



REQUEST FOR DECISION

Agenda Item Number: 8.2

Meeting Date: 5/9/2023

Author: S Grundy

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Operations

SUBJECT: Referral: Westbank First Nation / Ntityix - Forestry Cut Blocks and Roads

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council direct Administration to submit a response to Ntityix's 2023 Information Sharing Package, based on the following report and comments from Council.

PURPOSE

Forestry licensees share information on their upcoming works as a courtesy to notify the District of proposed development within the community watershed.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Historically, Ntityix has submitted an information package annually in the spring. In the past, Staff have responded with a letter laying out any concerns and requests that came from staff and discussion within the Healthy Watersheds Committee (HWC) and Council.

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS COMMENTS

Approved for Council's consideration.

REPORT

Staff received the attached information sharing package from Ntityix (Westbank First Nation's development arm involved in forestry) earlier this month. The package (attached) included an introductory letter, a general mapping file and some drawings showing the specific block locations. A screen capture from that general mapping file has been attached to this package for review as Figure I. A number of different cut blocks have been proposed over the course of this year and are denoted on the map with light green shading. Blocks shaded in tan denote blocks from 2022.

In past referrals, the package would first be presented to the HWC for review and comment prior to staff bringing it to Council for consideration. In general, members of the previous HWC's and Council did not support the continued clear-cutting of our community watershed.

As noted in the past, until a comprehensive watershed assessment (and any other pertinent contributions such as a road density study) is prepared by industry along with a stakeholder engagement plan, this stance will continue. The cumulative effects of droughts, fires, climate change and their impacts on water quality, quantity and flow should be thoroughly examined in the assessment to provide a better overall view of the health of our watersheds.

The letter of response to Ntityix's 2022 package has also been attached to this report. The primary comments noted within that response are listed below:

- Council and the Healthy Watersheds Committee (hereafter referred to as "The District") does not approve of any clear-cut harvesting techniques within the watershed but would recommend instead using selection logging techniques as demonstrated by the previous fire mitigation project off of Munro FSR.
- The District requests that no new **net** road length be added to the watershed and that all secondary / legacy roads be decommissioned upon completion of harvesting. In addition, for every 1km of new road constructed, it is requested that 0.2km of legacy roads be decommissioned elsewhere within the licensee's permitted area.
- Further, the District requests confirmation that any new blocks do not ultimately create a contiguous cleared area greater than 40 hectares (through harvesting adjacent to a previously cleared area).

If the points above (and any others that are noted during the discussion) are endorsed by Council, staff will prepare a response to Ntityix outlining the District's concerns and requests by the noted deadline of May 16th.

It is important to note that in past, Ntityix have shown themselves to be stewards of the watershed through selective logging blocks and reclamation of legacy logging roads; one of the primary sources of sedimentation into the creeks. Also, there are no proposed blocks within the Peachland Creek watershed in 2023.



Figure I – Mapping attached to Information Sharing Package. Tan colored shapes denote 2022 blocks, green colored shaped denote proposed 2023 blocks.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

District of Peachland.pdf – Introductory letter for 2023 Ntityix Information sharing package

CP60 Lacoma Lake.pdf – Map showing proposed cut areas near Lacoma Lake

CP72 Pennask.pdf – Map showing proposed cut areas near Pennask

CP73 HiddenCr.pdf – Map showing proposed cut areas near Hidden Creek

2022-05-10 WFN Referral Response.pdf – Referral response from 2022 Information sharing package

REVIEWED & APPROVED BY Joe Creron, CAO