

**STRATHCONA PARK PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE
FINAL MINUTES
(May 22, 2013 – Filberg Centre, Courtenay)**

SPPAC MEMBERS: Tawney Lem (Chair), Philip Stone, Mick Taylor, Hardolph Wasteneys, Peggy Carswell, Darren Saare, Erik Holbek

Regrets: David Campbell, Allison Mewett, Nick Page

BC Parks: Andy Smith, Peter Hehl

Recorder: Wendy Gibbons

Public: Lindsay Elms, Colin Wilson, Peter Raven, Ron Quilter

1. Introductions – Welcome newest SPPAC member – Mick Taylor. Also to Wendy Gibbons of MoE - Regional Program Administration Services who is filling in for John Milne as Recorder for this meeting only as he is away on holidays. Peter Hehl – New Senior Park Ranger for Strathcona Area also in attendance.

2. Approve agenda - The last SPPAC meeting's minutes were sent out in DRAFT format to SPPAC members by email and have not yet been adopted. Tawney asked members if there were any corrections required or if they could be adopted. Committee voted in favor of adopting the February 27th minutes. The minutes will be posted on the BC Parks website as Final.

Tawney expressed the need for SPPAC members to review minutes with a better turnaround time. Members were requested to review the minutes and indicate changes or approval shortly after they are circulated. The goal is to have the FINAL minutes within one month following the meeting. This will allow an opportunity for public input and will assist with agenda building for the next meeting. Emails from Chairperson will now have a priority ranking within the “subject header”, with a time sensitive due date. A question was posed as to needing minutes approved, however, to ensure accuracy of SPPAC input and discussion for public distribution, minutes have always been reviewed and accepted by all SPPAC members. The chair and BC Parks will make a strong effort to commit in getting the minutes out in Draft form in a reasonable timeframe to allow SPPAC members to comment in a timely manner. Agreement that “no response” implies acceptance.

3. Ranger’s Cabin at Hairtrigger
a. Review of criteria

Following a presentation at the last meeting from the ACCVI with respect to public use and management of the Ranger’s cabin at Hairtrigger Lake, the committee developed some draft criteria. A review of the criteria was attempted between the meetings to provide a timely response back to the ACCVI. Tawney was concerned that SPPAC missed the date that the committee had committed to provide a response by. Further discussion on the ACCVI proposal and SPPAC’s draft criteria ensued. Questions were

raised about overall public benefit and how to achieve best use of the cabin. Concerns were expressed about transportation of materials/supplies to and from the cabin, environmental impacts, and social and safety issues. The committee raised several questions: what needs attention; if supported what limits need to be set; should snowmobiles and/or helicopters be allowed for bringing in materials and supplies and if so under what conditions?

Currently there is plenty of trail access to the cabin, which is how most supplies and maintenance is currently done. However, the Park Facility Operator does fly some larger items in when necessary and often coordinates this when the toilet barrels are being flown in and out. Concerns were expressed about potential increases to environmental impacts and also about the possible need for a new winter safety system since any increase in public use will potentially bring in more intermediate and inexperienced people to the area, including school groups.

Concerns were expressed about helicopter vs. ground access. There is already some snowmobile/groomer access to north side of Helen Mackenzie Lake – would the committee recommend more access, i.e. to south side of lake below the head wall? Are there any good alternatives? If snowmobiles were allowed there are concerns such as noise. Perhaps an option for servicing the cabin is only to allow mechanical access once per year.

Andy indicated that it is unlikely that snowmobile use would be allowed further into the park. It was suggested that SPPAC should identify concerns and wait to see what the ACCVI comes back with. The ACCVI will also need to provide a Level 2 impact assessment as per BC Parks Standards. Another suggestion was to develop some operations policy based on usage patterns. SPPAC felt that the ACCVI should talk to other groups beyond the ski clubs, as the clientele should be as broad as possible given the fact that you can get in and out in a day. In order to have a public benefit it should have a responsible cross section of the public.

