



Recycling & Waste Management Solid Waste Management Plan 2023 Annual Summary Report

Purpose:

To update the Monitoring Advisory Group (MAG) concerning the implementation of key strategies outlined in the Cowichan Valley Regional District's (CVRD) 2018 Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP).

Summary:

The CVRD's 2018 SWMP was approved by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (ENV) in August, 2020. Many of the strategies outlined in the ten-year plan are underway. Table 1 below summarizes the progress made on all thirteen key strategies stated in the SWMP. "In-progress" indicates that the project has started but is not yet complete. "Ongoing" strategies are those that are worked upon continuously with no defined end dates, such as advocating for EPR programs, the environmental monitoring of landfills, and updating tipping fees.

Table 1. Status of SWMP Strategies

Strategy	Status
(1.A) Reduce wasted food from residential and Industrial, Commercial, and Institutional (ICI) sectors	In Progress
(1.B) Enhance and improve local reuse opportunities	In Progress
(1.C) Support bans on single-use plastic bags or other single-use items	In Progress
(1.D) Advocate for expansion of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programs	Ongoing
(2.A) Mandate source separation for ICI and multi-family	In Progress
(2.B) Adopt a full organics disposal ban and enhance enforcement of existing material disposal bans	In Progress
(3.A) Assess opportunities for access to recycling programs at depots	Ongoing
(3.B) Adopt universal (three-stream) curbside collection services across the region	In Progress
(4.A) Ensure best management practices for odour management	In Progress
(4.B) Ensure capacity for local organics processing	Ongoing
(5.A) Perform a feasibility assessment for development of ICI transfer capacity	In Progress
(6.A) Monitor Construction and Demolition (C&D) disposal and recycling activities in the region	Ongoing

(6.B) Develop a C&D waste management strategy	In Progress
(6.C) Reduce barriers to disposing hazardous materials (asbestos, gypsum wallboard)	Ongoing
(7.A) Explore options for local disposal	In Progress
(7.B) Explore and amend tipping fee	Ongoing
(8.A) Augment illegal dumping prevention strategies	Ongoing
(9.A) Introduce collection for Household Hazardous Waste (HHW)	Ongoing
(9.B) Improve recycling opportunities for bulky items	Ongoing
(9.C) Assess effective ways to reduce open burning of wood waste	Ongoing
(10.A) Monitor historic disposal sites	Ongoing
(11.A) Implement asset management plan	In Progress
(11.B) Develop Bings Creek Transfer Station 10-Year plan	In Progress
(12.A) Develop a disaster management plan	In Progress
(13.A) Consider best management practices for education and behaviour change programs	Ongoing
(13.B) Continue to support and encourage recycling education through ongoing promotion of Zero Waste Events program	Ongoing

Background:

In British Columbia, regional districts develop municipal solid waste management plans under the provincial *Environmental Management Act*. The CVRD's 2018 SWMP provides a long-term vision of how the CVRD will manage its solid waste and serves to guide solid waste management-related activities and policy development in the region for ten years.

The CVRD's 2018 SWMP was approved by the Board of Directors in October 2018 and subsequently submitted to ENV for consideration. Approval from ENV was received in August 2020. The primary goal of the SWMP is to reduce per capita waste generation to 150 kg/person.

The ten-year plan includes a number of key strategies to be implemented over the life of the plan. This report serves to update the MAG on progress made regarding plan implementation. Staff will continue to produce this progress report on an annual basis for the MAG and the CVRD Board of Directors.

Discussion:

Please refer to the complete CVRD SWMP, which can be found on the CVRD website at (<https://www.cvrld.ca/2979/Solid-Waste-Management-Plan>).

Table 2 provides an overview of waste generation and diversion data. Table 3 details the progress made on the SWMP strategy implementation.

