DISTRICT OF METCHOSIN

AGENDA

PARKS & TRAILS ADVISORY SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, May 20, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.
Council Chambers
Metchosin Municipal Hall

---

1. Agenda, Additions, Approval

2. Presentations
a) Neil West, Metchosin Invasive Species Cooperative (MISC), Invasives in Parks 1

3. Public Participation

4. Adoption of Minutes
a) Parks & Trails Advisory Select Committee, April 15, 2025.....9

5. Receipt of Minutes
a) Environmental Advisory Select Committee, April 22, 2025.....13

6. Business Arising from the Minutes
a) Beckingham Subdivision
b) Duke Road East Trail Update
c) Parks & Trails Master Plan Updates
   i. Open House Update: Summary of Comments 17
   ii. Draft Parks/Trails Info Sheet Format 19
   iii. Next Steps

d) Weir Beach Stairs
e) Management of Invasive Species in Metchosin Parks
f) Clarify the scope of Metchosin Bylaws review relative to PTASC

7. Reports
a) Parks & Trails Coordinator Verbal Report
b) Council Liaison Verbal Report
c) Chair Verbal Report

8. Correspondence

9. Other Business
a) Draft Invasive Species Policy 21
b) Metchosin Biodiversity and Natural Assets Plan.....25

10. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date



1

MISC
METCHOSIN INVASIVE SPECIES COOPERATIVE

Metchosin Invasive Species Cooperative (MISC) formed in 2019 in response to increased awareness by some locals about the threat of invasive plant species to many of our parks, public green spaces and ecosystems.

We set about educating ourselves and others and organizing volunteer work parties. By pulling or cutting, we've managed to make a major dent in the invasive populations in our parks. Our passion for eradicating invasives is contagious!



2

In 2019, MISC received a $20,000 grant from the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation. We have received funding from the HCTF all four times that we have applied. Three of those times, the use of herbicide, target species, and method of application was mentioned in the funding application. We recently had a conversation with HCTF's Amy Perkins where she expressed her strong support for the work that we are doing and encouraged us to apply for further funding. A group of MISC members recently applied for a grant from the HCTF to produce educational materials around invasives. I asked Amy to give me an overview of HCTF's review process:

- *All applications are reviewed by both HCTF Bio staff and a review committee that include reps from the Province - Ecosystems and/or Fisheries, BCWF and BC Nature.*
- *Each project is assessed and given a point score based on application questions.*
- *Reviewer recommendations go to the HCTF Board Stewardship committee for final review and funding approval.*

3

The following have all shown MISC strong support including our use of herbicide:

Procrastination is the bad habit of putting off until the day after tomorrow what should have been done the day before yesterday.

Parks Canada
Canadian Forest Services
Government of BC
Islands Trust
CRD Parks
District of Saanich
UVic's Department of Restoration of Natural Systems
The former Director of HAT who is now the CRD's Senior Conservation Biologist
Mayne Island Conservancy
TLC
The Islands Trust
Coastal Invasive Species Committee
PTASC
MEASC
Andy McKinnon

4

Hey Neil,

I would like to give a nod to the amazing work that the MISC do in a seminar talk this week in Reno, as a part of my community of practice section. I put together the below – is it accurate? Are you comfortable with me talking about you guys? Is there anything you would change?

Best,

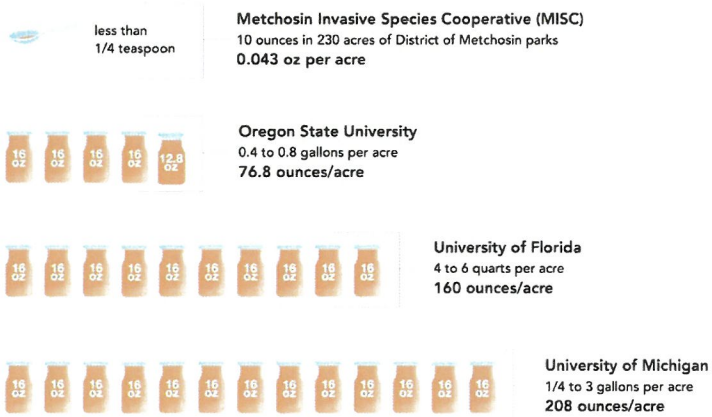
Nancy

Professor Dr. Nancy Shackleford
University of Victoria
Director, Restoration of Natural Systems



5

This graphic indicates the published, mid-range recommendations of Garlon use "per acre" to clear out invasives as well as brush from road-sides, etc., from three U.S. universities: Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Florida.



Metchosin Invasive Species Cooperative (MISC)
10 ounces in 230 acres of District of Metchosin parks
0.043 oz per acre

Oregon State University
0.4 to 0.8 gallons per acre
76.8 ounces/acre

University of Florida
4 to 6 quarts per acre
160 ounces/acre

University of Michigan
1/4 to 3 gallons per acre
208 ounces/acre

6

Invasives in general

BC Ministry of Environment

Nearly every type of old-growth Douglas-fir forest on British Columbia's dry coastal plain is now rare or endangered.

The understorey plants of these forests are also in danger of being overshadowed, not by natural competitors, but by invasive, non-native plants. Freed from the predators and competitors of their homelands, these plants invade forests and outcompete the native vegetation. English ivy, Scotch broom, Himalayan blackberry, English holly, and daphne.

7

Invasive plants and their effects on insect populations which in turn affect other species such as birds, fish, etc.



Native plants are best for our native birds. Through millions of years, birds have prospered with the native plants that provided them with the right foods and habitats throughout their life cycles. Numerous studies are now showing this to be true. In Washington, DC, for example, researchers found that chickadees were unable to raise young successfully on properties with mostly non-native plants, which didn't provide the insects they needed for their nestlings. The insects were unable to survive on these foreign plants because they didn't have the digestive enzymes to feed on these plants with which they hadn't evolved.

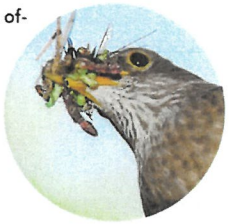


Chickadees are among the 96 percent of North American land birds that depend on insects, especially caterpillars, to feed their young. In the study, chickadees often didn't nest at all, and if they did, they had fewer nestlings and a third of the nestlings were less likely to survive.

8

The chickadees were, however, able to nest successfully on similar- sized properties with 70 percent or more native plants. Another study investigated the abundance of the insects in hedgerows. Hedgerows with invasive plants, like bush honeysuckle, multiflora rose, and Callery pear, had 91 percent fewer caterpillars than hedgerows with native plants. With these studies in mind, aim for at least 70 percent native plants in your yard to ensure the success of your favorite birds.

Examples of native shrubs that can replace cultivated species that offer little for birds, consider replacing forsythia, which hosts only a single caterpillar species, with a willow shrub in a genus that supports 456 species of caterpillars. Replace weigela, on which only 2 caterpillar species are found, with ninebark, which supports 41 species. Or replace cotoneaster, on which only 3 caterpillar species can survive, with dogwood, which supports 118 species.



Marietta Nowak (University of Wisconsin Press, Birdscaping for Wisconsin and the Great Lakes Region, 2025, forthcoming; printed with permission)

9



Holly

- Crowds out native species and monopolizes groundwater. Invasive Species Council of BC
- Increases sulfur on average 15%, persistent organic matter, and decreases pH. Burger 2017
- Berries are poisonous to people, particularly children, pets, livestock but not to birds. Zabinski et al 2012, ASPCA 2020
- Can tolerate a wide range of environments from full sun to deep shade. Boersma et al 2006
- Female plants begin producing berries at about 15 years. Boersma et al 2006
- Can survive past 250 years. Petersken & Lloyd 1967, Boersma et al 2006
- One tree may produce 120,000 seeds a season. Petersken & Lloyd 1967

Therefore, in 200 years, one tree can produce well over twenty million seeds.

"English holly (Ilex aquifolium) is a highly invasive species known for its long lifespan, with some plants living over 250 years. It has a remarkable reproductive capacity, producing up to 120,000 seeds annually. These seeds are dispersed over long distances by birds, and English holly can resprout from cut stumps and roots, making it difficult to eradicate. As a shade-loving species it has widespread suitable habitat in the region, and its ability to alter soil chemistry by adding large amounts of organic matter and sulfur impacts nearby plants. This combination of traits probably makes English holly the worst introduced plant species currently growing in the Capital Regional District from a long-term ecological impact perspective."

Rob Underhill BSc, RPBio
Biologist
Mayne Island Conservancy

10

The good news:



MISC could easily remove 50, berry-producing, female trees in one day, which would represent the elimination of approximately 1 billion seeds over the life of those 50 trees.

Holly has a relatively short-lived seed bank. Most germination occurs within a year. After three years seed banks are reduced by 80-90 percent. Sagarese & Francoeur 2006. Bowerma et al. 2006

As mentioned, it takes approximately 15 years for a female holly to produce berries. Using a reciprocating saw we can cut down and treat the vast majority of those trees too large to pull in about 1-2 minutes, eliminating a potential 20 million future seeds.

11

Tansy ragwort

Tansy ragwort can sicken or even kill cattle, horses, some goats, pets, and people. The highest risk is after the plants have been cut or mixed in with hay, because the plants are not as bitter but just as toxic.

In 1998, MISC founding member, current MISC executive member and PTASC member Kathy Atherton began work to bring attention to Metchosin's significant Tansy ragwort infestation.

The good news:
We joined forces with Kathy in her efforts. The summer of 2024 was the first summer since Kathy started her work that the tansy problem did not justify organizing a large group pull. From this point on keeping tansy in check should be much less time-consuming.

The most valuable of all education is the ability to make yourself do the thing you have to do, when it has to be done, whether you like it or not.
Andrea Hussey



12

Blackberry

If you are not ready today, you will be even less so tomorrow.

Propagates via root pieces and forms daughter plants where the tips of first year canes touch the ground. Shoots can arise from underground runners that persist up to a meter deep and over 10 meters long. Soil 2004

Typical thickets of blackberries can produce 7,000 to 13,000 seeds/m2 that remain viable in the soil for several years. SCBC 2014

Although blackberry shrubs offer limited food, nesting sites, and wildlife cover, it is poorer quality habitat than native shrub species and results in decreased biodiversity (Bennett 2007). It is often associated with a statistically significant reduction in bird species richness and evenness. Ashley 2010

Though Himalayan blackberry provides nectar and pollen for bees, the bloom period does not overlap with the foraging periods of all pollinators. species, and pollinators were 30% more abundant, compared to non-restored areas mostly dominated by Himalayan blackberry. Wray 2015

13



When Himalayan blackberry out competes native vegetation in riparian areas, flooding and erosion potential often increases because of the lack of deep-rooted native shrubs. Himalayan blackberry cannot provide the necessary shade for stream water, or contribute large woody debris compared to stream sides with diverse native vegetation. Bennett 2007

In 2016, local/provincial governments and several right-of-way partners on Metro Vancouver's Regional Planning Advisory Committee - Invasive Species Subcommittee spent nearly $350,000 on Himalayan blackberry control efforts. This figure does not include control costs for private landowners across the region, volunteer 'weed pull' hours, or costs associated with education and awareness activities.

