



## ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

OCTOBER 21, 2010  
6:00 PM – CVRD Board Room  
175 Ingram Street

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### AGENDA

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|--|--------|
| 1. <b><u>APPROVAL OF AGENDA:</u></b>   | 1–2    |
| 2. <b><u>ADOPTION OF MINUTES:</u></b>  |        |
| M1 Adoption of minutes of Environment Commission from September 22, 2010   | 3–7    |
| 3. <b><u>BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:</u></b>  |        |
| B1 Report on communications contract   | Verbal |
| B2 Report on Air Quality Monitoring  | 8      |
| B3 State of the Environment report update  |        |
| B4 Lidar – Lake Cowichan   |        |
| B5 Other   |        |
| 4. <b><u>SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT AND STAFF REPORTS</u></b>  |        |
| R1 Budget amounts for consideration from sub-committees  |        |
| a. Communication- Chris Wood   |        |
| b. Agriculture – Judy Stafford   |        |
| c. Land – Dave Poster  |        |
| d. Air – Lori Iannidinardo   | 9      |
| e. Water and Fish – Rodger Hunter  |        |
| R2 2011 Budget   | 10-12  |
| R3 Species at Risk   | 13-32  |
| 5. <b><u>DELEGATION</u></b>  |        |
| D1 Neail Dawe – Qualicum Institute   |        |
| 6. <b><u>NEW BUSINESS:</u></b>   |        |
| NB1 Environment Commission membership terms expiration dates   | Verbal |
| 7. <b><u>INFORMATION</u></b>   |        |
| 8. <b><u>CORRESPONDENCE:</u></b>   |        |
| C1 Request from Geoff Millar, Economic Development, asking the Environment Commission to participate in a focus group on a Sustainable Economic Strategy for the CVRD. | 33     |
| C2 Request from Peter Nix re Earth Day 2011 and the environment commission's possible participation.   | 34     |

9. **NEXT MEETING:** November 18, 2010

9. **ADJOURNMENT:**

**Distribution:**

CVRD Director Gerry Giles (Chair)  
Roger Wiles  
Peter Keber  
Chris Wood  
Dave Polster  
CVRD Director Phil Kent  
CVRD Director Rob Hutchins  
CVRD Director Lori Iannidinardo

Rodger Hunter (Co-Chair)  
Kevin Visscher  
Bruce Sampson  
Bruce Fraser  
Justin Straker  
Judy Stafford  
Larry George, Cowichan Tribes

**As Well As Full Agenda:**

Warren Jones, CAO, CVRD  
Brian Dennison, General Manager, Engineering and Environment Services  
Kate Miller, Manager, Regional Environmental Policy Division

**Full Agenda as Hard Copy**

Director I. Morrison  
Director L. Duncan  
Director K. Kuhn

**Agenda Cover Only:**

Director G. Seymour	Director T. McGonigle
Director M. Marcotte	Director B. Harrison
Director D. Haywood	Director K. Cossey
Director M. Dorey	Director T. Walker
Tom Anderson, Manager, Planning and Development Services	

Minutes of the regular meeting of the ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION held in the CVRD Boardroom, 175 Ingram Street, Duncan, on September 22, 2010 at 6:00 pm.

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Rodger Hunter	Director Iannidinardo
	Bruce Fraser	Director Hutchins
	Roger Wiles	Director Kent
	Kevin Visscher	Director Giles
	Dave Polster	John Morris
	Bruce Sampson	Chris Wood
	Judy Stafford	

**ALSO PRESENT:** Kate Miller, Manager, Regional Environmental Policy  
Brian Dennison, Manager, Engineering/Environment  
Dyan Freer, Recording Secretary  
Klaus Kuhn, Electoral I Area Director  
Ian Morrison, Electoral Area F Director

**ABSENT:** Larry George, Brian Dennison, Justin Straker, Pete Keber

## APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**It was moved and seconded that the agenda be approved as presented with the addition of two sub-committee reports from Land and Water & Fish sub-committees, as well as a hand out of the Blue Carbon Report.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

## ADOPTION OF MINUTES

**It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the July 15, 2010 Environment Commission meeting be adopted.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

## REPORTS

**R1 Air Quality Report – Kathleen Milward, Environmental Tech** presented a report showing data from ten nights of air quality sampling over the course of January and February, 2010. A mobile Nephelometer was used to measure Fine Particulate Matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) in the CVRD. Information on the wood stove exchange program was also reported. Discussion ensued.

***ACTION:*** Staff to create a report tabulating a comparison of where the residents who participated in the wood exchange program reside. This report should be sent to all regional directors.

At this time it is unknown if funding will be available to duplicate the testing.

**ACTION:** Staff to send the air quality report to municipal Mayors and Councils.

**R2 Sub- Committee Reports**

**a. Communications – Chris Wood**

1. What questions should we put on Ipsos Reid poll? Each sub-committee needs to decide on two questions that are pertinent to the State of Environment and their area of work and submit these to Chris Wood asap.

2. Larger strategy for communicating –information to communicate will come from the sub-committees work.

A plan was proposed for discussion to spend up to \$20,000 of the Environment Commission budget for a communication strategy. This would make a uniform and consistent message. We also need to engage staff members in our region to incorporate the ‘12 things’ concept into every day work. We need to stay with our branding – i.e. the ‘12 things’.

**It was moved and seconded to ask the Regional District to contract a communication service group to implement a communication plan/strategy for the Environment Commission.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**b. Agriculture - Judy Stafford – The Agricultural sub-committee report puts forth the following recommendations:**

1. CVRD support and adopt a food policy ( building on the current Cowichan Food Charter)
2. Review ALR guidelines and make recommendations to improve process to negate land leaving the ALR
3. Support agriculturally related mapping projects
4. Support the formation of the proposed Agriculture Advisory Committee
5. Support a year-round farmer’s market
6. Collect more data and research

Discussion ensued.

***ACTION: Add note to how the subcommittee report template is relevant to the environment commission’s goals and how they link (outcomes).***

**c. Air Quality – Lori Iannidinardo – Health Network is likely to conduct a 15 month study in the CVRD on outdoor and indoor air quality.**

***ACTION - Rob Hutchins will send to staff for the commission’s attention the health report from VIHA on respiratory impacts.***

Plan to give out simple information to people on respiratory irritants: i.e. smoke, mould, and air fresheners. This could be in the form of educational stories or spoken on at public forums.

**Recommendations:**

1. That mobile monitoring results be used to guide more stationary Monitoring
2. That further mobile or temporary monitoring should be conducted in

other possible priority areas within the CVRD.

3. That the commission support a public awareness campaign related to the dangers to public health posed by indoor and outdoor air contaminants.
4. That staff explore the effectiveness of policy tools and incentives in preventing air contamination and implement those that are determined to be most effective.

While the monitoring that exists indicates that air quality is relatively high the Committee is concerned about the higher than average respiratory admissions rates in the area, and gaps in monitoring data.

