



## AGENDA RESILIENT SAANICH TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

January 19, 2023, 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**
2. **Call to order & Election of Chair**
  - Lead: Megan MacDonald, Clerk
3. **Approval of Agenda**
4. **Adoption of Minutes (attachment)**
  - December 15, 2022 meeting
5. **Introduction of Council Representative – Councillor Zac DeVries (15 min.)**
  - Lead: Councillor de Vries
6. **Environmental Policy Filter (attachment)(30 min.)**
  - Lead: Tory Stevens, Filter Working Group;
  - Rebecca Newlove, Manager of Sustainability invited to participate
7. **Update and discussion on Workshop with W'SANEC Communities (15 min.)**
  - Lead: Eva Riccius
8. **Environmental Policy Framework Update (20 min)**
  - Lead: EPF Working Group or Judith Cullington
9. **Resilient Saanich status report to Council – Council Feedback (10 min.) (attachment)**
  - Lead: Eva Riccius and Tory Stevens
10. **State of Biodiversity Report update (10 min).**
  - Lead: Eva Riccius

**\*\* Next Meeting: February 16, 2023 \*\***

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  
December 15, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

Present: Tory Stevens (Chair); Kevin Brown; Tim Ennis; Purnima Govindarajulu; Stewart Guy; Jeremy Gye; Chris Lowe; Brian Wilkes; and Bev Windjack

Guests: Judith Cullington and Carly Bilney (Secretariats)

Staff: Eva Riccius, Senior Manager of Parks; Rebecca Newlove, Manager of Sustainability; Thomas Munson, Senior Environmental Planner; and 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**

T. Stevens read the Territorial Acknowledgement and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOVED by T. Ennis and Seconded by B. Wilkes: "That the Agenda for the December 15, 2022, Resilient Saanich Technical Committee meeting be approved."**

During discussion the following was noted:

- Items 5 & 9 were removed from the agenda, to be rescheduled for a later date.

**The Motion was then Put and CARRIED**

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

**MOVED by T. Ennis and Seconded by S. Guy: "That the minutes of the November 17, 2022 Resilient Saanich Technical Committee meeting be adopted, as amended."**

**CARRIED**

**RECEIPT OF CORRESPONDENCE**

**MOVED by S. Guy and Seconded by B. Wilkes: "That the memo of the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee dated December 1, 2022 and the response memo from Diamond Head Consulting dated December 15, 2022 be received for information."**

**CARRIED**

## **UPDATE BY SECRETARIAT TO RSTC**

J. Cullington and C. Bilney of JCA Judith Cullington & Associates advised that they met with the working group to discuss the Environmental Policy Framework.

## **FACILITATED SESSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY FRAMEWORK (EPF) QUESTIONS**

The Secretariat led the discussion and the following was noted:

- A short piece on what is meant by Resilient Saanich should be included in the document.
- The document should also include the purpose, scope and guiding principles, a list of the policies and programs within Saanich that was considered within the filter of the EPF and the results of the gap analysis.

### Questions for committee:

#### Who is the audience?

- Residents of Saanich, Council and staff.
- The development community and consultants.

#### What does success look like?

- The Official Community Plan must articulate what the EPF is about.
- The EPF outlines the expectations of Saanich in terms of development and stewardship.
- Success is when staff at all levels have embraced the policy, when decision making considers the EPF and when other policies and programs are not contradictory.
- Success is also when environmental policies are clear, and the public understands how and why they were developed.
- When environmental sustainability and biodiversity conservation permeates all actions and decision making in Saanich that will show that the EPF was successful.

#### How important is telling the story of the Environmental Development Permit Area (EDPA) and why it crashed? Is it important to have the details in the main document? What is the prominence of the history?

- The EDPA only applied to development applications; there is a need to look through an environmental lens on all programs within Saanich.
- There is also a need to incentivize stewardship.
- This is a fresh step forward; it may not be helpful to look back at past practices.
- Minimal reference to the EDPA may help to put the work on the EPF into context.

