

Burnaby Lake Park Association

COVID-19 Safety Plan for the Resumption of Volunteer and Stewardship Activities



July 2021

All groups for any Burnaby Lake Park Association (BLPA) events will be limited to a maximum of **25 volunteers**.

This is to ensure adequate distancing and that other COVID-19 safety measures can be applied to all events. All events will take place outdoors.

Masks have been changed from mandatory to only be required when physical distancing of 2 meters or more is not able to be maintained. Volunteers will still be required to bring a mask to the event regardless if they are vaccinated or not. However, it is up to the individual whether they would like to keep their mask on for the whole event or take it off when they are able to physically distance yourself from the other volunteers.

It is recommended that the participants have volunteered at Metro Vancouver Regional Parks before. These volunteers would be familiar the parks, previous safety measures and knowledge of the activities to be performed. Previous knowledge would include wildlife safety, risk of the tools, terrain and the knowledge of how to safely remove the invasive plants or proper planting techniques. Due to the degree of self-awareness and responsibility for safety measures, we require volunteers to be at least 16 years of age or older.

The BLPA may expand the allowable event group size as determined by the success of previous events, particularly with regard to ensuring participant safety (BC Government Regulations for COVID-19 protocols). The BLPA may recruit new volunteers on public forums such as its own social media accounts while keeping the group sizes small, and ensure a proper training program for new volunteers is in place.

All volunteers must pre-register online before the event starts to ensure the group does not exceed the maximum allowable size, acknowledge the safety protocol in place and provide contact tracing information as required.

Activities could include: wildlife monitoring, invasive removal projects, and planting events. A return to 'normal' stewardship activity will not occur until the Province of BC is able to enter Phase 4 of its BC Restart Plan.

Volunteers should be prepared for the possibility of last minute cancellation of stewardship events if provincial health orders change.

Burnaby Lake Park Association

COVID-19 Safety Plan - Stewardship Activities



PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for minimizing the risk of COVID-19 exposure during stewardship activities in order to ensure a safe work environment for Burnaby Lake Park Association (BLPA) members, contractors and volunteers.

1. Risk Assessment

Stewardship activities such as invasive plant removals, tree plantings, and wildlife monitoring are led by BLPA Members and contractors and include a group of volunteers working together outdoors in the same location. Identified below are areas and situations where the risk of COVID-19 transmission exists either through close proximity or contaminated surfaces.

- **Restoration sites:** All stewardship activities take place outdoors where the risk of COVID-19 transmission is reduced due to the ease of physical distancing and open air ventilation. Movement pathways at each site can be evaluated prior to the start of each event to identify potential pinch points.
- **Registration, introductions, and breaks:** Volunteers often congregate during registration, introductions, and breaks. BLPA contractor/s, with the aid of signage and place markers, will remind participants of Burnaby Lake Park Association's COVID-19 policies and protocols on physical distancing, hand washing and good hygiene.

Hand sanitizer will be available at the registration table and volunteers will be instructed to disinfect their hands upon arrival. Any common surfaces such as tables, clipboards, and pens will be disinfected at the start and end of each event. Volunteers will be encouraged to bring their own water and snacks, and pack out any garbage.

- **Work gloves and tools:** Volunteers can bring their own work gloves and tools if they prefer. All provided work gloves and tools will be cleaned and disinfected by BLPA contractors prior to the start of each event. For restoration plantings, invasive plant removals, and habitat maintenance, there will be sufficient tools (e.g. shovels, pruners, loppers, etc.) to assign each participant with their own. Consequently, tools will not be shared for these events.
- **Monitoring activities and equipment:** Monitoring activities involve very small groups (e.g. 2-6 people) and may utilize specialized equipment with potentially high-touch surfaces (e.g. GPS units, tablets, sampling poles, data loggers). The low number of participants reduces the risk of person-to-person and surface transmission, and individuals can be assigned specific roles to minimize equipment sharing. If equipment must be shared, it will be disinfected between users. Volunteers will be encouraged to bring their own work gloves if the volunteer can do so.

