



*Rotary Club of Campbell River*  
P.O. Box 25072, Campbell River, British Columbia V9W 0B7



**Elk Falls Suspension Bridge Project**  
**Completed and Opened**  
**May 9, 2015**  
**Access is FREE in Perpetuity**



Submitted by  
Lorrie David Bewza, President  
Rotary Club of Campbell River  
Elk Falls Suspension Bridge Project Chair

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## Project Location

- The Elk Falls Suspension Bridge Project is located in the Northwest corner of the City of Campbell River within Elk Falls Provincial Park. The project also included upgrading a portion of the Millennium Trail to allow all users access from the new parking lot. A portion of the Millennium Trail is on property owned by BC Hydro.



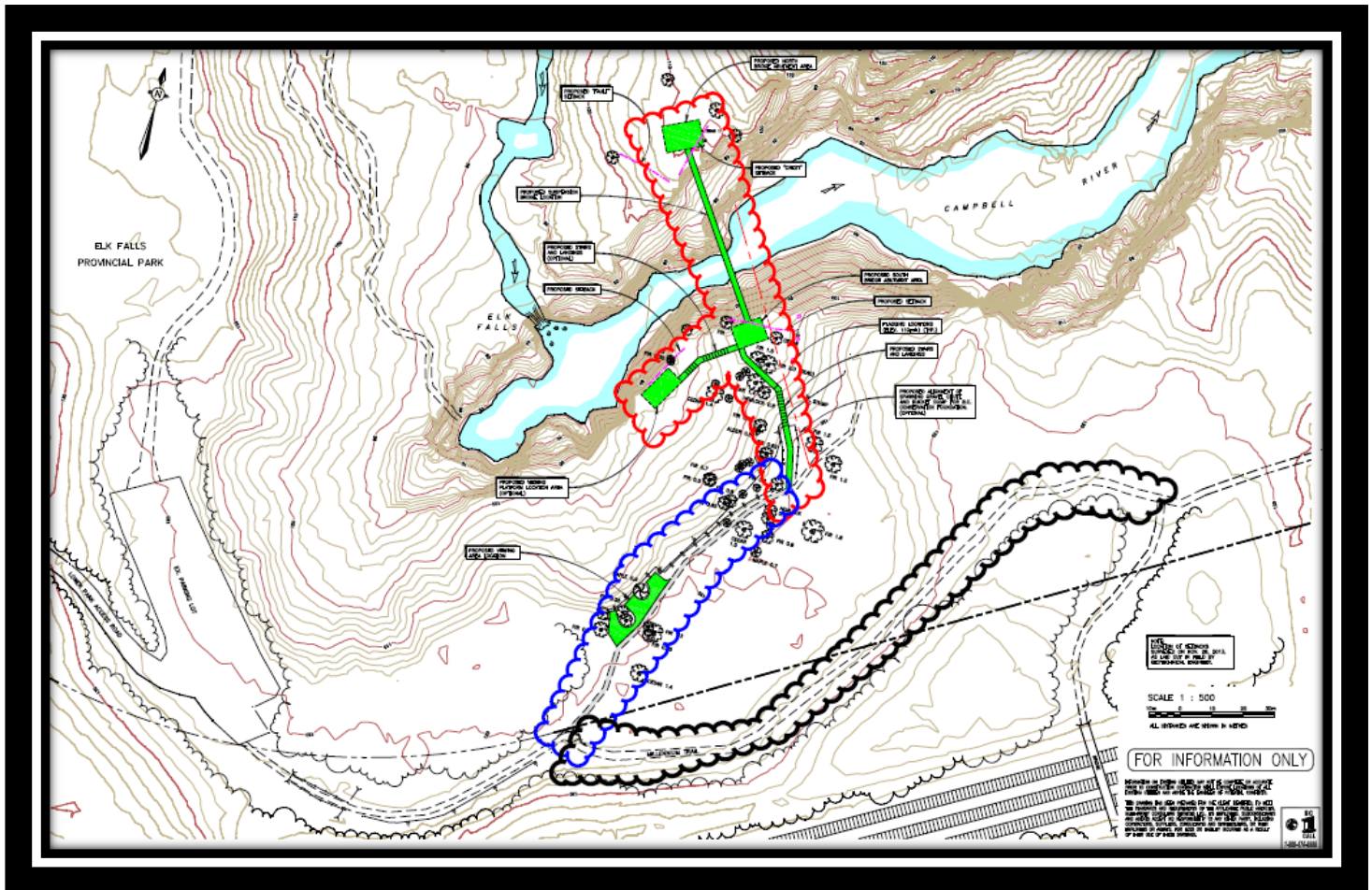
## Project Objectives

- Showcase a Natural Wonder
  - The 1986 Elk Falls Provincial Park Master Plan states “provision of day use opportunities is an important component of the park as existing use demonstrates. However the park's potential for providing such opportunities has not been utilized to date.” This project will greatly enhance day use opportunities identified decades ago by showcasing Elk Falls with the construction of viewing platforms and a world class suspension bridge.
- Increase Economic Activity and Opportunities
  - According to BC Parks, there are over 70,000 day use visitors per year at Elk Falls Provincial Park. After the project is complete with the new parking lot, barrier free trails (accessible to all visitors) and suspension bridge it is reasonable to expect the number of tourist visits to increase by 100%. An increase of 70,000 visitors per year would add **\$5,357,100** annually to our local economy (\$76.53 per visitor per day – Campbell River Visitor Centre statistic) plus the addition of employment brought in by the increased economic activity.

