



## **Late 2007 and Early 2008--The Next Restoration Phase What Can We Expect to See Growing Back in the Forest?**

### **Tree Planting**

Now that the cleanup of the debris blown down in last December's storm is nearing completion, people are asking what the future forest is going to look like. The Park Board has enjoyed the generous advice of some of coastal BC's top professionals of forest ecology, and listened attentively to the naturalist community, in formulating its regeneration plans. We learned that there are alternatives to the conventional timber production models that will serve well our goal of establishing the conditions that will foster a resilient coastal forest with a diversity of native trees and other species and habitats.



Detailed work guidelines for each blowdown area, called "prescriptions," are being devised that recognize the variety of site specific growing conditions. They attempt to match what would thrive naturally in a more truly wild environment over the course of time. Trees will be planted in clusters rather than in evenly spaced grid patterns. These clusters will be spaced to allow a healthy

shrub layer to grow between the trees. They will also favour the development of a well branched tree architecture that can better withstand future wind storms. While Western red cedar and Douglas fir will be the predominant species planted, Sitka spruce and Grand fir will also be added to the mix in a proportion known to

occur naturally within our forest zone. The Western hemlock will not be planted as we expect many to grow on there own.

A few Western white pines have already been planted atop the windy bluffs along Siwash Rock Trail. This tree used to occur in the park but was killed off by an introduced fungal disease. It is hoped that our stock exhibits the disease resistance for which they were selectively bred. Deciduous trees such as maple, alder, cottonwood, and cascara will also be used where and when appropriate.

### **Shrubs and Other Native Plants**

The top of the bluffs along Siwash Rock trail has been planted with sword ferns dug up by volunteers from a densely populated area nearby. Soon to come are thousands of small ‘plugs’ of shrub species suitable for exposed oceanfront sites. Our objective here is to guard against soil erosion, and establish a coastal bluff ecosystem that will be both attractive and resilient to that particularly harsh environment. Many of the plants such as salal, wild rose, ocean spray, and Saskatoon berry will offer a food source and nesting habitat for birds. Trailing plants such as the wild strawberry, kinnikinnick, and stonecrop will be cultivated along the very bluff edge in the hopes that they will partially colonize the exposed bluff below. It should make a beautiful addition to the seawall experience and help to slow the weathering process.



While some tree planting has been completed, the majority of the regeneration work will take place in the early spring of 2008. Infill planting will occur in subsequent years if required. The Park Board wishes to thank PRT Inc. and NAT’S Nursery for the donation of plant material, and Brinkman & Associates Reforestation Ltd for lending us their professional tree planters.