

SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT
WEST HOWE SOUND (AREA F)
ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA
Tuesday, September 26, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting will be Held Online via ZOOM

CALL TO ORDER

AGENDA

1. Adoption of the Agenda

DELEGATIONS

MINUTES

- | | |
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| 2. West Howe Sound (Area F) APC Minutes of July 25, 2023 | Pages 1 - 3 |
| 3. Egmont/Pender Harbour (Area A) APC Minutes of July 26, 2023 | pp 4 - 7 |
| 4. Halfmoon Bay (Area B) APC Minutes of July 25, 2023 | pp 8 - 10 |
| 5. Roberts Creek (Area D) APC Minutes of July 17, 2023 | pp 11 - 12 |
| 6. Elphinstone (Area E) APC Minutes of July 26, 2023 | pp 13 - 15 |

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

REPORTS

- | | |
|--|------------|
| 7. Forestry Referrals: BC Timber Sales Operating Plan (CRN00155) 2023-2027 | pp 16 - 22 |
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NEW BUSINESS

DIRECTORS REPORT

NEXT MEETING

ADJOURNMENT

SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT

AREA F – WEST HOWE SOUND ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION

July 25, 2023

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE WEST HOWE SOUND (AREA F) ADVISORY PLANNING
COMMISSION MEETING HELD ELECTRONICALLY VIA ZOOM

PRESENT:	Vice Chair	Tom Fitzgerald
	Members	Miyuki Shinkai Kevin Healy Jonathan McMorran
ALSO PRESENT:	Director, Electoral Area F	Kate-Louise Stamford (Non-Voting Board Liaison)
	Recording Secretary	Diane Corbett
REGRETS:	Members	Katie Thomas Susan Fitchell
ABSENT:	Members	Ryan Matthews

CALL TO ORDER 7:08 p.m.

AGENDA The agenda was adopted as presented.

MINUTES

West Howe Sound (Area F) Minutes

The West Howe Sound (Area F) APC minutes of May 23, 2023 were approved as circulated.

Minutes

The following minutes were received for information:

- Elphinstone (Area E) APC Minutes of June 28, 2023

REPORTS

Regional Growth Framework Baseline Research

The APC discussed the staff report regarding the Regional Growth Framework Baseline Research. Director Stamford gave a brief background on the report and responded to APC inquiries.

The following points were noted:

- Is the idea for this to be a holistic view of how growth should happen on the Sunshine Coast? What is the point of this?
- It is a nice idea; it would be an amazing resource.
- It is hard to put a lot of detailed comments because there isn't detail to comment on.

A member read aloud from the Regional Growth Framework Phase 2 Report regarding Area F (page 17):

- Water supply comes from Chapman Creek, Langdale well, Soames Point well, Granthams Landing well, Collector and Gordon wells, and local ground sources. The OCP does not allow for system expansion outside of the Residential Settlement Boundary.
- Any potential growth along Port Mellon Highway within the Residential Settlement Boundary and Gambier Island is not limited by current infrastructure. Gambier Island could benefit from a developed water system to provide fire protection.
- There may be a need to upgrade road transportation infrastructure in this area in response to anticipated future transportation demand. Most roads do not meet Provincial standards.

The member commented that, without infrastructure developed, we can't build anything. We need to have Port Mellon road looked after to have any development come into our area. Nothing has been done. There is a lot of potential from Langdale to Port Mellon; infrastructure is a limitation. Trailer parks are a potential way of developing affordable housing. There has been a holding pattern for the last twenty years; with no infrastructure development or improvement, it is not welcoming.

Member supported points below and hoped the SCRD would be able to execute some of the report's ideas into reality:

- (Phase 2 report, p. 21) "May be opportunities to allow affordable housing types like mobile home parks and tiny homes in rural areas (i.e. places that aren't necessarily well serviced by transit/services)."
- (Phase 2 report, p. 23) "Important to effectively communicate the value and benefits that are derived from growth."
- (Phase 3 report, p. 33, for Electoral Areas) "Focus development in close proximity to established centres or hubs, where commercial services and infrastructure servicing already exist." "Reduce development footprint and ecological impact by clustering buildings closely together."

Planning Enhancement Project (PEP) 2 Phase 1 Policy Mix Micro Project: Amendment Zoning Bylaw No. 722.9 and 337.123 Watercourse and Shoreline Protection Amendments

The APC discussed the staff report regarding Planning Enhancement Project (PEP) 2 Phase 1 Policy Mix Micro Project: Amendment Zoning Bylaw No. 722.9 and 337.123 Watercourse and Shoreline Protection amendments. Director Stamford provided background information.

