



# BCID QUARTERLY REPORT

Beaver Creek Improvement District  
B-6038 Beaver Creek Rd., Port Alberni, BC. V9Y 8X4 (250)723-9371

## Chairman's Report

It's been a busy few months preparing for our public information meeting and the October referendum. As well, we've concluded the hiring process and welcome aboard Brenda Sauve as our new Corporate & Financial Administrator. We want to publicly thank Loreen Brown who filled in over the transition period. Loreen stayed on a few months beyond the period we first asked her to cover — even though it was quite an imposition on her good will. Thank you so much, Loreen, for a job well done.

The October 11<sup>th</sup> public information meeting is being held at the Alberni District Secondary School, from 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm. This was the date and time most convenient for all parties involved.

As you all know, the Board committed to a governance referendum, which will be held from 8 am to 8 pm, Saturday,

### INSIDE THIS REPORT

Chairman's Report	1
Public Information Meeting	1
New Corporate & Financial Administrator	2
Lessons from the Bamfield Experience	2
Upcoming meetings & Short Notices	3
Maintenance & Upgrades	3

October 29 at the BCID Office, 6038 Beaver Creek Road. An advance poll will be held Wednesday, October 19 from 8 am to 3:30 pm, also at the BCID office. Voters are asked to bring two pieces of identification. The referendum is rapidly approaching and people are giving our options a great deal of thought. It's an important decision worth plenty of thought and discussion.

*Continued on page 2*

## Public Information Meeting — Options for Our Water Service

Tuesday, October 11, 2011 6:30 pm - 9:30 pm.  
ADSS Auditorium

— Referendum —

Saturday Oct. 29 - 8 am to 8 pm - BCID Office, 6038 Beaver Creek Road  
Advance Poll: Wednesday Oct. 19 - 8:30 am to 3:30 pm,  
also at the BCID office.

*Chairman's Report continued*

It's rare that people these days get to decide on the form of governance they live with.

As an historic event, it's attracted media coverage, letters to the editor and just general discussion among people with differing visions.

It's best not to believe everything you read or hear. Errors, misquotes, and misinterpretations about costs, funding and operational issues make it more difficult to make an informed choice. We're hoping for a big turnout for the public information meeting and that people fully discuss and understand all the options. There's about two weeks between the meeting and referendum and we hope this will be a period of sober reflection before committing to a governance option. Just remember, this is an opportunity to shape our future. Don't miss it!

Wayne Hasler, Chairman

## BCID hires new Corporate & Financial Administrator

With more than 10 years' experience in administration, Brenda Sauve has joined the BCID team as our newly-hired Corporate & Financial Administrator.

A few years ago, Brenda took some time out to study practical nursing at Vancouver Island University. As a Licensed Practical Nurse, she spent a couple of years in health care but soon decided it was time to return to her true interest, administration.

Currently enrolled at Camosun College, Brenda is completing her certification in Public Administration. The Board is very happy to have found such a competent young professional to take on our corporate and financial affairs.

## Lessons from Bamfield's water experience

The ACRD has run into problems operating the Bamfield Water System. They've stated their intention to contract services out to an independent operator - i.e., privatize the system's operation and maintenance. Indeed, their call for expressions of interest – shopping around for a partnership arrangement – ended September 20.

This development should interest Beaver Creek residents now sorting through options and trying to decide how water will be distributed in our district in the future. Among the options available, entering a partnership with a third party has provoked objections from ratepayers interested in the two conversion options rather than "privatize" our water supply.

This opinion group places a good deal of faith in both eligibility for grants under conversion and how a local water commission would safeguard Beaver Creek interests.

We think there are some lessons to be learned from the Bamfield experience.

In 2008, Bamfield ratepayers learned that the Bamfield Water System, owned and operated by the ACRD, was on the verge of collapse. As well, its pumping system was inadequate. A "Towns for Tomorrow" grant application was approved for \$160,000 and a new

*Continued on page 4*

## Maintenance & Upgrades — Bruce Forsyth, Supervisor



**METERS:** We have begun replacing old meters as they stop functioning properly. Because the old meters slow down as they age — and sometimes even go backwards — you may notice your consumption rising after installation of a new meter. It's not a mistake; it's just finally an accurate reading of water usage.

