



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL KOOTENAY

MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

RDCK Board declares climate action imperative

Nelson, BC: At its meeting last Thursday, the Board of Directors of the Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) joined municipalities across Canada and around the world in formally recognizing the global and local state of climate crisis. The Board declared an imperative for all orders of government to undertake changes to building construction, energy systems, land use, and transportation, and explore opportunities to address the reality of the crisis.

The motion was brought forward by Leah Main, Director for Village of Silverton and Chair of the Community for Sustainable Living Advisory Committee (CSLAC).

“This resolution stands as a political statement that recognizes the serious situation we are in with climate change overtaking us, and a commitment from the RDCK to respond,” said Director Main. “It’s also a call to action for all orders of government. This imperative means we have an obligation to take a hard look at what we’re already doing, create opportunities to do better, and quantify the results.”

RDCK staff will be reviewing previous plans related to climate change and adaptability—the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP - 2010) and the Strategic Community Energy and Emissions Plan (SCEEP - 2016)—and will identify where opportunities exist to build on what is already being done.

In the RDCK, the impacts of climate change include an increasing intensity and unpredictability of weather related events (fire, flood, landslides and drought) affecting residents and communities, agricultural production, and recreation; heat, smoke and stress related illnesses; change of landscape and biological diversity; and threatened water quality through loss of source water.

“The physical loss of infrastructure like homes, roads and services is devastating, and the cost of repairing communities and lives is significant,” said Sangita Sudan, General Manager of Development Services at the RDCK. “As residents in communities such as Johnson’s Landing and Grand Forks have experienced, the greatest cost often comes after the event—when property is so devalued and still at such risk that people are trapped between environmental threat and economic hardship. We must do all we can as a local government to safeguard people’s safety and way of life.”

In response to climate change, the RDCK has several commitments and projects underway that consider mitigation and adaptation strategies for climate change. These initiatives include:

- *100% Renewable Kootenays by 2050* initiative, led by the West Kootenay Eco-Society;

- Regional Watershed Governance Initiative Scoping Study seeking to investigate the RDCK's role in watershed governance; and
- Regional flood and hazard risk assessment project that will identify the risk of flood-related disasters.

For more information about the RDCK's response to climate change, please visit the "Sustainability" section of our website: <https://rdck.ca/EN/main/services/sustainability-environmental-initiatives.html>.

Incorporated in 1965, the Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) is a local government that serves 60,000 residents in 11 electoral areas and nine member municipalities. The RDCK provides more than 160 services, including community facilities, fire protection and emergency services, grants, planning and land use, regional parks, resource recovery and handling, transit, and much more. For more information about the RDCK, visit www.rdck.ca.

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