



Sunshine Coast Conservation Association

Newsletter Volume 1, Issue 1 (revised)

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SCCA Launches Major Initiative to Protect Biodiversity

by Daniel Bouman

As most members are by now well aware, the SCCA has launched a major challenge to forest policy in British Columbia in the form of a complaint to the Forest Practices Board. This complaint names 128 cutblocks in Interfor's current Forest Development Plan as evidence that old growth and sensitive wildlife habitat are being deliberately targeted for logging. In May, we received word that the Forest Practices Board has accepted our Complaint in its entirety and that it will be fully investigated.

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Sechelt Inlet Trail Planned

by John Dafoe

The SCCA is spearheading the planning of a major hiking trail for the Sechelt Peninsula that will allow hikers to traverse the inlet from Sechelt to Egmont. It will provide an accessible hiking route on the unroaded, wilderness side of the Sechelt Peninsula where excellent camping and picnicking opportunities are available in secluded inlet settings that feature mountain and sea views. As conceived, the trail will become a popular attraction for outdoor enthusiasts and dramatically benefit the tourism infrastructure of the Sunshine Coast. It will also provide valuable work experience to those involved in its construction.

The Sechelt Inlet Trail Committee (John Dafoe, chair, Edmond Butler, Dan Bouman, John Field, Elise Rudland, and Michel Frenette) is slowly proceeding with route planning and development as the Ministry of Forests' permit process and financial resources allow. A small group of volunteers is reviving a trail plan that was first set forward in the Inlet Seaside Corridors proposal of 1994.

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Spiipiyus Park Highlands-Caren Range

Mavis Jones (c) 1993

Angus Creek Report

by Gertrude Pacific, Monitor
SPAWN TO BE WILD

On May 5, 1998, The Terraces, a large development planned for the area north of Porpoise Bay Provincial Park, suddenly revealed in their final draft Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) that they were planning to take water from Angus Creek to irrigate their 18 hole golf course instead of using reclaimed residential gray water as they had previously stated for years. Those of us looking into this realized that the water in that lovely creek, whose spawning estuary flows through Porpoise Bay Provincial Park, is so low during the

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Halfmoon Bay Greenways

by Elise Rudland

HMB Greenways is a group of volunteers who have been creating trails in cooperation with the Ministry of Forests so that the communities on Curran Rd., Truman Rd., Brooks Rd. and Secret Cove can be linked to each other through Crown Lands. The trails will also link to Homesite Creek Falls and the Pender bike path system.

Presently, three 45-minute hikes have been completed: the Breadner Loop, the Curran Connector and the Homesite Creek Circle Trail. The Breadner Loop and Curran Connector cross Brooks Rd. at the infamous Homesite Creek cut block. A lookout onto the Westcan beaver marsh is planned for completion in June, and signage for all trails will soon be placed at the trailheads. Anyone wishing information about how to become a volunteer or how to get onto the trails and what to look out for should contact Elise at 885-4642. "



Marbled Murrelets

Marbled Murrelet National Recovery Team

by Sean Cullen

Several representatives of the SCCA attended the Conservation Science Forum & Workshop on Marbled Murrelets, one of our local endangered species, in March at the Institute of Ocean Sciences in Sidney, BC. The first day of activities focused on sharing information about Marbled Murrelet research and government conservation policy. SCCA member Paul Jones spoke passionately about Marbled Murrelet conservation on the Sunshine Coast and suggested that the role of the forest industry on the Recovery Team be reassessed.

The presentations also included an assessment of the conservation options for Murrelets in the Sunshine Coast Forest District by Toby Jones of the BC Conservation Foundation and Irene Manley. Their study pointed out the general failings of current management strategies.

On day two, the participants broke into working groups to develop action plans for Marbled Murrelet habitat, population habitat, field methodologies, and management and protection tools. A summary of the proceedings will be made available and announced on the SCCA web page. "

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Initiative to Protect Biodiversity

Several of the directors of the SCCA have been studying the changes in forest policy for years now and become very alarmed that current policy appears to be circumventing the letter and intent of the *Forest Act* and the *Forest Practices Code of British Columbia Act*.

