A Commitment to Connect at Symposiums

An important role for Columbia Basin Trust is bringing residents together at events like the Symposium to celebrate our accomplishments and help the region work toward solutions to shared challenges.

Symposiums are also opportunities for residents to connect with one another to create momentum in the Basin for further local engagement and action, as well as develop a sense of interconnectedness within the region.

The Trust’s commitment to hosting symposiums started with the events held while Basin residents helped create the beginnings of the Trust, a tradition that has continued through the Trust’s existence.

The Trust is committed to holding a symposium every three years. The 2013 Symposium took place in Creston, while the 2010 one took place in Revelstoke.

The 2013 Columbia Basin Symposium

More than 300 Basin residents connected with each other at Seeds for Success, the 2013 Columbia Basin Symposium, held October 18 to 20 in Creston at the Creston and District Community Complex. The event focused on “Community Change Through Collaborative Action.”

Seeds for Success sought to engage key leaders and residents active in their communities to collectively look toward the future of the Columbia Basin, while also discussing and addressing some of today’s key issues. The keynote speaker was Paul Born, President and Co-founder of Tamarack: An Institute for Community Engagement, which helps people collaborate and achieve collective impact on complex community issues.

Plenaries and workshops wove the theme of collaboration throughout the three days. The Symposium gave residents an opportunity to participate in strategic plans for the Trust’s social, economic and environment sectors. In addition, opportunities to meet with Trust staff and the Trust Board and President were heavily subscribed.
Plenaries and workshops on broadband, natural capital, the Columbia River Treaty, trends and perceptions, and seeding ideas for the Trust’s future maximized opportunities for conversation, education, knowledge building and informal networking.

The event featured a wine-tasting session highlighting three local wineries paired with local Creston produce, baking and more. In addition, the Saturday night showcased local food in the well-attended Taste of Creston, followed by a unique and memorable Evening of Basin Culture and Entertainment.

In addition to the capacity crowd, 50 Basin residents also participated in the Symposium online through interactive technology.

View biographies of the presenters, presentations and other resources from the Symposium at cbt.org/2013symposium/presentations.

Event Sustainability

The Trust is dedicated to the well-being of the Basin, so the role we take on as hosts of Basin events is important to us. To demonstrate and uphold this commitment, we did what we could to minimize the footprint of the 2013 Columbia Basin Symposium.

We welcome input and encourage Basin residents and Symposium participants to send us suggestions on how to improve next time.

Examples from the 2013 Symposium included:

Supporting Local Businesses and Organizations

• Supporting local businesses that attempt to reduce their environmental footprints and use local services.
• Supporting local community groups that could contribute to the event to fundraise for their organizations (e.g. Creston Youth Action).
• Purchasing local goods for speaker gifts.

Obtaining Green Food Services

• Obtaining catering from local restaurants that focus on using local ingredients and limiting waste.
• Reducing waste by ordering accurate quantities.
• Minimizing the use of disposable cutlery, cups, plates, table linens and napkins.
• Providing sources of water and reusable water bottles.

Reducing Paper

• Planning wisely and limiting the amount of paper printed for the event.
• Allowing attendees to receive their information packages electronically.

Reducing Travel

• Supporting green travel and reducing travel when possible.
• Allowing participants to attend virtually to reduce the need for travel.
Friday, October 18

Welcome and Opening

Presenters

Neil Muth, Columbia Basin Trust President and Chief Executive Officer; Chief Jason Louie, Lower Kootenay Band, Ktunaxa Nation; Ron Toyota, Mayor, Town of Creston; Michelle Mungall, MLA Nelson-Creston; Laurie Page, Columbia Basin Trust Board Vice-Chair; Honourable Bill Bennett, Minister of Energy and Mines

Emcee: Mike Stolte

Resources

• Welcome Video: cbt.org/welcomevideo

Plenary 1: Columbia River Treaty Review: Update and Key Findings

Presenters

Honourable Bill Bennett, Minister of Energy and Mines; Katrine Conroy, MLA Kootenay West; Les MacLaren, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Energy and Mines

Summary of Session

• The Province provided an update on the Columbia River Treaty (CRT) Review process, shared key findings, opportunities and challenges going forward and took questions from the floor.
• This included a review of historical facts, impacts, benefits, public consultation and key interests identified during public consultation.
• The potential future of the CRT was discussed. There was still time for the public to give input.

Key Points

• There have been three rounds of public consultation over the past 18 months.
• The Province wishes to keep the treaty, but renegotiate to modify/modernize.
• More community meetings and consultation are coming up in November 2013.
• Final recommendations will be made to the federal government in December 2013 (both the U.S. and Canada).
• They are still thinking about the best ways to further engage Basin residents (including First Nations) in the process.
Plenary 2: Trends, Perceptions and Applications

Presenters
Ray Bollman, Research Affiliate, Rural Development Institute, Brandon University, and Adjunct Professor, University of Saskatchewan; Jonathan Buttle, Researcher, Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute, Selkirk College

Summary of Session
• This session set the stage for the Symposium by describing the trends in our region and how these trends relate to past and future trends in rural Canada. Participants’ perceptions were explored in relation to what the data is telling us. The pitfalls and promises of using data and research to effectively inform decision making was discussed.
• There was a general discussion of the Basin indicator pillars (economic, social, environmental, cultural) by Buttle. Symposium participant perceptions were measured using handheld electronic polling devices. The exercise compared the perceptions of Symposium participants with results from a broader poll conducted amongst Basin residents. Elements of the State of the Basin Report were also presented.
• Bollman, former head of the Statistics Canada rural unit, presented population trends affecting the workforce and immigration/emigration, and how they might affect the region.

Key Points
• There is a general perception of positive well-being in the Basin.
• Population changes in the Basin will create pressures on labour supply. Resident attraction and retention strategies are important considerations.
• The State of the Basin Report can deepen and strengthen our understanding of our region and communities.

Resources
• Plenary 2 Video: cbt.org/plenary2video
• Bollman’s Presentation: cbt.org/pdfs/2013/RayBollman_2013Symposium.pdf
• State of the Basin Reports: cbrdi.ca/state-of-the-basin
• Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute Website: cbrdi.ca
• Rossland Indicator Project Video: cbrdi.ca/resources/videos
Keynote: How a Community Transforms: A Collective Impact Journey

Presenters
Paul Born, President, Tamarack Institute

Summary of Session
• Paul Born built one of the most successful community economic development organizations in Canada—then realized that poverty actually increased by five per cent in his community. Confused, he set out on a journey to understand what really transforms a community. What does it take to get everyone engaged and collaborating toward a collective impact? Participants heard about Born’s journey and learned about the collective impact approach now used across North America to restore ecosystems, improve high school graduation rates and renew economies.

Resources
• Keynote Video: cbt.org/keynotevideo
• Born’s Presentation: cbt.org/pdfs/2013/PaulBorn_2013Symposium.pdf
• Born’s Book, Community Conversations: tamarackcommunity.ca/g4s114a.html

Saturday, October 19

Session 1: Social Sector Planning Session

Presenters
Facilitator: Aimee Ambrosone, Senior Manager, Sector Initiatives, Columbia Basin Trust

Panel: Pat Cope, Executive Director, Family Resource Centre, Invermere; Alan Mason, Director, Community Economic Development, Revelstoke; Andrew Jarrett, Retired Executive Coordinator, Kootenay Boundary Community Services Co-operative

Summary of Session
• The Trust is in the process of renewing its five-year strategic plans that guide each of its social, economic and environmental initiatives. This session provided participants the opportunity to support the development of these plans and provide their input.
• The session asked participants to form breakout groups to address the following questions:
  1. What do you see as the key challenge facing communities that are addressing social issues?
  2. What are examples of ways to overcome that challenge?
• The session also involved a discussion on the possible roles the Trust could play with respect to the questions.
Key Points

Key Challenges

- Income disparity:
  - Poverty.
  - Housing.
  - Mental health/addictions.
  - Barriers like lack of funding, aging population of dedicated people, community building.
- Reduced poverty.
- Lack of coordination and long-term planning.
- Lack of collaboration and disconnection among groups/individuals/society.
- Need for rich, diverse, inclusive community dialogue to identify "what is health."
- Lack of community engagement and connectivity around a common agenda (poverty, multi-year resources, awareness).
- How do you catalyze people to be engaged? Citizen engagement is not others’ problems, it is ours. Different agendas, different communities etc.: build stronger communities.

