



# Citizens Coalition On Sewage Treatment (CCO\$T)

*Seven arguments against a very flawed sewage plan*

## **What is CCO\$T?**

We are a **loose coalition** of groups and individuals trying to stop the CRD's ill-advised sewage plan. **We are in favour of sewage treatment**, but believe that it must be done **responsibly** with regard to **cost, public health**, and the local and global **environment**. This plan does not do that.

## **Join us in this fight!**

We presently host two **email lists** and a number of web sites. You can join the email lists from our [web site](#).

## **Take part in the ongoing discussion**

Planning this project has mostly taken place **without much public oversight**. It's time this important issue was **brought out into the open**. Registering on our community web site [ccost.ca](http://ccost.ca) lets you become part of our **online Web Forums**, and also have your own **Blog** if you wish to express your individual views.

## **Associated groups**

Please also consider joining one or more of our existing participating groups:

- **ARESST/RSTV**  
<http://aresst.ca>
- **Save Haro Woods**  
[www.saveharowoods.ca](http://www.saveharowoods.ca)
- **Citizens Coalition On Sewage Treatment (CCO\$T)**

<http://ccost.ca/>

## **The CRD's sewage plan is incredibly expensive**

The largest and most expensive sewage plan ever proposed in Canada, its estimated capital cost of at least a billion dollars will add an additional tax burden of \$450–\$1250 (depending on the final cost) each year for every ratepayer in the region, for the entire 40-year planned lifetime of the project. This will impact everyone, as home and apartment owners will pass these costs on to renters, and no money will be available for low-income housing and other useful social services and the arts.

## **The plan doesn't solve existing sewage problems**

With its focus on adding expensive, polluting, and energy-intensive biosolid plants to the system, the CRD's plan doesn't deal with removing toxics from the sewage stream by increasing public education or by increased monitoring, and it doesn't solve the storm runoff problems that have resulted in raw sewage being washed up on our beaches. It is a poorly-conceived, "end-of-the-pipe" solution.

## **It would create serious new environmental damage**

Instead of ocean discharge—not ideal but not scientifically proven to be harmful—the plan would use the atmosphere as a dumping ground. Transporting and burning sewage sludge in cement kilns and waste incinerators in the Lower Mainland will impact Vancouver's already poor air quality and increase greenhouse gas emissions. The environmental benefits of this plan have not been evaluated. It will negatively impact the environment and destroy public green space.

## **It does nothing to improve the marine environment**

The Minister of Environment claims that ocean disposal is destroying the marine environment, and many leading BC marine environmental groups have supported his claim without examining it in detail. But many marine scientists and public health officials disagree. This claim has not been proven scientifically. The CRD plan may not improve the marine environment, but it will certainly affect people's health and increase global warming. It would still allow ocean discharge of waste water.

## **Public process has been restricted and inadequate**

Public input has been controlled and ignored throughout the process. People should have been involved at all stages, but this did not happen. Detailed recommendations from a hand-picked Technical and Community Advisory Committee were brushed aside, and apart from accepting input on whether the project should be publicly or privately owned, the public has not been given adequate opportunity to comment on the wisdom of the plan's basic architecture or any of its details.

## **Markets for the biosolid wastes have not been secured**

Buyers for the biosolid wastes and even a site for the central sludge plant in Victoria Harbour have not been secured. Biosolid wastes are not safe for use on forest or agricultural land, so the CRD will have to transport this toxic, smelly product by truck or pipeline to the Hartland landfill and build an expensive incinerator, adding to the project's already enormous cost.

## **The push to privatise services is driving the process**

Looking for a way to privatise municipal services, the BC government has used public concern about sewage as an excuse to mandate on-land tertiary sewage treatment. The government ordered the CRD to present a Business Case for private ownership, then avoided an environmental assessment by placing the project under the Environmental Land Management Act (ELM) without ever justifying the environmental need or benefits of the project or its social impacts.

# The battle to preserve Haro Woods



*Haro Woods is a much-loved and well used community recreational resource*

Cadboro Bay residents have been **trying for over 24 years** to have Haro Woods declared a Park. This **pleasant, forested area** is an important and much-loved community **recreational resource**. But despite community protestations, the CRD wants to **cut down Haro Woods** to build a **Saanich East water treatment plant**. There is no longer any justification for this senseless act of **green-space desecration**. Although the CRD **water conservation program** has achieved a dramatic reduction in sewage flows, this has been **totally ignored** by the project engineers.

There is now **sufficient capacity elsewhere** in the system to handle all Saanich East sewage, as well as sewage from the fast-growing **Western Communities**, until well after 2020. CRD must eliminate this **costly and pointless** Saanich East plant and preserve Haro Woods as a **vital and irreplaceable** community green-space recreational resource.

## A very flawed Liquid Waste Plan

*CRD spent \$22million in four years and still didn't get it right*

The CRD's Liquid Waste Management Plan is the **largest and most expensive** sewage project ever proposed in Canada. If proceeded with, this project would have **major negative** fiscal, environmental, and social impacts. It will **tie CRD's hands** for decades.

At an estimated capital cost of **over a billion dollars**, it would cost each regional ratepayer **at least an \$600 per year** in taxes and prevent regional municipalities from supporting existing or introducing new **social, cultural, or environmental** programs.

The CRD wants to build a biosolids (sewage sludge) processing plant on the **Budget Steel site in South Bay**, adjacent to the **Selkirk Waterfront**. The processed biosolids would then be **barged to Vancouver to be burned** in cement kilns or municipal waste incinerators—if anyone wants to buy this **expensive, low-grade fuel**.

Burning the CRD's biosolids would add an **estimated 1.6 Megatonnes** of greenhouse gases (**CO<sub>2</sub>e**) over its 40-year lifetime, considerably **increasing** BC's greenhouse gas footprint at a time **when we should be reducing** these emissions. Burning biosolids would **increase air pollution**, causing asthma and allergies in adults and children.

This impetus for the plan primarily has come from the BC government's desire to **privatise municipal services**. The province forced the CRD to include a **P3 option** in the project's Business Plan, mandating the CRD to treat all its sewage output by 2012.



### **Inadequate public involvement**

*The CRD **cannot claim** to have been **transparent** during its four-year planning process.*

*A required **community committee** was merged into a **technical advisory group**, and additional public input was **severely constrained**.*

***Misleading information** was given out far too often, and **other information** was withheld or **buried in reports**.*

*Public input was **controlled and managed** by only allowing discussion of **pre-determined topics**, such as privatisation (**P3s**).*

*As a result, people are **only now starting to realise** what this project means and how it will impact their life.*

### **It's time to stop this ill-advised plan**

*The proposed **Liquid Waste Plan** would commit us all to a **costly project that will do nothing to solve the sewage problem**. It will **damage people's health and not protect the environment**.*

- **Find out what this sewage plan means**
- **Tell your municipal Councillors about it**
- **Write to you MP and MLA about it**
- **Join with us to stop this senseless plan**