DISTRICT OF METCHOSIN

AGENDA

AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING

July 10, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.
Council Chambers
Metchosin Municipal Hall

---

1. Agenda, Additions, Approval

2. Presentations

3. Public Participation

4. Adoption of Minutes
a) Agricultural Advisory Select Committee, April 23, 2025 1

5. Business Arising from the Minutes
a) Farm Solidarity Fund Update

6. Reports
a) Chair Update (Verbal)
b) Councillor Liaison Update (Verbal)

7. Correspondence

8. Other Business
a) Metchosin Biodiversity and Natural Assets Plan.....4
b) Draft Invasive Species on Municipal Land and Roadsides policy 9
c) Metchosin Community Day

9. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date

Minutes
Agricultural Advisory Select Committee Meeting
April 23, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.
Metchosin Council Chamber
Council Chamber
Metchosin Municipal Hall

Present: Robin Tunnicliffe (Chair), Matt Ashton (Minutes Recorder), Shelly Donaldson (C. Liaison), Andrew Penn, Alex Fletcher, Brent Donaldson, Peter Chettleburgh, Sasha Tunnicliffe

Regrets: Candice LeCompte

The meeting was called to order at 7:12 p.m.

1. Approval of Agenda

- **Addition:** Robin will forward to AASC members a plan submitted by a member of the public regarding concerns and feedback on the Agricultural Plan.
- **Motion to Approve Agenda:** Moved by Matt, seconded by Andrew. **Carried.**

3. Presentations
None.

4. Public Participation
None.

5. Adoption of Minutes

a) February 26, 2025, AASC Meeting:

- **Motion to Approve Minutes:** Moved by Brent, seconded by Peter. **Carried.**

6. Receipt of Minutes

b) March 10, 2025 Committee of the Whole Meeting:

The March 10, 2025 minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting were received for information.

7. Business Arising from the Minutes

a) Farm Solidarity Fund Update
Alex Fletcher reported no significant developments since the last meeting and has not received updates from Heather Ramsay (of Umi Nami Farm). Sea Bluff Farm has yet to receive compensation through this program. Robin emphasized the value of the initiative and suggested writing to the Minister of Agriculture to highlight existing barriers, particularly regarding the Nutrition Coupon Program's limitations, which currently require distribution through farmers' markets. Brent proposed that the upcoming Metchosin Community Garden and its gardening programs could serve as a collaborative avenue to provide local produce and mentorship to local communities in need.

b) Metchosin Grown – Matt Ashton Report
Matt clarified the distinction between the Metchosin Grown brand and the Metchosin Grown Society. The Society was established to formalize the organization with insurance coverage, financial records,

and a municipal lease agreement for property use. Its mandate is to encourage residents to learn about and grow food, and to encourage future farmers, in accordance with its constitution. A discussion followed on managing the Metchosin Grown brand, with consensus that these responsibilities would be best overseen by a Coordinator under the District's Agricultural Plan. Appointing such a position would support all growers as outlined in the Plan. The Society's latest update included tours of two community gardens.

c) Destination Victoria – Engaging Metchosin Farmers

Destination Victoria is exploring the inclusion of Metchosin in the "Flavour Trail" brand. Although organizers have not yet engaged with Metchosin farmers, collaboration is essential to ensure mutual benefit and respect for the copyrighted brand. Andrew cited Ireland's "Wild Atlantic Way" as an example of successful agritourism branding. An upcoming agritourism collective roundtable will provide farmers with information on opportunities to add value through agritourism ventures, aligning with the interests of both the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Tourism.

d) Firearms and Farming

Matt shared his experience using firearms in farming and expressed concerns about the evolution of firearms regulations over the past eight years. He provided examples illustrating how current regulations can be complex and challenging for those with practical firearms knowledge. Matt extended an invitation to the AASC for an educational session at the Victoria Fish & Game Protective Association. The session aims to familiarize directors with various firearm types, their practical uses, and the current regulatory landscape. The purpose is to inform and educate, not to influence personal opinions on firearms regulations, but to foster well-informed, fact-based perspectives that could contribute to more effective and reasonable future policies.

