**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO****RURAL/AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE
AGENDA****Thursday, November 4, 2021
(VIRTUAL)**

<u>PAGE NO.</u>		<u>ACTION</u>
	<u>AGENDA- November 4, 2021</u>	Approve
	<u>Supplementary Agenda</u>	Receive
	<u>MINUTES</u>	
2-4	Rural/Agriculture Committee Meeting Minutes - October 7, 2021	Approve
	<u>DEVELOPMENT SERVICES</u>	
	<u>Crown Land Referrals</u>	
5-7	Lindsay King, Planner Crown Land Referral No. 7410209 (Area D)	Recommendation
8-34	Danielle Patterson, Planner Crown Land Referral Nos. 7410207 & 7410198 (Area C)	Recommendation
	<u>AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENCE</u>	
35-45	Northern Development – Review of Funded Greenhouse, Hydroponic and Horticulture Projects	Receive
	<u>RURAL REPORTS</u>	
46-48	Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services - Regional Broadband Infrastructure Service Establishment – Elector Response Form	Recommendation
49	Nellie Davis, Manager of Regional Economic Development – Regional Connectivity Service Establishment Plan	Direction
	<u>SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA</u>	
	<u>NEW BUSINESS</u>	
	<u>ADJOURNMENT</u>	

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO**RURAL/AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE MEETING****Thursday, October 7, 2021**

PRESENT: Chair Mark Parker

Directors Mark Fisher
Tom Greenaway
Clint Lambert
Chris Newell
Jerry Petersen
Michael Riis-Christianson
Gerry Thiessen

Staff Curtis Helgesen, Chief Administrative Officer
Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services
Megan D'Arcy, Agriculture Coordinator (West) – via Zoom
Nellie Davis, Manager of Regional Economic Development
John Illes, Chief Financial Officer
Michelle Roberge, Agriculture Coordinator (East) – via Zoom
Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant/Recording Secretary

Others Linda McGuire, Village of Granisle
Bob Motion, District of Fort St. James – via Zoom

Media Eddie Huband, Lakes District News – arrived at 12:50 p.m., left at 1:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Parker called the meeting to order at 12:48 p.m.

AGENDAMoved by Director Lambert
Seconded by Director Newell**RDC.2021-8-1**

"That the Rural/Agriculture Committee Agenda for October 7, 2021 be approved."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**MINUTES****Rural/Agriculture Committee
Meeting Minutes
-September 9, 2021**Moved by Director Petersen
Seconded by Director Lambert**RDC.2021-8-2**

"That the minutes of the Rural/Agriculture Committee meeting of September 9, 2021 be approved."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

AGRICULTURE REPORTS

Food and Agriculture Plan -Implementation Update

Moved by Director Lambert
 Seconded by Director Riis-Christianson

RDC.2021-8-3

“That the Committee receive the Regional Agriculture Coordinator’s (West) Food and Agriculture Plan – Implementation Update memorandum.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion took place regarding:

- Food Hub
 - o Challenges due to the COVID-19 Pandemic
 - o Capacity issues
 - o Moving toward Slaughter facility licensing correlates to Food Hub
- Focus on existing priorities
- More gated gatherings
 - o What are existing resources?
 - o Have facility/resources in some communities and not others
 - o Is there a way to increase knowledge base of existing markets and fill information gaps?
- Hub Network meeting – specific requirements that need to be identified and included in any proposal that is potentially funded by the province
- Importance of identifying what is needed for producers to meet demand and fill in the gaps
- Establishing guaranteed networks
- Community Gardens
 - o RDBN provides grant writing support to societies that operate Community Gardens
- Connecting Consumers Brochure
 - o Due to COVID-19 was not able to have public events
 - o Transitioned to online directory
 - Search by product/producer
 - Print option
 - Recognize lack of internet connectivity to access online version
 - Exploring printed options
- RDBN survey re: new slaughter regulations
- Land uses in terms of agriculture opportunities
- Gaps in the food chain
 - o Opportunities for local producers.

Agriculture Outreach Initiatives

Moved by Director Greenaway
 Seconded by Director Lambert

RDC.2021-8-4

“That the Committee receive the Regional Agriculture Coordinator’s (East) Agriculture Outreach Initiatives memorandum.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Chair Parker expressed support for the Agriculture Outreach Initiatives. Discussion took place regarding the benefits and advantages of a Podcast Series and video series to share relevant information about aspects of operating an agricultural operation as well as basic knowledge for living on rural property in the RDBN.

RURAL REPORTS

COVID-19 Relief Funds -Allocation to Electoral Area Services

Moved by Director Newell
 Seconded by Director Fisher

RDC.2021-8-5

“That the Rural/Agriculture Committee recommend that the Board approve the following allocations:

- Area A - \$56,630.96
- Area B - \$20,881.05
- Area C - \$15,245.97
- Area D - \$15,880.12
- Area E - \$17,163.83
- Area F - \$39,488.67
- Area G - \$9,729.41.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion took place regarding organizations applying for additional COVID – 19 Relief Funds due to the continued impacts of the pandemic. The Rural Directors Committee indicated its support for continued support via application to community groups restricted from normal revenue generation activities as a result of the pandemic. Staff will provide COVID-19 Relief Funds criteria to Rural Directors.

Covid – 19 Relief Funds -Application Approval

Moved by Director Fisher
 Seconded by Director Lambert

RDC.2021-8-6

“That the Committee recommend that the Board approve the following application for COVID-19 Relief Funds

-Electoral Area A

- Smithers District Chamber of Commerce – Live, Love, Local Campaign - \$5,000.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Grant in Aid – Federal Gas Tax Internal Trade

Moved by Director Fisher
 Seconded by Director Lambert

RDC.2021-8-7

“That the Committee receive the Manager of Regional Economic Development’s Grant in Aid – Federal Gas Tax Internal Trade memorandum.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Director Newell
 Seconded by Director Lambert

RDC.2021-8-8

“That the meeting be adjourned at 1:32 p.m.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Mark Parker, Chair

Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO

STAFF REPORT

TO: Chair Parker and Rural / Agriculture Committee
FROM: Lindsay King, Planner
DATE: November 4, 2021
SUBJECT: Crown Land Referral No. 7410209

RECOMMENDATION

That the attached comment sheet be provided to the Province as the Regional District's comments on Crown Land application No. 7410209.

VOTING

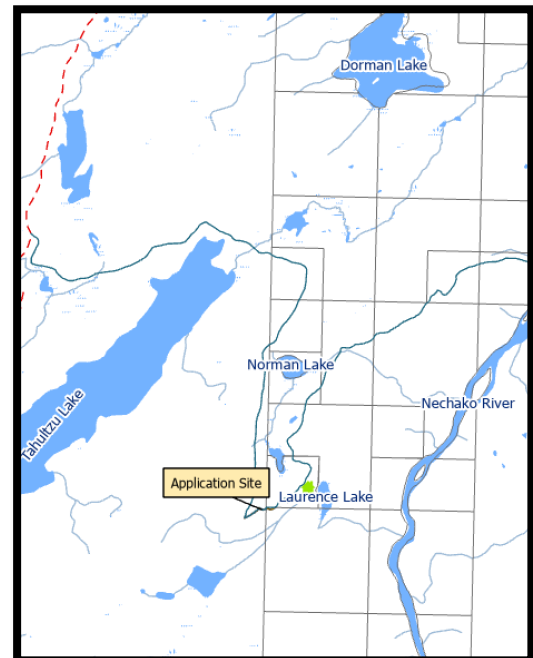
All Directors / Majority

DISCUSSION

This application is regarding a Licence of Occupation to permit the applicant to maintain and use the existing road on Crown land to access a mobile home on their privately owned property at 26099 Lily Lake Rd for a 10-year term. This property is approximately 35 km south of Fort Fraser. The related section of unpaved road is approximately 500 m long. It will require minimal maintenance and will not require any road-building materials.

ATTACHMENTS

- Comment Sheet
- Site Map



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO
COMMENT SHEET ON CROWN LAND REFERRAL

Applicant:	Rajesh Kuniyil Raveendran (7410209)
Electoral Area:	D
Existing Land Use:	Road
Zoning:	None
OCP Designation:	None
Proposed Use Comply with Zoning:	Not applicable
If not, why?	Not applicable
Agricultural Land Reserve Status:	Not in the ALR
Access:	18 km south of Fraser Lake on the Holy Cross FSR – 6 km south on Tahultzu FSR – 9 km southeast on Lily Lake Rd (to proposed section)
Within a Building Inspection Area:	No
Within an RDBN Fire Protection Area:	No
Other comments:	None

