

**DATE:** June 10, 2021

**FILE:** 5380-02

**TO:** Chair and Directors  
Comox Strathcona Waste Management Board

Supported by Russell Dyson  
Chief Administrative Officer

**FROM:** Russell Dyson  
Chief Administrative Officer

*R. Dyson*

**RE: Quadra Community Engagement and Recycling Transition**

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### **Purpose**

To receive board support to proceed with a communications plan to engage the local community on upgrading the existing Quadra Island recycling depot to a Recycle BC depot. To host an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) clean up on Quadra Island in September 2021 and utilize this event to further engage the wider community on the possible transition.

### **Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer:**

THAT staff conduct two engagement sessions with the residents on Quadra Island to gauge the interest of converting the existing recycling depot to a Recycle BC depot and expanding recycling opportunities;

AND FURTHER THAT the board support an Extended Producer Responsibility clean up on Quadra Island in September 2021 for materials such as batteries, light bulbs, ballasts, small and large appliances, scrap metal, paint, household hazardous waste and electronics.

### **Executive Summary**

The existing unstaffed Comox Strathcona Waste Management (CSWM) depot on Quadra Island offers residents diversion options for paper, newsprint, cardboard, as well as hard plastic, fibre and metal containers. Recycle BC has approved to bring onboard a depot for Quadra Island into their program for implementation in 2022, based on the population size, drive-time to a Recycle BC depot and that it is an island. This would reduce transportation and processing expenses, as well as generate new revenue, plus provide a range of recycling options to the island. A Recycle BC depot would likely come with higher staffing costs in order to ensure product quality that meets the programs stringent standards.

- A Recycle BC depot would reduce the hours and days of operation compared to the 365 days, 24 hour availability residents are used to, and it would also have higher labour costs and capital infrastructure requirements. Overall cost of the depot would depend on the location and level of service, which is to be consulted on during this proposed engagement, and proposed costs will be brought back to the board in October.
- The shifting global market for recyclables has resulted in challenges and lack of transparency to determine if materials outside of the Recycle BC stream are being recycled in a responsible or ethical manner. The Recycle BC program, a full producer responsibility program regulated under provincial guidelines, is required to find end markets for all residential packaging and paper recyclable materials collected. The main benefits of a Recycle BC depot include:
  - all the shipping costs from the depot are covered under this program;

- the financial incentives that the service will receive based on the amount of material collected which will be put back into the community to fund the recycling program, whereas non-Recycle BC depots costs the service to operate; and
- the commitments to transparency, verified results and a steadfast focus on environmental outcomes per provincial requirements.
- In order to proceed with investigating a depot conversion, the CSWM service would like to engage the community and provide residents with options and gauge feedback from residents prior to moving forward. Staff would host a COVID safe public information session on Quadra Island with residents during the June/July illegal dumping event, and to provide educational information to residents on the existing EPR programs in BC and the proposed EPR collection event in September 2021.
- Increasing costs to manage recyclables collected, as well as ongoing challenges with contamination and illegal dumping at unstaffed recycling depots can be mitigated with participation in the Recycle BC program and conversion to a staffed depot. This will also give residents the confidence that their recycling efforts are worthwhile, and materials are being responsibly managed downstream.

Prepared by:

***S. Valdal***


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 Stephanie Valdal  
 Services Coordinator - CSWM

Concurrence:

***V. Schau***


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 Vivian Schau  
 Senior Manager of CSWM  
 Services

Concurrence:

***M. Rutten***


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 Marc Rutten, P.Eng.  
 General Manager of  
 Engineering Services

### **Background/Current Situation**

The Province of British Columbia added printed paper and packaging to the Recycling Regulation in 2012, which resulted in the creation of an incentive based EPR program in 2014. EPR programs take the financial burden off of the tax payer and secure funding to recycle materials through producer responsibility programs. All of the transportation and fees associated with the collection of EPR materials are covered by the EPR programs. There are many EPR recycling programs in BC for the proper collection and recycling of materials such as; residential packaging, batteries, light bulbs, ballasts, small and large appliances, paint, household hazardous waste and electronics. An overview of the 15 different EPR programs and their materials is provided as Appendix A.

The CSWM service would like to establish a Recycle BC depot on Quadra Island, to increase diversion by creating access for residents to recycle residential packaging that is currently not accepted at the existing Quadra Island CSWM depot. This material includes, film plastics, glass, foam packaging and other flexible plastic packaging, in addition to the materials currently accepted such as paper, cardboard, metal, and hard plastic containers. A list of acceptable materials for disposal at a Recycle BC depot is included as Appendix B.

