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July 11, 2024

We respectfully acknowledge that we are gathering on the territories of the Shíshálh and Skwxwú7mesh Nations

Sunshine Coast Regional District

Committee of the Whole Meeting

Re: Recommendations from the Town of Gibsons regarding the Sunshine Coast Regional Water Strategy

The purpose of our submission is to share our experience as a partnering water purveyor on the Sunshine Coast and to provide feedback and recommendations for the Board's DRAFT SC Regional Water Strategy. Our feedback is made in good faith and in the spirit of regional cooperation, in our role as a partner in the provision of water services to the residents and business of Gibsons and the Sunshine Coast, as outlined in Aquifer 560 Watershed Agreement between Gibsons and the Regional District.

Concerns with the proposed strategy

Our primary concern with the proposed approach is that the SCRD's regional water system, as currently laid out, extends with **excessive connections through multiple watersheds, communities and territories, resulting in high energy (pumping costs) and greater potential for unaccounted loss of water**. This extensive system **struggles to provide water reliably** to all users during dryer periods, a situation that is worsening with climate change.

Our second concern is that to meet the current and future needs of the region, the SCRD is proposing to rely on the new sources of water identified in aquifers 560 (Elphinstone/Gibsons) and 552 (Langdale). Doing so, without first meeting the local needs of the residents and businesses of Gibsons, Elphinstone, Roberts Creek and portions of West Howe Sound **puts the future sustainability and water needs of these areas at risk**.

Thirdly, while we strongly support the efforts to complete the installation of water meters in the Sechelt area, the Regional Water Strategy is limited in its **sense of urgency** and in providing a **clear vision and action plan**, including a more aggressive approach to addressing the **unaccounted-for loss of water due to leaks**.

TOWN OF GIBSONS

"Nature is our most valuable asset"

Recommendations

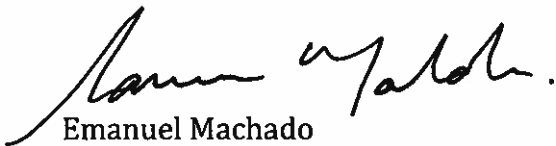
We respectfully request that consideration be given to the following recommendations:

- **Establish a new Groundwater-based SCRD water service area**, supplied by Aquifer 560 and, eventually, 552 to supply area D (Roberts Creek), area E (Elphinstone) and portions of area F (West Howe Sound).
- **Implement the recommendations** and commitments of the 2023 Aquifer 560 Watershed Agreement, including **optimizing the distributions systems** between Gibsons and SCRD; **expanding the Environmental Monitoring Program** and updating the regulatory framework for **aquifer protection** to match the rigorous requirements applied in the Town.

Benefits of this approach

- Combined, the new SCRD service area and Town's system could potentially **serve 9800 people or 34% of the Coast's population**.
- It would allow the residents and businesses in **areas D, E and F to have access to a reliable source of water from their local watershed**, similar to what the residents of Gibsons access.
- As many, if not all, properties are metered in the rural areas of the RD, isolating the new zone would **greatly improve the SCRD's ability to identify and repair leaks** in the new zone.
- Additionally, it allows for **accurately implementing a fair pricing mechanism** to better recover the costs of providing the water service.
- It would **reduce the number of users accessing Chapman System** by as many as 20% or 5,000 people approximately.
- It would provide **water to support the Chapman system**, as needed, assuming environmental and licensing limits are observed.
- Serve as **an emergency backup** to the Chapman System
- Can be implemented in 8-12 months, if deemed a priority.

