

## Our Journey Begins at Harris Pond:

1. **\*Vining at Stanley.** People called it the The Punchbowl because of the surrounding arc of sloping oak meadow. The ridge extending west from the hill where Camosak Manor now stands is the southern limit of the watershed. Head north on Stanley, turn left/west on Gladstone. Backyards on the left/south are pond bottom. A buried brick culvert cuts under Gladstone and the townhouse parking lot. Harris Pond was drained and the road raised in the late 1890s.
2. **Gladstone at Fernwood.** Turn right/north on Fernwood. Notice the valley profile down to Bay, flat to Haultain, then steep up Fernwood hill. Turn right/east on Pembroke, then left/north on Sayward. The creek winds down to Denman. Stop. Listen. Water is always flowing.
3. **\*Alexander Park.** Go right/east on Denman, left/north on Oregon, then cross Alexander Park diagonally to the NW. When heavy rain raises the water table, water puddles on the grass. One neighbour said a former resident hunted ducks here--from his back porch! Continue left/west on Fernwood. As you cross Bay at the light, look east up Bay to Richmond, the eastern edge of the watershed. Look west toward Rock Bay.
4. **Garden St.** Cross Fernwood. If it has been raining you'll see a puddle on Fernwood—a former bog. Go west on Bay; turn right/north on Garden. The community garden and untamed lot across from it are the low spots--too wet to build on. Note the storm drains and the dip.
5. **Bay at Cedar Hill.** Turn right/west on Bay. Look south up to Spring Ridge. Imagine a grassy slope and water flowing from Victoria's 1<sup>st</sup> water source near Spring and Princess. Consider a side trip to the original spring site and to the commemorative well in Stevenson Park. Gravel mined from this hill helped fill James Bay. The old road to Mt Douglas (Pkols) started here.
6. **Cedar Hill at Haultain.** Where Cedar Hill dips, there was a small bridge over the creek. Go left/west on Haultain. From the foot of the slope, to Cook, is a boggy area where people skated in winter. Willow trees like to keep their feet wet.

On the right, near Cook, one yard is still at the original level.

7. **\*Blackwood Park.** The culvert runs across Cook at the north end of the Blackwood Park--another spot too boggy to build on. Go right/north on Blackwood, then left/west on Kings. The creek now crosses John Work's Hillside Farm to Quadra. Cross Quadra (formerly 4<sup>th</sup> St). There was a small bridge here. Look up to the northeast, to The Rise and Summit Park. That is the northern boundary of the watershed.
8. **\*Wark Street Commons.** Continue west on Kings. The culvert runs across the south side of the park, across Wark then between the apartments. Look down the alley on the left/east side of the community centre. The dip in the lane is the creek route. Turn left/south on Dowler. Notice where the road dips. The creek flows under the Blanshard Court playground.
9. **Field St.** Cross Blanshard (formerly 1<sup>st</sup> St) at Bay. Look north; the creek crosses where Blanshard dips, passes west of the firehall and, then crosses Bay and flows along the west end of the Armory. Cross Bay, then go south on Douglas. Walk east on Field a bit. The parking lot behind the motel is down at the original level of the area. The creek takes a final turn for the sea, west under Douglas and down Queens past the former site of Roderick and Sarah Finlayson's house at Douglas and Bay.
10. **Finlayson Falls.** Go back to Bay and cross Douglas at the light. Head left/south on Douglas to Queens. The creek drops down Queens and under Government. Originally there was a waterfall and lagoon that opened into the larger bay. Now the culvert crossed under the filled area and empties straight into the end of Rock Bay. Visitors from different First Nations camped on the beach at One Rock Bay as they waited to trade at the Hudson Bay Company fort. A bridge on Government provided a view of the falls. That was filled in the late 1800s. Tidal water reached Government under sawmill pilings until 1960. A 12 year remediation project removed 100 years of industrial contamination, making the area ready for new development. Will spawning salmon find this creek again one day?



## Swengwhung Creek Walk

~ 45min/3.5km 1-way, level, accessible ~

**T**he Swengwhung family of the Songhees First Nation lived from this for land thousands of years before contact with European settlers. The creek that drained the Fernwood, Quadra-Hillside and Blanshard areas was culverted up to 10 feet (3m) underground in the late 1890s, but signs remain of the original lay of the land, if you but look.

This brochure offers a window to the past. Be curious as you sense the changing form of the land over time. Squint your eyes and imagine The Punchbowl and Harris Pond, a winter ice skating spot, Spring Ridge--the source of Victoria's first water supply, Hillside Farm--the family homestead of Hudson Bay pioneer John Work, Finlayson Falls, a lagoon and the bay where indigenous people from up the coast camped to trade at the new Hudson Bay Company fort.

Rediscover the natural features of the land, as First Peoples and early settlers saw them. Take a long, wide gaze down any street to sense the overall lay of the land. If you live in the area, is your house in a liquefaction zone--on bog/clay? ...or on bedrock? Notice how water shows up during rainy periods. Listen for the storm drain flow below the street.

