

## SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT STAFF REPORT

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**TO:** Infrastructure Services Committee – March 15, 2018  
**AUTHOR:** Remko Rosenboom – General Manager, Infrastructure Services  
**SUBJECT:** REGIONAL GROUNDWATER TASK FORCE – NEXT STEPS

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### RECOMMENDATION

**THAT the report titled Regional Groundwater Task Force – Next Steps be received;**

**AND THAT the SCR D proceed with Phase 2 of the Groundwater Investigation Project and that staff bring forward a future report with the results;**

**AND THAT the SCR D exchange information with local governments and other potentially affected parties on Phase 2 Test Drilling with respect to monitoring results;**

**AND THAT the SCR D collaborate on a framework with the Town of Gibsons to establish a Groundwater Management Zone related to the Gibsons Aquifer and that staff bring forward a future report;**

**AND FURTHER THAT the SCR D establish a working group with infrastructure staff from all four local governments to discuss upcoming projects and opportunities for collaboration.**

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### BACKGROUND

The Board adopted the following recommendation at October 26, 2017 meeting:

300/17      **Recommendation No. 1**      *Groundwater Investigation to Supplement Chapman Creek Water Supply*

THAT the report titled Groundwater Investigation to Supplement Chapman Creek Water Supply be received;

AND THAT recommendations from the Groundwater Investigation to Supplement Chapman Creek Water Supply Report be brought forward to the 2018 Budget process;

AND FURTHER THAT the SCR D consult with the Town of Gibsons, District of Sechelt, and Sechelt Indian Government District regarding proposed aquifer exploration identified in the report, prior to concluding the 2018 Budget process.

Consultation with local governments was structured as the Regional Groundwater Task Force with Terms of Reference adopted at the December 14, 2017 Board meeting.

346/17      **Recommendation No. 9**      *Regional Groundwater Task Force Draft Terms of Reference*

THAT the report titled Regional Groundwater Task Force Draft Terms of Reference be received;

AND THAT the 1. Purpose be amended as follows:

- a. Provide a forum for the staff at all four local governments on the Sunshine Coast to work towards – in the spirit of cooperation and collaboration – recommendations for the potential management of groundwater sources within the context of the region’s water supply concerns.

AND THAT 2.1 c. be amended to “To identify all the local governments water strategies, concerns and potential solutions...”;

AND FURTHER THAT the Regional Groundwater Task Force Terms of Reference be adopted as amended.

The Regional Groundwater Task Force met on three occasions between January 24 and February 21, 2018. A report summarizing the results of the Task Force discussions was presented at the March 8, 2018 Planning and Community Development Committee.

## **DISCUSSION**

### *Phase 2 Test Drilling*

There were concerns and potential solutions identified in the Regional Groundwater Task Force report which relate to Phase 3 of the Groundwater Investigation Project, and would involve developing a production well and applying for Water Licences.

At this stage and without test wells, there are still many unknowns. The results from the Phase 2 Test Drilling will assist in informing Phase 3.

Staff will bring forward a future report on the results of the Phase 2 test drilling with the results for Committee review and decision making before any next steps are proposed in Phase 3.

Staff recommend proceeding with test drilling of the four recommended sites under Phase 2 of the Groundwater Investigation. Phase 2 test drilling will provide a greater understanding of the capacity and water quality of the targeted aquifers. Monitoring of neighboring wells during test drilling will provide clarity about their interconnections with the potential production wells. Staff also recommend sharing the information with all four local governments with regards to monitoring the results including test results and impacts.

*Groundwater Management Zone*

Staff recommend that the SCRD collaborate on a framework with the Town of Gibsons to establish a Groundwater Management Zone to sustain and protect the Gibsons Aquifer. The Groundwater Management Zone is a recommendation in the Town's Aquifer Mapping Study (Waterline Resources Inc., 2013) and would be consistent with efforts the SCRD has undertaken to protect the existing SCRD wells as recommended in the Well Protection Plan (Associated Environmental, 2016) which was received by the Board on July 20, 2017.

*Further Collaboration*

There was consensus among all members of the Regional Groundwater Task Force that efforts could be made to improve communication between local governments at a staff level to discuss upcoming projects and servicing strategies. Staff recommend that a working group with infrastructure staff from the four local governments be established to discuss upcoming projects and opportunities.

**STRATEGIC PLAN AND RELATED POLICIES**

The Groundwater Investigation Project will supplement the existing water supply and ensure that the SCRD can continue to meet its mission of providing quality services to our community through effective and responsive government.

Continued engagement with all four local governments, including the Sechelt Indian Government District, reflects the priority to Enhance Collaboration with the *shíshálh* and *Skwúxwú7mesh* Nations.

**CONCLUSION**

The Regional Groundwater Task Force identified a need for greater communication between local government staff to discuss upcoming opportunities. Staff recommend establishing a working group with infrastructure staff from other local governments to discuss upcoming projects and opportunities.

Staff also recommend proceeding with Phase 2 of the Groundwater Investigation. Results from the Regional Groundwater Task Force will inform staff recommendations that will accompany the report summarizing the Phase 2 Test Drilling.

Should Phase 2 Test Drilling move forward, staff recommend sharing the information with local governments and other potentially affected parties as it relates to monitoring results.

Reviewed by:			
Manager	X – D. Crosby	Finance	
GM		Legislative	
CAO	X – J. Loveys	Other	