Respectfully submitted,

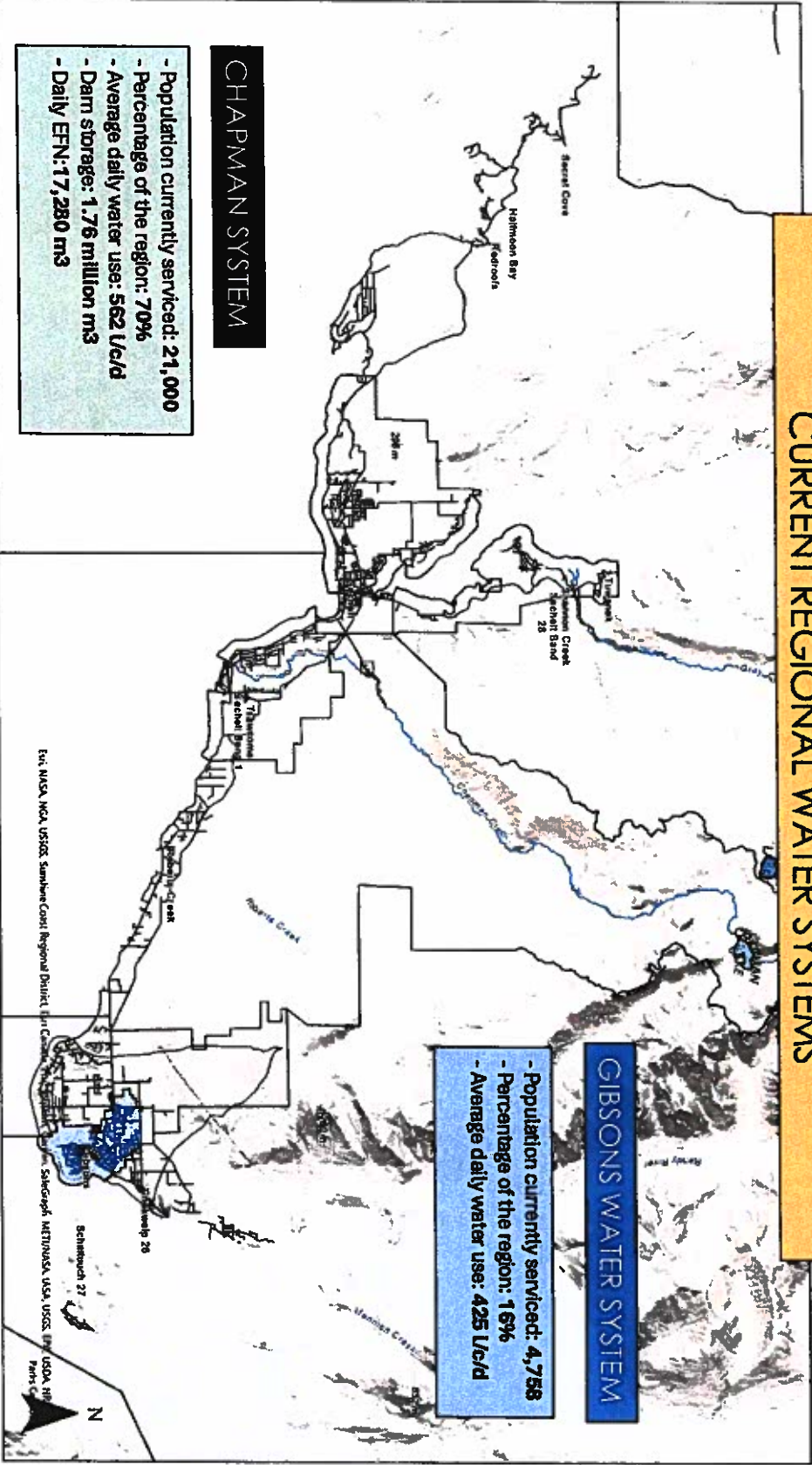


Emanuel Machado

Chief Resilience Officer

REGIONAL WATER STRATEGY - RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

CURRENT REGIONAL WATER SYSTEMS



CHAPMAN SYSTEM

- Population currently serviced: 21,000
- Percentage of the region: 7.0%
- Average daily water use: 562 L/c/d
- Dam storage: 1.76 million m³
- Daily EFN: 17,280 m³

GIBSONS WATER SYSTEM

- Population currently serviced: 4,758
- Percentage of the region: 1.6%
- Average daily water use: 425 L/c/d

- Legend**
- Edwards Lake
 - Chapman Lake
 - Gay Creek
 - Chapman Creek
 - Chapman WTP
 - Rhyolite West WdA
 - Church Road WdA
 - Langdale WdA
 - SCD Water Works
 - SCD Beyond Area
 - Aguler 560 Recharge
 - 100 Water Works
 - Town Well 1
 - Town Well 2
 - Town Well 3
 - Town Well 4
 - Town Well 5
 - Town of Gibsons