8. Reports

a) Councillor Liaison Update – AVICC Update

Councillor Shelly Donaldson reported that the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) recently held its annual convention in Nanaimo. The "goose resolution" presented by Shelly was endorsed and will be forwarded to the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM), marking a significant achievement for the AASC. A proposal concerning feral rabbit management was also endorsed. However, a province-wide fireworks ban proposal did not pass; nonetheless, local politicians are continuing to bring the issue forward to the UBCM.

9. Correspondence

None.

10. Other Business

a) Metchosin Biodiversity and Natural Assets Plan

Councillor Steve Gray shared the draft plan with the AASC. Members are to review the document and compile feedback and recommendations by the next meeting. Feedback should be sent to Robin, who will consolidate the responses for discussion before submission to MEASC.

b) Metchosin Agricultural Area Plan

i. 2025 Priorities and Implementation

Refer to pages 21-23 for ongoing and short-term actions (1-2 years).

ii. Agricultural Plan Coordinator
Recommendation to Council:

- Moved and Seconded by Brent and Peter that the AASC recommends the $5,000 in funding from the Metchosin Foundation be allocated toward hiring a contract coordinator to support the implementation of the Metchosin Agricultural Area Plan;
  And That Council allocates additional funding from the 2025 Financial Plan toward hiring a contract coordinator.

Carried

Alex will attend the upcoming Council meeting to address the motion.

iii. Grant Opportunities
No discussion.

11. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn: Moved by Alex, seconded by Sasha. **Carried.**
Meeting Adjourned at 9:20 PM.

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).

POLICY TITLE (draft): Invasive Plant Species on Municipal Land

1.0 Overview

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

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

2.0 Background

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 on invasives supports Metchosin's Climate Action Plan and the biodiversity goals within the District's Official Community Plan.

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 staffing and 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 of Metchosin policies and initiatives, including:

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

5.0 Overall Approach to Invasive Management

Following best management practices, 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 (e.g Japanese Knotweed, mature English Holly), or where there is significant risk of spread from an invasive species and eradication is possible (e.g. black knapweed), chemical treatment may be considered as outlined in section 6.0. Consultation with regional integrated pest management experts will be undertaken as deemed appropriate by the CAO.

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

6.0 Use of Herbicide

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

- **Impractical**. For example, where invasive species are too large for hand-removal or the use of machines is not possible (e.g. mature English Holly).
- **Ineffective in preventing impacts to local environments or limiting human health risks.** For example, the invasive species is widespread in an area and challenging to pick , and cutting is known to be ineffective (e.g. Black Knapweed in Tower Point Regional Park).
- **Likely to cause more damage to local environments than herbicide use**. For example, pulling plants/trees will cause significant ground/slope disturbance or where hand/machine removal is likely to cause extensive spread of seeds.
- **Incommensurate with high-risk situations.** For example, where early detection and rapid response (EDRR) action on certain species is necessary to prevent spread and the creation of an invasive of concern.

Where chemical treatment is deemed to be appropriate, best management practices will be followed, including the use of selective herbicides, species-specific timing of application, most effective and least hazardous method of application, application conditions (calm/clear weather), considering buffer zones near waterways and follow up.

The least toxic herbicide that effectively controls the species will be used. The least toxic herbicide will be determined based on the input provided by the Capital Region Invasive Species Partnership (CRISP) or other agencies deemed to have expertise in such matters. 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 staff, CRD staff, or qualified contractors. Per the CAO's authorization, volunteers with the appropriate training levels of training and certification (demonstrated/documented) may apply herbicide 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 management practices.
- 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 Regional Priority List, local organizations in Metchosin often have their own focus or priorities, whether in terrain type (e.g. riparian), localities (e.g. certain parks), or species (e.g. 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 may be appointed to CRISP, with the goal of that person regularly attending meetings.

The appointed Council representative will share information from CRISP with local stakeholders. *[NTD: these could include MEASC, PTASC, BWHPA, MISC, Devonian Restoration, Moralea's Meadow].*

8.0 Role of Volunteers

The District will support volunteer efforts to remove or otherwise manage invasive plant species. Volunteer projects to remove invasive species on District lands require a plan (the "removal 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..)
- Method of disposal.
- 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.

