



**AGENDA**  
**RESILIENT SAANICH TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**  
**May 18, 2023, 6:30– 8:30 PM**  
**Held virtually via MS Teams**

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In light of the Saanich Communicable Disease Plan related safety measures, this meeting will be held virtually via MS Teams. Details on how to join the meeting can be found on the committee webpage – [Resilient Saanich Schedule, Minutes & Agendas](#). Please note that individuals participating by phone are identified by their phone number, which can be viewed on screen by all attendees of the meeting.

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- 1. Territorial Acknowledgement**
- 2. Approval of Agenda**
- 3. Adoption of Minutes**
  - April 20, 2023 meeting
- 4. Receipt of Correspondence**
- 5. Presentation of 2<sup>nd</sup> Draft Connectivity Mapping – BCS (60 min.)**
  - Lead: Cassandra Cummings
- 6. Review of Stewardship Working Group Draft (40 min.)**
  - Lead: Chris Lowe
- 7. Review of Environmental Policy Framework Draft (20 min.)**
  - Lead: Tory Stevens
- 8. Debrief of W'SANEC community meeting (10 min.)**
  - Lead: Eva Riccius, Thomas Munson

\* \* Next Meeting: June 15, 2023

To ensure quorum, please email [megan.macdonald@saanich.ca](mailto:megan.macdonald@saanich.ca) if you are not able to attend.

**MINUTES**  
**RESILIENT SAANICH TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**  
Via Microsoft Teams  
April 20, 2023 at 6:34 p.m.

Present: Tory Stevens (Chair); Councillor Zac de Vries; Kevin Brown; Purnima Govindarajulu; Chris Lowe; Stewart Guy; and Bev Windjack

Regrets: Tim Ennis; Jeremy Gye and Brian Wilkes

Guests: Judith Cullington Secretariat

Staff: Eva Riccius, Senior Manager of Parks; Thomas Munson, Senior Environmental Planner; and Megan MacDonald, Senior Committee Clerk

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**TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT**

The Chair read the Territorial Acknowledgement and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOVED by K. Brown and Seconded by B. Wilkes: "That the Agenda for the March 9, 2023, Resilient Saanich Technical Committee meeting be approved."**

**CARRIED**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOVED by B. Windjack and Seconded by C. Lowe: "That the Minutes for the February 16, 2023, Resilient Saanich Technical Committee meeting be approved."**

**CARRIED**

**MOVED by C. Lowe and Seconded by S. Guy: "That the Minutes for the March 9, 2023, Resilient Saanich Technical Committee meeting be approved."**

**CARRIED**

**REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY FRAMEWORK DRAFT**

The Secretariat provided an updated version of the Environmental Policy Framework; committee members were asked to provide feedback on the document. The following was noted:

- The definition of "Natural Environment" has been difficult to agree on. Key elements of the definition need to be agreed upon. This term is broad, and it is important to consider all aspects while keeping it simple enough for all to understand.
- K. Brown (working group member) has proposed a very detailed description.
- The first version included a more broad definition which may not be descriptive enough to ensure that all readers have the same understanding of the definition.

During committee discussion, the following was noted:

- The natural environment can include both native and non-native species. Invasive species are not part of the natural environment.
- Aligning the definition with other Saanich plans (such as local area plans) is important.
- More inclusion of description of non-native/non-invasive species would be beneficial.
- There may be benefit in having the longer description proposed by K. Brown as it is more descriptive and ensures that there is a clear understanding of a complex term.

The Secretariat and the working group will discuss the feedback from the committee and update the document before bringing it back to the committee.

## **PRESENTATION OF DRAFT CONNECTIVITY MAPPING – BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION STRATEGY**

Diamond Head consulting provided the Draft Connectivity Map (PowerPoint on file). The following was noted:

- Urbanization tends to be focused in lowland areas near the ocean or water bodies which are the areas that support the highest levels of biodiversity. As cities are developed, these valuable habitats are lost and the connected network becomes fragmented.
- The ability to access these areas is impeded, isolation of populations can cause them to become genetically unhealthy due to inbreeding. The prey/predator dynamics can become unbalanced due to inbreeding and constrained movement.
- Connectivity is critical to allow access to habitats for populations to interbreed.
- The focus of this mapping is on terrestrial species, to help protect and connect the most valuable habitat, focus resources, and maximize the value of the natural areas and their ability to support as many species as possible, especially those that are at risk.
- Biodiversity of an island depends on its size, the amount of edges/shoreline, how species move and their tolerance for and ability to move through urban areas.
- Major hubs in the Habitat Connectivity Network (HCN) provide interior habitat and refuge for wildlife. These are most likely to maintain biodiversity due to less disturbance.
- Minor hubs are defined as smaller areas, which have more interface edges. This includes some rural areas that have been intermixes with urban/forest landscapes. They have less protected refuge areas however they are important stepping stone areas.
- Unique habitat features (such as wetlands or Garry Oak communities) can exist within minor or major hubs, and these hubs may or may not be connected by corridors.
- Major corridors are a linear natural habitat that connects major hubs together. They are wide and continuous, with a target of greater than 30m wide. They are often fragmented by barriers such as roads. Many follow streams and their riparian setbacks.
- Minor corridors are narrow (10-30m wide) spaces fragmented by urban barriers, they provide natural cover for mammals tolerant of urban activity, birds and flying insects.
- Agricultural lands are protected for agricultural use, typically a monoculture of plants free of hard barriers with low cover and a risk of toxins such as pesticides/herbicides.
- Urban matrix is the natural areas intermixed within and urbanized landscape. These are small patches of habitat such as single or small groups of trees, non-native habitat features (such as garden areas), which are habitat for flying and urban tolerant species.
- The goals of the strategy include:
  - Understand the amount of remaining habitat in Saanich and how fragmented it is.
  - Increase public education and awareness of natural habitat within the urban landscape.
  - Prioritize habitats that will support biodiversity and identify missing travel corridors
  - Understand where habitat patches are isolated.

- Provide mapping that can inform land use planning, conservation and restoration efforts.
- Considerations will be made for habitat type, biodiversity, agricultural lands, land ownership, streams, and riparian setbacks as well as project scale.

The following was noted during committee discussion:

- The maps provide a high-level snapshot, while it is nice to get lots of information on the maps, there is also a need to ensure that the information provided is digestible.
- The maps help to inform where Saanich is currently, this information will allow for future opportunities to create policies and monitor implementation and progress in future.
- The perception of missing information will be hard to overcome.

### **DEBRIEFING OF BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION STRATEGY OPEN HOUSES**

The Chair provided an update on the recent Biodiversity Conservation Strategy open houses.

- An in person event took place on April 18, 2023 with just under 100 people attending, as well as a virtual open house on April 19<sup>th</sup> with approximately 50 attendees.
- Feedback was gathered from attendees and will be used to inform the strategy.
- Many comments centred around mapping and ongoing concerns related to private property. Many residents have lingering concerns about the previous Environmental Development Permit Area, or the current lack thereof.
- A BCS and a Urban Forest Strategy questionnaires are available online.
- Comments and feedback from all venues will be reviewed by Diamond Head, to be summarized and then provided to staff and RSTC for further consideration.

### **REVIEW OF STEWARDSHIP WORKING GROUP DRAFT**

The committee briefly reviewed the Stewardship Working Group Draft, the working group has discussed many aspects in great detail, comments were included on the draft document. Due to time constraints committee members were asked to send any further comments to the working group for further consideration at a future meeting.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion from K. Brown the meeting adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

### **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for May 18, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tory Stevens, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Secretary

DRAFT

2550-20 Biodiversity

Vivian Cheung

From: MI <[redacted]>  
Sent: Tuesday, April 25, 2023 12:21 PM  
To: Council  
Cc: MUNI.Minister@gov.bc.ca; ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca  
Subject: (External Email) Ugly oaks, diversity, and biased outfits (re EDPA revival)

POST TO	Glen	POSTED	APR 26 2023
COPY TO	SS		
INFORMATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
REPLY TO WRITER	<input type="checkbox"/>		
COPY RESPONSE TO LEGISLATIVE DIVISION REPORT	<input type="checkbox"/>		
FOR			
ACKNOWLEDGED	A/E		

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BTW, many Garry Oak 'meadows' were created by humans. Tribal people felled trees with fire to make more space for food plants like Camas lily, and maintained the open space with fire every few years to suppress competing species – proven by archaeologists. So eco-activists are pushing to preserve a configuration that is not 'natural' by their definition, as they treat humans as if we are not part of 'nature'. (Those tribal people were farming – improving the land to increase food production.)

Garry Oaks are not rare in Saanich, nor throughout the southern end of Vancouver Island. I see many moving around on errands.