## Scope

The Elk Falls Suspension Bridge Project started in 2009 as a vision by the Rotary Club of Campbell River to create an attraction to showcase this natural wonder.

### Site Plan



The area circle in:

- Red contains elevated stairs leading 69 steps down to the Elk Falls Suspension Bridge and a further 49 stairs leading down to the Cantilevered Viewing Platform
- Blue is the barrier free trail (accessible to all visitors). It contains the barrier free viewing area that has a portion of the safety fence lowered to allow visitors in wheelchairs to have an unimpeded view of the top of Elk Falls and the pools above the falls.
- Black is the portion of the existing Millennium Trail that was upgraded to barrier free status including trail shaping with rest areas, bench installation, curbing and safety fencing.

## Change of Scope and Funding

- One of the major requirements was the creation of a new parking lot for the increased visitors that were forecasted to come to Elk Falls Provincial Park. The current parking lot was too small and could not accommodate RV's or tour buses. During the planning of the upper tunnel for the John Hart Generating replacement project, BC Hydro announced that they would be closing the road that provided access to Elk Falls Provincial Park for a period of three years. To allow access they proposed to create a temporary gravel parking area with a connecting trail into the park.

The Rotary Club of Campbell River suggested that this parking lot be made permanent to accommodate the increased visitors that would come to view the suspension bridge. With BC Parks' approval, BC Hydro subsequently constructed a permanent parking lot for 83 vehicles, buses and RV's. This parking lot has washrooms, a new trail that crosses the penstocks (current wood pipes that provide water to the John Hart generating station) and connects to the existing Millennium Trail, which will take visitors to the Elk Falls Suspension Bridge and viewing platforms. These facilities were meant to mitigate the inconvenience to the public during the John Hart project and to provide a legacy to the Campbell River community.

- The trail from the new parking lot to the M Millennium Trail was constructed to be barrier free (less than 5% grade). The remaining portion of the Millennium Trail to the barrier free viewing platform however, was not built to barrier free standard and therefore it fell upon Rotary to upgrade this portion of the trail. The Rotary Club of Campbell River committed another \$54,314 towards the project and BC Parks committed \$49,036 towards trail upgrades, signage, park benches and other safety improvements within the park.
- The Cantilevered Viewing Platform was redesigned during construction due to the identification of a rock fracture close to the canyon edge. The solution was to increase the height by 1.2 meters and the cantilever by 1.8 meters. This provided the desired view of the top of Elk Falls to where it hits the canyon floor.
- The Northside landing area was increased in size to create a rest area for visitors to enjoy the view before re-crossing the suspension bridge. There are future plans to create a Northside trail.

## **Support**

We gratefully acknowledge letters of support from the Wei Wai Kum First Nation, We Wai Kai Nation, K'ómoks First Nation, Homalco First Nation, City of Campbell River and Strathcona Regional District as well as the financial contribution from BC Hydro, Community Futures Strathcona, BC Parks and a matching grant from Island Coastal Economic Trust for this gift to our community.

We also had tremendous support and encouragement from then Mayor Charlie Cornfield who had such enthusiasm and confidence in the Rotary Club of Campbell River's ability to complete the Elk Falls Suspension Bridge Project, that he suggested to the Chairman of BC Hydro that they contribute funding to our project – and did they ever!

To build community support, Neil Cameron publisher/editor of our local paper the Campbell River Courier Island was instrumental in building community support by keeping the public informed of our progress with multiple front page coverage. From this coverage we were contacted by the media listed at the end of this report.

## **Delays**

- Full engineering drawings took longer than expected, resulting in a delayed start of four months.
- Geo-technical work to find the most suitable site was more extensive than anticipated and further delayed the drilling of suspension bridge rock anchors. Until the rock anchors were drilled, installed, tested and passed, the locations of the footing for the suspension bridge and elevated stairs could not be selected.
- The four rock anchors were drilled and passed on the first attempt. This saved considerable time and money without having to find and drill at other locations.

## **Employment Created**

- Direct employment created on site and at the contractors manufacturing plant is estimated at 12,864 hours. This does not include the employment created by two contractor employees staying in hotels four nights per week for the last 10 months or the employment created by the tourist information office located in the new parking lot. The most asked question was when the bridge is going to open.
- With the media coverage we have had in the last year, we expect to exceed our original forecast of doubling the current visitor count of 70,000 per year. This will provide a substantial increase in tourism to Vancouver Island. Since opening, May 9, 2015, the 83 unit parking lot has been full on most weekends with many visitors parking along the entrance roads. This would indicate that over 250 visitors are enjoying Elk Falls Provincial Park and the views from the Elk Falls Suspension Bridge and viewing platforms at the same time. As one vehicle leaves others arrive. On busy days we calculate that between one and two thousand visitors per day.