2. Protocols

Physical Distancing

- All stewardship activities will occur outdoors.
- BLPA contractor/s will consider movement pathways to identify and minimize pinch points.
- Stewardship events will be limited to activities where the worksite and the nature of work allow for BLPA contractor/s and volunteers to maintain a distance of 2 meters (6 feet).
- **The BLPA has set the group size for stewardship activities at 25 people that will consist of 1 Coordinator, 1 BLPA Director and a maximum of 23 volunteers. This will allow physical distancing to be effectively maintained.**
- Volunteers will be required to register online prior to all events to ensure that group size limits are not exceeded, to acknowledge the safety protocol in place and provide contact tracing information as required.
- BLPA contractor/s will remind volunteers of COVID-19 measures during recruitment and at the start of each stewardship event. Signage may be posted if necessary.
- Volunteers will be reminded that if they are at greater risk (over the age of 60 or with underlying medical conditions), they think through their risk tolerance and take extra precautions (BC Government, 2020).

Hand Washing and Hygiene

- An alcohol-based hand sanitizer (ABHS) with at least 60% alcohol will be available at every stewardship event (PHAC, 2020).
- For visibly soiled hands, dirt should be removed with a hand wipe first, followed by an ABHS (PHAC, 2020).
- If available, hand washing with warm water and soap for 20 seconds is preferred.
- BLPA contractor/s and volunteers must wash or disinfect hands:
 - Upon arriving at a worksite;
 - Before and after breaks (e.g. washroom, food or water breaks);
 - Before and after handling common items and tools (e.g. signing in);
 - After a stewardship activity.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Tools

- **Volunteers will be required to bring and wear mask regardless if they are vaccinated or not.** The BLPA will have non-medical disposable masks for emergency use only.
- Volunteers will be encouraged to bring their own gloves and tools if they have them available to use.
- Volunteers that do not have their own tools will be provided with a clean pair of work gloves (e.g. Showa latex-lined gloves) at the start of each stewardship event. They will be encouraged to wear them while working and throughout the event.

- Volunteers will be assigned their own tool(s) to minimize the sharing of equipment (e.g. shovels, pruners, loppers).
- Tools will be labelled so that volunteers can keep track of the one they are using.
- If **shared** equipment is to be used, it must be disinfected between users.
- Volunteers will make sure to bring all the things they need to be safe and comfortable.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Gloves, Tools, and Equipment by BLPA Contractor/s

- All used gloves, tools and equipment will be cleaned and disinfected by BLPA contractors at the end of each stewardship activity.
- For approved disinfectants, check Health Canada's list (2020).
- Alternatively, a diluted bleach solution can be used for disinfection. Refer to the BCCDC recommended bleach to water ratios and cleaning time chart (2020).

Work gloves (BCCDC, 2020):

- Volunteers are to deposit work gloves in a designated plastic bag or plastic-lined bin after use.
- BLPA contractor/s are to wear disposable nitrile gloves when washing dirty work gloves.
- Do not shake dirty items.
- Wash with laundry detergent and hot water (60-90°C) after each use.
- BLPA contractor/s is to wash hands with soap and water after removing disposable nitrile gloves.

Tools (BCCDC, 2020):

- Tools are to be disinfected before the start of each stewardship activity (e.g. 500 ppm bleach solution and left to air dry).
- After each stewardship activity, used tools are to be brought back to the storage space for cleaning and disinfecting.
- BLPA contractor/s are to wear disposable nitrile gloves and eye protection if cleaning may result in splashing or aerosol-generating contaminants.
- Wash and/or wipe off all dirt.
- Once the dirt is removed, disinfect with an approved product or diluted bleach solution as recommended by the manufacturer or BCCDC, respectively.
- Store tools until the next stewardship activity.
- BLPA contractor/s are to wash hands with soap and water after removing nitrile gloves.

Equipment (BCCDC, 2020;):

- Disinfect all equipment at the start and end of each stewardship activity (e.g. table, totes, clipboards, etc.) using Health Canada's approved product or diluted bleach solution and disposable nitrile gloves
- Check the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and disinfecting.
- BLPA contractor/s are to wear disposable nitrile gloves and eye protection if cleaning may result in splashing or aerosol-generating contaminants.

Waste:

- Encourage volunteers to pack out all waste or dispose it in designated garbage bins.

Potential COVID-19 Tracing

- All volunteers must check in with Coordinator in at the start of each stewardship event.
- Full names and contact information must be provided during registration in case contact tracing is required. Both email and phone number will be required. If this information is not provided, then the individual will not be allowed to participate in the volunteer event.
- Volunteers will have to state that they
 - Are not exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms
 - Have not travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days
 - Have not been exposed to a confirmed or clinical COVID-19 case in the last 14 days
- When registering, participants must also acknowledge that they have read and/or are aware of BLPA COVID-19 policy for volunteer work parties.

