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## ELECTORAL AREA UPDATE

AREA 'B' | GABRIOLA & SURROUNDING ISLANDS

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### Mudge Island Water Access

Mudge Island residents completed an inventory of public water accesses in 2005 which described all 27 of the



Director Howard Houle

Island's water accesses and made suggestions with respect to possible improvements. In November and December of 2012, residents were asked to review this inventory, complete a survey and help prioritize

potential development opportunities for the RDN to focus on.

The compilation of survey responses is now available on the Electoral Area 'B' Community Parks section of the RDN website. On Saturday, May 25, I will be holding an Open House to discuss the results of the survey. The Open House is scheduled from 1-3pm at Water Access MI-9, located off of Weather Road (where the craft fair is held).

Access to the waterfront is important to Mudge Island residents. The foreshore is used for walking, beachcombing, swimming, bird and wildlife viewing, fishing and boating among other activities.

Public access to the waterfront is provided along road rights-of-way that end at the foreshore. In regional districts the rights-of-way are owned by the Province under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI), however, the Ministry does not actively

manage undeveloped water accesses. Some residents have asked if the RDN can get involved in signing, developing and managing water accesses.

Each Electoral Area within the RDN pays for its own water access "park" development through its community parks budget. Some examples of improvements the RDN has undertaken on water accesses under permit from MOTI include trail development, the installation of stairs, signage, benches, picnic tables and toilets as well as car top boat launches and associated parking areas.

Once we have confirmed the Mudge Island water access priorities with residents, RDN staff will prepare and present a preliminary work plan and cost estimates for the Mudge Island Water Access Improvements to the Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee at its scheduled Nov. 5, 2013 meeting.

*For more information about this process please contact Elaine McCulloch at [emcculloch@rdn.bc.ca](mailto:emcculloch@rdn.bc.ca) or toll free at 1-888-828-2069.*

### Animal Control

Recent incidents in Electoral Area 'B' have raised community concerns that the current bylaw requirements to leash vicious dogs while in public do not go far enough to protect people or other animals against lunging or escaped dogs that have been declared vicious. At the regular meeting held May 22, 2012, the RDN Board directed staff to prepare a report for the Board's consideration

to amend the current Animal Control Regulatory Bylaw to add a requirement for muzzling of dogs that have been declared vicious.

In March 2013 the Board approved an amendment Bylaw for Electoral Areas 'A', 'B' and 'C' that requires dog owners to muzzle any dangerous dog when such a dog is in public. Provincial legislation relating to the regulation of animals has been considerably amended since the RDN's animal control bylaws were adopted in the mid-1990s,



so the amendment Bylaw also updates the bylaw language to align with the *Community Charter*. These updates include replacing the old term "vicious dog" with "dangerous dog" and setting out the powers of the animal control officer with respect

to dangerous dogs, including the power to apply to the provincial court for a destruction order. This authority has replaced the now repealed Livestock Protection Act.

The Board is also implementing similar changes for Electoral Areas 'E', 'F', 'G' and 'H' this spring.

### Camping at Descanso Bay Regional Park

If pitching a tent near the ocean, relaxing, enjoying nature and gazing at long sunsets are on your to-do list this summer, why not accomplish it all right here on Gabriola Island at Descanso Bay Regional Park? Our local RDN-owned campground is the perfect place for a mini-vacation filled with kayaking, swimming, hiking, picnicking and seaside exploring. >

## highlights

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- \* Animal Control
- \* Camping at Descanso Bay Regional Park

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Descanso Bay Regional Park is located at 595 Taylor Bay Road, close to the ferry terminal, and offers 32 campsites on a beautiful 40-acre oceanfront property. The Regional Park is also adjacent to the 113-acre Cox Community Park with its excellent network of trails winding through established forest.

Campsites are \$17 per night from April through September, and just \$10 per night from the beginning of October until the end of March. There is also a non-profit youth group camping rate of \$2.50 per head per night.

Please note that dogs must be on-leash at all times in the Park, including at the campsites.

*For more information about the campground or to make a reservation, call 250-247-8255.*

### Preparing for Wildfire Season

Wildland urban interface is defined as areas where structures and other human development meet with wildland areas containing trees, brushes and grasses. A fire in this type of area is called an interface fire. In the RDN many areas have a medium to high interface fire hazard rating, and in the hot summer months, wildland urban interface fire remains our most significant threat.

In BC, fire records show that the wildfire season has been increasing in length by one to two days a year since at least 1980 (Climate Change and Fire Management Research Strategy, February 2009). Wildland urban interface fire threatens about 20 communities and 70,000 people annually in Canada, and fire management costs about \$700 million a year. As both the area burned by wildfire and the costs associated with fire management continue to rise, local authorities are adapting how to prepare for and adjust to unavoidable climate change and its impacts on the intensity and frequency of wildland urban interface fire.

In the RDN Electoral Areas, Community Wildfire Protection Plans for each fire department's protection area define the risk areas for interface fires; identify ways to reduce risk; and outline ways to improve fire protection and prevention in the interface zone. To view the Community Wildfire Protection Plan for Gabriola Island, visit the Emergency Planning section of the RDN website at [www.rdn.bc.ca](http://www.rdn.bc.ca).

Residents play a key role in protecting public forests and range lands. The RDN encourages anyone who sees potentially harmful smoke or flame, or suspicious fire activity, to report it as soon as possible. Fires can be reported to 1-800-663-5555,

or \*5555 on mobile devices; suspicious and destructive fire activity can be reported by calling 911.

### Report Fires

1-800-663-5555

Mobile\*5555

911 Suspicious/Destructive

*Keep these numbers handy*

### House Number Visibility

To assist the Gabriola Volunteer Fire Department the British Columbia Ambulance Service and RCMP, please make sure that your house number is clearly marked and visible from the roadside. This is an extremely important step to take in order to ensure that emergency responders can locate your property if you need help.

### Community Bus

The Gabriola Island Community Bus will be on the road this spring thanks to an impressive volunteer effort. This project has been in the works since 2008. The group is currently seeking RDN Electoral Area 'B' Community Works funding to assist with this pilot project.



### Rollo McClay Park Pond Liner

A new pond liner is now in place in the Rollo McClay Community Park irrigation pond. This 28m x 50m pond captures rainwater, employs an in-ground water retrieval system, and is the sole source of irrigation for the community park's two ball fields.

The previous liner was in place for nearly 20 years, and over the past six years community volunteers worked to patch the liner and extend its life. The new liner is made of linear low-density polyethylene and is expected to last for more than 20 years.