

## Mayor's Message

Council wishes everyone a glorious and relaxing summer. Restrictions are easing as we all look forward to reconnecting with friends and visiting our favorite spots.

In March 2021, the Highlands was recognized as the "Bloomingest" community in the region. The annual count is organized by Destination Greater Victoria and the Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce. More than 30 billion blossoms were reported in the Highlands, surpassing the District of Saanich who reported 23 billion.

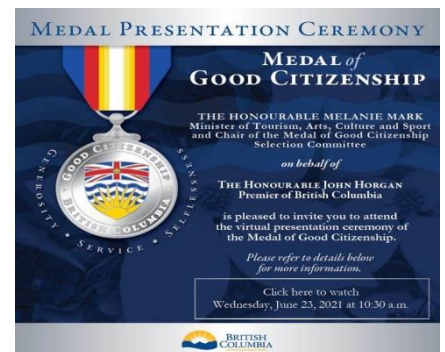


## Highlands Receives New Fire Engine

The existing 20 year old E2 fire engine at the East Fire Hall has been retired after 20 years of service due to age and to maintain the District's existing fire insurance rating. The fire engine was purchased in 2020 and the 2021 model has now been delivered.

The new Fort Garry truck was selected to enhance the effectiveness of the engine for Highlands' unique rural environment and call types within the established budget. *Thanks to the Firefighters for the picture.*

## Congratulations Bob McMinn BC Medal of Good Citizenship Recipient



The B.C. Medal of Good Citizenship recognizes BC residents who make extraordinary contributions to the well-being of their community. Bob's nomination recognizes him as a "community builder, leader, benefactor, conservationist, negotiator, innovator and super-volunteer". Bob has contributed significant resources in land, funds, and materials. He has also donated thousands of volunteer hours in the District of Highlands over the past 53 years.

Bob will be receiving his Medal of Good Citizenship on Wednesday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>. We hope you can watch the ceremony, if you are available. Details on the latest MGC recipients are on this BC [website](#).

## Kincentric Stewardship Research and Mapping Project at Mary Lake

The Kincentric Stewardship Research and mapping Project at Mary Lake is a collaboration between the WSÁNEĆ Nations, Victoria Greenbelt Society, Habitat Acquisition Trust and The Land Conservancy of BC. A grant has been submitted in partnership to assist with the completion of this valuable and beneficial work. This important project brings together First Nations Elders and scientists in a positive collaboration that will help to preserve Indigenous knowledge by filling gaps in the understanding of language, health, medicine, and philosophy of the WSÁNEĆ peoples for future generations.





# Community and Council News

## 2021 Property Tax Notices and Financial Plan Update

In May, Highlands Council adopted the 2021-2025 Financial Plan. Please contact the District Office with any questions that you may have regarding the Financial Plan. You can view the final 2021 budget online:

<https://www.highlands.ca/DocumentCenter/View/7712/2021-Budget-Summary-Document-for-April-12-draft-2>.

2021 Property Tax Notices have now been mailed to property owners in the District of Highlands. Payment is due by July 2, 2021 to avoid penalties being applied to your account. If you have not yet received your property tax notice, please contact staff at [finance@highlands.ca](mailto:finance@highlands.ca) or 250-474-1773. Please be advised that home owner grants are no longer accepted at the District Office. Applications must be made directly to the Province of BC at [www.gov.bc.ca/homeownergrant](http://www.gov.bc.ca/homeownergrant) or 1-888-355-2700.



## The Draft 2020 Annual Report is Now Available

Each year the District is required to prepare an Annual Report that includes information on municipal services and operations for the previous year, progress respecting the previous year's objectives, planned initiatives for the coming year, and the audited financial statements for the previous year.

The Draft 2020 Annual Report is now available for public inspection and comment. The Draft report is available online at <https://www.highlands.ca/157/Annual-Reports>. If you would like to review a paper copy, please contact the District Office at [info@highlands.ca](mailto:info@highlands.ca) or 250-474-1773.

The 2020 Annual Report will be considered at the electronic Council meeting scheduled to be held Monday, June 21, 2021 at 7:00 pm. Anyone wishing to make a submission regarding the Annual Report may do so in writing at any time prior to the meeting by email to [dhopkins@highlands.ca](mailto:dhopkins@highlands.ca) or by mail to 1980 Millstream Rd, Victoria, BC, V9B 6H1. Members of the public are also welcome to attend the June 21<sup>st</sup> electronic Council meeting and make a verbal submission or ask questions of Council and staff.

