



Director's Report

Hello UNA/UBC/UEL neighbours,

I hope that your summer is off to a good start. As we pass the midpoint of 2021, there are many reasons for optimism, but also continual reminders of the challenges that face us, both globally and locally. I am cautiously excited that BC has moved to Stage 3 of reopening from COVID. This success is in large part because of our collective commitment to getting vaccinated. However, case counts around the world are somewhat concerning, especially with the Delta variant. I trust that this will be extra motivation for each of us to ensure that we, and those we love, are getting their second (and first, of course, if you haven't!) vaccine dose.

I am deeply saddened by the confirmation of unmarked graves at the site of another former residential school here in BC. As difficult as it is for us to hear and digest this news, hearing and really internalizing it is an important step in our truth and reconciliation process. I stand with our Indigenous neighbours during this difficult time.

Finally, the recent heat wave and forest fires around the province and even right here on the UBC Peninsula, are depressing reminders of climate change, and the need for each of us to act now to mitigate the impact of climate change. It is also a good time for us to think about both fire prevention and emergency response mechanisms on the peninsula. You can learn more about this within my newsletter.

In addition to these sobering issues, I hope that you will enjoy reading some heartwarming stories about topics such as salmon fry returning after 115 years, and a child in our neighbourhood who recently identified more than 80 species within Pacific Spirit Regional Park!

For my part, in addition to a busy month of meetings, my husband, kids and I recently returned from a wonderful kayaking adventure off the coast of Quadra Island. I was reminded yet again, of how beautiful our province is, and how precious our natural ecosystems are. I felt very fortunate to have this time together being active and outdoors as a family.



Jen and her family on a recent kayak adventure near Quadra Island (off Vancouver Island).

As always, please reach out if you have any questions, suggestions or concerns that I may be able to assist with.

All the best,

Jen McCutcheon

Jen McCutcheon, Metro Vancouver Director for Electoral Area A (www.areaajen.ca or areaajen@gmail.com)



Fire Risks on UBC Peninsula

Over the past few weeks, the UBC Peninsula has been the site of two small forest fires. I am very grateful to our fire fighters (from Vancouver Fire Department); Metro Vancouver Emergency Response, Parks and Watershed Protection services; and BC Wildfire service for their assistance in quickly extinguishing these fires. You can read more about these fires on my website (www.areaajen.ca), and you can sign up to receive updates from me on any future events by emailing me at areaajen@gmail.com.

These events bring to light a number of important issues that I would like to address: (1) fire prevention, (2) air quality changes as a result of wildfires, and (3) emergency response on the UBC Peninsula.

1. Fire prevention

As a result of climate change, it now feels like we have a wet season and a dry season in Vancouver. During these long, hot, dry spells, the responsibility lies with each of us to help prevent fires. Here is a list of ways you can contribute to keeping us all safe.

How can individual British Columbians help prevent wildfires?

- There is currently a ban on open burning and campfires ban throughout British Columbia. You can learn more on B.C. fire bans & restrictions: www.bcwildfire.ca
- The BC Wildfire Service thanks the public for its ongoing help in reporting wildfires quickly. To report a wildfire, unattended campfire or open burning violation, call 1 800 663-5555 toll-free or *5555 on a cell phone.
- Everyone in the province also has an important role to play in preventing wildfires.
- One of the primary goals is to reduce the number of wildfires caused by people. Human-caused wildfires are entirely preventable and unnecessarily divert firefighting resources from naturally occurring fires.
- Anyone who contravenes an open fire prohibition may be issued a ticket for \$1,150, required to pay an administrative penalty of up to \$10,000 or, if convicted in court, fined up to \$100,000 and/or sentenced to one year in jail.
- If the contravention causes or contributes to a wildfire, the person responsible may be ordered to pay all firefighting and associated costs.

How can you keep our parks and other "green" spaces safe?

