

Plan Implementation

Introduction

This section compiles all of the actions listed throughout this management plan and lists them according to the priority they will receive.

The first list includes the Highest Priority Actions. These highlight actions that require attention in the near future.

The second list is the Project Oriented Actions. These are the actions that are a specific task or project. Park staff will review this list for upcoming budgets and annual work plans.

The third list is the On-going Monitoring Actions, which describes the actions that require on-going or monitoring types of tasks or projects. This list will be reviewed by park staff to ensure that the overall intentions of this management plan are being followed.

Implementation of actions in this management plan is dependent on available financial and staff resources. Approval of this plan does not automatically constitute approval of funding for implementation.

Highest Priority Actions

- Authorize current trapping and guide-outfitting operations by issuing Park Use Permits for these activities, associated structures and spike camps.
- Participate in coordinated management planning to address the impact on park values of industrial activities in adjacent resource management zones.
- Work with the Ministry of Employment and Investment and BC Environment to minimize the impact of coal extraction on park values.
- Complete a vegetation inventory to locate, identify and map plant communities, rare species and threatened plant communities in the Special Features zones, Natural Environment zones and areas that could potentially be impacted by recreation.
- Prepare a vegetation management plan for the above mentioned areas that will identify management strategies for specific issues such as insect infestation, disease, and blowdown in consultation with other agencies.

- Prepare a fire management plan that defines the role of these natural disturbances in the maintenance of natural ecosystem diversity. This plan will also consider fire history, natural fire regimes, impacts of suppression, historical use of fire by humans and values in need of protection. Prepare this plan in conjunction with other agencies.
- Apply low impact horse management practices such as picketing and use of supplemental feed for all horse-packing groups. Limit the number of horses in a group where/when necessary.
- Authorize the continued use of Connor Lakes as a source of Westslope cutthroat trout through Park Use Permit subject to the BC Parks Impact Assessment Process.
- Develop a wildlife inventory of key species including red and blue-listed species and mountain goats.
- Develop a coordinated long term approach to wildlife management with other government agencies including BC Environment, BC Ministry of Forests, Parks Canada, First Nations and Alberta Natural Resources with emphasis on the following key elements:
 - habitat improvement, nuisance wildlife, transplantation;
 - access, connectivity and range management; and,
 - coordinating wildlife management objectives.
- Develop a separate wildlife management plan for mountain goats, including determining the requirements for sustaining viable populations.
- Investigate opportunities to establish grizzly bear benchmarks for scientific study and management.
- Inventory the main fossil features in the parks and assess their significance.
- Assess the threat to the fossil features by natural forces such as erosion or by public extraction.
- Relocate horse tethering areas and corrals away from all lakes, creeks and rivers to protect sensitive riparian areas.
- Monitor and assess the impact of continuing snowmobile and mountain bike use in the Abruzzi Creek corridor (seismic road), through the BC Parks Impact Assessment process policy, including an impact assessment of these uses on wildlife values.
- Prohibit all forms of mechanized recreation in all other areas of Elk Lakes Provincial Park and Height of the Rockies Provincial Park.

- Authorize pre-existing commercial recreation tenure holders by Park Use Permit.
- Work with the Ministry of Forests to develop a range use plan that includes Elk Lakes Park.

Project Oriented Actions

- Acquire trapping rights as they become available.
- Monitor and assess the presence of noxious weeds.
- Reconsider the practice of salting in cooperation with the Ministry of Forests.
- Discontinue mineral claims in accordance with provincial government policy on resource rights compensation.
- Conduct inventories of indigenous and resident fish populations as required, in concert with BC Environment.
- Assess the stocking of lakes in the parks in concert with BC Environment to determine which lakes should continue to be stocked. In the interim continue to stock Upper and Lower Aosta lakes, Deep Lake, Driftwood Lake, Duck Lake, Frozen Lake, Riverside Lake and Monument Lake.
- In concert with First Nations, inventory the cultural and archeological features in the parks.
- Inventory and monitor campsite use in accordance with the Backcountry Recreation Impact Monitoring Policy. Education and regulations will be used to ensure compliance with management objectives.
- Educate visitors about minimum impact camping at all sites in the park to avoid site degradation and minimize human-bear conflicts.
- Limit camping and overnight accommodation facilities to what is already developed.
- Assess conditions and monitor backcountry visitor numbers and destinations to protect natural values in accordance with the Backcountry Recreation Impact Monitoring (BRIM) Policies.
- Discourage campfires and encourage the use of portable campstoves.
- Provide information on fishing regulations to park visitors.

- Assess conditions and monitor the impacts of horse use in accordance with the Backcountry Recreation Impact (BRIM) Policies to minimize impacts on natural values and the visitor experience. Criteria such as limited entry permits, limits on horse numbers, camp facilities, forage availability and timing will be used. Trails may be relocated around recurring problem areas and during certain conditions (extended periods of rain, soft conditions after a late thaw) to prevent trail damage.
- Prepare and provide information on established horse use and travel to minimize conflict between users.
- Restrict mountain bikes to the old seismic road in Cadorna Creek.
- Prohibit the use of motorized watercraft on all lakes in the parks except for expressed management purposes.
- Initiate an interagency review of mechanized recreation in the Elk Valley to determine options for accommodating these activities.
- Obtain updated wildlife data in order to manage for healthy populations and appropriate hunting levels.
- Adjust harvest levels according to fluctuations in wildlife populations, including natural predators.
- Review proposed changes with First Nations, guide-outfitters and recreational hunters.
- Work with existing tenure holders to develop a stewardship program and code of conduct.
- Undertake the BC Parks Impact Assessment process for major recreational developments, including archaeological impact assessment.
- Develop a protocol between the Ministry of Forests and BC Parks concerning the management of trails and trailheads on Crown lands that provide access to the parks.
- Use registration boxes and visitor surveys at access points to monitor users' experiences and social conditions regarding access issues.
- Prohibit all forms of motorized access except for management purposes and as provided for in this management plan.
- Work with commercial operators through a code of conduct to develop a coordinated approach to advertising so as not to unduly promote the park.

