

MOUNT MAXWELL PROVINCIAL PARK

PURPOSE STATEMENT AND ZONING PLAN

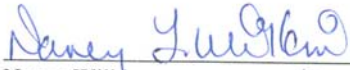
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Approved by:



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Date: March 14/03



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Date: March 23/03

MOUNT MAXWELL PROVINCIAL PARK Purpose Statement and Zoning Plan

Primary Role

The **primary** role of Mount Maxwell Provincial Park is to offer a variety of day use recreational activities such as picnicking, photography, nature appreciation, hiking and wildlife viewing in a natural setting. A distinctive Salt Spring Island landmark, Mount Maxwell Park provides spectacular views into Burgoyne Bay, Fulford Valley, Samson Narrows and across to the Saanich Peninsula and Gulf Islands. Park facilities include a parking lot, viewing area, benches, pit toilets, information shelter, trails and picnic tables.

There is a long history of tourism use at Mount Maxwell. The park is a favourite destination for local residents and visitors to Salt Spring Island. Together with Ruckle Provincial Park located at Beaver Point, these parks provide a variety of recreational opportunities as well as protecting important natural and cultural values found on Salt Spring Island, that complement other protected areas found in the Southern Gulf Islands.

Secondary Role

The **secondary** role is to protect a remnant Douglas-fir forest within the Southern Gulf Islands Ecosection. The park is adjacent to Mount Maxwell Ecological Reserve, Nature Trust Lands and the newly acquired Texada lands surrounding Burgoyne Bay. Together, these lands form one of the largest contiguous blocks of protected areas in the Gulf Islands. This unique area contains a mosaic of habitats from estuary and rocky shoreline to old growth Douglas-fir forests and Garry oak ecosystems. The steep rock cliffs on the south face of Mount Maxwell provide important nesting areas for species at risk including turkey vultures, peregrine falcons and several species of bats. The park contains several threatened species of plants, including scalepod, Gray's desert parsley, California hedge parsley and elfin moss.

Once official park designation of the Texada Lands has occurred, Mount Maxwell Provincial Park will be part of a larger protected area ecosystem that, along with Capital Regional District parks, will protect and conserve over 1,400 hectares on southwestern Salt Spring Island, including one of Canada's largest Garry oak meadows (a red-listed plant community).

Tertiary Role

The **tertiary** role of the park is to protect cultural values. Mount Maxwell is an important place in Cowichan Tribe traditions. Known as Hwmat'estum or "bent over place," Mount Maxwell features prominently in First Nations' origin stories about the relationship of man and the land. Archaeological sites of spiritual significance lie below Mount Maxwell while extensive middens marking 3,000 year old settlements circle the bay, known as Hwaaqwum or "place of merganser."

Pioneers, such as the Maxwell brothers, cleared the lowlands and remnants of their settlements remain in the park.

Known Management Issues	Response
Disturbance to sensitive nesting sites and other areas by human impact.	Provide fencing and interpretative signage needed to protect natural park values. Undertake inventory of species at risk. Provide signage and increased monitoring to reduce threat of forest fire and vandalism. Develop overall trail/recreation plan and linkages to new protected areas.
Impact of invasive species (e.g. Scotch broom and feral sheep/goats).	Develop vegetation management plan to provide recommendations on removal of invasive plants and protection of sensitive plant communities from feral animal grazing.
Protection of natural and cultural values.	Need better knowledge/inventory of natural (plant species) and cultural values; identify rare and endangered species. Continue communication with First Nations on cultural values in the Mount Maxwell area.
Addition of new protected area lands will complement this park and Mount Maxwell Ecological Reserve.	Develop a management plan that incorporates the Burgoyne Bay lands, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • public input and community support as well as cooperative-management arrangements; • preparation of a Background Report on the natural and cultural values on the newly acquired lands; • cooperate and liaise with CRD who will be developing their regional park management plan in next 5 years. Designate the recently acquired lands as a Class A park; add foreshore component.

Zoning

The western portion of the park will be zoned Special Feature to protect remnant old growth Coastal Douglas fir forests and Garry oak meadows that are contiguous to Mount Maxwell Ecological Reserve and the Nature Trust lands (approximately 76 hectares or 38% of the park).

An Intensive Recreation Zone will follow the road corridor from the park boundary to the main parking lot near the destination viewing area at the summit of Mount Maxwell (approximately 9 hectares or 5% of the park). Picnic tables, pit toilets, trails and informational signage are all located within this zone.

The rest of the park (approximately 114 hectares or 57%) will be zoned Natural Environment.

Conservation

Representation
- ecosection

- Southern Gulf Islands Ecosection. This ecosection is under-represented with only 5.6% protected. Mount Maxwell Park is a significant contributor (ranks 4th), providing 7.24% of the overall representation of this ecosection. The continued acquisition of private lands for inclusion in the future Southern Gulf Islands National Park Reserve will provide improved representation of this under-represented and highly fragmented ecosection.

- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant

- CDFmm – 2.43% of this biogeoclimatic variant is protected in the protected areas system. Mount Maxwell Park contributes only 0.3% of the overall representation of the CDFmm.
CWHxm1 – 2.07% of this variant is protected in the protected areas system. Mount Maxwell Park contributes 1.99% of the overall representation of the CWHxm1. Within the Southern Gulf Islands Ecosection, 8% of the CWHxm1 is protected; Mount Maxwell Park contributes 65.7% of the overall protected area representation of CWHxm1 in the Southern Gulf Islands.

Special Feature

- Interesting geological rock formation with pockets of old growth Douglas-fir and Garry oak.

Rare/Endangered Values

- Red-listed species include scalepod, Gray's desert parsley and California hedge parsley; elfin moss (insect) – blue-listed; Rock cliffs provide habitat for species at risk including turkey vultures, peregrine falcons and several species of bats.

Scientific/Research Opportunities

- Adjacent to Mount Maxwell Ecological Reserve and share some sensitive plant communities; require more research information on area's natural and cultural values.

Recreation

Representation
backcountry

-

destination	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Major Gulf Islands tourist attraction providing island residents and visitors spectacular views.
travel corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>	
local recreation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Popular island park offering a variety of day use activities.
Special Opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Education/Interpretation Opportunities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Provides scenic photography, wildlife viewing/nature appreciation; part of larger protected area ecosystem.

Cultural Heritage

Representation	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Special Feature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mount Maxwell area significant to First Nations culture (spiritual sites may be located in the park).

Other Management Considerations

Other Designations	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Relationship to other PAs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Will become a major component of larger Burgoyne Bay Protected Area and adjacent Mount Maxwell Ecological Reserve/Nature Trust lands.
Co-operative Management Arrangements	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Partnerships	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cooperation with CRD, Islands Trust – stewardship with local interest groups, Ecological Reserve warden.
Vulnerability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Fire, invasive plant species and vandalism.
Relationship to other Strategies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PMHL program and establishment of Gulf Islands National Park Reserve.

Area: 199 hectares

Date of establishment: October 21, 1938