



REGIONAL DISTRICT of Fraser-Fort George

Main Office: 155 George Street, Prince George, BC V2L 1P8
Telephone: (250) 960-4400 / Fax: (250) 563-7520
Toll Free: 1-800-667-1959 / <http://www.rdffg.ca>

2025 BUDGET CONSIDERATION Bear Lake Water System 8001

- ATTACHMENT(S): 1. 2025 Proposed Budget
2. 2025 – 2029 Financial Plan

SERVICE DESCRIPTION:

The Bear Lake Drinking Water System is supplied by two (2) wells from an underground aquifer (located south of the community); one reservoir that is situated on the Canfor property northeast of the community; and a network of underground watermains that distribute potable water to residential, commercial, and industrial customers. Although not within the defined service area, the Canfor (former Polar Forest Industries) mill site is connected to the drinking water system and historically paid a metered rate only. The Regional District is the purveyor of this system and is responsible to ensure that drinking water is supplied in compliance with the *Drinking Water Protection Act*.

Currently, there are eighty-three (83) residential, four (4) commercial, three (3) institutional, and one (1) industrial property supplied by the system with one hundred-sixteen (116) parcel tax properties.

Environmental Services staff attended the Bear Lake Community Commission annual budget meeting in December and service workplans for 2024 and 2025 were reviewed; and the planning and capital projects for future years and budget influences were presented.

This service is funded by a combination of user fees and a parcel tax levied against each parcel liable to taxation for Regional Hospital District purposes.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES ALIGNMENT:

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|--|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous and Intergovernmental Partnerships | <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational Strength and Adaptability | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quality Community Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Stewardship and Climate Action |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Awareness and Engagement | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Statutory or Routine Business | | |

SERVICE DETAILS:

- No. of Connections: Ninety-one (91) residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial customers
- Annual User Fees: \$92.40 (residential), \$145.20 to \$184.80 (institutional), \$250.80 to \$356.40 (commercial), metered rate of \$1.03 per 1000 Imp/gal (out of local area service industrial)
- Participants: One hundred-sixteen (116) properties in the community of Bear Lake in Electoral Area G
- Parcel Tax Limit: No limit (current rate is \$122.07 annually per parcel)
- Debt Balance: None

SERVICE WORKPLAN:

- Monitor, operate, and maintain pumphouse, reservoir and underground watermain infrastructure;
- Conduct three (3) drinking water samples per month and liability inspections to meet permit requirements;
- Prepare Annual Operational Summary report for the Ministry of Environment and Parks;
- Modem and connectivity upgrades to allow Environmental Services Administration to monitor water system parameters remotely;

- Asset management planning implementation including asset inventory, condition assessments, and refurbishment and replacement projects:
- Work with consultant to complete an onsite condition assessment of well 1 & 2 and pumphouse;
- Implementation of a backflow prevention system program;
- Implementation of a curbstop lifecycle replacement program;
- Conduct an electrical integrity check and overall assessment to confirm the condition assessment;
- Depending on the electrical assessment, funds have been proposed for the electrical power back and system rehabilitation; and,
- Survey for the right of way for the reservoir on the Canfor property.

CAPITAL PROJECTS:

Project	Cost Estimate	Notes
Electrical power back and system rehabilitation	\$ 30,000	Funded from reserves and operating budget.
Total:	\$ 30,000	

OVERALL FINANCIAL IMPACT:

	2024	2025	\$ Change	% Change
Total Expenditure:	\$ 45,022	\$ 169,920	\$ 124,898	277.4 %
Parcel Tax:	\$ 14,160	\$ 14,160	\$ 0	0.0 %

BUDGET INFLUENCES/SIGNIFICANT VARIANCES:

- Administration has reviewed the community water and sewer system bylaws with respect to the current rates and fees and the 2025 budgets have been adjusted to reflect the proposed changes.
 - Actuals may be lower in past years as there have been discounts identified in the bylaws that are proposed to be removed in 2025.
- User fee rates have remained the same since 1997. Total parcel taxes last changed in 2004. With increasing costs of operating and maintaining a drinking water system, more stringent regulations (increasing monitoring and sampling), and aging infrastructure; it is necessary to increase both the user fee and parcel taxes.
 - It is proposed that the user fees will have a 10% increase each year over the next five-year financial plan as well as increases to metered rate capacity charges;
 - Parcel taxes are proposed to be increased starting in 2026 once communications have occurred with the Local Area Service Participants.
- New to the 2025 budget is an Out of Local Area Service Capacity Charge for Metered Accounts to bring these metered connections in line with other RDFFG water system rates bylaws. The charge applies to the Canfor property that has an eight (8) inch connection to the system.
- Future budgets will need to consider asset management replacement and refurbishment costs and provide funds each year to reserves, to ensure appropriate reserve funds are available to cover these capital expenditures when needed.
- An onsite condition assessment for wells 1 & 2 and the pumphouse will be completed in 2025 to substantiate the estimates provided in the 2024 desktop assessments (\$60,000).
- An electrical integrity check and overall assessment will be conducted to provide guidance on necessary regulatory requirements and future works.

- A survey will be completed in 2025 for the right of way for the reservoir on the Canfor property (\$16,000).
- Major and minor capital projects have been included in the five (5) year financial plan based on the desktop facility condition assessments completed in 2024.
 - Projects in 2025:
 - Curbstop lifecycle replacement program (\$10,000)
 - Electrical power back and system rehabilitation (\$30,000)
- Wells 1 & 2 are budgeted for refurbishment/replacement in 2027 and 2028 respectively. Rehabilitation of the pumphouse is budgeted for 2029.

Respectfully submitted,

“Gina Layte Liston”

Gina Layte Liston
Senior Manager of Environmental Services

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