



Water Committee Meeting Date: February 13, 2008

To: Water Committee

From: Stan Woods, Senior Engineer
Policy and Planning Department

Date: February 1, 2008

Subject: **Public Comment on the Progress Report for the Drinking Water Management Plan**

Recommendation:

That the Board receive for information the report dated February 1, 2008, titled "Public Comment on the Progress Report for the Drinking Water Management Plan."

1. PURPOSE

To provide the Board with a summary of the public comment on the Progress Report for the Drinking Water Management Plan along with responses from Metro Vancouver staff on the comments received.

2. CONTEXT

At its meeting on July 27, 2007, the Board received the Progress Report for the Drinking Water Management Plan for the GVWD and Member Municipalities and directed that a meeting of the Water Committee be held to receive comments and submissions on the progress report.

An invitation flyer was mailed to a database of approximately one thousand individuals and organizations with an interest in Metro Vancouver drinking water issues inviting the public to provide feedback via delegations at the November 14, 2007 Water Committee meeting, or through written submissions. Three submissions were received. There were two delegations to the November 14, 2007 Water Committee; Mr Will Koop providing a verbal and written submission (Attachment 1) and Ms. Isabel Minty providing a verbal submission. Subsequent to the November 14 Water Committee meeting Ms. Elaine Golds of Burke Mountain Naturalists provided a written submission (Attachment 2). A summary of these comments along with responses from Metro Vancouver staff are provided in the following section.

Comments and Responses from Metro Vancouver staff

Mr. Koop and Ms. Golds were disappointed with the termination of the Regional Water Advisory Committee (RWAC) and feel that some form of public oversight is needed for watershed management. They would like to see more detailed reporting about the drinking watersheds and easier access to watershed information.

Staff response: In October 2007 the Metro Vancouver Board acknowledged the work of RWAC in contributing to past consultation processes, but felt the oversight of a standing public advisory committee was no longer required. The Board endorsed a more integrated and broader approach to receiving input on utility management plans through forums and

public meetings. Staff respond to public requests for specific or detailed information as quickly as possible.

Mr. Koop and Ms. Golds asked why the Hollyburn road was upgraded and the budget for the upgrade project.

Staff response: Information on road building and deactivation is provided to interested individuals upon request. The Hollyburn road was upgraded to provide adequate drainage and to facilitate deactivation work in the upper reaches. Overall budget for the road work is \$250,000 including 4.7 kilometres of road deactivation and 2.4 kilometres of road upgrade.

Ms. Golds asked Metro Vancouver to assist in the return of sockeye salmon to Coquitlam Lake.

Staff response: Metro Vancouver is undertaking studies to ensure that re-introducing sockeye salmon to Coquitlam Lake, in 2008, has no impact on drinking water.

Mr. Koop asked for permission to access the watersheds.

Staff response: Board policy limits access to the watersheds to those involved in Metro Vancouver business. Mr. Koop is not involved in Metro Vancouver business, so granting him access permission is not consistent with Board policy.

Ms. Minty was concerned that population growth and climate change would lead to global and regional water supply shortages. She was also concerned with privatization of water resources and loss of control over water resources.

Staff response: The water system is being improved to be resilient to climate change and to continue to provide a reliable supply of water for a growing population. Metro Vancouver is not considering any initiatives that would privatize ownership or operation of the drinking water system.

3. ALTERNATIVES

None presented.

4. CONCLUSION

Comments were received on the Progress Report for the Drinking Water Management Plan and are summarized together with responses from staff.

Attachments:

1. Presentation to Metro Vancouver Water District's Water Committee dated November 14, 2007 from Mr. Will Koop, Coordinator of the B.C. Tap Water Alliance. (eRIM 4590340)
2. Letter from Ms. Elaine Golds, Burke Mountain Naturalists to Chair Tim Stevenson and Members of the Water Committee dated November 29, 2007. (eRIM 4583766)