We estimate that old, faulty meter readings cost the improvement district approximately \$90,000 each year in unbilled gallonage.

**TURBIDITY:** We are expecting periods of high turbidity again this winter and due to lack of storage will likely face boil water advisories once again.

**VACANT PROPERTIES:** If you have water service to a vacant property, call the BCID office and have the water shut off. We are no longer able to offer forgiveness for delivery of unnecessary services after the fact.

In the past, the cost of these unused services has been picked up by all other ratepayers and we don't think that's fair.

A modest fee of \$50 for turning off unwanted services is a great saving all the way around.

**TENDERS:** We are currently looking at tenders for Phase One of the piping upgrade from the North Reservoir to Bainbridge. The winning tender will be announced when the process is finalized.

### Short Notices

**Beaver Creek Improvement District water board regular monthly meetings** are held on the third Monday of the month, starting at 7 pm in the Improvement District Office, B-6038 Beaver Creek Road. Public attendance and input is welcomed. Upcoming meetings are: Mon. Oct 17; Mon. Nov 21, and Mon. Dec 19, 2011.

**Here's a good deal.** Our new Point of Sale machine was free to upgrade but now gives you full security with your credit and debit cards.

**To avoid further penalties,** pay your 2011 water tax by December 31.

**Agendas are available** for monthly meetings; minutes for prior meetings will be available after they are adopted by the board. If you want to speak at the meeting please inform the office one week prior and you will be placed on the agenda as a delegate. If you need anything done by the board, please put it in writing. Talking to one person will not resolve an issue. There needs to be a quorum (3 trustees) and something on paper.

*Lessons . . . Continued from page 2*

pumphouse was built. The cost overruns amounted to \$40,000 from the capital fund, which Bamfield residents will repay over the next 11 years. They were told essentially that this new facility would cure their water problems. It didn't.

The Bamfield Water System is complex. Part of the supply system runs under the ocean. The intake on Sugsaw Lake is a floating wooden walkway with the water main and intake screens suspended underneath. It's anchored in many places to hold it in position. The water travels from the lake, under the ocean to Port Desire for chlorination, then on to two reservoirs and into the distribution system. Corrosion of fittings causes significant leaks.

The ACRD's 2010 Water Systems Report stated that future improvements would require an overland route because maintenance and repairs for the ocean-bed water main is "problematic" and that because it's gravity fed, a limited amount of water could be pumped.

In addition, a new reservoir for the West side of Bamfield is needed to provide adequate supply and water pressure to the community. There's been no mention of how these infrastructure problems will be addressed, or when. Many say that the ACRD doesn't know how to operate a water system and has failed to meet Bamfield's needs.

They question why their local board was not consulted on the pumphouse project — and why a resolution passed by the board regarding hiring an engineering firm was ignored.

Bamfield residents have expressed a lot of dissatisfaction with their ACRD operated system.

Some are particularly upset with a newly

proposed water bylaw that will alter the composition of the existing board.

This new five-member Committee will be made up of the Regional Director (or Alternate Director) as chairperson; the appointed Fire Chief of the volunteer department; Chair of the Bamfield Advisory Planning Commission; a member of Bamfield Marine Science Centre — and one lone member-at-large from the Electoral Area as "ratified by the Regional Board." Moreover, a quorum is three committee members, one of whom must be the Director or Alternate. Some feel this composition is "tailored to ACRD requirements" and deprives them of a voice.

Against this backdrop of discontent, the ACRD hasn't stated why it's taken the step to privatize Bamfield's water operations. It just has. For Beaver Creekers making an historic decision on governance, the Bamfield Solution should give pause for consideration.

- Is the ACRD able to operate a large, complex system like ours?
- Would our water committee or board under conversion have the same problems as Bamfield's has had?
- What about oversight of grant monies and cost overruns?
- If the ACRD discovers it can't run the BCID system will they just privatize its operation and maintenance as they are doing in Bamfield? And, at what cost?
- Most importantly, should we surrender our water license to the ACRD and perhaps end up buying our water back from an ACRD/private enterprise entity in the end?

This is not to say that it will necessarily go this way but the precedent has been set — and the questions should be asked.