

# MANAGEMENT PLAN

JUNE, 2002

for Sasquatch  
Provincial Park



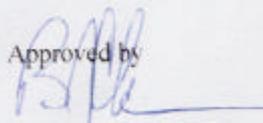
BRITISH  
COLUMBIA

Ministry of Water, Land  
and Air Protection  
Environmental Stewardship  
Division

Sasquatch  
Provincial Park

MANAGEMENT  
PLAN

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## **Introduction**

### **The Management Planning Process**

A Management Plan is an administrative manual and public document that directs protected area management for a five to ten year term. It sets out objectives and appropriate actions for conservation, recreation development if appropriate, feature interpretation, and protected area operations. Plan contents are based on an interpretation of current information relating to natural and cultural resources, recreation use, demand, and activities both within the protected area and surrounding lands. The management planning process involves a rigorous analysis of the overall goals of the park, patterns of use, management objectives, identified conflicts, and public expectations.

### **Relationship to Other Land Use Planning Initiatives**

This management plan for Sasquatch Provincial Park builds on the approved 1978 Master Plan for the park and the recreation and conservation objectives outlined in the 1996 Lower Mainland Protected Areas Strategy. This plan is influenced by private lands adjacent to the park and management plans on surrounding public lands, in particular the Dewdney Provincial Forest and other provincial parks including Cultus Lake, Skagit Valley, and Chilliwack Lake. The management plan for Sasquatch Provincial Park is intended to complement these other plans and to preserve the natural environment for the inspiration, use, and enjoyment of the public.

### **Background Summary**

Surrounded by the Coast and Cascade mountains, Sasquatch Provincial Park (Figure 1) lies approximately six kilometers from the town of Harrison Hot Springs, which is north of Highway 7 between Vancouver and Hope. The park was originally established in 1959 and encompassed twenty hectares on the east side of Harrison Lake, a freshwater inland fjord. At this time, the park was named Green Point Park. In 1960, a picnic site was developed at the lakefront. The site included picnic tables, toilets, changehouses, a pressurized water system, a boat launch, and parking for two hundred cars. The adjacent lands containing Hicks, Deer, and Trout lakes were added in 1968 and the park was renamed Sasquatch Provincial Park after the legendary Bigfoot, who is alleged to have roamed the area. The protected area conserves spectacular forest, lake, and mountain habitats in the Southern Pacific Range and Drier Maritime subzone of the Coastal Western Hemlock biogeoclimatic zone.

Today, the park consists of 1,217 hectares of land and has hiking trails, beaches, a group campground, 177 campsites in three camp grounds and receives over 275,000 visits annually.

**Figure 1: Location/Regional Context**

## **Planning Issues**

This management plan addresses a number of issues identified by the Environmental Stewardship Division and the general public through their comments over the years. Some of the key planning and management issues raised in this plan are as follows.

## **Conservation Issues**

- Preserving the birch (*Betula papyrifera*) population in Sasquatch's unique mixed forest, particularly along road corridors. The deciduous trees are a valuable aesthetic addition to the park as well.
- Ensuring the health of the forest ecosystem. Selective spacing of dead and hazardous trees in the Intensive Recreation Zone is necessary to increase infiltration of sunlight, allow understory growth, increase structural diversity, and ensure the safety of park users.
- Managing fisheries and fish habitat in the park. Fisheries values in Hicks, Deer, and Trout lakes are important park features.
- Preserving the natural viewshed of Hicks, Deer, and Trout lakes.

## **Recreation Issues**

- Managing for increased use of the park. Expanding and upgrading existing camping facilities and constructing additional trails will help meet increasing recreation demands in the Lower Mainland.
- Managing public vehicle access into the park, considering a portion of the through road lies outside the park boundary.

## **Role of the Protected Area**

As a Class A, Category 6 Provincial Park, Sasquatch serves both the conservation and recreation roles established in the legislative mandate of the *Park Act*. Specifically, the main purposes of the park are to preserve and present to the public both the scenic and biodiverse mixed forest and lake features and to provide camping and day use activities.