The CSWM service received authorization from Recycle BC to establish a Recycle BC depot on Quadra Island beginning in 2022. The island met the criteria for accessibility that Recycle BC used to determine that this community was in need of a more convenient location to drop off their depot only recyclables, based on the population size, drive-time to a Recycle BC depot and that it is an island.

Recycle BC provides specific criteria for operating a depot which receives their materials to ensure that the collected materials can be recycled safely and effectively, as well as meet the requirements of the recycling markets. The CSWM service must provide a suitable location to host the Recycle BC

depot. The site must be secured, staffed, locked during non-operational hours, provide enough space for all collection bins and materials, as well as storage. A paved location would be ideal to assist with loading. In addition, The CSWM service has been approached by BC Hydro regarding the possibility of collaborating to provide a location that would also be suitable to park a BC Hydro truck to provide assistance with restoring power during outages to minimize impact to the community, which can be a challenge with cancelled ferries as outages are usually associated with high winds.

In consultation with community members and Director Abram, staff will identify two to three suitable locations for the Recycle BC depot. In order to proceed with investigating a depot conversion, the CSWM service will engage the community and provide residents with options and gauge feedback from residents prior to moving forward. Staff suggests hosting a COVID safe public information session on Quadra Island with residents during the illegal dumping event, and to provide educational information to residents on the existing EPR programs in BC and the proposed EPR collection event in September 2021.

An EPR collection event is much needed this year as COVID has created congestion at the Return-it depot in Campbell River, where this material is accepted for recycling. COVID also caused the cancellation of Quadra's giant garage sale, hosted by the Quadra Philippines Connection, which not only services as a collection event for unwanted materials but also a large community event that many residents look forward to each year. EPR collection events are very well received by the communities who host them, and provide residents with the ability to properly recycle a large amount of materials from their home, and also provides as an opportunity for staff to educate residents on the importance of waste diversion.

If the board approves the proposed EPR clean up on Quadra Island in September 2021, collection would include batteries, light bulbs, ballasts, small and large appliances, paint, household hazardous waste and electronics from residents.

This EPR collection event will serve as another opportunity to engage the wider community on the possible transition to a Recycle BC depot, and to consult on what, if any, additional EPR programs the community may see value in having at their recycling depot on a permanent basis rather, than event basis, at the discretion of the board.

It is important to note, the majority of EPR materials are better suited to annual collection events, based on volumes anticipated to be generated annually. Analysis of demand and with resident input, staff will consider the addition of other EPR programs beyond Recycle BC to a future depot location. Furthermore, any future EPR collection events could be planned to take place at the depot location and operational staff could assist with collection, packaging and pick up of EPR materials, which will ultimately keep the costs low and increase use of this facility.

There is currently no organized curbside garbage collection or waste transfer facility available on Quadra Island. To inform longer term facility planning, residents will also be asked about how they currently manage their garbage and if they feel there would be value in a garbage drop-off location on the island. The CSWM currently provides waste transfer services on Cortes Island, and will be creating transfer stations and diversion facilities within Tahsis and Zeballos in the near future to support the closure of their remote landfills. Residents being able to take their garbage and recycling to the same location reduces Green House Gas (GHG) emissions and encourages diversion. Exploring this opportunity now ensures capital investments are made with a longer term vision for supporting all residents within the CSWM with a comparable level of service.

### Policy Analysis

The proposed activities support the first two objectives of the 2012 Solid Waste Management Plan:

1. To work towards a goal of zero waste and aim to minimize the amount of waste buried in landfills.
2. To improve the solid waste management system to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from solid waste management activities.

These initiatives will improve access to recycling, and reduce individual trips to Campbell River by residents to divert EPR materials, thereby reducing GHG emissions.

### Options

The board has two options:

- 1) Direct staff to proceed with engagement on a Recycle BC depot conversion and the proposed communications and outreach plan.
- 2) Provide alternative direction.

### Financial Factors

Without support from Recycle BC, the CSWM service pays for the transportation and processing of recyclable materials collected at the existing depot. Based on current service levels and the island population, residents generate an estimated 94 tonnes of material annually. The transport and processing currently costs the service \$38,179 per year. There is no revenue from this material.

In addition to paying for the transportation and processing, Recycle BC will offer financial incentives that the service would receive for the recyclables collected. Rates vary by material stream, and if the material is loose or baled. Staff have reviewed information regarding the breakdown of materials and financial incentives from other CSWM communities, and are estimating the incentives from a Recycle BC depot on Quadra Island to be in the \$10,000 - \$18,000 range depending on how much of the material is baled. Rate changes for all collectors were presented by Recycle BC in July 2020, indicating an increase in financial incentives were coming; these were subsequently delayed due to financial implications of COVID.

