

Responses to questions asked by attendees

Q1	Will the marine outfall system be able to handle larger flows in the future?
R1	Yes. The marine outfall options are designed to handle 640 m ³ /day, which is approximately three times more than the original design capacity of the treatment facility.
Q2	Will property owners who are outside the service area boundary but in proximity to potential receiving environments be consulted?
R2	Yes. Consultation with residents, First Nations, and stakeholders will occur.
Q3	Will property owners who are outside the service area boundary but in proximity to potential receiving environments be included in the referendum?
R3	No. Only property owners within the specified service area (ie: Bowser Village Centre) can vote in a potential referendum as they are the ones who would incur the direct financial costs of the system.
Q4	If the treatment plant had marine disposal, how far would the treated effluent affect the Georgia Strait Basin?
R4	Effluent must be virtually undetectable (ie: matching background ocean levels) within 100 m of the end of the outfall (called the “initial dilution zone”). The treatment system also includes UV disinfection of the effluent, which isn’t required in this environment, but was included in the interest of the neighbouring shellfish lease. UV disinfection removes the health risk of potential pathogens in the effluent. Receiving environment monitoring is required under Provincial regulation.
Q5	Will treatment remove contaminants of emerging concern like pharmaceuticals?
R5	Some pharmaceuticals are removed during secondary treatment but the technology to remove emerging contaminants, like pharmaceuticals, from municipal wastewater is still being developed. Currently, emerging contaminants are addressed through source control; by keeping them out of the waste stream whenever possible.
Q6	What happens to the solids removed during wastewater treatment?
R6	Solids are trucked to the wastewater treatment facility in French Creek where they are further treated to become biosolids. Currently, biosolids are beneficially re-used as a woodlot fertilizer. The biosolids are applied to forest stands with nutrient-poor soils to improve tree growth. The French Creek treatment plant creates “Class A” (high quality) biosolids, as defined by the <i>Organic Matter Recycling Regulation</i> .
Q7	How often would the solids be trucked to French Creek?
R7	The Bowser Village treatment facility is designed with generous solids storage capacity. Solids would likely be trucked to French Creek once every 2-3 weeks.

Q8	Does the RDN get paid for the selling of biosolids, or are they given away?
R8	There are costs to manage biosolids in accordance with the <i>Organic Matter Recycling Regulation</i> . The RDN pays a fee to SYLVIS Environmental to manage RDN biosolids. As well, the RDN pays a fee to VIU to perform research on the biosolids woodlot. Compared to other jurisdictions, the RDN has one of the lowest operational costs for solids management. The RDN biosolids program won the 2013 “Excellence in Management of Biosolids Award”.
Q9	If biosolids are beneficial as a fertilizer, why can’t they be sold?
R9	The RDN currently treats biosolids to a level that is appropriate for application in areas with restricted access (no public). The provincial regulation requires further management before biosolids can become a product that is marketable to the public. The costs associated with those extra steps make the sale of biosolids unprofitable.
Q10	Will the overall cost of construction be divided equally among each of the 70 parcels within the proposed service area?
R10	This is a question that we don’t have an answer to at this time. There are several factors that must be considered, including zoning and development potential of units. The cost distribution will be further refined as the project moves forward. We expect to have this information at the next public meeting, well in advance of a referendum.
Q11	Do these costs typically get spread over 20 or 30 years?
R11	Yes. 20 years is typical for financing. The project amortization period will be confirmed at the next public meeting.
Q12	Tell me about the pump stations – what do you see and hear? Would they be on private property?
R12	The pump stations are buried wet wells, with electrical kiosks at the surface. You would just see the kiosk. There may be some noise during a power outage when the genset comes on. The stations are all located within municipal right-of-ways.
Q13	Does the water in the area of the proposed outfall move around a lot or does it stagnate?
R13	There is good flushing at the proposed outfall locations. Freshwater leaving the outfall immediately moves up the water column when it meets the seawater, further improving mixing. Major currents in the area follow contours of the land.
Q14	Do currents typically flow south in this area?
R14	Yes. Currents in this area dominantly flow south.
Q15	What is a “pump station catchment area” [as shown on the collection system poster]?
R15	A pump station catchment area is all of the properties that contribute to a particular pump station. For example, on the poster, the sewage from the properties that are shaded purple would flow into “pump station 2”.
Q16	How will the amount that each property pays be decided? If I have a house on an acreage, will I pay for that whole area?
R16	Those numbers will be determined in the new year. Once the capital cost estimates are further refined, we will work with the Finance and Planning departments to figure out the best way to distribute the costs.

Q17	Do the current septic systems pose environmental concern?
R17	This study did not look at the effect of existing septic system on the environment. This project is focused on facilitating development potential in the Bowser Village Centre as envisioned by the Village Centre Plan.
Q18	The Island Scallops lease was raising scallops – didn't they have to stop doing that due to pollution caused by failed septic systems?
R18	<i>[Community member response]</i> No. That was due to calcification of the ocean.
Q19	Would a treatment system like the one proposed here improve the ability to control what's going in to the ocean better than septic systems?
R19	Yes.
Q20	It may be useful to pursue grant funding opportunities from the Federal or Provincial governments to look at potential impacts of septic systems in the area.
R20	Pursuing grant opportunities to explore this issue may be a viable option for other/future projects. It is very difficult to quantify and pin-point the impacts of septic systems on the environment.
Q21	If the referendum passed, would we have the option to keep our septic system for now and opt-in to sewer at a later date?
R21	No. If the referendum passed, everyone in the service area would have to connect to sewer within an established timeframe..
Q22	How would existing users benefit from future connections, or from connecting immediately rather than holding off?
R22	Properties that connect early will more likely benefit from grant funding. It is less likely that grant funding would be available for expansion or for later connections. As more properties connect, economies-of-scale would also reduce overall operations and maintenance costs.

Follow-up questions asked since the public meeting

Last updated August 22, 2016

Q23	Why was the treatment plant located in the southwest corner of the Village Centre, and not downslope near the water?
R23	<p>The chosen location:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is within the Bowser Village and designated for civic use, which includes utilities, - has a 99 year lease with the Province, - is located as far as possible from residential areas to mitigate odour and noise issues, and, - has ideal ground conditions for foundation bearing. <p>Having a treatment plant location at a lower elevation near the water would place it closer to residential properties and would result in much higher costs (design and construction) due to the requirement for more advanced odour control, more complex foundations, and concerns around archaeological deposits. In addition, the property would need to be purchased which would add to the cost of the overall project.</p>