2022 RWS Master Plan

Public Engagement Report

This report provides a summary of public engagement activities conducted following the release of the 2022 Regional Water Supply Master Plan.

Integrated Water Services has developed the 2022 Regional Water Supply Master Plan that includes a proposed infrastructure program intended to improve the water supply and transmission system and add redundancy to critical components to address hazards and risks. The Plan recommends projects to be implemented over the next 30 years based on the projected population, the impacts of climate change, and water treatment needs resulting from changing raw water quality characteristics and regulatory requirements over time.

Residents were informed about the Master Plan and invited to provide feedback through various engagement methods.

Engagement Methods

"Get Involved" Website

The CRD's new digital engagement site **GetInvolved.crd.bc.ca** was used to share details of the Plan and invite feedback between June 9 and July 6. Comments were collected using an online form, and through the water@crd.bc.ca email. Regional Water Supply Master Plan information remains available online at: Regional Water Supply Master Plan | Get Involved CRD

During the feedback period, 753 visits resulted in three levels of participation:

- Aware (visited at least one page): 383 participants
- Informed (downloaded documents, visited multiple pages): 157 participants
- Engaged (shared comments or asked questions): 22 participants

The most popular documents viewed were the 2022 Regional Water Supply Master Plan Executive Summary (101 downloads), the Project Overview Map (43 downloads), and the 2022 Regional Water Supply Master Plan Presentation (35 downloads).

Media & Stakeholder Information

A media release was issued on June 9, 2022 (attached). The release highlighted the projects, why they are needed, the timeline, and the engagement platform.

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Agenda items from the May 18 Regional Water Supply Commission meeting included a Regional Water Supply 2022 Master Plan staff report recommending that 1) staff be directed to seek public feedback on the Plan to be reported back to the Commission as well as the Water Advisory Committee feedback, and that the Commission consider endorsing the Plan, and 2) that the 2022 Master Plan be forwarded to the CRD Board for information. The Board Vice-Chair also highlighted the Master Plan in the monthly CFAX update.

- CRD Board Highlights June 8, 2022
- CFAX Update June 8, 2022
- Regional Water Supply 2022 Master Plan Released (crd.bc.ca) June 9, 2022

Local media coverage:

- CTV June 21, 2022
- CBC June 21, 2022
- Sooke News June 22, 2022
- CFAX June 22, 2022

Social Media

Staff scheduled social media posts to raise awareness of the Master Plan and to invite the public to provide their feedback via the engagement platform. In total, Facebook posts reached 12,352 users with 328 link clicks and Twitter posts resulted in 837 impressions (number of times a tweet was seen) with 32 link clicks.

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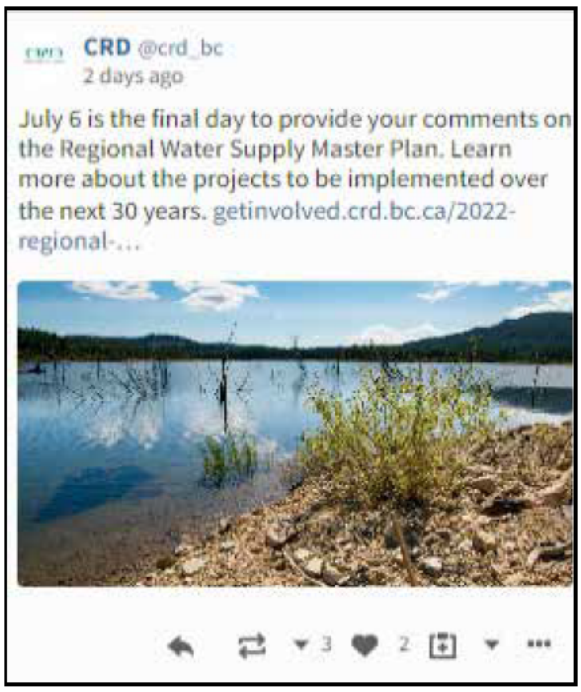

