

# Volunteers in Parks

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Regional Parks &  
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Sea to Sea Regional Park

## Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan (2022-2032)

By Colleen Long

This summer at their July 13 meeting, the Capital Regional District (CRD) Board approved the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2023 (the Plan) on an interim basis while engagement with First Nations continue over the upcoming year.

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This new strategic plan provides the long-term vision for regional parks and trails from 2022-2032. This plan updates the former Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021 to reflect current challenges and opportunities affecting the region, as well to incorporate other CRD initiatives and priorities, including the Regional Growth Strategy, the Climate Action Strategy and the CRD's commitment to support reconciliation with First Nations that have traditional territories in the region. This Strategic Plan has been developed with input from First Nations, stakeholder groups, other park agencies and the public.

**The highlights of the Strategic Plan are:**

- a commitment to build strong relationships with First Nations in the region and support Indigenous rights;
- increased efforts to conserve natural areas and cultural heritage;
- improvements to the visitor experience;
- preparations for, and action on, climate change;
- improved resiliency across the service; and
- enhanced access to, and equity in, regional parks and trails.



Balsamorhiza deltoidea, photo by Andrea Rangel

Below is a brief summary of the Plan and how it is organized.

## Section 1 – Introduction

Section 1 provides the introduction to the Plan and sets out the renewed vision, mission, values and guiding principles and also outlines the engagement process for the Plan.

**Vision:** The vision sets out the desired state of regional parks and regional trails in 2023 and is as follows:

We have an expanded and connected system of regional parks and regional trails that are rich in biodiversity, respect Indigenous cultural heritage and use, inspire stewardship, are resilient to change and provide enjoyable outdoor recreation experiences.

**Mission:** The mission defines the purpose of regional parks and regional trails, why it exists, what it does and the level of performance to be met or surpassed. The mission for regional parks and regional trails is as follows:

- Operate and manage a connected system of regional parks for public enjoyment.
- Foster stewardship by learning from and working with long-term land stewards and by connecting people to nature.
- Operate and manage a regional trail network for active transportation and recreation.
- Be fiscally responsible and accountable in decision-making.

A number of values and guiding principles were identified during the development of the plan. Values and principles define what is important to the CRD and will help to guide the implementation of the Plan.

## Section 2 – Regional Parks and Trails in 2022

Section 2 includes a review of the state of regional parks and trails in 2022.

## Section 3 – Planning Framework

Section three outlines the classification system for regional parks and trails. A park classification system establishes the intended purpose for each park type. This concept was first adopted in the Official Regional Park Plan, 1987, and continued in the CRD Parks Master Plan, 2000, and the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021.

### Regional Parks Classification

Existing regional parks are classified under the following classifications:

Conservation Area

Wilderness Area

Natural Recreation Area

Conservancy Area – is a new classification established in anticipation of protecting natural or cultural features, primarily for their intrinsic value to First Nations.

