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EAST SIDE PLANNING INITIATIVE

Bissett, Manitoba

ISSUES IDENTIFIED

Mining

Boom and bust scenarios are typical of mining communities. The goal for Bissett is to continue the viability of the mine and to carry on with exploration to see potential benefits for future mining development such as gold. However, there are too many restrictions on mining activity to make exploration viable, i.e. Atikaki Wilderness Par, Nopiming Provincial Park

Recommendation: Mining

- Lessen restrictions in designated parks and reserves, corridors and river systems that have an adverse affect on the great mining potential of the area.
- Continue and promote exploration in the area.

Tourism

There is an increase in lodges being developed up north by non residents. As a result, the money doesn't stay in the region.

The Parks' initiative has hurt us because it is imposing controls on the area. Access is being restricted from this end of the park and the park itself takes out a big chunk of wilderness. With so many restrictions, the region could be used exclusively by people from outside the area. There should be local access without additional restrictions. We would like the river to stay the way it is. We want to continue to use the river as we have always done and to promote its potential for eco-tourism.

There are pressures to develop remote cottages at the expense of local communities. The day use of the area by local people would be affected. Why not develop the subdivision within Bisset for cabin development? There are 23 lots 100' x 125' at a reasonable cost and suitable space available to develop on Rice Lake. Bissett strongly opposes any new remote cottage allocations due to local availability, pressure on small lake locations and eventual local restricted use.

There is a lot of potential for tourism in the area because of its' locational advantages. Recognizing the potential of the rivers would be essential for the economic well-being of the area. This area could be a destination point for summer and winter sports such as canoeing, fishing, camping and ski doing. As a means to diversify the economy, tourism could be promoted year round. Bissett is self sufficient and can provide lodging, food, air service, groceries, fuel and gas, lumber, equipment contractors. Is the government going to consider the role of local communities in the development of tourism? There would be more sustainable economic development if tourism went through Bissett. We have seen an increase in tour trips.

Recommendations: Tourism

- Develop and promote year round tourism
- Continued upgrading of PR #304
- Develop and promote cottage potential in community
- Put a freeze on cottage development on remote lakes or opening up additional sites on remote lakes
- No exclusive use of water ways, lodges and parks.

Economy

Access to Jobs

Access to jobs is an issue. Students from outside, for example, are brought in to work in the industries. Bunkhouses are needed for the people from out of town. We need to be made aware of the opportunities. There will be no future for the young people if there are no jobs. Local hiring should be a priority and local contractors should be able to bid and apply for procurement opportunities.

Access to logging is a problem because of the restrictions placed on decommissioned roads. Jobs have been lost in the logging sector. People (contractors) are out of work because of the decline in logging opportunities. Fire fighting through the Department of Conservation could be staggered, as well.

Recommendation: Economy

- More consultation for area employment and contract opportunities i.e.: Department of Highways, Department of Conservation, Hydro, Tembec

Consultation

We want to know what is going on and to be kept informed about what is occurring in the region. We are skeptical about how honest the process is; that the decisions have already been made. The

timing for these consultation meeting have not been good. There is not much activity here in the winter. People have gone away to find employment. There are currently approximately 90 people living here. At the meeting in the fall, only 20 people showed up. People are interested in getting the feedback from these meetings. Some who are currently away, were the ones asking the questions.

Recommendation: Consultation

- Consultation from all departments on all local and area concerns not just within the established community boundary
- Government needs to acknowledge and take serious local knowledge.

Other Issues:

Environment

Proper clean up of the Wanibigow River system needs to occur. There is erosion of the river banks. There is concern about the garbage and waste management.

Community Plan

There is a community plan for Bisset but it may be outdated in regards to population. Statistics indicate there are approximately people; 7 over 65; 27 between 50 and 65; 38 between 18 – 49 and 22 children.