

Highlands News

Highlands Council Newsletter
Fall 2020



Mayor's Message

It's been a busy summer with a record number of Zoom meetings dealing with the COVID-19 Pandemic. Local governments and their staff are working together in unprecedented

ways over the internet as the virtual landscape becomes more familiar. You are invited to attend our Highlands electronic council meetings by contacting the District office by noon on the day of the meeting. Alternatively, you can send your comments by email: info@highlands.ca or via Canada Post - District of Highlands, 1980 Millstream Rd., Victoria, BC V9B6H1

Take care and stay safe!!

Highlands Appoints a New Corporate Officer

We are very happy to announce that the District of Highlands has appointed Deb Hopkins as the Corporate Officer, following the recent retirement of Tina Neurauter. Deb will commence with the District of Highlands mid-September, and we are very much looking forward to her arrival.



Deb has worked in local government for over 20 years and brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the role. Deb is coming from the District of Oak Bay where she served most recently as the Director of Corporate Services, and previously spent 18 years with the District of Saanich working in Legislative Services and also Revenue Services. Deb has a Master of Arts in Professional Communication, a certificate in Local Government Management, and received a certificate from the Provincial Board of Examiners in Local Government Service Delivery.

In addition to loving animals, especially dogs and pigs, Deb is an avid cyclist and enjoys traveling around the world to watch professional cycling races. Deb will be a wonderful addition to our team at the District Office.

We would also like to express our sincere appreciation to Sonia Santarossa, who has helped us through the transition to a new Corporate Officer.

Please join us in welcoming Deb to the District of Highlands!



Fire Department News

The District of Highlands has been on an EXTREME fire hazard rating since July 31st, 2020. This means absolutely NO burning is permitted in the District – NO open fires, campfires, incinerators, woodstoves, chimneys, tiki torches etc.

When weather changes occur, it can take weeks before the fire hazard falls to a level where it is safe to burn. September in Highlands is historically our driest and busiest time of the year, and we must all remain vigilant in insuring our community is safe, so early spotting and reporting of any burning or fires is prudent in keeping any incidents as small as possible. Residents are also reminded that all reports of burning are 100% confidential, and are encouraged to contact the Fire Chief at 250-920-6970 or Firechief@highlands.ca if they see anything of concern.

TOTAL FIRE BAN

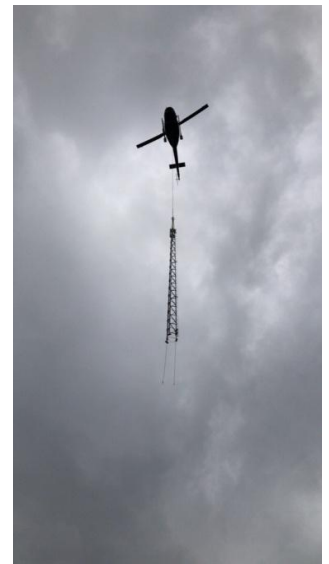


IN EFFECT

CREST Tower Upgrade Improves Communication

Historically, due to the topography of Highlands, emergency services have struggled with radio communications when responding to incidents in the north and remote areas of the District. Over the past 3 years, CREST has been undergoing a regional technology upgrade to a P25 standard. This year, as part of that regional upgrade and to improve the emergency communications in Highlands, CREST staff searched for a location in the Highlands to install a small tower to fill in the large gaps in signal within the District. In August that tower was commissioned, and hands on testing has shown that every area that previously had ZERO signal is now an area where police, fire and ambulance can easily communicate with each other throughout the entire District!

~Fire Chief Ford



CREST tower lowered into position

Drainage Culvert Replacements

You may have noticed some road work taking place in your neighbourhoods at the following locations to replace four drainage culverts:

- 644 Millstream Lake Road (near Davies Road)
- 3304 Woodridge Place (south of Verona **Crescent**) **Thursday, August 27th, 2020**
full day road closure from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm
- 3507 Woodridge Place (south of Eagles Lake Road) **Wednesday, September 2, 2020**
full day road closure from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm
- Raven Heights (near Woodridge Place) **Friday, September 4th, 2020**
full day road closure from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm

This work will be done in accordance with Federal Fisheries guidelines and best practices for road culvert replacements. The work is scheduled to take place between August 25th and September 18th during the hours of 7:30 am to 4:30 pm. In most cases, single lane traffic will be maintained during construction with traffic delays of up to 15 minutes. This schedule is dependent on weather conditions and other scheduling factors that may delay the work. Please check the District website for the most up to date information. Your patience is appreciated while we complete this important work.

