

INTERIM POLICY STATEMENT MABEL LAKE PARK

I. OUTLINE

- A. Mabel Lake Park is intended primarily as a recreation park catering to destination lake-oriented activities. Emphasis is on family camping, fishing, swimming and boating. Provision for regional day use recreation and nature interpretation of this natural region is also proposed.
- B. Within this region, Mabel Lake Park is intended to offer recreational opportunities distinct from those available in the more intensively developed recreation sites of the Okanagan and Shuswap areas. The design proposed for this park offers direct camper access to the lakeshore and a variety of camping arrangements.

II. CLASSIFICATION AND ZONING

Class: Park

Category: Recreation (see map, appendix 1).

Land Type Zone: Recreation

Use Zones: Accommodation

Day Use

Service

Natural

(Note: Interpretation and preservation zones to be identified.)

III. MANAGEMENT POLICIES

A. NATURAL RESOURCES

1.) Alienations

(a) Watersheds -

Commitment - No watershed reserves have been established over the park area. Water licenses exist on Taylor Creek under title to the Parks Branch. Provincial flood control requirements restrict facility development within the flood plain of Mabel Lake, namely no habitable buildings within 5' elevation or 25' laterally of the visible natural high water level.

Policy - No future alienations of water resources within the park should be permitted.

(b) Land and Minerals -

Commitment - No mineral claims or leases are located in Mabel Lake Park. A mineral reserve has been established over the area surrounding the park. There are no current trespasses over the park; however, there is a commitment to provide access to private properties south of the park (present access is through the park).

Policy - No further alienation of land and mineral resources in the park should be permitted. Access to private lots south of the park should be accommodated outside the park.

(c) Wildlife and Fish -

Commitment - No wildlife or fishery alienations occur in Mabel Lake Park.

Policy - No future alienations of fishery and wildlife resources in the park should be permitted.

(d) Forests -

Commitment - No timber lease or special use permits are located within the park.

Policy - No future alienations of forest resources should be permitted in the park.

(e) Agriculture -

Commitment - Mabel Lake Park is excluded from the agricultural land reserves. Grazing has occurred in the past, but no permits exist for the park.

Policy - No future alienations of agricultural resources in the park should be permitted.

(f) Historic and Cultural -

Commitment - Archaeological sites within Mabel Lake Park have been identified. Information on the prehistory of Mabel Lake Park is pending from the Archaeological Sites Advisory Board. No other cultural features remain, with the exception of old roads, two houses of former occupants and a cleared meadow at the south park boundary.

Policy - Archaeological sites shall be protected in accordance with the Archaeological and Historic Sites Protection Act.

(g) Ecological Reserves -

Commitment - None.

Policy - Not applicable.

2.) Management

(a) Watersheds -

Protection of the watersheds of Taylor and Latewhos Creek is required to protect spawning areas, ensure future flood control, and preserve the integrity of these features.

(See constraint #2.) Provincial flood control requirements for facility development shall be applied.

(b) Land and Minerals –

Park boundaries should be extended over the foreshore of Mabel Lake to a distance of 5 chains out from the high water line. B.C. Forest Service should be petitioned to establish a buffer zone around the park restricting logging in recognition of aesthetic and recreational values of the area (F.S. commitment required).

(c) Wildlife and Fish –

No hunting shall be permitted in Mabel Lake Park in accordance with Schedule “A”, Park Act Regulations 1539. No critical wildlife habitat areas occur in the park. Some fish spawning takes place at the mouth of Taylor and Latewhos Creeks. There is a commitment to protect fish spawning areas and wildlife habitats within the park. The implications of possible future wildlife grazing on vegetation management of open grass areas of the park should be reviewed by park management staff.

(d) Forests –

Tree clearing to create open grass areas in the campground will be required, consistent with the approved park concept. Tree clearing along the shore of Mabel Lake should be minimized to prevent erosion. Hazardous trees in intensive use areas should be removed under direction from management staff.

Fire suppression in the park is the joint responsibility of the B.C. Forest Service and Parks Branch management staff. A fire management plan for the park is required.

(e) Agriculture –

Not applicable

(f) Historic and Cultural –

Once an archaeological assessment is completed, a program for protection and/or interpretation of prehistoric features should be developed for the park. Special consideration of these features is required in facility development (see constraint #1). There is a commitment to remove former residences from the park.

- (g) Ecological Reserves –
Not applicable

B. PEOPLE

1.) Recreation

- (a) Type of Access -

Vehicle access to Mabel Lake Park is provided by a secondary access road and logging road originating at Lumby, 14 miles east of Vernon. Logging activity during summer months creates conflicts with recreationists on this road. Upgrading of the last three miles would largely alleviate the public safety hazard. Long-term plans are to extend this road north to the Trans-Canada Highway.

Boat access to Mabel Lake Park is at present unrestricted, although use has been limited to lakeshore cottagers or access from within the park. There are no restrictions to the beaching of small boats along the lakeshore of the park at present. Boat access areas will be designated.

