

Friends of Mount Douglas Park Society



Fall 2014

Students listen to instructions prior to releasing their salmon fry through the Stream to Sea / Classroom Incubation / Fry Release Program

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\$11000 Donation from FMDPS to Saanich Parks

Earlier this year Friends of Mount Douglas Park Society received a \$10,000 grant from the Pacific Salmon Foundation for salmon habitat restoration work in Douglas Creek. Additionally, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans provided a \$1000 grant. After this summer's successful creek work completion by Saanich Parks, two cheques were presented to Saanich totaling \$11,000.



\$11,000 presented to Saanich Parks from FMDPS for Douglas Creek Restoration work.

Free Smartphone GPS Enabled Park Map

Lost in the Park? Several years ago we GPS'd all of the Park trails and produced our Society's trails map overlaid on an aerial photo of the Park. This map is free for download from the maps section of our website <http://mounddouglasspark.ca/>. The trails shown are those that are recognized and maintained by Saanich Parks.

For those with a smart phone, an iPhone or Android, we now have something even better, a free GPS enabled map app for your smart phone. It displays the same Park trails map, but includes a blue dot that follows your position as you walk through the Park. It's a free download from our website maps page. It is a two-step process to load it onto your smart phone. First you install a free app from your app store. Second, you use that app to install our geospatial located trails map and you're ready to go! The full instructions are on the website.

New Saanich Parks Natural Areas Assistant Supervisor

We welcome Andrew Burger as Natural Areas Technician and, more recently, promoted to Assistant Supervisor of Natural Areas for Saanich Parks. We have been working with Andrew this past year and can assure you he is a real asset to Saanich and Mount Douglas Park!

Formerly, Andrew was in a similar role with Surrey Parks for seven years. Prior to that, he worked with the Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC, DFO and the Chehalis First Nation conducting stock and habitat enhancement programs. Formal education was with the Environmental Technology Program at Camosun College and a BSc degree in Natural Resource Management from the University of Northern BC in Prince George.



Andrew Burger, new Natural Areas Assistant Supervisor with son Eli



Watch for Andrew Burger's distinctive vest when you walk the Park

Trail Counts

Seven trail counters are located along trails in Mount Douglas Park. During the last quarter, July, August and September, Churchill Drive recorded a monthly average of just over 41,000 visitors passing the counter. The beach access trail saw a count of 10,500 and the Glendenning Trail counted 9,000 per month over the same three-month period. Just these three add up to a lot of Mount Douglas Park users!

Trail Intersection Way-finding Posts

Way-finding posts at every official trail intersection will soon be a reality. With almost 90 posts, it has been and continues to be a huge project for Saanich Parks. First a "blue print" was produced showing the location, orientation and signage for each post. The signage on each post consists of several small metal plates that are colour-coded to illustrate the trail

difficulty classification (green, blue, black for easy, medium and difficult), a direction arrow and trail name. We then took the blueprints to each location to verify the accuracy of the proposed location and the arrow direction.

The posts are now in the Saanich yard and the sign shop has manufactured most of the signs. The next step over the winter will be to install the posts. This won't be an easy task as the posts are heavy and have to be carried along the trails to the correct intersection. A relatively deep hole must be dug and the posts installed with an anchor so that they won't pull out. Sadly there are already examples of vandals lifting posts installed earlier without anchors and turning them 90 or 180 degrees!

Invasive Work Continues!

