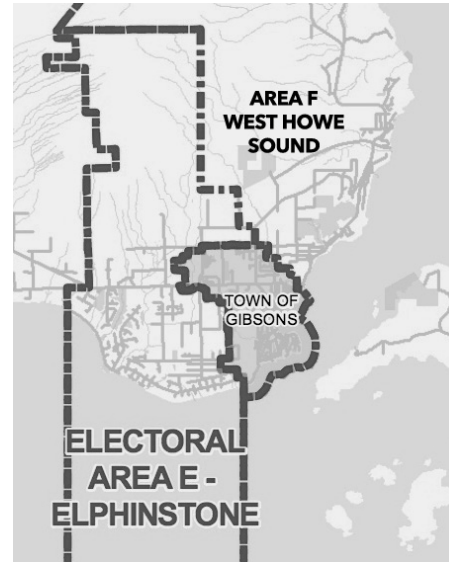


# What is Elphinstone?

Regional Districts are a type of government unique to British Columbia. They deliver certain key regional services, such as drinking water and garbage pick-up. They also provide basic government for rural areas that are not incorporated as municipalities.

Area E, or Elphinstone, is the smallest of the five rural areas in the Sunshine Coast Regional District in terms of size (21 sq. kilometres) but the largest in population (3,664 as of the 2016 census).

Unlike municipalities, regional districts do not have authority over roads, so all roads in Area E are the responsibility of BC's Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI). MOTI in turn contracts out road maintenance to a private company, Capilano Highways, which is responsible for filling potholes, sweeping, mowing shoulders, and clearing snow.



## What does the SCRD do?

Here are some of the local services that are funded and/or provided by the SCRD in this area:

- Regional Water Service
- Recycling (via Gibsons Recycling)
- Garbage collection and Sechelt landfill
- Green Waste drop off on Henry Road
- Sunshine Coast Transit
- Recreation Facilities (Gibsons Pool and Gibsons Recreation Centre)
- Parks (including Secret Beach, Whispering Firs)
- Playing fields (Mary Anne West)
- Playgrounds (Cedar Meadows, Grandview Heights, Sunnyside)
- Trails, bike paths and beach accesses (e.g. Secret Beach, Sunnyside-Chaster connector trail)
- Planning (e.g. issuing building permits)
- Fire service funding (Frank West Fire hall)
- Community Halls (Chaster House, Frank West Hall)
- Cemeteries (Elphinstone Pioneer Cemetery, Seaview Cemetery)
- Bylaw Enforcement and Dog control
- Regional Economic Development funding
- Emergency program for disaster response

News? Ideas? Concerns? Email [donna@everythingelphinstone.ca](mailto:donna@everythingelphinstone.ca) or visit:

[www.EverythingElphinstone.ca](http://www.EverythingElphinstone.ca)

## Who do I call?

### Sunshine Coast Regional District

1975 Field Road Sechelt, BC V0N 3A1  
Phone: 604-885-6800 Toll-free: 1-800-687-5753  
Email: [info@scrd.ca](mailto:info@scrd.ca) [donna.mcmahon@scrd.ca](mailto:donna.mcmahon@scrd.ca)  
Web: [www.scrd.ca](http://www.scrd.ca)

### Roads, Roads, Roads

For road maintenance concerns call Capilano Highways at (604) 983-2411 or Toll Free 800-665-3135.

For other road issues, contact the Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure (MOTI). The Manager of the Sechelt Area Office is Colin Midgley, (604) 740-8987. The Operations Manager for Howe Sound/Sunshine Coast is Don Legault.

### Illegal Dumping, Poaching, Wildlife

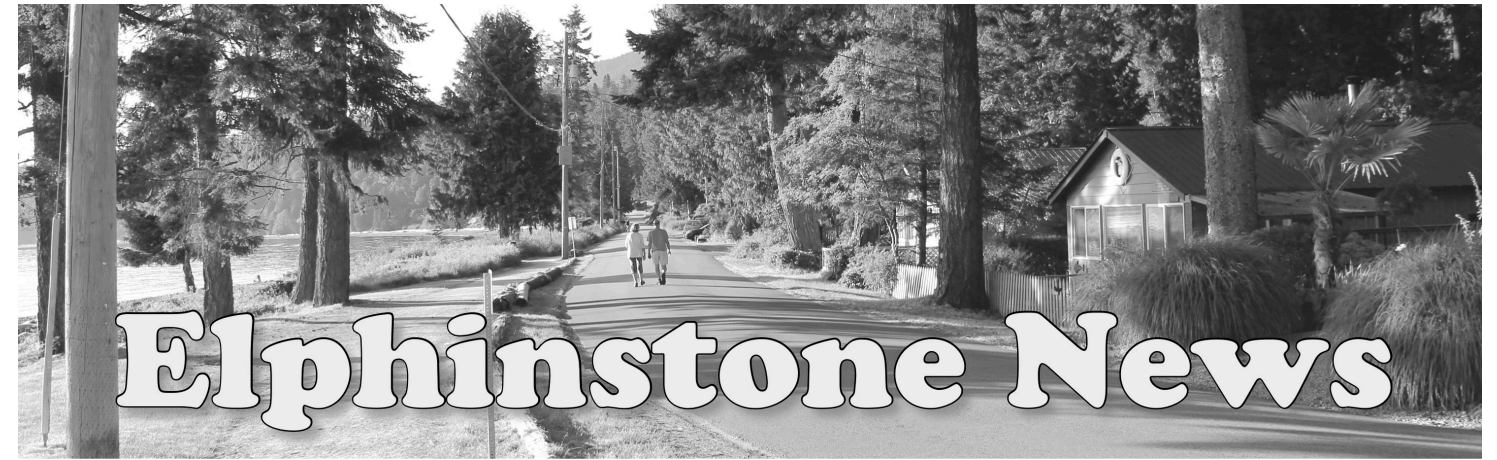
Report violations of environmental protection laws to Conservation Officers at 1-877-952-7277. This includes illegal dumping, fisheries offences, poaching, illegal use of pesticides, and wildlife conflicts.

