



Volunteers In Parks

Feature:
Sooke Hills
Wilderness & Sea to Sea

VIP Profile:
Bryce McCaughey

Staff Profile:
Mark Wilson

Volunteer &
Park Updates



Sooke Hills Wilderness (above) and Sea to Sea (below) Regional Parks



A Visual Tour of Two New Regional Parks

By Laurie Sthamann

In June, the CRD officially opened Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park. This vast wilderness area of more than 4000 ha makes it one of the largest in the CRD regional parks system. Sooke Hills Wilderness Trail is the first visitor opportunity created within Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park. The 13 km unpaved multi-use trail spans rivers, forests and hilltops. It goes to the Capital Regional District-Cowichan Valley Regional District boundary. This trail also forms part of the route of both The Great Trail (formerly known as The Trans Canada Trail) and the Vancouver Island Spine Trail.

Last December, the CRD opened Sea to Sea Regional Park. This wilderness area also encompasses about 4,000 ha. The first visitor opportunity developed in the park is the south section, which offers outstanding outdoor wilderness recreation that allows park visitors to remain in close touch with the natural environment. It features 30 km of designated hiking, mountain biking and equestrian trails, a wide range of large mammal and plant species and views from the peaks of Mount Manuel Quimper and Mount Brulé.



Making a difference...together

Regional Parks
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Victoria, BC V9B 2Z8

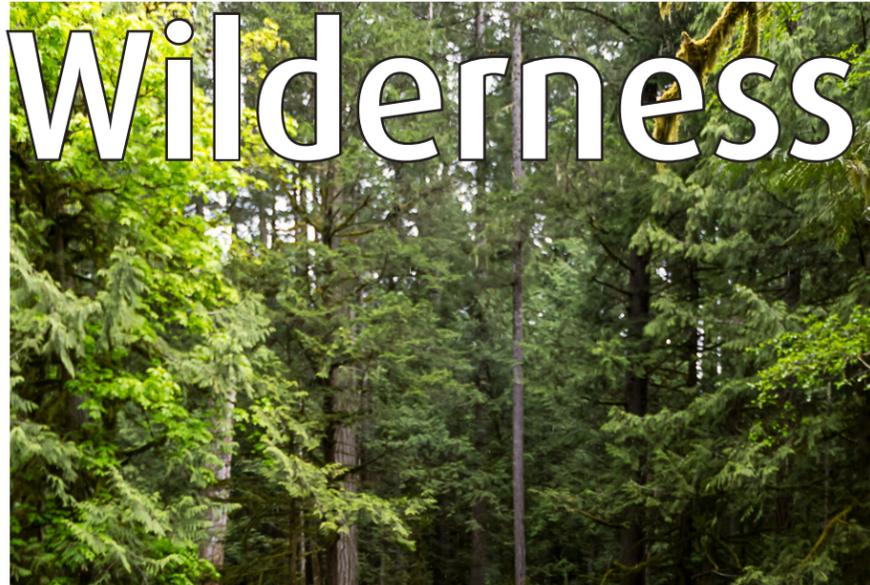
T: 250.478.3344
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www.crd.bc.ca/parks



Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park



Rest at the viewing platform, 2.5 km from the south trailhead, to take in the sights and sounds of Waugh Creek Falls.



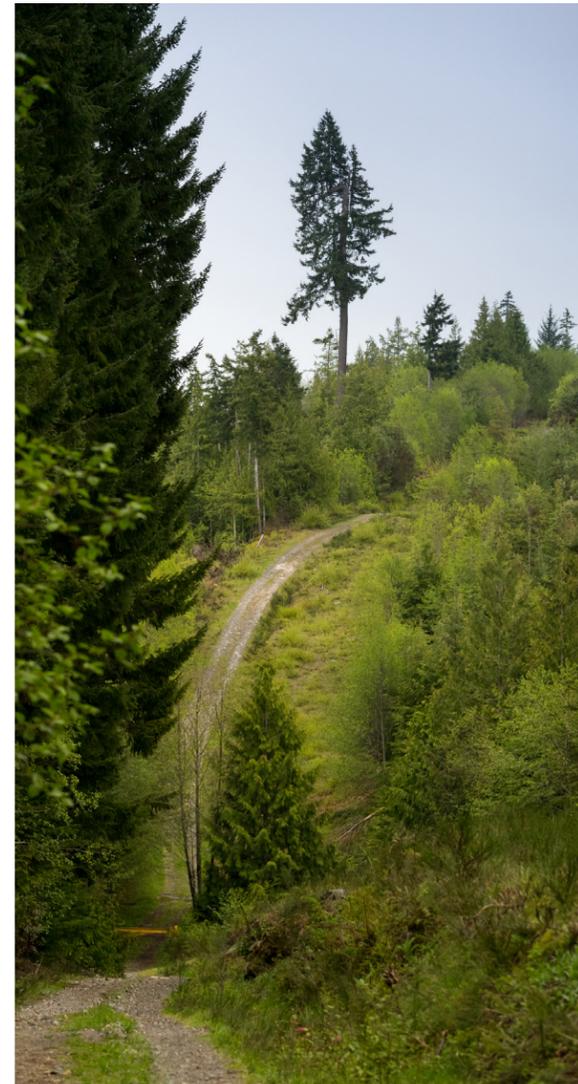
The E&N Railway is near the Waugh Creek Falls viewing platform, which is 2.5 km from the south trailhead. The trail in this section is narrow with steep grades.



