Research Partnership Opportunity

Bioremediation of former incinerator site

Reference #: COMM – 0469

Deadline: open until researcher found; email us ASAP if you are interested

Opportunity

The qathet Regional District (qRD) is transforming a former incinerator site that burnt garbage until 1994 into a resource recovery centre—a one-stop drop for all recycling and diversion programs. Before the build out of the resource recovery centre the site needs to be properly closed.

The qRD is seeking UVic researchers interested in sampling the soils and trees at the site to study remediation of toxins in the soil and the uptake of the trees.

Expressions of interest

If you’re interested in this opportunity, please email 1-2 sentences describing your research expertise and interest in the project to communityresearch@uvic.ca as soon as possible.

This opportunity is open until a researcher is identified. Please quote the reference number COMM – 0469.

Graduate students: We encourage students to apply as long as you have a faculty member to supervise your research project. Please copy/cc your faculty member supervisor on your email to us.

Timeline and deliverables

- November 2019 - April 2020 (approx.)

Researcher/student will work in collaboration with the qRD to conduct sampling of the soils and trees at the site to study remediation of toxins in the soil and the uptake of the trees, which includes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverable/milestone</th>
<th>Timeline (approx.)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sampling of soil and trees at site in Powell River, BC</td>
<td>Completed by March 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing a community report of findings (format to be determined in consultation with the qRD)</td>
<td>Completed by April 2020</td>
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Funding

There is currently no funding by the qRD; however, the qRD is willing to partner with UVic to seek funding to support this research.
Background

About the organization
The qathet Regional District (qRD), formerly the Powell River Regional District, is a British Columbian (BC) local government authority incorporating five electoral areas and one municipality (the City of Powell River). The qRD provides services such as land use planning, emergency preparedness and 911, solid waste management, regional parks and fire protection.

This Coast Salish name qathet (pronounced ‘KA-thet’) meaning ‘working together’ was gifted to the Powell River Regional District by the Elders of Tla’amin Nation. The official name change to qathet (pronounced ‘KA-thet’) Regional District was issued by the Lieutenant Governor on July 5, 2018.

About the initiative
The qRD plans to close and redevelop a former incinerator / solid waste transfer site which is located in the centre of the City of Powell River and contains materials that have the potential to contaminate nearby surface waters and recreational sites posing an environmental and public health risk.

The site is approximately 15 acres, half of which will be designated to the Resource Recovery Centre (RRC) which includes a waste transfer station, and the other half of the remediated land, will be made available to the community. The community envisions bike trails and botanical gardens next to the RRC, with parking to serve the nearby parks, trails and events.

To achieve the vision of an innovative, modern, clean and efficient RRC and community space, the qRD will first need to properly close the former incinerator site.

The closure and build out of the RRC at this site is a story of transformation and healing. To tell this story, the qRD is interested in investigating and potentially monitoring the presence and variety of pollutants determined through tree core and soil sampling. The research will be valuable in the area of bioremediation as an inexpensive alternative method for investigating the extent of shallow pollutants, which tree species uptake (e.g., heavy metals, etc.). This research will be an integral part of a continued interactive education kiosk at the RRC.

Questions
Please contact UVic Community Partnerships at communityresearch@uvic.ca for more information.