**It is moved and seconded to write a letter of support, which will include our air quality sub-committee's recommendations, to the Public Health Agency of Canada, Centre for Grants and Contributions, in support of the PHAC Lung Health Phase 2 project grant application.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

***ACTION: Phil Kent will share a report on air quality and children's health with the commission.***

- d. **Land** - Dave Polster the committee has two recommendations:
  1. Getting information out on land based issue facing us through public meetings or workshops in the region
  2. Strategize with experts on the endangerment of the Coastal Douglas Fir ecosystems (down to 1%) and what we can do.
- e. **Water and Fish** – Rodger Hunter Proposed workshops on:
  1. Water supply and quality,
  2. Water demand,
  3. Aquifer and riparian issues -what is happening to the aquifers? – how are their levels and how are they performing right now?
  4. Communication of the need for conservation of a water practice. How much water does each person or business use? Would like to find that data.
  5. Storm water outfalls capacities should be examined.Focus would be ideas that we can do quickly. Encourage partnerships. Look to municipalities for money as well.

***ACTION: The region needs storm water treatment and mitigation strategies – could the Commission address this issue and write a Best Practices bylaw?***

Discussion: Can we help in the collaboration within the district on this issue?

**B BUSINESS ARISING  
OUT OF MINUTES**

**B1 State of the Environment Report update**

Presentations have been made to Municipality of North Cowichan, City of Duncan, and will be made to Town of Ladysmith and Lake Cowichan soon – they have generated a lot of interest and been very well received. Projected cost of \$715.00 for 25 more copies to be printed. Small editorial changes needed, deadline for submissions of any changes by September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010.

NB: Rodger Hunter was asked to write a report to UBCM on the State of Environment report which was submitted for possibility of an award.

**B2 Budget and Work plan for the Environment Commission**

Our annual total budget is \$51,500. Current amount spent or designated \$29,000. The sub-committees need to prioritize their work and how much of the budget they would estimate they need. Each committee will present at next meeting. Submission in advance is recommended for review by the whole commission. Incentive program for rain barrels idea – is there support for that?

No new business

**NEW BUSINESS  
CORRESPONDENCE**

- C1** Request for quotes from our 12things.ca website to be used on the Energy Solutions Bus Display from Peter Nix, dated August 30, 2010 was received.

***ACTION:** Kate Miller will send a note to Peter that quotes from the 12things.ca may be used as long as not used out of context.*

- C2** Comments from Jim van Barneveld re agriculture section of State of Environment report dated September 6, 2010 to Gerry Giles by email.

**Action:** **Judy Stafford** will reply and state that Environment Commission has targeted this request as one of theirs and ask if he would like to attend the future Community Green Community meetings.

- C3** Letter from Municipality of North Cowichan's Mayor Tom Walker re the recent State of Environment presentation.

**It was moved and seconded that the correspondence from Peter Nix, Jim Van Barneveld and Mayor Tom Walker be received and filed.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**INFORMATION**

- IN1** CAO will present the Environmental Lens and the corporate Strategy Plan at the next Environment Commission meeting.
- IN2** Blue Carbon Report – Lori Iannidinardo wanted to bring it to the commission's attention that the Cowichan River and Cowichan Bay estuaries are shown as well as how the eelgrass benefits the carbon sequestration.

**ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 16, 2010**

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IN3 Thank you from Judy Stafford for our attendance at the Agricultural Society Harvest B-B-Q.

**NEXT MEETING** Thursday, October 21, 2010

**ADJOURNMENT** It was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned.  
The meeting adjourned 9:05 pm. **MOTION CARRIED**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Recording Secretary

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

As per a request at the Environment Commission Meeting of September 16, 2010, I have tallied the distribution of woodstove rebates across the region.

Please note, the program was run in two separate portions this year (run by the CVRD and MNC). Also, the program was well advertised and rebates were distributed in a first come, first served fashion. Grants were received from the provincial government, of differing amounts, and subsequently topped up by local government.

I was program coordinator for CVRD Electoral Areas, Town of Ladysmith, and Town of Lake Cowichan. I had a total of 90 rebates that have all been given out for this year; they were distributed as:

Town of Ladysmith	8	Town of Lake Cowichan	7
Area A	10	Area B	8
Area C	20	Area D	5
Area E	1	Area F	10
Area G	5	Area H	1
Area I	5		

Andy Daniel at North Cowichan is currently running the exchange program for North Cowichan and City of Duncan; their program is still running.

North Cowichan	47 (out of 75)
City of Duncan	7 (out of 25)

Both the CVRD and MNC are currently applying to the province for 2011 funding and plan to work together again next year so that every resident of the entire CVRD will be equally eligible for a rebate.

#### **Sustainability:**

Also of interest, for the 190 uncertified old woodstoves expected retired in our region by year end:

Reduced PM emissions = 62 kg/stove/season

190 stoves x 62 kg = 11,780 kg reduced PM emissions (per year)

Total estimated number of cords saved = # stoves changed x 1.63 cords

(Assumes new appliance owners use 1/3 less wood of a typical 4 cord winter)

190 stoves x 1.63 cords = 309.7 cords of wood saved (per year)

Let me know if you have any further questions,

Kathleen

**Kathleen Milward**

*Environmental Technologist*

Engineering & Environmental Services Department

Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD)

175 Ingram Street

Duncan, BC, V9L-1N8

Tel: 250-746-2530



**Sub-Committee Report on Air Quality****Recommendations and Financial Implications:**

Recommendations	Budget Implications
1. A letter be written from the Commission in support of the request for funding to investigate causes of the higher than average respiratory related hospital admissions in the region should such a letter be deemed to be useful.	None. Staff to prepare letter of support on behalf of Commission as per September meeting resolution.
2. Mobile monitoring results be used to guide more stationary monitoring.	Minor staff time to seek grant funding – possibly from a financial institution.
3. Further mobile or temporary monitoring should be conducted in other possible priority areas within the CVRD.	Undetermined. Link to funding request identified above.
4. The commission support a public awareness campaign related to the dangers to public health posed by indoor and outdoor air contaminants.	\$5,000 plus volunteer efforts and possible leveraged support from partners. (Public forums in communities?) -2011.
5. Local government staff explore the effectiveness of policy tools and incentives in preventing air contamination and implement those that are determined to be most effective.	Staff time or \$5000 contract. 2011.link up to respiratory admissions study.

**Purpose:**

Provide strategic guidance on priority environmental issues and responses for the CVRD.

**Background Discussion:****How are these recommendation relevant to the environment commission's goals and how does it link with desired outcomes?**

These recommendations relate directly to the Commission's goals of protecting and restoring our environment and reinforce the linkages between a clean healthy environment and the fundamental health and safety of humans. They also emphasize the importance of inventory and a science based approach.

While the monitoring that exists indicates that air quality is relatively high the Committee is concerned about the higher than average respiratory admissions rates in the area, and gaps in monitoring data.

Submitted by,

*Lori Iannidinardo*



C.V.R.D.

