

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New signs installed at Cherry Point / Hwts'ahwum beach area ask the public to help protect wildlife by keeping dogs on-leash

DUNCAN, BC – Cowichan Tribes, the Ministry of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship, and the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) are working together in an interjurisdictional effort to help protect wildlife from being negatively impacted by off-leash dogs in the Cherry Point / Hwts'ahwum beach area.

New signage has been installed at four public beach access points: Manley Creek Park, Satellite Drive, Clearwater Road, and Cherry Point Nature Park. The new signs ask the public to help protect birds and wildlife by keeping dogs on-leash and under control when on the beach or shoreline. The sandflats and the shoreline in the Cherry Point/ Hwts'ahwum beach area are a critical habitat for many resident and migratory birds, and other wildlife species.

"The CVRD is pleased to be working in partnership with Cowichan Tribes to protect birds and wildlife at Cherry Point / Hwts'ahwum Beach," said Brian Farquhar, Senior Manager of the CVRD Parks & Trails Division. "The wildlife awareness signage developed is being installed at CVRD-managed public beach access points to educate beach goers on these critically important natural intertidal and foreshore habitat areas for waterfowl, shorebirds and other wildlife."

Birds and other wildlife perceive dogs as a threat and will often take flight if chased or when a dog is nearby. This can lead to the abandonment of nesting sites, disruption of food foraging and may have other negative stress response impacts. Off-leash dogs may also disturb the nests and eggs of birds that nest along the shoreline or adjacent upland areas.

Wildlife are provided legal protections under the BC Wildlife Act. Migratory birds are also protected under the federal Migratory Birds Convention Act and Migratory Bird Regulations. Disturbances to birds, eggs, nests, or other wildlife could result in fines, imprisonment, and/or other penalties.

Additional planning and collaboration by the Province, Environment and Climate Change Canada and Cowichan Tribes will include public education and enforcement patrols.

For residents of in the south Cowichan area looking for designated off-leash dog parks, the CVRD manages the South Cowichan Community Off-leash Dog Park located in Quarry Nature Park in Cobble Hill. The other CVRD designated off-leash dog parks are the Central Park Community Off-leash Dog Park in Honeymoon Bay, and the off-leash dog park area in Osborne Bay Regional Park. North Cowichan also manages several [off-leash dog parks](#) for residents to enjoy.

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For more information, please contact:

Kris Schumacher
Manager, Communications & Engagement Division,
Cowichan Valley Regional District
250-746-2500 ext. 2543 or kris.schumacher@cvrd.bc.ca