

## **Gabriola Land & Trails Trust Update for POSAC October 7, 2019**

### New GaLTT Map

GaLTT published the new edition of our popular trail map in early August and sales have been brisk. The new map has the same basic format as previous map editions, but contains several improvements such as:

- a large insert map of the newly expanded 707 Community Park, with trail names, locations of numbered posts, and differentiation between side and main trails;
- several new trails created by GaLTT volunteers during the past three years;
- special notation for trails on private land (e.g., trail licences);
- special notation of lands held in trust for Snuneymuxw First Nation along with Hul'q'umin'um' place names;
- updated descriptions of popular walks.

### Accessibility Survey

The analysis of the Accessibility Survey undertaken during the spring of 2019 has taken longer than expected, largely due to the priority given to printing the new edition of the GaLTT map. Given the survey's broad scope (both water and trail mobility issues were included), the analysis is quite complex. GaLTT has recently contracted with Wave Consulting (Dyan Dunsmoor-Farley) to complete the analysis and write a final report. GaLTT hopes that the information obtained from the survey will be useful for setting priorities and planning future projects.

### Conservation Planning

Given GaLTT's motto to **Conserve + Connect**, we recently began a planning process that will focus on identifying priority areas on Gabriola for conservation and/or trail connections. Conservation could be by acquisition, conservation covenant, donation, bequest or landowner education. Trail connections could be a right-of-way (ROW), trail licence or some other method. The assessment criteria have been identified and the next step will be a map exercise eyeing Gabriola Island through the lens of these criteria.

### Beach Access

Gabriola Island is blessed with several public accesses to the shoreline. Over the years, many of these accesses have been developed by either the RDN or GaLTT for public use, and GaLTT maintains many of the access trails. GaLTT is currently in the process of building and replacing several missing yellow public access markers on developed accesses. We are also surveying undeveloped accesses to ascertain whether there is potential for future development.

### Trail Building and Maintenance

GaLTT continues with our twice-monthly volunteer work parties to undertake trail maintenance activities on island trails. We recently received a grant from the Gabriola Recreation Society to partially fund a trail upgrade between Peterson Road and McDonald Road through an area that floods during the winter months. The project goal was to construct an elevated boardwalk in order to provide year-round pedestrian and bicycle use on the entire length of this important connector trail. GaLTT members contributed a total of 69 hours of volunteer labour to complete this project. Work consisted of pre-building wooden frames, transporting to the site, leveling with concrete blocks, attaching surface boards, and building gravel ramps with handrails. In total, approximately 230 feet of new boardwalk was constructed and installed.

A new trail was recently built parallel to the linear Seymour Road Community Park, on the private ROW of the Seymour strata association (with permission). The new trail allows trail connection between existing trails on Federal Crown land and Seymour Road.

### Community Engagement

GaLTT hosted four separate events this summer. A forest bathing walk and rockhound (geology) event were held in July and a night walk and night cycle were held in August. GaLTT had a table at the Farmer's market each Saturday throughout the summer and every 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday during the fall. Plans are underway to host frequent weekend walks throughout the winter.

### Invasive Species

Several work parties were held during the summer months to remove Tansy ragwort. This invasive species has spread rapidly throughout the island during the past couple of years. Another volunteer effort was dedicated to removing English ivy from one of our conservation covenant properties.

Planning has begun on developing a clear strategy for addressing invasive species issues. The strategy will include planning (including mapping, prioritizing, and monitoring), education/communication, and action on the ground. The strategy would include GaLTT's current Scotch broom removal efforts would also likely include action on other invasive species.

### Strategic Plan Review

GaLTT's current 5-year strategic plan (2015-2020) is due for an update. A facilitated 1-day workshop open to all GaLTT members will be held on November 23<sup>rd</sup>. We'll look at the current strategic plan, review progress on priority issues, and identify areas in which more efforts are needed.

Rob Brockley

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