

OTTER POINT & SHIRLEY RESIDENTS & RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION (OPSRRA) INFORMATION UPDATE NOVEMBER 2006

The Otter Point & Shirley Residents & Ratepayers Association (OPSRRA) is a registered non-profit society with an elected Board of Directors and strives to present the points-of-view of its members to local government. OPSRRA was founded in 1992 and has a membership of about 350. Any resident or property owner in Shirley and Otter Point is eligible for membership.

Lifetime memberships are \$5.00 and are available from OPSRRA directors—see our web site (www.opsrra.ca) for further information.

The purpose of our society is to:

- Ensure that the development of the two communities of Shirley and Otter Point takes place in an orderly way and in the best interests of its residents.
- Co-operate with local government and other public bodies in the furtherance of the objectives of the society and benefits to the community.
- Concern itself with the performance of government agencies.
- Encourage citizens to stand for public office.
- Promote community spirit and sense of identity by organizing or supporting appropriate activities.

Are you an OPSRRA member? Do you want to receive the OPSRRA newsletter and notice of meetings directly to your e-mail address? OPSRRA is now e-mailing this newsletter to over 125 of our members. Contact Arnie Campbell at: d.acampbell@shaw.ca if you want to receive this membership service.

OPSRRA's EXECUTIVE AND DIRECTORS

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1. UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Contact Arnie Campbell at: d.acampbell@shaw.ca to have your community event listed in our monthly community events calendar.

Sunday November 1	Sooke Regional Museum Pioneer Evening 7:00 p.m. Otter Point Fire Hall 3727 Otter Point Road (at Kemp Lake Road)
Thursday November 2	Juan de Fuca Parks Committee 5:00 p.m. JDF Electoral Area Services Office 2-6868 West Coast Road, Sooke BC
Saturday November 4	Juan de Fuca Community Trails Society Hike to Cougar Ridge 9:30 a.m. Meet at the Galloping Goose parking lot at Roche Cove. This is a two-hour hike through mature woods and up to the ridge. The footing is good. Dress for the weather, bring a drink and a snack. Call 642-2767 or email sid2767@shaw.ca for more information.
Monday November 6	Otter Point Official Community Plan Public Hearing 7:00 p.m. Otter Point Fire Hall 3727 Otter Point Road (at Kemp Lake Road)

- Tuesday
November 7
JDF Land Use Committee Meeting
6:00 p.m.
Otter Point Fire Hall
3727 Otter Point Road (at Kemp Lake Road)
Note:
This meeting has been rescheduled to Tuesday, November 21
- Wednesday
November 8
**Shirley Community Association
Annual General Meeting**
7:30 p.m.
Shirley Community Hall
- Sunday
November 12
Shirley Craft Fair
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Shirley Community Hall
- Tuesday
November 14**
Shirley/Jordan River Official Community Plan Public Hearing
7:00 p.m.
Shirley Community Hall
- Wednesday
November 15
**Juan de Fuca Community Trails Society
Learn about Geo-caching**
7:30 p.m.
Otter Point Fire Hall
3727 Otter Point Road (at Kemp Lake Road)
A presentation on geo-caching by Erik and Michelle James.
- Wednesday
November 15
Sooke Region Museum Pioneer Evening
7:00 p.m.
Shirley Community Hall
- Thursday
November 16
**Sooke & Electoral Area Recreation Commission
(SEAPARC)**
7:00 p.m.
Multi Purpose Room "A"
SEAPARC Leisure Complex
2168 Phillips Road, Sooke BC
- Tuesday
November 21
JDF Land Use Committee Meeting
7:00 p.m.
Otter Point Fire Hall
3727 Otter Point Road (at Kemp Lake Road)
You can obtain the agenda at the CRD Planning Services office,
2-6868 West Coast Road or on the CRD website at:
www.crd.bc.ca/jdf/index.htm
Click on "Agenda" at the top of the page.
- Wednesday
November 22
OPSRRA Directors Meeting
Members welcome!
7:00 p.m.
Board Room "A"
SEAPARC Leisure Complex
2168 Philips Road Sooke BC