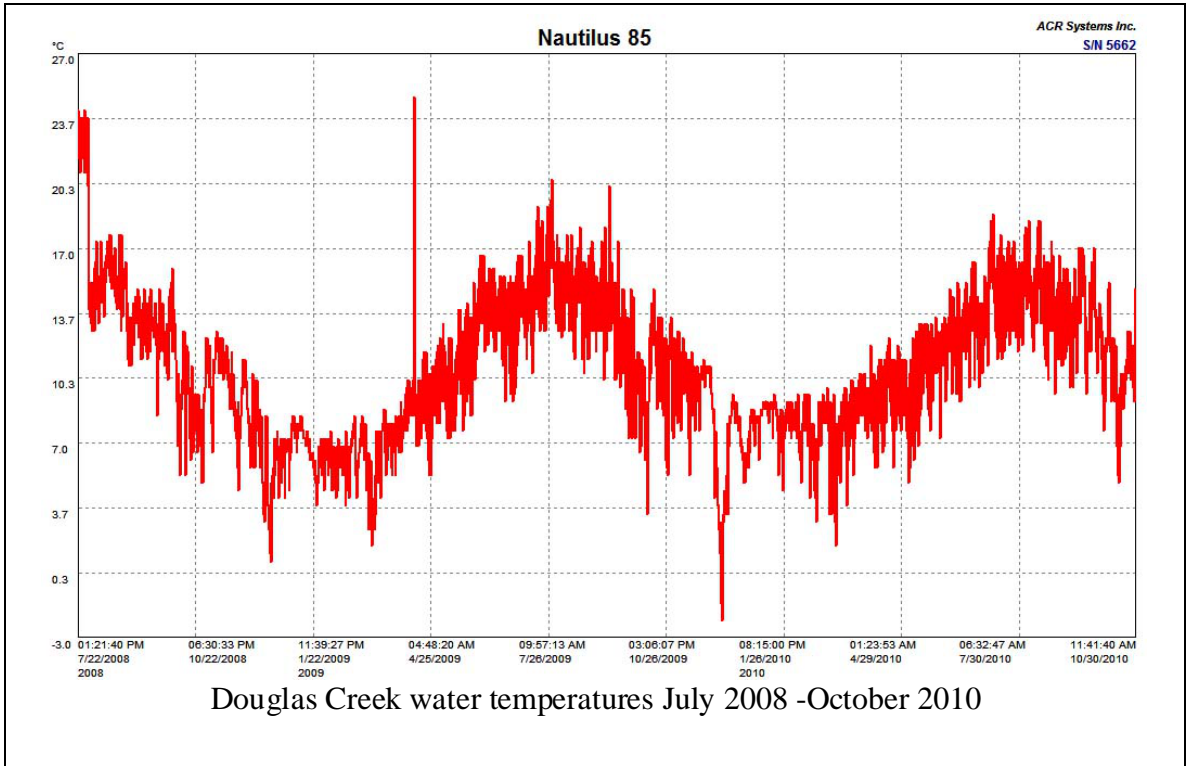
Removing invasive plants is one of the important restoration and preservation tasks for Mount Douglas Park. And the fantastic success of these hard-working volunteers is likely not recognized by many Park visitors – after all, the removal of invasive plants leaves more plants, albeit natural plants and many visitors possibly don't recognize the difference. But without this herculean work, the Park trees would be covered with ivy, the ground cover would be garlic mustard and Scotch broom would be over all the hill tops! Walk down the Glendenning Trail and look for the areas they have completed and compare this to adjacent areas not yet tackled.



Several of the invasive group volunteers take a quick photo break.

Although there are a few regular super volunteers, there are opportunities for others to contribute an hour or more towards the effort. Look on our website calendar for where to meet or contact Judy Spearing (jandd_spearing@shaw.ca). The group needs more help!

Douglas Creek Water Temperature and Flow Volumes - PSF Grant



The water temperature in Douglas Creek has been measured every 30 minutes for the past decade. Our Society installed a temperature recorder that has a ten-year battery life and sufficient memory to store a decade's worth of data (yes, we replaced the battery!). Yearly we download the data to produce an annual temperature chart.

We received a \$1000 grant from PSF to which we are adding \$1000 from our Society as partial funding for the purchase and installation of a recording device that will allow determination of water flow volumes. This project is in conjunction with the CRD and Saanich Parks. The device will measure water depth, most likely at the weir. The total water flow volumes can then be calculated from the depth values.

One of the biggest challenges for salmon habitat restoration in Douglas Creek is the extreme storm surge volumes. The only way these surges can be reduced is with a distributed approach throughout the Gordon Head watershed. Proven techniques include

rooftop downspout disconnects where the water is redirected into gardens. This has the triple advantage of reducing the storm system surges, helping your garden and improving the general water table.

Other techniques include rain gardens and street swales, both of which can reduce the surge levels, help the water table and, with proper vegetation, can reduce street runoff pollutants. Other cities have had good success with rain gardens. They can significantly enhance the streetscape.

