



# STAFF REPORT TO COMMITTEE

**DATE OF REPORT** December 14, 2023

**MEETING TYPE & DATE** Electoral Area Services Committee of February 7, 2024

**FROM:** Utilities Division  
Operations Department

**SUBJECT:** Cameron Farms Inclusion into the Arbutus Ridge Water System  
Service Area Request

**FILE:** 5600-05

## **PURPOSE/INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this report is to present a Certificate of Sufficiency and obtain approval to extend the boundary of the Arbutus Ridge Water System service area.

## **RECOMMENDED RESOLUTION**

1. That CVRD Bylaw No. 3286 – Arbutus Ridge Water System Service Establishment Bylaw, 2009 be amended to include the property described in the Arbutus Ridge Water System Service Area Certificate of Sufficiency dated January 12, 2024; and,
2. That the amendment to Bylaw 3286 be forwarded to the Board for consideration of three readings and adoption.

## **BACKGROUND**



The 2011 Arbutus Ridge Utility Transfer Agreement transferred utility works from the Arbutus Ridge Strata and golf course to the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD).

A nearby farm owned by the Cameron family had an agreement with the golf course (originally owned by CRC, the developer), under which the golf course leased certain lands from the Camerons and in exchange, agreed to supply the Camerons with potable water. The lease term expired in 2014 but there was a 25-year renewal term under the lease. It is unknown if the lease was renewed or not.

At the time of the agreement in 2011, CVRD discussions with the developer had identified that the Cameron's did not want to join the water service area at that time and wanted to continue to receive water from the golf course. The CVRD agreed to acquire the water utility subject to the continuing right of the golf course to supply water to the Cameron's property. As a result, the Cameron's are not within the service area and are not entitled to receive water directly from the CVRD.

The Camerons are now requesting water service from the CVRD to secure water for domestic purposes. This would involve inclusion to the water service area and an amendment to the establishing bylaw.

## **ANALYSIS**

### **Land Use Service Comments:**

The Development Services Division supports the request provided that the service is metered. The connection already exists and provides a source of potable water, conforming with OCP policy:

OCP Bylaw 4270 Manage Infrastructure Sustainably policy 3.2.3.2.5: *Does not support expansion of any services outside of future growth areas except for health, fire safety, agricultural support or sea level rise adaptation reasons.*

The parcel is not sub-dividable and uses are restricted by the A-1 zone and the Agricultural Land Reserve.

### **Utilities Comments:**

The Cameron farm has two existing homes that are currently serviced as part of the earlier agreement with the Arbutus Ridge Golf Course. In this agreement, several golf course greens lie on these lands within Lot B in exchange for domestic water supply. The golf course pays for the water usage, but as the Arbutus Ridge Water System is unmetered it is difficult to monitor usage, as well as leaks. Further, the water service to the farm comes directly from a CVRD watermain.

CVRD Utilities supports inclusion to the service area, as this is currently a non-compliant service connection.

## **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

User fees for the Arbutus Ridge Water System are \$474.80 per year per home. They are proposed to increase to \$489 per year in 2024. No parcel taxes are charged to this utility.

Capacity connection charges will not be levied as this service is existing, and does not result in any change to demand of the system.

## **COMMUNICATION CONSIDERATIONS**

Not applicable.


## **STRATEGIC/BUSINESS PLAN CONSIDERATIONS**

The Corporate Strategic Plan includes an objective to demonstrate strong fiscal leadership. The recommended resolution provides a reliable essential service.


Referred to (upon completion):


- ☐ Community Services *(Cowichan Community Centre, Cowichan Lake Recreation, South Cowichan Recreation, Arts & Culture, Facilities & Transit)*
- ☐ Corporate Services *(Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology, Legislative Services)*
- ☐ Operations *(Utilities, Parks & Trails, Recycling & Waste Management)*
- ☐ Land Use Services *(Community Planning, Strategic Initiatives, Development Services, Building Inspection & Bylaw Enforcement)*
- ☐ Strategic Services *(Communications & Engagement, Economic Development, Emergency Management, Environmental Services)*

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Reviewed for form and content and approved for submission to the Committee:

Resolution:

☒ Corporate Officer

Financial Considerations:

☒ Chief Financial Officer

Attachment A - Certificate of Sufficiency