Tawney reviewed some of the draft criteria that SPPAC would need to be met in order to recommend the proposal:

- Maximize public benefit as this is a government building.
 - There is great potential for a day-use benefit as well as overnight accommodation.
- Need a breakdown of expected public usage and access impacts (ACCVI has advised they do not want the liability of any trail maintenance, or responsibility for patrolling. The ACCVI proposed to only be responsible for maintenance, operations and managing reservations and information through their website.
- Need to demonstrate a reasonable effort has been made to consider all types of people who would use the cabin and perhaps provide a business plan to outline usage (who, when, numbers).
- Must ensure that all public have an equal opportunity to reserve/use the cabin - not just ACCVI members.

If any proposal goes ahead, SPPAC felt it should be subject to a review after one year (with additional reviews at 3 and 5 years), in order to make adjustments. Questions were

asked about how things can change after 12 months. Andy commented that all permits are subject to ongoing reviews assessing impacts or intolerable conflicts. The Minister has authority to cancel a permit. The committee noted that criteria should be developed as to how a review would be done and what it would focus on.

SPPAC recognized that the ACCVI has a proven track record, and therefore SPPAC does not have concerns about their commitment and credibility but must ensure open dialogue and that public benefit is the overall focus/goal.

The committee discussed the need for collaboration with other stakeholders such as Strathcona Wilderness Institute (SWI) whose trailhead cabin could provide great promotional benefits in the summer. Alternatively, Mount Washington's Raven Lodge could be a good source of promotion and information in the winter. There could be broad interest from both commercial groups as well as the general public. Other permittees such as Mt. Washington might also want to offer guided tours to the cabin in conjunction with their other programs i.e. fondue night.

Other comments from the committee included:

- A concern about the project being potentially under resourced. Viability should be addressed to ensure that impacts do not occur and then the operation fails/isn't able to remedy the impacts.
- Need for ACCVI to demonstrate/detail good operational practices (pack in pack out/water/solid waste).
- Impact Assessment - Who would do the assessment? Andy Smith noted that prior to a permit of this nature being approved, a Level Two Environmental Impact assessment (EIA) would likely be required. Such assessments are typically the responsibility of the permittee. The EIA procedure and format is dictated by BC Parks (manual and guidelines exist in order to ensure all information is collected and addressed). Does ACC have the resources to complete a Level Two assessment? The ACCVI might be able to draw on the expertise of BEES (non profit group). If impacts are identified, can they be mitigated acceptably? Will the need and timing of a Level Two assessment become a "show stopper" as it may take too long and be too costly for the ACCVI?
- Would the ACCVI need to provide a bond or financial security to cover rehabilitation if operation fails or if there is some unforeseen environmental impact?
- SPPAC recommends that a Level two assessment be conducted prior to any permit being approved.
- Need to assume maximum capacity and attraction of the cabin; need to ask people to help determine the criteria.
- The Level two assessment should consider how impacts to other areas of the park, i.e. Cirplet Lake and Kwai Lake may be reduced or mitigated due to the new use of the cabin.

ACTION – Andy Smith to circulate Level one and Level two assessment guidelines to SPPAC. Level one is done 'in house'; Level two is usually completed by a qualified professional.

Tawney summarized potential options below:

- 1 – Based on the existing proposal and information, decide to recommend or not recommend that the ACCVI manage the cabin.
- 2 – Recommend that a Request for Proposal be advertised – this would provide a fair and formal process to ascertain if there are any other interested groups wishing to provide the same service. If/when a potential Permittee is approved, the next step would be for that potential Permittee to complete a Level Two assessment.
- 3 – Advertise the intent to issue the permit - There is a possibility this could be viewed negatively as it would appear that the decision has already been made. SPPAC would prefer the process to be open and proactive, so any decision is based on feedback from the public.
- 4 – Advertise to the public that Parks has received an ‘expression of interest’ from the ACCVI to operate the Ranger’s Cabin as a non-profit venture and asking the public whether the cabin should be considered for public use and whether there is support for the ACCVI concept.

Does SPPAC support any of these options?

SPPAC discussed the options and decided additional public input is needed to determine: 1) if there is public interest in the cabin being open for public use; and 2) what concerns the public might have.

