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**REPORT TO SAANICH PENINSULA WASTEWATER COMMISSION
MEETING OF THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2010**

SUBJECT **BIOSOLIDS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM - ANNUAL UPDATE**

PURPOSE

The purpose of the staff report is to provide the Saanich Peninsula Wastewater Commission (SPWWC) with an update on the biosolids management program.

BACKGROUND

Under the Saanich Peninsula Wastewater Management Plan (LWMP) the Capital Regional District (CRD) and its participating member municipalities committed to implementing the Biosolids Management Plan, focusing on seeking opportunities to diversify biosolids beneficial use markets to include individual residences, commercial operations and farms.

Since the Saanich Peninsula wastewater treatment plant (SPWWTP) commenced operation in 2000, biosolids produced from the plant have been utilized in a variety of pilot applications, including: farmland application in Qualicum; as final cover material or landfill at Hartland landfill; composted at West Coast Landfill Diversion in Duncan; and land reclamation at a gravel pit in Colwood. For various reasons, these pilot programs have not resulted in a long-term solution to manage biosolids from the SPWWTP.

On February 16, 2006, the SPWWC directed staff to evaluate the long-term management of biosolids produced at the SPWWTP. In June 2006, the SPWWC approved a home-use biosolids pilot program (Pengrow product) in which 20 homeowners were selected to receive biosolids for lawn and garden applications. The program was well received and the number of customers has since grown from 20 homeowners in 2006 to over 1,000 customers in 2009. However, due to the limited space available for curing of the material at the current landfill site, Pengrow production is limited to approximately 180 tonnes per year which represents only 5% of the 3,500 tonnes produced per year. This volume generally satisfied the 2009 demand for the product. Regulatory restrictions governing land application quantities, however, limits existing agricultural customer's ability to increase their annual application amounts of the product per land parcel. An increase in annual agricultural application quantities will, therefore, require more customer land parcels.

In the long term, the LWMP states that it is intended that the Saanich Peninsula biosolids management program will pursue any biosolids management opportunities that become available through the CRD Core Area wastewater treatment project. The Core Area project is currently investigating various options in biosolids management and has identified a preferred strategy to use the biosolids as a fuel for cement kilns and/or to power a waste-to-energy facility.

Based on the current status of the project, it is likely that the Core Area wastewater treatment plants and biosolids management facilities will be operational within 5 to 10 years. In the interim, there is still a need to continue with the current SPWWTP biosolids management program until the Core Area facilities are in place. Also, since there is no space for storage of incoming biosolids or curing product at Hartland, the SPWWC direction is to defer significant costs associated with further expansion of the Pengrow program until the Core Area biosolids management plan becomes more defined. Further development of demonstration projects at the CRD's facilities (including piloting new product blends) and the exploration of other opportunities with the member municipalities would continue through the 2010 growing season.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The biosolids management program is included as part of the annual SPWWTP operating budget.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Saanich Peninsula Wastewater Commission receive this biosolids management program annual update for information.

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