MFR Review background and history (2019)

NOTE TO READERS: The following information and links contain detailed background on the history of the MFR review process in 2018 and 2019. This information was copied from the former engagement web page (https://www.northcowichan.ca/EN/main/community/current-topics/municipal-forest-reserve/background.html)associated with the project, prior to the new *Connect North Cowichan* website platform was developed.

The Municipality of North Cowichan is one of the few communities in North America that owns and manages forest lands for the benefit of residents. The Municipal Forest Reserve (MFR) is 5,000+ ha in size or 25% of the land base in North Cowichan.

COMMUNITY INTEREST: In late 2018, Council began hearing from citizens interested in the Municipality's forestry activities within the reserve. On December 19, 2018, many members of the public attended a Council meeting to share questions and comments about the management of the MFR. Council has asked for a review of North Cowichan's forestry operations, but in the meantime, it is required by law to adopt a budget and set tax rates by May 15, 2019. To do this, Council has to make some immediate decisions about 2019 forestry operations, which will affect the 2019 budget.

A Special Council meeting was held on Friday, February 15, 2019 for Council to consider and decide on 2019 forestry operations. The agenda, with background reports, can be viewed here. At that meeting, Council decided to harvest only the remaining 2018 contract obligations (see map) and timber that was blown down in the recent windstorm, and to make up the nearly $150,000 resulting budget shortfall through the Forest Reserve Fund and through budget savings. Council also adopted a revised term of reference for its Forest Advisory Committee and decided to expand its membership to include a registered professional biologist, three community members, and representatives from local Indigenous groups. The expanded Committee's mandate will include a full review of forest management practices. The minutes from the February 15 Council meeting can be viewed here.

BACKGROUND RESOURCES: ***(listed from most recent to oldest)***

- **August 2021**
  Memorandum of Understanding [PDF - 638 KB] (MOU) with Quw'utsun Nation (NOTE: an addendum correcting the official names of Quw'utsun Nation and the Corporation of the District of North Cowichan will be added once executed)
- **July 7, 2020 VIDEO**
  UBC Forestry Review Overview Presentation (from 5:40 - 50:20 of the video recording from the July 7, 2020 Committee of the Whole meeting)
- **May 15, 2019 PRESENTATION**
  Dr. Sheppard's Presentation on Community Engagement

- **March 6, 2019 REPORT TO COUNCIL**
  Approved 2019 Blowdown Harvest Plans for Stoney Hill, Mount Tzouhalem, and Maple Mountain
- **February 15, 2019 PRESENTATION**
  Presentation by the Municipal Forester: Municipal Forest Reserve Overview Presentation
- **December 19, 2018 PRESENTATION**
  Presentation to Council: Jim Dias Delegation
- **December 19, 2018 PRESENTATION**
  Presentation to Council: Dave Polster Delegation

NEWS RELEASES ***(listed from most recent to oldest)***

- **October 29, 2021:** Municipal Forest Reserve Review engagement opportunities
- **August 27, 2021**: Municipal Forest Reserve Working Group established with Quw'utsun Nation
- **March 16, 2021:** Memorandum of Understanding with the Cowichan Nation
- **December 14, 2020:** North Cowichan Developing Memorandum of Understanding with Cowichan Nation to Consult on the Municipal Forest Reserve
- **August 28, 2020**: First Nations Consultation on the Future of the Municipal Forest Reserve Moves Ahead
- **July 17, 2020:** Public Engagement on the Future of the Municipal Forest Reserve Paused for 60 Days
- **January 31, 2020:** Public Engagement on the Future of the Municipal Forest Reserve Goes Ahead
- **November 18, 2019:** Forestry Engagement Contract Awarded to Lees and Associates
- **May 22, 2019:** Update on Blowdown Salvage in Municipal Forest Reserve
- **March 11, 2019**: North Cowichan to Harvest Storm Blowdown in Municipal Forest Reserve
- **February 15, 2019**: Decision on 2019 Forestry Plans and Budget
- **January 23, 2019**: Salvage Assessments Underway in Municipal Forest Reserve