



THOMPSON - NICOLA REGIONAL DISTRICT

Notice of Information Meeting – Stump Lake Water Levels

Wednesday July 18, 2018

Summary of a Public Meeting held at Stump Lake, BC on Wednesday, July 18, 2018 commencing at 4:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Director Randy Murray Electoral Area “M” (Beautiful Nicola Valley – North)
Trevor Bohay, Sarah Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource
Simon, Darren Bennett Operations & Rural Development (FLNRORD)
Brad Bushill Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure (MOTI)
Barry Zunti Department of Fisheries & Oceans Canada (DFO)

STAFF: Mr. S. Gill, Chief Administrative Officer
Mr. R. Storie, Director of Community Services
Mr. A. Krause, Manager of Planning Services
Mr. J. Tomlin, Emergency Services Supervisor

Approximately 30-40 members of the public

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Meeting was called to order by Electoral Area “M” Director, Randy Murray at 4:00 P.M. with introductions given to stakeholders and staff present.

Overview of Weather and Water – Forest Lands and Natural Resource Operations (FLNRORD) provided by Trevor Bohay

Widespread flooding was observed across the southern portion of the Province in 2017 and 2018. We saw an unprecedented flooding in 2017, as a result of a high snowpack and rain on snow. We also saw an unprecedented snow year in 2018 – for this area, the snowpack was measured at 156% above normal. The water storage within Stump Lake has continued to increase. On May 11, 2018, Stump Lake was 1.430 m from spilling. On July 14, 2018, Stump Lake was 1.360 m from spilling, with much of this attributed to rains in June and the beginning of July. As Judy Guichon indicated at our last meeting, Stump Lake appears to be on a 25 year cycle of water spilling.

Meetings

At the previous meeting held at Stump Lake on April 20, 2018, the TNRD had limited knowledge of high water, and ability to move the water without understanding the impacts of temporary movement out of the lake. There was little knowledge around the natural outflow of the lake and the requirements of Section 11 of downstream users. TNRD was able to provide some level of assurance, looking at moving water temporarily by use of hoses, and pumps in an emergency situation.

The high water event in 2018 has provided the TNRD with the opportunity to determine what the natural flow of water is, what mitigative strategies could be successful and what properties are impacted.

- A survey was conducted by a private surveying company that indicated when water levels reach 746.1 m the lake will spill over the natural outflow. With natural or artificial spillover of Stump Lake, the Guichon Ranch/Ducks Unlimited infrastructure and lands would be impacted. As is currently the situation, a number of residents on Nicola Lake and the Nicola River (particularly in the City of Merritt) would be impacted.
- A digital geo-terrain model was also completed by a survey company to provide aerial information and an elevation line of 746.1 meters relative to properties around the lake.
- The TNRD also had the opportunity to review the extent the impact at 746.1 m would have on residents by doing a property by property assessment. Through Emergency Management BC (EMBC) funding, the TNRD spent approximately \$35,000 to gather this information and on response coats.

The TNRD now has a better understanding of the impacts, and with this information we are in a position to present three (3) options for residents to consider.

Option 1 – Status Quo - do nothing

The water will rise to 746.1 m before naturally spilling over the structure past the south end of the lake. By allowing the water level to rise to 746.1 m before natural outflow, we were able to do a risk assessment of all properties. This assessment determined that two (2) primary residents, twelve (12) boathouses/accessory structures as well as septic systems would be directly impacted. The TNRD would continue to engage in emergency response, and would provide sand, sandbags, pump impacted septic tanks, and ask residents to move assets of any value to higher ground. The TNRD was able to determine with the assistance of EMBC (and other agencies) that there is significant liability to move water by way of pumps, syphons or dam structures to downstream users.

Department of Fisheries and Oceans requires through the *Fisheries Act* Section 35 Authorisation for anyone that kills fish, permanently alters fish habitat or destroys fish habitat. This includes riparian fish habitat above the high water mark on private property. Individuals, landowners, local governments, and government agencies (like Ministry of Transportation and Highways) are all required to go through the required processes to ensure that fish are not killed or fish habitat is not destroyed.

