



**NOTICE OF  
ELECTORAL AREA SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING**

Tuesday,  
May 4, 2010  
Regional District Board Room  
175 Ingram Street, Duncan, BC

**2:00 pm**

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9. **INFORMATION**

10. **NEW BUSINESS**

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12. **CLOSED SESSION**

Motion that the meeting be closed to the public in accordance with the Community Charter Part 4, Division 3, Section 90(1), subsections as noted in accordance with each agenda item.

CSNB1 Discussion – referred from April 20<sup>th</sup> EASC

13. **NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday, May 18, 2010 - 2:00 pm start

14. **ADJOURNMENT**

**NOTE: A copy of the full agenda package is available at the CVRD website [www.cvrld.bc.ca](http://www.cvrld.bc.ca)**

Director B. Harrison  
Director K. Cossey  
Director I. Morrison

Director M. Marcotte  
Director G. Giles  
Director K. Kuhn

Director L. Iannidinardo  
Director L. Duncan  
Director M. Dorey



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## STAFF REPORT

### ELECTORAL AREA SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING OF MAY 4, 2010

**DATE:** April 28, 2010 **FILE NO:** EDCG  
**FROM:** Geoff Millar, Manager, Economic Development Division **BYLAW NO:**  
**SUBJECT:** Cowichan Region Area Agricultural Plan

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#### **Recommendation:**

Request that the Electoral Area Services Committee recommend that the Cowichan Valley Regional District Board establish an Agricultural Advisory Committee comprised of government, community, farmers and other stakeholders to address the issues and actions identified in the Area Agriculture Plan.

#### **Purpose:**

To implement the Cowichan Region Area Agriculture Plan.

#### **Financial Implications:**

There is no request for financial resources.

#### **Interdepartmental/Agency Implications:**

Implementing the Area Agriculture Plan will involve the participation of a number of agricultural community groups, local and provincial governments and the farming community.

#### **Background:**

Agriculture is an important economic driver in the Cowichan Region and the region has some of the best agriculture land on Vancouver Island. In recent years there has been a noticeable decline in our ability to provide food for the local population. Currently 18% of our food comes from local sources generating \$47.5 million in gross receipts. Agriculture provides a unique quality of life for the region whether experienced from a farmers viewpoint or from someone who has moved to the region for the rural lifestyle. The region is gaining a national and international reputation as a "food" region, particularly with Cowichan Bay designated a Citta Slow community. There is support in the region to see agriculture enhanced; for example – The Cowichan Food Charter signed by the Economic Development Commission and the CVRD Board.

.../2

In 2006, the Cowichan Region Economic Development Commission identified the agriculture sector as an important economic driver for the Cowichan Region and developed a strategy to create a Cowichan Region Area Agriculture Plan. Approval to move ahead with an area agriculture plan was supported by the CVRD Board. Funding was obtained from the Investment Agriculture Foundation, Ministry of Community and Rural Development, Cobble Hill Farmers Institute, independent farmers in the South Cowichan region and the CVRD and the plan process moved ahead in 2008. The Steering Committee was formed in the fall of 2008 to oversee the development of the Area Agriculture Plan process and the consultant, Gary Rolston from "From The Ground Up Consulting" was hired in early 2009. The consultant spent the better part of 2009, conducting research from statistical data sources and stakeholder consultation.

The consultant generated three reports: State of the Industry, Issues and Opportunities, and Action Plan. The final Area Agriculture Plan is attached which includes highlights from the State of the Industry report, Issues and Opportunities report and action items to move the industry forward.

The Action Plan portion of the Area Agriculture Plan identified 78 recommendations to improve the agriculture industry in the Cowichan Region

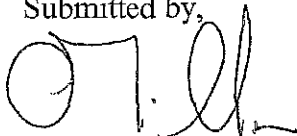
Four Broad Areas:

- Plan Implementation Structure and Communication
- Policy, Land Use and Environment
- Attraction and Marketing
- Education

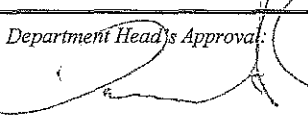
Overview of Action Plan Goals

1. To create a strong communication network between agriculture and the community- 15 action items
2. To create a local government policy framework that supports and welcomes increased agricultural production, encourages land improvements and helps provide access to resources- 45 action items
3. To improve and extend the access to market for local foods- 10 action items
4. To preserve the character and environment of the community- 8 action items

Submitted by,



Geoff Millar,  
Manager, Economic Development Division, CVRD

Department Head's Approval:

Signature

# Cowichan Region Area Agricultural Plan

October 2009



*This report was prepared for:*

**Cowichan Region Economic Development Commission**

*By:*

- Gary Rolston, P.Ag and Simon Pritchard, B.Sc.Ag.Mgmt  
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- Marla Limousin  
Ehrler Limousin & Associates, Courtenay, BC
- Arnold Harasymchuk  
BMC Business Management Consultants, Courtenay, BC

*With the assistance of the:*

**Project Advisory Committee:**

- Jim van Barneveld (co-chair)
- Ian Christison (co-chair and Chair of Cobble Hill Farmers Institute)
- Gerry Giles (Area 'C' Director and Chair of CVRD)
- Mike Tippet (CVRD Planner)
- Pete Keber (CVRD Environment Commission)
- Wayne Haddow (Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Agrologist)
- Graham Myers (Cowichan Agriculture Society)
- George Seymour (Councillor-District of North Cowichan)
- Roger Cheetham (Agricultural Land Commission)
- Joanne McLeod (Nanaimo-Cedar Farmers Institute)
- Geoff Millar (EDC, Manager)
- Kathy Lachman (EDC, Business Development)

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# 1 State of the Industry Report

## Executive Summary

The intent of the plan is to develop a vision for agriculture and a plan that strengthens farming in the Cowichan Valley Regional District. The plan is divided into three main sections:

- 1) State of the Industry – describes the current condition of the agriculture industry in the Cowichan Valley Regional District including the resources used and available, the economic impact, environmental limitations, trends and the regulations and policies that affect the industry. This part of the report is based on a combination of data analysis from the 2006 Census (the most recent statistical information available), a review of existing studies from the area, consultations with stakeholders, local knowledge and land-use inventory using aerial photography with some ground proofing.
- 2) Agricultural Issues and Opportunities – summarizes the issues and opportunities identified in the consultation process.
- 3) Action Plan – identifies the vision, strategic directions, and recommended goals, objectives and actions to implement the plan.

At lower elevations along the east coast of Vancouver Island, Cowichan, the warm land, has climate and soils that are well-suited to many different agricultural enterprises. There are 32,830 hectares (ha) of arable land. Of this, 9421 ha are considered prime agricultural land. However, about 80% of this area requires irrigation to produce high-value crops; only 2465 ha are currently irrigated. Access to water for irrigation is a significant concern.

The Cowichan Valley is, and always has been, one of the major agricultural areas on Vancouver Island. Historically, the Valley produced large volumes of vegetables, berries and dairy products that fed a large percentage of the population. The industry has changed as the population has increased. Analysis of long-term statistics indicates that inflation adjusted farm gate sales have increased by about 14.5%<sup>1</sup> over the past 20 years. This has happened despite a decrease in farm size (average farm size down 47%) over the same period. The total area farmed in the Regional District has declined from 17,621 ha in 1986 to 11,559 ha in 2006. Average revenue per hectare has increased from \$1467 (in 1985 dollars) to \$4114 (in 2005 dollars).

In recent years, there has been a noticeable decline in the livestock industry. High input costs, especially feed, fuel and fertilizer, combined with a reduction in processing capacity (and regulatory pressure) appear to be pushing livestock production toward the mainland. The loss of livestock production has been partially offset by increases in intensive horticultural operations.

The number, and productivity, of small lot operators (with annual sales less than \$25,000) has remained virtually the same. Small lot operators represent over 83% of the total farms but they generate only 8% of the total farm gate revenue. Medium-sized farms (with annual sales between \$25,000 and \$100,000) are increasing in size and in numbers. There were 84 farms (12% of the farms) in this group, generating over 9% of the total farm gate revenue. Large farms, with sales over \$100,000 are increasing in number and in their contribution to farm gate sales - 83 farms (<12%)

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<sup>1</sup> Without adjusting for inflation, the increase is about 90% from \$25.3 million (in 1985 dollars) to \$47.5 million in 2005 dollars.



produce 84% of the area's agricultural revenue. Even the large farms are producing more on less land - there has been a 16% drop in the number of farms with over 28 ha.

The Provincial government has developed a framework and guidelines for local government policy related to agriculture. Much of the CVRD's policy has been amended to fit within the framework. Official Community Plans (OCPs) have been completed in the municipalities and electoral areas within the Regional District. Most of these have been amended to comply with recommended policies for agriculture. The Regional District has not completed a Regional Growth Strategy. Some updating of local government policy could be completed to help support the local industry. During consultations, the wide range of Provincial and Federal regulations seemed to be of more concern to producers.

The industry analysis identified a number of important trends that are affecting, or will affect, the future of agriculture in the Cowichan Valley. Many of them are positive. "Buy local" trends have increased demand for local products which has improved sales at direct farm markets and Farmers' Markets – providing expansion opportunities for small and medium sized farms. The internet provides producers with access to information and with marketing opportunities that didn't exist 5 years ago. The trend towards smaller, more intensive and more organic farms will impact planning for the future. On the downside, the livestock industry is in decline and faces further challenges with access to (and cost of) processing. The livestock industry tends to use more land per farm; if it declines more, how will that land be used productively? Irrigation water is needed to increase food production – to meet society's demands for increased food self-sufficiency. Farmers are aging and there are not many young people lining up to take their place. These are some of the issues and opportunities that arise from a review of the current state of the agricultural industry in the Cowichan Valley.

The "Issues and Opportunities Section" describes the issues and opportunities that have emerged from the consultations and research. The agriculture industry in the Cowichan Valley is diverse and complex. Issues and opportunities are often interwoven. They cannot always be separated out as individual issues or concerns and often the true issue is not obvious. For the sake of this report, issues and opportunities have been divided into three categories: economic, social and regulatory, and environmental. Some issues and opportunities could fall into all three categories, however, they have been placed in the section where they are most important or face the greatest impediments.

Economic issues ranged from education and training to recruiting new farmers. Loss of critical mass, access to markets, investment in primary and value added production were concerns as was the state of the livestock industry on Vancouver Island.

Social issues mainly focused on food self-sufficiency with some concerns about labour and employee housing. Regulatory issues included, among others, availability and management of water resources, public awareness, communication between farmers and the community, general regulations and access to quota at the provincial level.

Environmental issues were raised related to water and waste management, habitat conservation and there were opportunities noted with bioenergy and beneficial re-use of waste products. Many of the onfarm environmental concerns can be, and are being, addressed by the Environmental Farm Plans which are supported by government funding.

The following draft vision statement was developed as a result of the consultation process:

*To develop a thriving and diverse agricultural industry in the Cowichan Valley which:*

- *Provides a healthy, high quality diet for the people who live and visit, and*

- *Preserves or enhances the character, environment and quality of life of the community.*

Two key strategic directions are suggested to lead the industry towards its vision:

- Economic Development – This is the dynamic strategy that will allow the industry to shift and optimize production to match market conditions at any given point in time.
- Food Security and food self-sufficiency – This strategy will help ensure that the resource base is developed and/or maintained so that the industry can produce a basic diet for 45% of the local population.

An action plan was suggested for each of the following strategic goals which were identified in the process above:

- To create a strong communication network between agriculture and the community
- To create a local government policy framework that supports and welcomes increased agricultural production, encourages land improvements and helps provide access to resources
- To improve viability and profitability in the local agriculture industry including:
  - Attracting and recruiting new farmers
  - Maintaining or expanding the livestock industry
  - Increased training and education programs for the industry
- To improve water management for agricultural purposes including:
  - Increased access to water for irrigation
  - Improved water use efficiency
  - Improved drainage and water control systems
- To improve and extend the access to market for local foods including:
  - Increased access to storage, processing and distribution systems
  - Increased on farm value-added production
  - Improved access to markets
- To preserve the character and environment of the community
- To ensure that "individual parcels within the ALR will be used for their highest and best agricultural use". This will ensure that the agricultural sector in the CVRD profits and contributes as much as it can towards local and island-wide food self-sufficiency.

The action plan highlights include recommendations to form an Agricultural Advisory Committee and to employ an Agricultural Support Officer, both of which will strengthen the communication links between agriculture, the CVRD and the community. Other recommendations are aimed at working on agriculture, rather than in it, to increase productivity and profitability. These recommendations will ultimately lead to a thriving industry, with a well developed resource base, that is ready to produce food for the future of the Cowichan Valley.



## Introduction

### 0.2.1 Purpose

The purpose of this section of the report is to describe the current state of the agricultural industry, in the Cowichan Valley Regional District including:

- Current economic impact or contribution
- Resources available including land (water, soil, climate), labour, capital, management and infrastructure
- Environmental limitations
- Regulations and policy that impact the local industry
- Background – where the industry came from
- Trends – indicators of where the industry is going
- Social factors that affect the industry

Most of the analysis in the report is based on the 2006 Canadian Census of Agriculture, which is the most current statistical information on the sector. The report is not limited to statistical analysis and “cutting and pasting” policy and regulation. There is some interpretation of these results, based on consultation and knowledge of the industry.

### 0.2.2 Goals and Objectives

The plan will strengthen farming in the Regional District by addressing the following goals and objectives:

- To describe the current status of the Cowichan Region agriculture industry in a manner that allows stakeholders to:
  - improve farm business management – to be implemented by farmers and farm organizations
  - develop policy which will encourage agricultural activity within and outside the ALR and allow agriculture to compete with other land uses and improved decision-making related to agriculture and agricultural land uses
  - develop strategies to attract new farmers and new investment in primary and value-added production
  - improve education and information exchange between the farm community and the public including better education of youth with respect to farm practices and the role that the industry plays in the community
  - promote local agriculture
  - address environmental issues related to agriculture
- Describe the resource base, including developing a land use inventory
- Identify the ecological services agriculture provides to the region

The Issues and Opportunities section:

- Identifies the opportunities for agricultural crops and products with potential for enhancing agriculture in the region including

- Opportunities in smaller and medium scale agricultural farm operations
- Identifies issues faced by the industry and the issues related to agriculture within the community of the Cowichan Valley

The Action Plan:

- Provides a draft vision statement for agriculture in the Cowichan Valley
- Recommends 2 key strategic directions related to economic development and food self-sufficiency.
- Recommends goals, objectives and actions for resolving the main issues and capitalizing on opportunities.

### ***0.2.3 Current Regional Setting<sup>2</sup>***

The Cowichan Valley Regional District has a population of 80,700<sup>3</sup>. The population grew 7% between 2001 and 2006 and is expected to increase another 6.4% by 2011. About 5% of the local population is First Nations.

The Regional District is comprised of four incorporated municipalities and nine unincorporated electoral districts. Fifty-six percent of the population resides in the incorporated areas. The most significant job creation, between 2001 and 2006, was in the retail and wholesale trade sectors. The greatest job losses were in the forest sector with a decline of 250 jobs during that period.

The median age in the Regional District has increased from 33.7 in 1986 to 43.9 in 2007. BC Statistics projects that it will reach 47.8 by the year 2036. Average age on Vancouver Island has been increasing faster than other areas of the province, reflecting the area's attractiveness for retirees. This is significant because food consumption patterns change as the population ages.

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<sup>2</sup> Most of the information in this section is from the "*Regional Economic Analysis, Vancouver Island and Central/Sunshine Coasts: Draft Report*" prepared by Vannstruth Consulting Group in January 2009 based on the 2006 Census.

<sup>3</sup> BC Statistics, Quarterly Regional Statistics, April 2009



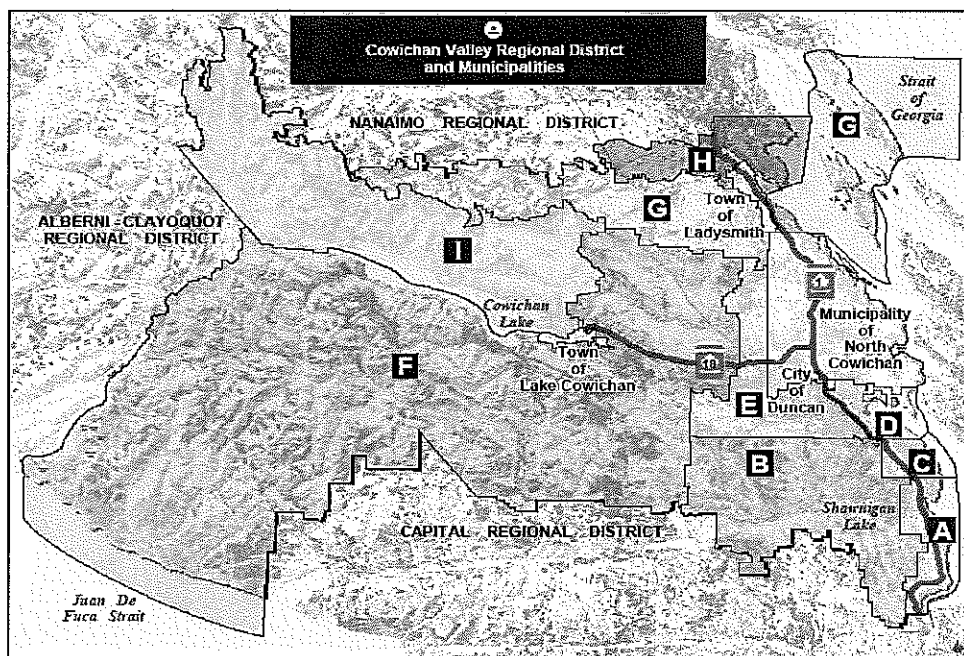


Figure 1 Map of Cowichan Valley Regional District and Electoral Areas

#### 0.2.3.1 Local Government

The Cowichan Valley Regional District consists of nine Electoral Areas and four municipalities as follows:

##### ELECTORAL AREAS

- A - Mill Bay/ Malahat
- B - Shawnigan Lake
- C - Cobble Hill
- D - Cowichan Bay
- E - Cowichan Station/Sahtlam/Glenora
- F - Cowichan Lake South/Skutz Falls
- G - Saltair/Gulf Island
- H - North Oyster/Diamond
- I - Youbou/Meade Creek

##### MUNICIPALITIES

- City of Duncan
- Town of Ladysmith
- Town of Lake Cowichan
- Municipality of North Cowichan

The CVRD Board consists of 15 Directors including one from each electoral area, three from North Cowichan and one from each of the other three municipalities in the region.

Statistics Canada combines the municipalities and electoral areas (as shown below) for the purpose of reporting the data used in this document.





<b>Agricultural Census areas</b>	<b>Includes</b>
North Cowichan	North Cowichan, Electoral Areas D and E, City of Duncan
Cowichan G	Town of Ladysmith, Electoral Areas G and H
Cowichan F	Lake Cowichan, Electoral Areas F and I
South Cowichan	Electoral Areas A, B and C

#### **0.2.4 Approach**

Various categories of data, from the 2006 Census, were analyzed to generate this report. The results of the statistical analysis were then evaluated based on a combination of consultations with stakeholders and local knowledge. A land-use inventory was conducted by air photo interpretation using Google Earth and other available air photos. The farms were identified using publicly available farm lists, farm market directories, local knowledge, etc. This process identified virtually all of the larger farms, most of the medium-sized farms and many part-time farms – especially those that are involved in direct farm marketing or Farmers' Markets. The average value of production per acre was estimated for each of the crop types identified. The total value of output was then estimated based on the land-use inventory. This was compared to the gross receipts reported in the census and found to be about 10% higher. Given that the census is based on a specific year, i.e. 2005, the land-use inventory method could be as accurate, or more accurate, for a given year.

The land-use inventory spreadsheet was also used to estimate the distribution of primary agricultural products produced in the Cowichan Valley (as reported in Figure 7).

The process above helped identify trends as well as potential issues and opportunities. These were confirmed in discussions with stakeholders in the Cowichan Valley.

The State of the Industry report and Issues and Opportunities report were used, in consultation with the CVRD community, to develop the Action Plan which:

- Describes the vision for agriculture in the Cowichan Valley.
- Identifies strategic directions and goals to achieve potential and take advantage of innovative and appropriate ideas for developing a strong agricultural industry
- Describes the Actions necessary to progress towards the vision and achieve the strategic goals
- Identifies a monitoring process that:
  - Measures ongoing progress towards plan implementation; and
  - Maintains an activity inventory of the agricultural sector in the region

#### **0.2.5 Stakeholders**

The following stakeholders have been consulted, or participated, in developing this report:

- BC Investment Agriculture Foundation
- BC Government – Ministry of Community Development
- Cowichan Agricultural Society (Duncan North Cowichan Farmers' Institute)
- Nanaimo-Cedar Farmers' Institute
- Cobble Hill Farmers' Institute



- Cowichan Green Community
- Economic Development Cowichan
- Cowichan Valley Regional District – Economic Development Cowichan and Planning Department
- District of North Cowichan - Planning
- District of North Cowichan Agricultural Advisory Committee
- Island Milk Producers
- Farmers' Market in the Square
- Keating Community Farm Cooperative

## Regional Context

### 0.3.1 History of Agriculture in the Cowichan Valley

No single source of information could be found which describes the history of agriculture in the Cowichan Valley. Tom Paterson of Fir Grove Publishing provided the following brief summary of the local industry:

*...the industry has changed over the years from stump farms to dairying....the annual Sweet Pea Festival that, incredible as it sounds today, was a major event in the '30s. We also had a large seed business in the Valley and Solly's farm at Westholme was a well-known exporter of chicks, purebred dairy cows and fruits between the world wars. T.A. Woods' farm at what is today The Garth was a major shipper of tree fruits. Then there is the Cowichan Creamery story (which included a jam factory). And, in 1910, Valley farmers and businessmen fought hard to have the new Dominion Experimental Farm established here; alas, it went to Saanichton. In 1901 W.P. Jaynes was "one of the first people in Canada to successfully use a silo," according to the 'Leader.' There's a great story in the history of the Cowichan Exhibition and the Cobble Hill Farmers Institute and, more recently, the phenomenal success (as it appears to me) of the Valley's wine industry...*

The Cowichan Creamery, formed in 1895, was the first dairy co-op in BC<sup>4</sup>. The co-op was financed with \$10 shares from 70 farmers totalling \$3000. It built a small plant over a spring which was believed to contain the coldest and freshest water in Duncan. In the first year of production, the Creamery produced 47,000 pounds of butter with sales of \$10,386. The Creamery operated for 93 years – closing in 1988.

In addition, a couple of long-time farmers, at one of the producer meetings, suggested strongly that the industry was better 50 years ago than it is now. They noted that the industry was small business back then. Everyone understood it. The work was hard but the industry fed everyone. Farmers produced a wide variety of crops and shipped them outside of the area.

<sup>4</sup> "Cowichan Co-operative Creamery", *Galleria – Stories of the BC Co-op Movement*. <http://bcics.uvic.ca>

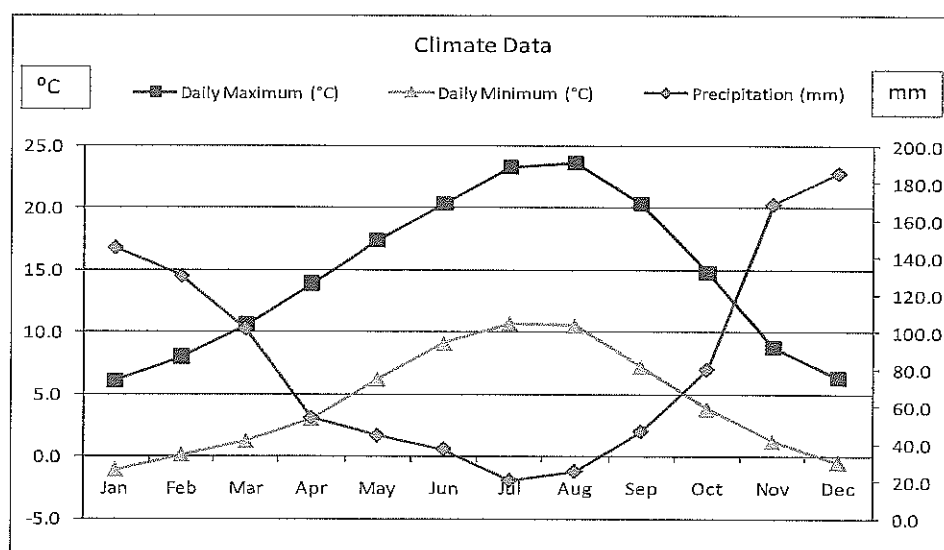


## Agricultural Capability and Resources in the Cowichan Valley

### 0.4.1 Climate

About 15.8% (estimated 55,586 of 350,890 ha) of the land in the CVRD has a climate suitable for agriculture<sup>5</sup>. Generally, this is the area below 200 m of elevation. It has a temperate climate. Water temperatures and breezes moderate air temperatures near the ocean. Inland areas, near Duncan, are much warmer during the summer. These microclimates have relatively high heat units for coastal areas. The valley enjoys an average of 274 frost-free days, annually, and an average frost-free period of 166 days (ranging from 146 days to 186 days). The western part of the Regional District, inland towards Cowichan Lake, has much higher rainfall and a shorter growing season.

Figure 2 Climate information for Duncan, Cowichan Valley<sup>6</sup>



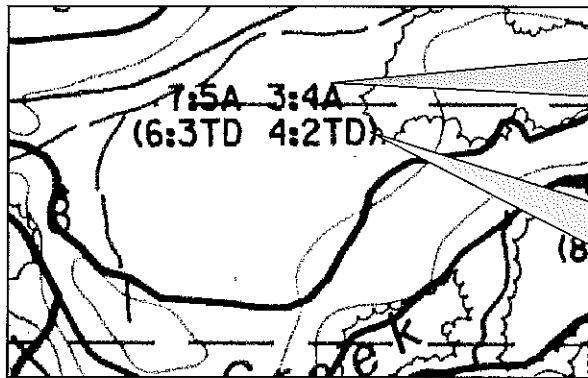
### 0.4.2 Soils and Agricultural Capability – CLI

The Canada Land Inventory (CLI) is a system of ranking the agricultural capability of soils. Capability classes range from Class 1, which have no significant limitations for cropping, to Class 7, which have no capacity for arable cultivation or pasture. Limitations to capability are defined by subclasses, which include, among others, excess water (W), aridity (A), topography (T), stoniness (P) and poor soil structure (D) – these 5 being the most common limitations of soils in the Cowichan Valley. CLI maps generally indicate an unimproved capability and an improved capability rating for each soil.

<sup>5</sup> Estimated for the Agricultural Area Plan proposal based on land with suitable topography below 200 m elevation, CVRD.

<sup>6</sup> See Appendix B for detailed information



**CLI soil classification map and interpretation:**

Organic (peat) soils are denoted with an "O" preceding the Class, as in O5W. Generally, Class 1 to 3 soils are considered as prime. Class 4 have limitations that require special management practices or severely restrict the range of crops, or both. Class 5 have limitations that restrict its capability to producing perennial forage crops or other specially adapted crops. There are crops that thrive on lands with lower capability ratings so CLI ratings cannot always be used as a measure of whether or not land may be suitable for some agricultural uses.

Land Capability for Agriculture for Southeast Vancouver Island was mapped at a 1:20,000 scale in the early 80's by the B.C. Ministry of Environment. These maps are generally quite accurate and are a useful tool, however, soil should be ground proofed for specific sites to ensure mapping accuracy. A second set of maps entitled "*Soils of Southeast Vancouver Island*" were completed at the same time and same scale. These maps name and describes individual soil series based on their characteristics.

*Recommendation: A draft management handbook was written for the soil series but never finalized. The handbook describes the type of crop that can be grown on each soil with various levels of management input and improvements. Updating and finalizing the manual and digitizing the maps, or improving the availability of them, would be very useful to potential farmers and planners.*

**Note:** much of the land above 150 meters and/or in unsettled areas of the Regional District has not been mapped or classified.

33,201 hectares, or 9.5%, of the CVRD land base is capable of agricultural production<sup>7</sup>. About half of that, 16,012 ha, or 4.6%, of the total land base is capable of producing vegetables. Only 2.7 percent is considered prime agricultural land (improvable to Class 3 or better).

<sup>7</sup> GIS Analysis, CVRD, completed for the Agricultural Area Plan proposal in 2006.



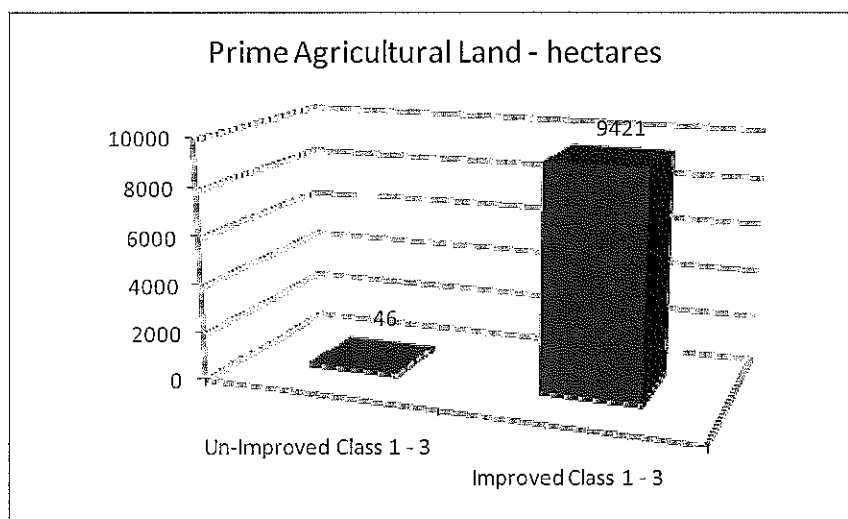
**Table 1. Agricultural land suitability within the Cowichan Region**

Land Area	Area (ha)	% of Agricultural Land	% of CVRD Total
Cowichan Valley Regional District	350,890		100%
Area with Climate Suitable for Agriculture	55,586		15.8%
Land with Agricultural Capability	33,201	100%	9.5%
Arable land (land that can be cultivated)	32,830	99%	9.4%
Crop land (suitable for crop production)	16,012	48%	4.6%
Prime agricultural lands (suitable for a wide range of crops)	9,421	28%	2.7%

**0.4.2.1 Improvements**

Based on the unimproved CLI classification, there are only 46.6 ha of prime agricultural land (Class 3 or better) in the CVRD. This includes 29.4 ha of mineral soils and 17.2 ha of organic soils.

With improvements, this increases to 9,421 ha – 8,540 ha of mineral soil and 881 ha of organic soil. A review of agricultural capability maps indicates that about 2/3 of the area's soils could be improved to Class 3 or better if they were irrigated – i.e., aridity (A) is the main limitation. Another 20% would be improved to Class 3 or better with irrigation and drainage. This essentially means that **irrigation would have a significant beneficial impact on about 8,100 hectares of land within the CVRD.** Statistics indicate that 2,465 ha were irrigated in the Cowichan Valley in 2005.


**0.4.3 Water**

Irrigation is essential for the production of most high value crops (berries, grapes, vegetables) in the Cowichan Valley. It is also very important for production of consistent, high-quality grass forage for livestock operations. The availability of water for irrigation varies throughout the Cowichan Valley. In some areas, there is adequate groundwater. Some organic soils are sub-irrigated. However, as noted above, of the 16,000+ ha that is suitable for crop production, only 2,465 ha (15.4%) is irrigated.



Generally, farms have adequate water for household use and livestock watering.

About one third of the Cowichan Valley Regional District lies within the Cowichan Basin. The “Cowichan Basin Water Management Plan”, completed in 2007, includes the following points relevant to agriculture:

- More than 530 licenses have been issued to divert water from streams and lakes in the basin, and more than 1300 wells have been drilled to pump water from the aquifers.
  - Vision for water in the Cowichan Basin - *“the Cowichan Basin community conserves and manages water to ensure reliable supplies for human use, thriving ecosystems, and a healthy economy.”*
  - Objective 1b – improve management of water demand in all sectors... promote efficient agricultural water use techniques, such as drip irrigation instead of spray irrigation.
- 
  - The recommended target for this objective is “10% reduction in agricultural water use by 2010 and 20% by 2015.” This is contrary to the target of a healthy agricultural economy and very difficult to achieve with increased self-sufficiency and growing population.
- Objective 4c – ensure drainage is adequate to allow tillage of farm fields in late spring... develop and implement a drainage improvement and control system for the Somenos and Quamichan sub-basins. Objective 4c1 - Promote crop selection in the Somenos and Quamichan sub-basins that is appropriate for their soil and hydrologic conditions.
    - Targets for these objectives include increasing the agricultural productivity of these sub-basins, increasing the number of days that fields are dry enough to till, maintaining the economic returns of farmland in the sub-basins, and shifting to moisture tolerant crops in low-lying areas.
  - Objective 4d – maintain winter water levels that are high enough to protect organic soils...

The plan acknowledges that Catalyst Paper has a licence to use a large volume of water from the Lake Cowichan system – “100 cubic feet per second for the whole year” - equivalent to 89 million cubic meters annually. Discussions indicate that Catalyst uses about 60% of that at full capacity and is currently using about 30% of its license. The economic activity that could be generated from the use of that water for agricultural purposes would more than offset the decline in output from the Catalyst Paper mill. To justify capital expenditures on irrigation infrastructure, agriculture would need medium to long-term commitment for access to the water.

#### 0.4.4 Natural Features

A large portion of the Regional District is mountainous with very little agricultural land. This includes all of Electoral Areas I and F, as well as most of the western portions of Electoral Area B and G. This part of the Regional District is generally cooler with much higher levels of precipitation coming in from the Pacific Ocean. The areas with agricultural potential are generally concentrated between the eastern slopes of the mountains and the Strait of Georgia – a band of land representing about 15% of the total Regional District parallel to the eastern coast of Vancouver Island.



The topography of the Cowichan Valley presents both challenges and opportunities. A large portion of the agricultural area has “egg carton” topography – low-lying peat areas surrounded by mineral soil ridges with bedrock outcroppings. The peat soils can be very productive if water levels can be controlled. Winter water levels must be lowered so root zones are not saturated for long periods. Summer water levels must be somewhat elevated to ensure the soil does not dry out. Once these soils dry, they are very difficult to re-wet and they quickly break down. Water control of peat soils is generally challenging because the outlet flow from these areas is either very flat, often involves several landowners, and/or there are regulatory agencies who oppose developing the in-stream structures required for optimum water control. Nevertheless, the peat, also known as organic, soils represent a very valuable and productive agricultural resource. These areas, however, are also “wetlands” which can provide valuable habitat for waterfowl, wildlife, and fisheries resources.

Many of the south-facing slopes in the Cowichan Valley are also well suited for grape and some forms of berry production.

#### ***0.4.5 Agricultural Infrastructure***

Generally, the Cowichan Valley has a significant level of infrastructure and support services for the agriculture industry. However, during the consultation process, the following deficiencies were noted:

- Livestock auction – existed in the past but no longer
- Red meat slaughter – exists but the capacity is insufficient to support potential local production
- Processing facilities for fruits and vegetables – packing houses existed historically and were aligned with rail transport
- Waste disposal – there are some shortfalls in waste disposal, specifically challenges with deadstock disposal and disposal of Specified Risk Materials from red meat slaughter plants.

##### **0.4.5.1 Transportation**

The Cowichan Valley is serviced by the following transportation services/infrastructure:

- Highways and roads – the main highways through the CVRD are Highway 1 – TransCanada, which runs north south through the centre of the CVRD, and Highway 18 which connects to the Cowichan Lake area – east west. There are many paved arterial roads servicing the lower elevation areas of the CVRD.
- Airport – the nearest airport is the Nanaimo Airport at Cassidy, adjacent to the northern boundary of the CVRD. Victoria International Airport is the nearest major airport with international service; according to MapQuest, drive time is 1 hour and 7 minutes from Duncan.
- Cowichan Valley Regional Transit System – provides bus service throughout the main communities and many rural parts of the Cowichan Valley.
- Ferries – within the CVRD there are ferry connections between:
  - Crofton and Vesuvius Bay on Salt Spring Island
  - Chemainus-Kuper Island-Thetis Island
  - Mill Bay and Brentwood Bay on the Saanich Peninsula



The nearest mainland ferry terminal is at Duke Point, near Nanaimo, about 45 minutes from Duncan.

- Rail – Southern Railway of Vancouver Island (SVI) is the operating railroad for Vancouver Island freight and passenger services. The company operates daily intercity passenger service from Victoria to Courtenay, on behalf of Via Rail Canada. SVI was appointed as the new operator of the rail line as of July 1, 2006. Passenger service leaves Victoria at 8:00 am, northbound, and arrives at Duncan at 9:35 am. The return trip leaves Courtenay at 1:15 pm and arrives in Duncan at 4:25 pm. It makes several stops, in both directions, within the CVRD: Shawnigan, Cobble Hill, Hillbank, Cowichan, Duncan, Hayward, Chemainus, Ladysmith and Cassidy. There is no scheduled freight train use of this line; however, there are regular shipments of livestock feed inputs (grain), by rail, into the Duncan area.

#### 0.4.5.2 Government Services

The office of the Regional Agrologist with the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture and Lands is located in Duncan. This office services the area from the Malahat to Nanaimo including the Cowichan Valley Regional District, the southern portion of the Regional District of Nanaimo and the adjacent Gulf Islands.

#### 0.4.5.3 Training and Education

Vancouver Island University (VIU) has a campus in Duncan. VIU offers a “Culinary Arts” Program, in partnership with the Cowichan Valley School District, as part of their Trades and Applied Technology program. VIU also offers a number of Continuing Education courses in the following areas:

- Master Gardeners Certificate
- Commercial courses in:
  - Landscaping related subjects,
  - Turf grass management
  - Agricultural tourism
- General courses in horticulture and garden type subjects
- “Cool climate” viticulture and winemaking
- Culinary – variety of courses

It is interesting to note that these courses tend to be oriented to organic/sustainable production systems. None of the courses are livestock oriented. This is likely due to shifts in demand for training that have resulted from shifts within the industry.

Providence Farm is a working organic farm dedicated to restoring the spirit and skills of those with physical, mental and emotional challenges. The farm offers “innovative programs in Horticultural Therapy and vocational training”.

#### 0.4.5.4 Agribusiness

There are a wide range of businesses in the Cowichan Valley that provide goods and services to farms. Some of these, like the equipment dealers and (Top Shelf) feed mill, service customers throughout Vancouver Island.

Marketing and distribution of local agricultural products is described later in this report because it is affected by a number of the factors described below.



## Agricultural Economy<sup>8</sup>

### 0.5.1 Farm Size (Area)

Average farm size has dropped from 31.2 ha in 1986 to 16.5 ha in 2006 – a decline of 47%. The area farmed has dropped to 3.33% of the total area of the Regional District.

