

Section Seven

Communications



Communications

Introduction

This section deals with the ways in which information about Naikoon is communicated: i.e. shared and presented. This section also puts a communication strategy into a context by describing the various roles information can play in Naikoon's management, in people's enjoyment of Naikoon, and in increasing awareness and knowledge of Naikoon's natural and cultural features and values as well as fostering environmental stewardship. There is also a recognition of the numerous ways in which information about Naikoon flows between groups and individuals and BC Parks.

Role of Awareness

Information about Naikoon can play a number of roles. Firstly, it can help people organize their holiday and plan what recreation activities they can do in Naikoon. Secondly, it can foster environmental stewardship by increasing people's awareness of the natural and cultural values of Naikoon in a local, regional, and provincial context. Thirdly, information can increase awareness of resource issues within Naikoon and promote outdoor etiquette and careful use. Fourthly, it can serve a role in informing the local non-aboriginal population and visitors about Haida history and thereby foster greater understanding between aboriginal and non-aboriginal people.

The second, third and fourth roles stated are of particular importance to this management plan, because of the relationship between BC Parks and the public, and, in particular, the Island community, in the stewardship of

Naikoon. Information about environmental values can encourage a wider understanding of the reasons for avoiding recreation activities in sensitive areas, such as bird habitat within the Rose Spit Ecological Reserve. Information about cultural values will contribute to the protection of Haida sites and the continuation of the Haida's relationship to Naikoon.

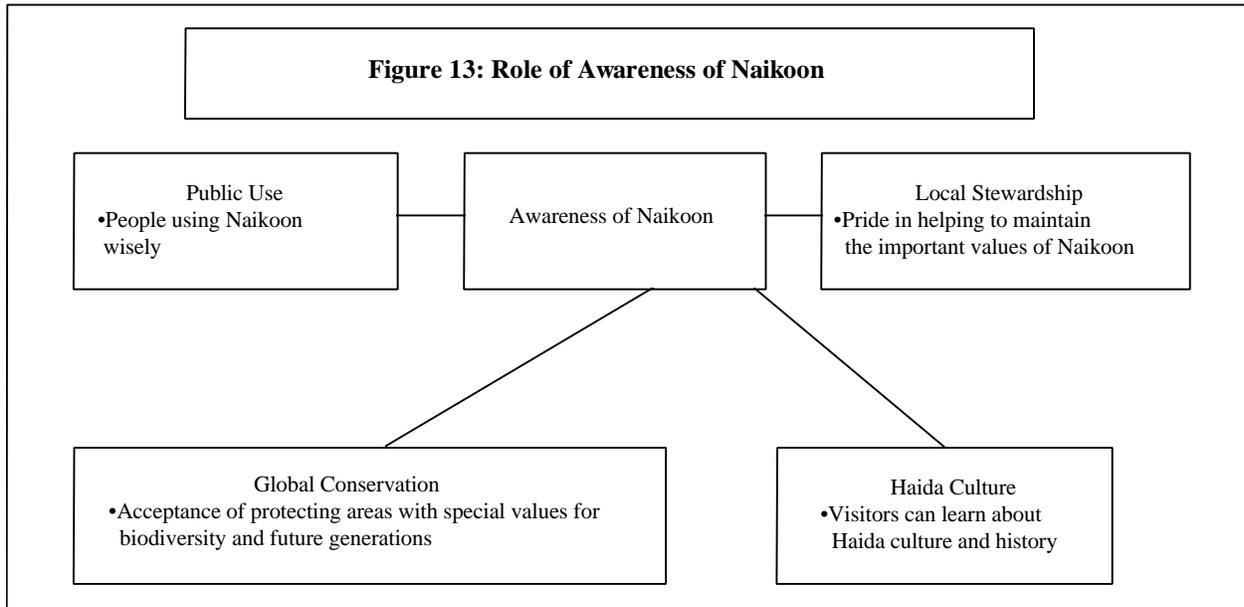
In this way, information can lead to a greater involvement in Naikoon's stewardship by people who use Naikoon. Awareness of Naikoon's values also supports local pride in Naikoon and a general awareness of how Naikoon contributes to protecting special values and biodiversity on provincial, national and global scales (Figure 12).

Pre-trip Planning and Orientation Communications

Information in Naikoon is provided in handouts and on signs to help people become oriented and aware of available opportunities. Aside from providing important information to visitors, signs also create an identity for Naikoon and can provide a place to inform visitors about other local and regional tourism and outdoor recreation opportunities.

Most BC Parks offices and BC Tourism Infocentres provide information about Naikoon to people planning their trip. BC Parks brochures describe how to reach Naikoon, what facilities are available, and what activities Naikoon offers. The brochure

Figure 13: Role of Awareness of Naikoon



generally provides enough information for people planning to visit the frontcountry areas of Naikoon. People planning extended backcountry trips (East Beach) can obtain details from Naikoon's headquarters in Tlell and from BC Parks' offices in Terrace, Smithers, and Prince George. A video on Naikoon, prepared by the Knowledge Network, can be seen by visitors when they reach the headquarters at Tlell.

