Restoring British Columbia's
Garry Oak Ecosystems

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES

Chapter 6
Outreach and Public Involvement

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Chapter 6

Outreach and Public Involvement

by Carolyn MacDonald, with contributions by Chris Junck and Jenny Eastman

Elise Croteau knee-high in camas (*Camassia* spp.) at Playfair Park in Saanich. Photo: Carolyn MacDonald

6.1 Introduction

> ... social engagement is a vital part of restoration and
> not merely an afterthought. (Higgs 2003)

Ultimately, successful protection and restoration of Garry Oak ecosystems will depend on the support and values of the public and communities in which these ecosystems exist. In Canada, the last remnants of Garry Oak ecosystems are found primarily in and around areas occupied by people. A well-planned public involvement and outreach approach can provide project support through community stewardship, funding opportunities, volunteer activities, and even restoration efforts that are expanded to adjacent properties. Communicating and working with the public and other stakeholders from the beginning planning stages can directly influence project success and sustainability.

The Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team (GOERT) is guided by the *Recovery Strategy for Garry Oak and Associated Ecosystems and their Associated Species at Risk in Canada* (www.goert.ca/documents/RSDr_Feb02.pdf). This Recovery Strategy acknowledges that communication and developing public involvement, awareness, and participation are essential aspects of the ecosystem recovery program (GOERT 2002). The Recovery Strategy identifies "motivating public and private protection and stewardship activities" as a key objective. Garry Oak ecosystem restoration projects play an important role in meeting Recovery Strategy objectives, which include public outreach and facilitating stewardship.

One of the preliminary restoration tasks outlined in the Society for Ecological Restoration's *Guidelines for Developing and Managing Ecological Restoration Projects* (Clewell et al. 2005) is to establish liaison with the public and publicize the project:

> Local residents automatically become stakeholders in the restoration. They need to know how the restored ecosystem can benefit them personally. For example, the restoration may attract ecotourism that will benefit local businesses, or it may serve as an environmental education venue for local schools. If residents favor the restoration, they will protect it and vest it with their political support. If they dislike the restoration, they may vandalize or otherwise disrespect it. (Clewell et al. 2005)

As you plan restoration, it is important to consider what level of commitment you are prepared to devote to the project. This chapter provides tools and resources for designing public involvement and public outreach for Garry Oak ecosystem restoration projects. No matter what scale or type of restoration project you are taking on—a grassroots, community-led project or a multi-stakeholder, government managed initiative—community consultation, education, public outreach, and volunteer management may be essential to your success.

EXAMPLES OF OUTREACH AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

- Public consultation meetings
- Public presentations
- Educational field trips to Garry Oak ecosystems
- Information and resources provided to the public
- Parks interpretive programs
- Public signage
- Volunteer programs
- Landowner/neighbour contact programs
- Education programs within the schools

6.1.1 Overview of this Chapter

This chapter provides descriptions, best management practices, tools, and resources for developing outreach programs for Garry Oak ecosystem restoration projects and addressing public participation throughout project planning and implementation.

- Section 6.2 provides an overview of how to communicate with the public, gives guidelines and tools for building a communications/outreach strategy, and provides information on public involvement and consultation. This section ends with descriptions of, and tools for, effective communication methods.
- Section 6.3 looks at the social and cultural aspects of restoration, including historical cultural relationships, social implications of restoration, and implications of bringing people back into the ecosystems.
- Section 6.4 describes the building of a stewardship ethic, provides considerations regarding stewardship challenges, gives an overview of community-based restoration, and describes stewardship programs for youth. This section concludes with a description of, and best management practices for, landowner contact programs.
- Section 6.5 covers tools and best management practices for managing volunteer programs.
- Section 6.6 ends with "celebration" as a reminder of the importance of celebrating the ecosystems and our work.

6.2 Communicating with the Public

6.2.1 Overview

> The world we have created today as a result of our thinking thus far has created problems that cannot be solved by thinking the way we thought when we created them. (Albert Einstein)

Successful ecological restoration of Garry Oak ecosystems needs to be based on both participatory action and scientific knowledge. Outreach and public involvement strategies are best considered at the beginning stages of a project and should be re-evaluated throughout its implementation. A project that includes the community in its vision, goals, and objectives from the start is much more likely to have success and long-term sustainability. Successful projects not only reach out to the broader community and stakeholders but also see the community as active participants and knowledge holders who can assist with many facets of the overall restoration program.

Communicating with the public can be viewed as a spectrum of activities ranging from informing and educating to involving and collaborating with the public and other stakeholders in the project. Careful planning and implementation of this process ensures key concerns, information, and other goals are considered and incorporated into the project planning process. Ongoing outreach maintains the project's profile and community interest, support, and stewardship.

In planning for public communication, consider the following:

- Who is your audience?
- What do they want to know? What do they have to contribute to the project?

- When (and at what points) do you need to implement different types of communication?
- Why are you communicating? Are you informing, asking for participation, or looking for full collaboration?
- How do you want to communicate? What are your resources and goals?
- How can the community communicate their concerns and provide input?

It is important to develop a communications or outreach strategy for your restoration project. This strategy may be the key to building community support or collaboration and long-term sustainability.

> A communications strategy may be the key to building community support and long-term sustainability for your restoration project.

6.2.2 Building a Communications/Outreach Strategy

In order to build a communications/outreach strategy, consider the following:

Objectives: Define your communication and outreach objectives (e.g., "Objective 1: To build awareness and educate the community about Garry Oak ecosystems and ecological restoration").

Audience: To be successful in communication, it is vital to know your audience. Consider who your audience is, including their knowledge, perspectives, interests, and the best ways to reach them, and start from where they are.

Key Message: Be very clear about what message you are communicating to the public.

Achieving Objectives: Identify which communication, outreach, and public involvement strategies you will use to achieve your objectives.

Resources: Identify available resources to help you with your strategies.

Evaluating Success: How will you know if you are successful? For each strategy, identify evaluation techniques (e.g., for site tours: number of people who attend, response of participants, successful engagement of the media).

Adjust Strategy: Be prepared to adjust your strategy as you evaluate its success.

Objectives

Identifying specific goals and objectives will help you to be more focused and effective. This will also help you to effectively evaluate the success of your public outreach. When you are developing objectives, carefully consider the available resources, timeframe of your project, stakeholders, and other considerations specific to your project that may impact a communications strategy.

Using the **SMART** technique is one way to develop effective objectives (see also Chapter 5):

Specific – Is the scope narrow enough that it can be attained?

Measurable – How do you know when you have achieved your outcome/objective?

Achievable – Can this objective be achieved with the time and funding available?

Realistic – Is this objective or activity realistic, and relevant to the over-riding goal?

Timed – What is the timeframe? Can the task be completed in this timeframe?

Audience

One of the most important considerations for effective outreach planning is to identify your target audience. You may have a number of different audiences and different methods of communicating with each. Consider their individual needs and knowledge, and how they best receive information.

Consider who needs to be informed and/or involved. How does your audience relate to your project goals? Do you:

- require volunteers?
- need to change behaviours around site use and stewardship (such as trampling and dumping of garden waste)?
- have goals that include public participation or consultation in the project?
- want to expand restoration efforts to neighbouring properties?
- need funding and other support from your audience?

Key Message

Consider what specific messages you want to convey to your audience in order to achieve your objectives. When communicating with the public, the simplest messages can be the most effective. Be careful not to overwhelm people with information. Adapt your key message(s) to your specific audiences and be prepared to change those messages in response to community feedback.

Achieving Objectives

Once you have considered your objective(s), audience, and key message(s), you then need to select the best communication strategies. You may want to focus on one specific method that seems to be best for your audience, or develop a few strategies to reach your audience(s) in different ways. Most restoration projects use a variety of outreach strategies targeted at different goals or objectives. Signage and presentations may work best to change the behaviours of certain audiences, whereas media, newsletters, and direct contact may work best in engaging and involving other audiences.

Resources

There are many great examples of effective outreach tools for restoration projects. To conserve time and resources, look at outreach tools that have been developed by related organizations, existing manuals for ideas and guidance and even other Garry Oak ecosystem restoration projects with outreach programs. The list at the end of this chapter includes helpful resources for developing outreach tools. Also see Section 6.2.3 for descriptions of effective communication methods.

Evaluation Methods

There are many different ways you can evaluate the success of your public outreach program. You may use evaluation methods that have specific, measurable goals such as behavioural changes or participation levels. If you are evaluating a specific part of your outreach program, the method you use should be specific to that component. For example, if you are evaluating your volunteer program, you may use:

- focus groups
- participant surveys
- ongoing participation statistics

One evaluation technique, SWOT analysis, requires you to carefully examine your objectives, and then evaluate your success. This analysis may be done in a group setting. In your group, evaluate each of the four elements listed below (evaluation elements "SWOT"). For each element, make sure everyone in the group clearly understands the element, then brainstorm and discuss. For example: does everyone understand "strengths"—what are the strengths of this activity (specific activity) in achieving the objective(s)? When everyone is clear, brainstorm or discuss the strengths, creating a list. After the group has completed an analysis of each SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats), compare and group the lists gathered for each and analyze the results.

Evaluation Elements

Strengths: attributes that help in achieving the objective

Weaknesses: attributes that are harmful in achieving the objective

Opportunities: external conditions that are helpful to achieving the objective

Threats: external conditions that could damage the objective

Adjusting your Strategy

Use the results of your evaluation to adjust your ongoing and future public outreach and involvement strategies so they become increasingly effective.

6.2.3 Restoration Planning: Public Participation

> Restoration represents an indefinitely long-term commitment of land and resources, and a proposal to restore an ecosystem requires thoughtful deliberation. Collective decisions are more likely to be honored and implemented than are those that are made unilaterally. (Society for Ecological Restoration, SERISPWG 2004)

Public participation should be considered carefully because it implicitly includes the promise that the contributions of the public will influence the project. A good public participation process requires planning, effective facilitation, and follow-up (Figure 6.1). The benefits of the process may include increased project support.

Public involvement can be vital to a restoration project's credibility, support, and long-term sustainability. The benefits can include:

- the opportunity to address concerns of stakeholders and neighbours early in the project, and identify options that will be supported by the community
- the chance to use the public's knowledge about the site, which will inform the restoration planning process
- the ability to build awareness and understanding of the project
- the opportunity to build long-term support for the project, which may include labour, resources, funding, and/or general stewardship

Case Study 1. San Juan Preservation Trust: Community Support = Bluebird Re-Introduction Success

At one time, Western Bluebirds (*Sialia mexicana*) were a significant part of the landscape of the San Juan Islands in Washington State. As their habitat and landscape changed, including the loss of large dead trees for cavity nesting, Western Bluebird populations began to decline in the 1930s. By the 1960s they were extirpated from the northern extent of their range in the U.S.A. Small populations persisted on southern Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands until the mid-1990s. In 2007, the San Juan Islands Western Bluebird Re-introduction Project began with a five year strategy to re-establish breeding populations of birds on the islands.

From the planning stages of this project, community outreach and involvement was considered essential. Public seminars were held before the project was implemented, to educate and gain support from the target communities and to engage volunteers. As the re-introduction began, the project depended on community volunteers as nestbox hosts and monitors. Monitoring is now conducted by a paid technician, but volunteer hosts play an invaluable role not only by providing space for the nestboxes, but in some cases also feeding mealworms to clutches (with some pairs having as many as three clutches in the season).

The San Juan Preservation Trust has overseen the majority of public education and outreach, providing not only the educational seminars and volunteer coordination, but wider public outreach. The Trust has reached out through nestbox building workshops, nestbox kit sales, outreach booths at local farmers' markets, educational programs for school children, media releases, a website blog, newsletter and even a bluebird haiku poetry contest (Kathleen Foley, personal communication 2010).

Elyse Portal inspects a Western Bluebird nestbox on San Juan Island. Photo: Carolyn Masson

Making partnerships in the community, conducting a sustainable volunteer program, and reaching out to build community support have been crucial to the success of this project. Re-introduction of the birds began in 2007, and the results of the 2010 spring and summer monitoring season were very encouraging. Twenty-four Western Bluebirds returned, seventeen more were translocated that season, and a total of eighty-four juvenile birds were banded. As the project continues and support grows, GOERT is planning a re-introduction project across the border on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands, with translocations to begin in spring 2012. The Canadian bluebird project will have the added benefit of lessons learned and experience gained through the successful San Juan Islands work. For more about this project, see Case Study 3 in Chapter 4 or go to www.sjpt.org/page.php?content_id=92.

A DEFINITION OF STAKEHOLDERS AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

(The International Association for Public Participation, www.iap2.org)

We define stakeholders as any individual, group of individuals, organizations, or political entity with a stake in the outcome of a decision. We define the public as those stakeholders who are not part of the decision-making entity or entities.

We define public participation as any process that involves the public in problem-solving or decision-making and that uses public input to make better decisions.

6.2.4 Decision-making for Public Process

Deciding what level of public process to undertake during the planning stages of a restoration project involves consideration of many factors, such as the mandate of the project, if being steered by an agency; goals for public participation; complexity of issues; community-related impacts; and First Nations participation. Appendix 6.1 provides an adapted version of the District of Saanich's checklist *Deciding Whether Public Involvement is Needed*. The checklist has been adapted to apply specifically to a restoration project. As described in the IAP2 public participation spectrum (Figure 6.1), each approach to public participation comes with expectations from the public that should be considered carefully. Good public process and/or involvement can make or break the success of a project.