SITE MAP

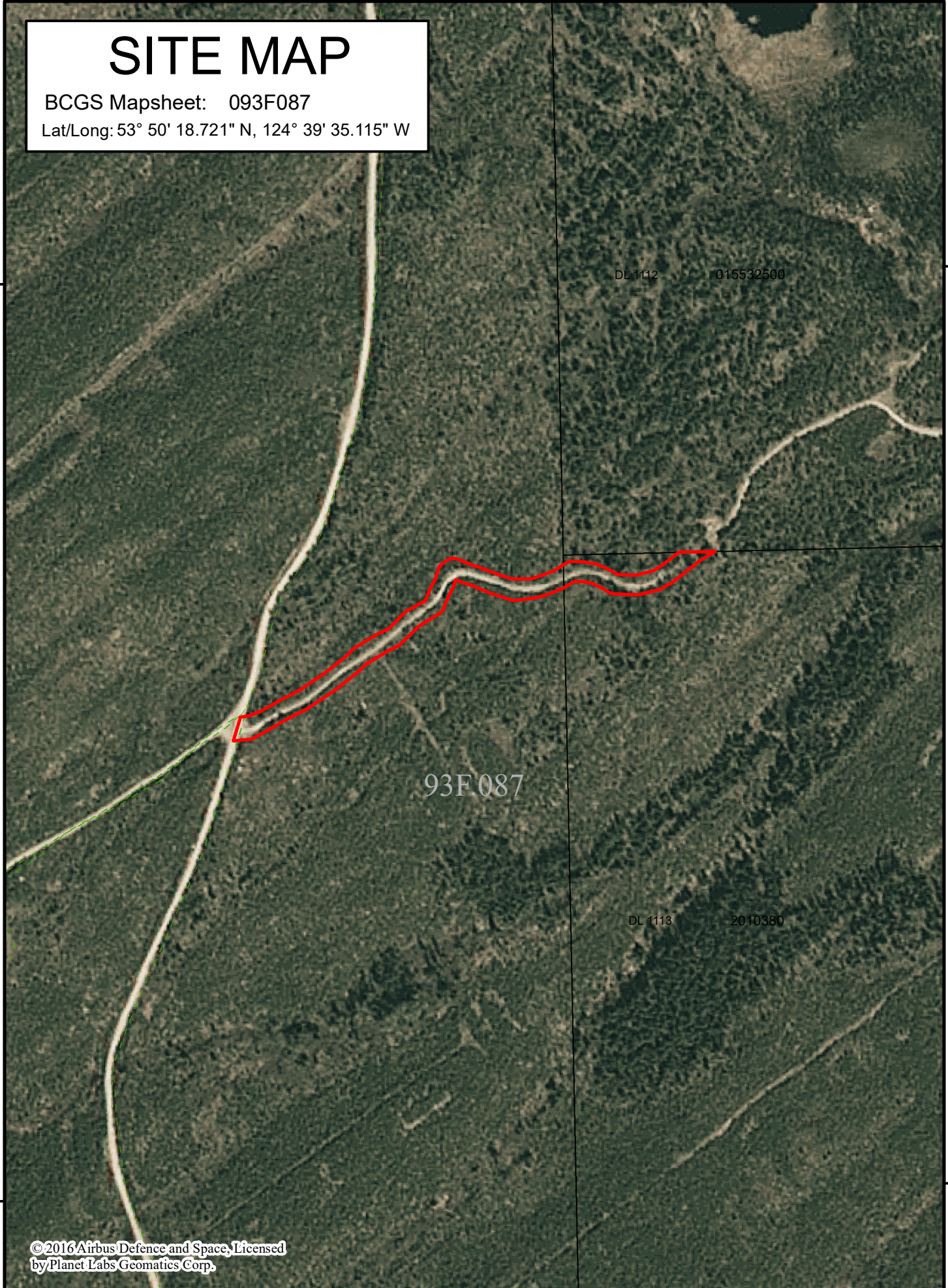
BCGS Mapsheet: 093F087
Lat/Long: 53° 50' 18.721" N, 124° 39' 35.115" W

53°50'30"N

53°50'30"N

53°50'0"N

53°50'0"N



© 2016 Airbus Defence and Space, Licensed by Planet Labs Geomatics Corp.

File Number: 7410209

Site # 1 of 1 - APPLICATION Area = 1.104 Ha.

TYPE: LICENCE

PURPOSE: TRANSPORTATION

SUBTYPE: LICENCE OF OCCUPATION

SUBPURPOSE: ROADWAY

LOCATION: LAURENCE LAKE

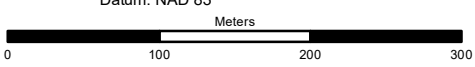
IMAGERY: SPOT 2016 – 2018

Produced by
Ministry of Forests, Lands &
Natural Resource Operations
Northern Service Centre
FrontCounterBC
Date: September 23, 2021

Scale: 1:5,000 *

* if printed on 8.5X14 page

Projection: BC Albers
Datum: NAD 83



Legend

- Crown Land Application
- Primary Survey Parcel
- Subdivision
- Municipality
- Surveyed Rights of Way**
 - Surveyed Road R/W
 - Gas/Oil R/W District Lot
 - Power Transmission R/W
 - Gas/Oil R/W
 - Telecom R/W District Lot
 - Miscellaneous R/W
- Transportation Corridors**
 - Highway
 - Railway
 - Surveyed Road R/W
- Protected Areas**
 - Provincial Park
 - Protected Area
 - OIC Ecological Reserve
 - Recreation Area
- Base Mapping Features (20K)**
 - River or Stream
 - River or Stream - Dry
 - Lake
 - Reservoir - Definite
 - Glacier/Icefield
 - Contour - 20m interval
- Transportation - Lines (20K)**
 - Airfield
 - Road
 - Forest Service Road
 - Road Permit
 - Trail
 - Rail Line

All measurements are approximate.



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO

STAFF REPORT

TO: Chair Parker and Rural / Agriculture Committee
FROM: Danielle Patterson, Planner
DATE: November 4, 2021
SUBJECT: Crown Land Referral Nos. 7410207 & 7410198

RECOMMENDATION

That the attached comment sheet be provided to the Province as the Regional District's comments on Crown Land applications No. 7410198 and 7410207.

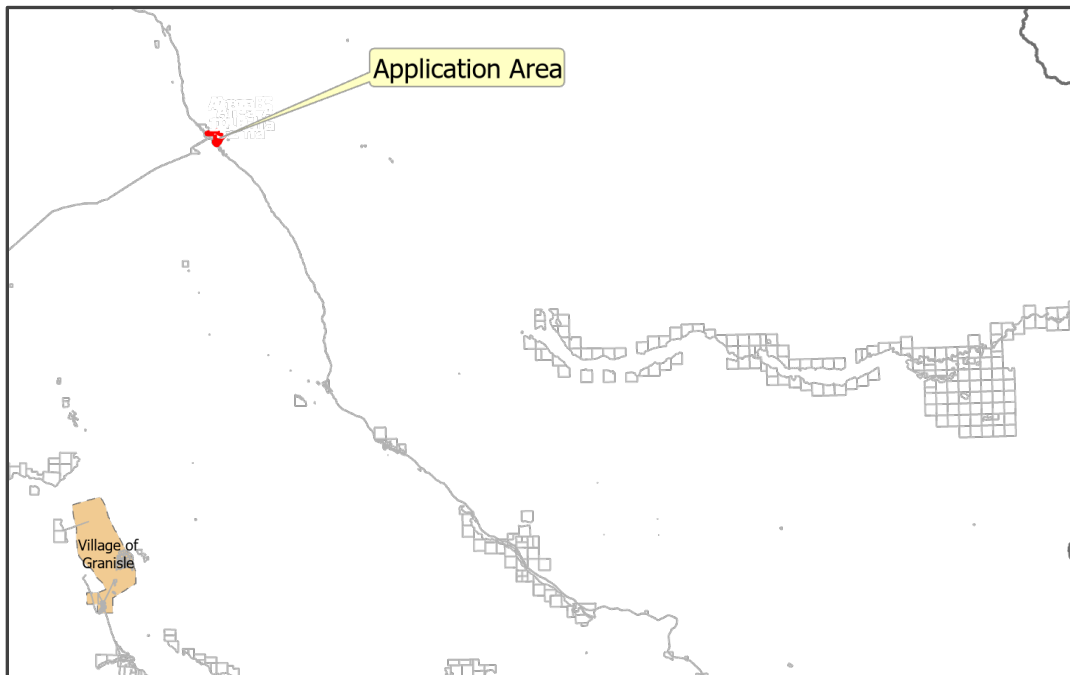
VOTING

All Directors / Majority

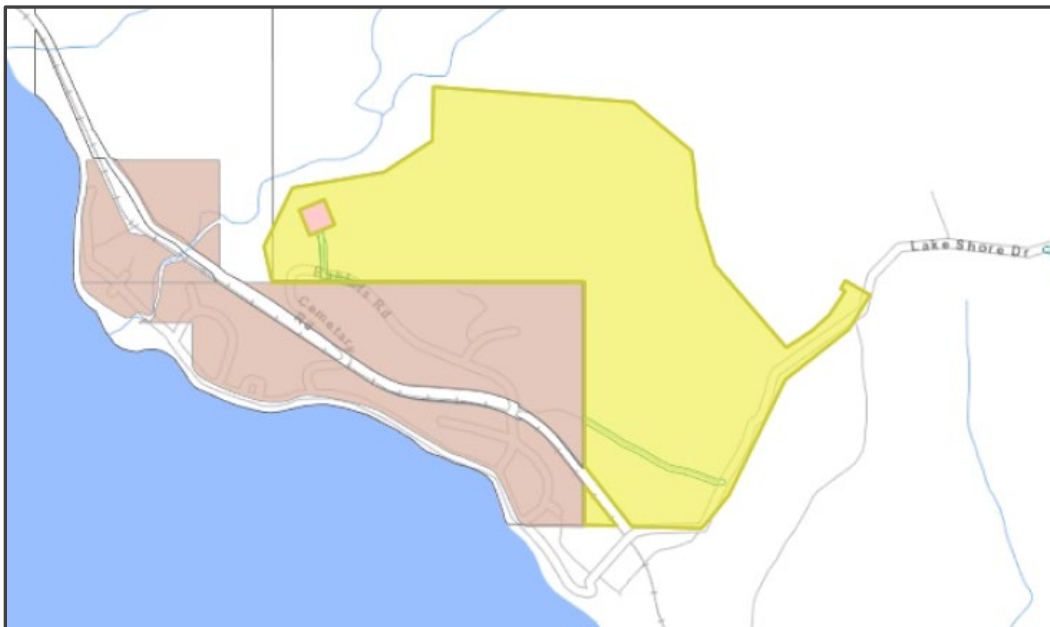
DISCUSSION

The Regional District received two Crown Land applications in one referral request effecting the same lands (see proposal map below). These lands are part of a proposed expansion of Takla Landing Reserve supported by the Regional Board in March 2021. Takla First Nation applied to the Government of Canada for an Addition to Reserve within this area, which is supported by Canada. As the process will take years to complete, the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (MIRR) and Takla First Nation applied for Crown Land applications for interim land use.

