

## Wetlands Celebration! Environmental Education at Sargeant Bay Provincial Park

by Vicki Haberl, BC Parks

It takes a special kind of energy to take an idea and find the enthusiasm and resources to see it materialize into a successful event.

Sechelt resident Sheane Reid wanted the children of the Sechelt area elementary schools to learn about the importance of wetland habitats. As a planner with the Sunshine Coast Regional District, Sheane works with the various agencies and organizations responsible for the environment and wildlife. He thought that there was much to be gained by bringing these groups together in one place with a common objective of providing a hands-on educational event in a wetland environment. What better location than Sargeant Bay Provincial Park? Momentum grew, a committee

was formed, and event preparation was underway.

On Friday, April 30, nearly 1000 children from West Sechelt, Sechelt and Halfmoon Bay Elementary Schools visited Sargeant Bay Park for a special day of festive, educational activities. The 16 activity centres were a cooperative effort of government agencies and community groups, including BC Parks, Sunshine Coast Regional District, Sechelt Indian Band, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Canadian Wildlife Service, Sunshine Coast Natural History Society, Sunshine Coast Salmonid Enhancement Society, Sargeant Bay Society, Halfmoon Bay Community School and more!

(Continued on page 2) ►



photo courtesy of Joop Burgerjon

Sargeant Bay Provincial Park is a perfect setting for hands-on wetland education.

## BC Parks Welcomes New Minister



Joan Sawicki was appointed Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks on July 21. First elected to the Legislature in 1991, the Burnaby-Willington MLA is no stranger to environmental and sustainability issues. A former partner in a land use consulting firm, she chaired the Greater Vancouver Regional District Waste and Environment Committee while serving on Burnaby Municipal Council in the late 1980s. More recently, she has played a major role in the GO GREEN Air Quality Awards, the Georgia Basin Initiative and the expansion of the beverage-container deposit-refund system. From 1992 to 1994, Ms. Sawicki served as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. In her spare time, she enjoys hiking and backpacking. *Visions* plans to publish a longer profile of our new minister in the Fall issue. □

## Inside

- A Little Bit of the Districts Comes to Victoria ...3
- A First Class Volunteer .....3
- Ebony and Ivory: a Black and White Nature Walk .....4
- Name the Protected Area .....5
- BC Parks Ambassadors .....5
- Skeena District Conservation Bulletin .....6
- BC Parks Impact Assessment Process .....7
- Interpretation Memorandum .....7
- Eight Days on the Road .....8

VISIONS is produced six times per year by BC Parks, Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks to maintain commitment to quality service and stewardship and to encourage innovation by everyone directly involved or interested in BC Parks.

VISIONS Newsletter is posted on BC Parks' web site: [www.elp.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/whatsnew/what.htm](http://www.elp.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/whatsnew/what.htm). As VISIONS is now available on the internet, please let us know if you would like to be removed from our mailing list.

To contact us regarding changes to the VISIONS mailing list or to receive a free subscription:

- call (250) 952-6709
- send an email note to [ParkInfo@prkvictoria.elp.gov.bc.ca](mailto:ParkInfo@prkvictoria.elp.gov.bc.ca)
- write to: VISIONS, BC Parks, PO Box 9398, Stn Prov Govt, Victoria, BC V8W 9M9 Canada

Articles from readers are welcome. Deadline for material in the next issue is September 1, 1999.

---

**Editor**

*Nancy Chave*

---

**Contributors**

*Loise and Ron Dewsbury  
Vicki Haberl  
Rick Kool  
Roger Norrish  
Brandin Schultz  
Christine Scott  
Karla Stroet  
Glenda Wheeler*

---

**Minister**

*Joan Sawicki*

**Deputy Minister**

*Cassie Doyle*

**Assistant Deputy Minister**

*Denis O'Gorman*



photo courtesy of Joop Burgerjon

*BC Parks Area Supervisor, Al Jenkins, helps elementary school children learn the importance of wetland habitats.*

*("Wetlands..." continued from page 1)*

School buses rotated each of the schools through the park at different times throughout the day. The children made their way through the various activity stations along the berm, getting their hands dirty at a craft table, trying on wildlife costumes and acting out skits, sampling a smorgasbord of wetland foods, or getting a close up look at wetland species through microscopes and telescopes. Different stations targeted primary and intermediate class groups.

