

## Notes: Fireside Chat #2

The session was well attended, and included municipal councillors, landowners, and land trust representatives.

Jay Slemph outlined the history and current status of the Special Areas. The Special Areas Board is unique in being a crown agency and a rural municipality, charged with managing public lands and enabling a dwindling population to continue on marginal land. Restrictive covenants are being used to protect the ecological value of fragile rangeland.

Role for land trusts in Special Areas: encourage more conservation by paying one third of purchase cost of public land in exchange for stewardship services, facilitate TDCs, promote and protect ecological reserves.

The Mountain View representative provided information on conservation strategies: environmental protection guidelines to landowners, density bonuses for conserving, TDCs, offering small supplementary payment to landowner in TDC transactions, etc.

A con and pro discussion of the adequacy of municipalities' conservation efforts:

-Municipalities counter conservation by incentives to "improve" farmland, are ignorant of land protection legislation or do not enforce it, have too much authority over land use, neglect to establish environmental reserves, etc.

-the legislation is appropriate though ignored, and the LUF will probably change that; enforcement is improving (developers prosecuted for draining wetlands), some jurisdictions have good Integrated Management Plans, some restrict development on good soil.

**Municipality tasks:** get informed, enforce laws, use integrated management planning, use conservation easements for utility corridors, environmental reserves, etc., do full cost accounting when considering competing land uses (gravel vs good agricultural land), use intervening status *re* oil/gas proposals.

**Land trust and ALTA tasks:** educate municipalities to their responsibilities, provide mapping for municipality use, find out from LUF (Seifferling) what municipalities are to expect and what the guidelines will be for farm land protection.

**LUF task:** control municipal discretion on land use, use full cost accounting, attend to cumulative effects, be willing to act in the service of social and environmental objectives previously neglected.

Incentives and as important as restrictions: Green Cover type programs, Rangeland/Wetland Recognition programs, Wetland Mitigation program (Land trust representative)

What is not working: Carbon credits (Municipal councillor)