

BCEAG

Bow Corridor Ecosystem Advisory Group

Recreational Opportunities Working Group (ROWG) Terms of Reference

January 07, 2001

Background

- BCEAG is a senior level advisory group formed to address development issues in the Bow Corridor. Working in a multi-jurisdictional capacity, BCEAG prepares integrated recommendations for consideration by the partnering agencies. BCEAG's partnering agencies include the Town of Canmore, Municipal District of Bighorn, Provincial Government, Banff National Park and Town of Banff.
- ROWG has been established to provide a mechanism to coordinate and make recommendations on the management of recreational opportunities from Banff National Park gates to Seebe. BCEAG ROWG is a working group of BCEAG and, as such, reports directly to BCEAG.
- Implementation of the recommendations generated within this process will be the responsibility of the partnering jurisdictions. The recommendations will not have statutory authority in any jurisdiction unless adopted under specific legislation. Partnering agencies may decide to work jointly where deemed beneficial.

Issues Statement

- Increased human use in the Bow Valley from Banff National Park to the Kananaskis River combined with recently designated protected areas and wildlife conservation objectives has raised concerns by locals and visitors about loss of access to recreational opportunities.
- BCEAG "**Guidelines for Human Use within Wildlife Corridors and Habitat Patches in the Bow Valley**" do not address the existence of many trails outside of Wildlife Corridors or future outdoor recreation needs in the Bow Valley.
- Implementation and Education efforts associated with the Guidelines for Human Use have not been adequate to date. A greater emphasis is required on education and development of community co-operation, in order to effectively implement the guidelines.

Coordinating Agencies

- The Town of Canmore and Alberta Community Development will be the joint lead/coordinating agencies for this project.

Study Area

- The study area is the area located within the heights of land which define the Bow Corridor from the Banff National Park gates to Seebe (Kananaskis River).

Goals

- To prepare and recommend a system of trails for the study area that promotes the sustainable use of trails and recreational areas and complements resource management objectives (including preserving wildlife corridors and habitat; dealing with erosion, safety and liability issues; minimizing user conflict; and managing trail development and impacts) of BCEAG members.
- To do this, ROWG will provide a mechanism to coordinate and make recommendations on the management of recreational opportunities within the study area. A key component of coordinating an

integrated trail management approach is building strong working relationships between the numerous recreational groups, individuals using the study area (i.e., general public), and the respective land management agencies.

- To develop a process for dealing with ongoing recreational concerns (once ROWG is disbanded) and to ensure integration of recreational opportunities between jurisdictions over a broader landscape.

Objectives

- To raise awareness of the need to manage recreational use in the Canmore area in order to meet resource management objectives.
- To clarify recreational opportunities, particularly trails, that can exist in the study area and that have not been closed or restricted for wildlife protection or other recreational management purposes.
- To review these recreational opportunities with representatives from a wide variety of groups in order to make recommendations on the establishment of a multi-jurisdictional trail network within the study area (including addressing access concerns).
- Where relevant, to make recommendations on areas where potential conflicts could occur between recreational users and non-recreational use (e.g., land development industry, rock industry, electrical power transmission, transportation, tourism development).

ROWG Members

ROWG is composed of both BCEAG members and public members (via interest group representation). A wide array of public participation techniques will be developed to engage the general public during the preparation of these recommendations.

BCEAG Members

- Provincial Government - Rob Wolfe (Project Manager), Steve Donelon, Jon Jorgenson, Don Cockerton, *Ron Henderson, *Greg McAndrews, *Jan Simonson
- Town of Canmore – Andre Gareau, Steve de Keijzer, *Gary Buxton
- MD of Bighorn - Greg Birch (Council representative being investigated)
- Banff National Park - Eva Katic (*Cliff White)
- Town of Banff - Sue Webb

Public Members

- Biosphere Institute – Melanie Watt
 - Canmore/Kananaskis Chamber of Commerce - Rob Elliott
 - Mountain Biking Public - Ken Davies
 - Pedestrian Public – Doug Campbell
 - Climbing Public – Dan Verrall (Chris Miller)
 - Youth Representative – (Steve Donelon to investigate representative.)
 - Equestrian Public - Carole Stark (Ann Maynard)
 - Cross-Country Skiing Public – Theresa Gawron (James Bannon)
 - Conservation Representative – Jeff Gailus
 - Ecological Scientist – (Jeff Gailus to investigate representative).
 - Recreational Studies – *Megan Squires
 - Graduate Student Observer – *Melissa Mauro
- (* = Will attend meetings on a discretionary basis.)

