

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve Management Plan Newsletter #5

May 2012



Phase 2 Process

We are now beginning Phase 2 of a four phase public process to develop the first Management Plan for Gulf Islands National Park Reserve.

This phase will focus on gathering comments and suggestions from First Nations, stakeholders and the public regarding 5 year actions and policy direction being proposed for the Management Plan.

Phase 2 includes four targeted stakeholder workshops, a Coast Salish workshop, meetings with Coast Salish First Nations, information booths and various public sessions (see www.parksCanada.gc.ca/gulf for more detail on public sessions).

Phase 2 Context

Input received early in 2012 from the stakeholder sessions and from the Park Advisory Board indicated that some of the objectives needed to be clarified. The updated objectives are included in this newsletter.

Newsletter #5 provides the draft vision and proposed actions for: working together; restoring ecological integrity; maintaining cultural heritage; enhancing visitor experience; and engaging Canadians outside of the park. It also includes policy direction that will also be used to help achieve the long-term goals and objectives.

In Phase 2 consultations, generally, we are asking the following:

- 1. Please rate the draft vision on a scale of 1-10 (1 = poor, 10 = excellent).**
- 2. Do the proposed actions make sense given the objectives?**
- 3. Have any critical, strategic actions been missed?**
- 4. Do you agree with the policy direction?**

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Gulf Islands National Park Reserve

Draft Vision

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve is a treasured natural place; a living legacy that connects people to the sensitive coastal ecosystems and rich multi-cultural heritage of the Salish Sea. The park is meaningful to many peoples, for many reasons.

We will strive to ensure Gulf islands National Park Reserve is a place where.....

Old growth Douglas fir forests stand beside iconic Garry oak meadows. Rocky shorelines continue to shelter nesting black oystercatchers and islets provide resting spots for seals and sea lions. Beneath the waves, eelgrass meadows provide a nursery for juvenile fish. These vibrant coastal habitats and the wildlife that depends on them, continue to capture the hearts of visitors. First Nations, local communities, interested Canadians, scientists and Parks Canada continue to learn about and work together to restore and maintain healthy and diverse ecosystems. We lead by example and make measurable improvements at key locations.

Cultural heritage is valued and respected. Meaningful examples of cultural heritage are managed to minimize potential impacts and help tell interesting human stories. The on-going connections of the Coast Salish peoples to the Gulf Islands are recognized—for millennia the region has been home to their ancestors and strong spiritual ties exist. The lands and waters of the Salish Sea region continue to provide food and medicines. Today, in the park, they connect with their traditional lands, activities and practices to help teach their children and preserve their culture. Coast

Salish knowledge is appreciated, their cultural sites are respected, and their involvement enhances both park management and visitor experience.

Those who came to this region more recently—the Chinese, European, Hawaiian and Japanese—are also recognized and key sites help illustrate their lives and interactions with the environment. Visitors get a glimpse into the past at homestead sites, light stations, and industrial sites such as an island brick-making factory. Island residents, area businesses and Parks Canada share a commitment to preserving and presenting the qualities that give each island its distinctive character.

People come from near and far to enjoy the dynamic intersection of land and water, the quiet peacefulness and the unique natural ecosystems. Some visitors play on a sandy beach or walk a short trail. A group of kayakers view wildlife as they ply the park waters. Others may participate in a restoration project—removing invasive plants and replacing them with native grasses and trees—or help Parks Canada staff monitor deer or clam populations. At the end of the day, whether watching the sunset from a serene campsite, the deck of a boat or a neighbouring bed and breakfast, all have had their own Gulf Islands experience.

This remarkable park enriches the lives of Canadians and instills in all a desire to protect and steward it as a refuge for nature, a sanctuary for visitors, and a place of continued use by the Coast Salish peoples. Our strong and diverse alliances further conservation, enhance visitor experience, and bolster public awareness and understanding of this unique part of Canada.

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve

Proposed Actions

As you read through the information on pages 3-14, remember that the objectives provide direction for the next 15 years, while targets and actions are focused on the initial 5 years of implementation.

In these sections, two terms bear explanation. First, *proposed key actions* are those actions that the park management team and Park Advisory Board feels are must-do actions and/or can realistically be accomplished in the first five years of the 15 year management plan timeframe. Where *potential actions* are proposed, they are next steps that will be undertaken if the proposed actions are completed and time and resources remain.

