



Local mills sponsor visitor programs

BY BRIAN CARRUTHERS

There was excitement in the air at Ten Mile Lake Park as 50 people gathered on June 22 to celebrate the parks' first visitor programs, jointly sponsored by West Fraser Mills and Weldwood of Quesnel.

Representatives of the mills, Cariboo District staff, Park Facility Operator and staff, Jerry the Moose and local media were on hand to kick off the event. An "Earth Walk" led by naturalist Grant Wardle was followed by cake cutting and refreshments.

Much of the credit for this initiative goes to the Ten Mile Lake Park Facility Operators, George and Judy Black, who were interested in offering some additional activities to increase their customer's enjoyment and ultimately, their length of stay. In the fall of 1995, Judy approached management at the two companies to see if they would consider sponsoring a naturalist program at the park. Some interest was expressed and at that point, Cariboo District staff became actively involved in the project. After eight months of meetings, phone calls and letters, a sponsorship agreement was signed and naturalist Grant Wardle was contracted by the companies.

Grant is a teacher at the local elementary school and has been actively involved with the Gavin Lake Forest Education Facility near Williams Lake. His creative and entertaining approach to interpretation and his knowledge of nature and the outdoors made him a natural choice for the job. Grant has developed a number of unique programs and will deliver them five days a week from late June to Labour Day.

Everyone involved in this project is excited about its potential benefits to the park and the local community. With the program up and running, efforts will now focus on securing funding to develop an amphitheatre for the park.



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Articles from readers are welcome. Deadline for material in the next issue is September 15, 1996.

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The bear facts

BY DOUG WILSON

The Yew Lake area and the Howe Sound Crest trail have been closed due to black bears since the end of June. The area is rich in bear habitat and with the higher elevations lacking normal food supply, six to eight black bears have decided to take residence within this area of Cypress Park.

The closure was the first of its kind at Cypress and has received overwhelming support from the public and local media. The issue was broadcasted on four television stations, many radio stations,

and two local newspapers. As the resource officer for the district, my hat's off to the Vancouver District team and the close co-operation of the Conservation Service for their efforts in addressing a very sensitive conservation issue.

We are currently implementing an extensive aversive conditioning program which will end soon after which the district and Conservation Officer Service will meet to further discuss management options.

Thank you to all those involved.



New Minister

Paul Ramsey was appointed Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks on June 17, 1996.

He had served as Minister of Education, Skills and Training and Minister of Health and Minister Responsible for Seniors, and prior to that he served as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Forests.

Mr. Ramsey, 51, was first elected in 1991. He represents the riding of Prince George North.

Mr. Ramsey served two terms as president of the College-Institute Educators' Association of B.C. and has held a variety of positions in local and provincial educational organizations and committees.

Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Mr. Ramsey completed his Bachelor and Master's degrees in English in the United States before enrolling at the University of B.C. where he did further graduate work and taught.

Paul and Hazel Ramsey have two children, Paul and Ann.

Park Visitors Share Their Perspectives

BY ALICE MACGILLIVRAY

It has been a decade since provincial park staff began to formally survey park visitors' opinions in what we call "satisfaction surveys." This survey is used along with park comment cards, household surveys and other research help to guide decisions about everything from land acquisition to maintenance standards. Listening to visitors' perspectives has become so ingrained in park management, that it seems strange that only five years ago, BC Parks was highlighted as a Service Quality "island of excellence" using these "new and innovative ways to serve their internal and external customers."

What did visitors tell us in the most recent (1995) satisfaction surveys? Overall, visitors were very pleased. Almost everyone's expectations were met or exceeded (96% of respondents). Over two thirds of campers thought the value they received for the fee was excellent or above average. Some satisfaction ratings

were extremely high. For example, over 90% of park visitors thought that cleanliness of grounds was excellent or above average. Other scores were lower: almost half the visitors said that "recreational things to do" in the park were average or below. Park managers build on the successes of high scores by monitoring operations, and sharing innovations. They also look for creative ways of improving services efficiently.

Satisfaction survey respondents also ranked 20 items to help park staff plan future priorities. With remarkable consistency, the top three choices were trails for short walks, self-guided nature trails and visitor centres. These results have been a factor in trail work being done. For example, E-Team-funded Pacheenaht Band work crews will be upgrading the Juan de Fuca Marine Trail between China Beach and Botany Bay.