Option 2 – Section 11 Application – Excavation of an Earthen Structure

The purpose of this option is to reduce the natural water level of 746.1 m to a lower level by way of excavation of an earthen structure at the end of the lake.

To obtain an approval for the Section 11 application process, the cost would be in the range of \$100,000 outside of any cost mitigated work to be done on a “natural” control structure to the south end of the lake. The Section 11 application process is subject to an adjudication by FLNRORD and the DFO. As part of the study, the downstream impacts need to be assessed. It is estimated that an additional \$50,000 might be required to upgrade two control structures on the Guichon Ranch. Currently there are one hundred (100) parcels of land to

be included in the service establishment; however, the numbers could be reduced if the study concludes a smaller service area is required (and conversely an increase in parcel cost would occur).

Option 3 – Pursue Water Storage License for Control Structure

The purpose of this option would be to build a water control structure at the south end of the lake. The water control structure would be classified as a dam. To undertake this study, it would be in the range of \$100,000 to conduct. An application of a Water License to FLNRORD would be required, and again results of the application are appealable by any member of the public. It is estimated that an additional \$50,000 might be required to upgrade two control structures on the Guichon Ranch. The estimated cost to build and include the downstream impact would be approximately \$900,000, with an annual operation of the dam at approximately \$12,000 per year.

Both Option 2 and Option 3 are timing related. The creation of a service area would not be completed until July 2019 with funding not available until 2020.

Section 11 or Water Storage License applications can take up to two (2) years to complete. The application for a Section 11 or Water Storage License would be done in 2021, with adjudication by FLNRORD and DFO (depending on results) if successful and not appealed in 2022/2023. Section 11 and Water Storage License processes are appealable.

FLNRORD indicated the probability of success of a Section 11 or Water Storage License are low.

Process

Options 2 and 3 are subject to the steps listed below:

1. Late 2018 - Create a local community association or society to establish a service area to secure funding for those properties who would benefit from a controlled water level;
2. 2019 - Create an established Service Area. Begin study for Section 11/Water License to FLNRORD;
3. 2020 - Complete study for FLNRORD, if the service area is successful;
4. 2020/2021 - Adjudication process for Section 11/Water License. Decision made by FLNRORD is appealable. Appeals can take 1-3 years for completion; and
5. 2022/2023 - Works to be completed if the appeal is successfully upheld.

Costs

For Option 2: to assume a Service Area for all 100 properties, a onetime cost of \$1,500 per parcel would be required. The cost of the study would be in the range of \$100,000; however, costs could be higher if the service area is less than the listed 100 properties. It is estimated that an additional \$50,000 might be required to upgrade two control structures on the Guichon Ranch.

For Option 3: there would be a onetime cost of \$1,500 to undertake studies and upgrade Guichon Ranch structures. To complete Stump Lake capital works, a water control structure,

at approximately \$9,000 per parcel would be required with an annual maintenance cost at \$120 per parcel per year.

The magnitude of work required for the study and Section 11 application would be in the range of \$100,000. The implementation of the capital works could be approximately a million dollars.

The general sentiment of the public after the meeting was both Options 2 and 3 not be pursued until all property owners were informed of the process and costs. The public was appreciative to TNRD and stakeholders for providing the options and probability of the options laid out in the meeting.

Director Murray indicated that if residents were interested in forming a society, to pursue option 2 or option 3, to please get in touch with him as soon as possible.

Follow Up

TNRD will review signage regarding boat speeds and wakes, at boat entry points (at forestry side).

Below are links to the Maps:

Survey Elevation Overview Map click [here](#)

Stump Lake Overview Map click [here](#)

Planet Mine Rd Properties Map click [here](#)

Please note that these are large files, and they may take several seconds/minutes to load.

No Further Emails with water levels will be disseminated until the fall if required.