



Communities Adapting to Climate Change

Learning Network Reflection Webinar
February 9th, 2010, 10am-12pm PST

Summary

The communities of Rossland, Castlegar and Kaslo/RDCK Area D that are participating in Phase Two of CBT's Communities Adapting to Climate Change (CACC) Initiative shared their experiences thus far with adaptation planning at the local level at the Climate Change Adaptation Learning Network's reflection webinar on Tuesday, February 9th, 2010.

Over twenty representatives from Basin local governments, including elected officials and staff as well as members of the Initiative's Technical Support Team and Advisory Committee, participated in the on-line interactive meeting.

The communities of Kimberley and Elkford that participated in Phase One of the CACC Initiative in 2008-2009, also provided an update on the implementation of their adaptation plans.

The Learning Network aims to support local governments in the Canadian Columbia Basin in their efforts to learn, grow and take action on dealing with climate change impacts at the local level. The learning network was established in June 2008 in response to local governments in the Columbia Basin that wanted to learn more about adapting to climate change.

Climate change adaptation planning is still relatively new and the communities that are doing adaptation planning now are breaking ground for other communities in the Basin and beyond. The February 9th reflection webinar was a great opportunity for the communities that are currently doing adaptation planning at the local level to share their lessons to date so that others can gain from their experiences.

February 9th Learning Network Webinar Participants

Presentations

Jennifer Ellis, City of Rossland Project Coordinator
Kristin Aasen, City of Castlegar Project Coordinator
Greg Lay, Mayor for the Village of Kaslo
Corien Speaker, CAO, District of Elkford
Troy Pollock, City Planner, City of Kimberley
Michelle Laurie, Coordinator, Communities Adapting to Climate Change Initiative

Elected Officials and Staff from Basin Communities

Kim Charlesworth, Councillor, City of Nelson
Ross Johnson, Councillor, Village of Silverton
Gord DeRosa, Councillor, City of Trail
Hillary Elliot, Councillor, City of Slokan
Jen Woodall (including city staff and elected officials), Engineering/Planning
Assistant, District of Sparwood
Hanne Smith, Councillor, City of Rossland
Martin Carver, Delegate for the RDCK, Area E

Technical Support Team and Advisory Committee Members

Bios Available at: <http://cbtadaptation.squarespace.com/contact-lists/>

Cindy Pearce
Ingrid Liepa
Cathy LeBlanc
Meredith Hamstead
Jeff Zukiwsky
Megan Walsh
Laurie Cordell
Jim Barnes

Agenda

- 10:00-10:05 Overview and Intro to Webinar Technology
- 10:05-10:15 Learning Network Objectives and Opportunities
- 10:15-11:15 Rossland, Castlegar, Kaslo/Area D Reflections followed by Q&A (10 min each)
- 11:15-11:35 Updates from Kimberley & Elkford + Questions
- 11:35-11:50 Open Discussion For All Participants
- 11:50-12 noon Closing Thoughts, Reminder of LN Events and Opportunities

Presentations

Please see all the presentation at:

<http://cbtadaptation.squarespace.com/presentations-2010/> for a summary of the key points from the presenters

Rossland

Presentation by Jennifer Ellis, Project Coordinator

Additional Key points:

- It is hard to determine what research you will need. To get some key science into our daily thinking may be the biggest gain/advantage of this process (such as our peak water flows will come at different times of the year in the face of climate change).
- To quote Stewart Cohen, main streaming some of the basic climate change science may be the best part to come out of the process.
- Hiring a dedicated full time coordinator to coordinate the adaptation planning project is recommended.

Questions:

Q: Will we be discussing Rossland's priorities today?

A:

1. Industry and climate change
2. Energy availability and cost
3. Changes in global food production and cost
4. Changes and increases in extreme events
5. Changes in water supply and demand
6. Changes in Transportation (cost and availability)

Jennifer noted that during the Technical Support Team visit, the climate change experts suggested switching around the list as some of the priorities were out of the control of the local level. Hans Schreier suggested moving energy and water to the top of the list.

Castlegar

Presentation by Kristin Aasen, Project Coordinator

No additional points to add.

