

April 2016 Trustee Report

March 22 – 24th – **Trust Council on Hornby Island.** The Trust passed the 2016-17 budget with no increase to property tax for the 3rd year running. A new staff position was approved to manage indigenous relations among all the Local Trust Areas as well as focus on marine advocacy in the Salish Sea.

March 31, 2016 - **Community to Community Event with the Squamish**

The Gambier Island Local Trust committee received funding through the Provincial Community to Community fund to host a meeting with the Squamish Chiefs and Council at the Gambier Island Community Centre.

We were very honoured that 12 of the Chiefs and Council accepted our invitation. The morning meeting was opened with traditional songs and prayers and then Councillor Lewis provided us with a comprehensive outline of the governance structure of the Squamish people as well as a brief history of their people in the Howe Sound watershed.

One of the most profound pieces of information was that it is estimated that before Captain Vancouver came into the area there were approximately 125,000 people living in the Howe Sound area and now the Squamish Nation is considered the second largest indigenous group in BC after the Cowichan with a population of about 3800.

We discussed common areas of interest including

- **Marine planning** for the Howe Sound area
- Impacts of **sea walls, docks, trails and recreational activities** on wildlife habitat and areas of spiritual significance on the islands
- Wilderness Recreational zone (former proposed woodlots) Chief Bill Williams noted that although the two potential **woodlots** on the North Eastern area of Gambier are not longer viable in their original configuration, the Squamish Nation is interested in the opportunities for the Squamish in the Crown land.
- Gambier Island Local Trust Committee and the Squamish agreed on establishing better lines of communication and collaboration for the upcoming **Official Community Plan review**. This is an important commitment, as the Province has a firm duty to consult with First Nations on Official Community Plans and the Ministry of Community Sport and Cultural Development recently outlined to Local Trust Committees a more robust First Nations engagement process for their planning work.
- The Local Trust Committee asked about the **New Brighton Dock**. The Squamish have no specific growth plans for the facility, but continue to monitor its usage. I heard recently that there is some consideration by the Squamish Marine Group staff of possibly replacing the outer New Brighton float with a concrete one as it continues to suffer from ongoing wave damage.

After the business meeting, the Islands Trust and the local community then hosted a luncheon for the Squamish Chiefs and Council. It gave everyone a chance to meet each other and enjoy the gorgeous

spring day around the Community Ctr field. In the gift exchange the community received a lovely eagle mask which can be viewed in the lounge at the centre.

A special thank you to everyone who was able to attend the luncheon and brought food. Local resident, Tracy Duperreault of Wheatberries catered the amazing sandwiches and Morgan Campbell of West Bay created a lovely tile piece for our gift to the Squamish Chiefs and Council. Also, thank you to Nancy Grenier for taking some of the guests out to the “ Big Tree”.

April 29 – **Howe Sound Community Forum**. The Gambier Island Local Trust Committee hosted the spring session of the HSCF which is the only opportunity for elected representatives from the municipal to federal level to meet as the Howe Sound region. The Committee could not have done this without the use of the amazing facilities at Camp Fircom which were provided to us free of charge by the camp. Thank You.

The Forum turned out to be the most well attended to date with more than 80 people making the water taxi trip over to Halkett Bay including MLA Sturdys and MP Pamela Goldsmith-Jones. Please follow the link [Spring 2016 Howe Sound Community Forum](#) to see further details about topics covered, including **derelict vessels, regional marine planning, expansion of glass sponge protection and development challenges facing the Sound**. The Howe Sound Community Forums are organized by Ruth Simons, a local Gambierite who volunteers countless hours to get it off the ground twice a year.

April 5 and May 10 **Trust Fund Board**. A highlight was Danielle Prevost of Environment Canada who presented to the Board about Species at Risk Act (SARA) and the role of municipal governments in protecting habitat. One of the species under discussion for local protection was the marbled Murrelet, which uses the old growth in the Howe Sound Islands as nesting sites. It is worth noting that SARA is in effect across all Canadian land and waters. For more information, see: [Species at risk in BC](#)

May 2 – Provided transport for the Islands Trust bylaw officer, Miles Drew, to tour the south west peninsula in his review outstanding bylaw files of Gambier.

May 11 – Beginning of the Provincial Environmental Assessment Screening Process for the **Burnco** Aggregate mine proposal for McNab Creek. I am a member of the working group and will be focusing on topics pertinent to Gambier Island such as noise, air quality and marine traffic impacts of the proposed project.

May 13 – Attended a meeting with the **GICA parks and trails committee, SCRD Director Winn and CAO Lovey** to provide feedback on the upcoming SCRD Parks questionnaire for Gambier residents. The questionnaire will be emailed out to everyone in the South West Peninsula sometime in the next month and a follow-up public dialogue will be held mid July at the Community Centre.

May 14 – Attended the **Gambier Island Community Association** meeting to review the summer’s activities and events.