



NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 60, Denman Island, B.C. V0R 1T0

February 2020

NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS
The
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
of DENMAN CONSERVANCY ASSOCIATION

7:30 pm on Monday, February 24, 2020
in the Back Hall

The AGM business will include:

- ❖ Reports from: Co-chair, Treasurer & Lands Manager
- ❖ Election of Directors
- ❖ Presentation and discussion of DCA's 5 Year Plan
- ❖ Volunteer Recognition

Refreshments and 'Meet the Directors' following the meeting

On the Land

Conservation Covenants and Land Stewardship Pledges

by Erika Bland

In this era of accelerating biodiversity loss, protecting the special plants and critters in our backyards may be the best way to contribute to maintaining diverse ecological communities within a matrix of different land uses. Conservation covenants and Land Stewardship Pledges are two tools for ensuring the ongoing stewardship of the places you love.

What is a conservation covenant?

A conservation covenant is "a voluntary, legal agreement between an agency and a landowner used to protect values on private land without requiring the landowner to part with the land. The covenant is registered against the title to the property in the British Columbia Land Title Office under section 219 of the Land Title Act." (Islands Trust Conservancy 2020)

A conservation covenant registered on property title means that future owners of the land are bound by the terms of the covenant to protect the land and the natural amenities defined therein. Lots of information about options for conservation covenants is available on the Islands Trust Conservancy website.

Through this increasingly common mechanism, landowners can leave a legacy of ecological protection that is carried forward beyond their time as stewards of that piece of land. A covenant can be registered on all or part of a property. Examples of conservation covenants on Denman Island held by DCA, such as the Denman Island Chocolate Factory or the Denman Island Natural Burial Cemetery, show how conservation covenants can be flexible in integrating the protection of biodiversity with other land uses. A conservation covenant can allow the landowner to keep certain rights, such as firewood collection or maintenance of a viewscape.

...continued Page 2

How do conservation covenants work?

A landowner identifies natural amenities they wish to protect on their land and approaches an agency such as Denman Conservancy or Islands Trust Conservancy with a proposal for that agency to hold a conservation covenant on a specific part of the land. The agency and landowner work together to assess and define the ecological values of that land in need of ongoing protection (i.e. Old Growth or mature trees, sensitive wetlands, critical habitat for species at risk, etc.). As part of this process, an ecological survey (called a Baseline Documentation Report) is carried out by a professional biologist to determine the characteristics of the land and the specific ecological amenities to be protected by the covenant. Terms of the covenant are drafted and agreed upon by the parties. The conservation covenant document goes through a legal review process, wording is finalized and the agreement is registered with the Land Titles office. Generally, the costs of the covenant process are shared by the landowner and the covenant holder. Landowners benefit by receiving an annual property tax exemption on the covenanted portion(s) of the land when Islands Trust Conservancy holds the covenant.

Subsequent monitoring of the covenant area, usually once per year, is carried out by the covenant holder, to ensure the terms of the covenant are being upheld. This is an opportunity to rectify anything that has occurred that violates (or could violate) the covenant terms. In my experience, the monitoring process is invaluable as a wonderful opportunity for the covenant holder to connect with the landowner and hear about their unique observations of the land.

Another Approach - Land Stewardship Pledges

In 1997-99, DCA undertook a landowner contact stewardship program which worked to encourage landowners on the island to preserve valuable natural areas on privately held lands.



Around the island, you will see signs at entrances to the participating properties, and outside the Community Hall there is a plaque listing all participants. The project conducted site visits with the landowners of 114 properties resulting in the protection of 1157.99 acres of privately held land. Full details of this project can be found on the DCA website under the 'Our Work' tab.

Time for another round?

At a recent meeting of the DIRA Climate Action Committee, this project was mentioned by Anne DeCossen, who was one of the leaders of the project at that time. I sensed great enthusiasm about DCA leading another such initiative, and am keen to explore what this would look like. In my mind, this would involve following up with previous Land Stewards or new owners of the properties where these Stewardship pledges were made, as well as identifying new properties where there are valuable ecological features that the landowners wish to protect through a voluntary pledge. Perhaps some of these properties would be appropriate for registration of conservation covenants, and this could be explored.



2. Holly roots – rhizomes. See page 3

DENMAN CONSERVANCY WANTS YOU!

If you like cocktails, massage, and lounge music at your organization's meetings, Denman Conservancy Association is probably not for you. But, if you want to see Denman's natural areas preserved, especially in a time of changing climate, and learn about Denman's natural wealth, we've got a deal for you. DCA is looking for new members for its Board of Directors. If you are interested, please call Susan-Marie Yoshihara at 335 0253 or info@denmanconservancy.

The great 2020 Fillongley Provincial Park English Holly Work Bee!

Notice how everything is easier and so fun when you get a team of dedicated volunteers together? That's what happened when we all tackled holly removal in Fillongley Park for a three day work bee! On Jan. 26, 27 and 28th, 31 volunteers donated more than 78 hours to remove a LOT of holly. In fact we removed over 165 cubic metres of holly! You say how much is that? It's a roll 2 m tall by 2 m wide and 40 m long!! This included some really large tree holly that needed chainsaws and reciprocating saws to cut down (see picture 1). Anyone who has dug holly up knows that they have wicked underground parts (called rhizomes; see picture 2) that form extensive networks from which suckers pop up above ground. We removed many of these from wet areas, but also adjacent to large trees and in rotting logs. They really love all that rotting nutrients. Because most of the larger trees were under the canopy in the shade, they didn't have many berries. Luckily!

