

**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO**

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2013  
7:00 PM**

***(RDN Board Chambers)***

**A D D E N D U M**

**PAGES**

- 2. LATE DELEGATIONS** (requires motion)
- 3                   **Rob Christopher, Nanaimo Search and Rescue Society**, re Society activities and financial update 2012 – 2013.
- 4                   **EnidMary Sangster-Kelly**, re Director Fell’s motion on Smart Meters.
- 5                   **Joanne Sales**, re Smart Meters.
- 6                   **Philip Marchant**, re Director Fell’s motion on Smart Meters.
- 5. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE**
- 7 - 15           **Ted Olynyk, BC Hydro**, re Further Consideration of Smart Meters.
- 16               **Joanne McLeod**, re resignation from the appointed position of Alternate Electoral Director, Area ‘A’.
- 7.4 SCHEDULED ADVISORY AND SELECT COMMITTEES**
- 17 - 19       **Electoral Area ‘F’ Parks and Open Spaces Advisory Committee** (All Directors – One Vote).
- That the minutes of the Electoral Area ‘F’ Parks and Open Spaces Advisory Committee meeting held Monday, November 19, 2012 be received for information.*
- 20 - 21       **Electoral Area ‘H’ Parks and Open Spaces Advisory Committee** (All Directors – One Vote).
- That the minutes of the Electoral Area ‘H’ Parks and Open Spaces Advisory Committee meeting held Wednesday, November 28, 2012 be received for information.*

22 - 24

**Regional Parks and Trails Select Committee** (All Directors – One Vote).

*That the minutes of the Regional Parks and Trails Select Committee meeting held Tuesday, February 5, 2013 be received for information.*

25 - 50

**Benson Creek Falls Regional Park Management Plan Terms of Reference**

1. *That the Terms of Reference for the Benson Creek Falls Regional Park Management Plan be approved.*
2. *That staff be directed to issue a Request for Proposals for a Project Consultant for the development of the Benson Creek Falls Regional Park Management Plan 2014-2024.*
3. *That Director Young and Director Dempsey of the Regional Parks and Trails Select Committee be appointed to participate as members of the Advisory Committee for the Benson Creek Falls Regional Park Management Plan.*

**Parcel Tax**

*That the Regional Parks and Trails Acquisition and Capital Parcel Tax be increased from \$12.00 to \$13.00 in the 2013 Annual Budget and Five Year Financial Plan.*

**O'Halloran, Matt**

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**Subject:** FW: Delegation - Feb 26 RDN Board Meeting

**From:** Rob Christopher [mailto:nansar08@gmail.com]

**Sent:** Monday, February 25, 2013 11:17 AM

**To:** O'Halloran, Matt

**Subject:** Re: Delegation - Feb 26 RDN Board Meeting

Hi Matt, thanks for your call.

I can confirm that I will be a delegation of one at tomorrow's Board meeting. I'll have some informatino for the Members that I will provide to you or Jackie prior to the meeting.

Thanks and best regards,

Rob Christopher  
President  
Nanaimo Search & Rescue Society

## O'Halloran, Matt

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**From:** EnidMary Sangster-Kelly <enidsk@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 24, 2013 9:50 PM  
**To:** O'Halloran, Matt  
**Subject:** Smart Meters

Greetings Matt,

I would like permission to address the RDN Board, this Tuesday evening, Feb. 26, 2013, re Julian Fell's motion on Smart Meters.

Thank-you so much,

EnidMary Sangster-Kelly.

250 248 2928

## O'Halloran, Matt

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**From:** Joanne Sales <joanne@glasswing.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 25, 2013 3:58 PM  
**To:** O'Halloran, Matt  
**Subject:** Delegation for Feb 26

Hello

I'm writing with the request to be a delegation at the board meeting on Feb 26, to speak about Smart Meters. I understand I only have 5 minutes to speak.

Thank you for this opportunity at this late time.

Joanne Sales  
250-752-4816  
Qualicum Beach

## O'Halloran, Matt

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**From:** Phil Marchant <marchantp@shaw.ca>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 26, 2013 9:05 AM  
**To:** O'Halloran, Matt  
**Subject:** Board meeting tonight

I wish to comment on the motions that will be put forth on behalf of Director Fell regarding smart metering. Thankyou----  
Philip Marchant, 950 Carmen Crescent, Gabriola Island. V0R 1X2



FOR GENERATIONS

February 21, 2013

Board of Directors  
Regional District of Nanaimo  
6300 Hammond Bay Road  
Nanaimo, BC, V9T 6N2

Dear Chair Stanhope and Nanaimo Regional District Directors,

We understand that the Regional District of Nanaimo was presented with incorrect and misleading information about the safety of smart meters at the Committee of the Whole on February 12, 2013. We appreciate the opportunity to address that misinformation in the detailed submission to the Board that follows this letter.

BC Hydro takes the safety of our customers and employees very seriously. In addition, as a provincial crown corporation, we are accountable for the information we provide to our customers and to the public. The information we provide must be factual and accurate.

BC Hydro appreciates the perspectives of local governments and communities. We hope to work with you to address your concerns and to build awareness of the need to upgrade the electricity grid.

#### **Upgrading the Electricity Grid**

The Smart Metering Program is about more than just exchanging meters. It is about upgrading the electricity grid, which is the backbone of our economy and supports our quality of life in B.C.

The electricity system that powers our province has not changed significantly in 50 years. We are using more technology in our homes and businesses now than ever before. Smart meters will upgrade the aging electricity system and ensure it keeps up with growth in demand.

That's why smart meters, like power lines, are standard BC Hydro equipment needed to get power to homes and businesses, and to ensure the safe, efficient delivery of electricity to British Columbians. With over 95% of the new meters installed across B.C., the meter installation phase of the program is nearing completion.

The old meters are not compatible with the new system and it is getting harder and harder to support them. In addition, as we transition to the new system, the cost of maintaining the old meters would have to be subsidized by the majority of customers who have accepted a new meter.

The new meters will get the lights back on faster and safer during power outages; provide customers with tools to conserve energy and save money; reduce wasted electricity; and keep rates low by helping BC Hydro operate more efficiently – as BC Hydro is a cost of service utility, if we save money, so do our customers.

### **Smart Meter Safety**

Smart meters are safe and communicate using radio frequency signals that are similar to what has been used safely for decades in televisions, radios, and other common household devices.

B.C.'s Provincial Health Officer, Health Canada, and the World Health Organization all confirm that BC Hydro's new smart meters pose no known health risks. Like BC Hydro, these organizations are accountable to the public to provide accurate information.

Independent testing by certified engineers has confirmed that a BC Hydro smart meter communicates for 1.4 seconds per day and has a power density of 2 microwatts per square centimeter. These signals are even below the strictest precautionary limits in the world, set out by Switzerland.

### **Working with Our Customers**

Our priority is to continue to work with customers that still have concerns about getting a new meter. In the meantime, we will not install a smart meter without the customer's agreement. If a customer does not accept a smart meter, we will not come back until we have made a decision about what, if any, alternatives are available.

BC Hydro operates within the B.C. *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, so it is necessary that customers contact us directly to discuss their individual accounts. **Customers with questions or concerns should contact BC Hydro by email at [smartmeters@bchydro.com](mailto:smartmeters@bchydro.com) or by telephone 1-800-409-8199.**

Thank you in advance for your consideration of the attached information in response to the submission "Further Consideration of Smart Meters" from February 12, 2013. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Ted Olynyk  
Community Relations Manager, Vancouver Island  
BC Hydro



## I. SMART METERS AND HEALTH

BC Hydro's smart meters communicate for a total of less than one minute per day. In fact, independent testing on BC Hydro's new meters has confirmed that the meter communicates for about 1.4 seconds per day. To put this into everyday context, four minutes in an office with Wi-Fi is the equivalent of one year with a smart meter.

A smart meter is a measurement device just like an old analog or digital meter. What makes the new meters "smart" is that they communicate data back to BC Hydro using radio frequency (RF) signals similar to those used safely for decades in televisions, radios and other common household devices. Radio frequency is not new technology – it is technology that has been confirmed to be safe and has been used safely around the world for decades.

When it comes to health, BC Hydro relies on recognized international bodies and the expertise of our public health authorities including Health Canada, the BC Center for Disease Control, the Provincial Health Officer, and the World Health Organization. Health scientists and authorities consider all available peer-reviewed scientific studies, on an ongoing basis, and employ a weight-of-evidence approach when evaluating possible health risks from exposure to radio frequency. This approach takes into account not only the number of studies, but more importantly, the quality of those studies.

The World Health Organization, Health Canada, the BC Center for Disease Control, and B.C.'s Provincial Health Officer have all confirmed that wireless meters pose no known health risk or reason for concern. Included below are conclusions from these health authorities.

### i. Conclusions from Health Authorities

#### World Health Organization (WHO)

The WHO has made the following statement in relation to non-ionizing radiation which includes radio frequency:

"In the area of biological effects and medical applications of non-ionizing radiation approximately 25,000 articles have been published over the past 30 years. Despite the feeling of some people that more research needs to be done, scientific knowledge in this area is now more extensive than for most chemicals. Based on a recent in-depth review of the scientific literature, the WHO concluded that current evidence does not confirm the existence of any health consequences from exposure to low level electromagnetic fields. However, some gaps in knowledge about biological effects exist and need further research."

- World Health Organization

On May 31, 2011 the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), part of the WHO, classified the radio frequency signals emitted by cell phones as a "possible carcinogen" or a 2B classification, alongside items like coffee and pickled vegetables. This classification indicates that they will continue to research these items.

In October 2011, the *British Medical Journal* published an update of a nationwide Danish cohort study of mobile phone subscribers, a joint work between researchers from the Institute of Cancer Epidemiology, Danish Cancer Society, and the IARC Section of Environment and Radiation. This study showed no link between mobile phone use, including longer term use of more than 10 years, and the risk of glioma or any other brain tumour. These results were not available when the 2B classification was made by the IARC.

#### Health Canada

Health Canada has developed guidelines for safe human exposure to RF energy. The current version of these exposure guidelines is specified in a document called Limits of Human Exposure to Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Energy in the Frequency Range from 3 kHz to 300 GHz - Safety Code 6 (2009). BC Hydro's smart meters are assessed at less than 0.5% of Health Canada limits in typical urban environments (a measurement that includes other sources of radio frequency).

According to Health Canada, "in the case of RF fields, health effects research on the subject has been ongoing for over 50 years and there are thousands of published studies. There is a great weight of evidence that RF field intensities below Safety Code 6 are not harmful. This conclusion is based upon the bulk of scientific evidence from animal, in-vitro and epidemiological studies that have been carried out worldwide, including at a Health Canada laboratory."

Health Canada continues to monitor the science regarding RF exposure and will take action if future research establishes that RF energy exposure poses a health risk to Canadians.

In addition, as described in the open letter from Canadian scientists (18 May 2012), radio waves at the level less than Health Canada Safety Code 6 limit are safe and there is no mechanism for 'bio-accumulation.' Further, the radio strength benchmark for Safety Code 6 is considered as a cumulative value of all radio waves in the area. At no time may the cumulative radio level exceed the prescribed levels. (English version starts on page 9 of the linked document).

#### BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC)

The BCCDC measured radio frequency from BC Hydro's smart meters in January 2012. The testing found that the radio frequency was a fraction of a percent of Health Canada's Safety Code 6 limit for public exposure to radio frequency, even when multiple meters were tested and when the measurement was done at a very short distance from the meter. The testing also found that "BC Hydro smart meter RF emissions outside homes are lower than the RF exposure associated with some household devices, e.g. baby monitors, cell phones, and microwave ovens."

The full test results are available at BC Center for Disease Control report on BC Hydro Smart Meter.

### Provincial Health Officer

The Chief Medical Health Officer undertakes periodic reviews of the evidence and provides public updates as necessary. In the June 2011 update related to radio frequency, the Chief Medical Health Officer issued the following conclusion: "Given the current scientific evidence, the consensus of public health practitioners is that at current exposure levels these electromagnetic fields do not constitute a threat to the health of the public." - Statement from the Provincial Health Officer

#### ii. **Smart Meter Safety**

Like all electricity grid equipment, smart meters must meet rigorous safety standards. More specifically, they are governed by, and subject to, the British Columbia Electrical Safety Regulations. Other standards, which are considered by BC Hydro for safety purposes and which are industry accepted standards, include the American National Standards Institute, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers and International Electrotechnical Commission.

Radio transmission and radio apparatus, like smart meters, are also subject to federal jurisdiction in Canada under the *Telecommunications Act*. Industry Canada also regulates radio apparatus and the design and operation of radio apparatus. One of the requirements is that radio apparatus be operated in a manner that complies with Health Canada's Limits of Human Exposure to Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Fields in the Frequency Range from 3 kHz to 300 GHz, Safety Code 6, 1999.

Smart meters have been designed to operate safely and in a manner that, as established by scientific research into the effects of radio frequency emissions, has no demonstrable health or environmental effects. There are three factors to consider for assessing the safety of radio frequency: strength, duration and distance. In particular,

- Smart meters emit very low power and radio frequency levels, which are well below the Health Canada exposure limits as well as the precautionary limits found in Switzerland, which has the world's strictest regulations in respect to radio frequency levels and emissions.
- Switzerland has a precautionary limit of 4.5  $\mu\text{W}/\text{cm}^2$  for highly sensitive areas like schools and hospitals. In comparison, BC Hydro smart meter signals are less than 2  $\mu\text{W}/\text{cm}^2$  at the same distance of 20 centimetres that Switzerland's limits are based on.
- Unlike other wireless infrastructure, smart meters use very low power signals – about 1 watt. This is less than 2 microwatts per square centimetre ( $\mu\text{W}/\text{cm}^2$ ) when standing adjacent to the meter. A microwatt is one millionth of a watt. To put that into context, the handheld radios used by first responders and in forestry work are 5 watts.
- Smart meters are installed outside of the home and are encased in metal meter boxes that help direct radio frequency signals away from the home.

- Radio signal strength decreases exponentially with distance – when distance doubles, signal strength falls to a quarter of the original level. In fact, at a distance of 40 cm from the meter, the radio signal strength drops to 0.5  $\mu\text{W}/\text{cm}^2$  – less than 0.08 per cent of the Safety Code 6 limit.
- Smart meters emit radio frequency levels that are significantly lower than other household devices, and, in fact, exposure to radio frequency during the 20 year lifespan of a smart meter is less than a single 30 minute cellular phone call. The calculation for this comparison is included below:

**Calculation**

Total exposure from smart meters over 20 years  $\Phi_1$  (Data from Planetworks independent testing):

$$\Phi_1 = \text{Power Density at 20 cm distance} \times \text{Transmission Time for 20 years}$$

$$\Phi_1 = 2.3 \frac{\mu\text{W}}{\text{cm}^2} \times \left[ \left( \frac{0.904 + 1.83}{2} \right) \frac{\text{seconds}}{\text{day}} \times 365 \frac{\text{days}}{\text{year}} \times 20 \text{ years} \right]$$

$$\Phi_1 = 22952 \text{ seconds} \frac{\mu\text{W}}{\text{cm}^2}$$

Divide by conservative value for cell phone exposure based on Richard Tell Associates report, page 2.

$$t_{\text{cell-equivalent}} = \Phi_1 \div \text{Power Density of Cellphone at Nominal Usage distance}$$

$$t_{\text{cell-equivalent}} = \Phi_1 \div 30 \frac{\mu\text{W}}{\text{cm}^2}$$

$$t_{\text{cell-equivalent}} = 22952 \text{ seconds} \frac{\mu\text{W}}{\text{cm}^2} \div 30 \frac{\mu\text{W}}{\text{cm}^2}$$

$$t_{\text{cell-equivalent}} = 765 \text{ seconds}$$

$$t_{\text{cell-equivalent}} = 12.75 \text{ min}$$

**iii. Smart Meters are Independently Tested**

Planetworks Consulting, a certified engineering firm located in North Vancouver, has conducted independent testing on BC Hydro’s new meters and confirmed that the meter communicates for about 1.4 seconds per day. Planetworks also confirmed through this testing that the strength of a meter is approximately 50% of the strictest standards in the world.

Planetworks Consulting also tested a bank of 40 BC Hydro meters in a real environment in a community in B.C. The testing showed that the signal from the meter bank remained at or below the level from radio, TV, cellular, and Wi-Fi signals in the nearby vicinity and was less than a fraction of a percentage of Health Canada Safety Code 6.

The full Planetworks reports are available at [www.bchydro.com/smart\\_meters](http://www.bchydro.com/smart_meters).

**iv. How Do Smart Meters Communicate Data to BC Hydro?**

There is a lot of misinformation about how smart meters communicate. Part of the confusion is that each smart metering system is set up to meet a particular utility's needs and therefore they all operate differently. The following information is specific to how BC Hydro's smart meters operate.

BC Hydro's smart meters are not communicating constantly. Throughout the day, the smart meter records a customer's electricity consumption on an hourly basis, and stores it securely on a computer chip inside the meter. Three times per day, or every eight hours, the radio inside the smart meter sends the customer's hourly electricity use data to BC Hydro.

In order to send the data to BC Hydro, the data from the smart meter is securely routed either from meter to meter until it is received by a collector, or directly to a collector. The collector then sends the data to BC Hydro.

The collectors are mounted on existing BC Hydro poles 18 to 24 feet above the ground. Collectors use low power, infrequent signals like smart meters (about 1 watt), and are inactive 99% of the time.

