

Friends of Island View Beach

Step 2 Presentation to the CRD

Recommendations for improvement at Island View Beach Regional Park

July 31, 2015

Overview of recommendations

- 1. Environmental:** The CRD environmental study did not demonstrate a need to restrict public access or activities in the park any more than it is now.
- 2. Poop bag dispensers:** Dog excrement is the most common complaint from the public about dogs in the park. Poop bag dispensers should be installed in key locations in the park.
- 3. Garbage bins:** In recent years the garbage bins in the park were replaced with small binettes that are inadequate and are often left overflowing. Larger garbage containers are needed for general garbage and poop bags, and should be emptied more frequently.
- 4. New inland trails:** Have new inland trails through the inland area of the park, and alongside all the mosquito drainage ditches. This would add an extra 3.5km of trails and relieve pressure on the beach front areas. **The Friends of Island View Beach offer to mow the trails and build the 5 foot bridges needed at no cost to the CRD.**
- 5. New Nature Reserve area:** In conjunction with the new inland trails in 4. above, there is a 6 acre area that lends itself as a Nature Reserve, and we recommend the trails and this Nature Reserve be implemented together.
- 6. Toilets:** The existing toilet facilities in the mid-park are not visible or sign posted, and there are no facilities in the north area. Put up signs for the existing mid-park toilet block near the main ditch. And place additional toilet facilities to the north.
- 7. Sea wall:** Climate change will cause rising sea levels and more frequent and stronger storms that will threaten the park and surrounding properties. Start planning now with adjoining land owners to strengthen and raise the sea wall.
- 8. Public boat ramp:** The public boat ramp is outside the park and not within the CRD jurisdiction. It is important for the public use of the beach, and does not restrict the northerly flow of sand. The CRD should encourage Central Saanich and the province to repair and maintain it.
- 9. Need for additional parking:** Parking at the end of Island View Road is becoming a serious problem, with cars being blocked in, and access to the boat ramp and the farm lands to the south being obstructed. The CRD owns land on both sides of Island View Road just before Homathko Road – this was the original parking for the beach before there was a park. This should be graveled over for use for boat trailers, charter buses, and overflow parking,

- 10. North drainage flood gate (Tsawout):** The north flood gate failed in **1927** leading to salt water flooding of farmers fields and was fixed then. It failed again in **1935** and was replaced in 1936. And it failed again sometime in the late **1980's** leading to serious salt water flooding for over 20 years, widespread mosquitoes and substantial mosquito control costs in all the surrounding areas. It is still not fixed entirely and there is sea water in the Tsawout ditches year round. The CRD should assist the Tsawout to repair or replace this damaged flood gate.
- 11. Privatize the camp ground:** The campground should be privatized and have longer openings. The contract should have a requirement that the private contractor have someone live at the site during the summer season which would be a control for unruly beach parties and fires; and also a requirement that the private contractor keep the park toilets clean and the garbage bins emptied. This will be a substantial cost saving to the CRD and give better service to the public.
- 12. Access to the park from Lamont Road/Highcrest Terrace:** The park borders Lamont Road/Highcrest Terrace to the west yet there is no all weather trail access from there. An all weather trail off Lamont Road/Highcrest Terrace could be built.
- 13. Maintenance of the mosquito drainage ditches, the mosquito control program, and maintenance of the sea wall** as committed by the Regional Parks Committee.
- 14. No hunting:** A clear “no exceptions” hunting ban should be included in any new park plan just as is contained in the existing park plan.

1. Environmental

Note: The Friends of Island View Beach claim no expertise in environmental matters, and we make no claim that species are in the park or not. Our role here has been to fact check the CRD Environmental presentation, and to see if there is supporting evidence for claims made by the CRD. The standard set by the Regional Parks Committee was the Environmental presentation was to provide **“factual technical and scientific information about the natural environment found in the park.”** Regional Park minutes, May 21, 2014, Agenda page 32 <https://www.crd.bc.ca/docs/default-source/crd-document-library/committeedocuments/regionalparkscommittee/20140521/2014-05-21rpcagenda.pdf?sfvrsn=6>

(A) Species at risk that are resident in Island View Beach Regional Park

The CRD Environmental Presentation suggested there are 9 “species at risk” resident in Island View Beach Regional Park.