## **Protected Area System Context**

Although the protected area complements existing provincial parks in the Fraser Valley including Cultus Lake, Chilliwack Lake, E. C. Manning, and Skagit Valley, Sasquatch Provincial Park offers an environment different from any other. Its biodiversity is enhanced by both a unique mixed forest that also presents colourful views during the autumn season and small, closely-nestled pocket lakes. Park users enjoy the outdoor recreation opportunities associated with this unusual combination.

In a local context, Sasquatch Provincial Park complements the heavily-developed, tourist destination area at Harrison Hot Springs.

## **Conservation Role**

Provincial parks have two conservation goals; ecosystem representation and special features preservation. In keeping with these goals, Sasquatch Provincial Park will:

- Contribute to conserving representation of the biodiversity within the Southern Pacific Range Ecoregion and the Drier Maritime subzone of the Coastal Western Hemlock biogeoclimatic zone.
- Protect special features including the pocket lakes, mixed forest, and rare and endangered species such as the tailed frog and black petaltail dragonfly.
- Continue to provide habitat for resident and transient mammals.
- Continue to provide an outdoor classroom and laboratory for educational opportunities and scientific research.

## **Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Role**

Sasquatch Provincial Park contributes significantly to the outdoor recreation and tourism goals by providing local residents and out-of-area visitors with a variety of land and water-based outdoor recreation activities. The goals of the park are to:

- Continue to provide easily accessible and affordable outdoor recreation opportunities that help satisfy demands of park users.
- Improve facility design to further enable universal access to recreation opportunities.
- Support tourism associated with Harrison Hot Springs.

## **Cultural Heritage Role**

Protected areas contribute to the preservation and understanding of our cultural heritage. The role of the park is to protect cultural heritage features associated with European and Stó:Lo, Chehalis, and Yale First Nations use of the park area.

## **Vision Statement**

*Park users have shown that the primary summer attraction in Lower Mainland parks is warm, clean water, coupled with easy access and natural surroundings. As such, Sasquatch Provincial Park will provide easy-access, lake-oriented day-use and overnight recreation opportunities. Lakeside camping will be a priority item. There will be minimum possible disruption to the natural surroundings other than to maintain the mixed forest environment.*

*Green Point will remain in its present role as a day-use area on Harrison Lake. Deer Lake will continue to offer a day-use area, camping, a small boat launch, fishing, and nature study, while Hicks Lake will continue to provide high density, lake-oriented camping with day-use beach and boating opportunities nearby. Trout Lake will provide angling opportunities in a natural environment setting. Trails in the park will provide both hiking and mountain biking opportunities.*

## **Relationship with First Nations**

While it is known that the park area was traditionally used by various bands of the Chehalis and Stó:Lo Nations and that there is no evidence indicating sole use by any one band, the Environmental Stewardship Division has limited information on the cultural significance of the protected area as it pertains to First Nations interests and values.

The Stó:Lo and Yale are both currently in Stage 4 of the treaty process. Their Statements of Intent include all of Sasquatch Provincial Park. The Stó:Lo have also expressed a desire to be more involved with the development and maintenance of the park.

The Division will develop an increased knowledge of First Nations' interests and values as they pertain to Sasquatch Provincial Park. It will also establish a working relationship with the Chehalis, Stó:Lo, and the Yale to foster public understanding of the traditional uses of the area. Once the issue of territory is determined, the Division will continue to liaise with the groups.

## **Park Zoning**

Zoning is a planning procedure used to organize a provincial park into comprehensive land and water units based on management objectives. As directed by the *Park Act*, parks established for more than one purpose must be managed in accordance with a zoning plan.

Sasquatch Provincial Park is divided into three zones (Figure 2), each contributing to the park management vision and complementing adjacent land-uses.

### **Intensive Recreation Zone**

The objective of the Intensive Recreation Zone is to provide for a variety of high-use, auto-accessible, and facility-oriented outdoor recreation opportunities. It permits the development and management of facilities including campgrounds, day-use areas, park operations buildings, and access roads. Approximately 250 hectares fall into this zone, which includes Hicks and Deer lakes, the three campgrounds, Green Point, the park access road, and part of the trail network.

