

MEETING SUMMARY: Dec 11, 2006

In Attendance

KNPS: President Kent Goodwin, Vice President Pam Chenery, Secretary Susan Bond, Director Chris Ferguson, Member Laura Duncan.

City: Mayor Jim Ogilvie, Councillors David Bellm, Kieran Hickey, Albert Hoglund and Bob West-Sells, Administrator Mike Dodd, Fire Chief Al Collinson.

Others: Bob Gray, Fire Ecologist

Participant Statements:

- (1) Bob Gray: Recommends a workshop facilitated by Dr Robin Gregory (see attached proposal) and attended by all stakeholders (City, KNPS, Ministry of Forests, Protection Branch, Ministry of Environment, Wildsight, Tembec, Teck Cominco, Nordic Club). Purpose is to reach consensus on a final, unified fire management plan for Kimberley that takes into account stakeholder requirements. Workshop decisions will be guided by Farsite fire-modeling software which assesses fire behaviour under varying fuel conditions and other factors. If the workshop can reach consensus on at least a minimum treatment plan, the BC government (via the BCFS Protection Branch) will provide substantial funding (\$500,000 range) to carry out the treatment. A consensus-based plan might also influence MoF Revenue Branch to look more favorably on reducing stumpage. Multi-stakeholder documents carry a lot of weight with the provincial government. The fuel-reduction plan agreed to by workshop participants will determine areas of treatment and levels of treatment within those areas, thus it will drive the logging plan -- but it won't cover operational details.
- (2) Bob West-Sells: The impact of logging and other treatments on the landbase is of critical importance to the City and KNPS. Will the workshop/modeling exercise address Nature Park logging plan issues such as landings and type of equipment?
- (3) Jim Ogilvie: Preservation of recreation and esthetic values, as well as fire risk reduction, must drive the workshop process. Public opinion is in support of the Nature Park, thus it must be preserved as such.
- (4) Kent Goodwin: Workshop objectives must encompass all values. Zero stumpage is a possibility if trees are logged on one-time Teck Cominco property which is not in the provincial forest but is now Crown land within the Park. Better maps are required to determine exactly where these formerly private lands lie.

Points of Agreement/Action Items:

- (1) Circulated notes of Nov 28, 2006, meeting OK.
- (2) Workshop will be held and scheduled over 2 full days Jan 25-26, 2007. Estimated cost: \$10,000. City and KNPS will contribute. Possible other funding sources: Mountain Equipment Coop, Tembec, MoF. Each stakeholder will assign 2 participants with decision-making authority. Each stakeholder will provide a brief statement outlining their key requirement, outcome or expectation from the workshop. Bob Gray will provide pre-workshop background info.
- (3) Question for Tembec: will they base their logging plan on the fuel-reduction scenario that comes out of the workshop? Logging plan details may require meetings with Tembec in addition to the workshop. The City and KNPS will work together in this regard and will press for a memorandum of understanding with Tembec before logging proceeds. Mayor Ogilvie will also make a strong statement in support of the Park to Tembec. City and KNPS need an update from Tembec on their Forest Stewardship Certification management plan for the Park and Horse Barn Valley. How much decision-making authority does Brian Dureski have?
- (4) The City will not pursue stumpage reduction with the province until after the workshop.

Proposal for Kimberly “Nature Park” Interface Fire Hazards Workshop

Submitted to: City Council, Kimberly B.C.
From: Robin Gregory, President, Value Scope Research
Date: December 2, 2006

This proposal outlines an approach to the development, evaluation, and defensible consideration of alternatives for reducing interface forest fire hazards associated with the “nature park” located in downtown, Kimberly. The proposal is for consideration by the City Council of Kimberly and other designated stakeholders.

Problem statement

Based on current (and, admittedly, partial) understanding, the basic problem statement is as follows: *In light of their short-term and long-term consequences, and recognizing the important role played by uncertainty, what are the alternative management actions that can and should be taken to reduce interface forest fire hazards associated with the “nature park” located in downtown Kimberly?* We propose to address this problem in a four-step process:

1. Work with City Council representatives to identify key stakeholders (including local citizens, local interests, industry, technical experts, municipal and provincial government). Read through background materials documenting previous discussions regarding interface fire risks in Kimberly and management alternatives that already have been presented to, or suggested by, stakeholders.
2. Design and lead (or co-lead) a workshop that will include representatives of each key stakeholder group. This will require careful analysis and characterization of multidimensional stakeholders’ objectives (ie., what matters to them in the context of reducing fire risks at the Nature Park, in part stemming from fire risks associated with beetle infested forested areas), various fire hazard reduction alternatives, the likely consequences of these alternatives (in light of uncertain and perhaps conflicting information), and key tradeoffs across objectives (likely to include fire hazards, environmental concerns, economic concerns, social and cultural considerations, institutional responsibilities, and other considerations).
3. Conduct deliberations and analyses over four key elements of the problem:
 - a) analysis of vulnerability: how vulnerable are different areas of the Nature Park, along with adjacent areas of Kimberly, to fire events of different types and probabilities and magnitudes.
 - b) analysis of importance: how important is each of these components to the key functions provided by the Nature Park.
 - c) analysis of risk reduction potential and cost: how feasible is it (from a technical perspective) and how costly (dollars, time) to reduce fire risks for different areas of the Nature Park, keeping in mind that different areas of the Park are likely to vary in importance with respect to objectives.
 - d) analysis of key tradeoffs: what are the important pros and cons of different management options, in light of what matters to different stakeholder groups? This analysis should include questions of timing, feasibility, and liability.
4. Determine the extent to which stakeholders can agree on an interface fire risk reduction approach. At minimum, areas of agreement and disagreement will be outlined; at best, a consensus solution will be recommended.
5. Review strengths and weaknesses in the workshop analysis, propose next steps (if needed), and recognize the need to coordinate with other ongoing forest management initiatives in the Kimberly area.

Methodological approach

The proposed approach, known as “structured decision making,” is based in decision analysis and probabilistic risk management. It combines methods from the decision and social sciences with techniques from engineering and planning. Structured decision making (SDM) approaches have been widely applied, both in B.C. (e.g., development of guidelines for the Water Use Plan process) and in Canada and other parts of the world, as a way to foster dialogue and to develop creative alternatives for multidimensional and complex management problems under conditions of uncertainty.

In this case, SDM approaches are likely to be paired with the insights of “Farsite,” a fire risk-reduction planning model that allows the placement of strategic fuel treatments on a landscape to observe how they affect fire behavior. Other consultants will be responsible for running the Farsite models.

The overall intention of this proposal is to keep technical jargon to a minimum and to work closely with a representative group of stakeholders, with the goal of developing an interface fire hazard-reduction plan for the Nature Park that is responsive to technical requirements and also responsive to the multiple perspectives and concerns of stakeholders.

Background on Value Scope Research and Robin Gregory

Robin Gregory is President of Value Scope Research, a Senior Researcher at Decision Research (a non-profit research institute based in Eugene, Oregon), Associate Director of the Eco-Risk Research Unit at the University of British Columbia, and an Adjunct Faculty member with the School of Environmental Studies, University of Victoria. He works on problems of environmental and risk management, value elicitation, and negotiated decision making. His work emphasizes

- the development of methods to help environmental managers and laypersons understand stakeholder values and the anticipated consequences of environmental actions characterized by multiple dimensions and substantial uncertainty. This was the focus of a recent grant from the U.S. National Science Foundation, for which Gregory was co-principal investigator, on understanding and improving stakeholder-based approaches to reducing interface fire hazards.
- facilitation and analysis with diverse stakeholder and First Nation representatives to create broadly supported risk and environmental management policy alternatives. In many cases, tough choices need to be made across different options; the use of structured decision methods, based on decision analysis and behavioral decision theory, can greatly help with these choices.
- integrating information from different sources of knowledge (scientific, indigenous, local resource users, lay citizens) to strengthen the link between information collection and better environmental decision making.

Dr. Gregory lives on Galiano Island, near Vancouver, and often serves as a consultant to government agencies, interest groups, and industry in the United States, Canada, and internationally. Most of this consulting is done through Value Scope Research, Inc., a small company he founded in 1996 (CCRA 89951-6348). Robin also frequently teams with other researchers; in the context of hazard-reduction planning efforts, previous projects have included Joseph Arvai (Michigan State University) and Michael Harstone and Graham Long (Compass Resource Management, Vancouver). Additional information can be provided on request; a CV for Dr. Gregory is included with this proposal.

Budget

The following budget is based on a preliminary analysis of needs and a recognition that funding is likely to be limited (thus the budget shows funding for R. Gregory only). Further discussions may be necessary to refine these estimates.

1. Review of background materials: 1.5 days
2. Lead 1.5 day workshop (afternoon Day 1, full Day 1): 2.0 days
3. Provide brief summary and evaluation of workshop results: 1.5 days
4. Travel time (billed at ½): 0.5 days

Total: 5.5 days @ \$1,400 per day = \$7,700.

Note: this total is exclusive of GST and travel costs (to be billed at cost, including receipts: airfare Vancouver/Victoria to Cranbrook, 3 nights hotel, and incidental charges).

Timing and suggested next steps

Our understanding is that the community seeks to hold a workshop on this topic as early in 2007 as possible. In conversations with Bob Gray, I have indicated that I would be available to lead / co-lead the proposed workshop on January 25 and 26. Unfortunately, I will be away (and out of e-mail range) for the period Dec. 6 – Dec. 20, so further conversations will need to take place either prior to my departure or after my return. The project sounds both challenging and important, and I would enjoy working with the City of Kimberly and other stakeholders to help develop a broadly supported approach.