NATIVE PLANT FORAGE FOREST MONITORING

REPORT PREPARED FOR THE GALIANO CONSERVANCY ASSOCIATION





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1. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Native Plant Forage Forest (NPFF) is a unique ecological and ethnocultural restoration project initiated by the Galiano Conservancy Association (GCA) on Galiano Island. The site is located at the Millard Learning Centre (Fig.1), a one-of-a-kind property which combines the delivery of innovative environmental education programs and the protection of sensitive coastal habitats. The NPFF aims to act as a model forest, where native plant species traditionally used for food and medicine can help to restore a degraded area, while also fostering a connection with the land and its people.



Fig. 1. The Millard Learning Centre (DL 57), a 76ha property located mid-Galiano Island, BC. Map produced by the GCA, 2012.

ISSUES: The site chosen for the implementation of this forage forest has been heavily impacted by human use, having been logged by its previous owner for approximately 10 years before the Galiano Conservancy acquired the property in 2012. Machine use was extensive, which caused the soils to be heavily compacted and facilitated the colonization of exotic thistles and invasive agricultural grasses. Grazing by black-tailed deer and feral sheep was also an issue, as it prevented the regeneration of native trees and shrubs which were palatable to these animals. Culturally speaking, fostering long-lasting partnerships with First Nations and community groups was also a priority, in order to allow an appropriate space for reconciliation, healing and the sharing of similar sustainable and ecological values.

PROPOSED TREATMENTS: Restoration treatments which focused on de-compacting the soils, removing invasive vegetation and fencing the area to prevent ungulate grazing began in 2017 and are expected to continue throughout 2018 (see Section 2 for a detailed project timeline). As the site presents a variety of soil moisture regimes, ranging from a gradient of dry to very wet conditions, a diverse range of native species associated with different Southern Gulf Islands ecosystems are to be established. An edible berries trail with shrubs such as gooseberry,

salmonberry and huckleberry was also envisioned, so that children and visitors can forage for food while partaking in the natural beauty of the site. By integrating traditional ecological knowledge and teachings, it is hoped that the NPFF will become a shared space where community members and First Nation groups alike will be able to learn from one another and engage with each other and the land.

The five main objectives of this project are as follows (from Huggins, 2017):

1. Restore ecological function and structure to logged and degraded site

2. Engage the Penelakut and Galiano communities in the planning, treatment, and ongoing management of the restoration site

- 3. Document the creation and evolution of the project through various media
- 4. Produce harvestable native plant foods, medicines, and materials
- 5. Monitor the site, report results, and adapt management according

2. PROJECT TIMELINE

Fig.2 below presents the major events which occurred, are ongoing, and are expected to occur for the NPFF project.



3. REPORT OBJECTIVES

CONTEXT: As part of her thesis work, Master student H. Park from the University of Victoria developed, in consultation with the GCA and food forestry experts, a comprehensive monitoring framework in order to assist the GCA in evaluating how effectively they are reaching their restoration and ethnocultural goals for both of their food forestry projects. This customized framework is meant to be a long-term monitoring tool which will provide consistent feedback and aid towards the adaptive management of both sites.

This report thus aims to present the first monitoring results following this framework methodology. Its specific objectives are to:

1. Complete the first post-restoration ecological monitoring of the NPFF site, following the monitoring indicator framework as described in Park and Higgs (2018).

2. Inform the GCA and interested stakeholders of important changes regarding the composition and structure of the NPFF since the site was restored in October 2017

3. Provide recommendations in order to improve future monitoring of the site

4. Provide a standardized template for future monitoring use of the site

4. SUMMARY OF MONITORING RESULTS

Table 1 below provides a summary of the post-restoration monitoring of the NPFF site which occurred between April 6th and April 20th 2018.

