

REGIONAL  
**GREEN/BLUE**  
SPACES  
STRATEGY



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# A Regional Green/Blue Spaces Vision: **Our Essential Nature**

There are times when we just want to roam the Gowlland Range and listen to the sound of air stirred up by eagles' wings. Or stroll the Swan Lake boardwalk and watch a family of proud ducklings parade past our feet.

Then there are days when splashing about with our children in the cool, clean waters of Thetis Lake is the only thing worth doing. Or maybe it's kicking up the warm, soft sand of Willows Beach.

Perhaps it's walking along the Colquitz Creek that makes our world come alive. Or taking a second, reflective look at a rare old Douglas-fir on the grounds of Royal Roads.

Whether it is the pastoral splendour of the Saanich Peninsula farmlands, or the stark and wild beauty of the Juan de Fuca coastline, our ability to appreciate nature begins with whatever captivates our senses. It then expands to values we feel deeply but rarely capture in words.

All of us who live in the Capital Regional District cherish the natural environment that is so essential to our quality of life, and we are determined that it never be compromised.

So although we already enjoy a diverse network of protected areas that stretches from the southern Gulf Islands to Port Renfrew, we cannot be complacent. As the region's population continues to grow, we must ensure that the stewardship of the natural environment remains integral to all forms of urban, suburban and rural development.

But we don't protect nature just so we can hike, relax, and contemplate. We must also safeguard endangered species and sensitive ecosystems such as Garry oak meadows and stands of old growth Douglas-fir. And we need to give Pacific salmon a fighting chance to return to urban streams.

To that end we envision the development of a regional green/blue space system that will protect and maintain the full range and diversity

of the natural environment that surrounds us, including significant green spaces, the marine environment, wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat, and unique ecosystems.

We are also committed to protecting and maintaining the last remnants of ecosystems that flourished here before the time of Captain Cook, and to restore natural systems we have altered.

This is neither a park plan nor a policy document, but a vision of cooperative stewardship that integrates the contributions of citizens, landowners, businesses, communities, and all levels of government. It is a vision of sustaining the essential nature of our region, of continually creating and protecting a livable and healthy community—and passing on that legacy intact to future generations.

# Executive Summary

Residents of the Capital Regional District (CRD) value the natural environment of the region. Protecting it from development and enhancing it is one of the core values that underpin the adopted Official Community Plans of the CRD. The Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy, in turn, springs from this value.

Regional green/blue spaces are defined as:

**Natural and semi-natural areas, both land and water, that are of ecological, scenic, renewable resource, outdoor recreation and/or greenway value. These areas are considered to have high ecological and/or social value as green/blue spaces. Green/blue space areas could include developed, partly developed or undeveloped public and private spaces.**

Population growth threatens the region's green and blue spaces. This growth will have an impact on existing parks and increase pressure to use green and blue spaces for urban and suburban development. To protect and maintain regional green/blue spaces, it will be important to channel growth and associated development away from them.

Local governments are therefore faced with the continuing task of protecting green/blue space while accommodating population growth. Land-use regulation is the principal tool for controlling development and protecting and maintaining green/blue space, so local governments have a major, ongoing role to play.

The CRD also has an important role to play in protecting and maintaining green/blue spaces, through the Regional Growth Strategy, the CRD Parks Official Regional Parks Plan, and park management plans. The Provincial Capital Commission (PCC) plays a key role, through the greenways initiative.

In 1995, CRD Parks and the PCC, based on direction from their respective Boards, initiated a strategy for protecting and maintaining green and blue spaces in the CRD. The Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy establishes a **broad regional vision** of what should be kept—green, blue, living and productive.

The Strategy identifies **why** we should protect and maintain regional green/blue space areas, **which** regionally significant green/blue space areas should be protected and maintained, **who** can contribute, and **how** protection and maintenance can be achieved.

The Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy is neither a park plan nor a policy or regulatory document, and identification of an area as regional green/blue space does not presume that public acquisition, regulation or other form of public protection is slated for the area. Other lands uses can—and do—take place on some of the green/blue space areas.

The Strategy outlines a Regional Green/Blue Spaces System which is considered to be a major part of the regional infrastructure that is essential for creating a livable and healthy region (i.e., sewers, water supply, transportation, solid waste disposal, and green/blue spaces). The System is composed of four principal parts:

- **Green/Blue Space Core Areas** (existing parks, valuable unprotected land and marine environments, and the region's water supply lands)
- **Greenways** (corridors that link green/blue spaces)
- **Renewable Resource Working Landscapes** (agricultural and managed forest lands)
- **Valuable Remnant Ecosystems** (sensitive environmental lands not included in green/blue space core areas)

Securing the Regional Green/Blue Spaces System will be an incremental, cooperative process requiring many years to complete. Citizens, landowners, all levels of government, institutions, public utilities, and non-profit organizations can all contribute to protecting and maintaining regional green/blue spaces.

# CRD Board and PCC Board Recommendations

The PCC Board endorsed the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy and approved recommendations on November 25, 1997. The CRD Board endorsed the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy and approved recommendations on November 26, 1997. The recommendations that were approved by both the PCC and CRD are presented first. These are followed by the recommendations that were approved separately by the PCC and CRD.

## Recommendations Approved By Both the PCC Board and the CRD Board

1. That the CRD and the PCC forward the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy to all municipalities, CRD Municipal Services, the Islands Trust, and the federal and provincial governments, bringing to their attention how they could contribute to the protection and maintenance of regional green/blue spaces.
2. That the PCC continue to support and fund the Commission's Greenways Program.
3. That the CRD and the PCC hold a workshop in 1999 to gauge the effectiveness of the Strategy in guiding the protection and maintenance of regional green/blue spaces.
4. That a status report be prepared for the CRD and PCC Boards of Directors in 1999 that assesses the effectiveness of the Strategy in guiding the protection and maintenance of regional green/blue spaces.
5. (a) That the CRD and the PCC report annually to their respective Boards about green/blue spaces projects; and  
(b) That the CRD and PCC prepare and distribute an information newsletter on the projects.
6. That the CRD and the PCC provide seed money for organizational costs to support the establishment of an independent land trust information/coordination office to promote land trusts and land stewardship, coordinate the activities of land trusts and provide information.

## **CRD Board Recommendations**

1. That the CRD regard the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy as a planning tool and guideline for preparing the Regional Growth Strategy.

## **PCC Board Recommendations**

1. That the Commission endorse the Regional Green/Blue Spaces System advocated in the report and regard the proposed system as the Regional Green/Blue Spaces infrastructure.
2. That the Commission and the CRD prepare an implementation plan with measurable objectives.