At the end of the day, the children had experienced a fun day at the park, learning that Sargeant Bay Provincial Park offers something more than just a place to play.

When BC Parks was approached to participate in the Wetlands Celebration and to be the host of the event at Sargeant Bay, it was a welcome opportunity to compliment various efforts by BC Parks to promote educational opportunities in the parks. This year, for example, BC Parks developed an environmental

education guide for elementary school teachers that focuses on Sargeant Bay. Eighteen teachers attended workshops offered to Sunshine Coast teachers at professional development days in February. Some of those teachers were enthusiastic participants in the Wetlands Celebration.

As further incentive, BC Parks offered free school programs to Sechelt area teachers this spring. Park Interpreters conducted in-park programs complimenting teachers' efforts in the classroom. The subject of protected areas can be complex, yet the issues and concepts of land use planning and protection of natural areas are important ones for educators and their students. Teachers of grades four to 10 find the study of protected areas relevant to program requirements in Science, Social Studies, and Language Arts.

All in all, it is exciting to see our parks being used as outdoor classrooms, whether it is part of a special event like the Wetlands Celebration or a family outing that results in both fun and learning. □

# A Little Bit of the Districts Comes to Victoria

by Glenda Wheeler, Victoria

Senior Records Clerk Glenda Wheeler, decides to bring a little 'district' feel to the file room at BC Parks Headquarters.

First came the pink Barbie tent, complete with Ken and Barbie and dog, Keiffer. A picnic table donated by Louise Goulet followed and was promptly filled with Barbie food and plastic bugs. Next came Jerry the Moose, complete with guitar, followed by a much needed biffy, however, according to a facilities expert, the biffy is not up to BC Parks standards. The animals and vegetation soon arrived on site – there is even a jeep hidden behind the park sign.

The park needed a name so Glenda created a 'name the park contest'. So many good names were submitted that another contest was held to narrow down the field. 'Snakizi' (snack easy) won out.

The park was well named as it represents the nature of the file room. The Victoria office file room has a snack table, always filled with goodies for all the staff, located at the entrance to Snakizi Park.

There have been a few problems with the park, on its first day of operation a violation ticket was issued for failing to have a dog on a leash and for disobeying a park sign (billy goat crossing). The park has brought much amusement and stress relief to Headquarters staff. □



Glenda Wheeler oversees 'Snakizi Park'.

# A First Class Volunteer

by Vicki Haberl,  
Garibaldi/Sunshine Coast District

Echo Oliver. It's an unusual name. Unique. And very fitting of its owner. Echo is one of a kind, and she is a first class volunteer. She came to the Garibaldi/Sunshine Coast District in March 1997 when she began hosting in various parks. Her previous experience as a Park Host with Oregon State Parks has been a valuable contribution to our program.

Echo left the comforts of home in Toronto, Ontario to be closer to her sea-loving sons who had moved to the west coast, one in Oregon, one in Vancouver. She spent some time in each location, exploring the coast and deciding where she would prefer to settle. Living in her large comfortable trailer made Park Hosting an ideal occupation during this transition.

A friendly and knowledgeable woman, Echo quickly shone as a first class host. She works well with park staff and Facility Operators, clearly understanding her roles and responsibilities. In the spring of 1998, our district identified a Host Coordinator as a worthwhile volunteer opportunity to pursue. With her organizational and interpersonal skills, Echo immediately came to mind as a prime candidate. When asked if she would be interested, she made a few pertinent inquiries, then wholeheartedly agreed to accept the challenge.

As our district's Host Coordinator she has used her Oregon experience to great advantage. In June last year she attended Oregon State's Park Host Rendezvous, where she reconnected with the many friends she made during her hosting duties there. She also spent some time and effort acquiring Oregon and

(Continued on page 4) ►

(...Volunteer" continued from page 3)

Washington State's host materials, and to speak with those agencies' volunteer coordinators. She then evaluated the differences between programs, considering the strengths of each agency's procedures and resources, and made recommendations for improvements to BC Parks Host Program and Host Manual.

For the second spring in a row, Echo has been a tremendous help in preparing for the arrival of the district roster of hosts. Her ability to identify with the needs of the hosts and her tactfulness and sensitivity to park operations make her an excellent link between BC Parks and the Park Hosts.

This spring Echo has also been busy preparing for a district Park Host Orientation. Her enthusiasm and commitment will ensure that this will be a worthwhile event for everyone. This was proven last fall when Echo assisted with a very successful Host Appreciation event.