Despite many requests by us, no evidence was given by the CRD to support the existence in the park of 3 of these species they claimed, which reduced the number of confirmed species at risk in the park to 6.

None of the 6 species at risk that are confirmed to be in the park, have been demonstrated to require additional special protection in the park. For a detailed analysis, see **Appendix 1**

(B) *“Species at risk” not resident in the park but known to use the park intermittently or utilize areas immediately adjacent to the park and therefore may be affected by our activities in the park.*

The CRD has listed 24 species of birds at risk that they say *“use the park intermittently or utilize areas immediately adjacent to the park and therefore **may be** affected by our activities in the park.”*

2 of those 24 have been reclassified by the Province as not being at risk so should not have been on that list.

The majority of those remaining are sea birds or diving ducks that feed offshore and do not come on land.

No factual, technical or scientific evidence is included in the CRD presentation to show these birds either

- **use the park intermittently, or**
- **that they utilize areas immediately adjacent to the park**

and are affected negatively by public activities in the park. For a detailed analysis see **Appendix 2.**

Conclusion:

The CRD environmental study did not demonstrate a need to restrict public access or activities in the park any more than it is now.

2. **Poop bag dispensers:** Dog excrement is the most common complaint from the public about dogs in the park. Poop bag dispensers should be installed in key locations in the park.

The dispensers and bags are readily available and are inexpensive. Here are examples:

http://i.dailymail.co.uk/i/pix/2015/06/03/15/29536CA500000578-3109345-image-m-15_1433342590581.jpg

<http://www.petstationsupply.com/>



3. Garbage bins: In recent years the garbage bins in the park were replaced with small binettes that are inadequate and are often left overflowing. Larger garbage containers are needed for general garbage and poop bags, and should be emptied more frequently.



4. New inland trails:

With increasing numbers of people visiting the park it is important to dilute the impact by encouraging the public to use other areas.

The CRD Regional Parks Committee have committed to maintain the mosquito drainage ditches and the mosquito control program. This means one side of all the mosquito drainage ditches will be kept open, so it is a natural extension to utilize those as public trails. Likewise two north-south trails can be put in.

These would be grass only trails, so the cost is minimal as the trails need only be mown once or twice a year. Approximately 5 small foot bridges would need to be built to cross the mosquito drainage ditches.

In the plan shown here 3.5km of additional public trails could be achieved this way at little expense.

The Friends of Island View Beach offer to mow the trails and build the 5 foot bridges at no cost to the CRD.



5. 6 acre nature reserve

In conjunction with the new trail system we propose in #4 above, we note there is are 6 acres in the park that is delineated by clear physical characteristics and is not readily accessible by the public, that lends itself as a Nature Reserve. This is in the north end of the park, bounded by mosquito drainage ditches on two sides and is encircled by dense brush, and has a swampy area running diagonally through it. With a small amount of fencing at each end of the diagonal swamp area, this Nature Reserve would be totally protected from human activities, and the screen of dense brush it would quiet too.

This area is not known to contain species at risk, but it is home to many birds and other species.

We recommend that the new trail system and this Nature Reserve be implemented at the same time.

The proposed Nature Reserve



6. Toilets: Many senior and special needs visitors come to the park. The existing toilet facilities in the mid-park are neither visible nor sign posted, and there are no facilities in the north area.

We recommend

- (a) that signs be erected for the existing toilet block in the mid-park near the main ditch,
- (b) that additional toilet facilities be added in the north of the park.
- (c) that the roof be repaired on the mid-park toilet block before winter.

The mid-park toilet block has no signage and is tucked in behind dense brush making it impossible to see except from one angle.





Taken from the main inland trail looking north. The toilet block is hidden behind this brush. There are no signs.

Taken from the branch trail from the sea shore looking west.

This is the only view of the toilet block. There is nothing to identify it as a public toilet. Nor are there signs.

(Hard to see in this photo but the roof is need of repair.)



7. Sea wall: Climate change will cause rising sea levels and more frequent and stronger storms that will threaten the park and surrounding properties. We recommend the CRD begin planning now with adjoining land owners to strengthen and raise the sea wall.