Points from discussion included:

- I saw that this was really long and I would need a lot of time to read it. Did not read.
- The Province brought in the RAPR legislation that sets out what the study area is and

what a Streamside Protection and Enhancement Area (SPEA) is. It is basically set by an accredited environmental monitor. It concerns me if you have another jurisdiction not just interpreting provincial guidelines, but want to do something on their own. Concern if, for example, Area A is doing something different than Gibsons. In reality the two zoning bylaws probably need a fair bit of work to make them consistent; they should be updated to match what the Province has downloaded on the Regional District. Concern about, with a very fixed budget, having to come up with a strict set of new rules, without having the budget to think this through.

- We have a bunch of minimum lot sizes that relate to where properties are within the Regional District. They are generally set bigger in the outlying areas, smaller into urban areas. The way minimum lot sizes were done was based on intended use. The bylaw should make lot size consistent with the Vancouver Coastal Health guidelines.
- The septic covenant area is huge, bigger than some lots that exist. Now, where you have two houses, you'd be making one. Same with SPEA: for all of the houses along Riverside, the SPEA boundary is part of their lot area. For a lot of those lots, you'd be turning three houses into one, but the SPEA would still be the same. Instead of creating 50 feet of road for one house, you'd be creating 150 feet of road, water main, drainage, clearing and maintenance for the road. By not including those areas (eg streamside protection, buffers), you are now ending up with bigger lots. It goes against everything we are trying to get more efficient with housing, and the area protected is still the same; there is less infrastructure for the same number of people. More efficient would be proving you have a viable building envelope.
- Where there is an existing lot that has been subdivided but not built on, is that taken into account?
- There are a lot of places that have been grandfathered. Does that make the lot redundant and disappear?

NEW BUSINESS

There was discussion of the Development Approval Process Review (DAPR) report sent to the APC by link in an email the previous day. There was uncertainty about what the SCRDP was requesting of the APC regarding the report, and a few members wanted the report to come to the APC for consideration due to not having the proper time or context to review it.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director's report was received.

NEXT MEETING Tuesday, September 26, 2023

ADJOURNMENT 8:27 p.m.

SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT

AREA A - EGMONT/PENDER HARBOUR ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION

July 26, 2023

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AREA "A" ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING HELD
AT SOUTH PENDER OFFICE, MADEIRA PARK, BC

PRESENT:	Chair	Alan Skelley
	Members	Jane McOuat Dennis Burnham Gordon Littlejohn Catherine McEachern Bob Fielding
ALSO PRESENT:	Electoral Area A Director	Leonard Lee (Non-Voting Board Liaison)
	Area A Alternate Director	Christine Alexander (Non-Voting Board Liaison)
	Recording Secretary	Kelly Kammerle
REGRETS:	Members	Sean McAllister
		Tom Silvey
		Yovhan Burega

CALL TO ORDER 7:00 p.m.

AGENDA The agenda was adopted as presented.

MINUTES

Area A Minutes

The Egmont/Pender Harbour (Area A) APC Minutes of April 26, 2023 were approved as circulated.

The following minutes were received for information:

- Halfmoon Bay (Area B) APC Minutes of April 25, 2023
- Elphinstone (Area E) APC Minutes of April 26 & June 28, 2023
- West Howe Sound (Area F) APC Minutes of April 25 & May 23, 2023

REPORTS

The Area A APC reviewed the Regional Growth Framework Baseline Research report.

Recommendation No.1 *Regional Growth Framework Baseline Research*

The Area A APC recommended that the Regional Growth Framework Baseline Research report be received for information.

The Area A APC discussed the proposed amendments to Bylaw 337 (Area A) with respect to the PEP 2 Phase 1 Policy Fix Micro Project and had the following recommendation, concerns and issues:

Recommendation No.2 *Planning Enhancement Project (PEP) 2 Phase 1 Policy Fix Micro Project: Amendment Zoning Bylaw No. 722.9 and 337.123 Watercourse and Shoreline Protection Amendments.*

The Area A APC recommended that the SCRD Board adopt Option No. 3, make no changes at this time, and that the proposed amendments do not receive first reading and no amendments to Bylaw 337 be enacted at this time.

