

NEW APPROACH TO MANAGING WASTE BRINGS PRAISE

Provincial report lays out positive framework for liquid and solid waste

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VICTORIA, BC - Georgia Strait Alliance and the T. Buck Suzuki Environmental Foundation, long time supporters of advanced sewage treatment in both Victoria and Vancouver, are applauding the Province's support for the full cycle approach to managing liquid and solid waste proposed in a recently released provincial report, "Resources from Waste".

"By focusing on what we can get out of our waste rather than just meeting disposal regulations, our ecosystem, our community and our pocket book will benefit", said Jim McIsaac, Clean Water Director, T. Buck Suzuki Environmental Foundation. "This reports shows that by closing the loop and treating waste as something that gives back to a community, we can effectively minimize pollution, aggressively work to meet our greenhouse gas reductions goals and generate income at the same time."

The report was commissioned by the Ministry of Community Services last fall, and puts forward environmental, economic, policy and engineering information outlining the opportunities that come from managing our liquid and organic solid waste so as to recover resources, such as heat, water and biofuels. Communities across the province can treat their waste as a resource, not as a disposal problem.

The report uses the Capital Regional District of Victoria, currently building its sewage treatment plan, as a case study. For Victoria, the authors estimate that 32 small resource recovery plants distributed throughout the region, instead of costing millions to operate, would generate \$100's of millions per year. This conclusion is in line with the CRD's own triple bottom line analysis which pointed to higher benefit from more plants.

What the region needs now is for the report's suggested income streams to be incorporated into the CRD's business case, which is currently under development. This will allow the community to decide on the right balance between the 4 proposed plants and the 32 plants contemplated in the report..

"The report lays out an incredible opportunity for Victoria to develop a plan that goes beyond anything we've seen before", said Christianne Wilhelmson, Clean Air and Water Program Coordinator, Georgia Strait Alliance. "Greenhouse gas reduction and income potential from sewage are real. We need to optimize these financial and environmental benefits and make Victoria and BC a leader in pollution prevention and energy recovery.

The groups are also encouraging the province to establish a climate goal of integrated resource recovery as the preferred means of managing municipal liquid and organic solid waste across BC. This would include communities putting resource recovery targets into their management plans and linking infrastructure funding to these targets. They encourage the province to provide

local government with tools for integrated resource management, including legislative tools, technical support and funding in order to take the report recommendations as is and make them real.

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A copy of the report can be found at:

http://www.georgiastrait.org/files/share/PDF/IRM_report.pdf

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