6.2.5 Effective Communication Methods

After considering what level of public outreach and/or involvement best suits your project and after identifying your objectives, audience, and key messages, you will need to decide which communication methods are most effective for your situation.

This is where you can be both creative and resourceful by looking at what methods have been the most effective for other projects with similar objectives and audiences. These methods may include:

- printed materials (such as brochures, newsletters, articles, flyers, and letters)
- visual outreach tools (such as signage and posters)
- on-line media (websites and on-line social media such as Facebook and Twitter)
- events (including presentations, meetings, workshops, media events, and unique gatherings)
- direct contact (landowner contact and volunteer programs)
- tours (e.g., as in peak seasons)

Case Study 2. Scotch Broom Project Halted

by Christian Engelstoft

Even though Garry Oak ecosystems do not occur on Haida Gwaii, lessons learned about the importance of public outreach in restoration are worth sharing. Scotch Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) was introduced to the islands in the early 1920s and to the Tlell area prior to 1936. In the fall of 1999, a program to control Scotch Broom was started in the Tlell area. Within a very short time, the work had to be stopped because the local community was in an uproar. Local citizens really liked the yellow flowering plant as it was one of the only plants that provided the landscape with colour and beauty; they saw no reason to pull it out. The outcome of that project could likely have been much different had the local community been educated about the effects of Scotch Broom on native ecosystems and consulted prior to the removal. To this day, Scotch Broom is a prominent part of the landscape, but control projects are now on-going.

Scotch Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*). Photo: Chris Junck

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INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT

INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
Public Participation Goal:	**Public Participation Goal:**	**Public Participation Goal:**	**Public Participation Goal:**	**Public Participation Goal:**
To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the Public:	**Promise to the Public:**	**Promise to the Public:**	**Promise to the Public:**	**Promise to the Public:**
We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
Example Tools:	**Example Tools:**	**Example Tools:**	**Example Tools:**	**Example Tools:**
• fact sheets • web sites • open houses.	• public comment • focus groups • surveys • public meetings.	• workshops • deliberate polling.	• citizen advisory committees • consensus-building • participatory decision-making.	• citizen juries • ballots • delegated decisions.

Figure 6.1 Public Participation Spectrum (from the International Association for Public Participation 2007; used with permission).

A survey of outreach and communication methods used in twelve Garry Oak ecosystem restoration projects conducted on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands[1] indicated that the most popular methods were signage, newsletters, media, and presentations. The most effective methods, although not necessarily the most popular ones, were either direct personal contact and/or involving people in the project (however, signage was also one of the most effective methods).

Public outreach and involvement has many positive effects. The survey of Garry Oak ecosystem projects cited the most positive effects of their outreach to be increased volunteer participation, greater connection of children with the ecosystems, greater empowerment of people, increased community support and stewardship for the project/site, and greater public awareness of the values of Garry Oak ecosystems and threats to them.

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1 A survey was conducted by C. MacDonald (2009/2010) through a questionnaire sent via email to key contacts of Garry Oak ecosystem restoration projects in British Columbia that had outreach and public involvement programs. In total, 12 completed questionnaires were received.

Presentation at Playfair Park restoration site. Photo: Carolyn MacDonald

Increased volunteer participation, increased community support, and greater connections between children and the natural world are some of the most positive effects of public outreach around restoration projects.

Interpretation

Many effective communication methods can be described as "interpretive". Interpretation can be defined as:

> Any communication process designed to reveal meanings and relationships of cultural and natural heritage to the public, through first-hand involvement with an object, artifact, landscape or site. (Interpretation Canada 1976)

Interpretation comes in many forms, from a sign or publication to a guided walk or theatrical program. In practice, it is a way of communicating enthusiasm, meaning, value, and wonder. Interpretation fosters connections between people and places, which is especially important for Garry Oak ecosystems.

> Far beyond the dissemination of factual information, interpretation aims to create in visitors meaning, so that they can put a place into personal perspective and identify with it in a way that is more profound and enduring than random fact-learning can alone produce. Interpretation is meaning making. (Ham 2002)

A good place to search for interpretation resources is the Interpretation Canada website (www.interpcan.ca/new).

The following descriptions profile some of the commonly used communication methods. The resources referred to here will help you to make the best use of each of these specific techniques.

Signage

Most signage used for Garry Oak ecosystem restoration sites identifies a site or project, and may provide a map, site interpretation, and other key information for site visitors. The twelve restoration projects surveyed identified signage as one of the most commonly used communication techniques.

The following are common types of signage used for ecological restoration sites:

- basic site/project identification signs
- interpretive signage
- kiosk-style map and interpretive signs
- seasonal signs
- sandwich boards (temporary)

Government-led projects will likely have their own signage production in-house and/or established procedures for signage development. Other projects and organizations may look to community professionals to provide information and assistance for signage development, production, and installation.

The following are some things to consider when planning for site signage:

- Is landowner consent (or partnership) required?
- Who is the main audience? (What are their needs and level of engagement?)
- What are the key messages (concise) and purpose of the signage?
- Is funding available?
- Is a project contact required? If so, consider the best long-term contact information. What materials are required to reduce the impacts of vandalism?
- What is the ideal location for, and height of, installation?

There are many resources available to help you plan for creating effective signage, e.g., *A Sense of Place: An Interpretive Planning Handbook* (Carter 2001).

Sandwich boards can be used to inform site users about temporary project activities, for example, on work party days to explain what volunteers are doing. Photo: Carolyn MacDonald

GOERT offers this series of "Stay on Track" signs to conservation partners to promote responsible use of sensitive ecosystems. For more, see www.goert.ca/stayontrack. Photo: Chris Junck

Kiosks can provide detailed site information such as maps and habitat descriptions. This photo shows the kiosk at Woodlands at Government House in Victoria. Photo: Carolyn MacDonald

With signs such as this Habitat Steward sign, GOERT recognizes landowners who allow access to their property for restoration and species at risk surveys. Photo: Chris Junck

Simple signs can be an unobtrusive way to inform users about a restoration site, such as this sign at Fort Rodd Hill National Historic Site. Photo: Carolyn MacDonald

Newsletters

Keeping regular contact with project partners, neighbours, volunteers, and other key stakeholders can be essential to the sustainability of your project. Newsletters are one way to keep people informed, interested, and even participating. A good newsletter can be provided with minimal costs, depending on your goals. Newsletters can be distributed via email, mail, and/or the internet.

There are many helpful tips on the internet for producing effective newsletters. Create a plan, an appealing design, and follow these guidelines:

- Banner: The banner should be simple and bold, clearly identifying the project or agency and including the publication date and number.
- Layout: Use consistent formatting such as fonts with a clean design. Printed newsletters often use 2–3 columns.
- Headlines: Make headlines eye-catching to draw in your readers.
- Graphics: Use good quality graphics to add interest and professional quality to your publication as well as making the newsletter easier to read.
- Writing style: Use a writing style that is brief, to the point, and uses a less formal style. Sub-headings help break up longer articles.
- Audience: Know your audience and what they want or need. Knowing your audience will also help decide what are the most important things to communicate about your project.
- Contact information: Make sure your contact information can be found easily in a consistent, strategic location.
- Distribution: Consider how best to distribute the publication for your intended audience, or provide a few options (such as print and email).

Websites

Increasingly, the public is accessing and wanting information through the internet. Websites can provide a way of promoting Garry Oak restoration sites and stewardship, and can be a way to connect participants with information, event announcements, newsletters, and resources. Currently, Garry Oak restoration projects are using a wide range of website approaches, from one very simple webpage with links to project webpages within a larger organization's website, to elaborate and professionally designed websites.

Most of us recognize the basic dos and don'ts of website design based on our own experience with accessing websites. The best designs are attractive, consistently formatted, and user friendly. Ecological restoration projects need to provide readily obtainable information about how to get involved, along with current contact information. Following are examples that have been created for Garry Oak restoration projects:

MT. TOLMIE CONSERVANCY
http://members.shaw.ca/mttolmieconservancy
This simple website has one main page which includes a clear statement of the project's purpose, contact information, and a list of upcoming events. The webpage provides links to a map, historical information, and photos. It is a very basic website with easy upkeep, and it focuses on providing specific information rather than using an engaging design.

COWICHAN GARRY OAK PRESERVE
www.natureconservancy.ca/site/PageServer?pagename=bc_ncc_CGOP
The Cowichan Garry Oak Preserve is an example of a project that has webpages within a larger organization's website (The Nature Conservancy of Canada, www.natureconservancy.ca). The main page directs readers to summaries and contacts for key aspects of their program, and information on upcoming events, research, and volunteer events. It also offers a concise description of the ecological and cultural history of the site, profiling why it is special.

CROW'S NEST ECOLOGICAL RESEARCH AREA
www.twu.ca/crowsnest
Trinity Western University provides webpages for its Crow's Nest research area within their larger website. The Crow's Nest pages are nicely organized and include a directory, giving it the appearance of an independent website. The site includes unique features, such as a digital herbarium, an inventory database of vertebrates and invertebrates, and an on-line tour of the research area using a map and photo links. The main purpose of the project is clearly stated, and the research description and links are easily accessible.

GARRY OAK RESTORATION PROJECT
www.gorp.saanich.ca
This website features a number of restoration sites, and the footer on each webpage includes contact information for the project coordinator. The website provides basic information about the project, as well as more in-depth information, newsletters, and announcements for volunteers and other interested parties. Maps provide information about each site, including how to access it by bus or walking trails. Note that information such as event listings are kept updated, which is an important website feature.

GARRY OAK ECOSYSTEMS RECOVERY TEAM

www.goert.ca

GOERT's website provides a good example of the key elements of successful website design. The website is attractive, carefully designed, and very user-friendly. Content is constantly updated, providing a go-to hub of Garry Oak ecosystem information. The website meets the needs of a wide variety of audiences, from engaging individuals who are new to Garry Oak ecosystems to providing in-depth information, resources, and tools for professionals. Extra links at the top of the banner provide easy access to contact information and information on donating to the organization or subscribing to its newsletter.

SALT SPRING ISLAND CONSERVANCY

www.saltspringconservancy.ca

This website is a great one to visit if you are looking to design a dynamic website for a non-government organization. Information is detailed and laid out in a very user-friendly manner. The footer at the bottom of each page tells you when the site was last updated. Specific project pages are especially in-depth. For example, the Sharp-tailed Snake (*Contia tenuis*) page includes good quality photos, information about the species and "how to help", and links to related resources, and the owl pages provide photos and species profiles, plus links to information on owl calls and nest box designs.

Carolyn MacDonald and Judith Carder pose at Chatterton Hill Park for a news story about supporting community projects. Photo: Diana Nethercott

On-line Social Media

Although many of us may still experience a "cringe factor" related to on-line social media or networking, it is a buzz we may need to listen to. There are many examples of projects and campaigns that have taken off due to their use of simple, on-line networking platforms. The most popular types of platforms include:

- microblogging (e.g., Twitter; short content on-line conversations)
- blogging (including free platforms such as Google Blogger)
- video (the most popular being YouTube)
- social networking (e.g., Facebook and MySpace)

On-line social networking is a means of connecting with people, and it can provide a way to reach a broader audience or even effectively communicate with a specific audience, such as youth. Many social networking sites provide a place to creatively draw interest and support for your project or campaign. If you aren't sure about venturing into this new world, find a young person to get you started!

Presentations

Presentations can be an excellent way to engage people and provide key messages or information about a project. They can also be a great way to put people to sleep or to put them off a topic. With careful planning and practice, presentations can be effective in reaching out to specific audiences. Plan your presentations so that you present key messages in a concise, engaging manner, and consider the following:

- Know your audience. Why is this relevant to them?
- Plan, prepare, and practice your presentation.
- Capture your audience's attention right from the start.
- Briefly tell your audience what you plan to present.
- Ensure your audience that you will not waste their time.
- Engage your audience. Pose a question or ask for some kind of response.
- Speak clearly, and use emphasis and pauses.
- Check your body language. Be confident.
- Look at your audience throughout the presentation.
- Use humour and enthusiasm.
- Tell short stories or provide examples to illustrate key points.
- Use visual aids, such as props, overheads, slides, or PowerPoint presentations.
- Keep to your allotted time.
- Have a clear conclusion and briefly summarize your key points.
- Ask your audience if they have any questions.

Use of PowerPoint and Other Slide Presentation Formats

Effective use of slide presentations uses this medium to enhance and highlight a presentation, rather than provide the substance of the presentation. Use good quality pictures, a standard

The author presenting a workshop on restoration. Photo: District of Saanich

design throughout, a minimum of text in abbreviated (even bulleted) form, and limit the use of tables, details, and anything with small text. Over-use of animation and different types of transition can be annoying and distracting. The focus of the presentation should be on the presenter, with PowerPoint slides serving as emphasis.

Workshops

Workshops are an effective way of engaging people in a topic. If your restoration site would benefit from good neighbours who are practicing stewardship on adjacent properties or if you need to train volunteers for a specific conservation project (such as rare species identification and protection or invasive species management), hosting a workshop might be the right approach.

Whether you host a workshop and bring in a skilled workshop facilitator/presenter or facilitate your own workshop, some general best practices apply:

- Have clear objectives
- Provide an icebreaker or an engaging welcome
- Start and end on time
- Provide a workshop agenda
- Know your audience (and start from where they are at)
- Address basic needs (comfort, washrooms, breaks/food)
- Use different types of activity types, such as small groups, brainstorming, and hands-on activities
- Provide participants with evaluation forms so they can provide feedback on the workshop

Workshop facilitators try to balance the input of participants; maintain focus; address disruptive behaviour; encourage brainstorming, questions, and discussion; and clarify workshop outcomes. Building trust and sharing enthusiasm are also important roles for facilitators.

