

July 5, 2011

Baikie Island restoration project final phase set to begin

The City of Campbell River is pleased to announce that the final phase of restoration work at the Baikie Island Nature Reserve will begin in early July and is expected to be complete this fall.

Funding assistance for this project comes from the federal government's Community Works Fund and the BC Hydro Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program.

The contract for the first stage of the restoration, the earthworks, has been awarded to Wacor Holdings Ltd. Contract administrator, Jim VanTine, will guide the process, making sure that the site is suitably prepared for fall planting and to provide habitat components that will support local wildlife. During restoration, the trails along Baikie slough and through Raven Park will remain open for the public to continue to enjoy, but access to the park on Baikie Island will be closed while construction work takes place.

Restoration work to date has included soil improvements, backwater channel and marsh creation and native species planting. The final phase of restoration will focus on the area in the centre of the island and will include the removal of industrial debris and degraded soils and clearing and reshaping of the site, as well as the addition of new soil and planting of native vegetation.

"It has been amazing to watch the transformation of a previously industrialized area into a productive and diverse natural area," says Ross Milnthorp, the City's general manager of parks, recreation and culture. *"The final phase of restoration will complete this transformation, providing important estuary habitat for native species, and an area where community members and visitors can enjoy and appreciate the natural beauty of the Campbell River estuary."*

The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) purchased Baikie Island in 2000 thanks to generous donors and wide-reaching community support. In 2001, the NCC transferred ownership of the property to the City of Campbell River, under a conservation covenant, to be protected and managed as the Baikie Island Nature Reserve. A baseline inventory of the property's biological and physical conditions, a monitoring report and a management plan were prepared by NCC in 2002, and restoration work led by the City of Campbell River began in 2003.

For more information about this project, please call Lynn Wark, Parks Project Supervisor at 250-286-7275.

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Photos: Baikie Island in 1994 and in 2009