This section in the north offers excellent hilltop vistas of the surrounding mountains, Finlayson Arm, and Greater Victoria. The trail joins the Cowichan Valley Trail in Shawnigan Lake.



3 km from the south trailhead is Goldstream River suspension bridge. Click to watch a time-lapse video of the bridge construction.

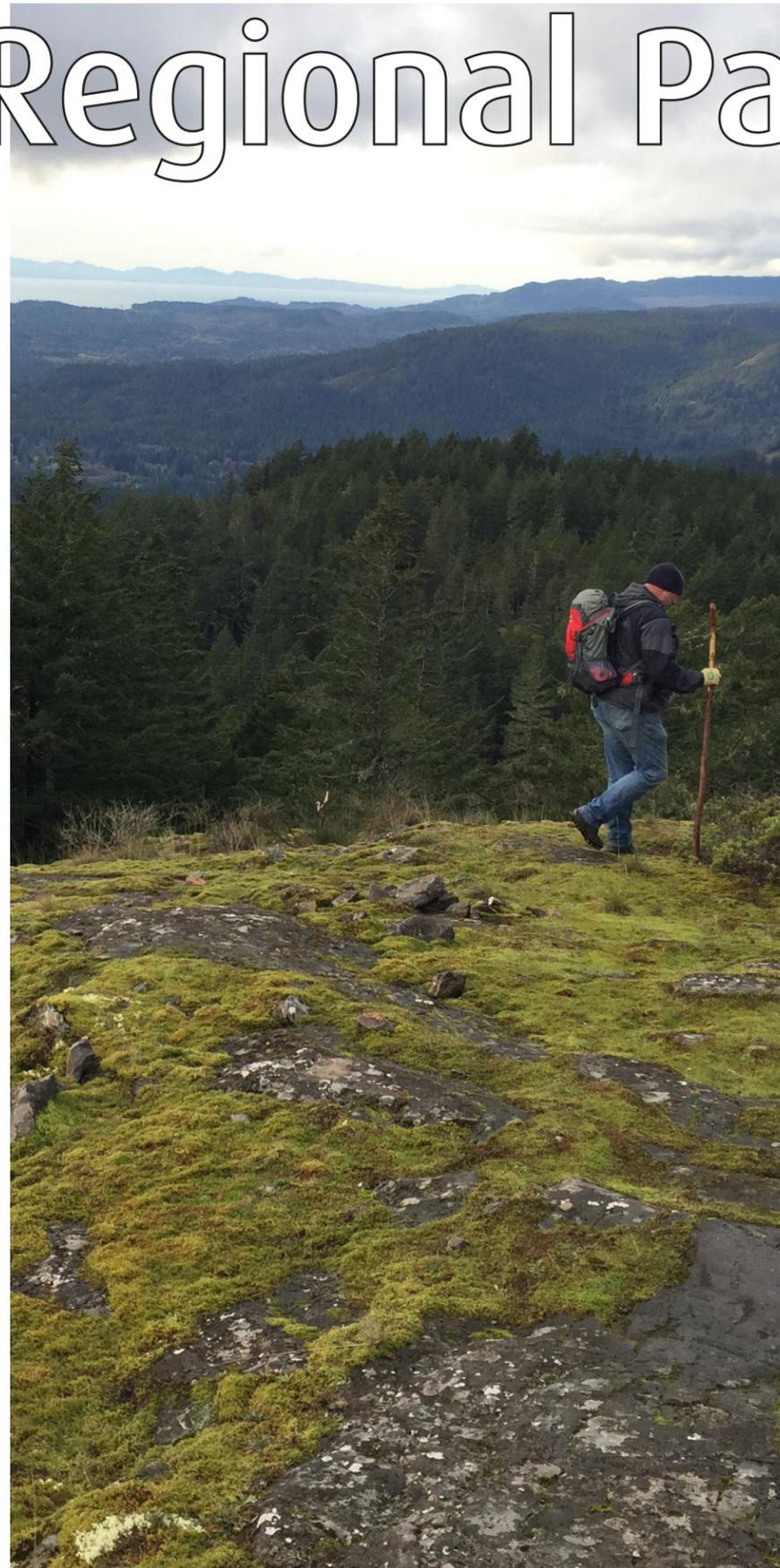


The route has steep hills with 10%-16% grades. Some sections are narrow and have loose gravel. Hike and ride on sections of the trail suited to your skill level.

Sea to Sea Regional Park



The 3 km trek to Mount Brulé has spectacular views of Sooke Basin, East Sooke Regional Park and the Olympic Mountains.



Hike or bike 5.6 km to the summit of Mount Manuel Quimper for panoramic views



The mountain bike trails range in rating from easy to extremely challenging. They've been constructed to take advantage of the exposed rock of the park. These natural rock formations create exceptional technical features, from drops to jumps.



