

January 16, 2026

Village of Sayward: Water Conservation & Landslide Update

The Village of Sayward, in partnership with the Strathcona Regional District (SRD), is providing an update on the Newcastle Creek landslide. The SRD has received emergency funding from the Ministry of Emergency Management & Climate Readiness (EMCR) to undertake a hazard evaluation of the landslide area, which is entirely on Crown land.

This includes an investigation of the current condition of the slope within and surrounding the Newcastle Creek landslide area. The data obtained from LiDAR drone flights will be used to characterize the slide and to develop cross-sections of the slide area and adjacent slopes. This will inform a risk analysis and the development of mitigation measures. In addition, a review of available historical data of the watershed will be completed. This is expected to include geotechnical assessments, hydrological data, harvesting records and significant event records. The work will also focus on reducing short term risks associated with water impoundment and debris.

Upon completion, expected by early May, this evaluation will be made publicly available and emergency management personnel will provide the community with an update on the next steps.

“While the Sayward community is appreciative of this funding to undertake a hazard evaluation, we are deeply concerned about the statement from EMCR that the Province of British Columbia has no intentions to undertake or fund any risk reduction (mitigation) measures on their Crown land,” said Village of Sayward Mayor and SRD Board Chair Mark Baker. “We have been instructed by EMCR that even if this hazard evaluation indicates further risk to the community the Province will not take any immediate action. Their recommendation was for the Village and Regional District to apply for (rare and highly competitive) grants to fund mitigation measures. We are asking EMCR to please reconsider this unfortunate statement and we hope to work with the Province in a collaborative manner to ensure that if any ongoing threats are determined that they are immediately addressed”.

Thank you to residents for their continued efforts to conserve drinking water while Sayward’s Public Works staff continue work at the Water Treatment Plant and the Newcastle Creek water intake. At this time, the Water Treatment Plant, water intake and reservoir are operating well, and there are no new updates to report. An increase in turbidity levels in Newcastle Creek continues to be observed following prolonged rainfall.

The Village of Sayward and the Strathcona Regional District appreciate the community’s patience and cooperation.

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