In some places, additional information is provided in parentheses () for greater explanation of the action. This detail may or may not be included in the final version in the management plan; it is provided as context for public review.

Working Together

Through discussions in both Phase 1 and to-date in Phase 2 it has become clear that people recognize the need for and want to see a strong emphasis placed on collaboration. This is seen as the most effective way achieve the best results, both in the park and in the surrounding environment. This section outlines proposed objectives, targets and actions relating to how Parks Canada will work with Coast Salish First Nations and with the public.

Working with First Nations

Objective #1

The public understands that First Nations can undertake traditional activities in the park, and is respectful of First Nations peoples who are undertaking such activities.

5-Year Target

- Visitor experience monitoring illustrates that park visitors understand that First Nations can undertake traditional activities in the park.

Proposed Key Actions

- Continue collaborating with First Nations to develop Coast Salish cultural information for the public (e.g., park website, visitor guide).
- Work with First Nations to develop and begin to implement a public communications strategy regarding Coast Salish traditional activities in the park (including an outreach education component).
- Monitor public understanding of First Nations traditional activities in the park (through Parks Canada's Visitor Information Program surveys).



Coast Salish Traditions Program
Parks Canada/Karla Point

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve

Working Together

Working with First Nations

Objective #2

Coast Salish First Nations are involved in developing strategic management initiatives of mutual interest and their communities are aware of the cooperative work.

5-Year Targets

- Key operational protocols are developed in collaboration with First Nations.
- An awareness/communication strategy is being implemented.

Proposed Key Actions

- Continue to work with existing, and to establish new, Cooperative Planning and Management Committees, as mutually agreed to with First Nations.
- Work with First Nations to develop a Human Remains Protocol.
- Work with First Nations to develop a Traditional Harvesting: Challenges and Opportunities report (as background to developing a Harvesting Protocol).
- Work with First Nations to develop a Harvesting Protocol.

- Work with First Nations to develop a strategy to raise awareness in Coast Salish communities of Parks Canada and on-going cooperative planning and management efforts between Parks Canada and First Nations (for communities, students and Councils; include a “Parks Canada & GINPR” component).

Potential Actions

- Begin to implement communications priorities between Parks Canada and First Nations.
- Develop cooperative initiatives among existing Coast Salish-Parks Canada Committees (e.g. inter-committee activities).



First Nations and Parks Canada working together
Parks Canada

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve

Working Together

Working with the Public

Objective #1

Public support is stronger because partners, key stakeholders and interested Canadians are aware of park initiatives and/or are engaged in experiential conservation or learning activities in the park.

5-Year Targets

- Three new engagement opportunities exist that allow for identified stakeholders and interested people to be involved in targeted initiatives.
- Engagement opportunities are communicated to the public in a planned way.

Proposed Key Actions

- Develop and begin to implement an integrated stakeholder/public engagement strategy (to identify who, why, what, and how engagement might occur).
- Develop and begin to implement a park communications strategy (to identify who, why, what, and how we will keep people updated on park activities).
- Provide engagement opportunities through a formal park volunteer program.

Working with the Public

Objective # 2

Achievements in all areas of park operations are optimized through collaboration and partnering arrangements.

5-Year Targets

- An integrated partnering strategy directs partnering activities.
- Collaborative opportunities exist to further ecological integrity, cultural resource management and visitor experience goals.

Proposed Key Actions

- Develop a partnering strategy (to identify why, how, with whom and for what partnering arrangement can be used to increase achievements and meet mutual goals).
- Work with existing partners to increase the effectiveness of partnering arrangements and to increase collaborative initiatives.
- Establish opportunities to collaborate with others to share information and achieve mutually-beneficial goals and activities.



Lyll Creek, Saturna Island
Parks Canada/Josh McCollough

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve

Maintaining Cultural Heritage

In national parks, cultural heritage relates to both First Nations and non-First Nations (newcomer) history and sites, including archaeological sites, buildings, landscapes and objects. Cultural resources management is a Parks Canada term that refers to an integrated and holistic approach to the management of cultural resources and heritage. This section outlines proposed objectives, targets and actions for maintaining cultural heritage.

