

Electoral Area C Community Update

February 2022

Issue 7

WELCOME - PUNTLEDGE - BLACK CREEK

Welcome to the first Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) Electoral Area C Community Update of 2022. Our last update was in October, and since then we have a variety of new plans and projects to share with you. Feel free to contact us regarding any questions or comments about CVRD business. Public input is always welcomed.



Area C Director
Edwin Grieve

Free guided nature walks for Comox Valley families

With winter behind us it's time to get outside and walk in nature with the Comox Valley Regional District's free guided walks and interpretive talks held in nearby community parks and shorelines.

Two programs are beginning this month: Family Trails (meet ups for family walks on CVRD trails) and Guided Naturalist Park walks, learning about local flora and fauna with monthly guided interpretative walk. Join us for these free programs: Please remember to wear appropriate footwear and clothes for changing weather conditions and check age suggestions (5-14) before attending. Length of programs may vary, from 1-2.5 hours. No pets allowed at this time. BC COVID-19 outdoor sport standards will be in place.



Family Trails:

Monday, March 7, 2022, 10 AM
Driftwood Park

Guided Naturalist Walk:

Saturday, March 12, 2022, 10 AM
Tsolum River (meet at curling rink)

Check out www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/natureprograms for more information.

New bylaw dispute system in place

On December 31, the CVRD launched a new streamlined bylaw adjudication system with the goal of taking the bylaw process out of the Provincial court system and managing disputes directly by local government. Bylaw violations such as minor zoning, building violations, animal control and other issues will be dealt with closer to home, avoiding costly legal council and unnecessary attendance of witnesses.

Bylaw infractions resulting in fines can be paid within 14 days, or a dispute can be registered with the CVRD office. Disputes will be overseen by a provincially appointed and independent adjudicator to determine if an offence occurred.

To learn more about the new bylaw dispute system, visit www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/bylawcomplaints.



Macaulay Road access planning

The CVRD has started work with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to develop terms of reference that will guide staff in a study to address emergency access routes in the Macaulay Road area. In October 2022, a meeting was held with the area director, CVRD staff and Macaulay Road Area Neighbourhood Association to collaborate on this project.

Funding for an alternate access would need to be included in the CVRD's annual budget to perform the study and community engagement. The outcome of recommendations will be provided to support future transportation priorities. There is currently evacuation guidelines in place with the Comox Valley Emergency Program and the Oyster River Fire Department who have worked with owners of private lands to identify alternate evacuation routes.

Merville Fire Hall close to completion

MERVILLE: The construction on the Merville Fire Hall is nearing completion and is expected to be up and running by the end of March this year. Work began in August 2021 by Kinetic Construction Ltd. on the facility which is designed to meet post-disaster building standards and will include two truck bays, a radio room, new safety equipment, storage, and adequate training space for volunteers. The fire hall now has 20 trained members ready to serve when the facility opens, and a fire engine is expected to arrive in February. To stay up to date on this project visit www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/mervillefire



MOUNT WASHINGTON: Property owners should expect a direct mail-out from the CVRD with details on the upcoming Alternative Approval Process to approve funding of \$1.4 Million for the Mount Washington Fire Hall project this spring. More information will be coming in the next few months.

A new hall would greatly improve response times and may reduce fire insurance premiums. If approved, the funding will pay for construction of a new fire hall (on donated land), all necessary equipment including a ladder truck, vehicles, heated storage, and debt repayment. The total estimated cost of the Mount Washington Fire Hall project is \$2.4 million with an estimated tax increase of \$123.40 per household (with an assessed value of \$500,000.) If approved, construction would begin in the summer of this year (2022). For more information, visit www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/mountwashingtonfire

AREA C BRIEFS

It's an election year!

Mark your calendar: Local General Elections will be held on October 15, 2022. The CVRD will share more information about running for office, voter registration and voting in the coming months. Watch for more information through the spring and summer.

New burning bylaws improve safety

Two new burning bylaws approved in January will provide consistency in rules for the CVRD's electoral areas, and provide fire departments with authority to manage burning in Black Creek, Merville, Mount Washington and Union Bay. The bylaws make burning rules the same throughout the electoral areas (outside of the municipal boundaries) and give Fire Chiefs authority to put on fire bans and control other burns. Residents will also need permits for fires over 50 cm in diameter.

Snow/Ice Road Maintenance Comox Valley

Road problems? Mainroad North Island Contracting at 1-877-215-7122 is the company in charge of all road maintenance and snow plowing for the roads and highways outside municipal boundaries in the Comox Valley. Call 1-877 215-7122 to report any problems. These calls are monitored 24/7.

BC Safe Restart grant funds awarded

Community halls, emergency preparation programs and food security initiatives were among the successful recipients of the CVRD's second grant funding installment from the BC Safe Restart grant fund. The province provided \$402,000 to support volunteer and CVRD programs in response to economic and social issues that arose as a result of the pandemic. To date, CVRD has received over \$1,125,000 million in COVID-19 safe restart grant money.

Broadband application made to Connect BC



An application by TELUS seeking funding support for improved internet connectivity to the Forbidden Plateau area was supported by the CVRD board in January. The funding application, made to the BC Economic Recovery Intake Fund, would support the installation of infrastructure and enable improved services for the area – particularly supporting health care, education and government services. A letter of support from the CVRD board was sent mid-January.

Have your say: CVRD's budget planning open to public



The public is encouraged to get involved with the CVRD's budget planning process which is now underway. The CVRD currently provides over 90 services including parks, arts and culture and core services like fire and water. There are many ways to have your say before the March 31 deadline:

- Submit comments online
- Present as a delegation
- Directly contact a CVRD board member
- Call 250-334-6000 for comments/questions

Did you know? All budget presentations are open to the public and are posted on the CVRD website at www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/currentbudget