Even though smart meters route data between each other, the total communication is still less than one minute per day.

**II. RESEARCH**

Public health authorities and BC Hydro are accountable to provide accurate information to the public. The following provides information related to articles and studies that claim radio frequency has negative health effects, and the response from recognized authorities on the subject.

**i. *BioInitiative Report***

This report is a collection of separate articles and reports that is self-published. Critical analysis from recognized international bodies with a mandate to research or advise the public has stated that the *BioInitiative Report* has not undergone independent peer review and "is not consistent with consensus of science, nor is it rigorous enough to raise doubt compared to known quality research." The report does not provide details about the authors' credentials like their field of expertise or where they received their degrees. Many of the authors are in fact not accredited to speak on the subject and they do not represent an authoritative body. In fact, one of the studies in the report has been accused of scientific

fraud. For example, the papers by Rudiger et al. on DNA breakage caused by cell phones were withdrawn by the authors after the prestigious journal *Science* reported scientific misconduct in August 2008.

The European Commission Joint Research Centre concluded that: “None of these conclusions [of the Bio Initiative Working Group Report] is supported by the major national or international reviews...that have made use of the internationally accepted weight-of-evidence approach to study results.”

The Health Council of Netherlands concluded that: “In view of the way the BioInitiative report was compiled, the selective use of scientific data and the other shortcomings mentioned above, the Committee concludes that the BioInitiative report is not an objective and balanced reflection of the current state of scientific knowledge. Therefore, the report does not provide any grounds for revising the current views as to the risks of exposure to electromagnetic fields.”

ii. **Madga Havas**

Magda Havas is a professor of botany at Trent University. Her work related to electromagnetic hypersensitivity (EHS) has received criticism from [Health Canada](#). More specifically, her endorsement of the “Graham-Stetzer filter,” which she claims to reduce the level of “dirty electricity” (emissions from Electromagnetic Fields or EMF) has been shown by Health Canada to actually increase the level of EMF, although the levels are still within safety standard. Further, Trent University physicists have issued a [public statement](#) refuting her health risk claims, saying “we do not believe that electromagnetic waves associated with WiFi in schools pose a health risk to children or teachers.” Additional [critical analysis of her studies](#) is available on a website maintained and contributed by McGill University professors.

iii. **Henry Lai**

Henry Lai, a psychology professor and one of the authors of the *BioInitiative Report*, claims that smart meters communicate 24/7 and that radio frequency has cumulative biological effects. These claims contradict the letter from [61 Canadian Scientists](#), and do not take into account how smart meters communicate data (see above information).

III. **BC HYDRO’S RESPONSIBILITY**

Smart meters are a necessary part of B.C.’s electricity system. They are standard equipment just like utility poles and power lines, and are required to modernize the system and ensure the safe, efficient delivery of electricity to British Columbians.

BC Hydro has been entering property to exchange meters for 50 years. In fact, BC Hydro typically exchanges about 40,000 meters per year as part of regular business. The right to enter private property to install, maintain and exchange our electric meters is included in the *Hydro and Power Authority Act* and the *Electricity and Gas Inspection Act (Canada)*.

In addition, when you request service from BC Hydro, you agree to the terms and conditions in BC Hydro's Electric Tariff, including the obligation to provide access to your property so that we can read, maintain or exchange the BC Hydro meter.

BC Hydro's Electric Tariff has been approved by the British Columbia Utilities Commission and contains the terms and conditions that govern our service to all customers. The full Electric Tariff is available on the BC Hydro website and at your local library.

#### **IV. COMMITMENT TO OUR CUSTOMERS**

BC Hydro is continuing to work with customers to answer questions about the new metering system. BC Hydro will not install a new meter without the customer's agreement. If a customer does not accept a smart meter, we will not come back until we have made a decision about what, if any, alternatives are available.

Customers always have the option to relocate the meter base to a different location on their property, in accordance with local electrical guidelines and at their cost. If a customer is interested in moving their meter base, contacting a qualified electrician is the first step.

**More information about smart meters is available at [www.bchydro.com/smartmeters](http://www.bchydro.com/smartmeters). Customers can also email [smartmeters@bchydro.com](mailto:smartmeters@bchydro.com) or telephone 1-800-409-8199.**

Thank you for your consideration of this information.

Joanne McLeod

2760 Ritten Road

Nanaimo, B.C.

V9X 1W4

February 23, 2013

Board of Directors

Regional District of Nanaimo

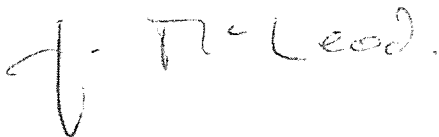
6300 Hammond Bay Road

Nanaimo, B. C. V9T 6N2

Dear Sirs and Madams:

Please accept this letter as my official resignation from the appointed position of Alternate Electoral Director, Area "A", effective immediately. I have found this brief exposure to politics to be very interesting and informative; however, time concerns related to other duties and interests have caused me to rethink my current level of involvement. I have enjoyed working with staff and have found them to be pleasant and helpful. I will retain some of my involvement with staff and Directors through my appointment to the Agricultural Advisory Group.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. McLeod." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "J" and a clear "McLeod." following it.

Joanne McLeod

Cc. Alec McPherson, Director, Area "A"



**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO**

**MINUTES OF THE ELECTORAL AREA 'F'  
PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (POSAC)  
REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD MONDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2012 7:00 PM  
AT ERRINGTON WAR MEMORIAL HALL**

**ATTENDANCE:** Julian Fell, director RDN board, Chair  
Reg Nosworthy  
Skye Donald  
Alfred Jablonski  
Steve Chomolok  
Barbara Smith

**STAFF:** Elaine McCulloch, Parks Planner  
Wendy Marshall, Manager of Parks Services

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Fell called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

**MINUTES**

MOVED A. Jablonski, SECONDED R. Nosworthy that the Minutes of the Electoral Area F Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee (POSAC) be approved.

CARRIED

**BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

R. Nosworthy requested clarification of the reference to 'Act 1, 2, 3 – 5, and 6' on the RDN Map of the Proposed Low-Traffic Road and Trail Route for Coombs-Errington. Ms. McCulloch advised that the ACT designations were provided to the Ministry of Transportation last year as part of a funding application for the Errington School Trail; this map is no longer operative.

Ms. Michel, Parks and Trails Co-coordinator, has been in contact with Steve Cross' family regarding the proposed trail in his name in Malcolm Park. This matter will be followed up on in the spring of 2013.

**REPORTS**

**Monthly Update of Community Parks And Regional Parks And Trail Projects**

Ms. McCulloch summarized the Community Parks and Regional Parks and Trails Projects reports for May, July to August, September and October.

Ms. Marshall reviewed the process necessary to obtain a Park Permit for private commercial purposes, with the intent to collect fees. S. Donald requested that Ms. Michel provide information to POSAC regarding fireworks certification in a Park.

### **2012 Electoral Area F Detailed Project Plan – November 2012**

Ms. McCulloch reviewed the 2012 5-year Project Plan Working document.

Arrowsmith Community Trail (ACT) Update:

Ms. Michel, Parks and Trails Coordinator, will attend the first POSAC meeting in 2013 to update the Committee on the Arrowsmith Community Trails, including how volunteer assistance can be used in the advancement of ACT.

David Lundine Trail – there is continued interest by neighbours in reviving the David Lundine Memorial Trail in Errington. S. Chomolok suggested that there had been a great group of helpers involved in the creation of the original trail and possibly could be called upon to assist again. This will be added to the list of potential trail development projects.

Cranswick Trail - B. Smith asked whether the surveys had been completed on the Cranswick gazetted right of ways and was advised by Ms. McCulloch that it will be done this winter when there are no leaves left on the trees. B Smith suggested that \$10,000 should be budgeted for trail survey fees as identified in previous Project Plan Working Documents.

S. Donald questioned where the unspent parks development allocation goes and whether we could use it to further projects in 2012. Ms. Marshall advised that the funds are added to the surplus which is carried forward to fund future years.

At S. Donald's request, Ms. McCulloch reviewed the reasons why the development of Romaine Park was postponed to a future year.

S. Donald questioned whether the Meadowood Park plans should take precedence over other expenses i.e. picnic tables in existing parks.

MOVED S. Donald, SECONDED R. Nosworthy that the Phase #2 of the Meadowood Concept Plan be deprioritized in favour of a review with reprioritization of all Park and Trail projects.

CARRIED

R. Nosworthy commented that 3 POSAC meetings are not enough to adequately deal with the issues and suggested that the committee members meet on an Ad Hoc basis without RDN staff. This meeting was set for the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November at a place to be determined.

Further discussion on the 5-Year Project Plan will be postponed to a future POSAC meeting.

**Meadowood Way Community Park Concept Plan**

Ms. McCulloch reviewed the Meadowood Way Community Park Concept Plan.

