



DECISIONS AND ACTIONS

Steering Committee
Wednesday, July 15, 2015

Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club

Present: Sara Stallard, Dorothy Chambers, Yogi Carolsfeld, Cathy Carolsfeld, Julian Anderson, Melissa Huston, Kitty Lloyd, Jody Watson, Tricia Demacedo

Guests: Marlene Lagoa, Township of Esquimalt

DECISIONS				
Next Meeting: 16 September 2015				
ACTIONS			ACTION BY	DUE
1	Identify potential MBS sign locations along waterfront	Jacques and Kitty	Summer	
2	Organize a design charrette to discuss concepts for developing Burnside Gorge local area plan	Jody and Marc Cittone	Fall	
3	Work with CRD staff to develop draft GWI display template, bring to GWI for review	Kitty/Jody	Fall	
4	Send a reminder that Saanich EDPA public information sessions are underway	Kitty	ASAP	
5	Check whether any of GWI suggestions re Cuthbert Holmes Management Plan were incorporated into draft	Kitty	ASAP	
6	Contact GWAS about pledge they developed for people who rent paddle boards/kayaks regarding responsible wildlife viewing	Kitty	ASAP	
7	Collaborate on ways to tackle issue of wildlife/paddling conflicts in the Colquitz	Jody/Tricia	Summer/fall	
8	Send link to video of Colquitz falls	Sara	ASAP	

INFORMATION

Review of action items from 20 May meeting:

GWI Display:

- Planning is underway with CRD communications staff to redesign the GWI display. Waiting for the 2015 aerial photos, taken in May, to be incorporated into CRD mapping system
- Draft will be ready for GWI review in the fall

Presentation: Developing the Esquimalt Neighbourhood Watershed Map

Marlene Lagoa, Community Development Coordinator, Township of Esquimalt

- Marlene is staff liaison on the Esquimalt Environmental Advisory Committee, which has been working on this project for past 2 years
- Final map received approval by council July 6, so can now be made public
- Within the region there is a significant number of discharges with high rating for public health concerns; committee especially concerned with water quality in West Bay
- Purpose is to design a watershed map of the municipality to increase public awareness of the relationship between individual behaviour at home and water quality at stormwater discharges
- Esquimalt is surrounded by water, committee wants to increase public awareness and understanding of where water flows from their neighbourhood, and what everyone can do to reduce contaminants entering the surrounding waterways through the stormwater system
- Environmental Advisory Committee wanted to create an accessible map, easy to understand, available online as 6 separate downloadable pages
- Raise awareness of numbering of storm drain outfalls so people can identify the one that drains their property and neighbourhood, and also for spill reporting
- Map is colour coded so drainage areas are matched with numbered outfalls
- In presenting the finished map to council, committee recommended that Neighbourhood Watersheds Map be endorsed as a tool for community stewardship programs; to be posted on Esquimalt website along with links to other sources of information on watershed protection (e.g. CRD Integrated Watershed Management and Source Control webpages) and to prepare an educational package to assist with promotion of the map
- Next steps:
 - Map will be displayed at the Gorge Waterway Nature House; large format printed on aluminum will be mounted outside of building
 - Print large format (5ft x 5ft) map for display at events
 - School resource binders with CRD watershed education lesson plans
 - Engage with existing resources and organizations (e.g. CRD, GWI, neighbourhood associations)

Questions:

- What about First Nations lands adjacent to Esquimalt?
 - Esquimalt is only able to depict infrastructure owned by the municipality
 - Good opportunity to work with the CRD Aboriginal Relations Initiative
- Suggestion to be careful of using the term 'watershed' when the areas depicted on the map are actually catchment areas, technically different and relate to infrastructure. This messaging may confuse people.

Partner Updates:

Saanich: For the past couple of months planning staff has been responding to flood of questions regarding the Saanich EDPA (Environmental Development Permit Area). [NB: This policy is not new, it came into effect in March 2012]. An open house was held June 17, 350 people attended, lots of work to set up; sent out letters to 3,600 affected properties; have received 300 feedback forms so far; another open house and town hall planned for September; following that, staff will report to council. Feedback is wide ranging, some supportive, lots of concerns about property value, having to have permits to conduct work on properties, concerns that mapping is not accurate; this has meant lots of staff site visits. GIS department is working on getting individual property surveys, using that to create a natural shoreline boundary

- Suggestion: Saanich should talk to CRD about shoreline mapping in the Gorge and Portage Inlet; this was done for the Harbours Atlas survey work

EDPA – GWI wrote a letter of support when this came into effect in 2012

Do we want to write another letter of support for EDPAs?

Mapping used was based on SEI (Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory) and Conservation Data Centre (CDC) data; some of the sensitive ecosystems were not included, 5 polygons identified including coastal bluffs, woodlands, wetlands; marine backshore – 15m from natural high water line; CDC data identified rare plants, animals and ecosystems, added a buffer from 10-15m around these areas. Every waterfront property is affected; restrictions include that no development will occur in SEI or CDC designated areas, with many exemptions (e.g. garden paths, fences, temporary structures, etc); existing structures are not affected.

