

REPORT TO CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT BOARD MEETING OF, AUGUST 14, 2019

SUBJECT Information on Compliance and Enforcement at Thetis Lake Regional Park

ISSUE

Compliance and bylaw enforcement presence has been increased for the remainder of the summer at Thetis Lake Regional Park to address liquor violations and illegal parking.

BACKGROUND

Over the years, there have been ongoing challenges at Thetis Lake Regional Park with the consumption of alcohol, smoking, dog management and illegal parking.

On the weekend of July 19-21, 2019, the View Royal Fire Department attended Thetis Lake on three occasions to provide first responder services. On two of these occasions, the victims had been consuming alcohol. The ability for the department to respond to these incidents was hindered by illegally-parked vehicles.

As a result of these events, CRD Parks and Bylaw staff, View Royal Fire Department and Westshore RCMP met to discuss options to increase a compliance and enforcement presence at the park. During these discussions, the CRD committed to shift resources from other parks to Thetis Lake for the remaining weekends during the summer. This will double the compliance and enforcement presence at Thetis Lake but will weaken the presence at other parks. The CRD is also taking a less tolerant approach to alcohol and parking violations. The table below shows the increased patrol hours and results of stronger enforcement of the CRD Parks Regulation Bylaw.

Date	Patrol Hours	Public Contacts	Liquor Violations	Warnings	Evictions	MTIs
July 19-21	19	350	18	35	1	0
July 26-28	35	1,400	26	11	53	14
Aug 2-5	44.5	1,420	23	28	28	9

Contributing to the enforcement challenges at Thetis Lake is the size of the park, number of access points and large number of park visitors. The park is 900 hectares and can see as many as 3,000+ visitors on the hottest days. Since 2010, visitation to the park has increased substantially, increasing from 350,000 in 2010 to 500,000 in 2018, an increase of 42%.

To ensure safe and enjoyable visits to regional parks, CRD Regional Parks has a compliance and enforcement program. The program is delivered by three levels of CRD staff, each with different compliance and enforcement responsibilities.

CRD park operations staff do not have enforcement authority under the CRD Parks Regulation Bylaw and, for staff safety purposes, do not address issues where liquor or drugs are involved. There are two full-time and four seasonal auxiliary park worker staff assigned to Thetis Lake and

their responsibilities include maintenance at Francis King, Lone Tree Hill and Gonzales regional parks.

The CRD employs park officers to conduct compliance and enforcement patrols throughout the regional park system. Park officers are typically engaged with removing illegal encampments, and dog management.

The CRD Regional Parks Division contracts bylaw enforcement officers from CRD Bylaw Enforcement Services. CRD bylaw officers conduct patrols at Thetis Lake throughout the summer months of June to September, regularly enforcing the bylaw through the use of warning notices and Municipal Ticket Information (MTI) (fines). Bylaw officers primarily focus on liquor enforcement and public safety around the lakes. The total annual contract with CRD Bylaw Enforcement Services is \$143,190, which funds approximately 950 hours of two officer patrols. In 2018, 37% of bylaw patrol time was dedicated to Thetis Lake.

CRD staff have historically worked closely with the region's RCMP detachments to address more serious issues within regional parks and to increase the overall enforcement presence. In more recent years, limited resources at the Westshore RCMP detachment have hindered their capacity to commit to enforcement patrols at Thetis Lake. The presence of the RCMP is arguably the greatest deterrent to alcohol use at the park.

CONCLUSION

The CRD is committed to providing safe and enjoyable recreation experiences in all regional parks. Due to recent concerns, the CRD has committed to shifting enforcement resources over to Thetis Lake Regional Park and decrease the level of tolerance for bylaw violations. This enhanced level of compliance at Thetis Lake will remain in place for the remainder of the weekends this summer.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Capital Regional District Board receive this report for information.

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Concurrence:	Larisa Hutcheson, P.Eng., General Manager, Parks & Environmental Services
Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

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Attachments: Attachment 1 – CRD Regional Park Enforcement Statistics 2007-2018