



## DECISIONS AND ACTIONS

**Steering Committee**  
**Wednesday, July 21, 2021**

MS Teams virtual call

**Present:** Thomas Munson, Mick Collins, Katie Turner, Alaina Dowling, Jack Meredith, Rick Daykin, Jamie Disbrow, Morley Eldridge, Jen Tyler, Lindsey McCrank

**Guests:** April Mitchell, CRD Regional Parks

<b>Next Meeting: October 20, 2021</b>			
<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>ACTION BY</b>	<b>DUE</b>
1.	Contact Katie Turner if you want to attend a tour of Cuthbert Holmes to view the habitat restoration and river improvement work: <a href="mailto:katie.turner@saanich.ca">katie.turner@saanich.ca</a>	All	ASAP
2.	Contact Morley Eldridge if you have a need for volunteers: <a href="mailto:morley.eldridge@gmail.com">morley.eldridge@gmail.com</a>	All	ongoing
3.	Send Lindsey responses to the Banfield Park dock expansion proposal before July 26.	All	July 26
4.	All GWI members are encouraged to fill out the GWI Review form and return to Lindsey	All	Date tbd
5.	Lindsey will arrange a handy DART update with BC Transit for interested GWI members	Lindsey	ASAP
6.	Contact Lindsey with events and public engagement opportunities that would be a good opportunity to promote the GWI.	Lindsey	ongoing

**Presentation:** Elk/Beaver In-Lake Remediation Plan Update, Presented by April Mitchell, CRD Regional Parks

- April provided a summary of the issues facing Elk/Beaver Lake, which is impacted by both external nutrient inputs (30%) and internal inputs (70%)
- She focused on internal nutrient inputs to the lake and the oxygenation system for Elk Lake (SPEECE cone) that will help to reduce cyanobacteria blooms, improve fish habitat, and support control of water milfoil. Beaver Lake will be treated using surface aeration.

- Funding for the technology has been approved and work is underway to have it in operation for April 2022.
- Questions about April's presentation can be directed to [Amitchell@crd.bc.ca](mailto:Amitchell@crd.bc.ca)

## Partner Updates

### Jamie Disbrow, BEES

- The BEES have been clearing ivy between the Beaver Lake beach field and the filter beds.
- Their work on Haliburton Brook is on hold while they sort out insurance documents. They hope to start in August by removing excess small woody debris and flagging larger debris for removal by the CRD.
- In the fall the BEES plan to support the implementation of the Elk/Beaver Lake Watershed Management Plan.

### Rick Daykin, Township of Esquimalt

- Several owl boxes have been installed in Esquimalt parks.
- The Gorge Pavilion is coming along well with opening planned for early 2022. This fall, a new Japanese garden will be planted.

### Alaina Dowling, GWAS

- GWAS has just completed its Youth Community Partnership report, which has been circulated to GWI members.
- Summer students have started, with a similar YCP report coming in the fall.
- GWAS is holding an in-person event for its members.

### Jack Meredith, Gorge Swim Fest Society

- The Gorge Waterway rubber ducky derby is scheduled for August 7. Raffle tickets are \$10. Sales deadline is noon on Aug. 7, with the ducks set to be released around 2 p.m. For more information and to buy tickets, go to <http://www.gorgeswimfest.ca/>

### Katie Turner, Saanich Parks

- Purple loosestrife removal is underway in Swan and Colquitz creeks.
- New Saanich Parks volunteers are now being welcomed to participate in the Pulling Together program. Contact Katie if you are interested in volunteering: [katie.turner@saanich.ca](mailto:katie.turner@saanich.ca)

### Cuthbert Holmes update (provided in writing by Becky Goodall, Park Planner/Designer)

- Work is scheduled to begin in September (after bird nesting season) on the granular trail that will replace the existing asphalt trail. The trail will be built in the swath that was cleared of invasive English hawthorn in the spring, and will be open to the public this fall. The old asphalt trail will be used to access restoration areas in the next year and then removed.
- A Qualified Environmental Professional (Dave Clough) has been hired to design and oversee physical changes to approximately 200m of the river's channel for the benefit of fish and wildlife in general, and salmonids in particular. Plans/details of these improvements are unavailable at the time of writing but are anticipated to include re-shaping the riverbed to reduce side-slope, creating areas with very gently

sloping sides to host a variety of emergent vegetation, and incorporating suitable organic material to provide cover, and feeding and resting opportunities for fish.

The QEP will:

- Secure approvals from required authorities
  - Assess the existing river conditions in the project area
  - Identify and produce plans for beneficial physical improvements to be made
  - Identify schedule for work
  - Identify machinery and materials required
  - Work with Parks staff to implement the work
- All work must comply with all Federal, Provincial and Municipal guidelines and best management practices regarding working in a fish-bearing stream. Physical work will take place in the fisheries window between Aug 15 – Sept 15.
  - Riparian Area Improvements: Natural Areas staff will continue to plant native vegetation in the 30 m area adjacent to the river this fall. Trembling aspen groves will also be established on both sides of the river as part of the MoTI interchange project compensation.

