

April 26, 2012

City to begin clearing boat ramps

Beginning Monday, Apr. 30, the City will clear winter storm debris from the Big Rock and Ken Forde boat ramps and use the gravel and driftwood for beach restoration.

An estimated 60 truck loads (12 yards per load) of material will be removed from the boat ramps to restore approximately 200 metres of beach between the new lift station on Hwy. 19A and Rockland Road.

“This shoreline area had been filled in and fronted by rip rap, and it sustained extensive damage during the storms in November 2011 and March 2012,” says Ross Milnthorp, the City’s general manager of parks, recreation and culture. *“The seawalk has been undermined in places where the rip rap collapsed, and soil has been washed away. In contrast, the foreshore area directly south has a natural, un-altered beach, and it sustained no damage in this year’s significant winter storms. The restored beach at Ellis Park also stood up well to the powerful wind and waves.”*

Video posted on the City’s YouTube channel demonstrates how restored shorelines at Ellis Park along Hwy 19A weathered the powerful waves during November 2011 storms. The City of Campbell River has also restored marine shore habitat at Dick Murphy Park and Rotary Park. Beaches in these locations were re-contoured using native materials and salvaged plants. The Dick Murphy Park restoration work received a gold level rating from the Green Shores Technical Working Group, a project of the Stewardship Centre for BC.

Timing the work with the tides, the City will clear the Ken Forde ramp April 30 and May 1 and will focus on the Big Rock site later the same week.

Using debris that’s clogging the boat ramps to “nourish starved beaches at key locations” was recommended in the City’s Marine Foreshore Habitat Assessment and Restoration Plan and complies with the Federal Fisheries Act.

“Restoring a natural beach slope in this area will help protect the waterfront better over the long term,” Milnthorp says. *“Softening the shore creates a more gradual slope that absorbs powerful wave energy. This slows erosion and will protect City infrastructure along the shore – roadways, sewer line and the popular Seawalk – from being washed out and undermined.”*

The boat ramp clearing and beach restoration work will cost approximately \$30,000, funded from the Community Works (Federal Gas Tax) Fund, rather than local taxation.

An environmental monitor will supervise the foreshore work, and all equipment working in the vicinity of the foreshore will be equipped with spill kits and use biodiesel / environmentally friendly products.

The City continues to work with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to develop a Memorandum of Understanding to streamline the beach restoration process and enable the City to keep Ken Forde boat ramp open on an ongoing basis.

“Until the Memorandum with DFO is completed the City will not be able to stockpile debris from Ken Forde boat ramp and consequently will only be able to clean out the boat ramp once per year,” Milnthorp says.

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