

***DRAFT***  
**PARK PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

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**85900-20/SPPAC**

DATE: October 14, 2005

TIME: 6:00 PM

LOCATION: CONFERENCE ROOM, PARKSVILLE OFFICE

LAST MEETING: June 11, 2005

ATTENDANCE: RON QUILTER, BC PARKS  
JOHN WILSON,  
ANNE FIDDICK,  
FRANK HOVENDEN,  
WARRICK WHITEHEAD  
RICK ROLLINS,  
PAUL ERICKSON,  
SANDY BRIGGS,  
DAVID VINCENT,

PUBLIC: PETER ROTHERMEL, BC FEDERATION OF MTN. CLUBS  
STEVE SMITH, STRATHCONA WILDERNESS INSTITUTE

GUESTS: GREG WITT, OSPREY PARK OPERATIONS  
RICK CARSWELL, SOCIETY OF PARK OPERATORS  
STEVE LORIMER, TIMBER WEST  
ANDY SMITH, BC PARKS

ABSENT: GARRY SCHAAN, SPPAC

CHAIR: ANNE FIDDICK, SPPAC

MINUTES: ANDY SMITH

## **1. Opening Remarks – Anne Fiddick**

Introduction of SPPAC members and public attendees.

## **2. Additions/Deletions to Agenda**

Annual NVI/SPPAC Meeting

## **3. Review Previous Minutes**

June 11, 2005 – No comments on previous minutes. Previous minutes ACCEPTED.

## **4. Paradise Meadows Trail Project Update – Andy Smith**

\$200,000 Funding secured for trail project through private donations, Coast Sustainable Trust matching grant and BC Parks capital contribution.

Land Donation of .65 ha from Mt. Washington Resort is being finalized. MOU between the Crown and the Resort has enabled construction to begin while waiting for land to be officially acquired as part of Strathcona Park.

Due to complex funding criteria, there was a need to partner with Vancouver Island Mountain Sports Society who holds all funds. VIMSS, through guidance by BC Parks and their normal contract competition process, awarded trail contract to JAD Enterprises. Contract bid price was approximately \$171,000. BC Parks is named as contract monitor.

Construction started September 29<sup>th</sup> and was shut down due to snow November 2<sup>nd</sup>. Construction will resume as early in the spring as possible. Completion is targeted for the end of July 2006.

## **5. Wood Mountain Update – Ron Quilter**

Little change to date. Process for removing park designation and transferring responsibility to Land and Water BC is continuing.

## **6. Crest Creek Planning Group – Andy Smith**

Andy Smith met with Chris Barner of the Heathens Mountaineering Club and agreed to try using the existing club planning group as a form to discuss issues rather than developing a new advisory group. The club's planning group has developed a draft Crest Creek plan which needs to be reviewed, amended if necessary and adopted by BC Parks. The draft plan will be distributed for input to various stakeholders, i.e. Sandy Briggs of SPPAC, also BC Transmission Authority, SWI, Strathcona Park Lodge and BC Parks.

**7. Access Issues through Private Lands – Steve Lorimar/TimberWest**

Restricted access to Comox Glacier along TimberWest's private logging roads has raised the question of TimberWest's public access policy.

Steve cited safety and vandalism/theft as the two biggest reasons for the company to impose restrictions. Logging operations are now 7 days per week, between the hours of 6:00 am and 4:30 pm. The public can use the logging road outside these operating times, unless closed for special reasons, i.e. fire hazard. Vandalism, theft, fires and dumping of garbage on TimberWest lands is a real problem. Unrestricted public access increases company liabilities associated with all these things. Company is not sure when they'll be pulling out of this area so can't comment on long term plans/timing.

- Eco Certification noted – TimberWest has this and in order to maintain it the company must meet criteria, which include policies around public access. There is an audit done annually on companies as part of the requirements of certification. Gary Schaan has details about this. Steve Lorimer indicated that company policies are generally posted on their Web Site. [www.timberwest.com](http://www.timberwest.com)

- Steve Lorimer indicated that this issue has gained prominence due to only one main group (Comox Valley Mountaineering) concerned about access.

Comment made concerning a need for the company to communicate plans to the public better, prior to going into areas and impacting existing trails. Steve Lorimer indicated that they often don't know trails exist until going into an area – the public doesn't tell TimberWest when they make these trails without permission.

To sum up Anne commented after Steve Lorimer had left that the Company requires a written policy concerning public access, but according to Steve Lorimer, one has yet to be developed.

