

January Boot Tales Director's Update

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Contact

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Extreme "King" tides over the last little while, bringing the largest tidal range of any point of the year. I hope everyone had a peaceful holiday season. A special thanks to Mary Degan, Lisa Humphries and their crew of volunteers who put on the community dinner at the Hall on the 25th that is such an important tradition here in the Creek.

Local SCRD Parks Update

Dakota Ridge should have been open for a while by the time you read this. Staff and volunteers have been working hard on culverts and other projects to extend the season through varied snow conditions. The sledding hill has received some attention as well. I hope you have the chance to make use of this great community asset over the winter. Updates on conditions can be found by checking the SCRD Dakota Ridge Facebook site. Note that you don't have to be "on" Facebook to see the site and access the information.

Winter storms are always a challenge in terms of park maintenance. Last month, in **Cliff Gilker Park**, a large tree fell on the only metal bridge in the park. The bridge was originally long-lined in by helicopter, and will likely be extricated for repair that way when conditions allow for it to happen safely. In the meantime, signage will help you navigate around the temporary trail closure.

After public feedback, **locally produced wooden picnic tables will be installed at the Roberts Creek Pier Park**. While the recycled plastic tables had longer projected life cycles and less associated maintenance cost than other options, many felt that they were not in tune with the natural and spiritual aspects at the Mouth of the Creek. The recycled tables will be used in other parks in the area. Upgrades in the garbage and recycling facilities at the pier will take place over the winter as well.

The SCRD holds some **land behind Roberts Creek Hall** within its Parks function. As part of the recent OCP Review Process, and also the 2007 Trail Network Plan, public input was sought around possible future uses. Ideas from past surveys have included affordable housing, accessible trails, farmer's market infrastructure, a playground, more parking for the Hall, and leaving the green space as it is.

As some of these options were considered more carefully, there was a realization that vehicle access to the site is limited by its location and topography. This is particularly true since safety at the corner of Roberts Creek Rd and the Highway is a priority. It was felt that a better understanding of those constraints was required before further exploring the opportunities presented. To that end, **staff have commissioned an engineering report** with regards to access options and other development considerations. Any decisions around the property would include wide public engagement, and involve both the Roberts Creek Community Association and the Masons, who collaborate to maximize the opportunities presented in both halls on that corner.

In addition, this winter parks staff will be **installing signs at some of the Beach Accesses** along the Sunshine Coast, including in Roberts Creek. The signs will be similar to the ones seen in Sechelt and Powell River. While those of us who have been around for a while have our favourite beachfront spots, it is often

should be noted that the Regional District does not hold permits on all waterfront road allowances in Roberts Creek, so while all road ends allow for statutory public shoreline access, trails, stairs or signs can only be built for the ones under permit. Locations for the signs will be decided in conjunction with the Roberts Creek Official Community Plan Committee.

Finally, a reminder of the request for the **owners of boats stored at Henderson Beach** to please move them by January 31, so that community volunteers can address the knotweed. More info on that project, including a contact email address, can be found in last month's newsletter, available online at robertscreekmark.com.

Upcoming Bylaw Public Hearings

There are two Bylaws headed towards Public Hearing this winter that impact Roberts Creek.

The first is an amendment of our Official Community Plan to **update our geotechnical Development Permit Areas** in places like creeks, slopes, ravines and shorelines. Among other things, the Bylaw incorporates what is now the provincial planning standard of a potential 1-meter rise in sea levels per 100 years. More information, and the proposed Amendment itself can be found at <http://www.scrd.ca/Geotechnical-Updates>

Halfmoon Bay, Elphinstone, West Howe Sound, and Pender Harbour are all at similar stages in the geotechnical DPA update process. A Public Hearing has been tentatively scheduled for Feb 16, 7PM at the Gibsons Community Center, but notices in the newspaper and on the SCR D website will confirm that.

The second Bylaw is with regards to **establishing a new "A" zoning that would apply to lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve**. Currently most of those lands are zoned 'RU3', but since Provincial ALR regulations often supersede local zoning, it was felt that a zoning designation more in line with those regulations would clarify land use options and better facilitate viable food growing operations on the coast. A staff report and the proposed Bylaw can be found in this agenda, on page 23: http://www.scrd.ca/files/File/Administration/Agendas/2015/2015-Dec-10_PDC_Agenda_Package.pdf
The Public Hearing for that Bylaw is tentatively scheduled for Feb 17, 7PM at the SCR D Field Rd offices.

Both proposed Bylaws have been reviewed by the Roberts Creek Advisory Planning Committee, the Official Community Plan Committee, and in the case of the "A" Zone, the SCR D Agricultural Advisory Committee.

On a related note, the Planning Department work plan for next year includes **reviewing our broad zoning Bylaw (#310) with regards to agricultural uses on non-ALR lands**, where most of us live. This is a further opportunity to advance both our Official Community Plan and the 2014 Agricultural Area Plan, while at the same time balancing the needs of other land uses. This is sure to involve around things like chickens, water supply, soil quality, greenhouses, animal waste, and more. All in the name of delicious, healthy, sustainable, footprint- shrinking local food production. Stay tuned for opportunities to participate in those discussions.

Save the Date, Sunday Feb 21

As a professional environmental educator, it has been interesting to watch the mainstream language around our relationship with the planet move from "don't pollute" through "environmentalism", "sustainability" and now "resilience". Resilience speaks of our ability to adapt in the face of change, and the pace of change is clearly speeding up.

One aspect of that is **our ability to adapt as a community in the event of an unexpected occurrence** such as a wildfire, an earthquake, marine incident or other event where Roberts Creekers will be reliant on each other for short and medium term help. Sometimes this is called Emergency Preparedness, but it is broader than that. Some would call it community capacity building.

To this end I am working with several partners to facilitate **a half-day event on the morning of**

household preparedness, neighbourhood collaboration, “Fire Smarting” your rural property, supporting vulnerable community members, and the psychological aspects of an event. Further goals include a summative mailout, and the identification of areas of community interest for further follow-up. More information will follow next month, but **at this point, just mark the date on your calendar**. We’ll wrap up that day by having a lunch together. Hope you can make it.

Happy New Year, everyone.