- Create an information strategy that will focus on maintaining low backcountry use levels.
- Work with local communities and tourism associations in providing appropriate pre-trip planning information.
- Ensure brochures on Height of the Rockies and Elk Lakes provincial parks are current and accurate.
- Prepare information for backcountry visitors which describes the natural and cultural features of the parks, wilderness recreation etiquette and safety, low impact camping, wildlife viewing techniques, and ways of avoiding bear encounters. The focus will be on pre-trip planning as much as possible.
- Ensure recreational activities have minimal impact on erosion of surface materials and do not compromise water quality.
- Assess and manage use to ensure proper disposal of human waste.
- Ensure sanitary facilities are properly designed and located.
- Ensure the parks' sanitary facilities are non-polluting.
- Encourage the assistance of volunteers to collect wildlife data with BC Parks Observation Cards; e.g., bird watching clubs, anglers etc.
- Protect 'in situ' important features, sacred sites and archeological sites. To protect them from damage they will not be identified on any park literature.
- Adopt the BC Archeological Assessment Guidelines whenever development plans for other resources have the potential to disturb archeological sites.
- Work with First Nations and the Heritage Conservation Board in managing the archeological and heritage resources in the parks.
- Maintain the confidentiality of the location of fossils for their protection.
- Develop preventive measures; e.g., monitoring, education and enforcement, to address the threat of extraction or impacts.
- Work with local colleges, universities, other agencies and corporate sponsors to establish funding and appropriate and timely research opportunities such as inventory and monitoring.

- Limit scientific research which involves collecting specimens by the specific terms of a research permit.
- Ensure that any material that is collected for scientific research will remain the property of the Province of British Columbia, regardless of where it is stored.
- Maintain routes and trails, as prescribed by zoning.
- Assist outfitters with trail problems and relocation on user maintained trails.
- Monitor human use of fish resources through recreation surveys and information from other agencies. If any changes are required they will be implemented by managing access to the area and by fishing regulations.
- Manage natural fish stocks in collaboration with BC Environment, First Nations and anglers.
- Identify and sign areas in the parks that are designated for horse use.
- Encourage the use of portable campstoves instead of open campfires to reduce the potential of forest fires.

On-going Monitoring Actions

- In the interim, until the fire management strategy is prepared, undertake an initial attack on all wildfire by either Ministry of Forests or BC Parks to control the fire until the situation is assessed. The fire may be allowed to run its natural course as long as it meets landscape biodiversity objectives, and visitors, adjacent commercial forests and park facilities are not in danger. The intent is to allow natural fires that occur under normal environmental (non-extreme) conditions to run their natural course. Use of mechanized heavy equipment will not be permitted.
- Retain wildlife trees except where there is a hazard to visitors or facilities.
- Encourage the use of processed feed.
- Monitor and evaluate periodically the effectiveness of the Range Use Plans in cooperation with the Ministry of Forests. The guidelines may be modified, if necessary, to achieve the objectives of this plan.
- Consider trail closures to minimize environmental degradation and impacts on wildlife.

- Assess, monitor and regulate hunting in cooperation with BC Environment, First Nations, guide-outfitters, hunters, and special interest groups to ensure healthy wildlife populations and habitats are maintained.
- Retain the Middle Fork free of commercial recreation activities.
- Limit new commercial recreation services to low impact proposals that do not require infrastructure to be located in the park in accordance with the KBLUP-IS.
- Conduct BC Parks' Impact Assessment process for new recreation services.
- Manage the parks according to the Wilderness Recreation, Natural Environment and Special Features zoning requirements. These include natural areas, solitude, high quality natural features and varied recreational opportunities.
- Establish capacity and limits of use through research, monitoring and in consultation with park users.
- Locate and design all park facilities in harmony with the visual setting and in accordance with park zoning objectives.
- Provide advice to the Ministry of Forests and forest licensees to help ensure, through the Forest Development Plan Review Process, that areas outside the park boundary are managed in accordance with the *Forest Practices Code of British Columbia Act* to protect viewscales.
- Work with the Ministry of Forests and other agencies to protect the visual integrity of the park from impacts of adjacent uses.
- Encourage cooperative management with the adjacent National and Alberta parks.
- Liaise on a regular basis with groups representing park users and commercial operators to ensure that the park management concerns benefit from the greatest possible input.
- Consult with First Nations on the actions that affect their traditional use.
- Continue to provide a seasonal ranger program with periodic winter patrols as funding allows.
- Use volunteers where possible to enhance park management.
- Continue to prepare Park Annual Operating Plans to determine the annual management requirements of the parks including the management actions to be implemented.

- Work with commercial operators, tourism associations and the media to portray the park in an appropriate manner and create expectations fitting of a wilderness park.
- Use an informal approach to promoting and advertising the park.
- Maintain the natural character of the park by limiting any signage to where it is necessary for visitor safety or the protection of sensitive sites.
- Work with National and Alberta Parks to coordinate park information to ensure public information is current and accurate.
- Ensure that research relating to the role of First Nations in the parks involves First Nations peoples and the Heritage Conservation Branch. Research opportunities will require a Park Use Permit.
- Produce education and information brochures on the themes described above.
- In concert with First Nations develop and present information on aboriginal cultural heritage features and themes of the park.
- Manage bear/human conflict in accordance with the BC Parks' Bear-People Conflict Prevention Plan
- Ensure the protection of rare, endangered and at risk species from visitor impacts.