

Four Winds Environmental Management Regional Solid Waste and Recycling Facility



Keeseekoowenin Ojibway Nation
Treaty No. 2 - The Riding Mountain Band



August 7, 2018

Dear Citizen,

This letter is part of our ongoing consultation process regarding the Four Winds Environmental Management Regional Solid Waste and Recycling Facility, which will serve the Municipalities of Clanwilliam-Erickson and Harrison Park. We hope to answer questions you might have about this important capital project.

The Need for a Regional Waste Site

In the area served by the proposed Four Winds site, there are already six landfills, and none of them comply with the new provincial regulations. Most are reaching capacity, most are near surface waterways which drain into the Little Saskatchewan River, none were designed to minimize leaching toxic material into groundwater, and they all contain unknown materials, some of which may be hazardous. Only three percent of waste is presently diverted by composting and recycling, which is well below the provincial average, meaning that a disproportionately large amount of material is ending up in the landfill.

The Four Winds Proposal

We intend to cap, seal, and monitor the six current landfills, and convert the sites at Onanole, Sandy Lake, Newdale, and Erickson to transfer stations (temporary waste holding facilities). Waste will be hauled from these transfer stations to a central, state of the art facility, which complies with all environmental regulations and represents a vast improvement over our current system. We intend to achieve 60 percent diversion by composting and recycling, meaning that more than 2,000 of the estimated 3,346 tonnes currently landfilled each year will be diverted. Surface water and groundwater will be protected by careful design of the new facility.

Who is Four Winds?

Four Winds Environmental Management is a partnership between the Municipalities of Harrison Park and Clanwilliam-Erickson, and Keeseekoowenin and Rolling River First Nations. The partnership formed out of a desire to do better with regard to solid waste management, by designing a proper facility for the realities of today and the future, and by using economies of scale to make substantial waste diversion feasible. Capital funding for the Four Winds project is largely coming from Indigenous Services Canada, and ongoing operational expenses will be shared by the parties involved.

Where Will the Four Winds Site be Located?

The Four Winds Environmental Management site will be located at NW 4-17-20 WPM, north of the Little Saskatchewan River valley on Provincial Trunk Highway 250. We commissioned a comprehensive analysis of all the land within the partnership area, in order to determine which locations met the surface requirements of the new provincial regulations. Three preferred land parcels were identified which would meet the requirements with minimal modification, and after approaching the landowners to gauge their interest in selling, we undertook subsurface geotechnical investigations on two of the parcels. A satisfactory purchase arrangement could only be negotiated with one landowner, using an independent real estate professional as negotiator.

Next Steps

We are currently working on a business plan, so that Four Winds Environmental Management is able to operate as an arms-length organization, independent of the municipal and First Nations governments whose representatives will comprise its board of directors. The engineered site design will be completed in the fall of 2018, with the intention that construction will occur in spring and summer of 2019. Environmental licensing from Manitoba Sustainable Development will be pursued once the design is completed. A conditional use order will also be required. We hope that the Four Winds site will be operational in the fall of 2019.

Conclusion

The Four Winds project was undertaken in response to a need to find new ways to deal with our solid waste. Most of our current landfills are approaching capacity, and there is no cost-effective way to decommission and replace six small landfills, especially not in a way which complies with the new regulations and protects the environment.

This partnership has always been about bringing our communities together in order to protect the water that flows across our political boundaries, to divert as much waste as we can before it goes into the ground, and to reduce the costs borne by individuals through economies of scale. We have a time-sensitive opportunity to build a state of the art facility using funds from the federal government, and using this opportunity will benefit us all in the long run.

Our goal is to protect the environment and water quality in the most cost-effective way possible.

Sincerely,

The Four Winds Environmental Management Board

To learn more about the project, please come to any of the following info sessions:

- *August 22, 12:00 – 3:00 p.m., Sandy Lake Community Hall;*
- *August 22, 5:00 – 8:00 p.m., Clanwilliam-Erickson Municipal Office;*
- *August 23, 5:00 – 8:00 p.m., Onanole Recreation Centre;*
- *August 24, 5:00 – 8:00 p.m., Newdale Drop-In Centre.*