

Activity Report of the Parks Committee to DIRA (PC)

March/April, 2011,

Submitted by P. Karsten

Includes summary notes from the GM of DIRA, and meetings with ERA March 14th, 2011:

Morning Beach Park.

Onsite Engineering Ltd, was contracted by the CVRD to develop the design package for the viewing platform, trail and stair case and a geo-technical report assessing the substrate of the site. Jeremy Araki (Onsite) and Brian Allaert (CVRD) made a presentation to DIRA on March 14th on the above project. The Quadra sand bluff has unfavourable characteristics for a permanent structure. Slippage of the sand face and wave action erosion at the shore line will affect the stability of the slope and any structure placed on it. The design plan accommodates this by creating independent units which can be adjusted and or replaced if necessary. Stair runs will be inter-connected by flexible joints similar to marina ramps to absorb movement. Metal grating will be fixed to the surface of the wooden stairs.

There will be 5 units of wooden stairs (approximately 100 feet in total); 25 feet of edged gravel trails on the more horizontal sections and a 25 foot ramp over damaged tree roots. At the shore large trunks of drift wood will be anchored by "dead men" with steps carved into them. An approach is taken to make the structures simple to be maintained by volunteers with basic carpentry skills and to invest as little as practical in the capital cost. Onsite presented a preliminary cost estimates for materials. Using treated wood \$10,449, or Western red cedar \$17,067; milling cost if logs are donated \$4,968. Peter Karsten noted that donations of cedar logs have been indicated and that much of the site preparation, trail work, delivery of materials to the site can be done by volunteers. The wooden stair case section would be done under contract. Feedback from the meeting underscored the interest to use untreated wood. One member asked if the project should be abandoned due to the unstable slope. Brian Allaert and Peter Karsten responded that the community had given direction to pursue the project. The trail can be made safe and the budget is in place to carry out the project. Continued use, which is unpreventable, will cause severe erosion problems and safety/liability concerns, which are greater risks than the uncertainty of the longevity of the structures. Development permits have been applied and the DFO is consulted. The design concept will be sent out for referrals to various agencies involved in parks.

Construction may commence early summer. The PC will make monthly reports on the progress.

The PC has placed a park entry sign and replaced the chain barrier with a more appropriate split rail fence to close the rope tail until it is open for use again.

Ecosystem Restoration Associates Inc.

John Block and Jennifer Holland of Ecosystem Restoration Associates Inc. made a presentation to a group of stake holders representing various organizations, groups, and committees involved and interested in parks at 3 pm at the Seniors' Lounge, Seniors' Center and again at the DIRA meeting at 7:30 pm Community Hall.

In summary ERA introduced the concept of forestry carbon offsets to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions from the atmosphere. ERA secures lands for forest conservation for “carbon finance”. ERA holds a conservation covenant for 100 years on the NDL, the 492 ha transferred to BC Parks. Their participation made the acquisition of the lands possible.

Conditions include: no subdivision, buildings or structures, roads or paths, alterations or interference with hydrology, tree removal, mining, petroleum product extractions, garbage and non native soil deposits or application of herbicides or fungicides that are allowed to have deleterious impact on the natural, environmental, wildlife, plant life or ecological values or tree biomass of the land. Over the life of the covenant 1% of the trees can be removed for park infrastructure or checker spot habitat management. If greater than 1% is removed the tree biomass lost must accrue to the covenant on or off island.

The conditions allow for conservation and recreation activities and add another layer of protection of the ecosystem beyond BC Parks policies.

ERA answered a number of questions including the aspect of voluntary and compliant emission reductions, the history and structure of their public company and the method of quantifying carbon storage. Other than one comment that the project may lend an excuse to polluters elsewhere, the community was supportive to the conditions and the effect the covenant has for the new park. ERA has submitted a meeting report which outlines the concept of carbon offsets to the community (on file with PC DIRA and Dora Drinkwater Library and attached).

Definition of “Passive Recreation” in LUB 186 for Denman Island

Trustee David Graham advised that the definition to be presented to the community in proposed bylaw 200 now reads: *Passive recreation* means non-motorized outdoor leisure activities which can be carried out with a minimal impact to the natural environment including but not limited to hiking, picnicking, horseback riding and bicycling.