- Thursday
October 19 **Juan de Fuca Economic Development Commission Meeting**
6:00 p.m.
JDF Electoral Area Services Office
2-6868 West Coast Road, Sooke BC
- Note: Change of meeting location.**
Contact the CRD office (642-1500) for agenda information
- Saturday
November 25 **Muir Creek Protection Society**
Watch the Returning Salmon
11:00 a.m.
Meet on the east (inland) side of the Muir Creek Bridge. See item
number 10 for details.
- Saturday
December 2 **Juan de Fuca Community Trails Society**
Hike
9:30 a.m.
Location to be announced.
- Thursday
December 7 **Juan de Fuca Parks Committee**
5:00 p.m.
JDF Electoral Area Services Office
2-6868 West Coast Road, Sooke
- Second &
Fourth
Thursday
of every month **Shirley Quilters and Crafters**
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Shirley Community Hall

2. OPSRRA PRESENTATION TO THE JDF ELECTORAL AREA LAND USE COMMITTEE

A committee of OPSRRA directors recently reviewed the draft Official Community Plans (OCP) for both Otter Point and Shirley/Jordan River. Our review found dozens of editing errors and examples of out-of-date information in both documents. We informed the Chair of the Shirley/Jordan River OCP Advisory Committee of our findings and suggested that a further review of their draft OCP might be necessary before it went to public hearing. The Chair of the Otter Point OCP Advisory Committee was already aware of many of the identified problems.

Instead of waiting for the OCP public hearings, OPSRRA decided to immediately present its findings to the JDF Electoral Area Land Use Committee. On October 3, the President of OPSRRA made a presentation to the LUC committee outlining the errors and out-of-date information in the Otter Point OCP and OPSRRA's Vice-President made a similar presentation on behalf of OPSRRA and the Chair of the Shirley/Jordan River OCP Advisory Committee. Following the presentations, Ken Douch, the Otter Point representative on the LUC committee, made the following motion:

MOVED by Ken Douch, **SECONDED** by John Stewardson that the Land Use Committee receive the document submitted by Arnie Campbell on behalf of the Otter Point Shirley Residents and Ratepayers Association as well as the submission from Jim Dexter and Maureen Nelson; that they are to be studied by the Planning Department for potential changes to the East Sooke, Otter Point and

Shirley/Jordan River OCPs at the Public Hearing stage as they relate to issues other than density and land use.

CARRIED

The following recognition of OPSRRA's efforts to point-out the errors and out-of-date information was given:

Bob Gramigna and Alternate Director Graham commended the work done by OPSRRA. Alternate Director Graham expressed his preference that staff make the easy amendments to the plans now and refer other items to a future process.

3. UPCOMING OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN PUBLIC HEARINGS

The public hearing for the Otter Point OCP is scheduled for [Monday, November 6 at 7:00 p.m. at the Otter Point Fire Hall.](#)

The public hearing for the Shirley/Jordan River OCP is scheduled for [Tuesday, November 14 at 7:00 p.m. at the Shirley Community Hall.](#)

- Anyone who believes that their interest in property is affected by the proposed OCP bylaw, for their respective community, must be given a reasonable opportunity to speak at the public hearing.
- Verbal presentations are time-limited by the chair (usually 3 to 5 minutes).
- Written submissions can be made anytime up to the close of the public hearing. **Nothing will be accepted after that time.**
- Presentations are expected to be relevant to the draft OCP being proposed and cannot be in the form of a question.
- The Regional Director and CRD Planning Staff are present but, legally, can not answer questions or make comment at the public hearing.
- If you have a question about an OCP, contact the JDF Electoral Services Planning Services office before the public hearing.

OPSRRA will be making both a verbal and a written submission regarding the Otter Point OCP. Concerns about the Shirley/Jordan River OCP will be presented at that OCP public hearing by a resident of Shirley. Our review of the draft OCP has identified numerous problems with the clarity and comprehensiveness of the document as well as the accuracy of the accompanying maps. In our opinion it's not a bad OCP—it merely is not as good as it should be. OPSRRA members are encouraged to attend the public hearing for their respective community and express their opinions. Once passed as CRD bylaws, the OCPs will form the foundation for the new CRD zoning bylaws proposed for Otter Point and Shirley/Jordan River.

