

COQUITLAM RiverWatch

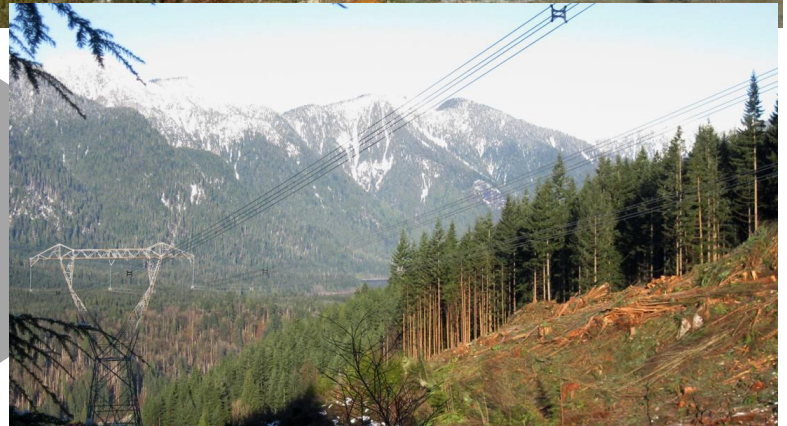
940 Stanton Ave. Coquitlam, B.C., V3J 4V2
imcart@telus.net



JANUARY 2013

NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 172



Photos clockwise from top left
New pump house in E-8 by Charlene
Salmon bones W-4 by Jeff
Pritchett Creek Bridge along the
powerline on Burke Mtn. by Terry
Tree removal for twinning powerline
from Merritt to Coquitlam by Ian
Breann Voth's cross in E-5 by David

DECEMBER RiverWatcher's REPORTS

Ian & Deanna (W-1) Dec. 30

The River was clear and at a normal level. Slade Creek was clear and flowing. Birds included Bald Eagle, gull, and crow.

Ian & Deanna (W-2) Dec. 30

Someone had dumped a piece of furniture along Pipeline Road. The River was clear and at a normal level above and below the gravel operations. The water level at the Galette gauge was .695 metres. Falacea (Fulawka) Creek (#4) was clear & flowing. Mantle Creek (#6) was clear and flowing well. Partridge Creek was clear and flowing well. Marquart Creek was cloudy and flowing well. Goodyear Creek (#11) was clear and flowing. Birds included Bald Eagles, Mallards, Common Mergansers, Buffleheads, Red-tailed Hawks, and chickadees. It was great to see the Red-tailed Hawks as I have not seen them in this reach for quite a while. There were many salmon carcasses around the Archery Pond in Upper Coquitlam River Park.

Dave (W-3) Dec. 31

I was out in the quiet time of day after some snow showers in the morning. There weren't many people on the trail but there were lots of foot and paw prints in the sand. Some straw and bricks were on the riverbank at McTavish Park. The straw is from the park construction but I'm not sure where the bricks came from. There was rusty water from a culvert just south of Galette Park running into the river. I don't recall it being this noticeable before. There was a bundle of newspapers at Galette and some litter around the waste can. There was too much litter at Galette Park and why litter is left beside a garbage can, or why someone would pick up dog poop and then throw away the full bag is beyond me. The McTavish Park users are cleaning up the area on their own as I took a garbage bag to pick up litter I had seen the previous day but it had already been picked up. There was a lot of wood debris along the Galette McTavish trail, which will all wash downstream once the river gets higher. There is also a washout of a large portion of the debris island behind McTavish Park. It appears that this process will continue. The River was running nice and clear and at a normal level. There are a lot of fresh sand deposits left from the higher water levels. Wildlife included Common Merganser, Steller's Jays, an immature Bald Eagle at Galette Park, and an Eastern Grey Squirrel. I have heard this eagle keening along the river for several weeks now, pestered by a nimbyistic crow. The eight jays were complaining to one another. There must be a feeder nearby.

Charlene (W-8 & 9) Dec. 11

The River was running clear and low. Water was flowing out of Mundy Creek into the Coquitlam River. I could see sediment striations along the riverbed from the Millennium Bridge. Birds included American Wigeon, Black-capped Chickadees, thrush, gulls, Mallard, Bufflehead, Green-winged Teal, merganser and sparrows. There was lots of coyote scat along the dykes, but I did not see any coyotes themselves. The grass/vegetation was being cut right down on either side of the dykes by a Metro Vancouver employee, along these reaches. Firework sales were brisk with non-stop traffic into the sales office. Otherwise, it was rather quiet.

