



C·V·R·D

## COMMUNITY SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2011  
9:00 AM / COMMITTEE ROOM #2  
175 INGRAM STREET, DUNCAN, BC

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The next Regular meeting of Community Safety Advisory Committee is scheduled to be held on Wednesday, November 16, 2011 at 9:00 am, in Committee Room No. 2, CVRD, 175 Ingram Street, Duncan, BC.

**DISTRIBUTION:**

CVRD -- Director Klaus Kuhn (Committee Chair)  
CVRD -- Director Lori Iannidinardo (Committee Vice-Chair)  
Municipality of North Cowichan -- Councillor John Koury  
City of Duncan -- Councillor Tom Duncan  
Town of Lake Cowichan -- Councillor Jayne Ingram  
Town of Ladysmith -- Councillor Jill Dashwood and Councillor Lori Evans  
Cowichan Women Against Violence Society / Safer Futures Program -- Theresa Gerritsen  
Community Options Society -- Cheryl Stone  
Cowichan Valley School District No. 79 -- Candace Spiisbury  
Cowichan Independent Living -- Jim Harnden  
RCMP -- Kevin Day and Markus Lueder  
Social Planning Cowichan -- Linden Collette  
Community Policing -- Carol-Ann Rolls  
Community Representative -- Michelle Bell  
Community Representative -- Bruce Ingram

**Cowichan Valley Regional District**  
Joe Barry, Corporate Secretary

(Agenda Cover Only)  
Warren Jones, Administrator  
CVRD Directors

Minutes of the Regular meeting of the Community Safety Advisory Committee held in the Board Room, 175 Ingram Street, Duncan, BC, on Wednesday, July 6, 2011 at 9:04 am.

**PRESENT:** Director Klaus Kuhn (Chair) <to 10:32 am>  
Director Lori Iannidinardo (Vice-Chair)  
Theresa Gerritsen, Cowichan Women Against Violence Society  
Councillor Jill Dashwood, Town of Ladysmith  
Councillor Tom Duncan, City of Duncan  
Councillor Jayne Ingram, Town of Lake Cowichan  
Candace Spilsbury, Cowichan Valley School District No. 79  
Kevin Day, RCMP  
Linden Collette, Social Planning Cowichan  
Carol-Ann Rolls, Community Policing  
Cheryl Stone, Community Options Society  
Michelle Bell, Community Representative <to 10:20 am>

**ABSENT:** Councillor John Koury, District of North Cowichan  
Councilor Lori Evans, Town of Ladysmith  
Markus Lueder, RCMP  
Jim Harnden, Cowichan Independent Living  
Bruce Ingram, Community Representative

**ALSO**

**PRESENT:** Dominique Beesley, Recording Secretary  
Thanya Al-Saadoon, Cowichan Women Against Violence Society

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

It was moved and seconded that the agenda be amended with the addition of the following New Business Item:

**NB1 – Community Safety Bulletin, June 2011;**

and that the agenda, as amended, be approved.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

**M1**

It was moved and seconded that minutes of the Regular meeting of Community Safety Advisory Committee, held April 20, 2011, be adopted.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**DELEGATIONS**

**D1**

Dan Vaillancourt, Facilitator, representing Youth Caregivers Project, provided a presentation and displayed a film on Youth Caregivers Project's work in supporting youth caregivers in the Cowichan Valley.

Mr. Vaillancourt introduced Kai, Stephanie and Nicole and noted that they were all youths in a role as primary family caregiver.

**REPORTS**

**R1** A Report from Director Lori Iannidinaro, Vice-Chair and Jayne Ingram, Member, Community Safety Advisory Committee, regarding Canada Post and the misuse of private/personal address, was received as a verbal update.

**It was moved and seconded that a subcommittee meet with Jean Crowder, MP for Nanaimo-Cowichan, to raise a concern, regarding the misuse of private/personal address, and that information be brought back on moving forward with action.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**R2** A Report from Director Klaus Kuhn, Chair, Community Safety Advisory Committee, regarding RCMP appreciation letter, was received as a verbal update.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**C1** Correspondence; regarding CSAC Youth Subcommittee meeting notes, May 26, 2011; was received.

