

May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Dear Board of Directors and our Trusted Mayor Ange Qualizza

I first came to Fernie in 1981. For over 40 years we have seen many changes mostly due to the influx of people some good some not so great. We are lucky enough to have 2 acres of land in Baynes lake area as well as a place in Fernie. My son works for Teck in the Mine driving truck and we are not against development. I not only echo but fully support all the concerns that have been voiced. I have additional concerns noted below. When I am not working I spend my time recreating like everyone else on the stunning trails Fernie has to offer. There has been a noticeable increase in traffic to Fernie over the past few years which has impacted the trails due to over population. Having more green space and protecting the space we already have for recreation so we can continue to build trails for people to recreate on should be a priority. As more and more people come to Fernie to bike/hike/run/snowshoe and cross country ski Fernie will need more green space to accommodate. This will be important not only for tourism but the mental and physical health of all.

I understand that BC Parks has shown an interest in this Land and expanding the Fernie Provincial Park. This area is a unique part of a microclimate and naturally connected to Fernie Provincial Park. This option is far more valuable, sustainable and honorable than supporting a development that benefits a small, elite group of people and carries risks with it that may have negative long-term impacts on not only the environment, financially and to its residents.

Having the RDEK's support and collaborate with BC Parks to keep this land protected, and I challenge the RDEK with another option which is to explore acquisition of this land themselves, are both options that are more in line with your Strategic Plan than approving this land for development.

When looking at your Plan that the RDEK has committed to I would like to highlight the following Priorities that the RDEK has identified and question if this development falls into any of your priority areas? Whereas the option of protecting this valuable area and turning it into a Park falls into multiple Priority areas noted below:

**Under the Focus on Economic health it states that RDEK supports innovation, stewardship and partnership to support a healthy regional economy.**

**-PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT** • Our natural beauty and clean environment are core regional strengths and we will ensure that they are conserved and protected. • We ensure natural areas are available for our residents, and look for opportunities to support access.

**-SUPPORT FOR RECREATION** • We have outstanding recreational assets and will focus on maintaining them for residents and tourists. • We will be judicious in the addition of recreational assets, ensuring they are sustainably managed and meet the needs of our residents.

**Under the Focus of Governance it states that RDEK will continue to build on our culture of principle and fact-based decision-making.**

**-BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS**(We work collaboratively with our member municipalities)  
**-PRINCIPLED DECISION MAKING** (We think regionally.)  
**-ADVOCACY** (We proactively advocate on behalf of our residents on issues affecting our region.)

On your website it states that RDEK has the responsibility for protection of health and safety of its citizens and for protection of the environment. How is this development in the best interests of residents? Is the RDEK living up to the Priorities of the Strategic Plan and responsibilities by approving a development that benefits a developer and small elite group of people that could afford to live there?

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for the RDEK to advocate and protect this land by looking at other options other than development. This is listening to your residents that you represent and that live here. It is what they want and better meets their needs as well as for future generations to come versus a development that benefits a few. It is a challenge worth taking on for the greater good. Make protecting this area one of your project areas.

How do you want to be remembered? What kind of Legacy do you want to leave behind?  
I thank you for listening and hopefully considering other options than development.

With gratitude,  
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