

# West Kelowna council concerned about Jackpine Lake development plans

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Further development at a fishing resort on Jackpine Lake is concerning West Kelowna officials, as the lake forms part of the reservoir system within the district's watershed.

Jackpine Lake lies approximately 10 kilometres outside the district, west of Crystal Mountain Resort.

The lake is considered an upland reservoir.

Planning supervisor Brent Magnan said the proposal before the Integrated Land Management Bureau is for the conversion of a lease on the existing site and extending the lease for 30 years.

The intention is to put up eight seasonal cabins for the use of people who own a portion of the resort.

The Regional District of Central Okanagan requires a 30-metre development setback from upland reservoirs. Magnan said West Kelowna staff have concerns regarding source water protection for Jackpine Lake and other reservoirs.

He added there are concerns that building may impact the potential for future reservoir development improvements on the site.

Coun. Bryden Winsby said even though West Kelowna may promote themselves as a tourist destination, facilities like those offered at the Jackpine camp are few and far between.

He noted the concern of potential damage to the watershed is an obvious one.

"I want to be satisfied those concerns are real," said Winsby

He added those familiar with the lake know there are other places around it to camp.

"If we're concerned about potential contamination to the water, be aware there is ability elsewhere

to camp, and as much or more contamination could occur from increased use.”

Magnan noted the lease area has been well maintained, and the applicant also operates a nearby forestry recreation site.

Coun. Carol Zanon noted she has been to the site several times, and agreed the property management was of the highest standard one could possibly hope for.

“He is a true steward of the environment up there.”

She noted there is no substantial change in what is proposed, with eight cabins replacing eight existing campsites.

She said the upgrades would allow septic disposal of waste instead of outhouses.

Zanon added there has been an application in for eight years to raise Bear Lake by seven metres, and Jackpine Lake is not be seen as the primary upland reservoir in the watershed.

Jackpine is a shallow lake that sometimes goes quite dry in the winter, with a high degree of colour in the water making processing more expensive.

Timing of any dam-building and raising of water levels at Jackpine would depend on West Kelowna’s water development master plan, a plan that is still under way.

Director of engineering Gary O’Rourke said the district should protect their water resources now if they can, rather than having to go backward in future.

Mayor Doug Findlater said the camp is well-known as a good steward of the lake.

Over the longer term, West Kelowna has to protect an asset originally fostered by the Westbank Irrigation District.

“I’m concerned about a long-term tenure, like 30 years, something that would encourage the applicant to do a lot of investment.”

Findlater said if it turns out the district requires the upland reservoir, it becomes more complicated to terminate the arrangement with the resort.

He said a partially completed water supply and demand study by the Okanagan Basin Water Board seems to be showing that climate change may not necessarily decrease the amount of precipitation in the region, but there would be more compression of precipitation into seasons, and more water storage capacity may be required.

Council voted to wait on recommendations until hearing from the resort owner.

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