### Septic Field Inquiries

Vancouver Coastal Health (604) 885-5164.

### Agricultural Land Reserve

To report unauthorized use of ALR land, such as removal of soil or blocking a stream, email [ALRLandUseConcern@gov.bc.ca](mailto:ALRLandUseConcern@gov.bc.ca) or call (604) 660-7000. [www.alc.gov.bc.ca](http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca)



April 2019 Newsletter from Sunshine Coast Regional District Area E Director Donna McMahon

## Water Plans Go Forward as Another Dry Summer Looms

Sunshine Coast residents are fed up with water restrictions and believe me, SCRD directors are hearing about it, particularly from farmers and food growers. We are moving forward as fast as we can with wells and new reservoirs, but we can't possibly get additional water into the system this year. Here's the situation in brief.

**SUPPLY SHORTAGE** – In December the new board received the news that we have only 50% of the water supply we need to get through a dry summer without going past Stage 2. As of 2017, the water deficit for the Chapman system is **1.5 million cubic metres of water**. That's approx. the storage in Chapman Lake AND Edwards Lake combined.

**INCREASING SEVERE DROUGHTS** – Summer rainfall is decreasing much more than anyone expected. From 1960-1996, we received an average of 150 mm (6") of rain in June, July and August. In the last two years we received half that amount of rain.

**HOT DRY SPRING 2019** – March saw record-breaking high temperatures and much lower than average rainfall. Our snowpack at Chapman Lake is 34% below average.

*Continued on next page...*

### Why a Newsletter?

It's now six months since an election that saw an almost complete change at the SCRD board (and at municipal councils), so I'm sending out this update with information I hope you find useful.

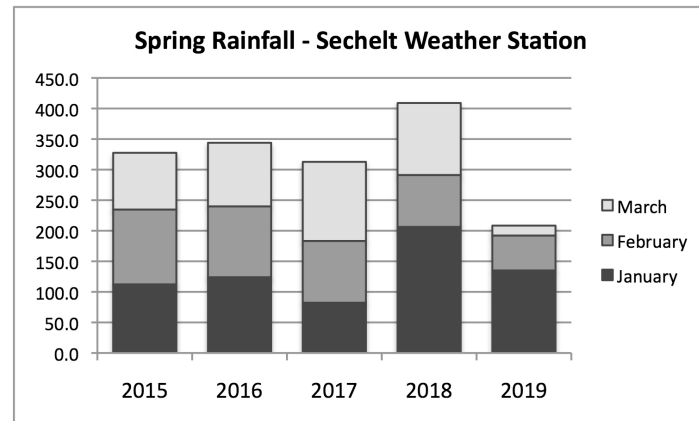
Paper mail-outs reach many people but they are expensive, so I won't be doing this often. I have a monthly email newsletter and update my website, **EverythingElphinstone.ca**. (If you're not online Gibsons Public Library has free public computers)



Swearing in ceremony at the Regional District board room Nov. 8, 2018.

Back row L to R:  
Mark Hiltz (Area F), Keith Julius (SIGD), Len Lee (Area A), Andreas Tize (Area D), Tom Lamb (Sechelt), Bill Beamish (Mayor of Gibsons).

Front Row:  
Donna McMahon (Area E), Lori Pratt (Area B, Chair), Darnelda Siegers (Mayor of Sechelt, Vice Chair).



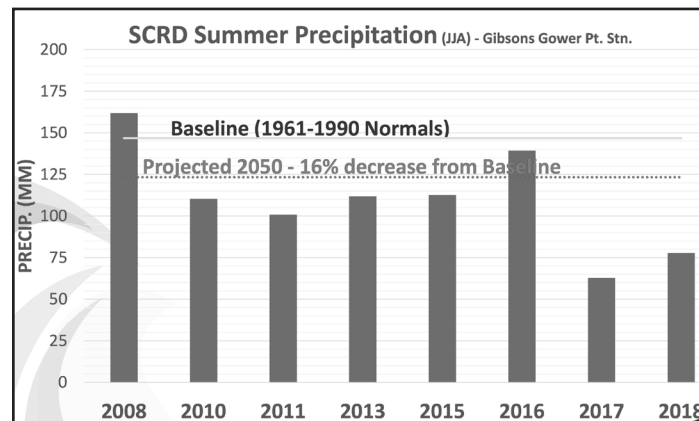
## Water continued...

