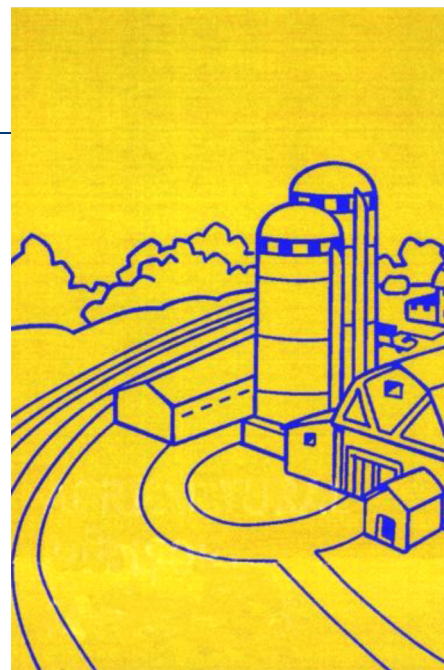

Agricultural Advisory Committee Regional Workshops

Workshop I, February 6, 2013

Workshop II, February 27, 2013

Workshop III, March 13, 2013



Summary of Proceedings



Ministry of
Agriculture

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1. Introduction and Background

Given the high level of interest in local food and food security currently, many communities are recognizing the importance of ensuring that agriculture finds a place on local planning agendas. The appointment of Agricultural Advisory Committees (AACs) by municipal councils and regional district boards is an effective way for local decision makers to connect with their farm and ranch communities. Some AACs have been in place for several years and others have been appointed more recently. AACs benefit from interacting with each other to share issues and ideas.

The sixth biennial AAC workshop was held as three regional workshops in 2013. The first was held on February 6th in Nanaimo, the second on February 27th in Kelowna, and the third on March 13th in Langley. It brought AAC members together from across BC to meet each other and discuss a variety of topics around the theme of AAC tools for success.

The BC Ministry of Agriculture has been organizing AAC workshops biennially since 2003. The overall objective of the workshops is to enable participants to take away ideas and information that would help them provide effective advice and support to their local councils and boards. The workshops have been highly successful and participants have expressed interest in alternating between a province-wide workshop and a series of regional workshops.

When the first AAC workshop was held in 2003, there were only 19 AACs. At the time of the 2013 workshop, this number had increased to 46! About 34 AACs were represented at the 2013 workshops with 159 participants in attendance.



Workshop I – February 6th, 2013 – in Nanaimo

2. General Attendance

The first regional workshop was held on February 6, 2013 at Beban Park in Nanaimo.

Representatives from 11 different local governments and/or AACs attended including:

- Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District
- City of Courtenay
- Comox Valley Regional District
- Cowichan Valley Regional District
- Denman Island
- District of Central Saanich
- District of North Saanich
- Gabriola Island
- Municipality of North Cowichan
- Powell River Regional District
- Regional District of Nanaimo

This workshop had 41 participants including AAC members and local government politicians and staff. Also present were staff from the BC Ministry of Agriculture (AGRI) and the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC). A list of participants is provided at the end of the notes from this workshop.

3. Workshop Outline

- Welcome and Introductions
 - *Wayne Haddow and Bert van Daltsen, Ministry of Agriculture*
- Effective Agricultural Advisory Committees, a presentation on AAC mandates and tools for influencing change
 - *Rob Kline, Ministry of Agriculture*
- Innovative Agricultural Advisory Committee Approaches, AAC representatives discuss their AAC's mandate and successes
 - *Mary Marcotte, Agricultural Advisory Commission Chair and Electoral Area Director, Cowichan Valley Regional District*
 - *David Page, Agricultural Advisory Committee Chair, Comox Valley Regional District*
- Elected Officials Panel, elected officials discuss their experiences interacting with AACs
 - *Sheila Malcolmson, Islands Trust Council Chair, Gabriola Island Local Trustee*
 - *Edwin Grieve, Chair of the Comox Valley Regional District Board, Electoral Area 'C' Director*
 - *Adam Olsen, District of Central Saanich Councilor*
- Agricultural Advisory Committees and the Agricultural Land Commission, a presentation on how AACs and the ALC can work together to strengthen farming
 - *Roger Cheetham, Agricultural Land Commission*
- Agricultural Land Use on the Island, a presentation on the status of agricultural land using Ministry of Agriculture Land Use Inventory data
 - *Bert van Daltsen, Ministry of Agriculture*

- Closing
 - *Wayne Haddow and Bert van Dalfsen, Ministry of Agriculture*

4. Sessions and Presentations

Five presentations took place at the Nanaimo workshop, in addition to the panel of elected officials and the opening and closing statements made by Bert van Dalfsen, Manager of the Strengthening Farming Program at AGRI. Wayne Haddow, Regional Agrologist with AGRI, acted as Master of Ceremonies. Workshop attendees received a folder containing various publications on AGRI's Strengthening Farming Program and AAC management. These documents are available on the Strengthening Farming website at <http://www.al.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/sf/Publications.htm>

4.1. Effective Agricultural Advisory Committees, a presentation on AAC mandates and tools for influencing change

Rob Kline, Regional Agrologist, Ministry of Agriculture
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Presentation Summary

- Rob began by introducing himself and explaining that his presentation will review some basic factors that lead to effective AACs.
- As of February 2013, there were 46 AACs across the province and 16 on Vancouver Island. 36% of the AACs in BC were on Vancouver Island.
- AACs advise local governments on agricultural land use and policy issues. AACs are an effective way for local governments to link with their farm and ranch communities.
- AAC members are volunteers, appointed by a Council or Regional Board. A key asset is that the AAC members are predominantly drawn from the farm and ranching community, and the committee focuses on agricultural issues. AACs want to make the best use of their members' skills and experience to provide the best input possible to Council.
- There are a number of factors that contribute to a successful AAC.
- Terms of Reference. A clear "terms of reference" (TOR) provides structure, while at the same time providing for a degree of flexibility in the role of the committee to meet local needs.
 - Meeting procedures such as frequency of meetings and quorum are important to clarify.
 - At a minimum, a TOR should include details on the number of members, member affiliation, the length of time each member is appointed (staggered terms are good), key roles and responsibilities such as reviewing plans, bylaws and ALR applications, water management issues, and agricultural awareness.
 - The TOR may also refer to the staff resources (and in some cases financial resources) available to the Committee to help it carry out its work.
 - Conflict of interest guidelines should be in writing. In some cases, these can be the same guidelines as those listed under the *Community Charter* that apply to Councillors or Board members.

- Periodic review of your TOR is a good idea.
- A model TOR with suggested criteria is available on the Ministry of Agriculture's website: <http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/sf/aac/resources.htm>
- New Member Orientation. It can be a bit confusing for new AAC members. How can you make it an easier transition?
 - At a minimum, they should receive written copies of all the relevant background material, such as the TOR, a volunteer policy (if there is one), conflict of interest guidelines (if not in the TOR), confidentiality requirements, etc. It would be helpful if staff have the time to walk them through these documents and answer any questions (before the new member's first meeting).
 - It always helps to break the ice if you do a round of introductions at the first meeting that a new member attends.
 - Annual Work Plan. An annual work plan gives the Committee a sense of direction and timelines. They are created at the beginning of the calendar year/fiscal year.
 - An annual summary report to the Council/Board highlights accomplishments and provides good feedback to the AAC itself.
- Working with Councils/Boards. AACs provide advice, not marching orders, so how can you help to ensure that advice is translated effectively up the line?
 - An obvious first step is to work closely with your Council/Board liaison. They are the linchpins, translating the Committee's perspective to the Council/Board, and vice versa.
 - Another tool is to bring your Council/Board out to farms with a farm tour. It's one thing for them to read a report that says they've spent x million dollars on flood-proofing and drainage infrastructure, but it's another to stand beside that new pump station and hear firsthand from the farmers what a difference it has made to their operations.
 - And don't forget social activities! An annual dinner or farm barbeque is a great way to get to know Councillors or Board members on a one on one basis, outside of meetings.
 - Finally, some local governments hold annual volunteer appreciation events. It's a chance for the different committee members to get to know one another and a chance to socialize with staff and elected officials.
- Making Effective Motions. There is a better chance of success if a motion is clear and concise. What can AACs do to ensure that their motions are developed in such a way that the minute taker can capture them easily and their Council/Board can effectively use them for policy advice or decision-making?
 - Make sure the advice is straightforward. Why are you making that recommendation?
 - Indicate who the recommendation is to. It is often to the Council/Board, but it could also be to a senior staff person.
 - Which document/application is the motion referring to?
 - How are you recommending that this application/document be handled? If the Committee feels there is information missing, there may be an opportunity to

refer the item back to staff to obtain more information for an upcoming meeting.

- Finally, it can be helpful to summarize the Committee's rationale in bullet form at the end of the motion. By summarizing the key reasons for the recommendation, it makes the motion easier for the Council/Board to understand. Local government staff can be a fantastic resource to assist in making effective motions.
- Connecting with other Groups. If AACs are to be effective, they have to interact with other groups or committees in their area. These interactions may take the form of:
 - Delegations – either those who request to appear before the AAC (or who the Council/Board refers to the AAC), or invited delegations.
 - Local researchers may be working on studies relevant to the AAC's mandate, and may wish to provide a presentation to the AAC for information or to liaise with the AAC to collect information.
 - Chambers of Commerce are potentially interested in linking with AACs, to get a better idea of the needs of local agricultural businesses.
 - Other local government Advisory Committees may wish to refer agenda items of shared interest to the AAC for comment, or to have a cross-appointed member to liaise on a more continuous base with the AAC.
 - Other AACs may be working on an item of common interest.
- Educating the Public. Agricultural Awareness has been added to many AAC's responsibilities. These might take the form of:
 - Fairs, such as the Saanich Fall Fair
 - Food Festivals, such as the North Saanich Flavour Trail
 - Public Open Houses, such as those on house sizes, siting, etc.
 - Farmers' Markets, such as displays, info, etc.
- Effectiveness Indicators. In summary, here is a list of points to help you gauge the effectiveness of your AAC:
 - Purpose of the committee is clear to all.
 - Scheduling and length of meetings.
 - Good communication among all members.
 - A relaxed atmosphere.
 - Good preparation on part of the chair and members.
 - Interested, committed members.
 - Minutes are complete and concise.
 - Periodic assessment of committee's work.
 - Recognition and appreciation are given to members so that they feel they are making a real contribution.
 - The work of the committee is accepted and makes a valuable contribution to the local government. "Accepted" means that even though there may be times where the local government may not go with the AAC's recommendation, the input is accepted and given due consideration in the decision making process.

- For AAC resources please visit:
<http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/sf/aac/resources.htm>
- For a list of AACs please see: <http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/sf/aac/list.htm>

Question and Answer Session

- One attendee asked about how involved liaisons are from other committees such as environmental committees. Do they get involved in discussions are they non-voting? The response was that it depends on the local government. On Salt Spring Island, they have been amalgamating their Advisory Planning Commissions to ensure cross-fertilization of ideas; Saltspring's AgAC remains in place and has delegated a non-voting liaison to the larger generic APC. AGRI staff are non-voting.
- One attendee asked about the role of farmers institutes versus the role of AACs. Often, the same people sit on both groups, as there are only so many volunteers and they have to decide where to put their energy. The discussion in response to this question was that although these groups may be doing similar things, farmer's institutes can have an advocacy role and AACs are a committee of local government, which means they have tighter ties to the local government.
- One attendee said that their local government does not provide input or opinion to the ALC despite having an AAC. There are also cases where AACs are underutilized and the local government does not want to forward applications to them. The response to this question was that in some cases, it may take time or a change in the political environment to make things better. In the meantime, keep trying.

4.2. Innovative Agricultural Advisory Committee Approaches, AAC representatives discuss their AAC's mandate and successes

Mary Marcotte, Agricultural Advisory Commission Chair and Electoral Area Director, Cowichan Valley Regional District

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David Page, Agricultural Advisory Committee Chair, Comox Valley Regional District

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Presentation Summary- Mary Marcotte

- Mary Marcotte began by introducing herself and showing a map of the Cowichan Region, which has 9 electoral areas and 4 municipalities.
- The Cowichan Region has some of the best agriculture land on Vancouver Island, including 19,034 hectares of Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and 700 farms. Among these farms are 16 organic farms, 16 wineries, and 35 vineyards.
- The Cowichan region is home to the largest dairy farm and the largest pepper farm on Vancouver Island. It also has 46% of all dairy cows, produces 91% of all turkeys on Vancouver Island, and has a large equestrian sector.
- Challenges that agriculture in the region faces include the following:
 - Loss of critical mass- only 18% of our food consumption is produced locally
 - Farm succession- the average age of farmers is 56 years old

- Training and access to information
- Marketing and distribution
- Land tenure and cost of land
- Loss of quota
- Water management
- Cowichan developed an Agricultural Area Plan in 2010. A regional AAC was developed in 2012 to oversee the implementation of the Agricultural Area Plan.
- The members of the regional AAC are appointed by the Cowichan Valley Regional District. It includes representation from:
 - Farmers Institutes
 - Farmers Markets
 - Ministry of Agriculture
 - Regional District Board
 - Cowichan Exhibition
 - Economic Development Cowichan
- The Regional Area Agriculture Plan includes six broad goals, 78 action items, and 14 action items prioritized by the Regional Agricultural Advisory Commission for implementation in 2012/2013. The broad goals include:
 - Education
 - Water use for agriculture
 - Land lease registry
 - Branding program
 - Encourage Environmental Farm Plans
 - Partnership with other agriculture organizations
 - Consumer awareness programs
- Regarding brand development, they are creating a brand for the regional AAC. The purpose is to enhance the current Cowichan brand to promote agriculture.
- Regarding education for agriculture, the Islands Agriculture Show was held in 2012 and 2013 at the Cowichan Exhibition Grounds. It attracted over 1,500 people from all over Vancouver Island and included 16 conference sessions and a 65 booth trade show.
- In the area of agriculture land use, several things are under development including:
 - What to expect when living in rural areas
 - Land lease- incubator farm
 - Promotion of farmlink.net, a website that matches farmers with land to lease with potential farmers who want to lease land
 - Mentorship of new farmers program
- In regards to the future of agriculture, they would like to increase food self-sufficiency from 18% to 45% and ensure that agriculture becomes the largest economic sector in the Cowichan Region.



Question and Answer Session

- One attendee asked how they ensure that their Agricultural Area Plan is implemented. The response was that they first determined the 6 major goals and then formed subcommittees that organized them into long, medium, and short-term goals. The subcommittees were free to enlist assistance from others. They kept good records and reported back to the AAC. They now have a work plan and are following up on each of the main goals. Local government staff have helped to prioritize the goals and slide them in wherever they can fit them. When that isn't possible, staff have gone to the Regional Board to ask for supplemental funding.

4.3. Elected Officials Panel, elected officials discuss their experiences interacting with AACs

Sheila Malcolmson, Islands Trust Council Chair, Gabriola Island Local Trustee

Edwin Grieve, Chair of the Comox Valley Regional District Board, Electoral Area 'C' Director

Adam Olsen, District of Central Saanich Councillor

Discussion Summary

- The panel began with introductions
- Grieve explained that the Comox Valley Regional District has been working on establishing a minimum lot size. They have concerns about real estate and Comox Valley Regional District is home to 1/3 of the ALR land on Vancouver Island. They are working on an Official Community Plan this year.
- Malcolmson explained that Islands Trust is a local government with zoning powers established in 1974 and includes over 470 islands. The Islands Trust policy statement is very supportive of agriculture. The islands have small farms, high land costs, high ferry costs, an aging population, and year-round agriculture. Denman Island recently adopted a farm plan and they are thinking about an AAC. Gabriola has 46 farms, but has not had any applications to the ALC since the AAC has been established. On Salt Spring Island, a farm plan was adopted in 2008 and they have had an AAC for a long time. It was one of the first and it is heavily relied on. The advice of the AAC is really valued.
- Olsen was elected in 2008. The farmland in Central Saanich is surrounded by urbanization. Normally, it is the reverse, so there is a lot of pressure on the land. 60% of their district is ALR and this affects their tax base. They did an OCP in 2008 and a



key section of it supports agriculture. They developed an AAP that made 109 recommendations that the AAC will be implementing. They struggle with estate home size and siting. Other issues they are dealing with include implementing their integrated storm water management plan, recycling and composting materials on farmland, environmental stewardship, and minimizing urban/farming conflicts. They have the Woodwyn farm project, which has 125 people living there year-round. Their AAC does not provide comment on ALC applications; that is the role of the Peninsula Agricultural Commission.

How does your AAC function? Does it handle ALC applications?

- In Central Saanich, there are examples involving Woodwyn Farm. They have reminded applicants that Council is responsible for all farmland and that they have to consider the impact of each application on all other farmland.
- In Comox Valley Regional District, they have a timber/land anomaly. In the last 5 years, they have had no exclusions and some inclusions. Non-farm use is more complicated. When they send a non-farm use application forward to the ALC, they include the notes from the AAC, but they forward it without comment.
- At Islands Trust, they rely on the advice of AACs whether the land is inside or outside of the ALR. On Saltspring, there is a high school, fire hall, community center, ballfield, and industrial interests located on farmland and increasing pressure to site community facilities on the vacant land that remains (i.e. farmland). In cases like this where there are legitimate competing interests, they really value the advice of the AAC and we need to hear what is good for farmland and what is good for farmers. It is really the AAC and ALC that are holding the line and encouraging local governments to make the right decision.

Can you talk about local government decisions that have varied from AAC recommendations?