4. UPDATE ON A REQUEST FOR A GOVERNANCE STUDY FOR SHIRLEY/JORDAN RIVER & OTTER POINT

The JDF Electoral Area Governance Study group is continuing its efforts to have the province and the CRD agree to a governance study that would include an incorporation option. The Governance Study group feels that incorporation is the only governance option that will:

- Protect the JDF Electoral Area from further annexations by adjoining municipalities—as happened last year with parts of Otter Point and East Sooke.
- Allow us to elect more than one person to be our elected government. At present we only get to elect the regional director—everyone else, whether elected or otherwise, has to be appointed by the regional director.

- Replace the current arrangement that has land use and other service decisions being made by people who do not live in our community.

The province and the CRD seem willing to allow the study of just about any governance option except incorporation. The following is the latest letter sent by the Governance Study group to the province and the CRD.

Honorable Ida Chong

Minister of Community Services
PO Box 9056 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Chong:

I am writing on behalf of the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Governance Study group—representing the communities of Shirley/Jordan River, Otter Point, Malahat and East Sooke.

1. The Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Governance Study group has not received a reply to our August 17th letter to you requesting a meeting to discuss our reasons for rejecting the proposed terms of reference for a governance study for the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area. Our rejection of the proposed terms of reference does not mean that we are opposed to a governance study—provided that it includes options that address the concerns of our communities. A reply to our letter is requested.
2. The District of Metchosin recently announced that it is interested in pursuing a boundary restructure study to examine the possibility of including the community of East Sooke within their municipality. If this study is agreed to, the outstanding governance needs and concerns of the JDF Electoral Area still need to be addressed.
3. When the province and the CRD proceed with a governance study for the JDF Electoral Area, will this happen with further community comment on the terms of reference?

Although our Governance Study group has been very patient about awaiting a reply to our August 17th letter, it should not be construed from our patience that we are somehow no longer interested in a governance study for our area. The ability of our community to have an acceptable level of self-determination and democratic representation depends upon the outcome of this governance study—otherwise we will be forever pursuing the need for yet another governance study to try and fix yet other shortcomings as the result of being an unincorporated area. Any final decision about terms of reference that may be made by the province and the CRD—without community input and agreement—merely reinforce our argument about the lack of governance options: the only ones that we get to study are the ones where we don't have the final say about the outcome.

I have a final request: since it is the future of our communities that is being discussed, we would have appreciated receiving copies of letters from the Ministry of Community Services to the CRD, District of Metchosin and others, concerning the JDF Electoral Area governance study.

We look forward to your attention to our continuing concerns.

Yours truly,

Ken Pungente
Chair, Otter Point & Shirley Jordan River Governance Study Group

C.C. Mr. Dale Wall, Assistant Deputy Minister Governance
His Worship Mayor Alan Lowe, Chair CRD Board of Directors
Mr. Kelly Daniels, CRD Chief Executive Officer
Mr. John Horgan, MLA - Malahat/Juan de Fuca
Mr. Erik Lund, Regional Director JDF Electoral Area

5. DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC VISION FOR OTTER POINT & SHIRLEY

OPSRRA is undertaking another community initiative called Developing a Strategic Vision.

WHAT IS A STRATEGIC COMMUNITY VISION?

A strategic community vision is a document that outlines the major goals that a community sets for itself for a 5 to 15 year period and identifies key strategies for achieving those goals.

The community goals normally reflect the community's priorities and can focus on diverse issues including: governance, public services, taxation, economic development, socio-cultural progress, environmental preservation, etc.

The strategies to achieve such goals are generally broad and inclusive, link to a wide range of groups and organizations both within and outside the community, and may include timeframes for initiating certain activities.

In some respects, the process of developing a strategic community vision can be more important than the document developed if it brings community residents, groups and elected leaders together in a process to clarify what they want for their community and how to pursue those goals.

