AGENDA
RESILIENT SAANICH TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
October 18, 2023, 6:30– 8:30 PM
Held virtually via MS Teams

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. **Approval of Agenda**

3. **Adoption of Minutes**
   - August 17, 2023 meeting

4. **Receipt of Correspondence**

5. **Discussion of Environmental Policy Evaluation Matrix (20 min.)**
   - Lead: Tory Stevens

6. **Discussion of Gap Analysis (30 min.)**
   - Lead: Kevin Brown

7. **Discussion of Environmental Policy Framework (10 min.)**
   - Lead: Tory Stevens

8. **Draft Updated Development Permit Area Design Guidelines (15 min.)**
   - Lead: Rebecca Newlove
   - DPA Design Guidelines | District of Saanich

9. **RSTC Schedule of work for November-December (15min.)**
   - Lead: Tory Stevens

*** * Next Meeting: November 16, 2023**

To ensure quorum, please email megan.macdonald@saanich.ca if you are not able to attend.

MINUTES
RESILIENT SAANICH TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Via Microsoft Teams
August 17, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

Present: Tory Stevens (Chair); Councillor Zac de Vries; Kevin Brown; Stewart Guy; Chris Lowe; and Brian Wilkes

Regrets: Jeremy Gye; Purnima Govindarajulu and Tim Ennis

Guests: Mike Coulthard and Alison Kwan of Diamond Head Consulting (DHC); Judith Cullington, Secretariat

Staff: Eva Riccius, Senior Manager of Parks; Thomas Munson, Senior Environmental Planner; and Megan MacDonald, Senior Committee Clerk

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TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

Councillor Z. de Vries read the Territorial Acknowledgement and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED by B. Wilkes and Seconded by K. Brown: "That the Agenda for the August 17, 2023, Resilient Saanich Technical Committee meeting be approved."

It was noted that the next meeting date has been changed to September 28, 2023.

The Motion was then Put and CARRIED

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

MOVED by C. Lowe and Seconded by S. Guy: "That the minutes of the June 15, 2023 Resilient Saanich Technical Committee meeting be adopted."

CARRIED

DISCUSSION WITH DIAMOND HEAD CONSULTING ON BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION STRATEGY (BCS) ACTIONS AND STRATEGIES

M. Coulthard and A. Kwan of Diamond Head Consulting (DHC) gave an overview of the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (BCS) Actions and Strategies (document on file). The following was noted:

- The BCS is a living document which will be continually reviewed and updated.
- Feedback from Phase 1 of engagement has been included in the recommendations.
- The key points of the feedback received from the committee have been summarized.
- Some similar comments existed; these were highlighted as important aspects.
- The recommendations outline a plan to achieve the goals identified in the strategy.
- One priority of the strategy is making sure that items are aligned on the Urban Forestry Strategy, the Official Community Plan, the Environmental Policy Filter, and others.
- The high-level goals have been structured in an organized manner, not prioritized.

The following was noted during discussion on the organization of the Strategy Goals and Recommendations:

- The numbered list may be interpreted as prioritized; it was determined that this was not the intention. Priority could be determined using different metrics and indicators.
- Item 1 could be better characterized by stating "completing the inventory of Saanich".
- The use of the term "connectivity" in the document is challenging, many areas lack connectivity. The definition is unclear and can be confusing; there should be a better understanding of the science and definitions behind the term.
- Although the list is not prioritized, it was noted that numbers 4 & 6 may be better placed higher on the list as they are both important aspects.
- Prioritizing public understanding of biodiversity and encouraging the creation of biodiverse spaces on private lands go together, you cannot have one without the other.
- There is an opportunity for a more qualitative approach, including understanding where the data gaps exist. An example of condition assessments for aquatic ecosystems was given as there is a data condition assessment of the Colquitz River done in the late 1990's. Other lakes and streams have not been assessed, so we know that this important information is missing and monitoring progress is not possible.
- Biodiversity on agricultural lands needs to be considered, as the typical monoculture farming methods are harmful to biodiversity and pesticides destroy the environment.
- There isn't a retrospective analysis of how effective the pulling together program is. We need better data to monitor and evaluate programs within the District.
- Preventing loss of biodiversity needs to be a priority ahead of restoration. Preserving the land and environments that are rich in biodiversity is of utmost importance.
- Better promoting backyard biodiversity in the community would be beneficial.
- The ranking system is not ideal as those items identified as low priorities will likely never get done. While they may get bumped up to a higher priority when the strategy is updated or refreshed, there is a potential they could be forgotten.
- Highlighting some as items as critical may be favorable, defining ranking is problematic.
- "Opportunistic recommendations" may be a better description than low priority.
- When considering the cost of implementing actions, we also need to factor in the cost of not doing them. While the cost to complete an action may seem high, there are many implications and negative things that could happen or be made worse by not completing them. An example of climate change was given and considering how not protecting biodiversity now may increase extreme weather events and related costs long term.
- The timeline to complete the actions will vary, the BCS will be reviewed and updated by staff periodically, likely every 5 years. New goals or actions will be added as needed.

