

Chris Moehr
4545 William Head Road

May 9thth., 2023

To: Councilor Jay Shukin & the Buffer Lands Working Group

Re: Considerations with respect to the fate of our 'Buffer Lands'

I send this note to congratulate you and to express my personal appreciation that you have come forward to assist our community in what is likely to be the most important land use issue facing us in not only the past decade, but the one to come.

As I am sure you know, over the decades Metchosin's typical response to land use issues – often generated by subdivision and amenity zoning requests, culminates in bringing in our Environmental Advisory Group – *thank God they are there*, followed by input from our Parks and Trails Advisory Committee. The end result of this is literally an impressive array of green space and publicly accessible trail systems throughout our entire municipality. And what is the fallout of all of this hard work and productivity – an 80% increase in our day use traffic, accelerated wear and tear on our roads, inadequate parking at our trailheads and park access points – all of this largely due to the failure of our adjacent municipalities to adequately provide their own recreational and green space. Question – is this the best we can and should do at this point in time?

I believe that you are all well aware that we are now at a time of unprecedented climate change and biodiversity crisis. Perhaps now is an optimum time to address these challenges in the context of Metchosin's Buffer Lands. As a minimum, the new federal Climate Emergency Program should be an integral part of any public engagement process.

It is now way beyond time that we collectively start to think about the next generation and the one after that in this context. Some things to think about in this context include ... how to legally prohibit soon-to-be adjacent Langford residents and others from accessing our

protected Buffer Lands; and what zoning adjustments would need to be made, or possibly created, to accommodate an appropriate dedication as conservation lands to our entire buffer area in the name of biodiversity protection and enhancement.

I will conclude by stating that I have solid reason to believe that the concept of moving forward to a dedicated conservation area (assisted by federal funding) for our Buffer Lands, is not only available but has significant uptake within our community.

As you work your way through the challenging task before you, please do not lose sight of this potential, possible and doable goal.

Chris Moehr,
President, APRM