

**Clinton and Area Community Wildfire Preparedness Roundtable
Draft Meeting Summary as of Oct 28, 2022**

Meeting date: October 24, 2022, 9:00AM to 12:00PM

Location: In Person at Clinton Memorial Hall

Present:

Bonaparte Indian Band – Brenda Antoine, Deb Arnott
Bonaparte Watershed Stewardship Society – Al Midgley
BC Parks – Terri Worthen, Sean Owens
BC Timber Sales – Jeff O’Hara
BC Wildfire Service – Rob Barnett
Emergency Management BC – Terry Olsen
Forsite Consultants – Hailey Sigalet, Liam Grant
Ministry of Forests 100 Mile House District – Johnna Wandler, Catherine Cautley-Davis
Stswecem’c Xget’tem First Nation – Judah Melton
Thompson-Nicola Regional District – Kevin Skrepnek
Village of Clinton – Mayor Susan Swan, Mayor-elect Roland Stanke, Murray Daly, Fire Chief Wayne Walch, Councillor-elect Darrell Schapansky
West Fraser – Rob Ballinger
Consultant – Mike Simpson

1. Introductions, Meeting Objectives, Agenda

Mike Simpson welcomed everyone and acknowledged First Nations unceded territory. A round of introductions took place. The agenda was approved as presented.

2. Debrief of the Fire Season That Was, Lessons Learned

Participants shared what wildfires happened in the area surrounding Clinton and the South Cariboo: Brenda noted there were a few near Hwy 99; Rob Barnett noted there were 110 fires in 100 Mile House zone, mostly small but some up to 50 ha; those with initial attack crews noted their crews were not that busy. The late start to summer and extended dry conditions and warm temperatures into October were noted.

It was noted that communication between BC Wildfire Service and Bonaparte Band was excellent this year, much improved over 2017, and included use of local knowledge keepers.

It was noted that there are big concerns with water, water availability for cattle and wildlife, with all the changes on the landscape. It was also noted that with grasses a fire hazard in many areas, we need to figure out how to utilize grazing as a fuel management tool.

3. Previous meeting summary

The previous meeting summary from May 17 was approved. Action Items were reviewed, see updated table at end of this summary. Updates on some of them are as follows:

- Grass along Kelly Lake Road – can’t really be treated, between fences, highway right of way and private property is difficult to treat. Perhaps by highways contractors?

4. Clinton & Area Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan

Hailey Sigalet, RPF, Fuel Management Specialist and Liam Grant, RPF, Planning Forester, both with Forsite Consultants Ltd. presented their work to date on the Clinton & Area Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan (CWRP). They presented on purpose of a CWRP, feedback heard at the first open house held September 8, risk identification and analysis work to date, and draft management strategies. Their presentation slides can be found [here](#).

Hailey and Liam welcome further input from the Community Wildfire Roundtable members, they can be reached via email at hsigalet@forsite.ca or lgrant@forsite.ca

Proposed timelines and steps to approval:

- Next public open house – looking at week of December 5-9
- Next Clinton & Area Community Wildfire Roundtable meeting – mid to late January
 - It was suggested that the Roundtable should endorse the final plan, before it is presented to Village of Clinton council, TNRD Board of Directors
- Adoption by Village of Clinton council, TNRD Board of Directors – February 2023

5. Information Sharing

Ministry of Forests 100 Mile House – Johnna Wandler, Catherine Cautley-Davis

- Johnna noted that for all of 100 Mile House Forest District, they currently have a \$1M budget, and have to date completed 3400 ha of landscape breaks , 80 ha of interface fuel breaks and 75 ha of hand treatments (no heavy equipment)
- Ongoing challenges with the weird weather with burning piles, and the risk of leaving them over summer to cure
- Catherine noted that MOF is initiating an access management plan to determine what roads can be deactivated, balancing need for access for range, wildfire suppression against other values such as wildlife, hunting and recreation.

BC Wildfire Service – Rob Barnett

- Rob noted that there are some prescribed burns (e.g., burning the ground, not just debris piles) proposed or in the works around Alkali Lake and Canoe Creek.
- BCWS has purchased property on Exeter Road in 100 Mile House for a new fire base
- Staffing updates: Peter Holub is now a full time wildfire prevention officer in the Cariboo Fire Centre, specializing in prescribed burning; there are 4 seasonal crews that can assist with pile burning and hazard abatement; they are looking to eventually have 1-2 permanent standby crews; and province-wide, there are 113 new full time positions.
- Rob noted that they appreciated that Clinton VFD actioned a wildfire this past year
- They have issued some orders to private landowners in the Clinton area to remove materials to reduce fire hazard

Emergency Management BC – Terry Olsen

- Terry attended on behalf of Trevor Pratt. EMBC can assist any local government or Indigenous government with evacuation planning, group lodging, training, etc.
- There is an upcoming seasonal preparedness workshop on Nov 2, local and Indigenous governments received invitations directly
- There are numerous funding programs available to local and Indigenous governments through Union of BC Municipalities on climate change, emergency preparedness and community resiliency and FireSmart, see [here](#)