The Ministry of Environment Stacey Filatow 2009 report for Island View Beach, said at page 17:

“Sea level rise due to global warming may threaten the ecosystems It is important to integrate climate change into management considerations ...”



8. Boat ramp: The boat ramp is outside the park and not within the CRD jurisdiction, however it is important for the public because it is one of the few public boat ramps on the Saanich Peninsula.

It has been speculated that the boat ramp stops the northerly drift of sand but this is not correct. The sand piles against the south side of the ramp then flows over it, so any amount trapped by the ramp is minimal.

Given the public importance of the public boat ramp we recommend the CRD encourage Central Saanich and the province to repair and maintain it.

As background, the existing boat ramp was built in 1974 with a Federal Government Local Initiative Program grant initiated by a local resident.



9. Need for additional parking on Island View Road: With the increasing popularity of the park, parking at the end of Island View Road is becoming an increasing problem:

- Boat owners have difficulty finding parking for their vehicles and boat trailers
- Vehicles often block access to the boat ramp and the private farm land to the south.
- Charter buses need somewhere to park

The CRD owns land on both sides of Island View Road just before Homathko Road – this was the original parking for the beach before there was a park.

We recommend:

- That the two CRD owned parcels alongside Island View Road be graveled over for use for boat trailers, charter buses, and overflow parking. (perhaps with the south side being designated for boat trailers, and the north side designated for charter buses and overflow parking).
- That lines be painted on the asphalt in front of the boat ramp and private driveway, creating a no parking lane, so vehicles from those areas can enter and exit without being blocked by vehicles left by park visitors.



10. North drainage flood gate (Tsawout): The north flood gate failed in **1927** leading to salt water flooding of farmers fields and was fixed then. It failed again in **1935** and was replaced in 1936. And it failed again sometime in the late **1980's** leading to serious salt water flooding for over 20 years, widespread mosquitoes and substantial mosquito control costs in all the surrounding areas. It is still not fixed entirely and there is sea water in the Tsawout ditches year round. We recommend the CRD and Central Saanich assist the Tsawout to repair or replace this damaged flood gate.

This aerial photo from the CRD atlas shows the sea water in the Tsawout ditches, while the Puckle Farm and CRD ditches are bone dry.



See <http://www.friendsofislandviewbeach.com/drainageoverview.html> for photos of the sea water flooding and damage from that broken flood gate. Although repairs were undertaken the gate must be undermined because the sea water still floods through as shown in the photo above – **this is shown in a video at the end of that link.**

11. Privatize the camp ground:

The CRD is not set up to run a business like a campground. The operating costs are far higher than would be for a resident private operator – as witness the constant parade of CRD vehicles and crews – and despite those high costs there is not the hands on attention to detail that a private operator can achieve.