RATIFICATION OF STEWARDSHIP BRIEF

Committee member C. Lowe gave an overview of the recent updates to the Stewardship Brief. Members were invited to provide comments prior to ratification of the document. The following was noted during committee discussion:

- The committee has reviewed the updated document as it was attached with agenda.
- This document has been reviewed and supported previously; however a formal motion has not yet been made. Formalizing support for the document is necessary.
- Thorough review and subsequent updates have led to a robust document which committee members believe to be thorough and informational.

MOVED by B. Wilkes and Seconded by C. Lowe: "That the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee endorse the Stewardship Brief and addendum as presented and that the documents be forwarded to Diamond Head Consulting."

CARRIED

RATIFICATION OF COLLATED RESPONSE TO DHC BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION STRATEGY DOCUMENT

The Chair gave an overview of the responses to the DHC BCS document. Members were invited to provide comments prior to ratification of the document. The following was noted during committee discussion:

- Committee members expressed interest in having this document and other documents available on the Saanich website.
- The document has already been sent to DHC and considered prior to the meeting, this motion formalizes the process and confirms that the document sent was what the committee wanted DHC to receive.

MOVED by K. Brown and Seconded by C. Lowe: "That the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee endorse the Collated Response to the DHC Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Document as presented and that the document be forwarded to Diamond Head Consulting."

The Motion was then Put and CARRIED

DISCUSSION OF RSTC MOTIONS (2020-2023)

The Chair gave an overview of the motions passed by the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee from the beginning of the process up until June 2023. The following was noted during committee discussion:

- There were several motions made, this document summarises them and outcomes.
- The document provides a fascinating journey through what has been done by the committee to date, committee members thanked the Chair for preparing it.
- In June of 2021 the committee made a motion to use conservation standards approach, it was the consensus of member that this approach should be used going forward; however, the request never materialised.
- This document will allow for future investigation and understanding of the process.

Committee members T. Stevens and B. Wilkes will work together to update the document and bring it back to the next committee meeting.

UPDATE TO ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY GAP ANALYSIS

Committee member K. Brown gave an overview of the Environmental Policy Gap Analysis. Members were invited to provide comments prior to ratification of the document. The following was noted during committee discussion:

- There are lots of policies at Saanich, there is a benefit in identifying where gaps in environmental protection and preservation measures exist.
- The gap analysis was created by staff early in the Resilient Saanich process. Many policies have been updated, and some new policies created. An update to the analysis may be beneficial to ensure it is current.
- Determining opportunities for new policies is one benefit of gathering data gaps.
- Including more marine and terrestrial targets in policies would be beneficial.
- The analysis is a good place to determine what aspects of the environment do not have policies, or few policies to support conservation goals.
- This process will be complex and time consuming, but it needs to be updated as the 2020 draft was obscure and the committee now has new policies in place.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion from B. Wilkes, the meeting adjourned at 822 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for September 28, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

_____
Tory Stevens, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

_____
Committee Secretary

Compilation of issues and concerns regarding Ecosystem Mapping Layers Provided on the Saanich Map GIS system - July 21, 2023

I have put together the following information based on my field investigations and analysis, as well as other individual's comments and reports regarding the following ecosystem map layers that are provided on the Saanich Map GIS system – Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory (SEI), Coastal Douglas-fir Terrestrial Ecosystem Mapping (CDF TEM) and Saanich Ecosystem Mapping (SEM). Many of these properties and areas provided below do not meet the scientific criteria of the sensitive ecosystem inventory standard or TEM standards. Many of these properties do not have natural ecosystems, or fragments thereof, and many have either been mapped incorrectly or have never been viewed and verified by the original mappers to confirm the occurrence of a natural ecosystem or fragment and whether they fit the ecosystem map unit that is indicated on the map layers. Over 125 properties and areas are indicated in these lists.

Very little field verification by qualified ecologists has been done for any of these inventories on private properties. Many other natural or near natural ecosystems, and ecosystem fragments, occur within Saanich Parks and have not been mapped or delineated as Sensitive Ecosystems or ecosystems at risk on the Saanich Map system. I have included an analysis I have done in the past, of all Saanich Parks and the unmapped Sensitive Ecosystems and fragments thereof that occur within over 100 of these parks.

Most of these areas indicated below are within Saanich's Urban Containment Boundary (UCB). I have viewed multiple natural ecosystems and ecosystem fragments on private properties in rural areas of Saanich. Most areas, however, are unknown as to whether the mapping is correct within rural Saanich.

This ecosystem mapping should be updated or replaced by new TEM/SEI mapping as proposed by the RSTC in their March 29, 2022 meeting approving a motion for new TEM/SEI mapping within the UCB and for Saanich Parks:
https://www.saanich.ca/assets/Local~Government/Documents/Committees~and~Boards/RSTC/Minutes/2022~Minutes/2022-03-29-RSTC%20Minutes.pdf

Also see:
https://www.saanich.ca/assets/Local~Government/Documents/Committees~and~Boards/RSTC/Agendas/SEI%20mapping%20in%20Saanich%20Oct%202021.pdf

https://www.saanich.ca/assets/Local~Government/Documents/Committees~and~Boards/RSTC/Agendas/2022~Agendas/Briefing%20Note%20Mapping%20WG.pdf

Properties that no longer support natural ecosystems or sensitive ecosystems

A) SEI and TEM mapping

Properties that I provided reports to Saanich Staff and Council during the EDPA process that allowed landowners to submit a request to Council to have them removed.

