

## MEETING SUMMARY

### Columbia Basin Regional Advisory Committee Meeting

June 24, 2021, 12pm – 1:30pm Pacific Time via Zoom

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The Columbia Basin Regional Advisory Committee met virtually on June 24, 2021 by Zoom. The main purpose was to provide an update on some of the Province's Columbia River Treaty-related community interest projects. The following summary is based on notes taken during the meeting, and though it is not verbatim, it is meant to reflect the spirit of the discussion.

#### Welcome/CBRAC Updates

*Brooke McMurchy, B.C. Columbia River Treaty Team*

- Brooke welcomed attendees to the meeting and acknowledged the Indigenous territories of the Ktunaxa, Secwepemc, *Syilx* Okanagan and Sinixt peoples. She also mentioned that June is Pride Month and National Indigenous History Month.
- Brooke then acknowledged the recent discoveries of unmarked graves at a number of former residential schools, including the Kamloops Residential School, announced by the Tk'emlups te Secwepemc in May, and the Marieval Residential School, announced by the Cowessess First Nation just hours before this CBRAC meeting. She recognized this has been a heavy time, especially for Indigenous people.
- Nathalie Allard, Ktunaxa Nation CBRAC member, advised that when Indigenous people are in a meeting, it is appropriate to allow space for them to share their thoughts regarding residential schools.
- She asked all those attending the meeting to keep in mind that every Indigenous person is a first- or second-generation residential school survivor. She thanked Brooke for acknowledging the discoveries that have happened recently, adding that real conversations need to happen so that healing can begin.
- Nathalie shared resources for learning more about residential schools and Indigenous culture, which are listed in the Reconciliation Resources section below.
- Brooke asked if others would like to share their thoughts, in particular, the Indigenous CBRAC members. There were no volunteers, so she invited participants to make comment at any time during the meeting, should they feel called to.
- Before moving into the presentations, Brooke confirmed the next CBRAC session – July 21, 2021 on the BC Hydro Integrated Resource Plan – and introduced Chelsea Forbes, the newest member of the B.C. CRT Team.

## Reconciliation Resources

- [Ktunaxa Nation Council SIS Onboarding: Key Considerations in Discussing Ktunaxa Health](#)
- [‘I know you’re sorry’: one Anishinaabe MC and poet’s response to all of Canada’s apologies](#)
- [Survivors of the Red Brick School](#)
- [Books for those with children:](#)
  - I Am Not a Number, by Jenny Kay Dupuis and Kathy Kacer
  - When We Were Alone, by David A. Robertson and Julie Flett
  - When I was Eight, by Christy Jordan-Fenton & Margaret Pokiak-Fenton
  - Not My Girl, by Christy Jordan-Fenton & Margaret Pokiak-Fenton
  - Stolen Words, by Melanie Florence
  - Shi-shi-etko, by Nicola I. Campbell
  - Shin-chi’s Canoe, by Nicola I. Campbell

## Agriculture Discussion Paper

*Brooke McMurchy, B.C. Columbia River Treaty Team*

- The B.C. Columbia River Treaty Team has published a discussion paper summarizing programs and initiatives available to the Columbia Basin agriculture sector, and is seeking feedback to learn where there may be gaps.
- Brooke explained that throughout the Province’s public engagement on the Columbia River Treaty, Basin residents have spoken of agricultural losses sustained when valley bottoms were first inundated after construction of the Treaty dams. Many people have indicated that increased support is needed for areas such as accessing land, financial aid for sustainable farming, irrigation, and dikes.
- To help respond to these concerns, the B.C. CRT Team investigated existing federal, provincial and regional agriculture programs and initiatives with the potential to help address some of the interests. Over 40 programs were identified, which have been compiled in the discussion paper.
- The B.C. CRT Team is now seeking feedback on whether there are gaps in addressing agricultures interests and concerns in the Basin, given the programs and initiatives listed in the discussion paper.
- Feedback is being accepted until 4pm PT, Sep. 15, 2021. Next steps will be considered after the B.C. CRT Team has assessed feedback.

- The discussion paper has been sent to key people and organizations involved in Basin agriculture. CBRAC members are encouraged to share details within their networks as well.
- In addition to providing an opportunity for feedback, the discussion paper may also be a useful resource for people in the agriculture sector.
- The discussion paper and details for submitting feedback are on the [B.C. CRT website](#).

### **Village of Valemount Air Quality Data Review**

*Nancy Chan, Air Quality Specialist, Hemmera Envirochem*

*[View Hemmera's report and the presentation](#) delivered to the Village of Valemount Clean Air Task Force on June 15, 2021. The same presentation was delivered to CBRAC during their June 24 session.*

- The community of Valemount has expressed concern about air quality and health impacts from dust events that may originate from the drawdown zone at Kinbasket Reservoir.
- A specific concern is the potential for silica within the dust to be linked to silicosis, a lung disease. The risk of silicosis is associated with the inhalation of fine particles (less than 10 µm in diameter) that contain crystalline silica.
- The Village of Valemount engaged Hemmera to conduct a detailed review of air quality monitoring data collected from the B.C. Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (ENV) monitoring station located on the roof of the firehall, along with ancillary information such as meteorological data (e.g., wind speed and direction), precipitation, Kinbasket Reservoir water levels, and documented dust events.
- Nancy Chan was the project manager on this study to evaluate whether the drawdown zone of the Kinbasket Reservoir could be a key source of dust events containing elevated concentrations of respirable particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> or PM<sub>2.5</sub>)<sup>1</sup>. She presented the study findings to CBRAC.
- Based on the air quality data review, possible dust events originating from the drawdown zone of Kinbasket Reservoir are expected to be infrequent and of very short duration, largely occurring during late winter and early spring when water levels in the reservoir are typically in decline.
- The analysis identified 14 probable dust events during the seven-year period from 2013-2019. Dust events are short term, lasting one to two hours, and although particulate

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<sup>1</sup> PM<sub>10</sub> are inhalable particles with diameters that are 10 micrometers or smaller. PM<sub>2.5</sub> are fine inhalable particles with diameters that are 2.5 micrometers or smaller. <https://www.epa.gov/pm-pollution/particulate-matter-pm-basics>

matter levels (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>) are elevated during the events, daily average concentrations remain below the relevant B.C. Ambient Air Quality Criteria and the Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards.

- WorkSafeBC has established occupational exposure limits for both crystalline and amorphous silica. Observed PM<sub>10</sub> concentrations during probable dust events may exceed WorkSafeBC exposure limits for respirable crystalline silica but remain well below exposure limits for respirable amorphous silica. However, the report noted there is no information available on the concentrations and characterization of silica in the air quality monitoring data collected in Valemount or the characterization of silica particles within the sand at Kinbasket Reservoir. It is likely that the majority of the silica particles at the reservoir are of the amorphous form.
- The report also noted that there may be other emission sources contributing to elevated PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations during identified dust events. Examples include wood smoke, local vehicle traffic and dust from unpaved surfaces located between Kinbasket Reservoir and the air quality monitoring station in Valemount.
- To quantify potential health effects associated with dust from the drawdown zone of Kinbasket Reservoir, Hemmera's report included recommendations to collect and analyze air quality samples from future dust events for the presence of silica, and analyze samples of sand from the bottom of Kinbasket Reservoir for amorphous versus crystalline silica and particle size distribution.

**Question:** Are there plans to collect samples of the sand for analysis?

**Answer:** This is the recommendation that was presented to the Village of Valemount. Kathy Eichenberger confirmed that if Valemount decides to proceed, there is funding to support it.

### **Columbia River Treaty Heritage Project**

*Eden Dupont and Jeff Sotropa, CRT Heritage Project Communications Team*

- Eden and Jeff are part of the CRT Heritage Project Communications Team and are leading the process of creating a visual identity (brand) for the proposed touring route.
- The CRT Heritage Project aims to link a series of information stops at key locations throughout the Canadian Columbia Basin, communicating Indigenous and non-Indigenous place-based stories of impacts and losses due to Columbia River Treaty implementation. A full description of the CRT Heritage Project can be found in the [May 2020 CRT newsletter](#).

