

FW: Questions about request for public input on Granite Bay VQOs

From: Fettes, Lesley FOR:EX <Lesley.Fettes@gov.bc.ca>
To: Gold, Cody FOR:EX <Cody.Gold@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: February 24, 2023 8:52:03 AM PST
Attachments: Letter to Lesley Fettes re- VQO revision Granite Bay area 2023-02-23.pdf
For the file.

Lesley Fettes | District Manager, Campbell River
250-850-1904

From: David Broadland at Focus Magazine <focuspublish@shaw.ca>
Sent: Thursday, February 23, 2023 5:51 PM
To: Fettes, Lesley FOR:EX <Lesley.Fettes@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: leslie Campbell <focusedit@shaw.ca>
Subject: Questions about request for public input on Granite Bay VQOs

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Dear Lesley,

I am responding to your request for public input with regards to a revised visual quality objective for an area near Granite Bay on Quadra Island.

Please find attached a PDF file as an initial comment.

Sincerely,

David Broadland
Director, [Discovery Islands Forest Conservation Project](#)

Attachment:

February 23, 2023

Ms Lesley Fettes
District Manager
North Island Natural Resource District

Dear Lesley,

I am responding to your request for public input with regards to a revised visual quality objective for an area near Granite Bay on Quadra Island.

You are proposing that the area under consideration would be changed to “Retention” from the previous category. But what was the previous category?

On our publicly available map of the Ministry’s visual quality objectives for Quadra Island, all of the area under consideration was mapped as “Parks and Protected Areas” (see below). Anyone looking at this map when it was first offered for public comment would have concluded the viewshed was protected. Indeed, given the high scenic value of this area, it would be my contention that the creators of that map (the CR District office?) intended to give that area the highest level of visual quality possible, which is “Preservation”. Sloppy mapping instead categorized it as “Parks and Protected Areas”.

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Perhaps because of that ambiguity, TimberWest has recently logged 5 cutblocks in the area. See the aerial image below from RESULTS Openings that shows the 5 logged cutblocks (two show as unlogged, but they have been logged).

I note that one of the logged cutblocks even has an approval that would have allowed an area to be cut right to the edge of a small bay. Why? A log dump?

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Why were these cutblocks approved in an area for which the mapping implied the highest possible VQO? Why wasn't TimberWest required to at least use a high level of retention or smaller cutblocks?

This has all the appearance of someone shutting the stable door after the horses have already bolted. The ministry appears to be taking this late action in the hope of rectifying a mistake that has already been made. But what mistake was made? Surely this area, the gateway to a beautiful provincial marine park, should have been protected from *any* visual or ecological degradation?

Please provide a thorough explanation for why this downgrade is being floated.

I would also request that your staff carefully examine the current mapping of visual quality objectives for Quadra Island so that it is clear, in every instance, what the applicable objective is. If the District's map is riddled with such ambiguities, there's surely work that needs to be done.

If that requires you to extend the period of public consultation, I hope you will be willing to do that.

Until this matter is cleared up, I would expect you to ensure that no further degradation of this important viewshed occurs, including no further cutting in approved cutblocks.

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The view above is from 2019, before the last two cutblocks had been logged

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This view is also from 2019, before the last two cutblocks had been logged

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The view above shows the close proximity of the cutblocks to Granite Bay and marine waters. This area is currently mapped as “Parks and Protected Areas” in the map of VQOs for Quadra Island.

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This is a view of the highest clearcut, close to the boundary of Small Inlet Provincial Park

I understand that this letter will become part of the public record on your request for public input. Good. I will complete my comment as soon as you provide an explanation for this downgrade and ambiguity-free mapping of VQOs for Quadra Island. I suggest you make this information publicly available at the earliest possible time.

Thank you in advance for your kind consideration of my questions and request.

Sincerely,
David Broadland
Director, Discovery Islands Forest Conservation Project