Some of the usefulness of such surveys comes through looking at trends, patterns in individual parks, and patterns among groups of visitors. The most recent results, for example, show that visitors aged 55-64 place a sense of security as the most important element of their visit, whereas 25-34 year-olds ranked it third after cleanliness of grounds and restrooms. Single parent families were particularly interested in educational facilities and services, and in recreational things to do.

As the satisfaction survey program enters its second decade, a team of park staff will begin a review of data and the approach to surveying. The team expects to find both answers and questions to help manage a park system that is as relevant and responsive as possible.

Management direction statements

BY ROGER NORRISH

Since 1991, the B.C. government has established over 180 new provincial parks and ecological reserves. With a few exceptions, most of these new protected areas do not have a written plan to guide the management of natural and cultural resources and visitor use. In addition, over 300 of the existing provincial parks and ecological reserves established prior to 1991, also lack written management plans.

BC Parks recently introduced a new planning tool in an endeavour to meet the significant challenge of providing management direction for these new protected areas. This tool, called a management

direction statement, will give protected area managers practical short-term strategies until full management plans can be developed.

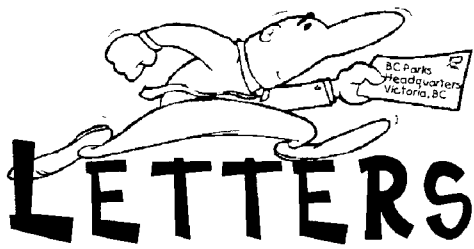
These documents will be short and describe: a) the site's conservation, recreation and cultural heritage values; b) existing tenures, lands use activities and commitments; c) First Nations interests; d) key management issues; and, e) a management strategy identifying high priority management objectives and actions. Where enough information is known, a preliminary zoning plan will also be defined.

While public involvement will not be

on the scale of a full park master plan process, protected area managers are committed to consulting with First Nations, other government agencies, Interagency Management Committees, Community Resource Boards and key stakeholders. Indeed, in a number of these protected areas new partnerships and collaborative arrangements involving BC Parks, First Nations and other government agencies will arise and be recognized and endorsed in the management direction statements.

For further information please contact Roger Norrish, Management Planning Coordinator in Victoria at 387-4660.





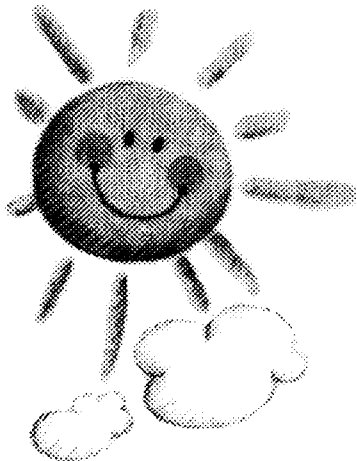
Letter to Wayne Stetski
District Manager
East Kootenay District

**Letter of Appreciation—
Assistance to RCMP
Wycliffe, B.C.—Hostage Situation**

May I take this opportunity, on behalf of Superintendent R.M. (Bob) Swann, the Officer Commanding Nelson Sub-Division, to express our sincere appreciation to your ministry and the members of your staff responsible for providing logistical support (picnic table/firewood) for the use of our members during this extended police operation. We have always enjoyed and sincerely appreciated the excellent support received from your ministry. This high level of co-operation is not however taken for granted and we wish to take this opportunity to convey our heartfelt thanks to yourself and the members of your staff who assisted in this endeavour.

Yours truly,

*J.R. (Jim) Senft
Staff Sargeant, RCMP
Cranbrook, British Columbia*



Bear Awareness Orientation

BY R.B. HARRIS

BC Parks leads the way again! In 1995, BC Parks introduced the Bear-People Conflict Prevention Plan, which was featured in a previous Visions article.

What wasn't noted at that time was the training that went hand-in-hand with this plan. BC Parks identified training needs for persons working in areas that had the potential for bear-people conflict.

The training consists of three elements with each building upon the other to provide a complete training program for staff.

BC Parks Public Safety Park Security Manual outlines the basic background for this course: "As park rangers and parks staff come in contact with problem wildlife it is desirable that they receive the BC Parks Bear Awareness Orientation Course. This course addresses Bear-People Conflict Prevention Plan and is a pre-requisite for staff to be qualified to use pepper spray or firearms."

