

Report to DIRA from Parks Committee April 12/ 2015

April 12 kicked off the National Week of Volunteers. Like many committees on Denman, the Parks Committee is comprised entirely of volunteers.

We had another very productive year. We have a dedicated, and capable group that regularly attends our monthly meetings. We share our knowledge and commitment to making the parks on Denman safe and accessible to the public, and community while protecting the sensitive ecology contained within both the provincial parks and CVRD parks.

The Parks Committee provides an umbrella liaison for the Checkerspot Working Group to be able to continue with their extraordinary effort to create and maintain an environment for the butterflies to be able to live and thrive on Denman. The Checkerspot Working Group has pulled together a dedicated group of community volunteers that have worked extremely hard to create this unique habitat within the Park, and to captive rear the next generation of Checkerspot larvae. Mar 31st saw the first release of the larvae into their new reserve in the park, and the opening of the lovely kiosk at the site, attended by students from, students, parents, provincial parks staff and special guests. Deb Bishop, along with Mike Morrell added extra labour to create an lovely native plant garden.

We are no nearer to having an official management plan for the Denman Provincial Park. This hasn't been a terrible hindrance as we have been able to complete most of what we needed without this in place. Thanks goes to Derek Moore, our provincial area manager for providing the necessary support. It must be pointed out that the drawback of not having a management plan for Denman Provincial Park is that there is also almost no budget for our provincial park – which means there is effectively no way for any actual improvements or projects, or routine upkeep. The exception is maintenance and projects that are budgeted for Fillongley and Boyle Point Park, as they have existing management plans.

We continue to have an excellent working relationship with both the CVRD and provincial parks staff. We have met with both staff groups

several times in the past year to make sure we are meeting all our commitments to them, and that these agencies are also fulfilling their commitments to Denman as well. For the first time we have been awarded a \$2,000.00 budget from CVRD that we will be able to access for our projects, and emergencies. This will enable us to proceed with a few small projects which we were unable to undertake in the past. Parks volunteers have donated significant amounts of not only time, but also time and materials, so that projects that we deemed necessary were accomplished. We have also been very lucky to have materials donated by both B.C. Ferries and other members of Denman community. Thanks must go to all those who have helped with materials and equipment. Thanks also, to the CVRD for allowing us a small budget to work with – it is gratefully received.

We experienced a setback this winter with the temporary closure of Morning Beach Park; there was damage to one of the transverse trails sections that slumped due to high tides and an extreme winter storm. We are in the process of working out what requirements we will need to meet with the CVRD to re-open this Park and the fabulous stairway to the beach. We have an agreement as to what we will need to do – and are in the process of undertaking the first stage. There is no firm date on this at present – but we are confident it will be this spring, and by summer Denman visitors will be down on the eastern beach once again.

It is a pleasure to chair this hard working and dedicated DIRA committee. Thanks to Ralf McQuaig (vice chair) and Tim Fuchs (secretary) and special thanks to the many regular attendees to our meetings and work bees, and other supporters, who are simply too numerous to name!

Laura Pope
Chair
Denman Parks Committee