The following properties were removed from the EDPA Atlas by Council or staff. These same properties have been returned to the TEM mapping indicating that they are natural ecosystems or sensitive ecosystems when they are not. The consultants that did the Coastal Douglas-fir TEM mapping originally used the SEI mapping for areas with Garry oak and related ecosystems, without verifying them on the ground. These same maps, the Coastal Douglas-fir TEM and the SEI maps, were used by Diamond Head Consulting for the State of Biodiversity report.

Alberg Lane

4007/4011 Rainbow Street

4037, 4035, 4039, 4041, 4043 Braefoot Road

4351 Gordon Head Road

4131, 4151, 4171 Glendenning Road

1519, 1521 Cedarglen Road

2768, 2770, 2776, 2780, 2786, 2796, 2810 Sea View Road

2785, 2801, 2811, 2821, 2825, 2831 Tudor Road

<u>Reports were submitted to Saanich between 2017 and 2020 20xx for the following properties but the SEI was never removed from the ESA Atlas</u> (I can provide reports, but they should be in Saanich files).

The reports show that none of the properties below support Sensitive Ecosystems, therefore they should be removed from the Saanich GIS mapping.

820 McKenzie Ave

3871 High St.

1555, 1559, 1563, 1565, 1567, 1569, 1571 Brodick Cres

4048 Hopesmore Drive

1586 Feltham Road

1558, 1560, 1568, 1570 Orleton Pl.

4038 Cedar Hill Road

4451 Shore Way

4343, 4355 Gordon Head Road

4003 Birring Place 1446 Simon Road (part of the report for Braefoot Road and Malton Avenue indicating no properties met the Sensitive Ecosystem level – see Stewart Guy and Brian Wilkes report below.

2936 Mt. Baker View Road – ask Jon Secter – he did a report there – lots more of these Coastal Bluff (CB) Sensitive Ecosystems are in poor ecological condition – maybe all. No longer Sensitive Ecosystems.

Matt Fairbarns 2015 quote about Coastal Bluff Sensitive Ecosystems - "*I believe that the site is most likely to be taken over by invasive species in the absence of management to prevent such an outcome. That is my best opinion as a biologist with considerable experience watching such ecosystems. I would hasten to add, however, that the same could be said of virtually every coastal bluff community in Saanich*."

<u>SEI Properties that I or other professionals have written reports for that indicated that these are not sensitive ecosystems – these should be removed from mapping. but still occur on maps – no Sensitive Ecosystem</u>

Some of these reports have not been submitted but could be provided if Saanich does not have copies.

St. Andrews High School 4040 Nelthorpe Street

1241/1249 Maywood Road (covered in ivy – also has a covenant) (report by SWELL consulting following a different standard) – however, there is no sensitive ecosystem present.

4169, 4171 Lynnfield Cres.

4012 Malton Avenue

4050 Nelthorpe Street – also see Matt Fairbarns report indicating poor ecological condition.

4009 TO 4011 Rainbow Hill Lane (report provided for this development indicated no rare or sensitive ecosystems – Adolf Ceska and Susan Blundell)

923 Woodhall Drive

4368 Wilkinson Road

978-A, 978-B Milner Avenue (SWELL Report – 90% of herb layer is bluebells)

1000 Beckwith Avenue – Aqua-Tex report

4368, 4360, 4362 Lochside Drive – Aqua-Tex report

SEI Mapped Properties that I have viewed on the ground that are not Sensitive Ecosystems that should be removed from the ecosystem maps – see following list.

Most of these areas are not Sensitive Ecosystems and should be removed. Mostly lawn or ornamental plants.

Rogers Court – 825, 829,

Rogers Way – 783, 785, 787,791, 795, 797, 801, 805, 809, 813, 817, 821 (SEI and TEM)

(Partial removal of some of these has occurred – still fully mapped as a TEM Douglas-fir – Onion grass plant community of young forest). No natural vegetation.

Map 10 – Rhododendron gardens in Playfair Park – large area not removed – mapped as Sensitive Ecosystem.

Map 11 Wetherby Park – Cedar Hill Road – lawn area – does not meet the SEI standard. Could remain on map if there is a plan to restore this park.

Properties that RSTC members (Stewart Guy and Brian Wilkes) visited that do not have Sensitive Ecosystems – SEI mapping – should be removed from the Saanich GIS system.