COQUITLAM LAKE

METRO VANCOUVER GATE

1900 PIPELINE

GALETTE

CORTES

PATRICIA PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

LOUGHEED HWY.

KINGSWAY

GATES PARK

PITT RIVER RD. (RED BRIDGE)

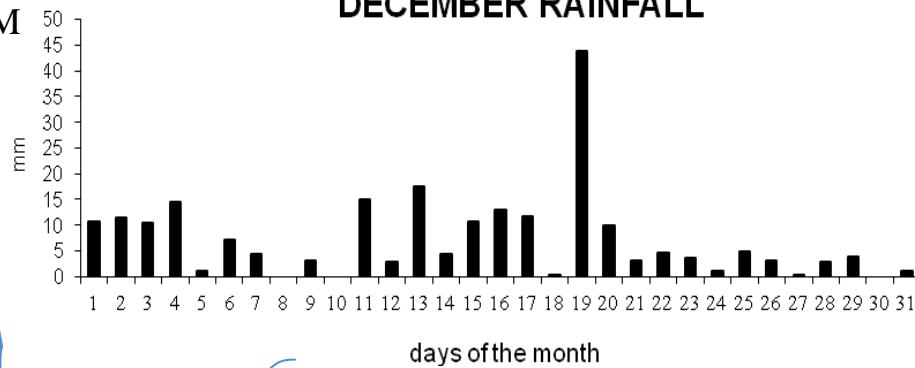
COLONY FARM

MARY HILL BY-PASS

FRASER RIVER

N

DECEMBER RAINFALL



Susan (E-4) Dec. 30 (Oxbow Side Channels)

The side channels were clear and at a normal level. There was thin ice on the stillest ponds. In the old equestrian center, by the new salmon rearing pond, grass seed has been strewn on the muddier areas and is now sprouting, even in the middle of winter. I saw 3 recently dead coho and about a week ago, I saw them alive, very red and spawning. Birds included Black-capped Chickadees, juncos, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Mallards, Buffleheads, Hooded Mergansers, Common Mergansers, kingfishers, gull, Great Blue Herons, Bald Eagles (3 immature, 1 adult), Varied Thrush, towhees, nuthatches, song sparrow, crow, and a flicker. I also saw an Eastern grey squirrel. Other birds seen thus far in December along this reach include Chestnut-backed Chickadees, Downy Woodpeckers, Pine Siskins, and Anna's Hummingbirds.

Susan (E-3) Dec. 30

The River was clear and at a normal level. Birds included Golden-crowned Kinglets, Common Mergansers, gulls, Black-capped Chickadee, Bald Eagles (3 immature, 1 adult), and a dipper.

David (E-5) Dec. 7

It was fairly busy on the trails for a weekday. This reach continues to be fairly clean. The River was clear and at a normal level. Birds included Glaucous-winged Gull, Common Merganser, Mallard, Pacific Wren and Northwestern Crow. There were 11 dogs off leash and only 1 on leash. This had to be one of the worst days for dogs off leash on the trail. If you want to let your dog off leash take them to the Dog Off Leash Park wonderfully supplied by the City of Port Coquitlam. The white berries of the common snowberry shrub are quite evident at this time of year.

David (E-5) Dec. 30

It was a very busy Sunday afternoon. A homeless camp has been established under the Lougheed Highway Bridge. On December 31, I saw the RCMP heading towards the camp, but I don't know the outcome. It's a shame that people have to choose to live under a bridge, whether because of lack of funds or lack of trust of the social services. Breann Voth's remembrance cross had a plant and small decorated tree placed at the base of the cross. There was an improvement in on leash dogs as there were 9 on leash and 4 off leash. I'm not sure if it's the holidays and people are more lax or the City of PoCo isn't out cleaning up or both but there was a lot of garbage around. The River was clear and at a low level. I'm assuming the low water level was due to the cold conditions higher up the mountains. Birds included Glaucous-winged Gull, American Dipper and Northwestern Crow. This was the first American Dipper I have seen this fall/winter. It was great to see one of my favourite birds. I'm always happy to see the little fellow as it means, even with all the challenges, that the river is still capable of supporting wildlife.

