

**FINAL MINUTES OF  
STRATHCONA PARK PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
(Jan. 24, 2014 – BC Parks Office, Miracle Beach – Black Creek)**

**SPPAC MEMBERS:** Tawney Lem (Chair), Philip Stone, Mick Taylor, Hardolph Wasteneys, Allison Mewett, Nick Page, Erik Holbek,

**Regrets:** Peggy Carswell, David Campbell, Darren Saare

**BC Parks:** Andy Smith

**Recorder:** John Milne

**Members of the Public:** Ken Vandeburgt, Erik Ware (Backcountry Park Facility Operator)

**1. Introductions** - Public attendees were advised that they can ask questions as the meeting proceeds and not wait until the end.

**2. Approve Agenda** - The last SPPAC minutes were approved via email and posted to BC Parks website.

**3. Strathcona Update (emailed by Andy Dec. 10, 2013 and** appended to the end of these minutes).

**Questions from SPPAC regarding Strathcona Update:**

What is the Priority for Capital Projects in 2014? The 2013 project was not quite finished, i.e., the trail upgrades on Forbidden Plateau. 1/3 of the project is being carried over to 2014 with the same contractor contingent on capital money being approved. While the 2014 budget is not approved yet (usually in April or May) sufficient funds to complete the plateau project is expected.

After completing the trail project started in 2013, dependant on capital balance, other trail upgrades in the plateau area will be given consideration, such as the Battleship Lake Day Use Area, and the trail from Paradise Meadows to Battleship Lake. Also on the list are improvements to the Elk River Trail, Bedwell Lakes Trail and after a recent inspection, assessment and potential repair/replacement of the Elk statue at the Elk Portal.

Is anything being planned for the trail between Helen McKenzie Lake and the Ranger Cabin? Informal discussions have taken place regarding options, such as re-routing to higher ground (could be very costly, i.e. \$300,000?), adding large sections of boardwalk to existing trail (costly and will not completely solve problem) or just focusing on a few of the worst sections and have the public accept that this is just the level of trail (option to use the better Battleship – Kwai Lake trail).

Parks are hoping for a \$100,000 budget for 2014 to use on Strathcona capital projects. If and when justified, some projects may be funded through Strathcona's Park Enhancement Fund account (not tied to operational budget allocations).

Is there any Update about the Clayoquot Wilderness Resort (CWR) Lower Bedwell Trail project? CWR is expecting to do planning during 2014 with a draft Management/Work Plan submitted to BC Parks in the fall of 2014. Construction can begin upon approval of the Management/Work Plan but not expected until 2015. One comment suggested that CWR doesn't seem to be in a big rush, however Andy explained that it was the timing of the court case decision that made it more practical to wait until 2014 to complete planning.

**FINAL MINUTES OF  
STRATHCONA PARK PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
(Jan. 24, 2014 – BC Parks Office, Miracle Beach – Black Creek)**

SPPAC recommended that the ACC proposal to manage the Ranger cabin proceed to the adjudication process, and that Parks request the ACC to conduct a Level 2 Environmental Impact Assessment. This recommendation has been accepted by Don Cadden, the Regional Manager. Andy will follow up and send a letter to the Alpine Club of Canada (ACC). SPPAC also recommended that several concerns be addressed. These included impacts on the area from increased use, human waste management, garbage management, potable water management, access, heating, maintenance, area footprint and reservations. If the L2 assessment results are favourable, then SPPAC would support the proposal. A 10 year term is recommended for the PUP or Partnership Agreement. Equal access to the public with a first come first served model is also recommended, as well as no fees for day use.

Once Parks has sent a letter to the ACC, SPPAC will publish their recommendations for the public to see. SPPAC's recommendations will be incorporated into future permitting documents, of which some language is standard boilerplate. The L2 could be done in house if the ACC has qualified people available, and could be conducted in the summer. Based on this timing, it would be the following year before any development on the cabin would actually happen.