BC Parks – Terri Worthen, Sean Owens

- Terri noted that she's new in her role, as BC Parks increases their capacity in house to address wildfire risk and management actions in parks. She and Sean are both full time covering a large area of the BC Interior, with other colleagues covering other areas.
- Within the Clinton & Area Community Wildfire Roundtable area, there are several parks with the following recent fuel management activities:
 - Chasm – none
 - Marble Range – none
 - Big Bar – fuel management/wildfire risk reduction treatments undertaken in 17.5 ha of the park in various areas
 - Edge Hills is adjacent

Bonaparte Watershed Stewardship Society – Al Midgley

- Al noted that the annual general meeting will be coming up in the winter

Village of Clinton – Murray/Mayor Swan

- We were successful for Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan (CWRP) funding from UBCM. We are currently reviewing some samples of requests for proposals (RFPs) and hoping to get out the RFP by the end of the week, and we are aiming to hire a consultant to get this done.
- There is a planned fuel break on west side of town. We are currently receiving community comments for the plan and will engage with the community more this spring.

Clinton Volunteer Fire Department – Wayne Walch

- Wayne noted there were a few grass fires, but a relatively quiet year.
- They've done some training with Shelly Harnden from BCWS

Thompson-Nicola Regional District – Kevin Skrepnek

- Kevin noted that TNRD has done some staff restructuring:
 - Kevin is now Manager, Community and Emergency Services
 - Jeremy Denny has been hired to coordinate training for VFDs and look after FireSmart, with the goal of securing funding and hiring seasonal staff
 - Mike Knauff has been hired by TNRD and will start in November
- TNRD is considering how to replace their 2009 Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), which was ineffective for the entire regional district area, with smaller CWRPs. Other than the Clinton & Area CWRP that covers a large part of Electoral Area E, there are not many others that cover rural electoral areas
- Jim Smith is the Electoral Area E Director-elect

Clinton Community Forest – Steve Law

- Steve reported that the fuel break on the south side of town is complete, 7km long x 100m wide from Sawmill Road to Fenton Road, funded by Forest Enhancement Society of BC.
- 7200 aspen were planted this spring in the above fuel break.
- In final stages of final plans and prescription for the fuel break on west side of town, operations will likely start this fall

West Fraser, Rob Ballinger

- Rob noted that they don't have fuel management initiatives underway in the Clinton area, but have an active project with Canim Lake Band involving fire salvage
- Pile burning to start this fall once conditions permit
- They are working with contractors to do more grinding of piles and hauling material to Atlantic Power in Williams Lake, this would result in less burning of debris piles

BC Timber Sales – Jeff O’Hara

- Jeff noted that in the Clinton & Area Community Wildfire Roundtable area, their only operating area is near Chasm and is quite young stands.
- Their current focus is fire salvage in Sparks Lake, Moose Valley and Long Lake – no green timber is currently being cut.

Stswecem'c Xget'tem First Nation – Judah Melton

- Judah noted that they are increasing their staff capacity with a new emergency manager Ashley Camille, and they’ve launched a guardian’s program
- Ongoing concern from their community is maintenance and status of MOTI roads in their area in case they were needed for evacuation. Need better maintenance during fire season.

Bonaparte Indian Band – Brenda Antoine

- Brenda noted that she is both referrals clerk and emergency coordinator.
- They are increasing their staff capacity in forestry and natural resources as well.

6. Next Steps

Next meeting in January 2023 – Mike will find a date via doodle poll. Could be virtual meeting.

Task or activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
Bring Alan Westhaver to present to the community, and field tour to look at fuel treatments an FireSmart risks of homes and structures	Mike Simpson	Spring 2023
Utilize the Cariboo Region mapping website (Forsite) to upload fuel management polygons (past and present). Soon there will be an updated mapping product in the form of Google Earth kmz files that will show past fuel management treatments and future proposed treatments.	Kane, everyone	ongoing
Questions about proposed fuel management projects, ribbon they see in the forest next to private property, contact Johnna Wandler at johnna.wandler@gov.bc.ca	Everyone	Ongoing
Training opportunities for Volunteer Fire Departments reach out to Jason Ward (Jason.Ward@gov.bc.ca) examples: SWPP 115 – structural, Engine boss course and Wildfire fighter 1 – equivalent to S100.	Everyone	Ongoing
Advise Rob Barnett if they see problems of excessive fuel buildup and fire risk on private land rob.barnett@gov.bc.ca	Everyone	Ongoing
Contact Rob Barnett if First Nations communities want to do training rob.barnett@gov.bc.ca	First Nations	Ongoing
Contact Rob Barnett or Reg Trapp about ideas for proposed prescribed burns	Everyone	Ongoing
Close the communication gaps – update or provide new contacts for key sectors missing on the contact list	Everyone	Before next meeting