

**Strathcona Provincial Park Wilderness Centre
And
Barrier Free Centennial Trail**

WHERE

Located in Strathcona Park at the Paradise Meadows Trailhead (adjacent to Mount Washington's Nordic Raven Lodge).

DIRECTIONS

Follow signs to Mount Washington Alpine Resort and Strathcona Park. When nearing top of mountain (before reaching main resort lodge), turn left off of Strathcona Parkway onto the Nordic road and follow brown/white signs to Strathcona Park and Raven Lodge. See map below or separate pdf file. Approximate driving time from Courtenay is 45 minutes and from Campbell River 60 minutes.

History

The Strathcona Provincial Park Wilderness Centre and Paradise Meadows, barrier-free Centennial Trail loop were completed in the fall of 2010, to mark the beginning of BC Parks 2011 Centennial year. It is fitting that Strathcona Park, the birth place of our provincial park system is one of the first easily accessible sub-alpine areas in the Provincial Parks system. The project took approximately 14 years of volunteer dedication through the planning, design, fund raising, and 5 year (2005-2010) construction period, ultimately solving a 100 year old problem in making "Paradise" accessible to everyone.

Overall success came via numerous initiatives such as Mount Washington Alpine Resort's key land donation and construction of the new Nordic road. This "paved the way" for a new unfettered public access into Strathcona Park, while providing much needed space for parking and the new facilities. Strathcona Park Wilderness Institute's (SWI) reliance on temporary huts to distribute park and safety information is now history and their important service is acknowledged through the permanent Wilderness Centre. All of this would not have been possible without the generous support from a multitude of private organizations and individuals. All of us are forever grateful to the many people who committed time and money towards this initiative, who can now take pride in being part of Strathcona's unique and continued history.

WHO CAN ACCESS THESE FACILITIES

Simply – "Every-Body". Youth, Seniors, Hikers, Walkers, Wheelchair users, Families with strollers, etc. People who already know the park and those who may never have been to the park before and would like to sample it in a friendly and safe atmosphere.

WHERE

Paradise Meadows, Strathcona Park (Trailhead adjacent to Mount Washington's Nordic Raven Lodge). Follow signs to Mount Washington Alpine Resort and Strathcona Park. When

nearing top of mountain (before reaching main resort lodge), turn left off of Strathcona Parkway onto the Nordic road and follow brown/white signs to Strathcona Park and Raven Lodge. See map below or separate pdf file. Approximate driving time from Courtenay is 45 minutes and from Campbell River 60 minutes.

SITE DETAILS

Parking lot - is hard-pack gravel/dirt, but drop off onto paved sidewalk at trailhead is possible. Ample parking in both the Paradise Meadows trailhead parking lot or large adjacent Mount Washington.

Wilderness Centre and Trailhead – The Centre is two floors but fully wheelchair accessible with outside ramps/trail connecting the levels. Inside visitors will find lots of information about BC Parks and specifically Strathcona. The Centre is operated by the volunteer non-profit Strathcona Wilderness Institute (SWI). Information signage is on site and easily accessible. There is a fully accessible traditional outhouse as well as an inside washroom. Note - there are no outhouses along the trail.

While SWI has a few snacks for sale, those who need more substantial food should either bring a picnic lunch (there are 2 tables at the trailhead) or, travel to the restaurant at Mount Washington Alpine Resort's main lodge, approximately 3 km from the trailhead.

Centennial Loop trail - is approximately 2 km long. It has both boardwalk and hard-packed gravel sections with no steps. While access into the meadows is via going down a switchback trail (2 only) the gradient has been kept to approximately 5%. Most of trail around the meadows is flat with a few short ramped sections between 5% and 8% grade.

Power chairs as well as standard wheelchairs are all capable of touring around the Centennial Loop. There are two wheel-chairs equipped with "Free-Wheel" attachments for people to borrow and try (<http://www.freewheelcanada.com/>). This attachment slightly lifts the front castors off the ground placing the load onto one "free-wheel" (much like a 3-wheel stroller).



Gravel Portion of Centennial Trail



Boardwalk Section of Centennial Trail





Trailrider





Free-Wheel Attachment