- All regional parks are currently under a "high" fire danger rating, and as you know, there have been two recent fires in/near Pacific Spirit Regional Park. Click [here](#) for more about park safety and preparedness.
- Smoking is prohibited in all Metro Vancouver regional parks and greenways, except in designated smoking areas. Check the [Pacific Spirit Regional Park webpage](#) frequently for the latest fire rating information and for current restrictions on outdoor cooking appliances.





What else can people do to help?

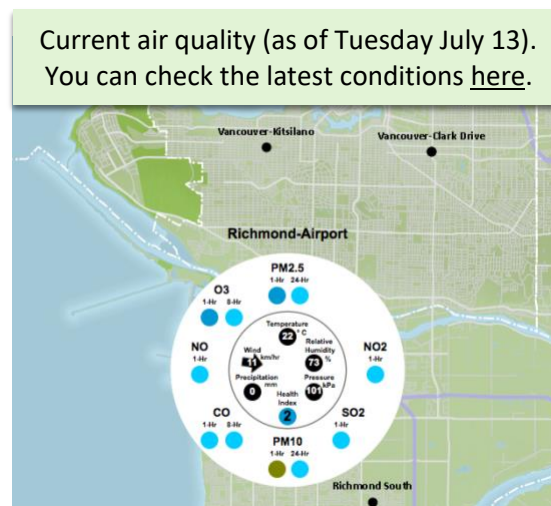
- Please do your part by refraining from activities that may cause wildfires.
- If you're a smoker, always fully extinguish your cigarette and dispose of it responsibly. Never throw it out of a vehicle window. Avoid smoking in dry grassy areas.
- If you ride an ATV, keep it away from dry areas and make sure that a spark arrestor device is installed, as required by law.
- Our firefighters appreciate the expressions of support they get from people all around the province. It's important for them to know that we're all behind them and supporting their extremely important work
- For fire safety tips inside your home, click [here](#).
- To engage your children in fire safety, check out [Ember's Den](#), which includes an engaging mascot with a [video](#) and a [colouring book](#) that has great tips.

If you see someone throw a cigarette butt or other smoking materials out of a vehicle, what can you do?

- Call 1 800 663-5555 toll-free or *5555 on a cell phone to report the incident. If possible, the following information should be provided:
 - location, date, and time of the incident
 - licence plate number
 - make and model of the vehicle
 - direction of travel

2. Air quality

Another important aspect of BC's forest fires is the impact that they have on our air quality. Metro Vancouver is responsible for monitoring the quality of our air across the region. You can click [here](#) for the current status of a number of pollutants across 31 monitoring stations across the region. Notifications are given when air quality deteriorates, and you can sign up [here](#) to be notified of these air quality advisories. For example, from June 26 to June 29, an Air Quality advisory was in place, initially for ground-level ozone, then also expanded to include fine particulate matter for the final day.



Fire and other first responders fighting the June 28th fire near Wreck Beach

3. Emergency response

The multiple areas of jurisdiction on the UBC Peninsula add an extra degree of complexity to emergency response. Coordination and collaboration is ongoing among staff from Metro Vancouver, UBC, the UEL and UNA, however, the response can still feel confusing from a resident's perspective. I have pulled together the table below that describes how major emergencies in the area will be responded to, with a focus on how residents will be informed. Given the complexities, I will be planning additional coordination meetings among stakeholders (for example, how are schools and



daycares on the peninsula informed?), as well as engagement session for residents. Stay tuned for more information on the date and timing of this session. As always, if you have additional suggestion for future engagement sessions, please let me know.

The table below provides a summary of how you can be notified about major emergencies. Please make sure that you have signed up to receive updates, and that your contact information is up to date.

Residents living within the UNA Neighbourhoods:

UNA residents who are UNA Members, or who have a UNA Access Card, are signed up to receive notifications from UBC Alert, the university's mass notification system. UBC Alert will only be used in active and urgent situations that require your immediate attention because they have the potential to:

- Result in serious harm to people;
- Cause substantial damage to property; and/or
- Disrupt the usual activities of the university.