**Table 2. Farm size – overall statistics 1996 to 2006**

<i>Areas in Hectares</i>	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006
Total Area Farmed	17261	18628	13,656	13,996	11,559
Number of Farms Reporting	554	594	772	691	700
Average Farm Size	31.2	30.8	17.7	20.3	16.5
Percent Farmland: Owned			71%	78%	86%
Leased			29%	22%	14%
Area Farmed (% of total area of RD)	4.97%	5.36%	3.93%	4.03%	3.33%

Total area of RD is 347,300 hectares.

#### 0.5.1.1.1 Parcelization

Table 3 compares farm sizes by Census area and the change since 2001. The number of large farms has decreased and there has been a slight increase in small farm numbers.

**Table 3. Farm sizes 2001 and 2006**

Size of farm	Cowichan Valley		% of total	% change	North Cowichan	Cowichan G	Cowichan F	South Cowichan
Hectares	2001	2006	2006	from 2001	2006	2006	2006	2006
under 4	243	262	37%	8%	139	23	16	84
4 – 28	317	330	47%	4%	182	52	7	89
29 - 52	53	50	7%	-6%	32	8	1	9
53 - 72	36	20	3%	-44%	16	1	0	3
73 - 97	16	16	2%	0%	8	0	0	8
98 - 162	16	16	2%	0%	7	4	1	4
163 - 226	7	5	1%	-29%	4	0	1	0
227 - 307	2	1	0%	-50%	1	0	0	0
308 - 453	0	0	0%	0%	0	0	0	0
454 - 647	1	0	0%	-100%	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>691</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>197</b>

Census Canada uses overall farm size when compiling statistics such as those used in the previous section. That farm business or farm entity may be made up of numerous smaller farm titles or

<sup>8</sup> The data analyzed in this section is from the 2006 Census based on the 2005 production year. This is the most current agricultural information available from Statistics Canada.

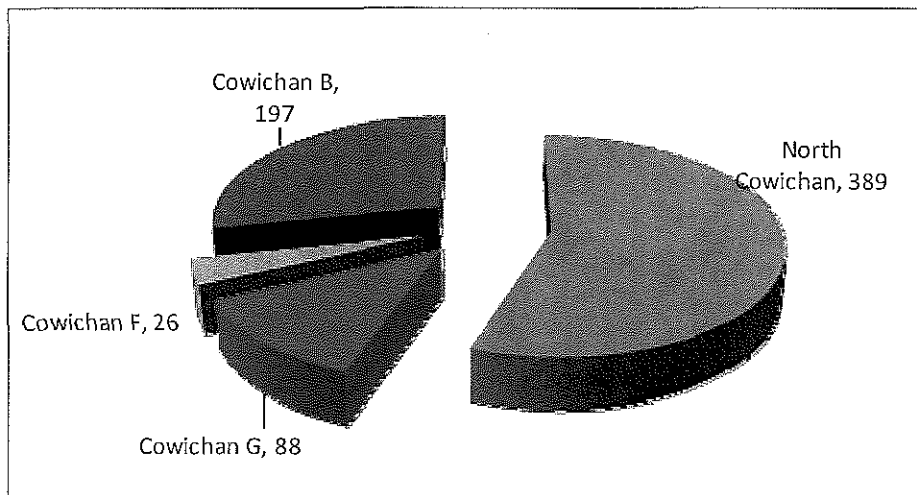


parcels. This section attempts to highlight this difference, and show the effect of titled parcels versus overall farm (enterprise) size.

### 0.5.2 Farm Numbers

The total number of farms in the Cowichan Valley in 2006 as reported by Statistics Canada was 700 – up very slightly from 691 in 2001. While the overall number of farms has remained static, farm size has changed – in area and gross receipts.

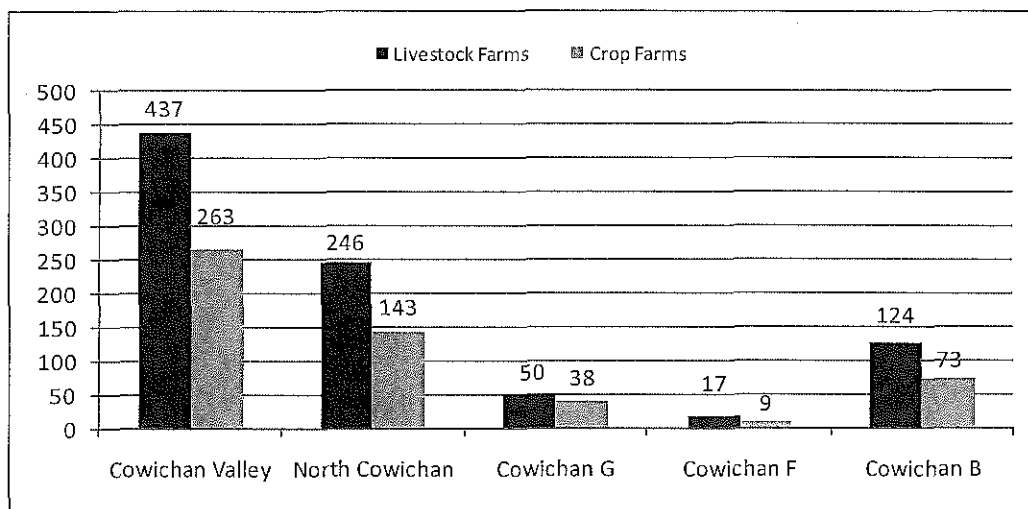
**Figure 3 Breakdown of Cowichan Valley farm numbers by electoral areas**



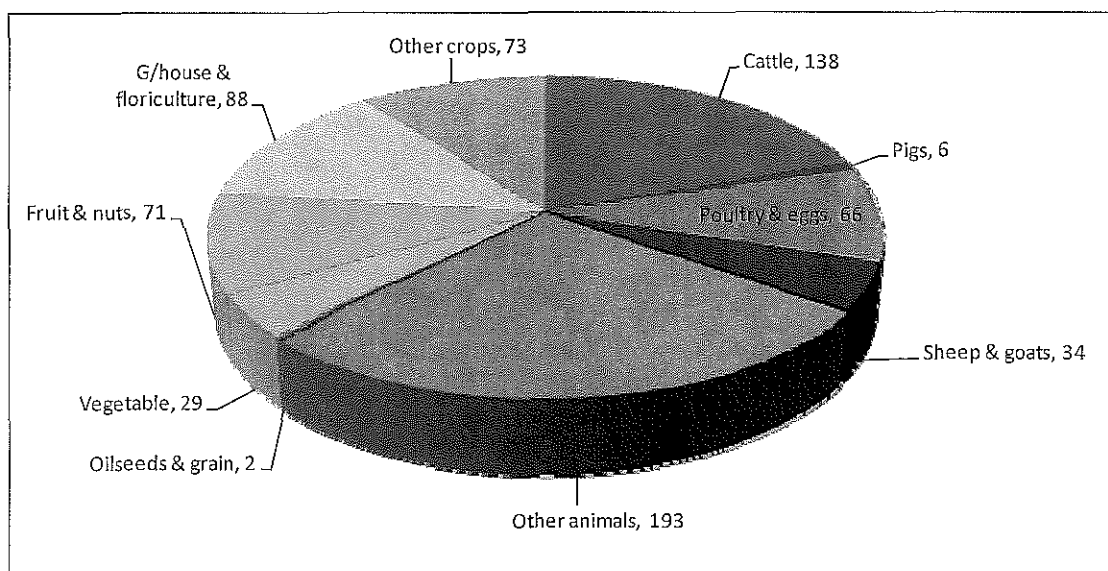
#### 0.5.2.1 Types of Farms

- 437 farms (62% of the total) are primarily livestock of which 103 report horses as the main enterprise.
- 263 farms (38%) report crop production as the main enterprise.



**Figure 4 Cowichan Valley livestock and crop farm numbers (Source – 2006 Census)**

The farms above can be further broken down into the major production categories shown in the following figure:

**Figure 5 Livestock and Crops Major Production Categories (Farm numbers - 2006)**

### 0.5.3 Product Diversity

Production levels, by enterprise, are shown in the appendices. The area used for crop production is generally down; however, there have been increases in some crops – notably grapes, blueberries and greenhouse nursery. The most significant decline in cropping area is in hay – a drop of 18% or 823 ha. This represents one third of the land that has been taken out of production in the past five years.

Livestock production has declined significantly with two exceptions: horses and poultry. The number of farms with horses, and the number of horses, has increased by 24%. Poultry production has

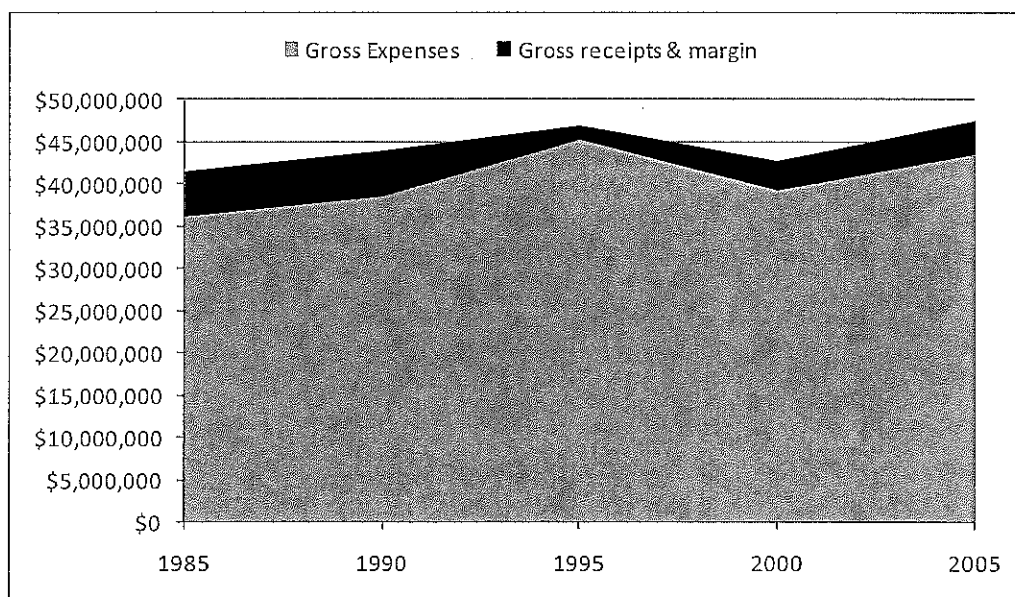


increased in every category with layers increasing by 43%, turkey production by 94% and other poultry up 199%.

#### 0.5.4 Farm Revenues

Gross receipts, or total farm gate sales, have increased steadily over the past 20 years from \$25,327,919 in 1985 to \$47,554,455 in 2005. When adjusted for inflation, the increase is more modest - a 14.5% increase in real terms from \$41.5 million in 1985 to \$47.5 million in 2005<sup>9</sup>. Inflation adjusted sales for the peak in 1995 (See Figure 6) were very similar to 2005 at \$47.0 million.

**Figure 6 Gross farm receipts, gross expenses and net receipts (margin) in the Cowichan Valley Regional District from 1985 to 2005 (inflation adjusted)**



#### 0.5.5 Farm Expenses - Input costs

Gross farm expenses have closely paralleled the increase in revenue over the same period (as seen in Figure 6). Expenses, not including depreciation, increased from \$39,195,484 in 2000 to \$43,503,736 in 2005 – an increase of 11% (inflation adjusted). About \$2.7 million of this increase was wages. There were also significant increases in feed costs, fuel and fertilizer. These inputs are transported onto the island on the ferry system and are inherently higher than the mainland. Farmers who are competing with mainland producers must either pay the added costs or become more efficient. The challenges and the added costs of bringing fertilizers and pesticides on to Vancouver Island are part of the reason that the island has moved to more organic production. Only 23% of the farms in the Cowichan Valley Regional District reported purchasing pesticides compared to 37% of the farms in the lower mainland.

<sup>9</sup> Inflation adjustment to 2005 dollars using the Consumer Price Index (CPI) from Statistics Canada



### 0.5.5.1 Profitability

Profitability (inflation adjusted) of Cowichan Valley Farms has increased slightly over the past five years. The margin in 2000 was \$3,564,207 (or 8.3% of gross receipts). This improved to \$4,050,719 in 2005 (or 8.5% of gross receipts). However, gross margins in percentage terms have shrunk in the last 20 years, being around 13.0% and 12.5% respectively in 1985 and 1990. Farmers are keeping a smaller portion of the food dollar than they were 20 years ago.

**Table 4. Farm profitability (adjusted to 2005 dollars) – receipts versus expenses<sup>10</sup>**

Area	Gross receipts		Operating expenses		Gross margin %	
	2000	2005	2000	2005	2000	2005
North Cowichan		\$28,276,974		\$25,425,204		10%
Cowichan Valley G		\$5,780,762		\$5,622,454		3%
Cowichan Valley F		\$254,921		\$385,192		-51%
Cowichan Valley B		\$13,241,798		\$12,070,886		9%
<b>Total for Cowichan Valley</b>	<b>\$42,759,690</b>	<b>\$47,554,455</b>	<b>\$39,195,484</b>	<b>\$43,503,736</b>	<b>8.3%</b>	<b>8.5%</b>

#### 0.5.5.1.1 Factors Affecting Farm Profitability

One of the desired outcomes of this plan is to determine the factors that influence the profitability and sustainability of farming enterprises within the Cowichan Valley. Analysis of the statistics, combined with industry consultations, indicates the following factors are most significant:

- Overall management
- Scale of Farm operations
- Intensity
- Marketing and Distribution - value added, direct marketing, supply management
- Input costs
- Critical mass of the local industry

#### 0.5.5.1.1.1 Overall Management

Management is a universal factor affecting the profitability of any business. Overall management is a combination of many functions. It is acknowledged here and is a component of the other factors described below. In the consultation process, there were several suggestions that increased access to training and information would help improve management skills especially for new and part-time farmers.

#### 0.5.5.1.1.2 Scale of Farm Operations

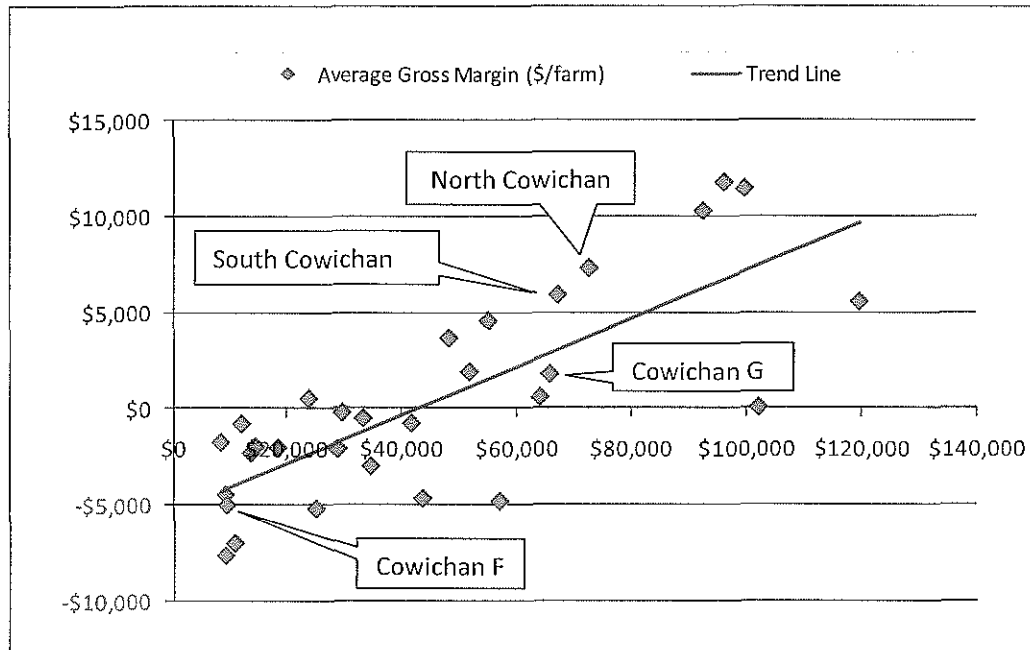
Statistics related to farm size were compared and analyzed for all Electoral Areas on Vancouver Island (see Figure 7). The “best fit” trend line indicates that the average gross margin (gross receipts

<sup>10</sup> Farm revenue and expenses reported in 2001 or 2006 are for the years 2000 and 2005 respectively.



minus operating expenses) per farm on Vancouver Island farms is negative until annual gross receipts reach about \$40,000 per year.

**Figure 7 Gross Margin per farm for all electoral areas on Vancouver Island – 2005 (Cowichan Electoral Areas shown).**



The 2006 census indicates that there are 533 farms (76%) in the Cowichan Valley with annual sales less than \$25,000. There are another 53 (7.6%) farms with sales between \$25,000 and \$49,999 per year. The estimated total gross receipts, by farm size, are shown in Appendix D.

Based on these numbers, it is suggested that farms could be grouped into three different categories. The main reason for “stereotyping” them is that producers in these farm categories, generally, face different issues and opportunities. They could be described as follows:

- 1) **Small Lot Operators** or part-time farmers - with annual sales of less than \$25,000, the operators of these farms inherently work off the farm. The number of farms has changed very little – dropped from 553 in 2001 to 533 in 2006. Many of these farms are in it for the lifestyle – not to generate revenue. Others are part time farms from which the sales represent a significant and important contribution to the family income. They are important because they contribute to the critical mass needed to support the overall industry and they help educate consumers, provide healthy food for on farm families, etc.
- 2) **Developing farms** – there is no specific range of sales for this farm category. The main distinguishing factor is that they are in it as a business. Newcomers may have sales of less than \$25,000 per year but because they are building their businesses they probably would not remain in that statistical group from one Census to another. Anecdotally, they tend to be innovative and produce for specialty markets. Many of these are “early retirees” who have moved away from an urban career. The number of farms in this category is increasing as is the revenue



generated. These farms tend to be more intensive with higher gross margins resulting from direct sales or value-added activities.

- 3) Large-scale, commercial or commodity, farms – these are the established farms, most of which have sales over \$100,000 per year. Eighty-three farms, with sales over \$100,000, generate 83% of total revenue. Many of these are “commodity” producers who sell and distribute their product through more traditional distribution systems. Average annual revenues of these farms are increasing. The number of farms is also increasing; however, the average size seems to be decreasing indicating that the intensity of production is increasing.

There is a fourth, and emerging, group of “producers” who should also be considered in developing this plan – the new term for them is urban agriculture but they really represent a return to backyard gardening. This trend is worth noting because it represents an opportunity to market new and different products and services. For example, in the spring of 2009, Farmers’ Market vendors have noted a significant increase in sales of bedding plants.

Figure 8 Trends in farm numbers and total revenue 2001 to 2006<sup>11</sup>

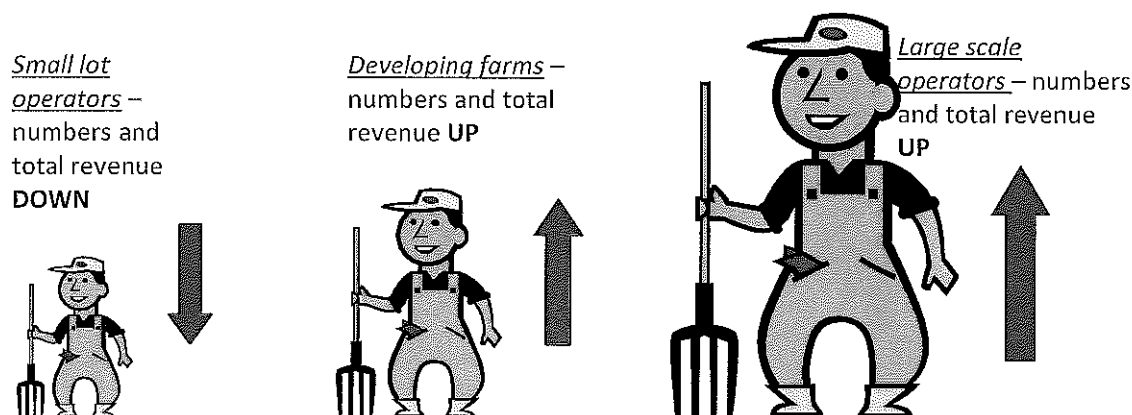
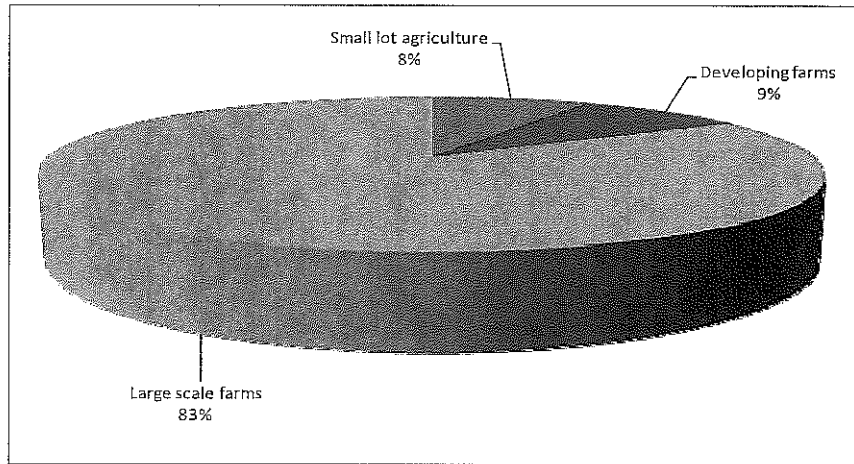


Figure 9 below gives a graphic illustration of the distribution of farm revenues between the three sectors. Any loss in production or quota's in the large scale sector would have a significant impact on that sector's share of the overall revenue.

<sup>11</sup> See Appendix C for detailed revenue categories and farm numbers



**Figure 9** Percent of total revenue generated by farm size in 2006<sup>12</sup>**0.5.5.1.1.3 Intensity**

Increasing the intensity of production, to produce more dollars per hectare, is another potential method of increasing the profitability and sustainability of farms. The total area farmed in the Cowichan Valley has declined from a high of 18,628 ha in 1991 to 11,559 ha in 2006. Gross farm receipts for the area have increased marginally over the past 20 years in real terms, but farmers are generating more sales on less land and that increase is more significant. Average sales per hectare have increased from \$2,407.09 per ha in 1985 to \$4,114.06 in 2005<sup>13</sup>.

Year	Farms	Gross receipts	Ave per farm	Ave \$ per hectare	CPI*
1985	554	\$41,548,731	\$74,998	\$2,407.09	64.8
1990	594	\$43,983,575	\$74,046	\$2,361.15	78.4
1995	772	\$47,001,976	\$60,883	\$3,441.86	91.6
2000	691	\$42,759,690	\$61,881	\$3,055.14	96.1
2005	700	\$47,554,455	\$67,935	\$4,114.06	106.3

\* Consumer Price Index: Year 2002 = 100

**0.5.5.1.1.4 Marketing and Distribution**

There is no direct statistical information that indicates how changes in marketing and distribution have affected, or does affect, the profitability or sustainability of the agricultural sector in the Cowichan Valley. However, direct farm market enterprises are increasing in number. Vendor numbers at farmers markets are increasing quickly and significantly indicating that the opportunity to sell direct to the consumer provides a better return, especially for developing farms.

<sup>12</sup> See Appendix D for detailed revenue generation figures

<sup>13</sup> These numbers have been adjusted for inflation to 2005 dollars, with the CPI shown in the table (from Statistics Canada.)





#### 1.5.5.1.1.5 Input Costs

Increasing input costs have a significant negative impact on the profitability and sustainability of agriculture both in the Cowichan Valley and on Vancouver Island. The most significant example can be seen in the decline of the livestock industry. Beef and dairy operations tend to require more land. The cost of land ownership has increased. Livestock operations generally require concentrated feeds (grain) which are “imported” from the Prairie Provinces. Fuel and processing are also significant costs. The cost of all of these inputs has increased significantly over the past 5 to 10 years. For some producers, or types of production, there are no alternatives or substitute inputs so production has left the area – moved to areas with lower input costs.

#### 1.5.5.1.1.6 Critical Mass

The local industry must maintain a certain size, scale and product mix to support the local businesses, industry and infrastructure needed for local production. Supply management, or commodity, producers play a very significant role in maintaining the critical mass. Without these larger producers, it is unlikely that many support businesses could remain viable. Fruit and vegetable packinghouses have disappeared because of declining mass of production in the past. Will livestock processing be the next support sector to disappear?

Collective knowledge and expertise are other elements of critical mass that can be lost if the industry, or sectors of it, decline too much or if there are increased loss of farms due to retirement.

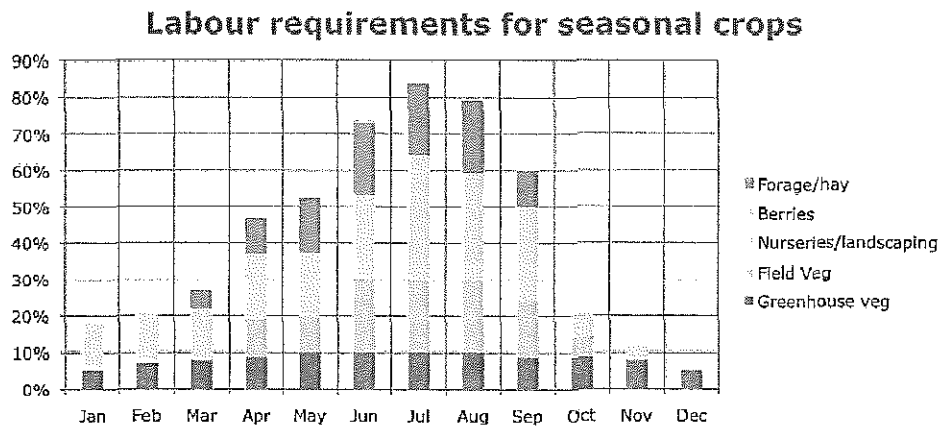
### 1.5.6 Human Resources - Employment

Human resource use in the agriculture sector is different from other sectors for the following reasons:

- Seasonality – most types of farm work are highly seasonal (see Figure 10).
- Owner operated – many small farms grow to the point where the owner and/or family members can do most, if not all, of the work required on the farm.
- Very physical – many jobs on the farm are purely hard physical work and, during those peak seasons, require long hours.
- Low pay or the perception of low pay – industry has a reputation of paying low wages for very hard work.
- Requires a wide range of skills – farm operators are required to be “jacks of all trades”. Many have the same expectations for employees and, many of the jobs on farms require a range of knowledge and skills from plant production to machinery maintenance and operation.



Figure 10 Estimated percentage of labour required for crops over the year.



Agriculture employs 845 people in the Cowichan Valley and another 210 are employed in food manufacturing<sup>14</sup>. Census statistics indicate that 103 farms employ full-time, year-round labour for 10,847 person weeks – roughly equivalent to 220 full-time equivalents. Over half of this is in the Municipality of North Cowichan. The amount of year-round labour employed increased by 17% between 2000 and 2005.

One hundred sixty-two farms reported employing seasonal or part-time labour for a total of 4693 weeks – less than 100 full-time equivalents. This was a 20% increase compared to the 2000 census.

The remaining labour is provided by owner operators and their family members, i.e. farmers. The characteristics of farm operators are interesting and relevant to planning.

- The average age of farm operators in the Cowichan Valley is 54.4 years; up from 52.6 years in 2001. The increasing age of farmers is a widespread issue. The average age of farmers in Canada is 52.0.
- In 2006, 1075 people reported as “farm operators” in the local census area. Of those, only 50 (less than 5%) were under 35 years of age. Succession plans are needed for retiring farmers and new farmers are needed to produce food for the future.
- 630 farm operators in the Cowichan Valley report having non-farm work. Only 445 operate without support of nonfarm income. Given that there are 1075 operators on 700 farms (about 1.5 per farm), a small portion of the farms are fully supporting themselves from farm revenue.
- 445 farm operators are female – about 41.4% - much higher than the national level of 27.8%.

Finding or training new farmers is critical to maintaining the necessary skills and expertise necessary to “grow” the industry in the future (as noted in the previous section on Critical Mass).

<sup>14</sup> These figures are from the report “Regional Economic Analysis – Vancouver Island and Central/Sunshine Coasts” which is an in depth statistical analysis of the most current Census information. The report profiles the main areas of economic activity in the region and examines trends over the last 20+ years.

### 0.5.7 Marketing and Distribution

Total Cowichan Valley consumer food and drink consumption is estimated at \$256.4 million<sup>15</sup> as shown in Figure 11.

**Figure 11 Annual consumer food and drink expenditure in the Cowichan Valley**

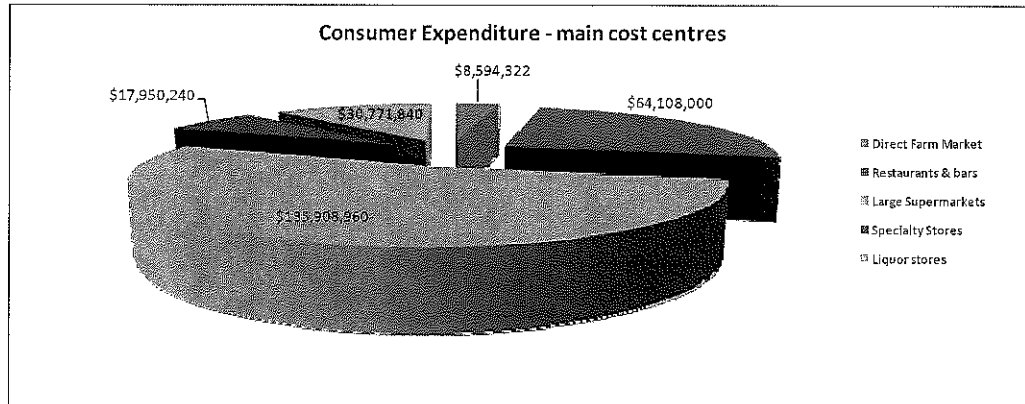


Figure 12 graphically illustrates the paths that local foods follow from the field to the plate. Some are simple – direct farm marketing where the farmer retains most of the food dollar. Others are complex – the products disappear into mass distribution systems and may or may not be available to local consumers.

The values used in Figure 12 were derived by estimating the sales of the different products produced in the Cowichan Valley, identifying the path to market for each, and estimating the percentage of, either producer revenue (blue), revenue to local processors (green), or cost to consumer (red). The red columns indicate the percentage and dollar value of consumer food purchases.

**Direct market or retail** - this column includes the value of products sold direct to the consumer including farm stands, direct local hay sales, and Farmers' Markets sales. It is estimated that farmers earn 17% of their total revenue (of approximately \$8,594,000) from products sold direct to the consumer. However, this represents only 3.4% of the local consumer food purchases.

There are three Farmers' Markets listed with the BC Association of Farmers' Markets:

- 1) Duncan's "Market in the Square" (the newly amalgamated local Farmers' Market) operates Saturdays from 10:00 am until 4:00 pm, in downtown Duncan, from March through to December. [www.marketinthesquare.net](http://www.marketinthesquare.net). The market has a membership of 100 with about 30 vendors selling primary farm product<sup>16</sup>.
- 2) Crofton Farmers' Market – Saturdays from 8:00 am until 1:00 pm from May to September. Vendor numbers are not listed.
- 3) Cedar Farmers' Market – Sundays from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm from May to October. 27 vendors. This market is not located in the CVRD but some of the vendors farm within the CVRD.

<sup>15</sup> Based on Census Canada statistics for total households, and average household consumption 2005.

<sup>16</sup> [www.bcfarmersmarket.org](http://www.bcfarmersmarket.org)



**Middleman or wholesale** - this column includes primary product sold to restaurants or through small local markets. Farmers earn 18% of their revenue (about \$9,187,000) which represents about 3.6% of consumer food purchases.

**Feed input** - this is included to recognize that 8% of the value of local farm product is produced as feed and used on the farm of origin. Feed produced as hay for sale, is included in direct sales above. It is included to acknowledge the importance of locally produced feed.

**Local processing and local sale** - this includes a portion of livestock production (eggs, meat birds, beef, other meats, wine, milk and a variety of horticultural products). It represents 19% of the farm gate revenue, an estimated value added to local processors of about \$8.2 million (adding 16% to the overall producer dollars), and about 6.9% of the consumer food dollar.

**Local processing and export** (shipped outside of the Cowichan Valley) - this includes an estimated portion of the milk, wine, and meat products. It represents 24.3% of producer revenues, over \$9 million in value-added processing (adding 19% to overall producer dollars) and about 8.0% of the consumer food dollar.

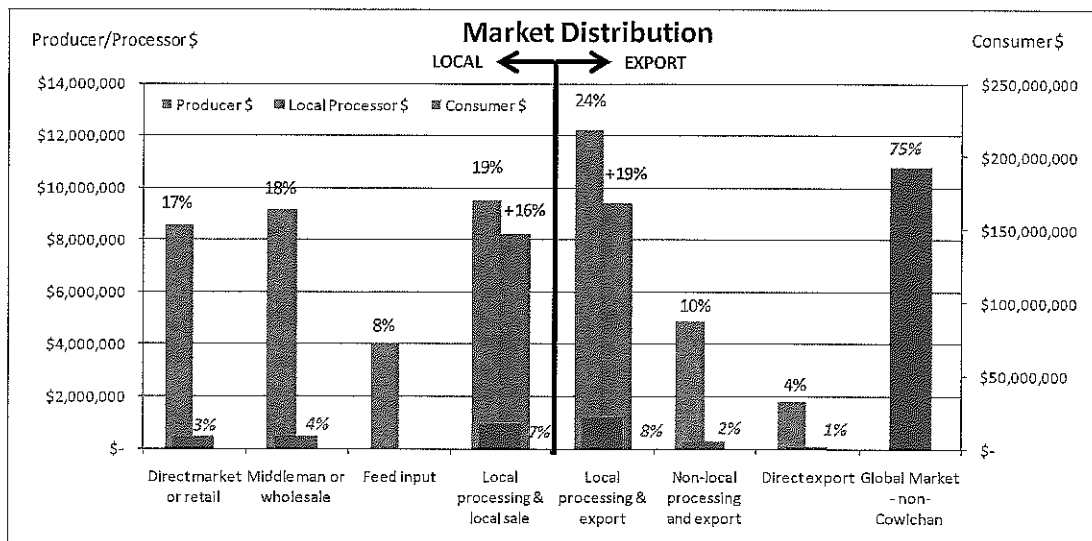
Most of the milk produced in the Cowichan Valley is processed at the Agropur/Island Farms plant in Area H (North Oyster). From there it is distributed throughout the island and to some mainland areas.

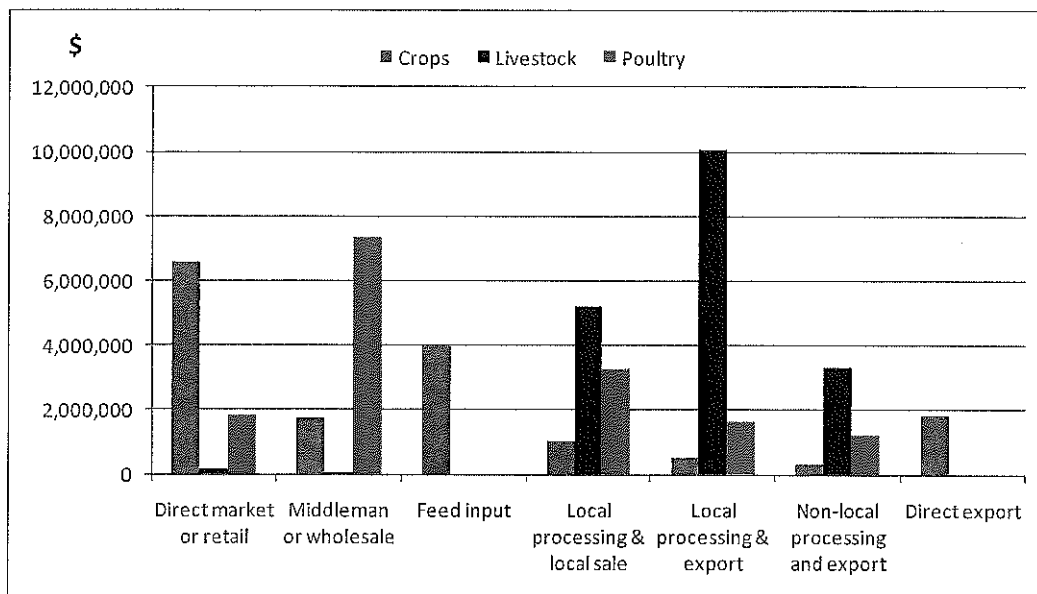
**Nonlocal processing and export** – this includes a portion of the dairy products, some broilers and turkeys and some horticultural products. It represents 9.6% of farm gate revenues and 1.9% of the consumer dollar.

**Direct export (outside of the Cowichan Valley)** - this includes a percentage of primary products that are shipped directly to markets outside of the Cowichan Valley. Direct export includes a variety of horticultural products – greenhouse nursery and vegetables, turf, berries, fruit, etc. It represents 3.6% of farm gate revenues and less than 1% of the consumer dollar.

**Global market** – Consumers spend 75% of their food dollar on products distributed through mass distribution systems, which likely do not include any local product.

**Figure 12 Estimated Distribution of Cowichan Valley Farm Products and Consumer Spending.**



**Figure 13** Estimated distribution of revenue source for the three major producer sectors.

### 0.5.8 Trends<sup>17</sup>

#### Total Area Farmed

The total area farmed in the Cowichan Valley Regional District has declined from a high of 18,628 ha in 1991 to 11,559 ha in 2006 – a 38% drop in 15 years.

#### Farm Size - Area

The average farm size, by area, has been decreasing steadily since 1986 (or earlier). In 1986, the average farm size in the Cowichan Valley was 31.2 ha. As of 2006, this had dropped to 16.5 hectares – a 50% decline.

#### Farm Size - Revenue

Average sales per farm have decreased from \$74,998 in 1985 to \$67,935 in 2005 in real terms, but have increased in nominal terms. There is no significant trend here, as average sales have recovered somewhat after a low of \$60,883 in 1995.

#### Intensity

Intensity of production is increasing as the acreage falls. Average sales of farmed land have increased from \$2,407 per ha in 1985 to \$4,114 per ha in 2005. This is an increase of 71%. The increase between 2000 and 2005 alone was just under 35%.

#### Organic

The number of certified organic farms has increased from six in 2001 to 16 in 2006. 181 farms, or 25.9% of the total, reported being “non-certified” organic.

<sup>17</sup> Inflation adjusted to 2005 dollars where applicable



**Livestock**

The livestock industry is in a state of decline – especially ruminant livestock – dairy, beef and sheep. This is due to a combination of factors including increasing feed and fertilizer costs as well as significant increases in slaughter costs. Dairy production has also moved out of the area, in recent years, as quota has become more transferable. This trend is disturbing because a large portion of the land base in the Cowichan Valley is only capable of producing forages. Also, the livestock industry has contributed greatly to helping maintain the agricultural infrastructure of the area.

