



COMMUNITY RATIFICATION PROCESS SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to provide a summary of the process that will be used to approve the Iskut Band Land Code and the Individual Agreement. It is important for Iskut Band members to review this to understand how we will be voting.

CONFIRMATION BY VERIFIER

Before the community vote can happen, the Verifier must confirm that the Community Ratification Process (CRP) document and the Land Code are consistent with the *Framework Agreement on First Nations Land Management* and the *First Nations Land Management Act*.

Before the CRP can be verified, Council will pass a Resolution and provide the Verifier with an electronic copy of the document.

This resolution must be passed at least 65 days before the first regular voting day. The Verifier will then have 30 days to review these documents to confirm that they are consistent with the *Framework Agreement on First Nations Land Management* and the *First Nations Land Management Act*.

Who is the Verifier?

The Verifier is someone who is responsible for monitoring the Land Code process. They are jointly appointed by the First Nation and Canada to provide an independent and third-party review. It is their job to make sure that all of the proper steps are taken when developing and ratifying the Land Code.

LAUNCHING THE VOTE

Once the Verifier confirms that the Land Code and the CRP are consistent with the *Framework Agreement on First Nations Land Management* and the *First Nations Land Management Act*, Council will pass a Resolution to set the voting day. This resolution will also include the following:

- confirm the Ratification Officer
- confirm the list of eligible voters
- confirm that an electronic voting option will be provided
- approve the text of the Land Code and the CRP

Who is the Ratification Officer?

The Ratification Officer is appointed by Council to oversee the voting process. This person must be knowledgeable about overseeing voting processes and they must also have no personal interest in the outcome of the vote.



- order that the Ratification Vote be held to determine if the community approves the Ratification Documents
- set the regular voting days and the advance voting day
- confirm the wording of the ballot question

THE BALLOT QUESTION

When Iskut Band members go to vote on the Land Code. The ballot question will look something like this:

DUTY OF THE RATIFICATION OFFICER

Ballot Question

Do you approve:

- The Iskut Band Land Code, dated XX for reference; and
- The Individual Agreement between Iskut Band and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada?

EXPLANATION

A “YES” vote means that the Iskut Band will manage its own reserve lands under the Iskut Band Land Code.

A “NO” vote means that the Iskut Band lands will continue to be managed by Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada under the Indian Act.

The Ratification Officer is responsible for overseeing the process for the ratification vote and will have all the powers that are needed to carry out that responsibility. This includes the power to appoint one or more assistant Ratification Officers to help with the process.

Assistant Ratification Officers may be given any of the duties set out in the Ratification Process except:

- the initialing of ballots
- the deposit of the mail-in ballots in the ballot box
- the counting of ballots

All of these duties must still be done by the Ratification Officer.



NOTICE OF VOTE

A notice will be posted at least 30 days prior to the first voting day. This notice must be placed in public places where it can be read by the Iskut Band members. The Verifier must also publish the notice in one or more newspapers at least 28 days before the first regular voting day.

The notice of vote will contain the following information:

- the date, place and time of the poll on the regular voting days
- the date, place and time of the poll on the advance polling day
- the ballot question
- the procedures for registering in the Land Code vote
- instructions for getting a copy of the *Framework Agreement on First Nations Land Management*, Individual Agreement, Iskut Band, the Background Documents and the CRP
- the name, office address and telephone number of the Ratification Officer
- information on options for voting

PRELIMINARY PROCEDURES

The Ratification Officer and the Band Manager will work together to get everything ready for the vote. This will include:

- designating the polling place
- preparing enough copies of regular ballots and mail-in ballots
- preparing sufficient copies of the secrecy envelopes, the identification envelopes and return envelopes
- preparing sufficient copies of the voting instructions
- obtaining a sufficient number of ballot boxes
- providing for a designated voting area at the polling place(s) such that a registered voter can mark a ballot free from observation
- providing a sufficient number of lead pencils and blue or black ink pens for marking the ballot
- ensuring that samples of the ballot question are posted or available for examination at the poll
- ensuring that a Commissioner for Taking Oaths or Notary Public will be available as required



INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS

All eligible voters will receive the information that they need to make an informed vote. The following information will be sent to each Iskut Band member on the list of eligible voters:

- a copy of the Notice of Vote
- a copy of the Land Code
- a summary of the Land Code
- a copy of the Individual Agreement
- a summary of the Individual Agreement
- a summary of the *Framework Agreement on First Nations Land Management*
- a summary of the *First Nations Land Management Act*

Who is an Eligible Voter?

An eligible voter is a Iskut Band member who is 18 years old or older on the date of the Land Code vote.

This information will be sent to the voter's last known address and will be mailed at least 30 days prior to the first regular voting day. Eligible voters may choose to receive this information electronically.

In addition to the information provided in the mail-out there may also be:

- visits at the homes of Eligible Voters
- telephone contact with Eligible Voter
- information meetings at the Iskut Band administrative offices and other appropriate places
- such other information activities as Council may be deemed appropriate

INFORMATION TO THIRD PARTIES

There may be people or companies that currently hold an interest (such as a lease) in Iskut Band reserve lands. It is important for that they are also informed about the Land Code. At least 30 days prior to the first regular voting day, the following information will be provided to them to ensure they have the information that they need to understand Land Code:

- the date of the Ratification Vote
- a communiqué from the Iskut Band explaining the effect of the Ratification Vote
- a summary of the *First Nations Land Management Act*



- a summary of the *Framework Agreement on First Nations Land Management*
- a summary of the Land Code
- the name, office address and telephone number of a person who may be contacted for purposes of obtaining copies of the Background Documents or further information about the management of Iskut Band Reserve Lands

Iskut may also wish to share information about the Land Code with local municipalities, regional districts, First Nations, or any other entity operating in the area.

REGISTERING TO VOTE

Each eligible voter must register for the Land Code vote with the Ratification Officer. This is so that the Ratification Officer knows that intend to vote. This will ensure that they receive all of the documents that are needed to cast their vote.

The Ratification Officer will send to each eligible voter a registration package at least 30 days before the first regular voting day. This package will be sent to the voter's last known address and will include:

- instructions about the electronic registration process
- a voter registration document and a prepaid return envelope
- a mail-in voting package

This mail-in voting package will include:

- voting instructions
- a pre-folded and initialed ballot
- a ballot envelope
- a prepaid return envelope

An eligible voter who wishes to vote must register with the Ratification Officer. There are two options to register for the vote:

- 1) completing and signing a voter registration document in front of a witness and return the voter registration document to the Ratification Officer by mail, courier, hand delivery or facsimile
- 2) completing registration through the electronic registration process