## Content Note

This Strategy is a summary document. Therefore, much of its supporting information is not repeated from previous reports. Those include:

*Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy—Draft for Review, Comments and Discussion, August 1996*

*Supporting Land Trust and Stewardship Initiatives in the Capital Region, June 1997*

*Feedback on the Draft Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy, June 1997*

## Update Note

The process for creating the proposed Regional Green/Blue Spaces System is ongoing. Since the release of the draft Strategy in the fall of 1996, a number of initiatives have contributed to the overall system of green/blue spaces advocated in this Strategy. Examples include:

- A campaign by the Victoria Natural History Society Habitat Acquisition Trust to purchase land surrounding the estuary of Ayum Creek.
- Approval by the District of Saanich Council to develop a green spaces strategy.
- Creation of the South and West Salt Spring Island Conservation Partnership.
- Completion of the Galloping Goose Regional Trail in Victoria, Saanich and View Royal, through a partnership among Victoria, Saanich, the PCC, the CRD, the B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Highways and BC Heritage Trust.
- Purchase of the Mill Farm property on Salt Spring Island, through a partnership of the Salt Spring Island Conservancy, Pacific Marine Heritage Legacy Program, and CRD Parks.
- Designation of Capital Regional District Water non-catchment lands as Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park.
- Purchase of many properties on the southern Gulf Islands by the Pacific Marine Heritage Legacy.



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# **1 Why Protect And Maintain Regional Green/Blue Space?**

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**Part 1 of the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy explains why we need a Strategy, sets out the purpose and objectives of the Strategy, and defines regional green/blue space. It also explains the relationship of this Strategy to the Regional Growth Strategy, and summarizes the feedback that was received in response to the draft Strategy.**

## **Why We Need a Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy**

**Given the constant urban and suburban expansion, the region's natural environment is one of the most at-risk areas in Canada.**

The Capital Region of British Columbia is blessed with a mild climate, a spectacular physical setting in a varied landscape, and a rich and diverse natural heritage. Around us, forest-clad hills roll to a sparkling ocean. The combination of a Mediterranean climate, the ocean, forests, rocky hilltops, and freshwater rivers, creeks and lakes makes this one of the most ecologically diverse regions in British Columbia.

Historically, there has been plenty of room here for people and nature to co-exist, but over the past few decades, the region's population has increased sharply. Our population is estimated to increase. Given the constant urban and suburban expansion, the region's natural environment is one of the most at-risk areas in Canada. Many prominent open and natural areas once assumed to be unchangeable features of the

landscape have already been developed, or proposals for development are underway. In addition, the cumulative loss of smaller habitat remnants is eroding the biological diversity of the region.

Many natural areas in the CRD are already protected in parks by all levels of government. Residents of the region place a high priority on the need to protect many remaining natural areas from development. In recent surveys, residents have consistently stated that protection of natural areas is one of the top environmental priorities for the CRD, and that, whereas other issues can often be dealt with after the fact, purchase or protection of environmentally important areas can only be accomplished **before** development occurs.

Green/blue spaces have ecological, scientific, social, cultural and economic benefits and values. More specifically, green/blue spaces are important to the residents of the region, because they:

**Residents of the Capital Regional District (CRD) value the natural environment of the region. Protecting it from development and enhancing it is one of the core values that underpin the adopted Official Community Plans of the CRD.**

- maintain biological diversity and essential ecological processes;
- provide areas for outdoor recreation and personal rejuvenation;
- enhance the quality of life for residents of the region;
- enhance the scenic values of the regional setting;
- contribute to a sense of place for regional residents;
- contribute to the region’s economy;
- provide areas in which people can learn about our natural environment; and
- provide natural benchmarks for long-term scientific research.

Since natural areas do not follow municipal boundaries, planning for the protection and maintenance of these areas is necessary on a regional level. But until now, there has been no regional strategy for doing that. The Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy that follows is essential: it will provide the CRD and the PCC with well-defined goals and direction in their efforts to protect and maintain green/blue spaces. It will also make a clear statement to other levels of government, business, public organizations and the public about the importance of protecting and maintaining green/blue spaces in the Capital Region.

## **Purpose and Objectives of the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy**

### **Purpose**

This Strategy:

1. identifies **why** regional green/blue space areas should be protected and maintained, **which** regionally significant green/blue space areas should be protected and maintained, **who** should be responsible for that protection and maintenance, and **how** protection should be achieved;
2. outlines a comprehensive, long-term Strategy for maintaining, conserving, rehabilitating and restoring green/blue spaces on public and private lands in the CRD, including areas with ecological, aesthetic, renewable resource, outdoor recreation, and greenways values; and
3. promotes a cooperative, collaborative approach among property owners, all levels of government, and public and private organizations for maintaining, conserving, rehabilitating and restoring green/blue spaces in the CRD.

## Objectives

The objectives of the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy are to:

- conserve rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems and species in the CRD;
- maintain biological diversity by protecting and enhancing a variety of habitats;
- conserve ecologically valuable areas in large, diverse, contiguous units and connect them with greenways;
- maintain the character and diversity of green/blue spaces in the CRD;
- enhance and restore areas that could have green/blue space values;
- develop a comprehensive set of priorities for the conservation of green/blue spaces in the CRD;
- provide appropriate outdoor recreation opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to experience and enjoy green/blue spaces in the CRD;
- educate people about the value of protecting green/blue spaces in the CRD; and
- foster partnerships for the conservation and stewardship of green/blue spaces.

Population growth threatens the region's green and blue spaces.

## Definition of Regional Green/Blue Spaces

Regionally significant green/blue spaces are areas representing the natural and visual character of the region which provide outdoor attractions and outdoor recreation opportunities for the region's residents. Many of these areas are the last remnants of natural systems and settings in the CRD.

For the purposes of the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy, the term "green/blue spaces" is defined as:

**Natural and semi-natural areas, both land and water, that are of ecological, scenic, renewable resource, outdoor recreation and/or greenway value. These areas are considered to have high ecological and/or social value as green/blue spaces. Green/blue areas could include developed, partly developed or undeveloped public and private spaces.**

The five categories of green/blue spaces are:

**The Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy is neither a park plan nor a policy or regulatory document, and identification of an area as regional green/blue space does not presume that public acquisition, regulation or other form of public protection is slated for the area.**

### 1. Ecological

This category includes areas that:

- support the diversity of ecosystems in the region,
- support rare, threatened or endangered plant and animal species,
- contribute to the continued functioning of regional ecosystems, and
- contribute to improved knowledge and understanding of natural processes.

### 2. Scenic

This category includes landscapes, waterscapes, natural landmarks, or features that provide important scenic and visual elements in the region and help define its character (e.g., farm, rural and forested landscapes, ocean views, and distinctive or unusual land forms).

### 3. Renewable Resource Working Landscapes

These areas are private and public lands used primarily for renewable resource purposes, such as agriculture and forestry, which provide both an economic return and a green/blue space function. These lands will continue to be used for renewable resource purposes and do not include parks. In general, they are lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve, Forest Land Reserve or provincial forest, or assessed as forest land by the BC Assessment Authority. The main-

tenance of green/blue space values will be encouraged in the management of these lands.

