



**HIGH LEVEL FORESTS
PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

Tuesday, April 25th, 2017

5pm, High Level Seniors Center

PRESENT:

Gordon Stenhouse (FRI Research)	Marissa Green (Norbord)
Boyd Langford (Member of Public)	Crystal McAteer (Town of High Level)
John Thurston (Hungry Bend Sandhills Society)	Phil Trapton (Member of the Public)
Jenna Gardner (Member of the Public)	Evan Gardner (Peace River Constituency)
Aaron Doepel (LaCrete Sawmills)	Allen Plantinga (Tolko)
Melanie Plantinga (Tolko)	Mike Morgan (Town of High Level)
Nicolene Lawson (Norbord)	

INFORMATION SENT:

Baptiste Metchooyeah (Dene Tha')	Exact Harvesting
Bernie Doerksen (LaCrete Polar Cats)	Fort Vermilion Heritage Center
Marnie Suitor (Peerless Trout First Nation)	Christine Malhmann (Agriculture & Forestry)
Carol Gabriel (Mackenzie County)	Fred Radersma (Norbord)
Barry Toker (Watt Mountain Wanderers)	Keith Badger (Netaskinan Development)
Jon McQuinn (Norbord)	Kieran Broderick (Beaver First Nation)
Claude Duval (Watt Mnt Wanderers)	Lindee Dumas (LRRCN)
Connie Martel (Dene Tha')	Terry Jessiman (Agriculture & Forestry)
Cory Ferguson (Paddle Prairie Metis Settlement)	Marilee Cranna Toews (Hungry Bend Sandhills Society)
Chris Mitchell (Town of Rainbow Lake)	Paddle Prairie Metis Settlement
Dan Coombs (Agriculture & Forestry)	Sugu Thuraisamy (LRRF)
Dan Fletcher (Town of Rainbow Lake)	Treetech
Terry Batt (Trapper's Association)	Tracey Laboucan (Lubicon Lake Nation)
Brent Holick (LaCrete Polar Cats)	Walter Sarapuk (MacKenzie County)
Mike Cardinal (Tallcree First Nation)	Tristina Macek (N'Deh Ltd. Partnership)
Margaret Carrol (High Level & District Chamber of Commerce)	Cheryl Ernst (High Level & District Chamber of Commerce)
Matt Marcone (Echo Pioneer)	Paul Ebert (Agriculture & Forestry)
Harvey Sewpagaham (LRRCN)	Fred Didzena (Dene Tha')

CALL TO ORDER 5:45pm

- 1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & ROUND TABLE**
- 2. NEW BUSINESS**

Grizzly Bear Research – Gordon Stenhouse

How many bears has Gord collared? Approximately 300 in 19 years.
If the population is below the 1000 considered necessary for a non-threatened species, when did it drop below the 1000 animal threshold? We don't know.
Gord also does not know if 1000 or more animals is a realistic goal for this species in Alberta. 75% of that may be sustainable and feasible.

What is the relationship between black bears and grizzly bears? The research so far has shown that if there are many black bears in an area there are not many grizzly bears. If there are many grizzly bears, there seem to be few black bears. The ranges do not seem to overlap.

What should people look for if they are identifying den sites? Grizzlies often dig test holes. They like gravel ridges along creeks/ivers. They like to den in the root balls of trees. They do not like to be near roads.

How big a range do grizzlies bears have? Females approximately 500 square KM, males 1500 square KM. They often come back to the same areas repeatedly, apparently checking for the availability of berries or other seasonal foods.

What is the average life span? How long do they reproduce? Gord has encountered a 32 year old male with many off spring. He also has records of a 28 year old female who was still producing cubs. She was a hunter and was teaching those skills to her offspring.

Would they migrate to Alaska or Yukon? No, grizzly bears may move between BC and Alberta but behavior does not suggest a long distance migration like that.

How long do collars stay on? Approximately 2 ½ years. The collars can be commanded to drop off remotely. (If Gord sends the command). They have a cotton band which rots off over time. The collar is usually commanded to turn off while the bear is denned which saves battery life. The collars usually send updates every 10 hours. The researchers have "geo fences", virtual points set up so if a bear leaves its den they receive an e-mail message telling them that it is mobile. They can set up these "geo fences" around campgrounds to provide warnings if bears come close to recreation areas.

Grain spillage from trains and trucks is an attractant to grizzly bears, is Gord working with anyone on solutions to this problem? No, though he agrees that spilled grain is attractive to bears. It would be very costly to fix all the leaky rail cars which appear to be out there.

Does he think that it is possible to reintroduce grizzly bears in the northern United States? Possibly, under certain conditions.

Caribou habitat and protection is a big issue in the north. How does it mesh with grizzly bear protection? Caribou are specialists, grizzly bears are generalists. Caribou seem to require specific conditions for best survival. Grizzly bears are more able to adapt to different conditions. Bears do not kill many caribou. The caribou are at greater risk from wolves.

3. Please be aware of the Forestry Week BBQ being hosted by the Northern Lights Forest Education Society on May 10th at 5:30pm at the Footner Lake Walking Trails. Everyone is welcome.

There is also an open house to present the companies General Development Plan on May 10th from 11:00am-5:00pm at the Town of High Level office. There will be a BBQ from 11:00am – 1:00pm. Information Sessions will be in Rainbow Lake on May 9th and LaCrete & Fort Vermillion on May 11th.

4. **NEXT MEETING - Tuesday May 30th, 2017 – SFI Standard Certification, 2017/18 General Development Plan**
5. **MEETING ADJOURNED – 7:00pm**