The original **Biodiversity Guide Book** and Landscape Level planning provisions of the **Forest Practices Code** required minimum percentages of the landscape to be maintained in old growth condition. As well, critical and sensitive habitats were to be identified and protected in Wildlife Habitat Areas (WHA), integrated into Old Growth Management Areas (OGMA), and Forest Ecosystem Networks (FEN). Most of the candidate areas for these designations were identified and mapped by specialists in the Fish and Wildlife Branch of the Ministry of the Environment.

This approach to biodiversity is considered to be the absolute minimum necessary to maintain ecosystem function and dependent wildlife. Unfortunately, these sections of the **Forest Practices Code** have never been

implemented. We are now seeing massive numbers of cutting approvals in these candidate areas. This is an obvious effort to liquidate timber from areas before they would be subject to restraint under a fully implemented **Forest Practices Code**. If this situation is allowed to continue the impacts on Marbled Murrelets and Mountain Goats will be severe. As well, all low elevation old growth will be wiped out.

While the situation looks dire, there is good reason for hope. No government can stand before the public and justify this degree of looting. I am very confident that public awareness and pressure will motivate changes in government policy. We need to create that level of awareness and pressure soon! There is a strategy underway now to get media attention at the provincial level and we are speaking with many members of government, including our MLA Gordon Wilson. If you would like to be a part of this strategy, call 604-740-6531 to volunteer for the campaign. If we work together, major changes are probable. The full text of the complaint is now available at the SCCA's web site at: www.user.dccnet.com/welcomewoods/scca.htm. "

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Angus Creek Report

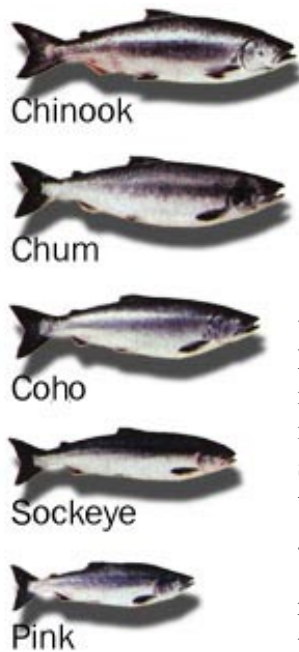
summer months that, even to our non-rocket scientist eyes, its water levels would not support salmon rearing and golf course irrigation at the same time.

When we called the salmonid studies instructor at Capilano College about records of historical water volumes on Angus and Shannon Creeks, we were told that “there was no information on either creek”. With no data, we began to doubt that any government agency would have the information needed to protect salmon habitat in Angus Creek. However, we realized that we might have one or two years to begin the job of providing baseline information before a decision would be made. So, six local residents formed **SPAWN TO BE WILD** to gather data. We feel very lucky that John Termuende, of Termuende Hydrological in Gibsons, became our mentor, teaching us the rudiments of stream surveying, measuring and monitoring. BCParks allowed us to install a homemade staff gauge in the creek, and we began, in June 1998, to monitor water levels (and thus volume) every day.

On June 27, 1999, the Department of Oceans and Fisheries (DFO) applied for a water license for fish conservation for Angus Creek. We have encouraged this application with many letters to the Ministry of Environment (MoE), and garnered support from more established conservation and advocate organizations as well. MoE in Victoria has replied that a determination on the water license will be made by this July.

Last summer, in addition to our scientific and lobbying work, we turned to community cultural activities by working with the enthusiastic teachers and students of Sechelt’s Ecole Du Pacifique, who were already familiar with salmonid issues from years of working with eggs and alevins in the classroom. After weeks of preparation in salmon puppet making and bilingual song practice, we all welcomed the fish home with a Salmon Serenade at the side of Angus Creek one stormy November day.

