

MEDIA RELEASE  
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## Community Rallies to Save Pristine Maltby Lake

Concerned residents filled Lana Popham's Community Office on Friday morning, anxious to hear an update on Maltby Lake.

As a decision about Maltby Lake and The Land Conservancy (TLC) heads into the Supreme Court of British Columbia on Monday, the judge will hear arguments about the future of Maltby Lake: 172 acres of undisturbed forest and wetland surrounding 21 acres of pristine water in Saanich. The Land Conservancy, under Creditor Protection since 2013, owns a 35% interest in the property and is under pressure from its Court-appointed Monitor to sell its share to the highest bidder.

"A sale to the highest bidder would mean the surrounding property would likely fall into the hands of developers who are paying only lip-service to the protection of Maltby Lake's existing environment", said Saanich resident Patrick Brown.

"A sale without legally-binding protection for the lake's environment would disregard the intent of the Will under which TLC acquired the property and compromise the integrity of TLC", says Friends of Maltby Lake Watershed Society board member Joan Hendrick.

Saanich municipality identified Maltby Lake in 2012 as an Environmentally Significant Area with a rich variety of endangered, threatened and at-risk species and ecosystems. "Numerous studies indicate that the water is as pure as it can get and the presence of sponges and jellyfish indicate that they have survived in this habitat since it was separated from marine contact several thousand years ago. . . A hugely important value to saving Maltby Lake is that future generations of biologists and other scientists will be able to use Maltby Lake as a reference site," says Ian Bruce, aquatic biologist and E.D. of Peninsula Streams Society.

Saanich residents, local Saanich Councillors, local conservation organizations, the general membership and Board of TLC, MLA Lana Popham and MP Randall Garrison all agree that if a sale is ordered by the court, it must be to a bidder that will accept an obligation to maintain its natural state. Such a proposal has been made and accepted by the TLC. The individuals involved have widespread – and growing - support from the community at large and are offering legally binding protection that honours the intent of the will. Friday's update to the public immediately resulted in five new pledges from those in attendance, totalling \$32,500. "Neighbours, friends, family and strangers have been motivated by our efforts and are pledging small and large amounts. We are hopeful" says Carmel Thomson.

**Will the Supreme Court of BC recognize the significant public support and balance the valid financial interests of TLC's creditors, the environmental importance of the watershed itself and the integrity of TLC's position of trust on behalf of its donors in BC? We believe TLC will present a plan to the Court on Monday that will achieve just that.**

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*"there is nothing in or near the core municipalities that approaches the ecological integrity of Maltby Lake." – Ian Bruce,*