

**FINAL MINUTES OF THE FIFTEENTH MEETING OF THE
KANANASKIS COUNTRY INTERDEPARTMENTAL
CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday, January 10, 2006, at 9:30 a.m.
Main Floor Boardroom
Canmore Provincial Building
800 Railway Avenue, Canmore, AB**

Present:

Co-chair: Rick Blackwood Sustainable Resource Development

Secretary: Laurie Christiansen Community Development

Members: Ralph Rolston Infrastructure & Transportation
Ron Henderson Community Development
Mike Benny Community Development
Dave Nielsen Community Development
Kevin Crockett Economic Development

Absent: Sandy Fisher Infrastructure & Transportation
Heather Sinton Environment
Russell Stashko Sustainable Resource Development

Guests: Don Cockerton Community Development
Steve Donelon Community Development
Hal Couillard Couillard Group Inc. (#4)
Craig Couillard I-XL Industries Ltd. (#4)

- 1) Review Minutes of November 8, 2005, Meeting (All)
 - Minutes approved as written.

- 2) Review of the Agenda (All)
 - Gorge Creek Road Update to be discussed as part of #3.
 - Other items will be addressed under Roundtable.

- 3) Sheep Valley Protected Areas Draft Management Plan (D. Cockerton & S. Donelon)
 - Final Terms of Reference were distributed to KCICC at the July 2005 meeting, with a request for comments/concerns.
 - Between September and December 2005, the Planning Team has prepared the Sheep Valley Protected Areas Draft Management Plan (DMP), distributed today.
 - Comments on DMP to be submitted to member department's Planning Team representative or directly to D. Cockerton by January 31, 2006.
 - The goal is to circulate the final revised DMP early February for a final review prior to its release to the public for review. Public review should take place during March & April 2006, with the final Management Plan to KCICC for endorsement in May or June 2006.
 - Concerns discussed: grazing management, trail concerns, trail refurbishment planning, vacant government buildings, and Gorge Creek Road.
 - **Decision: Submit comments to your Planning Team representative or D. Cockerton by January 31, 2006.** A trail refurbishment plan should be attached as part of the DMP. A decision as to the status of the ranger cabin and shed/barn is needed in the DMP should identify what will be done with these buildings. Gorge Creek Road issues need to be reviewed by the Planning Team and Alberta Transportation.

- 4) Highwood Ranger Station Proposal (H. Couillard, C. Couillard)
 - Proponents presented a plan to restore the Highwood Ranger Station house as rental accommodation including RV sites for equestrian users in the area.
 - A proposal package was distributed to each member detailing the plan.
 - Proponents' goal is to maintain a part of history, preserve this site, and utilize it as rustic accommodation for equestrian users in the area.

- Couillard's are seeking direction from KCICC regarding the likelihood of this project being approved and whether or not they should continue with developing a more detailed business plan.
- KCICC members, alone, continued their discussion regarding this project following the formal presentation.
- **Decision:** This project is not in keeping with approved uses in the area and is not in keeping with the IRP, which identifies the Highwood as very sensitive wildlife range and important elk winter habitat. **R. Blackwood to draft a letter to Couillard's indicating that the proposal is not supported.**

5) Fortress Mountain (R. Blackwood)

- Zrinko Amerl, Banff Rail Company, has taken over the operation of Fortress Mountain ski area and is attempting to ready the site for skiing winter 2006.
- Serious difficulties are hindering progress and may make it impossible for the ski area to open this year.
- RV rental lots at the base of the ski area are a concern and are not approved in the lease with SRD. The RV tenants have been removed once but some have returned.
- R. Blackwood suggested having Mr. Amerl attend KCICC at a later date to review the "master plan" for Fortress Mountain ski area.
- **Decision: Item presented for Information.**

PUBLIC MEETING:

6) KID Events Sign (M. Benny/B. Johnston)

- KID Community Association would like to install a sign along Highway 40 to highlight community events.
- KID Council is in support of the sign but seeks KCICC endorsement of the sign, its style and location, as well as direction on the types of messaging that can be posted.
- The preferred design is horizontal with the preferred location south of Barrier Lake Information Centre.
- KID will own and maintain the sign, control the messaging, and determine which groups can access the sign. If no event is posted, then a KID message will be on the sign, (i.e. Block Parent Community).
- The cost of this sign will be close to \$25,000 and the community association is seeking grants and/or sponsorship to support construction. KCICC is not in favour of potential sponsors being identified on the sign.
- **Decision: KCICC endorses the sign with the following conditions.**
 - Proper sign panels must be used – no loose lettering.