The first element of training which is mandatory for all other elements (e.g., pepper spray and firearms) and staff working with problem wildlife, is the Bear Awareness Course. This course is a one-half day course and is usually delivered with the assistance of the district's resource officer. The purpose is to: "qualify staff, volunteers, and other personnel working or travelling in areas where contact with bears is deemed likely, and to comply with policies to:

- provide for the safety of park visitors and their property;
- maintain the natural distribution, abundance and behaviour of grizzly and black bear populations using protected areas; and
- provide opportunities for visitors to understand, observe and appreciate bears, while discouraging the process of habituation and food conditioning among bears.

The second and third elements of training developed were a pepper spray and firearms course. Again each element was designed as a stand alone course and must be successfully completed before being allowed to use either pepper spray, or a firearm. However neither could be given without staff first successfully completing the Bear Awareness Orientation Course.

Only those authorized by their district manager can utilize pepper spray or a firearm and then, as noted, only after the appropriate training had been received.

The purpose of the pepper spray course is to provide staff working in parks with potential bear-people problems a means of defence or deterrent in the event of an attack. The course promotes public safety and safety of staff in bear country, as well as the safety and survival of bears. Before taking this course, candidates must have successfully completed the Bear Awareness Orientation Course.

The purpose of the firearm course is to qualify those park rangers who have been designated by their district managers to carry firearms with the policies set out in the Public Safety Park Security Manual. Please note that within BC Parks firearm means either a 12 gauge pump shotgun, or a rifle.

The background to BC Parks firearm policy states: "In incidents where wildlife is posing an immediate threat to staff or public safety or where wildlife has been severely injured, euthanasia is an appropriate response. The best method that provides for a humane death is by shooting. As a result there is a requirement for some park rangers to use firearms, and to be knowledgeable in the prevention and response to problem wildlife incidents.

The above outlines policies and procedures for two different areas within BC Parks. Conservation and recreation. Historically this seemingly diametric positions can at first seem at odds. However the above blends the needs for conservation, with the expectations and demands placed upon parks by active recreationists.

How is the program working? This year the Workers' Compensation Board of British Columbia recognized BC Parks course as a model to be followed by companies employing workers in the silviculture industry. The Boy Scouts of Canada, WCB, BCIT, and Houston Forest Products have all requested copies of this material.

E-Team Program involves real people

BY CATHERINE HAMILTON

Recently, interesting and often touching stories about young people have been trickling in to the Environment Youth Team (E-Team) program office in Victoria. One young mother, who had been on social assistance before joining the E-Team, thought she would have to quit the program because she was unable to work and afford daycare. Her co-workers and sponsor rallied around her, finding daycare and grants that have allowed her to continue her training on an E-Team project that involves setting up an environmental business.

"When hearing about the government's Youth Employment Initiative as a whole, it's easy to forget that each program is dealing with individuals, and that each position is giving a young

person a chance," said E-Team manager Sean Darling.

The E-Team program connects young people aged 16 to 24, who are not attending school, with employers on environmental and outdoor recreation projects. Many of these youths have limited opportunities for employment, and this program gives them some tools to connect with the workforce. The E-Team program has three components: Work Crews, Internships and Eco-ed.

The goal for the Environment Youth Team 1996/97 program year is to connect 1,340 young people with employers. The employers, who are seen as 'sponsors,' must devote 20 per cent of project time to formal training covering personal character, job readiness, environmental awareness and specific job skills. This

requirement ensures that E-Team members come away from the program with skills and job training that will help them find work in the future.

Currently, more than 70 young people are working on exciting E-Team projects throughout the province. Some examples include: developing the 25 km Log Train hiking trail in Port Alberni, the Operation Creeksave salmon enhancement project in Abbotsford, a Park Ranger Trainee position in Williams Lake, and interns taking part in a commercial fishery observation program in Prince Rupert.

The E-Team is administered by the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks. For sponsor applications, or further information on the program, please contact the E-Team office at 387-2233.

Fraser Valley District volunteers

BY FRASER VALLEY DISTRICT

Can enough thanks ever be given to BC Parks volunteers? It is a difficult task knowing how to show our appreciation to those who give us so much of their time. The Fraser Valley District has begun to tackle that task by becoming more involved with volunteers.

