

Earth Day Activities Must Happen Year Round

Each year on April 22nd, countries around the world celebrate Earth Day, with countless citizens participating in community events, like restoring streams and cleaning up beaches, or undertaking individual activities like planting a tree, forgoing the car, or eating a vegan meal.

This year, the usual festivals and community events had to be cancelled, to avoid the spread of COVID-19. The global pandemic has also made it easy to forget, on a day-to-day basis, that issues like climate change and protecting our environment are still important – and that these challenges are all linked.

This week, the Town of Gibsons undertook several earth-friendly actions which are consistent with our Strategic Goals and Priorities, and which reflect our belief that it is our everyday actions (Earth Day or not) that will make a difference, each one contributing to our overall goals of helping our community and ensuring the survival of our planet.

These actions include:

1. Contributing \$500 to the Sunshine Coast Conservation Society's initiative to investigate the value and importance of District Lot 1313 to biodiversity, water management and protection of a valuable coastal forest and ecosystem suitable for recreation and education;
2. Supporting a neighbourhood request for funding to enable community members to voluntarily improve their local park and undertake a spring clean-up and removal of invasive species;
3. Publication of [an article at waterbucket.ca](#) by Emanuel Machado, CAO, entitled "Resiliency Planning During a Pandemic: Perspectives from Gibsons on A Local Government Response".

In the article, Mr. Machado makes the following observation:

"The Town and others have been trying to find the balance between encouraging people to keep their distance from one another, while also promoting healthy activities, such as walks in the woods, trails and other greenspace. There is an abundance of evidence which shows even limited exposure to nature promotes health and well-being. The natural assets that provide those health benefits are managed by the Town of Gibsons, applying natural asset management approaches, as outlined in the Town's asset management policy."



4. Continuing a contract with the Nicholas Sonntag Marine Education Centre to evaluate the conditions and the environmental health of Gibsons Harbour and marine recreation area, with a view to making environmental improvements over a four-year period. In 2019, the project helped to assess the condition of the eel grass beds and impacts of commercial mooring buoys on the harbour floor; and

5. Encouraging individual efforts to help clean up the Town while walking and social distancing.

In short, like many before me, I urge our citizens to remember that while Earth Day is celebrated once a year, the earth must be our priority every day, as it is the only one we have.

On behalf of Council,

Mayor Bill Beamish
Town of Gibsons



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