

CRD manages sewer deadline

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It's been 11 long months for planners and politicians at the Capital Regional District, but through it all they somehow managed to meet Environment Minister Barry Penner's June 30 deadline to submit an updated sewage treatment plan.

"From our perspective we feel we've delivered on all the requests the minister has made," said Dwayne Kalynchuk, the CRD's manager of environmental services.

"I'm really satisfied with the work we've done and I think everyone's really stepped up to the plate, the staff and the politicians."

Penner, facing pressure from environmental groups, last July ordered the CRD to update its liquid waste management plan, effectively setting the stages for a sewage treatment mega-project in the Capital Region.

CRD staff and elected board members then embarked on an urgent but complex planning process examining new technology, potential funding models and possible treatment sites.

Kalynchuk said the CRD will deliver three documents to Penner's office today – the updated liquid waste management plan, a "strategic document" that "support the plan, and a report outlining the communications challenges associated with the upcoming project.

Reports released this spring indicate the project will cost between \$1 billion and \$1.2 billion.

Earlier this month, politicians awarded \$800,000 in contracts to two firms that will be carry out the next phase of planning. Westland Resource Group of Victoria received a \$468,803 contract to identify specific sewage treatment sites and carry out environmental and social reviews on them," the CRD said in a recent press release.

Westland will assess the impact on plants and animals, as well a noise traffic, land-use aesthetics, proximity to residential neighbourhoods, property values effects and archeological potential. Westland has been given a year to complete the work.

Meanwhile, Ernst and Young Orenda Corporate Finance Inc. of Vancouver has been tasked with preparing a financial and conducting "a public and private sector capability and capacity review."

The BC government has ordered the CRD to assess public private partnerships during the sewage treatment planning process.

Ernst and Young Orenda will receive \$306,360 for the work and has until November to deliver the goods.