

**Title of Special Initiative:** Interactive Soils & Forages Pilot Workshop

**Report Title:** Final Report

**Report Covering Period:** January 27, 2013 to March 31, 2014

**Organization(s):** Peace River Forage Association

**Address:** Box 265, Dawson Creek, BC V1G 4G7

**Contact Person:** Bill Wilson, Treasurer or Sandra Burton, Lead Contractor

**Telephone:** (250) 782-2866 (250) 789-6885

**Email:** billwilson@pris.ca sburton@xplornet.com

---

**Objectives:**

1. Take the lessons learned from the first 2 pilot case studies/ field days this fall and plan the first pilot interactive winter workshop. This will be the third in a series of 5 case study/ field day/ workshop events in the total directed studies field based course, as offered in the UNBC calendar and as advertised in the newsletter and on the website.
2. Demonstrate a number of tools, resource materials and people available that could assist participants in making sound management decisions.
3. To instigate more dialog, information sharing and mutual respect among forage managers, revegetation consultants, students, university researcher/ professors, soils specialists, and range ecologists.

**Accomplishments:** A successful workshop was held on February 15, 2014 in Taylor, BC, with attendance of over 55. There was a healthy mix of forage producers, grass seed growers, environmental consultants, researchers and resource people participating in the day's activities and discussions. The format changed frequently from larger group discussions to smaller group discussions, and from hands on to more passive activities. Effort was made to integrate the 2 pilot case studies from the fall into the introduction for the day's workshop activities, with some very hands on activities and discussion. Throughout the day, some activities involved 3 groups, while others involved 6 smaller groups, each group led by a mentor. Bill Wilson and Bill McGill led a lively discussion involving the whole group at the end of the day, to facilitate integrating take home messages into the participants' individual decision making and management contexts.

The Peace River Forage Association has partnered with UNBC, in particular Bill McGill, to have these courses accepted and advertised in the UNBC course calendar for credit for UNBC students. There has also been liaison with the appropriate personnel so that these days are recognized for Agrologists Professional Development and Certified Crop Advisor credits.

**Tasks in progress:** none for a short term project.

**Extension and Communication:** There are several articles, before and after this workshop, written in the **Forage First** newsletter, which was published and circulated to a mailing list of 220 in February and May (on file if required). PRAD was acknowledged in all articles and advertising.

**Finances:** Income and expense report attached.

**Variances from original work plan, schedule or budget:** There were more funds spent on key resource materials for this workshop, as the winter indoor setting was better suited to learning to use tools for success such as maps, handbooks, resource materials, interpreting analysis and integrating this with the lessons learned at the field days.

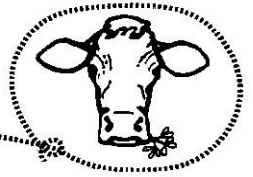
**Summary comments, conclusions:** The workshop setting was more challenging to convert into a truly interactive format, as both station masters and participants slide back into the one way flow of information. The opportunity to do this first workshop as a pilot gave us a test run. From the inside looking out, the key organizers felt that more time, effort and coordination with resource people, station masters and group mentors needs to be done to convert key messages from lecture format to a more interactive, hands-on format. However from the outside looking in, the participants were very complimentary on what was learned during this pilot workshop, and how much more effective the integrated take home messages are.

One improvement was that we added in more mechanisms for both written and verbal feedback, so that we can adapt to the participants requests. Our most rewarding feedback continues to be people keep asking when the next session of this course is and in a region where pre-registration is not common, we have people committing ahead of time.



**UNBC** In partnership with

Peace River Forage Association  
of British Columbia



## Interactive Soils & Forages Course

Involving Real People with Real Issues

### Day 3 of a 5 Part Course

### Sat Feb 15 2014 Agenda

#### What tools are helpful to solve these soils & revegetation issues?

Meet at **Taylor Community Church**, Taylor, BC

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| 8:00 to 8:30 am   | <b>Coffee, Registration &amp; Group Competition</b> ( <i>Talon Johnson</i> )   |
| 8:30 to 9:00 am   | Highlights of this course to date ( <i>Bill McGill</i> )<br>Question of the day & different approaches or stations ( <i>Sandra Burton</i> )            |
| 9:00 to 10:00 am  | Introducing the passion for soils & forages ( <i>Special Guest Speakers</i> )  |
| 10:00 to 10:30 am | <b>Coffee Break &amp; Group Competition</b> ( <i>Sandra Burton</i> )   |
| 10:30 to 12:00    | <b>Rotate through 3 Stations</b> (1/2 hour per station)  |
| 12:00 to 1:30 pm  | <b>Lunch Break or Landscape Learning Lunch Option</b><br>( <i>Sandra Burton, Richard Kabzems</i> )   |
| 1:30 to 3:00 pm   | <b>Rotate through 3 Stations</b> (1/2 hour per station)  |
| 3:00 to 4:00 pm   | <b>Coffee Break &amp; Small Group Discussions</b><br>What were the important pieces learned at each station towards answering the question of the day? |
| 4:00 to 5:00 pm   | <b>Whole Group Discussions</b> ( <i>Bill McGill, Bill Wilson</i> )<br>Small groups share an idea with the larger group                                 |
| 5:00 pm           | Thank yous   |