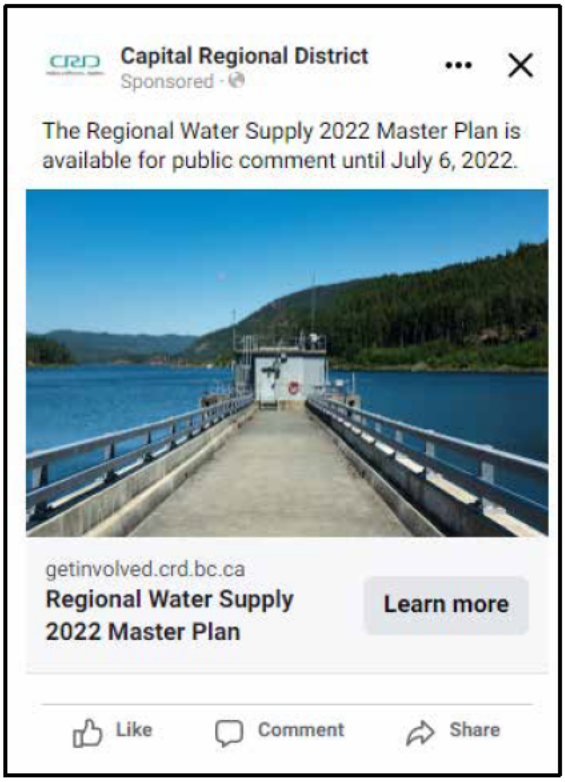

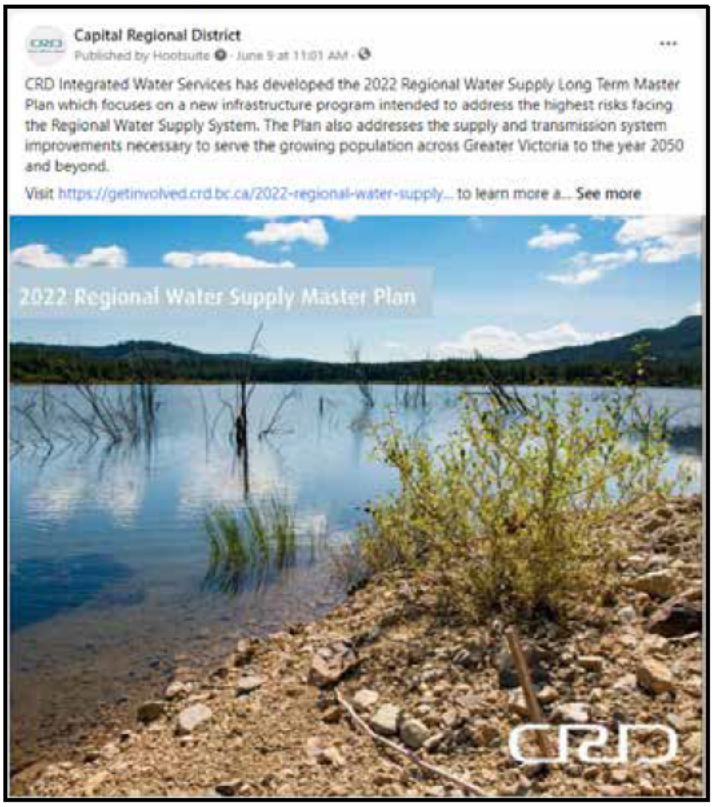

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Responses

Comments

The following comments were received by the CRD via an online comment form.