## WestShore Alert Subscribers

WestShore Alert is a regional public alert notification system that will notify you of emergency events or disasters within the Highlands as well as regional events. WestShore Alert and the District of Highlands is now using Alertable to send emergency notifications. Existing subscribers were notified that they have been transferred to the new platform, PEASI/Alertable, and will need to opt in to continue receiving alerts. Existing subscribers who do not opt in prior to July 26, 2021 will no longer receive emergency alerts. Residents can also download the free Alertable app for IOS at:

<https://apps.apple.com/ca/app/alertable/id1277488940>

and Android at:

[https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.artermobilize.alertable&hl=en\\_CA](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.artermobilize.alertable&hl=en_CA).

New subscribers are welcome. It is free to register and can be done from your mobile phone, tablet, or computer. This system provides critical life-saving information during emergencies and safety advisories including weather warnings and road safety information. You can register for notifications at <https://alertable.ca/signup/index.html?site=BC7B#alertMessage>



## Highlands Community Garden Latest Projects ~ Marlene Tyshynski

The Community Garden now includes a "Little Garden Library" and the Garden Boxes have been completed!!! There are plans to host a speaker on Culinary and Medicinal Herbs in the near future. Watch for posters on the Notice Boards for the date. To get on the waiting list to rent a garden box or to join up as a Communal Community Garden member (just \$10/year/individual or family) contact the Membership Co-ordinator Monika Careless at [Mccoyle1@gmail.com](mailto:Mccoyle1@gmail.com)

Check the Garden out on Facebook at [HighlandsCommunityGarden!](https://www.facebook.com/HighlandsCommunityGarden/)

# Community and Council News

## **Burning in Highlands** *by Fire Chief Dean Ford*

The Fire Department receives many questions every year about burning in the Highlands. Below are the answers to the most common questions we receive, and you are encouraged to contact the Fire Department at 250-920-6970 any time you have a burning question or complaint.

### **When is burning allowed?**

Burning season starts on Oct 15 and closes when the forest fire danger rating increases with the warmer weather. Generally, these closures start happening in late May to early June, with campfires closing once the rating hits High/Extreme.

### **What is the difference between a campfire and backyard fire?**

A backyard fire has a maximum size of 1m x 1m and is intended for yard clean up and fire smarting of residential property. A campfire is a recreational fire in a firepit with a maximum size of .5m x .5m, burning only clean dry seasoned firewood (no greens).

### **Does my fire need a permit?**

EVERY fire burning outside a home or building requires a permit. This would include campfires, backyard burning, land clearing fires and incinerators. Permits are online at <https://hvfd.burnpermits.com/>.

### **How much are permits?**

Permits are free and are designed to inform residents of the restrictions and precautions for their type of fire. These permits also allow the fire department to know who and where people are burning when a complaint is received.

### **How do I reduce the amount of smoke my fire is producing?**

A hotter fire produces less smoke. The best way to keep the fire burning hot is to burn only dry materials, ensure the fire is receiving a lot of oxygen, and stoking the fire to increase the surface area of the burning material.

### **Are there better days than others to burn?**

Definitely! Have you ever noticed that some days the smoke seems to “hang” low in the air, while other days the smoke rises and dissipates quite quickly? The Province provides a daily ventilation index to indicate how well smoke will disperse in each area of the province. Burning only on days when the index for Southern Vancouver Island reads “GOOD” will allow for your smoke to disperse quickly. This ventilation index can be found at:

<https://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/epdpa/venting>

### **What do I do if I have a concern about how or what someone is burning?**

Please contact the fire department at 250-920-6970 to file a burning complaint. This information is not shared when we attend the complaint.

A lot of our complaints revolve around smoky/smelly fires. When burning, please ensure you are only burning wood-based products and not burning any prohibited material like garbage, food scraps, plastics, paints, metals, drywall, etc. For burn barrels/incinerators remember that all fires need a lot of oxygen in order to burn hot and with little smoke, so keep those air holes open. Most importantly, do not treat your incinerator like a garbage can to burn household garbage and waste!