Here are some of the most important findings from this first monitoring survey:

- Total plant species richness increased from 59 to 102 from pre-restoration of the site (October 2016) to post-restoration (April 2018). For a list of all species surveyed, please see Annex B
- Overall herbaceous plants still represent the most important structural layer in the Native Plant Forage Forest, occupying approximately 75% of the total site land cover
- Tree density is quite low, with only 4 trees/ha. On the other hand, stump density is approximately 156/ha, which highlights the past use of this area as a logging site
- Approximate coarse woody debris (CWD) volume is 14m³ for the site, or 28m³/ha. For additional details on the importance of CWD in forested ecosystems and how its volume was calculated, please see section 4.1
- Overall exposed soil, which is mainly generated by the planting beds, occupies 18.1% of the total site area (see Annex A for a map of site cover)
- Most of the native plants species occupying the site belong to the trees, woody perennials and mosses structural layers, while most of the invasive species are from the herbaceous layer
- There have been 257 visitors to the NPFF site, with groups ranging between elementary school children, university students and adults
- There have been 140 volunteers who contributed 1060 volunteer hours to the project

SURVEY DATE: April 6th 2018									
Principle	Criteria	Indicator	Core Measure	Result	References used				
	Integrity of biotic community		Trees: 10Species richnessWoody perennials: 23Herbs: 58Mosses/lichens/fungi: 11						
			Total Species richness	102	Gibson, 2017,				
		Plant Diversity	% cover	Trees: 5 Woody perennials: 18 Herbs: 75 Mosses/lichens/fungi: 2	Huggins, 2017, Pojar and MacKinnon, 1994, Goward et al., 1994, Vitt et al., 1988				
			% Forest based understory	30	1900				
			% Grasses	70					
			Tree density	4/ha					
Ecological integrity			Stump density	156/ha					
Leoiogicui integrity	Habitat quality	Habitat structural diversity	Volume of CWD	14m ³	Baker and Chao, 2011, BC Ministry of				
			Volume of FWD	N/A	Forests and Range and BC Ministry of				
			Volume of snags	5.9m³	Yan et al., 2006, Densmore et al., 2004, Feller 2003.				
		Landscape connectivity	% Area of roads and footpaths	8.7					
	Ecological processes	Succession	Repeat photography	See PP01, PP02 and PP03	See Anney A				
	Soil	Soil erosion	% of Exposed soil	18.1	See Annex A				

Table 1. Summary of monitoring results according to indicator framework as described in Park and Higgs (2018).

Informed by past and future	Historical knowledge	Historical biological community or processes	% Native cover	Trees: 100 Woody perennials: 98 Herbs: N/A* Mosses/lichens/fungi: 100	Huggins, 2017	
		Food security	Destination of products and food produced	N/A		
	Cultural values and social equity Cultu and	Cultural identity and spiritual values	Aboriginal participation	Number of elders who were involved: 6		
				Number of events with aboriginal participation: 4	K. Erickson, 2018,	
	Economic benefits	Yield	Income from yield and other activities	N/A		
Social benefits and		Employment	Number of jobs created	1 FTE job created		
engagement			Number of education and outreach events	12	Pers. Communication	
		Acquisition of		Total number: 257		
	Outreach, education and training	knowledge and		Demographics:		
		skills	Number and demographics of visitors	Elementary school: 110		
				High school: 0		

				University: 59 Adults: 88	
		Research and science	Number of research/education projects and individuals studying the system	4 research projects and 4 students studying the system	
	Resilience and stability	Prepared and resilient to extreme weather	Crop failure after extreme weather	N/A	
		Self-regulating	Outbreaks of disease	N/A	K. Erickson, 2018,
Long-term sustainability	Economic self-sufficiency	True yield	Input and cost	Number of volunteers: 140 Total Volunteer hours: 1060	Pers. Communication
	Governance	Collaborative participation	Number of collaborators involved in the project	5 organizations collaborating (GCA, PIES, GCS, AMES, UVIC) plus 10 individual collaborators	

* ID of grasses was not feasible at the time, due to lack of inflorescence

4.1 COARSE WOODY DEBRIS

Coarse Woody Debris (CWD) occupy an important function in forested ecosystems by providing habitat for a variety of species, while also being an important source of carbon and nutrients to the forest floor (Feller, 2003, Densmore et al., 2005, Gough et al., 2007). Although definitions vary as to what constitutes exactly CWD in terms of size and diameter (Yan et al., 2006), for the purpose of this report the definition from the BC Field Manual for Describing Terrestrial Ecosystems 2nd Edition (2010) was adopted. This manual describes CWD as "dead woody material, in various stages of decomposition, located above the soil, larger than 7.5cm in diameter and not self-supporting" (BC Ministry of Forests and Range and BC Ministry of Environment, 2010).