Now that she has both sons corralled in BC, Echo has grown to love the Squamish area and its natural beauty. Hopefully she'll stay around. BC Parks, and I personally, would miss her if she left. □

## Ebony and Ivory: a Black and White Nature Walk

by Christine Scott

An ocean of green washes the woods in hushed ripples, broken only by occasional birdsong or leaves trembling on strong summer stems. Above this dense, living carpet rise spikes of floral abundance in dominant shades of white!

Bereft of any splash of colour, the woodland scene these days can only be sung to a softer shade of pale than the wild hot pinks that ruled April and May.

Last week, a venture onto the Black Creek estuary trails proved that, by and large, the wildflowers of June come in shades of ivory and cream; with the solitary exception of the exceedingly elegant black lily. In the midst of a ramble punctuated by dozens of white wildflowers, the discovery of a moist patch of black lilies came like a bolt of black lightning! Dark brown flowers are not exactly common, and the few that exist can be missed in the blink of an eye. The black lily, like a few other darkly-stained flowers, smells like rotten meat – a distinguishing characteristic that is quite appreciated by pollinating flies.

*Fritillaria camschatcensis* is also known as northern rice root. Of all the lilies that grace our woodland floor, the black lily is one of the most remarkable. Striking bell-shaped flowers in a shade of bronzed brownish-purple burst from the top of a tall stem that can reach 18-inches in height. Whirls of lance-shaped leaves encircle the stem, pushing the flower cluster ever skyward. It prefers a moister home than its dry-land cousin, the chocolate lily, which came into full bloom last month.

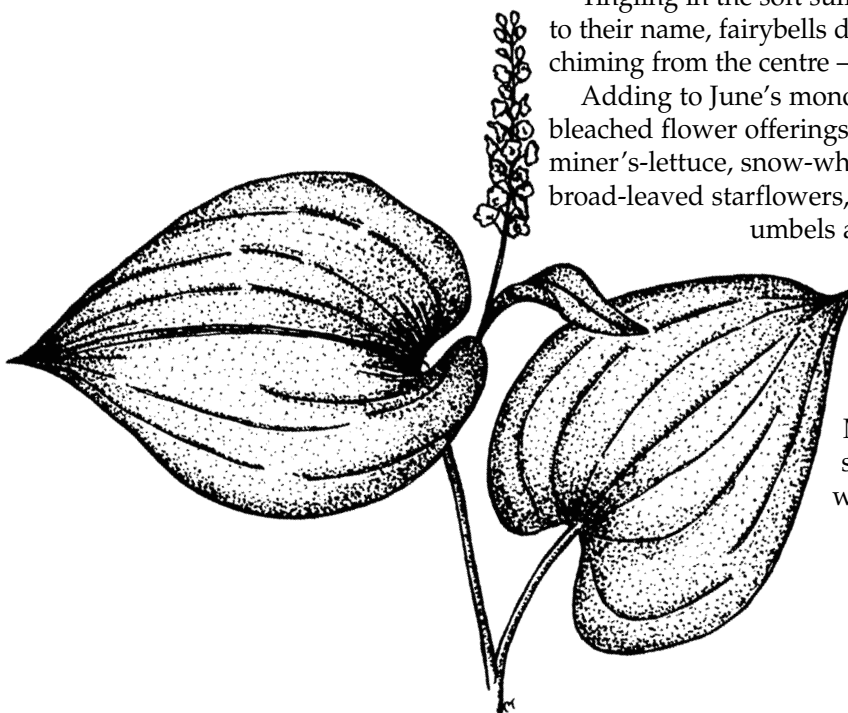
Apart from the black lily, many local nature trails are speckled with white wildflowers – fluffy, foamy, fragrant white clusters cavorting on the rooftops of the emerald forest floor. Tall, vertical shafts of false lily-of-the-valley exude a delicate lily perfume. Creamy spires of the vanilla-leaf flower are striking as they burst above three fan-shaped, horizontal leaflets. Bunches of vanilla-leaf leaves, hung in the kitchen to dry, acquire a soft vanilla scent that surpasses the finest potpourri.