FAQs, lots of other information is available on Saanich website:

[%3fref=shortURL](http://www.saanich.ca/living/natural/planning/edpa.html?ref=shortURL)

ACTION: send a reminder to GWI that this process is underway

This policy was enacted in 2012, but there has been a media campaign recently which has raised awareness and generated lots of interest and questions from the public

WFT: Summer season at the Nature House, it has been open 3 days/week since July 1; emphasis on working with microscopes, salmon life cycles; now have a map rack to display maps at NH and at events; involved with “bring back the herring” working group – initial focus to get all pilings clad with fabric or hard plastic in harbour. This was done at Hall’s Boat House in Saanich Inlet – no success in attracting herring; Yogi feels this is not the best approach; Oysters: intertidal surveys this time of year; 3 sites: Gorge Hospital – looks good, lots of oysters around 1 yr old; settlement on vertical posts is good; sending some up to Island Scallops to see if they’re pH resistant, testing a variety of species – rock scallops seem quite resistant to low pH, Pacific oyster not very resilient

BGCA: Email from CoV Mayor Lisa Helps – area is being considered for possible sewage treatment site, two locations are in Rock Bay area, the community association will be approached for comment

Sara: A new sewer pump station is under construction on the Gorge at the end of Austin Ave; Sara is the environmental monitor for the project, if you see something of concern, please let her know. There will be a public washroom installed there; just started clearing the site, putting sediment containment in place.

Someone has posted a video of Colquitz falls, on private land upstream of West Saanich Rd.

ACTION: Sara will send a link to the video

CSSSES: Dorothy reported that a house mandated by Saanich to be demolished in 2010, 65ft from water at 985 Portage Rd, is now being demolished; homeowner hired a company to demo the house without making sure that there’s no oil tank on property. (Onus is on property owner to ask about presence of an oil tank). Dorothy inquired at Saanich fire department, records show 2 on this property - 1 underground, 1 above. This information is not offered by Saanich unless specifically requested; homeowners don’t know to ask about this. Even though records may be poor, recommend that when homeowners request a demo permit, Saanich should inform them if their records show presence of an oil tank. Even if ground is not excavated, presence of heavy equipment on the land can cause ruptures in underground oil tank infrastructure and cause leaks into the environment.

Dorothy has taken several local politicians on tours through Cuthbert Holmes Park, including Randall Garrison (MP), Colin Plant (Saanich councilor), Harley Melchies (manager Saanich engineering); many eyes have been opened about the natural resources of the park.

FoCH: A couple of youth groups now working in the park, more work parties to happen in the fall; draft Cuthbert Holmes Park Management Plan was passed by Saanich advisory committees, will be considered at September council meeting

ACTION: Check to see whether the CHP management plan has incorporated any of our suggestions re boating in the Colquitz

ACTION: Check into what GWAS has done to get people to sign a pledge about respecting wildlife when they rent a paddle board or kayak

- GWI letter to Saanich regarding wildlife refuge area in Colquitz?

ACTION: Tricia and Jody will talk about strategies for tackling this issue

CRD Harbour Program Update:

- Grant application to the National Wetland Conservation Fund was not successful
- Working on a 4-year budget to be able to get the harbour inventory done, will request a CRD budget supplemental to cover the cost of doing this inventory
- Contacted by researcher at Washington State Univ, looking at contaminants in seaweeds at traditional First Nations seaweed harvesting beaches; comparing between *Fucus* (rockweed), *Ulva* (sea lettuce) and *Nereocystis* (bull kelp); looking for 4 sites around the harbours; hope to collaborate with local First Nations on this project
- Sewage treatment: after Eastside and Westside committees narrow choices down to 6 sites per side, these will be presented to CRD board, board will narrow these down to 6 sites in total at the 29 July meeting; costing will then be done, technical feasibility, more public consultation in the fall; need to have sites chosen by end of October; until July 22, Westside survey is available online
- Water Quality Objectives report: still waiting for input to draft report from Province; meanwhile pulling together more information, including benthic data analysis

Coordinator Updates

- Organizers of Gorge Swim Fest on August 9 have requested help (message sent to GWI earlier)
- Progress with creating new outreach display is underway with CRD communications staff.
- Attended the second Herring Working Group meeting June 17; summary:
 - monthly meetings are planned for next 8 months, see what happens after that; attendees represent a wide range of interests in harbour
 - seeking ideas for projects or initiatives, using herring as a “platform” to bring other ideas into public focus;
 - herring festival proposed – an event to raise public awareness of importance of herring to local marine ecosystems including bird, fish and marine mammal populations; importance to local First Nations
 - forum proposed to bring together experts and others interested in sharing knowledge and ideas of how to enhance herring in the region; ideas include genetic studies, monitoring program, establishing more reef balls
 - Lots of herring observed all over Salish Sea this year, GWI members noted that an unusually high number of juvenile herring were seen in the harbour this year

Adjournment: 9:30pm