
CITY OF KELOWNA

MEMORANDUM

Date: March 29, 2006
File No.: 6130-07
To: City Manager
From: Urban Forestry Supervisor
Subject: Pine Beetle Update

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council receive for information the March 29, 2006 report from the Urban Forestry Supervisor on the status of pine beetle.

UPDATE

In the last few months there have been several new developments with regards to pine beetle infestations in Kelowna:

- On-going air and ground surveys have revealed that beetle infestations dramatically increased in 2005, and new infestations continue to be discovered. Part of the problem is that many of the trees that were infested late last summer have not yet turned yellow and are very difficult to see from any distance. Once the infested trees start to change colour, we plan on conducting an aerial survey to better map out the newest infestations. Although the Hall road area has been logged extensively, some of the larger remaining infestations include:
 - Myra / Bellevue Provincial Park (approx. 1400 trees);
 - Mission / Kettle Valley / South slopes;
 - Roberts Lake / Quail / landfill areas; and
 - Glenmore area.
- Additional infestations have also been discovered on city properties (e.g. at least 200 infested trees have recently been identified behind the landfill).
- Negotiations with "Service Canada" (formerly HRDC) and our fuel modification contractor have been successful, which will allow us to utilize Service Canada crews for disposal of beetle infested wood from private properties. A similar program was funded in Prince George last year. The property owner would be responsible for removal of infested trees and hauling them to the property edge, where Service Canada crews then chip the wood or take it away for proper disposal. Resources will be limited, however, and we anticipate that we will need to limit the amount of time that the crews spend at any one property to a maximum of two days. Service Canada crews would also assist us with tree removal on City properties, "mass trapping" efforts, and we have budgeted for a full time "beetle coordinator" through this program. The City is expected to contribute approx. \$50,000, and Service Canada will contribute an additional \$400,000. We intend to use the \$100,000 already approved by Council to help fund this program. When crews are not hauling beetle wood, they will conduct fuel modification to mitigate fire risk on city properties. The program will operate from April to September, 2006. We expect the funding will be

renewable for the fall / winter season, therefore we may be asking Council at final budget for an additional \$50,000 for continuation of the program after September.

- Approximately 50 households have signed on to the City website to let us know about infested trees on their property and we have received phone calls from many more. Parks staff and the Regional Noxious Insect / Bylaw officers have inspected many of these sites and provided advice.
- The majority of property owners have been compliant with requests to remove and dispose of infested trees. However, a few owners have refused, primarily due to costs.
- A number of residents have taken advantage of the free chipping program at the landfill to drop off infested wood, with 228 cubic metres collected to date. Most of the Hall road residents were also able to utilize the burner at Mission Regional Park for wood disposal.
- Through the Capital News, a colour brochure was sent out to 39,000 households in the City. Brochures and additional information has also been available at Parks, City Hall and the Recreation Centres.
- A variety of additional information is now available on the city website, www.kelowna.ca. Residents may also call the Beetle hotline, 469-8457 or email trees@kelowna.ca
- A public meeting was held on March 28, at Parkinson Recreation Centre to offer additional information to the community and answer questions. More than 150 people turned out to the meeting.
- Mayor Shepherd and other city officials have been in contact with Provincial and Federal authorities to try to gain additional funding from other levels of government. Ron Cannan, MP, has also been working on our behalf in this matter.
- A pine beetle taskforce was recently set up with membership from the City, RDCO, BC Parks, and the Ministry of Forests. The intent of the task force is to better communicate and develop joint strategies for dealing with forest health issues in the Central Okanagan. An inaugural meeting was held on March 16. One of the immediate tasks of this group was to recommend a strategy for BC Parks to deal with infestations in Myra/Bellevue park. BC Parks is currently working on that strategy, with assistance from the forest service. In order to deal with this large infestation quickly (prior to beetle flight) BC Parks is planning to pile and burn the infested trees. However they have indicated that they will work closely with forestry staff to try to minimize smoke.
- The Ministry of Forests and City of Kelowna are also developing a joint effort to “mass-trap” beetles along the perimeter of the Okanagan Mtn. Park fire / City interface.



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Urban Forestry Supervisor

c.c. Director of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Services
 Director of Works and Utilities
 Director of Planning and Corporate Services
 Parks Manager
 Fire Chief
 Environment and Solid Waste Manager