MOVED R. Nosworthy, SECONDED S. Donald, to support the Meadowood Concept Plan as presented.

CARRIED

MOVED S. Chomolok, SECONDED R. Nosworthy to receive the Reports.

CARRIED

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Community Parks and Trails Strategy – Northern Electoral Areas**

Ms. Marshall reviewed the Community Parks and Trails Strategy (CPTS) – Northern Electoral Areas of E, F, G and H.

**Committee Appointments to the Community Parks and Trails Strategy Advisory Committee**

The Advisory Committee along with staff from the RDN will be tasked with providing direction regarding the acquisition/protection, development and management of Community Parks and Trails.

B. Smith questioned whether there had been any new Parkland acquired through the subdivision process. Chair Fell commented that the larger lot sizes precluded the operation of the parkland allocation.

MOVED J. Fell, SECONDED A. Jablonski that Barbara Smith will be the 2013 Area F Appointment to the CPTS Committee.

CARRIED

**ADJOURNMENT**

MOVED R. Nosworthy that the meeting be adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO**

**MINUTES OF THE ELECTORAL AREA 'H' PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ADVISORY  
REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETING  
November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

**Attendance:** Bill Veenhoff, Chair, Director, RDN Board  
Barry Ellis  
Richard Leontowich  
Valerie Weismiller  
Marguerite Little  
Nancy Robertson  
Dagmar Seydel

**Staff:** Elaine McCulloch, Parks Planner  
Wendy Marshall, Manager of Park Services

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**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Veenhoff called the meeting to order at 10:00am.

**LATE DELEGATION**

Wes Witton presented a petition, signed by local residents, in favour of developing a trail through existing parkland connection between Leon and Marshall roads.

**MINUTES**

MOVED B. Ellis, SECONDED D. Seydel that the minutes of the June 27, 2012 meeting be approved.

CARRIED

**COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE**

MOVED V. Weismiller, SECONDED M.Little that the following be received:

**C. Midgley, RDN to L. Thornburn, Mid Island Bluegrass Society. RE: Application**

CARRIED

R. Leontowich spoke about the electrical updates for the Lighthouse Community Centre. An increase from 60 amps to 100 amps is required. Funds are included in the draft Electoral H Parks budget. Project is to begin sometime in March.

**REPORTS**

Ms. McCulloch reviewed the Community and Regional Parks and Trails Update for June – October 2012. Highlights include:

- Ms. Marshall reported on the stairs at Shoreline Drive – Scheduled to fix stairs this winter.

- Henry Morgan Update - Ms. McCulloch reported on the permitting for Henry Morgan Park. It is expected that the development and building permit was approved shortly. The project tender has been issued and closes on the November 30<sup>th</sup>. Submissions reviewed and a contractor selected. Once the contract is signed it will be 120 days to completion but will not include pumptrack or playhouse with the exceptions of the footings. Ballenas shop students have been contacted regarding building the playhouse. V. Weismiller asked if a trail was going along the undeveloped parks of Esray Rd. to connect to Henry Morgan. It was suggested that once the park development is complete and a route is flagged, a local trail group could blaze a trail.
- Horne Lake Regional Park –A request for proposals for a Park Operator has been issued and submissions are now being reviewed.

MOVED, D. Seydel, SECONDED N. Robertson to receive the reports.

CARRIED

## NEW BUSINESS

### Community Parks and Trails Strategy

The Committee appointed D. Seydal to the Community Parks and Trails Strategy Committee to represent Electoral District Area 'H'.

### Water Access

Ms. McCulloch suggested that a beach access subgroup be formed to review the beach accesses and report back. Sub group members are Val, Nancy and Richard. Each member will come to next meeting with 2 Beach Access priorities. It was reported that the Beach access next to Sandbar has been gated.

The application process for the 2013 Committee members was discussed.

## ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

M. Little – Reported that there are seaweed collections taking place on local beaches. Chair Veenhoff gave an update on licensing and harvesting. Apparently an invasive species of seaweed is being harvested and the BC Ministry of Agriculture has been granting licences. Marguerite will send Bill the Information on licensing.

R. Leontowich spoke about the possibility of heating the hall with geothermal.

D. Seydal spoke about a bylaw for trees, especially tress on the waterfront. Chair Veenhoff will bring it to the RDN board.

## ADJOURN

MOVED N. Robertson that the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

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Chair

**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO**

**MINUTES OF THE  
REGIONAL PARKS AND TRAILS SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, AT 12:00PM  
IN THE RDN COMMITTEE ROOM**

**Attendance:** Director Diane Brennan, Chair, City of Nanaimo  
Director Maureen Young, Electoral Area 'C',  
Director Joe Stanhope, Electoral Area 'G'  
Director Julian Fell, Electoral Area 'F'  
Director Dave Willie, Town of Qualicum Beach  
Director Brian Dempsey, District of Lantzville  
Director Howard Houle, Electoral Area 'B'  
Director Marc Lefebvre, City of Parksville

**Staff:** Tom Osborne, General Manager of Recreation and Parks  
Paul Thorkelsson, Acting Chief Administrative Officer  
Wendy Marshall, Manager of Park Services  
Margaret Paridaen, Regional Parks Planner  
Ann-Marie Harvey, Recording Secretary

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**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Brennan called the meeting to order at 12:02pm.

**MINUTES**

MOVED Director Lefebvre, SECONDED Director Young that the minutes of the Regular Regional Parks and Trails Select Committee meeting held December 4, 2012 be approved.

CARRIED

**COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE**

MOVED Director Dempsey, SECONDED Director Stanhope, that the following correspondence be received:

**W. Marshall, RDN to P. Hills** RE: Fence Construction at Moorcroft Regional Park

CARRIED

**REPORTS**

**Monthly Update of Community and Regional Parks and Trails Projects November/December 2012**

Ms. Marshall gave a summary of the November/December Regional Parks and Trails Projects highlighting the new signs for the Parksville/Qualicum Links are up, a new operator at Horne Lake Regional Park and work being done at Moorecroft Regional Park.

Director Fell noted that one of Mrs. Marshall's reference to a board meeting date should be January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

MOVED Director Stanhope, SECONDED Director Fell, that the Monthly Update of Community and Regional Parks and Trails Projects November/December 2012 report be received as amended.

CARRIED

## **Benson Creek Falls Regional Park Management Plan Terms of Reference**

MOVED Director Young, SECONDED Director Stanhope that:

1. That the Terms of Reference for the Benson Creek Falls Regional Park Management Plan be approved.
2. That staff be directed to issue a Request for Proposals for a Project Consultant for the development of the Benson Creek Falls Regional Park Management Plan 2014-2024.

CARRIED

MOVED Director Stanhope, SECONDED Director Houle that Director Young and Director Dempsey of the Regional Parks and Trails Select Committee be appointed to participate as members of the Advisory Committee for the Benson Creek Falls Regional Park Management Plan.

CARRIED

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Fire Share Cost**

Ms. Marshall reported that the Ministry of Forests was looking at streamlining their cost sharing agreements based on uses, risk location, etc. Our cost was \$1000/yr and in the new agreement will be \$900/yr. This agreement will go to the Board in 3 weeks and covers fire protection for Mt. Benson, Horne Lake, Mount Arrowsmith Massif and Community Parks in Electoral Areas 'H' and 'C'.

MOVED Director Stanhope, SECONDED Director Fell that the update be received.

CARRIED

### **Parcel Tax – Re: G. Holme Correspondance**

MOVED Director Willie, SECONDED Director Lefebvre that the recommended Parcel Tax motion be deferred until after the In Camera meeting.

CARRIED

### **Plan for Accessibility**

Director Lefebvre asked about a plan for accessibility in our parks and trails. Ms. Marshall stated that accessibility is always taken into account but topography issues are usually what determines accessibility. She noted that with a park like Moorecroft the prospect of accessibility is easier to achieve and will be examined as development moves forward.

## **IN CAMERA**

MOVED Director Young, SECONDED Director Stanhope, that pursuant to Section 90(1) (e) of the Community Charter the Committee proceed to an In Camera Committee meeting to consider items related to land issues.

Time: 12:38

CARRIED

Return to Regular meeting at 1:43pm

**Parcel Tax**

MOVED Director Lefebvre, SECONDED Director Willie, that the Regional Parks and Trails Acquisition and Capital Parcel Tax be increased from \$12.00 to \$13.00 in the 2013 Annual Budget and Five Year Financial Plan.

CARRIED

**ADJOURNMENT**

MOVED Director Young that the meeting be adjourned at 1:55pm

CARRIED

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Chair





CAO APPROVAL		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
EAP		
CCW		
JAN 25 2013		
RHD		
BOARD		
RPTSC		

## MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** Tom Osborne  
General Manager, Recreation and Parks Services

**DATE:** January 25, 2013

**FROM:** Wendy Marshall  
Manager of Parks Services

**FILE:**

**SUBJECT:** Benson Creek Falls Regional Park Management Plan Terms of Reference

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### PURPOSE

To obtain approval of the Terms of Reference for undertaking a Management Plan for the Benson Creek Falls Regional Park 2014-2024.

### BACKGROUND

The Benson Creek Falls Regional Park (BCFRP) is a 31.3 hectare (78 acres) regional park located at the confluence of Benson Creek and Flynnfall Creek in Electoral Area 'C'. The RDN park was established in August 1, 1991 through a lease with the Province of British Columbia for a period of 30 years, to August 2021.

With its close proximity to Nanaimo, Benson Creek Falls Regional Park is a popular destination for viewing of the waterfalls on Benson Creek and Flynnfall Creek. The park is well known for its ammonite fossils, hiking, birding and swimming. Mountain bikers and equestrians also use some of the existing trails in and around the park. The site's steep topography, diverse and fragile habitats, combined with growing recreation pressures and safety concerns indicate the need for a comprehensive management plan that protects the conservation values and manages positive visitor experiences into the future.

The Management Plan will guide the operations, development, and stewardship of the property based on a comprehensive analysis of the property's natural values and public consultation process. The plan will confirm the long-term vision, principles, goals and objectives for BCFRP and will identify shorter term management policies and actions for the period 2014-2024. The plan is to be reviewed after five years (2019) and updated formally at ten-year intervals. This will be the Regional Park's second management plan. The first management plan for the park was completed in 1999 by a consultant, however, it was a 'management plan brief' without a full public consultation process.

## **PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Terms of Reference describes the parameters for the development of the management plan including a number of project objectives and resulting deliverables. It is proposed that a consultant be hired to undertake the development of the Management Plan for Benson Creek Falls Regional Park, drawing on sub-consultant professional services as needed during the process. The Terms of Reference also describes the establishment of a staff Working Group consisting of parks staff to coordinate the project and to review draft material with the aim to anticipate issues or implications related to implementation.

An Advisory Committee will also be established to provide advice and direction on materials produced prior to public review including: vision statement, principles, goals and objectives, issues, summaries from public input, management policies, and concept plans. The Advisory Committee will also review changes to the draft plan prior to presentation to the Regional Board.

The proposed composition of the Advisory Committee is: two representatives from the RDN Regional Parks and Trails Select Committee (RPTSC), and an invitation for representation from the local Snuneymuxw First Nation and Stz'uminus First Nation.

## **TIMEFRAME FOR PLAN COMPLETION**

Staff anticipate the project can be completed by December 2013 with the following phases:

### **PHASE 1: Project Initiation - March to June, 2013**

- Request for proposals
- Selection of consultant
- Project Start-up Meeting
- Research; park inventory & analysis
- Base mapping
- Preliminary issues, program and vision development
- Preparation of open house materials (survey, panels, maps, website info);
- Advisory Committee Review
- Open House (#1); stakeholders interviews
- Analysis and review of public feedback with RDN staff

### **PHASE 2: Draft Management Plan Development - July to August, 2013**

- Consultant writes draft Management Plan: vision, principles, goals, objectives, policies, implementation strategy, and supporting maps
- Preparation of preliminary park master plan concept
- Advisory Committee review of draft Management Plan and Concept

### **PHASE 3: Final Plan Completion - September to December, 2013**

- Preparation of Open House #2 materials (survey, information panels, maps, website info)
- Open House (#2) and presentation of draft Management Plan

- Analysis and review of public feedback with RDN staff
- Complete final Management Plan, Park Master Plan Concept, Implementation Strategy and supporting maps
- Advisory Committee Review of Final Management Plan
- Draft of final Management Plan on RDN website and for public comment
- RPTSC review of final Management Plan
- Submit final Management Plan for Board approval

## **ALTERNATIVES**

1. That the Terms of Reference for Benson Creek Falls Regional Park Management Plan be approved and two members of the Regional Parks and Trails Select Committee be assigned to the project's Advisory Committee.
2. That the Terms of Reference for Benson Creek Falls Regional Park Management Plan not be approved and provide alternative direction to staff.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The management planning process will take approximately 1 year and will span the 2013 budget. The 2013 budget allocation is \$35,000 excluding taxes.

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

Benson Creek Falls Regional Park is unique in the regional park system with steep-sided ravines, and waterfalls on Flynnfall and Benson Creeks. The site's steep topography and related environmental sensitivities means that the park activities and amenities need to be carefully planned, executed and maintained to minimize detrimental impacts. Conservation and enhancement of the forested and aquatic ecosystems within the Benson Creek Falls watershed will be an important aspect of an environmentally sustainable and resilient region.

As part of the RDN's pursuit to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the concept of carbon-banking has been discussed in relation to Benson Creek Falls Regional Park. While no plans are in place, there is potential to further this discussion within the context of the park management plan.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

A Terms of Reference has been prepared to guide the preparation of the 2014-2024 Management Plan for Benson Creek Falls Regional Park. The Terms of Reference proposes a consultation process that will allow for residents, organizations and government agencies to be involved in the Plan's preparation. The Management Plan will be coordinated by a staff Working Group and guided by an Advisory Committee to ensure an agreeable and successful outcome. The total project budget is \$35,000 (excluding taxes) allocated in the 2013 Regional Parks Capital Budget.

Benson Creek Falls Regional Park has seen very little in the way of development and upgrades over the past decade, however the park has seen a substantial amount of pressure from use, primarily caused by residents and tourists wishing to access and view waterfalls on Benson Creek and Flynnfall Creek.

It is good practice for the Regional District to undertake management plans as they provide comprehensive baseline research and information to help manage the conservation, recreation and operational components of a park; they provide meaningful avenue for public consultation on the future of park and recreation opportunities; they are useful for prioritizing operational projects and budget; and, they provide updated communication tools to help promote park values. Therefore, staff recommend approval of the Terms of Reference attached as *Appendix I*.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Terms of Reference for the Benson Creek Falls Regional Park Management Plan be approved.
2. That staff be directed to issue a Request for Proposals for a Project Consultant for the development of the Benson Creek Falls Regional Park Management Plan 2014-2024.
3. That two members of the Regional Parks and Trails Select Committee be appointed to participate as members of the Advisory Committee for the Benson Creek Falls Regional Park Management Plan.



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Report Writer



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General Manager Concurrence



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CAO Concurrence

Appendix I

## **Benson Creek Falls Regional Park Management Plan**

### **Terms of Reference**

# Regional District of Nanaimo

## Benson Creek Falls Regional Park Management Plan 2014-2024

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

February, 2013



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## **Images of Benson Creek Falls Regional Park**

# Benson Creek Falls Regional Park

## Management Plan

### Terms of Reference

#### ONE: INTRODUCTION

The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) is seeking proposals from qualified consultants interested in preparing a management plan for Benson Creek Falls Regional Park. This will be the Regional Park's second management plan. The first Management Plan was prepared in 1999 by Archadia Landscape Architecture Ltd. An updated Management Plan will continue to guide the operations, development, and stewardship of the property based on a comprehensive analysis of property values and public and stakeholder consultation. The plan will confirm the long-term vision and goals for Benson Creek Falls Regional Park and identify shorter term management policies and actions for the period 2014-2024. The plan is to be reviewed after five years (2019) and updated formally at ten-year intervals.

The 2014-2024 Benson Creek Falls Regional Park Management Plan will build upon previous studies to investigate current conditions and priorities for the park that will help guide future recreational management, environmental stewardship and development actions for the park (see reference documents and reports).

#### *Regional Context*

The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) manages about 2,026 hectares of regional park, trail and conservation lands in the mid-Vancouver Island area along with another 584 hectares of neighbourhood or Community Park and trail. A Regional Parks and Trails Plan, completed in 2005, sets out the goals of the RDN in respect to land management, stewardship and recreational use of regionally significant properties. The RDN seeks to protect and steward the lands while at the same time, provide rewarding and educational outdoor recreational experiences. A primary management goal for these lands will always be to strike a sustainable balance between environmental protection and human use.

#### *Park Location*

Benson Creek Falls Regional Park is a 31.3 hectare park located at the confluence of Benson Creek and Flynnfall Creek in Electoral Area C of the Regional District of Nanaimo. Steep-sided ravines, 20 to 50 metres deep, surround Benson Creek and Flynnfall Creek through the Park. Flynnfall Falls, located at the confluence of these two creeks is approximately 10 metres high. The 15-20 metre high Benson Creek Falls, also known as Ammonite Falls, is located on Benson Creek near the south boundary of the Park. Several other tributaries, which are dry in summer,



also flow into Benson Creek within the Park. Hoskins Creek flows eastward through the Park near the north boundary.

### *Park History*

By the early 1960's the recreational and educational attributes of the area were well known to local residents, hikers, and fossil enthusiasts. Around that time, a key event leading to the establishment of the Park occurred. A 16" diameter ammonite fossil located near the main falls on Benson Creek was destroyed by vandals. This event provided the impetus for a group of local supporters to seek protection for the remaining fossil features, dramatic creek canyons and waterfall area as Provincial Park. For almost 40 years, the RDN attempted to achieve protection of the area through ongoing negotiations with senior government.

The Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources (formerly Ministry of Environment Lands and Parks) issued Lease #103987 to the RDN commencing August 1, 1991 with a lease area of 31.33 ha for regional park purposes for a period of 30 years to August 2021. The lease has a special proviso requiring that the RDN shall not fill, build or remove vegetation within 7.5 metres of the top of the stream banks without prior written consent of the Province.

### *Park Description and Current Uses*

The area is well known locally with websites promoting Ammonite Falls as a tourist destination, as well as many online maps promoting mountain biking in the area. Cyclists typically stage from the Jamieson Road area and ride the south ridge lines on Crown and private forestry lands. The park itself is used mainly by hikers, birders, as well as swimmers destined for Benson and Flynnfall Creeks.

While web maps and information involve trespass over private lands to get into the park, the Weigles Road trailhead is the formal signed entrance for people arriving at the park in vehicles (off Doumont or Biggs Rds). Roadside parking is located about 400 metres from the Biggs-Doumont intersection via Biggs Road, and is relatively central to the City of Nanaimo's 84,000 population. Users also informally access the park from the east off the 'McGarrigle' logging road, and from the south off the undeveloped Jameson Road right-of-way. There is a need to work with adjacent landowners to manage trespass over private lands to access the park.

The park is surrounded by large tracts of relatively undeveloped resource lands, used mainly for forestry or gravel extraction. Since logging operations have ceased in the park, the main roadbeds have been left intact. Development of the park by the RDN has been limited and most trail development has been undertaken on an ad hoc basis by volunteers. Though the steep switchback trail is closed, (and posted with signs), park visitors continue to use the trail leading to Benson Creek. Strong enthusiasm exists in the community to use the park for hiking, biking, nature appreciation and access to the creeks for swimming. Mountain bikers and equestrians also use some of the existing trails in and around the park. Strategies are needed to encourage responsible and safe recreation activities in the Park.

## *Conservation Values*

The most valuable, diverse and ecologically sensitive habitats within the Park are the deep, steep-sided ravines and associated Benson Creek and Flynnfall Creek stream beds. The greatest threats to these areas are the potential negative environmental impacts of unmanaged activities, unsanctioned stream crossings, and illegal, dangerous trails along steep slopes. The site's steep topography and related environmental sensitivities mean that recreational improvements related to park use need to be carefully planned, executed and maintained to minimize detrimental impacts. Any planned park development must comply with the Crown lease that states the RDN shall not fill, build or remove vegetation within 7.5 metres of the top of the stream bank without prior written consent of the Province.

## *Previous Studies on Benson Creek Falls Regional Park*

Basic field survey information within the Park was gathered in 1999 by Coastal Resource Mapping Ltd. Survey information included identification of top of and bottom of bank location and elevations for Flynnfall Creek and Benson Creek, and locations of existing trails, to a level of accuracy adequate for planning purposes.

A current Environmental Overview of Benson Creek Falls Regional Park report is being completed in 2013 and will be available for use in the management plan. The last environmental assessment was completed in 1999 by J.C. Lee and Associates Ltd., biological consultants. The overview included assessments of environmental sensitivity, enhancement requirements, constraints to development, and opportunity to support outdoor recreation uses such as trail development and nature interpretation. Results of the Lee report were incorporated into the 1999 BCMP.

The 1999 Management Plan indicates that there are no simple, straightforward solutions to providing improved recreational trail access across either Benson Creek or Flynnfall Creek within or near the park boundaries. Since the 1999 report, there has been little development in the park, except for the installation of regulatory and directional signage, trail bridges, trail maintenance and hazard tree management.

## *Reference Documents and Data*

- Benson Creek Falls Regional Park Management Plan Brief, Archadia Landscape Architecture Ltd., 1999
- Current Environmental Overview of Benson Creek Falls Regional Park, 2013.
- Preliminary Environmental Overview of Benson Creek Falls Regional Park, J.C. Lee and Associates Ltd., May 1999.
  - RDN GIS base mapping: The Regional District of Nanaimo GIS Department uses ArcGIS 10. Data will be provided in either Shapefile or FileGeodatabase format projected to UTM Zone10 NAD83 Metres. For the purposes of the project the data provided may include: legal parcels, road centreline, regional park, Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory data, any park features captured by GPS and TRIM data: 20m contours and watercourses. Orthorectified imagery is also available with the most recent capture dates being April 2011 and summer 2012. These layers and others can be examined in the RDN interactive webmap – RDNMap.

- Project data deliverables are preferred to be in the form of Shapefile or FileGeodatabase compatible with ESRI ArcGIS10.”
- RDN Regional Parks and Trails Plan 2005 – 2015
- East Wellington - Pleasant Valley Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1055, 1997.



## TWO: MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Benson Creek Falls Regional Park Management Plan (BCMP) is a strategic plan that will define the future direction, policies, priorities, and actions for the Regional District of Nanaimo in the short and long term with a 10 year focus (2014-2024). The Plan's implementation will guide the operations, development and stewardship of the park.

The BCMP will include the following objectives: gather and analyze baseline information, establish direction, and develop implementation strategies.

### *Baseline Information*

Baseline data collection should include the following information which should be presented using charts, maps and photos:

#### *Property and Land Status*

- Size and location (extents)
- Legal encumbrances
- Applicable zoning, official community plan and land and park use regulations
- History of land use to acquisition and since acquisition
- Neighbouring land uses
- Applicable fire protection services
- Detailed property description – trails, road networks, vegetation, views, access (supported with GPS or survey data)

#### *Ecological Values*

- Existing sensitive ecosystems
- Presentation of environmental features of the park based on the environmental overviews and management implications for environmental protection
- Impact of outside park boundary resource extraction and recreational use on natural values

#### *Recreation Values*

- Present BCFRP as part of the Regional Parks and Trail System
- Identify who is using the property (provide detail on use by user type - individuals through to large groups i.e. hikers, mountain bikers, equestrians, winter sports enthusiasts, unauthorized motorized vehicles, and special event holders)
- Identify why the property is being used (what attracts people to the property?)
- Identify how the property is being used i.e. access points
- Inventory and map all existing and proposed trail routes and show related improvements
- Identify when the property is being used
- Examine the value of BCFRP for regional tourism
- Present statistical evidence of demand for trails and outdoor nature and park experiences on Vancouver Island and in the Nanaimo area.

### *Cultural Values*

- Identify historical values of the site, including traditional use by First Nations
- Identify any registered archaeological sites or sites of heritage interest
- Assess the extent to which the property is a known 'place' within the Regional District, particularly the Nanaimo area, and characterize the nature of human attachment to it.

### *Resource Values*

- Indicate impacts of resource extraction in surrounding lands, e.g. forestry, gravel extraction
- Make reference to protection of paleontological features in the park.

### *Educational Values*

- Review how BCFRP has been used for educational purposes by external agencies, e.g., Vancouver Island University's forestry program, and other community groups
- Identify past and continuing research activities, carried out at BCFRP
- Investigate opportunities for formal integration of the site into area school and university-college curriculum for either education or research purposes (provide examples from elsewhere).

## *Establish Direction*

### *Seek out Issues, Opportunities, Constraints and Ideas*

- Identify the main issues facing the managers of BCFRP
- Organize the issues and ideas by subject or theme
- Consult with the public and stakeholders on issues, ideas

### *Confirm Vision, Principles and Goals*

- Develop a simple overarching vision statement
- Identify a short list of management principles coming out of the vision;
- Establish a set of goals with more detailed objectives
- Flowing from the objectives should be proposed policies and specific actions that will be undertaken over the next ten years of BCMP
- Create a Park Master Plan Concept that expresses vision, amenities and actions
- Seek public input on the vision, principles, goals, actions, concept

## *Develop Implementation Plan*

*Develop broad-based management policies for achieving Goals and meeting Vision and Principles, addressing the following areas of general management concern and suggest others as needed:*

- Use
- Public accessibility
- Trail plans and development
- Public safety and security

- Partnerships
- Environment
- Stewardship
- Recreation, education and culture
- Resource management
- Development

*Develop targets and actions*

- Outline actions to be accomplished within the ten year management plan period
- Identify what parties are accountable for each action
- Identify when actions are to be completed by
- Provide cost estimates for each action item
- Use tables and time line charts to convey material

*Public Consultation Program*

The Regional District of Nanaimo's Public Consultation/Communication Framework Policy No.A1.23 measures a successful project as one that provides for meaningful and on-going public involvement. The success of the public process component of the Benson Creek Falls Regional Park Management Plan will be achieved through meeting the following goals:

- Anyone likely to be affected by a decision shall have opportunities for input into that decision;
- The consultation process shall allow for a meaningful level of involvement;
- All positions and input received will be considered; not all input can and will be accommodated;
- The process shall recognize and take into account the different characteristics and abilities of the community;
- The process shall recognize interdepartmental issues and concerns, and shall involve and coordinate internal staff resources as necessary or appropriate.
- The integrity of broad public involvement must be paramount to the process and must not be superseded by any individual or interest group;
- The RDN shall provide feedback, in a timely manner, about how public input has been utilized in Board decisions, and how the public will be affected;
- An evaluation component shall be built in to the process to allow those involved to learn from past experiences and to ensure the proper use of resources.

