

STRATHCONA PARK PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

(May 7th, 2024 – Face to Face, Black Creek office 7:00PM)

SPPAC MEMBERS present: (Chair) Hardolph Wasteneys, Jessie Moore, Ryan Wanner, Jennifer Pass, Bill Phipps, Ryan Stuart

REGRETS: Phil Stone, Catrin Brown

Recorder: Ryan Yardley (BC Parks)

Public

4 members of the public in attendance

Agenda

1. Previous minutes
2. Myra Falls Mine Impact Benefits Agreement update
3. Crest Crags update (Bill)
4. Abbreviated Strathcona Area Update
5. other items – Trail Counter priority Discussion, Jack's Trail Discussion

MEETING SUMMARY

Meeting summary notes from March 26th online meeting provided to members at the meeting for review. Following no comments all meeting summaries will be posted to Strathcona Park Website.

Myra Falls Mine – Impact Benefits Agreement Letter to RD update

Members requested an update on the status of a response from SPPAC's Letter to the Regional Director regarding the Impact Benefits Agreement in place between Myra Falls Mine and 2 First Nations. Jessie provided an update that the response required more than a generic staff response and is being reviewed by legal. Significant backlog on legal requests. Will plan for annual mine update at next meeting.

Strathcona Update

Jessie provided a powerpoint overview of the highlights and projects that operational staff completed this season.

Park Operator – "43K Wilderness Solutions" is entering their 10th season, of a 10-year contract (ends March 31, 2025). 43k has had some staffing changes over the winter but have now hired all their staff for the season and will be providing full services in the

backcountry operating areas starting June 15th. From what we are observing, snow conditions over the winter resulted in negligible damage to facilities and infrastructure.

Two Capital Projects will be initiated in the park this season.

- The Della Falls trailhead dock on Great Central Lake has been on the capital list for several years. Replacement with a similar structure is scheduled for the fall when water levels are optimal. Project will also include upgrades and re-design on the trailhead facilities (right sizing the facilities and shifting them within the park boundary). Discussion about the park boundary at the trail head. Jessie will provide additional information in the coming months about the Section 16 Reserve application.

- Buttle Lake Campground is finally going to be receiving a capital upgrade (likely first of 3 years). This year will be replacing all the toilets to new accessible designs. Planning is underway now, with construction activities planned as soon as possible in the fall (late October/November).

The Croteau Lake group site will open June 27th to September 30th this year. Last season we had 38 bookings for a total of 96 nights. Most bookings were for 2 nights, with some for 3 nights and a couple of only 1 night.

The Croteau Lake Group Site Host Program will be implemented once again this season. We made some minor tweaks to the host camp last season including a new tent based on feedback from past volunteers. We also held an orientation session for volunteers to connect with BC Parks staff as well as with one another. We have several returning volunteers on the schedule and some new volunteers. This years so far, we have 10 of 12 weeks filled and are still looking for volunteer hosts for 2 weeks in September.

Ranger staff identified priority signs throughout the trail network in this area of the park to be replaced. While the flex post design that was piloted a few years initially seemed promising as a solution, several are broken, bent and/or illegible. Expect to see new signage on the plateau this season.

BACKCOUNTRY Projects

Della Falls – Dock Replacement (Capital Investment Program). Annual Trail clearing (late June)

Arnica Lake – Toilet will be replaced with a moldering style base and a z-best throne.

Crest Mountain Trail – No significant work or changes planned. Monitoring of the Long Term Ecological Monitoring plot (Forest Productivity) occurred in August and September.

Kings Peak Trail – Park Rangers installed a new Z-best toilet and food cache at the meadows camping area in September. Hopefully this should help to alleviate the growing human waste problem that has been a topic of concern over the past few years.

Marble Meadows – Windfall will likely need to be cleared from the trail with support from BC Wildfire Service.

Hwy 28 Corridor Bridge Work – upgrade of the Cervus Creek bridge (Lady Falls Parking lot/trailhead) is currently underway by MoTI contractors with a planned completion of Summer 2024. Lady Falls parking lot will remain closed through the season as access to the parking area is contained within the right of way where work is occurring.

Tree theft along King's Peak Road over the winter.

Crest Crags – Volunteer Trail days planned for this coordinated by Bill Phipps and volunteers. BC Parks will supply materials and supplies and Park Ranger staff.

Asset Management System – BC Parks staff will be prioritizing condition assessments on high risk assets (e.g. Bridges, viewing platforms).

Next Meeting:

October 22, 2024 (pending Interregnum still in effect). If meeting is needing to be cancelled for this, Jessie will reschedule for a short online meeting after the new government is sworn in.

Scheduling meetings far in advance with calendar invites works well for most participants.

Meeting adjourned 9:15PM.