

Sustainable Gabriola

Meeting notes, Sunday, Feb. 22, 2026



Present: Susan S (facilitator), Bob M (notes), Steve E, John B, Bob A, Tom C, Charlotte C, Fay W, Nancy HP, Betty K, Janice C, Greg B.

1. Introductions

2. Reconciliation Moment

Fay recounted how she'd gotten to know many Indigenous people, especially young women, while she was working in Thompson, Manitoba, including once being invited to visit a trapline in the north. She had come to greatly respect their communal values, including the importance they put on relationship.

3. Susan reported on grant information received from Vanessa Craig:

- Nanaimo Foundation's **Give Where You Live Grant** – letters of intent accepted between Feb 9-Mar 23. Up to \$15K for pilot projects and \$25K for capital projects. https://nanaimofoundation.com/grants_post/give-where-you-live-grants/
- Nanaimo Foundation's **Neighbourhood Small Grants** - \$500 to “create projects that bring people together.” Grants will open early March – check re confirmed dates. https://nanaimofoundation.com/grants_post/neighbourhood-small-grants/
- **RDN's Community Grants** for stand-alone projects (not ongoing funding). Emphasis will be on groups that don't already receive funding through the RDN. Information about past recipients available on website. Applications due by April 24 — <https://rdn.bc.ca/community-grants>.

4. Sea Lion Electric Equipment

Steve reported on a Vancouver Island based startup called Sea Lion Electric Equipment, which is designing and manufacturing electric transporters, excavators, and other equipment - <https://www.sealion.ca/>.

5. Agi Co-op

Susan announced that the Agi Co-Op is looking for new directors. People willing to run should get their names in well in advance of the next election, which will take place at the Co-Op's Mar 11th AGM — agicoopdirectors@gmail.com.

6. World climate news

Bob A read Deb F's monthly Climate report (scanned copy appended).

7. Crab count

Steve E briefly described the Hakai Institute's Salish-Sea-wide Dungeness crab megalopae monitoring project and said they are looking for volunteers to once/week check and report

on contents of each of Gabriola's two light traps (one in Descanso Bay, one in Degnan Bay). Contact Steve for more information.

8. GILSS report

Nancy (on behalf of John, SG's Gabriola Land Steward Society rep) reported that things are progressing but there's nothing to report at this time.

9. Nanaimo data centre

Janice told the meeting that she had found those promoting the idea of a Data Centre in Nanaimo are greatly misrepresenting water use, in saying it will be the equivalent of that of a 35-unit residential building. She had determined that if more realistic consumption per-person figures are used, consumption will be more like that of a 174-unit residential building. She has informed Paul Manly of this, but so far no response.

10. Island Trust policy statement

Bob A drew attendee's attention to a letter from MLA Rob Botterell to Chair Laura Patrick and Trust Council, drawing attention to a report by Island Trust lawyers that there are parts of Trust Council's 1st Draft Trust Policy Statement that contravene the Trust's mandate to preserve and protect. The correspondence may be read at <https://saltspringexchange.com/2026/02/20/letter-to-laura-patrick/>.

Notes

- Susan circulated a suggested letter to local political leaders, in support of a Snuneymuxw press release citing a lack of action on pollution into local waters. Several attendees signed on, and Susan will email our support.
- Gabriola Players will be putting on a play to do with climate change, "Manufacturing Doubt," written by Steve Earle. Show dates March 26-27-28-29.

Next meeting — Sunday Mar. 29th, 3:00 – 4:30, Gabriola Commons upstairs, main room

Facilitator: Bob M

Notes: Nancy

Reconciliation moment: open

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① Fast growing trees are taking over forests of the future and putting biodiversity, climate resilience under pressure (International study published in "Nature Plants")

- Forests will be increasingly dominated by fast growing trees while slower growing and more specialized species are at risk of disappearing.
- When specialized native species disappear, they leave gaps in ecosystems. Specialized forest ecosystems are the backbone that contribute to stability, carbon storage, and resilience to change.
- Fast growing trees are more vulnerable to drought, storms, pests and climate shocks. This makes forests less stable and less effective at storing carbon over the long term.

(Phys.org): ~~Fast growing trees are taking over forests of the future~~

② Climate change ^{in combination with development} will continue to take beloved natural spaces across Vancouver Island

- Wetland and Coastal Ecosystems: Over 85% of historical wetlands habitats in areas like South Okanagan + Vancouver Island have already been lost to development
- Old growth forests: old growth logging continues to fragment ecosystems with only 3% of highly productive old growth remaining in BC
- Marine Ecosystem Decline: Marine heatwaves and rising temperatures have led to the disappearance of 90% of sunflower sea stars allowing sea urchins to destroy kelp forests
- Loss of specific species: Local ecosystems are losing bio-diversity including fawn lilies, gray oak, native snakes, frog and insects as habitats are replaced by developments such as paved over green spaces and road expansions.

- Drought & Dying Forests: species like cedar trees die due to lack of water, disrupting local forest ecosystems

On going threats and future projections

- wildfires - accelerating frequency & intensity
- "Novel Ecosystems" - protected areas will transform as new untested ecosystems emerge.
- Habitat Fragmentation: isolated habitat patches ^{that} cannot support species long term.

(Times Colonist: climate change will continue to take beloved natural spaces)

- Nanaimo launches sea level survey to ~~guide~~ guide coastal protection plan.

The city of Nanaimo has launched "Our Coastal City" project featuring a public survey open from Feb 17 to Mar 13, 2026 to inform a new "Sea level Rise Management Plan". This initiative launched on a 2018 study identifying risks in Departure Bay, Downtown, and Protection Island. ~~it~~ aims to address projected 0.88 metre sea level rise by 2100.

- The survey is available on the "Get Involved Nanaimo" website.

② FIFA games - June 2026

- ~~2026 Fifa World~~ High end charter options
- ~~High end~~ high end charter options are being offered in host cities including Vancouver ~~and~~ and San Francisco, and Seattle. providing amenities and private screening on the water,
- Threats & annoyances for Salish Sea: anchoring, noise, lights "

③ Doomsday Clock 2026

- on Jan 27, 2026 the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists moved the Doomsday clock to 85 seconds to midnight, the closest it has ever been to signalling global catastrophe. This move reflects critical threats from nuclear arms, climate change, AI risks ^{and} signaling a "failure of leadership" and increased global instability.
- Clock's inception ~~was~~ in 1947.
- without urgent international co-operation to tackle these ~~issues~~ ~~existential~~ ~~risks~~, humanity is at its highest risk of self-inflicted disaster.