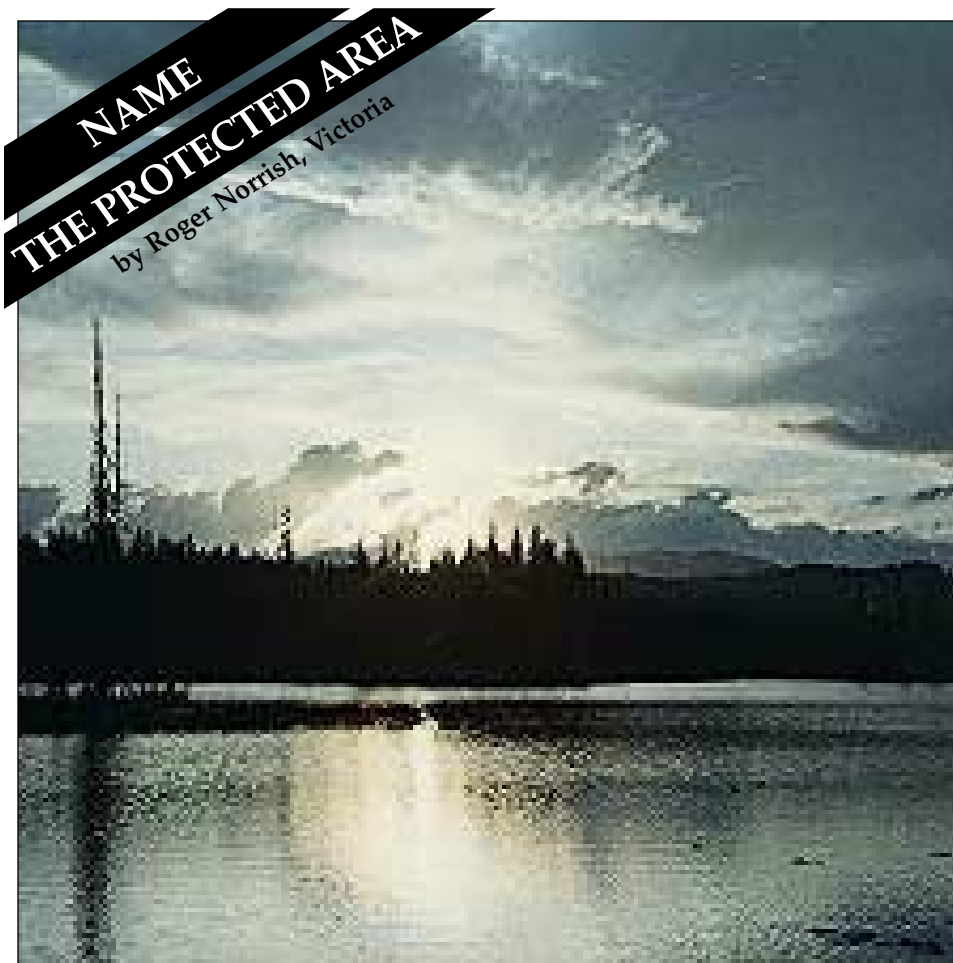
Tingling in the soft summer breezes are little white Hooker's fairybells. True to their name, fairybells drip from the end of a tall stem with golden stamens chiming from the centre – not unlike real bells at all!

Adding to June's monochromatic woodland color-scheme are a myriad of bleached flower offerings: delicate towers of ivory foamflower, pale Siberian miner's-lettuce, snow-white thimbleberries (with tissue-paper petals), broad-leaved starflowers, thread-like false bugbane, huge, snowy cow parsnip umbels and elegant, creamy false Solomon's-seal.

Take a walk down any of the local trails to view nature's shimmering white wildflower diamonds afloat on an emerald sea – and watch closely for the special guest appearance of the black lily.

The Black Creek estuary trail is accessed off Miracle Beach Road, approximately a 25-minute drive south of Campbell River. Park beside the small wooden bridge. □





*Tamarack, woodland lakes, a popular sand beach, a major campground, black bear, Indian Paintbrush, and porcupine define this protected area.*

## Tamarack and Woodland Lakes

This protected area lies in the West Kootenay region. During the mid-1950s, the BC Parks Branch carried out a major project involving road, beach and campground facility construction at one of three woodland lakes. In 1967, the main access road was paved, and the park became one of the most popular family destinations in the West Kootenay. If you travel in the summer to this provincial Class A park, you may see a black bear in the distance or, more likely, you might spy a solitary porcupine ambling through the forest or a family of Merganser swimming in the lakes. Tall tamarack trees shade the main campground, while the cool waters of the main lake provide a welcome respite from the afternoon heat. And in the picnic area, you may be surprised to see a family from the nearby community of Trail playing a game of bocce. Can you name this protected area? The game of bocce sounds intriguing. Who introduced this game to the West Kootenay town of Trail?