Solutions

- Strategic collaboration: provide tools/resources for overcoming issues.
- Each community and region supported to develop vision/work:
  - Coordinate the efforts of social organizations (competition).
  - Support the capacity of agencies and volunteerism: resources.
  - Change perceptions about poverty.
  - Improve communication between sectors around issues.
- Framework for group coordination and collaboration at the community level with leadership (paid positions).
- Communication, communication, communication:
  - Link organizations via paid social planning coordination (backbone organization).
- Include those with lived experience/create community dialogue opportunities.
- Community conversations (local and Basin):
  - Backbone organization at the community and Basin level.
  - Common agenda.
- Work together more effectively through the municipalities and through communication.

Possible Columbia Basin Trust Roles

- Continue community priority process (Keys to Success).
- Fund social development and coordination.
- Bring players together to communicate, collaborate and coordinate (include local government).
- Offer long-term funding.
- Help to knit across sectors.
• Help address bringing together rural with municipalities re: community development.
• Offer flexible funding models at the community level.
• Keep the sector liaisons.
• Support the development of a tool kit for communities.
• Hire social coordinators to support communities.
• Support knowledge sharing/transfer internally (from external).
• Allow and help communities to define themselves (common interests and geography).

Resources
• Columbia Basin Trust Social Initiatives: cbt.org/social

Session 2: Environment Sector Planning Session

Presenters
Tim Hicks, Manager, Water and Environment, Columbia Basin Trust; Lynne Betts, Communications and Community Engagement Consultant, Imprint Creative Solutions

Summary of Session
• The Trust is in the process of renewing its five-year strategic plans that guide each of its social, economic and environmental initiatives. This session provided participants the opportunity to support the development of these plans and provide their input.
• This session was a discussion of environmental well-being and how the Trust’s Environment Strategic Plan can build and support that goal.

Key Points
• Work with forested land base. Recognize that it is tied to water.
• Consolidation of environmental, social and economic groups and benefits.
• Opportunities to strengthen, expand and clarify what environmental capacity building means to communities.
• Learn from others.
• Focus on helping communities and organizations build and grow their “backbone” so they can stand on their own.
• Provision of funding to help create collaboration and partnerships.
Session 3: Economic Sector Planning Session

Presenters
Lisa Kilpatrick, Manager, Economic, Columbia Basin Trust; Geri Brightwell, Principal, Brightwell Consulting

Summary of Session
• The Trust is in the process of renewing its five-year strategic plans that guide each of its social, economic and environmental initiatives. This session provided participants the opportunity to support the development of these plans and provide their input.
• A wealth of information has been gathered from various sources, research, input from Basin residents (e.g. Thoughtstream), etc. This information has identified themes that will be used during discussions, to move forward and to engage residents.
• Participants moved into six breakout groups to discuss themes and their relative importance, and the challenges and opportunities within each.

Key Points
• Key themes:
  • Economic infrastructure.
  • Business industry support and attraction.
  • Workforce development.
  • Current and future economic drivers.
  • Local economic resiliency.
  • Local and regional capacity.
• The Trust’s economic sector is at the beginning of the engagement process for renewing its strategic plan. There will be much opportunity for input.

Resources
• Kilpatrick’s Presentation: cbt.org/pdfs/2013/EconomicInitiatives_Symposium2013.pdf
Plenary 3: Building Effective Collaboration

Presenters

Moderator: Mike Stolte

Panelists: Paul Born, President, Tamarack Institute; Marleen Morris, Co-Director, Community Development Institute, University of Northern British Columbia; Brad Woodside, Mayor, City of Fredericton

Summary of Session

• Each presenter gave a story of collaboration on a challenging project he or she was personally involved in. They each described how impediments to collaboration were overcome. A lengthy question and answer session followed.

Key Points

• Morris cited examples of community collaboration from the U.K. The most important element was to build strong collaborative leadership and an ethos of collaboration at the board level.

