

Section One

What is a Management Plan?



Introduction

A management¹ plan is prepared by BC Parks for guiding how a park will be managed over a ten year term. It sets out objectives and actions for conservation, development, interpretation, and operation of a park. A management plan relies on current information relating to such things as natural resources, cultural activities, recreation uses, and activities occurring on surrounding lands. This information is available from park managers, discussions with other governmental agencies, previously prepared reports, study teams, public interest groups, and from the general public.

The process for preparing a plan involves a rigorous analysis of the overall goals of the park, patterns of use, management objectives, and possible sources of conflict among park policies. Through the process various options for managing the park are developed and assessed. In choosing the most appropriate options, the intent is to reach a balance between protecting the natural resources from damage (conservation) and managing human uses of the area (cultural activities, recreation).

Although every large park will have a management plan prepared, the timing for preparation can depend on many factors. For example, the priority for a management plan can be increased if there are serious management issues that need to be resolved.

¹ When this project began, this document was called a “master plan”. BC Parks now refers to master plans as management plans. Thus, this plan’s text was changed to use this current language.

Management plans provide strategies to deal with immediate issues, but must also set direction for long-term strategies. This means that the plan will generally contain numerous statements describing management actions that will need attention. Since BC Parks cannot carry out every task at the same time, the plan must also rank the priority of the management actions.

BC Parks prepares management plans with a high degree of public involvement. The general public and public interest groups have opportunities to provide comments to BC Parks through a variety of means including public meetings and questionnaires. In the planning process for Naikoon, there was assistance from the Haida and by a local volunteer study team.

Each section of the management plan provides a brief summary of relevant background information. More detailed information can be obtained from the Naikoon Management Plan Background Document which has been prepared separately.

This management plan is presented in eight main sections:

1. the context of the plan is discussed with a summary of background information on Naikoon;
2. the role of Naikoon and a vision statement are presented. These provide the general essence of the importance of Naikoon and the critical goals and principles that provide the long-term foundation for its management;
3. relationship with island community;
4. the plan presents Naikoon’s zoning which defines in general terms how different areas will be managed;

5. the objectives and actions for managing human activities that may affect the natural and cultural aspects are then discussed;
6. the plan discusses the objectives and actions for providing outdoor recreation opportunities and for providing information about Naikoon;
7. the communications strategy is presented; and,
8. the priorities for implementing the management actions are presented.

Approval of this management plan forms an agreement between BC Parks and the public regarding how Naikoon will be managed. In essence the plan is a working document with a set of documented strategies and priorities that have been agreed to and in this way the plan has an important monitoring role.

Relationship With Other Land Use Planning

Management planning processes provide a mechanism for public review, discussion, and support for management strategies. In this respect, Naikoon's management plan must be considered in terms of its relationship with broader conservation and recreation goals for Haida Gwaii, the province, and with other land use strategies.

Additions to Naikoon have been suggested by the public through the Parks and Wilderness for the 90s process. This process was initiated in December 1990 by BC Parks and the Ministry of Forests to identify study areas that would be considered for park or wilderness designation. In 1992, the Parks and Wilderness for the 90's process evolved

into the Protected Areas Strategy to provide a much more comprehensive analysis and direction for protecting natural, cultural and recreation values. The target for this process is to develop and expand a system of protected areas that will conserve 12 percent of the province by the year 2000. The public submissions for park additions are now being dealt with through this process rather than the management planning process.

This management plan provides information about Naikoon's management that is relevant for other federal and provincial government agencies such as the Ministry of Forests, the Fish and Wildlife Branch, and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Information in this plan will assist in a cooperative approach to managing Naikoon's boundary areas and its wildlife and fish resources.

How This Plan Was Prepared

Reason for the Plan

The previous management plan for Naikoon was completed in 1983. It was prepared without public involvement and a number of policies such as the management of vehicle beach use are out of date. Since the time of the 1983 management plan, camping use in Naikoon has doubled and day use has tripled in number. A current management plan is needed to deal with resource management issues and with increasing recreation demands on Naikoon.