*(Answers on page 8). □*

## BC Parks Ambassadors

*by Louise and Ron Dewsbury, Richmond*

After enjoying a fantastic summer and fall as campground hosts at Sasquatch Provincial Park, it took little convincing for us to explore the notion of continuing the fun while we travelled during the winter months. So, armed with a binder of information that would choke a horse, numerous brochures and maps, and a folding sign that boasted we were 'Ambassadors for British Columbia Parks', we headed for Arizona.

We knew there would be homework, and soon realized that we could never digest all the information in the binder, so in order to appear half-way knowledgeable, we skimmed through the binder and made mental notes on where we might find the information that interested persons just might request. In that way, we knew we could at least pull out the binder, find the information and share it together. We also set up a brochure display table, sacrificing our TV space. Who wants to watch TV in the middle of the dessert anyway? We felt we were ready for any traveller who had ideas of crossing the border into our beautiful province.

We waited! First, our sign kept falling over. It had to be those Mexican winds from the south. No worry, we turned the sign into a sunscreen for the front window of our vehicle, sat down with a nice cool beverage and waited some more!

At first the more timid folks, seeing the sign, waved or called "Hi BC" to us. We waved and called "Hi" back. It didn't take long to realize that if we offered more conversation in return, they would actually stop, wander in and sit a

*(Continued on page 6) ►*

("...Ambassadors" continued from page 5)  
spell. In our three months on the road, only a handful of travellers asked questions about routes, roads, cities and parks in BC. There were a few requests for information about Banff and Alberta, even Ontario and the Maritimes. Having travelled extensively through all of these areas, we were pleased to share tales of our journeys, and sent them on their way.

By far, the majority dropped in to share the wonderful experiences they had while travelling through BC. They sketched routes on our maps, discussed the state of the roads, (especially the road to Alaska), named their favourite fishing holes, reminisced about people they had met, gushed over the cleanliness of the province, and in a couple of instances, scoffed that they had to leave their guns at home. But one thing was certain, they all dreamed of returning once again to visit our province.

What a school of learning for us, "the supposed ambassadors"! We soon acknowledged that the true ambassador for BC is anyone who has had the opportunity to travel within our province. We met campfuls!

What did we gain, besides a good time and some wonderful conversations that is? Friends, friends and more friends! Telephone numbers and both postal and e-mail addresses were exchanged. Plans were cemented for future rendezvous in Alpine Texas, in Carmel California, in Benson Arizona, and closer to home, in Bend Oregon. Since arriving home in April, we have already received two special invitations, one signed 'love' and the other signed 'hugs'.

Would we do it again? You betcha! □

# Skeena District Conservation Bulletin

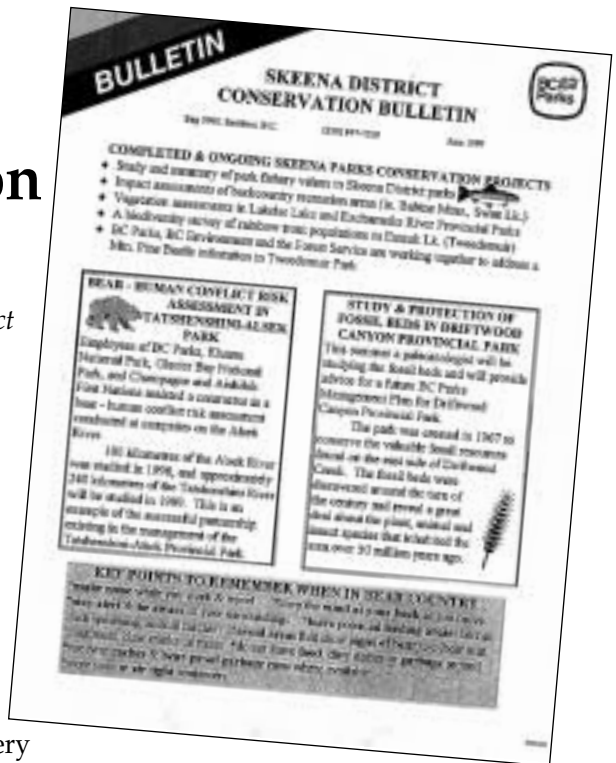
by Karla Stroet, Skeena District

For the last few years the Skeena District has been producing a one page Conservation Bulletin that is distributed in its parks in the spring. The Bulletin highlights the various conservation and resource projects that are being conducted, or have been completed, in the Skeena District during the year. Every year the Bulletins are sent to all the Area Supervisors who give them to the Park Facility Operators to distribute in each of the parks. They have found that one of the best places to post them is on the inside of the pit toilet doors, but they also put them on information shelters and various other structures.