### 4. Outdoor Recreation

Outdoor recreation areas are lands that provide, or could provide, a variety of year-round outdoor recreation opportunities for regional residents and visitors. Areas with outdoor recreational value will have one or more of the following regionally significant attributes:

- natural landscape or waterscape feature(s),
- cultural or historic feature(s),
- views,
- a wilderness-type experience, and/or
- a natural or cultural history educational experience.

Regionally significant outdoor recreational lands will primarily attract residents from throughout the region.

### 5. Greenways

Greenways are linear corridors associated with watercourses, trails and transportation routes which are shared by humans and wildlife. Greenways will connect with other green/blue spaces wherever possible.

These categories are not mutually exclusive; most green/blue space areas will include more than one type of green/blue space.

**Local governments are faced with the continuing task of protecting green/blue space while accommodating population growth. Land-use regulation is the principal tool for controlling development and protecting and maintaining green/blue space, so local governments have a major on-going role to play.**

## **Relationship to the Regional Growth Strategy and to Local Planning**

It is estimated that the population of the CRD will grow. That growth has major implications for the maintenance and protection of the green/blue spaces infrastructure.

To address those implications, the CRD has initiated a Regional Growth Strategy. It promotes socially, economically and environmentally healthy human settlement that makes efficient use of public facilities and services, as well as land and other resources. The Regional Growth Strategy embraces all of the CRD except for the southern Gulf Islands.

By provincial legislation, the Regional Growth Strategy **must** include, among other topics:

- a. a comprehensive statement on the future of the region, including the social, economic and environmental objectives of the board in relation to the regional district; and*
- b. actions proposed for the regional district to provide for the needs of the projected population in relation to ... parks and natural areas.*

The Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy will be an important source of information in helping to define the Regional Growth Strategy, because it articu-

lates a broad regional vision of green/blue space protection and maintenance. That vision can be used to help evaluate other regionally important values, such as the need for affordable housing, a strong and resilient economy, and settlement patterns and transportation systems that ensure the development of complete communities.

The Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy also:

- provides an information base for more detailed regulatory land-use planning by municipalities, CRD Municipal Services, and Islands Trust (e.g., Official Community Plans, zoning bylaws, and development permits);
- increases the awareness of green/blue spaces as an important factor in the layout and patterning of development;
- will be used to update the CRD Official Regional Parks Plan and identify areas of interest to CRD Parks and the PCC;
- provides information for park planning by the federal and provincial governments; and
- provides residents and developers with information on areas of regional green/blue space significance and the importance of green/blue space planning and management.



The System presented in this Strategy is at a regional level, so areas with local green/blue space values may not be shown. However, these local areas are still important to the overall protection and maintenance of green/blue spaces in the region.

## **Response to the Draft Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy**

The draft Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy was made available in August 1996 throughout the CRD to the public, business, and all levels of government for review and comments. The response to that draft Strategy is presented in the report titled *Feedback on the Draft Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy, June 1997*.

Based on the response received by the CRD, the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy appears to have strong support throughout the region and across a wide range of sectors. It is seen as being able, when it is implemented, to make a significant and positive contribution to sustainability and the quality of life in the region. Many respondents perceive the Regional Green/Blue Spaces

Strategy as a key component in the development of a Regional Growth Strategy.

The main area of concern was implementation. Some respondents would prefer to see the Strategy developed and implemented after the Regional Growth Strategy is completed; others urged immediate implementation of the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy, using its recommendations as the tools for maintaining, protecting and restoring green/blue spaces.

All groups had the same questions about implementation:

**Who will coordinate the Strategy?**

**Who will participate, and in what roles?**

**How and when will the Strategy be implemented?**

**How much will it cost to implement?**

**How will the costs be covered?**

There was a general consensus that the CRD and the PCC continue to act together as catalyst and coordinator, actively encourage the involvement of existing inter-governmental and inter-municipal committees, and establish a public advisory committee.

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2 Which Areas?  
**The Proposed Regional  
Green/Blue Spaces System**

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## Criteria Used to Select Green/Blue Space Areas

The proposed Regional Green/Blue Spaces System is primarily based on the following criteria:

### Purpose and Objectives

The proposed System has been designed to achieve the overall purpose and objectives of the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy.

### Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory (SEI)

The Green/Blue Space Core Areas and Valuable Remnant Ecosystems in Greater Victoria and the Gulf Islands are based on sites identified by the Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory (SEI). The SEI identified and mapped native vegetation communities of conservation significance in nine broad ecosystem categories. The SEI study area in the Capital Region includes the Gulf Islands, core urban communities, the Saanich Peninsula, and the western communities to approximately the Sooke Basin.

### Additional Environmental Information

In addition to the SEI data, CRD Parks and the PCC have assembled and reviewed environmental data from a variety of sources.

## Areas Nominated by the Public, Municipalities and Islands Trust

In 1995, the public, municipalities and Islands Trust were asked to identify areas that they felt had regional green/blue space value. Approximately 480 areas, from the very general to the very specific, were identified.

## Areas with Green/Blue Space Values Situated Adjacent to Existing Parks

Maintaining green/blue space values on lands adjacent to existing park areas is considered a priority where:

- the land includes environmental features that are intrinsic to the park's ecosystem and integrity;
- the land includes regionally significant outdoor recreational experiences that are integral to the experiences offered in the park;
- the land would help connect existing parks;
- the land contains areas identified in the SEI; and/or
- the area would help meet the objectives of the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy.

## The Proposed Regional Green/Blue Spaces System

The proposed Regional Green/Blue Spaces System is a network of green/blue spaces connected by greenways. Wherever possible, this regional System will connect to existing local systems of green/blue spaces and greenways in order to create a network throughout the region. The System is shown on Maps 1, 2, 3 and 4. It is made up of four principal elements:

The actual land use of areas under municipal jurisdiction and identified on Maps 1, 2, 3 and 4 will be determined through Official Community Plans and land use bylaws.

### **GREEN/BLUE SPACE CORE AREAS**, composed of:

- Existing Parks
- Unprotected Green Space
- Blue Space
- Capital Region Water Lands;

### **GREENWAYS**, composed of:

- Greenways
- Stream and Wetland Stewardship Blueways
- Marine Access Greenways;

### **RENEWABLE RESOURCE WORKING LANDSCAPES**, composed of:

- Agricultural Land
- Managed Forest Land; and

### **VALUABLE REMNANT ECOSYSTEMS**

The proposed Regional Green/Blue Spaces System is considered the regional green/blue spaces infrastructure, and one of the major components of the regional infrastructure that is essential for creating a livable and healthy region (i.e., sewers, water supply, transportation, solid waste disposal, and green/blue spaces).

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### **GREEN/BLUE SPACE CORE AREAS**

Large Green/Blue Space Core Areas form the basic building blocks of the Regional Green/Blue Spaces System.

The Green/Blue Space Core Areas in the CRD can be broken into two types: Green Space Core Areas and Blue Space Core Areas.

*Green Space Core Areas* contain the major examples of the region's

**The Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy establishes a broad regional vision of what should be kept —green, blue, living and productive.**

historic land-based ecosystems and the majority of areas identified in the SEI. Green Space Core Areas are made up of:

- Existing Parks (e.g., national parks, provincial parks and ecological reserves, regional parks, and municipal nature parks);
- Unprotected Green Space (e.g., areas with green space value which are not in existing parks); and
- Capital Regional District Water Lands.

*Blue Space Core Areas* are marine environments with high ecological, recreational and/or scenic values. While particular marine areas may embody specific values, it is recognized that the entire shoreline of the CRD is important because it is an integral part of the regional identity, and because of its largely unspoiled character. The management of intertidal areas and sub-tidal and nearshore waters comes under the jurisdiction of the federal and provincial governments, but the green/blue space values of the coastline can be negatively affected by development and other activities on land. Therefore, local governments need to be aware of the values of these important coastline areas when planning and approving development and in regulating land-use activities and stormwater discharges.

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## **GREENWAYS**

Greenways are made up of:

- Greenways,
- Stream and Wetland Stewardship Blueways, and
- Marine Access Greenways.

### **Greenways**

Greenways are corridors that link Green/Blue Space Core Areas. Together they can form a network of pathways, bikeways, waterways or undeveloped green corridors that link green/blue spaces, public lands, open spaces, cultural features and viewpoints. Used to their full advantage Greenways can form a multifunctional system whose parts differ depending on their main purpose, terrain, surrounding land use and legal boundaries. Some links will be largely recreational, while others would be primarily for habitat conservation, especially in riparian areas. Other parts, with no public access, would provide green travel routes for daily and seasonal wildlife movement or vegetation shifts in response to climate change. Greenways in suburban and urban areas, on the other hand, might be paths on quiet streets linking parks and public areas to

the waterfront or points of interest. Some Greenways could have a mainly local purpose such as the Bowker Creek Greenway or they may have a regional role such as the Galloping Goose Regional Trail.

The planned regional trail is the foundation for a Capital Region Greenways System. The regional trail sets out to link major parks and other cultural features to the three major trail systems in the region: the West Coast Trail, the Juan de Fuca Provincial Marine Trail, and the Galloping Goose Regional Trail.

In 1995, the PCC became an active partner in the development of the greenways system for the region. With the assistance of the Greenways Advisory Committee, it proposed an integrated Capital Region Greenways System that will form part of the Regional Green/Blue Spaces System (see map 4). The proposed greenways system expands the usefulness of the established trail system through a network of green links to the Regional Green/Blue Spaces System and to destination points such as airports, ferry facilities, and institutions.

Greenways have the advantage of being understandable at both the regional and neighbourhood scale. At the regional level they provide a unifying rationale for linking and preserving small and large green/blue spaces. At the neighbourhood level Greenway links can be a readily understood tool to harness local interest to contribute a link to the Green/Blue Spaces System.

### **Stream and Wetland Stewardship Blueways**

Stream and Wetland Stewardship Blueways follow major streams, rivers and lakes. These areas are important because they:

- are valuable habitat for fish and wildlife;
- help maintain water quality;
- support unique vegetation communities;
- provide a link between land and the ocean; and
- provide opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Wetlands along stream corridors are also important because they help moderate storm and summer water flows and contribute to ground-water recharge.

These areas have been identified in order to focus on their value as stream and wetland habitats and on the need for conservation of the variety of natural systems they support. Voluntary stream stewardship of private land within these corridors will be the primary way of achieving the conservation objectives of the Strategy. Outdoor recreation is considered appropriate when it is compatible with the need to conserve the

natural values of these corridors.

The values of streams and methods to protect stream and wetland systems are well documented in the reports “Stream Stewardship: A Guide for Planners and Developers” and “Land Development Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Habitat” produced by the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the provincial Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks. The two principal ways of maintaining and protecting stream and wetland systems are with municipal development controls, and private or public land stewardship.

### **Marine Access Greenways**

Marine Access Greenways incorporate and link green spaces, beach accesses, and waterfront walkways on the marine shoreline. They include the key regional green space areas that warrant long-term protection, such as the marine coastline from Rocky Point to Royal Roads. Portions of the Marine Access Greenway allow the public complete access to the marine shoreline. Wherever possible, access points to beaches and waterfront areas are linked by trails and roads along or parallel to shoreline.

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## **RENEWABLE RESOURCE WORKING LANDSCAPES**

Renewable Resource Working Landscapes are private and public lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve, the Forest Land Reserve, and the provincial forest. Resource harvest activities in these areas distinguish them from other types of green/blue spaces; the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy recognizes that the primary purpose of these lands is resource use. As such, these lands first provide an economic return, and second, a green/blue space function. The Renewable Resource Working Landscape category does not include park lands.

### **Agricultural Land As Green Space**

Agricultural land is central to the character of the Capital Region: it makes up a major part of our open green space near settled areas. Some agricultural lands, particularly seasonally flooded agricultural fields, also provide important wildlife habitat values. However, these environmental benefits can be a burden to farmers.

It must be recognized that farmland is a working landscape: its major purpose is the production of crops and livestock. It must also be recognized that commercially viable farming is becoming more intensive, so we can no longer assume that the pastoral character of the region’s

**Residents of the region place a high priority on the need to protect many remaining natural areas from development.**

farmlands will continue. The nature of farming is changing: it is moving from soil-bound and seasonal, to year-round and less dependent on soil resources. Farming is focusing more on specialty crops, greenhouse operations, and special livestock enterprises.

Understanding the needs of agriculture is key to developing measures that will help farmers continue farming, thereby maintaining the open green space of the region. In spite of the regulations intended to save farmland, and the property tax advantages available to farmers, farming remains an uncertain economic enterprise and that is impeded by the cost of irrigation water. The most effective way for individuals to support the continuance of viable farming—and the maintenance of agricultural land as green space in this region—is to buy locally grown products.

### **Managed Forest Land As Green Space**

Commercially managed forest lands dominate the visual character of the area west of Sooke, and some areas on the Gulf Islands. Approximately 56% of the region's land base is managed forest land. Most of these commercial forest lands are harvested on short-term (approximately 80-year) rotations. The extensive network of forest roads provides recreation access to scenic lakes and ridge tops. Large blocks of contiguous regenerating forests provide important habitat for a number of wildlife species.

The maintenance of green/blue space values on Crown forest land is addressed through provincial land-use planning initiatives such as the Vancouver Island Land Use Plan, subregional Land and Resource Management Planning processes, and the regulations and standards of the Forest Practices Code.

