



For immediate release

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SD 69 and SD 71 working together to determine the future of Tribune Bay Outdoor Education Centre

COMOX VALLEY, B.C. – The Boards of School District 69 (Qualicum) and School District 71 (Comox Valley) are working together to address the future of the Tribune Bay Outdoor Education Centre. This follows the difficult decision by the Tribune Bay Outdoor Education Society to cease operations due to financial limitations.

Both districts are in close consultation with the Tribune Bay Outdoor Education Society to fully understand the financial challenges that have led to the current situation. This collaboration underscores a commitment to transparency and mutual support in navigating the Centre's future.

The districts and the Society share a long-standing agreement regarding the park's operations, as outlined by the Park Use Permit, which is due to expire on December 31, 2024. In anticipation of this expiry, and starting March 17, 2024, SD 69 and SD 71 will assume full responsibility for the park's operation, maintenance, and protection, ensuring that the Society's absence does not impact the park's upkeep.

"Tribune Bay Outdoor Education Centre has provided many students of Qualicum School District with extraordinary learning experiences, leadership growth and development over the last thirty years." said Eve Flynn, Chairperson for Qualicum School District. "We support exploring new opportunities for this camp and hope that a new and vibrant set of programs can emerge from this time of transition."

Recognizing the importance of community input and support, the school districts are eager to collaborate with the Hornby Island community, the Society, and BC Parks. The goal is to explore all available opportunities that may alleviate the current financial strains and to devise a sustainable structure for the Centre's programming and operations.

"In facing these challenges, we are reminded of the significant role the Tribune Bay Outdoor Education Centre plays in our community and in the lives of our students," said Michelle Waite, Chairperson for Comox Valley Schools. "We are committed to engaging with the island community and stakeholders while determining future involvement of SD 69 and SD 71 within the park lands that hosts the centre."

The decision by the Society to halt its operations means that the 2024 booking season at the Centre is lost. By the end of June 2024, the districts aim to conclude their explorations of sustainable options. This timeline is critical for making informed decisions about the potential renewal of the Park Use Permit, ensuring the Centre's long-term viability and accessibility to users.

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