The Facts – SOSBOWSER.ca

Bowser Village Center Wastewater Project Update

The RDN is hosting a public information meeting on May 16, 2018 (6 PM) at the Lighthouse Community Hall and seeking input on rezoning the proposed wastewater treatment plant site from Residential 2 (RS2) to Public 4 (PU4).

Does the RDN care about your input?	Area H residents have indicated overwhelmingly that **they do not** support a rezoning for a wastewater plant with a marine outfall. 644 people petitioned last fall, representing 17% of Area H residents, indicated that they **do not** want a marine disposal system. Of those petitioned, only 1% of Area H residents supported marine disposal in the RDN controlled bylaw petition. Although the RDN indicated that a referendum for the consent of impacted Area H community would take place as part of application for the Clean Water and Wastewater Grant funding the project, no such referendum was executed. Is the RDN willing to return to a preliminary planning stage and consider green on-land alternatives?

Bring your friends, family and neighbors to this meeting; bring signs and make sure your voice is heard! This is your opportunity to make it clear to the RDN that turning the Salish Sea into a toilet is unacceptable and **will not** be tolerated. Your vote matters, nominations for the RDN 2018 election run September 4th-14th and culminate in an election on October 20th. An Area H Director that is focused on preserving and protecting the Salish Sea can make all the difference.

RDN Communication	Contention
The project is designed to serve a future population of 600 people.	• BC wastewater regulations allow for the consolidation of existing sewage systems as well as the introduction of new systems. Once a pipe and outfall are introduced, the RDN can easily expand capacity to serve thousands, significantly increasing deleterious pollution to the Salish Sea. Make no mistake, the introduction of this system is only the beginning of **big and unsustainable** development. • How long will the capacity of the local marine environment allow for natural recovery from unnecessary pollution sources?
The marine outfall location has been confirmed and extended 400 meters.	• In direct contravention to several Ministry of Transport utility policies, the proposed pipeline design will export Bowser sewage effluent over 2 kilometers along Highway 19A, crossing at least two salmon bearing streams, requiring the logging of trees and the disruption of private driveways. • While the RDN has extended the original pipeline design to assuage community concerns, green land based disposal alternatives have yet to be professionally assessed; these superior solutions remove residual human pathogens, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, plastic microfibers and other toxic substances. Both Chatwin Engineering and Kala

	Geosciences have confirmed feasible locations for ground infiltration disposal in the Bowser and Deep Bay areas. • Why use the Salish Sea as a toilet if green on-land alternatives are feasible? • Where is the money coming from to fund the additional 400 meters of pipeline?
97% of Canadian communities discharge wastewater to marine or fresh waters.	• As our communities grow and generate greater volumes of wastewater, it is beyond comprehension that any rational government would promote existing practices that are unsustainable where feasible, safer and green on-land disposal alternatives exist. The sub-optimal status quo does not justify another pollution source being added to the Strait of Georgia.
UV disinfection works because it disrupts the DNA so the organisms **cannot grow or reproduce.**	• Despite UV disinfection, some organisms rebound, reproduce, spread and survive in the marine environment. Vibrio cholerae are an example of a bacteria that may survive and disseminate in marine waters as evidenced by the recent detection of Cholera on herring eggs close to the proposed outfall. The National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases states that "We are living in an interconnected world where an outbreak of infectious disease is just a plane ride away". With rising surface seas temperatures will toxigenic serotypes cause an outbreak in Northern Seas?
Duke Point uses similar treatment technology and last year produced effluent that was about ten times cleaner than its permitted standard.	• The RDN statement regarding the Duke Point effluent is misleading as it does not disclose the concentration levels of bacteria, viruses, parasites, human pathogens or other contaminants the RDN is licensed by BC Environment to dispose of. Furthermore, the update does not discuss the fate of these contaminants; their inevitable distribution into the marine food web; the required Environment Canada outfall monitoring that will follow the installation of the outfall and the likely sanitary shellfish closure area that will be imposed on the community by the DFO. The impact of marine sewage effluent disposal can be clearly observed in the DFO closure maps up island[1]; **this disposal practice is archaic and the community of Area H deserves better!**
Solids recovered during treatment plant operation will be further treated at the RDN's wastewater treatment facility in French Creek.	• By this logic, why not extend the treatment to liquid effluent, reduce water usage, as well as reuse the effluent as a nutrient and irrigation source in on-land disposal? Perhaps the liquid effluent could be used to augment water balance to save threatened plant species in drying wetlands near Deep Bay.

