

October 31, 2018

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### **A new home for crabs and fish: New eelgrass planting completed in estuary**

Nearly 400 square metres of new habitat for marine animals has been added to the Campbell River estuary with the completion of an eelgrass planting program by the City.

Roughly 3,600 eelgrass plants were added to plots in an underwater garden near the float plane dock this month, following an estuary cleanup by the Tyee Club and City contractors that saw debris like old tires removed from the waterway.

*“This is a great example of community partnership,”* said Mayor Andy Adams. “The work of the community to clean up the estuary laid great foundation for the City team’s work – and we can see the benefits for this sensitive ecosystem and our ongoing rehabilitation of Baikie Island and the estuary.”

The eelgrass planting program offers habitat compensation for in-water work at the Big Rock Boat Ramp, where the City’s request for larger breakwaters required that habitat improvements be made elsewhere to meet Fisheries and Oceans Canada regulations. Phase 1 of the Big Rock Boat Ramp upgrades were completed this summer with the ramp re-opening on Oct. 3.

Eelgrass – a flowering underwater plant – is known to be popular habitat for fish, crabs and other marine life.

*“Over the course of the planting work, crews saw animals already actively using the new plantings,”* said Jason Hartley, the City’s capital works manager.

The eelgrass planting, completed by Pacificus Biological Services, will be monitored over the coming five years to ensure the new underwater garden thrives.

Updates on the eelgrass work will be posted as part of the Big Rock Boat Ramp project webpage. Visit [www.campbellriver.ca/bigrockboatramp](http://www.campbellriver.ca/bigrockboatramp) for the latest news.

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*Photo Caption: Crews from Pacificus Biological work on planting an underwater garden of eelgrass.*