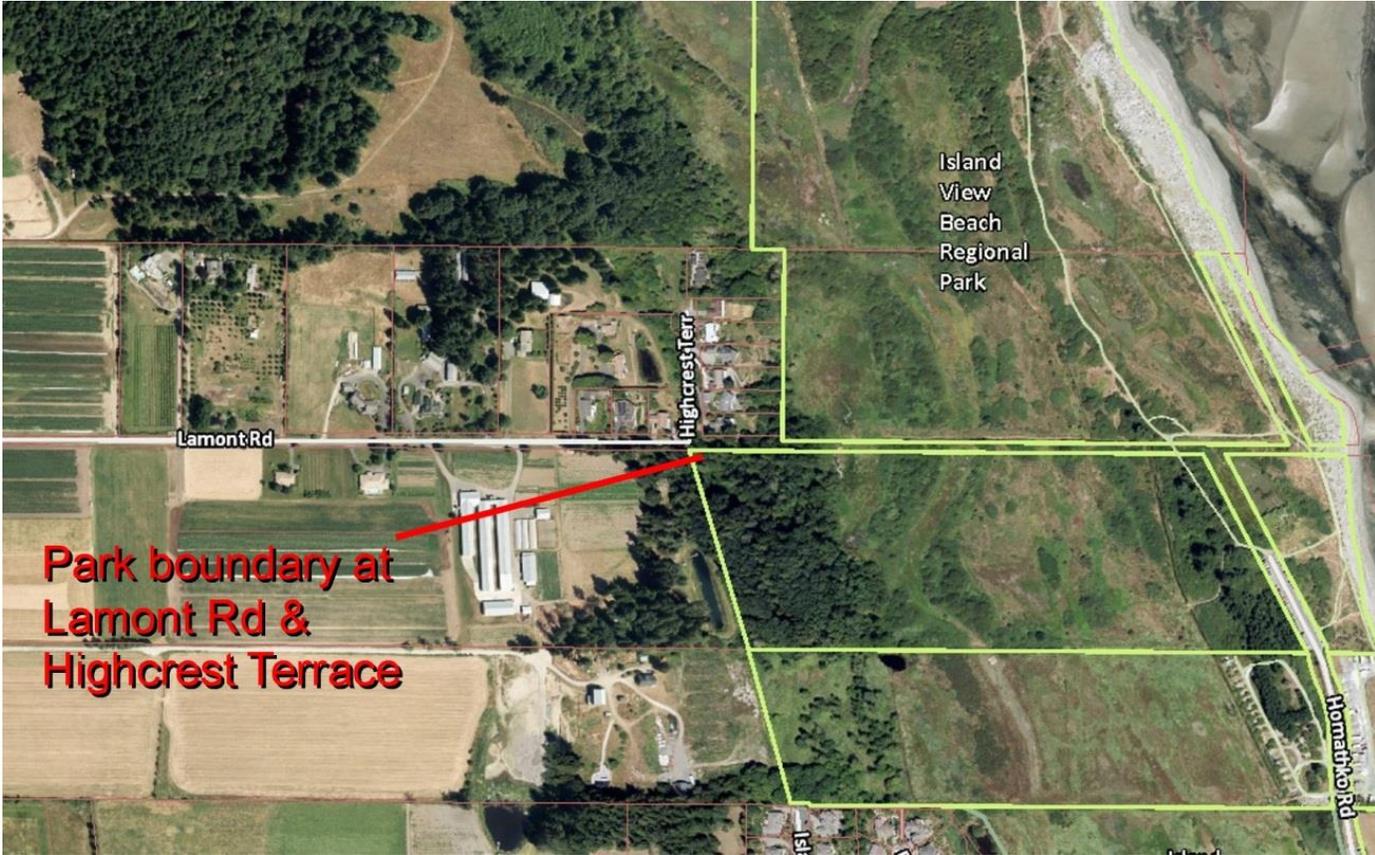
We recommend the campground be privatized and have longer openings.

The contract should have a requirements that the private contractor:

- (a) have someone live at the site during the summer season which would be a control for unruly beach parties and fires; and
- (b) keep the park toilets clean and the garbage bins emptied. This will be a substantial cost saving to the CRD and give better service to the public.



12. Park access off Lamont Road & Highcrest Terrace: The park borders Lamont Road & Highcrest Terrace to the west yet there is no all weather trail access from there. An all weather trail off Lamont Road could be built.



13. Maintenance of the mosquito drainage ditches, the mosquito control program, and maintenance of the sea wall.

Any new plan should contain clear language incorporating the commitment of the Regional Parks Committee to maintain the mosquito drainage ditches, the mosquito control program, and maintenance of the sea wall.

These links show the consequences of not maintaining these programs

<http://www.friendsofislandviewbeach.com/drainageoverview.html>

<http://www.friendsofislandviewbeach.com/howeasilyflooded.html>



14. No hunting

The existing park plan has an express “no exceptions” hunting ban.

Given the large number of park visitors and the residential housing around the park, any new park plan should contain the same “no exceptions” hunting ban.

Appendix 1

Species at Risk confirmed resident in Island View Beach Regional Park

The direction from the Regional Parks Committee in May 2014 was that this report was to ***“Provide factual technical and scientific information about the natural environment found in the park.”***

<https://www.crd.bc.ca/docs/default-source/crd-document-library/committeedocuments/regionalparkscommittee/20140521/2014-05-21rpcagenda.pdf?sfvrsn=6>

The CRD Environmental Presentation states at page 14 ***“Nine ... species [at risk] are confirmed as seasonal or year-round residents at Island View Beach Regional Park.”***

<http://issuu.com/capitalregionaldistrict/docs/ivbnep-species?e=2590922/10796110>