Landowner Contact Programs

Landowner contact programs have been shown to be one of the most effective tools for encouraging land stewardship (Archibald et al. 2005). A description of best practices is provided in Section 6.4.5.

Case Study 3. Habitat Acquisition Trust (HAT) Good Neighbours Program

Habitat Acquisition Trust, based in Victoria, B.C., has developed an award-winning landowner contact program for protection and stewardship of Garry Oak ecosystems in the Capital Regional District (CRD). Through their *Good Neighbours* program, HAT has reached out to neighbours of protected areas to increase stewardship within protected areas, increase landscape connectivity and buffers on surrounding private lands, and raise awareness and appreciation within the community. One of the Good Neighbours projects reached the neighbours of Knockan Hill Park in 2008, aiming to bolster the on-going efforts of the Friends of Knockan Hill Park Society. Working with the Society, Royal Roads University, and other conservation partners, HAT reached out to landowners through information postcards, direct contact by phone, and landowner visits. The Knockan Hill Good Neighbours project delivered information to 97 interested residents following the postcard mail-out, provided 37 private land care consultations, and eventually signed 25 land care agreements. One of the successful social marketing tools used by HAT is stewardship signs, which land care stewards placed on their properties.

In addition to the direct landowner contact, HAT engaged the community through a speaker series in the park (historical and natural history topics) and a nature photography workshop. HAT promoted their vision for whole ecosystem conservation by engaging with local Cub Scouts to paint storm drains, reminding residents of salmon downstream. The success of this Good Neighbours project was marked by the great responses, action, and increased stewardship by Knockan Hill residents. In 2009, the CRD recognized HAT's creative and effective community-based stewardship approach with the Eco-Star Award for Land Stewardship.

Saanich Parks staff member/arborist Ron Carter discusses the value of wildlife trees and tree diagnostics with local residents at Knockan Hill Park. Photo: Todd Carnahan

Volunteer Programs

One of the most important methods of increasing stewardship and support for Garry Oak ecosystem restoration projects has been the development of volunteer programs. Successful volunteer programs share certain key elements whether they are developed within a grassroots community organization or as a formal program managed by a government body or agency. Volunteer programs and related resources and tools are described in Section 6.5.

Community-based Social Marketing

Community-based social marketing is an effective approach to promoting behavioural change that is becoming increasingly recognized and adopted. The following description is based on the book *Fostering Sustainable Behaviour*:

> Community-based social marketing is an attractive alternative to information-based campaigns. Community-based social marketing is based upon research in the social sciences that demonstrates that behaviour change is most effectively achieved through initiatives delivered at the community level, which focus on removing barriers to an activity while simultaneously enhancing the activity's benefits. (McKenzie-Mohr and Smith 1999).

Community-based social marketing involves four steps:

1. identifying the barriers and benefits*
2. developing a strategy that uses tools that have been shown to be effective in changing behaviour
3. piloting the strategy
4. evaluating the strategy once it has been implemented across a community

Note: barriers and benefits refer to the barriers to a particular behaviour change and the benefits of that behaviour change.

The types of tools that can be used in a strategy include:

• commitment techniques
• prompts
• social norms
• effective messages
• incentives to act

For detailed descriptions of these techniques and how to use them, see McKenzie-Moore and Smith (1999). The book also describes techniques for removing external barriers to behavioural change, and designing and evaluating effective programs. Much of the book's content is available on-line at www.cbsm.com.

Local programs have successfully used social marketing techniques to increase stewardship of Garry Oak ecosystems.

"The Coast Salish peoples of southern Vancouver Island cleared rocks and brush from their camas (*Camassia* spp.) meadows, leaving stretches of open parkland interspersed with stately Garry Oak trees (*Quercus garryana*). This practice utilized disturbance to maintain an early successional habitat in close association with mature forest habitat. The tending of the successional habitat mosaic provided the best possible conditions, not only for camas, but also for other root vegetable species, for wild strawberries (*Fragaria* spp.) and other berries, and for deer and other game at the edges of the woodlands, thus increasing the diversity of resources available in a limited geographic space." (Turner et al. 2003)

6.3 Social and Cultural Aspects of Restoration

> ...what is being restored encompasses cultural beliefs and practices
> along with ecological processes, structures and patterns. (Higgs 2003)

6.3.1 Historical Cultural Relationships

Historically, First Nations had a relationship with the land that included stewardship of natural systems that provided them with things like food and trade items. The First Nations peoples' historic use of fire maintained important wildlife habitat, plant resources, and the open canopy and understorey structure of Garry Oak ecosystems (see Chapter 2: Distribution and Description, and Chapter 3: Natural Processes and Disturbance). In this chapter, we describe some of the cultural and social aspects of restoration as they apply to planning public outreach, public involvement in the restoration project, and efforts to restore human relationships with the land.

It is important to include historical cultural practices in restoration projects. This photo shows prescribed burning at Playfair Park in Saanich. Photo: Carolyn MacDonald

MAKING CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

The following are some ways restoration projects can make and enhance cultural connections with the site, with Garry Oak ecosystems, and with historical relationships and practices:

- restoration planning
- traditional cultural practices at the site
- education and interpretation
- volunteer programs
- printed outreach materials
- site signage
- special events, celebrations
- website

Gordon deFrane of the Chemainus/Penelakut First Nations wrote the following description and introduction for *Garry Oak Ecosystems of British Columbia: An Educator's Guide* (MacDonald and Staniforth 2005):

O SI'EM NA SI'AYA

The first inhabitants of what is now called Victoria referred to themselves as the people of the windy place, the Lekwungen. Their ancestors today are more frequently thought of as the Songhees. The Songhees are one of four social, linguistic and culturally distinct and unique indigenous nations that have continuously inhabited Vancouver Island since long before Vancouver, Cook or Juan de Fuca ever explored the waters off the coast of British Columbia.

In the southern region of the island, the Straits Salish nation called Victoria, the Saanich Peninsula and the San Juan Islands home. From the north side of the Malahat to near Cape Mudge Island, the Coast Salish family of nations have lived and existed since the first humans fell from the skies long ago. From Cape Mudge to the north end of the Island is home to the kwakwak'awakw family of nations. The Nuu-chah-nulth family of nations calls the west coast of the island home.

Each nation, clan or tribal group derived their livelihoods from the forests, rivers, oceans, mountains, marshes, lakes and...Garry Oak ecosystems. The Garry Oak ecosystems are ancient landscapes bounded up in the lives, lore and legends of the First Peoples of the Island. Healthy Garry Oak ecosystems meant healthy communities. Therefore, it is important to recall and to remember the ancestors of the First Peoples of Vancouver Island; each footstep stirs the dust of the ancestors that have gone before, which leaves a memory of the ancestors to follow. (Gordon deFrane)

Case Study 4. Field Trip with Cowichan Tribes

In May 2009, GOERT and several conservation partners in the Cowichan Valley provided students with a day-long tour of two Garry Oak ecosystem restoration sites. Thirty middle school students and about sixty youth and adult students from Cowichan Tribes schools attended. The day began at the Cowichan Garry Oak Preserve. Along with Nature Conservancy of Canada staff members who manage the site, facilitators included three Cowichan Tribes leaders and a rare plant specialist. The participants toured a Garry Oak meadow in bloom and a native plant nursery where rare plants are being grown, and ate their lunch while sitting under the largest Garry Oak tree in Canada. Students learned about uses of native plants, traditional camas digging practices, and words for some plants in the Hul'qumi'num language. The day wrapped up at nearby Somenos Garry Oak Protected Area with a walk around the site and a discussion of native plants and invasive species. For more, see www.goert.ca/news/2009/08/cowichan-tribes.

Cowichan Tribes leader Ken Elliott speaks to students about native plants in the nursery at Cowichan Garry Oak Preserve. Photo: Carolyn Masson

Cowichan Tribes leader Doug August greeted students at the big oak. Photo: Carolyn Masson

Cultural practices such as stewardship of meadows, use of fire, and harvesting of bulbs led to values that sustained ecosystems and spiritual connections with the land. It is recognized that "intensive cultural activity has shaped this ecosystem for millennia and appears necessary to maintain it into the future" (MacDougall et al. 2004). Restoring culturally sustained Garry Oak ecosystems that are currently threatened due to contemporary values and practices requires restoration of the relationships between people and the ecosystems.

> The cultural landscapes of southern Vancouver Island have changed dramatically in the last 160 years. Environmental change was not only influenced by shifting climatic and ecological processes, but by the behavior, practices, and economic choices of humans who dwelled within the environment. (Beckwith 2004)

Brown and Mitchell (2000) described the "...growing understanding of the link between nature and culture: that healthy landscapes are shaped by human culture as well as the forces of nature, that rich biological diversity often coincides with cultural diversity, and that conservation cannot be undertaken without the involvement of those people closest to the resources."

In terms of historical cultural aspects of restoration planning and outreach, it is important to include First Nations and historical cultural practices in planning and implementing Garry Oak ecosystem restoration projects. Any opportunity to engage First Nations should be taken to encourage the mutual sharing of information and to include First Nations as partners or key stakeholders in restoration planning. Engaging and educating youth are likewise important, especially for hands-on learning and cultural education with First Nations partners.

6.3.2 Social Implications of Restoration

> ...restoration must be conceived in a way that makes the connections between culture and ecology, people and place, prominent. (Higgs 2003)

Although some restoration sites may seem to exist in relatively isolated places, any restoration site has a community context that needs to be acknowledged. Historical First Nations practices on the site or practices used only since European settlement may be known. Recent historical use is also important in terms of the social implications of conducting restoration. For example, the site may have been used by the community as a place for local children to play, a favourite dog walking spot, a privacy barrier (e.g., a shrub hedge) from a road, a site for annual Easter egg hunts, a picnic destination, or a place where neighbours dumped yard waste. Both the historical (see Chapter 3: Natural Processes and Disturbance) and contemporary uses of the site need to be considered within restoration planning as well as outreach and public involvement.

Chapter 8: Restoration Strategies describes historical and cultural practices in relation to restoration strategies, and the impact of contemporary values and management of the use of the site by humans. The management of human use and impact of dogs are both big issues for restoration projects in urban areas. Restoration planning needs to address how to engage the community in the restoration project and how to design the project within the unique context of that community.

> Restoration practices that hold firm to ecological fidelity and embrace social and cultural goals are much more likely to prosper and endure (Higgs 1997).

Case Study 5. Tsawout First Nation: Restoring Land, Language, and Culture

Members of Tsawout First Nation are working to restore their ancestral lands, and at the same time, to restore their language and culture. Saanichton Bay has traditionally been a place of abundant harvest for the Tsawout Nation, but today shellfish beds are contaminated by excessive nutrients and sediments from upstream. With the help of Habitat Acquisition Trust's (HAT) TIXEN/Cordova Shore Good Neighbours Project and other partnerships, community members have been working to restore sand dunes, rare bluffs, a salt marsh, eelgrass meadows, and clam beds by repairing damage from development, excessive stream nutrients, foot traffic, vehicles, dogs at large, and invasive species. Festivals and guided activities have helped to engage the community in the project.

> "The Tsawout Lands Advisory Committee really identified with the concept that their threatened culture is an aspect of biodiversity worth protecting, that their language defines a unique world view, and that they as a People are therefore endangered. This story is one of community-based ecological restoration in the most comprehensive sense—that restoring community is just as important as restoring the land."
> –Todd Carnahan, HAT

> "The success of our common goal to conserve sensitive ecosystems really depends on the willingness of everyone to work together, and this is what we felt was so critical to the partnership with HAT, because they provided education to the public and our own members and created a better understanding of what we were trying to achieve. So I think this type of partnership is worthwhile for any community that has the goals to conserve the plants and medicines and water that we all thrive on."
> –Gwen Underwood, Tsawout Lands Advisory Committee

The project was highlighted for the conservation community when a panel from Tsawout First Nation presented at HAT's annual Conservation Connection Forum.

Photos: Todd Carnahan

PEOPLE AND ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION. WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED?

- Restoration practitioners
- Specialists (e.g., botanists)
- Neighbours
- First Nations
- Community volunteers
- Funders
- Community organizations
- Schools; children and youth
- Post-secondary students
- Local businesses

GORP volunteers touring Woodlands at Government House restoration site. Photo: Carolyn MacDonald

Engaging the community in a restoration project may impact land management practices surrounding the site and within the community. The public, especially project volunteers and participants of landowner contact programs, may be engaged enough to change practices and increase stewardship surrounding the restoration project such as in private backyards, school grounds, church properties, and on municipal lands. There are excellent resources and programs available to support less formal efforts to conserve native species and habitats, especially on private lands, including the Naturescape BC program and GOERT's *Garry Oak Gardener's Handbook* (GOERT 2009). Landowner contact programs (see Section 6.4.5) can be a very successful way to engage and connect with the community.

6.3.3 Bringing People Back into the Ecosystem

> Restoration is a social and cultural act, an interaction between humans and nature (Edgar 2007).

There are both positive and negative implications of bringing people back into the ecosystem. On the positive side, the people involved will develop greater awareness and appreciation of Garry Oak ecosystems and will increase their understanding and knowledge of the ecosystems over time, which ideally will lead to increasingly positive actions in protecting and restoring Garry Oak ecosystems.