The methodology described in Baker and Chao (2011) was used in order to calculate the volume of CWD at the site. This required for the diameters at both ends of all cylindrical/conical pieces of CWD to be measured, along with the total length of the woody debris (for complete results of CWD volume calculations, see Annex C).

Although there is no set amount of CWD required on a site in order to maintain a healthy forest ecosystem, research suggests that a natural old growth forest can have anywhere between 19 to 120m³ of CWD/ha (Sippola et al., 1998, Densmore et al., 2005). The NPFF site currently presents 28m³ of CWD/ha, which means that some CWD might need to be added manually in order to replicate old forest structure and function. However, the NPFF may also reach this amount on its own, as it matures with time. Additionally, it is important to take into account potential overestimations and underestimations of CWD at the site, which resulted from the surveying and calculation method.

One issue with the Baker and Chao method is that it can overestimate the volume of CWD if the piece does not have a complete cylindrical or conical shape. Furthermore, it was impossible to record the volume of some pieces at the site, as they were located underneath a pile of larger CWD (see Fig. 3). The result given for CWD volume should therefore be taken as an estimation and not a precise amount. In order to standardize the process, it is recommended that surveyors combine volume calculations with a transect methodology, such as one described in the BC Field Manual for Describing Terrestrial Ecosystems.

4.2 SITE COVER

An estimation of the total area of the site along with the cover of specific components was performed using the Trimble GeoXH geospatial data collector. Collected data was then analysed and displayed with ArcGIS 10.6. Table 2 below presents the NPFF site cover data. For a complete map of the area, please see Annex A.

 Table 2. NPFF site cover

Total Fenced area (m ²)	% Cover of Exposed soil	% Cover of vegetated-grass dominated	% Cover vegetated (other)	% of Rock cover
5473	18.1	8.7	69.9	3.2

An important discussion item to mention here is the percentage of exposed soil at the site. One of the indicators from the Park and Higgs (2018) monitoring framework states that there should be less than 5% of exposed soil, and currently the NPFF has approximately 18% of exposed soil, which normally would be considered as problematic for soil erosion. However, as most of this exposed soil cover is due to the creation of planting beds and the education circle, it is expected that this percentage will decrease in upcoming years, as native plants and grasses become established.

4.1 PHOTO-POINT MONITORING

Three permanent photo-points were established prior to the restoration of the site, in October 2017. The first set of photos were taken October 2^{nd} 2017, and the first post-restoration repeat photos were taken on April 20th 2018. The metadata for these photo-points is presented in Table 3 below. For a visual representation of their location, please see NPFF map in Annex A. Actual photo-point imagery is presented in Table 4.

The camera used for the original photos was unfortunately not the same as the one used for the repeat photos. The camera used for the April 20th photos was a Canon PowerShot ELPH 125 with a 28-224mm F3.2-6.9 8x zoom lens. As the lenses were not identical for both cameras, images depth may be slightly different. It is recommended that the same camera be used for all future photo-point monitoring work.

	Northing	Easting	Azimuth 1 (°)	Azimuth 2 (°)	Lens height (m)	Distance to board (m)
Photo-point 1	5419615	465679	325	37	1.4	10
Photo-point 2	5419623	465706	240	334	1.4	10
Photo-point 3	5419691	465678	174	222	1.49	No board. Centre Azimuth 1 at base of arbutus and Azimuth 2 at base of cedar seedling on top of stump

Table 4. NPFF photo-point monitoring imagery, pre and post site restoration, for the three permanent photo-points at the site

4.2 PHOTO DOCUMENTATION

A visual documentation of the site was performed in April 2018 in order to capture the most important changes and features of the NPFF at the time. Figures 3 to 10 present these features below. For best comprehensive results, photo documentation should be a seasonal monitoring task at the NPFF site.

