



## **Fact Sheet for Letters of Support; Crystal Mountain's Sustainable Forest Retreat Rezoning Proposal**

### **\* That meditation is a valid forest use**

CMS would like to propose a use of forest land that is not based on the extraction of resources. It is the belief of CMS that this proposal is in harmony with the values of the community, the preservation of forest land, and the growth and development of human beings in their search for harmony with the natural world.

**\* This centre is a benefit in itself**, community facility open to the public/ no personal gain. Members of CMS recognize and support the natural, aesthetic, and social values of the island's rural landscape. The proposal is designed to maintain and enhance these values. The OCP 'supports the passive contemplation, spiritual connection and low impact recreational and educational access to the forest.' **Reference – OCP 2.m**

**\* Not subdividing, in fact making a larger amalgamation;** the amalgamation of Lots 9 and A provides increased protected forest contiguous with DL 87. A provincially owned lot.

**\* Preservation of a mature forested residential lot makes sense...** the whole of Lot 9, with its mature second growth forest, plus areas of steep slope, wetlands and sensitive ecosystems on Lot A, will be preserved. The only use will be maintenance of the existing limited trail network, where associated use would not adversely impact sensitive ecosystems.

**\* CMS is committed to implementing recommendations in the Ecosystem-based Land-use Plan** Our intentions to continue working with local biologist, Keith Erickson, to restore soil ecosystems, the altered hydrology, destroyed wildlife habitat, the spread of invasive exotic species and the resulting overall reduction in biotic diversity. This commitment makes us the best people to bring back the forest after the multiple clear cuts to the Forest Lot. That both the Conservancy and the Galiano Club have more than they can handle with regards to restorations of impacted ecosystems. The CMS can regularly mobilize retreatants and volunteers from on and off the island to contribute work, to manage and repair the forest, streams and watersheds on the Crystal Mountain property.

**\* CMS is completing a Sustainable Forest Management Plan.** This plan incorporates land management and recovery; It is a working guide for maintaining Covenant agreements. A conservation covenant is placed on the title of your property, binding future owners to the same terms you agree to. This ensures that the natural features that you value today will continue to be protected forever. Putting a conservation covenant on your property creates a permanent sanctuary for the plants and animals you share your land with.

**\* CMS is working with certified professionals** to address the Galiano Island LUB specified development standards for water use and wastewater treatment.

**\* Our buildings and infrastructure will be low impact.** The goal of the Centre is to provide public access to appropriately scaled retreat facilities that will allow retreatants to abide in a forest environment. Sustainability in all aspects, is a primary guideline in the establishment of the forest retreat centre. In terms of the proposed



infrastructure and building design this means clustered, modest structures, low impact, 'green' buildings with alternative, water saving measures and environmentally safe, effective waste recycling and disposal

**\*Square foot totals for all proposed structures is less than would be allowed under the Heritage Forest model** ( 3 houses of any size, 3 cottages, 6 septic fields, driveways etc)

**\* There will be 1 dwelling of up to 1,000 square feet.** Other than a dwelling for caretaker, residential uses are not permitted.

**\*There is currently no existing zone in the Land Use Bylaws that fits this proposal.** Therefore, a new zone would need to be created. 'The social and economic diversity and creativity of the island community and the important role of volunteer based groups in community life are fundamental to our identity.' **Reference – OCP 2.e**

**\* CMS was registered as a non-profit Society in 1976 and a Canadian Charity in 1982.** A non-profit Society may be registered as a Canadian charity only if its purposes are exclusively for the public benefit. We seek to keep fees as low as possible and flexible. Bursaries are distributed. CMS programs are not run to generate profit for the Society. Separate fundraising has been done to purchase and maintain the retreat site. The operation and maintenance of the Society, the Centre, and the programs are supported entirely by volunteers.

**\* The stated purpose of CMS** is to *"Promote the development of the wholesome, clear, interested mind through study, meditation and compassionate work."* In the Canada Revenue Agency guidelines, an intangible benefit is described as "purposes directed to the mental and moral improvement of mankind, or promoting the moral or spiritual welfare of the community."

CMS offers public programs to everyone. These programs vary in length, types of training and meditation; to meet the diverse needs of people. No affiliation with the Society or particular religious belief is required. Membership is not required nor does membership confer any special privileges or program discounts. The public side of CMS can be compared to a Public Library. It exists for a specific purpose and is used in a specific way for the benefit of the public. It is run entirely on a volunteer basis. CMS has no paid staff.

Please submit your letters to Island Trust:

by email

Planner Staff: Kim Farris [kfarris@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:kfarris@islandstrust.bc.ca)

Robert Kojima [rkojima@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:rkojima@islandstrust.bc.ca)

Trustees: Sandy Pottle [spottle@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:spottle@islandstrust.bc.ca)

George Harris [gharris@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:gharris@islandstrust.bc.ca)

Laura Busheikin [lbusheikin@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:lbusheikin@islandstrust.bc.ca)