• Woodside spoke of an award-winning drug awareness campaign using a "Try hugs, not drugs" slogan for young children. He commented that once you admit to having a problem, it’s often too late. He recommended having goals and objectives and setting action for change.

• Born spoke of the need for different types of solutions for the differing complexities of issues. One size does not fit all. With simple issues, one can follow a recipe and develop a plan. With more complicated issues, a thorough study and understanding of the issue is needed (e.g. rocket to the moon requires a scientific approach). With a complicated issue like raising a child, or community development, one needs to be always active, present and involved, as the ground is continually moving. Paul emphasized the importance of learning together at all times.

• Common elements among the presenters were: developing a culture of collaboration; creating time and space to work together, emphasizing both formal and informal retreats in different settings (e.g. outside the boardroom, possibly on a touring bus); having good information to base dialogues upon; and the development of a common agenda.

• Collaborating is not easy. It takes work, especially with many people with many ideas coming together to form a common agenda.

Resources

• Plenary 3 Video: cbt.org/plenary3video

Session 4: Columbia River Treaty Local Governments’ Committee Update

Presenters

Deb Kozak, Chair, CRT Local Governments’ Committee, and Councillor, City of Nelson; Karen Hamling, CRT Local Governments’ Committee, and Mayor, Village of Nakusp; John Harrison, Information Officer, Northwest Power and Conservation Council; Terry Keenhan, Water Resources Manager, Yakima County

Summary of Session

• This interactive presentation provided an update on the Columbia River Treaty from the Local Governments’ Committee standpoint and that of other stakeholders.

• The session featured a lengthy question and answer session from participants.
Key Points

- Key points of the review are:
  - Ecosystem functions: Should provide enhanced stream flows from Canada to benefit fish, wildlife and other uses.
  - Hydropower: Rebalance power benefits to reflect the actual value of coordinated operations.
  - Flood risk management: The level of risk will be similar to the risk existing prior to 2024; need rules for called-upon flood control.
  - Fish above Chief Joseph and Grand Coulee dams: Investigate with Canada and, if warranted, implement.
  - Climate change: Flexible strategy to adapt CRT to future changes in climate.
  - Draft doesn’t say “termination,” but “modernization” by “revisions, diplomatic notes or other means.”
  - The Sovereign Review Team represents all states; interests not on the SRT want seats at the table.
  - Priorities vary by interest; disagreement on ecosystem functions, fish and wildlife enhancement, flood risk management, future governance.
  - There are a lot of competing stakeholder interests that needs to be resolved; will they reach consensus by December 2013? The U.S. State Dept. is conducting a national policy review as well. Our view is they need to talk with us re: storage and coordination.
  - Recommendations include trying to restore salmon, but we have been clear throughout the process that we do not view the return of salmon to the Basin as a treaty issue. If the U.S. gets salmon above Grand Coulee, we’ll create passage into Canada. Arrow and Brilliant dams or expansion facilities have been built with capacity for salmon passage.
  - People whose homes were flooded still need to be compensated, but regional governments can’t come up with the money to recompense.
  - Residents are building into floodplains on both sides of the border. There needs to be discussion about moving or relocating properties, as more extreme weather events will create big issues. The City of Portland has moved one neighbourhood and re-established it.

Resources

- Keenhan’s Presentation: cbt.org/pdfs/2013/TerryKeenhan_2013Symposium.pdf

Session 5: Investing in Natural Capital: McKenzie Watershed Voluntary Incentives Program

Presenters

Karl Morgenstern, Environmental Management Supervisor, Eugene Water & Electric Board

Summary of Session

- The Eugene Water & Electric Board is developing a drinking water source protection strategy that will reward rural landowners who maintain high-quality land along the McKenzie River. The strategy will help protect water quality in the McKenzie Watershed and avoid future water treatment costs.
- A significant combination of environmental problems were threatening and compromising the quality of domestic water source in Oregon. Attempts to implement a regulatory solution were very poorly received and did not work.
• A collaborative effort resulted in a program that recognizes the economic values of ecosystems that maintain water quality and pays private landowners to manage riparian areas and wetlands in ways that preserve and protect water quality.

Key Points
• Collaborative incentive-based approaches supporting responsible environmental management practices can be more effective than regulatory approaches.
• Collaboration created a shared vision between and among parties that previously held strong, divergent points of view.