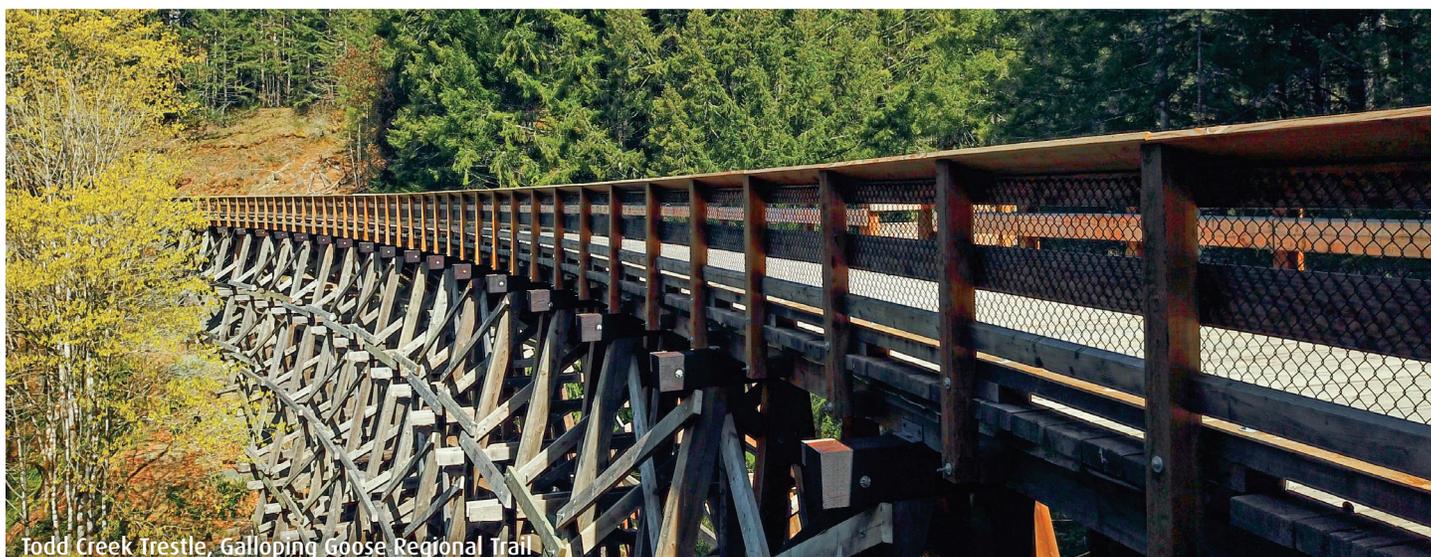
### Regional Trail Classification

Like regional parks classification system, a trail classification system establishes the intended purpose for each regional trail type. This Plan builds on the regional trail classification system established in the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021.

Existing regional trails are classified under the following classifications:

Urban Bike and Pedestrian

Rural Bike and Pedestrian



Todd Creek Trestle, Galloping Goose Regional Trail

## Section 4 – Strategic Priorities

Section 4 outlines the key priorities and initiatives for regional parks and trails in five themes (shown below) along with their supporting actions and times for implementation.



### Reconciliation

Goal 1: Strong, collaborative and mutually beneficial relationships with First Nations through working in partnership.



### Conservation

Goal 2: Regional parks protect the region's natural assets and cultural heritage for future generations.



### Visitor Experience

Goal 3: Visitors to regional parks are involved in stewardship and have enjoyable outdoor recreation experiences.



### Climate Action & Resiliency

Goal 4: Regional parks and regional trails are resilient and take action on climate change.



### Access & Equity

Goal 5: Regional parks and regional trails are inclusive and accessible.



East Sooke Regional Park

## Section 5 – Monitoring and Reporting

Section 5 outlines the monitoring and reporting structure for the Plan so that the status of actions can be tracked and progress towards achieving the goals can be realized. Minor or major amendments to the Strategic Plan may be considered by the CRD Board over time, in response to shifting priorities.

To view a copy of the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan and other associated documents go to <https://getinvolved.crd.bc.ca/regional-parks-strategic-plan-update>.

# Volunteer Profile - Jeni Luther



*Jeni has been a Park Steward at Matheson Lake Regional Park since February 2014.*

**What do you most enjoy about volunteering with Regional Parks?**

I just enjoy BEING in the parks and I spend a lot of time there. I like to take care of the spaces I love.

**What is your favourite volunteer memory or experience?**

One time I was walking on some crunchy arbutus leaves thinking, "I will definitely warn off any bears with all the noise I'm making." Then I crested a hill and came face to face with a black bear who had also been crunching along in the arbutus leaves! I think we had the exact same looks on our faces. We both backed up slowly, turned around and went back the way we each had come! We even both glanced back at the same time, just to make sure the other was going away.

**Tell us a bit about yourself?**

I came to Vancouver Island 22 years ago. I started volunteering at Matheson Lake with my Dad, Kem Luther, in 2014. There is nothing I like better than the smell of sun warmed rocks, the sound of cottonwood leaves in the wind and a deep, cold lake in which to swim.

# Staff Profile - Rachael Ince



*Rachael has been our Outdoor Recreation Specialist since March 2022.*

**What is your position and when did you start working at Regional Parks?**

I am the Outdoor Recreation Specialist here at Regional Parks, I started working here in March 2022. My role is to ensure regional parks provide excellent outdoor recreation opportunities for visitors whilst conserving the natural environment. I work with different community recreation groups, along with providing support to other staff with anything outdoor recreation related. In the coming months I am looking forward to working on the development of an Outdoor Recreation Plan which will support the new Strategic Plan.

