



REPORT

To: Chair and Directors

Report Number: ADM-BRD-031

From: Crystal Brown, Electoral Area Manager

Date: June 2, 2020

Subject: May 21, 2020 Electoral Area Directors Committee Recommendations

The following recommendations from the May 21, 2020 Electoral Area Directors Committee meeting are presented to the Regional Board for its consideration:

RECOMMENDATION #1: *[Corporate Unweighted]*

That the Regional Board send a letter to the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako, stating that, at this time, the Regional Board does not wish to change the boundaries of the Peace River Regional District.

RECOMMENDATION #2: *[Corporate Unweighted]*

That the Regional Board send a letter to Premier John Horgan and Bruce Ralston, Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, stating that the Board would like to be involved in the prioritization process for the clean-up of orphan and inactive oil and gas wells.

RECOMMENDATION #3: *[Corporate Unweighted]*

That the Regional Board send a letter to Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, asking that the Provincial Medical Health Officer be more open and candid about the location of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in BC.

RECOMMENDATION #4: *[Stakeholder Weighted Vote – LGA Section 209]*

That the Regional Board move forward with assent voting (referendum) in the Charlie Lake Fire Protection Area to amend the Service Establishment Bylaw to include first medical responder services and road rescue services; further, that each question be asked separately on the ballot.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

The draft minutes of the May 21, 2020 Electoral Area Directors Committee meeting are on the Consent Calendar.

Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine Proposed Boundary Expansion

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.

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.

Clean-up of Orphan and Inactive Oil and Gas Wells

The recently announced Federal Economic Response Plan includes provisions to clean up orphaned and inactive oil and gas wells in western provinces. British Columbia, which has 350 orphaned wells, will see \$120 million through this new initiative. In B.C., orphan wells are managed by the Liability Management Branch of the B.C. Oil and Gas Commission. Clean-up costs can range between \$100,000 to several million dollars per well depending on the complexity and size of the well and the degree of contamination.

Charlie Lake Fire Protection Area

On February 26, 2020, staff and the Electoral Area C Director attended a public engagement session at the Charlie Lake Community Hall to discuss the possibility of adding road rescue services and first medical response services in the Charlie Lake Fire Protection Area. Approximately 40 people attended the two-hour session. To gather feedback from the area residents, staff developed an information package to describe the proposal and conducted a survey to determine if there was interest in adding these services.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

1. That the Regional Board provide further direction.

STRATEGIC PLAN RELEVANCE:

- ☒ Responsive Service Delivery
- ☒ Enhance Emergency Planning and Response Capacity

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION(S):

None at this time.

COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATION(S):

None at this time.

OTHER CONSIDERATION(S):

None at this time.

Attachments:

1. Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine Proposed Boundary Expansion Report
2. Charlie Lake Fire Department Road Rescue & First Medical Response Public Engagement