The current budget for the existing CSWM depot on Quadra and cost comparatives for a Recycle BC depot (not including capital infrastructure), is provided in Table 1 below. Through the consultation process with residents, the staffing requirements and location will be discussed allowing for more refined cost estimates on the operational expense of a Recycle BC depot.

**Table 1: Current Quadra Island CSWM Depot Budget**

Budget items (annually amount)	CSWM Depot	Recycle BC Depot Comparatives
<b>Transportation</b>	\$21,102	\$0
<b>Recycling Tipping fees</b>	\$17,077	\$0
<b>Recycling Revenues</b>	\$0	(\$10,000-\$18,000)
<b>Staffing</b>	\$10,000	To be determined through consultation
<b>Lease/Rent of facility</b>	\$0	To be determined through consultation
<b>Illegally dumped garbage removal</b>	\$7,102	Similar or less

A staff member is currently funded to keep the area around the bins tidy, to remove garbage and contamination within the recycling bins where possible. They are only budgeted for limited hours each month and are not actively engaging with residents. This level of staffing would not meet Recycle BC requirements and the budget would increase depending on days and hours of operation to meet the community needs.

There is currently no lease or rent cost for the location of the bins. However, a new location is being explored to site the Recycle BC depot in order to meet the requirements for proper lighting, paved surface for loading, security and sufficient space for storage and containers.

The CSWM service also currently incurs a cost of \$7,102 per year to manage the illegally dumped garbage associated with this unstaffed recycling depot.

There are no financial implications for hosting an EPR clean up event on Quadra, all the supplies, transportation and collection is covered by the respective EPR programs. Staff travel to Quadra for the event is already provided in the existing CSWM budget.

**Legal Factors**

There are no significant legal factors associated with this report.

**Intergovernmental Factors**

CSWM staff will work with staff at the Strathcona Regional District to book the Community Center for an EPR clean up event in September and will request assistance with advertising the event to residents on Quadra Island.

**Interdepartmental Involvement**

CSWM staff will work with communications staff to prepare promotional materials to engage the community and to advertise the upcoming events and community consultation.

**Citizen/Public Relations**

It is important for the service to engage and educate all residents within the service area. The potential conversion of a CSWM depot to a Recycle BC depot provides an excellent educational opportunity. Utilizing existing events to conduct public outreach addresses COVID concerns and supplies a unique opportunity to engage with residents already invested in the community.

Attachments: Appendix A – BC Extended Producer Responsibility Programs Overview  
Appendix B – Recycle BC Materials List  
Appendix C – Communication Plan

## B.C.'S PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP MODEL

B.C. offers the most extensive list of mandated materials for recycling in North America. Guided by the Province of B.C.'s Recycling Regulation, our industry-led programs increase access, improve recycling rates, divert materials from landfill, and educate British Columbians to support a circular economy.

Extended producer responsibility has existed in British Columbia for **over 25 years**



### ABOUT BC RECYCLES

The Stewardship Agencies of British Columbia (SABC) are an informal alliance of industry product stewardship organizations. SABC works with government, service providers and other stakeholders to ensure B.C.'s extended producer responsibility model is successful and cost effective.

**WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER**

# THE IMPACT OF BC RECYCLES

Every year, product stewardship programs in B.C. recover approximately

# 425 MILLION

## KILOGRAMS OF MATERIALS

and either recycle them or turn them into valuable new materials

### Over....

**1 billion** beverage containers

**7.2 million** light bulbs

**6.4 million** used oil filters

**5 million** tires

**107,000** smoke/co alarms

**210,000** major appliances

**36,600** cell phones

**6,600** thermostats

**23 million kg** of lead-acid batteries

**185 million kg** of packaging & paper

**54.1 million litres** of used oil & antifreeze

**23.4 million kg** of beer containers & packaging

**15.9 million kg** of electronics

**5 million kg** of small appliances

**2.9 million litres** of paint

**723,000 kg** of consumer batteries

**99,950 kg** of medications

### COLLECTED FOR RECYCLING EACH YEAR

**176 communities**

participating in curbside and multi-family packaging and paper collection programs

**Over 99%**

of British Columbians have convenient access to one or more recycling programs



# Appendix B – Recycle BC Materials List



- ✓ Greeting cards
- ✓ Paper gift wrap
- ✓ Paper gift bags
- ✓ Paper carry-out beverage trays
- ✓ Cores from paper towel and toilet paper
- ✓ Plastic packaging for toys, batteries etc. Separate plastic from paper backing
- ✓ Spiral wound cans and lids for frozen juice concentrate, chips, etc.
- ✓ Plastic pails less than 25L for laundry detergent, cat litter, etc.
- ✓ Plastic tube for yogurt, margarine, etc.