STAFF REPORT

R2

COWICHAN VALLEY ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION  
OF JULY 15, 2010

**DATE:** July 9, 2010 **FILE NO:** Env Comission

**FROM:** Kate Miller, Manager, Regional Environmental Policy

**SUBJECT:** Environment Commission Budget

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**Recommendation:** That the Commission consider its 2011 budget needs in light of the 2011 budget direction provided by the Board.

**Purpose:** For information only

**Financial Implications:** The commission has an established budget of \$31,500 per annum to cover costs of commission activities and programs. The budget was expanded in 2010 to include an additional \$20,000 for communication and outreach purposes.

**Interdepartmental/Agency Implications:** Not at this time

**Sustainability Implications:** Not at this time

**Background:** The CVRD Board reviewed and approved the 2011 Budget timeline and schedules presented by the General Manager of the Corporate Services Department (attached report) and made the following additional recommendation. That the Regional Budgets excluding Parkland Acquisition, be limited to a combined 2% requisition increase. The Environment Commissions budget is imbedded in the Environmental Initiatives Budget which currently sits in the General Government Budget. This is currently being moved into a separate, stand alone Regional Budget through bylaw at which point it will be clearly identified as a separate function within the CVRD. Based on this last year's budget is being considered a core budget with the result that the Commissions current core budget is set at \$51,500 annually, overseen by the Environmental Policy Division. If the Commission feels that the budget allocation needs to be modified they will need to make a recommendation to that effect; conversely if they want to take on additional programs or projects beyond their existing core programming they will have to request supplemental funding.

Submitted by,

Kate Miller, Manager  
Regional Environmental Policy

Approved by:

Brian Dennison, General Manager,  
Engineering and Environmental Services



## STAFF REPORT

### REGIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING OF AUGUST 25, 2010

DATE: August 12, 2010

FILE NO:

FROM: Mark Kueber, General Manager  
Corporate Services Department

BYLAW NO:

SUBJECT: 2011 Regional Budgets Discussion

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#### Recommendation:

1. That it be recommended to the Board that the 2011 Budget Timeline and Schedule be approved.
2. That direction be provided from the Committee on the 2011 Regional Budgets.

#### Purpose:

To discuss the 2011 Budget and to provide the Board members an opportunity to give staff direction at the beginning of the Budget process on the nine Regional budgets which are:

- General Government
- 911
- Emergency Planning
- Economic Development
- Regional Tourism
- Regional Parks
- Parkland Acquisition
- Kinsol Trestle
- Solid Waste.

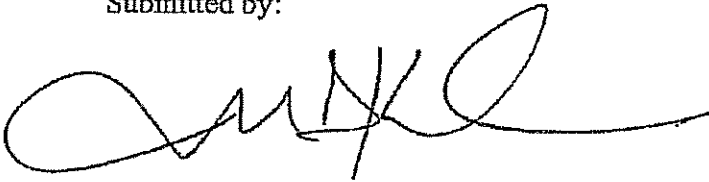
#### Background:

During the 2010 Budget preparation it was generally agreed that the Committee members would like an opportunity in late August to discuss and provide earlier direction into the 2011 Budget process. The staff will be starting the Budget process soon and are now seeking that direction. To facilitate discussion a number of points are stated below and the Committee's comments are appreciated.

1. Commissions/Committees will also be requested to provide direction.
2. Core expenditures used as foundation in determining 2011 Budget.
3. Supplemental new items are reviewed and recommended by Corporate Leadership Team to Board.
4. 1<sup>st</sup> Budget booklet distributed after surplus and new assessments are known in 2011.
5. Early Budget adoption vs 15 months of Capital.
6. New staff positions being proposed.

In an attempt to clarify timing so the Board is aware when budget meetings are taking place, a timeline has been prepared and is attached to this report. Board comments on the timeline are also requested.

Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MK', with a large loop at the end.

Mark Kueber, C.G.A.  
General Manager, Corporate Services Department  
MK:tk

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## STAFF REPORT

**R3**

### CVRD ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION OF OCTOBER 21, 2010

**DATE:** October 13, 2010

**FILE No:**

**FROM:** Kate Lindsay, Environmental Analyst

**SUBJECT:** BC Species at Risk task force call for comments

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**Recommendation:** For information purposes

**Purpose:** To inform the committee about an opportunity to provide advice on a provincial Species at Risk (SAR) regulatory framework and to provide background documents for their information.

**Financial Implications:** Not at this time.

**Interdepartmental/Agency Implications:** Not at this time.

**Background:** The majority of Canadian provinces have enacted species at risk legislation; BC currently does not have stand alone species at risk legislation in place, and contains the largest amount of species at risk in Canada. The CVRD is home to 134 species of plants and animals and an additional 84 ecological communities provincially designated as endangered or threatened, (2010 State of the Environment Report).

In the 2009 Throne speech the province announced the development of a SAR task force to provide guidance to the Province on this critical issue. Shortly thereafter the province formed a local government working group to address some of the critical issues and challenges from a local government point of view. The report from that local government working group was presented at UBCM recently and is attached as a backgrounder.

In June 2010, the province of BC announced the members and mandate for a Species at Risk Task Force. The 10 member team was selected from a wide range of regional sectors and backgrounds, and will make recommendations to the Cabinet Committee on Environment and Land Use by the end of December 2010. The task forces terms of reference is attached as a backgrounder as well as some specific questions of the public in regards to their mandate. The task force is seeking submissions through an online tool (<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/sartaskforce/submissions.html>). Any comments through the website will be submitted directly to the members of the task force.

This is an opportunity for the CVRD to provide important advice on a critical issue in our regional district.

February 16, 2010

Staff Report to the Engineering and Environmental Services Committee

Page 2

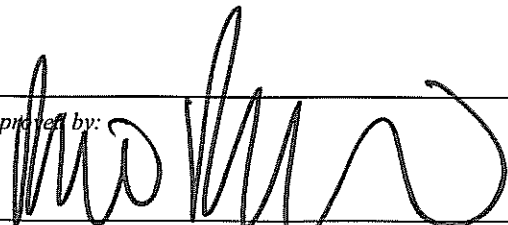
Submitted by,



Kate Lindsay  
Environmental Analyst  
Regional Environmental Policy Division

KL:df

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Approved by: 

Brian Dennison, General Manager  
Engineering and Environmental Services

**WORKING TOGETHER TO PROTECT SPECIES AT RISK:  
RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE CONSERVATION  
ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE LANDS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA**

*SPECIES AT RISK LOCAL GOVERNMENT WORKING GROUP*

*This discussion paper addresses how the protection of species at risk could be enhanced on local government and private lands in British Columbia (B.C.). It was prepared by the Species At Risk Local Government Working Group, with input from more than 50 of B.C.'s local governments, and includes recommendations on how the provincial government can work in partnership with local governments to achieve shared conservation goals.*

## Species at Risk in British Columbia

There are more than 1,377 species at risk in British Columbia<sup>1</sup>—plants, animals and insects that are in danger of becoming locally or globally extinct.

