

AGENDA
For the Special Meeting of the
Environment & Natural Areas Advisory Committee
To be held virtually via Microsoft Teams
Tuesday September 28, 2021 - 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Due to COVID-19 measures, Saanich is unable to accommodate the public for any Council, Committee of the Whole, Advisory, Board or Foundation meetings while maintaining the limits on large gatherings due to the Public Health Order.

As per the Order of the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, *Emergency Program Act*, Ministerial Order No. M192, public attendance at the meeting is not required if it cannot be accommodated in accordance with the applicable requirements or recommendations under the *Public Health Act*.

To hear this meeting by telephone, please call **1-833-214-3122** access code **955 801 155#**

MS Teams callers are identified by your phone number, which will be viewed on screen by all attendees of the meeting, and not retained.

**TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND DIVERSITY,
EQUITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT**

1. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES (attachment)**
 - June 16, 2021
2. **CHAIR'S REMARKS**
3. **DISCUSSION ABOUT REDUCING SOLID WASTE THROUGH BUILDING DECONSTRUCTION (attachment)**
 - Memo provided by C. Mersereau with links for background reading
4. **PRESENTATION – GREEN SHORES PROGRAM**
 - Kelly Loch & Andrea McDonald
 - <https://stewardshipcentrebc.ca/green-shores-home/gs-about/>
5. **ROUNDTABLE UPDATES**
 - Elk Beaver Lake Watershed Management Plan
 - Resilient Saanich
 - Parks Report (attached for information)
 - Other

MINUTES
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL AREAS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Held Virtually via Microsoft Teams
June 16, 2021 at 6:07 p.m.

Present: Councillor Rebecca Mersereau (Chair) (6:53), Kevin Brown (Acting Chair), George Klima, Ryan Senechal, Al-Nashir Charania, Jennifer Grant, Braedan Drouillard, Karthik Narayan.

Guests: Dr. Lorien Nesbitt, Assistant Professor, University of British Columbia; Dr. Teale Phelps Bondaroff, Director of Research, Oceans Asia.

Staff: Nathalie Dechaine, Manager of Community Development/Business Systems; Thomas Munson, Senior Environmental Planner; Megan MacDonald, Committee Clerk.

Regrets: Anqian Wei and Tiffany Joseph.

MINTUES

MOVED by R. Senechal and Seconded by K. Narayan: "That the Minutes of the Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee meeting held May 19, 2021, be adopted as circulated."

CARRIED

CHAIR'S REMARKS

K. Brown, Acting Chair, noted that Councillor Mersereau is away due to a Council meeting schedule conflict, she will join the committee meeting when the Council meeting is over.

ACCESSIBLE URBAN FORESTS

Dr. Lorien Nesbitt, Assistant Professor at the University of British Columbia (UBC) presented information on creating just and accessible urban forests. The following was noted:

- Urban Green Equity is defined as fair access to and governance of urban forests, regardless of differentiating factors, such as socioeconomic status, racialization, cultural background or demographics.
- Some benefits of urban forests include increased biodiversity, reduced flooding, reduced air pollution, CO2 sequestration, climate change adaptation, increased property values and community investment. There are also numerous health benefits for the public including physical health, emotional health and lower stress.
- Public appreciation of urban forests is growing as people become more aware of the benefits of urban forests including trees, shrubs and urban gardens.
- There have been studies that show consistent evidence of unequitable distribution of urban canopy, with positive associations to income and education.
- Recent analysis of the distribution of the urban forest in Vancouver has shown that neighborhoods with residential instability, material deprivation, or ethnic concentration experienced lower access to public parks, lower residential exposure to vegetation and water and higher residential exposure to buildings and pavement.

