

From: **Fof IvBeach** <friendsofislandviewbeach@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Jul 12, 2016 at 3:07 PM
Subject: Re: questions from the Times Colonist
To: "Dedyna, Katherine (Times-Colonist)" <KDedyna@timescolonist.com>

Hello Katherine,

We had positive discussions with CRD staff after the stakeholder meeting on Friday, and came away hopeful we can reach better communication and understanding of each others positions. The Friends of Island View Beach have offered to assist the CRD in the recovery strategies for the contorted-pod evening primrose, and the sand verbena moth. We have been saying for three years now that we support environmental protection where it is shown to be necessary.

There are few protected species resident in the park, and, as far as we are aware, these are all thriving except for the contorted-pod evening-primrose that was fenced off in 2007.

Some who want to close the park to the public, spread scaremongering talk that people or animals may cause damage, but you have only to visit the park and observe the respectful behaviour of the public to the environment, to see that is not true. Exaggerated claims are made about off-leash dogs, and again we say, take no ones word for this - come and see for yourselves.

Island View Beach Regional Park has been left to its own devices for the 50 years the CRD has owned it. The park and the people have evolved comfortably together over the years, in the absence of direction from the CRD. This is what the public means when it says "leave the park alone". The park works as it is: in harmony, where people and the environment coexist and thrive.

4,500 people have called on the CRD to leave the park alone. That number continues to grow, and the public are serious. If there is need to protect something the public will support this, but they want evidence based decisions.

Our next step will to be work with CRD parks staff to share the information we have about the park, and to offer our help in the recovery strategies. The solution lies in getting past the rhetoric and the misunderstandings of each other's positions. A question that must be addressed is rising sea level – if nothing is done to protect the park then this has been a costly exercise in futility. And perhaps this is time for a new park model – Island View Beach is a good example that the public are responsible and there does not need to be a top down enforcement approach.

When the smoke of the rhetoric is blown away we hope the positions will not be far apart, and that a revised draft plan emerges leaving the park alone, while clarifying environmental support. If reason does not prevail, then the only thing more certain than rising sea level will be rising public outrage.

The Friends of Island View Beach