

Help CRD Parks preserve the past

The province of B.C. requires that all archaeological sites and artifacts be conserved as Heritage Resources according to the requirements of the Heritage Conservation Act passed in 1994.

Archaeologists attempt to solve mysteries of the past from clues left behind. Middens, for example, are full of clues, but they're also very fragile. Materials are often found in thin layers, with the newest on top, and the oldest at the bottom. Removing the materials will eventually destroy the site, making it difficult or impossible to understand the past and how societies change.

If you think you've discovered an archaeological site or artifact in a regional park, do not disturb it. Instead, contact CRD Parks, or the Archaeology Branch, so that the resources can be recorded and included in the parks' archaeological inventory. We protect these cultural resources and use them in our archaeological research and interpretive programs. Help us preserve the past for the future.



The B.C. Heritage Trust has provided financial assistance to this project to support conservation of our heritage resources, gain further knowledge and increase public understanding of the complete history of British Columbia.



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The First Peoples Of The Capital Regional District

We are learning much about the past of First Peoples: the northern Straits Salish, the Sooke, the Saanich, and the Songhees. We learn through the study of archaeology, early historical records, and other non-written



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records such as oral history.

The natural environment of the region provided the Straits Salish with a bounty of rich and varied resources. In response, they developed tools and a way of life that took advantage of this abundance.

In winter, the Straits Salish lived in villages along sheltered bays or river mouths. In summer, they hunted, fished, collected, and prepared food — at various summer camps — for the winter. The people stored their excess harvest for times of shortage.

The marine environment — the sea, local streams and lakes — was the main focus for Straits Salish life. People lived on or near the shoreline, travelled by water, and lived off the ocean. They reef-netted salmon; fished for halibut, ling cod, red snapper, and herring; hunted sea lions, porpoises and seals; and harvested crabs, clams and seaweed from the intertidal zones.

Straits Salish tool makers used a variety of local materials — stones such as chert and basalt, bone, antler, shells, bark, stems, and roots — to fashion their tools. They constructed simple, unmodified stone flakes and complex and carefully shaped adzes, drills and knives.

They also crafted fine items such as baskets, mats, clothing and carvings out of perishable materials. Consequently, much has not survived. However, the craft and artistry of the Straits Salish has been passed through generations, and aspects of their traditional culture continue today.

archaeology in

CRD Parks



*i*n CRD Parks,

people are a part of the landscape. Nature and culture are one.

The historical use of the natural environment connects the living present with the past. This interaction between people and their landscape is an important part of our history. Archaeology gives us an understanding of the past, a sense of continuity through time, and a legacy for the future.



Herring drying on racks at Constance Cove.

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What is archaeology?

Archaeology is the study of material remains of a human activity in order to build a picture of the past.

What is an archaeological site?

An archaeological site is a place where there is physical evidence of past human activity.

Why are archaeological sites important?

Archaeological sites are heritage resources containing irreplaceable information that helps us understand the past.

Archaeological sites in CRD parks

There are several recorded archaeological sites in CRD Parks:

- shell middens (layers of shells, ashes and other camp debris, up to 4,000 years old)
- petroglyphs (designs carved in stone, 200 to 700 years old)
- trench embankments (fortified defensive sites surrounded on three sides by water, 600 years old)
- a burial cairn complex (a pile of rocks placed over a burial or commemorative site)
- a cultural depression site (the result of a hearth, pit or cache)
- a burial cave (a natural crevice or rock overhang used for a burial site)



C.MORISSETTE, CRD PARKS

Royal B.C. Museum archaeologist, Grant Keddie, demonstrates how tools were made and used.

Archaeological research has occurred in the past in CRD Parks. Material evidence from excavated sites is held by the Royal B.C. Museum. Records dealing with the interpretation of these sites are held at the Archaeology Branch of the Provincial Government and at CRD Parks.

CRD Parks has a responsibility to the past as well as the future

It has a mandate to:

- protect and interpret non-renewable resources such as archaeological resources
- manage archaeological sites in cooperation with the Archaeology Branch (Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture)
- maintain an inventory of historically significant sites