Exit: NMSA, MOA, USSS, Samsheer Court Regional District, Light Creek, Schenbuch 27, Samsheer, METRUSIA, USA, USSS, USA, NP, PNH, CA

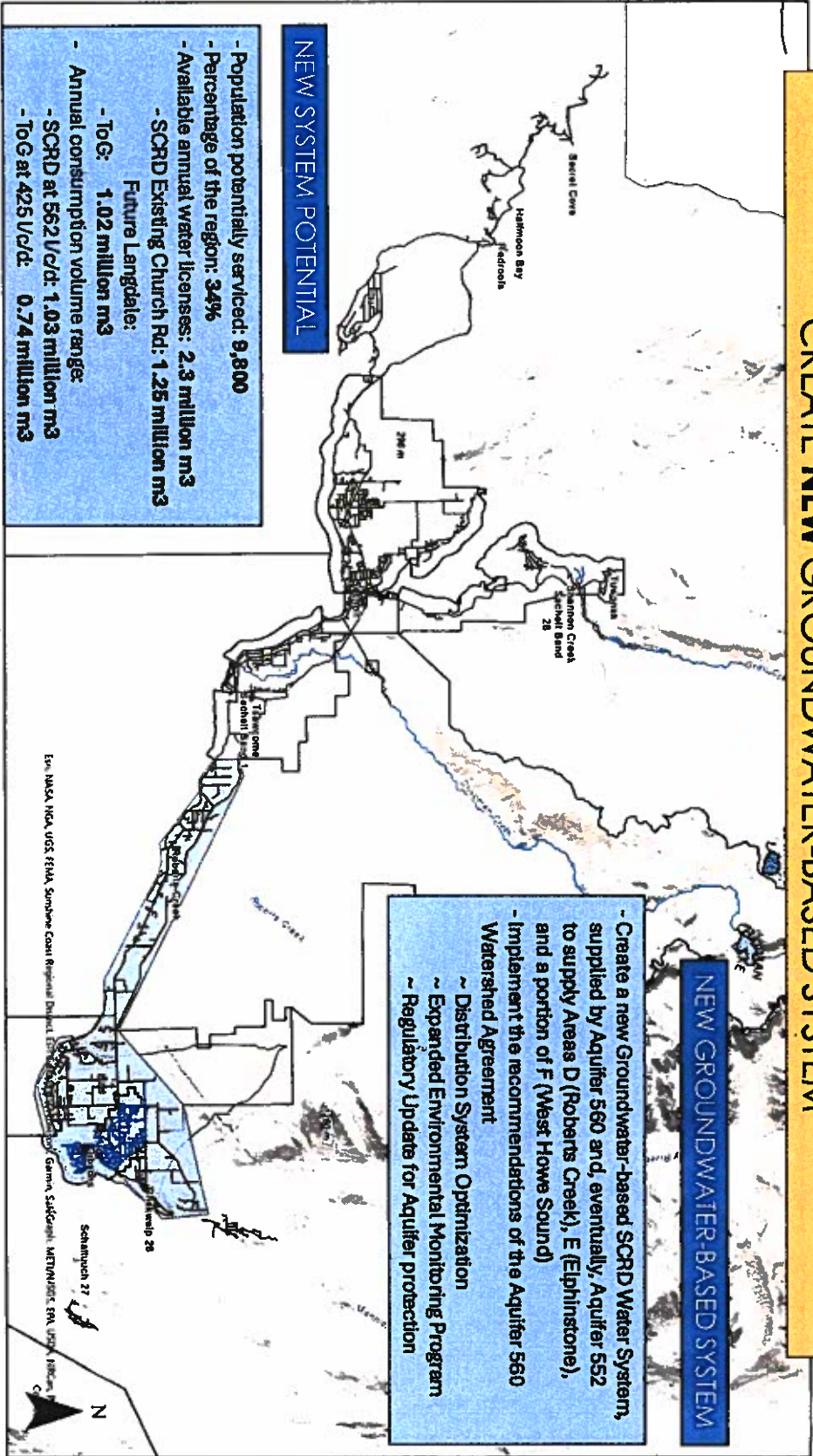
REGIONAL WATER STRATEGY – RECOMMENDED ACTIONS CREATE NEW GROUNDWATER-BASED SYSTEM

