

**REPORT TO PARKS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2019**

SUBJECT **Capital Regional District Waterways and Beaches**

ISSUE

To provide supporting information on the recommendations of a University of Victoria Environmental Law Centre report titled “Cleaning up CRD Waterways and Beaches – Update of Reinventing Rainwater Management.”

BACKGROUND

The University of Victoria Environmental Law Centre (UVic-ELC) presented their report, “Cleaning up CRD Waterways and Beaches – Update of Reinventing Rainwater Management”¹, to the Parks & Environment Committee on July 24, 2019. Subsequently, the Board passed a motion that *staff report back to the Parks & Environment Committee on options for strengthening regulations, policies and programs relating to the health of waterways and beaches in the Capital Region.*

The UVic-ELC report updates their 2010 report (“Re-inventing Rainwater Management in the Capital Region”) and contains 12 recommendations targeted at local governments (Appendix A). Staff have identified how these recommendations are (or will be) addressed through existing service delivery and where specific items lie outside of the current mandate (Appendix B).

REGULATORY IMPLICATIONS

Local governments and the CRD are ultimately bound by senior government regulations to control contaminants leaving land via stormwater, wastewater or human activities, including the provincial Environmental Management Act and the federal Fisheries Act.

The CRD has developed the Capital Regional District Sewer Use Bylaw for environmental protection by protecting sewage infrastructure and managing contaminants carried by wastewater to the ocean.

The CRD has also developed bylaws that municipalities are able to participate in or adopt:

- 1) Stormwater Source Control Model Bylaw (available for municipal customization and adoption)
- 2) Stormwater Source Control Bylaw (CRD Bylaw, currently active on Saanich Peninsula)
- 3) Onsite Sewage System Maintenance Bylaw (CRD Bylaw, currently active in the Core Area)

A number of the UVic-ELC recommendations fall within municipal mandate and/or some are within the CRD’s mandate. A selection of work under these recommendations is discussed in Appendix B.

¹ Nadji, A. and A. Lesperance. 2019. Cleaning up CRD Waterways and Beaches: Update of Reinventing Rainwater Management. Victoria, BC: University of Victoria Environmental Law Centre Clinic. 35pp.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The Capital Regional District (CRD) provides environmental protection services to local government and First Nations through a framework of two liquid waste management plans, several service establishing bylaws (notably for stormwater discharge sampling) and agreements, each with associated work plans and cost-sharing formulas.

Staff work cooperatively with participating local governments, First Nations, stakeholders and residents to monitor, assess, steward and enhance local waterways, watersheds and shorelines. Staff liaise with local government counterparts regularly to assess program direction and undertake short- and long-term planning to meet environmental protection goals.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Watershed, watercourse and shoreline protection is a key priority for several CRD services related to wastewater and stormwater management, as well as integrated watershed management.

The CRD undertakes its own shoreline monitoring rating system as a tool to identify receiving waters under stress from land-based stormwater contaminants. These ratings are used by local governments to prioritize remedial actions and capital planning. This sampling is not designed to address recreational (swimming) beach monitoring.

The Island Health Authority (IHA) is responsible for overseeing public health related to regional swimming areas. IHA historically collected the associated samples and reported results but is now transitioning the responsibility for sample collection to local governments (and the CRD for regional parks). IHA will continue to provide sample analyses and interpretation and publish advisory information on recreational beach safety.

On May 17, 2019, Mayor Haynes sent a letter to the CRD (Appendix C) indicating the District of Saanich would welcome a conversation with the CRD to explore undertaking a beach sampling service; at this time, Saanich is the only municipality to express this request. A summary of regional IHA sampling locations can be found in Appendix D.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The CRD work discussed in this report is undertaken within existing service levels and annual budgets. Additional sampling to support recreational beach sampling (May-September) would require additional resources (approximately \$15,000, shared across several services) to hire seasonal, part-time staff to collect and deliver these additional samples. This service level adjustment would be brought forward for consideration during the 2020 budget deliberations.

CONCLUSION

Staff continually review the CRD's service delivery to meet local government, public and regulatory expectations. The UVic-ELC report contains 12 recommendations targeted at regional municipalities. A number of these recommendations are or will be addressed through existing CRD service delivery, while others fall under local, and provincial government jurisdiction and mandate.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Parks & Environment Committee recommend to the Capital Regional District Board:

That this report be received for information.

Submitted by:	Glenn Harris, Ph.D., R.P.Bio., Senior Manager, Environmental Protection
Concurrence:	Larisa Hutcheson, P.Eng., General Manager, Parks & Environmental Services
Concurrence:	Larisa Hutcheson, P.Eng., Acting Chief Administrative Officer

CL/DG:ss

Attachments: Appendix A – Recommendations from the University of Victoria Environmental Law Centre Report, *Cleaning up CRD Waterways and Beaches*
Appendix B – Selected CRD Actions under Each UVic-ELC Recommendation
Appendix C – Letter from Mayor Fred Haynes, District of Saanich re Beach Water Sampling (May 17, 2019)
Appendix D – Island Health Summer Beach Sampling Locations