

Restoration Plan for Falaise Park

Completed by: Stuart Macpherson Park Steward

Date: 5 February 2018

Review & Updates: 26 November 2020

1. General Brief Site Description

Google map link: <https://goo.gl/maps/yvu99NKjQuB2>

- Overall description : This is small neighbourhood park (0.78 ha) featuring a playground, a remnant Garry oak forest growing on a rocky outcrop and trails.

- Amenities:

Playground at the northeast corner on Falaise Crescent

A bench beside the playground

A Falaise Park sign is erected by the playground

There is a garbage can adjacent to the play area

There is bench at the top of the park under a large oak tree. A new bench and memorial plaque to artist Tannis Warburton was installed in 2020.

The Saanich Falaise Park sign faces Falaise Crescent on the westside

There is a staging area on south west entry with a Falaise memorial with two information plaques concerning WWII and the Falaise subdivision for veterans. This area is used for community events

- History: The park is dedicated to WWII veterans who were the initial residents of the Falaise subdivision. The east side of the park was private property before addition to the park. The deciduous and apple trees along the fenced eastern boundary are a legacy of this previous ownership.
- Current Use: This is a small 0.78 hectare park on a bend of Falaise Drive; consisting of a high ground rocky outcrop (nob) with a residual Garry oak ecosystem. Local people walk through the two trails in the park. The playground is popular with young families, infants and children. In approx 2004 the playground was moved to its present

location from the top. It is a more suitable location for parking and family gatherings. It has a bench and cycle rack; but no picnic table

- Maintenance: Saanich Parks mows the grassed area and trails during the summer, empties the garbage can and trims the woody vegetation.
- Ecosystem types: small residual Garry Oak ecosystem, predominantly Garry oak trees, some older Douglas fir with a Camas lily meadow understorey. (Note a vegetation inventory has not been done - a tree and lower vegetation count could be carried out).
- Unique features (natural or cultural): a rare plant (blue-listed Yellow Montane Violet - under the oak forest in the Camas lily meadow. Camas seed and propagules have been transplanted to Playfair Park. The discovery of this plant was made by Tannis Warburton, a Falaise resident and watercolour artist. She reported the find to Saanich Parks
- First Nations archaeological sites/uses: not known. Rocky knolls such as this are common throughout the Saanich local area before subdivision construction so this area may not have been of special significance.
- Soils: thin coarse textured soil over bedrock. Some areas of organic loam underneath the tree cover. Small areas of black organic soil under the Garry oak forest. Very low moisture levels; the soils dry out markedly during the summer months.
- Other Issues: as this is a small park the natural vegetation is vulnerable to deterioration from the spread of invasive plants and people walking through off trail areas. Also deer trails are at risk of becoming “people trails” which might exacerbate fragmentation of the ecosite.

Deer frequently browse vegetation in the park. Their presence may hamper restoration efforts.

• Native Plants: (incomplete needs expanding)

Ocean spray	<i>Holodiscus discolor</i>
Tall Oregon grape	<i>Mahonia aquafolium</i>
Snowberry	<i>Symphoricarpo albus</i>
Trailing blackberry	<i>Rubus ursinus</i>
Lingwort lichen	
Salmonberry	<i>Rubus spectabilis</i>
Lungwort	<i>Lobaria pulmonaria</i>
Camas lily	<i>Camassia quamash</i>
White fawn lily	<i>Erythronium oregonum</i>

Main invasive species populations:

Invasive Species	% Cover	Notes
English Holly <i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	> 0.5 %	Scattered small holly plants in the understorey. <i>Easy to identify and remove</i>
English Ivy <i>Hedera helix</i>	> 1.0%	Spreading ground cover in the north east section beside the playground and beginning to climb trees. <i>This ivy could be removed and creeping spread arrested by a concerted effort.</i>
Periwinkle <i>Vinca major</i>	> !%	Provides ground cover east of the playground spreading to the chain link fence
Scotch Broom <i>Cytisus scoparius</i>	> 0.5 %	Scattered plants throughout the wild vegetation areas, mostly eliminated by aggressive pulling the past 2 years. Frequently browsed by deer <i>Proactive elimination and maintenance needed. Seed source remains in the soil. Needs continual monitoring</i>
English Hawthorn <i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	> 0.5 %	Scattered small trees, These would be easily eliminated <i>Would be relatively easy to eliminate</i>

Daphne Spurge Laurel <i>Daphne laureola</i>	> 0.5 %	<p>A dense thicket of Daphne opposite the playground area and in a clump on the southern boundary beside the wild bamboo. Also small Daphne germinants and seedlings occur in the understory to the west of the playground</p> <p><i>Would be relatively easy to eliminate. Needs continual monitoring</i></p>
Himalayan blackberry <i>Rubus laciniatus</i>		<p>Found in the wild vegetated areas throughout the park - growing on xeric sites so the blackberry bushes are not vigorous.</p> <p>A lot was eliminated along the south side fence area a few years ago. (reportedly by the church youth group)</p> <p><i>Blackberry would be relatively easy to eliminate with a concerted effort. Needs continual monitoring.</i></p>
Orchard grass <i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	10-15 %	<p>Tall 3ft plus- and clumpy. Regrows every year</p> <p>Found under the Garry oak forest competing with the Camas lily meadow, the top of the knoll and around the park generally.</p> <p><i>Would require a</i></p>

