

Trustee Report – Dan Rogers – May 2, 2015

April seemed like a quieter month from a Gambier Islands Local Trust Council (GILTC) perspective until I sat down to write this report. Here's a short description of some of the events and issues that have occurred since my last report near the end of March.

March 25th - The GILTC hosted a workshop on a “soft shore” or “green shore” approach to foreshore remediation. The protection, preservation and remediation of shorelines in our Trust area has been and continues to be a high priority for us. The importance of foreshore and near shore ecosystems and the science of soft shore approaches to storm protection were both explored by experts and local government officials in a well-attended (approximately 40 people) workshop at Chaster House just north of Gibsons. Traditional solid walls as upland protection from storm surges and high water have been proven to be ineffective and harmful to the nearshore area. The Trust Council is working on education approaches for waterfront owners and will be exploring regulation options going forward. Here is just one article from the Bowen Island Undercurrent explaining some of the issues involved in beach and shore line protection. <http://www.bowenislandundercurrent.com/news/bowen-s-beaches-help-to-feed-the-salish-sea-1.1870039>

March 26th was the GILTC regular meeting in Gibsons. Minutes of all meetings can be found on our website at <http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/islands/local-trust-areas/gambier/meeting-calendar,-agendas-minutes.aspx>. Of note, we approved 2 development variance permits for 2 properties on Gambier Island. In both cases the variances were allowed **after** some development occurred which is never the preferred approach and in once case it was only after some lengthy litigation, but it was great to finally have a solution to troublesome issues. Hopefully it is a sign that the system works but it is always better to get approval before development. Before construction it is important for you to know what the Local Land Use bylaws provide.

April 1 – I attended a Forum in West Vancouver put on by the Future of Howe Sound Society on whether LNG was “right for Howe Sound”. The evening forum was attended by well over 150 people and the voiced sentiment was clearly against the Woodfibre LNG proposal.

April 8 – I participated in a conference call with SCRD Area F Director Ian Winn, my fellow trustee Kate Louise Stamford (who is also the “alternate Area F Director by the way) and Joyce Clegg and Kathy McTaggart from Gambier on the proposed budget and

tax increases for Keats and Gambier. It looks like the SCR D taxes for these areas is going up between 12 and 15% for a variety of reasons;

- a) Please remember that the SCR D portion of your tax bill is only 25% of your total property tax. The rest is divided between Islands Trust (which should have close to a 0% increase), school , hospital and other services.
- b) There has been a large number of “asset failures” in the SCR D that require attention including the Gibsons library, some other municipal buildings and docks.
- c) More of the cost of the Island docks is being downloaded onto Area F.
- d) In the case of Keats, the cost of the dog control bylaw amounts to about a 2% increase.

Discussion is occurring about whether there are some SCR D services that the Islands shouldn't be paying for which is a difficult and longer term discussion. I will pass on any final information on taxes when it is available.

April 8 – There was another in a series of discussions with Connect BC about trying to get high speed internet to the Islands. This is a frustrating process as both the technical difficulties and the cost are an impediment. Kate and I will continue to push this issue.

April 13 – I attended a meeting in West Vancouver of the Probus club to hear the Communications Director for the Western Canada Marine Response Corporation talk about oil spill response. The talk was most interesting given this was about 5 days after the spill in English Bay. This Corporation has the contract to be the primary “responder” for all oil spills on the B.C. coast. As this is a hot topic, I'm attaching a copy of their presentation to this report. I should add that some of what was presented is at odds from what I have learned from other sources. And the question remains whether, as has been reported, the Kitsilano Coast Guard station could have contained that spill much more quickly if it was still open. For example, it is clear that WCMRC was not on the water until at least 4 hours after the spill was first reported by a pleasure boater. And the regulations for even English Bay only set 6 hours as a mandated response time ... through one tide change and the regulated response time for Howe Sound and the Strait of Georgia is actually 16 hours ... over two tide changes.

April 25 – I attended a “Holly Pull” at Campfire Rock cove on the Southside of Keats Island. About 15 enthusiastic volunteers worked throughout the day to remove as much as possible of the invasive and pervasive plant. I encourage everyone to try and rid holly from your areas as it is threatening much of our traditional forest.

May 1 – I attended the Howe Sound Community Forum on Bowen Island. The Forum brings together many of the elected officials from around Howe Sound along with many community groups to discuss the large issues facing Howe Sound. We were welcomed by the Squamish Nation and Bowen Island Mayor. You will be able to find a record of the proceedings in time but of particular interest was a presentation on the soon to be opened Sea to Sky Marine Trail and the Glass Sponge Reefs off Halkett Bay.

Trustee Stamford – May Report

March 25 - Participated in the Gambier Island Local Trust Area Softshores workshop for builders. See Trustee Rogers report for details.

March 31 – Trust Fund Board Meeting – attended via phone:

- Land protection covenants on Galiano and North Pender signed
- Sponsored Crown Grant reviewed for Lasqueti Island
- Support to the Thetis Island Nature Conservancy for their land purchase project

April 28th – 2015 Islands Clean-up strategy meeting at SCRDR office

Discussions around specific items (marine Styrofoam, tire floats, auto batteries) SCRDR staff will do further research into taking old televisions this year or propane tanks. Pick-up dates for the summer will be published shortly along with a final list of accepted items.

May 1st – Attended the Howe Sound Community Forum on Bowen Island and did a presentation on the Islands Trust Fund's activities in the Howe Sound area.

Howe Sound industrial projects update

- Woodfibre LNG Environmental Assessment commentary period is closed
- Expecting the Environmental Assessment Office to open the Burnco Gravel Project for commentary at any time now.
- No new news about the Metro Vancouver incinerator proposal

May 3 – Gambier Island Community Association meeting. Joe Wright outlined the results of his attendance at the Broadband Conference in Richmond. GICA and the Eastbourne Community Association jointly paid for Joe's registration to the conference to help determine internet upgrade options for Gambier and Keats. Please contact Danny Tryon, Chair of GICA for a copy of the written report if you are interested.

SCRD Alternate Director –

Working with Director Winn and previous Director Lee Turnbull to review Grants in Aid. Letters to applicants should be out this week.

April 8 – reviewed Area F and Island taxation and functions with Director Winn, Trustee Rogers, K McTaggart and J Clegg.

April 23 – Participated in the SCR D Board meeting in Director Winn's place.

April 28 – Attended the Area F Advisory Commission meeting