Volunteers undertaking projects that required multiple visits to the same area can submit a single plan covering the full project. In addition, the CAO must also be notified of specific work dates by email at least two business days prior to the work being undertaken.

9.0 Training

As the CAO deems appropriate in terms of operational needs, District staff will be provided with necessary and appropriate training,
including but not limited to Pesticide Applicator's certification.

10.0 Public Education and Awareness Activities

The District will inform and educate Metchosin 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.
- Mail outs (e.g. 2025 tax notice insert)
- Community forums.
- Information at community events
- Other activities (e.g. the purchase of 'Pullerbears' for use by residents in removing holly).

DRAFT – Version 2 (Mark-up)
June 9, 2025

POLICY TITLE (draft): Invasive Plant 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. Outlines a process to identify invasives of local concern and develop effective management approaches within the District's available means and resources.
2. Mobilizes District and community resources to prevent, eradicate, contain, and protect assets from invasive species.
3. Defines the role of volunteers and local organizations regarding invasive management on District-owned land.
4. Outlines a process for longer-term planning regarding invasives, including information sharing and public education.
5. Clarifies~~y~~ the use of herbicides for invasive management.

2.0 Background

~~Similar to many communities in southern British Columbia, i~~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 on invasives supports Metchosin's Celimate Aaction Plan and the biodiversity goals within the District's Official Community Plan.~~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 staffing and 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 of Metchosin policies and initiatives, including:

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

5.0 Overall Approach to Invasive Management

Following best management practices, m~~M~~anual and/or mechanical actions to remove or manage invasive species shall be prioritized by District staff and volunteers. Where mechanical removal will be ineffective (e.g Japanese Knotweed, mature English Holly), or where there is significant risk of spread from an invasive species and eradication is possible (e.g. black knapweed), ~~(for example, rapid spread or noxious plant),~~ chemical treatment may be considered as outlined in section 6.0. Consultation with regional integrated pest management experts will be undertaken as deemed appropriate by the CAO.

Decisions regarding chemical treatment will be made by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), consistent ~~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~~Herbicide

~~Pesticide~~ Herbicide 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 (e.g. mature English Holly).~~.~~
- **Ineffective in preventing impacts to local environments or limiting human health risks.** For example, the invasive species is ~~small~~/widespread in an area and challenging to pick ~~(i.e. challenging to pick) within an area~~, and cutting is known to be ineffective (e.g. Black Knapweed in Tower Point Regional Park). ~~This is currently the case with the following species: black knapweed, poison hemlock, and Japanese knotweed.~~
- **Likely to cause more damage to local environments than herbicide use**. For example, pulling plants/trees will cause significant ground/slope disturbance or where hand/machine removal is likely to cause extensive spread of seeds.~~.~~
- **Incommensurate with high-risk situations.** For example, where early detection and rapid response (EDRR) ~~swift~~ action on certain species ~~may is~~be necessary to prevent spread and the creation of an invasive of concern. ~~larger problem (early detection and rapid response in terms of new invasives), say with black knapweed, poison hemlock, and Japanese knotweed.~~

Formatted: Font: Arial, English (United States)

- ~~**Risk widespread disbursement of the invasive seeds.** Where removal by hand or machine may cause an extensive spread of seeds. For example, the use of a 'Pullerbear" may cause significant soil disturbance and the spread of seeds.~~

Where chemical treatment is deemed to be appropriate, best management practices will be followed, including the use of selective herbicides, species-specific timing of application, most effective and least hazardous method of application, application conditions (calm/clear weather), considering buffer zones near waterways and follow up.

