

December 2, 2021

To: Mike Sosnowski, RDEK Electoral Area A; Stan Doehle, RDEK Electoral Area B; Dean McKerracher, Mayor District of Elkford; Ange Qualizza, Mayor City of Fernie; David Walks, Mayor District of Sparwood

Re: **Galloway Lands Residential Subdivision**

Elected officials take the oath of public office, in part, to protect the values of its citizens for current and future generations. Community values are typically expressed after extensive and thoughtful consultation in plans such as the Elk Valley Official Development Plan. I've contributed extensively to these processes over the decades as a resident of the Elk Valley and it is clear what the majority of my neighbours care about. I implore you to deeply consider these articulated values when making your decision to amend our Official Plan and change zoning thus allowing the Galloway Lands Rural Residential (Estate Subdivision) proposed by Banff/Canmore-based investors and developers.

**People of the Elk Valley value fish and fishing.** To have healthy fish populations, fish need undisturbed, clean, clear, cold, aquatic habitat to spawn, develop and overwinter. Lizard Creek, which flows along the north boundary of this proposal is relatively undisturbed by human development. If we want fish recruitment into the Elk River for residents and visitors to our region, we need to prioritize limited development of this tributary. The proposed Galloway estate subdivision will disturb riparian habitat, will add increased sediment from impervious surfaces like roads, and risk septic contamination to groundwater thus polluting Lizard Creek. Keeping the forest on the landscape healthy and growing also enhances resilience of the entire region to climate change effects like slowing down runoff of heavy rains in intense convective cells like we experienced this fall.

**Elk Valley residents value wildlife.** Hiking throughout the Elk Valley and paddling the Elk River, I am thrilled and inspired by the wildlife diversity and abundance. We have healthy wildlife populations of carnivores like grizzly and black bear, and wolves, ungulates like elk and moose, threatened birds like Great blue herons and Northern goshawk, unlike in other parts of Canada and the World. So that current and future generations get to see these animals, and respecting their inherit right to thrive and make a living, we must share our space with them. Wildlife need corridors to travel and connect, places to raise babies, home range during the seasons, in places that do not have people 24/7. The Galloway estate subdivision will have a dense population with of 74 largely secondary-homes with dogs, street lights, roads, traffic, and all the things that exclude wildlife. These mansions will be filled with people escaping Banff, Canmore and Calgary because they have destroyed the types of values we in the Elk Valley still enjoy.

**Elk Valley residents value good stewardship of the land.** Community stewards like the Fernie Rod and Gun Club and Elk River Alliance to name a few, along with local

residents have participated in stewardship activities in the Lizard Creek drainage to enhance fish habitat, study wildlife corridors, map aquatic health and collect water quality data. We know how healthy and special this watershed is to not only Lizard Creek but the mainstream of the Elk River. The Galloway estate development will severely compromise fish habitat and water quality in Lizard Creek as well as terrestrial wildlife habitat. Don't be fooled by the developers promise conservation covenants - most are in undevelopable land, legal requirements and private lots with few resources to monitor and enforce. An estate subdivision of 74, 2-5 acre lots, is 'paving paradise' and we will never get this natural landscape back.

**Elk Valley residents value recreation.** This private land under its current Rural Resource zoning has offered residents the opportunity to cross country ski, hike, bike and wildlife view since it was last logged in the 1980s. Additionally trail amenities have been enhanced and stewarded by both the Fernie Nordic Centre and Fernie Trails Alliance. By developing an estate subdivision, recreational value is seriously degraded.

What I and many Elk Valley residents are asking is for you to stand with us, holding local values at the forefront of your decision making. As you ponder your vote, did you take local office to represent the monetary values of outside developers from Banff, Canmore and Calgary or do you first and foremost represent your local constituents. Together, we work hard with you to protect these above stated community values for current and future generations. In your heart, as we honour these community values, the Galloway Land is priceless and must not be squandered for the rich and entitled.

Respectfully,

Lee-Anne Walker, 40 year resident of the Elk Valley and RDEK Area A