**Irrigation**

Irrigated area increased by about 10% - from 2,235 ha in 2000 to 2,465 in 2005, despite the decline in area farmed. Virtually all of the fruit and vegetable lands are irrigated out of necessity.

**Demographics of Farmers**

The average age of farm operators is 54.4 compared to 52.6 in 2000 – increasing rapidly. Interestingly, 41.4% of farm operators in the Cowichan Valley are female compared to a national average of 27.7% and a B.C. average of 36.5%.

**Urban Agriculture**

This is an observed and very recent trend based on discussions with direct farm marketers in the spring of 2009. Over the past two or three years, consumers have become increasingly interested in the source of their food. They want to know where their food comes from, who is producing it and how it is being produced. This interest seems to have escalated to the point that the “backyard garden” has now become extremely popular again. Bedding plant sales in the spring of 2009 have exceeded expectations of the suppliers.

**New Media**

The evolution of the Internet is another trend that warrants mentioning. Planning is for the future. The Internet is replacing other forms of media and has become a major source of information. High-speed connections are becoming available in rural areas. Young people look for jobs online – not in the local newspaper. The Internet will change the way farmers do things. It has already but more is yet to come!

**Farm Structure**

A number of factors suggest that the structure of farms will change in the future. The price of farmland is prohibitive for many new farmers. Retiring farmers are finding it challenging to sell and/or pass the farm on to the next generation. Large dairy farms have millions of dollars of assets and buyers are scarce. These factors suggest that there will be creative new structures for farm businesses in the future. These may include corporations (with nonfamily shareholders), increased leasing (which may allow aging farmers to remain on their land and keep farm classification), leasing of small plots within a larger acreage, cooperatives, Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs), and perhaps other structures where consumers support a local farm through some form of investment.

**Consumer trends**

A number of consumer trends will likely have a positive impact on local producers by creating increased demand and pushing prices up. These trends are based on the consumers’ desire to know where their food comes from and how it was produced.

### Climate Change

The exact impact of climate change on local agriculture is not yet known. However, some aspects of it are fairly certain. Weather patterns seem to be more erratic. Summers appear to be hotter and drier and winter storms more intense. This increases crop production risk. Hot dry summers imply more irrigation will be needed. Forecasted temperature increases suggest that some low-lying (and highly productive) agricultural lands may be flooded as ocean water levels rise. Lack of available water in areas that currently supply food, notably California, may result in shortages and/or much higher prices for imported fresh fruits and vegetables.

### 0.5.9 Policy and Regulatory Context

The agriculture industry is affected by policy and regulation at every level of government – local, provincial and federal. This section summarizes these policies and regulations.

Restrictions and controls on development are established by local governments under the Community Charter and the *Local Government Act*, which contains extensive land use regulations, zoning powers and subdivision powers. The Community Charter came into force on January 1, 2004.

The legislative regime enables local governments to adopt regional growth strategies and official community plans for the establishment of a framework for land use regulations and zoning by-laws. Local governments are not required to adopt either an official community plan or a zoning by-law. If no such by-laws have been enacted by a local government, land use is governed by generally applicable provincial laws, the common law and any restrictive covenants and building schemes that may be registered on title to properties.

While the B.C. Legislature has largely delegated its jurisdiction over land use and development control to local governments, the provincial government continues to control a number of areas including agricultural land, forestland, riparian land, heritage sites and highways. Additionally, a number of provisions in various statutes permit the provincial government to be involved in local government planning and zoning processes.

The Development Services Department of the Cowichan Valley Regional District is responsible for Community and Regional Planning services for the electoral areas of the Cowichan Valley.

Once the CVRD Board adopts an Official Community Plan (OCP), regulatory bylaws such as zoning are updated. OCPs also can designate development permit areas for the following purposes:

- To protect the natural environment
- To protect development from hazardous conditions
- To protect farming
- To protect heritage areas
- To revitalize a commercial area
- To establish guidelines for the form and character of commercial, industrial or multiple family residential development

Once there is an OCP in place, planners implement the land use bylaws established by the Regional Board. The intent of the community and regional planning function and the related land use bylaws is to protect the rural communities' interests with respect to growth and development.

All local governments are required to ensure that zoning bylaws and new development conform to the OCP. Without an OCP, there is no clearly defined foundation for regulating land use.



### ***0.5.10 Regional Land-Use Policy***

#### **0.5.10.1 Regional Growth Strategy**

Regional district boards have been given the powers, under the Local Government Act, to adopt “regional growth strategies” which provide a policy context for the community plans of regional districts and their member municipalities. The provincial government has set forth a number of substantive goals that regional growth strategies should work towards which include, among other things, the avoidance of urban sprawl, protection of environmentally sensitive areas, reduction of pollution, protection of water and promotion of energy conservation.

Following the adoption of a regional growth strategy, all by-laws adopted and works and services undertaken by a regional district board must be consistent with the strategy. Additionally, local governments must amend their official community plans within two years to include a “regional context statement” that sets out the relationship between the plan and the regional growth strategy and how the plan is to be made consistent with the growth strategy in the future.

Their purpose is to coordinate local government action on a range of services such as housing, transportation, urban containment, the green infrastructure, and economic development in recognition that collaboration on a regional level will make individual municipal action more effective. All zoning and infrastructure decisions must be consistent with the RGS.

RGSs and OCPs that contain unequivocal policies regarding local government support for maintaining existing agricultural lands and enhancing the farm economy can help to reduce speculation that farmlands will be converted to other uses. Indeed, local governments within a region can ensure that they and other municipalities will protect agricultural land by insisting on including policies, in RGSs, that land zoned as agriculture will not be rezoned to allow non-farm uses except in limited, defined circumstances.

To date, nine of twenty-eight regional districts have adopted RGSs in BC, and several more are under development. The existing RGSs in BC include strong agricultural protection statements. The Capital Regional District (Victoria and Saanich Peninsula) adopted a Regional Growth Strategy in 2003. It is now being updated as part of the 5-year review process and will be revised as the region's sustainability strategy.

The Cowichan Valley Regional District has not completed a Regional Growth Strategy.

#### **0.5.10.2 Official Community Plans (OCPs)**

An official community plan, while not mandatory, is a general statement of the broad objectives and policies of a municipality regarding the form and character of existing and proposed land use and servicing requirements contained in the area covered by the plan. Additionally, an official community plan may create a policy context that guides development rights within the affected area.

Every community plan that is adopted must conform to the content requirements set out in the Local Government Act and must be adopted with broad consultation with the public, adjacent local governments, first nations, school boards, improvement districts and other governmental agencies. There are a number of mandatory requirements for official community plans which include:

- addressing the residential requirements to meet housing needs over the following five years,





- the location, amount and type of existing and proposed commercial, industrial, institutional, agricultural, recreational and public utility land uses,
- the location of proposed public facilities such as parks, schools and waste disposal sites,
- the location of major road, sewer and water systems and
- Policies for affordable housing

As optional content for an official community plan, areas may be designated in which no development may occur without the owner applying for and obtaining a development permit. The rationale for development permit areas is to protect the natural environment, protect farming and heritage sites, revitalize an area or to control the character of development in a certain area. The requirement for development permits in certain areas has a significant impact on development in such areas as it also enables the local government to impose conditions, based on guidelines set out in the official community plan that can significantly affect the size and character of the development and its cost.

All by-laws enacted or works undertaken by a council or regional board after an official community plan is adopted must be consistent with the plan. Hence, where a local government wishes to amend a zoning by-law and the amendment is not consistent with the official community plan, the local government will have to amend the official community plan at the same time that it amends the zoning by-law.

An OCP affects agriculture and the use of land adjacent to agriculture in several ways. It must include, among other things, the amount and type of present and proposed agricultural land uses. This is usually depicted in a land use map in the OCP. It may contain policies of the local government respecting the maintenance and enhancement of farming on land in a farming area or in an area designated for agricultural use in the community plan. These policies deal with a wide range of issues, including water supply, recreation near farmland, supporting the agricultural industry, and safeguarding the ALR. Finally, local governments may designate development permit areas for the protection of farming in the OCP, and establish guidelines for how urban development may occur adjacent to the ALR. OCPs do not directly regulate land use or farm-related policies, but instead provide high-level guidance on local government land use, subdivision and capital program decisions.

Once an OCP is in place, local government decisions to amend existing regulations and approval requirements must be consistent with the OCP. Landowners must meet the requirements of applicable zoning bylaws, farm bylaws or development permits.

Some examples of plan policies that promote both agriculture and the ALR include:

- providing for a full range of agricultural and complementary uses in the ALR and encourage value-added activities that can improve farm viability;
- providing setbacks and buffers when developing land adjacent to the ALR to prevent conflicts and encroachment;
- recognizing and protect the needs and activities of farm operations when considering adjacent and nearby land uses;
- planning for uses that are compatible with agriculture along the ALR boundary
- preserving contiguous areas of agricultural land and avoiding severance by recreation, parks, and transportation and utility corridors; and



- encouraging partnerships with the agricultural community, senior governments and private enterprise to promote the development of the agricultural sector

The existing electoral area OCPs address similar issues with minor differences between them. Overall, they are consistent with the minimum requirements of the Agricultural Land Commission Act and Regulations. Where there is a difference between the ALC Act and local policies and bylaws, the more restrictive regulation shall apply. Some areas have added additional policies where necessary. Area I is the only area that does not address agricultural policies directly because of the low level of agricultural activity.

**Table 5. Existing Official Community Plans in the CVRD including most recent amendment date**

Number	Area	Name	OCP date	Most recent amendment
1	Electoral Area A	Mill Bay, Malahat	1999	2007
2	Electoral Area B	Shawnigan Lake	1987	2009
3	Electoral Area C	Cobble Hill	1989	2008
4	Electoral Area D	Cowichan Bay	1985	2008
5	Electoral Area E	Cowichan Station, Sahtlam, Glenora	1994	2008
6	Electoral Area F	Cowichan Lake South, Skutz Falls	1999	2007
7	Electoral Area G	Saltair, Gulf Islands	2005	2006
8	Electoral Area H	North Oyster, Diamond	1993	2009
9	Electoral Area I	Youbou, Meade Creek	2005	2008
10	District of N. Cowichan		2002	Under review
11	City of Duncan		2007	2007
12	Town of Ladysmith			
13	Town of Lake Cowichan		1998	2008

South Cowichan (Area's B and C) are currently working on a joint updated OCP.

Local governments may also commit to creating and implementing Agricultural Area Plans in an OCP.

While local governments have considerable latitude to establish policies for the future of agriculture in their boundaries, they must ensure that all bylaws and plans, including OCPs, are consistent with the Agricultural Land Commission Act, regulations and orders of the Commission. OCPs that deal with ALR land must be referred to the Agricultural Land Commission for approval.

Another component of AAPs is the use of geographic information systems (GIS) mapping and agricultural land use inventories. These tools help local governments more accurately map agricultural land and show how new development will affect agriculture. They can also assist decision makers to understand how new policies and regulations will affect farming.

### 0.5.10.3 Zoning Bylaws

The right to use land in B.C. is governed by zoning by-laws as permitted by the B.C. *Local Government Act*.

The purpose of Zoning is to help enforce the Official Community Plan. Governments can control the use and the density of use. Zoning can control the distance buildings and uses must be setback from lot lines, the height of buildings, parking spaces on the site and the size of signs.

Most zoning regulations have been developed over many years and were intended to reduce conflict between neighbours by considering the relationship of activities and the best location for them to occur.

One prime purpose of zoning is to protect property owners against changes in the use of neighbouring parcels of land that may result in a conflict and devaluation of their property or affect their environment or way of life. This protection is achieved by requiring a property owner who proposes a change in the use of land to make an application to the Regional Board.

Zoning regulations, based on the consultation and intent of an OCP policy, can support the ALR and agricultural uses and ensure that land is not used for some other use even if it is removed from the ALR. Zoning regulations can also help to mitigate the cumulative impacts of farm-related activities, such as residential, marketing, processing and agri-tourism, on farmland productivity.

Provincial regulations allow certain land uses and activities in the ALR, but the regulations also allow local governments to regulate or prohibit these same activities and uses. Zoning standards can help prevent an activity from becoming a nuisance to neighbours or interfering with agriculture. Zoning regulations may mitigate these impacts by directing where these types of activities can occur, and to what extent.

As well as specifying that local governments can regulate or prohibit certain uses, the Agricultural Land Commission Act also limits local government's power to zone agricultural land:

- Local governments cannot allow non-farm uses in the ALR, unless permitted by the Agricultural Land Commission Act, regulations, or orders of the ALC
- Local governments must ensure that zoning bylaws are consistent with the Agricultural Land Commission Act, regulations, or orders of the ALC. The most important restrictions on zoning are found in Sections 2 and 3 of the Agricultural Land Reserve Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulation where;
  - Section 2 designates certain uses as farm uses that can be regulated, but not prohibited by local government. Designated farm uses include farm retail sales; wineries, cideries and ancillary uses; greenhouses; on-farm processing; storage and application of fertilizers; intensive agriculture; mushroom farming and seasonal agri-tourism (but not accommodation). Many of the designated farm uses are subject to important restrictions such as limits on the size of retail sales operations.
  - Section 3 allows certain land uses such as ecological land reserves and road construction within a dedicated right-of-way. These cannot be prohibited by local government.
- The Provincial government can prohibit specified local governments from using zoning to restrict the use of ALR land for a farm business without provincial approval. To date, the Province has designated only the municipalities of Abbotsford, Delta, Kelowna and Langley Township.



The most important characteristics of zoning that aim to support the ALR and agricultural community include:

- large minimum lot sizes and as few zones as possible for ALR land to ensure adequate land for the continued viability of a diversity of farm operations;
- contiguous areas of agricultural land where other uses do not interfere with the practice of farming;
- suitable commercial land to accommodate the agricultural service industry in farming communities without compromising the ALR with commercial uses;
- regulation of accessory and non-farm uses on agriculture land and in the ALR to minimize their impact on agriculture (such as maximum lot coverage and the appropriate siting of buildings, driveways and parking lots close to access roads); and
- edge planning techniques such as buffering and setbacks to decrease conflicts between the agriculture/non-agriculture interface

Other zoning considerations include regulating:

- the type of farm and residential uses, buildings or structures;
- stormwater;
- direct farm marketing & other agri-tourism activities;
- form and character of buildings to protect rural quality (such as the height of buildings); and
- off street loading and parking

Finally, local governments can limit subdivision of ALR land by maintaining large minimum lot sizes for land in agricultural zones. It is important to note that even if the Agricultural Land Commission approves the subdivision of land, a local government is not required to rezone the property to accommodate the subdivision. Large lot zoning effectively prevents the creation of small lots, with limited agricultural potential, in farming areas.

#### 0.5.10.4 Edge Planning – Edge Planning Areas, Development Permits & Covenants

Land use compatibility issues are often focused along urban/agricultural edges. Historically, little attention has been paid to developing policies that enhance land use compatibility and ensure the security of agriculture at the interface. The Strengthening Farming legislative package was enacted, and specific components were designed to enhance local government's ability to undertake edge planning along agriculture's interface. Based on the principle of "shared responsibility", there are tools for both the urban side and the agriculture side. Local governments, the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, and the farming community are increasingly referring to the 600 metres on either side of the farmland/non-farmland boundary as edge planning areas. Edge planning areas (EPAs) require a partnership of local and senior governments, the agricultural community, and other sectors to ensure the continuation of farming adjacent to urban uses.

To protect agricultural land, and to prevent conflict between farming and urban uses, EPAs require a variety of land use and farm practices approaches. These include:

- Establishment of buffers on urban land. This could include a landscaped buffer on the urban side and considerations for the siting and orientation of buildings. This can be carried through and detailed in a development permit, a zoning bylaw, a subdivision and development control bylaw, an official community plan, and any related covenants;

- zoning bylaws that direct the siting of farm uses, farm buildings and farm structures that may cause conflicts, e.g., ones associated with significant noise, dust and odour;
- for local government designated by the Provincial government, farm bylaws that establish farm management standards for practices such as manure storage and handling, and activities that create significant noise, dust and odour; and
- communication efforts to improve relations between the urban and farming communities

Development permits areas (DPAs) are one of the strongest tools for shaping new development to ensure that it respects adjacent farmland and farming practices. DPAs allow local governments to create site-specific requirements for development over and above basic zoning. A municipality may designate a DPA in which new development will be required to conform to development permit guidelines. A permit must be obtained before a private landowner may subdivide, alter land, or construct or alter a building in a DPA, and development must be in accordance with the terms of the permit.

Local governments may designate an area as a DPA for a range of purposes, including the protection of farming. When a DPA is established, the local government must describe the special site conditions or objectives that justify the designation, and specify guidelines to achieve those objectives.

When an owner applies to the local government for a development permit to alter a site within a DPA, the guidelines in the OCP or zoning bylaw will direct what conditions, if any, staff and council place on the new development. DPA guidelines designated to protect farming may include land requirements that result in buffering or separation of development from farming on adjoining or reasonably adjacent land. This includes:

- screening;
- landscaping;
- fencing;
- setback of buildings from agricultural land;
- open space uses adjacent to farming;
- sensitive handling of walkways and trails in buffer strips;
- specifying water retention capacity and limits on total impervious surfaces to prevent flooding of agricultural land by suburban development;
- prohibiting road endings adjacent to farmland; and
- Minimizing pedestrian and vehicle traffic near the ALR. Many local governments have incorporated the Agricultural Land Commission's Landscaped Buffer Specifications into DPA guidelines.

#### 0.5.10.4.1 *Covenants*

Under section 219 of the Land Title Act, a municipality or regional district may register a covenant on the title to land to protect specific characteristics of land in or adjacent to the ALR. A covenant is a voluntary agreement between the landowner (often a farmer or a developer) and a covenant holder (a municipality, regional district, or non-profit organization). The landowner agrees to protect the land as contemplated in the wording of the covenant. The covenant holder has the right to monitor and enforce the covenant to make sure the landowner is using the land in accordance with the covenant.



Registering the covenant on the title of the land ensures that the covenant applies to future owners and endures indefinitely. For example, a covenant on the parcels of residential land adjacent to ALR land can outline buffer specifications like large backyards remaining free from development and landscaping requirements such as a hedge of trees or shrubs near the edge of the property. Covenants “run with the land,” meaning they apply to whoever owns the land, thus ensuring that urban-agriculture edge mitigation measures endure over the long term.

Covenants may contain provisions specifying:

- the use of land (including that it be used for agricultural purposes), or the use of a building on or to be erected on land;
- that land is to be built on in accordance with the covenant or is not to be built on;
- that land is not to be subdivided except in accordance with the covenant or is not to be subdivided;
- that parcels of land designated in the covenant are not to be sold or otherwise transferred separately;
- That land, or a specified feature, be protected, maintained, enhanced, or restored in accordance with the covenant.

For example, covenants can require that a wetland be maintained as a buffer between agricultural land and an urban residential area.

Covenants are often secured on land that is being subdivided adjacent to farmland to ensure that future activities and development of that land does not hinder the productive ability of the land in the ALR. Covenants also provide notice to potential buyers that the land is adjacent to farmland, which helps prevent future conflict about farming practices.

#### 0.5.10.4.2 *Farm Bylaws*

Some farm operations may be inappropriate for a specific area. The ministry and a local government may agree to use a farm bylaw under the *Municipal Act* to directly regulate or prohibit farm operations in a manner consistent with the minister's standards.

A farm bylaw will set special rules for farm practices in that area that can then be enforced directly by local governments. Farm bylaws may only be adopted with the approval of the Minister of Agriculture, and only in an area declared by regulation (sections 917 and 918 Local Government Act).

Farm bylaws allow for greater flexibility in setting standards and deal with matters that cannot be regulated by way of zoning. They may prescribe different standards depending on the size or type of farm, type of farm operation, the site conditions, and the adjoining land uses. Farm bylaws may be used in edge planning as the ALR or farmland equivalent to development permits for the protection of farming. Farm bylaws may include setbacks, siting of farm activities, and buffer requirements. Local governments will particularly want to consider the benefits of regulation by farm bylaw for areas or uses where lot size or configuration makes standard setbacks inappropriate, where topography and waste management create public health issues, and where there are sensitive adjoining land uses such as urban residential.

Agricultural operations are protected through right-to-farm legislation in BC (see *Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act (FPPA)* below). Farmers cannot be sued for nuisance-type impacts to nearby landowners, such as noise and odour, from normal farm practices. Residents living in farming



areas must be willing to accept both the pleasant and not-so-pleasant by-products of an agricultural community.

However, in recognition that some farming activities can create exceptional impacts for residential neighbours and require a more fine-grained regulatory approach, designated local governments may enact farm bylaws such as:

- Respecting the conduct of farm operations as part of a farm business (e.g., noise control regulations for audible bird scare devices);
- Respecting the types of buildings, structures, facilities, machinery and equipment specified by the local government that are a prerequisite to conducting farm operations and that must be utilized by farmers conducting the specified farm operations (e.g., for mushroom farming and on-site composting);
- Regulating the siting of stored materials, waste facilities and stationary equipment (e.g., for manure storage, compost storage and waste water management); and
- Prohibiting specified farm operations.

### ***0.5.11 Provincial Legislation and Land Use Policy***

A number of changes have been made to provincial land-use policy since 1986. These are described below. The *Strengthening Farming* initiative was undertaken, over the same period, to increase awareness of these changes and to assist local governments in incorporating these “right to farm” provisions into local policies and bylaws. The degree to which these have been incorporated into local policies and bylaws, in the Cowichan Valley Regional District, varies because some of these have not been reviewed or updated during that time.

The *Strengthening Farming* initiative lists 59 Provincial Acts<sup>18</sup> that affect agriculture. Summaries of some of the most relevant legislation are provided below.

#### **0.5.11.1 Agricultural Land Commission Act<sup>19</sup>**

The *Agricultural Land Commission Act* provides the legislative framework for the preservation of BC’s agricultural land. The legislation provides for the establishment of the provincial Agricultural Land Commission and outlines its objectives, powers, processes, use of land within the ALR, and the relationships with local governments. The act takes precedence over most other provincial legislation and local government bylaws. The purposes of the Agricultural Land Commission are:

- 1) to preserve agricultural land;
- 2) to encourage farming on agricultural land in collaboration with other communities of interest;
- 3) to encourage local governments, First Nations, the government and its agents to enable and accommodate farm use of agricultural land and uses compatible with agriculture in their plans, bylaws and policies.

Accordingly, the Agricultural Land Commission plays a very significant role in the establishment of land-use policy and in the land-use decision-making at the local government level.

<sup>18</sup> [www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/fppa/refguide/other/870218-67](http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/fppa/refguide/other/870218-67) Appendix C Prov Legislation (2004)

<sup>19</sup> [www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt](http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt)



#### 0.5.11.1.1 *Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)*

The Agricultural Land Reserve is a provincial zone in which agriculture is recognized as the priority use. The ALR was established in 1973, by way of the BC *Land Commission Act*. The land to be included within the ALR was identified in subsequent years - mostly in 1974 to 1976 with some fine-tuning afterwards.

5.1% of the land within the Cowichan Valley is in the ALR. Only 3.3% of the land base in the Regional District is actively farmed – presumably, most is within the ALR – so a significant portion of the ALR is not actively farmed.

**Table 6. Most recent ALR designation<sup>20</sup>**

ALR land	Hectares
At designation	21,984
Inclusions	415
Exclusions	4,680
<b>At March 2008</b>	<b>17,719</b>
Cowichan RD area	347,300
% ALR land	5.10%

18.4% of the ALR land parcels in the Cowichan Valley are 8.0 ha or larger. **Note: according to the census (Table 3), about 15% of the farms in the Cowichan Valley are over 29 ha.**

#### 0.5.11.1.2 *Agricultural Land Reserve Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulations*

On November 1, 2002, the new *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and the *Agricultural Land Reserve Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulations* were brought into force. The regulations essentially describe acceptable “farm uses of agricultural land” in the province. These activities are permitted on ALR lands and may not be prohibited by local government bylaw except a “farm bylaw” prepared under Section 917 of the *Local Government Act*. These activities include the following (detailed descriptions are included in Appendix A and at the Land Commission website: [www.alc.gov.bc.ca](http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca)):

- Farm product processing - storage, packing, product preparation and processing of farm products
- Farm retail sales
- Wineries and cideries
- Additional residences necessary for farm use
- Construction of farm buildings

#### 0.5.11.2 *Farm Practices Protection Act*

The *Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act (FPPA)* was passed in B.C. in April 1996. The intent of the act was to protect farms, using “normal farm practices”, from unwarranted nuisance complaints involving dust, odour, noise and other disturbances. The Farm Practices Board, now called the Farm Industry Review Board, was established to deal with complaints that arise from the Act – to determine whether the disturbance results from normal farm practices.

<sup>20</sup> Source – Agricultural Land Commission. See appendix E for map showing ALR.



### 0.5.11.3 Land Title Act

The *Land Title Act* gives approving officers the power to assess impacts of new subdivisions on farmland. The approving officer may require buffering of farmland from the subdivision and/or the removal of unnecessary roads to reduce the impact of subdivision on adjacent farmlands.

### 0.5.11.4 Local Government Act

The *Local Government Act* provides the legislative framework for local governments. There are provisions in the act that address agriculture including community planning, zoning, nuisance regulations, the removal and deposit of soil, weed and pest control and water use and drainage. Publications are available to assist local government in addressing these issues within their local policies and bylaws.

### 0.5.11.5 Provincial Farm Classification – BC Assessment

The *Assessment Act*, administered by BC Assessment, provides for preferred property taxation on lands that qualify as farmland. BC Regulation 411/95 (Standards for the Classification of Land as a Farm) of the *Assessment Act* defines a farm as all or part of a parcel of land used for:

- a) primary agricultural production;
- b) a farmer's dwelling; or
- c) the training and boarding of horses when operated in conjunction with horse rearing

All farm structures including the farmer's dwelling will be classified as residential.

There are minimum income requirements to qualify for farm classification as follows:

- a) \$10,000 on land less than 8000 m<sup>2</sup> (2 acres)
- b) \$2,500 on land between 8,000 m<sup>2</sup> (2 acres) and 4 ha (10 acres)
- c) On land larger than four ha (10 acres), \$2,500 plus 5% of the actual value of any farm land in excess of four ha.

Land rented to a "bona fide" farmer may also qualify if there is a written lease in place. Landowners must submit an application for Farm Classification to BC Assessment. Full details on farmland classification in BC are available at the BC Assessment website: [www.bcassessment.bc.ca](http://www.bcassessment.bc.ca).

For the 2009 assessment roll, there were 1,148 properties fully or partially in farm class within the Cowichan Valley Regional District; that number includes eight properties on a First Nations assessment roll. According to BC Assessment records, these folios make up 670 farm operations.

Note: lower farm numbers are expected in Provincial Farm Classification because the minimum income threshold is \$2500 per year. The Federal Census has no minimum income for reporting as a farm.

In December 2007, the Minister of Small Business and Revenue committed to a review of the farm assessment process. The review is to ensure that the assessment system is fair, equitable and supports farming in BC with clear, simple and straightforward regulations and policies. Between September and November 2008, the Farm Assessment Review Panel consulted with people throughout BC to gather input for this process. The panel has recently submitted its report to the province. The recommendations will be considered for implementation in the 2010 assessment roll. The results of this review could affect this planning process.



#### 0.5.11.6 Natural Products Marketing (BC) Act - Supply Management

The *Natural Products Marketing (BC) Act* is the enabling legislation for various marketing boards and commissions in BC. It provides a system that allows individual commodities to promote, control and regulate production, transportation, packing, storage and marketing of natural products in the province.

In the Cowichan Valley, producers of the following products are affected by the regulations and policies that have evolved from this act: dairy, chicken, eggs, turkeys, cranberries, and some vegetables.

Concerns were expressed that quota for production of some of these commodities is moving to lower-cost production areas or that allocation of quota is not consistent with consumption on Vancouver Island – as it has been in the past.

#### 0.5.11.7 Meat Inspection Regulation – Food Safety Act

In September 2004, the Province of BC enacted a new *Meat Inspection Regulation* under the *Food Safety Act*. All BC abattoirs that produce meat for human consumption must be licensed either provincially or federally. Only meat from livestock slaughtered in a licensed abattoir can be sold for food. The regulation allowed a two-year transition period to give abattoir operators, livestock farmers and other stakeholders time to adapt.

Prior to enactment of this regulation, abattoirs in designated “Meat Inspection Areas” in BC had to be licensed (except farmers slaughtering their own animals on their own farm). Outside of the meat inspection areas, abattoirs had the choice of being either licensed, or approved by the Regional Health Authorities. Only animals slaughtered in licensed facilities were inspected.

The Cowichan Valley was not in a meat inspection area; the Capital Regional District was in a meat inspection area.

The Meat Inspection Regulation has resulted in reduced availability of custom slaughter services for red meat producers in the Cowichan Valley Regional District. There are two licensed red meat plants, one transitional red meat plant and one licensed poultry plant. One of the red meat plants is also licensed for poultry.

##### 0.5.11.7.1 *Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE)*

The discovery of BSE in Canada has led to policy and regulation aimed at eradication of the disease. It is now widely accepted that transmission of BSE can only occur when susceptible species consume infected material. The policies and regulations have been designed to ensure that the parts of the animal that could contain the infectious agent, or prion, which are known as Specified Risk Materials (SRM) cannot be consumed by other livestock. The actual volume of SRM produced on Vancouver Island is less than 40 tonnes per year, however, to ensure that it is not fed to livestock, this material is currently shipped to a landfill in Coronation, Alberta – along with other slaughterhouse waste from other areas of BC. The overall impact of these regulations, which are necessary to protect Canada’s export cattle markets, represents a significant cost to the island red meat industry.

### 0.5.11.8 Environmental Policy and Regulation

#### 0.5.11.8.1 *Environmental Farm Plans*

A number of Provincial and Federal regulations and policies affect agriculture. The Canada – BC Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) Program, launched in 2003, provides a process for individual farmers to evaluate how their operation impacts the environment and plan changes that will and enhance their environmental stewardship. Developing an EFP will help to ensure that farmers are aware of the relevant environmental policies and regulations.

The plan covers environmental issues and concerns related to:

- farm waste, fertilizers, fuel, wood waste, composting, energy use, on farm processing, livestock areas (indoors and out), manure handling, mortality disposal, crop production, pest management, buffers, riparian areas, soil management, water quality and quantity, drainage, irrigation, runoff/leachate, air quality including gas emissions, dust and particulate, odours, burning, and biodiversity among others.

### 0.5.12 Health and Food Safety Framework

Food safety and food self-sufficiency have become much higher priorities for consumers and governments in the past two or three years. This shift has resulted from a number of food safety problems that have arisen within the mainstream food production and distribution systems. These concerns range from “Mad Cow” disease to melamine in dog food to food shortages and fears about the practices and products of large-scale agribusiness. Consumers want to buy food, close to home, from people they trust.

#### 0.5.12.1 Food Security

A number of groups have joined forces in the Cowichan Valley to develop a Food Security Plan, which was published by the Cowichan Green Community in March 2008. The CGC has also developed a Food Charter for the Cowichan Valley. These projects were funded in part by the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA). A Food Security Action Plan was developed “to provide direction in addressing the barriers to food security through education, advocacy, and building community through growing and sharing our own food”. Key points in year one of the action plan includes:

- Organize educational opportunities for residents to kick-start household level food production and processing
- Encourage gardening and other food production activities at the individual, household, and community levels
- Establish a food security research program
- Advocate for policies to enhance food security, and against policies that undermine it, and
- Develop an action plan to support local farmers

In the intermediate term, the Cowichan Food Security Coalition will also conduct community workshops, develop strategic plans and work with local farmers and government to ensure that agricultural policies support the food security objectives.



This documents a number of initiatives intended to improve the quality of food available to lower income people in the community: Cowichan Community Kitchens; community gardens; FruitSave, a fruit-gleaning program to make use of unused backyard fruit; O.U.R. Eco-village, a sustainable living demonstration site, etc.

The initial vision suggested in this planning process is “sustainably produce enough healthy food so there are no more hungry children.” Further discussion led to a revised vision as follows: “to build a thriving agriculture community as part of a sustainable and resilient community in the region.”

A *Food Security and Agricultural Enhancement Discussion Paper*<sup>21</sup> has also been prepared as part of the *North Cowichan Official Community Plan Review*. This document agricultural issues and proposes a number of actions to improve food security and enhance agricultural production and profitability in North Cowichan and within the Regional District.

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<sup>21</sup> Bev Suderman, Planning Assistant, September 15, 2008



## Issues and Opportunities

This section describes the relevant issues and opportunities identified in the consultation process. The goals, objectives and actions in the Action Plan section were developed based on the Issues and Opportunities described in this section.

This Section has been organized using three categories:

- 2.1. Economic
- 2.2. Social and Regulatory
- 2.3 Environmental

Note: Some issues could be placed under two or more categories but for ease of presenting the information in an organized manner, we have selected the most relevant category.



## Economic Issues and Opportunities

Recognizing economic opportunities -- if this report identified specific crops or products to produce, it would be doing a disservice to the local industry. Instead, this planning process has identified and described a number of trends in the industry. Interpreting where those trends will take the local industry will help people identify opportunities that suit the resources that they have available to them.

### *1.0.1 Loss of Critical Mass*

This is an issue worth noting. It is probably at the "food for thought" stage -- not necessarily at a critical stage, yet. There were comments during the producer meetings about how the industry was better 50 years ago. When asked why, the response was (a) that people understood and appreciated agriculture more back then and (b) the infrastructure and systems were in place to produce the primary product, add value and even ship to external markets. There were packing houses for fruit and vegetables. Some of these have disappeared. This has happened in many areas because the industry has shrunk and there isn't enough production to support processors. Technology has improved processing equipment, and reduced the cost, and Internet-based businesses allow processors or potential processors to track down and buy technology and equipment with relative ease. Smaller scale processing can be viable because of these advances. Even so, a certain volume of production is needed to support the businesses that supply the industry and to maintain the resources and expertise within an area. Are there industries in the Cowichan Valley that are declining to the point where they will not support the existing suppliers and infrastructure? During consultations, there were comments suggesting some of the livestock sector may be close to that point. The swine industry has virtually disappeared. The dairy industry has declined quite sharply.

### *1.0.2 Access to Capital*

Issue – producers have expressed concern with the problem of accessing capital for expansion. This is a concern that needs to be discussed further. Part of the problem is due to restrictions in capital markets that have resulted after the American economy crashed over the last couple of years. However, land appreciation over the past decade has been very significant. Farmers who have owned their land for more than 3 to 5 years should have adequate equity to secure financing based on traditional lending practices. This may have changed in the last few months as credit markets have tightened.

### *1.0.3 Farm Business Succession/Recruitment of New Farmers*

Issue - The aging demographics of existing farmers and the need to replace them as they retire necessitates new and creative strategies to allow the industry to grow in the future. The average age of existing farmers is increasing quickly and significantly. The children of these farmers often do not want to carry on in the farm business. Succession planning can be a long-term and expensive process to ensure that the retiring farmer has adequate resources for retirement and appropriately deals with taxation issues. It must also be done in a manner that the younger generation can afford and, there are often concerns and issues within the family that must be



addressed in the planning process – potential marriage breakdowns, non-farming siblings, timing, equity, cash flow, etc. In some areas, less than 5% of the farm population is under 30 years old. This issue is not just a farming issue. It is widespread among small businesses. Some farmers simply do not want to talk about it so it doesn't happen. Some don't realize the complexity of it and don't give themselves the time to plan and implement the plan appropriately. Succession planning can take many years in some cases.

#### **1.0.4 Investment Attraction**

Opportunity – this is discussed to some extent in the section on recruitment of new farmers but it also represents an opportunity. The Cowichan Valley has some infrastructure needs and there are, or will be, increased opportunities for agribusinesses to start up to supply developing farms: an abattoir, suppliers of organic inputs, freight, distribution and marketing services, irrigation design and supply and others. Someone will recognize some of these opportunities but strategies to attract investment to the area will make it happen faster.

#### **1.0.5 Declining Livestock Industry**

Issue – the census statistics indicate a decline in the food-producing component of the local livestock industry between 2001 and 2006. The number of dairy and beef operations dropped by 57 farms. This decline has clearly continued since the census. The livestock industry is shrinking throughout Vancouver Island for several reasons:

- Reduced access to the abattoirs and processing facilities. There are two underlying reasons this has happened:
- New meat inspection regulations which require that all animals be slaughtered in an inspected facility, and;
- Significant increases in the costs of disposal of certain types of slaughterhouse waste (i.e., Specified Risk Material or SRM) related to the control of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) or Mad Cow Disease.
- Increasing input costs – especially feed and fertilizer
- Competitive disadvantage relative to the lower mainland area due to above factors
- Marketing Board policies favoring production on the mainland

There may be some degree of public apathy about the loss of the livestock industry; however, there are some important economic, environmental and social reasons to maintain a viable industry on Vancouver Island:

- A significant portion of ALR lands can only produce forage. If there is no livestock industry, there is no economic reason to maintain production or productivity on those lands.
- Biosecurity – spreading the livestock industry throughout the province will help protect against widespread disease outbreaks (example: avian flu) and will provide a base for repopulation of farms after these outbreaks
- Food security – the level of production relative to consumption is declining. Increasing production on the island will help maintain or increase the degree of food self-sufficiency.



- Environmental sustainability – high livestock densities in areas, like the Fraser Valley, can lead to detrimental impacts on the environment. Land is less expensive and more readily available for livestock production on Vancouver Island and animal densities are much lower.
- Forage based livestock operations provide valuable habitat for a number of species of wildlife.

The decline in beef and dairy operations has been offset, somewhat, by an increase in horse operations. Is this an indicator that local agricultural land is being converted to gentrified recreational use?

### ***1.0.6 Training and Access to Information (Extension)***

**Issue** - Managing and operating a farm business requires a broad base of knowledge and skills. The Internet has certainly improved overall access to information; however, it does not ensure that the searcher will find relevant local information at the level of detail needed. Farm businesses have slim profit margins and must operate at a very high level of efficiency to make money. Farmers must “do all the little things right!” An Internet connection might provide 90% of the information needed but the missing 10% is what will make a difference between failure and success. Many of the issues raised by people in the consultation process could be addressed with improved training and access to the right information at the right time!

### ***1.0.7 Input Costs***

**Issue** - increasing input costs have tightened margins for farmers steadily on Vancouver Island. Many inputs are brought onto Vancouver Island by ferry, increasing costs, and creating a competitive disadvantage for Island producers. Concentrated feeds (grain) from the prairies, fertilizers and fuel are the main examples. The prices of these are much higher on Vancouver Island than they are on the mainland. Over the years, island farmers have responded to this by producing higher quality local forages to displace grain and by diligent use of fertilizers or by replacing fertilizers with organic nutrients. This is part of the reason that there are more organic, or near organic, farmers on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands.