The Vancouver Island Land Use Plan identified areas of special environmental, recreational and cultural value that have since been designated as Low Intensity Areas (San Juan Ridge in the western portion of the CRD is an example). Land and resource management on Crown forest lands attempts to integrate timber harvesting with wildlife management, provision of recreation opportunities, and preservation of viewscales. The Forest Practices Code requires forest companies to maintain biodiversity and wildlife habitat values at the forest-stand level by providing a range of forest ages and stages, and by connecting remnant stands of older forest with sensitive habitats.

The Forest Practices Code does not apply to private land (outside of woodlot licences), so owners of private forest land have more discretion in the intensity of forest harvesting and the maintenance of green/blue space values. However, private managed forest lands have been designated part of the Forest Land Reserve in order to minimize the loss of productive forest land to urban development and rural-area settlement.



**The Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy will be an important source of information in helping to define the Regional Growth Strategy, because it articulates a broad regional vision of green/blue space protection and maintenance.**

Private land can be removed from the Forest Land Reserve, but only if the landowner pays a financial penalty based on the tax differential between managed forest and residential land.

Owners of private land that is classified as Managed Forest (MF) by the British Columbia Assessment Authority have their own organization—the Private Forest Landowners Association. Forest landowners in the MF classification are required by the *Assessment Act* to demonstrate an ongoing commitment to growing trees on their land. The objectives of the Private Forest Landowners Association are:

- To promote responsible forest stewardship on B.C.'s private forest lands.
- To promote government policy which is fair, environmentally sound, and fiscally responsible.
- To protect the rights of private property owners and seek compensation if landowners' rights to manage are constrained by government policy.
- To promote government policy that encourages investment on private forest lands, including incentives to grow trees.

The restoration of green/blue space values, such as fish habitat, on forest land damaged by past logging practices is also ongoing in the Capital Region. The Watershed Restoration Program, a provincial initiative of Forest Renewal BC, is working to restore, protect and maintain fisheries and aquatic and forest resources in damaged watersheds. The program is intended to foster watershed stewardship by forest companies, and to build strong community-based support for sustainable watershed management.

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## **VALUABLE REMNANT ECOSYSTEMS**

The SEI has identified a number of small ecosystems and vegetation types that are scattered across the landscape in Greater Victoria and on the southern Gulf Islands. These Valuable Remnant Ecosystems are important relics of the original distribution of native vegetation. Taken together, these areas are regionally significant and add to overall green/blue spaces in the region.

These Valuable Remnant Ecosystems occur primarily on private land and have no form of protection. Some of these remnant ecosystems, such as those associated with Garry oaks, are of provincial and national conservation significance and have a strong cultural heritage values. Many of these ecosystems have been altered by human use and the introduction of exotic plants and will require management intervention to maintain their biodiversity and conservation values.

## Key Green/Blue Space Areas

There are many opportunities—large and small—to protect and maintain green/blue space areas throughout the CRD. The green/blue space values of these areas will be enhanced by a linking system of Greenways. Some of those areas are described below.

### Saanich Inlet to Juan de Fuca Strait

- This Green/Blue Space Core Area consists of existing protected areas, large contiguous areas of SEI sites, many Stream Stewardship Blueways, Crown land, proposed ecological reserves, large undeveloped private holdings, and Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park.
- The green space values of this area were recognized as far back as 1969, when the area was identified as green land, and as a proposed regional park, in a report titled “Regional Parks – A Report for the Capital Regional District Board.”
- This area has high ecological, outdoor recreation, scenic and greenway values.
- This area provides a buffer between the urban and suburban areas of the CRD and the commercial forest land to the west of the Sooke Hills.

- This area will be an important green/blue space in the future, given the expected population growth in the region—especially in the western communities.
- This area provides an unparalleled opportunity to maintain the upper portions of the Veitch, Ayum and Charters creeks watersheds.
- Along with the area from Rocky Point to Esquimalt Lagoon, this area is part of an important flyway for migratory birds.

### Capital Regional District Water Catchment Lands

- This area is important because it is the source of water for the urban and suburban areas of the CRD.
- The area has high ecological values. Approximately 42% of the remaining older age classes of coniferous and mixed forest in the CRD portion of the Nanaimo Lowlands eco-section is in the CRD Water catchment lands.
- This area contains scientific study sites that are part of a global environmental monitoring network.

### **Federal Department of National Defence Lands (Rocky Point to Esquimalt Harbour)**

- The federal government owns approximately 2,900 hectares of land in the CRD. The majority of this Department of National Defence land is located along the coast from Rocky Point to Esquimalt Harbour. These lands have high ecological and scenic values. Some areas have high potential for outdoor recreational activities.
- These lands border the proposed Blue Space Core Area from East Sooke Regional Park to Esquimalt Harbour.

### **Mount Work Regional Park to Thetis Lake/Francis-King/Mill Hill Regional Parks**

- These regional parks provide an important green space close to urban areas and have high ecological, outdoor recreation, scenic and greenway values. Mount Work Regional Park and Thetis Lake/Francis-King/Mill Hill Regional Parks are separated by approximately 3 kilometres of land. As a Green Space Core Area, these connecting lands would greatly enhance the green/blue space values of the area.

### **South and West Salt Spring Island**

- A dominant landscape feature in the region and on Salt Spring Island. The south and west hilltops and shoreline of Salt Spring are visible from many points in the CRD. The area has high ecological, recreational, scenic and greenway values.

### **San Juan Ridge**

- San Juan Ridge contains the only sub-alpine area within the CRD. As such, the area has unique ecological and outdoor recreational green/blue space values.

### **Tod Creek/Prospect Lake Watershed**

- This Stream and Wetland Stewardship Blueway is a regionally significant natural connection between Mount Work Regional Park and Tod Inlet.

### **Blenkinsop Lake and Creek – Swan Lake and Creek – Elk/Beaver Lake – O'Donnel Creek – Colquitz Creek System**

- This freshwater system is an important urban Stream and Wetland Stewardship Blueway. The corridor has high ecological, outdoor recreation, scenic and greenway values.

**Large Green/  
Blue Space  
Core Areas  
form the basic  
building blocks  
of the Regional  
Green/Blue  
Spaces System.**

### **Craigflower Creek**

- This Stream and Wetland Stewardship Blueway is a regionally significant natural connection between Portage Inlet, Thetis Lake Regional Park, and Mount Work Regional Park. The corridor has high ecological values.

### **Sooke River and Tributaries**

- Sooke River is the largest river in the CRD east of the Sooke Basin. The river provides important spawning habitat for salmon.
- The river—and parallel Galloping Goose Regional Trail—and adjacent lands provide excellent opportunities for outdoor recreational activities such as swimming, fishing, hiking and mountain biking.

### **San Juan River Estuary**

- The lower portion of the San Juan River contains a broad, highly productive, and ecologically important flood plain and estuary.