- For Islands Trust, no cases could be recalled yet where the Islands Trust local government didn't embrace the AAC advice. There are cases where the ALC decision hasn't reflected the AAC and Islands Trust advice; on Saltspring, there's local support for new year-round farm worker housing, while the ALC is understandably skeptical about the long-term ability to enforce its use for farm labour. This can be a real conundrum for communities. It is really about affordable housing. Another example was about bulk water extraction as a non-farm use on ALR land; locally, the advisory committee and Islands Trust recommended against it, the ALC approved it for a two year term and then turned down the renewal.
- In Comox Valley Regional District, they have been working to develop logging right-of-ways into trails. There have been lots of concerns such as disease and dogs roaming. They have been trying to determine how to mitigate the impacts on farming by fencing, buffering, providing access across trails. It is important to listen and communicate with respect.
- In Central Saanich, they need crop protection against deer and geese. They face lots of challenges. A tenant of their sustainability strategy is to support local food. The healthy watersheds committee and the AAC should work together. They are working on a trail

through farmland. There were lots of concerns initially. Trail users were concerned about a composting operation. They are promoting signage to warn people about entering a farming area. When there is nothing happening on land, realtors see that as the highest and best use, but that policy doesn't support farming. Don't protect farmland, encourage farming. One big issue has been water. Farmers wanted better drainage and stream-keepers wanted to control high flows and slow the water down. They ended up using an old wetland to store water. This took land out of production, but it worked.

- One attendee commented that AACs hear both sides of arguments and are much more focused than the Peninsula Agriculture Commission, which has broader discussions. This particular AAC is focused on their Agricultural Area Plan and they are overwhelmed by the task. They don't have as much experience as other AACs.
- In the Comox Valley Regional District, many people want to encourage farming. They don't have even half of their land in farming, even forages. They have reached out to aquaculture to support it as well. They are working on getting buy-in so that they can put policies into their Official Community Plan.
- For Islands Trust, more than a dozen OCPs have strongly farm-supportive policies and, as local governments, they are trying to ensure there are no zoning barriers to small scale agriculture and community food security. Gabriola is now using its AAC to advise on what OCP and LUB changes would better support farmers and local food production.
- One attendee brought up the issue of institutional organizations using farmland. They often have lots of community support. These are the toughest to deal with. One example is the ferry parking lot expansion. They attended a farm tour in Pemberton and heard about regulating the siting and size of houses in the ALR. That should be encouraged. To what extent has the Central Saanich storm water plan been implemented? The response was that there has been a quarter million dollars to develop it and ten million to implement it. They have picked some low-hanging fruit and are using wetlands to slow water. They are doing one project per year and everything else is a supplemental task.

4.4. Agricultural Advisory Committees and the Agricultural Land Commission, a presentation on how AACs and the ALC can work together to strengthen farming

Roger Cheetham, Regional Planner, Agricultural Land Commission

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Presentation Summary

- Roger began by introducing himself and stating three goals for his presentation:
 - To inform AACs what the Commission considers when reviewing applications and planning matters
 - To explain what information the AACs can provide the Commission regarding applications and planning matters
 - To discuss how the ALC and AACs can work together

- The ALR is 'A provincial zone where agriculture is recognized as the priority use and where non-agricultural uses are regulated and farming is encouraged.' Agricultural lands are designated under the Act.
- The ALC is 'The body of appointed individuals (and staff) who administer the ALR boundary, subdivision and non-farm uses.'
- The ALR is 5% of BC's land base. This area is comprised of about 50% private and 50% crown land. The majority of the ALR lies in the northern part of the province. The ALR is larger now than when it was established.
- The next slide showed a map of the ALR on Vancouver Island. There are 116,203 hectares of ALR on Vancouver Island, which is about 1.5% of the land base and 2.5% of ALR land.
- The purpose of the ALC comes from the ALC Act:
 - Preserve agricultural land
 - Encourage farming on agricultural land in collaboration with other communities of interest
 - Encourage local governments, First Nations, the government and its agents to enable and accommodate farm use of agricultural land and uses compatible with agriculture in their plans, bylaws, and policies.
- The ALC's principal functions are land use planning, applications, policy development and research, and compliance and enforcement.
- When it comes to land use planning, the ALC's mandate is to encourage local governments, First Nations, the government and its agents to enable and accommodate farm use of agricultural land and uses compatible with agriculture in their plans, bylaws, and policies.
- In order to achieve this mandate, the ALC collaborates with local government by using tools such as growth strategies, land use bylaws, Official Community Plans, agri-teams, and agriculture area plans. These tools help to outline the community needs with respect to agricultural, residential, and commercial goals.
- When it comes to ALC applications, if a proposal is not consistent with the ALR Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulation, an application must be submitted to the ALC. Application types include subdivision, non-farm use, exclusion, and inclusion.
- The Commission considers many factors in making its decision. If the application is for exclusion, the first and foremost question is whether the land is suitable for farm use, because that is the criterion used in Section 15 of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*.
- Suitability involves more than just an agricultural capability rating – because agriculture also includes non-soil bound farming – it also includes consideration of parcel size, relation to other agricultural land, impacts from adjacent non-farm uses, etc. To the extent that those factors are likely to make it impractical to farm the land, they lend credence to an exclusion application. But the Commission also looks at the impact on nearby agriculture and may refuse an application to exclude low-capability land which is surrounded by active agriculture.
- The next slide showed a diagram of the ALC application process. Landowners or agents submit an application via their local government. The local government reviews the application, creates a report, refers it to relevant committees or boards, and then, if

authorized, forwards it to the ALC. ALC staff do background research and meet with the applicant onsite or arrange a hearing. ALC Commissioners then review the application, make a decision, and notify the applicant.

- The ALC Staff who do the background research are the land use planners, but regional planners also get involved when the application raises broader planning issues.
- Although it is a linear path of information to the ALC, the decision comments and feedback from the Commissioners can be used by local governments, AACs and the public to get a better understanding of what the Commission considers to be a positive or negative impact on agricultural land in BC.
- Commission consideration may include, but is not limited to any or all of the following:
 - Agricultural potential of subject and adjacent parcels
 - Agricultural capability rating
 - Agricultural suitability and current land or agricultural use
 - Raised expectations of land use change
 - Regional and community planning objectives
 - Alternate location outside ALR
 - Local government and AAC recommendations
 - Does the proposal benefit/support/damage/restrict agricultural land use?
 - Impact on existing or potential agricultural use
- With regard to specific types of applications, it is important to break down some of the common issues the Commission has dealt with in the past year and elaborate on some examples of common wording that you may have seen on recently released decision minutes.
- Regarding subdivision:
 - Subdivision of large cohesive units of agriculture is not consistent with the ALC Act to preserve and encourage agriculture and leaves the agricultural options open for the future
 - Subdivision for the purpose of residential use on agricultural land is not a benefit to the business of agriculture such as it conflicts with surrounding agricultural uses (Right to Farm, access, vehicles, dogs) and increases density
 - In some cases, roads are a substantial impediment to farming and safety of crossing, however a low-traffic road may not be a significant barrier to farming the land as a cohesive unit
 - Section 946 of the Local Government Act is a tool available to local government to accommodate a subdivision



for a relative where the proposed lot is smaller than the minimum lot size specified in a zoning bylaw. If the Commission allows a subdivision, 946 may be invoked by a local government. However, 946 is NOT a reason for the Commission to allow a subdivision.

- Regarding non-farm use and additional dwellings:
 - Vacant farmland is not an opportunity for development and non-farm use. 5% of BC is designated as the provincial reserve of agricultural land. You can only farm or ranch where the land will cooperate. There should be a very good justification why the remaining 95% of the province is not a suitable alternative location for a non-farm use.
 - The Act and [Agricultural Land Reserve Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulation](#) do not set a limit on the number of additional residences for farm help per parcel, but all residences must be necessary for farm use. The local government must be convinced that there is a legitimate need for an additional residence for farm help such as 'farm' classification under the [Assessment Act](#), size and type of farm operation, etc.
 - The Commission can NOT allow additional residences for farm use based on a proposed farm/ranch operation. In addition, second dwellings should not be seen as an opportunity for non-farm rental income purposes.
 - Second dwellings almost always lead to subdivision by the current owners or by the subsequent landowners. Think forward 20 years when at least one of the house owners leaves or dies or the property changes hands.
- Regarding exclusion, the Commission recognizes that there are circumstances under which exclusions are practical and/or necessary for community growth. However, there must be sufficient justification both physically (agricultural cap, agricultural suitability) and logistically for the community.
 - If an OCP is inconsistent with the ALC's recommendations or the ALR designation, the Commission is not compelled to approve the application.
 - If the exclusion proposal is based on lack of agricultural potential, the first and foremost question is whether the land is suitable for farm use. To the extent that agricultural capability, parcel size, relation to other agricultural land, impacts from adjacent non-farm uses, etc. are likely to make it impractical to farm the land, they lend credence to an exclusion application.
 - Regardless of the reason for exclusion application, sometimes potential exclusion areas are better addressed in an Official Community Plan review rather than a case by case basis.
- If the Agricultural Land Reserve is to be maintained in the long term, it is obvious that it cannot be endlessly eroded. This goes beyond measures to control land under local agricultural and rural zoning bylaws, which are generally effective only so long as there is not a routine request to use more farmland for non-farm purposes. The principles involved in evaluating an application under the ALC Act must differ from those employed in weighing re-zoning requests. The criteria for judging applications under the

Act, will, by necessity, be more oriented towards maintaining a permanent farmland reserve without strict regard to present use or production needs.

- AACs bring local farming knowledge to the Commission. They provide the Commission with insight on the following:
 - An assessment of agricultural potential of the subject property
 - Any limitations to agricultural development
 - History of agriculture on the property
 - Impact of the proposal on farm activity on the property and in the surrounding area
 - Opinion in the proposal is in the best interest of agriculture
 - The reasons behind the AAC recommendation to local government
- The AAC can be involved with ALC work through:
 - Advising local government on land use bylaws
 - Providing local knowledge about and assessing the potential impact of specific applications
 - Contributing to the development of and monitoring the implementation of agricultural area plans
- The ALC is shifting from using 80% of its resources, which are currently devoted to applications, to 80% of the resources being devoted to proactive planning in the context of the ALC mandate. They want to refocus time and energy on planning, research, policy, education, and communications. Some of those new directions include:
 - Targeted ALR boundary reviews, creating defensible boundaries
 - Proactive planning, engaging local governments, advisory groups, communities, provincial ministries, agencies regarding the ALC Act and agriculture
 - Encouraging farming, prioritizing proposals that are intended to support and enhance agriculture
 - Enhancing compliance and enforcement
- The new ALC direction compliments local government and AAC involvement. It involves:
 - Earlier and extensive involvement in local government planning processes
 - Increased communication and engagement
 - Emphasis on agricultural area planning
 - Encouraging establishment of agricultural advisory committees
 - Encouraging agri-teams
- Contact the ALC at 604-660-7000 and visit the website at www.alc.gov.bc.ca

Question and Answer Session

- One attendee stated that they are concerned about small stores as non-farm uses, such as Hopcott's and Bakerview EcoDairy. The response was that only 50% of the items sold can be from off of the farm, but that can creep up to 70 or 80%. Home occupations are similar. If they are successful, they grow and grow.

- One attendee asked whether the ALC would ask for a business plan before someone purchases ALR land. The response was that this question could be addressed at the local level. The ALC would like to have more linkage with local government bylaws.
- One attendee asked about definitions. Buildings can be applied for as barns. The response was that whenever there is a question, just call the ALC.
- One attendee asked whether the ALC can loosen up the regulations to help farm incomes. The response was that they have already done that through agri-tourism and home occupation accommodation. They would consider suggestions that don't have a negative impact on farmland.

4.5. Agricultural Land Use on Vancouver Island, a presentation on the status of agricultural land in the region using Ministry of Agriculture Land Use Inventory data
Bert van Dalfsen, Strengthening Farming Program Manager, Ministry of Agriculture
bert.vandalfsen@gov.bc.ca

Presentation Summary

- Bert began by introducing himself and asking who has already heard about Agricultural Land Use Inventories (ALUIs).
- ALUIs are inventories of agricultural lands where data on land use, and land cover (biophysical cover on the land) is collected. This includes non- agricultural uses and land covers such as residential, commercial, transportation.
- When there is some agricultural activity on a parcel, that activity is described to a greater level of detail. This includes
 - irrigation systems
 - livestock and their associated facilities
 - apiculture, aquaculture
 - value added activities such as fruit stands, crop processing
 - visible agricultural practices such as the presence of a wind machine, propane cannon,
 - or water source activities such as a well or pumphouse
- The basic inventory unit is legal land parcels, not farm units, which may encompass more than one legal land parcel. Our goal is to survey all parcels that have potential for agricultural use including:
 - parcels in the ALR,
 - parcels with BC Assessments Farm Class designation,
 - parcels with local government zoning that allows agriculture.
- The ALUI program is mainly focused on informing local government Agricultural Area Plans and regional water strategies, as they can help estimate agricultural water use. More recently there has been interest in utilizing the data for air emissions work. ALUIs can be used to support edge planning and to test the impacts of a new land use planning policy.

- The Ministry of Agriculture has been conducting these inventories since 1996. However, over last 4 years, the program has been expanding. The 2010 and later surveys use a more detailed system. This year, there is a crew of 5 people preparing for the field season. There will be 7 field crews out this summer, as many as 16 people.
- The next slide showed the status of inventories across the province as of 2013. There is no target to survey the entire province. In 2009, North Saanich, Central Saanich, and Juan de Fuca was done. In 2012, the Cowichan Valley Regional District and the Nanaimo Regional District were surveyed and the Comox Valley will be surveyed during 2013.
- ALUIs are done using AgFocus, which is an internally developed system designed to efficiently capture detailed information about land cover and land use on agricultural lands. The information is posted on our website.
- The next slide showed a sample map. The ALUI maps include the legal land parcel boundaries, which are shown in yellow here. Then GIS is used to split the legal parcel into land cover polygons which follow the spatial patterns exhibited in the aerial photography. Google Maps Street View is also utilized to help determine where to put the blue line. In the map on this slide, the blue line follows the break between a grassy land cover and a treed land cover. Polygons are also created around buildings and their associated yards, roads, reservoirs, bare areas down to 500 square metres.
- Using the maps, a survey crew consisting of an Agrologist and a data entry technician, navigates public roads and examines each legal parcel recording both land cover and land use. In high traffic areas, a driver may be added to the crew. The survey rate is about 750 hectares per day depending on traffic, weather, visibility from the road, and experience level.
- The next slides showed tables describing the ALUI Primary Land Use Classification. The classification used is hierarchical and allows as much detail as possible to be captured. This table is an example of the possible land uses. Agriculture is the one this program focuses on and the study area is chosen accordingly (ALR, BC Assessment Farm Class, local government zoned for farming).
- For livestock, although the surveyor can capture an animal count, most often a scale is applied to the operation based on the number of animals seen, the size and type of facilities and perhaps local knowledge.
- Soils and climate data are also added to each parcel to provide the base data required to run an Irrigation Water Demand Model.



- The next slide showed a table of average irrigation water demand over the season. Irrigation demand is how much water a farmer needs considering crop type, soils and climate, if the farmer is using good management. If a farmer is overwatering, irrigation demand will increase. In the Okanagan, we usually think of tree fruits and grapes, but there is more forage grass than anything else.
- The next slide showed a pie chart of Delta's irrigation systems based on recent ALUI data. This slide shows that 43% of Delta's cultivated land is irrigated by giant gun, 37% is not irrigated, 11% is trickle irrigated, 9% is irrigated by sprinkler and under 1% is sub-surface irrigated.
- The following slide showed a pie chart of the general land cover in North Saanich. Agriculture occupies 784.5 hectares or 48% of the land area. The next slide showed a pie chart of agricultural land cover in North Saanich. Crops occupy 694.5 hectares or 89% of the agricultural land area.
- The next slide showed a map of Delta's land covers.
- ALUIs are valuable for the following:
 - Build community support for farming
 - Identify opportunities to support and expand farming
 - Resolve limitations for agriculture
 - Promote land use compatibility
 - Increase knowledge of land use in the ALR
 - Provide a database that may be used to answer questions
 - Guide local government bylaw development
- Regarding local government bylaw development, Metro Vancouver recently used the ALUI to identify landowners in the ALR who are not farming and carried out a survey to determine why. They have an action plan that has an objective of "increasing the land that is actively farmed by 2015".
- The next slide showed two land use maps of Pitt Meadows. One from 1996 and one from 2002. The ALUI allow us to track changes over time on a parcel by parcel basis. The Census does not provide this level of detail.
- The survey unit is the legal land parcel or cadastre. This is often obtained through local governments. Ortho-photography is often accessed from the provincial data warehouse of local governments. Data sharing and licensing agreements are agreed on prior to surveying.
- The ALUI data limitations include the following:
 - Where visibility is limited, data is interpreted from aerial photography and local knowledge
 - It is a snapshot in time
 - The survey unit is the legal land parcel and not the farm unit
 - Many farm practices are not captured, such as manure handling or spreading and fertilizer or pesticide applications
 - Crop production practices are only captured if visible
 - Livestock are attributed to the parcel where they were seen on the day of the survey

- Livestock are recorded as a scale of operation and not by individual animal counts
- Capturing the type and number of livestock on a property using a “windshield” survey method is very difficult. Livestock often are in buildings or at the back of the property and therefore not seen. Also, livestock move from property to property and while they may be present one day on one property, they could be present on a different property the next day resulting in over counting. For many properties, livestock type and a range of the number of animals present was estimated using a number of methods including barn size and local knowledge. Using this data to extrapolate livestock farm management practices or environmental impacts from individual parcels is invalid.
- In regards to ALUI data from Vancouver Island, reports have not yet been compiled for the Cowichan or Nanaimo Regional Districts yet. The remainder of this presentation focuses on land covers, parcel size distribution, and the status of small parcels on Vancouver Island.
- The next slide showed a graph of parcel size in Central Saanich. 29% of the parcels are less than 1 hectare and more than half are less than 4 hectares.
- The next slide showed a graph of the ALR area in Central Saanich. 72% of parcels and 29% of the area is in parcels of less than 4 hectares.
- The next slide showed a map of parcel sizes in Central Saanich and the following one showed a graph of land covers in Central Saanich. Here we see that the smallest parcels have very little farming, with most of parcels being covered with man made features, which are usually made up of residential development. This means that expanding agriculture will mean intensifying areas already farmed, re-developing built areas for farming, or clearing land. Most of the natural and semi-natural areas are treed.
- The next slide showed a map of Central Saanich’s land covers. This is a spatial representation of the previous slide, although this shows all the parcels surveyed, even those outside the pink line representing the ALR boundary.
- The next slides showed land cover graphs and maps for Central Saanich, Cowichan Valley Regional District, and Nanaimo Regional District. Of these three jurisdictions, Central Saanich has the most agricultural land cover and Nanaimo has the most natural and semi-natural land cover.
- When we compare the parcel size distribution of these three jurisdictions, it is clear that there is an ample supply of small lots in agricultural areas of some communities. In Central Saanich and the Cowichan Valley, more than half of the lots are less than 2 hectares.
- The next slide showed parcel sizes in Central Saanich, Cowichan Valley Regional District, Nanaimo Regional District, Langley Township, Surrey, and Delta. How does Vancouver Island compare to the Metro Vancouver? You can see that the Metro Vancouver is also heavily parcelized. This is expected to be the case near most of our heavily populated areas.
- The next slides showed charts of parcel sizes in Central Saanich and North Saanich. The charts have parcel size on the y-axis and the green bar represents the percentage of those parcels that are farmed. The charts show that the smaller parcels are much less likely to be farmed, which is a typical outcome in most communities where there is an

abundance of small parcels. Subdividing farmland to create smaller parcels for new entrants to farming is not required, as we already have lots of small parcels. These slides show that subdivision actually discourages farming.

- The next slide showed potential annual sales on 5 acres from various farm products. Small lots may be very productive when they are used intensively. This slide provides some examples of where direct marketing of fruits and vegetables, potted nurseries, mushrooms, floriculture and poultry can produce high annual sales from a 5 acre lot. Less intensive use of hay, beef, sheep or horses have much lower projected annual sales. While we do not want more small lots to be created, as they are typically underutilized for farming, they may be very productive when used for farming.
- Although this presentation focused on parcel size distribution, Agricultural Land Use Inventory data can be used for a variety of purposes including:
 - Agricultural awareness
 - Agricultural plans and strategies
 - Agricultural trends
 - Parcel size impacts
 - Agricultural impact assessments
 - Edge planning
 - Agricultural water management
 - Residential uses
 - Opportunities for farming
 - On-farm value-added trends and opportunities
- Bert may be contacted at bert.vandalfsen@gov.bc.ca and 604-556-3109. For copies of completed ALUI Reports, visit: <http://www.al.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/sf/gis> Click on Planning for Agriculture and then GIS and Agricultural Land Use Inventory Projects.

5. Attendees

19 AAC members shown in this colour of text

14 Local government representatives shown in this colour of text

8 Provincial government representatives shown in this colour of text

41

	First Name	Last Name	Position	Location
1	Roger	Cheetham	Regional Planner	Agricultural Land Commission
2	Liz	Sutton	Land Use Planner	Agricultural Land Commission
3	Bill	Thomson	Agricultural Advisory Committee Chair	Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District
4	Wayne	Smith	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District
5	John	Grayson	Agricultural Advisory Committee Chair	City of Courtenay

6	Andrea	Burch	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	City of Courtenay
7	David	Page	Agricultural Advisory Committee Chair	Comox Valley Regional District
8	Carl	Goldscheider	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Comox Valley Regional District
9	Edwin	Grieve	Chair of the Regional Board, Electoral Area 'C' Director	Comox Valley Regional District
10	Mary	Marcotte	Agricultural Advisory Commission Chair, Electoral Area Director	Cowichan Valley Regional District
11	Kathy	Lachman	Business Development Officer	Cowichan Valley Regional District
12	Dan	Ferguson	Agricultural Advisory Commission Member	Cowichan Valley Regional District
13	Bob	Crawford	Agricultural Advisory Commission Member	Cowichan Valley Regional District
14	Peter	Keber	Agricultural Advisory Commission Member	Cowichan Valley Regional District
15	David	Graham	Denman Island Trust Trustee	Denman Island
16	Marina	Reid	Steering Committee	Denman Island
17	Ryan	Vantreight	Agricultural Plan Steering Committee Member	District of Central Saanich
18	Adam	Olsen	Councillor	District of Central Saanich
19	Bernadette	Greene	Agricultural Advisory Commission Chair	District of North Saanich
20	Tina	Baynes	Agricultural Advisory Commission Member	District of North Saanich
21	Irfane	Fancey	Agricultural Advisory Commission Member	District of North Saanich
22	Alice	Finall	Mayor	District of North Saanich
23	Celia	Stock	Councillor, Council AAC Liaison	District of North Saanich
24	Eric	Veale	Agricultural Advisory Commission Secretary	Gabriola Island
25	Sheila	Malcolmson	Islands Trust Council Chair, Gabriola Island Local Trustee	Islands Trust Council
26	Bert	van Dalfsen	Manager, Strengthening Farming Program	Ministry of Agriculture
27	Wayne	Haddow	Regional Agrologist	Ministry of Agriculture
28	Sue	Gordon	Office Manager	Ministry of Agriculture
29	Rob	Kline	Regional Agrologist	Ministry of Agriculture
30	Jill	Hatfield	Regional Agrologist	Ministry of Agriculture
31	Alison	Fox	Land Use Agrologist	Ministry of Agriculture
32	Jen	Woike	Agricultural Advisory Committee Chair	Municipality of North Cowichan
33	Gerry	Plester	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Municipality of North Cowichan
34	Audrey	Rogers	Planner	Municipality of North Cowichan
35	Dave	Murphy	Electoral Area Director	Powell River Regional District
36	Helena	Byrd	Agricultural Advisory Committee Chair	Powell River Regional District
37	Howard	Houle	Electoral Area 'B' Director	Regional District of Nanaimo
38	Andrew	Brown	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Regional District of Nanaimo

39	Joanne	McLeod	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Regional District of Nanaimo
40	Colin	Springford	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Regional District of Nanaimo
41	Greg	Keller	Senior Planner	Regional District of Nanaimo

□ □ □

Workshop II – February 27th, 2013 – in Kelowna

6. General Attendance

The second regional workshop was held on February 27, 2013 at the Ramada Hotel in Kelowna. Representatives from 14 different local governments and/or AACs attended including:

- Cariboo Regional District
- City of Kamloops
- City of Kelowna
- City of Penticton
- City of Salmon Arm
- District of Coldstream
- District of Lake Country
- District of West Kelowna
- Peace River Regional District
- Regional District of Central Okanagan
- Regional District of Kootenay Boundary
- Regional District of North Okanagan
- Squamish-Lillooet Regional District
- Township of Spallumcheen

This workshop had 54 participants including AAC members and local government politicians and staff. Also present were staff from the BC Ministry of Agriculture (AGRI) and the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC). A list of participants is provided at the end of the notes from this workshop.

7. Workshop Outline

- Welcome and Introductions
 - *Carl Withler and Bert van Dalftsén, Ministry of Agriculture*
- Keeping AACs Informed and Engaged Between Application Periods
 - *Shannon Tartaglia, Planning Analyst, District of West Kelowna*
- The District of Kent's Agricultural Advisory Committee and Agricultural Area Plan Implementation
 - *Darcey Kohuch, Director of Development Services, District of Kent*
- Online Soil Mapping in BC, a presentation on the status of work being done by the Ministry of Environment and the Pacific Agri-Food Research Centre
 - *Deepa Filatow, Provincial Bioterrain Specialist, Ministry of Environment*
- Agricultural Advisory Committees and the Agricultural Land Commission, a presentation on how AACs and the ALC can work together to strengthen farming
 - *Martin Collins, Regional Planner, Agricultural Land Commission*
- BC's Agricultural Land Commission, a presentation on the strategic direction of the Agricultural Land Commission
 - *Richard Bullock, Chair, Agricultural Land Commission*
- Closing
 - *Carl Withler and Bert van Dalftsén, Ministry of Agriculture*

8. Sessions and Presentations

Five presentations took place at the Kelowna workshop, in addition to opening and closing statements made by Bert van Dalftsén, Manager of the Strengthening Farming Program at AGRI. Carl Withler, Resource Stewardship Agrologist with AGRI, acted as Master of Ceremonies.

Workshop attendees received a folder containing various publications on AGRI's Strengthening Farming Program and AAC management. These documents are available on the Strengthening Farming website at <http://www.al.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/sf/Publications.htm>

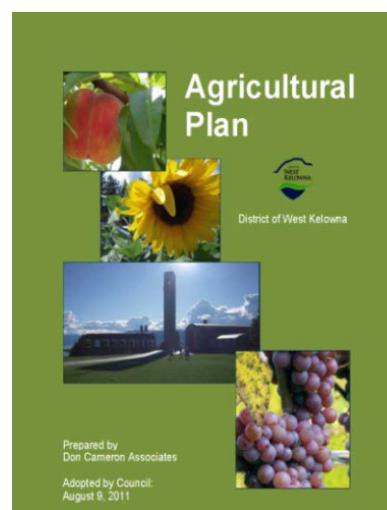
8.1. Keeping AACs Informed and Engaged Between Application Periods

Shannon Tartaglia, Planning Analyst, District of West Kelowna

shannon.tartaglia@districtofwestkelowna.ca

Presentation Summary

- Shannon stated that there has been a change in the market and an evolution to stronger agricultural policy.
- In most parts of the province, the number of applications received by the ALC in 2010 was lower than the number received during 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009.
- Shannon shared a slide showing the Terms of Reference of the West Kelowna AAC. Their mandate is to assist staff and Council in protecting, enhancing, and promoting agriculture within the District of West Kelowna.
- West Kelowna has developed 14 master plans in 5 years. These include the:
 - Agricultural Plan
 - Community Amenity Policy
 - Development Services Bylaw
 - Official Community Plan
 - Sign Bylaw
 - Soil Removal and Deposit Bylaw
 - Waterfront Plan
 - Westbank Centre Revitalization Plan
 - Zoning Bylaw Review
- They have also processed 20 development applications, 8 ALC applications, and had an agricultural tour in 2010.
- The AAC provided feedback on their Servicing Bylaw. The motion was, "That the AAC is concerned that the current draft of the Works and Servicing Bylaw No. 0120 is economically prohibitive to agriculture and agricultural improvements due to the proposed servicing requirements triggered by building permits. The Agricultural Advisory Committee requests staff to explore exemptions to remove the economically punitive Works and Servicing standards to the agricultural community."
- The AAC provided feedback on their Sign Bylaw. The related motions were, "That the Agricultural Advisory Committee support the wording of the bylaw revision in relation to size and no non-agricultural signs on farm property; That signs should be permitted to the same



extent on each road frontage of the property; That the cost of applying for a sign variance, given how important advertising is to agriculture, could be detrimental; That consideration is given for a plan to allow off-site signage of seasonal crops as well as the possibility of a permanent post to hang individual signs on.”

- Plans for the 2013 to 2015 term include working with staff to implement the Agricultural Plan, fitting agri-tourism into the larger Tourism Strategy in the District, looking at agricultural land valuation and agricultural outreach, a tourism-farm mapping exercise, the development of a studio-farm tour, and an outdoor farmer’s market.
- During the 2013 to 2015 term, the AAC needs education on BC Farm Assessment changes, temporary farm worker housing, and starling control programs. They have requested further information on how District parking regulations impact agriculture, the history of home-plating in the District, and Robert’s Rules of Order.
- To keep your AAC engaged, Shannon recommends having exit interviews with AAC members at term end and engaging the AAC by encouraging the committee to communicate their education and training needs. If all else fails, you can always call your Regional Agrologist from the Ministry of Agriculture.
- Contact the District of West Kelowna at 778-797-1000 and info@districtofwestkelowna.ca www.districtofwestkelowna.ca

Question and Answer Session

- One attendee stated that the value of a home may have increased by 17% but the value of the farm has increased by 300%. This means that when you sell your property, you never get the full value back. The response was that one possibility for some is a home site severance, which is available to those who have been living on the property since 1972 or earlier. It is also possible to reconsolidate, returning the home to the farm. The ALC presenters will talk more about this later in the day.
- One attendee asked whether there has been any interaction between the AAC and invasive species and plants. Shannon stated not to date.
- One attendee asked whether West Kelowna has made exemptions for large farms. The response was that the servicing bylaw was zone based. Previously, the agricultural zone was exempt, but this was going to be changed. The value of development could work as an exemption criterion, but not for large agricultural parcels where they are along a roadside.
- One attendee asked who is on the AAC. The response was that positions are advertized through the newspaper and then approved by Council. The positions are voluntary. They are an advisory group but they have a good relationship with Council. There have only been three cases where Council varied from the AAC recommendation.



- One attendee asked for any instances where elected officials have had a different view than the AAC. The response was that they really have not had that scenario. It has been pretty positive. They do not have any elected officials on the AAC.
- One attendee stated that a property owner might have land for lease. Can an AAC help with this? The response was that they are contemplating that sort of work.
- One attendee asked whether land that will not be actively farmed is taxed at the residential rate. The response was yes.
- A comment was made that some communities have farm tours to promote an understanding of farming. Lake Country, Kelowna and the Regional District of Central Okanagan host a shared farm tour every two years.

8.2. The District of Kent's Agricultural Advisory Committee and Agricultural Area Plan Implementation

Darcey Kohuch, Director of Development Services, District of Kent
dkohuch@district.kent.bc.ca

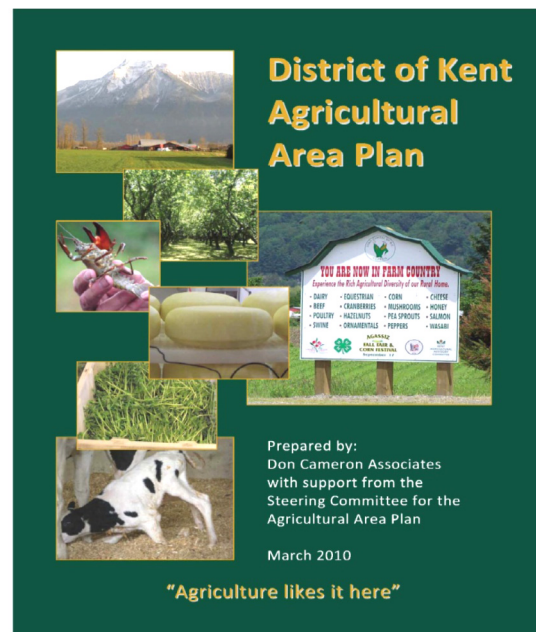
Presentation Summary

- Darcey shared a slide showing a map of the District of Kent. The District has a population of 5,400 and a total land area of 19,374 hectares (47,869 acres).
- Darcey shared a slide showing a map of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) in the District, which has 6,532 hectares of ALR (16,141 acres).
- The Kent AAC was established in 2002. The 18 member committee was comprised of 16 local area farmers, 1 district councilor, and 1 advisory representative from the Ministry of Agriculture.
- The AAC held regular monthly meetings at the District Hall and held ad-hoc executive meetings at the member's homes. There was no District staff advisory or recording secretary until 2008.
- In 2009, Darcey obtained an understanding of the Kent AAC by reading the terms of reference, reviewing past minutes, and talking to committee members, council representatives, CAO and administration, and advisory staff.
- The strengths of the Kent AAC include:
 - Knowledgeable, capable, committed committee members and Ministry of Agriculture advisory staff member
 - Desire to make good community decisions
 - Many accomplishments such as the circle farm tour program, education tours, they started an agricultural area plan, and developed application recommendations
- The weaknesses of the Kent AAC include:
 - Deteriorating relationship with the District of Kent support staff: inconsistent reporting, lack of follow-up, and decisions made that contradicted Agricultural Land Commission recommendations



- Changes to the Kent AAC have included:
 - Updating the Terms of Reference- understanding roles
 - Reviewing the Terms of Reference with the ALC on an annual basis
 - Treating the committee with the same respect as provided to Council, this includes providing consistent written reports to the AAC
 - Improving the agenda format and explaining policy and regulation requirements
 - Implementing a follow-up sheet
- The Agricultural Area Plan development process started in August 2008. Don Cameron Associates was contracted to prepare the plan and an Agricultural Area Plan steering committee was established.
- The Agricultural Area Plan process included a series of meetings, public consultations, and plan reviews. The final documents were adopted into the District's Official Community Plan in June of 2010.
- The Agricultural Area Plan consists of two documents, the Agricultural Area Plan and the Background and Implementation. Both documents can be viewed on the District of Kent's website at www.district.kent.bc.ca
- The contents of the Background and Implementation document are as follows:
 - Agricultural Area Plan Development
 - Purpose of the plan
 - The important planning questions
 - Relationship among the planning terms
 - Steps in developing the plan
 - Background and Current Situation
 - District of Kent Agriculture in Perspective
 - SWOT analysis for the District of Kent
 - Policy context
 - Education and research
 - Perspectives from other jurisdictions
 - Implementation Strategy
 - Role of the Agricultural Area Plan
 - Monitoring and review process
 - Implementing the specific recommendations
 - Appendix
 - Kent Agricultural Advisory Terms of Reference
 - The Consultant Team
- The contents of the Agricultural Area Plan are as follows:
 - Overview
 - Guiding principles of the plan
 - Vision and goals
 - Strategy- Encourage industry profitability
 - Strategy- Enhance agricultural capacity
 - Strategy- Foster partnership and collaboration

- The AAP project cost \$65,760, but the net cost to the District was \$25,760. Grant funding was received from the Investment Agriculture Foundation (\$30,000) and the Province (\$10,000).
- District staff prepares a year-end report on Agricultural Area Plan-related accomplishments to date. The Kent AAC reviews the report and forwards a recommendation to Council for the following year's priority items. Council considers the AAC's recommendations and if they are supported, they are adopted.
- The Council adopted the following Agricultural Area Plan recommendation as priority items for 2013:
 - Recommendation 4.3.2- Support recreation trails in or adjacent to agricultural land
 - Recommendation 4.5.1- Discourage applications for additional residences in the Agricultural Land Reserve
 - Recommendation 4.7.1- Support local farmers in making their products available for local purchase
 - Recommendation 5.5.1- Declaration of 'Agriculture Week'
- Darcey shared two slides showing a long list of Agricultural Area Plan accomplishments. These include:
 - Dissapproved application for removal of ALR land adjacent to the Agricultural Research Station
 - Draft home plate bylaw language has been approved by the AAC and must now be presented to the public for input
 - Mass Carcass Disposal Emergency Plan has been developed and exercises have been conducted
 - A farmer's market has been established
 - Agriculture tours are conducted every two years
- Darcey can be contacted at 604-796-2235 and dkohuch@district.kent.bc.ca



Question and Answer Session

- One attendee asked about the population of Kent. The response was that the 5400 population estimate includes Agassiz.
- One attendee asked whether there are trails both in and out of the ALR within Darcey's jurisdiction. The response was that most of the trails are on dykes inside of the ALR.
- One attendee asked how many small farms Kent has. The response was that the answer is in the Agricultural Area Plan. There are larger dairy and blueberry farms and a variety

of types of smaller scale farms including goat-dairy operations and several agri-tourism operations.