Information about Naikoon will be provided to people upon request, however, there is no need for promotion strategies that encourage increased use of Naikoon. Currently, Naikoon is known well on a local and regional scale and also attracts visitors from the rest of British Columbia and Canada as well as international tourists. The level of tourist use must be balanced with the level of tourist facilities available on the Queen Charlotte Islands-Haida Gwaii and in Naikoon and must be sensitive to the local uses of the area.

Information about Naikoon needs to be consistent and accurate and reflect the appropriate "image". This is particularly important for people who are planning their first trip to Naikoon. The image of Naikoon is strongly linked to the Vision Statement described earlier in this plan. The image presented to the public must be firmly grounded in the concepts presented by this management plan.

Objective

- To provide current, accurate, helpful information about Naikoon to assist people in planning their trip.
- To supply information to orient visitors in Naikoon and to supply information

about other local recreation and tourism opportunities and provincial parks.

Actions

- Work with Island tourism associations and communities in providing appropriate pre-trip planning information.
- Ensure brochures and handouts on Naikoon remain current and accurate.
- Provide safety and information signs where needed in the Intensive Recreation and Natural Environment zones.
- Maintain the natural character of the Wilderness Recreation Zone by limiting signs to cases where they are necessary for visitor safety or for the protection of sensitive sites.
- Continue to work with Island tourism associations, the Haida, Chambers of Commerce, Parks Canada, and communities in providing regional tourism and outdoor recreation information.
- Develop a plan for how to best use a portion of Naikoon's headquarters in Tlell for visitor information.

Natural and Cultural Values Communications

Naikoon can provide an important role in sharing information about conservation, ecology, natural processes and features, Haida culture and history, and European settlement of Naikoon's interior. This type of information helps to cultivate an

understanding of how Naikoon is linked to the current lifestyle of residents and how it helped shape and influence the Haida culture today. Communications also has a role in conserving special features and biodiversity on a regional, provincial, and national level.

The Information Network

Information about Naikoon's cultural, historical, and natural values is available in a variety of forms: academic research and studies, published material, government reports, and individuals knowledgeable about Naikoon. This information can play a role in guiding how Naikoon is managed, how people enjoy its features, setting and opportunities, and can be shared with visitors to increase awareness about natural, cultural, and historical values. Information for preparing this management plan was gained from local volunteers on the study team, from the Haida, from other government agencies and reports, from staff managing Naikoon, and from the draft background document prepared in March 1992.

The numerous sources and forms of information, the "network", will continue to grow as more information about Naikoon's features and values is gathered. BC Parks will continue to be guided by new information and must consider how to integrate it into managing Naikoon and how to share the knowledge with other agencies, the public, and information liaison strategies with schools.

This management plan identifies the types of studies that are currently needed, such as the study to determine the effects of beaver on Naikoon's interior salmon spawning areas (see Fish and Shellfish section). Knowledge gained from such studies requires information from a variety of sources and, in

turn, can be used in a variety of ways. It is important to consider the link between information gathered for resources management and its uses for interpretation and education programs in Naikoon.

Naikoon is suited to providing information on its role in conserving a representative area of the Queen Charlotte Lowlands eco-section, focusing on the following attributes:

Natural:

- Dune formation and dune vegetation;
- Beach formation, life forms, ecology;
- Ecology of bogs and plant associations;
- Coastal western hemlock vegetation communities;
- Wildlife viewing and ecology;
- Inter-tidal marine life; and,
- Traditional (Haida) ecological knowledge.

Cultural:

- Historical and contemporary Haida culture with respect to Naikoon; and,
- Colonial activities in Naikoon.

Objective

- To share information about natural and cultural features and values in the area in order to foster and maintain appreciation and understanding of Naikoon's significance and the importance in protecting these features and values.

Actions

- Develop a communications strategy for Naikoon which incorporates the *Regional Interpretation and Information Plan*⁷ prepared by BC Parks in 1989. Communication themes will address the importance of Naikoon and its Ecological Reserves as protected areas as well as the main cultural and natural themes. BC Parks will work with the local volunteer group and the Haida in developing a communications strategy that will consist of information, interpretation (including interpretive trails), education, outreach programs, and community relations.
- In cooperation with the Haida, develop an educational guide to Naikoon which outlines activities relevant to Naikoon's natural and cultural themes for students and teachers. In conjunction with preparing this guide, develop strategies for integrating information about Naikoon into Island schools.
- Work with the Island volunteer group and the Haida to prepare a nature guide for Naikoon.

⁷ This Plan was prepared by BC Parks staff to develop a strategy that best incorporates each park's special features and resources into a regional interpretative strategy.