

## THE GREEN WATCH

### The Green Lake Area Ratepayers' Association Newsletter

Representing property owners and residents in the Watch and Green Lake Area

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**WINTER 2010**



Season's Greetings and Merry Christmas to one and all GLARA residents,

I hear tell from local lake shores that Arctic inflow winds have quickly descended with the message to residents of the chilling reminder that time was running out to get the end of fall errands finished! Jack Frost is a knocking at the door and first snows cover the autumn leaves. Finally, good bye pine and spruce beetles? The season for sharing, thanking, and reflecting is upon us.

The newsletter content evolved in such a manner that the focus is directed to the update provided by the collaboration between North and South Green Lake Volunteer Fire Departments, Roy Allan and Bill Hinde. Since early 2000 (remember Y2K?), with the arrival of drier, hotter summer temperatures and increased activities in the back country, the lake district residents have been continuously reminded of the risks associated with wild fires and fire prevention on private property. Our awareness and anxiety levels heightened by the reminders associated with low flying air tankers and helicopters, camp fire bans, lingering wild fire smoke hazes that drifted in with cooler night air, and the call to action for volunteer fire fighters and all associated residents through the 70 Mile House fire. I would like to thank Fire Chiefs Guy Polisen and Bill Hinde and the volunteer fire fighters and fire association members for their individual efforts and contributions as a whole for the safety in peace of mind and for the commitment to be on call on a moments notice. Look for updates through your fire department as fire prevention programs expand.

Upon reflection, 2010 works to a close on a very high note. The Official Community Plan adoption will be an event announced early in the new year. In the simplest of terms, this By-law will be used by the CRD and TNRD to direct land use planning decisions in such a manner that the lowest common denominator we all share and enjoy, our water, is protected. Old and new relationships with multiple levels of government have been given new energy and GLARA looks forward to the rewards associated with this new energy. One example is the heightened commitment to monitor Green Lake water levels and the executive looks forward to the announcement of an expansion of the water quality testing program. Thank you very much to the team working behind the scenes on the lake to assist with both aspects of lake health. We look forward to training new team members, so please give us a call. And to Krista and her colleagues, now that the 70 Mile House Store is well past lock up, you will be counting the days to your official grand opening. The store meant a lot to the lives of those living in and around 70 Mile House, so best wishes with the work to complete!

In closing, my gratitude to the time and energy provided by each of the GLARA Directors in support of the advocacy and education efforts advanced by the Association. Special mention to Marie Kuyek (Editor and Membership) and Lorrie Fleming (Secretary). To all residents, I hope this holiday and Christmas provides the opportunities for gratitude, sharing and reflection. For the winter months, to clear lake ice and lots of back-country trail snow! To 2011, a year of times and people that bring enjoyment and contentment.

Bruce A. Gilmour  
GLARA President

## **OCP Update**

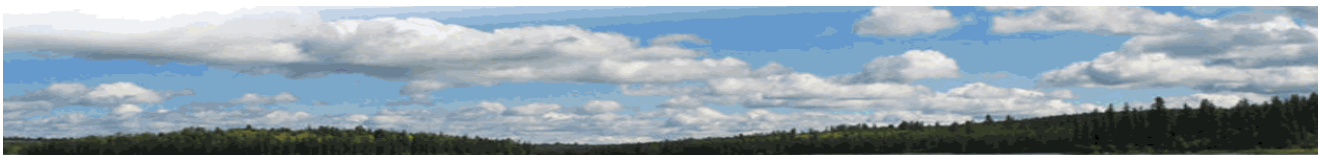
On November 6, 2010, the Thompson-Nicola Regional District and Cariboo Regional Districts Board of Directors held a joint Public Hearing at the 70 Mile Access Centre. The Public Hearing is the last phase for residents to consider the draft content and recommendations in the bylaws for an Official Community Plan for the 70 Mile House and Green Lake and Area that fall under the land use planning authority of the two Regional Districts. A public hearing report will be prepared and considered by each respective Board for further bylaw reading in December. If approved, then the bylaws will be forwarded to the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development office in Victoria for Provincial review and approval. Final bylaw review and approval for the By-law adoption by the two Regional Districts is anticipated for 2011.

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OCP document can be found at the following link:

<http://www.cariboord.bc.ca/Services/Planning/OCPs/GreenLakeAreaOCP.aspx>



# COMMUNITY SAFETY – OUR FIRE DEPARTMENTS

With another summer behind us and the potentially explosive fire season at an end we can all breathe a sigh of relief. But none more so than our fire chiefs and the volunteer fire fighters who dedicate so much of their time to our safety. The tinder dry forests that surround us posed a threat that will not be thoroughly gone until there is a good snow fall. The total burning ban during the summer months helped to reduce the risk and fortunately there were not many electrical storms in our immediate area. The Bonaparte Lake fire had us all on edge, but the Forestry crews were able to contain that fire after several days of hard work.