- One attendee asked what Kent is doing to support small farms. The response was that they are helping them bring their products to market, but it is tricky, as creating business is hard. They do well in the summer but struggle at other times. They are reviewing the business license bylaw to consider whether farmers should need to have a business license.
- One attendee noted that Kent's Agricultural Advisory Committee has 18 members and asked whether that was too many. The response was that the number is now down to 11 and a quorum requires 6.
- One attendee asked whether the Agricultural Land Use Inventory data has been valuable for them. The response was that it was valuable for their Agricultural Area Plan. Agricultural activities change over time.
- One attendee asked about what has been done to keep offspring on the farm. The ALC will address this question as well. What does succession planning mean? Splitting up the property makes a mess of it. Subdivision to create new parcels is no longer happening. Of all the zones in Kent, the agricultural zone has the most opportunities in terms of bed and breakfasts, agri-tourism, etc. A farm employee residence is an option.
- One attendee asked whether, as a planner, Darcey looks at a subdivision bylaw or a similar policy through an agricultural lens. Do you look at the local government barriers to agriculture? The response was that Kent has two types of agricultural zones, one for intensive agriculture and one for regular agriculture. Greenhouses were part of the intensive agriculture zone. They changed the zoning to accommodate it. Most of the residential area is developed. Kent doesn't have the same pressures as other communities. They didn't waste time on edge planning because the edge is already defined.
- One attendee asked whether they look at the total picture to take the pressure off of farmland. The response was that they do this in their planning documents, but they really don't have urban pressure.
- One attendee asked whether the Agricultural Advisory Committees' recommendations normally reviewed by Council. The response was yes, they normally are. Staff also make their own recommendations.
- One attendee asked about First Nations and the Fraser River. The response was that they have a Memorandum of Understanding with Harrison Hot Springs and four First Nations. They meet at regular intervals during the year. The main issue is gravel removal. They have a united voice on this issue and need to deal with others who don't understand.
- One attendee asked whether the AAC minutes go to Council and the ALC. The response was that yes, they go to Council and when ALC applications are supported, those get sent to the Commission.

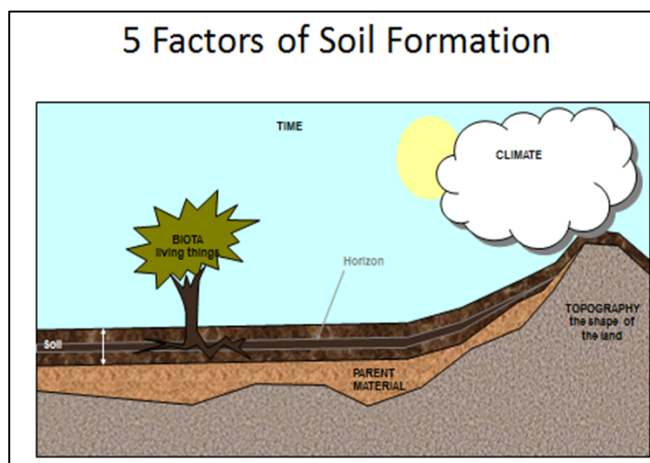
8.3. BC Soils Information Overview and Interactive Session

Deepa Filatow, Provincial Bioterrain Specialist, Ministry of Environment

Deepa.filatow@gov.bc.ca

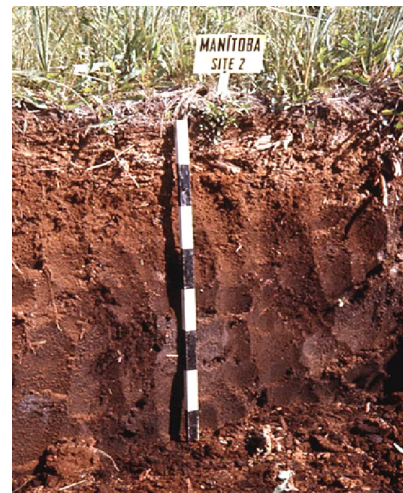
Presentation Summary

- Deepa began by introducing herself. She is a provincial expert on soils and terrain information. In addition, she is an urban farmer, passionate composter, xeroscape gardener, wine and food connoisseur, cross country ski coach, mom, wife...
- Deepa then explained the outline for her presentation and asked attendees to consider the following questions:
 - How are soils relevant to your current AAC activities?
 - What soils information do you currently use? In what format (maps, point data, GIS maps)?
 - Do you use GIS software or does your organization have a GIS department?
 - What do you want to get out of this talk?
- The first part of Deepa's presentation covered 'Soils 101'.
- Terrestrial Ecosystem Information (TEI) is information relating to ecosystems, soils, surficial geology (terrain), and wildlife habitat and species distribution. Natural resource inventory data and information is governed by Resource Inventory Standards Committee (RISC) standards. The data is managed by Terrestrial Ecosystem Information Unit in the Ecosystem Information Section, Knowledge Management Branch, Ministry of Environment.
- TEI data are used to answer landscape level questions at a variety of scales.
- There are four team members on the TEI team at the Ministry of Environment's Ecosystem Information Section. They are Deepa Filatow, Maija Finvers, Tony Button, and Corey Erwin. They:
 - Maintain inventory and digital capture standards
 - Convert and clean up legacy data
 - Load data into corporate repositories
 - Steward data from other custodians
 - Improve access to data and utility of the information
 - Acquisition and creation of new information
- The TEI team works with partners such as:
 - Scott Smith and Liz Kenney, Agriculture and Agrifood Canada
 - Margaret Schmitt, Simon Fraser University
 - Chuck Bulmer and Shannon Berch, BC Government
- Soils are the loose materials on the earth's surface capable of supporting plants.
- Deepa explained 5 factors of soil formation.
- They utilize The Canadian System of Soil Classification, which includes soil horizons and characteristics.
- BC has complex topography,



geology, and surficial materials that contribute to soil diversity. BC also has a complex and changing climate.

- BC is situated at the subduction zone between the Pacific Plate and the continental North America Plate. Tectonic activity resulted in the accretion of the terrains that have created most of BC. Tectonic setting, volcanism, mountain building, erosion, and other processes were all players in the complexity of BC's present day geology.
- Glaciation and the erosion and deposition by glacial ice was a major influence on our modern landscape. Multiple glaciations have covered BC over the past 2 million years. Most of the modern day materials on the land surface are a result of the most recent glaciations that ended 10,000 years ago.
- Since the end of the last glaciation geomorph, processes such as erosion and deposition by snow/ice, water, wind, and gravity have continued to shape the landscape.
- In summary, BC's bedrock geology is complex and BC has complex topography. There are a variety of surficial materials that vary in their character.
- Scanned maps are available at:
http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/esd/distdata/ecosystems/TEI_Scanned_Maps/ Sort the list to narrow your search and click on the link in the EX_IMAGE_URL field to open the folder and then copy to your local drive or double click on the TIFF file.
- Scanned map holdings include soils, terrain, surficial geology, ecosystems, agriculture capability and other capability maps. These were hard copy maps dating from the late 1960s to the early 1990s that have been scanned and georeferenced.
- The most up-to-date version of the data can be viewed in GIS from iMap. The best way to access the scanned map data is by using arcGIS tools. They can set up a custom map for finding soils and agriculture data within a certain area, if arcGIS is accessible.
- Published reports are available at: <http://sis.agr.gc.ca/cansis/publications/bc/index.html> Follow the links to get to the published reports and associated maps.
- Other soils and agricultural documents in the provincial libraries and catalogues can be accessed through the CLIR site: <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/clir/> This site searches multiple provincial government libraries and catalogues.
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data are points, polygon or lines that have associated soils attributes. These datasets are actively being worked on to enable publication to a centralized freely available self serve location. These datasets can be obtained by request to: soilterrain@victoria1.gov.bc.ca
- Deepa explained that there have been various soil mapping attempts at the federal and provincial level. They are now amalgamating all of this information.
- Deepa shared the website for Hectares BC: <http://www.hectaresbc.org/app/habc/HaBC.html> which is a pilot project to test a new tool for geospatial data analysis in the natural resource area.
- In partnership with the Federal Government the Province, they are working on predictive soil mapping, using available soils information to refine the provincial



coverage of soils information using GIS technologies and expert knowledge.

- Access to data is important, but often clients are asking for data because they are trying to answer a question. They are now working towards data themes that focus on critical information that can be used to answer a wide variety of land management decisions.
- If you have maps or data not found in the provincial or federal data holdings, contact the data managers at soilterrain@victoria1.gov.bc.ca
- Deepa can be contacted at deepa.filatow@gov.bc.ca and 250-861-7675.

Question and Answer Session

- One attendee asked about whether there are indicator plants for soils attributes. The response was that she is not aware of any provincial handbook on this.
- One attendee asked about flooding at the Site C dam. The response was that Deepa is involved in a response on behalf of the Ministry of Environment.
- One attendee mentioned that the website is hard to access. The response was that people should use the soilterrain@gov.bc.ca email address to ask questions.
- One attendee asked about micro versus macro scale maps. The response was that there are limits as to how fine scale the mapping can be. It is hard to base a zoning map on a soils map.
- One attendee asked whether there is a resource that says what soils are suited to which crops. The response was no, they don't have that yet.

8.4. Agricultural Advisory Committees and the Agricultural Land Commission, a presentation on how AACs and the ALC can work together to strengthen farming

Martin Collins, Regional Planner, Agricultural Land Commission

Martin.Collins@gov.bc.ca

Presentation Summary

- Martin began by introducing himself and stating three goals for his presentation:
 - To inform AACs what the Commission considers when reviewing applications and planning matters
 - To explain what information the AACs can provide the Commission regarding applications and planning matters
 - To discuss how the ALC and AACs can work together
- The ALR is 'A provincial zone where agriculture is recognized as the priority use and where non-agricultural uses are regulated and farming is encouraged.' Agricultural lands are designated under the Act.
- The ALC is 'The body of appointed individuals (and staff) who administer the ALR boundary, subdivision and non-farm uses.'
- The ALR is 5% of BC's land base. This area is comprised of about 50% private and 50% crown land. The majority of the ALR lies in the northern part of the province. The ALR is larger now, than when it was established.
- The next slide showed a map of the ALR in the Okanagan region. The Okanagan ALR represents 5% of the provincial ALR, which is comparable to the Lower Mainland.
- The purpose of the ALC comes from the ALC Act:

- Preserve agricultural land
- Encourage farming on agricultural land in collaboration with other communities of interest
- Encourage local governments, First Nations, the government and its agents to enable and accommodate farm use of agricultural land and uses compatible with agriculture in their plans, bylaws, and policies.
- The ALC's principal functions are land use planning, applications, policy development and research, and compliance and enforcement.
- When it comes to land use planning, the ALC's mandate is to encourage local governments, First Nations, the government and its agents to enable and accommodate farm use of agricultural land and uses compatible with agriculture in their plans, bylaws, and policies.
- In order to achieve this mandate, the ALC collaborates with local government by using tools such as growth strategies, land use bylaws, OCPs, agri-teams, and agriculture area plans. These tools help to outline the community needs with respect to agricultural, residential, and commercial goals.
- When reviewing all of these tools, the ALC is looking for local government justification that has been based on local and regional planning assessments and is supported by rigorous technical analyses which include:
 - identifying the need for and expected community benefits or values to be achieved
 - determining whether there are reasonable alternative means of meeting community need
 - identifying and assessing the impacts or risks to the community if the proposal does not proceed or is delayed
 - identifying and assesses the impacts of meeting non-agricultural community need and the mitigation or management of these impacts
- When it comes to ALC applications, if a proposal is not consistent with the ALR Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulation, an application must be submitted to the ALC. Application types include subdivision, non-farm use, exclusion, and inclusion.
- The Commission considers many factors in making its decision.
 - If the application is for exclusion, the first and foremost question is whether the land is suitable for farm use, because that is the criterion used in Section 15 of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*.
 - Suitability involves more than just an agricultural capability rating – because agriculture also includes non-soil bound farming – it also includes consideration of parcel size, relation to other agricultural land, impacts from adjacent non-farm uses, etc. To the extent that those factors are likely to make it impractical to farm the land, they lend credence to an exclusion application. But the Commission also looks at the impact on nearby agriculture and may refuse an application to exclude low-capability land which is surrounded by active agriculture.

- Generally speaking, short term economic viability is not a reason to consider land unsuitable for farming as every commodity goes through economic cycles, and if we excluded land suited primarily to tree fruit production every time the economics of tree fruit farming is in the tank, we would have no land available when the economics of tree fruit farming is looking very good.
- The next slide showed a diagram of the ALC application process. Landowners or agents submit an application via their local government. The local government reviews the application, creates a report, refers it to relevant committees or boards, and then, if authorized, forwards it to the ALC. ALC staff do background research and meet with the applicant onsite or arrange a hearing. ALC Commissioners then review the application, make a decision, and notify the applicant.
- The ALC Staff who do the background research are the land use planners, but regional planners also get involved when the application raises broader planning issues.
- Although it is a linear path of information to the ALC, the decision comments and feedback from the Commissioners can be used by local governments, AACs and the public to get a better understanding of what the Commission considers to be a positive or negative impact on agricultural land in BC.
- Commission consideration may include, but is not limited to any or all of the following:
 - Agricultural potential of subject and adjacent parcels
 - Agricultural capability rating
 - Agricultural suitability and current land or agricultural use
 - Raised expectations of land use change
 - Regional and community planning objectives
 - Alternate location outside ALR
 - Local government and AAC recommendations
 - Does the proposal benefit/support/damage/restrict agricultural land use?
 - Impact on existing or potential agricultural use
- With regard to specific types of applications, it is important to break down some of the common issues the Commission has dealt with in the past year and elaborate on some examples of common wording that you may have seen on recently released decision minutes.
- Regarding subdivision:
 - Subdivision of large cohesive units of agriculture is not consistent with the ALC Act to preserve and encourage agriculture and leaves the agricultural options open for the future
 - Subdivision for the purpose of residential use on agricultural land is not a benefit to the business of agriculture such as it conflicts with surrounding agricultural uses (Right to Farm, access, vehicles, dogs) and increases density
 - In some cases, roads are a substantial impediment to farming and safety of crossing, however a low-traffic road may not be a significant barrier to farming the land as a cohesive unit
 - Section 946 of the Local Government Act is tool available to local government to accommodate a subdivision for a relative where the proposed lot is smaller than

the minimum lot size specified in a zoning bylaw. If the Commission allows a subdivision, 946 may be invoked by a local government. However, 946 is NOT a reason for the Commission to allow a subdivision.

- Regarding non-farm use and additional dwellings:
 - Vacant farmland is not an opportunity for development and non-farm use. 5% of BC is designated as the provincial reserve of agricultural land. You can only farm or ranch where the land will cooperate. There should be a very good justification why the remaining 95% of the province is not a suitable alternative location for a non-farm use.
 - The Act and [Agricultural Land Reserve Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulation](#) do not set a limit on the number of additional residences for farm help per parcel, but all residences must be necessary for farm use. The local government must be convinced that there is a legitimate need for an additional residence for farm help such as 'farm' classification under the [Assessment Act](#), size and type of farm operation, etc.
 - The Commission can NOT allow additional residences for farm use based on a proposed farm/ranch operation. In addition, second dwellings should not be seen as an opportunity for non-farm rental income purposes.
 - Second dwellings almost always lead to subdivision by the current owners or by the subsequent landowners. Think forward 20 years when at least one of the house owners leaves or dies or the property changes hands.
- Regarding exclusion, the Commission recognizes that there are circumstances under which exclusions are practical and/or necessary for community growth. However, there must be sufficient justification both physically (agricultural cap, agricultural suitability) and logistically for the community.
 - If an Official Community Plan is inconsistent with the ALC's recommendations or the ALR designation, the Commission is not compelled to approve the application.
 - If the exclusion proposal is based on lack of agricultural potential, the first and foremost question is whether the land is suitable for farm use. To the extent that agricultural capability, parcel size, relation to other agricultural land, impacts from adjacent non-farm uses, etc. are likely to make it impractical to farm the land, they lend credence to an exclusion application.
 - Regardless of the reason for exclusion application, sometimes potential exclusion areas are better addressed in an Official Community Plan review rather than a case by case basis.
- If the ALR is to be maintained in the long term, it is obvious that it cannot be endlessly eroded. This goes beyond measures to control land under local agricultural and rural zoning bylaws, which are generally effective only so long as there is not a routine request to use more farmland for non-farm purposes. The principles involved in evaluating an application under the ALC Act must differ from those employed in weighing re-zoning requests. The criteria for judging applications under the Act, will, by

necessity, be more oriented towards maintaining a permanent farmland reserve without strict regard to present use or production needs.

