



News Release

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Silence, Solitude and Stewardship for Unique Eco Art Project

A unique artistic endeavor is officially underway in Woodhaven Nature Conservancy Regional Park.

It's called the Woodhaven Eco Art Project and is being facilitated by UBC Okanagan Creative Writing professor Nancy Holmes in collaboration with local artist Lori Mairs. It celebrates the unique aspects of this special conservation regional park: its silence, solitude and diverse natural environment.

In describing this artistic project, Holmes says, "Throughout the remainder of the year, local artists and students, including musicians and performers, writers, sculptors and other visual artists will create multiple works of art in the park and in response to the park. As the key principle of eco art is to do no harm to the environment and to respect the place in which it unfolds their works will have minimal impact on the park's natural environment. Participating artists will leave nothing in the park that shouldn't be there and remove nothing from the park."

Holmes adds, "Throughout the rest of the year, visitors to Woodhaven may find a new 'natural object' installation, a new poem or an interesting sculpture. Each visit could find a new sample of artistic expression, generated from the inspiration of each participating artist."

She says, "We've created a website for the Woodhaven Eco Art Project: woodhaven.ok.ubc.ca from which people can keep up to date with what's going on or download MP3 files for Woodhaven Audio Walks. There will also be collectable Woodhaven Trading Cards and strange little 'zines' to flip through – poems that people can read as they stroll along a path. There's even a fridge magnet type log poem that people can use to create their own poetry."

Throughout the project, there will be special guided walks, performances and events and a short film about the art projects and people involved will be created to document the project.

Regional District Chair Robert Hobson says, "Our Board supports this unique endeavor because it is sensitive to the stewardship and history involved with Woodhaven, which was protected thanks to the vision and environmental activism of Joan and Jim Burbridge. Hopefully, this history and the wonderful natural surroundings of Woodhaven will inspire the participating artists and we look forward to their creative expressions. Our Regional Parks encourage people to leave only gentle footprints. As that forms the focus of this art project 'that nothing will be left behind', Woodhaven is the perfect location."

The Woodhaven Eco Art Project is funded by the Hampton Fund at the University of British Columbia and is supported by the Regional District of Central Okanagan.

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