

AGENDA
Parks, Trails and Recreation Advisory Committee
Via MS Teams
February 23, 2022 at 4 p.m.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and to ensure social distancing, this meeting is closed to the public and can be viewed/heard via MS Teams. Please note that MS Teams callers are identified by their phone number which can be viewed on screen by all attendees at the meeting.

***** Territorial Acknowledgement & Inclusivity Statement *****

- 1. ADOPTION OF MINUTES** (attachment)
 - January 26, 2022
- 2. CHAIR'S REMARKS**
- 3. DORIS PAGE PARK RENEWAL CONCEPT**
 - Presentation by Anita Kess and Coleen Rogers, Cordova Bay Community Association
- 4. DRAFT CADBORO BAY LOCAL AREA PLAN**
 - Staff presentation by Manager of Community Planning
- 5. NAMING OF LAYRITZ FIELD – UPDATE**
 - Senior Manager of Parks to provide update
- 6. DIVISION REPORTS FOR INFORMATION/REFERENCE** (attachments)
 - Community Services Division Report
 - Parks Division Report
- 7. ADJOURNMENT**

* Adjournment *

Next Meeting: March 23, 2022

In order to ensure a quorum, please contact Nancy Chaggar at
nancy.chaggar@saanich.ca if you are unable to attend.

MINUTES
Parks, Trails and Recreation Advisory Committee
Via Microsoft Teams
January 26, 2022 at 4 p.m.

Present: Councillor Judy Brownoff (Chair), Pam Carroll, Ted Austin, David Little, Dex Owen, Leigh Campbell, Amy-Jade Louie, Rachel Corder.

Staff: Suzanne Samborski, Director of Parks, Recreation and Community Services; Eva Riccius, Senior Manager Parks; Tiana Solares, Senior Manager Recreation; Nathalie Dechaine, Manager Community Development/Business Systems (5:33 pm); Mike Goldsworthy, Park Planner Designer; Julie Lommerse, Park Planner Designer; Becky Goodall, Park Planner Designer; Nancy Chaggar, Senior Committee Clerk.

Regrets: Annie Djiotsa; Darryl Wick

Guest(s): Keith Davidoff

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair and Committee members introduced themselves.

2. 2022 MEETING DATES/TERMS OF REFERENCE

MOVED by D. Owen and Seconded by T. Austin: "That the 2022 Parks, Trails and Recreation Advisory Committee meeting dates be adopted as circulated."

CARRIED

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

MOVED by P. Carroll and Seconded by L. Campbell: "That the minutes of the November 24, 2021 Parks, Trails and Recreation Advisory Committee meeting be adopted as circulated."

CARRIED

4. BOWKER CREEK

The Park Planner/Designer presented to the Committee an update on the Bowker Creek planning process (PowerPoint presentation on file). In response to questions from the Committee, it was noted:

- The Bowker Creek daylighting feasibility study was completed recently and outlines areas where the Creek could be daylighted.
- The vision for the Bowker Creek Greenway is that it be a 9 km long greenway which will be a regional asset and connector.
- Currently the only section of the Bowker Creek greenway that has been completed is at Browning Park.
- Wayfinding signs along the greenway may be relocated after they've been installed to guide the public to better routes as they are developed, for example when the Shelbourne Street Improvement Plan is completed.
- Work with the District of Oak Bay and City of Victoria is required in order to have

them collaborate in this project.

- A cost assessment will be prepared for installation of signs in early 2023.
- There are funds set aside for this project and may be used for sign installations.

