

To Mayor Murdock and Saanich Council

We, the undersigned, represent many of the Saanich Pulling Together program lead stewards and volunteers as well as other community members who support our park system. Volunteers work in over 55 Saanich Parks and natural areas, and have observed substantial impacts on the integrity of these diverse ecological areas over the past years.

While we are involved in invasive plant removal and informing the public about the rich biodiversity and significance of our natural area parks we observe many issues that are not being dealt with by an underfunded, under resourced Saanich Parks Department.

We believe that the Parks Department needs significant resources to provide public education, effective parks signage, protective fencing for restored areas, increased restoration projects, updated management plans and enforcement/oversight for the areas being restored by Pulling Together volunteers and Parks staff in the many significant natural areas that are experiencing amplified impacts from our increased local population.

We respectfully request action to prevent further degradation of Saanich Parks natural ecosystems, particularly where volunteers are attempting restorative work, including the protection and management of wildlife, species at risk, and other biodiversity. We believe that these actions should include significant public education, clear and informative signage, restrictions on use by people and their pets based on management plans and updated bylaws, and increased support for the incredible work done by Saanich Parks to maintain our natural heritage for the future.

If you agree with and wish to have your **name included as a signatory on the petition**, please forward your full name, Saanich park connection, resident municipality and postal code **by March 5, 2023** to Ted Lea tedloralea@shaw.ca