

**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO**

**REGIONAL PARKS AND TRAILS SELECT COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
TUESDAY, JUNE 7, 2016  
12:00PM**

*(RDN Committee Room, 6300 Hammond Bay Road, Nanaimo)*

**A D D E N D U M**

**PAGES**

**DELEGATIONS**

**P. Kirk** – Creekside Place Parking at Benson Creek Falls Regional Park

*Motion to receive late delegation.*

**COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE**

2-4

**P. Jacobson** – Arrowsmith Parks & Land-Use Council, to RDN RPTSC, RE: Hamilton Marsh Protection

5

**L. Brookes, Arrowsmith Naturalists, to RDN Board, RE: Preservation of Hamilton Marsh**

*Motion to receive Communications/Correspondence*



*An association of individuals and groups committed to engaging with community, government, and industry to advocate for the conservation and expansion of parks and protected areas within the Mount Arrowsmith watersheds.*

3349 Blueback Drive  
Nanoose Bay, BC V9P 9H9  
250 468 1714  
pgrinder@gmail.com

June 3, 2016

Regional Parks and Trails Select Committee  
Regional District Of Nanaimo

I am writing on behalf of the Arrowsmith Parks and Land-Use Council, of which I am a member.

We have a great concern for unique natural areas which are vulnerable to destruction through development or resource extraction. Hamilton Marsh is one of those special places.

The purpose of this communication is to convey our unqualified support for Ceri Peacey and the Friends of French Creek Conservation Society who have so passionately and relentlessly pursued the protection of Hamilton Marsh.

There are multiple compelling reasons to protect this natural area:

\* As you know, the French Creek Water Region is one of the most stressed in the RDN. French Creek and Hamilton Marsh are the two dominant water features in the region.

\* There is high surface water stress, and a relatively small amount of surface water storage. In terms of groundwater, the region includes two large Quadra sands aquifers, which run from French Creek water region into both the Englishman River and the Little Qualicum River regions. These aquifers are also under high stress.

- \* Climate change, concurrent with increased development, is bringing increasing demand and vulnerability to the water supply in this region.
- \* Wetlands like Hamilton Marsh (the most significant on the Central Island) play a critical role in water buffering, retention, storage, and groundwater recharge. Their value is being better appreciated.
- \* More municipalities are recognizing the benefits of natural infrastructure versus the engineering costs to replicate them.
- \* The marsh has well-documented high flora and fauna values for many different species, and has been identified as a sensitive ecosystem.
- \* French Creek and Hamilton Marsh have been designated a by the Ministry of the Environment as a “Sensitive Stream” under the Fish Protection Act. Low summer flows already threaten salmon and trout populations.
- \* It has high community values as a perfect place for education, research, monitoring, and appropriate recreational activities.
- \* As a unique public protected area, it would offer eco-tourism opportunities and economic benefits for Mid-Island businesses.

**While it seems like common sense to preserve this place - it remains under constant threat of being further compromised by logging and development.**

The time has come for the RDN to take action to protect this awesome natural resource, which contributes so much to our our human, plant, and wildlife communities.

**This RDN action should take the form of -**

Representation to the Landowner of the concerns of our community, and the actions the RDN recommends that they take.

Representation to the Provincial Government of the concerns of our community, and how it can assist to achieve our goals.

Working with all agencies and stakeholders to acquire Hamilton Marsh (including suitable buffer areas) to serve as a protected community watershed in the future and, in the meantime, as a public green space. This approach is similar to what Greater Victoria has planned for its sources of drinking water.

A response as to your reaction to our suggestions and request would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Pat Jacobson

On behalf of Arrowsmith Parks and Land-Use Council

Date: June 3, 2016

To: Board of Directors  
Regional District of Nanaimo

From: Lynne Brookes, PhD.  
President,  
Arrowsmith Naturalists

Re: **Preservation of Hamilton Marsh for Our Watershed, Wildlife and Community**

I am writing this letter on behalf of the 104 member Arrowsmith Naturalists, a local chapter of the 52 member Federation of BC Naturalists, to state that we thoroughly support and are a part of the community effort to preserve Hamilton Marsh. The current effort is spearheaded by the Friends of French Creek Conservation Society.

Hamilton Marsh, located primarily in Area F of the Regional District of Nanaimo, is a 36 ha. wetland protected within 360 ha. of mixed second growth forest. Wetlands are endangered internationally and locally. This at risk wetland ecosystem in our own watershed is valuable for its role in improving water quality, retention of precipitation and runoff, as the largest broodmarsh in the area, the support of at least 120 species of birds, 70 recorded species of dragonflies and red- and blue-listed species. This wetland and surrounding forest have historically played and continue to play an important role in our community for educational activities in SD69, for citizen science, for eco-tourism, and for various forms of recreation. There are also important cost saving environmental services and quantifiable benefits to the community from preserving wetlands.

We urge the Regional District of Nanaimo to make every effort to secure Hamilton Marsh and its protective forest as a Regional Park for the good of the watershed, the wildlife and the community. We will be glad to support the RDN and others in this effort for the benefit of all.

Sincerely,

*Lynne W. Brookes, Ph.D.*  
President,  
Arrowsmith Naturalists - ([www.arrowsmithnats .org](http://www.arrowsmithnats.org))

Lynne Brookes  
1418 Memorial Drive (Box 871  
Errington, BC V0R 1V 0  
[rppsolar@yahoo.com](mailto:rppsolar@yahoo.com)  
250-586-4595