DISTRICT OF METCHOSIN

AGENDA

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING

May 27, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.
Council Chambers
Metchosin Municipal Hall

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1. Agenda, Additions, Approval

2. Presentations

3. Public Participation

4. Adoption of Minutes
a) Environmental Advisory Select Committee, April 22, 2025 1

5. Receipt of Minutes
a) Parks & Trails Advisory Select Committee, April 15, 2025 5

6. Business Arising from the Minutes
a) Race Rocks Ecological Reserve
b) Local Biodiversity and Natural Assets Plan
- Identification and mapping of sensitive ecosystems

7. Reports
a) Chair's Verbal Report
b) Council Liaison Verbal Report

8. Correspondence

9. Other Business
a) Draft Invasive Species on Municipal Land and Roadsides 9
b) MEASC meeting with Western Canada Marine Response Corporation (WCMRC)

10. Adjournment and Next Meeting

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.

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.

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).