

RESPONSE & RECOVERY – THE DUNCAN FLOOD

SPEAKERS BIOGRAPHY:

Sybille Sanderson has worked in Emergency Management for the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) since November 1998 and has developed a real passion for building Community Resilience through Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery. Sybille has personally responded to many small and large incidents during that time and understands both the theory and the reality of emergencies. Sybille is the Acting General Manager of Public Safety at the CVRD and is responsible for regional emergency management as well as six fire departments. Sybille has the awesome privilege of working with community groups throughout the Cowichan Valley to prepare for emergencies, build community resilience and together make the Cowichan Valley a safer place to live.

Elysia Dempsey is currently the Disaster Management Coordinator for the BC Coastal Region of the Canadian Red Cross. This exciting position allows her to work with rural and urban communities in the BC Coastal Region in respect to mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery work. Elysia has lead numerous disaster responses within BC dealing with fires, floods, extreme weather and pandemics.

Elysia was born and raised in BC on a small gulf island called Read Island, and has a deep connection and attachment to the coast. She completed her BA in Political Science from the University of Victoria and has a certification in Community Development with the University of Waterloo. Elysia spent several years working in Northwestern Ontario in Community Development before joining the Red Cross in 2007.

SESSION ABSTRACT:

In November 2009, the Duncan area was hit with significant flooding that left some families totally devastated and others with major damage to repair. The response required cooperation between four jurisdictions (two municipalities, the regional district and first nations). The Cowichan Valley regional Emergency Operations Centre ran 24/7 for eight days coordinating the emergency response. The regional Recovery Operations Centre and Resilience Centre ran daily for 2 ½ months with recovery efforts continuing for over a year. The Canadian Red Cross provided great leadership with volunteers working in both the recovery and resilience centres and supported evacuees with client assessments, referrals to community agencies, gift cards, temporary housing and personal support throughout the initial months of recovery.

Sybille Sanderson, Acting General Manager of Public Safety for the Cowichan Valley Regional District will share lessons learned during the response and recovery phases from an ESS and Local Government perspective and Elysia Dempsey, Disaster Management Coordinator for the Canadian Red Cross will share lessons learned working in the Recovery Operations Centre and the Resilience Centre working directly with those affected by this disaster.