**C2** Correspondence; regarding CSAC Youth Subcommittee meeting notes, June 8, 2011; was received.

**10:20 am** Michelle Bell left the meeting at 10:20 am.

**C3** Memorandum from Youth Safety CSAC Subcommittee, regarding report (prepared by CWAV/Safer Futures), was received.

**C4** Correspondence, regarding *The Society of Children and Youth of BC Municipal Standards and Indicators of Child and Youth Friendly Communities*, was received.

**C5** Correspondence, regarding local youth resources compiled by the Cowichan Valley Youth Caregivers Project, was received.

**10:32 am** Director Kuhn, Chair, left the meeting at 10:32 am and Director Iannidinaro assumed Vice-Chair at this point.

**C6** Correspondence, regarding indicators and their function in understanding youth safety, was received.

**It was moved and seconded that the Community Safety Advisory Committee focus on the youth safety project for which the age range be from 10 to 18 years old.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**NB1**

*Community Safety Bulletin, June 2011*

The Community Safety Bulletin dated June 2011 was received.

**ADJOURNMENT**  
11:06 am

**It was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting adjourned at 11:06 am.

Certified Correct:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Recording Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Vice-Chairperson

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

# CSAC Subcommittee Report

**To: CSAC**

**From: CSAC Youth Safety Subcommittee**

Members: Linden Collette, Cheryl Stone, Michelle Bell, Thanya Al-Saadoon, Theresa Gerritsen

**Date: September 2011**

**Re: Youth Safety Subcommittee updates and recommendations to CSAC**

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The CSAC Youth Safety Subcommittee gathered for three meetings since the July 16<sup>th</sup> CSAC meeting. Meeting dates were July 22<sup>nd</sup>, August 12<sup>th</sup> and September 9<sup>th</sup>.

The key topics that the Youth Safety Subcommittee focussed on were:

1. Determining which of the indicators (that youth in the Cowichan Valley are faced with) that the committee will use to inform its work this year.
  2. Planning towards creating a youth component to inform and complement the Youth Safety Subcommittee's work. Invitations were distributed to youth serving agencies and institutions for recruitment purposes. The subcommittee's intention is to engage youth in presenting a youth perspective of community safety – both to inform the CVRD, and to participate in community events and presentations highlighting youth safety.
- 

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Confirm a set of indicators for CSAC to adopt to inform the youth safety focus this year.
2. Conduct a series of youth safety dialogs in each of the regions represented on the CSAC.
3. Present to the CVRD board CSAC's plan to conduct a focus in the area of Youth Safety. Suggested presentation to board schedule is Oct. 2011, Feb. 2012, June 2012.

## Youth Safety Indicators

The Youth Safety Subcommittee of CSAC met and discussed possible indicators of youth safety in the Cowichan Region. While it will be important to monitor negative circumstances that youth experience, the subcommittee also recommends looking at factors which can increase resiliency and lead to flourishing youth. The subcommittee recommends that CSAC adopt the following indicators:

1. **The number of youth in foster care.**  
Rationale: Youth in care are more likely to have experienced violence and neglect. They are less likely to graduate from high school.  
Data source: Ministry of Children and Family Development
2. **The number of youth living below the low income cut off (LICO).**  
Rationale: Youth living in poverty have more extreme stress in their lives. They are more likely to live in housing that is unsafe and have more health problems.  
Data source: BC Stats
3. **The number of youth who are victims of crime.**  
Rationale: children and youth under 18 years of age are more at risk of physical and sexual assault than adults.  
Data source: RCMP
4. **Teen pregnancy rates.**  
Rationale: Teen parents are less likely to have social and economic resources and are therefore more likely to live in poverty, and be subject to violence and crime.  
Data source: VIHA
5. **The number of youth involved in sports, recreational and special interest activities.**  
Rationale: Involvement in sports and hobbies is a resiliency factor for youth.  
Data source: Youth survey- This will involve original research
6. **High school completion rates.**  
Rationale: High school graduation is an indicator of literacy and employability, both of which are associated with the ability to increase standard of living and decrease safety risk.  
Data source: School district
7. **Number of youth volunteering.**  
Rationale: Volunteering can aid integration and social cohesion, reduce isolation and help youth to feel included in the community.  
Data source: Youth survey- This will involve original research

