



Thompson Regional Committee Meeting (Zoom meeting)
Draft summary for March 4th 2025

In attendance:

Rhona Martin	Columbia Shuswap Regional District	Board member
Percy Folkard	Civil Society	Board member
Tricia Thorpe	Thompson-Nicola Regional District	Board member
Vivian Birch-Jones	Squamish-Lillooet Regional District	Committee member
Dennis Lapierre	FBC alumnus	Committee member
Alex de Chantal	Fraser Basin Council	Staff
Terry Robert	Fraser Basin Council	Staff
Erin Vieira	Fraser Basin Council	Staff

Meeting commenced at 10:00 AM

1. Welcome and introductions

Alex welcomed all present and acknowledged Secwepemc territory. A round of introductions took place. Alex briefly reviewed the purpose of the FBC Thompson Regional Committee. Alex reminded everyone that the committee meeting schedule has shifted from the second Tuesday of every other month to the first Tuesday of every other month. The January 7th 2025 draft summary was approved.

2. Staff reports

Shuswap Watershed Council (SWC)

Background	The FBC is the program manager for the Shuswap Watershed Council, a collaborative partnership of local governments, First Nations, and Provincial agencies to enhance water quality and safe recreation in the Shuswap. See www.shuswapwater.ca for more information.
Update	Erin reported that the SWC Water Quality Grant Program was open for applications in the winter; the intake period closed on January 31 st 2025. The grant program provides funds to farmers and other stewards in the Shuswap watershed for projects to improve nutrient management and build soil health, ultimately to protect water quality by preventing the movement of nutrients from the landscape to surface water. Eleven grant applications were submitted by the deadline. Staff performed an initial screen of the applications. The Water Protection Advisory Committee met in February to discuss and review the applications in detail and make recommendations for funding.



	<p>The next Shuswap Watershed Council meeting is tomorrow, March 5th 2025. The agenda includes the election of chair and vice chair for 2025, and approval of water quality grant applications.</p> <p>FBC staff submitted a funding application to the Watershed Security Fund to support the SWC in 2025. The request is for \$400,000 over two years. Staff are also preparing to apply for some additional funding from local governments within the Shuswap watershed.</p> <p>The SWC finalized a new Terms of Reference that includes a revised membership. Staff have been working to fulfill the membership. Three new members will be introduced in the SWC meeting tomorrow.</p> <p>Whirling disease was recently confirmed in Kootenay Lake. The SWC is raising awareness for this locally, and reminding residents of best practices to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species including clean-drain-dry, watercraft inspection, proper fish handling, etc. More information is available from the Province of BC: Whirling disease - Province of British Columbia.</p> <p><u>Discussion</u></p> <p>There was a group discussion on agricultural practices and the need for a shift toward more sustainable practices that build soil health, sequester carbon and improve nutrient management.</p> <p><u>Action item:</u> Staff to follow up with Salmon Safe program</p>
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Thompson Shuswap Salmon Collaborative (TSSC)

Background	FBC has been retained to facilitate and provide planning support for a Thompson-Shuswap Salmon Collaborative. It is a government-to-government-to-government initiative involving the Secwepemc Fisheries Commission, the Province of BC, and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). See https://www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/tssc.html for more information.
Update	The Integrated Planning for Salmon Ecosystems (IPSE) is an initiative under the Conservation and Stewardship pillar of the Pacific Salmon Strategy Initiative (PSSI). This initiative is piloting collaborative planning processes in key watersheds in British Columbia and the Yukon to help improve the health of Pacific salmon ecosystems. The outcome of the pilot project will be the Thompson Shuswap Salmon Ecosystem Action Plan, which will provide strategic recommendations and inform and identify the work needed to be undertaken to implement jointly defined priorities and actions that benefit salmon ecosystems while considering impacts from climate change and human uses.



Community Wildfire Roundtables

Background	FBC is facilitating roundtables for wildfire preparedness in the communities of Clearwater, Williams Lake, Clinton, Lillooet, Quesnel, Similkameen, Prince George and Salmon Arm. See www.wildfireroundtables.ca
Update	Staff are working on setting dates for next meetings of the roundtables. Typically the roundtables meet in spring, and then avoid meeting during the wildfire season. Staff have submitted a funding proposal to the Province to sustain the roundtables for the next three years, and establish 1-3 new roundtables in northern BC.