Crown Land Referral No. 7410198 (from MIRR) is a Notation of Interest for a Section 17 Conditional Withdrawal. A Conditional withdrawal prevents land disposition inside the area for incompatible Crown Land applications. Crown Land Referral No. 7410207 from (Takla First Nation) is for a Community/Institutional Use Crown Land Lease, that would provide Takla First Nation exclusive use of the area for housing and infrastructure development.

APPLICATION MAP**PROPOSAL MAP**

(Existing IR7 shown in pink and application area shown in yellow)

**Attachments:**

- Comment Sheet
- Excerpts from Crown Land Referral Nos. 7410198 and 7410207 referral packages

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO
COMMENT SHEET ON CROWN LAND REFERRAL 7410188

Applicants:	Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (No. 7410198) & Takla First Nation (No. 7410207)
Electoral Area:	C
Existing Land Use:	Logging roads/cleared land
Zoning:	None
OCP Designation (shown in pink below):	None
OCP Designation (shown in white):	None
Proposed Use Comply with Zoning:	Not applicable
If not, why?	Not applicable
Agricultural Land Reserve Status:	Not in the ALR
Access:	Lakeshore Drive
Within a Building Inspection Area:	No
Within an RDBN Fire Protection Area:	Not within. The Regional Fire Chief has no concerns about this proposal from a FireSmart perspective.
Other comments:	On March 2, 2021, a letter was sent to Takla First Nation providing the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Board of Directors' support for the expansion of Takla IR7. The RDBN Board of Directors continues to support the expansion process.

From: FrontCounterBC@gov.bc.ca
To: [Danielle Patterson](#)
Cc: [Maria Sandberg](#); [Deneve Vanderwolf](#); [Rowan Nagel](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: 7410198 and 7410207 - Province of BC Referral Request on a Section 17 reserve and Community Institutional Lease application
Date: Wednesday, September 29, 2021 9:13:38 AM

Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako
Danielle Patterson

Community Institutional
Referral Number: 137604608 - 003
Reference Number: 593240
Request Sent: September 29, 2021
Response Due: November 13, 2021

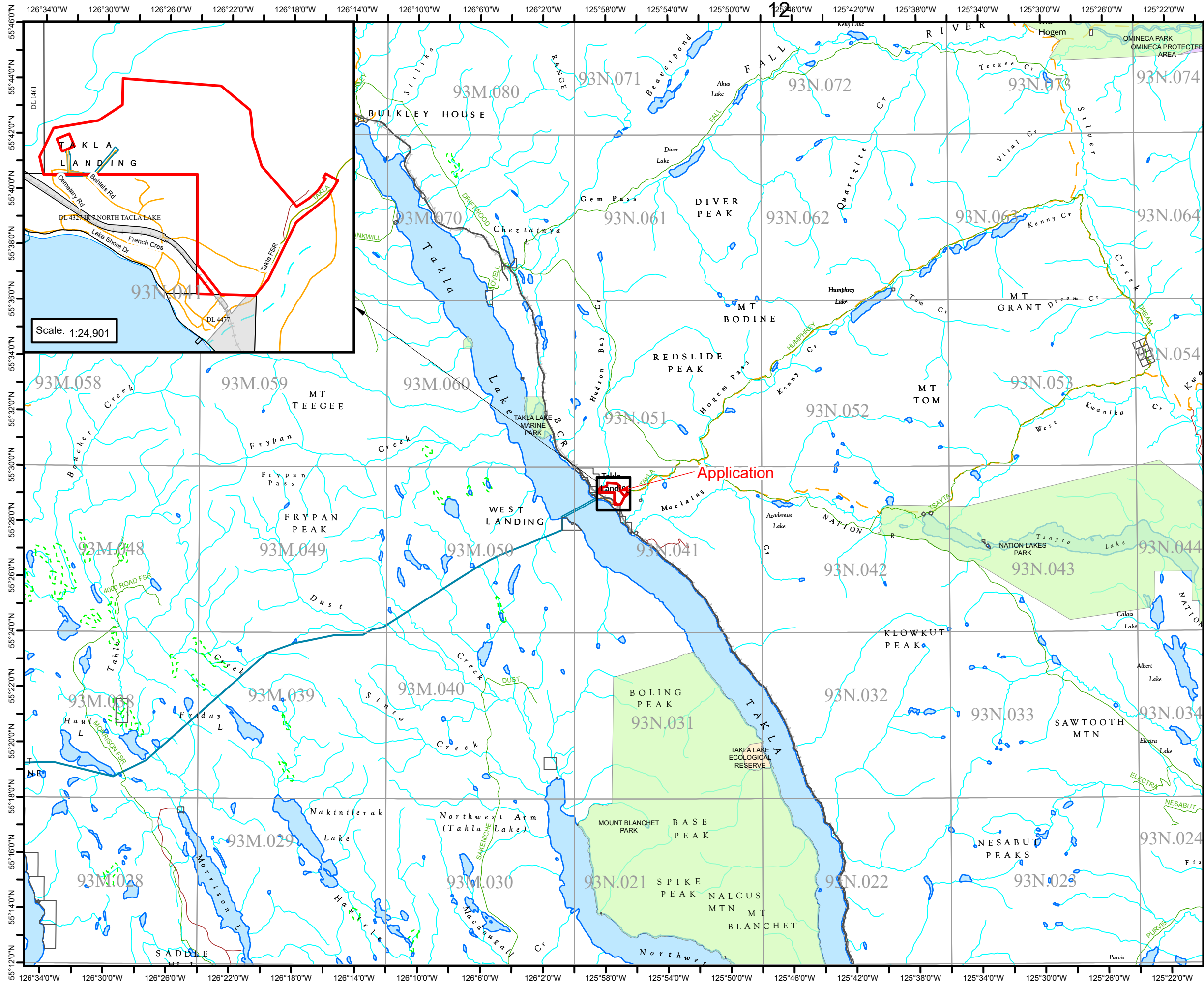
You are invited to comment on the following Crown land application. A response is required in order for the application and adjudication process to move ahead.

File and Tenure Types: 7410198 Sec 17 Reserve and 7410207 Lease
Proponent: Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (7410198) and Takla Nation (7410207)
Intended Land Use/background: First Nations Reserve Expansion and Community and Institutional Use
BCGS Mapsheet: 93N.041
Location: Takla Reserve
Legal Description: UNSURVEYED CROWN LAND ADJACENT TO DISTRICT LOT 4327, I.R. NO. 7, BEING TACLA LAKE, TOGETHER WITH PART OF DISTRICT LOT 1461, CASSIAR DISTRICT.
Area: 117.52 ha

This project includes two land files on the same area. Takla Nation has applied to the Government of Canada for an Addition to Reserve (ATR) within the application area. Canada is supportive of Takla's ATR application; however, the process is expected to take several years to complete and Takla and Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (MIRR) have undertaken these Land Act applications to allow the project to proceed in the interim. The objective for Takla Nation is to use this land for the purpose of housing and community development needs.

Application 7410198 is currently a Notation of Interest and is proposed by MIRR to be established as a Section 17 Conditional Withdrawal that will note the land use designation for ATR and will protect the area from incompatible Land Act applications. Application 7410207 for a lease would allow Takla Nation to have exclusive use of the area and construct improvements. The Section 17 application is intended to be temporary and would be cancelled when the lease is finalized. Area is within the Provincial Forest ? see map of removal and Appendix 3.

You can view the application on the following website: <https://comment.nrs.gov.bc.ca/>
? Click 'Find Applications' then enter Crown Land File Number 7410198 or 7410207
? This will highlight the application on the map, which you can then click to View Application Details.



Scale: 1:24,901

LOCATION MAP


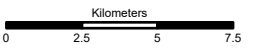
File - 7410207 Area = 117.52 Ha
 Client - TAKLA FIRST NATION

Legend

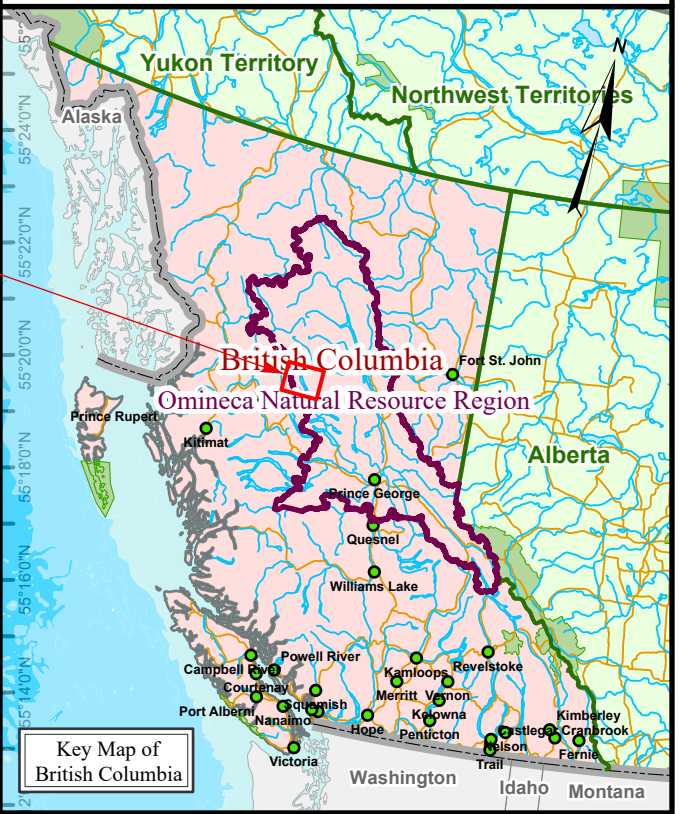
- Crown Land Application
 - Municipal Boundary
 - Primary Survey Parcel
 - Subdivision
 - Surveyed Rights of Way
-
- Provincial Park
 - Protected Area
 - OIC Ecological Reserve
-
- Highway
 - Railway
 - Surveyed Road R/W
 - Road
 - Forest Service Road
 - Trail
 - Rail Line
-
- Water Features**
 - Rapids
 - River or Stream - Definite
 - River or Stream - Dry
 - River or Stream - Indefinite
 - Dam - section Base
 - Flooded Land - Inundated
 - Lake - Definite
 - Lake - Indefinite
 - Lake - Intermittent
 - Reservoir - Definite
 - Glacier
 - Icefield
 - Island - Definite
 - Sand Bar
-
- Contours**
 - Contour - interval 200m

