

A SEASON FOR CHANGE

Provincial Parks enjoyed a very successful two week involvement in the Canada Winter Games at Brookvale and owe a great deal of credit to the hundreds of volunteers in the provincial biathlon and cross-country associations. Even the weather co-operated right up to the last day, which was no mean feat this year. It appears now that winter is definitely on the wane as we move into March. A large flock of Canada Geese was seen high over Bonshaw Provincial Park on the seventh.

Like everyone else in this season, the Parks Branch begins to change gears from winter activities to preparation for spring and summer. Last year we piloted a new program called "This is Your Park" with a couple of Island communities. The program fits well under the mission statement of Parks which is:

- to operate and promote the orderly development of recreational opportunity and services, encourage conservation and preservation of natural resources and insure their effective integration with other sectors of public and private endeavours.

"This is Your Park" is aimed at encouraging community participation in the operation and development of individual provincial parks and the program will be promoted strongly this year after the progress indicated in 1990.

The program has specific objectives of

- providing year-round interest and appreciation of the parks,
- increasing visitation to the parks by blending community and park interests,
- promoting a better quality and more varied experience for park visitors,
- allowing more opportunity for contact between tourists and Islanders.

Park communities are defined in the broadest sense to mean any user groups and the target for each park is the formation of a community committee which the Parks Region will support. Programs, facility improvements and protection are all candidates for this community agenda and we look forward to hearing from each of you in support of your favorite provincial park.

- Doug Murray