In June, Back Country Horsemen's of British Columbia members, Jim Wiebe and George Ralph spent the three days clearing about 30 km of trail in the Skagit Valley (sections of the Skyline and Centennial trails). John Rose had the Federation of Mountain Club's of British Columbia work on the Grainger Creek trail while volunteer Tom Moore (name sound familiar?) opened up the Bonnevier trail with John's and Jim Hilton's assistance.

June 21st was set aside for Fraser Valley District Volunteer Ecological Reserve Wardens to meet with our district manager, Pat Rogers. The informal meeting served as a get-acquainted session and an up-date on eco-reserve news. An appreciation lunch hosted by Pat and Rick Jessome concluded the meeting.

June 30th, George Ralph and two members of the Backcountry Horsemen Association cleared windfalls from the Skagit River trail. They encountered many different obstacles including some very large fallen trees. The tired trio dragged themselves home after a 17 hour day but are anxious to return to finish the project.

On July 4th, an invitation was accepted by our Park Host Volunteers to attend an orientation meeting at the Fraser Valley District office. The hosts who attended were all "veteran" park hosts but they enjoyed the opportunity to meet again with our staff and to share their thoughts and concerns about their roles in their various parks. With officers and area supervisors present, any concerns were dealt with quickly and efficiently.

During the session, we emphasized our gratitude to our hosts for helping us provide park visitors with information, friendly smiles and the occasional bandage. Probably the main highlight of the meeting was introducing the hosts to the reservation system. They had accumulated many questions and comments

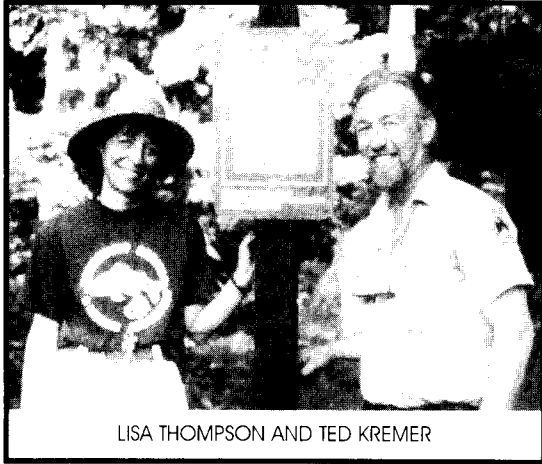
about the new system and were happy to receive the information package issued by our recreation officer. Their comment was, "Now we don't have to just shrug our shoulders anymore when campers ask us about the reservation system."

An enjoyable lunch at scenic Aquadell Golf Course ended the productive meeting and started a most pleasant task of becoming more committed to our volunteers.



