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Office of the Premier
Ministry of Community Services
Western Economic Diversification Canada

\$2.6 MILLION TO IMPROVE COURTENAY WATER SUPPLY

COURTENAY – The Comox Valley Regional District’s drinking water supply will be greatly improved thanks to an investment of more than \$2.6 million from the federal and provincial governments. The funding is provided through the Canada-B.C. Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (CBCMRIF), which enables communities across B.C. to become healthier, greener and more sustainable places to live.

The announcement was made today by Premier Gordon Campbell, the Honourable Gary Lunn, MP for Saanich-Gulf Islands and Minister of Natural Resources, James Lunney, MP for Nanaimo-Alberni and Stan Hagen, MLA for Comox Valley and Minister of Tourism, Sport and the Arts.

“This investment will help ensure that the water supply in the Comox Valley keeps pace with the growth that this region is experiencing now and expects to continue in the years ahead,” said Campbell. “This important project is made possible by the partnership between the different levels of government – all working together to improve services for residents.”

“There are few things more important to a community than its water supply. This new system will provide a clean, consistent and dependable water source for the Town of Courtenay, as it grows and expands over the next decades,” said Lunn, on behalf of the Honourable Rona Ambrose, President of the Queen’s Privy Council for Canada, Minister for Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Western Economic Diversification. “The Government of Canada is proud to partner with the Province of British Columbia to deliver on our promise to help communities become more vibrant and productive places to live, work and raise families.”

“This funding will enable the Comox Valley Regional District to provide a reliable water supply that meets the increasing demand for this growing area,” said Lunney. “The Government of Canada is pleased to work with the Province of British Columbia to deliver lasting infrastructure improvements to the Comox region.”

The \$2,666,666 in federal/provincial funding will go towards twinning the East Courtenay Reservoir in order to double the region’s available water supply. The project will also install new water level monitoring equipment. This will provide fire protection, maintain water quality, and meet the region’s water demands for approximately 2,300 new households over the next 20 years.

“It’s a priority of our government to ensure the Comox Valley’s drinking water supply is sustainable,” said Hagen. “Working with the federal government and the regional district is one way we can ensure this community has good, clean drinking water for the health and wellbeing of the residents.”

“Expansion of the reservoir will provide a 25 per cent increase in the overall Comox Valley water supply storage capacity,” said Paul Ives, chair of the Comox Valley Water Committee. “This project has been part of our long term capital plan, and with this funding in place, we can now proceed with completion. The most important thing to remember about increasing the reservoir’s capacity is that it will ensure a sustainable water supply for the residents of the Comox Valley Regional District.”

The majority of the program funding from the CBCMRIF, which was launched in June 2006, supports communities of fewer than 250,000 people. It helps minimize the costs to taxpayers of local infrastructure upgrades or new construction projects.

At least 60 per cent of the funding will assist “green projects” that are geared towards enhancing environmental sustainability, such as water and waste-water systems, public transit and environmental energy improvements. Other infrastructure projects will support local roads, cultural and recreational facilities, tourism and broadband connectivity. Funding for this project is conditionally approved pending the successful completion of an environmental assessment.

The total amount available through the CBCMRIF, with federal and provincial investments and matching local government contributions, is over \$220 million. More details on the program are available online at www.canadabcmrif.ca.

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