

M.D. of Bighorn
Agricultural Services and Environmental Advisory Board
December 2, 2011
M.D. Administration Building, Council Chambers

In Attendance: Jackie Gemmill – Chairman
Bryne Weerstra
Marla Hingley
Dene Cooper
Erik Butters

Absent: Penny MacMillan

**Alberta Agriculture
And Rural Development:** Doug Macaulay, AARD

Staff: Dwight Tannas, Environmental Fieldman
Will Davies, Assistant Environmental Fieldman
Emily Smith

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 9:08 am

1. Agenda

a) Additions

None

b) Approval

MOTION HINGLEY THAT

the agenda is approved as circulated.

Carried Unanimously

2. Adoption of Minutes

a) MOTION HINGLEY THAT

the minutes of the ASE&AB meeting September 16, 2011 are approved as revised.

Carried Unanimously

3. Delegation:

4. Agricultural Fieldman's Report

A report was included in the package.

Updates:

W. Davies attended the Bow River Basin Council conservation tools workshop in mid-October.

5. Business Arising From Minutes

a) Living in a Natural Environment (LNE) Friday February 24, 2012 5-9pm

Requests for funding are out. Speakers/topics confirmed are as follows:

Fascinated by Fungi – Alberta Mycological Society – Martin Osis

Medicinal, Edible, Toxic, Poisonous. Understanding the Mushroom and Fungi.

Bison Belong

Will the reintroduction of bison in Banff affect those living in the eastern slopes?

Promotion for the event will begin in mid-January as the event is three weeks later this year than usual.

b) Municipal Update

Brief update provided by D. Cooper

A number of Bighorn's boards, committees, and organizations that Bighorn is associated with are connected with the mandate of the ASEAB. The ASEAB is a board of Bighorn with Legislative responsibility.

1. The Bighorn Corridor Environmental Committee (BCEC) is a community committee; the Bow Corridor Ecosystem Advisory Group (BCEAG) is a regional group organized by the Province to advise on regional environmental land-use issues;
2. The Biosphere Institute is an independent scientific research organization which is supported by the municipalities. Their focus is on sustainability and other environmental issues;
3. WildSmart is a non-profit organization affiliated with the Biosphere Institute that focuses on public education surrounding living with wildlife;
4. The Bow River Basin Council (BRBC) is concerned with watershed health and sustainability;
5. The Southern Alberta Waste to Energy Association (SAWEA) is comprised of most of the municipalities and waste commissions in the south part of the Province and is looking at alternatives to landfilling municipal solid waste (MSW). SAWEA is currently working on a proposal to develop an incineration plant in southern Alberta.
6. Calgary Regional Airshed Zone (CRAZ) monitors, analyzes, and provides information on air quality and develop strategies to manage air quality issues within the region.
7. Ghost Stewardship Monitoring Group
8. Spray Lakes Sawmill Public Advisory Group
9. South Eastern Slopes

South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (SSRP)

Council has received the feedback from the ASEAB, planning and administration, and has requested that the CAO prepare a consolidated response on the SSRP.

Ambulance Service

Ambulance service has moved from a municipal responsibility to provincial, and with Canmore moving into the provincial model, there will be a total of 8 ambulances available throughout the region to service Bighorn.

Budget

Council is currently in annual budget deliberations.

Roads

West Jumpingpound roads are nearing completion. Shell will be responsible for maintaining (including weed control) of the south section, and maintenance of the north section is still to be determined. The Agriculture Fieldman noted that native seed mix was utilized.

Director of Operations

Bill Luca begins December 20th.

Brief update provided by E. Butters

Well Drilling Tax

It is not well known that municipalities receive a fee for each new well drilled. This is a provincially managed process and its intent is to assist municipalities with issues related to drilling, i.e. roads. Over the years, Bighorn has benefitted from this program. Currently this tax program is scheduled to end this year, but the Minister has indicated it will be extended for another year pending consultation. Councillor Butters intends to encourage Bighorn to pursue this issue.

c) Red Bow Regional Watershed Alliance, Ladies Livestock Lessons, Ranching Opportunities.

Red Bow Regional Watershed Alliance was initiated by fieldmen in six municipalities as a way to pool and share resources around watershed education when the provincial government directed funding towards these types of initiatives. The former Up the Creek Publication was a joint effort of this group. Ladies Livestock Lessons and the Ranching Opportunities Conference were also initiatives of this group. A loss of the funding ended this formal alliance and the Up the Creek publication, but the Ladies Livestock Lessons and Ranching Opportunities conferences have continued.

Ranching Opportunities continues to be very successful, due in great part with the affiliation with Olds College a number of years ago. The Ladies Livestock Lessons has done well in the past, but a decrease in the attendance this past year has, in part, led to a decision to reevaluate this program. In February, the organizing committee will meet to discuss.

d) Alberta Invasive Plant Council

There is a new website, membership is continuing to increase and there is a growing request for the weed fact sheets and the weed wise posters. Bighorn continues to be an active member.

e) Weed Control and Assistant Fieldman's Update

i) GPS Mapping

W. Davies presented a number of reports on weed mapping activities within Bighorn.

The first was a mapping of weed locations within the Ghost Forest Reserve area contracted by the Ghost Watershed Alliance and undertaken by Cows and Fish.

