



CHRISTINA BENTY: C (250) 344 0921  
[christinabenty@christinabenty.com](mailto:christinabenty@christinabenty.com)

CALEB MOSS: C (250) 439 7172  
[sls@christinabenty.com](mailto:sls@christinabenty.com)

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Greetings RCRW Society Members,

It was a pleasure and a privilege to have the opportunity to delve into the complex and layered world of board process and planning. Strategic level governance work is all about making firm decisions in regards to goals and objectives while clearly and intentionally deploying limited resources. The choice to undergo a formal facilitated strategic direction setting session at this juncture of your organizational life reflects sound governance and we applaud your willingness to engage in such. In terms of board composition and committed individuals, you are top notch. The intellectual capacity and overall level of multi-stakeholder commitment coupled with the expertise of your paid staff is extremely high. Debate is robust, opinions flow freely, passion is evident, and there is the right mix of serious playfulness. Clearly, this group iteration is a sound model for tackling project specific initiatives such as the one you are immersed in.

Your organization is somewhat unique in that its formal construction has been intimately tied to the undertaking of the penning pilot project. Pilot projects, by very design, are meant to have a limited life span. They are created to undertake specific projects over a defined period with a finite fiscal commitment. They are intended to both achieve a goal and generate data from which future projects can draw upon. Regardless of final conclusions in terms of reaching specific targets, the pilot itself is on point. What begins to complicate matters and what drove workshop discussions, is the relationship between the society itself and the project. Explicitly, the pilot will be completed in less than two years yet the society itself has no expiration date. That being said, at this juncture the sole purpose for the society has been to undertake the caribou penning endeavor.

The underlying goal of the strategic session was to pull apart the organizational layers and plot a clear and intentional way forward. In analyzing the initial written feedback, the real time member dialogue, and the exercise generated information, several conclusions were reached.

Strategic Leadership Solutions

**The RCRW has proven itself relevant.** You function well. You are connected and well represented across stakeholder groups. You are well informed and inform well. You have shown project success and an ability to garner and deploy funds with intention and purpose. You have stuck together and stayed together. Stakeholders have not dropped off. Arguably, you have already achieved more than the pilot itself in terms of cross stakeholder relationships and ability to work on complex issues at a community level. As a society, you have created the structural (governance model) capacity to take on additional projects.

**However,** and the however is the crux of the matter, this does not imply that you should or must continue post pilot. Often, groups formed to tackle a specific issue have success, than allow this success to dictate continuation. This can be fantastic, but needs several pieces to be in place in order to predicate continued success. On this front, there were several additional conclusions informing future direction. First and foremost, the society was formed to oversee and fund a specific project intending to explore a concept and gather data. The group was not constructed to self-populate direction. The group was not constructed to pursue funding outside of the project scope. Many of the involved stakeholders are at the table solely due to project specific intentions and continuations outside completion has not been contemplated by their parent organizations. There is zero, in terms of dedicated resources, in place outside of pilot project completion. Potential future paid staff are not resourced at this time. No individual driving force currently exists to drive a post pilot existence. In addition, several key members are in the midst of role diminishment or exiting entirely. It is going to be a bit of a stretch to maintain enough informed and highly functioning bodies to carry the pilot to completion as it stands.

**A candid examination of this reality led the group to conclude that it is not feasible to contemplate the ongoing existence of the RCRW beyond the pilot project.** This is not to be taken as notice to dissolve. It is to be taken that at this time, resources and the required level of effort will not be deployed in either contemplating or pursuing post pilot existence. If external funding, outside requests, or awesome opportunities appear, your functional capacity will allow you to weigh the possibilities as they arise. **It was determined that the wisest way to proceed at this juncture is to focus board and staff resources on wrapping up the pilot project with a high degree of intentionality.**

With less than two years to pilot termination, several key areas were highlighted as areas of focus. Of primary importance is the final report and the commensurate messaging. This has a completion expectation of August 2019. The board determined that they are able to influence the flavor of data messaging and are able to control, to a degree, its availability and dissemination. Staff will initiate a formal request for direction from the board by March of 2018. This provides the board the opportunity to influence the manner in which the story is told. Data is great, but it is the style and context in which it is delivered that captures and holds audience imagination.

It was agreed that several sublayers will fall out from the report itself:

- A short, one page fact sheet that can be easily understood.
- Readily accessible links to the relevant data generated by the pilot.
- Data will be tailored in a format that will allow for full and open access via government portals.
- Community communication and/or presentations along with stakeholder engagement will be undergone following completion of the final report.

In addition to the final report, the topic of pen closure brought up much discussion. Assuming project termination, this is a tactical matter. Board decision points should be determined by staff recommendation. Given timelines, this should populate board agenda during the final year of the project.

We consider the working strategic session a success and are impressed with your collective ability to not get lost in the minutiae. Staying brutally focused and organizationally on point is seldom easy, but you are doing a great job of both applauding your successes and facing your factual limitations. Wrapping up a pilot project of this scope and import with intentionality and purpose is extremely important. Outside of the day to day operations that require ongoing monitoring and support, finishing with class and style should take front seat at board level.

Thank you for your time investment and candid engagement. We have little doubt that you will carry this project to the finish line at the highest level.

Best,

Caleb Moss and Christina Benty

### We're awesome because:

- ❑ We have raised the profile of caribou conservation in Revelstoke and beyond
- ❑ We are relevant to the community
- ❑ There is local buy-in and ownership
- ❑ Effective transmission of information to stakeholders
- ❑ Project can be/was effectively and locally implemented
- ❑ There has been great relationship building between stakeholders and with government partners

### Post Pilot Project Termination

- ❑ Increased visibility/awareness of North Columbia herd achieved
- ❑ Political will exists to put funding & resources into caribou recovery
- ❑ Government has a legal mandate & obligation to carry out caribou recovery
- ❑ Proof of "concept" has been demonstrated (i.e. Maternity Pen is a viable recovery tool)
- ❑ Full integration of government for all the recovery tools – full control of government to manage all ~~to~~ fully
- ❑ Free up resources for other conservation projects
- ❑ The initial project scope was never intended beyond a pilot
- ❑ Despite proof of concept, there are still unresolved animal welfare challenges (e.g. in pen calf survival)
- ❑ No assurances from our funders that project will continue beyond a pilot

### Post Pilot Continuation of the Society

- ❑ We can be efficient with time and money because of our high level of oversight
- ❑ We have expertise and efficiencies in financial, operational, logistical and technical components
- ❑ To maintain links with community
- ❑ Society does what government would have to do (e.g. community consulting) anyway but we do it in a more meaningful way, given our history
- ❑ Raised awareness of the value of caribou conservation