Two significant threats to species conservation are loss of habitat caused by human activities (urbanization, road development, logging and agriculture) and invasive alien species that displace native plants and animals. At present, most species at risk occur in the Okanagan and Similkameen river valleys, the Fraser River valley, the Kootenay region and eastern Vancouver Island.

Many people are aware of the decline in iconic species such as the Vancouver Island marmot or woodland caribou, but know nothing about the loss of lesser-known species such as the dromedary jumping-slug or rusty cord moss. While it's easy to be complacent, loss of these species can impact humans in ways we might not realize. Biodiversity is the foundation of the human economy—for example, the loss of native bees and other pollinators is affecting agricultural productivity, and we rely on healthy ecosystems to clean our air and water and support resource-based economies. As a society, we also have legal and moral obligations to protect all forms of life (Canada is a signatory to the Convention on Biological Diversity<sup>2</sup>).

British Columbians agree that species at risk are a priority. In a recent poll<sup>3</sup>, 95% of respondents agreed that the public should be encouraged to become involved in protecting and recovering species at risk, while 74% agreed that landowners should not have the right to use their property in ways that put plants or animals at risk of extinction, endangerment or threat.

## *The Role of Local Governments*

Senior (federal and provincial) governments have some legislation, policies and initiatives to protect species at risk (see Appendix 1). However, local governments and landowners are also important players in conserving species at risk. Although only a small portion of B.C.'s land base is privately owned (~5%), a disproportionately large number of species at risk occur on private land, including about 38% of known at-risk plants and 3% of known at-risk animals.<sup>4</sup>

Local governments regulate land use on much of the private property where species at risk occur, and own many important habitats. For example, the entire Canadian populations of Kellogg's rush and poor pocket moss are located in municipal parks.<sup>5</sup> Local government decisions are important because they affect—for better or for worse—species at risk on private lands.

<sup>1</sup> [www.speciesatrisk.bc.ca](http://www.speciesatrisk.bc.ca)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cbd.int/>

<sup>3</sup> UBC Faculty of Forest. 2008. [http://www.harfolk.ca/Publications/bc-SaR-POS\\_Final-Technical-Report\\_08-06-24.pdf](http://www.harfolk.ca/Publications/bc-SaR-POS_Final-Technical-Report_08-06-24.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> B.C. Conservation Data Centre

<sup>5</sup> [www.speciesatrisk.bc.ca](http://www.speciesatrisk.bc.ca)

## Developing a Shared Approach to Species at Risk Conservation and Management

The B.C. Ministry of Environment set up a *Species at Risk Local Government Working Group* in the fall of 2009 to develop and obtain support for a common, province-wide approach to protecting species at risk on local government and private lands. The approach builds on the extensive work already underway in the various regions of the province. More than 50 local governments (municipalities and regional districts) participated in this process, including staff and elected officials. Representation was almost exclusively from the southern half of B.C., perhaps reflecting greater awareness of species at risk issues already affecting these areas. However, it will be important to engage more northerly local governments in this discussion, as there are already species at risk in the north and they have an important role to play in preventing yet more species from becoming at risk. Discussion did not include species at risk on agricultural lands, as these are largely outside the control of local governments.

Local governments vary considerably across the province in many ways, including their approaches to species at risk. Some local governments place a high priority on protection and management and have found creative ways to achieve their goals. Some local governments are concerned about species at risk, but feel they do not have the authority, technical skills or resources to accomplish much. And for some local governments, species at risk are simply not a priority.

Nonetheless, the local governments who chose to participate in the Species at Risk Local Government Working Group identified some common issues and needs that they encourage the provincial government to address. Key concerns from local governments include:

- ♦ The respective roles of local and provincial government are unclear.
- ♦ Local governments are challenged by many competing priorities, and being asked to respond to species at risk is seen by some as more downloading of responsibility;
- ♦ There are few incentives to encourage local governments or landowners to take on responsibility for species at risk conservation, and limited legislation to require habitat protection;
- ♦ Many local governments lack the resources or technical expertise to address species at risk;
- ♦ There are many tools available to local governments, and several regional initiatives underway; yet awareness of species at risk and the role that local governments can play in their conservation may be low among both staff and elected officials;
- ♦ The implications of climate change with respect to species at risk are poorly understood; and
- ♦ There is little integration of the many different provincial initiatives that affect local government, making response complex.

At the same time, British Columbians can be proud of a variety of initiatives that are taking place across the province. Some of the available policies and programs are outlined in Appendix 1.

The working group has provided recommendations to the Province under five strategies:

1. Increase local government awareness of species at risk
2. Facilitate use of effective tools and techniques
3. Identify and collaborate on shared responsibilities
4. Conduct ecosystem mapping and encourage data sharing
5. Engage landowners in species at risk habitat protection



## Strategy 1: Increase Local Government Awareness of Species at Risk

### *Issues*

Local governments face many challenges on a day-to-day basis, and species at risk issues may be lost in a sea of other priorities. In some communities, awareness of species at risk may be low among staff, elected officials or both. Historically, wildlife conservation focused on larger vertebrates and species of commercial significance. Today, there is a greater awareness that species loss relates to other local government priorities, such as the importance of healthy ecosystems to local economies and community health. If local governments are to contribute to the protection of species at risk and their habitats, ways need to be found to increase awareness of the issues, opportunities and available resources.

### *Local Government Needs*

- ♦ Clear information on:
  - ◇ the importance and benefits of species at risk for ecosystem and economic health
  - ◇ which species are at risk (by region)
  - ◇ local governments' legal requirements to protect species at risk
- ♦ Easy access to biodiversity information, preferably through a 'single window' approach
- ♦ Awareness and understanding of the Conservation Framework

### *Recommendations: Awareness*

To further support local government efforts, the Province could:

- 1.1. *Provide a 'single window' for information on species at risk, such as links to useful websites and information updates.*
- 1.2. *Provide up-to-date data on species at risk by electoral area/municipality (e.g., through the CDC Species and Ecosystem Explorer or the SAR & Local Government websites).*
- 1.3. *Increase awareness of existing resources, such as the Conservation Framework, inventories, species at risk data, and best practices documents.*
- 1.4. *Provide regular, regional workshops targeted to staff, elected officials and/or consultants, focusing on species at risk specific to that area. These would include updates on legislation and the conservation framework, potential threats (e.g. new diseases and invasive species), progress on provincial biodiversity strategies, etc.*
- 1.5. *Provide professional development opportunities (e.g., webinars) for consultants and local government staff to gain a better understanding of species at risk taxonomic groups (e.g. birds, beetles, dragonflies, plants), mapping and inventory products and the Conservation Framework (e.g., invertebrates, plants, small mammals).*
- 1.6. *Provide clear information that demonstrates how species at risk and ecosystem conservation can support other local government priorities, such as healthy lifestyles, economic growth, flood protection, soil conservation, air and water quality, and recreational opportunities.*

The South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program is a partnership of more than 40 groups working to protect species and ecosystems at risk. They produce many brochures, planning guidelines and other sources of information for homeowners and local governments.

The Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team is a partnership of experts affiliated with all levels of government, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, First Nations, volunteers and consultants dedicated to the recovery of Garry oak and associated ecosystems in Canada and the species at risk that inhabit them.

The District of Saanich is establishing development permit areas, with supporting guidelines, for red- and blue-listed species.

*1.7. Integrate species at risk educational opportunities into work within other ministries such as education and health programs, tourism, and resource-based ministries, such that local government works are linked and cross-referenced with other work being completed elsewhere in the province.*

In addition, UBCM could:

*1.8. Include a species-at-risk field trip/workshop session in the annual and regional conventions.*

Local governments could be encouraged to:

*1.9. Put information on local species at risk on their website, including information on incentives for conservation.*

## Strategy 2: Facilitate Use of Effective Tools and Techniques

### *Issues*

There are many tools that local governments can use to promote species at risk protection on local government and private lands (see Appendix 1), some more effective than others. These include: regulatory tools such as tree protection bylaws (currently available only to municipal governments) and restrictive covenants; planning tools such as development permit areas, park dedication and urban forest planning; financial tools such as property tax incentives; and educational tools such as workshops or brochures.

The working group identified the most significant tool missing from the 'toolkit' as provincial legislation that requires detailed inventory when the presence of species at risk is suspected, combined with habitat protection for species at risk. Without a clear legislative requirement to protect species at risk, competing and conflicting priorities can make such protection challenging for decision-makers.

### *Local Government Needs*

- ♦ Legislative authority to protect species at risk and critical habitats on private land
- ♦ Legislative authority to enforce infractions of development permit restrictions, including with a stop work order and the ability to go to court when infractions occur.
- ♦ Authority for the Approving Officer (whether employed by the local government or Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure) to refuse subdivision for environmental protection reasons.

### *Recommendations*

To further support local government efforts, the Province could:

- 2.1. *Enact legislation to require protection of all species at risk and their habitats across B.C., including on private land. This includes bringing in regulations for the B.C. Wildlife Amendment Act; requiring habitat protection for species at risk (e.g., through additions to the list of identified wildlife under the Forest and Range Practices Act); controls on threats to species at risk (e.g., licensing of all terrain vehicles, increasing the scope of controlled alien species to include plant and invertebrate species).*
- 2.2. *Amend the Local Government Act/Community Charter to:*
  - ♦ *Enable the protection of biodiversity values (e.g., soil integrity, rock formations and other identifiable wildlife features);*
  - ♦ *Enable strong enforcement of development permit area guidelines, including making infractions a civil or criminal offence; and*
  - ♦ *Allow regional districts to adopt tree protection bylaws.*
- 2.3. *Enforce provincial legislation and regulations*
- 2.4. *Encourage and support the development of local government plans and strategies that address species at risk as part of broader sustainability initiatives (e.g., official community plans, urban forest management strategies, urban agricultural programs and pesticide reduction initiatives).*

In addition, UBCM could:

- 2.5. *Share information on examples of successful community approaches.*

Local governments could be encouraged to:

Many municipalities (such as Port Coquitlam, Vernon and Whistler) use sustainability checklists to encourage developers to protect and restore native habitats as part of the development process.

The Town of Qualicum Beach has identified carrying capacity and ecosystem limits as important elements in its Official Community Plan.

2.6. *Identify important habitats in regional growth strategies, official community plans and development permit areas.*

2.7. *Regularly update these plans to include new inventory information.*

2.8. *Develop regional conservation plans, watershed plans, urban forest strategies, and other ecosystem-based plans and strategies.*

## Strategy 3: Identify and Collaborate on Shared Responsibilities

### *Issues*

Local government decisions affect species at risk, for better or for worse. However, local governments may be unclear on local and provincial legal authorities, responsibilities and roles with respect to species at risk: what must local governments do, what can they do, and what are the Province's roles and responsibilities? Like local governments, the provincial government is stretched thin and may not always enforce its own regulations (e.g., licensing of docks on waterways).

Moreover, many local governments lack the technical expertise and resources to identify, protect and manage the broad scope of species at risk within their communities. While technical support was once part of the development referral process, this is now mostly achieved through best practices documents, resulting in the loss of site-specific advice.

On a positive note, there are many examples throughout B.C. of collaborative efforts to address species at risk issues.

### *Local Government Needs*

- ♦ Clear delineation of provincial and local government roles, responsibilities and authorities.
- ♦ Assistance with implementation of the Conservation Framework on local government and private lands. This will require:
  - ◇ Completed action plans/strategies for all identified species at risk;
  - ◇ Technical support to develop conservation management plans for local government lands (e.g., species/ecosystems specialists and restoration experts). These plans should be based on a provincial template and standards, yet provide enough flexibility enough to meet different regional needs.
- ♦ Support for collaborative approaches that pool resources, technical expertise and enforcement approaches across senior and local governments and non-government organizations (including land trusts).

### *Recommendations: Shared Responsibilities*

To further support local government efforts, the Province could:

- 3.1. *Provide clear direction on roles and responsibilities of provincial and local governments with respect to species at risk, recognizing that local governments cannot take on additional responsibilities without resources and support.*
- 3.2. *Provide explicit information on species at risk recovery requirements, by species and/or ecosystem (including information on yellow-listed species of concern), with best management practices for protection and conservation, management and recovery.*
- 3.3. *Provide technical support for species at risk conservation plans*
- 3.4. *Provide technical support where development proposals include species at risk.*
- 3.5. *Identify opportunities for pooling resources and expertise.*
- 3.6. *Assist local governments with incorporating species and habitats into their bylaws.*

In addition, UBCM could:

Many municipalities (such as Port Coquitlam, Vernon and Whistler) use sustainability checklists to encourage developers to protect and restore native habitats as part of the development process.

The Town of Qualicum Beach worked with a local partner to purchase 32 acres of the Brown Property, home of many endangered and rare plants.

*3.7. Facilitate MOUs or other arrangements to share resources and expertise among multiple governments.*

*3.8. Provide information on opportunities for funding and collaboration.*

*3.9. Facilitate opportunities for smaller local governments to share resources, for example by creating shared environmental manager positions or collaborating with non-government organizations.*

Local governments could be encouraged to:

*3.10. Identify important habitats in regional growth strategies, official community plans and development permit areas.*

*3.11. Where feasible, acquire land for habitat protection (perhaps in cooperation with land trusts) and prepare conservation management plans.*

## Strategy 4: Conduct Ecosystem Mapping and Encourage Data Sharing

### *Issues*

Local governments cannot protect species at risk if they do not realise these species are (or may be) present. Ecosystem mapping (e.g., sensitive ecosystem inventory mapping, terrestrial ecosystem mapping, sensitive habitat inventory mapping, foreshore inventory mapping, watershed mapping, ecosystem features mapping), provides an essential 'heads-up' that species at risk may be present on a particular property, but to be of value it has to be accurate, up-to-date and of sufficient detail to support local decision-making. Conducting this ecosystem mapping, inventory and baseline studies at a provincial or regional level provides an economy of scale and consistency across jurisdictional boundaries.