For questions about the Cuthbert Holmes project please contact Becky Goodall at [becky.goodall@saanich.ca](mailto:becky.goodall@saanich.ca). Contact Katie Turner if you want to attend a tour of Cuthbert Holmes to view the habitat restoration and river improvement work: [katie.turner@saanich.ca](mailto:katie.turner@saanich.ca)

**Action:** Contact Katie Turner if you want to attend a tour of Cuthbert Holmes to view the habitat restoration and river improvement work: [katie.turner@saanich.ca](mailto:katie.turner@saanich.ca)

#### Mick Collins, Golden Rods and Reels

- With the dry conditions, there are concerns about water levels in Craigflower creek. CRD Parks is being consulted regarding releasing more water from Thetis Lake.
- BC Transit's handyDART biologist has met with Yogi and Mick to discuss improvements to the fish counting fence and to do a preliminary assessment of restoration opportunities for Craigflower's mainstem.
- In partnership with WFT and PSS, Mick's group is supporting the "Small Watersheds Project" where 4 interns are participating in training and restoration plans for Craigflower, Colquitz, Millstream, and estuary environments (focused on oysters)
- Mick's group is supporting the implementation of the Elk/Beaver Lake Watershed Management Plan. They are working with the CRD to analyze water flow and quality of the 4 streams going into Elk/Beaver Lake.

#### Thomas Munson, Saanich Environmental Services

- Saanich Council endorsed the Elk/Beaver Lake Management Plan and has committed a staff person's support 1 day per week.
- Resilient Saanich passed Milestone 1 (Initiate) and is moving on to Milestone 2 (Assess).
- The next phase includes the creation of a State of Biodiversity report, followed by a Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, to be completed by the end of 2022.

#### Morley Eldridge, South Island Sea Kayak Association

- SISKKA has 400 members, many of whom would be interested in volunteering on GWI projects.

**Action:** Contact Morley Eldridge if you have a need for volunteers: morley.eldridge (at) gmail.com

## CRD Harbours and Watersheds Program Update:

### Jen Tyler

#### 1. *Green Shores Demonstration Restoration Sites*

- The Stewardship Center of BC, who run the Green Shores program in Canada has secured funding through the Federal Climate Action and Awareness Fund along with the Pacific Salmon Foundation and Peninsula Streams. The grant includes funds for Green Shores demonstration restoration sites in the capital region.
- The Stewardship Center of BC and PSF have a contract in place to conduct a feasibility study to inform site selection for one or more Green Shores demonstration restoration sites in the Gorge and Portage Inlet.
- Municipally owned road end sites that may be armoured, over run by invasive species and used by neighbours as garden waste dumping sites as well as other municipally owned shoreline properties in the Gorge and Portage Inlet are being considered.

#### 2. *Harbours Ecological Inventory and Rating*

- The contract was awarded to Archipelago, Dillon and Vertex. They are using low-tide, high-resolution orthophoto imagery to map the biological and physical features of the core area harbours. The ecological rating from the VEHEAP project in 2000, which is included in the existing harbours atlas is also being updated. There will be a stakeholder workshop in the fall to discuss the rating process.

#### 3. *Land Cover Classification*

- The land cover classification project will be completed in August. The deliverables include a land cover classification of the region as well as a canopy height model, a riparian model and a suitable tree planting model. Contact Jen Tyler if you are interested in acquiring the datasets.

#### 4. *Watershed Assessments*

- A summer student is working on the development of criteria and indicators for watershed assessments in the region. The Colquitz watershed, Elk and Beaver Lakes watersheds and Bowker Creek are planned to be used as pilot watersheds.

### Lindsey McCrank

#### 1. *GWI Review*

- Lindsey will be sending out the GWI Review, a fillable pdf form that explores the mandate, activities, membership composition, and meeting structure of the group. If people would rather provide their feedback over the phone, please contact Lindsey.

**Action:** All GWI members are encouraged to fill out the GWI Review form and return to Lindsey

#### 2. *BC Transit handyDART update*

- BC Transit hosted 3 open houses for input into the HandyDART project, and has an online survey open until midnight July 23: [https://engage.bctransit.com/victoriahandydartcentre/survey\\_tools/victoria-handydart-centre-phase-3-survey](https://engage.bctransit.com/victoriahandydartcentre/survey_tools/victoria-handydart-centre-phase-3-survey)

- BC Transit has offered to present to/meet with interested GWI members to further discuss the proposed plan

**Action:** Lindsey will arrange a handy DART update with BC Transit for interested GWI members

### *3. Banfield Park Dock*

- The City of Victoria is considering an application to enlarge the dock at Banfield Park and has invited GWI to submit a response. GWI members can provide their responses to Lindsey before July 26.

**Action:** Send Lindsey responses to the Banfield Park dock expansion proposal before July 26.

### *4. EcoStar Awards*

- Island-based non-profit, academia, government or individuals who have shown outstanding leadership in sustainability are invited to apply for a 2021 EcoStar Award. Applications are due September 19.  
<https://www.ecostarawards.com/apply>

### *5. 2021 Events and public engagement*

- Now that COVID restrictions are lifting, please contact Lindsey about 2021 event or public engagement opportunities that would be a good fit for GWI.

**Action:** Contact Lindsey with events and public engagement opportunities that would be a good opportunity to promote the GWI.

**Adjournment: 9:00 pm**

**Next meeting, October 20, 2021 7-9 pm**