

Peace River Agriculture Strategic Planning Society

Title of Project: Peace River Prospects - Agriculture in the BC Peace

Quarterly Report

July 1, 2002 – September 30, 2002

Contact Person - Sue Hansen or Kate O'Neil

Address: Box 6843 Fort St. John, BC V1J 4J3

Telephone: 789-9113 or 787-9804 respectively

Fax: 789-9113 or 787-0932

Email: katmyo@pris.bc.ca (Kate O'Neil)

Immediate Objectives:

1. To make sure that stories of a more technical nature are submitted to the Northern Horizon, whereas a mix of stories and photos are suitable for the two daily newspapers.
2. To ensure a good cross section of material is provided to the dailies, including four or five briefs.
3. Conduct a phone campaign to request information and request long term support with the objective of PRASPS becoming a marketing tool for commodity groups to use for their promotional needs.
4. Continue to work with the Alaska Highway News to increase and enhance their interest in covering and sponsoring the agriculture sector.
5. Selectively submit material to other agriculture newspapers.
6. To continue providing Peace Prospects as both a marketing and information source for the agriculture sector

Accomplishments:

- This project began in 1999 as a pilot project and we have been operating successfully for three years.
- Peace Prospects has one primary writer and a co-ordinator. Other rural writers and cartoonists submit material at intervals.
- The existence of Peace Prospects has encouraged several groups to realize the value of communicating their news and events. We occasionally receive material from the Forage Association and Forage Seed Association, information from the PFRA, the North Peace 4-H clubs, the Peace Bison association and notice of special events from both agriculture ministry offices.
- Agriculture is a busy sector and the writers have no difficulty accessing stories from producers and Ministry of Agriculture staff.
- The Ministry of Agriculture clips all Peace agriculture stories and sends them to Victoria - very often PRASPS is supplying the only material about the agriculture sector.
- We continue to have a weekly presence in both the Alaska Highway News and the Peace River Block News that runs Friday and Thursday respectively. The Block News is interested in having as much material as we can send.
- Tracking the success of the project is difficult, however we have had specific feedback from 4-H, PROPA, the Sheep producers, individuals, the Peace River Regional District, the Bison and FSJ farmers market, cattlemen and the Northern Horizon says our contribution definitely enhances their newspaper resulting in more advertising. Increasingly people who have not used the paper are calling to post their special events and sales. Alaska Highway News reporters occasionally ask for contact information so they can cover the sector as well.

- PRASPS provided the South Peace Stockmen with space to promote their sponsors for their June AGM. They chose Peace Prospects because it is well read and because they felt their sponsors would receive the best coverage in our publication.

Tasks in Progress:

- The Northern Horizon continues to be published twice monthly. The Alaska Highway News still publishes its largest paper on Fridays and we publish in the Thursday edition of the Block News.
- Support of the papers by purchasing advertising for an event or program is a good idea. News does not automatically follow the purchase of an ad however it creates good will and reporters do look for material to cover. The papers are no longer willing to allow us to post paying events on the Agriculture page. Groups must pay and can get a non profit rate. We can still offer space in the Northern Horizon, however Mike Bailey will not let us promote for profit agriculture events.
- We plan to continue contacting groups to get their information – we are only hearing from the most active groups and feel there are many groups who could use marketing assistance in getting maximum participation for their events and meetings.
- We are assessing the lifespan of the project relative to PRASPS interest/ability in continuing to fund 50% of the project. Part if this assessment will include contacting organizations. We may also add a marketing component with the objective of offsetting costs of the project.

Cost Breakdown:

Phone:	\$ 30.54
Northern Horizon	\$2,568.00
Project Manager	\$ 1,231.31
Writing	\$1,875.80
Total cost July 1, 02 – Sept 30, 02	\$5,705.65

Summary, comments, conclusions:

As mentioned, there is never a shortage of material. We have been asked to do stories describing the state of the industry and identify some of the trends of change in the BC region's agriculture sector.