Kaslo/RDCK Area D

Presentation by Greg Lay, Mayor of Kaslo

Additional key points:

- Recent meeting with technical support team visit was very successful and he is happy with the project partnerships (CBT & RDCK).
- First public meeting they invited the local stakeholders.
- Communicate visually is important to Kaslo as it's helpful to communicate the science
- Interpreting the science and visualizations : the topography can be a challenge in determining the climate change issues
- We want to get better at monitoring and developing climate data in our community

Questions:

Q: Cathy LeBlanc: did you say that you lost a watershed?

A: Greg: The volume in the creek and the obstructions in the creek made the water systems murky and /or unreliable.

Kimberly

Presentation by Troy Pollock, City Planner, Kimberley (no PowerPoint)

- They completed their Adaptation Plan last summer
- 3 main priority areas identified:
 - Water and forests
 - Municipal infrastructure
 - Tourism
- They came up with 75 recommendations for action (identified as high, med, or low priority).
- They did work with visualizations for their project.
- Current: continuing to review the recommendations in council. They are continuing to review with city staff and managers. It's difficult for it to stay on everyone's radar (people are busy). But they think they have made some progress.
- They are also continuing to consider ways to communicate with the community on the report's recommendations.
- Kimberley recently hosted a sustainability conference where they showcased their adaptation project.
- They are continuing to update and review the OCP and the adaptation project will complement (they will try to mainstream some of the recommendations in the adaptation report into the OCP).

Elkford

Presentation by Corien Speaker, CAO for the District of Elkford (no PowerPoint)

- They are still in the process of trying to finalize the OCP (they hope to be completed by May).
- The OCP is becoming the strategic plan for Elkford. Not all of the policies are related to the adaptation plan.
- Policy directives: Elkford will act on opportunities to adapt to climate change
- Action: all of councils decisions need to include climate change projections
- Modify the language in the OCP to include adaptation
- Re-do by laws specifically referencing climate change
- Action: making sure that citizens are aware of climate change
- Fire smart and emergency evacuation plans and protecting the watershed and the forest for the community will take into account climate change and adaptation
- Project with CBT was a starting point but there is a lot to do to implement the adaptation plan.
- There is a lot of commitment to implement the action items and she intends on making a 10 year plan to implement actions.

Questions:

Q: Laura Whitley Binder: Thank you very much for sharing the lessons learned. She is interested in the contrast between Elkford and Kimberley in implementing the plan. She is wondering if Elkford's choice to wrap it into the OCP process has given the adaptation plan more weight to implement the plan. It seems like Kimberley is having more difficulty in implementing the plan.

A: Corien: she doesn't know if there is much difference. If she was to do it again, she would have done the adaptation first and then the OCP. By combining the two processes, it created a lot of work (almost too much work).

It's important to put adaptation into the OCP as the OCP guides all the municipal work. They tripled their workload by doing it all together. If you choose to do it this way, you need to increase resources in other places. She doesn't feel like they can action the adaptation items fast enough as everything is happening together.

A: Troy: There is a lot of competing pressures on people's time and this is a challenge. Staff and council are supportive of the initiative and they are making small steps. They need better progress on the OCP review to bring the focus back to the Adaptation plans. 'Competing Priorities'.

Q: Kristin: will you share your planning document?

A: Corien and Troy agreed they would share all information as it becomes available.

Q: Martin Carver: Thanks Corien, could you speak to the "Request for decision model" you mentioned?

A: They are intending to add a specific discussion on mitigation and adaptation. For example: if they have a development activity in the flood plain and the OCP says that they should be redirecting development from the flood plain then they will be discussing through this lens.

Comment: Hanne Smith: would like to see Elkford's request for proposals when she has one. It would be useful for them.

Comments

Kristin: A climate change adaptation workshop in the community (Castlegar) would be valuable as it would help convince the community and bring them up to speed.

Interesting point: coordinators have all been participating in monthly telecons

Cathy: each presenter provided excellent lessons for communities. She would like to get back to all the communities to capture lessons learned.
Congratulations to all presenters and CBT.

Laurie Cordell: Regarding an Adaptation Workshop in 2010, she suggested combining it with the CBT symposium in the Fall of 2010.

Please see the PowerPoint presentations at:

<http://cbtadaptation.squarespace.com/presentations-2010/>

Survey

All learning networks members are requested to complete a short survey regarding future Learning Network events:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/LQGV7H7>