Now, almost two years since we became involved with Angus Creek, we have obtained a Research Permit from BCParks to install a high tech Field Station to monitor the water volume electronically. The equipment, which was donated by John Termuende, and housed in a pipe donated



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Sechelt Inlet Trail Planned

This proposal’s concept was “a way of thinking about the inlets as an interconnected land and seascape that requires a comprehensive, integrated planning process”. Rather than a traditional “protected area, the Inland Seaside Corridors concept recognized a place for “ecologically based forestry practices”.

Despite overwhelming support for the trail within the community and enthusiastic offers of help to work on the trail, we, so far, have not been able to obtain a trail permit from the Ministry of Forests. Conditions imposed by the District Manager since the permit was applied for in June of last year are still causing delays.

Logging permits are being issued despite environmental and stakeholder concerns, while projects like the Sechelt Inlet Trail are unable to obtain a permit because of networking by the forest industry. The fox is running the henhouse in the Sunshine Coast Forest District.

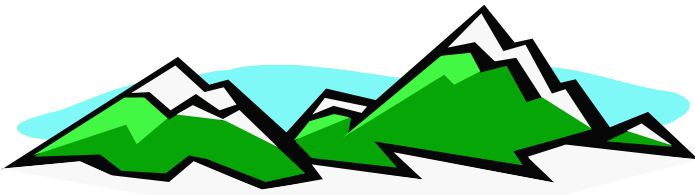
With the implementation of the Forest Practices Code in 1995, the public was told that values like biodiversity and recreation would be protected under the Biodiversity Guidelines and a Landscape Unit Planning process. However, the Code was never fully implemented, leaving out those critical Biodiversity Guidelines, and Landscape Unit Planning for this district has been consistently postponed over the years and now we have learned that it has been indefinitely postponed!

In August 1999, the Forest Practices Board agreed to investigate our complaint concerning old growth retention on the Sechelt Peninsula and the problems we were having with planning the Sechelt Inlet Trail. The Forest Practices Board has inspired recognition of the Trail in logging plans and initiated a dialogue that is now ongoing with license holder, Terminal Forest Products. To date, small gains have been made for biodiversity, recreation and trail planning, as compared with significant ongoing logging.

Terminal Forest Products should be credited for recognizing the trail in its logging plans and altering those plans to accommodate its existence as they plan their cutblocks. The Sechelt Inlet Trail Committee and Terminal Forest Products are in a process that hopefully will solve some of the concerns for both user groups. In time, it is hoped that biodiversity and recreation will be able to coexist with logging on the peninsula.

The Sechelt Inlet Trail Committee needs a permit from the Ministry of Forests to proceed. Please add your voice to help with this permit by contacting the District Manager, Greg Hemphill and our MLA, Gordon Wilson at the addresses listed on the back page.

Please take advantage of the SCCA’s Charitable Status and make a tax-deductible donation. “



Friends of Homesite Creek Have Cause to Celebrate!

by Panos Grames

News of the completion of the long awaited negotiations between Ministry of Forests officials and T&T Trucking was received June 5th, 2000. Under the terms of the agreement, T&T Trucking will remove the timber felled in 1998, decommission the roads and re-establish the trail system. The spur road that was started will be replanted this season. Fortunately, only a small portion of the road right of way was cut, and this incredible ecosystem remains intact.

Friends of Homesite Creek would like to thank all the people who helped in so many ways to bring this to a resolution. The community was firm in its stand and Friends of Homesite Creek was bolstered by the increasing support throughout the process. As Alda Grames says, "Whenever help was needed, the right person would appear and help out in their own unique way. We really want to thank every one of them."

The next step is to ensure that this site receives protected status. It is one of the few easily accessible areas of crown land on the Sunshine Coast that is not slated for cutting. Anyone who would like to walk through one of the many trails here, or help with the process of achieving protected status, is encouraged to call Friends of Homesite Creek at 885-3948! "

One Straw Update

by Robin Wheeler

One Straw is the Sunshine Coast's organic growers group. We serve as a network for new and experienced gardeners who want to share seeds, tips or tubers.