### **Saanich Inlet**

- Saanich Inlet is a sensitive marine environment and scenic fjord with specialized habitats. It is home to some species that are rare or unusual in B.C. The Goldstream Estuary is a provincially significant ecological area.
- The Saanich Inlet has very high recreational and cultural values.
- The CRD Board has recommended that the Saanich Inlet be designated a National Marine Conservation Area.

### **Active Pass**

- Active Pass is a scenic and ecologically productive marine channel. It is also a key part of the BC Ferries route between Victoria and Vancouver.

### **Portage Inlet and the Gorge**

- The terminus of Colquitz Creek, this unique inlet has high recreational and scenic values. It also provides herring spawning sites.

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Who and How?  
**3 Protecting and Maintaining  
Areas Identified in the  
Proposed Regional Green/  
Blue Spaces System**

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**Part 3 outlines the contributions that could be made by all of the participants in green/blue space protection and maintenance to help create the Regional Green/Blue Spaces System described in Part 2. Specifically, Part 3 identifies who the participants are in protecting and maintaining green/blue spaces, and how these participants could contribute.**

Securing the proposed Regional Green/Blue Spaces System will be an incremental process over many years. A great deal more will need to be done through various planning processes, such as work on the Regional Growth Strategy, updating Official Community Plans, updating the Official Regional Parks Plan, preparing park management plans, and other land-use studies.

Collaboration is essential in securing the Regional Green/Blue Spaces System, because no single level of government and no landowner or non-profit organization has the direct responsibility or capability to accomplish the task alone. The public also expects cooperation among levels of government so that tax dollars are used efficiently.

The first step in achieving cooperation is to have a common view of the future, and the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy helps to define exactly such a view.

The participants who have a role to play in protecting and

maintaining regional green/blue spaces include citizens, landowners, all levels of government, institutions, public utilities, and non-profit organizations. These participants can help secure regional green/blue spaces through:

- land stewardship,
- land management,
- land acquisition,
- land-use and resource regulation,
- financial and technical support,
- education, and
- advocacy.

Although every participant may not be able to do all of those things, they can all help to secure green/blue spaces.

Listed below are the contributions that participants could make in order to help create the Regional Green/Blue Spaces System.

**Greenways are corridors that link Green/Blue Space Core Areas. Together they can form a network of pathways, bikeways, waterways or undeveloped green corridors that link green/blue spaces, public lands, open spaces cultural features and viewpoints.**

## Citizens of the Capital Regional District

### Contributions that Citizens Could Make

1. Take an active interest in protecting and maintaining green/blue spaces.
2. Participate in public discussion of the protection and maintenance of green/blue spaces, the Regional Growth Strategy, and local planning efforts.

3. Support local agriculture by buying local products.
4. Take part in education programs about green/blue spaces, and encourage all family members to participate.
5. Cherish existing green/blue spaces.
6. Visit and enjoy green/blue areas and be good land stewards.
7. Support land trust initiatives.

## Landowners

Landowners can help protect and maintain green/blue spaces through stewardship and management of their lands.

### Contributions that Landowners Could Make

1. Become land stewards to protect and maintain regional green/blue spaces. Activities that promote good stewardship on private property include:
  - preserving wetland areas and woodlots;
  - maintaining riparian zones around waterways and wetlands;
  - keeping cattle away from stream banks so they don't cause damage to streamside vegetation and accelerate bank erosion;

- replanting disturbed areas with native vegetation;
  - planting cover crops for wildlife and for soil protection;
  - minimizing the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers that can pollute waterways;
  - planting gardens that provide food and shelter for wildlife;
  - erecting nesting boxes for wood ducks, swallows, martins, bluebirds and bats; and
  - pursuing legal forms of protection for important habitat on private property.
2. Participate in **Naturescape British Columbia**, and use native plants in landscaping.

**There are many opportunities—large and small—to protect and maintain green/blue space areas throughout the CRD.**

## Non-Profit Organizations

Significant green/blue space areas in the region have been protected as a result of the efforts of non-profit organizations. These organizations have raised money to purchase land, restored natural areas, conducted research, raised public awareness, conducted education programs and provided advice to government. These groups also have an important continuing role to play in protecting and maintaining green/blue spaces in the region.

Non-profit organizations own some significant parcels of land, such as the YMCA's Camp Thunderbird.

### Contributions that Non-Profit Organizations Could Make

1. Work with the CRD and the PCC to expand the green/blue spaces database.
2. Commit to the stewardship of green/blue space values on land they own.
3. Continue to advocate for the protection and maintenance of regional green/blue spaces.
4. Work with landowners to foster appropriate stewardship practices.
5. Continue to provide education about green/blue spaces.
6. Continue land trust initiatives.

## Institutions and Public Utilities

Institutions and public utilities have a role to play in securing regional green/blue spaces, through education, land management and stewardship. Some of the key institutional and public-utility lands in the CRD with regional green/blue space value are:

- the Greater Victoria Water District catchment and non-catchment lands,
- the Glendale lands, and
- forested areas on the University of Victoria lands.

### Contributions that Institutions and Public Utilities Could Make

1. Incorporate green/blue space values into the assessment of development projects and land-use decisions.
2. Commit to the stewardship of green/blue space values on their lands.
3. Inventory green/blue spaces on their lands.



## First Nations

First Nations can maintain regional green/blue space values on their lands through land management and stewardship.

### Contributions that First Nations Could Make

1. Use the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy as a guide to incorporate green/blue space planning into the assessment of development.
2. Incorporate the following into community and developmental planning on their land:
  - the Regional Green/Blue Spaces System,

- SEI sites,
  - large, contiguous units of green/blue space,
  - logical, definable boundaries at the urban green/blue space interface ,
  - continuation of greenways
  - cluster development, and
  - designated buffer areas between developed areas and green/blue spaces.
3. Commit to responsible stewardship in protecting and maintaining green/blue space values.

## Municipalities, CRD General Municipal Services and Islands Trust

The primary role of local government in protecting and maintaining regional green/blue spaces is through land-use regulations and land-use decision making. *This places municipalities, CRD Municipal Services, and Islands Trust in the most pivotal position for conserving and maintaining regional green/blue spaces.*

Local government can also secure green/blue spaces through land acquisition, management and stewardship.

