

Murray's Pond and monuments

The realization that Murray's Pond, a popular recreation spot around a geological sink in Colwood, is to be sacrificed to a gravel operation has prompted an effort to have the site made a park.

The sink is a distinctive hole left by glacial action, and the surrounding woods have been used by residents since 1920. Located off Wishart Road just south of Applegate Road, the area has been a favorite of students from nearby schools who visit to study flora and fauna.

That ended a few weeks ago when the area was fenced by Genstar, the company that owns the huge Construction Aggregates gravel pit property which encompasses the pond area.

The fight to preserve the pond promises to be an uphill struggle. If it were Crown land, there would be a good chance of having the site declared an ecological reserve. But the act is specific: its provisions protect only Crown land.

Unfortunately, the federal government has never acted to give Parks Canada the authority to create national monuments. In the United States, national monuments can be established by specific acts of Congress or under the Antiquities Act of 1906. The national monument designation can provide protection for anything of historic, prehistoric or scientific interest.

The interesting aspect of natural national monuments is that they need not be full-scale parks. A glacial sink, an exposed cliff of basalt or sandstone hoodoos are simply protected by law and the public is guaranteed access to view them.

Hopefully, someone at Genstar will recognize the sense in what is being proposed by those who want to save Murray's Pond. The giant pit area is destined to become a subdivision once its gravel potential is exhausted. It has been proposed that 16 hectares surrounding the pond be set aside as the park Genstar will ultimately have to provide in a subdivision to satisfy the Capital Regional District. Why not dedicate that park, including Murray's Pond, now?

805003

June 4/82

E. D. TORRILLO

Colwood

Times