CONCERNS AND ISSUES:

- These amendments are not “housekeeping” items
- Given the importance and number of waterfront properties in Area A, the proposed changes will have a significant and negative impact on both property values and the amount of subdividable land.
- Area A residents need to be informed of the proposed changes and provided with an opportunity to ask questions and provide their input.
- Justification for pushing these changes through on an emergency basis has not been justified; specific provincial legislative requirements are not specified and vague references to fostering climate resilience is not adequate justification.
- The changes would aggravate rather than clarify the regulatory confusion and layer on additional and conflicting compliance and enforcement issues.
- The committee is concerned about the assumption that all areas should have the same OCP or Zoning bylaw as this idea has never been vetted with the residents of Area A, this Committee, PHARA or our community associations. Area A has extensive waterfront properties and a topography and economic climate quite different than the other Electoral areas and municipalities of the Sunshine Coast.

Parcel Area Calculation for Subdivision Purposes

- There may be confusion between “useable parcel area” (where a minimum useable size is set out in s.413 of Bylaw 337 for each Subdivision Area) and a calculation of the total area of the property proposed to be subdivided (the numerator in calculating minimum lot size). The Streamside Protection Enhancement Area (SPEA) is already excluded from the definition of “useable parcel area” in Bylaw 337. If specified requirements for minimum lot size, useable parcel area and lot coverage ratios are otherwise met, the committee did not see a benefit to excluding SPEA area. Requirements of the SPEA report (and a restrictive covenant on title) would restrict development on the resulting subdivided lots.
- The proposed definition of a stream or watercourse contains a novel, additional exclusion in

calculating parcel area (new 402 (iv)) that goes beyond the current Riparian Areas Protection Act (RAP) because it removes the connection between such water and preservation of fish habitat.

- As drafted, the proposed exclusion would include areas of pooled water over vast areas of land that is the temporary and natural consequence of precipitation in a Coastal Rainforest area of rocky sloping land. The committee questioned the exclusion of such water areas if there was no connection to protecting fish habitat and recommends deletion of 402 (iv).

Hardscaping Definition

- The benefit of creating a “hardscaping” definition was questioned, as it would further confuse the issue and be of limited benefit.
- The Changes proposed would not prevent hardscaping near the waterfront, because the prohibition would only apply where a SPEA area has been created in an RAP QEP report. That report is triggered by: an application for development (an undefined term in RAP regulations) or by a land being within a Development Permit Area (DPA) #4 under the Area A OCP).
- The proposed wording would not prevent a buyer of a vacant lot (whose land is not within Development Permit Area #4) building a road to the water, clearing tress, importing sand or gravel, building a retaining wall etc. because no SPEA would exist at that point.
- Such activities are unlawful where land is within a DPA #4 – Riparian (see OCP s. 3.10 and 3.10.8), but it was noted most landowners are not aware that their property is within a DPA.
- It would be of benefit to include “hardscape” in the “Land Alteration” definition in OCP s. 3.10 (c).

Streamside Buffer

- It was noted that a once a SPEA is delineated in the RAR report, it usually specifies what can be built or grown or not removed within the SPEA (down to identified trees, etc.) and the SCRD often requires a covenant specifying such restrictions be registered against title.
- The 5-metre buffer is significant (increasing the SPEA setback area by potentially 20- 50%) and of questionable value. If the SPEA (as determined based on the professional reliance model set out in the RAP) is not adequate in protecting a stream or watercourse (and nearby roots and canopy), it seems the Province should revisit this legislation.
- Given the huge impact of these site restrictions for many property owners in Area A, limiting building of: patios, decks, pathways, stairs, etc., to access and enjoy the waterfront, the stated rationale of “ critical green infrastructure asset that strengthens the resilience to climate change impacts” is not enough.
- Scientific justification is needed for something going beyond protection of fish habitat.
- Given the vast tracts of Crown land within Area A subjected to annual permitted deforestation, it is difficult to justify the hardship to (only) waterfront property owners by requiring an additional 5 metre “no build” zone.

Water Setbacks

- The proposed increased setback requirements pose serious consequences to landowners in Area A by reducing property values and rendering many parcels “unbuildable”.
- Serious justification and the opportunity for public input is requested.
- Varying setbacks means existing properties will lose privacy as neighbours are forced to build behind them and those required to build further back will have restricted sight lines and want to clear more trees for water views.
- The committee is concerned with the reality that, as the SCRD increases these restrictions (without increasing the resources available to enforce them), trees will disappear to maintain view lines (Why do people buy waterfront?), paths and stairs will appear, (residents want safe

access to waterfront), larger hardscaping will be built (such a long trek to the shore) and this activity will now occur (and be visible) in a (proposed) larger setback area.

- Bylaw enforcement, requests for variance and pressure on planning staff will grow exponentially, because the consequences are critical to waterfront owners.
- The changes suggested are an oversimplified band-aid non-solution to a complex issue.

