

Electoral Area 'H'

Official Community Plan Newsletter

Community Vision Statement:

Electoral Area 'H' is a safe and peaceful rural area with small centres of settlement that support a balance of permanent and seasonal residents. Growth is guided in a way that balances economic, environmental and social sustainability and generally occurs within existing settlement areas.

In order to attract residents, such as young families and professionals, there is a strong economic and employment base that offers year-round work opportunities. This includes service, commercial and industrial uses within the Town of Princeton, along with mining, renewable energy and tourism opportunities throughout the rural area.

Local agriculture is strongly supported by area residents, who value organic and sustainable practices and support the on-going use of arable land for agricultural production, including traditional activities such as cattle ranching.

Respect for the environment is a core value. This entails protection of natural resources, good drinking water, healthy lakes and watercourses, and safe wastewater treatment. New development is respectful of the environment, and there are protected parks and open spaces throughout the area.

The natural environment is celebrated for its low-impact outdoor recreational opportunities, including access to the back-country for cross-country skiing, hiking, biking, bird watching, horseback riding and fishing. Motorised activities, such as boating, snowmobiling and the use of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) are pursued in a manner that is respectful of other users and the environment.

Local health services including permanent and full-time doctors, a local clinic, dentist and home support services are valued by area residents. There is also social support for residents of all ages, including local educational and protective services, and there is diversity in housing options.

Following extensive community consultation throughout 2009, and input from the Electoral Area 'H' OCP Review Committee through 2010 and 2011, a DRAFT Official Community Plan Bylaws & Zoning Bylaw are now available for public review via the Regional District's web site at www.rdos.bc.ca.

The draft OCP and Zoning Bylaws represent the first comprehensive review of land use bylaws in Electoral Area 'H' since the mid-1990s when the former Rural Land Use Bylaw was adopted by the Board in 1997.

Draft Official Community Plan (OCP) Bylaw Highlights

COMMUNITY VISION

One of the first steps in drafting a new Official Community Plan was the preparation of a Community Vision statement as the previous Plan did not contain one.

Based upon input received from the community via the 2009 Resident Survey and a number of Open Houses held that same year, a vision statement was drafted (at left) which, along with 11 Broad Goals, informed the OCP review.

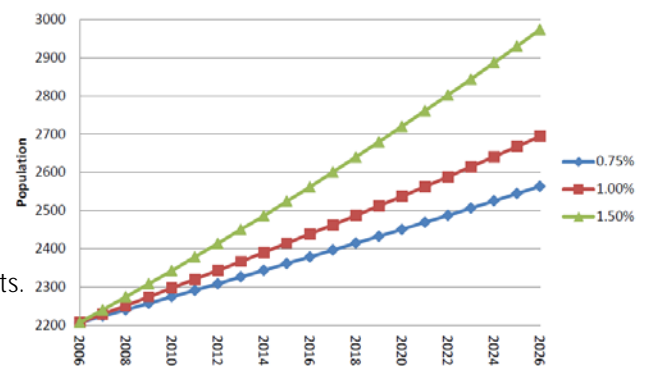
The **Broad Goals** are as follows:

- .1 Rural Community
- .2 Managed Growth
- .3 Distinct Communities
- .4 Strong Economy
- .5 Natural Environment
- .6 Infrastructure
- .7 Transportation
- .8 Recreation
- .9 Housing Diversity
- .10 Public Involvement
- .11 Water Resources

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

The draft OCP now contains a more comprehensive growth management section which estimates that the Electoral Area will require the construction of approximately 500 to 700 residential units over the next 20 years to accommodate anticipated growth in both seasonal and permanent residents.

Projected Permanent Population Growth



LOCAL AREA POLICIES

The Plan area is comprised of a number of distinct communities such as Eastgate, Tulameen, Coalmont, Allison Lake and the Princeton Fringe Area. While they each have much in common, their circumstances are also different in important ways. In response to this, the Plan contains a new Section that provides a background overview of each community while outlining the policies aimed at the specific issues that each location currently confronts (i.e. an additional access to Missezula Lake).



Copper Mountain



Bluebunch Wheatgrass dominated Grasslands can be found in Electoral Area 'H'

Draft OCP Bylaw Highlights continued ...

GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION STRATEGY

In 2008, British Columbia's *Local Government Act* was amended to require all Official Community Plans to set targets for the reduction of greenhouse gases, as well as policies and actions to achieve those targets.

In early 2010, Stantec (a consulting firm) was retained by the Regional District to prepare Climate Action Plans

(CAPs) for each Electoral Area. These Plans indicate that the highest energy use is for residential buildings, while the greatest greenhouse gas generation is from personal vehicle use.

For Electoral Area 'H', the Draft OCP sets out a goal of reducing GHG emissions by 30% below 2007 levels by 2030.

ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT (ESDP) AREA

In 2009, the Regional District undertook Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory (SEI) mapping at Eastgate, Otter Lake, and around Chain Lakes.

These three areas were selected for mapping due to their ecological sensitivity as well as being locations where recreational development pressure is increasing. The total area mapped represented approximately 19,800 ha.

This mapping forms the basis of a new Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area in Electoral Area 'H'.

Under the *Local Government Act*, an OCP may designate a development permit area for the purpose of protecting the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity.

The purpose of requiring a development permit is to ensure

certain requirements are addressed towards the protection, restoration and preservation of the natural environment.

Mapping of proposed ESDP Areas is available from the Regional District's web site as well as the location of other potentially sensitive ecosystem areas within the Electoral Area:

www.rdos.bc.ca

TRAIL NETWORK

The 2009 Resident Survey showed strong support for protecting natural areas and open spaces, and the importance of backcountry recreation opportunities (i.e. ATV and snowmobile use) in drawing people to the area.

