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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Environment

### **Sooke's cutting-edge liquid waste management plan approved**

SOOKE – The District of Sooke has taken concrete steps to protect the Sooke Harbour and Sooke Basin from the environmental pressures of urban development with an innovative Liquid Waste Management Plan (LWMP) approved by the Ministry of Environment.

Sooke has exceeded provincial requirements for liquid waste management and created a rainwater management plan that makes protecting water quality a guiding principle in land use decisions. It works on three principles: protect existing water quality, prevent future damage, and remediate areas that may already be damaged. As part of the plan, district is establishing an extensive water quality monitoring program on the community's 17 watersheds and the Sooke harbour and basin.

Rainwater will be managed through low-impact development techniques, best management practices, marine environmental protection, spill prevention and rainwater management education. The plan includes strict controls requiring each development site to manage its own stormwater. Road design and construction will incorporate rainwater management principles, including the use of fewer impervious surfaces, while integrating low-impact design features that allow better control of the rate that rainwater flows into streams. It also puts strict controls on rainwater discharges to Sooke harbour and basin. Sooke aims to improve water quality in the harbour and basin to the point where a longstanding ban on shellfish harvesting can be lifted.

The LWMP also prohibits developments from discharging sewage into Sooke harbour and basin or to water courses leading to the harbour and basin. This will protect the environment by promoting development in areas supported by the district's Official Community Plan. A partnership has been formed between Ministry of Environment, the District of Sooke, the Capital Regional District, Environment Canada and local First Nations to provide long-term management of Sooke's aquatic environment.

This integrated approach of monitoring, infrastructure design and a multi-government partnership will ensure a high water quality standard for today and for the future.

## Quotes:

Minister of Environment Terry Lake –

“Sooke is just one of several communities in B.C. that are facing development pressures, and Sooke has responded to those pressures by being a true leader in environmental sustainability. The district’s plan for managing its liquid waste is cutting-edge and a model for other communities. The leadership that Sooke is showing will have real, measurable benefits in the watershed and will lead to a healthier environment.”

Sooke Mayor Janet Evans –

“Sooke is proud of its natural environment. And as the first community in British Columbia to integrate both rainwater and sanitary in a liquid waste management plan, we now have the tools to protect the watersheds and the Sooke Harbour and Basin for future generations.”

## Quick Facts:

- Local governments are required to submit an updated liquid waste management plan to the Ministry of Environment every five years for approval.
- The ministry carefully reviews submitted plans to ensure they meet the requirements of the Environmental Management Act, which include: sewer discharges, combined sewer overflows, urban storm water runoff management, pump station overflows, and subdivision on-site disposal. The plan must address the implications of future growth and provide cost estimates per household to implement the plan.
- Local governments are also required to consult the community, including local First Nations, before submitting the plan to the ministry.
- Sooke met or exceeded all requirements and went above and beyond in developing a comprehensive rainwater management strategy.

## Learn More:

District of Sooke Sanitary Sewer:

[http://sooke.ca/EN/main/government/devservices/eng/lwm\\_san.html](http://sooke.ca/EN/main/government/devservices/eng/lwm_san.html)

District of Sooke Rainwater:

[http://sooke.ca/EN/main/government/devservices/eng/lwm\\_rain.html](http://sooke.ca/EN/main/government/devservices/eng/lwm_rain.html)

<http://sooke.ca/EN/main/government/devservices/eng/rainwater.html>

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