NEW BUSINESS

This APC requests a meeting with the planning department with all APC's in attendance.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director's report was received.

NEXT MEETING September 27, 2023

ADJOURNMENT 8:30 p.m.

SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT

HALFMOON BAY (AREA B) ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION

July 25, 2023

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE HALFMOON BAY (AREA B) ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING HELD ELECTRONICALLY VIA ZOOM

PRESENT:	Chair (Acting)	Kelsey Oxley
	Members	Len Coombes Barbara Bolding Ellie Lenz Alda Grames Matt Garmon Suzette Stevenson (Recorder)
ALSO PRESENT:	Director, Electoral Area B	Justine Gabias (Non-Voting Board Liaison)
ABSENT:	Members	Nicole Huska

CALL TO ORDER 7:00 p.m.

AGENDA The agenda was adopted as presented.

MINUTES

Halfmoon Bay (Area B) Minutes

The Halfmoon Bay (Area B) APC minutes of April 25, 2023 were approved as circulated.

Minutes

The following minutes were received for information:

- Egmont/Pender Harbour (Area A) APC Minutes of April 26, 2023
- Elphinstone (Area E) APC Minutes of April 26 & June 28, 2023
- West Howe Sound (Area F) APC Minutes of April 25 & May 23, 2023

REPORTS

Regional Growth Framework Baseline Research

Key points of discussion:

- The baseline framework around transportation was insular to the coast and should include the need for transit ferry to ferry.
- The lack of transportation north of Sechelt, which is concerning for seniors, and others, for whom cycling is not an option, needs to be addressed.
- It was noted that Handy Dart service does not adequately bridge the gap in the lack of taxi service.
- Concern for a sustainable pace of development in regard to water, fire departments, schools (all infrastructure) must see parallel growth to match development.
- As has been in the past, attendance by a staff member to the APC meeting would provide clarity around jurisdiction and proposed management of water inline with development growth.

Recommendation No.1 *Regional Growth Framework Baseline Research*

The Area B APC recommends that the baseline framework around transportation recognize the coastal connection to the lower mainland and Powell River, as well as the lack of transportation north of Sechelt which focuses on abism and creates a car dependent society, by including provision for a ferry to ferry transit route which could also provide insular transportation for communities north of Sechelt.

Planning Enhancement Project (PEP) 2 Phase 1 Policy Fix Micro Project: Amendment Zoning Bylaw No. 722.9 and 337.123 Watercourse and Shoreline Protection Amendments

Key points of discussion:

- Concern around the inclusion of the word “ponds” and the wording, “whether or not usually containing water” in the “proposed add” to Bylaw 722, Section 4.3.1 a) which is also included in the “proposed amendment” to Bylaw 337, Section 402 (iv).
- Consideration of the removal of the word “pond”, and “whether or not usually containing water” from the proposed add to Bylaw 722 section 4.3.1 a) and from the “proposed amendment” to Bylaw 337, Section 402 (iv).
- An SCRD staff member should be present to give context to the document wording so the APC can comment more contextually on the proposed changes. For example; p.24 and the calculation of minimum parcel area when not including a) and b) listed SPEAs

Recommendation No.2 *Planning Enhancement Project (PEP) 2 Phase 1 Policy Fix Micro Project: Amendment Zoning Bylaw No. 722.9 and 337.123 Watercourse and Shoreline Protection Amendments*

The Area B APC recommends that an all APC joint meeting be scheduled with SCRD staff present to create clarity around jurisdiction, and how SCRD will manage water services with area growth, which would provide opportunity for stronger input from all APCs for the proposed changes to the Bylaws 722 and 337.

REPORT

The Director's report was received.

NEXT MEETING Tuesday, September 26, 2023 via Zoom

ADJOURNMENT 7:55 p.m.

SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT

ROBERTS CREEK (AREA D) ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION

July 17, 2023

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE ROBERTS CREEK (AREA D) ADVISORY PLANNING
COMMISSION MEETING HELD ELECTRONICALLY VIA ZOOM

PRESENT:	Chair	Mike Allegretti
	Members	Meghan Hennessy Chris Richmond
ALSO PRESENT:	Electoral Area D Director	Kelly Backs (Non-Voting Board Liaison)
	Recording Secretary	Vicki Dobbyn
REGRETS/ABSENT		Bob Hogg Erik Mjanes Gerald Rainville

CALL TO ORDER 7:07 pm

AGENDA The agenda was adopted as presented.

MINUTES

The Roberts Creek (Area D) APC Minutes of March 20, 2023 were approved as circulated.