As we seek to bring people back into the ecosystem and develop healthier relationships between humans and the land, we face of the challenge of trying to balance the impacts of increased human traffic and use with environmental preservation. Conserving culturally modified ecosystems infers that people should be part of the system. However, determining what the appropriate human-nature relationship should now be can be challenging.

Lindon Carter with a Garry Oak Restoration Project sign in Playfair Park, Saanich. Photo: Ron Carter

> No matter how straightforward it appears to be, a restoration project is constructed by social norms. Sense of place, land tenure, sources of livelihood and traditions of community organizing all mediate the relationship between people and place (Edgar 2007).

The Society for Ecological Restoration's *Guidelines for Developing and Managing Ecological Restoration Projects* (Clewell et al. 2005) state that restoration planning should include cultural objectives that "pertain to the realization of cultural project goals. These objectives may involve publicity campaigns, public celebrations of restoration in progress, participation of stakeholders and school children in restoration implementation and monitoring, and other actions that ensure cultural intimacy with ecosystem recovery."

Restoration has a greater chance of success when a project is designed within a community context and in partnership with stakeholders, when it works to build stewardship of the site and within the community, when it seeks to rebuild cultural connections and practices, and when it takes on the delicate balance between maintaining ecological integrity and bringing people back into the ecosystem.

6.4 Stewardship

> The real substance of conservation lies not in the physical projects of government, but in the mental processes of its citizens. (Aldo Leopold)

There is a lack of consensus regarding definitions of environmental/ecological stewardship (Worrell and Appleby 2000; Fuchs 2004). Many definitions include elements of careful or responsible management, consideration of future generations, caring for natural systems, or consideration of cultural values and ethics. Stewardship is described as both an action and an ethic or value. Stewardship should be defined within restoration project planning so that its meaning and related objectives are clear. Establishing stewardship as an ethic within our society and local communities is an important overall goal in successfully protecting and restoring Garry Oak ecosystems.

Case Study 6. Mt. Tzuhalem Volunteer Stewardship

Syd Watts first visited the Mount Tzuhalem Garry Oak area as a Scout in 1938, at age 11. As a teen in the 1940s, Syd spent many happy hours exploring on the slopes of Mount Tzuhalem. It is not surprising that the area was made an ecological reserve in 1984 after Syd spent years leading tours and talking to people about the unique site. By that time, he had also spent five years with his wife and naturalist friends (many from the Cowichan Valley Naturalists' Society) clearing broom from the flower meadows he loved. Syd became the first (and so far only) warden for the ecological reserve. His work to spearhead broom removal since the late 1970s was taken over in 2003 by crews funded through the Habitat Stewardship Program. The beautiful flower meadows of Mount Tzuhalem Ecological Reserve are a testament to the dedication of Syd Watts and his willing crew of stewards.

Since the 1970s, Syd Watts and the Cowichan Valley Naturalists' Society have preserved this meadow, with its large population of Endangered Deltoid Balsamroot (*Balsamorhiza deltoidea*), from the ravages of Scotch Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) invasion.

Deltoid Balsamroot
(*Balsamorhiza deltoidea*).
Photos: Dave Polster

The following are definitions of interest regarding stewardship:

> In its broadest sense, stewardship is the recognition of our collective responsibility to retain the quality and abundance of our land, air, water and biodiversity, and to manage this natural capital in a way that conserves all of its values, be they environmental, economic, social or cultural. (The Land Stewardship Centre of Canada, www. landstewardship.org)

> Efforts to creature, nurture, and enable responsibility in landowners and resource users to manage and protect land and its natural and cultural heritage. (Brown and Mitchell 2000)

A few of the challenges in defining stewardship include the tendency for the term to imply dominion over the natural world, that actions regarded as stewardship are essentially good (when this may be open to interpretation) and may imply delivery of some type of public benefit (Worrell and Appleby 2000). These issues reinforce the need to define stewardship in relation to the specific goals and objectives of a restoration project and in relation to the goals and objectives of the Garry Oak and associated ecosystems Recovery Strategy (GOERT 2001).

6.4.1 Building a Stewardship Ethic

The Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team was formed to coordinate efforts to protect and restore endangered Garry Oak and associated ecosystems and the species at risk that inhabit them. Stewardship is an important element of successfully protecting and restoring Garry Oak ecosystems. In this context, stewardship would describe the human care, management, and value of Garry Oak ecosystems. Because these ecosystems are at risk primarily due to human activities, the mitigation of risk and the protection and restoration of these ecosystems will depend on the activities and values of people and society.

> We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect. (Leopold 1949)

The Cowichan Community Land Trust Society has worked to build stewardship ethics in the community, in part by connecting with people on the land. A report (Archibald et al 2005) of their landowner contact programs showed this direct contact with landowners changed land ethics significantly. Surveys of participants in landowner contact programs reported most significantly changes in attitudes about land stewardship, increased knowledge and understanding of land stewardship issues, and changes in environmental management practices (especially relating to wildlife habitat). Landowners were also more likely to join environmental and conservation organizations and contribute towards land acquisition campaigns (Archibald et al. 2005). See more on landowner contact programs in section 6.4.5.

A Few Strategies to Build Stewardship

with inspiration from Oregon State Parks, Centennial Horizon Principle 4 (2008)

- *Inspire* people to make connections with Garry Oak ecosystems by involving them in restoration projects or inviting them to explore the beauty of your restoration site with you.

- *Embrace* new ways to reach out to people, exchange ideas, and engage them in stewardship.

- *Listen* to people and what they are interested in; hear their stories.

- *Offer* interpretive programs and make the Garry Oak restoration site come alive.

- *Promote* regional and community approaches to stewardship, fostering a sense of place.

- *Encourage* teachers and post-secondary students (and professors) to use the restoration site as a laboratory, and contribute to site monitoring and research (see Section 6.4.4).

- *Develop* good volunteer programs that provide long-term stewardship and training opportunities (see Section 6.5).

- *Reach out* to neighbours through Landowner Contact Programs (see Section 6.4.5).

- *Create* partnerships for the restoration site to build community.

6.4.2 Stewardship Challenges

Many Garry Oak restoration projects have been initiated and their on-going success is due to the invaluable contributions of volunteers. "Volunteer stewardship programmes…have a critical role, not merely for the important habitats that are restored and monitored, but also for their influence in building a potentially powerful constituency of knowledgeable advocates for the environment" (Langenfeld 2009). Successful restoration projects aim to achieve a proper balance between stewardship and science.

In her paper, *Does Stewardship Work? Lessons from the Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team*, Fuchs (2004) identified concerns and limitations about the reliance on volunteer stewardship for Garry Oak ecosystem recovery and restoration efforts. While Fuchs acknowledged that volunteer stewardship is vital to Garry Oak ecosystem recovery, she cited a "lack of clarity about the relative importance of social vs. ecological goals and objectives". Challenges occur when restoration projects rely primarily on non-expert volunteers for site assessment, identification of rare species, development of scientifically-based management strategies, long-term commitment, and "scientifically meaningful monitoring." Fuchs advocates for identifying appropriate roles in recovery efforts and finding methods and tools to "bridge the gap between science and stewardship".

Fuchs (2004) described two-thirds or more species at risk in Garry Oak ecosystems as being "cryptic and/or extremely difficult to identify in the field", and requiring identification by taxonomic experts. Because many of these species are extremely rare, the "consequences of inappropriate actions are potentially extremely serious". Fuchs advocates for the use of "experts to conduct inventories, design site and species specific management strategies", and she stresses that "research and rigorous monitoring are key components of the recovery program."

> Science should inform stewardship practice by helping define ecological goals and objectives, and by helping identify appropriate and effective actions to meet those goals (Fuchs 2004).

Fuchs (2004) identified concerns about public involvement in Garry Oak ecosystem restoration: volunteer participation "[drops] off after the large exotic shrubs have been removed", and there is a lack of interest in cryptic, non-showy species, a reluctance to undertake key elements of restoration planning, and a lack of "resources, expertise, or interest to institute scientifically meaningful monitoring programs."

Case Study 7. City of Victoria: Volunteer Groups Banding Together

In the City of Victoria, eleven community volunteer groups have taken an interest in their local parks and green spaces. Some of the key parks include the Garry Oak ecosystem sites of Beacon Hill and Summit Park. Others, such as the Ryan Greenway, may provide important stepping stones between the larger remnant sites. The City does not have a formal volunteer program as there is no agreement with the union for this, so City support is generally limited to an advisory role, supply of materials including soil and mulch, and removal of debris. These eleven groups are invited to meet monthly at the City's training room to share experiences and for training. The meeting is facilitated by the City of Victoria and training is provided by request. These groups have now formed a loose, larger organization called the Native Ecosystems in Victoria Public Areas Network (www.nevpan.org). Working together, their intention is to create a more cohesive voice in addressing city council and staff over parks and natural areas issues. They are exploring the possibility of becoming a non-profit society with the intention of applying for environmental grants that are open to such groups.

Volunteers at Beacon Hill Park.
Photo: City of Victoria

In her Master's thesis *The Value of Ecological Restoration Volunteer Programs: a Case Study in Western Washington State*, Langenfeld (2009) found limitations in the use of volunteers in restoration programs. In her case study of Garry Oak prairie restoration in Washington State, she found that the rate of volunteer "turnover and burnout" and conflicts between volunteers and managers regarding "visions of restoration goals" had negative effects on restoration programs. Langenfeld (2009) stated that these limitations can be addressed through proactive volunteer management and specific methods, and that investing in highly effective volunteer programs was essential to accomplishing restoration goals.

Ryan et al. (2001) showed that an important element in building a strong program that involves volunteers was to retain long-term volunteers by responding to their motivations as volunteers. One of their key findings was that volunteer involvement resulted in "transform[ing] the way that people view the natural environment and environmental issues" (Ryan et al 2001), which illustrates the importance of volunteer programs to stewardship and environmental education goals.

Langenfeld (2009) found that the longer volunteers are involved in a program, the more specialized their roles become and the more vital they are to the success of the restoration program. Volunteers with the South Sound Prairie Restoration Group moved from initial roles in invasive plant removal, seed collection, native planting, placement of habitat structures, and educational outreach to leadership roles and roles requiring ecological knowledge and specialized training, including mechanical and chemical alien invasive plant control, propagation of native plants, and ecological monitoring. Langenfeld states that maintaining staff and expert roles, as described by Fuchs (2004), is essential to consistently "bridge the gap between science and stewardship", but that volunteers provide invaluable contributions to the *science* of this restoration program.

> These individuals [volunteers] hold an invaluable amount of localized knowledge sometimes not held by anyone else. Skillful contributions…are by far some of the greatest advantages to long-term investment in volunteers. (Langenfeld 2009).

Woodlands at Government House volunteer leader Patricia Boyle giving a tour for GORP volunteers. Photo: Carolyn MacDonald

6.4.3 Community-based Restoration

Many restoration projects begin with or depend on grassroots community efforts. Stewardship as a community effort can be very powerful and effective. It is doubtful that Garry Oak ecosystems will recover without community-based efforts and initiatives. Fortunately, many of the challenges associated with this approach can be overcome with the support, resources, and tools now available to community-led projects. The following is a summary of some of the unique initiatives and tools available for community stewardship and restoration projects.

Tips for Starting a Project

The following is adapted in part from the *Citizen's Handbook* (www.vcn.bc.ca/citizens-handbook) and *Community Stewardship: a Guide to Establishing Your Own Group* (Fraser Basin Management Board 1996). The Community Stewardship guide and many other excellent resources for community-based projects are available through the Stewardship Centre of BC (www.stewardshipcentre.bc.ca).

Before starting a project, consider the following:

- Research your proposed site and project before jumping in.
- Is there an existing project or organization to address this?
- Is there community support for this project?
- Who can help?

When starting a community-based project, ask yourself the following questions:

- What are we trying to do?
- What are your goal(s) and objectives? (Strategize)
- Who is able to provide support?
- Are there groups to partner with?
- What skills/people do we need?

During restoration project planning, consider the following:

- Be clear regarding land ownership and establish official permission for the project.
- If the site is a park, work with land managers throughout the project stages.
- A good site assessment is an important place to start.
- If species at risk occur on the site, engage experts and GOERT in the project.
- Create an adaptive restoration plan with help from this publication.
- Strategize how to build support and resources for this long-term endeavour.
- Engage the community and celebrate!

Community-based Projects

There are many great tools available to support community-based restoration projects. The following are a few examples. Successful projects can take advantage of these existing tools and programs to reach their goals.

Case Study 8. Strawberry Vale Elementary: Engaging Elementary Students in Restoration and Stewardship

Strawberry Vale Elementary School in Victoria has a strong history of environmental stewardship thanks to dedicated teachers. The school community has engaged in a few restoration-type projects including stewardship of a heavily invaded Garry Oak ecosystem remnant on municipal land next to the school. In 2003-2004, students in grades 6 and 7 not only led a school-wide effort to remove English Ivy (*Hedera helix*) from this Garry Oak area, but also designed a costumed skit they performed for each class in the school. The skit was an engaging way to introduce Garry Oaks, the concept of an invasive species, and conservation messages. Strawberry Vale leaders went beyond student involvement, reaching out to families, the community, and partners in order to achieve their goals. With assistance from the District of Saanich, the Habitat Acquisition Trust (HAT), and others, the school undertook this restoration project not only for the restoration value, but also for the educational and stewardship values for the whole community.