#### Is there anything missing from the Table of Contents?

- The document should articulate how the policy will cross over into the different departments within the organization.
- It could include a list of the cross departmental work currently being undertaken.
- There needs to be a description on how the EPF is intended to be used.
- The thematic plans and SMART goals/objectives should be included.

- The EPF is the overarching policy; the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, the Climate Action Plan and the Urban Forest Strategy fall under it.
- A graphic could show the EPF and how the other policies connect to it.
- A statement advising that the EPF applies to both private and public lands should be included.
- Guiding principle 2 could read “Respect and include Indigenous values, knowledge and perspectives in decisions”.
- The precautionary principle could be a standalone principle.
- Footnotes could be added to link to documents to substantiate any statements.
- The EFP will become Saanich’s goals.
- The goal of the framework is to foster complementary and coordinated policies.

An updated draft EPF will be prepared and provided for discussion at a future meeting.

### **UPDATE ON DIAMOND HEAD CONSULTING STATE OF BIODIVERSITY REPORT**

The Senior Manager, Parks provided an update on the progress on the State of Biodiversity Report and the following was noted:

- A first draft of the report will tentatively be ready in January 2023.
- It will be provided to the committee for comment once it has been reviewed by the Senior Manager as there may be a need for revisions prior to review.
- The report will outline the existing state of biodiversity in Saanich.
- It will be the starting point for public engagement.

### **STAFF REVIEW OF STEWARDSHIP WORKING GROUP SUMMARY**

The Senior Manager, Parks answered questions from the committee and the following was noted:

- Clarification is needed on what enhanced stewardship means and what opportunities there are for enhanced stewardship.
- The committee could provide ideas on what types of stewardship work they have seen in other municipalities that could be considered by Saanich.
- Stewardship opportunities should be available for both private and public lands.
- There may be a need for additional funding or to reallocate resources for enhanced stewardship.

The committee was asked to provide any updates or revisions to C. Lowe within the next three weeks and a revised version will be provided at the February meeting.

### **UPDATE ON WORKSHOP WITH WSÁNEĆ COMMUNITIES**

The Senior Manager, Parks provided an update on the workshop with the WSÁNEĆ communities, and the following was noted:

- The workshop was re-scheduled to January 12, 2023.
- It is hoped that the conversation will be around strategic actions.

The committee was asked to advise T. Stevens of their availability to attend the meeting.

## **REVIEW OF CLIMATE ACTION PLAN (ENVIRONMENT SECTION)**

Discussion took place and the following was noted:

- Reviewing the Environment Section of the Climate Action Plan is the last item for the committee to look at as per the Terms of Reference.
- The policy filter could be applied to the Environment Section as part of the beta testing of the filter.

## **COMMITTEE CHAIR**

T. Stevens advised that this was her last meeting as Chair. Appointment of a new Chair will be discussed at the January meeting.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion from P. Govindarajulu, the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

## **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for January 19, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

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Tory Stevens, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Secretary

The eleven guiding principles are as follows.

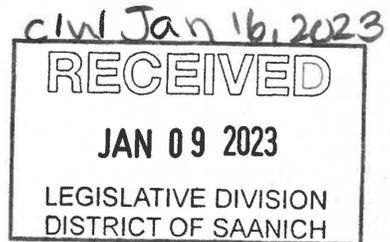
1. **Recognizing the intrinsic value** of nature.
2. **Respecting and including** Indigenous knowledge, worldviews and perspectives in environmental decisions and actions.
3. **Using evidence-based decision-making** to support adaptive environmental management.
4. **Adopting the precautionary approach**<sup>1</sup> in environmental decision making.
5. **Leading by example** through innovation and improving on best practices.
6. **Looking beyond Saanich's borders** to achieve results at a bioregional scale.
7. **Addressing climate** adaptation and mitigation in all that we do.
8. **Collaborating** with diverse interests to achieve multiple environmental benefits.
9. **Providing transparency** with open environmental data for public oversight and research.
10. **Enhancing community capacity** and knowledge to create a passionate, informed and skilled community that participates in building a more resilient Saanich.
11. **Safeguarding diversity, equity and inclusivity** by creating safe and welcoming public services and spaces for all.