Where provided, alternates have been listed in brackets. Member alternates may attend all meetings with the primary representatives. Their role in this case would be that of an observer in order to prevent duplication of representation. Operating principles and interest group reporting relationships will be discussed and established at the first official ROWG meeting.

Process

1. Identify key background documents and supporting material that will guide the planning process and establishment of the trail network map.

- include a description of the resource management objectives that have been established by BCEAG member agencies. Should also include current recreational objectives, if they exist.
 - include decisions relating to the continued maintenance of trails and trail closures (i.e. identify what is off or on the table for discussion and provide rationale).
2. Identify key stakeholders that would need to be involved in the planning program. Establish a public participation framework (Outreach and Education Plan) that describes how the process will be conducted and outlines opportunities for citizens, stakeholders, and user groups to become informed and actively participate in the planning process.
 3. Identify and categorize the issues that would need to be addressed within the study area (and beyond for issues of broader scope). This should include ecological and social (i.e. recreational/human use) issues.
 4. Recommend a range of management actions to address ecological and social issues.
 5. Provide a draft report (or trail map) to BCEAG and continue with the aforementioned Outreach and Education Plan.
 6. Submit final report to BCEAG by no later than September, 2002. Make the report available to the public.

Potential Tasks (To Be Refined as the Process Unfolds)

1. Finalize revised ROWG terms of reference; present TOR to BCEAG for adoption; establish working framework for the ROWG (see attached starting point); develop a more detailed plan and timeline for achieving the objectives; document all potential constituent user groups and, where possible, assign responsibility for liaison; and develop Banff Park gates to Seebe working version trail map [December]
2. Prepare for initial presentations to the public [December-January]
 - Draft answers to some of the questions put forward to date
 - Develop a presentation covering the terms of reference and background material
 - Determine who, how and when the public consultation will start
 - Arrange logistics (press, other awareness, meeting rooms, materials)
3. Convene first official ROWG meeting [January]
4. Issue a news release about the process at the conclusion of the first official meeting. [January]
5. Initiate public consultation process (suggested methods highlighted below) [February – April]
 - Hold formal open forums
 - Survey public (method to be determined)
 - Meet with stakeholders (small group meetings)
 - Solicit ongoing feedback from ROWG groups
 - Assemble findings into a common format
 - Establish a list of key issues/hot spots
6. Report progress to BCEAG and the public near the end of the consultation process [March]
7. Continue refinement of detailed trail map [January – April]
8. Establish sub-committee to draft ongoing public consultation and education framework for BCEAG [March – May]
9. Discuss alternatives to deal with trail issues/hot spots. [April - May]

10. Publish conclusions from discussions on issues/hot spots and the proposed framework for ongoing public consultation and education to the constituent groups and solicit feedback [June]
11. Report progress to BCEAG and the public [June]
12. Revise conclusions (if appropriate) and produce final deliverables [June – September]
 - General recommendations;
 - Framework for ongoing user involvement and education;
 - Maps and associated Educational Material;
 - Presentation materials;
13. Submit final deliverables to BCEAG for approval. [September]
14. Inform the public on the project results. Methodology to be determined. [October]

Working Framework and Miscellaneous Items

- The process will be led by Rob Wolfe. Rob will chair all meetings including setting the meeting dates and agendas. A separate person will be assigned to make notes for the meeting and publish them to the ROWG members.
- ROWG holds working committee meetings and, therefore, it is not anticipated that the general public will attend. General outreach will be done through a series of public forums. However, if members of the general public are interested in attending a meeting, they should contact one of the members of the committee for more information.
- ROWG members will be responsible for developing a protocol to keep their respective groups informed about the project and its progress on an on-going basis, and for obtaining direction from their group which will then be relayed to ROWG. Cross-member assistance at these meetings may prove valuable (i.e., presenting to your interest group jointly with another member from a different interest group).
- Media inquiries will be directed to a single spokesperson appointed by the group. At the end of each ROWG meeting, members will agree on the key messages that can be passed on to the media by this spokesperson.
- While the spokesperson is authorized to speak on behalf of the group, representatives may speak on behalf of their sector. Sector representatives agree that their representations to the media will be respectful of other sectors and supportive of the process. Sectors are encouraged not to characterize the positions or suggestions of other sectors in their discussions with the public or the media.
- ROWG will work towards consensus¹. In the event that there are certain points that the group was unable to agree upon, differing views should be clearly noted in the final document.
- Changes to the seasonal and permanent closure recommendations contained within the Guidelines for Human Use within Wildlife Corridors and Habitat Patches in the Bow Valley (August 1999) will not be considered unless new reasonable alternatives/information becomes available to warrant such changes.
- It is expected that costs for local advertisements, room rentals (if necessary) will be shared between the partnering jurisdictions.
- Reports, documents, data and other materials prepared as part of the working group's activities shall be shared among all members of BCEAG. Project updates will be provided to BCEAG on a regular basis.