There was some discussion about whether time limits should be set for this process. Deadlines could come from the ACC, or could be recommended by SPPAC. In case another group expresses an interest in this opportunity, the intent is to not unduly delay progress. From feedback heard so far, it is unlikely that another non-profit group would be interested. Should the proposal move ahead to the approval stage, BC Parks would have to advertise a "notice of intent to issue a Park Use Permit".

Andy will speak with the Regional Director to confirm if he wishes to set any time lines and whether the ACC will be given a chance to follow through before anyone else would be considered for the same proposal. The ACC will be asked to comment on their anticipated time lines.

**4. Nyrstar/SPPAC Annual Meeting (sorry not open to the public)**

**Date** - February 7 at Miracle Beach Office during the day. noon to 4 p.m.

**SPPAC members attending** - Phillip Stone, Mick Taylor, Alison Mewett, Nick Page (maybe). For BC Parks; Andy Smith, Aaron Miller, Erica McClaren and Don Cadden, Regional Director.

This meeting will provide an update on the 2013 operations, what is planned for 2014 and also discuss the development of a new mine closure plan.

**5. Volunteer Coordination Contract and Volunteer Agreements  
Updates on internal progress**

Park Enhancement Funds have been approved to fund a contract for Community Engagement Services and an Invitation to Quote has been sent out to Seasonal Rangers. The contract term will be for 10 weeks and proposed from February 11<sup>th</sup> to April 20<sup>th</sup>. The Contractor will liaise between volunteer groups and BC Parks helping groups to develop the new volunteer agreements in the new provincial format. This is expected to eliminate much of the administrative tasks for the Volunteer Groups so they can just focus on expressing their interests and needs. BC Parks and the government's risk management branch have been working on setting conditions for volunteer agreements. All existing agreements are being looked at to see what is working and what isn't. As part of the contract, the Contractor will be required to assess the value of this process for both the Volunteer Groups as well as BC Parks and to provide recommendations for improvements. Victoria would like to have all new agreements in place by Spring/Summer 2014. Volunteer groups will be asked for feedback. The contractor will help volunteer groups complete forms.

**FINAL MINUTES OF  
STRATHCONA PARK PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
(Jan. 24, 2014 – BC Parks Office, Miracle Beach – Black Creek)**

Becs Hoskins, the Public Engagement Specialist in Victoria, will also help groups with this process.

A main Volunteer Agreement can set the criteria for the volunteer group to work under. This main agreement, negotiated/developed only once with assistance from the Parks' Community Engagement Specialist, Area Supervisor and Contractor is intended to be for a long-term period. Specific projects can then be proposed at the convenience of the Volunteer groups and once each is approved, implemented under the conditions of the main agreement. In the long term, this will create efficiencies and stability for the volunteer groups to be able to plan better knowing that they have a long term commitment from BC Parks.

Andy sent out a list to SPPAC of possible projects in the Park (informal for consideration only at this time, but if any were approved they could be pursued through multiple ways, i.e. operational budget, capital budget, volunteer/sponsorship, and Park Enhancement Funds) SPPAC could help with prioritizing these projects. If a project was supported by a volunteer group, there may be the possibility for collaboration and therefore potential Parks money to help with transportation, tools, etc. Andy's list was not intended to be all inclusive but rather to provide a starting point for others to add projects to or for some projects to be considered and dropped due to concerns or insufficient support.

It was suggested that a meeting could be held with interested volunteer groups to hear what projects or services they believe are important to pursue and and see if there are common interests where collaboration may be possible with BC Parks.

When could such a meeting be held? It was suggested that perhaps such a meeting would be facilitated by SPPAC (would need the support of the Regional Director due to ToR identifying restrictions for SPPAC to hold public meetings. Discussion took place about when to hold such a meeting but no decision was made.

Another alternative option to a meeting, could be a website used to collect information from the public. Current technology could even offer this in the form of an interactive map recording where work is needed (e.g. blowdown, muddy eroded area, etc). This could also be used to record trail conditions. There are already some websites available that describe trail information. One constraint is that such websites require resources to develop and maintain.

