

There was little bit of everything during weekend Comox Days celebrations and parade, and there was also everything for the little ones, as can be

seen by expression of youngsters on this special float. Parade included Little Toot, providing free rides for children, courtesy of CFB Comox.

Oyster River Dredging Delay Sought by Board

CAMPBELL RIVER — The proposed test channel that would be dredged through the mouth of the Oyster River should be held in abeyance at least until Environment Canada has finished its studies there.

And the provincial government will be strongly urged to hold a public hearing on the use of the estuarine region of the Oyster River.

Those two decisions were

reached by the Comox-Strathcona Regional Board after a presentation by a representative of the British Columbia Steelhead Society, opposed to the proposed channel.

Pacific Playgrounds operates a resort area at the mouth of the river, and part of its expansion plans calls for a 1,700-foot deep water channel to be dredged through the estuary region to give 24-hour access to its boat basin.

At present the basin is not accessible during low tide.

An engineering study recommended a smaller test channel be dug first, so tidal and storm action could be observed to see what effect a larger channel might have on the estuarine region.

Both channels have received a considerable criticism from environmental groups.

By following the advice of Rev. Charles Brandt, secretary of the Steelhead society, the board overruled recommendations by its own environmental committee.

The committee "recommended that the Department of Lands be notified that the Regional District has no objection to construction of the test channel."

An alternate motion was put forward by director Dick Treherne, whose electoral area includes the Oyster River, to hold the test channel in abeyance until the federal fisheries studies have been completed at the end of December.

At that time the fisheries report would be studied by the board, and the proposed test channel reconsidered. An amendment was added to the motion that the provincial government be urged to hold a public hearing on the matter.

Father Brandt told the board the estuary was a vital area for the support of five species of salmon and trout.

He also pointed out the channel was in violation of a recreational land reserve set for the area by an order-in-council of the provincial government in 1937, and that the director of lands also recommended the channel construction wait until the federal studies are completed.

Director H. C. McQuillan of the nearby Black Creek electoral area, opposed the

what he called the delaying tactics of the board.

He said the company should not be kept waiting forever not knowing if it will be allowed to dig the channel.

Two other directors agreed with McQuillan but the rest of the board voted in favor of delaying the channel until studies were completed.