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 Natural Resource Operations
 and Rural Development
 Prince George
 FrontCounterBC
 Date: September 22, 2021

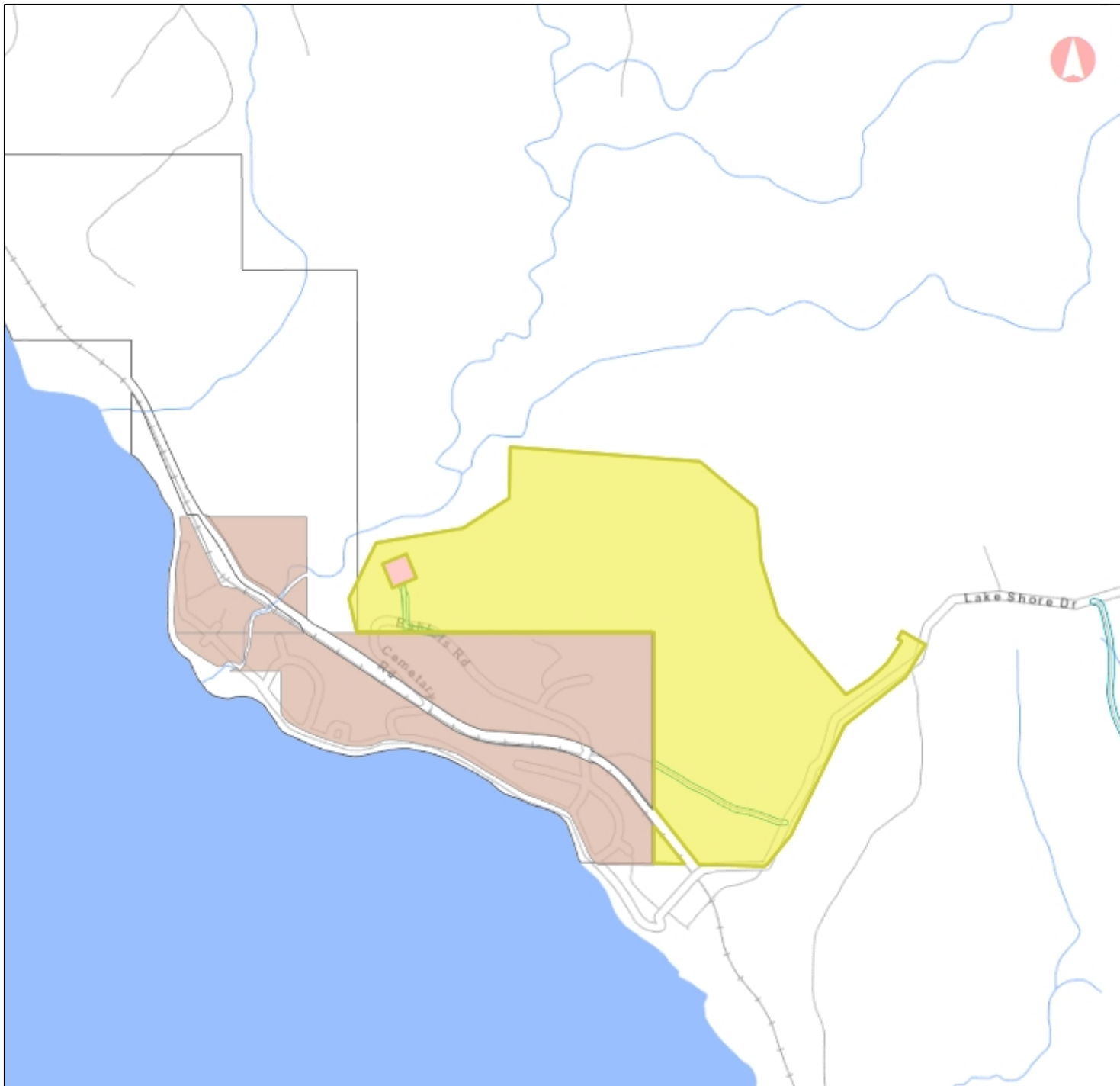
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BC Albers Projection/NAD 83



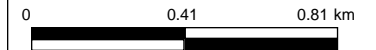
Key Map of
 British Columbia



iMapBC Mapping

Legend

- Indian Reserves - Colour Fill
- Tenure Applications - Tantal
- Tenures - Tantal - Outline
- Provincial Forest Deletion - (
- Provincial Forest - Outlined
- Provincial Forest Exclusion - (
- Provincial Forest Addition - (
- TileCache



1: 20,000

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Datum: NAD83

Projection: NAD_1983_BC_Environment_Albers

Key Map of British Columbia



Management Plan

Please describe the details of your project to the extent known. Consult the guidance document for further information on regulatory requirements, rationale for why the information is required, and how to find required information.

The scope and the timing for response will be provided. If information is requested and not received, it may result in the disallowance of the application.

Information on these topics may be required as part of the application processing and if further detail is necessary that is not part of the application and management plan received, you will be contacted and requested to provide additional information. In some circumstances, the use of a qualified professional to complete the plan may be required.

1.0 Background

1.1 Project Overview

Describe project for which authorization is requested, including construction and/or phased development details:

Takla Nation is applying for a Crown Land Lease for Community/ Institutional Purposes adjacent to Takla IR7. Takla Nation requires an expansion to their Reserve lands at Takla land, into the surrounding Provincial Crown lands to accommodate current and future housing and community development needs. There is a high demand for new housing at Takla Landing. A recent survey of Takla Nation members indicated that nearly half of those respondents who live off-reserve wish to move back, while an additional 44% said "maybe". Lack of housing was identified as a major barrier to moving home. Due to the significant housing shortage, less than a quarter of members live on-Reserve. There is no land to accommodate additional housing, community facilities and infrastructure to enable their members to return. Takla Nation plans to construct 100 new homes over the next 10 years. Phases 1 and 2 will accommodate up to 95 lots. Supporting infrastructure including water, sanitary, roads, power will also be required. The attached map shows the potential areas of development for future community expansion.

1.2 Investigative Work

If any preliminary investigative work has been carried out, with or without an investigative authorization, provide details on work completed, incomplete or on-going from previous term. Please provide comments on any archaeological work, new technology or any First Nations agreements undertaken.



Activity	Brief Description of Activity	Status (e.g. Complete, incomplete, ongoing)	Comments / Milestones
Civil Field Review	<p>August 2020 - aerial survey to gather images to support decision on future development of the community</p> <p>Topographical survey to calibrate images taken during aerial survey.</p> <p>Review of off-reserve road works,</p>	Complete	Refer to attached Civil Field Review

Activity	Brief Description of Activity	Status (e.g. Complete, incomplete, ongoing)	Comments / Milestones
	tree removal and drainage patterns.		
Geotechnical Invesitgation	A geotechnical investigation will be completed. This will include site reconnaissance, test pitting, soil sampling, and review of significant geotechnical feastures of the site.	To be Completed	
Archaeological Investigation	An archaeological investigation will be completed to determine the potential for archaeologically sensitive areas and artifacts.	To be Completed	
Environmental Investigaion	An environmental assessment of the project area will be completed and preparation of an Environmetnal Impact Assessment (EIA). This will define sensitive wetland habitat, fish vs non fish bearing streams and other environmental risks.	To be Completed	
Detailed Topographic Survey	A detailed topographic survey will be completed using traditional survey methods to pick up all ground featurues within the proposed development area.	To be Completed	

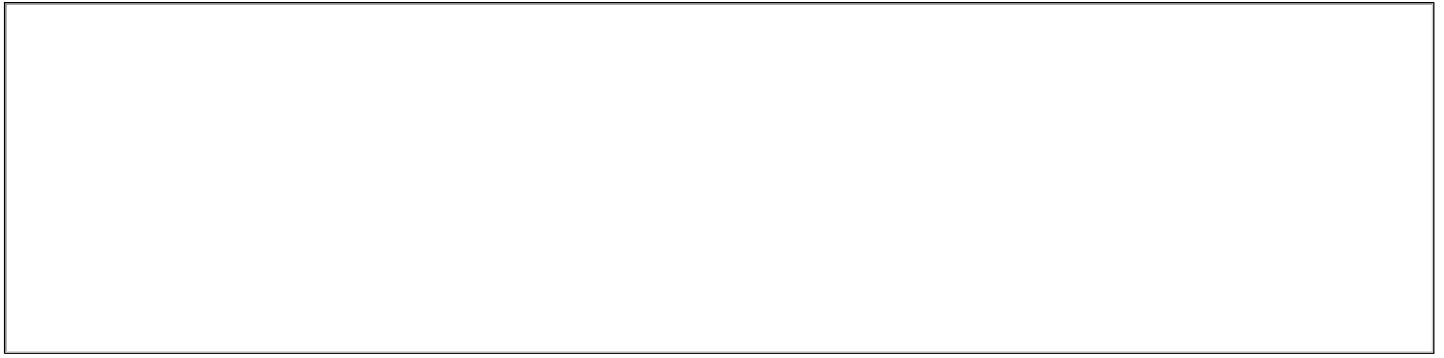
Add Row

1.4 First Nations Consultation

Describe any contact you may have had, including the name of the First Nation(s) and representatives contacted including a description of any discussion of potential adverse effects from the proposed activity and any discussed mitigation measures.



