



DECISIONS AND ACTIONS

Steering Committee
Wednesday, January 20, 2021

MS Teams virtual call

- Present:** Bill Thomas, Brianne Czypyha, George Blogg, Vicki Blogg, Jack Meredith, Jacklyn Barrs, Jacques Sirois, John Mullane, Julian Anderson, Katie Turner, Mick Collins, Rick Daykin, Thomas Munson, Sara Stallard, Dorothy Chambers, Yogi Carolsfeld, Bruce Bevan, Angela Hanes, Dick Faulks, Morley Eldridge, Jen Tyler, Lindsey McCrank
- Guests:** Representing BC Transit: Lori Beaulieu, Katie Hamilton, Errol Nordstrom, Geoff Huber, Scott Murdoch (Murdoch de Greef), Cori Barraclough (Aqua-Tex Scientific)
- Becky Goodall, Saanich Parks

Next Meeting: April 21, 2021			
	ACTIONS	ACTION BY	DUE
1.	Lindsey McCrank will circulate technical reports and updates from BC Transit as they become available, and will facilitate a future presentation to GWI.	Lindsey	As needed
2.	Lindsey and Katie Hamilton will help connect GWI members with BC Transit staff, as required.	Lindsey/Katie	As needed
3.	GWI members should contact Becky Goodall with feedback on the Cuthbert Holmes park improvements and Curtis Point improvement project: becky.goodall@saanich.ca	All	ASAP
4.	Lindsey provided the draft 2021 GWI work plan and is seeking feedback before February 20. Please contact Lindsey with suggestions.	All	February 20

Presentation: HandyDART update by BC Transit representatives (Lori Beaulieu, Katie Hamilton, Errol Nordstrom, Geoff Huber, Scott Murdoch, and Cori Barraclough)

- Representatives from BC Transit updated the group on the handyDART project (please contact Lindsey for copies of the presentation, which is a large file)
- Of particular interest to GWI members were changes in the designation of Watercourse 2 (formerly Ditch 2), and opportunities to relocate this watercourse to join Watercourse 1, in order to improve the quality of riparian and instream fish habitat.
- Upcoming technical reports include a Habitat Assessment and Riparian Area Regulation Report that will be circulated and posted on the handyDART website.
- The preliminary site design is underway and will potentially be completed by March, after which time there will be public and stakeholder consultation. BC Transit will be invited to a future GWI meeting to present the preliminary design and receive feedback.
- BC Transit confirmed that there will be an independent environmental monitor on site during construction
- Several GWI members would like to connect with BC Transit staff to provide further information or to collaborate on projects. Specifically:
 - Yogi Carolsfeld will connect with Cori Barraclough regarding specific instream enhancement opportunities for Craigflower Creek. He also would like to collaborate in the areas of fish use monitoring and environmental DNA studies
 - Dorothy Chambers would like interested representatives from BC Transit to join her on a tour of MoTI water filtration features at Cuthbert Holmes. She will connect with Scott Murdoch.
 - Bruce Bevan would like BC Transit to be aware of Craigflower water flow and turbidity monitoring data that is available online.
 - Angela Hanes invites collaboration with BC Transit on managing beaver dams along Craigflower.

Action:

- Lindsey McCrank will circulate technical reports and updates from BC Transit as they become available, and will facilitate a future presentation to GWI.
- Lindsey and Katie Hamilton will help connect GWI members with BC Transit staff, as required.

Presentation: Becky Goodall, Saanich Parks (see attachments)

- Becky presented planned improvements for Cuthbert Holmes Park from the 2015 Management Plan
- The proposed timeline for the work is:
 - Trail relocation and restoration: before mid-March 2021
 - Creek work: mid-August to September 2021
 - Aspen woodland creation: November
- Becky introduced the Curtis Point Ecological Protection and Visitor Accommodation Project, designed to protect the fragile landscape of Curtis Point while providing opportunities for low impact recreational use.
- GWI members are asked to contact Becky at becky.goodall@saanich.ca with comments about either project

Partner Updates

Angela Hanes, View Royal representative

- Angela continues to work with a lawyer to review options for opposing the BC Transit HandyDART facility and will update the group at the next meeting

Bill Thomas PSS

- Goldstream Hatchery is delivering eggs to Saltspring and Saturna Islands
- PSS forage fish surveys are underway at Esquimalt Lagoon
- The Atkins fish ladder is functioning well, with high levels of water passing through the culvert
- PSS is hosting a virtual auction in late February. Contact Bill if you would like to participate in this fundraiser.

