

Gabriola Land and Trails Trust (GaLTT) Report

Regional District of Nanaimo

Area B Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee February 12 2024 Meeting



GaLTT Activities Since Last POSAC Meeting:

October 14th. GaLTT's invasive committee chair Alison Thomas and BC Parks' Erica McLaren presented on the collaborative restoration project in Drumbeg Provincial Park at the Garry Oak Ecosystem Restoration conference in Victoria.



October 15th. GaLTT Trails Work Party – Work was completed on the Burnside Drive – Cox Community Park connector trail. 10 volunteers (15 volunteer hours).



October 10th and 17th. GaLTT Invasives Work Parties – Drumbeg Provincial Park. (54 volunteer hours). Restoration site preparation work was done on October 10th (7 volunteers, 17 volunteer hours) and planting was completed on October 22nd (12 volunteers, 28.5 hours). Seeding took place the following day (5 volunteers, 8.5 hours).

October 12th. Robinson Woods Conservation Covenant. (3 volunteers - 6 volunteer hours). Under the existing conservation covenant agreement an annual monitoring, and recording of findings, is required.

October 21st and 22nd. Growing Native Plants From Seed workshops. 18 Gabriolans took part in two Seeding Native Plants for Pollinators workshops, organized by Nanaimo & Area Land Trust (NALT). Vancouver Island University Professor, Caroline Josefsson, and NALT Stewardship Manager, Linda Brooymans, presented the importance of native plant species as a food source for native pollinators, especially bees.



October 22nd and 23rd. GaLTT Invasives Work Parties – Drumbeg Provincial Park restoration work continued. GaLTT volunteers planted 100 plugs of field chickweed and Roemer's Fescue and 75 Fool's onion corms in the 4 original sites we had not worked in in 2022. 45 small yarrow plants were also installed that committee members had raised from seed earlier in the year. The following day GaLTT volunteers seeded the same 4 sites, as well as the expansion sites first planted and seeded in 2023.

October 29th. GaLTT Trails Work Party – Robinson Woods Boardwalk. 14 volunteers (21 volunteer hours).



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Volunteers removed an old existing 13 metre boardwalk and replaced it with a new 19 metre boardwalk in Robinson Woods. Sections of the old boardwalk were relocated to several other parts of the trail and will eventually be replaced over the next few years.

November 10th. Burnside Drive Connector Drive Opening Ceremony – 30 participants attended the official trail opening, followed by a walk along the trail. The new trail now enables people to travel from Descanso Bay Regional Park to The Village without have to walk on the busy sections of Taylor Bay Road and the Ferry Hill. The connector trail also forms an important part of the GaLTT's vision for a complete "Descanso to Drumbeg" trail from one end of Gabriola to the other.



November 19th. Drumbeg Provincial Park Accessibility Work Party - With the assistance of a BC Parks Enhancement Funding (PEF) grant, GaLTT volunteers installed carpath material from the parking lot to the picnic tables to assist people with mobility issues. The picnic tables were turned 90° to improve the view for everyone seated and gravel was added around the tables, level with the concrete pad, making wheelchair access to the table possible.

This project is Phase 1 of planned accessibility improvement projects at Drumbeg Provincial Park, subject to BC Parks grant funding.

"My grandson has Cerebral Palsy and uses forearm crutches to walk. Walking is difficult for him, and impossible on uneven surfaces. Being able to come to the park and walk independently to areas, such as the picnic tables, provides him with a greater sense of inclusion in the community, and is an indication that he is a valued member of our society" - Linda

November 26th. GaLTT Invasives Work Party – Drumbeg Provincial Park. A dedicated team of 12 volunteers (18 volunteer hours) tackled the small broom plants growing around the newly-seeded and planted plots at Drumbeg meadow.



December 3rd. GaLTT Trails Work Party – 9 volunteers (12 volunteer hours). GaLTT volunteers undertook drainage maintenance and improvements on the River Place Trail in Cox Community Park.



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December 5th. GaLTT and GIMS Save Honeysuckle Woods Campaign Launch.



GaLTT and the Gabriola Island Memorial Society (GIMS) has initiated a campaign to have the Honeysuckle Woods undesignated as a Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure gravel pit and redesignated as parkland with a portion of the 40 acre property used for green burial.

