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March 24, 2019

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Coats Marsh RP and the Potlatch Density Additions (Coats Marsh East and 707 CP SW)

While pleased that Gabriola has recently acquired new parkland, namely Coats Marsh East (W½ of NE¼ Sec. 10 except remainder) and 707 SW (SE¼ Sec. 13 except.. and SW¼ of Sec.14), I am rather disturbed that management planning for these new areas appear to be going ahead without any opportunity that I am aware of for public or even GaLTT membership input. This is despite the fact that the current management plans for the 707 CP and Coats Marsh RP will be shortly up for renewal, and that the Islands Trust LTC is actively considering creating a new P4 zone which will give them a tool to designate areas where the needs of wildlife have absolute priority. The Coats Marsh RP Management Plan in particular very badly needs up-dating to incorporate new knowledge about the ecosystems there and the parks hydrogeology.

It is to be regretted that it is not possible administratively for the Coats Marsh East land to be integrated with the existing Coats Marsh RP when having an administrative boundary separating the east shore of the *marsh* and the catchment area of the *marsh* from the rest of the *marsh* is going to create problems in an area that is so obviously ecologically integrated.

Exactly how it is intended to manage usage of any trails that cross seamlessly from the new lands into Coats Marsh RP is unclear. Simply making all of the new lands a part of the 707 CP, and even

contemplating new trails into the Coats Marsh RP from the 707 CP, would I submit run a grave risk of weakening the stated current goal of Coats Marsh RP management as identified by the Ecological Gift's program, the TNT/RDN Lease Agreement, and community consensus, to give environmental conservation priority, and to make human access to the park property a secondary consideration. Coats Marsh is I have no doubt one of the properties that the Islands Trust would have in mind if the P4 zoning tool comes into being.

I would respectfully request that the RDN and GaLTT do not make any substantial alterations to the existing trail systems until the public, including GaLTT members, have been informed as to the nature of the changes, and had an opportunity to comment on them. GaLTT's eagerness to have the trails updated without consideration of the ecological damage that they do in an effort to have new maps ready before the tourist season appears to me not to be compatible with their mandate "...to preserve sites of environmental ...importance". This is disappointing.

Sincerely

Nick Doe