The increasing fuel prices, over the past couple of years, inevitably have a higher impact on large-scale, commodity-based farms. Small lot, organic farmers tend to use less equipment and may actually benefit from higher fuel prices because it will push the cost of competing produce, higher. Increasing energy prices are a double-edged sword. They push up the cost of production but, in many cases, are pushing up the transportation costs for imported (competing) foods and taking land out of food production, elsewhere, in favor of biofuel production.

### ***1.0.8 Direct Farm Marketing (Distribution)***

**Opportunity** - Marketing direct to the consumer provides an opportunity for a farmer to sell product at retail price or maybe even a slight premium. During the consultation process, there were people who were skeptical of the extent of this opportunity. However, past studies have shown that the farmer only receives about \$.30 out of the food dollar. The statistics show that the cost of production is over 90% of revenue which implies \$.27 of that \$.30 is paid back out in expenses. There is a lot of potential gain if the producer can sell direct as long as the cost of marketing is less than the increased revenue. Research related to farm markets indicates that consumers want to buy





direct from the farmer because they know the product is fresh and high quality, is produced locally, and they know how it is produced.

Tourism traffic, during the main harvest months, represents an added number of consumers who are also interested in buying fresh local product. The demand is increasing. The trend is strong and appears to be getting stronger.

There are some pitfalls. Consumers must believe that they are truly buying local and are truly buying from the producer. Farmers markets and farm markets that resell imported product could potentially lose their credibility with their customers. Food safety concerns at any farmers market, anywhere, could have a serious impact on this strong demand. Farmers markets and farm markets must ensure that the products they are selling are safe and are consistent with the expectations of consumers. If they can do that farmers will benefit from increased prices/revenues and consumers will benefit from quality local product -- everyone wins.

### ***1.0.9 Marketing and Distribution - Access to Markets***

**Issue** - Despite the strong and growing demand for local product, the vast majority (about 75%) of food is still purchased from the major supermarket chains, restaurants and liquor stores. It is difficult for local producers to get their product into these stores because the distribution system that supplies these stores is designed for large-scale and large volumes. With the sale of the Thrifty's chain to Sobeys, none of the major chains have a warehouse or distribution center on Vancouver Island. Those producers, who have the volume to market through the chain stores, often have to send product off island to the warehouse from which it is distributed back to the area where it came from. The local connection is easily lost in the process.

There are similar challenges in trying to market to local restaurants. Restaurant owners are very busy. It is much easier for them to buy from a wholesale distributor than it is to buy from several small local producers. They want quality but they also want simplicity and competitive prices.

### ***1.0.10 Infrastructure***

**Issue** - the consultative process has identified a number of shortfalls in infrastructure. Developing this infrastructure could have a significant positive impact for the industry. Missing or inadequate infrastructure of note includes: irrigation systems, community kitchens, cold storage, abattoirs, food processing facilities, auctions, waste disposal systems for deadstock and slaughterhouse waste, etc. The Cowichan Valley Food Security Plan has a number of comments about the adequacy of various types of infrastructure within the Cowichan Valley including: community kitchens, cold storage, farmers markets, food banks and other organizations that are dealing with agriculture somewhere between the field and the plate.

### ***1.0.11 Product Diversification - Non-traditional Land Use***

Component of the vision, issue and opportunity - "diversity" was specifically mentioned as a desired component of the vision for local agriculture. Local stakeholders envision a future industry made up of a broad base of agricultural activities. These include a mix of farm sizes (large and small in terms of revenues and land base), a mix of farm business structures, a broad range of crops and products, primary and value added, mixed with agri-tourism and other related services, food and nonfood, with varied marketing systems but hopefully with a few more young farmers! The issue related to



diversity was generally that diversification does not always fit with regulation. Sometimes, regulations do not permit the buildings needed to accommodate intensive cropping enterprises or agri-tourism. Value added enterprises face concerns with zoning, waste management, water, etc. Opportunity - there are a number of trends, which suggests that there will be increasing opportunities for diversification of product both on individual farms and within the local agriculture sector. These trends include:

- Increasing demand for local product, i.e. the 100 mile diet
- Multiculturalism - producing for diverse cultures within Canada and potentially for export?
- Beanery, green fuels, green roofs, green everything
- Tourism, agri-tourism, culinary tourism, the Olympics -- all will draw new people into the Cowichan Valley and other parts of Vancouver Island
- On farm processing -- technology and access to information, eBay and the Internet allow smaller scale processing at an economic level
- Urban agriculture creates demand for products at a different level
- Wineries and vineyards

Even though diversity seems to be desirable, it must be controlled or organized diversity. Diversification should not be a means of avoiding regulation. Many people made comments about how regulation was preventing them from diversifying their farm operations. However, people also acknowledge that there is a need for regulation. The challenge is to find a means that will allow appropriate diversification of the agriculture sector.

#### ***1.0.12 Alternate Energy***

**Opportunity -** There is growing interest, globally, in developing cleaner forms of energy. Residents in remote areas of Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands have developed small-scale alternate energy systems for their own use over the years. Many of these systems are very creative and, in developing them, the user has developed expertise. From that perspective, there is a knowledge base, not necessarily scientific, but practical. There is also a sustainable mindset that goes along with it. Moreover, because of higher energy prices on Vancouver Island, there is an economic incentive to develop alternate energy systems. Some of the unused (or underutilized) land base could be brought into production of biofuels. There are significant volumes of potential fuel feedstocks -- wood waste among others. It is also much easier to find information about systems that have been developed in other parts of the world. Even five years ago, it was very challenging to locate biomass burner information on the Internet and even harder to find the equipment or a supplier of equipment. Now, all of this is readily available.

A number of crops or products from Vancouver Island could potentially be processed for biofuels to replace imported energy, especially fossil fuels. A trial is underway in Campbell River - testing oilseed crops for biodiesel. Jerusalem Artichoke are being produced for potential biofuel production as well as other beneficial by-products. There are large quantities of wood waste and other biomass products that could be converted to energy. The technology to process and use these products is improving quickly.



## Social and Regulatory Issues and Opportunities

### 1.1.1 Trends

#### 1.1.1.1 Food Security, Self-sufficiency

**Element of Vision, Issue, Opportunity** - The degree of desired food self-sufficiency or food security should be carefully considered if it is going to be defined within the vision. For example, increasing the degree of food self-sufficiency for a growing population inherently means a significant increase in agricultural production. This will require, among other things, access to irrigation water and improved access to information for producers.

Food security and food self-sufficiency were raised as issues at virtually every meeting. They are a concern at the producer level and at the consumer level. The growing interest at every level also creates opportunities as the demand for local food increases. The Cowichan Green Community has developed a Food Security Plan with the support of a wide range of stakeholders - most of which have also provided input into this planning process. It recognizes many of the issues discussed in this plan and the direction is consistent with the vision that has developed so far.

Note: food self-sufficiency is more relevant for Vancouver Island as a whole than it is for the Cowichan Valley. The Cowichan Valley produces a larger percentage of the food consumed than the Regional District of Nanaimo. An island-wide food self-sufficiency goal would be more meaningful, easier to measure and would likely be useful as a planning tool. Food systems and their efficiency, distribution, security and mechanisms for securing any targets established in an island wide system (abattoirs, egg production, etc) could be located in the CVRD. Land uses and transportation systems could be more efficient as part of an "Island Plan".

**Issue** - "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts" – there is increasing awareness that all communities of Vancouver Island have issues relating to food security.

The Cowichan Valley Regional District has some of the most fertile ground on Vancouver Island and some of the best growing conditions. It is well positioned to provide a bounty of product and take an effective role in providing island residents with food and agricultural services.

#### 1.1.1.2 Changing Farm Size

**Issue or Opportunity** - The average farm size has dropped from 31.2 ha in 1986 to 16.5 ha in 2006. Farms are getting smaller, by area, but the statistics seem to indicate that they are becoming more productive. They are growing more on less land. Even large farms are reducing their acreage, on average, implying that they are making better use of their most expensive resource. Intensity is increasing – revenue per ha is 280% higher than it was 20 years ago. Livestock operations, which tend to use much more land, are declining. Vancouver Island is becoming a horticulturally oriented area, parts of which have been compared to Provence in France. What does the local farm of the future look like? The trends seem to suggest that it will be a smaller scale, intensively managed, irrigated, organic (or near-organic) horticultural operation. Nevertheless, as described in the section above about the declining livestock sector, there is a need to preserve land for larger scale operations. As noted above, the larger scale, forage-based operations can utilize certain types of land. Some crops, like grapes, thrive on different types of soils that may not be mapped as "prime" agricultural land. Greenhouses can be located on non-prime land but generally are more profitable



on prime climatic sites. Intensive vegetable and berry operations are the farms that tend to require or do best on prime sites with good climate, soils and water. The average area used by intensive vegetable and dairy operations in 2006 was less than 2.0 ha. However, it must be noted that, in most cases, there are economies of scale and promoting or encouraging larger operations will generally lead to a healthier industry economically.

Provence (from <http://www.everyculture.com/Europe/Provençal-Economy.html>): *"The average size of the farms in this region (Provence) is 11.5 hectares, which is half the national average. Sixty percent of the farming population operate holdings of less than 5 hectares. Because of the relatively small size of the holdings, most rural households combine some form of wage work with agricultural work."*

#### 1.1.1.3 A Voice for Agriculture

**Issue and Opportunity** - At every meeting, comments were made that suggested the industry needs to be better heard and better understood. This included producers and politicians. Local politicians suggested agriculture has to ensure that its voice is heard and be more involved in the discussions that lead to plans and policies that affect them. Farmers commented that consumers did not understand how their food was produced or why farmers do the things they do. To some extent, the industry has relied on the local staff of the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands to fill some of these roles, however, the Ministry no longer has the resources to do this. There were other suggestions about how to make this happen.

Note: an observation that needs to be included - the industry needs new people, new farmers, but, at many meetings the tone is more negative than positive. This does not apply to everyone, of course, but potential new producers can easily be scared off by doom and gloom!

#### 1.1.1.4 Urban Agriculture

Urban agriculture is a rapidly emerging trend that has developed because of consumer concerns about the security of their own food. People want to know where their food comes from, how it was produced and the consumer has concluded that the best way to be certain is to grow it yourself. It is considered a "new trend" although we are only one generation away from producing our own food for family consumption. The trend creates opportunities for farm businesses and suppliers to provide products and services to those who are growing their own food. It may slightly affect the demand for local food but the demand is increasing quickly and it is doubtful that backyard production would exceed the increase in demand. If there is a concern, it could be that urban plots are not well managed and become incubation areas for diseases, weeds and pests. This has happened in other areas. Another concern is with raising livestock - inexperienced producers dealing with animals in small backyard areas. There could be problems with neglect purely because the owner doesn't know what they are doing.

#### 1.1.1.5 Water Related Issues

These issues are included as "social" because the primary hurdles are regulatory. If the regulatory hurdles were removed, they would become environmental or potentially economic issues.



#### 1.1.1.6 Access to Water for Irrigation

**Issue** - Currently, about 2465 ha are irrigated in the Regional District. Agricultural capability maps indicate that over 9400 ha could be improved to prime (Class 3 or better) with irrigation - an increase of just under 7000 ha. Most horticultural crops require irrigation. Without it, yields are so low that production cannot be justified. For many of those crops, access to water for irrigation could increase annual income per ha by \$25,000. For forage crops, irrigation increases and stabilizes yield so there is feed available on dry years.

Some areas in the south part of the Regional District have access to enough groundwater to irrigate. Access to groundwater in other parts of the Regional District is sporadic. There are some peat areas where crops can be essentially sub irrigated if water controls are in place to maintain appropriate water levels. Aside from this, farmers either need to develop water storage on their farms or, if available, tap into district water systems. For most farmers, developing water storage on-site is impractical. It is extremely expensive and many do not have appropriate topography to collect and store water. In some cases, dams must be built which, by regulation, must be engineered and approved. Also, if there is no re-charge from groundwater, the reservoir must be very large. As a rule of thumb, 1 ha would require about 3000 m<sup>3</sup> of water per year - equivalent to 1 acre foot per acre. Irrigating the 7000 ha noted above, therefore, would require about 21,000,000 m<sup>3</sup> of water per year - but the food self-sufficiency of the Cowichan Valley would increase significantly as would the farm gate receipts.

A large portion of the land that would benefit from irrigation is in the Cowichan basin. The Cowichan Basin Water Management Plan, completed in 2007, includes a recommended target to reduce agricultural water use by 10% before 2010 and by 20% before 2015. Catalyst Paper has a license to use 100 ft.<sup>3</sup> per second from the Cowichan basin. This is equivalent to 89,000,000 m<sup>3</sup> per year. Catalyst uses about 60% of that when operating at full capacity and, earlier this year reported using about 30% of it. Clearly, however, the legal right to use that water belongs to Catalyst and, even if it was available, a suitable distribution system would be required before it could be used by District farmers.

#### 1.1.1.7 Environmentally Sensitive Areas - Management of Organic Soil/Wetland Areas

**Issue** - This is an issue at several levels - provincial and local government policy with some degree of federal regulation as well as a sustainable management issue at the farm level. Organic, or peat, soils can be very productive farmland. However, these soils have developed in low-lying areas. High-value perennial crops cannot be grown if there are extended periods of winter flooding and during the summer, the water table in the soils must be maintained to ensure they remain wet. If they dry out, they oxidize (essentially burn up), the soil level drops and winter flooding occurs more often. In most cases, the outflow from these wetland areas is very flat so regular maintenance is required to ensure water is removed fairly quickly in the winter and held at appropriate levels during the summer. Unfortunately, the outflow channels often cross several properties which means that downstream property owners decisions can affect the livelihood of those trying to farm these types of soils. Also, federal fisheries regulations and provincial water management policies and regulations - protection and management of fish habitat and water - must be considered. Local governments are often caught in the middle or are involved in these issues for a number of reasons.

There were also comments, during the consultation process, that individual landowners were forced to pay for engineering costs for drainage and irrigation improvements which benefit other



landowners and, in some cases, society in general. Engineering costs can be very expensive for an individual farmer and it can be difficult to find engineers with experience in designing these systems.

The other concern that arises with this issue is that government agencies tend to treat it as a one time activity so an application has to be completed every time maintenance is required. The application process can be long and drawn out because the people involved may change and/or the requirements are not understood by everyone.

#### **1.1.1.8 Drainage**

**Issue** - In some cases this issue relates to management of organic soils (as described above), however, there are also cases where drainage improvements could significantly improve the productivity of farmland but there is no outlet for the drained water. Improving drainage often affects adjacent landowners or requires the cooperation of adjacent landowners. For example, in the Fraser Valley there are many areas where community drainage systems have been designed and implemented. These are usually done on lands where there is a significant gain associated with the improvements. There may be examples or areas within the Cowichan Valley Regional District where there could be significant benefits associated with this type of drainage system.

### **1.1.2 Land and Resources**

#### **1.1.2.1 Land Tenure and Cost of Land**

**Issue/Opportunity** - Availability of land and the cost of land for new farmers was identified as a significant hurdle in several meetings. There are young people who may be interested in farming but cannot afford the land. Most of these people seem to be reluctant to lease land or do not know how to access leased land. However, in discussions with dairy farmers, many of them lease large acreages and commented that it was cheaper than owning it. Vancouver Island has very high priced land. It is doubtful that this will change. It is more likely that the business structure of farms will need to change in the future. There are some examples of this in place now – Keating Community Farm, cooperatives in other areas, leases, garden plots, etc. For succession purposes, large dairy farms may need to shift to different corporate structures to survive if family members do not want to take over the family farm.

#### **1.1.2.2 Inclusion of New Lands into Agricultural Land Base**

##### **Issue/Opportunity?**

There was some discussion, during the consultation process, about including additional lands into the agricultural land base. The lands noted fit into two categories:

- lands that are well-suited to specialty crops such as grapes, and
- forestry lands that may be productive agricultural soils that have not been mapped for capability.

A preliminary assessment of the demand for, and location of, sites for grape production has been completed. Clearly, the Vineyard and winery industry is growing, and will continue to grow, in the Cowichan Valley.

### **1.1.3 Governance**

#### **1.1.3.1 Land Use Planning**

A goal of land use planning is to ensure that development does not sacrifice long term environmental quality for short-term benefits and that it preserves resources and the environment for future generations. Planning sustainable development (or "thrivable development") for agriculture should involve continued integration of the environment and the economy.

Thoughtful planning decisions need to be made by elected officials, industry, and individuals that consider all biological, social and economic consequences. The provincial government has developed a number of land-use planning instruments to assist local government in developing plans that do just this. These include establishing the mandate for Regional Growth Strategies, the requirement for Official Community Plans (OCP's) and Zoning ByLaws (ZBL's), guidelines and associated plans, bylaws and policies.

#### **1.1.3.2 Land Use Planning and Policies**

**Issue** - Within the Cowichan Valley Regional District, there are nine Official Community Plans (OCPs) with adoption dates between 1985 and 2009 (District of North Cowichan). While OCP's usually generate a 20 year Vision and plan for implementation, they are amended throughout their life, and as such are "living" documents. In review of the OCP's of the district municipalities of the CVRD, the plans are similar and most of the policies relating to agriculture are generally consistent with the recommendations of the Agricultural Land Commission.

However, the corresponding Zoning Bylaws, (the enforcers of the OCP's) vary between municipalities. Permitted and Conditional land uses vary greatly between ZBLs and as a result, interpretation, enforcement and comprehension may be difficult in some situations for both the planner and the land holder.

A framework that is effective in responding to regional issues requires policy that is consistent throughout the regional district as "a whole", rather than many different "parts".

#### **1.1.3.3 Urban Rural Interface - Edge Planning**

**Issue** - Many urban rural conflicts occur along the boundary between urban residential uses and farmland. Often, someone new moves into a farm neighborhood and then starts to complain about the farm that has been there for many, many years.

As part of the Strengthening Farming Initiative, the Agricultural Land Commission has developed a number of tools and recommended policies for planning along the edge. These include buffers, development permit areas and agricultural zoning to limit the types of agriculture that can occur near the urban rural boundary. Generally, the Land Commission aims towards buffering on the urban side of the ALR boundary, however, in many parts of the CVRD there is, long established residential development immediately adjacent, or very close to, the boundary with no such buffer.

There are many types of agriculture that could operate along the boundary with minimal conflict, however, in some places residential areas have been developed adjacent to existing operations which create noise, dust or odor. In most areas of the CVRD it is too late to implement some of the policies or use the tools that have been developed.



#### 1.1.3.4 Loss of Land to Development

**Issue** - Highly productive and fertile lands may be lost to development.

#### 1.1.3.5 Farm Classification for Property Tax Purposes

**Issue** - Farmers in BC can apply for and receive preferential property tax classification if they demonstrate that they can generate specific levels of income which vary depending on farm size. BC is currently reviewing the farm classification process. A panel has traveled the Province and heard submissions. They are in the process of compiling a report based on this input. The report was, very recently, submitted to the provincial government with the intent that recommendations will be applied to the 2010 taxes.

The issue of split farm classification arose during consultations. Some farmers have lost Farm classification on portions of their farm. The consensus seems to be that farm classification should continue to apply to the whole farm. Farmers "use" land in many different ways. Developing farmers may hold land in reserve until they have developed markets for their products. Expansion happens over several years as markets develop or as they can afford it. Land is used as buffer. It can be set aside to protect environmentally sensitive or riparian areas within the farm. In those cases, land that is not being farmed, perhaps, should be taxed at an even lower level because it is used for the benefit of society rather than the landowner.

#### 1.1.3.6 Employee Housing

**Issue** - Housing for employees is a significant issue everywhere but especially in areas where there are labor intensive, seasonal horticultural operations. These farmers need extra labor at certain times of the year -- mainly harvest but it could also be for pruning, weeding and other crop management activities. The pay for these jobs is usually relatively low so, if the farmer can provide housing, it can make it easier to attract labor. There is also a transient labor force that travels from area to area to do these jobs. Some farmers are now employing Mexican labor. One of the conditions of using this labor force is that the farmer must provide housing. There are farmers who use motels for this purpose, however, that labor is generally needed during peak tourist season. In Province, after hundreds of years of farming, they have not resolved the issue of housing for seasonal farmworkers. It seems to be a problem all over the world. In this planning process, the issue, as expressed, was that the farmer may be willing to provide housing but policy does not allow it. The Agricultural Land Commission has a policy " Permitted Uses in the ALR: Residential Uses". The policy does not limit the number of residences for farm help per parcel but all residences must be necessary for farm help. The regulations permit a manufactured home for family members as well as a secondary suite. The Land Commission policy provides a list of criteria and factors that local government should consider in determining whether or not to allow additional residences on ALR parcels. It should also be noted that there were farmers and other stakeholders who were quite adamantly opposed to loosening the limits on additional residences in the ALR. The comment was made that these additional residences start out as farm labor housing but don't always stay that way.

#### 1.1.3.7 Strengthening Farm Organizations

**Issue** - Farm organizations in BC have the expertise to grow and improve the industry, however, the organizations are generally run by busy farmers on a volunteer basis. Like many volunteer-run



organizations, a select few keep the organization going. Many organizations have low budgets and very few of them have paid staff. They do the best they can with what they have but the membership of these organizations truly has the local knowledge that cannot be found on the Internet. If these organizations had the time and resources to share that information, they could significantly help grow their industry. The other missing link for farm organizations, now, is a connection to other farmers around the province. Strengthening local, Island and provincial organizations would provide farmers at all levels with a stronger voice and better connection to the consumer. During the consultations, there were comments that farmers need to ensure that their voice is heard during this, and other, land-use planning processes. If the needs of agriculture are not put on the table, and kept on the table, they will be missed.

#### 1.1.3.8 Access to Quota

**Issue** - Access to quota was identified as an issue, however, some supply management producers suggested that this was not the case. They say that quota is available for anyone that wants to purchase it. There were a number of comments about supply management. The underlying issue is probably more closely related to how to maintain Vancouver Island production of supply managed commodities at a level that is close to consumption i.e. food self-sufficiency for milk, chicken, turkeys and eggs. Production of these commodities is generally declining. Quota is moving to the mainland for various reasons. Processing capacity is dwindling or underutilized because of the loss of production. Yet, livestock densities on the mainland have increased to the point where there are concerns with pollution and biosecurity/disease transfer because farms may be too close together. Some commodities are unnecessarily transported off island, to the mainland, and then back again. Clearly, this cannot be sustainable in the long run. Some farmers have also noted that the quota system is not accommodating product diversity in those production areas. It is difficult to obtain enough quota or a license to produce enough of these specialty products to generate a profit on a small farm.

Another part of this issue is that many of the local supply management producers are close to retirement. In many cases, the next generation does not want to milk cows so the quota is sold and usually moves off island. Some of the big farms are getting bigger. Even this issue boils down to declining margins in that sector. The younger generation does not see the industry being as profitable, or as attractive, as it has been in the past and they are moving on to other ventures.

#### 1.1.3.9 Education/Public Awareness

**Issue and Opportunity** – Improved public education and awareness is another issue/opportunity that is mentioned at virtually every meeting or consultation.

It is an issue because many people do not understand farming. They do not know what farmers do or why they do it. Most people are at least one generation removed from the farm. The story of the school student who, after touring the dairy farm and the milking parlor, asked “why would you go through all this trouble to make milk when you can buy it at the store?” – a good example. Farmers do need to tell their story and, in many cases, need to emphasize that the production systems on Vancouver Island are not like the massive commodity operations in the US.

The average resident is disconnected from the food they eat. It is an opportunity because people are very interested in where their food comes from. The interest level is higher than it has been in



decades. The 100 mile diet and other consumer trends have heightened the awareness. Agriculture is finally getting the attention it deserves.

Preserving the character of the community is an important principle for the Cowichan Valley. Agriculture is a critical component in preserving green space but improved viability and public support are key components to keeping farm land green.

## Environmental Issues and Opportunities

The plan specifically aims to address issues and opportunities related to "sustainable" farm practices. "Sustainability" is an issue of its own. It seems to automatically refer to environmental sustainability, however, agriculture is a business and a business must also be economically sustainable. For the purpose of this plan, the following definition of sustainability is thought to be appropriate:

"Economic sustainability is a system which supports sustainable social and environmental outcomes. No amount of excellent social and environmental performance will prolong the life of a business that is economically unsustainable, nor are green and community values necessarily good gauges for longevity."

Based on this definition, sustainable farm practices would be those that allowed the farm business to operate at a profit with no long-term negative (and preferably some degree of positive) social and economic impacts.

### 1.2.1 Ecological Benefits of Agriculture

One of the objectives of this planning process is to "identify the ecological services agriculture provides to the region". It would be a challenge to describe blanket "ecological benefits" from agriculture. For example, agricultural lands provide habitat for wildlife but development of farms can also reduce available habitat. Deer fencing can interfere with wildlife corridors. Agriculture provides better habitat than residential areas but it would be difficult to suggest that more agriculture equals more habitat. There are perceptions that the livestock industry is hard on the environment, uses too much water, etc. but in reality forage lands on Vancouver Island provide more ecological benefits than horticultural farm land which is often fenced to exclude wildlife. Well-managed forage in peat fields surrounding wetlands provides winter habitat for waterfowl along the Pacific Coast flyway - the migratory path for a large portion of the world's trumpeter swan population and other waterfowl.

There are a number of general types of ecological benefits that could be attributed to agriculture but, in most cases, there is ongoing research and debate about the actual impact. It is suggested that the actual impact is a function of the management of the individual farmer.

Producing local food for local consumers, to minimize the carbon footprint, should be one of the benefits on the list, however, even that appears to be open for debate at times and there is research that indicates that this is not always true?

### 1.2.2 Environmental Farm Planning

Environmental Farm Planning (EFP) is a significant tool that can be used to address or partially address many issues in this planning process. Environmental farm planning is a planning process that clearly identifies environmental risk areas on individual farms, reviews the current situation, suggests improvements that will reduce the environmental impact and, in some cases, allows the farmer access to partial funding to proceed with the improvements. There is government assistance for eligible farmers to complete the plan. The EFP program in BC strives to:

- improve agricultural sustainability



- recognize producer efforts to farm in an environmentally sustainable manner
- improve farm profitability
- improve awareness
- enhance marketing opportunities
- improve the response to environmental incidents through contingency planning
- demonstrate on farm due diligence
- reduce the need for additional environmental regulation
- improve relationships with environmental agencies

The planning process covers the following areas (among others):

- nutrient management
- riparian management
- grazing management
- irrigation management
- wildlife management
- integrated pest management
- shelter belts
- biodiversity

### ***1.2.3 Soil and Crop Management***

**Issue and opportunity** - there is an increasing trend on Vancouver Island towards organic production. Part of the reason that this trend has materialized is the high cost of chemical inputs - fertilizers and pesticides - which are "imported" to the island. Over the years, the added cost of transport of these inputs has forced farmers to use them very efficiently. Farmers have changed crops or chosen species and varieties that may be more weed resistant, drought tolerant or make better use of nutrients. A large percentage of island farms report themselves as being "near organic". Many of these farms use some chemical fertilizer but, whenever possible, will substitute with organic fertilizers like compost. A lot of these farms, if not the majority, do not use pesticides. Consumers, are recognizing that "local" is more important than organic; local organic is great if you can get it. As an observation, good farm managers must "do all the little things right" in order to be economically viable. In the process, they generally are also the most environmentally sustainable.

### ***1.2.4 Water Management***

**Issue** - Water management including access to irrigation water, regional drainage and water control systems adjacent to peat/wetland areas are regional issues. However, water must also be appropriately managed on individual farms or properties. Environmental Farm Planning addresses water management issues/topics on farms and, in some cases, will allow farmers access to some capital to improve water use or reduce the impact of the farm on surrounding water resources. Even so, to improve the use and efficiency of water use over time will require that all stakeholders continue to improve the management of water and their awareness of why it is needed and how it is used in local food production.



### **1.2.5 Waste Management**

**Issue** - generally, the waste management issue is the same as the water management issue. Farm waste must be appropriately managed. Environmental farm planning addresses waste management issues on individual farms. It is to the farmer's benefit to ensure that they practice due diligence which will reduce the potential for environmental disasters on any given farm. Farmers also benefit by making better use of nutrients and other inputs. Fertilizer and energy are two of the most expensive inputs on most farms. Alternate energy and beneficial reuse of waste products are emerging trends or opportunities. There is the potential to produce more energy on Vancouver Island and there is also the potential to replace expensive imported chemical fertilizers with reused waste products from the island.

### **1.2.6 Beneficial Re-use of Wastes**

**Opportunity** - farmers on Vancouver Island purchase relatively large quantities of chemical fertilizers that are produced on the Prairie Provinces. Fertilizer prices increase with energy prices and Island producers pay extra to transport these products to Vancouver Island which puts them at a competitive disadvantage. At the same time, there are vast quantities of organic waste generated on the island. A lot of this is landfilled. Some of it (Specified Risk Material and other slaughterhouse waste) is hauled off island to distant disposal sites. Biosolids, treated sewage sludge, are reused in some cases but not always beneficially. Organic wastes can contain valuable nutrients - nutrients that farmers are paying significant dollars for. It is not always easy to convert these nutrients to a usable form but it also does not make sense to pay, in some cases significant, disposal fees to "export" them or dispose of them in landfills.



## Action Plan

There are two key elements to the vision that has developed in this process:

- 1) **Economic development.** There is a strong desire to develop a vibrant, exciting local agricultural industry that produces a wide variety of products and showcases them to the world – a place where people come to eat and celebrate the food produced there.
- 2) **Food self-sufficiency.** There is also a strong desire to achieve a high level of food self-sufficiency in the Cowichan Valley – to develop an industry that can feed the local population in the future.

The vision, goal, objectives and actions in this section are developed on the basis that these two elements can be complimentary. They are not mutually exclusive.

The economic development strategy will encourage development of a diverse and profitable agriculture sector. It will encourage value-added processing and storage. It will help the industry improve marketing and distribution connections to the community. Helping the industry grow will ensure that the resource base needed for food self-sufficiency is available for the future. Land will be improved – drained, irrigated and managed. Labor and management skills will be maintained or enhanced. Appropriate infrastructure will be in place. Farmers will respond to market conditions. Currently, the opportunities appear to be in intensive horticulture, niche market and specialty crops, mainly sold direct to the public. A number of trends suggest that there will be increased need to produce more food, close to home, which may shift production towards staple foods. An industry with a well managed and developed resource base will be able to make these adjustments.

## Vision

*To develop a thriving and diverse agricultural industry in the Cowichan Valley which:*

- *Provides a healthy, high quality diet for the people who live and visit, and*
- *Preserves or enhances the character, environment and quality of life of the community.*

The products – there is pride and positive energy in the Valley about the quality and diversity of products that can be produced by the “warm land”. There is unanimous agreement that the valley can produce more different products and of equal or better quality. Producers want to invite the world to experience the flavour of the Cowichan Valley. Becoming a food destiny will help make the valley a profitable and enjoyable place to farm.

At the same time, producers and consumers alike want to preserve or enhance the local quality of life - green space, clean water, abundant habitat, sense of community. The community wants to regain some of the past (more farmers, relatively higher levels of processing and food self-sufficiency, trust and other values). They also want the benefits of the present and the future (fresh, safe food, variety, low-cost, improved storage and handling and other factors affecting quality).

Feedback during consultations suggest that the vision agriculture in the Cowichan Valley should include the following elements:

- Create a regional identity around food, and food culture, so that people moving to the area, or visiting, understand the importance of food and food production in the Cowichan Valley.
- Environmentally, economically, and socially healthy

- Diverse – diversity is desirable in terms of farm size (acres) and scale (dollars) as well as products – primary products, processed, food, beverages, non-food, energy crops, etc. It is also desirable to have diversity in farm business structure, goals, farm culture and lifestyles.
- Resilient – to develop an industry that can adapt, survive, thrive.
- More food self-sufficient than the current level
- Preservation of green space - in discussions with consumers, it is clear that they are not entirely willing to sacrifice green space in favour of the intensive production that may be required to reach higher levels of food self-sufficiency.
- Profitable and thriving farm sector
- Widespread Community Involvement - ownership. In recent years, there has been a huge increase in interest, amongst consumers, in food security and food self-sufficiency. People want to know where their food comes from! More than ever before, the general public are showing an interest in supporting local food production.
- "Kaizen" - Kaizen is the Japanese philosophy that focuses on continuous improvement in all aspects of life. Literally, it translates to "good change".
- Prominence in the community. The industry wants to be better recognized for its contribution to the economy, to the local community and to environmental stewardship.
- Aims to make the highest and best agricultural use of ALR lands and optimize the use of available resources
- More positive than negative!

There was general agreement that "agriculture" is not limited to food production. Land uses which conserve or enhance the resources needed for food production in the future are important. They contribute to product diversity and quality of life.



### 2.0.1 Strategic Directions

Based on the consultation process, two key strategic directions will lead the industry towards its vision:

- Economic Development – This is the dynamic strategy that will allow the industry to shift production and optimize production to match current market conditions at any given point in time.
- Food Security and food self-sufficiency – The goal of this strategy is to ensure that the resource base is developed and/or maintained so that the industry can produce a basic diet for 45% of the local population.

#### 2.0.1.1 Economic Development

To develop a vibrant and diverse agri-food sector that contributes to the regional economy and establishes the Cowichan Valley as a leader in Vancouver Island's agri-food sector.

#### 2.0.1.2 Food Security and Food Self Sufficiency

**Strategic Direction:** to develop the local agricultural industry to the point that it can produce 45% of the food consumed within the Cowichan Valley Regional District but to do so in a manner that does not diminish the character and environment of the community.

To achieve this, significant and continuous improvement is required in the following areas:

- A strong voice for agriculture which will connect consumers, government and industry, and
- Local government policy framework that supports and welcomes increased agricultural production, encourages land improvements and helps provide access to resources, and
- Improvements in the collective management expertise in the industry which will increase profitability and productivity
- Increased access to water for irrigation as well as improved drainage and water control in some areas (especially low lying areas with organic soils)
- Extension of the season that local food is available. This includes everything from production practices and varieties that extend the season of raw product to increased greenhouse production to storage and food processing.

#### Discussion:

During the consultation process, there was widespread, if not unanimous, support to aim for significant increases in food self-sufficiency in the area. The 45% target noted above is estimated using methods developed in a 2006 study conducted by the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture and Lands. The current level of food self-sufficiency is estimated to be 18 to 19%.

The study concluded that 0.524 hectares (ha) are required produce a healthy diet for one person. About 10% of that area (0.053 ha) must be irrigated, prime land to produce higher value crops – fruit, vegetables and some livestock feed. The remaining area, 0.471 ha, could be non-irrigated. Using this model, it is estimated that 40,311 ha (4,077 ha irrigated and 36,234 non-irrigated) would be required to feed the population of the CVRD. There are 17,977 ha of land in the ALR (44.5% of





the 40,311 requirement) of which only 11,559 ha (28.6%) are currently farmed. However, the target was not based solely on the assumed area required. Adjustments were made for seasonality and competitive advantages/disadvantages. For example, the Cowichan Valley is well suited to production of vegetables, berries and a variety of fruits. Even with ideal storage and processing, these will not be available year round so the target for these crops was set at 60% (see Table 7). Other products (for example grains and red meat) can be produced at much lower costs, elsewhere in Western Canada. The target was adjusted on the assumption that the vast majority of the feed grain and most red meat will continue to be produced in areas better suited, off-island. It is suggested that progress toward this goal would, generally, happen as follows:

- 1) The land that is currently actively farmed (11,559 ha) would be improved (irrigated, drained, etc.) and farmed more intensively
- 2) ALR land that was previously farmed would be brought into production and, eventually most of the ALR land and some productive non-ALR land would be improved for production.

A more detailed description of the target calculation is included in Table 7. It should be noted that this target:

- is considered achievable and realistic with current production practices, technology and species/varieties. It is assumed that these will advance at the same rate as the population increases so the target will continue to be realistic, and
- is a regional target and it may be more realistic to re-establish it as part of an island-wide food self-sufficiency goal, and
- is not intended to “tell farmers what to produce”. Producers will adjust their product mix to fit market conditions. However, pursuing this self-sufficiency goal will ultimately ensure that the resources (land, labour, capital, and management) will be in place to provide 45% of the required food. The industry will convert land use to essential crops if there are food shortages in the future.

Table 7. Estimated Actual Food Self Sufficiency and Targets for Future Food Self-sufficiency

Required production for 100% food self sufficiency in CVRD <sup>22</sup>	Actual production			Target production	
	Hectares	Hectares (2006)	% of req.	Hectares	% of req.
Dairy - fodder	1,539	2,213	144%	2,213	144%
- grain	3,693	0	0%	0	0%
Meat (non-fish) & alternatives	30,310	5,151	17%	14,246	47%
Fish	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Grains (food)	2,231	0	0%	0	0%
Vegetables	1,362	94	7%	817	60%

<sup>22</sup> Required production is the area in hectares required to produce a healthy diet, for the current population of the Cowichan Valley based on Canada’s “Food Guide to Healthy Living” as outlined in “BC’s Food Self-Reliance”

[http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/Food\\_Self\\_Reliance/BCFoodSelfReliance\\_Report.pdf](http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/Food_Self_Reliance/BCFoodSelfReliance_Report.pdf)



Fruit	1,169	172	15%	702	60%
<i>Non-irrigated</i>	36,234	5,151	14%	14,246	39%
<i>Irrigated</i>	4,077	2,479	61%	3,732	92%
<i>Total</i>	40,311	7,630	19%	17,977	45%

A target of 3,732 ha of irrigated prime land is suggested but increases beyond that are certainly desirable; each added hectare of irrigation could displace 3+ hectares of non-irrigated land.

### 2.0.2 Strategic Goals

The following strategic goals flow out of the direction described above:

- To create a strong communication network between agriculture and the community
- To create a local government policy framework that supports and welcomes increased agricultural production, encourages land improvements and helps provide access to resources
- To improve viability and profitability in the local agriculture industry including:
  - Attracting and recruiting new farmers
  - Maintaining or expanding the livestock industry
  - Increased training and education programs for the industry
- To improve water management for agricultural purposes including:
  - Increased access to water for irrigation
  - Improved water use efficiency
  - Improved drainage and water control systems
- To improve and extend the access to market for local foods including:
  - Increased access to storage, processing and distribution systems
  - Increased on farm value-added production
  - Improved access to markets
- To preserve the character and environment of the community
- To ensure that "individual parcels within the ALR will be used for their highest and best agricultural use". This will ensure that the agricultural sector in the CVRD profits and contributes as much as it can towards local and island-wide food self-sufficiency.