ACTION: SPPAC will advise the West Coast Region Regional Director that SPPAC needs to get more public input and recommends that this be done through advertising an expression of interest.

If the expression of interest shows there is public interest, SPPAC will recommend that a call for public tender be issued.

4. Adjacency Issues - a. SPPAC Mandate and ToR

At the previous meeting, SPPAC questioned whether they should recommend changes to SPPAC’s Terms of Reference (ToR) that would broaden the Committee’s mandate to consider and address park adjacency issues.

In preparation for this meeting Andy Smith posed the question to Don Cadden – Regional Director. Andy provided Don’s response to the committee. To summarize, Don supports SPPAC listening and considering adjacency issues. In this ToR this is covered by the language: “...reviewing and commenting on c) specific issues referred by...SPPAC; and e) public issues and concerns. To facilitate public requests, it was suggested that such topics come to SPPAC through a written request explaining what the intent of any discussion/presentation is, prior to the meeting. This would allow the committee to know ahead of time what the issue is and be prepared for it. If the committee would like more clarification or discussion regarding this, Don is willing to further explain things. BC Parks’ mandate is for recreation and conservation. SPPAC noted that Don’s response was

excellent and has empowered the Committee to discuss adjacency issues such as the next topic at this meeting regarding the proposed Comox Lake proposal.

b. Comox Lake Sustainable Use Recreation Area Proposal – letter to Don Cadden

Nick was tasked at the last meeting with drafting a letter. The letter has not been finalized. No further discussion took place regarding the letter due to Nick being absent at this meeting. A commitment from the group is needed to provide comments regarding Nick's draft. Tawney requested reply via email ASAP.

ACTION: The committee will finalize a letter supporting the principles of the Comox Lake Sustainable Use Recreation Area Proposal prior to the next meeting, and forward the letter to Don Cadden. (*Update: Since the meeting, the letter has been provided to Don, who has committed staff to meet with David Stapley about the Proposal*).

The committee continued with a discussion on adjacency issues at Comox Lake and noted that there are impacts on all edges of the park. Should SPPAC make recommendations for BC Parks to negotiate or apply pressure on adjacency issues or is this just futile? Can/should SPPAC become separate advocates or collaborate with interested user groups? Advocating with specific groups is outside of SPPAC's mandate to provide advice to the Regional Director. However, in formulating that advice, SPPAC needs to be open to all groups who wish to bring forward issues for consideration and discussion.

Public member, Colin Wilson, who is associated with the United Riders of Cumberland and the Comox Valley Trails Alliance community partnership, discussed the need to collaborate with other groups. Their group is looking to build partnerships, especially with agencies.

The committee then discussed an 'integrated catchment management approach'. The concept is to take a feature of the landscape, such as the Comox Lake watershed and through legislation, ensure all stakeholders surrounding the area are meaningfully involved in discussions about development, impacts and management before decisions are made unilaterally. This does not change the responsibilities of individual stakeholders that may border the park, but would ensure everyone is aware of each other's concerns.

Peggy explained the community driven process which took place during the Inland Highway Construction Project a number of years ago with respect to the watershed areas. The process brought people together to provide a collaborative discussion on the environmental issues in a positive and respectful manner in order to develop the best plan.

It was suggested that Mick bring further information regarding the 'integrated catchment management' approach to the next meeting.

5. No Campfires Signage

“Guests don’t burn the furniture” – (catch phrase suggested by Phil)

Andy Smith corresponded with Kel Kelly (Friends of Strathcona Park). FOSP is interested in championing the compliance issue regarding “no fires”. FOSP would like to develop new signage in cooperation with BC Parks while involving other groups i.e. youth groups. Once new signage has been designed and approved, FOSP would facilitate interested people to help install the signs and perhaps clean up unauthorized fire rings/fires scars at the same time (Schelderup Lake and Flower Ridge were a couple of suggested areas although zoning may prohibit signage in the Wilderness Conservation Zones). Andy supported the FOSP project and submitted a proposal to the Regional, Park Enhancement Fund initiative (*Update – since the meeting, the proposal was supported with \$2500*).

6. Nyrstar Mine

a. Tailings Dam Facility (TDF) Closure Plan and the Mine Development Review Committee

Tawney thanked Hardolph as SPPAC’s mine representative, for being kind enough to wade through all the correspondence involved with the review. The mine development review committee, made up of many stakeholders and government agency representatives, including BC Parks, have a mandate to review all major mine developments and closure plans. Hardolph provided input to BC Parks on the TDF cover design being proposed as part of its closure plan. The surface of the TDF is about 40 hectares containing approximately 40 million tons of material. Priority is stabilization and protections against seismic events. The first stage of closure is currently being worked on and involves wrapping a berm of clean fill around the perimeter of the TDF (to be completed by August 2013). Other stages include contouring and capping the TDF. Capping will be done using first a geotextile cover, followed by clean-fill/till material, woody debris and planting. Water flowing through the TDF is captured in perimeter drain pipes where it eventually is pumped to a treatment facility to filter out such things as zinc and other metals, prior to release into Myra Creek. There is some concern that the drains won’t capture all the water and may eventually end up in Myra Creek. There is also some concern about the geotextile being damaged and water within the TDF being drawn to the top. It has been recommended that more hydrology studies are needed. If not planned and done right, there is potential for contaminated water to leach out of the TDF for years. The estimated cost of closing the TDF is approximately \$20 million.

Associated with the closure of the TDF is the acquisition of clean fill for topping all reclamation areas. The current clean fill (Core Rack Access Borrow = CRAB) site was accessed by clearing a forested area. SPPAC has voiced concerns regarding the ongoing need for clean-fill and the current lack of long term plans to access the needed material. There is a need to know how much is required, where it will come from and what impacts are associated with accessing it. Is obtaining clean fill from outside the park an option?

BC Parks and Hardolph provided initial comments regarding the TDF closure plan as part of the Mine Development Review Committee (MDRC) and then reviewed all comments

submitted by other members. The summary of comments was sent to Nyrstar for review, after which Nyrstar (and/or consultants) provided a response. Members of the MDRC were then given the opportunity to make final comments. All information is now in the hands of the Ministry of Energy and Mines, who will consider all comments prior to making any final decisions about the TDF closure plan (the TDF closure plan should not be confused with the complete mine Closure Plan which must be updated approximately every 5 years – next one due in 2014).

While SPPAC is being provided good information and opportunities for input, there are still many concerns about what may or may not be tolerated. SPPAC would like to see the valley restored but understands that aspects of the mine will need to be maintained forever. Ironically, the best scenario in the short term is for the mine to continue operating in order to ensure proper monitoring and maintenance continues. In the long term, any closure plan will need to address the importance and long term needs of ongoing monitoring and maintenance.

There was a discussion on woody debris and invasive species. Hardolph would like to see the use of more woody debris in reclamation plans and asked Andy if Erica McClaren, BC Parks Conservation Specialist, had any further comments. Andy advised that BC Parks agrees and has submitted comments to Ministry of Energy and Mines about the need to include conditions about the use of woody debris. Hardolph wondered if debris from adjacent TimberWest property could be accessed for mine reclamation. However, such a project may conflict with the Park Act and there is also concern about the introduction of invasive species. There was a question about whether there will be any public process on reclamation? Currently the closure plan discussions are focussed on broad concepts while detailed plans concerning planting etc. will be prepared in the future. Nyrstar have indicated they welcome input during the creation stages.

SPPAC would like to arrange for another information meeting with Nyrstar representatives.

Andy read a short update from Ivor McWilliams of Nyrstar.

Tawney advised the new members that there is always an opportunity for any SPPAC member to have a mine tour.

ACTION: New members to check with Tawney to arrange such a tour.

7. Collaboration with External Groups and Public Engagement

Discussed in part during the Adjacency discussion. Moved to the next meeting as part of the discussion on the integrated catchment management approach.

