
City of Kelowna

MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 11, 2004
FILE: 5280-02
TO: City Manager and Regional District Board
FROM: Environment Manager
RE: **Agricultural Wood Waste Chipping Project**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council and the Regional Board receive, for their information, a summary of the "Agricultural Wood Waste Chipping Project".

Background

This project will be used to test and showcase the feasibility of operating a full scale agricultural wood waste chipping program within the Central Okanagan. Outcomes of this project include:

- 1) Costs of operating an annual chipping program
- 2) An accurate assessment of wood waste material available on an annual basis
- 3) Acceptance of this program by the agricultural community
- 4) Health and other potential cost benefits to the region.

The focus of this project is to chip wood waste specifically from orchard removals, which if burned produce approximately 11,000 Kg of smoke particulate each year. Smoke from agricultural burning is a key contributor to deteriorating air quality and hazy conditions within the Central Okanagan.

Orchard replacement material consists mainly of stumps and tree trunks over 8 inches in diameter. This type of material results from orchardists replacing older fruit trees with more profitable varieties. Orchard replacement material is approximately half the volume of orchard material burned each year; the other half is from prunings.

The project will involve utilizing a portable tub grinder (the grinder can be easily transported from orchard to orchard in a matter of minutes) to grind stumps, branches and whole trees into 1 to 2 inch sized chips within participating orchards. After grinding, the wood chips are spread around the orchard trees, which the Pacific Agri-Food Research Center promotes as being beneficial to increase soil moisture retention and control weeds.

This project relies on a multi-partnership agreement to be successful. Partners for this project include the City of Kelowna, the Central Okanagan Regional District, the British Columbia Fruit Growers Association, BC Fruit Packers Cooperative, Okanagan North Growers Cooperative, Pacific Agri Food Research Center and up to 50 orchardists.

Budget

The cost of this project is set to a maximum of \$40,000; however, the cost could be less depending on the number of applications received.

The project is being funded with two grants and staff support from RDCO and the City.

- 1) The Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection is providing \$10,000, and;
- 2) The Agriculture Environment Partnership Initiative component of the Agri-Food Futures Fund is providing up to \$30,000 for this project (Attach 1).
- 3) The Regional Air Quality Committee support staff will provide in kind staff time to administer and coordinate the project.

A summary report will be produced this fall for review by City Council and the Regional Board.

Mark Watt
Environment Manager

John Vos
Director Works & Utilities

cc: RDCO Board

Attachment: 1) Agriculture Environment Funds Contribution Agreement

File No.: 5280-02
Subject: Agricultural Wood Waste Chipping Project

The following is a list of the attachments that are **not** available with the electronic version of this report. The attachments can be viewed in the City Clerk's Department (3rd level, City Hall):

- Agricultural Environment Conditional Grant Agreement