See page 9 -
https://www.saanich.ca/assets/Local~Government/Documents/Committees~and~Boards/RSTC/Agendas/2021-12-16-full-agenda.pdf

1. Wilkinson Rd at Loenholm Rd. Mapped as WD, or woodland, but is mostly shrubs including red-osier and rose. Some of the property is fenced and cannot be accessed. From what we saw, it is in fair condition.
2. Rogers Court lots 825, 828, 829. Mapped as WD. Or woodland, but in those lots it is lawn and garden under trees. No sensitive ecosystem.
3. 4040 Nelthorpe St. at Lakeview. Mapped as WD, or woodland. Nice grove of Garry oak but completely overwhelmed by invasive blackberry, ivy, daphne. No sensitive ecosystem.
4. Milner Rd 978B. Mapped as WD, or woodland. Cleared of shrubs, ground cover blackberry and agronomic grasses, some garden escapes. No sensitive ecosystem. Not a woodland.
5. Lynnfield Cres 4169. Mapped as WD, woodland. Lot has been stripped of shrub layer; only blackberry, ivy, and agronomic grasses on ground. Not a sensitive ecosystem. Not a woodland.
6. Payton Place 1430. Mapped as WD. Open field with several trees. Filled with thistle, queen Anne's lace, agronomic grasses and other invasives. Not a sensitive ecosystem
7. Malton Ave, near 4084. Mapped as WD, woodland. Dominated by ivy and blackberry. Not a

sensitive ecosystem
8. Simon Rd, behind 1446, viewed from Birring PL. Mapped as WD, woodland. Open area of agronomic grasses under trees. Not a sensitive ecosystem.

B) Saanich Ecosystem Mapping (SEM) maps, mapped as 'sensitive ecosystems' according to criteria provided in the Moraia Grau and Associates reports and mapping but which were never vetted by QEPs and never approved by Saanich Council. See https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/community/natural-environment/environmental-planning/saanich-ecosystem-mapping.html

The SEM maps were created to meet the following: "*The overall objective of the Saanich initiative is to identify and map remaining environmentally significant areas, including smaller sensitive, rare and endangered ecosystems, species at risk (SAR) sites, as well as buffers and linkages between these areas."* See Page 1 of: https://www.saanich.ca/assets/Community/Documents/ESA%20Mapping%20Phase%201%20Report.pdf

The sites and properties provided below by a variety of professionals do not meet the "*sensitive, rare and endangered ecosystem*" category.

Properties viewed by RSTC member (Brian Wilkes) that are on Saanich Map GIS, that are not Sensitive Ecosystems and should be removed.

https://www.saanich.ca/assets/Local~Government/Documents/Committees~and~Boards/RSTC/Agendas/2021-02-16-rstf-full-agenda.pdf See page 41 to 43

Map 7 – Camosun College – large area of lawn under oak trees, native plant garden is covered in invasive and agronomic grasses.

Map 10 – Kathleen Street-Rock Street - lawn, garden, invasives.

Map 17 – Zinnia Court – ROW mapped as Woodland, but covered in invasive species – ivy, blackberry; (this one could be kept because it is public land which could be restored)

Map 17 Lavender Avenue, Montcalm Street – mapped as Woodland when they are lawn, garden, roadway, pathways, invasives and a few native species under oak trees.

Map 19 – San Marino – front yards –lawn and garden under oak trees – a few native species; Cumberland Street – dominated by invasive species.

Map 26 – 4140 Quadra Street is lawn and garden under oak trees, etc. (I have viewed this one on the ground as well)

4140 Quadra Street – also TEM – (I have viewed on the ground as well) – lawn and gardens.

SEM Properties that I have viewed that are not Sensitive Ecosystems and should be removed from Saanich Map.

Alberg Lane southwest side of property – this was not a sensitive ecosystem before the development – report by two biologists for Alberg property.

4195 to 4221 Glendenning Road – lawn and gardens in backyards.

Oakwinds Street, Oakdale Place – dense invasive species covering much of this unit.

Wende Road, Athlone Drive – private back yards, lawn, invasives, horticultural species

Persimmon Close – private back yards, lawns, etc.

Map 20 – McKenzie Avenue at Cedar Hill Road – mostly invasive species under oak trees – including the Covenant area.

Much of this Saanich Ecosystem mapping on Map 20 are private back yards with gardens, invasives and few native species.

Map 26 – Lily Avenue Property mapped as Wetland – it is not a wetland.

Jefferson Street/Feltham Road – oak trees in back yards – look at older orthophotos on Saanich GIS can see the lawn and garden in these back yards.

Most SEM mapping within the UCB is tree canopy with non-native understory – in my opinion only public land areas should be kept in this mapping within the UCB. Possibly keep rural areas but these need to be assessed on the ground to confirm that Sensitive Ecosystems or other Environmentally Significant Areas exist.

Preliminary Analysis of the Coastal Douglas-fir Terrestrial Ecosystem Map (TEM) and Saanich Parks.

The Coastal Douglas-fir TEM was mapped by Madrone Environmental Services Consultants and released in 2007. **No field verification was undertaken on private lands within the District of Saanich for this mapping.**

It is difficult to tell exactly what is mapped for each polygon – it appears from Saanich Map GIS that only one of the three possible plant communities that can be mapped in TEM has been displayed in the data in the legend on the left. If this further information was provided, individuals could do more of an analysis of what is mapped within each polygon for Saanich Parks and other areas.