8. Volunteer maintenance of Della Falls Trailhead

Darren Saare is corresponding with Andy about a potential volunteer agreement with the Port Alberni Search and Rescue group to provide some repair and maintenance work at the Della Falls Trailhead.

ACTION: Andy to send copy of volunteer agreement form to Darren, who will discuss with SAR group and then confirm with Andy if there is support.

9. Strathcona Update – Andy provided a brief Strathcona update (the full update was sent out via email to members on May 21st). The full update along with the Nyrstar update from May 22nd, will be combined as one package of information and included as an attachment to these minutes. Once final minutes have been adopted they will be posted along with attachment to the BC Parks website.

CWR Permit – Andy advised that there is no update at this time. Everyone is waiting for a court ruling. Tawney advised that the Friends of Strathcona Park have provided their description and interpretation of this permit issue on their website. *Update since meeting: the petition submitted by the FOSP (Society of the Friends of Strathcona Park v. British Columbia (Environment), VA S123664 – SCBC) was dismissed by Mr. Justice Sigurdson. The reasoning can be read in detail by viewing through the BC Supreme Court website.*

Legacy Funds - Tawney to send email out to SPPAC to ask members how best to use the Legacy funds that are available for Strathcona Park.

10. Open Discussion and Additional Public Questions

Tawney offered a ‘Thank you’ to Lindsay and Colin for their input and attendance and to all other public who attended the meeting.

Tawney provided insight on the current protocol on how the public is engaged during SPPAC meetings. However, in an attempt to make the discussion more efficient and meaningful, depending on the situation and topic, the Chairperson may now start inviting the public to comment during the SPPAC discussion.

Colin – Question on status of Wood Mountain ski park? What are the plans for the park’s future? Colin expressed concerns about snowmobiles when others are tobogganing; and inappropriate/illegal use. So many people do not have a clue about being in a park. Update and answer provided from BC Parks – Andy Smith. After a public process in 2004 the Minister at that time, supported the declassification of the park and transfer to Crown Land. However, the K’omoks First Nation has identified Wood Mountain Park as potential treaty settlement lands. As a result, the park status is currently in limbo as the treaty process continues. No plans can be made as the land may be turned over to the K’omoks First Nation. With respect to the vandalism issue, while there has been ongoing issues in the past, there is little remaining in the park to vandalize. One option currently being explored is the potential to appoint an interim Class C board for the park made up of K’omoks First Nations representatives. This could provide an avenue for exploring and considering new uses for the land. BC Parks West Coast Region Section Head and Area Supervisor met with the K’omoks First Nation to discuss this possibility as well as what might be required to clean up the property. Should all parties support this interim option, it may be lead to a Request for Proposals to see what ideas exist and if there are

interested partners to pursue something with mutual benefits. The Minister of Environment would have to approve any such appointment of a new Board. BC Parks has made it known to all treaty negotiators and the K'omoks First Nation that the public and BC Parks wants to maintain some public right-of-way into this side of Strathcona Park.

Meeting adjourned – 10:15 pm

Next meeting – Friday October 4, 2013 in Courtenay BC

See below for STRATHCONA UPDATE FOR SPPAC MAY 22, 2013 MEETING:

**Strathcona Update for SPPAC
May 22, 2013 (Courtenay/Filberg Meeting)**

Strathcona Staffing – Peter Hehl returned to work on April 29th as this year's Strathcona Senior Ranger. Peter was a Ranger in Strathcona in 2011 before taking a position in Kamloops for one year. We are happy to have the opportunity to bring him back. Peter will be working with Jeff Hoy who worked in Strathcona last year.

Section Head – After doing double duty covering the vacated Section Head position since Ron Quilter's retirement, Andy Smith, Strathcona Area Supervisor, has handed over the Section Head duties to Aaron Miller, who has made a permanent lateral move from the lower mainland where he was the SH there for the last couple of years.

Jerry McArthur, Windy Park Operations, who is our current Backcountry Park Facility Operator, is returning for the last year of his contract. The backcountry maintenance contract will be going out for bids in the near future (RFP being posted on BC Bid by end of May or early June). The Request for Proposals will be open for approximately 8 weeks and will be supplemented with a mandatory Q&A meeting for all bidders. Bidders will be encouraged to visit all backcountry areas before the mandatory meeting.