- Metro Vancouver Region

14

How we don't work:



WE DO NOT SPRAY.

How we do work:

As a team of volunteers, MISC pulls and cuts whenever possible. When plants are too large or difficult to pull, our last recourse is to use a herbicide. If that approach is required, we hire a certified applicator to target the cut stump.

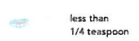




15

keep in mind:

when MISC is talking about herbicide treatment



less than 1/4 teaspoon

Metchosin Invasive Species Cooperative (MISC)
10 ounces in 230 acres of District of Metchosin parks
0.043 oz per acre



Oregon State University
0.4 to 0.8 gallons per acre
76.8 ounces/acre



University of Florida
4 to 6 quarts per acre
160 ounces/acre



University of Michigan
1/4 to 3 gallons per acre
208 ounces/acre

We've made great progress in Metchosin to date, primarily because we've had a supportive PTASC, council, and staff, as well as the support of several ecosystem restoration experts who have shared their knowledge and expertise with us.

Thank you.

16

8

District of Metchosin

Minutes
Parks and Trails Advisory Select Committee Meeting
Tuesday, April 15, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.
Council Chamber
Metchosin Municipal Hall

Present: Ron Aubrey (meeting chair), Kathy Atherton, Caroline Donahue, Karen Hoffman, Jim Nan, David Shanks (recorder)

Regrets: Councillor Jay Shukin

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Agenda, Additions and Approval

Moved Caroline that the Committee approve the agenda as presented.

Carried

2. Presentations
None

3. Public Participation
None

4. Adoption of Minutes
a) Parks & Trails Advisory Select Committee, March 18, 2025

Moved by Jim that the Committee approve the minutes of the Parks and Trails Advisory Select Committee meeting held on March 18, 2025.

Carried

5. Receipt of Minutes
a) Environmental Advisory Select Committee, March 25, 2025

Action: to ask Council Liaison to clarify about the scope of review of Metchosin Bylaws by Metchosin Biodiversity, Metchosin Foundation, Bilston Watershed, & UVic Environmental Law Centre. Are there any implications for PTASC?

Moved by David that the Committee receive the above Committee Minutes.

Carried

6. Business Arising from the Minutes
a) Beckingham Subdivision
- Access has been requested to take photos during wildflower blooms for use on future District website page.
    - CAO noted that Phase 1 Trail is now dedicated as road allowance.
    - Portions remain to be completed, will be established as Nature Trail per existing Master Plan guidelines

b) Blinkhorn Nature Park
- Two more documents to correct name PTASC map package & ATNP
- Periwinkle pulled regularly. Bluebells widespread & may need tarping to remove.
  Action: Kathy to follow-up with Katy

c) Duke Road East Trail Update
- Awaiting report from District Engineer. Seeking recommendation on type of drain cover replacements to be installed.
- Seeking to setup open house in May if possible

d) Parks & Trails Master Plan Updates

i. Open House Update
  - Feedback forms being compiled by Jay. Expected for next meeting
  - Attendance met expectations.
  - Suggestion for future to have large map printed that attendees can write comment/edits upon.

e) Discussion: Draft Active Transportation Network Plan (ATNP)
- Comment draft ATNP seems to be one size fits all, does not feel that it was customized to specifics of District & rural character. For example, Metchosin doesn't have "Streets", "parks & recreation"
- Pg 7, John Stubbs is in Colwood (not Sooke)
- Feedback of July 31 Public session for Duke Rd East wasn't well captured where participants were very much concerned about Safety
- Pg 34 has trail design guidelines that diverge from Metchosin trail building guidance
- ATNP Phase 2 engagement update, Pg 5; seems to be potential conflict between resident feedback about fiscal responsibility versus designing & building to meet BC Active Transportation Design Guide
  - Understanding is that BC guidelines apply for projects seeking Active Transportation grants

Action: David to request updated ATNP Priorities list for PTASC to provide comment & share PTASC input to Urban Systems

7. Reports

a) Parks and Trails Coordinator
- Intend to send out initial communication to all past respondents that were interested in volunteering as Trail Stewards.
  - Discussion needed with Jay; understanding is that insurance still required
  - Chair noted that Colwood willing to share their solution to cover volunteers under District insurance
  - Consider volunteers as eyes on trails, perhaps using only small hand tools. Tasks requiring power tools, chain saw should be completed by Public Works
- Broom cleanup being considered on several trails, may involve work crews from William Head
- Thanks to Kathy for compiling & sharing inventory of trails & parks for Master Plan update
- Appreciation for roadside cleanup March for Liz.

