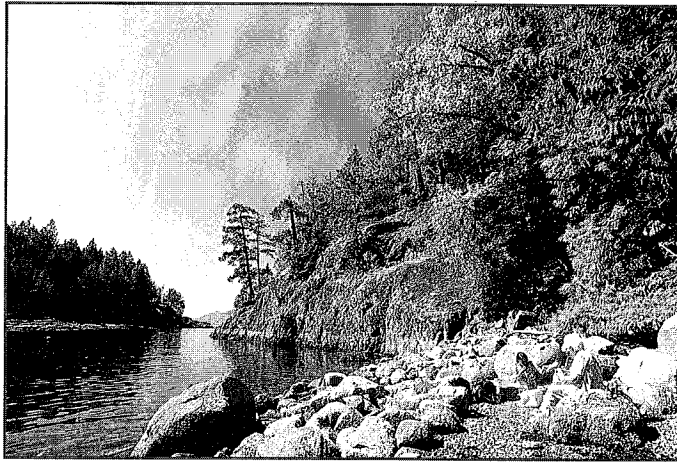


The Nature Trust's Contribution to BC Parks

Francis Point - Photo, Graham Osbourne



BC parks are some of the most beautiful in the world. Hiking up mountainous terrain, watching salmon make their river journey or sitting below a towering Douglas-fir, our parks provide opportunities to enjoy memorable experiences and the ecological diversity of British Columbia.

As a leading non-profit land conservation organization, The Nature Trust of British Columbia has played a key role in both the establishment and contribution of key infill private properties to a number of Provincial Parks. In addition, a number of Nature Trust properties under long term lease to the province or federal government are designated and managed as Ecological Reserves, National Wildlife Areas and Wildlife Management Areas (which will be detailed in the next issue of *The Kingfisher*). Since 1971 The Nature Trust has worked to protect BC's wildlife and plants through the securement and management of high-risk habitats. Due to the generosity, support and foresight of donors and many partners, numerous Nature Trust properties with significant ecological values have been conserved and in a number of cases become part of Provincial Parks. Of over 120 land acquisition projects acquired by The Nature Trust, 11 are managed as Provincial Parks.

"It is very satisfying to know we have been able to add to the conservation values of our provincial protected areas system," said Nature Trust Director Frances Vyse. "For example, at Roderick Haig-Brown Park our purchases were critical to protecting the integrity of the lower Adams River ecosystem; our purchase of private land in 2001 in the small remaining areas of dry coastal forest led to the creation of Francis Point Park."

1. Cowichan River Provincial Park

The Nature Trust acquired 4.4 hectares (11 acres) near Cowichan Lake that became part of the Cowichan River Provincial Park on southern Vancouver Island. This park protects significant stretches of the Cowichan River, a Provincial Heritage River, internationally renowned for its salmon and steelhead fishery. The park features Douglas-fir and Western hemlock forest communities and rare wildflowers. Mammals found in the park include shrews, voles, bats, martens, river otters, black bears, black-tailed deer and Roosevelt elk. At least 200 different bird species inhabit the area including osprey, hawks, owls, ravens and bald eagles.

2. Francis Point Provincial Park

In 2001 The Nature Trust purchased 72.8 hectares (180 acres) at Francis Point west of Madeira Park on the Sunshine Coast. This property is now Francis Point Provincial Park. It features the Very Dry Maritime Subzone of the Coastal Western Hemlock biogeoclimatic zone. This low elevation forest type is exclusive to the eastern side of Vancouver Island and small areas on the Sunshine Coast.

3. Juan de Fuca Provincial Park

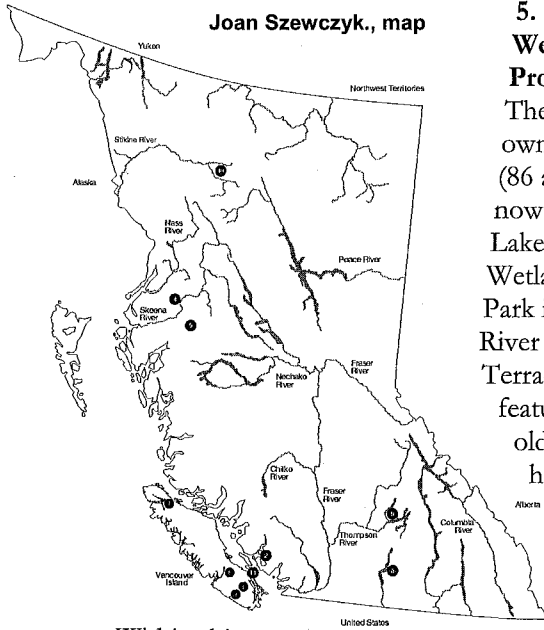
The Nature Trust owns 1.6 hectares (4 acres) at Botanical Beach that is now part of Juan de Fuca Provincial Park. Located south of Port Renfrew on Vancouver Island, Botanical Beach is one of the richest tidal areas along the west coast. It features a unique shoreline framed by ridges of shale and quartz, which jut up through the black basalt to form huge tableaus or "potholes." Juan de Fuca Provincial Park includes China Beach, the Juan de Fuca Marine Trail and Botanical Beach as well as waterfalls, grottos, old-growth forest, estuaries and tide pools.

4. Kitsumkalum Lake Provincial Park

The Nature Trust acquired 61.43 hectares (152 acres) of Kitsumkalum River and adjoining slough with high fish and wildlife values near Terrace. This land is now part of Kitsumkalum Lake Provincial Park. The slough stays open in winter and many waterfowl including Trumpeter Swans overwinter here. As well, it is an important coho and sockeye spawning and rearing area and protects the mouth of Dry Creek. There are large cottonwoods and snags surrounding the slough providing nesting sites for many bird species.

