



**AGENDA**  
**RESILIENT SAANICH TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**  
**October 20, 6:30– 8:30 PM**  
**Held virtually via MS Teams**

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In light of the Saanich Communicable Disease Plan related safety measures, this meeting will be held virtually via MS Teams. Details on how to join the meeting can be found on the committee webpage – [Resilient Saanich Schedule, Minutes & Agendas](#). Please note that individuals participating by phone are identified by their phone number, which can be viewed on screen by all attendees of the meeting.

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1. **Territorial Acknowledgement** Coun. Mersereau
2. **Call to order & agenda** Chair T.Stevens
  - Approval of agenda
3. **Adoption of Minutes**
  - September 15, 2022 meeting
4. **Receipt of Correspondence**
5. **Update on Diamond Head Consulting mapping (10 min).**
  - Lead: Cassandra Cummings, DHC
6. **Overview of Biodiversity Related Initiatives at CRD (30 min)**
  - Lead: Jeff Leahy, Senior Manager of CRD Parks
7. **Stewardship Working Group Summary (40 min.)**
  - Lead: Chris Lowe
8. **Application of Environmental Policy Filter (5 min.)**
  - Lead: Tory Stevens
9. **Update from Council Liaison (and Memo) (10 min)**
  - Lead: Councillor Rebecca Mersereau
10. **Update on Secretariat Position (5 min)**
  - Lead: Eva Riccius
11. **Update on Workshop with WSÁNEĆ Communities**
  - Lead: Eva Riccius
12. **Update on Condition Assessment Mapping (5 min.)**
  - Lead: Tory Stevens

\* \* Next Meeting: November 17, 2022 \* \*

To ensure quorum, please email [megan.macdonald@saanich.ca](mailto:megan.macdonald@saanich.ca) if you are not able to attend.

**MINUTES**  
**RESILIENT SAANICH TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**

Via Microsoft Teams  
September 15, 2022

Present: Tory Stevens (Chair); Councillor Rebecca Mersereau; Kevin Brown; Purnima Govindarajulu; Chris Lowe and Brian Wilkes

Regrets: Stewart Guy; Tim Ennis; Bev Windjack and Jeremy Gye

Staff: Eva Riccius, Senior Manager of Parks; Thomas Munson, Senior Environmental Planner; Darren Copley, Environmental Education Coordinator; Megan MacDonald, Senior Committee Clerk

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**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m.

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

Councillor Mersereau read the Territorial Acknowledgement and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOVED by K. Brown and Seconded by C. Lowe: "That the Agenda for the September 15, 2022, Resilient Saanich Technical Committee meeting be approved."**

**CARRIED**

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

**MOVED by B. Wilkes and Seconded by K. Brown: "That the minutes of the June 28, 2022 Resilient Saanich Technical Committee meeting be adopted as amended."**

**CARRIED**

**PRESENTATION ON PRIVATE LAND STEWARDSHIP OPTIONS**

D. Copley, Environmental Education Coordinator presented information on Saanich's Enhanced Stewardship on Private Lands and a proposal to build on the Native Plant Salvage Program. The following was noted:

- Saanich implemented a Native Plant Salvage Program in 2001 to encourage community involvement and environmental stewardship.
- Currently there are ~500 trained volunteer members involved in native plant rescue from development sites in Saanich.
- Salvaged plants are used in local restoration projects and on private property.
- Benefits of this program include increasing community cooperation, education about native plants, restores natural systems/habitats, encouraging Naturscaping and protecting biodiversity.
- There are opportunities to improve the program by training residents to propagate

native plants, creating ambassadors to expand the reach of the program and create a network of native plant enthusiasts who can contribute to biodiversity.

- Healing the land using indigenous plants can be part of Saanich's commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.
- This could also help build and enhance partnerships with local organizations and connect members to their projects (such as the GOMPS Garry Oak Nursery, Habitat Acquisition Trust and Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary).
- Proposed Program Components could include:
  - Core Members Program:
    - Native plant/seed "stock exchange".
    - A tool sharing shed (with a project partner).
    - Bulletin board to post projects that require plants, contacts for donating plant material and crowd-source your planting needs.
    - Propagation info/videos.
  - Stewardship/Naturescape Training – Creating Resilient Residents:
    - New Member Orientation program.
    - Native Plant Propagation Techniques.
    - iNaturalist instructions for monitoring and learning.
  - Advanced Training and Speakers/Topics:
    - Native plant propagation techniques.
    - Restoration techniques.
    - Naturescaping for wildlife habitat.
    - Planting for climate change.
    - Pollinator-friendly gardening.
    - Identifying species visiting the restoration areas.
  - Members Corner, Mentoring, Q&A
    - Members provide programs to the group.
    - Restoration projects, new ideas, showcasing their own yards.
  - Accreditation for:
    - Program members.
    - Program mentors.
    - Ambassadors/Teachers.
- There are numerous potential partners who have been identified.