We have a library of books and videos for all stages of growth (yours) and a newsletter to keep us all up to date on local and international bits of lore and news.

Watch the newspapers for the workshops and video nights that will be coming up in the fall. A sample newsletter can be e-mailed to you by contacting Robin at 885-4505 or via email at oss_vol@uniserve.com. For further information e-mail one_straw@sunshine.net. "

Hello, Other Coast Earth Watchers

by Robin Wheeler

ONE STRAW

It seems to me that the Sunshine Coast Conservation Association could do a great job for all of us if they (all of us) had some idea of what each one of our groups were up to. I'm suggesting that each group should contribute an article to the SCCA Newsletter each issue, talking briefly about new events or high points, or places that require the attention of other members, such as where to find new petition sheets or how to help with a fundraiser.

The SCCA has huge potential for a large number of interested parties to finally meet, network, and exchange information and expertise. This will only work if we get involved.

These articles could be relatively painless and would be of great benefit to each group (i.e. "we can't cooperate with your needs if we don't know what you're doing"). I hope this plan takes off, and that we take advantage of this opportunity to communicate with each other. "

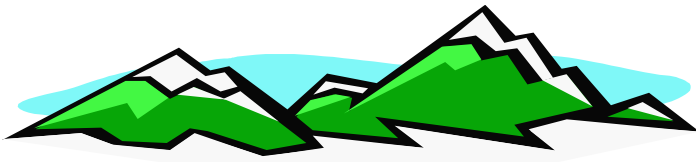
Ruby Lake Wood Ducks

When Aldo Cogrossi, owner of Ruby Lake Resort, came from northern Italy seven years ago, he brought his love for animals and the natural world with him. Ruby Lake Resort is located near prime habitat for the beautiful, rare Wood Duck. This species is on BC's endangered list and is in serious decline across North America. Ruby Lake is home to 81 other bird and diving and dabbling duck species. In the last few years Aldo has increased the Wood Duck population 19 fold, from 2 to 38, by building and placing nesting boxes.



To celebrate and teach about wood ducks, our environment and wildlife in general, Aldo together with Brigit Garrett hosted their First Wood Duck Wilderness Festival at Ruby Lake Resort on May 7th. The event included slide shows, guest speakers (Paul George of the Western Canada Wilderness Committee and a locally renowned birder, Tony Greenfield), guided hikes, vendor booths, information tables, nesting house displays, a children's craft table, Celtic music and an authentic Northern Italy lunch.

Information about next year's event can be obtained by submitting an email to Aldo and Brigit at: taktous@rubylakeresort.com. "



About the SCCA

by Brad Benson

The SCCA coordinates conservation and environmental interests for the Sunshine Coast, from Howe Sound to Jervis Inlet. The SCCA's official Purpose is fully stated in the Application for Membership section on the back page, however, overall it is to preserve the natural biodiversity of the Sunshine Coast region for the present and future benefit of humanity and all life.

Though it has taken years to put together this 'umbrella' organization, it is still in its formative stages. We have barely begun with two major projects recently initiated under the SCCA umbrella: the Sechelt Inlet Trail and the Forest Practices Board Complaint (see stories on page 1). We have also endorsed a motion to protect all locally important sites and streams designated by Land for Nature, an initiative of the Federation of BC Naturalists. And now, add to that the introduction of this newsletter.

Protection of the regional environment of the Sunshine Coast has been very active over the last decade with literally dozens of organizations springing to life as individual issues required. However, with the formation of the SCCA, we are now in a much better position to act together in concert, whether that be in the initiation of regional campaigns, working to raise the awareness of member

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Angus Creek Report

by the Salmon Enhancement Society, covered in paint donated by BCParks, and constructed by our volunteer monitors, is installed and working. The downloaded information is slated for posting on the Internet at the Save Our Fish website: <http://www.watch.org>. Our information gathered from daily monitoring proves that there is not enough water to support an irrigation diversion and salmon habitat, particularly in the warm months of low flow.

