



KANAKA CREEK REGIONAL PARK  
WATERSHED STEWARDSHIP CENTRE

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**February 6, 2015**

### **\$2.8 MILLION BEQUEST TO ENHANCE METRO VANCOUVER'S REGIONAL PARKS**

A generous bequest from the estate of a Metro Vancouver resident who loved the outdoors will help enhance Metro Vancouver's Regional Parks and provide opportunities for citizen stewardship.

George Ross, a long-time Burnaby resident who loved trees and walking forested trails, left \$2.8 million to ensure that generations to come will enjoy Metro Vancouver regional parks as he did.

"We are delighted and incredibly grateful for this extremely generous gift from the late Mr. George Ross," said Metro Vancouver Board Chair Greg Moore today at a creekside ceremony in Kanaka Creek Regional Park in Maple Ridge.

Mr. Ross's legacy will initially benefit the Kanaka Creek Watershed Stewardship Centre project with \$300,000 to fill the funding gap and allow this nature-focused learning facility to become a reality.

The remaining \$2.5 million will be used to create the George Ross Legacy Stewardship Program to be administered by the Pacific Parklands Foundation, which is dedicated to raising funds for Metro Vancouver's Regional Parks. Annual interest of \$50,000 to \$60,000 from the endowment will fund hands-on stewardship activities by our parks partners in Metro Vancouver Regional Parks.

“As a biologist who has been involved in outdoors and environmental education projects I know how important a facility like this is, and we applaud the late Mr. Ross’s generosity and vision,” said Heather Deal, Chair of Metro Vancouver’s Regional Parks Committee.

The Centre is situated in the 419-hectare Kanaka Creek Regional Park. This key \$1.1-million phase of construction will feature a multi-purpose classroom to be named the George Ross Learning Room, washrooms, a separate resource building, and ‘roof-to-creek’ landscaping. These new elements complement the recently rebuilt Bell-Irving Fish Hatchery.

Over the next two years additional wetlands and interpretive stormwater management features will be installed to complete the Centre.

“This Centre has been a dream of the Kanaka Education and Environmental Partnership Society (KEEPS) for more than a decade,” said Ross Davies, KEEPS Education Coordinator. “I can’t wait for the curiosity that will be unleashed as students observe something we have collected under the microscope, note details, and then head back outdoors to see how it has adapted to its home”.

Residents and visitors to Metro Vancouver Regional Parks as well as parks partners that offer programs and activities will all benefit from the Centre and the Legacy Stewardship Program.

“This bequest will allow our Foundation to leverage funds from the generated interest for years to come to create lasting projects and initiatives in the regional parks system”, said David Pohl, President of the Pacific Parklands Foundation.

“We encourage all park users and friends to think ahead as Mr. Ross did to leave a charitable bequest to the Pacific Parklands Foundation in their Will,” he added.

Donations for regional park projects like the Kanaka Creek Watershed Stewardship Centre and charitable bequests made through the Pacific Parklands Foundation help to enhance our regional parks and fulfill community aspirations for accessible, healthy parkland and outdoor education. To donate or learn more please visit [www.pacificparklands.com](http://www.pacificparklands.com).

Metro Vancouver’s Regional Parks system currently comprises 22 regional parks, four regional park reserves, two ecological conservancy areas, and five greenways. These sites protect sensitive ecosystems and significant natural features and host over 10 million annual visitors. For more information go to [www.metrovancouver.org](http://www.metrovancouver.org).

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