Table 2. Annual Waste Tracking Synopsis

SWMP Reference	Strategy	Goal	Status
Section 1.2	Pollution Prevention Hierarchy and Targets	Long-term disposal target of 150 kg per capita	In Progress
<p>Comments: 42,768.3 tonnes of waste generated in the CVRD was sent to landfill in 2023. The per capita waste rate, based on an estimated regional population of 95,535, was 447.7 kg/person, a 5% decrease from 2022.</p> <p>43,202 tonnes of recyclable materials and 8,050.2 tonnes of organic material were recycled through private and public waste management facilities in the CVRD, which represents a diversion rate of 54.5%</p>			

Table 3. SWMP Strategy Implementation

SWMP Reference	Strategy	Goal	Status
Strategy 1.B	Enhance reduce and reuse potential	Enhance and improve local reuse opportunities	In Progress
<p>Comments: In 2023, the CVRD and Habitat for Humanity partnered to hold seven Pop-Up Donation Drop events at Bings Creek Recycling Centre. These events yielded 2,750 kg of reusable items, which generated about \$5900 in sales for Habitat.</p>			

SWMP Reference	Strategy	Goal	Status
Strategy 1.C	Enhance reduce and reuse potential	Support bans on single-use plastic bags or other single-use items	In Progress
<p>Comments: The CVRD continued its work to advocate for and shape provincial and federal single-use items regulations. Feedback provided to the Province was incorporated into their <i>Single-use and Plastic Waste Prevention Regulation</i>, which went into effect on December 20. The CVRD continued to participate in the CWMA’s Plastic Waste Reduction Working Group, which focuses on challenges and solutions related to plastic waste.</p>			

SWMP Reference	Strategy	Goal	Status
Strategy 1.D	Enhance reduce and reuse potential	Advocate for expansion of EPR Programs	Ongoing
<p>Comments: The CVRD provides feedback on the EPR programs that are required by the Province’s Recycling Regulation. The goal is to help shape the development of effective policies and programs to improve product recyclability, increase accessibility to collection networks, and reduce waste management costs.</p>			

In 2023, the CVRD petitioned Tire Stewardship BC to remove charges to collectors for tires still on rims. Collectors are obligated to recover these costs through per tire disposal fees. These fees are unequivocally responsible for the high incidence of illegally dumped tires throughout BC. Similarly, the CVRD worked with Major Appliance Recycling Roundtable and local metal recyclers to update and improve collection remittances.

SWMP Reference	Strategy	Goal	Status
Strategy 3.B	Reduce disposal from the residential sector	Adopt universal (three-stream) curbside collection services across the region	In Progress
<p>Comments: The CVRD launched the second phase of engagement for the three-stream program. Over 1000 residents provided feedback on their preferred option out of the two feasible service options identified in the first engagement phase. The option of garbage, recycling, and comingled food waste and light yard waste with the option of glass collection received the most support. The details of this process were published in the Phase 2 Engagement Summary Report, available on the CVRD website.</p>			

SWMP Reference	Strategy	Goal	Status
Strategy 6.A	Improve management of C&D materials	Monitor C&D disposal and recycling activities in the region	Ongoing
<p>Comments: The expanded painted wood program, which operated out of all three recycling centers, diverted 922.2 tonnes of material from landfill. Currently, painted wood waste is processed into a fuel source that replaces the use of coal in cement plants. The CVRD will continue to look for a higher and better use for painted wood waste.</p>			

SWMP Reference	Strategy	Goal	Status
Strategy 7.A	Explore options for local disposal	Explore options for local disposal	In Progress
<p>Comments: The CVRD initiated the formation of an island/coastal local government working group to assess the status of local landfill capacities and plan for potential joint long-term and emergency waste disposal solutions. The working group kicked off in fall 2023 and continues to meet on a quarterly basis.</p>			

SWMP Reference	Strategy	Goal	Status
Strategy 7.B	Explore options for local disposal	Explore and amend tipping fee	Ongoing

Comments:

To address changes in costs for the processing and hauling of recyclable and garbage materials that are collected at CVRD Recycling Centres, the CVRD conducts an annual review of tipping fees in conjunction with annual budget preparation. Fee amendments may also occur as a result of new processing contracts. Due to various factors such as inflation and increased transportation costs to the landfill in Washington state, the tipping fee for MSW was approved for increase twice in 2023, raising it to \$204/tonne.

