

Gowlland Tod Background

The Commonwealth Nature Legacy was established to commemorate the spirit of the XV Commonwealth Games held in Victoria in 1994. Comprising more than 1,200 hectares, the park is a result of a unique partnership between the provincial and local governments, organizations and companies. The focus of this park is to preserve a heritage of green space on southern Vancouver Island for present and future generations.

This park protects a significant part of the Gowlland Range, one of the last remaining natural areas in Greater Victoria and a significant portion of the natural shoreline and uplands of Tod Inlet.

The Gowlland Range is a particularly rich area of biodiversity with more than 150 individual animal and plant species identified. The protected area preserves a rare, dry coastal Douglas-fir habitat that features grassy meadows, moss covered rocky knolls and old growth forest.

Established in 1995, the park area has long been acknowledged by outdoor enthusiasts for its important conservation, cultural and recreational values. A parking lot, viewing platform, tables and toilets are located at the Caleb Pike access, and an extensive trail system exists throughout the Gowlland Range, McKenzie Bight and Tod Creek. Partridge Hills and the connector to Tod Inlet remain undeveloped at this time.

Conservation

While much of the park area is accessible by trails, visitors are reminded of the importance of retaining and conserving the fragile habitats of the park. Visitors are asked to stay on marked trails, observe the code of ethics for hiking or other activities and to show respect for the cultural and natural environment.

Many rare or endangered plant and animal species can be found in the park. In order to protect extremely fragile habitat, portions of trails have been closed or seasonally relocated.

Enjoy your visit to the park and leave it in its natural state for the enjoyment of others.

Cultural History

On the east shore and uplands of Tod Inlet visitors will find reminders of the activities of the Vancouver Portland Cement Company which thrived between 1904 and the 1920s. Nearby, Caleb Pike homestead and an abandoned copper mine provide a reminder of the area's pioneer activities. Many of the trails are evidence of previous logging activity. Most significantly, the presence of First Nations peoples is evident at Tod Inlet or SNITCet, the place of blue grouse. They also utilize the numerous sites within the park for medicinal, ceremonial and spiritual significance. We ask that visitors respect the unique nature of these values.

Natural History

The park can be divided into three main areas:

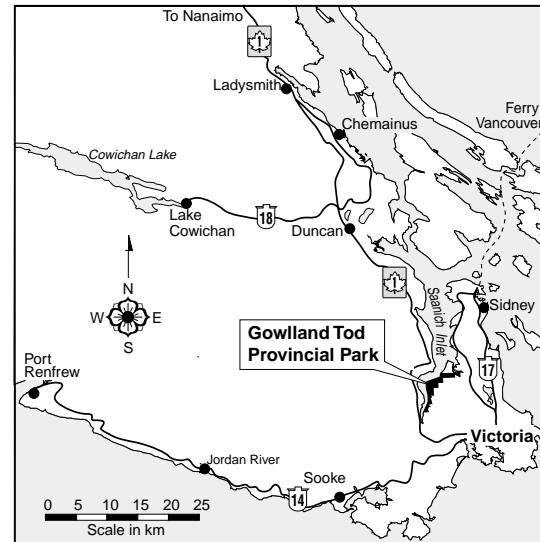
Tod Inlet has long been valued for its natural beauty, ecological significance and recreational opportunities. The range of habitats and the waters of the inlet, shoreline, Tod Creek and uplands support a diversity of wildlife. Blue heron, bald eagle, Peale's peregrine falcon as well as river otter, blacktail deer and red squirrel frequent this area. Dozens of plant species, some rare or threatened (Phantom Orchid) are found in the mixed forest of arbutus, western redcedar, alder, and coastal Douglas-fir.

The **Gowlland Range** is a rich area of biodiversity where seashore, open forest, and rock outcrops support more than 100 resident species of birds, in addition to cougar, blacktail deer and the occasional black bear. During spring and summer the moss covered knolls offer an abundant display of wildflowers, goldstar, fawn lilies, larkspur, camas and many more.