Start Up

During the spring, summer and fall of 1991, BC Parks began compiling background information about Naikoon's resources and patterns of visitor use (figure 1). A draft background document was prepared by a team of local consultants supervised by Moore Resource Management of Queen Charlotte City. As well, BC Parks prepared the Terms of Reference for the project. By December 1991, a volunteer Study Team was formed comprising of local residents and covering a variety of interests. BC Parks also met with representatives of the Haida to discuss the management planning process and to gain their support and involvement in the project.

The Study Team plays an important role by providing local knowledge and perspectives on various interests and concerns about how Naikoon is managed. The Study Team operates as an advisory board, giving advice to BC Parks and reviewing material prepared through the planning process. Study Team meetings began in January of 1992 and initially dealt with reviewing background material and a questionnaire, defining issues, and helping to prepare for public meetings.

The Study Team meetings were put on hold over the spring and summer, because the Haida Nation had concerns about being involved in a process that may be taken, as endorsing the provincial park status and prejudicing Haida title. In September 1992, a Tripartite Agreement between Canada, British Columbia, and First Nations that included Haida representatives, decided that the matter of land title dispute would be dealt with through the BC Treaty process. The Naikoon planning process restarted in December of 1992.

Public meetings were held in January 1993 at Sandspit, Queen Charlotte City, Skidegate, Masset, Old Masset, and Port Clements. The meetings provided a forum for people to express their views about various issues concerning Naikoon and to hand out a questionnaire and background information. In order to increase the general awareness of the planning process, ads were put in local and provincial newspapers and information packages and questionnaires were mailed out to Island residents and to provincial recreation and conservation organizations. All responses to the questionnaires, letters, and comments were reviewed by BC Parks and the Study Team.

Preparing the Draft Management Plan

In April 1993, the Study Team met over an entire weekend to review public information and to develop and discuss options which address Naikoon's issues. The intent was to come to an agreement on preferred options that would be written into the draft management plan.

By October 1993 the draft management plan was ready for review by various BC Parks staff knowledgeable in resources management, visitor services, interpretation, outdoor recreation, and Ministry policies and regulations. The intent of the internal review was to ensure that the contents of the plan conform with the *Park Act* and Regulations, is compatible with current policies, and that it contains realistic objectives and management actions.

