

NEWS RELEASE

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Restoration Magic Underway at Neck Point Park

Summary

Visitors to Neck Point Park may notice a shadier landscape thanks to recent restoration efforts. Over 45 new trees and 300 plants have been added near the parking lot and washroom building. This new vegetation is part of an ongoing initiative to restore the forest understory which has been impacted by off-trail foot traffic. The first phase of this project was completed through a collaboration between students from École Hammond Bay, volunteers from the Nanaimo Area Land Trust and City parks staff.

Nestled among the newly planted areas is a whimsical addition—a Fairy “Welcome Tree” that replaces the beloved “Giving Tree” lost in a windstorm last year. Several fairy and gnome homes have also been refreshed with new walking paths made from windstorm debris and interpretive signage to guide visitors.

As the park’s popularity grows, so has the number of unsanctioned trails and trampled areas. Community members have contributed fairy houses along a secondary trail near Annie Clark Way creating what is now known as “Fairy Lane.”

To help preserve the park’s natural beauty and environmental integrity, visitors are kindly asked not to leave new fairy homes on trails or add non-organic materials such as glitter, plastic or artificial decorations to existing ones.

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Department is planning further restoration efforts, including the removal of invasive species, additional native plantings and the installation of environmental fencing to protect sensitive areas and tree health. These initiatives aim to ensure that Neck Point Park remains a cherished natural space for current and future generations to enjoy.

Strategic Link: The protection and enhancement of environmentally sensitive areas is a key goal of City Plan. Parkland management and providing amenities and spaces to meet evolving community needs is also identified as a need to consider and balance.

Key Points

- Phase 1 of a multi-phased restoration planting project is complete near the parking lot in an effort to rejuvenate trampled forested areas.
- Recent tree fall damaged a popular trail with community-installed fairy homes. A new fairy home has been installed on a secondary trail along with this significant environmental restoration planting work to help balance recreational use while preserving and enhancing natural park features.
- The public should enjoy the park but is asked to not bring additional dwellings or artwork to the park and to stay on designated trails.

Quotes

"Recent work at Neck Point Park has been designed to balance the protection of the park's spectacular natural features with growing and evolving community desires for outdoor recreation. The City of Nanaimo has committed thoughtful planning and stewardship that ensures visitors can enjoy these spaces today while preserving their beauty and biodiversity for generations to come."

Kirsty MacDonald
Manager of Park Operations
City of Nanaimo

Quick Facts

- Neck Point Park has been protected as a City of Nanaimo Park since its purchase in 1996 with additional land acquired and protected in 2009. The 36 acre park features a number of sensitive features, including 14 different habitat types, 170 landmark trees and access to significant underwater habitat at the park's "Neck".
- The new welcome home was created by local nature-artisan Charlie Pickard along with help from carver Cameron Smith and solar panels by Keith Cook. In addition, the tree was donated by Antoine Auger on Denman Island and several local businesses donated materials including Home Depot, Windsor Plywood, Slegg Building Supplies and Home Hardware Brooks Landing.

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Contact:

For media enquiries, please contact:
Communications
City of Nanaimo
media.requests@nanaimo.ca
250-754-4251



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