



Englishman River

SoFoBoMo 2009 Rusty J. Joerin

Englishman River is located on the East side of central Vancouver Island BC, Canada. Its headwaters are the eastern slopes of Mount Arrowsmith, its estuary on the south side of Parksville. This river runs through Provincial and Regional parks, forest lands owned or managed by timber companies, private lands, crown land, Nature Trust lands and the Parksville-Qualicum Beach Wildlife Management Area.



The beginning and the end of it. May 1, 2009.

Dedication

This book is dedicated to:
Rowena Margaret
(Brownie) Joerin

Mentor-Artist-Mother

May, 2009



Englishman River is



A home for wildlife



A place for recreation



Of one kind



Or another



A man came up to me and said "this is the best swimming hole on the river".

I agreed that it was a popular place to swim but privately I know of several others that I prefer.



The nose, Top Bridge Regional Park

"That's gotta be cold" I said.
"Yup" was all he said.



Englishman River Falls
Provincial Park May 4, 2009.
Go figure.

The Englishman is crossed by several bridges. Here are two of them.





The Railway Bridge



The Englishman River is a very special place in the hearts and minds of many local residents.



They grew up there, played,
loved and laughed there.



This river is very special to me
also.



The river nourishes a forest of many trees, plants and animals along its length too.





This dancing Yew is next to a favourite swimming hole.



There are some really significant trees along the Englishman.



And pretty ones too.



The trees stabilize the river bank and shade the river which protects the fish that feed us.

In 1998 they built a dam on Arrowsmith Lake to store additional water to be released in the summer so that drinking water may be drawn from the lower river.

They said that this would also be good for the fish.



It is going to be a dry year.
May 17, 2009



The summer before the dam was completed I made a project out of swimming naked in as many of the more remote swimming holes as I could. I swam in quite a few.



Now there is more water in the river in summer the pools don't get quite as warm. It is still swimmable though.

In the mid 1970's for one two year term, I was the district director representing the area through which Englishman River ran. A developer had plans for 1100 acres of land including about 5 kilometres of Englishman River and Morison Creek (a tributary). One of the principles of the development company was in my high school class. We had chosen different life paths.



This five kilometre section of the river consists of cliff banks of over thirty metres straight down to the river as well as banks stepped back from the river with significant second growth forest. The upland portion of the land was scrub forest and a former Christmas tree farm. If the land was to be developed, I felt that there had to be a wide enough leave strip along the river to protect the banks and serve as a wildlife corridor. I found an ally in a retired Canadian Army General who was the chairman of the District Board on which I was elected to. So the hippy and the General set to work to get this corridor preserved.



A reporter from the big Vancouver Daily paper came and toured the river with us, and did a story that advanced our cause. The local press got involved. The development went ahead and there are many homes on smaller averages there now.





And there is a wildlife corridor there now too, along one side of the river.



Confluence, Morison Creek
and Englishman River.

The opposite bank of the river is owned by Island Timberlands. It's been recently logged. The David Suzuki Foundation has called for much wider stream and riverside no logging buffer areas to protect fisheries and wildlife than what you see here.

The State of Washington requires a 91 metre wide buffer along streams on public land.



There is a small island up river from the Provincial Park. I have visited and photographed there for several years. I marvelled that the forest had not been logged. Three years ago I found markings on several trees and knew it was a matter of time. The island was heli-logged this winter amidst considerable local controversy. The most valuable timber is gone but it is not clear cut. The good thing is that there are a lot more people taking an interest in where their drinking water comes from.



Three Stumps May 23, 2009



But still the salmon berry
returns each spring.

In the lower reaches of the river there are various fish habitat enhancement projects. This rock weir is one as are the “large woody debris” anchored in the river behind it.

Log upriver, build habitat down river, I guess everyone gets employment and that has to be good, right?



Before the Englishmen came to this river First Nation's people cultivated the river estuary. They used a simple digging stick to enhance habitat for food plants such as chocolate lily. The salmon and steelhead were plentiful.



Also during the Mid 1970's another developer wanted to build a "mini Venice" style housing project here. They made a presentation to the District Board on which I sat. They told us they would have a biologist do a study. I asked a presenter what they would do if the biologist recommended the area not be developed. "That would be heavy", he said. It was the seventies, they talked like that then.

This area is part of the Parksville-Qualicum Beach Wildlife Management Area. It is owned by the Nature Trust of BC and managed by Nature. Juvenile salmon once again have safe habitat to grow in and Parksville has a jewel.

The water intake that supplements the water supply is about a kilometre up river from here.



Englishman River Estuary,
May 2009.



So will we ever learn to live in
harmony with nature?

I think the River knows the
answer.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to Paul Butzi for inspiring me and so many others to participate in SoFoBoMo. Thanks to Bernard Sumption, the wizard behind the scenes that made this work. Thanks also to you for looking.

Doing this was a lot of fun.

Contact

I would love to read your comments: rusty@woodsgift.ca

Print purchase or image licensing enquiries are welcome.

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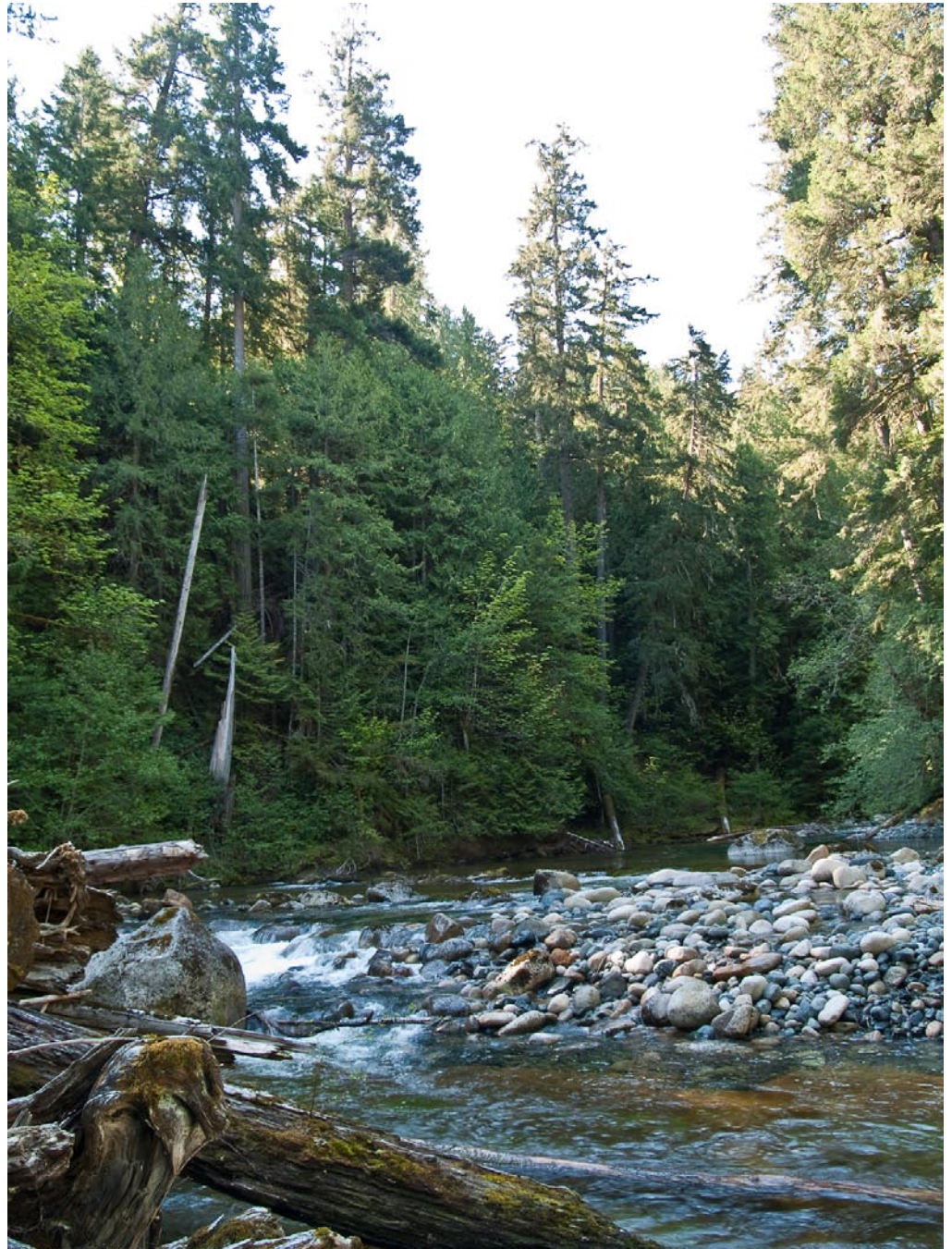
Technical Stuff

Every image contains a bit of the river, the water and/or a channel in which it flows.

All images were made with a digital camera and a couple of lenses in May 2009.

Raw files were processed in Lightroom, exported as jpegs and then inserted in a Word 2007 document laid out with the table's tool.

The resulting document was converted to .PDF using Acrobat Professional.



Information

Nature Trust of BC

<http://www.naturetrust.bc.ca/articles/Englishman%20River%20case%20statement%20pdf.pdf>

BC Parks:

http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/englishman_rv/

Top Bridge Regional Park

<http://www.rdn.bc.ca/cms.asp?wpID=848>

Forest Policy Research

<http://forestpolicyresearch.org/2009/02/13/british-columbia-beautiful-ancient-forest-island-on-englishman-river-is-right-now-being-destroyed/>

Island Timberlands

<http://www.islandtimberlands.com/>

David Suzuki Foundation

<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/>

Mid-Vancouver Island Habitat Enhancement Society

<http://www.mvihes.bc.ca/>

Brant Wildlife Festival

<http://www.brantfestival.bc.ca/>

Pacific Salmon Foundation

http://www.psf.ca/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=6&Itemid=42

