

Notice of Motion

Monday, September 9, 2024

From: Councillor Chambers

Call to Action for Rithets Bog

That staff reach out to the Rithet's Bog Conservancy to determine quick fixes that may mitigate flooding ahead of the Capital Regional District Watershed Plan that are inexpensive and will prevent species extinction and biodiversity loss.

Rationale:

In 2023 Saanich produced the "State of Biodiversity" report which identifies Rithets as having "very high biodiversity." Rithets likely has the highest biodiversity of any site in Saanich.

As a result of global climate change our summers are getting longer and drier. This results in the summer water table at Rithet's getting lower and lower. Systems that historically would be inundated through the summer and into the fall are drying up in June. Drying out wetland habitats during the summer is devastating for these systems. Aquatic flora and fauna simply cannot survive without standing water. If you're a Three-Spined Stickleback (*Gasterosteus aculeatus*) and there is no water, you die. If you are a Pacific Chorus Frog (*Pseudacris regilla*) even an extra week of inundation can mean the difference between a successful brood of tadpoles becoming froglets or the loss of a generation.

Although there is a Capital Regional District watershed program on its way, we cannot wait with climate change and worsening conditions. From PKOLS to Portage Inlet with Rithets Bog in between, these are the most biodiverse areas in Saanich and in Canada. These solutions are expensive and timely. There are some quick fixes that may mitigate drought and prevent species extinction, this Notice of Motion requests staff reach out to the Rithets Bog conservancy stewards for their input and bring back options for quick fixes to save the most biodiverse and important wetland areas in Saanich

The Notice of Motion will be considered at a future Council meeting.