An additional challenge is that even where data exist, local government staff may not have the technical expertise to interpret inventory data or to implement recovery strategies.

Environment assessments are often required as part of the land development process. However, many such surveys lack rigour and consistency because there are no clear guidelines as to how data are to be collected. For example, these assessments often miss the appropriate season to complete species at risk surveys.

Data gathered by local governments and consultants are often not provided to the Conservation Data Centre; a lost opportunity to update and improve provincial data.

### *Local Government Needs*

- ♦ Reliable, up-to-date ecosystem mapping/inventory data
- ♦ Technical support to interpret data
- ♦ Guidelines for conducting environmental assessments and providing this information to the Province

### *Recommendations: Inventory and Data Sharing*

To further support local government efforts, the Province could:

- 4.1. Fund, conduct and update inventories and data collection.
- 4.2. Provide science support to local governments on an as-needed basis.
- 4.3. Provide clear, mandatory guidelines (terms of reference) for consultants on how to gather inventory information at various scales of development. Inventory and assessment need to be completed by an appropriate environmental professional, during appropriate seasons, and the resulting data should be provided to the B.C. Conservation Data Centre.
- 4.4. Require private land holding companies to complete multi-year species at risk inventories prior to applying to have forested land rezoned for residential or other non-forest uses.

In addition, UBCM could:

- 4.5. Encourage local governments to submit their data to Conservation Data Centre (e.g., through reminders in bulletins and on the CivicInfo website).

Local governments could be encouraged to:

- 4.6. Submit information gathered on local species at risk to the Conservation Data Centre.

The City of Kelowna has completed inventory and mapping of environmentally sensitive areas including creeks, wetlands, Okanagan Lake foreshore, grasslands and old growth forests. This information is included in their Official Community Plan.

The Sunshine Coast Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory is a "flagging" tool that identifies sensitive ecosystems and provides scientific information and support to local governments and others who are trying to maintain biodiversity. It was developed with input from the federal and provincial governments, three regional districts, local First Nations and forestry companies.

- 4.7. Require developers to provide their data to the Conservation Data Centre.

## Strategy 5: Engage Landowners in Species at Risk Habitat Protection

### **Issues**

An increasing number of species at risk are found on private land, where there is little or no legislated protection for many of these species or their habitats.

Many landowners are not even aware that species at risk exist on their property, and lack the expertise and resources to protect species and their habitats. There are few incentives for species at risk protection on private land. For developers, it may be seen as detrimental to their interests to have species at risk identified, as this could increase their costs (e.g., for assessments) and limit their ability to develop their property as they had planned.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)—such as land trusts—play an important role in assisting landowners to identify and protect ecological values on their property, and educating the public on species at risk values. However, funding to support these organizations and their activities is increasingly scarce (from both senior and local governments) and lacks long-term commitment.

### **Local Government Needs**

- ♦ A suite of incentives (monetary or other), compensation or other programs that will make landowners (including developers) more receptive to taking on responsibility for species at risk management on their land.
- ♦ Effective landowner outreach programs, undertaken by local government staff or non-government organizations, that include information on the values of species at risk.
- ♦ Detailed best management practices guidelines that are species-specific, ecosystem-specific and region-specific, and written in non-technical language.
- ♦ Opportunities, resources and incentives to build relationships with land trusts and conservancies to acquire, purchase or covenant private lands for conservation purposes.

### **Recommendations: Landowner Engagement**

To further support local government efforts, the Province could:

- 5.1. *Set up a provincial fund (open to stewardship groups and local governments) to provide funding for landowner outreach and incentive programs, including strategic acquisition of critical habitats.*
- 5.2. *Enable local governments to provide property tax reductions for biodiversity measures.*
- 5.3. *Provide targeted outreach materials for landowners and developers that provide information on the many values of species at risk, and best practices to maintain and enhance critical habitats. These should be available online from the species at risk website.*

In addition, UBCM could:

- 5.4. *Disseminate information on successful incentive programs, and available tools such as density transfer and clustering.*
- 5.5. *Encourage and support collaborative efforts between local governments and with non-government organizations.*

Local governments could be encouraged to:

- 5.6. *Require developers to follow guidelines and best practices (e.g., Develop with Care).*
- 5.7. *Provide incentives to developers to protect species at risk habitat (e.g., through clustering or density transfer).*
- 5.8. *Provide property tax reductions to landowners who protect species at risk habitats through conservation covenants on their land.*



The Islands Trust offers a Natural Areas Tax Exemption Program that reduces property taxes for landowners who have a signed conservation covenant to protect natural areas on their property.

The federal Ecological Gift (Ecogift) Program offers significant tax benefits to landowners who donate land or a partial interest in land to a qualified recipient. Recipients ensure that the land's biodiversity and environmental heritage are conserved in perpetuity. The Program is administered by Environment Canada in cooperation with other federal departments, provincial and municipal governments, and non-government organizations.

## Next Steps

The working group suggests that the Ministry of Environment takes the following 'next steps':

- ♦ Provide these recommendations to the new Species at Risk Task Force to determine a shared stewardship approach;
- ♦ Identify and implement pilot projects, involving provincial and local conservation organizations; and
- ♦ Work with UBCM to support greater understanding of species at risk values, issues, and available tools for protection and management.

The *Species at Risk Local Government Working Group* will continue to meet and discuss these issues on a bi-monthly basis, and the group looks forward to a response from the Province.

## Sources for Further Information

B.C. Conservation Framework <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/conservationframework/>

Conservation Data Centre <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/cdc/>

Ecological Gifts Program <http://www.ec.gc.ca/pde-egg/>

Guidelines and Best Practices documents <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/BMP/bmpintro.html>

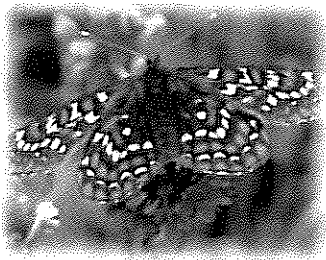
SAR Recovery Teams, Recovery Implementation Groups <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/recoveryplans/rcvry1.htm>

Sensitive Ecosystems Inventories <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/sei/>

Species and Ecosystems Explorer <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/atrisk/toolintro.html>

Species at Risk & Local Government <http://www.speciesatrisk.bc.ca/>

Stewardship Centre for British Columbia <http://www.stewardshipcentre.bc.ca/>



Edith's Checkerspot ssp. *taylorii*  
Photo Jennifer Heron

## Appendix 1: Existing Resources and Initiatives

### *Federal Legislation and Commitments*

The United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity is an international, legally-binding treaty with three main goals: conservation of biodiversity; sustainable use of biodiversity; and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources. Canada's response has been to develop a Canadian Biodiversity Strategy and implement the *Species at Risk Act*.

