

MEETING SUMMARY

Columbia Basin Regional Advisory Committee Webinar Socio-Economic Integration in Columbia River Treaty Scenario Modelling

March 8, 2021 12pm – 1:30pm Pacific Time/1pm - 2:30pm Mountain Time via Zoom

The Columbia Basin Regional Advisory Committee met on March 8, 2021 by webinar to learn about current efforts to integrate socio-economic values in Columbia River Treaty scenario modelling.

The session was led by the Columbia River Treaty Local Governments Committee, the group leading this initiative. It included a presentation on the process to date and invited input from CBRAC on engagement approaches. There was time given for questions and answers.

View the presentation and the backgrounder document on the [CBRAC website](#).

This summary is based on notes taken during the meeting and is meant to give greater context to the slides in the presentation.

Welcome

Brooke McMurchy, B.C. Columbia River Treaty Team

Brooke McMurchy welcomed attendees and began the webinar with an acknowledgement of the traditional Indigenous territories that all participants, spread throughout the Canadian Columbia Basin and Victoria, were joining the webinar from.

Brooke then provided the following updates on CBRAC activities:

- Comments on the 2021 CBRAC webinar schedule were received and most members supported an increase in meeting frequency to accommodate time-sensitive topics such as the socio-economic values discussion being held during this session.
- The next CBRAC webinar in mid-late April will be on climate change projections in the Columbia Basin. Exact date will be confirmed after the CBRAC Steering Committee meets on March 12, 2021.
- Comments on the updated CBRAC Terms of Reference will be integrated and shared soon.
- Expressions of interest are still being accepted for a new Jaffray/ Baynes Lake area CBRAC member until March 31, 2021.
- The Columbia River Treaty Virtual Town Hall on February 24, 2021 had over 200 people join from Canada and U.S., and received over 150 questions. Answers to the questions will be posted on the [Province's Columbia River Treaty website](#), along with a summary report of the session. A recording of the 2.5 hour meeting is currently available on [YouTube](#).
- CBRAC was invited to provide feedback on this session to Brooke.McMurchy@gov.bc.ca.
- The Province is aiming to hold another Virtual Town Hall in the fall.

Columbia River Treaty Scenario Modelling Introduction

Kathy Eichenberger, Executive Director, B.C. Columbia River Treaty Team

Kathy provided the following context for the process of integrating socio-economic values into Columbia River Treaty modelling, and how it fits into the overall Columbia River Treaty negotiation process.

- A technical working group reporting to the Negotiation Advisory Team (NAT)¹ is working on a project to examine different scenarios for how the Canadian Treaty dams could be operated differently to meet Basin interests.
- This group, the CRT Modelling Sub-committee, has customized a computerized river management model to assess different operations (scenarios) for the dams along the Kootenay and Columbia Rivers, in order to:
 - understand how U.S. proposals for Treaty changes will impact Basin interests, and
 - to explore how the Treaty can be modernized to increase flexibility for Canadian operations to change reservoir levels and flow operations in a way that would enhance values in the Basin.
- Columbia Basin Indigenous Nations are developing performance measures for Indigenous Culture Values and are leading the development of performance measures for ecosystem function, in partnership with the Province, federal agencies and non-governmental organizations.
- BC Hydro has developed performance measures for power generation.
- The Local Governments Committee has taken the lead on developing performance measures for socio-economic values. This was the missing piece to ensure all Basin interests were being included in the modelling process.
- The CRT Modelling Sub-committee had its first training session on March 8 (this morning). It was a positive meeting.

Agenda Review and Team Introductions

Cindy Pearce, Executive Director, CRT Local Governments Committee

Cindy explained what to expect during the rest of the session, and introduced the team working with her on this process. Avery Deboer-Smith is the team researcher and Ryan MacDonald is the modelling advisor.

¹ The Negotiation Advisory Team is comprised of representatives from Canada, B.C. and the Ktunaxa, Secwepemc and Syilx/Okanagan Nations. This is the core group responsible for developing Canadian options and positions for the Canada-U.S. negotiations on the Columbia River Treaty.

Socio-Economic Integration in CRT Modelling Presentation

Cindy Pearce, Executive Director, CRT Local Governments Committee

Ryan MacDonald, Modelling Advisor, MacHydro Consultants Ltd.

- **Cindy presented the Overview section** of the presentation to introduce the reasons for this initiative, the modelling process, the sources of information, types of socio-economic performance measures, roles and the steps in the process.
- **Ryan presented the Introduction to Scenario Modelling and Performance Measures section**, providing details about river management models generally, about the customized Columbia River Treaty Planning Model (CRTPM), model inputs and set-up, scenario evaluation steps and an example of how performance measures are used in scenario evaluation.
- **Cindy then presented the section on Developing Socio-Economic Performance Measures (SE PMs)** including the steps that have been taken to create the Initial Summary of SE PMs, with a list of the documents that have been reviewed, and the next steps to refine this initial list by reviewing Water Use Plan reports and incorporating new information from CBRAC and the Local Governments Committee. Flooding, erosion, navigation, recreation and tourism, health (dust generation) and agriculture have been identified for research, review and coding as the key socio-economic PMs.
- The Initial Summary of SE PMs was introduced, and CBRAC was invited to provide input on an on-line survey. Responses will be anonymous.