## **Youth Safety Dialogues**

The Subcommittee is proposing that CSAC representatives meet with youth and parents on the topic of Youth Safety in communities represented on CSAC to identify issues and engage in participatory research activities based on indicators. The activities would include drawing from the concerns for safety that arise, explore reasons, and recognize characteristics of flourishing youth in the community and community initiatives that are working or have worked in the past.

### **Preparation for Dialogues:**

Develop a consistent format or workshop style agenda that include an icebreaker or fun activity, activities that encourage input and dialogue (mini movie making exercise, group work etc., brainstorm), collection of information, food and fun.

Facilitate and make connections with host community, linkages with community representatives that connect with youth, promote event, organize event.

Deliver event and collate information.



# Community Safety Bulletin

June 2011

*"Promoting Safety in the Cowichan Region"*

Presented by Cowichan Safety Advisory Committee (CSAC)

## 'Mosquito' Discussed as a Means of Addressing Youth Vandalism

Ladysmith council is considering employing a device that emits a high pitch whine to deter loitering by teens at Transfer Beach Park. The park is experiencing vandalism suspected to be perpetrated by youth frequenting the area at night. The 'Mosquito' is used in other locations as a deterrent to youth, causing them discomfort with the irritating noise it emits – a noise that supposedly can only be heard by people between the ages of 13-25. Not all of the council agrees that this is the best way to address the problem, and acknowledge that most youth are socially appropriate and the problems are caused by only a few. Discussions around possible solutions continue.

## Cowichan Valley Open Learning Co-op Showcases Students Artistic Talents

Grade 11 and 12 alternate school students from CVOLC put on a grand display of their artistic talents during the 'Minds and Mediums' art show at the Benchmark Gallery in downtown Duncan. From May 12<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>, the public was invited to both view and purchase student created art pieces. Showcasing the student's art has now become an annual event, with positive outcomes for both the presenters and the public.

## No Closure in the Tyeshia Jones Murder Investigation

Investigators continue to work diligently towards uncovering evidence that would enable them to lay charges in this unsolved murder case. The body of the 18 year old young woman was discovered 3 months ago, and no suspects have been charged as yet. Mary Jim, Tyeshia's mom, has asked the community for some privacy, and requests that if people have information about her daughter's case, to take that to the police, not to the family.



### RCMP Working with Bar Owners to Address Safe and Respectful Social Behaviours

The RCMP is working with bar owners in conducting a 'Bar Watch Program' in Duncan. The program is aimed at addressing and promoting safe and respectful social behaviours in local business that serve alcohol. Bar Watch includes guidelines for both patrons and establishment serving staff. With an agreed upon 'code of conduct' being the guiding framework of the plan, the hope is that both patrons and staff will work together to maintain a social atmosphere that is free of uncivil behaviours. The City of Duncan, the District of North Cowichan and the Cowichan Valley Regional District have all endorsed the 'Bar Watch Program'.

### Local Credit Card Fraud Activity

Community Policing assisted a local merchant with a credit card fraud, linked to investigations throughout the province with the RCMP Commercial Crime Section. Local RCMP investigated and was able to conduct an undercover set-up in Parksville, resulting in the arrest of two individuals from the mainland. Community Policing has been sharing its Business Watch programs with other detachments. Also, Shawnigan Lake (Mill Bay Merchants) will be launching one soon.

