

BC Summer Games at Golden Ears Provincial Park

by Jeff Such, Lower Mainland District

Golden Ears Provincial Park was the venue for rowing and cycling events at this year's BC Summer Games held July 23 – 25. Park Rangers had a great time working with the dedicated volunteers, event organizers and hundreds of participants involved in the Games. Our goal was to ensure that the rowers and cyclists had one of their most memorable and exciting summers in the beautiful host communities of Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows.

Mountain bikers were treated to a state-of-the-art mountain bike circuit, recently built with FRBC funds, on Alouette Mountain; rowers soaked up inspiring vistas as they powered their long boats down majestic Alouette Lake; and cyclists burned up their leg muscles as they sped down the winding 13 kilometres of Golden Ears Parkway.

Park staff were proud to help and be a part of the '98 Summer Games team that had the privilege to bring a bit of magic to an enthusiastic group of young people in this great province of British Columbia. □

Wells Gray InfoCentre Welcomes Millionth Visitor

by Ellen Ferguson,
Thompson River District

On Parks Day, Saturday, July 18th, Wells Gray InfoCentre welcomed the millionth visitor since the InfoCentre opened for business in 1986.

Joy and Ray Sheridan of Lac La Hache were planning a weekend of camping and sight-seeing in Wells Gray Park and had stopped at the InfoCentre to pick up a brochure and learn what there was to see and do in the area.

Their "see and do" began with greetings from the Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks, the Honourable Cathy McGregor, as well

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Articles from readers are welcome. Deadline for material in the next issue is November 1, 1998.

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Minister

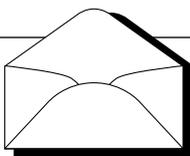
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Letters

"Nice Parks, Nice Hosts!"

Dear Sir:

Just wanted to let you know how much we have enjoyed your BC Parks. They lack for very little and are in such beautiful settings. We think we have pretty places in Colorado, and we do, but I think your parks are hard to beat.

We also enjoyed meeting two of your hosts, Fred and Mildred Benard in Smithers, BC at Tyhee Lake. They are wonderful people and were so helpful on things we wanted to know and where the fish were biting.

Thanks again,

*Jack and Helen Lowe
Golden, Colorado*

("Wells Gray..." continued from page 1)

as from BC Parks and Chamber of Commerce staff. Gifts were presented on behalf of BC Parks and a number of local businesses, with local newspaper staff taking photos and providing press coverage.

BC Parks gave the Sheridans a day-pack with three books about Wells Gray Park: Neave's *Exploring Wells Gray*, Goward and Hickson's *Nature Wells Gray*, and Perner's photographic collection *Wells Gray Park*, as well as a week of free camping in any of the local provincial parks.

Local businesses provided a variety of gifts including books, T-shirts, a First Aid kit, camping, bed-and-breakfast, and dinners, while recreational offerings included golf passes, river-rafting, horse-riding, and a half-hour sight-seeing flight with Wells Gray Air.

Following the cutting of the cake and posing for photographs with

Helping the Land Heal

Ecological Restoration in BC Conference

November 5 – 8, 1998

Victoria Conference Centre

Organized by the BC Environmental Network Educational Foundation and the Restoration of Natural Systems Program of the University of Victoria, this conference will cover a wide range of topics including the restoration of grasslands, forest restoration and management, watershed planning and more.

For more information, contact: Brian Egan, Project Coordinator phone: (250) 360-0877; e-mail: restore@islandnet.com or visit the website: www.islandnet.com/~restore □

Jerry the Moose, the Sheridans were again on their way.

Contacted at their home the following week, Joy and Ray were still bubbling with enthusiasm over their holiday. They had camped at Pyramid, Clearwater Lake and North Thompson, enjoyed their sight-seeing flight, horse-ride and river-rafting trip, hiked, dined out, made some new friends and went home with great memories, some souvenirs, and many wonderful things to say about Wells Gray Park.

Other Parks Day events included the formal opening of Wells Gray's Pyramid Campground by the minister. She also kicked off the Parks Day 'Take a Hike' event, a hike to Pyramid Mountain lead by our naturalist, Jim Blueschke. □

NAME THE
PROTECTED AREA

How the Other Half Live

by Brian Carruthers, Cariboo District

As much as the Area Supervisors in the Cariboo District work as a team, having two of them working in a remote office presents some challenges, as many districts are aware. When they are in the district office, the two Area Supervisors from Bella Coola speak endlessly of their areas, but many of the staff can only conjure up images, not having been there themselves. With three of the six Area Supervisors and the Senior Park Ranger being relatively new to the district, we figured it was time to make that trek across the Chilcotin so all could see what this Bella Coola place is all about.