Objective #1

A strategic cultural resource management program directs maintenance of key cultural heritage values.

5-Year Target

- Strategic planning is complete and helps ensure that the cultural heritage management program is effective, sustainable, meets specified cultural resource management standards and can be easily reported on.

Proposed Key Actions

- Develop a cultural resource management strategy (CRMS) in cooperation with Coast Salish First Nations and key stakeholders (to identify cultural resources to be maintained and how they will be managed).

- Develop a standardized, integrated cultural resource monitoring program (to enable assessment and reporting of the condition of the resources and management practices including inventory, evaluation, management, and monitoring).
- Develop a cultural landscapes assessment in cooperation with Coast Salish First Nations and key stakeholders (to clarify the extent of specific cultural landscapes and detailed management direction).



Sidney Spit brick factory artefact
Parks Canada/Josh McCollough

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve

Maintaining Cultural Heritage

Objective #2

Protection of a number of agreed upon priority First Nations cultural heritage sites is improved.

5-Year Target

- Negative impacts are reduced or alleviated at priority sites, jointly identified with Coast Salish First Nations.

Proposed Key Actions

- Complete the on-going Cultural Heritage-Visitor Use Conflict Assessment (priority setting assessment) in collaboration with First Nations Committees (to direct where actions/effort should be directed first).
- Develop and begin to implement protection strategies for selected locations (based on the assessment noted above), in collaboration with First Nations and university partners.
- Collaborate with First Nations to identify other First Nations sites requiring protection.

Potential Action

- Support an archaeological research program, with particular focus on inter-tidal areas.



Mahoi House, Russell Island
Parks Canada

Objective #3

Protection of a number of key cultural buildings and landscapes is improved.

5-Year Targets

- Key cultural heritage buildings/structures are stabilized at Roesland and Russell Island.
- Cultural landscapes are clearly defined at Roesland and Sidney Spit.

Proposed Key Action

- Develop and begin to implement protection strategies for selected locations, including key areas identified in approved Area Plans and in the cultural resource management strategy.

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Maintaining Cultural Heritage

Objective #4

The public is more aware of the significance and sensitivities of key cultural heritage features/sites and how they can assist in protecting these values.

5-Year Targets

- Park interpretation and public outreach education programming incorporates messages regarding key cultural features/values and sensitivities and why protection is important.
- Public education programming incorporates information about the relationship between cultural use over time and the current state of the environment.

Proposed Key Action

- Identify/develop culture-related interpretive/educational themes and information for the public using the park's Cultural Resource Values Statement, an interpretation strategy, and where appropriate, First Nations involvement.

Enhancing Visitor Experience

Parks Canada wants to facilitate memorable visitor experiences in national parks. Our goal is to connect people with the natural and cultural values protected within the park in meaningful ways. This section outlines proposed objectives, targets and actions for enhancing visitor experience.

Objective #1:

A strategic visitor experience program directs efforts to provide relevant and satisfying visitor experiences.

5-Year Targets

- Strategic direction for promotions, product development, interpretation and visitor services is set out in a visitor experience plan.
- A visitor experience monitoring program is being implemented.

Proposed Key Actions

- Develop a visitor experience plan (including desired experiences, research needs, and evaluation tools) and related Strategies (market segmentation, visitor opportunities concept, promotions strategy, interpretation strategy, visitor facilities strategy).
- Refine the park attendance tracking system.
- Conduct a Visitor Information Program study (social science study monitoring key visitor experience indicators that is conducted in advance of State of the Park reporting).

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Enhancing Visitor Experience

Objective #2

More people are experiencing, connecting with and helping steward the park through enhanced and new visitor opportunities.

5-Year Targets

- New visitor opportunities are developed based on a Visitor Experience Plan and appropriate assessments (market-demand, desired visitor experience, visitor needs, evaluation of compatibility/suitability with natural and cultural heritage, and facility sustainability).
- Existing visitor opportunities and facilities are enhanced in appropriate locations.
- Some park visitors are engaged in ecological integrity and cultural heritage management projects.