The following was noted in response to questions and comments from the committee:

- Currently there is not a similar program that is regional, each municipality handles this topic differently. Regional coordination could improve this initiative.
- Portland Oregon has an accreditation program; committee members will share this example with the Environmental Education Coordinator.
- This program could be promoted by influencers such as landscapers. There is great benefit in having local contractors and landscapers becoming more aware of why Naturescaping is so important. Many landscapers are completely unaware of the risk of invasive plants or the benefits of native plantings.
- Native plants are extremely important to feed beneficial native insects and pollinators.

## **STEWARDSHIP WORKING GROUP SUMMARY**

C. Lowe provided a brief overview of the recent work by the stewardship working group (Briefing note included with the agenda), the following was noted:

- The current assessment of existing and potential stewardship opportunities has been summarized in the briefing note.
- For the purpose of the working group; stewardship has been defined as the efforts taken

to protect, maintain, enhance and restore biodiversity and associated ecosystem functions to ensure a healthy environment for future generations.

- The committee was welcomed to provide feedback for further revisions.

The following was noted during committee discussion:

- The briefing note provides a great summary.
- A member noted that there is reference to development being the greatest driver for biodiversity loss, it was noted that invasive species also drives the loss of biodiversity.
- Members will send comments to C. Lowe for incorporation in the briefing note. Feedback will be compiled and further discussed at the next meeting.

## **BIODIVERSITY WORKING GROUP – NEXT DRAFT OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY FILTER**

B. Wilkes provided information about the updated Environmental Policy Filter, which was included as part of the agenda; the following was noted:

- The next step will be to test the filter with existing policies to see if it is effective.
- Testing may also lead to the realization of blind spots or areas for improvement.
- Chair T. Stevens will discuss testing with P. Govindarajulu and another committee member and provide an update at the next meeting.

## **UPDATE FROM COUNCIL LIAISON (AND MEMO)**

Council Liaison R. Mersereau provided a memo with the motions that were passed by Saanich Council since the creation of RSTC, to ensure these recommendations are top of mind for the committee moving forward. It was also noted that following the election, the committee may not have a Council Liaison immediately. A new liaison will be appointed at some point by the Mayor following the election.

## **UPDATE ON SECRETARIAT POSITION**

The Senior Manager of Parks provided information about the secretariat position; the following was noted:

- The scope of work for this position has been determined.
- A targeted request has been sent to 3 consultants for consideration, currently the selection is still in progress. The committee will receive a further update in future.

## **UPDATE ON DIAMOND HEAD STORY MAP / STAFF UPDATE**

The Senior Manager of Parks provided information about the Diamond Head Story Map. The following was noted during discussion:

- The Story Map is available until mid-October. Committee members are encouraged to provide input and promote the map via social media, news release, and to share the opportunity within their network.
- Knockan Hill was identified as being 20% native species, it was noted that this number may vary significantly based on which area of Knockan Hill is being considered.
- The consultant, Diamond Head, is also working on the State of Urban Forest report, a draft of which is anticipated in late September or early October. There will be an opportunity for public will review and comments prior to the report going to Council.

**UPDATE ON TECHNICAL EXPERTS MAPPING**

Chair T. Stevens noted that the opportunity to provide input for the Technical Experts Mapping closes soon, comments should be provided as soon as possible.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion from Brian, the meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for September 15, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

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Tory Stevens, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

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Committee Secretary

DRAFT

**DRAFT (v5) Revised briefing note from the Stewardship Working Group to the RSTC  
2022-10-20**

This document has been compiled from submissions from Bev Windjack, Kevin Brown, Carolyn Richman, Ted Lea and others. Any missed contributor names are unintentional and we are happy to give credit where due.

**Background**

The Resilient Saanich Technical Committee (RSTC) was mandated to assess opportunities for enhanced environmental stewardship in Saanich following the rescinding of the Environmental Development Permit Area in 2018.