### Contributions that Municipalities, CRD General Municipal Services and Islands Trust Could Make

1. Plan for green/blue spaces and greenways and recognize the results in all Official Community Plans.
2. Use the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy as a guide to incorporate green/blue spaces planning into Official Community Plans, Local Area Plans, zoning, and assessment of development.
3. Commit to responsible stewardship of green/blue space values on land owned by

**Securing the proposed Regional Green/Blue Spaces System will be an incremental process over many years.**

- municipalities, CRD Municipal Services, and Islands Trust.
4. Consider using or expanding the use of the amenity-bonus provision of the *Municipal Act* to retain green/blue spaces and green/blue space values.
  5. Work with the staff of federal and provincial government conservation agencies to ensure that relevant bylaws and regulations are consistent with senior government conservation objectives for green/blue space values.
  6. Adopt the methods outlined in “Stream Stewardship: A Guide for Planners and Developers” and “Land Development Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Habitat” for stream and wetland systems maintenance and protection.
  7. Supplement the results of the SEI by identifying and assessing green/blue space areas that have municipal significance.
  8. Consider the following in community and developmental planning:
    - the Regional Green/Blue Spaces System,
    - SEI sites,
    - large, contiguous units of green/blue space,
    - logical, definable boundaries at the urban-green/blue space interface,
    - cluster development,
    - transfer development rights from green/blue space areas
    - designated buffer areas between developed areas and green/blue spaces, and
    - conservation covenants.
  9. Encourage enhancement and restoration of degraded public and private sites, using native plant species.
  10. Waive property taxes on conservation lands that are owned by private conservation organizations.
  11. Work with CRD Engineering to adopt a consistent integrated watershed management approach to maintaining aquatic habitat and stormwater quality.

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## Capital Regional District (CRD)

CRD Regional Planning Services, Parks, Engineering and General Municipal Services all have roles to play in protecting and maintaining regional green/blue spaces through land management, stew-

ardship and acquisition, technical and financial assistance, and land-use regulation. Actions for those departments are presented below, except for General Municipal Services, which is addressed in the

section dealing with municipalities and Islands Trust.

**Contributions that the CRD Could Make**

1. Regard the proposed Regional Green/Blue Spaces System as the green/blue spaces infrastructure for purposes of the Regional Growth Strategy.
2. Update the Official Regional Parks Plan and incorporate actions from the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy.
3. Continue, in partnership with the PCC, to implement the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy.
4. Hold a workshop in 1999 to gauge the effectiveness of the Strategy in guiding the protection and maintenance of regional green/blue spaces.
5. Prepare a status report for the CRD Board of Directors in 1999 that assesses the effectiveness of the Strategy in guiding the protection and maintenance of regional green/blue spaces.
6. Join with the PCC to support a community-based land trust

- information office.
7. Join with the PCC to develop and support a land stewardship/landowner contact program coordinated by a land trust information office.
  8. Commit to responsible stewardship of green/blue space values on CRD-owned land.
  9. Participate in joint ventures with other levels of government, and with private- sector and non-profit organizations to acquire regional green/blue spaces.
  10. Assist community planning by providing municipalities and Islands Trust with access to natural-areas maps compiled for the green/blue spaces project.
  11. Assist in the enhancement and restoration of at least one stream in the CRD as a demonstration project.
  12. Work with all municipalities to develop a consistent integrated watershed management approach to maintaining aquatic habitat and stormwater quality.

**Provincial Capital Commission (PCC)**

The PCC can help secure regional green/blue spaces through land acquisition, management and stewardship, and through technical and financial assistance.

**Contributions that the PCC Could Make**

1. Continue support and funding its Greenways Program.
2. Practise responsible

**Collaboration is essential in securing the Regional Green/Blue Spaces System, because no single level of government and no land-owner or non-profit organization has the direct responsibility or capability to accomplish the task alone. The public also expects cooperation among levels of government so that tax dollars are used efficiently.**

stewardship of green/blue space values on PCC-owned land.

3. Support expanded green/blue space mapping and databases to include modified terrestrial ecosystems as well as bird and wildlife habitats.
4. Continue to develop and implement an effective system of viewscape mapping.
5. Join with the CRD to support a community-based land trust

information office.

6. Join with the CRD to develop and support a land stewardship/landowner contact program coordinated by a land trust information office.
7. Expand, in partnership with the CRD, the role of the Greenways Advisory Committee so that it serves as a region-wide green/blue spaces public advisory group.

## Government of British Columbia

The provincial government has a major role to play in protecting and maintaining regional green/blue space areas, from many perspectives. They can fulfill that role by:

- establishing and managing parks and ecological reserves;
- managing the use of Crown land;
- protecting, regulating and managing natural resource lands;
- providing programs and financial assistance for the conservation of green/blue spaces and values;
- providing education;
- ensuring compliance with Agricultural Land Reserve and Forest Land Reserve legislation;
- creating and revising legislation that affects the powers of municipalities to control land

use; and

- providing financial and technical assistance to regional districts and municipalities for the protection and maintenance of lands with green/blue space values.

Key areas owned by the provincial government that are of regional green/blue space significance include:

- provincial parks and ecological reserves;
- vacant Crown lands on southern Salt Spring Island along Satellite Channel and the height of land stretching from Mount Sullivan and Bruce Peak to Hope Hill;
- Crown lands in the Sooke Hills;
- the western portion of San Juan Ridge;
- parcels along the San Juan River and estuary;

- all of the shoreline; and
- the nearshore marine environment.

**Contributions that the Government of British Columbia Could Make**

1. Transfer vacant Crown land with regional green/blue space value—or which has been identified as a potential park or conservation area in a land-use plan—to a government agency, local government, or recognized non-profit organization that has a natural-area conservation mandate.
2. Commit to responsible stewardship in protecting and maintaining green/blue space values on provincial land.
3. Complete the Protected Areas Strategy on the southern Gulf Islands.
4. Continue to establish proposed ecological reserves in the CRD.
5. Establish marine protected areas in the CRD.
6. Continue to contribute to greenways protection and stewardship by providing technical and financial

- assistance.
7. Provide technical and financial assistance for demonstration greenway projects.
  8. Incorporate green/blue space values into the assessment of all development projects in areas under provincial jurisdiction.
  9. Consult with the CRD about green/blue space interests as they relate to the disposition of land and to land-use development on provincial land within the CRD.
  10. Waive property taxes in unincorporated areas on conservation lands that are owned by private conservation organizations.
  11. Refine and monitor the results of the Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory (SEI).
  12. Continue to protect agricultural land through the Agricultural Land Reserve.
  13. Prepare a guide for developers and local government that addresses the protection and maintenance of green/blue spaces in urban, suburban and rural development.

**Government of Canada**

The federal government can protect and maintain regional green/blue spaces through stewardship, land management and acquisition,

financial and technical assistance, education, and land-use regulations.

In 1990, the federal govern-

**Implementing the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy is not the responsibility of a single agency or participant; the scope of the strategy alone puts it well beyond the means and jurisdiction of any one group or level of government.**

ment made a formal commitment to take a leadership role in practising exemplary stewardship on the land under its control. Implementing this stewardship ethic will help secure the region's green/blue spaces.

The key federally owned or regulated regional green/blue space areas are:

- Fort Rodd Hill National Historic Park, and Pacific Rim National Park Reserve;
- Pacific Marine Heritage Legacy lands;
- Rocky Point to Esquimalt Harbour (Large tracts of land are held by the federal Department of National Defence. This is a Green/Blue Space Core Area.);
- Royal Roads;
- land associated with lighthouses;
- marine environment;
- Victoria International Airport lands;
- Cole Hill (Heals Rifle Range); and
- Observatory Hill (Dominion Astrophysical Observatory).