Strawberry Vale students with the sign for their restoration project, which began as a legacy project for students in grades 6 and 7. The older students provided leadership and gave presentations to the younger students, including skits. Photo: Ron Carter

Case Study 9. Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary: Engaging Secondary School Students

Nature sanctuary staff designed a project that would be interesting and manageable to engage local Reynolds Secondary students. A program was designed to teach the students about the role of fire in Garry Oak ecosystems, to introduce them to plot monitoring, and to engage them in active participation. In return, the nature sanctuary received valuable monitoring information about a burn site on Christmas Hill. The initial participants from Reynolds school were six grade 10 students, expanding to on-going plot monitoring for future students. The program teaches the students about mapping, using binoculars, taking samples, and learning to identify invasive and native plants. It was made to be highly engaging and fun. The wrap-up for a field session is usually wild tea made on the spot with natural ingredients like licorice root and arbutus bark.

Community Mapping has been a very successful endeavour for empowering community groups in British Columbia. Identifying unique features of the community and building a sense of place can be a powerful way of building awareness and beginning community dialogues. See Section 6.8 (Additional Resources) for *Giving the Land a Voice: Mapping Our Home Places* (Abbedey et al. 1995).

Conservation Networks can provide vital support for individual organizations or projects. For example, in the Capital Regional District (CRD), Habitat Acquisition Trust maintains a web-based network (www.conservationconnection.bc.ca), holds an annual Conservation Connection event (see their website at www.hat.bc.ca), and oversees a conservation listserv. There is also an ecoregional group, the Cascadia Prairie-Oak Partnership, which hosts a listserv focused on exchange of information related to conservation of prairie-oak ecosystems throughout their range west of the Cascade Mountains. The listserv is used to exchange technical information and to announce events related to prairies and oak woodlands in Cascadia. To subscribe, send a request to info@goert.ca.

Networks can be a great way to find partner organizations, avoid project overlaps, build support and constituency for your project, communicate your needs and events, learn from others and, well ... network!

For more information and resources, see the following websites:

- Stewardship Centre of BC (www.stewardshipcentre.bc.ca)
- Citizen Handbook (www.vcn.bc.ca/citizens-handbook)
- Community-based ecosystem monitoring (www.forrex.org/publications/forrex%20series/fs13.pdf)

6.4.4 Youth and Stewardship

Restoring Garry Oak ecosystems creates a legacy in both the physical and cultural landscape. Therefore, it makes sense to involve youth in restoration as much possible. Restoration projects provide unique opportunities for connecting youth with stewardship of Garry Oak ecosystems, thereby providing them with hands-on experiences, ecological literary, stewardship ethics, and skills training for future careers.

- The Salt Spring Island (SSI) Conservancy has a school program called *Stewards in Training* for students in Grades 1 to 8. The *Garry Oak Ecosystem Stewardship* sessions take place at the Andreas Vogt Nature Reserve and at Channel Ridge. These are hands-on environmental education programs with an action component that contributes to ecological restoration activities at the site.
- The *SSI Conservancy Stewards in Training Program Manual* describes the benefits of the program for the student participants. It also provides a fitting summary of the overall benefits of involving children and youth in stewardship and restoration. For example, students develop:

  -a connection to the natural world

  -an ecological understanding

  -a set of environmental ethics

Case Study 10. Girl Guides of Canada: Uplands Park Stewardship Project

Since 1993, the Oak Bay Girl Guide groups have been stewards of Uplands Park, along with other partners including Scouts, other Girl Guides and school groups. The Girl Guides and their partners have targeted their contribution towards the restoration of Uplands Park on long-term removal of Scotch Broom (*Cystisis scoparius*). They not only have been successful in removing massive amounts of Scotch Broom in this time, but also have created a great deal of attention for the site through involving the media with the draw of what the young people are accomplishing. Leaders report the project has had a great impact on the children and youth involved, including building a connection with Garry Oak ecosystems and giving them a sense of empowerment. After 17 years of leading the Oak Bay Girl Guides as Uplands Park stewards, Margaret Lidkea has begun working with the local Glenlyon-Norfolk Middle School removing English Ivy (*Hedera helix*) and Spurge-laurel (*Daphne laureola*), tying stewardship action projects in with the B.C. curriculum. The Guides and other young people have much to gain from active participation in this project. Aside from becoming stewards of Garry Oak ecosystems, they are participating in healthy activity, gaining confidence, increasing social skills, and developing their sense of place.

Girl Guides of Canada have removed massive amounts of Scotch Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) from Uplands Park since 1993. Photos: Margaret Lidkea

Case Study 11. University Undergraduate Involvement in Restoration: Trinity Western University Crow's Nest Ecological Research Area

by David R. Clements

Every spring, several students are hired by Trinity Western University to serve as restoration practitioners and researchers on Trinity Western University Crow's Nest Ecological Research Area (CNERA) on Salt Spring Island. Projects range from inventory and monitoring, to invasive species control, to involvement in Trinity Western faculty research projects. Many students end up completing an undergraduate thesis project related to Garry Oak ecosystem restoration. Recent research areas have included evaluating growth rings on Douglas-fir (*Psuedotsuga menziesii*) and Garry Oak (*Quercus garryana*) trees, biology of the Propertius Duskywing (*Erynnis propertius*) butterfly, lichens as indicators of Garry Oak ecosystem health, impacts of Scotch Broom, impacts of herbivory, impact of herbivores on Garry Oak tree growth, spatial studies of Garry Oak meadow boundaries, and the chemical ecology of invasive Sweet Vernalgrass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*). The students also do work on nearby sites on Salt Spring Island.

The camp at CNERA has three cabins to house students and researchers, as well as a cook shelter, a composting toilet, and a storage shed. Every other year, Trinity Western University faculty also lead a set of travel study courses in plant ecology and marine biology on Salt Spring Island. The plant ecology course makes extensive use of CNERA, and students learn restoration techniques in the process, including practical experience in invasive species removal. Students working at CNERA also work with other groups involved in Garry Oak restoration such as the Salt Spring Island Conservancy. The exposure students get to Garry Oak restoration through these experiences is valuable for developing their awareness of the many restoration ecology issues surrounding Garry Oak ecosystems, which they can go on to apply either within this system or other ecosystems. One alumnus of the plant ecology and marine biology courses has arranged field trips to the site with his elementary school class, thus passing on his experiences to the next generation. For more information on CNERA, see the website: www.twu.ca/sites/crowsnest.

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Trinity Western University students hard at work removing invasive plants. Photos: Trinity Western University

-a sense of place

-a set of hands-on and observational skills

-an understanding of stewardship of the natural world

-a sense of self

(Bateman and McEwan 2009)

- Environmental education goals are summarized well in *Leap into Action* (Staniforth 2004):

    Environmental education includes three critical components: developing
    awareness of, and appreciation for, the environment; developing knowledge
    and understanding of environmental, social, and economic systems; and
    creating potential and capacity for appropriate actions.

- *Garry Oak Ecosystems of British Columbia: An Educator's Guide.* In 2005, a team of Garry
    Oak ecosystem conservation partners completed a manual to support formal and non-formal
    educators in connecting youth with Garry Oak ecosystems (MacDonald and Staniforth
    2005). The manual used B.C.'s curriculum guidelines in order to be a recommended resource
    for teachers. It provides background information on Garry Oak ecosystems and includes
    environmental education activities around Garry Oak ecosystems and supporting appendices.
    The manual and hands-on workshops are available through Wild BC (www.wildbc.org) of the
    Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation.

Youth Programs: Schools

Many schools and teachers have been interested in Garry
Oak ecosystem restoration and stewardship on their school
grounds. Projects have included invasive species management,
planting of native plants, mulching over non-native grasses, and
educational signage. Some schools have used the *Educator's
Guide* (above) to continue connecting students with their school
ground stewardship area while achieving curriculum learning
outcomes.

One of the challenges of school ground restoration projects is
long-term sustainability. Teachers may be too busy or schools
may be challenged to keep the project going from year to year.
There are organizations, such as Habitat Acquisition Trust in
Victoria (www.hat.bc.ca) and Evergreen (www.evergreen.ca),
that provide support and help schools keep projects moving
forward.

While some ambitious schools and teachers have taken on
restoration projects on their own properties (or adjacent ones),
others have joined in as partners on a nearby restoration site. Participating in existing projects
can be an excellent way for students to participate in restoration, learn valuable skills, and become
stewards of a project that may be led by local experts and agencies or conservation groups.
Many teachers have also used specialized educational opportunities within restoration sites to
contribute to curriculum outcomes.
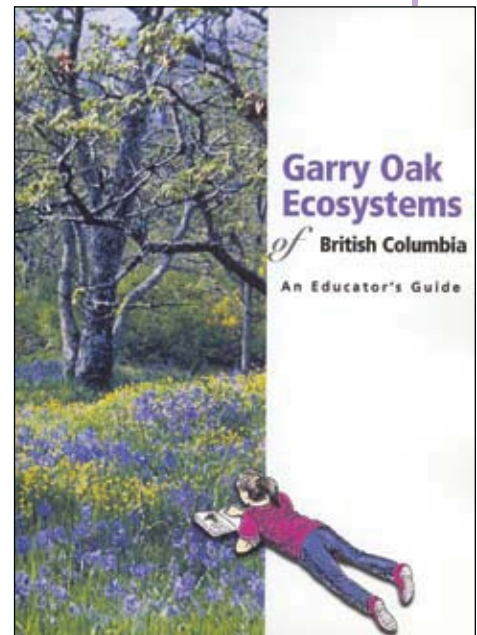
Restoration projects that provide programs for schools may want to consider using the following elements to engage this specialized audience:

- pre-trip information and warm up activities
- classroom visits* before the field component is undertaken
- specialized curriculum for specific grades
- age-appropriate approaches
- interactive, hands-on involvement as much as possible
- post-trip follow-up
- information to pass on to families through the students

Note: classroom visits prior to the field component can be valuable to prepare students with some basic awareness and knowledge, expectations for the field session, and build enthusiasm for their participation in the project.

Youth Programs: Community Groups

Many restoration projects have benefitted from volunteer efforts and stewardship activities of community youth organizations, such as Scouts, Guides, church youth groups, and young naturalist clubs. Some groups have environmental stewardship in their mandate, many can provide on-going stewardship and participation from year to year, and some may even be able to contribute other resources. Some of the considerations described above for working with school groups will also apply to youth community groups. Leaders of youth groups may even have the skills and willingness to take on a specific on-going role in the restoration project.

Youth Programs: Families

Involving families, especially neighbours of the site, can provide a wonderful stewardship opportunity. If a restoration project is going to include volunteers of different ages, some thought must be given to the types of safety issues, supervision, and activities that are appropriate for engagement. For more information on some of these volunteer considerations, see Section 6.5.

Beyond Youth: Post-Secondary Programs

Garry Oak restoration projects often benefit from the involvement of post-secondary students (of all ages) who may have special skills to contribute, are looking for training and experience in their chosen field, and enjoy the networking and social aspects of volunteering. These volunteers are potential future leaders in the field of ecological restoration (or related fields). Engaging post-secondary volunteers can also help train potential future staff for the project.

6.4.5 Landowner Contact Programs

Landholder contact (LHC) has become a popular environmental tool in British Columbia and elsewhere. In LHC programs, representatives of an environmental organization or agency visit... landholders for the purpose of encouraging improved land stewardship. This may take the form of environmental education, assistance with restoration, facilitation of contact with stewardship resources, non-binding stewardship pledges, voluntary land management plans, legally binding management agreements, or conservation covenants (easements) (Lawrance et al. 2000).

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF LANDOWNER CONTACT

- Planning
- Program coordination to reduce multiple contacts by other organizations
- Professional, knowledgeable staff or volunteers
- Outreach products
- Promotion
- Public involvement/community support
- Tracking of landowner contact data, site information
- Information/data sharing (if landholders permit)
- Follow up
- Thanks and recognition
- Evaluation

Landowner contact (LOC) or landholder contact programs involve direct communication with property owners or managers by representatives of conservation organizations, recovery teams, or government agencies for the purpose of increased wildlife and habitat protection. This may be achieved through land stewardship, informal land management plans and stewardship pledges, legally binding management agreements, conservation covenants (easements), tax incentives, the federal Ecological Gifts program, or similar means. Comprehensive LOC/LHC programs may include letters, phone calls, leaflet drops, public presentations or workshops, and/or door knocking campaigns to initiate contacts; distribution of written materials, environmental education, and facilitation of stewardship funding and other resources; property visits, biological inventories; assistance with stewardship or restoration plans and activities; follow-up monitoring; and further assistance as required.

Good landowner contact programs produce some or all of the following benefits:

- greater understanding and appreciation by landholders of the significance of habitat and species on their property
- improved cooperation among landholders, recovery teams, non-government organizations, and government agencies, and increased participation of stakeholders in the recovery planning process
- better land use decisions and improved land stewardship/restoration practices
- reduced harm, more protection, and recovery of endangered species and ecosystems

Case Study 12. Sharp-tailed Snake Recovery Project: Pender Island's Local Champion

The Sharp-tailed Snake (*Contia tenuis*) is a small, Endangered, Red-listed, elusive snake that occurs in Garry Oak and associated ecosystems and has been the target of outreach efforts throughout the CRD. On Pender Islands, Habitat Acquisition Trust (based on Vancouver Island) and the Pender Islands Conservation Association (PICA) collaborated on this outreach program.