Many parks, as shown on the Saanich Map GIS system have no mapping at all or there are big gaps in coverage. For example, there is a large gap for much of Mount Douglas Park (at least as displayed), and for Francis King CRD Park and Mt. Work CRD Park, – parts of these parks are missing on Saanich GIS. Many smaller parks have no mapping but do have natural or semi natural ecosystems that should be mapped as natural assets for Saanich.

There is no accurate ecosystem inventory of all the parks and public areas within Saanich, that I am aware of.

Ecological condition for all ecosystems is needed to be able to determine restoration requirements, particularly for Garry oak ecosystems, Terrestrial Herbaceous and Coastal Bluff ecosystems, and for forested ecosystems where invasive shrubs dominate, or other degradation has occurred – this is not provided in any mapping to date.

Over ten Saanich Parks have Trembling Aspen Woodland Sensitive Ecosystems. It appears that not one of these are mapped by the Coastal Douglas-fir TEM or by the new Saanich Ecosystem Mapping (SEM) as Aspen Woodlands. Trembling Aspen communities are provincially listed ecosystems at risk, much rarer than Garry oak ecosystems.

Just a few examples below (There are others):

Most of the TEM Woodland and other areas within the built environment just mirror the polygons that were used in the SEI mapping – many of which also have not been field verified.

The TEM mapping is incorrect in many places, below are some examples.

Saanich Park	**What is here?**	**What is mapped by Coastal Douglas-fir TEM?**
Phyllis Park – viewpoint area	Garry oak Woodland; Terrestrial Herbaceous Sensitive Ecosystem	FdPl – Arbutus – mapped polygon to south of this area meets this description, and seems mapped correctly
South Valley Park	Trembling Aspen Woodland; Garry oak Woodland; Riparian Shrub	Fd – Oniongrass – Young Forest
Feltham Park – east side	Garry oak Woodland	Fd - Salal
Feltham Park – west side	Garry oak Woodland; Riparian young forest; Cottonwood Riparian	CwBg - Foamflower
Bow Park	Garry oak Woodland; Trembling Aspen Woodland; Riparian Shrub around pond	Fd - Salal

Mount Tolmie Park – southeastern polygon	Garry oak woodland	FdPl - Arbutus
Cedar Hill Golf Course – oval-shaped polygon northwest of Clubhouse	Garry oak woodland	FdPl - Arbutus
Top of Mount Doug Park	Garry oak woodland	FdPl - Arbutus
Cuthbert Holmes Park north side	Nootka Rose - Pacific Crab Apple	Early successional states – probably was Garry oak before it was farm then shrub – not an estuarine community
Playfair Park, Mount Tolmie, Mount Douglas, Christmas Hill Park	The Conservation Data Centre describes a red-listed plant community *Quercus garryana / Bromus carinatus* (Garry oak / California brome) plant community, which is more appropriate for these areas.	Garry Oak - Brome/mixed grasses (

List of known problems on private land with the Coastal Douglas-fir TEM mapping

Properties that have errors in the TEM mapping which occur within the Urban Containment Boundary (UCB) are provided below.

Many of the rural properties are unknown because no one has done field verification on most of these areas, except in CRD Parks. This should be completed, with landowner cooperation.

Location	Mapped as in Coastal Douglas-fir TEM	Should be mapped as
Queenswood Drive area	01 Douglas-fir – Salal - large unit	Mostly 02 site series – Douglas-fir – Arbutus and people's lawn and ornamentals; some shallow soil Garry oak areas as well
4225 Blenkinsop Road (4239 Blenkinsop Road seems correct)	This property is mapped as 01 Douglas-fir – Salal	Eastern portion of Mount Douglas golf course has a deep soil Garry oak – oceanspray site association. Much of Madrona Farms is

		mapped as this unit – the cultivated field areas should be separated from the forested and woodland areas.
4317 Blenkinsop Road	01 Douglas-fir – Salal	Area north of Madrona Farms is all Garry oak – not 01 site series – large unit – some of it may be correct
Alberg Lane, 1521 to 1511 Cedarglen Road; 4151 to 4195 Glendenning Road	01 Douglas-fir – Salal	Started mostly as Garry oak unit – little 01 if any – much is now lawns and houses and was originally a farm on Alberg Lane when mapped by Madrone consultants.
Little Saanich Mountain – steep south and southwestern facing portion below Cladina - Wallace's selaginella map unit	01 Douglas-fir – salal unit mapped	This is more likely 02 or 03 unit – steep warm aspect, shallow soil unit
Map 19 Nicholson Street and Lane; Licorice Lane	Mapped as Woodland	Most of the area is houses, roads, and non-vegetated areas – appears to be a corridor but is not; - what year were the air photos that was used for this mapping?

