



2008  
Annual Report

 **Comox Valley**  
REGIONAL DISTRICT

CVRD TEAM

FINANCIALS

THE BIG  
PICTURE

COMMUNITY  
SUPPORT

ENVIRONMENTAL  
SUPPORT

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COVER IMAGE: Buckley Bay (Baynes Sound - Area "A")

PHOTOGRAPHER: Hans Peter Meyer



## Message from the CAO

This is my inaugural message as chief administrative officer for the Comox Valley Regional District, and I am very pleased to be able to present it to you.

In February, when the provincial government restructured the former Comox Strathcona Regional District, the board appointed me as interim CAO for the new Comox Valley Regional District, and I spent the next several months steering the organization on its newly-charted course.

In August, the board appointed me as permanent CAO and I am so excited to know that I will be at the helm of an organization ready and willing to take on new challenges, and to effect the board's vision of an efficient, effective, customer-focussed regional district.

There are exciting times ahead for all of us, but in this report I am looking back on the accomplishments of the past year, and wish to acknowledge the board's support and staff's dedication to working together during this first year of the transition of the two new regional districts. Given the changes to structure and personnel I commend and thank everyone for these accomplishments.

2008 has been a year of collaboration for the four Comox Valley local governments. Working together, Courtenay, Comox, Cumberland and the CVRD are committed to steering the regional planning initiatives that will help to shape the future of Comox Valley land use and servicing for the next 20 to 50 years: developing strategies for sustainability, regional growth and a regional water supply, and developing a regional sewer master plan.

When the former CSRD was restructured, solid waste was the one service that the province mandated would stay "whole", with the CVRD providing that service for its own residents and those in the Strathcona Regional District too. To that end, we began a review of the life of the waste management centres in the Comox Valley and Campbell River, and the exploration of possible ways to address that including diverting even more items from the waste stream through composting of organics.

We broadened our educational outreach, not only providing information on making better choices for a better future by choosing pesticide alternatives, composting, recycling and reducing water consumption, but also by helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through a partnership with the province on an "idle free" awareness program. We even decided to make this annual report our very first "online only" edition, thereby reducing even further our organizational paper use and paper generation.

We undertook some innovative projects with our transit system, offering free bus rides for K to 12 students during back to school week in September.

And, once again, the popular SkyRocket soil amendment, produced from our liquid waste biosolids, was a tremendous hit, selling out both times in the year when we offered it to the public!

The complete inventory of initiatives undertaken last year is too lengthy to cover here, so I have touched on a few highlights and invite you to read about more of them in the following pages of our 2008 annual report.

Debra Oakman, CMA  
chief administrative officer



## Message from the chair

On behalf of my colleagues on the Comox Valley Regional District board of directors, I am pleased to introduce the annual report for the year ending December 31, 2008.

This was my first year as chair of the regional district board, and what a year it was! Not only did we undertake several initiatives that are groundbreaking in the Comox Valley – regional growth strategy, regional water and sewer strategy, regional sustainability strategy – but we did it in the year when we began the transition from being part of the oldest regional district in BC to becoming one of the two newest.

In February 2008, the provincial government restructured the former Comox Strathcona Regional District into two brand new entities: the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) and the Strathcona Regional District (SRD), with the CVRD being designated the “successor” to the former CSRD and the provider of services, by contract, to the SRD for a transition period through to the end of 2009.

We have worked with the SRD to develop a contract for service delivery to that organization that provides planning and parks services, finance, human resources, IT, communications and other administrative support. We have also been working collaboratively with the three Comox Valley municipalities, and would like to particularly mention the elected officials

forums as good examples of all four local governments working together for the benefit of all.

We recruited a permanent CAO for our organization and we undertook an exercise to create and adopt new governance and structure policies. One of the key roles for a board of directors is in the area of policy development – recommending the issues that would benefit from the creation of policy and reviewing and refining policies until they provide the clarity an organization needs to carry out its day-to-day work.

