

## **FRIENDS OF RATHTREVOR PARK**

Parksville-Qualicum Beach

MEDIA RELEASE

January 17, 2008

### **RATHTREVOR BEACH PROVINCIAL PARK NO LONGER THREATENED WITH BUILDING CONSTRUCTION**

After a six month effort, the group Friends of Rathtrevor Park is happy to announce its conclusion that Rathtrevor will not be chosen as the site for the construction of a traffic-generating interpretive centre. "We think our Save Rathtrevor campaign is no longer needed," reported Berni Pearce and Jennifer Duggan, representing the Oceanside Coalition for Strong Communities, one of the participating groups in the campaign. "We feel fairly confident that the recent decision by Parksville City Council has put an end to any thoughts of building a tourist destination building in our protected areas," said Pearce.

She was referring to a motion passed by Parksville City councillors at their regular meeting on December 17, 2007, in which they agreed "the City of Parksville will not support any proposal that would locate a biosphere centre in Rathtrevor Provincial Park or on any other environmentally sensitive lands." "To the best of our knowledge, this motion was never reported in the press," said Pearce, "but it's an important and welcome piece of information for citizens of this region."

The Friends of Rathtrevor Park believe that the Rathtrevor issue is now settled since both Parksville and Qualicum Beach councils have joined MLA Ron Cantelon and declared their desire to protect Rathtrevor and other sensitive areas. Mr. Cantelon's words, as quoted in the PQB News last September 7, were "Time to pull the plug on this."

The Friends of Rathtrevor Park are anxious to convey to MLA Ron Cantelon and to the Councillors of both the City of Parksville and the Town of Qualicum Beach their sincere gratitude for a decision which they believe greatly pleases the entire region.

Campaigner Jennifer Duggan, who had 'hands on' experience interacting with visitors at Rathtrevor last summer, believes this happy result has been achieved simply because the people of this region care so much about their parks and Rathtrevor in particular. "It concludes a very intense, coordinated effort by residents' associations, environmental groups, tourism operators, park users, environmental professionals and Oceanside citizens who organized and attended meetings, wrote letters and emails, conducted and participated in polls, distributed information and signed petitions. People believed they could make a difference, got involved, worked collaboratively - and succeeded," said Duggan.

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