A unique aspect of Electoral Area 'H' is the system of historic trails that transect the region and which were formalised in the early 1800s as fur trading routes, and, later, when the Oregon Treaty established the International Boundary in 1846 and new British trade routes had to be found to connect the interior with the coast.

As 82% of respondents to the 2009 Resident Survey indicated tourism and eco-tourism should be encouraged, the Draft OCP includes new information on these historic trails as well as a dedicated "Trails Schedule" which contains information on the Hudson Bay Brigade Trail, Dwedney Trail, and others.

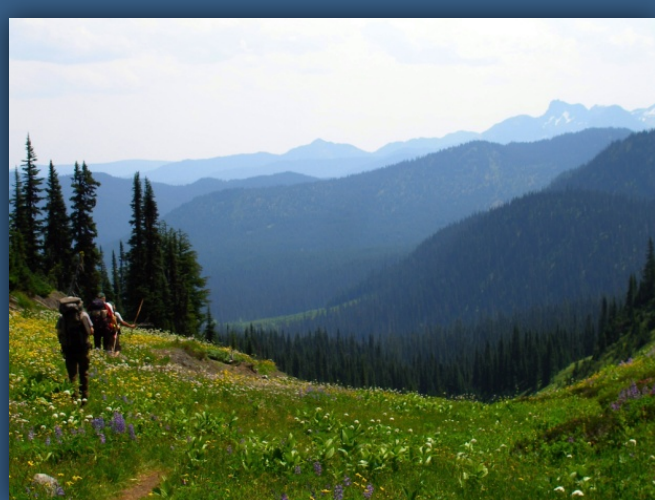
Promotion of these historical trails could facilitate economic, social and environmental benefits, such as being leveraged to attract the large urban population of the Lower Mainland (approx. 2.2 million persons) to visit and recreate in the area.

Electoral Area 'H' Director: **Brad Hope**

Official Community Plan Review Committee:

John Ackerly;	Linda Allison;
Susan Dixon;	Tim Hall;
Ole Juul;	Treana MacLeod;
Kim Maynard;	Chris Pemberton;
Marg Reichert;	William Sawchuk; and
Charles Weber	

RDOS Planner: **Christopher Garrish**



The Cascade Divide

Other Proposed Zoning Bylaw Changes

- Introduction of “agri-tourism accommodation” units as a permitted use in certain zones along with a series of general regulations.
- New floor area requirements for “accessory dwelling units” of 140 m² for first unit and 70 m² for all subsequent units (where permitted).
- Inclusion of regulations from Campsite & Mobile Home Parks Bylaw No. 713, 1982, related to manufactured home parks.
- Separation of “bed & breakfast” from the “home occupation” uses – B&Bs will now be a stand-alone use.
- “Home Industry” uses to be permitted on parcels 2 ha in area or greater.
- “Kennels” to be permitted as a secondary use (instead of as a principal use) in Rural designations.
- “Resort” has been removed as a listed use. Future “resort” uses will be expected to seek a zoning amendment from the Regional District Board (same approach as that adopted for “composting facilities” in 2004).
- The minimum parcel size in the Small Holdings Three (SH3) Zone has been amended from 0.8 ha to 1.0 ha to reflect introduction of 1 ha Policy in 2008.
- “Secondary suites” have been introduced as a permitted use in all residential and rural designations.
- Introduction of Conservation Area (CA) Zone — to be applied to Whipsaw Creek Ecological Reserve.

Draft Zoning Bylaw Highlights

The most notable change proposed by the Draft Zoning Bylaw involves changes to the current Resource Area (RA) Zone. Respondents to the 2009 Resident Survey indicated that they generally favoured:

- retaining agricultural land in parcels larger than 20 ha;
- maintaining the integrity of land suitable for resource extraction (i.e. Crown land);
- safeguarding and improving water quality; and
- managing growth and protecting the rural character of the area.

Under the current Zoning Bylaw the RA Zone is applied to approximately 96% of the Electoral Area and encompasses Crown land, the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), designated Community Watersheds as well as a number of privately held parcels – each of which is seen to possess their own unique land use requirements.

In response, the Draft Zoning Bylaw proposes to separate these unique areas into new zones, specifically:

- **Agriculture Three (AG3) Zone** for those parcels generally situated within the ALR;
- **Watershed Resource Area (WRA) Zone** for those areas generally situated within defined Community Watersheds;
- **Rural Resource Area (RRA) Zone** for parcels that are privately held and not generally situated within the ALR; and
- **Resource Area (RA) Zone** which will be retained over the remaining parcels / area including Crown land and other privately held parcels (i.e. mineral claims, managed forests, and those parcels that are remotely located with access via forestry road).

While these zones retain certain elements of the current RA Zone, they also differ in important ways such as the range of permitted land uses, and minimum parcel size requirements (i.e. 120 ha in the WRA Zone, 60 ha in the RA Zone, 20 ha in the AG3 Zone and 8 ha in the RRA Zone).

The creation of these new zones is also seen to facilitate the growth management objectives of the OCP, as well as the Regional District’s commitment under the Provincial Climate Action Charter to “adopt zoning practices that encourage land use patterns that increase density and reduce [rural] sprawl”.

Further information including copies of the Draft Zoning Bylaw as well as the Draft Zoning Map are available for viewing from the Regional District’s office in Penticton, the Building Inspection Office at the Riverside Centre in Princeton or on the web at www.rdos.bc.ca (under Planning -> Projects -> Rural Princeton Bylaw Review).

Open Houses related to the Draft Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaws will be held in early September with times and locations to be notified on the Regional District’s web site.