- (b) Accommodation –

At present, the park caters primarily to regional fishermen and family groups who utilize the open field at the south end of the park. Camper vehicle use predominates. Basic garbage and toilet facilities are provided. Estimated maximum summer weekend camper use is 200 persons per day.

- (c) Day Use -

Of minor significance at Mabel Lake Park is regional day use associated with fishing, boating and beach activities. Maximum use is estimated at 100 persons per day.

- (d) Dispersed Back Country Use -

Dense forest cover and lack of access restrict extensive recreational use of the park at present. With a trail program, the potential demand for extensive recreation will increase.

- (e) Seasonal Use -

The present summer use period extends from late May to September. The potential for winter use appears limited in the near future.

- (f) Preservation –

Preservation of undeveloped areas of the park is a function of access restrictions. No special preservational requirements are needed for Mabel Lake Park except for identified archaeological features.

(g) Group Use –

Some organized group use from Camp Vernon occurs in Mabel Lake Park, involving Army manoeuvres. Group use in terms of families and friends camping together is also recorded. A detailed review of Army activities is required to determine future policy towards this type of park use.

2.) Information Provision

No official public information is at present available on this park. For the immediate future, information needs will be nominal, except regarding hazards created by the access road. It would be desirable not to generate increased park use through official information until Stage I of the development plan is implemented.

3.) Education Programs

No educational programs operate in Mabel Lake Park. The park has some potential for school outdoor activities as a satellite to the North Okanagan area.

4.) Interpretation Programs

At present, no interpretive programs are available in the park. A naturalist program and trail program are proposed as part of Stage II of the park development plan. Interpretive plans for the park and region are required.

C. DEVELOPMENT LEVELS

1.) Current Development

Present park development consists of an open grass parking/camping area, pit toilets, and a service area. A new forest access road has been constructed through the park, bypassing proposed use areas.

2.) Quality Factor

The concept for Mabel Lake Park is to provide opportunities for lake-oriented camping, picnicking, boating, fishing, beach use, nature interpretation, and extensive upland activities. Intensive use will be limited to the areas zoned on the attached map (appendix 1), with natural buffers separating use areas. The remainder of the park will be retained in a natural state.

It is proposed that Stage I and II development be limited to 125 vehicle access campsites south of Taylor Creek, 15 walk-in campsites north of Taylor Creek plus 80 day use parking spaces, 20 boat launch parking spaces, a boat launch, picnic site and beach area at the southern end of the park. Possible Stage III development would include either a 125 vehicle-access campground or group campsites plus 15 walk-in campsites in the area between Taylor and Latewhos Creeks, and is contingent upon assessments of regional camping needs, park carrying capacity, and stability of lower Latewhos Creek delta for recreational use. No expansion of day use and camping capacity is projected beyond Stage II at this time.

The concept for camping at this park is to provide a variety of camping settings ranging from private forested sites to clustered sites adjacent to open grass areas linked to lakefront beaches.

This will involve clearing of selected forest areas and substituting a grassed landscape. Lakeshore areas should be retained in a natural state where possible except where access improvement are required adjacent to open camping areas.

The level of facility development planned for Mabel Lake Park is to be consistent with the informal, destination-oriented qualities of this site. Services will be centralized in camping areas, and will ultimately include flush toilets, hard surfaced roads and landscape management (grass mowing and minimal irrigation) in cleared openings.

Initially, however, facility development will be less sophisticated (pit toilets, gravel roads, basic water supply) and an assessment at the end of Stage I will indicate the degree of upgrading of services for future development stages.

Due to the special user and landscape management considerations implied in the concept for Mabel Lake Park, a management plan for the park will be required.

3.) Future Development

Proposed future development of Mabel Lake Park includes:

Stage I - Day Use Area - 25v. parking lot, picnic area, boat launch, 20v. boat launch parking lot, basic water system, pit toilets, cabanas.

- Campground - 60 sites (vehicle access) including all basic services.

- Service Area -

- Information Program - for park and region.

Stage II - Day Use Area - 50v. parking lot, flush toilets.

- Campground - 65 sites (vehicle access) including all services.

- Walk-in Campsites - 15 sites north of Taylor Creek.

- Summer Residence -

- Interpretation Program - summer naturalist, trails.

Stage III - Group campground -

- Campground - (125 sites) including all services (vehicle access).