~~Where chemical treatment is deemed to be appropriate, t~~The least toxic herbicide ~~pesticide~~ that effectively controls the species will be used. The least toxic ~~pesticide~~ herbicide will be determined based on the ~~current standards~~ input provided ~~adopted~~ by the Capital Region Invasive Species Partnership (CRISP) or other agencies deemed to have expertise in such matters. 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 staff, ~~or~~ CRD staff, or qualified contractors. Per the CAO's authorization, volunteers with the appropriate training levels of training and certification (demonstrated/documented) may apply herbicide ~~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 management 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 Regional Priority List ~~species ranking table~~, local organizations in Metchosin often have their own ~~have~~ focus or priorities, ~~specific focuses,~~ whether in terrain type (e.g.~~i.e.~~ riparian), localities (~~i.e.~~ e.g. certain parks), or species (~~i.e.~~ e.g. 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~~ may be appointed to CRISP, with the goal of that person regularly attending ~~ing all~~ meetings.

The appointed Council representative ~~shall~~ will share ~~work toward sharing~~ information from CRISP with local stakeholders. [NTD: these could include MEASC, PTASC, BWHPA, MISC, Devonian Restoration, Moralea's Meadow]. ~~, including the ISAG.~~

8.0 Role of Volunteers

Formatted: Tab stops: 2.64", Left

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 (the "removal 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..)
- Method of disposal.
- 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.

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

Volunteers undertaking projects that required multiple visits to the same area can submit a single plan covering the full project. In addition, the CAO must also be notified of specific work dates by email at least two business days prior to the work being undertaken.

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

910.0 Training

~~To ensure appropriate and current understanding and implementation of this Policy and its principles,~~ As the CAO deems appropriate in terms of operational needs, District staff will be provided with necessary and appropriate training,
including but not limited to Pesticide Applicator's certification. ~~an~~

101.0 Public Education and Awareness Activities

~~As practicable, T~~the District will ~~undertake opportunities to~~ inform and educate Metchosin 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.
- Mail outs (e.g. 2025 tax notice insert)
- Community forums.
- Information at community events
- Other activities (e.g.~~x.~~ the purchase of 'P~~p~~ullerbears' for use by residents in removing holly).

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

Summary of Comments on Version 1 of the draft
Policy on Invasive Plant Species on Municipal Land (the "Policy")
June 9, 2025

The following summarizes comments and input received by organizations and individuals regarding the Policy following the circulation of the Policy after the May 13, 2025 Committee of the Whole meeting. The summaries of several comments are also included which came before May 13.

- Please review Saanich's Integrated Pest Management Policy.
    - *[Review undertaken]*
- Colwood has a policy that should be reviewed.
    - *[Weblinks to documents were provided, which went to Colwood's Bylaw 1995 Regulating the use of Pesticides on Residential and Municipal Properties*]
- Should specific pesticides be referenced?
    - *[Section 6.0 of the policy broadly covers pesticides, including which herbicides are authorized for use. Reference to specific pesticides (whether allowed or prohibited) is likely best done in a bylaw].*
- Volunteer section seems cumbersome, too much bureaucracy.
- PTASC can't determine what kind of herbicide is appropriate (if any) in District parks.
- Need a collective response to invasives.
- The time has come for Metchosin to take more serious action in dealing with invasives. The District should explore the power available to it through the *Weed Control Act*.
    - *[Summary: The* Weeds Act *is provincial legislation requiring landowners and managers to control certain invasive species on their property…. The* Community Charter *gives the power to a council (such as a local government) to create bylaws and govern the growth of weeds on private property.]*
- The biodiversity and natural assets plan would be a great place to start implementing more stringent measures on invasives control by advocating for bylaw enforcement on noxious weeds.
- It's unclear to me how having a staff member at a volunteer event would somehow keep us safer and affect any concerns around "liability" issues.
    - *[The policy does not indicate that a staff member needs to be in attendance; however, Section 8.0 indicates that information (time, date, location, etc) about a "Volunteer project" is required and that approval is also required by the CAO. Based on input received, this section was modified to minimize administrative burden for on-going projects; however, notification of forthcoming would on approved projects would still be required.]*

1POLICY TITLE (draft): Invasive Plant 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~~best management practices 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 on invasives ~~supports~~ aligns with Metchosin's Climate Action Plan and OCP biodiversity goals.

