

COQUITLAM RiverWatch

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NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 185

THE FUTURE OF THE RIVERVIEW LANDS

The Province announced a new visioning process on the future use of the Riverview lands and the objective is to identify potential future uses for the site and inform the City of Coquitlam as it develops neighborhood planning. The process is informed by a set of guiding principles and aims to balance community values, government requirements and economic sustainability.



Inuksuk in E-5 by David

The first two open houses have already occurred and the attendance was impressive. The sense from almost everyone who attended all had similar good words for the excellent mental health care carried out at Riverview in past decades and thought that the future uses of Riverview should follow past practices and preserve the green spaces. If you have not yet submitted comments to the website, there is still time. We encourage all to submit their heartfelt thoughts. People who do not wish to submit comments via the website (**renewingriverview.com**) have the option of submitting them simply by email to **questions@renewingriverview.com** or by regular mail to Communications, Renewing Riverview Committee, 1701- 4555 Kingsway, Burnaby, BC V5H 4V8. There is no immediate deadline for comments, but please do it soon. We expect the second in the series of meetings to be held in May or June.

FINGERLING FESTIVAL

On Saturday, May 3 from 11am – 3 pm: The Port Moody Ecological Society will host its 23rd annual Fingerling Festival at their Noons Creek Hatchery and the Port Moody Skating Arena. Coquitlam RiverWatch will attend with our display along with 59 other environmental organizations. Children's

singers, Bobs and Lolo, will be back by popular demand with shows at 11:30am and 1:30pm. Come help release 40,000 salmon into Noons Creek at this free, fun, family event. There will be games and activities for kids of all ages.



Leachate (iron oxide) in E-5 by David



Marquart Creek running almost clear in W-2 by Ian

JANUARY RiverWatchers' REPORTS

Ian (W-1) Jan. 25

The River was clear and at a normal flow. Slade Creek was clear and flowing. Birds included American Dippers, raven, Common Merganser, and a Varied Thrush. I saw two dippers and one was singing.

Ian (W-2) Jan. 25

Twenty cars were at the remote plane park and two cars were at the remote car park. A family of four was by the River. 6 people were having a fire in UCRP. At least 12 people were at the Archery Pond with remote boats in the pond and helicopters flying around the pond. I don't think this is allowed and I have never seen people using the pond for this before. They did not stay long enough for me to get a photo. I hope I never see this again. 6 people were at Galette Park. The River was clear above and below the gravel operations. It was at a normal level. The water level at the Galette gauge was .620 metres. Falacea (Fulawka) Creek (#4) was clear & flowing. Mantle Creek (#6) was clear and flowing. Partridge Creek was clear and flowing. Marquart Creek was almost clear & flowing. Goodyear Creek (#11) was clear and flowing. Birds included 4 Bald Eagles (3 mature & 1 immature), American Dipper, and a Common Merganser.

