

June 27, 2011

South Campbell River boat ramps back in service this week

Big Rock and Ken Forde boat ramps will be back in service in time for Canada Day.

The City's boat ramp maintenance is part of a plan to protect eroding park shorelines in compliance with the Federal Fisheries Act.

"The long-term solution for foreshore protection is for us to work with nature and use the material that clogs the ramps to nourish starved beaches at key locations," explains Ross Milnthorp, the City's general manager of parks, recreation and culture. *"Gravel and driftwood that have gathered in the boat ramp areas will be moved to restore the foreshore north of Rotary Park, where winter storms did major damage to the Seawalk."*

By softening the shore in this area, creating a more gradual slope and removing hard shoreline material like rip rap, the City will slow erosion and nourish beaches with the protective material nature brings north with winter storms. This will help prevent City infrastructure along the shore – roadways and the popular Seawalk – from being washed out and undermined.

"Nourishing the beach is a very effective and cost efficient way to protect the shoreline. It looks natural, keeps land from washing into the sea, restores habitat and protects infrastructure," Milnthorp says.

The City is working with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to develop a strategy that identifies priority foreshore locations for future restoration and/or nourishment with material trapped in boat ramps.

"We understand people are eager to get their boats in the water, and the long-term plans we are developing with DFO will help us get the boat ramps open earlier in years to come," Milnthorp adds. *"We appreciate that the community has been patient while we worked with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to ensure that boat ramp maintenance meets acceptable foreshore habitat management regulations."*

Clearing the boat ramps is tide dependent, and preparation work at the Rotary Park site has begun. An environmental monitor will supervise the ramp clearing and 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 of Campbell River previously restored marine shore habitat at Dick Murphy Park, where a badly-eroded shore reinforced with waste materials and contaminants was 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.

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