Rain gardens have had the best success when residents take ownership of the rain garden as part of their yard frontage and use it to enhance the neighbourhood. For some reason, we have yet to see this ownership approach in Saanich; hopefully some neighbourhood will soon take this on and provide a good local example of a rain garden that others could emulate .

Monitoring the creek water flow surges over the long term should provide an indication of the success of storm surge mitigation techniques.



Campus View Students Cleanup Douglas Creek

Canadian Urban Forest Conference Tour

The Canadian Urban Forest Conference is held every two years to provide a focus for discussion on Canadian urban forestry practices, and to allow for dialogue between professionals and community groups on innovative urban forest strategies, policies, technologies, and management practices. This year's conference was held at the Victoria Conference Centre.

Mount Douglas Park was featured for one of their field trips where FMDPS joined

Saanich Parks in guiding the tour group from the summit of Mount Douglas through different trail and ecological zones, ending at the beach parking lot. We were certainly pleased with the many positive comments from the attendees about the beauty of the Park.

More Trash Receptacles

Saanich Parks has installed two additional trash receptacles, one at the upper Churchill Drive parking lot and the second where the Irvine Trail crosses Churchill Drive. The former adds capacity at the summit where the existing receptacles were overflowing despite frequent emptying. The second at the Irvine Trail should help with doggy bags so that they are not left along the road edge.

As part of the Churchill Park entrance enhancement project, the trash receptacle that was an unintended Park entrance “feature”, has been moved to a less conspicuous but still convenient location.



Large capacity trash receptacles are used in high volume areas. About 2m of the receptacle are underground.



Fall leaves and fungus at work.

Douglas Creek Restoration

There are a few weeks each year when work in salmon-bearing streams is permitted. During last summer's "fisheries window", considerable additional restoration work was completed in Douglas Creek in the section mid-way between the weir and Ash Road. This was year three of our five year restoration plan. The work consisted of armouring the creek banks with tree root balls and logs, each of which was then anchored to large diameter rocks. Spawning gravel was then placed in sections of the creek bottom. Thanks to grants from Pacific Salmon Foundation.

The day after work was completed, a small storm surge took one minute for water to reach levels that would wash away anyone in the creek! This surge was captured on video. There is a link to it in the video section on our website.



Thirty root balls were placed in Douglas Creek this past summer to provide creek bank stabilization and salmon habitat.



Dave Clough, RPBio, developed the five year Douglas Creek restoration plan. Here he keeps a watchful eye on year three work.



Root balls are transferred to creek.



Placing root balls & logs on the creek bank



Place it over there.



Logs and root balls along creek banks



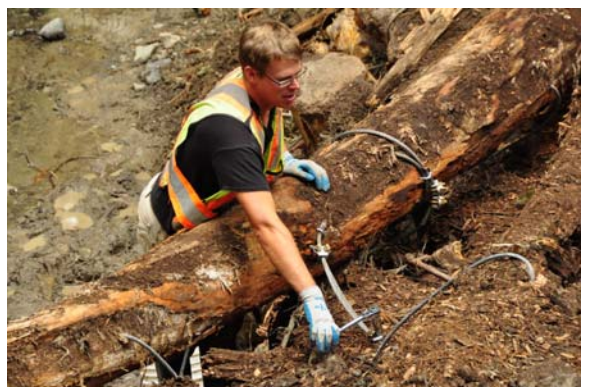
Drilling for anchor cables



Cables around logs to protect creek banks.



Any logs not securely cabled will be washed out with the first storm surge!



Lots of cables and clamps to adjust!

Tree Appreciation Day

Sunday, November 2 was Tree Appreciation Day in Saanich and Mount Douglas Park. Approximately 350 native plants and trees were planted in just under two hours by 30 volunteers. This year's restoration planting was along the temporary access that was used to bring material and machines to Douglas Creek for this past summer's creek work.



Volunteers received expert planting advice before fanning out to do the actual planting.



Junior planter hard at work



Tree Appreciation Day planters.

New Split Rail Cedar Fences

New split rail cedar fences have been installed at several restoration planting sites. Unfortunately many of the very small new plants don't have leaves in the winter and walkers don't seem to see them, resulting in "plants grow by the inch and die by the foot!" Hopefully the fences protecting these restoration areas will be respected.



Cedar fence along Douglas Creek. Earlier restoration planting was trampled and has recently been replanted.