- AACs bring local farming knowledge to the Commission. They provide the Commission with insight on the following:
 - An assessment of agricultural potential of the subject property
 - Any limitations to agricultural development
 - History of agriculture on the property
 - Impact of the proposal on farm activity on the property and in the surrounding area
 - Opinion in the proposal is in the best interest of agriculture
 - The reasons behind the AAC recommendation to local government
- The AAC can be involved with ALC work through:
 - Advising local government on land use bylaws
 - Providing local knowledge about and assessing the potential impact of specific applications
 - Contributing to the development of and monitoring the implementation of agricultural area plans
- The ALC is shifting from using 80% of its resources, which are currently devoted to applications, to 80% of the resources being devoted to proactive planning in the context of the ALC mandate. They want to refocus time and energy on planning, research, policy, education, and communications. Some of those new directions include:
 - Targeted ALR boundary reviews, creating defensible boundaries
 - Proactive planning, engaging local governments, advisory groups, communities, provincial ministries, agencies regarding the ALC Act and agriculture
 - Encouraging farming, prioritizing proposals that are intended to support and enhance agriculture
 - Enhancing compliance and enforcement
- The new ALC direction compliments local government and AAC involvement. It involves:
 - Earlier and extensive involvement in local government planning processes
 - Increased communication and engagement
 - Emphasis on agricultural area planning
 - Encouraging establishment of agricultural advisory committees
 - Encouraging agri-teams
- Contact the ALC at 604-660-7000 and visit the website at www.alc.gov.bc.ca



Question and Answer Session

- One attendee asked about repatriating the homesite severance. The response was that homesite severance at the time the ALR was established was meant to recognize that the land owners at the time did not anticipate that the ALC Act would be established. Repatriation is not likely.
- One attendee asked about the Peace River, where the oil industry is encroaching on farmland. The response was that this industrial use is temporary. Some oil wells have been decommissioned where there is now farming. The ALC does recognize that this activity has a huge impact on farming. Currently, the maximum allowance that does not require a referral to the ALC is 7 hectares/quarter. This maximum may change.
- One attendee asked about the delegation agreement with the ALC for the oil and gas industry. The response was that the current referral limit is 7 hectares/quarter, which is now being reviewed.
- One attendee asked how many sites the ALC actually visits. The response was about 25%, but sometimes individual commissioners visit more.
- One attendee asked how someone becomes a commissioner. The response was that you apply to the Board Resourcing and Development Office (BRDO). The applications are reviewed by the chair and appointed by the Minister of Agriculture. The Chair is appointed by Cabinet.
- One attendee stated that they are trying to wrap their head around how to encourage farming. Does subdivision promote farming? The response was that some historical subdivisions were very small. Areas where parcelization was promoted have been damaged more. Changing landscapes can be disruptive to agriculture. They would welcome applications to consolidate parcels.
- One attendee commented that the policies on the ALC website are great. Please create more, as they promote consistency with the Local Government and ALC Act. The response was that the ALC does not normally receive bylaws that are inconsistent.
- One attendee asked whether the ALC has looked at areas that should be included in the ALR. The response was that the Ministry of Agriculture has done some of that over the years, but not with a lot of success.
- One attendee asked about allowing the wine production facilities on-farm. The response was that the Province and the ALC granted the ability to sell other things on-farm in the mid-nineties. The attendee followed up by stating that liquor laws require land-based wineries, meaning that the winery has to be on-site. Washington State is different. The response was that the ALC was not aware of this issue.
- One attendee asked whether the Mining Tenure Act has precedence over the ALC Act. The response was that surface rights are under the ALC Act and under surface rights are not and therefore, they have to work together. The right to explore is not superseded by the ALC Act. Mines are not generally a problem. The ALC may ask the mining company to enable agriculture, i.e. provide water to other sites, etc.
- One attendee asked about zoning bylaws having to be consistent with the ALC Act. How does this affect minimum lot size designations? Subdivision requests are being forwarded when they have met the minimum lot size designation. The response was

that it has resulted in more applications. They are not sure it is worth the politics that follow.

- One attendee asked about whether time has run out when it comes to grandfathering a second residence. The response was that the right is lost once someone dies. The application has to be made soon afterwards.
- One attendee from a new AAC asked what weight the ALC places on AAC recommendations when they differ from the local government. The response was that they give it weight and also look for a track record. The ALC wants a recommendation with a reason or discussion around it and even a voting pattern.
- One attendee stated that their local government recently formed an AAC. They asked where their Advisory Planning Commission fits in. Is the role of the Advisory Planning Commission diminished? The response was that the AAC is more focused. If they keep both groups, the ALC would be interested to hear from both of them.
- One attendee asked if you add a spouse to the title, does it affect the homesite severance. The response was no, it does not affect the application.

8.5. BC's Agricultural Land Commission, a presentation on the strategic direction of the Agricultural Land Commission

Richard Bullock, Chair, Agricultural Land Commission

Presentation Summary

- Richard began by thanking the Ministry of Agriculture for inviting him to speak.
- Richard has been working to bring real change to the ALC, moving it forward after 40 years.
- Richard would like to see the ALC spend 20% of its time on applications and 80% of its time working on planning.
- The last two Ministers of Agriculture turned a corner and said that the ALR is here to stay.
- When it comes to dealing with applications, the emphasis is on farming-related applications. Recent land purchases go to the bottom of the list and real farmers with real problems and real land go to the top of the pile.
- Over the last 2.5 years he worked on a report about the ALC and the ALR. One outcome was the finding that the ALR is good for the Province.
- The ALC is an administrative tribunal, as laid out in the ALC Act. Local governments are the first step in the process of managing the ALR and the ALC is the last step.
- Looking at the ALR boundaries, they are not all that bad. When it comes to suitability, tree fruits can be located on 3-6 class land. In addition, staging areas for cattle movement can be located on land without good soil.



- The ALC is moving to online application in June. Applicants will be able to go through prompts and see their application history.
- Gravel extraction and fill is a big issue for them to grapple with. They ask many questions when reviewing these applications, including will the site be rehabilitated so that it is at least as good for farming as it was before.
- The ALC takes its job seriously and they are tired of hearing that poor soil means that the land is not good.
- In Richard's 2 and a half years as Chair, he thinks they have been fair.

Question and Answer Session

- One attendee said that historically, the ALC has had problems with land values and subdivision and farming has struggled. How do they help farmer's farm? The response was that the ALC does not have the money to support farmers. Senior government has to deal with that.
- One attendee asked about meat regulations. The response was that the ALC has weighed in with their feedback.
- One attendee stated that they are quite concerned with Delta farmland being put into roadways. Can you stop it? The response was that Mufford Crescent was one of the first issues he addressed. Richard had a public meeting and they changed plans- the development is now going along the railroad. The decision on South Fraser Perimeter Road was before his time. It resulted in lost land but got a lot of mitigation.
- One attendee from Lillooet stated that they don't have a lot of development pressure and their ALR lands have gone to forage crops or fallow. The response was that the ALC is protecting farmland and not agriculture. Economics are not his purview. Just because land is not farmed is not a good reason to exclude it. The real question is how to put land into production. If someone had told him ten years ago that there would be a local food movement, he would have said they were crazy.
- One attendee commented that the ALC will keep us at the same level of agricultural potential we've already got for 7 generations. The response was that he does not agree. Technology and the climate are changing. We are seeing vineyards in new places such as Clinton.
- One attendee asked whether the ALC is exempt from reviewing Site 'C'. The response was that no, they are not. The provincial interest has not been invoked. So far, they have not had an application.
- One attendee stated that they are doing gravel extraction, but they are licensed, bonded, etc. What more would the ALC require to extract within the ALR? The response was nothing, if you are doing it properly. It is bond controlled by the ALC in order to fund the Agrologist, which is intended to prevent them from getting shoved out of the process.
- One attendee commented that Kelowna faces constant development pressure. They are happy to hear that these applications are going to the bottom of the pile. The response was that often people bring up comments about decisions elsewhere, but the province is very different from region to region. You can't compare decisions between regions.

- One attendee asked when application fees will be going up and commented that it can't be too soon. The response was that they have made a submission to the government and they hope to have it addressed very soon.
- One attendee commented that 5% of our land is in agriculture and only 2.5% is privately owned. Will we see agriculture encouraged on the other 2.5%? The response was that most of that is grazing land and poorer land.
- One attendee commented that oil and gas lands are very expensive to reclaim.
- One attendee asked whether they get a lot of applications that include compensation or land trades. How do they deal with them? The response was that they deal with them with common sense. They are generally skeptical about land trades.
- One attendee stated that when it comes to fees, \$300 is not a lot. What is happening with regard to fees? Dealing with applications is getting to be a waste of resources and the attendee assumes that the applicants will keep coming back. The response was the same as earlier. A request has gone to the Treasury Board and they are waiting for a response.

9. Attendees

25 AAC members shown in this colour of text

17 Local government representatives shown in this colour of text

12 Provincial government representatives shown in this colour of text

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	First Name	Last Name	Position	Location
1	Richard	Bullock	Chair	Agricultural Land Commission
2	Martin	Collins	Regional Planner	Agricultural Land Commission
3	Lucille	Dempsey	Commissioner	Agricultural Land Commission
4	Jim	Johnson	Commissioner	Agricultural Land Commission
5	Bert	Miles	Commissioner	Agricultural Land Commission
6	Ron	Wallace	Land Use Planner	Agricultural Land Commission
7	Wilma	Watkin		Cariboo Regional District
8	Ted	Blackwell	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	City of Kamloops
9	Dieter	Dudy	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	City of Kamloops
10	Maren	Luciani	Agricultural Area Plan Project Planner	City of Kamloops
11	Pierre	Calissi	Agricultural Advisory Committee Vice-Chair	City of Kelowna
12	Todd	Cashin	Environment and Land Use Manager	City of Kelowna
13	Leo	Gebert	Agricultural Advisory Committee Chair	City of Kelowna
14	Greg	Sauer	Planner	City of Kelowna
15	Allan	Garland	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	City of Penticton
16	Bronwyn	Sawyer	Planning Technologist	City of Penticton
17	John	McLeod	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	City of Salmon Arm
18	Maria	Besso	Councillor	District of Coldstream
19	Peter	McClean	Councillor	District of Coldstream
20	Darcey	Kohuch	Director of Development Services	District of Kent
21	Owen	Dickie	Councillor	District of Lake Country
22	Mark	Koch	Director of Planning and Development	District of Lake Country
23	Shayne	Wright	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	District of Lake Country
24	Claude	Drought	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	District of West Kelowna
25	Menno	Salverda	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	District of West Kelowna
26	Shannon	Tartaglia	Planning Analyst	District of West Kelowna
27	Jim	Forbes	Regional Agrologist	Ministry of Agriculture
28	Ken	McAra	Regional Agrologist	Ministry of Agriculture
29	Greg	Tegart	Regional Manager, Interior BC	Ministry of Agriculture
30	Bert	van Dalfsen	Manager, Strengthening Farming Program	Ministry of Agriculture
31	Carl	Withler	Regional Agrologist	Ministry of Agriculture
32	Deepa	Filatow	Provincial Bioterrain Specialist	Ministry of Environment
33	Frank	Breault	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Peace River Regional District
34	Jill	Copes	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Peace River Regional District
35	Bob	Fugger	Agricultural Advisory Commission Member	Regional District of Central Okanagan
36	Victor	Macdonald	Agricultural Advisory Commission Member	Regional District of Central Okanagan
37	Molly	Thurston	Agricultural Advisory Commission Chair	Regional District of Central Okanagan
38	Donna	Dean	Planner	Regional District of Kootenay Boundary

39	Rick	Fairbairn	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member, Director	Regional District of North Okanagan
40	Bob	Fleming	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member, Director	Regional District of North Okanagan
41	Anthony	Kittel	Regional Growth Strategy Coordinator	Regional District of North Okanagan
42	Mike	Macnabb	Agricultural Advisory Committee Chair, Director	Regional District of North Okanagan
43	Bruce	Naka	Agricultural Advisory Committee Vice-Chair	Regional District of North Okanagan
44	Rob	Smailes	General Manager, Planning and Building	Regional District of North Okanagan
45	Ralph	van Dalfsen	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Regional District of North Okanagan
46	Jacquie	Rasmussen	Agricultural Advisory Committee Chair	Squamish Lillooet Regional District, District of Lillooet
47	Kristina	Salin	Planner	Squamish Lillooet Regional District, District of Lillooet
48	Eckhard	Zeidler	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Squamish Lillooet Regional District, District of Lillooet
49	Tom	Boeve	Agricultural Advisory Committee Chair	Township of Spallumcheen
50	Christine	Fraser	Councillor	Township of Spallumcheen
51	Rob	Hettler	Councillor	Township of Spallumcheen
52	Susan	van den Tillaart	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Township of Spallumcheen
53	Tony	van den Tillaart	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Township of Spallumcheen
54	Kathy	Velocci	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Township of Spallumcheen



Workshop III – March 13th, 2013 – in Langley

10. General Attendance

The third regional workshop was held on March 13, 2013 at Newlands Golf Course in Langley. Representatives from 15 different local governments and/or AACs attended including:

- City of Abbotsford
- City of Chilliwack
- City of Pitt Meadows
- City of Richmond
- City of Surrey
- Corporation of Delta
- District of Kent
- District of Maple Ridge
- Fraser Valley Regional District
- Metro Vancouver Regional District
- Squamish Lillooet Regional District
- Sunshine Coast Regional District
- Township of Langley

This workshop had 64 participants including AAC members and local government politicians and staff. Also present was staff from the BC Ministry of Agriculture (AGRI) and the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC). A list of participants is provided at the end of the notes from this workshop.

11. Workshop Outline

- Welcome and Introductions
 - *Orlando Schmidt and Bert van Daltsen, Ministry of Agriculture*
- Effective Agricultural Advisory Committees, a presentation on AAC mandates and tools for influencing change
 - *Chris Zabek, Ministry of Agriculture*
- Innovative Agricultural Advisory Committee Approaches, AAC representatives discuss their AAC's mandate and successes
 - *Kim Grout, Director of Operations and Development Services, City of Pitt Meadows*
 - *Darcey Kohuch, Director of Development Services, District of Kent*
- Elected Officials Panel, elected officials discuss their experiences interacting with AACs
 - *Ken Huttema, Councillor for the City of Chilliwack, Member of the Chilliwack Agricultural Commission, and Chair of Chilliwack's AAC*
 - *Ian Paton, Councillor for the Corporation of Delta and Chair of Delta's AAC*
 - *Harold Steves, Councillor for the City of Richmond and representative on Richmond and Metro Vancouver's AACs*
 - *David Davis, Councillor for the Township of Langley and member of Langley's AAC*
- Agricultural Advisory Committees and the Agricultural Land Commission, a presentation on how AACs and the ALC can work together to strengthen farming
 - *Tony Pellett and Eamonn Watson, Agricultural Land Commission*
- Agricultural Land Use in the Lower Mainland, a presentation on the status of agricultural land in the region using Ministry of Agriculture Land Use Inventory data
 - *Bert van Daltsen, Ministry of Agriculture*

- Closing
 - *Orlando Schmidt and Bert van Dalftsén, Ministry of Agriculture*

12. Sessions and Presentations

Five presentations took place at the Langley workshop, in addition to the panel of elected officials and the opening and closing statements made by Bert van Dalftsén, Manager of the Strengthening Farming Program at AGRI. Orlando Schmidt, Regional Manager with AGRI, acted as Master of Ceremonies. Workshop attendees received a folder containing various publications on AGRI's Strengthening Farming Program and AAC management. These documents are available on the Strengthening Farming website at

<http://www.al.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/sf/Publications.htm>

12.1. Effective Agricultural Advisory Committees, a presentation on AAC mandates and tools for influencing change

Chris Zabek, Regional Agrologist, Ministry of Agriculture

chris.zabek@gov.bc.ca

Presentation Summary

- Chris began by introducing himself and stating that there are some general commonalities and ideas that many AACs are using to work effectively.
- As of February 2013, there were 46 AACs across the province.
- AACs advise local governments on agricultural land use and policy issues. AACs are an effective way for local governments to link with their farm and ranch communities.
- AAC members are volunteers, appointed by a Council or Regional Board. A key asset is that the AAC members are predominantly drawn from the farm and ranching community, and the committee focuses on agricultural issues. AACs want to make the best use of their members' skills and experience to provide the best input possible to Council.
- There are a number of factors that contribute to a successful AAC.
- Terms of Reference. A clear "terms of reference" (TOR) provides structure, while at the same time providing for a degree of flexibility in the role of the committee to meet local needs.
 - Meeting procedures such as frequency of meetings and quorum are important to clarify.
 - At a minimum, a TOR should include details on the number of members, member affiliation, the length of time each member is appointed (staggered terms are good), key roles and responsibilities such as reviewing plans, bylaws and ALR applications, water management issues, and agricultural awareness.
 - The TOR may also refer to the staff resources (and in some cases financial resources) available to the Committee to help it carry out its work.
 - Conflict of interest guidelines should be in writing. In some cases, these can be the same guidelines as those listed under the *Community Charter* that apply to Councillors or Board members.

