



DECISIONS AND ACTIONS

Steering Committee
 Tuesday, October 14, 2014
 Colwood Municipal Hall

Present: Judith Cullington, Jason Nault, Ken Morgan, Gayle Johnston, Beth Mitchell, Phil Lambert, Joe Richardson, Kitty Lloyd

Guests: Nora Creamer (Colwood Engineering), Mayor Carol Hamilton

DECISIONS				
1	ELSI recommends that no additional memorial benches should be installed at the lagoon			
2	Summary report of 10 years of ELSI fish monitoring data should be prepared and submitted to DFO			
3	Request that Helen Lockhart come to next ELSI meeting to tell us about monitoring of the bridge, and dynamics at the entrance to the lagoon			
4	Look into homeowner outreach about managing Canada geese on waterfront property			
Next Meeting: 2:30pm Tues. December 9, 2014 at Colwood Municipal Hall				
ACTIONS			ACTION BY	DUE
1	Correct notes from 12 August 2014 , re-send to ELSI		Kitty	ASAP
2	Inform Colwood whether the requested memorial bench location is in a restoration study plot		Kitty	ASAP
3	Let Ken Morgan know if the goose deterrence being used at the property on Anchorage Ave is an electric fence		Beth	ASAP
4	Write a summary report of 10 years of lagoon creek fish monitoring data for submission to DFO		Kitty	Winter
5	Ask Helen Lockhart to come to next ELSI meeting		Kitty	Fall/winter
6	Contact HAT about Good Neighbours program as relates to Canada geese		Kitty	Fall/winter

INFORMATION

Review of Action items from August:

Correction: Iain Bourhill contacted Kitty earlier to note that the minutes from the last meeting need to be corrected to remove Action #4: regarding contacting Emmett McCusker about development updates; planning is always the department to contact regarding developments.

ACTION: update notes as needed and resend to ELSI members.

Review of use of glyphosate in Migratory Bird Sanctuary: Ken did not receive an answer from the CWS Delta office about whether use of glyphosate is allowed in MBS

Application for National Wetland Conservation Fund: Kitty reported that she and Jody have worked extensively on an application for a harbour-wide application (i.e. to include Esquimalt Harbour, Victoria Harbour, Gorge Waterway/Portage Inlet). Not submitted for Aug. deadline, but will submit for next one to be announced by Environment Canada in next couple of weeks.

Development Updates:

Royal Bay: Judith not aware of anything new at this point, work is continuing at the high school, scheduled to open in Sept. 2015. There's milk thistle showing up from earlier hydroseeding; Royal Bay is apparently working with Coastal Invasive Species Council to control and eradicate this. Neighbourhood notifications regarding works underway – only one reported so far from those who have signed up for these email alerts.

Seafield Cottages: Judith unsure of the status of this application

Ocean Grove: New plan is expected sometime before municipal election Nov. 15; owner is giving away Subaru Foresters to encourage sale of existing units

Essencia: Jason reported that the Coast Collective is having a fundraiser on Sat; there will be an announcement of some kind regarding plans for this property.

Other: Mayor Hamilton reported that **Capital City Centre** at Colwood Corners has a potential new owner Onni; they are the preferred bidder for this, could take till end of December as they have to go through a court process. If the bid goes through, they will assume debt for fence around the site. Tax arrears will also be part of the deal (\$750,000); Colwood would either take back some land, or get paid out eventually.

Interpretive Signs and Ceremony:

Nothing new to report; Mayor Hamilton has not had an update lately; Colwood is getting a more open dialogue with the Songhees, not so much with Esquimalt; need to have both on-side and engaged to move forward with the sign and mural ceremony.