Colwood notes

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 staffing and 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:

Commented [JG1]: Due to Metchosin's limited staff resources, CRISP is attended by a Metchosin Councillor to liaise and partner with government invasive management folks from across the CRD. Expert CRD staff serve as Metchosin's invasive pest management consultants on through regular liaison on occurrences and best management practices. Presently, the CRD treats knapweed in our regional parks in coordination with Metchosin including local flyer distribution and letters to households where knapweed has been discovered on private residences f(ollowed by contracts between residents and CRD contractor for herbicide application and landowner payment coordinated between our office staff, CRD and landowners). Any additional herbicide treatments on District properties and roadways is coordinated with the CRD during the year e.g. Japanese knotweed, poison hemlock – was treated due to timing and limited staff resources. Otherwise, PTASC (with MISC depending on the issue) organizes invasive removals in District parks. Best management practices are followed including dab application of Garlon by licensed contractors on Holly and European Ash. We also have an organized volunteer approach to Tansy Ragwort. Akin to all CRD municipalities volunteers play an important role in invasive management. In other words, staff resources are inadequate to the task everywhere and so priority setting is a must.

Commented [JG2]: Statement Is true but as was mentioned at MEASC, most are aging, retired people some with a variety of health issues. So, perhaps the point to add here is that the volunteer base is not a given without considerable effort to bring on and retain new players.

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:

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

5.0 Overall Approach to Invasive Management

Following best management practices, m~~M~~anual and/or mechanical actions to remove or manage invasive species shall be prioritized by District staff and volunteers. In consultation with regional integrated pest management experts and w~~W~~here mechanical removal ~~will be~~is ineffective (e.g. Japanese Knotweed) or ~~, or~~ where there is significant risk of spread from an invasive species and eradication is possible (~~for example, rapid spread or a noxious plant~~e.g. Black Knapweed), 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.

Commented [JG3]: What problem are we trying to fix with this approach? I recommend we continue our current practices with a Council liaison taking this role in consultation with CRD/CRISP integrated pest management experts and PW staff. That system has been working well. I suppose, actual herbicide application may shift from CRD contractors to in-house staff depending on cost, workload, ongoing training requirements, supervision, etc. and decided by the CAO within his available resources. I think we should seek further clarification from CAO on costs and practicality of in-house licensed applicators versus contracted service in light of his decision. Bob can brief us easily as he already made the decision presumably based on some matrix or other.

6.0 Use of Herbicides

Herbicide 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 (e.g. English Holly trees)
- **Ineffective in preventing impacts to local environments or limiting human health risks.** For example, the invasive species is ~~small~~/widespread within an area ~~(i.e.~~and challenging to pick~~) within an area~~, and cutting is known to be ineffective. ~~This is currently the case with the following species:~~(e.g. Black Knapweed at Tower Point Regional Park, ~~poison hemlock, and Japanese knotweed~~.
- **Likely to cause more damage to local environments than herbicide use**. 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.~~
- **Risk of extensive spread.** Where removal by hand or machine may cause an extensive spread of seeds.

Commented [JG4]: An example would be helpful

Commented [JG5]: An example would be helpful?

Where chemical treatment is deemed to be appropriate, best management practices will be followed e.g. use of selective herbicides, species-specific timing of application, most effective and least hazardous method of application, calm and clear weather, buffer zones near waterways and follow up.

the least toxic herbicide that effectively controls the species will be used. The least toxic herbicide 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~~contractor. ~~Per the CAO's authorization, v~~Volunteers with the appropriate training levels of training and certification (demonstrated/documented) may apply herbicide 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 management practices ~~in terms of treatment~~.
- Appropriate chemical options, when necessary.
- Cooperative approaches to the District.

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 invasive 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~~ shar~~inge~~ invasive infosheets and alerts ~~information~~ from CRISP with staff, MEASC, PTASC and other volunteer invasive removal and

Commented [JG6]: Who decides? I think we refer to BMP's for region and province e.g. I gave a small booklet to Nicole to give to you on Provincial BMP's for roadsides.