## Progress to completion

|                                                                                                                                                                                        |           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| • Draft project concept and scope                                                                                                                                                      | Completed |
| • Obtain letters of support                                                                                                                                                            | Completed |
| • Hold public meeting                                                                                                                                                                  | Completed |
| • Submit formal proposal to BC Parks                                                                                                                                                   | Completed |
| • Submit formal proposal to BC Hydro                                                                                                                                                   | Completed |
| • Obtain letter of approval in principle from BC Parks                                                                                                                                 | Completed |
| • Submit and secure funding from Community Futures Strathcona                                                                                                                          | Completed |
| • Submit and secure funding with Island Coastal Economic Trust                                                                                                                         | Completed |
| • Secure signed MOU with BC Parks, BC Hydro and Rotary Club<br>Club of Campbell River – Free access for all visitors in perpetuity<br>as a condition of Rotary and BC Hydro's funding. | Completed |
| • Secure Parks Use Permit from BC Parks to begin construction                                                                                                                          | Completed |
| • Secure Permission to Access BC Property                                                                                                                                              | Completed |
| • Geo-technical study                                                                                                                                                                  | Completed |
| • Environmental study                                                                                                                                                                  | Completed |
| • Archaeological study                                                                                                                                                                 | Completed |
| • Issue RFP and select contractor for elevated stairs, cantilevered<br>viewing platform and suspension bridge                                                                          | Completed |
| • Complete design of suspension bridge, and elevated stairs                                                                                                                            | Completed |
| • Design of North side landing platform                                                                                                                                                | Completed |
| • Hazard tree removal and site preparation                                                                                                                                             | Completed |
| • Footings for the elevated stairs and viewing platform                                                                                                                                | Completed |
| • Suspension bridge rock anchor drilled into bedrock                                                                                                                                   | Completed |
| • Four 26 foot anchor rods grouted in place and pull tested                                                                                                                            | Completed |
| • Helicopter in suspension bridge anchor posts                                                                                                                                         | Completed |
| • Four main suspension bridge cables installed                                                                                                                                         | Completed |
| • Suspension bridge decking and side safety cables attached                                                                                                                            | Completed |
| • Elevated stair framing and stair treads installed                                                                                                                                    | Completed |
| • North side landing redesigned                                                                                                                                                        | Completed |
| • North side landing footings and framing                                                                                                                                              | Completed |
| • North side safety fencing                                                                                                                                                            | Completed |
| • Cantilevered viewing platform redesigned – height and cantilever                                                                                                                     | Completed |
| • Install additional footings for cantilevered viewing platform                                                                                                                        | Completed |
| • Assemble cantilevered viewing platform                                                                                                                                               | Completed |
| • Wood side boards and cap rail installed on elevated stairs                                                                                                                           | Completed |
| • Safety fencing on suspension bridge installed                                                                                                                                        | Completed |
| • Design Millennium Trail upgrade, barrier free viewing platform<br>and new trail to the suspension bridge                                                                             | Completed |
| • Select and hire contractor to upgrade trails and create barrier free<br>viewing area per design drawing                                                                              | Completed |
| • Select and hire contractor to install over 330 meters of safety<br>fencing on trails                                                                                                 | Completed |
| • Rotary hands-on project to install safety curbing, benches and final<br>touches prior to opening day                                                                                 | Completed |



**Rotary Club of Campbell River**  
P.O. Box 25072, Campbell River, British Columbia V9W 0B7



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**Financial Statement**  
**Elk Falls Suspension Bridge Project**  
**April 4, 2009 – June 11, 2015**

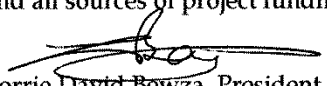
**Project Expenditures**

|                                                          |                           |
|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Environmental, Archeological and Geo-technical           | \$ 25,054                 |
| Suspension Bridge, Connecting Trail and Platforms        | \$ 610,470                |
| Barrier free viewing platform, trails and safety fencing | \$ 76,294                 |
| Project Management                                       | \$ 28,182                 |
| Parking lot, trail bridge and connecting trail           | <u>\$2,000,000</u>        |
| <b>Total Expenditures</b>                                | <u><b>\$2,740,000</b></u> |

**Project Funding**

|                                                                                        |                           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Rotary Club of Campbell River                                                          | \$ 129,314                |
| BC Hydro                                                                               | \$ 150,000                |
| Community Futures Strathcona                                                           | \$ 86,650                 |
| Island Coastal Economic Trust                                                          | \$ 325,000                |
| BC Parks                                                                               | \$ 49,036                 |
| BC Hydro – In kind donation<br>parking lot, connecting trail and bridge over penstocks | <u>\$2,000,000</u>        |
| <b>Total Funding</b>                                                                   | <u><b>\$2,740,000</b></u> |

I hereby certify that this statement accurately represents all project expenditures  
and all sources of project funding

  
Lorrie David Bewza, President  
Rotary Club of Campbell River  
Elk Falls Suspension Bridge Project Chair

June 11, 2015

# **Elk Falls Suspension Bridge Project**

## **Fact Sheet**

The Elk Falls Suspension Bridge Project started in 2009 as a vision by the Rotary Club of Campbell River to create an attraction to showcase this natural wonder. This world-class suspension bridge and viewing platforms are the result of the incredible work of Rotarians assisted by BC Parks, BC Hydro and the never ending support and generous donations of the people of Campbell River to the annual Rotary TV Auction.