Before: It might look like a trail, but it was the temporary truck and heavy machinery access during last summer's creek work. The split rail fence was temporary prior to the restoration work.



After: Same temporary access, but after restoration. The many small native plants will likely take a year to be fully established. Hopefully no walkers here!

Saanich Parks staff are to be congratulated on the exceptional restoration of this temporary access "road".

No Crosswalks – yet...

Two major trails cross roads that still don't have crosswalks. One is the Douglas Trail paralleling Douglas Creek where it crosses Ash Road. The second crosses Cedar Hill Road mid-way between Churchill Drive and Ash Road. There is a real need for crosswalks at both locations – during peak traffic times it is almost impossible to find a safe break in the traffic. And unlike unmarked crosswalks that are defined in the motor vehicle act at every road intersection, crossing at these trail crossings is jay walking. Engineering insists on good sight-lines so that the walker can see any vehicles, and more important, so the vehicle driver can see the walker well in advance to provide ample stopping time.

Love Victoria - Volunteers Clean Park

Love Victoria is a new initiative from the Cadboro Bay United Church where, each month they try to do something to support and show love for this area.

The first initiative was to focus on Mount Douglas Park with a big trash pickup effort. Volunteers concentrated on the beach, Churchill and Cedar hill parking lots and also along the Cedar Hill and Cordova Bay Roads.



Cadboro Bay United Church initiates “Love Victoria” initiative with Mount Douglas Park cleanup

Tools, car parts, dirty diapers, household trash and fast food drink and food wrappers were picked up, but the real surprise was the number of cigarette butts along the roads. It's a bit of a scare to think these might have been thrown from passing cars during the dry summer months.

A big thanks for their efforts and we wish them real success with their great initiative.

Annual Pumpkin Lineup

Every year the lineup of carved Halloween pumpkins placed on the log borders of Cordova Bay Road through the Park seems to grow in number.

Upcoming Events

Watch for the salmon carcass toss, salmon parr and fry transplants in the new year. They will be posted on the website calendar



Halloween pumpkins at the Park entrance.



Safe in the Park

Danger Tree Work

Dead trees and overhanging branches are assessed as to their danger to passing park visitors. If determined to be a danger, every effort is made to cut as little as possible to make them safe. If a tree can be safely topped, it will be converted to a wild-life tree.



Two boom trucks used to access dead, overhanging branches.



Any volunteers for this work?



Tree topping - Even more fun...?



Heading down to the creek with native plants for restoration planting along the banks.



Little Mount Douglas

How Many Trees are in Mount Douglas Park?- by Professor Trainboat

*Have you ever wondered
How many trees are in Mount Doug Park?
Young Emily decided to count them
She got her notepad and made a start*

*She started in the south
And worked her way north
Counting Maples and Cedars
And Douglas Firs of course*

*She counted ten, then a hundred
To one thousand and one
Then she got overwhelmed
There was so much counting to be done*

*Then she spotted an Owl
Perched at the top of a tree*

*He was looking back at her
And he asked quizzically:*

*"Why are you counting them,
Each one separately,
When they all work together
To support you and me?"*

*Emily shrugged her shoulders
The Owl was right
She was looking so hard at the trees
That she missed the forest in plain sight*

*She looked around the forest
And realized that the counting was done
The total number of trees in the Park
Is, and always will be, **one**.*

Board of Directors

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At-large	Matt Boyd	1571 Craigiewood Court	V8N 5Y3	813-0102
At-large	Nancy Lewthwaite	1559 Mt Douglas X Road	V8N 1Z9	658-0763

Membership Renewal - Gift Membership

Providing information via this newsletter about the Park is an important Society function. We want to reach more Park users and Park neighbours. Why not **give someone you know a gift subscription and include it with your renewal**? A one-year membership isn't much more than the price of a good cup of coffee! You provide the gift and we'll send notification to the recipient of your generosity. We hope you will continue to support the work of the Society for another year.

Gift From _____

New Member (or renewal) form:

Name: _____

Email _____

Address: _____

Postal Code _____ Telephone No. _____

Membership **4 years \$20** 3 years \$15 2 years \$10 1 year \$5

Send or deliver to: Treasurer, Friends of Mount Douglas Park Society
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Colour versions of newsletters are available on website.