¹ Consensus is a process where members agree on the package of provisions that address the entire range of issues and interests. The members may not agree with all aspects of the agreement but they do not disagree enough to warrant their opposition to the overall package.

Appendix #1: BCEAG Project Summary

BCEAG

Bow Corridor Ecosystem Advisory Group

Who is the Bow Corridor Ecosystem Advisory Group (BCEAG)?

- The Bow Corridor Ecosystem Advisory Group (BCEAG) is a senior level advisory group formed to address development issues in the Bow Corridor.

Is BCEAG a Decision-Making Body?

- BCEAG is not a decision-making body. It is a coordinating group making recommendations to individual councils and jurisdictions.

Why was BCEAG Created?

- BCEAG was created as a result of the 1992 Decision Report by the Natural Resource Conservation Board (NRCB) regarding the application by Three Sisters Resorts Inc. to develop a tourism project in Canmore. The NRCB recognized the role of different governments and agencies in the planning and approval of development in the Bow Corridor. BCEAG was established for enhanced coordination in the Bow Corridor, recognizing its environmental sensitivity and the substantial pressure for development.

When was BCEAG Established?

- BCEAG was established in September 1995 with membership from the Municipal District of Bighorn, Town of Canmore, Town of Banff, Banff National Park and the Provincial Government.

What are BCEAG's Main Objectives?

- To facilitate inter-agency and inter-jurisdictional partnerships in managing environmental and resource issues in the corridor;
- To ensure environmental and resource management initiatives in the Corridor are coordinated and integrated;
- To facilitate a coordinated one-window approach on cross-agency issues;
- To provide information and advice to member agencies on resolving environmental and resource management issues.
- On a project by project basis, utilize public education and involvement as a tool.

Who are the Member Organizations?

- Town of Canmore
- Town of Banff
- Municipal District of Bighorn No. 8
- Banff National Park
- Alberta Energy
- Alberta Economic Development
- Alberta Environment
- Alberta Sustainable Resource Development
- Public Lands Division
- Lands and Forest Service
- Fish and Wildlife Service
- Alberta Community Development

Where is BCEAG's Focus Area?

- The focus area of BCEAG includes lands contained between the height of land on either side of the Bow Corridor from the Banff National Park eastern boundary east to approximately Seebe. Issues that are related to lands outside the boundaries of this focus area would be considered where there is potential for impact on the Bow Corridor.

How does BCEAG Determine Workplan Priorities?

- BCEAG determines annual work priorities starting on June of each year based on submissions from members.

What are BCEAG's Working Groups?

- Approved priorities and specific activities are undertaken by working groups established by BCEAG. The working groups are given specific terms of reference and deadlines for reporting back to BCEAG. Working group reports are submitted to BCEAG. The working groups are disbanded upon completion of their work.

How Often does BCEAG Meet?

- Meetings are held quarterly on the second Thursday of September, December, March and June.

What has BCEAG Completed to Date?

| Project | Objective | Date Completed |
|--|---|-----------------------|
| Base Map | The objective of this project was to create a seamless Geographic Information System database of spatial ecological information for the entire length of the Bow Valley, peak to peak, from Lake Louise to Seebe. | November 1998 |
| Wildlife Corridors and Habitat Patches Guidelines | The objectives of this project were to delineate wildlife corridors and habitat patches within the Bow Valley and to provide guidelines on the types of land uses that should be permitted within and adjacent to wildlife corridors and local habitat patches. | March 1998 |
| Guidelines for Human Use Within Wildlife Corridors | The objective of this project was to provide BCEAG member agencies with a coordinated approach for the management of human use activities within wildlife corridors and habitat patches in the Bow Valley. | August 1999 |
| Education and Implementation Recommendations* | The objective of this project was to provide BCEAG member agencies with a coordinated approach to public education and the implementation of the Guidelines for Human Use. | September 2001 |
| Wildlife and Human Use Monitoring Recommendations* | The objective of the project was to provide BCEAG member agencies with a coordinated to wildlife and human use monitoring in the Bow Valley. | September 2001 |
| Wildland Urban Fire Interface* | The objectives of this project were to identify high fire hazard areas within the Bow Valley from Banff National Park to Lac des Arc. | September 2001 |

* Not yet approved by all municipal jurisdictions.