It was a year of both uncertainty and excitement as we worked through our development as a brand new entity with accountability for some large new mandates while maintaining the responsibility for all the existing services we provide for our residents, like drinking water, sewer, solid waste, recreation and parks.

I think we did an admirable job, both from the political and the staff perspective, and I would like to thank my colleagues on the board, members of the Comox Valley municipal councils who are working with us on regional strategies, and our CAOs for all their hard work and dedication over the past year. We are the beginning of a new direction with the regional district and I believe we are well prepared to take on the challenges and opportunities ahead.

Fred Bates  
chair





## 2008 Comox Valley Regional District board of directors

LEFT TO RIGHT (REAR): Starr Winchester (City of Courtenay); Larry Jangula (City of Courtenay); Don McRae (City of Courtenay); Jim Brass (Town of Comox); Barry Minaker (Puntledge-Black Creek --Area 'C'); Carol Quinn (Denman-Hornby Islands --Area 'K')

LEFT TO RIGHT (FRONT): Suzanne Murray (Baynes Sound - Area 'A'); Fred Bates, chair, (Village of Cumberland); Barbara Price, vice-chair (Lazo North - Area 'B'); Paul Ives (Town of Comox)

## 2008 Comox Valley Regional District senior management team

LEFT TO RIGHT:  
Ron Neufeld, GM operations,  
Debra Oakman, chief administrative  
officer, Leigh Carter, GM corporate  
communications



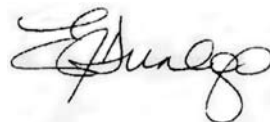
# Management's responsibility for financial reporting

These summarized consolidated financial statements have been prepared by management from the complete consolidated financial statements for inclusion in this annual report. They provide a brief financial overview of the regional district's financial position at December 31, 2008 and the results of its activities for the period ended December 31, 2008.

Management maintains a system of internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that assets are safeguarded and that transactions are authorized, recorded and reported properly. Management also maintains a program of proper business compliance.

The board of directors is responsible for reviewing and approving the financial statements and for ensuring that management fulfills its responsibilities for financial reporting and internal control.

Meyers Norris Penny LLP, Chartered Accountants, the regional district's independent auditors, have conducted an examination of the financial statements in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and have expressed their opinion in their report which accompanies the complete audited financial statements available at the regional district office or online at [www.comoxvalleyrd.ca](http://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca).



E.J. Dunlop, CGA  
Officer responsible for Financial Administration  
pursuant to Section 199 of the Local Government Act.

## Auditors' report



MEYERS NORRIS PENNY LLP

The accompanying summarized consolidated statement of financial position and statement of financial activities are derived from the complete consolidated financial statements of the Comox Valley Regional District as at December 31, 2008 and for the period then ended on which we expressed an opinion without reservation in our report dated June 5, 2009. The fair summarization of the complete consolidated financial statements is the responsibility of management. Our responsibility, in accordance with the applicable Assurance Guideline of The Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants, is to report on the summarized financial statements.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements fairly summarize, in all material respects, the related complete consolidated financial statements in accordance with the criteria described in the Guideline referred to above.

These summarized financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. Readers are cautioned that these statements may not be appropriate for their purposes. For more information on the Regional District's financial position, results of operations and cash flows, readers are invited to obtain a full set of audited financial statements, from the Regional District office or online at [www.comoxvalleyrd.ca](http://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca).

