

OTTER POINT & SHIRLEY RESIDENTS & RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION (OPSRRA) INFORMATION UPDATE NOVEMBER 2007

The Otter Point & Shirley Residents & Ratepayers Association (OPSRRA) is a registered non-profit society with an elected Board of Directors and strives to present the points-of-view of its members to local government. OPSRRA was founded in 1992 and has a membership of about **375**. Any resident or property owner in Shirley and Otter Point is eligible for membership.

Lifetime memberships cost \$5.00 per person and are available from OPSRRA directors—see our web site (www.opsrra.ca) for further information and on-line registration.

The purpose of our society is to:

- Ensure that the development of the two communities of Shirley and Otter Point takes place in an orderly way and in the best interests of its residents.
- Co-operate with local government and other public bodies in the furtherance of the objectives of the society and benefits to the community.
- Concern itself with the performance of government agencies.
- Encourage citizens to stand for public office.
- Promote community spirit and sense of identity by organizing or supporting appropriate activities.

Are you an OPSRRA member? Do you want to receive the OPSRRA newsletter and notice of meetings directly to your e-mail address? OPSRRA is now e-mailing this newsletter to over **185** of our members. Contact Arnie Campbell at: d.acampbell@shaw.ca if you want to receive this membership service.

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1. UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Contact Arnie Campbell at: d.acampbell@shaw.ca or 642-3113 to have your community event listed in our monthly community events calendar.

Thursday November 1	Public Forum Western Forest Land Sales in Shirley, Jordan River & Otter Point Areas 7:30 p.m. S.J. Willis School Auditorium 923 Topaz Avenue, Victoria BC (Blanshard & Hillside Avenue)
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Thursday November 1	Juan de Fuca Parks Committee 5:00 p.m. JDF Electoral Area Services Office 2-6868 West Coast Road, Sooke BC
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Saturday November 3	Juan de Fuca Community Trails Society Finding Bradford Swamp Meet at 9:30 am at 2452 Kemp Lake Road (parking is limited at the trail-head) This is a 2 to 3 hour walk with reasonable footing and no great changes in elevation. Dress for the weather. Contact Rosemary (642-2767) for more information. Check the web site for hike details: www.freewebs.com/communitytrails
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Sunday November 4	Shirley Fall Fair 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Shirley Community Hall
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Sunday November 4	Juan de Fuca Salmon Restoration Society Open House 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Charters Creek Project 3 km up Sooke River Road, right-hand side of Charters Bridge
Tuesday November 6	Developing a Strategic Vision Steering Committee Monthly Meeting 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon Board Room "A" SEAPARC Leisure Complex 2168 Philips Road Sooke BC
Wednesday November 7	OPSRRA Membership Meeting 7:30 p.m. Otter Point Fire Hall 3727 Otter Point Road, Sooke BC
Tuesday November 13	JDF Land Use Committee Meeting 7:00 p.m. Shirley Community Hall You can obtain the agenda at the CRD Planning Services office, 2-6868 West Coast Road or on the CRD website at: www.crd.bc.ca/jdf/index.htm Click on "Agenda" at the top of the page.
Wednesday November 14	Shirley Community Association General Membership Meeting 7:30 p.m. Shirley Community Hall
Thursday November 15	Sooke Electoral Area Recreation Commission (SEAPARC) Meeting 7:00 p.m. Multi-Purpose Room "A" SEAPARC Leisure Complex 2168 Philips Road Sooke BC
Friday, Saturday, Sunday November 16, 17 & 18	All Sooke Arts and Crafts Christmas Fair November 16 1:00 to 8:00 p.m. November 17 & 18 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Sooke Community Hall Two floors of our wonderful local artisans. Don't miss it!
Tuesday November 27	Developing a Strategic Vision Forum Water—Environment—Change 7:00 p.m. Otter Point Fire Hall 3727 Otter Point Road (at Kemp Lake Road) Third in a series of public information forums presented by the Developing a Strategic Vision Project.



Saturday December 1	Juan de Fuca Community Trails Society Explore the trails at Camp Barnard Meet at 9:30 am at the end of Young's Lake Road (parking is limited at the trail-head) This is a 2 to 3 hour hike. Dress for the weather. www.freewebs.com/communitytrails
Sunday December 9	Sooke Region Museum, Moss Cottage Christmas and Snowman Building Contest 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
December	Otter Point Fire Department Candy Cane Run  Watch for information about the date, route and approximate times of Santa's travels around Otter Point
Saturday January 5, 2008	Juan de Fuca Community Trails Society To be announced www.freewebs.com/communitytrails
Second & Fourth Thursday of every month	Shirley Quilters and Crafters 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Shirley Community Hall

2. NOTICE OF OPSRRA MEMBERSHIP MEETING

OPSRRA will be holding its fall membership meeting on Wednesday, November 7 from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the Otter Point Fire Hall. Topics will include an update and discussion of the conditional sale of Western Forest Products land in Shirley, Jordan River and Otter Point; proposed changes to the Rural A portion of the Zoning Bylaw; draft JDF parks plan; and proposed new residential developments. A complete agenda will be sent to members on e-mail, to others by request.

3. SHIRLEY EDUCATION & ACTION SOCIETY (SEAS) ELECTS DIRECTORS

The Shirley Education & Action Society elected the following directors at its October 7th Annual General Meeting:

President:	Dominique Bernardet
Vice-President:	Michael Galizio
Secretary/Treasurer:	Tom Tidwell
Directors at Large:	Eric Ellis and Bobbi Metzger

4. WESTERN FOREST PRODUCTS LAND SALES IN SHIRLEY, JORDAN RIVER AND OTTER POINT

Well. There goes the neighbourhood! First, it was TimberWest and now Western Forest Products saying they want to sell their forest lands near our settlement

areas and move their forestry operations further into the bush. Given that the only folks interested in buying the forest lands are not interested in keeping them as working forests I guess that we'll have to find a new motto for the area, as "Where The Forest Meet The Sea" may soon no longer be a very accurate description for Shirley, Jordan River and Otter Point!

Your OPSRRA directors feel that the continued movement of large parcels of private forest land out of forest production and into residential development is going to place enormous pressure on our small, rural communities and we are not ready for it—at least not yet. As a ratepayers' association we are guided by our constitution that says that one purpose of our organization is to ensure that development in the local area happens in an orderly manner and in the best interest of the residents. We have taken the position that some serious, area-wide planning needs to happen before considering further development on the large tracts of private forest land being sold in our area.

- Our present zoning bylaw is out of date and the drafting of a new one has been delayed for over a year. Currently much of the WFP land in Shirley, Jordan River and Otter Point is zoned Forestry which would allow one house on a 10 acre fee simple lot or possibly 4 houses if the lot were rezoned to Rural A and allowed to be strata titled.
- As an unincorporated area, the Province approves our subdivision applications, determines where our roads go and permits lot averaging.
- CRD mapping of the area to identify sensitive ecosystems such as wetlands, streams and watersheds is incomplete.
- Stronger local bylaws are needed to protect watersheds, potential potable water sources and other environmental features.
- The Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Parks Plan for the area is still in an early draft stage. Final recommendations for future parks and trails have not yet been made.
- The CRD Master Parks Plan will not be officially updated to include planning for the area until 2010.
- The CRD Regional Growth Strategy, which is currently designed to prevent urban sprawl from developing west of Sooke, will not be reviewed until 2008.
- Fire protection, which is provided by volunteer fire departments, is non-existent in some areas.
- Community amenities such as parks and trails and community services such as fire protection, police, roads, transit, schools, water, septic, building inspection and bylaw enforcement will have to be developed and maintained.
- Our present tax base is primarily residential and very limited given the size of our population. Removing the private forest lands from the TFL to help ease the debt of WFP will transfer that debt, in part, to the local taxpayer, who will be required to support the infrastructure that residential development will demand.
- Residents in Shirley and Otter Point are exploring governance options as many are not satisfied with the present system of one elected Regional Director who has to represent Willis Point, the Malahat, East Sooke, Otter Point, Shirley, Jordan River, Port Renfrew and the First Nation lands in Esquimalt and View Royal.

These are some of the outstanding issues that we feel have to be addressed and we have been lobbying both our provincial and Regional District governments about our concerns. The November 7 OPSRRA membership meeting will be an opportunity for you to hear more, let your directors know whether you support our efforts and to suggest what further actions we should take.

5. DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC VISION PROJECT FORUM

Details of the forum are on the project's website: www.jdffuture.org

Date: Tuesday, November 27

Time: 7:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Place: Otter Point Fire Hall

Topic: Water—Environment—Change

Format 20 minute presentation by each speaker followed by a moderated question and answer session and concluded by brief “wrap-up” comments from each speaker.

Everyone Welcome

No Charge

It's Your Community!

This public information forum is the third in a series of workshops and community information forums sponsored by the Otter Point & Shirley Residents and Ratepayers Association (OPSRRA) and the Developing a Strategic Vision Steering Committee.

The **Developing a Strategic Vision** project also produces an Information Bulletin. It is available on the web site or can be sent directly to your e-mail address by contacting Arnie Campbell at d.acampbell@shaw.ca. The Vision project now has a Discussion feature. Once you register you can log onto the site and post your own comments about the Otter Point and Shirley Vision project, read the comments of others, comment on theirs, etc.

6. OTTER POINT EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROGRAM LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS

The **Otter Point Emergency Services Response Program** is looking for volunteers to act as neighbourhood Pod Leaders and Assistants. Otter Point has been divided in 35 Pods, each consisting of 20 to 30 homes, to act as self-reliant micro-neighbourhoods in the event of a disaster. Every Pod requires a Pod Leader and Assistant whose role is to organize and to prepare the Pod to care for one another during an emergency. Once organized, every Pod Leader will be equipped with radio communications linking them to a command centre to communicate their status and needs. This is a very important program for the safety and survival of our community and volunteers are essential for it to work. As the program is in the development stage it is looking for many volunteers interested in helping to organize the program. Training will be provided.

Interested in helping? Please contact:

Richard Muller OPemerg.prep@shaw.ca or
Shelley Mitchell 642-2350

7. RECYCLING IN OUR COMMUNITY

It doesn't make much sense to be lobbying government, business and others to help protect our local environment if we ignore our own responsibility to minimize our personal impact. Enough moralizing ... Where does your garbage go? Where do old appliances and electronics end-up? How many old vehicles are rusting

away in your yard? Try using some of these services to safely dispose of your recyclables:

- **Scrap Metal:** You can recycle scrap metal, batteries and tires can in Sooke. Try the scrap metal yards on Sooke River Road and in the Industrial area behind Edward Milne Community School.
- **Pop & Beer Cans, Beer & Wine Bottles, Tetra Paks, etc.** Take these back to the retail source. In most cases, you've already paid a recycling fee and deposit. Use the service and get your deposit back. If you have a lot of different deposits and don't want to go to various retail outlets or don't want the nickels and dimes, take your items to the bottle depot on Idlemore Road (just below Saseenos Elementary School). You can donate your deposit refund to one of the community groups registered there or take it home to your own piggy bank.
- **Electronics:** You can now recycle desktop computers, monitors, TVs, printers, and fax machines through the Electronics Stewardship Association of BC. This is a new program that allows for FREE recycling of these electronics at designated locations. The depot in our area is at the Salvation Army Thrift Store in Sooke (3-6686 Sooke Road). Phone 642-3612.
- **Motor Oil:** You can recycle used oil at the Canadian Tire store in Langford. Drop your containers off at the designated spot outside their automotive department between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.
- **Hazardous Waste:** Take paints (with labels left on) and batteries to the Sooke Garbage disposal site in Sooke.
- **Styrofoam:** Dispose of packaging, food trays, containers, etc. by contacting Pacific Mobile Depot. Phone: 893-8383.