WHY DEVELOP A STRATEGIC COMMUNITY VISION FOR OTTER POINT AND SHIRLEY/JORDAN RIVER

Neither Otter Point nor Shirley/Jordan River has community goals or strategies. The closest document either has are proposed Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaws, which are legislatively required and focus narrowly on ensuring an adequate supply of land for housing and setting land use zoning standards.

Although the Capital Region District Board, which includes an elected regional director, functions as the local government for Otter Point and Shirley/Jordan River, the CRD concentrates its energies on larger, region-wide planning issues. The lone regional director faces significant challenges in identifying let alone seeking to achieve diverse community goals in the six distinct Juan De Fuca electoral area districts. Local government bylaws and regulations for both Otter Point and Shirley/Jordan River are largely determined by elected officials who neither live in the community nor are electorally accountable to it for their decisions.

The economic base of Otter Point and Shirley/Jordan River is changing. The traditional fishing, agriculture and logging industries are becoming less significant as employers, while home-based businesses and the tourism and retirement industries continue to grow in economic importance. Population growth is largely based on in-migration of retirees or commuting workers. Young adults often leave these communities for educational and employment opportunities elsewhere.

Southern Vancouver Island is experiencing long-term population growth and, with it, demands for more housing, infrastructure and services. As land becomes more expensive and limited in Langford, Colwood and Sooke, increasing pressure for

housing and commercial development in Otter Point and Shirley/Jordan River is anticipated. A large-scale land developer recently purchased substantial forest tracts in Otter Point (with similar purchases in Shirley/Jordan River likely to follow) and is currently exploring ways to convert the land into profitable housing developments and settlement areas.

By a wide margin, residents of Otter Point and Shirley/Jordan River recently rejected amalgamation with the municipality of Sooke. In public meetings dealing with their respective draft zoning bylaws, many residents of both districts have spoken in support of maintaining a largely rural, low housing density pattern of development. The Otter Point and Shirley/Jordan River Governance Committee has called on the CRD to support a study looking at local governance options. Other community organizations are actively lobbying for the creation of public parks and trails.

Common forums to identify community goals and strategies to achieve them do not currently exist in Otter Point and Jordan River. Unfortunately, if the residents of Otter Point and Shirley/Jordan River do not find a way to develop and support a common vision of future community development, future change and development may well be determined by non-residents with competing and conflicting visions and interests.

HOW CAN A STRATEGIC COMMUNITY VISION BE DEVELOPED?

The first step is to see if community organizations are supportive of the idea of developing a strategic community vision. The OPSRRA Board could recommend tabling such a proposal for consideration with the current Otter Point and Shirley/Jordan River Governance Committee and also circulating it for feedback with local organizations and groups in Otter Point and Shirley/Jordan River.

If there is sufficient community support for the idea, a small planning committee could be established with participation from interested groups with a mandate to draft recommendations for developing a strategic community vision document over the next 1-2 years. The recommendations should include ways of obtaining wide community involvement, possibly through the use of evening/weekend workshops, public meetings, a community survey, and the assistance of a non-profit facilitator organization such as SmartGrowth BC.

If the recommendations brought forward by such a planning committee find community support, a steering committee could then be established to obtain the necessary funding/support commitments and manage the visioning process.

If there is a will to develop a strategic community vision, there is certainly a way to do it.

Note: Letters inviting approximately 30 local organizations to participate in this venture are being sent out in early November. If there is sufficient interest in participating in this planning exercise, on behalf of the community, we see beginning our work in January.

6. UPDATE ON WHAT IS HAPPENING WITH THE 560 ACRES BEHIND THE OTTER POINT FIRE HALL

TimberWest recently sold this large parcel of land (details were reported in the June 2006 OPSRRA newsletter) to Canadian Horizon, a land development company. A representative from Canadian Horizon recently contacted OPSRRA requesting a meeting to discuss their proposed development plans and to “sound-out” community support for their development proposals. Canadian Horizon was able to share the following information about their tentative plans at this meeting:

- They intend to apply to have the property included within one of the soon to be established Settlement Containment Areas.
- They will request that the current Rural “A” zoning be changed. Their intent is to apply for subdivision approval that would allow 2.5 acre lots.
- They intend to apply to bring a public (CRD) waterline into their development as a community amenity.