This document summarizes the RSTC Stewardship Working Group's (WG) current assessment of existing and potential stewardship opportunities, along with recommendations to take forward to the consultant preparing the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.

Stewardship can be defined and characterized in a number of ways. In the context of this document, we have defined stewardship as the voluntary efforts taken to protect, maintain, enhance, rehabilitate, -and restore biodiversity and associated ecosystem functions to ensure a healthy environment for future generations.

More broadly, stewardship:

- often refers to voluntary and unpaid participation, but may be encouraged through subsidies or incentives, or require certain activities through regulations.
- can be on public or private property.
- aims to enhance the environment through motivated community participation~~participation is typically oriented toward environment and community, rather than self-driven by a variety of personal motivations for participating.~~
- can range from individual actions to ecologically-oriented larger group projects, often placed-based rather than issue based, and can vary in complexity and scale.
- actions can be direct (removing trash, removing invasive plants, planting trees, establishing pollinator meadows etc.) or indirect (environmental education) – which do not directly “improve” the environment.
- community action can include physical labor, applying specialized skills for planning and organizing rehabilitation and restoration efforts, citizen science-related data collection and dissemination.
- programs can originate as government-led or community-led. Government-led implies active engagement with or participation by the community. Community-led activities may have strong motivations but lack capacity and need logistical support from government.

To succeed, the Stewardship WG recommends that enhanced stewardship efforts in Saanich must:

- be proactively coordinated by a robustly resourced staff team on both public and private lands
- have clearly articulated objectives

**Commented [CL1]:** Comment from Kevin Brown - I think environmental stewardship is far more than having the right species of vascular plants. It's also about modifying the built environment to make the urban landscape safer for all other desirable organisms – bird-friendly buildings, appropriate lighting for insects, birds, other animals. Managing our cats and dogs. Minimizing litter, especially plastic and keeping it out of storm drains and streams. Some things we're aware of – other things are invisible to most of us

- target areas at risk of imminent loss, biodiversity hotspots and public and private land hosting ecosystems and species at risk
- [consider biodiversity beyond vascular plants, including soil and aquatic life](#)
- have quantitative targets and metrics to evaluate stewardship success over time and space
- consider all spatial scales, from targeted initiatives (e.g. Bowker Creek) to district- and region-wide efforts (e.g. hub/spoke corridor protection and enhancement).
- build on existing stewardship and [citizen science programs](#) (e.g. Naturescape, iNaturalist) and consider enhancing them with incentives for developers and residents
- [be supported by strong partnerships with rejuvenated environmental and stewardship community groups](#)
- [recognize that there are varied reasons why people may be motivated to participate in stewardship including desire to protect the environment, social connectedness, non-monetary recognition, etc.](#)
- [provide opportunities for those that do not own property in Saanich to participate](#)
- develop ongoing community enthusiasm to protect biodiversity and the environment through education, outreach and incentives
- have strong community association support
- educate developers about the value and benefits of biodiversity and environmental protection and incentivize their participation
- be fulsomely applied on public park land to ensure Saanich is leading by example
- prioritize native species and natural ecosystem functions, but recognize that non-native species and urban impacted ecosystem functions are unavoidable, but still have stewardship/biodiversity value
- educate landscaping companies on the value of using native plants [and on the use of non-native species that support biodiversity objectives and do not contribute to further proliferation of invasive species](#)

**Commented [CL2]:** Comment from Kevin Brown - [Citizen science is potentially much much more than iNaturalist especially in a town with very knowledgeable and motivated citizens](#)

Further details about these recommendations are provided below.

### **Voluntary Stewardship vs Regulation**

The Stewardship WG recognizes the value of voluntary and enthusiastic stewardship. However, there are some situations where Saanich should consider a replacement for the Environmental Development Permit Area as development is [the greatest significant driver for of](#) biodiversity loss in the region. The balance between voluntary and regulation in the context of continued development is a significant elephant in the biodiversity strategy room.

Likely areas for environmental development protection should be identified in the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy with full rationale, and should not be limited to sensitive ecosystems. Factors such as the need to protect, enhance, [rehabilitate](#), and restore hub/spoke biodiversity corridors should be considered.