After the foggy, wet, nail-biting trip down "the hill" and a tour through the Corridor of South Tweedsmuir Park, everyone anxiously awaited the highlight of the visit – a voyage on the *Hakai Ranger*. As they awoke the next day, even the low hanging clouds and steady drizzle couldn't dampen the spirits of the group. Resembling the cast of Gilligan's Island (you guess who's who) and with snacks in hand, we boarded the *Hakai Ranger*. After a safety orientation by "Captain" Walbauer it was off to Dean Channel and the famous Mackenzie Rock Provincial Park.

On the way back to Bella Coola, the cowfolks from the Cariboo got a chance to experience a pod of porpoises, frolicking in the wake of the boat. They then soaked their bones in Eucott Bay hot springs, a proposed protected area through the mid-coast LRMP.

After a tour of the Bella Coola office and shop complex (and a frisk of the Williams Lake Areas by Tracy and Pat to ensure none of their stock went missing) it was back to Willy's Puddle and the dust of the Cariboo. Now that the Area Supervisors from Williams Lake are aware of this little piece of paradise, the jockeying has already started for any vacancy, should Pat or Tracy decide to move on. □



Don Olesiuk, Pat Singer, Joanne McLeod, Helen Farrer, Laurie Lyons and "Captain" Tracy Walbauer.

Mountain Splendour

by Roger Norrish, Victoria



Alpine lakes, jagged mountain peaks and forested valley bottoms define this protected area.

This provincial park, established in 1922, is among the oldest protected areas in the province of British Columbia and is one of several protected areas making up the Canadian Rocky Mountains World Heritage Site. The park is named after a mountain peak, known to many as the "Matterhorn" of the Canadian Rocky Mountains. Visitors from around the world come to the park to participate in mountain climbing, wilderness hiking, photography and wildlife viewing during the summer months and cross-country skiing and snowshoeing in the winter. Can you name this protected area? And what national park lies along this park's eastern boundary?

(Answer on page 8). □

Protected Areas: Preserving Our Future

by Vicki Haberl, Garibaldi/Sunshine Coast District

Schools in the Garibaldi/Sunshine Coast District now have a better understanding of the *Protected Areas: Preserving our Future* environmental education guide, as a result of a project conducted over the fall, winter and spring of 1997/98. Environmental educator, D.G. Blair-Whitehead fulfilled a contract to introduce and facilitate the use of the environmental education guide in the school districts within BC Parks' Garibaldi/Sunshine Coast District. The project included a pilot project with teachers from a local elementary school, and teacher professional development workshops in each of the school districts.

The objectives of the project were:

- to introduce the *Protected Areas* education guide to teachers in the Garibaldi/Sunshine Coast District during the 1997/98 school year
- to provide support to a select group of teachers to integrate *Protected Areas* programs into their classroom studies through the pilot project
- to assist teachers in completing a successful pilot project that inspires those teachers to use *Protected Areas* programs again, to share program ideas with other teachers, and to endorse the *Protected Areas* education guide
- to build on the success of the pilot project by introducing the *Protected Areas* guide to other teachers in the Howe Sound School District and the Sunshine Coast School District at professional development days in the 1997/98 school year
- to have intermediate level teachers throughout the Garibaldi/Sunshine Coast District use the *Protected Areas* education guide **without** ongoing support and funding from BC Parks.

The *Protected Areas: Preserving Our Future* environmental education

guide was published in 1996 by the BC Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, BC Ministry of Forests, and Canadian Heritage Parks Canada. It explores the concepts, values and practices that underlie the idea of protected areas by considering the "whats, whys and hows" of protection of things we value through student activities and teacher background information.

Out of the outcomes of the Garibaldi/Sunshine Coast District project included a supplemental document to the *Protected Areas* guide which focused on Alice Lake Provincial Park. This document is intended to compliment the *Protected Areas* guide and presents background information and activities for a local case study of a protected area that is familiar to many students. The Alice Lake case study was used in two pilot classrooms and was presented to teachers throughout both the Howe Sound and Sunshine Coast School Districts.

During the pilot project it was found that the effectiveness of the local case study for Alice Lake Park was significant. Teachers in the pilot project, as well as those introduced to it at professional development workshops, felt that the local case study was important to the success of the *Protected Areas* unit for their classrooms. Hopefully next school year will see many more children learning about protected areas due to the involvement of local teachers in the *Protected Areas* workshop.

Recommendations were made for additional ways in which to continue the enhancement of student awareness of protected areas. These will be considered for implementation by the Garibaldi/Sunshine Coast District as we attempt to expand our relationship with school age children in the future. □

Kakwa Clean Up

by Rick Roos, Prince George District

The weekend of August 29/30 was the start of a clean up of an old quarry site in Kakwa Recreation Area by BC Parks Prince George District and the Spruce City Wildlife Association of Prince George. The quarry site is located near Babette Lake and is where, back in the early 1980s, quartzite rock had been hauled to be used in a variety of ways.

The quarry had a short life span and was abandoned in the mid 1980's. Debris from the site, 45-gallon drums that had contained diesel fuel, jet fuel, kerosene, solvents, gasoline, and motor oils, still litters the area. With the inclement weather and deep snow pack these drums are starting to show their age.

The drive to the quarry is approximately 150 kilometres on the highway and 110 kilometres on rough gravel road, creeping in four-wheel drive in many locations, making travel time five and a half hours one way.

With the assistance of seven members of the Spruce City Wildlife Club, using their personal vehicles and trailer, we managed to move 53 drums and six large equipment batteries to a recycling plant and scrap dealer in Prince George.

There is still debris on site but we made a pretty good dent in it, thanks to the Spruce City Wildlife Club of Prince George. □



Cleaning up the old quarry site in Kakwa Recreation Area.



BC Parks staff with Indonesian visitors in front of the Wells Gray Information Centre.

Nusa Tenggara to Wells Gray

by Bruce Petch and Monty Downs, Thompson River District

BC Parks Thompson River District had the opportunity to host a group of international visitors on June 16 – 18. The group consisted of six people who work in resource management with non-government organizations in the Nusa Tenggara islands (Southeast Indonesia) and two associated with the Center for the Environment at Cornell University (New York). The week before they had attended an international conference on Common Property Management at UBC. They were interested in learning more about resource management issues in BC, thus they asked if we could organize a trip for them in the Thompson-Okanagan. Attendance at the conference and the tour afterwards were arranged by World Neighbors, an international development organization, and sponsored by the Ford Foundation.

The tour started with an introduction to Thompson River District through slides and discussion with staff. Then over two days they visited Lac le Jeune, Tunkwa, Wells Gray and Lac du Bois Parks. The visit to Wells Gray was especially memorable – we took the visitors by boat up Clearwater Lake and Azure Lake to Rainbow Falls, in addition to stops at Helmcken Falls, Spahats Falls and Green Mountain Lookout. The amount of water and wildland was truly amazing to these visitors. Coming from small, densely-populated islands there are very few permanent streams and people often walk for hours to get their daily water supply. We gained some fascinating insights from the questions the visitors asked – for example, they found it hard to believe that decisions could be made at the provincial or even the district/regional level without having to consult federal authorities (in Indonesia the government structure is highly centralized). The group had the good fortune to be guided by the inimitable Harry Parsons (interpretative program contractor) when not being led by BC Parks' staff.

At the end of their visit to the Kamloops area, the group graciously presented a handwoven cloth (made with natural dyes) from the island of Sumba. They also left us with their impressions of the area (fear and disbelief were among the impressions they had!). Visitors and hosts alike commented on how much they had learned from the visit. A commitment was made to continue the relationship, and an invitation was extended to us to visit their program areas in Indonesia. We will be exploring ways that we can continue to learn from each other, with World Neighbors as the link (World Neighbours Canada volunteers are based in the BC Interior). Anyone interested in participating in this partnership can contact the authors. □

Driftwood in the Big Picture

by Doug Biffard, Victoria

Have you ever sat on a beach and wondered what it looked like when Captain Cook and Chief Maquinna met? What about all that driftwood? Is this evidence of modern logging or was there always driftwood piled on beaches? Is this just potential firewood or part of ecological processes too big and too slow for us to perceive?

A forest fire burns valuable trees, but if we watch over a longer period of time, it also creates new opportunities. We've learned to see the larger role that fire plays in interior forest ecosystems and we are now planning to allow for fire in protected areas. In coastal forests, however, fire does not have the same dominant role in maintaining biodiversity.

Coastal forests tend to get much older. Renewal and diversity in temperate rainforests is structured by the processes of aging, disease, blowdown and stream meandering. These processes lead to large pieces of trees lying about the forest. This debris is referred to as large organic debris or LOD. Once a tree falls to the forest floor it goes through a process of decay but it may also be transported down the watershed and out to sea. The flow of large organic debris is a normal and vital part of Pacific ecosystems right from the top of watershed to the deep ocean floor beyond the continental shelf.

Terrestrial organisms, from insects, salamanders and rodents to birds, bats and bears, depend on large organic debris in various stages of decay for a variety of habitats. For aquatic organisms, mostly fish and insects, it is more the spatial arrangement and movement of large organic debris that is important to diversity. As large debris is transported down a stream it can provide structure to the stream channel. A normal stream is a series of turns and shallow straight

(continued on page 6) ►

("Driftwood..." continued from page 5)

sections called pools and riffles. The pool riffle complex is often based on location of large logs. In-stream cover for young fish is provided by fallen trees and limbs, or by log jams.

In estuaries, large organic debris helps to stabilize sediments allowing vegetation to take hold. The formation of back channels and slow water where juvenile salmon can grow and adapt to seawater is often based on anchored tree trunks or log jams. Large debris on the estuary flats provides physical diversity to an otherwise uniform landscape. All kinds of animals, like crabs, fish and snails use this cover to rest while the tide is out. Driftwood on beaches helps to control severe erosion from winter storms.

In the marine environment there are a number of animals that are adapted to rely solely on wood for their existence. In coastal waters there are two species of mollusks and two species of crustaceans that live exclusively by boring into and partially digesting wood. The mollusks are called teredos and are related to clams. Gribble is the common name for the crustacean that bores into wood. It is similar to the terrestrial pill bug.

Debris floating on the open ocean attracts a host of marine life. Many types of juvenile marine fishes are associated with floating debris. The pelagic gooseneck barnacle is only found attached to floating debris. In the past, open ocean debris was exclusively wood or seaweeds. No one knows the consequences to ocean ecology brought by changes in the form and composition of open ocean debris.

In the deep ocean there are two groups of animals found in association with sunken wood. The first group is a type of seastar-like animal that has only been found attached to sunken logs. The other is a group of mollusks similar to teredos that bore into and digest wood. Their work in breaking down wood is known to support an oasis of diversity in the



Botanical Beach driftwood – potential firewood or essential ecological element?

deep ocean.

Unlike the deep ocean, sea life in coastal areas is prolific. This abundance makes it very difficult to know what contribution finely ground, partially digested wood fibre makes to the diversity of bottom dwelling marine organisms. However, the simple fact that there are animals specifically adapted and totally reliant on submerged wood says two things:

- that wood has been available in the marine environment for eons and
- that it is reasonable to expect that breakdown of wood by the borers supports many other organisms. This is the basis of biodiversity.

We now know that large organic debris from coastal forests is an important and natural part of Pacific ecosystems. Unfortunately, the changes in the flow of debris caused by human activities are measurable and threatening. For example:

- Debris is now smaller in both diameter and length. The change from large to smaller debris causes negative changes in both aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems. Small debris decays faster. It does not improve habitats or stabilize shorelines. There is less chance that small debris will make the journey to the open ocean then on to the deep ocean floor. In addition small debris in large

quantity overwhelms decomposers and suffocates nearshore environments.

- Fewer upturned root wads with the tree trunks attached. Less of this type of debris makes its way into streams or onto beaches. Whole trees with roots attached have a greater value for habitat diversity (both in the forest and in streams) and provide better stabilizing effects.
- Change in debris species composition to woods that decay more rapidly.

What does this mean to BC Parks? Maintaining natural systems is part of our mandate. We need to ensure that our practices allow for the generation, decay and transport of large organic debris. It's hard to imagine that the large trees that blew down in MacMillan Park will ever make it to the open ocean, but that is what we need to strive for. Creeks should be allowed to meander through old growth forests carrying out the process of erosion and deposition; creating and recreating pools and riffles. Once giant trees fall into a stream, their eventual transport to the sea should be viewed as a success. Further, large driftwood in estuaries and on beaches must be left to fulfill its role – a role that connects the forest with the sea in food webs we know very little about. □

People at Parks

by Paula Sibbald, Victoria



Terri and Harold Rimmer

Terri Rimmer

*Finance and Administrative Officer –
Cariboo District*

Terri was born in Nanaimo and raised in the Victoria area. Upon graduation, she married and worked at various service industry positions until she started with the South Vancouver Island District (then know as the Malahat District). Her first position was a park assistant. She held various other positions such as labourer, revenue collector, office assistant and accounts clerk.