Resources
• Morgenstern’s Presentation: cbt.org/pdfs/2013/KarlMorgenstern_2013Symposium.pdf

Session 6: Community Broadband

Presenters
Brad Woodside, Mayor, City of Fredericton, New Brunswick

Summary of Session
• This session is intended to inspire and educate community members about the impacts and potentials of broadband. The City of Fredericton has recognized the vital importance of intellectual infrastructure as a tool to cultivate the growth of its knowledge-based economy.
• Woodside spoke about the city of Fredericton’s fibre program, initiated in 2000. He described successes pertaining to high-tech development, and how Fredericton’s broadband network has facilitated substantial growth in the tech sector. Two companies that started in Fredericton recently sold for half a billion dollars. The owners of the companies are still in Fredericton and investing in future start-ups.
• Twice the city has made the “Top Seven Intelligent Communities in the World” list.
• Fredericton just announced a signing with Canada’s Advanced Research and Innovation Network (canarie.ca) and the University of New Brunswick.
• Fredericton offers 100 Meg symmetrical services for $200 per month. In the not-too-distant future, Woodside is going to announce a 75 per cent cut to offer those services for $50 per month: the lowest rates in North America.
• The utility the city created is non-profit and has a few million in the bank to continue development. Fredericton offers free wi-fi in its downtown.
Key Points

- Anchor tenants were key, including the prepayment of city services for three years.
- Political support is important at all levels.
- Don’t give up as this is a long process.
- The federal government has an important role in improving connectivity.

Session 7: Making It Work: Collaboration in Regional Economic Development

Presenters

Marleen Morris, Co-Director, Community Development Institute, University of Northern British Columbia

Summary of Session

- This session explored the benefits of collaboration in regional economic development and the factors that can make it work. Drawing on examples from rural BC and the U.K., the presentation looked at how communities and regions, working together, can achieve the synergies and produce the momentum for lasting community and economic transformation.
- Examples of successful collaborations were provided.
- Breakout sessions provided opportunity to discuss collaborative challenges and solutions.

Key Points

- Factors for successful collaboration: information, leadership, involvement, goals and outcomes, strategies and plans, implementation and monitoring.
- Identify common assets and aspirations: small, short-term.
- When starting out, look for the wins and build from there.
- The more you build collaborative capacity, the easier it gets.
- Both community development and economic development need equal attention to move into a growth phase.
- Five elements of collaboration: 1. context, 2. structure/links, 3. information and knowledge, 4. governance and 5. leadership.

Resources

- Morris's Presentation: cbt.org/pdfs/2013/MarleenMorris_2013Symposium.pdf
- Kootenay Workforce Roundtable Skills and Training Plan: jtst.gov.bc.ca/regionalworkforcetables/kootenay.htm
Plenary 4: Conversation, Collaboration and Community Change

Presenters

Paul Born, President, Tamarack Institute

Summary of Session

• This highly interactive and inspiring workshop was based on Paul’s book *Community Conversations: Mobilizing the Ideas, Skills and Passion of Community Organizations, Governments, Businesses and People*. Communities around the world are entering a new era of community building. At the heart are community conversations, in which common goals are embraced by a diverse array of people with different backgrounds and needs, and influencers are drawn from multiple sectors, including community organizations, various levels of government and business leaders big and small.

Key Points

• Community conversations are critical in tackling complex issues.
• Community conversations are critical in creating the right environment for community change.
• Get close to people. Understand their needs.
• Build trust and empathy.
• Let what needs to be done emerge.
• Involve everyone—embrace diversity.
• Build a collaborative culture.
• Collaborating builds collaboration.
• The most important parts of a strategic plan are the process and conversations that lead to its creation. Arrive together.

Resources

• Plenary 4 Video: cbt.org/plenary4video
• Born’s Presentation: cbt.org/pdfs/2013/PaulBorn_2013Symposium.pdf
• Born’s Book, *Community Conversations*: tamarackcommunity.ca/g4s114a.html
• *The Power of Collective Wisdom* by Alan Briskin and Sheryl Erickson
• Studies of the wisdom of crowds

An Evening of Basin Culture and Entertainment

On Saturday, October 19, from 8 to 10:30 p.m. at the Wynndel Hall in Creston, Symposium participants and the public joined the Trust for an evening of cultural entertainment. This all-ages evening was filled with lively music, theatrical performances, First Nations drumming and dancing and surprise guests from across the Basin.