		<i>concerted effort to eliminate the grass</i>
<p>Cotoneaster</p> <p><i>Cotoneaster sp</i></p>	minor	<p>Scattered individual plants along under the trees beside Falaise Drive (provides a screening effect)</p> <p>Also along the east boundary</p> <p><i>Cut off at ground level.</i></p> <p><i>Leave some for a roadside screen.</i></p>
<p>Snowdrops</p> <p><i>Galanthus sp</i></p>	minor	<p>Scattered through the southern area and is spreading</p> <p><i>Requires removal by hand</i></p>
Bamboo	minor	<p>Growing along the southern boundary, has just begun to spread from the neighbours property right beside the chain link fence of L855.</p> <p><i>The (six) shoots should be dug out with root rhizomes.</i></p> <p><i>Needs a root barrier at the fenceline.</i></p>
<p>Flowering Cherry trees</p> <p><i>Prunus sp</i></p>		<p>These were underplanted under the Garry oak forest on the west side. They are on a rocky xeric site and are not thriving or vigorous.</p> <p>This area might be underplanted with Garry oak seedling and suitable</p>

		<p>native shrubs such as Indian plum and Hairy Manzanita .</p> <p><i>All the cherry trees should be removed once the oak seedlings have been established and are growing well (a minimum of 10 years)</i></p>
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2. Directives and Guidelines:

Safety Considerations – *(special concerns about campers, steep areas, underground services etc. Risk assessment of adjacent land uses. Danger trees, toxic plants, garbage, underground services etc.)*

At present none of the special considerations mentioned above are a concern. The presence of Daphne laurel is noted and residents have been notified to be aware of this toxic plant. It has now been mostly eliminated

Along the eastern boundary chain link fence are a profusion of hedge plants cascading over from the neighbouring property. These ought to be (kept) trimmed back and the boundary might be planted with native tree/shrubs /shrubs (species to be decided). Consultation with the neighbours concerning the plan beside the boundary is important.

Fire hazard over the summer months is a concern. Dry grass accumulations are vulnerable to flash fire sparked by carelessness.

Ecological Considerations – Species at Risk (if known) and special ecological features.

A rare plant -Yellow Montane Violet - under the oak forest in the camas meadow (*Colleen Playfair Park Steward can supply seeds, to increase its presence*)

Remnant degraded Garry oak ecosystem – restoration efforts requires eliminating invasive plants and some planting of native shrubs - eg. salal , Oregon grape and native trees – Garry oak, some Douglas fir , Grand fir

3. Vision Statement

Description of what the “end state” of this work will be.

- Protected the natural wild areas of the park as a small Garry oak ecosystem and maintain the recreation area, the trails and playground area for neighbourhood enjoyment
- Restored Camas lily meadow under the Garry oak tree canopy and to establish Camas lily on the top knoll of the park

Goals for the Falaise Park Restoration Plan are:

- Protect the areas of highest ecological integrity by focusing restoration efforts in key areas with high diversity of native species.
- Prevent, eradicate, contain, control, the effects of invasive plant species on native plants/vegetation
- Document all phases of restoration activities in order to apply adaptive management.

4. Restoration Goals and Objectives

- The short term objective is to contain and eliminate all invasive plant species from all areas in the park.
- Secondly to implement a modest replanting of native trees, shrubs and ground cover compatible with Garry oak system
- Trim back hedge plants along east side fence growing over from the neighbours property. And to establish native trees and shrubs along both fence lines
- Identify and protect natural germinants of Garry oak

Work Area Descriptions and Treatment Plans

Work areas are listed in order of priority with detailed notes regarding seasonality of work activities and references of specific methods to employ and Best Management Practices to employ. Refer to map (Appendix A) for locations.

Update November 2020

Removal of most of the invasive plants has been completed . Ongoing maintenance/ weeding of Scotch broom, English ivy and blackberry is needed

Focus will now be on removing the Orchard grass which has become prolific in many areas of the park in dense patches as well as clumps . These will be grubbed out and sections spread with mulch. The success of this treatment will be monitored and assessed in spring 2021

Planting of native plants and oak trees was completed in 2019 and 2020. More planting is scheduled for 2021 and 2022

Replanting

Plant natives shrubs and trees along the east fence boundary (Species to be decided eg Tall Oregon grape, deer fern , kinnikinnick , Douglas fir.

Plant Garry oak and some Douglas fir, Grand fir under the existing treed area

Plant Arbutus seedlings (subject to availability around the knoll area)

Areas 1 - NE corner

Remove blackberry clumps

Remove English ivy from trees and ground, and periwinkle cover

Remove Daphne and holly plants

Cut out the hawthorne

Trim back mock orange shrub growing over near the bench

Update November 2020:

All invasives mentioned have been removed . Maintenance weeding regrowth of ivy, blackberry germinants and periwinkle is ongoing.

