

**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO**

**MINUTES OF THE DRINKING WATER AND WATERSHED PROTECTION TECHNICAL  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Wednesday, May 24, 2023**

**12:30 P.M.**

**Board Chambers (Webstreamed)**

In Attendance:	E. Tian	Chair
	R. Barlak	Ministry of Environment & Climate Change Strategy Representative
	S. Blackburn	Public Representative (South)
	L. Brooymans	Environment Community Representative
	N. Goeller	Hydrologist Representative
	P. Jorgenson*	Forest Industry Representative
	P. Law	General Public Representative
	W. Luedke	Fisheries and Oceans Canada
	M. Ryn	Agricultural Community Representative
	B. Sileniaks*	Municipal Representative (City of Parksville)
	S. Sowa	Island Health
	D. Van Everdingen	Ministry of Forests, Hydrogeologist Representative
B. Weir*	Municipal Representative (Town of Qualicum Beach)	
Regrets:	A. Barroso	Hydrogeologist Representative
	L. Cake	Water Purveyors
	A. Gilchrist	Academic Community Representative (Vancouver Island University)
	Chief M. Recalma	Indigenous Community Representative
	N. Schneider	Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
	W. Shulba	Islands Trust Representative
	M. Squire	Municipal Representative (City of Nanaimo)
	J. Wilson	Indigenous Community Representative
	M. Woods	Municipal Representative (District of Lantzville)
Also in Attendance:	M. Walters	Regional District of Nanaimo
	K. Fowler	Regional District of Nanaimo
	C. Brugge	Regional District of Nanaimo
	L. Fegan	Regional District of Nanaimo
	E. Forssman	Regional District of Nanaimo
	J. Pisani	Regional District of Nanaimo
	S. Schultz	Recording Secretary

\* Denotes electronic meeting participation as authorized by Section 10 of "Regional District of Nanaimo Board Procedure Bylaw No. 1862, 2022".

## **CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order.

## **TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The Chair respectfully acknowledged the Coast Salish Nations on whose traditional territory the meeting took place.

## **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

It was moved and seconded that the agenda be approved as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

## **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Technical Advisory Committee meeting held February 13, 2023, be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

## **ROUNDTABLE UPDATES**

Farewell and thank you to Erica Forssman; welcome back to Julie Pisani in the Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Program Coordinator position.

Committee members provided updates on current issues and projects from their perspectives / organizations.

## **INVITED PRESENTATIONS**

- Bill Floyd was unable to attend to present the Snowpack Monitoring Update so a quick summary was provided by Erica Forssman, including that the 2022-2023 progress report has been received for the fourth year of the study. Snowpack was slow to build this year and only reached average levels in mid-April. The major melt occurred throughout the month of May.
  - *Data to action: This data is shared directly with the Englishman River Water Service to inform their water supply planning and operations.*
- Linda Brooymans reported on the School Water Stewards Program delivered by Nanaimo and Area Land Trust, and funded in part through the Regional District of Nanaimo Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Program.
  - *Cultivating a water stewardship culture: Student engagement in activities that connect them to their local watersheds, fostering a care for their neighbourhood waterbodies and ecosystems.*
- Aliandra Badger and Neil Goeller presented on the recently established Community Flow Monitoring Network which is a partnership between BC Conservation Foundation, Province of BC, and local community groups in order to collect hydrometric (streamflow and level) data. The Drinking Water and Watershed Protection program is in the process of providing priority sites within the Regional District of Nanaimo to be included in the network.
  - *Data to action: This data will inform Drinking Water and Watershed Protection related efforts, including water budgets, rainwater management performance targets, surface water quality interpretation, etc.*

## STAFF PRESENTATIONS

- Melissa Tomlinson was unable to attend so Erica Forssman shared an update on Team WaterSmart Events that occurred over the busy spring outreach season of Water to Earth Month, noted that the School Watershed Field Trips are running again this May/June, and shared that Residential Irrigation Check-ups will be starting up again in June/July.
  - *Cultivating a water stewardship culture: Promoting water conservation.*
- Capri Brugge informed the committee of stewardship partner engagement activities including the Community Watershed Monitoring Network volunteer thank-you event, Stewards in the Spotlight event, and the interactive Get Involved Webpage for water stewards in the region: [www.getinvolved.rdn.ca/watershed-stewardship-network](http://www.getinvolved.rdn.ca/watershed-stewardship-network)
  - *Cultivating a water stewardship culture: Supporting volunteers.*
- Capri Brugge updated the committee on the Regional District of Nanaimo Administration Building Raingarden Demonstration Site which is in the planning stages with an aim to begin landscaping work on the site this summer. The location at the Regional District of Nanaimo administration building provides ample visibility from a staff and community education perspective and will provide a demonstration of green infrastructure that is promoted through the Region Strategy for Rainwater Management.
  - *Enhancing water awareness & implementing rainwater management initiatives.*
- Lauren Fegan informed the committee of the upcoming pre-summer groundwater analysis and the Volunteer Observation Well Depth2Water Webtool that will be used for the data visualization and reporting.
  - *Data to action: This snapshot of pre-summer groundwater levels will inform decision-makers and the public about groundwater trends heading into the summer period, providing context for conservation measures and operational decisions.*
- Lauren Fegan shared that the 2022 Community Watershed Monitoring Network surface water quality results will be presented at a public session on July 12, 2023 at Nanoose Place.
  - *Data to action: This water quality data will continue to inform stream stewardship efforts, stormwater/rainwater management activities and land use planning referrals.*
- Erica Forssman provided an update on the French Creek Water Budget project, that is currently awaiting the Provincial publication of revised aquifer boundaries for the study area, after which point the refined numerical model can be finalized and the results reported on according to updated aquifer delineations.
  - *Data to action: This study will help to quantify groundwater and surface water availability in the French Creek water region given future scenarios of land cover, climate change and water use to inform water management and allocations, land use planning, and climate resilience actions.*
- Erica Forssman shared an update on the Ecological Accounting Process Partnership that is training the Vancouver Island University student land planners,

GIS analysts, and natural science students in the ecological accounting methodology through project applications supported over the next three years by the Regional District of Nanaimo, the City of Nanaimo, and the Municipality of North Cowichan. The Regional District of Nanaimo has selected French Creek as the focus stream for 2023, to dovetail with the other related projects taking place in that part of the region. More to come on this project as the scope is refined over the coming months.

- *Quantifying watershed natural assets and ecosystem services to later inform policy and planning processes.*
- Erica Forssman informed the committee of progress on two items related to the implementation of the Regional Strategy for Rainwater Management:
  - French Creek Watershed Performance Targets for Rainwater Management – Technical report received by Regional District of Nanaimo Board for information in April. Implementation of targets will first require the development of a standard checklist for review of stormwater plans by the Regional District of Nanaimo (and municipal partners) potentially brought into force by way of DPs or other means. Then, continuous targeted hydrometric and water quality monitoring will be required to gauge indicators over time. Next steps are working with the Planning Department and Municipal Partners on policy approaches that Drinking Water and Watershed Protection could provide support on.
  - *Data to action: Facilitating integration of water information into planning processes such as Development Permit Areas.*
  - Regional Climate Change Assessment, in partnership with the Regional District of Nanaimo Sustainability Department, is currently scoping a project working with Pacific Climate Impacts Consortium to produce regionally downscaled climate projections for the entire Regional District of Nanaimo, that would be used for future and ongoing work such as hydrologic modelling for rainwater management, water supply planning and climate preparedness.
  - *Generates a richer understanding of the region's water resources in a changing climate.*

## **ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

TIME: 3:14 P.M.

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CHAIR