



Halalt First Nation

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Municipality of North Cowichan
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North Cowichan, BC, V9L 6A1

February 12, 2026

Via email: Rob.douglas@northcowichan.ca
Council@northcowichan.ca

Attention: North Cowichan Mayor Rob Douglas and Council

RE: Official Community Plan Amendment at 8150 & Section 20 Hidden Hills Road

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing on behalf of Halalt First Nation regarding the "Early Consideration – Official Community Plan Amendment at 8150 & Section 20 Hidden Hills Road." At this time, Halalt has significant unresolved concerns with the proposal and is not in a position to support the amendment moving forward.

The stream running through the project area is part of the Bonsall Creek watershed and Aquifer 172, which is integral to the Chemainus watershed. The area contains riparian zones and environmentally sensitive ecosystems. The floodplain, estuary and aquifer are immensely valuable to Halalt for hunting, fishing, trapping, harvesting, and other cultural and sacred purposes, and important village and residential sites are located across the watershed. These interconnected systems remain essential to the wellbeing of our people and our responsibilities as stewards of the land and water.

Halalt also has grave concerns regarding fire protection for this proposed development. We understand that North Cowichan Fire Department staff have raised serious challenges about the lack of an accessible water source for firefighting in this area, noting that response times and water availability would not meet expected standards. If a fire were to occur, Halalt holds an existing agreement with the Fire Department allowing access to Halalt's groundwater to support fire suppression efforts. This raises serious outstanding issues for our community: a development without adequate water supply would result in increased dependence on Halalt's aquifer, risking its depletion in a fire event. Given the cultural, ecological, and drinking-water significance of this aquifer to our community, this presents severe concerns that remain unresolved.

Halalt holds constitutionally protected Aboriginal rights and title throughout this region, and continues to advance watershed and aquifer-protection initiatives that sustain our people. Any land-use changes that interact with these sensitive systems must therefore be approached with caution and with full consideration of Halalt's long-term interests and stewardship responsibilities.

Given the significance of this matter, Halalt respectfully requests the opportunity to attend and speak at the next Council meeting where this OCP amendment will be discussed. Please advise us of the date and time so that we may participate.

Thank you for your attention and for maintaining open dialogue with Halalt First Nation.

Huy ch q'u,



Sulsimutstun (Chief James Thomas)

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