A key role of the Consultant in compiling the BCFRMP is to develop, lead and interpret a region-wide community input process that contributes to the project's objectives.

The public input process must use a varied approach to obtaining input in order to maximize participation and must include but is not limited to:

- ongoing consultation with the RDN Staff Working Group and BCMP Advisory Committee;

- interviews with community organizations, and other government and corporate organizations;
- online public surveys on the RDN website as well as project updates and resources on the RDN website; and
- a minimum of two regionally advertised Open Houses to solicit views, comments and opinions on the BCFRP and to present the draft BCFRPMP and receive comments prior to the preparation of the final document.

### *Preliminary List of Stakeholders*

**Local Recreation Clubs** – hiking, snowshoeing, running, mountain biking: Nanaimo Mountain Bike Club, Arrowsmith Mountain Bike Club, field naturalists.

**Provincial & Other Government Agencies** – City of Nanaimo, District of Lantzville, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources

**First Nations** - Snuneymuxw First Nation, Stz'uminus First Nation

**Neighbouring Private Corporations** (trail use agreements) – Vancouver Island University Woodlot, TimberWest, Island Timberlands, Crown woodlot licence holders.

**Services and Organizations** - East Wellington Volunteer Fire Dept.; BC Forest Service, Mid Island Fire Zone, RDN East Wellington / Pleasant Valley Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee, School District 68, Vancouver Island University.

**Community/Stewardship Groups** - Nanaimo and Area Land Trust, Arrowsmith Naturalist, WiTS (wildlife and tree stewardship – BC Nature), Qualicum Beach Museum.



### THREE: CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

The development of the Management Plan will be coordinated by a Staff Working Group and guided by an Advisory Committee.

The proposed composition of the Staff Working Group is: Regional Parks Planner, Manager of Parks Services. In addition, other RDN staff resources including Planning, Mapping and Parks Operations staff will be brought into the project as specific information or feedback is needed. The Staff Working Group will meet to discuss and review project timeline, progress, and next steps. The Staff Working Group will also review draft material with the aim to anticipate issues or implications related to implementation.

The proposed composition of the Advisory Committee is: two representatives from the RDN Regional Parks and Trails Select Committee (RPTSC), invitation for representation from the Snuneymuxw First Nation, Stz'uminus First Nation. This committee will provide advice and direction on materials produced prior to public review including: principles, vision statement, goals and objectives, issues, summaries from public input, management policies, and concept plans. The Advisory Committee will also review changes to the draft plan prior to presentation to the Regional Board.

The Advisory Committee will:

- Review project plan
- Confirm vision statement and goals
- Review research, and all public consultation materials
- Review issues, trends, and public feedback from the open houses
- Review and discuss management plan strategies (i.e. vision, principles, actions, implementation plan)
- Review draft plans before they go to public review
- Review issues & feedback from public input of draft plan
- Review changes to the draft plan and final plan.



## *Project schedule and phases*

### *PHASE 1: Project Initiation: April- June, 2013*

- Research and Data review
- Inventory/Analysis & Issue Identification
- Base mapping
- Preliminary issues, program and vision development
- Development of public engagement strategy and materials
- Advisory Committee Review of public engagement strategy and materials (survey, maps, input topics)
- Open House #1 (website, survey); interviews with key stakeholders
- Analysis and review of public feedback with RDN staff

### *PHASE 2: Draft Management Plan Development: July –August, 2013*

- Consultant writes draft Management Plan: vision, principles, goals, actions
- Preliminary master plan concept development
- Advisory Committee Review of draft Management Plan

### *PHASE 3: Final Management Plan Completion: September-December, 2013*

- Circulate Draft Management Plan (email and website, survey) and hold Open House #2
- Analysis of public feedback; consultant makes revisions to Final plan and concept
- Advisory Committee review of final Management Plan; circulate final Management Plan for public comment (email, RDN website, survey)
- Final revisions of Management Plan
- Regional Parks and Trails Select Committee review of Management Plan
- Revisions to final Management Plan for Board approval



## *Level of Effort and Budget*

The budget of \$35,000 (excluding taxes) is expected to cover all fees, expenses, sub-contractor services, consultation and applicable taxes. Expenditure of the budget should reflect the following priorities:

**Phase #1: Project Initiation.....30%**

*Deliverables:*

- Base maps
- Identification of preliminary issues, program and vision development
- Public engagement strategy and materials
- Meeting with Parks staff to review materials; meeting with Advisory Committee
- Conduct Open House #1; review and analysis of public feedback

**Phase #2: Draft Management Plan Development.....30%**

*Deliverables:*

- Completion of draft Management Plan including vision, principles, goals, objectives, policies, implementation strategy, supporting maps
- Park master plan concept
- Meeting with Parks staff to review materials; meeting with Advisory Committee

**Phase #3: Final Management Plan Completion.....40%**

*Deliverables:*

- Materials preparation and conduct Open House #2
- Analysis and review of public feedback
- Completion of final Management Plan with supporting maps and implementation strategy
- Park master plan concept
- Delivery of final documents and digital files

100%

Given the level of effort expected and the proposed project schedule, the RDN schedule of payments will be as follows:

- a) Upon satisfactory completion and delivery of Phase #1 deliverables: 30% payment June, 2013
- b) Upon satisfactory completion and delivery of Phase #2 deliverables: 30% payment August 2013
- c) Upon satisfactory completion and delivery of Phase #3 deliverables: 40% payment December 2013

### ***Deliverable Notes***

A clear and succinct writing style should be used. The use of tables, matrices, charts, maps and photographs should support written content where applicable. The main section of the plan should be no more than 50 to 60 pages, including maps, photos and charts. Detailed

background information should be contained in appendixes if directly relevant to the understanding of the main document and otherwise placed in separate annexes.

All material presented by the contractor must be submitted in triplicate hard copy as well as in RDN approved digital formats. At least some photographs should be of presentation quality and useful in the promotion of BCMP; videos may be used to document the current state of the property.

All studies, reports, maps, photos and related resources developed in this project shall become the property of the RDN.



## FOUR: CONSULTANT PROPOSAL

### *Proposal Requirements*

#### **Proposed Methodology and Table of Contents**

A proposed methodology and table of contents for the Benson Creek Falls Management Plan; a work program detailing stages, deliverables and timing (This work program will detail all phases, including research, public involvement and plan development).

#### **Proposed Public Engagement Process**

An outline of a proposed comprehensive consultation process that:

- Will not direct or control the scope of the project.
- Will facilitate a broad range of input through a continuum of questioning from very general matters to very detailed issues.
- Will account for different stakeholder knowledge levels in regards to Regional Park policies and goals.
- Will utilize a varied approach to obtain input from a wide range of Regional District residents (i.e. online surveys; open house with interactive maps, information panels; public presentation, website information; interviews of key stakeholders)
- Will obtain detailed and accurate input that will yield data that can be analyzed.

#### ***Qualifications***

Information on the qualifications, ability and past experience of the company with similar projects, including references of other Park Plan projects that the consultant has completed, preferably in a Regional District setting;

#### ***Personnel***

A list of the personnel who will work on the project, their individual experience specifically related to Park Planning and what their role will be;

#### ***List of Sub-consultants***

A list of sub-consultants, including their company and staff experience specifically related to their role; and,

#### ***Project Schedule and Budget***

A schedule that includes the fee structure and the upper limits of the project cost. This fee structure must include an outline of fees for at least the following:

- Sub-consultants
- Plan development; mapping, graphics, word processing, park concept design
- All disbursements
- Hourly rate schedule of personnel assigned to the project and hour requirements for each personnel

- Harmonized Services Tax
- All other fees associated with the project

### *Consultant Selection Process*

#### **Proposal Deadline**

Deadline to receive proposals is **16:30:00, on April 2, 2013** by email, mail or in person to the RDN office at Parksville. Proposals received by the specified due date will be reviewed and evaluated by the Advisory Committee according to the criteria chart below. Both this request for proposals and the winning proposal will form part of the project contract. The lowest bid price will not necessarily be selected.