Dead branches of apple and plum trees cut back

Area has been mulched over cardboard

Planted with salal, ferns , Indian plum, redcurrants

Area 2 - East boundary (chain link fence)

Trim back hedge plants spilling over from neighbour's property

Further planting is planned with other native trees right to the back corner to form a screen from neighbours property

Update November 2020

Hedge trimming completed

Blackberry thicket in far back corner all removed

One metre wide strip mulched over cardboard

Planted with Tall Oregon grape and native shrubs

An initial four Douglas fir planted along the fence boundary (note as these trees grow the lower branches on the fence side should be trimmed back so they don't grow over the fence)

Area 3 - Playground West side

Remove scattered blackberry by digging and cutting back in late spring

Remove Daphne under the trees

Remove English ivy under the trees

Remove some Cotoneaster growing along beside the road – leave some to screen the road boundary

Update November 2020

Removal of these invasives all but completed

Roadside strip -all invasives and weeds removed

Re sprouting of blackberry shoots need removal

Spring 20120 some redcurrant and oak were planted

Area 4 – East centre

Remove scattered blackberry and snowdrops. Occurs under the trees and rock face and top area east of the bench

Update November 2020

Blackberry all but removed. Sprouts in spring 2021 will need removal

Garry oak seedlings planted and natural germinants identified. All caged on the slope facing the playground

Garry oak seedlings planted around the perimeter of the bench area

Removal of Orchard grass clumps and mulching commenced in fall 2020

Area 5 West South

Remove scattered blackberry and other invasives are present

Removal of invasive grasses in Camas lily meadow is needed

Consider underplanting with Indian plum and along the rocky slope try out some Hairy Manzanita

Update November 2020

Some small diameter cherry trees removed and trimming of larger cherry trees

Garry oak seedlings planted in 2019 through the meadow and caged

A patch of Yellow Montane Violets plants were planted spring 2020.

Some Orchard grass grubbed out and mulch spread

5. Disposal Plan

Notes regarding where and how invasive plant material should be disposed of. Any specific precautions, consider signing of debris piles for public concerns and to decrease additional dumping of yard waste etc. Leave on site versus remove?

All pulled invasive plants will be disposed off offsite by notifying Saanich Parks for pickup.

Any woody material left on site should be cut into 18"long pieces and scattered under the forested area

English ivy and blackberry would be the most significant mass to be disposed of.

6. Connectivity

Description of other nearly natural areas that should be considered for source plants or destination of plants if required. Consider corridors for wildlife and how this may be enhanced. Risk assessment of adjacent land uses.

There is no opportunity for connectivity as the park is bounded by a Falaise Crescent and residential properties. Nearby Royal Oak Burial Park provides a haven for the neighbourhood deer. Deer browse regularly in the park

7. Community Outreach and Communication Plan

List of contact names, schools, community associations, businesses, churches, community association, important neighbours to the project, any concerns raised etc.

The park steward is a member of the Falaise Community Association (FCA) Board

- *Draft of any specific public messages to communicate to neighbours for outreach (flyers, postcards, newspaper articles, signs) and plan for when and how to circulate this information. Plan for any signs on site*

Work progress will be reported in the Falaise Community Association *Falaise Focus* newsletter regularly.

Volunteer work parties will be posted on the FCA website and by flyer to residents

List Saanich parks staff *Pulling Together Volunteer Program*:

Katie Turner Park Stewardship Coordinator 2020

Rick Hatch assistant supervisor Natural Areas Saanich Parks

and previously :

Jenny Eastman Coordinator of Volunteers 2013-2019

Jillian Tuson Natural Areas Practitioner Saanich Parks

8. Park Issues:

(Staff input about past, ongoing or upcoming issues or projects that may affect restoration work on site. Each plan to be circulated to Natural Areas staff and park volunteers.)

Not aware of any other pressing issues at present

9. Monitoring Plan

(Lay out a plan of who will monitor and how this will be done. What will be monitored and how this will be done.)

A status report will be prepared by the lead steward in October annually and provided to Parks staff for review

- The lead steward will be available for ad hoc inspections with Park staff

10. Resources

- *What resources are available to carry out the work?*

Saanich has provided volunteers with gloves, safety glasses, some light tools and a spade.

- *What resources are lacking?*

Volunteers don't have diggers and picks

- *Are grants being applied for?*

Will be applying for a Sparks Grant \$500

**Appendix A —Natural area site map showing work areas, in order of priority
(sample only)**

*Need to get/prepare Falaise map and show the work areas described
above using Saanich Mapping Tool*

- **Appendix B – Species Inventory Lists (ongoing)**

This is to be undertaken summer 2021, if possible done by September 1

Appendix C: Photographs taken 2020



Park trail flanked by Falaise Memorial plaques on west side



Falaise sign facing Falaise Drive west side



Falaise playground -cedar rail fence installed 2019



Falaise playground



Area 1 northeast corner, underplanted 2019



Area 2 East boundary, invasives cleared and underplanted 2019 with native plants



Area 4 Garry oak seedlings planted and protected 2019



Area 5 rocky slope with cherry trees, underplanted Garry oak 2019



Westside bend showing wide verge and cherry trees

