

# Answers to Frequently Asked Questions about Ken Forde boat ramp access

***Council has reconsidered the decision to provide only limited (non-trailer) access at the Ken Forde boat ramp this summer. The ramp will be cleared and open for boat trailers later in July.***

## **What has changed with plans for Ken Forde boat ramp access?**

Council has reconsidered the decision to provide only limited (non-trailer) access at the Ken Forde boat ramp. The City will remove gravel washed up on the ramp to have the facility open for boat trailers the remainder of the summer. This work will comply with environmental regulations and the City's agreement with the federal government to use the gravel for shoreline restoration elsewhere in the community. Following assessment by a qualified environmental professional, the ramp will be cleared at the next available sufficiently low tide (anticipated July 19-21).

The earlier decision to remove only logs and wood debris (providing access for smaller vessels that don't require a trailer, such as canoes and kayaks) was among cost-saving measures endorsed this spring.

## **Why is it challenging to keep this boat ramp open?**

The Ken Forde boat ramp is located near the shallow Willow Point reef and even when fully cleared of debris, can only be used for trailered launches at higher tides. With prevailing ocean currents and winds, the boat ramp collects both floating debris and beach gravel. Keeping the ramp clear requires continuous attention and is largely dependent on weather and tides.



## **Why not get a machine in there to clean it up whenever necessary?**

Removing any accumulated debris must consider natural cycles and impacts on the marine environment (both at the boat ramp and the new location for the beach gravel). For example, machines can't work in the water, so clearing must be planned around low tides during daylight hours. In addition to following environmental regulations, the City also has an agreement with the federal department of Fisheries and Oceans that provides conditions for boat ramp work. This agreement requires that any beach gravel removed from the boat ramp is placed back on the foreshore to nourish another beach area.

## **What has to be done before gravel can be moved?**

This gravel provides important marine habitat. Before we can move gravel, it must be checked by a qualified environmental professional, particularly to ensure we protect surf smelts (small feeder fish that support the foundation of the food chain). Surf smelt could potentially be spawning in this gravel at any time of the year. We must also check for spawning before placing gravel in a new location on the foreshore. The most efficient way to do this work is to coordinate gravel removal from the boat ramp with relocation to a new site. In Campbell River, as much as possible, we try to coordinate this work with beach restoration projects that restore a natural slope to protect the shoreline from winter storms and sea level rise.

## **Where will the gravel go this year?**

Beach restoration projects were cancelled for 2020 as a cost-saving measure to offset revenue loss caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. We have permission to temporarily store the gravel off the beach for future use.