We need more feedback from various agriculture groups, as we are conscious there is broader coverage needed. We are asking for this information instead of waiting for it to come to us.

We still wish to publish 5 or 6 small items, of roughly 50-60 words each per week; for this we need more feedback from producers.

In order to fill a daily page, which is usually half filled with ads, it takes approximately two or three stories with a photo to fill that half space. If we can supply the news, both papers will attempt to book space for us, but we must follow through and be consistent.

Our budget continues to be based on supplying approximately 1,200 words at 21 cents each, photos are \$15 each and \$5 for the second photo for the same story. Briefs are to be supplied by the editor.

Since we do not pay the dailies for the space we use we are at their mercy in terms of what space they give us to fill each week. This is a two-way relationship. We promise to deliver and they promise *some* space. It works well, but it is sometimes a tight rope to walk on.

Occasionally there is difficulty getting the Northern Horizon to be consistent with sending proofs of the paper before it is printed, which is why the PRAD logo is occasionally missed. We have had some success in creating a consistent relationship with them.

PRAD should feel free to provide approved applicants with our contact information and if it is mandatory for applicants to publish information about their project we are happy to provide the coverage. As well, the PRAD board should encourage funding recipients to make use of us as a promotional and information tool both for their project or organization, as well as for public interest and to promote PRAD's contribution.

The Peace River Regional District recently struck an agriculture advisory committee; this may be taken as a signal that the Regional District feels it needs input, and possibly assistance, in implementing programs and new regulations for rural residents in BC's northeast. They have also improved their own communication mechanisms by preparing a newsletter to update residents. Perhaps a project such as Peace Prospects is more valid than ever, since it has always been a tool designed to communicate agriculture/rural issues both within those sectors and to connect to our more urban communities.

Peace River Agriculture Strategic Planning Society

Title of Project: Peace River Prospects - Agriculture in the BC Peace

Quarterly Report

September 30 to Dec 31, 02

Contact Person - Sue Hansen or Kate O'Neil

Address: Box 6843 Fort St. John, BC V1J 4J3

Telephone: 789-9113 or 787-9804 respectively

Fax: 789-9113 or 787-0932

Email: katmyo@pris.bc.ca (Kate O'Neil)

Immediate Objectives:

1. To make sure that stories of a more technical nature are submitted to the Northern Horizon, whereas a mix of stories and photos are suitable for the two daily newspapers.
2. To ensure a good cross section of material is provided to the dailies, including four or five briefs.
3. Conduct a phone campaign to request information and request long term support with the objective of PRASPS becoming a marketing tool for commodity groups to use for their promotional needs.
4. Continue to work with the Alaska Highway News to increase and enhance their interest in covering and sponsoring the agriculture sector.
5. Selectively submit material to other agriculture newspapers.
6. To continue providing Peace Prospects as both a marketing and information source for the agriculture sector

Accomplishments:

- This project began in 1999 as a pilot project and we have been operating successfully for three years.
- Peace Prospects has one primary writer and a co-ordinator. Other rural writers and cartoonists submit material at intervals.
- The existence of Peace Prospects has encouraged several groups to realize the value of communicating their news and events. We occasionally receive material from the Forage Association and Forage Seed Association, information from the PFRA, the North Peace 4-H clubs, the Peace Bison association and notice of special events from both agriculture ministry offices.
- Agriculture is a busy sector and the writers have no difficulty accessing stories from producers and Ministry of Agriculture staff.
- The Ministry of Agriculture clips all Peace agriculture stories and sends them to Victoria - very often PRASPS is supplying the only material about the agriculture sector.
- We continue to have a weekly presence in both the Alaska Highway News and the Peace River Block News that runs Friday and Thursday respectively. The Block News is interested in having as much material as we can send.
- Tracking the success of the project is difficult, however we have had specific feedback from 4-H, PROPA, the Sheep producers, individuals, the Peace River Regional District, the Bison and FSJ farmers market, cattlemen and the Northern Horizon says our contribution definitely enhances their newspaper resulting in more advertising. Increasingly people who have not used the paper are calling to post their special events and sales. Alaska Highway News reporters occasionally ask for contact information so they can cover the sector as well.

