



Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee
700 North Road
Gabriola, BC V0R 1X3

November 27, 2019

Re: Ecological Protection Land Use Designation

Dear Trustees,

In principle, Gabriola Land & Trails Trust (GaLTT) supports the IT's initiative to establish a new Ecological Protection (EP) Land Use Designation for the purposes of protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity. Earlier this fall, GaLTT sent a request to the LTC for an opportunity to comment on the draft bylaw amendment once it is available. We look forward to reviewing the site-specific provisions which will be included in the draft amended bylaw.

Although the specific details of permitted uses for the proposed EP zone are not yet available, applying EP zoning to both Burren's Acres Nature Reserve and Elder Cedar Nature Reserve seems very appropriate given the primary intent of a nature reserve is to protect ecological attributes and features. We hope the site-specific provisions for Elder Cedar Nature Reserve will allow for continued low impact recreational use of this site.

We're inclined to agree with both the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) and The Nature Trust (TNT) that Ecological Protection zoning is not appropriate for Coats Marsh Regional Park (RP) given its adjacency with the 707 Community Park and the interconnectivity of the existing trail systems within the two parks. The current Coats Marsh Management Plan contains language that allows for restricted public access to environmentally sensitive areas within the park. GaLTT encourages the RDN and TNT to take actions that will provide greater protection to the marsh ecosystem itself and potentially to other sensitive park ecosystems and, after soliciting public input, to make appropriate updates to the current management plan. GaLTT has previously made specific recommendations to the RDN that at least two existing trails that lead to the edge of the marsh be closed to public access. It is our understanding that the RDN agrees with this proposed action.

Thank you for your initiative to establish a new Ecological Protection Land Use Designation for the protection of ecologically sensitive lands within the local trust area.

Yours truly,

Rob Brockley
President, Gabriola Land & Trails Trust