

**REPORT TO ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE  
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2026**

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**SUBJECT**    **Wrap-Up Activities of the Wildlife Attractants Working Group**

**ISSUE SUMMARY**

To report on recent work with municipalities to develop consistent policies and bylaws that limit bear attractants and initiate an awareness campaign to reduce bear-human interactions across the region.

**BACKGROUND**

On May 8, 2024, the Capital Regional District (CRD) Board directed staff, through a Motion with Notice, to work with municipalities to develop consistent policies and bylaws that limit wildlife attractants and prevent bear-human interactions.

In a staff report presented to the Environmental Services Committee in March 2025 titled 'Wildlife Attractants in the Capital Region' (Appendix A), staff provided an update on addressing the Board motion. The update included progress on establishing a working group focused on limiting wildlife attractants and identified key resource documents that could be used for guidance.

These resources included the *Wildlife Attractant Bylaw Toolkit* produced by the Get Bear Smart Society which outlines a stand-alone model bylaw and options for incorporating wildlife attractant considerations into existing bylaws, including solid waste bylaws. Staff also highlighted the "Bear Smart" Community Program Background Report, which describes steps and procedures local governments can take to reduce the frequency of human-bear conflicts. The first Wildlife Attractants Working Group was scheduled for April 2025.

During the presentation of the March 2025 staff report, a subsequent motion arose recommending that "staff be directed to explore creating a public awareness campaign regarding reducing wildlife attractant and interaction in the Capital Region. And that this work be done in coordination with other organizations involved in this work." Staff incorporated this direction into 2025 work plans.

**Wildlife Attractants Working Group**

Eight municipalities and one electoral area responded to the invitation seeking working group members and participated in meetings. The CRD hosted five Wildlife Attractants Working Group meetings between April and October 2025. An average of four municipalities attended each meeting.

Meetings involved sharing knowledge and resources, identifying potential solutions and exploring bylaw options for reducing human-bear interactions due to improper management of waste. Subject matter experts, including representatives from the BC Conservation Officer Service and Wild Wise Society, were asked to present to the working group to provide information and recommendations based on their work and experience.

Key takeaways from working group meetings included:

- The primary concern for working group members was limiting bear attractants in residential solid waste, rather than wildlife attractants as a whole (e.g., fruit trees, backyard apiaries).
- There are existing model bylaws and active bylaws in place for interested municipalities to adopt.
- Education and awareness should be a primary focus.
- Local governments have limited resources and capacity to implement and enforce additional bylaws.
- Local governments have a range of options for education and outreach supports from no-cost volunteer organizations such as Wild Wise Society to paid positions such as WildSafeBC Community Coordinators.
- A regional bylaw would not be appropriate as the CRD does not have authority over municipal garbage and organics collection.

Given that model bylaws already exist and have been shared with the working group, staff will transition the bear attractant topic from the Wildlife Attractants Working Group to the Local Government Waste Reduction Working Group (LGWRWG) as a seasonal agenda item for meetings.

The LGWRWG is made up of representatives from all thirteen municipalities and meets monthly. To ensure the continuation of knowledge sharing and coordination related to limiting bear attractants, CRD staff will include the topic on meeting agendas at least three times a year. Additionally, staff will regularly encourage municipal representatives to bring forward any related programs or initiatives to the meetings to share with the broader group.

### Awareness Campaign

In accordance with the Board motion to create a public awareness campaign, the CRD implemented a social media campaign from July to September 2025 to amplify messaging from expert organizations whose primary focus is educating the public about limiting bear attractants. The CRD shared and reposted content that highlighted how improper management of household curbside garbage can lead to human–bear conflicts, including tips for securing and storing household waste bins.

Staff will continue to monitor, share and repost wildlife attractant-related content from local expert organizations on a seasonal basis through a variety of CRD communications channels.

### CONCLUSION

Capital Regional District staff were directed to work with municipalities to develop consistent policies and bylaws to limit wildlife attractants and to implement a public awareness campaign. Through the working group process, several tools and resources were shared with interested municipalities—including existing model bylaws and education-focused approaches. A social media campaign encouraging proper management of curbside garbage was also implemented. Moving forward, staff will conclude the dedicated Wildlife Attractants Working Group and integrate the bear attractants topic as a seasonal agenda item for the Local Government Waste Reduction Working Group meetings.

**RECOMMENDATION**

There is no recommendation. This report is for information only.

Submitted by:	Russ Smith, Senior Manager, Environmental Resource Management
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Concurrence:	Luisa Jones, MBA, General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Environmental Services
Concurrence:	Ted Robbins, B. Sc., C. Tech., Chief Administrative Officer

**ATTACHMENT**

Appendix A: Staff Report: Wildlife Attractants in the Capital Region (March 19, 2025)