### Block Watch Expanding

Since the April CSAC meeting, five new Block Watch sites are in process of being certified. They are: Diana Drive (Properties Area), Deuchars Drive (Gibbins Rd/Hospital Area), Akira/Webdon (Sahtlam/Upper River Bottom Area), Sahtlam Estates Road (Upper Sahtlam) and Pauline Street (Crofton).

### Youth Voter Numbers Up

Following the May 2011 federal elections, the percentage of Canadian voters increased 2.6 from the 2008 record low. Here in Cowichan, what is considered to have most affected the surge in local voter turnout was the number of young people showing up at the polls on Election Day. And these youth were not only showing up to vote, but also volunteering to support the incumbents during the election drive. Successful candidate Jean Crowder said, "We had a lot of young people join this campaign" and added that she would like to keep them involved by, "putting together a youth council".





August 9, 2011

Catalyst Paper  
Box 70  
CROFTON BC V0R 1R0

**Attention: Robert Belanger, General Manager Crofton Division**

Dear Mr. Belanger:

**Re: Recommendations for Safety Measures at the Lake Cowichan Weir**

As you know, Tyler Neal drowned earlier this summer in a very unfortunate accident in the waters immediately adjacent to the weir at Cowichan Lake/River. Ms. Lennie Neal, the mother of the young man, was a delegation to the August 3, 2011, Electoral Area Services Committee of the Cowichan Valley Regional District.

Ms. Neal spoke of this tragic accident and outlined a number of her recommendations on how this area may be made safer so that such a tragedy won't happen again. The attached correspondence outlines many of her thoughts in this regard.

As a result of her presentation, the Committee passed the following recommendation which was subsequently approved by the Regional Board at their August 4, 2011, regular meeting.

***"That a letter be sent to Catalyst Paper requesting that they review the seven recommendations listed by Lennie Neal on Page 3 of her letter dated July 12, 2011 regarding Safety Measures at the Lake Cowichan Weir and further that a copy of the letter be forwarded for information to the Cowichan Watershed Board and Community Safety Advisory Committee."***

The Cowichan Valley Regional District Board would appreciate Catalyst Paper doing what it can to implement the recommendations which fall under its purview as owners of the weir.

Thank you in advance for your action in this regard.

Yours truly,

Gerry Giles,  
Chair

TRA/jnl

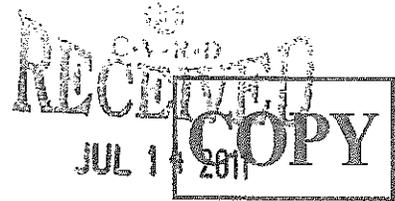
Attachment

pc: Director I. Morrison, Electoral Area F – Cowichan Lake South/Skutz Falls  
Director K. Kuhn, Electoral Area I – Youbou/Meade Creek  
Cowichan Watershed Board  
Community Safety Advisory Committee  
Town of Lake Cowichan

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Lennie Neal  
210-681 Government Street  
Duncan, B.C. V9L 1A9

*Registered  
Letter*



July 11, 2011

Gerry Giles  
Council Chair  
Cowichan Valley Regional District

Original: <i>EGES</i>	Copies to: <i>Chair</i>
Board:	<i>JB</i>
Committee(s):	<i>JB</i>
Directed by: <i>[Signature]</i>	Date: <i>July 14/11</i>
File #	

Dear Ms. Giles:

My name is Lennie Neal, I am the mother of Tyler Neal, who was drowned at the Lake Cowichan weir on June 14, 2011. I would like to address this council to bring some awareness of our grave concerns following this accident and to request some action and accountability of the council in addressing these concerns.

Tyler grew up a block from the Shuswap river in the interior and spent his whole childhood swimming and playing in the river. A strong swimmer, he was very familiar with river currents, and swam by the Lake Cowichan weir in the summer, when the water was warmer and the water levels lower. And therein lies the danger of the Lake Cowichan weir. In the summer the danger is much less, the water levels are low and the deadly invisible back eddy does not come anywhere near the shoreline, so one can enter the river there and gently drift downstream with the current. BUT, when the water is higher, that deadly back eddy increases exponentially and comes dangerously near shore.

We all know to stay away from white water, but who knew that the seemingly normal water closer to shore was so dangerous? Not Tyler. Not Peter Devana, who wrote a letter to the editor of the Cowichan News-Leader newspaper after news of Ty's horrifying story, detailing his own harrowing near death experience at the weir a few weeks earlier. Peter, the vice chair of the Advisory Planning Committee for the Cowichan Lake South/Skutz Falls area, has been putting his riverboat into the landing at the weir for 10 years and more and did not expect his boat to be grabbed by the eddy and hurled upstream against the current into the weir gate. Peter was lucky to have a boat to grab onto, even submerged. It saved his life.

It is believed that Tyler, in similar fashion to Peter, unaware of the existence and power of the back eddy stepped into the water a couple of feet to see if he could get his remote controlled boat within range of the controller in his hand. The constant water turbulence of the two gates that were open had made the river bed soft and the back eddy easily took Tyler's legs out from under him. Once in the weir's incredible pull, Tyler was unable to surface and he drowned.

Which brings me to my first question. Why, when the water was high, were only two gates open? It is now clear to me that when you restrict water outflow, it creates more

**COPY**

turbulence and more current, and consequently, deadly back eddies. Why not open all the gates somewhat? The same amount of outflow could be achieved, only much more safely, and the dangerous and turbulent water would at least be visible, and a deterrent to those thinking to enter the water at that point. The day after we learned of Tyler's death, we saw a man with his small son and dog down at the water's edge where Tyler died, throwing sticks in the water for the dog, oblivious to how close to danger they were standing. How many other close calls have there been? We don't know, in large part because the camera at the weir is live only. It doesn't record anything, so the investigators were unable to see what happened to Tyler, or to Peter, or to anyone else who ran afoul of the weir deathtrap under these conditions. In an era of cheap digital recording equipment, why is this? I understand from the RCMP that there are several missing person files in Lake Cowichan and it is possible that some of the missing people entered from this point. You must make certain that you have done everything in your power to ensure that Tyler will be the last fatality at the weir.

I took some photos at the weir several days after Tyler's death. It's not like actually being there, but you get an idea. Can anyone see what the orange and white sign says on the side of the weir, the one covered by foliage? We couldn't either, not from any angle. Actually, to see any signs at the weir, you have to look up, waaaaay up. At the very top of the weir are signs saying swimming here MAY cause serious injury. They say nothing about increased danger when the water is higher, nothing about the back eddy. In fact, those signs at the very top of the weir are the only indications that there is any danger whatsoever. There are no signs on the road to the weir, no signs in the parking area, no signs lower on the weir itself. There is also no attempt to exclude the public from this danger, such as a gate that prevents access, a common dam safety feature.

But can we just avoid the weir? Apparently not. In conversations with both the Lake Cowichan police and Mr. Devana, the point was made that the weir is the only place in the area where a boat can be launched on the river easily. This includes search and rescue work on the river. So, it would seem that a good way to mitigate the danger of the weir would be to build a boat launch at a safer place, maybe near the pub end of Saywell park. "If you build it, they will come". Fewer people would use the weir for boats and tubes, and the road leading to it could be made harder to access, discouraging even more people.

The thought of another family living the hell we have been plunged into is totally unacceptable to me, and if there is one small bit of good that can come from Ty's death, it would be that no one else be ambushed by the unknown dangers of the Lake Cowichan weir. Please make it so.

In summary, although this indeed was a tragic accident, it is an accident that quite likely could have been prevented if responsible public safety measures were put in place and we are calling on you, the council of the Cowichan Valley Regional District to seek accountability for and ensure the safe operation of the weir at Lake Cowichan. In particular, we make the following requests respectfully:



- 1) An explanation of the existing public safety measures and considerations with respect to the existence and operation of the weir.
- 2) A compliance audit on those measures.
- 3) An independent assessment of the risk to the public that the weir represents in varying conditions, including but not limited to, high water levels and the number and choice of gates open at the weir.
- 4) Identification of where the responsibility and liability with respect to operation of the weir lie.
- 5) A supported action plan to provide better safety and warning to the public.
- 6) An alternate river launch point for boats in Lake Cowichan.
- 7) A recording camera at the weir.

Thank you in advance for your commitment to avoid any further loss of life. We look forward to your response and a chance to hear from the Board in person at the next available meeting opportunity. This letter has been distributed to other parties that also hold an interest in the operations at the Lake Cowichan weir.

Sincerely,

Lennie Neal

250-597-2245

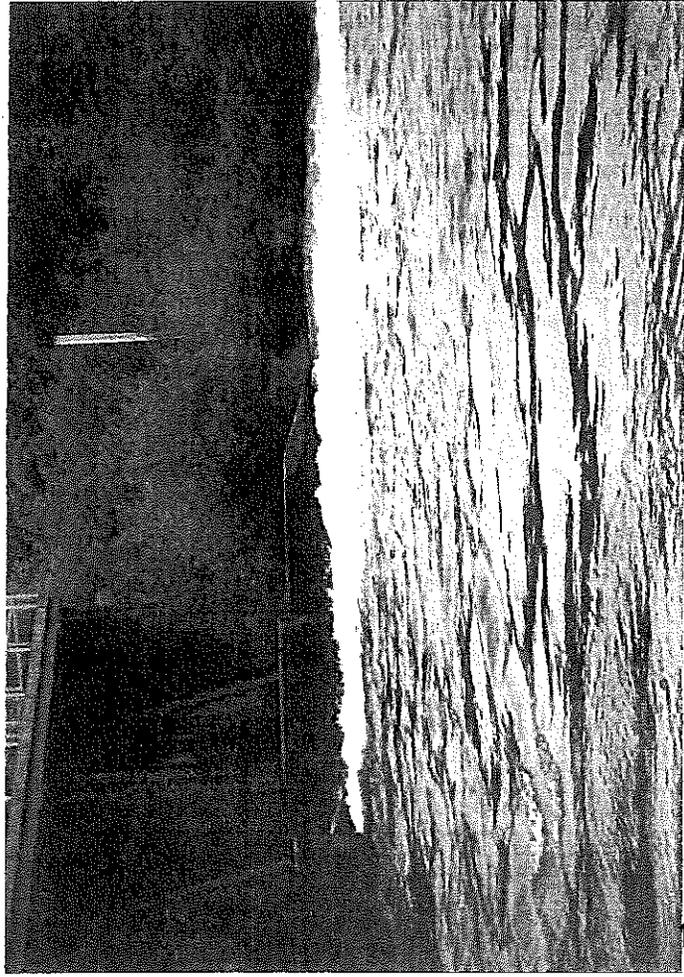
Attachments: Photos of weir, Letter to the Editor from Peter Devana.