While many frontcountry park maintenance bundles are also going out to bid this year, these are mostly in the south island as the contract expiry dates are earlier there than in the north island area. RLC Enterprize Ltd will continue as the Park Facility Operator in Strathcona (Buttle Lake area) for another couple of years until their current contract ends.

1) NVI/Breakwater

- Nyrstar recently announced the donation of \$25,000 to BC Parks to be used within Strathcona-Westmin and Strathcona Parks on projects mutually agreed to between BC Parks and Nyrstar (BC Parks Area Supervisor to develop list of potential priority projects and discuss with Nyrstar representatives).
- Nyrstar Myra Falls Ltd was awarded the prestigious John T. Ryan Award for 2012 by the Canadian Institute of Mining. This is a regional award presented to the mine which achieved the lowest Injury Frequency rate for any metalliferous mine in British Columbia and the Yukon Territory. The last time that Myra Falls won this award was in 1986.
- Core Rack Area Borrow site project (CRAB – Clean Fill) – As noted in October 2012 update, Nyrstar completed logging of site in early September 2012 and during the Fall started moving clean fill from the site to the nearby old TDF. Operations ceased over the winter but will begin again in the near future. Haulage of clean fill to complete the TDF

Seismic upgrade berm started on May 7 but was shut down from May 14-20 due to wet conditions – work will be completed by August 1.

- Tailings Dam Facility Closure Plan – BC Parks received Nyrstar’s required response to those comments previously submitted by Stakeholders. Ministry of Mines then provided a 2nd opportunity for Stakeholders to submit secondary responses which were sent in at end of April. The Mines Development Review Committee Draft report has been sent out for comments (amalgamated comments from various stakeholders and government agencies). Ministry of Energy and Mines will be completing review and finalizing their permits within the next couple of months.
- Jim Mitchell Lake Spillway Project – BC Parks did receive the additional information they had been waiting for concerning removal of material from the old existing borrow pit on the road leading up to Jim Mitchell Lake. The additional information did not reveal any issues and therefore BC Parks is currently drafting authorization for this spillway enhancement project to proceed this year. One of the conditions of this authorization is commitment to discuss, plan and develop enhancements to the boat launch and potential boat landing at either end of the lake (previously suggested by SPPAC). Approval is subject to the mine receiving all other necessary approvals from other government authorities/branches.
- Nyrstar has started to mine the Price ore body via the Thelwood road access. It is still planned for the ore and waste rock to be moved via underground conveyors through existing mine corridors. In addition, as previously planned there will be approximately 3 material/supply trucks servicing the portal daily as well as crew trucks during shift change. A temporary storage shed has been installed as planned right at the portal, and is still proposed to be moved underground once mining creates enough room. Other than the trucks and shed no other impacts are expected within this corridor. The Price project is moving along slowly with work focussed on diamond drilling. This drilling is looking at upgrading geological, geotechnical and hydrogeological information that is needed before decisions related to mine design can be made.
- Construction of the Lynx TDF berm raise will commence once the TDF seismic upgrade work has been completed – this year’s aim is to raise the Lynx TDF berm to an elevation that will provide adequate storage for paste tailings until December 2014.

2) Capital Projects

While the 2013 capital allocations have not been confirmed yet for BC Parks, we have submitted a request for \$100K tied to trail upgrades potentially on the plateau and/or Elk River trail.

Elk River trail assessment has just been received from Strategic Group Consulting. BC Parks is currently reviewing the report and considering the recommendations. Some points to consider – most creek crossings are being recommended as ‘fords’ rather than constructing bridges. Existing large bridges over Puzzle and Butterwort creeks are to be assessed by an Engineer and modified/replaced as needed. “Abandoned” small bridge just prior to Butterwort Creek in the flooded/debris flow area has been recommended for removal and the area just left as a “ford”. While this trail does get impacted by high water during spring run-off conditions, during summer, many creeks are dry and not an issue. Does SPPAC have any opinion about removal of bridges and/or not installing any new ones on our backcountry trails, forcing visitors to “ford” safe creek crossings?

3) Heber Diversion Penstock Decommissioning

Planting of the old Heber Penstock corridor within the park (approximately 2 ha) was started in early May. There will be “some” seeding done of the berm at the Crest Creek Crag outflow area and along the disturbed road edge leading to the Crest Creek Crag parking lot. BC Hydro has committed to a long term monitoring program of this reclaimed area and should targets not be met in five years, enhancement plantings will be planned and implemented to the satisfaction of BC Parks.

4) CWR Park Use Permit – No new update. No physical work has been started. – CWR is awaiting outcome of court challenge (Judicial review took place between February 4th to 8th).

5) Backcountry

Plateau Ranger Cabin – BC Parks along with SPPAC heard a presentation from ACC at the February SPPAC meeting. SPPAC has had a chance to review the proposal and BC Parks is currently waiting to receive a recommendation from the committee, before considering the proposal any further. The Alpine Club of Canada proposed to convert the under-utilized cabin as an ACC hut. ACC was advised that while BC Parks supports exploring optional uses for the cabin, any proposal would need to include benefit to the general public. In addition, if such a proposal was supported, it would require advertising and/or a general Request for Proposal call. BC Parks does not wish to consider the proposal any further if there is no public support.

Bedwell Lakes Trail Upgrades – The fall project to repair/replace the long section of boardwalk that skirts the Baby Bedwell lake shore did not get completed prior to heavy snow fall. Once access is gained, and the Spring start-up trail priorities have been addressed, the boardwalk project will be completed.

Elk River Trail Upgrades – See information under Capital Projects.

Arnica Lake – The human waste issue has not been resolved. The current small “Z-Best” open air toilet has not worked out due to the inability to dig adequate holes and be able to relocate every two or three years. A fly-out system done elsewhere in the backcountry, would solve the problem but is extremely costly to build and more costly to sustain requiring drums and constant helicopter time. This alternative is certainly not the “greenest” solution either. We have considered composting toilets but experience learned from other parks indicate they don’t work well at higher elevations and there is a constant need for maintenance. A mouldering toilet system (above ground open air composting style) is being looked into but again the short season at these elevations likely prohibits the use. A pack out system would be ideal, but it may be too premature for our current visitor culture to adopt. For 2013, Rangers will again try to locate a suitable site for moving the existing Z-Best toilet to.

Some repairs are required to the tent pads and a bridge replacement is still required at the lake outflow where the trail needs to cross and follow the east shore. The old bridge was washed away many years ago and it appears only in the Spring is the water too high to cross and follow the trail. The full span at this location is approximately 10 metres, but there is a large boulder sitting in middle of creek that could potentially be used as a midstream abutment/pier. More planning is required and funds needed to pursue any further.

Discussion Issues *(carried forward from October SPPAC meeting)*

- Strathcona Park Wilderness Centre water damage issue
- Park Enhancement Funds (PEF) submissions x 4 (1 – SWI support; 2- LNT Program Proposal; 3-FOSP - new No Fire signage program; 4 – SWI brochure/map support.
- Strathcona Expedition Surplus Funds – Support SWI or other?
- Crest Creek dredging;
- Gold Lake Access – road is becoming impassable within about 5km of trailhead;
- Kunlin/Donner Lake Access – road leading into Kunlin Lake from main logging road is becoming overgrown and rough. Kunlin was once targeted for a vehicle accessible campground, while Donner was identified for recreational canoeing and marine campground opportunities. MP only talks about a trail to Donner and therefore conflicts with canoe potential (a very long way to carry a canoe from Kunlin Lake). Do we want to try and open up the old road to first Kunlin and then beyond to Donner Lake?
- Divers Lake Cabin – inherited with the addition, but currently no formal policy concerning retention and use.
- Wood Mtn Park – Treaty talks are still continuing. BC Parks keeps reminding negotiating

team that we are concerned about retaining access into Strathcona Park through or around this property.