The following minutes were received for information:

- Egmont/Pender Harbour (Area A) APC Minutes of March 29 and April 26, 2023
- Halfmoon Bay (Area B) APC Minutes of March 28 and April 25, 2023
- Elphinstone (Area E) APC Minutes of March 29, April 26 and June 28 2023
- West Howe Sound (Area F) APC Minutes of March 28, April 25, and May 23, 2023

REPORTS

Regional Growth Framework Baseline Research

Key Points of Discussion:

- There is a lack of clarity on what is expected of the APC in relation to all the documents.

- It was a lot of material to review with little notice, which was not appropriate and feels like a token consultation.
- The timeline for the need for feedback is not clear.
- Maps are not labelled properly.
- We would benefit from a webinar for all APCs and the Roberts Creek OCPC led by Planning staff for an overview and clarity on expectations.
- The APC needs more explicit instructions on the feedback requested.
- It was suggested that APC members particularly review the recommendations on pages 33 and 34 of the agenda package prior to further review.

Recommendation No. 1 *Regional Growth Framework Baseline Research*

The Area D APC recommends that the SCRD hold a webinar led by Planning staff for all APC's for an overview of the three documents, and for clear instructions and a timeline on the expectations of feedback requested from the APC's;

AND THAT if a webinar is not within the capacity of staff, a written document with expectations and a longer timeline be provided.

Recommendation No. 2 *Regional Growth Framework Baseline Research*

The Area D APC recommends that Area D (Roberts Creek) be labelled on the maps in the Regional Growth Framework Phase 3 report.

DIRECTORS REPORT

The Director's Report was received.

NEXT MEETING

To be scheduled

ADJOURNMENT 8:07 pm

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SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT

AREA E – ELPHINSTONE ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION

July 26, 2023

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AREA E ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
HELD AT FRANK WEST HALL, 1224 CHASTER ROAD, ELPHINSTONE, BC

PRESENT:	Chair	Mary Degan
	Members	Laura Macdonald Nara Brenchley Arne Hermann Clinton McDougall
REGRETS:		Rod Moorcroft Anthony Paré Michael Sanderson
ALSO PRESENT:	Electoral Area E Director	Donna McMahon (Non-Voting Board Liaison)
	Alternate Director	Ashley St Clair
	Recording Secretary	Vicki Dobbyn

CALL TO ORDER 7:09 p.m.

AGENDA

The agenda was adopted as circulated.

MINUTES

Elphinstone (Area E) APC Minutes of June 28, 2023 were approved as circulated.

REPORTS

1. Regional Growth Framework Baseline Research

Key Points of Discussion:

- In general APC members support the development of a regional growth strategy.
- It was noted that we do not have a land use plan or regional growth strategy.
- Members would like more time for effective consideration of the report, and will have an informal gathering in early August to discuss the report in order to finalize feedback and recommendations in time for the September APC meeting.
- Some of the specific planning language is challenging to understand. Members would like the benefit of having more members present with their expertise and familiarity with

planning language.

- It is not suitable for a template approach as it needs to be site specific.
- Reconciliation is now an important consideration in a regional growth strategy.
- The regional growth strategy is most likely to have greatest impact on rural areas because the municipalities are more built out.
- Members really appreciate the extensive report and believe it is on the right track
- Documents are impressive in scope
- Members liked seeing the cross jurisdictional collaboration, and seeing environmental and climate change issues such as invasive species, reducing emissions, and protecting tree habitats included in the report.
- Member acknowledge the hard work to develop this report and that it is something the community has been asking for.
- There could be more clarity on the website on what the SCRD can and cannot do.
- It was suggested that an article in the newspaper clarifying different roles and authorities in development would be helpful as many citizens are not aware of this.

Recommendation No. 1 *Regional Growth Framework Baseline Research*

The Area E APC recommends that the APC chair send the following questions to Planning staff, and ask for a response in early August:

- What is the relationship between the development of the regional growth strategy and the OCP review process? Which comes first? Should we be doing the regional growth strategy first?
- When a regional growth strategy is approved, does MOTI have to follow its direction?
- Is it important to have a regional growth strategy for accessing provincial and federal funding?

Recommendation No. 2 *Regional Growth Framework Baseline Research*

The Area E APC recommends that SCRD staff develop an easy infographic or flow chart outlining who has control over what aspects of development, to include SCRD zoning by-laws, Ministry Of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI), Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH), and provincial regulations.

Recommendation No. 3 *Regional Growth Framework Baseline Research*

The Area E APC recommends that the Regional Growth Framework Baseline Research report come back to the September agenda to provide the APC more time for consideration and discussion.