Communication with volunteer groups about possible projects can also take place when the agreements are being reviewed. The list circulated to SPPAC will be shared with volunteer groups, and they will be asked to add to the list by the Contractor. Access road issues outside of parks may be of interest as well to volunteers, although BC Parks resources are restricted for use within parks.

The public also holds valuable information on areas of the park where maintenance is needed, or where safety issues exist. Tawney will take the list of possible projects and edit out the details to shorten it, then send to Andy. This list can then be posted online with an invitation for the public to add to it.

In terms of volunteer projects, a point was made that building new trails requires future maintenance. Parks already has a challenge finding the resources to maintain what they have now. The Park Master Plan deals with some of these concerns by identifying what is currently supported and what isn't, and also zoning covers what can be built and where. If volunteer groups want to propose building new trails or facilities, a commitment to maintaining them would need to be considered and potentially form part of any agreement. Volunteer projects could include environmental assessments, closures, etc. There should be some creative thinking about what is possible to broaden the range of ideas.

**FINAL MINUTES OF  
STRATHCONA PARK PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
(Jan. 24, 2014 – BC Parks Office, Miracle Beach – Black Creek)**

Safety is also an issue in some places. A question was asked whether routes with flagging and hand ropes are allowed. Andy commented that if the zoning of an area is Wilderness Conservation, no facilities or structures are allowed. In addition liabilities due to safety concerns (ropes or ladders placed by others may not meet safety standards). It was suggested that Parks could put up a sign in these situations explaining risks and having users accept liability.

In discussion about access, Mick asked about the possibility of forming collaborations outside the Park to help with access issues. Some access roads are no longer useable. Andy has recently spoken with the Ministry of Forests about the Gold Lake access. Parks is an adjacent stakeholder that is consulted when logging roads that access parks are deactivated. Perhaps logging companies could be approached to keep roads open as a public relations gesture. Liability is always an issue with this. Andy advised that it often comes down to money and that often neither the Ministry of Forests or the logging companies care if a road remains open as long as someone accepts the liabilities and maintenance requirements.

Could these roads be converted into a recreation corridor? Again, that would depend on money and someone accepting the liability/responsibility of this. However, road closures don't necessarily mean closure to people, but rather just vehicles. Most often, roads do become informal recreational corridors, first accommodating 4x4's and then ATV's, bikes and eventually as they grow in, hikers.

**6. Illegal trails and activities in the Park  
Awareness and education strategy**

This topic was discussed at the last SPPAC meeting. There are lots of illegal activities going on in the Park. Does SPPAC want to make some recommendations about this to the Regional Director?

Enforcement is one option, but has the potential to cause conflict, and won't necessarily create the buy in needed for long-term resolution. Avoiding problems through education (e.g. ongoing conservation protects the values people visit the park for) and changing the cultural norm (e.g. no fires) is the preferred solution.

Two illegal activities of great concern is flagging and clipping of random trails that have no history or significant use. While clipping may be done by a very few, there are organized groups who are also doing this. Flagging is more widespread and while sometimes done for individual safety in remote areas, is often occurring on a route where the flagging is not necessary. There is also a problem with cairns. They may be placed on the wrong route, but like flagging, people don't take them down afterwards.

Garbage is also a problem especially in fire pits (more often also illegal).

Messaging from BC Parks tends to be ignored. Social pressure from the public has more impact. The question is how to make these activities unacceptable. Other Park systems in the Rockies, the U.S. and New Zealand experience the same problems. What they do should be checked out.

Some B.C. Provincial parks allow fires. In Strathcona the public decided fires wouldn't be permitted. Traces of fires should be removed. This could be something the public could be asked to do, and is happening to a degree already. Park Rangers and Park Facility Operator staff are constantly cleaning up illegal fire pits.

Andy is hoping all existing volunteer groups associated with Strathcona Park will help by condemning all illegal activities and communicate to their members to lead by example and not do such activities or supporting/encourage others who are performing illegal activities. Illegal activities include such common things such as fires, dogs off leash, building or developing illegal trails/routes, putting up flagging, entering closed areas, cutting vegetation, etc.

