

Sustainable Gabriola

Meeting notes, Sunday November 30th, 2025

Attending: Steve E (facilitator), Fay W (note-taker), Tom C, Charlotte C, John P, Nancy HP, Joan J, Suzi, Greg B, Bob A, Bob Mc, Steve U



Reconciliation (Joan) — Joan spoke about Murray Sinclair’s Truth and Reconciliation Commissions’ 94 calls to action. About 14 have been incorporated (according to Canada), or 11 (according to Indigenous people). At the heart of his recommendations are kindness and respect. Indigenous people knew how to live because they had to learn how to live with the interconnected world. Settlers arrived with a consumption culture based on taking more than needed for a good life. We don’t need all of the things we need to live a good life. Walking the same path and understand the same thing – we are in relation to all things. Science speaks to the same concept through interconnection. The work we are all doing here at SG is moving us in the right direction.

1. **Golf Course land for sale** (Nancy) — Can SG initiate a way to talk about this land for community benefit? John P mentioned that the Coates property has been discussed GILLS. Michelle Benjamin has had a conversation with Gabriola Talks about a community conversation about the property. Seven pieces of land for sale as one package, eleven million dollars, 380 acres. Includes lake, hydro dam, greenhouses, housing, golf course, Hydrant set up by fire department is across the road, and so much more. Should we Include Haven property, which is for sale, in conversation. Gabriola Talks could take lead and hold a series of talks? Action: Gabriola Talks will determine if it is appropriate to take on and if it is then they will identify ways in which there can be community conversations about the benefits of community ownership for these properties.
2. **Blue Heron Learning Society Writing Workshop** (Fay) — People are invited to participate in a monthly writing workshop that will start January 19, 2026. Each month a prompt will be provided for the participants to write a short piece (fiction, non-fiction, poetry, etc.) that they can read out at the following month’s session. The focus is on personal or community change relative to environmental, social, and other issues relevant to the Gabriola Region. More information can be found at <https://blueheronlearning.ca/>
3. **Clean BC review** (Greg) — Independent review of Clean BC was just completed. 50 pages long plus appendices. A range of viable recommendations to fight climate change are featured. [Download report](#) (PDF,94 pages). BC government [press release](#).
4. **Canada/Alberta MOU agreement** (Steve) — The recent agreement between Canada and Alberta regarding a proposed pipeline, carbon capture and revised climate policies (carbon pricing versus cap) raises concerns and questions about the projections are in terms of increased emissions. Steve noted the numbers indicate that the carbon capture

comes nowhere close to the emissions that would result from a pipeline. It was suggested that an article be written for the media about this.

5. **Volunteer Fair** (Bob) — Gabriola non-profits gathered at the Community Hall in order to have a conversation about what challenges the non-profits on the island were facing. Chamber and Gabriola Health and Wellbeing Collaborative (GHWC) led the session. A report is expected from the session. Themes: Topic areas should be in one place rather than spread all over. Treasurers were in short supply and it would be nice to have that aspect coordinated (side notes – Commons doing well with a team approach and SG doing well with no requirement for a treasurer). GHWC appears to want to be the lead for coordinating all the groups. The afternoon featured organizations at tables providing info about their organization. Gertie and SG sat at the same table. Our new Pamphlet* was available for people. We weren't recruiting volunteers – it was more about providing information about our different activities. It was good to have all of the groups get together and hear what different groups were doing. There were suggestions to do non-profit round table more often. Recent collaborative meeting was good for sharing what each group is doing.

* *Pamphlet*: PDF of pamphlet can be found on SG About Us website page or [click here](#) – looking for feedback and suggestions.

6. **Gabriola Transportation Society** (Steve)
Ferry Hill Trail — The Society went to RDN subcommittee and made the case for starting to move on the trail Ferry Hill. The RDN has set aside \$500,000 of Community Works funding to do study in 2026. The Society has been pushing hard for over a year to get this moving. CBC did radio and TV spots. The Society is also advocating for being part of the decision-making group for the work on the trail and for public input early in the planning process. The Nanaimo Cycling coalition indicated that they were at the Gabriola presentation to the RDN and would like to be connected to the Transportation Society. Greg will facilitate that connection.

The [Cyclepaths report](#) was done in 2010. The route and recommendations were put into the Gabriola OCP and several other road construction changes were made as a result. But there has been limited work done due to the Ministry of Transportation rationalizing that bike paths/allowances are only needed when new roads are created. The GTS is planning to update the Active Transportation Plan in 2026. It was mentioned that Salt Spring did a lot of work creating viable bike trails. Steve U to join Transportation Society.