**Figure 2: Zoning**

## **Special Features Zone**

Within the Special Features Zone are natural or cultural features that are of significance or sensitivity. Management of this zone is oriented towards limited recreational and interpretive use that will sufficiently protect or preserve the high quality of the identified features. Motorized activities are not permitted. This zone comprises approximately 30 hectares of the park and includes Trout Lake (Figure 3), Beaver Pond, and Hicks Falls.



**Figure 3:** Trout Lake – Special Features Zone

## **Natural Environment Zone**

The objective of the Natural Environment Zone is to provide easily-accessible, off-road outdoor recreation activities in a largely undisturbed natural environment. This zone contains the remaining 940 hectares of the park and includes most of the trail network.

## **Managing Natural, Cultural and Recreational Values**

### **General Management Policies**

Park management will be directed towards conserving the natural and cultural values found within the park, while providing a variety of compatible outdoor recreation activities. As such, the principles of conservation management in Sasquatch Provincial Park will emphasize managing human activities and associated impacts to prevent or minimize degradation of natural ecological processes and cultural features.

This section outlines management objectives and actions, which provide general direction regarding park management, and identifies priorities for specific management actions. These objectives and actions are governed by the *Park Act* and the *Park and Recreation Area Regulation*.

### **Land and Resource Tenures**

There are a number of active park use permits in the park. Gibson Pass Resorts holds a park operations permit and Vedder Mountain Rentals holds a permit to operate commercial canoe rental at Hicks and Deer lakes. Non-conforming tenures include BC Hydro, Telus, and the Corporation of the District of Kent for utility rights-of-way. A fourth non-conforming tenure is Westcoast Energy's permit to use and provide minor maintenance to the Hicks Lake access road and trail in order to access a gas pipeline outside of park boundaries.

#### *Management Objective:*

To review the non-conforming tenures to ensure terms and conditions of the permits are current.

#### *Management Strategy:*

- Continue managing non-conforming tenures to meet the conservation and recreation objectives of the park.

### **Water**

Sasquatch Provincial Park has significant water features that provide high quality aquatic habitat and outstanding recreation opportunities. A number of creeks traverse the area and four small lakes occupy the narrow Y-shaped valley in which the park is situated. Hicks Lake, fifty meters at the south end, is deepest of the four. Deer and Trout lakes are examples of small lakes with marsh communities. Beaver Pond, located at the north end of Hicks Lake, is the smallest and shallowest collection of water. It is a classic pond community that is gradually being reclaimed by plant succession. A series of small streams flow into, out of, and between the lake systems.

The Green Point day-use area borders on Harrison Lake. While out of the park boundaries, this glacially-fed freshwater fjord is frequented by many park users. The park also features Hicks Falls, a small waterfall located near Hicks Lake.

*Management Objective:*

To maintain the natural conditions and quality of water in and adjacent to the park for aquatic species, landscape aesthetics, and health considerations.

*Management Strategy:*

- Design and locate all facilities to minimize risks of contaminating water sources.

## **Vegetation**

There are a variety of forest and plant communities within the park, which represent the Southern Pacific Range Drier Maritime subdivision of the Coastal Western Hemlock (CWH) biogeoclimatic zone. The park was almost entirely clear-cut at one time. The last logging operations ceased in the 1950s. Sasquatch Provincial Park currently supports a typical second-growth cedar-hemlock stand approximately fifty to sixty years old. The climax stand will consist mainly of coastal western hemlock, a lesser western red cedar component, and some scattered Douglas-fir on the drier sites. Presently, the birch population, the pioneer species, is dying off. This is due to the shorter lifespan of birch as compared to conifers and due to the conifers occupying most of the canopy coverage, thus preventing light from penetrating the understory. Conifer dominance has resulted in the suppression and death of approximately fifty percent of the birch trees in the park.

Sasquatch Provincial Park also supports lakeside communities revolving about sun and moisture-loving plants such as alders, willows, grasses, sedges, vine maples, salmonberry, and thimbleberry.