The CRD identified these nine at <https://www.crd.bc.ca/docs/default-source/parks-pdf/sarfactsheetivb.pdf?sfvrsn=2> as being:

- (1) Contorted-pod evening-primrose
- (2) Sand-verbena Moth
- (3) **Common nighthawk**
- (4) Georgia Basin Bog Spider
- (5) Yellow Sand-Verbena
- (6) Beach Bindweed
- (7) **American Glehnia**
- (8) Black knotweed
- (9) **Fleshy Jaumea**

The CRD has been requested repeatedly to provide factual technical and scientific information that confirms the **Common Nighthawk**, the **American Glehnia**, and the **Fleshy Jaumea**, are truly resident in the park, but they declined to do so. In fact, a report commissioned by the CRD and received by them in 2014 – before the CRD prepared their Environmental presentation – states the opposite:

The report of Fleshy Jaumea is suspect – there is no precise information confirming its presence at Island View Beach and there is little or no suitable habitat within the regional park. It is known to occur in adjacent lands but the report for Island View Beach is probably a mapping error created by the vague nature of old records. American Glehnia is also known from adjacent lands but neither has been reported from Island View Beach Regional Park.

http://www.friendsofisolandviewbeach.com/uploads/2/4/3/5/24351508/island_view_beach_camissonia_and_lathyrus_survey_2014.pdf Page 4

Similarly, the Cordova Conservation Strategy, a 5 year study of the Cordova Shore which includes Cordova Spit; the Tsawout lands; the CRD park; the Central Saanich park; the farm lands; and private properties to

the south, that was managed by CRD Parks, says of the **Common Nighthawk** in Appendix 5: <https://www.crd.bc.ca/docs/default-source/parks-pdf/cordovashoreconsstrat.pdf?sfvrsn=0>

Common nighthawk

Rare fall migrant – possibly nesting at the [Cordova] spit

Cordova Spit where this “rare fall migrant” might possibly nest, is 1km to the north of Island View Beach Regional Park.

Removing the species that have not been confirmed as resident in the park leaves:

- (1) Contorted-pod evening-primrose
- (2) Sand-verbena Moth
- (4) Georgia Basin Bog Spider
- (5) Yellow Sand-Verbena
- (6) Beach Bindweed
- (8) Black knotweed

(1) Contorted-pod evening-primrose

Fairbarns, 2014, reported the contorted-pod evening-primrose lies within the area that has been fenced off for its protection since 2007.

His recommendations were to repair the fencing, provide signage, monitor traffic, and save the seeds. No recommendation was made to enlarge this already fenced off area, as the contorted-pod evening-primrose only occupies a small part of that fenced area.

http://www.friendsofislandviewbeach.com/uploads/2/4/3/5/24351508/island_view_beach_camissonia_and_lathyrus_survey_2014.pdf



Figure 1. Contorted-pod Evening-primrose polygons, June 2014.

Overall, the subpopulation of Contorted-pod Evening-primrose in Island View Beach Regional Park is in moderately poor condition. The plants tend to rather small but that is equally true of the other Canadian populations. They were reproducing well considering their small stature. There was no evidence of herbivory or disease.

(2) Sand-verbena Moth**(5) Yellow Sand-Verbena**

The Sand-verbena moth is totally dependent on the Yellow Sand-Verbena so they are looked at together. Fairbarns, 2007, reported about the **Yellow Sand-Verbena** that:

The occurrence itself is in excellent condition.

*Reproduction and Health: **The plants are of high vigour and reproducing abundantly.** There was negligible evidence of disease or herbivory which is probably insufficient to have a significant impact on reproduction and survival.*

<http://www.friendsofislandviewbeach.com/uploads/2/4/3/5/24351508/tixen - rare plant report-3- fairbarns 2007.pdf> Page 16

(6) Beach Bindweed aka Beach morning glory

Fairbarns, 2007, reported that

The occurrence itself is in excellent condition.

*Reproduction and Health: **The plants are of high vigour and reproducing abundantly.** There was negligible evidence of disease or herbivory which is probably insufficient to have a significant impact on reproduction and survival.*

<http://www.friendsofislandviewbeach.com/uploads/2/4/3/5/24351508/tixen - rare plant report-3- fairbarns 2007.pdf> Page 18

(8) Black knotweed

Fairbarns, 2007, reported that:

The occurrence itself is in excellent condition.