Dave (W-3) Jan. 16

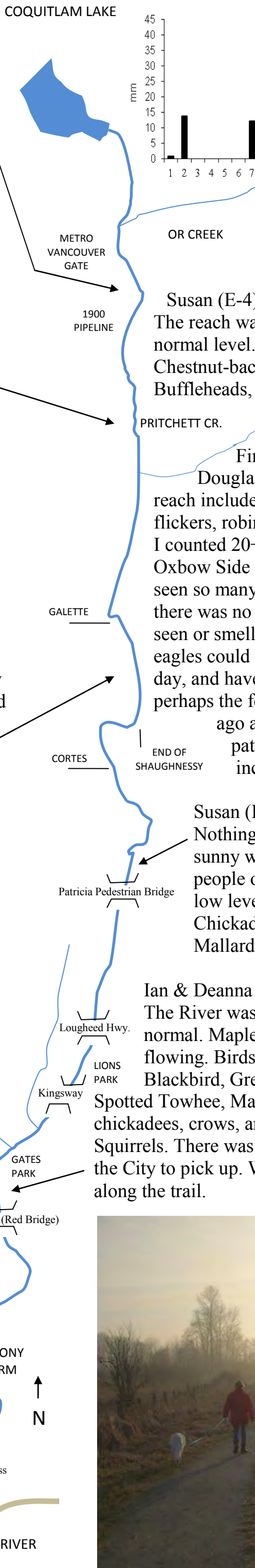
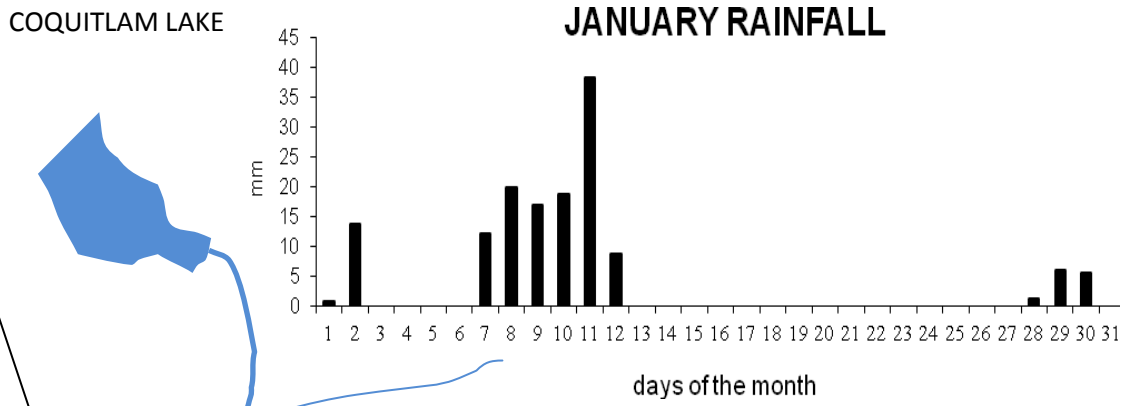
One person was at Galette Park, two people were watching their dogs and one guy smoking a joint at McTavish Park. Galette and McTavish Parks were pretty clean and the south foot of Hockaday Street had fast food wrappers and pop cans. The River was cloudy and at a normal level. Wildlife included juncos, Bushtits, thrushes, towhees, gulls, crows, Eastern Grey Squirrel, and Douglas squirrel. Reasonably quiet day with few people out- a bit cold perhaps. The River looked good and was moving fast. McTavish Park has become an off leash park for the neighbourhood. Dogs are on leash for the walk to and from the park but enjoy their freedom once at the park. Not really complaining.

Charlene & Roger (W-8 & 9) Jan. 26

7 dogs were on leash and only 2 were off leash. Three fisherman dressed in full fishing gear were in the mouth area by the Fraser River. The River was quite high and moving quickly. Bird activity included kingfisher (in Mundy Creek), geese, Red-tailed Hawk, heron, and a Mallard. Two coyotes were noted in the Home Farm from the Home Farm Dyke Trail. They looked healthy and unconcerned about us. The recent weather has been lovely. Cold and crisp with foggy mornings. On this day, the fog never lifted from Colony Farm Park. We waited until later in the day to do the reaches in the hopes that the fog may lift.



Garbage gathered and piled up in E-7 by Ian



Susan (E-4) Jan. 4 **Oxbow Side Channels**

The reach was very clean. The water was clear and at a normal level. Birds included Black-capped Chickadees, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Mallards (140), Buffleheads, Wood Ducks, crows, Great Blue Heron, Bald Eagles, Song Sparrows, Anna's Hummingbirds, towhees, juncos, House Finches, and Pine Siskins. I also saw a Douglas Squirrel. Birds also seen this month in this reach include Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, flickers, robins, and Varied Thrushes. Earlier this month I counted 20+ bright red coho salmon spawning in the Oxbow Side Channel near River Springs. I have never seen so many. Last year I only counted 5. On this day, there was no sign of them, not a dead one to be either seen or smelled. I think the increase in the number of eagles could be related to that. I saw four eagles on this day, and have seen them often lately. I also wonder if perhaps the fence that was installed a couple of years ago along parts of the side channel close to the path is keeping dogs out of the water and increasing the number of salmon surviving.

Susan (E-3) Jan. 24

Nothing remarkable on this day. Just a warm, sunny winter day along the river with quite a few people out enjoying it. The River was clear and at a low level. Birds included Black-capped Chickadees, American Dippers, Bald Eagle, juncos, Mallards, and crows.

Ian & Deanna (E-7) Jan. 26

The River was clear and the level was a little lower than normal. Maple and Scott Creeks appeared clear and flowing. Birds included Wood Ducks, Red-winged Blackbird, Great Blue Heron, Pacific Wren, woodpecker, Spotted Towhee, Mallards (2 in Scott Creek), robins, chickadees, crows, and a gull. I also saw 2 Eastern Grey Squirrels. There was a pile of garbage that someone had left for the City to pick up. We also saw 2 propane tanks discarded along the trail.