### **Are there alternatives to burning?**

Yes! Before resorting to burning, check what other disposal options are available for the material you want to burn. Recycle at a local collection facility. Compost instead of burning leaves and clippings.

Hire tree trimming companies to dispose of land clearing debris. Woody materials can be turned into wood chips, particle board, wood pellets or fuel for cogeneration plants.

**For more information about burning, permits, or the Fire Department visit the District's Website at:**

<https://www.highlands.ca/132/Fire-Services>

## Bear and Cougar News ~ Councillor Marcie McLean

I have been the Highlands Council appointed representative to the “Co-Existing with Carnivores Alliance” for many years now. That alliance boasts a broad representation of elected officials, First Nations, experts, citizens, plus regional and provincial staff. Please check out their informative website at [coexcarnivores.org](http://coexcarnivores.org)

Besides garbage, bears are attracted to many scents including cosmetics, vehicle oil and ripening fruits etc. Honey is a natural food for bears, so if you're beekeeping you can expect them to drop by. The best deterrent for bears is electric fencing. Once a bear has an unexpected electric shock on its nose, for example, it will stay away from the fence. The bear cubs will learn this as well.

Cougars will hunt raccoons. If your garbage is attracting raccoons to your property or the roadside, then you may also attract cougars to your property and your neighbors' properties as well.

More people are going into the wilderness parks at dusk and in the night. The CRD & BC Parks are aware of this issue. People should be aware that wildlife are much more active in the dark and are foraging for food. Large carnivores need uninterrupted space in order to consume enough protein and calories to survive and reproduce.

It is a contravention of the *Wildlife Act* to knowingly put out attractants to potentially predatory wildlife. The BC Conservation Officers highly recommend that households put their garbage out on the morning of scheduled pick up. People can be ticketed by the Conservation Officers if garbage is put out the night before pick up. These tickets start at approximately \$275.00 and go up to \$575.00 for a second offence.

The outcome for the wildlife can sometimes be deadly due to habituation from human behaviours and Provincial Policy in the *Wildlife Act* directing the Conservation Officers.

Let's help wildlife by doing our part to protect them.



### Upcoming Events:

- June is Pride Month
- June is National Indigenous History Month
- June 21 National Indigenous Peoples Day
- June 21 Council Meeting, 7pm, Electronic Via Zoom
- July 19 Council Meeting, 7 pm
- July 19-23 West Shore Parks and Recreation Roving Play Park at Twinflower Park, pre-registration required
- August 16 Council Meeting, 7 pm,
- Check out West Shore Parks and Recreation's free planned activities for Pride Month and National Indigenous History Month at [www.westshorerecreation.ca/](http://www.westshorerecreation.ca/)

## Contact Info:

Mayor Ken Williams  
[kwilliams@highlands.ca](mailto:kwilliams@highlands.ca)  
250-882-5481

Councillor Leslie Anderson  
[leslie.corvidconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:leslie.corvidconsulting@gmail.com)  
778-350-8180

Councillor Ann Baird  
[ann@eco-sense.ca](mailto:ann@eco-sense.ca)  
250-812-5481

Councillor Gord Baird  
[gord.baird@gmail.com](mailto:gord.baird@gmail.com)  
250-818-7986

Councillor Marcie McLean  
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250-474-4725

Councillor Karel Roessingh  
[karel@roessong.com](mailto:karel@roessong.com)  
250-727-9808

Councillor Rose Stanton  
[rose26@telus.net](mailto:rose26@telus.net)  
250-474-3403

Fire Chief Ford  
[firechief@highlands.ca](mailto:firechief@highlands.ca)  
250-920-6970

Municipal Office  
[info@highlands.ca](mailto:info@highlands.ca)  
250-474-1773

CRD Animal Control  
250-478-0624

CRD Bylaw Enforcement  
250-474-3351

CRD Parks  
250-478-3344

Wildlife Information  
1-800-663-9453



### Volunteers of the Month

Thank you to the HDCA for their volunteer efforts during this year's Community Broom Removal. Scotch broom is an invasive plant that grows rapidly, crowds out native plants, impedes the growth of groundcover species, impacts forest re-growth and changes soil chemistry. Kudos to all of the community volunteers for their time and commitment in removing this invasive species.