

MEETING MINUTES

MABR Roundtable Gathering Volume 16
Friday, August 14th, 2020 from 10:00am to 12:30pm

Virtual meeting via Zoom.



Attendees (12)

Pam Shaw, MABRRI Director of Research
Kim Burden, Parksville & District Chamber of Commerce, E.D.
Ceri Peacey, Community Representative
Blain Sepos, Parksville Qualicum Beach Tourism, Executive Director
Haley Tomlin, MABRRI Assistant Research & Community Engagement Coordinator
Mandy Hobkirk, MABR Coordinator
Teunis Westbroek, Town of Qualicum Beach, Councillor
Maureen Young, Regional District of Nanaimo
Michael Recalma, Qualicum First Nation, Chief
Chris Burger, City of Parksville
Steve Adams, Mosaic Forest Management, Resource Technologist
Courtney Vaugeois, MABRRI Projects Coordinator

Regrets (7)

Graham Sakaki, MABRRI Research & Community Engagement Coordinator
Michael Wyse, Snuneymuxw First Nation, Chief
Brian Wiese, Town of Qualicum Beach, Mayor
Ed Mayne, City of Parksville, Mayor
Cheryl Jones, Snaw-naw-as First Nation, Councillor
Geraldine Manson, Snuneymuxw First Nation, Elder
Sonja Zupanec, Islands Trust

Objectives

The main objectives of this Roundtable gathering are for participants to:

1. Continue to engage in respectful and meaningful dialogue with one another.
2. Discuss past, present, and future events for the MABR/RI.
3. Hear from one another about regional/organizational/community updates.

Welcome & Opening Prayer

- Mandy provided a welcome, acknowledged the traditional land and territory, and provided housekeeping items for working with Zoom.
- Around the circle brief introductions.

Agenda Adoption

- Ceri asked to add the Role of the Community Representative and to discuss the future of this position.
 - This item was added to the *Future* section.

- Mandy read and provided a reminder of the Culture of Engagement document.

MABR Updates

Past

Small pockets of funding from CCUNESCO and CBRA

- MABR received \$3,000 from CCUNESCO for writing an issue brief on the role of Canadian UNESCO BRs in a post-COVID-19 recovery.
 - Involved collecting best practices of resilience and sustainability from BRs across Canada.
- Also received \$1,500 from CBRA for writing a showcase document on BRs and research.
 - Included two case studies: one on the MABR and Reconciliation and the other on Clayoquot Biosphere Trust's work on climate change.
- Mandy will send out the link for both of these documents when these are published.

Virtual MABR Youth Program

- We are unable to conduct the youth programs right now, therefore we are still referring people to the [at-home activities page](#) on the MABR website.
 - Please share with anyone who may be interested.

EuroMAB submission

- Letter of interest for the MABR to host EuroMAB 2023 was submitted in April. Hosts will be announced at EuroMAB 2021.

BC Parks Foundation: Purchasing West Ballenas Island

- BC Parks Foundation submitted to the Canada Nature Fund to purchase West Ballenas Island to establish a provincial marine park over the Ballenas Winchelsea Archipelago.
- MABR provided a letter of support for this acquisition. This would become a new core area in the MABR if it is successful.

MABR Director

- Dave Witty stepped down as Director in May. We need to have someone on file as a contact for UNESCO, it has been suggested that this person be Pam.
- Everyone is equal at the Roundtable, therefore this role would be strictly administrative.
- Teunis, Steve, and Chris shared their support for Pam taking of the role of Director.
- Teunis suggested that the Roundtable should celebrate Dave Witty's contribution to the MABR.
 - A reception was suggested when we are able to gather in person again.

Present

MABRRI's birthday (Aug 14)

- We have done a lot in the last 6 years.
- MABRRI is now producing Annual Reports, the 2019 report is the first one. The Annual Reports will showcase what MABRRI has done throughout each fiscal year and also provides a description on how MABRRI works and MABRRI's research plan.