Boundary Reduction Proposal from Ecoasis Developments

Highlands Council was approached by Ecoasis Developments LLP with a proposal to reduce the boundary of the District of Highlands and transfer the Bear Mountain Resort lands (431 acres) to the City of Langford. As your elected representatives tasked with acting in the best interests of the community as a whole, Highlands Council carefully considered the concept of a boundary change and the related proposal.

Acknowledging that the District of Highlands is a financially stable community, able to appropriately fund the services and projects that are important to the community and our significant progress towards ensuring sustainable asset management through long term financial planning, Council unanimously decided not to support the proposed boundary reduction.

The decision of Council also took into consideration its obligations to the original intentions behind incorporating as a municipality 26 years ago. Protecting and preserving the natural environment of all District lands, which include a portion of what is now Bear Mountain Resort, remains a priority as well as ensuring the best interests of the residents and property owners of the District of Highlands remain our first priority. Please visit the website at the following link for the correspondence from the Mayor: <https://www.highlands.ca/DocumentCenter/View/7488/Newsletter-Release-re-Ecoasis-proposed-boundary-adj--FINAL-letter-from-mayor-version>

An Alternative Fling Event

The Highlands District Community Association and the Highland Heritage Parks Society have decided not to hold the Highlands Fling this year due to the restrictions required because of the pandemic. However, organizers would like to reach out to residents and have come up with a safe and simple community event that would respect Dr. Henry's guidelines. HDCA and HHPs volunteers will be at Caleb Pike Park on August 29th and September 6th from 1-4 pm and at the intersection of Munn's Road and Woodridge Place on August 30th and September 5th from 1-4 pm to hand out free wrapped ice cream bars and granola bars and say hello to our neighbours. Volunteers will ensure that physical distancing of 2 metres is maintained and hand-sanitizing stations will be available. Food handlers will be masked and gloved. Donations to the Goldstream Food Bank will be accepted at the event. Cash donations are preferred by the Food Bank and egg cartons are needed.

Golder Associates Review of Ecoasis Groundwater Management Reports

Council considered the following report at its July 13 Meeting: <https://www.highlands.ca/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Item/5800?fileID=5953>. As background, in 2018, Golder and Associates recommended reviewing the water balance analysis that Ecoasis had done on their lands with respect to groundwater use for golf irrigation. The purpose of that analysis was to ultimately request changes to the restrictive covenant ("master development agreement" done in 2005) that the District has with Ecoasis that controls groundwater use. In February 2016, the *Water Sustainability Act* and supporting regulations came into force that offered a groundwater licensing program for non-domestic users. This legislation did not exist when the District and Ecoasis entered into the restrictive covenant. Ecoasis applied for an in-use groundwater license in 2017. At that July 13 Meeting, Council resolved to defer consideration of any changes to the master development agreement pending consultation with the Province through the groundwater licensing application process.

Groundwater Protection Implementation and Work Plan Is In Motion!

At the end of 2019, Council endorsed a plan that incorporates previous and new consultant recommendations into a practical and organized "to do list" for actions towards groundwater protection. Actions are sequential and organized into categories of science, planning and community stewardship – all of which are inter-related.

Due to some leftover funds from the grant to do the work plan, the District was able to start its first items on this to do list – community aquifers delineation and mapping work. This project looked at the aquifer itself and was able to establish smaller areas with similar characteristics – thus "community aquifers". Please see image. The report and presentation made to Council on June 29 can be found here:

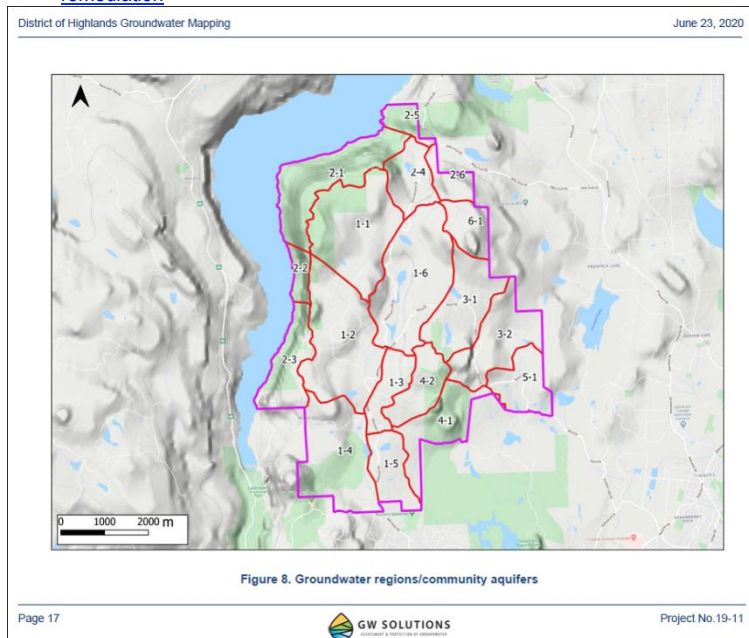
https://www.highlands.ca/DocumentCenter/View/7473/Unfinish-Buss_Groundwater-Mapping

