

Education Report to the Farmland Trust Annual General Meeting, February 15, 2018

Education remains a key purpose of the Farmland Trust, and the board is always looking for opportunities to provide educational opportunities to members of the community.

The educational activities of the Farmland Trust during 2017 were largely the result of the efforts of Rob Kline, who joined the board in March, but who left the board due to other commitments in the beginning of October. A number of educational items took place during the year; these are outlined in this report. However, some other ideas that were initiated did not come to fruition in 2017 after Rob's resignation because other issues took priority and the remaining board members were stretched too thin to pursue some of them. With an expanded board in 2018, a number of educational opportunities are expected to take place.

Native Pollinator Habitat Enhancement

The board contracted with Lora Morandin, a Senior Staff Scientist with the Pollinator Partnership Canada to visit the Farmland Trust's properties and produce a report on native pollinator habitat enhancement. Lora conducted site visits and met with board members, and in November, 2017 presented a report called the Burgoyne Valley Community Farm Site Report and Program Development. (A copy of the report is available upon request.) Her report makes recommendations for enhancing pollinators, including the removal and control of invasive plants and provides a long list of native plant species that attract pollinators. The report also outlines a number of potential educational activities that the Farmland Trust could undertake. The board has requested some more detailed information about educational projects that it could do itself.

Earth Day Presentation

Rob and Mike Lakin participated in the Earth Day celebration in Centennial Park with a presentation dealing with runoff.

Honey Bee Colony Tour

Wendy Gilson set up twelve hives near the reservoir on the Burgoyne Valley Community Farm and held a series of educational events during the summer on bees, some of which took place at the Burgoyne Valley Community Farm, and others at different locations. This included collaboration with the Salt Spring Island Conservancy.

Permaculture Food Gardens Design

Michael Nickels conducted a workshop with 12 permaculture apprentices at The Root in which they studied the site and developed a comprehensive conceptual design for growing nuts trees, fruit trees, berry bushes, and vegetables on the site, making best use of the various growing conditions on the site and with a view to demonstrating food production in a changing climate.

Wetland Development at Burgoyne

The Conservancy brought in wetland expert Tom Biebighauser to discuss the development of wetlands at the Conservancy property on Blackburn Road, and the Farmland Trust arranged for him to tour the Burgoyne site in September. He met there with board members and discussed potential wetland opportunities. Tom recommended that a wetland not be created off the toe of the reservoir because it

would make the land below it even wetter and have more impact on farmland. He suggested that enhancement of the existing cedar grove wetland adjacent to the reservoir is a preferred option.

Fall Fair Presentation

Larry and George did a presentation at the Fall Fair outlining the proposed activities at The Root and explaining the development of the site.

Seedy Saturday

The Farmland Trust participated once again in Seedy Saturday in February.

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Future Educational Opportunities

During 2017, discussions took place with a number of individuals about potential educational activities. For various reasons these did not take place, but will be pursued in 2018. Among these are:

Bio-char Demonstration with Rick Laing

Rick is proposing to demonstrate the production of bio-char, either at his home or at the Burgoyne site. This got postponed for a number of reasons, including the summer burn ban and Rick's availability.

Apple and Fruit Tree Production with Conrad Pilon

Conrad has offered to do a workshop on apple and fruit tree production.

Workshops with Linda Gilkeson

Master Gardener Linda Gilkeson has offered to do a variety of workshops for the Farmland Trust. Some ideas included training on pest, disease and disorder identification; pest management and training for pesticide use by organic growers; tree fruit pests; and root diseases (garlic, potatoes, carrots, etc.).

Grey Water Management with Gord Baird

Discussions took place with Gord Baird about the potential use of grey water at The Root, but this was not pursued at the time because of doubts that grey water could be used there safely without considerable expense.

Report prepared by George Ehring