5. UPDATE ON PICKLE BALL COURT

The Park Planner/Designer presented to the Committee (PowerPoint presentation on file) and the following was noted:

- The presentation provided an update on pickle ball noise issues and possible mitigation measures.
- There have been noise complaints particularly stemming from Tolmie Park. This is mainly due to the court's proximity to neighbouring homes.
- The courts are popular and are in use almost all day long.
- A November 2021 report to Council proposed options for plans of action for pickle ball courts. Council approved recommended guidelines for distance and mitigation.
- Acoustic panels, both in-house and outsourced, have been trialed at Tolmie Park but feedback is that they aren't helping.
- Correspondence received from residents neighbouring the Tolmie Park courts indicate requests to have the courts removed.
- The pickle ball association is not supportive of court closures at Tolmie Park.
- Staff would like to move forward in exploring other options such as limiting play hours, staggering play times, implementing a booking system, and locking of gates. Staff wish to continue exploring sound attenuation options and locations for future courts.
- Another progress update will be brought forward to the Committee in a few months.

In response to questions from the Committee, it was noted that:

- Saanich has indoor pickle ball courts at Pearkes and Saanich Commonwealth Place.
- There are ongoing inter-municipal discussions about pickle ball and a regional strategy is being explored. Discussions on a provincial level will also be taking place.

6. 2022 POP UP DOG PARK LOCATION OPTIONS AND PROGRAM TWEAKS

The Park Planner/Designer presented to the Committee and the following was noted (PowerPoint presentation on file):

- In 2021, the pop up dog park pilot program operated in five different locations for two weeks each.
- Feedback collected from the 2021 program was positive. The Cadboro-Gyro Park location was the least desired location by the community.
- 80% of people who used the parks indicated they would return if the program continued.
- Staff propose to expand the program to nine locations in 2022, and that the dog park be held at each location for a full month.
- Based on feedback received, there is room for improvement in the enclosures used, the gates, and shaded areas of the dog parks. The 2022 program will include a drinking bowl for dogs and a bench.
- The total cost to run the program in 2022 is expected to be \$28,000.

In response to questions from the Committee, the following was noted:

- The pilot program provides an opportunity to collect preliminary data for the People, Pets and Parks strategy which may include recommendations for permanent dog parks.
- The strategy will take place in 2022 and results will likely go to the next Council term.

MOVED by A. Louie and Seconded by L. Campbell: “That the Parks, Trails and Recreation Advisory Committee support the 2022 pop up dog park program being implemented and funded through the budget.”

**The Motion was then Put and CARRIED
with T. Austin OPPOSED**

7. FIELD NAMING AT LAYRITZ PARK

Keith Davidoff, representative of the Victoria Mariners Baseball organization, presented to the Committee and the following was noted:

- This is an initiative to name a baseball field at Layritz Park “The Zack Downey Memorial Field”.
- Zack was a sports enthusiast and baseball was his passion. He was diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma in October 2012 and passed away in May 2014 at the age of 18.
- A memorial tournament was established and has continued annually at Layritz Park.

MOVED by T. Austin and Seconded by D. Owen: “That the Parks, Trails and Recreation Advisory Committee support the re-naming of field 7 at Layritz Park to be re-named “Zack Downey”, and that the Parks, Trails and Recreation Advisory Committee ask Staff to bring a report and the supporting letter from the Home Club to Council.”

CARRIED

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:44 p.m. The next meeting is February 23, 2022 at 4 pm.

Councillor Brownoff, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary



The Corporation of the District of Saanich

Report

To: Healthy Saanich Advisory Committee;
Parks Trails and Recreation Advisory Committee

From: Cristina Caravaca, Senior Manager- Community Services

Date: February 02, 2022

Subject: Community Services Division Update

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee receive this report as information.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an overview of recent Community Services division activities.

DISCUSSION

Film Industry: The film industry continues to be active in Saanich with a new project from GPM Productions called "Reginald the Vampire". Locations in 2022 include a section of Scolton Road in the Cadboro Bay area, the interior of a vacant unit within the Tillicum Mall, a remote residence in the Ten Mile Point area and the Gorge Road Canoe and Kayak Facility. Reginald the Vampire will continue to film throughout the first part of the year with several more Saanich locations scheduled, but not yet disclosed.