In the near future, more information will be posted at this link: <https://www.highlands.ca/428/Groundwater-Well-Information>

Millstream Meadows Contamination Migration

Unfortunately some contaminants from Millstream Meadows (1965 Millstream Road) has migrated to the Municipal Office property (1980 Millstream Road). In fall of 2019, the CRD conducted expanded groundwater testing to continue the investigation towards their Certificate of Compliance pursuant to the *Contaminated Sites Regulation* for Millstream Meadows. The owners of Millstream Meadows (CRD and BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD) are required to remediate it. Further information is expected to be forthcoming. Here are a couple of links to what we know now:

District of Highlands August 17, 2020 Council Agenda Item: <https://www.highlands.ca/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Item/5849?fileID=5969>
CRD Millstream Meadows Remediation Link: <https://www.crd.bc.ca/project/capital-projects/millstream-meadows-remediation>



Use of Poisons for Rodent Control

The District has received a number of letters from concerned members of the public about the wide-spread use of rat poison (anticoagulant rodenticides) and the resulting negative impacts. Members of the community are assured that the District does not use any rat poison in our municipal operations.

There are many harmful impacts of using anticoagulant rodenticides. Non-target species like birds, pets, and even our children may accidentally eat these poisons. Rat poison acts by causing internal bleeding which is why poisoned rodents become VERY thirsty and can be seen out in the open looking for water as they die a slow and painful death. Poisoned rodents become easy prey for other creatures like owls, hawks, vultures, and our pets. The poison is still active and can kill other wildlife up the food chain.

Owls eat about three rodents per night (1000 per year), so inadvertently killing owls and other predators can actually lead to higher rodent populations.

We encourage Highlanders to use other forms of rodent control like traps, but as always, the best approach is to keep our yards free of rodent attractants. Rat trap design has improved significantly for ease of use. Please think about your neighbours and wild creatures when considering rodent control methods.

Highlands Council wishes to thank you for writing and expressing your concerns!~ *Councillor Ann Baird*

Community Hall Landscaping – Pergola Installation

Phase 1 of the Community Hall landscaping project began with raised gardens immediately behind the auditorium that were completed in 2019. As a continuation of Phase 1 of this project, at its July meeting, Council approved a design concept for a pergola to be installed between the two gardens. The design concept is for a wrought iron open roof design that would be ideal for weddings and wedding photos. The pergola, that will fit well into the natural landscape, will not shade the garden plants and will allow plants to train on the structure. A local artisan will be commissioned to construct the pergola that will be made of 85% recycled material. To the left is a photo of the Community Hall landscaping where the pergola will be placed.



Design concept for pergola

Bow Hunting Bylaw Map Update

At its August 17th Meeting, Council adopted an updated map for the bow hunting bylaw. The map now reflects parcels that met original criteria for the prohibition of bow hunting. Criteria included properties within rural residential zones, parkland, and municipally-owned land. Also added to properties that are prohibited from bow hunting were daycare zones, properties with conservation covenants, and the Mary Lake Nature Sanctuary. A copy of the consolidated bylaw and map can be found here: <https://www.highlands.bc.ca/DocumentCenter/View/7494/145---Firearms-and-Bow-Hunting---Consolidated>

Please note that, in addition to complying with all Provincial Hunting Regulations, it is necessary to obtain a permit accompanied by a \$20 fee, to hunt in the District. You must receive permission from the property owner. A copy of the hunting permit can be found here: <https://www.highlands.ca/DocumentCenter/View/5872/Bow-Hunting-Permit?bidId=>

Highlands Community Garden Has Survived the Pandemic



The Community Garden is flourishing. We are looking forward to welcoming new garden box renters for Spring 2021. We will continue to practice all COVID-19 safety protocols required by Dr. Bonnie Henry when gardening or holding “distance” workshops. If you would like more information or to be put on the Wait List for 2021 contact our membership coordinator Tammy at highlandscommunitygarden@outlook.com

