

OKANAGAN FALLS PARK Purpose Statement and Zoning Plan

The **primary purpose** of the park is to provide camping opportunities.

The 2 hectare park along the Okanagan River near Highway 97 is a very popular camping destination. It also is one of a number of parks in the south Okanagan serving travellers of the Highway 97 corridor. The park is a popular naturalist destination for bird watching and nature study in the spring and fall. The park offers easy access to nearby features such as the Okanagan River channel and the Kettle Valley Railway right-of-way for walking, bicycling and fishing and the sandy beach at Christie Memorial Park on Okanagan Lake. The 25 campsites occupy most of the small park. Much of the park has been planted with shade-providing non-native tree species.

The **secondary purpose** of the park is to protect its riparian features which provide bat feeding habitat.

The park is located in the Southern Okanagan Basin but its size and level of development limits its conservation values to those associated with the river edge. Although part of the BGxh1 biogeoclimatic subzone/variant, it has low representative values. Special feature values focus on the riparian features. Bats utilize the riparian zone for feeding. The stretch of Okanagan River is the present upper most point of range for the threatened sockeye salmon. With initiatives for habitat restoration being planned, the park may become an important viewing area for salmon and the related restoration works. No CDC records occur for species at risk.

A **tertiary purpose** is to protect the area as a First Nation traditional use fishing site. The Okanagan Nation Alliance have an annual salmon feast in the park.

Known Management Issues	Response
Most of the trees in the campground are non-native limiting its conservation contribution to the protected areas system. Many of the trees are suffering from disease.	Undertake a tree replanting program replacing the diseased trees with trees native to the park area.
Planned habitat restoration initiatives could result in an increased Okanagan River sockeye salmon run and broaden the interpretive opportunities offered by the park.	Participate with other agencies and the First Nation on the Okanagan River Restoration Planning project. Implement initiatives that relate to the park such as the creation of viewing opportunities.

Zoning

The entire park (2.2 ha) is zoned Intensive Recreation to provide camping and day use recreation opportunities.

CONSERVATION

Representation

- ecosection Southern Okanogan Basin – the park contributes negligibly (0.02%) to the representation of this well represented ecosection (12.35%)
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant BGxh1 - . the park contributes negligibly (0.08%) to the representation of this under-represented BEC unit (4.91%)

Special Feature

- Okanogan River riparian area – bird and bat feeding habitat

Rare/Endangered Values

Scientific/Research Opportunities

RECREATION

Representation:

- backcountry
- destination Important camping destination – hub for day use activities such as walking/bicycling on Okanogan River dyke and Kettle Valley Railway right-of-way use, nature study (particularly bird watching)
- travel corridor Very important south Okanogan Highway 97 travellers camping spot
- local recreation Important for day use activities (walking, bird watching, etc.)

Special Opportunities

Education/Interpretation Opportunities

- Bird watching; nature study

CULTURAL HERITAGE

Representation

- Okanogan First Nation fishing site

Special Feature

OTHER MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Other Designations

Relationship to Other PAs One of a system of camping/day use parks servicing the south Okanagan/Highway 97 traveller

Co-operative Management Arrangements

Partnerships

Vulnerability

Relationship to Other Strategies

Area: 2.2 hectares

Date of establishment: March 16, 1956