Foggy day in Colony Farm by Roger

JANUARY RiverWatches' REPORTS

Jeff (W-4) Jan. 18

The river was low and clear on a foggy Saturday morning. I walked downriver at the river's edge and returned on the Trans Canada Trail. Many fish spines and some rotting salmon carcasses were along the river. Grist Creek had 28 carcasses and one live salmon which looked badly beaten up. Mallards, mergansers, many gulls, a dipper, a kingfisher, crows, chickadees and a flicker were seen or heard. Large intrusions included a burned shopping cart and a tent pitched by the river. And I accidentally stumbled across a brand new geocache. The Maple Creek well was running. The outfall at the north end of Gabriola was very low with a horrible orange-brown foam on the water. Earlier in the month high water followed by very low water left several fry stuck in the side channel pool by Cooper beach. These fry are extremely good at hiding – I noticed them one evening in the light of my headlamp but was unable to find them by day. I airlifted 6 out. To my astonishment there was a water strider in the pool. A Great Blue Heron has been a regular visitor to the smaller of the two outfalls at the north end of Gabriola where a few fry still hang out. Dippers have been in good singing voice all month.

Daily Water Quality Checks by Jeff

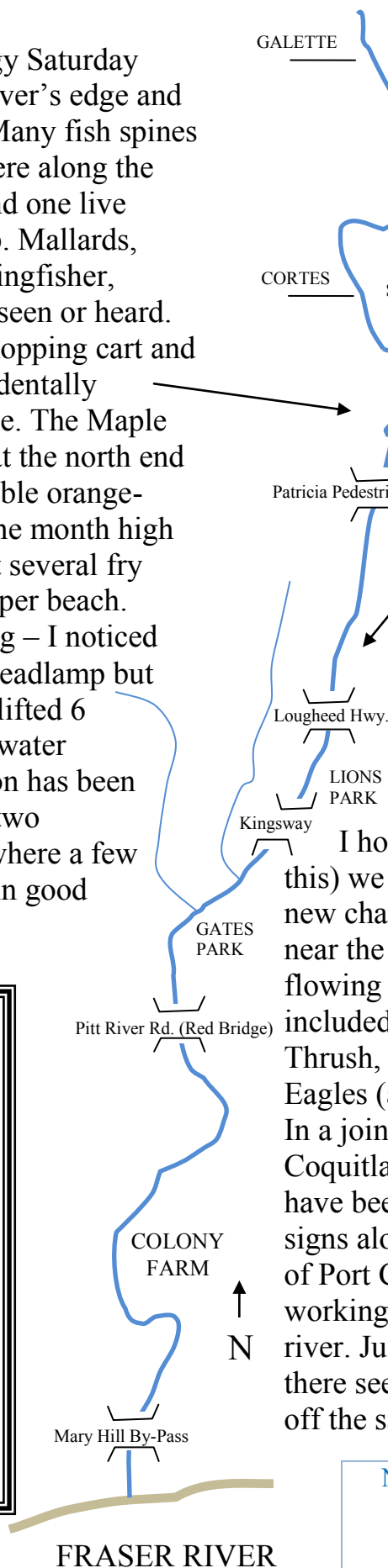
January was a month of extremes for river level, the river being very high on January 3, 9 and 12, and very low from the 19th through the 31st, almost as low as it was in August. Water quality was murky or silty on the 2nd and 3rd and from the 8th to the 12th, cloudy on the 5th, otherwise clear. As usual, water quality was poor when the river was high.

David (E-5) Jan. 27

The Dog Off Leash Park was moderately busy, 1 car parked at the Mountain Bike Park, but no riders visible. Someone built a small Inuksuk on the beach just before the Patricia Pedestrian Bridge. Leachate was quite noticeable, flowing from the City of Port Coquitlam works area.

I know that the leachate is supposed to be harmless but it looks particularly bad at this time of year. Between the iron oxide colour and the oil residue on top, it doesn't leave a good impression. The River was clear and at a low level. It was hard to believe that the water could be that low in January.

I hope (can't believe I'm writing this) we get some rain soon. A complete new channel has now been eroded out near the debris dam and water is flowing much more normally. Birds included Northern Flicker, Varied Thrush, Northwestern Crows, Bald Eagles (adult), and an American Dipper. In a joint undertaking, the City of Port Coquitlam and the City of Coquitlam have been erecting sensitive fish habitat signs along the river. Kudos to the Cities of Port Coquitlam and Coquitlam for working to improve the habitat along the river. Just a personal observation but there seems to be more bird life living off the salmon runs in recent years.



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FRASER RIVER