**FINAL MINUTES OF  
STRATHCONA PARK PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
(Jan. 24, 2014 – BC Parks Office, Miracle Beach – Black Creek)**

**7. Public Engagement Sub-committee**

Some of this topic was covered under section 5.

Peggy, Mick and Tawney (sub-committee) have had discussions about SPPAC engaging the public more effectively. SPPAC wants to be more accessible and the public should be asked what they want to talk about, what information they want, and what communication formats are most effective to use. The subcommittee is proposing a two prong approach: one, an online questionnaire/survey; and two, going to talk to people at their scheduled meetings (e.g. requesting time on group agendas). When asking the public about preferred methods of engagement, SPPAC's limitations will be laid out (e.g. there cannot be any/minimal increase in costs and administration time for Parks). A stakeholder map/list is being created to identify the various groups and individual users of the park. The subcommittee's activities will be conducted at no cost to Parks. Information collected will be collated and recommendations on a public engagement strategy will be developed for the Regional Director to consider. The subcommittee is looking for feedback from SPPAC on this proposed approach.

Members questioned how the stakeholder groups are being identified. Names will be generated through brainstorming, and the rest of the committee will be asked to add to the list. Other individuals with wide networks will also be asked to review the stakeholder list. First Nations , will also be included. The subcommittee will clearly let First Nations know that any communication with SPPAC will not be considered consultation.

Since SPPAC is only an "advisory" committee, the question was asked if SPPAC's undertaking of public engagement would unduly raise the public's expectations about the committee's role and their influence on decision making. Some members of the public already know the limitations of SPPAC, but many don't. Tawney advised that this information will be communicated right at the beginning of any communication as part of the background information regarding SPPAC. Concern was also expressed about conducting a "survey" since the public might consider it a referendum and expect SPPAC to take specific action. SPPAC is only asking the public for feedback in order to help them make their recommendations to the Regional Director, and not asking the public to tell Parks what to do.

The intent of this engagement project is to give the public meaningful opportunities to communicate, and hopefully broaden the number of people who take part in deliberations about Park management/operations. By raising the profile of SPPAC, and building relationships with stakeholders, this may also help educate people in parks issues – e.g. fires in the park and other illegal/unwanted activities.

Some members suggested using the term 'communication' instead of 'engagement' due to the potential for implying some level of empowerment. It must be clear that the goal of the SPPAC subcommittee is to find out how to get more information to, and from, the public. This process isn't about seeking input on the Master Plan. The subcommittee will be the only SPPAC members who go out to communicate with other groups, rather than all SPPAC members. It was noted that communication goes both ways – from the public to SPPAC and from SPPAC to the public.

There is a concern about first creating higher public communication expectations and then needing SPPAC members to maintain things. New SPPAC members will be recruited soon and they may or may not be interested in taking on this extra work. Do the Terms of Reference (ToR) need amending? Andy commented that the Regional Director should be consulted about this subcommittee proposal for public engagement.

SPPAC's Terms of Reference does set some conditions which may conflict with this process (e.g. SPPAC cannot call public meetings). However, SPPAC will not be calling public meetings, but instead going to other "groups' meetings. Again, Andy will let Regional Director know what is being proposed.

**FINAL MINUTES OF  
STRATHCONA PARK PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
(Jan. 24, 2014 – BC Parks Office, Miracle Beach – Black Creek)**

Andy commented that SPPAC was created at a time when the Master Plan was new and the digital age with the social media network programs were undeveloped or non-existent. It was for that reason that the SPPAC ToR detailed the types of people who should make up the committee, so that issues could be discussed by a diverse group with various backgrounds. This would ensure the Regional Director got good feedback and discussion from a representative segment of the public. I don't believe SPPAC was ever supposed to capture everyone's opinion/input. I'm not sure that while the SPPAC subcommittee proposal is a great way to expand on the amount of public feedback, that it is necessary to satisfy the intent of SPPAC or the needs of the Regional Director. If a process is developed to provide the public more and easier communication access to BC Parks, is this threatening the overall need of the committee?