- Eden spoke about the process that led to a visual identity design recommended by the Communications Team. She first clarified that the design has not been approved by the CRT Heritage Project Steering Committee and so may change.
- The Communications Team began by surveying 30 people from diverse stakeholder groups, including CBRAC members, around what they deem important and relevant with regard to the Columbia River Treaty and the CRT Heritage Project, to help define the tone, feeling and imagery for the logo and brand.
- Jeff described the responses as powerful and said they would inform other aspects of the CRT Heritage Project in addition to the brand design.
- Resonant ideas shared through the survey included: sadness and strength, what story does the river tell?, water is life, understand with whom you share a place, development and destruction, and many more.
- It was noted that Indigenous stories from the Columbia Basin are not well known and telling them is a part of reconciliation.
- Jeff then shared the design process and a potential logo with CBRAC and explained some of the key design ideas incorporated: 'over and under', a sense of interruption, and the break and flow of the water and river. Ideas for the name of the touring route project were also shared.
- CBRAC members provided feedback on the proposed logo and touring route name, which Eden and Jeff will bring back to the Heritage Project Communications Team and share with the Heritage Project Steering Committee during their August meeting.
- Because the logo and touring route name are under development, the design and name ideas shown during the presentation cannot be included in these notes.
- CBRAC members were generally supportive of the process, the design and the name. Some raised the following comments:
  - The word memorial, or memory, is important in the process of acknowledging what happened and moving beyond it.
  - I appreciate the logo, the description that was provided, and how all-encompassing the logo is. The lines in the design are very linear; however, in my opinion, the logo does not have an Indigenous access point.
  - There are lots of benefits from the Treaty to the Basin, and during the presentation there was no talk of those benefits, as though it's only a sad story.
- Brooke encouraged CBRAC members to email the B.C. CRT team if they have any further comments or questions after the meeting.

## **Columbia River Treaty Video Series Project**

*Frances Litman and Jon O’Riordan, Creatively United for the Planet*

- The B.C. CRT Team is supporting Creatively United for the Planet, a non-profit society, in developing a series of four videos highlighting the value of water using the Columbia River as a learning resource.
- Project leads Jonathan O’Riordan and Frances Litman explained that video series aims to help to educate and inform a wide audience about Columbia Basin history, the importance of water, the significance of the Columbia River Treaty, and aspirations that Basin Indigenous Nations and communities have for the future of the Treaty.
- Concepts woven throughout the project include: the historical role of water to Indigenous culture and communities; the interconnectivity of water to all life and ecosystems; water as a common bond between the U.S. and Canada; the uses of water—commercial, ecological and spiritual; the impacts of climate change; and the importance of shared values in transboundary agreements.
- Developing the videos will involve engagement with Indigenous Nations, the Columbia Basin Trust, and community consultation, including CBRAC.
- Jon shared the conceptual outline for the videos:
  - **The first video** is a historical overview of the changing role of water and the Columbia Basin dam developments in both the U.S. and Canada.
  - **The second video** centres on the voices of the Columbia Basin and the different uses of the Columbia River, such as: flood risk management, hydropower, recreation, fisheries, etc.
  - **The third video** focuses on ecosystem restoration, highlighting efforts underway to enhance Basin ecosystems, and how climate change, and adaptive management factor in.
  - **The fourth video** will ask “Where do we go from here?”, outlining aspirations for a renewed Treaty, including Treaty governance and a vision for the Columbia River.
- Frances then shared a prototype for the first video, including examples of potential imagery and narration. Bringing visual art into the project is among the ideas being considered.
- Frances recognized that the themes covered in these videos are similar to those emerging from the CRT Heritage project, shared earlier in this meeting.
- She expressed that the biggest challenge right now is finding high resolution photos and footage to include in the videos, and asked CBRAC members to contact her if they know of people who may have or be able to film footage for this project. (email [Brooke.McMurchy@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Brooke.McMurchy@gov.bc.ca) or Frances at [info@creativelyunited.org](mailto:info@creativelyunited.org) if you have suggestions.)

**Question:** Will Indigenous Nations and communities be contacted to provide or to review information?

**Answer:** Yes, Indigenous Nations and communities will be contacted as they are a key part of this work. The B.C. CRT Team has provided us (Frances and Jon) with wide-ranging list of Treaty-related contacts.

- Brooke invited Frances and Jon to seek feedback from CBRAC again as this project evolves.
- She also highlighted that this project could be an important legacy piece for the Basin.

Brooke closed the meeting by thanking everyone for attending and sharing their comments.