

Memo

File: 1420-20 NAAPT

To: Natural Areas, Parks and Trails Advisory Committee
From: Councillor Judy Brownoff
Date: April 8, 2024
Subject: BC Hydro Projects – Establishment of Funding for Climate Action
Ecosystem Restoration. Proposed Motion for the 2024 UBCM Convention

BACKGROUND:

BC Hydro is undertaking a project to upgrade the high-voltage power lines along Prospect Lake Road (from Meadowbrook Road to Munns Road). The project will result in the loss of an estimated 485 trees, 98% of which are native species, without a restoration plan or compensation being offered to Saanich. This loss of biodiversity, particularly the significant reduction in the tree canopy, is concerning, especially given our commitment to environmental sustainability as outlined in Saanich's Climate Action Plan.

The removal of these trees will have a visual impact and also affect the local ecosystem and wildlife habitat. It's imperative that we recognize the broader implications of such projects on our community and environment going forward.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Saanich Council endorse the following resolution and direct staff to send electronic copies to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) member municipalities requesting favourable consideration and resolutions of support:


"WHEREAS the BC Hydro and Power Authority Act and associated Statutes references other acts within its scope, including the Climate Change Accountability Act and Environment Management Act. Various communities have experienced that their operations do not fully comply with these acts or the province's nature-based 2030 Climate Change targets to protect land, preserve nature, and reverse biodiversity loss. Moreover, the Authority does not allocate a budget for adequate eco-restoration in areas where its activities have harmfully impacted biodiversity. Financial support is crucial to the success of Hydro projects and the realization of provincial Climate Change targets.

AND FURTHER WHEREAS to prepare the Province for the impacts of Climate Change, it is essential BC Hydro collaborate with local governments, stakeholders, and landowners. The *BC Hydro Power and Authority Act* must also prioritize ecosystem

retention in its mandate to provide affordable power while minimizing environmental impact, restoring biodiversity, and in the process support Local Governments' Climate Action Plans.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT UBCM recommend the Province of BC mandate *BC Hydro and Power Authority Act* to incorporate a budget for Climate Action Ecosystem Restoration in all its projects, and that the *BC Hydro and Power Authority Act* be updated to reflect necessary budget requirements.”

Prepared by:



Judy
Brownoff
Councillor

cc: Suzanne Samboroski, Director of Parks, Recreation and Community Services; Eva Riccius, Senior Manager Parks, Recreation and Community Services; Paul de Greef, Manager, Park Plan and Development, Parks, Recreation and Community Services; Alix Link, Manager of Urban Forestry, Natural Areas, and Community Stewardship, Parks, Recreation and Community Services