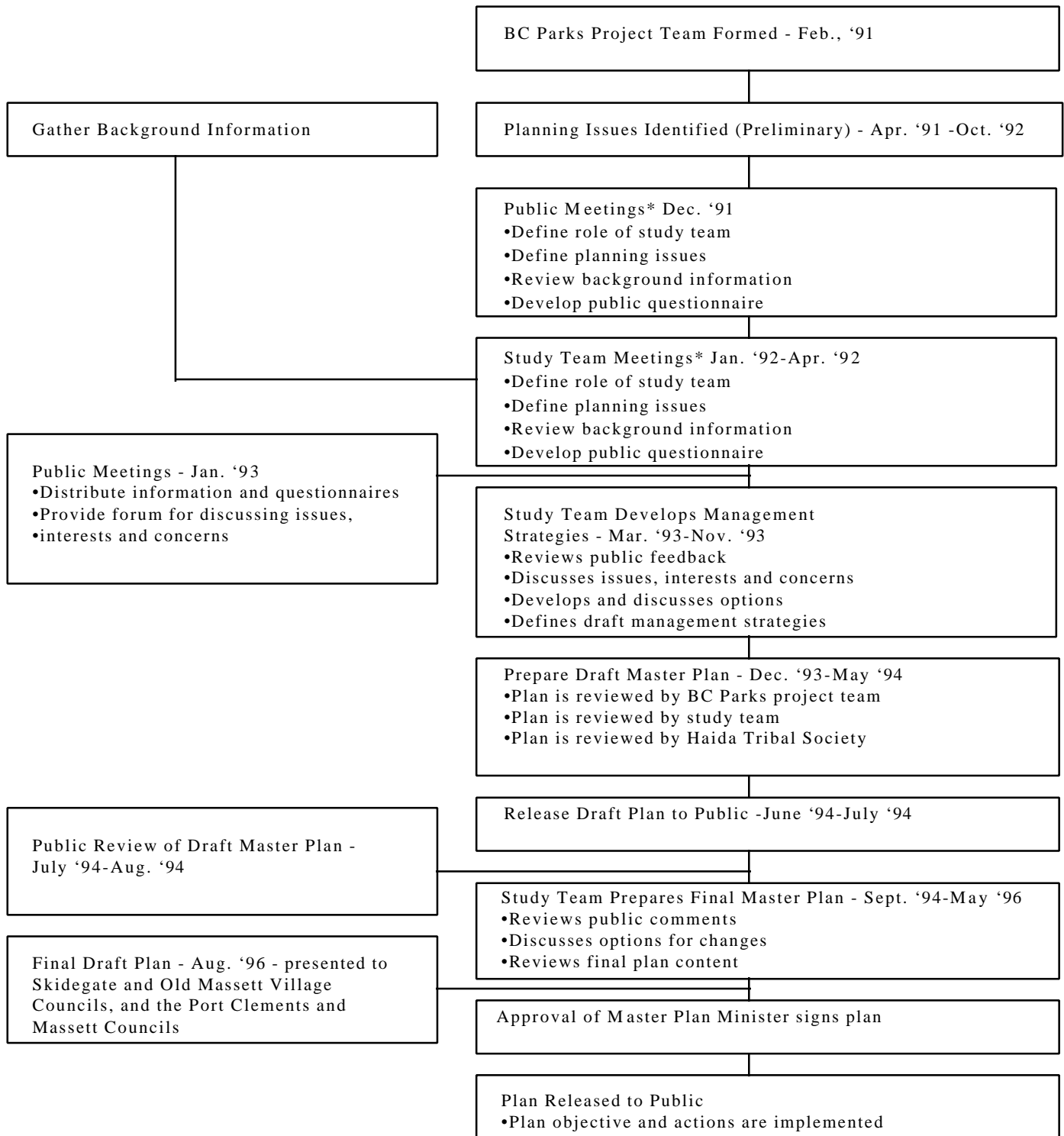
The draft was sent to the Study Team in November 1993 for their review and comment. Between November 1993 and March 1994, the Haida Tribal Society was

asked by the Council of the Haida Nation to review the draft management plan and the society prepared a report with suggested revisions and detailed information of Haida history and culture relating to Naikoon. By May 1994, a second draft was sent to the Study Team for a review before being released to the public. In June 1994, the draft management plan was released to the general public for review. Copies were sent to everyone who attended the public meetings, to provincial organizations, and to anyone responding to newspaper and radio ads announcing the plan's release.

During the summer and fall of 1994, BC Parks received and reviewed comments on the draft management plan and met with interest groups and the Haida. During 1995, BC Parks was active with a newly elected council of Old Masset Village. While the new council reviewed the prepared draft and offered advice and comment to BC Parks, there were parallel negotiations proceeding to enter into a cooperative management agreement with the Old Masset Village Council. Entering into cooperative management agreements with First Nations is relatively new for BC Parks and the negotiations can be complex. As such, the preparation of the final draft management plan was delayed.

By February 1996, the final draft management plan was ready to be reviewed by the Haida, the Study Team, and BC Parks Headquarters staff. Final meetings were held with the Study Team and the Haida Councils during the summer of 1996 in order to ensure there were ample opportunities to review and comment before the final plan was delivered to BC Parks' Minister for approval.

Figure 1: Preparing the Final Draft Plan



*Study Team refers to public interest representatives and BC Parks representatives

Background Summary

Introduction

The name “Naikoon” (meaning long nose) comes from the Haida name “Naii Kun” for House Point (area also known as Rose Spit). As throughout all parts of Haida Gwaii/Queen Charlotte Islands, Naikoon has a long history of occupation and use by the Haida people and figures prominently in their present lifestyle and their history. There are many places of cultural and spiritual importance as well as historic village sites and important food sources throughout Naikoon.