*Management Objectives:*

- To improve forest health in the Intensive Recreation Zone.
- To retain a representative example of the seral birch forest.

*Management Strategies:*

- Conduct a study to determine the best methods of retaining an example of the seral birch forest.
- Conduct a forest thinning exercise in accordance with crown thinning guidelines to remove all hazard trees and enhance deciduous growth.

## Terrestrial Wildlife

The diversity of habitats at Sasquatch Provincial Park supports a large variety of bird, amphibian, fish, and mammal species. BC Wildlife Watch has identified the Beaver Pond as a wildlife viewing area. Viewing highlights at Beaver Pond include tree, northern rough-winged, and barn swallows, at least one family of beaver, downy and hairy woodpeckers, red-breasted sapsuckers, chickadees, Stellar's jay, warblers, and vireos. Slollicum Bluffs, viewable from the Deer Lake day-use area, is another notable wildlife habitat area.

Several rare species have been observed in the park. They include the yellow-listed bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) and blue-listed tailed frog (*Ascaphus truei*) and black petaltail dragonfly (*Tanypteryx hageni*).

### *Management Objectives:*

- To protect and maintain natural wildlife habitats within the park.
- To protect terrestrial wildlife with particular attention to rare, endangered, sensitive, and vulnerable species.
- To increase public knowledge and understanding of wildlife and their habitat in and around the park.
- To encourage scientific research projects in the park, particularly those that enhance understanding of natural processes, improve information on rare and endangered species, and have direct management benefits.

### *Management Strategies:*

- Review and update the existing inventory species list.
- Undertake a terrestrial-ecosystem mapping project to determine wildlife habitat suitability and potential.
- Develop a wildlife viewing strategy to enhance visitor appreciation and understanding of the variety of wildlife in the park.
- Develop a long-term wildlife management strategy.

## Aquatic Wildlife

The lakes and streams in Sasquatch Provincial Park provide excellent fish habitat for over ten species of fish from the sturgeon, smelt, salmon, catfish, and stickleback families. BC Wildlife Watch has identified Hicks Lake Outlet and Trout Lake Creek as wildlife viewing areas. Hicks Lake Outlet has a small dam and fish ladder. During April and May, visitors can view spawning rainbow trout. Trout Lake Creek is filled with spawning chum salmon in October and November.

The red-listed white sturgeon (*Acipenser transmontanus*) has been observed in Harrison Lake.

*Management Objectives:*

- To protect fish habitats throughout the park.
- To maintain fish stocks that will permit a sustainable recreational fishery at appropriate locations.

*Management Strategies:*

- Develop a fisheries management strategy for the park that builds on current knowledge and addresses lake stocking requirements and habitat protection priorities identified in an overall regional fisheries management plan for small lakes in the Lower Mainland's provincial park system
- Design and locate all park facilities and water recreation activities to minimize disturbance to fish habitat.

## **Cultural**

There is limited recorded information about the cultural values of the park, which was almost entirely clear-cut at one time. Logging roads and railroads traversed the area and workers established a logging camp at Green Point. During logging operations, Hicks Lake was dammed. Trout Lake Creek was also dammed, and a powerhouse built to generate electricity for the hotel and town of Harrison Hot Springs. Operations discontinued in 1951 when BC Electric lines were extended into the Harrison townsite. Ice blocks cut from Trout Lake were taken to the hotel cooler in Harrison.

The park area is also the traditional territory of the Chehalis and Stó:Lo Nations. While there are a number of archaeological sites in the greater Harrison area, there is little known archaeological evidence within park boundaries. The only isolated finding is at the Green Point day-use area.

*Management Objectives:*

- To protect the archaeological site from disturbance.
- To inform visitors of the park's cultural history and heritage.
- To continue researching and discovering facts and features related to the cultural heritage of the protected area.

*Management Strategies:*

- Develop a Cultural History Theme document for the park.
- Facilitate interpretive signage for the Special Feature Zone features.

## Visual Landscape

Sasquatch Provincial Park offers visitors impressive visual experiences. The park's second-growth mixed forest contains a birch population that offers colourful views in the fall. The park's water features also provide visitors with spectacular photographic and scenic opportunities.