The former fire lookout built by BC Forest Service in the 1950s is at the summit of Mount Manuel Quimper.



Hikers, equestrians and mountain bikers share much of the network of trails, such as the 1.7 km Sword Fern Trail.



Volunteer Profile

Photo submitted

Bryce McCaughey has been a Park Steward and Volunteer Naturalist at Francis/King Regional Park since 2006.

What do you enjoy most about volunteering?

I love interacting with all the different visitors and getting the chance to share any knowledge I can offer, as well as being able to learn a lot from them as well. We get visitors with all levels of natural history knowledge and awareness so you never know if you'll be educating someone who's new to exploring the natural world or if you'll be learning something yourself from someone with a deeper level of expertise in a particular area. I also really love the fact that it's a role that drives me to explore all the different trails and hiking opportunities in the park.

What is your favourite volunteer experience or memory?

My favourite experiences were the times I had the opportunity to meet and talk with Grace, the daughter of Freeman King. She was 90 years old at the time and was dropping off some old items of her fathers to be displayed in the nature centre. She and I sat and talked for a few hours and it was just amazing to have the chance to hear so many stories about Freeman King from someone so close to him.

Tell us a bit about yourself.

I'm a pretty simple person who enjoys life to be pretty quiet and balanced when possible. I have an obvious love of nature and the outdoors and I find I'm most relaxed and at ease when I'm able to get out in the woods for at least an hour or two a day. I'm a big fan of dogs and have two great dogs who love to get out on the trails with me. I also have a canoe and love to get out on a quiet lake to paddle around in when I can.



Staff Profile

Mark Wilson is a Parks Operations Worker 5 in the west service area for Regional Parks.

What do you do at CRD Regional Parks?

It is my responsibility for all aspects of field operations, ranging from public safety, vegetation management, asset management and protection of flora and fauna.

Where have you worked previously?

I started working for the CRD back in 1980 as a "drop in supervisor" at Juan de Fuca Recreation Centre. It then morphed into ice making, building maintenance and then outside parks.

Where were you born and where have you lived?

I have lived in Victoria for most of my life but I was not born in Canada. My Father joined the Royal Canadian Navy as a submariner which stationed him in England for 7 years. While there he meet his bride to be during his deployment and of this great union my brother and I were born in a small town called Lowestoft, Suffolk County. We have lived here in Victoria since my father's redeployment.

Tell us a bit about yourself.

I have been married for 30 years to Emily and am father of two grown men, Jordan (28) and Nico (23), both are employed locally, one as a red seal chef and the other as an apprentice mechanical insulator. I have been involved with a local Search and Rescue organization for the past 15 years and still going strong with JdF GSAR. I am very fond of soccer and played competitively in the VISL before I joined SAR. I am an avid gardener and have resided in Langford for 30 years.

Volunteer & Park Updates

New Volunteers Welcomed



Park Stewards

- Catherine Hayden – Horth Hill Regional Park
- Cassandra Webb – Albert Head Lagoon Regional Park
- Chyrs Tei Argast – Sea to Sea Regional Park
- Fred Pye – Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park
- Graedon Church – Lone Tree Hill Regional Park
- Jeff Sorensen – Mt. Wells Regional Park
- JoAnne and Tony Wass – Lochside Regional Trail
- Ken Moore – Sea to Sea Regional Park
- Michelle James – Sea to Sea Regional Park
- Nitya and Scott Harris – Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park
- Sean Edwards – Galloping Goose Regional Trail

Volunteer Naturalists

- Caitlin Moran – Francis/King Nature Centre
- Carolyn Rymes – Beaver Lake Nature Centre
- Hannah Christo – Beaver Lake Nature Centre
- Monica Pandian – Witty’s Lagoon Nature Centre
- Rebecca Nielsen – Witty’s Lagoon Nature Centre
- Terri Rolph – Beaver Lake Nature Centre
- Whitney Watson – Francis/King Nature Centre

Regional Parks Annual Report

The annual report highlights the accomplishments and overall performance of CRD Regional Parks in delivering services and making progress on its priorities. It includes information on corporate and strategic priorities, land acquisitions, visitation, public programs and projects. Download it from our website.



Photo Oriana Graber

Gulf Islands Regional Trails Plan

The Capital Regional District Board recently approved a draft regional trails plan for Galiano, Mayne, North and South Pender, Salt Spring and Saturna Islands, which is now ready for public review. The draft plan proposes the development of a regional trail on each of the islands, initially focusing on connecting the ferry terminal to a commercial hub or other key destination on the island.

Open houses are being held on each island over the summer to gather input on the draft plan. Comments may also be provided online from July 31 to September 30, 2017. Visit the website for details.



The Great Trail Celebration

CRD Regional Parks is planning a community celebration of completing our portion of The Great Trail on August 26 at Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park. The Great Trail – created by Trans Canada Trail and partners, has been 25 years in the making. Celebrations will take place across the country to thank the volunteers, partners and donors for all their hard work in helping connect the 24,000-km trail from coast to coast to coast. We will send out details about the event in August.