



# REPORT

To: Rural Budgets Administration Committee

Report Number: FN-RBAC-072

From: Teri Vetter, Chief Financial Officer

Date: April 22, 2021

**Subject: Grant Request – Northern Environmental Action Team – Northern Co-Hort**

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## OPTIONS:

1. That the Rural Budgets Administration Committee authorize a multi-year grant contribution of \$85,000 per year in 2021, 2022, and 2023, payable from Electoral Area B, C, D, and E Fair Share in equal amounts of \$21,250, to be issued to Northern Environmental Action Team in support of the Northern Co-Hort program.
2. That the Rural Budgets Administration Committee authorize a multi-year grant contribution of \$85,000 per year in 2021, 2022, and 2023, payable from Electoral Area B, C, D, and E Peace River Agreements, Spending Item #4 (Assistance to Other Organizations) in equal amounts of \$21,250, to be issued to Northern Environmental Action Team in support of the Northern Co-Hort program.
3. That the Rural Budgets Administration Committee respectfully deny the grant application from Northern Environmental Action Team and provide no grant funding for the Northern Co-Hort program.

## BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

The grant request from Northern Environment Action Team (NEAT) is being brought forward to the Rural Budgets Administration Committee to provide an opportunity to jointly consider the request, determine its merit and whether or not the grant application will be supported. The objective of this report is to present information to RBAC to assist with determining the following:

1. Approval of a grant contribution, the amount and funding source; or
2. Rejection of the grant application for reasons identified by the Committee.

Northern Environment Action Team (NEAT) is requesting a multi-year grant contribution, in the amount of \$85,000 per year for 2021, 2022 and 2023, for a total grant contribution of \$255,000 to support the Northern Co-Hort program. The program was launched in 2018 as a way to lend support to regional horticultural producers, research sector trends, build collaborative partnerships and provide educational and capacity building opportunities. The goal of the program is to collectively develop and grow a strong regenerative horticultural sector and support the next generation of family farms in the region. The funding requested will be used to support operational expenses specific to staff wages and administrative costs. The total cost of the program is \$661,715 in 2021, \$380,931 in 2022 and \$422,167 in 2023. Full details of the program and all related costs can be found in the attached grant application.

NEAT is a registered not-for-profit organization in good standing with the *Societies Act* and has received a total of \$131,151 in grant contributions from the Regional District as outlined below:

2019	\$47,251	Economic Development – Northern Co-Hort
2018	\$1,000	Electoral Area B BC Rail – Northern Co-Hort (Farm Business Management and Co-op Development workshop)
2018	\$1,000	Electoral Area C BC Rail – Northern Co-Hort (Farm Business Management and Co-op Development workshop)
2016	\$6,900	Electoral Area B Fair Share – Food Secure Kids Program
2014	\$7,500	Electoral Areas B, C, D and E Fair Share in equal amounts of \$1,875 - Food Secure Kids Program

**ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:**

1. That the Rural Budgets Administration Committee provide further direction.

**STRATEGIC PLAN RELEVANCE:**

- ☒ Not Applicable to Strategic Plan.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION(S):**

Rural grant contributions may be provided from Fair Share or Peace River Agreements, Spending Item #4 – Assistance to Organizations. The table below outlines the balance after remaining commitments for each reserve per each Electoral Area as of March 31, 2021.

Electoral Area	Fair Share	Peace River Agreement
Area B	\$ 721,567.04	(\$ 2,864.50)
Area C	\$ 911,887.50	\$1,519,261.59
Area D	\$2,075,140.22	(\$ 130,360.91)
Area E	\$2,088,395.01	\$1,722,067.21

Area B and Area D are currently in a deficit balance for PRA, however, the PRA payment for 2021 will be received by April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and will no longer be in a deficit balance.

**COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATION(S):**

The applicant will be notified in writing of the Committee's decision and, if funding is supported, will be asked to recognize the Regional District for its financial contribution.

**OTHER CONSIDERATION(S):**

None at this time.

**Attachments:**

1. Grant Application – Northern Environmental Action Team, Northern Co-Hort