Engagement Input

Cindy Pearce, Executive Director, CRT Local Governments Committee

Cindy presented this section, starting by acknowledging potential challenges to effective engagement, then inviting CBRAC's input on the following:

- **Target audiences**
 - Local government, CBRAC, public, industry (forestry, agriculture) and youth.
- **CBRAC engagement**
 - **Now** – Input on the Initial Summary as discussed in the previous section.
 - **June 2021** – CBRAC will be invited to provide input on existing and new PMs with a PM summary table that includes links to background documents, a webinar, an online survey to provide feedback and a commitment that all of their feedback will be compiled and then reviewed with the LGC.

- **October 2021** – Public input will be summarized and CBRAC will be invited to provide input on an updated summary table, with a webinar and online survey, with a commitment that all feedback will be compiled for LGC consideration to make recommendations to the CRT Negotiations Advisory Team.
- **Public feedback**
 - **September 2021** – Input on draft PMs will be requested from the public. Public will be provided with a PM summary table that includes links to background documents, an informational webinar (potentially at a regional, sub-regional and/ or reservoir level), an online survey to provide PM feedback and a commitment that all feedback will be compiled and then reviewed by the LGC and CBRAC.

CBRAC supported these approaches, with input regarding the challenges of communicating this complex topic to the public.

Next Steps

Cindy Pearce, Executive Director, CRT Local Governments Committee

Timeline (completed or in progress are in red font)

- **Nov 2020 - Sept 2021 - Collect Information**
 - Community interest and SE PM data collected from a wide range of sources.
- **Feb-Mar 2021 - Design Engagement**
 - Methods for engaging CRBRAC local governments and the public.
 - Updated budget and workplan
- **Apr-Aug 2021 - Initial PM Review**
 - Review updated SE PM Summary with LGC and CBRAC.
- **Sep-Oct 2021 - Public Feedback**
 - Feedback from local government and public collected.
- **Nov-Dec 2021 - SE PM Recommendations**
 - Feedback reviewed with CBRAC and LGC recommends SE PMs to NAT.
- **Begins Sep 2021 - Confidential Scenario Modelling²**
 - PMs finalized and used to model scenarios

² Scenario modelling is confidential at this time because it is informing Canadian negotiating positions on the Columbia River Treaty. Sharing the details of this modelling could compromise Canada's ability to achieve an agreement with the U.S. that is in the best interest of the Canadian Columbia Basin.

Survey for CBRAC

CBRAC are asked to complete a socio-economic PM feedback survey by March 19, 2021.

Question and Answer Period

Question/ Comment	Answer
We should engage with local search and rescue teams.	We will explore this further.
Are you planning to include college classes?	Yes. We will be reaching out to instructors in relevant fields and engage in a process with them.
How does Kootenay Lake play into this process? It isn't part of the CRT, but I want to make sure the impacts to Kootenay Lake will also be looked at.	Yes, Kootenay Lake is included. You can review PMs in the Initial Summary Table.
For the FortisBC entitlements and industry interests I think FortisBC and Columbia Power should be included in the industry section. Constant power is another important socio-economic factor that isn't included here.	You will need to speak to BC Hydro folks about power entitlements as power generation is a category of PMs being developed in the CRTPM that is different then socio-economic PMs.
For decades along Kootenay Lake, we have enjoyed the advantage of much lower flood events, the result of this has been the growth of vegetation. Recently, half of all total BC accretion applications were on Kootenay Lake. People are still allowed to keep building closer and closer to the water. With less potential flood protection in the future – potential future higher flood events may prove that these accretions were a bad choice. How can we temper the rate of these accretions?	An accretion happens when water levels drop over the long term and vegetation grows on the side of the waterway. Property owners can then apply to the Surveyor General to expand their property into the area this vegetation is growing. While local governments do have tools to try and reduce the amount of development in these areas, they are difficult to implement. Hopefully the Kootenay Lake Flooding Analysis can provide more refined information to inform the flooding PMs for Kootenay Lake.
I think the challenge will be getting the language of PMs into something that is easily digestible to the general public for the engagement pieces.	Agree. This will be an important part of the process.

In terms of general public engagement – one of the things we really struggled with that would be good to provide to the public is “What is involved in the Treaty vs what is not”. A list of examples would be a great idea. Agree.

CBRAC Next Steps and Wrap-Up

Brooke McMurchy, B.C. Columbia River Treaty Team

Brooke closed the meeting and thanked everyone for their participation. She informed CBRAC that a follow up session on this topic will be scheduled around June.