

PHOTO: DELAYNE OLESJUK

Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks, Honourable Joan Sawicki, arrived with local dignitaries and Jerry the Moose in a Voyageur canoe.

75 Years of Conservation

by Kate Alexander, Cariboo District

Parks Day in BC's Cariboo was a little different – we celebrated by highlighting Bowron Lake Park's history, and its excellence as a canoeing destination. It is 75 years since the area was first designated a Game Reserve. Despite the chilly weather and remote location, a crowd of about eighty people gathered at the park.

The Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks, Honourable Joan Sawicki, arrived with local dignitaries and Jerry the Moose in a Voyageur canoe. There were speeches and congratulations all around, then the crowd divided into two, for either a guided nature walk along the lakeshore, or a kid's treasure hunt. We then offered rides in the Voyageur Canoe and a canoe rescue demonstration.

At the park's registration centre were some interesting displays. Local

artists had loaned their work for the summer; the renewed log walls set off the paintings and sculpture beautifully. In the centre was a huge new 3-dimensional map model of the park. We had also put together old photos, artifacts and writings from the pioneers that pushed for Game Reserve designation in 1925. Barkerville Historic Gold Rush Town, located just 30 kilometres from the park, assisted us with the research and also loaned us their school-teacher for the day. Mrs. Emily Bowron was the wife of Gold Commissioner John Bowron, for whom the park is named. She acted the part superbly.

The guests reconvened for a dinner of barbecued hot dogs, chips and sticky cake (traditional Parks Day fare), and we selected the winners of

our local draws. Prizes were plentiful: Bowron T-shirts, Parks Day T-shirts, hats and pins. Next we enjoyed interpreter Jesse Latendresse's program about Bowron Lake Canoe Circuit and its history. Several old-timers contributed their experiences of the park.

Finally, there was a marshmallow roast around the campfire. Jesse got things started with his canoeing songs, and the park rangers told some tales of near disasters and heroic rescues. One story goes: Jesse met two European tourists and asked them how their canoe trip went.

"It was beautiful, but I'm exhausted," said one.

"Yes, we got almost no sleep the whole six days, we were so frightened by all the wolves," added the other.

Jesse, who has canoed the circuit countless times and only rarely seen wolves, was intrigued. In the distance, a loon called. "There's one howling now," said the first European, with a shudder. □

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Articles from readers are welcome. Deadline for material in the next issue is November 15, 2000.

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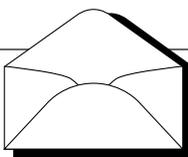
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Letters

August 25, 2000

Mr. R. Austad

*Area Supervisor, South Vancouver Island District
BC Parks*

Dear R. Austad:

Last Sunday, August 20th, I was sailing south past Beaver Point en route to Tsehum Harbour when I spotted a large log floating vertically in the water. To recreational boaters this type of hazard is particularly ominous because they are very difficult to spot and can easily damage or sink recreational vessels that collide with them. Consequently, I have always made an effort to put a bright orange flag on this type of menace so all boaters in the area can spot them.

Unfortunately, as I boarded my 9-foot tender to get close enough to the log to flag it, a large wave from a passing boat capsized my small boat and I found myself in the cold water of Swanson Channel gripping onto my capsized boat. My wife was unable to handle the sailboat by herself so she couldn't come to my aid. She waved for assistance.

Fortunately for me, a parks department boat was passing by and immediately came to my aid. It was a craft with a folding ramp at the bow. The crew on board lowered the ramp and pulled me on board. I was given a blanket and helped back on board my sailboat. They then called the Coast Guard Rescue to report the event. While waiting for the CGR to arrive, one of the crew members, with first aid training, came with me onto my sailboat to ensure that I was not suffering any debilitating effects from the cold water. He checked my pulse and other signs.

I was extremely grateful for the assistance your employees gave me. Due to the cold water and its effects of hypothermia I could have been in serious trouble. However, due to their fast action and assistance, I was left without any adverse health problems.

Additionally, they recovered my tender, emptied the water and returned it to me. Apart from wet clothes and one hell of a scare for both my wife and myself, we were able to continue on our way to Tsehum Harbour.

Please accept my sincere appreciation for everything that was done by your parks branch crew. They deserve significant commendation.

*Yours truly,
John Phillion
Saanichton, BC*



Illegal Activities in Parks

by Gary Glinz, Skeena District

During the summer of 1999, Park Rangers discovered a lodge owner and outfitters carrying on a commercial activity in North Tweedsmuir Park (fish guiding and air transport). The owner was warned, yet returned to the park a few days later to continue his illegal activities. He was also discovered in Fiordland Park after he had been evicted from Tweedsmuir.