Campbell River, British Columbia

June 5, 2009

*Meyers Norris Penny LLP*

Chartered Accountants



# Summarized consolidated statement of financial position as at December 31, 2008 (audited)

	December 31, 2008
<b>Financial Assets</b>	
Cash and temporary investments	\$ 46,097,274
Receivables and inventory for resale	5,967,824
Debt recoverable from others	24,558,378
<b>Total Financial Assets</b>	<b>76,623,476</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>	
Payables and other liabilities	4,768,915
Long-term debt	56,649,144
Deferred revenue	6,460,911
Provision for landfill closure and post closure	2,963,371
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>70,842,341</b>
<b>Net Financial Assets</b>	<b>5,781,135</b>
<b>Non-Financial Assets</b>	
Inventory of supplies	65,358
Capital assets	125,964,899
<b>Total Non-Financial Assets</b>	<b>126,030,257</b>
<b>Net Position</b>	<b>\$ 131,811,392</b>
<b>Comox Valley Regional District Equity Position</b>	
Equity in capital assets	\$ 93,874,133
Fund balances	37,937,259
<b>Comox Valley Regional District Position</b>	<b>\$ 131,811,392</b>

# Summarized consolidated statement of financial activities

## Period ended December 31, 2008 (audited)

	December 31, 2008 Actual	December 31, 2008 Budget <i>unaudited</i>
<b>Revenue</b>		
Frontage and parcel taxes	\$ 159,761	\$ 179,789
Grants in lieu of taxes	394,363	320,726
Requisitions - electoral and municipal	14,294,214	16,304,341
Transfers from other governments	695,095	4,049,488
Sales of services and own revenue sources	14,229,167	16,062,290
Contribution from others	2,444,169	2,315,988
Interest earned and actuarial adjustment	468,733	-
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>32,685,502</b>	<b>39,232,622</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>		
General government	2,655,723	4,317,037
Protective	2,378,365	2,932,632
Transportation	1,697,636	2,108,155
Environmental health	11,337,965	30,757,234
Public health and welfare	10,090	58,499
Environmental development	2,080,801	3,407,424
Recreation and cultural	6,550,237	8,411,666
Debt charges - Municipalities	2,371,091	2,315,988
Landfill closure and post closure allowance	332,066	-
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>29,413,974</b>	<b>54,308,635</b>
<b>Net Revenues (Expenditures)</b>	<b>3,271,528</b>	<b>(15,076,013)</b>
<b>Financing Activities</b>		
New debt issued - Regional District	-	(7,851,593)
Debt principal repayments - Regional District	1,344,491	1,344,489
Actuarial reduction of debenture debt	468,733	-
Non financial asset valuation change	(65,358)	-
<b>Decrease (Increase) in long-term financing</b>	<b>1,747,866</b>	<b>6,507,104</b>
<b>Change in Consolidated Fund Balances</b>	<b>1,523,662</b>	<b>(8,568,909)</b>
<b>Consolidated Fund Balance from prior organization</b>	<b>36,413,597</b>	<b>9,536,524</b>
<b>Ending Consolidated Fund Balances</b>	<b>\$ 37,937,259</b>	<b>\$ 967,615</b>



CVRD TEAM

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Town of Comox harbour  
PHOTOGRAPHER:  
Beverly Nelson



# the big picture

## CVRD hosts "Why waste energy?" Coast Waste Management Association conference

The CVRD hosted the annual Coast Waste Management Association (CWMA) conference held at Crown Isle Resort. The CWMA is a membership association serving the solid waste industry in coastal BC, whose mission is to foster environmental leadership and best practices by providing a forum for discussion, education and networking.

The Comox Valley Regional District is working hard to ensure that waste management initiatives can realistically meet our needs now and in the future. The CVRD delivers solid waste services for its own region and for the Strathcona Regional District. One of the challenges the region faces is that if waste generation continues at its current rate, both the Campbell River and Comox Valley landfills will be full by 2015. In the Comox Valley and the Strathcona Regional Districts, solid waste generation has increased from 47,000 metric tonnes in 2002 to 72,000 metric tonnes in 2007. This is a significant increase in waste generation -- over 50 per cent increase in the last five years.