Commented [JG7]: As above, delete this paragraph and retain existing arrangements. See also comments from CRISP,

Commented [JG8]: I think this needs to be worded to indicate that the person who does the application is a contractor. We probably need to ascertain that contractors liability coverage if something were to go wrong eg someone was injured or there was a significant spill or drift from site (ie using spray) or will policy say no to use of spary for the volunteer-run operations – only dab? The policy might indicate what is possible now for the contractor working for volunteers – eg. dab treatment for European Ash and English Holly trees only. Any new chemical treatments would need to be doen by District staff (if we continue down that path) or CRD contractors.

Commented [JG9]: Meaning?

Commented [JG10]: The Regional Priority List (and classifications within) are under revision and new descriptions and classifications provide room for local approaches just like you include here. As I recall it was pretty good wording – Strategic Control and maybe removing Contain (for example). And the former means local priority actions are based on local circumstances but would always include the worst offenders that need rapid response. So the previous paragraph may suffice or you might want to add language from the new Regional List. I recommend that we see that CRISP document finalized and then it can be added to this policy and the wording in the policy can reflect the new wording of the CRISP document.

Commented [JG11]: Rethinking this now reading this draft and after hearing Council colleagues at the table. Do we need to train our PW staff in pesticide application? I think we spend less than $1000 on CRD contract services. What is the cost comparison with training, updating, paying for chemicals, storing chemicals, wages, opportunity costs, etc.? I seem to recall that perhaps the Mayor and C. Donaldson did not like the idea of staff using their limited time to attend these meetings and I am agreeing with them – maybe pesticide application is a poor use of their time if they are not applying pesticides on a regular basis.. Likewise, the meetings.

habitat restoration groups (e.g. BWHPA, MISC. Devonian Restoration and Moralea's Meadow volunteers). ~~stakeholders.~~

Commented [JG12]: May also name Buffer Land Stewardship group now or later once established.

8.0 Role of Volunteers

The District will support 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.
- Transport and disposal plan

Commented [JG13]: This part of the document has given rise to several calls this week from Neil. There is lots more to discuss here and perhaps this is actually the policy piece that is missing at present (rather than the CRISP relationship and organizing the minor amount of local government herbicide programming we do here - a few patches of knapweed onour property (plus helping only a few private landowners get it done) and a perhaps now dead Japanese knotweed or two). What problems does the volunteer invasive removals cause? If we authorize them formally to work on invasives in our parks – what needs to be in that authorization – if there is use of herbicide – record keeping to meet municipal reporting requirements, liability for each party re: herbicide, plain old ordinary liability, locations and timing could come in an email. What does Bob say in terms of what does he need? Can he make it easy but effective to meet his needs? If we list only dab treatment allowed on contract with qualified professional for holly and European Ash it keeps it simply and safe.

Commented [JG14]: Prioritize parks and trails

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

Commented [JG15]: See earlier comments. If we are now directing this change, I woujld like to understand our reasons for doing so. From the numbers we have, I don't think it is cost-effective and might lead to unnecessary herbicide application due to our limited staff and management resources.

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.
- Mail outs (e.g. 2025 tax notice insert)
- Community forums.
- Information at community events
- Other activities (ex. the purchase of Pullerbears for use by residents).

Commented [JG16]: As noted earlier, we do a fairly widespread effort in the Tower Point neighbourhood pre-knapweed treatment. Hoping in a few years this effort will revert to pulling and we can leave behind herbicide treatments.

Commented [JG17]: I believe MISC will make these available for others but haven't confirmed with Neil. Also, only limited usage eg this weekend only cutting no pullers.

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

2.0 Background

~~Similar to many communities in southern British Columbia, i~~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.

Commented [AM1]: Not clear what's meant here.

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 Herbicides

Herbicide 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.
- **Risk of extensive spread.** Where removal by hand or machine may cause an extensive spread of seeds.

Where chemical treatment is deemed to be appropriate, the least toxic herbicide that effectively controls the species will be used. The least toxic herbicide will be determined based on the current standards adopted by the Capital Region Invasive Species Partnership (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 herbicide 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.
- Cooperative approaches to the District.

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 invasive focuses, whether in terrain type (e.g. ~~i.e.~~ riparian), localities (e.g. ~~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.

8.0 Role of Volunteers

The District will support 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, t~~The District will ~~undertake opportunities to~~ inform and educate Metchosin 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).