The park occupies the lower half of a narrow Y-shaped valley. The upper half of the valley is outside of park boundaries and is part of the Dewdney Provincial Forest. Thus, the high quality of landscape aesthetics that this area provides is subject to forest practices. Sasquatch Provincial Park's westernmost boundary is at the Green Point day-use area, along the shoreline of Harrison Lake. The park does not extend into the water to include the foreshore component of the lake which is used heavily by park visitors. Park boundaries also exclude the north bluff backdrop and small island, which is privately-owned (Figure 5). Both are integral scenic components of the day-use area.



**Figure 4:** View from Green Point Day-Use Area at Harrison Lake. The small island, the headland and the lake foreshore are outside park boundaries.

*Management Objectives:*

- To ensure that viewing opportunities are maintained, enhanced, and made publicly accessible through appropriate signage.
- To ensure that facility design and recreational activities complement the park's natural setting.

*Management Strategies:*

- Conduct a study to determine how to preserve the birch population, particularly along road corridors in the Intensive Recreation Zone.
- Selectively harvest the tree stand at the southern end of Green Point day-use area to open up the view to Harrison Lake.
- Protect viewsheds by liaising with the Ministry of Forests and reviewing Visual Quality Objectives for adjacent Crown forest lands.
- Extend park boundaries to include part of Harrison Lake, the foreshore area, and the north bluff drop by acquiring these areas from Land and Water British Columbia Inc. and the Dewdney Provincial Forest.
- Extend park boundaries to include the small island by examining acquisition options.

**Figure 5: Proposed extension of park boundary**

## **Resource Research**

Given its protected area status, Sasquatch Provincial Park provides excellent opportunities for research on the park's natural and cultural resources and visitors' attitudes.

### *Management Objective:*

To encourage non-consumptive research of the park's natural and cultural heritage resources so as to better understand and manage the protected area.

### *Management Strategies:*

- Increase research opportunities at the post-secondary level for a variety of projects within the park.
- Approach provincial institutions with specific invitations for biological research proposals.

## **Managing Opportunities for Outdoor Recreation**

Currently providing over 275,000 annual visits, Sasquatch Provincial Park offers many outdoor recreation opportunities for public use and enjoyment. Management of these opportunities will be based on the park zoning plan and visitor services policies of the Environmental Stewardship Division of the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection. Opportunities will be developed to levels appropriate with documented demands in the regional market area and will be subject to environmental assessment. Figure 9 at the end of this section shows the proposed developments for the park.

## **Access**

Visits to the protected area depend on the provision of access. Sasquatch Provincial Park is located off of Highway 7, six kilometers north of Harrison Hot Springs. Access is through Harrison Hot Springs, along the east side of Harrison Lake. The park road is in the park, with the exception of a short section west of Trout Lake. This section is under the authority of the Ministry of Forests, as it lies outside park boundaries and in the Dewdney Provincial Forest.

Public traffic terminates at Deer Lake and at the Hicks Lake boat launch.

### *Management Objective:*

To allow visitors to access the park year-round while minimizing effects on the environment, wildlife, and other visitors' enjoyment of the park.

*Management Strategies:*

- Extend park boundaries so that the entire access road is in the park (Figure 5).
- Repair deteriorating portions of the park access road.

## **Frontcountry Camping**

Sasquatch Provincial Park has 177 campsites in three campgrounds. Hicks Lake Campground has seventy-one sites, Bench sixty-four, and Lakeside forty-two. Each campground has disabled access sites. Hicks Lake Campground also offers one group campsite.

The number of parties accessing the campsites at Sasquatch Provincial Park has ranged from 15,000 to over 20,000 each year. High user demand requires building additional sites and upgrading existing campgrounds. A shortage of group campsites in the Lower Mainland also requires that additional group sites be built.

*Management Objective:*

To provide campsites and developments at a level that will contribute to established regional demands while protecting park conservation values.