The federal *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) was enacted to: prevent Canadian indigenous species, subspecies, and distinct populations from becoming extirpated or extinct; provide for the recovery of endangered or threatened species; and encourage the management of other species to prevent them from becoming at risk. It primarily applies to sites where federal lands or federal contributions are involved. In addition, the federal Minister of Environment can apply SARA to provincial and private lands if the laws of the province provide effective protection for a species at risk. The *Species at Risk Act* requires the development of recovery strategies for all endangered species, identifying what needs to be done to stop or reverse their decline.

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) sets controls on the international trade and movement of animal and plant species that have been, or may be, threatened due to excessive commercial exploitation. Within Canada, the implementation and administration of CITES are shared among federal and provincial agencies to make the best use of existing organizational structures and to reduce costs. The Canadian Wildlife Service is responsible for managing CITES species in Canada.

### *Provincial Legislation and Policies*

British Columbia has no stand-alone endangered species legislation. Multiple acts together form the basis of protecting species at risk in the province.

The BC Wildlife Act protects most vertebrate animals from direct harm, except as allowed by regulation (e.g., hunting or trapping). Legal designation as 'Endangered' or 'Threatened' under the Act increases the penalties for harming a species, and also enables the protection of habitat in a Critical Wildlife Management Area. It also protects the nest trees of some birds (eagle, peregrine falcon, gyrfalcon, osprey, heron or burrowing owl), but does not protect the habitat of any species. Proposed changes under the B.C. Wildlife Amendment Act will allow for the protection of invertebrates and plants, but the regulations for this act have yet to be written and the this protection is not in force.

The B.C. Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA) created an Identified Wildlife Management Strategy to provide direction, policy, procedures and guidelines for managing 'Identified Wildlife' (including species at risk) on Crown land. The Strategy aims to minimize the effects of forest and range practices on Identified Wildlife situated on Crown land, and to maintain and (if necessary restore) habitats throughout their ranges.

The Riparian Areas Regulation (RAR) (part of the B.C. *Fish Protection Act*) calls on local governments to protect riparian areas during residential, commercial, and industrial development by ensuring that proposed activities are subject to a science-based assessment conducted by a Qualified Environmental Professional. This regulation only applies to local governments in the Georgia Basin and Okanagan Valley.

The B.C. Conservation Framework directs action for conserving species and ecosystems in B.C. The Framework tools select appropriate actions depending on what is known about the species or ecosystem in question. If this detailed information already exists, the Framework recommends actions such as ecosystem and habitat protection, invasive species control, stewardship, population management, and planning processes. Where information is lacking, detailed studies and assessments may be required.

### *Local Government Authorities*

Local governments in British Columbia function under the authority of the *Local Government Act*, *Community Charter* and/or *Vancouver Charter*. They are required or enabled to produce a variety of plans and strategies that address

environmental issues, including official community plans, regional growth strategies, sustainability plans, biodiversity plans, infrastructure plans, and urban forest plans. They can control development through tools such as zoning, subdivision approvals,<sup>6</sup> development permit areas, and park dedication; and can regulate activities such as tree cutting, soil removal and use of pesticides. They also have a few financial tools that can be applied to species at risk protection, such as variable fee structures.

### ***Non-government Organizations***

There are also a great many stewardship and land acquisition programs being undertaken non-government organizations and land trusts across British Columbia. Organizations with a province-wide or broad regional scope include:

- ♦ Land Trust Alliance of BC <http://www.landtrustalliance.bc.ca/>
- ♦ TLC The Land Conservancy of British Columbia <http://www.conservancy.bc.ca/>
- ♦ Nature Conservancy of Canada (BC) <http://www.natureconservancy.ca/>
- ♦ The Nature Trust of BC <http://www.naturetrust.bc.ca/>
- ♦ Ducks Unlimited Canada <http://www.ducks.ca/province/bc/index.html>
- ♦ East Kootenay Conservation Program <http://www.ekcp.ca/index.html>
- ♦ Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team <http://goert.ca/>
- ♦ South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program <http://soscp.org/>

Many of these groups work in cooperation with senior and local governments to achieve shared goals.

### ***Inventory and Data***

The British Columbia Conservation Data Centre (CDC) systematically collects and disseminates information on plants, animals and ecosystems at risk in British Columbia. This information is provided in a centralized database which provides scientific information on the status, locations and level of protection of these species and ecosystems.

The Stewardship Centre Species at Risk and Local Governments: A Primer for British Columbia website allows people to search for species at risk in their area by name or by ecosystem type, and to learn about threats and ways that local governments can contribute to species at risk conservation.

Sensitive Ecosystems Inventories have been developed to identify remnants of rare and fragile terrestrial ecosystems and to encourage land-use decisions that will ensure the continued integrity of these ecosystems. There are Sensitive Ecosystems Inventories for east Vancouver Island and Gulf Islands, Bowen & Gambier islands, Sunshine Coast, and the Okanagan Valley from Vernon to Osoyoos.

### ***Publications***

Several guidelines and best practices documents are available, including:

- ♦ Green Bylaws Toolkit for Conserving Sensitive Ecosystems and Green Infrastructure
- ♦ Develop with Care: Environmental Guidelines for Urban and Rural Land Development in B.C.
- ♦ Conservation Covenants - A Guide For Developers and Planning Departments
- ♦ Planning for Biodiversity: A Guide for Farmers and Ranchers
- ♦ Best Management Practices for Raptor Conservation during Urban and Rural Land Development in B.C.
- ♦ Best Management Practices for Amphibians and Reptiles in Urban and Rural Environments in B.C.
- ♦ Wetland Ways: Interim Guidelines for Wetland Protection and Conservation in B.C.

<sup>6</sup> In unincorporated areas the Approving Officer is a provincial employee (Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure).

## Appendix 2: Glossary

**Biodiversity:** the variety of life on earth in all its forms including genes, species, and ecosystems and the natural processes that link and maintain them.

**Ecosystem:** a complete system of living organisms interacting with the soil, land, water, and nutrients that make up their environment.

**Land trust:** private, non-profit, charitable organisations that work to conserve land.

**Species at risk (SAR):** a species that has been defined as 'at risk' [of extirpation] by either government.

Blue-grey tailed dropper  
Photo Kristina Ovaska

al

**Red-listed:** includes any indigenous species, subspecies or plant community that is Extirpated, Endangered, or Threatened in British Columbia.

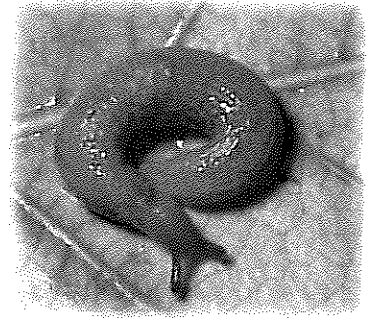
**Blue-listed:** any native species, subspecies, or plant community that is considered to be Vulnerable (Special Concern) in British Columbia. These species are of concern because of characteristics that make them particularly sensitive to human activities or natural events.