### 2.0.3 Goals and Action Plan

**Goal 1 – to create a strong communication network between agriculture and the community**

*Objective 1a: to strengthen the farm network - improve communication within the farm community*

**Actions**

- 1) Each Agricultural Organization to adopt the Agricultural Plan and create an internal strategy that will address the issues or actions relevant to the organization. This includes prioritizing the issues, setting goals, timelines and assigning responsibility within the organization and/or in cooperation with other stakeholders
- 2) Hold a joint strategic planning session with local agricultural organizations. This session will help identify and address issues that are relevant to the region and overlap between organizations. It could also identify issues to be dealt with on an island wide basis.
- 3) Implement the internal strategies by “putting them on the agenda”. It is suggested that one or two, a manageable number, of the issues be discussed in detail at each meeting
- 4) Develop Internet-based resources with local information. Use the new tools that the Internet provides – social networking to improve information flow. A local “discussion group” could increase communication and information flow – especially for potential new producers. And, it will likely attract new members to the organizations
- 5) Monitor and measure progress. Set aside one meeting per year to review progress, set new goals and timelines.

***Objective 1b: improve connection between agriculture and local government***

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**Actions**

- 1) Form an ad hoc Agricultural Committee for the CVRD. Note: this could be the existing agricultural plan committee. Its purpose would change to implementation of the plan. Alternatively, the committee may decide to dissolve in favor of an Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) if it is desirable to add plan implementation to the terms of reference for the AAC.
- 2) Develop and adopt terms of reference for, and establish, an AAC.
- 3) Advertise and/or request expressions of interest for membership. This would probably include a request to each of the Farmers’ Institutes for a nomination to the committee.
- 4) Develop a job description and contract or employ an agricultural advocate or Agricultural Support Officer who will provide support services to the industry, interact with the AAC, and help with implementation of the plan.
- 5) Continue to promote agriculture by developing and hosting events that connect the community with agriculture, ie farm tours, open houses, etc.

***Objective 1c: To improve the connection between agriculture and the community***

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**Actions**

- 1) Continue to promote agriculture by holding events that connect the community with agriculture, ie farm tours, open houses.



- 2) Encourage, promote and attend Farmers' Markets.
- 3) Work with organizations like the Cowichan Green Community who have an expressed interest in supporting local agriculture
- 4) Support the BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation. Ask for their materials, conduct farm tours and gain an increased presence in the classroom.
- 5) Use new tools, such as social networks, to reach out to a larger portion of the population. If necessary, invite a specialist to a meeting to describe these and how they can be used to connect with the broader community.

**Goal 2: to create a local government policy framework that supports and welcomes increased agricultural production, encourages land improvements and helps provide access to resources**

*Objective 2a: establish an Agricultural Advisory Committee and develop a process that allows open two way communication between the agriculture industry and local government*

#### **Actions**

- 1) Develop or adopt terms of reference for the Agricultural Advisory Committee. Suggested terms of reference can be provided by the authors of this plan. Based on discussions during consultations, the committee will:
  - a. respond to referrals from the regional district and
  - b. have the capacity to recommend motions for policy change forwarded by industry.
- 2) Advertise for Committee members. How this is done will depend on the terms of reference, however, it is suggested that a portion of the committee would be made up of members nominated by the local Farmers' Institutes.
- 3) Hold a joint meeting between the AAC and the Regional Board to further define and discuss the roles and expectations of the committee in terms of referrals and advocacy.

*Objective 2b: adjust local policy to further support agriculture*

#### **Actions**

- 1) Review and harmonize zoning bylaws to ensure that wording and permitted /conditional uses, related to agriculture, are consistent between Electoral Areas and municipalities.
- 2) Amend zoning to allow and encourage value added production as a permitted use in agricultural zones. Complex cases may require a referral to, and recommendation from, the AAC
- 3) Clearly describe permitted uses in each of the agricultural zones within the zoning bylaws and develop a handbook or webpage describing "what to expect when living in farm areas". This could provide information about "normal farm practices". New landowners would be advised of what to expect from the farm next door.
- 4) Edge Planning - where development has not occurred along the edge, implement the policies and use the tools recommended by the Land Commission. This may include a combination of



Development Permit Areas, buffers and possibly some restrictions on the type of agriculture along the edge

- a. Encourage urban agriculture type operations along the urban rural interface.
- 5) Create a preferred zoning for intensive agriculture. Dairy farmers and other intensive operators would be classified as such within the Zoning Bylaw. Permitted and conditional uses would be stated as part of that category of "Intensive" Agriculture Zone.
- 6) Recognize that blanket land use policies for agriculture do not always work. In some cases, policy may need to be flexible. Allow these cases to be referred to the AAC.
  - a. Farm Labour Housing – Develop detailed guidelines for determining legitimacy of a request for additional residences. Refer complex cases to the AAC.
- 7) Encourage the Regional District to undertake a Regional Growth Strategy
- 8) Overlay current land uses on a soils/agricultural capability map to determine the highest and best use for the land and base it on the performance of the land. The 1:20,000 soils and agricultural capability mapping currently available is not digitized. The land use/soil map may need to be done using a hard copy atlas version.

### ***Objective 2c: to improve local government services to agriculture***

#### **Actions**

Note: many of the following actions could be developed or facilitated by the Agricultural Support Officer.

- 1) Provide online access to soil and agricultural capability mapping as well as zoning information. Ultimately, the entire area (CVRD and municipalities) would be viewable at one site.
- 2) Identify, map and protect areas that are suitable for:
  - a. Greenhouses and other intensive operations that don't require good soil
  - b. Processing facilities including abattoirs
  - c. Site for Permanent Farmers' Market
  - d. Intensive livestock operations
  - e. Specialty crops, like grapes and berries, with specific soil and microclimate requirements. Specifically, create an atlas of suitable sites for Vineyard operations
- 3) Where possible, map the agricultural capability of forestry lands or other lands outside the ALR that may be suited for agricultural use. Note: it is suggested that immediate mapping of remote or semi-remote timberlands is not a high priority. The use of the existing agricultural land base has declined significantly over the past 20 years and most of these lands are accessible and are already cleared. It doesn't make economic sense to develop remote lands when capable sites in good climates near town are being abandoned. Very little land has been cleared for agricultural purposes in the past 20 years.

### **Goal 3: to improve viability and profitability in the local agriculture industry**



***Objective 3a: To attract and develop new farmers***

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**Actions**

- 1) To support established farms that are not planning inter-generational transfer
  - a. Recruit buyers for large operations and promote Cowichan Valley farm opportunities in a strategic and targeted method.
  - b. Hold a workshop that deals with farm structures including leases, co-ops, corporate structure and addresses succession issues.
- 2) Develop and maintain a land for lease registry and sample lease agreements to assist new/young farmers. This could also include assistance with formation of co-op farms and other new farm structures.
- 3) Recruit new farmers from two potential target groups:
  - a. Early retirees, and
  - b. Existing farmers wanting to change or reinvesting.
- 4) Develop programs to assist young people who are interested in farming. This could include development or promotion of farm cooperatives, leasing, information exchange, equipment co-ops and sharing, mentoring, or any combination of these.
- 5) Develop mechanisms for dividing and using large parcels of ALR to accommodate the climate of small lot farming and urban agriculture

***Objective 3b: to prevent further decline and ultimately expand the livestock industry***

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**Actions**

- 1) Ask the AAC to develop a motion, to be presented to the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC), requesting that quota levels on Vancouver Island be increased to levels that support regional food self-sufficiency. The motion could be framed so that new quota would be allocated to regions that are producing less than regional consumption
- 2) Increase public and political awareness of the issue and the importance of the livestock sector
- 3) Recruit livestock producers from areas where production intensity may be creating environmental, bio-security and/or odour issues.
- 4) Support initiatives that:
  - a. reduce input costs for agricultural producers (cost of transportation, feed, fertilizer and energy
  - b. reduce the cost of, or improve access to, processing
- 5) Assist in developing solutions for disposal of Specified Risk Materials (SRM). SRM is currently shipped, at significant cost, to Alberta where it is processed and landfilled.



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***Objective 3c: to deliver training and education programs to the agricultural industry***

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**Actions**

- 1) Organize, or partner in the organization of, a Vancouver Island Agricultural Show which provides a venue for a major trade show, promotion of island products and short courses/mini-workshops.
- 2) Lobby the provincial government to reinstate extension services.
- 3) As part of the Farmers' Institutes' strategic planning process, identify short courses, workshops, etc. to address training and education needs for the industry. The following have been identified in the consultation process:
  - a. Small Farm Development Program – materials for the course are available from "From the Ground Up".
  - b. Access to credit – how to find and deal with lenders/investors
    - i. Lending sources – there are lenders, other than the commercial banks, who may be prepared to lend to farmers, i.e. Farm Credit Canada, Community Futures, Business Development Canada, private lenders, AgCapita
    - ii. Alternatives to borrowing – leases, cooperatives, etc.
  - c. Business planning and budgeting.
    - i. The "BC Farm Business Advisory Services Program" will soon be available to assist farmers in developing budgets and benchmarks for their farm operations which may help with loan applications
  - d. Farm Business Succession
  - e. Using technology to increase profit – from social networks to new tractors.
  - f. Direct farm marketing

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***Objective 3d: to increase revenues and/or reduce costs***

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**Actions**

- 1) Investigate joint purchase of inputs. Bulk purchases of some products, coordinated by farm organizations, could allow cost reductions. This is one of the constitutional mandates of Farmers' Institutes and it has been a common practice of the institutes in the past
- 2) Consider joint purchase of equipment, or equipment pooling, to allow farmers access to better or more efficient equipment.
- 3) Support existing suppliers, especially local agribusinesses.
- 4) Investigate beneficial re-use of waste products and alternative energy possibilities. These could be addressed at the Island Agriculture Show.



***Objective 4a: Increase access to water for irrigation***

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**Actions**

- 1) Initiate discussions with Catalyst Paper to secure access to increased water (part of the unused portion of their water license).
  - a. Catalyst also releases heated wastewater. There may be potential to beneficially reuse this for agricultural production - perhaps greenhouses
- 2) Allow farmers access to Municipal water at a favorable rate
- 3) Develop strategies that will allow reallocation of water within the current infrastructure
- 4) Revisit the Cowichan Basin Water Management Plan
- 5) Review potential water storage options throughout the Regional District. Apparently, there is considerable resistance to raising the level of Cowichan Lake. At a glance, this is the most obvious place to increase water storage at the district level because it is already tied into distribution systems. Are there other options? If so, where and how?
- 6) Provide support, such as engineering, to assist farmers with development of on-site or small local irrigation improvements. During consultations, at least one farmer commented that it was very difficult to find engineers with appropriate skills to assist with these types of design and, those that are available, are prohibitively expensive in large part because of the process required for approvals.
- 7) Encourage Environmental Farm Plans and on-going Implementation.

***Objective 4b: Improve water use efficiency***

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**Actions**

- 1) Hold a workshop that deals with water, irrigation design and water use efficiency.
- 2) Encourage Environmental Farm Plans and on-going Implementation.

***Objective 4c: Improve drainage on farm and within local drainage channels***

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**Actions**

- 1) Provide support to farmers/landowners to develop or maintain water management systems, including water control structures on wetland areas, that impact multiple users or landowners
- 2) Assist with creation of Improvement Districts<sup>23</sup> to coordinate regular maintenance of drainage channels
- 3) Encourage Environmental Farm Plans and on-going Implementation.

***Objective 4d: Develop and maintain water control systems in low-lying areas.***

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<sup>23</sup>The BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs has a manual online to assist with creation of improvement districts - [http://www.cd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/gov\\_structure/library/improvement\\_district\\_manual.pdf](http://www.cd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/gov_structure/library/improvement_district_manual.pdf)





**Actions**

- 1) Provide support to farmers/landowners to develop or maintain water management systems, including water control structures on wetland areas, that impact multiple users or landowners
- 2) Assist with creation of Improvement Districts to coordinate regular maintenance of water control structures.
- 3) Encourage Environmental Farm Plans and on-going Implementation.

**Goal 5: to improve and extend the access to market for local foods.****This includes:**

- increased access to storage, processing and distribution
- increased on farm value added production, and
- improved access to markets

***Objective 5a: To extend the season through storage, processing and new production methods and facilities.*****Actions**

- 1) Encourage changes to provincial and federal policy that will allow increased value-adding on farm.
- 2) Ensure that local zoning and OCPs are written to allow and encourage on-farm storage and processing facilities. Complex cases may be referred to the AAC.

***Objective 5b: to improve Access to Markets*****Actions**

- 1) Maintain and continue to support a local Grower's Guide, whether it be online or paper copy, or both, so consumers can easily find local growers. A version of this guide could be targeted to the Greater Victoria area to draw on that large population to the South.
- 2) Work towards developing a year round Farmers' Market site
- 3) Develop consumer awareness programs. The major supermarkets and restaurants will respond to consumer demand. Customers vote with their dollars. If more people ask for local product, these businesses will find a way to supply it or use it.
- 4) Develop a local distribution, marketing system between a number of farmers who service similar markets, ie CSAs, restaurants, independent grocers
- 5) Develop a branding program for Cowichan Valley agricultural products, and
- 6) Revive the "Rooster Booster" marketing campaign that was initiated by the Island Farmers' Alliance



- 7) Certify local farms so consumers know they are buying local and are buying direct from the producer. Certification helps to assure local consumers are not being misled.
- 8) Food safety programs will increase consumer confidence in local products. Local farm organizations may want to ensure that their members and members' employees have access to "Food Safe" training.

**Goal 6: to preserve the character and environment of the community**

***Objective 6a: Promote and encourage completion and implementation of Environmental Farm Plans (EFPs)***

**Actions**

- 1) Discuss and encourage EFPs at the Farmers' Institute meetings and at strategic planning sessions
- 2) Set up a table at the "Market in the Square" to promote environmental farm planning to producers and to educate consumers. Encourage consumers to "look for" the Environmental Farm Plan sign when they are supporting local farmers.
- 3) Recognize, and improve awareness in the community of, the contributions to land stewardship and the environment made by landowners. Many landowners are more than willing to provide these services to society. They feel it is part of land stewardship. Problems often arise when someone else imposes limitations or expectations on farmers without any form of consultation, communication or appreciation.

***Objective 6b: to improve environmental stewardship***

- 1) Access government programs, such as the Canada Revenue Agency's Scientific Research and Experimental Development (SR&ED) Program, to conduct research into improved environmental practices including alternate energy and beneficial re-uses of waste.
- 2) Reduce or eliminate property taxes on the portion of land that is not available for farming. The most obvious of these areas would be Riparian areas, especially those set aside to protect fish habitat. However, there are also low-lying peat lands that farmers are unable to use because of flooding.
- 3) Compensate. There are programs evolving that will help to compensate farmers and landowners for some of these services. Landowners can receive compensation for conservation covenants in some cases. There are programs for compensation for wildlife losses. Carbon credits may be available in the future. □
- 4) Conduct an inventory of organic wastes generated within the regional district.
- 5) Work with other regional districts or local governments on Vancouver Island to develop this beneficial reuse options. Often these are capital intensive so large volumes of waste are required to justify the capital expense.



## 2.0.4 Indicators

*“You can't manage what you don't measure.” – Author Unknown*

### 2.0.4.1 Land Use Inventory

The census provides a snapshot of the entire Regional District once every five years - probably not often enough to support the planning and economic development efforts that are needed to achieve the vision in a rapidly changing community.

During this planning process, a land-use inventory was completed to analyze the current state of the industry in the Cowichan Valley. This inventory was based on air photo interpretation using Google Earth, followed by some ground proofing. If it could be maintained, this type of land-use inventory can be used as a means of monitoring the growth and development of the local agricultural sector.

**Recommendation:** *Use the land-use inventory developed for this plan to build and maintain a land use database that will allow ongoing monitoring of agricultural activity in the Cowichan Valley.*

In addition to this, the following indicators are suggested as measures of progress towards the strategic directions and goals described above:

#### Economic Measures

Census Canada – the agricultural census is completed every five years. The next census should be completed in 2011 for the crop year 2010. Data will be available in about 2012. This information will allow comparisons to prior census of (among others):

- Farm numbers and size
- Revenues and expenses
- Livestock operations
- Area irrigated and add some measure of irrigation efficiency
- Areas in various crops
- Area actively farmed
- Average revenue per hectare - Gross farm gate receipts have continued to increase while average farm size has dropped and total area farmed has dropped. Average revenue per hectare at least is an indicator (probably) that the industry is making more efficient use of its resources.

The census provides long-term statistically sound information that allows “apples to apples” comparisons but the five-year span between collection does not allow measurement on an ongoing basis.

Short-term economic measurables could include:

- The number of identifiable farms. As noted in the “State of the Industry Report”, the largest 10% of the farms generate over 90% of the total farm gate revenue. These farms are generally quite easy to identify, as are many of the farms that sell between \$25,000 and \$100,000 per year. Many of these are direct farm markets or farmers market vendors, also easy to identify.
- New farms. It may not be easy to identify the new small lot operators (those that sell less than \$10,000 per year), however, it is generally easy to identify new farm businesses because they start to invest in land improvements and/or begin to participate in farmers markets, farmers institutes and farm product guides.



- Contacts and/or inquiries at Economic Development Cowichan, CVRD, and other stakeholder agencies.
- Farm business assessments. The new BC Farm Business Assessment program provides funding to evaluate the profitability of individual farm businesses. The data for individual farms is kept confidential, however, the number of assessments completed is available from the program.
- Participants in various training programs and extension events.

The Cowichan Food Security Plan identified the following indicators related to food security. Most of these are relevant to the agricultural plan:

- The number of people who identify themselves as growers for personal use or for commercial sale;
- Production volumes per grower
- Food Bank use
- Volume of local products available – this could include vendor counts at the Farmers' Market
- Local produce availability in grocery stores
- Diversity of choices of local product
- Land in food production

#### **Food Self-Sufficiency Measures**

Census Canada – again, the information collected in the census can be used to measure progress towards the food self-sufficiency goal. However, the information required to do this measure is only available once every five years. The model that was used to establish the 45% food self-sufficiency goal was based on targets for the area of improved land. The most important target is the area of prime irrigated land. Aside from the measures already described, monitoring the area that is improved by irrigation and/or drainage will give a reasonable indication of progress towards the targets.

#### **Environmental Indicators**

- Environmental Farm Plans completed
- Improvements funded by related programs

### **2.0.5 Vancouver Island Agricultural Plan**

During this planning process, a significant number of issues were raised that were relevant, or perhaps more relevant, to the whole of Vancouver Island. Many of these support a recommendation to complete a Vancouver Island Agricultural Plan. No doubt there are other issues which would arise in an island plan. This process did not attempt to identify all of them but acknowledges some of those that were identified below.

**Recommendation: Support a request to complete a Vancouver Island Agricultural Plan**

#### 2.0.5.1 Vancouver Island Issues and Opportunities

Many of the local issues and opportunities identified and discussed in this plan also apply to Vancouver Island as a whole. The following ideas warrant mention:

- Initiate an Island Agricultural Trade Show – similar to the Pacific Ag Show – complimentary but dealing with Island oriented subjects
  - Revive or reinstate island extension programs
- Strengthen and increase the membership in the Island Farmers' Alliance or create another Island-wide farm organization to represent the industry
- Establish food self-sufficiency and food security goals for VI
- Improved branding of Vancouver Island product -- IFA rooster logo



## Appendices

### Appendix A Detailed Agricultural Land Reserve Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulations

#### **Farm Product Processing in the ALR<sup>24</sup>**

The storage, packing, product preparation and processing of farm products are designated by the Regulation as farm uses, and as such, may not be prohibited by a local government bylaw, except a farm bylaw approved by the Minister of Agriculture and Lands, under Section 917 of the Local Government Act. This permitted farm activity is in addition to general farm uses permitted under the Act.

The Regulation permits farm product processing and related activities on a farm in the ALR provided at least 50% of the farm product is produced (i.e. grown or raised) on the farm on which the processing or related activity takes place. The farm may be comprised of one or several parcels of land owned or operated by a farmer as a farm business.

Alternatively, in the case of feed used to raise animals or fish on a farm, farm product that originates elsewhere may be processed into feed on a farm provided at least 50% of the feed is required and consumed for animal or fish feed on that farm. The feed not consumed on the farm (i.e. the remainder which is less than 50% of the total feed produced) may be sold from the farm.

The 50% threshold is based on the quantity (measured by volume or weight) of processed farm products sold, calculated over the full product line.

Related activities of storage, packing and product preparation, in addition to processing include, under Section 2 (3), "the construction, maintenance and operation of a building, structure, driveway, ancillary service or utility necessary for that farm use". There is no building threshold area stipulated for these uses in the regulation. A local government may regulate these uses, for example by setting a maximum building area or maximum site coverage, but may not prohibit the uses, as they are designated 'farm uses' under the Act. The regulation of the use must therefore be reasonable and not prohibitive.

Related uses that are not included in the regulation for processing or uses above the threshold require application to and approval from the Commission.

The retail sale of processed farm products on a farm for the purpose of onsite or offsite consumption is covered under Commission Policy "Activities Designated as Farm Use: Farm Retail Sales in the ALR".

"Farm product" means a commodity that is produced from a farm use as defined in the Act or designated by this regulation.

#### ***Farm retail sales in the ALR<sup>25</sup>***

Farm retail sales are designated by the Regulation as a farm use, and as such, may not be prohibited by a local government bylaw, except a farm bylaw approved by the Minister of Agriculture, Food and

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<sup>24</sup> [http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/legislation/policies/Pol1-03\\_FarmProdProc.htm](http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/legislation/policies/Pol1-03_FarmProdProc.htm)

<sup>25</sup> [http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/legislation/policies/Pol2-03\\_FarmRetailSales.htm](http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/legislation/policies/Pol2-03_FarmRetailSales.htm)

Fisheries under Section 917 of the Local Government Act. This permitted farm activity is in addition to general farm uses permitted under the Act.

The Regulation permits, as a farm use, farm retail sales on a farm in the ALR. If all products originate, or are produced on, the farm on which the sales are taking place there is no limitation for the retail sales area. If farm or non-farm products offered for sale originate elsewhere, the retail sales area is limited. In this case, where products not originating from the farm are also sold, at least 50% of the retail sales area must be used for the sale of farm product produced on that farm and the total retail sales area for all products, both farm and off-farm in origin, must not exceed 300 square meters. The farm may be comprised of one or several parcels of land owned or operated by a farmer as a farm business.

The 50% area limitation is based on the area devoted to the retail sale of farm products produced on that farm. Wholesale sale of farm product is considered a farm activity within the meaning of the definition of 'farm use' in the Act and thus is not restricted by the Regulation.

#### *Winery or Cidery in the ALR<sup>26</sup>*

Both a British Columbia licensed winery and cidery are designated by the Regulation as farm uses, and as such, may not be prohibited by a local government bylaw, except a farm bylaw approved by the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries under Section 917 of the Local Government Act. These permitted farm activities are in addition to general farm uses permitted under the Act.

The Regulation permits licensed wineries and cideries on a parcel in the ALR, provided at least 50% of the farm products (fruit) used to make the wine or cider is produced on the farm on which the winery or cidery is located. The farm may be comprised of one or several parcels of land owned or operated by a farmer as a farm business. Alternatively, the use is permitted if the farm that grows the fruit to make the wine or cider is 2 ha or larger and at least 50% of the fruit used to make the wine or cider comes from a BC farm under a minimum 3 year contract to provide fruit to the winery or cidery. The 50% threshold is measured by the quantity (measured by volume or weight) of farm product processed calculated on an annual basis. Despite the threshold, the Commission may recognize unusual circumstances in the production of BC wine grapes and their effect on wine production.

Wine retail sales, winery tours and food and beverage service in a lounge are permitted provided they are ancillary to the winery or cidery. The winery/cidery must be licensed under the Liquor Control and Licensing Act of British Columbia. A food and beverage service lounge is allowed up to a maximum area of 125 square meters indoors and 125 square meters outdoors. The outdoor area of 125 square meters includes patio space but does not include areas set aside for picnicking. Picnicking areas are permitted as an ancillary use where the winery has a "picnicking endorsement" to its licence. The 125 square meter floor space or outdoor area is roughly equivalent to a seating capacity of 65 persons in the lounge or on the patio. Thus, the maximum capacity is potentially 130 persons, where both indoors and outdoors seating are provided. However the person or patron capacity remains subject to the limits and conditions established by the general manager under the Liquor Control and Licensing Act.

Wine tasting or the free offering or sale of product samples is considered part of the winery tour activity and is permitted. Special promotional events held at wineries may be allowed under Section 2 (2) (e) of the Regulation that permits certain temporary agri-tourism activities on assessed farms. See Commission Policy "Activities Designates as Farm Use: Agri-tourism Activities in the ALR".

<sup>26</sup> [http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/legislation/policies/Pol3-03\\_Wineries.htm](http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/legislation/policies/Pol3-03_Wineries.htm)



Uses that do not meet the threshold established in the Regulation for wineries or cideries, or associated uses not permitted in the Regulation, require application to and approval from the Commission.

The Regulation does not permit breweries, U-brews and U-vins, which are considered non-farm uses and require application to the Commission.

### **Additional Residences for Farm Use<sup>27</sup>**

The Act and Agricultural Land Reserve Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulation do not set a limit on the number of additional residences for farm help per parcel, but all residences must be necessary for farm use. However, see Section 3 (1) (b) of the Regulation which permits a 'manufactured home' for family members of the owner. This Section also permits a secondary suite within a residence. See Commission Policy "Permitted Uses in the ALR: Residential Uses".

Local government must be convinced that there is a legitimate need for an additional residence for farm help. One criterion is that the parcel should have 'farm' classification under the Assessment Act. In coming to a determination, a local government should consider the size and type of farm operation and other relevant factors. To help determine the need and evaluate the size and type of farm operation, a permitting officer may wish to obtain advice and direction from staff of

- a) The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
- b) The Agricultural Land Commission

Local government bylaws should not necessarily be the basis for making a determination about the necessity for farm help. Some bylaws may automatically permit a second residence on a specified size of parcel in the ALR. This is not an appropriate determination under the Act and should not be used as the basis for issuing a building permit for an additional residence for farm help. Some local governments have adopted detailed guidelines as a basis for determining legitimacy of a request for additional residences for farm help, in which a threshold for different types of agricultural operations is specified. In these instances, it may be appropriate to consider these as factors in interpreting Section 18 of the Act.

If there is any doubt with respect to need, an application under Section 20 (3) of the Act for permission for a non-farm use is required.

### **Construction of farm buildings<sup>28</sup>**

The following activities are designated as farm use for the purposes of the Act and may be regulated but must not be prohibited by any local government bylaw except a bylaw under section 917 of the Local Government Act:

- The construction, maintenance and operation of farm buildings including, but not limited to any of the following:
  - a greenhouse;

<sup>27</sup> [http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/legislation/policies/Pol9-03\\_add-residences.htm](http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/legislation/policies/Pol9-03_add-residences.htm)

<sup>28</sup> [http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/legislation/policies/Pol18-03\\_fill-farmbuildings.htm](http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/legislation/policies/Pol18-03_fill-farmbuildings.htm)





- a farm building or structure for use in an intensive livestock operation or for mushroom production;
- an aquaculture facility

Where it has been determined through the building approval process that placement of fill or removal of soil is necessary for the construction of a farm building, of which the building area is less than 2% of the area of the parcel, the acceptable volume of fill or soil removal is that needed to undertake the construction of the building. The over-riding principle is that the volume is reasonable and the quality of material is not deleterious to the agricultural quality of the land or the environment and all activity must be done in accordance with good agricultural practice.

### **Subdivision Approval by Approving Officers<sup>29</sup>**

An approving officer under the Land Title Act, the Local Government Act, or the Strata Property Act or a person who exercises the powers of an approving officer under any other Act may authorize or approve a plan of subdivision without the approval of the commission if the proposed plan achieves one or more of the following:

- (a) consolidates 2 or more parcels into a single parcel by elimination of common lot lines;
- (b) resolves a building encroachment on a property line and creates no additional parcels
- (c) involves not more than 4 parcels, each of which is a minimum of 1 ha, and results in all of the following:
  - a. no increase in the number of parcels
  - b. boundary adjustments that, in the opinion of the approving officer, will allow for the enhancement of the owner's overall farm or for the better utilization of farm buildings for farm purposes;
  - c. no parcel in the reserve of less than 1 ha;
- (d) establishes a legal boundary along the boundary of an agricultural land reserve

An approving officer who declines to authorize or approve a plan must give notice of that decision to the person who made the application. A person who receives a notice under subsection (2) may apply to the commission with respect to the proposed subdivision.

If an approval is granted under section 10, the approving officer must endorse on the plan a certificate acceptable to the commission, and provide a copy of the approved plan to the commission. If the requirements of subsection (1) are met, a registrar of titles under the Land Title Act may accept the endorsed plan for deposit.

<sup>29</sup> [http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/legislation/policies/Pol12-03\\_ALR-subd-approval.htm](http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/legislation/policies/Pol12-03_ALR-subd-approval.htm)



Appendix B Climate information for Duncan, Cowichan Valley<sup>30</sup>

Temperatures	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Daily Average (°C)	2.6	4.1	5.9	8.5	11.9	14.7	17.0	17.1	13.8	9.3	5.0	2.9	9.4
Standard Deviation	1.7	1.6	1.2	1.1	0.9	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.7	1.9	0.5
Daily Maximum (°C)	6.1	8.0	10.6	13.9	17.4	20.3	23.3	23.6	20.3	14.8	8.8	6.3	14.3
Daily Minimum (°C)	-1.1	0.1	1.2	3.0	6.2	9.1	10.7	10.5	7.2	3.8	1.2	-0.5	4.3
Precipitation (mm)													
Rainfall (mm)	129.5	122.2	99.7	53.9	44.4	37.3	20.3	25.3	46.7	79.5	163.3	171.1	993.1
Snowfall (cm)	15.8	7.9	2.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	5.4	14.4	46.1
Precipitation (mm)	145.3	130.1	101.7	54.0	44.4	37.3	20.3	25.3	46.7	80.0	168.8	185.5	1039.2
Days with Precipitation													
≥ 0.2 mm	16.9	16.3	15.3	11.7	10.8	8.9	5.4	5.8	8.6	12.1	17.8	17.9	147.1
≥ 5 mm	9.4	7.7	6.9	4.0	3.2	2.8	1.3	1.7	2.9	4.9	10.3	9.8	64.9
≥ 10 mm	4.9	4.7	3.4	1.5	1.0	1.1	0.5	0.6	1.3	2.4	6.1	5.3	33.7
≥ 25 mm	1.1	0.9	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.5	1.7	1.8	6.9
Days with minimum temperature													
> 0 °C (frost free days)	11.6	14.6	17.5	21.1	30.7	30.0	31.0	31.0	29.2	23.4	17.9	14.1	274
≤ 0 °C	15.4	13.7	13.5	6.9	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	7.6	12.1	15.9	91.3
Degree days (growing days)													
Above 5 °C	13.8	21.5	45.3	105.1	212.7	292.8	372.8	371.0	264.1	136.4	38.9	19.0	1893.3
Above 10 °C	0.1	0.2	1.0	14.8	67.3	143.1	217.8	216.0	117.3	26.5	2.5	0.4	806.9
Heat Units													
Above 10 °C	0.00	0.00	30.50	175.64	360.87	507.71	631.94	631.34	455.41	217.75	0.00	0.00	3012.17
Growing season					360.87	507.71	631.94	631.34	455.41				2588.27

## Appendix C Farm distribution according to Gross Farm Revenue (2001 gross income is inflation adjusted)

Gross farm revenue	Cowichan Valley CD		North Cowichan	Cowichan Valley G	Cowichan Valley F	Cowichan Valley B
	2001	2006	2006	2006	2006	2006
<\$10,000	442	432	230	55	19	128
\$10,000 - \$24,999	111	101	60	16	3	22
\$25,000 - \$49,999	47	53	29	5	4	15
\$50,000 - \$99,999	15	31	17	3	0	11
\$100,000 - \$249,999	25	30	20	3	0	7
\$250,000 - \$499,999	28	24	17	2	0	5
\$500,000 - \$999,999	19	19	11	3	0	5
\$1 million - \$2 million	4	9	4	1	0	4
>\$2 million	0	1	1	0	0	0
<b>Total Farms</b>	<b>691</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>197</b>
Gross income for region	\$42,760,000	<b>\$47,554,000</b>	\$28,244,000	\$5,421,000	\$287,000	\$13,602,000
% of total		<b>100%</b>	59%	11%	1%	29%

<sup>30</sup> From Environment Canada historical weather data for Duncan Forestry Station (and current weather station at North Cowichan Municipal office) in Duncan.

[http://www.climate.weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca/climate\\_normals/index\\_e.html](http://www.climate.weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca/climate_normals/index_e.html)

Heat units have been calculated using the formula on the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture website at;

<http://www.omafr.gov.on.ca/english/crops/pub811/1gddchu.htm#chu>

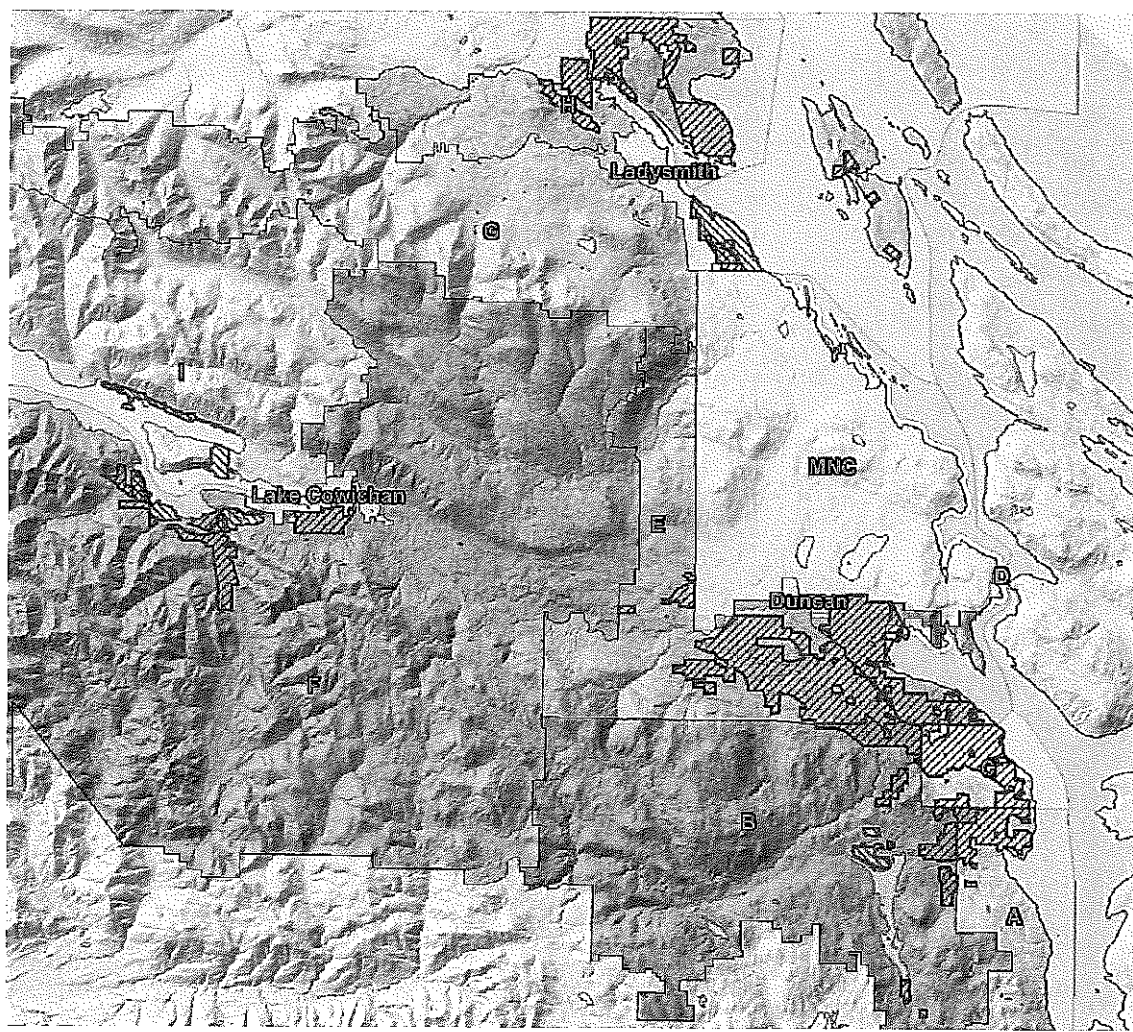


## Appendix D Estimated gross revenue based on various farm sizes by sales (2006)

Gross farm revenue	Number of farms 2006	Average revenue (estimated)	Gross revenue 2006	% of total revenue 2006
<\$10,000	432	\$5,000	\$2,160,000	5%
\$10,000 - \$24,999	101	\$16,000	\$1,616,000	3%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	53	\$36,000	\$1,908,000	4%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	31	\$70,000	\$2,170,000	5%
\$100,000 - \$249,999	30	\$150,000	\$4,500,000	9%
\$250,000 - \$499,999	24	\$350,000	\$8,400,000	18%
\$500,000 - \$999,999	19	\$700,000	\$13,300,000	28%
\$1 million - \$2 million	9	\$1,250,000	\$11,250,000	24%
>\$2 million	1	\$2,250,000	\$2,250,000	5%
<b>Total Farms</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>\$67,934</b>	<b>\$47,554,000</b>	<b>100%</b>



## Appendix E Agricultural Land Reserve and CVRD water systems



ALR land is shown in green. CVRD water systems are shown in blue.