CVRD board chair  
Fred Bates delivers  
opening remarks at  
the conference

PHOTOGRAPHER:  
Wendy Schebel



The Big  
Picture

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## Every picture tells a story

In January the former Comox Strathcona Regional District launched its web-based “photo gallery” for visitors and residents to check out the region’s areas of unsurpassed natural beauty as well as its network of more structured parks, green spaces and trails, plus other amenities both recreational and cultural.

Following the restructure of the CSRD into the Comox Valley and Strathcona Regional Districts in February, the photo gallery was divided too, and now the CVRD’s web-based photo gallery showcases the urban and rural highlights within our borders.

The web-based data bank of photographs showcases parks, trails and other significant points of interest in the CVRD’s electoral areas, and also includes the vibrant urban areas and surrounding landscapes.

The photo gallery can be found on the CVRD’s website at [www.comoxvalleyrd.ca](http://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca) by clicking on “photo gallery” on the left hand menu on the main page. There is photography of all the electoral areas, with text descriptions of the parks and trails, and under “municipalities” in the sub-menu are photos of each city, town and village in the CVRD with links to their own websites and to tourism and economic development organizations. More photos will be added to the site over time.

## New automobile service station zone

A review of the commercial and industrial zones in the CVRD revealed that the Comox Valley zoning bylaw was generally permissive of vehicle fuel retail sales. Further research also determined that the regional district had over 100 properties from which vehicle fuels could potentially be sold. Following this review, the regional district introduced a bylaw amendment (Bylaw No. 2) for the regulation of commercial retailing of vehicular fuels in the Comox Valley.

In May, the CVRD brought in a new zone, Commercial One A (C-1A), for automobile service stations that are currently providing fuel sales in the regional district. By leading the way with this new zone, all new applications for automobile service stations in the Comox Valley shall be subject to new conditions of use including allowed merchandise display areas, permitted fuel pump and canopy setbacks as well as requirements for parking, landscaping, signage and lighting.

## Everything old is new again

On February 15, 2008 BC's oldest regional district, Comox Strathcona, was divided into two new entities -- the Comox Valley and the Strathcona Regional Districts -- as the result of the restructure of the local government announced by the province the year before.

The province advised in July 2007 that it had been looking at models of regional governance in BC and in other jurisdictions to see whether some could be adapted that would help deal with challenges of governance in a region as geographically large and diverse as the CSRD was. They felt that in the case of the CSRD, the scope and diversity of issues could be better focused if there were two governments overseeing the area of the former CSRD -- one dealing with matters in the Comox Valley and the other with matters north of the Oyster River.

After February 2008, the year was spent figuring out how one organization becomes two -- without negatively affecting service to residents in either area. The board of directors split into two along geographically representational lines, and each elected its own chair and formed its own committees. All financial information had to be divided and re-allocated to the two new legal entities. The CVRD, designated the "successor" regional district by the province, provided all services to the SRD on a contract arrangement. The only service that

remained "whole" was solid waste, which remained a CVRD-delivered service in both regional districts.

The CVRD remained in the former CSRD location in Courtenay while the SRD secured new office space in Campbell River for an interim chief administrative officer and an assistant. Early in 2009 the CVRD plans to locate two planning staff, one parks technician and one building inspector in the SRD offices to focus on parks, land use and building issues "north of the Oyster River". The emergency program manager and his deputy, whose focus is on areas within SRD borders, re-located to the SRD space in 2008.

It was a year of many unanswered questions and a lot of work. This coming year -- 2009 -- was deemed by the province as the second of the two "transition years" and it will be filled with working out the final details of how the organizations will operate after transition is over. The two permanent chief administrative officers, both hired in 2008, will work with the provincial government, their respective boards, staffs and external partners and stakeholders to lay out the future of what are now the two newest regional districts in the province.



## Let's get regional, regional...

When the former Comox Strathcona Regional District was restructured into two new entities, one of them -- the new Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) -- was mandated to develop a regional growth strategy and a regional water strategy.