**What do you most enjoy about working at Regional Parks?**

It is a privilege to work at Regional Parks, I get to spend my days working to ensure there are opportunities for people to connect with nature and be physically active outdoors, whilst protecting the natural spaces we all love. It is amazing to have the opportunity to spend time in the parks, doing site visits and meeting community recreation organizations. There is so much knowledge and experience here, it is a great team to work in.

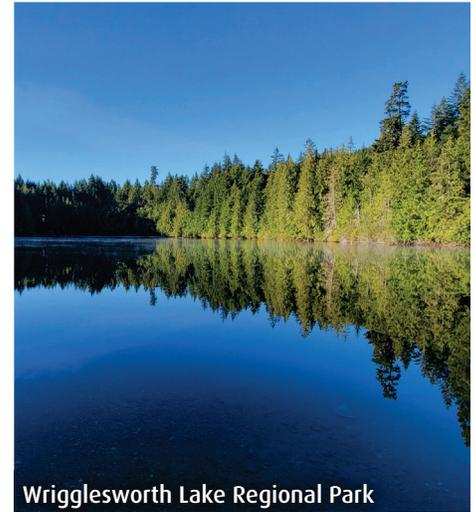
**Tell us a bit about yourself?**

I moved to Canada from the UK in January 2022, with my husband and dog. I have worked in outdoor recreation for 10 years, from coaching and guiding, to supporting volunteer run recreation groups and societies, and most recently completing a master's degree in which I researched the psychological health benefits of being physically active in the outdoors. I love spending time outdoors and it has been great to explore this special area through biking, hiking, climbing and paddling. So far my time in Victoria has been great.

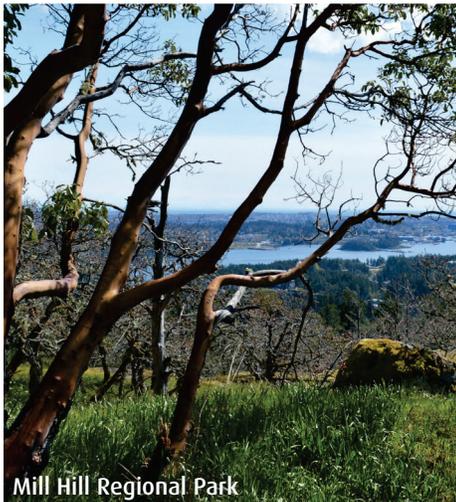
# Volunteer & Park Updates

## New Parkland Acquisitions

Since our spring volunteer newsletter, the CRD has acquired some new parkland. In June, the CRD's newest regional park—Wrigglesworth Community Park— transferred from the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Parks and Recreation Commission. This transfer increases the number of parks in the CRD's regional parks system to thirty-three. The 15.5 hectare [Wrigglesworth Lake Regional Park](#) is located at the top of the Malahat and is naturally connected to the Trans Canada Trail. It includes the 4.21 hectare Wrigglesworth Lake, which provides an opportunity for freshwater swimming and day use for the growing number of residents in the area. About 35% of the property has been identified as sensitive ecosystem, including wetland, riparian and older second growth. Much of the park is unfragmented, with a minimal trail network.



Wrigglesworth Lake Regional Park



Mill Hill Regional Park

Then in August, [the CRD acquired four parcels of land](#) totalling 9.8 hectares adjacent to Mill Hill Regional Park. These parcels contain coastal Douglas-fir forest and arbutus stands and were purchased from the Town of View Royal for \$927,500.

“Mill Hill Regional Park is one of the most significant Garry Oak sites in the region and represents one of the highest concentrations of plant species at risk in British Columbia,” said Colin Plant, CRD Board Chair.

“This additional land helps to complete the Mill Hill Regional Park boundary and acts as a protective buffer for some of the high value rare plant species found there.”



East Sooke Regional Park

## Seasonal Reminder: Rainy and Windy Weather

All regional parks and regional trails remain open year round, however be prepared for changing weather conditions. Weather can change quickly, so always check the forecast before heading out.

During wind storms, watch for falling branches, changing beach conditions and slippery surfaces. Avoid forested areas in high winds (40km/h+). Be prepared for rain and expect slippery surfaces.

As the days get shorter, remember to bring out your flashlight and reflective gear while exploring regional parks and trails. Help everyone stay safe on regional trails (Lochside, E&N Rail Trail, Galloping Goose) by dressing visibly and by keeping to the right.

For more information, visit [crd.bc.ca/parksafety](http://crd.bc.ca/parksafety).