Municipality	Please provide your feedback on the CRD's provisional financial plan.
Colwood	How do you think the public is going to pay for that the well is running dry so to speak .....
Victoria	I think this is a great idea and I fully support it. The price is completely reasonable for securing something so important. We are lucky to have the water system we currently have, but we should not put off planning and building for our future needs.
Colwood	Water filtration should be the highest priority. If there is a wildfire, the water supply will be contaminated. Don't wait until there is an emergency to build the filtration plant.
Esquimalt	On behalf of our family and extended family, we wish to register our objection to any plan calling for the filtration of the water.
Saanich	I can't believe the water restrictions that have been on here for decades now with all the development still going on, Gvrd and Saanich are completely scorched, Broadmead was the first neighbourhood that should have showed that, I would like to sit in to any panel or discussion that could possibly help, when I was 12 here you could water your yard here, grass/shrubs and gardens and they were good for at least a week, the ground is stripped and paved over and where it isn't rain water flows over rocks and dries up, could go on about this forever but there are too many people, glad I will be dead when I am in 30 years, seen so many area's die already around here

Langford	This work is needed to safeguard our supply for future generations. Manage our risk by making the changes sooner than later.
Sooke	Lots of good work plans to add redundancy to the current infrastructure. Good to build on the accomplishments of the strategic plan now that the Wastewater Treatment Plant finally completed. The right-of-way from the old flow line should be seriously considered for use to run the pipeline from the filtration plant at Japan Gulch (once completed) to Sooke. Currently, even with existing population levels, interuptions to traffic flow on Sooke Road are challenging and highly unpopular, as well as potentially hazardous to construction crews. Costs of installation and maintenance of this pipeline would be increased significantly if traffic management had to be considered as well. The pipeline from the filtration plant to Sooke should double as a bike path/walking trail. Currently, the Galloping Goose meanders too far from the highway to allow for use as a commuter path or even an effective recreational path. With population pressures and climate change anticipated to create significant demands and increased rate of change, we need to get the most out of infrastructure, especially linear corridors. Should be a three-tier system for water rates: agriculture (cheapest), suburban food production (cheap), and home use (regular rate). At current water rates, people are already discouraged from food production. Healthy communities/ecosystems of the future will need to utilize yards for food production and pollinator etc. habitat rather than concrete and burnt grass. Need to ensure that the filtration plant does not filter out the body-replenishment minerals from our fantastic water supply. Lower Cragg Main and MacDonald Main useful parcels if Leech to be fully utilized for storage as well as topping up Sooke Lake Reservoir?
Sooke	With the exponential growth of population in the Sooke/Otter Point area and the monopolization of bulk water delivery in the region during the summer months when wells run dry, piped water is essential to many growing families to access a more affordable and dependable water source. [redacted] commented that there is no discernible sprawl in this area. Growth is inevitable. Please consider adding a water main extension of infrastructure service in this region for our future. Thank you.

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Nanaimo	How does this impact First Nations and their water supply needs?
Victoria	Yes please build it! I want our water supply to have better filtration. Sometimes the tap water tastes like lake, which is gross!I hope it will be built soon.
Langford	This seems like a no brainer. Credit to the Crd for the foresight to propose this and be ahead of the game to protect our most valuable resource.
Saanich	Clearly the water supply must be improved and protected going forward. The proposed projects seem reasonable, although I have not delved into the details. I didn't see anything about seismic stability, but presumably that is a significant consideration? The cost part requires clarity. Are we to expect up to a 20% cost increase per year for over a decade? That would be problematic to say the least. The wording on that part is particularly muddy and unclear; it was probably written by politicians or communications experts...
Victoria	For the construction of various sites, I assume there are going to be many trees removed. Will the CRD be planting equivalent trees in nearby areas to replace the lost ones? Will an environmental assessment be carried out by a third party prior to construction?
Esquimalt	I found the plan to be a very intensive engineering report. However The Sooke reservoir area has some 8900 hectares of forests and the leech some 9600 hectares of forest; with climate change the fire risk for these forest has been increased and I see nothing in the master plan for any fire mitigation program. The watershed forest should be fire-smart managed. One big conflagration would be a major disaster. Check with UBC Forestry Faculty Professor [redacted] and associate professor [redacted] for the latest on the science in fire proofing and the Logan Lake Fire Smart-Program in their surrounding forests that helped save their community in 2021 for an example that worked.. Their are ,also forestry consultants who are up to speed in this area., [redacted] and [redacted] being two I would recommend for a fire risk assessment. Looking forward to seeing a fire-smart program in Watershed Forests soon, [redacted].

