Stoney Creek Trail Report
No. 79 - October 2025

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This is a rare photo of **the original Bridge 5**, built by **Al Kenny** during the development of Stoney Creek Trail in the mid-1990's. The people on the bridge are unidentified.

The Bridges, when they were new...

Mrs. Bert Kenny has kindly provided these photos of the four distinctive wooden bridges that her husband, local real estate developer Al Kenny, had built for the trail in the 1990's. They have been numbered “2”, “3” and “4” by the City.

Bridge 2 (above) and **Bridge 3** (right) provide easy access to Bateman Park from the neighbourhood on the east side of the creek. The slope in the distance has always been a favourite place for children to go sliding in winter.

Bridge 4 (left) is one of the three Kenny arched bridges still in use, along with the two shown above.

On the right is the original **Bridge 5**. It was damaged by high water in the early 2000's and later relocated to another city park. Its replacement (not a Kenny-style arched bridge) was destroyed by the Atmospheric River flood of November 2021.

Bridges 1 and 6, not shown here, installed years later, also differ from the Kenny bridge design.

Bridge 5

Cover Story — Slugs: 1/2

A black slug on the move

The black slug is a member of the *Arionidae* family of “round-back” slugs. It is said to be “right-handed” because its internal organs are asymmetrically located on the right side of its body, as indicated by the breathing hole on the right side of its mantle. Its bottom side, or “foot,” has thousands of tiny teeth and acts like a rasp.

The *Arion ater* produces three kinds of mucus: a thinner mucus coats the slug laterally and aids movement, and a thicker, stickier mucus that coats the entire length of the slug, preventing dehydration. This combination assists the wave-like contractions of the foot that propel the animal forward. A third kind of mucus helps to deter predators.

Slugs are closely related to snails. Both are in the class of invertebrate animals called **gastropods** (“stomach foot”). Slugs are much like snails without shells. Being more exposed, they require more moisture and tend to live in damp, shaded areas.

The **black slug** seen frequently on Stoney Creek trail is the ***Arion ater***. It is an invasive species from Europe and very common the Pacific Northwest.

Conservationists are concerned about competition between black slugs and native slugs such as the banana slug (none of which I've seen here).

There is a breathing pore on the right side of a slug's mantle.

Slugs: 2/2

The slug is most active after rainfall, as mucus production depends on moisture such as found in leaf litter and moss. As an omnivore, it plays a vital role in nutrient cycling by consuming fungi, carrion, earthworms, leaves, stems, decaying plant material, and dung. It is among the few animals whose gut bacteria produce enzymes capable of breaking down cellulose.

Slugs can also be food for other wildlife, including birds, toads, snakes, and some insects. However, most animals prefer not to prey upon them due to their mucus which tastes foul and makes them slippery and difficult to capture.

This brown *Arion ater* is eating a snail crushed underfoot.

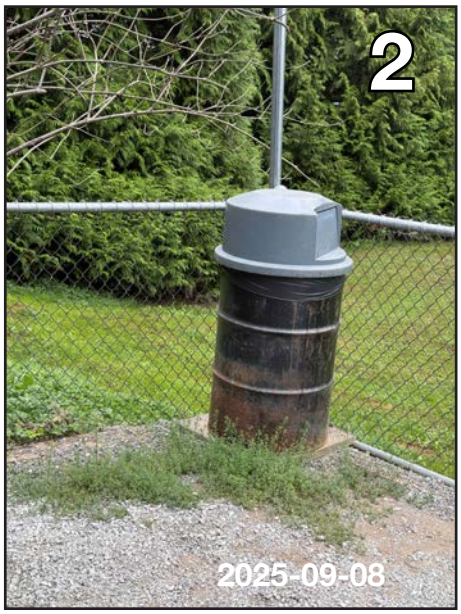
Slugs have four tentacles - the upper two for seeing and lower two for smelling.

When picked up or touched, the black slug will curl up and begin to rock from side to side. This defensive behavior confuses predators, and is unique in the family *Arionidae*.

The black slug is a hermaphrodite, having both male and female reproductive organs. If it cannot find a mate, it can self-fertilize. It lays a cluster of eggs in a dark cool place where they will hatch as juveniles in about a month and live for about a year.

Young *Arion ater* tend to be brown in colour and become darker as they mature.

The trusty, rusty litter barrels

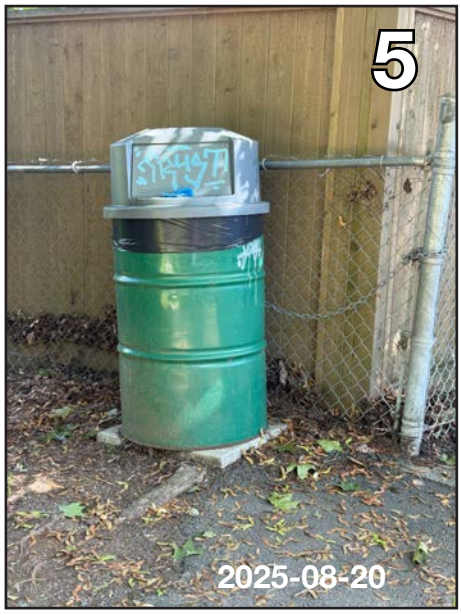


Litter barrel stations:

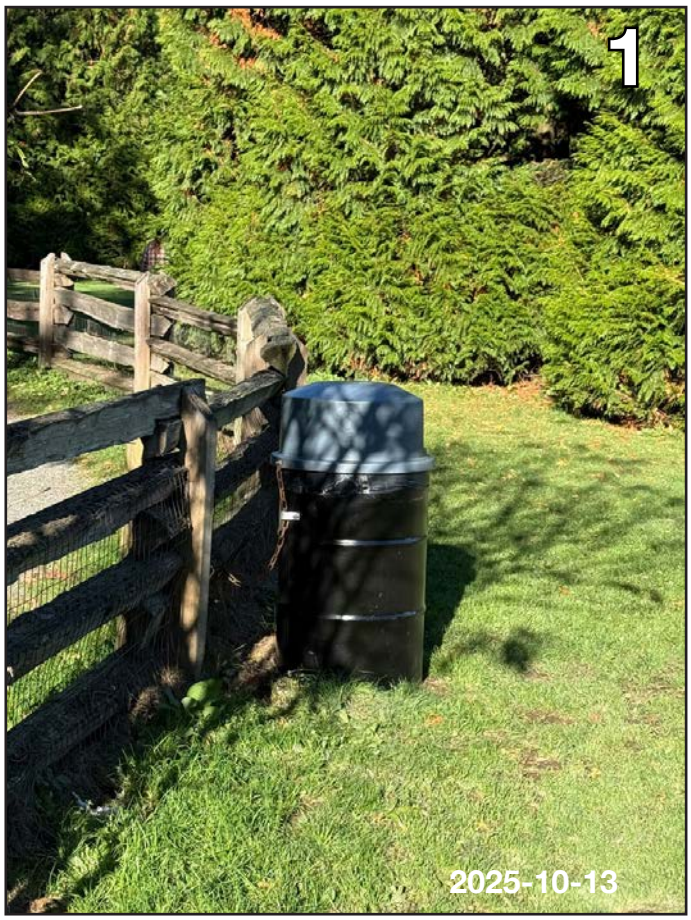
1. Near the Bateman parking lot entrance near Bridge 1
2. In the north vestibule of the Dog Corral*
3. Near the Hearthstone Court entrance*
4. At Bridge 2 between the Bowl and Bateman Park
5. At the Latimer Street entrance on Hemlock Hill*
6. At the entrance to the Forks from the Playground
7. At the end of Bridge 3 leading to Coachstone Way*

Kudos to the unnamed people who empty the barrels and keep the dispensers filled!

*Those with poo bag dispensers nearby



New litter barrels!



The feature about litter barrels on page 7 was prepared in September for publishing this month. It was a surprise to suddenly have three of the old barrels replaced by these new ones.

1: Dog Corral south end

2: Dog Corral north vestibule

3: Hearthstone Court entrance

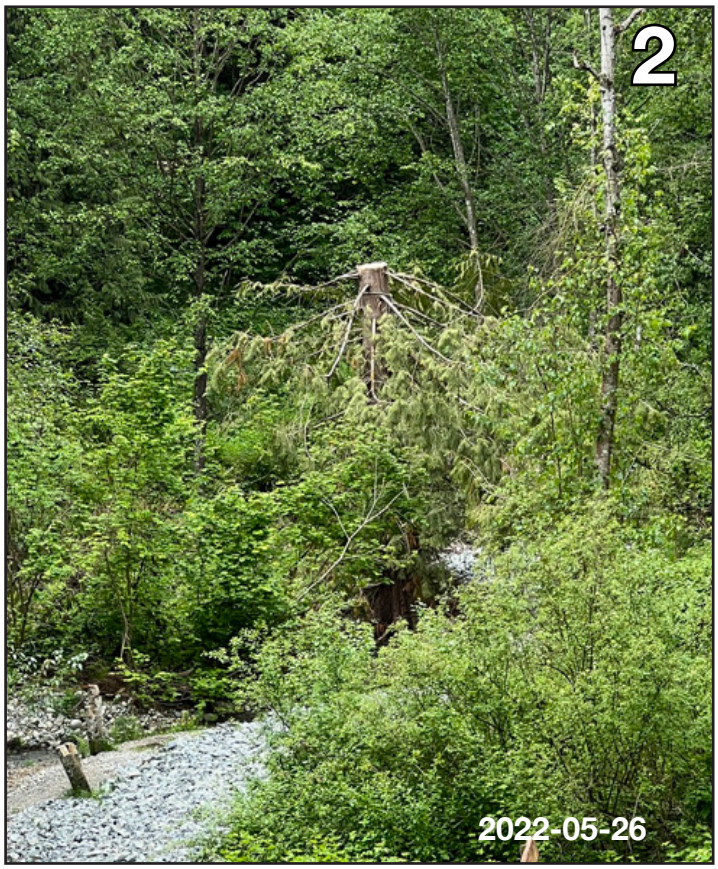
By the way, they were “christened” by dogs almost immediately.

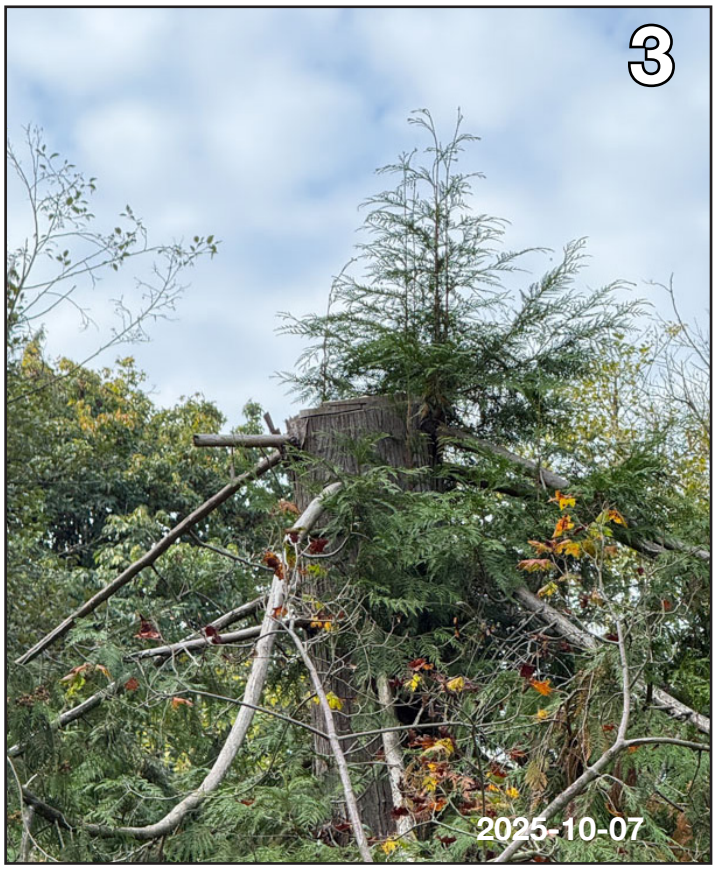
Another pleasant surprise

Photo 1 shows “Cedric,” a tall redcedar standing near the south end of Bridge 5 four years ago. It was taken two months before the deluge of November, 2021 when the raging creek undermined his roots and caused him to topple.

Photo 2 shows the drastic measure taken by the City in an attempt to save Cedric. Apparently it was necessary to cut off his top in order to stand him upright. They succeeded but, as you can see in this photo, he lost more than half his height.

Photo 3 shows a pleasing development—new growth has emerged from the top of his “stump.” The attempt to keep Cedric alive has been successful!





Stoney Creek hosts visitors from UFV

On the 22nd, if you happened to see a large number of young people in colourful vests scattered near all six bridges, you now know they were an Environmental Studies class from the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV). The students had come to Stoney Creek on a field trip.

They were under the supervision of **Dr. Mariano Mapili** from the Department of Geography. Dr. Mapili has taken over the position of **Dr. Steven Marsh**, retired, who had previously contributed to our creek assessments.

The students, enrolled in a Geography course on freshwater ecology, divided into groups and used various scientific instruments to conduct a broad range of creek measurements, including stream flow, water turbidity, and dissolved oxygen levels.

Using much simpler equipment—plastic eyedroppers and egg trays—they also sampled aquatic insects (benthic macroinvertebrates).

Dr. Mapili, an associate professor, is especially interested in environmental issues such as the effect AI data centres (with their huge demand for water as a coolant) will have on our natural environment.

Odds & Ends

Autumn colours:

1. Red oak

2. Vine maple

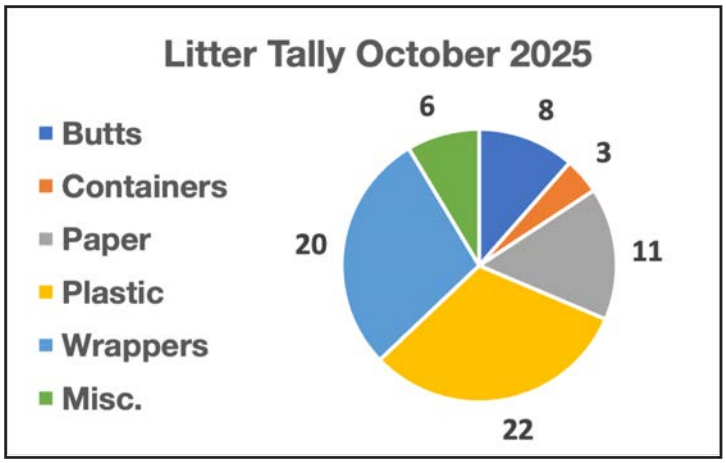
3. Hazelnut

New fixture:

4. Water dispenser for people and dogs

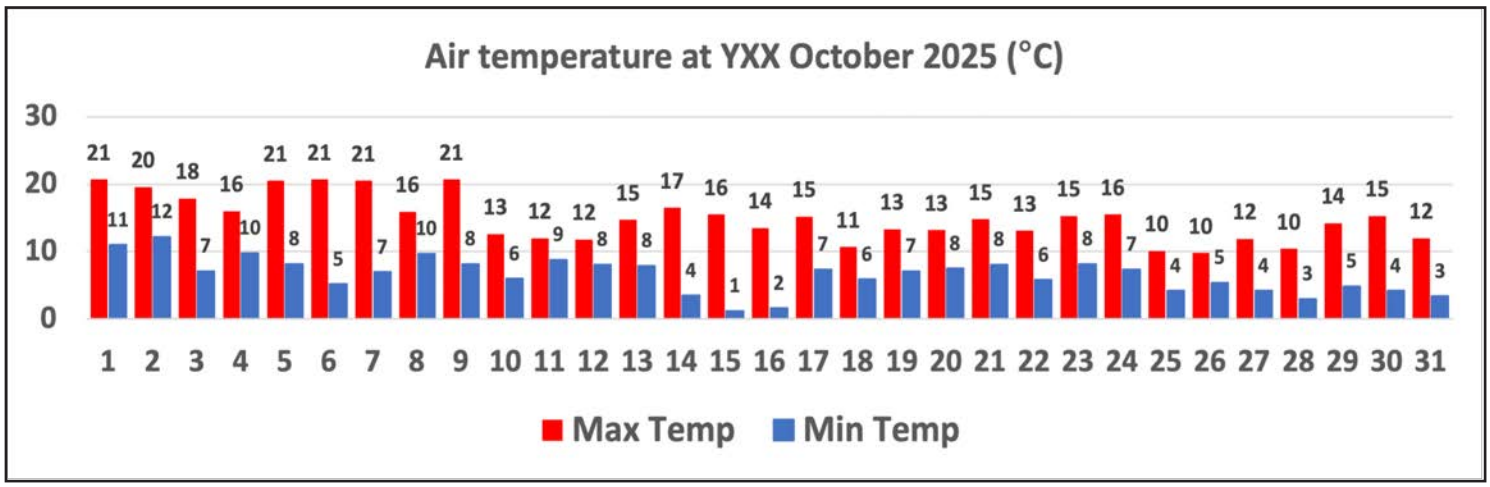
Spawning salmon:

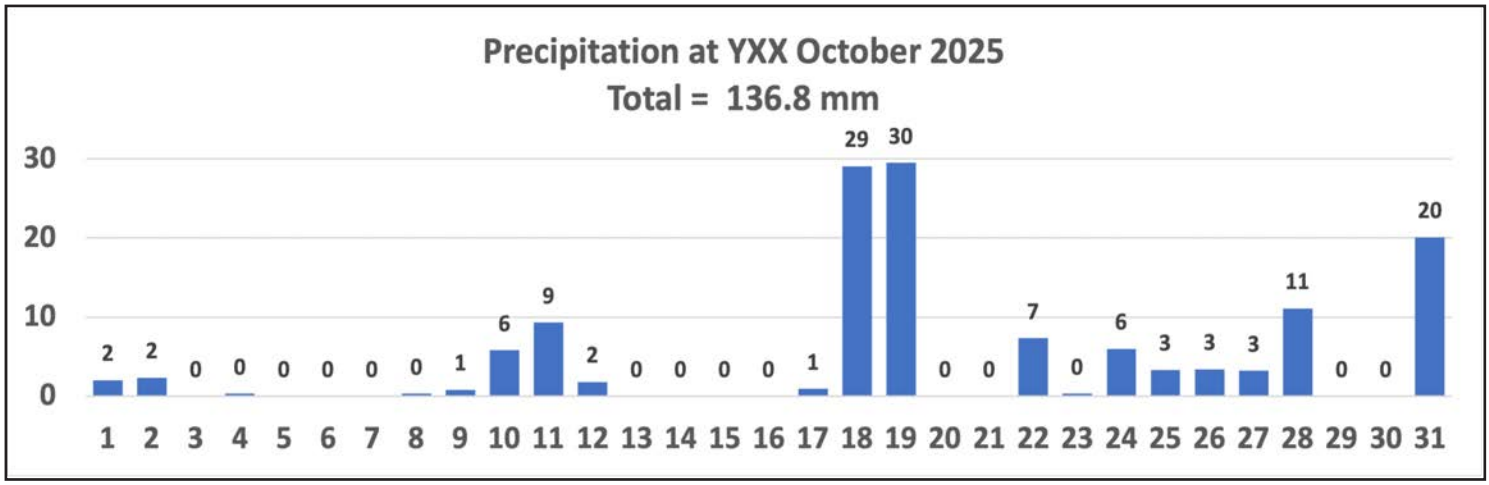
5. Due to the low water level, the first spawners seen this season (a pair of chum) went upstream only as far as Bridge 1.

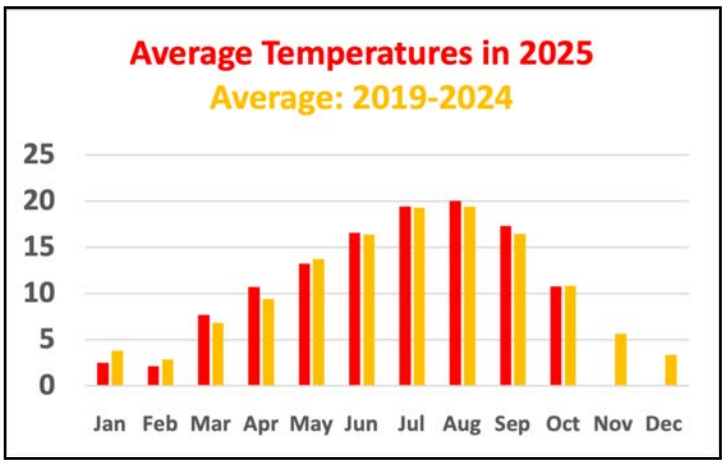


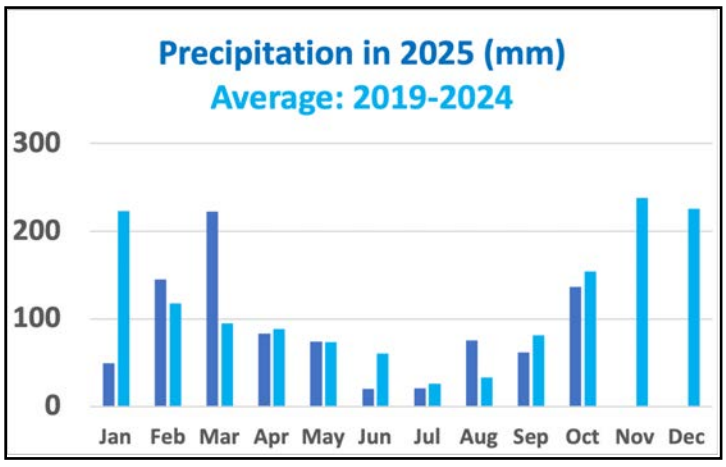
Total litter items = 70

Containers: bottles, bottle tops, cans, coffee cups, lids, juice boxes.
Paper: tissues, napkins, posters, newspaper, receipts, cardboard, etc.
Plastic: dog waste bags & shreds, other items made of plastic.
Wrappers: candy wrappers, foil, cellophane.
Miscellaneous: clothing, glass, chewing gum, dog balls & fragments, etc.

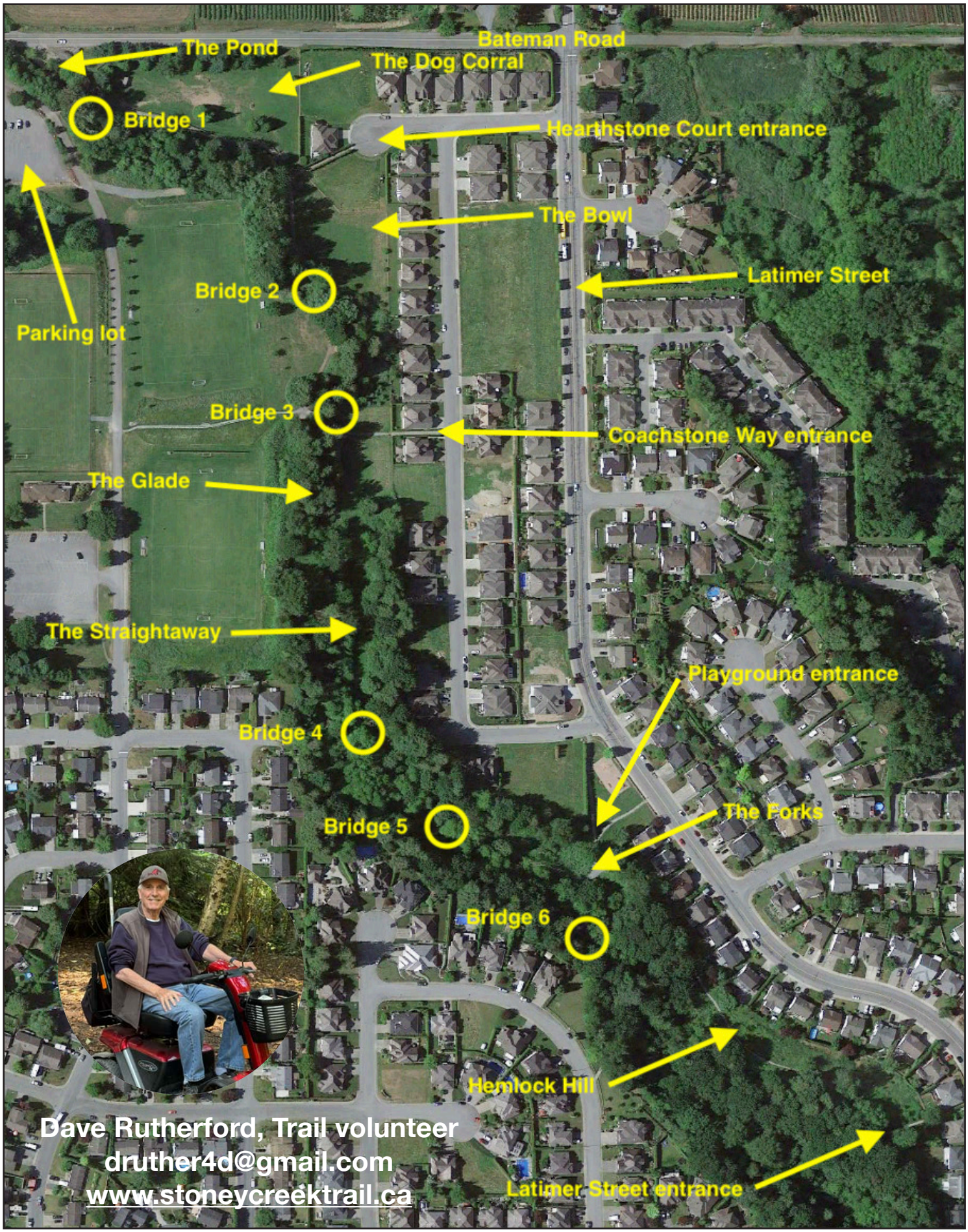








For convenience, I use these custom place-names:



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