The province required that the CVRD establish a select committee -- the Comox Valley water supply commission -- to develop an overall regional water strategy that identifies all viable water sources and to provide a recommended service plan and operating structure for a regional water supply system. In addition, the province has required that the CVRD develop plans, policies and actions related to regional water demand management and watershed protection. This work is to be completed by the end of 2009.

The regional growth strategy (RGS) is being created over a two-year period (2008-2010) with an approved RGS policy document to be adopted by December 31, 2010. All four Comox Valley local governments entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in July 2008, and that MOU will provide interim management of planning and development initiatives until the RGS has been adopted in 2010. The RGS will focus on the overall pattern of land use in the valley and the creation of a sustainable human settlement pattern. As such, its focus

will be on defining where future growth will occur and the appropriate type, intensity and form of that growth.

In addition, in April the CVRD board directed that, subject to available financing, the existing sub-regional sewer master plan be expanded to align with the provincial initiatives for Comox Valley regional water and growth initiatives.

And, a decision was made to develop a sustainability strategy for the Comox Valley. The sustainability strategy will focus on establishing specific environmental principles and related regional and municipal actions (e.g. policies related to local food production, sustainability checklist for developers, policies regarding pesticide use, and incentives for using alternative transportation).

The development of a sustainability strategy is a joint initiative of the Comox Valley Regional District, the City of Courtenay, Town of Comox and Village of Cumberland, using the firm of HB Lanarc known for their work in helping areas identify trends and opportunities for more sustainable planning. A grant from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Green Municipal Funds provided \$180,000 to cover half the total costs of the project.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Comox Valley MLA and Minister of Agriculture & Lands Stan Hagen, Premier Gordon Campbell, Dr James Lunney MP for Nanaimo-Alberni, and Paul Ives, CVRD director and chair of the Comox Valley water committee

## \$2.6 million to improve water supply

The Comox Valley Regional District's drinking water supply will be greatly improved thanks to an investment of more than \$2.6 million from the federal and provincial governments. The funding is provided through the Canada-B.C. Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (CBCMRIF), which enables communities across B.C. to become healthier, greener and more sustainable places to live.

The funding will go towards twinning the East Courtenay Reservoir in order to double the region's available water supply. The project will also install new water level monitoring equipment. This will provide fire protection, maintain water quality, and meet the region's water demands for approximately 2,300 new households over the next 20 years.



# community support

## Keeping the valley safe

Good planning is the key to success in many things in life, and being ready to care for ourselves and our families following an emergency is one area where planning can make a life-altering difference. Emergency programs are of paramount importance to all local governments, including the Comox Valley Regional District. The Comox Valley Emergency Program (CVEP) functions as a partnership between Comox, Courtenay, Cumberland and the regional district to provide coordinated emergency programming to the Comox Valley.

In 2008, the Comox Valley Emergency Program trained 22 engineering and technical professionals in Rapid Damage Assessment level two, engaged in an emergency exercise with local responders and emergency personnel based upon regional flooding, and responded to 15 level one emergency social services calls to support local fire departments and police and in doing so providing lodging and supplies to displaced persons.

CVEP is currently developing a public outreach program focused on emergency preparedness for vulnerable populations including seniors and the disabled.

A river runs through it .....

LEFT TO RIGHT: Directors Barry Minaker, Puntledge-Black Creek (Area 'C'), Barbara Price, Lazo North (Area 'B'), and Suzanne Murray, Baynes Sound (Area 'A') at the Tsolum River checking out crossing possibilities for the historic One-Spot Trail.



Community Support

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## CVRD recreation facilities become even more accessible

In 2008, the CVRD's recreation facilities continued to remove physical barriers and to include services for people with disabilities, seniors and others with accessibility needs, making it easier to take part in getting fit.

Arena #2 at the CVRD's sports centre was equipped with an automatic double sliding glass door and the reception desk at the aquatic centre was modified to include a lower counter to be more wheelchair friendly. As more and more people with accessibility issues are interested in using the facilities, the number of parking stalls for the handicapped at each facility has been increased.

