
**REPORT TO ELECTORAL AREA SERVICES COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, 07 FEBRUARY 2007**

SUBJECT FUNDING FOR DEVELOPMENT OF ONSITE SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

PURPOSE

To request funding for preliminary work by staff to investigate how the proposed program for management of onsite systems planned for the core area could be modified to meet the needs of the Salt Spring Island (SSI) and Southern Gulf Islands (SGI) electoral areas.

BACKGROUND

The Capital Regional District is developing and implementing a program for management of onsite systems; i.e. septic systems and other small wastewater treatment systems that discharge to ground. It is envisaged that the program will require owners of septic systems to regularly pump out their septic tank and for owners of small treatment plants to have a contract with a qualified service provider for regular maintenance.

Development of the management system is a commitment in the Core Area Liquid Waste Management Plan (LWMP). Municipalities that are participants in the plan and have unsewered areas are required to participate in the program. The Saanich Peninsula LWMP contains a similar commitment for North Saanich. The Board authorized staff to poll municipal councils and electoral area directors for jurisdictions that are not within the LWMP area to determine whether they wish to participate.

The proposed program is being developed on the basis that it would be implemented consistently across the participating areas. However, the directors for SSI and SGI indicated an interest in participating in a modified program that targets watersheds that are a source of drinking water and community well capture zones and that would include a requirement for mandatory inspection of septic tanks. The directors have also requested more detailed information about funding alternatives for the program.

To date, the work on development of the program has been funded by the participants in the regional septage function, which includes all jurisdictions except SSI and SGI. There is no provision in the 2007 budget to investigate modification of the program for the islands. Therefore, it is requested that the directors for SSI and SGI, between them, allocate a budget of \$5,000 for 2007 to provide for preliminary work by staff to investigate funding alternatives and how the program could be modified to meet the needs of SSI and SGI.

ALTERNATIVES

The alternatives are:

1. That \$5,000 be provided for staff time to plan for a modified management program for SSI and SGI;
2. That funds for 2007 not be provided and plan for additional funding in 2008; or
3. That SSI and SGI not participate in the program.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Provision of additional funding will impact the 2007 budgets for SSI and SGI.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

Staff of the Environmental Services department are developing and implementing a program for management of onsite systems. It is envisaged that the program will require owners of septic systems to regularly pump their septic tank and owners of small treatment plants to have a contract with a qualified service provider for regular maintenance. It is intended that the program would be applied on a consistent basis across the participating areas. The directors for SSI and SGI have indicated an interest in participating but are considering a modified program.

When the budget for 2007 was established, there was no funding provided for development of a program for SSI and SGI. Therefore, it is recommended that the directors for SSI and SGI, between them, allocate a budget of \$5,000 for 2007 to provide for preliminary work by staff to investigate how the proposed program for management of onsite systems could be modified to meet the needs of the SSI and SGI electoral areas.

RECOMMENDATION

That the directors for Salt Spring Island (SSI) and Southern Gulf Islands (SGI), between them, allocate a budget of \$5,000 for 2007 to provide for preliminary work by staff to investigate how the proposed program for management of onsite systems could be modified to meet the needs of the SSI and SGI electoral areas.

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Concurrence

COMMENTS

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