



**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO
RURAL/AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE
AGENDA**

Thursday, June 6, 2024

PAGE NO.

ACTION

AGENDA, June 6, 2024

Approve

Supplementary Agenda

Receive

MINUTES

2-5

Rural/Agriculture Committee Meeting Minutes - May 9, 2024

Approve

DELEGATION

BC VEGETABLE MARKETING COMMISSION

Derek Sturko, Chair

Andre Solymosi, General Manager

Re: BC Vegetable Marketing Commission's Role in Northern BC and Re-Introduction of "Regulated Area" Restrictions

AGRICULTURE REPORTS

6-8

Megan D'Arcy, Regional Agriculture Coordinator -BC Vegetable Marketing Commission Amending Orders

Receive

9

Megan D'Arcy, Regional Agriculture Coordinator -IAF BC Agriculture Water Infrastructure Program

Receive

DISCUSSION

Society Wildfire Groups

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

NEW BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO**RURAL/AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE MEETING****Thursday, May 9, 2024**

PRESENT: Acting Chair Mark Parker

Directors Judy Greenaway
Clint Lambert – via Zoom
Stoney Stoltenberg

Directors Shirley Moon, Electoral Area F (Vanderhoof Rural)
Absent Chris Newell, Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural)
Michael Riis-Christianson, Electoral Area B (Burns Lake Rural)

Alternate Directors Doug Bysouth, Electoral Area B (Burns Lake Rural)
Alex Kulchar, Electoral Area F (Vanderhoof Rural)
Elijah Newell, Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural)

Staff Curtis Helgesen, Chief Administrative Officer
Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services
Megan D’Arcy, Regional Agriculture Coordinator
John Illes, Chief Financial Officer – arrived at 2:22 p.m.
Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning - arrived at 2:21 p.m.
Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director of Corporate Services

Others Martin Elphee, District of Fort St. James
Annette Morgan, Village of Telkwa – via Zoom – arrived at 2:20 p.m.

Media Jeremy Hull, LD News

CALL TO ORDER

Acting Chair Parker called the meeting to order at 2:19 p.m.

AGENDAMoved by Director Stoltenberg
Seconded by Alternate Director Kulchar**RDC.2024-4-1**

“That the Rural/Agriculture Committee Agenda for May 9, 2024 be approved.

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES

Rural/Agriculture Committee Meeting Minutes -March 7, 2024 Moved by Director Stoltenberg
 Seconded by Alternate Director Kulchar

RDC.2024-4-2 "That the minutes of the Rural/Agriculture Committee meeting of March 7, 2024 be approved."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

AGRICULTURE REPORTS

Ministry of Agriculture and Food Follow-up Letter Moved by Director Stoltenberg
 Seconded by Alternate Director Bysouth

RDC.2024-4-3 "That the Committee recommend that the Board approve the follow-up letter to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

BC Vegetable Marketing Commission - Update Moved by Director Stoltenberg
 Seconded by Director Greenaway

RDC.2024-4-4 "That the Committee receive the Regional Agriculture Coordinator's BC Vegetable Marketing Commission - Update memorandum."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Acting Chair Parker will follow up with the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George regarding their request for a meeting with the BC Vegetable Marketing Commission.

RURAL REPORT

Grant in Aid Under \$2,500 Approval Update Moved by Director Stoltenberg
 Seconded by Director Greenaway

RDC.2024-4-5 "That the Committee receive the Manager of Regional Economic Development's Grant in Aid Under \$2,500 Approval Update memorandum."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

NEW BUSINESS

Farm Animal Advisory Panel

Alternate Director Kulchar spoke of participating on the Farmed Animal Welfare Advisory Panel and meeting with stakeholders to provide recommendations to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. Alternate Director Kulchar commented that Recommendation 6 - Shortage of Livestock Veterinarians, Especially in Rural and Remote Areas has received funding toward B.C. Veterinarian clinics that treat farm animals. He also noted Recommendation 1 - Enforcement, Inspections, Audits, Oversight - Public Trust recommends that the Ministry of Agriculture and Food create a new inspection and enforcement function within the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to assume responsibility for implementation of the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act*.

Community Emergency Response Societies

Director Stoltenberg mentioned that he has received a number of inquiries from Electoral Area A (Smithers/Telkwa Rural) area residents to form Community Emergency Response Societies similar to the Chinook Emergency Response Society in Electoral Area E (Francois/Ootsa Lake Rural). He noted that one group has received its society status and two groups are working toward achieving status.

Chair Lambert provided an overview of the Chinook Emergency Response Society funding structure.

Community Irrigation

Chair Lambert spoke of community irrigation systems for areas that are prominent farming locations. He noted the importance of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food having aquifer mapping.

Discussion took place regarding dam costs, standardized dam sizing and building requirements, operations, and liability. Inviting the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship to a future Board meeting to discuss water licensing and community irrigation prior to allocating staff resources for additional research on such a project was discussed.

John Illes, Chief Financial Officer noted that the Regional District oversees Glacier Gulch dam in Electoral Area A (Smithers/Telkwa Rural). It was noted that the Province has indicated that it will provide permits to Regional Districts only.

Advocacy with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food regarding funding for community irrigation projects was discussed. The Provincially funded Agricultural Water Infrastructure Program administered through the Investment Agriculture Foundation requires a farmer to have an Environmental Management Plan (EMP).

