

park pioneer

Bob Ahrens b. 1926

Advocates for nature conservation must deftly navigate both physical and political landscapes. Bob's tireless advocacy for Provincial Parks stemmed from a great knowledge of the province and its people, and a desire to help the public enjoy the remarkable nature of BC. With involvement in more successful park proposals than can be listed here, Bob brought a profound integrity to his Ministerial roles, counting as a victory every park established or protected from degradation. He helped found the Ecological Reserves Program of BC, he was an ally to Outdoor Recreation Clubs, a faithful supporter of nature interpretation programs, and one of the original policy-makers working to keep BC Parks as natural as possible and in public control.



Above: Bob in 1989.
(Photo courtesy of Bob Ahrens)

Background image: Kokanee Creek Provincial Park
The property that is now Kokanee Creek Park was subdivided and sold to individuals before Bob was able to convince the new land-owners to turn the lots back at cost, creating this highly valued park near Nelson. (Photo: Gail Ross, BC Parks)



Affiliations:

UBC - B.A.Sc. Forest Engineering 1949
BC Forest Service, Parks Division - Chief
of Reconnaissance and Inventory 1951
- 1958
BC Ministry of Recreation and
Conservation, Provincial Parks Branch
- Chief of Planning 1958, Director 1968
- 1975
BC Ministry of Recreation and
Conservation - Associate Deputy
Minister 1975, Acting Deputy Minister
1978, Deputy Minister 1979
BC Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing -
Assistant Deputy Minister 1980 - 1984

Awards:

Meritorious Service Award, Federal-
Provincial Park Conference 1984

Parks:

Involved in nearly every park added to
the Provincial Park System 1950 - 1975

Top: Bob (right) at the summit of Mt Copley near MacMillan Provincial Park, late 1950's. **The team was working on a new park proposal for the area.**

Bottom: Bob (right) on general reconnaissance, 1950's