



Shortly after park establishment, a Management Direction Statement was prepared in consultation with user groups and was vetted in a public open house attended by over 100 people. This statement establishes the policies under which the park will be managed until a full management plan is prepared and is fully consistent with the Bulkley and Kispiox Land and Resource Management plans. Completion of a park management plan is a high priority but given other priorities and resource constraints is not expected to begin until 3 to 5 years from now.

The Management Direction Statement provides guidance on how BC Parks will manage conservation, recreation and cultural heritage values in the short term in consultation with park users and others who have an interest in the park. The statement also provided for work to be undertaken in recreation planning and human/bear management.



Since park establishment, a number of steps have been taken to manage bear human conflict at the bridge/weir area, ensure continued public access to the river and assess recreation capacity.

The park boundary has been adjusted to include a small area (20 hectares) between the bridge and the weir and an interagency protocol has been established to streamline coordination with other agencies such as the Ministry of Forests, BC Environment, and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). The boundary adjustment is consistent with the original



direction from the Bulkley Land and Resource Management Plan and, in hindsight, is a much better on the ground definition for this particular area than initially was set when the park was established.

A proposed memorandum between BC Parks and the DFO will ensure long term public access via the existing boat launch

and existing parking area, both located within DFO's lease area. Overnight camping has been relocated away from the bridge to reduce bear/human conflicts and risk to park users.

In addition, BC Parks recently commissioned a report on recreation capacity in the Babine River Corridor Park. The primary objective of study was to find out from park users what their expectations were for quality of park



experience and what suggestions they had for achieving their desired experience. As such the report is a summary of the range of public opinions as prepared by an independent consultant.

A number of the suggestions have proven to be quite controversial as users have had the opportunity to review the consultant's draft report— for example some members of the public have suggested that angling use levels should be actively managed for all anglers and others have suggested that jet boat use should be eliminated from the park to maintain a desired wilderness experience.

Those who rely on jet boat use for guided fishing or who want to maintain the opportunity to use jet boats for unguided fishing naturally find the suggestion on jet boat use unacceptable. This has been accompanied by a sense that their interests have been marginalized or excluded because this suggestion has been included in the report and could be acted on without further discussion. In addition, there is the sense that user groups are being pitted against each other.

BC Parks regrets that the report has generated these concerns and wants to clarify its current perspective on the jet boat use and angling use on the Babine River, and how the report will be used.

The Management Direction Statement for Babine River Corridor Park provides for jet boat use for both guided and non guided fishing, recognizing them as uses in place before the park was established. Over the next several years prior to the preparation of a management plan we will work with users to see if there are ways to limit negative impacts of jet boat use on other park



users. BC Parks will convene sessions with park users and interested members of the public to review these and other operational issues prior to and at the end of each field season.

Likewise angling use will continue to be managed in accordance with fishing regulations

and the Management Direction Statement for Babine River Corridor Park. Efforts will continue prior to the preparation of a management plan to develop ways to minimize conflicts between users and between users and grizzly bears.

It is the approved Management Direction Statement that will guide park management over the next several years, not the report on recreation capacity. Any options noted in the report that are inconsistent with the Management Direction Statement will only be considered in the context of the park management planning process. Even then, the report will be one of many considerations.

The management planning process will include public and user involvement as a fundamental component and is intended to provide a positive framework to resolve the issues that are of utmost concern to park users.