

LETTER: Take action to prevent more canyon tragedy

North Shore News

April 23, 2016 03:39 PM

Dear Editor:

Re: [presumed drowning in Lynn Canyon. \(http://www.nsnews.com/news/updated-teen-s-body-pulled-from-lynn-canyon-after-three-weeks-1.2234894\)](http://www.nsnews.com/news/updated-teen-s-body-pulled-from-lynn-canyon-after-three-weeks-1.2234894)

After living in Lynn Valley for more than 30 years I know that as soon as there is a heavy rainfall or the rapidly melting snows on the mountains surrounding Lynn Canyon Park fill the waterways in the spring, it won't be long before there is an accident or a death in the canyon. And so it was, as helicopters circled overhead and the wails of emergency vehicles echoed up the hill for hours on Monday, March 28, as I worked in my garden.

The reasons for this situation are simple: as the waters of the rains and melting snows rush to fill local stream beds, the resulting torrents hurtle downward, filling the narrow canyon walls. This creates mighty currents and undertows resulting in centrifugal forces with the power to hold large objects under water against the sides of the canyon and topple huge rocks and tree trunks into the water.

Fenced off areas are covered with warning signs throughout the canyon's intricate system of hiking trails. People who choose to swim in those waters or climb the nearby cliffs are taking a chance with the forces of nature.

According to a suggestion on social media (North Shore News, April 1), fines should be established to combat the annual drownings and accidents in Lynn Canyon. This may help, but I would also like to suggest some more constructive alternatives:

- Educational programs in schools, libraries, youth groups and perhaps the Lynn Canyon Ecology Centre, possibly titled: If you Love Nature, Respect Her and Learn Her Ways.
- Give out reports on daily conditions in areas safe for swimming and diving in the canyon as we do for boating and for skiing and hiking trails in season.
- Add emergency numbers to current signage so park visitors can report people illegally swimming or climbing in areas already fenced off and prohibited.
- Yes, and charge and fine those who break the rules.

My heart goes out to the family of Cole Marsh from Coquitlam. Please help to prevent further tragedies like that of a 17-year-old, whose friends say "died doing what he loved."

Martha Barker

North Vancouver

What are your thoughts? Send us a letter via email by [clicking here \(http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/send-us-a-letter\)](http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/send-us-a-letter) or post a comment below.

© 2016 North Shore News