The benefit of pursuing more engagement is that beyond receiving more public input, this could raise the role of SPPAC in the public's eye.

Once this engagement process is complete, connections made, and new tools developed to streamline communications, the workload should decrease in this area. Many new social media tools are available now that weren't before, so communication is much better now.

Examples of past/recent SPPAC outreach include the CWR/Bedwell Horse issue and the ACC Ranger Cabin Proposal.

The subcommittee plans to draw up an introduction/background for the questionnaire/survey along with the proposed questions and will circulate it to SPPAC members for review.

**8. SPPAC membership  
Recruitment, chair, attendance**

5 of the 10 SPPAC members' terms are up in the Fall of 2014. SPPAC's Terms of Reference list suggested skills needed by committee.

Members leaving have skills in the areas of biology, aboriginal issues and water management. Members leaving are David Campbell, Peggy Carswell, Nick Page, Tawney Lem, and Phillip Stone. An exit strategy will be discussed online.

Those members remaining and their skills are:

Alison Mewett- landscape architect  
Hardolph Wastenays- geology  
Erik Holbek- resource management  
Darren Saare- recreation  
Mick Taylor- engineer

Geographically it would be nice to have new members from Victoria and/or the south island. Particular skill areas which should be targeted as per ToR include the areas of environmental law, First Nations, and youth. These skills will be mentioned in the call for members, but all applications will be encouraged from people with a passion for, and knowledge of, the park.

The Terms of Reference are considered a guide, rather than prescriptive (Regional Director would have to confirm this). SPPAC believes the Terms of Reference is in need of some updating. There was discussion about preferred skills listed for SPPAC members, and a question about restrictions around other potential candidates as well as the benefit for representation from those holding PUP's, or those who work in the park such as guide outfitters. These people hold valuable information about the park and conflict of interest must be considered, however, if conflict exists a member could always remove themselves from discussion around such issues.

**FINAL MINUTES OF  
STRATHCONA PARK PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
(Jan. 24, 2014 – BC Parks Office, Miracle Beach – Black Creek)**

Tawney and Andy will draft a request for applications. SPPAC should move towards having terms staggered so this many members' terms aren't up at the same time.

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed to see if there are any shortcomings. Each SPPAC member shall review the Terms of Reference and send any suggestions for changes to Andy. He will collate them and discuss with Regional Director before responding to the committee.

It was pointed out, it would not be a good idea to have a new chair person at the same time there is such a significant turnover of members.

**9. Mapping session planning -  
SPPAC, Parks and Stakeholder session to ID assets and volunteer group priorities**

See item 5 above.

**10. Next meeting time and closing comments**

**The next meeting will be on Thursday, March 27th from 5 - 9 p.m. at BC Parks' Rath Trevor Beach office. Note the change of day of the week and time.**

**Public Input**

Ken Vandeburgt asked if his question presented at the last SPPAC meeting had been dealt with. He has proposed changes to the Park Act, after the public's input on the Master Plan Amendment was not heeded. He referenced the Larkin Report and what it said about listening to the public. He wants SPPAC to have more power to influence decision-making. Ken would like feedback from SPPAC, which is the only advisory committee like this in the BC Park system. He would like to see a change in BC Park system through the Park Act to give it teeth to protect parks. Pipelines are proposed to run through other parks in the near future.

This topic was discussed online between members, and will be further explored at the next meeting. Andy thinks this may not be the venue for this discussion. Tawney will circulate Ken's email again for reconsideration and comment. Andy also sent Ken's email to the Regional Director and will discuss further with him.

The following is the Strathcona Update as circulated to SPPAC on December 13, 2013.