Garry Oaks on southern VI are at the northern limit of their viable range, which may slowly move north as climate continues to warm slowly from the cold era that motivated Viking farmers to leave southwest Greenland. If climate cools again their range may move southward, but the species will continue as it lives south into northern California (colloquially called Oregon White Oak in the US, abundant in Oregon from where its wood is exported to this region). (Beware of the scam of slicing and dicing until a population is claimed to be in danger of extinction – thus claims that Garry Oaks are endangered in Canada – never mind that the species only grows in temperate climates on the west coast, thus by definition is absent from most of Canada.

Remember that Garry Oaks are not a permanent species, they are replaced by Douglas Fir as happened in Metchosin. That's nature. (Typically Garry Oaks replace alder, which is an early in-early out species, as aspen ('poplar') is inland. I doubt anyone is trying to preserve those populations here, but of course Druids tend to worship oak trees.)

And beware the 'biodiversity' push, founded on illogical assumptions. Nature does not maintain biodiversity, it often wipes species out with weather variation and climate (such as the last ice age eliminating Sequoias in most of North America). Population counts are notoriously inaccurate, for example reported sightings of sharp-tailed snakes spike every time they are publicized – reclusive creatures, they ignore memos to report for census, and people may mistake them for earthworms if not motivated to

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look closely. Human activities increase diversity, for example cultivation helps tiny creatures by creating better soil and cover.

Eco-activists tend to avoid looking for populations. One supposed tree expert claimed that *Arbutus Menzies* only grow on rocky outcrops on southern Vancouver Island. In reality they grow in forest in the Cowichan Valley, on bluffs in the lower mainland, and all the way south to southern California. (In the US they are colloquially called Madrone or Madrona, hence the name of a neighbourhood in Seattle.)

As for biased consultants, I note that government-funded Habitat Acquisition Trust – which exists to prevent human use of land, is now focusing on Garry Oak meadows. Recall its representation of ‘canopy coverage’, unscientifically based on 2.5 sets of data despite the obvious variation in trees and imprecision of measuring foliage from above. (I say a half set of data because HAT used a ropey procedure of artificially enhancing a low resolution data set, a method challenged in other fields.

***Humans are inherently good, but to thrive  
need protection against coercion by those who err.***  
<http://www.moralindividualism.com>

## Keith Sketchley

Saanich BC

2550-20 Biodiversity

**Vivian Cheung**

POST TO	Gren	POSTED
COPY TO	SS	APR 26 2023
INFORMATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
REPLY TO WRITER	<input type="checkbox"/>	
COPY RESPONSE TO LEGISLATIVE DIVISION	<input type="checkbox"/>	
REPORT	<input type="checkbox"/>	
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ACKNOWLEDGED		AIE

**From:** MI [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 25, 2023 12:24 PM  
**To:** Council  
**Cc:** MUNI.Minister@gov.bc.ca  
**Subject:** (External Email) Recapping the EDPA mess

This email sent from outside the District of Saanich. Use caution if message is unexpected or sender is not known to you.

With concerns raised about possible resurgence of the infamous Environmental Development Protection Agency it is appropriate to review history.

The Saanich law was criticized as overlapping other laws thus not necessary.

Analysis was so incompetent that buildings and pavement were classified as ecologically sensitive. Saanich staff were very slow to correct those errors.

The law and Saanich administration of it forced cost of consultants on some property owners.

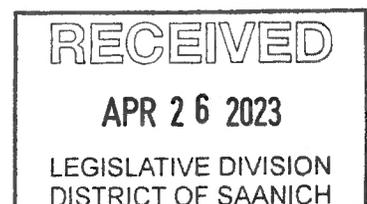
A review of the law was ordered, but:

- Criteria for the review was written by Saanich staff administering the controversial law, that was clearly unethical.
- Criteria had a huge omission.
- Saanich staff administering the law chose the consultant for the review, that was clearly unethical.
- The consultant's web site indicates it was biased toward 'protecting'.
- Saanich staff administering the law dictated which questions the consultant could ask, that was clearly unethical.
- The consultant did not spend much time with boots on the ground in Saanich, claiming they knew all about Garry Oak meadows because they had visited the small grove in the Fraser Valley (whose description is different than much of the Garry Oak environment in Saanich). That was incompetent.

A previous council that some of you were on rescinded the EDPA law.

Now the incompetent consultant is employed again!

LETTER: Saanich appears poised for return of EDPA - Saanich News



People are hungry and homeless and assaulted right here in Saanich - what are you up to now? Answer is paying a whole eco-industry of studies, reports, and consultants acting against honest humans. Why?

(I will address oaks, diversity, and bias in a separate communication.)

***Humans are inherently good, but to thrive  
need protection against coercion by those who err.  
<http://www.moralindividualism.com>***

Keith Sketchley



Saanich BC