Community Trail Project
Active transportation gets a boost in Area F as RDN Parks launches a program of trail building along undeveloped road allowances (public roads never opened for vehicular use). These trails will link up low traffic dead-end roads and create the means for pedestrians, cyclist and equestrians to get around their community without having to hug the sides of high traffic through-roads like Grafton or the highway. Contact RDN Parks if you would like to participate in your community trail building project.

Whiskey Creek Water System
The RDN took responsibility for the management of the Whiskey Creek Water System on January 31, and the Board would like to thank the members of the Whiskey Creek Water District for their help in making this transition as smooth as possible. This utility supplies water to the Westerlea Estates Subdivision.

Prior to 2002 the Whiskey Creek Water System was owned and operated by the original developer of the Westerlea subdivision, and during that time it fell into disrepair and was issued a series of boil water advisories from the Ministry of Health. In 2002 residents formed the Whiskey Creek Water District to assume control of the utility, and began managing the system on a volunteer basis. In April 2010 residents undertook a successful petition to turn management over to the RDN. The RDN also manages seven other Water Service Areas within the Regional District.

Capital improvements this year will include a new control panel and alarms in the raw water pumping station, installation of new water meters, and upgrading the alarm system for communications with the RDN Water Services Department. The RDN will complete additional work over the next two to five years, including upgrades to the water storage reservoir and pumping station.

Future upgrades to the system could include upgrades to pumping stations to provide emergency fire flows, water main upgrades, and installation of more fire hydrants. These improvements would depend on residents’ approval for the upgrades and for the additional borrowing they would require.

Residents who have questions about the water system may contact RDN Water Services at 250-954-3792.

Draft Regional Growth Strategy
The Regional District of Nanaimo wants to hear what residents think about the new policies on food security, water conservation, transportation, economic development, affordable housing and climate change included in its Draft Regional Growth Strategy.

To view the Draft RGS and learn more about how it will encourage sustainability in the region, visit www.ShapingOurFuture.ca. Hard copies can be viewed at the RDN Administration Building, all regional libraries, and municipal offices in the RDN. A survey is also available on the site, and those who complete it by May 27 will be entered to win $400 towards food from a grocery store of their choice. Other prizes include transit and recreation passes.
In addition to the survey, residents can provide feedback by sending an e-mail or writing a letter.

The RGS was adopted in 1997 and was last reviewed in 2003. It represents the RDN Board’s commitment to shaping a more sustainable pattern of population growth and development in the region’s rural Electoral Areas and four municipalities over a 25-year period.

For more information, email growthmanagement@rdn.bc.ca or call 250-390-6510.

**Drinking Water/Watershed Protection Update**

The RDN’s Drinking Water Watershed Protection Program is learning more about water in the Region through collaboration with local environmental groups, government agencies and residents. The work done through this important program is assisting the RDN Board in making well-informed land use decisions that protect our environment. Recent projects include the ongoing Observation Well Program and the Watershed Snapshot Report.

**Observation Well Program**

The Drinking Water Watershed Protection Program identified the need for an expansion of the groundwater observation well network, so the RDN and the Ministry of Environment developed a plan to expand the network of 14 wells to include at least 10 more wells. We are converting six existing wells to observation wells and four new wells have already been added—one in Area H, two in Area E and one in Area A.

A second phase of the expansion will begin later in 2011 and will see even more observation wells added to the network. The DWWP Advisory Committee’s technical working group will be identifying sites for these wells and working in partnership with the Ministry of Environment and, where possible, the Geological Survey of Canada. The Ministry of Environment will be responsible for the long-term monitoring of the observation wells.

The Towns for Tomorrow program provided $150,000 in support funding for the Observation Well Program.

**Watershed Snapshot Report**

The DWWPP will present the Watershed Snapshot Report to the RDN Board in May. This report was carried out to determine the state of water resources in the RDN, and involved extensive consultation with the public, hydrogeologists, biologists, well drillers, planners, and local and provincial government representatives. A web-accessible WaterMap and report database is available now at www.rdn.bc.ca and includes reports from a variety of sources associated with water resources, and all of the information gathered as part of the Watershed Snapshot Report process. This is the most comprehensive source of water resource information available in the Region.

**Summer Fire Safety**

As fire season approaches, take some time to assess your family’s level of risk and, where necessary, to make changes around your home and property to reduce that risk. It is a good idea to prepare an emergency fire and evacuation plan and review it with your family. Another important consideration is to have your address or lot number displayed prominently so that emergency vehicles can find your property as quickly as possible.

The Emergency Planning section of the RDN website (www.rdn.bc.ca) provides links to the RDN’s community wildfire protection plans, which identify areas of concern and rank the level of interface fire risk in each area. Residents can access the fire hazard rating for specific areas by using the RDNMap, an interactive property map located on the RDN website. The RDNMap has a variety of lookup tools to help you locate addresses, roads and properties. To find the Fire Hazard Rating for your area, go to www.rdn.bc.ca and click on Emergency Planning to access the instructions.