We also are on Facebook as HighlandsCommunityGarden ~*Marlene Tyshynski*



Celebrate Your Special Day in a Special Place



Caleb Pike Heritage Park

This rustic and unique 3 acre park is surrounded by beautiful Douglas Fir forest
3 Heritage buildings circa 1883 • Ceremonies • Free Parking
For rates and availability please call or go online today



Community Hall

Customize your event at our brand new hall which offers a 1200 square foot assembly area
Entertain up to 150 guests • Acoustically designed stage
Non-Commercial Kitchen • Floor to ceiling windows
Free Parking



1980 Millstream Rd, Victoria
Heritage Park: 250-474-7601 • Hall: 250-474-1773
www3.telus.net/calebp05 • www.highlands.ca

Council and Staff Contacts:

Mayor Ken Williams
kwilliams@highlands.ca
250-882-5481

Councillor Leslie Anderson
leslie.corvidconsulting@gmail.com
778-350-8180

Councillor Ann Baird
ann@eco-sense.ca
250-812-5481

Councillor Gord Baird
gord.baird@gmail.com
250-818-7986

Councillor Marcie McLean
marciemclean@shaw.ca
250-474-4725

Councillor Karel Roessingh
karel@roessong.com
250-727-9808

Councillor Rose Stanton
rose26@telus.net
250-474-3403

Fire Chief Ford
firechief@highlands.ca
250-920-6970

Municipal Office
250-474-1773

CRD Animal Control
250-478-0624

CRD Bylaw Enforcement
250-474-3351

CRD Parks
250-478-3344

Wildlife Information
1-800-663-9453

Meeting Dates *

September

*Council - Tuesday, September 8 – 7:00 pm
HSC – Tuesday, September 9 – 7:30 pm
CotW – Monday, September 14 – 7:00 pm
SSSC – Tuesday, September 15 – 7 pm
SLUSC – Wednesday, September 16 – 7 pm
Council - Monday, September 28 – 7:00 pm

October

*Council - Monday, October 5 – 7:00 pm
CotW – Tuesday, October, 13 – 7:00 pm
HSC – Wednesday, October 14 – 7:30 pm
Council – Monday, October 19 – 7:00 pm
SSSC – Tuesday, October 20 – 7:00 pm
SLUSC – Wednesday, October 21 – 7:00 pm

November

*Council – Monday, November 2 – 7:00 pm
CotW – Monday, November 9 – 7:00 pm
SSSC – Tuesday, November 10 – 7:00 pm
Council – Monday, November 16 – 7:00 pm
SLUSC – Wednesday, November 18 – 7:00 pm

December

*Council – Monday, December 7 – 7:00 pm
CotW – Monday, December 14 – 7:00 pm

*Please note due to COVID-19 all of the regularly scheduled meeting dates and times noted above have been cancelled until further notice, other than the first Council meeting of the month (noted with an *). Council will consider the meeting schedule at its meeting in early September.

JDF Library Open for Limited Service

Monday to Saturday

For those who self identify as senior or immune compromised: 11:00 am -12:00 pm

For everyone: 12:00 pm- 4:00 pm

Monday 9:00 am through to Saturday 5:00 pm

- Pick up holds
- Return Items
- Browse a small collection on the spot
- Upgrade an online library card
- Pick up a BC Summer Club starter kit, books for babies ,bags and more.

For customer service, contact us through our web form or phone 250-940-4875. Phone support is available Monday to Saturday, 11:00 am to 4:00 pm.

South Highlands Local Area Plan Update

The South Highlands Local Area Plan (“SHLAP”) is starting into Phase 2. The Task Force met once in late July virtually. The result has been a finalized Background Analysis Summary Report and Engagement Plan. Both these documents will be on the web site in the near future:
<https://www.highlands.ca/504/South-Highlands-Local-Area-Plan>

It is expected that a Project Launch will occur in September. Please keep posted for more information! The District needs your input to have the best plan!



Tip: Remember to replace the batteries in any battery-operated smoke alarms on November 1st when we turn the clocks back one hour.

Stay connected! Check out our website at www.highlands.ca and subscribe to *Notify Me* which allows you to sign up to an unlimited number of email lists. Receive email or text message updates regarding the information you have requested that is important to you!

www.highlands.ca | 1980 Millstream Road | Highlands, BC | V9B 6H1 | 250-474-1773