*Reproduction and Health: **The plants are of high vigour and reproducing abundantly.** There was negligible evidence of disease or herbivory which is probably insufficient to have a significant impact on reproduction and survival. Ecological Processes: Natural processes do not pose a significant threat to the long-term viability of the population. The plants occur on actively eroding sandy habitats but are probably well-adapted to such circumstances.*

<http://www.friendsofislandviewbeach.com/uploads/2/4/3/5/24351508/tixen - rare plant report-3- fairbarns 2007.pdf> Page 22

(4) Georgia Basin Bog Spider

The Georgia Basin Bog spider was found in a low lying area in 2009 south of where Lamont Road transects the park. This is not an area frequently visited by the public, nor is the public identified as a threat to this species. According to the Canadian Species at Risk Public Registry “The greatest threat is inundation by sea water since three of the four known sites are less than 3 m above sea level and are at risk from projected increases in the frequency and severity of storms.”

http://www.registrelp-sararegistry.gc.ca/species/speciesDetails_e.cfm?sid=1176

The low areas of the park were flooded with sea water in January 2014 and to our knowledge the Georgian Basin Bog Spider has not been searched for since then so it is not known if it survived the flooding. In any

event, if it did, it is not at risk from the public.

<http://www.friendsofisolandviewbeach.com/howeasilyflooded.html>

Summary about confirmed “species at risk” in the park

There are 6 confirmed “species at risk” resident in Island View Beach Regional Park.

The Contorted-pod Evening-primrose has been protected since 2007 and requires no further protection.

The Yellow Sand-verbena (and hence the Sand-Verbena moth), the Beach Bindweed and the Black Knotweed are all in excellent condition, high vigour and reproducing abundantly.

The Georgian Basin Bog Spider, if it survived the sea water flooding of January 2014, is not at risk from the public in the park.

Conclusion about confirmed “species at risk” in the park

None of the species at risk that are confirmed to be in the park, have been demonstrated to require further special protection in the park.

Appendix 2

“Species at risk” not resident in the park but known to use the park intermittently or utilize areas immediately adjacent to the park and therefore may be affected by our activities in the park.

In their presentation at page 14, the CRD said:

There are 33 confirmed species at risk at Island View Beach

.....

*Nine of these species are confirmed as seasonal or year-round residents in Island View Beach Regional Park. [Note – these are discussed in Appendix 1] **Others are known to use the park intermittently or utilize areas immediately adjacent to the park and therefore may be affected by our activities in the park.***

<http://issuu.com/capitalregionaldistrict/docs/ivbnep-species?e=2590922/10796110>

Two things to note about this statement are:

(a) Throughout its presentation, the CRD used the terms ***“Island View Beach”*** and ***“Island View Beach Regional Park”***. This is unfortunate and misleading given their similarity, and many readers would believe these to be the same area. They are not. ***“Island View Beach”*** is the greater area, and includes Cordova Spit, the Tsawout lands, the CRD park, the Central Saanich Park, the farmlands, and the private properties of Island View Beach estates and the foot of Highcrest Terrace. In the 2010 Cordova Conservation Strategy, the CRD referred to this greater area as “Cordova Shore”. It is regrettable that in this 2015 environmental report the CRD instead chose to use the misleading term “Island View Beach” instead of a distinguishing term to make it clear they were not referring Island View Beach Regional Park. It is likely that many were misled by this.

(b) The CRD are saying there are 33 species at ***“Island View Beach”*** – the greater area - of which nine they say are actually in the park. [In Appendix 1 we suggest that only 6 are confirmed resident in the park.] This means the CRD is saying that 24 species (33 – 9) ***“use the park intermittently or utilize areas immediately adjacent to the park and therefore may be affected by our activities in the park.”*** No factual technical and scientific information was given by the CRD to support this sweeping claim, nor is any information given as to which species at risk might use the park intermittently and which may utilize areas *“immediately adjacent to the park”*. Regrettably, it is a statement thrown up in the air without substantiation and serves no useful purpose.