<u>Saanich Parks that have sensitive ecosystems that are not mapped as supporting natural or near natural sensitive ecosystems or are mapped incorrectly – see long list that I put together – of the 171 parks over 100 parks have unmapped sensitive ecosystem fragments.</u>

My table of these unmapped sensitive ecosystems in Saanich Parks is attached.

I will be willing to discuss any of these issues with Saanich staff or the RSTC.

Respectfully submitted,

Ted Lea,

Vegetation Ecologist

Compilation of issues and concerns regarding Ecosystem Mapping Layers Provided on the Saanich Map GIS system - July 21, 2023

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Also see:
https://www.saanich.ca/assets/Local~Government/Documents/Committees~and~Boards/RSTC/Agendas/SEI%20mapping%20in%20Saanich%20Oct%202021.pdf

https://www.saanich.ca/assets/Local~Government/Documents/Committees~and~Boards/RSTC/Agendas/2022~Agendas/Briefing%20Note%20Mapping%20WG.pdf

Properties that no longer support natural ecosystems or sensitive ecosystems

A) SEI and TEM mapping

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2768, 2770, 2776, 2780, 2786, 2796, 2810 Sea View Road

2785, 2801, 2811, 2821, 2825, 2831 Tudor Road

<u>Reports were submitted to Saanich between 2017 and 2020 20xx for the following properties but the SEI was never removed from the ESA Atlas</u> (I can provide reports, but they should be in Saanich files).

The reports show that none of the properties below support Sensitive Ecosystems, therefore they should be removed from the Saanich GIS mapping.

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1555, 1559, 1563, 1565, 1567, 1569, 1571 Brodick Cres

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1586 Feltham Road

1558, 1560, 1568, 1570 Orleton Pl.

4038 Cedar Hill Road

4451 Shore Way

4343, 4355 Gordon Head Road

4003 Birring Place 1446 Simon Road (part of the report for Braefoot Road and Malton Avenue indicating no properties met the Sensitive Ecosystem level – see Stewart Guy and Brian Wilkes report below.

2936 Mt. Baker View Road – ask Jon Secter – he did a report there – lots more of these Coastal Bluff (CB) Sensitive Ecosystems are in poor ecological condition – maybe all. No longer Sensitive Ecosystems.

Matt Fairbarns 2015 quote about Coastal Bluff Sensitive Ecosystems - "*I believe that the site is most likely to be taken over by invasive species in the absence of management to prevent such an outcome. That is my best opinion as a biologist with considerable experience watching such ecosystems. I would hasten to add, however, that the same could be said of virtually every coastal bluff community in Saanich*."

<u>SEI Properties that I or other professionals have written reports for that indicated that these are not sensitive ecosystems – these should be removed from mapping. but still occur on maps – no Sensitive Ecosystem</u>

Some of these reports have not been submitted but could be provided if Saanich does not have copies.

St. Andrews High School 4040 Nelthorpe Street

1241/1249 Maywood Road (covered in ivy – also has a covenant) (report by SWELL consulting following a different standard) – however, there is no sensitive ecosystem present.

4169, 4171 Lynnfield Cres.

4012 Malton Avenue

4050 Nelthorpe Street – also see Matt Fairbarns report indicating poor ecological condition.

4009 TO 4011 Rainbow Hill Lane (report provided for this development indicated no rare or sensitive ecosystems – Adolf Ceska and Susan Blundell)

923 Woodhall Drive

4368 Wilkinson Road

978-A, 978-B Milner Avenue (SWELL Report – 90% of herb layer is bluebells)

1000 Beckwith Avenue – Aqua-Tex report

4368, 4360, 4362 Lochside Drive – Aqua-Tex report

SEI Mapped Properties that I have viewed on the ground that are not Sensitive Ecosystems that should be removed from the ecosystem maps – see following list.

Most of these areas are not Sensitive Ecosystems and should be removed. Mostly lawn or ornamental plants.

Rogers Court – 825, 829,

Rogers Way – 783, 785, 787,791, 795, 797, 801, 805, 809, 813, 817, 821 (SEI and TEM)

(Partial removal of some of these has occurred – still fully mapped as a TEM Douglas-fir – Onion grass plant community of young forest). No natural vegetation.

Map 10 – Rhododendron gardens in Playfair Park – large area not removed – mapped as Sensitive Ecosystem.

Map 11 Wetherby Park – Cedar Hill Road – lawn area – does not meet the SEI standard. Could remain on map if there is a plan to restore this park.

Properties that RSTC members (Stewart Guy and Brian Wilkes) visited that do not have Sensitive Ecosystems – SEI mapping – should be removed from the Saanich GIS system.

