



Making a difference...together

**REPORT TO SAANICH PENINSULA WASTEWATER COMMISSION
MEETING OF THURSDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2009**

SUBJECT **2010 SAANICH PENINSULA STORMWATER QUALITY PROGRAM BUDGET**

PURPOSE

To request additional funding in the 2010 stormwater quality program budget to allow staff to increase the number of investigations for stormwater discharges rated high for public health concern.

BACKGROUND

The Saanich Peninsula stormwater quality program began in 1997 as a component of the Saanich Peninsula Liquid Waste Management Plan. The program works to limit the impacts of stormwater runoff on public health and the environment by conducting stormwater discharge surveys, upstream investigations, technical assistance, major watercourse monitoring and special projects to protect freshwater and nearshore marine ecosystems and resources.

Between 1999 and 2006, the program was partly supported by a \$10,000 annual grant from Environment Canada for the Open Saanich Inlet Shellfish Beds Project. This funding was never replaced, which limited the program's capacity to monitor contamination flowing into Saanich Inlet.

The program had achieved early success, reducing the number of discharges rated high for public health concern from 30 in 1998 to seven in 2002. Since 2006, the number of high-rated discharges has risen to 12 and nine of these were identified as problematic for two or more years.

At its 18 June 2009 meeting, the Saanich Peninsula Wastewater Commission (SPWWC) received the results of the 2008 annual Saanich Peninsula stormwater sampling program. The Commission noted that the number of discharges rated high for public health concern and environmental concern did not seem to be improving and asked staff to determine the amount of additional funding required to address these problematic stormwater discharges.

The Capital Regional District (CRD) Stormwater, Harbours and Watersheds Program (SHWP) rates discharges for concern based on public health (sewage contamination) and environmental concern (chemical contaminants). The public health concern ratings are the topic of this report; the environmental concern ratings are being addressed in the SPWWC recommendation that the CRD create a CRD-led stormwater source control bylaw.

SHWP staff indicated that successful investigation of stormwater discharges to locate contamination sources is costly due to labour and sampling costs. The Saanich Peninsula stormwater quality program budget has limited funds available for detailed investigations each year, which makes it difficult to resolve the contamination issues that are accumulating.

Municipal engineering staff rely on the SHWP stormwater investigations in order to locate and remediate contamination sources. For example, in 2008, the Town of Sidney authorized the additional expenditure of \$5,000 for a directed investigation of a discharge in All Bay. SHWP staff performed an upstream investigation of the stormwater system and identified two possible sources which were further investigated by the Town of Sidney.

On the Saanich Peninsula, there are currently nine discharges of concern that have been rated high for two or more years. SHWP proposes investigation of four discharges per year. The cost for a single investigation is estimated at \$5,000 per discharge.

ALTERNATIVES

That the Saanich Peninsula Wastewater Commission:

1. approve a continuous supplementary of \$20,000 in the Saanich Peninsula stormwater quality program budget to allow staff to increase the number of investigations for stormwater discharges rated high for public health concern;
2. recommend a different funding option to allow staff to increase the number of investigations for stormwater discharges rated high for public health concern as needed;
3. not approve a continuous supplementary of \$20,000 in the Saanich Peninsula stormwater quality program budget.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This work will require a continuous supplementary of \$20,000 per year in the Saanich Peninsula stormwater quality program budget.

This would result in allocation of approximately \$73,500 from the Saanich Peninsula stormwater quality program budget to stormwater quality monitoring, investigation and reporting in 2010. Using the 2008 population estimates prepared by CRD Planning and Protective Services, this is a per capita cost of \$1.73.

In comparison, the Core Area stormwater quality program performs essentially the same functions for the seven core area municipalities at a per capita cost of \$1.77. The 2009 budget for the Saanich Peninsula stormwater quality program was approximately \$52,250, or \$1.23 per capita.

SUMMARY

The Saanich Peninsula stormwater quality program budget does not have funds available for staff to do enough detailed investigations each year to reduce the number of discharges rated high for public health concern. The SPWWC asked staff to determine the amount of additional funding required to address problematic stormwater discharges.

The successful investigation, in partnership with Town of Sidney, indicates that, with additional resources, SHWP investigation efforts should produce information that will help reduce the number of discharges rated high for public health concern.

A comprehensive investigation of one discharge is estimated to cost approximately \$5,000 per year. SHWP proposes to investigate four discharges per year at a cost of \$20,000 per year.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Saanich Peninsula Wastewater Commission approve a continuous supplementary of \$20,000 in the Saanich Peninsula stormwater quality program budget to allow staff to increase the number of investigations for stormwater discharges rated high for public health concern.

Glenn Harris, PhD, RPBio
Senior Manager, Scientific Programs

Dan Telford, PEng
Senior Manager, Engineering Services

DG:cam