School to Sea Interpretive Trail

BY ANDY SMITH

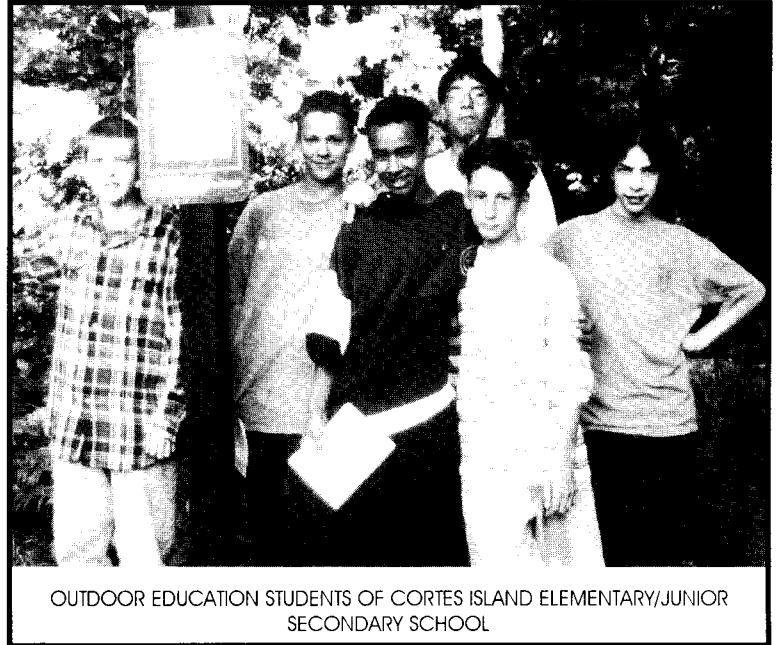


LISA THOMPSON AND TED KREMER

On June 26, 1996, there was a grand opening of a trail. It was not covered by the press or attended by crowds of people. It was the opening of the "School to Sea Interpretive Trail" on Cortes Island. The trail, constructed by students of Cortes Island Elementary/Junior Secondary School, winds its way from the school through Mansons Landing Provincial Park which shares a common boundary. The students of Lisa Thompson's outdoor education class thought the idea of an interpretive trail would help teach other kids what they themselves have learned about the islands' environment. Ted Kremer, area

supervisor for BC Parks, also thought the idea was terrific and suggested a collaboration. Strathcona District would contribute the signs and numbered posts while the students would provide the labour to construct the trail and produce an interpretive guide. The impressive guide was developed by assigning one page to each student and having them research and write about an important or interesting topic of their choosing. Numbered posts were then erected at each site representing the corresponding topic. The school board also assisted by having the guide printed for sale by the school and island merchants. Many locals are

already making use of the trail, inspiring pride in the students and providing a long term benefit to the community. This is a great example of an ideal relationship between a school district and BC Parks. Hats off to all the students for excellent work and to Lisa Thompson and Ted Kremer for recognizing the opportunity and supplying the support.



OUTDOOR EDUCATION STUDENTS OF CORTES ISLAND ELEMENTARY/JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL

Manson's Landing store recycled

BY TED KREMER

The Manson's Landing store has been a fixture on Cortes Island for many years. It has served as a store, gas station, and post office. Situated at the head of a federal dock at Manson's Lagoon, it instantly became the focal point of the community on southern Cortes Island as well.

Until recently the store and gas station were under a park use permit to the Reddel family. They operated a very successful business at the site. However, the cost to upgrade the facilities to present day environmental standards

helped in the decision not to renew the permit with parks.

The five fuel tanks that supplied the gas bar were offered by the Reddel family and quickly accepted by the volunteer fire department for water storage on the island. At the same time as this was all happening the local librarian was wishing for a larger library and a museum building to house and display artifacts from the islands early days. Well, May Ellington heard about the vacant building and parks heard about the library, it didn't take long for the two sides to get together.

May quickly formed the Cortes Island Museum and Archive Society and started asking for and receiving donations. BC Parks donated the building and also helped with the preparations for the move.

The building now sits in an ideal location next to the fire hall just across from the school. It is not finished yet, but look for May, her husband, and the volunteers working at the future home of the island's treasures.

The real price of parks

BY MIKE HALLERAN

When I think I'm ready, I'm going to write a piece called "Farewell to Freedom." It will be a lament for the vanishing level of personal choice in what sorts of things one is allowed to do in Hinterland. The abuses of a few slob recreationists, expensive searches for lost machos, various kinds of polluters and poachers and over-zealous regulators, have all resulted in the triumph of yet another new-age correctness which wants more rules for everything. In no place is that situation so threatening as in parks.

Does increasing regulation prevent misbehavior or encourage it? When I was growing up, I was taught that such things as respect for property, for the land, helping people, and so on, were part of civilized behavior. Something you were expected—if not required—to do. That is in some contrast with the modern view that good behavior can be universal if you have enough rules. The pressures of the modern world are too much for some people. Pressures of increasing regulation can create the need to get away for a while. But where do you go when the parks are as regulated as everywhere else?

When (the first) President Roosevelt created Yellowstone Park in Montana, he made himself a laughing stock. It was just about a century ago and the lower 48 portion of the US still contained huge areas of de facto (real) wilderness. Ninety years later, a park employee named Alston Chase finally sounds a warning that America's first national park is seriously threatened. Not by heavy industry, but by hordes of people in Gortex and Vibram. Chase calls his book *Playing God in Yellowstone*.

We first altered wilderness because we feared it. Now we fear its passing. So we put it into parks. But beautiful landscapes made into parks may be less beautiful from that point on. Some of our parks are being loved to death. It seems we must either have excessive human presence or over-regulation or both. In Yellowstone, it's already happening. In some Canadian parks, it's ominously close.