- Haley shared the MABRRI Annual Report with the group:
 - In 2019, MABRRI had 39 projects, received \$750,000 in research funding, and engaged in a lot of community outreach. Additionally, the report included a list of all the faculty and staff MABRRI worked with and community partners (over 170 individuals).
 - The 2019 report also incorporated the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in order to show how MABRRI is contributing to them.
- The [2019 MABRRI Annual Report](#) is on the MABRRI website and is open to be shared with anyone.

MABRRI project updates:

- Timing windows project:
 - Thank you to everyone for providing letters of support for this project.
 - Heard back from the Habitat Stewardship Program for the Species at Risk application - we were put on the alternate list.
 - We have submitted more grants recently for the project (smaller, start-up funding).
 - Continuously looking for funding, so we may ask for more letters of support when other applications request them.
 - We have successfully received funding from Mitacs to hire a student to do the background work on the project.
- First Nations Pandemic Planning project:
 - Received \$100,000 from NALMA.
 - The project involves looking at every First Nation community on Vancouver Island and some on the mainland coast to see how they responded to the COVID-19 situation. Four MABRRI research assistants (and VIU students) are working on the project. The project also involves partnerships with multiple health associations on the island and a group in Manitoba.
 - The project has three main questions:
 - What worked well for First Nation communities?
 - What didn't work well?
 - What needs to be in place in September should there be a second wave?
 - To gather data, the students are interviewing representative from the First Nation communities over the phone to learn about what they did in response to COVID-19. Some of the interviews have been short (15 minutes), while others have been a few hours.
 - The outcome of the project will be a report that will highlight success stories and best practices of First Nation communities' responses to COVID-19.
 - Additionally, as a side project, MABRRI hopes to draft templates for communities to use if they decide to amend their emergency plans.

Clam monitoring project (Mitacs)

- Brand new research project that aims to determine the impacts of recreational harvesting on clam beds in the Nanoose Bay Recreational Shellfish Reserve.
- It was developed because the Nation has concerns about overharvesting and that the current levels of activity will have long term impacts.

- Cindy Stern from the Nanoose Economic Development Corporation (NEDC) approached MABRRI to partner on this project.
- Received funding from Mitacs to hire a student for the research project.
- The findings will be presented to NEDC and they might want to expand on the project after the internship is complete.
- Applied for Ethics last night (August 13) to be able to talk to First Nation community members to see if they have noticed any patterns in the clam harvesting.
- Teunis knows someone who did her thesis on clams – Josie Osborne. This paper may help with the literature review.
- The project came from a side conversation from the Roundtable – which proves that the Roundtable has meaningful impact on the region.
- Maureen suggested that if Mandy notified DFO of the project they would want to collaborate.

Giving out awards for activities in the Biosphere

- Pam mentioned that a Biosphere Reserve in Quebec hosts an annual awards program. Pam has proposed that the MABR does something similar – either create an awards series or have some awards be incorporated into the Chamber of Commerce awards.
- Pam asked the Roundtable for their feedback and support.
 - Teunis, Blain, Mandy, Steve, and Ceri expressed that they support this idea.
- Teunis expressed that people would need to understand the purpose of the award(s) and that the awards would be important as they would recognize the work people are doing and to celebrate achievements. He also suggested the awards could be hosted with the celebration of Dave Witty.
 - Pam suggested it could be included at the Annual Research Conference.
 - Teunis also expressed that it would be good to work with the Chamber on the awards as it would show that the Chamber addressed economic growth and also recognizes the Biosphere Region and the environment.
 - Steve agrees with Teunis. Steve also expressed that the MABR balances all components of sustainability, not just the environment.
- Blain expressed that it would make sense to sponsor something through the Chambers.
- Kim mentioned they are always looking for ways to expand their programs. For example, they added a tourism award last year. The tourism award excited the community and it was viewed to be important to recognize people and their work.
 - Kim expressed that he would support the MABR developing their own series or going through the Chamber.
- Mandy felt that the awards would also be a good opportunity to raise awareness of the MABR.
- Ceri mentioned she would like to see more active conservation and it would be nice to have an award for people who work hard on this.
 - Mandy suggested that there could be an award that promotes active conservation efforts.
- Pam will do some research and put together some options for the next meeting.

