

## About the Friends

The Northeast Woods Lazo Marsh Conservation Area comprises approximately 467 acres (186 ha) of land under three jurisdictions — the Comox Valley Regional District, the Town of Comox, and the Government of British Columbia. About one-third of conservation area is used for light recreation with many popular trails for hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding.

The Friends of Comox-Lazo Forest Reserve Society (FOCLFR) was incorporated in 1996, two years after the Northeast Woods was declared a Crown Forest Reserve by the Government of British Columbia. The Society's members are committed to good stewardship, preservation and protection of the area.

The Society conducts annual cleanups of the Northeast Woods Area and over the years has cleaned up much of the debris remaining from the years when the Torrence Road section was used as a municipal dump. Volunteer patrols ensure trails are maintained and "unfriendly" activities are discouraged.

Many trails in the conservation area have been named after local pioneer families or native flora and fauna. Others have been named by local mountain bikers who created many of the trails.

The conservation area is recognized for its special and rare ecosystems, which include second growth mixed forests, meadows, sand dunes, lakes and marsh wetlands. A wealth of wildlife — bird, mammal, reptile, amphibian and fish — inhabit the area and many rare native tree and plant species are also thriving.

For more information about FOCLFR, please visit us on the website of our sister organization, The Comox Town Residents' Association at:

Don't get lost, get involved!  
Join Friends of Comox Lazo  
Forest Reserve  
[ctrahq.wordpress.com/foclfr](http://ctrahq.wordpress.com/foclfr)

## Northeast Woods-Lazo Marsh Conservation Area

### Cared for by .....



### Friends Of Comox-Lazo Forest Reserve

...and its co-management partners

Questions, suggestions and comments are welcome and should be directed to the Friends of Comox-Lazo Forest Reserve, the Comox Valley Regional District or the Town of Comox.

### Contact Information

Friends of Comox-Lazo Forest Reserve: 250-339-4015  
Comox Town Residents' Association: 250-339-6654  
Town of Comox (Parks): 250-339-2202  
Comox Valley Regional District: 250-334-6000

## History

The Comox Peninsula was first settled by homesteaders in 1862 on Crown land. Sections of Lazo Marsh were drained to grow potatoes and hay until the 1940s, when beaver activity made it unusable for farming. About this time, Queen's Ditch was dug in the north section to drain land for CFB Comox.

In the 1960's, Bert Marriott bought 175 acres (70 ha) in the area, including what was then known as the Radford Swamp. He established a bird sanctuary on 166 acres and crusaded to prevent hunting and protect the swamp for migratory birds. At that time there were large stretches of open water deep enough to paddle a boat around.

In 1975, 85 acres of Lazo Marsh was bought by what is now The Nature Trust of B.C and in 1980 the organization acquired a further 38 adjoining acres of marsh to the north. Water retention in the Lazo Marsh area has been the focus of ongoing restoration projects by Ducks Unlimited since 1981.

Much of the southern forested sections were logged between 1890 and the 1920s and forest fires later ravaged some portions of this area.

Town of Comox land at the Torrence Road terminus of the Reserve served as a municipal dump from 1949 to 1976. In 1982, the Town of Comox was granted Crown land in the southeast to establish a nature park and preserve the Lazo Marsh. In 1994, following intensive lobbying by local residents and environmental groups, the entire northeast section was designated a wildlife reserve by the Government of British Columbia. In 2001, 313 acres (127 ha) became a Wildlife Management Area. This included The Nature Trust of British Columbia property as well as the Crown wildlife reserve.

A Co-Management Agreement signed in June 2004 officially granted joint stewardship of this area to all jurisdictions. Partners in the preservation of the Northeast Woods-Lazo Marsh Conservation Area, are the Province of British Columbia, the Comox Valley Regional District, the Town of Comox, the Comox Town Residents' Association and the Friends of Comox-Lazo Forest Reserve.

## The Trails

Currently, several kilometres of popular trails crisscross the conservation area from the sand pit near Pritchard Road through forest, meadow and marsh to Curtis Road. Seasonal, walking-only trails are identified at the trail start with an orange metal triangle. All-season, multi-use trails are identified with a green triangle. Trail name signs are posted above the triangle markers.

Trails in the Lazo Marsh area are often wet and are therefore designated "walking-only". Other trails may be overgrown, rough and/or hazardous due to heavy rains or winds. Periodically, trails are decommissioned to protect sensitive areas and permit natural growth to re-establish itself. These trails have been blocked with logs or rocks and visitors are asked to respect the closures.

Visitors are advised to stay on marked trails for their own safety. Many rusting metal objects, remnants of the Comox municipal dump, are hidden in tangled undergrowth. Deep holes from abandoned wells and diggings also exist in some forested areas.

Mountain bike enthusiasts often share the trails with walkers and hikers. All users are expected to show courtesy to others enjoying the conservation area.

The preservation of this beautiful area depends to a large extent on the cooperation and vigilance of visitors. Any violations or damage should be reported to one of the co-management authorities listed on this brochure.

Although bear and cougar are very rare in this area, visitors should be on the alert and report any sightings to authorities.

The park is open from dawn to dusk all year. No motorized vehicles or fires are permitted within the conservation area boundaries.

All visitors to the conservation area enjoy it at their own risk.

