



Cowichan Estuary Restoration
& Conservation Association



August 29, 2023

Mayor and Council
Municipality of North Cowichan
7030 Trans-Canada Highway
Duncan, BC V9L 6A1
council@northcowichan.ca

Re: Request for support to obtain a permit to improve the trail along the Cowichan Estuary

Hello Mayor and Council,

Conservationists and ambassadors of the Cowichan Estuary welcome BC Nature Trust's recent announcement of the plan to rehabilitate 70 hectares of former farmland for restoration into a functional salt marsh. The planned removal of the dike will also remove a heavily used CVRD trail from Maple Grove Park in the estuary.

We expect the removal of this popular dike trail will significantly increase use of the trail along Dock Road that the Cowichan Estuary Restoration and Conservation Association (CERCA) created and maintains, and the trail along the Cowichan Estuary that leads to a spit at the Western Forest Products mill pond. The latter trail serves bird watchers, photographers and nature lovers as a wildlife viewing area and is heavily overgrown by invasive Scotch broom following years without maintenance, making access increasingly difficult. Also, areas of the side bank are eroding.

CERCA and the Cowichan Valley Naturalists' Society would like to improve the Cowichan Estuary trail by removing broom, replacing it with native plants and stabilizing the areas where the side bank is eroding.

Western Forest Products supports our efforts to enhance the trail and its recreational use, however, we need a permit from the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations to work there. Since the area is located within North Cowichan we suggest that it would be in North Cowichan's interest to assist our two organizations to obtain the permit so we can improve its trail system. Would you please add your voice to ours to aid us in obtaining a permit. With gratitude.

Dr. Goetz Schuerholz, Chair
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Bruce Coates, President
Cowichan Valley Naturalists' Society
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