For those who volunteered last year, we resurveyed the test plot for resprouted shoots, and we can all be very satisfied that there were very few resprouts or new plants. We got that area resurveyed and removed on Sunday afternoon. So great job! What we did find was surprising though – some of the trees that had been sprayed with pesticides by BC Parks in 2018 actually resprouted from the base of the sprayed (and we thought) dead plants! We even found a few examples of where a “dead” branch from a sprayed tree had touched the ground and resprouted! Wow.

We would also like to thank all those volunteers for baking or donating goodies. They were much appreciated by all. And thankfully, the rain held off – I guess that's another of Erika Bland's super powers! That and organising a super work bee! Thanks Erika for all you do.



1. Holly stump..... photos by L Hermanutz

Looking Forward to 2025 Seeking Your Input on DCA Strategic Goals

With the start of the new decade, DCA is looking forward and developing goals and objectives to guide our activities for the next 5 years. The DCA Board of Directors held a day-long focus meeting in late January to develop a draft plan for our 2020-2025 Strategic Goals that we will be presenting at the Annual General Meeting on Monday February 24. Members will have the opportunity to provide input on the goals and objectives at the AGM using “sticky note democracy”. As ever, our primary goal is to preserve and protect the natural environment around us. Other important goals are to facilitate community education and participation in conservation activities, and to support and conduct research on Denman in the field of conservation. A new goal that we are developing for the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan is to accept and act on the reality of the climate emergency by confirming principles for managing conservation lands and developing and implementing strategies for outreach, education and advocacy. We also have the longstanding goals of maintaining and building our financial and human capacity, and meeting our administrative obligations.

Within each goal there will be a number of specific objectives proposed to contribute to achieving the goal. Some of the new objectives we are considering include :

- Facilitate a Denman-wide tree-planting project
- Develop a prioritized list for acquiring lands based on highest conservation value
- As part of the United Nations Decade of Restoration, explore the potential for active habitat restoration on DCA-managed lands
- Develop and maintain a database for monitoring and mapping data
- Seek opportunities for engagement with First Nations and Indigenous peoples
- Explore new funding opportunities
- Develop a local nature guide and include a nature education element in DCA's outreach activities
- Communicate and cooperate with other conservation groups in our region
- Work with relevant organizations and agencies to ensure ongoing optimal quality and quantity of water on conservation lands

Join us at the AGM to hear more about the goals and objectives proposed in our new Strategic Plan and let us know what you think.

Contributors to this Newsletter:

[Erika Bland](#), [Anne Fisher](#), [Luise Hermanutz](#), [John Millen](#), [Patti Willis](#)

The Association for Denman Island Marine Stewards
& Denman Conservancy Association Invite You To

THE HEART OF THE FRASER

a Film Screening & Valentines Dinner

Friday February 14th

Denman Island Community Hall 1196 NW Rd, D.I.
Pentlatch, K'ómoks, Qualicum, Tla'amin Homelands

6pm | Dinner

Pizza by Ima's Kitchen
Plus s Selection of Salads

7pm | Film

Introduced by Dr. Ken Ashley
Director, BCIT Rivers Institute

\$25 Dinner + Film Advanced Tickets Required

Tix Available Abraxas Books & Weinberg's Buckley Bay *until Feb 10*

(\$0-15 Sliding Scale for **Film Only** - Advanced Tickets OR at Door)

Families welcome! dcalandmanager@gmail.com for kids food pricing or other questions.

The Peace Pagoda Finds a Home

If you are old enough to think back to 1984, you may remember that the Denman Island Peace Group (DIPG) constructed an ambitious, full-scale cedar and stone Peace Pagoda at the Courtenay Renaissance Faire. This was in response to the nuclear weapons' standoff between the US and the USSR. The DIPG pagoda was inspired by a Buddhist peace pagoda in Washington State, which was intended as an acupuncture point transmitting positive energy to the global body. When it was brought back to Denman from the Faire, there were a number of sites considered for the pagoda's home, but it ended up residing (in pieces) in the Lake Farm machine shed for the past 36 years. Its handcrafted pieces have now been liberated by the Denman Conservancy Association and will be reassembled this spring on the Settlement Lands to serve as a covered shelter for rest and environmental education.

Up-Coming Events

Wednesday February 12: **Taylor's Checkerspot Recovery Project Update**

6:30 pm to 8:30 pm, Back Hall

Sponsored by Garry Oak ecosystems recovery team and others

Friday February 14: **Heart of the Fraser** – dinner and film

6 pm, Community Hall

Sponsored by DCA & ADIMS

Monday February 24: **DCA AGM**

7:30 pm, Back Hall

Saturday March 7: **Invasive Species Workshop**

10 am – 2 pm Activity Centre

Sponsored by DCA & Pesticide Committee