A joint investigation by Park Rangers and the Conservation Officer Service led to formal charges being laid. A total of twelve counts were laid under the *Park Act*. The lodge owner pled guilty to three charges and received a suspended sentence at a hearing held on May 8 in Burns Lake Provincial Court. He was instructed to post a peace bond of \$1,000 and is required to provide copies of all flight logs to the Skeena District Manager of BC Parks each month from June to October. Fines for the other counts total \$6,500. Crown Counsel stayed the remaining charges.

This was a precedent setting case for BC Parks as it sends a clear message out to those individuals that try and disregard our park permit system that we will not tolerate these types of illegal activities.

The Skeena District has learned from this experience and gained some insight into this type of investigation as to how both the Crown and the Judge perceive our permit system.

Our primary goal is to stop these activities from occurring in the first place. Once they are happening, it is very costly to proceed with charges, especially if the events are happening in remote locations. Here are some tips you may find useful:

- Remember that judges like to see well-documented, progressive discipline and that our professionalism will be examined.
- Check the Internet in the spring, you will be surprised by how many people advertise their illegal activities. Call them and follow up with a "Cease and Desist" letter.
- Read those recreational guiding ads you find in outdoor magazines and follow up with letters.
- Check out the local outdoor shows.

If you decide to lay charges, get some advice and counsel; it can save you time and money, as well as your pride. Here are some tips for you to consider:

- Bring in the Conservation Officer Service if fish or wildlife is involved. They are the experts and we can learn from them.
- Check your Park Management Plan regarding the activity to make sure



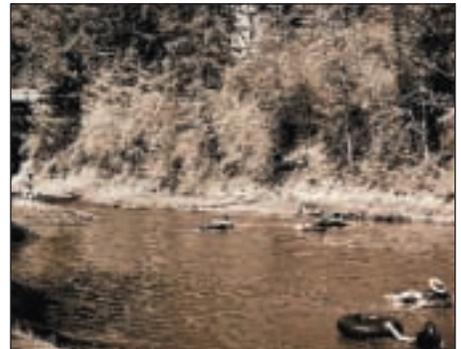
it gives clear direction. The accused will also be doing this. The judge may question the process but not the public direction we have used.

- Keep in mind that trials are expensive for all parties, so at some point, there will be plea-bargaining. The charges you have laid could be reduced dramatically from where you started.
- Be ready to assist Crown Counsel. They are very busy people and usually allot specific timelines to each case. The more efficiently you can help them, the more time they will have to go over the details of the case.

All of us at BC Parks would far sooner get compliance through education and we are usually very successful at this. There are times however, that we need to stand firm in our roles as stewards and use the law to ensure park values are protected. □

River and Tubes

by Roger Norrish, Victoria



Rising river waters swirl through forest glades while park visitors drift the river using inner tubes.

Provincial parks protect many portions and, in some cases, entire lengths of British Columbia's rivers. This protected area is located west of Duncan and protects portions of the river for which it is named. The river is famous for wild salmon and Steelhead fisheries. The park includes such interesting place names as Skutz Falls, Marie Canyon and Stolz Pool. A 20-kilometre trail follows the river from just west of Duncan and provides the hiker with impressive vistas of the mixed forest and river environment. If you visit this park during a hot summer day, you will likely hear and see large groups of people drifting down the river, shouting as they encounter swift rapids or talking quietly as they drift through languorous, slow moving back eddies. Can you name this new provincial park? And what is the name of the memorial cairn located in the park to commemorate a World War II event? (Answers on page 8). □

Yellowstone Tour 2000

by Judy Millar, Okanagan District

On June 18, 2000 a contingent of BC Parks staff: Hugh Markides (District Manager, Skeena), Brian Carruthers (Operations Officer, Cariboo), Mona Holley (Assistant Resource Officer, Victoria), Brandin Schultz (Ecological Integrity Training Project Manager) and myself (Resource Officer, Okanagan) travelled to Yellowstone National Park to gather information from our neighbours on the famous and precedent-setting Yellowstone fires of 1988 and other park management issues.

Our six days consisted of touring with National Parks staff to various locations throughout the park discussing a wide range of subjects including bison diseases, wolf relocation, bear/people interactions, environmental impact assessments, infrastructure, public education and media relations and all the while witnessing the huge expanses of wildfire evidence.

The contingent was tasked to review an assortment of topics including National Parks' fire management planning/policies, park planning, ecological integrity and park infrastructure. There will be a final report on the information collected and findings from the tour.

The Park

Yellowstone National Park (YNP) was established in 1872 and is located primarily in the northwest corner of Wyoming, with portions extending into southwestern Montana and southeastern Idaho. It is the first park in the United States National Park system and is almost one million hectares in size. Today the park receives over three million visitors annually. Because of this long history, it provides an opportunity to learn from the vast experience of park managers and scientists.

The commanding features that initially attracted interest, and led to the preservation of Yellowstone as a national park, were geological:



the geothermal phenomena, the colourful Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone River, fossil forests, and the size and elevation of Yellowstone Lake. There are more geysers and hot springs there than in the rest of the world combined (approximately 20,000 features).

Cultural sites dating back 12,000 years evidence the human history of the park. More recent history can be seen in the historic structures and sites that represent the various periods of park administration and visitor facilities development.

Yellowstone Park Foundation

The Foundation's mission is to protect, preserve, and enhance Yellowstone National Park. They are the only non-profit organization in the world dedicated exclusively to this purpose. During the last two and a half years they have raised more than \$3.5 million to support projects and programs that were beyond the financial capacity of the National Park Service. The park is much richer following my spending spree in the gift shops (yes, I am seeking therapy).

Fire History

The natural history of fire in the park includes large intense fires sweeping across the volcanic plateaus creating the vegetation mosaic that we see today. In the 1700s there were many such fires in YNP. With the early European settlers came "good stewardship" and fire suppression. In the 1940s ecologists recognized the benefits of fire as a primary agent for maintenance of ecological diversity.

Much of the vegetation in YNP is fire-adapted and the majority of the park is above 8,000 feet above sea level (2,400 meters ASL). Consequently 80% of Yellowstone National Park was covered in dense, even-aged mature forests of lodgepole pine.

Between 1972 and 1987, YNP practiced a natural fire policy which allowed fires to burn approximately 14,000 hectares, with all of these fires being suppressed naturally. It seemed the program was a "no-fail" situation. That was until the unprecedented conditions of 1988 began to take shape. By July 21 these famous fires began to be noticed by the

(continued on page 5) ►

("Yellowstone..." continued from page 4)

public and the media. It was then decided to extinguish all fires. Despite that, within a week, fires in the park encompassed 40,500 hectares. On August 20, huge winds pushed the fire across more than 60,700 hectares.

Fire Weather Conditions of 1988

Several important factors made the 1988 fire season unique in recorded history. Severe drought created the driest summer ever recorded in the 116-year history of the park. The rains of late July, early August did not occur and there was no rain until September 11. The fuels dried out much earlier that year and stayed dry much longer than a typical year. In addition, there was more than double the number of lightning strikes during the season. The strong winds were also a major contributing factor. Wind drove several fires together and some began to create their own winds. The winds together with low humidity contributed to the defenseless fire control activities.

Hundreds of thousands of tourists visit 'Old Faithful' each year. It is the most cherished place in Yellowstone National Park. During the firestorm around Old Faithful Geyser, park rangers watched thousands of embers the size of a human fist flying by. The fierce winds carried many over a mile in front of the main fire, where they often started new fires. However, prior to the fire overtaking the Old Faithful site, it was business as usual juxtaposed with wildfire. On the surrounding hills, smoke rose from the forests while firefighters struggled to slow its progress. In peace, the tourists enjoyed the timeless spectacle of the geysers.

The fires of 1988 were uncontrollable due to the unnatural amount of fuel accumulations allowed to build up over a half century of fire suppression. A 1987 report indicated that more than 50% of the 12 million hectares that comprise the 'Greater' Yellowstone Area had moderate to high potential

for high-intensity fires.

These fires were so intense (hot and fast) that suppression was not possible. Consequently, by July 22, 1988, management decided to practice aggressive control on all new fires. This became the greatest fire fighting effort in the US history. In the end, only the rain and snow controlled the fires.

We saw lush carpets of young thriving lodgepole pine, wildflowers and many wildlife trees. The rejuvenation was awe-inspiring with each and every view. A true mosaic presenting conditions for maintaining the biodiversity of the area. It was a pleasure to spend two days with our most prominent guide, Assistant Superintendent, Marv Jensen. He was wonderful, full of incredible knowledge and so many facts. We enjoyed Marv's sense of humour and warm hospitality. We learned a new word 'tonnages', which will now be coined to mean 'lots or large quantities'.

The Wildlife

Yellowstone is recognized as a great wildlife sanctuary, one of the last places in the US where the full complement of wildlife that occurred during the time of the Lewis and Clark's epic journey to the Pacific in 1804-1806 still roam free.

Numerous species of wildlife were encountered on the trip including one of the famous Canadian/Yellowstone wolves, bears (Boo Boo and Yogi), multitudes of bison and elk and the occasional moose, big horn sheep, pronghorn antelope and a wily coyote (with a rabbit dangling from his hungry jaws) and spawning cutthroat trout. Dramatic birds included a few pelicans and eagles.

Bear/Human Conflict Prevention was being practiced by trail closures throughout most of the park. Some were marked with a warning sign (Bear in Area). A standard practice in this park is to restrict campgrounds to hard-sided units only when bears have been spotted in the area. The park is prime bear country and bear protection is a priority. Other areas may be closed to visitors as well such as critical places for nesting birds.

We were a studious bunch with Study Bunny and Study Buddy in our midst often laboriously "mining" our hosts for information for hours at end. Can you guess who they were? Thanks Hugh for the great idea and Parks Executive for allowing this awesome opportunity to visit Yellowstone and study the Fires of '88 and other park management issues. □



Left to right: Hugh Markides, Brandin Schultz, Judy Millar, Brian Carruthers, Mona Holley

Hinton

by Nancy Chave, Victoria

Hinton – how can one word convey so much to so many? An enigma to those who haven't experienced it and an elemental understanding to those who have.

What is Hinton? Literally, Hinton is the name of a small sawmill town in western Alberta that is the home of the Environmental Training Centre. It is also the nomenclature commonly given to the Federal Provincial Parks Management Course that is held at the training centre.

The Federal Provincial Parks Council (FPPC) developed the course to 'provide an opportunity for broadening and upgrading the knowledge in Park Operations so that employee effectiveness and service to the public may be improved'. To broaden and update the knowledge and abilities of park personnel; to provide a forum for the exchange of knowledge and experiences and networking of different park agencies; to acquaint participants with the newest trends in management and technology in park operations; to assess park management and methods of operations; to provide support for the individuals in all park agencies; and to stimulate excellence and alternative methods of dealing with park management problems and issues.

The Federal Provincial Parks Management Course has been run annually for 28 years and for the last 20 years it has been held in Hinton and been coordinated



Andy Nowicki

by Andy Nowicki. Friends, if you have had the pleasure of meeting Andy you will know what an outstanding person he is. Whether in the classroom or on the volleyball court, Andy has a presence that is hard to describe. Respect and admiration come to mind, plus his ability to bring 20 strangers together



The class takes a trek through Dinosaur Provincial Park, Alberta.



Federal Provincial Parks Management Course Class of 2000.

and help build an amazing camaraderie among them.

The 20 strangers came from across the land: BC, Nunavut, Newfoundland, New York and nearly everywhere in between, all bringing a flavour of their parks and parks systems, sharing the pride of their highlights and the issues that encumber them. I was fortunate to be chosen to attend this course along with two others from BC Parks, Kirby Villeneuve (Strathcona District) and Brian Bawtinheimer (Garibaldi/Sunshine Coast District).

Through many interesting and thought-provoking resource leaders we learned about teambuilding and leadership; the philosophy, tradition and current challenges of parks; trends and managing with reduced resources; private sector involvement

in park operations; public involvement in park planning; and visitor services. A cross-Canada Futures Panel made us aware of issues that confront park systems now and helped us gain an insight as to what to prepare for in future years. These subjects were brought to life in trips to parks in BC and Alberta where we were able to look at successes and issues first hand and work as teams to offer solutions and feedback.

I'll never forget the course at Hinton. The learning experience has opened my eyes and stimulated my desire to learn more about our parks system. But more important, I'll never forget the friends I've made – what an amazing group of people. The memories will live forever. □

A Taste of Good, Ole Cariboo Hospitality

by Helen Farrer, Cariboo District

I recently had the pleasure of reading an article in the *Prince George Citizen* newspaper that mentioned the writer's experience with a Park Facility Operator in one of the parks I oversee. The park in question is Horsefly Provincial Park and the Park Operator is Gerri Teppema.

Gerri first began working at Horsefly Provincial Park eighteen seasons ago, back in the time when provincial parks were operated with in-house park staff. Over the years, Gerri has seen many changes with park operations as she has gone from the park staff, to contract, to operations permit at Horsefly Provincial Park. In all this time, the one constant has been Gerri's outstanding pride in her work as witnessed by

the many extras that she does for park visitors and the constant above average care she gives in maintaining the park. It is Gerri's "beyond the call of duty" way of operating that brings me to the point of this story.

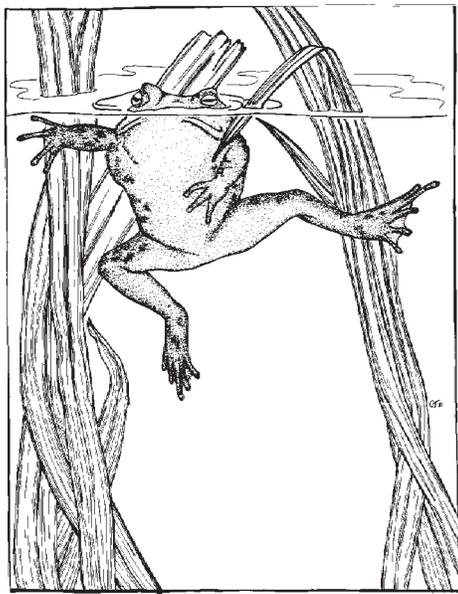
As I read the article, written by Mike Nash, about his weekend spent exploring the Cariboo, I was filled with pride to read his thoughts and experiences in visiting Horsefly Provincial Park. It seems that when Gerri came around collecting fees the evening Mike and his wife were camping at the park, he inquired as to what time they could get coffee in town the next morning. Gerri replied she didn't know exactly when the café opened but that she would call and find out for him. The columnist thanked her but told her not to bother as they would just take their chances the next day.

To their surprise, the next morning when they climbed out of their tent, they found a freshly placed package on the picnic table and upon looking inside, discovered a hot thermos of fresh coffee with "all the fixings" and a note, compliments of Gerri.

Touched by this thoughtful gesture, Mike returned home to write his article about exploring the Cariboo and gave special mention to Gerri who gives hospitality a real face. In a time when values from yesteryear seem to be disappearing, it is good to know that hospitality is still alive because folks like Gerri Teppema live it each day. □



Gerri Teppema



E-Team Crews Combat Fungus and Frogs

by Andrew MacLeod,
E-Team Communications

Throughout BC, Environment Youth Team work crews in the new Legacy E-Team program are helping with conservation in BC Parks. As published in June 2000 *Visions*, several crews are clearing invasive weeds and replacing them with native species. Other crews are working on more cutting edge, at times more ruthless, projects.

For example, there's the "Root Rot Rockers" team with Katim in Clearwater. A participant writes: "Another interesting project under the guidance of Bob Scheer, the resource officer for BC Parks, was the applica-

tion of a new experimental fungus to combat armillaria disease which occurs in forests in BC's southern interior and is a concern to BC Parks.

"The disease travels from tree to tree attacking the roots of trees causing thin fragile tops and eventually killing trees and making it a concern for public safety due to the rotting roots.

"The fungus is applied by digging around the base of the stumps and exposing the roots. The fungus is then packed around the roots and covered back over with soil. The new experimental fungus will only grow on dead trees and should take over within a year and eventually wipe out the armillaria disease."

Crew members report that the fungus has also been applied to four cases of athlete's foot, two moldy bathrooms and a stubborn rash. Results were mixed.

(continued on page 8) ►

("E-Team Crews..." continued from page 7)

On Vancouver Island, an "executing agency" new to the program this year, Mossie Environmental Services, is taking it's title literally. A Mossie crew completed "Operation Kermit Croaked" in Hemer Provincial Park in June.

American bullfrogs, an introduced species, are expanding their range and out-competing native frogs. The E-Team crew used nets to capture bullfrogs in the park, then turned the frogs over (still living) to MELP environment staff who promised the naïve young E-Teamers that the frogs would be kept in total comfort.

"This is the best summer job I ever had," said one E-Team participant. "I'm up to my knees all day in a swamp, but I rest well at night knowing that these cute little frogs are going to good homes. I heard the deputy minister volunteered to take home four. I can't believe I'm getting paid to do this."

BC Parks financial staff are also happy with the crew's results, as sales of legs and other edible Kermit parts are padding the failed facilities budget. "Yeah right, just let them try to audit this," said the grinning guy who was busily punching numbers into his calculator in the lunchroom a few weeks ago.

The purchasers include two French restaurants, a natural pet food company and the supplier of BC Ferries veggie burgers. All have expressed interest in hiring members of the crew when they are finished their E-Team contract.

The success of the fungus and frog crews has observers wondering where the E-Team will focus its conservation efforts next.

"The possibilities are endless, but there are some priorities," South Vancouver Island District manager and unofficial parks spokesperson Dave Chater jokingly said. "We know that families and domestic animals are by far the most invasive species in the parks. While I wouldn't advocate chloroform, there must be something E-Teams could do to discourage them."

"I'm imagining a Smokey the Bear type thing, but meaner. Instead of 'Give a hoot, don't pollute,' the slogan could be, 'Give a damn, scam.' It would be good for the parks. Really." □

Interpretive Trail Receives Presidential Visit

by Scott Back, Lower Mainland District

On August 5, the Yew Lake Interpretive Trail in Cypress Provincial Park received a presidential visit. For weeks, the Vancouver area staff were busy fixing the winter damage on the trail. This was to prepare for the president of Iceland's interpretive walk through a piece of the Canadian wilderness.

At 1:00 p.m., park staff had a meeting with the RCMP Protective Service. A grey Chevy Caprice pulled up with the rear-end sitting low from the weight of five guys in dark suits and dark sunglasses crammed into the vehicle. They had ear pieces coming out of their suit jackets and little microphones coming out of their sleeves. It was like the secret service all the way! They were responsible for coordinating the protection of the site. Shortly after a debriefing, the bomb squad arrived. They ensured there was a "safe" building on site, and a dog walked the entire trail checking all culverts and ditches for any explosive devices. By this time we were thinking, "Is the president of Iceland a controversial leader?"

After the site was deemed safe, we had to await the arrival of the motorcade. First, an unmarked police vehicle arrived with four more protective service agents. Then a police motorcycle arrived ... then two more ... and two more. Finally, a tightly packed parade of 12 vehicles arrived on site. We closed the service gate and asked all park visitors to use the other entrance to the trail. This was all "protocol."

Chris Tunnoch, Extension Officer for the Lower Mainland District, lead the interpretive walk. She said, "It was the best dressed group I had ever lead." Everyone had on suits or dresses (it's a good thing the Yew Lake Trail is barrier free).

During the walk, the president was courageous enough to taste some hemlock and cedar needles. He enjoyed the old growth loop and was in awe over the size of the trees. Apparently, there aren't very many trees in Iceland.

In the end, the entourage of finely dressed dignitaries, left as quickly as they came. Although the experience was different than a normal BC Park interpretive program, the same information was passed along. I think the people in the Protective

Service knew there wasn't any real threat, however, we were told they are required to use the same protocol for all heads of state. This type of visit does not happen very often in BC Parks and it was fun to be a part of it. □



Answers (from page 8): The protected area is Cowichan River Provincial Park on Vancouver Island. The memorial cairn is called the Burma Star Memorial Cairn and commemorates Cowichan Valley resident Major Charles Hoey, VC, and the Allied Second World War campaign in East Asia.

NAME THE PROTECTED AREA:

Wattling in Driftwood Bay

by Brent Blackmun, Strathcona District

Initiated last year under Campgrounds BC, Driftwood Bay Group Campground in Strathcona Park completed its inaugural season hosting its first visitors. Located just across the lake from the Buttle Lake Campground, Driftwood Bay offers a covered log picnic shelter and disabled access facilities. The site is capable of accommodating up to 25 units and, as a pilot project, was available for booking through *Discover Camping*.

The development of this site was not without challenges. Threats to the riparian zone and fluctuating water levels were a concern. This was addressed by moving the site well away from the lake and restoring lost



Riparian enhancements at Buttle Lake.

productivity of the developed beach and access trail. This spring E-Teams and Park Rangers stabilized and planted eroded slopes. Wattle fencing was constructed from bundles of cut willow and staked onto disturbed areas. Once the areas were stable they were planted out with native trees and shrubs. Cottonwood, red alder, red osier dogwood, Sitka and Hooker's willow were all reintroduced to the site.

These bioengineering measures

were developed by borrowing ideas from local highway projects. Plots were established to monitor the success of different approaches. Early indications show these efforts are taking well and sprouting new shoots, providing cover for geese, and browse for deer as well as retaining soils.

It is hoped that these types of riparian enhancements will continue around the entire Buttle Lake reservoir to minimize impacts. □

Community Partnership in the Okanagan

by Greg Betz, Okanagan District

In the fall of 1998, the Okanagan District initiated a pilot project called the *Catalogue of Opportunities*. The goal was to produce a gift catalogue to identify enhancement projects throughout the district that could be privately sponsored.

The pilot project was recognized as part of the *Adaptive Service Delivery* initiative in the spring of 1999 and was funded to the amount of \$18,000. A catalogue and associated marketing plan was produced with the assistance of a private consultant. The focus of the catalogue was to present potential enhancement projects, volunteer opportunities, as well as to introduce a *Be a Friend of BC Parks Okanagan District* program.

The project has proven to be very challenging and, as a result of hard work by all staff and the consultant, also very rewarding. The district is currently doing a strategic evaluation to determine overall benefits and other keys to success. It generated in-kind contributions and pledges in excess of \$300,000 over the past year and several of the enhancement projects are ongoing. Cash donations have been minimal, however our *Friends* program has generated over \$2,000 to support various projects.

The most beneficial aspect of the pilot project is that staff have developed a new way of engaging the community. Staff have recognized that the business community, local community service clubs and individual volunteers want to get involved and the catalogue has helped provide a focus for that involvement. This pilot has evolved into a component of the Districts' extensive abilities and an excellent outreach tool. For more information contact BC Parks, Okanagan District Office at (250) 494-6500. □

\$5,500 Fine for Killing Grizzly Bear

The unlawful killing of a grizzly bear has resulted in a \$5,500 fine for James Litshauer of Yarrow.

The conviction follows a joint investigation by Lower Mainland and Southern Interior conservation officers into a May 8, 1999, shooting of a female grizzly bear in the Nahatlatch River valley north of Boston Bar. Due to conservation concerns, grizzly bear hunting is not permitted in the area. The area was designated as a provincial park in July 1999.



All British Columbian's are urged to do what they can to protect provincial wildlife and their habitat. Please report violations to your local ministry office or call the Observe, Record, Report toll-free number at 1-800-663-WILD (9453). □

A Rare Ecosystem Bursting with Life

by Sarah Joannis, South Vancouver Island District

I have almost completed my fifth season of work in the marine parks of the southern Gulf Islands. Although I work outside everyday, I still find the ecology of this coastal Douglas-fir biogeoclimatic zone fascinating. I never let it slip my mind how particularly small, and rare this zone is. It only covers a small part of southeastern Vancouver Island, several Gulf Islands and a narrow strip of the adjacent mainland. Ecologically, the zone is limited by relatively warm, dry summers and mild, wet winters.

In a typical work day, I find myself surrounded by forests of Douglas-fir, western redcedar, grand fir, arbutus, Garry oak and red alder. This unique variety of species exists only here in the coastal Douglas-fir zone. Composition of these tree species varies considerably as a result of widespread human disturbance. The majority is second growth that has regenerated from turn of the century logging.

There are nearly fifty rare vegetative species and many broader species restricted to this zone. I have learned to identify many of these plants and continuously keep an eye open to spot the rare ones. They thrive along seaside, rock outcrop and forested habitats. Dense shrubs of salal, dull Oregon-grape and ocean-spray crowd trail edges for all to see. Vanilla-leaf, sword fern, western trillium, trailing blackberry and lady fern are just a few examples of common herbs that cover the forest floor. This abundance of flora provides favorable habitat for numerous wildlife species. Black-tailed deer are the most abundant large ungulate. Both black bear and cougar are common throughout, although are rare in the Gulf Islands. Raccoons and gray squirrels prevail which many campers and ecologists love to hate.

Many bird species nest in the trees and shrubs: Steller's jay, pileated woodpecker, common raven, chestnut-backed chickadee, red-breasted nuthatch and varied thrush are just a few. The list goes on. Cabbage Island Provincial Marine Park is a haven for birds and birders alike. Many red and blue-listed species live in this zone, including: bald eagle, great blue heron, green backed heron, yellow-headed blackbird, Brandt's cormorant, anatum peregrine falcon, marbled murrelet, Lewis' woodpecker, common barn-owl, purple martin, clouded salamander, townsend's big-eared bat, sharp-tailed snake and keen's long-eared myotis.

Today, the main threat to this ecosystem is the encroachment of urban development. Residential and industrial urbanization is expanding; consequently, threatening this unique natural system. The only old growth forest left remains in our parks. It is possible that one day, the only natural functioning coastal Douglas-fir ecosystem will be in our parks as well. I feel it is important for us as park managers to understand these incredible ecological values and emphasize conservation in our management plans. Proper management and public awareness is key in preserving the remaining coastal Douglas-fir biogeoclimatic zone. □



"Thank You"

by Nicole Smith, Thompson River District

Richard and Rita Larsen have been the volunteer campground hosts at North Thompson Provincial Park near Clearwater for three years. The Larsen's have been wonderful people to work with and are excellent representatives of BC Parks.

Over the years Richard and Rita have taken pleasure in camping in many provincial parks. They both decided they wanted to pay back BC Parks for all the use and enjoyment they received over the years by becoming volunteer hosts.

When the Larsen's applied to be hosts the only park available in the Kamloops District was North Thompson which turned out to be perfect for them as Rita utilizes both a wheelchair and motorized cart to maneuver around in all areas of the park. North Thompson is very wheelchair accessible and level.

Richard and Rita really enjoy meeting new people from around the world and are very familiar and knowledgeable about the park. They have become familiar with the town of Clearwater and surrounding parks such as Wells Gray.



Rita and Richard Larsen

Rita has not let her disability get in the way of carrying out and enjoying her job as a campground host. BC Parks would like to thank Richard and Rita for all their time and effort volunteering for BC Parks.

The Larsen's hope to return to North Thompson for a fourth season to meet new people and catch up with old friends. □

Park Preserver

Parks extension officer grew up outdoors

Printed with permission of Prince George This Week 'Around Town', July 30, 2000.

Cheryl Livingstone-Leman's love for the outdoors started almost from the time she was in the bassinet. She was camping with her parents by age one and continued throughout her childhood. Now, Livingstone-Leman educates other families about BC Parks, Prince George District.

"I think that was very influential," she says of her early camping expeditions. "I used to attend every nature hike I could and attend all the interpretive programs to try and learn as much as I could about wildlife and the plants."

Livingstone-Leman says it is important to expose young people to the beauty of nature. It's even more worthwhile if there's some educational component that can be enjoyed along with the outdoors experience.

She says it gives children and youth knowledge about conservation issues, she adds.

At age 15, she decided her future calling was working for parks. After completing high school, Livingstone-Leman earned a track and field scholarship to Washington State University.

She competed for four years in middle distance running and traveled across the US for competitions. She also earned a degree in Wildlife and Wildland Recreation Management.

During the summers she worked as an interpretive naturalist for Alberta Parks, conducting guided nature hikes in some of the same parks she visited as a youth. Livingstone-Leman made presentations on various nature themes for families and children at the same time.

After completing university, she continued on with Alberta Parks working on the development and delivery of school programs and teacher workshops, she says.

In 1990, Livingstone-Leman started with BC Parks, Prince George District,



Cheryl with her newest addition, Klee Coburn Leman, born August 20, 2000.

as a visitor services coordinator. Since then, the position has changed slightly to what is now called an extension officer.

Her job covers a range of responsibilities and is always interesting and challenging, she says.

"My main focus is on three areas: interpretation and education; marketing and information; outreach and partnerships," she says.

Much has changed with parks in the Prince George District, due to the Protected Areas Strategy and the Land and Resource Management Planning (LRMP) process.

Livingstone-Leman says BC Parks tries to maintain a balance between conservation and recreation values. She says recreation is important, but so is protecting the fish, wildlife and biodiversity.

"Not only do we operate some of the best campsites and hiking trails in the country, but we also have an obligation to ensure things like wildlife, fish, flora and biodiversity are protected," she says.

The natural beauty and closeness of nature is why Livingstone-Leman moved to Prince George and why

most people do as well, she says.

When she started in Prince George, the district had 32 protected areas. Now there are 45 protected areas and by the end of the process, about 75 parks and protected areas will be managed in this district within the next few years.

"These parks are decided through a public process so all stakeholders have a say in what areas will be set aside," Livingstone-Leman says. "It was a completely open-door process, so there shouldn't be any issues."

But the increase in parks and protected areas presents a new set of challenges to BC Parks as well, she says. The district isn't receiving any more money for maintenance or programs.

So BC Parks is depending more on corporate sponsors and volunteers to keep those activities going, Livingstone-Leman says. For example, Trans Mountain Pipeline sponsored a theater, interpretive signs and a newsletter in Mt. Robson Park, she says.

She lists one of her favorite local hiking spots as the Sugarbowl Grizzly Den Provincial Park, about a 60-minute drive east of the city.

And one spot that is more unknown is Paaren's Beach Provincial Park, near Fort St. James.

"You're camping right on the shores of Stuart Lake and a five minute drive from town," she says.

There's a national historic site to visit with costumed interpreters guiding you through. She also recommends visiting Mt. Pope, which has a hiking trail that leads to the mountain top. On the top, there's an incredible view and a gazebo to enjoy it from, she adds.

She will be away from her job for a few months expecting her first child.

When she returns, she will have a new perspective on the goal of BC Parks: "preserving the natural environment for future generations." □

Return of the Upper Adams River Sockeye

by Nicole Smith, Thompson River District

The Upper Adams River Provincial Park protects 65 kilometres of undisturbed Upper Adams River floodplain. This park was established in 1996 and provides extensive protected spawning habitat for sockeye, chinook and coho salmon.

Sockeye salmon life cycle

Sockeye salmon (*Oncorhynchus nerka*) generally have a four-year life cycle. Typically sockeye travel long distances to reach the spawning grounds, where a female sockeye may lay up to 5,000 eggs. The eggs will hatch in approximately two months. The alevins emerge from the gravel and migrate to nearby lakes in the early spring. Sockeye fry will rear in fresh water for one to two years before migrating to the ocean. Most sockeye will return to spawn in four years from hatching. This is why sockeye salmon numbers peak in the rivers every four years.

Up until the last few years, the most recent significant runs in the Upper Adams occurred in 1901 and 1905, when every tributary of the Upper Adams was full of spawning sockeye. However by 1922 there were no traces of sockeye in the Upper Adams River and the run was considered extinct.

So what happened to the Upper Adams River sockeye?

Between 1922 and 1954 there was considered to be no sockeye in the Upper Adams River. This was probably caused by the construction of a splash dam in 1908 at the top end of the spawning grounds. The dam was constructed by a logging company to flash-float logs down the Adams River. This practice caused artificial floods, which washed down spawning salmon, and there eggs downstream. The logging company



pulled out in 1922 and the dam was eventually removed in 1945. Another contributing factor to the sockeyes disappearance occurred in 1913 when the Hells Gate slide blocked the Fraser River.

What caused the return of the sockeye to the Upper Adams River?

Between 1950 and the early 1980s approximately 10 million eggs and 500,000 fingerlings were introduced to the river. By 1980 the run was only around 600 fish. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans continued this stocking program and in 1984 the return was around 3,500. In 1996 the numbers of returning sockeye to the Upper Adams had grown to 30,000.

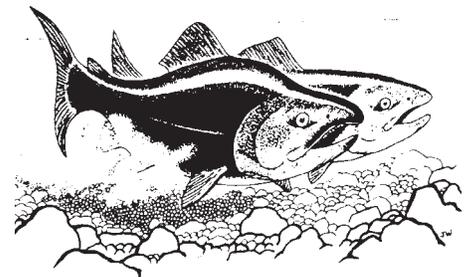
Upper Adams River sockeye run in the year 2000

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) estimate the sockeye escapement to be 70,000 fish this

year. DFO indicated that this was a very healthy and promising return for a river that was once considered extinct of sockeye.

DFO, in conjunction with the Adams Lake First Nations, have worked very hard at enhancing and re-building the sockeye salmon in the Upper Adams. They have been greatly rewarded with high returns.

Let's hope this upward trend continues and sockeye numbers continue to improve in the Upper Adams River system! □



Fisheries Statistics and information for this article were gathered from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.