

Parks and Natural Environment Advisory Committee

7pm April 22, 2026

1370 Crown Street – DNV Operations Centre

Minutes

Present: Maysa Tsang, Chair
Johanna Moretto
Sandra Hartner
Adele Wilson
Councillor Lisa Muri
Caroline Jackson, General Manager,
Climate Action and Parks
Steve Jenkins, Manager, Parks

Absent: Hamish Fairweather
Charlene Seward
Michael Cliff
Karin Jensen
Glen Parker

Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm

1. Welcome and introductions

2. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by

Seconded by

THAT the April 2026, agenda is approved

CARRIED

3. Adoption of February 2026 Meeting Minutes

Moved by

Seconded by

THAT the February 2026 meeting minutes are adopted

CARRIED

4. Nature and Biodiversity Strategy

The District's Climate Action team is creating a Nature and Biodiversity Strategy to:

- Increase awareness of nature and biodiversity in the District
- Identify and protect important ecosystems and corridors
- Recommend policies, plans, and operational practices, that support long-term ecological integrity

This strategy has been called for in the Official Community Plan and the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy. It includes mapping of habitat types, tree canopy, freshwater ecosystems, biodiversity rankings, and a desired habitat network. This information will guide District decision making in various areas including land acquisition, habitat restoration, wildfire management, and development. Throughout the plan, engagement with various District teams and committees, First Nations, and environmental non-profit organizations has taken place.

Vision:

The District envisions an ecological network of protected and interconnected natural areas that are biodiverse and resilient to climate change, where shared community stewardship supports opportunities for everyone to connect with nature.

Twenty-three high level action items were identified by District teams and implemented into the strategy. These actions cover planning and policy, municipal operations, habitat restoration and enhancement, education and stewardship, and data collection and monitoring. Under these twenty-three action items, there are many fine scale directives that will guide daily staff operations.

Next Steps:

- Public engagement from May 4-24
- Council consideration

Committee Feedback:

- Educate private landowners regarding invasive species, illegal dumping, etc. Especially those near biodiversity hot spots.
- Volunteer events and demonstration projects such as pollinator gardens with infographics allow the community to get involved
- Governments have made it harder for people to volunteer (liability issues), we should work to increase opportunities
- The North Shore is used by residents from across the lower mainland, and nature can't always handle that much pressure. It's ok to decommission trails and close areas for conservation. Metro Van has large areas of land that are strictly conservation areas and requires bookings to enter Widgeon Marsh. It's ok for us to use these management tools to protect nature.
- QR codes at trailheads for survey access are a great engagement tool
- Presenting this strategy to local community organizations (Blueridge, Parkgate, Lynn Valley, etc.) will help get residents involved in the action items of this strategy. People want to be involved and feel a sense of ownership and belonging on public lands.

- It would be interesting to look at historical tree canopy data to see where we are losing trees and how much of our canopy has been lost.
- Ensure that monitoring of tree canopy and changes in ecosystems over time is in place – There is a plan for ongoing monitoring.
- Ensure that maps are interactive so that small scale, high value ecosystems can be zoomed in on. Small pocket ecosystems are sometimes a saving grace for fauna and flora, and they're easily overlooked. – These maps will be available to staff and the public alike and will be interactive with the ability to zoom in and out and utilize different layers of interest.
- How does this tie into wildfire planning? - A lot of the work the District is doing to support biodiversity, such as the forest resilience work, street tree program, urban canopy festival, and habitat restoration, supports wildfire resilience. Our forest resilience and habitat restoration programs increase species diversity, particularly deciduous species, which are more resistant to fire. These programs also help decrease invasive species that are more flammable. And our street tree and urban canopy programs help increase shade, cooling, and water retention within the district. Healthy, diverse ecosystems are one of our greatest defenses against natural disasters.
- We should ensure that City of North Vancouver and our local First Nations are aware of our mapping so and vice versa so that we can all work together. - CNV mapping was taken into consideration in the creation of this strategy, but no First Nations mapping was available.
- Committee members would love to have the Engineering and Planning departments come speak to them about how this strategy will be implemented into development. It's easy for these departments to be on board in theory but can be hard for them to implement when there are competing pressures.
- Communication is key, how can we continue to broaden communication with other departments, mayor and council, community organizations, and residents. Council does not always have the information they need to know what questions to ask, and the community and the environment are being impacted because of it.
- Reports to Council templates should have an environment section built into them so that we are forced to look through that lens regularly.
- Staff and committees need to be protective of the environment and push back on development plans. PNEAC members used to regularly show up at council meetings to oppose development proposals.
- It would be beneficial for council to have a decision-making matrix of what to consider from a nature and biodiversity standpoint. This has worked in the past when the District was considering selling School District land for development.

5. Hastings Creek Trail Updates:

After many years of looking at different options, the decision was made to close a section of Hastings Creek Trail. This caused an outcry in the community, and a 1000-person survey was brought forward to council. The District doesn't want to close the trail. However, there is an underlying instability issue in the area that it will cost millions of dollars to mitigate. Slides in this area date back to the 1980's, and they are increasing in frequency and intensity. So even with millions of dollars, there's no guarantee that a future slide will not wipe out the work.

The Parks department responded with further consultation with some of the best trail builders in the region to try to find a solution. Once those proposals come in, they will be assessed and presented to council with recommendations.

From a nature and biodiversity perspective, the trail closure is not a bad thing. Hastings Creek is a salmon bearing stream and a valuable wildlife corridor. The constant recreation and trail building pressures do negatively impact fish and wildlife.

Committee Comments:

- Weather systems are changing drastically, and we don't have control over these. We need to make sure people understand what the costs are to make this trail safe and accessible, and what other opportunities there might be to use that same funding.

6. Round Table and Member Updates

- It was re-emphasized that the committee would like to have Engineering and Planning come in to discuss how the Nature and Biodiversity strategy will be implemented in development.
- There will be a motion to council made to have Roche Point Park protected in perpetuity under the Park Dedication Bylaws. This is due to a patch of old growth significant to the region.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:54 pm.