**FINAL MINUTES OF  
STRATHCONA PARK PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
(Jan. 24, 2014 – BC Parks Office, Miracle Beach – Black Creek)**

**Strathcona Update for SPPAC  
Dec 13, 2013 (BC Parks Black Creek Office)**

**Strathcona Staffing** – All seasonal staff now finished.

Jerry McArthur, Windy Park Operations, who is our current Backcountry Park Facility Operator, completed his season at end of October. His contract has been extended one additional year (ending October 30<sup>th</sup>. 2014) to time with the implementation of the new Provincial “PRISM” recreational services delivery management program (New format for facility maintenance contracts).

**1) NVI/Breakwater**

- See written update from Ivor McWilliams of Nyrstar
- SPPAC/Nyrstar meeting scheduled for first week of February at BC Parks Black Creek office.
- Core Rack Area Borrow site project (CRAB – Clean Fill) – After a shut down during the 2012/13 winter, Nyrstar resumed work removing clean fill from this site and covering the berm of the old Tailings Dam Facility. This work was completed in August. While there is remaining clean fill at this site, it won't be used until Nyrstar is ready to do the final covering of the TDF surface. Completion of TDF is targeted for 2017.
- Tailings Dam Facility Closure Plan – BC Parks has not heard back from the Ministry of Energy and Mines regarding the finalization of this plan since sending in our comments on the draft plan.
- Jim Mitchell Lake Spillway Project – This project will not commence until Spring/early summer of 2014. Final approval still required from Dam Safety. This is a two year project with the dam modification being done first in 2014 followed by new spillway gate installation in 2015.
- Nyrstar has postponed mining the Price ore body until the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2014.

**2) Capital Projects**

The only 2013 capital project this year for Strathcona, is the upgrade of the trail between Battleship Lake and Kwai Lake. “Great Installations” won the bid (valued at approximately \$100K) and commenced work on September 9<sup>th</sup>. The project was divided into 3 sections but limited funds only covered enough for the completion of two sections in 2013 (Battleship end and Kwai end), leaving the middle portion, which will be completed in 2014 (Contractor agreed to complete project at same expense rate as 2013). Work in 2013 included damaged bridge removal and new crossing at Murray Meadows, erosion control work, new boardwalk sections and repair/replacement of old boardwalk sections. The 2013 work was completed in late October. 2014 work will commence once snow is clear of trails (probably July). Depending on funds available in 2014, additional work on plateau may be done, i.e. upgrade of trail between Murray Meadows and Hairtrigger Lake, upgrade of Battleship day-use area including toilet.

**3) Heber Diversion Penstock Decommissioning**

The planting of the old Heber Penstock corridor within the park (approximately 2 ha) which was completed in May 2013 is being monitored and assessed by BC Hydro. The reports from their consultants show very good survival of planted stock as well as good natural regen to date. Monitoring will continue over the next few years and should the growth be inadequate, more planting may take place to the satisfaction of BC Parks.

**4) Crest Creek Dredging Project**

While BC Hydro had advised BC Parks earlier in the year that there weren't adequate funds to dredge Crest Creek (quite full of rock and gravel from various events over the last several years), they surprised us in early August that they did find some funds to proceed. As a result, Uplands Excavating were hired and the project commenced on August 16<sup>th</sup>. One excavator was used along with two articulated dump trucks to remove material from the creek-bed, repair existing berms on both side of creek and to extend one berm to the lake to provide a much needed stable

FINAL MINUTES OF  
**STRATHCONA PARK PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
(Jan. 24, 2014 – BC Parks Office, Miracle Beach – Black Creek)

staging area for accessing the local climbing walls along the creek. The Heathens were invited to provide input into the project and appreciated getting this work done.

**5) CWR Park Use Permit** – Judicial review took place between February 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>) and the ruling was delivered June 24, 2013. Justice Sigurdson concluded that the Minister's decision was reasonable and should not be set aside and the Friends of Strathcona Park petition must be dismissed. CWR has been advised of the decision and will now start planning as per their proposal and the authorized Park Use Permit. Their required Management Plan and other planning documents will be developed for submission by Fall of 2014.