NEW GROUNDWATER-BASED SYSTEM

- Create a new Groundwater-based SCRID Water System, supplied by Aquifer 560 and, eventually, Aquifer 552 to supply Areas D (Roberts Creek), E (Elphinstone), and a portion of F (West Howe Sound)
- Implement the recommendations of the Aquifer 560 Watershed Agreement
 - ~ Distribution System Optimization
 - ~ Expanded Environmental Monitoring Program
 - ~ Regulatory Updates for Aquifer protection

NEW SYSTEM POTENTIAL

- Population potentially serviced: **9,800**
- Percentage of the region: **34%**
- Available annual water licenses: **2.3 million m³**
- SCRID Existing Church Rd: **1.25 million m³**
- Future Langdale:
 - ToG: **1.02 million m³**
 - Annual consumption volume range:
 - SCRID at 562 V/c/d: **1.03 million m³**
 - ToG at 425 V/c/d: **0.74 million m³**



Legend

- Edwards Lake
- Chapman Lake
- Gray Creek
- Chapman Creek
- Chapman WTP
- Aspen Lake West Well
- Church Road Well
- Langdale Well
- SCRID Water Mains
- SCRID Electrical Area
- New SCRID Water System
- Aquifer 560 Recharge
- ToG Water Plants
- Town Well 1
- Town Well 3
- Town Well 3
- Town Well 4
- Town Well 6
- Town of Gormon

1.8/750 1.5 3 4.5 0
Kilometers



Town of Gibsons and SCRD Announce Aquifer 560 Watershed Agreement

Friday, July 28, 2023 – Today the Town of Gibsons (ToG) and the Sunshine Coast Regional District (SCRD) announced that they have entered into a long-term Aquifer 560 Watershed Agreement. The agreement improves on the 2013 Bulk Water Agreement and commits both local governments to jointly expand the monitoring program across the ecological area of the watershed. This area covers from “Source to Sea”; the aquifer recharge area extending up the mountain, Chaster, Charman, Gibson and Soames creeks, and the Gibsons harbour in Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound.

The two parties, in partnership with the Squamish Nation, have also agreed to continue exploring legal protections for the natural assets that provide ecosystem services such as water storage and filtration, drainage, and coastal protection, in the form of a Water Sustainability Plan Area designation.

The partnership also envisions the creation of a Fringe Area Plan to better align governmental planning in the area. This would include a transportation network plan, alignment of land use planning and the protection of natural areas to ensure current and future growth remains sustainable, meeting the needs of the community while protecting the ecological integrity of the fringe area.

The parties have also agreed to collaborate on optimizing the interconnection between the SCRD and ToG water system, to build greater resiliency for both systems. They will:

- Evaluate ways to bolster the level of service each community can reliably provide through strengthened infrastructure and coordinated Water Supply Strategies.
- Align Well Head and Aquifer Protection Strategies, Development Permit Area requirements, and Aquifer Monitoring and Modelling Programs, to enable a common understanding of the Aquifer characteristics and consistent application of protection measures.
- Plan for the sustainable operation of the two water systems over the year to align with drought forecasts and in consideration of the capacity of each source.
- Review and align Emergency Response Plans to provide better integration and communication.
- Develop and share emergency operating procedures for each water system to ensure rapid response time for cross-system supply is possible in urgent situations.

Similar to the last two years, the ToG will supply the SCRD with up to 1500 cubic metres of water a day to supplement the Regional District's needs for 2023. With the additional well

capacity at Church Road, it is anticipated that the SCRD will be able to supply its own needs in the future and that the exchange of water will be limited to emergency situations.

"This is truly a significant development," says Silas White, Mayor of Gibsons. "Our staff's hard work and diligent aquifer stewardship to make this happen exemplifies our community's concern, cooperation and willingness to work together to solve issues that affect the entire Sunshine Coast. Through better collaboration and integration, we will all benefit."

"This important agreement shows what can be achieved through respectful cooperation and collaboration," says SCRD Board Chair, Leonard Lee. "We can accomplish big goals by bringing everyone together to work towards maintaining and protecting our watersheds."

Click here to view the [Aquifer-560-Watershed-Map.pdf](#)

For more information about the Town's water system, go to www.gibsons.ca/water

For more information about the SCRD, go to www.scrd.ca

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