- Periodic review of your TOR is a good idea.
- A model TOR with suggested criteria is available on AGRI's website:
<http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/sf/aac/resources.htm>
- New Member Orientation. It can be a bit confusing for new AAC members. How can you make it an easier transition?
 - At a minimum, they should receive written copies of all the relevant background material, such as the TOR, a volunteer policy (if there is one), conflict of interest guidelines (if not in the TOR), confidentiality requirements, etc. It would be helpful if staff have the time to walk them through these documents and answer any questions (before the new member's first meeting).
 - It always helps to break the ice if you do a round of introductions at the first meeting that a new member attends.
 - Annual Work Plan. An annual work plan gives the Committee a sense of direction and timelines. They are created at the beginning of the calendar year/fiscal year.
 - An annual summary report to the Council/Board highlights accomplishments and provides good feedback to the AAC itself.
- Working with Councils/Boards. AACs provide advice, not marching orders, so how can you help to ensure that advice is translated effectively up the line?
 - An obvious first step is to work closely with your Council/Board liaison. They are the linchpins, translating the Committee's perspective to the Council/Board, and vice versa.
 - Another tool is to bring your Council/Board out to farms with a farm tour. It's one thing for them to read a report that says they've spent x million dollars on flood-proofing and drainage infrastructure, but it's another to stand beside that new pump station and hear firsthand from the farmers what a difference it has made to their operations.
 - And don't forget social activities! An annual dinner or farm barbeque is a great way to get to know Councillors or Board members on a one on one basis, outside of meetings.
 - Finally, some local governments hold annual volunteer appreciation events. It's a chance for the different committee members to get to know one another and a chance to socialize with staff and elected officials.
- Making Effective Motions. There is a better chance of success if a motion is clear and concise. What can AACs do to ensure that their motions are developed in such a way that the minute taker can capture them easily and their Council/Board can effectively use them for policy advice or decision-making?
 - Make sure the advice is straightforward. Why are you making that recommendation?
 - Indicate who the recommendation is to. It is often to the Council/Board, but it could also be to a senior staff person.
 - Which document/application is the motion referring to?
 - How are you recommending that this application/document be handled? If the Committee feels there is information missing, there may be an opportunity to

- Finally, it can be helpful to summarize the Committee's rationale in bullet form at the end of the motion. By summarizing the key reasons for the recommendation, it makes the motion easier for the Council/Board to understand. Local government staff can be a fantastic resource to assist in making effective motions.
- Connecting with other Groups. If AACs are to be effective, they have to interact with other groups or committees in their area. These interactions may take the form of:
 - Delegations – either those who request to appear before the AAC (or who Council or the Board refers to the AAC), or invited delegations.
 - Local researchers may be working on studies relevant to the AAC's mandate, and may wish to provide a presentation to the AAC for information or to liaise with the AAC to collect information.
 - Chambers of Commerce are potentially interested in linking with AACs, to get a better idea of the needs of local agricultural businesses.
 - Other local government Advisory Committees may wish to refer agenda items of shared interest to the AAC for comment, or to have a cross-appointed member to liaise on a more continuous base with the AAC.
 - Other AACs may be working on an item of common interest.
- Educating the Public. Agricultural Awareness has been added to many AAC's responsibilities. These might take the form of:
 - Fairs, for example the Metro Vancouver AAC has participated in the Campbell Valley Fair held in September in Langley
 - Food Festivals, such as those held in Maple Ridge and Surrey
 - Public Open Houses, such as those on house sizes, siting, etc.
 - Farmers' Markets, such as displays, info, etc.
- Effectiveness Indicators. In summary, here is a list of points to help you gauge the effectiveness of your AAC:
 - Purpose of the committee is clear to all
 - Scheduling and length of meetings
 - Good communication among all members
 - A relaxed atmosphere



- Good preparation on part of the chair and members
 - Interested, committed members
 - Minutes are complete and concise
 - Periodic assessment of committee's work
 - Recognition and appreciation are given to members so that they feel they are making a real contribution
 - The work of the committee is accepted and makes a valuable contribution to the local government. "Accepted" means that even though there may be times where the local government may not go with the AACs recommendation, the input is accepted and given due consideration in the decision making process.
- For AAC resources please visit:
<http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/sf/aac/resources.htm>
 - For a list of AACs please see: <http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/sf/aac/list.htm>

Question and Answer Session

- One attendee asked about staffing. Who usually supports the AAC? The response was that a staff liaison sits as a non-voting participant and is typically from the planning section. Clerical expertise helps ensure that the minutes are recorded smoothly.
- One attendee asked about AACs and budget and taxation function. The response was that some AACs have an operating budget. Maple Ridge has an allocation for activities that focus around agricultural awareness. Some AACs don't have any budget.
- One attendee asked about the Ministry of Agriculture's role with AACs. The response was that AACs can invite Ministry staff to sit as a non-voting ex-officio members. Ministry staff from the Regional Agrologist Network attend meeting and assist with projects when possible. Most members of this network sit on multiple AACs and have a broad breadth of knowledge on AAC functions. ALC staff also sit on AACs as non-voting members.
- The Surrey Environment Advisory Committee was mentioned. They invited a person to sit on the AAC and the Environment Advisory Committee to ensure that the two committees don't butt heads.
- One attendee commented that a variety of AAC's have overlapping issues. Some issues are specific to each municipality, but some are large enough to warrant multiple AACs getting together to figure it out. The response was that yes, some issues are more regional in nature and there are commonalities among AACs such as high land prices, the need for working drainage, how to assist young farmers, how to prevent urban sprawl, and expectations for exclusion. Some of the local issues may be regarding different types of agricultural production depending on soils, climates, etc.
- One attendee asked about funding. Their AAC would like to move an education program forward. What is the general environment for grant opportunities? The response was that some AACs have Agricultural Area Plans. Local governments can apply to the Investment Agriculture Foundation for matching dollars. Getting money for general operations is a bigger challenge. Other groups have used gas tax money, applied to the Real Estate Foundation or VanCity, also Columbia Trust.

- One attendee asked about Cannabis. Maple Ridge has a new bylaw and this is something that all will have to grapple with. Is it an industrial use or is it an agricultural use? The response was that this is an important topic that is being discussed internally. Maple Ridge has gotten some comments from the ALC. A briefing note has been written and will be considered by Ministry executive, so there is not a formal policy yet.

12.2. Innovative Agricultural Advisory Committee Approaches, AAC representatives discuss their AAC's mandate and successes

Kim Grout, Director of Operations and Development Services, City of Pitt Meadows

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Darcey Kohuch, Director of Development Services, District of Kent

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Presentation Summary- Kim Grout

- Kim began by introducing herself. She is one of the only local government staff also serving as Chair of an AAC.
- The stated purpose of the Pitt Meadows AAC is to advise the municipality on agricultural issues including:
 - Implementation of the Agricultural Plan
 - Applications under the ALC Act
 - Comprehensive reviews of agricultural policies and plans
 - Irrigation, drainage, and other water management issues
 - Other matters referred to Council
- The Pitt Meadows AAC reviews applications under the ALC Act. Applications reviewed before being forwarded to Council for consideration include applications for:
 - Exclusion
 - Non-farm use
 - Subdivision
 - Soil Deposit
- The Committee can pass resolutions on these applications indicating:
 - Support for an application, with comments
 - No support an application, with comments
 - Forward with comments only
- The voting membership of the Committee is comprised of up to 8 members representing a diversity of commodity groups:
 - 6 farming community at large members
 - 1 agri-tourism/value added processing sector representative
 - 1 business sector representative (supports or affiliated with agriculture)
- Representation from the following geographic areas is suggested:
 - 3 members from Diking and Drainage Area No. 3
 - 1 member from Diking and Drainage Area No. 1
 - 1 member from Diking and Drainage Area No. 2
 - 1 member from Diking and Drainage Area No. 4

- The Committee has 3 non-voting members. These are:

- A member of Council
- Superintendent of Operations
- A representative from the Ministry of Agriculture



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- The Chair is elected from the membership the first meeting of the year.
- The Agricultural Policy Framework in Pitt Meadows consists of the Agriculture Plan and Agriculture Policies in the Official Community Plan. The Official Community Plan policies fall under the following categories:
 - ALR Land for Productive Uses
 - Larger Agricultural Parcels
 - Housing in Agricultural Areas
 - Urban-Rural Conflicts
 - Diversifying the Agricultural Economy
- The strengths of the Pitt Meadows AAC include:
 - Committee membership is not too large
 - Terms of reference mandates referrals of ALR applications
 - Membership works hard to look at the bigger picture “what’s good for this town”
 - Able to pass resolutions “for or against” applications made by fellow farmers
 - Have input into the annual drainage capital planning
- A city-wide drainage utility was established in 2008 due to flood damage. The AAC was identified as a key stakeholder.
- There was acknowledgment that an additional revenue source was needed to fund the life-cycle cost of the drainage system. A single, city-wide utility allows the City to prioritize expenditures where the need is greatest.
- A fee using parcel area is most equitable for drainage, however there was some concern with financial impact on farms with large holdings. Urban properties should contribute more on a proportional basis due to greater run-off.
- The AAC adopted the concept of creating a drainage utility and the Committee’s input informed and shaped the drainage utility charge structure.
- Kim showed a chart indicating typical drainage utility costs. The total cost of the drainage assessment and drainage levy for a typical small farm is \$710 and the total cost for a typical large farm is \$5350.
- The outcome of the AAC’s involvement was that the city-wide drainage utility adopted by Council.
- In 2008 they worked on a farm home plate policy framework. It was a recommendation in the Agricultural Plan and adopted in Official Community Plan Policy.
- The farm home plate consultation included a public open house in December of 2008. 155 people attended. 83 questionnaires and 14 emails/letters were received. There was also a 222 signature petition (160 Pitt Meadows residents, 87 owners of agricultural

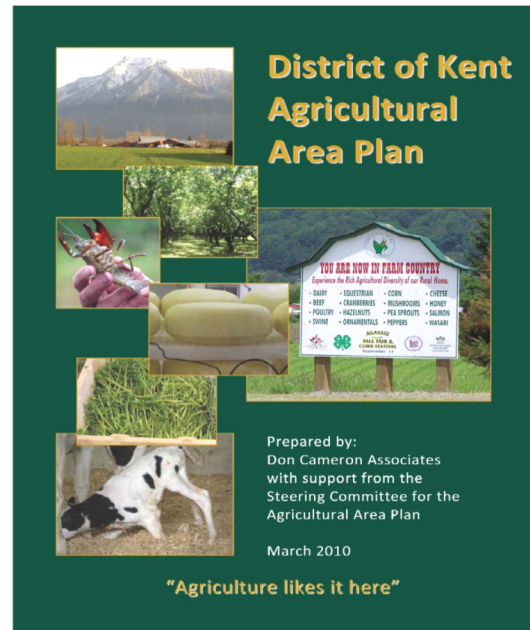
property). 32.5% of respondents supported a farm home place policy and 77.5% did not support farm home place policy. 70% did not support a housing cap.

- The issues raised around farm home place included:
 - Impact of being non-conforming and being able to replace homes in existing locations
 - Impact on home insurance
 - Availability of mortgages
 - Potential reduction in land values
 - Impact on smaller lots
- Ultimately, the farm home place concept was defeated. Perhaps Pitt Meadows will broach this topic again at some point in the future.
- Kim can be reached at kgrout@pittmeadows.bc.ca.

Presentation Summary- Darcey Kohuch

- Darcey shared a slide showing a map of the District of Kent. The District has a population of 5,400 and a total land area of 19,374 hectares (47,869 acres).
- Darcey shared a slide showing a map of the ALR in the District, which has 6,532 hectares of ALR (16,141 acres).
- The Kent AAC was established in 2002. The current membership is comprised of 11 voting members including the District Councilor (Chair), 1 advisory representative from the Ministry of Agriculture and 1 advisory representative and a recording secretary from the District of Kent staff.
- Tips for effective AAC meetings include:
 - The Terms of Reference is reviewed on an annual basis and Committee members and advisory staff understand their roles.
 - Respectful debate is encouraged.
 - Staff treats the committee with the same respect as provided to Council
 - Well-prepared agendas
 - Staff provides consistent written reports to the AAC
 - Staff explains policy and regulation requirements
 - Follow-up sheets are utilized.
- The Agricultural Area Plan development process started in August 2008. Don Cameron Associates was contracted to prepare the plan and a steering committee was established.
- The Agricultural Area Plan process included a series of meetings, public consultations, and plan reviews. The final documents were adopted into the District's Official Community Plan in June of 2010.
- The Agricultural Area Plan consists of two documents, the Agricultural Area Plan and the Background and Implementation. Both documents can be viewed on the District of Kent's website at www.district.kent.bc.ca
- The Agricultural Area Plan project cost \$65,760, but the net cost to the District was \$25,760. Grant funding was received from the Investment Agriculture Foundation (\$30,000) and the Province (\$10,000).

- District staff prepares a year-end report on accomplishments to date. The Kent AAC reviews the report and forwards a recommendation to Council for the following year's Agricultural Area Plan priority items. Council considers the AAC's recommendations and if they are supported, they are adopted.
- The Council adopted the following recommendations as priority items for 2013:
 - Recommendation 4.3.2- Support recreation traits in or adjacent to agricultural land
 - Recommendation 4.5.1- Discourage applications for additional residences in the Agricultural Land Reserve
 - Recommendation 4.7.1- Support local farmers in making their products available for local purchase
 - Recommendation 5.5.1- Declaration of 'Agriculture Week'
- Darcey shared two slides showing a long list of Agricultural Area Plan accomplishments. These include:
 - Disapproved application for removal of ALR land adjacent to the Agricultural Research Station
 - Draft home plate bylaw language has been approved by the AAC and must now be presented to the public for input
 - Mass Carcass Disposal Emergency Plan has been developed and exercises have been conducted
 - A farmer's market has been established
 - Agriculture tours are conducted every two years
- Darcey can be contacted at 604-796-2235 and dkohuch@district.kent.bc.ca



12.3. Elected Officials Panel, elected officials discuss their experiences interacting with AACs

Ken Huttema, Councilor for the City of Chilliwack, Member of the Chilliwack Agricultural Commission, and Chair of Chilliwack's AAC

Ian Paton, Councilor for the Corporation of Delta and Chair of Delta's AAC

Harold Steves, Councilor for the City of Richmond and representative on Richmond and Metro Vancouver's AACs

David Davis, Councilor for the Township of Langley and member of Langley's AAC

Discussion Summary

- The panel began with introductions.
- Huttema has a background in dairy farming but now has a poultry farm that has expanded into poultry processing with a focus on custom poultry. There were 10 employees, but there are now 100. He still lives on the farm and is the only active farmer on city council. Regarding the relationship between the new AAC and Chilliwack's Agriculture Commission (CAC), the CAC is a sub-committee of the economic committee. Its mission is to attract and maintain economic activity and they pushed hard to develop the Agricultural Area Plan, which was adopted about half a year ago. The Agricultural Area Plan recommended establishing an AAC, which had its inaugural meeting about 3 weeks ago. It is not just for farmers, agri-businesses are part of it as well.
- Davis has 200 purebred Holsteins on Hudson's Bay Farm, which is a century farm. He sat on the Township of Langley's AAC and ran for Council because he was concerned about rural-urban conflict.
- Steves' family has farmed on the same site since 1877. They raise grass fed cattle. He ran for Richmond Council 40 years ago. At one point, the AAC developed a food-security plan, which he would like to get back on track.



The agricultural industry has a lot in common with the fishing industry. He would like to preserve agricultural land, but reorganize the food distribution system.

- Paton's family is from Scotland and purchased land in 1938 on Boundary Bay. He was involved in 4H and his father was a dairy farmer, Chair of ALC into 1990s and in the auctioneer business. Today, Paton Holsteins is farming 100 acres, including hay and potatoes. The Delta AAC is a great group. Delta has a tight-knit farming community with wonderful camaraderie and a powerful farmer's institute. However, Delta has had challenges such as a massive new road through farmland and port expansion in 2009. They are constantly squeezed by railways, highways, and hydro lines to get traffic to the port.

How do Councils make land use decisions?

- In Chilliwack, they have a new AAC, so they plan to take all interested parties into consideration when it comes to decisions on ALR policy and regulation.
- In Langley, it used to be a forestry community and then it switched over to farming. There are tailor-made policies for the Township. New rules have to be made as things change.
- In Richmond, the AAC has been discussing a rezoning across street from ALR land that requires buffers and there is a big debate about non-farm uses. Richmond is trying to

become more like Surrey in its dealings with non-farm uses. Transportation plans have destroyed cranberry farms along the way. If you solve the tunnel problem, it just displaces the traffic. Richmond Council recently referred a new bridge proposal to the AAC.

- In Delta, the AAC meets 4 to 5 times per year. There are usually 12 to 14 people at meetings including AAC members and people from the Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust and Ministry of Agriculture. One issue they are discussing is co-generation in greenhouses, which is currently done in conjunction with a landfill in Delta. Anaerobic digesters still require a rezoning with Delta. There is a bylaw on soil conservation that deals with people caught bringing illegal fill onto their farms. Delta was a leader in the province on home plate. Any parcel under 10 acres is restricted to a 60m by 60m home plate.

How do you approach your job as a Councillor?

- In Chilliwack, there unfortunately has not been dialogue between the Chilliwack Agriculture Commission and Council. Chilliwack has done a good job of maintaining their urban containment boundary in order to reduce conflict between urban and agricultural uses.
- In Langley, sometimes it feels like it works backwards because applications go to Council first. It is sometimes hard to get applications referred to the AAC.
- In Richmond, non-farm uses go to the AAC but farm uses don't. The AAC makes comments about fill applications, even though Council approves things that they may not be happy with. One positive thing is that the AAC took a strong stand on the port plan and said that trucks should not go through farmland. Farmers came up with an alternative proposal for traffic. Another positive thing is the Metro Vancouver AAC, which is regional and has a budget and an Agrologist on staff. It adjudicates grants for agricultural education, advises on new agricultural development such as Colony Farm, and is a direct route to politicians.
- In Delta, one of the big projects underway is the Perimeter road, which has an impact on agriculture. They have been working on irrigation improvement in conjunction with this project. Delta's water is constantly being affected by the tides and so there is an effort to bring in cleaner, less saline water. AACs are grassroots and their members are the eyes and ears of what's happening out there. They are common sense guys that know about ditching, draining, leveling, feeding cows and chickens. Staff now request farmers' advice on various projects.

What are the fundamentals of a good relationship with Council?

- Have members on the AAC that are well respected and connected.
- Councils need to listen to AACs. They are grass roots and know what is happening. It is fundamental that Councillors get information before making a decision.
- Even with highly respected members, communicating ideas can sometimes be difficult. Some AACs may not be forceful enough on fill issues. More than just day-to-day land use issues should be referred to the AAC because they have a different perspective.
- It is important to have the Mayor and CAO in tune with agriculture community and it is important to talk about the little things. City Hall sees the good stuff but not the miserable stuff. Regarding water usage, some farms have to use potable water to wash

their products, which is really expensive. People in urban areas like to look at agricultural areas, but don't want to provide the rebates. High water users should be getting water rebates. AACs need to communicate with CAOs and Mayors.

What are your AAC's most valuable tools?

- In Chilliwack, they plan to maintain the new AAC and hope it will promote agricultural activity. Water usage is one thing to protect, but they have to ensure that it is economically viable as well. The Agricultural Commission developed Agricultural Area Plan and an implementation committee. One key area of the plan is to establish Chilliwack as a centre of excellence in agriculture. One asset is Fraser Valley University, which is building a program on both the technical side and research side.
- From Langley: Knowledge and experience is a valuable tool, so they promote farm tours. 73% of their land parcels are under 10 acres and 75% of their parcels are in the ALR. They have done the draft agricultural viability study, which is a 20-year plan about securing food production.
- From Richmond: AACs can share information and communicate with each other. In general, Councils frown on committees with ideas of their own, but AACs can help educate everyone about agriculture.
- From Delta: Most Councillors have little background in agriculture and politicians look at agricultural sector as just a few votes. Food safety and food for the future need to be made a priority. A push from AACs is a very important part of what's happening. The AAC presents ideas to Council and now we have 30 signs that will go on Highway 10 to explain what is growing.

Tell us about a tricky situation your AAC has encountered.

- From Chilliwack: There hasn't been any tricky ones yet. The community recognises the AAC's importance.
- From Langley: The Mayor wanted to change the AAC design regarding who can vote. Ultimately, there has been a difficult compromise. There are two co-Chairs and Council members are non-voting. Design problems can mean that communities are not able to get the full benefit from AACs and can't get AACs to give an opinion.
- From Richmond: Going to the AAC representative without going through Council can be tricky. Richmond has come out against GMO crops and yet there are 3 farms growing GMO corn. Luckily, Richmond is against GMOs except when it comes to corn.
- From Delta: Water rates were debated at a recent meeting. Greenhouses are getting hurt by the current rates, especially now that they have to wash and grade products on-farm. It is important for AACs to invite people such as Richard Bullock to meetings so that they can stay current on policies. It is important to invite all types of officials as guest speakers so that they are interested and care about what you're doing.

Tell us about a success story from your AAC.

- In Chilliwack, forming the AAC is a huge success. Huttema is thrilled with the members filling volunteer positions. This shows a commitment to agriculture.
- In Langley, a motion of Council to ban blueberry cannons went to the AAC. When it comes back to Council their job will be easier. The AAC has saved money and staff time. It is a tough decision, so they are getting a lot more advice.
- In Richmond, there is a buffering system. Every foot is protected and recommendations come from the AAC, which results in a good urban rural boundary. If your property is on the ALR you have to plant shrubs and trees on your land if you don't want to farm.
- From Delta: Losing farmland in any region is not a good thing; however, mitigation and compensation for lost farmland is at least a strong bargaining tool for benefits to the rest of the farming area. Delta recently purchased another 18 acres of organic farmland from a developer and added it to another 60 acre parcel next to it in order to ensure it remains as active farmland for years to come. Delta has also enacted a farm "crop sign" program where over 30 signs are in place around Delta indicating what particular crop is being grown in fields as you drive by.



12.4. Agricultural Advisory Committees and the Agricultural Land Commission, a presentation on how AACs and the ALC can work together to strengthen farming

Tony Pellett, Regional Planner, Agricultural Land Commission

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Eamonn Watson, Land Use Planner, Agricultural Land Commission

eamonn.watson@gov.bc.ca

Presentation Summary

- Tony and Eamonn began by introducing themselves and stating three goals for their presentation:
 - To inform AACs what the Commission considers when reviewing applications and planning matters
 - To explain what information the AACs can provide the Commission regarding applications and planning matters
 - To discuss how the ALC and AACs can work together
- The ALR is 'A provincial zone where agriculture is recognized as the priority use and where non-agricultural uses are regulated and farming is encouraged.' Agricultural lands are designated under the Act.

- The ALC is 'The body of appointed individuals (and staff) who administer the ALR boundary, subdivision and non-farm uses.'
- The ALR is 5% of BC's land base. This area is comprised of about 50% private and 50% crown land. The majority of the ALR lies in the northern part of the province. The ALR is larger now, than when it was established.
- The next slide showed a map of the ALR in the South Coast region.
- The purpose of the ALC comes from the ALC Act:
 - Preserve agricultural land
 - Encourage farming on agricultural land in collaboration with other communities of interest
 - Encourage local governments, First Nations, the government and its agents to enable and accommodate farm use of agricultural land and uses compatible with agriculture in their plans, bylaws, and policies.
- The ALC's principal functions are land use planning, applications, policy development and research, and compliance and enforcement.
- When it comes to land use planning, the ALC's mandate is to encourage local governments, First Nations, the government and its agents to enable and accommodate farm use of agricultural land and uses compatible with agriculture in their plans, bylaws, and policies.
- In order to achieve this mandate, the ALC collaborates with local government by using tools such as growth strategies, land use bylaws, Official Community Plans, agri-teams, and agriculture area plans. These tools help to outline the community needs with respect to agricultural, residential, and commercial goals.
- When it comes to ALC applications, if a proposal is not consistent with the ALR Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulation, an application must be submitted to the ALC. Application types include subdivision, non-farm use, exclusion, and inclusion.
- The next slide showed a diagram of the ALC application process. Landowners or agents submit an application via their local government. The local government reviews the application, creates a report, refers it to relevant committees or boards, and then, if authorized, forwards it to the ALC. ALC staff do background research and meet with the applicant onsite or arrange a hearing. ALC Commissioners then review the application, make a decision, and notify the applicant.
- The ALC Staff who do the background research are the land use planners, but regional planners also get involved when the application raises broader planning issues.
- Although it is a linear path of information to the ALC, the decision comments and feedback from the Commissioners can be used by local governments, AACs and the public to get a better understanding of what the Commission considers to be a positive or negative impact on agricultural land in BC.
- Commission consideration may include, but is not limited to any or all of the following:
 - Agricultural potential of subject and adjacent parcels
 - Agricultural capability rating
 - Agricultural suitability and current land or agricultural use
 - Raised expectations of land use change

- Regional and community planning objectives
- Alternate location outside ALR
- Local government and AAC recommendations
- Does the proposal benefit/support/damage/restrict agricultural land use?
- Impact on existing or potential agricultural use
- With regard to specific types of applications, it is important to break down some of the common issues the Commission has dealt with in the past year and elaborate on some examples of common wording that you may have seen on recently released decision minutes.
- Regarding subdivision:
 - Subdivision of large cohesive units of agriculture is not consistent with the ALC Act to preserve and encourage agriculture and leaves the agricultural options open for the future
 - Subdivision for the purpose of residential use on agricultural land is not a benefit to the business of agriculture such as it conflicts with surrounding agricultural uses (Right to Farm, access, vehicles, dogs) and increases density
 - In some cases, roads are a substantial impediment to farming and safety of crossing, however a low-traffic road may not be a significant barrier to farming the land as a cohesive unit
 - Section 946 of the Local Government Act is tool available to local government to accommodate a subdivision for a relative where the proposed lot is smaller than the minimum lot size specified in a zoning bylaw. If the Commission allows a subdivision, 946 may be invoked by a local government. However, 946 is NOT a reason for the Commission to allow a subdivision.
- Regarding non-farm use and additional dwellings:
 - Vacant farmland is not an opportunity for development and non-farm use. 5% of BC is designated as the provincial reserve of agricultural land. You can only farm or ranch where the land will cooperate. There should be a very good justification why the remaining 95% of the province is not a suitable alternative location for a non-farm use.
 - The Act and [Agricultural Land Reserve Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulation](#) do not set a limit on the number of additional residences for farm help per parcel, but all residences must be necessary for farm use. The local government must be convinced that there is a legitimate need for an additional residence for farm help such as 'farm' classification under the [Assessment Act](#), size and type of farm operation, etc.
 - The Commission can NOT allow additional residences for farm use based on a proposed farm/ranch operation. In addition, second dwellings should not be seen as an opportunity for non-farm rental income purposes.
 - Second dwellings almost always lead to subdivision by the current owners or by the subsequent landowners. Think forward 20 years when at least one of the house owners leaves or dies or the property changes hands.

- Regarding exclusion, the Commission recognizes that there are circumstances under which exclusions are practical and/or necessary for community growth. However, there must be sufficient justification both physically (agricultural cap, agricultural suitability) and logistically for the community.
 - If an Official Community Plan is inconsistent with the ALC's recommendations or the ALR designation, the Commission is not compelled to approve the application.
 - If the exclusion proposal is based on lack of agricultural potential, the first and foremost question is whether the land is suitable for farm use. To the extent that agricultural capability, parcel size, relation to other agricultural land, impacts from adjacent non-farm uses, etc. are likely to make it impractical to farm the land, they lend credence to an exclusion application.
 - Regardless of the reason for exclusion application, sometimes potential exclusion areas are better addressed in an Official Community Plan review rather than a case by case basis.
- If the ALR is to be maintained in the long term, it is obvious that it cannot be endlessly eroded. This goes beyond measures to control land under local agricultural and rural zoning bylaws, which are generally effective only so long as there is not a routine request to use more farmland for non-farm purposes. The principles involved in evaluating an application under the ALC Act must differ from those employed in weighing re-zoning requests. The criteria for judging applications under the Act, will, by necessity, be more oriented towards maintaining a permanent farmland reserve without strict regard to present use or production needs.
- AACs bring local farming knowledge to the Commission. They provide the Commission with insight on the following:
 - An assessment of agricultural potential of the subject property
 - Any limitations to agricultural development
 - History of agriculture on the property
 - Impact of the proposal on farm activity on the property and in the surrounding area
 - Opinion in the proposal is in the best interest of agriculture
 - The reasons behind the AAC recommendation to local government
- The AAC can be involved with ALC work through:
 - Advising local government on land use bylaws
 - Providing local knowledge about and assessing the potential impact of specific applications
 - Contributing to the development of and monitoring the implementation of agricultural area plans
- The ALC is shifting from using 80% of its resources, which are currently devoted to applications, to 80% of the resources being devoted to proactive planning in the context of the ALC mandate. They want to refocus time and energy on planning, research, policy, education, and communications. Some of those new directions include:
 - Targeted ALR boundary reviews, creating defensible boundaries

- Proactive planning, engaging local governments, advisory groups, communities, provincial ministries, agencies regarding the ALC Act and agriculture
- Encouraging farming, prioritizing proposals that are intended to support and enhance agriculture
- Enhancing compliance and enforcement
- The new ALC direction compliments local government and AAC involvement. It involves:
 - Earlier and extensive involvement in local government planning processes
 - Increased communication and engagement
 - Emphasis on agricultural area planning
 - Encouraging establishment of agricultural advisory committees
 - Encouraging agri-teams
- Contact the ALC at 604-660-7000 and visit the website at www.alc.gov.bc.ca

Question and Answer Session

- One attendee asked about the targeted ALR boundary review. The response was that the review is happening outside the South Coast and outside of the Okanagan. They are starting in the Kootenays.
- One attendee asked about having ALC Planners attend AAC meetings. The AACs require support. Where is the future for the ALC if they don't have enough man power to do what they are mandated to do? The response was that in 2001 and 2002, government did a thorough review and the ALC changed. If more enforcement on the ALR is needed, the ALC can delegate enforcement power to local government.
- One attendee stated that if land is coming out of the ALR as a result of boundary review, they assume that new land will also get included. If land gets included, will there be compensation for the landowners? The response was that under the ALC Act there is no compensation. There are places like the Sunshine Coast and Columbia Shuswap where boundary work can be done. Most people that have had their land included into the ALR were happy to be included.
- One attendee asked about the ALCs' power over native land. The response was that there are two jurisdictions. Land under treaties within the ALR are under the ALC. They dealt with the Tsawwassen lands like any other application. The Osoyoos Band is active in planning the areas near their reserve. They get more revenue from agriculture than anywhere else in the country.
- One attendee asked about enforcement by municipalities and cannabis in particular. The response was that the ALC is dealing with it as a permitted farm use. As mentioned earlier, there is the potential to delegate enforcement authority to the local government, which could empower their bylaw enforcement officers a bit more. It is not something that is required, but it is a tool that local governments could use. If delegation took place, the local government could determine and keep whatever fees were applied.
- One attendee asked whether the ALC Commissioners still want recommendations from AACs. The response was yes, local information is valuable. There are 10 commissioners now and they don't have the ability to visit every property. Commissioners look at the

type of farming occurring and the type of application. If subdivision is being considered, they look at the potential impact of subdivision on neighbouring properties. Could any proposed non-farm uses be located elsewhere? The ALC works to respect the feedback from AACs.

- One attendee commented that as an AAC member, they see themselves as partners with the ALC. It would be helpful to get the feedback from the ALC on the rationale behind their decisions, especially when there is a conflict between the ALC and the AAC. The response was that they agree, but sometimes due to a lack of staffing it may not always occur. Sometimes the application goes through multiple groups besides just the applicant. The power the application has as a communication tool can be important.
- One attendee asked about gas and oil applications. Do applicants have to apply for each piece? The response was that it depends on the application. Oil and gas is layered together. The ALC has a delegation agreement with Oil and Gas Commission. The ALC website covers whether an application should go to the ALC or the Oil and Gas Commission. They dealing with the Kinder-Morgan pipeline. In that case it will be four applications to the ALC, one for each Regional District the pipeline goes through.
- One attendee commented that they are a fan of the ALR and not always of the ALC. It is important to acknowledge something that has lasted for 40 years and thank Harold Steves and the agency staff. Having applications referred to AACs is important. Do you ever get questions about applications that have not been referred to AACs? The response was that Councils are not obligated to refer applications to AACs, but one could put pressure on them to do so.
- One attendee asked about the enforcement of illegal activities on ALR land such as truck parking. AAC members can become the eyes and ears for the agriculture land, but the ALC only has two bylaw enforcement officers. That means it is up to AAC members to report activities to Council and the ALC. One attendee responded that at Surrey's AAC, there is a regular agenda item called 'Integrity of the ALR', when members can bring up enforcement issues. The information discussed is shared with bylaw staff, creating a nice feedback loop.

12.5. Agricultural Land Use in the Lower Mainland, a presentation on the status of agricultural land in the region using Ministry of Agriculture Land Use Inventory data
Bert van Dalfsen, Strengthening Farming Program Manager, Ministry of Agriculture
bert.vandalfsen@gov.bc.ca

Presentation Summary

- Bert began by introducing himself and asking who has already heard about ALUIs.
- ALUIs are inventories of agricultural lands where data on land use, and land cover (biophysical cover on the land) is collected. This includes non-agricultural uses and land covers such as residential, commercial, transportation.
- When there is some agricultural activity on a parcel, that activity is described to a greater level of detail. This includes
 - irrigation systems
 - livestock and their associated facilities

- apiculture, aquaculture
- value added activities such as fruit stands, crop processing
- visible agricultural practices such as the presence of a wind machine, propane cannon,
- or water source activities such as a well or pump-house
- The basic inventory unit is legal land parcels, not farm units, which may encompass more than one legal land parcel. The goal is to survey all parcels that have potential for agricultural use including
 - parcels in the ALR
 - parcels with BC Assessments Farm Class designation
 - parcels with local government zoning that allows agriculture
- The ALUI program is mainly focused on informing local government Agricultural Area Plans and regional water strategies, as they can help estimate agricultural water use. More recently there has been interest in utilizing the data for air emissions work. ALUIs can be used to support edge planning and to test the impacts of a new land use planning policy.
- The Ministry of Agriculture has been conducting these inventories since 1996. However, over last 4 years, the program has been expanding. The 2010 and later surveys use a more detailed system.
- The next slide showed the status of inventories across the province as of 2013. There is no target to survey the entire province. In 2009, the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District around Pemberton was done. In 2010 and 2011, the entire Metro Vancouver Regional District was surveyed and in 2011, 2012, and 2013, all of the Fraser Valley Regional District will be surveyed.
- ALUIs are done using AgFocus, which is an internally developed system designed to efficiently capture detailed information about land cover and land use on agricultural lands. The information is posted on AGRI's website.
- The next slide showed a sample map. The ALUI maps include the legal land parcel boundaries, which are shown in yellow here. GIS is then used to split the legal parcel into land cover polygons which follow the spatial patterns exhibited in the aerial photography. Google Maps Street View is also utilized to help determine where to put the blue line. In the map on this slide, the blue line follows the break between a grassy land cover and a treed land cover. Polygons are also created around buildings and their associated yards, roads, reservoirs, bare areas down to 500 square metres.



