

Roberts Creek SCRD Director's Newsletter, December 2017

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In person: Gumboot Café, most Saturday Mornings, 10-12.

Email first if you want to be certain that I'm there.

Wishing everyone the best of the holiday season ahead and a peaceful new year.

Please do make an effort to ensure that you are visible to drivers as a pedestrian or a cyclist. If your personal safety isn't reason enough, then consider the implications of an accident on others or our first responders.

Solid Waste Challenges

Recently, an SCRD engineering consultant estimated that our "Sechelt Landfill" has approximately **10 years of capacity left**, if disposal rates stay consistent. Disposal rates are most closely linked with economic conditions. Since **organic material** (food scraps, garden waste, compostables, food soiled paper) makes up 40% of waste stream, the Board has directed staff to focus their efforts in this area. There are many ways and many reasons to get these items out of the "waste stream". The environmental, social and fiscal benefits of doing so are significant.

Recycling programs present a greater challenge, as the materials are processed off the coast, are more susceptible to both market forces and changes in provincial producer subsidy programs. A number of SCRD Directors recently went to Vancouver to advocate for increased provincial funding support for smaller Regional Districts like ours. Of course as with all materials, (including water) **reduction** and **reuse** hold the keys to shrinking our ecological footprint to sustainable levels.

Minimizing disposal rates, funding the safe closure of the Sechelt Landfill, and exploring options for post landfill plans (all of them expensive) will be a **key focus for the SCRD over the next number of years.**

Fixed Link Completed

I would encourage you to get out sometime this month on the Purple Trail in Cliff Gilker Park and try out the upgraded **fixed link between the east and west banks of Roberts Creek**. Parks staff have done a great job on this project, and bridge upkeep has been a focus of the Parks Department asset management program.

As I write this, it looks like we are finally seeing the **provincial study on another fixed link of interest**, available here:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/transportation/transportation-reports-and-reference/reports-studies/vancouver-island/sunshine-coast-fixed-link>

In addition, BC Ferries has just proposed a \$250 million dollar upgrade to the Horseshoe Bay terminal, one of three key elements required for hourly sailings on Route 3 in the future. (The Langdale terminal upgrade and two purpose-built ships being the others).

A Bike Shop in Roberts Creek?

A rezoning application has been submitted for a property across the road from the Post Office. The **application for retail use of the site** is in line with our Official Community Plan, as it sits within an area designated for “Village Core Potential Commercial Growth”.

Want to learn more? A **Public Information Meeting is being held this Tuesday, Dec 12 at 7PM** at Roberts Creek Hall.

Community Forest Block E28

As you may know, The District of Sechelt is the sole shareholder in the “Sunshine Coast Community Forest”, which has 3 tenure areas on the coast. The Sechelt Mayor and Council recently held a public meeting with regards to E28 as they consider community concerns with regards to the harvesting of the block, which **sits within the Roberts Creek OCP boundaries in an area designated for enhanced ecological protection**. The previous government indicated no interest in opening conversations around increased protection for the Elphinstone area.

With the help of our MLA, the Mayor was able to have discussions at the Ministerial level. The District is in the position that if the block is not harvested by the Community Forest, it would likely be offered to other entities to harvest. There is hope that a potential review of “landscape level” planning on the coast will result in fewer “operational level” conflicts. If you are looking for more of my thoughts on the topic, then you will find them here: <https://robertscreekmark.com/news-blog/>

shishálh Nation Interests

Our Roberts Creek Official Community Plan speaks early and often of **the importance of our relationship with the shishálh and Skwxwú7mesh Nations**. Those relationships form an important part of the SCRD Board’s Strategic Plan. With regards to land use issues, the SCRD has a referral and consultative relationship on many items. Having said that, because of the context of unceded crown land, First Nations often deal directly with the Province or private tenure holders on many issues.

The shishálh Nation has been working for years on agreements with regards to forestry within their territory. Council signed a “Forestry Shared Decision-Making Pilot Agreement” with the Province, as well as a recent agreement with Interfor, a major tenure holder in shishálh territory. The agreements are a significant step in implementing the Nation’s 2007 Strategic Land Use Plan (SLUP), which can be found here: <http://www.shishalh.com/docuploads/rights-and-title/Proactive-Planning---shishalh-First-Nation-Strategic-Land-Use-Plan-1424411827-1.pdf>

The SLUP document includes maps, designated Conservation Areas (18% of territory), Cultural Emphasis Areas (36%), potential Community Forest areas (5%) and other Stewardship Areas (42%), and is rooted in a cultural history that goes back thousands of years. The **shishálh priorities for these areas may or may not align** with those of us who would like to see a greater level of ecological protection, for example, on the slopes of Mt Elphinstone.

Part of Reconciliation involves the acknowledgement that First Nations are free to identify their own priority interests, and to act on those interests. **This is emphasized in Article 18 the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**, a document endorsed by both federal and provincial governments http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfi/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf

I have never felt comfortable with us “newcomers” making assumptions and inserting First Nations into our own landuse disagreements, and would encourage Roberts Creekers to be mindful of that phenomenon. I offer my congratulations to shishálh in the realization of broader Nation input into activities within their territory.

Roberts Creek Advisory Planning Committee

Advisory Planning Committees provide input to the SCRD Planning Department with regards to land use proposals, OCP amendments, bylaws and permits. Our Roberts Creek APC meets on the 3rd Monday of the month, and has room for a couple of new members. More information is available in the December Coast Current Newsletter below, and **applications are being accepted until January 15th**. You are also welcome to come and learn more about about the opportunity one Saturday morning at the Gumboot.

SCRD December Newsletters Topics

The **December edition of the SCRD’s “Coast Current” Newsletter** contains information on Holiday Food Reuse and Recycling tips, the Winter/Spring Recreation Guide, Dakota Ridge ski passes, Holiday Transit Service and more. It can be found at: <https://secure.campaigner.com/CSB/public/archive.aspx?args=MjMzOTUwNzA%3d>

Note that a hard copy of this Newsletter is posted in the glass case beside the General Store, and hard copies are available in the Roberts Creek Library Reading Room.