Fig. 3. Pile of CWD near the wetland area, adding nutrients and C to the soil

Fig. 4. Education circle is being colonized by grasses. Woodland strawberries have been planted along its perimeter

Fig. 5. Top planting bed, with camas and a flowering Sea blush (*Plectritis congesta*)

Fig. 6. Previous hollowed out stump now a nursery stump, planted with Red huckleberry (*Vaccinium parvifolium*)

Fig. 7. Wetland area in western portion of the site, water loving plants such as Skunk cabbage (*Lysichiton americanus*) are to be planted

Fig. 9. Top three beds, planted with Garry Oak meadow-like plants such as camas (*Camassia quamash*), Sea blush (*Plectritis congesta*), and Shootingstars (*Dodecatheon pulchellum*)

Fig. 8. Another wet area, north-west on the site, next to the wetland.

Fig. 10. South-West perimeter bed, planted mostly with forest understory plants such as Oregon grape (*Mahonia aquifolium* and *Mahonia nervosa*)

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations have resulted as reflections after the first post-restoration monitoring survey. They are meant to inform the GCA and future surveyors of the area in order to improve the management of this Forage Forest.

1. Plant inventory surveys should be performed in the summer, when grass inflorescence is present, to facilitate identification of the different species.

2. Permanent vegetation survey quadrats may provide a more accurate and comparable representation of species richness at the site. At present, the entire site was surveyed, which may not truly reflect all species present in the area, due to individual capacity at plant identification and also seasonal variations.

3. The same camera (make, model, lens) should be used for photo-point monitoring. Even with precise orienteering and measurement, different camera lenses can lead to different depth perceptions, which will not provide exact replicas of images for comparison.

4. Images from the repeat photography should not be overexposed, in order to allow all features to be clearly visible. To facilitate this process, ISO settings should be recorded, as well as taking the photographs at same time of day, during the same season.

5. Photo-point monitoring should be undertaken at the same time, ideally once every season, in order to properly capture vegetation changes throughout the year and to facilitate comparison of images (McDougald et al., 2003). If resources are not available for seasonal photography, repeat images should be taken at least once a year.

6. A line transect method, as described in the BC Field Manual for Describing Terrestrial ecosystems, 2nd Edition, should be used for sampling CWD. Volume calculations should then be based on size and shape of surveyed pieces.

7. Site photo documentation should also be undertaken seasonally or least once a year, in order to document major changes in the structure and composition of the Forage Forest.

6. CONCLUSION

This report provided results of the first post-restoration monitoring of the Native Plant Forage Forest project, following the comprehensive framework as described in Park and Higgs (2018). A separate monitoring template is provided with this report, which can be used for future surveying and data update of the area. A systematic and consistent approach to monitoring this site is essential in order to adapt to change and allow for ecosystem and socio-cultural resilience and regeneration.

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ANNEX B: Plant Inventory List

Layer	Latin name	Common name	Baseline survey (18/10/2016)	Species richness (18/10/2016)	Nursey additions (15/12/2017)	Monitoring Spring 2018 (06/04/2018)	Species richness monitoring Spring 2018 (06/04/2018)	% cover Monitoring Spring 2018 (06/04/2018)	Total species richness
Α	Alnus rubra	Red Alder	x	4		х	10	5	10
А	Arbutus menziesii	Pacific Madrone	x		x	x			
А	Pseudotsuga menziesii	Douglas-fir	x			x			
А	Thuja plicata	Western Redcedar	x			x			
А	Acer macrophyllum	Bigleaf Maple			x	x			
А	Crataegus douglasii	Black Hawthorn			x	x			
А	Quercus garryana	Garry Oak			x	x			
А	Salix scouleriana	Scouler's Willow			x	x			
А	Taxus brevifolia	Western Yew			x	x			
А	Malus fusca	Pacific Crabapple			x	x			
В	Amelanchier alnifolia	Saskatoon Berry	x	12	x	x	23	18	23
В	Gaultheria shallon	Salal	x			x			
В	Holodiscus discolor	Oceanspray	x			x			
В	llex aquifolium	English Holly	x			x			
В	Lonicera hispidula	Hairy Honeysuckle	x			x			
В	Paxistima myrsinites	Falsebox	x			x			
В	Rubus laciniatus	Cutleaf Blackberry	x			x			
В	Rubus leucodermis	Blackcap Raspberry	x		x	x			
В	Vaccinium ovatum	Evergreen Huckleberry	x		x	x			
В	Vaccinium parvifolium	Red Huckleberry	х		х	х			
В	Mahonia aquifolium	Tall Oregon Grape			x	x			
В	Mahonia nervosa	Dull Oregon Grape	x		x	x			
В	Oemleria cerasiformis	Indian Plum			x	x			
В	Ribes divaricatum	Wild Gooseberry			x	x			

