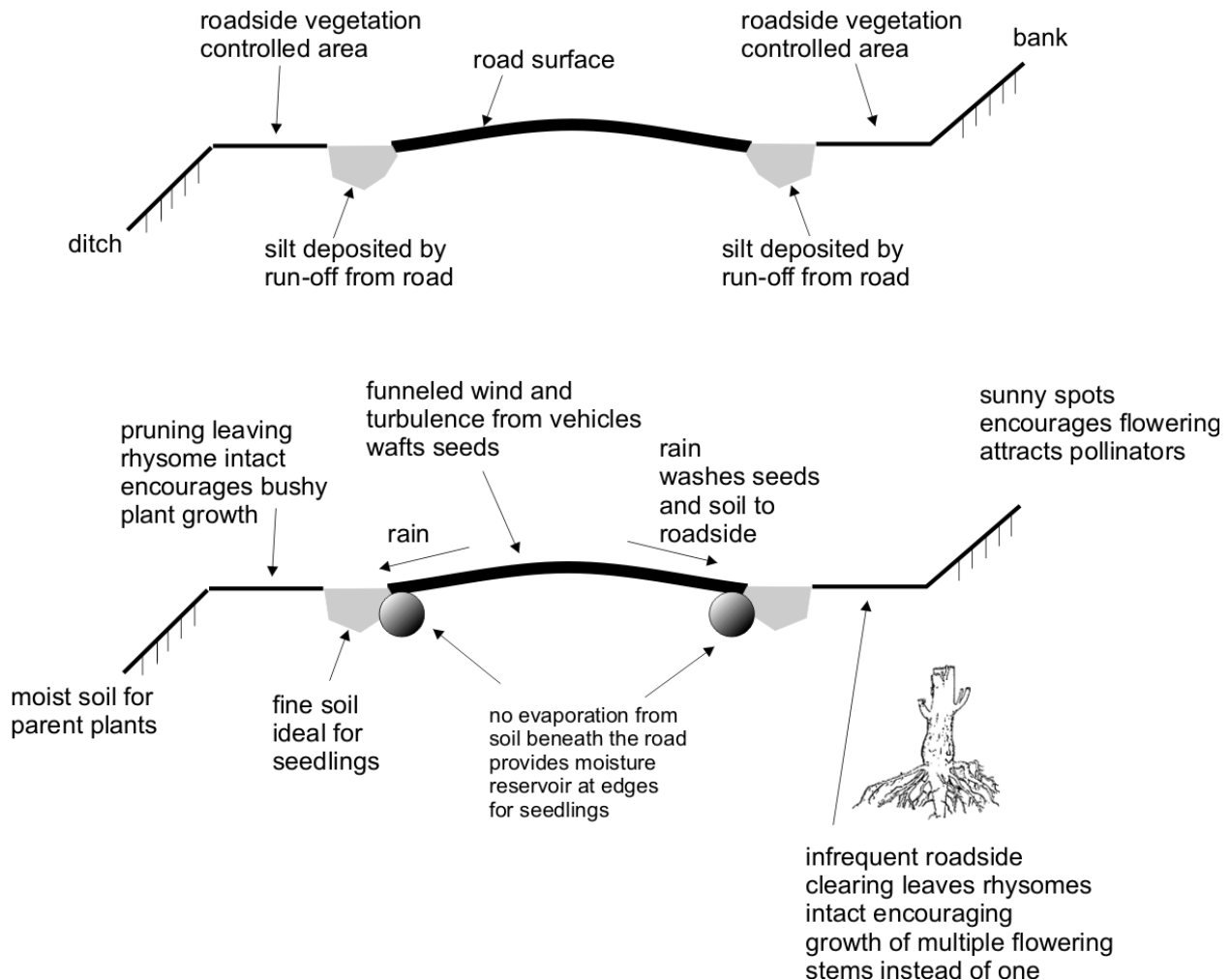


Why tansy ragwort (*Senecio jacobeeae*) grows along roadsides on Gabriola.



1. Seeds are windborne. Roads provide wind tunnels and air turbulence from vehicles.
2. Seeds landing on the road surface are washed by rain to the edges of the road.
3. Wind blown dust does the same providing a good fine soil for seedlings.
4. Rain run-off provides moisture.
5. No evaporation from soil beneath the road provides a moisture reservoir in hot weather.
6. Roadside vegetation management encourages growth by cutting single stems leaving the rhizomes intact. New growth from the rhizome is then multi-stemmed.
7. Areas beyond the vegetation control area provide a wide range of habitats for mature plants. These grow in concentrated patches as seed dispersal other than along the road is not that efficient.

TRAILS: Several factors also apply to trails, but in the absence of vehicle traffic, it is not entirely clear to me why the ragwort is more prolific along well-used trails. The most likely explanation is

that well-used trails keep the soil bare and are usually wider. Patches of tansy ragwort also occur in previously logged areas where there is very little human traffic. See the discussion at:

<http://gabriolan.ca/2011/08/10/gabriola-islands-trust-tansy/>