Appendix F Comparison of CVRD farm numbers and production by commodity (2001 vs 2006)

Enterprise	2001 Cowichan Valley		2006 Cowichan Valley		Units	% change 2001 to 2006
	Number of Producers	Area or head	Number of Producers	Area or head		
<b>Crops</b>						
Berries and fruit - all	118	143	130	172	hectares	21%
Cranberries	0	0	2	16	hectares	n/a
Blueberries	21	13	23	15	hectares	16%
Strawberry/Raspberry	52	21	46	11	hectares	-48%
Grapes	29	52	35	75	hectares	44%
Apples	63	22	60	28	hectares	28%
Other fruit & nuts			69	30	hectares	n/a
Nursery, sod, trees	53	69	49	44	hectares	-36%
Mushrooms	5	1,040	2		m2	-100%
Maple taps	0	0	10	319	taps	n/a
Vegetables	75	55	84	63	hectares	15%
Potatoes	16	60	10	31	hectares	-49%
Forage/silage	20	352	22	328	hectares	-7%
Hay/fodder	306	4,676	276	3,853	hectares	-18%
Grain	6	14	4		hectares	n/a
Greenhouse vegetables	23	18,762	23	19,535	m2	4%
Greenhouse nursery	29	16,930	34	27,628	m2	63%
<b>Livestock</b>						
All cattle	264	11,674	230	10,174	head	-13%
Feeder steers & heifers	122	630	136	796	head	26%
Beef cows	162	1,468	138	1,146	head	-22%
Dairy cows	57	3,853	44	3,632	head	-6%
All pigs	61	940	46	952	head	1%
Sows	15	126	12	87	head	-31%
All sheep	126	2,958	112	2,274	head	-23%
Ewes	120	1,198	110	996	head	-17%
Horses	148	704	183	876	head	24%
Bison	1	0	0	0	head	n/a
Goats	47	1,832	46	1,021	head	-44%
Bees/honey	n/a	n/a	33	1,072	hives	n/a
<b>Poultry</b>						
Broilers (at census day)	105	257,487	86	82,449	birds	-68%
Broiler production (annual)	121	3,178,293	97	1,011,689	kilograms	-68%
Layers	262	108,334	258	154,758	birds	43%
Turkeys	39	9,588	42	18,556	birds	94%
Other poultry	82	1,924	69	5,756	birds	199%



## Appendix G – Issues and Opportunities Identified in Consultation Process

*General Issues and Opportunities*

Source	Food Security Plan	CAS Strategic Plan	North Cowichan Ag Plan	Individuals	March 13	Cedar FI	CAS
Develop a Vision			x	xx	xx		xxx
Food Security	Xxx	x	x	x	x	xx	x
Ag Advisory Committee				xxx			
Ag Coordinator on staff at CVRD	X		x		x	xx	xx
Profitability - Improved Management	Xx		x	xx	x		x
Training/Access to Information	X	xx	xx	x	xxx	x	x
Buy Local - 100 mile diet, VI diet	X	x			xxx	x	x
Land Leasing -- Future Farm Structure	Xx	x		xxx			xxx
Negative Attitudes	Xx			xx	xx	xx	xx
Public/Consumer Awareness	Xx	x	xxx	xx	x	x	xxx
Promote Diversity							xxx
Urban Agriculture				xx	xxx		xxx
Island Strategy			xx		xx		xx
Loss of Critical Mass					x		

*Land Use Planning*

Source	Food Security Plan	CAS Strategic Plan	North Cowichan Ag Plan	Individuals	March 13	Cedar FI	CAS
Access to Water for Irrigation	Xxx		xxx	xxx	xx		x
Water Management -- peat				x			
Urban Rural Interface/Edge Planning		x	xx	x			
Environmentally Sensitive Areas			x				
Drainage	x		x	xxx			
Land-Use/Capability			x		xx		x



Inventory							
Farm Classification							
Employee Housing					xx	x	x
Political Support/Respect for Agriculture	x	xx	xxx	x	xxx	xx	xx
Regulation in General		xx	xx	xx	xxx	xx	xx
Meat Inspection Regulations	x				x	xx	xx
Development Pressure	x	x	xx		xx		
Marketing Board Issues				xxx			x
Zoning To Accommodate Processing				xxx		xx	xx

### *Economic Development and Agricultural Viability*

Source	Food Security plan	CAS Strategic Plan	North Cowichan Ag Plan	Individuals	March 13	Cedar FI	CAS
Access to Capital					xx		x
Farm Business Succession					x	x	
Recruitment of New Farmers	x	xx	x	x	x	xx	x
Declining Livestock Industry				xx	xx		x
Loss of Landowner's Rights			x	x			
Changing Farm Size			x				
High Input Costs	x	xx	x	x			
Land Tenure and Cost of Land	xx		x	x	x		x
New Product Development			x		x		
Direct Farm Marketing			xx		x		
Access to Markets	x		xx		x		
Declining Infrastructure			x		xx		xx
Specialty Products					xxx		
Agri-tourism			xx		x		
Culinary Tourism	xx	x	x		x		
On Farm/Community Processing	x	x	xxx	xx	xxx		
Access to Quota			xx	xx			



***Sustainable Farm Practices***

Source	Food Security Plan	CAS Strategic Plan	North Cowichan Ag Plan	Individuals	March 13	Cedar FI	CAS
Strengthening Farm Organizations		x	x		x		
Training and Access to Information	Xx	xx	xx		xx		x
Crop Management				x			
Water Management	X		x				
Soil Management	X		x				
Waste Management/beneficial re-use of wastes	x		x				
Alternate Energy			x				
Beneficial Re-use of Wastes			x				

[1] *BC Agriculture Plan: Growing a Healthy Future for BC Families*, BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands (2008) [http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/Agriculture\\_Plan/](http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/Agriculture_Plan/) .

[2] [http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/legislation/policies/Pol4-03\\_agri-tourism.htm](http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/legislation/policies/Pol4-03_agri-tourism.htm)

[3] [http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/legislation/policies/pol5-03\\_agri-tourism-accom.htm](http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/legislation/policies/pol5-03_agri-tourism-accom.htm)





## 3.0.1.1 Appendix H – Food Self-Sufficiency

## Introduction

Food self-sufficiency for a region, province or country is an-going debate in most parts of the world. Globalization has increased trade. Regions or countries with surplus commodities trade for commodities which are better produced in other regions or countries. Agricultural products which are not suited to production in a certain region are not likely to be sustainably produced there for the sake of self-sufficiency.

The following tables were extracted from, or based upon, a study done by the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands in 2006, entitled “BC’s Food Self-Reliance”<sup>31</sup>. The study was based on the whole of BC, from which figures for Vancouver Island and Cowichan Region have been extrapolated.

Table 8. Hectares Needed to Produce a Healthy Diet for One Person

	Servings/day	Raw Weight/day	Raw Weight/Year	Yield/Ha/yr	Hectares Needed
Dairy	2.87	718 g	262 L	13,000 L	0.020*
				Grain	0.048
Meat (non-fish) & alternatives	2.25	169 g	68.6 kg	Range	0.394
Fish	0.25	19 g	6.9 kg	n/a	n/a
Grains (food)	8.5	140 g	51.1 kg	1,750 kg	0.029
Vegetables	3.75	225 g	82.1 kg	6,600 kg	0.018*
Fruit	3.75	319 g	116 kg	9,600 kg	0.015*
<b>Total</b>				<b>Non-irrigated</b>	<b>0.471</b>
				<b>Irrigated</b>	<b>0.053*</b>
				<b>Ha/person/year</b>	<b>0.524</b>

\* Irrigated land is required for areas marked with an asterisk.

The figures for servings per day above, were derived from “Canada’s Food Guide to Healthy Living”, which recommends higher consumption of dairy, fruit and vegetables and lower consumption of meat and grains than is currently consumed in BC.

Table 9 shows the area required for BC, Vancouver Island and the CVRD were calculated based on the hectares needed per person above.

Table 9. Area required for food self sufficiency for BC, Vancouver Island and Cowichan

Region (all figures in hectares)	British Columbia	Vancouver Island	Cowichan Region
Population	4,113,487	734,860	76,929

<sup>31</sup> [http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/Food\\_Self\\_Reliance/BCFoodSelfReliance\\_Report.pdf](http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/Food_Self_Reliance/BCFoodSelfReliance_Report.pdf)



Dairy	82,270	14,697	1,539
<i>Grain for dairy</i>	197,447	35,273	3,693
Meat (non-fish) & Alternatives (including feed requirements)	1,620,714	289,535	30,310
Fish	n/a	n/a	n/a
Grains (food)	119,291	21,311	2,231
Vegetables	72,809	13,007	1,362
Fruit	62,525	11,170	1,169
<b>Non-Irrigated land</b>	<b>1,937,452</b>	<b>346,119</b>	<b>36,234</b>
<b>Irrigated land</b>	<b>218,015</b>	<b>38,948</b>	<b>4,077</b>
<b>Total land required</b>	<b>2,155,467</b>	<b>385,067</b>	<b>40,311</b>

The hectares above give a simplified illustration of the hectares required for Cowichan Region (or any other region) to be self-sufficient in those commodities. Table 10 shows the estimated consumption of commodities based on the 2006 population figures and per capita consumption.

**Table 10. Estimated total annual food consumption – BC, Vancouver Island and Cowichan**

<i>Based on area population of:</i>		4,113,487	734,860	76,929
<i>Commodity Group</i>	<i>Commodity</i>	<i>British Columbia</i>	<i>Vancouver Island</i>	<i>Cowichan Region</i>
<b>Dairy</b>	Dairy (incl butter)	1,080,782,409	193,077,980	20,212,416
<b>Meat &amp;</b>	Red meat	245,484,227	43,854,895	4,590,960
	Poultry & eggs	184,606,108	32,979,233	3,452,439
	Pulses and nuts	36,498,292	6,520,292	682,578
	Grains (feed)	1,544,868,997	275,985,418	28,891,601
	Forage	1,080,155,516	192,965,988	20,200,692
	Pasture & range	912,908,696	163,087,931	17,072,900
<b>Fish</b>	Fish	37,709,691	6,736,704	705,233
<b>Grains (food)</b>	Grains (food)	314,885,689	56,253,222	5,888,882
	Oils & fats	109,768,417	19,609,742	2,052,851
	Rice	31,261,920	5,584,832	584,650
<b>Vegetables</b>	Vegetables	763,931,908	136,473,751	14,286,788
<b>Fruit</b>	Fruit - deciduous	171,602,580	30,656,198	3,209,252
	Fruit - tropical	309,642,440	55,316,534	5,790,825
<b>Other</b>	Wine	49,159,369	8,782,149	919,361
	Honey	3,516,966	628,294	65,773
	Sugars & syrups	136,341,049	24,356,849	2,549,803

#### **Dairy**

Dairy farms in the Cowichan region produce most, if not all, of their own forage requirements and are able to supply sufficient grazing land where necessary. They purchase concentrated feeds (grain) to balance the ration. Grain can be produced more efficiently elsewhere so it is assumed that all grain will



be bought in – reducing the local land base requirement by 3,693 hectares. The balance of the land needed for dairy can be met in the Cowichan region.

#### **Meat and alternatives**

Table 10 indicates the commodities in this group. Due to the nature of production, this group requires the largest amount of land. Once again, the grain portion is better bought in from outside. From the calculations in the BC Food Reliance report, 0.209 ha of the 0.394 ha required for each person, is needed for grain production. This reduces the area required in the Cowichan region to 0.185 ha/person or a total of 14,232 hectares.

Pulses and nuts are predominantly not produced in Cowichan so a further reduction can be made for these products.

#### **Fish**

It is assumed that the Cowichan Region is, or can be, self-sufficient in fish production. Furthermore, fish could readily be substituted for other products reducing the land base requirements for food self-sufficiency.

#### **Food grains**

Like feed grains, these are not widely produced in the Cowichan region. The 2,231 hectare requirement can be removed from the Cowichan region for the same reasons as previously explained.

#### **Vegetables**

Cowichan region is capable of producing a wide range of vegetables which, in season, could supply the region's requirements. The problem is that there is a limited growing season (except where greenhouses are used – see comment below). With processing and storage facilities, the season could be significantly extended but most vegetables would still not be available for a large portion of the year. The 1,362 hectares indicated above would not be fully required if the Cowichan Region were to settle for only partial self-sufficiency.

#### **Fruit**

Cowichan could produce a significant portion of the fruit requirements but the variety would be very limited and, without significant improvements in storage and processing, the season of availability would be quite short - 4 to 8 months depending on type. Currently most of the deciduous fruit comes from the Okanagan, and the tropical fruits are imported. Cowichan would need to ramp up production significantly in order to meet local demand and eliminate imports.

#### **Other**

The 'other' group has been added in table 3, although it is not clear where it is included in tables 1 and 2. Wine and honey are produced in significant quantities in Cowichan while sugar is exclusively imported, and will continue to be so.

#### **Other information**

Non-food production is significant but it is not included in the tables above.

**Table 11. Hectares in production (non-food)**

<i>Commodity</i>	British Columbia	Vancouver Island	Cowichan Region
------------------	------------------	------------------	-----------------



Nursery	4,207	416	69
Sod	837	78	13
Christmas Trees	6,018	611	157
Floriculture*	3,000	536	56
Horses*	100,000	6766	1319
<b>Total</b>	<b>114,062</b>	<b>8,407</b>	<b>1,614</b>

\* estimates

Only 4% of BC's productive farm land is irrigated but it generates 40% of the farm gate receipts.

Greenhouse production, on a square meter basis, can be 20 times higher than field crop production. Currently only 3 major vegetable crops are produced in greenhouses - tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers. These tend to sell premium prices because of quality and off season availability.

The limited number of food crops that can be economically grown in greenhouses in Cowichan Region, suggests that both greenhouse and field crop production are needed to meet the quantity and diversity of food desired in the region.

#### Vancouver Island

The introduction outlined some of the issues surrounding food self-sufficiency. It may not be practical to look at food self-sufficiency in the Cowichan Region alone, but rather to look at the bigger picture of Vancouver Island, or even BC. The table below gives a summary of the self-sufficiency of food production on Vancouver Island. The percentages are well below those of Cowichan on its own, representing a considerable opportunity for regions such as Cowichan to produce food (to which the region is suited) for the rest of Vancouver Island and beyond.

**Table 12. Level of self-sufficiency on Vancouver Island**

<i>Crop/Commodity</i>	<b>Required production*</b>	<b>Actual production</b>	
	<b>Vancouver Island</b>	<b>Year 2006</b>	<b>% of req.</b>
Dairy - fodder	14,697	5604	38%
- grain	35,273	0	0%
Meat (non-fish) & alternatives	289,535	25,581	9%
Fish	n/a	n/a	n/a
Grains (food)	21,311	0	0%
Vegetables	13,007	533	4%
Fruit	11,170	751	7%
<b>Non-irrigated</b>	<b>346,119</b>	<b>25581</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Irrigated</b>	<b>38,948</b>	<b>6888</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>385,067</b>	<b>32469</b>	<b>8%</b>

\* Based on a Vancouver Island Population of 734,860.

Opportunities exist for Cowichan to produce beyond its own requirements in commodities such as milk, fruit, vegetables, and poultry (eggs and meat). The summary below deals primarily with Cowichan's self-sufficiency, but the value of production could be expanded to market outside the CVRD.



### Summary

- Table 13 indicates that 40,311 hectares of land would be need to produce “a healthy diet” for the population of the CVRD. About 4,077 hectares of that would need to be irrigated.
- The current total area of the ALR in Cowichan is 17,719 hectares, of which 11,559 hectares is being actively farmed and 2,465 hectares is irrigated.
- About 90% of the irrigation is on dairy farms - forage and pasture. Assuming the same dairy production in future, there will be an additional requirement for irrigation of vegetables and fruit.
- Currently only 266 hectares are irrigated for vegetable, fruit and nursery production. Based on estimates above, up to 2,500 hectares of irrigation may be required for vegetable and fruit production in the future.
- The total irrigation for dairy, vegetables and fruit in the future could be up to 4,700 hectares – double its current level. There is certainly enough suitable land for this level of production provided there is adequate access to water.
- To improve food self-sufficiency, food production must increase faster than the population growth. Future improvements in food production efficiency may partially (or wholly) offset population growth. Globally, production has increased faster than consumption in the past but many projections suggest this will not continue.
- Tourism should be considered. Vancouver Island and Cowichan are tourist destinations, which add significantly to food requirements during part of the year.

**Table 13. Cowichan Region self-sufficiency – current and possible?**

<i>Population</i>	<b>Required production</b>	<b>Actual production</b>		<b>Possible production?</b>	
		<b>Year 2006</b>	<b>% of req.</b>	<b>Aim for?</b>	<b>%</b>
76,929	<b>Cowichan Region</b>				
Dairy - fodder	1,539	2,213	144%	2,213	144%
- grain	3,693	0	0%	0	0%
Meat (non-fish) & alternatives	30,310	5,151	17%	14,246	47%
Fish	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Grains (food)	2,231	0	0%	0	0%
Vegetables	1,362	94	7%	817	60%
Fruit	1,169	172	15%	702	60%
<b>Non-irrigated</b>	<b>36,234</b>	<b>5,151</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>14,246</b>	<b>39%</b>
<b>Irrigated</b>	<b>4,077</b>	<b>2,479</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>3,732</b>	<b>92%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>40,311</b>	<b>7,630</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>17,977</b>	<b>45%</b>

- Based on the model described earlier, the Cowichan Region could achieve **45% – 50% self-sufficiency**. However, Cowichan is likely to continue to “export” products suited to the area (milk, vegetables, fruit and poultry), and import products which are best grown elsewhere (grain, oilseeds, sugar, tropical fruit etc).
- The total area required future production exceeds the current area of ALR land (17,719 ha), but is within the area estimated land with agricultural capability (33,201 ha).





## STAFF REPORT

### ELECTORAL AREA SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING OF MAY 4, 2010

**DATE:** April 14, 2010 **CVRD FILE NO:** 4-G-10DP  
**FROM:** Jill Collinson, Planning Technician  
**SUBJECT:** Application No. 4-G-10DP (Brian Tassell for Robert Boscher)

---

**Recommendation:**

That Application No. 4-G-10DP be **approved**, and that a development permit be issued to Brian Tassell, on behalf of, **Robert Boscher**, for that part of Lot 12, District Lot 34, Oyster District, Plan 2519, shown outlined in red on Plan 298R, except part in Plan 33268, to permit repair of a 10 metre section of a  $\pm 3$  metre tall riprap retaining wall, repair 28 metres of scour protection along the retaining wall footings, and removal of 2-3 trees along the bank subject development complying with the recommendations noted in Simpson Geotechnical Ltd report, dated April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

**Purpose:**

To consider an application to alter the shoreline of a property located in the Ocean Shoreline Development Permit Area. Proposed works include repairing a 10 metre section of a  $\pm 3$  metre tall riprap retaining wall, repairing 28 metres of scour protection along the retaining wall footings, and removal of 2-3 trees along the bank.

**Background:**

Location of Subject Property: 11193 Chemainus Road

Legal Description: That part of Lot 12, District Lot 34, Oyster District, Plan 2519, shown outlined in red on Plan 298R, except part in Plan 33268

Date Application and Complete Documentation Received: April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010

Owner: Robert Boscher

Applicant: Brian Tassell

Size of Parcel: 0.52 acres (2104 sq.m)

Existing Zoning: R-3(General Residential 3 Zone)

Minimum Lot Size Under Existing Zoning: 1 ha for parcels not connected to community sewer  
0.4 ha for parcels connected to a community sewer  
0.2 ha for parcels connected to community water and sewer.

Existing Plan Designation: Residential

Existing Use of Property: Residential

Existing Use of Surrounding Properties:

North: Ocean  
South: Residential  
East: Residential  
West: Residential

Services:

Road Access: Chemainus Road  
Water: Saltair Walter System Service  
Sewage Disposal: On-site septic

Agricultural Land Reserve Status: Property is not located within the ALR

Environmentally Sensitive Areas: The CVRD Environmental Planning Atlas does not identify any Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory polygons, although the subject property is located within the Ocean Shoreline Development Permit Area.

Archaeological Site: We have no record of any archaeological sites on the subject property.

### **Planning Division Comments:**

The subject property is located adjacent to Ladysmith Harbour, just north of Davis Lagoon. The lot is situated within the Ocean Shoreline Development Permit Area, which was established to protect the sensitive environment of the ocean shoreline and foreshore bluffs, and to protect development from hazardous conditions.

The subject property is a 2104 m<sup>2</sup> (0.52acre) steeply sloped residential lot, with an existing house, detached two-storey garage, paved driveway, extensive upper and lower retaining walls and stairway beach access. The lower existing +2 metre tall concrete retaining wall was constructed just above the high water mark in 1986 and the riprap portion of the retaining wall was constructed in 1994. The property owners want to expedite the repair of a 10 metre section of the riprap retaining wall and 28 metres of scour protection along the retaining wall as there is indication of destabilization of the foreshore bank.

The geotechnical report, compiled by Richard Simpson, P.Eng, indicates a previous landslide occurred in 1994 and that active shoreline erosion is happening at the toe of the previous slide area. This report notes the 10 metre proposed riprap section is experiencing erosion from ocean waves resulting in a destabilizing influence on the slope in need of immediate remediation.

### **Policy Context**

The subject property is located within the Ocean Shoreline Development Permit Area (DPA). Thus, the applicant must receive a development permit from the CVRD prior to commencing any site preparation or construction, in accordance with the Saltair Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2500. The following section outlines how the proposed development addresses the Ocean Shoreline DPA guidelines.

Please review the attached excerpt from OCP Bylaw No 2650, which provides the complete guidelines.

- (a) **Retention of natural vegetation** –Along the shoreline of the subject property there are a few clusters of trees. The more southerly tree cluster is in the location of proposed repair of the riprap retaining wall and will need to be removed. There are 2-3 trees that will be affected.
- (b) **Road and Driveway Design**– There is an existing driveway which there is no proposed alteration or relocation.
- (c) **Footpaths** – There are existing footpaths and beach access to the shoreline. No alteration or new constructions of footpaths are proposed.
- (d) **Site preparation minimized** – All required equipment and materials are to be transported to the site by barge and offloaded onto the beach. The applicant has contacted Fisheries and Oceans and is aware that they must conform to the Fisheries and Oceans Best Management Practices for Constructing Erosion Control Structures in the South Coast Area.
- (e) **Imperviousness figures** – This application does not propose construction of any new impervious surfaces, rather the repair and remediation of what is in existence.
- (f) **Public Access** – During the repair process, public beach access may be intermittently interrupted due to machinery activity and the unloading of materials. However, upon completion of the project, public access along the marine waterfront will not be affected by any obstructions.
- (g) **Location of Retaining Walls** – The existing riprap wall at the high water mark of the ocean will have a 10 metre section in the southern portion of the subject property repaired. A 28 metre section of the existing concrete seawall will have footing scour protection replaced. (Refer to attached plan).
- (h) **Soft Erosion Control Methods** –Existing vegetation will remain with the exception of the removal of 2-3 trees. No other soft erosion control methods are proposed.
- (i) **Materials Used for Retaining Walls** – The existing retaining wall is constructed of concrete. For scour protection along the concrete retaining wall footings, 500 kilogram (approximately 1 metre in diameter) boulders will be used. As noted on the attached site plan, the eroded area would be repaired with the placement of 100kilogram (approximately 1.5 metres in diameter) riprap boulders and blended into what is existing onsite.
- (j) **Vegetation along Retaining Walls** – nothing suggested
- (k) **Retaining wall appearance** –No unsightly materials are proposed. The riprap boulder shoreline protection will be keyed into the beach for scour protection and blended into the



existing riprap at each end. Scour protection for the footing of the existing concrete seawall will be repaired to prevent further deterioration and erosion of the retaining wall.

- (l) **Retaining wall with fence** – There is an existing fence located atop the concrete retaining wall. No alternation, construction or relocation of the fence is proposed.
- (m) **Best Management Practices** – BMP's are to retain natural soils and vegetation, reduce hard impermeable surfacing, encourage natural retention and filtration of rain water, and reduce the use of polluting materials.

**Advisory Planning Commission Comments:**

This application was not forwarded to the Area G APC due to active erosion occurring on the subject property. Staff and the Area Director believe this issuance of this permit is of a time-sensitive nature and should proceed directly to EASC.

**Final Comments:**

The application conforms to the applicable guidelines outlined in the Ocean Shoreline Development Permit Area (DPA). The purpose of this DPA is to protect the sensitive environment of the ocean shoreline and foreshore bluffs, and to protect development from hazardous conditions. As geotechnical reports indicated that active erosion is having a destabilizing effect on the bank and there is history of previous slides on site, Staff is recommending immediate approval of this application.

**Options**

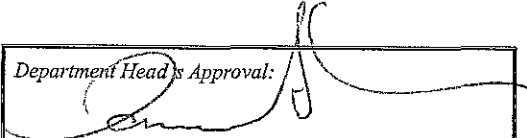
1. That Application No. 4-G-10DP **be approved**, and that a development permit be issued to Brian Tassell, on behalf of **Robert Boscher**, for that part of Lot 12, District Lot 34, Oyster District, Plan 2519, shown outlined in red on Plan 298R, except part in Plan 33268, to permit repair of a 10 metre section of a  $\pm 3$  metre tall riprap retaining wall, repair 28 metres of scour protection along the retaining wall footings, and removal of 2-3 trees along the bank subject development complying with the recommendations noted in Simpson Geotechnical Ltd report, dated April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010.
2. That Application No.4-G-10 DP be revised.

Submitted by,

Jill Collinson, Planning Technician  
Development Services Division  
Planning and Development Department

JC/jah

Attachments

<p>Department Head's Approval:</p> 
<p>Signature</p>



CVRD

COWICHAN VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT

DRAFT

DRAFT

NO: 4-G-10DP DRAFT

DATE: MAY 12<sup>TH</sup>, 2010

TO: ROBERT BOSCHER

c/o BRIAN TASSELL

ADDRESS: BOX 6818, DRAYTON VALLEY,

ALBERTA, T0E OMO

1. This Development Permit is issued subject to compliance with all of the bylaws of the Regional District applicable thereto, except as specifically varied or supplemented by this Permit.
2. This Development Permit applies to and only to those lands within the Regional District described below (legal description):  
*Lot 12, District Lot 34, Oyster District, Plan 2519, shown outlined in red on Plan 298R, except part in Plan 33268 (PID 000-284-041)*
3. Authorization is hereby given for the development of the subject property in accordance with the conditions listed in Section 4, below.
4. The development shall be carried out subject to the following condition:
  - Development to be in substantial compliance Shoreline Protection Plan, dated April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010
  - Development must comply with the recommendations noted in Simpson Geotechnical Ltd report dated April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010.
5. The land described herein shall be developed in substantial compliance with the terms and conditions and provisions of this Permit and any plans and specifications attached to this Permit shall form a part thereof.
6. The following Schedule is attached:
  - Site Plan- Shoreline Protection Plan, dated April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010.
  - Simpson Geotechnical Ltd report dated April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010.
7. This Permit is not a Building Permit. No certificate of final completion shall be issued until all items of this Development Permit have been complied with to the satisfaction of the Development Services Department.

ISSUANCE OF THIS PERMIT HAS BEEN AUTHORIZED BY RESOLUTION NO.  
XX-XXX(X) PASSED BY THE BOARD OF THE COWICHAN VALLEY  
REGIONAL DISTRICT THE 12<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF MAY 2010.

---

Tom Anderson, MCIP  
General Manager  
Planning and Development Department

**NOTE:** Subject to the terms of this Permit, if the holder of this Permit does not substantially start any construction within 2 years of its issuance, this Permit will lapse.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that I have read the terms and conditions of the Development Permit contained herein. I understand and agree that the Cowichan Valley Regional District has made no representations, covenants, warranties, guarantees, promises or agreements (verbal or otherwise) with ROBERT BOSCHER other than those contained in this Permit.

---

Signature

---

Witness

---

Owner/Agent

---

Occupation

---

Date

---

Date



Covichan  
Valley  
Regional  
District

This map is compiled from various sources for internal use and is designed for reference purposes only.


The Regional District does not warrant the accuracy.

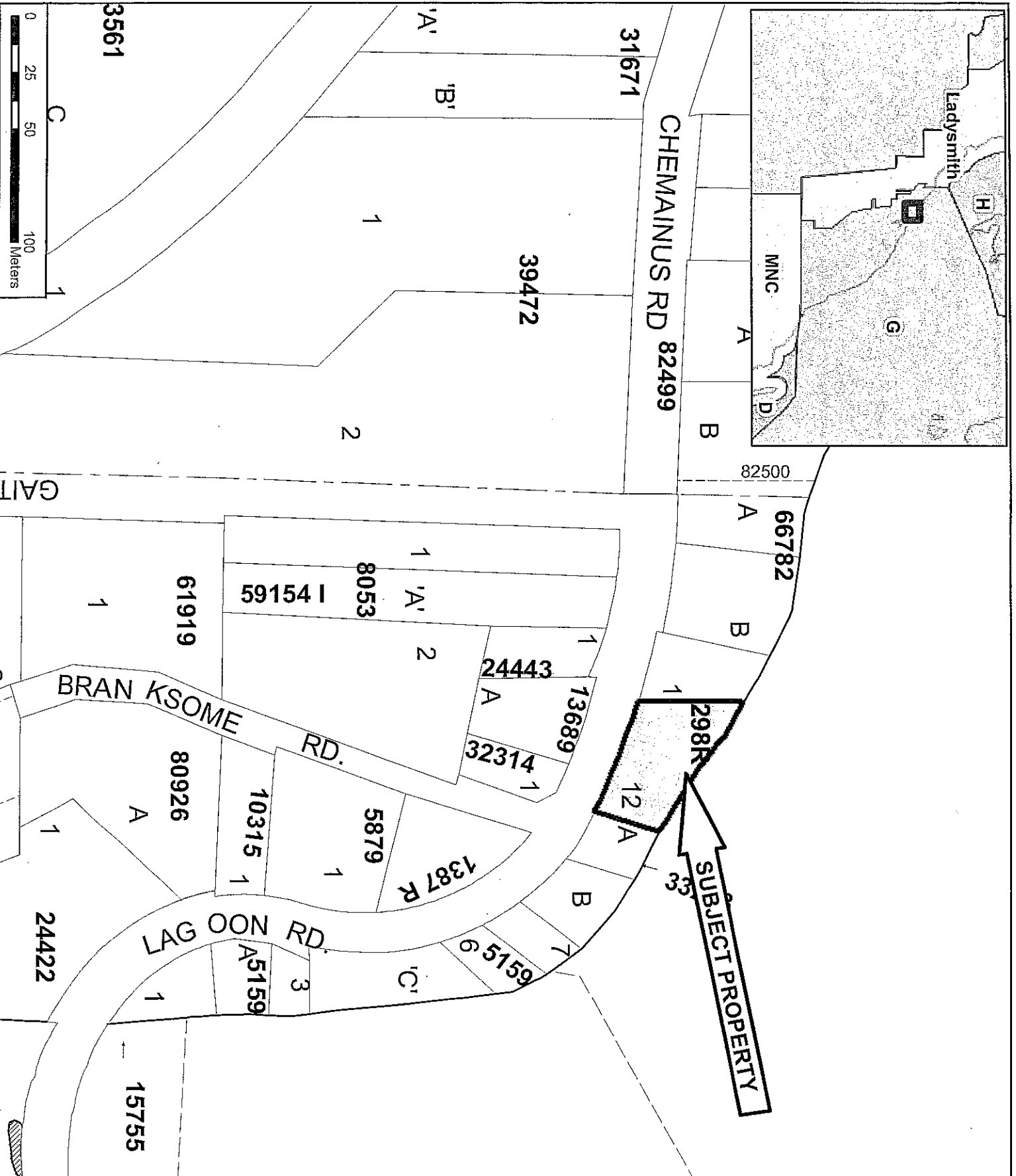
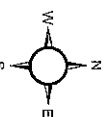
All persons making use of this compilation are advised that amendments have been consolidated for convenience purposes only and that boundaries are representative.

The original Bylaws should be consulted for all purposes of interpretation and application of the Bylaws.

FILE: 4-G-10-DP

Legend

 Subject Property



## 5.4 R-3 GENERAL RESIDENTIAL 3 ZONE

Subject to compliance with the general regulations detailed in Part 3 of this Bylaw, the following regulations apply in the R-3 Zone:

### 1. Permitted Uses

The following principal uses and no others are permitted in the R-3 Zone:

- (a) Single family dwelling;

The following accessory uses are permitted in the R-3 Zone:

- (b) Bed and breakfast accommodation;
- (c) Buildings and structures accessory to a principal permitted use;
- (d) Residential day care centre;
- (e) Home-based business;
- (f) Horticulture;
- (g) Secondary suite on parcels 0.4 ha or larger.

### 2. Minimum Parcel Size

The minimum parcel size in the R-3 Zone is:

- (a) 1 hectare if not connected to a community water system.
- (b) 0.4 hectare if connected to a community water system;
- (c) 0.2 hectare if connected to a community water system and a community sewer system.

### 3. Number of Dwellings

Not more than one dwelling is permitted on a parcel under 0.4 hectare in area, that is zoned R-3. For parcels zoned R-3 that are 0.4 hectare in area or larger, one secondary suite is also permitted.

### 4. Setbacks

The following minimum setbacks apply in the R-3 Zone:

Type of Parcel Line	Residential Use	Accessory Residential Use
Front parcel line	7.5 metres	7.5 metres
Interior side parcel line	3.0 metres or 10% of the parcel width, whichever is less	3.0 metres or 10% of the parcel width, whichever is less, or 1 metre if the building is located in a rear yard
Exterior side parcel line	4.5 metres	4.5 metres
Rear parcel line	4.5 metres	4.5 metres

### 5. Height

The height of all buildings and structures in the R-3 Zone shall not exceed 7.5 metres, except in accordance with Section 3.8 of this Bylaw.

### 6. Parcel Coverage

The parcel coverage in the R-3 Zone shall not exceed 35 percent for all buildings and structures.

### 7. Parking

Off-street parking in the R-3 Zone shall be provided in accordance with Section 3.13 of this Bylaw.

 OTHER DPA  
 RIPARIAN AREAS REGULATION DPA

OCEAN SHORELINE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA

**SUBJECT PROPERTY**

CHEMAINUS RD

RD

LAG OON RD



BRAN KSOME

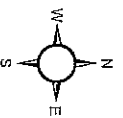


The map is compiled from various sources for internal use and is designed for reference purposes only.  
 The Regional District does not warrant the accuracy.  
 All persons making use of this compilation are advised that amendments have been consolidated for convenience purposes only and that boundaries are representational.  
 The original Bylaws should be consulted for all purposes of interpretation and application of the Bylaws.

FILE: 4-G-10-DP

**DPA**

Legend  
 Other DPA  
 Subject Property



## **SECTION 20.3 – OCEAN SHORELINE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA**

### **20.3.1 CATEGORY**

The **Ocean Shoreline Development Permit Area** is designated pursuant to Section 919(1)(a) and (b) of the *Local Government Act*, to protect the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity, and for the protection of development from hazardous conditions.

### **20.3.2 AREA OF APPLICATION**

The **Ocean Shoreline Development Permit Area** applies to all parcels with frontage on the ocean shoreline, as shown on **Map 9: Ocean Shoreline Development Permit Area Map**.

### **20.3.3 JUSTIFICATION**

Pursuant to Section 919 of the *Local Government Act*, the **Ocean Shoreline Development Permit Area** is established to address the following:

- (a) There are over 140 parcels fronting on the ocean shoreline in Saltair. The cumulative impact of careless development on these parcels would have a detrimental impact on the sensitive ocean shoreline.
- (b) Davis Lagoon consists of an accretion beach, sheltered marshlands and surrounding uplands that support a diversity of plant and animal life and should be maintained for such purposes. The lagoon acts as a valuable staging area for waterfowl and birds. Salmon use it to enter Stocking Creek, and the freshwater it discharges into Ladysmith Harbour supports some productive oyster beds. This is an area of high biotic capability that should be protected. It is one of the few remaining lagoons on southeastern Vancouver Island.
- (c) An aquatic buffer, or riparian zone, consisting of natural vegetation, rocks, trees, or fallen trees can help protect land by protecting the bank from slumping or being washed away. Roots of plants and trees act to reinforce soil and sand and help hold them together, while the leaves of plants reduce the energy of wind and the force of falling rain, increase the evaporation rate and slow water runoff (further information can be obtained at the CVRD Development Services Department).
- (d) Research into watershed hydrology and environmental resilience has demonstrated that once certain thresholds of impervious surfaces (total area of roofs, paving, concrete slabs, accessory buildings and other hard surfaces) are exceeded, irretrievable harm may be done to aquatic life. Many of the developed areas of the OCP area already exceed this threshold of imperviousness (for further information, contact the Development Services Department).
- (e) While many oceanfront parcels in Saltair have already developed extensive hard surfaces and clearings in close proximity to the shoreline, there is increasing evidence that buffer areas are critical in protecting natural values, even where existing development does not allow them to be as wide as a conventional 30 to 100 metre strip.
- (f) Parcels along the shoreline of Saltair slope down to the ocean. They require special attention because they are on the receiving end of drainage and seepage from uphill and may have wetter soils which are more easily compacted and damaged than upland soils. They have the tendency to erode because of both slope and the action of water and wind over exposed stretches of water.

- (g) Surface water is quickly and directly affected by pollution from sources such as poorly placed and maintained septic systems, fertilizer (nitrates, phosphates), driveway runoff, and lawn and garden pesticides. A vegetated buffer can filter pollutants out of runoff from roads, yards, and septic systems before they reach the ocean. Conversely, hard surfaces and reduced vegetation increase runoff and erosion potential and decrease absorption by the soil.
- (h) On a property with substantial native vegetation, the use of fertilizers and pesticides can be avoided, as these substances are not required to grow native plants.
- (i) The marine foreshore bluffs in Saltair consist of steep slopes and complex topography generally unsuitable for urban development. The bluffs have been created by wave action eroding away at the glacial material of the backshore. There is limited beach material protecting the bluffs. The bluff and foreshore is low in gravel and high in silt and clay. Particularly when vegetation is removed at the edge of bank, it is susceptible to further wave action which may result in land slippage, sloughing or soil creep. The placement of buildings and structures and the clearing of vegetation near the edge of the Saltair Bluffs could increase the rate of erosion and add to the risk of land slides.

#### **20.3.4 GUIDELINES**

Within the **Ocean Shoreline Development Permit Area**, no person shall:

- subdivide land;
- alter land, including the removal of trees or vegetation and removal/deposit of soil;
- construct a road, bridge or driveway; or
- construct a building or structure

prior to the owner of land applying for and receiving a development permit from the CVRD, which shall sufficiently address the following guidelines:

- (a) Trees and shrubs in the riparian buffer area should be carefully pruned, where necessary to enhance views, rather than removed;
- (b) Roads and driveways should be located as far as possible from the edge of a bluff or from the ocean shoreline, so as to keep sand, gravel, leach oils and fuels, and road salt out of runoff. Driveways should be angled across the hill's gradient, where possible, and be composed of porous materials such as road mulch, small modular pavers or pre-cast concrete lattice, to keep runoff to a minimum. For driveways that are already paved, a portion of the runoff can be diverted by the use of speed bumps in regular intervals. Settling pools can be installed in runoff ditches that slope to water;
- (c) Footpaths to the shoreline should be planned to avoid erosion, using slope contours rather than a straight downhill line, and be narrow to minimize impacts on drainage patterns. Impacts to a slope can be minimized by elevating stairs above the natural vegetation;
- (d) Site preparation should be carried out in a manner which minimizes the need for vegetation clearing. In order to control erosion and to protect the environment, the development permit may specify the amount and location of tree and vegetative cover to be planted or retained;



- (e) Figures for total imperviousness on sites within this development permit area should be calculated by the proponent and submitted at the time of development permit application. The Board may specify maximum site imperviousness or effective imperviousness in a development permit;
- (f) Public access along the marine waterfront is important to Saltair residents and should not be affected by any obstructions;
- (g) Retaining walls along the marine shoreline will be limited to areas above the high water mark, and to areas of active erosion, rather than along the entire shoreline frontage. Backfilling behind the wall, to extend the existing edge of the slope, is not permitted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the fill is necessary to prevent further erosion or sloughing of the bank;
- (h) Where possible, steep, bare slopes should be cut back, and soft erosion control methods should be used. In cases where hard armouring, such as using solid concrete or heavy rocks or rock in wire cages, is necessary, the planting of native vegetation should be done to soften its impact, and the base of the wall should be constructed to be habitat friendly;
- (i) Retaining walls along the marine shoreline should be faced with natural materials such as wood and stone, particularly darker colours that blend in with the natural shoreline and are less obtrusive when seen from the water. Large, fortress like, uniform walls should not be permitted unless composed of pervious materials and stepped or softened to provide for water absorption;
- (j) Deep rooted vegetation should be planted along the retaining wall on the steps or along the top, to help filter runoff before it enters the beach;
- (k) Retaining walls or sea walls should not utilize unsightly construction debris like broken concrete, blocks or bricks;
- (l) Where a fence is constructed on, or in conjunction with, a uniform retaining wall or the highest uniform section of a retaining wall, the retaining wall or portion thereof should be considered to be an integral part of the fence for the purpose of determining height;
- (m) The latest Best Management Practices for land development of the Ministry of Water Land and Air Protection and Fisheries and Oceans Canada, should be respected.

