



SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

Monday, November 9, 2015 - 8:30 AM
Council Chambers
Municipal Hall, 13211 Henry Ave.
Summerland, BC

Page

1. **Call to Order**

2. **Adoption of Agenda**

2.1 Adoption of Agenda

Recommendation:

THAT the agenda be adopted/amended.

3. **Delegations**

3.1 Bryn White, SOSCP Manager, regarding the South Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Program

Recommendation:

THAT the delegation from the South Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Program, be received for information.

4. **Resolution to Close Meeting to the Public**

4.1 Resolution to Close Meeting to the Public

Recommendation:

THAT this meeting now be closed to the public pursuant to Sections 90(1)(c) and (e) of the Community Charter for Council to discuss:

- ***labour relations or other employee relations; and***
- ***the acquisition, disposition or expropriation of land or improvements.***

5. **Adjournment**

5.1 Adjourn Meeting

Recommended Resolution:

THAT the meeting be adjourned.

2 - 21



THE CORPORATION OF THE
DISTRICT OF SUMMERLAND
DELEGATION

DATE: November 5, 2015
TO: Linda Tynan, Chief Administrative Officer
FROM: Katie Karn, Deputy Corporate Officer
SUBJECT: South Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Program (SOSCP)
presentation

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

That Council pass the following resolution:

THAT the delegation from the South Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Program, be received for information.

BACKGROUND and DISCUSSION:

Bryn White, the South Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Program Manager, will be in attendance to provide Council information regarding SOSCP's role, the shared Environmental Planner's relationship with the SOSCP, as well as to provide an introduction to the Conservation Fund Concept.

Respectfully Submitted

Katie Karn

Katie Karn
Deputy Corporate Officer

Approved for Agenda

Linda Tynan, CAO



**South Okanagan
Similkameen**
CONSERVATION
PROGRAM

102 Industrial Avenue
Penticton, British Columbia
V2A 7C8
Tel: (250) 490-8225
Fax: (250) 490-2231
Email: bryn.white@gov.bc.ca
Website: www.soscp.org

November 5, 2015

Mayor and Council
District of Summerland

Re: **Presentation from SOSCP, and Establishing a Local Conservation Fund**

Please see the attached information package in support of our discussion on November 9th 2015.

I am looking forward to orienting Council to the South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program, the nature of our shared environmental planning partnership with the District, and introduce an innovative idea for local community funding for conservation, greenspace and sustainability.

The proposal for establishing a Local Conservation Fund has been raised at the RDOS Board table, and direction has been provided for SOSCP to engage and solicit public and member municipality opinion on the establishment of a fund.

I am looking forward to an opportunity to talk with you about this innovative and important concept, and how it would benefit the community of Summerland specifically.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Bryn White'.

Bryn White
South Okanagan Similkameen
Conservation Program Manager
250.490.8225

SOSCP Is A Partnership Of Non-Government And Government Organizations With Shared Interests In Biodiversity Conservation

A Regional Conservation Fund for the South Okanagan Similkameen
Prepared by: South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program (SOSCP)
October 2015

1. What is a conservation fund?

A *conservation fund* is a dedicated funding source established by a regional district or municipality to support environmental conservation. The fund provides local financial support for activities to protect valuable natural areas, as part of restoring and sustaining a healthy local environment. It focuses on projects that don't fall within the mandate of other levels of government.

A regional district or municipality has the legal authority to establish and operate a conservation fund as a service, just as with other services such as fire protection, water supply, recreation and waste management. The fund can be financed through a property tax, parcel tax, local area service tax or fees. A fund program usually runs for ten years, after which the regional district decides whether or not it will continue. Five BC regional districts have created conservation funds, four of which are comparable to the RDOS as they are mostly rural – the East and Central Kootenay RD's, Central Okanagan, and Cowichan Valley Districts – as well as the Capital Regional District.

2. How will a conservation fund benefit the Okanagan Similkameen region?

The South Okanagan Similkameen region is known for its spectacular natural surroundings, including habitats and species that are at risk. Local residents value natural areas as contributing significantly to their high quality of life, yet governments and community organizations have only limited resources to conserve and protect these values. Now is the ideal time to establish a conservation fund. There are still significant natural areas worth protecting and land is still relatively available and affordable. Partners are prepared to help acquire and manage these areas, and the public is supportive.¹

The Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen (RDOS) made a commitment to environmental protection and conservation in the 2010 *Regional Growth Strategy*. Those policy statements translated into a partnership with the South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program (SOSCP) to prepare *"Keeping Nature in Our Future: a Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for South Okanagan Similkameen"*, completed in 2012.

A conservation fund for the Okanagan Similkameen will:

- provide local governments and conservation groups with a practical tool to protect the valuable natural areas identified in the regional biodiversity strategy;
- open up opportunities to leverage additional funding through pooling resources with other government and non-government organizations;
- allow the region to build on lessons learned from other successful conservation funds in B.C.;
- provide a reliable source of funding to create a significant natural legacy for future generations in this region and beyond.

3. What are the goals of a conservation fund?

Each local government custom designs the conservation fund to address local environmental priorities and dovetail with existing planning and decision-making. The following are possible goals for a regional conservation fund, which would be refined in consultation with local governments, communities, and other stakeholders:

¹ SOSCP commissioned Polls conducted by Synovate for South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program, 2004, 2008.

- Protect ecosystems and their services that support our economy and communities;
- Acquire, manage and protect natural areas of regional importance, including habitats for rare and at risk species;
- Restore and protect watersheds, including lakes, watercourses and groundwater;
- Build on the network of regional green and open spaces for people and wildlife;
- Support stewardship activities to restore and enhance damaged or disappearing ecosystems;
- Increase recreation and tourism opportunities; and
- Protect special places that enhance local quality of life, and encourage people to explore the region's history and natural environment.

Several community conservation priorities emerged in spring 2013 during the RDOS-supported public open houses and Advisory Planning Committee meetings on the regional biodiversity strategy in seven municipalities/electoral areas. Along with the above list, they provide a starting point for future consultation on the conservation fund:

- Water management (quality/quantity).
- Parks and protected areas, including regional parks.
- Wildlife corridors and connectivity in valley bottoms.
- Promoting compatibility of agriculture and the environment.
- Specific development and planning tools to strengthen environmental protection.

4. How does a local government establish a conservation fund?

The creation of a conservation fund involves the following activities:²

1. Identify a team to work on establishing the fund, with both government and community partners. (The SOSCP will likely be the main partner for this area.)
2. Engage local governments and communities in deciding on the conservation fund.
3. Choose the desired legal approach to establishing and financing the fund.
4. Design the fund, including a conservation vision and goals, based on priorities identified in *"Keeping Nature in our Future"* and consultation.
5. Identify criteria and processes for inviting, approving and evaluating projects.
6. Establish efficient, transparent procedures for fund management and administration.

The preference of the RDOS is to have member municipalities participate in a regional fund that is established based a percentage of property value. The regional goal is to garner up to \$500,000 per year to support conservation efforts. The average cost per household is dependent on the property value, and how many households are in the service area (more participating areas, the less cost per household). The annual per household costs in other areas of British Columbia range from \$10 to \$25 approximately.

RDOS is seeking public input, and working with SOSCP to gauge public support throughout the remainder of 2015 – with a goal of referendum in early 2016.

² South Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Program. 2011. *Establishing a Regional Conservation Fund in British Columbia: A Guide for Local Governments and Community Organizations*.
<http://www.soscp.org/conservationfundguideforbc/>

Achieving Sustainability in the South Okanagan Similkameen Through Partnership



*Presented by
Bryn White, SOSCP
Program Manager*

*For District of
Summerland
November 2015*



**South Okanagan
Similkameen**
CONSERVATION PROGRAM





**South Okanagan
Similkameen**
CONSERVATION PROGRAM

Who is the SOSCP?

Partnership of organizations working together to conserve nature and biodiversity in the South Okanagan and Similkameen

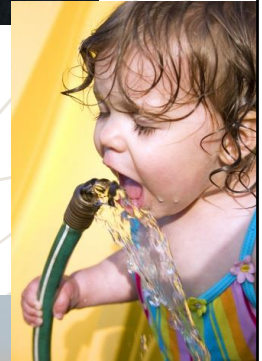
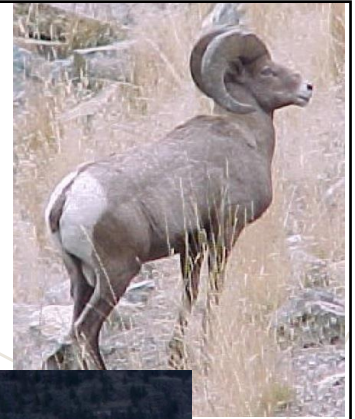


Like nowhere else...

Richness

Rarity

Risk





SOSCP and District of Summerland

- Partnership since 2008
- Conservation projects in the community
- Focus on sustainable land use – connection with planning dept.
- Innovative and creative approach to capacity and expertise
- SOSCP Shared Environmental Planner - Alison Peatt R. P. Bio





South Okanagan
Similkameen
CONSERVATION PROGRAM



What is a conservation fund?

- A source of funding held by a local government for the specific purpose of undertaking ecological activities
- Community groups and other organizations can apply for funding to support their projects
- Money from the local fund can be used to match outside funds to increase the power of the fund
- The fund is overseen by local governments with guidance from an independent technical committee





South Okanagan
Similkameen
CONSERVATION PROGRAM

Why establish a conservation fund?

- The South Okanagan Similkameen is one of the most at risk areas of the Province. Natural areas and wildlife here are rare and endangered.
- SOSCP worked with partners to prepare a Nature Conservation Strategy called **"Keeping Nature in our Future"**.

A key recommendation is that local governments establish a "Local Conservation Fund".





South Okanagan
Similkameen
CONSERVATION PROGRAM

Where does the money for a conservation fund come from?

- Nature conservation can be considered a **service just like planning, parks and recreation, libraries, sewer, and water**
- A conservation fund can be financed through property value or parcel levy, local areas service levy or fees.





South Okanagan
Similkameen
CONSERVATION PROGRAM



*Upper Columbia
Valley Conservation
Fund: up to
\$230,000 annually
for wildlife,
watersheds and
working lands*

Who else has done this?

- Central Kootenay \$15/parcel
- Capital Regional District \$20/household
- Upper Columbia Valley \$20/parcel
- Central Okanagan Regional District \$26.50 avg./household
- Cowichan Valley - \$715,000 per year raised per year to acquire new parks





**South Okanagan
Similkameen**
CONSERVATION PROGRAM

From this....



To this....



Why establish a conservation fund?

- Conserve ecologically important areas
- Protect and restore fish and wildlife habitat
- Protect community watersheds
- Protect important natural areas from fire, weeds and off-road vehicle damage
- Encourage volunteer nature conservation activities
- Protect natural spaces for hiking, walking and wildlife viewing
- Support environmental education and awareness

From this....



To this....





**South Okanagan
Similkameen**
CONSERVATION PROGRAM

What types of projects could be eligible for funding?

**Watershed and drinking
water protection?**

**Fish and wildlife habitat
restoration?**

Parkland acquisition?

Open-space?

**Protection of endangered
species?**

**Trails network
development?**

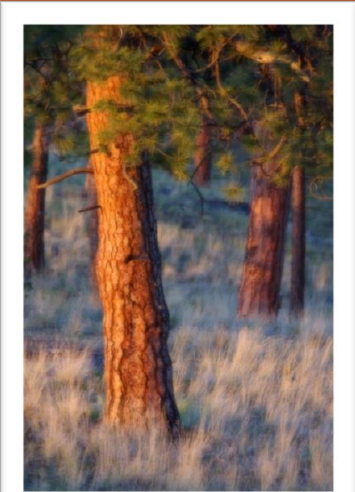
- Project types will vary from region to region
- Criteria and evaluation process should be established
- Regional goals and priorities can be determined





South Okanagan
Similkameen
CONSERVATION PROGRAM

Who holds & manages the conservation fund?



- **The regional district or municipality collects monies for the fund.**
- Support of a technical committee
- A partner organization, for example, the SOSCP may be assist with aspects of fund administration





South Okanagan
Similkameen
CONSERVATION PROGRAM



How is a conservation fund established by a municipality?

- Providing a service, such as a conservation fund, is at the discretion of council and no approval need be sought from the electors to establish the service (under section 8(2) of the *Community Charter*)





South Okanagan
Similkameen
CONSERVATION PROGRAM



How is a conservation fund established by a regional district?

- Regional district boards must adopt an establishing bylaw to create a service (under the *Local Government Act*)
- In most cases, approval must be obtained through assent of the electors (i.e. Referendum), alternative approval process or consent on behalf of municipal participating area





South Okanagan
Similkameen
CONSERVATION PROGRAM



How long is a conservation fund in place?

- Money in a conservation fund is non-lapsing (can be carried over from one fiscal year to the next)
- Conservation fund programs typically have a lifespan of 10 years;





South Okanagan
Similkameen
CONSERVATION PROGRAM

Goal:

*Establish a
Regional
Conservation Fund
by end of 2016*

Summary:

- Strong support for this concept in the community
- Specific projects that may benefit?
- Threshold amount per household?

Your thoughts?



*“The lands acquired for the regional parks and trails through this fund contribute significantly to the environmental, economic and social sustainability of the region. **It is a defining ingredient of the region...**”*

Geoff Young
CRD Board Chair