Discussion: Memorial Benches at the Lagoon

Note: Judith declared possible conflict of interest and left the room during this discussion (memorial in question is for a personal friend who passed away)

Nora Creamer:

- The responsibility for memorial benches and other legacy items are now with Colwood engineering department. Currently in the process of updating their Legacy Policy [sent out with ELSI agenda package]. The list on file of families with benches at the lagoon does not have current contact information, Colwood still trying to identify who the families are and how to contact them about the existing benches.
- New standards are coming into effect for parks benches, new and replacement ones will be constructed of recycled plastic. Another change to the earlier policy is that the maintenance period for gifts such as benches, memorial plaques, picnic tables, bike racks and trees has been reduced to five years from ten.
- Nora will ask whether city and parks committee will agree with installing memorial plaques around base of picnic table at the lagoon; many family requests could be accommodated and the charge for that would be much less than \$1000 that it costs to have a memorial bench installed.

Mayor Hamilton:

- Friends and family of recently deceased firefighter Darryl Corrigan have raised funds to install and pay for 15 years of maintenance for a memorial bench in his honour. The family requested that a memorial bench be installed at Esquimalt Lagoon, near garbage can #14 (approximately 500m from washroom building), where the family regularly met for gatherings.
- Mayor has been discussing this with the family for several months and would like to give them an answer soon. Wants to hear from ELSI before making a decision about placement of another bench at the lagoon.
- Mayor frequently gets requests for benches along Galloping Goose in Colwood, but CRD owns that land; she has asked CRD Parks about benches but got no response.

Questions/Comments:

- ELSI submitted a letter to Colwood dated 4 August 2009 recommending that no additional benches be placed at the lagoon, in accordance with the goals of the Interim Management Guidelines for Coburg Peninsula (IMG). Alternatives suggested included establishing a restoration project fund, putting two memorial plaques on the existing benches, installing plaques on the side of the interpretive sign kiosks or at the accessible arts space and the installation of bike racks.
- There were 14 benches along Coburg Peninsula, and three more up the hill to the west on Ocean Blvd; two that were near the pump station are currently missing due to vandalism and a vehicle accident, leaving 12 on Coburg Peninsula at the present time.
- When Kitty visited the proposed site today, there were dune restoration signs on either side, indicating that this is in a study plot. Need to confirm this with Natalie or Jody at CRD.
- When ELSI did a survey of visitors at the lagoon during the establishment of the IMG, majority of respondents wanted no more signs and structures installed at the lagoon.
- What about replacing the two benches that are currently missing?
 - The families who paid for those benches need to be contacted first to see whether they want them replaced.
- Alternative suggestions for replacement benches that would not compromise existing dune habitat:
 - Burial mound adjacent to the pump station
 - DND land where the ranger cabin was
 - Former degaussing station near the accessible arts space, could build a low wall around that mound and have plaques on it
- What about putting two plaques on one bench? Are there any existing ones that have more than one name?
 - There is only one with names of a couple.
- Some of the benches have been there more than the initial 10 years, families need to be contacted to see whether they want to pay for another maintenance period. If not, these could be re-designated to new families. Colwood Parks committee recently discussed this and it's up to Colwood to contact original families regarding ongoing maintenance or replacement.
- If the benches are rarely used, are they memorials that don't have a real function?
 - During winter storms when paths become blocked, benches get used more often, but people don't usually gather there for long periods

DECISION: ELSI recommends that no additional benches be installed at the lagoon (i.e. max of 14 on the peninsula).

ACTION: Kitty will determine whether location of requested bench site (garbage can #14) is in one of dune restoration study plots, and let Nora and Mayor Hamilton know.

Outreach:

Tour of Lagoon with Victoria Natural History Society:

- On Sept 14th, Kitty let a VNHS tour of the lagoon. Mayor Hamilton, Judith and Beth were there and about 12 other people. Interesting walk, and some people continued on to Coast Collective to learn about the restoration at Bee Creek.

Canada Geese on waterfront properties:

House on Anchorage Ave that is for sale: several yards with manicured lawns there have always had a goose problem; suddenly one property that is for sale has no geese. Beth was concerned that an electric fence was being used, which could potentially harm birds as well as dogs and/or children. Realtor told Beth that it's a motion-activated water sprinkler (not electric fence). Question: What is permissible to use to repel birds in an MBS?

