

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO

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

HELD ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2010 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
	Lynne Magee	Vancouver Island Health Authority
	Faye Smith	Environment Community Representative
	Alan Gilchrist	Academic Community Representative (VIU)
	Al Chatterton (Alternate)	Forest Industry Representative
	Ken Epps (Alternate)	Forest Industry Representative
	Shelley Bayne	Hydrogeology Representative
	John Deniseger	Registered Professional Biologist Representative
	John Finnie	GM, Regional and Community Utilities, RDN
	Mike Donnelly	Manager of Water Services, RDN
	Christina Metherall	Drinking Water/Watershed Protection Coordinator, RDN
	Paul Thompson	Manager of Long Range Planning, RDN
	Bev Farkas	Recording Secretary, RDN
Regrets:	Oliver Brandes	Academic Community Representative
	Bonaventure Thorburn	Water Purveyors' Representative

CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 12:30 and introductions were made.

BUSINESS ARISING

That the Drinking Water Watershed Protection Advisory Committee terms of reference be amended to include a representative from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.

MINUTES

MOVED D. Bartram, SECONDED J. Burnett, that the minutes of the Drinking Water Watershed Protection Advisory Committee meeting of September 21, 2010 be adopted. CARRIED

REPORTS

Drinking Water Watershed Protection Work Plan Discussion and Next Steps. (C. Metherall)

C. Metherall reviewed the Watershed Snapshot Report 2010 and the Action Schedule with the committee. The following points were discussed:

Region-wide Recommendations

- ? The term “aquifer” is used often in document – there is a need to refer to surface water as well as groundwater.

Program 1(3)

- ? Opportunities for rainwater harvesting are different for indoor or outdoor use and existing or new building – the province is presently working on changes to legislation.
- ? Financial institutions do not presently recognize rainwater as a viable water source and this is reflected in loan availability.
- ? It is important to make connections between Green Building program and Drinking Water and Watershed Protection rainwater capture initiatives.
- ? Promoting rainwater harvesting may encourage development in areas with limited water resources.

Program 2(4)

- ? Some indicators from the Regional Growth Management Advisory Committee (2006) will be used as some are very pertinent, especially those relating to groundwater.

Program 2(5)

- ? Budget structure will be developed with professionals.
- ? Partnerships with other organizations, including stewardship groups, VIU, other government agencies will be imperative when refining budgets.

Program 2(7)

- ? Information will be gathered in areas with no water meters (such as Electoral Area B) by asking residents to volunteer to have meters installed.

Program 2(8)

- ? Inform stewardship groups about what data is required so they can provide it.

Program 2(9)

- ? Water purveyors have already shown great interest in participating.

Program 2(10)

- ? Also involve other agencies and landowners.
- ? Need municipalities to be involved in program, City of Nanaimo may have an interest in partnering on Nanaimo River.

Program 2(14)

- ? Concern for impact of development on aquifers. There are areas where we have concerns (ie. Surfside, Fairwinds) and this list should be expanded.
- ? Developers are looking at focused area – assessments need to be on much broader spectrum and look at long-term impacts to surrounding properties.
- ? Rezoning is the best way to influence development – subdivision conditions can be set in DP areas and OCPs have to show requirements for DPs.
- ? MOE has for many years encouraged rainwater management in LWMP as it is viewed as waste. Regional districts do not have stormwater functions and work with municipalities to address rainwater management impacts.

Program 7(23)

- ? A snowpack station may now be monitoring on Mt. Arrowsmith.

Individual Watershed Recommendations:

Watershed #5 South Wellington to Nanoose

? Note on maps all golf courses or do not show any on maps.

Watershed #6 Nanaimo River Watershed and South Area A

? Ask Nanaimo Airport to share their well monitoring data.

Watershed #7 Gabriola Island

? Concerns about septic and water quality – recommend adding as Rural Water Quality Improvement Program Pilot Project.

The next step will be to amend the Watershed Snapshot Report 2010 with suggestions from this meeting and present as information to the RDN Board. At that time staff will recommend the municipalities be invited to attend DWWPAC meetings as unofficial members to better understand the focus and direction of this committee.

After presenting the report to the Board it will be presented to the public via news releases, website, Regional Perspectives and letters to those who participated in workshops for their input. The report will then go to the Board for final approval.

Drinking Water Watershed Protection Program Updates (C.Metherall)

C. Metherall reviewed programs such as the WellSMART program and the Irrigation Review program which were very successful in 2010.

Geological Survey of Canada Program Update (P.Lapcevic)

P.Lapcevic informed the committee that the Geological Society of Canada has been working on characterizing priority aquifers across the country and has received 3-5 years funding to do a characterization project on the island for the Nanaimo Lowlands which covers the area from Mill Bay to Deep Bay. The well data base has been updated and they are mapping the area. They will potentially focus on Parksville and Qualicum Beach and hopefully do some predictive modeling. Updates will be brought to the Committee.

Englishman River Groundwater – Surface Water Interactions Study (G.Wendling)

G.Wendling noted that residents provided wells for monitoring in 2008. In 2009 six data loggers were in place and data was collected over a one year period, indicating the variation of water levels, the rate at which levels drop and when the levels drop. It shows how quickly and when recovery takes place. Comparisons can take place after the 2010 results are calculated. There are now 12 data loggers and 26 monitoring wells. It has been confirmed that Little Mountain is a recharge area. This work is being done with funding from the Royal Bank of Canada and the RDN, who has supplied money for public outreach and the data loggers. G. Wendling reported that there will be progress reports on the interaction between groundwater and surface water.

Surface Water Quality Monitoring Project (J.Deniseger)

Standard and biological monitoring is being done between late August and the end of September. Six sites in Englishman River Watershed are being monitored at summer low flow and fall/winter rainy period. Five sites in the French Creek Watershed are being monitored although there is not enough water in some parts of French Creek to do biological monitoring. Attainment monitoring is done for one year at a time and checked again after 5 years. TV reporters were invited to tape some of the biological monitoring.

First Nations Consultation (J.Finnie)

J. Finnie indicated that there are up to eight First Nations within the RDN with an interest in activities taking place on RDN land, however there are only three First Nations that have reserves in the RDN. It was suggested that an information package about the Drinking Water Watershed Protection Plan and the Committee be sent to Snuneymuxw, Qualicum and Nanoose First Nations with an offer to make a presentation to their councils. This will be discussed further with the CAO of the RDN.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Stanhope thanked the committee for their contributions noting the importance of this committee to the RDN Board. The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 pm. The next meeting TBA.

Chairperson