The Skeena District has found the Conservation Bulletin to be a useful tool for informing the public about the issues BC Parks is addressing in the District's protected areas. It is also an important and inexpensive publication for building awareness and support, and for educating

visitors about the natural environment they are enjoying.

The main topics included in this year's Conservation Bulletin are the bear-human conflict risk assessment in Tatshenshini-Alsek Park, the study and protection of fossil beds in Driftwood Canyon Provincial Park, some key points to remember when in bear country, as well as brief descriptions of some of the completed and ongoing conservation projects in Skeena Parks. The example shown above will give you an idea of the format for the one we developed for 1999. □



Picnic site at Lakelse Lake in the Skeena District.

# BC Parks Impact Assessment Process

After several years as a working draft process, the BC Parks Impact Assessment Process was implemented as of April, 1999. It ensures that the stewardship of British Columbia's system of protected areas is included in all activities and practices that are conducted within these areas. Its purpose is to:

- provide for the assessment of all potential impacts of proposed actions in provincial protected areas; ensure provincially consistent standards are followed;
- provide an open and accountable assessment process; provide a forum for standardized and documented decision-making; and,
- provide for participation in the review process by the proponent, other agencies, First Nations, and the public, where required.

There are three parts to the process. The policy document is Part 1 of the BC Parks Impact Assessment Process.



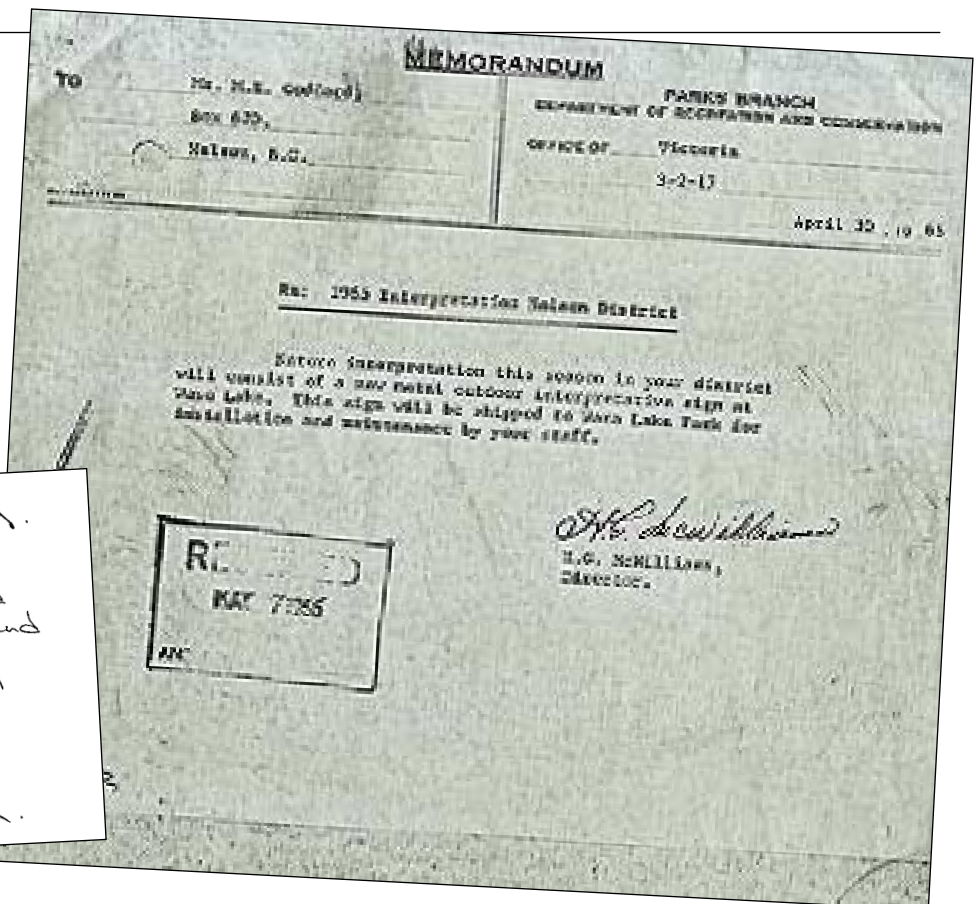
It states the purpose and objectives of the policy and provides an overview of the three levels of assessment. Part 2, the Users Guide, provides instructions for completion of the three levels of assessment. Part 3, the Management Plan Screen, provides an assessment framework to be completed during the development of management plans. The Management Plan Screen is currently a working draft and will be finalized within a year.