Takla Nation is the applicant and is in support of the project and selected site.



2.0 Location

2.1 Description

Provide a general description of the location of the project. Include activities such as traffic patterns and volume; parking; drilling and sampling etc.



The project is located adjacent to Takla Nation's main community located on Takla IR7. The area of interest for the community expansion project is generally bounded by Takla FSR to the East and Hudson's Bay Creek to the west. It consists of a network of logging roads that were built to logging standards. The vegetation is mostly cleared. The main access route is Lakeshore Drive.

The project will require an engineering feasibility assessment and detailed design before proceeding to tendering and construction. Future construction is intended to be phased. Phases 1 and 2 will see the development of at least 95 lots, houses and required infrastructure. The first phase will include construction of approximately 45 lots, at an elevation similar to the existing community extents. The second phase will involve expanding further up the hillside, with an additional 50 lots.

2.2 Location Justification

Provide your reasons/justification of the need for this type of project at this location. For example, is the activity close to a main highway for truck access purposes; or adjacent to other examples of this use - ie. is the proposed marina close to an existing marina



It is adjacent to Takla IR 7. It provides a logical expansion to the existing community. The area is mostly cleared, with rudimentary logging roads already constructed. Other adjacent areas to Takla IR 7 are bound be steep slopes, Takla lake, or more environmentally sensitive areas. The proposed project area is the most cost effective and an efficient use of available land.

2.3 Seasonal Expectations of Use

When will the Project require use of the land? Include information on key works during construction phases as well as operations phase and indicate seasons or full year activities. Please reference [reduced risk fish windows](#) as required by DFO:



Project Phase (Construction / Operations)	Brief Description of Activity / Works	Season
Feasibility / Design	Site access will be required for investigative work including test pitting, surveying, and environmental site reconnaissance	Spring/Summer
Construction	Construction of typical roads, lot pads, water/sewer services, drainage crossings, and other required infrastructure for residential and institutional development.	Year Round

Project Phase (Construction / Operations)	Brief Description of Activity / Works	Season
	Drainage crossing works will be timed with reduced risk fish windows.	
Operations	Access to the site will be year round once homes are constructed and residents are occupying.	Year Round

Add Row

3.0 Infrastructure and Improvements

3.1 Facilities and Infrastructure

Detail any new and existing facilities, infrastructure or processes proposed and any ancillary uses. Provide details of planned construction methods and materials, and construction scheduling.

Facility/Infrastructure/Process	Construction Methods/Materials	Construction Schedule
Roads and Drainage	Conventional road construction through stripping and removal of unsuitable soil, cut/fill of suitable subgrade material, placement of sub-base and base gravels, and paving if applicable. Culverts, bridges, and other drainage crossings to be constructed during reduced fish risk windows.	Spring/Summer/Fall
Lot Pads	Conventional lot pad construction through stripping and removal of unsuitable soil, cut/fill of suitable subgrade and placement of surfacing gravel.	Spring/Summer/Fall
Water System	Construction of underground watermains and lot services. First phase of the development (~45 lots) to be serviced from existing reservoir. Second phase (~50 lots) and beyond will required higher elevation reservoir constructed either with concrete or bolted steel reservoir.	Spring/Summer/Fall
Sewer System	Construction of underground gravity sewer mains and lot services connecting to existing sewer system. First phase of the development (~45 lots) to be connected to existing community drainfield. Second phase (~50 lots) and beyond may require additional treatment capacity to be confirmed at feasibility stage.	Spring/Summer/Fall
Homes	Conventional single family or multi family home construction	Spring/Summer/Fall
Community Facilities	Conventional building construction for community facilities as identified based on preference and need	Spring/Summer/Fall

Add Field

3.2 Access

Identify existing and proposed roads used for access and their use by season. Include any proposed connections that require either a Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure permit for connection or use of a Forest Service Road and what type of FS road and types of vehicles expected. Include information on any road use agreements and include the volume of traffic during construction/operation and phase or season that the traffic is expected.



Roadway/Proposed Connection	Existing/Proposed	Existing Road Classification	Road Permittee Information and Road Use Agreements	Traffic Volume		Mitigation of Traffic Effects
				Construction Phase	Operations Phase	
Driftwood Forest Service Road	Existing	Forest Service Road	R10413	TBD	TBD	Standard flagging and traffic control during construction activities.
Phase 1 Road	Proposed	-	-	TBD	TBD	not required
Phase 2 Road	Proposed	-	-	TBD	TBD	not required

Add Field

3.3 Utility Requirements and Sources

Describe utility requirements and sources, include agreements in place or underway allowing access to utilities. Utilities include power generation, electrical or gas transmission or distribution lines, telecommunications.



Power is currently provided by a BC Hydro grid connection. A capacity study will be conducted to confirm the capacity of the existing power supply and potential for development.

3.4 Water Supply

Identify water requirements for construction and operation phases (e.g. surface water and/or groundwater), including sources, location, volume and a general description of infrastructure planned to meet water supply requirements, include any agreements outside of Water Act Authorizations, such as Municipal water supply.

Project Phase (Construction/ Operation)	Water Requirement (e.g. Surface water or ground water, etc)	Source/location	Volume	Infrastructure Description	Agreements
Current Operation (existing water license)	Surface Water Intake	Takla Lake	Estimated Average usage is 66 m3 /day Treatment Plant capacity is 650 m3/day	The authorized works are screened intake, pipe, pump, pumphouse, standpipe, treatment facility, distribution system and hatchery.	Water License NO. 503471 Max Diversion 100,000 m3 / year 616 m3 / day
Proposed Construction / Operation (Phase 1 - 45 Lots)	Existing surface water intake	Takla Lake	Average 35 m3/day Max 105 m3/day	First phase of development to be serviced from existing reservoir and treatment plant with additional water mains and water services to each lot.	No additional agreements required.
Proposed Construction / Operation (Phase 2 - 50 Lots)	Existing surface water intake	Takla Lake	Average 39 m3/day Max 117 m3/day	Second phase of development and beyond will be supplied by the existing lake intake and treatment plant. Water distribution will require construction of a second higher pressure zone reservoir and water mains and water services to each lot.	No additional agreements required.

Add Field

3.5 Waste Collection Treatment and Disposal

Identify any waste disposal (note septic system required), sewage, sanitation facilities and refuse disposal proposed. Include agreements in place or underway such as Health Regional Board Sewage Disposal Permits etc.



Project Phase (Construction/ Operation)	Is there a water requirement (e.g. Surface water or ground water, etc)	Discharge distance to closest body of water (well, lake, etc.)	Volume of daily discharge	Infrastructure Description	Existing Agreements
Current Operation (existing effluent disposal field)	No	200m west to Takla Lake	Communal drainfield designed for average of 160 m ³ /day Estimated average discharge is 69 m ³ /day	Community has existing sewer system consisting of gravity collection systems, septic tanks, filter chambers, liftstations (3), and communal drainfield and septage (sludge) lagoons. The communal drainfield is located at the northwest end of the reserve and the septage lagoons at the east end.	MSR 103137
Proposed Construction / Operation (Phase 1 - 45 Lots)	No	as above	Average 36 m ³ /day	Proposed lots will be serviced by gravity collection system connecting to existing collection system and liftstations. Phase 1 likely to be serviced from communal drainfield subject to confirmation of performance of the existing system.	
Proposed Construction / Operation (Phase 2 - 50 Lots)	No		Average 41 m ³ /day	Proposed lots will be serviced by gravity collection system connecting to existing collection system and liftstations. Further investigations required to determine if Phase 2 can be	

Project Phase (Construction/ Operation)	Is there a water requirement (e.g. Surface water or ground water, etc)	Discharge distance to closest body of water (well, lake, etc.)	Volume of daily discharge	Infrastructure Description	Existing Agreements
				serviced from existing drainfield.	

Add Field

4.0 Environmental

Describe any significant impacts and proposed mitigation for the following environmental classes:

4.1 Land Impacts

4.1.1 Vegetation Removal

Is any timber removal required?

Yes No

Are any areas of vegetation to be cleared, outside of timber removal?

Yes No

Removal Type	Impacts	Proposed Mitigation
General vegetation removal needed for construction of roads, lot pads, and other infrastructure. Most timber has been removed by recent logging and a few isolated remaining deciduous trees might require removal to accommodate infrastructure.	To be determined - minimal.	Qualified Environmental Professional will be on site to monitor areas of potential environmental impacts and implementation of mitigation measures.
Add Field		

4.1.2 Soil Disturbance

Will there be any areas of soil disturbance, including clearing, grubbing, excavation and levelling?

Yes No

Disturbance Type	Impacts	Proposed Mitigations
Excavation for construction of roads, lot pads, services and other infrastructure.	Impact to ground soil. Removal of unsuitable organic material. Cut/Fill of suitable subgrade material and placement of import sand and gravels.	Qualified Environmental Professional will be on site to monitor areas of potential environmental impacts and implementation of mitigation measures. Erosion and sediment control measures to be implemented during construction.
Add Field		

Is the area to be excavated a Brownfield site or has the potential to be contaminated?

Yes No

Is there potential for disturbance of archaeological, paleontological fossils or historical artifacts?

Yes No

Additional research and plans may be required. [Heritage Conservation Act](#)

4.1.3 Riparian Encroachment



Will any works be completed within or adjacent to the riparian zone of any water body? If your project is within 30 meters of a watercourse and you intend to: disturb soil, remove plants, construct, install works for flood protection, develop drainage systems or service sewer or water systems the Riparian Areas Regulation may affect your development.

Yes No

Identify all works that may affect the Riparian zone, the impacts, and proposed mitigations:

Work Type	Impacts	Proposed Mitigations
Drainage Crossings	Minimal and will be designed in accordance with Fish stream crossing guidebook and environmental best practices.	Construction in accordance with environmental best practice and during reduced risk fish windows.
Add Field		

4.1.4 Pesticides and Herbicides

Will there be any use of pesticides or herbicides during construction, operations and/or maintenance?

