
Happy New Year from Teale and an Update!

Teale <hello@teale.ca>

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To: hello@teale.ca



Happy New Year!

Dear friends,

I hope you had a lovely winter holidays. I wanted to wish you a very happy New Year and all the very best in 2023!

This past year was jam packed and was as busy as it was exciting. A big highlight for me was getting elected to [Saanich Council](#), and I am incredibly grateful to all of the Saanich voters who put their confidence in me!

I am also proud of my work around the community, which included helping install a [road mural on Falaise Crescent](#), Saanich, and

supporting the region's growing network of little free libraries (LFLs). This year, we cut the ribbon on the region's [650th LFL](#) and delivered the Pocket Places Project's [75,000th book](#)!



I also got up to a ton of research covering a wide range of topics, including [illegal fishing](#), [marine plastic pollution](#), shark conservation, [parliamentary procedures](#), tax policy, and road safety.

I was happy that I finally got out of the office and was very lucky to travel to Gabon in West Africa to study innovative fisheries monitoring and enforcement strategies. I pleased to see my work on sea cucumber wildlife crime get covered in a documentary - [Pirates of the Seabed](#) - which aired on Channel News Asia in Singapore. If you haven't had a chance yet, check it out!

I wanted to share a few updates on a number of my ongoing projects and things I will be working on as 2023 begins.

Saanich Council News



I was honoured to have been elected to Saanich Council in October, and despite having studied politics and government for decades, the first few months were a steep learning curve. With orientation complete, I'm beginning to find my feet and will be making my first notice of motion at our upcoming meeting on Monday!

My council colleagues bring a wealth of experience to the chambers and I am looking forward to working with them in the upcoming term. We have already approved a number of new housing developments, including a ton of garden suites and a [townhouse complex for car free families](#) on Richmond. We have begun the strategic planning process that will help guide our work over the next four years.

I am excited to announce that I will be serving as the Chair of the Active Transportation Advisory Committee, and hope to help improve road safety in the District through this role. I have also been named to the Royal McPherson Theatre Society Board as a Director, a Trustee on the Greater Victoria Public Library Board, and will serve as a Director on the Regional Water Supply Commission.

If you ever want to get in touch with me about Saanich issues, drop me an email on my new councillor drop me a line at 250-882-6261, or an email at teale.phelps.bondaroff@saanich.ca. I'm very much looking forward to the year ahead!

Project Updates

Reproductive Justice



The AccessBC Campaign has been ramping up our efforts to push for free prescription contraception as the 2023 provincial budget approaches. Part of our efforts include a campaign to [raise funds to put up billboards](#) in Victoria and Vancouver to put pressure on the government and mobilize people to participate in our [letter writing campaign](#).

I booked our first billboard this afternoon! And I'm hoping we can raise a little more to put up ads around the lower mainland. Please support this campaign if you can.

Support the Billboard Campaign!

I am very proud of our teams amazing work, and am pleased to have my friend and campaign co-founder Devon Black back on the team after she took a work hiatus.

In December, our grassroots campaign made national headlines and was covered in the [Globe and Mail](#), the [Calgary Herald](#), [CTV News](#), [Radio Canada](#), and several prominent CBC Radio programs ([Radio West](#), [On the Coast](#), and [The Current](#)). We even got our first news [article in Turkish](#)!

I am very much hoping that 2023 will be the last year that people have to pay for prescription contraception in BC. You can help by taking a few seconds to write the Premier. Take action by clicking the button below.

Write Premier Eby!

Research Publications



I have been working on issues relating to the separation of religion and government in Canada and BC in my role as Research Coordinator with the [BC Humanist Association](#).

Our advocacy helped ensure that municipal inaugural meetings in BC were more inclusive this year. In [a recent study](#), we found that in 2018, 23 BC municipalities included prayer in their inaugural meetings - a violation of the Supreme Court ruling in *Saguenay*, which prohibits the practice and requires the state to remain neutral.

Thanks to our advocacy, this number dropped to around 3 in 2022! I was particularly pleased to see Saanich update its practices for this year's inaugural meeting. We are in the process of verifying municipal council minutes and agendas across the province.

In December, we released a [new report](#) examining unconstitutional prayer in Ontario Municipalities. This was our longest report to date, weighing in at 177 pages! My research team is in the process of updating it to see how practices changed in Ontario after the most recent round of inaugural meetings.

I am proud of this work which demonstrates the power of research advocacy and will hopefully make municipal council meetings around the country more inclusive.

Marine Conservation



My work on wildlife crime in sea cucumber fisheries continues to have an impact around the world. It was recently covered in a [Yahoo! Finanza article](#), and I am working with my [OceansAsia](#) research team on a number of projects, including crime in Canadian sea cucumber fisheries, shark oil in cosmetic products, crime in global seahorse fisheries, finless porpoise conservation, and marine plastic pollution.

I can't thank you enough for all of your support in 2022 and very much looking forward to the new year! It looks like it's going to be a busy one. Please keep in touch.

Warm regards,

Teale Phelps Bondaroff
Saanich Councillor

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