



# The Galiano Restorative Learning Centre Creating a Model of Sustainable Living

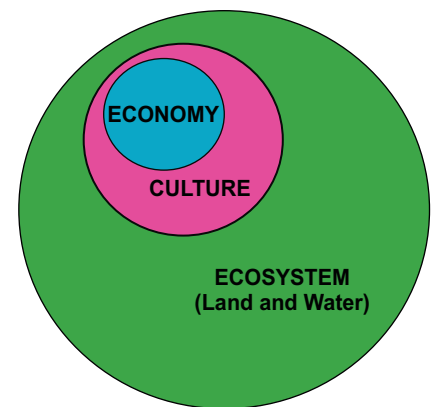
The underlying foundation of the Galiano Restorative Learning Centre, both programs and facilities alike, is to provide examples of how we can live in harmony with the land. From use of energy and water to production of food and waste to sourcing of materials and labour, we will demonstrate the same responsible, informed, and adaptive approach that we have employed for over two decades in the restorative management of our conservation lands. Participants will learn how to live with a small footprint, experiencing first hand life on a small island where 'limits' are palpable. The Learning Centre will operate in an environment where there is no "garbage"; where everything is recycled, energy is produced on site, carbon is saved instead of spent, food comes from outside your window, and water is collected and filtered at your doorstep. Achieving this vision will require an approach to long-term and daily decision making that embraces diversity and is anchored in healthy ecological systems.

## **Embrace Diversity**

The Galiano Restorative Learning Centre will be an open, safe space for discussion and critical thinking about contemporary sustainability challenges. It will enable a meeting of the minds; a place where all bodies of knowledge about sustainable living can come together and be applied in a living model. We will encourage participation from First Nations, descendants from pioneering families, and people coming from rural, urban, immigrant or other contexts, as cultivating diversity of ideas and perspectives is as important as stewarding the surrounding ecological diversity. Visioning for and management of the Learning Centre will include participation from the Galiano community and our visitors - we will model a participatory approach where people learn by doing. The technologies and planning processes we use will create a showcase for living with the land, sharing the story of our successes, challenges and solutions.

## **Ecosystem-based Approach**

Our vision for the Learning Centre and approach to land management is based on a relationship where economies are part of human cultures, which are part of ecosystems. The integrity of ecological health provides the basis for sustainable cultures, including their economies. We intend to build a model showcasing how we can transform our economy and society to respect the limits and work to actively restore the ecological services our communities depend upon.



## **Restorative Enterprise**

Based on the teachings and tools of community economic development and the social enterprise movement, we will subsidize our youth programs by offering for-profit courses at the same site. Adults will learn how to make the transition to a sustainable lifestyle through experiential "Restorative Retreats" similar to those the youth will enjoy, with special rates for courses run in partnership with post secondary institutions. We seek to complement the services offered by other retreat facilities and create a niche in providing practical training in sustainability solutions and team building through participating in hands-on ecological restoration work together.

**To discuss this opportunity further, please contact Ken Millard, Director (250) 539-2424**

# Site Management, Systems and Facilities at the Galiano Restorative Learning Centre

## Land Use and Resource Management

Ecosystem-based management looks first at what to protect, secondly at what to restore and finally at what can be used. With this in mind, the first priority for management of the protected lands surrounding the centre will be ecological restoration. We will show students how to avoid destructive practices, remove sources of pollution and invasive species, monitor natural regeneration of native vegetation, and then protect, encourage and install new plants where necessary to restore the area's complex and diverse ecosystems. Students will also identify and engage in opportunities to harvest a diversity of forest products in a manner that contributes to rather than diminishes the ecological health of the area. They will participate in building projects that feature "vernacular" architecture, creating the facilities on the site needed by groups who face barriers to camping, while modeling the sustainable and safe use of natural resources.



## Food Security

When it comes to making decisions about food to grow, purchase and serve, we will balance policies of "local first" and priorities of organic, seasonal, and/or wild sources with our desire to keep program costs low for participants, while staying within project budgets. With a 100 mile diet featuring healthy, tasty meals that combine wild ingredients, with traditionally preserved goods, seasonally available fresh produce, and durable goods that keep well without refrigeration, participants will have the chance to learn what food security can mean. Each year, we will build upon a permaculture-based teaching garden which makes use of previously cleared or even damaged areas to create habitat for beneficial insects and birds, while ensuring the development of a secure, quality, low cost food source for our programs.

## Waste

Each group of visitors will participate in sorting and diverting their waste at Galiano's recycling depot and safely composting food and human wastes in our system on site. They will see how commitment to a zero waste policy actually can work in the real world, by learning about which non-recyclable and non-compostable materials we refuse to bring on site, and how we reuse or store those we find unavoidable.

## Water

In our collection, use and disposal of water, we have a world of practices to tap into and find the right solution for our needs and our site. Instead of drilling into the limited groundwater supply and potentially polluting it with a septic system, we will explore rain harvesting, collection from natural springs, grey water recycling, and wetland filtration. Students will learn about how water is used and conserved in other countries to gain perspective on the value of the only substance we truly need to survive.

## Energy and Transportation

On Galiano, we can demonstrate the need and ability for people to create a post-carbon lifestyle; to reclaim and invent ways to meet our basic needs without being vulnerable to peak oil or contributing to climate change. Once they have arrived, students will experience fossil-fuel free travel, using pedal power, self-propelled boats and their own feet. They will tour a variety of alternative energy generation systems, learning why they are appropriate to our particular site and climate. The power often goes out during storms on Galiano, but our students will experience how self-sufficiency can be worth the investment when the lights stay on and our programming can continue without interruption.

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