

December 18, 2020

MEMO TO : Park Board Commissioners
 FROM : General Manager, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
 SUBJECT : **Stanley Park Heronry Remediation Work – Board Briefing Memo**

Dear Commissioners,

The purpose of this memo is to inform you about the remediation work being undertaken for the Stanley Park heronry, which includes some tree removal and clean-up required for safety purposes, along with new tree plantings to support the heron colony into the future. This Great Blue Heron colony, which nests near the Park Board Administration Building at 2099 Beach Avenue, has been an important natural occurrence for the last twenty years with many interested human followers, both in person and via the Park Board’s popular live heron cam. In 2020, the Stanley Park Ecology Society (SPES) reported a total of 104 nests, with 94 active during the nesting season that ran from February to September.

During autumn site meetings, a few of the maple trees were deemed as potentially hazardous to both the other nest trees and to users of the path and parking lot below. A remediation plan was developed to identify the trees and areas for removal/clean-up, as well as locations for new plantings (see diagram in Figure 1). As shown in the plan diagram, trees B, J & P were identified for complete removal (tree J had occupied nests in 2020), with tree A requiring some branch removal only. As all these trees contained nests, a provincial application was submitted with the remediation plan to support their removal. The BC Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy approved a permit for the identified hazardous trees/branches to be removed, with the work to be completed prior to January 15, 2021, well outside of the heron nesting season.

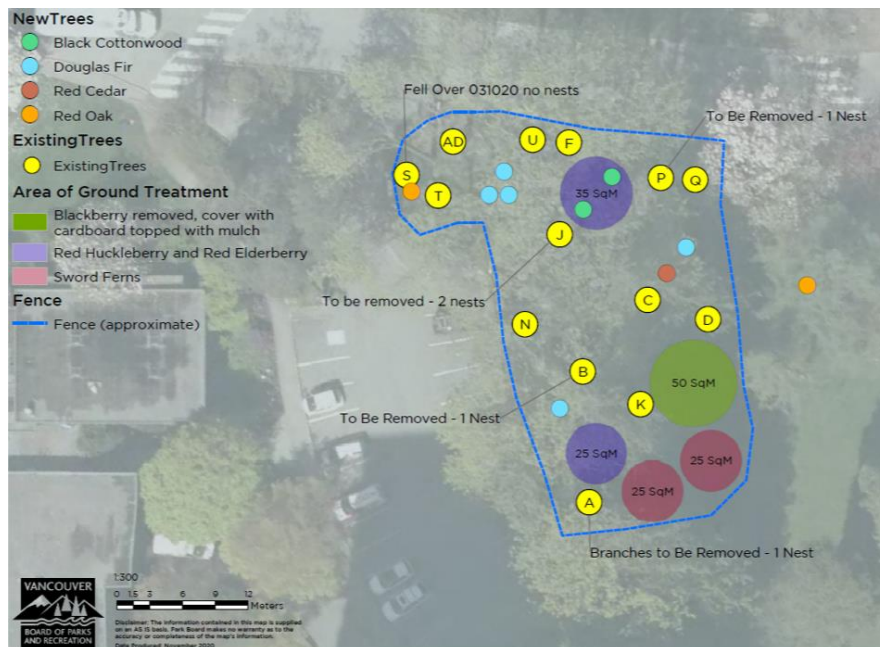
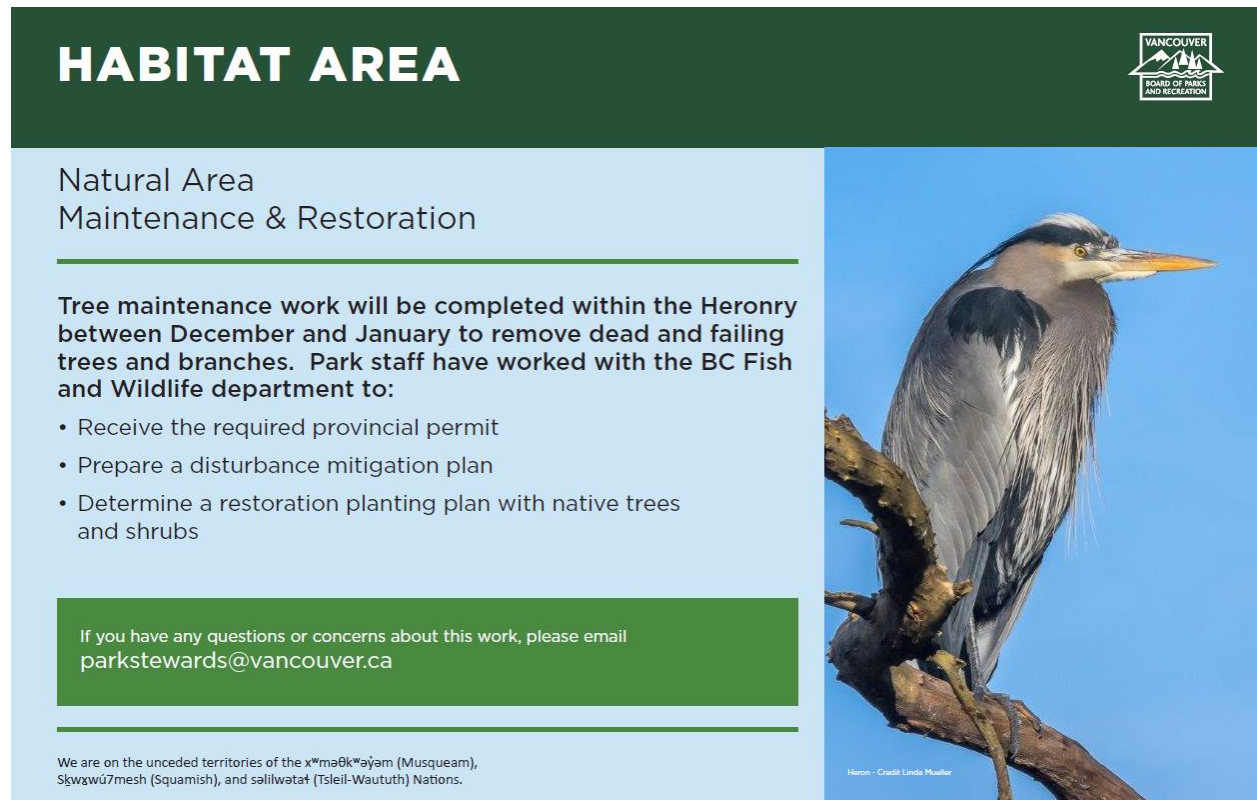