#### **Evaluation of Proposals**

Proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

<b>Max. Score</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
2	Credentials and references are strong;
2	Experience and project history is relevant and extensive;
2	Draft work program presented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflects the objectives detailed in section 3 of the Terms of Reference;</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents an appropriate mix of team members and sub-consultants and has the necessary resources to complete the contract;</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involves a clear plan to compile, review and analyze baseline information and develop the management plan, master plan concept and actions;</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents a comprehensive public consultation strategy based on the RDN's Public Consultation/Communication Framework Policy No. A1-23;</li> </ul>
2	Fee breakdown supports the work program presented & the total fee provides good value.
<b>14</b>	<b>Total</b>

#### **Selection of Consultant**

Potential candidates may be contacted for an interview with RDN staff on **Monday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013**. The successful proponent will be notified no later than **Wednesday, April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2013**. All applicants will be subsequently notified of selection results by email and post.

Upon acceptance of the project, the consultant will enter into a contractual agreement with the RDN. Both this Request for Proposals and the chosen consultant's proposal will form part of the project contract.

#### **Project Commencement**

The first meeting with the selected consultant will be held on **Monday, April 15, 2013 at 10 a.m. at the RDN Recreation and Parks office in Parksville**. A site tour of Benson Creek Falls Regional Park with Consultant and RDN staff will be arranged for a later date.

## *Project Schedule and Phases*

### **Phase 1: Project Initiation – March to June, 2013**

#### **Consultant Selection: March-April**

- Issue request for proposals by **Friday, March 8, 2013**
- Proposals due by **Tuesday, April 2, 2013, at 16:30:00 hours**
- Optional interview with candidate(s) on **Monday, April 8, 2013**
- Successful proponent contacted by **Wednesday, April 10, 2013**
- First meeting between Consultant and RDN Park staff on **Monday, April 15, 2013**

#### **Project Start Up: April-June**

- Research and Data review
- Park Inventory and Analysis; Issue Identification
- Base mapping
- Preliminary issues, program and vision development
- Preparation of open house materials (survey, panels, maps, website info); stakeholders interviews
- Advisory Committee review of public engagement strategy and materials
- Open House #1; interviews with key stakeholders
- Review and analysis of public feedback with RDN staff

**(Payment #1: 30%)**

### **Phase 2: Draft Management Plan Development – July to August, 2013**

- Consultant writes draft Management Plan: vision, principles, goals, objectives, implementation strategy
- Preliminary park master plan concept development
- Advisory Committee Review of draft Management Plan and park master plan concept

**(Payment #2: 30%)**

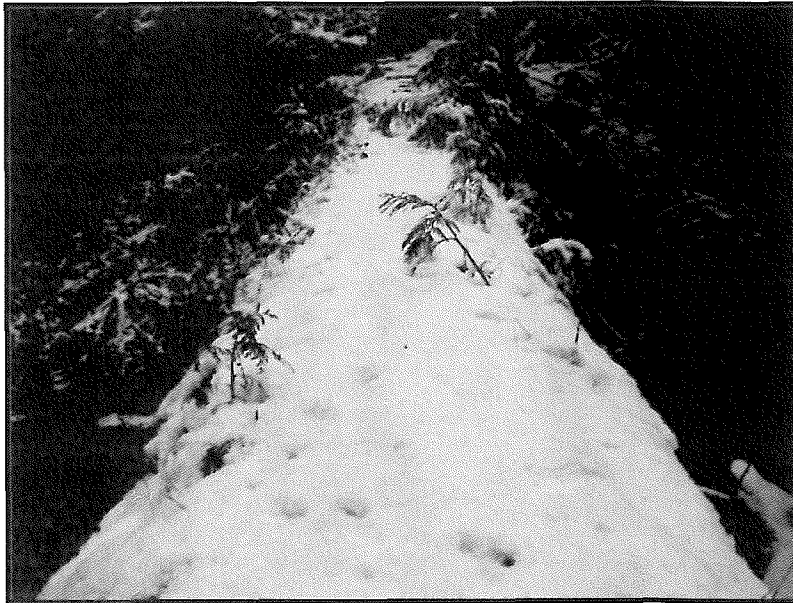
### **Phase 3: Final Management Plan Completion – September to December, 2013**

- Preparation of Open House #2 materials (survey, information panels, maps, website info)
- Circulate Draft Plan (email and website, survey) and hold Open House #2
- Analysis and review of public feedback with RDN staff; revision and complete final Management Plan
- Advisory Committee review of final Management Plan
- Circulate final Management Plan for public comment (email, RDN website)
- Regional Parks and Trails Select Committee review of final Management Plan (possible consultant presentation)
- Submit final Management Plan for Board approval

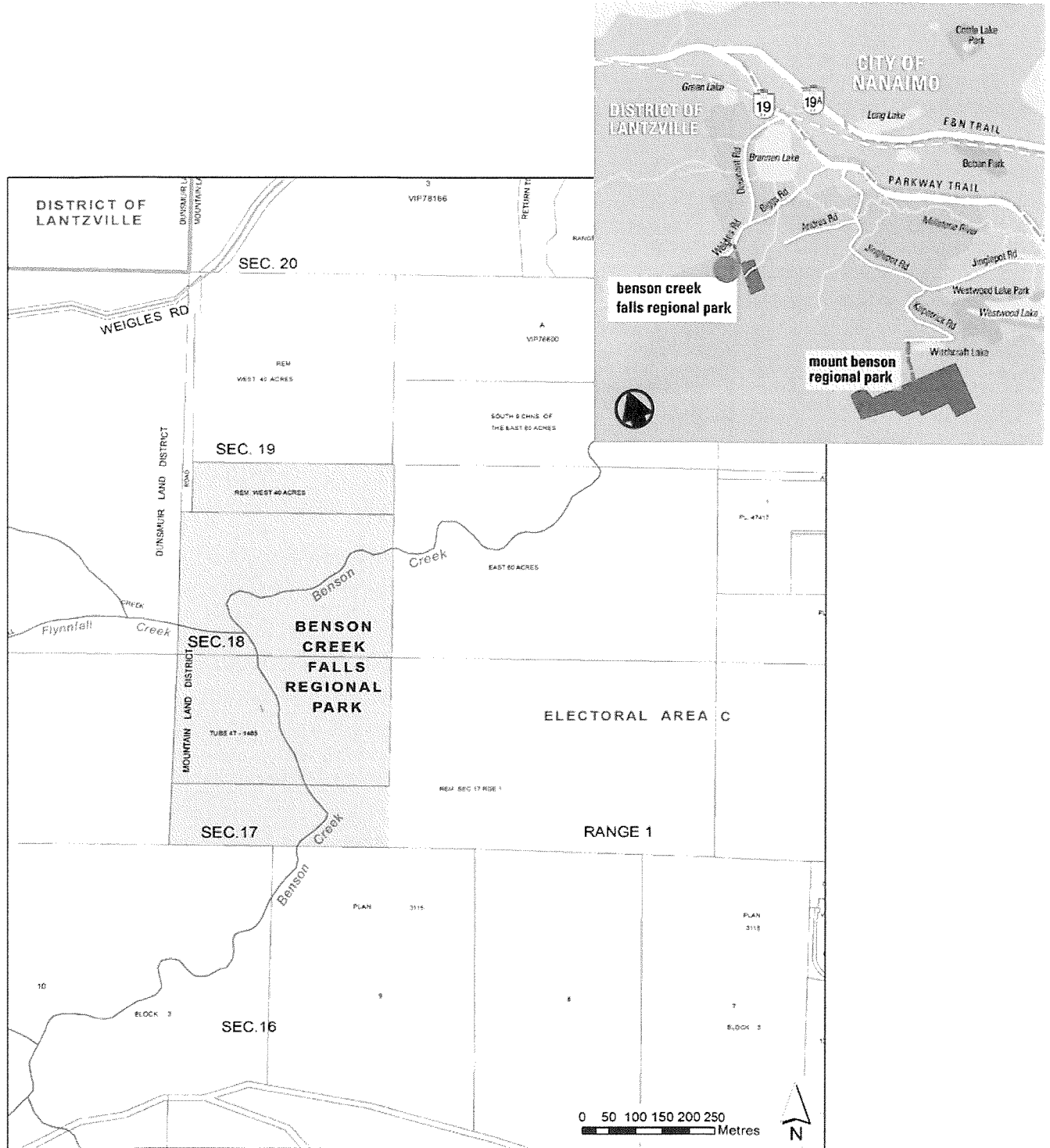
**(Payment #3: 40%)**

## *RDN Contact*

For all information about this request for consultant services, contact Margaret Paridaen, RDN Regional Parks Planner, 250-248-3252 or 1-888-828-2069 or [mparidaen@rdn.bc.ca](mailto:mparidaen@rdn.bc.ca).



# Benson Creek Falls Regional Park: Regional Context Maps







# Images of Benson Creek Falls Regional Park