- Government messaging takes priority if necessary (i.e. Fire Ban).
- Colour and design to fit with the Architectural Motif of Kananaskis Country.
- The right to veto and pull messaging that is deemed inappropriate.

7) Roundtable

R. Rolston

- AIT would like some direction on the Gorge Creek Trail. Significant flood damage from June 2005 means close to \$80,000 in repairs are required between Ware Creek and Volcano Ridge. AIT will maintain trailhead access at either end if that is what is desired. The merit of repairing the road for vehicular traffic is questionable. A decision is needed. The Planning Team for the Sheep Valley Protected Areas Management Plan will review.

M. Benny

- Bow Corridor Regional Transportation Strategy – representatives from the Towns of Canmore and Banff, MD of Bighorn, Parks Canada, AIT, CD, ENV, etc. have been meeting to share information and strategize regarding transportation issues. Currently the group is working on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding the goals of the group, hoping for endorsement by all jurisdictions by January 31, 2006. A current project is the commuter trail between Exshaw and Banff. ED has set aside \$30,000 to assist with its development.
- The Facility Operator in the Elbow has now moved out of the shop area and into the houses. Dismantling of facilities at Bragg Creek will commence soon.
- Elbow Falls day use refurbishment/construction commenced January 6, 2006.

K. Crockett

- The feasibility study for a province-wide web-based reservation system will start January 11, 2006. The contractor is from BC and has worked with BC Parks and Parks Canada. The contractor worked on a similar project in the US for both the Forest and Parks services. It may be possible to expand the reservation system to include not only campgrounds but also bus tours, historic site visits, interpretation and guided activities.

D. Nielsen

- CD has given \$100,000 in funding to the Canadian Avalanche Centre to assist with funding the operation, along with partners such as the Federal Government, BC government and industry partners, as well as private donations through fundraising. This is the first of a three-year commitment. CD would like to see attention placed on the Crowsnest Pass and David Thompson areas where fatalities have occurred. Another target group is snowmobile users from the Calgary area who venture into the mountains for recreation and may not check the avalanche bulletins. This program requires that Parks Canada and AB Parks staff be sources of first-hand information and updates.
- The PLPP/Spray Management Plan is still being reviewed in Edmonton awaiting approval. The plan must be in place prior to any possible facility expansion at Mt. Engadine.

S. Donelon

- The Heritage Protection group is working on a landscape disturbance model to identify landscape targets and assist with forest protection, from wild fire and mountain pine beetle perspectives. The model may be ready as early as late February to early March 2006.
- Stu Walkinshaw has resigned from his position with SRD and will return to consulting, in much the same capacity. He will be vacating the Bow Valley office by January 31, 2006.

R. Blackwood

- The Turner Valley Ranger Station office closed January 3, 2006. Negotiations are underway for the Town of Turner Valley to take over the space. M. Benny noted CD is utilizing storage space in the maintenance compound, and he would like this to continue.
- Mountain Pine Beetle controls will be underway by January 20, 2006. Approximately 710 trees have been identified in the Spray Valley and about 106 in the Bow Valley. Falling and burning should be done by mid-late February. There is a very big problem in the Willmore Wilderness area and resources are being redirected there for control action.

8) Next Meeting: March 14, 2006

Minutes approved by:

Dave Nielsen, Co-Chair, KCICC

Rick Blackwood, Co-Chair, KCICC

Next Meeting
Tuesday, March 14, 2006, at 9:30 a.m.
Main Floor Boardroom
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