Assisting community groups in the MABR (social media, website, newsletter)

- Graham and Mandy were discussing how the MABR could support local organizations in the region. They came up with the idea that Mandy could spend 1 day per week to help organizations who align with the MABR's goals.
- This would also provide leverage for the periodic review as we would know what is happening in the region.
- Ceri is supportive of this idea.
- Mandy already operates the social media for the MABR and MABRRI and she has been working on developing these platforms to be better and more engaging with their audiences. Additionally, Mandy has been spending time on developing her marketing and social media skills through webinars and other resources.
- So far Mandy has reached out to organizations for additions to the MABR newsletter. Mandy is working on forms to send out to organizations offering assistance. She will send the forms to the Roundtable to share.

Future

MABRRI Guest Researchers:

- Jenni is a student from Germany who is doing her Masters in Global Change Management. She came across the MABR and MABRRI websites and she has expressed her interest in doing research on a topic related to human/nature connections.
 - She hopes to come to Vancouver Island in March 2021 to November 2021.
 - She would be self-funded but Pam and the Roundtable could help her with finding funding sources.
 - She does not have a research question yet and is hoping that people from the Roundtable would be willing to talk with her to discuss some options.
 - Teunis, Steve, and Kim are willing to chat with her.
 - Ceri suggested that Lynn Brooks would be a great resource.
 - Jenni provided Pam with a link to her website, Pam will share this information as well.
- Yesterday Pam was contacted by a student from the University of Colorado who is interested in governance of parks and protected areas. The student came across Biosphere Reserves, including the MABR. Pam explained the Roundtable to the student and the student has expressed interest in including the MABR and the Roundtable in their research.
 - Pam posed the question to the group: are we willing to be part of her research?
 - No objections from the table.

Highway signage project update (grant)

- There have been a couple highway signage meetings since the Roundtable gathered last. From these, we have decided to apply for funding from the Canada Council for the Arts.
 - Up to \$100,000 for one-year project funding, due September 23rd, 2020.
- One Nation can apply at a time, so we will focus on finding funding with Snaw-naw-as in 2020 and Qualicum in 2021.
- Over 100 applications are submitted to each intake, and about 20-25% of applications receive funding.
- Can submit the same application over and over again.

- They believed the project was strong, just needs to focus on the carvers and their careers, and the benefit to the Nation to having the art displayed.

Funding MABR Coordinator position

- We did receive some small amounts of funding through CBRA for small projects.
- We are also part of an initiative that is pitching to the federal government to receive funding for Biosphere Reserves. They are trying to receive annual federal funding to Biosphere Reserves.
- Kim sent a lead to a funding opportunity from WorkSafe BC.
 - Graham is still looking at this.
- Looking at all and any funding programs to fund the MABR Coordinator position.
- Pam asked everyone on the Roundtable to keep it in mind that we are always looking for funding for this position.
- Teunis expressed that if the MABR could have the local government match funding, then the federal government may be more willing to provide funding, as having local support would make the application stronger. For example, the Town of Qualicum Beach approved that tax payers pay \$1 per person in order to keep the Museum running. Teunis mentioned that if people see the benefit of the program/initiative, then they usually are in support of it. He feels that the awards program would show the benefit of the MABR to community members.
- Chris expressed that the annual report is great and shows how much the group has done. He also felt that the MABR has a good story to tell and we could get in front of a lot of groups, including local governments. He feels that approaching the RDN is critical. We can push the local governments for a little bit of funding.
 - He also suggested that we could do some research on where other BRs are getting their funding
- Teunis suggested that the MABR should create a short video that could be used as a visual at board or council meetings.
 - Haley, Ceri, and Chris support the video idea.
 - Chris suggested that students could be involved in the making of the video. He felt that the video could be a powerful tool.
 - Haley mentioned that MABRRI made a video for the bull kelp project and it has received a lot of positive feedback from people.
 - Ceri mentioned the Hamilton Marsh project video has been one of their most powerful tools.
- Mandy will work on developing the video.

Role of the Community Representative

- Ceri has asked for the Roundtable to provide her with some guidelines of what they would like the Community Reports to look like.
 - Chris expressed that the report should be neutral and should use science-based facts.
- Ceri also expressed concerns that her role as the Community Representative has not be strongly defined.
 - She posed the question: How valuable does the Roundtable see the Community Representative role?