7. **The Water Guide** (Joan) The Water Guide is now posted on the [Water Page](#) of SG Climate 12. Water group met with RDN and they agreed to put on both a well-smart (February) and rainwater harvesting event (might be combined with well-smart). Wastewater and septic might be another workshop that they will present. The Guide will be posted on the website and a link will be available to the email list when minutes are sent out. It was suggested that a number be printed out and that it be made available at the library and at community events. The DIY creation of well watchers was

mentioned. Steve E will look into Blue Heron course focused on how to make well watchers. Lots of discussion about monitoring wells. One-pager for the Water Document was suggested.

8. **Neighbourhoods:** (Suzi) — There have been connections made between newcomers to the island and their neighbourhood contact. The Women’s Names/Tansy neighbourhood met and had a presentation from Shirley Nicholson as well as the Fire Smart group. They had about 25 people out for the event. Posters have been created for those wanting to create a neighbourhood event. The website continues to add resources.
9. **Zoning Nanaimo industrial land** (Greg, Bob A) — Paul Manly put motion forward to Nanaimo Council to limit 5 or 6 high-emitting industries on the heavy-industry-zoned property near Harmac. Motion changed to simply request a staff report on limiting high-emitting industries (passed 5 to 4). Those against argued that emissions aren’t in the purview of the municipality; they believed the BC and Federal governments were responsible. Paul also raised the issue of the Canada Investor-State Dispute Settlement mechanism, which means that (for example) an oil refinery could be situated on a piece of property and the law will protect the right of that industry to be there even if communities are against it. “Progressive Nanaimo 2026” group will be identifying and promoting progressive candidates for the upcoming local government elections. Nanaimo council supplies 8 people out of 19 on RDN board. We need to make sure that Islands Trust is also aware of what is going on.
10. **Global Climate News** — Bob A read out Deb F’s notes (thanks Deb!). See below for notes.

Next meeting: Sunday, January 25, 3:00–4:30, Gabriola Commons Main Room Upstairs
Susan S – Facilitator
Dyan DF – Notes
Bob A – Reconciliation moment

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COP 30

Another COP wrecked by fossil fuel interests and global leaders' cowardice.

Key Observations:

1. 5000 indigenous people were there, but unable to vote or attend closed door meetings.
2. The power of protests – protests happened every day, most notable an indigenous led “great people’s march” on the Middle Sat.
3. US absence created a vacuum, and an opportunity. In an historic first, America did not send an official delegation. China took an unexpected leadership role.
4. Implementation through side deals – not the main stage – such as the Belem pledge, committed signatories to quadruple sustainable fuels production and use by 2035.
5. The Global transition text – more than 80 countries signed the text for a roadmap to transition away from fossil fuels. But when the final deal was agreed, key references to fossil fuel phase out were missing. Opposition from Saudi Arabia, India and other fuel producers watered it down.
6. Warming is going to exceed 1.5°C*. Humanity is living beyond limits.
 - a. Exceed 1.5°C and not only do extreme climate events grow in number and severity, but we are also approaching tipping points for large Earth regulating systems like the Amazon rainforest and the Greenland and West Antarctic ice sheets, loss of tropical coral reef system.
 - b. Immediate action at global scale and on multiple fronts is required.
 - c. Accelerate fossil fuel phase out
 - d. Transform the global food system to absorb 3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere each year and store it safely in the ground.
 - e. Need to ensure continued “health” and resilience in nature on land and in the ocean.

* Due to the underlying warming trend combined with natural climate variability like El Nino events, annual and monthly averages have already exceeded the 1.5°C mark. The year 2024 was the first calendar year to register an annual temperature anomaly exceeding 1.5°C. The World Meteorological Organization predicts there is a 70% chance that the 5 year average for 2025 to 2029 will be more than 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

While many delegates and world leaders are beginning to doubt the efficacy of COP summits, it is the only global forum to tackle the climate crisis.

COP 31 (2026) will be held in Turkey amidst geopolitical headwinds included a US president who shunned the talks, the rising tide of right wing populous conflicts in Ukraine, Gaza, Sudan, intolerable levels of inequality, and global economic uncertainty.

Footnote: Canada had a full official delegation to COP 30 led by Environment and Climate Change Minister Julie Dabrusin and included a diverse group of representatives from civil society, indigenous communities, youth, business plus provincial and territorial governments.