

Strathcona Wilderness Institute – 2016 Annual Visitor Report Park Use Permit, Authorization 103312

Strathcona Park Wilderness Centre : Paradise Meadows Trail Head

The Centre was open from June 24th until October 10th in 2016 for a total of 108 days : 7 days in June, 31 days in July, 31 days in August, 30 days in September, 9 days in October.

The Centre was staffed by one student through the Canada Summer Jobs programme from June 24th to August 29th , and by a cohort of 15 Volunteers throughout the Season.

11,000 visitors entered the Centre- a substantial increase over the 8000 over 124 days last year. In addition, 250 participants & leaders were involved in the organized events (Hikes & Nature Walks etc - see below). Several days saw over 200 visitors, and the average # per day was over 100.

Visitor Provenance Summary

Canada: -- 80% of total visitors

US: -- 4 % of total visitors (30 States)

Europe: -- 11.5 % of total visitors (23 countries)

Other countries: -- 4.5 % of total visitors (21 countries)

Organized Summer Events

We scheduled 24 guided Hikes on a variety of the Forbidden Plateau trails and Nature Walks mostly around Paradise Meadows covering every weekend through July and August, plus on three weekends in September and one in October. Only two cancellations occurred through uncooperative weather & injury. We had one presentation at the Wilderness Centre by Cheney Jackson from the Marmot Recovery Foundation . 9 volunteers led these hikes and Nature walks, as well as two of the SWI Directors.

We did not have school groups approach SWI this year for guided walks or hikes, although there were several schools touring the Meadows and beyond in September, including a group of 29 Japanese students. This December, as last year, we will have the tots from the Hand-in-Hand Nature Pre-school up at the Centre for morning in the snow.

The planned Nature Camp to be held in September has been postponed until 2017.

Wheelchair & TrailRider Use

10 visitors made use of the Wheelchairs for the Paradise Meadows Boardwalk . The TrailRider was taken out on 7 occasions for trips to the new Accessible picnic location at Battleship Lake; it was also used to carry out an injured hiker on July 28th.

The Buttle Hut beside Park HQ at Buttle Lake

The Buttle Hut was open for only 15 days over 6 weekends from early July to Labour Day, staffed by 3 volunteers and 1 of our Directors. The total number of visitors was 525 (of which 68% were Canadian, 30% European, and 2% the rest).

Organized events - summary

No events were organized this year in the Buttle Lake area of the Park.