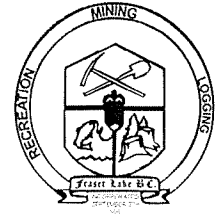


Village of Fraser Lake



March 13, 2024

Fraser Lake is a strong and resilient community.

Through the years, the Village of Fraser Lake has experienced the benefits and downturns associated with communities largely supported by the resources industry. It's a fact that industries come, and industries go – but a community can last forever with the right people.

Shortly after the BC Natural Resources Forum in January of this year, West Fraser made the surprise announcement they would be permanently shuttering the Fraser Lake Sawmill, and that over 170 team members would be dismissed. While the numbers of impacted workers have improved through placement opportunities in other facilities, and many able to bridge to retirement, the fact remains that Fraser Lake's sawmill and our final industrial employer is closing.

West Fraser's involvement in the community provided wages to many members in the communities but over the years the work became unreliable, and the resources taken from our community has caused a strain to the resources available to the community, our First Nations neighbours, and the BC taxpayers.

On February 29, 2024, the Village hosted a Town Hall, inviting the impacted communities to come together and share openly about our pathway forward and how, collectively, we work towards the common goal of supporting the best affordable place in BC to live, raise a family, and play.

Our community members brought forward several valuable points and ideas, but one we heard several times over was the need for our timber, OUR RESOURCE, to stay in the Timber Supply Area and our community. West Fraser should not have the ability to port this product to another area to support their business operations and capacity while the future of the region is in dire need of economic potential. That resource, as previously noted, belongs here for the benefit of Fraser Lake and the First Nations in the region.

It is apparent that the community desires for the community to explore resiliency opportunities for the long-term benefit of Fraser Lake. Council was pleased to support our administrative team as they begin recruiting for our new Economic Development Officer. We know this brings positive opportunities to the region.

While we are encouraged by the Budget 2024 announcement of contribution levels for the Northwest Resource Benefit Alliance and appreciate the positive impacts this will have for communities like ours, we need new projects, new opportunities, and an impactful vision for the future of British Columbia's economy.

We would like to thank our community for their earnest contributions and emotional outpouring of support. We would also like to thank the regional Mayors and elected officials that attended to the Town Hall in support:



Village of Fraser Lake




- Burns Lake Mayor, Henry Wiebe;
- Houston Mayor, Shane Brienens;
- Vanderhoof Councillor, Brian Frenkel;
- Regional District Director, Mark Parker; and
- MLA John Rustad.

Our community has all the right people to build a bright and sustainable future. We just need partners in Government and industry that recognize the communities strength and value.

While we were encouraged to see many of you attend the first Town Hall, we look forward to increased participation in the months ahead. After all, this is our collective future.

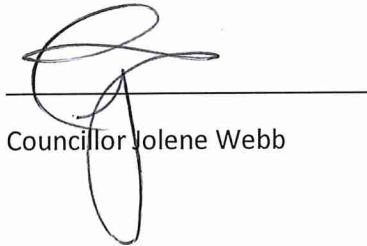
Sincerely,



Mayor Sarrah Storey




Councillor Joe Jenkinson



Councillor Yolene Webb



Councillor Craig LePoidevin



Councillor Audrey Fennema



White Swan Capital of the World

