

Terms of Reference for the Recreation Stewardship Review

I. Background

The recreation services provided by the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection – services in BC Parks, hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing opportunities, and the provincial freshwater hatchery program – are deeply valued by BC residents and a drawing card for visitors from around the world.

Government is committed to improving the delivery of this world-class recreational experience in a way that is financially sustainable and creates benefits for everyone involved – local communities, tourism operators, First Nations and the public at large.

Government is also committed to balance the provincial budget by fiscal year 2004/2005. The three-year service plan for the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection, published in February, indicates that “fewer ministry staff and funds will be directed to providing camping and recreational services such as hunting and angling opportunities (including stocking of lakes and rivers) where recreational use is low or costs cannot be recovered (cost recovery will be largely dependent on the management and funding model adopted for parks, and hunting and angling).”

To that end, the Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection has appointed an expert panel to review these services and recommend improved management models and funding sources.

II. Requirements and Responsibilities of the Panel

The three-year service plan for the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection calls for the development of “a new management model for park and wildlife recreation that connects fees with services and opportunities and allows greater public involvement in decision making.”

To guide the government’s review, the Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection has appointed a five-member panel with expertise in the areas of stewardship, recreation and management. The panel will make recommendations to government on improvements to the management model and funding sources for the recreation services delivered by the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection. Accordingly, the panel is required to carry out the following responsibilities:

- The panel will limit the scope of their work to management and resourcing issues facing parks, fish and wildlife recreation programs and work within the scope of previous decisions made in the Core Review, Service Plan and Budget processes.

- The panel will identify and evaluate options for funding, service delivery and public involvement in ongoing delivery of park, fish and wildlife recreation opportunities.
- The panel will investigate and examine the policy and management framework that exists in other leading jurisdictions. This will include reviewing such concepts as the establishment of a supporting foundation or trust and the creation of a governing or advisory authority or board.
- The panel will consult with British Columbians on the options they develop.
- The panel will submit final written recommendations to the Minister no later than November 29, 2002.

III. Review Process

The review process will occur in two phases.

Phase 1

During phase 1 the panel will work with Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection staff to confirm the principles established in the Core Review, Service Plan and Budget processes.

The panel will then develop, assess and recommend policy options based on these principles.

The panel, in partnership with staff from the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection will develop a consultation model and process during this time period.

This consultation model will be completed and announced no later than July 1, 2002.

Phase 2

During phase 2 the panel will undertake targeted consultations with key stakeholders and accept written submissions from the public in response to the policy options developed during phase one.

The panel will submit draft recommendations to the Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection by September 13, 2002, which will be released for public discussion and feedback, resulting in final recommendations by November 29, 2002.

Implementation actions will be initiated in 2003 and completed by the end of 2004.