**6) Backcountry Plateau Ranger Cabin** – This is being discussed further at this SPPAC meeting. A Request for Public Input was developed and supported by SPPAC for distribution through email, websites and group networking (Newspaper advertising was not possible at this time due to a temporary government freeze). Responses were received by Andy Smith, Area Supervisor and shared with SPPAC. SPPAC is currently preparing a recommendation to the Regional Director.

**Bedwell Lakes Trail Upgrades** – The 2012 project to repair/replace the long section of boardwalk that skirts the Baby Bedwell lake shore, while completed in 2013 did not meet standards and will be modified by contractor in Spring 2014.

**Elk River Trail Upgrades** – While an assessment was done in the Fall of 2012, no capital work was started in 2013 as the Plateau trail enhancement project took priority (the failure of the Murray Meadow Bridge over the winter forced a change in trail priorities). Upgrades will be considered for 2014 should there be adequate funds, but the priority will be to finish the Kwai/Battleship trail first.

**Arnica Lake** – The human waste issue continues. While Rangers did manage to locate what they thought was a new site for the z-best toilet, subsequent storm conditions confirmed the site is inadequate. Either a new site must be found, or a different solution explored, i.e. fly-out; new type of alpine composter (haven't found one yet that would work). Repairs to some of the tent pads and a bridge replacement are still required. We will continue to look for adequate PRV (maintenance) budget to address these issues.

**Gold Lake Access** – The logging road leading to the eastern access trail to Gold Lake is getting very rough and needing 4x4 or at least trucks. Most vehicles will not be able to access the last 1.5 km. Trail itself has many blow-downs and some so large it requires detouring around. It is still possible to hike the trail, but there is work that needs to be done. With what appears to be low use, the question is how much of budget are we wishing to allocate to the maintenance of this trail?

**Oshinow/Toy/Junior/June Lakes** – while main logging access road is in good shape from Great Central Lake, the road into Oshinow, is slowly getting overgrown. The road surface is still OK. Campsite is being utilized at lake and as usual fire rings are being consistently built. No official pit toilet has been established but an unofficial one has been placed in the bush.

**Croteau Lake Group Site** – Nothing new to report at this time. While SPPAC has already supported the concept of this site, to move this project ahead will require the completion of a Level 1 impact assessment and if required a Level 2 assessment. Once assessments are complete and can confirm appropriateness a detailed site plan needs to be developed, costs/budget identified, funds procured and finally the plan implemented.

**Plateau Km Signage** – approximately 25 new km signs were installed on the plateau during 2013 replacing those that were delaminating. A new "diamond" technology is being tried which imbeds the lettering into the sign so there can be no delaminating or fading and also due to an anti-graffiti coating, lexan covers are not required. While double the cost (\$60 vs \$30) this could

**FINAL MINUTES OF  
STRATHCONA PARK PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
(Jan. 24, 2014 – BC Parks Office, Miracle Beach – Black Creek)**

eliminate the need to replace these signs approximately every 4 years. We plan on replacing more signs in 2014.

**Upper Myra Falls Trail Boardwalk** – Damage boardwalk due to windfall required a partial rebuild and was completed in late June 2013. More upgrades, including view point, have been identified when future maintenance funds (PRV) are confirmed.

**Della Falls Trailhead** – The Port Alberni Search and Rescue, lead by our own SPPAC member Darren Saare donated their time and expertise to complete some trailhead maintenance over a two day period in July 2013. Work included, windfall removal, brushing, painting and removal of rotten facilities. Their efforts were greatly appreciated and they have indicated that they would be interested in potentially helping out again in 2014.

As windfalls need to be cleared on the Love Lake trail and some brush and bridge work elsewhere, maintenance funding has been requested for 2014.

**Donner/Kunlin Lakes** – Both lakes were accessed by Rangers in July by ATV. Old roads are quite bad and narrowing with Alders. While there are still signs of use at Kunlin, it is low. There has been a slide which now blocks the old road/trail up to the Ucona Falls and rather than walk, people have cut an unauthorized ATV trail through the forest to get around. As usual there were several fire rings which were cleaned up.