*Management Strategies:*

- Construct three additional group campsites: at Hicks Lake at Ninebark Bay and Sundew Point, and in the playing field between Bench Campground and Deer Lake.
- Relocate the nine waterfront sites at Lakeside Campground.
- Expand Lakeside Campground by up to forty sites.
- Upgrade all the campgrounds to a Level 2 development by improving disabled access, expanding and resurfacing paths, and providing new furniture.
- Improve day-use and beach access at Bench Campground and Lakeside Campground.
- Investigate the camping potential at Trout Lake.

## **Hiking**

Sasquatch Provincial Park offers three designated trails. The Hicks Lake and Deer Lake trails are day-use, hiking-only trails (Figure 6). The Beaver Pond Interpretive Trail is a short, pleasant walk near the Hicks Lake day-use area. The park also provides an access trail to Moss Lake, which lies outside of park boundaries and is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Forests. High user demand requires building additional trails.

*Management Objective:*

To maintain, enhance, and expand the opportunities for hiking in the park.

*Management Strategies:*

- Upgrade informational signage on Hicks and Deer Lake trails (e.g. length, interpretive information).
- Construct the Cascara Trail from the Moss Lake Trail to Hicks Lake, which would link the campgrounds at Hicks and Deer lakes.
- Construct two short trails to Hicks Waterfall from Beaver Pond and the main access road;
- Develop a roadside staging area to Hicks Waterfall.
- Liaise with the Ministry of Forests regarding trail access to Moss Lake.
- Develop a staging area at the Cascara Trailhead.



**Figure 6:** Hicks Lake Trail

## **Fishing and Hunting**

Fishing is a popular activity at Sasquatch Provincial Park. It is primarily a “put and take” activity that relies heavily upon the existing stocking program. The three lakes within the park boundaries are stocked with cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, and brook char.

Sasquatch Provincial Park is closed for hunting.

### *Management Objective:*

To maintain fish populations and recreational fishing opportunities for park visitors.

### *Management Strategies:*

- Continue the stocking program and other fish habitat improvement projects;
- Enforce fishing regulations that reflect the conservation objectives of the park.

## **Mountain Biking**

Mountain biking has become an extremely popular activity in recent years. At present, the only cycling opportunities at Sasquatch Provincial Park are on the park roads, in parking lots, and on the road section of the Hicks Lake Trail.

### *Management Objective:*

To expand mountain biking opportunities in the park.

### *Management Strategies:*

- Designate Hicks Lake Trail for mountain biking.
- Designate the Moss Lake Trail south from the Lakeside/Bench campground entrance and the Deer Lake Trail on the north side of Deer Lake as mountain biking trails (Figure 7).
- Review on an annual basis any adverse impacts of mountain biking on the environment of the park and on other park users, and implement appropriate regulation, management, and/or site improvements as required.



**Figure 7:** Proposed mountain biking trail.

## **Snow Recreation**

Because of its elevation and topography, Sasquatch Provincial Park is not suitable for winter recreation. Only in exceptional climatic circumstances are there ice-fishing opportunities at Hicks, Deer, and Trout lakes. Due to poor road access during winter, the ministry will refrain from promoting winter recreation activities.

## **Motor-Boating and Canoeing**

With three lakes within park boundaries and a fourth lake bordering the Green Point day-use area, Sasquatch Provincial Park provides excellent opportunities for motor-boating and canoeing.

Deer Lake permits electric motors only. Hicks Lake allows motors with a maximum of 10 horsepower. Trout Lake does not permit motor boats. Commercial canoe rentals are available at Hicks and Deer lakes. Due to a high number of users, boat fuel, associated oil products, and other pollutants are regularly introduced into the lakes.

*Management Objective:*

To continue to provide opportunities for motorized boating and canoeing while ensuring the ecological integrity of the lakes and minimizing disturbances on other water recreationists.

*Management Strategies:*

- Encourage boat users to practice “no trace” boating.
- Enhance small boat launching and canoe support facilities at Hicks and Deer lakes.
- Maintain speed restrictions to ensure safety and to minimize noise pollution.

