

7.0 COMMUNICATIONS

Managing current information about the parks is an important component of managing visitor use and enjoyment. Information and its management can:

- serve to set visitor expectations and assist in planning recreational uses;
- promote outdoor etiquette and careful use of park resources; and
- create an awareness and appreciation about cultural features, natural setting and conservation.

Marble Range and Edge Hills Parks are primarily wilderness parks, providing opportunities for protection of wildlife and their habitats and for backcountry recreation. The role of the communications strategy is to support the achievement of these goals.

7.1 Marketing and Promotion

Marketing or promotion of a park can affect the level of use and the type of visitor it attracts. Consequently, information and promotion strategies must be consistent with the objectives of the parks.

The conservation and wilderness values of the parks must be incorporated in information and marketing strategies. There are concerns that promoting the values or backcountry recreation opportunities could lead to significant increases in the number of visitors and have correspondingly negative effects on wildlife and other park values. Consequently, care must be taken in the type of information program that is undertaken. Active advertising or promotion of values or activities is not appropriate for these parks.

For the term of this plan, BC Parks will provide basic information about these parks that describes some access routes and public safety information for park users, and lets users know how to protect park values during their visit.

Every effort should be made to ensure that there is consistency between commercial recreation users and BC Parks with respect to the accuracy of information provided and the level of promotion of park use.

Objectives

- o To ensure that published public information about Marble Range and Edge Hills Parks is consistent with park vision and roles.
- o To portray the role of these parks in conserving important wildlife habitat and populations.
- o To provide accurate and appropriate information for low use and low impact backcountry recreation.

Strategies

- ◆ Work with government agencies, commercial operators and tourism associations or groups to portray the park in a manner that encourages the awareness of the sensitivities of these areas to increased visitation.
- ◆ Do not actively promote or market these parks.
- ◆ Create an in-park handout that will focus on maintaining low levels of use, public safety and protection of park values, including such elements as outdoor safety, wilderness and conservation ethics, firewood conservation, cultural values, human waste disposal, bear safety, and trail etiquette. In-park handout preparation should recognize the special sensitivities of Edge Hills Park.
- ◆ Signing should be small and warn visitors of the backcountry nature of the area and of the absence of facilities and services.

7.2 Nature Appreciation

The natural and cultural values of these parks have appreciation, interpretation and educational potential. Interpretive programs can build an appreciation for the historical and natural features that the parks have to offer, and promote stewardship and support for parks and their values.

Wildlife viewing and nature appreciation are popular in these parks. When viewing wildlife, animals should not be disturbed, particularly in times of physiological stress during winter and spring.

Objectives

- To promote stewardship for these parks and their values
- To encourage visitor appreciation and understanding of the natural and cultural values of these parks.

Strategies

- ◆ Provide educational materials on wildlife viewing that includes information on ethics and intrusion on wildlife when animals are under stress.
- ◆ Work with commercial recreation operators, local environmental groups and schools to encourage private sector development of environmental education materials and opportunities.
- ◆ Develop and implement interpretive strategies for these parks that focus on their contributions to the protected area system, their natural and cultural values and desired wilderness ethics.

Consider the possibility of developing an off-site interpretive opportunity at an appropriate location (for example, in Clinton or along Highway 97).