In the spring of 2005, biologist Christian Engelstoft gave a public talk on Pender Island about the Sharp-tailed Snake's biology and identification. After his presentation he was approached by local naturalist David Manning, who handed him a bag with a dead snake he had found that week. He thought that it might be a Sharp-tailed Snake but wanted it confirmed. To Christian's surprise, it was the elusive Sharp-tailed Snake. Together, they visited the site where he had found the snake and it became clear that David would be a good person to involve in the Pender Island outreach program. From years of hiking the islands, and his involvement with eagle nest monitoring, David knew the landscape, and he was well-known and well-thought-of in the community. Thanks to his gentle and immediately likeable personality, he opened many doors in the community and the outreach program took off.

One of the outreach goals of this project was to encourage landowners to sign a land-care agreement. In other areas in the CRD, the Sharp-tailed Snake outreach project was successful in signing agreements with about 50% of visited landowners. On Pender Island, with this local champion, David bumped it to 99%. This is a great example of the benefits of engaging well-connected local stewards.

Sharp-tailed Snake (*Contia tenuis*). Photo: Christian Engelstoft

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LANDOWNER CONTACT CONSIDERATIONS

- Have landowners previously received land care information?
- Are they interested in the topic?
- What is their level of education and/or experience?
- Are they physically and financially able to do stewardship? Do they need assistance?
- How long have they owned their land?
- Evaluation

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Best Practices for Landowner Contact Programs

Based on Habitat Stewardship Program (HSP) Landowner Contact evaluation report (Kilburn & Passmore 2009)

WHO SHOULD YOU CONTACT?

With the vast array of communications tools available it is possible to reach all landowners within a designated area, but time and resource restrictions usually limit the number of landowners that an organization can *effectively* engage. It is usually best to focus on a subset of landowners.

What is the best way to select contact groups? Some organizations use a geographic or bio-centric approach. Their programs concentrate on property owners adjacent to parks or other important habitat areas. GOERT's program focuses mainly on landholders of properties that have or are likely to have species at risk occurrences, and/or other prominent ecological values.

Another approach that has proven to be highly successful is to identify local champions to promote your program—the "early adopters" and highly motivated individuals in a community. These leaders are often willing to take independent action after initial guidance and then promote their stewardship initiatives to friends and neighbours. They are often able to use their reputation and networking skills to achieve greater rates of landowner engagement. However, research also shows the merit of investing time and resources in developing high-quality workshops and other programs for the remaining landowners.

EFFECTIVE METHODS FOR CONTACTING AND ENGAGING LANDOWNERS

The most successful landholder contact programs employ a combination of communication and engagement methods in a multi-step process. Wide-reaching communication tools, such as media campaigns, posters, pamphlets, and letters can introduce a contact program and raise awareness. Workshops and community events provide opportunities for small groups of property owners and their neighbours to receive in-depth information about habitat stewardship best practices. These approaches can lead to personal, direct contact with landowners at a later date.

One of the most important aspects of landholder contact work is developing and maintaining strong interpersonal relationships with landowners. It is critical to employ contact personnel who have exceptional interpersonal skills as well as biological knowledge. To maintain landowner

contact consistency, it is ideal to retain one core staff person who will work with landowners over multiple years.

Successful landowner contact programs provide regular, consistent contact that is tailored to individual needs and communication preferences. Even a six-month break in contact can be enough for landowners to lose interest. If regular, direct contact cannot be achieved, you can try to maintain contact by inviting landowners to events or send them educational materials and newsletters. Repeated contact promotes strong interpersonal relationships—which is the key to securing landowner participation in habitat stewardship initiatives. See HAT's Good Neighbours Program (Case Study 3).

BEST PRACTICES FOR BUILDING STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH LANDOWNERS

- Let the landowner take the lead
- Work on their time frame
- Start small and build gradually
- Respect confidentiality and privacy
- Be warm, friendly, sincere, professional, and respectful
- Use tact, diplomacy, sensitivity, and patience
- Find shared interests to build rapport
- Be an active listener
- Address questions and concerns promptly
- Be knowledgeable
- Present information in a non-judgmental way
- Use appropriate humour
- Quickly follow up contact with promised support

MOTIVATING LANDOWNERS TO PRACTICE STEWARDSHIP

The most effective way to motivate landowners to practice land stewardship is to visit them on their property and point out the significant natural features on their land. This is especially true if the site visits are conducted by species at risk experts and knowledgeable staff or volunteers who can address the landowners' questions and concerns, identify species, point out threats, and discuss mitigation or restoration strategies.

The best way to engage landowners is to talk about their interests, then promote habitat enhancement work that ties in with their interests. For example, many people are avid gardeners or enjoy watching birds and butterflies, so promoting Naturescaping with native plants can be a good first step towards land stewardship. Encouraging landowners to help professional biologists survey and monitor species at risk populations is another effective engagement tool.

The federal Habitat Stewardship Program (HSP) *Landowner Contact Evaluation Report* (2009) identifies other motivators for landowners:

> Some landowners are motivated by their belief in the intrinsic value of conserving biodiversity. Other landowners are more motivated to conserve certain habitats and species, usually with a focus on high profile "charismatic mega-fauna". LOC programs that highlight

Case Study 13. Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team (GOERT): Working With Landholders to Protect Species at Risk

by Chris Junck

The Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team's outreach program is guided by a comprehensive recovery strategy that aims to protect and restore Garry Oak ecosystems and their associated species at risk (SAR). The landholder contact program component is directed towards a diverse range of target audiences, some of which are often overlooked in other landowner contact programs. A variety of outreach approaches is used for three main audience groups:

First Nations and Local Government Land Managers and Planners

- meetings, seminars, and field workshops
- distribution of species at risk (SAR) occurrence data and maps, reports, and other relevant outreach materials and information
- provide input into development plans, land-use bylaws, official community plans

Development Industry

- provide information about Garry Oak ecosystems and SAR
- provide information about habitat and SAR protection measures
- provide technical advice and input into development plans
- participate in the development planning process

Private, Corporate, Industrial, and Institutional Landowners and Managers; Conservation Organizations

- letters, pamphlet drops, phone calls
- site visits and SAR inventories
- follow-up consultations to provide SAR inventory reports and maps and develop restoration plans and stewardship activities
- restoration signs
- stewardship agreements
- formal protection measures

Although these outreach initiatives are generally well-received, there are often challenges that need to be addressed:

- too few SAR experts available for plant inventories, workshops, and advice
- difficulty of building trust with landholders, especially when they are concerned about the possible implications of having SAR on their property
- balancing overall program objectives with the objectives and timelines of funding agencies. For example, the Recovery Team often contacts landowners on behalf of the federal government to secure permission to access properties for SAR assessments and critical habitat delineation, or

GOERT staff Shyanne Smith and Chris Junck with landowner Rod Mitchell. Mitchell participates in restoration for species at risk on his land. Photo: GOERT

to provide assistance for the *Species At Risk Act* consultation process. This often happens with tight deadlines and there isn't always enough time to build rapport before delivering all of the required consultation messages, requesting permission for property access and data sharing.

Evaluation

GOERT uses several methods to evaluate the success of landowner contact:

- tracking all landowner contact sessions and outcomes.

- local government seminars and workshops—questionnaires, follow-up telephone interview with some of the managers approximately 6 months after the program to see how many SAR harm reduction strategies were or are planned to be implemented.

- GOERT has participated in a comprehensive evaluation of landholder contact programs conducted by Environment Canada, which included qualitative and quantitative evaluations (including a questionnaire and telephone interviews of landowners involved in contact programs), and a follow-up workshop with organizations engaged in LOC programs.

Chris Junck *is the Species at Risk Outreach Specialist with GOERT.*

the protection of at least one charismatic 'flagship' species are more likely to achieve broad public support. The Land Conservancy of B.C. works in bighorn sheep habitat, and although this species is not federally listed, it is an excellent flagship species for the program as it is a highly valued component of the ecosystem. Protecting this species in turn contributes to the protection of other SARA-listed species that occupy similar habitat. Once landowners are engaged, introducing less charismatic species to the program forefront is easier.

HSP recipients also recommended that landowners be publicly recognized and appreciated for their efforts and commitments to stewardship. Public recognition schemes where landowners are honoured for their stewardship activities are known to help build crucial community support and to maintain and build landowner motivation. Community-based social marketing advocates also note the importance of employing an appreciation and recognition scheme as a component of maintaining dedication to new behaviours and actions.

SECURING HABITAT THROUGH NON-BINDING STEWARDSHIP AGREEMENTS

Written and verbal stewardship agreements have been very effective tools for habitat protection and restoration projects. While these voluntary stewardship agreements do not guarantee permanent preservation, they are a good starting point for raising awareness and promoting sustainable land management practices. These protection measures are not legally binding, so there is no sacrifice in property value, legal fees, land survey costs, or other expenses associated with conservation covenants or other legal agreements. Landowners can focus on stewardship instead of financial trade-offs and the potential for lost market value. Legally binding habitat protection is generally easier to achieve once landowners have a greater understanding of the importance of habitat protection, and of the financial benefits associated with legally binding agreements.

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

Planning and carrying out a comprehensive landowner contact program requires a multi-year commitment of time and resources. Carefully managed landowner contact programs provide many benefits for conservation organizations and restoration programs. Building and maintaining long-term working relationships with property owners and land managers can yield better restoration results, greater protection of habitats and species at risk and more support for an organization's programs.

6.5 Volunteer Programs

Volunteers are often essential to creating successful ecological restoration programs. Volunteer programs may achieve some of the project's education and outreach goals and build stewardship for the site. Volunteer programs range from informal to formal, engage volunteers occasionally to regularly, and provide simple to varied types of volunteer opportunities. Positive volunteer experiences keep volunteers coming back, and successful programs provide valuable support, resources, and labour for restoration projects.

This section provides information, resources, and considerations for volunteer programs in Garry Oak ecosystem restoration.

Case Study 14. Fort Rodd Hill National Historic Site: Volunteers Help Control Invasive Species

Invasive species removal can be a large and daunting task requiring the commitment of many years of management. At Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites of Canada in Colwood, B.C., volunteer efforts to control species such as Scotch Broom and Spurge-laurel have been ongoing since 2003, when Parks Canada adopted a volunteer program to assist in invasive species removal. Recently, co-op students working for Fort Rodd Hill have managed the program; their work includes organizing the program, advertising, and supervision of volunteers. The goals of the volunteer program are (1) to raise public awareness of invasive species, (2) to educate the public on ecosystem restoration, invasive species removal techniques, and on the value of rare Garry Oak and associated ecosystems at the site, and (3) to provide invaluable volunteer labour for invasive species removal. Each of the three objectives is considered of equal importance.

The volunteer program at Fort Rodd Hill encourages volunteer groups from a broad range of ages and abilities, with the understanding that removal of large quantities of invasive species is not the singular goal of the program. Volunteer education and experience builds long-term stewardship ethics and behaviour. Volunteers become increasingly skilled each time they attend an invasive species removal day, removing greater quantities of invasive plants with increased care. By providing positive volunteer experiences, the Fort Rodd Hill program encourages volunteers to return again and again.

Parks Canada Species at Risk Recovery Planner Conan Webb leads a tour at Fort Rodd Hill National Historic Site. Photo: Carolyn MacDonald

Case Study 15. Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary's Formal Volunteer Program

In Victoria, this non-governmental organization (NGO) operating a nature sanctuary on public lands has a long-established formal volunteer program with a staff Coordinator of Volunteers. While there are different types of volunteer positions, many volunteers are involved in the Garry Oak native plant garden and restoration in natural areas of the sanctuary. With a shortage of staff, volunteers play a vital role in achieving restoration and native garden goals. All volunteers are formally registered, work in supervised teams, and receive good training. The volunteer program also includes youth and adults from correctional programs. One important restoration project that volunteers are assisting with is a burn site in the Garry Oak rock outcrops on Christmas Hill. Site Manager June Pretzer notes that the burn site is at an exciting stage with all the invasive Orchard-grass (*Dactylis glomerata*) now eliminated and the Hairy Cat's-Ear (*Hypochaeris radicata)* under control. In 2009, volunteers at the sanctuary contributed about 10,000 hours of work.

Volunteers removing invasive plants at Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary. Photo: June Pretzer

Volunteer work party at Little Mount Douglas in Saanich. Recent studies show that Canadian volunteers are increasingly seeking opportunities for flexible work that incorporates socialization and fitness. Photo: District of Saanich

6.5.1 Volunteers in Restoration Projects

Many Garry Oak restoration projects in Canada depend on volunteers, and many projects are coordinated by volunteer stewardship groups. Successful restoration projects often depend on restoration practitioners who can carefully plan and encourage long-term committed volunteer involvement. While the benefits of working with volunteers in restoration projects are many, there are also complications that must be considered.

Recent Canadian trends show that volunteers increasingly seek out the types of experience that Garry Oak restoration projects can offer: meaningful, flexible work that incorporates socialization and fitness (Volunteer Canada 2007). Restoration projects offer very visible, tangible results for volunteers to experience in their neighbourhoods. Keeping the project messages positive and offering hands-on involvement are strong features that attract volunteers.

There are many benefits to including volunteers in restoration projects. Some of the key benefits are:

- providing "people power" and enthusiasm
- bringing community connections to the project
- providing broader perspectives and ideas
- accessing diverse abilities and skills
- increasing funding opportunities
- enabling messages to reach wider audiences

Along with the benefits of volunteers, there are also important implications and requirements involved in running volunteer programs. The following should be considered in the planning stages:

- increased cost, depending on the size and format of the program
- increased time to organize and supervise volunteers

- development of risk management procedures
- development of volunteer management procedures (such as intake)
- provision of training and services needed by volunteers
- processes for addressing volunteer issues and problem solving

The experiences that Canadian volunteers seek are changing. Recent trends tracked by Volunteer Canada (2007) show that volunteers wish to be involved in short-term projects that allow them to interact with family and friends. They want to make a real difference on projects that matter to them. They want to register and serve as volunteers in a quick and flexible manner. Volunteers also want to learn and use new skills. Increasingly, Canadians are seeking out volunteer opportunities with environmental projects. Remaining aware of changing trends in volunteerism will help restoration practitioners tailor their volunteer programs so that the success of their projects is enhanced.