- Using the maps, a survey crew consisting of an Agrologist and a data entry technician, navigates public roads and examines each legal parcel recording both land cover and land use. In high traffic areas, a driver may be added to the crew. The survey rate is about 750 hectares per day depending on traffic, weather, visibility from the road, experience level.
- The next slides showed tables describing the ALUI Primary Land Use Classification. The classification used is hierarchical and allows as much detail as possible to be captured. This table is an example of the possible land uses. Agriculture is the one focused on and the study area is chosen accordingly (ALR, BC Assessment Farm Class, local government zoned for farming).
- For livestock, although the surveyor can capture an animal count, most often a scale is applied to the operation based on the number of animals seen, the size and type of facilities and perhaps local knowledge.
- Soils and climate data are also added to each parcel to provide the base data required to run an Irrigation Water Demand Model.
- The next slide showed a table of average irrigation water demand over the season. Irrigation demand is how much water a farmer needs considering crop type, soils and climate, if the farmer is using good management. If a farmer is overwatering, irrigation demand will increase. In the Okanagan, we usually think of tree fruits and grapes, but there is more forage grass than anything else.
- The next slide showed a pie chart of Delta's general land cover based on recent ALUI data. This slide shows that two-thirds of the area in Delta is covered by agricultural crops with about 2% covered by farm infrastructure, 2% covered by active greenhouses and 2% covered by unused pasture, forage or unmaintained greenhouses. Natural and semi-natural areas are 12%. Anthropogenic areas meaning managed vegetation, non built or bare areas, transportation lands residential footprint etc. are 11%. 6% is in un-surveyed areas, mainly rights-of-way.
- The next slide showed a pie chart of Delta's agricultural land cover based on recent ALUI data. When combined, vegetables are the largest agricultural land cover, followed closely by forage and pasture. Berries are almost 20% of the cover with 13% blueberries and 5% cranberries.
- The next slide showed a map of Delta's land covers.
- ALUIs are valuable for the following:
 - Build community support for farming
 - Identify opportunities to support and expand farming
 - Resolve limitations for agriculture
 - Promote land use compatibility
 - Increase knowledge of land use in the ALR
 - Provide a database that may be used to answer questions
 - Guide local government bylaw development
- Regarding local government bylaw development, Metro Vancouver recently used the ALUI to identify landowners in the ALR who are not farming and carried out a survey to

determine why. They have an action plan that has an objective of “increasing the land that is actively farmed by 2015”.

- The next slide showed two land use maps of Pitt Meadows, one from 1996 and one from 2002. The ALUI allow one to track changes over time on a parcel by parcel basis. The Census does not provide this level of detail.
- The ALUI data limitations include the following:
 - Where visibility is limited, data is interpreted from aerial photography and local knowledge
 - It is a snapshot in time
 - The survey unit is the legal land parcel and not the farm unit
 - Many farm practices are not captured, such as manure handling or spreading and fertilizer or pesticide applications
 - Crop production practices are only captured if visible
 - Livestock are attributed to the parcel where they were seen on the day of the survey
 - Livestock are recorded as a scale of operation and not by individual animal counts
- Capturing the type and number of livestock on a property using a “windshield” survey method is very difficult. Livestock often are in buildings or at the back of the property and therefore not seen. Also, livestock move from property to property and while they may be present one day on one property, they could be present on a different property the next day resulting in over counting. For many properties, livestock type and a range of the number of animals present was estimated using a number of methods including barn size and local knowledge. Using this data to extrapolate livestock farm management practices or environmental impacts from individual parcels is invalid.
- In regards to ALUI data from the Lower Mainland, the Delta report has been completed and there is a draft report completed for Richmond, Surrey, Langley, and Barnston Island. The remainder of this presentation focuses on land covers, parcel size distribution, and the status of small parcels in the Lower Mainland.
- The next slide showed a graph of parcel size in Delta. A third of the parcels are less than 1 hectare and more than half are less than 4 hectares. Although there are many small parcels, they don’t take up much area. The smallest one third of parcel numbers only makes up 1% of the area in Delta. There are some very big parcels (over 128 hectares) that make up 21% of the area.
- The next slide showed a map of parcel sizes in Delta. While over half the lots are less than 4 hectares, they only make up 5% of the ALR.
- The next slide showed a graph of land covers in Delta. Here we see that the smallest parcels have very little farming, with most of parcels being covered with man made features, which are usually made up of residential development. The natural or semi-natural areas are about 10% of the area for parcel sizes less than 64 hectares. This means that expanding agriculture will mean intensifying areas already farmed, re-developing built areas for farming, or clearing land. Most of the natural and semi-natural areas are treed.

- The next slide showed a map of Delta's land covers. This is a spatial representation of the previous slide, although this shows all the parcels surveyed, even those outside the pink line representing the ALR boundary. Note that within the ALR the largest natural and semi-natural areas are near or part of Burns Bog, Boundary Airport, and Reifel Bird Sanctuary on Westham Island. The biggest anthropogenic areas are the Metro Vancouver garbage dump and golf courses.
- The next slide showed parcel size maps for Delta, Richmond, Surrey, and Langley. Here you can see that Delta has larger parcel sizes, followed by Surrey, Langley and Richmond, with progressively smaller parcel sizes. Note that Richmond has some pockets of very small parcels.
- The next slide showed land cover graphs for Delta, Richmond, Surrey, and Langley. Here you can see that Delta has very little room for expansion of farming onto natural and semi-natural areas. The Township of Langley has about half of its area in natural and semi-natural areas and its ALR area is almost equal to the other three communities combined. These natural areas represent areas of potential for growth in farming.
- The next slide showed ALR parcel sizes in the Lower Mainland for Richmond, Chilliwack, Langley Township, Surrey, Abbotsford, and Delta. There is an ample supply of small lots in agricultural areas of some communities. In Richmond, Chilliwack and Langley, half of the lots are less than 2 hectares. In Surrey, Delta and Abbotsford, the median is between 2 and 4 hectares.
- The next slide showed ALR parcel sizes in Central Saanich, Cowichan Valley Regional District, Nanimo Regional District, Langley, Surrey, and Delta. How does Vancouver Island compare to the Metro Vancouver? You can see that the Vancouver Island is also heavily parcelized. This is expected to be the case near most of our heavily populated areas.
- The next slide showed a chart of parcel sizes in Delta and whether they are used for farming. This chart shows that the smaller parcels are much less likely to be farmed. This is a typical outcome in most communities where there is an abundance of small parcels. Subdividing farmland to create smaller parcels is not required, as we already have lots of small parcels. This slide shows that subdivision actually discourages farming.
- The next slide showed potential annual sales on 5 acres from various farm products. Small lots may be very productive when they are used intensively. This slide provides some examples of where direct marketing of fruits and vegetables, potted nurseries, mushrooms, floriculture and poultry can produce high annual sales from a 5 acre lot. Less intensive use of hay, beef, sheep or horses is much lower. While we do not want more small lots to be created, as they are typically underutilized for farming, they may be very productive when used for farming.
- The next slide showed Census data for various Lower Mainland communities. Census information is often used to get a broad feedback on the farming happening in a community. While it is informative, it can be misleading in a variety of ways. This table is listed with Metro Vancouver and Fraser Valley Regional District municipalities in descending order of ALR land. From this data one might conclude that a lot of land that could be farmed is not being farmed. One problem is that Census data reports farming where the farm headquarters are. In addition, some communities have lots of land farmed outside the ALR. The Census information does not address:

- Permitted uses in the ALR which preclude farming such as wildlife reserves, parks, golf courses, airports etc.
 - ALR land that is covered with non-farm uses; roadways, commercial, industrial, etc.
 - ALR land that does not have potential for farming; steep topography, man-made water bodies, etc.
- A standard calculation in the ALUI is to determine how much of the ALR in a community is available for farming and has the potential to be farmed. To do this, start with the amount of land in the ALR and reduce it by the amount of land that is in rights-of-way (such as highways), in very small parcels (less than 100 square metres) and in Delta's case, foreshore area, for example along Boundary Bay. These areas are not surveyed and amount to 6% of Delta's ALR land. Next, the amount of area not available for farming is determined. In Delta, this is about 7% of the ALR. Next, the amount of the remaining area that has limited potential for farming is determined. In Delta, this is about 4% of the ALR. Finally, subtract the area that is farmed and you get the area that is available and has potential for being farmed, which is 12% in Delta. Thus, there is 17% of the ALR in areas not surveyed, non-farm uses and those areas supporting farming, which is more than the land that is not farmed and is available and has potential for farming.
 - The next slide showed a map of land available and with potential for farming in Delta. This map shows where the land that is not farmed and may be farmed is located. In Delta, there are 1161 hectares of land in the ALR available and with potential for farming, which is 12% of the ALR in Delta. Approximately half this area is on parcels already farmed and the other half is on parcels which are not farmed.
 - The next slide showed a map showing which parcels in Delta were considered used for farming and which ones weren't. 80% of Delta's ALR is on parcels considered to be "used for farming" and 20% is not used for farming. Of this, 14% of Delta's ALR is on parcels "not used for farming". 6% of the ALR is on parcels too small to be surveyed (less than 100 square metres), foreshore and outside of parcels.
 - The next slide showed a table comparing ALUI data to Census data for Langley Township, Delta, Surrey, and Richmond. This table lists those four Metro Vancouver municipalities where there are draft ALUI reports again in order of descending size of ALR. Using the data collected in the ALUI, the numbers were refined considerably to show what area was actually suitable for farming, farmed, supporting farming, and finally available with potential for farming.
 - The next slide showed a table with the areas farmed for Langley Township, Surrey, Delta, and Richmond. Note that on a percentage basis, Delta is farmed more than Richmond, Surrey and Langley Township.
 - The next slide showed a table with the land not farmed and available for farming for Langley Township, Surrey, Delta, and Richmond. Note that the Township of Langley has about twice the area not farmed and available for farming than the other 3 municipalities combined. Surrey has about twice the area available for farming compared to Delta and Delta and Richmond have similar areas available for farming.

- The next slide showed maps of land available and with potential for farming in Delta, Richmond, Surrey, and Langley Township. Here you can see that Delta has very little room for expansion of farming onto natural and semi-natural areas. The Township of Langley has about half of its area in natural and semi-natural areas and its ALR area is almost equal to the other three communities combined. It has, by far, the greatest potential for growth in farming of the Metro Vancouver communities south of the Fraser River.
- The key messages of this presentation are:
 - Communities are already heavily parcelized
 - Smaller parcels are underutilized for farming
 - There is a large amount of ALR land not available for farming
 - Expansion of farming is likely to require land clearing
 - The ALUI can provide insights into land uses, land covers, and areas where farming may be increased
- Bert may be contacted at bert.vandalfsen@gov.bc.ca and 604-556-3109. For copies of completed ALUI Reports, visit: <http://www.al.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/sf/gis> Click on Planning for Agriculture and then GIS and Agricultural Land Use Inventory Projects.

Question and Answer Session

- One attendee asked about including soil type information on the land use inventory reports. The response was that when you look at census statistics, around 1/3 of farms have non-soil-based crops. A lot of land with poor soils could be area for potential expansion of non-soil-based agriculture.
- One attendee commented that in Richmond, it is impossible to cut trees down unless one is farming. Can the land use inventory look at the small lots in Richmond that are not serviced? The response was yes, the land use inventory could look at that. It allows you to delve deeper into the trends that you are seeing.
- One attendee asked about unutilized farmland. Is the unutilized land in the inventory mostly horse property? The response was that horses show up as forage and pasture. In Langley, the inventory shows large amounts of natural cover, so there is potential for agricultural growth in that area.
- One attendee asked about mapping other food industries not linked to primary production. The response was that the inventory does capture direct marketing of crops, including wineries. When you look at the hierarchy, you'll see that it captures quite a bit.
- One attendee asked where inventories have taken place. The response was that the Strengthening Farming program has focused on completing inventories in the Southern part of the Province. But there are other areas under way or under consideration as well including Terrace, Kitimat-Stikine, Fraser Fort George, Chimney Lake, etc.
- The land use inventories allow you to identify underutilized areas and understand why they are underutilized. There was a recent Ipsos Reid poll of ALR landowners that are not farming. Some commented that they enjoy the park-like setting and others commented that they are not interested in leasing out land because they didn't want

their privacy to be compromised. We need to understand the barriers to farming for these property owners.

13. Attendees

- 35 AAC members shown in this colour of text
 14 Local government representatives shown in this colour of text
 11 Provincial government representatives shown in this colour of text
 4 Others shown in this colour of text

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	First Name	Last Name	Position	Location
1	Eamonn	Watson	Land Use Planner	Agricultural Land Commission
2	Lindsay	McCoubrey	Land Use Planner	Agricultural Land Commission
3	Tony	Pellett	Regional Planner	Agricultural Land Commission
4	Reg	Enns	Executive Director	BC Agriculture Council
5	Heloise	Dixon-Warren	Director, Electoral Area B	Cariboo Regional District
6	Allan	Campeau	Planner	City of Abbotsford
7	Brenda	Falk	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	City of Abbotsford
8	Frank	Keis	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	City of Abbotsford
9	Louis	Schurmann	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	City of Abbotsford
10	Brett	Payne	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	City of Chilliwack
11	Chris	Les	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	City of Chilliwack
12	Gillian	Villeneuve	Manager of Development Planning	City of Chilliwack
13	Jason	Lum	Councillor, Agricultural Advisory Committee Vice Chair	City of Chilliwack
14	Ken	Huttema	Councillor, Agricultural Advisory Committee Chair	City of Chilliwack
15	Kim	Grout	Agricultural Advisory Committee Chair, Director of Operations and Development Services	City of Pitt Meadows
16	Mike	Manion	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	City of Pitt Meadows
17	Bill	Jones	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	City of Richmond
18	Colin	Dring	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	City of Richmond
19	Harold	Steves	Councillor, Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	City of Richmond
20	Kevin	Eng	Planner	City of Richmond
21	Stephen	Easterbrook	Agricultural Advisory Committee	City of Richmond

			Member	
22	Carla	Stewart	Senior Planner	City of Surrey
23	Markus	Kischnick	Planner	City of Surrey
24	Martin	Hilmer	Surrey Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee Representative	City of Surrey
25	Mike	Bose	Surrey Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee Representative	City of Surrey
26	Emme	Lee	Vancouver Food Policy Council Member	City of Vancouver
27	Tara	Moreau	Vancouver Food Policy Council Member	City of Vancouver
28	Ian	Patton	Councillor, Agricultural Advisory Committee Chair	Corporation of Delta
29	Jerry	Keulen	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Corporation of Delta
30	Lisa	King	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Corporation of Delta
31	Adrie	Stuyt	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	District of Kent
32	Darcey	Kohuch	Director of Development Services	District of Kent
33	Holger	Schwichtenberg	Councillor, Agricultural Advisory Committee Chair	District of Kent
34	Susan	Spaeti	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	District of Kent
35	Candace	Gordon	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	District of Maple Ridge
36	Cheryl	Ashlie	Councillor	District of Maple Ridge
37	Craig	Speirs	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	District of Maple Ridge
38	Kim	Lauzon	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	District of Maple Ridge
39	Shephanie	James	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	District of Maple Ridge
40	Aja	Philp	Planner	Fraser Valley Regional District
41	Catherine	Overgaard	Planner	Fraser Valley Regional District
42	Bob	Audette	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Metro Vancouver Regional District
43	Daryl	Arnold	Agricultural Advisory Committee Chair	Metro Vancouver Regional District
44	Lorraine	Bissett	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Metro Vancouver Regional District
45	Theresa	Duynstee	Planner	Metro Vancouver Regional District
46	Bert	van Dalfsen	Manager, Strengthening Farming Program	Ministry of Agriculture
47	Chris	Zabek	Regional Agrologist	Ministry of Agriculture
48	Geneve	Jasper	Resource Stewardship Agrologist	Ministry of Agriculture

49	Hannah	Cavendish-Palmer	Land Use Planner	Ministry of Agriculture
50	Kathleen	Zimmerman	Regional Agrologist	Ministry of Agriculture
51	Kim	Sutherland	Regional Agrologist	Ministry of Agriculture
52	Mark	Robbins	Regional Agrologist	Ministry of Agriculture
53	Orlando	Schmidt	Regional Manager, Coast	Ministry of Agriculture
54	Ferdinand	Csaky	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Squamish-Lillooet Regional District, Electoral Area C
55	Ian	Holl	Planner	Squamish-Lillooet Regional District, Electoral Area C
56	Sam	Casavant	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Squamish-Lillooet Regional District, Electoral Area C
57	Dave	Ryan	Alternate Electoral Area Director, Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Sunshine Coast Regional District
58	Greg	Gebka	Planner	Sunshine Coast Regional District
59	Jon	Bell	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Sunshine Coast Regional District
60	Allan	Tillberg	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Township of Langley
61	Bill	Ulrich	Long Range Planner	Township of Langley
62	David	Davis	Councillor, Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Township of Langley
63	Nancy	Clark	Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	Township of Langley
64	Jim	LeMaistre	Agrologist, Planner	