The CRD presentation has photos of the Western Sandpiper but that is not a species at risk, and is identified as *“one of the most abundant shorebirds in North America”* .

http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Western_Sandpiper/id

To see a list of the 24 species that the CRD say “use the park intermittently or utilize areas immediately adjacent to the park and therefore **may be** affected by our activities in the park.” the reader must look elsewhere, to the second page at <https://www.crd.bc.ca/docs/default-source/parks-pdf/sarfactsheetivb.pdf?sfvrsn=2> Listed there are 33 species. The 24 are the ones that do not have a small tick behind their names.

The CRD say in their presentation at page 8, that these 24 species were made up from reported sightings from e-Bird <http://ebird.org/content/canada/> and the Breeding Bird Atlas and the Coastal Waterbird Surveys but they do not give links to the latter two. Again, regrettably however, they are speaking of the greater “Island View Beach” and not “Island View Beach Regional Park”.

The e-Bird sightings are reports from the public who may have been standing on Cordova Spit, a kilometer north of the park, looking out to sea with binoculars, so the actual bird may be several kilometers from the park, yet the CRD has included those birds as being “*immediately adjacent to the park*” and who “*may be*” affected by human activities in the park. This is self serving conjecture, not science.

This list of 24 includes two species that are no longer classified as a “species at risk”. The **Cackling Goose** BC listing was changed from Blue to Yellow, and the **Snowy Owl** BC listing was changed from Blue to Unknown, both in March 2015. Neither of these species should be on the species at risk list, so if the list was appropriate it would be 22 not 24.

But is the list appropriate at all? The majority of birds on it are marine birds that feed at sea and do not come on land. For example:

Seabirds: *This group is restricted to those birds which spend most of their time on open water. These birds are often referred to as ‘pelagic seabirds’ and include the tubenoses (albatrosses¹, fulmars, shearwaters, and storm-petrels); cormorants; jaegers, skuas, gulls, and terns; alcids (murre, murrelets, auklets, and puffins); and phalaropes (although the latter may also be categorized as shorebirds).*

Waterfowl and Allies: *This group includes species that commonly breed inland near fresh water but either migrate along the coast during spring and fall or use marine habitats for moulting and wintering. Loons, grebes, swans, geese, ducks, and cranes are included in this group due to similarities in their habitat use. Ducks are sometimes further divided into dabbling ducks, which tend to stay nearshore and in estuaries, and **sea ducks or diving ducks, whose habitats include more open marine waters.***

<http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Library/328842%20Appendix%20K.pdf> Page 1

An example of a sea bird on the CRD list is the **Common Murre** which does not breed here.

Behavior

Outside of the breeding season, Common Murres are almost always seen in the water. On land, they sit upright. They swim and dive well, and can dive more than 150 feet below the water's surface. Their flight is labored.

Diet

Most of the diet is made up of small fish, although a wide variety of sea creatures including crustaceans, marine worms, and squid are also taken.

http://birdweb.org/birdweb/bird/common_murre

An example of a diving duck on the CRD list is the **Surf Scoter** which does not does not breed in this area: *Scoters spend the non-breeding part of the year in large rafts on the ocean or in open bays and inlets. **They forage almost exclusively by diving**, taking prey from the ocean floor and also taking mussels from man-made structures. They are strong flyers but must get a running start along the water to get airborne. Males actively defend their mates, keeping other birds at bay.*

Diet

During winter, mollusks and crustaceans are the most common food items. Surf Scoters also eat other aquatic invertebrates and pondweeds.

http://birdweb.org/birdweb/bird/surf_scooter

Summary about bird species outside the park

The CRD has listed 24 species of birds at risk that they say “use the park intermittently or utilize areas immediately adjacent to the park and therefore **may be** affected by our activities in the park.”

2 of those 24 have been reclassified by the Province as not being at risk.

The majority of those remaining are sea birds or diving ducks that feed offshore and do not come on land.

No evidence has been given showing these birds either use the park or utilize areas immediately adjacent to the park, or are affected negatively by public activities in the park.

Conclusion about bird “species at risk” that live outside the park

No factual, technical or scientific evidence is included in the CRD presentation to show these birds either use the park intermittently, or that they utilize areas immediately adjacent to the park and are affected negatively by public activities in the park.