The CVRD also obtained a grant to study the current and future situation with respect to accessible transportation and recreation.

## Back to school week brings free transit rides for students K-12

Comox Valley transit eased the back to school rush by waiving transit fares Tuesday Sept 2nd through Friday September 5th for students in kindergarten through grade 12.

This opportunity allowed students to become introduced or re-acquainted with the nine conventional transit routes and the "school special" route 99, which begins the first day of school to accommodate student travel. The free wireless Internet connection on board some of the buses makes taking the bus fun and provides an effective use of commuting time for students of all ages.

## Partnering to ensure a safe beach fire season

The CVRD once again partnered with the Comox fire department and the RCMP in 2008 to keep beach fire activities safe. Funding provided by the regional district allowed both the fire department and the RCMP to hire extra personnel to patrol beaches in Lazo North (Area 'B'). At Goose Spit park the regional district had Comox Valley Security staff also do regular patrols. Security officers ensured the park was closed at 11pm and that all fires were put out. By working together, those patrolling on any particular evening were able to respond quickly to parties and large fires for the benefit of nearby residents and others enjoying the beaches.

## Compost education centres support local food banks

Over the 2008 growing season the Comox Valley Regional District harvested more than 380 pounds of produce from the vegetable gardens at its compost education centres in the Comox Valley and Campbell River. The season's bounty was donated to the local food banks as part of the national "Plant a Row-Grow a Row" (PAR-GAR) program.

PAR-GAR is a people-helping people program to assist in feeding the homeless and the hungry in their own communities. The Comox Valley Regional District, the Canadian Association of Food Banks, the Composting Council of Canada and the Canadian Members of Garden Writers of America all support the PAR-GAR program that encourages Canadian gardeners to grow a little extra produce to donate to those in need.

The CVRD's participation in the PAR-GAR program will continue next year with a 50 per cent increase in beds to grow food at the regional district's compost education centres in both Campbell River and the Comox Valley.

PAR-GAR red spade





## Ruth Masters Greenway opens

The Comox Valley Regional District, Comox Valley Land Trust and the Land Conservancy of BC unveiled a new plaque and kiosk located at the Powerhouse Road entrance to Masters Greenway. Ruth's generosity in donating 7.3 hectares (18 acres) of her family's homestead as a nature and wildlife reserve in 2004 has resulted in the lovely natural space that all can enjoy.

The greenway features both red and blue-listed (threatened and endangered) species while containing quality habitat

for a wide range of wildlife. As part of a larger undeveloped corridor along the south side of the Puntledge River, the greenway allows larger species, such as bear, to move through the area.

Masters Greenway and Wildlife Corridor is located on Powerhouse Road just west of Courtenay. It features walking trails and cliffside views of the Puntledge River and connects to the City of Courtenay trail system along the Puntledge.

LEFT TO RIGHT: Brian Allaert, CVRD parks technician; Karin Albert, CVRD parks planner; Christina Waddle, Land Conservancy of BC; Barry Minaker, CVRD director for Puntledge-Black Creek (Area 'C'); Jack Minard, Comox Valley Land Trust; Gwyn Sproule; Barbara Price, CVRD director for Lazo North (Area 'B'); Karla Funk, Land Conservancy of BC. Front and centre is Ruth Masters.

PHOTO CREDIT: Beverly Nelson





# environmental support

## The great pumpkin smash

The Comox Valley Regional District showed residents another smashing good time at the second annual pumpkin smash events held in the Comox Valley and Campbell River.

The two pumpkin smash events, held on November 1st, were presented in partnership with Thrifty Foods. The smashes were successful at keeping a frightening amount of compostable waste out of the landfills.

