



Islands Trust

**GAMBIER ISLAND
LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE
AGENDA**

A BUSINESS MEETING OF **THE GAMBIER ISLAND LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE**
held at 10:30 am on Thursday, July 11, 2013
at Keats Camp – Pilot House, Keats Island, BC

LATE ITEMS, ADDITIONS

**AMENDMENTS/ADDITIONS
TO ITEMS:**

- 14. NEW BUSINESS**
- 14.5 Memorandum dated May 22, 2013 regarding Gambier Island Local Trust Area Eelgrass Mapping – Funding - *attached*
- 14.6 Trust Council meeting Venue
- 14.7 Honorarium for Ramona de Graaf



Memorandum

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Date: May 22, 2013

File Number: GM – 6500

To: Gambier Island Local Trust Committee
For meeting of July 11, 2013

From: Christine Rikley, Islands Trust Fund
Aleksandra Brzozowski, Island Planner, Local Planning Services

Re: Gambier Island Local Trust Area Eelgrass Mapping – Funding

Purpose

To request the Gambier Island Local Trust Committee (LTC) commit \$2,000 from the LTC's 2013-2014 budget to eelgrass mapping of the Associated Islands in the Gambier Island Local Trust Area, which would be a collaborative initiative of the Islands Trust, Islands Trust Fund, and Seagrass Conservation Working Group.

Background

The recently released Audit of Biodiversity in B.C. (Office of the Auditor General of B.C.) highlighted the importance of collecting sufficient and reliable information on species distribution in order to make well-informed decisions about conserving biodiversity. With sensitive ecosystem mapping completed on Gambier (2008-2010), the LTC has access to biodiversity distribution data for terrestrial species. At the March 2013 shoreline workshop, the need for similar biodiversity data collection for shoreline and foreshore environments was identified.

Eelgrass is a critical nearshore habitat for birds, mammals, invertebrates and commercial and non commercial fish. Eelgrass beds are also an important carbon sink. Contaminates and development pressures from shoreline land use threaten eelgrass ecosystems and the species they support.

Proposed eelgrass mapping will support the LTC and Trust Fund Board in making science-based decisions about land use and conservation that preserve Gambier and its associated islands' foreshore ecosystems. Eelgrass mapping will serve as baseline inventories from which we can monitor the effects of conservation activities, as well as human impacts, such as potential increased tanker traffic, marine industrial activities (e.g. log dumping and booms), and foreshore use (e.g. wharves and docks). Eelgrass mapping will also enable marine conservation groups to identify areas ideal for eelgrass restoration.

In 2012, the Islands Trust Fund and Seagrass Conservation Working Group, with financial assistance from some local trust committees and outside funders, mapped eelgrass in the following areas:

- North and South Pender;
- Thetis and associated islands (except Valdes);
- Gambier;
- Lasqueti; and,
- Mayne.

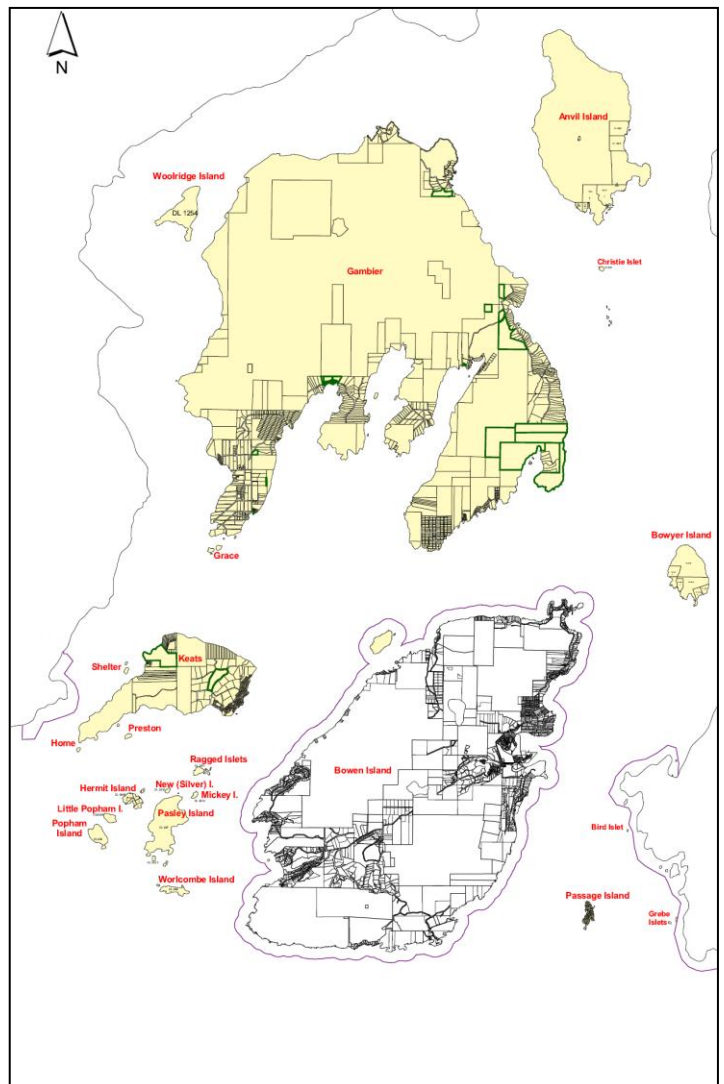
In 2013, the partnership aims to map eelgrass in the following areas (subject to funding):

