



MEDIA RELEASE

February 20, 2017

Temporary trail closure at Oyster River Nature Park

Campbell River, BC – Once again, heavy fall rains followed by a severe wallop of winter weather have wreaked havoc on hiking trails in the Oyster River Nature Park, damaging trees and fencing along portions of the park trails. Thanks to some provincial grant funding, the Strathcona Regional District can start working to improve the most hardest hit areas of the park trail. Starting today, the popular Fisherman’s Trail will be closed to the public between the hours of 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. until March 10, 2017, to ensure public safety while workers resurface the trail.

The Oyster River Nature Park in Electoral Area D is situated on Regent Road on the north side of the Oyster River, and is a popular spot for dog walkers, nature lovers and fishermen. Year after year, the Oyster River breaches its banks during periods of heavy rain, leaving portions of the park under water. Raging river waters have also caused significant erosion along portions of the river bank, making parts of the trail dangerous or impassible.

“We were fortunate to receive funding this year that would allow us to make improvements to the Fisherman’s Trail,” says Aniko Nelson, Parks and Planning Manager for the regional district. “However, the downside is that we have to close the trail temporarily while work is underway. There will be heavy equipment in use in the park during the coming days, and we must exercise caution to make sure people are kept safely away from the work site. We realize this is not ideal for park users, but ultimately our goal is to make the trails safe for everyone to enjoy.”

This work comes on the heels of the closure of trails outside the Oyster River Nature Park boundary – commonly referred to as the “Pub-to-Pub Trail” – that reside on private property. An agreement with the private land owner has lapsed and the regional district is working to negotiate a renewed agreement for those portions of the trail corridor resting on private land. In the meantime, the property owner has restricted access to the private portions of the trail that connect to the Oyster River Nature Park due to risk and liability associated with erosion and bank instability caused by recent storm events.

“The regional district understands the importance of this trail network to the community and we are hopeful to reach a renewed agreement with the property owner that will allow for continued public use of the trail,” says Nelson. “In the interim, we ask for the public’s patience as we continue negotiations.”

Questions regarding the temporary trail closure can be directed to the Parks Department by calling 250.830.6722 or by email to parks@strathconard.ca.

The Strathcona Regional District is a partnership of four electoral areas and five municipalities providing approximately 43,000 residents with 55 services including parks, liquid and solid waste systems, fire protection, emergency preparedness programs and a full-service sports facility.

-30-

Media contact:

Aniko Nelson, Parks and Planning Manager

250-830-6708