In the Comox Valley, the pumpkin smash was held at the CVRD's compost education centre on Headquarters Road and was well attended by families who brought several pumpkins each. Children had the chance to participate in an eco-treasure hunt for a waste reduction prize and there was a fantastic turnout of 230 people despite the rain. The pumpkin compost was used at the gardens at the CVRD's compost education centres in Campbell River and in the Comox Valley.



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WATER WISE: BETTER CHOICES, BETTER FUTURE

**YOU ARE IN THE  
COMOX LAKE WATERSHED AREA**



Comox Lake is the main source of drinking water for residents of the Comox Valley. Please be responsible about what you put into the water.

Thank you for respecting your community watershed.

[www.comoxvalleyed.ca](http://www.comoxvalleyed.ca)



Patty Rose at the PNE with the CVRD's "Nature Works" display

## Better choices, better future

In 2008, the CVRD developed "Better Choices, Better Future" as its key message in advertising and public information on various subjects including recycling, recreation, pesticide alternatives, water and transit.

### Water

The Water Wise campaign was an extensive public education awareness program that used print media, radio, and marketing strategies including branding fleet vehicles, recreation rink board advertising, door-to-door handouts and watershed protection signage.

### Pesticide alternatives

Patty Rose, one of the CVRD's contract educators, proudly unveiled the "Nature Works" display that was showcased in the agricultural building at the 2008 Pacific National Exhibition in Vancouver. The display aimed to raise awareness and share information about pesticide alternatives.



## Better choices, better future cont'd...

### School video contest

A video contest was launched as part of the campaign to raise awareness of environmental issues promoted through the CVRD's public education programs. The "Better Choices, Better Future" video contest was open to youth between eight and 12 years old who live in the Comox Valley or to a classroom with students between the ages of eight and 12 in school district 71. The winner in the classroom category was Cape Lazo school's grade five class from Brooklyn elementary, taught by Sarah Heselgrave and Stacey Paul. This students

were awarded with a special waste-free lunch as well as enviro-water bottles.

The individual contest winners were Max Davies, Brittany Sponselee and Mitchell White from Valley View elementary school. Each student received a "take it to go" daypack and an enviro-water bottle. The video clips will be used in future marketing and promotion of the CVRD's various educational initiatives.

Classroom video contest winners  
BACK ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT): Wendy Schebel (CVRD), Lainey, Ellie, Solana, Easton, Mrs. Sarah Heselgrave, Delaynee, Josh, Liam, Mark, Ms. Stacey Paul; MIDDLE ROW (L-R): Riannah, Ben, Jesse, Danny, Matteo, Cassidy, Maya, Noah, Brady; FRONT ROW (L-R): Savanna, Will, Charissa, Alexandra, Jaiden, Rebekah, Rosalie, Katie; VERY FRONT ROW: Ms. Paul's twin daughters, Elise and Aislen Ferguson



Individual Video Winners  
Valley View Elementary  
LEFT TO RIGHT: Brittany Sponselee, Mitchell White, Ms. Jan Smith and Max Davies

PHOTOGRAPHER (both photos):  
Beverly Nelson



Proudly displaying their 'Go Green for Halloween' re-usable bags, CVRD Nature Works model Alanna Stephens stands outside the Comox Valley aquatic centre with CVRD director and chair of the Comox Valley sports commission, Paul Ives.

PHOTOGRAPHER:  
(both photos)  
Beverly Nelson



LEFT TO RIGHT: CVRD contract educator Gayle Bates and CVRD education and events coordinator Wendy Schebel with some of the great wrapping alternatives at the staff day session on re-thinking holiday wrap.



## Better choices, better future cont'd...

### Go green for Hallowe'en

A partnership promotion between the CVRD's operations department and its Comox Valley sports and aquatic centres offered residents a chance to be greener and healthier at Halloween. For the first time, booklets of 10 one-time youth leisure passes were sold for the special price of \$10. The passes were good for a youth swim or skate until December 15 and with each pass came a free re-useable bag for toting swim or skate gear. A total of 260 booklets were sold between October 16 and 31. The re-usable bag also supported the Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce's Bag-Free Comox Valley.