This year's activities started quickly with the 70 Mile Store fire on January 2<sup>nd</sup>. As a part of their mutual aid agreement, both North and South side crews assisted the 70 Mile House VFD in combating the blaze. Although the store was destroyed, the hundreds of gallons of water pumped onto the fire saved the Post Office building and kept the fuel oil and large propane tanks from erupting. Luckily there was an abundant source of water at the ranch across the highway from the store.

**70 Mile Store, after the fire. Go to website to see progress on the rebuilding of the store.**



web site: <http://cariboovacations.com/70mile/>

Both fire departments attended major structure fires in their own districts this year. In March a fire in the Watch Lake area destroyed a workshop. When the fire fighters arrived the building was fully engulfed and the situation was made worse by numerous exploding propane canisters in the blaze. Several nearby houses and sheds were saved from serious damage. The nature and location of this fire demonstrated the need for a better water supply to fight fires that are not close to the lake. To obtain water from the lake more efficiently, a high volume pump has been mounted on a heavy duty trailer that can be driven to the water's edge at the Watch Lake or Green Lake access roads. This will enable the crews



**Watch Lake - North Green Lake Fire Department**

than in the past, but there is a definite need for at least one large volume tanker.

In July the South Green fire department responded to a house fire near access 7A on South Green Lake Road. Here too the building was fully engulfed when the fire fighters arrived, however, quick action by the crew saved the outbuildings on the property. Fire Chief Bill Hinde credits the owner's having cleared the lot of dead trees and underbrush with helping to keep the fire from spreading into the surrounding forest. As the last of the blaze was being extinguished a breeze came up from the lake. Had it arrived earlier the fire would have most certainly blown into the forest behind.



The Watch Lake – North Green Lake VFD had two wildfire incidents to contend with that could have developed into very serious fires had the crew not been able to respond quickly. The first incident involved an abandoned skidder fire at a logging show to the east of Green Lake. The operator had left the burning machine and when Chief Polisenio and a Forestry worker arrived on the scene the flames were creeping across the ground toward the forest. This fire was extinguished quickly, but the skidder was destroyed. The second wildfire was the result of a lightning strike that left a tree burning on the edge of the horse trail to the west of Box Hill on Watch Lake Road. The fire fighters were able to push the recently obtained 4x4 trucks equipped with water tanks and pumps along the trail to the fire and extinguished the fire before it spread.

So far the two 4x4 pickups have been a valuable addition to the fleet. These multi-purpose vehicles



replaced the two aging ambulances that were costing too much to maintain. These trucks now provide quick transportation to medical emergencies for the First Responders. A snow plough has been mounted on one unit to allow it to clear driveways in the event of an emergency during the winter and to clear access roads to the lakes to pump water when needed.

Other than the house fire South Green Lake VFD had no incidents that threatened to develop into wildfires during the high hazard summer months. Chief Hinde believes that the public relations campaign his department embarked upon during the summer helped to reduce the risk of fires. Almost every weekend the fire fighters went out and talked about fire dangers with residents along South Green Lake Road.

As a result of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) developed by the TNRD, South Green Lake is a prime location where fuel management would be practical. According to the TNRD mapping, all of South Green Lake shows the interface fuel hazard assessment ranking of 65-80, which is considered HIGH. We at the South Green Lake Volunteer Fire Department (SGLVFD) are committed to protect human safety and health, our homes, businesses and infrastructure and, as such, we are pleased to act as the local government and have obtained 100% funding through the UBCM to have a Fuel Subscription treatment plan prepared by a RPF (Registered Professional Forester). The RPF's role is to show location of treatment area, type of treatment recommended,

public consultation and First Nations consultation. This prescription process is currently underway and each South Green Lake resident will be receiving correspondence from the RFP in the near future. The second phase would be the implementation of the prescription. This part of the process would be funded 75% by government, with South Green Lake residents having to contribute 25%. Our 25% contribution could be "in kind" (e.g. volunteer labour). We are in the early stages of this process and will keep residents posted via the SGLVFD web site ([www.southgreenlakevfd.ca](http://www.southgreenlakevfd.ca)) and community consultation.



**South Green Lake Fire Department and Fire hall**

The North Side Department has enough members on their roster that they are able to provide a first responder (medical aid) service. Eight members have first responder certification and three others are employees of the BC Ambulance Service. The first responder program is expensive to operate, but over the past three years there have been twice as many medical aid calls as fire calls and the department is determined to keep it in operation as long as financially possible.

Funding to maintain emergency services is always a problem for both departments. Keeping equipment up to an acceptable standard is their biggest expense. Both departments are self-maintained organizations with the South Green Lake VFD receiving their finances through tax role assessments. The Watch Lake – North Green Lake VFD, on the other hand, is primarily funded through annual fire dues paid by the property owners. In the past some property owners have chosen not to support their fire fighters and first responders and left themselves open to extensive fees for service should an emergency have arisen on their property.

Last year the North Side was fortunate enough to obtain a Major Capital Grant from the province and with matching funds, material and labour raised in the surrounding community, they were able to expand both fire halls.



**Sonny Johnson Memorial Firehall #2**



**Shorty Horn Memorial Firehall #1**

The South Side has begun a similar project to expand their current facilities. Some of the clearing and leveling of the site is complete. Research into funding alternatives is being conducted and a committee has been struck to develop the plans for the addition of two drive-through bays and a drying tower.

