

Friends of Strathcona Park Newsletter - Summer 2020

Box 3404, Courtenay, B.C. V9N 5N5
www.friendsofstrathcona.org

FOSP AGM

Due to the Covid pandemic we postponed our AGM which is usually held around the end of June. This year we propose holding it on September 12, 2020 with some changes due to Covid. There are two plans, one for a face to face meeting and the other a Zoom backup.

Because of the unusual circumstances this year we are asking people to pre register. If the weather co-operates the AGM will be held from 3 to 5 p.m. at Jennifer and Jack Welsh's place at 3164 Hellicar Road in Merville. It will be outside in a lovely shady field with physical distances kept in mind. There is enough room to easily accommodate the numbers we've had in the past. We will have a port a potty, hand sanitizer and the like available. Participants are asked to bring their own chairs and if they'd like to stay for a meal afterwards, their own food, dishes, utensils, and drinks. In other words you are asked to be totally self contained. There will be no barbequed salmon this year.

If the weather doesn't co-operate or we can't hold the meeting due to a second wave of Covid, we will move to Plan B, a Zoom meeting to be held a week or two later. We will email those who have registered and give them the information they need for the Zoom meeting. We hope this is not necessary, but we need to have a contingency plan just in case.

If coming to the Sept. 12 AGM from the Courtenay direction proceed out Headquarters Road past Smith Road and Tsolum River Road to the next left which is Hellicar. The AGM is near the end of the road on the right, look for a sign. Coming from the north turn right at the Merville Store onto Merville Road. Carry on for a few kilometres and turn left onto Headquarters Road, Hellicar is a few km along on the right. Follow directions as above and we'll see you at the meeting.

Because of the Covid situation the Friends have been somewhat inactive the last 6 months. We did have a public meeting planned with participation from Nicole Pesonen, Environmental Superintendent of

Nyrstar Mine arranged. This has been postponed to some future date. We hope to get this going again and will let you know.

SPPAC

A Strathcona Park Public Advisory Committee Meeting was held through Zoom on July 9th to discuss a proposal being made by Bill Floyd who is a hydrologist with the Ministry of Forests to install a weather station somewhere in Strathcona Park. The Wilderness Conservation zoning does not allow any sort of man made infrastructure, neither trail, toilet facility, nor anything else. After discussion SPPAC voted 5 to 3 not to allow this to be constructed. Since then this proposal has been amended to leave out the Wilderness Conservation zone locations and leave one possible location in the Wilderness Recreation zone. This advice now goes to the Regional Manager in Nanaimo, Don Cadden, for a decision. FOSP hopes this is turned down.

Again, due to Covid, there has been no opportunity for SPPAC to meet and discuss park issues.

Parks Update

Again we have to thank Andy Smith for sharing his information with the Friends. He has given us quite a lot of information which we have summarized here.

Because of Covid Strathcona was closed for a while, then gradually reopened - day use on May 14th, camping June 1st and group sites July 18th.

B.C. Parks received their budget for the year in July. It was slightly reduced from last year and better than expected. As an aside, not from Andy, the City of Vancouver's parks budget is \$136 million for 2020 and B.C. Parks budget for the entire province is only \$40.6 million for the same time period. Vancouver spends over 3.3 times as much on parks as the Provincial Government. FOSP thinks that is shameful and should be fixed especially considering studies show a dollar spent on Provincial Parks benefits the economy ten fold.

There have been some delays in using staff due to the pandemic, but things seem to be returning to normal