

NEWS RELEASE

Distributed October 15, 2025

Buttertubs Marsh viewing tower to be renamed in honour of Bill Merilees

City of Nanaimo honours local conservationist's legacy with tower renaming and refurbishment

Summary

The City of Nanaimo will honour the late Bill Merilees by renaming the Buttertubs Marsh viewing tower the "Bill Merilees Viewing Tower." In partnership with the Nature Trust of BC, the City will also refurbish the structure to ensure it continues to serve as a welcoming space for nature enthusiasts.

For more than 40 years, Bill Merilees dedicated himself to the conservation and enhancements of Buttertubs Marsh. As founder and chair of the "Friends of Buttertubs," he championed the marsh as a protected nature reserve, prioritizing environmental stewardship over recreation. His efforts led to the creation of the Buttertubs Trail, expansion of the marsh's protected lands and installation of interpretive signage and wildlife features.

Merilees also played a key role in community engagement, producing a printed nature guide and supporting research projects with VIU students. His legacy lives on in the thriving ecosystem he helped nurture and protect.

Strategic Link: Prioritizing collaboration and open communication with our community, ensuring our work is guided by their feedback and insights.

Key Points

- The Buttertubs Marsh viewing tower will be officially renamed the "Bill Merilees Viewing Tower" in honour of the late conservationist.
- Bill Merilees dedicated over 40 years to the protection and enhancement of Buttertubs Marsh, including trail development, habitat restoration and public education.
- Nanaimo City Council has directed staff to work with the Nature Trust of BC to refurbish the tower and install commemorative signage.

Quotes

"Bill Merilees was a tireless advocate for nature and a true champion of conservation in Nanaimo. Renaming the viewing tower in his honour is a fitting tribute to a man whose vision and dedication helped shape Buttertubs Marsh into the ecological treasure it is today."

Leonard Krog
Mayor
City of Nanaimo

Continued... Buttertubs Marsh viewing tower to be renamed in honour of Bill Merilees

Quick Facts

- Buttertubs Marsh Conservation Area is a 55-hectare wetland and floodplain habitat co-managed by the City of Nanaimo, Nature Trust of BC, Ducks Unlimited Canada and the Province of BC.
- The site features a 2.3 km loop trail, interpretive signage, boardwalks, benches and the viewing tower.
- Bill Merilees passed away on June 18, 2025, shortly after community groups petitioned to name the viewing tower in his honour.

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View the online edition for more information -

<https://www.nanaimo.ca/NewsReleases/NR251015ButtertubsMarshViewingTowerToBeRenamedInHonourOfBillMerilees.html>