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**REPORT TO REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY COMMISSION
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2010**

SUBJECT RELEASE OF WATER TO CHARTERS CREEK

ISSUE

The continuation of water releases to Charters Creek.

BACKGROUND

Charters Creek a small tributary to the Sooke River is under natural conditions is an ephemeral creek. When the Kapoor Tunnel was completed and the section of the Flowline between Charters and Humpback Dam abandoned, water surplus to the demand in Sooke resulted in incidental discharges into Charters Creek. These incidental releases occurred due to the difficulty in matching releases from Sooke Reservoir to the demand in Sooke. As it was not possible to pressurize the Flowline, surplus water had to be discharged. In addition, leakage in the FFlowline along its route necessitated additional releases of water to ensure water reached the Charters facilities. Under Federal Fisheries Regulations the Capital Regional District (CRD) may have an obligation to continue water releases. The volume of water released would be part of the agreement to release water from the Sooke Reservoir to the Sooke River.

The Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), the Juan de Fuca Salmon Restoration Society (JDFSRS) and the CRD have been working together for several years to plan for the abandonment of the Flowline and to provide the means of continuing the release of water to Charters Creek.. A plan and design to install the supplemental supply system has been developed, but the project was not completed before the 2010 dry season. Because of the high pressure in the supply pipeline, the diversion system requires a pressure reducing valve and concrete valve chamber along with a connection to the SCADA system for monitoring purposes. This summer the CRD released water from Charters Dam and installed a temporary system to maintain flows in the creek at the volume requested by DFO.

The design for the longer-term supply system (funded by DFO, JDFSRS and corporate donors) is now complete and forms part of a larger project to construct an interpretive centre on Charters Creek. It is expected that the diversion system will be installed before the dry season of 2011, provided that funding can be secured, and use of the temporary system can then be discontinued. The coalition of groups involved in the design secured funding from a variety of sources, but the total raised is estimated to be \$50,000 less than what is required to construct the project. JDFSRS is requesting that the CRD make up the funding shortfall.

ALTERNATIVES

1. That the Regional Water Supply Commission approve funding of \$50,000 to be included in the 2011 Capital Budget for completion of the water diversion project.
2. That the Regional Water Supply Commission not provide funding.

IMPLICATIONS

Alternative 1 – Provision of \$50,000 to complete this project will add to the capital spending in 2011 and will be funded by the bulk water rate. Providing the funding would continue our positive relationship with the JDFSRS, DFO, First Nations, and local groups.

Alternative 2 - If the CRD does not provide funding for completion of this project, the CRD may be subject to legal challenges.

CONCLUSION

As a result of the physical characteristics of the Sooke water supply system there have been incidental releases of water to Charters Creek. The CRD may be obligated to continue releases under Federal Fisheries regulations.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Regional Water Supply Commission approve funding of \$50,000 to be included in the 2011 Capital Budget for completion of the water diversion project.



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Concurrence