- Maureen feels that it is valuable to hear the communities' concerns, as it makes us a better MABR.
- Teunis mentioned that the role of the MABR is to network and make community connections. He also suggested that Ceri could bring community concerns to the Roundtable where that can be discussed.
- Pam mentioned that the original intention behind the Community Rep position was to have someone who was tied to the community and knows what is happening. With this connection, the MABR could figure out what needs to happen and if research projects can be developed.
- Mandy feels the Community Rep position is valuable and that Ceri is doing a great job.
- Ceri expressed that she doesn't want to be the liaison between the Roundtable and the community. (Steve agrees).
 - Kim expressed that as long as the community members do not expect any action, it is good to be informed of the issues and concerns they have.
- Kim expressed that it is important to remember what our jurisdiction is and our role is – the MABR's role is to work towards creating a good balance through research and data collection. Therefore, we should exclude advocacy pieces in the Community Report.
 - Teunis and Kim agreed that we shouldn't be sharing personal opinions in the report.
- Steve mentioned that the group needs to be careful on how we word things and that the Roundtable is not here to manage problems.
 - Mandy agreed by mentioning that the Roundtable is in a unique position as we have connections with the community to address and hear people's concerns. But we do not have the jurisdiction to address some problems.
- Chris also mentioned that he wants to know the concerns of the community, but he feels the Roundtable should discuss the concerns internally and there should be a consensus amongst the Roundtable when providing responses to the community.
- Haley suggested that the Community Report could highlight the good news stories and any concerns could be worded as questions seeking clarification from the Roundtable.

Circle Updates from Roundtable Members

- Steve - We are mostly working from home and restricting our work from the office. Operationally we are started back up, but are not fully operational.
- Maureen - As a Regional District they have been doing meetings via Zoom.
- Blain - There is a lot going on, especially in the Tourism industry. The Tourism industry may look busy right now, but it doesn't mean the businesses are profitable. After the amount of loss they experienced a few months ago, things are looking pretty grim and there are concerns about what will happen in the fall and winter.
 - They have shifted their focus to recovery focused efforts. They have been working on a new initiative that is connecting businesses with resources and support.
 - Blain mentioned that if any of the Roundtable members know of anyone who is in business and having a tough time, they should feel free to share his contact information.

- Michael – the office and campsite are open and the Nation is taking it one step at a time.

Closing

- Next meeting – Friday November 6th from 10:00am – 12:30pm.
- With the future being uncertain, we will plan to host the next meeting over Zoom again.
 - However, if COVID lightens up, the plans can be changed to host the meeting in person. Teunis offered to host if this is the case.

Appendix A

MABR Roundtable Gathering Vol. 16 Agenda

Friday, August 14th, 2020 from 10:00am to 12:30pm
Virtual Meeting via Zoom.

Roundtable contact: Mandy Hobkirk - (250) 709-7678

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AGENDA

Time	Activity
10:00-10:15	Welcome/Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Words of welcome• Acknowledgement of First Nation unceded Territory• Around the circle brief introductions• Review and collectively adopt agenda• Reminder of the MABR Roundtable Culture of Engagement
10:15-11:20	MABR Updates <p><i>Past:</i> Small pockets of funding from CCUNESCO and CBRA – Mandy Virtual MABR Youth Program – Mandy EuroMAB submission – Mandy BC Parks Foundation: Purchasing West Ballenas Island – Mandy MABR Director – Mandy</p> <p><i>Present:</i> MABRRI's birthday (today/ Aug 14) – Haley Clam monitoring project (Mitacs) – Mandy Giving out awards for activities in the Biosphere – Pam Assisting community groups in the MABR (social media, website, newsletter) – Mandy</p> <p><i>Future:</i> MABRRI intern from Germany (Jenni) – Pam Highway signage project update (grant) – Mandy Funding MABR Coordinator position – Pam</p>
11:20-11:30	Coffee Break/ Health Break
11:30-12:20	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What's new with you/your organization?
12:20-12:30	Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Final reflections & action items• Next Roundtable date, host, agenda• Closing words