- Elk Falls Suspension Bridge is 60 meters long, 64 meters above the canyon floor and is designed to safely hold six hundred 200 lb. people (120,000 lbs.).
- The cantilevered viewing platform is 3 meters above the ground and cantilevers 4 meters to the cliff edge providing an amazing view of Elk Fall from the top to the canyon floor.
- Low impact elevated stairs and walkways lead down to the Elk Falls Suspension Bridge and the elevated cantilevered viewing platform.
- The new access road off Brewster Lake Road and the 83-spot parking lot with bus and RV parking, and the trail into the park, was constructed by BC Hydro in agreement with the Rotary Club of Campbell River and BC Parks. These facilities were meant to mitigate the inconvenience to the public during the John Hart project and to provide a project legacy to the Campbell River community.
- Rotary has upgraded 340 meters of the existing Millennium Trail to be accessible to wheel chairs and those with mobility challenges. The trail is sloped to an average of 5% with intermittent flat spots to provide resting areas.
- Three new park benches were installed with flat rest areas for wheelchairs.
- Rotary created 130 meters of new trail to the Elk Falls Suspension Bridge. The first 60 meters are accessible to all and include an accessible viewing platform with a view of Elk Falls and the pools above.
- 337 meters of Safety fencing and 106 meters of curbing were installed along the trails to provide safe passage to all visitors.
- We thank the following contractors for their efforts in constructing the trails, elevated stairs, viewing platforms and the suspension bridge:
  - Pacific Industrial and Marine Ltd
  - Five Star Aggregate and Excavating
  - McElhanney Engineering
  - CV Cedar Sales and Fencing
  - Michael Cullen Geotechnical Ltd
  - Econ Consulting
  - Golder & Associates
  - Achinback Industries and Foundry Limited
  - Timberwolf Tree Services
  - Gavin Hall Masonry Ltd

Aerial of Elk Falls Suspension Bridge, pedestrian bridge across Penstocks and new Parking Lot (left to right). Campbell River and Discovery Passage can be seen at the top left of the photo.



Courtesy of BC Hydro

## Amazing Co-operation

The Elk Falls Suspension Bridge Project could not have been completed without the amazing cooperation and assistance from BC Parks and BC Hydro from project inception in 2009 through completion in 2015. This includes the new 83 unit parking lot with washrooms, bus and RV parking, a new trail and pedestrian bridge across the Penstocks that allow all visitors' access to Elk Falls Provincial Park. BC Parks and BC Hydro shared studies and reports with Rotary and both contributed funding to complete this project. See the permanent plaque further in the report that thanks all contributors towards this project.

The cooperation and assistance was so incredible that the Rotary Club of Campbell River awarded a Paul Harris Fellow to Brent Blackmun, BC Parks and Stephen Watson, BC Hydro. A Paul Harris Fellow is given to Rotarians that have contributed \$1,000 USD to Rotary International to fund World Wide projects such as the End Polio Now campaign. The award is rarely given to non-Rotarians and was given in recognition of extraordinary service that exemplifies the Rotary moto of "Service Above Self".



President Lorrie David Bewza, Elk Falls Suspension Bridge Project Chair,  
Stephen Watson, BC Hydro - Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Vancouver  
Island,  
Brent Blackmun, BC Parks - Nootka Area Supervisor

### John Hart Project Interpretive Centre



- The interpretive centre is off to a great start for the first four months of 2015. Through April there have been 1,225 visitors; twice as much as 2014. The centre was open three days a week, and the 2015 numbers by month were:
  - January – 175 visitors for an average of 13.5 people per day;
  - February – 234 visitors for an average of 19.5 per day;
  - March – 374 visitors for an average of 29 per day; and
  - April – 442 visitors for an average of 34 per day;
- From May 17 to early September, the centre is open five days a week, from Wednesday to Sunday, from 10 am to 5:00 pm;
- With the opening of the Elk Falls Suspension Bridge on May 8, the numbers have since skyrocketed, peaking at 384 people one day. For the first two weeks the bridge was open, the centre had 1572 visitors or 196 people per day;
- SD72 teachers and students continue to take advantage of a BC Hydro partnership where they can go through the centre and walk the trail system; and
- The centre continues to be a great place to keep apprised of the project through construction reports, wall panels and videos. The Museum at Campbell River staff the centre and have a kiosk about the local social history, amongst other sources of reference. Public feedback continues to be very positive.

30

Since opening the Elk Falls Suspension Bridge the 83 vehicle parking lot has been full most weekends with people parking on the side of roads nearby. The public response to the Elk Falls Suspension Bridge, viewing platforms and connecting trails has been fantastic.

The staff at the BC Hydro Interpretive Centre estimate that the percentage of park visitors that stop into the Interpretive Centre is somewhere between 10% and 20%. The estimated average number of visitors to the suspension bridge is between 980 (5x196) and 1,960 (10x196). The peak day mention above would indicate that 1,920 (5x384) to 3,840 (10x384).

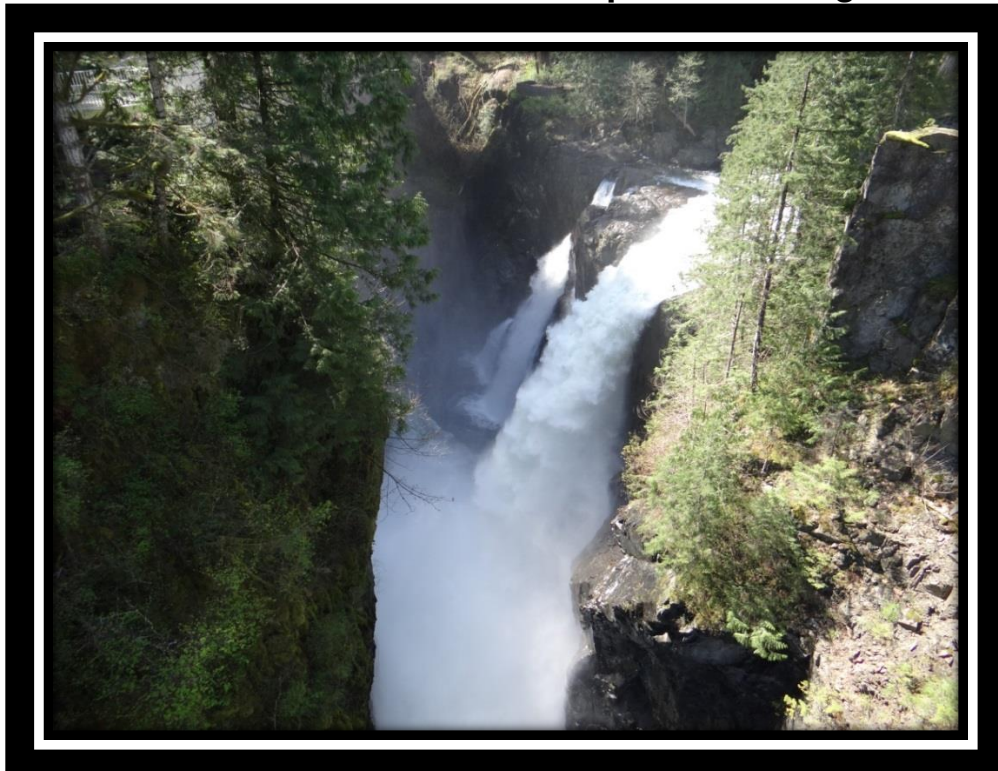
As I stated on Shaw TV's Talk About "Come and see it you will be amazed"

