

MINUTES
RESILIENT SAANICH TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Via Microsoft Teams

October 20, 2022

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

Guests: Jeff Leahy (CRD Parks), Jody Watson (CRD Environment), Cassandra Cummings, Nguet-Ann Ng (Diamond Head Consulting)

Staff: Eva Riccius, Senior Manager of Parks; Thomas Munson, Senior Environmental Planner; Paula Bronson, Parks Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 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 S. Guy: "That the Agenda for the October 20, 2022, Resilient Saanich Technical Committee meeting be approved as amended."

CARRIED

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

MOVED by K. Brown and Seconded by S. Guy: "That the minutes of the September 15, 2022 Resilient Saanich Technical Committee meeting be adopted as presented."

CARRIED

RECEIPT OF CORRESPONDENCE

The committee received a memo from the Senior Manager of Parks to formalize the Milestone 3 Workplan.

UPDATE ON DIAMOND HEAD CONSULTING MAPPING

Cassandra Cummings and Nguet-Anh Ng provided on update on the Diamon Head Consulting Mapping. The following was noted:

- Diamond Head showed draft maps and updated on the State of Biodiversity project.
- Cassandra will send draft maps and descriptions for Committee's information.

The following was noted during committee discussion:

- J. Leahy raised concerns with one of the maps and requested referral of the maps for review.
- Diamond Head Consulting to send next set of draft maps to CRD Parks for review.

OVERVIEW OF BIODIVERSITY RELATED INITIATIVES AT CRD

The Senior Manager of Parks provided an overview of biodiversity related initiatives at the CRD. The following was noted:

- Have a unique eco-system because of the coastal Douglas firs ecosystem.
- One of the CRD Parks targets is land acquisition.
- Along with most Municipalities the CRD has a permitting process for activities to make sure conditions are met to preserve biodiversity.
- Impact assessments are carried out for environmental, social, cultural and recreational.
- CRD follows Best Management Practices, check list for certain conditions.
- CRD has interpretive program which has been a huge success getting youth out.
- CRD has had some big wins including: Mountain biking and development of authorized trails and stopping the construction of unauthorized trails.
- CRD has a Ranger program to assist with public education and compliance.
- CRD is working on Cultural Heritage protection. Interim parks and trail plan focussing on First Nations reconciliation.
- CRD is starting small nursery to help with threatened plants used for their own restoration sites.

The Supervisor of Environmental Planning CRD noted projects of interest for Saanich's Biodiversity strategy. The following was noted:

- Harbour Projects: Portage Inlet, Gorge Waterway, Victoria Harbour, Esquimalt Harbour and Esquimalt Lagoon.
- Invasive species monitoring: eg Green crab monitoring. Found three Green Crabs in Esquimalt Lagoon
- Intertidal Inventory/Backshore inventory with ecological rating.
- CRD is looking at the potential of partnerships between six Municipalities to expand intertidal and backshore inventory.
- Land cover data: Looking at data from 1995, 2011, 2019, 2021. The most recent report used 2019 LiDar data.
- Looking at potential tree planting areas to plant trees that don't have them now.
- Two billion trees - working with the municipalities to put together a proposal to federal government.
- CRD in discussions with First Nations re planting. Want to do complete re forestation. Grant does not to allow planting in wetlands. Can not plant on private land. Not a lot of non private land. Funding depends on monitoring.
- CRD working on the development and delivery of outreach programs.
- CRD encourages collaboration on management of invasive species.
- There is a focus on high priority invasive species.
- Working on Canada Goose management surveys.
- Biodiversity Inventory working on inventory from a variety of sources.

FEDERAL FUNDING FOR LAND ACQUISITION

Committee Member S. Guy noted that the federal Government and Nature Canada are exploring a pilot project opportunity to work with municipalities to advance the federal government's commitment to protect 30% of Canada's lands and waters by 2030. More information is expected soon.

AQUATIC DATA

Committee Member B. Wilkes spoke to his memo to the RSTC related to incorporation of aquatic data into the State of Biodiversity Report. The following was noted:

- Challenge is how to exactly incorporate.
- Want to have a chapter or section on fresh water, outlining lakes, wetlands and streams.
- Using Durrell Creek, Swan Creek and Colquitz Creek as examples of functioning and non- functioning.
- Need to identify the gap in biodiversity.
- Data is in a lot of different places that require collating with the aim to incorporate into something useable. Is there some way to pull together the information and summarize? Can something be added from this committee?
- Discussion about whether or not and how to incorporate. RSTC not supportive of a new data layer and map. Diamond Head will write something on aquatic systems for the State of Biodiversity Report, and more can be laid out in the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.

STEWARDSHIP WORKING GROUP SUMMARY

Committee member C. Lowe provided an update on the Stewardship Working Group. The following was noted:

- The group is going in the right direction.
- Felt that going forward the definition of stewardship should be reviewed.
- The question "How far does this group want to go?" was posed to the Committee.

The following was noted during committee discussion:

- Much of the working group's focus on biodiversity is heavily based on plants, trees and shrubs and should also consider animals.
- "Does Stewardship WG consider a need for regulation?" A lot of existing bylaws talk about biodiversity but don't transfer to guidelines.
- Is there a confusion of stewardship with Public and Private lands? Seems to be volunteer based stewardship on Public lands.

APPLICATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY FILTER

Committee members P. Govindarajulu and T. Stevens are hoping to have Rebecca Newlove, the Manager of Sustainability attend next RSTC meeting to provide her thoughts and questions for RSTC discussion with respect to the application of environmental policy filter.

UPDATE FROM COUNCIL LIAISON (AND MEMO)

- New Council sworn in November 7th, 2022
- There will be a new liaison for RSTC.

- Councillor Mersereau offered to share information to help the new councillor, write a final update for the new council and thanked everyone for the hard work in the last two years, said it has been quite remarkable and is looking forward to seeing what the results will be.
- Committee members thanked Councillor Mersereau.

UPDATE ON SECRETARIAT POSITION

The Manager of Parks provided an update on the Secretariat position. The following was noted:

- Call for Proposal has gone out to three consultants and there is hope each will put something together.
- Proposals are due next week.

UPDATE ON WORKSHOP WITH W̱SÁNEĆ COMMUNITIES

The Manager of Parks gave an update on a workshop with W̱SÁNEĆ communities

- November 15th workshop on Urban Forest Strategy and Biodiversity
- Working with Eric Pelkey
- Dr. Brian Thom has agreed to assist with workshop. He has already been working with Saanich and W̱SÁNEĆ community members.
- RSTC should be able to attend along with Saanich staff and consultants.

UPDATE ON CONDITION ASSESSMENT MAPPING

The Chair felt that Cassandra had covered the update.

OTHER

- There will be a soft launch of Saanich Neighbour to Neighbour on October 28th. New program developed by Emergency Services, Sustainability and Parks. More at: [Neighbour to Neighbour Project | District of Saanich](#)
- There will be four weeks of workshops and then each group can apply to do a project. Opportunity to do a biodiversity project if interested. This is a pilot.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion from Brian, the meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for November 17, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

Tory Stevens, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary