

# Gabriola Land and Trails Trust (GaLTT) Report

Regional District of Nanaimo

Area B Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee February 10 2025 Meeting



## GaLTT Activities Since Last POSAC Meeting:

*October 6<sup>th</sup>*. GaLTT Trails Work Party – Keith Drive ROW boardwalk. GaLTT volunteers installed mesh on a recently installed boardwalk.



*October 6<sup>th</sup>*. GaLTT had an information table at the Fall Fair at The Commons. In addition to information literature, GaLTT also had a well stocked supply of free native plants that had been rescued from the lands where the Gabriola Housing Society development is occurring. All the plants were taken by attendees.



*October 15<sup>th</sup>*. GaLTT Invasives Work Party – Drumbeq Provincial Park – 20 hours, 12 volunteers. Restoration area work.

*October 20<sup>th</sup>*. GaLTT Trails Work Party – Boardwalk frames construction.

*October 27<sup>th</sup>*. GaLTT Invasives Work Party – Drumbeq Provincial Park – 13.25 hours, 9 volunteers. Restoration area planting.



*November 2<sup>nd</sup>* GaLTT Volunteer Appreciation Event –.

*November 3<sup>rd</sup>*. GaLTT Trails Work Party – S'ul-hween X'pey (Elder Cedar) Nature Reserve. 9 volunteers (18 hours) installed a 22m boardwalk on the north trail.

*November 3<sup>rd</sup>*. GaLTT Invasives Work Party – Drumbeq Provincial Park – 28.5 hours, 14 volunteers. Restoration area planting.



*November 5<sup>th</sup>*. GaLTT Invasives Work Party – Drumbeq Provincial Park – 27 hours, 13 volunteers. Restoration area planting.

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*November 7<sup>th</sup>* . GaLTT Invasives Work Party – Drumbeg Provincial Park – 25.5 hours, 10 volunteers.  
Restoration area planting.

*November 10<sup>th</sup>* . GaLTT Invasives Work Party – Drumbeg Provincial Park – 29.5 hours, 13 volunteers.  
Restoration area planting.

*November 12<sup>th</sup>* . GaLTT Invasives Work Party – Drumbeg Provincial Park – 11 hours, 5 volunteers.  
Restoration area planting.

*November 14<sup>th</sup>* . GaLTT Invasives Work Party – Drumbeg Provincial Park – 15.25 hours, 4 volunteers.  
Restoration area planting.

*November 18<sup>th</sup>* . GaLTT Invasives Work Party – Drumbeg Provincial Park – 15.75 hours, 15 volunteers.  
Restoration area planting.

*December 6<sup>th</sup>*: Regional District of Nanaimo 707 Community Park 78 Acre Addition Ceremony. A public celebration of the recent purchase of the 78-acre property was held. About 30 people attended, including four GaLTT board members and several RDN staff. Tom Osborne (General Manager, RDN Recreation and Parks Services) and Vanessa Craig (RDN Director) had many very generous words to say about GaLTT, in general, and specifically about our support for this specific property and our donation. The GaLTT President spoke on behalf of GaLTT. The ceremony was followed by a 30-minute loop walk through the property.

*December 8<sup>th</sup>*. GaLTT Trails Work Party – 6 volunteers made drainage improvements on the Boulton / Nelder’s Pond trail licence.

**Our grand total for our Drumbeg Provincial Park restoration planting and seeding in October-November = 222 volunteer hours!**

**Thirty-seven individuals took part over a total of 11 planting and seeding sessions.**

the assistance of a grant from the Gabriola Recreation Society, 6 members of GaLTT’s trail chainsaw crew completed a chainsaw safety training course. The following day the crew cleared the fallen trees in and next to Haven Woods and on the McConvey trail.



*December 10<sup>th</sup> School Hikes*: GaLTT volunteers led Grade 6/7 students on a hike from the school to Descanso Bay Regional Park. Teacher Jen Holme leads weekly walks with her class and asked for the help of GaLTT volunteers for a longer hike each month. Not only does this walking program increase fitness but it helps kids understand the lay of the land and their place in this coastal Douglas fir ecosystem!



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*December 10<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup>* . GaLTT Invasives Work Party – Queequeg Community Park. 12.5 volunteer hours, 6 volunteers.

In late September, the RDN hired a local contractor to remove two large patches of invasive Himalayan blackberry that had been gradually taking over the north-west side of the park. One patch was threatening to invade the fenced restoration area, where, in 2022, we planted 100 native shrubs after removing an enormous quantity of waist-high daphne the previous year.



A GaLTT team of Invasive Species volunteers met at Queequeg with Kaitlin Fader (our RDN liaison for invasives removal and restoration work) to replant this newly-cleared area with another 40 native shrubs and half a dozen small Douglas firs, all provided by the RDN. This new planting will provide a natural extension to our original restoration site here, including salal, dull Oregon grape, salmonberry and snowberry.



*January 5<sup>th</sup>* GaLTT Invasives Work Party – Drumbeq Provincial Park – 32 hours, 21 volunteers. Scotch broom removal.



*January 11<sup>th</sup>* . Neighbourhood Pathway Guided Walk. What a beautiful day for a walk in the woods! Our first Neighbourhood Pathways guided walk, led by GaLTT president, Hugh Skinner, included 40 islanders! We walked along the Medical Clinic and Gabriola Commons trail licences and down the beautiful Wilkinson path, a former trail licence on private land, now the newest part of the 707 Community Park.



