



Nature Salt Spring

<https://naturesaltspring.org>

December 1, 2022

Dear Ruth and Bryan –

I am writing on behalf of our group in support of Transition Salt Spring's EcoAction Fund application "Nature Based Solutions: Improving and Protecting Fresh Water while Increasing Fire Resistance and Restoring Ecosystem Vitality in the Maxwell Creek Watershed".

We understand that the goals of this project are to

1. Significantly reduce seasonal high waterflows in ditches alongside Mt. Maxwell Road to reduce damage to infrastructure, thereby reducing sedimentation into Rippon Creek and Lake Maxwell, and restoring hydrological and ecosystem functions.
2. Significantly reduce seasonal high waterflows in and leading into Rippon Creek by restoring natural infiltration, water retention and hydrology functions, thereby reducing threats to road-related infrastructure and related negative impacts on area ecology.
3. Demonstrate the effectiveness of natural infrastructure working alongside modified grey infrastructure to mitigate climate impacts on freshwater ecosystems and road infrastructure, while reducing the ecosystem-damaging negative feedback loops created by using grey infrastructure alone.

The vision of Nature Salt Spring is *"A Gulf Island Region where natural ecosystems are valued, protected, restored, studied and explored by all members of the community"* and our mission statement is *"To inspire, inform and empower people to value, understand and protect local ecosystems and biodiversity."*

With this in mind, we are very enthusiastic about your proposed project, as it is focused on understanding, restoring, protecting and valuing the natural functioning of the ecosystem in the study area. We believe use of nature-based solutions is an excellent way to ameliorate problems caused by past practises, and to avoid such problems in future. We are particularly pleased to see the wide range of community groups collaborating with TSS on this project, and potential shared learnings about the practical benefits of restoration of damaged ecosystems.

The Nature Salt Spring Steering Committee has discussed how our group might be involved with the Nature Based Solutions Project. As it progresses, we look forward to contributing by:

- Observing and recording bird activity and other wildlife at the project site before and after restoration works are done, to help evaluate changes in habitat richness and biodiversity
- Sharing members' expertise related to wetland restoration and engineering
- Working with high school students and other community members to help with plantings
- Distributing informational articles about the project to our membership and community
- Organizing interpretive walks and educational events for the public to observe the project and become informed about the many values achieved by restoring wetlands
- Presenting a NatureKids "Explorer Event" for families to see and learn about this project and maybe contribute in some small way, to meet our NK goal of taking action for nature

We have confidence in the ability of Transition Salt Spring to collaborate and successfully carry out this proposal. We believe it is a very valuable project and urge the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change to provide the funds necessary to implement it.

I am available at jdwilkin@telus.net to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,
Jean Wilkinson, Nature Salt Spring