Note: Canadian Horizons is also trying to secure approval from the District of Metchosin to rezone and develop a 121 hectare rural property (Centre Mountain) for residential use.

7. DID YOU KNOW THAT?

The Sooke Region Museum is organizing a Pioneer Night in Otter Point on Wednesday, November 1 and in Shirley on Wednesday, November 15?

This will be an opportunity for local residents to spend 2 hours (7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.) hearing about their community’s history, see old pictures and talk with descendants of local pioneers.

Do you have local historical information that you would like to share or questions that you would like answered? If so, let us know and we’ll try to help.

8. SPEEDING ON LOCAL ROADS

OPSRRA was asked by some of its members to help with a traffic situation in their neighbourhood. We felt that the concerns were broader and combined them with others that we have heard about. The following letter was recently sent to the provincial Ministry of Transportation.

Mr. Bob Webb

Operations Manager
 Ministry of Transportation
 Area Office
 Suite 240 – 4460 Chatterton Way
 Victoria, B.C. V8X 5J2

Dear Mr. Webb:

I am writing on behalf of the Otter Point & Shirley Residents & Ratepayers Association (OPSRRA) to request that you consider some road signage and maintenance changes that would improve safety in our community.

Residents of both Shirley and Otter Point are concerned about the increased volume of traffic on our rural roads and the excessive speed of some of the drivers. Because our communities are without sidewalks or roadside trails; pedestrian, horseback and bicycle traffic need to use the roads too. The recent introduction of a community bus route through Otter Point and the growth in Bed & Breakfast facilities has added to the number of people who are walking our roads—either for pleasure or to get to a bus stop.

Our organization has several suggestions that we feel would help to make our local roads safer:

- Keep the sides of the roads mowed during the spring and summer so that they can be used as a safe walking and horseback riding area or as a refuge when you need to step off the road to allow other traffic to pass.

- Do regular (annual?) routine grading to improve the width and evenness of the shoulders.
- Post more speed limit signs on the secondary roads.
- Identify No Exit roads with proper signage. Most roads in Shirley and Otter Point are dead ends. Drivers unfamiliar with the area are constantly get “lost” trying to find a through road and tend to speed in the return direction as they try to recover the time they feel that they have lost.
- Consider installing roads bumps in some areas to calm the speeders.

Finally, we would appreciate your advice about what could be done about dirt bike riders who cruise our rural roads. Some are under-age, don't wear helmets and are probably uninsured. While we realize that this is a policing issue, is there anything that your department has had success with that would curb the inherent danger of mixing these off-road vehicles with other vehicular and non-vehicular traffic using our roads?

Regards,

Arnie Campbell
President OPSRRA

Cc. Mr. Erik Lund, JDF Regional Director
Sooke Detachment RCMP

9. WHERE THE NO HUNTING & NO SHOOTING BOUNDARY SHOULD BE

Further to the item in the October OPSRRA newsletter, the following letter has been sent to the provincial Ministry of the Environment.

Mr. Dick Heath

Regional Manager Environmental Stewardship
Ministry of the Environment
2080 A Labieux Road
Nanaimo, BC V9T 6J9

Dear Mr. Heath:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Otter Point & Shirley Residents & Ratepayers Association (OPSRRA) to request that the provincial Ministry of the Environment review the present No Shooting & No Hunting boundary in our area.

The present boundary is the B.C. Hydro power line that runs from Jordan River through the communities of Shirley, Otter Point and Sooke. No shooting or hunting is allowed south of the power line. We feel that this boundary should be moved further north. For example, where it runs through Otter Point (in the vicinity of Tugwell and Robinson roads), a residential neighbourhood with perhaps 50 homes, is located north of the power line. Our soon to be approved Otter Point Official Community Plan identifies an area north of the power line as part of a Settlement Containment Area. This means that residential development will continue to grow within the presently permitted shooting and hunting area.

