

Regional District of Nanaimo Board – Meeting Date: July 22, 2025

This document contains closed ‘in-camera’ meeting decisions that have been released because they are no longer considered sensitive.

Hamilton Marsh Approval of Contract of Purchase and Sale

The Board voted to rise and report on “Hamilton Marsh Approval of Contract of Purchase and Sale” - Following receipt of an endorsed Purchase and Sale Agreement, that Regional District of Nanaimo and Mosaic staff work together to create a press release for August 26, 2025, describing that the Regional District of Nanaimo and Island Timberlands Limited Partnership have reached a conditional sale for approximately 360 hectares of land known as “Hamilton Marsh”.

Released: October 16, 2025

September 2, 2025

The RDN and Island Timberlands Reach Conditional Purchase Agreement for Hamilton Marsh

The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) and Mosaic Forest Management are pleased to announce that a conditional Contract of Purchase and Sale (CPS) has been signed for approximately 360 hectares (ha) of land known as Hamilton Marsh. An offer of \$30 million was accepted, with the sale anticipated to be completed by March 31, 2026, should all conditions of the CPS be met. The conditions to acquire the lands as regional parkland and conservation area include the RDN securing a minimum of \$7.5 million in funding through other partners.

Owned by Island Timberlands and managed under Mosaic Forest Management, the Hamilton Marsh site is located south of the Town of Qualicum Beach with most of the land located within RDN Electoral Area F and a segment within Electoral Area G. The site is bounded by Hilliers Road on the north and west sides, Memorial Avenue on the east side, and the Island Corridor Foundation rail corridor on the south side.

Acquiring Hamilton Marsh as a conservation site has been a priority for the RDN for many years. The marsh, located on the north side of the property and approximately 36 ha in size, forms part of the French Creek watershed and connects with Beach and Grandon Creek in the Town of Qualicum Beach. It is formed through a combination of several wetland habitats including a prolific waterfowl brood marsh. Several species of wildlife that use the marsh and the surrounding mature, second-growth forest are listed by the Conservation Data Centre as species of concern or at risk.

The acquisition site contains many priority West Coast Region (WCR) environmental values including an extensive stand of mature forest. This ecologically significant wetland and mature forest is located within the Coastal Douglas-fir moist maritime (CDFmm) biogeoclimatic subzone. In the absence of a stand-altering disturbance the 100-year old mature forest will be classified as old-growth within 150 years; the area represents an important recruitment site for this rare type of old forest within the province.

To help offset the \$30 million cost, the RDN is actively pursuing funding contributions from partners, including conservation groups and the provincial ministries, in the amount of \$7.5 million.

Two key conditions within the CPS related to funding are:

1. November 21, 2025 - Partnership agreements for funding in place to the RDN Board's satisfaction
2. January 30, 2026 - Confirmation of a minimum of \$7.5 million from funding partners and other contributions

Support from the Government of British Columbia, as well as funding support through federal grants, land trusts, individuals and corporations are essential to complete the acquisition. Securing this area would represent a significant step within British Columbia toward achieving Canada's 30 by 30 conservation target which aims for the effective protection and management of 30 per cent of Canada's land and water by the year 2030.

As partnership agreements are developed and confirmed this fall, the public will have the opportunity to donate funds towards the acquisition.

Should all the conditions of the CPS be satisfied, Hamilton Marsh would become the RDN's thirteenth regional park and conservation area and would add to the over 2,814 ha of land already held within the other 12 regional and 216 community parks in the RDN. The RDN also has 78 km of trails in 10 regional trail systems.

For more information on the conditional purchase and next steps, visit getinvolved.rdn.ca/hamilton-marsh-conditional-purchase.

Quotes

"We are pleased to work with Mosaic to protect this ecologically significant land, and to make this important addition to our extensive parks system a reality. Preserving natural areas for the benefit of wildlife, water conservation, and future generations is essential. We look forward to working with partners and our communities to secure the funding needed to ensure this very special place is permanently protected."