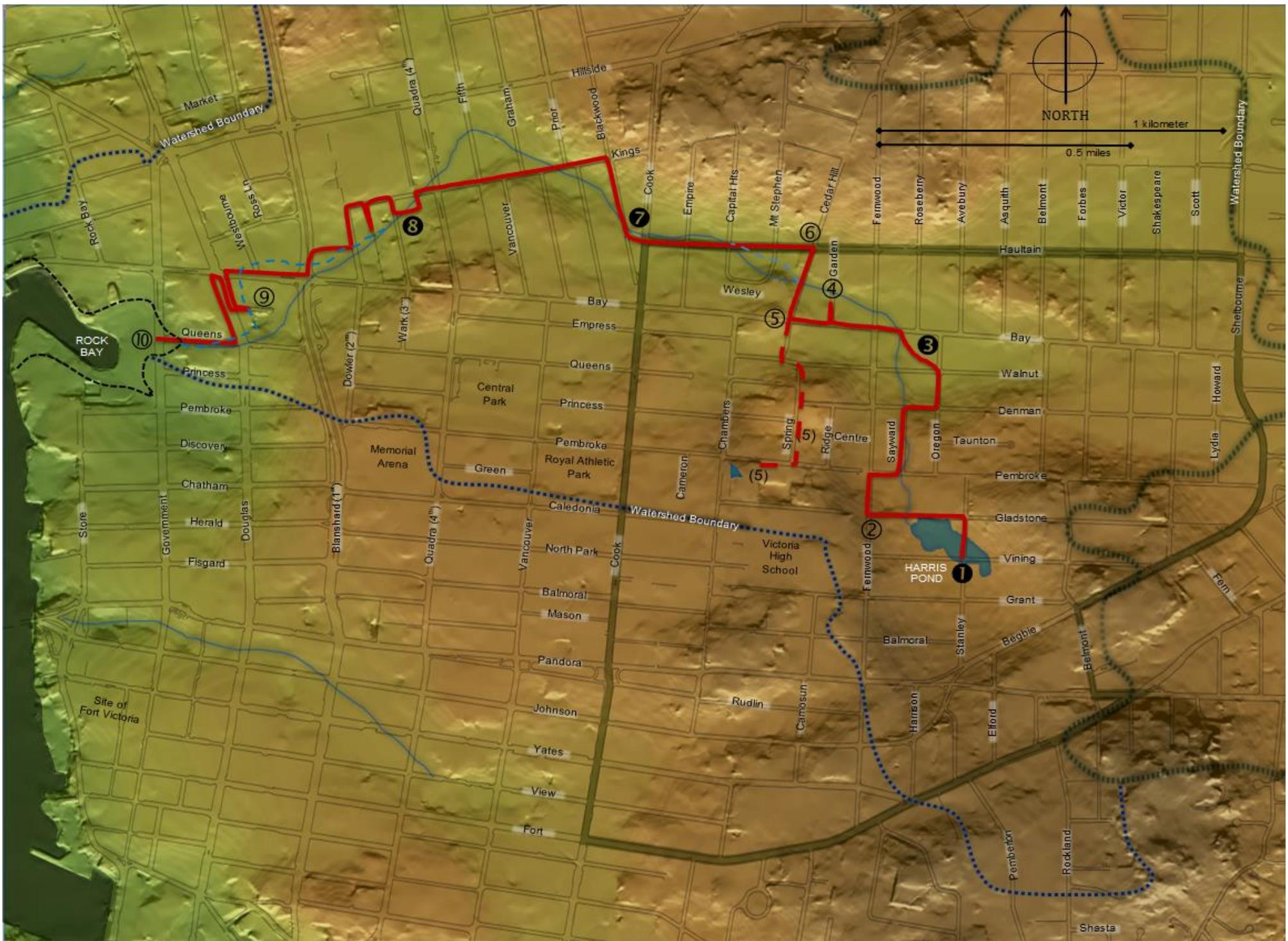
- Look for interpretive signs at four locations indicated by numbered black circles on the map and an \*asterisk in the tour text.

### Harris Creek / Rock Bay Creek Revival

After you explore the route of the culverted stream that drains Fernwood, North Park, Blanshard and Quadra-Hillside into Rock Bay, get the companion map of the watershed boundary circle route.

Visit our website: [www.rockbaycreek.ca](http://www.rockbaycreek.ca)

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Follow the culverted creek from Harris Pond to Rock Bay, then explore the Rock Bay Watershed boundary (orient the map so dark areas appear as high ground).

Brochure design by Daniel Doherty (CC) 2021-08-01. Hill-shade map by Steve Ford courtesy of the UVic Geography map lab. Interpretive signs created by Rock Bay Creek Revival are located at numbered black circles 1 Also: visit [www.rockbaycreek.ca](http://www.rockbaycreek.ca) for boundary circle route map.