- There is building evidence that access to urban vegetation is unequitable, higher real estate values and higher income areas have a higher concentration of urban forest.
- Some cities such as Vancouver are beginning to address urban green inequities.
- Green gentrification is defined as the physical or psychological displacement of marginalized residents due to improvements to urban forests that increase cost of living or create a sense of exclusion and barriers to urban forest.
- Our relationships with nature influences our culture and vice versa. Biocultural diversity provides a lens to understand urban green equity, a framework to address conceptual challenges, and a case via which to examine green equity approaches.
- A biocultural diversity case study of Vancouver highlighted four of many unique discourses/expressions, which are:
 - Ecosystem Services & “Vacouverism”: This expression is recognized as the dominant discourse in many cities in the world, green is viewed as good; nature provides services to humans, often along with sustainability branding and identity.
 - Indigenous Reciprocity & Resistance: This is a reciprocal relationship with nature, a holistic view of the urban ecosystem where nature and humans are viewed as one. All beings have rights and responsibilities, and opportunities for intercultural learning exist. Examples in Vancouver are Stanley Park and UBC Farm.
 - Asian Aesthetics: Scenic representations of Asian culture such as the Dr. Sun Yet-Sen Traditional Chinese Garden, which also provide opportunities for learning, some examples are modeled after Ming Dynasty gardens.
 - The Three Sisters: A traditional Mayan farming practice of reciprocity and care, using the three sisters, corn, beans and squash. The Tal A'xin: Maya in Exile Garden was established by Mayan refugee families in the mid 1990's, and offers intercultural learning, workshops, volunteer opportunities and knowledge sharing.
- Mosaic governance may be a path towards equity. Multicultural cities have high biocultural diversity and an interesting urban nature that grows and changes. Diversity is typically absent from dominant urban forestry discourses.
- Recognition justice and recognition equity acknowledges the fundamental value of what is other than your own. This is the recognition of the diversity of people, communities and their (biocultural) experiences, and the importance of their participation in urban forest processes such as decision making and stewardship.
- A mosaic of governance approaches across the urban landscape supports diverse practices, cultures, people and institutions including an institutional commitment to context-sensitive governance. There is an important leadership role for institutions such as municipal/regional governments in this process to provide coordination and resources while allowing for flexible governance.

In response to questions and comments from the committee, the following was noted:

- A cost/benefit analysis on biodiversity which includes health benefits, qualitative information, and quantifiable objectives would be helpful. There are economic benefits to appropriate management of urban forests.
- Some studies suggests that lower income populations are more likely to experience health related benefits from contact with nature than higher income populations.
- Urban green equity is a way to efficiently distribute ecosystem services where they are most needed. Finding a way to encourage the population to interact with nature is important. Reducing barriers to access urban forests is difficult but necessary.
- There are many metrics for analysis of the health benefits of nature. In terms of having people active in their neighborhood, trees for shade are important. Restoration in nature can happen in a city park where there is less traffic noise and more healing.
- There is an intentional process of present moment awareness called forest bathing, which can be done in an urban forest environment, the directions given are restorative.
- There are studies that look at the time required for positive health benefits in natural

- versus unnatural settings, both provide benefits.
- Having residents take stewardship roles is extremely beneficial for all.
 - Some of the barriers to mosaic government are consistency and connection. There may be hesitation from levels of government to give rights to one group as those rights may lead to inequity for another. There are often barriers to people and organizations.
 - Access to intersectional data is often a barrier in highlighting inequities while understanding diversity. There is demographic data missing.

*** Councillor Mersereau joined the meeting at 6:54 and took over as Chair ***

MARINE PLASTIC POLLUTION

Dr. Teale Phelps Bondaroff, Director of Research for Oceans Asia, presented information on marine plastic pollution. The following was noted:

- Oceans Asia is a Hong Kong based marine conservation organization specializing in investigating, monitoring and researching various ocean related activities including illegal fishing operations, conservation efforts and marine plastic pollution.
- The Oceans Asia team has been researching plastic pollution on remote islands near Hong Kong. The beaches are boat access only, which means the plastic on the beaches is oceanic waste, not left behind by visitors. Beaches in Saanich are typically quite clean, remote beaches are generally quite bad, littered with plastic pollution.
- Aerial shots were taken with a drone to monitor the accumulation over time and seasonal changes. Samples of micro plastics were taken regularly as well. In February 2020 the team began finding masks, there were 70 masks collected over a 100 metre of beach in less than one hour. They have now found up to 156 masks in an hour.
- The research team has been working to find out approximately how many masks are entering the oceans due to COVID-19. Marine plastic pollution is an issue, the recent report highlights personal protective equipment (PPE) and plastic waste from COVID.
- There are many discarded masks around Saanich, most of which will enter the ocean whole, or break down to micro plastics and enter the waterway from there.
- The PPE market exploded during the pandemic, almost half a billion masks are produced per day. A conservative estimate is that there were about 52 billion masks produced in 2020. Around 3% of plastic that is produced enters the ocean. This means that approximately 1.56 billion masks entered the ocean in 2020. Masks are a small fraction of the marine plastic pollution problem. This has a devastating impact on marine wildlife and ecosystems.
- Plastic can entangle animals, causing many issues or death. Large gobs of sea gear sweep the bottom of the ocean, harming delicate species. Plastic does not go away.
- Masks break down into micro plastics. A single mask with exposure to sunlight and wave action/movement will release up to 173,000 microfibers a day. This plastic bio accumulates and bio magnifies in predators, including humans.
- Micro plastic has been found everywhere, including in sea spray, deep in the ocean trenches, all the way to the snow on the top of Mount Everest. Action at every possible level is needed to address the serious threat posed by marine plastic pollution.
- Masks are hard to recycle as they are made of multiple types of materials. Lots of work needs to be done, including a deeper understanding of how to tackle the issue. While beach cleanups are great, however they are not the solution. If the bath is overflowing it is important to turn off the water before grabbing the mop.
- At an individual level, there are sustainable and renewable options to almost all single use plastic items, everybody needs to reach for reusable items when possible.
- There are technology options such as sustainable fibers and compostable masks.
- Governments need to foster and support initiatives to step away from single use items.

- The government could increase fines for littering and dumping, adopt policies to encourage sustainability, as well as pass legislation that requires producers to establish end of life disposal policies. We can design public spaces and the urban environment to decrease littering and increase effective disposal of waste.
- Wildlife safe garbage bins are essential to stop animals from tearing apart the bin.

In response to questions and comments from the committee, the following was noted:

- Some important steps that can be taken at the local level are regulatory approaches, such as banning specific items one by one, or from design angle, such as identify and address littering hot spots. One targeted way to solve waste issues is installing properly designed waste bins, a multifaceted approach will be the most effective.
- The Provincial and Federal government have made announcements that they plan to make aggressive changes to ban the use of single use plastics.
- There is a global phenomenon of missing plastic, scientists do not know where the plastic has gone, which is concerning.
- Saanich does not have an audit program to monitor where waste comes from.
- Dumping of household garbage in parks is an ongoing issue. This needs to be looked at from a regional level to ensure that everybody has affordable and accessible disposal options. If there are barriers to proper disposal people may dump garbage.
- OceansAsia has done investigations on garbage that washed up on the beach, where the polluter was identified and changes were made to solve pollution problems.
- Cradle to cradle design is important, designing products that are recyclable encourages reuse and recycling. A circular approach to reuse and recycle is important.
- Waste management measurements and audits should be implemented by all.
- End of life recycling should be a normal procedure for producers/sellers of that item, such as a shoe recycling program being implemented by stores that sell shoes.
- Saanich has recently implemented a zero waste strategy.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC FEEDBACK ON THE DRAFT PRINCIPALS, GOALS & OBJECTIVES FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Senior Environmental Planner gave an update on the Summary of Public Feedback on the Draft Principals, Goals & Objectives for the Environmental Policy Framework. The following was noted:

- The Draft Principals, Goals & Objectives for the Environmental Policy Framework were finalized, and the public engagement process has now concluded as well.
- Best practices for transparency and inclusion were implemented despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. There was a virtual open house, mail outs, and targeted stakeholder engagement took place, as well as ads in the newspaper, e-newsletters, posters, e-bulletins and delivering materials to senior's centers.
- A consultant will summarize all of the comments into a detailed report for Council.
- Comments on the draft vision included improving the clarity of the terms, such as what are measurable improvements, the definition of "collaborative" and clarify time lines.
- There is a need to seek more feedback from First Nations. Mail outs and requests for feedback were sent to W̱SÁNEĆ nations, but no responses were received. The First Nations representative position on the RSTC was vacant for most of the meetings.
- It is important to identify how we can protect, preserve and restore natural areas in Saanich while increasing density. Public land and private land both need to be involved in the process, with clear expectations and regulations for both.
- 80% of respondents supported the draft principals and goals. Other areas to consider would be preservation and protection of greenspace and biodiversity. Saanich was a leader in protecting along rivers, streams and corridors. We need to look at what was

done then, and what we need to protect now.

- A clear definition of restoration and sustainable living should be established, as these items may be different to different people. Reducing environmental impacts and reducing tree loss, is extremely important. The Resilient Saanich Technical Committee (RSTC) will likely have the opportunity to comment on the new Urban Forest Strategy.
- Ideally the Resilient Saanich process would be based on inclusion, equity, balance and empowerment for all cultural groups in Saanich.
- Feedback included that there could be more links to the Climate Plan, One Planet Saanich, and the climate emergency. All documents should work together to achieve common goals. The Resilient Saanich strategy should integrate all plans and policies.
- It is crucial to increase and improve the enforcement of existing regulations.
- Recognizing the role of the development industry and the impact of development on biodiversity in built up urban areas may help us to leverage the industry as partners. There are opportunities to enhance urban areas when development takes place.
- Connectivity between areas of biodiversity is a key concept in biodiversity conservation. Green hubs with corridors and connections between hubs, such as was suggested in the Saanich Green Belt Proposal would be ideal.
- A state of biodiversity report could establish a baseline of where we are at and provide information about how we are progressing with the goals.
- The objectives could be improved by applying the SMART theory. This acronym stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time bound. For RSTC this would mean more clarity on achievements and goals, more specificity on indicators and measurements, or describing the costs to achieve goals and objectives.

ROUNDTABLE UPDATES

A committee roundtable discussion took place, the following was noted:

- A committee meeting will be held in the near future to hold the near future to review applications for the Environmental Awards.
- The committee recommendation to recognize the 50 year anniversary of the Saanich Green Belt Proposal was recently supported by Council.
- The committee regularly does not meet during the summer. The next regularly scheduled committee meeting will take place in September.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

Next meeting is Wednesday, September 15, 2021.

Councillor Mersereau, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary



The Corporation of the District of Saanich

Memo

To: Members of the Environment & Natural Areas Committee
From: Councillor Mersereau
Date: 21 September, 2021
Subject: Discussion about solid waste reduction through building deconstruction

One of the initiatives I'm interested in exploring for Saanich is policy to incentive or require deconstruction of buildings as a strategy to reduce solid waste generation. Through a discussion with ENAC, I'd like to gather your feedback on this topic to consider how or if to move forward with it.

Below are some links to background reading materials you may find helpful for the discussion

- CRD's 2016 Solid Waste Composition Study <https://www.crd.bc.ca/docs/default-source/recycling-waste-pdf/WasteCompositionStudy2016.pdf>
- City of Victoria report on 'Options to Salvage Reusable Materials from Building Deconstruction' (April 29, 2021) [https://www.victoria.ca/assets/Departments/Sustainability/Report_Construction%20Waste%20Reuse\(1\).pdf](https://www.victoria.ca/assets/Departments/Sustainability/Report_Construction%20Waste%20Reuse(1).pdf)
- City of Victoria webpage with information on their initiative to reduce construction waste <https://www.victoria.ca/EN/main/residents/waste-reduction/construction-waste.html>
- Capital Daily article 'Unbuilding the Future' (February 27, 2021) <https://www.capitaldaily.ca/news/deconstruction-victoria-unbuilders>
- City of Vancouver demolition permit recycling and deconstruction requirements: <https://vancouver.ca/home-property-development/demolition-permit-with-recycling-requirements.aspx>
- Metro Vancouver Construction and Demolition Waste Reduction and Recycling Toolkit: <http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/solid-waste/SolidWastePublications/DLCToolkit.pdf>

Looking forward to the discussion!

