

Summary notes for Community Recovery Session#4 March 10 2021

Capacity - Various local perspectives on past & future events- and offering resources for those leading recovery efforts.

Lilia Yumagulova is the Project Manager for Preparing our Home; an award-winning Indigenous community resilience planning program.

- Preparing our Home serves and is led by indigenous youth.
- There is a huge cultural recovery going on right now; food, language and other activities are being acknowledged and celebrated.
- More learning is happening nation to nation; between elders in community; between nations; etc.
- Pre disaster recovery planning is needed for multiple hazards as climate change is showing us.
- The youth are a catalyst for change, but this work and learning is most effective when done intergenerationally and in community.
- The colonial impacts on indigenous peoples and communities cannot be ignored, and include many things directly related to both people and infrastructure.
- First Nations people are uniquely placed for community-based planning; they are the first responders and are leaders in adaptation.
- Planning for recovery needs to interconnect with other fields of practice such as response, public health, and others
- There are multiple benefits to co-planning prior to recovery- eg: housing and pre recovery planning.
- There is a lot of opportunity for cultural training for non-indigenous practitioners.

Bill Kershaw is a director on the Thompson Nicola Regional District board and has been a resident of Barriere for many years.

- The McLure Wildfire was started in the afternoon of July 30, 2003, 23 km south of the District of Barriere.
- The evacuation order was issued by the newly formed Thompson Nicola Regional District Emergency Operation Centre.

Summary notes for Community Recovery Session#4 March 10 2021

Capacity - Various local perspectives on past & future events- and offering resources for those leading recovery efforts.

- The region quickly lost power, as the BC Hydro services at the time were not looped and infrastructure was quickly destroyed by the fire. This resulted in a longer evacuation than most would have expected, nearly a month for most community members.
- With only hours to evacuate many came back to homes filled with rotting food and other wastes due to the extended loss of power.
- In total seventy-two homes and nine businesses were destroyed in the fire and many more suffered damage or loss.
- The most significant business loss was the Tolko Mill, leveled by the fire it was never rebuilt, resulting in 180 lost jobs
- Population dropped as mill workers either retired and moved. The remainder chose to become remote workers, leaving their families to work in camps, mostly in Northern Alberta. This changed the structure of the community for years to come as the demographic shifted rapidly.
- It was noted that after the fires in Kelowna they were able to apply for grants tied to recovery as an incorporated municipality that were not available to the residents of Barriere. The decision to incorporate was informed by the outcomes of the fire.
- The incorporation discussion centered around the communities increased ability to determine their direction as an incorporated municipality, vs being a part of a very large regional district.
- The vote to incorporate passed, and on December 4, 2007 the District of Barriere was officially created.

Second Fires

- There is always a concern of a second fire in the area in unburned areas, due to dryness and fir bark beetle infiltrating.
- More firesmarting is needed around the communities to keep them safer in future.

Capacity

- The capacity of the community has changed substantially since 2003.

Summary notes for Community Recovery Session#4 March 10 2021

Capacity - Various local perspectives on past & future events- and offering resources for those leading recovery efforts.

- Every incident (and there have been several in the area) has been an opportunity to learn more, and refine practices.
- Regionally the ability to manage large-scale disaster events has increased.

Best Practices

- Communications have evolved and become better since 2003. Good comms are key to combat misinformation.
- For newly incorporated communities, capacity of governance and leadership should be a consideration by the Province.

Emanuel Machado is the Chief Resiliency Officer and CAO for Gibsons BC.

- How dependent are we on nature?.....(100%!!)
- To manage a watershed all agencies must work together to ensure ecological integrity and include indigenous knowledge as part of planning.
- In terms of infrastructure, local government needs to keep what we have restore what we need and don't overbuild.
- There are multiple ways to approach things and they don't always involve the most expensive choice.
- Natural assets can be more cost effective than built infrastructure
- With financial planning the usual costs and benefits are not the same for natural assets as infrastructure. There are no costs upfront, no costs to replace, no depreciation; in fact they have noted more of a value added features, such as remaining carbon neutral or even sequestering carbon.
- Insurance companies are discussing green infrastructure and suggesting costs could go down in future if more communities put these in place.
- The EOC that was stood up for Covid worked very well, though it was different, running it from a number of different places and connecting virtually.

Summary notes for Community Recovery Session#4 March 10 2021

Capacity - Various local perspectives on past & future events- and offering resources for those leading recovery efforts.

- As a backup in case of flooding or other disasters that could happen, a plan was devised that involved all 4 communities in the area supporting each other and being ready to step in if needed.

- Social services or neighbourhood supports were not at the level they could be for helping individuals, so this is something that the community needs to address.

Links

Lily Yumagulova

Preparing our Home:

<http://preparingourhome.ca/>

Preparing Our Home Program Brochure:

<http://preparingourhome.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/POH-BROCHURE-2021-edition.pdf>

Bergen, Norway: capacity building:

<http://haznet.ca/urban-resilience-action-innovation-cooperation-bergen-norway/>

Contact info: preparingourhome@gmail.com

Bill Kershaw:

Description of 2003 McClure fire and recovery efforts:

<https://www.barrierestartjournal.com/news/the-mclure-wildfire-of-2003/>

Contact info: 250-319-4770

Contact Info: director.wkershaw@tnrd.ca

Emanuel Machado:

Municipal Natural Assets Initiative (MNAI):

<https://mnai.ca/-start>

Natural Asset Management : Resources and Links, Town of Gibsons BC

<https://gibsons.ca/sustainability/natural-assets/natural-asset-management-resources/>

Contact info: Emanuel Machado Chief Administrative Officer Chief Resiliency Officer
p. 604 886 2274 c. 604 741 1092 h. 604 740 5996 www.gibsons.ca