If you live within the UNA Neighbourhoods and have not yet signed up to become a member, I encourage you to do so. You can find out more [here](#).

Residents are encouraged to add the [UBC Alert](#) phone numbers to your contact list so you are aware of any incoming UBC Alert notifications.

Voice calls: 604-822-0164

Text messages: 723-389

The UNA encourages residents to update their emergency contact information through updating their "Primary Phone" contact information in [MyUNA](#) Profile Page. Or alternatively, notify the UNA office of any updates or changes by emailing reception@myuna.ca.

Additional information can be found on [UNA's Public Safety page](#) and [UBC's Emergency Communication page](#).

Residents living on UBC Campus:

UBC students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to sign up to [UBC Alert](#), the university's mass notification system.

Students: Log into the [UBC Student Service Centre](#) and add your cell phone number to 'Your Details.'

Faculty and Staff: Including a mobile number in your [Workday](#) contact information will enable UBC to send you alerts in urgent situations that pose an immediate safety or security risk to the community.

UBC Alert will only be used in active and urgent situations that require your immediate attention because they have the potential to:

- Result in serious harm to people;
- Cause substantial damage to property; and/or
- Disrupt the usual activities of the university.

Faculty, staff and students are encouraged to add the [UBC Alert](#) phone numbers to your contact list so you are aware of any incoming UBC Alert notifications.

Voice calls: 604-822-0164

Text messages: 723-389

Additional information can be found on [UBC's Emergency Communication page](#).

Residents living within the UEL:

UEL residents are encouraged to sign up to Metro Vancouver's [Emergency Notification System](#). If you are registered, the system sends a voice, text and email message to notify Electoral Area A residents of large-scale emergencies and evacuation orders. The [UEL's Emergency Preparedness page](#) has helpful information related to household emergency kits, the types of risks that exist within the UEL, and more.

From Jen McCutcheon, Director, Electoral Area A

July
2021

Coho Salmon Fry return to Coquitlam River for the first time on 115 years!

For the first time in over 115 years, Coho salmon fry have spawned naturally in Coquitlam River! This species conservation success is the result of partnership and careful release of adult Coho salmon in the river and is a story that warmed my heart.

Following Metro Vancouver Board support in July 2020, Metro Vancouver's Water District partnered with Kwikwetlem First Nation (KFN), Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), BC Hydro and the Port



Coho salmon fry found in Coquitlam River... for the first time in 115 years!



Release of adult Coho salmon into a tributary of
Coquitlam River in summer, 2020

Coquitlam and District Hunting and Fishing Club (PCDHFC) to capture and

transport 62 adult Coho salmon from the Coquitlam River (below the Coquitlam River dam) to Cedar Creek, a main tributary to Coquitlam Lake.

Since the release of the adult salmon into Cedar Creek last summer, the site has been carefully monitored. In May of 2021, BC Hydro fisheries consultants confirmed the success of the adult release when they found emergent Coho fry in the creek. These fry are the first Coho naturally spawned in the upper watershed since the original Coquitlam River Dam was built over 115 years ago. This marks a significant milestone in salmon recovery for the Coquitlam River system and a significant cultural event for the Kwikwetlem First Nation.

Calling Youth interested in Civic Engagement



While I welcome and appreciate input, suggestions and engagement from any resident, I would like to start a specific youth engagement program. The aim of this initiative is to engage interested youth in issues that will impact the future of the region. The details are still to be finalized, but I envision sharing agendas (for open meetings) and issues that I will be making decisions on, and then working with the participant(s) to develop and

Calling any interested youth: Get involved in your community and region. *Image source: UBCM*