#### **Contributions that the Government of Canada Government Could Make**

1. Restate its leadership for the stewardship of land it controls

in the CRD, and lead by example by ensuring that regional green/blue spaces on federal lands are protected and maintained.

2. Create a national park in the southern Gulf Islands, and national marine conservation areas in the CRD.
3. Designate Saanich Inlet as a national marine conservation area.
4. Continue the national Ecological Monitoring and Assessment Network (EMAN) initiative on federal lands in the CRD.
5. Ensure that any development activity on federal lands is consistent with the intent, objectives and policies of Official Community Plans.
6. Consult with the CRD, the PCC, municipalities and Islands Trust about green/blue space interests as they relate to disposition of land and to land-use development.
7. Incorporate green/blue space values into the assessment of all new development projects on federal lands.
8. Continue to provide technical and financial assistance and education for the protection of fisheries and migratory bird habitats in the CRD.

## Regional Land Trust and Land Stewardship

A land trust is a private, charitable organization that works to conserve land in the community. Using donations, bequests and volunteer labour, trusts typically acquire land or development rights, and then preserve the land. Several local land trusts exist in the CRD, but there is no regional land trust.

The draft Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy suggested that a regional land trust be established by the CRD and the PCC, and that the two organizations provide seed money for organizational costs and coordinate the start-up phase.

A regional green/blue spaces trust would be a community-based, non-profit society with a board of directors drawn from a broad range of interests in the community. The primary objectives of the trust would be to secure land and manage a land-stewardship program. A green/blue spaces trust would operate independently of government, but would work cooperatively with government to protect and maintain green/blue spaces.

A workshop was held in May 1997 with land trust and land stewardship representatives to discuss the regional land trust proposal presented in the draft Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy, and the potential roles of the CRD and the PCC. The results of the workshop are presented in the report "Supporting Land Trust and

Stewardship Initiatives in the Capital Region," which recommends that a regional land trust and stewardship program **not** be established. The workshop participants felt that the existing local and community-based land trust groups already work effectively to protect and maintain green/blue space.

Further, the report recommends that:

- an independent information/coordination office be established;
- the CRD and PCC support land trusts and stewardship groups by providing grants to these groups for land acquisition and stewardship initiatives, and for the information/coordination office; and
- the tipping fee at Hartland Landfill be used as a source of funds for the above two initiatives.

### Contributions that the CRD and the PCC Could Make

1. Provide seed money for organizational costs to support the establishment of an independent land trust information/coordination office to promote land trusts and land stewardship, coordinate the activities of land trusts, and provide information.
2. Partner with land trusts to purchase land.

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4 How and How Much?  
**Implementation,  
Recommendations and  
Costs**

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**Successful implementation of the Strategy will depend on collaboration among independent jurisdictions with varying levels of responsibility and funding, and on partnerships among governments, land-owners and institutions.**

## Implementation

Implementing the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy is not the responsibility of a single agency or participant; the scope of the Strategy alone puts it well beyond the means and jurisdiction of any one group or level of government. And realizing the green/blue spaces vision for the Capital Region—implementing the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy—will take years. For those reasons, a detailed implementation plan and coordination process are not necessary—or practical.

Successful implementation of the Strategy will depend on collaboration among independent jurisdictions with varying levels of responsibility and funding, and on partnerships among governments, landowners and institutions. It will also depend on the outcome of the Regional Growth Strategy and local government land use-planning and regulation.

For all of those reasons, it is recommended that the process remain fluid and be opportunistic; but that the CRD and the PCC take a number of key actions to guide implementation of the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy. Within the CRD, CRD Parks and CRD Regional Planning Services will be responsible for implementing the Strategy.

### CRD Board and PCC Board Recommendations

Following are the key recommendations approved by the CRD Board and PCC Board for achieving a regional green/blue spaces system. The recommendations are interdependent, requiring the cooperation of many groups, with the CRD and PCC acting as catalysts for successful implementation.

The PCC Board endorsed the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy and approved recommendations on November 25, 1997. The CRD Board endorsed the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy and approved recommendations on November 26, 1997. The recom-

mendations that were approved by both the PCC and CRD are presented first. This is followed by the recommendations that were approved separately by the PCC and CRD.

#### Recommendations Approved by both the PCC Board and CRD Board

1. That the CRD and the PCC forward the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy to all municipalities, CRD Municipal Services, the Islands Trust, and the federal and provincial governments, bringing to their attention how they could contribute to the protection and maintenance of regional green/blue spaces.

2. That the PCC continue to support and fund the Commission's Greenways Program.
3. That the CRD and the PCC hold a workshop in 1999 to gauge the effectiveness of the Strategy in guiding the protection and maintenance of regional green/blue spaces.
4. That a status report be prepared for the CRD and PCC Boards of Directors in 1999 that assesses the effectiveness of the Strategy in guiding the protection and maintenance of regional green/blue spaces.
5. (a) That the CRD and the PCC report annually to their respective Boards about green/blue spaces projects; and (b) That the CRD and PCC prepare and distribute an information newsletter on the projects.
6. That the CRD and the PCC provide seed money for organizational costs to support the establishment of an independent land trust information/coordination office to promote land trusts and land stewardship, coordinate the activities of land trusts and provide information.

### **CRD Board Recommendation**

1. That the CRD regard the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy as a planning tool and guideline for preparing the Regional Growth Strategy.

### **PCC Board Recommendations**

1. That the Commission endorse the Regional Green/Blue Spaces System advocated in the report and regard the proposed system as the Regional Green/Blue Spaces infrastructure.
2. That the Commission and the CRD prepare an implementation plan with measurable objectives.

### **Costs**

The costs to implement the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy are dependent on a number of variables that are not within the control of the CRD or the PCC. Therefore, only direct costs to the CRD and the PCC have been provided, below.

**Table 1: Estimated Direct Costs to the CRD and the PCC to Implement the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy**

Item	Proposed Shared Cost: CRD/PCC	CRD	PCC
Assessment of Effectiveness	\$15,000		
Workshop in 1999	\$20,000		
Status Report in 1999	\$ 5,000		
Annual Report/Newsletter	\$10,000		
Seed Money for Regional Land Trust Office	\$30,000 \$25,000		
Mapping, Information Gathering, Analysis			
Viewscape Mapping			\$20,000
Greenways Program Funding			(1)
Land Acquisition		(2)	(1)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$105,000</b>		<b>\$20,000</b>

**Notes:**

- (1) Subject to PCC funding and Government of British Columbia approval.
- (2) Subject to the update of the Official Regional Parks Plan, and approval of the CRD Board.

Endorsement of the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy by the CRD and PCC Boards does not constitute automatic approval of funding for implementation. Standard funding procedure approvals will be adhered to at all stages of implementation.