- Chair noted would he appreciate for PTASC to be given advance notice for such cleanup activities that involve trails

b) Council Liaison
- None

c) Chair Verbal Report
- Attended Colwood Parks & Trails meeting and spoke as Public Participant
  - Seeking more information sharing between Colwood Chair/Liaison back & forth with PTASC/Metchosin Liaison
  - Colwood committee has different role to PTASC, includes duties to approve items such as Soccer field & surrounding spaces in Royal Bay.
  - From topic discussed, contemplating to propose some "pocket parks" as community gardens. To consider option during the Master Plan update
    - Noted there is work to clear space for gardens behind Old School Museum & tennis courts
  - Colwood committee members expressed interest to meet with PTASC members

8. Correspondence
- None

9. Other Business

a) Parking on William Head Trail in the Village Core
- Jay is following up, and Councillor Epp noted to be aware of the issue
  - Recent events have implemented traffic cones
  - Seems cars park there when My-Chosen Cafe lot it is full. So this seems to be an issue on non-event days.
    - Is it possible to install physical divider between road & trail?
    - Idea raised to resurface this trail to make it more obvious it is a trail rather than parking lot.
      Action: to request adding this to Public Works list

b) Invasives in Parks
- Shiny geranium has been reported in 100 Acre Park (Metchosin Wilderness Park).
  Action: Need to ask reporter if specific location can be provided

c) Blaney Trail Bat Box
- Visited trail with HAT representatives
  - HAT identified proposed location
    - They also observed a small/undersized bat box between 2 nearby properties
  - During visit wondered if trees had topped by District?
    - Was noted this was past issue in 2018-19
  - HAT asked & requestor confirmed the site does have bat activity.
  - Several questions have been forwarded to the district . Awaiting response.
    - Is it permitted to prune branches to make adequate space (15 ft) around proposed location?

- Would Public Works intend to install the required post and bat box, or volunteers? David volunteered and expects other neighbours are willing to assist.

d) Hillman trail bench
   - Noted feedback from Open house on delay to replace & that the old bench shouldn't have been removed. **Action** for Jay to follow-up on expected timing to install replacement Hillman trail bench

e) To add to next agenda
   - Weir Beach Stairs repair
   - Management of invasive species in Metchosin Parks, and inviting MISC to present

10. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date

Moved by Caroline that the Committee adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Carried

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 20, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

District of Metchosin

Minutes
Environmental Advisory Select Committee
Tuesday, April 22, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.
Council Chambers
Metchosin Municipal Hall

Present: Bill Cave, Garry Fletcher (Chair), Councillor Steve Gray (Council Liaison), Anna Hall, Merrilee Hoen, Andy MacKinnon (Recorder), Ric Perron, Erin van de Water

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Agenda, Additions, Approval

Addition: add Westshore Bioregional Meeting under Reports.

Moved and Seconded by Steve & Bill that the Committee approve the agenda as amended.

Carried

2. Presentations

None.

3. Public Participation

Garry Lamb asked about MEASC involvement regrading environmental assessments.

4. Adoption of Minutes

Moved and Seconded by Ric and Anna that the Committee adopt the minutes of the Environmental Advisory Select Committee meeting held March 25, 2025.

Carried

5. Receipt of Minutes
a) Parks & Trails Advisory Select Committee, March 18, 2025

Moved and Seconded by Merilee and Erin that the Committee receive these minutes.

Carried

6. Business Arising from the Minutes

a) Spongy Moth Spraying Program

No updates.

b) Race Rocks Ecological Reserve

Is Race Rocks located in the Municipality of Metchosin?

Moved and Seconded by Andy and Bill that Councillor Gray will ask Staff to review Metchosin's incorporation documents to determine if Race Rocks is within Metchosin's municipal boundaries.

Carried

c) Environmental Groups in Metchosin, Project Criteria and Student Support

Merilee has asked Nancy Shackelford to determine student requirements that might fit with needs of Metchosin community groups. And then Merilee will convey those requirements to Metchosin groups. There are also opportunities for entire classes (rather than individual students) to participate in projects. Experience suggests that we need to ensure that students have the skills that Metchosin groups require.

Merilee will continue to follow up on this and will bring more information to MEASC's next meeting.

d) Local Biodiversity and Natural Assets Plan

Steve has recently (today!) received further comments from MEASC members and is revising the Plan.

- Identification and mapping of sensitive ecosystems
- Next steps

Andy has been working with the Conservation Data Centre (CDC), and earlier this afternoon received Element Occurrence Records (EORs) for threatened and endangered species and ecosystems in Metchosin.

Moved and Seconded by Anna and Garry that Steve and Andy define the GIS capabilities that we'll require as a municipality to make the maps we need from CDC and other (e.g. marine shorelines) data.

Carried

7. Reports

a) Chair's Verbal Report

None.

b) Council Liaison Verbal Report

2025 District 5-year Financial Plan was approved with 2025 municipal tax increase (including police services) of 3.73%. Next year projected tax increase 9.6%. The following years increases are projected at 2.8%, 5.9% and 4%, respectively.

Work on the 2024 District Annual Report is underway. Councillor Gray thanked MEASC for another productive year supporting Council.

Capital Region Invasive Species Partnership (CRISP) is revising the regional priority invasive species list including new definitions for management priority.

MEASC recommendations on invasive species management and the use of herbicides were adopted by Council's Committee of the Whole (COW) but not Council itself. Instead, Councillor Shukin offered to prepare a draft policy on managing invasives on District property. Ric Perron will assist Councillor Shukin and MEASC will have the opportunity to review the draft before it heads back to Council's COW.

Michael Lowry, West Coast Marine Response Corporation (WCMRC) will present to Council on May 5 regarding oil spill and shoreline response. Fire Chief has been advised.

2025 AVICC endorsed Metchosin's resolution seeking provincial leadership in concert with Canadian Wildlife Service on effective management of resident Canada Geese including a cull. Resolutions supported by Metchosin on the development of a provincial strategy on feral rabbits and legislating the BC Coastal Marine Strategy were similarly endorsed. Metchosin's resolution calling for a province-wide consumer ban on fireworks was not endorsed. Thanks to Mayor Little and Councillors Donaldson and Epp who all attended AVICC earlier this month.