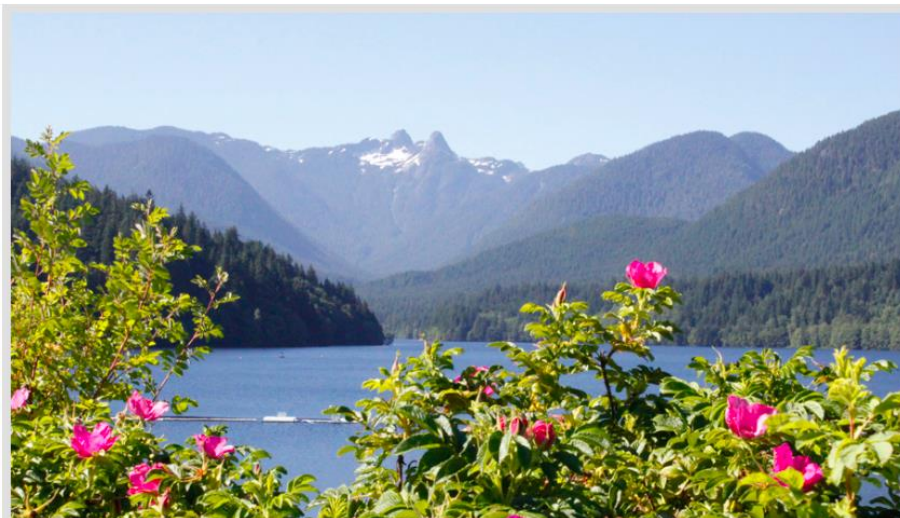


understand their considerations related to the issue. I am just formulating this idea, so I am open to other ways to tweak it as it develops.

If you are (or a youth you know is) between the ages of approximately 13 and 30*, and you are interested in learning more about issues such as climate change, regional planning and transportation, community engagement, and local politics, please send me an email and we can connect further about this opportunity.

**if you are older and would like to get involved, please send me an email and we can chat about how you can get involved.*

Water Conservation in Metro Vancouver



Water for the UBC Peninsula comes from Metro Vancouver's Capilano Watershed, pictured here

Did you know that we, as the Metro Vancouver Region use an average of one billion litres of water a day! Peak consumption occurs in the summer months at approximately 1.5 billion litres per day.

During the recent heat dome, daily water consumption reached 1.79 billion litres on June 27, just shy of the all-time high set in 2009, when the region used almost two billion litres on a single day.

Please be aware of your water consumption and do what you can to conserve this precious resource. You can find out more about water restrictions that are currently in place

across the region (these are standard restrictions each summer), as well as tips on how to conserve water [here](#). ([WeLoveWater.ca](#))

Typically, water demand increases in the summer due to outdoor uses like lawn watering. Under the region-wide regulations in effect until October 15, residential lawn watering is allowed twice a week, in the mornings only. One hour of rain or watering per week is all you need to maintain a healthy lawn, but if you let your lawn go dormant during summer, it will become green again in the fall. For full details, see the current [Lawn Watering Regulations](#).

ELECTORAL AREA A Director's Update

From Jen McCutcheon, Director, Electoral Area A

July
2021

Community Connections

This section highlights awesome community initiatives. Please send me your ideas about people who are going out of their way to make our neighbourhoods even better. I know there are lots of examples and I'd love to hear from you about some of them (email me at areaajen@gmail.com).

This month's community connections piece is on a 10-year-old boy who probably knows the park and its inhabitants better than most of you. His name is Eli, and he goes to University Hill Elementary and Soaring Eagle Nature School.



Eli recently identified 84 different species within Pacific Spirit Regional Park! Photo credit: Eli's family

Eli was recently involved in a fundraiser called a species-a-thon. He and many others who go to Soaring Eagle collected pledges for how many species they would each find. I, Jen's son, Simon (the author of this week's piece) got a chance to ask Eli a few questions about this project, and his impressive species identification skills.

Simon's question: What makes Pacific Spirit Regional Park so special to you and what is your favourite thing about the park?