Refreshments, Food and Water

- Volunteers will be encouraged to bring their own food and water, and take home any garbage.
- **BLPA may provide individually portioned drink box or snack bar; Coordinator will distribute them to reduce contact**
- BLPA contractor/s will bring a case of bottled water to each stewardship activity for emergency use only.

First Aid (Burnaby Lake Park, 2020)

- Minimize unnecessary exposure to the patient by verbally assessing them from a distance of 2 meters, if possible.
- Although participants should already be pre-screened for the event, double-check to make sure they are not exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms or have travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days.
- If patient is not able to self-treat under your direction, apply the following treatment procedures:
 - Put on disposable nitrile gloves, and disposable mask;

- If possible, give the patient a disposable mask to wear while you provide first aid;
- Continue with patient assessment and treatment as per normal protocols;
- If patient is unresponsive, call 9-1-1 immediately and report their travel history if known;
- If CPR is required, perform **compression-only** CPR;
- Document all assessments in First Aid Record.

3. Policy

Burnaby Lake Park Association COVID-19 Responsibilities and Absences From Work (Temporary Policy) should guide BLPA contractor/s' issues and concerns during the pandemic. As set out in the British Columbia *Worker's Compensation Act*, employers and employees have a collective duty to maintain a safe workplace, and a collective obligation to keep our communities safe as best we can.

In consideration of maximizing safety and minimizing risk related COVID-19:

- BLPA contractor/s and volunteers must complete a Personal Health Check before attending a stewardship event. The full self-assessment tool is available online at: <https://covid19.thrive.health/>.
- Participants will be asked not to attend a stewardship activity if they are:
 - Exhibiting cold or flu-like symptoms in the last 10 days such as fever, chills, new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, and new muscle aches or headache;
 - Under the direction of the provincial health officer to self-isolate;
 - Arrived from outside of Canada in the last 14 days;
 - In close contact with someone who has a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days.

4. Communication and Training

- BLPA contractors and volunteers who organize stewardship activities in Burnaby Lake Regional Park must review the COVID-19 Safety Plan – Stewardship Activities prior to running an event. Any modifications to Metro Vancouver policy and safety plans will be shared with the BLPA to ensure the BLPA policy and safety plans remain consistent.
- Potential volunteers will be informed of BLPA COVID-19 measures in advance of a scheduled event (i.e. during recruitment).
- BLPA COVID-19 policy (e.g. Personal Health Check), along with protocols on physical distancing and good hygiene, will be posted at the registration table.
- BLPA contractor/s will also remind volunteers of existing COVID-19 measures at the start of each stewardship event.
- Volunteers will be asked to check off that they have read and/or are aware of BLPA COVID-19 policy and protocols on the sign-in form.

5. Monitor and Update Plan

- BLPA contractor/s will continually assess work sites and activities for COVID-19 risks, and change procedures as needed.
- Issues and concerns will be shared and discussed with co-workers and supervisors.
- Volunteers are encouraged to provide input.
- Policies and protocols may be updated if necessary.

DELIVERING A VOLUNTEER STEWARDSHIP ACTIVITY

The following protocols are COVID-19 specific and are meant to be added to the protocols outlined within existing documentation to ensure BLPA contractor/s and volunteer safety.

1. Pre-Event Planning and Recruitment

- BLPA contractor/s are to review BLPA COVID-19 safety protocols and updates before organizing a stewardship activity.
- When planning a stewardship activity, carefully evaluate the worksite and the nature of the activity to ensure that COVID-19 protocols can be effectively carried out (*e.g.* physical distancing, good hygiene, etc.).
- Although, the Provincial Health Order presently allows for groups of increased number, group sizes for stewardship activities will be set at a level where physical distance can be maintained.
- Contact and inform volunteers of BLPA COVID-19 policy and protocols in advance of the scheduled event.
- Remind participants that they are not to attend the stewardship event if:
 - a. They are exhibiting cold or flu-like symptoms in the last 10 days such as fever, chills, new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, and new muscle aches or headache;
 - b. Are under the direction of the provincial health officer to self-isolate;
 - c. Have arrived from outside of Canada in the last 14 days;
 - d. Or have been exposed to a confirmed or clinical COVID-19 case in the last 14 days.
- Participants **must register** prior to the event to ensure that the group size limit is not exceeded – No drop-ins allowed. They should notify Coordinator if they are unable to attend or cancel their registration to open up the spot for another volunteer.
- Remind volunteers they must bring their own mask, water, and snacks. They can also bring their own work gloves if they prefer to use them.