Colonial settlement of the area began in the early 1900s, encouraged by the government in Victoria declaring free Crown Grants. Settlers ambitiously drained wetlands for farming and to raise cattle. The majority of these ventures failed to prosper due to the expense of land clearing and bog drainage, high transportation costs to unreliable Canadian markets, and isolation from friends, family, and neighbours. Many settlers left to serve in World War I and many never returned to their homestead. Only a handful of settlers remained after the Great Depression of the 1930’s. A number of these early settlement lots are still privately owned and interesting evidence of this period of settlement can still be found today.

The Provincial Government designated Naikoon as a Class A Provincial park in 1973 covering an area of about 72,000 hectares comprising a mixture of coastal temperate rainforest ecosystems, wetlands and bogs, sand dunes and almost 100 kilometres of beaches. Also

within Naikoon are unique natural features such as Tow Hill, important bird and other wildlife habitat, and rare and highly specialized plant species. Naikoon lies entirely within the Queen Charlotte Lowland Ecoregion.

Naikoon attracts tourists and local residents looking for a variety of recreational opportunities. People spend most of their time near the ocean, enjoying camping and picnicking, beach walking or driving, overnight hiking trips, fishing, hunting, bird watching, and terrestrial and marine wildlife viewing.

There are also some pleasant recreation opportunities away from the ocean and beaches. These include walks through lush temperate rainforests and peat bogs, boating, camping and picnicking on Mayer Lake, and fishing in a number of Naikoon’s rivers.

Naikoon’s Natural Features and Values

Naikoon lies entirely within the wet hypermaritime subzone of the Coastal Western Hemlock Biogeoclimatic Zone. Much of the interior is a continuous series of raised bogs interspersed with wetland forest communities. These areas support an interesting array of mosses, lichens, liverworts and herbs as well as “bonsai” trees and shrubs.

Closed canopy climax western hemlock forest make up a relatively small proportion of Naikoon’s area. Along the sandy shoreline there is a distinctive forest community affected by salt spray and

See Figure 2 in the Naikoon Map Folio

See Figure 3 in the Naikoon Map Folio

dominated by Sitka spruce. A number of unusual, rare or highly specialized plants occur throughout the sand dunes and wetlands.

Throughout this mosaic of forest and vegetation communities, birds and wildlife find important habitat. An estimated 170 different species of birds occur in Naikoon and 46 of these species breed in the area. The range of habitat from beaches to grassy meadows to old growth forest invites a diversity of species that is unusual within such a relatively small area.

The diversity of land mammals on the Queen Charlotte Islands/Haida Gwaii is low compared to the adjacent mainland. However, the isolation of the islands has led to the evolution of distinct subspecies of most of the native mammals, including the black bear, marten and the weasel.

There are no reptiles and only one native amphibian, the Western toad, known to occur in Naikoon. Little is known about Naikoon's invertebrates, but dragonflies, damselflies and a number of ground beetle species are known to occur in Naikoon. A number of marine mammals, such as the Gray, Humpback and Orca (Killer) whales, and seals and otters can be seen in the nearshore and offshore of Naikoon.

Eleven species of fish occur in Naikoon's freshwater lakes, rivers and streams. These range from salmon species and sculpins to lamprey and sticklebacks. Extensive research on sticklebacks has been carried out within Naikoon and the adjacent Drizzle Lake Ecological Reserve.

There are a number of introduced species inhabiting Naikoon. These include black-tailed deer, beaver, raccoon, muskrat, red

squirrel, rats, tree frogs, pheasants and feral cattle, dogs and cats. Virtually all of these introductions have altered the natural ecosystem of Naikoon. As well, some plant species have been introduced, including grasses, and broom and thistle plants.

