



REPORT

To: Electoral Area Directors Committee

Report Number: ADM-EADC-003

From: Crystal Brown, Electoral Area Manager

Date: May 12, 2020

Subject: Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine Proposed Boundary Expansion

RECOMMENDATION #1:

That the Electoral Area Directors Committee receive the report titled "Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine Proposed Boundary Expansion" dated May 12, 2020 for discussion.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

The Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine (RDKS) is interested in potentially expanding its northwest and northeast boundaries to encompass two areas of the Stikine region that are currently under provincial jurisdiction.

The Stikine region is the only area of the province that is not part of a regional district or municipality. When the regional district system was established in the 1960s, the Stikine region did not have sufficient population or property assessments to support being established as a regional district.

Without municipalities or a regional district, the Stikine region relies on the provincial government for basic local governance. Over the years the Stikine region has been reviewed for opportunities to have areas evolve to local governance via a regional district and reduce the role of the Province in managing local affairs.

The last significant change to the external boundary of the Stikine region came in 2007 when the boundary of the RDKS was expanded into the Stikine region to take in the community of Dease Lake. Since 2007, there has been continuing consideration of whether further boundary changes should be considered, taking a more holistic approach to governance and services.

In 2014, a study was completed that looked at the financial, service delivery and governance implications of expanding the northwest and northeast boundaries of the RDKS to encompass two areas of the Stikine region that are currently under Provincial jurisdiction.

Under a regional district local governance regime, the primary responsibility for service delivery would shift to the regional district. As occurred when Dease Lake was included in the RDKS, the area would be represented by a locally elected electoral area director who would sit at the regional district board table on behalf of the residents residing in that electoral area.

In 2017, staff from the Ministry, the RDKS, the Peace River Regional District (PRRD) and the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako (RDBN) discussed the respective interests of the regional districts in bringing areas of the Stikine into their boundaries to provide basic local governance and service delivery where needed. No action was taken following these discussions with local governments. The collective view is that now is a logical time to reinvigorate these discussions, including conversations with First Nations in the region.

On the recommendation of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Provincial Cabinet can alter the boundaries of a regional district to include an area not in a regional district. Before the Minister makes a decision on a boundary change proposal, the Ministry gathers the perspectives and concerns of First Nations, neighbouring regional districts and stakeholders so that the Minister's decision can be made with due consideration of the perspectives of those who may be impacted by the boundary change.

If the proposed RDKS boundary expansion is approved, there will be an orphaned area created. The Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako is interested in taking over the orphaned area, but will require a part of the Peace River Regional District's Electoral Area B boundary in order to gain access to the orphaned area.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

1. That the Electoral Area Directors Committee provide further direction.

STRATEGIC PLAN RELEVANCE:

☒ Not Applicable to Strategic Plan.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION(S):

None at this time.

COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATION(S):

None at this time.

OTHER CONSIDERATION(S):

None at this time.

Attachments:

1. Ministry Letter
2. Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine Proposed Boundary Expansion Map
3. Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine Boundary Expansion Report
4. Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Proposed Boundary Expansion Map