Contact CRD Environmental Services for more information:

CRD Hotline: 360-3030
Email: hotline@crd.bc.ca
Web Site: www.crd.bc.ca/es

8. UPDATE: SOOKE REGION MUSEUM

Lesley Douch, Juan de Fuca Electoral Area representative to the Board of the Sooke Region Museum, provided the following update:

The Museum Board continues to look for financial contributions and is hoping for a five-year contract with Sooke Municipality, as well as applying for other grants. The Juan de Fuca Economic Development Commission has commissioned heritage signs for various neighbourhood sites. The Sooke Harbour Chamber of Commerce will lease space in the Museum, starting November 1. The caretaker has given notice. The Society has nominated Sooke as best heritage community to Heritage Home Magazine. Artifacts will be borrowed from the B.C. Museum and private individuals for the Provincial Police exhibit and reunion in August 2008. The annual Moss Cottage Christmas and Snowman Building competition may be held again this year on Sunday, December 9 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

9. UPDATE: JUAN DE FUCA ELECTORAL AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Ken Douch, Chair, JDF EDC, submitted the following:

Residents should be aware that there is no representation from Shirley on the EDC, and also that the Commission lacks members from several other areas of the JdFEA. Individuals with business experience or ideas for an improved economic

climate in the area are welcome to apply to become commissioners. I can outline what would be involved if anyone is interested (kalsooke@shaw.ca). New initiatives could lead to a more effective and influential Commission.

10. UPDATE: JUAN DE FUCA PARKS COMMISSION

Ken Douch, Vice Chair, JDF Parks Commission submitted the following:

Desire has been expressed for improvement of the parks to make them more useful and a number of people have come forward to express their willingness to provide park stewardship. The Commission is in favour of this, if carried out in a logical manner, and the following steps would be needed.

1. Form an organized group of neighbours and interested parties that can be identified by the Commission.
2. Generate a plan for the park for improvement and maintenance, and get agreement from the Commission and neighbours.
3. Generate work parties and funds and donations of materials and labour.
4. Carry out work and invite Commissioners to see the results

It should be noted that your tax dollars are extremely stretched for the maintenance of parks, and so not a great deal of help can be given to these activities; however, working under the umbrella of the CRD would provide professional advice and also indemnity.

11. JUAN DE FUCA ELECTORAL AREA RURAL A ZONING REVIEW

The most recent options being considered for change to the Rural section of the Electoral Area Zoning Bylaw, according to a handout provided at the October 30 Open House, are:

Eliminate the option for strata subdivisions:

The zone remains the same, but restricts the ability to create a strata for each dwelling in a four-on-ten scenario. It will still allow the construction of the permitted dwellings, but eliminate the possibility to strata them.

To permit only one dwelling per lot:

The zoning would reduce the number of dwellings to one per lot regardless of the lot size. Minimum lot size would remain at 4.0 Ha.

To permit the subdivision of 4 dwellings on 4.0 Ha, plus 1 dwelling on the remainder, but no additional lots:

Permits the subdivision of one 4 Ha (10 acre) parcel into four 1 Ha (2.5 acre) parcels for permitting one dwelling on each lot. If there is a remainder lot, it is permitted one dwelling unit. For example, this would allow a 7.0 hectare parcel to subdivide permitting the creation of four lots on 4.0 Ha and the remainder parcel of 3 Ha is permitted one dwelling.

To permit subdivision of 4 lots on lots 7.99 Ha or less with a minimum lot size of 0.81 Ha and to restrict subdivision on lots 8.0 Ha and greater, and restrict strata subdivisions:

Lots less than 8.0 Ha would remain within the current Rural Zone permitting up to 4 dwellings. The zone would also permit the creation of 4 parcels with a minimum parcel size of 2 acres (0.8 Ha). All lots 8.0 Ha and over would be rezoned to restrict

further subdivision, but still allow up to a maximum of 8 dwelling units as per the current Rural zone. Both zones would eliminate the ability for strata subdivision.

OPSRRA will not be commenting on these suggested options until we see the report being prepared by CRD Planning Services for the November 13 Land Use Committee meeting. These proposals will be on the agenda for discussion at the November 7 membership meeting.