Ken: Motion-activated sprinkler is considered humane; electric fences not allowed. Ken checked into this with colleagues at Environment Canada, and reported that:

- regardless of behavior, geese are protected and it's an offense to harm them
- lawful to deter birds, but not harm them
- situation where birds could be electrocuted is not allowed, nor shooting with any kind of firearm
- best thing is to do some measure of outreach to homeowners about living in an MBS; how to change their yard to be not so attractive to geese
- deterrence best done through landscaping (geese love short tender grass)
- legislation is very weak, really only addresses disturbing birds on nests
- this problem is everywhere, no one has found the perfect solution; airports spend millions deterring birds – getting rid of grass would be a solution
- the only birds not protected in MBS legislation are those which are under provincial jurisdiction including cormorants, crows, starlings, ravens and “upland game birds” (e.g. quail, pheasant, grouse, ptarmigan)

ACTION: Let Ken know if the fence in question is electrified; Ken will forward link to more information about Canada goose management from Environment Canada.

Suggestion to do some outreach to lagoon homeowners, such as Habitat Acquisition Trust's “Good Neighbours” program

Invasive Plants workshop, Sat. Oct 18th at Fort Rodd Hill:

- Workshop is almost full (20 max).
- Rachelle McElroy from Coastal Invasive Species Council will give a presentation to give regional context
- Aimee Pelletier will talk about projects at FRH.
- There will be a hands-on session on native plant propagation, and the afternoon will be spent removing invasive plants at FRH

Partner updates:

VNHS: At a recent board meeting, someone mentioned that they observed a dog off leash at the lagoon, and the dog owner did not know that it was an MBS where dogs are required to be on-leash.

Beth: Is anyone monitoring physical changes at entrance to lagoon?

- Judith: Helen Lockhart is monitoring the area with respect to bridge and abutment. Maybe Helen would attend an ELSI meeting to updates us on that. Riprap put in to protect DND Rangers' house has changed the contours of the spit; so did the closure of Royal Bay gravel pit, the main source of sediment feeding the spit.
- Beth has noticed that more vegetation has become established at the lagoon in the past couple of years when there have been fewer severe winter storms.

ACTION: Ask Helen Lockhart to attend an ELSI meeting and give an update about the bridge and changes at the entrance to the lagoon

Fish Monitoring:

- Bee Creek – cutthroat trout, no coho;
- Colwood Creek – lots of coho, despite low water levels, two different size classes (70mm and 30mm), seems unusual to find really small ones at this time of year; interesting that they never find coho carcasses; DFO tells them that carcasses are often eaten by scavengers before carcasses would be found.
- Creeks seem healthy, temperature 14°-15°, consistently cool; next month will mark 10 years of data collection
- Used to get hundreds of stickleback, lots of sunfish, bass (= pumpkinseed fish), but not recently; also crayfish and sculpin in lower reaches of Colwood Cr, probably coming down from Glen Lake

ACTION: Recommend that Kitty should send a 10-year summary of data to DFO representative (Shona Smith)

Judith:

- Two contracts have been drafted regarding proposed sewage treatment plant for Colwood: ground water and environmental impact studies. Questions to be answered include whether wastewater can be used as ground water recharge. Should be finalized by end of year; the plan will have to pass CRD environment committee and board, meet flood hazard guidelines; there will be a coordinated response by municipalities when Provincial guidelines are developed.
- **Question:** Where will cars be parked during construction of sewage treatment at JdF (ie for Park & Ride)? Treatment will take place in the basement of building, two storeys of parking above; during construction there will be temporary parking along Lagoon Rd
- Dunes at Island View Beach – report to CRD Parks committee about dune habitat management there; committee decided to let the dune do what it will, let nature take its course; but seems like they will do that without knowing full scale of what they might stand to lose
- Judith is not running for council in November municipal election; would like to remain on ELSI committee as Colwood citizen.

Meeting adjourned: 4:30pm