

**DATE:** February 19, 2020

**FILE:** 5600-01/CVRW

**TO:** Chair and Directors  
Comox Valley Water Committee

**FROM:** Russell Dyson  
Chief Administrative Officer

Supported by Russell Dyson  
Chief Administrative Officer

*R. Dyson*

**RE: Bevan Industrial Lands Proposed Development**

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### **Purpose**

This report provides information about the Village of Cumberland's (the Village) proposed development of the Bevan Industrial Lands (Bevan Lands), part of which are located in the Comox Lake watershed.

### **Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer:**

This report is for information purposes only.

### **Executive Summary**

#### *Issue/Background*

- The Village's Bevan Lands consist of approximately 500 hectares situated along Bevan Road approximately 2.5 kilometers north of the Village core. The lands are currently primarily owned by Comox Timber Ltd.
- In 2016, the Bevan Lands were rezoned to allow industrial use. During the rezoning process, the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) submitted comments on the Official Community Plan (OCP) zoning bylaw amendments, including recommendations to ensure consistency with the recommendations of the Comox Lake Watershed Protection Plan. These comments were not addressed by the Village.
- In July 2019, the Village released a Request for Proposals for consulting services for the creation of a Bevan Industrial Lands Conceptual Master Plan to use in the promotion and/or attraction of industrial development and/or investment in the Village.
- In October 2019, a stakeholder workshop was held to gather input for the conceptual master plan. CVRD staff from Planning Services and Engineering Services were in attendance. The briefing from this workshop, as well as the workshop's outcome summary document, do not mention or address the concerns raised about industrial use in the Comox Lake watershed that were expressed by CVRD staff in attendance.
- In November 2019, Village staff presented this project to the Comox Lake Watershed Advisory Group, where concern for this industrial project in the drinking watershed was again expressed. To date, none of the published materials or maps from this project acknowledge that it is taking place within the Comox Lake watershed which supplies drinking water to 45,000 people in the Comox Valley.

#### *Concerns*

- Many industrial processes and activities allowed under the existing zoning use materials and create wastes that are incompatible with drinking water and present a risk for water supply contamination.

- Due to the proximity of the Bevan Lands to the lake intake for the Comox Valley water system, currently under construction, there will be very little opportunity for dilution, settling or in-lake processes to mitigate any contamination or runoff from the Bevan Lands.
- The area is currently unserved for water and wastewater. On-site septic disposal presents a risk of contamination of groundwater if not properly implemented and monitored in the long-term. Also, in general an industrial park is not compatible with on-site septic.
- Storm water management will be critical for source water protection. Stormwater will need to be highly treated and directed away from Comox Lake; without adversely impacting the ecological health of neighbouring water bodies. Ongoing monitoring of the effectiveness of these measures will be required in perpetuity.

*Policy*

- The CVRD Regional Growth Strategy, Goal 5 policy 5B-4 requires that, “Where development is proposed in a watershed of a water supply lake that is controlled politically by one jurisdiction responsible for approving development within the watershed will formally consult with the jurisdictions receiving water from the watershed”. This has not yet occurred. The CVRD would like to engage in formal consultation with the Village to mitigate concerns regarding source water protection.
- The Village’s OCP also contains strong language supporting the protection of drinking water sources, including Comox Lake.

*Path Forward*

- The CVRD will work with the Village to ensure that concerns regarding potential harm to our source drinking water from industrial development in the Comox Lake drinking watershed are addressed.
- Mechanisms to manage stormwater, drainage and runoff should be put in place to ensure protection of groundwater and surface water. Wastewater should be treated and disposed offsite.
- Allocation of resources by the Village toward detailed assessments and monitoring of groundwater and surface water, in perpetuity, will help ensure that these protective mechanisms continue to be effective in the long term.

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