

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO

MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE DRINKING WATER WATERSHED PROTECTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

HELD ON THURSDAY, MARCH 31, 2011 AT 12:30 PM
IN THE RDN BOARDROOM

Present:	Director J. Stanhope	Chairperson
	Joe Burnett	Director Electoral Area A
	David Bartram	Director Electoral Area H
	Gisele Rudischer	Director Electoral Area B
	Deb Ferens	Islands Trust Representative
	Gilles Wendling	General Public Representative (South)
	Gordon Buckingham	General Public Representative (North)
	Pat Lapcevic	Ministry of Environment
	Faye Smith	Environment Community Representative
	Alan Gilchrist	Academic Community Representative (VIU)
	Ken Epps	Forest Industry Representative
	Shelley Bayne	Hydrogeology Representative
	Mike Donnelly	Manager of Water Services, RDN
	Christina Metherall	Drinking Water/Watershed Protection Coordinator, RDN
	Bonaventure Thorburn	Water Purveyors' Representative
	Greg Keller	Senior Planner, RDN
	Domenico Iannidinaro	Forest Industry Representative
	Cavan Gates	Special Projects Assistant / Recording Secretary, RDN
Regrets:	Oliver Brandes	Academic Community Representative

CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 12:30.

MINUTES

MOVED J. Burnett, SECONDED D. Bartram, that the minutes of the Drinking Water Watershed Protection Advisory Committee meeting of November 23, 2010 be adopted. CARRIED

REPORTS (verbal)

Electoral Area A OCP Update – Water Conservation Development Permit Area (G. Keller)

G. Keller reviewed the Electoral Area A Official Community Plan (OCP) with the Committee. The following points were noted:

- ? A groundwater vulnerability assessment was prepared and public consultation was carried out; community concerns concentrated on quantity and quality of groundwater.
- ? The draft OCP has been scheduled for third reading.
- ? The OCP has been linked with work done on Drinking Water Watershed Protection.
- ? DWWP staff provided research for the OCP and aided with public outreach. The OCP includes a section on DWWP policies for further research, advocacy, rezoning conditions and rainwater management.

- ? A Development Permit Area (DPA) is included in the OCP for all land above the Yellowpoint aquifer which requires a hydrogeological assessment and the installation of a rainwater harvesting system compatible with indoor use for new buildings.
- ? Future opportunities for collaboration were determined to be the alignment of groundwater studies with planning projects like the OCP review, and the sharing of information between departments.
- ? This OCP may serve as a template for other OCPs.

Community Surface Water Quality Monitoring (C. Metherall)

C. Metherall reviewed the Community Surface Water Quality Monitoring project. Past surface water monitoring activities include the Ministry of Environment's (MOE) water quality objective attainment monitoring on French Creek and the Englishman River as well as monitoring by community stewardship groups such as Streamkeepers. Proposed actions include working with existing community stewardship groups and providing them with high quality equipment, training and a long-term data collection strategy. The RDN will provide the equipment and pay for quality control and quality assurance. The MOE will provide training, technical resources and data storage in their environmental monitoring system. This year's schedule includes an introductory workshop in May, training in early August, low flow data collection in late August and fall flush data collection in October and November; stewardship groups have indicated their interest in the program. The RDN has yet to discuss obtaining water quality data for hatcheries on the Little Qualicum River from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Ground Water Quality Survey – Cassidy and South Wellington (C. Metherall)

C. Metherall reviewed the Ground Water Quality Survey project in Cassidy and South Wellington. Approximately 600 letters inviting participation in the sampling project were distributed to property owners, of which approximately 100 answers were received. There will be a report published after the results are analyzed. The forestry companies have not been approached for participation in the project.

Gabriola Island – Well Locates (C. Metherall)

C. Metherall outlined the current situation on Gabriola Island regarding locating wells. Presently, the well driller that performs the majority of work on the island does not submit any well records creating record gaps for recently drilled wells. In response, the RDN is proposing a "Well Records for Groceries" incentive program whereby new well record submissions would enter the property owner into a draw for a gift certificate for a grocery store; details have yet to be determined.