Figure 1: Stanley Park Heronry Remediation Plan

SPES has provided valuable monitoring data, and has been involved throughout the planning and communication of this work. Staff have posted eight information signs around the heron colony (see Figure 2 below), and a copy of the provincial permit, project restoration plan, and Heronry Management Plan is available at the Park Board's Administration Building (at reception) for any members of the public who have questions about this work. Additionally, the Park Board's Senior Environmental Planner can address any specific questions or concerns from the public or media.



The signage features a dark green header with the text "HABITAT AREA" in white. Below this, on a light blue background, is the title "Natural Area Maintenance & Restoration". A green horizontal line separates the title from the main text, which states: "Tree maintenance work will be completed within the Heronry between December and January to remove dead and failing trees and branches. Park staff have worked with the BC Fish and Wildlife department to:" followed by a bulleted list: "• Receive the required provincial permit", "• Prepare a disturbance mitigation plan", and "• Determine a restoration planting plan with native trees and shrubs". A green box at the bottom left contains the contact information: "If you have any questions or concerns about this work, please email parkstewards@vancouver.ca". A small Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation logo is in the top right corner. On the right side of the sign is a photograph of a Great Egret perched on a branch against a clear blue sky. A small credit line "Heron - Credit Linda Mueller" is visible at the bottom of the photo.

Figure 2: Stanley Park Heronry Remediation Signage

Park Board Urban Forestry staff began with the tree and branch removal work last week, and the remaining remediation work is expected to be done by the end of this month.

Regards,



Donnie Rosa (*she/her they/them*)
General Manager - Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

/ct/clc

Copy to: PB Senior Leadership Team
Planning, Policy & Environment
PB Communications