



February 2, 2012

Dear Member of Legislative Assembly:

We are writing to ask that you join us in calling for a full one third funding commitment from the Provincial Treasury be given to the Capital Regional District of Victoria (CRD) to ensure that the regions plan for wastewater treatment becomes a reality.

In the summer of 2006, the province of BC ordered the CRD to plan for treatment after an independent expert panel (SETAC) concluded that dilution was not a long term wastewater management solution, and when further evidence of that the seabed around the 2 outfalls were contaminated came to light.

After five years of effort reviewing a multitude of options the community approved a plan to address the current pollution problem in an effective and adaptive manner. This Liquid Waste Management Plan was sent to the Province and was approved by the Minister in 2010. The community continues to support sewage treatment; our 2011 survey of municipal election candidates is a clear indicator. However, to get the shovels in the ground, shared funding must come from all levels of government - but to date, the province has failed to put forward its committed investment.

If action is not taken to begin the construction of the CRD's wastewater treatment system, there is a serious risk that the plan will become outdated, and we will have to start the planning process over again – a significant waste of time and taxpayers money, not to mention the ongoing pollution of our local waters. Moving forward on this important project would have the added benefit of creating jobs and benefiting local businesses during a construction period that could take up to 8 years. The lack of treatment in the CRD remains a blight on the community, which impacts its image and has a direct negative affect on tourism.

The need to take action on wastewater treatment in the region was made even clearer last week when the CRD released its latest monitoring report which revealed further degradation of the environment around the outfalls, with the presence of even more harmful chemicals.

On February 21, 2012, it is imperative that the Province clearly commit to the CRD the funds it needs to meet the mandated requirement for wastewater treatment. Please raise this issue within your caucus and within your government today.

Sincerely

Christianne Wilhelmson  
Executive Director  
Georgia Strait Alliance

Jim McIsaac  
Director of Sustainability  
T. Buck Suzuki Foundation