### **20.3.5 EXEMPTIONS**

The following will be exempted from the requirement of obtaining a development permit in the **Ocean Shoreline Development Permit Area**:

- (a) Retaining walls that are more than 2 metres from the high tide mark, and are under 0.7 metres in height;
- (b) Buildings and structures located more than 30 metres from the high water mark of the ocean;
- (c) Removal of hazardous trees;
- (d) Interior renovations and minor exterior renovations of existing buildings.

### **20.3.6 APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

(a) Before the CVRD authorizes the issuance of a development permit for a parcel of land in the **Ocean Shoreline Development Permit Area**, the applicant must submit a development permit application, which at a minimum includes:


1. a written description of the proposed project;
2. reports or information as listed in the relevant Development Permit Guidelines;
3. information in the form of one or more maps, as follows:
  - location/extent of proposed work;
  - location of ocean high tide mark;
  - location of other watercourses;
  - topographical contours;
  - location of slopes exceeding 25 percent grade;
  - location of lands subject to periodic flooding;
  - percentage of existing and proposed impervious surfaces;
  - existing tree cover and proposed areas to be cleared;
  - areas of known sensitive or rare native plant communities;
  - existing and proposed buildings;
  - existing and proposed property parcel lines;
  - existing and proposed roads, vehicular access points, driveways, and parking areas;
  - existing and proposed trails;
  - existing and proposed stormwater management works, including retention areas and drainage pipes or ditches;
  - existing and proposed erosion mitigation and bank alterations;
  - existing and proposed septic tanks, treatment systems and fields;
  - existing and proposed water lines and well sites;

(b) In addition to the requirements listed above, the applicant may be required to furnish, at the applicant's expense, a report certified by a professional engineer with experience in geotechnical engineering which includes:

1. a hydrogeological report, which includes an assessment of the suitability and stability of the soil for the proposed project, including information on soil depths, textures, and composition;
2. a report on the safety of the proposed use and structures on-site and off-site, indicating that the land may be used safely for the use intended; and/or
3. a stormwater management plan, which includes an assessment of the potential impact of the development on the groundwater resource.

(c) In addition to the requirements listed above, the applicant may be required to furnish, at the applicant's expense, an environmental impact assessment, certified by a registered professional biologist, assessing any impacts of the project on watercourses and lands in the area.

# Map 9 Ocean Shoreline DPA

 Ocean Shoreline DPA

Stuart Channel

Saltair

Electoral Area G

Trans-Canada Highway

Town of Ladysmith

Electoral Area G

0 100 200 300 400 500 Meters



April 12, 2010  
File: SGL10-013

Bob Boscher  
c/o Bryanston Construction Ltd.  
7050 Jack's Rd  
Lantzville, BC V0R 2H0

**Re: Shoreline Erosion Protection Assessment, 11193 Old Chemainus Road,  
Chemainus, BC (Part of Lot 12, District Lot 34, Oyster District)**

### INTRODUCTION

As requested, Simpson Geotechnical Ltd. (SGL) has conducted a shoreline erosion assessment and remedial design for the captioned property. The property is an oceanfront residential lot bounded on its northern side by Stuart Channel.

The purpose of our assessment was to review an area of foreshore erosion that was occurring near the toe of a slide that occurred around 1994 and to provide recommendations for repair of the shoreline protection at the property.

### BACKGROUND

A slide occurred on the property in the early 1990's as described in the referenced reports<sup>1</sup>. Those reports indicate that the property development reactivated an older landslide with a backscarp that passed through the residence, although the 1990's slope movement was restricted to an area northwards of the residence.

It was noted in those reports that slope toe erosion by the sea was a significant destabilizing influence on the slope and one of several recommended remedial actions at that time was placement of rip rap boulders at the slope toe to reduce toe erosion from wave action and to weight the toe of the slide for stabilizing effect. We understand from the contractor (Brian

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<sup>1</sup> Reference Reports:  
Slope Instability, Chemainus Property, BC, HBT AGRA Limited, 16 June 1994, File No: NX01436;  
Preliminary Geotechnical Review of Part of Lot 12, District Lot 34, Oyster District, Saltaire, Chemainus, B.C. (11193 Old Chemainus Road). AGRA Earth & Environmental, 28 July 1994, File No: NX01436.

Tassell, Bryanston Construction Ltd.) that some of those remedial works were implemented and little if any slope movement has been observed since.

#### **SITE DESCRIPTION**

The site assessment was conducted on February 24, 2010. Figure 1 is a site plan of the property illustrating our observations and a photo log is appended. The property was bounded by existing residential developments to the east and west, Old Chemainus Road to the south and Stuart Channel to the north. The site sloped down from Old Chemainus Road to Stuart Channel through several terraces with a total grade change in the order of 10m.

The lowest terrace slope of the site adjacent to the beach was approximately 2m in height. The shoreline of the subject property adjacent to that lowest terrace slope was a combination of cast-in-place concrete retaining wall and rip rap boulders as seen in Photo 1.

The concrete retaining wall was approximately 27m in length, essentially vertical and the footing of the wall was exposed at beach level. There was a "hinge" in the wall where the eastern end of the wall deflected northward, reportedly the result of the 1990's slope movement (Photo 2).

Both east and westward of the retaining wall the shoreline slope comprised rip rap boulder shoreline protection. The boulders had a nominal diameter in the order of 0.8m. The majority of the existing rip rap shoreline protection at the site was in good condition. However, there was an area of active shoreline erosion approximately 10m in length in an area of minimal rip rap eastward of the concrete retaining wall, at the toe area of the previous slide (Photo 3 and 4).

The area of failed shoreline protection exposed silty sand with some gravel, cobbles and boulders. Several trees with curved, pistol-butted trunks suggestive of slope movement were located at the face of the eroded area. There were tension cracks in the ground surface near the crest of the failed and eroded shoreline protection area (Photo 5).

The upslope area from the failed shoreline protection was an essentially level and grassed terrace area (Photo 6) that separated the shoreline slope from a boulder surfaced slope that rose up to the residence. No evidence indicative of active slope movement was noted up gradient of that lower terrace although we understand that a wooden stairway on the slope may have experienced some minor movement.

#### **DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

There is evidence of active shoreline erosion occurring along an approximately 10m length of the site shoreline, at the toe of the slide area. Erosion of the toe of the slide will have a

destabilizing effect on the old slide as the mass at the toe counteracts the mass at the top. Consequently, the shoreline protection in the eroded area should be repaired as soon as practical to stop the loss of the stabilizing toe material and add additional mass to the slide toe.

We envision that eroded area would be repaired with the placement of rip rap boulder shoreline protection keyed into the beach for scour protection, and blended into the existing rip rap at each end. We expect that the rip rap placement will require removal of the trees currently on the face of the eroded area.

We note that given the history of slope movement at the property as documented in the referenced reports, we cannot rule out the possibility that slope creep has contributed to the local failure of the shoreline protection. Installation and monitoring of slope indicators in the slide area would be required in order to determine if the slide is continuing to creep, and how. It would take some time to delineate the slide movement, if any, by monitoring the slope indicators, potentially in the order of years. We can provide a cost estimate for the installation and monitoring of slope indicators on request.

The scour protection for the footing of the existing concrete seawall westward of the erosion area was deteriorated and the footing was exposed to wave action. The scour protection along the footing should also be repaired to prevent further deterioration of support to the seawall. We envision rip rap scour protection being placed along the seawall footing at the same time as the shoreline protection is repaired at the eroded area.

Figures 2, 3 and 4 illustrate the recommended remedial work. We expect that all required equipment and materials will need to be transported to the site by barge and offloaded onto the beach. The practicality of barge access to the site should be reviewed with a barge operator. Installation of the shoreline and scour protection should be conducted under the review of Simpson Geotechnical Ltd.

We have contacted the Cowichan Valley Regional District regarding the recommended remedial work and understand that the site is located in an Ocean Shoreline Development Permit Area. Consequently a development permit from the Cowichan Valley Regional District will be required prior to commencing the work.

We have also contacted Fisheries and Oceans regarding the proposed work and understand that the work must also conform to the Fisheries and Oceans Best Management Practices for Constructing Erosion Control Structures in the South Coast Area (Vancouver Island - Sunshine Coast). That document is attached for convenience.

## CLOSURE

SGL appreciates the opportunity to be of services on this project and looks forward to working with you as the project progresses. This report was prepared for the exclusive use of Mr. Bob Boshier and his appointed agents for the shoreline protection system described herein. Any use or reliance made on this report by an unauthorized third party is the responsibility of that third party. Contractors should make their own assessment of the property for the purposes of bidding on and performing work on the site.

The recommended shoreline protection is intended to minimize wave erosion. However, minor maintenance of the rip rap following major storm events may be required. Minor maintenance may consist of restoring dislodged rip rap pieces and repair of the ends of the shoreline protection where the system will be weakest.

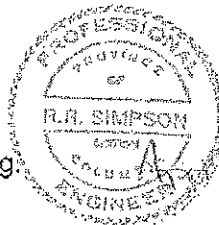
This report has been prepared in accordance with standard geotechnical engineering practice. No other warranty is provided, either expressed or implied.

Yours truly,

**Simpson Geotechnical Ltd.**

Per:

Richard Simpson, P.Eng.



## Attachments:

Figure 1 – Geotechnical Site Conditions

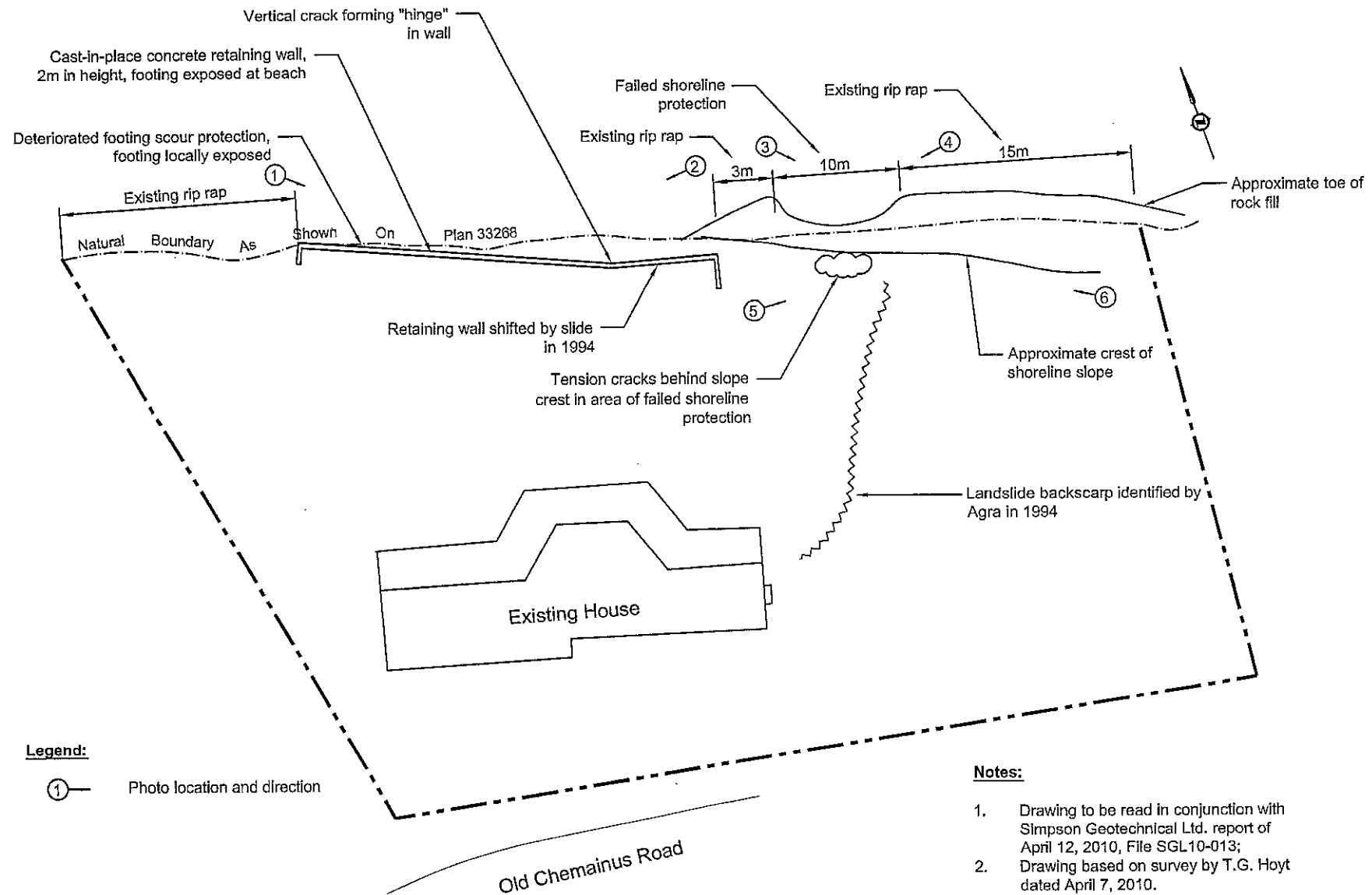
Figure 2 – Proposed Remedial Works

Figure 3 – Rip Rap Details

Figure 4 – Retaining Wall Scour Protection

Photo Log

Best Management Practices (BMP's) for Constructing Erosion Control Structures in the South Coast Area (Vancouver Island – Sunshine Coast), Fisheries and Oceans



**Project:** 11193 Old Chemainus Road - Shoreline Protection Assessment

**Title:** Geotechnical Site Conditions

**Client:** Bob Boscher c/o Bryanston Construction

**File:** SGL10-013

**Drawn by:** RRS

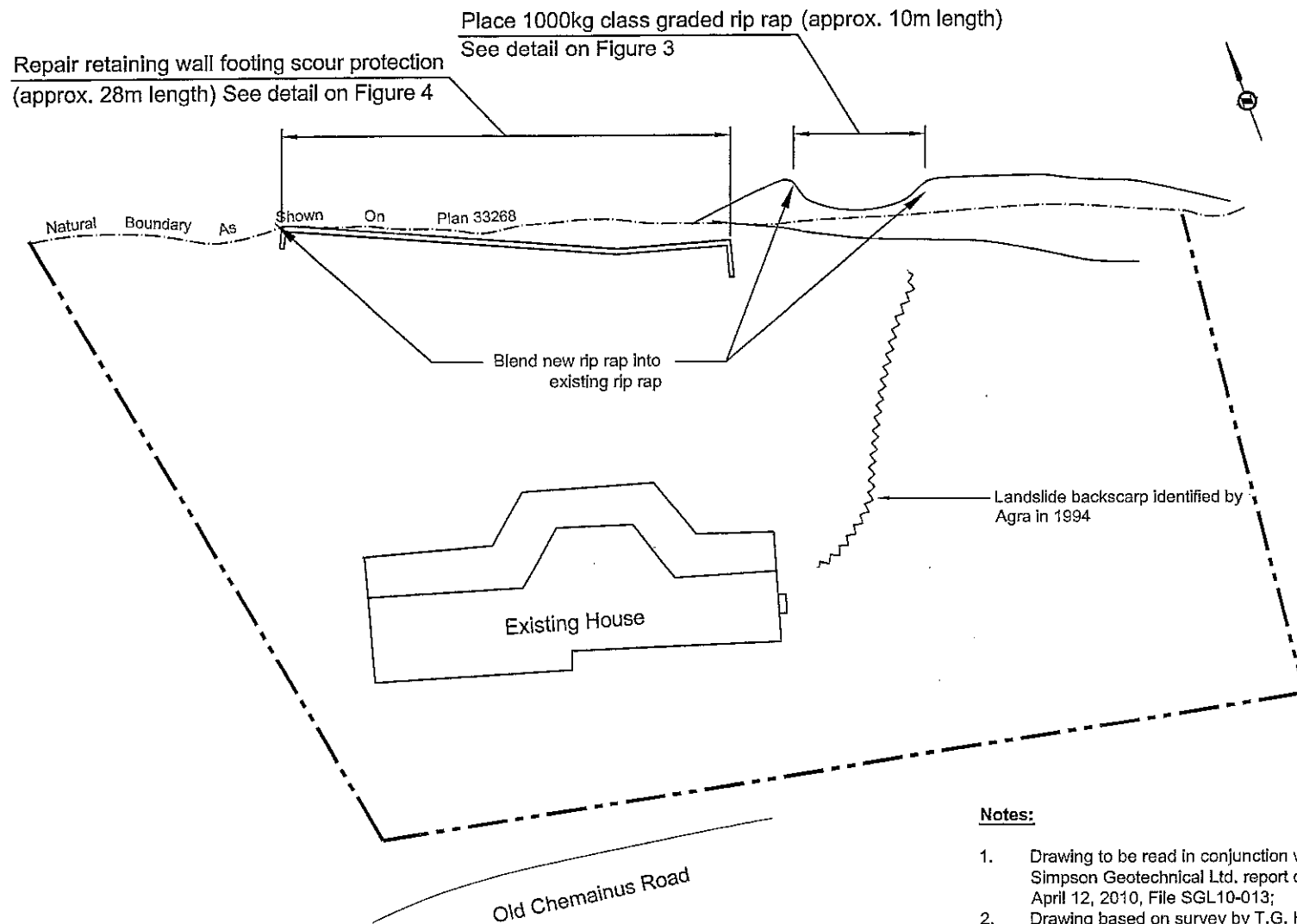
**Scale:** 1 : 400

**Date:** April 12, 2010

**Dwg. No.:** Figure 1

**SIMPSON GEOTECHNICAL LTD.**





**Notes:**

1. Drawing to be read in conjunction with Simpson Geotechnical Ltd. report of April 12, 2010, File SGL10-013;
2. Drawing based on survey by T.G. Hoyt dated April 7, 2010.

**Project:** 11193 Old Chemainus Road - Shoreline Protection Assessment

**Title:** Proposed Remedial Work

**Client:** Bob Boscher c/o Bryanston Construction

**File:** SGL10-013

**Drawn by:** RRS

**Scale:** 1 : 400

**Date:** April 12, 2010

**Dwg. No.:** Figure 2

**Simpson Geotechnical Ltd.**

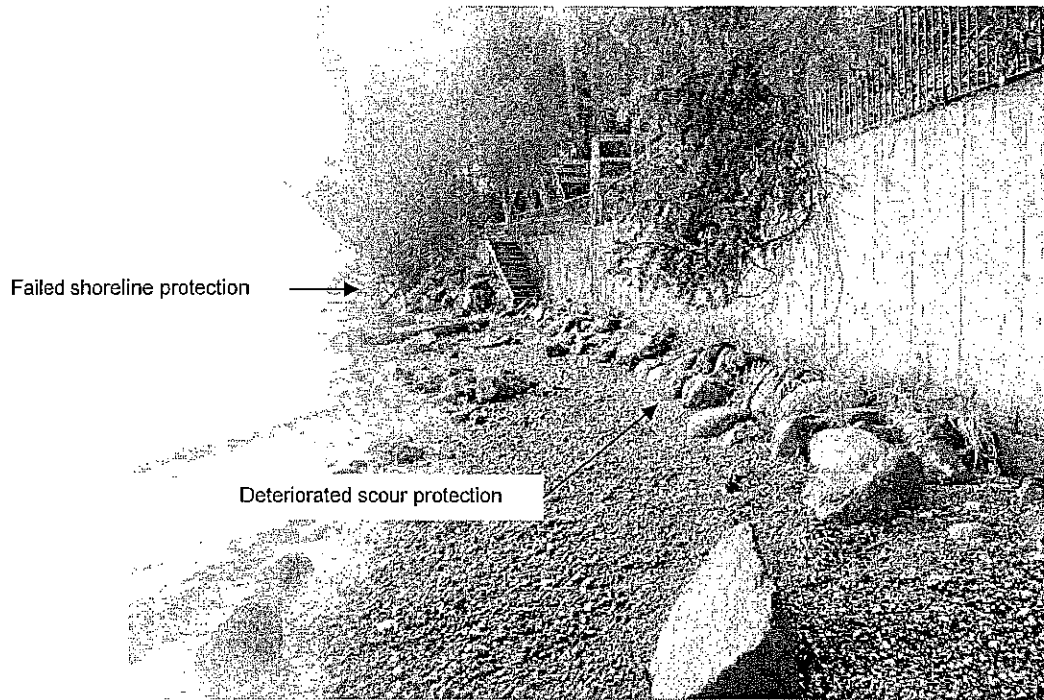


Photo 1 – Shoreline of subject property looking eastward showing deteriorated scour protection and exposed retaining wall footing

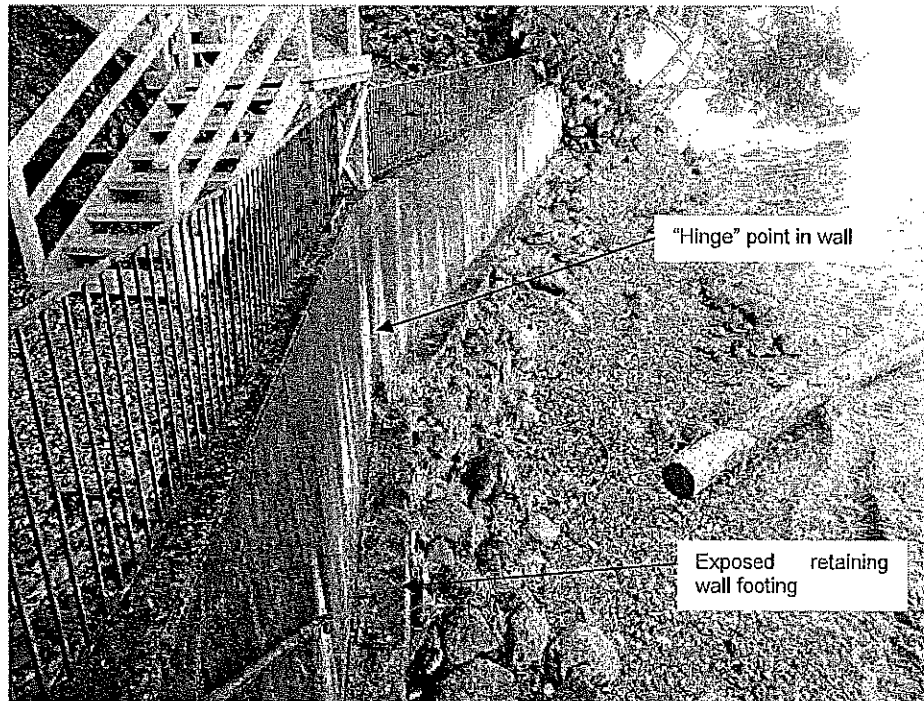


Photo 2 – "Hinge" point in retaining wall and exposed footing



Photo 3 – Failed shoreline protection near toe of slide area looking eastward



Photo 4 – Failed shoreline protection near toe of slide area looking westward



Photo 5 – Tension cracks near crest of slope above failed shoreline protection

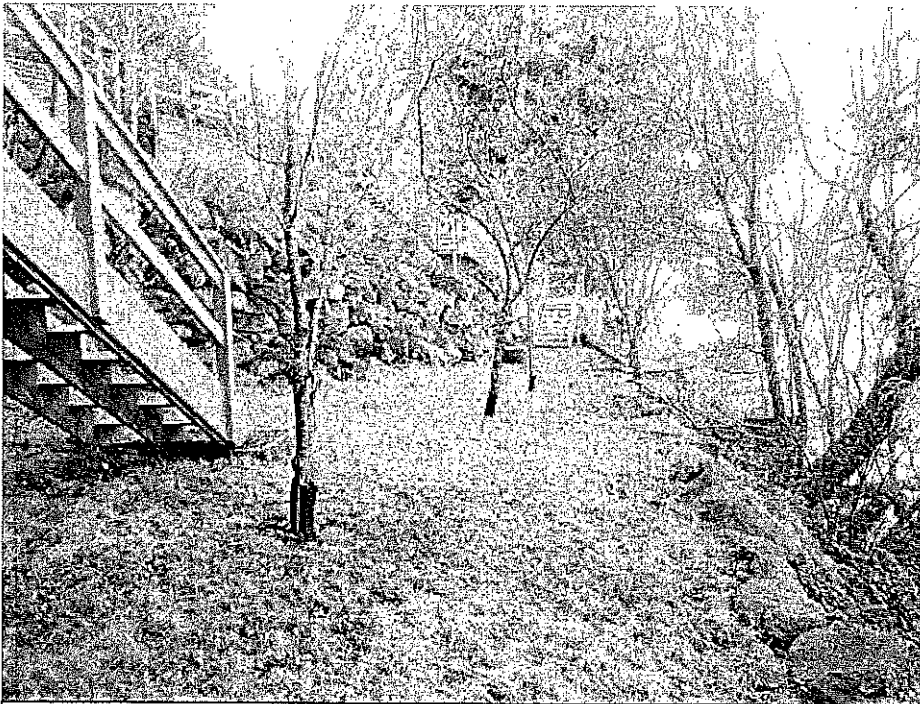


Photo 6 – Looking westward along crest of shoreline slope

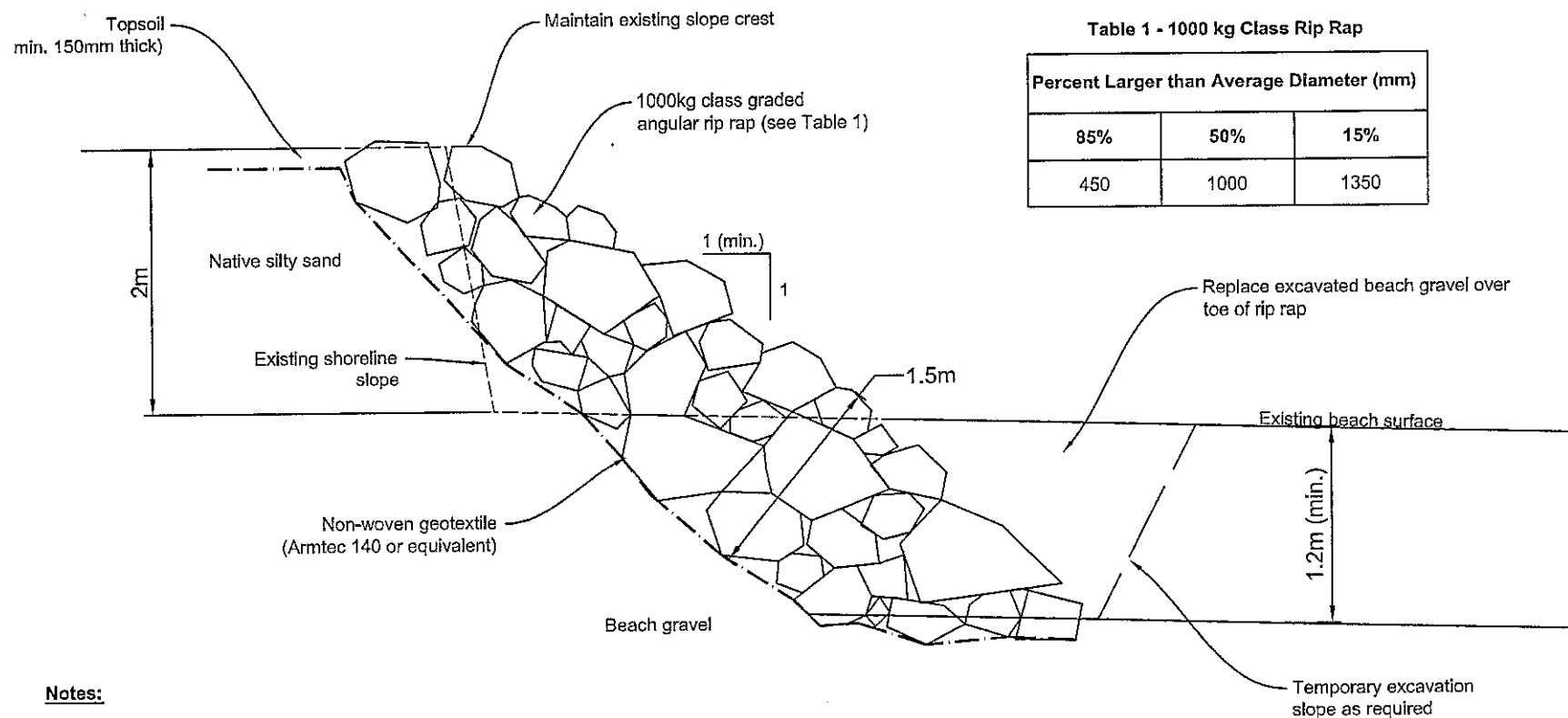


Table 1 - 1000 kg Class Rip Rap

Percent Larger than Average Diameter (mm)		
85%	50%	15%
450	1000	1350

**Notes:**

1. Drawing to be read in conjunction with Simpson Geotechnical Ltd. report of April 12, 2010, File SGL10-013.

Looking Westward

**Project:** Shoreline Protection

**Title:** Rip Rap Details

**Client:** Bob Boscher c/o Bryanston Construction

**File:** SGL10-013

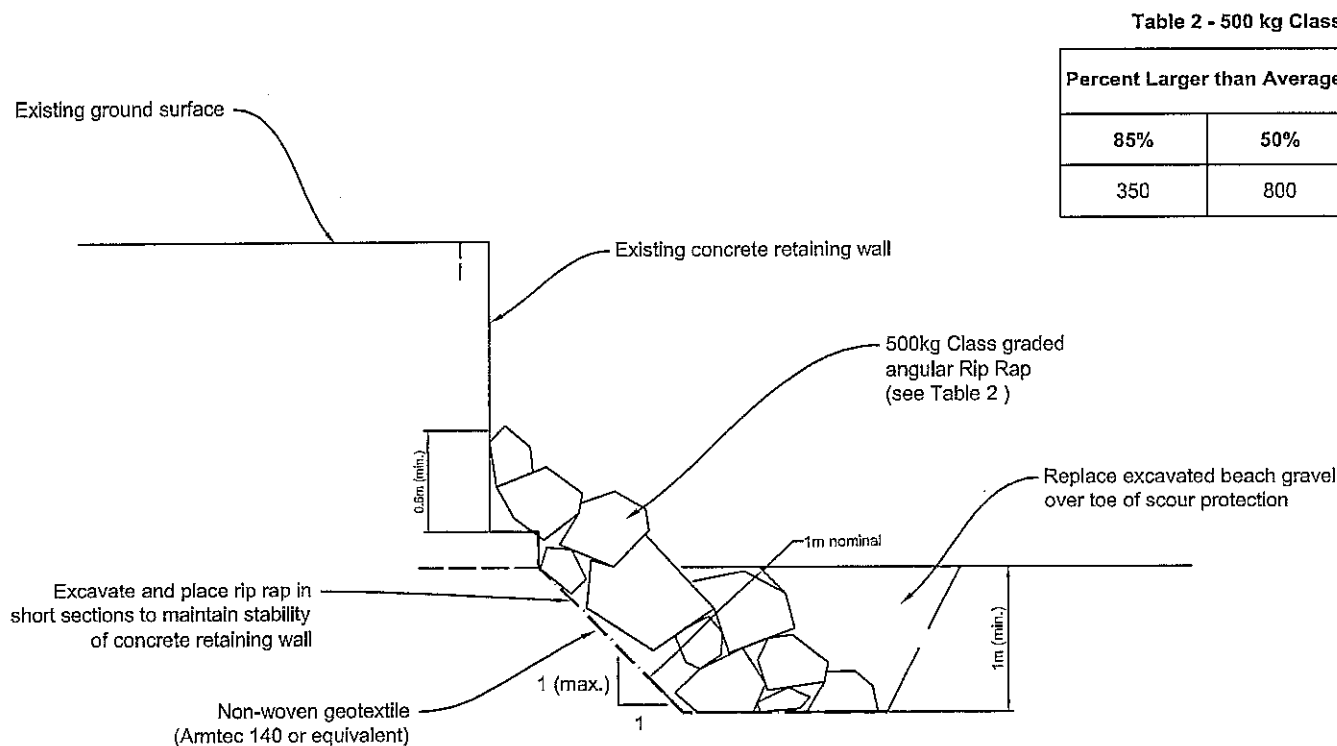
**Drawn by:** RRS

**Scale:** 1 : 50

**Date:** April 12, 2010

**Dwg. No.:** Figure 3

**SIMPSON GEOTECHNICAL LTD.**

**Notes:**

1. Drawing to be read in conjunction with Simpson Geotechnical Ltd. report of April 12, 2010, File SGL10-013.

**Project:**

Shoreline Protection Repair

**Title:**

Retaining Wall Scour Protection

**Client:**

Bob Boscher c/o Bryanston Construction

**File:**

SGL10-013

**Drawn by:**

RRS

**Scale:**

1 : 50

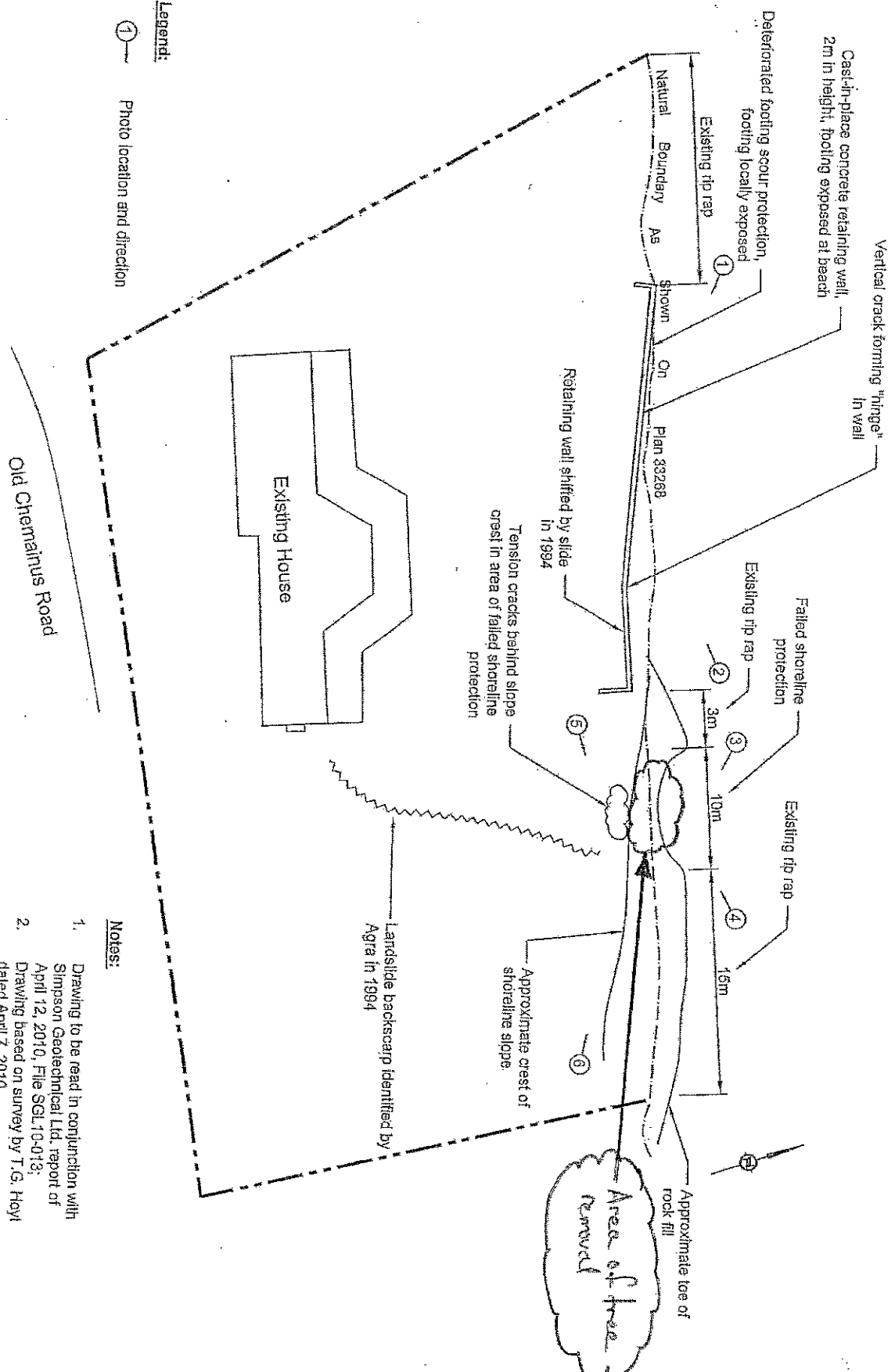
**Date:**

April 12, 2010

**Dwg. No.:**

Figure 4

**SIMPSON** Geotechnical Ltd.



Project: 11193 Old Chemainus Road - Shoreline Protection Assessment			
Title: Geotechnical Site Conditions			
Client: Bob Boscher c/o Bryanston Construction			
File: SGL10-013	Drawn by: RRS	Scale: 1 : 400	Date: April 12, 2010
		Dwg. No.: Figure 1	



D3

## STAFF REPORT

### ELECTORAL AREA SERVICES COMMITTEE OF MAY 4, 2010

**DATE:** April 28, 2010 **FILE NO:** 1-B-10DVP  
**FROM:** Alison Garnett, Planning Technician **BYLAW NO:** 985  
**SUBJECT:** Development Variance Permit Application No. 1-B-10 DVP (Bell)

---

#### **Recommendation:**

That Application No. 1-B-10DVP by Charles and Jill Bell for a variance to Section 8.3(b)(2) of Zoning Bylaw No. 985, by increasing the height limit for an accessory building from 7.5 metres (24.6 ft) to 9.5 metres (31 ft), on Lot 1, Shawnigan Lake Suburban Lots, Malahat District, Plan 32805, **be approved.**

**Purpose:** To consider an application to vary the permitted height of an accessory building from 7.5 metres (24.6 ft.) to 9.5 metres (31 ft.).