All these documents are available for viewing on the BC Parks website at [www.elp.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/protect/protect.htm](http://www.elp.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/protect/protect.htm).

Thanks to everyone that participated in providing input to the process, especially the Impact Assessment Working Group, and a special thanks to Marcy Sangret, Axys Environmental Consulting, who provided valuable expertise and a great training program. □

*It seems as if Interpretation has always been the 'poor cousin' in BC Parks. This memo dated April 30, 1965, sent from Headquarters to the Nelson District, lets locals know that they are going to get one metal sign as the sum of their efforts for the year. No hard feelings, though, as the note by Milt Goddard, to Kerry Joy, attests. And in BC Parks, hope springs eternal.*

*by Rick Kool, Victoria*



*Attention Mr. Kerry Joy.  
 What a year we had in 1965! Harold was a card wasn't he.  
 Let us hope the next a years brings more progress.  
 Milt.*

# Eight Days on the Road

by Brandin Schultz, Garibaldi/Sunshine Coast District

When was the last time you met or touched base with staff in your BC Parks district “next door” and toured their parks? Back in the days of Regional Offices there may have been more contact and information flow from district to district, but without the Regional structure, perhaps some of this connection has been lost. This year, as a result of feedback from the employee survey, the Skeena District Operations staff decided to reverse this trend and go forth, meet other district personnel, talk issues and explore some other northern parks!

Eight days later, after over 3000 kilometers on the road, two touch football games, innumerable coffee and outhouse breaks and countless black bear sightings, the trip was over. Twenty-three parks had been visited in the Skeena, Prince George and Peace-Liard Districts as well as the District offices in Prince George and Fort St. John. Portions of Highway 16, the Alaska Highway, and Highway 37 were traveled. Staff in Prince George and Fort St. John hosted information and issue exchange sessions and some of the operations staff from these districts accompanied the Skeena Operations personnel on tours of their parks.

The highlight for most was a two-day trip into Spatsizi’s Coldfish Lake camp where the problems associated with maintaining buildings and developments inside a wilderness park were front and center. A visit to a nearby guide-outfitter camp illustrated the issues with keeping permitted activities such as this monitored and in check and some environmental impacts from these camps. Ironically, although some guiding operations are trying to diversify their client base to capture more eco-tourism, hiking and photographic expeditions, this in fact brings more people into the parks over a broader season than the traditional hunting and fishing activities, which



Spatsizi’s Coldfish Lake camp.

may result in more impact to an area unless carefully managed.

The runner up stop was a good look at the Liard River Hot Springs campground, associated facilities, composting outhouse, and overview of the black bear incident that occurred there two years ago. Of particular interest were the techniques in place for maintaining vegetation to reduce bear occurrences and garbage management practices in place for lodges, campgrounds and others along the highway where large collection bins have replaced garbage cans or other collection techniques that were not bear proof.

It was extremely interesting to see how mutual problems such as handling budget reductions, deciding where and when to maintain levels of service, struggling to meet park standards, maintaining occupancy rates, etc., were being addressed in other areas of the province. At the same time many staff appear to be wrestling with the problem of more

parkland being designated during a time when budgets and staff resources are barely holding steady or even declining. Continual turnover of staff, both seasonal and permanent, and contractors, seems to be a chronic problem for some northern operations.

Many thanks to each and everyone from these districts whom helped us out with answering our questions and sharing their experiences, frustrations, and successes – or just for rubbing shoulders with us. □

**NAME THE PROTECTED AREA.**  
Answers (from page 4): The protected area is Champion Lakes Provincial Park. The people who introduced the popular lawn bowling game of bocce were immigrants from Italy, many of whom worked in the COMINCO smelter on “the hill” in Trail.