Anna provided us with an update regarding marine mammal and oil spill response (as related to wildlife) in central and western Juan de Fuca Strait. This project will be evaluating the monitoring and response preparedness for injured, deceased or oiled marine mammals in the waters of southern Vancouver Island (Canadian waters only), with emphasis from Metchosin to Port Renfrew. The goal is to expand the capacity, improve communication and reduce the existing lag time for wildlife response.

c) Westshore Bioregional Meeting

Merilee reported on this meeting that she and Alison Leduc attended, to develop a bioregional framework similar to the one developed by the Saanich Peninsula. She circulated materials from the meeting. A mix of people, with some municipalities (e.g., Highlands, View Royal, Sooke) not represented. A huge commitment, and based on this one meeting, it wasn't clear that they had enough support to develop a bioregional strategy.

8. Correspondence

None.

9. Other Business

a) Significant Trees Policy W-100.84, Committee Review & Update

b) Schedule A of Tree Management Bylaw No. 287 (Significant Trees), Committee Review & Update

This discussion began with concern about protecting two big arbutus trees on one property in Metchosin. CAO spoke with the new landowners and they're aware of the importance of the big arbutus trees. MEASC recognizes that while protecting trees in Metchosin is important, that our existing Significant Trees list largely consists of trees that were important for the property owners some decades ago. Few (if any) of the trees have been revisited since they were placed on the list, the locations of some are uncertain, and some are almost certainly dead.

Moved and Seconded by Andy and Bill that MEASC recommends that Significant Trees be removed from Metchosin Bylaws.

Carried

c) Climate Action Plan Priorities

MEASC members will send comments about Climate Action Plan Priorities to Councillor Gray.

10. Adjournment and Next Meeting

Moved and Seconded by Erin and Anna that the Committee adjourn the meeting at 8:48 p.m.

Carried

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 27, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

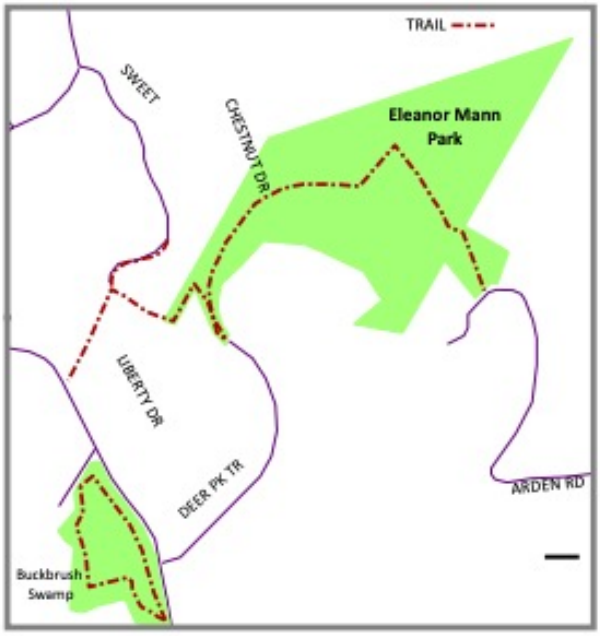
- More notice on the April 6 open house would have been appreciated.
- Consider more maintenance on muddy trail sections so these don't get wider (i.e. people trying to step around the wet spots.
- The gravel put down in 100 Acre Wood was helpful.
- Can we re-surface the tennis court. Apply for grants to fund this.
- Keep eyes open for additional parkland acquisition opportunities.
- Please put more benches along the trails. Seniors who walk find them helpful.
- Mountain bikes should not be allowed on trails; serious damage can result.
- Equestrian use of trails highly valued.
- Do all trails need to be developed to equestrian use standards?
- New roadside trail idea: From the 'Goose at Lindholm then along Happy Valley to connect to Metchosin Core.
- Nature conservancy very important, wildlife is our natural asset.
- Drainage on Hillman Trail (Pears rd side) needs work and please look at the blackberries on both sides of the trail.
- For future open houses it may add value to have maps of the parks and trails that people can draw on or mark up.
- Everyone be respectful – dogs under control / bikes not too fast / aware of others on path."
- Please fix Weir Beach Stairs.
- Look at developing a Wildlife Nature Reserve as a place to be protected from development.
- Need a creative way to deal with cigarette and cigar butts and beer cans and dog poop bags.
- Manage existing trail network. Minimize impacts to environment. Use Active Transportation Plan and Road Safety data to Align and Prioritize.
- Safe transportation for pedestrians along Park Drive, Delgada and Duke Road.
- Is our system outgrowing our volunteers. How much will be put on Public Works?

Eleanor Mann Park

2026 Parks and Trails Master Plan

Description

- Located between Deer Park Trail and Arden Rd
- District owned park; zoned P3 (Park and Open Space)
- 17 ha (42 acres);
- Trail is ~1km. Generally, easy to moderate terrain, with steep, rough incline near Deer Park end.
- Park contains natural 2nd growth forest with a main nature trail with natural footing running through from end to end.



Map of Eleanor Mann Park

Management Considerations

- Parts of the trail require intermittent brushing.
- The Deer Park Trail end sees erosion damage in heavy rains. Generally ignored.
- Some on-street parking available at both ends.
- Broom in some areas

Connectivity and Access Points

- Connects Deer Park Trails to Arden Rd.
- Also connects down to Libery Dr. and Sweet Chestnut Rd.

Biodiversity Elements

- Some wildflowers in Spring.
- Large riparian wetland runs half way along the centre of park. Not really visible.
- Small easily navigable bridgeless seasonal stream crossing.
- Wildlife corridor.

Accessibility

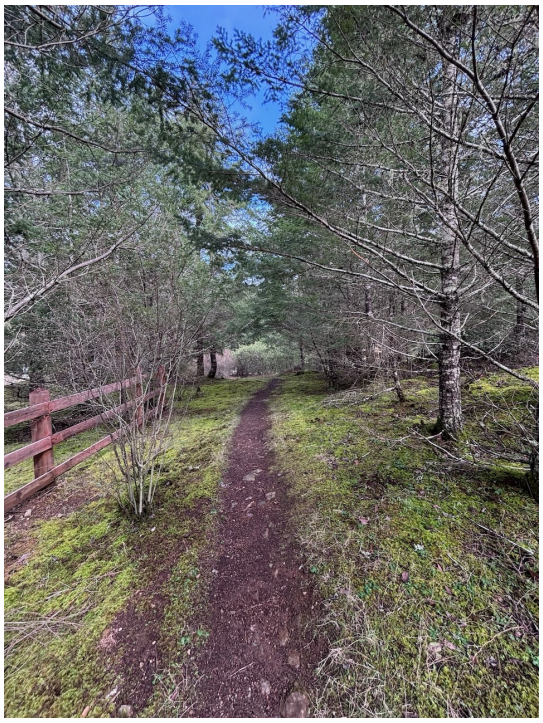
- Very good for first half entering in from Arden Road.

Eleanor Mann Park

History
The 17 ha park was created in 2000 in conjunction with the development of Wildwood Creek Estates. Eleanor Mann (1925-1997) was the mother of the developer, Steve Mann, and the wife of Don Mann of Don Mann Excavating. As such, she had an indirect role on much of the development in the Greater Victoria area.

Although not a resident of Metchosin, Eleanor Mann would have fit right in. She was an outdoor enthusiast and loved horses. Family was most important to her though and she devoted most of her energy to it, particularly her grandchildren and great grandchildren.

The park was used by local residents long before it was formalized as such to hike or ride horses between Sweet Chestnut and Arden Roads on the old logging skid road. The subdivision process added connections to Liberty Drive and Deer Park Trail providing many opportunities for "circular" hiking routes. The logging history is visible in the tall, rotting old growth stumps but you have to look hard as the maturing second growth obscures it. The park and large acreages surrounding it make a significant contribution to Metchosin's forest cover.





Entry point to park from Liberty Dr (left). Photo of trail near Deer Park (right).
Photos are only for illustration purposes

POLICY TITLE (draft): Invasive Species on Municipal Land and Roadsides

1.0 Overview

This Policy provides a framework for managing invasive-plants ("invasives") on District-owned land, including roadsides. Specifically, this Policy seeks to:

1. Outline a process to identify invasives of local concern and develop effective management approaches within the District's available means and resources.
2. Mobilize District and community resources to prevent, eradicate, contain, and protect assets from invasive species.
3. Define the role of volunteers and local organizations regarding invasive management on District-owned land.
4. Outline a process for longer-term planning regarding invasives, including information sharing and public education.
5. Clarify the use of herbicides for invasive management.

2.0 Background

Similar to many communities in southern British Columbia, invasive species are a serious issue in Metchosin due to our mild climate, fertile soils and abundant precipitation. Invasives are of a particular concern in Metchosin as the District is the largest municipality in the CRD by area (69.57km2) and has an abundance of natural-space and farmland. Climate change is exacerbating invasive spread and action supports Metchosin's climate action goals.

The impacts of uncontrolled invasives are significant and include:

- Increased fire risk
- Human health and safety risks
- Agricultural impacts
- Biodiversity impacts
- Accessibility impacts
- Impacts to infrastructure, particularly recreational elements like parks and trails.

In developing the Policy, best practices and approaches from other local governments were reviewed. However, the driver for specific Policy elements are Metchosin's unique characteristics and realities, including:

- Limited District resources
- A large land base, most of which is either natural area or farmland.
- An enthusiastic, skilled and dedicated volunteer base.
- Large parkland areas and a regional trail, which are managed by the Capital Regional District.

3.0 Scope of Policy:

This Policy applies to all District owned lands and municipal road allowances in all parts of the District.

4.0 Strategic Relevance

This Policy has been developed with reference to other District policies and initiatives, including:

- Policy W-100.50 (Elimination of Pesticides and Herbicides for Cosmetic Purposes on Municipal Grounds).
- Climate Action Plan, 2023-2028
- Agriculture Area Plan, 2024
- Declaration of Climate Emergency and Biodiversity Crisis (December 2022)

5.0 Overall Approach to Invasive Management

Manual and/or mechanical actions to remove or manage invasive species shall be prioritized by District staff and volunteers. Where mechanical removal will be ineffective, or where there is significant risk from an invasive species (for example, rapid spread or a noxious plant), chemical treatment may be considered as outlined in section 6.0.

Decisions regarding chemical treatment will be made by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), in keeping with the terms of the Policy. The CAO may seek advice from Council, Advisory Select Committees, or other bodies.

6.0 Use of Pesticides

Pesticide use for invasives will be carefully managed and only used when manual or mechanical options are considered:

- **Impractical**. For example, where invasive species (such as mature holly) are too large for hand-removal or the use of machines is not possible.
- **Ineffective in preventing impacts to local environments or limiting human health risks.** For example, the invasive species is small/widespread (i.e. challenging to pick) within an area, and cutting is known to be ineffective. This is currently the case with the following species: black knapweed, poison hemlock, and Japanese knotweed.
- **Likely to cause damage to local environments**. For example, pulling plants/trees will cause significant ground/slope disturbance.
- **Incommensurate with high-risk situations.** For example, swift action on certain species may be necessary to prevent spread and the creation of a larger problem (early detection and rapid response in terms of new invasives), say with black knapweed, poison hemlock, and Japanese knotweed.