What is BCEAG Currently Working On?

| Project | Objective | Update |
|--|---|--|
| Recreational Opportunities Working Group | The objectives of this project are to prepare of a valley-wide multi-jurisdictional recreational opportunities map and a corresponding education and communications action plan. | Terms of reference have been developed and approved by BCEAG. Recent revisions to the terms of reference will be forwarded for Council approval. |
| Regional Transportation Study | The objective of this study is to reduce the net impact of vehicles on ecological integrity while enhancing the quality of experience for residents and visitors. | Terms of reference have been developed and approved by BCEAG. Funding opportunities are being investigated. Revisions to the terms of reference will be considered if needed. |
| Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Working Group | The objective of this project is to review the need for, and make recommendations to BCEAG, and subsequently to the Clean Air Strategic Alliance (CASA), regarding the establishment of an air quality management zone in the Bow Valley. | Terms of reference have been developed and approved by BCEAG. Recent revisions to the terms of reference will be forwarded for Council approval. The first working group meeting was held in October 2001. |
| Regional Mortality and Movement Study/Workshop | This project is in the conception phase and as such, terms of reference have not yet been developed. | |

For More Information...

- Contact Rob Wolfe, Business Manager at 297-5383 or Dave Nielsen, Chair at 678-5508.

Appendix #2: BCEAG Terms of Reference

BOW CORRIDOR ECOSYSTEM ADVISORY GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

Adopted: September 13, 2001

BACKGROUND

- The Bow Corridor Ecosystem Advisory Group (BCEAG) is a senior level advisory group formed to address development issues in the Bow Corridor.
- BCEAG is not a decision-making body. It is a coordinating group making recommendations to individual councils and jurisdictions.
- BCEAG was created as a result of the 1992 Decision Report by the Natural Resource Conservation Board (NRCB) regarding the application by Three Sisters Resorts Inc. to develop a tourism project in Canmore. The NRCB recognized the role of different governments and agencies in the planning and approval of development in the Bow Corridor. BCEAG was established for enhanced coordination in the Bow Corridor, recognizing its environmental sensitivity and the substantial pressure for development.
- BCEAG was established in September 1995 with membership from the Municipal District of Bighorn, Town of Canmore, Town of Banff, Banff National Park and the Provincial Government. The overall goal is to facilitate a partnership approach to ecosystem management in the Bow Corridor.

OBJECTIVES

- The objectives of BCEAG are:
 - To facilitate inter-agency and inter-jurisdictional partnerships in managing environmental and resource issues in the corridor;
 - To ensure environmental and resource management initiatives in the Corridor are coordinated and integrated;
 - To facilitate a coordinated one-window approach on cross-agency issues;
 - To provide information and advice to member agencies on resolving environmental and resource management issues.
 - On a project by project basis, utilize public education and involvement as a tool.

MEMBERSHIP

- Each organization has one official member however, additional people are welcome to attend. Alternates should be able to speak with authority on behalf of the organization.
- Member organizations are:
 - Town of Canmore
 - Town of Banff
- Municipal District of Bighorn No. 8
 - Banff National Park
 - Alberta Energy
 - Alberta Economic Development
 - Alberta Environment
 - Alberta Sustainable Resource Development
 - Public Lands Division
 - Lands and Forest Service
 - Fish and Wildlife Service
 - Alberta Community Development

CHAIR

- Parks and Protected Areas Director, Alberta Community Development, Bow Region

FOCUS AREA

- The focus area of BCEAG includes lands contained between the height of land on either side of the Bow Corridor from the Banff National Park eastern boundary east to approximately Seebe. Issues that are related to lands outside the boundaries of this focus area would be considered where there is potential for impact on the Bow Corridor.

PRIORITY BUSINESS

- BCEAG will determine annual work priorities starting on June of each year based on submissions from members. Priorities will be established by October 31 to allow budgeting by members.

BCEAG WORKING GROUPS

- Approved priorities and specific activities are undertaken by working groups established by BCEAG. The working groups are given specific terms of reference and deadlines for reporting back to BCEAG. Estimates of funding to complete the activity may be required. Working group reports are submitted to BCEAG. Estimated costs of implementation and suggested cost sharing strategies should be considered as part of each report. The working groups are disbanded upon completion of their work. For tracking purposes, an on-going quarterly report mechanism has been created.

FUNDING

- Administrative and support requirements will be minimized for the work of BCEAG. BCEAG regularly scheduled meetings will be organized by the Chair and hosted by member agencies. Initiatives agreed to by member municipalities and agencies that require commitments of time, money or other resources will be negotiated among members as necessary.

MEETING DATES

- Meetings are held quarterly on the second Thursday of September, December, March and June.

CONTACT

- Rob Wolfe, BCEAG Business Manager - 297-5383