



**REPORT TO ELECTORAL AREA SERVICES COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17, 2013**

SUBJECT **APPLICATION TO UNION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA MUNICIPALITIES (UBCM)
FOR GRANT FUNDING OF A FUEL MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION PROGRAM
ON PENDER ISLAND**

PURPOSE

To request a Capital Regional District (CRD) Board resolution in support of a grant application to the UBCM Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative for the purposes of a fuel management prescription to provide a secondary fire escape route into Magic Lake Estates, Pender Island.

BACKGROUND

The goal of Pender Island Risk Mitigation Action Plan is to reduce wildfire risk on Pender Island by 50% as measured by the Southern Gulf Islands Wildfire Risk Assessment Model. A working group reviewed the results of the model and chose to focus the action plan on the four most effective risk mitigation management objectives. One of these objectives is an alternative vehicular emergency evacuation route from the Magic Lake Estates subdivision. This subdivision contains 1260 lots and a population of 1500 which doubles during the fire season, and currently has only one fire escape route.

Both the emergency program and the fire service on Pender Island have been working to create a secondary access point to Magic Lakes as a significant objective towards community safety. Any blockage of the single access currently in place creates significant risk to the large subdivision including the inability of police, fire or ambulance to access residents requiring emergency service support.

An opportunity to create a secondary access has become available through the Lively Peak Park, which is managed by the CRD through the Pender Island Parks and Recreation Commission. This route would connect Scarff Road with Sailor Road using an existing, but overgrown trail through the park. This route would be used for vehicles only in emergency events. In non-emergency times, the route would be a community trail for use by pedestrians or cyclists. The trail would be owned and maintained by the park.

The application for this project was discussed and supported by both the Southern Gulf Islands Emergency Program Advisory Commission and Pender Island Parks and Recreation Commission.

ALTERNATIVES

1. The CRD Board authorize staff to make application to UBCM for grant funding for a Fuel Management Prescription for Pender Island to support a secondary emergency access route into Magic Lakes.
2. Staff be directed to look for alternative routes for emergency access into Magic Lakes.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

UBCM provides 75% funding for projects such as this that meet the requirements of the Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative. This initial phase is for a prescription to be created outlining the best way to develop this secondary emergency access. Once completed, the CRD will be able to apply for a second 75% grant for the actual works involved in creating the route. Funding for the 25% residual is within the Southern Gulf Islands Emergency Program budget and work plan.

PUBLIC SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

Creation of a secondary emergency access route into Magic Lakes Estates will provide a significant level of improvement in the ability of emergency responders to access the area in the event of a wildfire or any other event that impacts the primary route. Additionally, the route will also provide a fire break within the park in the event a wildfire.

SUMMARY

A secondary access point into Magic Lakes is a key priority identified in the Southern Gulf Islands Community Wildfire Protection Plan. UBCM, through their Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative, provides 75% funding for the development of a Fuel Management Prescription, outlining how to best achieve the results identified, in this case, a secondary emergency access route. This route will allow for emergency access of emergency response vehicles into the area or for the evacuation of residents out of the area in the event of a wildfire. In order to apply for the grant, a Board resolution supporting the application is required.

RECOMMENDATION

That Electoral Area Services Committee recommends to the CRD Board that:

1. Staff be authorized to make application to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities for grant funding for a Fuel Management Prescription for Pender Island to support a secondary emergency access route into Magic Lakes.

****ORIGINAL SIGNED****

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Marg Misek-Evans, MCIP, RPP
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Concurrence

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