



February 9, 2018

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sechelt clarifies District's position regarding logging in Sandy Hook residential neighbourhood.

Sechelt, BC - The District of Sechelt does not have any legal authority over the land in Sandy Hook that is now classified as Private Managed Forest. As the District receives numerous inquiries about the property, further clarification is provided here for citizens.

The timeline of events is as follows:

- In 2016 160 trees were cut down on private property in violation of municipal bylaws.
- An investigation by Bylaw staff resulted in 160 charges laid against the property owner and the logging company.
- Those charges are now in litigation.
- The property owner had the property reassessed by BC Assessment as a Private Managed Forest.
- Under this new designation the property owner now has a Managed Forest Commitment with the Private Managed Forest Council to log the property legally.
- The reclassification occurred without any consultation with the District of Sechelt.
- Despite frequent requests for information, the District has no information on any requirements regarding geotechnical surveys, community consultation or a work plan for the property.
- The District no longer has any authority in this matter and all control over the land falls with the Private Managed Forest Council, a corporation appointed by the Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development Contacts to uphold the Private Managed Forest Land Act.

The reclassification of the property from Rural Residential to Private Managed Forest has resulted in a change in the property assessment value from \$3,929,000 to \$152,400. This is a loss to the District tax base of \$3,776,600 and an annual revenue loss of \$8,782.

Mayor Bruce Milne stated, "We share the concerns of our Sandy Hook citizens regarding the possible impacts on their properties and District infrastructure should the land be compromised as a result of the logging. We also have concerns about the safety of our citizens during the logging process due to increased vehicle traffic and the potential for mud slides."

The District will continue to press the Private Managed Land Council, the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development Contacts and our MLA to address our community's concerns.

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