Artisans from the Creston Valley area displayed visual art pieces including painting, ceramics and fiber arts, plus performed live art demonstrations. There was a cash bar and goods for sale.
The evening included:

8 p.m.    Musical Theatre from Creston’s Footlighters Theatre Society
8:40 p.m. Welcome from the evening’s host and Columbia Basin Trust
8:45 p.m. Community Circus Entertainers: the A-Muse Troup from Golden
9:30 p.m. Eagle Spirit Bear Drum Group and Ktunaxa Dancers
10 p.m.    Good Ol’ Goats from Cranbrook

A free shuttle service started at 7:30 p.m. and departed every 30 minutes from downtown Creston locations.

Over the Symposium weekend, people were also invited enjoy “Get to Know Creston Self-guided Tours.”

Sunday, October 20

Plenary 5: Seeding Ideas for the Trust’s Future

Presenters

Moderated by: Wayne Lundeberg, Columbia Basin Trust Director, Planning and Evaluation; Johnny Strilaeff, Columbia Basin Trust Vice-President and Chief Operating Officer

Summary of Session

• The Trust is forecasting a significant increase in revenues beginning in 2016. This facilitated discussion will provide one source of input to the Trust Board around some of the strategic issues and opportunities that come with that increase.

Part 1

The session consisted of a presentation on the Trust’s forecasted revenues, showing various scenarios of spending all the $25-million forecasted increase against reinvesting some of that increase. Participants were broken into nine small groups and asked to discuss the following question:

• Should the increase in forecasted revenue go exclusively to Delivery of Benefits, or should some or all of it be reinvested?

Groups were allowed time to discuss and then reported back to the plenary the results of their discussions.

Part 2

The second phase of this activity began with a presentation on some of the ways the Trust could evolve its Delivery of Benefits activities in the future, and some of the implications of the different growth models. Participants were broken into nine small groups and asked to discuss the following question:
• Assuming a significantly increased Delivery of Benefits budget, what should the Trust’s Delivery of Benefits activities look like as we develop over the coming years?

Groups were allowed time to discuss and then reported back to the plenary the results of their discussions.

**Key Points**

- All groups were open to reinvesting some of the increased revenues.
- Some activities that the Trust should support might not necessarily fit Delivery of Benefits or its Investment Program but might be a “third way.”
- There is a need to build the capacity of communities and organizations.
- There is a need to evaluate what the Trust is currently doing and not be afraid to stop funding activities that are not meeting expectations.
- The Trust should not be locked into a sector-based approach, but recognize that issues and problems are cross-sectoral, as are communities.
- The Trust should retain the ability to fund large, legacy-type projects.
- There should be a Basin vision to help the Trust identify how increased revenues could best be used.

**Resources**

- Plenary 5 Video: [cbt.org/plenary5video](http://cbt.org/plenary5video)

**Closing**

**Resources**

- Closing Video: [cbt.org/closingvideo](http://cbt.org/closingvideo)

**Feedback**

Evaluation forms were handed out in the registration package and made available online immediately after the Symposium. In total, 106 participants completed the evaluation.

Approximately 84 per cent of respondents highly rated the Symposium as a whole. Every session received consistently high ratings, from keynotes and plenaries to concurrent sessions and events like the Taste of Creston and Evening of Basin Culture and Entertainment.

As one attendee said: “I felt the Symposium was very well organized and informative and engaged attendees to participate and ask questions throughout.”

**Next Steps: Where to From Here?**

In the spirit of the Symposium, the Trust will continue to support community conversations that aim to set common priorities in a collaborative way.

The Trust will also follow up on Plenary 5—Seeding Ideas for the Trust’s Future—with a significant Basin-wide engagement initiative. The purpose is to gain input from a diverse cross-section of Basin residents, which will help the Trust set priorities, make decisions, plan delivery mechanisms and allocate resources.