The RDN has started the permitting and approvals process by submitting several applications packages to local, Provincial and Federal agencies. Approving agencies will direct the RDN on the required referrals procedures for each application.	• The RDN has not disclosed which approvals have been applied for nor made available the application and supporting documents; why is this information not publicly available? • Despite a request from the Area H Rate Payers and Residents Association for detailed information, the RDN has not provided information relating to the referrals process for any permit or approval applications relating to the project. • During the December 12th, 2017 General Board Meeting, Chair Bill Veenhof indicated that he was representing Area H and the RDN was looking at our request for green alternative disposal options. Within 24 hours of the meeting, the RDN released a statement that the bylaw to construct a wastewater treatment plant had passed with a marine disposal option; **this clearly demonstrates a gross misrepresentation of the Area H residents.**
We Heard You – A series of six public meetings in 2016 and 2017 were held to engage with the community on the project.	• The only time the beach-side impact community was formally consulted was at a Public Information Meeting in October 2017 **after** the RDN received the communities' anti-sewage petition. Despite two consecutive days of unanimously negative feedback from the community, the RDN pushed a report through to the board that largely ignored community feedback. The community feedback was clear: **No effluent should be discharged into the Salish Sea**. The community supports cleaning the effluent with advanced treatment, keeping it on-land and in Bowser - not exporting it down the road to public beaches and the marine environment.
Project Facts – The RDN does not and will not discharge raw sewage to the Strait of Georgia.	• Even the best systems can have upsets as evidenced by the incident on Saltspring Island at Ganges Creek and Harbor on April 15, 2018. Redundancies that are built into wastewater project designs, such as detention ponds and wetland plant or engineered filtration systems, protect the environment and those living in it. Why does the RDN continue to refuse consideration of even limited add-on treatments such as those in place at Sechelt or those being implemented at other communities near Bowser?
Project Facts – The treatment plant effluent will be cleaner than the regulated standard.	• The standard is low to accommodate large cities and does not mandate removal of dissolved biological nutrients, toxic chemicals, pharmaceuticals, or micro-plastics. While UV disinfection is effective, it does not destroy all pathogenic and parasitic organisms; **a pathogenic load will still be present in the treated effluent**. • The RDN, DFO and health departments rely on dilution and die-off for reducing potential transfer of disease (and toxic effects) to marine organisms and humans. Recent cases of

	Norovirus in contaminated Baynes Sound oysters and Cholera on herring eggs have served as disease vectors in North America; both human pathogens are known to exist in human sewage effluents discharged into marine environments. The regulated effluent standard is not satisfactory to guarantee that the public will not become ill from consuming contaminated shellfish or recreational use.
Wastewater treatment is designed to **eliminate hazards** to human health and the environment as the community grows.	• **This statement is false.**

[1] DFO closure maps – http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/contamination/sani/index-eng.html

A message from the Executive Director of the Area H Residents Association:

When I grew up the world was a much different place. For instance, smoking was acceptable on airlines, in hospitals, restaurants and even Dr.'s offices. Wearing a seat belt or using a child safety seat in a car was viewed skeptically and as an unnecessary hassle and driving drunk was more of a funny story the next day instead of a dangerous crime. Today we look back with disbelief and shock at some of the things which we all took for granted back then.

Soon a time will come that the idea of using the ocean to dispose of harmful sewage will be viewed the same way - with disbelief especially so since there are now better modern green alternatives.

That time is now and this is our legacy.

Bryan Holyk