[In addition, there are a few existing bylaws which are sometimes inadvertently punitive to homeowners, or are too restrictive. In addition, bylaws may discourage voluntary stewardship.](#) Examples from the Tree Protection Bylaw include:

- 1) The 2-1 or 3-1 tree replacement requirements are not feasible on many sites. However, staff have indicated that it is becoming increasingly challenging to find alternative areas

**Commented [CL3]:** Comment from Kevin Brown - I'm actively looking for research that addresses what is an appropriate balance between voluntary env stewardship and appropriate regulation. I have one paper considering that in the context of tree protection. Might be worth floating the general question to Env Law Centre at U Vic.

**Commented [CL4]:** Comment from Kevin Brown – Section should be bolstered a bit to answer the following questions - What are the advantages/disadvantages of voluntary stewardship versus regulation for protecting/enhancing Saanich's natural environment? How do the approaches complement each other?

**Commented [CL5]:** Comment from Kevin Brown – do some bylaws actually discourage stewardship? Or should stewardship supplant regulation? Are there any other bylaws where this may apply?

to plant trees to compensate for loss during development, so resolving this conundrum will be challenging

- 2) Residents who maintain a sufficient tree canopy (NB: "sufficient" would need to be defined) should not be penalized for the loss of one or two trees, but all residents should be encouraged/incentivized to replant if possible.

**Commented [CL6]:** Comment from Kevin Brown - There is a direct conflict between the amount of impermeable surface Saanich allows on lots and the space available for trees.

**Commented [CL7]:** Comment from Kevin Brown - Tree numbers are a component of canopy and in theory easier to keep track of from Park's perspective (not that they have!) - but the two metrics aren't well correlated - depends on species mix, age, etc. Relative canopy cover can be easily and cheaply measured on a single lot basis.

### **Objectives, Targets and Metrics**

Stewardship objectives will vary based on the scale and spatial coverage of any given stewardship program, but should all have the underlying objective of stewardship as defined above (*i.e., to protect, maintain, enhance, rehabilitate, and restore biodiversity and associated ecosystem functions to ensure a healthy environment for future generations*). Any enhanced stewardship programs that Saanich advocates for or promotes must have clear rationale and defined objectives. Without an understanding of why a program exists and what it intends to achieve, building enthusiastic and informed participant support will not be possible.

Examples of enhanced stewardship objectives include:

- 1) rehabilitation or restoration of sensitive ecosystems to the extent possible
- 2) maintenance and enhancement of tree canopy
- 3) maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity hub/spoke corridors
- 4) enhancement of backyard biodiversity
- 5) maintenance, rehabilitation, and restoration of native species
- 6) maintenance, rehabilitation, and restoration of urban watersheds
- 7) maintenance, rehabilitation, and restoration of the marine foreshore

While the list of objectives above is certainly not exhaustive, it does cover many of the broad biodiversity conservation concerns identified by the RSTC to date.

All stewardship programs must also have clearly defined targets, but developing targets will be challenging for some. For example, sensitive ecosystem rehabilitation or restoration targets would likely be different for public versus private lands. In parks, the target may be to restore sensitive ecosystems to natural state, but on private lands this is likely impossible and rehabilitation may be more likely. However, residents should be encouraged and incentivized to restore sensitive ecosystems on their properties where possible, but a more realistic private land target could be to simply enhance backyard biodiversity in support of the maintenance, rehabilitation, and enhancement of biodiversity hub/spoke corridors. Examples of targets include, but should not be limited to:

**Commented [CL8]:** Comment from Kevin Brown: This (what is biodiversity and natural in an urbanizing landscape) and the balance between voluntary and regulation in the context of continued development are the elephants in our biodiversity strategy room.

**Commented [cj19]:** Comment from Bev Windjack - I thought we discussed separating regulated (by-lawed, etc.) and volunteer activity, with volunteer being the true stewardship for the RSTC project.

- 1) Increasing tree canopy by 5% per year
- 2) Daylighting 100m of creek per year
- 3) Eliminating 100% of invasive species from parks
- 4) Soil retention on property, neighborhood, and district scales
- 4)
- 5) 70% of native species in your backyard
- 6) 50% of residential properties with 25% native species by 2030
- 5)

**Commented [cj110]:** Brian reminded that Saanich staff are challenged to find places to plant replacement trees on public property. This likely means much of the restored tree canopy will have to come on private property



Enhanced stewardship programs should also include quantitative metrics, and like objectives and targets, metrics will vary by program. Without metrics, the ability to assess success of efforts over time and space will not be possible. Suggested stewardship metrics include, but should not be limited to:

- 1) Tree canopy and/or native species coverage area
- 2) Change in seral stage (e.g. to assess success of reducing lawn and enhancing (ideally) native shrub coverage under urban tree canopy)
- 3) Number of rare and endangered species present
- 4) Number of properties participating in Naturescape, Green Shores, or similar programs
- 5) Length of creek daylighted
- 6) Number of volunteers students participating in invasive species removal programs
- 7) Area of invasive species removal
- 8) Area of impermeable surfaces

Accurate and regularly updated ecosystem and biodiversity mapping will be critical for the development and tracking of many metrics. It does not appear that Saanich has a sufficient GIS staffing complement or budget to regularly update mapping and track metrics.