Proposed Key Actions

- Develop a welcome gateways strategy (to identify what a welcome gateway should be, what role(s) it will play, what facilities or services it would provide, evaluate potential options, and determine feasibility of establishing a pilot project).
- Assess and enhance existing visitor opportunities and facilities to meet the needs of existing visitors (e.g. kayakers).
- Develop a formal park volunteer program.

Potential Action

- Assess the need for additional opportunities, services or facilities to attract and meet the needs of potential new visitors (e.g., youth, cultural tourism).

Objective #3

Visitors consider that they have had a meaningful experience and have learned something interesting or valuable through interpretive programming or volunteer opportunities.

5-Year Targets

- The interpretive program is sustainable and includes interpretive programs (personal services) and interpretive signs/guides/technology (non-personal media).
- Visitors consider they've learned something interesting or valuable.
- Volunteer opportunities include an educational component.

Proposed Key Actions

- Assess needs and develop strategies for an in-park education/interpretation program (e.g. key staging locations, venue/structure needs, programming needs, parking/washroom services) and begin to implement key recommendations.
- Implement key personal (interpreter-led) and non-personal (media, signs, guides) interpretive opportunities/projects (from the interpretation strategy).
- Incorporate an educational component into the park volunteer program.

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Enhancing Visitor Experience

Objective #4

Visitor Experience is enhanced by authentic Coast Salish culture-based interpretive opportunities.

5-Year Target

- There is agreement among the First Nations and Parks Canada on at least one Coast Salish culture-based interpretive opportunity to implement in the park.

Proposed Key Action

- Work collaboratively with Coast Salish Committees and First Nations to:
 - ⇒ consider how First Nations culture-based interpretation might be provided in the park (e.g., partnering, business opportunities, park interpretation)
 - ⇒ identify up to 3 potential Coast Salish interpretive opportunities to be assessed.

Potential Action

- Support or undertake feasibility assessments of the three potential opportunities and where feasible, implement a Coast Salish visitor experience opportunity.



Relaxing on Russell Island
Parks Canada/Christian J. Stewart

Objective #5

Park facilities meet the needs of visitors, provide appropriate protection to natural environment and cultural resources, and are sustainable.

5-Year Targets

- Existing park facilities that are negatively impacting key natural or cultural heritage features are re-designed, re-located or maintained to minimize negative impacts.
- New facilities are planned and developed considering natural and cultural protection needs as well as visitor needs.

Proposed Key Actions

- Redesign/relocate camping facilities at locations that are impacting natural or cultural sites/features while maintaining current capacity (e.g., Shell Beach, Beaumont, Cabbage and D'Arcy Islands).

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve

Enhancing Visitor Experience

- Assess existing informal trails and potentially designate additional park trails from these, where assessments indicate they will enhance visitor opportunities, will not impact significant resources, and are sustainable in the long term. Also consider designating some park trails for both cycling and pedestrian use and the potential for trail linkages, where feasible and desirable.
- Align park facilities with industry standards for 'Accessibility' (for people with physical challenges) at key campsites, day use areas, and trails.
- Improve parking/access at priority locations where there are deficiencies (e.g. Lyall Creek, East Point, Ainsley Point)

Potential Actions

- Begin to implement facility recommendations from the anchoring/moorage strategy.
- Continue to update park facilities, where appropriate, to "green" standards.
- Assess the possibility of developing additional trails to provide different experiences (e.g. long distance trails) considering market demand, ecological and cultural sensitivities, potential trail linkages, and long-term sustainability.

Engaging Canadians Outside of the Park

Objective #1

Public awareness, understanding and support for Gulf Islands National Park Reserve is higher because of strategic public outreach education initiatives.

5-Year Targets

- Public outreach education initiatives are focused on youth, residents of metropolitan Vancouver and Victoria and the boating community and increase awareness and understanding of critical park messages and possible outdoor experiences in the park.
- Awareness and understanding of Parks Canada and GINPR initiatives is higher within Coast Salish First Nation communities.

Proposed Key Actions

- Develop and begin to implement an outreach education strategy (that explains natural and cultural components and recreational opportunities; and that uses new technology and builds cooperative/collaborative opportunities with potential partners in the region). Work with First Nations on Coast Salish components.
- Continue to provide outreach education opportunities at local and regional venues/events on a periodic basis.

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Partner and Public Engagement Policy Direction

This section in a management plan highlights the role of any management boards, formal partnering arrangements, key means to pursue regional coordination, strategies for effective engagement and monitoring the effectiveness of engagement initiatives.

Park Advisory Board (PAB)

The Park Advisory Board, appointed by the Chief Executive Officer for Parks Canada, consists of one representative from the Capital Regional District Board, one representative from the Islands Trust Council, three members of the public and two (non-voting) Parks Canada representatives, one of whom is the Park Superintendent. The PAB meets at least four times per year.

The purpose of the PAB, as set out in the park establishment agreement between the Province of BC and the Federal Government is to provide advice and guidance to Parks Canada through the following roles:

- recommending the interim management guidelines for the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve (completed in 2006);
- recommending the management plan for the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve;
- reviewing and advising on the annual business plan for Gulf Islands National Park Reserve; and

- providing advice on other current matters related to the planning, management and operation of the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve that are of interest to the surrounding communities and the public.

Coast Salish First Nations-Parks Canada Cooperative Planning and Management Committees

Parks Canada works collaboratively with Coast Salish First Nations who have interests in the park area. Where feasible, cooperative committees are established with representatives of various First Nations. At the time of approval of this Management Plan, three formalized Cooperative Planning and Management Committees exist with representation from 10 Coast Salish First Nations (Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group-Parks Canada Committee includes reps from 6 First Nations, WASANEC-Parks Canada Committee includes reps from 3 First Nations and the Tseycum First Nation-Parks Canada Committee). The Committees work independently with Parks Canada on matters of mutual interest and on occasion may meet jointly or work on joint initiatives.



First Nations discussing cultural heritage management
Parks Canada/Matthew Poyne

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve

Partner and Public Engagement Policy Direction

Coast Salish First Nations Engagement

When formal park management planning initiatives, major changes/developments, or significant new programs are being proposed, additional opportunities for engagement and/or consultation are offered directly to each of the 19 Coast Salish First Nations, through their elected representatives (Chief and Council).

At least once per year, a Coast Salish-Parks Canada meeting is held to which all 19 First Nations are invited to send representatives. These meetings may be used to update First Nations on park operations and management, engage First Nations in specific planning/development discussions or work on specific projects of interest to Coast Salish peoples generally. Evaluations of these meetings will be conducted by participants to ensure they are effective and useful.

Formal Collaboration

Formal arrangements currently exist with several groups including the:

- Pender Island Museum Society for use of the Roe House at Roesland for a local museum;
- Capital Regional District/Saturna Island Parks and Recreation Commission for use of the Winter Cove baseball field for local events;
- Capital Regional District/Saturna Heritage Committee for use of the fog alarm building at East Point for a local heritage centre;
- Shaw Ocean Discovery Centre regarding working together to further public outreach education; and
- Various emergency service providers (e.g. police, fire, coast guard, public safety).

At GINPR, staff also participate with some partners who have formal arrangements with the Coastal BC Field Unit or Parks Canada's National Office, such as BC Ferries and Mt. Equipment Coop.

Parks Canada will develop strategies for establishing and monitoring the effectiveness of formal partnering arrangements and major public and stakeholder engagement initiatives.



Narvaez Bay, Saturna Islands
Parks Canada/Josh McCollough

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve

Partner and Public Engagement Policy Direction

Regional Coordination

Regional coordination and relationships will be focused on the following key areas:

- Emergency services (police, fire, public safety, coast guard);
- Aspects of resource conservation/restoration, such as management of hyper-abundant species, species at risk, creating critical corridors for ecological integrity;
- Aspects of visitor experience, such as product development, promotions, and new opportunities;
- Public outreach and partnering opportunities;
- Planning liaison with Fisheries and Oceans Canada, BC Parks, Capital Regional District Parks, Islands Trust, and the State of Washington.

Public Engagement

Annually, Parks Canada will report on the implementation of the management plan. Information may be provided through an annual report, newsletter or public session.

Regular opportunities are also used to engage key stakeholder groups and interested citizens. Examples includes the:

- Local Island-Parks Canada Liaison Committees;
- A working group and annual liaison with the Council of BC Yacht Clubs.

State of the Park Reporting

In association with the development of State of the Park Reports, Parks Canada will undertake an evaluation of on-going working relationships with Coast Salish First Nations, partners and key stakeholder/interest groups.



Portlock Point, Prevost Island
Parks Canada/Nick Irving

Administration and Operations Policy Direction

Parks Canada also uses various legislative, regulatory and policy direction to manage the park. The following outlines key direction that exist at a national level and applies in GINPR or policy direction created specific to GINPR.

Administration Policy Direction

Financial Sustainability

All proposed undertakings are considered based on financial realities and a requirement for financial sustainability. Annual priorities are set based on the direction of the management plan, annual business plan, and existing budget.

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Administration and Operations Policy Direction

Human Resources

Parks Canada's Human Resources Values and Operating Principles set national expectations and guide all human resources initiatives. The actions set out in this management plan are generally considered feasible given existing Parks Canada staff capacity. In some cases, proposed actions will be dependent on collaborative efforts and/or external groups taking the lead on projects or tasks through volunteer or partnering arrangements.

Performance Management

Nationally, Parks Canada uses a Performance Management Framework to set expected results within various performance areas. These and the park management plan provide a basis upon which annual work planning and performance management are undertaken.

Park Offices

The park office is located on Harbour Rd. in the Town of Sidney. A small number of staff are based from Field Offices at Roesland on North Pender Island and adjacent to the Recreation Centre on Saturna Island.

Environmental Stewardship

In line with the overall management principle 9, Parks Canada will continue to consider "green" options when addressing park administrative and operational needs. A park environmental stewardship committee will continue to solicit staff ideas and propose possible actions to park management.

Operations Policy Direction

Environmental Assessment

Under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA 2004), completion of environmental assessments is a mandated responsibility of the federal government. Parks Canada will assess any proposed management actions that meet the definition of a "project" under CEAA.



Roesland, North Pender Island
Parks Canada/Josh McCollough

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Administration and Operations Policy Direction

Harvesting by First Nations

Aboriginal Peoples can undertake traditional resource harvesting within national park reserves. Further, where established treaty rights exist, they too may be undertaken within national park reserves as noted in the Treaty. Parks Canada will work with Coast Salish First Nations to have traditional activities undertaken in ways that maintain public safety and that ensure resource conservation.

Commercial Fishing

Commercial fishing is prohibited in national parks by the National Parks of Canada Fishing Regulations. In some cases an exception may be possible. Parks Canada will collaborate with Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) to assess the necessary actions relating to commercial fisheries in the park.

Recreational Fishing

Recreational fishing is prohibited in national parks unless an area is specifically opened through the National Parks of Canada Fishing Regulations. Parks Canada will work with DFO and key stakeholders to identify necessary actions relating to recreational fishing in marine waters of the park.

Ecological Integrity/Ecosystem-based Management

Parks Canada manages national parks using an ecosystem-based management system, with an overall goal of protecting or restoring ecological integrity within the park. Because of the fragmented nature of the park, Parks Canada will collaborate with others to develop connections and corridors that are considered critical for the protection and management of ecological integrity.

Protection of Burial Grounds

Burial grounds are defined as “a structure or unstructured resting place for human remains and includes those sites with a potential for human remains”. All human remains and funerary objects and all cemeteries and burial grounds, regardless of cultural origin or affiliation, shall be treated with respect and dignity. Parks Canada will assess sites where conflict exists, or may occur, between park facilities and burial grounds to determine how to ensure appropriate respect is shown to these sites. Where issues relate to First Nations burial grounds, this work will be completed in consultation with the Coast Salish representatives.



Winter Cove, Saturna Island
Parks Canada/Christian J. Stewart

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Administration and Operations Policy Direction

Interim Management of Cultural Heritage Sites

Where interim measures are required to address emergency situations, immediate conflicts or Area Plan direction prior to completion of the Cultural Resource Management Strategy and site-specific strategies, the following process will be used:

- Establish a multi-disciplinary team, including external experts and/or First Nations representatives where appropriate, to consider the situation.
- Identify the significance of the resources and the effects on them.
- Identify options for resolving the conflict/reducing negative impacts.
- Seek consensus on appropriate solutions.
- If there is no consensus, priority will be given to protecting ecological integrity.

Visitor Safety in the Park

Users of the national park reserve and Parks Canada share responsibility for public safety. In association with developing new or enhancing existing park facilities and opportunities, Parks Canada will assess potential safety hazards/risks. Parks Canada will make information about possible hazards in the park available to the public. Park users also take responsibility to undertake their activities in



Cabbage Island
Parks Canada/Josh McCollough

ways that reduce the potential for public safety issues to arise. Parks Canada will continue to work cooperatively with other emergency service providers, such as the RCMP and local fire and ambulance groups, to manage risks and provide integrated services.

Fees

In line with national park policy, Parks Canada collects fees in national parks based on level of service and personal use/benefit. Fee levels (cost) are set through a national process. Park fees are used to off-set the costs of providing and maintaining visitor facilities and services.

At the time of approval of this Management Plan, fees are charged for overnight camping and overnight boat moorage (Sidney Spit dock and park mooring buoys). In the future, fees will be collected, where appropriate and feasible, for day-use in the park. In GINPR, fees will supplement the maintenance of trails, picnic sites, mooring buoys, etc..

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Administration and Operations Policy Direction

Parks Canada will work with targeted user groups, such as the boating community and local communities, to develop fee packages/collection systems that streamline requirements and facilitate ease of payment. Before any new fees are introduced or fees levels are changed a public consultation process will be undertaken.

Group Size

The maximum overnight group size at park camping areas is 12. At the Sidney Spit Group Site the maximum overnight group size is 30. Advance reservation is required for overnight groups.

A maximum group size is 15 for all day-use sites (trails, picnic areas, beaches, intertidal areas, etc.). For functions such as reunions and group outings, larger groups (up to 50-60) may be permitted at specific day use areas with prior approval and a Special Activity Permit.

Special Event/Group Event Permits

Any group or individual wanting to hold an event in the national park reserve, including weddings, special events, or group use, where the group is anticipated to be in excess of the park's group size policies (above), must obtain prior written approval and a Special Activity Permit from Parks

Canada. The permit establishes expectations and restrictions such as set up requirements and parking.

Commercial Licences

All businesses wanting to bring clients into the national park reserve must have a Parks Canada Business Licence prior to doing so. This licence establishes expectations and operating standards to ensure protection of ecosystems and cultural features, a positive visitor experience, visitor safety and consistency and fairness for commercial operators. Requirements may include providing key national park messages to clients, where activities may be undertaken, restrictions on group size and meeting industry certification standards.

Campfires

Within national parks, campfires are permitted in designated locations only. In GINPR, campfires are permitted in designated fire rings within McDonald and Prior-Centennial campgrounds. Fire bans will cover the entire park during times of "extreme" fire danger.

Recreational Activity Assessments

Before new activities or opportunities are established in the park, a recreational activity assessment will be conducted. This evaluation process is guided by four core principles—to ensure natural and cultural heritage protection, to facilitate

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Administration and Operations Policy Direction

meaningful experiences, to promote public understanding and awareness, and to include public involvement. The approach will address current and potential visitor desires/needs, social science research, identifying target markets and potential offers. The level of public involvement in or public notification of the assessment will vary depending on the complexity and/or potential for public concerns relating to the proposed activity.

Land Acquisition

Future land acquisitions will be considered, with the existing “Core Area of Interest” agreed to by the Province of BC and the Federal Government in the park establishment agreement of 2003 and based on the following general criteria:

- Representative natural region characteristics/ecosystems;
- Under-represented ecosystems;
- Naturalness;
- Biodiversity;
- Maintenance of ecological integrity;
- Opportunities for public recreation and tourism;
- Complete islands;
- Key connections/corridors; and
- Cultural heritage.

Provide Your Thoughts

Phase 2 consultations continue into July 2012. Please provide your thoughts on the information provided in this newsletter.

Comment forms will be available at public open houses, park information booths and on the park website (www.parkscanada.bc.ca/gulf).

Comments received by July 15 will be reviewed and considered by the Planning Team as we continue to develop the management plan.

Next Steps

Phase 3 of the planning process is anticipated in the late Fall 2012-early 2013. It will focus on park zoning and specific area management approaches.

We invite you to continue to participate in the development of the management plan.

For Park Information

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