Vanessa Craig, Chair, Regional District of Nanaimo

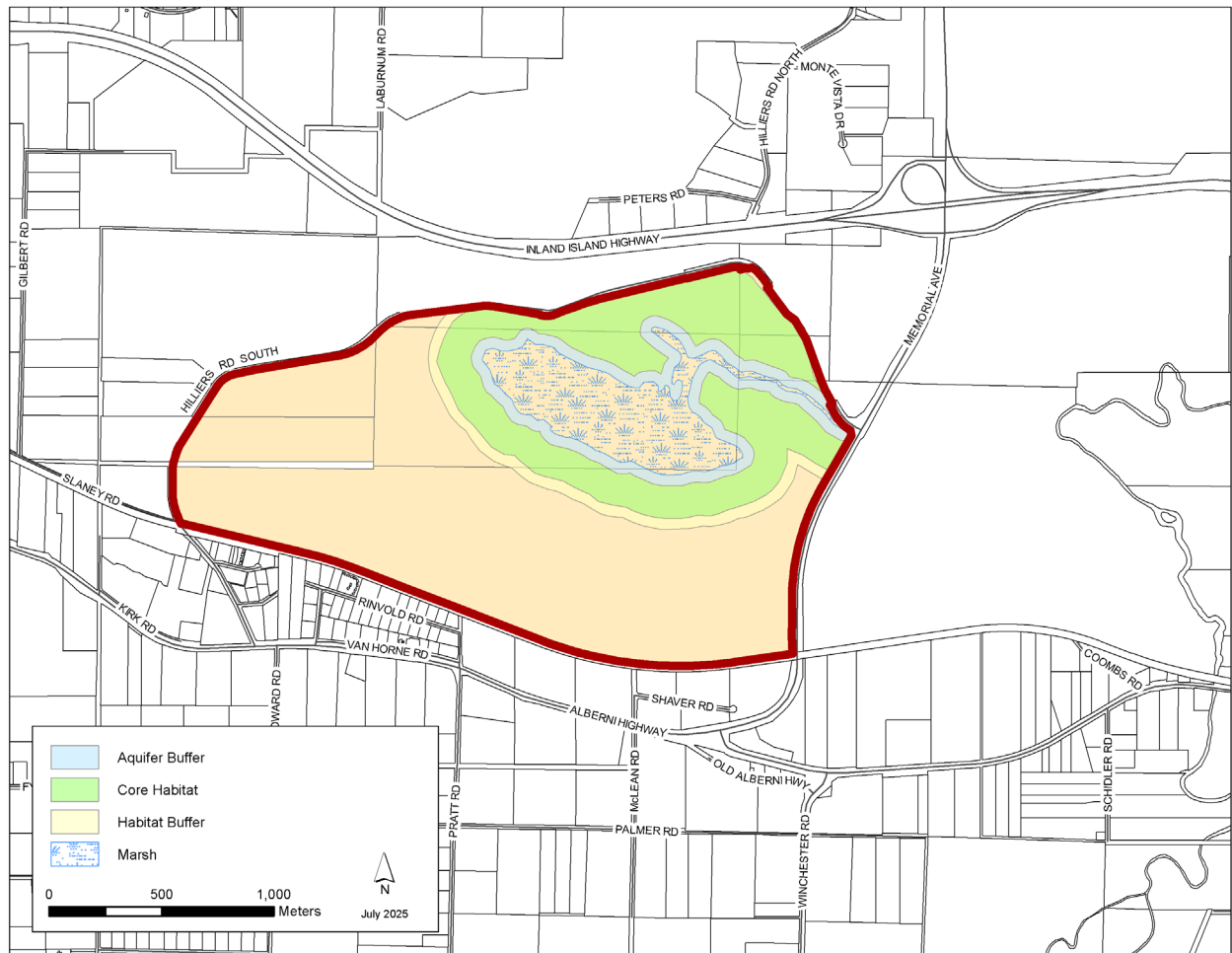
"We recognize the importance of Hamilton Marsh to the community, which is why we've entered into a conditional purchase agreement—a key step that enables the Regional District to begin working with potential funding partners toward permanent conservation of the area."

D'Arcy Henderson, Senior Vice President, Timberlands and Chief Operating Officer, Mosaic Forest Management

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Map of Hamilton Marsh, located in RDN Electoral Area F and G