Layer	Latin name	Common name	Baseline Survey	Species	Nursery	Monitoring Spring 2018	Species richness	% cover Monitoring Spring	Total species
			(18/10/2016)	(18/10/2016)	(15/12/2017)	(06/04/2018)	2018 (06/04/2018)	2018	
В	Ribes sanguineum	Red-flowering Currant			х	х			
В	Rosa gymnocarpa	Baldhip Rose			x	х			
В	Rosa nutkana	Nootka Rose			x	х			
В	Rubus parviflorus	Thimbleberry			x	x			
В	Rubus spectabilis	Salmonberry	х		х	x			
В	Sambucus racemosa	Red Elderberry			х	x			
В	Shepherdia canadensis	Soopalalie			х	x			
В	Spiraea douglasii	Hardhack			х	x			
В	Viburnum edule	Highbush Cranberry			х	х			
С	Achlys triphylla	Vanilla Leaf	х	41			40	75	58
С	Agrostis capillaris	Colonial Bentgrass	х						
С	Anaphalis margaritacea	Pearly Everlasting	х			х			
С	Arctium minus	Burdock	х			х			
С	Athyrium filix-femina	Lady Fern	х						
С	Bromus carinatus	California Brome	х						
С	Cirsium arvense	Canada Thistle	х			х			
С	Cirsium vulgare	Bull Thistle	х						
С	Dactylis glomerata	Orchard Grass	х						
С	Digitalis purpurea	Foxglove	х			х			
С	Elymus glaucus	Blue Wild Rye	х						
С	Elymus repens	Couch Grass	х						
С	Epilobium angustifolium	Fireweed	х			х			
С	Equisetum telmateia	Giant Horsetail	х			х			
С	Galium aparine	Cleavers	х			х			
С	Gamochaeta ustulata	Purple Cudweed	х			х			
С	Geranium molle	Dovesfoot Geranium	х			х			
С	Heuchera micrantha	Crevice Alumroot	х			x			
С	Holcus lanatus	Velvet Grass	Х						

Layer	Latin name	Common name	Baseline Survey	Species richness	Nursery additions	Monitoring Spring 2018	Species richness monitoring Spring	% cover Monitoring Spring	Total species richness
			(18/10/2016)	(18/10/2016)	(15/12/2017)	(06/04/2018)	2018 (06/04/2018)	2018	
С	Hypochaeris radicata	Cat's-ear	х			х			
С	Juncus effusus	Common Rush	x						
С	Linnaea borealis	Twinflower	х						
С	Mycelis muralis	Wall Lettuce	x			х			
С	Nemophila parviflora	Oak Nemophila	х						
С	Plantago lanceolata	English Plantain	х			х			
С	Poaceae spp.	-	х						
С	Polypodium glycyrrhiza	Licorice Fern			х	x			
С	Polystichum munitum	Sword Fern	х			x			
С	Prunella vulgaris	Self-heal	х			х			
С	Pteridium aquilinum	Bracken Fern	х						
С	Ranunculus repens	Creeping Buttercup	х			х			
С	Rubus ursinus	Trailing Blackberry	х			х			
С	Rumex acetosella	Sheep Sorrel	х			х			
С	Scirpus microcarpus	Small-fruited Bulrush	х						
С	Senecio vulgaris	Common Groundsel	х			х			
С	Silene coronaria	Rose Campion	х						
С	Sonchus asper	Prickly Sow-thistle	х			x			
С	Stellaria graminea	Common Starwort	х						
С	Trientalis latifolia	Starflower	х						
С	Torilis arvensis	Hedge Parsley	х			х			
С	Urtica dioica	Stinging Nettles	x			х			
С	Vicia sativa	Common Vetch	х			х			
С	Cardamine hirsuta	Hairy Bittercress				х			
С	Achillea millefolium	Yarrow			х	х			
С	Allium cernuum	Nodding Onion			x	x			
С	Camassia leichtlinii	Great Camas			x	x			
С	Camassia quamash	Common Camas			х	x			
				-			•		

