

August 8, 2002

Mr. Bruce Strachan, Chair
Recreation Stewardship Panel
c/o Praxis Pacific
3848 St. Georges Ave.
North Vancouver, BC
V7N 1W5

Dear Mr. Strachan;

On behalf of the Province, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you and the other Recreation Stewardship Panel members for taking on this very important task. This government is critically aware of the social, health and economic benefits of the fish, wildlife and parks of our province, and the importance of maintaining these assets undiminished for future generations. You have a special opportunity to make recommendations that can both enhance the protection of these resources and increase the opportunities for the public to use and enjoy them.

Enclosed is an updated statement of mandate and expectations intended to help clarify the Recreation Stewardship Panel's terms of reference. The broad scope of your assignment is recognized. This update provides the Panel with established provincial priorities and direction.

Participation in outdoor recreation has been described as a defining attribute of our British Columbia culture. I know there is a great deal of interest in the work of the Panel. We all look forward to your recommendations.

Best Regards,

Original signed by

Joyce Murray
Minister

Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection

A NEW APPROACH TO FISH, WILDLIFE AND PARK RECREATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

STATEMENT OF MANDATE AND EXPECTATIONS

THE CHALLENGE

British Columbia's fish, wildlife and park resources are without equal in the world. Outdoor recreation is a cultural trademark of the province and a defining characteristic of our quality of life. Recreational use supports significant social, health and economic benefits that are particularly valued in the rural regions of our province.

Through the Core Review and Service Plan processes, the province has confirmed the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection's mandate, which is: 1) to maintain environmental protection standards; 2) to maintain and restore biodiversity; and, 3) to provide fish, wildlife and park recreation opportunities. Ministry budgets have now been allocated to reflect the relative order of priority of this mandate.

The public has a keen interest in maintaining and expanding opportunities to use and enjoy fish, wildlife and parks. However, provision of these opportunities should be less reliant on the general taxpayer and more dependant upon those who most directly benefit from their use. While the province must continue to conserve and protect its fish, wildlife and park resources, we also need to enhance tourism, create jobs, and help expand and diversify the economy of British Columbia.

The challenge is to find new ways to involve all users in paying appropriately for the provision of recreational services and to secure the involvement of all communities and interests in the service delivery. This challenge brings with it a special opportunity to significantly increase both the level of conservation and protection of the province's fish, wildlife and parks and the support of all those that use and cherish these assets.

THE VISION

The following is the province's vision for the future of fish, wildlife and park recreation.

Fish, wildlife and park resources continue to be deeply treasured by British Columbians and are a cornerstone of the provincial tourism economy. The province is renowned for its expanding world class outdoor recreation opportunities. Services that support outdoor recreation are supported by the users and are delivered though a variety of public, private, not-for-profit sector and First Nation partners and have direct links to local

communities. Conservation and protection of British Columbia's fish, wildlife and parks are not diminished by recreational uses and are a showcase to the world of British Columbia's commitment to sustainable resource management.

THE MANDATE

The mandate of the Recreation Stewardship Panel is to provide recommendations to the Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection on new management and funding opportunities to achieve the province's vision for fish, wildlife and park recreation.

In preparing these recommendations, the Panel should address:

- The province's obligation to conserve and protect the fish, wildlife and parks of British Columbia in perpetuity;
- The province's continued ownership of fish, wildlife and park resources and the land dedicated for these purposes;
- Ensuring First Nations' rights are respected and that there are meaningful ways for First Nations to be involved in the management of these resources and the delivery of recreation opportunities;
- The province's responsibility to pay for the conservation and protection of fish, wildlife and park values from general tax revenue, while reducing the reliance on the province for the direct provision of outdoor recreation services. The sharing of recreation supply costs and benefits with partners should be considered;
- The province's objective to create economic opportunity and jobs, especially in rural communities and for First Nations
- The need to generate and capture increased value from the use of the province's world-class outdoor recreation opportunities, without diminishing the value of the assets. Diversification and increase of appropriate use should be considered;
- The implications of, and alternatives processes for, connecting and dedicating user fees to the provision of outdoor recreation opportunities;
- Identification of new approaches to ensure the ongoing management of fish, wildlife and park recreation enjoys the highest level of public support; and,
- There are different types of protected lands within the province ranging from those that are principally dedicated to the protection of natural values to those that provide opportunities to use and enjoy these values. The public must be able to understand and differentiate this range of purposes.

The Panel should ensure its recommendations are based on sound technical input and can be supported by recreational users, First Nations and the general public. Direct consultation with organizations that are provincial in scope should be considered.