**The Nature Trust of British Columbia
Properties in BC Provincial Parks**

Joan Szewczyk., map



5. Lakelse Lake Wetlands Provincial Park

The Nature Trust owns 34.67 hectares (86 acres) that are now part of the Lakelse Lake Wetlands Provincial Park in the Skeena River Watershed near Terrace. This area features lakeshore old-growth cedar, hemlock and Sitka spruce and spawning habitat for salmonids. coastal

Within this forest, diverse wildlife populations and plant communities exist. The Kermodei bear--a white species of black bear--is native to the area as are coyote, moose, wolf, and cougar. About 100 bird species have been counted in the area, including bald eagles, ospreys and trumpeter swans.

6. MacMillan Provincial Park

In 2005 The Nature Trust was a key partner in almost doubling the size of the MacMillan Provincial Park to over 280 hectares (690 acres). Located on Vancouver Island near Port Alberni, MacMillan Park is a world renowned site. Cathedral Grove in the park features some of the largest and oldest Douglas-fir trees in the world--more than 800 years old and reaching heights in excess of 80 metres (taller than a 20-storey building). In 1944, H. R. MacMillan donated land in recognition of the majestic stand of trees. Three years later it became a Class A provincial park.

7. Marble River Provincial Park

The Nature Trust owns 47.5 hectares (118 acres) of land that is part of Marble River Provincial Park near Port Hardy on northern Vancouver Island. The Marble River flows through a shallow canyon bordered by forest covered bench lands. The

park protects fish and wildlife associated with the river and estuary, including Bald eagle nesting habitat near Quatsino Narrows, steelhead fishery and salmon spawning and rearing habitat as well as waterfowl habitat. The park also contains the under-represented Coastal Western Hemlock very wet maritime biogeoclimatic variant in the Nahwitti lowlands ecosection.

8. Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park

On the east side of Okanagan Lake, just opposite Peachland is Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park. The Nature Trust contributed 202.5 hectares (500 acres) to this park that encompasses ecosystems from three different biogeoclimatic zones: bunchgrass, ponderosa pine and interior Douglas-fir. The park protects habitat for five blue (vulnerable) and two red listed (endangered) bird species including the Western grebe and Whiteheaded woodpecker. Blue listed reptiles found in the park include Western painted turtle, Rubber boa, Gopher snake, Western blue racer and Western rattlesnake.

9. Roderick Haig-Brown Provincial Park

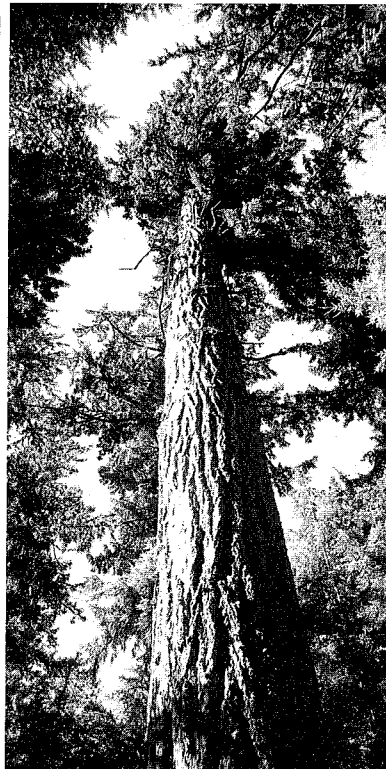
Between 1976 and 1986, The Nature Trust and its partners acquired 46.52 hectares (115 acres) on the Adams River to establish a 1,076 hectare (2,658 acre) corridor along the world-famous sockeye salmon spawning grounds of the Adams River. The wooded area surrounding the river contains Douglas-fir, cottonwood, birch, alder, ponderosa pine, hemlock

and cedar. The park is home to numerous bird species as well as whitetail and mule deer, black bear, beaver, river otter and mink. It is named after one of the first directors of The Nature Trust, Roderick Haig-Brown, a well known conservationist, writer and magistrate.

10. Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Provincial Park

The Nature Trust owns 81.7 hectares (202 acres) at Cold Fish Lake in Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Park. This park is one of Canada's largest and most significant, and it spreads across the Spatsizi Plateau and the Skeena Mountains. Lands within the park support large populations of wildlife. The light snow in the rain shadow of the Eaglenest Range creates one of the most important habitats for woodland caribou in British Columbia. The Spatsizi River Valley,

Photo Doug Walker



with its flooded areas and oxbow ponds, provides aquatic vegetation for summer forage as well as willow flats for winter browse for moose. Grizzly and black bear, wolverine, beaver, hoary marmot, and Arctic ground squirrel are found here as are more than 140 species of birds.

11. Squitty Bay Provincial Park

The Nature Trust acquired 5.7 hectares (14 acres) on Squitty Bay on the southeast shore of Lasqueti Island. Lasqueti Island lies between central Vancouver Island and Texada Island. Ground-hugging prickly pear cacti grow here alongside Rocky Mountain juniper, far from its montane habitat, and the blue-listed California hedge parsley.

BC is one of the most desirable places to live and visit due in large part to our ability to enjoy the province's spectacular natural beauty. However, this beauty is fragile. We must protect it. For over 34 years The Nature Trust has been committed to finding a balance between conserving our land for its extraordinary biodiversity values and providing recreational and economic benefits. Through management plans for each property, The Nature Trust along with its partners assesses the allowed use relative to the conservation values and sensitivity to disturbance. Where appropriate certain properties become part of Provincial Parks and protected areas as one way to conserve biodiversity.

- ***Robin Rivers***

The Nature Trust of British Columbia Properties in BC Provincial Parks

