

## **Appendix 7**

### **Comments on Issues Related to Helliwell Provincial Park Collected at Hornby Island Public Meeting**

**November 20, 2000**

**Helliwell Provincial Park Ecosystem Based Plan  
Comments from Public Meeting on November 20, 2000**

**Wildlife General**

- Have a biologist do a lowest-low-tide (June) inventory of the tidal zone, especially in the sea caves and under overhanging rocks. Are the big white anemones, keyhole limpets, lingfish, lampshells, babies of four kinds of seastars, whelks still there?
- The stellar sea lions are staging longer on Norris Rock and on reefs off Flora Islet.
- Inventory amphibians in wetland.
- We have (seasonal) ravens on our property – four of them [Downes Pt]. This is new. They are breeding pairs. One or two are still around.

**Cormorants**

- Don't be alarmed if cormorants desert the cliffs. I have read that they move nesting-grounds when the old site becomes too infested with disease/parasites.
- A very busy colony of cormorants existed 1970-1980(?) [Area noted on map] Cleaned out by opossum. They have only just started to return. It should be noted they (the cormorants) were not there when the park opened.

**Vegetation General**

- Use regeneration techniques (eg. logs to trap drifted leaves and acorns, dead branches to discourage deer) under/around garry oaks.
- Identify yews, junipers, sitka spruce (if any), white pines (if any).
- The meadow growth, while needing some protection it needs to be done with the least amount of inconvenience to the general public, which I believe would meet the "spirit" in which the property was given by the Helliwell family.
- Remove encroaching shore pine – give to food bank to sell as xmas trees.
- Prune and thin ingrown D.G. stand.
- Remove holly and ivy.
- Utilize prescribed burns as a means to mimic natural disturbance and traditional practices.

**Cactus**

- In the early eighties or late seventies prior to the fire, cactus grew in a bowl in the sandstone here. [Area noted on map]

**Wildflowers**

- Consider reseeding the bluff-tops with nursery-raised wildflowers – onions, brodiaea, saxifrage, blue-eyed mary, sea-blush mimulus, etc in areas where these have vanished.

- And in the forest edges – curly (fawn) lily, trillium, bleeding-heart, false lily-off-the-valley, etc.

### **Trail Management**

- I am in favor of cutting the grass in the season that the caterpillars are around. I've seen two on the path that skirts their territory where they are at great risk of being stepped on. The area should probably be roped off at appropriate periods of their cycle.
- Reduce trail to St. John's Pt. to type II – create cross trail to bluffs to shorten time spent in the park and at the same time provide some relief to erosion problems at St. John's Pt. Move toilet from current location at St. John's Pt. and place at new trail location.
- Reduce “social trails” potential at St. John's through an educational brochure explaining the sensitive soils and ecosystems.
- I believe it is important to recognize the value of Helliwell as a “family park.” There are significant opportunities for education about plants, animals and birds that are being missed. There could be more trails!
- I support keeping bicycles out of the park and am concerned about the large number of photographers who leave paths to set up their cameras and tramp down the vegetation.
- Block undergrowth trails (Use fallen branches) where trails come too close to eagle/hawk/owl nest or roost-trees, to reduce disturbance by humans.

### **Dogs in Park**

- In the 36 years that I have lived on Hornby I have seldom seen dogs bother ducks in any way, particularly in the park, chased the odd deer maybe.
- I believe that it is imperative that a common sense approach for all to share the beauty of the park including families (which often includes the family pet.) (In my opinion this should also include Tribune Bay.)
- I also believe that “unsupervised” wildlife i.e. opossums cause more damage to ducks, cormorants etc. than any supervised pet.
- I feel that blaming dogs for the disappearance of the nesting cormorants is absolutely wrong – and causes a credibility problem.
- I have observed harlequin ducks on our beach for a number of years. They are disturbed up to ten times a day by eagles and by people walking by. It is no big deal. They swim out into deeper water ready to dive down and a few minutes later swim back in again. I watched them during moult ---and they do the same thing. They have been disturbed for 10,000 years and survive quite well. Aside from this, it is a rare time the harlequins in Helliwell Park are ever disturbed by dogs. A few people who appear only too ready to blame things on dogs are first creating a problem which doesn't exist – and then blaming dogs.

Also, it is questionable whether dogs are damaging the wild flowers. There may be problems with dogs frightening children, upsetting some adults or the usual thing but to blame dogs for environmental damage is based on very questionable science – and makes the “Saviours” of the part seem “far out” – not really to be listened to.

- Concern over dogs is greatly overblown. Emphasis should be placed on encouraging people to keep their dogs under control, and not necessarily keeping them on the leash. They are part of the “family experience” in a park which should be dedicated to family use.

**Miscellaneous**

- Be aware of the blowhole in the rock at the end of St. John’s point. (See map over)
- I strongly agree with Briony Penn’s idea of having local artists supply signage.
- I am very pleased that the consultants are islanders.
- Produce TEM Maps for the park.
- Document First Nations traditional usage of park.
- Limiting or “closing” the park seems very drastic and would cost a fortune to manage with manpower, considering we can’t keep campers out now.
- I believe the park should be maintained as a day walking park.