**8. Bundle Management – Greg Witt and Rick Carswell/PFO Society**

Rick Carswell runs the South Island Parks Bundle contract and is president of the Provincial PFO Society. Greg Witt runs the Mid and North Island park bundles contracts and also holds the backcountry contract for Strathcona Park. Rick gave quick overview of the PFO Society. One of the key goals of the PFO Society is to re-establish interpretation programs within BC Parks. Rick has taken over Goldstream Nature House and Interpretive Programming from Arenaria as part of his bundle and has provided free interpretive programming at many of his parks.

Greg and Rick have spoken with the Minister to lobby for the re-establishment of Interpretive Programming in Parks. They will be developing a proposal for the Ministry to consider. This will require some increased financial input from BC Parks. They are also researching potential to access health funds due to the connection with physical fitness and wellness.

Anne has suggested that SPPAC assist the PFO Society by preparing a letter of support.

Buttle Lake HQ - Greg Witt indicated they are still researching ideas for the use of this facility. Osprey is considering finding a partner, i.e. school/college that may wish to utilize the facility.

Osprey is open to discuss any interp/education ideas that Strathcona Wilderness Institute has. Steve Smith and Carol should get together.

Contact info:

Rick Carswell, RLC Enterprize – [rlcenterprize@shaw.ca](mailto:rlcenterprize@shaw.ca)

Greg Witt, Osprey Park Operations – [ospreysilviculture@shaw.ca](mailto:ospreysilviculture@shaw.ca)

## 9. NVI Issues – John Wilson (SPPAC)

John provided summary of his review of the NVI report

- Tailings Disposal Facility – is being upgraded to 1000 year earthquake event. The company has noted some minor seepage in the past, but the company does make regular inspections of facility and fixes any cracks etc immediately.
- 2004 Environmental Report submitted to comply with Reclamation Permit.
  - o Construction of Paste Facility to reduce water in tailings.
  - o Upgrade of Tailings berm has required some additional encroachment on Myra Creek.
  - o Link to Hydro grid upon closing is still noted in plan – SPPAC and BC Parks has always been opposed to this.
  - o Desire to increase hydro power on site by raising dams.
  - o Diesel Spill explained.
  - o Custom Milling – proposed a pilot project a few years ago. Some concern from SPPAC about increase to tailings as well as truck traffic.
  - o Not as much tailings going underground as originally expected.
  - o Still exploring clean-fill sites, i.e. Thelwood and Myra Valleys.
  - o Metal Loading – has increased but still meets permit requirements. Could be attributed to 1) different ore bodies require different processing and therefore there is fluctuations with metal levels 2) sludge has higher concentrate therefore releasing more into water 3) higher volumes of water 4) more sensitive monitoring equipment.

The company had been given new effluent levels in 2002 and given two years to comply.  
PH used to average 11 and is now averaging 9.5. At this lower level it is more difficult to extract metal from effluent.
  - o **Consultants had suggested construction of Super Pond concept at start of system. This should increase efficiencies. Completion 2005/2006. This is important and an update should be requested at annual NVI meeting.**
- **NVI/SPPAC annual meeting scheduled for January 19<sup>th</sup> at Black Creek. It was suggested to invite someone from Mines to the meeting.**

## 10. Marmots

- Frank and Warrick expressed their non-support for the re-introduction of marmots into Strathcona Park at this time. Frank believes that the real benefactors are the Timber companies who support this for good PR – it is really “blood money”.
- Warrick expressed concerns. Why has Strathcona bumped up on the list as a suitable site? What has happened to the other sites? We should wait to see what success there is at other locations.
- Consensus about not supporting any form of predator control.
- SPPAC wants more information from Don Doyle (MoE).
- Support letter for Don will be postponed until more information has been given.
- **Ron indicated that SPPAC supported this previously. Past minutes will be checked and distributed to members.**
- **Another update from the Marmot Recovery Team should be placed on the next agenda.**

## 11. Website

SPPAC has a special place on the BC Parks/Strathcona Park website now. SPPAC minutes, Terms of Reference, current committee members names are currently posted. <http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/strathcn/strathwk.html>

## 12. Outdoor Recreation Vehicles

- Warrick made everyone aware of a program to have all Snowmobiles and ATV's require special registration/licensing and stickers applied to vehicles.
- There is an initiative to have legislation created concerning this. BC is last Province to have legislation about this.
- Warrick would like SPPAC to support this initiative.
- Noted that this type of issue is outside the scope of SPPAC.