## **Resource Education**

There are a number of opportunities for outdoor study at Sasquatch Provincial Park. Educational programs have been offered to school groups during spring and include nature walks and pond studies. During the summer season, regularly scheduled interpretive programs have been featured in the park to assist visitors in understanding and enjoying the park. Programs have included guided walks, slide shows, children’s programs, and special events. Interpretive programs at Sasquatch Park have attracted approximately 5,000 visitors each summer season.

*Management Objective:*

By working with the private sector and conservation/education organizations, continue to provide visitors with interpretive education information that will enhance their understanding and appreciation of park features and values.

*Management Strategy:*

- Encourage school groups to use the park as part of their outdoor education programs.
- Contact private organizations to have them provide visitors with resource education opportunities.

## **Commercial Recreation**

Other than commercial canoe rentals at Hicks Lake and Deer Lake, there are no other commercial services at Sasquatch Provincial Park. Due to the number of commercial services, such as equipment rental and supplies, available in nearby Harrison Hot Springs, further authorization of commercial recreation by park use permit will only be considered if the permit activity extends to, and is primarily dependent upon, adjacent lands outside the park.



**Figure 8:** Boat launch at Hicks Lake.

## **Horseback Riding**

Currently, there are no horseback riding opportunities at Sasquatch Provincial Park. As there has been no public demand for the development of this activity, horseback riding will not be encouraged at this time.

**Figure 9: Existing and Proposed Development**

## **Communications**

Communicating information about the park is an important aspect of this plan. Increased awareness provides major support for management strategies and decisions. The ministry will liaise with the tourism sector in Harrison Hot Springs in order to communicate park information to the public and will emphasize the use of BC Parks' website as the prime communication tool.

## **Information**

Information on Sasquatch Provincial Park emphasizes the park's natural and cultural features, discusses recreational activities available, encourages environmental ethics, promotes public recreation safety, and educates the public on the park's conservation role.

### *Management Objective:*

To ensure information reflects the conservation, recreation, and cultural heritage roles of the park.

### *Management Strategies:*

Provide public information with emphasis placed on the park's natural lake and forest character. All of the information produced will contribute to:

- Creating an awareness of the park as a protected area.
- Enhancing use and enjoyment of facilities and services.
- Developing an understanding and appreciation of natural resources in the park.

## **Awareness and Pre-Trip Planning**

Visitors to Sasquatch Provincial Park are mainly from the Lower Mainland. Residents from Harrison Hot Springs and the surrounding area are familiar with the park's natural features and come to enjoy fishing, camping, and other outdoor recreation activities.

### *Management Objective:*

To continue to provide accurate and up-to-date information to park visitors and users.

*Management Strategies:*

- Ensure that travel information centers are well-informed with material that discusses the park.
- Promote the BC Parks' website as a valuable information source.

## **In-Park Information**

The Ministry currently provides park orientation and information largely through on-site signs. Emphasis is placed on outdoor safety, visitor enjoyment, and preservation of natural resources.

*Management Objective:*

To provide visitors with on-site information that enhances their outdoor experience.

*Management Strategy:*

- Ensure that directional and trail signage, interpretive panels, and information shelters are in place and up-to-date.

## **Natural and Cultural Heritage Education**

The features found within Sasquatch Provincial Park represent the natural and cultural resources in the Fraser Valley area. The character of these resources lends itself to outdoor education and appreciation.

*Management Objective:*

To present information on the educational themes that are unique to the park and emphasize their conservation, recreation, and cultural heritage roles.

*Management Strategies:*

- Obtain and develop information pertaining to the logging history of the park area and the unique, second-growth mixed forest.
- Obtain and develop information pertaining to stream and lake enhancement programs that have taken place in the park.

## **Plan Implementation**

As the management actions from the Sasquatch Provincial Park Management Plan are of varying priority, they will be implemented in strategic stages.

### **Immediate Priority Actions**

#### **Natural and Cultural Resource Management**

- Conduct a forest thinning exercise in accordance to crown thinning guidelines to remove all hazard trees and enhance deciduous growth.
- Extend park boundaries to include part of Harrison Lake, the foreshore area, and the north bluff drop by acquiring these areas from Land and Water British Columbia Inc. and the Dewdney Provincial Forest.
- Selectively harvest the tree stand at the southern end of Green Point day-use area to open up the view to Harrison Lake.
- Protect viewsheds by liaising with the Ministry of Forests and reviewing Visual Quality Objectives for adjacent Crown forest lands.
- Review and update the existing inventory species list.