Eli's response: I have a passion for almost all things in the forest. I like to forage for berries and edible plants. I like to climb the trees and see the wildlife. It is a beautiful place and a nice change from where I live, it is so close but so different. My favorite thing about the park is that it is a place where people can come to feel calm and relaxed while also having fun and being excited. At Soaring Eagle, we get a "nature name" at the start of the year. I feel really connected to the name I got this year; a bird called the Northern Flicker.

Simon's question: Can you tell me a bit more about the fundraiser you were just involved in?

Eli's response: The money went towards the Urban Native Youth Association ([UNYA](#)), they provide indigenous youth with different programs and activities in Vancouver.

The species-a-thon is a scavenger hunt to look for species in Pacific Spirit Park that was organized by my teachers at Soaring Eagle Nature School. I was the only kid in my group who wanted to participate, so I took on the challenge on my own (well, with my family!). I collected pledges from people in my community for each species I found, and then spent a day out in the forest looking for, and identifying plants, animals and fungi.



Simon's question: What did you accomplish in this fundraiser?

Eli's response: I initially raised \$929 and found 84 species but then one family knew that I had a goal of \$1,000 and upped their pledge to help me reach my goal!

Simon's question: I heard you identified around 80 species, how were you able to identify so many species?

Eli's response: I spent an entire day in Pacific Spirit looking for species with my family. We brought several field guides that we borrowed from the library so we could look them up while we searched. I also knew a lot of the species from going to Nature School and spending so much time in the forest. We used a mobile app to look up the ones that we couldn't find in the books. *If you'd like to see the list of species Eli identified, send Jen an email at areaajen@gmail.com*

Simon's question: Is there anything else that you would like to share with your neighbours?

Eli's response: I hope this inspires you to raise money for an organization of your own, and also to spend more time out in nature.

If you still want to donate to UNYA, you can use the GoFundMe link on the Soaring Eagle [webpage](#). Thank you to all the community members who have done so already. You've really helped a great organization. Soaring Eagle Nature School has committed to raising \$25,000 for UNYA and have currently raised \$16,741.

Well done, Eli! I bet if we all understood nature as much as you the world would be a better place.

Article written by Simon McCutcheon.



Just a few of the 84 species living in Pacific Spirit Regional park that Eli was able to identify as part of his fundraiser for Urban Native Youth Association (UNYA). *Photo credit: Eli's family.*



TransLink Updates



Masks Recommended on TransLink Buses, SkyTrains and Seabuses

Starting July 1, 2021, masks will move from being mandatory to recommended while onboard transit vehicles and vessels, and at bus stops and platforms. This is consistent with the Provincial Health Orders on mandatory masks being lifted. TransLink has put in place a number of measures to ensure the continued safety of riders and staff. You can read more about their safety plans [here](#).

[More information on TransLink's Fare Increase](#)

My daughter and I on the bus. We were impressed with how many people were still wearing masks, even now that masks are recommended, not required.

TransLink boosts buses to beaches

This summer, TransLink is making it easier to reach outdoor attractions across the region by bus. Summer schedules have been adjusted to increase access warmer-weather tourist destinations such as Stanley Park, White Pine Beach, Buntzen Lake, Rocky Point Park, and Lions Bay. If you're heading out this summer, avoid looking for parking and take the bus.

[Find out more about TransLink's summer service adjustments](#)



TransLink invests in walking, cycling and roads



In addition to running transit, TransLink supports movement across the region with investments in regional walking and cycling paths, and roads. This year they are supporting 131 projects across the region with \$125 million, including \$148,000 to continue improvements for pedestrians and cyclists using Westbrook Mall.

[Read more about TransLink's investments in the region's paths, infrastructure and roads](#)



Community Works Fund

On June 21, I met with representatives from the UNA Board and UEL CAC, along with staff from UNA, UEL, UBC and Metro Vancouver, to kick-off discussions on what potential projects would benefit our communities using the Electoral Area A Community Works Fund. The Community Works Fund comes from federal gas tax money that is delivered through UBCM to all BC local governments through a direct annual allocation to support local priorities.