## Park Update

**1) Elk River Restoration (Streamline Environmental)** – The section of live staking willow whips, not completed in 2004 was completed in September. This Hydro BCRP funded project will now move into a monitoring stage.

**2) Drum Creek Fish Habitat Enhancement** – Hydro's BCRP has funded a Consultant/Fish Biologist to do an initial fish assessment of the Drum Creek drainage this year under a park use permit. Field work was completed in late September. It is anticipated that the project will now proceed to phase two which is enhancement work, primarily adding large woody debris in strategic locations along two reaches. The consultant, Mike Law, requires letters of support to make a second BCRP application. BC Parks as well as our fisheries branch support the project in concept and are now waiting for project details in order to permit the next phase.

**3) Elk Winter Range Habitat Enhancement Project** – This year's work was assessment and monitoring only. No work is planned for 2006 or 2007, but further assessments are scheduled for 2008. Ursus Environmental Consultants are still leading this project.

#### **4) NVI/Breakwater (Boliden) –**

Name Change – BC Parks is still pursuing a Permit Modification Agreement to incorporate the new Breakwater name change. Recreation Section Head is leading this.

New Ramp Portal – Work continues.

Timber Sale – the company completed logging of the previously approved clean-fill site near their new super pond site. The timber sale was finalized and the wood has been moved off site. Timber Mark was provided to Victoria to track revenues and as per new policy and MOU, funds will be placed into BC Parks account.

#### **4) Backcountry**

New Toilet Project – Capital project to install two new permanent toilet buildings at Main Bedwell Lake and Helen Mackenzie Lake campsites approved. Advertising on BC Bid resulted in no bidders. As a result, project has been broken into components 1) Construct Pads 2) Construct buildings 3) Install. Currently Osprey Park Operations has been contracted to build pads. Quotes have been solicited on the other components. Also as part of this project, a new prototype fly-out toilet has been approved for trial at Baby Bedwell Lake campsite. The “One-Step” design incorporates a new modified barrel in the shape of a round platform that a ZBest toilet attaches to. The toilet utilizes a PVC frame and custom tarp for privacy in summer which is removed in winter leaving the previously tested ZBest toilet exposed in the winter. The new toilet will be easier to access, won’t require a cement pad for a foundation, doesn’t impact the environment directly, can be repaired with local easily available parts and costs a fraction (approx \$4,500) of the \$25,000 permanent toilet structure.

Operations Permit Renewal – the backcountry permit is up for renewal this year for another 3 years after completing an initial 3 years.

Backcountry Areas – No real problems experienced in any of the areas.

Croteau Lake Group Site– An initial Level 1 Assessment was done at the site with no surprises. Due to other priorities this year, no other work has been done to pursue what is believed to be a worthwhile project.

Lady Lake/Murray Meadows Bridges – new bridges (project started last fall) were completed.

Boardwalk Repairs – two damaged sections of boardwalk on the trail to Helen Mackenzie Lake were repaired. One repair utilized some experimental screw-in piles for leveling. The other repair was Piggott Creek bridge and the boardwalk leading up to it.

Della Falls Campsite - New campsite was developed adjacent to Della Falls as an alternative to the closed campsite downstream. Six tent pads were created using on-site gravel. A ZBest toilet installed, signs erected and a new trial Bear proof barrel purchased as a Bear Cache (Barrel is cheap, easy to install by one person and easy to use). Initial comments about campsite identify a problem with drinking water – complaining that people have to walk too far (perhaps 30 meters) to water source. Problem could easily be rectified with a pipe but it would create another

problem as this would be deemed a water system and come under regulatory control.

Conservation Core Crew – Team of five people completed the following projects:

- Plateau creel survey and recruitment assessment of stocked lakes (needs to be continued next year).
- Mapping of plateau trails and identifying potential water impact sites.
- Kwai Lake Impact mapping.

**5) Survivor Canada Incident** – Crown Counsel is still pursuing. Appearance date set for November 25, 2005.

**6) Staffing** – this season we had one additional backcountry ranger position in the Strathcona area. This worked out well and our increased presence in all areas was noted.

**7) Rainbow Coalition** – had a gathering at Kunlin Lake this summer. Andy and staff met with the group, they were well behaved and cleaned up after themselves.

**NEXT MEETING (Annual NVI/SPPAC Meeting):**

**Wednesday, January 19, 2006 10 a.m. at the Black Creek BC Parks office – Conference Room.**

**Next Regular SPPAC meeting – Friday, February 3, 2006 – Rath Trevor Provincial Park, Parksville BC Parks office – Meeting Room.**