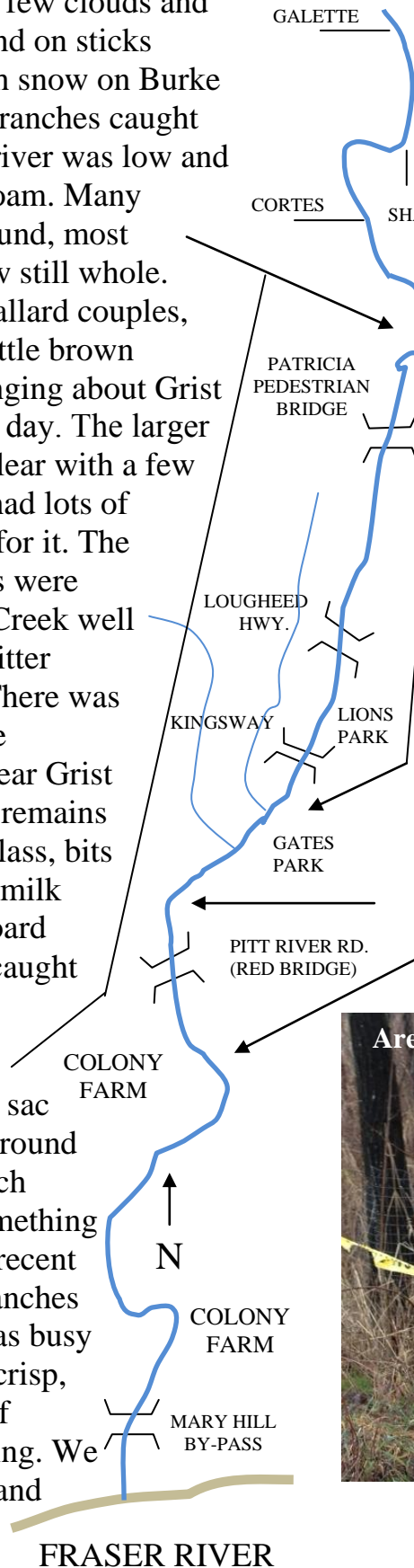
DECEMBER RiverWatcher's REPORTS

Jeff (W-4) Dec. 8

The morning was sunny with a few clouds and cold with frost on cars, roofs and on sticks along the river. There was fresh snow on Burke Mountain. Drops of water on branches caught the sun through the trees. The river was low and clear with some small bits of foam. Many salmon carcasses were still around, most reduced to bones only but a few still whole. Birds seen included gulls, 2 Mallard couples, ravens, chickadees and some little brown fellows. An eagle had been hanging about Grist Creek but he didn't appear this day. The larger Gabriola outfall was low and clear with a few soapy bits, the smaller outfall had lots of bubbles, which is now normal for it. The Dunkirk and Saltspring outfalls were flowing and clear. The Maple Creek well and Grist pipe were running. Litter pickup was on December 26. There was only a small amount of garbage everywhere except the beach near Grist Creek. Garbage there included remains of a fire, newspapers, broken glass, bits of conduit, a spray can, plastic milk crate, a broom head and cardboard box. A foam mattress had got caught on a downed tree in the river.

Carole & Lyn (W-4) Dec. 30

Just north of Salt Spring cul de sac (near pumps), we had to skirt around low hanging tree branches which looked to be vine maple, or something of similar growth pattern. The recent snowfall may have bent the branches lower than normal. The trail was busy and clean, but considering the crisp, clear sunny weather, the lack of wildlife was somewhat surprising. We only saw one Northern flicker and one squirrel. The River was clear and at a normal level.



Ian & Deanna (E-7) Dec. 30

The River was clear and at a normal level. Scott and Maple Creeks appeared clear and flowing. The level of Reeve Slough still appears to be lower than it has in the past. Birds included Wood Ducks, Great Blue Heron, Mallards, Pacific Wren, Song Sparrow, gull, and chickadees. There were still salmon carcasses around.

Charlene (E-8) Dec. 31

River was low, clear, and flowing downstream. A lot of work is still happening along the reach, mostly between the Millennium Bridge and Wilson Farm. A new building has been erected where the old pump house used to stand. The area along the river adjacent to this has been blocked off and it appears that Metro Vancouver is working to stabilize the area – lots of gates, ribbon, and pylons along this zone. Birds included geese, Mallard, hawk, thrush and Bufflehead.



Newsletter editor
 Ian McArthur
 (604-939-4039)
 Email: imcart@telus.net