Tasks in Progress:

- The Northern Horizon continues to be published twice monthly. The Alaska Highway News still publishes its largest paper on Fridays and we publish in the Thursday edition of the Block News. It is our intention to expand our coverage by seeking similar partnerships with Alberta community papers.
- Support of the papers by purchasing advertising for an event or program is a good idea. News does not automatically follow the purchase of an ad however it creates good will and reporters do look for material to cover. The papers are no longer willing to allow us to post paying events on the Agriculture page. Groups must pay and can get a non profit rate. We can still offer space in the Northern Horizon, however Mike Bailey will not let us promote for profit agriculture events.
- We plan to increase our efforts to contact groups to get their information -- we are only hearing from the most active groups and feel there are many groups who could use marketing assistance in getting maximum participation for their events and meetings.
- We are interested in continuing this project; however PRASPS needs to find economies and significant funding support in order to continue beyond another year. In coming months we will seek funding support from agriculture organizations and associations.
- In November we made a proposal to the Northern Horizon based on our belief, and understanding, that the project does provide value to them and enhances their paper. We were turned down and told they will no longer offer us the center spread, but instead we will be moved to the front of the paper. The reasons were attributed to low revenues.

Cost Breakdown:

Phone:	\$ 31.01
Northern Horizon	\$2,400.00
Project Manager	\$2,433.90
Writing	\$2,877.00
Total cost Oct 1, 02 – Dec 31, 02	\$7,741.91

Summary, comments, conclusions:

We need more feedback from various agriculture groups, as we are conscious there is broader coverage needed. We are asking for this information instead of waiting for it to come to us.

We still wish to publish 5 or 6 small items, of roughly 50-60 words each per week; for this we need more feedback from producers.

In order to fill a daily page, which is usually half filled with ads, it takes approximately two or three stories with a photo to fill that half space. If we can supply the news, both papers will attempt to book space for us, but we must follow through and be consistent.

Our budget continues to be based on supplying approximately 1,200 words at 21 cents each, photos are \$15 each and \$5 for the second photo for the same story. Briefs are to be supplied by the editor.

Peace River Agriculture Strategic Planning Society

Title of Project: Peace River Prospects - Agriculture in the BC Peace

Final Report

Jan 1, 03 to April 1, 03

Contact Person - Sue Hansen or Kate O'Neil

Address: Box 6843 Fort St. John, BC V1J 4J3

Telephone: 789-9113 or 787-9804 respectively

Fax: 789-9113 or 787-0932

Email: katmyo@pris.bc.ca (Kate O'Neil)

Immediate Objectives:

1. To make sure that stories of a more technical nature are submitted to the Northern Horizon, whereas a mix of stories and photos are suitable for the two daily newspapers.
2. To ensure a good cross section of material is provided to the dailies, including four or five briefs.
3. Conduct a phone campaign to request information and request long term support with the objective of PRASPS becoming a marketing tool for commodity groups to use for their promotional needs.
4. Continue to work with the Alaska Highway News to increase and enhance their interest in covering and sponsoring the agriculture sector.
5. Selectively submit material to other agriculture and regional newspapers.
6. To continue providing Peace Prospects as both a marketing and information source for the agriculture & rural sectors

Accomplishments:

- This project began in 1999 as a pilot project and we have been operating successfully for three years.
- Peace Prospects has one primary writer and a co-ordinator. Other rural writers and cartoonists submit material at intervals.
- The existence of Peace Prospects in the Northern Horizon has prompted several groups to capitalize on the value of communicating their news and events to a large regional audience. We receive material from the Forage Association and Forage Seed Association, information from the PFRA, the North Peace 4-H clubs, the Peace Bison association and notice of special events from both agriculture ministry offices.
- Agriculture is a busy sector and the writers have no difficulty accessing stories from producers and Ministry of Agriculture staff.
- The Ministry of Agriculture clips all Peace agriculture stories and sends them to Victoria - very often PRASPS is supplying the only material about the agriculture sector.
- We continue to have a weekly presence in both the Alaska Highway News and the Peace River Block News that runs Friday and Thursday respectively. The Block News is interested in having as much material as we can send.
- Tracking the success of the project depends on depends partly on specific feedback from 4-H, PROPA, the Sheep producers, individuals, the Peace River Regional District, the Bison industry, the FSJ farmers market, cattlemen grain producers, pea producers, etc. The Northern Horizon says our contribution definitely enhances their newspaper resulting in more advertising. Increasingly people who have not used the paper are calling to post their special events and sales. Alaska Highway News reporters occasionally ask for contact information so they can cover the sector as well.

Tasks in Progress:

- The Northern Horizon continues to be published twice monthly – producing approximately 100 agriculture related stories during the project's 12 month cycle. The Alaska Highway News still publishes its largest paper on Fridays and we publish in the Thursday edition of the Block News.

It is our intention to expand our coverage by seeking similar partnerships with Alberta community papers.

- Recognizing that the daily papers are reaching the urban market more than rural we are attempting to provide stories that explain about issues affecting food quality, access and price as well as where local meat and produce can be purchased.
- Support of the papers by purchasing advertising for an event or program is a good idea. News does not automatically follow the purchase of an ad however it creates good will and reporters do look for material to cover. The papers are no longer willing to allow us to post paying events on the Agriculture page. Groups must pay and can get a non profit rate. We can still offer space in the Northern Horizon, however Mike Bailey does not want us promoting for profit agriculture events that we may feel are of interest to our readership.
- Correspondence is being prepared to get groups to submit their information – we are only hearing from the most active groups and feel there are many groups who could use marketing assistance in getting maximum participation for their events and meetings. It is important for groups to understand the time lapse between deadlines and when their event is scheduled; there are groups whose events might have been better subscribed with more advance promotion.
- We believe Peace Prospects is a useful tool; however PRASPS must find other sources of income in order to continue beyond the next funding year. The board is considering various alternatives for alternative funding. Unfortunately, many groups who have accessed this promotional and information tool may discover a need to plan a marketing budget in order to use this and other marketing and promotional tools.
- In November we made a proposal to the Northern Horizon based on a belief, and understanding, that the project provides value to them and enhances their paper. We were turned down and told they will no longer offer us the center spread, but instead we will be moved to the front of the paper and still charged the same amount. The reasons were attributed to low revenues. We have held the centre space during the three month period since Jan 1, however when they sell it we are moved onto nearby pages.

Cost Breakdown:

Phone:	\$ 30.00
Northern Horizon	\$2,400.00
Project Manager	\$ 766.50
Writing/Photography	\$2,820.40
GST @50% (a non recoverable cost)	\$ 111.88
Total cost Jan 1, 03 – March 31, 03	\$6,128.78

Summary, comments, conclusions:

We need more feedback from various agriculture groups, as we are conscious there is broader coverage needed. We are asking for this information instead of waiting for it to come to us. This information will also enhance our ability to provide short updates.

We still wish to publish 5 or 6 small items, of roughly 50-60 words each per week; for this we need more feedback from producers.

In order to fill a daily page, which is usually half filled with ads, it takes approximately two or three stories with a photo to fill that half space. If we can supply the news, both papers will attempt to book space for us, but we must follow through and be consistent.

Our budget continues to be based on supplying approximately 1,200 words at 21 cents each, photos are \$15 each and \$5 for the second photo for the same story. Briefs are to be supplied by the editor.

We may consider a marketing seminar aimed at agriculture groups and associations to help groups promote their information and meetings – this would include understanding the various news media and how to access them, as well as helping them to understand what Peace Prospects offers.

It is quite likely this will be the final year for Peace Prospects since PRASPS funds have dwindled to where it would not be in a position to continue funding 50% of the costs. As a result we very likely seek opportunities to visit with the user organizations and ask for their input on how the project can be extended and how they would be able to support it.