

British Columbia
Conservation
Foundation

Qualicum Beach Streamkeepers Society

August 13, 2018

Tom Osborne
General Manager, Recreation and Parks
Regional District of Nanaimo
6300 Hammond Bay Road
Nanaimo, BC V9T 6N2

Les Bogdan
Director, Regional Operations
Ducks Unlimited Canada
Unit 511, 13370-78 Ave.
Surrey, BC V3W 0H6

Dear Tom and Les:

It's been more than 6 years now that a cooperative effort has been underway between Ducks Unlimited Canada, the Regional District of Nanaimo, the British Columbia Conservation Foundation and the Qualicum Beach Streamkeepers to undertake annual habitat restoration activities in the Little Qualicum River estuary and spit.

As you're aware, in June 2010 a Management Plan for the Little Qualicum River Estuary Regional Conservation Area (2010 - 2019) was released and we are now nearing the end of its effective term. The primary management goal for the LQRERCA is to ensure the natural state of the spit preserved, conserved, maintained and enhanced as wildlife (*including wild fish*) habitat, within the context of the Little Qualicum estuary as a whole.

In support of this goal, BCCF undertook a large-scale fish habitat improvement project in the spit's DFO-constructed salmon rearing channel in 2012, and the QB Streamkeepers and BCCF have planted over 200 native trees, shrubs and grasses on the spit, most within four fenced enclosures to protect plantings from browsing deer and rabbits, since fall 2014.

Each summer, BCCF and Streamkeeper volunteers have carried a portable water pump and several hundred metres of hose to bring potable water from the river to the plantings during

extended periods of hot and dry weather. In addition, more native species have been planted to replace those lost and improvements have been made to the enclosures. Many invasive plants, including blackberries and scotch broom, have been cut and removed. Several hundred hours of volunteer time have been committed over this period.

In addition, complementary work undertaken by the Guardians of Mid-Island Estuaries Society to reduce the number of resident Canada Geese, and restore native *Carex* sedge marsh benches, looks very promising for long-term estuary health.

Overall, much has been learned about the survival of native plant species in this challenging environment – an environment which seems to be becoming even more water short and dry, with long established trees on the Spit showing stress and losses.

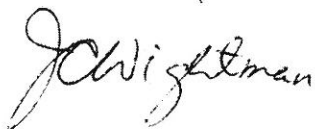
Collectively, we believe it's essential that managers and stakeholders in the Little Qualicum River estuary now commit to reviewing the experience of the past several years and develop a shared commitment and vision for the future. We've essentially completed the first phase of joint stewardship and can learn much from it. If our non-government organizations are to continue with on-the-ground restoration in the estuary, a clear set of shared objectives and targets will be central.

We look forward to your thoughts about how best to move forward on this important issue.

Yours truly,



David James
President
Qualicum Beach Streamkeepers Society
216 Saturna Drive
Qualicum Beach, BC V9K 2P5



Craig Wightman, RPBio.
Senior Fisheries Biologist
BC Conservation Foundation
PO Box 7
#1-7217 Lantzville Road
Lantzville, BC V0R 2H0