Regards,

Rebecca Mersereau, Chair of the Environment & Natural Areas Committee



PARKS, RECREATION
& COMMUNITY SERVICES

REPORT TO: Parks, Trails & Recreation Committee, Environmental and Natural Areas, and Healthy Saanich Committees

DATE: September 13, 2021

FROM: Eva Riccius, Senior Manager, Parks

SUBJECT: Parks Division Update – September 13, 2021

The following update is provided for Committees:

Community Development and Business Systems

Park user groups:

The Parks Division had an extremely busy summer with internal and external user groups returning to activities in parks they love as the BC Restart Plan planned rolled out. The big change was the return of adult sports and loosening of restrictions for outdoor events and gatherings! Many spring sports were extended into summer which Parks accommodated by adjusting operational and administration protocols.

Going into Fall, we expect activities to return to high participation levels with the usuals fall sports, Saanich Recreation and Community Services and School District 61 and 63 and independent school sports, programs and outtrips. Parks staff anticipate a high volume of permit requests.

In 2021 so far, the Parks Division has created more than 480 permits, for internal groups (Recreation and Community Services), external groups and SD61 and SD63 and independent school programs.

Staff acknowledge the efforts of internal and external users groups for their ongoing diligence and efforts in meeting Provincial Health Officer's requirements for a safe return to activities. It has truly been an community effort to keep participants safe during the pandemic. We look forward to continue working with our community as we steer out of this pandemic.

Park Stewardship Update:

Youth Stewardship in Parks

We continue to support school groups in parks such as Haro Woods, Feltham Park and

Marigold Parks. One class from Lambrick Middle School engaged in a ongoing partnership with Feltham Park and the Pulling Together volunteers. All involved, including volunteers, staff, educators and students found this to be a very rewarding experience. The group studied and surveyed the site, then carefully removed invasive species such as Daphne, English Ivy and Himalayan Blackberry using best management practices. We look forward to providing more stewardship partnerships opportunities with local schools.



Lambrick students and volunteers at Feltham Park

Pulling Together and Park Ambassador Volunteers

Pulling Together and Park Ambassador volunteers had a little break during the summer heat wave, but are now busy again stewarding Saanich Parks. In line with the BC Restart Plan, we have created a stepped resumption plan to safely allow volunteers to work in parks. This is an exciting and busy time, as we continue to support a vibrant volunteer team, respond to increased interest from the community and plan for larger community stewardship events and programs in the fall.

Launch of UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, World Environment Day and Make a Difference Week

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, we were unable to host an open community event to mark the launch of the [UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration](#) and [Make a Difference Week](#), but we were none the less very busy. From June 5th to June 11, there were community stewardship volunteers active in parks every day. This included 150 youth from three local schools, on four different days, removing invasive species while adhering to Covid protocols. Regular Pulling Together volunteers met in different parks every day of the week, such as Cedar Hill, Phyllis, and Bruce Hutchison Parks just to name a few. Mount Douglas Park Ambassadors were out on the trails greeting visitors and sharing their incredible knowledge about the park.



Pulling Together and Park Ambassador volunteers making a difference in Parks

iNaturalist Training

Park Ambassador volunteers participated in a training on using the citizen science app iNaturalist to learn about and document biodiversity in Mount Douglas Park. This tool has gained huge popularity and we look forward to others in our volunteer community and beyond to contribute observations, and become part of this growing community of naturalists.