### Re-thinking holiday wrapping

And late in the year, the CVRD worked towards waste reduction for the holidays through marketing initiatives and partnerships that encouraged residents to "re-think holiday wrapping". A newspaper article, advertisements, a Shaw TV special, a "green holidays" web page on the CVRD website and partnership with Our Big Earth to create the "Holiday Green Guide" all offered hands-on suggestions to keep the holidays filled with all the things we love about the festive season while reducing our impact on the planet.



## Comox Valley bike to work week a great success

A total of 1,567 cyclists helped make the very first bike to work week a great success. Wet commuting weather did not dampen the enthusiasm of valley residents to use more active and sustainable modes of transportation. Encouraged by several valley businesses and a keen group of volunteers, 409 commuters dusted off their bicycles and rode to work for the very first time.

The bike to work week held from June 2nd – June 8 was just one of several local initiatives to mark Canadian Environment Week. The CVRD partnered with other local governments and several private businesses in encouraging people to make a commitment to choose an alternative way of getting to work whether it was by bike, walking, taking public transit, initiating a carpool or telecommuting. Celebration stations were set up around the community where cyclists, walkers, transit users and carpoolers were waved in to stop for refreshments, bike repairs and prizes. An anti-idling campaign was also launched.

Hopefully the bike to work week inspired a few people to continue with their alternative mode of transportation.

## CVRD climate change toolkit

Climate change will affect various services provided by local governments, so in an effort to begin reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, the CVRD became a member of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Partners for Climate Protection (PCP), a program where members commit to reducing GHG emissions and acting on climate change. In September the CVRD's committee of the whole took another step forward in meeting the requirements of the PCP as well as of the Climate Action Charter through the adoption of the CVRD climate change toolkit.

This toolkit represents a preliminary step in reducing GHG emissions in the Comox Valley and aims to change practices and policies within the CVRD to create more focus on climate change.

It outlines various GHG emission reduction initiatives that local government organizations can pursue, examples of projects that other local government organizations have already implemented, an explanation of each initiative in the context of the CVRD and information about funding proposed projects. The adoption of the toolkit authorizes staff in all departments to pursue energy-saving approaches to projects that have been previously carried out in a conventional manner.

## Earth Day gets off the ground in the Comox Valley

The Comox Valley Regional District celebrated Earth Day with a range of free family events on Saturday April 19th at its compost education centre at 4795 Headquarters Road in Courtenay.

In the spirit of getting the community to reduce its ecological footprint, a household hazardous waste drop off was held in the parking lot of the Driftwood Mall. The regional district enlisted the services of HAZCO Environmental Services to manage this event. Acceptable materials included household hazardous waste such as solvents, pesticides and flammables.

Also on Earth Day a special bus provided transit service between the Driftwood Mall and the Earth Day Family Festival at the CVRD's Comox Valley exhibition grounds.. At the exhibition fairgrounds there were a number of booths with alternative energy demos, eco-friendly products, enviro-games, and local food. CVRD educators were on hand at the regional district's compost education centres in Campbell River and the Comox Valley providing workshops on pesticide alternatives, water conservation, plastic recycling and the benefits of composting.

## Idling a "no-go" at the CVRD

The CVRD launched the new anti-idling initiative designed by the Ministry of Environment (MoE) and the Youth Climate Leadership Alliance. Over the spring and summer months, Dawn Fizzard represented the CVRD as MoE's local idle reduction ambassador attending community events to provide educational materials as well as to answer general inquiries. The key elements of the anti-idling initiative included building community partnerships, collecting information about driving and idling habits, increasing the number of idle free zones and promoting simple strategies that individuals can incorporate as good habits.

People bring hazardous household waste to drop off point set up by the CVRD and HAZCO Environmental Services







Seal Bay Park  
(Lazo North - Area 'B')

PHOTOGRAPHER:  
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