

**From:** Save Estuary Land Society <[saveestuaryland@gmail.com](mailto:saveestuaryland@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Friday, January 20, 2023 10:17 AM

**To:** Inquiries <[inquiries@rdn.bc.ca](mailto:inquiries@rdn.bc.ca)>

**Subject:** Proposed Regional Growth Strategy Amendments - January 24 Board meeting

Good morning,

Please find attached a letter in support of proposed amendments to the Regional Growth Strategy. I would be grateful if you would submit it to the Board of Directors for their consideration.

Thank you,

Denise Foster, Chair  
[Save Estuary Land Society](#)

RDN Board of Directors  
6300 Hammond Bay Road  
Nanaimo, BC  
V9T 6N2

Dear RDN Board of Directors,

Please consider this letter in support of Director Lehann Wallace's proposed Regional Growth Strategy amendments.

The Save Estuary Land Society (SELS) was formed in 2018 to protect the environment for the benefit of the public by conserving or restoring ecosystems, habitats of estuaries and associated riparian, marsh, wetlands, forested uplands and meadows.

Eastern Vancouver Island is identified as supporting more biological diversity than anywhere else in BC yet is one of nine most at risk areas in Canada. It has become increasingly apparent that deforestation and development in flood plains is resulting in continued and serious loss of biodiversity and sensitive habitats.

Over the past five years SELS has been studying French Creek, its estuary and associated lands culminating in the conservation of 9.2 ha on the northwest side of the estuary. During this time climate change, logging and lack of riparian protections has wreaked havoc with water flows in French and Morningstar Creeks as follows:

- Drastically low flows resulting in multiple species die offs and impairing salmon spawn.
- Torrential creek flows resulting in log jams, bank collapses, flooding and washing out of salmon and their eggs.
- High water mark stakes on both the northwest and southeast sides of the estuary (set by RPBios contracted to property owners/developers) have flooded. Stakes on the southeast side were reset to higher ground and flooded again.
- On Dec 27, 2022, French Creek breached its bank at the estuary in three places due to snow melt followed by heavy rains and a king tide. Fortunately there was little wind to cause waves and bring increased risk.

Nature controls the timing and severity of flood events however we can reduce risks by preserving nature's existing protections - floodplains and forests. Limiting development and infrastructure in these areas reduces risk and contributes to the ecological health and biodiversity of our communities.

We urge you to take protective measures and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Denise Foster, Chair  
[Save Estuary Land Society](#)