The clear waters of **Finlayson Arm** are home to a rare and fascinating variety of marine life such as cloud sponges, lamp shells, anemones, wolf eel, killer whales, river otter and seals.

Recreation

The park contains an extensive network of trails that date back to the area's history of logging and mineral development. These trails today provide more than 25 kilometres of hiking trails with magnificent opportunities for day trips.



For More Information

BC Parks

<http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/bcparks>



Ministry of Water, Land
and Air Protection

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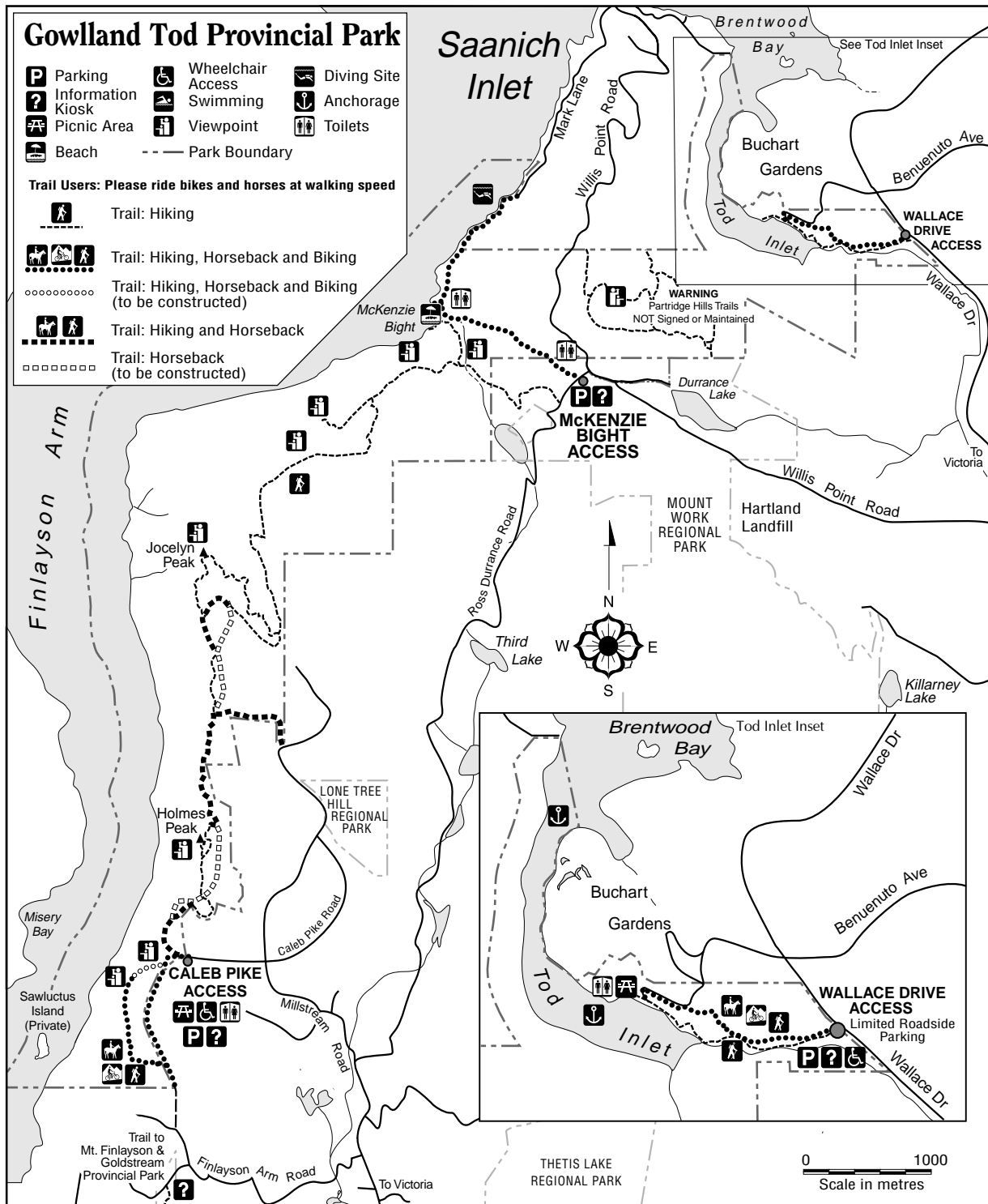
Gowlland
Tod

PROVINCIAL PARK



Welcome. This 1,200-hectare park protects the forested lands and marine environments of Tod Inlet, Gowlland Range and Finlayson Arm and offers day-use, trails and wildlife viewing.

Vancouver Island



Access Points

Caleb Pike Parking Lot/South Access:

Provides access to Holmes Peak and Jocelyn Hill with spectacular viewpoints of the Saanich Inlet via the Ridge Top Trail. You can extend your hike to Mount Work Regional Park parking lot and McKenzie Bight. To access Mount Finlayson, check directions at the information shelter and follow signage south to Rowntree Road, then Finlayson Road.

Wallace Drive/North Access:

Provides access to the shores of Tod Inlet. This is the site of the old Vancouver Portland Cement factory and townsite. The calm waters provide an ideal setting for a picnic or day visit.

Mount Work Parking Lot/Middle Access:

Provides access to McKenzie Bight and the Ridge Top Trail via Timberman Trail. McKenzie Bight is ideal for a seaside visit. Ridge Top Trail offers a more challenging hike to rocky outcroppings with spectacular viewpoints. You can make a longer hike to Caleb Pike parking lot or enjoy the extensive trail systems of Mount Work CRD Park.

Tod Inlet (Marine Access):

Provides marine access to the park and overnight anchorage that is safe and secluded. A Marine Park Host is available in the summer months.

McKenzie Bight (Marine Access):

Provides day anchorage and shore access to park trail systems.

Trails

Observe map symbols and trail signs. There are trails restricted to hiking only and multi-use trails for hiking, horseback, and biking. **Please ride bikes and horses at a walking speed.**

For your safety and the preservation of the park, stay on marked trails and respect the delicate vegetation and cultural features. Shortcutting trails destroys plant life and soil structure.

BC Parks has developed a trail plan for this park with the assistance of the Gowlland Tod Trail Advisory Group. Trail additions will be constructed over the next one to two years.

A management plan for the park has been developed with the assistance of the volunteer

Gowlland Tod Advisory Group. As the park contains cultural features and archaeological sites significant to the people of the Saanich First Nations, BC Parks is committed to involving them in interpretation and education programs and in the ongoing management of the park.

Safety Rules & Pointers

- ▶ **Proper Equipment** – be prepared with appropriate outerwear and footwear for wet weather, foggy and slippery conditions. Carry adequate supplies to allow for an emergency.
- ▶ **Emergencies** – report Search and Rescue and other emergencies to the RCMP using the 911 phone service.
- ▶ Thieves operate in public areas. Please lock your vehicle and carry your valuables with you.
- ▶ **Animals** – remember this is a wilderness area. Black bear and cougar may be present. As a precaution, it is recommended that you leave pets at home. Keep young children from wandering alone into brush areas. If you see bears or cougars, please report sightings to the Park Facility Operator, or call the Observe, Record, Report line at 1-800-663-9453.
- ▶ There is no public access to the park through the surrounding private property.
- ▶ Horses and mountain bikes are only allowed on signed designated trails.
- ▶ Keep pets on a leash and under control at all times. You are responsible for their behaviour and must dispose of their excrement.
- ▶ Divers must not handle or remove marine life from dive sites.
- ▶ Artifacts are not to be removed.
- ▶ Fires are not permitted throughout park and foreshore areas.

Park Fees

No fees. The park is open year-round. Access depends on weather and snow-load.