

Partnering to manage our water resources



The K'ómoks First Nation (KFN) and the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) have reached an agreement to work together on water supply and development in the Comox Valley. This agreement is an important milestone towards building a meaningful relationship and partnership moving forward.

Ensuring mutual benefit

The new Mutual Benefit Agreement, finalized in September 2018, includes extending water services to K'ómoks lands south of Royston and greater participation by KFN in the management of regional water resources. The agreement also provides the CVRD the support it needs to move forward with the new water treatment project. The signing of this agreement marks an important milestone towards collaborative management of water resources for the Comox Valley, helping to secure provincial permits for the new water treatment project and support the CVRD's grant applications.

What the agreement includes

1. Plans to extend water service south to Royston and beyond

The Water Service (South) Extension Project will include a new transmission main that extends south from the existing Comox Valley water system to connect with the future water system. This project includes the provision of treated Comox Lake water to K'ómoks lands south of Royston.

- This project is distinct from the water treatment project and will be funded through grants, the K'ómoks First Nation and other water service providers and developers. The water service extension project will only proceed once all necessary funding has been secured.
- Once the construction is complete, the CVRD will supply treated water in bulk that will be purchased by KFN for the development and servicing of their south lands.

Building a path forward

Recognizing that water is a shared interest between KFN and the regional district, the agreement provides a clear framework of how the two organizations will work together now and in the future.

The agreement specifically confirms:

- KFN support for and participation in the Comox Valley Water Treatment Project and the Water Service (South) Extension Project
- KFN support for a water licence application to be made to the province by the CVRD
- The supply of water in bulk by the CVRD to KFN for the development and servicing of K'ómoks lands
- KFN future participation in management of regional water resources, including its participation in the governance structure of the Comox Valley water system



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What the agreement includes (cont'd)

2. Opportunities for KFN businesses

The agreement lays out opportunities for K'ómoks businesses in both proposed projects:

- The agreement specifies that contracts up to \$10 million related to the construction of the Water Service (South) Extension Project may be awarded to qualified K'ómoks businesses and joint ventures, provided the prices are commercially competitive.
- For the Comox Valley Water Treatment Project, the regional district has agreed to work with KFN to establish an inventory of K'ómoks businesses, provide that list to short-listed proponents and require short-listed proponents to include in their proposals a plan to provide subcontract opportunities to K'ómoks businesses.

3. Support for a new water licence

To accommodate expected growth in the Comox Valley over the next 25 years, KFN will support the CVRD's application for an additional water licence of up to 5 million cubic metres per year from Comox Lake. This is in addition to the CVRD's existing water licence of 9.1 million cubic metres per year.

To learn more about the project

Visit the project website at: comoxvalleyrd.ca/watertreatment
OR connectcvrd.ca

Email the project team at: engineeringervices@comoxvalleyrd.ca

Phone: 250-334-6000

Under the new licence application, 2 million cubic metres will be allocated to supply water to K'ómoks lands, while the remaining 3 million cubic metres will be for the supply of bulk water to service growth in the rest of the Comox Valley.

4. Working towards shared management

The CVRD has commissioned a study on its utility governance structure, including governance of the Comox Valley water service. KFN will continue to attend and participate in meetings of the water committee as a non-voting member while the water committee examines governance options.

Following the water committee's review and consideration of the governance study, the KFN and CVRD will discuss the future decision-making role of the KFN in the management of regional water resources, which may include KFN membership on the water committee as a voting member.



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