

Reay Creek plan back on the table May 12

Steven Heywood
News staff

Consultation into the effects of contamination in Reay Creek, as well as the impact of storm water runoff, continue to be investigated in the run up to a May 12 community meeting.

James Bogusz, vice-president of operations and development at the Victoria Airport Authority (VAA), says they have hired a contractor to review storm water flows in the creek on airport property.

"That will help determine what and where the issues are," he said, "and if we need to address that."

In 2012, the VAA spent around \$250,000 to remediate the portion of Reay Creek that runs through its property. Contaminated soil was removed and the creek chan-

nel itself moved to avoid what Bogusz said are places of contamination that date back to the 1930s and '40s.

"I won't say there's no more pollution on our land," Bogusz said. "It's been there for years and now the emphasis is on what can be done downstream."

The VAA is one of the stakeholders in the Town of Sidney's push to clean up sediment in the Reay Creek pond — just across Canora Road from the airport property. Testing in January, and other work done last year by Peninsula Streams, confirmed the presence of heavy metal contaminants in the sediment — and in the water downstream. In the wake of those results, the municipality has made investigating its cleanup options a priority.

In a meeting with the *News*

Review, Sidney Director of Engineering Tim Tanton and Chief Administrative Officer Randy Humble outlined their progress. Not only is the town looking into the pond sediment issue, but the future of the dam that created the pond in the first place.

"It's a complex project," said Tanton. "There's the dam, contamination, flows and a myriad of interested parties."

The Town's first goal, he continued, is to establish a framework to guide everyone to possible solutions.

"It's a strategic process," added Humble, "and it's not a finite plan. We will be meeting with representatives of the VAA, North Saanich and Transport Canada within two weeks to discuss process."

Bogusz noted VAA has reached out to Transport Canada, "strongly

encouraging" them to attend.

For their part, VAA continues to monitor the creek since their restoration work. A monitoring shed sits on their land, west of Canora Road. Bogusz said this is a mobile station that Transport Canada contributed to in the early 2000s. Results from it, he said, have always showed pollution.

The level of contamination in the creek today, insists the municipality, is not immediately dangerous.

Residents nearby and others have questioned that.

Tanton said the levels of contamination present were found by the Town's consulting firm to be at a threshold acceptable for residential habitation.

That said, the long-term impact is a big question mark and one Sidney says they hope to solve

through planning this year and possible corrective action in 2016 or '17 — in conjunction with the other parties.

Bogusz added the VAA will do its part and wants to see everyone at the table. He said he's confident that the good will between them will lead to solutions.

In the meantime, a Reay Creek Residents group, formed in the wake of the environmental studies, plan to meet May 12 with officials from the Victoria Airport Authority. On the table will be details of discussions between VAA, Transport Canada, Sidney and North Saanich. The Town of Sidney, too, is promising to have updated information available at that meeting. It's scheduled to take place at 6:30 p.m. at the B.C. Air Museum on Norseman Road, off Canora Road in North Saanich.

DISTRICT OF NORTH SAANICH FIRE DEPARTMENT OPEN BURNING CLOSURE MAY 9, 2015

Effective May 9, 2015 at sunset, all outdoor burning is closed for the season within the District of North Saanich. This includes burning in incinerators, fire pits and open piles until further notice. The only exception is chimineas and approved manufactured outdoor fire appliances with a permit, which can be obtained by contacting the fire department.

Please consider alternatives to burning such as composting, recycling and chipping. The municipal pit off Littlewood Road by the Legion on Mills Road will be open the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month from 8:00 am until 12:00 pm and the 2nd and 4th Thursday from 8:00 am until 12:00 pm to drop off burnable materials. \$7.00 will be charged for cars and \$15.00 for pickups and trailers. North Saanich residents only with drivers licences being checked.

If you live within a forested area you are more susceptible to damage in the event of a forest fire. To evaluate your property and help minimize the damage there are preventative measures that you can take. Please stop by the Wain Road Fire Hall located at 986 Wain Road and pick up your copy of the Homeowners FireSmart Manual.

Thank you.
Fire Chief, Gary Wilton
250-656-1931

www.northsaanichfire.ca

May 4, 2015



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Emergency Expo at Panorama Rec. Centre

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It's a simple idea: to have a kit in your home that contains enough water, food, first aid gear and other supplies that will allow you to survive on your own for at least a week.

"It's a big commitment to have to go out and buy enough stuff for a week," Trelford said. "If we can get the idea out now, maybe people can add to their kit over time."

"We want them to at least start thinking about it," Harman added.

They plan of having demonstration kits at Panorama, to help show people what could go inside. The expo will also show people tips on how to respond in the event of a crisis — such as where the gas shut off valves are typically located in one's home.

"We want people to think about this," Harman added, "especially since emergency services are going to be bogged down."

"I think back to the snow storm in 1996. People then were OK but if it was much worse, how would they respond? It takes time to learn and to prepare."

The various branches of PEMO (search and rescue, communications, emergency social services and neighbourhood preparedness) will be at the expo to explain their role. Harman said the biggest push at this event is on awareness.

Yes, these organizations exist to help — but they will be so overwhelmed in the first few days of a disaster. People have to be self-sufficient."

The PEMO expo is not all serious. The Sidney Lions Club will be on site and serving food and there will be a collection of fire trucks and other emergency vehicles to explore.

The expo runs Saturday, May 9 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For information on emergency preparedness, visit prepareyourself.ca.

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