Where chemical treatment is deemed to be appropriate, the least toxic pesticide that effectively controls the species will be used. The least toxic pesticide will be determined based on the current standards adopted by CRISP. The goal is to use herbicides that have short residual effects and/or specifically affect target invasive species. Such herbicides:

- Are least disruptive of natural (e.g., biological) controls,
- Are least hazardous to human and animal health,
- Minimize negative impacts to non-target organisms,
- Are least damaging to the general environment.

The determination on whether to apply herbicide on District owned/managed lands for invasive species will be made by the CAO, in consultation (as appropriate) with other bodies as the CAO determines.

Herbicides will normally be applied by qualified District Public Works or CRD staff. Per the CAO's authorization, volunteers with the appropriate training levels of training and certification (demonstrated/documented) may apply pesticides in certain limited circumstances, per the requirements of section 8.0.

7.0 Capital Region Invasive Species Partnership (CRISP)

The District will continue to actively participate in CRISP, and will seek CRISP's on-going advice on:

- Species of key concern and those requiring urgent action as identified.
- Best practices in terms of treatment.
- Appropriate chemical options, when necessary.

CRISP's Regional Priority Invasive Plant List will serve as a resource for the District (see Appendix 1).

While CRISP has a species ranking table, local organizations in Metchosin often have specific focuses, whether in terrain type (i.e. riparian), localities (i.e. certain parks), or species (i.e. a focus on English holly or Scotch broom). These areas of focus are to be encouraged and supported.

Along with an appointed Council representative, a District staff member shall be appointed to CRISP, with the goal of that person attending all meetings.

The appointed Council representative shall work toward sharing information from CRISP with stakeholders, including the ISAG.

8.0 Role of Volunteers

The District will work support to volunteer efforts to remove or otherwise manage invasive plant species. Volunteer projects to remove invasive species on District lands require a plan containing the following, which is to be approved by the CAO:

- Time, date and location of the project.
- Target species (may be more than one).
- Method (i.e. pulling, cutting, trimming, etc..)
- Group leader or key contact.
- Expected number of volunteers
- A sign-in sheet of participants to be kept the day of the activity and provided to the District.

10.0 Training

To ensure appropriate and current understanding and implementation of this Policy and its principles, District staff will be provided with necessary and appropriate training, including but not limited to Pesticide Applicator's certification an

11.0 Public Education and Awareness Activities

As practicable, the District will undertake opportunities to inform and educate residents about invasive species and management best practices. Support from advisory committees and community groups should be sought on initiatives. These may include:

- Information sheets on specific invasive species.
- Community forums.
- Information at community events
- Other activities (ex. the purchase of pullerbears for use by residents).

DRAFT v2.0 22 Apr 2025

Outline for a Metchosin Biodiversity and Natural Assets Plan

Introduction

The purpose of this plan is to guide the stewardship of Metchosin's natural environments and ecosystems, aligning with the objectives outlined in Metchosin's Official Community Plan (OCP) and the District of Metchosin Declaration on the Climate Emergency and Biodiversity Crisis.

The plan has two priorities:

- securing ecosystem features that would otherwise require costly engineered infrastructure (e.g. flood control, aquifer recharge, shoreline protection from storm surges, soil health).
- protecting, conserving, and enhancing biodiversity and natural assets in the region through the implementation of specific strategies and actions that address key ecological priorities promoting long-term ecological health while supporting community and land use goals.

Prioritizing protection of natural assets and their associated nature-based services can secure important budget savings for the municipality while protecting species and ecosystems.

1. Vision and Goals

Vision:

Metchosin is a thriving resilient community where biodiversity is protected, enhanced and integrated into daily life and where important natural assets are valued and protected. Through sustainable development practices, ecological restoration and community engagement, Metchosin is a place where both natural ecosystems and people can flourish. Moreover, by recognizing and accounting for natural assets in the District's financial planning and asset management programs, Metchosin will be equipped to make sound planning and financial decisions into the future that support the health of our region and the health and safety of our residents in the face of climate disruptions.

Goals:

- Conserve Natural Ecosystems and Species: Safeguard, critical habitats, ecosystems, and species to ensure their long-term survival and ongoing provision of ecosystem services
- Integrate Biodiversity and Asset Management into Land Use and Financial Planning: Ensure that biodiversity and the preservation of ecosystem features are considered in all land use development and planning decisions, guided by a District natural assets management plan
- Engage, Educate and Listen to the Community: Foster an informed and active community engaged in biodiversity conservation and natural asset management
- Improve Ecological Connectivity: Enhance conservation corridors and links between natural areas to support wildlife movement
- Restore and Revitalize Degraded Ecosystems: Implement active restoration programs for areas impacted by development or other human activity

2. Context and Alignment with the OCP and Metchosin's Region Role

The **Metchosin Official Community Plan** (OCP) emphasizes, environmental stewardship, habitat conservation, and sustainable land use practices. The OCP outlines strategies for maintaining the district's rural character, preserving natural features and fostering a sustainable and resilient community.

Key sections in the OCP relevant to this Biodiversity Plan include:

- **Environmental Policies and Development Permit Areas**: These are critical to maintaining Metchosin's biodiversity with a focus on the conservation of shoreline, riparian zones, forests, meadows, wetlands, and conservation corridors.
- **Sustainable Development**: Metchosin maintains and preserves a low density rural-agricultural community within the region. Metchosin's OCP stresses the need for low impact development that respects and integrates with the natural environment, ensuring that new housing or zoning does not erode critical habitats, proper functioning of wetlands and aquifers.
- **Agriculture and Land Stewardship**: There is a strong emphasis on promoting agricultural practices that protect and enhance biodiversity in the Metchosin Agricultural Plan.
- **Community Engagement and Education**: The OCP recognizes the importance of fostering community that is engaged with and

knowledgeable about environmental conservation. Much of this work is done through volunteer initiatives.

