

September 5, 20128

Bob Rogers, RDN Director,
POSAC Area E

Dear Bob

I am following up our useful phone conversation today with this written observation, concerning the possibility of some kind of children's playground being built by the Stone Lakes, at the bottom end of Stone Lake Drive.

That area is a rare, ecologically delicate natural site, with ponds and wetlands, and fenced trails through ferns and forest. It is protected from the road, houses, mail boxes and pumping station by a small clump of trees and wild blackberries. Any child who wants a wilderness experience can, by walking a few meters off the road, find him or herself surrounded in this quiet beauty; we regularly walk our dog and grandchildren there for this reason.

It feels a long way from houses and roads, *precisely because of* that small stand of trees.

The notion that the District could somehow make this precious area more 'natural' strikes me as bizarre. A lot of money, machines and effort would be expended to destroy the habitat of many creatures and birds, upset the ecological balance of the ponds, and result in some man-made 'natural feature' which would look manicured, sterile, and have none of the attraction and mystery of what is already there. The very few children who live in this area would, I am sure, ignore it.

If your goal is to provide inviting natural spaces for families and children to explore, you have already achieved it, brilliantly: the Stone Lakes are a beautiful blend of nature and walkways. I urge your planning group to leave well enough alone.

Yours sincerely

Dr David Dowling
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Nanoose Bay