

## BRIEFING NOTE: MOSQUITO CONTROL BUDGET REQUIREMENT

### SUMMARY OF ISSUE

Past Boards have been supportive of a 6 year plan of annual increases in program budgets by approximately 15% per year to get this service to a position where the annual budget is being fully funded from current year revenues and not from reserves. 2019 is the final year of that 6 year phase in. We are now recommending that it be further increased by 2 years (for 2020 and 2021) due to recent floodwater years requiring significant mosquito control efforts. Reserve funds are important for the mosquito control program due to the potential for unforeseen requirements (e.g., new treatment sites identified) or for the level of treatment needed in floodwater years, which are becoming more regular along the Fraser River.

### BACKGROUND

A decade ago, the mosquito control program had accumulated a substantial surplus due to annual payments received from the Province at that time for potential West Nile Virus control. When those payments ceased in 2011, the surplus funds, held in reserve, were used to offset program costs for several years, allowing the tax requisition to be kept temporarily low. As the reserves got lower, there was a need to increase the tax requisition for this program again to allow the budget to be fully funded from current year revenues.

The Board previously supported a multi-year plan to increase the tax requisition for this program by 15-20% per year from 2014-2019. 2019 was originally planned to be the last big increase year of this 6 year plan.

### DISCUSSION

Floodwaters result in exponentially more nuisance mosquito breeding areas becoming active within the region, and requiring additional control efforts to keep mosquitoes at 'tolerable levels' during those years. When needed, the added treatment costs for these high water years are absorbed by the program's reserves. Due to recent high water years along the Fraser River, including 2018, and the significant mosquito control efforts that were required, there is currently a need to restore program reserves. This is particularly important given forecasts for more frequent high water years along the Fraser River and more extreme flood events.

While the 6 year plan of budget increases has helped to establish a sustainable budget for mosquito control purposes, it is recommended to continue increasing the budget by 15% per year for 2020 and 2021. This would allow for reserves to be restored and to better accommodate the annual fluctuations inherent to mosquito control in this region.

## BRIEFING NOTE – Air Quality Monitoring Agreement

### SUMMARY OF ISSUE

Metro Vancouver serves as the FVRD's service provider, via contract, to operate and maintain the FVRD's air quality monitoring stations. Metro Vancouver is seeking an increase in compensation for its efforts, as the current contract has not been updated for many years.

### BACKGROUND

The Air Quality Monitoring Network in the Lower Fraser Valley includes 29 stations. These stations continuously monitor air and weather parameters. The FVRD currently hosts six stations from Abbotsford to Hope as part of this larger network.

Since 1998, the FVRD has had a contract with Metro Vancouver to provide for the operation and maintenance of the FVRD's stations. Metro Vancouver, who has the staff and equipment to do the technical work required, also provides the same services to other organizations that own air quality monitoring stations in the network, including the Port of Vancouver and the Vancouver International Airport.

Two new stations (in Mission and Agassiz) were added to the network in 2013-2014, but the invoice amounts paid by the FVRD did not change. Cost increase and operational changes of the growing network need to be addressed as Metro Vancouver has been operating the FVRD's stations below cost for many years while still maintaining excellent service and data integrity.

A new Air Quality Service Agreement with Metro Vancouver has been drafted that includes an updated budget.

### DISCUSSION

The long-term partnership with Metro Vancouver on the operation and maintenance of the stations has proven successful, delivering high-quality services to FVRD residents at moderate cost. It would be difficult and very costly for the FVRD to change service providers or consider taking on this responsibility in-house.

To preserve the integrity of the regional Air Quality Monitoring Network as a whole, the FVRD stations function best as a part of partnership with all other stations, of which an agreement with Metro Vancouver affords. Metro Vancouver has full capacity to support this endeavor, including experienced technical staff designated to run the stations and highly-qualified analytical scientists who oversee data management and quality assurance and offer the FVRD this service at a very reasonable cost.

