

June 29, 2010

Ken Forde Boat Ramp Back in Service Wednesday

Ken Forde boat ramp will be back in service in time for Wednesday evening boat launching.

"We understand people are eager to get their boats in the water," says Ross Milnthorp, the City's general manager of parks, recreation and culture. *"We appreciate that the community has been patient while we worked with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to ensure that boat ramp maintenance meets acceptable foreshore habitat management regulations."*

The City's boat ramp maintenance will become part of a comprehensive plan to protect eroding park shorelines in compliance with the Federal Fisheries Act.

"The natural process of long shore sediment transport is like a huge conveyor belt moving tremendous volumes of material to the north, especially during winter storms," Milnthorp explains. *"When this conveyor belt is interrupted with a rock pile-up or berm like those we see at the boat ramps, the material becomes trapped."*

The long-term solution for foreshore protection involves using the material that clogs the ramps to nourish starved beaches at key locations.

"Nourishing the beach is a very effective and cost efficient way to protect the shoreline. It looks natural, keeps land from washing into the sea, restores habitat and protects infrastructure," Milnthorp says. *"We have a major undertaking in the works with plans to restore Ellis Park beach and the seawalk at the base of Rockland Road."*

To slow the erosion caused by wave action on the beach, the City has been granted approval from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to use debris that was clogging the Ken Forde and Big Rock boat ramps to create a more gradual slope on the beach at Ellis Park. The City will also relocate the seawalk at this location farther away from the shoreline to protect it from powerful storm damage.

The restoration project at Ellis Park is expected to be completed at the beginning of August.

"Clearing the Big Rock boat ramp is tide dependent, so we won't be able to begin that work until mid-July," Milnthorp explains, adding that an environmental monitor will supervise the ramp clearing and foreshore work, and all equipment working in the vicinity of the foreshore will be equipped with spill kits and use biodiesel / environmentally friendly products.

The City has already restored marine shore habitat at Dick Murphy Park, where a badly-eroded shore with some waste materials and contaminants was re-contoured using native materials and salvaged plants. The Dick Murphy Park restoration work received a gold level rating from the Green Shores Technical Working Group, a project of the Stewardship Centre for BC.

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