Jacklyn Barrs, WWF

- Jacklyn believes the first Pacific sand lance egg identified since sampling began in 2018 was found recently at Esquimalt Lagoon
- The Fraser Basin Council's Salmon Safe program is a great resource:
https://www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/water_salmon-safe.html

Brianne Czypyha, City of Victoria

- The City of Victoria is offering grants to achieve items in its Strategic Plan:
<https://www.victoria.ca/EN/main/residents/city-grants/strategic-plan-grants.html>
- Victoria also has approved its Zero Waste Victoria plan:
<https://www.victoria.ca/EN/main/residents/climate-change/waste-reduction.html>
- Stakeholder engagement is done at Peter Pollen waterfront park, with a conceptual design coming this spring/summer
- Songhees Park expansion plan is 90% done, and Victoria is working with First Nations to incorporate art into the design
- Banfield Park swim dock budget is scheduled to be discussed at a January 21 meeting.

Katie Turner, Saanich Parks

- Katie continues to work with volunteers at 40+ Saanich park sites to remove invasives and enhance biodiversity
- Saanich is celebrating the UN Decade for Ecosystem Restoration, 2021-2030:
<https://www.decadeonrestoration.org/#:~:text=The%20UN%20Decade%20on%20Ecosystem%20Restoration%20aims%20to,will%20only%20succeed%20if%20everyone%20plays%20a%20part.>
- Nancy Shackelford from UVic's Restoration of Natural Systems Program is looking for local stories about ecosystem restoration. Contact katie.turner@saanich.ca or nshack@uvic.ca to share stories.

Sara Stallard, SIASS

- Sara noted that she found a sand lance egg on Pat Bay beach during forage fish surveys with Sea Change approximately 10 year ago. She will connect with Jacklyn Barrs to share information.

Rick Daykin, Township of Esquimalt

- Work on the Gorge Park pavilion is on schedule and is going well
- A protective fence has been placed at the east side of Gorge Creek
- A new pollinator meadow interpretive sign has been developed
- Trail restoration is underway at Macaulay Point, Saxe Point, and High Park

Thomas Munson, District of Saanich

- Saanich continues to develop its Resilient Saanich environmental framework and biodiversity strategy, including public consultation beginning January 22. For more information: <https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/community/natural-environment/resilient-saanich-environmental-policy-framework/biodiversity-conservation-strategy.html>
- Thomas shared information about a fundraising campaign for Mountain Road Forest, a Saanich property that CRD and HAT would like to cooperatively purchase: [HAT Mountain Road Forest Campaign](#)

Jack Meredith: Gorge Swim Fest

- Jack is anticipating no swim fest in 2021 due to Covid so is focusing on fundraising
- He is working with John Roe of the Veins of Life and the Rotary Club to host a Rubber Ducky fundraising race. Contact Jack if you would like to participate.

CRD Harbours and Watersheds Program Update:

Jen Tyler

- Caslys Consulting has been contracted to update the CRD land cover classification using orthophoto imagery from 2017 and 2019 and LiDAR data. Other deliverables will include:
 - Riparian model
 - Canopy height model
 - Suitable planting areas
 - Change in canopy cover and impervious surfaces by municipality and watershed.

The project is planned to be completed by June 2021.

- Green Shores level 2 will be offered through UVic by the Stewardship Council of BC. <https://continuingstudies.uvic.ca/science-and-ecological-restoration/courses/green-shorestm-training-program-level-2-workshop>
It is a great opportunity if you are interested to soft shore approaches to shoreline development or restoration. Level 1 is a prerequisite but it can be started any time. <https://www.bcit.ca/study/courses/renr1720>
- Planning for harbours intertidal inventory underway. Four band (RGB, NIR), high-resolution (4 cm), low-tide orthophoto imagery was collected last summer. The extent is the intertidal zone with a 50 m buffer to the backshore or to the nearest road. We can look at making it available if it is of interest to any groups.

Lindsey McCrank

- GWI will have a new meeting schedule for 2021 which will be reassessed at the end of the year to make sure it is meeting the groups' needs. There will be 4 meetings instead of 6: January 20, April 21, July 21, October 20, all from 7-9 pm.
- As requested, Lindsey will be sharing GWI Steering Committee email addresses with the group. Please be mindful and respectful when using this contact information and do not share the email addresses beyond the group.

- Lindsey provided the draft 2021 GWI work plan and is seeking feedback before February 20. Please contact Lindsey with suggestions.
- Biodiversity engagement: To support the CRD's regional biodiversity strategy, work is underway to develop materials and activities that raise public awareness about biodiversity and the role we all play in its protection. The CRD wants to work with all of its partners to spread the biodiversity message, and Lindsey will provide more information soon about opportunities for involvement.

Adjournment: 9:30 pm

Next meeting, April 21, 2021 7-9 pm