## Pictures

**Elk Falls Suspension Bridge**



**Elk Falls view from the Suspension Bridge**



**Cantilevered Viewing Platform with cliff edge view of Elk Falls**



**Elk Falls with a flow of 40 cubic meters per second**



## Opening Day May 8, 2015



Rotarian Greg Manzulenکو, Phil Kent ICET, Jessica McDonald CEO BC Hydro, Environment Minister Mary Polak, Rotary President & Project Chair Lorrie David Bewza, Don Cadden BC Parks, Past President Mark DeGagne – left to right

## Facing North on the Elk Falls Suspension Bridge



- More Pictures are available on Facebook page – Elk Falls Bridge

## Permanent Plaque in the Barrier Free Viewing Area



BC Parks



BChydro 

# ELK FALLS SUSPENSION BRIDGE PROJECT

THE ELK FALLS SUSPENSION BRIDGE PROJECT STARTED IN 2009  
AS A VISION BY THE ROTARY CLUB OF CAMPBELL RIVER  
TO CREATE AN ATTRACTION TO SHOWCASE THIS NATURAL WONDER.

WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE LETTERS OF SUPPORT FROM THE  
WEI WAI KUM FIRST NATION, WE WAI KAI NATION,  
K'ÓMOKS FIRST NATION, HOMALCO FIRST NATION,  
CITY OF CAMPBELL RIVER AND STRATHCONA REGIONAL DISTRICT,  
AS WELL AS THE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION FROM BC HYDRO,  
COMMUNITY FUTURES STRATHCONA, BC PARKS AND A  
MATCHING GRANT FROM ISLAND COASTAL ECONOMIC TRUST  
FOR THIS GIFT TO OUR COMMUNITY.

OFFICIALLY OPENED AND DONATED TO BC PARKS ON MAY 8, 2015  
BY THE ROTARY CLUB OF CAMPBELL RIVER.

THIS WORLD-CLASS SUSPENSION BRIDGE AND VIEWING PLATFORMS ARE  
THE RESULT OF THE INCREDIBLE WORK OF ROTARIANS ASSISTED BY  
BC PARKS, BC HYDRO AND THE NEVER ENDING SUPPORT AND  
GENEROUS DONATIONS OF THE PEOPLE OF CAMPBELL RIVER  
TO THE ANNUAL ROTARY TV AUCTION.

MAY 8, 2015

Island Coastal  
  
ECONOMIC TRUST

Community  
Futures  Strathcona



BC Parks

## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

### Between:

Her Majesty the Queen in Right of the Province of British Columbia, represented by the Minister responsible for the *Park Act*, having an address at Ministry of Environment, BC Parks & Conservation Officer Service Division, West Coast Region, 2080 A Labieux Road, Nanaimo, British Columbia V9T 6J9

(herein "BC Parks")

and

The Rotary Club of Campbell River, an internationally chartered service club in the Province of British Columbia, having an address at PO Box 72, Campbell River BC V9W 4Z9

(herein the "Rotary Club of Campbell River")

and

British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority a Crown Corporation in the Province of British Columbia, having an address at 6911 Southpoint Drive, Burnaby, BC, V3N 4X8

(herein "BC Hydro")

(each a "Party" and collectively the "Parties")

### Purpose:

This Memorandum of Understanding serves to foster multi-partner collaboration to construct a suspension bridge and viewing platforms, and expand the existing trail network to enhance recreational opportunities in Elk Falls Provincial Park.

### Whereas:

1. The Parties have a successful history of collaboration within and around Elk Falls Park for the delivery of recreational improvements benefiting the Community of Campbell River and the Park.
2. BC Parks is the property owner but wishes to promote community stewardship, maximize opportunities for sustainable development, and provide safe recreational experiences for visitors in Elk Falls Provincial Park.
3. The Rotary Club of Campbell River wishes to increase tourism in the Campbell River area and enhance recreation opportunities in Elk Falls Provincial Park by fundraising and providing support for managing the Elk Falls Suspension Bridge Viewing Area and Trail Project.
4. BC Hydro is providing funding contributions to support the Elk Falls Suspension Bridge Viewing Area and Trail Project. In addition, BC Hydro is committing to providing a new public parking

area, with barrier free facilities and trails from the new parking area to connect to the Millennium Trail on BC Parks property, as part of the John Hart Generating Station Replacement project.