### **Existing Stewardship Programs**

There are many excellent stewardship programs already in place in Saanich or that have been developed elsewhere, and could be implemented in Saanich. Overall, there is strong RSTC support for the [native plant salvage program & PLUS \(propagation, learning, using, sharing\)](#), Naturescape and Green Shores programs, and the Stewardship WG would also like to highlight the Habitat Acquisition Trust's Good Neighbours program and the Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary model. The Stewardship WG, Saanich staff, and other contributors have compiled lists of other programs that will be provided to the consultant developing the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for consideration.

The Stewardship WG feels there are a few broad gaps or issues with existing programs that should be addressed to achieve enhanced stewardship success including:

- 1) Lack of a municipal level stewardship plan. This plan will likely be part of the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and should ensure efforts and stewardship target locations are prioritized, actions are not duplicated, and common objectives are achieved across municipal boundaries. This plan should also consider all spatial scales, from targeted initiatives (e.g. Bowker Creek) to district-and region-wide efforts (e.g. hub/spoke corridor protection and enhancement). The plan, for example, should consider whether the new private property stewardship coordinator should target their efforts to residents who live within areas identified and targeted for hub/spoke biodiversity corridor rehabilitation or restoration. Should existing volunteer efforts be redirected to specific prioritized sensitive ecosystem areas rather than general invasive species removal in parks? Saanich is also currently developing stormwater and other environmental management plans, and it is unclear whether stewardship and/or biodiversity are being considered. Are there areas in which stewardship should be prioritized to benefit stormwater management?
- 2) Lack of proactive promotion, outreach and coordination for [the native plant salvage program & PLUS](#), Naturescape, Green Shores (or similar) and citizen science (e.g. iNaturalist) programs. Saanich would also likely benefit from increased staff capacity to

**Commented [CL11]:** Comment from Kevin Brown: There may be the rare person that voluntarily removes an existing permeable surface or chooses not to install it (possibly at greater cost). I sense the municipality may have to meaningfully regulate the amount of impermeable surface on any given lot as part of building and development permits. That assumes Saanich has asked (and will get from DHC) to estimate the amount and distribution (public vs private land) of impermeable surfaces. (I've asked a few times without a good answer). Meaningfully restricting impermeable surface area will conflict with Saanich's desire to densify.

**Commented [CL12]:** The Stewardship WG will be reviewing the other submissions and will compile a summary for submission to the consultant along with this brief.

**Commented [KB13R12]:** I think a more complete table/spreadsheet showing the breadth of activities and who coordinates/funds them and what they steward is important- I keep meaning to expand what we've got already. Essentially a partial gap analysis minus the effectiveness part

provide 1-on-1 advice to residents on biodiversity enhancement and stewardship opportunities on a site-by-site basis. Saanich already has arborists that do site visits to advise on tree removal and the district would benefit from a similar, if not enhanced and more advisory, level of service for environmental stewardship. This gap will hopefully be filled, in part, by the hiring of a new private property stewardship coordinator. Alternatively, Saanich could collaborate with, or contract, external organizations such as Habitat Acquisition Trust, to administer these programs. Citizen science and open data programs should also be considered.

- 3) Lack of subsidies or incentives to participate in private property stewardship. .  
Examples of potential subsidies or incentives include:

- a. Subsidized native plant supplies
- b. Reductions in property taxes based on percentage of native species or tree canopy [rehabilitation](#)/restoration/coverage and/or reductions in impermeable surfaces. The Stewardship WG acknowledges that changes to property taxes are complicated to implement and would require substantive bylaw consultation, development and [revision](#).
- c. Enhanced public acknowledgement of residents who successfully achieve Naturescape, Green Shores or similar program objectives in newsletters, media and elsewhere
- d. Certification for residents who go above and beyond in stewardship efforts. [Examples that could be adapted for Saanich include programs from Portland, Oregon \(e.g. <https://backyardhabitats.org/>\), Edmonton \(<https://natureedmonton.wordpress.com/welcome/about-edmonton-master-naturalists/>\), the Habitat Acquisition Trust \(<https://hat.bc.ca/goodneighbours>\)](#)

**Commented [CL14]:** Comment from Kevin Brown: Owners of single family homes (are already seen by some as wealthy and privileged. Those people may see such public financial incentives as a subsidy to those who don't "need" it.

