

## February Boot Tales Director's Update

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### Contact

In Person, Gumboot Café,

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Now is a great time of year to **explore some of the trails up above us on the mountainside**. High water levels in the creeks make for some spectacularly beautiful waterfalls and lush green sanctuaries. Not sure of your way around up there? Ask for map resources at a local outdoor store, and be sure to take the "10 essentials" of the backcountry with you, even if you're just out for a few hours.

We are so fortunate to have that wildness at our doorstep. A special **thank you** to those who work so hard, often in a volunteer capacity, to protect the ecological integrity of Mt. Elphinstone, and to make it accessible to those seeking to appreciate its many values.

### Budget Season Ahead

With Hydro rates, MSP premiums, and food prices all rising at levels well above the Consumer Price Index, **the Board is well aware of the sensitivity of households to property tax increases**. At the same time, there are assets with a replacement value of \$254 million to manage, service levels to maintain, and a community with range of concerns to address.

Of note in a recent staff report was a healthy pattern of reduction in net debt. For an overview of the Regional District's finances, a review of the Board's Financial Sustainability Policy, 5 year Financial and Integrated Plans and more, see the January 22<sup>nd</sup> Special Corporate and Administrative Services Agenda on the SRDC website.

The formal Budgeting process will take place in **two rounds this year, February 9-12 and March 7-9**. New this year will be **a presentation and Q and A sessions by SCRD staff in Roberts Creek**, and other Rural Areas. This will be a great opportunity to learn more about both how a Regional District operates, and specifically this year's Budget picture. One certainty is that there will be an increase in rates for those of us on Regional Water, in order to fund the demand management and supply enhancement initiatives that were so evidently needed over the summer.

### Water

Speaking of water, In January, **I posted an update on how the Board was moving forward on this issue on the News Blog of my website**. As we continue to receive reports and take action on what is perhaps our most pressing concern here on the coast, I will continue to update that post. There will be upcoming Budget proposals with regards to infrastructure upgrades, including lowering the access channel up at Chapman Lake, along with further review of the Drought Management Plan and the specifics of Stages 1-4. The results of a staff report on the feasibility of a cistern rebate program will be posted there as well. Because of the dynamic and interconnected nature of the issue, look to my website for summaries and links.

### Keeping Informed

Speaking of staying up-to-date (I should be in radio), if you've gotten this far in the newsletter it's because you like to know what's going on with your local government. If that's the case, I would highly recommend an **electronic subscription to the SCRD's "Coast Current" Monthly Newsletter**. January's

specifics of the new Transit Bus Fare Structure, and a link to the Winter/ Spring Recreation Guide. It can be found here, <http://www.scrd.ca/Newsletter> and if you subscribe, will appear monthly in your email box. **Issues of particular interest to Roberts Creekers will continue to be highlighted in this newsletter.**

Cast your memory back to the morning in early July when we all woke up to an orange sky and a significantly compromised air quality. That dramatic intersection of environment and emergency was a reminder of our fundamental dependence on systems that are in flux. Everything from rising food prices, peak oil, climate and economic instability, and recent tectonic events speak to us of the need to pay attention to what keeps us thriving. To that end, a great team is putting together the following event:

## **“Taking Care of Each Other - Ar Roberts Creek Resilience and Emergency Preparedness Forum”**

**Roberts Creek Hall, Sunday Feb 21<sup>st</sup>, 9:30 – Lunch (together)**

Far from taking a “Survivalist” approach, this event is aimed at forging stronger community awareness and connections around how we can take care of one another in the event of an event, be it a slowly-emerging or fast-moving one. A recent VCH Survey found rural Sunshine Coasters at the top of the Lower Mainland list in terms of household preparedness. The bad news? That still involves only 50% of us with 72hr readinerf Mitigation, Caring for School-age children, and the Psychological

*Aspects of events.e these are subject to change) in jury*

**-“Open Space” identified nvñvjcation of areas of common interest**

**-12:30 Lunch together elongatedo o in common interest groups**

**This will necessarily be a quick treatment of a broad and deep topic. Intended outcomes include:**

- determining community interest levels in areas of further learning or action,
- raising awareness of existing resources and avenues for engagement
- sharing findings from the event in a future Boottales mailout, and RC Library Reading Room resource,
- a community better able to support not only itself, but other areas of the Sunshine Coast.

Bring your perspectives on the topic, **a pen, a bag for hard copy resources, \$10 for lunch** and an appetite for engagement. Too busy? Thinking of not coming? Experts in the field agree that getting past the “denial” stages of processing this challenge is a key piece of the picture! Your neighbours will thank you.

PS. What is this “Resilience” term that keeps getting thrown around? Like “Sustainability” definitions vary, but a further breakdown of the term often includes components like adaptation, diversity, decentralization, self-activation, flexibility, shared understanding, inclusive participation, redundancy, self-organization, managed connectivity, and learning.