

# Colwood group out to preserve geological 'sink'

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Colwood area residents are rallying to preserve one of the best examples of a geological sink on Vancouver Island.

The sink, or kettle — a distinctive hole left by glacial action — is part of the 327.8-hectare Construction Aggregates gravel pit owned by Genstar.

Murray's Pond, as it is called, and the surrounding woodland have been used as a recreation spot by residents since 1920. The area has also been used unofficially by students at both Wishart and Dunsmuir schools for jogging, nature walks, and pond water study.

It's a haunt of deer, squirrels, birds and waterfowl. There are ferns, ladyslippers, trilliums and other wildflowers under the trees around the pond.

But the area was fenced a few weeks ago.

"That's when we realised that it really is private property — and not only that it's all going to be bulldozed over and dug up for gravel," said Lois Gar-

dener, who is leading a drive to have about 16 hectares set aside as parkland.

The company will be putting houses on the gravel pit site when the open pit mining is finished, Gardener said.

At that point it will have to get approval of subdivision plans, and Capital Region District guidelines say a minimum of five per cent of subdivision land should be left as park.

"There doesn't seem much point in ruining a natural park if eventually you are going to have to try to establish another park," she said.

"It just seems to make sense to leave this area alone now."

Gardener has collected 260 names on a petition asking the CRD to help save the area. She hopes to have 300 signatures by month's end.

She also has the support of Sooke school trustees.