6.5.2 Developing a Volunteer Program

Whether a volunteer program is formal or informal, or led by the community, an agency, or organization, it is wise to give consideration to minimum organizational standards:

- volunteer position (or role) descriptions
- policy development to address issues such as risk management
- volunteer intake procedures that are clear and efficient
- training for volunteers (and staff who work with them)
- volunteer recognition

Informal Programs

Some volunteer programs spontaneously spring up in communities as like-minded people organize themselves to achieve a common goal. For example, neighbours may start removing invasive plants and start a larger effort to restore a local park. Informal volunteer programs can move rapidly and be very successful. They may also eventually have some challenges to work through in regards to organization, resources, and long-term commitment.

In Section 6.4.3, community-based restoration projects are described along with tips specific to community based restoration projects, resources, and case studies.

Informal volunteer programs should still have:

- a key contact or coordinator
- a system to organize volunteer information
- waivers as required
- basic equipment (safety vests, gloves, first aid kit)
- a safety policy or agreement
- an agreement about project guidelines (e.g., how the work will be done, restrictions, public communication)

Formal Programs

Formal volunteer programs are often coordinated by a government agency or an established organization. They have a coordinator, policies and procedures for volunteer involvement, volunteer positions, and a management system for volunteer information, and may provide insurance and other benefits for volunteers. Often, formal programs have set intake procedures and may do some level of screening for appropriate volunteers. Whether the resources are available to create a formal program or not, aspects of these programs can be successfully implemented by almost all restoration projects that include volunteers.

6.5.3 Essential Elements of Volunteer Programs

Policies and Procedures

Depending on the project, policies and procedures may outline how and when work is conducted, what safety procedures are required, what training is required, and what types of communication policies are needed. Policies regarding volunteers may include requirements for the following:

- attending an orientation session before participation (or within a time period)
- training for different types of volunteer jobs
- obtaining criminal record checks
- addressing appropriate on-site conduct
- developing effective communication methods (e.g., who to contact for difference situations)
- developing public communication policies (e.g., media interview procedures, basic public outreach messages)

Spending time in developing these policies will help your organization communicate clearly with volunteers, avoid conflicts or misunderstandings, and smoothly integrate volunteers into the project.

> Volunteer Canada is the national professional organization that sets standards, suggests policies, and provides leadership on volunteer issues.

Risk Management

Identification and assessment of risks for your volunteer program is essential. Risks include health, safety, and legal risks. Agencies or organizations may have a risk manager who develops risk management forms, documents, and policies. If your agency or organization does not have a risk manager, you can look at what types of risk management systems other organizations have developed. You may also want to consult with a lawyer to ensure that all the legal implications of your volunteer program have been addressed.

Risk management includes creating safe work environments and developing policies to avoid risks to health and safety. Policies may be developed for various aspects of the project, such as how work will be conducted near a road, how site visitors will be alerted to risks while work is being conducted, how tools will be used safely and by whom, what safety equipment will be used, and how garbage pick-up will be handled safely. Other ways to address potential risks include developing volunteer medical alert information, planning first aid procedures, and creating reporting procedures for incidents. Insurance policies can also be obtained to provide registered volunteers some assistance in the case of accident or injury.

Case Study 16. Saanich Garry Oak Restoration Project (GORP): Risk Management

The District of Saanich employs a Risk Manager who works with staff and the GORP Coordinator of Volunteers regarding risk management policies and forms. A formal safety policy has been developed that includes volunteer supervision requirements, safety equipment requirements, waivers, site safety policies such as signage on trails and garbage pick-up, safe work practices (such as not working under the influence of drugs or alcohol and policies for work party supervisors). Saanich's waiver forms were developed by the Risk Manager and the Municipal Solicitor, with special forms for group waivers, individual registered volunteers, and a consent form for volunteers under the age of 19. The Risk Manager also coordinates an insurance policy for volunteers, providing limited insurance for injuries and loss of work for registered volunteers who have accidents while volunteering for the program. All this planning has provided for smooth procedures and safe work environments for 11 years of this program.

GORP volunteers removing Himalayan Blackberry (*Rubus discolor*) root crowns from the Camas Park site on McKenzie Avenue. Photo: Breanna Newhouse

Planting native grass plugs for trial restoration plots at Playfair Park GORP site in Saanich. Photo: Carolyn MacDonald

Legal risks also need to be addressed. Legal waiver forms are commonly used by organizations, agencies, and landowners/managers to address legal risks associated with land ownership, supervising volunteers, and with volunteers working on that land. Consider how you will address legal implications of working with minors (i.e., persons under 19 years of age), who cannot legally sign a waiver. There are also legal implications regarding the collection and care of personal information. See Appendix 6.2 for examples of waivers.

Risk management is becoming increasingly important to ensure the safety of volunteers and to address legal liabilities. It is critical to consider what risks volunteers and your organization will be exposed to and plan to minimize and address these risks. Staff and volunteers should all be aware of risk management policies and procedures.

6.5.4 Managing a Volunteer Program

Managing a volunteer program requires organization and enthusiasm to be effective. A coordinator of volunteers who values the efforts of volunteers and who has essential skills can lead and develop a successful program. It takes time and careful planning to organize volunteers. The effort put into this task will pay off in meaningful volunteer participation and long-term commitment.

Volunteer management is a distinct, established discipline. Many resources and types of support are available for developing successful programs.

Recruitment

Before recruiting volunteers, consider what kinds of volunteers are needed and what tasks they should be assigned. A critical first step is to develop position descriptions that specify what types of skills and qualities a volunteer should have (e.g., physical fitness, special training, or people skills), and what kinds of expectations volunteers should be prepared to meet. Consider what the organization can offer to volunteers, for example, career training or social opportunities.

When recruiting, target the places where you may find the volunteers that meet your needs. The following are possible sources of volunteers:

Volunteers and staff work side by side at Playfair Park in Saanich. When developing a volunteer program, it is important not only to develop clear roles for volunteers but also to ensure that they are able to achieve their goals and gain valuable experiences and training. Photo: Carolyn MacDonald

- post-secondary institutions (and specific programs, such as Environmental Studies)
- high schools (sources of keen, youthful volunteers) and other local schools
- local clubs and organizations with similar values (e.g., natural history groups)
- local youth groups
- organizations such as service groups with volunteer requirements (e.g., cadets, scouts)
- volunteer organizations (see Section 6.5.5)
- conservation or "green" minded businesses
- neighbourhood organizations
- site neighbours

Volunteer Intake

Focused and efficient volunteer intake is an important part of a program. Initial screening is critical to developing a reputable and sustainable volunteer program. Spending time on the first contact with a potential volunteer can be important. An application form provides basic information needed, and can be provided on-line or in paper form. Sample forms are provided in Appendix 6.2.

Interviewing a volunteer can help you determine what they hope to gain from volunteering, what types of skills and training they have, and how they will fit within the project. During the interview, the volunteer should be given a brief orientation to the organization, the project, and Garry Oak ecosystem restoration. The volunteer can be asked to provide personal references to complete the intake process, and criminal records checks can be requested if required by your program. Other screening methods are described on Volunteer Canada's website (www.volunteer.ca) under "Topics and Resources".

Placement

A successful volunteer program generally has clear roles for volunteers. A detailed position description provides volunteers and staff with a clear outline of what is expected and what success looks like. The overall goal is for the volunteers to help in achieving the project/organization goals. It is often best to place a new volunteer with a more experienced volunteer who can serve as a mentor. Checking in with new volunteers (especially in the first six weeks) can be very important and will help everyone make adjustments, as needed. This will help build long-term relationships. It is important to thank and recognize volunteers, and check in periodically on their training needs. One of the keys to placement is to make sure the volunteer is able to achieve his or her goals and gain valuable experiences and training.

Orientation and Training

Once volunteers have been brought into an organization or project, they need some kind of orientation. Many organizations have orientation sessions for groups of new volunteers, or may have an orientation procedure for one-on-one situations. Orientation sessions cover the basics of the organization and project, related policies and procedures, and any other requirements or expectations of the volunteers. Orientation sessions should be enjoyable, build enthusiasm, and provide refreshments (particularly in group sessions) as a way of thanking and welcoming volunteers.

HEALTH CHECK FOR A VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The following questions should be considered when you are developing or evaluating your volunteer program. Strive to answer "yes" to each of these questions:

- Do your staff and volunteers work together and feel like a team?
- Do you track volunteer hours?
- Are your volunteers covered by insurance?
- Do your volunteers get thanks on a regular basis?
- Do you recruit from the whole diverse community?
- Do your volunteers have position descriptions?
- Does your volunteer program have a budget?
- Are volunteers thoroughly screened and trained at intake?
- Do you offer ongoing training?
- Do you deliver what you promise to your volunteers?

On-going training can be offered as needed, but should be provided at least several times a year to help volunteers develop and enhance their skills and knowledge. Training may be an important goal for some volunteers. Consider bringing in special speakers or guest trainers and include topics that keep alive the sense of wonder about Garry Oak natural areas. Providing training is also a good way to thank and recognize volunteers.

Evaluation

A healthy volunteer program places importance on evaluation. In addition to being evaluated in their position, volunteers should be given the opportunity to evaluate their experiences with the organization and the progress of the project. Evaluation and feedback to volunteers can be very informal, through frequent verbal comments and coaching by the volunteer coordinator. It can also be a formal process involving an annual interview between the coordinator and the volunteers. The coordinator should keep records of the feedback provided and received.

It is important for volunteers to be able to provide feedback in ways that feel comfortable for them. Having times when feedback is requested—either anonymously or otherwise—can be valuable in building strong organizations and relationships.

Retention and Recognition

Recognition of volunteers is important. Volunteers who feel appreciated and happy in their role are more likely to be retained long term and to bring in more volunteers and raise the public profile of the organization. Providing refreshments at work parties, social opportunities, and

reference letters for employment are some great ways of showing appreciation for your volunteer efforts. Some programs host annual recognition events and provide certificates or awards, small gifts, and verbal recognition. Other forms of on-going recognition include informal notes and frequent words of appreciation for volunteer accomplishments. Volunteers also appreciate being kept informed about the organization or project, and should be allowed to provide feedback on how they like to be recognized. Consider what fits best for your team of volunteers and be creative.

Record Management

Volunteer programs need to manage the personal information of volunteers and their application forms, updated contact information, interview notes, reference checks, volunteer hours, and other key information. All personal information about volunteers must be kept in a secure location, and access to that information must be carefully controlled. Anyone in charge of keeping such information, especially within government organizations, should be aware of the requirements outlined in the *Freedom of Information Act* and the implications of keeping personal information.

Communication

Volunteers should be kept informed about the project, and clear lines of communication must be established between the volunteers and the volunteer coordinator and staff. Changes in the program or organization should be communicated directly to the volunteers rather than through the media. Volunteers like to be kept informed, and they do their jobs best when they are included in the program's communications network.

6.5.5 Volunteer Program Resources

There are many valuable resources available to enhance or build your volunteer program. The following list will help you get started. Sample forms and other key resources from formal volunteer programs for Garry Oak ecosystem restoration are included in the appendices.

A variety of resources are available through Volunteer Canada (www.volunteer.ca):

- Sample forms for volunteer programs
- Issues and policies related to developing volunteer programs
- Advice about requesting criminal record checks
- Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement
- Other valuable information for developing volunteer programs

Local Volunteer Centres (examples)

Volunteer Victoria (www.volunteervictoria.bc.ca)
Volunteer Cowichan (www.volunteercowichan.bc.ca)
Volunteer Nanaimo (www.volunteernanaimo.ca)
Volunteer Salt Spring (www.volunteersaltspring.com)

These centres provide a central clearinghouse for interested community volunteers. By joining your local centre you will be able to participate in workshops about volunteering and will likely be part of a database that will profile your program for potential new volunteers.

CELEBRATING GARRY OAK ECOSYSTEMS AND RESTORATION

- Artistic celebrations
- Tree Appreciation Day
- Wildflower celebrations
- Volunteer recognition
- Earth Day and Biodiversity Day
- Fundraising celebrations
- Community picnics
- Poetry contests
- and more: honouring, engaging, and giving thanks

Thanking your volunteers can involve training days, awards, and time spent enjoying Garry Oak ecosystems. In this photo, GORP volunteers share a lunch at Gonzales Hill during a field-trip day where they visited a variety of restoration sites. Photo: Carolyn MacDonald

6.6 Celebration

> Communities are strengthened through the gathering
> of energy and commitment. (Higgs 2003)

The Canadian Oxford Dictionary definition of "celebrate" includes "make publicly known; extol, praise widely". The word originates from the Latin word *celebrare*, meaning honoured. Honouring and celebrating Garry Oak ecosystems raises public awareness, inspires, and helps build a sense of place and connection. Honouring and celebrating people and culture in relation to Garry Oak ecosystems builds connections, relationships, support, commitment, and a sense of belonging and community. Celebrating the restoration of Garry Oak ecosystems may play an important role in recognizing volunteers and other valuable contributions, may help with fundraising efforts, and may be a way to share joy in the success of good work.