SWMP Reference	Strategy	Goal	Status
Strategy 8.A	Reduce illegal dumping	Augment illegal dumping prevention strategies	Ongoing

Comments:

The CVRD continues to monitor and enforce illegal dumping hotspots across the region. Also, the CVRD's Community Clean-up Fund enables the free disposal of community clean-up debris collected by eligible volunteer groups. In the year 2023, volunteer groups disposed of 33 metric tonnes using clean-up funds. The CVRD summer student continued a 2022 study to assess and track illegal dumping and came up with recommendations on how to decrease the prevalence of these activities.

SWMP Reference	Strategy	Goal	Status
Strategy 9.C	Implement collection/drop-off for HHW, bulky items, and organic debris	Assess effective ways to reduce open burning of wood waste	Ongoing

Comments:

During the annual open burn windows, RWM staff continued to collaborate with other CVRD divisions to promote composting and chipping instead of open burning of wood waste. The inclusion of light yard waste in the Three Stream Curbside program is expected to reduce backyard burning, which is a high priority goal of the Cowichan's Regional Airshed Protection Strategy. The Open Burn Permitting program was transferred from RWM to the Environment department in 2023.

SWMP Reference	Strategy	Goal	Status
Strategy 11.B	Implement an asset management plan	Develop Bings Creek Transfer Station 10-Year Plan	In Progress

Comments:

Separate from the extensive 10-year plan, The CVRD applied for a six-million-dollar grant for expanding the recycling infrastructure on the site. CVRD released an RFP for the Bings Creek Modernization project, which includes construction of a new transfer building, traffic flow improvements, and water infrastructure upgrades.

SWMP Reference	Strategy	Goal	Status
----------------	----------	------	--------

Strategy 13.A	Integrate education and behaviour change best practices	Consider best management practices for education and behaviour change programs	Ongoing
<p>Comments:</p> <p>The CVRD has undertaken a rigorous public education campaign, incorporating where possible the principles of Community Based Social Marketing (CBSM) as recommended in the SWMP. An overview of educational efforts in 2022 includes attendance at public outreach events such as markets, fairs, home shows and the like; presentations to community groups on proper recycling techniques; promotion of the Cowichan Recycles App for collection reminders and other recycling/waste-related notifications; continual updating of the Recylopedia online search engine for recyclables; extensive social media posts on a wide array of environmental topics; summer curbside auditing of recyclables and associated educational stickers and notices to reduce recycling contamination; and regular updating of web pages.</p> <p>Staff apply to WildSafeBC for a yearly for a seasonal local WildSafeBC coordinator. This coordinator's role is to provide education and outreach regarding decreasing interactions with wildlife, with a focus on bear awareness and curbside garbage. Staff provide this coordinator with information to assist in tagging garbage totes that are left out overnight. Staff also act as a liaison between this position and other interested parties such as conservation officers, municipalities, and volunteers. The WildSafe coordinator attends community events and provides education at local schools and groups, in addition to generating social media campaigns.</p> <p>The CVRD was one of the first to prohibit placing carts at the curb outside of the collection day set-out window, established in its curbside collection bylaw. Going forward, the CVRD seeks to establish a bear awareness working group with other local municipalities to decrease wildlife interactions across the region.</p>			

SWMP Reference	Strategy	Goal	Status
Strategy 13.B	Integrate education and behaviour change best practices	Continue to support and encourage recycling education through ongoing promotion of Zero Waste Events program	Ongoing
<p>Comments:</p> <p>The Community Event Tote Program was created to provide an opportunity for not-for-profit organizations and schools to educate the community about proper waste separation practices by ensuring that waste is properly separated at events. Eligible applicants are required to pay a deposit to cover disposal fees (per Bylaw 4412) and/or for the processing of contaminated materials, unclean, damaged or missing totes. Fifteen events were scheduled for this program in 2023, providing education on proper recycling techniques to the public. The program is promoted on the CVRD website and often has return customers.</p>			