

Report prepared for Peace River Agricultural Development Fund

Title of Project: Transportation Project
Report Title: Annual Report
Report Covering Period: April 1, 2002 to March 31, 2003
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The **objectives of the Transportation Committee** are that the committee members stay informed on road\ rail transportation issues, to encourage more efficient use of our grain transportation system by rail and truck and to make sure that the grain industry is represented at various committees dealing with Northern Transportation issues to maintain a balanced view of the needs in our transportation system.

Accomplishments:

The **Transportation committee members** have taken part in the formation of the **South Peace Rural Road Task Force** and have been able to give their input on various transportation issues. The following concerns have been raised at these meetings:

- 78% of rural roads in the BC Peace are gravel and not built for the heavier and high volume of traffic
- The lengthening of road bans has stretched from 60 days to 90 days per year over a 20 year period
- The roads do not have adequate width or construction standards to accommodate the change in traffic
- The Rural road task force has compiled a map of the various roads and prioritized roads which need to be rebuild, upgraded or better maintained

The rail situation in Dawson Creek was addressed at a **Northern Transportation Conference** held in November 2002 in Prince George, the transcripts of this meeting indicated that both CN and BC Rail are in negotiations with Short Line Rail companies. Dawson Creek was deemed to be the hub of the northern grain trade with 40plus B-trains of grain coming in from all over the BC Peace and Alberta daily and unloading into awaiting BC Rail cars. It was stressed that northern industries are dependant on good rail service and road infrastructure, and the BCGPA Transportation committee is available on an advisory capacity to various boards and agencies to guarantee adequate rail services for the grain industry into the region.

The Transportation committee is also in close communication with the **Regional Compliance Enforcement Officer** to get clarification on issues of road transport of agricultural vehicles or implements of husbandry. Conflicts with farmers and weigh scale officers have indicated to BCGPA Transportation committee that there are uncertainties in regards to the enforcement of certain rules pertaining to farm vehicles. The BCGPA invited an expert panel comprised of specialist in the field of Farm Fleet Insurance, Ministry of Highways & ICBC requirements as well as the compliance officer himself to answer questions farmers may have on road transport with their vehicles & implements.

The **Canadian Grain Commission** also indicated that it is proposing a new system to move grain varieties through the elevator and transportation system. BCGPA committee met with the Canadian Grain Commission to discuss this issue and submitted recommendations to the new proposed delivery, marketing and transportation system. BCGPA also held an information seminar for farmers to voice their opinion on the proposed changes to the handling, marketing and transporting of grain.

The new recommendations would hamper the transportation system and put extra requirements onto farmers, grain handlers, truckers, railways and port grain handling systems.

Extension and demonstration:

- Actively participate in Rural Road task force meetings
- Recommendations towards production of Rural Road task force info CD "Rural Roads in the North Peace"
- Information Seminar for Farmers on Variety Eligibility Declarations through the Grain Commission of Canada held in March of 2003
- Communication with PRRD, area farmers, community and farm leaders.
- Encouraged government people to understand the issues and implications.
- Report to general BCGPA membership
- Pamphlet given out at AGM "Farm vehicles on the move" a guide to licensing and insuring farm vehicles in British Columbia.

Finances:

| | Budget | Actual |
|----------|---------------|---------------|
| Income | \$7,705.00 | \$3,269.65 |
| Expenses | \$7,705.00 | \$3,269.65 |

Variances from original work plan schedule or budget:

Additional issues addressed through Farmer Information seminar held in March

Summary comments, conclusions:

The grains industry needs to have a voice to solve problems in regards to rural roads and rail transportation. This committee continues to be of importance to area producers.

Attachments:

Project Financial & "In-Kind" summary