A number of important natural features and values are protected within Rose Spit and Tow Hill Ecological Reserves. These include representations of dune ecosystems, and ancient beaches, low elevation bogs and old-growth forests, rare plants, and important bird nesting sites. These Ecological Reserves are set aside, under the *Ecological Reserves Act*, for scientific research and other specialized protection.²

Naikoon's Cultural Values

Naikoon features prominently in the origins, development, and institutions of the Haida (see figure 4). The powerful landscape and dynamic governing systems of the Haida are combined in the creation of proprietary symbols world renowned for their artistic qualities. Village sites throughout Naikoon include: Naii Kun'lnagaay (on the East Coast); Tsaawaagiis 'lannee (near Naii Kun); Xuyaa gandlaa 'lnagaay (Raven Creek Town); and, 'Laanaas (at Cape Ball). Features such as Tao (Tow Hill) and Naii Kun (House Point or Rose Spit) figure prominently in historical accounts of Haida origins. Places such as Yuda'lgans (halibut banks to the north of Naii Kunn) provide food.

² Ecological Reserves are designated to preserve representative examples of B.C.'s ecosystems; protect rare and endangered species in their natural habitat; preserve unique, rare, and outstanding botanical, zoological, and geological phenomenon; and, perpetuate important genetic resources.

These examples are only a small sample of the Haida history of Naikoon. There are compelling reasons for BC Parks and the Haida to work together to accurately present this world view with visitors to Naikoon.

Naikoon has interesting links to colonial history and aging physical evidence such as wagon roads, drainage ditches, and remnants of a wooden railway line still remain today. Although gold prospecting, the fur trade, and free Crown Grants of land were the initial draws to the area, agriculture was the attraction for many of the early colonists. Other ventures such as fish canneries, tourist accommodations, placer mining, and forestry also brought settlers to the area.

Recreation in Naikoon

The most intensive use of Naikoon occurs along North Beach and in the Tlell area. Naikoon is used year round by the Island community, while tourism is limited to the summer months. Most people are attracted to Naikoon for its camping, beach walking, wildlife viewing, fishing, scenery, and enhancement of their lifestyle. The beaches offer natural collectable treasures such as scallops, razor clams, sea shells, and some not-so natural collectibles such as flotsam and jetsam. Nearby trails into the forests of Naikoon offer a scenic “get-a-way” for part of the day. Naikoon’s sandy beaches extend for great distances. Vehicle use on these beaches enables quicker access to remote beaches, such as East Beach, and also enables people to visit the beaches in cool, wet weather. For some other people, the beaches provide a place for a relaxing, “back-to-nature” experience without vehicles.

Since records have been kept, from the mid-1980s, campground use in Naikoon has been

steadily increasing. To accommodate this use, 12 new campsites were added to Agate Beach campground. Day use to the beaches, trails and picnic spots have also been increasing steadily since the mid-1980s.

Lands Excluded From Naikoon

Notwithstanding the issues related to jurisdictional dispute between the Haida and the Governments of Canada and British Columbia, there are 35 surveyed lots, widely distributed throughout Naikoon that are occupied or held by private persons (see Land and Resource Tenure section). BC Parks does not control what occurs on these private lots, but the *Park Act* does not allow private road development across park land to access private lots. Rezoning and subdivision proposals for private inholdings within Naikoon, are administered by the Regional District and referred to BC Parks for comment.

There are two Old Masset “Indian Reserves” within Naikoon³. One at the Hiellen River which is 28.5 hectares, and one at Yakan Point which is 34.8 hectares.

The Tlell Cemetery is located off Beitush Road, and has been used since 1942. There

³ The Old Masset Village Council has not been party to the designations of reserves and are only recently beginning treaty negotiations with Canadian and British Columbia governments. “Indian Reserves” do not reflect the Haida Nation’s assertions of ownership over Haida Gwaii.

See Figure 4 in the Naikoon Map Folio

is a portion of one trapline territory within the southern Naikoon area, but it is inactive and therefore no Park Use Permit is issued.

When Naikoon was designated by the provincial government in 1973, its foreshore boundary excluded most of the razor clam beds, which are managed by the Department of fisheries and Oceans and the Haida nation for commercial harvesting.