Learning and documenting biodiversity in Mount Douglas Park

Park Planning and Development

Planning and Design Section:

Haro Woods – Finnerty Creek Restoration

Planning work is underway for the Natural Areas crew to work with a consultant in September – October to define the stream channel, control erosion, and improve riparian areas and habitat for wildlife.

Food Truck Pilot Program

The Pilot wrapped up on September 8. Feedback collected from park users and vendors will be reflected in a report to Council and will help to inform decisions regarding continuation of the program.

Accessible Public Washrooms

Washrooms previously available only for park user groups were converted and made available to the public at Horner, Hyacinth, Reynolds and Rudd Parks.

Pop up Dog Parks Pilot Project

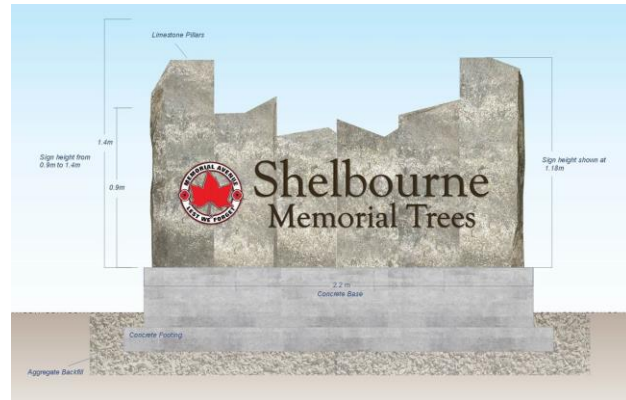
The pilot ended on September 7. Staff are working on a summary report which will be presented later this fall. The data will be shared with the consultant hired for the People, Pet and Parks Strategy.

People, Pet and Parks Strategy

Staff have begun work on an RFP to hire an external consultant for this project.

Shelbourne Street of Unfinished Dreams (Memorial Avenue) Gateposts

Parks and Engineering staff have been working with City of Victoria engineers on the development of the gatepost signs which will be installed later this month in time to mark the the 100th anniversary (October 2) of when the first of the London plane trees were planted on Shelbourne St. The sign at the Saanich end of Shelbourne will be at the the corner of Cedar Hill Road and Shelbourne (just south of Mount Douglas Park) and the City of Victoria's is at the corner of Denman and Shelbourne (already partially constructed). The sandstone for the sign is from the old Customs House which is being renovated at the corner of Government and Yates Street. The stone was donated to Saanich by Banyon Construction who is re-constructing that building. The City of Victoria sign will be constructed of granite once used for curbs in downtown Victoria.



Noise issues relating to the game of Pickleball

Staff are currently preparing a Report to Council reviewing the noise complaints resulting from this sport and some possible mitigation measures to consider.

Allenby Park Playground and Sportcourt Improvements

Play equipment has been ordered for the playground replacement project at Allenby Park. Additional comments helped shaped the final playground chosen. New playground renderings have been shared on the website. Construction drawings are underway and will include a new playground footprint, upgraded sportcourt with two basketball hoops and two hockey nets, new main pathway through the park, new park furniture and tree planting and an imaginative natural play area with sand. Construction is anticipated to start mid fall.



Quick’s Bottom Park Arboretum

This new and exciting project is about to start in early September on the piece of parkland in Quick’s Bottom Park located off of Wilkinson Road. Phase I includes 76 new trees to be planted with a new main gravel trail and looping pathways to view the arboretum. A small parking lot and driveway will be constructed for access to the site. Future work will provide information signs to further enhance the visitor experience. This project will be phased over several years.

Construction Section:

Normandy Park is about 90%complete. Work left to do is irrigation, landscaping, tree planting in the fall, and planting of garden bed.

Hampton Park parking lot – the construction of a plaza is underway.

Cuthbert Holmes Park - trail construction underway to relocate the main trail away from the river.

Jenkins Pond Park - construction of boulder retaining wall and dedicated bench installed.

Trail repairs and graffiti removal are ongoing.