#### Groups:

**Red Mentor:** *Jim Chramosta*

**Yellow Mentor:** *Darryl Kroeker*

**Purple Mentor:** *Richard Kabzems*

**Brown Mentor:** *Talon Johnson*

**Green Mentor:** *Rick Kantz*

**Blue Mentor:** *Bill Wilson*

#### Approaches or Stations:

**Soil microbes and their habitats:  
What can we learn from them?**  
*Bill McGill*

**Can we use websites to help  
understand soils related issues?**  
*Maja Krzic*

**What can we learn from soil, CLI  
maps & air photos?**  
*Sandra Burton*

**Can we integrate soil, plant tissue  
& feed analysis into this?**  
*Elston Solberg & Julie Robinson*

**How can we use the forage  
species selection website tool?**  
*Allen Dobb & Charles Burnett*

**Can we learn from seed vigour  
analysis?**  
*Morgan Webb*

**Thank you to our Interactive Soils & Forages Course field day partners:**

**Shell Canada, Encana,  
PRAD, Investment Agriculture Fdn**

# Station Masters Biographies

## William (Bill) McGill, UNBC Professor, Research Interests

- \* Biogeochemical cycling with an emphasis on carbon and nitrogen sequestration in or bioavailability to microbes within terrestrial ecosystems.
- \* Exchange of carbon and nitrogen between terrestrial ecosystems and the atmosphere.
- \* Tools and practical applications include, simulation modeling of carbon and nitrogen dynamics.
- \* Land remediation, soil conservation, and greenhouse gas mitigation.
- \* Recent work has focused on hydrocarbon-induced soil hydrophobicity and transformations of xenobiotics in soil on one hand and modeling of trace gas emissions from soils on the other.



## Elston Solberg, President Agri-Trend Agrology

- \* Elston brings with him over 25 years of research expertise through his work with Agri-Trend, and through his work as Head Cereal Specialist and Research Agronomist with Alberta Agriculture. In addition to his experience as a researcher at the University of Alberta,
- \* Elston also has experience in the waste management industry, including municipal and intensive livestock operations.
- \* He has authored, co-authored, and published many research papers in a wide variety of technical and industry journals, and has contributed to numerous articles throughout the ag-media sector.

## Maja Krzic, Associate Professor UBC, Applied Biology/Forest Sciences Education

Ph.D. (1997), University of British Columbia

M.Sc. (1990), University of Belgrade, Yugoslavia

B.Sc. (1986), University of Belgrade, Yugoslavia

### Research Interests

Application of information technology in soil science education

Soil compaction susceptibility

Land-use impacts on temperate grasslands: linking soil quality and ecosystems function

Rehabilitation of degraded forest soils



## Morgan Webb, Senior / Accredited Seed Analyst, IST

Morgan manages Seed Science and Technology at Seed Check. He is the Lab Manager, and oversees the general operation of the purity, germination and seed health laboratories. He works wherever I am needed the most. He is from a farming background with a rare education in Seed and Grain Technology. He has passionately studied seed vigour, germination, purity testing and seed pathology since 1991. He sees seed testing as a way of life as well as a profession.

### Qualifications/ Experience:

- \* Accredited Seed Analyst by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency for all crop kinds, Germination, Purity & Disease, Seed Grader and Seed Import Release Agent.
- \* Senior member of Commercial Seed Analysts Association of Canada & served on the Boards of International Society of Seed Technologists, Canadian Seed Institute and Seed and Grain Advisory.

## Charles Burnett, President GeoMemes Research Inc

Charles is a consulting geographer with experience in landscape ecology, GIS/mapping and community engagement. He has provided creative, innovative and community-based solutions to land and marine management since 2005. Charles' background includes an MSc in Geography (Forest Remote Sensing & GIS, UVic), and a PhD in Resource Management & Conservation from the University of Turku in Finland.

Charles loves to mobilize knowledge in creative, data-rich and intuitive ways. He is a member of the Society for Conservation GIS and volunteers his time planning and trail-building the 700km long Vancouver Island Spine Trail.



## Allen Dobb, P.Ag. Allen Dobb Consulting Ltd

Allen works as an independent consultant for a diverse group of clients in BC's agriculture and natural resources sector. He is author of the BC Rangeland Seeding Manual with Sandra Burton, and supported the development of the Peace River Forage Association forage seeding tool with colleagues from GeoMemes Research Inc. He holds an M.S. degree in Forest and Range Management from Washington State University. Allen was raised on a farm near Beaverlodge, Alberta and has worked in BC, Arizona and Lesotho, Southern Africa.