

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New shoreline property on the Cowichan River dedicated to CVRD as parkland

Cowichan Lake South/Skutz Falls, BC - The Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) is pleased to announce that Little Beach, a popular tubing destination on the Cowichan River, has recently been dedicated to the CVRD as public parkland.

The property was acquired through a rezoning/subdivision application process as a 5% park dedication requirement under the *Local Government Act* and community amenity contribution. The new park is located in Electoral Area F – Cowichan Lake South/Skutz Falls, to the east of the Town of Lake Cowichan, and has formally established a dedicated access/egress point on the Cowichan River. Little Beach is a popular summer tubing destination, but also provides year-round access for other recreational users such as fisherpersons and paddle sport enthusiasts, as well as swift water training grounds for local first responders. The CVRD plans to work with stakeholder groups to develop a short-term plan for 2023 that ensures on-site safety and park maintenance.

“This property is vital to maintaining the recreational use of the Cowichan River for thousands of residents and tourists to this area each year, and will become a jewel of a community park in close proximity to a municipal centre,” said Ian Morrison, Director of Area F – Cowichan Lake South/Skutz Falls. “We are thrilled to see Little Beach formally designated as public parkland, and grateful to the former property owners for their contribution of a property that holds significant public interest and benefit. I look forward to continuing conversations with stakeholder groups about how we can transform this park into a space that’s accessible and welcoming to all community members and user groups.”

In the longer-term, CVRD will work with the Town of Lake Cowichan, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, RCMP and tubing rental companies on overall improvements to the function and safety of this popular tubing and kayaking take-out point on the river. The CVRD will begin work on preparing a conceptual plan, identifying key park amenities to add while taking on the management and maintenance of Little Beach Park through delivery of the Regional District’s community parks program in Electoral Area F. As well, riverfront ecological remediation will be important to manage the riparian area and establish a more direct route for outdoor recreationalists to move through the park to exit from the river, reducing further impact to the riparian area.

“The addition of this property into our community parks portfolio is a big win for the region, allowing for the opportunity to establish an effective management approach balanced with environmental sustainability for what is an already heavily-used riverbank area on the Cowichan River,” said Brian Farquhar, Division Manager of Parks & Trails for the Cowichan Valley Regional District. “The ability to now manage this popular site under our parks program allows for striking a balance between public access to recreational opportunities and public values with protecting and enhancing the environmental integrity of the Cowichan River.”

More information on the management and planned improvements for this emerging park will be on the CVRD website, under About Parks & Trails: <https://www.cvrd.ca/96/About-Parks-Trails>

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