

Article rank | 29 Jun 2010 | Times Colonist | JUDY BROWNOFF

# McLoughlin Point is the obvious choice 1

## Centralized operations will reduce costs, add environmental benefits

McLoughlin Point represents the most comprehensive, intelligent and responsible site for secondary sewage treatment in the core area of the Capital Regional District.

A centralized liquids-only facility on McLoughlin Point will bring many more benefits than other options would, including lower costs and a reduced impact on the environment. It is the logical choice.

The site became feasible because of a key decision by the provincial government concerning water reuse. Residents, inspired by the CRD's demand management programs, are demonstrating exemplary water conservation efforts. With the purchase of the Leech watershed lands, water resources are extensive enough to accommodate projected growth.

Based on our success, the province removed the requirement that water reuse be included in a wastewater treatment system for the core area — Victoria, Esquimalt, Saanich, Oak Bay, View Royal, Langford and Colwood. As a result the CRD could consider the consolidation of sites, and the site on McLoughlin Point in Esquimalt became the obvious choice.

This decision also allows the replacement of a Saanich East treatment facility with attenuation tanks and the elimination of the immediate need for a West Shore facility.

The CRD has been working on its sewage treatment plans for three years. With every amendment submitted to the Minister of Environment, we have reduced costs, refined resource recovery opportunities and better accommodated the communities in which wastewater treatment facilities were considered.

The reductions in costs are significant and will make the wastewater system far more sustainable for future generations. With the choice of McLoughlin Point, the largest reduction yet in cost has been made possible.

Capital costs are now set at \$782 million and operating costs at \$14.5 million, resulting in an average cost of \$300 per household per year, in a range of \$210 to \$500 for most people. A host of available resource recoveries will see the potential for more than 18,500 tonnes of carbon offsets per year.

Resident concern in siting a wastewater facility near neighbourhoods was noted at many public open houses, by CRD consultants and peer review teams. This social concern also helped shape the final configuration.

By choosing a site removed from dense residential areas, facilities will have much less overall impact.

A centralized facility allows the CRD to work within the confines of limited siting options and to impact as few neighbourhoods as possible.

Initially, a distributed wastewater system was chosen in part due to the potential resource recovery opportunities it could offer. The McLoughlin Point site and treatment plant has been a cornerstone of every option since the start of planning.

With that site, resource recovery opportunities such as heat, energy, biogas,

biosolids and phosphate can still be included in the plan. Heat recovery will be possible in adjoining neighbourhoods such as National Defence lands and James Bay.

The biosolids facility will produce 22 tonnes of dry biosolids each day by 2030. This will be used as a fuel substitute in cement kilns. The McLoughlin plant will see \$3.1 million in resource recovery revenues by 2030.

With only one continuously operating outfall, marine life and water quality will improve for our waters and shorelines.

There will be no need for shellfish closures around the previously proposed outfall site in Saanich East. That will prevent the disruption of fisheries and First Nations traditional fishing grounds.

Centralized facilities will also mean truck traffic will be eliminated or greatly reduced in most communities.

We have no choice but to move ahead. Secondary sewage treatment will be required by federal regulations by 2020, and the provincial government has ordered the CRD to initiate secondary treatment for the region.

The final plan for treatment helps ensure that both levels of government will provide the funds they have promised, and will let the CRD comply with new regulations.

The CRD's core area liquid waste management committee is firmly behind the decision to bring sewage treatment to the region. Research in the past three years has provided the CRD with time to adjust and alter the core area wastewater system configuration until the best scenario was found — and that scenario is McLoughlin Point.

The CRD's philosophy is to improve the wastewater system as opportunities arise. This will ensure that the McLoughlin Point choice will offer, for years to come, the lowest cost, the least impact on the environment and residents and the highest possible use of wastewater resources.

Saanich Coun. Judy Brownoff is the chairwoman of the Capital Regional District's core area liquid waste management committee.

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