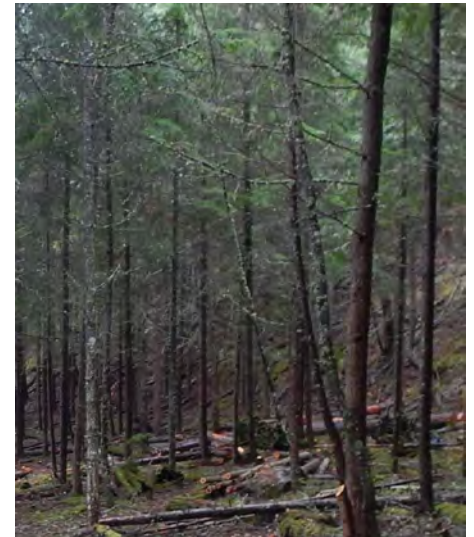


BALFOUR BEACH REGIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN



Prepared For:
Regional District of Central Kootenay

Prepared By:
Ecoscape Environmental Consultants Ltd.
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DISCLAIMER

The content of this Management Plan was informed by public consultation/stakeholder involvement, the direction of a RDCK Project Resource Team, available background studies/data and by a brief ecological overview site visit of the park. Due to the inherent problem with brief overview inventories, additional work should be undertaken to garner a thorough species list and to comprehensively understand the potential impacts of the proposed Design Concept on the ecology and archeology of the park and geotechnical impacts. Use of or reliance upon conclusions made in this document is the responsibility of the party using the information. The advice of relevant professionals (engineers, lawyers, etc.) should be sought. Ecoscape Environmental Consultants Ltd., Juliet Anderton Consulting Inc., project partners, and the authors of this report, are not liable for accidental mistakes, omissions, or errors, as best attempts have been made to verify the accuracy and completeness of information presented.



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Chapter 1 - Introduction

1.0 Introduction

Balfour Beach Regional Park (Balfour Beach) preserves public access to a stretch of pristine waterfront along the western shore of Kootenay Lake. The park consists of steep, treed banks and approximately 653 metres (2,142 feet) of water frontage. The park area provides important habitat for wildlife, and local residents enjoy the area for day use recreational activities, including: nature appreciation, walking, beachcombing, swimming, canoeing and kayaking. Many enjoy the park simply for its peaceful, scenic qualities.

Balfour Beach consists of two Provincial Crown parcels and the adjacent Kootenay Lake foreshore, for a total area of 3.8 hectares (9.3 acres). In 2012, following the direction of the Area E Rural Official Community Plan Bylaw 2260, the Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) lead a process to protect public access to this land and the waterfront by attaining approval from the province for a 30 year Licence of Occupation (No. 404454). Soon after securing the Licence, the RDCK initiated the development of a 10-Year Park Management Plan.

The Balfour Beach Management Plan is set out within this document. The Plan guides the transition of the property from exclusive management by the province, to management by the RDCK as a Regional Park. Future park improvements are outlined within the Plan and direction is provided to park operations, maintenance and decision-making (see Appendix A for a Summary Table of the Management Plan). The Management Plan was approved in the summer of 2015 (TBD) by the Nelson, Salmo, and Electoral Areas E, F and G Regional Parks Commission.

The Management Plan was prepared under the direction of the RDCK Development Services and Community Services Departments and by a consulting team composed of Ecoscape Environmental Consultants Ltd. and Juliet Anderton Consulting Inc. The Management Plan was shaped by a number of factors, including:

- feedback gathered through the public involvement process
- current and historic park uses and surrounding land uses
- the terms of the Licence of Occupation
- a site-specific environmental overview
- regional bylaws and provincial regulations, and
- research on best practices in park management.

The Management Plan begins with a brief description of the park and by identifying the management challenges. Management challenges are described by a number of categories including: road access, adjacent land ownership, environment, park maintenance, fire safety, archeological resources, enforcement, communication and engagement and plan monitoring. A long-range vision and a set of 10-year management goals follows, providing direction to the priorities of the Management Plan and serving as a reference for future decisions that will be part of the ongoing operation of the park. The vision statement,

Balfour Beach Regional Park is a protected and pristine natural area on the scenic waterfront of Kootenay Lake. Terrestrial and aquatic life including overland plants and trees are thriving. Park trails allow for appreciation of the park's natural environment and provide environmentally



sensitive access to the public waterfront and upland park area. Park visitors feel welcome in the park and are respectful of the park's natural values and surrounding private property.

provides the essence of the Management Plan objectives.

Appendix B provides a summary of the Public Involvement Process, including participating organizations, questionnaire results and comment theme outcomes. Key identified themes included:

- no designated park access from Green Road
- suggested staging areas
- preserve the park environment
- local park use and tourism

The Park Design Concept provides high level direction to a physical layout for public access and parking improvements, recognizing the constraints presented by the shortage of park road frontage, the natural slope of the land, the rocky and rugged shoreline, and by varying water levels and access limitations on adjacent private and public land. The Design Concept also plans for washroom facilities, as well as other important features, including: a trail network, day use beach areas, signage, fencing and other measures to protect environmental and archeological features.

Beyond direction to physical improvements, the Management Plan also provides strategies and actions for the on-going operation and maintenance of the park. Management Zones have been designated to provide direction to the use and management of specific geographic areas, and recommendations have been set out to provide avenues for continued public involvement and continued engagement of other government bodies.

The Plan concludes with a preliminary Implementation Plan, outlining the priorities necessary to implement the Park Design Concept and to undertake park operations over a 10-year period. Preliminary cost estimates are provided; however, it should be noted that figures will become more precise as additional information is gathered on implementation activities. The total estimated 10-year capital and operating costs for Balfour Beach is approximately \$183,500. Implementation of these works over the timeline specified is dependent on staffing capacity and on the availability of funding.

1.1 Park Context

1.1.1 Park Location and Description

Balfour Beach (Balfour Beach) Regional Park is located in the community of Balfour, British Columbia, on the western shore of Kootenay Lake. The 3.8 hectare (9.3 acres) park occurs east of Highway 31, approximately one kilometer north of the Balfour Ferry Terminal, at the confluence of Kootenay Lake and the West Arm. The park falls within Electoral Area "E" of the Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK). Immediately west of the park is Crown land currently designated as a First Nation Treaty Reserve.

The majority of the northern and uplands section of the park consists of steep treed slopes, while the land stretching along the waterfront flattens out over a narrow section that parallels the waterfront. The park foreshore is formally within the boundary of park and forms a functional connection to the park.



As water levels vary, large or small sections of the foreshore are exposed throughout the seasons. Three foreshore areas have been cleared of their typical rocky terrain, creating sandy beach areas, one at the north end of the park and two closer to the south end. Trails exist in the upland and waterfront sections of the park.

The RDCK Official Regional Parks Plan (Bylaw 2044) designates Balfour Beach as a Waterfront Access Park. Waterfront Access parks are acquired and planned as parks intended primarily for public access to high quality waterfront areas. The intensity of development is typically dependent on the characteristics of each park.



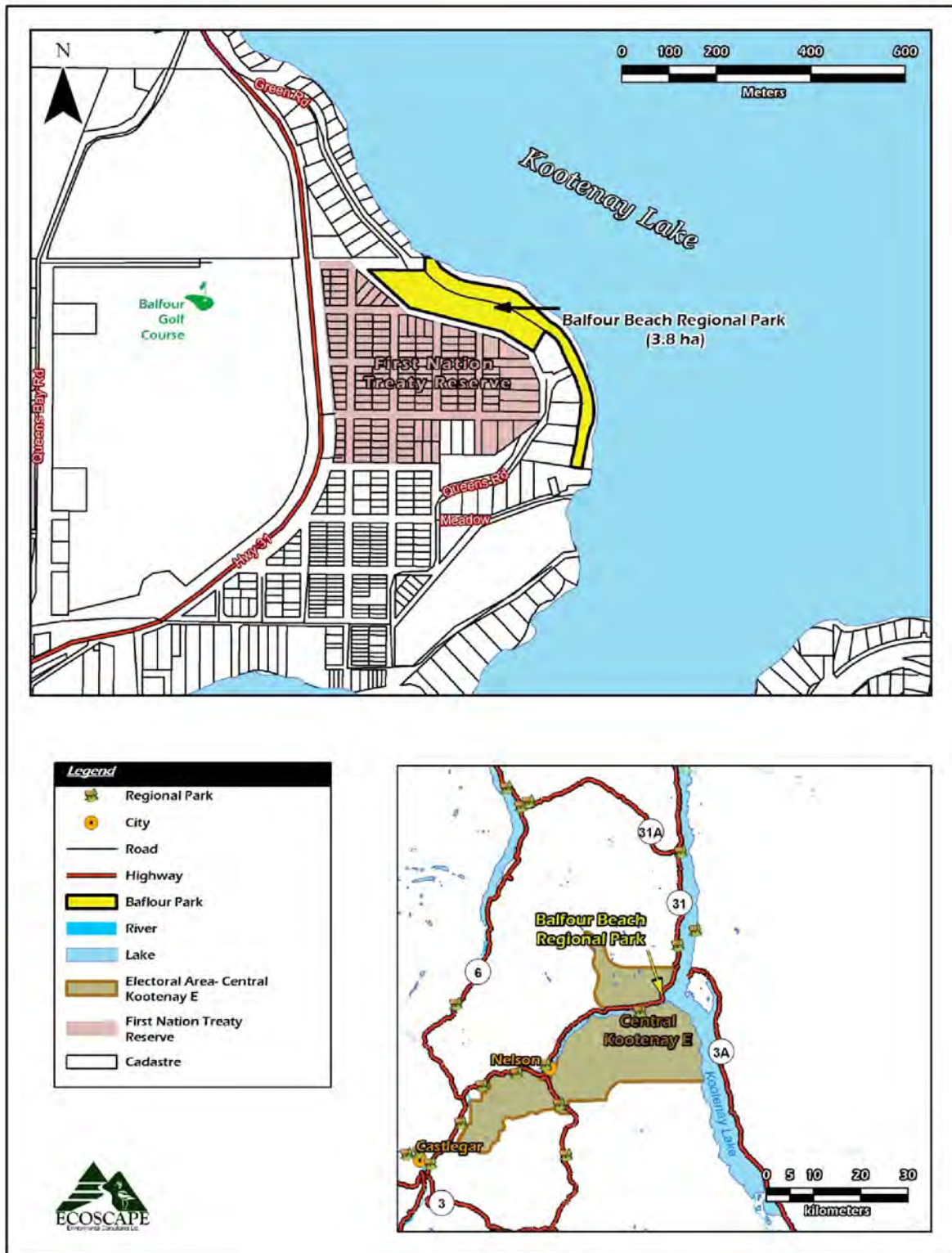


Figure 1.1 Park Location



1.1.2 Environmental Features

The following sections describe the environmental values of the park, including the current ecological condition, an overview of species at risk and ecosystems, and environmental sensitivities. The information is largely derived from online resources and from a recent site visit. A detailed biophysical inventory has not been completed for the park.

Existing Ecosystems

Balfour Beach is characterized by a young to mature coniferous woodland of lodgepole pine and Western red cedar. The park occurs within the Dry Warm Interior Cedar – Hemlock (ICH dw) biogeoclimatic zone which is described by the Biogeoclimatic Ecosystem Classification (BEC) program (Braumandl and Curran 2002). This zone typically occurs on the valley bottoms; has soils that dry out during the summer and a winter snowpack that is shallow and of short-duration.

Ecosystem Mapping has not been completed for Balfour Beach, therefore Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory (SEI) mapping classifications that were undertaken for the Slokan Valley have been applied to this park (Durand 2013) (Figure 1.2). Using airphoto interpretation, the park was divided into two ecosystem polygons, which are inclusive of two different ecosystem classifications including a young mixed forest (broadleaf and coniferous) ecosystem, and a narrow riparian fringe that is associated with Kootenay Lake. The riparian fringe community includes more broadleaf species such as black cottonwood and paper birch.

The ecosystems within the park are largely intact and encompass a native tree, shrub and herbaceous understory. Weedy species were mostly encountered along the western boundary of the park at the interface of the crown land. At the time of the site visit, logging crews were working within the park to remove understory growth and to thin trees. The fuel management prescription was intended to retain healthy mature trees, while the thinning focused on the younger understory trees (Cathro 2014). Ungulate winter range (mule deer) target age and conifer crown closure levels were also considered.

Aquatic Resources

Kootenay Lake (Watershed Code: 340-000000) occurs immediately east of Balfour Beach. It is a productive lake with approximately 28 fish species including the red listed White Sturgeon (*Acipenser transmontanus*). Foreshore Inventory and Mapping (FIM) data was collected for Kootenay Lake in 2012. Shoreline segment 45 occurs adjacent to the park and was described as a gravel shoreline with rural land use and a medium level (10-40%) of impact. An estimated 50% of the segment remains in a natural state (Cormano and Schleppe 2013). The area has steep slopes (20 - 60%) and the shore type was described as gravel with a moderate littoral zone (10-50 m). Substrates along the park generally consist of 5% sand, 30% gravel, 50% cobble, and 15% boulder, and the riparian area was reported as having mature coniferous forest with moderate (<10%) shrub and abundant (>50%) tree cover (Cormano and Schleppe 2013). The Aquatic Habitat Index current and potential rating for this segment is High (Cormano and Schleppe 2013). The lake adjacent to the park also has high suitability for juvenile fish rearing.



Best practices suggest a riparian setback from Kootenay Lake at 15 m from the top of bank (Figure 1.2). Permanent park development activities, such as the washroom facility, should occur outside of this setback area.

Species At Risk

The potential for Species at Risk was determined through discussions with local biologists, by provincial data inquiry requests, online sources (i.e., BC Conservation Data Centre) and is based on the availability of habitats to support important life functions such as breeding, migrating, feeding, resting and hibernating. The ecosystems within the park provide suitable habitat and are known to support Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*). A heronry or colony of nesting herons has been reported to occur within the park. Herons typically return to the same nesting site year after year, laying their eggs between February and April. Herons are particularly vulnerable to human disturbance and are known to abandon their nest sites due to disturbances, in particular loud noises (MOE 2014). The sensitivity of this species needs to be considered in the development of the park's design concept.

The provincial Conservation Data Centre also reports an occurrence of Wild Licorice (*Glycyrrhiza lepidota*) near Green Road, just north of the park and the red listed White Sturgeon (*Acipenser transmontanus*) is found in the deep waters of the Queens Bay.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) were determined and classified based on ecosystem polygons identified through preliminary SEI mapping for the Slocan Valley (Durand 2013). The ranking of ESA was completed based on ecosystem characteristics, including riparian contribution and wildlife habitat suitability. Professional judgment was also used to evaluate each ecosystem polygon based on criteria including: provincial status (i.e., Red or Blue listed), rare and endangered species observations or occurrence potential, landscape condition (i.e., connectivity, fragmentation), successional status, regional rarity and relative biodiversity. Each polygon was assigned a value rating based on the above criteria, which reflect the relative habitat condition (i.e., higher scores represent higher value). Ecosystem polygons were ranked using the environmental sensitivity classes described below:

- **Very High:** These areas represent extremely high ecological value and typically contain rare or critical habitat areas for sensitive or at risk species, undisturbed or pristine ecosystems and habitats, and biodiversity hotspots (e.g., wetlands, old growth forest). They substantially contribute to the regional habitat function and connectivity and are highest priority for conservation.
- **High:** These areas contribute to the regional biodiversity and connectivity of the surrounding landscape but lack critical habitats for at risk species (e.g., riparian areas, mature forest). Development should generally avoid these areas to conserve the important features or to allow potential progression to the Very High category (e.g., mature forest becoming old growth). Encroachment into these areas should be compensated for by restoration in other areas to work towards achieving a no net loss of High value habitats.



- Moderate: Ecosystems of moderate significance represent disturbed habitats or fragmented features with the potential to return to High value through natural succession (e.g., young or fragmented forest, degraded habitats). Moderate areas contribute to the diversity of the landscape; however their condition and adjacency may limit significant function. These areas will benefit from restoration and enhancement activities which will facilitate succession to higher value habitats.
- Low: These areas contribute little to no value with regard to habitat diversity and have limited potential for supporting significant wildlife (e.g., heavily impacted or disturbed sites). Development is typically focused on these areas based on their limited contribution to regional biodiversity and limited capacity to return to high value through natural succession. These areas may be restored through intensive remediation and management practices.

The ESA composition of the Park is depicted on Figure 1.2 – *Ecosystem Classification and Environmental Sensitivity*. The entire area of the park (i.e., 100%) was classified as having High ESA value, based on the above criteria.





Figure 1.2 Ecosystem Classification and Environmental Sensitivity

1.1.3 Vehicle and Pedestrian Access

The park has very little functional road frontage and the legal road frontage that does exist is improved to only a rural standard. Park visitors access the south end of the park from Meadow Street. Limited parking occurs along the public road, visitors walk around a fenced parcel of private land, and along the rocky shoreline to reach the south end of an existing park trail. Access to this trail is restricted during high water, when Kootenay Lake typically peaks during the first week of July.

Pedestrians and visitors currently access the north end of the park from Green Road or by walking the waterfront. Vehicles park along the narrow road width of Green Road or at the end of Green Road in a section of the road used by area residents as a turn-around. Occasionally vehicles attempt to drive the steep unimproved road down to the waterfront, with varying success. Access back on to Highway 31, presents safety challenges due to the design of the road alignment, restricted sightlines and the speed of the highway traffic.

A number of park neighbours along Queens Road access the park and waterfront via long staircases from their upland homes down to the park boundary. A public right-of-way also exists from Queens Road to the park and waterfront. The undeveloped condition of the right-of-way and steep slope does not functionally support access. Like other upland property owners, it is possible to build stairs from Queens Road to provide park access.

Vehicles and pedestrian are also known to occasionally approach the park from Wilson Street, through the Crown parcel west of the park, from the northern end of Queen's Road, and from the rural road running along park's northern boundary.

1.1.4 Surrounding Land Uses

A large section of land west of the park is laid out as an old town site subdivision. The subdivision was never developed and the land was subsequently turned back to the Provincial Crown. It is evident that the land has been used for gravel extraction as exposed gravel covers large parts of the property. There are currently no active licences for gravel extraction on the property. The land carries the provincial designation as a First Nation Treaty Reserve (Section 16 of the Land Act). The Treaty Reserve designation limits further leases and licences and other applications under the provincial Land Act. Transient public access to these lands, including walking and motorized recreation, is not restricted by the Treaty Reserve designation. Walking trails on the property connect to park trails leading to the waterfront and to the southern end of Green Road. At times, the gravelly Crown lands have been used for dirt biking. Evening parties, noise, intoxication, and fires have also caused concern in the past. The property includes a gate at Wilson Street; however, access restrictions are not evident.

Adjoining lands north of the park, accessed from Green Road, are residential in nature and number of residential properties (accessed from Queens Road) overlook the south end of the park toward Kootenay Lake. One waterfront residential property directly south of the park, and the RDCK water treatment facility, separates the park from Meadow Street. A motorized boat launch is located at the east end of Meadow Street and fishing takes place in Kootenay Lake adjacent to the park.

1.1.5 Cultural and Historical Features

The park and broader area is within the asserted traditional territory of the Ktunaxa Nation. The Ktunaxa people's traditional territory covers the Kootenay Region and extends into the United States. In British Columbia the Ktunaxa Nation Council represents the interests of four Indian Band members: St Mary's Band, Tobacco Plains Band, Columbia Lake Band and Lower Kootenay Band. Other First Nations have expressed an interest in the area, including the Akisqunuk First Nation, Upper Nicola Band, Penticton Indian Band, Lower Simikameen Indian Band, Secwepemc Nation, Okanagan Indian Band, Shuswap Indian Band and the Okanagan Nation Alliance. As noted above, the adjacent Crown land to the west is within a First Nations Treaty Reserve.

The southern end of the park approaches a registered archeological site. The site is protected by the terms of the RDCK Licence of Occupation and the *Heritage Act*, and may not be disturbed or altered without a permit.¹ The Licence requires an archaeological assessment to be undertaken by a qualified archaeologist prior to proceeding with any ground disturbance. All reasonable precautions must be undertaken to avoid disturbing or damaging any archaeological material found on or under the land. Upon discovering any such material, the RDCK must immediately notify the ministry responsible for administering the Heritage Conservation Act. First Nations have many sacred and sensitive areas within their traditional territories, additional consultation is needed to determine if there are unidentified cultural features (e.g., culturally modified trees, burial sites, etc.) within the park that require protection.

1.1.6 Recreational Features and Park Infrastructure

Balfour beach has traditionally been used by locals for low impact recreational uses including nature appreciation, walking, hiking, swimming, and boating. Non-motorized boats such as canoes and kayaks pull into the shore, at one of the three sandy sections of beach. The upland park area includes a trail network and a foreshore trail follows the waterfront along relatively flat sections of the park. Visitors also use the trails for walking dogs. Balfour Beach does not currently have a formalized parking area, washroom facilities or access to potable water. The park does not have signage or fencing.

1.1.7 Terms of the Licence of Occupation

As noted in the introduction to the Management Plan, Balfour Beach is made up of two Provincial Crown parcels (see Figure 1.1). In 2012, the RDCK came to an agreement with the Province to protect public access to this land and the waterfront by attaining approval for a 30 year Licence of Occupation (No. 404454). The Licence of Occupation sets out a number of terms providing direction to RDCK management activities. Notable direction includes the following:

- Prior to proceeding with activities that will disturb the ground within the park, an archaeological assessment must be undertaken by a qualified archaeologist.
- Riparian trees and vegetation should only be removed to maintain the safety of park users. If riparian tree species are to be removed, it is recommended that the RDCK replace them with the same species of tree. Only native trees and plant species should be utilized for re-planting.
- Measures should be taken to avoid attracting wildlife (e.g., use of bear proof garbage containers).

¹ The *BC Archeological Management Handbook for Local Government* assists in integrating archeological management into local government planning processes.

- Activities must adhere to the *Water Act* and must respect overlapping water licences.
- Timber must not be cut or removed without establishing a right under the *Forest Act* to harvest Crown timber.
- Improvement must not be constructed that interfere with the riparian right of access of any person over the land (without obtaining from the person a Statutory Right of Way).
- Overnight camping is not permitted.
- Park managers are committed to keeping the land clean, safe and sanitary.

Chapter 2 - Management Challenges

2.0 Introduction

A number of management challenges were evident in the development of the Balfour Beach Management Plan. The following points provide a summary of the key challenges.

2.1 Road Access

Balfour Beach was initially acquired with the objective of protecting public access over the long term to this significant waterfront area. Providing for functional public access is challenged by the fact that the park has inadequate parking areas and limited road frontage, and is surrounded by steep slopes and a rocky and rugged shoreline with variable water levels.

Road frontage is limited to the north end of the park, where a portion of the property line abuts the end of Green Road. A road right-of-way connects from the end of Green Road to Highway 31, however, the Ministry of Transportation and Highways has indicated the right-of-way is too steep to undertake improvements. Traffic safety is presently in question along Green Road, particularly where the road intersects with Highway 31; and the functionality of Green Road is limited by the narrow road width and the tendency at times for vehicles to park on the shoulder. Some visitors attempt to drive the steep unimproved road down to the waterfront, with varying success. Despite the challenges along Green Road, it is anticipated that without management actions visitors will continue to use the road to access the park, parking along the shoulder or in the cul-de-sac at the end.

The south end of the park has no road frontage. The park is separated from Meadow Street by the RDCK water treatment facility and a private residential property. The residential property is fenced to the beach; and during high water beach access may be covered with water. During all other time of the year, park visitors are able to navigate the rocky shoreline and can access the park from by parking at Meadow Street and walking along the foreshore. A public right-of-way also extends down slope from Queens Road to the boundary of the park. The undeveloped condition of the right-of-way and steep slope does not functionally support access at this time. Like other upland property owners, it is possible to build stairs from Queens Road to provide park access. Queens road would provide parking if stairs were constructed. In general, use of the park by those with physical challenges is currently very limited.

2.2 Adjacent Land Ownership

Crown Land

The Provincial Crown land west of the park abuts almost 400 metres of the park's western property line. The land is managed by the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (MFLNRO). The public can access this Crown land and presently is not able to functionally differentiate it from the parkland. Although presently there is only one trail leading into the park from the Crown land, the length of this boundary and potential for multiple access points, create challenges for preventing unwanted activities in the park when they are permitted on the adjacent Crown land. Transient motorized recreation, such as dirt-biking and quading, for example, are permitted on the adjacent Crown land, and are attracted to the former gravel pit. These uses, however, are not compatible with

the environmental values of the park. Invasive weeds may also be tracked into the park from disturbed areas of the adjacent Crown land.

The MFLNRO also has different standards for enforcement and monitoring than are expected for Balfour Beach. The public may look to the RDCK to address nuisance activities taking place on the adjacent Crown parcel.

Private Land

Park visitors are not always clear when they are on public land and when they are trespassing on private property. At the north end of the park, visitors enjoy walking the park waterfront and carry-on beyond the park's foreshore, along the public foreshore, between private residential properties and Kootenay Lake. Walkers, however, are not always sure of their right-of-access along the foreshore, and private property owners have at times wrongly assumed the beach in front of their property is also private.

Five residential properties abut the southern stretch of the park, to the west. Many of these properties have access routes or staircases leading up to the homes and most are not marked as private property. In addition, the RDCK has no understanding of the safety standard of the staircases.

2.3 Environmental Impacts

Motorized Vehicles – As previously mentioned, there are direct trail connections from the adjacent Crown land west of the park, and this area is currently being used by quads and motorbikes. Motorized use within Balfour Beach could result in increased erosion potential, dispersal of weed seeds and overall habitat destruction.

Slope Stability - Private property occurs immediately west of the park boundary at the park's south end. Some of the property owners have cleared trees and vegetation along the steep slope. With the lack of vegetation, there are possible concerns with the stability of the upland slope and there may be an increased potential for a landslide that would result in affects on habitat and material placed within the park boundary.

Off Leash Dogs – Uncontrolled off-leash dogs can cause numerous problems including harassment of wildlife, disruption of ground level nesting birds, spread of invasive plants, trampling of native vegetation, degradation of aquatic ecosystems, and conflicts with other park users.

Human /Wildlife Conflict - Human/wildlife conflict is defined as any interaction between wildlife and humans which causes harm, whether it's to the human, the wild animal, or property. Human-wildlife conflict is most likely to occur in late spring/early summer during dispersal and nesting seasons. Education that informs park users of appropriate behavior when encountering wildlife may be key to reducing conflicts.

Protection of Fish Habitat – Previous modification of the shoreline with the construction of groins and removal of rocks could be harmful to fish. Further shoreline modification should not be undertaken without proper permitting through the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources.

Shoreline Erosion – There are a couple of locations along the upper edge of the southern most beaches that are eroding during high water.

Fuel Treatment – The recent fuel treatment within the park substantially opened up the forest. This is likely beneficial for some wildlife (e.g. mule deer), but may negatively affect other more sensitive species such as the Great Blue Heron. When nesting, these birds are particularly sensitive to disturbance. For example, if there are trails within close proximity to nest sites, it may be beneficial to temporarily close or re-route trails, to prevent the birds from abandoning nests.

Unsanctioned Trail Use –The establishment of new, unsanctioned trails can result from park users taking shortcuts, rather than staying on designated routes. The shortcuts then get established, and it becomes difficult to discern between sanctioned and unsanctioned trails. There are several concerns with regards to ever-expanding trail networks. First, trail development often leads to the establishment of introduced and invasive plants. As the density of trails expands over relatively small areas, individual plant invasions can meld together; completely displacing the native plant community. Second, trails on steep sloped areas act to facilitate the movement of water and can become hotspots for down cutting and erosion. Finally, trails can also negatively impact local wildlife, often times resulting in a reduction of species richness and abundance.

2.4 Park Maintenance

Park neighbours have, in the past, raised concerns with nuisance activities and the general appearance of the former Crown managed land. The lack of washroom facilities is a health concern that requires attention. There is currently no garbage collection and litter has also been a problem. Neighbours and self-appointed park stewards have periodically undertaken park clean-up activities. Large debris from an old boat remains on the shoreline and some neighbours have dumped yard waste in the park. Terms of the Licence generally require the RDCK to keep the land clean, safe and sanitary. Overnight camping and squatting could become a management issue and are not permitted within the Licence of Occupation.

2.5 Fire Safety

Concerns about fire safety have been raised in recent years; however, the risk of wildfire has been greatly reduced through the recent fuel management prescription that was undertaken in November 2014 within the park and within the surrounding area.

2.6 Archeological Resources

A registered archaeological site occurs near the south end of the park. The Licence of Occupation and provincial regulation require that the park be managed in such a way that park development does not impact cultural resources and values.

2.7 Enforcement

The RDCK will need to consider assigning bylaw enforcement staff to enforce park regulations.

2.8 Communication and Engagement

The Balfour community, including park neighbours, were very interested in the process and outcomes of the Park Management Plan, and will be equally interested in aspects of implementation. It will be important to continue to provide these individuals and community groups with access to information as the various aspects of the Plan are implemented.

The local community, local businesses and interested community groups will be encouraged to participate in aspects of park stewardship, plan implementation. Actions will be identified that the community can pursue to support environmental well-being, species at risk and a healthy riparian area.

2.9 Plan Monitoring

The park management plan is the key tool to guide decision-making for Balfour Beach. Periodic reviews of the plan are equally important to determine the effectiveness of the plan in achieving goals and addressing management challenges.

Chapter 3 - Vision and Goals

3.0 Introduction

The long-term vision for Balfour Beach and the set of ten-year goals for the Management Plan explain the desired future condition for the park and the purpose and direction of the Management Plan. The vision and goals were developed to focus priorities during the creation of the Management Plan and will be referred to as part of the on-going operation of the park. The outcomes of the public involvement process contributed significantly to the development of the vision and goals. Other significant factors in their development included the current and historic park uses and surrounding land uses, the direction set by the Area E Rural Official Community Plan Bylaw 2260, the direction set by the terms of the Licence of Occupation, the physical constraints and opportunities of the park site, and applicable local, provincial and federal policy. Implementation of the vision and ten-year goals is achieved through the Design Concept, and through the Plan's direction to park operations.

3.1 Long Term Vision Statement

The long term vision describes the aspirations for the park, beyond the ten-year scope of the Management Plan. The vision is designed to inspire and motivate those who have a role in the management and stewardship of the park.

Balfour Beach Regional Park is a protected and pristine natural area on the scenic waterfront of Kootenay Lake. Terrestrial and aquatic life including overland plants and trees are thriving. Park trails allow for appreciation of the park's natural environment and provide environmentally sensitive access to the public waterfront and upland park area. Park visitors feel welcome in the park and are respectful of the park's natural values and surrounding private property.

3.2 Management Plan Ten-Year Goals

The Management Plan goals are designed to help those who have a role in the management and stewardship of the park to work towards achieving the vision. The goals have been developed with a ten-year scope in mind; however, many of the goals should be renewed in a similar form after the ten-year scope.

Goal 1 – Limit the Recreational Footprint and New Park Infrastructure

The recreational footprint and new park infrastructure will be limited to preserve the park's natural environment. Park infrastructure will be limited to washroom facilities, garbage services, signage, and a staircase. Infrastructure will have little to no impact on the waterfront aquatic life or the park's forest ecosystems.

Goal 2 – Actively Manage Impacts from Adjacent Crown Land and Prevent Motorized Access

Park managers will actively manage potentially harmful impacts on the park from adjacent Crown and residential land uses (e.g., motorized uses, invasive weeds, etc.). The park boundary, shared with the former gravel pit, will be assessed to identify key current (and potential) access points for motorized vehicles and these access points will be closed with design modification, including natural barriers.

Goal 3 – Monitor Habitat

Forested areas affected by the prescribed fuel treatment will be monitored to assess habitat regeneration and to ensure that unsanctioned trail development does not occur. Shoreline habitat will be monitored to deter unauthorized modifications and to assess the progress of erosion.

Goal 4 – Improve and Manage Park Access and Parking

The park design concept will plan for multiple pedestrian access points and for parking areas that strive to minimize impacts on adjacent property owners and provide for safe and functional park and waterfront access. Access management tools will be used to discourage vehicle access at undesirable locations.

Goal 5 – Welcome Visitors and Build Good Neighbour Relations

The Balfour community and other park visitors will feel welcome to use the park in a respectful manner. Potential impacts of park users on park neighbours will be mitigated through park design and park management. Boundary signage will be designed to clearly define the boundary of the park for park visitors and to discourage visitors from crossing onto private land. Relationships will be built with residential and provincial neighbours to build knowledge of their potential impact on the park.

Goal 6 – Preserve Cultural and Historical Values of the Park

Opportunities will be explored for the park to raise awareness about First Nations' spiritual, social, cultural, and economic relationships to the land within the region. The park design will be limited as to not disturb archeological features and an archeological assessments will be undertaken prior to disturbing the ground.

Goal 7 – Educate Visitors of Safety Hazards

Enhance visitor safety within the park through signage advising users of safety hazards in the park.

Goal 8 – Engage Park Stewards

The local community, local businesses and interested community groups will be encouraged to participate in aspects of park stewardship and plan implementation. Periodic review of the plan will be undertaken and actions will be identified that the community can pursue to support environmental well-being, species at risk and a healthy riparian area.

Chapter 4 - Design Concept

4.0 Introduction

The Design Concept is a central feature of the Management Plan. It includes the Plan's direction to the management and use of specific areas through the establishment of park management zones and the development of a conceptual design concept for access and appropriate levels of recreational use. The Design Concept also includes the physical improvements necessary to support the design.

4.1 Designation of Park Management Zones

The park is separated into two park management zones including Limited Recreation and Natural Environment. Figure 4.1 – *Park Management Zones*, depicts the management zones within the park.

4.1.1 Limited Recreation

The Limited Recreation Zone includes the existing trail network. Intended recreational activities within this zone include hiking and nature appreciation. The following considerations pertain to the Limited Recreation Zone.

- The trail network should be monitored over time to ensure that park patrons are using the sanctioned trails and that unsanctioned trails are not becoming established.
- Smaller trails that connect the main trail with the beach gathering areas should be marked and added to the sanctioned trail network.
- Critical wildlife habitat, specifically wildlife trees, should be retained whenever possible along the trail network. The presence of these features should be considered in the finalization of the trail network. Ideally trails should avoid higher risk areas adjacent to mature trees with high wildlife value (e.g. potential nest cavities, and perches) to mitigate the need for future hazard tree management.

4.1.2 Natural Environment

The Natural Environment Zone represents the remaining areas within the park. This zone is intended to protect provincially significant natural ecosystems for their intrinsic value, contribute to the park's biodiversity, and insure preservation of the land for long-term appreciation. The beach gathering areas are included within this zone. The following considerations pertain to the Natural Environment Zone.

- If, in the future, a small parking area is warranted at the end of Green Road to prevent parked cars from blocking the Green Road turnaround, the Natural Environment Zone could accommodate three cars; any larger and it is suggested the area be rezoned within the Plan.
- The beach gathering areas should be regularly monitored to ensure low impact recreational activities (e.g. picnicking, sun bathing, nature appreciation) are not negatively affecting the environment.
- Any unsanctioned trails within this zone should be decommissioned. Where unsanctioned access has degraded the natural condition, restoration efforts in conjunction with future access management should be implemented.

- Native vegetation planting may be useful to speed up the process of trail decommissioning and to naturalize areas of enhanced disturbance.
- The Natural Environment Zone should be evaluated for non-native and invasive plant species, and a weed management strategy should be implemented, especially along the western side of the park where it abuts against Crown land.
- Mature trees, including those that are dead and/or decaying (snags) should be left standing, unless they pose an immediate public safety hazard.
- Habitat enhancement opportunities (i.e. construction of nesting platforms, nest boxes, etc.) for rare and endangered species should be undertaken. This is especially relevant for the Great Blue Heron.
- Recent thinning of the forest canopy has left the park more open. This should improve shrub development, reduce fire risk and increase browse for ungulates.



Figure 4.1 Park Management Zones



4.2 Permitted Uses

The management plan recommends the following permitted uses which will then be incorporated and regulated under the park regulation bylaw. Figure 4.2 - *Summary of Permitted Uses*, outlines the permitted activities that can occur within each Management Zone.

Figure 4.2 Summary of Permitted Uses

Permitted Uses	Natural Environment	Limited Recreation
Parking		
Hiking/Walking/Running	✓	✓
Nature Appreciation	✓	✓
Geocaching	✓	✓
Picnicking	✓	✓
Snow Shoeing	✓	✓
On-Leash Dog Walking	✓*	✓
Biking - Not permitted		
Special Uses and Events --Not permitted		
Commercial Uses - Not permitted		

*"Special Use" means any service, activity or event as defined and required by RDCK special use permit.

✓On-leash dog walking is to occur on designated trails only.



All other RDCK permitted uses/restrictions are consistent with the Regional Parks Regulation Bylaw No. 2173. Typical restrictions include:

- No alcohol
- No alteration to natural features
- No fires
- No fireworks
- No firearms
- No hunting/trapping
- No overnight camping
- No overnight parking
- No off-road vehicle use
- No dumping or disposal
- No smoking
- No littering

The hours of operation for Balfour Beach are from sunrise to sunset. It should be noted dogs must be kept on a leash.

4.3 Proposed Infrastructure Improvements

Figure 4.3 –*Design Concept*, depicts the proposed design concept. The specific elements of the various design features are further described in the following sections. The key elements include parking/access, a designated trail network, signage and washrooms.

The Design Concept put forth includes the entire park boundary as shown in Figure 4.3. An alternative to this design is for RDCK to only manage the eastern most parcel and to return the steep sloped western parcel to the Crown (the division between the parcels is shown in Figure 4.3 with a purple line). Management of the western parcel will likely be more challenging due to encroachment issues from the adjacent Crown land (e.g. motorized access, weeds). At this time, RDCK has not dedicated substantial enforcement resources.



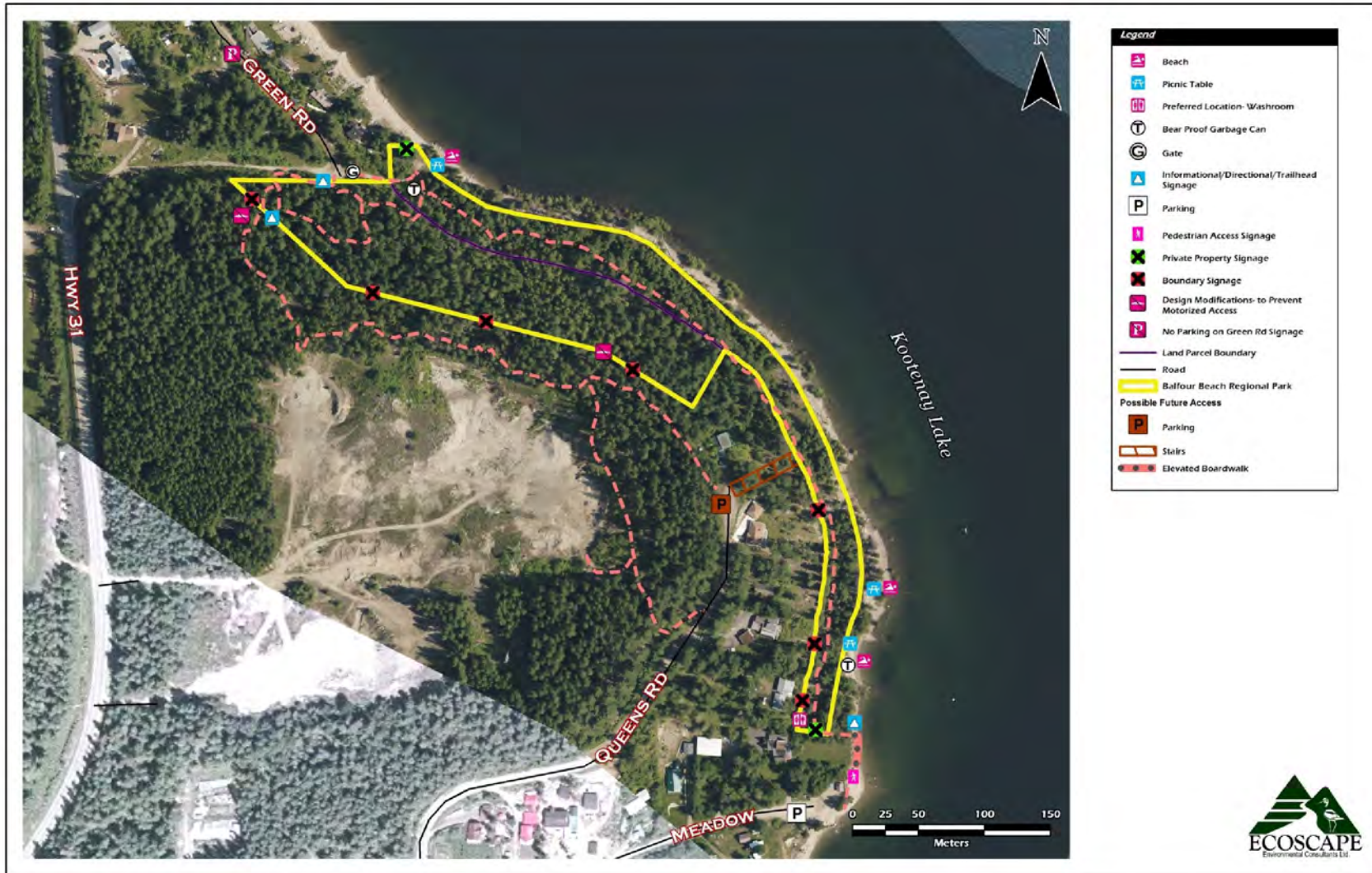


Figure 4.3 Design Concept



4.3.1 Parking and Access

The lack of improved road frontage and the steep slopes of surrounding land at Balfour Beach limit the available options for visitor parking. The design concept directs visitors through signage to roadside parking at the bottom of Meadow Street. This is the best, immediately available option for parking and access to the beach. The parking area should be identified with signage. Use of this parking area should be monitored periodically to ensure it is functioning effectively. Pedestrian access from the Meadow Street parking area will continue as it does now, via the Crown foreshore, connecting to the south end of the park and the park trail that runs just upslope of the Kootenay Lake foreshore. Park boundary, directional and information signage will be posted at this pedestrian entrance to the park.

The plan also proposes that the RDCK work with the appropriate provincial ministries and upland property owner to explore the possibility of establishing an easement and constructing a raised boardwalk at the interface of the Kootenay Lake high water mark and the private parcel that occurs immediately south of the park. The boardwalk would provide park access during periods of high water and would improve accessibility to the park.

Access to the north end of the park via Green Road will be discouraged for the driving community. Signage at Green Road and Highway 31 will indicate “no vehicle access to Balfour Beach Park,” and signage will be posted along Green Road indicating no “park-related” parking. A gate will be also installed to prevent unauthorized vehicle access to the waterfront. Parking enforcement should periodically issue complaint-based tickets to encourage compliance with parking regulations. Park managers note that the few vehicles expected to continue park along the side of the Green Road cul-de-sac, despite attempts to discourage formal park access, will not be restricted from parking at that location.

The RDCK should also work with Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to install signage to improve road safety directed at vehicles turning onto Highway 31 from Green Road, restricting turning movement to right-hand turns only; though it should be noted that highway safety is not directly within the scope of the RDCK's responsibility.

Pedestrian access to the park is expected to continue along the foreshore from both the north and south ends of the park. The plan proposes park boundary signage, signage differentiating private property from the foreshore and informational signage at these locations. Pedestrian access is also expected to continue along the relatively steep rural right-of-way from Highway 31, along the northern boundary of the park, as well as from trails originating from the Crown land west of the park. Park boundary signage is proposed along the western boundary, and trail head signage, and signage noting “no-motorized access” is proposed at key trail access points along both the northern and western boundaries. Boundary signage will also be posted near private staircases along the western boundary to indicate the extent of RDCK property.

The remaining potential access point occurs from Queens Road on the western boundary of the park. This may be a long term option for access and would require a staircase down the slope. There is an existing right-of-way at the end of Queens Road that extends downslope to the park boundary. The Management Plan does not necessarily advocate for park access at this location, but acknowledges that park access, especially for the driving community is limited. Access at this location could be potentially



developed in the future with proper buy-in from relevant provincial agencies, including Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. Emergency access to the park is not expected to be a challenge, despite the lack of road frontage (TB confirmed).

4.3.2 Trial Concept

No significant modifications are proposed to the currently 864 m sanctioned trail network. It consists of a single trail that extends along the toe of slope for the entirety of the park. This trail then curves upslope at the northern end of the park connecting to Green Road and to Crown lands west of the park. The park trail concept includes trail heads with appropriate signage at the following locations:

- west of Green Road on the north property line;
- east of Green Road at the base of the slope;
- along the west property line abutting crown land; and
- at the south end of the park from the foreshore and Meadows Street.

The park boundary, shared with the former gravel pit, will be assessed to identify key current (and potential) access points for motorized vehicles and these access points will be closed with design modification, including natural barriers. Boundary signage to communicate to users the extent of the park boundary and, in some locations, the permitted park uses, will also be installed.

Additional unsanctioned trails should be actively decommissioned with surface roughening, the application of native mulch, a dissolved mycorrhizae solution, an appropriate native seed mix and/or tree planting. Large woody debris available throughout the park will also be useful in trail decommissioning. The naturalization of non-sanctioned trails should be regularly monitored to ensure effectiveness and that invasive weeds are not overrepresented.

The operational fuel treatment program recently undertaken within the park has likely improved accessibility and may result in the establishment of additional unsanctioned trails. It is recommended that the trail network be assessed in light of the recent disturbance, and that trails be reestablished or decommissioned as appropriate. A public safety and hazard assessment may also be warranted.

4.3.3 Archeological Site Protection

A registered archeological site approaches the south end of the park and archeological artifacts may occur within. Informational signage highlighting cultural values and discouraging users from venturing off designated trails will be located within the southern park area.

4.3.4 Beach Gathering Areas

Three areas of the park foreshore have existing groins and have been cleared of the typical rock cover to expose sandy ground. These sites are currently functioning as destination beach areas within the park. The Management Plan supports the continuation of these beaches for public gathering for picnicking, sun bathing and nature appreciation. Non-motorized boats are permitted to dock at these beaches, as the park acts as an excellent destination for local kayakers and canoers alike. No further modification (beyond the addition of picnic tables and the removal of dumped debris and garbage) is planned for these areas. There is some evidence, however, of erosion on the upper edge of the southern-most



beaches. These locations will be monitored over time and assessed to determine if they will need reinforcement.

4.3.5 Washrooms and Park Facilities

A single portable washroom facility is planned (Figure 4.3). The preferred location of the washroom would be at 30 metres upslope of the park boundary when entering the park off Meadow Street. The other options are at the bottom of the potential staircase or near the Green Road access. The toilet in all instances should be located outside the riparian setback from Kootenay Lake and should be serviceable by a pumper truck. The most appropriate location for the toilet will need to be fully assessed and therefore the location may change. Bear proof garbage bins (with regular garbage collection during peak times) are also planned near the beach destinations.



Chapter 5 - Operations and Maintenance

5.0 Introduction

The operation and maintenance of Balfour Beach will be centrally coordinated by the RDCK's Community Services Department in a manner that will be consistent with the vision, goals and overall direction of the Management Plan. Maintenance activities will include a series of on-going responsibilities related to park facilities and services. Operational activities will include responsibilities such as issuing permits, enforcing bylaws, undertaking inspections, coordinating communications and monitoring plan implementation and the park's environmental health. One-time activities that fall within the scope of park operations will also be necessary as the Management Plan begins implementation (e.g., public safety hazard assessment).

The Official Regional Parks Plan No. 2044 and the Regional Parks Regulation Bylaw No. 2173, contain policies that provide specific direction to regional park operations. The Parks Regulation Bylaw outlines the authority of the General Manager of Community Services, the Parks Operation Supervisor (or Authorized RDCK personnel) and members of the RCMP to enforce the provisions of that bylaw and issue tickets in accordance with the RDCK Municipal Ticketing Information Bylaw. Park operations and maintenance must also comply with the terms of the RDCK Licence of Occupation, as well as covenant other local, provincial and federal acts, regulations, policies and bylaws.

Public safety will be an important element of the RDCK's operational responsibilities. Although each visitor is responsible for his or her own safety while using parklands, the RDCK will be conscious to exercise its duty of care obligations.

The RDCK also places a high value on working with community organizations, interested individuals and park neighbours. The passion and enthusiasm of community organizations and volunteers could be employed for activities such as park patrols, visitor education, environmental monitoring, trail maintenance and invasive weed management. Community stewardship and community partnerships are addressed below to reflect the important role that the community will play in park operations and maintenance.

The following sections of the chapter address key actions related to operating and maintaining the park and implementing the Management Plan. *Figure 5.1 – Operational and Maintenance Responsibilities*, summarizes the preliminary set of responsibilities that will need to be assigned and *Figure 5.2 – Operational and Maintenance Strategies and Actions*, outlines specific actions that will need to be undertaken.



Figure 5.1 Operational and Maintenance Responsibilities

Operational Responsibilities – Ongoing	Maintenance Responsibilities – Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Plan implementation coordination – Bylaw enforcement – Overseeing park construction projects – Overseeing community stewardship projects – Staff communications and coordination – Intergovernmental communications – Public communications (website etc.) – Volunteer training and coordination – Hazard Tree Monitoring – Monitoring of environmental recovery from prescribed fuel treatment, shoreline monitoring and the potential for unsanctioned trail expansion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Parking area upkeep – Washroom servicing – Garbage collection – Trail upkeep – Signage upkeep – Invasive weed management – Security duties – Routine safety inspections
One-Time Operations Initiatives	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Park trail network and boundary assessment (including hazard assessment) – Required Archeological Assessments (prior to park gate construction and other ground disturbance) – Five year plan review – Ten year plan review 	



Figure 5.2 Operational and Maintenance Strategies and Actions

5.1.1 Roles and Responsibilities	
<p><u>Strategy 1</u> <i>Provide clear definitions of roles and responsibilities for operational and maintenance needs.</i></p>	<p><u>Actions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Assign the responsibility for coordinating the overall implementation of the Management Plan to the RDCK General Manager of Community Services. 1.2. Outline the detailed list of operational responsibilities; assign the staff members responsible for overseeing each, utilizing existing structures and processes for service delivery and providing guidance for service levels where appropriate. 1.3. Assign the staff member or private contractor responsible for maintenance activities and determine service levels as appropriate. 1.4. Assign a staff member to coordinate a park specific bylaw enforcement schedule.
5.1.2 Public Safety and Duty of Care	
<p><u>Strategy 2</u> <i>Ensure due diligence is exercised in addressing public safety.</i></p>	<p><u>Actions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Undertake a public safety assessment of the park to identify potential liabilities. 2.2 Work with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to Post signs at the Highway 31 intersection with Green Road, indicated “no vehicle access to Balfour Beach park” and encourage them to post signage prohibiting left hand turns from Green Road. 2.3 Post signage clearly stating that alcohol is not permitted within the park and encourage the RCMP to implement enforcement programs to deter alcohol consumption by enforcing impaired driving laws. 2.4 Conduct regular hazard tree assessments. 2.5 Ensure contact information is posted on signage at entrance to the park for users to report hazards, fire and other threats. 2.6 Develop a schedule for RDCK park safety inspections. 2.7 Provide information at the park to educate uses on how to reduce conflict between humans and wildlife and install bear proof garbage containers.
5.1.3 Park Etiquette and Bylaw Enforcement	
<p><u>Strategy 3</u> <i>Educate park patrons about park etiquette and take enforcement action.</i></p>	<p><u>Actions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Develop a bylaw enforcement schedule detailing the time and frequency of bylaw inspections. 3.2 Ensure that park signage adequately conveys park etiquette and park values.



5.1.4 Community Engagement	
<p><u>Strategy 4</u> <i>Engage community stewardship, develop community partnerships and facilitate philanthropic initiatives.</i></p>	<p><u>Actions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1 Continue communications with First Nation representatives to explore opportunities in the park to interpret native culture and heritage. 4.2 Investigate educational partnerships with local school districts and other opportunities for the park to serve as a venue to connect the region's youth with the natural environment in a hands-on way. 4.3 Engage interested groups to peruse stewardship projects within the park. 4.4 Continue communication with adjacent property owners to raise awareness of their responsibilities as a park neighbour and their potential impacts on the park (e.g., invasive weeds, slope modification) 4.5 Continue to update the RDCK website with information about the actions taken to implement the Management Plan.
5.1.5 On-going Park Monitoring	
<p><u>Strategy 5</u> <i>Monitor ecosystem health, levels of recreational use, invasive species, and other park impacts.</i></p>	<p><u>Actions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1 Undertake regular inspections of park trails and infrastructure. Make adjustments as necessary to ensure success. 5.2 Regularly monitor recreational uses to ensure they are consistent with the Management Plan goals. 5.3 Revisit the Management Plan after five years and ten years to ensure the management practices are working effectively and are aligned with the Management Plan goals.



5.1.6 Environmental and Archeological Responsibility	
<i>Strategy 6</i> <i>Ensure due diligence (from an environmental and archeological perspective), is exercised in the build out of the design concept.</i>	<u>Actions</u> 6.1 Engage an archeologist to undertake an assessment of the proposed parking area and gate at the north end of the park and, if pursued, the proposed boardwalk at the south end of the park. 6.2 Ensure that the Design Concept is constructed following best management practices and is consistent with the Provincial Develop With Care: Environmental Guidelines http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/documents/bmp/devwithcare/



Chapter 6 - Implementation Plan

Figures 6.1 through 6.3, *Costing for Implementation of Concept Design, Operational and Maintenance Responsibilities*, provides estimated costs for the Design Concept development items, and ongoing operational and maintenance responsibilities over the next ten years. These preliminary cost estimates will become more accurate with further site-specific assessments. Based on the estimates provided, the capital investment needed to undertake the Design Concept is approximately \$68,400. Although this budget is allocated over ten years, all of the work has been slated to occur over the first five years. The highest priority items include a signage plan, installation of a washroom, and a gate to prevent motorized access down a steep slope to the foreshore area of Kootenay Lake.

The operational and maintenance costs are estimated at \$115,100 over ten years, with spending distributed much more evenly throughout the Management Plan period. Therefore, the total estimated ten year capital and operating costs for Balfour Beach is approximately \$183,500. Implementation of these works over the timeline specified is dependent on staffing capacity and on the availability of funding. Possible funding sources include taxation, donations, grants (e.g. community works funding), fundraising, and in kind work.



Figure 6.1 - Costing for Implementation of Balfour Beach Regional Park Concept Design

Development Plan Items	Cost	Short Term (Years 1-3)			Medium Term (Years 4-7)				Long Term (Years 8-10)			Yr. 1-10 Total
		year 1	year 2	year 3	year 4	year 5	year 6	year 7	year 8	year 9	year 10	
Design and access improvements at the north end of park (excluding signage)												\$23,500.00
Archaeological assessment as required by the Licence of Occupation	\$3,500.00		\$3,500									
Installation of an access gate to prevent vehicle from driving down the steep slope to the foreshore area	\$3,500.00		\$3,500									
Installation of one bear aware trash receptacle (includes concrete slab)	\$2,500.00			\$2,500								
One wood picnic table (includes concrete slab)	\$1,500.00				\$1,500							
Capital cost to supply and install a unisex washroom building (as per RDCK supplied design)	\$12,500.00			\$12,500								
\$23,500.00												
Design improvements near the two southern beaches												\$5,500.00
Installation of one bear aware trash receptacle (includes concrete slab)	\$2,500.00				\$2,500							
Two wood picnic tables (includes concrete slab)	\$3,000.00				\$3,000							
\$5,500.00												
Trail Improvements												\$8,000.00
Existing trail upgrades (864 lm), decommissioning	\$3,500.00		\$2,000			\$1,500						
Boundary trail assessment, design modifications, rerouting	\$4,500.00		\$3,000			\$1,500						
\$8,000.00												
Signage plan												\$20,000.00
Design and administrative costs	\$6,000.00	\$6,000										
Supply and install private property, boundary, safety signage	\$7,500.00		\$7,500									
Supply and install three informational/trail head/directional signs	\$2,500.00		\$2,500									
Supply and install signage outside of the park boundary (including pedestrian access, no park access and no parking signs)	\$4,000.00		\$4,000									
\$20,000.00												
Sub-total											\$57,000	
Contingency (20%)											\$11,400	
TOTAL 10 YEAR CAPITAL COST ESTIMATE											\$68,400	

Figure 6.2 - Costing for Operational Responsibilities

Operational Responsibilities - Ongoing	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Yr. 1-10 Total
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	
Plan implementation (coordination, capital project management, initiation of partnerships, intergovernmental communications)	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$1,500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$21,000
Park Specific Public Communications (website, brochures, etc.)	\$2,500	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$9,500
Park Monitoring and Stewardship	\$1,500	\$500	\$1,500	\$500	\$1,500	\$500	\$1,500	\$500	\$1,500	\$500	\$10,000
Bylaw enforcement	\$0	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$22,000
Five/Ten-Year Management Plan Review	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,000	\$10,000
	\$7,500	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$8,000	\$13,500	\$4,500	\$4,500	\$3,500	\$4,500	\$8,500	\$72,500
TOTAL 10 YEAR OPERATIONAL COST ESTIMATE											\$72,500

Figure 6.3 - Costing for Maintenance Responsibilities

Maintenance Responsibilities - Ongoing	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Yr. 1-10 Total
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	
Garbage removal and Servicing	\$0	\$5,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$29,000
Washroom servicing	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$800	\$800	\$800	\$800	\$800	\$800	\$800	\$5,600
Trail upkeep	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$4,000
Invasive weed management	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,000	\$0	\$0	\$2,000
Signage upkeep	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$500	\$0	\$500	\$0	\$500	\$0	\$500	\$2,000
	\$0	\$5,000	\$3,000	\$5,300	\$3,800	\$4,300	\$4,800	\$6,300	\$4,800	\$5,300	\$42,600
TOTAL 10 YEAR MAINTENANCE COST ESTIMATE											\$42,600
TOTAL 10 YEAR CAPITAL, OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE COST ESTIMATE											\$183,500

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Provincial Develop With Care: Environmental Guidelines
<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/documents/bmp/devwithcare/>



Appendix A: Balfour Beach Management Plan Summary Table



Management Challenges, Recommendations, Suggested Timelines and Estimated Costs for BALFOUR BEACH REGIONAL PARK							
Management Challenge/Issue	Comments	Importance Level	Recommendation	Related Plan Goal	Suggested Timeframe	Capital Cost	Operating Cost (10 Yr)
Road Access	Providing for functional public access is challenged by the fact that the park has limited road frontage and is surrounded by steep slopes and a rocky and rugged shoreline with variable water levels. Road frontage is limited at the north end of the park where a portion of the property line abuts the end of Green Road. The south end of the park has no road frontage.	Very High	The design concept directs visitors (through signage) to roadside parking at the bottom of Meadow Street. Pedestrian access from the Meadow Street parking area will continue as it does now, via the Crown foreshore, connecting visitors to the south end of the park and the park trail that runs just upslope of the foreshore. The possibility of a raised boardwalk along this pedestrian access could be investigated in the future to increase access for those less mobile and to support access for all users during high water. Future possibilities to consider also include a right-of-way from Queen's Road to the park. This would involve roadside parking along Queen's Road and a long staircase down to the park boundary.	Goal 4 - Improve Parking and Access	a) Meadow Street Parking and Directional/Trail Head Signage - <i>Immediate</i> b) Boardwalk and Staircase - <i>Long Term</i>	a) \$1,800 b) not costed	
Parking and Access Management	The functionality of Green Road as a park access is limited by the narrow road width and the tendency at times for vehicles to park on the shoulder. The approach from Green Road to the highway is also challenging as sightlines are restricted and the left turn radius is very tight (see below). The Green Road access has also lead some visitors to attempt to drive the steep unimproved road down to the waterfront, with varying success. Despite these challenges, and without management actions, visitors will continue to use the road to access the park.	Very High	Access to the north end of the park via Green Road will be discouraged for the driving community. Signage at Green Road and Highway 31 will indicate "no vehicle access to Balfour Beach Park," and signage will be posted along Green Road indicating no "park-related" parking. A gate will be also installed to prevent unauthorized vehicle access to the waterfront. Parking bylaw enforcement should periodically issue complaint-based tickets to encourage compliance with parking regulations. Park managers note that the few vehicles expected to continue to park along the side of the Green Road cul-de-sac, despite attempts to discourage formal park access, will not be restricted from parking at that location.	Goal 4 - Improve Parking and Access	a) Green Road Signage - <i>Immediate</i> b) Access Gate - <i>Immediate</i> c) Bylaw Enforcement - <i>on-going</i> d) Signage upkeep - <i>ongoing</i>	a) \$2,500 b) \$3,500	c) \$5,000 d) \$1,000
Highway Safety	Traffic safety is presently in question along Green Road where the road intersects with Highway 31. The road alignment provides poor sight lines for vehicles exiting Green Road, and the left turn radius is very sharp. It should be noted that this issue is not directly within the scope of the RDCK's responsibility.	Very High	In addition to the above actions to discourage Green Road as a park access, the RDCK should work with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to install signage to improve road safety directed at vehicles turning onto Highway 31 from Green Road, restricting turning movement to right-hand turns only.	Goal 4 - Improve Parking and Access	a) MOTI Communication - <i>Immediate</i>		a) 1500
Adjacent Crown Land - Preventing Motorized Activities	The Provincial Crown land west of the park abuts almost 400 metres of the park's western property line. The public can access this Crown land and is not able to differentiate it from parkland. Although there is only one trail leading into the park from the Crown land, the length of this boundary and potential for multiple access points, create challenges for preventing unwanted activities in the park when they are permitted on the adjacent Crown land. Transient motorized recreation, such as dirt-biking and quading, for example, are permitted on the adjacent Crown land, and are attracted to the former gravel pit. These uses, however, are not compatible with the environmental values of the park.	Very High	The park boundary, shared with the former gravel pit, will be assessed to identify key current (and potential) access points for motorized vehicles and these access points will be closed with design modifications, including natural barriers. Boundary signage to communicate to users the extent of the park boundary and, in some locations, the permitted park uses, will also be installed. Enforcement of the park bylaw will also be necessary from time to time.	Goal 2 - Manage Crown Land Impacts	a) Park boundary assessment and design modifications - <i>immediate</i> b) Boundary Signage - <i>immediate</i> c) Bylaw enforcement - <i>ongoing</i>	a) \$4,500 b) \$2,000	c) \$10,000
Human/Wildlife Conflict	Human/wildlife conflict is defined as any interaction between wildlife and humans which causes harm, whether it is to the human, the wild animal, or property. Human-wildlife conflict is most likely to occur in late spring/early summer during dispersal and nesting seasons.	Very High	Bear aware garbage containers will be installed. Education that informs park users of appropriate behavior when encountering wildlife may be key to reducing conflicts and should be included on park signage.	Goal 7 - Educate Visitors of Safety Hazards	a) Bear Proof Garbage - <i>Immediately</i>	-see park sanitation	see park sanitation
Adjacent Private Land - Private Staircases	Five residential properties abut the southern stretch of the park, to the west. Many of these properties have access routes or staircases leading up to the homes and most are not marked as private property. The RDCK has no understanding of the safety conditions of these staircases and should avoid liability for trespassing.	Very High	In addition to the signage identified above, the RDCK should post signage near these staircases to indicate the staircases are on private property and that the RDCK makes no claim to the safety standard and accepts no liability for trespassing. Park neighbours should also be advised to mark their stairs as private property.	Goal 7 - Educate Visitors of Safety Hazards	a) Signage - <i>Immediately</i>	a) \$1,000	

Management Challenges, Recommendations, Suggested Timelines and Estimated Costs for BALFOUR BEACH REGIONAL PARK								
Management Challenge/Issue	Comments	Importance Level	Recommendation	Related Plan Goal	Suggested Timeframe	Capital Cost	Operating Cost (10 Yr)	
Adjacent Private Land - Trespassing and Encroachment	Park visitors are not always clear when they are on public land and when they are trespassing on private property. At the north end of the park, visitors enjoy walking the park waterfront and carry-on along the public foreshore, between private residential properties and Kootenay Lake. Walkers, however, are not always sure of their right-of-access along the foreshore, and private property owners have at times wrongly assumed the beach in front of their property is private.	High	The plan proposes improved boundary definition, including park boundary signage, signage differentiating private property from the foreshore, informational signage and trail head signage at key locations. Design improvements (including picnic tables) to the park's north and south beaches will also welcome park visitors and clearly recognize the beaches are part of the park's public realm.	Goal 5 - Welcome Visitors/Build Good Neighbour Relations	a) Signage - <i>Short term (1-3 years)</i> b) Picnic Tables - <i>Short term (1-3 years)</i> c) Signage upkeep - <i>ongoing</i>	a) \$2,000 b) \$4,500	b) c) \$1,000	
Park Sanitation and Cleanliness	Park neighbours have, in the past, raised concerned with nuisance activities and the general appearance of the former Crown managed land. The lack of washroom facilities is a health concern that requires attention. There is currently no garbage collection and litter has also been a problem. Large debris from an old boat remains on the shoreline and some neighbours have dumped yard waste in the park. Overnight camping and squatting could become a management issues and are not permitted within the Licence of Occupation.	High	One pit toilet is recommended for the park. Two RDCK should ensure that there is an established schedule for servicing pit toilets. In addition, park personnel or park contractors should monitor pit toilets on a regular basis to ensure cleanliness and identify potential problems. Garbage known to be dumped in the park should also be removed. Bear aware garbage container and regular garbage collection will be necessary. Overnight camping is not permitted.	Goal 5 - Welcome Visitors/Build Good Neighbour Relations	a) Toilet - <i>immediate</i> b) bear proof garbage - <i>immediate</i> c) garbage removal - <i>immediate</i> d) Toilet servicing - <i>ongoing</i> e) Garbage servicing - <i>ongoing</i>	a) \$12,500 b) \$5,000 c) \$2,000	d) \$5,600 e) \$27,000	
Protection of Archeological Resources	The Licence of Occupation, provincial regulations, and best practices require that the park be managed in such a way that park development does not impact cultural resources and values.	High	Opportunities will be explored for the park to raise awareness through the signage plan about First Nations' spiritual, social, cultural, and economic relationships to the land within the region. The park design will be limited as to not disturb archeological features and an archeological assessments will be undertaken prior to disturbing the ground. Trails will not approach known archeological sites.	Goal 6 - Preserve Cultural and Historic Values	a) Archeological assessment - <i>immediate</i>	a) \$3,500		
Communication with Neighbours	The Balfour community, including park neighbours, were very interested in the process and outcomes of the Park Management Plan, and will be equally interested in aspects of implementation.	High	It will be important to continue to provide interested individuals and community groups with access to information (i.e., website updates, brochures, letters, etc.) as the various aspects of the Plan are implemented.	Goal 5 - Welcome Visitors/Build Good Neighbour Relations	a) Communication - <i>ongoing</i>		a) \$6,000	
Plan Monitoring and Review	The park management plan is the key tool to guide decision-making for Balfour Beach.	High	Five and ten year reviews of the plan are important to determine the effectiveness of the plan in achieving goals and addressing management challenges.	Goal 8 - Engage Park Stewards	a) Plan Review - <i>periodic</i>		a) \$10,000	
Adjacent Crown Land - Clarity of Enforcement Responsibilities	Because it is currently difficult to differential parkland from the Crown managed land to the west, the public may look to the RDCK to take responsibility and address nuisance activities taking place on the adjacent Crown parcel.	Moderate	Communication will be sent to park neighbours to indicated who the appropriate enforcement authorities are and who to contact for what type of nuisance activity. Park boundaries will also be clearly defined.	Goal 2 - Manage Crown Land Impacts	a) Communication - <i>Immediate</i>		a) \$1,000	
Adjacent Private Land - Slope Stability	Private property exists immediately west of the park boundary at the park's south end. Some of these property owners have cleared trees and vegetation along the steep slope approaching the park. With the lack of vegetation, there are possible concerns with the stability of the upland slope and there may be an increased potential for a landslide that would result in material placed within the park boundary.	Moderate	Advise park neighbours of best management practices and regulations affecting slope modifications.	Goal 5 - Welcome Visitors/Build Good Neighbour Relations	a) Communication - <i>periodic</i>		a) \$1,000	

Management Challenges, Recommendations, Suggested Timelines and Estimated Costs for BALFOUR BEACH REGIONAL PARK							
Management Challenge/Issue	Comments	Importance Level	Recommendation	Related Plan Goal	Suggested Timeframe	Capital Cost	Operating Cost (10 Yr)
Invasive Weed Encroachment	Invasive weeds may be tracked into the park from disturbed areas of the adjacent Crown land or from adjacent private property, potentially leading to the displacement of the native plant community.	Moderate	Naturalization of non-sanctioned trails will be regularly monitored to ensure effectiveness and that invasive weeds are not overrepresented. The park boundary should be assessed periodically to monitor and remove invasive weeds. Adjacent property owners will receive communication to inform them of their potential impact on the park, include dumping of plant material.	Goal 2 - Manage Crown Land Impacts Goal 5 - Welcome Visitors/Build Good Neighbour Relations	a) monitoring trail naturalization b) Invasive weed removal - <i>periodic</i> b) Communication - <i>periodic</i>		a) \$2000 b) \$2000 c) \$1000
Off-Leash Dogs	Uncontrolled off-leash dogs can cause numerous problems including harassment of wildlife, disruption of ground level nesting birds, spread of invasive plants, trampling of native vegetation, degradation of aquatic ecosystems and conflicts with other park users.	Moderate	Park bylaws require dogs be kept on a leash and on designated trails only. Park signage will include on-leash dog regulations.	Goal 1 - Limit Recreational Footprint	a) Bylaw Enforcement - <i>on-going</i>		a) \$5,000
Fish Habitat Protection	Previous modification of the shoreline, with the construction of groins and removal of rocks, could be harmful to fish.	Moderate	Further shoreline modification should not be undertaken without proper permitting through the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources. Changes should be monitored over time and reported as appropriate.	Goal 3 - Monitor Habitat	a) Monitoring - <i>ongoing</i>		a) \$3,000
Shoreline Erosion	Two locations along the upper edge of the southern-most beaches are eroding during high water.	Moderate	These locations will be monitored over time and assessed to determine if they will need reinforcements.	Goal 3 - Monitor Habitat	a) erosion repair - <i>as needed</i> b) monitoring - <i>ongoing</i>	a) not costed	a) \$1,500
Fuel Treatment Impacts	The recent fuel treatment within the park substantially opened up the forest. This is likely beneficial for some wildlife (e.g. mule deer), but may negatively affect other more sensitive species such as the Great Blue Heron. When nesting, these birds are particularly sensitive to disturbance.	Moderate	If there are trails within close proximity to nest sites, trails should be temporarily re-route trails to prevent the birds from abandoning nests.	Goal 3 - Monitor Habitat	a) Monitoring and re-route trails - <i>ongoing</i>	a) \$1,500	a) \$1,500
Trail Network and Use of Unsanctioned Trails	Unsanctioned trail development often leads to the establishment invasive plants and the displacement of the native plant community. Unsanctioned trails on steep sloped areas act to facilitate the movement of water and can become hotspots for down cutting and erosion. Such trails can also negatively impact local wildlife, often times resulting in a reduction of species richness and abundance.	Moderate	Trail head and informational signage will be installed, and the trail network should be monitored over time to ensure that park patrons are using the sanctioned trails and that unsanctioned trails are not becoming established. Smaller trails that connect the main trail with the beach gathering areas should be marked and added to the sanctioned trail network. Critical wildlife habitat, specifically wildlife trees, should be retained whenever possible along the trail network. The presence of these features should be considered in the finalization of the trail network. Ideally trails should avoid higher risk areas adjacent to mature trees with high wildlife value (e.g. potential nest cavities, and perches) to mitigate the need for future hazard tree management.	Goal 1 - Limit Recreational Footprint	a) Trail Network Finalization - <i>short term</i> b) Trail Head Signage - <i>short term</i> c) Trail Network Upkeep - <i>ongoing</i>	a) \$3,500 b) \$1,200	b) \$4,000
Fire Safety	Concerns about fire safety have been raised in recent years; however, the risk of wildfire has been greatly reduced through the recent fuel management prescription that was undertaken in November 2014 within the park and within the surrounding area.	Moderate	Park users are not permitted to fires in the park. The park does not allow overnight camping. Neighbours and park visitors will be informed of who call to report fire. Bylaw enforcement may, at times, need to make site visits.	Goal 7 - Educate Visitors of Safety Hazards	a) Communication - <i>ongoing</i> b) Bylaw Enforcement - <i>periodic</i>		a) \$1,500 b) \$2,000

Management Challenges, Recommendations, Suggested Timelines and Estimated Costs for BALFOUR BEACH REGIONAL PARK							
Management Challenge/Issue	Comments	Importance Level	Recommendation	Related Plan Goal	Suggested Timeframe	Capital Cost	Operating Cost (10 Yr)
Stewardship	The local community, local businesses and interested community groups will be encouraged to participate in aspects of park stewardship and plan implementation.	Moderate	Actions will be identified that the community can pursue to support environmental well-being, species at risk and a healthy riparian area.	Goal 8 - Engage Park Stewards	a) Communication - periodic		a)\$2,000

Total Costs Above
 Capital Cost Contingency
 Additional Cost - Plan Implementation/Administration
 Signage Plan Design and Administration

	\$51,000	\$95,600	\$11,400	\$19,500
			\$6,000	
TOTAL COST			\$68,400	\$115,100

Appendix B: Balfour Beach Public Involvement Plan



Balfour Beach Regional Park Management Plan Project Public Involvement Plan Summary

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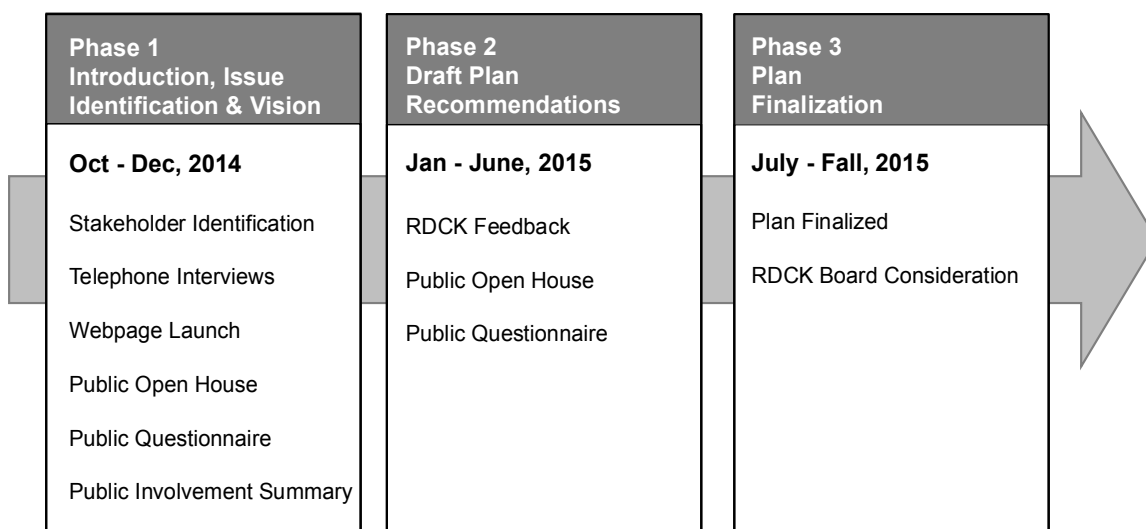
1 INTRODUCTION

As part of the Balfour Beach Management Plan, a Public Involvement Plan was undertaken to engage residents of the RDCK, specifically those living in Balfour and the adjacent communities. The Public Involvement Plan also looked to generate feedback on key project decisions from the RDCK’s Community Services and Development Services Departments and other interested government and non-government organizations. The following document outlines the public involvement process, the range of interested organizations, the communication and notification methods and the input received from participants.

2 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN PROCESS

The Public Involvement Plan was implemented through three phases, over the course of approximately ten months. Implementation began in October 2014 and was complete in the early fall of 2015. *Figure 1.0 – Public Involvement Process*, provides a high level view of the process.

Figure 1.0 – Public Involvement Process



2.1 Phase 1: Introduction, Issue Identification and Vision Development

Phase 1 of the public involvement process took place between October and December 2014. This phase focused on identifying stakeholders and introducing these groups and individuals to the park and the management plan process. The project team established a website, contacted stakeholder organizations and conducted a number of telephone interviews to build their understanding of the interests of potential stakeholders.

A public open house was held on November 6, 2014 to explore the issues and challenges that participants believe to be central to the management plan and to understand participants’ visions for the future of the park. The format for the open house included the display of a series of presentation boards. Seven project representatives were on hand to guide attendees through the boards and to answer questions. Project representatives gathered verbal feedback

and questionnaires were available for participants to complete. The open house presentation boards and questionnaire were also posted online on the project website (<http://www.rdck.ca/EN/main/services/parks/park-management-plan.html>). The enclosed public involvement summary highlights comment themes and questionnaire results. The summary completes Phase 1 of the project's Public Involvement Plan.

2.2 Phase 2: Preliminary Recommendations

Phase 2 of the Public Involvement Plan took place in the spring of 2015. In anticipation of the Phase 2 public involvement events, a long-term park vision, a set of 10-year management goals and a draft management plan was prepared. The development of these materials was informed by the:

- feedback gathered from the Phase 1 public involvement events
- environmental and other site-specific research
- current and historic park uses
- regional and provincial regulations affecting the use of the land, including the terms of the Licence of Occupation agreement, and
- research on best practices in park management.

The vision, goals and draft management plan recommendations, as well as the Phase 1 public involvement outcomes was presented for discussion to the RDCK project management staff. Stakeholder organizations were be circulated the draft recommendations and RDCK residents were invited to find out more about the recommendations and provide their feedback through a questionnaire and second open house on June 23, 2015. The questionnaire was available to complete at the open house as well as online.

2.3 Phase 3: Plan Finalization

Phase 3 of the public involvement process, involves the finalization of management plan. The plan will be submitted to the RDCK project management team and posted on the RDCK website for stakeholder organizations and the public to provide final comments. Final comments and the management plan will be presented to the Nelson, Salmo, Electoral Area E, F and G Regional Parks Commission and the RDCK Board of Directors for final consideration.

3 PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS

3.1 RDCK Project Resource and Management Team

The RDCK project resource and management team included the RDCK's:

- General Manager of Development Services, Sangita Sudan
- General Manager of Community Services, Joe Chirico
- Parks Operations Supervisor, Cary Gaynor
- Planning Manager, Meeri Durand; and
- Planner, Mark Crowe

The resource and management team is a central focus for consultation and reporting activities throughout each phase of the management plan project. The RDCK had significant knowledge to bring to the project and a significant interest and investment in the outcome of the

management plan. The RDCK Board of Directors makes park policy and budget decisions for the park based on the recommendations of the Nelson, Salmo, and Electoral Areas E, F and G Regional Parks Commission.

3.2 Potential Stakeholders

In further developing the initial list of individuals and organizations that could be interested in the management plan, consideration was given to what was known about the central focus of the project and the scope of the project decisions. The following points touch on some of the considerations that contributed to the development of the initial stakeholder list:

- As a public entity, the actions and investments of the RDCK in parks and other services are of interest to local residents. The Parks Commission, RDCK staff and the RDCK Board are accountable to the public and have an interest in identifying and responding to public needs.
- The RDCK is committed to working and communicating effectively with other government bodies and agencies (e.g., federal, provincial, municipal, First Nations, etc.). Provincial ministries, agencies and commissions could have important decision-making roles on specific aspects of the management plan implementation. The RDCK values provincial processes for consultation with First Nations and will apply these processes throughout the project.
- The park land is owned by the Province and the RDCK has a Licence of Occupation for park purposes. The Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations manage the licencing agreement and will have an interest in the planning process.
- Previous decisions and the direction established within existing RDCK policy documents will also shape the management plan and impact the scope of consultation (e.g., Official Regional Parks Plan Bylaw 2044, and the Nelson, Salmo, E, F, G – Bylaw 2329).
- Although the overall project is complex, resolving the park access issues and preserving the pristine waterfront and riparian environment will be central to the project. Planning for the operational and maintenance needs of the park will also be important.
- The public involvement process could provide opportunities to grow a resource of organizations interested in on-going stewardship of the park.

3.3 Interested Organizations

Over 40 government and non-government organizations were approached at the onset of the public involvement process to assess their interest in participating in public events and to understand their desired level and method of involvement. *Figure 2.0 – Stakeholder Consultation and Information*, lists those organizations participating in the public involvement process and those circulated project information.

Figure 2.0 - Stakeholder Consultation and Information

Organizations Participating in Phase One Consultation	Additional Organizations Circulated Project Information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Area E Advisory Planning Commission - Balfour and District Business Association - Balfour Recreation Association - Central Kootenay Invasive Plant Committee - Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program - Friends of Kootenay Lake - Ministry of Environment, Environmental Protection - Ministry of Environment, Fish and Habitat - Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources Operations, Regional Operations Division - Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure - Regional District of Central Kootenay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adams Lake Indian Band - Akisqnuq First Nation - Columbia Basin Trust - Interior Health Authority - Ktunaxa Lands and Resources Agency - Lower Kootenay Band - Lower Similkameen Indian Band - Ministry of Energy and Mines - Neskonlith Indian Band - Okanagan Indian Band - Okanagan Nation Alliance - Osoyoos Indian Band - Penticton Indian Band - Secwepemc Nation - Shuswap Indian Band - Sinixt - Splots'in First Nation - St. Mary's Indian Band - Tobacco Plains Indian Band - Upper Nicola Band - West Kootenay Invasive Weed Council

3.4 RDCK Residents and Park Neighbours

Residents of the RDCK were invited to participate in the project through the public open house events, open house one-on-one discussions with hosts, open house questionnaires and/or through the online questionnaire. In Phase 1, approximately 40 people participated in the open house event and 70 questionnaires were completed. In Phase 2, approximately 35 people participated in the open house event and 31 questionnaires were completed. *Figure 3.0 - Project Notification and Participation*, lists the public involvement events, the feedback tools, the communication and notification methods and the levels of participation achieved.

Figure 3.0 - Project Notification and Participation

Public Involvement Events (2014)		Notification Methods		PARTICIPATION	Stakeholder Organizations Phone Interviews/Emails	Surrounding Residents Direct Mail/ Email to Contact List	RDCK Website Update	RDCK Press Releases/PSAs	RDCK Facebook/Twitter	Pennywise – Kootenay Lake ed. Advertisement	Nelson Star Advertisement	Kootenay Morning Radio News Story	Castlegar News Article	The Goat FM	Poster in Gill and Gift
Phase 1															
October (2014)	Project Introduction Outreach Website Launch	n/a	✓	✓	✓										
Oct/Nov (2014)	Website Questionnaire Launch	82		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Public Open House	35													
Nov (2014)	Questionnaire Reminder			✓	✓	✓									
Phase 2															
June (2015)	Website Update & Questionnaire	31		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
	Public Open House	35													
Phase 3															
Fall (2015)	Draft Plan Posted Board Consideration			✓	✓	✓	✓								

4 PHASE 1 - PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT OUTCOMES

4.1 Phase 1: Comment Themes

Through Phase 1 (Introduction, Issue Identification and Vision Development) of the public involvement process, the project team received a series of detailed comments from participants. All of the comments were reviewed and considered by the project team. The following sections summarize the key themes heard through Phase 1. It is important to acknowledge, in some of these areas, a range of opinions was expressed and there was not unanimous agreement. It should also be noted that some of the themes raise competing objectives.

Theme A: No Designated Park Access from Green Road

Many participants strongly emphasized that, for many reasons, Green Road should not serve as a park access. Access to Highway 31 from Green Road was noted to be very dangerous and not suitable for park access. Some noted it should not be marked with directional signage to the park. Many park neighbours noted Green Road is very narrow and should not function as a parking area for the park, also noting the importance to residents of keeping the turnaround at the end of Green Road free from parked vehicles. The portion of the road between Green Road and the park also was noted to present challenges. The slope is very steep and participants suggested it be closed to prevent vehicles from becoming stuck.

Theme B: Suggested Staging Areas

All participants recognized the challenges of finding suitable vehicle and pedestrian access to the periphery of the park and providing for suitable parking areas. Although there were few common themes with respect to solutions, some suggested that access through the gravel pit be investigated, including a walking path down Edward Street to Green Road. Other participants suggested access from Meadow Street, at the south end of the park.

Theme C: Preserve the Park Environment

Preservation of the park's natural environment and scenic qualities was very important to the vast majority of participants. Concerns were voiced about the impacts of human and dog activities on wildlife habitat, including the herons that breed in the wooded area of the park. Modification of forested areas was strongly discouraged. Participants also stressed the importance of preventing motorized vehicles in the park and planning for park maintenance to ensure the area is free from litter and waste. Many also discouraged additional development; however, there was some agreement that a washroom would be of value.

Theme D: Local Park Use and Tourism

A number of residents noted the importance of Balfour Beach as an amenity to support area tourism, while others valued the park primarily for the use and enjoyment of locals. Those who supported the park as a tourist destination noted that Balfour does not currently have a public beach suitable for swimming, boating and/or picnicking, leading tourists to drive through Balfour to other destinations. Other locals simply enjoy the park for the quality of life it brings to the Balfour community. Some noted they feel it should be made clear to park neighbours that members of the community should be made to feel welcome to use the public land. Some neighbours feel that regular patrols, bylaw enforcement and policing resources will not be sufficient to manage nuisance and crime (e.g., trespassing, break and enters, litter, noise, parties and fire hazards). Some believe an increase in such activities would be associated with higher levels of public park use.

Other Points of Interest

The following points, although they did not develop into common themes, were also of note.

- Ensure proper dialogue occurs with the neighbourhood.
- Ensure safe emergency access.
- Protect the water intake from contamination.

- Remove the pilings in the lake.
- Provide clear signage, directions to the park, a proper parking area, washrooms with drinking water and a change area, easy access from parking to the beach area, a picnic area, a groomed beach and a designated swim area with a public use dock.
- Add the walking trails around the gravel pit to the park.

4.2 Phase 1: Questionnaire Results

Throughout the Phase 1 (Questionnaire Results) of the management plan project, a public questionnaire was made available on the project website for interested individuals to complete. Residents within the RDCK were made aware of this opportunity through the RDCK's social media channels, press releases and paid advertising. The majority of those in attendance at the November 6, 2014, public open house also completed the questionnaire. A total of 82 responses were received.

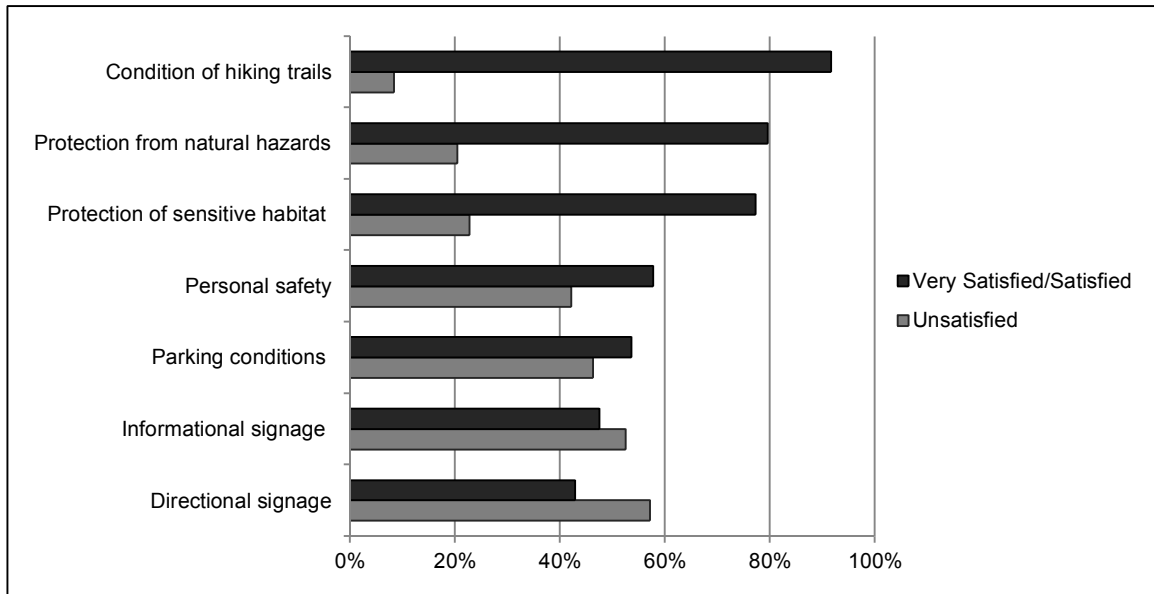
The vast majority of respondents (85%) were from Balfour or Queens Bay, and approximately half considered themselves park neighbours. Forty four percent had visited the park more than five times over the past two years. Twenty percent had never been to the park, or had not been in the last two years. The most common reasons noted were that they did not know about the area or that they felt access was too great a challenge.

The most popular park activities included walking, hiking, nature appreciation, wildlife viewing, birding, off-leash dog walking and swimming. However, visitors also enjoyed the park for a wide range of other activities, including on-leash dog walking, kayaking, boating, canoeing, paddle boarding, fishing, picnicking, trail maintenance, sketching, painting, photography, research and horseback riding. Some visitors noted that they spend time at the park simply to enjoy the peace and quiet.

The vast majority of respondents who expressed an opinion were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the current condition of hiking trails (92%), protection from natural hazards (80%) and protection of sensitive habitat (77%). Just over half were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their sense of personal safety (58%). The lowest levels of satisfaction were noted for informational signage (48%) and directional signage (43%). The park does not currently have park-specific signage. Respondents were divided in their opinions concerning current parking conditions. Forty-six percent were “unsatisfied” while, 54% were “satisfied” or “very satisfied.” *Figure 4.0 – Satisfaction Levels with Existing Conditions*, provides the questionnaire results of those who expressed opinions about existing conditions.

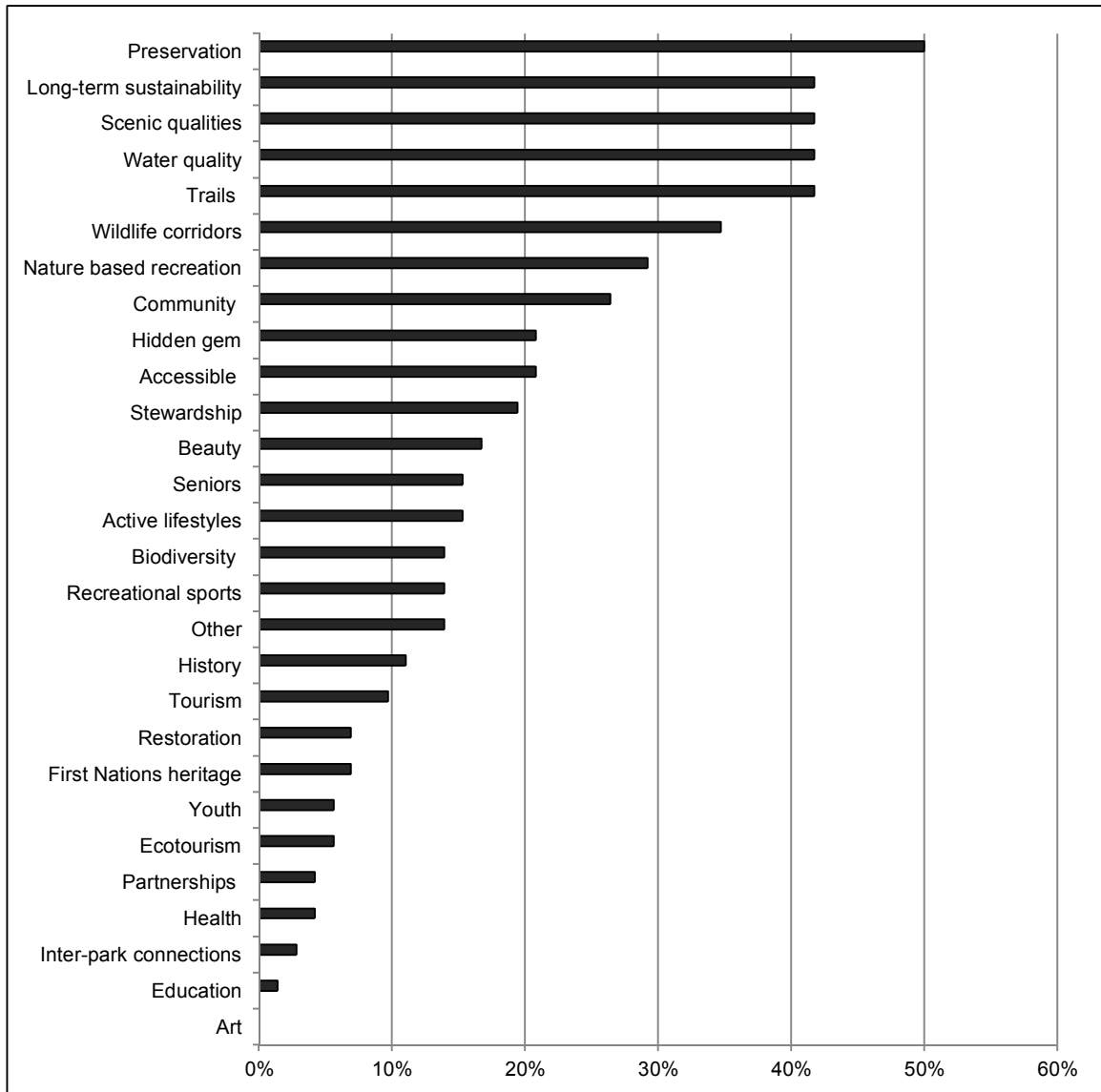
Respondents were also asked about words and phrases they believed were central to developing a vision for the park. *Figure 4.1 – Top Words and Phrases Important to the Development of the Park Vision*, sets out the response.

Figure 4.0 - Satisfaction Levels with Existing Conditions



(see Figure 4.1, next page ...)

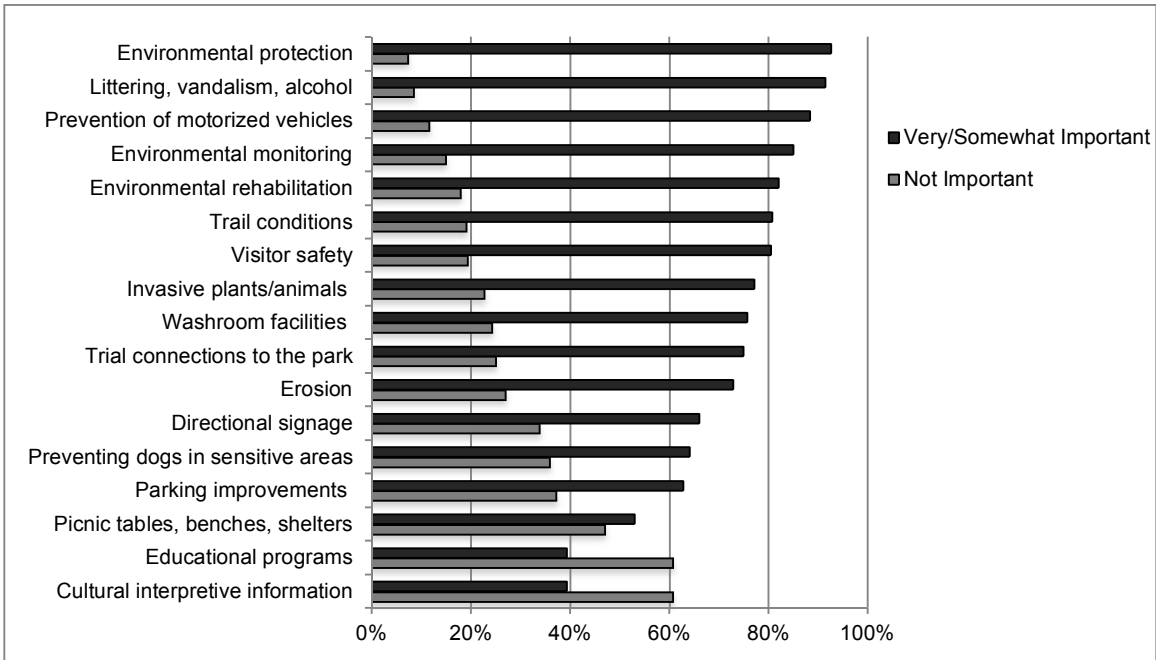
Figure 4.1 - Top Words and Phrases Important to the Development of the Park Vision



Note: Those responding “other” noted the vision should include the terms “wildlife-based” and “respect for neighbours”.

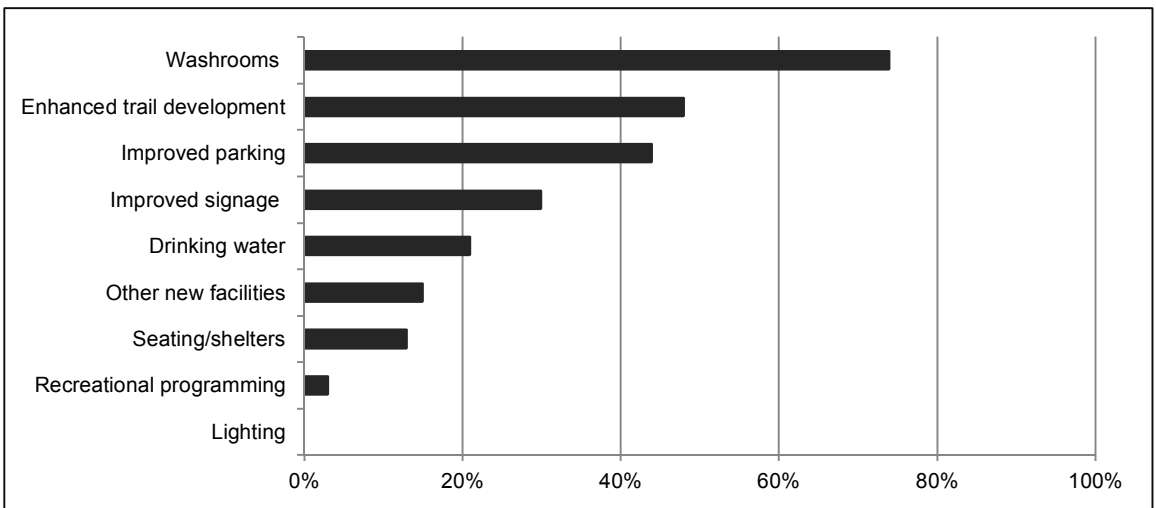
Almost all respondents indicated that the top priorities (i.e., “very important” or “somewhat important”) for the management plan should be to protect the environment (93%), address littering, vandalism and alcohol consumption (92%) and prevent motorized vehicle access (88%). Environmental monitoring, environmental rehabilitation, trail conditions and visitor safety were also “very important” or “somewhat” important to over 80% of respondents. Notably, educational program and cultural interpretive information ranked low on the priority list with over 60% of respondents noting such efforts were “not important” to the management plan. *Figure 4.2 – Top Management Plan Priorities*, provides the questionnaire results of those who expressed opinions about management plan priorities.

Figure 4.2 - Top Management Plan Priorities



When asked specifically about their top three priorities for services, facilities and/or programs, respondents indicated their highest priorities were for washrooms. Seventy four percent considered washrooms as one of their top three service priorities. Approximately half considered trail enhancements (48%) and parking improvements (44%) within their top three service priorities. There was less support for improved signage, drinking water, seating and shelters, recreation programming and lighting. Some respondents noted their desires for other facilities and services, including a family swimming beach, a kite surfing/windsurfing launch and park monitoring (e.g. fires and garbage). *Figure 4.3 – Top Services, Facilities and Programs*, highlights the questionnaire results of those who expressed opinions about services, facilities and programs.

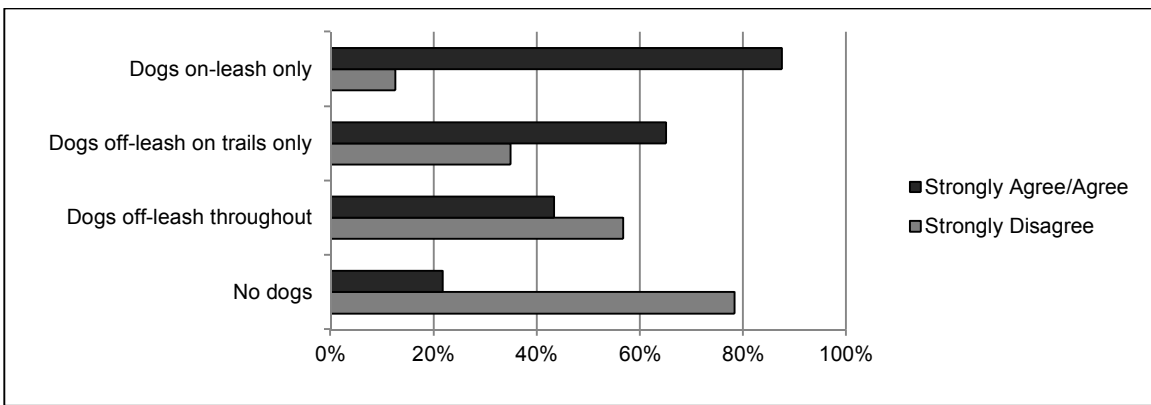
Figure 4.3 - Top Services, Facilities and Programs



Respondents were also asked if they supported tourism and ecotourism uses in the park where these uses are compatible with conservation and environmental values. Approximately 47% supported such uses, 38% did not and 15% indicated they were unsure.

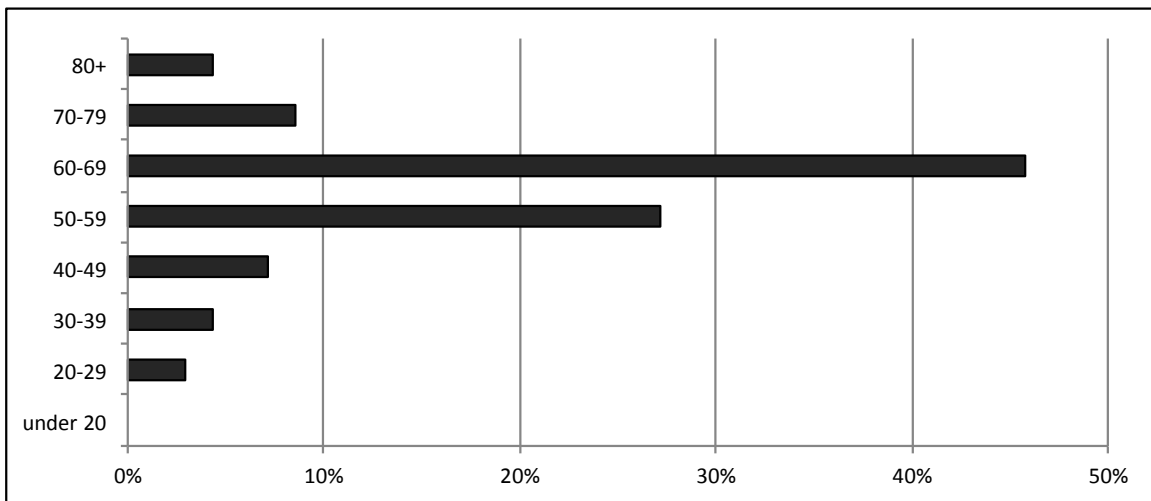
When asked for their opinions about dogs in the park, 78% “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that dogs should be allowed in the park. Although, the vast majority (88%) “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that dogs should be kept on a leash. When asked specifically about allowance for off-leash dogs on trails only, 65% “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with such an allowance. Fifty seven percent “strongly disagreed” with the suggestion that dogs be allowed off-leash. *Figure 4.4 – Dog Restrictions*, highlights the responses received from four questions concerning dog restrictions.

Figure 4.4 – Dog Restrictions



The profile of respondents was relatively evenly split between male (56%) and female (44%). *Figure 9.0 – Questionnaire Age Distribution*, represents the age distribution of respondents. Of note, only 14% of respondents were under the age of 50.

Figure 4.5 – Questionnaire Age Distribution



5 PHASE 2 – PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT OUTCOMES

Phase 2 (Draft Plan Recommendations) of the public involvement process for the Balfour Beach Regional Park Management Plan was underway in the spring of 2015. In anticipation of the related public involvement events, the draft park management plan was prepared including the long term park vision and the set of ten year management goals. During Phase 2, the draft plan was presented for discussion and feedback to the RDCK project management staff and Electoral Area Directors. Stakeholder organizations, interested individuals and park neighbours were also notified and provided online access to the draft plan. RDCK residents were invited to find out more about the recommendations and provide their feedback through a second questionnaire and public open house on June 23, 2015. Residents within the RDCK were made aware of this opportunity through the RDCK's social media channels, press releases and paid advertising. Approximately 33 people attended the open house and a total of 30 questionnaire responses were received.

5.1 PHASE 2: Comment Themes

The project team received a series of comments on the draft plan. All of the comments were reviewed and considered by the project team. The following sections summarize the key comment themes heard through Phase 2. It is important to acknowledge, in some areas, a range of opinions was expressed and there was not unanimous agreement.

Theme A: Overall Support for Management Efforts

Participants expressed a general level of support for the draft management and design proposals. Ninety four percent of questionnaire respondents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with the vision statement, and each of the elements of the design concept were rated “important” or “very important” by at least 65% of questionnaire respondents. Highest levels of support were for barriers to prevent motorized vehicle access (100%), bear-proof garbage containers (97%), signage to discourage access into protect areas (90%), and trail heads and trail head signage (87%). Of all the design concept improvements, the proposal to “add picnic tables and continue public beaches for picnicking and gathering” received the least support; 17% felt this should “not be pursued.”

Theme B: Parking and Park Access

It was clear in during the open house and through questionnaire responses that some participants believe park access and parking will continue to be challenging. A majority of participants supported the proposal to discourage access via Green Road and direct parking to the bottom of Meadows Street. Some noted “no parking signs” should be posted at the Green Road cul-de-sac and that future provisions for parking at the end of Green Road would not be workable. Although Meadows Street was the preferred parking location, participants believed this area also presents parking challenges. Currently, the end of Meadows Street is used as a boat launch; trucks and boat trailers are known to consume much of the area's available parking, neighbours also note impacts from traffic and parking. Some suggest this area would need to be expanded and developed into a formal parking lot to be a functional parking area for Balfour Beach Park. The vast majority, 83%, supported efforts to explore the construction of a boardwalk between Meadows Street and the park. Sixty three percent supported efforts to

explore a staircase from Queens Road to the park. It was noted that parking at three access points would prevent congestion in any one location.

Theme C: Washroom Location

The vast majority of respondents supported the need for a washroom. Seventy six percent noted a washroom was “very important” or “somewhat important”; however, there was some discussion about the washroom location. Some suggested washrooms be located to provided easy access for park users, one at each end of the park near the beaches. Others suggest a washroom be located at Meadows Street. There was some concern about the impact on the water intake and on neighbouring property. Washroom maintenance was also noted as important.

Theme D: Prevent Motorized Access into Sensitive Areas

All respondents supported proposed barriers and access management to prevent motorized access to the park. One hundred percent believed related improvements were “very important” or “somewhat important.”

Other Comments and Points of Interest:

- Let’s do it!
- This is a very thorough and thoughtful plan.
- Keep it simple, a wonderful natural space.
- Appreciate efforts to enhance this special place, natural foreshore with limited public access.
- Leave it natural with the addition of signage and an outhouse.
- No smelly outhouses or pump out tanks.
- Prevent dumping of household garbage.
- Allow off leash dogs on trails.
- There is no rationale for requiring on-leash dogs.
- Don’t create park rules that won’t be enforced.
- Include signage to instruct park users to pick up after their pet.
- Close park after 11:00 pm to discourage partying.
- Closing evening access seems unfair to respectful park users.
- Add signage at beaches to advise boaters of park rules.
- Build fire pits and provide wood to prevent fires in random locations and cutting of trees.
- Boardwalk proposal directly impacts neighbouring property.
- Staircase should be far enough away for adjacent home to maintain privacy.
- The public beach should be in front of the deepest part of the park; not at Meadows Street where private property runs just behind the park.
- The southern section of the park is a catastrophe on the rights of residents of Queens Road.
- The north section of the park should be the focus. Allow parking at Green Rd.
- Clearly mark private property and public roads to avoid conflict.
- I like the idea of invasive weed control and limited forest floor fuel load.
- A lengthy, serious proposal to subdivide the park into north and south sections was never seriously considered by the RDKC.
- I would like to see the final draft before approval; another information meeting may be needed to clarify final proposals.

5.2 Phase 2: Questionnaire Results

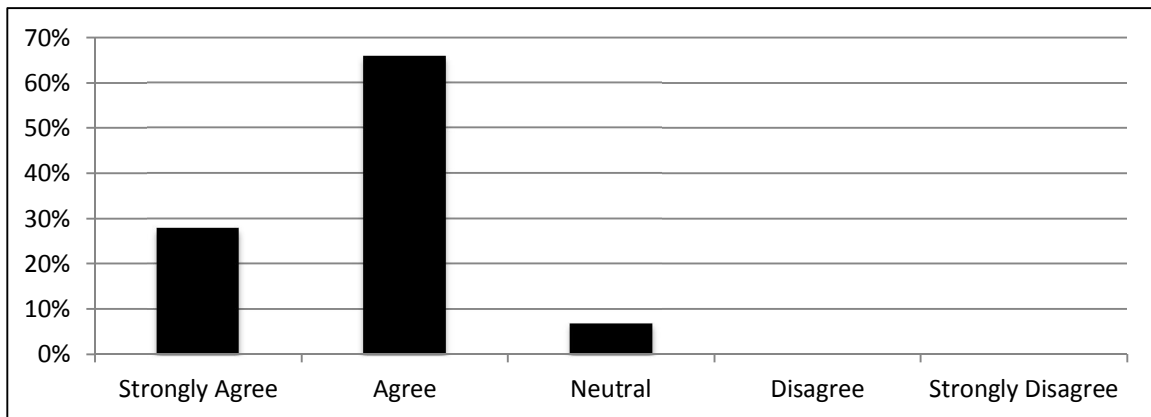
During Phase 2 (Draft Plan Recommendations) of the process, a questionnaire was made available, both at the spring open house and on-line, requesting input on the Draft Plan Recommendations. The following comments and figures summarize the questionnaire response.

The questionnaire asked respondents about their level of support for the proposed vision statement for Balfour Beach Regional Park.

Balfour Beach Regional Park is a protected and pristine natural area on the scenic waterfront of Kootenay Lake. Terrestrial and aquatic life including overland plants and trees are thriving. Park trails allow for appreciation of the park's natural environment and provide environmentally sensitive access to the public waterfront and upland park area. Park visitors feel welcome in the park and are respectful of the park's natural values and surrounding private property

Ninety four percent of respondents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with the proposed statement; 7% were neutral.

Figure 5.0 – Vision statement support



The design concept for Balfour Beach Regional Park proposed a number of park improvements. The questionnaire asked respondents how important each of the improvements was to them and if some proposals should not be pursued. Figures 5.1 through 5.12, beginning on the following page, summarize the results of the series of questions related to park improvements.

Figure 5.1 – Percentage of respondents ranking improvements as “very important” or “somewhat important”

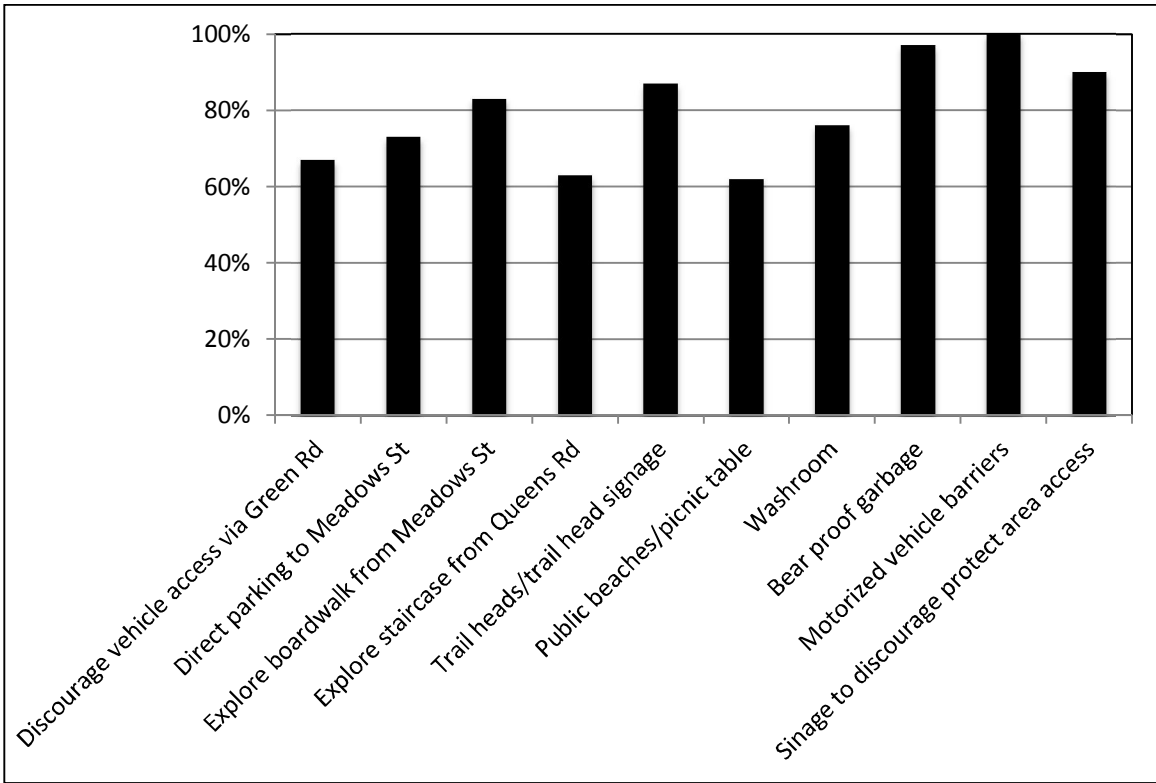


Figure 5.2 – Percentage of respondents ranking improvements as “should not be pursued”

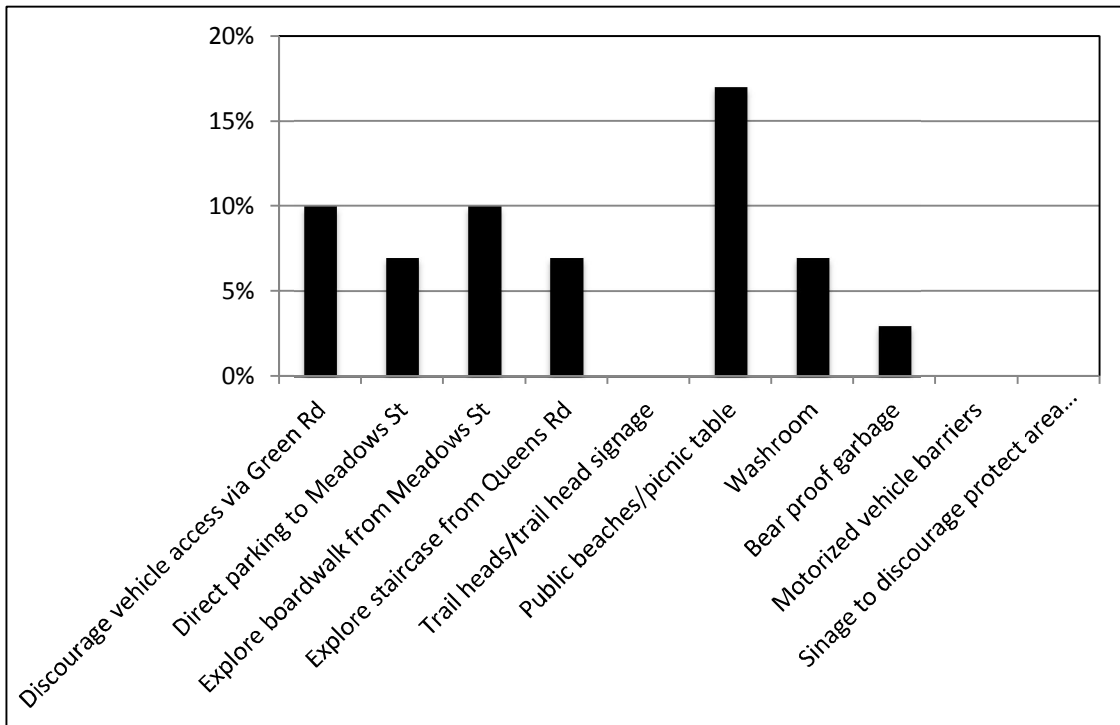


Figure 5.3 – Discourage vehicle access via Green Road

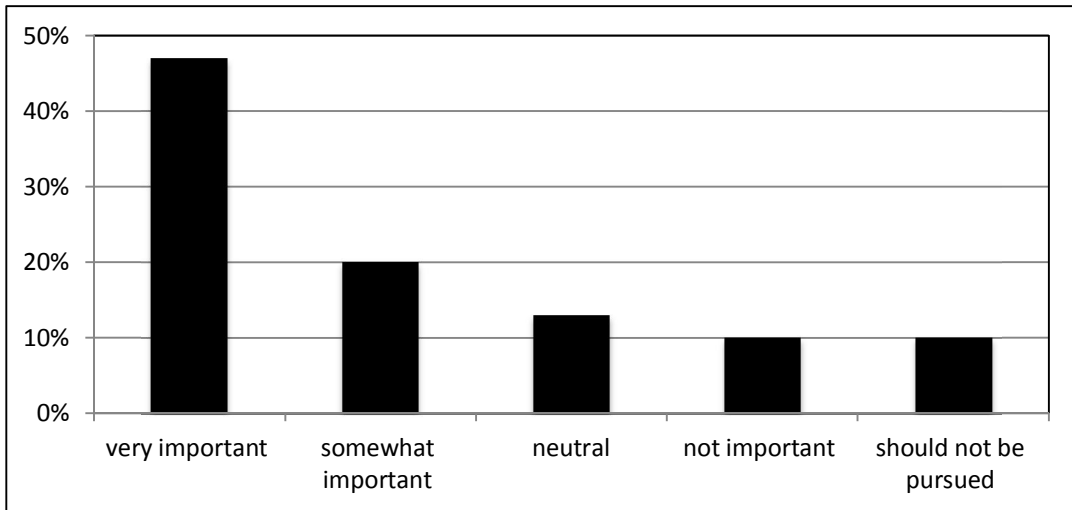


Figure 5.4 – Direct visitors to parking at bottom of Meadows Street

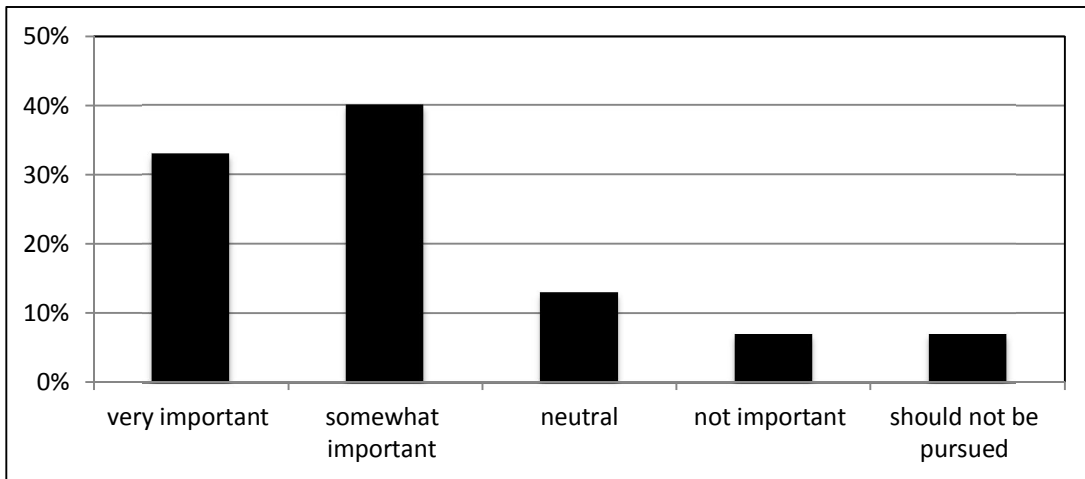


Figure 5.5 – Explore the possibility of a foreshore boardwalk between Meadows Street and the park

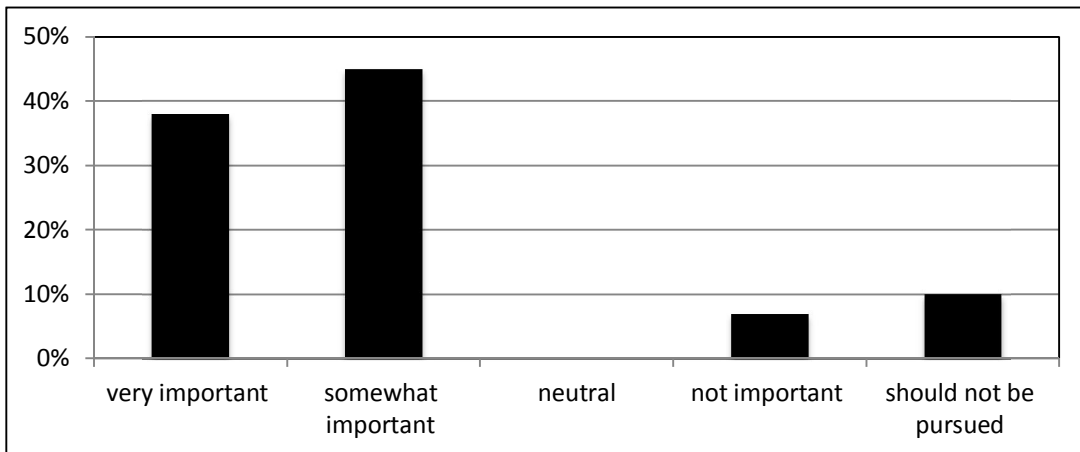


Figure 5.6 – Explore the possibility of a staircase to the park from Queens Road

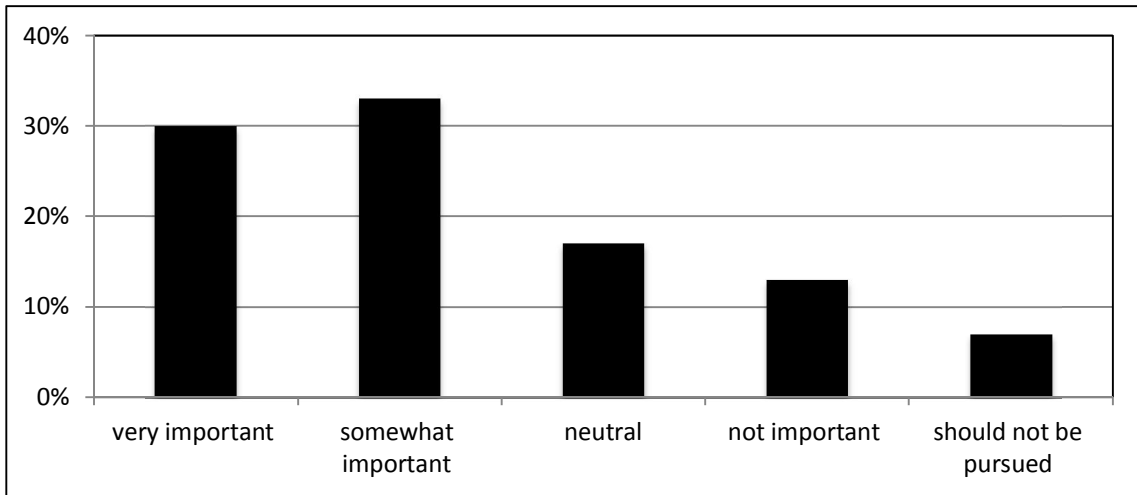


Figure 5.7 – Establish trail heads and trail head signage

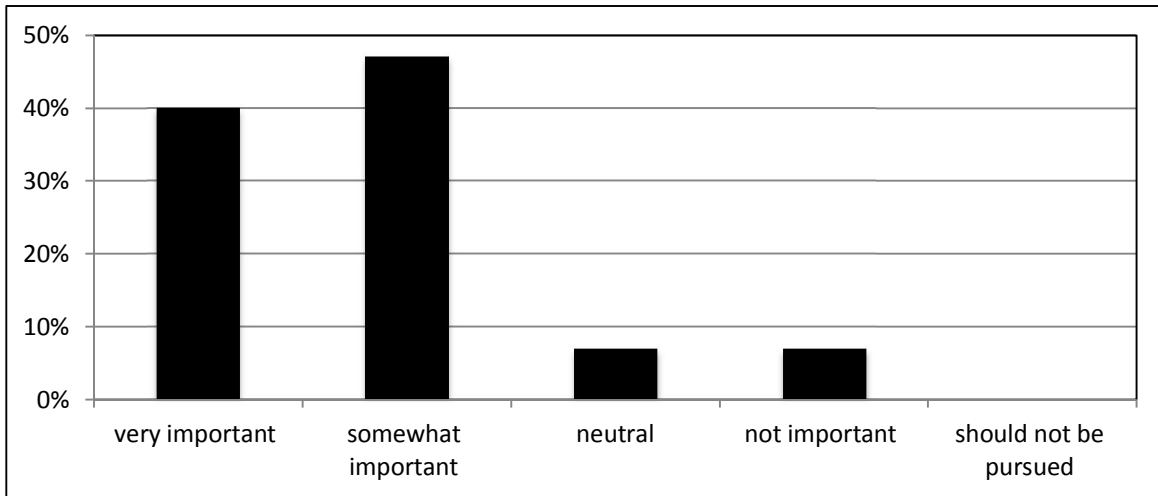


Figure 5.8 – Add picnic tables and continue public beaches for picnicking and gathering

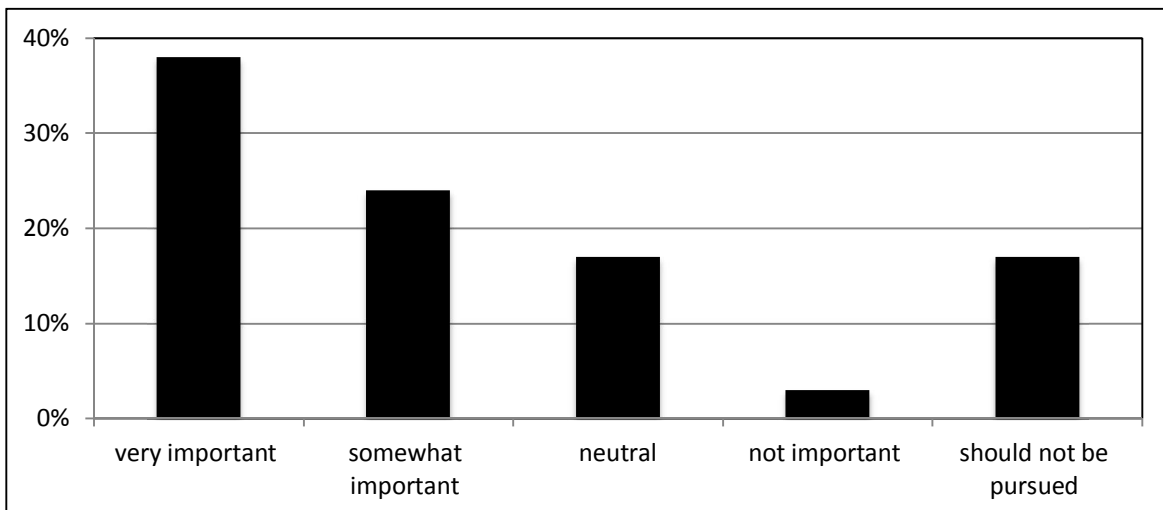


Figure 5.9 – Add a washroom

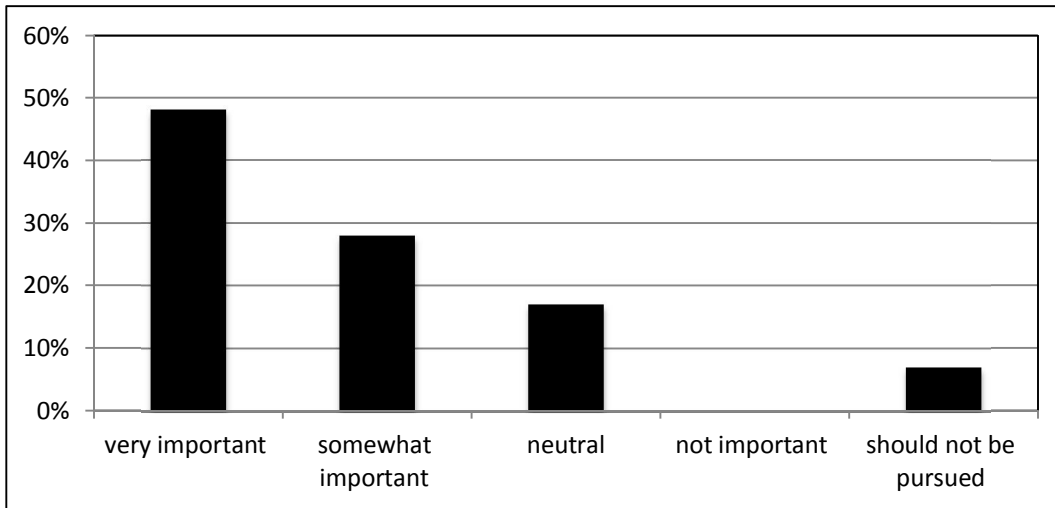


Figure 5.10 – Add bear proof garbage containers

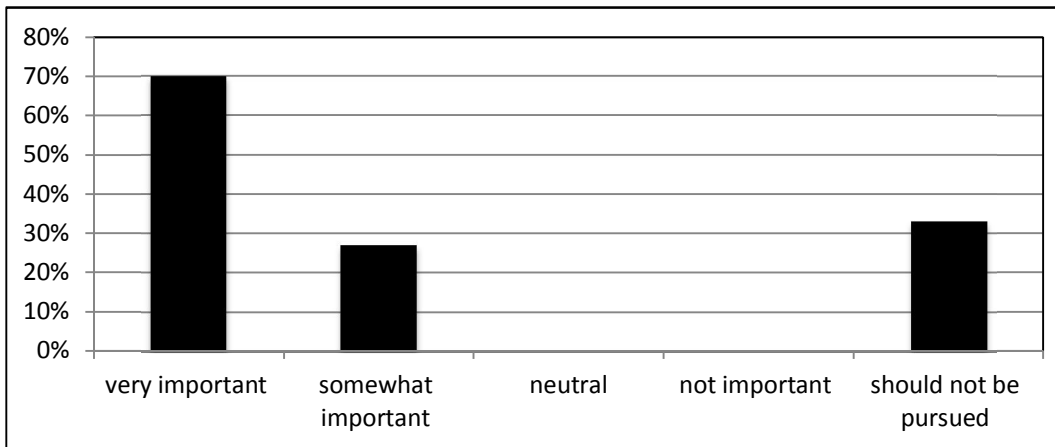


Figure 5.11 – Install barrier to prevent motorized vehicles in the park to provide environmental protection

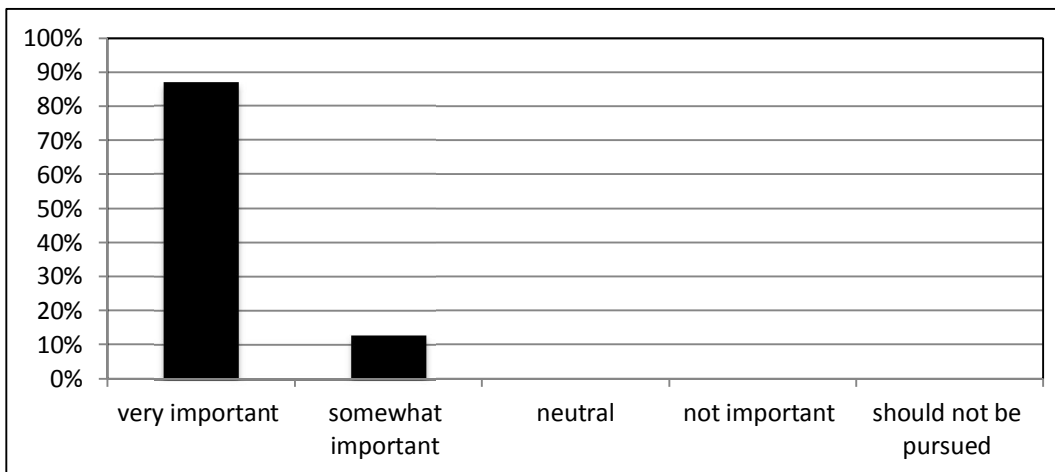


Figure 5.12 – Install signage to discourage visitors from venturing into protected areas