Yes No

4.1.5 Visual Impacts

Will there be any adverse effects of the projects, and any potential adverse effects on sight lines to the project area from surrounding areas likely to be used for scenic viewing by residents or other users?

Yes No

4.1.6 Archaeological Sites

Are there any known or high potential (Arch Procedure) archaeological sites within the project area?

Yes No

Have you conducted an AIA or engaged an archaeologist to assist with your investigations?

Yes No

4.1.7 Construction Methods and Materials

Identify the types of construction materials, the methods used, their impacts, and any mitigations:

Construction Material/Method	Impacts	Mitigations
------------------------------	---------	-------------

Construction Material/Method	Impacts	Mitigations
Road and Lot Pad Construction with placement of gravel material.	Impact to ground soil through stripping and excavation.	Standard mitigations through a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and erosion and sedimentation control.
Utility Construction and installation of plastic/metal underground piping.	Impact to ground soil through trenching and excavation.	Standard mitigations through a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and erosion and sedimentation control.
Drainage crossing construction with plastic/metal culverts and rip-rap aggregate erosion protection.	Temporary impact to stream bed and channel.	Conducted in accordance with Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), Fish stream crossing guidebook, DFO regulations, Fish salvaging and fish isolation techniques and full time environmental monitoring.
Add Field		

4.2 Atmospheric Impacts

4.2.1 Sound, Odor, Gas or Fuel Emissions

Will the project construction or operation cause any of the following to disturb wildlife or nearby residents:

Sound? Yes No

Odor? Yes No

Gas? Yes No

Fuel Emissions? Yes No

4.3 Aquatic Lands

4.3.1 Drainage Effects

Will the project result in changes to land drainage?

Yes No

Describe the potential effect or impact and include plans for mitigation/management:

Effect	Potential Impacts	Proposed Mitigations / Management Plan
Directed drainage channels through culvert crossings. Currently the drainage upstream of the community is uncontrolled, and undefined, and	Positive impact on downstream drainage.	Standard mitigations through a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and erosion and sedimentation control.

Effect	Potential Impacts	Proposed Mitigations / Management Plan
resulting in increased runoff to the community lands.		

Add Field

4.3.2 Public Access

Will the project result in changes to public access?

- Yes No

Describe the potential effect or impact and include plans for mitigation/management:

Effect	Potential Impacts	Proposed Mitigations / Management Plan
Increased public access to site area as it will become a mixed-use residential development.	Positive impact on public access.	Not needed.

Add Field

4.3.3 Flood Potential

Will the project result in a potential for flooding?

- Yes No

4.4 Fish and Wildlife Habitat

4.4.1 Disturbance to Fish/Wildlife and Fish/Wildlife Habitat

Will the project result in adverse effects to wildlife or wildlife habitat?

(BC Wildlife Act)

- Yes No

Provide a description of any potential adverse effects to wildlife and wildlife habitat from proposed construction and operation (including seasonal considerations, potential adverse effects from changes to access by hunters and fishers, along with proposed measures to mitigate adverse effects).

Project Phase	Potential Impacts	Proposed Mitigations / Management Plan

Project Phase		Potential Impacts	Proposed Mitigations / Management Plan
Construction		Construction of drainage crossing culverts	Conducted in accordance with Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), Fish stream crossing guidebook, DFO regulations, Fish salvaging and fish isolation techniques and full time environmental monitoring.
<input type="button" value="Add Field"/>			

Will the project (construction or operations phase) occur in and around streams, lakes, estuarine or marine environments?

Yes No

Describe the fish habitat on or near the project site, include potential impacts of the Project (e.g. stream crossings, water diversions, etc), including seasonal considerations, and plans to manage/mitigate effects.

Project Phase	Impacts	Proposed Mitigations / Management
Construction	Construction of drainage crossing culverts	Conducted in accordance with Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), Fish stream crossing guidebook, DFO regulations, Fish salvaging and fish isolation techniques and full time environmental
<input type="button" value="Add Field"/>		

Is the project (construction or operations phase) likely to increase erosion or sedimentation?

Yes No

Will the project (construction or operations phase) require water diversion?

Yes No

Will the project threaten or endanger species at risk in the area?

Species At Risk Act

Yes No

5.0 Socio-Community

5.1 Land Use

Describe the current community setting on or near the project area, including the location of non-aboriginal and aboriginal communities or known use areas.

The only neighboring community is Takla First Nation IR 7 which is adjacent to the subject property.

The property is currently a forest harvesting area.

5.1.1 Land Management Plans and Regional Growth Strategies

Are there any land and resource management plans, coastal plans, provincial, regional growth strategies or local government plans with zoning, or management policies or use restrictions in place that could limit or preclude your proposed use of the land? *(Please refer to the [Union of BC Municipalities \(UBCM\)](#), and check the websites of the municipality, regional district or other organization with jurisdiction including your project area.)*

Yes No

5.2 Socio-Community Conditions

5.2.1 Adjacent Users or Communities

Is the project likely to restrict public access, or the ability, or the ability of adjacent land owners or tenure holder to access their property or tenures?

Yes No

5.2.2 Existing Services

Provide a description any increased demand on fire protection and other health facilities and emergency services arising from your Project, including proposed management or mitigation measures.



The development will be serviced by existing community health facilities and emergency services and is within the community's population growth estimate for services.

The existing reservoir has capacity to provide fire protection for the first phase of the development, and subsequent phases will require an additional reservoir at a higher elevation and with additional fire protection storage.

END O F FORM

APPENDIX 3: VALUE AND INTEREST ASSESSMENT FORM

Provincial Forest Tracking # *XX*File: 10500-20/*PF# Takla*LANDS: *7410198 and 7410207*CLIFF tracking #: *XX*EDRMS Retrieval Code: PF### *PFT##***Date:**

To: *Name*
 District Manager
Name Resource District
City, BC

Re: Deletion from the *Takla* Provincial Forest: Value and Interest Assessment

Under Section 5(5) of the *Forest Act*, disposition of the fee simple interest in Crown land within a Provincial Forest is prohibited except for the purposes of a highway, transmission line or pipeline right of way. Under Section 5(7), the Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations or delegated official may delete land from a Provincial Forest outside a tree farm licence if it "will be to the social and economic benefit of British Columbia". Deletion of Crown land from the *Name* Provincial *Forest (brief description for the request)*.

Requesting Agency:

- Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development
- Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation
- BC Parks
- Ministry of Tourism
- Other (please specify) _____

Rationale for Provincial Forest Deletion (please include any supporting information such as Briefing Notes, memorandum of understanding, interim treaty agreements etc.):

- Utility infrastructure
- Controlled Recreation Area
- Private sale or transfer of land to a third party

- Interim Agreement with First Nations (name the First Nations)
- Treaty Agreement (name the First Nations)
- Other (please describe)

Authorization of Disposition

- Land Act*, Section 11 (2)
- Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing Act*, Section 9

Map Reference

[The map (*Provincial Forest Name – Forest Act Section 5 Forest Deletion – Provincial Forest Tracking #XX*) attached to this assessment represents a surveyed area. This legal survey represent the official legal boundary definition of the area being removed under this order.]

First Nations Consultation

- First Nations Consultation has been completed by *name of Ministry* (attach First Nations Consultation Summary)
- First Nations Consultation is to be completed *Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations, and Rural Development*

Effects of the proposed deletion on the following forest and range interests have been assessed. Interests are derived from the *Forest and Range Practices Act*, *Forest Act*, and *Wildfire Act*. Effects are assessed as high (H), moderate (M), low (L) or not applicable (N/A).

Table 1: *Name* Provincial Forest Deletion

Forest and Range Values/Interest	Effect (L/M/H/NA)	Impact	Actions and Status
Timber Supply (Allowable Annual Cut (AAC))			
Range			
Visual Quality and Scenic Area			
Water and Community Watershed			
Riparian and Lakeshore Management Zones			

Biodiversity			
Wildfire Risk			
Silviculture obligations and investment			
Research and inventory			
Forest and Range tenures and operations			
Compensation potential			
Access and Infrastructure			
Other interest			
Archaeological			
First Nations Interests			

Name of Ministry or Branch are engaged in consultation with the First Nations and ongoing discussions with agencies and other stakeholders to resolve any concerns with the interests identified in the above table 1.

District Preparer: _____

Date: _____

I have considered the above assessment of interest and the proposed use of the land and do support the proposed deletion from the *Takla* Provincial Forest.

Accepted by: _____

Date: _____



Review of Funded Greenhouse, Hydroponic and Horticulture Projects

October 27, 2021

Building a
Stronger North

Background

Community-led commercial greenhouse, hydroponic and horticulture operations support economic development within the Trust's service area.

These projects are well aligned with the Trust's mandate to support investments in the Agriculture sector and contribute toward economic diversification.

These project types meet the eligibility criteria of the Economic Infrastructure program in that they provide a capital asset to communities that drive new revenues and job creation.

Secondary benefits include local food security and increased availability of fresh grown produce in rural, remote and Indigenous communities.



Background

Since 2017, the Trust has invested **\$1,474,460** in **10** greenhouse, hydroponic and horticultural projects:

2 in Prince George Region

2 in Northwest Region

3 in Cariboo-Chilcotin Lillooet Region

2 in Northeast Region

Total value of all projects is **\$3,438,754** –
Every dollar invested by Northern
Development is matched with \$1.33 from
other funding sources.



