



STAFF REPORT

CVRD REGIONAL SERVICES MEETING OF APRIL 23, 2014

DATE: March 3, 2014 File No. 2240-20-PWS
FROM: Kate Miller, Manager, Environmental Initiatives Division
SUBJECT: Cowichan Valley Water Balance Web Tool for Home Owners

Recommendation

That the Water Balance Web Tool and supporting documents be shared with the CVRD and partner municipal planning staff; and further, that planning staff consider integrating it into the planning framework to support watershed management objectives at the Official Community Plan and Development Permit level.

Relation to the Corporate Strategic Plan:

Promote sustainable land use; restore, rehabilitate and enhance the natural environment as well as the 2014 work plan item - develop a rainwater management strategy.

Financial Impact: *(Reviewed by Finance Division : _____)*

Included in 2014 core budget.

Background:

The CVRD has been a regional case study for the development of the Water Balance Model express tool for property owners and recently launched the live website <http://cvrld.waterbalance-express.ca/>. Homeowners across our region can now use the tool, free of charge, to determine how their property affects their watershed's stream health. The tool can be used for general purposes as well as providing a mechanism for the region's planners to determine if a proposed development has impacts on rain and storm water generation. As the region moves forward in watershed management the implications of land use and determining of its impacts has been difficult for individual property owners to do simply and affordably to date.

The tool will also allow the average property owner to "model" their property pre and post development and by using a number of strategies ensure that their generated runoff is within stream health bounds. An easy print option allows the property owner to record the mechanisms to achieve those targets and share with planning staff should they be in a Development Permit area.

This tool has resulted in an enhanced capability of the CVRD to maintain its leadership in the areas of watershed management and the development of technical and community based responses to emerging issues which are appropriate for our regional context.

The Cowichan Valley Regional District has been working with the Mr. Kim Stephens and the Partnership for Water Sustainability in BC (“the partnership”) in its various forms since 2007, most notably the Convening for Action on Vancouver Island (CAVI) working group of which the CVRD is the regional lead. The ongoing relationship between the CVRD and the partnership has resulted in a number of successful outcomes and benefits to the region, including:

- enhanced internal capacity within our local governments;
- effective sharing of information (*model bylaws, technical standards, annual learning and information sharing for technical currency and updates on emerging standards*);
- enhanced access to provincial regulators and policy makers;
- leveraged resources to undertake key research in our region (*agricultural land capability and water demand modeling*);
- opportunity to develop specific tools for our community (*water balance model express*);
- structured opportunities to support shared leadership within our region with high caliber technical support and collaboration to resolve emerging issues related to integrated liquid waste management planning, water quality source control, climate adaptation and sustainable service delivery, and governance and stewardship (*Interregional Collaboration for Watershed Sustainability*).

Mr. Stevens will make a brief presentation on the current work of the Interregional Collaboration for Water Sustainability and the upcoming local workshop focused on climate adaptation and water.

Submitted by,



Kate Miller

KM/dkf

Approved by:

General Manager:

