

From: Friends of Mountain Road Forest
Sent: Monday, July 20, 2020 3:21 AM
To: president@falaise.ca
Subject: support for land protection

July 20, 2020

To: Falaise Community Association Board and Members

Re: Support for the protection of a rare natural state Coastal Douglas-fir property at 4692 Mountain Road (49 acres).

We are writing to inform you of an important undeveloped, ecologically sensitive property now for sale in Saanich and to invite you to support this land being protected as a park.

The Mountain Road property is the hub of much larger forest lands in Saanich. It is a magnificent example of second growth Coastal Douglas-fir, Garry oak meadow, rock outcrop, arbutus, and the provincially Red-listed Douglas-fir/Oregon-grape ecological communities. A spring-fed stream that transects the property, flows through a rock ravine and is part of the headwaters of the Colquitz River system, flowing through Viaduct Flats. Species at risk such as Western Screech-Owl and Common Nighthawk are known to have bred on the property. Potential sharp-tailed snake habitat has also been identified. The property contains a few simple trails, and surprisingly few invasive plant species. It offers excellent connectivity to several parks and undeveloped properties. Logan Park, Francis-King Park, Elk/Beaver Lake Park, Observatory Hill are within 2 km. High rocky outcrops provide panoramic views of the region.

Of equal importance is the value of this property to the local community. For more than 50 years, the owners of 4692 Mountain Rd have graciously allowed the community to access this property for their quiet enjoyment. The local community recognizes and cherishes the invaluable ecological and recreational roles this land plays in their lives. Many people walk and tend to the trails, and care for this place in their own way. It is a deeply loved piece of land.

The property is now for sale and is advertised as having potential for subdivision. The Friends of Mountain Road Forest (FOMRF) represents a group of many community members who wish to see this property protected as park or with some form of conservation protection that will ensure no development of any kind, in perpetuity. The FOMRF is working with Habitat Acquisition Trust and other conservation groups, along with the District of Saanich, the CRD, and the owners to find ways to protect this increasingly rare treasure. **This is a once in a generation opportunity to protect nature in Saanich.**

Concerned and hopeful community members have written many letters to Saanich Council and the CRD Board appealing for protection of this land. More letters are urgently needed! The Steering Committee has arranged a tour on **Saturday, July 25, 2020 at 10:00 AM**. Other times can be arranged as needed. **Please RSVP** here.

We need your help:

- We respectfully invite you to write a letter to the CRD Board and Regional Parks Committee to support the acquisition of the 4692 Mountain Road property as parkland.
- Please feel free to share this letter with your network of others who may support this initiative, or contact us with any questions.

- If you would like to stay apprised of future developments, please let us know at mtrdpreservation@gmail.ca.

With thanks,

The Friends of Mountain Road Forest Steering Committee
mtrdpreservation@gmail.com