

Nechako Valley Regional Cattlemens Association AGM

The NVRCA AGM was held on March 4th at the Elks Hall in Vanderhoof B.C.

Before and during the AGM there was a small trade fair set up for people to browse around and get some great info on local businesses. We had B.C. Livestock, Valley Feeds, RBC, Ag-safe, Glen Dale Agra, Heartland Soil a portable mill. We had local ranches promoting their bulls and sales. Vanderhoof Co-op had a big display and donated all the coffee and snacks for the day. NVRCA also had a display showing off the new webpage cards and all the advertisers on the webpage. Lots of great door prizes were handed out.

John Kochel started the meeting with his President report. First on his list was to praise the Regional Directors for all their hard work they do through the year and for organizing the AGM. He noted the need for provisions of shavings in the valley. John thanked Shirley Moon and Gordon Larson from our area for stepping up as current Directors for B.C. Livestock Co-op. Cam Hill has filled the vacant brand inspector job for Vanderhoof. John talked on the challenges of cattle rustling in the valley and our need to stay diligent in voicing our concerns.

After the President report we had Butch Ruitter give the financial report and he was happy to mention that the webpage was bringing in its own revenue so far. The cost of the wolf incentive program was discussed and the grasshopper seminar was a success.

We had MLA Jon Rustad join us. His talk was on balanced budgets, Government plans on eliminating PST on small businesses from B.C. Hydro, and MSP being reduced on Jan.1, 2018. He talked on range tenures to be continued and a covenant to be placed on the land or property to secure range forever.

Larry Garrett spoke to Jon Rustad about the need for shavings for cattle husbandry and for the proposed packing plant in Prince George . 3 suggestions were proposed:

1. could be put in regulations
2. create stumpage incentive
3. on volume swap

In Public Relations Liz Legebokoff was pleased to announce the NVRCA website was up and running. Thanks to Vanderhoof Co-op for paying the \$1050.00 for the creation of the page and The Horn Levy Fund for \$300 to help pay for the updating fees. On top of that all the advertisers that found us worthy enough to advertise has helped give the website a boost. Now there are enough funds to update on our monthly meetings at the local level and weather reports and other information needed. Check it out at <http://www.nechakocattlemens.com/>

The NVRCAs try hard to keep youth involved in the agriculture industry. Celebrating a [long time partnership](#) with school district 91 The Project Agriculture program puts 24 students through a 3 day program. This program involves half a day at the Vet clinic where they have vet and farrier demonstrations. Half a day at B.C. Livestock yards in Vanderhoof where they have hands on experience with cattle, branding, tagging, vaccinations and castrations. They also have a tour of the yards, and they have a mock auction. The next 2 days they are put through stations like equipment handling, truck driving, dairy operations, horsemanship lessons, cattle handling. Without the help of our local members and businesses and volunteers this important program wouldn't happen.

We also congratulate our scholarship recipients Angela Kulchar and Cynthia Peterson and wish them the best of luck in their future endeavors.

From the Shavings Committee Mike Kulchar talked about the numbers and the deliveries and all going well but the price of shavings will be going up. Shirley Moon gave a history report on the shaving issue. She wants to know WHO is actually the person that will get something done in securing shavings for the future. This issue has gone through Local, Regional, and BCCA along with the Forest service personnel, Industry, and community forest projects in Fraser Lake, Fort St. James, Vanderhoof, and B.C. Government. [As a committee, we are very disappointed with Vanderhoof District Council letting wood shavings slip off the table as a community value when the final draft of the Community Forest Agreement was signed.](#)

BCCA passed our resolution on the shavings issue in the 2016 AGM but it was not dealt with. John Kochel received an email on Feb.21, 2017 from the manager of BCCA Kevin Boon stating that the shavings issue is back on our laps. As you can imagine this response disappointed all in the room. A lot of work and volunteer man hours has gone into trying to secure shavings for the future and there is no evidence of support from BCCA.

We had the Mayor of Vanderhoof take time out of his day to come for awhile, he spoke of Vanderhoof as a community and how agriculture holds it all together.

Mark Parker - Regional District Chairperson of the agriculture committee was soon to be involved in a video conference with the federal government to protect farm lands from foreign ownership..

We had reports from Wayne Ray on Environmental and Land Stewardship. Charles Poole gave his report from his committee Aboriginal affairs and Land, that they are working on grazing leases and permits, seeding on logging sites, highway fencing and need for better communications with first nations. Alex Kulchar read a report from Brian Adams from Livestock Industry Protection with the discussion of the shaving issue, provincial slaughter capacity and plans for Prince George plant, transport regulations, ICBC and RCMP.

Shawnee Newton came and gave a PR report for BCCA. She talked of working on

Agriculture in the classroom. Also the scholarships that are available with applications due by April 15.

BCCA Vice President Larry Garrett first off mentioned the passing of some of our members and sent condolences to their families. Henry Williams, David Reimer, and John Russell. Larry talked on topics of CFIA, premise ID, BCCA participating in B.C. Beef Day, ground water licensing, the Prince George packing plant and BCCA initiatives: Invasive plants, dam safety, Public trust and where food comes from. The BCCA AGM will be held in Kamloops this year and Smithers next year.

We had our local RCMP Constable Sven Neilson apologize for the detachments unfavourable treatment of a rustling case in the district of Vanderhoof. This was followed by a discussion on the need to educate the RCMP on the agriculture industry. More rural protection and highway speed control was requested.

CCA Andrea White a representative with the Canada Beef Industry Round Table gave us a power point presentation on working sustainability, assessment, verification and projects with topics of environment, social and economics considered in each topic.

After a long day of reports and information we finished it off with a feast of Prime rib, chicken, salmon, shrimp and all the fixings and delicious dessert all catered from Nechako catering company and wine donated from Bacchus Vine Creations.

At the end of our meal our guest speaker was Phil Gallagher, Head Chef of Earls restaurant. He talked on the mistake they made and how they are trying to make it right. " We realize that we should have worked harder with local ranchers and industry to create a supply of beef that met our criteria." He talked on what they want, why they want it and how they have to have it. His talk was very interesting, it was neat to hear how things work in the restaurant industry. Phil got the royal treatment while he was here and got to tour some of the local ranches. He was very impressed, he said "it looks like what you are doing is what we are wanting done".

All in all it was another great year and hopefully by next year we get some of these issues worked out.

Liz Legebokoff
Head of the Public Relations Committee of NVRCA