2. Planning Enhancement Project (PEP) 2 Phase 1 Policy Fix Micro Project: Amendment Zoning Bylaw No. 722.9 and 337.123 Watercourse and Shoreline Protection Amendment

Key Points of Discussion:

- How do we make sure the SCRD keeps up with changing provincial standards?
- Should there be a policy that the SCRD aligns with provincial standards at a minimum rather than having to deal with individual amendments. This would not prevent us from exceeding provincial standards.
- Will there be a surge of applications that will come in before this amendment is

approved?

- It can be challenging to determine boundaries which tie into parcel size.
- Will get first reading July 27. Third reading is targeted for quarter 4 of 2023
- It has implications for people developing rain gardens to manage stormwater.
- What if someone builds a pond, would it be subject to these amendments?
- It is appreciated that the amendment is being updated and protecting the environment.

Recommendation No. 4 *Planning Enhancement Project (PEP) 2 Phase 1 Policy Fix Micro Project: Amendment Zoning Bylaw No. 722.9 and 337.123 Watercourse and Shoreline Protection Amendment*

The Area E APC recommends support of option 1 to proceed with First Reading for all proposed amendments.

Recommendation No. 5 *Planning Enhancement Project (PEP) 2 Phase 1 Policy Fix Micro Project: Amendment Zoning Bylaw No. 722.9 and 337.123 Watercourse and Shoreline Protection Amendment*

The Area E APC recommends that the SCRD consider language in a by-law amendment that states as provincial regulations change, the SCRD by-laws automatically change to stay aligned with provincial standards.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director's report was received.

NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2023, 7:00 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT - 8:40 PM

SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT STAFF REPORT

TO: Advisory Planning Commissions – September 1, 2023

AUTHOR: Sierra Rempel, Strategic Initiatives Coordinator

SUBJECT: FORESTRY REFERRALS: BC TIMBER SALES OPERATING PLAN (CRN00155) 2023-2027

RECOMMENDATIONS

THAT the report titled Forestry Referrals: BC Timber Sales Operating Plan (CRN00155) 2023-2027 be received;

AND THAT Advisory Planning Commissions review the report and provide recommendation(s) to SCRD for the proposed referral response to BCTS.

BACKGROUND

BC Timber Sales (BCTS) is a Provincial Corporation that is responsible for harvesting approximately 20% of British Columbia's Annual Allowable Cut and operates under the legislative and regulatory frameworks of the *Forest Act*, the *Forest Range and Practices Act*, the *Wildfire Act*, *BCTS Regulation* and the *Wildfire Regulation*.

SCRD receives an annual referral for [BC Timber Sales' \(BCTS\) 5-year Operating Plan](#). BCTS shares proposed harvesting and road building activities in order to receive comment on and understand stakeholder interests in advance of anticipated harvesting.

The 2023-2027 Operating Plan was received by the SCRD on June 21, 2023. SCRD and BCTS have a Communications Protocol which prescribes SCRD response within 90 days; an extension has been provided until October 27, 2023.

This report provides background on BCTS, analysis of the Operating Plan, and recommendations for response. BCTS is only seeking feedback on and only has a mandate to consider or act on feedback related to the 2023-2027 Operating Plan.

Please see SCRD webpage link <https://www.scrd.ca/bcts-logging> for background information about BCTS and SCRD role in responding to annual Operating Plan referrals. Past SCRD referral-responses to BCTS Operating Plans, including the Communications Protocol is also available.

DISCUSSION

In the 2023-2027 Operating Plan BCTS proposes 5 new blocks, totalling a gross area of 100.63 hectares, to be harvested between 2024 and 2027. This report provides review of new blocks only, with the exception of comments on one previously referred block.

Maps of the 2023 Operating Plan blocks are available [here](#). SCR D has provided comment on the previously referred blocks.

New cutblocks are concentrated in three main areas:

- high elevations on Mount Elphinstone
- low elevations near McNab Creek, Dakota Creek, and Hillside Industrial Park
- Hotham Sound, north of Earls Cove

The summary tables below provides a list of proposed cutblocks:

Block ID	Proposed Auction Year	Net area in Hectares (ha)	Summary Details
McNR005	2024	15.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14.21 ha in high elevation near McNair / Mt Elphinstone • New method of capturing timber felled during road construction • Road to provide “direct route” to Port Mellon • Within Dakota Community Watershed • Crosses Dakota Creek, and approximately 6 other tributaries to Dakota Creek • Outside the Mt Elphinstone South Watershed Assessment Phase 1, 2 and 3 area
ELPH010	2024	1.59	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.59 ha in Elphinstone • Slopes along Roberts Creek • Within Roberts Creek Official Community Plan Area • Outside the Mt Elphinstone South Watershed Assessment Phase 1, 2 and 3 area
GRAN011	2025	6.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6.7 ha in Granville (Hotham Sound)
ELPH008	2026	33.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 33.5 ha in Elphinstone • Above Roberts Creek and associated tributaries • Outside the Mt Elphinstone South Watershed Assessment Phase 1, 2 and 3 area

MCNA002	2027	44.63	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 44.63 in McNab • Lower elevations along McNab Creek
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Previously referred block:

Block ID	Proposed Auction Year	Net area in Hectares (ha)	Summary Details
McNR002	2026	19.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located on slope above and within Hillside Industrial Park

SCRD Service Area Impacts: Drinking Water Protection

The (Provincial) definition of Community Watersheds includes watersheds where surface water licences are present for the purpose of human consumption by a licensed waterworks and does not include groundwater drinking water supply or aquifer recharge zones.

Deforesting leads to long-term ground cover changes such as loss of mature tree canopy, increased bare land and compaction of land and road cuts across streams and along slopes. This can result in on and off-site effects of erosion, downslope sedimentation (the increase of sediment supply to a stream network), land movement, changes to drainage, increased magnitude of peak flows, which impact water infiltration processes that can result in a change to surface and groundwater quality and quantity. Industrial activities in recharge zones pose the risk of spills or other vectors of both surface and groundwater contamination. Logging near source water areas and tributaries can result in changes to the hydrological regimes of the area and in some cases result in the loss of source water flows, which are critical in providing base flows to larger surface water streams or for groundwater infiltration. Changes to water infiltration as a result of logging are complex and differ depending on specific locations, time of year, and sometimes require years before impacts are actualized.

Protecting groundwater recharge areas is of critical importance to protecting community drinking water supply. The SCRD is increasing its reliance on groundwater resources for the provision of drinking water in the Region, as it looks to diversify water sources for the Chapman Water System.

SCRD Service Area Impacts: Storm Water Management

The Mount Elphinstone area contains many headwaters and creeks. While SCRD does not have a stormwater management service, changes to stormwater and hydrological regimes can impact services and assets downstream, both public and private. SCRD Official Community Plans (OCPs) identify many of the creeks in this area as at risk for debris flows, ravine instability and slope hazards.

Logging on steep slopes, in headwaters areas, and above developed communities adds to the existing identified risk of slope instability, flooding, debris flows and ravine instability. This risk increases again when it is coupled with the new normal of summer drought conditions drying out soils and vegetation, increased frequency of winter storms and increased intensity of rain events. SCRD provided comments about these risks on Elphinstone in the 2020-2025 referral response.

Recent years have seen increased heavy rainfalls where increased creek discharge has led to washouts. Washouts in the region in 2021 resulted in an Emergency Operations Centre, and State of Local Emergency as they impacted SCRD services and assets such as drinking water supply mains, transit services, and park infrastructure. In the Elphinstone area, damages to park trails in Cliff Gilker, watermain washouts resulting in Boil Water Advisories, and disruptions to transit services occurred during high flows on creek in the area.

SCRD Service Area Impacts: Roberts Creek Official Community Plan (OCP) Impacts

The Roberts Creek OCP includes the following policy related to 13) Water Service Areas and Watersheds:

13.8 Deforestation is a significant concern and any forestry activity should take into account possible impacts on water quality and supply.

The Roberts Creek OCP includes the following objective related to 13) Stormwater Management and Drainage Plans:

14a To maintain the existing natural watersheds' flow characteristics to the greatest extent possible by taking into account the cumulative impacts of each development on watersheds.

SCRD Service Area Impacts: Hillside-Port Mellon Officially Community Plan (OCP)

The Hillside-Port Mellon OCP includes the following objective related to land use:

2.1. To protect development from hazardous conditions in the form of land slip, erosion, flooding and debris torrents.

2.2 To protect valuable fish and wildlife habitat areas associated with McNair and Dakota Creeks, Mohawk Creek, the Rainy River and the ocean foreshore.

2.3 To satisfy the requirements of the provincial Fish Protection Act, in particular the Riparian Areas [Protection] Regulation, with respect to protecting fish habitat.

Analysis: McNR005

Drinking Water

This road cutblock is proposed through a designated Community Watershed where the SCRD holds a water licence. This licence is not related to current SCRD water service. The potential future quality and quantity of this water source could be impacted by the logging of the crossing over multiple tributaries and Dakota Creek itself.

