

## EXTENSIVE STUDY

# Environment protected in area's overall concept

In order to build a refuge pleasure craft channel and breakwater, Pacific Playgrounds Ltd., has made extensive engineering and ocean hydraulic studies and followed this up with an application to the B.C. Provincial Lands Department.

The application, which was made in February, 1972, is for a foreshore lease and permission to dredge an all-tide refuge pleasure-craft 1700 foot channel.

The proposed channel is to be dredged at right angles, and several hundred feet from the Oyster River, and follows the

natural burm, said company director George Ward.

The company's hydraulic studies show that everything coming from the Oyster River flows north — the Oyster River has no effect on anything south of the mouth of the river, said Ward.

To date, studies by both the company and the provincial government have found nothing to conflict with the proposal in the application by Pacific Playgrounds, however, Environment Canada studies have not yet been completed, pointed out Ward.

During this study period Pacific Playgrounds hired Willis, Cunliffe and Tait to conduct surveys of the area and the company in turn hired the services of Western Hydraulics, experts in oceanography and water movements.

"None of these studies have yet shown our plan to be detrimental to the area," explained Ward.

"If what we were trying to do here was harmful to the river and fishing, then it would be against our best interests," said Ward.

"We are striving to build a refuge pleasure-craft channel here which is really necessary to the area," added Ward.

"There is no safety harbor for boats between Comox and Campbell River — if boats get caught up out there in the middle of the water when it blows hard, they have nowhere to go."

Ward estimated that between Saratoga Beach and Miracle Beach there were upwards of 600 campers per day in the summer, many of whom used boats.

"We consider this would be a safety area or refuge for all these people," he said.

After 16 months of extensive studies, the company is still waiting for a decision.

A long range recreational development has steadily progressed over the last six years towards reality. Pacific Playgrounds located in the beautiful Saratoga Beach and Oyster River area opens its doors this week on phase one of a long range recreational complex

Few holiday resorts set in natural scenic areas provide all-family recreation facilities.

That's where Pacific Playgrounds triumphs.

Out of the total 354 acres that encompasses the new development, some 40 acres is set aside for family recreation.

If Dad wants to go fishing all day and Mom doesn't like the water, there's plenty for her to do while Dad's trying his luck for a tealhead or salmon.

She can laze and sunbathe by the 20 by 50 swimming pool or take a dip, while the little ones play in the heated tot pool.

Maybe she wants to dig clams, gather oysters or trap crabs for the evening meal - it's all there at Pacific Playgrounds.

And when the laundry needs to be done there's no bother getting out the car and traipsing into

Accommodation consists of 10 cottages, six of which face the Oyster River with the other four facing the swimming pool.

The cottages have two bedrooms, living area, kitchen, and four-piece bathroom, all winterized and electric heated.

Each cottage has been carefully built to ensure the maximum of privacy, and blend into a natural background of trees.

But if you have your own trailer there are 130 trailer sites completed, 16 with hook-up for power, water and sewer and 114 complete with water, power, sink drains and sani-station.

Service buildings include 20 toilets, basins and showers, as well as the laundromat, two swimming pools each with its own separate filter and heating system, and an outdoor cook-out.

## Life dream

(Continued from page 3)

Nissen became president of the company which then took in 12 shareholders from B.C. and Alberta.

In April, 1972, construction got underway. The company acquired the services of a semi-retired engineer, Norm MacClary, who came here to work on the site and help plan the project.

"We fitted everything into the trees and natural scenery rather than remove things," said Ward.

"The idea was to design a park that was spacious and fitted in with nature."

Both partners disapproved of the idea of building a 'jammed' park, regardless of how it looked.

They opened the park to the public on Aug. 1, 1972. A total of four acres was set aside for the swimming pools and ball-field and will eventually include a tennis court.

The company dredged an inland freshwater marina to accommodate up to 160 boats - and they were on their way.



Bob Nissen  
President



George Ward  
Managing Director

town. A laundromat is provided, complete with hairdryer.

Food store cupboard getting low? No worry, the development also provides a comprehensive store which sells everything except fresh meat.

For the sports fisherman, there's a fully-stocked tackle store selling items for both river and ocean fishing, as well as marine gas and propane sales.

If you want to get away from the hurly-burly and enjoy natural surroundings in peace and quiet, you can do this at Pacific Playgrounds and still have plenty for the kids to do.

A ball field provides an opportunity for the youngsters to let off steam, while a fleet of 20-14½ foot aluminum rental boats complete with 9.6 h.p. motors are available for hire.

The recreational development is built adjacent to the famous Saratoga beach, with its long stretches of sand, and safe waters, warmer for swimming than in most local beaches.

The cook-out is accommodated in a covered building which is used for barbecuing and group functions.

The original concept of the recreational area envisioned by the managing director of Pacific Playgrounds Ltd., George Ward of Alberta, was for a recreation-retirement development.

Ward came to the island in 1966 and started looking for land. He bought 40 acres on the Oyster River and later in 1967, purchased three other parcels totalling 300 acres.

Between 1967 and 1969, Ward cleared up the tide flat at the river mouth and then moved out from Calgary. It took two years, from 1969 to 1971 to complete studies and arrange financing.

Then Ward met his present partner, Bob Nissen, also from Alberta, and together they formed the companies known as G.S. Ward Holdings Ltd. and Pacific Playgrounds Ltd.

(Continued on page 7)