The road to Donner is in real rough shape (not advisable for anything other than an ATV). A small row boat and an old canoe were found at the lake in July 2013. While these could be considered abandoned, a decision was made to leave them at this time due to logistics in removal. At some point in the future the entire lake will need to be explored to identify potential marine campsites, at which time more discussion can take place to reconfirm the Master Plan direction. Part of this discussion must involve whether to re-establish road access into these lakes.

**7) Strathcona Park Wilderness Centre water damage**

The repairs required from damage through basement flooding were completed in October. BC Parks covered all costs.

**8) Park Enhancement Funds (PEF)** – SWI was granted \$3300 to support their program. Their season was successful, servicing visitors 7 days/week and utilizing volunteers to operate both Buttle and Paradise Meadows information buildings. SWI held a Volunteer recognition evening in October.

Friends of Strathcona were granted \$2500 in support of the new “No Fire” sign initiative. Carol Hunter has been leading this project and has met with Andy Smith and Erica McClaren (Conservation Specialist) to strategize. Carol has also met with youth as well as VUI students to get their assistance in designing some new draft signs. Ideas will be presented to Andy and Erica and perhaps shared with SPPAC if they would like to provide input as well. Project must be completed by mid March 2014.

Volunteer Park Warden Program – Carol Hunter has also prepared a draft proposal to resurrect a volunteer warden/trail host program in Strathcona. The program would have trained volunteers (done through annual orientation) “observing and reporting” on trail and facility conditions, issues and enforcement problems. Volunteers would not be involved in enforcement, but when appropriate and comfortable, provide information/awareness concerning Leave No Trace ethics and park regulations. Such a program was provided in the past but dropped many years ago due to the lack of staff and financial resources to coordinate and deliver appropriately. Andy Smith and Erica McLaren of BC Parks met with Carol on December 9<sup>th</sup> to discuss the proposal further. While there is support for the concept, further internal discussions are required with the Regional Director and Section Head to confirm their support (some commitment of time and resources is inevitable). If initial support is confirmed, then further discussions are required to start working out details of implementation. As the proposal identified that the program be coordinated by a 3 or 4 person working group/committee, Andy suggested that Carol talk to some potential candidates to see if they would like to commit to developing and implementing this volunteer program over the next couple of years.

**FINAL MINUTES OF  
STRATHCONA PARK PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
(Jan. 24, 2014 – BC Parks Office, Miracle Beach – Black Creek)**

**9) Volunteer Coordination Services**

At the October 4<sup>th</sup> Strathcona Park Public Advisory Committee meeting, the new Provincial Volunteer Program was discussed. The program has been completely reviewed and updated in consultation with volunteers all over the province. Much has been accomplished over the last year starting with the creation of a new Provincial Community Engagement Specialist position, who then coordinated and hosted volunteer input workshops throughout the province. A broad provincial working group was formed to review all the public input which lead to prioritizing the changes and work required to develop the new Volunteer Program. One of the long awaited results, accomplished after many meetings with our Risk Management Division, was a new insurance program for volunteers and changes to what Volunteers are now allowed to do, i.e. use of power tools. In order to improve the overall process and get the support needed to accomplish these and future changes, it was necessary to develop new Volunteer Agreements for both individuals and official groups. There was also a great need to create consistencies throughout the province and therefore every region has agreed to work with existing volunteers and organizations to review old agreements and update them into the new provincial standard agreements. It is the Provincial goal to have all such agreements completed by the Spring of 2014.

Between now and next Spring, meetings with designated representatives of all groups will be scheduled to discuss and develop new long term agreements.

As a resource to help both, volunteer groups as well as BC Parks, Area Supervisor, Andy Smith has submitted a proposal to the Regional Director and Victoria staff, to potentially contract out volunteer coordination services through displaced/laid off seasonal staff (they would not/could not be employees at this time). Currently awaiting for approval/rejection at this time.