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<sup>1</sup> The International Institute for Sustainable Development notes that, "In order to protect the environment, the precautionary approach shall be widely applied by States according to their capabilities. Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation." <https://www.iisd.org/articles/deep-dive/precautionary-principle>



The Corporation of the District of Saanich



# Report

**To:** Mayor and Council  
**From:** Suzanne Samborski, Director of Parks, Recreation & Community Services  
**Date:** December 28, 2022  
**Subject:** Resilient Saanich Status Update

## RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council receive this status report on the Resilient Saanich program for information.
2. That Council review the status of work outstanding and provide any specific directions.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the status of the Resilient Saanich program and its various components.

## BACKGROUND

With a new Council, and Council Liaison to the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee (RSTC), it is timely to provide this overview of the status and anticipated timelines for completion of the components of the Resilient Saanich program as outlined in the Terms of Reference.

### Brief History

**2017 November.** Council directed staff *“to bring Council a report as soon as possible on the potential of developing a Saanich program which includes the topics of Climate Adaptation, a Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, and Stewardship Program to serve as a policy framework for other Saanich environmental policies and programs, and a new Environmental Development Permit Area be considered part of this program; and that the Diamond Head report recommendations be considered a component of this report.”*

**2018 April.** Council rescinded the Environmental Development Permit Area.  
**May.** Council provided \$250,000 to fund the Resilient Saanich program.

**2019 July.** Council reviewed a staff developed draft terms of reference, for the Resilient Saanich program which laid out three milestones.

**2020** Council also made a motion to create a Technical Advisory Committee to “*support staff in reviewing and preparing the draft goals and objectives for the Environmental Policy Framework, and subject to input from the public and Council.*” Additionally, Council approved a motion for staff to “*work with the Technical Advisory Committee to further refine the scope for the Environmental Policy Framework and data collection and develop an evaluation matrix for the selection of policy tools.*” Two additional motions were approved: *to hire a GIS staff to assist with mapping and for staff to identify implications, costs and effectiveness of proposed interim measures which could be put in place to protect the environment while the large program was underway.* Council then directed staff to bring back a report that outlined opportunities to expedite the Environmental Policy Framework process. At that point, other than strengthening the Tree Protection Bylaw in 2019, no additional interim measures were pursued.

**October.** Staff brought an expedited workplan which Council supported with some amendments. Essentially, the revised workplan reduced some public engagement and eliminated:

- the need for new field-based data collection,
- citizen science projects and ecosystem valuation, and
- biodiversity modelling and corridor studies; all with the intent to shorten the timelines for deliverables.

**2020 June.** Council approved a revised terms of reference for the program.

**August.** An RSTC was formed with Council approval of membership consisting of science and policy experts that reside in Saanich.

**2021 August.** Council received a progress report related to Milestone One, which was the ‘initiate’ phase. All items were completed except for the publishing of the fourth edition of the Environmental Sensitive Areas Atlas, which was held back at the request of the RSTC.

Council also received information from RSTC about their proposal for an Environmental Policy Framework which would be based on thematic plans or policy areas such as climate change, biodiversity, urban forestry, water management, land use planning and development, agriculture, green economy, transportation, governance and administration along with a few other areas. Each proposed thematic plan would contain policies and program objectives in response to the various environmental challenges and opportunities.

The RSTC provided a working draft of a proposed evaluation matrix for new and existing policies. The Committee also presented draft goals and objectives which had received public feedback.

Council approved a revised Terms of Reference (TOR) proposed by the RSTC and associated additional funding (\$197,000) for the program. The TOR are specific to the Committee, moving away from the broader program. Along with RSTC undertaking and overseeing more of the work, a number of other changes were made including:

- defining the Environmental Policy Framework to include thematic plans as mentioned above and “*to produce a more coherent body of plans, policies, bylaws and strategies in support of a more resilient Saanich.*”

- Requesting funding for secretariat support as an independent facilitator for RSTC.
- Recommending a more detailed State of Biodiversity report, carried out by a consultant.
- Adding urban forestry to the scope of its work with some tasks related to the Urban Forest Strategy Update.
- Undertaking a review and evaluation of the GIS environmental map layers.
- Undertaking a review of the Ecosystems Section of the Climate Plan (2020).
- The ability for the RSTC to take reports with opposing recommendations from staff and the consultants.