Continuing the agreement with Metro Vancouver, with consideration of more economical compensation, will assure continuity, uniformity, compliance, and high quality of monitoring operations and data management, and will help to reach our goals for cleaner air in the region.

## BRIEFING NOTE: Solid Waste Tonnage Levy

### SUMMARY OF ISSUE

Revenue from the Regional Solid Waste Tonnage Levy is expected to decrease. Action must be taken to secure funding for the Regional Solid Waste Management budget which is solely funded by the Levy.

### BACKGROUND

The Regional Solid Waste Management budget is funded via a waste tonnage fee levy which is applied to all municipal solid waste that is disposed of within the FVRD or leaves the FVRD through a consolidation point (transfer station) on its way for disposal outside of the FVRD.

The levy was first issued via a bylaw in 1999, priced at \$1 per tonne that was used in a combination of general tax requisition to fund the Solid Waste budget. Beginning in 2010 the levy was increased by 10 cents per year and general tax requisition was ceased. In 2014 it reached \$1.65 per tonne, which is where it remains today. The original intention of the levy was also to be an incentive to recycling, yet the fee remains too low to prove effective.

Metro Vancouver's Regional Services Rate (a comparison to the levy) is set between \$5.40 - \$8.52/tonne depending on the size of load (2019 levels). An additional \$5 per load fixed transaction fee is applied independent of tonnage. This fixed transaction fee is not applied in the FVRD.

Fuels costs, value of the Canadian dollar, US landfill fees, MV tipping fees, downturns in the economy and population growth all effect fluctuations in the quantity of waste disposed each year and so the revenue generated by the annual levy.

### DISCUSSION

The new FVRD Source Separation bylaw, due to come into effect in 2020, and the MV Generator Levy which may deter MV waste being disposed in the FVRD or through the FVRD to the Washington State, US, are expected to significantly decrease the levy collected - potentially between \$70,000 - \$135,000.

Options to offset the decrease in levy revenue include:-

- Increase the levy applied to solid waste disposed at facilities within the FVRD
- Fund the service through a combination of levy and general taxation
- Fund the service solely through tax requisition, removing the levy.
- Add a fixed transaction fee

## BRIEFING NOTE – Elizabeth Wildlife Centre Grant in Aid

### SUMMARY OF ISSUE

The Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD) Board supported a regional grant in aid of \$5,000 to Elizabeth's Wildlife Centre in 2018 and asked Staff to bring forward an option for ongoing financial support during the 2019 budget discussions.

### BACKGROUND (excerpt from Elizabeth's Wildlife Centre website)

*Elizabeth's Wildlife Center* was established in 1986, and became a non-profit organization in 1999. Elizabeth Melnick, founder and primary caregiver of the Center, is a qualified registered nurse and wildlife rehabilitator. What first began as a rescue center from her home, expanded into Elizabeth's backyard with construction of aviaries and small housing facilities.

The Center is now a fully functioning, independent facility, capable of handling hundreds of injured/orphaned wild birds and animals. The Center has 4 buildings that serve as care-giving facilities. We have pre-release buildings, and a waterfowl pond for rehabilitation purposes.

Each year we admit over 1000 birds/animals and approximately 50% are fully rehabilitated and released. Each animal that enters our facilities is assessed, given necessary treatment, rehabilitated, and if fully recovered, released to their natural environment. Our goal is to continue our Rehabilitation and Release Program. Our Community Education Program is also an intricate part of the Center.

Tours of the facilities is against government policy. The Center receives over 4,000 phone calls per year with questions regarding situations involving small wildlife that are injured/orphaned. This service is provided during normal business hours, daily from 9 am to 5 pm.

The Center offers a mutually beneficial solution for both animals and humans by providing a permanent and safe place for wildlife to be rehabilitated while at the same time educating the public. This is the only Wildlife Center in the Abbotsford area that provides this service. The Center receives animals from the local police and fire departments, the SPCA, veterinarians and residents of Abbotsford and the Lower Fraser Valley -- serving approximately 200,000 community members. The purpose of the Center is to preserve wildlife. These invaluable animals, whose natural life cycle has been disturbed by human interaction, would otherwise be euthanized.

