



## DIRECTOR REPORT

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To: SRD Board

From: Mark Baker, Chair

Date: March 3, 2023

Subject: North Island Natural Resources

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### Background:

North Island communities have been traditionally resource based and the resource industries continue to support many families with well-paying jobs, benefits, and a vast array of community supports/donations. Over the last several years, the voices of the north island communities have struggled to resonate with policy makers at both the provincial and federal levels regarding the continual erosion of support for resources-based operations. Many municipalities have attempted to impress upon governments about the importance of forestry, aquaculture, mining, and other sectors continue to articulate yet their voices continue to go unheard.

With the continued lack of meaningful consultation, representation, and consideration of the north island economies, several sectors are facing the real possibility of reduced employment or outright closures and direct job losses which would devastate north island communities. This concern has now been realized with the most recent decision (February 2023) to close of all salmon farms in the traditional territories of the Laich-kwil-tach and Klahoose First Nations. As stated by the BC Salmon Farmers Association, "The decision to not issue salmon farm licences in the Discovery Islands area is devastating for all coastal communities who rely on the aquaculture sector".

With over 55,000 residents represented within the two Regional Districts (SRD and RDMW) it is critical that our voices are both heard and respected. Without a united and consistent voice, the risk to a significant portion of the north island economy is real and, with that, the loss of jobs, families, and financial stability for the north island economy. As we were elected to be the voice for our residents, a united voice is now more necessary than ever. The following motion is recommended to provide a strong, north island voice, to both Victoria and Ottawa.

The Strathcona Regional District and Regional District of Mount Waddington represent residents and communities across northern Vancouver Island where forestry, aquaculture and mining are the cornerstones of a healthy and vibrant Northern Vancouver Island economy.

Proposed motion:

1. THAT the report from the Chair be received.
2. THAT the Board support the creation of a Natural Resource Committee as a standing committee, and

THAT the Regional District of Mount Waddington be invited to appoint an equal number of its directors to the Committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Baker', is written over a light beige rectangular background.

Mark Baker  
SRD Chair  
(Mayor, Village of Sayward)