Terri and her family moved to Williams Lake in 1989 (she has four children and three grandchildren)

and although the name of her position and duties have changed through the years, she has remained in this position and has taken various courses towards a Financial Management Certificate.

Over the past few years she has been busy with her regular duties along with working on provincial competition panels such as human resources coordinators, areas supervisors and extension officers.

Until moving to the Cariboo District area, Terri says she didn't totally appreciate all the beautiful parks on Vancouver Island. Throughout the years, she has had a chance to enjoy the parks in the Cariboo District and others in various parts of the province and now has a total appreciation for our parks being world famous for their spectacular beauty.

As for her future, Terri hopes to advance within the government and is not sure whether she'll stay put in the Cariboo District or look for a position further south in the province.

Upon retiring, Terri and her husband plan to own a ranch somewhere in British Columbia which will certainly keep them busy, but will leave time for travel opportunities. □

Return of the Peregrine Falcon

by Greg Betz, Okanagan District

The Okanagan Valley is one of the four most endangered ecosystems in all of Canada. It is also one of Canada's favourite tourist and retirement destinations. More and more of the valley's unique habitat is being developed every day. Among the many and endangered species in the valley, few are as captivating as the Peregrine Falcon. In the Okanagan these falcons were wiped out in the 1960s due to the negative effects of DDT which was used extensively by the agricultural communities throughout the valley.



Blake Dixon and Arthur

Following the example of the Canadian National Peregrine Recovery Plan, in July eight young Peregrine Falcons were released from the roof of the Landmark Square II in Kelowna. It is hoped that these magnificent birds will once again nest and settle back into the valley they once inhabited extensively. A breeding pair of falcons has not been seen in the Okanagan since 1959.

The Peregrine Falcon became the focal point for a valley-wide public

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Elementary, My Dear

Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson went on a camping trip. As they lay down for the night, Holmes said, "Watson, look up into the sky and tell me what you see."

Watson said, "I see millions and millions of stars".

"And what does that tell you?"

"Astronomically," Watson replied, "it tells me that there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets. Theologically, it tells me that God is great and that we are small and insignificant. Meteorologically, it tells me that we will have a beautiful day tomorrow. What does it tell you?"

"Somebody stole our tent." □

(“...Peregrine Falcon” continued from page 7)

environmental education campaign. Thousands of people, especially children were provided with environmental educational learning opportunities including:

- endangered wildlife interpretive presentations
- colouring and art contests
- live TV coverage on Shaw Cable
- name the peregrine contests
- public seminars on endangered species/endangered spaces at the libraries.

BC Parks contributed to this project by having Area Supervisor Blake Dixon attend half (38) of the presentations in the local schools. Blake is the only certified falconer in the valley and was able to fill a dual role of handling “Arthur”, a live falcon, and represent BC Parks, promoting the protection and management of endangered spaces.

As it turns out, this project is about far more than just bringing back the peregrine, it’s learning what we can do to protect other wildlife species that are at risk in the valley. It promotes learning what we can do to make the Okanagan and British Columbia a healthier place for all living creatures. □



Victor and Terry Bopp at the summit of Mt. Pope.

A Victor-ious Hike to the Summit

by Cheryl Livingstone-Leman

In celebration of Parks Day this year the Prince George District organized an interpretive “Take a Hike” event at Mt. Pope in Fort St. James. Mt. Pope is one of the proposed protected areas and the trail was recently upgraded with the help of Canfor and Forest Renewal BC funding.

An important aspect of organizing an interpretive hike is finding a knowledgeable leader. Well, we hit the jackpot! Our eager volunteers were Victor Bopp and his wife Terry. Many of you know Victor from his District Manager days in Prince George. Victor brought his expertise in birding to the hike and, coupled

with Terry’s knowledge of plants, they proved a dynamic duo!

The weather was picture-perfect. It took about four hours to hike to the summit of Mt. Pope where the hikers enjoyed lunch in the gazebo overlooking Stuart Lake and Fort St. James. A highlight of the trip was the black bear and her two cubs in the valley below – giving the hikers a perfect vantage point to watch the family. The return hike took about two and a half hours and the tired bunch agreed to meet for dinner in Vanderhoof on their way back to Prince George as a way to finish a perfect day of hiking and good company. □

NAME THE PROTECTED AREA:
Answer (from page 3): The protected area is Mount Assiniboine Provincial Park. The national park lying next to the protected area’s eastern boundary is Banff National Park.