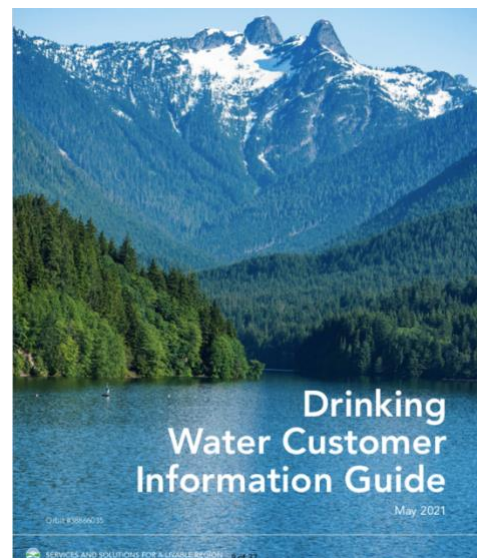
Eligible projects categories are wide-ranging, from transit and road improvements, to infrastructure, to community plans ([click here](#) for examples of eligible projects). The amounts available are based on population, which equates to approximately \$635K for UNA/UBC projects, and \$150K for UEL projects. The first meeting focused on understanding eligibility, process and guiding principles. Representatives were asked to circle back to their organizations to discuss and identify potential projects, which will be discussed at the second meeting scheduled for late September 2021.

How Safe is our Water?

Moving back to the topic of our drinking water, Metro Vancouver recently released a Water Consumer "Drinking Water Customer Information Guide".

Metro Vancouver and its member jurisdictions, in collaboration with the regional health authorities, are responsible for the provision of clean, safe drinking water to the region. This includes providing water to 2.7 million residents and businesses in the region through a complex regional treatment and transmission system and local distribution systems.

To aid frontline staff in answering questions from the public, Metro Vancouver has developed an updated Drinking Water Customer Information Guide (The Guide). The Guide provides information on various topics such as the overall water system, treatment processes, water quality and associated regulations and guidelines, common issues and solutions, and frequently asked questions. While I am quite sure that the guide provides more information that the average resident will ever want to know about water, I thought that there may be some interesting aspects to the report. You can browse through it [here](#).





One example of a question addressed in the report is “*Is bottled water safer than tap water?*”. Here is the response given in the report:



Metro Vancouver’s tap water is required to meet even stricter regulations than bottled water. It comes from the rain and snow that falls on the mountains and flows into the Capilano, Seymour and Coquitlam reservoirs. Metro Vancouver’s tap water is safe to consume; it is continuously monitored and is subjected to over 142,000 tests annually. It tastes great, is inexpensive, and doesn’t contribute to plastic waste in landfills or oceans.

... so skip the single use plastic and drink our beautifully clean tap water. 😊

If you are out and about and looking for a place to fill your reusable drinking bottle, you can use Metro Vancouver’s Tap Map App to quickly locate the closest public drinking fountains across the region. Click [here](#) to try it out.

Jen's Board and Committee Appointments for 2021

Below are the boards and committees that I serve on. Feel free to reach out to me if you would like to learn more.

- Metro Vancouver Regional District (MVRD) Board of Directors
- TransLink Mayors' Council for Regional Transportation
- Climate Action Committee, MVRD
- Finance and Intergovernmental Committee, MVRD
- Chair of the Electoral Area A Committee, MVRD
- Mayors’ Committee, MVRD
- E-Comm Board of Directors
- Human Resources Committee, E-Comm
- Fraser Valley Regional Library Board of Directors
- Joint Regional Planning Committee for TransLink
- Inaugural Board Member for Metro Vancouver Zero Emission Innovation Centre (ZEIC)
- Ocean Watch Action Committee

Links & Connections

[Jen McCutcheon’s Website](#)

www.areaajen.ca

[Jen McCutcheon’s Facebook](#)

www.facebook.com/AreaAJen

[Metro Vancouver](#)

www.metrovancouver.org

[Mayors’ Council on Regional Transportation](#)

www.translink.ca