

Friends of Strathcona Park
Newsletter - Spring 2026
Box 3404, Courtenay, B.C. V9N 5N5
www.friendsofstrathcona.org



Annual General Meeting

July 11, 2026, 2:30 – 4:30
Followed by a potluck barbeque.
Bbq salmon provided by FOSP.
Please bring chairs and eating utensils and something to share.
Details on page 4 of the newsletter.

Location:
Peggy Carswell's house
7040 River Ave. North

Many Hands, Lasting Impact: Restoring Karst Creek Together

This past spring, the Friends of Strathcona Park brought together an inspiring group of volunteers for a weekend of stewardship, connection, and conservation at Karst Creek on the shores of Buttle Lake.

From May 8–10, twenty-five volunteers from across Vancouver Island gathered to tackle an invasive species threatening one of BC's most treasured landscapes: Scotch broom. Participants included students, teachers, international students, and community members, many experiencing hands-on conservation work for the very first time.

The results were extraordinary.

Working over two full days, volunteers removed an astonishing amount of broom from the Karst Creek Group Campsite (FOUR truckloads to be exact!) and surrounding habitat. Four large contractor bags were filled, along with two enormous piles left for BC Parks to transport to the Campbell River waste facility. In fact, the volume removed exceeded what volunteers could haul themselves.

Timing was critical. By removing Scotch broom during peak bloom, volunteers targeted the plants at their most vulnerable stage, reducing future seed production and giving native vegetation a chance to recover.

But the weekend was about much more than invasive species removal.

Participants shared meals, gathered around evening campfires, learned about Scotch broom ecology, and explored nearby Myra Falls together. New friendships were formed, and a deeper

appreciation for Strathcona Provincial Park emerged among volunteers of all ages.

The event also demonstrated the power of community collaboration. The project was made possible with the funding received from the Sitka Activator Fund, and partnership from BC Parks, Greenways Land Trust, BroomBusters, and Timberline Secondary School helped make this inaugural event a success.

Perhaps most importantly, the broom pull cultivated a new generation of park stewards.

Youth participants gained firsthand experience protecting BC's oldest provincial park and discovered that meaningful conservation can begin with a single weekend of collective action.

The scale of the invasion was eye-opening, but so was the impact of community effort. With this momentum, the Friends of Strathcona Park are committed to returning to Karst Creek in future seasons and expanding stewardship opportunities throughout Strathcona Park.



K2 Creek Bridge repair:

What's known as K2 Creek is about a 20 - 30 minute walk to the west of Bedwell Lake. It's the beginning of a trail the Friends constructed in the 1990's after the famous blockade that pressured the government of the day to add the Bedwell Valley back into Strathcona Park after it and some other areas had been deleted. This trail leads all the way to the ocean at the head of Bedwell Sound and can be accessed by boat from Tofino. Over the years FOSP has periodically worked on keeping this trail open and in 2010 rerouting a large part of it when a good portion of the old road bed it was built on washed away.

The crossing over K2 Creek consists of two yellow cedar logs which have been in place for about 35 years and are beginning to deteriorate. The safety issue with this crossing is that it is located at the top of a waterfall with a long drop. If a log was to break, it would be fatal.

Why is this an important trail? It opens up a massive area of Westcoast rainforest that needs

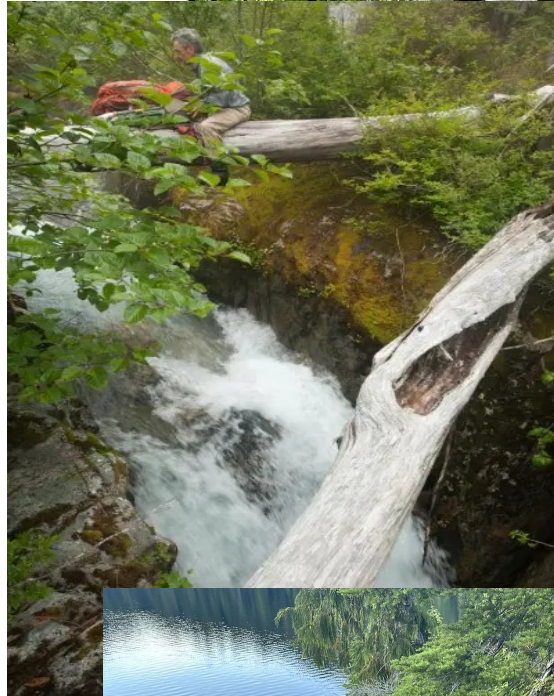
protection to the Pacific ocean, and beyond? As more and more people seek an escape from urban life the backcountry needs to be able to absorb this pressure in a controlled way that addresses human impact on the wilderness.

The Pacific side of the Bedwell needs to have a comprehensive plan to address these coming pressures and a well built trail is the spine to support where and how people access this precious area. In its present state the trail is almost self regulatory in that its condition controls who access the area. At the moment only the most adventurous persons will attempt this route due to its condition. The Friends team who scouted out the K2 bridge last August seek to make that crossing safe for the foreseeable future, however, as demand increases and it will, there will need to be a more substantial investment made in its replacement.

FOSP has a Park Use Permit allowing us to work in this area. Later this summer the small group that visited the site last year will go in to replace the old logs with new ones and add a cable hand rail. Parks will fly supplies in beforehand. Park staff have been very supportive of this project and are helping out as best they can with a very limited budget.

Long term plans are to replace this crossing with a more substantial bridge costing a lot more. This requires proper engineering and a detailed plan.

This will be a future direction to be discussed at our upcoming AGM.



FOSP AGM July 11, 2026 2:30 – 4:30

**Peggy Carswell's house
7040 River Ave. North
Merville, B.C.**

www.fertile-ground.org/directions-2.html

There will be a potluck barbeque starting at 5:30. FOSP will provide salmon for the main course.

Directions to get to Peggy's place. North of Courtenay on Highway 19A at the Merville Store turn towards the mountains. Follow Merville Road several kilometers to where Headquarters Road joins it from the left. Merville Road becomes Headquarters Rd. and continues straight ahead. Follow it to the stop sign and turn right. Proceed to Railway Avenue and turn right again. Continue to River Ave. North and turn left. Peggy's place is the second driveway on the left. Park along the road please. There is a map available at

John and Marlene will be stepping down as directors. Marlene is one of the founders of FOSP and John has been involved almost as long. Both are willing to work with new directors to help the transition. We would like some of you to join the Board of Directors of the Friends to carry on the work we have to do. Please consider this as there is still much to do.

In order for us to plan we would like you to tell us if you re coming and how many people you would be.

You can email us via jsmilne64@shaw.ca.

**FOSP Membership Form
Thank you for renewing.**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ **Postal Code** _____

Phone _____ **alternate phone (cell)** _____

e-mail _____

Membership (suggested \$10 per year) _____

Donation (tax receipts for anything \$25 and over. _____

Number of People coming to AGM (July 11) _____

Comments _____

send to: Friends of Strathcona Park, P.O. Box 3404, Courtenay, B.C. V9N 5N5