

# Kamloops Air Quality Roundtable

Meeting Summary as at April 12, 2017

**Location:** TRU Campus, Kamloops

**Meeting Date:** April 7, 2017, 9:05AM to 12:15PM

## Present

Ralph Adams, Ministry of Environment

Nicola Banton, KGHM Ajax

Greg Baytalan, Interior Health Authority

Danika Carlson, Ministry of Environment

James Gordon, TRU - Office of Sustainability and Environment (to 9:30AM)

Jo-Anne Hales, Tkemlups te Secwepemc

Ted Howe, TRU - Education

Josephine Howitt, City of Kamloops (Sustainability)

Justin Lee, Interior Health Authority

Emily Lomas, City of Kamloops (Environmental Services)

Nicole MacCulloch, KGHM Ajax

Reanna McMillan, Ministry of Environment

Gina Morris, Kamloops Moms for Clean Air (KMFCA)

Casey Neathway, First Nations Health Authority

Mike Simpson, Fraser Basin Council (FBC)

Aaron Wiebe, TRU - Office of Sustainability and Environment (from 10:00AM)

## 1. Welcome, Introductions, Review Agenda and Objectives

Mike Simpson welcomed everyone, Secwepemc territory was acknowledged, and introductions were made around the room. The agenda was approved as presented.

## 2. December 5, 2016 Meeting Summary

The December 5 meeting summary was approved. All outstanding actions were completed. Josie and Ted advised that Mike Bowden, a principal at Juniper Ridge Elementary, will participate on the roundtable for School District 73.

## 3. Slash Burning, Interface Fire and Ecosystem Restoration Burns and Air Quality

Hugh Murdoch, Forest Protection Officer, Kamloops Fire Centre, BC Wildfire Service ([hugh.murdoch@gov.bc.ca](mailto:hugh.murdoch@gov.bc.ca)) described slash burning, wildland-urban interface fire risk, and ecosystem restoration activities that restore wildlife habitat. Slash burning can be undertaken for many activities: forest industry operations, agricultural land clearing, clearing for land development, clearing of rights of way for roads and utility corridors, and other utility structures. Forest industry slash piles are usually burnt between 12-24 months after harvest, and most often in November so that snow and winter conditions can ensure they are out. Carry-over fires is a significant risk and liability; the forest industry monitors with heat sensors from helicopters and copper rods driven into the soil.

Paul Emmett, Weather Technician, Kamloops Fire Centre, BC Wildfire Service ([paul.emmett@gov.bc.ca](mailto:paul.emmett@gov.bc.ca)) described the requirements for venting of smoke before burning is conducted. [Venting indices](#) are generated by MOE for general locations. Paul conducts many custom venting forecasts that are very specific to a location and material type.

Walt Klenner, Wildlife Ecologist with Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations ([walt.klenner@gov.bc.ca](mailto:walt.klenner@gov.bc.ca)), gave a presentation on current research looking at slash piles on logging operations in the Kamloops area, evaluating what commercial value is in the piles. Walt noted that the forest industry is traditional, change is difficult, but that identifying markets for specialty products, lower grades and non-standard dimensions of material could be found with leadership, insight and incentives. Finding markets for this material would result in less being burned, which would improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions. Access his presentation [here](#).

All presenters welcomed further contact; their email addresses are noted above.

#### **4. Purple Air Network of Air Quality Monitoring - Debrief from December 5 Meeting**

There was limited discussion following Dr. Michael Mehta's presentation on the Purple Air Network on December 5, 2016 (see [www.purpleair.org](http://www.purpleair.org) and Michael's presentation [here](#)).

Building on the brief discussion from December 5, 2016, there were concerns expressed with the accuracy of the sensors, interpretation of the data, communication of erroneous health risks to the public, and public statements made by Dr. Mehta about the MOE air quality monitoring network. Ted expressed support for the Purple Air Network and his colleague Dr. Mehta. Support was expressed for the value that the Purple Air Network can provide, notably the spatial and temporal variability of particulate matter in different locations of the airshed, and that it can be a good citizen science and school engagement tool, as long as the limitations are stated.

It was agreed that Mike Simpson will draft a statement of "Known Limitations" and circulate it to Roundtable members for feedback by April 28, 2017, and then post on our website if consensus is reached.

There is a webinar on April 24, 2017 with Eric Taylor, MoE Meteorologist, focusing on an overview of the Purple Air Quality Network, the work MoE is doing to evaluate it, how data is reported, the strengths and limitations of the network. Since it takes place during the inter-regnum period (i.e., during an election cycle), it is only for government staff.