Observation Wells – Phase 1 Complete (M. Donnelly)

Mike Donnelly reported on the status of the expansion of the provincial observation well network in the RDN. Money was received from senior levels of government for new wells. Eleven new wells are in place or in progress and four were drilled in March. The new well in the Town of Qualicum Beach is located close to the intersection of the highway and the river; it is an old municipal well that is not being used due to poor quality. These wells will be used as part of the provincial well network.

GSC Project Update (P. Lapcevic)

P. Lapcevic provided an update on the Geological Survey of Canada's (GSC) project in the region. It is a collaboration between the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, the RDN, the Cowichan Valley Regional District and the Geological Survey of Canada to assess the groundwater resources in the region. The new observation well on Holden Corso Road was cored as it was drilled and the cores were sent to the GSC. Overburden cores of other wells were cost prohibitive. Provincial staff have been reinterpreting pump test records to allow for chronological comparison. A graduate student from the University of Calgary is studying groundwater surface water interactions on the Englishman River. The following points were noted:

- ? There is a new GSC superficial map of the region.
There is not yet a monitoring well on the Timberlands Road Right-of-Way.
- ? The well drilling rig that can do overburden cores regularly visits Vancouver Island; they need to be contacted to discuss the possibility of cost reduction by piggy-backing jobs when they are on the island.
- ? A report on groundwater vulnerability is forthcoming and workshops will be presented to planning staff .
- ? The groundwater vulnerability maps are available for all of Electoral Area A on iMap BC.
- ? In the event of a 7.0 or higher magnitude earthquake surface infrastructure would be damaged, but the actual well yield would be minimally affected.

Team WaterSmart 2011 (C. Metherall)

C. Metherall outlined the planned actions for Team WaterSmart. There are eight workshops focusing on rainwater and greywater reuse scheduled for the spring. The workshops are advertised in local newspapers and attendance statistics will be maintained. In addition, the irrigation review program will be implemented on a larger scale in 2011.

Watershed Snapshot Report – Public Comments (C. Metherall)

C. Metherall reviewed public input on the Snapshot Report; there were twelve submissions by members of the public. Items that were not adequately addressed in the report were summarized and presented to the Committee for discussion. Unconfirmed and potential issues will be added to the list of concerns in the report. After the comments are finalized, the report will be submitted to the Board of Directors for approval.

It was also noted that resources from salmon enhancement projects may be used to monitor water quality; a DFO community advisor may be able to provide assistance. In addition, the school climate monitoring network is being utilized for this project.

Composting Toilets for Primary Use (M. Donnelly)

Discussion postponed to a later date.

RDN Water Services Website Demonstration (C.Metherall)

C. Metherall demonstrated the new RDN Water Services site including the web based GIS Water Map. The following points were discussed about the website:

- ? Climate change information will be linked to the Energy and Sustainability page.
- ? The GIS database is independent.
- ? Staff are currently working on a protocol for updates.
- ? There will be dedicated technical support as the DWWP function funds a portion of a GIS position.
- ? The fish bearing watercourses layer could be added.

Upcoming Technical Committee Meeting to assist with:

Terms of Reference for Water Budgets

Present information and information gaps need to be assessed.

Phase 2 of the Observation Well Program

To be discussed at the next meeting of the Technical Committee.

Water Resource Indicators

More data needs to be collected about which indicators to use and how to assess them including which ones are already used and assessed by different organizations. The following suggestions were made:

- ? The indicators and any information gaps to be added to the web map.
- ? Snowpack could be used as an indicator as well as average daily temperature.
- ? Community water systems and aquaculture operations may have information on raw water quality that would be useful.
- ? Groundwater extraction could be estimated based on type of development and quantity of development.
- ? Work with water suppliers to determine water usage.
- ? Impermeable surface area is not necessarily a good indicator of watershed health if good rainwater management practices are in place.
- ? Rainwater catchment could be measured if new installations are recorded.
- ? Need to limit the number of indicators so that the data can be properly analyzed.

NEW BUSINESS

The Committee agreed to a presentation by the Mid Vancouver Island Habitat Enhancement Society at the next meeting of the Drinking Water Watershed Protection Advisory Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Stanhope thanked the committee for their contributions noting in particular and how often the importance of water is raised as a concern by residents.

Chairperson