**DROUGHT FATIGUE** – Finally, last year we were nowhere close to meeting water use targets.

A lot of people are angry at the SCRD because they figure the water shortage is mostly a result of bad planning (true) so they are deliberately flouting restrictions. This puts us in an extremely dangerous situation. If our taps run dry, we have no fire protection, no hospital services and no public sanitation. It's an emergency nobody is prepared for.

Right now the board is revising the water stages to maximize water conservation, while still prioritizing food growing as much as possible. But we need to reduce summer water consumption. We can avoid going to Stage 4 this year if everyone pitches in, including businesses, schools, the tourism industry, gardeners, farmers, and local governments.

We plan to bring the community to the table and explore short and long term solutions. But until we are able to get new water sources online, we must conserve.



## Sign Up to Pay Taxes Monthly

Do you face a whopping property tax bill in July? Make the cost easier to manage by registering online to pay in monthly installments at eTaxBC. I did this myself and wrote step-by-step instructions as I went. You can find them on my website, [www.EverythingElphinstone.ca](http://www.EverythingElphinstone.ca).

## Highway 101 Under Review



The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) is conducting an “operational review” of the performance of Highway 101, and improvements needed between Langdale and Redroofs. Results are expected in mid 2019.

Let's hope we see some concrete plans to deal with the

dismaying state of our highway. I am particularly concerned about the stretch between Henry Road and Lower Road which has been the site of several pedestrian fatalities.

I chair the regional Transportation Advisory Committee, which meets quarterly at the SCRD.

## Pratt Road Residents Raise Concerns

Development has started at Gospel Rock and residents are understandably worried that it will funnel a great deal of traffic onto Pratt Road.

I've been working with Mayor Bill Beamish and Town staff to do what we can to address this. Unfortunately a new road to Gospel Rock is not in the cards any time soon. Meanwhile, I'll see what we can do about improving safety on Pratt. I'm also working on a pedestrian/bike connector along the Inglis right-of-way from Mahan to Shaw. Stay tuned.

## Garbage, Recycling and Organics

The SCRD recently renewed our weekly curbside garbage collection contract for 5 years and we're looking at how to bring in curbside organics collection. The program in Gibsons has reduced the volume of waste going to the landfill by **45%**. I favour an “opt-out” feature for residents who compost all of their organics at home.

Recycling pick-up is not on the horizon yet due to cost. Residents will continue to use Gibsons Recycling Depot.



## Minister Defers Logging

On March 29 the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resources Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD) announced that BC Timber Sales will hold off on the auction of Block 1313 (Reed Road Forest).

This is good news, but it's not the end of the road. The SCRD and residents need to come together to find a permanent solution. I am very much in favour of the idea of creating an Educational Forest, and will be working on that for the rest of the year.

I'd like to thank everyone who helped work on this, including MLA Nicholas Simons, SCRD board chair Lori Pratt, the Sunshine Coast Conservation Association, Elphinstone Logging Focus, and especially the neighbours and other Elphinstone residents for standing up to protect this beautiful forest and community watershed.

## Housing Crunch Hurts Coast

In February the median price for detached homes sold on the Sunshine Coast reached \$611,000. Sunshine Coast families now need an income of \$100,000/year to qualify for a mortgage for the average house. That's crazy! Working people are priced out of the market and employers are desperate for staff.

If you have a suite in your house that's sitting vacant, please think about renting it. Nurses, doctors, teachers and police officers are all looking for housing, and employers such as Vancouver Coastal Health need help. You can contact employers directly rather than advertising in the paper.

## Community Briefs

**Congratulations** to Elphinstone resident **Eve Corlett** on receiving a **Community Achievement Award** for her extraordinary dedication to daycare. For forty years Eve's daycare has provided 24/7 care for the children of shift and emergency workers such as doctors, police, ferry workers and commuters. Read more in the Coast Reporter and Coast Clarion.

A big **thank you** to residents who participated in a shoreline clean-up between Secret Beach and Chaster Beach. There have been some challenges with picking up the totes, but we're working on it!

Welcome to **Sunday Cider** a new craft cidery which has applied to operate a food and beverage lounge and picnic area at 1632 Sunshine Coast Highway. Owners are planting an orchard on this 20 acre former berry farm.

## Join a Community Group!

- **Elphinstone Community Association (ECA)** Meets monthly at Frank West Hall. Everyone welcome. For more information contact [elphinstonecommunity19@gmail.com](mailto:elphinstonecommunity19@gmail.com).
- **Woodcreek Park Neighbourhood Association (WPNA)** Meets monthly in members' homes in Woodcreek Park. Contact [woodcreekpark@gmail.com](mailto:woodcreekpark@gmail.com) or find them on Facebook.
- **Poplars Neighbourhood Association** - Contact A. Sawyer, [sawalison@gmail.com](mailto:sawalison@gmail.com).