Special Events: Due to the on-going pandemic we are not able to host the in-person Family Arts Festival at the Cedar Hill Recreation Centre in 2022. Case counts of the new Omicron variant are expected to remain high in the Victoria area and current PHO restrictions on indoor events remain in place until mid-February. Plans are underway for either the outdoor GeoQuest Scavenger Hunt event in April or a return to the full scale in-person Earth Day Festival at the Saanich Hall if restrictions begin to ease.



Older Adult Services: Staff have been renewing community connections and communicating internally and externally throughout the winter. Internally we have begun developing a deeper connection with our diverse range of Older Adult Instructors. We also have collaborated with programmer groups in teams across our Saanich community recreation centres, as we work together on pursuing the 2022 Older Adult strategic goals. Our Older Adult team has met with inter-municipal partners, recreation programmers and Island Health at the first (HARP) Health and Recreation Partnership Older Adults Committee meeting of the year. We have also chaired the first of this year's seasonal meetings with our Older Adult serving partners in Saanich (Victoria Native Friendship Centre, Saanich Silver Threads, Cordova Bay 55+ and Goward House). This gathering continues to develop openness, program partnership and a shared voice of advocacy between agencies. At this meeting we were encouraged to share widely and use in territorial acknowledgements a video made by the Songhees Nation (<https://vimeo.com/275788251>). This video was shared with us by the Victoria Native Friendship Centre and it helps connect us, to the connection to the land, upon which we do our Older Adult work and we keep this in mind as we go about our connections and communication this year.

Community Arts: Exhibitions: [The Witness Blanket Travelling Exhibition](#) by artist Carey Newman and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights ran at Cedar Hill in November-December. We facilitated a successful opening ceremony, two film screenings of the documentary film [“Picking Up the Pieces: The Making of the Witness Blanket”](#) with the artist in attendance, and private bookings for over 1000 students/schools, members of Indigenous organizations or families and community services organizations. The exhibition was well attended and made an impact on many community members, many sharing their thoughts and gratitude in our guest book, and sharing comments on social media.



The Art of Gratitude inter-generational invitational exhibition of art and poetry at Cedar Hill ran through January 21. Twenty-two artists shared their art and personal expressions of gratitude with the community, combined with a participatory activity for community add to a gratitude tree. The 2022 season of exhibitions begins with an exhibition by artist Barb Derosie. **Programs:** In December, we successfully held a youth poetry night for youth from a variety of schools. The turnout and performances were tremendous and participants very respectful of health protocols. Our popular Youth Art Hive program at Cedar Hill returned Jan. 13 at full capacity. Community-partnered arts programs are in the planning stages for late January start.



Diversity and Equity: Diwali was Nov 1-5 this year and with restrictions in place we wanted to celebrate with community in a way that was safe. Saanich community recreation centres were decorated with information panels and diyas and lights starting Nov 1st and on Nov 3rd community volunteers set up in each of the centres and were wishing folks a Happy Diwali and offering individually wrapped laddos (traditional treat). We also worked with community members to put together another video greeting that we put out on Nov 4th through social media.



We have loaned our portable skate park equipment to Tsawout Nation for this winter to begin a youth skate boarding program. The idea is the equipment will be rotated through the WSA NEC Nations which will enable their youth workers the ability to provide indoor opportunities to skateboard and scooter. We will also be able to have our female skateboard instructor work with them to increase opportunities for girls skateboarding.

Financial Assistance: The LIFE (Leisure Assistance for Everyone) program will be celebrating its 30th anniversary of supporting individuals and families living on a low income. Over the past 3 decades, thousands of Saanich citizens have been granted free access to enjoy drop-in services and a reduction in registration fees to ensure social engagement and physical activity was available to them despite their income. A milestone to celebrate and be proud of!

The 2022 LIFE program registration and renewal process began on November 15th, 2021. Undoubtedly the pandemic is having an effect on registration trends, albeit LIFE participants are following through with the registration process and their commitment to their well-being. We were excited to re-introduce the opportunity for LIFE patrons to purchase the Regional annual pass at 50% off the regular price as it was available pre-COVID however, understandably this option is tentatively on hold.

The Saanich Elf once again made an “amended” appearance in a COVID safe and friendly way this past holiday season this year appropriately delivering a face covering to every child at Tillicum School. Of course, the “gifting” process looked much different from the 144 pair sock delivery in 2019 and the helmets that were presented in 2020, however, none-the-less, the bright and playful face coverings donated by the Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities program were well received and greatly appreciated by the Tillicum School Community.

On January 17th, 2022 we moved forward with the Saanich Canadian Tire After School Jumpstart program at Tillicum School expanding to including an additional off-site location, the Pearkes Field House on Mondays and Thursdays to ensure capacity numbers were following PHO guidelines and safe for the participants. Following and email out to the school community seeking interested of the program, all after-school sessions were full within a couple of days. Again, the success of acquiring a grant from the Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities program is making this possible and making a difference in the lives of 75 children who otherwise would not have the accessibility to extra-curricular activities after school due to limited finances and resources.

Child and Youth Services: Youth Services wrapped up 2021 with our participants and partners from Claremont High School Indigenous Leadership group, Royal Oak Middle School, Surrounded by Cedars and VIRCS all enjoying our Teen Centre space to celebrate the end of the year!

As we say good-bye to the Fire Department at the Pearkes Youth Centre, and before we welcome back the Youth from the Tillicum Community, the Flipside is getting a re-refresh! Fresh paint, new ceiling tiles and a deep floor clean are all underway.

Lastly, we wanted to share this amazing testimonial from our VIRCS Partnership with the Backdoor Teen Centre at Gordon Head.

"We really appreciate the opportunity to use the Backdoor Teen Centre for our monthly Youth Nights as part of the Enable Program. The centre is spacious, light and youth-friendly. It is perfect for facilitating art, conversations, workshops, hang-outs, games, cooking and movie nights. The fact that it is fully-equipped with everything we need is so helpful.

One of our successful youth-run projects last summer, called "Ready, Set, Engage", was borne out of regular meetings in the Backdoor Teen Centre. We have been able to offer workshops facilitated by community partners around communication, leadership and success. This fall, we met up to celebrate the Mexican Day of the Dead and to explore ideas of resilience. It has meant so much to both staff and youth to be able to meet safely in person since the beginning of last year. It truly has brought youth together and provided a space to create community. We look forward to many more moments with newcomer youth in this space."

(January 10th, Enable Program Facilitator)



PARKS, RECREATION
& COMMUNITY SERVICES

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

DATE: February 23, 2022

FROM: Eva Riccius, Senior Manager, Parks

SUBJECT: **Parks Division Update – February, 2022**

The following update is provided for Committees:

Community Development and Business Systems

Park user groups:

As current COVID-19 restriction ease in outdoor spaces, Parks is anticipating an extremely busy spring with sports and community groups gearing up to begin seasonal operations as well as public and private school use. Staff are busy meeting with all sport user groups and clubs that are planning for their 2022 spring season. This involves meeting with 15 ball clubs, 3 lawnbowling clubs, 3 community garden clubs, 1 football club, 1 lacrosse club and select public schools running sport- specific academies.

There are currently many project applications in from our home user groups to help improve our park infrastructure, which are in the process of being adjudicated. As groups rebound from the pandemic we expect project application volume to be high and continue to come in.

The Braefoot Park Field Lights Replacement, in partnership with Lakehill Soccer Association, has wrapped up with the replacement of 39 tungsten-halide bulbs with LED fixtures. This is a great sustainability upgrade to the facility which will reduce maintenance, reduce light spillage, and have significant energy savings.

Park Stewardship Update:

Pulling Together work planning 2022

Over the next two months Natural Areas staff and the Park Stewardship Coordinator will meet with 25+ Pulling Together Lead Stewards to plan restoration in parks across Saanich. Lead Stewards are sent a work plan template prior to meeting, to help guide the meeting. The meetings involve a site walk, where we use maps to delineate volunteer treatment areas, where they will carefully remove invasive plants and restore habitats, supported by replanting, mulch, fencing, signs and natural regeneration. We also ensure a safe work site and discuss Best Management Practices for removal and

disposal, plant identification and any other issues to support volunteers in the field. This is an amazing opportunity for volunteers to showcase their accomplishments and ensure supports for the year ahead. They are an epic group of committed community volunteers who do so much to care for natural areas in Saanich.



Barbara and Andre (lead stewards) with Kyle at Boulderwood Park



Lindsay (lead steward) with Maddie and Jake at Haro Woods

Pulling Together work parties

Community volunteers continue to be busy stewarding Saanich Parks while adhering to Covid-19 protocols for volunteering. Despite smaller in person gatherings of people, volunteer hours for 2021 were an incredible 15,000 hours. This includes our regular volunteer groups (44 sites), and schools, and community groups who also support invasive species removal and replanting on restoration sites. New volunteers continue to be accepted to assist with existing Pulling Together projects, and we are assessing capacity to initiate and support new Pulling Together projects for 2022.



Mount Tolmie Pulling Together volunteers

Mount Douglas Park Ambassadors

There are currently 14 Park Ambassador volunteers providing outreach and education to visitors in Mount Douglas Park. It's a great group including seasoned volunteers, and students who care for the park and are motivated to help visitors understand their role in protecting its natural resources.



Orienting new Park Ambassadors

Volunteer Recognition

Park Ambassadors and Pulling Together Lead Stewards have been mailed a very small token of gratitude for their continued stewardship efforts. It has been a challenging two years for many, and we have missed hosting an in person volunteer recognition event, but are hopeful that we can meet again in person in the near future.



Letter and pollinator seed packet sent to volunteers

Park Planning and Development

Planning and Design Section:

Tripp Station Bike Park

Results from the online survey were mixed about the preferred concept and after further discussion with BC Hydro regarding the underground high voltage transmission line, the resulting final plan is a combination of Concepts B and C.

Construction of the bike park is now well underway. The Design/Build crew from Bike Track Ltd. has started work on the pump track first and will move to other components as ground conditions allow.



Food Trucks in Parks

The proposed program was presented to PTR on November 24, 2021 and was supported by Council on February 7. Food truck vendors will be invited to Beckwith and Cadboro-Gyro Parks for 10 weeks from late June till after the Labour Day long weekend.

Pop-up Dog Parks

The proposed locations and schedule for the dog park program was presented and endorsed by the PTR Committee on January 26. Council will be asked to endorse the plan for summer 2022 in March. Locations and schedules are being finalized for the three month program running in June, July and August.

King’s Park Community Nature Green Space

Staff are preparing a report for Council outlining the proposed public consultation process for planning the new green space, and zoning options.

People Pets and Parks

Lees and Associates out of Vancouver (<https://elac.ca/>) have been hired to develop the People, Pets and Parks Strategy. Sub-consultants for project include:

- Modus (Public Engagement)
- LADR Landscape Architects (Local Research)
- Mustel Group (Market Research)

The team have now started Phase 1 of the project , which includes:

- developing a Project Charter
- identification of stakeholders
- background research
- preliminary mapping
- developing a drafting a public engagement plan

Lochside/Fowler Park Renewal Project:

Participation in the initial online survey was somewhat low despite efforts to promote it in the community. Parks received 165 responses. Many responses would like to see dedicated pickleball courts added, walking paths added and the playground improved. The complete results are available on the project webpage at saanich.ca/parks



Pickleball Action Items:

Staff continue to research proposed action items related to issues with noise related to the game of Picklball.

Construction Section: The section has been working on:

- Graffiti removal
- Ongoing playground inspections and maintenance
- Repair of trails washed out over the winter
- Lambrick Park trail realignment (behind the recreation centre and completed playground improvements for daycare centre)
- Installing new signs related to dogs at Cadboro Gyro and Mt. Douglas Parks
- Installing 13 trail marking posts at Haro Woods
- Furniture refinishing and new benches and tables installed for donation program
- Continuing with Quicks Bottom Park construction, weather permitting

Park Operations

Maintenance Section:

With our 2 new positions in Refuse and Washrooms last year we now have some data.

- Refuse – with 7 day a week coverage we collected and disposed of over 160,000Kgs of refuse from our 260+ receptacles in Parks in 2021.
- Washrooms – with 7 day a week coverage we visited our Parks washroom locations over 4000 times last year to clean and disinfect.

Soccer season is heading into the home stretch and Baseball clubs are now itching to be on the fields. The team is working with Saanich Police on camper issues that have begun to build again as the milder weather allows people to be outside more. Winter is the Maintenance Section's time to inspect and repair Parks infrastructure from bleachers to fencing to catch basins and everything in between. The Parks shop is very busy trying to ready equipment for the upcoming season for all sections of Parks. Irrigation is preparing to start charging and repairing systems for the upcoming year.

Horticulture Section:

Horticulture crews are in the process of the bi-yearly maintenance of Traffic Islands in the Gordon Head and Broadmead area. There are 267 in total in that area. The work involves pruning, weeding, and mulching. This past winter with the wet heavy snow and freezing temperatures caused some damage to plants and shrubs but overall, the areas made it through well.

With warming weather the bulbs are making appearances throughout Saanich.

Urban Forestry Section:

The December winter storms have kept the Urban Forestry section inundated with tree calls. This is coming on the heels of one of our busiest call year in recent history. The team has had to triage their calls for service, and move all hazard tree work to the top of the list.

Our boulevard tree planting program started up the first week in January. Planting has continued in parks when the weather permits. Staff planted Blair Park recently and are waiting to get into Quicks Bottom. The crew is off to a good start, planting 86 new trees in the Shelbourne, Quadra and North Quadra Community Association areas. Our Supervisory staff continue to review Engineering drawings for tree impacts, and provide onsite arborist supervision for Public Works projects. Work planning is well under way for all the park planting projects which will happen at the end of 2022.



Blair Park Planting

Natural Areas Section:

Habitat Protective Fencing



Working closely with Pulling Together Stewards at Rithet's Bog and the Rithet's Bog Conservation Society, a Natural Areas crew recently built a section of cedar split-rail fencing to protect recent restoration efforts in the shallow fen along the south/west corner of Rithet's Bog. Crews will also be removing ~200m² of pool liner that has been covering a patch of invasive Reed Canary Grass. Natural Areas has two experimental plots to control invasive species; the one at Rithet's plus another at Quick's Bottom to help control Yellow Flag Iris. The Quick's Bottom site was a regional initiative led by Dr. Catherine Tarasoff where several staff along with other Municipalities learned the method of smothering using a benthic barrier. This method is a non-chemical and reusable way to treat invasive plant species. Staff will be using this method at the King's Road Community Nature Greenspace soon to help control Lesser Celandine along Bowker Creek.



Cuthbert Homes Planting and Hawthorn Removal

Crews recently planted 50 Douglas fir trees in the 'rough and loose' section directly above the Cuthbert Holmes Trembling Aspen restoration area. These fir trees will be part of a Coastal Douglas Fir ecosystem that will support the Trembling Aspen forests along the Colquitz River and

surrounding the new fish habitat alcoves constructed during last year's fisheries window. These 50 trees are in addition to the ~150 Doug fir seedlings planted along the same stretch late last year. Crews will be planting some Big-leaf Maple and native Black Hawthorns to add some diversity along the 'rough and loose' hillside. The total trees planted along the east side of the Colquitz, in Cuthbert Holmes Park is approaching 500. On Valentine's Day, a class from Colquitz Middle School joined staff to plant 6 Trembling Aspen, 15 Red-flowering Currant, and 3 Big-leaf Maple trees within the Aspen project site.

As part of the new pathway in Cuthbert Holmes Park, and to continue with our UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration commitment, crews cleared a patch of invasive English Hawthorn trees under a grove of mature Garry Oak trees. This is part of our Garry Oak Dripline Restoration initiative. After the English Hawthorn trees were removed and the stumps cut down to ground, crews planted five multi-stem native Black Hawthorn, five Snowberry and five June Plum to help green up the space.



UN Decade Garry Oak Dripline Restoration

Continuing on with the GO Dripline commitment, crews have several more project sites planned for 2022, including Fairburn Park where crews have just completed installing split-rail fencing to protect seven mature Garry Oaks. This park is right next to the Maria Montessori Academy who have committed to helping staff restore the dripline understory of these seven mature Garry Oaks with native shrubs, more Garry Oak trees and a healthy herbaceous layer of plants including Camas. The protective fencing is an important component to helping restore the compacted, barren forest floor under these wonderful Oaks.



Duck Boxes and other Nesting Structures

A crew will be cleaning and replacing the "dust-free" wood chips in all of our Wood Duck boxes; at the same time they will count the egg shells and note any potential predatory issues with the box locations. Last year we noticed a tree branch was being used by a Grey squirrel to access one of the Wood Duck boxes at Beckwith Pond. Crews will cut back brush or sometime move the box to a better location.



A new box will be installed at King's Pond in Cedar Hill Park this year.

The success of the Great Horned Owl nesting platforms in Cuthbert Homes Park has continued into 2022. After three successful Owlet births in 2021, the breeding pair have returned to the same nest in 2022 and signs are looking good for another successful season. Don Illingworth, seen in the photo above, is rumoured to be retiring this spring. Don is one of our hardest working Parks Workers in Saanich and has played a key role in the development, expansion and success of the Parks Natural Areas section for 15 plus years. He will be dearly missed.

Annual Fish Carcass Toss at Douglas Creek



The Friends of Mount Douglas Parks Society organized another fantastic Carcass Toss this year with a special invite to two classes from Saint Margaret School. The event saw 150-200 Salmon Carcasses tossed into the creek as well as the release of several thousand Coho Salmon Smolts at the Douglas Creek weir. These fish will hang out for several weeks before making their way out to the ocean. The new bridge site has already seen hundreds of native trees and shrubs planted last year with many more hundreds to be planted

over the next few weeks including a “Tapestry Conference Planting” event on February 18th with 30 school teachers. The theme of this Pro-D field session and conference is, “Connecting Classrooms to Community”. Staff, Friends of Mount Douglas Parks Society and the Elders and Indigenous Knowledge Keeper of School District 61 will be touring Douglas Creek and planting several dozen Western-red cedar trees. Since the Salmon carcass toss a few weeks ago there has been much wildlife activity between the weir and the Douglas bridge; raccoons have been seen enjoying the tasty fish and a pair of mature bald eagles and a juvenile have been hanging out along this strip of creek. The fishy smell was not overbearing but definitely strong enough to get the dogs all excited.



Restoration Planting, Pulling Together Volunteer Support and Invasive Species

Crews are continuing with planting projects across ~30 parks in Saanich. They recently completed the planting area at the Belvedere entrance into Beckwith Park with help from Pulling Together volunteers. A wonderful mix of Saskatoon



Berry, Red-flowering Currant, Mock Orange, June Plum, Tall-Oregon Grape and Sword fern were planted. We continue to pick up weekly invasive piles from many Pulling Together groups and support various work parties each week. Invasive plant species being treated at this time of year include: English Holly, English Hawthorn, Lesser Celandine, Shiny Geranium, and Poison Hemlock.