### **Stewardship During Development and Landscaping**

There is currently a lack of consideration for stewardship and biodiversity protection opportunities when private property development or updated landscaping takes place. Many developers, landscapers and landowners do not understand the value of ecosystem and biodiversity protection or that development does not have to have adverse impacts.

It is therefore recommended that Saanich implement a workshop or create a video that all development applicants (professional and otherwise) must attend/watch prior to submitting an application. This workshop/video would inform applicants of Saanich's rationale and objectives for biodiversity enhancement and protection, the value of doing so, and provide examples of successful projects that have enhanced, [rehabilitated](#), and restored biodiversity.

**Commented [CL15]:** Comment from Kevin Brown – would this be a meaningful requirement, or just another box to check to meet the letter of the (by)law

There is also a lack of incentives for developers to protect and enhance biodiversity in their projects. The Stewardship WG has two ideas for how developers could be incentivized:

- 1) [A Developer Environmental Steward certification program could be developed.](#) Saanich would then encourage property owners to work with certified developers. Staff effort would be required to determine certification criteria and administrate the program. Certification criteria could include previous success at implementing projects that

achieve stewardship objectives, with the more successful projects a developer has, the higher their certification is (e.g. gold, silver, bronze developers).

- 2) A LEED-like certification consisting of biodiversity and ecosystem service attributes could be developed and applied at a property level. The Township of Esquimalt's Green Building Checklist has some criteria that Saanich could adapt.

There are seemingly contradictory development bylaw requirements from an environmental perspective. Some of what Saanich asks developers to do is contradictory and not supportive of effective biodiversity enhancement.

Finally, many landscapers and Master Gardener associations would benefit from enhanced education on the benefits of the use of native species and better selection of non-native species, when unavoidable. Such education could tie into the above mentioned environmental steward certification or LEED-like certification programs.

### **Barriers to Enthusiastic Participation**

Enthusiastic participation in stewardship will be fostered by addressing many of the gaps and issues noted above. However, there are a few other barriers to enthusiastic stewardship participation that the Stewardship WG would like to note.

One of the criticisms Saanich faced during the EDPA review was that some residents were not enthused about felt there was a double-standard when requiring private property native species stewardship when native species biodiversity and ecosystems services were not completely maintained in adjacent Saanich Parks or on other non-park public lands. Others felt that sensitive ecosystem designations were improperly assigned to their properties.

Ideally Saanich would find capacity through enhanced volunteer support and/or new staff to undertake enhanced biodiversity and ecosystem service rehabilitation and restoration in all parks and on non-park public lands, with native species prioritized. This would demonstrate that Saanich is leading-by-example. In addition, relying solely on "sensitive ecosystem" definitions and terminologies should also be avoided when identifying areas for prioritized stewardship and/or environmental protection regulation as few sensitive ecosystems actually remain intact in Saanich. Other justifications for flagging areas for biodiversity conservation will be necessary, and these justifications must have community support to succeed.

Not all Saanich residents are landowners, and therefore do not necessarily have opportunities to enthusiastically steward their own back yard. Therefore, opportunities to participate beyond backyard biodiversity must also be promoted and made available to non-landowners.

This would demonstrate that Saanich is leading by example.

### **Native vs Non-native Species**

While the RSTC prefers restoration of native species and natural ecosystem services, it is not feasible to do so in all instances. Therefore stewardship efforts must recognize the biodiversity value of many (but certainly not all) non-native species, and encourage and incentivize biodiversity enhancing stewardship regardless of whether full native restoration is possible. As

**Commented [CL16]:** Comment from Kevin Brown: What are the consequences for developers who voluntarily choose to not be certified or choose not to follow a green building checklist? Would their application not be approved?

**Commented [cj17]:** Comment from Bev Windjack – yes application would not be approved without their participation

**Commented [cj18]:** This starts to get away from voluntary stewardship though. If we're requiring developers to participate, that gets more into regulation (which I'm all for).