PC: Catalyst Paper Mill, Robert Belanger

PC: Town of Lake Cowichan, Mayor Ross Forrest

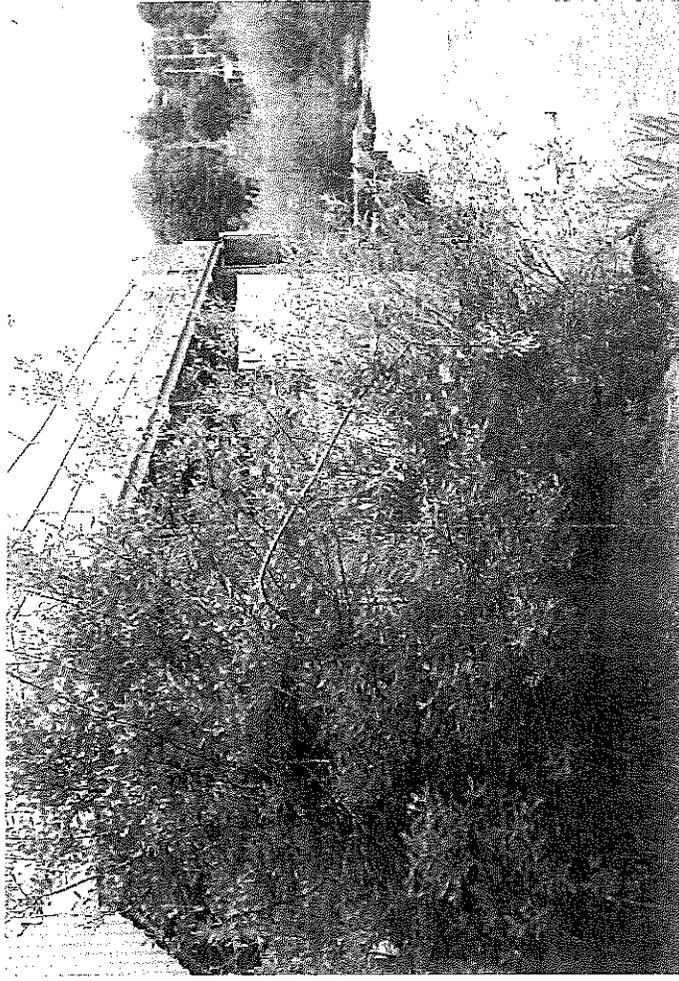
PC: Ministry of Natural Resource Operations, Section Head Dam Safety, Will Jolley

The weir, one week after Ty's death

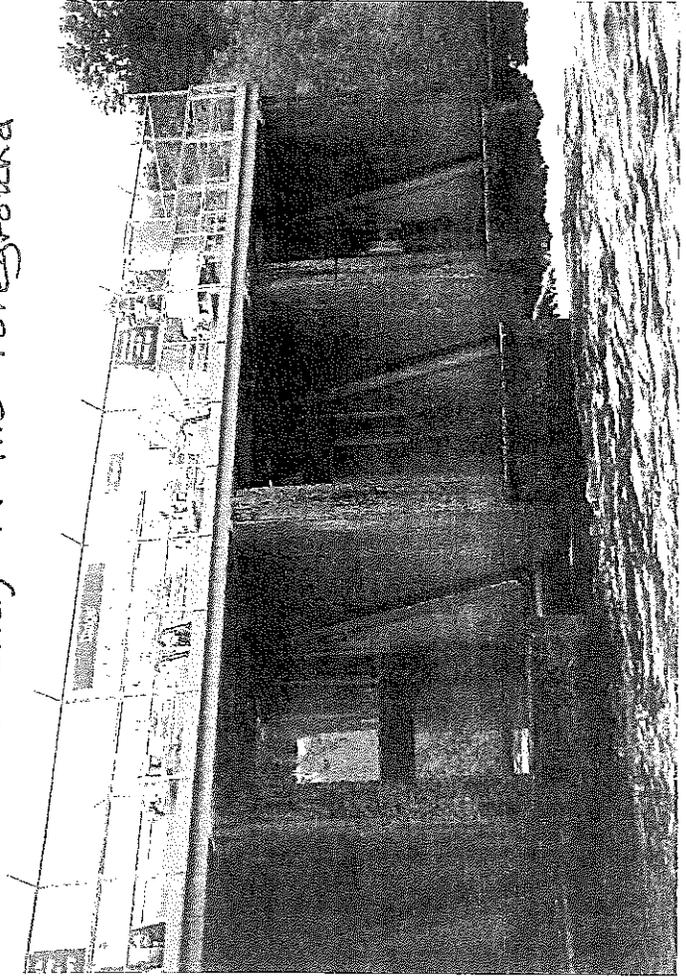


Back eddy in the foreground

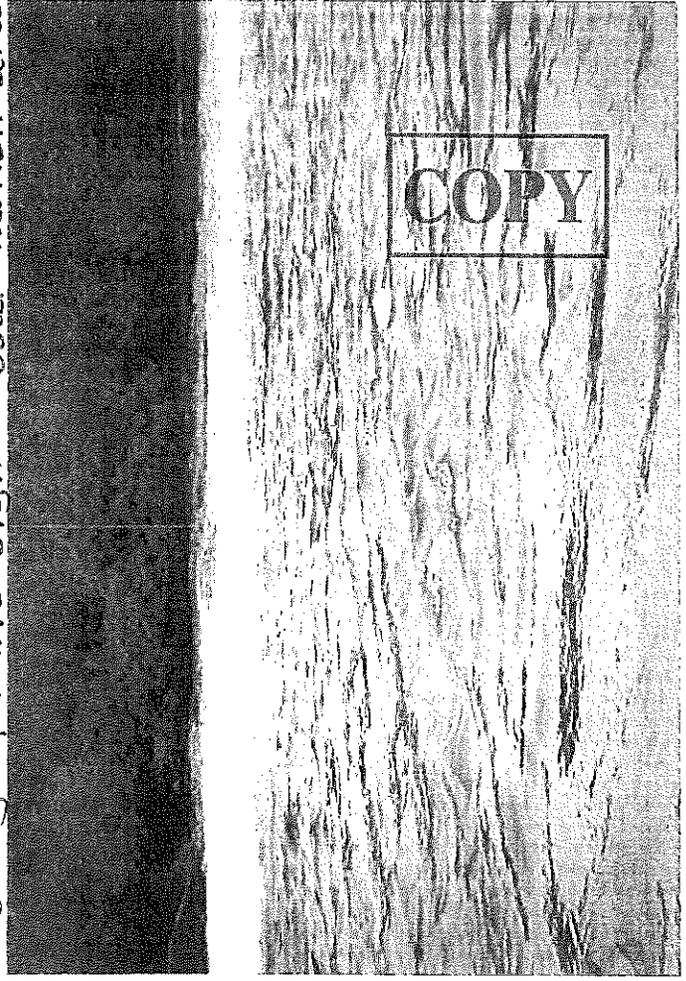
after Ty's death



Orange & white sign - Boat launch area



Only two gates open



Back eddy in the foreground

COPY

## I can tell you first-hand about the hazards of the weir

Dear editor

After the tragic drowning of Tyler Neal I had to write to further emphasize the dangers at the Lake Cowichan weir.

On May 13 I had a similar experience at that exact location but somehow survived.

After launching my driftboat (a smaller version of those used by river guides), I found myself drifting toward the white water created by the outflow of the weir. Having drifted the river every year during the past 10 years I thought nothing was amiss.

While waiting for my friends to launch their craft, I suddenly felt myself being pulled at a high rate of speed toward the weir rather than being pushed downriver as one would expect. Within seconds the rear end of my boat was pulled against the weir, filled with water from the overflow, and capsized immediately.

The back end sank and the front end came out of the water and turned over on me. All this happened within seconds!

I immediately sank below the boat into the very turbulent water and sank farther as my loose, breathable full waders partially took on water. On my first attempt to surface I was unsuccessful as the boat was about six feet above me.

On my second attempt, after taking in two gulps of water, I managed, with Herculean ef-

fort, to reach up and pull myself to the surface by grasping the side of the overturned boat.

My shoulders ached for days afterward.

Luckily I somehow made it about 20 metres to the shore where I grabbed some willows and my friends were able to get me out.

My waders were filled with water right up to my knees and I couldn't even pull myself onto shore. The capsizing of my boat happened so fast my friends did not even see or hear it happen. The lessons I learned from this: Never go into the river anywhere near the weir, and never go on any body of water in a boat or tube without first putting on a life vest.

The thing I regret most is that I did not submit this letter immediately after the incident.

If I had, maybe it could have changed history. I pass on my sincere condolences to the family and friends of Tyler Neal.

Peter Devana

Lake Cowichan