*January 12<sup>th</sup>* . GaLTT Invasives Work Party – Drumbeq Provincial Park – 17 hours, 11 volunteers. Scotch broom removal.

*January 19<sup>th</sup>* . GaLTT Invasives Work Party – Drumbeq Provincial Park – 26 hours, 17 volunteers. Scotch broom removal.

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January 25<sup>th</sup> . Neighbourhood Pathway Guided Walk. On a beautiful, crisp Saturday morning, 25 walkers appreciated the beauty of icy Nelder’s pond. We also marvelled at some of Gabriola’s biggest trees that our guide Suzanne showed us on the Champaign trail!



**Yarrow’s Story:** Yarrow Koontz recently registered a “conservation covenant” on a portion of her property through the Islands Trust Conservancy.

“I really wanted to make sure the natural features of the land were protected in perpetuity should I decide to sell the property in the future,” says Yarrow.

Since 2002, Yarrow has spent countless hours removing invasive plant species and restoring disturbed areas on her 8.2-acre property near Silva Bay. She cares deeply about the Land and beings who inhabit the area, but was worried about how a future landholder might treat it. She is keenly aware that Gabriola’s remaining natural ecosystems are increasingly threatened by disturbance caused by human development.

GaLTT Invasives Species Guide:

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On January 15, 2025, GaLTT released its Invasive Species Guide. This publication and distribution of the guide was supported by a Regional District of Nanaimo Community Grant.

The GaLTT Invasive Species Committee is pleased to announce our new guide to dealing with invasive plants – something we've been working on for many months. This pamphlet was distributed to all island mailboxes on January 15 as an insert in the Sounder. An article in this week's paper explains why we're doing this.



The new guide focuses specifically on the plants that are a problem for us here on Gabriola, and is intended to be kept on your fridge door (or somewhere equally handy) to use for reference.

## GaLTT Fallen Tree Removals from Trails (October 2024 to February 2025):

- From the Evans trail
- In the 707 CP from the Fawn PI trail near post 56
- In the 707 CP from the Old Centre Rd trail near post 50
- In Cox CP on the McConvey trail
- In Cox CP on the Yogi Loop trail
- 2 trees in Haven Woods
- From the Trail Licence, Chichester Rd W to Clarendon Rd

- A tree was cleared on the Lois Lane - Garland Trail Licence.
- 1 on the trail from end of St Catherine's Ave to the shore at Gabriola Passage
- 2 on the Petroglyph trail
- 5 trees in Haven Woods
- 9 trees on the Fin Rd-Balsam connector trail
- 8 trees in Cox Park, 3 in the lower section (McConvey trail) of the park and 5 on the Mallett Creek, River Place and Burnside Dr trails.
- 1 on the Oyster Way trail
- 1 on the Garry Oak Loop
- 1 on the Bonnie View Rd – Seymour Rd trail
- 1 cleared on the North trail in SXNR and repairs done to the boardwalk damaged by the tree
- In Cox CP 2 trees cleared, 1 on the River Place trail, 1 on the McConvey trail
- In the 707CP on the trail between posts 49 & 59.

## GaLTT Trails Trimming (October 2024 to February 2025):

- 707 Parks, Sign Posts 18-23, SP 4-8-7, SP 30-29
- Merlin's Trail
- Clamshell Dr to South Rd.

## GaLTT Nature Stewards Program:

Several islanders owning larger acreages have recently joined the [Nature Stewards](#) program, pledging to conserve wildlife habitat and biodiversity on their properties.

GaLTT's Nature Stewards program now has 118 landholders participating - conserving biodiversity on their private lands, taking in just over 283 acres of pledged habitat in total. As Gabriola is about the same size as the island of Manhattan, Nature Stewards conservation lands are like enlarging Central Park by one-third.

These Nature Stewards landholders are conserving a rich, biodiverse patchwork of habitat, connecting with

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their neighbours' lands and adjacent parkland. As the program continues, these conservation connections will paint a more complete interconnected map of habitat conservation on private property, protected parks and Indigenous lands.

## **GaLTT Nature Stewards Watershed Community Outreach Project:**

RDN Watershed outreach planning for Castell Creek. Funding was confirmed for this Phase 3 of our project. This program is funded through the RDN Drinking Water and Watershed Protection (DWWP) Stewardship Seed Funding program.

## **Future GaLTT Activities and Events:**

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

School Hikes: – Future hikes are being planned with the Grad 6 / 7 class.

GaLTT has received approval from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (“MOTI”) for the installation of a bench on an undeveloped portion of Taylor Bay Road, overlooking Taylor Bay beach. The bench will be installed this spring.

Neighbourhood Pathways Winter Walk series has been planned every second Saturday.

A fund is being organized by the Blue Heron Learning Society to help travellers voluntarily offset their carbon footprint when flying or long road tripping. GaLTT is considering a ‘*Grow with GaLTT*’ project under the conservation umbrella where donated funds can be used to purchase seed, plugs, small shrubs and tree seedlings.

The GaLTT Annual General Meeting will be on March 29, 2025 at the Gabriola Golf Course clubhouse.