Project 38	Grant Amount	Year Approved	Status
Research and Teaching Greenhouse CNC Prince George	\$133,205	2017	Completed Oct. 2020
Hydroponic Unit CNC Quesnel	\$63,424	2017	Completed Nov. 2020
Kitselas Geothermal Community Greenhouse Kitselas First Nation	\$211,000	2017	Completed Mar. 2020
Peace Haskap Agriculture Planting Pilot Peace Haskap Society	\$141,132	2018	In progress (95% complete)
Williams Lake First Nation Cannabis Cultivation Facility Williams Lake First Nation	\$250,000	2019	In progress (99% complete)
Shackan Nursery Expansion Shackan Indian Band	\$250,000	2020	In progress
Commercial Hydroponic Greenhouse System Gitmaxmak'ay Nisga'a Society	\$175,000	2020	Completed Dec. 2020
Valemount Vegetable Growing Container Valemount Learning Centre	\$166,328	2020	Completed Sep. 2021
Commercial Hydroponic Greenhouse System Saulteau First Nations	\$135,875	2021	In progress
Kitasoo Commercial Hydroponic Greenhouse System Kitasoo Xai'xais Nation	\$145,125	2021	In progress



**Kitselas Community
Greenhouse**
Kitselas First Nation

\$14,347 Grant



Village Greens Valemount
Valemount Learning Society

\$166,328 Grant



Sugar Cane Cannabis
Williams Lake First Nation

\$250,000 Grant

Economic Benefits

Based on applicant projections, the ten funded projects are expected to result in:



9 temporary full-time equivalent (FTE) positions during construction phases



33 permanent new full-time equivalent (FTE) positions, following project completion



\$4,137,142 gross facility revenue by year-two, following project completion



Commercial Hydroponic Greenhouse System - \$175,000 Grant

Gitmaxmak'ay Nisga'a Prince Rupert/Port Edward Society

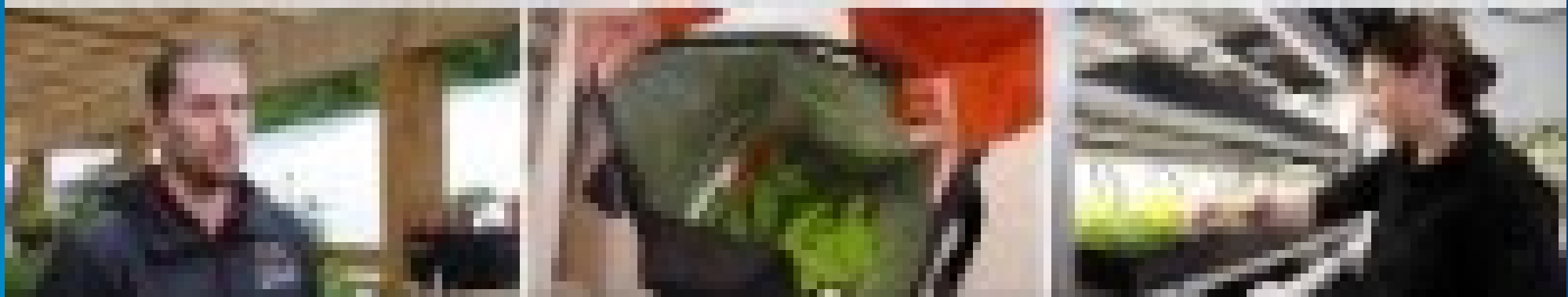


In operation since December 2020 - producing commercial crops of lettuce, spinach, kale, basil, cilantro, parsley and microgreens.

Project reached break-even point in January 2021 at 60% production capacity.

Employs **one-full time** horticulturalist and **one part-time** sales/delivery position – consistent with application projections.

Current approximate gross revenue of \$4,500/month – this is 53% of projected year one revenues in application and will increase once full production capacity is reached.



'Village Greens' Vegetable Growing Container - \$166,328 Grant

Valemount Learning Society

Containerized grow facility was delivered in May 2021 with seeding taking place mid summer with first harvest in August.

Produce subscription program for community now in place – first pick up was late September. Now up to 20 subscribers with plans to scale up and supply commercial clients.

Current employment of **one part-time** Manager position – this is consistent with job projections in application. Hoping to support additional positions as business grows.



'Sugar Cane Cannabis' Cultivation Facility - \$250,000 Grant

Williams Lake Indian Band

Construction commenced June 2020.

Facility is 99% complete and ready to begin production imminently – waiting on final licensing approvals following building completion.

Experienced Master Grower has been hired from Ontario with additional support staff to follow later in 2021.

The facility is expected to support seven FTE positions and generate a net profit of \$1.8 million annually.



building front



building rear



interior retail space

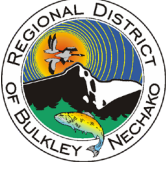


exterior enhancements



Thank you

Building a
Stronger North

**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO****MEMORANDUM**

TO: Chair Parker and Rural/Agriculture Committee

FROM: Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services

DATE: November 4, 2021

SUBJECT: Regional Broadband Infrastructure Service Establishment
– Elector Response Form

RECOMMENDATION: (all/directors/majority)

That the Rural/Agriculture Committee recommend to the Board that the Elector Response Form be approved as the Elector Response Form for Bylaw No. 1951.

BACKGROUND

At the September 23, 2021 Board meeting, staff presented a report regarding the Regional Broadband Infrastructure Service Establishment, inclusive of an Elector Response Form for the Board's approval. Staff were directed to revise the wording to better reflect the purpose of the bylaw. A revised Elector Response Form is attached for consideration.

ATTACHMENT

Elector Response Form



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO

ALTERNATIVE APPROVAL PROCESS

ELECTOR RESPONSE FORM

Regional Broadband Infrastructure Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1951, 2021

Electoral Areas "A" (Smithers Rural), "B" (Burns Lake Rural), "C" (Fort St. James Rural), "D" (Fraser Lake Rural), "E" (Francois/Ootsa Lake Rural), "F" (Vanderhoof Rural), "G" (Houston Rural)

As an elector of the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako, I am **OPPOSED** to the adoption of "Regional Broadband Infrastructure Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1951, 2021" which establishes a service within Electoral Areas A, B, C, D, E, F, and G of the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako for the purposes of exploring and developing partnerships with Internet Service Providers and Telecommunications Providers to assist with the provision of these services to all residents."

I CERTIFY THAT I MEET THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS:

- 18 years of age or older;
- Canadian citizen;
- resident of BC for at least 6 months immediately before signing this Elector Response Form;
- resident of OR registered owner of real property in the defined portion of the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako for at least 30 days immediately prior to signing this Elector Response Form; and
- not otherwise disqualified by law from voting.

FULL NAME OF ELECTOR:

_____ (Please Print Full Name)

ELECTOR'S RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS:

_____ (State Full Civic Address)

SIGNATURE OF ELECTOR:

DATE:

To be completed by Non-Resident Property Electors Only

I am entitled to register as a non-resident property elector as an owner of the property located at the following address:

- ❖ A person must not sign more than one elector response form in relation to the same Alternative Approval Process.
- ❖ A person may only submit one elector response form, regardless of the number of properties owned.

Unless Alternative Approval Electoral Response Forms petitioning against the adoption of this bylaw have been received from 10% (1,218) of the eligible electors within the defined boundaries of the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako, Bylaw No. 1951 will be deemed to have received approval of the electors.

The deadline for submitting this elector response form is **4:30 p.m. on Monday, February 21, 2022.**

The address for submission by mail or in person is:

Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako
Director of Corporate Services
Box 820, 37, 3rd Avenue
Burns Lake, B.C., V0J 1E0

Postmarks WILL NOT be accepted as the date of submission, ORIGINAL SIGNATURES ARE REQUIRED, therefore the Elector Response Forms may not be returned by fax or email.

INFORMATION REGARDING QUALIFICATIONS FOR ELECTORS

Resident Electors:

- age 18 or older;
- a Canadian citizen;
- a resident of British Columbia for at least 6 months immediately before signing this Elector Response Form;
- a resident of the defined portion of the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako for at least 30 days before signing this Elector Response Form; and
- not disqualified by any enactment from voting in an election or otherwise disqualified by law.

Non-resident property electors:

- not entitled to register as a resident elector in the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako;
- age 18 or older;
- a Canadian Citizen;
- a resident of British Columbia for at least 6 months immediately before signing this Elector Response Form;
- a registered owner of real property in the defined portion of the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako for at least 30 days before signing this Elector Response Form;
- not disqualified by any enactment from voting in an election or otherwise disqualified by law.

****If there is more than one registered owner of the property, only one of those individuals, with the written consent of the majority of the owners, may register as a non-resident property elector in relation to one parcel of real property in a jurisdiction. A consent form may be obtained by contacting the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako or at www.rdbn.bc.ca.**

****Properties registered in company/corporation names do not qualify under the *Local Government Act* to vote.**

Copies of this form may be utilized, provided that only Elector Response Forms with original signatures are submitted. Forms may also be obtained by contacting the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako at 1-800-320-3339 or at www.rdbn.bc.ca .

INSTRUCTIONS

OPPOSED – If you are opposed to the adoption of "Regional Broadband Infrastructure Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1951, 2021" you can sign and submit an elector response form if you qualify as elector of the participating service area. All elector response forms **must** be received in the office of the RDBN no later than the deadline of **4:30 p.m. on Monday, February 21, 2022**. If you are submitting your form by mail, be advised that postmarks will not be accepted as the date of submission.

NOT OPPOSED – If you are not opposed, you need to do nothing.

A copy of the bylaw, a staff report summarizing this initiative and elector response forms are available on the RDBN website at www.rdbn.bc.ca and at the RDBN office (37, 3rd Avenue, Burns Lake, BC) Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., excluding statutory holidays.

For further information contact: Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services or Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant at (250) 692-3195 or 1-800-320-3339.



Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Rural/Agriculture Committee Memorandum

To: Chair Parker and Committee
 From: Nellie Davis, Manager of Regional Economic Development
 Date: November 6, 2021
 Regarding: **Regional Connectivity Service Establishment Plan**

Recommendation:

Direction.

Background:

As per discussion at the October 6, 2021 Connectivity Committee Meeting, the communication tools for the Regional Connectivity Service establishment have been expanded to include the option of printed newspaper articles.