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Juan de Fuca	Hello- Thank you for asking for public input. I am not an engineer nor an expert but have been reading and observing water, watersheds and human impact on both - sometimes with terrible consequences. In California the Central Valley aquifer has been so drained for agricultural irrigation and piped away for city use that the land is sinking as much as twenty feet due to the collapse of the aquifer. The same situation has been happening since the early 1930s with the Ogallala Aquifer under several Midwest states. Water behind several US dams is so low the potable water availability and the hydropower are both being severely rationed. We need to learn from the poor choices elsewhere before we see major irreversible problems here. Rather than taking the rain water from where it belongs on the land where it falls, we need to rethink our water sourcing and think of roof rainwater harvesting and cisterns instead of expensively piping in water and expensively (and wastefully) thinking of rain water as "waste water" and sending it down pipes to be treated (expensively) in plants before being released (wasted) into the sea. Educate people here to think like people in Australia and in Bermuda where there is no water supply except rainwater saved and treated in tanks with lime to keep it potable. Educate people to value and judiciously use only as much water as they need and understand that, as Aristotle noted, it is not rational to value diamonds highly but take water for granted. People in the Juan de Fuca area who are not on "piped" city water are quite good at harvesting and being frugal with water due to being on wells, stream water licenses or having it trucked in. We are not a special breed and would be happy to share in educating people. We have the healthiest watersheds where the rain stays where it falls.
Juan de Fuca	Ongoing, Water will be one of our most precious resources on the South Island. Development and commercial use of watersheds will seriously reduce the ability of watersheds to receive and store rainfall. Even a small percent of development can lead a natural 1% runoff into a 25% runoff. An increase that will lead to local flooding, land and stream bank erosion, and incursion into sensitive riparian ecosystems. Massive development, like leveling mountains to build housing, and commercial parking lots and wider roads can lead to a 75% runoff from the changes to the natural watershed's ability to manage the natural distribution of water. Humans cannot recreate the watershed once it is destroyed. No amount of money poured into "wastewater" infrastructure will handle this water resource as effectively as Nature.

	Trying to provide potable water for everyone is a laudable endeavour. The problem is that such undertakings will cost millions and ultimately we may still run out of water as climate and populations put pressure on our system. Worse yet - people don't think about where or how the water comes to their home. They will only be angry when it stops coming out of the tap. It is possible in our geographic location to become self-sufficient in water on a personal domestic and local level. Rainwater harvesting is a well established technology and any freestanding house unit with a roof is capable of storing three to six thousand gallons of water a year. This is sufficient for a family to use for some or all their needs. It will greatly reduce the need for costly budgets to secure piped water resources, to maintain and build the drainage system and to charge increasingly higher water rates to consumers. So - Harmonise the building codes (at least on this one thing) and require all new detached buildings to have rainwater storage on site which can be used and released back to the land. If developers say "No, that will be too expensive to require a $10,000 system for every house" what their really are saying is that the future costs of supplying water and managing "wastewater" will have to paid by the municipalities and the CRD.
Metchosin	No mention of farming. That should be our top priority. Food security is a real issue. CRd is a perfect place to grow food. We need to plan for more agriculture and farm water supply in droughts Also, so many developments are going in with high water use homes. Any water used for frivolous or hedonistic purposes needs to be billed out for big money whereas water going for community gardens, obviously farming and environmental restoration needs to be billed with a recognition of its value as an investment to the region.
Central Saanich	I was pleased to see that you have included future water demands from agricultural users as well as residential and commercial users. Access to water will be a key part of future food security and supporting farmers, especially those in the Agricultural Land Reserve that have access to CRD water. As a residential user, I wholeheartedly support farmers continuing to access CRD water at a special agricultural water rate.
Metchosin	I am very concerned about three areas not incorporated in the report. 1- no growth strategy for local food security with any growth in agriculture. Climate change and