- Galiano and associated islands;
- Valdes;
- Bowen;
- Gambier associated islands;
- Gabriola and associated islands;
- Denman Island; and
- Hornby Island

Eelgrass Mapping in the Gambier Island Local Trust Area

Data for eelgrass mapping will be collected by boat with the aid of a towed underwater camera. The mapping will be completed to a Level 1 standard as defined in “Methods for Mapping and Monitoring Eelgrass Habitat in British Columbia (Dec 2002)”, available through the Community Mapping Network, and as modified through a methodology approved by a qualified registered professional biologist. The modifications to the methodology are designed to accommodate modernized mapping techniques and to reduce costs.

The Gambier Island Associated Islands that will be part of the 2013-2014 eelgrass mapping project will include all of the islands in Howe Sound as follows (see adjacent map):



Alexandra	New (Silver) Islet
Anvil	Paisley
Bowyer	Passage
Christie Islet	Popham
Defence	Preston
Grace	Ragged
Grebe Islets	Shelter Islets
Hermit	Small
Home	White
Tolmie	Woolridge
Little Popham	Worlcombe
Mickey	

Trust Council approved \$22,000 in program funding for eelgrass mapping in the planned LTAs for 2013. Combined with funding from the Islands Trust Fund, the Galiano Island Local Trust Committee, the Denman Island Local Trust Committee, and confirmed grants achieved by the Seagrass Conservation Working Group, the partnership still has a funding gap of approximately \$5,000 for this program which we are hoping to cover with funding from the Gambier Island Local Trust Committee, the Hornby Island Local Trust Committee and the Islands Trust Science and Technical budget. The following is a cost/revenue breakdown for the Gambier Associated Islands (not including the Thormanbies and islands outside of Howe Sound):

Gambier Island Eelgrass Inventory Budget

Cost		
Gambier associated islands (22.5km)		\$9,460
Revenue		
Islands Trust	\$2,930	
Islands Trust Fund	1,030	
Seagrass Conservation Working Group (grants confirmed)	<u>3,500</u>	
	\$7,460	
Funding gap		\$2,000

Staff Comments:

The following two policies are contained in the Gambier Associated Islands Official Community Plan:

3.12.1 The LTC should support and undertake initiatives to identify environmentally sensitive areas and significant natural sites, features and landforms in the planning area.

3.12.3 The LTC should protect environmentally sensitive areas, significant natural sites, features, views, scenic areas and landforms in the planning area through:

(b) the implementation of development permit areas where accurate mapping identifying sensitive ecosystems at an appropriate scale is available and where the administration of development permit areas is feasible.

Mapping eelgrass for the Gambier Associated Islands would serve towards implementing these policies.

As regards the 2013/2014 budget for the Gambier LTC, \$8,000 has been budgeted for Work Program Priority #3: Foreshore Protection/Stewardship. To date, this area of funding has not been accessed. The requested \$2,000 for eelgrass mapping could fall under this budget area as part of preliminary research to underpin possible shoreline DPAs for the Associated Islands.

Alternatively, the \$2,000 funding gap could be allocated from Special Projects, which is a general budget area to be used at the discretion of the LTC to achieve LTC objectives beyond the current Work Program budget. Currently, \$2 has been spent from this budget area.

Please note that the Gambier LTC may consider splitting the funding requests between the two funding areas, and may also consider funding an amount lower than \$2,000.