

Macdonald Wood Park Society



volunteer stewards of Macdonald Wood Park

Balmoral Ave & Croteau Rd, Town of Comox

MWPS@shaw.ca

PLEASE HELP US SAVE A BEACH AND A PARK SYSTEM

We all treasure our waterfront parks and beach accesses and want them protected. And there was no reason to think the beach access at Macdonald Wood Park at the end of Croteau Road was in danger -- but it is.

On October 5, 2015 the residents of Croteau Beach received a letter from the Regional District Sewage Commission stating that they are proposing to “stop up and close” the road right of way - the beach access - for a forcemain pump station which would move tons of sewage through an environmentally sensitive wetland and over First Nations middens. Habitat would be endangered, trees would be lost to an industrial site. The structure they are proposing is 3500 sq ft and at least three storeys in height. The footprint this requires is so large that access to the beach would be severely compromised, possibly eliminated, not to mention noise and odour.

This unopened road right of way is heavily used by the public as an extension of Macdonald Wood Park. It is the only public and open access to Croteau Beach and the Rotary boardwalk. Signage points out the archaeological First Nations midden running through the lower part of the park. This Croteau Beach access was identified in a CVRD Beach Access Survey in 2011 as one of the most frequented Beach Accesses in the CVRD!

The Croteau/Macdonald Wood Park access did not appear on the list of twenty recommended sites compiled by Heuristics Consulting Associates for the Sewage Commission. It seems questionable to hire experts and then completely ignore their recommendations. In such circumstances, reasons for a choice should be made available to the public, as well as the qualifications of those who made the choice, particularly when an already industrially zoned site, Pump Station No. 1, was identified as the consultant’s first choice.

The Croteau Beach/Park access is much loved for its quiet and natural setting as a beach access for pedestrian and recreation activities. The Ministry of Transportation’s *“Policy on Closure of Actively Used Rights of Ways That Provide Access to Water”* states:

“It is the goal of the Ministry to ensure that all public access to water is preserved and dealt with consistently across the province. To that end, rights of way under the Ministry’s jurisdiction which provide public access to water are to be retained and managed with both present and future public use in mind.”

The CVRD may promise future access to be re-established but basic building size requirements and limited property dimensions would restrict the type and width of access, if there is any access at all. We would ask that any current or upcoming CVRD application to close up and take ownership of the Ministry of Transportation portion of the right of way be rejected outright, based on the Policy quoted above.

If you care, if you value the ambience of this waterfront access and the twenty-acre park system and you do not want it at risk, you can help. Please contact any or all of the people listed below. Macdonald Wood Park Society feels that the destruction of this public beach access should not be an option.

Ministry of Transportation (they can deny closing beach access):

Brendan Kelly 250-334-6967 Brendan.Kelly@gov.bc.ca

Sewage Commission (they made this choice):

Manno Theos	250-703-0463	mtheos@courtenay.ca
Bob Wells	250-792-1945	bwells@courtenay.ca
Erik Eriksson	250-334-3306	eeriksson@courtenay.ca
Maureen Swift	250-339-1211	mswift@comox.ca
Barbara Price	250-339-4037	bprice@comox.ca
Ken Grant	250-287-1797	kgrant@comox.ca
Major Trevor Fenton	250-339-8211 #8258	Trevor.Fenton@forces.gc.ca

Regional District Senior Engineer

Marc Rutten 250-334-6000 mrutten@comoxvalleyrd.ca

Regional District Area B Director

Rod Nichol 250-898-8873 rodnichol@shaw.ca

Please consider also contacting the Mayor and Councillors of Comox and let them know how you feel about the proposed location of a sewage pumping station.

Facebook Page: [Stop the Macdonald Wood Park Pump Station](#)