We evaluate our success by the number of animals released, education evaluation forms, financial support within the community, the number of phone calls received, and volunteer involvement. Our goal is to increase awareness and knowledge about wild animals.

## **DISCUSSION**

The regional grant in aid Program is the mechanism that would provide the Board with the ability to provide ongoing financial support to Elizabeth's Wildlife Centre. This program has been used to provide annual support to the Wildsafe BC program and to provide ad hoc financial support as determined by the Board. This program is funded regionally by all members using the default allocation model of assessed values.

The taxation financial impact to generate a \$10,000 regional grant in aid would be 1 cent for every \$100,000 of residential assessed value. As the business class has a provincially set multiplier of 2.45, the taxation financial impact would be 2.45 cents for every \$100,000 of business assessed value.

## BRIEFING NOTE – WildsafeBC Grant in Aid

### SUMMARY OF ISSUE

The Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD) has hosted the WildsafeBC Program since 2012 with a financial contribution of \$15,000 annually plus in-kind office space. Funding changes to the program have resulted in personnel and structural changes to the program. The 2019 budget includes \$15,000 Grant in Aid with specific deliverables for the program to ensure citizens in the FVRD are well serviced.

### BACKGROUND

WildsafeBC is a provincial program administered by the British Columbia Conservation Foundation (BCCF) which was initiated in 1999, and has grown to over 50 communities around the province. WildsafeBC teaches communities, through active outreach, how to manage wildlife in their neighborhoods and prevent animals from becoming a nuisance or even becoming aggressive. The program is a valuable tool to help inform FVRD residents how to keep themselves safe, and how to keep wildlife safe. The program includes:

- Door to door canvassing in cases of human/wildlife interface issues,
- Presentations to community groups,
- Social media campaigns,
- Attending Community Events with display and education material,
- Developing brochures, and
- School education outreach programs.

Door to door canvassing is largely based on responding to the human/wildlife conflicts reported in to the Provincial Conservation Service.

The Fraser Valley Regional District Board provides a monetary contribution to a maximum of \$15,000 plus in kind contributions of office space, computer, and phone line for the delivery this program.

Over the past several years the funding model from BCCF has been in decline:

	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Total Budget</b>	\$43,010	\$35,627	\$34,571	\$27,405
<b>Ministry of Environment</b>	\$15,000	\$10,000	\$ 9,603	\$10,000
<b>Other Grants</b>	\$13,010	\$10,267	\$ 9,968	\$ 2,405
<b>FVRD</b>	\$15,000 office in kind	\$15,000 office in kind	\$15,000 office in kind	\$15,000 office in kind
<b>People Served</b>	11,000	12,181	8,261	6,500
<b># Positions</b>	3	3	3	1

Since 2015, the number of grants available has also been declining. The most significant piece is the Canada Summer Jobs Grants which, in 2018, was not available. It is anticipated this trend will continue into the future.

In 2018, the program changed with less staffing, but a longer season. Typically the Wildsafe program runs from May-November, but the funding was utilized to have the single coordinator stay on until February. For the Fraser Valley Regional District, this can be particularly helpful as wildlife interface typically continues through the winter months due to the milder weather patterns. One example of this was when the cougar attack occurred at Cascade Falls Regional Park just prior to Christmas 2018, Wildsafe was able to be out in the neighbourhood talking with neighbours, and be out in the park educating public who had questions.

In 2018, with the change in staffing levels, fewer people were reached through the program, however, a change in focus to ensure key events around the region are included would increase numbers of people reached.

## DISCUSSION

The Wildsafe Program is an asset to the residents and visitors to the FVRD. However, as the funding regime changes and the program is reaching fewer people, it is time for a re-evaluation of the program within the District.