Although the number of members on their rosters look good on paper, both Fire Chiefs, Bill Hinde and Guy Polisenio, worry that there may not be enough people available for future growth. Many people in our community travel south for the winter leaving only limited numbers behind to protect the community. Both Chiefs ask that if you can spare a couple of hours a week to attend training sessions, please contact them about membership. You don't have to be a full-time resident.

Our communities are justifiably proud of our fire fighters and first responders. They are there for us twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. It is this dedication that is so much a part of the spirit of volunteerism that makes our country tick at the grassroots level. Across Canada there are 4500 volunteer fire departments doing their best to provide fire protection and emergency medical aid to their communities. Some have little more in terms of equipment than a pickup, a pump, a hose and lots of enthusiasm. Other departments with large tax bases and municipal support, boast equipment that rivals that of the professional departments found in large towns and cities. Our departments here at Watch and Green Lakes are very fortunate to have been able to bring their equipment and training up to decent standards on very limited budgets, but they still have a way to go. Our department members can proudly take their place among the 84,000 volunteer fire fighters across Canada who receive little but our gratitude and the occasional pat on the back for their time and dedication.

Roy Allan & Bill Hinde



## Green Lake Snowmobile Club

Support your local Snowmobile Club.  
Become a member. Visit their website for more information : <http://greenlakesnowmobileclub.ca>  
or call 250-456-7369 Barb Thurston

If you are not receiving this Newsletter by email and would like to receive a colour copy, email me at: [greenwatchlake@gmail.com](mailto:greenwatchlake@gmail.com) and I will email you a copy.  
Marie Kuyek

## Eurasian Watermilfoil in British Columbia

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This brochure has been produced to answer the more frequent enquiries received by the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks (now called Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection) on Eurasian watermilfoil and to provide you with general information on related water management concerns.

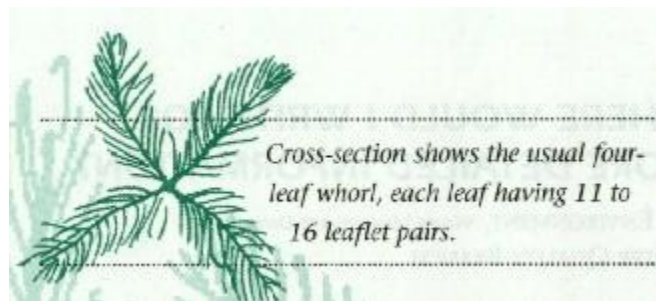
### ***What is the Problem?***

Aquatic plants are an important part of the biology of our lakes and other water bodies. They provide food, habitat and rearing areas for a wide variety of organisms. Vegetation helps to stabilize lake bottoms and aerate the water. However, some aquatic plants, such as Eurasian watermilfoil, also can have undesirable effects, especially when they are too abundant or become established in unwanted locations.



In British Columbia, problems caused by Eurasian watermilfoil include:

- growing and spreading rapidly
- invading and replacing native plant communities
- obstructing swimming, boating, waterskiing and fishing
- reducing the appeal of beach areas due to the accumulation of plant debris
- impeding flood control, water conservation, drainage and irrigation works
- reducing the economic benefits of tourism where dense growth limits recreation



Eurasian watermilfoil is not native to North America. It was first observed in British Columbia in 1970 in Okanagan Lake. The plant has spread since to Shuswap and Mara Lakes, to Christina and Champion Lakes in the Kootenays, to all the main lakes in the Okanagan Valley and to numerous water bodies in the Lower Mainland. Also, isolated populations were discovered on Vancouver Island in 1985, and in Nicola Lake in 1991.

Many uninfested water bodies in these areas and elsewhere in British Columbia remain susceptible to the introduction of this plant.

## ***How Does it Grow and Spread?***

Eurasian watermilfoil is a perennial, which grows from a fibrous root system on a variety of bottom types. During the spring and summer months, when growth is rapid, plants may reach the water surface from depths exceeding five metres.

Floating plant fragments produced by waves and boaters are spread by water currents, making the plant difficult to contain. New plants develop when the fragments sink, rooting best in protected locations.

Boats and boat trailers carrying plant fragments are thought to be the most common form of spread from one water body to another.

## ***Management***

Management strategies currently in use in British Columbia include:

- preventive efforts (e.g. surveillance of non-infested areas and public information to discourage spread, particularly by boaters)
- placing bottom coverings on new populations to prevent lake-wide infestations
- root removal (maintenance of priority areas by rototilling or shallow water cultivation)
- harvesting (cosmetic control by cutting the plant below the water surface)

## ***What Can You Do?***

- Reduce spread of watermilfoil and other aquatic weeds by clearing all plant material from boats, motors, trailers, wet wells and anchors. Dispose of plants far away from water bodies.
- Learn how to identify Eurasian watermilfoil.
- Report suspected new infestations to any BC Water, Land and Air Protection office.
- Contact local authorities and seek expert advice when concerned about aquatic plant problems in your community.

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