In addition to the increased financial impact of the program, it was estimated that the program would need an additional six months with a new completion date to occur by Q4 2022.

**October.** A further revised Terms of Reference is approved by Council to include engagement with First Nations.

**2022 March.** After an unsuccessful RFP process for a Project Coordinator (Secretariat), State of Biodiversity Report and Biodiversity Conservation Strategy as one large contract, staff were able to secure a contract with DiamondHead Consulting for a State of Biodiversity Report. Time to completion has extended past the original Q2 2022.

**June.** RSTC requested that staff hire a Secretariat to support their work.

**August.** Council received the Milestone Two report, which noted that progress had been made although half of the tasks were ongoing which were related in part to consulting contracts. Council also received the RSTC's draft Principles and Goals for an Environmental Policy Framework and directed staff to consider them in the update of the Official Community Plan. RSTC's workplan for Milestone Three was also received.

**September.** DiamondHead Consulting was contracted to undertake the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.

**November.** Judith Cullington and Associates was awarded the Secretariat contract with the first task to write up the Environmental Policy Framework document. The contract has been specified as a writing contract, rather than a secretariat or project coordinator as the Chair continues to facilitate workflow.

## **DISCUSSION**

There have been good inputs from the RSTC into the Resilient Saanich program and there is much work that needs to be completed to fulfil the approved TOR.

In the words of the former Council Liaison, the revised TOR "chang[ed] the focus to the RSTC rather than the Resilient Saanich initiative," and added "more tasks and propose[d] using additional consulting expertise." In addition, the TOR provides the ability for the RSTC to provide advice directly to Council if there is no agreement between staff and the Committee on an approach or initiative.

The changes in the TOR have resulted in an atypical approach where a Committee of Council took on significant additional work (as outlined in Appendix 1) and has the ability to strongly

influence the direction of staff and consultants resulting in extended timelines and increased resources.

Timelines for specific deliverables have been extended to allow the RSTC, staff and consultants to come to agreement to avoid bringing operational and small items to Council for decisions. For example, the State of Biodiversity Report, which is a snapshot in time, has been slower to complete to ensure RSTC is supportive of the methodologies, assumptions and outcomes being carried out by the Consultant. Some of the delay stems in part from a lag in the ability to hire the Consultant; where another factor has been in having the RSTC, the Consultant and staff agree on the approach in commonly used assessment tools. The RSTC recommended using a provincial assessment standard which requires more data than is available or able to be gathered. Staff and the consultant recommended using an assessment method has been used in other municipalities in British Columbia to develop similar State of Biodiversity reports.

Once the RSTC had the time to review the results of using the provincial method, they saw the challenges related to the lack of data and there is now consensus to recommended against using those results. This dialogue has increased the time needed to complete the report, which will form the basis for developing a draft Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and will be used to open public engagement for strategy development. A first draft of the State of Biodiversity report is anticipated in Q1 2023.

Appendix 1 provides a high-level overview of tasks set in the original Terms of Reference, tasks set in the final revised Terms of Reference, status and estimated timelines to completion.

It would be useful at this time for Council to review the scope of work outstanding and provide direction if they choose.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

1. That Council receive this status report on the Resilient Saanich program for information, and that Council review status of work outstanding and provide any specific directions.
2. That Council provides alternate direction.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Financial implications may occur depending on Council direction. One example is the need for the continuation of the environmental GIS staff. Staff have submitted a request to the 2023 budget for that to continue. Staff would return to Council and request further funding if required.

**CONCLUSION**

The RSTC has worked diligently on their actions as outlined in the revised TOR. While many are not yet complete, staff, consultants and the RSTC have made progress. A significant body of work is yet to be completed. The earliest revised time to completion of the program as outlined in the TOR is Q4 2023 assuming tight turnarounds of project phases.