See page 9 -
https://www.saanich.ca/assets/Local~Government/Documents/Committees~and~Boards/RSTC/Agendas/2021-12-16-full-agenda.pdf

1. Wilkinson Rd at Loenholm Rd. Mapped as WD, or woodland, but is mostly shrubs including red-osier and rose. Some of the property is fenced and cannot be accessed. From what we saw, it is in fair condition.
2. Rogers Court lots 825, 828, 829. Mapped as WD. Or woodland, but in those lots it is lawn and garden under trees. No sensitive ecosystem.
3. 4040 Nelthorpe St. at Lakeview. Mapped as WD, or woodland. Nice grove of Garry oak but completely overwhelmed by invasive blackberry, ivy, daphne. No sensitive ecosystem.
4. Milner Rd 978B. Mapped as WD, or woodland. Cleared of shrubs, ground cover blackberry and agronomic grasses, some garden escapes. No sensitive ecosystem. Not a woodland.
5. Lynnfield Cres 4169. Mapped as WD, woodland. Lot has been stripped of shrub layer; only blackberry, ivy, and agronomic grasses on ground. Not a sensitive ecosystem. Not a woodland.
6. Payton Place 1430. Mapped as WD. Open field with several trees. Filled with thistle, queen Anne's lace, agronomic grasses and other invasives. Not a sensitive ecosystem
7. Malton Ave, near 4084. Mapped as WD, woodland. Dominated by ivy and blackberry. Not a

sensitive ecosystem
8. Simon Rd, behind 1446, viewed from Birring PL. Mapped as WD, woodland. Open area of agronomic grasses under trees. Not a sensitive ecosystem.

B) Saanich Ecosystem Mapping (SEM) maps, mapped as 'sensitive ecosystems' according to criteria provided in the Moraia Grau and Associates reports and mapping but which were never vetted by QEPs and never approved by Saanich Council. See https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/community/natural-environment/environmental-planning/saanich-ecosystem-mapping.html

The SEM maps were created to meet the following: "*The overall objective of the Saanich initiative is to identify and map remaining environmentally significant areas, including smaller sensitive, rare and endangered ecosystems, species at risk (SAR) sites, as well as buffers and linkages between these areas."* See Page 1 of: https://www.saanich.ca/assets/Community/Documents/ESA%20Mapping%20Phase%201%20Report.pdf

The sites and properties provided below by a variety of professionals do not meet the "*sensitive, rare and endangered ecosystem*" category.

Properties viewed by RSTC member (Brian Wilkes) that are on Saanich Map GIS, that are not Sensitive Ecosystems and should be removed.

https://www.saanich.ca/assets/Local~Government/Documents/Committees~and~Boards/RSTC/Agendas/2021-02-16-rstf-full-agenda.pdf See page 41 to 43

Map 7 – Camosun College – large area of lawn under oak trees, native plant garden is covered in invasive and agronomic grasses.

Map 10 – Kathleen Street-Rock Street - lawn, garden, invasives.

Map 17 – Zinnia Court – ROW mapped as Woodland, but covered in invasive species – ivy, blackberry; (this one could be kept because it is public land which could be restored)

Map 17 Lavender Avenue, Montcalm Street – mapped as Woodland when they are lawn, garden, roadway, pathways, invasives and a few native species under oak trees.

Map 19 – San Marino – front yards –lawn and garden under oak trees – a few native species; Cumberland Street – dominated by invasive species.

Map 26 – 4140 Quadra Street is lawn and garden under oak trees, etc. (I have viewed this one on the ground as well)

4140 Quadra Street – also TEM – (I have viewed on the ground as well) – lawn and gardens.

SEM Properties that I have viewed that are not Sensitive Ecosystems and should be removed from Saanich Map.

Alberg Lane southwest side of property – this was not a sensitive ecosystem before the development – report by two biologists for Alberg property.

4195 to 4221 Glendenning Road – lawn and gardens in backyards.

Oakwinds Street, Oakdale Place – dense invasive species covering much of this unit.

Wende Road, Athlone Drive – private back yards, lawn, invasives, horticultural species

Persimmon Close – private back yards, lawns, etc.

Map 20 – McKenzie Avenue at Cedar Hill Road – mostly invasive species under oak trees – including the Covenant area.

Much of this Saanich Ecosystem mapping on Map 20 are private back yards with gardens, invasives and few native species.

Map 26 – Lily Avenue Property mapped as Wetland – it is not a wetland.

Jefferson Street/Feltham Road – oak trees in back yards – look at older orthophotos on Saanich GIS can see the lawn and garden in these back yards.

Most SEM mapping within the UCB is tree canopy with non-native understory – in my opinion only public land areas should be kept in this mapping within the UCB. Possibly keep rural areas but these need to be assessed on the ground to confirm that Sensitive Ecosystems or other Environmentally Significant Areas exist.

Preliminary Analysis of the Coastal Douglas-fir Terrestrial Ecosystem Map (TEM) and Saanich Parks.

The Coastal Douglas-fir TEM was mapped by Madrone Environmental Services Consultants and released in 2007. **No field verification was undertaken on private lands within the District of Saanich for this mapping.**

It is difficult to tell exactly what is mapped for each polygon – it appears from Saanich Map GIS that only one of the three possible plant communities that can be mapped in TEM has been displayed in the data in the legend on the left. If this further information was provided, individuals could do more of an analysis of what is mapped within each polygon for Saanich Parks and other areas.

