

**REPORT TO ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2013**

SUBJECT **BIRD ABATEMENT PROGRAM FOR HARTLAND LANDFILL - AWARD OF CONTRACT 13-1784**

ISSUE

To seek approval for award of Contract 13-1784, Bird Abatement Program for Hartland landfill.

BACKGROUND

The Hartland landfill attracts a large number of nuisance birds mostly seagulls, crows and ravens, due to the presence of food waste in the garbage to be landfilled. The number of birds is seasonal, fluctuating depending on the availability of natural food sources away from the landfill. The most critical time of large numbers of birds at the landfill is the six months between October and March.

The birds create a number of challenges including:

- Health risks to staff, the public using the site and neighbouring residents due to the direct exposure to flying birds or from droppings;
- Spreading of litter on the landfill and to adjacent properties; and
- Damage to equipment and on-site facilities.

Efficient bird control minimizes these, challenges, which is a requirement of the Ministry of Environment and is included in the Hartland Landfill Operating Plan.

Over the years staff have used various methods of bird control including, wire grid over the working face and use of canons, screecher guns and kites. These methods achieved reasonable levels of success, however due to its nature it also presented challenges such as:

- The seagulls, together with eagles, owls and non-nuisance birds, were being tangled in the wires resulting in injury and death.
- The noise of the cannon and screecher gun is disturbing to neighbouring residents, their pets and domestic animals.
- The poles used to erect the wire grid were a safety hazard.
- Kites, when broken loose from their tether line, were getting caught in the high voltage hydro wires which run across the landfill lands, creating a safety hazard.

As a means of mitigating the challenges posed by these bird control methods, staff have been using trained raptors (hawks and falcons) as an alternative bird control method on a trial basis for the last few years. Raptor predatory birds have a greater impact on the behaviour of nuisance birds than any other control methods, including mechanical or auditory devices. The birds adapt quickly to netting, noisemakers and kites and will soon disregard these deterrents in their search for food. This proved extremely successful in both reducing the number of nuisance birds on site and minimizing injury or death to birds and noise to the residents. Nanaimo Regional District has been using birds of prey to control its nuisance bird population at their regional landfill successfully for over 20 years with great success.

A Request for Proposal (RFP) was called on October 7, 2013. The contract is for three years starting January 1, 2014. Two proposals were received and reviewed in accordance with the CRD's policy and procedure for evaluating RFPs and the proposal from Pacific Northwest Raptors Ltd. ranked the highest.

ALTERNATIVES

That the Environmental Services Committee recommends to the Board:

1. that Contract 13-1784, Bird Abatement Program for Hartland Landfill, be awarded to Pacific Northwest Raptors Ltd., with up to 2 one-year extensions, for the first year sum of \$97,566.00 (inclusive of GST); or
2. that Contract 13-1784, Bird Abatement Program for Hartland Landfill, not be awarded and staff continue with historical bird control approaches.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The birds of prey nuisance bird control method eliminates the use of cannons or screecher guns which in turn eliminates noise pollution for the neighbouring residents.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The use of birds of prey to control seagulls and other nuisance birds at the Hartland landfill has proven to be very successful in reducing the number of birds while reducing the incidences of injury and death to other birds (eagles, owls and other non-nuisance birds) and reducing noise for neighbouring residents.

ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

Alternative 1 will mitigate the environmental and safety issues the passive bird control program creates, and will not increase the cost of the program.

CONCLUSION

The Hartland landfill attracts a large number of nuisance birds due to the nature of the operations. The use of trained raptors (birds of prey) at the landfill to discourage the nuisance birds has proven successful and a more humane method to control them. It also eliminates the noise pollution from air cannons and screecher guns. The work was tendered through an RFP and two proposals were received. Pacific Northwest Raptors Ltd. ranked highest in the evaluation and meets the requirements of the RFP, has the ability, experience, personnel and trained raptors to fulfill the requirements of the work.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Environmental Services Committee recommends to the Board:

That Contract 13-1784, Bird Abatement Program for Hartland Landfill, be awarded to Pacific Northwest Raptors Ltd., with up to 2 one-year extensions, for the first year sum of \$97,566.00 (inclusive of GST).

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