While the program does measure successes – people reached, events attended, etc. – the FVRD has not held WildsafeBC to account to with deliverable outcomes to ensure funding is being utilized effectively. In this regard, it is recommended the FVRD hold WildsafeBC to account and set up minimum parameters for which to measure successes for the FVRD. These minimums can provide some level of certainty the FVRD funding (which has now become the major funding partner) is providing benefit to FVRD residents.

At a minimum, the WildsafeBC Program should:

- a) Attend at least 1 event in each of the three largest municipalities (Chilliwack, Abbotsford, Mission) of the FVRD;
- b) Attain a minimum outreach to 10,000 people;
- c) Provide responsive outreach to residents with wildlife/human interface issues.

The minimums can easily be reached by collaborating with the FVRD, focussing on stronger presence at a variety of events, and having strong connections with the provincial Conservation Officers.



## BRIEFING NOTE – Sub-Regional Parks West (Abbotsford/Area G)

### SUMMARY OF ISSUE

The Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD), in partnership with the City of Abbotsford, manages and operates regional parks with the city of Abbotsford and within a portion of Area G – Sumas Mountain. Since the takeover in April of 2018, both the FVRD and City of Abbotsford have a better understanding of the operational requirements of these parks. The 2019 budget represents the first full year of managing, operating and maintaining the parks.

### BACKGROUND

In April 2018, Glenn Valley Regional Park, Matsqui Trail Regional Park, and the western flank of Sumas Mountain transferred management, operations and maintenance from Metro Vancouver Regional District to the Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD). The City of Abbotsford (COA) is operating Glen Valley Regional Park and Matsqui Trail Regional Park under contract, and the FVRD has added the western flank of Sumas Mountain to the operations while continuing to operate the eastern flank. These three parks operate out of a sub-regional service area which includes Abbotsford and a portion of Electoral Area (EA) G.

On June 26, 2018, FVRD directors from Abbotsford and the director from EA G had an initial workshop with staff from both local governments to discuss the vision, opportunities, and priorities for these three regional parks. This budget options presented represent the finding of the workshop.

### DISCUSSION

Presented are four options for the consideration of the Board (Abbotsford and Area G). All budget options respect the reflections introduced by the participants at the June workshop:

- Be fiscally prudent while achieving success
- Jointly identify and prioritize capital improvements
- Collectively determine desired park planning efforts
- Together explore park land acquisition opportunities

The FVRD, in partnership with The City of Abbotsford, has developed the following budgetary options for the Boards' consideration.

Part of the work plan for 2019 involves starting Phase 1 of the Sumas Mountain Management Plan which includes developing a snapshot of what is on the mountain. This snapshot will showcase existing trails, environmentally sensitive areas as well as overlaying cultural sensitive areas from a first nations' perspective. This snapshot will allow a thorough planning process to occur with collaborative efforts with users, first nations, the City of Abbotsford, the FVRD and the province to start to develop a thorough and detailed Sumas Mountain management Plan.



Further work plans include conducting a refresh of Metro Vancouver's Park Management Plans for Matsqui Trail and Glen Valley regional Parks. These plans are dated and need to be updated to reflect the needs of the users and communities as a whole.

Other works include signage updates, survey and data integration and trail upgrades.

### Option #1: Taxation Decrease (1.2%)

Part of the discussion points about taking over Metro Vancouver Regional Parks was the opportunity to manage and operate the parks better and more efficiently. In this regard, the following budget is presented as an overall cost savings to the tax payer.

#### 735 - Sub Regional Parks (West)

##### Revenue

##### FVRD - Funding Requisition

Rentals/Lease	\$	(60,000)
Transfer from Surplus (Buy In)	\$	(111,200)
Taxation	\$	(867,910)
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>(1,039,110)</b>

##### Expenses

Glen and Matsqui	\$	527,900
Sumas Mtn	\$	340,010
Buy In Projects	\$	111,200
Transfer - Capital	\$	60,000
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>1,039,110</b>

Operationally, compared to the budgets provided by Metro Vancouver, the cooperative effort between the FVRD and the City of Abbotsford can operate and maintain the regional parks more efficiently; however, this option is a do nothing, status quo methodology without forward thought, or without building contingency for emergency events such as freshet response of storm damage.

