



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 16, 2007**

November 15 Board Meeting Highlights

Barkerville circle route proposal to be further reviewed; Bear Lake Wildfire Protection Recommendations; Willow River to vote for sewer and water design study;

PRINCE GEORGE, BC –

The Board of Directors for the Regional District of Fraser Fort George want to see more research before committing their support to a circle tour route being proposed by the Barkerville Heritage Trust. The Barkerville Heritage Trust is advocating for a circle tour route using the Purden Lake Road as a means to increase tourism visitation to the site and the northern BC region overall.

“While the Board is supportive of the concept and views Barkerville as a critical component to Northern BC tourism, we would like to see more consultation with stakeholders in the region, as well as more research on the impacts of the proposed route on communities who rely on the tourism traffic that Barkerville generates,” says Board Chairman Art Kaehn.

The Board has directed administration to work with Barkerville Heritage Trust to assist with further consultation with stakeholders and determine if funding opportunities exist for undertaking a regional traffic flow study.

The Regional District of Fraser Fort George undertook a study to address the wildfire threat around the Bear Lake community as a result of extensive mountain pine beetle infestation. At its November meeting, the Board was presented with a number of recommendations resulting from the Bear Lake Wildfire Protection Plan.

Some of the key recommendations include fuel management (harvesting) of dead lodgepole pine close to the community; enhancing the Regional District website to outline fire risks and proactive steps homeowners can take to Fire Smart their homes; incorporating building setback bylaws for communities at risk; and purchasing a portable emergency sprinkler kit capable of protecting 50-100 homes.

The Board voted to review the recommendations and directed administration to apply for funding through UBCM to prepare a prescription for the Bear Lake Community Wildfire Protection Area.

People in the community of Willow River will be going to the polls to vote whether or not to fund a study to determine accurate costs and issues related to constructing a sewer and water system. The referendum will occur in early 2008, and if successful would add an additional \$250 to the taxes of each property. The in depth design study would be an important first step to possibly bringing a community sewer and water system to Willow River.

Concerns with water and sewer issues in Willow River have been investigated in the past. In 1988 a water system feasibility study was carried out by the Regional District in conjunction with an engineering firm. A referendum was held in August of 1990, but the proposed project was defeated.

There is a renewed interest in establishing a sewer and water system in Willow River as a result of concerns over the safety of the drinking water and the failing of sewer systems in the area.

At a Glance:

Building permits

A total of 486 permits have been issued so far this year for the Regional District of Fraser Fort George; 55 more than were issued for the same period last year. 85 single-family dwelling permits valued at \$19,740,000 have been issued.

Community Grants

The Board approved \$25,730 in Community and Recreation Grants to the following:

- Association des Parents Francophone de Prince George for cultural workshops
- Reid Lake Community Association for hall roof repairs
- Pineview Recreation Commission for building addition expenses and event expenses
- Bear Lake Recreation Association for Food Safe course and Wildfire Protection meeting expenses
- Shell-Glen Improvement Society for Volunteer Appreciation Christmas party

For further information, please contact
Reneé McCloskey
Manager of External Relations
Regional District of Fraser Fort George
(250)960-4453