2. Event Day Setup

- BLPA contractor/s or BLPA lead volunteer will:
 - a. Disinfect the welcome table, equipment and high touch surfaces.
 - b. Place a sign-in form, hand sanitizer and BLPA COVID-19 policy at the welcome table.

- c. If necessary, place physical distancing markers (2 meters apart) on the ground to indicate where volunteers should stand during sign-in and introductions.
- d. Mark staging areas designated for equipment, garbage, *etc.*

3. Volunteer Arrival and Check-in

- As volunteers arrive, BLPA contractor/s or BLPA lead volunteer will use digital check in to reduce contact:
 - a. Welcome them and ask them to stand at the physical distancing markers.
 - b. Remind volunteers of BLPA COVID-19 policy for volunteer work parties.
- All participants must check in and confirm:
 - a. Full names and contact information in case contact tracing is required; and
 - b. Confirm that they are aware of BLPA COVID-19 policy for volunteer work parties.
- BLPA contractor/s or BLPA lead volunteer will inform volunteers that all equipment and gloves have been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.
- Volunteers will be asked to maintain a minimum distance of 2 meters (6 feet) between themselves and members of the public at all times while participating in the stewardship event.
- BLPA contractor/s or BLPA lead volunteer will identify family units where members may be working closely together (e.g. parent and child).

4. Explain and Demonstrate Tasks

- BLPA contractor/s or BLPA lead volunteer will clearly explain and demonstrate tasks. Specific procedures for reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission will be highlighted (e.g. where green waste should be placed, stacking empty pots, *etc.*).
- BLPA contractor/s or BLPA lead volunteer will clearly define the work area, and point out any potential pinch points.

5. Distribute Equipment

- Volunteers will be assigned their own gloves at the start of each stewardship activity.
- BLPA contractor/s or BLPA lead volunteer will hand out gloves to each volunteer to minimize surface transmission.
- Volunteers will be encouraged to keep their work gloves on as often as possible and not to touch their face, mouth or eyes.
- Tools will be handed to each volunteer to minimize surface transmission, and once assigned, the tool(s) should only be used by that person for the duration of the event.
- Label tools so that volunteers can keep track of the one that they are using.
- Should there be a need to share tools or equipment, they must be disinfected between users.

6. Supervise and Assist Volunteers During the Work Session

- The BLPA contractor/s or BLPA lead volunteer will be responsible for ensuring that all participants maintain physical distancing while working.
- Should volunteers begin to congregate too closely together, the BLPA contractor/s or BLPA lead volunteer will kindly remind participants to maintain a physical distance of at least 2 meters.
- In the event of a first aid response, BLPA contractor/s or BLPA lead volunteer will follow the BLPA – COVID-19 Protocol: *Providing First Aid*

7. Break Time

- Breaks will be taken as appropriate.
- Volunteers will be asked to disinfect their hands before and after a break.
- **Individually packaged drink and snacks may be provided and the Coordinator will be the only one who distributes them.** No food or drink is allowed to be shared between volunteers.
- Volunteers will be asked to keep all garbage with them, or dispose of it in designated garbage bins.

8. Collect Equipment/Sign-Out

- Volunteers are to remove as much debris from the equipment as possible onsite (e.g. mud, vegetation, etc.)
- Volunteers are to place equipment directly in the work truck while maintaining physical distancing. If not, they are to leave equipment neatly piled next to the sign-in table.
- Volunteers are to deposit work gloves (singly and unbundled) into a designated plastic bag or plastic-lined bin after use.
- Remind volunteers to clean their hands before leaving the event.

9. Clean up

- Follow the protocols for cleaning and disinfecting gloves, tools, and equipment outlined in COVID-19 Safety Plan for Stewardship Activities.

REFERENCES

BC Centre for Disease Control (2020). *Bleach-water ratios table*. <http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/bleach-water-ratios-table.pdf>. Accessed June 2, 2020.

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BC Government (2020). *BC's Restart plan*. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/bc-restart-plan>. Accessed June 5, 2020

Health Canada (2020). *Hard-surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers (COVID-19): List of disinfectants with evidence of use against COVID-19*. <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/list.html>. Accessed June 2, 2020.

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Work Safe BC (2020). *COVID-19: A guide to reducing risk*. <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/information-sheets/covid-19-guide-to-reducing-risk?lang=en>. Accessed May 25, 2020.