**Commented [CL19]:** Bev to provide more insight here

**Commented [CL20]:** Comment from Kevin Brown: Would people who made this complaint suddenly change their attitudes and practices even if Saanich Parks suddenly reverted to their pre-settlement condition? Parks surrounded by housing developments are bombarded with invasive species - some property owners adjacent to poorly-monitored public land will use it as a dumping ground for their yard waste.

As noted above, stewardship covers a broad range of potential activities and varied scales. Not everyone is a homeowner with their own garden. Not sure how to say it, but I think its important to stress that stewardship is partly a mindset and there are many potential opportunities for anyone to help out - they need to know that and be able to do manageable things locally. Not just pulling invasive plants, but maybe picking up trash along their favorite stretch of trail or monitoring stream quality, etc.

[noted above, landscapers and their suppliers could become valuable promoters of native species use, and advisors on the best selection and diligent use of non-native species, when unavoidable.](#)

Restoration [and rehabilitation](#) of native species on private property should be acknowledged and celebrated, [while the appropriate use of non-native species should not be discouraged.](#)

### **Staffing and Coordination**

Proactive coordination and promotion will be required to achieve enhanced stewardship in Saanich. Saanich staff already coordinate stewardship, but with a primary focus on parks. These efforts seem well resourced from a volunteer perspective, but because existing staff are already at capacity, they do not have the ability to most efficiently utilize all volunteer resources. Saanich parks staff also cannot keep up with the removal of invasive species in parks, let alone fulsomely enhance and restore biodiversity across all parks, or even at all on non-park public lands. [Finally](#), Saanich [also](#) does not have a stewardship coordinator for private or non-park public land. Programs such as [the native plant salvage program & PLUS](#), Naturescape, Green Shores and citizen science programs (e.g. iNaturalist) will never achieve their full potential without much more proactive coordination and promotion. There are also many unrealized biodiversity enhancement opportunities on Saanich right-of-ways and boulevards that could be [rehabilitated](#), restored and maintained by existing volunteer groups (e.g. pulling together), community associations, or neighboring homeowners. [Finally, accurate and regularly updated ecosystem and biodiversity mapping will be critical for the development and tracking of many biodiversity conservation metrics. It is does not appear that Saanich has a sufficient GIS staffing complement or budget to regularly update mapping and track metrics.](#) Additional staff is the most economically efficient way to address stewardship by harnessing the enthusiasm and energy of the public.

As such, the RSTC believes Saanich needs significantly more staff capacity to maintain, [rehabilitate](#), and restore biodiversity in parks and non-park public land, [and](#) proactively develop, encourage, and incentivize stewardship programs on both public and private lands, [and update associated mapping and success metrics.](#)

At a minimum, the RSTC has already recommended that Saanich develop a business case for the 2023 budget planning cycle for hiring a private and non-park public land stewardship coordinator. This coordinator should proactively promote programs such as [the native plant salvage program & PLUS](#), Naturescape and Green Shores, and should consider options to subsidize and/or incentivize voluntary stewardship on private lands.

Unfortunately, this single staff hire will likely not be enough to ensure success of enhanced stewardship at a district scale, and on both public and private lands. Additional parks, planning, and GIS staff should be considered. Further rationale for new staff was provided in previous sections.

[Non-staff organizations could also be leveraged or contracted to promote biodiversity conservation in Saanich. Potential organizations to approach include Habitat Acquisitions Trust, Master Gardener associations and other existing naturalist groups.](#)

**Commented [cjl21]:** Based on Darren Copley's presentation noting that some non-native species are actual detriments to biodiversity, does the RSTC want to

**Commented [KB22R21]:** I understand Doug Tallamy's point. I think we should encourage native vs non-native, but... Several topics to be fleshed out here including: (1) when we say "native" species and biodiversity, we generally only mean vascular plants- who knows how non-native our urban soil biodiversity is and will continue to be (2) richness of vascular plant species (and maybe of some other taxa) may be greater in urban settings than in more "natural" settings which raises questions about what we mean by biodiversity and what are appropriate metrics; (3) probably a great range of biodiversity values across non-native plants eg suitability for pollinators or as habitat for other species (non-native oaks?); invasiveness (4) ability to tolerate climate change is an important consideration we've tended to ignore so far.

