

Nareka Jacques

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Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Subject

Removal of hazardous dead trees in Centennial Park

Full Name

Garth van der Kamp

Phone Number

[REDACTED]

Address

7622 Sigmar Place
Saanichton , British Columbia. V8M 1N3

Neighbourhood

Saanichton

Email

[REDACTED]

Message

Garth van der Kamp
7622 Sigmar Place
Saanichton BC V8M 1N3

September 28, 2024

District of Central Saanich
1903 Mount Newton Cross Road
Saanichton, BC, V8M 2A9

Attn: Mayor and Council

Re: Removal of hazardous dead trees in Centennial Park

I enjoy my daily walks through Centennial Park, and want to express my thanks to Council for its support of the Park, and to the Park staff for their work in maintaining the paths, taking down hazardous trees, and removal of ivy and blackberries and other invasives species. Centennial Park is outstanding for its beauty.

With this letter I urge Council and Parks staff to place extra priority on removing dead grand fir snags from Centennial Park, as you may be planning to do already. I know of at least five such snags that broke off halfway up during the last winter season; at least three of these came smashing down across a path. That is alarming. In a park as heavily used as Centennial such sudden and unpredictable failure of dead trees should be minimized. At this time there are several dead and decaying grand fir snags in the Park that are very likely to fall with no warning during the coming autumnal storms.

Here is a quote of a note sent to me by my brother, Professor Emeritus Dr. B. J. van der Kamp, who specialized in tree pathology in the Faculty of forestry at the University of British Columbia:

“First of all most conifer snags come down in bits and pieces. Differences in the rate of failure between species are substantial. The first to start (after death) is grand fir, followed by hemlock, spruce, Douglas-fir and cedar. Cedar snags stand forever compared to the rest and when they do fail, they mostly come down in one piece. In my study for BCHydro Douglas-fir snags stood at least three times as long as hemlock before starting to fail, while the differences between Sitka spruce, hemlock and grand fir were smaller. Hardwoods generally fail fast, and commonly as a whole from basal decay. So yes, high use parks should be inspected regularly (every five years?) and certainly all dead hardwoods, grand fir, hemlock and Sitka spruce within reach of trails removed. Of course this means removing suitable sites for cavity nesters as well, both for nesting and feeding.”

I trust that the District will readily provide any extra funding, with high priority, if it is needed to carry out the work of taking down dangerous dead trees, considering that these snags are a well-known hazard.

Sincerely

Garth van der Kamp

Cc: Conan Odell, Conan.Odell@csaanich.ca.

Cc: Colin Jennings, Colin.Jennings@csaanich.ca

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