**Yellow-listed:** all species that are not included on the British Columbia Red or Blue Lists.

**Recovery Planning:** a process to identify and facilitate the implementation of priority actions to ensure the survival and recovery of species and ecosystems at risk. The goal of recovery planning is to help arrest or reverse the decline of a species, and/or reduce or remove the threats to its long-term persistence in the wild.

**Stewardship:** an ethic and practice to carefully and responsibly manage resources and ecosystems for the benefit of future generations. Stewardship can be practiced in many ways by governments, organizations, communities, and individuals to benefit the natural environment.

**Vertebrate species:** animal with backbone, e.g. a mammal, bird, reptile, amphibian, or fish.



<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/sartaskforce/>

## **Ministry of Environment Call for Submissions**

Any comments submitted through this website will be provided directly to the Species at Risk Task Force members. Click the button(s) below to submit your input, by topic, to the Species at Risk Task Force. Submissions will be accepted until November 15, 2010.

### ***Defining Vision, Principles and Outcomes***

- Where should our conservation efforts be focused?
- What principles should guide future development of a species at risk program in B.C.?
- What are the measurable outcomes that best address the fundamental threats to biodiversity in B.C. and help us achieve our vision?

### ***Environmental Management***

- In light of climate change and multiple development demands, what management methods need to be advanced to meet our conservation targets?

### ***Regulatory Framework***

- What changes are required to the existing regulatory framework to ensure we balance ecological and socio-economic considerations and best achieve our conservation targets?

### ***Private Land Stewardship***

- How do we advance private land stewardship and conserve species and ecosystems at risk on private land in B.C. while respecting the interests of taxpayers?

### ***Effective First Nation and Stakeholder Communications and Engagement***

- What are the key elements of a communications and engagement strategy to ensure communities, First Nations, private landowners, and all other stakeholders who operate on the province's land and water base understand and value the benefits of species at risk conservation?

# Ministry of Environment

## Species at Risk Task Force

In August 2009, Premier Gordon Campbell announced in the speech from the throne that the Province will establish a task force on Species at Risk. The Species at Risk Task Force will provide recommendations to the B.C. government to help it update its vision for the conservation of species and ecosystems at risk and ensure British Columbia remains a leader in environmental sustainability.

The task force will build on the provincial government's Conservation Framework and Conservation Data Centre, and will provide fiscally responsible and economically viable recommendations on the following topics: Defining Vision, Principles and Outcomes; Environmental Management; Regulatory Framework; Private Land Stewardship; and Effective First Nation and Stakeholder Communications and Engagement.

The Species at Risk Task Force will make recommendations to the Cabinet Committee on Environment and Land Use by the end of December 2010.

## Terms of Reference for Species at Risk Task Force

### Purpose

The Species at Risk Task Force will provide recommendations to the B.C. government to help it update its vision for the conservation of species and ecosystems at risk and ensure British Columbia remains a leader in environmental sustainability.

The task force will build on the provincial government's Conservation Framework and Conservation Data Centre, and provide fiscally responsible and economically viable recommendations on the following topics:

- **Defining Vision, Principles and Outcomes:** Where should our conservation efforts be focused, what principles should guide future development of a species at risk program in B.C., and what are the measurable outcomes that best address the fundamental threats to biodiversity in B.C. and help us achieve our vision?
- **Environmental Management:** In light of climate change and multiple development demands, what management methods need to be advanced to meet our conservation targets?

- **Regulatory Framework:** What changes are required to the existing regulatory framework to ensure we balance ecological and socio-economic considerations and best achieve our conservation targets?
- **Private Land Stewardship:** How do we advance private land stewardship and conserve species and ecosystems at risk on private land in B.C. while respecting the interests of taxpayers?
- **Effective First Nation and Stakeholder Communications and Engagement:** What are the key elements of a communications and engagement strategy to ensure communities, First Nations, private landowners, and all other stakeholders who operate on the province's land and water base understand and value the benefits of species at risk conservation.

### **Secretariat Support**

The Ministry of Environment will provide secretariat support to the task force and will coordinate research, analysis and documentation prepared by staff in other ministries and agencies or under contract.

### **Reporting**

The task force will make recommendations to the Cabinet Committee on Environment and Land Use. The report will be in the form of a short paper (15-25 pages in length) providing analysis and advice on the topics identified and any other pertinent matters. The advice may be the opinion of all members or one or more of the members. The task force is not a decision-making body, but rather an advisory body making recommendations to government. As such the recommendations are not public, but Cabinet intends to make the recommendations public in some form.

### **Membership**

The task force will consist of a small but balanced group of well-respected, credible individuals from a range of sectors, who understand the biological, socio-economic and socio-political complexities associated with this topic and who are prepared to work with others to find solutions to the issues. Members were selected for their skills and attributes and their ability to operate at the policy, regulatory and strategic level and not their technical expertise. Members are expected to contribute their individual perspectives, knowledge and intellect, and are specifically requested not to represent their affiliation or the interests of any specific group or stakeholder interest.



October 13, 2010

Attention Environment Commission Members:

CVRD is creating a new Sustainable Economic Development Strategy for the Region. We are gathering various community groups, sectoral groups and others together in separate focus groups during the week of November 2-5.

We would like to invite the members of the CVRD Environment Commission to meet on **Tuesday evening November 2 from 6:30-8:30 pm at 135 Third Street, Duncan**. We hope to have up to as many as possible from the Commission meeting with the consultants on challenges facing the region and explore our opportunities.

Please RSVP this email with your agreement to attend. We look forward to your positive reply and assistance in this important initiative for the Cowichan Region.

If you have any questions please call or email me directly.

Thanks

*Geoff*

Geoff Millar, Manager  
Economic Development Cowichan  
Cowichan Valley Regional District  
135 Third St Duncan BC V9L 1R9  
T 250-746-7880 ext 246  
F 250-746-7801  
E [gmillar@cvrld.bc.ca](mailto:gmillar@cvrld.bc.ca)  
[discovercowichan.com](http://discovercowichan.com)



Correspondence from Peter Nix dated October 12, 2010, sent by email to Lori Iannidinardo

On April 13th 2011, Dwight International School (Shawnigan Lake) is planning a full day of Earth Day celebration with workshops, guest speakers and information booths. Please set aside this date and wait for a subsequent agenda – and most importantly, let us know if you would like to participate and in what capacity. We are inviting all schools in the Cowichan Valley to come and join the educational experience. The agenda is not confirmed but may include;

Key Note speaker (not confirmed)

Workshop Groups (for example, biofuel coop, Nanaimo recycling, Cowichan Carbon Busters, BC Sustainable Energy Assc.)

Contractor Booths

Municipal/ CVRD Participation – perhaps outlining climate action plans?

Student Participation events (one idea is for the students to build a cube equal to 1 tonne of carbon dioxide)

We can all join in together to learn the latest in technology, and what we can do to lessen our impact on the planet. Lunch will be provided.

Please let me know if you or your organization would like to participate as an information booth, provide a workshop, be a student event facilitator) or as a guest speaker.

Sincerely

Peter Nix  
Cowichan Carbon Buster