

Delegation: Dr. David Witty, Director, Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region, re Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Roundtable Representation

Summary: Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region (MABR), a UNESCO designated area, lies within the Regional District of Nanaimo. The Biosphere has become known internationally for its significant work in community-based research and Indigenous relationships with the Snaw-Na-As First Nation and Qualicum First Nation. MABR has signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the City of Parksville and Town of Qualicum Beach both of which sit on the MABR Roundtable (in itself recognized for its innovative, collaborative processes). In the past, the RDN also attended the MABR Roundtable through the RDN's DWWP Program Coordinator. Unfortunately, the last RDN Council determined that it did not need to be involved in the MABR.

A UNESCO Biosphere designation (there are 650+ in the world and 18 are in Canada) is considered by other communities to be a major accomplishment and recognition of the importance of the natural environment and the relationship of humans to the environment. Such designations draw international attention.

On behalf of MABR, I am requesting an opportunity to make a presentation to the RDN Committee of the Whole to seek RDN representation on the MABR Roundtable to join the leaders of Parksville, Qualicum Beach and the two First Nations. In addition, the RDN is requested to reappoint the Coordinator of DWWP, with whom the MABR continues to work on joint research projects, to also sit on the Roundtable (joining VIU and citizen representative and time company representation).

Action Requested: 1) RDN appoint a RDN representative to the Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region Roundtable; and
2) Reappoint the Coordinator of DWWP to also sit on the Roundtable.