Cooperative Community Wildfire Response

Background	FBC staff have been retained to coordinate training for the Cooperative Community Wildfire Response project. This project identifies and delivers training opportunities for rural communities.
Update	Alex reported that this project delivers the S100, S185, and ICS100 (incident command system) for communities. He clarified that trainees do need to re-certify every year and this can be done online for a fee of around \$30, however funding for this initiative is only for the first-year course.

Kamloops Air Quality Roundtable

Background	FBC facilitates a technical roundtable including City of Kamloops, BC government, T'kemlups te Secwepemc, health authorities, industry, Thompson Rivers University and community groups. The Roundtable meets to discuss air quality issues and how to work together. See www.kamloopsairquality.ca .
Update	No update.

Forest Landscape Planning

Background	FBC has been retained to assist with the provincial Forest Landscape Planning Process. The Province is doing these in shared authority with First Nations. FLPs replace the former Forest Stewardship Plans.
Update	Alex reported that monthly meetings are taking place in Merritt between the Province and 8 – 10 First Nations.

3. Report from Director of Interior Regions

Terry Robert reported the following:

- FBC has applied or \$800K to continue supporting the wildfire roundtables and establish 1-3 new roundtables in north-eastern BC
- The next FBC board meeting will be in June in Williams Lake, logistics are currently being planned. FBC directors are asked to respond to a forthcoming survey.
- The recruitment process for FBC's CEO is underway
- FBC will likely have a new Chair at the June board meeting and there will be some recognition for outgoing Chair Colin Hansen



- FBC has had an agreement with Metro Vancouver for many years but unfortunately the long-term funding is being cut; FBC has a strategy in place to deal with this
- Looking to hire a regional manager in the Kootenays.

4. Committee member reports

Tricia Thorpe

- Anticipating a final geohazard report for the Venables Valley
- Attended a Nicola watershed meeting to discuss drought and water storage.

Dennis Lapierre

- Observation that snow in Falkland is nearly all melted, Salmon River level has risen.

Vivian Birch-Jones

- Alarmingly low snow pack and Fraser River level
- Some communities have done a good job of fire-smarting and fuel reduction
- Mule deer habitat loss due to wildfires; very good research done by Dr. Sue Senger
- St'at'imc Fisheries Forum presented Jeremy Venditti's work on the Fraser River; many good recommendations came out of this including for a monitoring station on the river.

Rhona Martin

- Very busy snowmobile season, lots of tourists from Ontario, Montreal, USA
- CSRD had its second budget meeting recently; budget will be approved at the board meeting later this month
- Bridge construction at Sicamous is disrupting travel but it is very much needed and travellers are asked to be patient and plan ahead
- Sicamous Eagles junior hockey had a great season.

Percy Folkard

- Teaching a micro-credential course on agro-ecology and encouraging farms to shift their practices toward more sustainable practices that improve carbon sequestration and nutrient management. Would like to bring this course and others to the Salmon Arm – Okanagan College campus.
- Salmon Arm Fall Fair has suffered since Covid, new volunteers are coming on board which is great
- BC Institute of Agrologists is sharing a paper about use of synthetic fertilizers contributing to the build-up of PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, also known as 'forever chemicals') in agricultural soil; concurrently, there is another paper about an American Midwest farmer whose beef tested positive for PFAS which has impacted his livelihood.

Action item:

Staff to set up a meeting with Percy, Terry, and new FBC staff Scott Brown to further discuss soil and agriculture practices.



Jamison Squakin

- In her absence, Jamison shared this update via email: Okanagan Nation Alliance is hosting a workshop about restoring salmon habitat and fish passage, April 8th – 10th in Penticton BC. Link to register: [Spring 2025: River Restoration Workshop](#).

5. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:40 AM.

Next Thompson Region Committee (ThRC) meeting:

May 6th 2025, 10:00 – 11:30 AM.

Hybrid meeting – in-person and Zoom available – your choice how to participate.