12. DID YOU KNOW THAT ...

The trail west of Muir Creek through what is now called Blueberry Flats was known as the Bark Trail? In the 1880s, the Muir family commercialized what was probably a native practice of stripping the bark from Western Hemlock trees and using it for dye. Many of the harvesters were early settlers at Otter Point. The Muirs arranged for the harvested bark to be brought to the mouth of Muir Creek where it was collected and shipped to six tanneries in Victoria where it was used in the leather making process.

Jacobs Creek in Shirley was named after Mr. Jacob who was one of the local bark harvesters in the 1880s? The bark, which he and other early settlers harvested from the Western Hemlock trees, was sent to Hawthorne's and other tanneries in Victoria. Starting in the 1920s, logs from the Jacob's Creek area were transported to the Point No Point where they were boomed and then towed to mills in Victoria. The Jacob's Creek watershed was once the site of some of the highest railway logging trestles in the area. Steep slopes (as much as 30% along the watercourses) made access difficult and often dangerous. Much of this land is now owned by Western Forest Products; 942 acres has just been sold to a private developer.

Information for this month's **Did You Know That?** is from *The Sooke Story—The History and the Heartbeat and 4,000 Years—a History of the Rainforest*, written and published by the Sooke Region Museum

Do you have local historical information that you would like to share or questions that you would like answered? If so, let us know and we'll try to help.

13. FREE SMALL BUSINESS LISTING ON OPSRRA'S WEB SITE

OPSRRA welcomes The Stick in the Mud Coffee House, 6715 Eustace Road in Sooke. The Stick is in Sooke, but the owners are from Otter Point. The Stick is a place to gather and discuss issues (current hot topics include the WFP land 'auction'), to congregate, drink acclaimed coffees and chinwag about the weather and all things coffee house-esque. The Stick features a landscaped courtyard, an outdoor play area for the under three-foot crowd(!) and the area's only La Marzocco.

It's the best coffee available, some fine eats and terrific teas, great ambiance, live music sometimes and comfortable chairs and couches.

Do you operate a small business? Are you an OPSRRA member? OPSRRA is offering a free business listing service for members, on its web site: www.opsrra.ca We will list non-members for a suitable donation!

The purpose of this service is to provide an opportunity for businesses in Jordan River, Shirley and Otter Point to advertise their goods and services to their local community. We anticipate having listings for accommodation, farm produce, art, furniture-making, fishing charters, eco-tours, firewood, knitting, soaps, landscaping, bookkeeping, sewing, spas and more. More information, businesses already listed, and an on-line registration form are available on OPSRRA's web site (www.opsrra.ca) under **Business Listings**.

The OPSRRA web site has more information about the following business listings:

1001 Welding & Equipment Repair	Accent in Grooming
ALM Organic Farm	A Point of View B&B
Beaches West B&B	Bear Home Remodeling
Birds Edge Press	Blue Waters B&B
Eagle Cove Beachfront Guest Suite	Fancy That Esthetics & Body Care
Full Circle Seeds	Heron's Rest B&B
Jambo Pet Sitting Service	Kemp Lake Store
Knotty Beds by Nature	Le Sooke Spa
Otter Point Beach House	Rhythm's Edge Percussion Shop
Road's End Construction	Sandy's Drywall Ltd
Stick in the Mud Coffee House	Straitview Ridge Bed & Breakfast
Tugwell Creek Honey Farm	Tugwell Creek Meadery
Wood Visions	

14. BACK ISSUES OF THE OPSRRA NEWSLETTER

Back issues of the OPSRRA newsletter are available on the OPSRRA web site.

This monthly newsletter is prepared by the directors of OPSRRA. It is available to members by e-mail and to others on our web site: www.opsrra.ca. To have an item you would like to have considered for placement in the newsletter, or make a comment about the newsletter, contact an OPSRRA director. OPSRRA tries to verify the correctness of the information in this newsletter; if we have got it wrong we will acknowledge that and make a correction as quickly as possible.
