



February 1, 2026

To Mayor and Council,

The lack of recognition provided to the Garry oak ecosystem as part of the QMP is an indicator of land use planning that devalues a critically endangered ecocultural landscape. The District of Saanich, as governing authority of land-development and urban forest manager, holds responsibility to invest in stewardship as the Garry oak ecosystem we all enjoy today cannot simply be removed and replaced.

We believe that a lack of recognition for Garry oak trees and associated species will produce lasting social, environmental, and economic losses. We insist that Saanich appropriately value its stewardship commitments. Garry oak ecosystems within the urban QMP area may be increasingly degraded and fragmented, but that does not provide license to the District of Saanich to remove these living relatives maintained over centuries by ləkʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ stewards.

Key Considerations

Kwetlal (Garry oak ecosystem) exist in the Quadra and McKenzie area today in large part because of centuries of ləkʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ stewardship.

Supporting opportunities for ləkʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ knowledge keepers to lead and inform the QMP process recognizing kwetlal/Garry oak ecosystems are not an artifact, but an ecocultural and living landscape.

District of Saanich has not updated its urban forest canopy analysis within 5 years as recommended by the Urban Forest Strategy.

The present QMP area canopy analysis reflects remote sensing that is nearly 7 years old.

The 3-30-300 principle is not a regulation and is not inclusive of Garry oak trees and Garry oak ecosystems.

District of Saanich urban forest canopy targets are not inclusive of Garry oak ecosystems.

To support better overall outcomes for present and future residents of the Quadra and McKenzie Area, we are requesting Council:

1. Postpone their vote on the QMP Plan pending the addition of a Garry oak ecosystem analysis and stewardship plans.
2. Include kwetlal/Garry oak ecosystem analysis and stewardship goals in the QMP in recognition that ləkʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ food systems are not in the past-tense, but must also be prioritized in the present and future for land-use development policy changes.

Ryan Senechal

Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society - President