5. The Rotary Club of Campbell River, BC Hydro and BC Parks are committed to working cooperatively to achieve the mutual goal of enhancing recreation in the park and creating a community legacy in Elk Falls Park through the completion of the Elk Falls Suspension Bridge, Viewing Area and Trail Project.

Therefore the parties wish to enter into this Memorandum of Understanding on the following terms and conditions.

1. BC Parks will support the project by providing the necessary staff time, as well as technical support to ensure the project accommodates the following needs; Community outreach, Recreational Facilities Gifting Agreement facility design, environmental and archaeological impact assessments, BC Parks obligations for First Nation consultation. BC Parks will also own and maintain all new facilities once constructed to BC Parks satisfaction.
2. Rotary Club of Campbell River commits to managing the overall project including obtaining and managing funding, reporting, hiring contractors, and overseeing in-kind activities. This authority to complete this work will be granted by BC Parks through a Recreational Facilities Gifting Agreement.
3. As part of the John Hart Generating Station Replacement Project, BC Hydro is providing the necessary funding and project management skills to construct a new parking area and barrier free trail connecting to the existing Millennium Trail. The majority of this work is on BC Hydro lands, and where it falls within the Park, authority is granted through the Park Boundary Adjustment Process and the related Authorizations to accommodate the project at Elk Falls. BC Hydro will not be responsible for any ongoing maintenance or operational costs for the new suspension bridge once these facilities are constructed. The parking lot and trail connection to the park will be transferred to BC Parks upon the completion of John Hart Generating Station Replacement Project.
4. The Parties agree to engage all other interested stakeholders, including but not limited to; City of Campbell River, First Nations, Campbell River Search and Rescue, Campbell River Fire Department, BC Ambulance Service, BC Hydro John Hart Generating Station Liaison Committee, British Columbia Conservation Foundation, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Campbell River Salmon Foundation, Applicable non-government organizations.
5. The Parties commit to following all safety and environmental standards and procedures while working in Elk Falls Provincial Park.
6. The Parties understand and agree that access to the Elk Falls Suspension Bridge, viewing platforms, connecting trails and parking lot will be free of charge for all users in perpetuity.
7. The Parties will cooperate and keep each other informed of their commitments to the project. The Rotary Club of Campbell River will continue to inform the public of the progress of this project. The parties will not represent one another during the course of any project communications. All public communications and press or media of major milestones (start, completion and opening dates) on the project may be in collaboration among the three parties.

This Memorandum of Understanding is not legally binding on the Parties and merely indicates the present intentions of the Parties with respect to the matters described in this document. Subsequent legal documents will be signed in due course.



BC Parks

Signed by:

Don Cadden  
Regional Director, West Coast Region  
(on behalf of BC Parks, Ministry of Environment)

Aug 19/13  
Date

Mark DeGagne  
President – Rotary Club of Campbell River  
(on behalf of the Rotary Club of Campbell River)

July 26/13  
Date

Dianne McSherry  
John Hart Project Director  
(on behalf of BC Hydro)

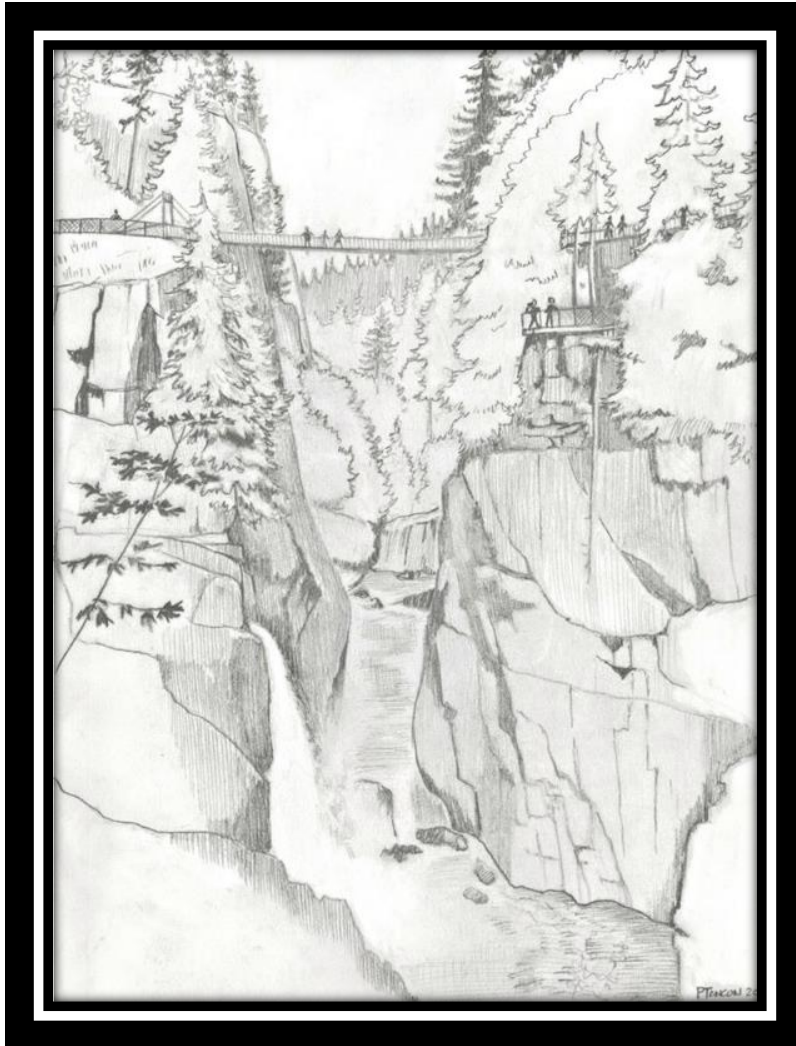
Aug 1/13  
Date

**Media Coverage** has been extensive and continues to build as more people visit.

- Courier Islander newspaper – Campbell River – Front page over six times  
[www.courierislander.com](http://www.courierislander.com)
- Shaw TV – Go Island – Campbell River, Comox Valley and on  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nITVHRiVQqw> 9 Episodes of Go Island are available on You Tube
- Shaw TV Island Adventure Episode 32  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bc0ZM0Jk0fs>
- Shaw Cable Talk About Show  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gsyBBxgHLlk&feature=youtu.be>
- CTV – Victoria – coverage all over Vancouver Island – multiple on site reports Copy and paste the link below for opening day announcement  
<http://vancouverisland.ctvnews.ca/video?clipId=610550>
- CHEK TV New – Victoria coverage all over Vancouver Island  
<http://www.cheknews.ca/suspension-bridge-opens-over-campbell-river-falls-91141>
- Times Colonist Victoria – coverage all over Vancouver Island – multiple updates  
[www.timescolonist.com/](http://www.timescolonist.com/)
- 2Day FM Radio Station – Campbell River
- The Eagle FM Radio Station – Campbell River and Comox Valley
- CFAX Radio – Victoria
- Rotary International magazine and website
- BC Hydro billing insert article
- Building Links blog serving Vancouver Island
- Soar Magazine – Pacific Coastal Airlines magazine
- Facebook page – Elk Falls Bridge – In the last two months we reached over 23,000 people in 43 countries

## Suspension bridge near Campbell River could be a thriller

[Carla Wilson](#) / Times Colonist  
November 13, 2013 10:27 PM



Rendering of bridge and view platform above Elk Falls. Photograph by Paolo Tancon

A new suspension bridge near Campbell River aiming to give visitors a thrill is scheduled to open by June.

The 80-metre-long pedestrian bridge in Elk Falls Provincial Park will be designed with a sag, said Lorrie Bewza, who is heading up the \$650,000 project for the Rotary Club of Campbell River.

Sagging helps provide the fun and fear factor. “I think when there are people on it, there will be a bit of a movement,” Bewza said.

It will be 60 or 65 metres — the exact height has not yet been finalized — above the water, providing a view of the tumbling 25 metres of Elk Falls. “It is just an amazing canyon,” Bewza said. A visit will be free.

The Elk Falls project will join new and planned pedestrian suspension bridges in Squamish and Kelowna designed to attract visitors and boost tourism. They are building on the popularity of the famous 137-metre-long Capilano Suspension Bridge in North Vancouver, which hangs 70 metres above water.

Bewza had been hoping for a height of at least 71 metres to beat the Capilano, but it appears the terrain will not allow for that.

He estimates between 35,000 and 70,000 people will walk over the bridge annually, injecting \$2.5 million to \$5 million into the local economy.

Rickety suspension bridges that just happen to snap when the hero is half-way across have long been a staple of heart-stopping moments in action movies set in exotic locations.

Today's suspension bridges are built using steel cables. The Elk Falls bridge will be anchored into bedrock, Bewza said. Extra side cables may be installed to stabilize the sway.

McElhanney Consulting Services has been hired to manage the project. B.C. Hydro is sharing its studies of the area, Bewza said.

The aim is to minimize impact on the park, he said. Archeological and environmental information will go to B.C. Parks. A request for proposals to build the bridge will likely be issued within four weeks, he said.

The bridge design is still to be finalized, but Bewza expects it will be similar to the Haslam Creek bridge near Nanaimo. Construction will begin in March or April 2014, he said. A viewing platform facing the falls is also in the plans.

Bridge planning is proceeding as B.C. Hydro develops its \$1-billion John Hart replacement generating station that will see five years of construction begin in 2014. Hydro amenities include rerouting the popular Canyon View Trail, which runs along the Campbell River. The new Station View trail will allow users to watch the massive construction project.

Access to the suspension bridge will be via a new Hydro-built, 80-stall parking lot off Highway 28. The new parking area is linked to a trail and pedestrian crossing over Hydro pipelines and there is a new interpretive centre about the generating station.

The trail design to the bridge has still to be finalized, Bewza said.

Planning for the bridge started a few years ago when three or four members visited Elk Falls, he said. The Rotary Club of Campbell River runs an annual fundraising television campaign to raise money for community projects. The bridge project received \$75,000 from the club, Hydro chipped in \$150,000, a federal grant totalled \$86,500, public donations amounted to \$700 and club members donated about \$14,000 worth of work and materials to the local Millennium Trail, Bewza said. The Island Coastal Economic Trust provided matching funds of \$325,000.

## Campbell River's Elk Falls suspension bridge nears completion

Neil Cameron / Campbell River Courier Islander  
January 23, 2015 03:50 PM



Another view of the nearly complete suspension bridge. Photograph By Submitted

The suspension bridge across the Elk Falls canyon in Campbell River is getting closer and closer to completion. The permanent cables have been strung across, connected to the anchors and tensioned in place, said project head Lorrie Bewza. “The decking and fencing are being bolted in place working from the South side of the canyon,” he said. “The contractor will complete the decking then attach fencing, handrail and other safety features to the bridge.”

Bewza said the north side landing area will be constructed in February with decking, fencing and benches.

The south side has an the elevated walkway and stairs leading down to the elevated viewing platform that will provide the visitor a view of Elk Falls from the top to the bottom of Elk Falls Canyon where the World Famous Campbell River starts.

Bewza said they still have trails to upgrade, fencing to install and a barrier free viewing platform to construct before opening in the spring of this year.

The bridge project that began five years ago, along with an all-access viewing platform, is estimated at a cash value of over \$2 million, said Bewza.

The project, according to a study obtained by the Courier-Islander, will generate between \$2.5 million and \$5 million annually for the local economy. It will be 60 to 80 metres long and hang from 50 to 60 metres above the Campbell River canyon floor offering a top to bottom view of Elk Falls. It is capable of holding 400 300-pound men.

## It's anchors away for Elk Falls suspension bridge

[Carla Wilson](#) / Times Colonist

October 1, 2014 09:26 PM



A work crew drills one of the two anchor holes on the south side of Elk Falls canyon for the suspension bridge being built in the provincial park. Photograph By Lorrie Bewza

A work crew drills one of the two anchor holes on the south side of Elk Falls canyon for the suspension bridge being built in the provincial park. Photograph By Lorrie Bewza

Holes are being drilled to hold anchors for a new suspension bridge near Campbell River that is to be completed in late November.

The 61-metre-long bridge will span the canyon in Elk Falls Provincial Park to give visitors a clear view of the falls. A slight sag will be built into the bridge which will be about 65 metres above the water.

"It's looking good now," Lorrie Bewza said by cellphone while visiting the site Wednesday. "It will be awesome."

The anchoring system for the bridge will be set in holes being drilled on the each side of the canyon, he said.

Each hole is about 7.6 centimetres in diameter and nine metres deep.

Spearheaded by the Rotary Club of Campbell River, the project cost is at about \$725,000, said Bewza, club president.

The pedestrian bridge was originally scheduled to open in the summer, but the date was pushed back as plans evolved.

A cantilevered viewing platform will be constructed on the south side of the trail, Bewza said.

The bridge is being built as B.C. Hydro embarks on its \$1-billion John Hart Generating Station replacement project. New trail routes and amenities are going in, supported by Hydro and by the Rotary Club, which is working with B.C. Parks on the bridge.

An elevated walkway and staircase to reach the bridge are being constructed in sections off site.

Funders include the Rotary, citizens, B.C. Hydro, the federal government, and the Island Coastal Economic Trust.

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# Suspension bridge opens to great acclaim

- *by* Kristen Douglas - Campbell River Mirror
- *posted* May 12, 2015 at 3:00 PM



The community came out to test the new suspension bridge over Elk Falls Canyon Saturday after a public opening.

— image credit: Kristen Douglas/Campbell River Mirror



As the sun shone down, casting a glow off several pairs of golden scissors, it was the moment they – and many in the community – had all been waiting for.

The official opening of the suspension bridge above Elk Falls Canyon.

Representatives from BC Parks, BC Hydro, Campbell River Rotary Club, local government and the B.C. government, took part in the proverbial ribbon cutting ceremony Friday morning to mark the opening of the bridge, which was then opened to the public Saturday morning.

Mary Polak, the B.C. Minister of the Environment, and Jessica McDonald, president and CEO of BC Hydro, led the first group across the 60-metre high and 64-metre long suspension bridge.

While Polak was impressed with the bridge and the view of Elk Falls, she was most thankful for the accessibility of the trail down to one of two new viewing platforms.

“My mother was a paraplegic and when I grew up we very much liked outdoor experiences but nine times out of 10 we would get somewhere and dad would have to take us to the more interesting places while mom sat in the car because you just couldn’t go there,” Polak said. “To see a place like this, that has been designed with that in mind, so that people who have mobility challenges can still enjoy the natural beauty

you have here, I just want to commend all of you that have been involved for putting that lens to this project.

“You have no idea what that means not just to the people who are having mobility challenges but to their family and friends who would really like to enjoy these spaces together with them.”

While the first platform and the trail leading from the new, 83-stall parking lot is wheelchair accessible, multiple stairs lead down to a second viewing platform that gives viewers a front-facing view of the falls, as well as to the suspension bridge.

Rotarian Lorrie Bewza, and project chair for the suspension bridge, said Rotary has estimated that the suspension bridge will result in 70,000 more people visiting Elk Falls each year – double the amount that currently visit the park.

He said the idea for the project was borne out of a desire to have a better view of the falls.

“In 2009 the Rotary Club of Campbell River was up walking through the park, looking for potential viewing areas to showcase Elk Falls and the canyon,” Bewza said. “When we looked at the canyon we all agreed we had to build a suspension bridge and that was met with some ‘really?’ but we worked on that and had many discussions and we proposed it to our club and they voted on making this our major project.”

Bewza said Rotary’s contributions are largely thanks to the community of Campbell River, as is stated on a plaque mounted to a rock on the trail leading to the bridge.

“The plaque states ‘This world-class suspension bridge and viewing platforms are the result of the incredible work of Rotarians, assisted by BC Parks and BC Hydro and the never-ending support and generous donations of the people of Campbell River to the annual Rotary TV Auction,’” Bewza said. “Without that, we wouldn’t have the funding.”

The project was made possible by \$124,500 in funding from Campbell River Rotary Club, a federal government grant of \$86,650, \$325,000 from the Island Coastal Economic Trust, as well as \$150,000 from BC Hydro which also shared its environmental and geo-technical reports with Rotary. Hydro also built the new Elk Falls parking lot which will be turned over to BC Parks to operate once construction on the John Hart project is complete.