#### **5. Information Sharing Roundtable and Clean Air Day Plans for 2017**

The following was shared:

- Ted reported that the collaboration with TRU, SD73 and the Purple Air Network has been cancelled by SD73 over concerns with the accuracy of the devices. TRU computer science department is looking at the devices, attempting to improve their accuracy. Teacher candidates and the Big Little Science Centre are incorporating air quality into lesson plans at Aberdeen Elementary and their programs, respectively.
- Josie reported that the City is assessing progress to date on the [Airshed Management Plan](#). Clean Air Day focus will be on the Commuter Challenge; Eco Smart team will have a booth at the Farmers' Market downtown on June 7. The City is hosting the Green Living Expo on April 29 at the Sandman Centre; booths are still available for groups to sign up [here](#). The school anti-idling project is advancing with three schools (Juniper Ridge, Marion Schilling, and Lloyd George).

- Emily reported that the City is conducting a woodstove survey, to be distributed with May utility bills, in advance of applying for provincial woodstove exchange program funding in fall 2017. Emily noted in a recent UBC webinar that Kamloops had among the lowest levels of woodstove smoke of 40 cities across BC.
- Nicola reported that the “clock” on the KGHM environmental assessment has started again, and that there is new air quality modelling information available [here](#). Recent memos from MOE re: air quality and other topics is available [here](#). No plans for Clean Air Day, they focus on Earth Day, but will look at having KGHM participate in the Commuter Challenge.
- Casey reported that the First Nations Health Authority has focused on indoor air quality lately, and increased their instrumentation ability for assessing homes on reserve. Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada now requires radon testing for below grade renovations and new builds. No plans for Clean Air Day.
- Reanna and Danika noted that their positions, Community Resource Technologists, are part of a new program of compliance, and there are 7 positions across the province to liaise with communities on all environmental issues, not just air quality.
- Ralph reported that a large part of his recent workload has been the KGHM Ajax Mine review. Much of his workload over the coming 18 months, until he retires will be in the Cariboo. Replacement plans are to hopefully retain an epidemiologist with air quality expertise who is currently with MOE on short-term contracts.
- Jo-Anne reported that she will prepare something for leaseholders in the Mount Paul industrial park about Clean Air Day. TtS issues burning permits for band members to burn yard waste in spring, consistent with City of Kamloops requirements. Graveyard cleanup day is April 14, there may be burning of vegetation and weeds.
- Gina reported that Kamloops Moms for Clean Air are continuing their education push about PM<sub>2.5</sub>, and simple things that everyone can do to improve air quality. She is brainstorming with James Gordon about an *Idle Free for Ice Time* initiative, encouraging people to donate the funds they save from idling less to the proposed outdoor ice surface at Riverside Park that James and others are promoting. Up to \$6.5M could be saved if all vehicles in Kamloops idled 10 minutes less per day. Clean Air Day plans are in the works for a bike/walk/stroll event.

Greg Baytalan has been sharing information on UBC Occupational and Environmental Health seminars/webinars. They have been recorded and can be accessed and viewed [here](#). The following may be of interest from the winter 2017 semester:

- Feb 10 - Not the usual suspects: Road dust and residential woodsmoke in British Columbia
- April 7 - Meanwhile, back at the ranch: Health effects of air pollution in rural areas

## 6. Financial Contributions for 2017/18

Mike reported that for the current fiscal year (ending March 31, 2017), that the \$10 000 contribution will have been spent. Mike reported that for the current level of activity (3-4 meetings per year, communication in between meetings, some media outreach, website maintenance) that \$10 000/year is required.

The following commitments were made:

- KGHM Ajax Mines committed \$5000 - already in the works
- City of Kamloops noted they would likely be able to commit \$1000

## 7. Next Steps

### ACTIONS:

- All members to share information about the Kamloops Air Quality Roundtable with their constituents/memberships/colleagues, and post links on their websites to [www.kamloopsairquality.ca](http://www.kamloopsairquality.ca)
- Mike to have approved meeting summaries and today's presentations posted on web
- Mike to prepare draft statement on Purple Air Networks for roundtable review via email - feedback requested by April 28 from all roundtable members
- Roundtable members to consider funding the \$4000 shortfall for 2017/18 and advise Mike Simpson ASAP. Charitable tax receipts can be issued for contributions.

### Next Meeting Date

- Tentatively scheduled for **September 2017**. Mike to seek date with a doodle poll in late August.
- Future meeting schedule to revert to 4 meetings/year (pending funding): February, April, September, December

### Next Meeting Agenda

- Meeting summary approvals - April 7, 2017
- City of Kamloops Airshed Management Plan - 5 year review of progress to date (TBD)
- Possible presentation\*
- Information sharing roundtable (minimum 30min)

### \*Future presentation topics to arrange:

- Basic presentation by Ralph and Greg on regulations, hazards and initiatives for air quality from MOE and Interior Health Authority
- Levoglucosan levels, Sarah Henderson research for Health Canada