# Memo

**To:** Resilient Saanich Technical Committee  
**From:** Eva Riccius, Senior Manager Parks  
**Date:** September 27, 2022  
**Subject:** Resilient Saanich: Terms of Reference Update

On August 22, 2022 Saanich Council received the Resilient Saanich Milestone Two Progress Report and a Milestone 3 Workplan. Included, Council also received the draft Principles and Goals for the Environmental Policy Framework and directed Planning to consider them in the Official Community Plan Update. The Progress Report and the Milestone 3 Workplan, summarized in this memo, provides updates to the attached RSTC Terms of Reference (Appendix B, as endorsed by Council October 21, 2021). The updates to the Terms of Reference include:

- The workplan in Appendix A.
- No additional appointments will be made to the RSTC for Milestone 3.
- Milestone 2 action items that are still ongoing include:
  - Review and evaluate the District’s GIS environmental mapping layers and atlas.
  - Develop a State of Biodiversity Report.
  - Review and evaluate the existing stewardship program and recommend improvements.
  - Begin drafting outline for Environmental Policy Framework.
  - Test and refine draft Environmental Policy Evaluation Tool on existing environmental policy.

Project timelines have been updated as follows:

Q1 Jan-Mar	Q2 Apr-Jun	Q3 Jul-Sep	Q4 Oct-Dec
<b>2022</b>			
Milestone Two (continued)	Milestone Two (continued)	Progress Report to Council  Milestone Two (continued)	Milestone Three  ( & Milestone Two tasks continuing)
<b>2023</b>			
Milestone Three (continued)	Progress Report to Council		

To provide clarity on the comprehensive budget for Resilient Saanich, Council originally designated \$250,000 for Resilient Saanich on May 7, 2018 and then designated an additional \$197,000 on August 9, 2021 based on the updated RSTC Terms of Reference (from Council's Strategic Initiatives Contingency Fund for the RSTC Milestone Two Work Plan). No further funds have been allocated by Council.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the Resilient Saanich initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Riccius', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Eva Riccius  
Senior Manager Parks

## Appendix A: Milestone 3 Workplan

Action	Level of Public Participation	Relative Expense	RSTC Role	Staff Role	Council Role
21. Hire consultant team to develop the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply future climate change, demographic and development predictions</li> <li>• Apply outcomes of additional studies that may have occurred</li> </ul>		\$\$\$\$\$	Advise team	Hire consulting team and oversee contract	
22. Continue the environmental policy gap analysis			Form a working group to decide how detailed this analysis should be. Use secretariat to help complete.	Initial gap analysis completed by staff and included in the RSTC binder	
23. Review and evaluate Saanich's Urban Forest Strategy			Provide input at draft document. Test the utility of the proposed EPF program plan outline and evaluation tool.	Apply RSTC EFP Principles and Goals	Council will consider the entire UFS as part of a separate process.
24. Review and evaluate the Ecosystem Section of the Climate and recommend improvements if necessary			Work with the Sustainability Section to understand goals and RSTC role. Draft SMART objectives.	Sustainability Section to engage with RSTC	

Action	Level of Public Participation	Relative Expense	RSTC Role	Staff Role	Council Role
25. Identify and analyze appropriate tools for conservation, including an enhanced Stewardship Program.	Consult and Collaborate		Work with the BCS consulting team and staff to identify and incorporate appropriate tools into the strategy	Work with RSTC and BCS consulting team to identify and incorporate appropriate tools into the strategy.	
26. Complete the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and identify enhancements for the stewardship program with recommendations for implementation including indicators and monitoring.	Consult		Work with staff to advise the consulting team. Review draft strategy.	Work with RSTC to advise the consulting team. Review draft strategy.	Council will consider the entire BCS in a separate process.
27. Complete the draft Environmental Policy Framework document.			Complete draft report of advice to staff.	Use RSTC advice to write final EPF.	
28. Submit a progress report on Milestone 3 to Advisory Committees (Environment and Natural Areas, and Parks, Trails and Recreation) and Council.			RSTC is dissolved.	Staff to prepare report.	
29. Present a complete Resilient Saanich Environmental Policy Framework including a State of Biodiversity Report, a Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (incorporating the Enhanced Stewardship Program) to Council.				Staff to prepare package for Council.	Council to consider for approval.



## **Appendix B: Resilient Saanich Technical Committee Terms of Reference**

Adopted August 9, 2021

With revisions adopted October 25, 2021.

[RSTC TOR.pdf \(saanich.ca\)](#)