

Request for Decision

File No: P 108 510

Date March 3, 2020
Author Karen MacLeod, Planning Coordinator
Subject Proposed Lake Windermere Groyne Navigation Markers

REQUEST

Consider the proposed installation of Navigation Marker Piles for the Lake Windermere Groyne.

OPTIONS

1. THAT Public Services and Procurement Canada be advised that the RDEK supports the proposed installation of Marker Piles for the Lake Windermere Groyne as outlined in the January 2020 correspondence.
2. THAT Public Services and Procurement Canada be advised that the RDEK does not support the proposed installation of Marker Piles for the Lake Windermere Groyne as outlined in the January 2020 correspondence.
3. THAT Public Services and Procurement Canada be advised that while the installation of permanent navigation markers for the Lake Windermere Groyne is generally supported that the RDEK has concerns about the timing and short duration of the engagement opportunity, the aesthetic impact of the proposed pile markers and lack of information provided with regard to alternative options and environmental considerations of the proposed works.

RECOMMENDATION

Option 3.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

The Lake Windermere groyne (or weir) is located at the north end of the lake as it narrows into the Columbia River channel. The groyne narrows the navigable portion of the channel for motorized watercraft to the far eastern extent of the channel. Seasonal fluctuations in water levels can make the rocks and old marker piles difficult to see and the groyne is a known hazard for experienced boaters on the lake. In recognition of the hazard informal signs and buoys have been placed to identify portions of the groyne by local user groups.

Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) is proposing the permanent installation of a single line of untreated wood marker piles spaced at 20 metre intervals along the 200 m expanse of the groyne. The western extent of the navigation channel is proposed to be marked with a red triangular day beacon to ensure visibility for travel from both directions. The correspondence identifies that the proposed works has considered minimizing annual maintenance costs and opportunities for protection of aquatic habitat. The installation of the marker piles was originally scheduled for summer 2019, but was deferred to allow for engagement with First Nations, local government and interested local organizations.

As a known boating hazard the installation of permanent hazard markers is desirable. Permanent markers would ensure that all boaters are aware of the presence of the groyne. As presented by PSPC, the information package received only presents the preferred option for the markers with an assurance that due diligence will be undertaken from an environmental perspective. The present 'engagement' opportunity does not allow for stakeholders to provide comment on the preferred type of navigation marker in consideration of local concerns or aesthetic considerations, nor does it provide information on environmental impacts or mitigation opportunities. The current engagement process is more reflective of a 'notification of proposed works' than a meaningful opportunity for stakeholders to provide comment on the appropriate navigation markers based on social, environmental and aesthetic considerations for Lake Windermere.

CONSULTATION

Advisory Planning Commission F & G

The APC reviewed the referral as an information item and discussed alternatives to the proposed markers and the aesthetics of the proposed piles.

Lake Windermere Management Committee (LWMC)

The Lake Windermere Ambassadors in their role as LWMC provided the following comments:

- Aesthetics of the project in a part of our community, also the entrance to Invermere, that is currently undergoing a project to clean up the area and make it a more desirable neighborhood.
- In the price analysis has the lifespan of an untreated wood (Douglas Fir or Larch as indicated in the cancelled project) pile marking in water been considered?
- We have not been given access to any of the environmental analysis documents as are referenced several times in the plan. While we understand an Environmental Assessment was not deemed necessary for this project we would like access to review what considerations were taken when deciding on this plan
- In the reports provided we were not given adequate information on all the options considered (removal, alternative markings) to fully understand and make an informed opinion on which method would be best. We would request further information on research completed in this project
- Under proposed work 'To alert boaters to the western side of the navigation channel, the eastern pile will include a red triangular day beacon, visible whether approaching upstream or downstream'. While difficult to understand I don't believe this conveys the correct placement of the project, safe passage is provided on the eastern side of the groyne.
- The proposed project is very dismissive of annually removed markings, while this is what occurs with every other marking on Lake Windermere. For example, the Ambassadors have three buoys in the Taynton Bay area to indicate a Slow/No Wake zone that we install every spring and remove every fall.
- Many residents around Lake Windermere are seasonal residents, requesting all input before the end of February will not capture this larger audience who will be greatly affected by the project and deserve a chance to have their voices heard.
- One of the Shuswap Councilors also expressed concerns that they are expecting to be engaged but have not yet, they have concerns related regarding the potential impact to the historical salmon beds that fall immediately downstream from the project location.

The Lake Windermere Ambassadors have independently forwarded the above comments to PSPC in response to the referral.

District of Invermere

The District of Invermere's Council also received the PSPC letter and has passed the following resolution:

Resolution #20-0208

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receives Public Service and Procurement Canada's letter and additional information for Council's review and consideration with respect to the proposal of permanent installation of marker piles along the Lake Windermere Groyne;

AND THAT Council receives and supports the review comments made by the Lake Windermere Ambassadors regarding the marker pile installation;

AND FURTHER THAT Council direct Staff to respond to PSPC indicating support of the Lake Windermere Ambassadors comments.

SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Lake Windermere Management Plan

Goal 2: Ensure the continuation of diverse and safe recreational opportunities.

- Ensure that a range of motorized and non-motorized activities can safely occur on the lake.
- Encourage and promote safe boating practices and codes of conduct.

Goal 3: Encourage and support the development of a community that will work together to respect and balance the various interests on the lake.

- Continue to involve the public in planning and management processes.

Attachments

- Public Works & Procurement Services Letter
- Appendix A - Proposal Summary
- Construction Plans