Often, the reason for proclaiming a park is to keep certain things in and others out. From the time the park is proclaimed, the struggle begins over what will be allowed and what not. By definition, park boundaries are both enclosure

and enclosure.

Garrett Hardin, author of *The Tragedy of the Commons*, the classic essay on land use, also wrote a piece on how to keep parks from being destroyed by people. His point was that declaring a new park can actually focus public attention on a given natural feature, resulting in eventual overuse. The new park becomes a target. Everybody wants in so regulations tighten up. It is a fine line between adequately regulating park use and over-regulating park users.

If declaring a park is supposed to preserve sensitive natural features, then it's a dumb idea. Too much human presence threatens naturalness. As in Stanley Park, Yellowstone, or bumper-to-bumper-Banff.

Conferring park status might slow the rate at which a landscape is changed. But if the natural, ecological features eventually disappear or are badly degraded, then what does it matter if that happens in a decade or a century? Both are too soon.

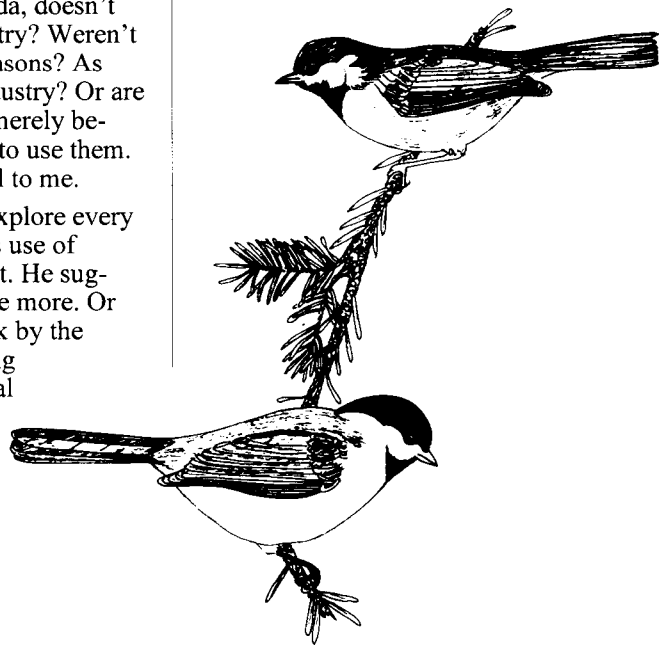
The United Nations recommends that 12 per cent of every country be preserved in parkland. The 12 per cent solution is no doubt a compromise, but having a limit suggest that thinly populated B.C. needs the same percentage of parkland as crowded California. Does the ratio of parks to people not matter here? Maybe it's not meant to. If the plan is to encourage tourist visits from park-poor countries to park-rich Canada, doesn't that turn parks into an industry? Weren't they created for different reasons? As perhaps an alternative to industry? Or are we cashing in on the parks merely because some people will pay to use them. That sounds pretty industrial to me.

Hardin says we should explore every alternative to encourage less use of parks—lessen human impact. He suggested a price: simply charge more. Or lottery. You get into the park by the luck of the draw, like hunting seasons. Or limit the physical condition: allow park use only to those who can hike in on their own and prohibit the use of private cars. The last one has a lot of credibility coming from Hardin who for many years was apparently physically incapable of hiking due to illness.

Eventually we must address these disagreeable choices; essentially because most of our park advocacy is based on the wrong motives. Too often we create parks not to make something happen, but to keep it from happening. "Save the Stein," I used to shout when writing outdoor stuff for the *Sun* and CBC 25 years ago. It had already been discovered that demanding a park was a great way to stop the loggers. And if they complained, they made themselves look like insensitive brutes who hated parks. It's a gross tactic and it's still in use.

The landforms and features of the Stein Valley may not be as old or as grand as Yellowstone, but they have now figures out what the half-life of a park is. It is the interval between the time a park is opened and becomes sufficiently despoiled to where more people will not want to go there. I once saw a photo with about 60 tents in one basin of the Stein. I have never gone back. It reminded me—heaven forbid—of Banff. Or of "Playing God in Yellowstone."

Mike Halleran is the host of the television series, WestLand seen on the Knowledge Network and is a frequent lecturer on the subject of sustainable development. He lives at Meadow Creek in the West Kootenay.



