

**Core Area Wastewater Treatment Project - Biosolids
FIRST NATIONS ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY
May 2019**

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The Capital Regional District (CRD) has been engaging with First Nations on the Core Area Wastewater Treatment Project since 2006. The CRD signed agreements relating to the project with Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations and is currently negotiating a capacity agreement with the W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council (WLC) which represents the four W̱SÁNEĆ Nations.

Since the beginning of the project, the CRD has provided regular updates to Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations, with a liaison from each Nation meeting bi-weekly with a project team representative.

The CRD has been engaging with the W̱SÁNEĆ Nations on this project since May 2017. An overview of the project was shared at the several of the initial meetings and at the time it was referenced that a decision about where the biosolids would be going after leaving the Residuals Treatment Facility (RTF) was still outstanding.

From minutes of September 18, 2018 with the WLC, the following information was shared at the meeting:

- Biosolids were identified as a residual from the process, and as being part of the project. The plan is to use biosolids as a fuel source, these will not be stored at Hartland. Biosolids will be produced to a Class A level under provincial regulation wherein they could be applied to the land however, under current CRD policy they are prohibited to be used for that purpose.

At a further meeting on October 30, 2018, it was again shared with the WLC that the likely use for biosolids would be as an alternate fuel source. At that time a WLC representative inquired whether there would be any revenue from this product. CRD staff indicated that there would not be any revenue from the beneficial use of biosolids.

On May 6, 2019, the latest information regarding sending the biosolids to a cement kiln in Richmond, BC was presented to the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations. The information shared included:

- Description of where biosolids fit into the bigger picture of the wastewater treatment process.
- Discussion that this is the final piece of the bigger project, and that the biosolids are the product being produced at the RTF, which has been previously discussed.
- Provided a sample of representative biosolids and discussed the general characteristics of the material (dryness, odour, energy content and explosive potential).
- Explained the CRD's procurement process and how the CRD arrived at co-combusting the biosolids at lower mainland cement kilns as the only option that meets all the various constraints (Federal, Provincial, CRD Board). This included a discussion of the CRD's policy against land application of biosolids.
- Described how burning biosolids in cement kilns will have an overall positive impact on the environment, in that it will displace some fossil fuels (coal and/or natural gas) currently used in the process (i.e. greenhouse gas reductions).

- Stated that the CRD will incur costs to implement the beneficial use plan, including transportation of the biosolids to the lower mainland and subsidizing their processing by the cement manufacturers.
- Discussed air emissions in the lower mainland and how the cement manufacturers are confident in their plants ability to meet air quality regulations.
- Provided contact information and location of further information on the Beneficial Use Plan should people be interested <http://www.crd.bc.ca/project/capital-projects/projects/residuals-treatment-facility/biosolids-beneficial-use-strategy>

Feedback was solicited from the Liaisons and no specific concerns were identified at the time.

CRD staff met again with the WLC coordinator on May 14, 2019 on a related matter and it was conveyed again that the current decision for biosolids is to send them to a cement kiln in Richmond, BC for use as an alternate fuel source. The information shared included:

- Description of where biosolids fit into the bigger picture of the wastewater treatment process.
- Discussion that this is the final piece of the bigger project, and that the biosolids are the product being produced at the RTF, which has been previously discussed as part of the SeaTerra project.
- Discussion of the CRD staff roles in the overall project, that being responsible for arranging a beneficial use of the biosolids but having minimal involvement in the main project.
- Explained the CRD's procurement process and how the CRD arrived at co-combusting the biosolids at cement kilns in the lower mainland as the only option that meets all the constraints (Federal, Provincial, CRD Board). This included a discussion of what other local governments do with their biosolids, as well as the CRD's policy against land application of biosolids.
- Described how burning biosolids in cement kilns will have an overall positive impact on the environment in that it will displace some fossil fuels (coal and/or natural gas) currently used in the process (i.e. greenhouse gas reductions).
- Stated that the CRD will incur costs to implement the beneficial use plan, including transportation of the biosolids to the lower mainland and paying a handling and processing fee to the cement manufacturers.
- Discussion on cement kilns being a short-term option that will secure a beneficial use of the material for a 3-5 year period.
- During that 3-5 year period the CRD will be working on a long-term option that will involve much consultation and analysis of options based on the characteristics of the actual product produced at the RTF.

Following this presentation, the WLC coordinator responded and discussion included these topics:

- The possible ways in which the WSÁNEĆ group can become involved (trucking of the biosolids, employees at the RTF, working with Gwaii Engineering on long-term options).
- About operation of the RTF and that a number of employees will be hired by the private operator. CRD staff offered to discuss this with the operator and coordinate further communications.
- The need for training any WSÁNEĆ members to be employed at the RTF was referenced and Gwaii Engineering offered to provide assistance with this.
- That WSÁNEĆ group is interested in capacity building around GIS cultural mapping projects.
- That WSÁNEĆ group is interested in pursuing research grants in partnership with the CRD.
- That WSÁNEĆ group is interested in investigating a district energy system using dried biosolids for their community.

- Reference was made that the WSÁNEĆ group would like to have an impact benefit agreement in place for the overall RTF project.

When asked if there were any issues with the biosolids plan as proposed, the WLC coordinator responded that there were no specific concerns at the time and it would be discussed with the Leadership Council.