

Denman Island Residents Association Marine Guardians Committee

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Annual Report for the April 11, 2016 DIRA AGM meeting

The objective of this committee is:

- To communicate and work with all other organizations, ministries, local residents, agencies or Governments to protect and preserve Denman Island beaches, and foreshore areas.
- To research possible remedies or initiatives to prevent any further erosion of fish habitat, and all areas of Denman beaches up to legal boundaries of upland area.
- To bring recommendations forward to Denman residents for consideration.
- To undertake protection initiatives either independently or in partnership with other DIRA Committees, NPO's, or Ministries which may include fundraising initiatives

Since the last DIRA AGM, the Marine Guardians have:

April 2015 DIRA MG's met on Denman with Bruce Jolliffe (CVRD Chair and Director of Area A) and Trustee Critchley with the result that both local government reps. supported the initiative to prohibit vehicles on our beaches.

May 2015- DIRA MG's and the Assoc. for Denman Island Assoc. for Marine Stewards met with the DIRA Exec. and were assured that the DIRA Exec. fully supports all its committees.

June 2015- outreach to shellfish growers about why driving on the beach is harmful through Hollie Wood (Isbister) Oysters. Laurie Montemurro volunteered to be the MG's liaison with the DIRA Exec.

July 2015- Successful **Motion** made at a regular DIRA meeting to change the name of DIRA Guardians of Denman Shores to DIRA Marine Guardians Committee .

Last October we met at the Min. of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) office with Area Manager Tallina McCrae, Trustee Critchley. MOTI has jurisdiction over beach accesses and was fully supportive of the installation of appropriate and effective signage at Hinton and Millard Rd. as a first step. She was also aware that the existing MOTI sign at Hinton is ineffective but will explore other options.

Last December we met with the CVRD Parks Planner Karin Albert and showed her both Hinton and Millard Rd. areas where there was obvious evidence that vehicles were driving along the foreshore over forage fish spawning grounds. She too, was in favor of signage as a first step and will connect with MOTI to avoid duplication. Parks Planner Albert also invited the MG's to come and make a presentation to CVRD staff in the near future to further the cause to protect our foreshore.

January 2016 we met with the DIRA exec. and expressed our support for the moving of the existing Community Dock gate from it's current location to the southern boundary of Water Lot 257 to not only protect the foreshore but also to fulfill the contractual obligations between DIRA and Telus to protect the Telus cable.

Both MG co-chairs attended the CVRD TACPAC (Technical and Public Advisory Committees) meeting and expressed support for continuing on with the outfall location to remain at Cape Lazo rather than Baynes Sound.

February 2016 MG's made the following motion at the DIRA meeting- that the DIRA Exec. bring back to the membership, all the information gathered from the "exploratory phase" with Telus before any decisions are made on DIRA's behalf but because of a lack of quorum, it was tabled until the March meeting.

March 2016 the above motion passed and another motion was proposed That the DIRA membership approves the Marine Guardians sending their letter to Telus re environmental concerns on the foreshore near the Telus cable. The Chair clarified for the members present that the Executive had requested the Guardians hold off sending their letter until after the issue around the DIRA/Telus cable contract is resolved. Much discussion ensued, ranging from why vehicles are on the beach to is there documentation that the forage fish habitat has been compromised by vehicles driving on this stretch of beach. Dorrie was able to provide background information on the decline of forage fish in Baynes Sound. Some members felt the Executive's decision should be respected while other members felt the letter could be sent. Doug Wright requested they wait until the boat ramp is built as once the ramp is in place there should be no reason for people driving on that stretch of beach. A friendly amendment was requested to remove mention of heavy equipment from the letter. It was noted this motion is being used to appeal an Executive ruling. The procedural point was made that if a motion is made by a member then it can be voted on to counteract the recommendation of the Executive. The vote was called and the motion failed. Also in March, the MG's attended the Local Trust Committee meeting and offered suggestions as to how the Local Trust could participate in making our beaches more pedestrian friendly and protect habitat of numerous species in their Marine Conservation zones.

Current members are- Dorrie Woodward and Edi Johnston co-chairs, Shelley McKeachie, Howard and Maryjane Stewart and Barb Mills