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Director Stoltenberg
Seconded by Director Greenaway

RDC.2024-4-6

"That the meeting be adjourned at 2:45 p.m."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Mark Parker, Acting Chair

Wendy Wainwright, Deputy Director
of Corporate Services



Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Rural/Agriculture Committee

To: Chair and Committee
From: Megan D'Arcy, Regional Agriculture Coordinator
Date: June 6, 2024
Subject: **BC Vegetable Marketing Commission Amending Orders**

RECOMMENDATION: (all/directors/majority)

Receive.

BACKGROUND

In addition to the statement regarding an Amending Order issued on May 13, 2024 to defer the implementation of the expanded regulated area, the BC Vegetable Marketing Commission released a second Amending Order on May 17, 2024 regarding the Compliance and Enforcement Policy and Procedures Manual.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1) The Commission's Role in Northern BC - Temporary Re-Introduction of "Regulated Area" Restriction (May 13, 2024)
- 2) BCVMC Amendments to the General Order (May 17, 2024)

The Commission’s Role in Northern BC Temporary Re-Introduction of “Regulated Area” Restriction

The BC Vegetable Marketing Commission is responsible for the promotion, control, and regulation of the production, transportation, packing, storage, and marketing of vegetables produced in British Columbia. The overall purpose is to provide a framework for producer economic stability, satisfy other public interests, and benefit producers, the sector’s value chain, and the public.

Prior to January 1, 2024, crops regulated by the Commission were limited to certain vegetable crops grown “south of the 53rd parallel north (including Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands and excluding the Queen Charlotte Islands [Haida Gwaii]).”

Effective January 1, 2024, the Commission extended the vegetable crops regulated by it to include those vegetable crops grown throughout the entire Province.

Numerous persons and organizations have since sought clarification with respect to the expanded geographical scope of regulated vegetables. Therefore, the Commission will pass an Amending Order that effectively defers the implementation of this expanded geographical scope until January 1, 2026.

This will give the Commission time to consult with vegetable producers, producer organizations, and other industry partners regarding the nature and extent of vegetable production in the north and develop a common-sense approach to the Commission’s involvement.

We are currently developing the consultation process and reaching out to organizations to discuss the plan. Though the Commission will expand the geographical scope of regulated crops on January 1, 2026, consultation will focus on which vegetable crops and farm operations will be regulated by the Commission and the way they will be regulated.

In the meantime, information on the application of these regulations can be obtained from the Commission’s website www.bcveg.com, or by contacting the Commission directly. Please direct your inquiries to the Commission’s General Manager.

BCVMC
#207 - 15252 32nd Ave
Surrey BC
Canada, V3Z 0R7
Tel: (604) 542-9734
Toll Free in BC: 1-800-663-1461
E-mail: info@bcveg.com

BCVMC Amendments to the General Order

On May 13, 2024, the Commission announced that it will pass an Amending Order that effectively defers the implementation of the expanded geographical scope of regulated vegetables to the entire Province until January 1, 2026. This will give the Commission time to consult with vegetable producers, producer organizations, and other industry partners regarding the nature and extent of vegetable production in the north and develop a common-sense approach to the Commission's involvement. The amending order for this deferment has now been issued as Amending Order #1.

The Commission has reviewed and reconsidered the Compliance and Enforcement Policy and Procedures Manual published on January 1, 2024. On further reflection, the Commission determined that the Manual is too prescriptive and inflexible to properly anticipate the procedural requirements and substantive outcomes applicable in all cases of compliance and enforcement. It was resolved that the Manual be repealed in its entirety, effective May 16, 2024. Amending Order #2 repeals the Compliance and Enforcement Policy and Procedures Manual.

Both Amending Orders can be found on the Commission website at <https://www.bcveg.com/general-order--amending-orders/>.

BCVMC
#207 - 15252 32nd Ave
Surrey BC
Canada, V3Z 0R7
Tel: (604) 542-9734
Toll Free in BC: 1-800-663-1461
E-mail: info@bcveg.com



Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Rural/Agriculture Committee

To: Chair and Committee
From: Megan D'Arcy, Regional Agriculture Coordinator
Date: June 6, 2024
Subject: **IAF BC Agriculture Water Infrastructure Program**

RECOMMENDATION: (all/directors/majority)

Receive.

BACKGROUND

Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC (IAF) has announced a restructuring of the [Agriculture Water Infrastructure Program](#) that now includes Community and Strategic Projects as well as Producer Projects and Assessments, Engineering Studies and Plans.

No details are available yet for the Community Project intake, except that there will be a total of \$23M in funding available, and that there will be up to \$1M-\$2M available per project. The cost-shared ratio for Community Projects will be 50%. The maximum amount of funding allocated for each individual project will be confirmed after IAF has reviewed an expression of interest, and prior to the application stage.

The funding window for Assessments, Engineering Studies, or Plans, also at a cost-share of 50%, will open on June 20, 2024. The application will be available on May 30, 2024. A webinar to learn more about the application process for this stream is scheduled for May 30, 2024 at 12PM. As per the IAF website, the seven eligible activities that may be funded in this stream are:

- Water supply assessments or feasibility studies.
- Engineering studies or plans.
- Dam engineering assessments.
- Dam Emergency Plans.
- Dam Safety Reviews.
- Other Professional consultative services as required under the Dam Safety Regulation (DSR).
- Drainage master plans, dike engineering studies or design plans.

No details are available for the Strategic Projects funding stream, except that there will be up to \$5.2M allocated for these types of projects.