Although we have received numerous suggestions from our members about where the boundary could be shifted, we would prefer to rely on your knowledge and expertise in this area. Our association would be able to offer you necessary assistance. For example we can direct you to the Otter Point Fire Department map

that would give you an immediate count of how many homes are currently located north of the power line and to the proposed Settlement Containment and Official Community Plan maps for our area.

A reply to our letter would be appreciated.

Yours truly,

Arnie Campbell
President OPSRRA

Cc Mr. Erik Lund, JDF Electoral Area Regional Director
District of Sooke Mayor & Council
Sooke Detachment R.C.M.P.
Mr. Bob Lapham, Manager CRD Protection & Planning Services
Mr. John Horgan, MLA Juan de Fuca - Malahat

10. MUIR CREEK PROTECTION SOCIETY

The Muir Creek Protection Society recently made a presentation to the CRD Parks Committee and it was very well received. Many of the Parks Committee members made a point of coming up to them afterwards to express their support for the cause. The CRD is talking with TimberWest to ensure that the land remains unlogged while details (little things like money!) are sorted out. OPSRRA sent the following letter to TimberWest.

Mr. Steve Lorimer

Manager First Nations & Community Relations
TimberWest #3-4890 Rutherford Rd.
Nanaimo, BC V9T 4Z4

Dear Steve:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Otter Point & Shirley Residents & Ratepayers Association to thank TimberWest for holding-off logging their property in the Muir Creek area. It is our understanding that this is being done pending the outcome of a CRD decision to purchase some of that area for a park.

Our association feels that it is important to preserve the property along Muir Creek as forested parkland. We therefore support any effort on your company's behalf to protect as much of creek and its watershed, as possible, from logging.

Please let me know if our association can be of assistance to you in this matter.

Regards,

Arnie Campbell
President OPSRRA

Cc. Kate Woods, Muir Creek Protection Society
Erik Lund, JDF Regional Director
Louise Paterson, Chair JDF Parks Commission

Note:

1. The next Muir Creek walk is Saturday, November 25. Meet at 11:00 a.m. on the east/inland side of the creek and watch for the returning salmon and the eagles that feed on them; then do a one-hour hike up the ridge trail (some mud and steep sections), if weather permits.
2. The Muir Creek Protection Society AGM is coming up in December and they are looking for volunteers who would be willing to be Society directors—if you have the ideas and the time, please contact them:
www.muircreekprotectionsociety.org

11. FREE SMALL BUSINESS LISTING ON OPSRRA'S WEB SITE

Do you operate a small business? Are you an OPSRRA member? OPSRRA is offering a free business listing service for members, on its web site: www.opsrra.ca
We will list non-members for a suitable donation!

The purpose of this service is to provide an opportunity for businesses in Jordan River, Shirley and Otter Point to advertise their goods and services to their local community. We anticipate having listings for accommodation, farm produce, art, furniture, fishing charters, eco tours, firewood, knitting, soaps, landscaping, bookkeeping, sewing and more. More information, businesses already listed, and a registration form are available on OPSRRA's web site (www.opsrra.ca) under Business Listings.

The following business listings are on the OPSRRA web site:

1001 Welding & Equipment Repair	Accent in Grooming
ALM Organic Farm	Beaches West B&B
Birds Edge Press	Blue Waters B&B
Body Wellness Spa	Eagle Cove Beachfront Guest Suite
Full Circle Seeds	Heron's Rest B&B
Jambo Pet Sitting Service	Kemp Lake Store
Otter Point Beach House	Roads End Construction
Sandy's Drywall Ltd	Straitview Ridge Bed & Breakfast
Tugwell Creek Honey Farm	Tugwell Creek Meadery
Wood Visions	

12. BACK ISSUES OF THE OPSRRA NEWSLETTER

Back issues of the OPSRRA newsletter are available on the OPSRRA web site.

This monthly newsletter is prepared by the directors of OPSRRA. It is available to members by e-mail and to others on our web site: www.opsrra.ca.
To have an item you would like to have considered for placement in the newsletter, or make a comment about the newsletter, contact an OPSRRA director.

OPSRRA tries to verify the correctness of the information in this newsletter; if we have got it wrong we will acknowledge that and make a correction as quickly as possible.