	global unrest are making growing local food critical. 2- no mention of holding all new development in the CRD to a higher water conservation standard with bathrooms, grey water recycling, etc. as well as a CRD wide retrofit campaign to bring up to date older homes and residences. 3- some kind of billing penalty for business and activities that are wasting water like car washing, lawn watering, etc. How unacceptable is it to have Royal Bay install lawns in a gravel pit? We have to be doing better as local city planners on items like this and the CRD can lead the way.
Victoria	The Smith Hill Reservoir is an important asset to birders, joggers and walkers from the Quadra and Hillside neighbourhood. Any changes to the reservoir should protect and enhance the current usage of these users. The reservoir is also an important stopover point for hundreds of migrating water fowl. Rare species have been found in recent years attracting birders far and wide. The City of Victoria in the past had discussed options with the CRD for the potential conversion of the reservoir space to park. Conversion could double the size of the existing Summit Park, extending the endangered Garry Oak ecosystem and introducing ponds for migrating water fowl. Please involve the neigbourhood stakeholders and the City in the design and implementation of the The Smith Hill tank and pump station project. Thank you.

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Media Release

For Immediate Release
June 9, 2022

Regional Water Supply 2022 Master Plan Released

Victoria, BC- The Capital Regional District (CRD) Regional Water Supply Commission has released the 2022 Master Plan that includes a proposed infrastructure program to improve the water supply and transition system and add redundancy to critical components to address hazards and risks. The Plan recommends projects to be implemented over the next 30 years based on the projected population, the impacts of climate change, water treatment requirements resulting from changing raw water quality characteristics and regulatory requirements.

"The 2022 Master Plan builds on previous system infrastructure investments, which have been largely focused on securing supply, and takes a forward-looking approach to create a resilient water supply system that will serve Greater Victoria for the next 30 years," says Lillian Szpak, Chair of the Regional Water Supply Commission and City of Langford Councillor.

The plan advances the commitments, strategic priorities and actions adopted in the 2017 Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan, recommending 21 major projects to meet anticipated water supply and treatment needs based on projected population for the year 2050. The recommendations also consider climate change impacts on water supply and demand, anticipated changes in raw water characteristics and regulatory requirements. Modeling indicates that by 2045 additional water will need to be sourced from the deep northern basin of Sooke Lake Reservoir and the Leech River water supply catchment area. The recommended projects will require significant investment over a 30-year period, approximately $2 billion, to be paid for through water rates with the potential for grant funding.

The plan is available for public review and comment until July 6, 2022 at getinvolved.crd.bc.ca/2022-regional-water-supply-master-plan.

Feedback collected will be presented to the Regional Water Supply Commission and will be used to guide how the plan is implemented over time, with further engagement carried out as each project is designed and implemented.

About the Regional Water Supply System

The CRD Regional Water Supply System delivers safe and sustainable drinking water to more than 400,000 people living in Greater Victoria. This work includes protecting the source, disinfecting the water

and monitoring water quality, operating and maintaining transmission and distribution systems and investing in infrastructure renewal. The Regional Water Supply Service delivers water to customers situated in 13 local municipalities, 8 First Nations and the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area through a mix of sub-regional and local distribution systems.

Learn more: Greater Victoria Water Supply System: An Overview (Video)

Proud to be recognized as one of BC's Top Employers and Canada's Greenest Employers, the CRD delivers regional, sub-regional and local services to 13 municipalities and three electoral areas on southern Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. Governed by a 24-member Board of Directors, the CRD works collaboratively with First Nations and all levels of government to enable sustainable growth, foster community well-being, and develop cost-effective infrastructure while continuing to provide core services to residents throughout the region. Visit us online at www.crd.bc.ca.

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