Ts'yl-os Provincial park

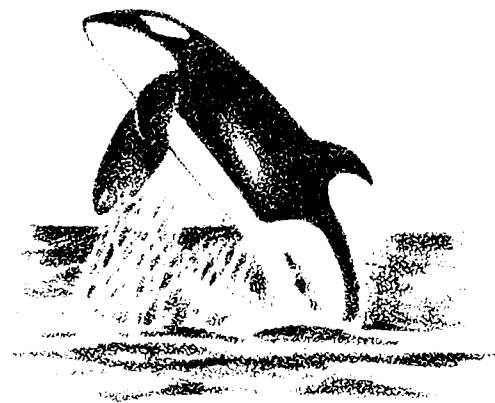
BY KRIS KENNETT

The draft master plan for Ts'yl-os Park is now available for public comment. Ts'yl-os Park was created in 1995, upon consensus recommendations of the Chilko Lake Study Team.

For the past two years, a parks planning committee has been working to develop the master plan through a consensus based process.

A wide variety of interests were represented on the committee including local residents, tourism operators, naturalists, recreationalists, environmentalists and industry support groups.

If you would like a copy of the plan, contact BC Parks, Cariboo District, 181 1st Avenue North, Williams Lake, B.C. V2G 1Y8, or call (604) 398-4414.



The story behind the name and its effect on management

When the Chilko Lake Study Team made its consensus recommendation to protect the area around Chilko Lake, the Xeni Gwet'in (or the Nemiah Valley Indian Band) asked to determine an appropriate name for the new park. The Ts'ilquotin names for two prominent features were suggested—Ts'ilquox Biny (Chilko Lake) and Ts'yl-os (Mt. Tatlow).

The Xeni-Elders chose "Ts'yl-os," out of respect for the mountain that dominates their valley. To the Xeni people, Ts'yl-os protects their home from harm. (See box legend of Ts'yl-os below). The Xeni have great respect for the mountain and deserve a certain code of behaviour including never pointing at it and being of "pure mind" when travelling by.

In terms of the management of this area, BC Parks has come to understand the importance of the mountain to the Xeni Gwet'in and their spirituality. Consequently, the master plan guides BC Parks to direct climbers to other areas and develop educational information to park visitors so they can gain an appreciation and respect for the culture of Xeni people.

Long ago, before white settlers moved in, Ts'il?os was once a man. Ts'il?os had a wife named ?Eniyud. They lived in the mountains south of Konni Lake. Even though they had six children together, they had trouble getting along with one another. One day, Ts'il?os and ?Eniyud got into an argument. ?Eniyud threw her baby on Ts'il?os' lap. She left two children with him and took the other three away. Ts'il?os turned into a rock along with the two children above Xeni Lake. You can still see the baby in his lap today.

?Eniyud and her three children headed toward Tatlayoko Valley. On her way, she planted wild potatoes. When she arrived on the other side of Tatlayoko Valley, ?Eniyud also turned into a rock. Wherever you find wild potatoes growing, she planted them.

The Elders of Xeni Gwet'in say that if you point at Ts'il?os, he will make it rain or snow. He will change the weather, usually when you are on foot or horseback, far from home. ?Eniyud is the same, but meaner. The Elders say when you try to camp around her, she will change the weather.

Equal Opportunity

BY MONTY DOWNS

Do you have Park Use Permit holders working in your park that do not contribute to maintenance? Why do we ask horse use concessionaires to do trail maintenance and not hiking companies, canoeing companies or other guiding companies? We asked this question of the permittees in Wells Gray Park this spring, at their Annual Operation Plan meetings. They agreed it was unfair and modified their proposed operating plans to include specific pre-season maintenance.

As a result the windfalls on all trails used by permittees have been cut out by them. The Clearwater Lake to Azure Lake boardwalk has been replaced with

their labour, BC Parks provided the lumber. Brushing back, drainage and general tread maintenance was completed on the trails that they use.



There have been a number of positive effects from this initiative:

1. BC Parks does no power saw work in Wells Gray Park.
2. All permittees contribute to facility maintenance in the park they draw their livelihood from.
3. Park Rangers are freed up to do more resource management and enforcement work instead of cutting trees all day long, far more in keeping with their training and job descriptions.
4. BC Parks is able to get to areas of the park not previously visited, on a regular schedule, because of this freed up time.