Stormwater

The tributaries and creeks this proposed road crosses has a history of high creek flows resulting in damages to Port Mellon Highway and scouring of the bridge crossing at Dakota Creek. The SCRD is the Diking Authority as defined pursuant to the *Dike Maintenance Act* for Dakota Creek Berm. The berm was designed and installed for the purpose of flood and erosion protection for highway and lands to the east, including SCRD-owned Hillside Industrial Park.

Draft Recommendations

The SCRD does not support the logging of McNR0005 due to it being located within a Community Watershed, as well as the potential impact to downstream SCRD assets of the Dakota Creek berm and Hillside Industrial Park.

Analysis: ELPH010

Drinking Water

The watershed of Roberts Creek is not designated Community Watershed, however, BC Well Database lists 164 private licenced groundwater wells pulling from Aquifer 555.

Changes in land cover on these slopes have the potential to impact private/commercial downstream drinking water licences on Roberts Creek.

Stormwater

ELPH010 located within DPA #3, Slope Hazards. This known hazardous area inherently adds risk and stormwater management responsibilities for downstream property owners, land managers and service providers. Impacts of logging exacerbate these risks through changing hydrological regimes such as decreasing of soil infiltration, the increase of snow cover and thus snow melt, and increase rainfall impacts on clear cut areas. The SCRD owns multiple assets along Roberts Creek, including Cliff Gilker Park and Roberts Creek Pier Park. Cliff Gilker was negatively impacted by high water flows in 2021, resulting in damages to park infrastructure.

Draft Recommendations

SCRD recommends that in advance of proposing/engineering cutblocks on Mount Elphinstone near Roberts Creek, that a review of the cumulative impact to ground water resources of Aquifer 555 by qualified experts selected by Local Government water service providers be completed. Historical and any proposed forestry activities for the next 5 years, and climate change considerations should be considered as part of such assessment.

SCRD is concerned about the cumulative impacts of resource activity, including deforesting, that is proposed on or near Aquifer 555, which supports private wells who are not within the SCRD Regional Water Service Area and thus do not have access to other sources of water.

SCRD understands that BCTS is undertaking a Watershed Assessment for the Roberts Creek area and recommends the implementation of findings prior to the auctioning of these lots.

Analysis: ELPH008

Comments and draft recommendations related to ELPH008 are the same as ELPH010.

Analysis: GRAN011

The SCRCD does not have any services or assets that would be impacted by this proposed cutblock.

Analysis: MCNA002

The SCRCD does not have any services or assets that would be impacted by this proposed cutblock.

Analysis: MCNR002

This block appears to be located within SCRCD-owned property at Hillside Industrial Park. Staff await clarification from BCTS about the location, in the event that there is a mapping error. This cutblock was proposed in an earlier Operating Plan.

Draft Recommendations to follow in a subsequent report to Electoral Areas Services Committee.

Summary and Draft recommendations:

THAT SCRCD respond to BCTS referral as follows:

THAT SCRCD does not support the logging and construction of McNR005

AND THAT SCRCD recommends that in advance of proposing/ engineering cutblocks on Mount Elphinstone near Roberts Creek, that a review of the cumulative impact to ground water resources of Aquifer 555 by qualified experts selected by Local Government water service providers be completed. Historical and any proposed forestry activities for the next 5 years, and climate change considerations should be considered as part of such assessment.

AND THAT BCTS completes a Watershed Assessment for the Roberts Creek watershed prior to auctioning of the proposed cutblocks.

CONCLUSION

SCRCD received forestry referrals from BC Timber Sales regarding the 2023-2027 Operating Plan. SCRCD analysis shows potential impact to drinking water services, and increased risk of flooding and sediment transfer which could impact downstream SCRCD assets.

SCRCD has and will continue to emphasize strong concern to BCTS regarding cumulative impacts to:

- Downstream private property owners' stormwater impact
- Downstream public assets, such as roads, parks, watermains, and creeks

- Regional and provincial emergency response requirements for stormwater impact such as recent events in Fall of 2021.

SCRD has and will continue to advocate for:

- A proactive, landscape-level, multidisciplinary, cumulative impact assessment framework;
- Climate change informed, climate-resilient forest planning that recognizes and values local forests as local assets that protect against increasing climate impacts.

Attachments

Attachment A – BCTS Block Maps 2023-2027

Attachment B—BCTS Block List 2023-2027

Reviewed by:			
Manager		Finance	
GM	X – I. Hall	Legislative	
CAO		Other	X - J. Clark