This Biodiversity and Natural Assets Plan will ensure these OCP directives are fully realized by providing actionable steps and strategies that align with Metchosin's vision of ecological sustainability and fiscal prudence, the emerging CRD biodiversity strategy and CRD Regional Growth Strategy.

3. Priority Biodiversity Actions

3.1 Habitat Protection

- **Identify, describe and map high-value biodiversity areas**: In partnership with ecological experts, identify priority ecosystems, including wetlands, riparian zones, old growth forest, meadows and shorelines that provide ecosystem services and require protection from development. Develop a comprehensive map of biodiversity observations and establish ongoing monitoring programs to track the health of ecosystems and species to inform a municipal natural asset management program. Work with the BC Conservation Data Centre and register eligible protected lands and parks in the BC Conservation Areas Database.
- **Incentives**: Establish forest canopy protection and conservation covenant requirements for property tax exemptions. Establish a local conservation fund dedicated to local high-priority conservation and restoration projects.
- **Create protected areas**: Finalize a new zone (e.g. Conservation Zone P4) for designated conservation areas (e.g. buffer lands and other protected areas). Enact Environmental Development Protected Areas (EDPA). Encourage the use of conservation covenants on private property to prevent habitat degradation and ensure long-term ecological protection. Support the 30% by 2030 national conservation targets.
- **Updated tree cutting bylaw**: Adopt new permit requirements to minimize tree cutting.

3.2 Natural Asset Management

- **Annual reports during the budget process on the status of municipal natural assets**: Prepare an asset management inventory. Monitor and report on asset condition.

3.3 Habitat Restoration

- **Riparian and Wetland Restoration**: Restore disturbed wetland ecosystems to improve water quality, enhance wildlife habitat, and maintain critical functions like flood, regulation and carbon storage e.g. initiatives of the Bilston Watershed Habitat Protection Association.
- **Invasive Species Management**: The District manages invasives alongside volunteer groups and through the CRD and the Capital Region Invasive Species Partnership (CRISP). The Parks and Trails Advisory Select Committee (PTASC), the Metchosin Invasive Species Cooperative (MISC) and the Devonian Restoration Volunteers work in local and CRD regional parks. Work parties have started on the Buffer Lands.
- **Forest and native plant restoration and reforestation**: Land owners are encouraged to restore native forest ecosystems by planting native tree species, removing invasive species and improving forest health. The Moralea's Meadow volunteers do restoration work there and public education on native planting. Westmont School staff and students are restoring a Garry Oak meadow with assistance from the Habitat Acquisition Trust (HAT).

3.4 Conservation Corridors and Ecological Connectivity

- **Establish conservation corridors**: The Metchosin Foundation Conservation Corridor Project works with local volunteers and landowners plus conservation organizations and neighbouring communities to create and maintain ecological courses that connect fragmented natural areas. Promote green infrastructure solutions e.g. fencing, road crossing.
- **Ecological planning and development**: Ensure that any new development plans include ecological, connectivity considerations, maintaining natural corridors, and minimizing habitat fragmentation.
- **Buffer zones around critical habitats**: Create buffer zones around significant natural assets ensuring that development is set back from sensitive, ecosystems and conservation corridors e.g. establish local government riparian area regulations.

3.5 Sustainable Land Use under Metchosin's Agricultural Plan

- **Promote sustainable agricultural practices**: Support agricultural practices that enhance biodiversity such as agroforestry, regenerative agriculture, permaculture and organic farming. Local farmers and homeowners work to reduce pesticide use, protect riparian buffers and enhance hedgerows.

- **Agri-environmental stewardship programs**: Develop and implement programs that encourage landowners to maintain natural habitats, plant native species and restore degraded landscapes on agricultural properties including removal of invasives.
- **Agricultural land protection**: Work within the ALC framework and the OCP to ensure that agricultural land remains protected from development pressures, preserving its ecological function and connection to wildlife habitats. Locally regulate ALC compliant site restrictions and setbacks. Enforce strong dumping regulations.

3.6 Community Engagement and Education

- **Public education campaigns**: The Metchosin Biodiversity Project's Walk and Talk programs educate residents about local biodiversity. The Metchosin Foundation educational materials and website help to emphasize the importance of protecting natural ecosystems. Together these initiatives inform conservation priorities.
- **Volunteer programs**: Established volunteer groups organize community members in habitat restoration, invasive species removal and monitoring. Volunteer recruitment is ongoing.
- **Encourage citizen science initiatives**: The Metchosin Biodiversity Project promotes biodiversity monitoring through community use of iNaturalist and periodic Bioblitz events collecting valuable data for conservation efforts. The Metchosin Hall Society conducts annual bat counts at the Hall in concert with the Habitat Acquisition Trust.

4. Action Plan and Implementation Timeline (Schedule goes here)

5. Conclusion

The Biodiversity and Natural Assets Plan for Metchosin will protect the natural heritage of the community by fostering collaboration, responsible land-use practices and active community engagement aligned with the principles and goals of the Official Community Plan. This Plan will also secure ecosystem features that would otherwise require costly, engineered infrastructure (e.g. flood control, aquifer recharge, shoreline protection from storm surges, soil health).