Layer	Latin name	Common name	Baseline Survey	Species richness	Nursery additions	Monitoring Spring 2018	Species richness monitoring Spring	% cover Monitoring Spring	Total species richness
			(18/10/2016)	(18/10/2016)	(15/12/2017)	(06/04/2018)	2018 (06/04/2018)	2018	
С	Clinopodium douglasii	Yerba Buena			х	х			
С	Festuca roemeri	Roemer's Fescue			х	х			
С	Fragaria vesca	Woodland Strawberry			х	x			
С	Sisyrinchium idahoense	Idaho Blue-eyed Grass			х	x			
С	Artemisia suksdorfii	Coastal sage			x	х			
С	Trifolium wormskjoldii	Springbank Clover			x	х			
С	Dodecatheon pulchellum	Few-flowered Shootingstar			x	х			
С	Heracleum maximum	Cow-parsnip			x	х			
С	Lomatium nudicaule	Barestem Desert-parsley			x	х			
С	Lysichiton americanus	Skunk Cabbage			x	х			
С	Plectritis congesta	Sea blush			х	х			
D	Kindbergia oregana	Oregon Beaked Moss	х	2		x	11	2	11
D	Polytrichum spp.	Haircap Moss	х			х			
D	Hylocomium splendens	Stairstep Moss				х			
D	Kindbergia praelonga	Common Feathermoss				х			
D	Hypogymnia inactiva	Forking Bone				х			
D	Platismatia glauca	Ragbag				х			
D	Cladonia macilenta	Lipstick Cladonia				х			
D	Cladonia chlorophaea	False Pixie Cup				х			
D	Cladonia spp.	Cladonia scales				x			
D	Lichenomphalia umbellifera	Heath Navel				x			
D	Cerrena unicolor	Mossy Maze Polypore				x			
TOTAL		N/A		59	N/A		84	100	102

CWD	Diameter 1 (m)	Diameter 2 (m)	Length (m)	Volume (m ³)	Class	Notes
1	0.07	0.3	7.12	0.27	1	
2	0.14	0.22	1.65	0.04	4	
3	0.14	0.12	1.22	0.02	3	
4	0.54	0.62	1.90	0.50	1	Leaning
5	0.41	1.04	1.52	0.75	3	
6	0.58	0.15	1.82	0.26	3	
7	0.34	0.13	2.47	0.13	2	
8	0.28	0.3	2.10	0.14	2	Under stump
9	0.36	0.15	12.41	0.74	1	
10	0.32	0.19	9.59	0.52	1	
11	0.31	0.34	5.32	0.44	2	
12	0.42	0.4	1.25	0.16	3	
13	0.12	0.21	1.26	0.03	2	
14	0.35	0.24	3.15	0.22	3	
15	0.11	0.28	1.71	0.06	2	
16	0.39	0.15	3.29	0.23	3	
17	0.43	0.31	1.01	0.11	2	
18	0.25	0.32	5.21	0.34	2	
19	0.38	0.4	3.40	0.41	2	
20	0.22	0.33	2.31	0.14	3	
21	0.1	0.39	3.87	0.25	2	
22	0.23	0.12	1.78	0.05	2	
23	0.25	0.3	3.39	0.20	3	
24	0.31	0.54	4.32	0.66	3	
25	0.23	0.17	6.73	0.22	3	
26	0.41	0.46	2.58	0.38	4	
27	0.94	0.6	4.75	2.32	4	
28	0.38	0.4	0.75	0.09	2	
29	0.34	0.36	3.74	0.36	1	
30	0.29	0.48	8.94	1.10	2	
31	0.18	0.14	2.47	0.05	2	
32	0.26	0.21	2.52	0.11	5	
33	0.2	0.31	4.18	0.22	5	
34	0.3	0.33	1.89	0.15	3	
35	0.27	0.35	6.10	0.47	1	
36	0.31	0.28	2.22	0.15	2	
37	0.39	0.59	8.67	1.70	2	
	TOTAL	Volume CWD		13.99		

Annex C: Coarse Woody Debris Volume Calculation