#### **Background:**

**Location of Subject Property:** 1487 Mahon Road

**Legal Description:** Lot 1, Shawnigan Lake Suburban Lots, Malahat District, Plan 32805 (PID 000-192-791)

**Date Application and Complete Documentation Received:** March 12, 2010

**Owner:** Charles and Jill Bell

**Applicant:** Same

**Size of Parcel:** 1732 m<sup>2</sup> (0.4 acres)

**Existing Zoning:** R-2 (Suburban Residential)

**Minimum Lot Size Under Existing Zoning:** 1.0 ha

**Existing Plan Designation:** Suburban Residential

**Existing Use of Property:** Residential



Existing Use of Surrounding Properties:

North:	Residential
South:	Residential
East:	Residential
West:	Residential

Services:

<u>Road Access:</u>	Mahon Road
<u>Water:</u>	Well
<u>Sewage Disposal:</u>	Septic System

Environmentally Sensitive Areas: None have been identified.

Archaeological Site: None have been identified.

**The Proposal:**

An application has been made to: the Regional Board to vary Section 8.3(b)(2) of Bylaw No. 985.

For the purpose of: constructing a second story on an existing garage with a total height of 9.5 metres (31 ft).

**Planning Division Comments:**

The subject property is a small residential lot located at the south west end of Shawnigan Lake. The lot is split in two by Mahon Road, and the residence is located on the portion of the lot fronting on Shawnigan Lake. On the portion of the lot west of Mahon Road there is located an accessory building, which is the subject of this application. The building is a single story three car garage and workshop, and is currently 5.8 metres (19 ft) in height.

The applicants would like to build a second story over part of the existing garage (affecting approximately 91 m<sup>2</sup> or 988 ft<sup>2</sup>), in order to accommodate a hobbies room. They are requesting a 2 metre variance to the 7.5 metre height limit for an accessory building in the R-2 zone, in order to build to a total height of 9.5 metres. There is no change to the existing building footprint as the proposed construction involves lifting the existing roof over two bays of the three car garage.

The surrounding parcels to the west of Mahon Road are recreational lots, without permanent residences. From staff's perspective, lake views would not be impacted by the height variance, as the existing building is currently surrounded by mature trees. Additionally, the subject building is the only building on the portion of the lot west of Mahon Road, and therefore gives the impression of a principal building. The proposed height of 9.5 metres complies with the 10 metre height limit of a principal residence.

**Surrounding Property Owner Notification and Response:**

A total of 23 letters were mailed out and/or otherwise hand delivered to adjacent property owners, as required pursuant to CVRD Development Application Procedures and Fee Bylaw No. 3275, which described the purpose of this application and requested comments on this variance within a specified time frame. To date, no correspondence has been received.

**Options:**

1. That the application by Charles and Jill Bell for a variance to Section 8.3(b)(2) of Zoning Bylaw No. 985, by increasing the height limit for an accessory building from 7.5 metres (24.6 ft) to 9.5 metres (31 ft), on Lot 1, Shawnigan Lake Suburban Lots, Malahat District, Plan 32805, **be approved.**
2. That the application by Charles and Jill Bell for a variance to Section 8.3(b)(2) of Zoning Bylaw No. 985, by increasing the height limit for an accessory building from 7.5 metres (24.6 ft) to 9.5 metres (31 ft), on Lot 1, Shawnigan Lake Suburban Lots, Malahat District, Plan 32805, **be denied.**

Option 1 is recommended.

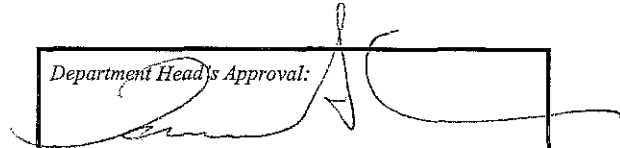
Submitted by,



Alison Garnett  
Planning Technician  
Planning and Development Department

AG/jah

Attachments

<p>Department Head's Approval:</p> 
<p>Signature</p>



CVRD

**DRAFT**

**COWICHAN VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT  
DEVELOPMENT VARIANCE PERMIT**

**DRAFT**

NO: 1-B-10DVP

DATE: April 27, 2010

TO: Charles and Jill Bell -DRAFT

ADDRESS: 1487 Mahon Road

Shawnigan Lake, V0R 2W3

1. This Development Variance Permit is issued subject to compliance with all of the bylaws of the Regional District applicable thereto, except as specifically varied or supplemented by this Permit.
2. This Development Variance Permit applies to and only to those lands within the Regional District described below (legal description):

*Lot 1, Shawnigan Lake Suburban Lots, Malahat District, Plan 32805 (PID 000-192-791)*

3. Zoning Bylaw No. 985, applicable to Section 8.5(b)(2), is varied as follows:  
The height limit for an accessory building is increased from 7.5 metres to 9.5 metres, subject to the applicant providing a survey confirming compliance with the approved height limit.
4. The following plans and specifications are attached to and form a part of this permit.
  - Schedule A – Proposed building drawings
5. The land described herein shall be developed in substantial compliance with the terms and conditions and provisions of this Permit and any plans and specifications attached to this Permit shall form a part thereof.
6. This Permit is not a Building Permit. No certificate of final completion shall be issued until all items of this Development Variance Permit have been complied with to the satisfaction of the Development Services Department.

**AUTHORIZING RESOLUTION NO. XXXXX PASSED BY THE BOARD OF THE COWICHAN VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT THE XX DAY OF XXXXXX.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tom Anderson, MCIP  
General Manager, Planning and Development Department

**NOTE:** Subject to the terms of this Permit, if the holder of this Permit does not substantially start any construction within 2 years of its issuance, this Permit will lapse.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that I have read the terms and conditions of the Development Permit contained herein. I understand and agree that the Cowichan Valley Regional District has made no representations, covenants, warranties, guarantees, promises or agreements (verbal or otherwise) with \_\_\_\_\_ other than those contained in this Permit.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Owner/Agent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Occupation

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



Covichan  
Valley  
Regional  
District

This map is compiled from various sources for internal use and is designed for reference purposes only.

The Regional District does not warrant the accuracy.

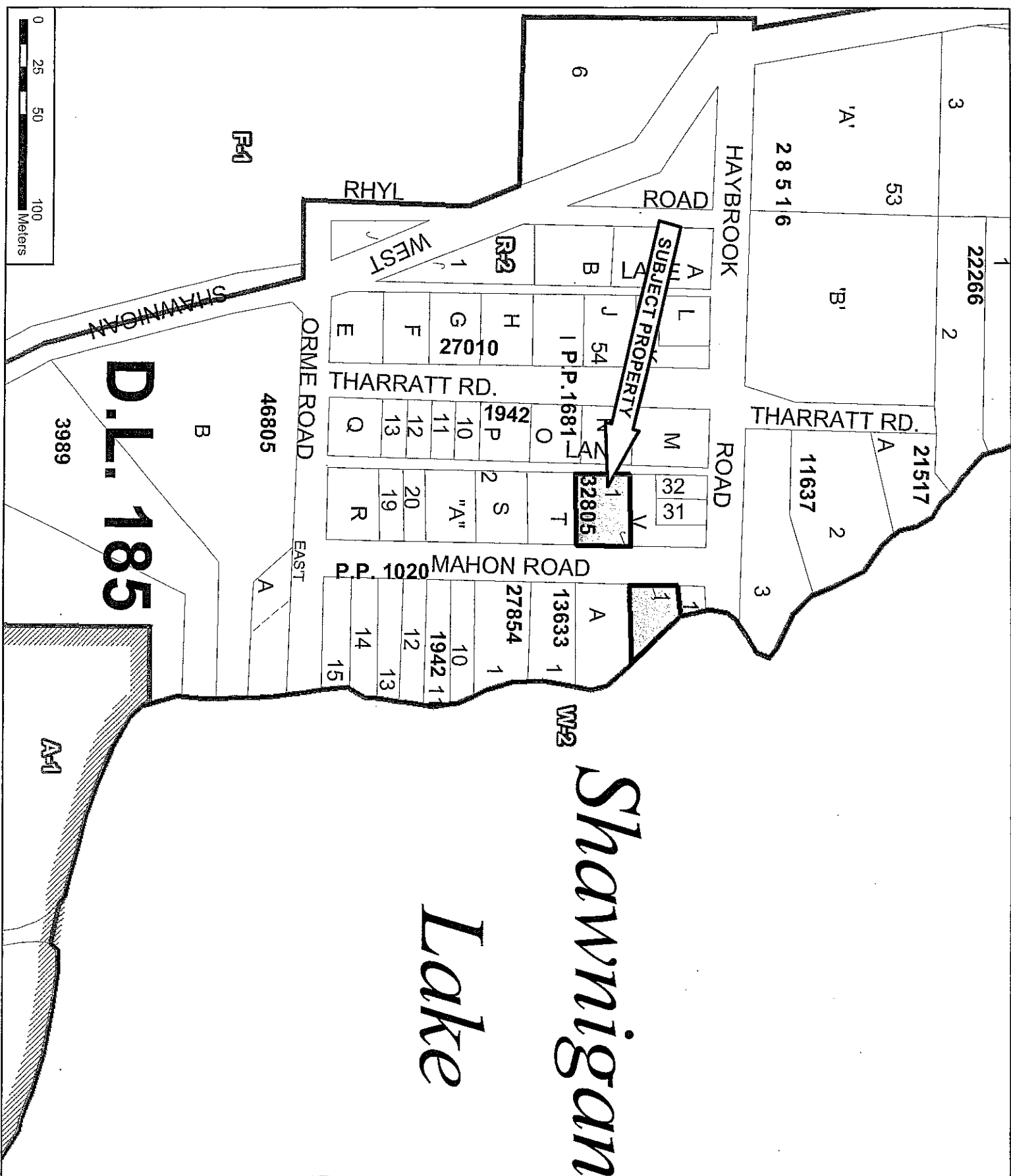
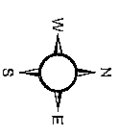
All persons making use of this compilation are advised that amendments have been consolidated for convenience purposes only and that boundaries are representational.

The original Bylaws should be consulted for all purposes of interpretation and application of the Bylaws.

FILE: 1-B-10  
-DVP

# ZONING

- Legend
- Subject Property
  - Zoning Electoral Area B



13

PLAN OF SUBDIVISION OF LOT U, PLAN 27010, AND LOTS 2 & 3,  
BLOCK 3, PLAN 1942, SHAWNIGAN LAKE SUBURBAN LOTS,  
MALAHAT DISTRICT.

Scale : 1 : 500

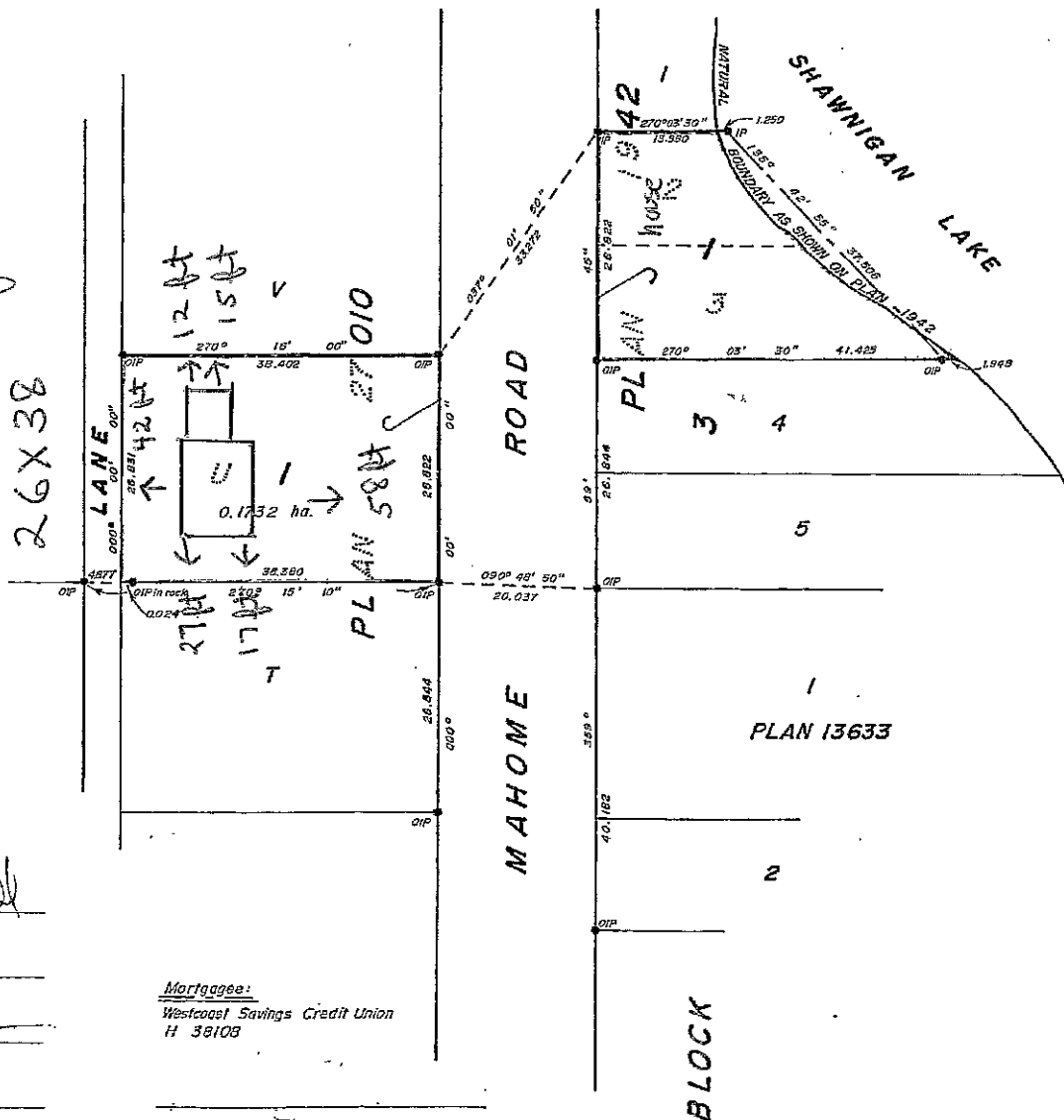
LEGEND

Bearings are astronomic derived from Plan 27010.

- OIP denotes iron post found.
- IP denotes standard iron post set.

All distances are in metres unless otherwise noted.

Size of building to be raised  
26X38



Signatures  
Registered Owners

Charles R. Bell  
Charles Richard Bell

Jill Heather Bell

H. Cuthbert  
Witness as to both signatures

Mortgagee:  
Westcoast Savings Credit Union  
H 38108

Occupation  
RR3, Wooders Road  
Duncan, B.C.  
Address

HEIGHT OF ROOF PEAK WITH VARIANCE 31 FT

↑ VARIANCE REQUESTED  
6½ FT.  
↓

ALLOWABLE HEIGHT OF BUILDING 24½ FT WITHOUT VARIANCE

TOP OF PRESENT HEIGHT OF ROOF PEAK 19 FT  
TRUSSES  
8 FT.  
↓

BOTTOM OF TRUSSES

10x16 GARAGE DOOR

Charles R Bell  
1487 MAHON RD  
SHAWNIGAN LAKE  
250.743-9711

10x10 GARAGE DOOR

38 FT WIDE  
↔

3x7 DOOR

EACH  
SQUARE  
= 159.6

HEIGHT OF ROOF PEAK WITH VARIANCE 31 FEET

↑ VARIANCE REQUESTED  
6 1/2 FT

ALLOWABLE HEIGHT OF BUILDING 24 1/2 FT

WITHOUT VARIANCE

Charles Bell  
1487 MAHON RD  
SHAWNIGAN LAKE.

250.743-9711

PRESENT HEIGHT OF ROOF PEAK 19 FEET

TOP  
OF TRUSSES  
8 FT.

BOTTOM OF TRUSSES

END VIEW

6x4  
WINDOW

FOUNDATION  
WALL

← 26 FT WIDE →

EACH SQUARE  
= 1 FT.

FOUNDATION  
WALL

### 8.3 R-2 ZONE - SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL

#### (a) Permitted Uses

The following uses and no others are permitted in an R-2 Zone:

- (1) single family dwelling or mobile home;
- (2) agriculture horticulture;
- (3) home occupation -- domestic industry;
- (4) bed and breakfast accommodation;
- (5) daycare nursery school accessory to a residential use; and
- (6) small suite or secondary suite.

#### (b) Conditions of Use

For any parcel in an R-2 Zone:

- (1) the parcel coverage shall not exceed 30 percent for all buildings and structures;
- (2) the height of all buildings and structures shall not exceed 10 metres except for auxiliary buildings which shall not exceed a height of 7.5 metres; and
- (3) the minimum setbacks for the types of parcel lines set out in Column I of this section are set out for all structures in Column III and IV:

<b>COLUMN I Type of Parcel Line</b>	<b>COLUMN II Residential Use</b>	<b>COLUMN III Agricultural &amp; Accessory Use</b>	<b>COLUMN IV Accessory Residential Use</b>
Front Side (Interior)	7.5 metres 10% of the parcel width or 3 metres whichever is less	30 metres 15 metres	7.5 metres 10% of the parcel width or 3.0 metres whichever is less or 1.0 metres if the building is located in a rear yard
Side (Exterior)	4.5 metres	15 metres	4.5 metres
Rear	4.5 metres	15 metres	4.5 metres



D 4

REC

APR 15 2010

COWICHAN VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT  
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DEPARTMENT

REQUEST FOR DELEGATIONS

APPLICATION DATED: April 14/2010  
NAME OF APPLICANT: Dwain Waterius  
ADDRESS OF APPLICANT: 5175 Lee Rd  
PHONE No.: 250-597-3906  
REPRESENTING: N/A  
Name of Organization  
MEETING DATE: May 4  
April 20, 2010  
COMMITTEE/BOARD NAME: E.A.S.C.  
NO. ATTENDING: 2

TOPIC TO BE PRESENTED:

To allow existing bathtub to  
remain in my shop

NATURE OF REQUEST/CONCERN:

same as above

Note: Once the request for delegation application has been favourably considered, presentations will be restricted to ten (10) minutes, unless notified otherwise.



SRI

## STAFF REPORT

### ELECTORAL AREA SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING OF MAY 4, 2010

**DATE:** April 28, 2010 **FILE NO:** 34-E-09BE  
**FROM:** Nino Morano, Bylaw Enforcement Official **BYLAW NO:**  
**SUBJECT:** 5175 Lee Road – Accessory Building Fixture

---

#### **Recommended Options:**

- 1) Permit one bathing facility (bathtub) and one sink to remain in the accessory building.
- 2) Permit one bathing facility (bathtub) and one sink to remain in the accessory building and require the land owner to register a covenant reaffirming the structure will not be used as a dwelling.
- 3) Deny request to allow for one bathing facility (bathtub) to remain and remove all fixtures over and above one toilet and one sink.

#### **Purpose:**

To seek direction from the EASC on the matter of a bathing facility in an accessory building at 5175 Lee Road, Glenora.

#### **Financial Implications:**

N/A

#### **Interdepartmental/Agency Implications:**

N/A

#### **Background:**

On December 8, 2009 a complaint was lodged regarding the use of a structure (Quonset hut) as a dwelling where noise generated by the residents was disturbing the neighborhood. It was later discovered in the building file that this structure was intended to be a residential accessory building. It is likely the fixtures within it were installed sometime in the past prior to current ownership. The land owner removed the tenants shortly after involvement of the Bylaw Enforcement Official. While the use of the structure was no longer an issue, there remained the physical aspects of the structure that still made it a dwelling, mainly the cooking and bathing facilities.

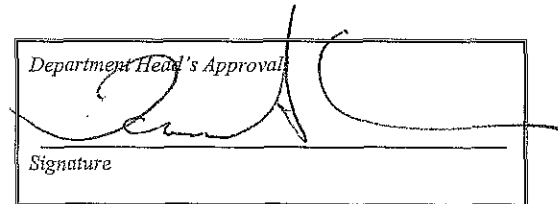
The following is an excerpt of the January 19, 2004 EASC meeting where it was resolved that:

*"As a measure to reduce the number of illegal dwellings in the CVRD, that staff be authorized to allow for one toilet and one sink, and no other facilities such as showers, bathtubs, and laundry and kitchen facilities, in accessory buildings, without the specific authorization of the Board."*

The land owner has indicated they no longer wish to have this structure occupied but wish to keep the bathing facility (bathtub) for reasons outlined in their attached submission. The cooking facility (stove) has been permanently removed with the only remaining fixtures being a toilet and sink. Upon recent inspection, the structure does not appear to be habitable. There is septic tank in close proximity to the structure that was likely installed around the time the structure was constructed in 1979 with no noticeable signs of improper operation. There is a large pond on the property which is unknown whether or not would be affected by the Riparian Areas Regulation.

The EASC may wish to consider requiring a covenant be registered on title if the fixture is permitted to remain. The Zoning (A-1) appears to permit a small suite on this parcel as it is over 2 ha so there may be a possibility to legalize depending on whether or not all the small suite regulations are satisfied.

Submitted by,

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature. The box is divided into two sections by a horizontal line. The top section is labeled "Department Head's Approval" and the bottom section is labeled "Signature". The signature is written across both sections.

Nino Morano  
Bylaw Enforcement Officer  
Planning & Development Department

NM/jah

Attachments

## Nino Morano

---

**From:** LINDA CLIFF [ltvenn@shaw.ca]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 20, 2010 9:43 PM  
**To:** Nino Morano

To: Nino Morano

I am writing to you as requested in regards to the existing bathtub in my workshop area. We purchased the property November 2007. At that time the sole purpose of the shop area was strictly to benefit my business and for my own personal uses. At the end of October 2009 I allowed a distant family member to stay back there while they were waiting to move into town. This decision was a big mistake and what was suppose to be a brief helping hand turned into an absolute nightmare not only for us but for our neighbour as well. But now I am faced with dealing with the bathtub issue.

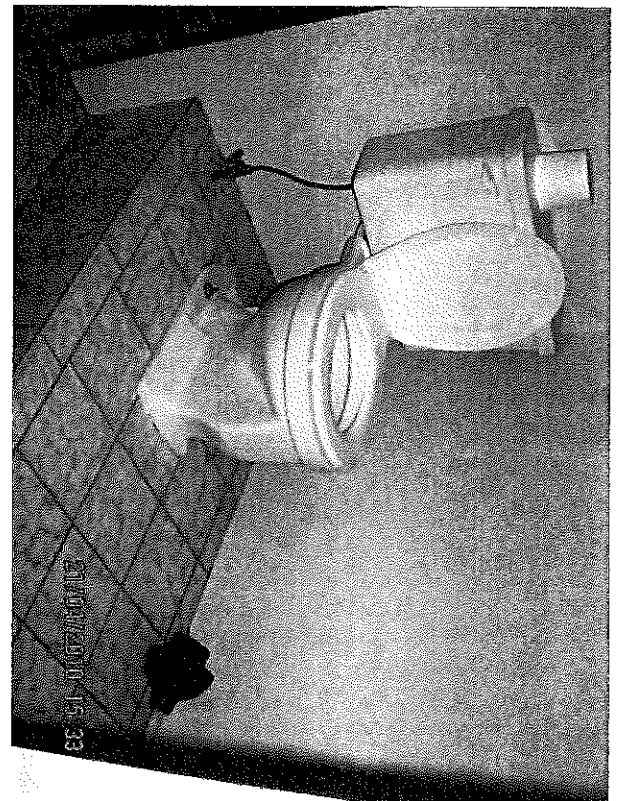
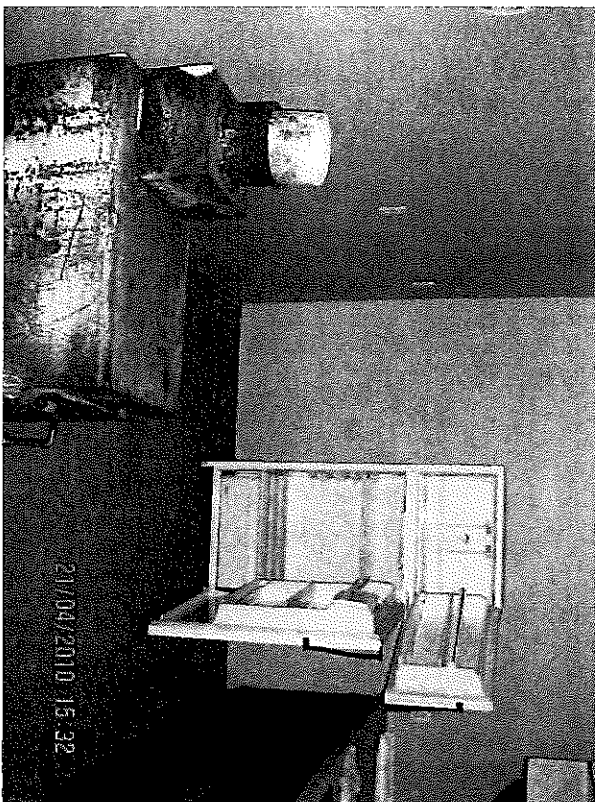
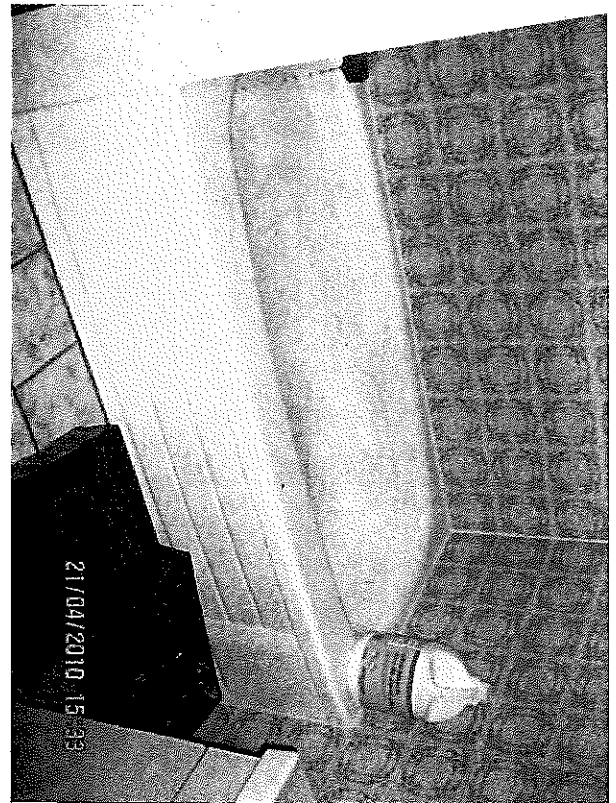
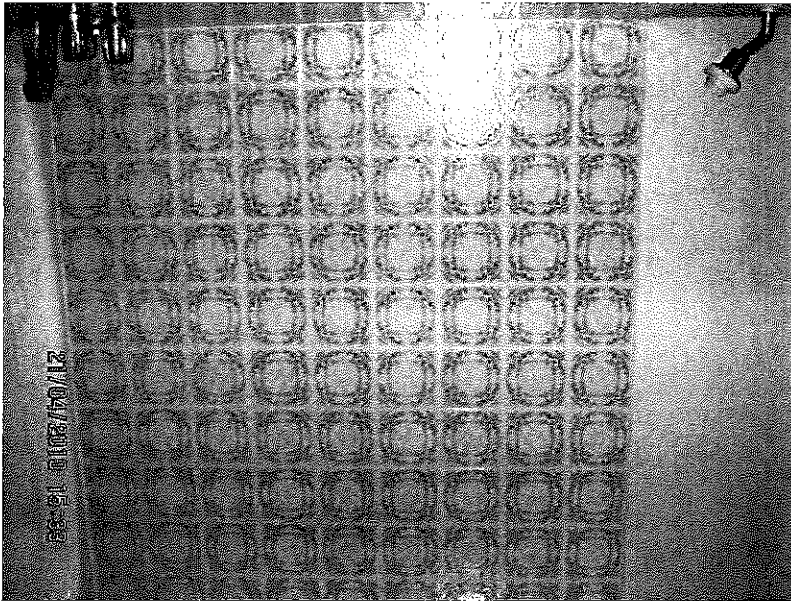
First of all, my intention are true to keep the tub for use in relation to my business. I need the tub for the following: soaking trays, brushes, paint cans, drop cloths, etc. in hot water.

Secondly, In my spare time I am working with wood and use the tub for soaking wood in order to manipulate the wood into different shapes.

Thirdly, we recently gave the one and only bathroom in the main house a facelift and do not want to damage our new tub when bathing our animals.

Lastly, It is with great regret to of brought this attention to our property; I never purchased the property with the intention of allowing anyone to live or rent out any space in my shop nor do I have any intention what so ever of allowing anyone to live or rent out space in my shop. I am just requesting to keep what was existing when I purchased this property.

Sincerely Dwain & Lynda Walerius



5175 LBB Road



5175 LBE BAND



SR2

## STAFF REPORT

### ELECTORAL AREA SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING OF MAY 4, 2010

**DATE:** April 28, 2010

**FILE NO:**

**FROM:** Tom R. Anderson, General Manager

**BYLAW NO:**

**SUBJECT:** Dangerous Dog Situation

---

#### **Recommendation:**

That the Regional District take the necessary steps to convey the dangerous situation that exists with packs of roaming dogs on the Cowichan First Nations lands and that the Cowichan Tribes be requested to take immediate action to rectify this situation before someone is seriously injured.

#### **Purpose:**

To bring the above noted matter to the attention of the Committee in the hopes of improving a dangerous situation.

#### **Financial Implications:**

N/A

#### **Interdepartmental/Agency Implications:**

N/A

#### **Background:**

I received a visit from a property owner on Miller Road which is located just south of Duncan. He outlined a situation where 3-4 dogs are roaming the neighbourhood terrorizing residents and pets. The situation is nothing new in that the dogs that are causing the problems emanate from the First Nations land which are located across Miller Road from the fee simple land owned by the complainant and others.

CVRD Dog Control Contractor, the SPCA, have done their best to respond to this situation but the dogs run in a pack and are very elusive. As such, our usual means of responding to such complaints is hindered by the change in political boundaries and authorities of the two jurisdictions.

In an attempt to try to rectify this very dangerous situation, it is requested that the Regional Board become involved in an attempt to convince the Cowichan Tribes to take some action to control the dog populations on their lands and specifically in the Miller Road area.

Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom R. Anderson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tom R. Anderson,  
General Manager  
Planning and Development

TRA/jh





SR3

## STAFF REPORT

### ELECTORAL AREA SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING OF MAY 4, 2010

**DATE:** April 28, 2010

**FILE NO:**

**FROM:** Tom R. Anderson, General Manager

**BYLAW NO:**

**SUBJECT:** Bylaw Enforcement Official Appointments

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#### **Recommendation:**

1. That the Regional Board appoint Brian Duncan as Bylaw Enforcement Official.
2. That the Regional Board appoint Grant Breckenridge as Bylaw Enforcement Official.
3. That the Regional Board appoint Norm Knodel as Bylaw Enforcement Official.
4. That the Regional Board appoint Ian McDonald as Bylaw Enforcement Official.
5. That the Regional Board appoint Gary Anderson as CVRD Bylaw Enforcement Official.

#### **Purpose:**

To fulfill the necessary legal requirements.

#### **Financial Implications:**

N/A

#### **Interdepartmental/Agency Implications:**

N/A

#### **Background:**

Staff within the Building Inspection Division are moving forward with the assumption of the dual roles of Building Inspector and Bylaw Enforcement Official. To do this, four of our Building Inspectors have just recently completed Level I of the Bylaw Enforcement certification course at the Justice Institute. Brian Duncan, Chief Building Inspector, had previously obtained his Level II certification as part of his duties at a previous employer. The dual role of Bylaw Enforcement Official and Building Inspector will increase our capacity to respond to issues and complaints in a more efficient manner than under our present structure.

In order that we meet all the legal requirements under the legislation and CVRD regulatory bylaws, we require that the Board approve the above recommendation.

Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom R. Anderson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tom R. Anderson,  
General Manager  
Planning & Development Department

TRA/jah

API

## **Area A Advisory Planning Commission**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**13 April 2010 at 6:30 PM**

### **Mill Bay Fire Hall**

**Present:** June Laraman, Archie Staats, Deryk Norton, Ted Stevens, Cliff Braaten, Dola Boas, Geoff Johnson, Brian Harrison (Director, Area A), Roger Burgess (alternate Director, Area A)

**Regrets:** Margo Johnston, David Gall

**CVRD:** Mike Tippet(Planning and Development)

**Presenters:** None.

**Audience:** One observer

Meeting called to order at 6:30 pm

#### **Previous minutes:**

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of 25, March 2010 meeting be adopted.

**MOTION CARRIED**

#### **Bamberton Update.**

**Mike Tippet, CVRD**

- Following the APC recommendation to the CVRD Board that the Bamberton application should move to the next phase, the CVRD planning Department started formulating the draft bylaws with input from Three Point Properties. The CVRD will be proposing a stand-alone Bylaw for Bamberton. The focus thus far has been to ensure that the major issues and outputs agreed and discussed in the several forums held in 2009 are incorporated into the bylaws. These bylaws will be presented back to the Board and for the final public hearing.
- Since January 2010 there have been several meetings covering such items as: rezoning t the entire site CD-1, CD-2, and CD-3. Also discussed were slope stability, rock fall hazards, interface fire prevention, general road layout and the form and character of the Neighbourhoods – all of which needs to turn into the design parameters which will be stated in the PDA.
- Some outstanding items are the timeline for the hand-over of the dedicated park lands to the CVRD, the commitment to some aspects of the triple bottom line and what is required by the CVRD to complete the bylaws. The CVRD has agreed to provide a list to the applicant on what is still outstanding and must be delivered by Three Point Properties. The question of amenities still has to be discussed with the applicant.

#### **Existing Business:**

**Rezoning Application No. 4-A-09RS (Limona)**

**Roundtable Discussion**

The purpose of this meeting is to continue to review the modifications to the application that was made in June 2009 and recommend potential next steps to the CVRD.

**The discussion started with a review of the Stonebridge Development Long-term Traffic Impact Review (September 4, 2009) provided by the CVRD:**

- The Barry Road "Round-About" was discussed, and the flow of traffic at peak times. The highway improvements would only have to be done if the present proposed density and rezoning was approved. The recommended highway improvements are:
  1. Barry road roundabout

2. Widening of Shawnigan Mill Bay and TCH intersection with two North bound turning lanes
  3. Extra lane on the bridge south of the Shawnigan Mill Bay intersection
  4. Lowering of the hill crest of Shawnigan Mill Bay between TCH and Barry Rd
  5. Improvements required at the Deloume Rd and TCH intersection.
- The APC expressed real concern that the MoT's demands for extensive offsite upgrading of the roads and the TCH appears to be driving the need for increased density. Additionally, there was concern that the estimated \$6.5M in road works costs could be impacting the level of amenities proposed by the developer.

#### **General Concerns and Comments**

- Does Limona really need that much density to move forward?
- There are many unknowns with an increased density of 1,116 residences
- Limona proposal is general in context and does not offer a sufficient level of detail to allow the APC to get a clear view of what will be delivered. Mike Tippet indicated that Limona does not have a firm plan at this time.
- There is general agreement with the commercial and the senior's development components of the proposal.
- Concern was expressed that the proposed wastewater disposal is not adequate for the community.
- Limona hasn't thoroughly addressed the question on parks, wastewater, amenities and services, hospitals, fire protection, or schools.

The Chair asked the APC to respond to the five questions poised by the CVRD re the rezoning application.

#### **1. Does the application measure up to the expectations of the OCP and the community?**

- Even if the OCP recommends that density be located at this site, the reality of the impacts of this type of development does not seem like a good idea.
- The original zoning is more appropriate for the site.

#### **2. Is the proposed density appropriate for the site?**

- This is the right location for density to occur but without the services it is hard to have density.
- Comfortable with the commercial and senior developments but residential plan is too condensed with small lots.
- Potential for increased crime without appropriate social amenities.
- Apartments are okay as leaves more green space.
- Number of lots is too great for the area.

#### **3. Is the green space/parks adequate for the size of development proposed?**

- Need to preserve more green space by reducing the number of lots.
- Green space requires better distribution.

#### **4. Are the offered amenities appropriate, given the scale and type of development?**

- The proposed level of density requires more attention to amenities than currently suggested.
- If the density delivers another 2 to 3K in population then must have the required amenities to support.

#### **5. Does a neighbourhood plan need to be done? Or is the information submitted in the application sufficient to constitute a neighbourhood plan**

- Need a service plan and waste management plan for the community.
- A neighbourhood plan should be done, as what has been presented thus far is not sufficient.

It is the recommendation of the APC to the CVRD Board that based on the unanimous and consistent response to the questions posed by the CVRD that

The Limona zoning application does not meet the needs of the community and should not move forward in its present form.

It should be noted that there is unanimous APC support for the seniors housing and commercial development based on feedback from the wider community in various forums.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM

The next regular meeting will be at 6:30 pm, 11 May 2010 at Mill Bay Fire Hall.



CVRD

COWICHAN VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT

SUBMISSION FOR A GRANT-IN-AID (ELECTORAL AREAS)

Submitted by Director Giles Area C Cobble Hill

Grantee: Grant Amount \$ 3500.00

NAME: Evergreen Independent School

ADDRESS: Box 166 Cobble Hill BC

UDR 110

Contact Phone No: 250 743-2433

PURPOSE OF GRANT: To assist with repair and

upgrading of the original Cobble  
Hill School

REQUESTED BY: Gerry Giles  
Director Requesting Grant

ACCOUNT NO.	AMOUNT	GST CODE
01-2-1950-377-113	3500.00	10.0

**FOR FINANCE USE ONLY**

BUDGET APPROVAL [Signature]

VENDOR NO. \_\_\_\_\_

**Disposition of Cheque:**

Mail to above address: \_\_\_\_\_

Return to \_\_\_\_\_

Attach to letter from \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Approval at Regional Board Meeting of \_\_\_\_\_

Finance Authorization \_\_\_\_\_



**EVERGREEN  
INDEPENDENT  
SCHOOL**

Box 166  
Cobble Hill, BC  
Canada V0R 1L0  
Ph: 743-2433  
Fax: 743-2570  
evergreen@evergreenbc.net

To: Director Gerry Giles

April 23, 2010

Dear Gerry,

Through this letter, the Evergreen Independent School Society wishes to apply for a grant-in-aid from the Cobble Hill ~ Area 'C' grant-in-aid fund. Evergreen has embarked on our first Annual Fund appeal, with a focus on improving the educational tools available to our staff, as well as some necessary repairs and upgrades to our buildings.

A grant-in-aid from Cobble Hill ~ Area 'C' would be used to help Evergreen enhance a number of learning assistance initiatives for our children. These will include: increasing the number of books in our library, funding for one-on-one support for students who need help in particular areas, and providing our staff with updated reading assessment tools to ensure that the children can be properly supported in their learning.

We are grateful for your consideration of this request, and look forward to hearing from you

Thank-you

Teri Young  
Evergreen Independent School Society  
Fundraising Chair