If you would like to help the Angus Creek Salmon, and take action by writing a short letter – longhand might be novel – to MoE Minister Joan Sawicki (see **Contacts**, on back page) asking her to preserve spawning and rearing habitat in Angus Creek. Since the MoE will decide what to do in July, please act now! "

issues, fundraising -- we now have tax deductible status, or staging workshops and conferences to increase the awareness of issues of concern.

A major future initiative of the SCCA will be its involvement in the long overdue LRMP (Land and Resources Management Plan). This process will allow public involvement in land use planning on our local crown lands so we can work toward the integration of timber harvesting and the conservation of our regional biodiversity.

The SCCA's educational activities over the past year include:

1. **Panel on Treaty Negotiations** – Its relevance to conservation issues. Co-sponsored with the Sechelt First Nation through Local Advisory chair, Iris Griffith.
2. **What on Earth are Toxic Chemicals Doing To Us?** - A presentation by Miranda of Toxic, Ink.
3. **Conservation Advocacy Skills Workshop** - Co-sponsored with BC Watershed Alliance.
4. **Green Issues Forum** – an all-candidates meeting focusing on environmental issues.
5. **Heritage Seed Day** – Workshop on organic seed preservation and propagation. Co-sponsored with One Straw Society.
6. **Fish Habitat Protection Advocacy Workshop** – Co-sponsored with West Coast Environmental Law. "



Narrows Inlet

Newsletter of the Sunshine Coast Conservation Association

Newsletter Editor: Brad Benson

Articles & photos may be submitted by sending them to Brad Benson at bjbenson@sunshine.net or faxed to 886-0069.

Thanks to all those who have contributed to this publication.

Contact Numbers for Letters of Support:

Inquiry BC

Call this toll free 1-800 number and you will be connected by telephone or fax to any individual or department of the BC government: **1-800-663-7867**

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Member Organizations:

BC Spaces for Nature	One Straw Society
Elphinstone Living Forest	Pender Harbour and District
Francis Point Marine Park Society	Wildlife Society
Friends of Caren	Sargent Bay Society
Friends of Homesite Creek	Sechelt Inlet Heritage Trails Club
Gambier Island Conservancy	Spawn to Be Wild
Halfmoon Bay Greenways	Sunshine Coast Greenways
Native Plant Society of BC,	Sunshine Coast Heritage Society
Sunshine Coast Chapter	Sunshine Coast Natural History Society
	Tetrahedron Alliance
	Tuwanek Ratepayers Association
	Water First Committee

Sunshine Coast Conservation Association

Box 1969, Sechelt, B.C. V0N 3A0

PURPOSE: The purpose of the Sunshine Coast Conservation Association is to preserve the natural biodiversity of the Sunshine Coast Region for the present and future benefit of humanity and all life; specifically to:

1. Conduct research to inventory and describe our remaining natural areas with the goal of identifying land and waters important for the preservation of biodiversity. All information collected will be freely available to the public.
2. Work to retain such lands and waters in a natural state and make them available for the public enjoyment where possible.
3. Raise public environmental and conservation awareness by sponsoring educational programs and workshops and by building access infrastructure for low impact recreation."

Our constitution requires that Membership in the SCCA is conditional upon acceptance of the Purpose of the SCCA stated above.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP OR RENEWAL

Name: _____

Mailing address: _____

Phone: _____

Fax number: _____

E-mail address: _____

Web site: _____

\$10 - Group Membership

• SCCA Representative/Contact: _____

• Alternate: _____

\$10 - Affiliate Membership (Individuals)

\$_____ Donation

I accept the purpose of the SCCA: Signature: _____

Receipts for Income Tax purposes will be issued for donations