Park Operations

Maintenance Section:

Refuse, washrooms, dumping in parks, tennis/pickleball, parking lots maintenance are all very busy. Field maintenance is ongoing. Baseball season was extended through the summer by most clubs as they had a late start due to Covid 19. Fall ball is about to begin at some clubs. Soccer season is upon us and we are out making sure that the

fields are ready to go for September 1st. The Parks shop is busy as we are heading into our second busiest time of the year for repairs.

Horticulture Section:

The annual beds are looking spectacular and we will be switching over to bulbs and winter plantings as they decline in the coming weeks. Annual orders and layouts for the displays are being put together for next year. The trim crews are preparing for the fall season which at some point will include leaf collection in our parks.

Urban Forestry Section:

The warm dry summer weather has kept the Urban Forestry team extremely busy. Our two aerial lift trucks have been working at capacity dealing with the increased call volume that we have continued to experience since Covid-19 began. With kids on their summer break, we've focused our hazard tree mitigation and canopy raising efforts around schools (and routes). We've also been busy pruning along major transit routes in response to calls from BC Transit about tree limbs hitting their double decker buses.

Our boulevard tree watering program continues to try to keep our young trees alive in this prolonged period of drought. We have two full time, and one part time watering trucks out making over 3000 watering stops a month. Staff have done an amazing job this year with this sometimes monotonous job.

Our stump grinding program started up on August 30, in preparation for this winter's replacement tree planting program.

Supervisory staff continue to review Engineering, Fortis and Telus drawings for tree impacts, and provide onsite arborist supervision for Public Works projects. Staff have also finalized tree planting designs, and tree orders for this winter's upcoming planting season.

Natural Areas Section:

Mount Douglas Bridge and Trail

The Fisheries window has brought two significant creek enhancement projects to the Natural Areas section in conjunction with the Parks Construction crew and the Public Works Creeks and Waterways crew. The new Douglas Creek Bridge has been installed between Churchill Trail and Douglas Trail, close to the Edgemont park entrance. A ~40m section of Douglas Creek received ~90 tons of boulders and ~60 tons of river rock to improve bank stability, restore Salmon spawning



beds and enhance fish habitat. Along with the rock, several logs and stumps were strategically placed to improve fish habitat. Working closely with Friends of Mount Douglas Park Society, the Natural Areas crew built an interactive viewing area at the west side of the bridge. This multi-level area (including rustic rock steps) will be the centre point for future Salmon carcass toss and Fry release events with the public and school youth groups.

Cuthbert Holmes Park/Colquitz River Project

Saanich Parks has been working closely with biologist Dave Clough for close to a decade on creek enhancements in Douglas Creek, Swan Creek and Colquitz Creek to name a few. The section of Colquitz Creek, for this year, is within Cuthbert Holmes Park just behind Silver City Theatre. The Construction section is currently working on the new pathway on the south side of the creek while Natural Areas along with the Creeks and Waterways crew are creating large fish-habitat alcoves/channels. These new creek habitat areas were designed to capture daily tidal



flooding but also natural rainwater drainage. This creek work is part of the Trembling Aspen grove restoration project that is being funded by Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure environmental mitigation funds from the Highway 1 interchange. Dry-land structures, to improve terrestrial habitat, will include large woody debris (logs & stumps), boulders, and wildlife trees. These channels will offer juvenile Chum Salmon and returning Coho Salmon protection from predators and feeding spots as the move up or down the river.

Other Natural Areas activities include continuing support for the Pulling Together Volunteer program and invasive plant removals, including Poison Hemlock, Knotweed, Giant Hogweed, Purple Loosestrife and others. The restoration watering truck will run until the end of September or until significant rain occurs. We are planning for our usual 30 plus restoration planting sites this year including the annual Tree Appreciation Day event happening at McMinn Park this November. National Tree Day will be celebrated on September 22 by planting Big-leaf Maple trees at the new Douglas Creek bridge site. The crew continues to support restoration planting sites, the Garry Oak Dripline projects and new protective fencing initiatives.