

OKANAGAN-KOOTENAY STERILE INSECT RELEASE PROGRAM BOARD

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the **OKANAGAN-KOOTENAY STERILE INSECT RELEASE (SIR) PROGRAM BOARD**
held virtually via Zoom, on Friday, March 11, 2022

Voting Members:

Director Shirley Fowler, Chair	Regional District of North Okanagan
Director George Bush, Vice Chair	Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen
Grower Dave Dobernigg	Grower Representative – Zone 3
Director James Baker	Regional District of Central Okanagan
Director Tim Lavery	Regional District Columbia Shuswap
Director Brad Sieben	Regional District of Central Okanagan

Non-Voting Members:

Dr. Susanna Acheampong	BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
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Guests/Delegates:

Allison Lickley	Cascadia Partners
Jonathon Snoek	Cascadia Partners

Regrets:

Grower Amarjit Lalli	Grower Representative – Zone 2
Taras Pojasok	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Grower Walter Makepeace	Grower Representative – Zone 1, organic
Glen Lucas	BC Fruit Growers Association

Staff:

Melissa Tesche	OKSIR General Manager
Carol Bellingham	RDCO Financial Manager
Paul Thiessen	OKSIR Operations Manager
Evan Esch	OKSIR Entomologist
Michelle Cook	OKSIR Project Manager
Shelby Austen	OKSIR Administrator & Project Coordinator

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting of the OKSIR Board to order at 9:12am.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

2.1 Adoption of Agenda

Moved by: Director Bush

Seconded by: Director Baker

“THAT the March 11, 2022, meeting agenda be adopted as amended.”

CARRIED

3. MINUTES

3.1 Regular Board Meeting – January 28, 2022 – for adoption

Moved by: Director Baker

Seconded by: Director Lavery

"THAT the SIR Regular Board Meeting Minutes of January 28, 2022, be adopted as presented."

CARRIED

3.2 Business Arising from Minutes

4. DELEGATION/PRESENTATION

4.1 Mr. Jonathon Snoek and Ms. Allison Lickley, Cascadia Partners, re: Sterile Insect Release Program Evaluation and Funding Model

The Chair introduced Mr. Snoek and Ms. Lickley of Cascadia Partners to the Board.

Mr. Snoek and Ms. Lickley presented an update on the SIR Program Evaluation and Funding Model project that is being cost shared between the OKSIR Program and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (MAFF). The goal of the project is to determine the value the SIR provides to the tree fruit industry in British Columbia. Cascadia has completed interviews with local growers and horticultural advisors. Mr. Snoek and Ms. Lickley informed the Board that feedback has been generally positive and that the OKSIR Program has been described as effective, necessary, and offering numerous benefits beyond just the significant economic value. The next step of the process will see Cascadia complete a jurisdictional scan to understand the costs of codling moth management in comparable growing regions that do not have sterile insect release in an attempt to quantify the value of the program. The final report, which will be compiled for MAFF, independent of the OKSIR Program, will be finished at the end of March.

The Chair thanked Mr. Snoek and Ms. Lickley for their presentation.

5. CORRESPONDENCE/ INFORMATION

5.1 Staff Report from Melissa Tesche, General Manager, dated January 26, 2022 re: Program Update

The General Manager gave the staff report in detail.

The General Manager informed the Board that facility operations are increasing for the season and that diet ingredients are arriving on time. The X-ray machine has not yet arrived and the deadline for testing this technology keeps getting pushed back due to shipping manufacturing problems. Though this is an inconvenience, the top priority right now is production and X-ray testing may be delayed until the fall. The General Manager noted that SIR staff are trying to remain flexible during these delays.

Seasonal field staff are now starting for the 2022 season. Facility staffing issues seem to have eased a small amount compared to 2021, but continue to be an issue alongside the current rising fuel costs.

The General Manager informed the Board that the UAV program is back for a second year of field operations. She recognized the work of SIR Project Manager, Michelle Cook, who worked with Transport Canada to have the visual observer portion of the operational permit requirements to be removed. This will reduce expenses for the season and make the UAV program more economical. She noted that the clause had been put into place around safety concerns related to the carrying and dropping of moths, not related to the safety of the drones themselves.

The General Manager informed the Board that the BC Fruit Grower's Association's annual general meeting was virtual this year. In her presentation at the meeting to inform growers that the parcel tax rate will show an 8% increase from 2021. The grower's provided the General Manager with positive feedback and collectively understand why the increase is necessary.

The General Manager provided the Board on upcoming changes to the grower representatives on SIR—two new representatives will be nominated by the BCFGa at their next meeting, and the nominations will be sent to the Regional Districts for their approval. The General Manager and Chair thanked the current RDCO/RDNO grower representatives, Amarjit Lalli and Dave Dobernigg, for their years of service to the SIR Board, noting that an in-person thank you lunch is necessary and will be arranged for a meeting convenient for Directors Lalli and Dobernigg.

She also noted the BCFGa had passed a resolution in support of provincial funding for the SIR program.

The General Manager informed the Board that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs is still preparing the Order in Council package for a spring cabinet date. By the next meeting, SIR should have a new piece of legislation.

The General Manager provided an update on MAFF's stabilization initiative. A number of subcommittees are working on key recommendations in the plan. OKSIR is participating in subcommittees for industry leadership, extension, and the recommendation around SIR funding.

Moved by: Director Bush

Seconded by: Director Baker

"THAT the staff report from the General Manager be received.

CARRIED

5.2 Memo from Shelby Austen, Office Administrator & Project Coordinator, dated Feb 11, 2022, re: 2022 Preliminary Tax Roll Values

Ms. Austen presented the 2022 Preliminary Tax Roll Values in detail.

Moved by: Director Lavery

Seconded by: Grower Dobernigg

"THAT the 2022 Preliminary Tax Roll Memo be received."

CARRIED

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.1 Amendment to Schedule A to Bylaw 39 – SIR 2022-2026 Five Year Financial Plan

Ms. Bellingham presented the amendment to Schedule A – Bylaw 39 in detail.

Moved by: Director Bush

Seconded by: Grower Dobernigg

"That the Schedule A to Bylaw 39 – SIR 2022-2026 Five Year Financial Plan be adopted as amended."

CARRIED

7.2 Interim Financials to February 28, 2022

Ms. Bellingham presented the interim financial statements in detail.

Moved by: Director Baker

Seconded by: Director Sieben

"That the Schedule A to Bylaw 39 – SIR 2022-2026 Five Year Financial Plan be adopted as amended."

CARRIED

ADJOURN TO IN-CAMERA

N/A

8. OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 Director Item: Discussion of OKSIR Communication Strategy (Director Lavery)

The Chair opened the floor and Director Lavery raised the potential need for a communications strategy for SIR. The Board noted the advantage of communicating a value proposition to senior governments, laterally to the Regional District partners, and to the public. The Board agreed that a communications strategy could add increased value and benefits to the program. Staff will look at options to develop a communications strategy and report back to the board.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by: Director Bush

Seconded by: Director Baker

"THAT the SIR Board meeting be adjourned at 10:16am"

CARRIED



Chair



Corporate Officer