- Starting to compile data from other sources is really helpful. These are locations where Bighorn staff would not likely have accessed.

Next a map of the Jamieson, Highway 40 area showing weed locations and types and weed spraying areas.

- A colour coding of the weeds has been created. In total, there are six maps showing different areas of Bighorn and the location of weeds, and also the spraying activity in 2011.
- A suggestion was made to organize the legend by restricted weeds, then noxious weeds and that a distinction is made in the coding to discern the two types.

Finally, W. Davies made a presentation on efforts to map weed locations along the Bow River from Canmore to Seebe.

W. Davies and U. Gillespie GPS'd the south channel of the Bow River between Canmore and Seebe this summer by raft. A contractor had already completed the north channel in 2005. This information will be useful in tracking weed locations and the effectiveness of management techniques. Sustainable Resource Development plotted the GPS points on their maps and provided the maps back to Bighorn. Observations included that there was the

level of infestations around the hamlets that were expected to be found. The area around the quarry on the south side of the Bow River at Seebe is a large area of weed infestation.

W. Davies was asked if he is using a density distribution scale, which he is and it has been entered into the GPS machine. W. Davies expressed his appreciation to U. Gillespie for her assistance with the GPS and mapping.

Board members noted that allotment holders are required to undertake annual self-inspections of their allotments and file it annually with the Province. This report includes the location of weeds.

It was suggested that the Assistant Fieldman contact the Pincher Creek Grazing Association to get information on the vegetation inventories they are undertaking.

ii) William Davies met with Tourism, Parks and Recreation staff

Rich Johnson and Melanie Percy and SRD Range Specialist Brendan Kowalenko to discuss weed issues and the possibility of collaborating. Bighorn has offered to undertake a weed workshop for parks staff.

iii) Large Carnivore Livestock Losses Mini-Conference

The original proposal to sponsor a single presentation on trapping as a carnivore management strategy was suggested at the last meeting. At the time, the ASEAB felt that the presentation might be perceived as too directive of one solution and that it needed a broader perspective. What is now being proposed as an expanded presentation on a number of topics relative to predators and their management.

The Assistant Fieldman is looking for an endorsement from the ASEAB to take forward for approval from Bighorn Council.

Speakers are confirmed, hall is booked, p/a system is booked and options for catering snacks are being pursued. While no partners have stepped forward to support 'officially', the M.D. of Ranchlands is a presenter and permission to use their logo will be requested. There will be no charge to attend and it is expected that the whole workshop will come in under \$1,000, including catering, hall and p/a rental, advertising and speaker costs. These costs can be covered through the ASB grant for educational or extension programs.

MOTION HINGLEY THAT the ASEAB recommend that Council endorse the presentation and support of the Large Carnivore Livestock Losses Mini-Conference on Friday February 17, 2012.

f) Central ASB Conference

Minutes of the Central ASB conference were circulated for information.

g) Growing Forward Update

Moving ahead with Growing Forward II, the vision, intent and policy framework have been set. It is likely that the Federal Government will be looking for new ideas. A number of the funding programs are now fully subscribed for this year, but there are still opportunities in the leadership development and business opportunity area.

Comment: The more opportunities to provide support for water initiatives the better. Requirement of completing an environmental farm plan can be a challenge and obstacle.

6. New Business

a) Strategic Business Plan

A copy of the Strategic Business Plan for 2011-2013 was presented for the Board's review. This report must be updated and submitted annually to the Province. Each year, strategic tasks are reviewed and reported on as part of this process. This report must be sent to the Province by the end of December. Comments from Board:

Page 3 – need consistency with fonts, font sizes, borders, etc.

On tables, change ‘time’ column header to ‘when’.

Move section breaks to be consistent

MOTION WEERSTRA THAT the ASEAB approve the updated M.D. of Bighorn ASEAB Strategic Business Plan for January-December 2011, 2012, 2013 with noted minor corrections.

Carried Unanimously

b) Provincial ASB Conference

Scheduled for January 29 – February 3, 2012 in Edmonton. Still waiting for resolution package, but need an idea of numbers attending in order to hold rooms. Board members unsure of ability to attend some or all of conference. Agreed to book six rooms pending receipt and review of the conference package.

c) Red Deer County ASB Letter

Red Deer County is proposing to bring together ag. Fieldmen and board chairs from around the region to discuss creating a networking group that would meet from time to time to discuss issues, exchange ideas, etc. Board expressed some concern with the level of external commitments already required of the fieldman, but agreed that Bighorn’s fieldman and board chair should attend the first meeting to get more information.

d) Election of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

Nomination of J. Gemmill for Chairperson by B. Weerstra

Nomination of B. Weerstra for Vice-Chairperson by J. Gemmill

As there were no further nominations, J. Gemmill and B. Weerstra were congratulated on their appointments.

7. Information

8. Next Meeting

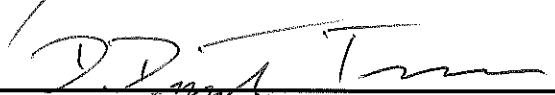
Friday January 20, 2012 at 9am at the M.D. of Bighorn administration office.

9. Adjournment

MOTION HINGLEY TO ADJOURN the meeting at 1:32pm.



Chairman



Designated Office