



Salt Spring Island Foundation
158A Fulford-Ganges Road
Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 2R7

January 29, 2023

Dear Grant Selection Committee,

This letter is to express support from Nature Salt Spring, a local club associated with BC Nature, for the “Native Plant Garden & Huy ch q’u Gathering Place” proposal submitted to your Indigenous Priorities Fund.

Nature Salt Spring is a new organization with a goal to deepen the connection of all Islanders with nature. It grew out of our concerns about the Climate and Biodiversity Crises, and our recognition that healthy, sustainable human societies can only grow and flourish if citizens are committed to understanding, enjoying and protecting the ecosystems and biodiversity that support us and all life on the planet.

We are very pleased to see the work already done with students to create two native plant gardens, as this kind of “hands in the soil” activity can inspire a deep interest in and love of nature. We fully support the goals of this proposal to expand, enhance and use these gardens to help children learn more about native plants, local ecosystems, and their significant connections to indigenous cultures.

As University of Victoria student Maya Irwin writes in her impressive Native Plant Garden Design for this site: “[Native plants] provide a way for us to engage with nature and learn about our local flora and fauna. When coupled with early childhood education, they offer a unique opportunity to foster a lifelong connection to the places we live. This is especially important in the light of our current climate and biodiversity crises - never has it been more important to love and appreciate plants” (Dec. 2022, page 3).

Given the careful planning that has gone into this project, we are confident it will be successful, and provide a wonderful resource for students to gain more knowledge and understanding about the inter-connectedness of life, and develop a commitment to stewardship. When the children tell their families about what they are doing and learning, this awareness will be extended. Furthermore, since the site is in a very visible and easily-accessed location, the entire community will have the opportunity to observe and appreciate the beauty and benefits of native plants, and their importance to local pollinators, birds and Indigenous cultures.

We hope you will approve this proposal, and thank you for your dedicated work to support exciting and useful community projects.

Sincerely yours,

Kathleen Maser, Steering Committee Co-Chair
David Denning, Steering Committee Co-Chair
Nature Salt Spring
<http://NatueSaltspring.org>