Prepared by:



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Eva Riccius  
Senior Manager of Parks

Approved by:



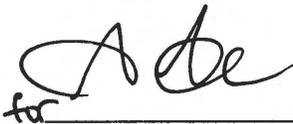
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Suzanne Samborski  
Director of Parks, Recreation & Community Services

Attachments: Appendix 1: Tasks Remaining

**ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS:**

I endorse the recommendation from the Director of Parks, Recreation & Community Services.

  
for

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Brent Reems, Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix 1: Tasks Remaining

| <b>Task from original TOR</b>                | <b>Task from final TOR</b>   | <b>Status</b>   | <b>Original Timeline</b> | <b>Revised Estimated Timeline</b>   |
|--|--|---|--------------------------|---|
| Environmental Policy Framework               | Environmental Policy Framework   | Outline drafted by RSTC in 2022. Principles and Goals presented to Council. Consultant hired in Nov 2022 to assist RSTC in completing EPF document. Staff recommend public engagement.  | Q2 2022                  | Q2 2023   |
| Policy evaluation tool                       | Policy filter  | RSTC developed draft policy filter in fall 2022. To be reviewed for ability to be implemented. If implemented across District, will need implementation guidance and signification change management approach for staff.                            | Q2 2022                  | Q2 2023   |
| Publish 4 <sup>th</sup> edition of ESA Atlas | NA   | RSTC requested not to publish. Work has halted.   | Q2 2021                  | Unknown   |
| Enhanced Stewardship Program                 | Review and evaluate existing stewardship program, recommend improvements. (Milestone 2)<br>Identify and analyze appropriate tools for conservation, including an enhanced Stewardship Program. (Milestone 3)<br>Identify enhancements with recommendations for | RSTC moved to Milestone 2 and 3. An RSTC working group drafted a briefing document (Fall 2022) which will be submitted to consultant as input to Biodiversity Conservation Strategy. Staff provided comments (Dec 2022). Staff included Stewardship | Q2 2022                  | Q1 2023 for RSTC to provide recommendations to Consultant (specific actions identified in the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy) |

Appendix 1: Tasks Remaining

|                              | implementation including indicators and monitoring.                            | program to scope of work for consultant.   |         |  |
|------------------------------|--|--|---------|--|
| NA                           | Review and evaluate the District's GIS environmental mapping layers and atlas. | RSTC added this item. RSTC mapping working group provided memo to full committee recommending Saanich prioritize improving mapping. Staff recommended to send to be considered in Biodiversity Conservation Strategy as a strategic action.  | NA      | To be considered in Biodiversity Conservation Strategy |
| State of Biodiversity Report | State of Biodiversity Report   | To be provided by DiamondHead Consulting. Timeline extended to allow the RSTC, staff and consultants to come to agreement on methodologies, assumptions and outcomes. RSTC required time to review. RSTC agrees not to use results in the State of Biodiversity Report using provincial standards due to lack of data. | Q2 2022 | Draft Q1 2023  |
| NA                           | Review and evaluate Urban Forest Strategy                                      | RSTC added. Would like to test the Environmental Policy Framework and policy filter against the development of UFS.  | NA      | Q1/2 2023  |

Appendix 1: Tasks Remaining

|                                    |  |  |         |                                |
|------------------------------------|--|--|---------|--------------------------------|
|                                    |  | Would push out delivery of UFS as this is not in scope of UFS work. RSTC will have opportunity to provide input to strategy development as other Council Committees.           |         |                                |
| Biodiversity Conservation Strategy | Biodiversity Conservation Strategy                           | Consultant led. To begin once State of Biodiversity report is complete. Public engagement included.  | Q1 2023 | Q4 2023                        |
| NA                                 | Environmental policy gap analysis                            | RSTC to define if still desired.   | NA      | Unknown                        |
| NA                                 | Ecosystem Section of the Climate Plan recommend improvements | RSTC willing to carry out if desired. RSTC is planning to use this as a test case for the draft Policy Evaluation Matrix. Sustainability Division working on some refinements. | NA      | Test case possibly in Q1 2023. |