#### **Recreation Use Management**

- Repair deteriorating portions of the access road.
- Extend park boundaries so that entire access road is in the park.
- Construct two short trails to Hicks Waterfall from Beaver Pond and the main access road.
- Develop a roadside staging area to Hicks Waterfall.
- Liaise with the Ministry of Forests regarding trail access to Moss Lake.
- Designate the Moss Lake Trail south from the Lakeside/Bench campground entrance and the north portion of the Deer Lake Trail as mountain biking trails.
- Upgrade all the campgrounds to a Level 2 development by improving disabled access, expanding and resurfacing paths, and providing new furniture.
- Construct three additional group campsites: at Hicks Lake at Ninebark Bay and Sundew Point, and in the playing field between Bench Campground and Deer Lake.
- Improve day-use and beach access at Bench Campground and Lakeside Campground.
- Designate Hicks Lake Trail for mountain biking.
- Enhance small boat launching and canoe support facilities at Hicks Lake and Deer Lake.
- Ensure that directional and trail signage, interpretive panels, and information shelters are in place and up-to-date.

## **Intermediate Priority Actions**

### **Natural and Cultural Resource Management**

- Conduct a study to determine the best methods of retaining an example of the seral birch forest, particularly along road corridors in the Intensive Recreation Zone.
- Develop a long-term wildlife management strategy.
- Develop a wildlife viewing strategy to enhance visitor appreciation and understanding of the variety of wildlife in the park.
- Develop a fisheries management strategy that builds on current knowledge and addresses lake stocking requirements and habitat protection priorities and reflects a regional BC Parks' fisheries program
- Develop a Cultural History Theme document for the park.
- Increase research opportunities at the post-secondary level for a variety of projects within the park.

### **Recreation Use Management**

- Construct the Cascara Trail from the Moss Lake Trail to Hicks Lake, which would link the campgrounds at Hicks Lake and Deer Lake.
- Upgrade informational signage on the Hicks and Deer Lake trails (e.g. length, interpretive information).
- Relocate the nine waterfront sites at Lakeside Campground.
- Expand Lakeside Campground by up to forty sites.
- Encourage school groups to use the park for their outdoor education programs.
- Provide public information with emphasis placed on the park's natural lake and forest character through BC Parks' website. The information produced will contribute to:
  - Creating an awareness of the park as a protected area.
  - Enhancing use and enjoyment of facilities and services.
  - Developing an understanding and appreciation of natural resources in the park.
  - Ensure that travel information centers are well-informed with material that discusses the park.

## **Distant Priority Actions**

### **Natural and Cultural Resource Management**

- Extend park boundaries to include the small island by examining acquisition options;
- Prepare cultural interpretive signage.

### **Recreation Use Management**

- Develop a staging area at the Cascara Trailhead when demand arises.
- Investigate the camping potential at Trout Lake.
- Approach provincial institutions with specific invitations for biological research proposals.
- Obtain and develop information pertaining to the logging history of the park area and the unique, second-growth mixed forest.

- Obtain and develop information pertaining to stream and lake enhancement programs that have taken place in the park.

## **Ongoing Actions**

### **Natural and Cultural Resource Management**

- Manage non-conforming tenures to meet the conservation and recreation objectives of the park.
- Design and locate all park facilities and water recreation activities to minimize risks of contaminating water sources and disturbance to fish habitat.
- Enforce fishing regulations that reflect the conservation objectives of the park.
- Continue the stocking program.

### **Recreation Use Management**

- Review on an annual basis any adverse impacts of mountain biking on the environment of the park and on other park users, and implement appropriate regulation, management, and/or site improvements as required.
- Maintain boat speed restrictions to ensure safety and to minimize noise pollution.
- Encourage boat users to practice “no trace” boating.
- Promote the BC Parks’ website as a valuable information source.