

DIRECTOR'S NEWS FEB-MARCH/08

AN UPDATE FROM SCRD DIRECTOR, DONNA SHUGAR



CONTACT

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GREENSHORES

Volunteers are requested for the Roberts Creek Green Shores Advisory Committee.

This is a 6 month commitment beginning in March. This group will:

1. Review the report entitled *Green Shores Case Study Roberts Creek: Overview of Key Shore Management Issues and Green Shore Opportunities*, other technical and staff reports, existing regulations and policies pertaining to the foreshore in Roberts Creek.
2. Reach a common understanding on the environmental, geophysical, jurisdictional and property issues associated with shoreline protection and foreshore management.
3. Identify any further environmental, hazard or property rights issues that should be examined; and 4. Make recommendations to the Planning and Development Committee of the SCRD Board on local planning, regulatory or voluntary management approaches.

There will be 11 members on this committee, consisting of 4 Roberts Creek waterfront property owners or residents, 4 non waterfront people and 3 members with technical expertise, a biologist, a member from DFO, and a geotechnical engineer. Applications will be received until March 5. Applicants are invited to submit a brief statement indicating their location of residence or ownership of property in Roberts Creek, experience and interests relevant to the committee to Mark McMullen, Senior Planner, Sunshine Coast Regional District, Box 800, Sechelt, BC, VON 3A0 (phone: 604-885-6804 ext. 5). Full terms of reference for this committee can be seen on the SCRD website or on my website.

A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) paper concerning Green Shores issues that have been raised by the public is available on the SCRD website. You can also view it on my website. It is a very useful resource for a better understanding of the issues and the intentions of the Board.

BIKE LANES

In a very short time you will see work begin on a section of bike lane on Lower Rd. This will be a one-way lane, on the water side of the road extending from the cemetery towards Conrad Rd. This area was selected because it is a particularly dangerous section of road. Several steep hills slow cyclists down and motorists have difficulty getting around them because of poor visibility.

The funding for this bike lane comes from a federal gas tax rebate grant. There will be additional annual grants in the coming years so we will be able to service other areas with safer biking and walking amenities as well. Examples are: the Lower Rd from the bridge heading towards Gibsons and dangerous sections of Beach Ave.

You may also have noticed 2 new sections of bike lane on the Highway, one from Galdwin Trail Rd to Malcolm Creek Rd and the other extending from Maskell Rd towards Gibsons.

2 other sections will also be done shortly. They are from Rat Portage Hill to Flume Rd and from Flume Rd to Marlene Rd. These are projects of MOTH and the funding has come from the Hwy 101 safety improvements grant of \$500,000 per year for 3 years.

PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS

Another project we are funding with gas tax money is a pedestrian improvement project in the downtown core. 14 volunteers have been working with SCRD Planning staff on 4 focus areas: the elementary school and Roberts Creek Rd heading towards downtown, the Heart of the Creek, the downtown itself, and the section heading from downtown to the pier. These focus groups have been working with maps showing all road allowances and landmarks according to a survey that was done on the areas last year. They have conducted site visits and have suggested some changes to improve the safe walkability of the central area of our community. The groups have been working towards a grant application deadline so that we might be able to double the available funds. We hope to unveil the plans in March. Discussions have been held with MOTH staff to ensure that whatever is done conforms to their requirements. Some of the excellent ideas brought forward by the focus groups will therefore not be able to be done. However, we are striving to get the best possible plan with the budget we have and the constraints of what MOTH will permit.

RECYCLING

The contract for a full review of the SCRD recycling program has been awarded to Gartner Lee Ltd. This process will involve the public and will examine every aspect of the program to determine what if any changes should be made. Watch for an appeal for volunteers to sit on a steering committee in early March.

BUDGET

The SCRD is about to complete the third and final round of budget talks. Because of changes in assessments some areas (e.g. Pender Harbour) are facing substantial increases this year. However, I am pleased to report that going into Round 3 Roberts Creek is looking at an increase over last year's taxation of only 4.5%, the first single digit increase since 2004, the smallest in the last 6 years. These figures can change during Round 3 discussions, but the changes should not be significant.

Budget highlights include: half hour bus service on the Sechelt to Langdale route beginning in the summer and continuing for the rest of the year, a review of the Roberts Creek OCP as soon as the Elphinstone OCP has been concluded, the recycling review, conducting local government elections, a new electronic records management system to enable more efficient storage and retrieval of important government documents, and a full year of our new Manager of Sustainability, Stewardship and Conservation.

EARTH DAY

From Earth Day organizer, Sheila Wilson:

Come celebrate Earth Day 2008 at the Roberts Creek Pier on Sunday, April 20 from 12 - 5:00 pm. Enjoy the great line-up of local entertainment and the booths containing local artwork and crafts, sample the food, and educate yourself on local issues. Cycle to Earth Day and receive a free bike tune-up! Other related events are shaping up, including a special showing of Black Cat Film's "Garbage Warrior," to cap off the event at the RC Hall. More info to follow. See you there!

If you wish to volunteer contact Sheila at shemark@dccnet.com.

EMERGENCY PLANNING

Sheila Wilson also organized a very informative meeting at the RC Hall a few months ago on our Emergency Preparedness Program. This will be followed by another public info session on Personal and Family Emergency

Preparedness. Watch the newspapers and my website for details.

SPRING CLEAN UP

The SCRD Board has decided to continue with the coupon system for Spring Clean Up again this year but with one significant change: coupons will be valid for a full year. That way line ups at the land fill will be avoided. The decision to continue with the coupon system was made to avoid adding a cost of at least \$30-35 to every property's annual utility bill. It was a challenge for Board members to wrestle with, particularly for areas like West Howe Sound which is so far from the Sechelt Landfill. We have asked staff to research the option of a Gibsons drop off site in terms of costs and other logistics. For now we are asking people to help each other out and work with their neighbours to get unwanted stuff to the landfill.

RECREATION

The new **Gibsons Arena and Community Centre** is planned to open on March 15!

We have received a grant from the Island Coastal Economic Trust so that we will be able to complete the road to the **Dakota Ridge** cross country ski facility this summer.

On March 9 there will be a **Snow Fest at Dakota Ridge**. Activities for the whole family are planned and there will be a shuttle to transport people from the lower parking lot to the top. For information call Ted Chisolm at 604.885.6800 ext. 6820 or email Ted at ted.chisholm@scrd.bc.ca

BC TIMBER SALES

BC Timber Sales has recently advertised a cutblock on Mt Elphinstone. This block (A77536) is located on the eastern border of Clough Creek (called Robinson Creek on BCTS maps). **Joe Smith Creek** runs through the cutblock and the successful bidder is required to inform water license holders on that creek a minimum of one week prior to commencing work. Check out the BCTS website. <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/bcts/> Click on Timber Sale Notices at the top of the Home Page, then enter the block number. You will be able to see maps and other information. The SCRD has met with representatives from BCTS and expressed our serious concern with logging so close to settled areas and within drinking watersheds. This has not resulted in any changes to their plans.