The articles have been prepared as a series that could run in consecutive editions of newspapers around the region in the lead-up to the Alternative Approval Process anticipated for early 2022. The articles, which are attached to this memo, include the following topics, as identified in the draft communications plan discussed at the April 2021 Connectivity Committee meeting:

- 1) Connectivity - What is it and why do our communities need it?
- 2) The State of Connectivity in the RDBN.
- 3) Who is CityWest?
- 4) How will Connectivity infrastructure be funded?

Staff require direction regarding distribution of the articles. Rural Directors each have the opportunity to decide whether the articles benefit the AAP process in their area and fund them individually. Staff will only run articles in areas where Rural Directors have provided direction to do so. The costs to print the articles are provided below. These costs will be funded by Electoral Areas and not charged to the Regional Service. Where Areas share a publication, the opportunity exists to share the associated costs. The pricing aligns with a ¼ page advertisement, including RDBN logo.

Newspaper	Cost per edition	Cost for series of 4
Area A (Smithers Interior News)	\$526.09	\$2,104.36
Areas B (Lakes District News)	\$368.85	\$1,475.40
Area C (Caledonia Courier)	\$364.05	\$1,456.20
Area D (reached via Omineca Express)	\$364.05	\$1,456.20
Area F (Omineca Express)	\$364.05	\$1,456.20
Area E (reached via Lakes District News)	\$368.85	\$1,475.40
Area G (Houston Today)	\$325.65	\$1,302.60

Additionally, staff require approval of the messaging that will be used on the website and in Social Media posts about the service establishment. Consistent with the proposed wording on the Elector Response Form, staff propose:

'The RDBN is establishing a Regional Connectivity Service for the purposes of exploring and developing partnerships with Internet Service Providers and Telecommunications Providers to assist with the provision of these services to all residents.'

Connectivity Article #1 Connectivity – What is it and why do our communities need it?

We have been aware for some time of the importance of the internet to connect us to the wider world, but until recently there was a lingering perception of privilege when it came to access to high-speed connection at one's fingertips at any time of day. Let's admit, some of us still remember when the CBC ended programming for the day and our access to produced video content abruptly ended with the national anthem. The reality today has shifted significantly.

The growing number of uses for internet and data have slowly replaced paper or traditional methods of accessing information and services, to the degree that the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) declared broadband internet an essential service in Canada in 2016. The CRTC also adopted minimum performance standards of 50 megabits per second for download and 10 megabits per second for upload. Until that time, local landline was the only service deemed essential by the CRTC. Both Federal and Provincial Governments have made financial commitments to extend service to areas where the minimum standards are not yet available.

COVID-19 caused an unprecedented and almost immediate shift to online platforms for almost all previously in-person activities. The importance of reliable, affordable connectivity became paramount. In the last two years, many of us have begun relying increasingly on online access to government services, for everything from healthcare, emergency information and programs to access to financial support programs for our households or businesses. COVID-19 served to catapult us firmly into the realities of a digital economy and has sped up the adoption of digital technologies in all sectors. It is crucial that all areas of the RDBN are capable of meeting the broadband and cellular needs of residents and businesses to ensure our communities remain vibrant and economically sustainable into the future.

Another pandemic-related shift is that work-from-home options became normalized as the pandemic progressed, and many organizations will likely continue embracing ongoing work-from-home options to encourage a positive work-life balance for employees. This is important for businesses and organizations hoping to attract and retain skilled employees at a time when labour shortages are disrupting business operations across the Province, and this scenario requires that not only businesses, but also residences all over the region, have access to high-speed internet capable of high-quality video conferencing.

Internet and cellular communication has also changed how we hear about, react to and recover from emergency events. All levels of government rely on digital communication to alert residents to emergency events and evacuation information. It is also the most-used medium for accessing updates and support programs during and after an event. In this case, access to digital communication is not a benefit, it is an issue of health and safety.

We are proud to work on your behalf to ensure that the region is well-positioned to respond quickly and effectively to all the known (and unknown) transitions and changes our residents will face. We are proud to be part of rural BC, and rural residents deserve reliable, affordable connection to everything that matters to them.

Connectivity Article #2 The State of Connectivity in the RDBN

Whether you live in a rural area or within a municipality, you have likely experienced some degree of frustration with your current internet service. Many residents have reported that inadequate connectivity has impacted their ability to work remotely, access online education, access emergency information, transition a business to an online platform, connect with friends and family, access government programs or resources, or even simply watch a movie. These issues highlight the disparity between urban and rural communities, leaving rural residents at a disadvantage. Poor access to connectivity impacts the social opportunities, economic viability and safety our region.

The Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) has determined that the minimum speeds that all Canadians should have access to for this essential service are 50 megabits per second for download and 10 megabits per second for upload (50/10 Mbps). Many residences, if you were to perform an internet speed test right now, would struggle to get above 15 Mbps, and some residents do not even have enough speed to perform a test.

Since 2018 the RDBN has been working to understand the state of connectivity in the region, the work that can be done to improve it and the barriers to success. Because we live in rural areas with diverse geography like lakes, rivers and mountains, we know that creative solutions will be required. We also know that we are committed to finding solutions that meet or exceed the minimum standards, as future-proofing the region's connectivity infrastructure is critical to making sound investment decisions. A 2019 RDBN Connectivity Planning Study by TANEx Engineering has become the gold standard for local government connectivity planning in BC. In addition to studies, the RDBN also struck a Connectivity Committee to specifically address the actions the RDBN can take to improve connectivity infrastructure in the region. Studies and additional information regarding RDBN connectivity planning is available on our website at www.rdbn.bc.ca.

The RDBN believes that investments in connectivity infrastructure are largely the mandate of senior levels of government. Both the Government of Canada and the Province of BC have made financial commitments to funding this infrastructure, but the structure of those funding programs leaves little room for local governments to influence the design, approval or construction timelines of projects considered through those intakes. In addition to other planning, the RDBN continues to be a strong advocate for change in the arena of infrastructure funding and policy changes. Telecommunications and Utility companies that hold a monopoly on the existing infrastructure and have little competition in rural Canada operate with ROI and stakeholder returns, not resident needs in their planning and decision-making processes. For this reason, the current policies and funding models of senior government have failed rural and remote communities. The RDBN believes that change is possible, and is pleased to see local governments around the province rallying to effect change in this landscape.

Connectivity Article #3 – Who is CityWest

Although it has recently been declared an essential service, broadband infrastructure is funded quite differently than other essential service infrastructure in BC. Services like roads, electricity and public transportation are operated directly by the Province, or by Crown corporations, which are funded by and accountable to the Province. While private companies can receive government subsidies, telecommunications and internet infrastructure is owned and operated mostly by for-profit Internet Service Providers (ISP). Because of the nature of for-profit business models, it can be hard to find a meeting ground between local government's mandate to provide service to residents and a for-profit company's mandate to provide shareholder returns.

The RDBN is very pleased to be developing a partnership with CityWest, an Internet Service Provider that is wholly owned by the City of Prince Rupert. This public ownership instills strong values in CityWest's service model that enable the company to incorporate local government priorities in their planning and investment decisions. The RDBN sees this partnership as having the highest potential for collaborative efforts to see the region served with broadband service. CityWest and the RDBN's shared value of 'no home left behind' opens many opportunities for creative and helpful discussions about how to deliver service in the RDBN.

The next step in the RDBN's partnership with CityWest is to establish a Regional Connectivity Service. This service establishment is a mandatory step in the partnership, as the Local Government Act prohibits Regional Districts from signing Partnership Agreements without an established service. The proposed service will be established with minimal taxation (< \$0.01 per \$1,000 OR <\$2.50 per \$250,000 of assessed home value). The purpose of the service establishing bylaw is NOT to fund connectivity infrastructure through taxation, but solely to enable the RDBN to enter into a formal partnership with CityWest or other partners that may be capable of providing different connectivity solutions down the road.

CityWest already has a strong history in the western end of the region, providing service in Smithers and Houston for many years. They are also offering service via newly constructed fibre in Vanderhoof and are building Fibre to the Home in the community of Fraser Lake this fall. CityWest has demonstrated a commitment to serve the region and has invested in building infrastructure where other providers have resisted due to low return on investment. We believe CityWest's willingness to dive headfirst into solving the region's connectivity issues makes them an ideal partner in this process.

Connectivity Article #4 – How will Connectivity Infrastructure be Funded?

Due to the vast geographic scope of the RDBN, the Board will advocate strongly that senior levels of Government fulfill their commitments to funding rural connectivity solutions. This funding is currently available through grant programs such as the Federal Universal Broadband Fund and the Provincial Connecting British Columbia program. These funds however also present some challenges.

One of the challenges is the availability of funds weighed against the cost of proposed projects. A Universal Broadband Fund intake from earlier this year was six times over-subscribed, meaning that, at most, only one out of six applications would be successful at receiving funding. At that rate, even with an equivalent intake every year, some projects would take up to six years to secure funding. This timeline may not be acceptable for all communities. It also brings to mind challenging questions about the appropriateness of solving connectivity issues by asking communities to compete against each other to access public funding for an essential service.

The RDBN's strategy will include exploration of all the funding options available for consideration. This includes contributions from the RDBN's allocation of Canada-Community Building Funds (previously Federal Gas Tax), as well as other options for infrastructure funding. It also includes looking at options to reduce project budgets by mobilizing community members and groups to contribute time or skilled labor to project construction. If you are interested in participating in any potential endeavors in your area, please reach out to RDBN Staff or your elected representative.

The proposed Regional Connectivity Service Establishment Bylaw WILL NOT be used for funding connectivity infrastructure. The service is proposed exclusively to enable the RDBN to enter into Partnerships with Internet Service Providers, as required by the Local Government Act. We are pleased that we have been able to maintain a strong planning momentum with CityWest as the partnership develops, and several grant applications are currently under consideration with Federal Provincial funding programs. We look forward to updating you soon on upcoming construction and service availability in the RDBN.