## Option #2: Tax Neutrality 0.0%

Option #2 retains the tax requisition as per 2018 and adds in surplus to be able to respond to un-planned events that may occur within a given calendar year. Events such as the freshet experienced in 2018, or the ice storm of 2016, can play havoc on the regional parks budgets for clean-up, repairs, and/or closures.

### 735 - Sub Regional Parks (West)

<b>Revenue</b>		
<b>FVRD - Funding Requisition</b>		
Rentals/Lease	\$	(60,000)
Transfer from Surplus (Buy In)	\$	(111,200)
Taxation	\$	(878,500)
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>(1,049,700)</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Glen and Matsqui	\$	527,900
Sumas Mtn	\$	340,010
Buy In Projects	\$	111,200
Transfer - Capital	\$	60,000
Transfer – Surplus	\$	10,590
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>1,049,700</b>

Option #2 allows for the build-up of a small surplus to allow for an emergency fund to build in case of extreme weather events such as freshet or ice storm damage.

### Option #3 – Non-Market Growth 3.25% (Recommended Option)

Option #3 captures the non-market growth within the taxation area. Non-market growth is the growth in assessment from new growth within the sub regional area. Within the City of Abbotsford, the non-market growth represents approximately 3.25% of the overall growth of assessed value. In essence, a 3.25% increase in requisition should have no net impact on the taxpayer.

This option allows the FVRD to build up its surplus as in Option #2, but also allows for the start of a land acquisition fund to start.

#### 735 - Sub Regional Parks (West)

Revenue		
FVRD - Funding Requisition		
Rentals/Lease	\$	(60,000)
Transfer from Surplus (Buy In)	\$	(111,200)
Taxation	\$	(907,051)
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>(1,078,251)</b>
Expenses		
Glen and Matsqui	\$	527,900
Sumas Mtn	\$	340,010
Buy In Projects	\$	111,200
Transfer - Capital	\$	60,000
Transfer – Surplus	\$	10,590
Transfer - Land	\$	28,551
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>1,078,251</b>

While there is no specific strategic plan for land acquisition on Sumas Mountain, the FVRD does have its Regional Parks Strategic Plan outlining the criteria for which land acquisition could occur. A formalized strategic land acquisition strategy is anticipated to be an outcome of the Sumas Mountain Management Plan.

The start of the accumulation of funds will allow for the acquisition of land in a timely manner without having to seek loan approvals and, importantly, without going into debt.

Option #3 allows for the building of a surplus for emergency purposes, and initiating a land acquisition fund, without an impact on the taxpayer since the growth in the sub region will effectively pay for the increase in taxation.

#### Option #4 – Tax Increase 6.25%

Option #4 proposes to increase the impact on the taxpayer by an additional 3% across the sub region. Depending on each individual assessment, this percentage may fluctuate slightly. The intent is to start building the land acquisition while a strategic plan is prepared.

#### 735 - Sub Regional Parks (West)

Revenue		
FVRD - Funding Requisition		
Rentals/Lease	\$	(60,000)
Transfer from Surplus (Buy In)	\$	(111,200)
Taxation	\$	(933,406)
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>(1,104,606)</b>
Expenses		
Glen and Matsqui	\$	527,900
Sumas Mtn	\$	340,010
Buy In Projects	\$	111,200
Transfer - Capital	\$	60,000
Transfer – Surplus	\$	10,590
Transfer - Land	\$	54,906
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>1,104,606</b>

For an increase in taxation of \$26,335 representing an approximate 0.07% increase to the overall draft requisition to the City of Abbotsford, the land acquisition fund can start to grow at a rate of approximately \$55,000 per year, opposed to \$28,500 per year presented in Option #2.