Many parks, as shown on the Saanich Map GIS system have no mapping at all or there are big gaps in coverage. For example, there is a large gap for much of Mount Douglas Park (at least as displayed), and for Francis King CRD Park and Mt. Work CRD Park, – parts of these parks are missing on Saanich GIS. Many smaller parks have no mapping but do have natural or semi natural ecosystems that should be mapped as natural assets for Saanich.

There is no accurate ecosystem inventory of all the parks and public areas within Saanich, that I am aware of.

Ecological condition for all ecosystems is needed to be able to determine restoration requirements, particularly for Garry oak ecosystems, Terrestrial Herbaceous and Coastal Bluff ecosystems, and for forested ecosystems where invasive shrubs dominate, or other degradation has occurred – this is not provided in any mapping to date.

Over ten Saanich Parks have Trembling Aspen Woodland Sensitive Ecosystems. It appears that not one of these are mapped by the Coastal Douglas-fir TEM or by the new Saanich Ecosystem Mapping (SEM) as Aspen Woodlands. Trembling Aspen communities are provincially listed ecosystems at risk, much rarer than Garry oak ecosystems.

Just a few examples below (There are others):

Most of the TEM Woodland and other areas within the built environment just mirror the polygons that were used in the SEI mapping – many of which also have not been field verified.

The TEM mapping is incorrect in many places, below are some examples.

Saanich Park	**What is here?**	**What is mapped by Coastal Douglas-fir TEM?**
Phyllis Park – viewpoint area	Garry oak Woodland; Terrestrial Herbaceous Sensitive Ecosystem	FdPl – Arbutus – mapped polygon to south of this area meets this description, and seems mapped correctly
South Valley Park	Trembling Aspen Woodland; Garry oak Woodland; Riparian Shrub	Fd – Oniongrass – Young Forest
Feltham Park – east side	Garry oak Woodland	Fd - Salal
Feltham Park – west side	Garry oak Woodland; Riparian young forest; Cottonwood Riparian	CwBg - Foamflower
Bow Park	Garry oak Woodland; Trembling Aspen Woodland; Riparian Shrub around pond	Fd - Salal

Mount Tolmie Park – southeastern polygon	Garry oak woodland	FdPl - Arbutus
Cedar Hill Golf Course – oval-shaped polygon northwest of Clubhouse	Garry oak woodland	FdPl - Arbutus
Top of Mount Doug Park	Garry oak woodland	FdPl - Arbutus
Cuthbert Holmes Park north side	Nootka Rose - Pacific Crab Apple	Early successional states – probably was Garry oak before it was farm then shrub – not an estuarine community
Playfair Park, Mount Tolmie, Mount Douglas, Christmas Hill Park	The Conservation Data Centre describes a red-listed plant community *Quercus garryana / Bromus carinatus* (Garry oak / California brome) plant community, which is more appropriate for these areas.	Garry Oak - Brome/mixed grasses (

List of known problems on private land with the Coastal Douglas-fir TEM mapping

Properties that have errors in the TEM mapping which occur within the Urban Containment Boundary (UCB) are provided below.

Many of the rural properties are unknown because no one has done field verification on most of these areas, except in CRD Parks. This should be completed, with landowner cooperation.

Location	Mapped as in Coastal Douglas-fir TEM	Should be mapped as
Queenswood Drive area	01 Douglas-fir – Salal - large unit	Mostly 02 site series – Douglas-fir – Arbutus and people's lawn and ornamentals; some shallow soil Garry oak areas as well
4225 Blenkinsop Road (4239 Blenkinsop Road seems correct)	This property is mapped as 01 Douglas-fir – Salal	Eastern portion of Mount Douglas golf course has a deep soil Garry oak – oceanspray site association. Much of Madrona Farms is

		mapped as this unit – the cultivated field areas should be separated from the forested and woodland areas.
4317 Blenkinsop Road	01 Douglas-fir – Salal	Area north of Madrona Farms is all Garry oak – not 01 site series – large unit – some of it may be correct
Alberg Lane, 1521 to 1511 Cedarglen Road; 4151 to 4195 Glendenning Road	01 Douglas-fir – Salal	Started mostly as Garry oak unit – little 01 if any – much is now lawns and houses and was originally a farm on Alberg Lane when mapped by Madrone consultants.
Little Saanich Mountain – steep south and southwestern facing portion below Cladina - Wallace's selaginella map unit	01 Douglas-fir – salal unit mapped	This is more likely 02 or 03 unit – steep warm aspect, shallow soil unit
Map 19 Nicholson Street and Lane; Licorice Lane	Mapped as Woodland	Most of the area is houses, roads, and non-vegetated areas – appears to be a corridor but is not; - what year were the air photos that was used for this mapping?

<u>Saanich Parks that have sensitive ecosystems that are not mapped as supporting natural or near natural sensitive ecosystems or are mapped incorrectly – see long list that I put together – of the 171 parks over 100 parks have unmapped sensitive ecosystem fragments.</u>

My table of these unmapped sensitive ecosystems in Saanich Parks is attached.

I will be willing to discuss any of these issues with Saanich staff or the RSTC.

Respectfully submitted,

Ted Lea,

Vegetation Ecologist