### GLASS (return to depot)

Glass bottles - clear and coloured      Glass jars - clear and coloured

**1** Put all lids in blue box.

- ✗ Drinking glasses, dishes, cookware
- ✗ Window glass, mirrors
- ✗ Ceramic products
- ✗ Light bulbs or light fixtures

### FOAM PACKAGING (return to depot)

Foam meat trays (remove absorbent pad)      Foam take-out containers and cups      Foam cushion packaging used to protect electronics etc.

- ✗ Blue or pink foam insulation, packing chips and peanuts
- ✗ Squishy or flexible foam, foam noodles

### PLASTIC BAGS AND OVERWRAP (return to depot)

Plastic bags      Outer bags and product wraps

- ✓ Bags for groceries, produce, dry bulk foods, frozen vegetables, water softener, salt, garden products, etc.
- ✓ Overwrap for diapers, feminine hygiene products, paper towels, soft drink flats newspapers, etc.

Want to recycle something not included here?

### OTHER FLEXIBLE PLASTIC PACKAGING (return to depot)

Crinkly wrappers and bags      Flexible packaging with plastic seal      Zipper lock and stand-up pouches

Woven plastic bags      Non-food protective packaging

- ✗ Plastic squeeze tubes, plastic-lined paper, paper-lined plastic, plastic strapping
- ✗ 6-pack rings, biodegradable plastic, vinyl

### Characteristics of Plastic Bags and Overwrap vs. Other Flexible Plastic Packaging

PLASTIC BAGS AND OVERWRAP	OTHER FLEXIBLE PLASTIC PACKAGING
Can Poke Your Thumb Through It	Crinkly
Single Material	Foil Lining
Not Crinkly	Doesn't Stretch





## Communications Plan

**Project Name: Quadra Island Depot Conversion**

**File: 5380-02**

### **Purpose**

- To inform and support the public education and outreach for Quadra Island residents regarding the potential conversion of the current Comox Strathcona Waste Management (CSWM) unstaffed depot to a Recycle BC depot.

### **Target audience(s):**

- Quadra Island residents
- CSWM Board Directors, Strathcona Regional District (SRD) Electoral Area Directors
- SRD staff
- Recycle BC
- Island Return-It Depot – Campbell River
- Media – Discovery Islander

### **Project background:**

- In 2013, the CSWM board made the decision to convert many of the existing CSWM recycling depots in our service area to RecycleBC depots.
- In 2019, the CSWM board made the decision to close four (4) of the remaining six (6) CSWM depots effective July 2020 and July 2021. The two remaining depots on Quadra Island and Oyster River were removed from consideration at the time because they provided the only local option for recycling for the rural areas.
- As with the other CSWM depots slated for closure, the Quadra Island CSWM depot contends with illegal dumping and high levels of contamination which often results in the entire bins getting landfilled, as well as safety issues for users of the depot and staff tasked with managing the contaminated waste.
- Residents of Quadra Island cannot currently recycle the large extent of depot-only materials (glass, foam packaging, other flexible plastic packaging and film plastics) on the island; the closest depot is located in Campbell River.
- In 2021, the CSWM service received notification from Recycle BC that Quadra Island is eligible for to establish a Recycle BC depot beginning in 2022, provided that a local organization is willing and able to provide Recycle BC depot service that meets all program requirements and collection standards, specifically, staffed and secured during non-operating hours.
- Recycle BC has provided a formal offer to establish a RecycleBC depot on Quadra Island and hence, staff will now gauge the interest among the community through formal and informal public consultation sessions.

### **Spokesperson:**

- Vivian Schau – Project lead and Media spokesperson

**Communications Support:**

- Christianne Wile – Communications strategy support
- Lyndsay Fraser – Communications tools and implementation support

**Guiding principles:**

- Communications included in all project team meetings and in key project-related discussions
- Project to have budget sufficient to cover communications strategies
- All materials and communication will follow the CSWM style guide

**Communication Objectives:**

- Engage with residents, specifically the depot users, both informally and formally to gauge interest for a depot conversion, ensuring a full understanding of the implications including reduced hours of operation, increased visibility, change of location and changes to recyclable materials.
- Provide quantifiable data for the directors based on the community's interest
- Increase awareness of “5W’s and H” of the Recycle BC program and EPR programs in general, and answer any questions residents may have about solid waste and/or recycling. This information will help them to make the best decision for how they want to see their recycling managed moving forward. (who, what, when, where, why and how) and will also prime them for the September EPR collection event.
  - Secondary information from Recycle BC such as material lists, annual reports and educational campaign materials can be included for reference.