December 6th. Shaw Road ROW Accessibility Project – 6 volunteers (9 volunteer hours) installed a bench. GaLTT and Gabriola Woodworkers Guild volunteers installed a new resting bench with a view down the Pylades Channel at the end of Shaw Road. The trail is relatively short and fairly smooth.



A GaLTT member donated the wood and GaLTT's Accessibility fund supplied other materials. The Gabriola Woodworkers Guild provided the woodworking skills, using it as a learning opportunity for new members.

January 7th. GaLTT Invasives Work Party – Queequeg Community Park. 12 volunteers (18 volunteer hours). GaLTT volunteers cleared a large expanse of ivy from the side of the Tashtego Crescent link trail.

January 20th. Vision 2050 Workshop – GaLTT received a grant from the Islands Trust to host a collaborative visioning event focusing on the environment at the Gabriola Island Community Hall.



76 participants attended. Erin Udal facilitated the event. Gabriola Shorekeepers, GROWLS, the Gabriola Memorial Society and several other environmentally focused groups collaborated in its delivery of the event.



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January 28th. GaLTT Trails Work Party – S'ul-hween X'Pey Nature Reserve. 7 volunteers (10 volunteer hours). 30 metres of mesh was installed around the ancient Elder Cedar Tree. The boardwalk has become increasingly slippery recently and the mesh will make it safer for everyone to enjoy walking around the tree.



GaLTT Fallen Tree Removals from Trails:

- Cleared several trees on the Lois Lane-Garland trail
- A tree cleared on Petroglyph trail
- A tree cleared on the Captain Ahab CP trail
- A tree cleared on the Cameron TL trail
- Several trees cleared in the 707 CP
- 3 trees cleared on Haven Woods
- 2 trees cleared in COX CP
- A tree cleared on the Captain Ahab CP trail

BC Parks – GaLTT Volunteer Services Agreement:

GaLTT has a five year Volunteer Services Agreement with BC Parks. As part of the Agreement, GaLTT reports information on the total number of volunteers, and volunteers hours, that were spent in BC Parks throughout the calendar year.

GaLTT recorded:

- **105 individuals** who volunteered in BC Parks on Gabriola Island in 2023. This is an increase from 55 individuals in 2022, a 91% increase.
- **325 total number of hours of Service** performed by all the individuals in 2023. This is an increase from 196 hours in 2022, a 66% increase.

GaLTT Nature Stewards Program:

97 Nature Stewards participants confirmed in the program with pledges covering over 186 acres.

RDN Watershed Grant – Watershed factsheets for Goodhue Creek and Castell Creek watershed neighbourhoods were distributed.

Future GaLTT Activities and Events:

GaLTT Work Parties: Every Sunday, alternating weekly between Trails and Invasives.

New GaLTT trails map. Currently under development and scheduled to be completed and available in 2024.

Trail drainage improvements on the Mallet Creek trail and the Burnside Drive - Cox Park connector trail, including related boardwalk installation.

Construction of the Paisley Place Community Park trail to circumvent Gabriola Housing Society lands.

Construction of additional boardwalks on the MOTI Keith Road undeveloped ROW.

Construction of additional boardwalks in Robinson Woods.

Accessibility mobility improvements in Drumbeg Provincial Park.

GaLTT Winter Guided Walks Series. A series of walks are being planned for the winter.

February 3, 10 am. 'Walking through History'

- **Leader:** Kerry Marcus, GaLTT's founding president, horse back rider and custodian of the Robert Degnen farm house (circa 1899)

March 2, 1:30 pm. 'Gabriola Birds: Songs & Stewardship'

- **Leaders:** Vicky Scott, birding enthusiast and Libby Gunn, naturalist

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April 6, 10 am 'Conserving and Connecting Gabriola'

- **Leaders:** Claudia Brann, local nature enthusiast, and Anne Landry, GaLTT conservation co-chair

May 4, 10 am 'Map Reading 101'

(or, how not to get lost in the 707)

- **Leader:** Hugh Skinner, GaLTT president, cyclist and hiker

GaLTT Annual General Meeting. Sunday, March 10th @ 2:00 p.m at the Gabriola Golf Club. AGM will include a presentation by Chris Drake about small scale restoration on public and private lands.

Planning underway of GaLTT 20th Anniversary events: to be scheduled for 2024.