



**REPORT TO THE ELECTORAL AREA SERVICES COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2, 2010**

SUBJECT **Juan de Fuca Community Wildfire Protection Plan**

PURPOSE

Approval to apply to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) for funding, to complete a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) for the Juan de Fuca (JdF), and to do so jointly with the District of Sooke.

BACKGROUND

CWPP utilizes a base layer of information gathered by a consultant to look at how communities can reduce risk from interface fires. As communities continue to develop in rural areas, and continue to move more and more into forested areas, the risk of interface fires continues to grow.

Recently, plans were developed in the Capital Regional District (CRD) Watershed Lands, Southern Gulf Islands, and Salt Spring Island completed. To date, no plan has been developed for JdF.

Staff has met with Chief Sorenson, District of Sooke Fire, to discuss the development of a CWPP. Both Chief Sorenson and CRD staff agree it would be more efficient to work together on the planning process, to ensure compatibility of plans. The result will be independent plans for each community, based on common methodology and with consistent recommendations. This is similar to the recent process involving Pender Islands and Saturna Island.

The process of developing a CWPP begins with a scientific assessment of the area under consideration to look at risk and potential impact. Risk is based on numerous factors, including weather patterns, forest and ground cover type, topology, emergency response capacity and property development.

Once the initial data is compiled, the process will need to engage representation of stakeholders including, but not limited to:

- Local land use planners
- Emergency Management
- Ministry of Forests
- Provincial Parks
- Building Inspection
- Local Fire departments
- Regional Parks
- National Parks

By working with these groups, and the data collected, the plan will identify steps that can be reasonably taken by each stakeholder to minimise ongoing risk from interface fires. This may include impacts on OCPs, building inspection bylaws or emergency planning by local communities or by parks.

By applying jointly on behalf of all the communities of JdF with the District of Sooke, we will be able to pool the available funds to allow for both a more comprehensive study of the forest and land cover as well as it will ensure that a common methodology will allow all the communities to work on solutions as a group.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Apply for the UBCM CWPP funding on behalf of the communities of JdF, jointly with the District of Sooke.
2. Apply for the UBCM CWPP funding on behalf of the communities of JdF, independent of the District of Sooke application.
3. To not approve staff to apply for UBCM CWPP funding at this time.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications for this project, as 50% is provided by UBCM, and 50% will be in-kind contribution. The in-kind will be submitted based on meeting organization and attendance by all invited members, both CRD staff and other stakeholder agencies. As well, CRD is able to provide strong GIS information to the project as part of our in-kind contribution.

INTERAGENCY IMPLICATIONS

Development of a CWPP, jointly with the District of Sooke will provide a common framework for protection from risk of interface fire, as well as a common response plan in the event of a fire start among responding agencies.

Currently, Sooke has a mutual aid agreement with the CRD departments for fire protection. Additionally, other stakeholders involved in the process may also be involved in a common response to interface fires, including CRD Parks, CRD Water, and Ministry of Forest.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

CWPPs provide for communities to be prepared for the eventuality of interface fires. As communities continue to grow into interface areas, it is important to recognise what can be done to reduce risk, through planning, building inspection, emergency response and emergency management. Jointly applying for funding with District of Sooke is the most efficient, effective way of developing a CWPP in the JdF.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Electoral Area Services Committee recommend to the Capital Regional District Board:

That an application be submitted to Union of British Columbia Municipalities for joint funding on behalf of the communities of Juan de Fuca and the District of Sooke to complete a Community Wildfire Protection Plan.



Travis Whiting, Manager
Protective Services

Robert Lapham, MCIP
General Manager, Planning & Protective Services
Concurrence

Kelly Daniels
Chief Administrative Officer
Concurrence