**Key Messages:**

- The unstaffed CSWM depot is plagued with illegal dumping and high level of contamination of otherwise recyclable materials, which is resulting in a large portion of this material being landfilled.
- Residents have noted concerns with the transparency and accountability of where our recycling is going. Increasing tipping fees for recyclables, transportation costs and ethical concerns regarding where the material is going are affecting the viability and sustainability of the CSWM depots.
- A conversion to a Recycle BC depot will allow for:
  - the acceptance of glass, plastic wrap, other flexible plastic packaging and foam packaging that isn't currently accepted at the CSWM depot.
  - Staff to be present to observe and correct sorting errors, and educate the public on recycling best practices
  - Through Recycle BC, residents can be assure that their material is actually recycled and will therefore be diverting a larger volume of material than if continuing to use the CSWM depots.

**Timeline:**

- **Informal sessions**
  - June 9<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> – 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. CSWM staff will be on site at the CSWM depot location to informally meet residents as they drop off their recyclables. These sessions will provide an opportunity to find out how residents are currently using the depot and to respond to questions and/or concerns about changes to their routine

should the proposed Recycle BC depot be implemented. Information gathered in this informal setting will help to develop communications materials to be utilized in the formal consultation.

- **Formal consultation sessions**

- July 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> – 12:30 AM to 4:30 PM. These sessions will be promoted and will provide residents with the opportunity to meet CSWM staff on site at the depot and fill out a survey. The same survey will be available online throughout the month of July to increase opportunities for residents to participate. Formal sessions and the online survey will be advertised via social media, print advertisements in the Discovery Islander and on printed posters in key public spaces such as community Centres and City Hall.
- September – date and time to be determined. This town hall meeting will be promoted through via social media, print advertisements in the Discovery Islander and on printed posters in key public spaces such as community Centres and City Hall. The intention of this town hall meeting is for CSWM staff to present the preliminary findings from the June and July sessions which will inform the recommended approach. This meeting will be attended by senior staff and will be available to answer questions from residents.

<b>Tool/Task</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Print Ads</b>	Notice of formal sessions and online survey in Discovery Islander	\$1,500	½ page ad insertion: June 25 July 9 July 23 September 3 September 17
<b>Posters</b>	Printed posters to distribute to key public locations promoting formal sessions and online survey. Posters printed in house.	\$0	
<b>Book Community Hall for Town Hall Consultation</b>	Book Community hall for September engagement	\$125 (5 hours @\$25/hr)	
<b>Social Media</b>	Event posts on Facebook to promote formal sessions and promotional posts to encourage residents to fill out an online survey. Content to be promoted organically (unpaid).	\$0	Weekly June 25 – August 5
<b>Informal Sessions</b>	Diversion coordinator on site in June from 10AM to 2PM to conduct public outreach to help inform development of communications materials.	Staff and Contractor time	June 9 June 18

<b>Tool/Task</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Formal Sessions</b>	Diversion coordinator on site in July from 10AM to 2PM to gather feedback, including completion of surveys providing quantifiable data for report-out. Additional town hall meeting with senior staff to present survey outcome, proposed service and available for questions and feedback.	Staff and Contractor time	July 3, 2021 July 4, 2021 September 2021 (exact date TBD)
<b>Online Engagement</b>	Establish a page on Connect CVRD engagement portal to provide information about the program and to house the survey.	Staff time	June 25 – August 5
<b>Outreach to Private Depot Operators</b>	Notify Return-It depots in Campbell River about potential volume fluctuations if the CSWM service proceeds with the Recycle BC depot.	Staff and Contractor time	June – August
<b>Signage</b>	Information boards for September (if needed)	\$2000	

### Evaluation and Next Steps

- Results from the formal events and online survey will be compiled and reported out at the September town hall meeting. Public feedback gathered during this phase will help to inform staff recommendations about next steps for this initiative, to be reported out to the Board in Fall 2021.
- Should the Recycle BC depot conversion be pursued, the CSWM will communicate the decision to residents via a direct mail out.

### Approval History

<b>Created by:</b>	<b>Stephanie Valdal, June 1, 2021</b>
<b>Reviewed by:</b>	<b>Christianne Wile, June 9, 2021</b>
<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>Vivian Schau, June 9, 2021</b>