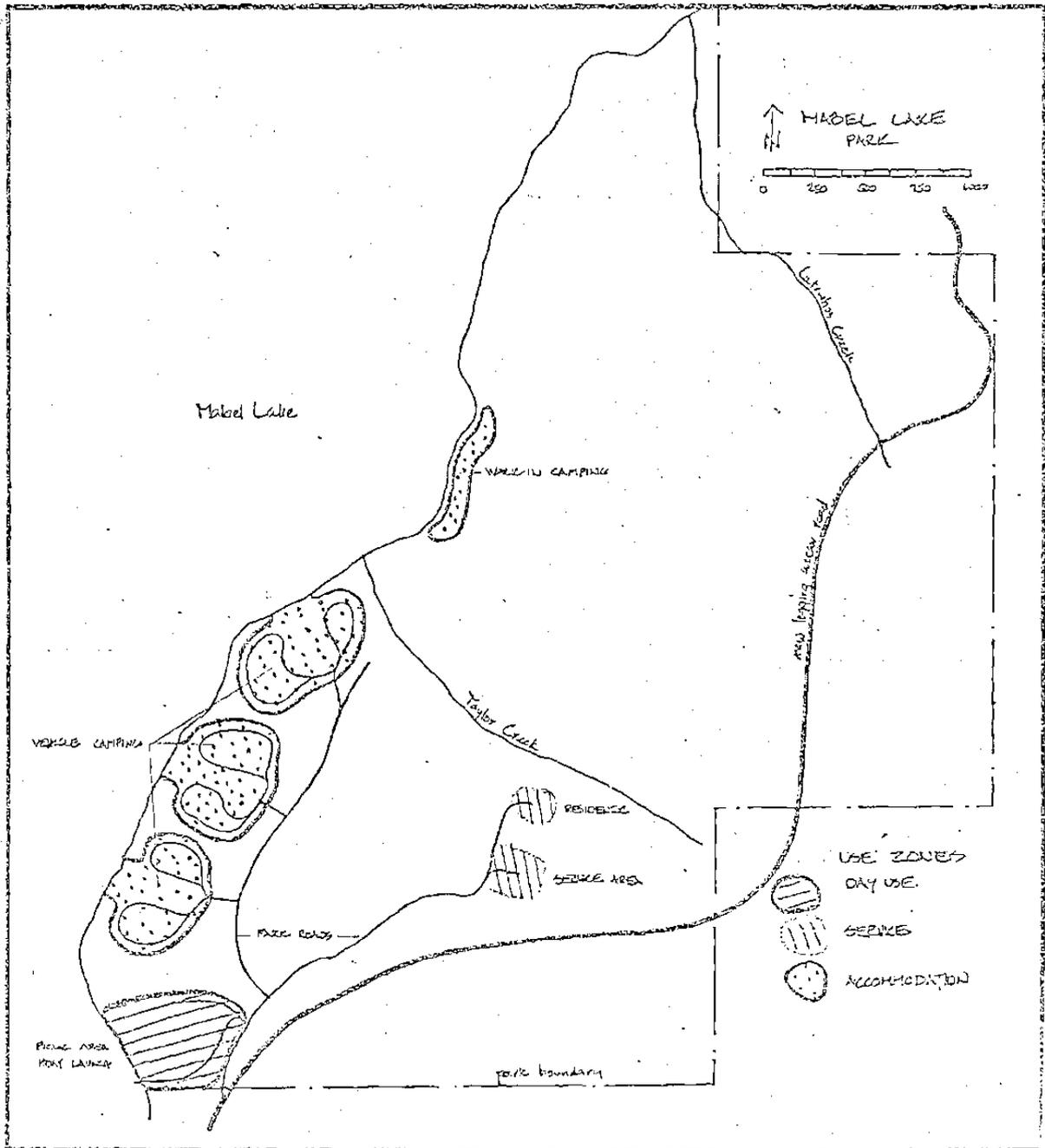
IV. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

See attached chart, appendix 2.

V. CONSTRAINTS

- 1.) No park development should be undertaken in areas containing known archaeological features without an assessment of the preservational/interpretive values of such features.
- 2.) Stage III development north of Taylor Creek should not be undertaken without an assessment of the flooding potential from Latewhos Creek and a review of regional Parks Branch recreational objectives, and desirable park carrying capacity.
- 3.) Existing residences which pre-date park establishment should be removed from the park. Disturbance to the natural conditions of the park should be minimized during removal.
- 4.) Road access to the park shall be designed so as to maximize public safety and minimize conflict with non-recreational traffic.

APPENDIX I
MABEL LAKE PARK



IV: FUTURE DIRECTION – SUMMARY

	FACILITIES & PROGRAMS				STAFF	RESOUR CE MANAGE MENT	SERVICES		
	RENOVA TIONS & REPLACE MENT	UPGRA DING	COMPLE TION OF APPROV ED PLANS	NEW FACILI TIES & PROGR AMS			RESEA RCH	PLAN NING	ENGINE ERING
P H A S E 1				Stage I day use Stage I campgro und Stage I Service area	3 seasona l mainte nance staff	Improved public access (Hwys Dept.)	Review of service require ments	Site plan stages I and II Interpre tive assessm ent and plan	Stage I services plan
P H A S E 2				Stage II day use Stage II campgro und Residenc e Walk-in campsite s Interpret ative program Informat ion program	1 seasona l mainte nance staff 1 seasona l naturali st				Stage II services plan
P H A S E 3				Camping north of Taylor Ck Stage III				Review of regional campin g objectiv es	Assessmen t of Latewhos Ck. delta