"Restoration is a social and cultural act, an interaction between humans and nature" (Edgar 2007). As such, restoration may help restore relationships between people and the land, and thus become a meaningful and even sacred activity that brings people closer to nature (VanWieren 2008). We honour and celebrate that which we value—and value is a fundamental necessity for successful recovery and restoration of these rare ecosystems.

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Appendix 6.1

Deciding Whether Public Involvement is Needed

Adapted with permission from: District of Saanich Toolkit for Public Process (2002).

Public involvement includes the promise that the public's contribution will play a role in the decision process (though not necessarily determining what the decision will be). Informing and educating the public about a project should be incorporated even when a decision is made not to engage in a public involvement/planning process.

Always do public involvement when:

- **Recommended** – for example, by the funders or managers backing or requesting the project
- **Critical information is lacking** – available information isn't adequate to make a sound decision and it is anticipated that the quality of the decision would be enhanced by community involvement
- **Issues of conflict, heightened public concern, or public risk** – dispute or conflict that needs to be resolved; high degree of concern over the decision to be made (or project) or when there is the perception that the decision (or project) holds significant implications for public health or safety
- **Highly complex issues** – when the issue(s) or project is highly complex and/or there is not a clear understanding of the implications and outcomes of the decision or project
- **Consent and compliance needed** – there is a perception that involvement is essential to ensure a sense of shared responsibility and commitment to the project and/or when it is likely that compliance or cooperation is not assured unless all those affected are involved in the decision
- **Facing a strategic choice or unclear priorities** – when the decision involves a strategic choice between apparently equal alternatives or when public priorities are unclear

APPLICABLE EXAMPLES

- Projects that involve a statutory requirement for public involvement (e.g., within rezoning applications and development proposals)
- Major changes in land use
- Changing the use of public space (e.g., park plans)
- The project or decision will impact people's daily lives by altering:

    -the character of the neighbourhood

    -parks, recreation facilities

    -road infrastructure

    -the streetscape (e.g., landscaping, trees)

    -traffic and parking

    -pedestrian movement

    -levels of safety

    -levels of service (e.g., garbage removal)

Usually do public involvement when

- The public expresses interest in having input or the decision is likely to be seen as significant
- The decision has significant policy implications (e.g., enforcement issues)
- There is actual or potential conflict or dissenting views in the public around the issue/decision at hand
- There is a need to build awareness of the issues through public involvement
- There are financial implications such as those that involve spending money on new amenities or a taxation levy
- The negative impacts of a project can be mitigated based on advice from the public
- You need help choosing between options
- The decision is highly value-laden versus being driven by technical considerations

Rarely do public involvement (more informing) when

- Choices are limited or highly constrained; there are few options
- You know that public opinion is behind the project for the most part
- Choices are highly focused and technical and there is little room for influence based on values
- A clear consensus has already been reached through other processes (e.g., public petition)
- Less complex, minor decisions are being made

Never do public involvement when

- Your goal is to announce a decision
- The decision (or project) cannot be affected because

  the decision is already made

  the decision will be made outside of the public involvement process

  staff/landowners must make a decision and take action in an emergency situation
- The time frame and/or resources are too short for meaningful, informed input and cannot be changed
- You don't know what you're asking from the public
- You do not have support from the landowners or managers to engage in public involvement

Inform the public when

- Public involvement is not warranted, but the public needs to be alerted to a change or to understand what is going on
- You want to encourage public support of a project that is underway

Appendix 6.2 Example Volunteer Intake Forms and Waivers

(forms follow)

Regional Parks
490 Atkins Avenue
Victoria BC Canada V9B 2Z8

T: 250.478.3344
F: 250.478.5416
www.crd.bc.ca/parks

Mill Hill Restoration Project ~ Volunteer Application Form

Contact Information

Last Name:	Given Name(s):	
Address:	City:	Postal Code
Home Phone Number ( )	Work Phone Number ( )	Cell Phone Number ( )
Date of Birth (for insurance purposes):	Email Address:	

In case of Emergency notify:

Last Name:	First Name:	Relationship:
Address:	City:	Postal Code
Home Phone Number ( )	Work Phone Number ( )	Cell Phone Number ( )

Allergies:	
Medications/Medi-alert needs:	

How did you find out about the Mill Hill Restoration Project?	

I understand that my services will involve working outdoors in steep and uneven terrain under the direction of the Environmental Conservation Specialist and a Parks Worker 5 staff member or the Coordinator of Volunteers. I will be removing young broom seedlings and daphne at Mill Hill Regional Park. I understand that I will be following the directions and safety procedures that will be instructed on the day prior to volunteering.

I understand that in the event of a personal injury I am not covered by WCB but instead would be eligible for benefits under the CRD Volunteer AD&D policy (subject to terms and conditions).

I understand that I am responsible for the safety and security of all my property and possessions.

I understand that the CRD will indemnify me against any claims for damages arising out of the performance of my duties and, in addition, pay amounts required for the protection, defense, or indemnification arising there from provided that I am not guilty of dishonesty, gross negligence, or wilful misconduct, or the cause of the action libel or slander.

_____   _____
Signature of Volunteer   Date

Photo waiver

Regional Parks and the Capital Regional District has my permission to use any photographs, film, or other images taken of me participating in Parks-related activities.

I understand my photograph/image may be used in brochures, newsletters, fact sheets, news articles, posters, audio/visual materials, on the CRD website, or in other printed materials.

_____

Signature   Date

☐   I decline to have my image used.

Regional Parks

490 Atkins Avenue

Victoria BC Canada V9B 2Z8

T: 250.478.3344

F: 250.478.5416

www.crd.bc.ca/parks

Parental Consent Form

(Required for youth volunteers under 19 years of age)

Name of Youth Volunteer	Date of Birth (for insurance purposes):

Parent or Guardian Information

Last Name:	Given Name(s):	
Address:	City:	Postal Code
Home Phone Number ( )	Work Phone Number ( )	Cell Phone Number ( )

In case of Emergency notify:

Last Name:	First Name:	Relationship:
Address:	City:	Postal Code
Home Phone Number ( )	Work Phone Number ( )	Cell Phone Number ( )

Allergies:	
Medications/Medi-alert needs:	

I _____ hereby give consent for my son/daughter/legal ward, named above, to volunteer with the Capital Regional District Parks Volunteer-In-Parks program at _____

I affirm that I am the parent/guardian of the above named volunteer. I understand that there could be some risks associated with this activity. I have read the attached position description of the work the volunteer will perform and will discuss it with my son/daughter/legal ward.

In the event that my child/legal ward requires medical attention, I consent to my child being transported to the nearest emergency centre, including by ambulance if necessary, and accept that I am responsible for cost of such ambulance service.

_____   _____

Parent/Guardian signature of Youth Volunteer   Date

Photo waiver

Regional Parks and the Capital Regional District has my permission to use any photographs, film, or other images taken of me participating in Parks-related activities.

I understand my photograph/image may be used in brochures, newsletters, fact sheets, news articles, posters, audio/visual materials, on the CRD website, or in other printed materials.

_____

Signature   Date

☐   I decline to have my image used.

The Corporation of the District of Saanich

RELEASE OF LIABILITY, WAIVER OF CLAIMS, ASSUMPTION OF RISKS AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

GROUP FORM

BY SIGNING THIS DOCUMENT YOU ARE WAIVING CERTAIN LEGAL RIGHTS, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO SUE - PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

To: the District of Saanich, its officers, employees, elected officials, agents and volunteers,

And to: the owners and occupiers of private premises on which I conduct volunteer work for the District of Saanich,

(hereinafter called the "Releasees")

ASSUMPTION OF RISK

I am aware that my volunteer work for the District of Saanich may involve risks caused or contributed by natural and man-made terrain, wildlife, plants, climatic conditions, my own physical condition, actions of the Releasees and other third parties, vehicular traffic, tools and equipment. I am also aware that such risks may foreseeably result in personal injury, illness, loss of life or property damage, but I freely assume the legal and physical consequences of these risks.

RELEASE and WAIVER

In consideration of being accepted as a volunteer for the District of Saanich, I covenant not to sue and hereby waive, release and discharge the Releasees from any and all claims of liability for personal injury, illness, loss of life or property damage of any kind or nature whatsoever and howsoever arising either directly or indirectly as a result of my volunteer work. This Release and Waiver applies to all claims, foreseen and unforeseen, including negligence and breach of statutory or other duty of care and is binding on my heirs, executors, administrators, or any others who may claim on my behalf.

INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

In consideration of being accepted as a volunteer for the District of Saanich, I agree to indemnify and save harmless the Releasees from any claim, lawsuit, liability, debt, demand, loss or judgment (including costs, defence expense and interest) whatsoever and howsoever arising either directly or indirectly as a result of any act or omission by me that is grossly negligent, wilful or outside my scope of authority or duties as a volunteer for the District of Saanich.

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the above, and I recognize that by signing this document I am waiving certain legal rights, including the right to sue.

Please sign accompanying sign-in sheet.

The Corporation of the District of Saanich

RELEASE OF LIABILITY, WAIVER OF CLAIMS, ASSUMPTION OF RISKS AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

By signing this document I acknowledge that I have read the accompanying form titled "Release of Liability, Waiver of Claims, Assumption of Risks and Indemnity Agreement" and that I am waiving certain rights, including the right to sue.

NAME (PRINT)	ADDRESS	SIGNATURE	DATE

The Corporation of the District of Saanich

RELEASE OF LIABILITY, WAIVER OF CLAIMS, ASSUMPTION OF RISKS AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

BY SIGNING THIS DOCUMENT YOU ARE WAIVING CERTAIN LEGAL RIGHTS, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO SUE - PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

To: the District of Saanich, its officers, employees, elected officials, agents and volunteers,

And to: the owners and occupiers of private premises on which I conduct volunteer work for the District of Saanich,

(hereinafter called the "Releasees")

ASSUMPTION OF RISK

I am aware that my volunteer work for the District of Saanich involves risks caused or contributed to by natural and man-made terrain, wildlife, plants, climatic conditions, my own physical condition, actions of the Releasees and other third parties, vehicular traffic, tools and equipment. I am also aware that such risks may foreseeably result in personal injury, illness, loss of life or property damage, but I freely assume the legal and physical consequences of these risks.

RELEASE and WAIVER

In consideration of being accepted as a volunteer for the District of Saanich, I covenant not to sue and hereby waive, release and discharge the Releasees from any and all claims of liability for personal injury, illness, loss of life or property damage of any kind or nature whatsoever and howsoever arising either directly or indirectly as a result of my volunteer work. This Release and Waiver applies to all claims, foreseen and unforeseen, including negligence and breach of statutory or other duty of care and is binding on my heirs, executors, administrators, or any others who may claim on my behalf.

INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

In consideration of being accepted as a volunteer for the District of Saanich, I agree to indemnify and save harmless the Releasees from any claim, lawsuit, liability, debt, demand, loss or judgment (including costs, defence expense and interest) whatsoever and howsoever arising either directly or indirectly as a result of any act or omission by me that is grossly negligent, wilful or outside my scope of authority or duties as a volunteer for the District of Saanich.

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the above, and I recognize that by signing this document I am waiving certain legal rights, including the right to sue.

_____   _____
Volunteer Signature   Witness Signature

_____   _____
Volunteer Name (please print)   Witness Name (please print)

_____
Volunteer Address

_____
Date

06/2010

The Corporation of the District of Saanich

INFORMED CONSENT / PERMISSION FORM

THIS FORM MUST BE READ AND SIGNED BY EVERY MINOR WISHING TO PARTICIPATE IN VOLUNTEER WORK FOR THE DISTRICT AND A PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN OF THAT MINOR. A MINOR IS A PERSON UNDER 19 YEARS OF AGE.

ELEMENTS OF RISK

I am aware that volunteer work for the District of Saanich may involve certain elements of risk. Injuries may occur while working, including; allergic reactions, cuts, abrasions, sprains, fractures, spinal injury and even death.

The risk of sustaining injury results from the nature of the activity itself, natural and manmade terrain, wildlife, plants, climatic conditions, the actions of third parties and the worker's own physical condition and actions. Injury can occur without any fault on the part of either the worker, the District of Saanich, its employees, consultants or other volunteers. By choosing to take part in this activity, you are accepting the risk that you/your child may be injured.

The chance of injury can be reduced by carefully following instructions and safe work practices at all times while engaged in the activity.

PARTICIPANT'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I HAVE READ THE ABOVE AND THE VOLUNTEER SAFETY POLICY. I AGREE TO FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY AND EXERCISE SAFE WORK PRACTICES AT ALL TIMES.

Name of participant (please print):

Signature of participant: Date:

PARENT/GUARDIAN'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND PERMISSION

I HAVE READ THE ABOVE AND HAVE BEEN PROVIDED OR OBTAINED SUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO MAKE AN INFORMED DECISION ABOUT MY CHILD'S VOLUNTEER WORK. I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE DISTRICT OF SAANICH PROVIDES LIMITED ACCIDENTAL DEATH, DISABILITY, DISMEMBERMENT OR MEDICAL EXPENSE INSURANCE FOR REGISTERED VOLUNTEERS AND THAT BY ALLOWING MY CHILD TO WORK AS A VOLUNTEER, I AM ASSUMING THE ASSOCIATED RISKS AND UNINSURED EXPENSES. I GIVE MY CHILD PERMISSION TO WORK AS A VOLUNTEER.

Name of Parent/Guardian (please print):

Signature of Parent/Guardian: Date:

Emergency contact: Phone:

Important health information: