



Notice of Meeting and Meeting Agenda Regional Parks Committee

Wednesday, February 24, 2021

10:00 AM

6th Floor Boardroom
625 Fisgard St.
Victoria, BC V8W 1R7

R. Mersereau (Chair), G. Young (Vice Chair), G. Holman, B. Isitt, R. Martin, J. Ranns, D. Screech, L. Seaton, M. Tait, N. Taylor, C. Plant (Board Chair, ex officio)

The Capital Regional District strives to be a place where inclusion is paramount and all people are treated with dignity. We pledge to make our meetings a place where all feel welcome and respected.

1. Territorial Acknowledgement

2. Approval of Agenda

3. Adoption of Minutes

3.1. [21-178](#) Minutes of the January 27, 2021 Regional Parks Committee Meeting

Recommendation: That the minutes of the Regional Parks Committee meeting of January 27, 2021 be adopted as circulated.

Attachments: [Minutes - January 27, 2021](#)

4. Chair's Remarks

5. Presentations/Delegations

In keeping with directives from the Province of BC, this meeting will be held by Live Webcast without the public present.

To participate electronically, complete the online application for "Addressing the Board" on our website. Alternatively, you may email the CRD Board at crdboard@crd.bc.ca.

[21-182](#) Delegation - Yvonne Mendel; Representing South Island Mountain Bike Society: Re: Agenda Items 6.2. Capital Regional District Regional Parks - Revenue Generation Strategy - 2021-2024, and 6.3. Initial Engagement Reports for the Mount Work, East Sooke, Matheson Lake and Roche Cove Regional Parks Management Plans.

6. Committee Business

6.1. [21-144](#) Regional Parks - Strategic Plan

Recommendation: The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board: That staff report back on a plan to review and update the Regional Parks Strategic Plan.

Attachments: [Staff Report: Regional Parks Strategic Plan](#)

6.2. [21-174](#) Capital Regional District Regional Parks - Revenue Generation Strategy - 2021-2024

Recommendation: That the Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

1. That the Capital Regional District Regional Parks Revenue Generation Strategy 2021-2024 be approved with a gradual implementation of parking fee changes over three years, including the expansion of seasonal paid parking to nine additional regional parks in 2022;
2. That staff bring back an amendment to the Capital Regional District Parks Services and Facilities Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 3675 in 2021.

Attachments: [Staff Report: CRD Regional Parks - Revenue Generation Strategy - 2021-2024](#)

[Appendix A: Revenue Generation Strategy 2021-2024 \(Options\)](#)

[Appendix B: Regional Parks Revenue Generation Strategy 2021-2024](#)

[Appendix C: Regional Parks Revenue Generation Review](#)

6.3. [21-147](#) Initial Engagement Reports for the Mount Work, East Sooke, Matheson Lake and Roche Cove Regional Parks Management Plans

Recommendation: The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board: That this report be received for information.

Attachments: [Staff Report: Regional Parks Management Plans Engagement](#)

[Appendix A: Mount Work Engagement](#)

[Appendix B: East Sooke Engagement](#)

[Appendix C: Matheson Lake/Roche Cove Engagement](#)

7. Notice(s) of Motion

8. New Business

9. Motion to Close the Meeting

9.1. [21-179](#) Motion to Close the Meeting

Recommendation:

1. That the meeting be closed for Land Acquisition in accordance with Section 90(1)(e) of the Community Charter.
2. That such disclosures could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the Regional District. [1 item]

10. Adjournment

The next meeting is March 24, 2021.

To ensure quorum, please advise Tamara Pillipow (tpillipow@crd.bc.ca) if you or your alternate cannot attend.

Meeting Minutes

Regional Parks Committee

Wednesday, January 27, 2021

10:00 AM

6th Floor Boardroom
625 Fisgard St.
Victoria, BC V8W 1R7

PRESENT

Directors: R. Mersereau (Chair), G. Young (Vice Chair), G. Holman (EP), B. Isitt (EP), R. Martin (EP), J. Ranns (10:05 am), D. Screech, L. Seaton (EP), M. Tait (EP), N. Taylor

Staff: L. Hutcheson, General Manager, Parks and Environmental Services; J. Leahy, Senior Manager, Regional Parks; B. Schultz, Manager Planning, Resource Management and Development, Regional Parks; T. Moss, Visitor Services & Community Devel Manager, Regional Parks; B. Martin, Senior Project Engineer, Facilities Management & Engineering Services; M. Lagoa, Acting Deputy Corporate Officer; T. Pillipow, Committee Clerk (Recorder)

EP - Electronic Participation

Regrets: Director C. Plant

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 am.

1. Territorial Acknowledgement

Chair Mersereau provided a Territorial Acknowledgement.

2. Approval of Agenda

**MOVED by Director Screech, SECONDED by Director Taylor,
That the agenda for the January 27, 2021 Regional Parks Committee meeting be
approved.
CARRIED**

3. Adoption of Minutes

3.1. [21-100](#) Minutes of the November 25, 2020 Regional Parks Committee meeting

**MOVED by Director Screech, SECONDED by Director Taylor,
That the minutes of the Regional Parks Committee meeting of November 25, 2020
be adopted as circulated.
CARRIED**

4. Chair's Remarks

Chair Mersereau welcomed everyone to the first meeting of 2021. She is very honoured to be chairing this committee along with Vice-Chair Young, especially as the public is very engaged with this committee. Any suggestions or

feedback is welcomed by the Chair.

5. Presentations/Delegations

- 5.1. [21-104](#) Delegation - Corey Burger; Representing Greater Victoria Cycling Coalition: Re: Agenda Item 6.3.: Regional Trails Widening Study
Corey Burger spoke in favour of Item 6.3.
- 5.2. [21-105](#) Delegation - Elise Cote; Resident of Saanich: Re: Agenda Item 6.3. Regional Trails Widening Study
Elise Cote did not participate in the meeting.

6. Committee Business

- 6.1. [21-089](#) 2021 Regional Parks Committee Terms of Reference
L. Hutcheson spoke to Item 6.1.

Discussion ensued on the committee being able to seek regular updates related to the Regional Trails Management Plan. L. Hutcheson noted that regional trails is part of the purview of this committee.

**MOVED by Director Screech, SECONDED by Director Ranns,
That the Regional Parks Committee receive the 2021 Terms of Reference,
attached as Appendix A.
CARRIED**
- 6.2. [21-087](#) CRD Regional Trails Visitor Use Survey - 2019
L. Hutcheson introduced T. Moss who spoke to Item 6.2.

Discussion ensued on the following:
- future plans for the existing parking lots near trail heads
- recreation and active transportation of people living near the trails
- municipal and regional investments in regional trails
- the status of the trail between Savory School and Atkins Road
- increased staff presence to curb speeding, promote trail etiquette and reduce danger on the trails
- funding for new construction

**MOVED by Director Screech, SECONDED by Director Taylor,
The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District
Board:
That this report be received for information.
CARRIED**
- 6.3. [21-084](#) Regional Trails Widening Study
L. Hutcheson introduced B. Schultz who spoke to Item 6.3.

Discussion ensued on the following:

- implications to other projects with an expedited timeline for this project
- funding sources
- lighting options that take into account the various needs across the region
- rationale for the recommendation of the 6.5m wide pathway
- conducting the public consultation while maintaining COVID-19 protocols
- room for growth within the recommended widening strategy

MOVED by Director Young, **SECONDED** by Director Screech,
The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

1. That the Regional Trails Widening Study be received for information;
2. That staff be directed to conduct public engagement on the 6.5 m separated use pathway design with lighting and implementation priorities as recommended; and
3. That staff report back to a future committee meeting with further recommendations.

MOVED by Director Isitt, **SECONDED** by Director Taylor,
That recommendation 2 be amended by adding the words "including consideration of low-intensity lighting in the trail segment adjacent to Swan Lake, aiming for balance between wildlife and public safety considerations.", after the words "priorities as recommended".

CARRIED

OPPOSED: Ranns, Seaton, Tait

MOVED by Director Isitt, **SECONDED** by Director Screech,
That the recommendation be further amended by adding the following: "That staff aim to expedite public engagement and detailed design with a view toward having a shovel ready project."

CARRIED

OPPOSED: Martin, Ranns, Seaton, Tait

MOVED by Director Young, **SECONDED** by Director Screech,
The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

1. That the Regional Trails Widening Study be received for information;
2. That staff be directed to conduct public engagement on the 6.5 m separated use pathway design with lighting and implementation priorities as recommended including consideration of low-intensity lighting in the trail segment adjacent to Swan Lake, aiming for balance between wildlife and public safety considerations;
3. That staff report back to a future committee meeting with further recommendations; and
4. That staff aim to expedite public engagement and detailed design, with a view toward having a shovel ready project.

CARRIED

OPPOSED: Ranns, Seaton, Tait

6.4. [21-079](#)

CRD Regional Parks and Trails - 2020 - Year in Review

J. Leahy spoke to item 6.4.

Discussion ensued on the following:

- Elk/Beaver Lake capital element funding

- appreciation of staff for their efforts

MOVED by Director Screech, **SECONDED** by Director Taylor,
The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District
Board:

That the CRD Regional Parks and Trails - 2020 Update be received for
information.

CARRIED

6.5. [20-629](#) South Island Transportation Strategy

E. Sinclair spoke to Item 6.5.

Discussion ensued on the following:

- the Gulf Islands being omitted from the South Island Transportation Strategy
- timing for the Salt Spring Island regional trail planning
- action that this committee can or should take in order to raise provincial interest in the trails

MOVED by Director Screech, **SECONDED** by Director Young,
That the South Island Transportation Strategy be received for information.

CARRIED

7. Notice(s) of Motion

There were no Notice(s) of Motion.

8. New Business

There was no new business.

9. Adjournment

MOVED by Director Screech, **SECONDED** by Director Taylor,
That the January 27, 2021 Regional Parks Committee meeting be adjourned at
11:52 am.

CARRIED

Chair

Recorder



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REPORT TO REGIONAL PARKS COMMITTEE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2021

SUBJECT Regional Parks – Strategic Plan

ISSUE SUMMARY

To present an update on the renewal of the 2012-2021 Regional Parks Strategic Plan, approved by the Capital Regional District (CRD) Board in 2012 for a 10-year term.

BACKGROUND

The development of the current Strategic Plan was initiated in 2009 to replace the CRD Parks Master Plan that had been in effect since 2000. The project was staff supported but primarily led by a volunteer Citizens Advisory Panel and included engagement with stakeholders, the public, government, First Nations and other park agencies.

The Strategic Plan continues to be a well-used reference document, providing ongoing guidance and remains useful as a “roadmap” for the Regional Parks Division. The vision, mission and goals outlined in the Strategic Plan considered many of the trends, challenges and protected area values that are still relevant today. With respect to plan implementation since 2012, six strategic priorities and 26 associated actions were identified. Of the 26 strategic actions outlined in the document, 22 actions are ongoing, three have been completed, and one has yet to be initiated (i.e., developing an outdoor recreation strategy).

Since the publication of the plan, many things have changed. For example, the CRD is now part of a national movement toward Reconciliation with Canada’s Indigenous peoples, and envisions strong relationships with First Nations across the region based on trust and mutual respect, partnerships and working together on shared goals. Park acquisitions have added over 300 hectares to the system since 2010, and many more acquisitions are anticipated over the next decade, as the Land Acquisition Fund has been renewed until 2029.

Current management challenges include pressures of increased visitation and striving for sustainable service delivery. Large capital-intensive critical assets, such as bridges, trestles and dams, require ongoing inspections and maintenance and, in some cases, extensive rebuilds. The regional trail system continues to expand, with the third of the five phases of the E&N Rail Trail to be completed by May of 2021.

The CRD has recognized the importance of the Strategic Plan and the fact that its term ends in 2021, by including Initiative 6a-1 in the 2019-2022 Corporate Plan as both a Board and Corporate Priority. It directs staff to *Ensure appropriate funding for parks & trails infrastructure, improvements & maintenance by updating the Regional Parks Strategy with consideration to ecological, recreation & reconciliation principles, land acquisition capacity, & expanded partnerships with First Nations & parks user groups.*

Staff will commence a review and update process in the fall of 2021 and submit an updated plan to the Board for consideration in 2022.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

That staff report back on a plan to review and update the Regional Parks Strategic Plan.

Alternative 2

That that this report be referred back to staff for more information.

IMPLICATIONS

Alignment with Board & Corporate Priorities

Updating the strategic plan will be in alignment with current Board priorities. Efforts to work closer with First Nations during this project would help achieve Priority Initiative 6a-1 in the 2019-2022 Corporate Plan, which directs staff to *Undertake engagement with First Nations regarding greater collaboration and parks management.*

Alignment with Existing Plans & Strategies

An updated Strategic Plan will reflect outcomes from the newer CRD plans, reports and strategies, such as the Climate Action Plan, the Regional Transportation Plan, the First Nations Task Force Report, the Land Acquisition Strategy, Regional Trails Management Plan and other completed regional parks management plans.

Notably, completing a Regional Parks Outdoor Recreation Strategy, as directed in the Strategic Plan has yet to be developed. In lieu of this work, additional emphasis will be placed on providing more management direction for outdoor recreational pursuits in an updated Strategic Plan.

Environmental & Climate Implications

The Strategic Plan is the umbrella guiding document for Regional Parks, which forms more than half of the capital region's formally protected areas and regional trails. This system is key in helping to achieve the region's climate action active transportation goals. These goals will be considered during the plan update. An updated plan could also provide better direction on navigating the balance and potential competing interests between conservation and recreation, in light of increasing visitation.

Social Implications

The regional parks and trails system facilitates healthy lifestyles and wellbeing, providing access to nature, recreation and opportunities for active transportation.

There will be coordination with other major CRD engagement initiatives planned for 2021/2022 to maintain clear communication with the public and manage staff workloads. There will be engagement with First Nations, municipalities and electoral areas, stakeholder groups and citizens of the CRD. The planning process itself will facilitate stronger relationships and partnerships to support plan implementation and system management. A detailed project and public engagement plan will be developed this Spring and be presented to the Parks Committee later in 2021.

Service Delivery Implications

Staff are committed to other multi-year projects underway in 2021 and 2022, such as park management planning for East Sooke, Mount Work, Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks. Retaining consultants to undertake some activities of this work will be required. This particular planning initiative has been deferred by six months to accommodate public engagement on the Regional Trails Widening Study, as directed by the Board.

Financial Implications

Over and above staff time to provide project management and internal functions, such as project oversight and plan reviews, additional financial considerations include fees for consultants, advertising, facility rental and honorariums. The costs will be covered by the Regional Parks core budget and any additional funding will be determined and brought forward as part of the 2022 budget process.

Intergovernmental Implications

In addition to public consultation, there will be engagement with First Nations, municipalities and electoral areas. This is an opportunity to build awareness, ownership, and advocacy for the plan, as well as to strengthen relationships. The planning process will be an opportunity to advance the CRD's reconciliation initiatives, including dialogue with First Nations regarding their interests within the regional parks system.

Regional Growth Strategy Implications

Regional parks and regional trails aspects such as: ecosystem and human health protection and improvements; climate change mitigation and adaptation; parkland acquisition; and regional trail network expansion are elements of the 2018 CRD Regional Growth Strategy (RGS).

An updated plan will be better aligned with the vision and objectives of the RGS. Action items could outline ways to support achieving RGS targets, such as realizing the Sea-to-Sea Green/Blue Belt or completing the regional trail network.

CONCLUSION

The 2012-2021 Regional Parks Strategic Plan sets the strategic direction for the regional parks service; however, its term ends in 2021. Staff will commence a Strategic Plan review and update project in 2021, and submit an updated plan to the Parks Committee for consideration in 2022. Regional Parks will further develop a detailed project and engagement plan and present later in 2021 as an update to the Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

That staff report back on a plan to review and update the Regional Parks Strategic Plan.

Submitted by:	Jeff Leahy, RPF, Senior Manager, Regional Parks
Concurrence:	Larisa Hutcheson, P.Eng., General Manager, Parks & Environmental Services
Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer



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**REPORT TO REGIONAL PARKS COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2021**

SUBJECT **CRD Regional Parks – Revenue Generation Strategy – 2021-2024**

ISSUE SUMMARY

To seek direction on the proposed Revenue Generation Strategy 2021-2024 for Capital Regional District (CRD) Regional Parks.

BACKGROUND

At its March 27, 2019 meeting, the Parks & Environment Committee directed staff to identify options during the 2020 budget process for service level adjustments to sustain the CRD Regional Parks service delivery. At the October 23, 2019 meeting, staff presented the Regional Parks Sustainability Service Delivery Plan Report Card as well as an infrastructure status report card for each regional park and trail, which identified that the financial and human resources were no longer sufficient to meet the current asset renewal demands. This meeting resulted in two motions related to Sustainable Service Delivery: 1) that an additional \$925,000 be requisitioned each year for capital reserves to fund the refurbishment and replacement of existing assets; and 2) that staff report back in 2020 on strategies to ensure sufficient funding is in place in future years to sustain the Regional Parks service delivery.

At the November 25, 2020 Regional Parks Committee meeting, a Regional Parks Revenue Generation Strategy 2021-2024 (Appendix B) and the Regional Parks Revenue Generation Review (Appendix C) were presented. At this time, the Regional Parks Committee referred the matter back to staff to report back to the committee with:

1. revised recommendations with lower fee increases and/or extended implementation timelines for parking and camping;
2. provide options for short-term paid parking;
3. provide options for considering acceleration of paid parking at the three parks in the report;
4. have conversations with the District of Central Saanich about paid parking at Island View Beach;
5. consider what the implication would be on revenue if year-round paid parking is considered; and
6. provide any other revised recommendations by staff.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

1. That the Capital Regional District Regional Parks Revenue Generation Strategy 2021-2024 be approved with a gradual implementation of parking fee changes over three years, including the expansion of seasonal paid parking to nine additional regional parks in 2022;
2. That staff bring back an amendment to the Capital Regional District Parks Services and Facilities Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 3675 in 2021.

Alternative 2

That the Capital Regional District Regional Parks Revenue Generation Strategy 2021-2024 be approved with alternate options, as provided in the Revenue Generation Strategy 2021-2024 (Options) (Appendix A), and that staff bring back an amendment to the Capital Regional District Parks Services and Facilities Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 3675 in 2021.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

Staff’s recommended option for parking fee changes is to implement a short-term (2 hours) rate and fixed incremental daily and yearly rates (see Table 1). This gradual approach makes the changes to fees systematic and would bring fees up to fair market value over a span of three years.

Table 1: Recommended gradual increases of parking fees over a span of three years.

	Short-Term (2 hours)	Daily	Season
2020	None	\$2.25	\$20.00
2021	\$2.00	\$4.00	\$30.00
2022	No change	\$5.50	\$45.00
2023	No change	\$7.00	\$60.00
2024	No change	No change	No change

Projected revenues for year-round paid parking along with the expansion of paid parking to nine regional parks (see Table 2), could ultimately generate \$2.5 million in annual revenue at the fair market value rates. This year-round paid parking option would defeat the capacity-driven approach to application of paid parking suggested in the Revenue Generation Strategy. Furthermore, year-round paid parking may or may not be economically viable for a parking management service provider. Therefore, staff are recommending seasonal paid parking for nine regional parks. Projected revenues for seasonal paid parking along with the expansion of paid parking to nine regional parks, could ultimately generate \$1.9 million in annual revenue. These estimates need to be considered cautiously because the introduction of the short-term parking option, the value of the seasonal pass, the fact that visitors with a seasonal pass may visit more than one park, the variability of modes of travel to different parks, and the change in visitor use patterns are all variables that can influence gross parking revenue projections. The Regional Parks Committee’s request for other paid parking options are identified in Appendix A.

Staff recommend that a camping fee of \$25 be implemented across regional parks campgrounds. This would create consistent camping fees for regional parks campgrounds as well as bring current fees up to fair market value. A \$25 camping fee could ultimately generate \$15,000 in additional annual revenue.

Service Delivery Implications

The regional parks system has grown from just over 8,400 hectares in 2000 to more than 13,000 hectares in 2018. Visits to regional parks and trails have also increased by more than 45%, from 5.2 million in 2010 to 7.6 million in 2019. Preliminary numbers show that 2020 recorded

unprecedented visitation numbers, which may continue even after the pandemic, as residents created new habits of use and/or discovered new regional parks.

To address increasing pressures on the regional parks and trails system as well as the direction of the Regional Parks Committee, an accelerated paid parking option is provided (see Table 2). After 2024, the regional parks without paid parking would be reassessed for implementation of parking fees. Albert Head Lagoon and Island View Beach regional parks parking lots are not located on CRD land. Discussion with the respective municipalities will be undertaken in 2021 to discuss the feasibility of implementing paid parking in these locations.

Table 2: Recommended additional regional parks with paid parking in 2022.

Regional Park	Visitation in 2019
Devonian	64,693
East Sooke	208,121
Elk/Beaver Lake	1,587,494
Francis/King	76,550
Horth Hill	96,216
Matheson Lake	65,152
Mill Hill	51,913
Mount Work	196,607
Witty's Lagoon	98,046

Social Implications

In the 2017 Regional Parks Resident Survey, respondents were asked to comment on levels of funding for operating regional parks and trails in the future. More than half of the participants (55%) were in favour of increasing funding. A similar outcome was reflected in the 2018 Regional Parks Funding Priorities Survey, where participants pointed out that currently not enough money is available for the maintenance and management of the regional parks and trails system. Such results show an understanding by the public of the need for additional funding to support service delivery within regional parks and trails.

Alignment with Board & Corporate Priorities

The Regional Parks Revenue Generation Strategy 2021-2024 aligns with Corporate Priority 6a-1 and Board Priority 2d, which specifies the need to “Ensure appropriate funding for parks & trails infrastructure, improvements & maintenance by updating the Regional Parks Strategy with consideration to ecological, recreation & reconciliation principles, land acquisition capacity, & expanded partnerships with First Nations & parks user groups.”

Alignment with Existing Plans & Strategies

The Regional Parks Strategic Plan (2012-2021) identifies the strategic action to explore opportunities for generating non-tax revenue as a means to strengthen the management of existing parks and trails. By implementing strategic and tailored revenue strategies, CRD Regional Parks can address immediate and growing service delivery pressures and help to reduce the ongoing need for increased requisition.

CONCLUSION

As the regional parks system expands and the number of people who enjoy regional parks grows, resources, as currently allocated, are no longer sufficient to meet growing demands. In order to ensure appropriate and sustainable funding, a Regional Parks Revenue Generation Strategy 2021-2024 has been developed to highlight areas for additional non-tax revenue cost recovery. Additional options for implementation have been provided through the Regional Parks Revenue Generation Strategy 2021-2024 (Options).

RECOMMENDATION

The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

1. That the Capital Regional District Regional Parks Revenue Generation Strategy 2021-2024 be approved with a gradual implementation of parking fee changes over three years, including the expansion of seasonal paid parking to nine additional regional parks in 2022;
2. That staff bring back an amendment to the Capital Regional District Parks Services and Facilities Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 3675 in 2021.

Submitted by:	Jeff Leahy, RPF, Senior Manager, Regional Parks
Concurrence:	Larisa Hutcheson, P.Eng., General Manager, Parks & Environmental Services
Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS

- Appendix A: Revenue Generation Strategy 2021-2024 (Options)
- Appendix B: Regional Parks Revenue Generation Strategy 2021-2024
- Appendix C: Regional Parks Revenue Generation Review

Revenue Generation Strategy 2021-2024 (Options)

Regional Parks

Capital Regional District | February 24, 2021

Capital Regional District - Regional Parks
490 Atkins Avenue, Victoria, BC V9B 2Z8
T: 250.478.3344 www.crd.bc.ca/parks



Options to the Revenue Generation Strategy 2021-2024

At its March 27, 2019 meeting, the Parks & Environment Committee directed staff to identify options during the 2020 budget process for service level adjustments to sustain the Regional Parks service delivery. At the October 23, 2019 Parks & Environment Committee meeting, staff presented the Regional Parks Sustainability Service Delivery Plan Report Card as well as an Infrastructure Status Report Card, for each regional park and trail that identified that the financial and human resources were no longer sufficient to meet the current asset renewal demands. This meeting resulted in two motions related to Sustainable Service Delivery: 1) that an additional \$925,000 be requisitioned each year for capital reserves to fund the refurbishment and replacement of existing assets, and 2) that staff report back in 2020 on strategies to ensure sufficient funding is in place in future years to sustain the Regional Parks service delivery.

At the November 25, 2020 Regional Parks Committee meeting, a Regional Parks Revenue Generation Strategy 2021-2024 was provided to support the generation of additional funding through non-tax revenue cost recovery for infrastructure and service delivery needs that are currently excluded from the Regional Parks Sustainability Service Delivery Plan Report Card as per the second motion of the Parks & Environment Committee meeting. At this time, the Regional Parks Committee referred the matter back to staff to report back to the committee with: 1) revised recommendations with lower fee increases and/or extended implementation timelines for parking and camping; 2) provide options for short-term paid parking; 3) provide options for considering acceleration of paid parking at the three parks in the report; 4) have conversations with the District of Central Saanich about paid parking at Island View Beach; 5) consider what the implication would be on revenue if year-round paid parking is considered, and 6) provide any other revised recommendations by staff.

Gradual Parking Fee Increase

Gradually increasing the parking fees in the regional parks system would result in systemic and predictable increases over time. A fixed incremental amount is proposed for short-term, daily and yearly increases.

Gradual increase (Table 1): a new short-term parking fee of \$2.00/2 hours is proposed in 2021. The daily fee will have an initial increase of \$1.75 and incremental increases of \$1.50 per year subsequently, to a maximum of \$7.00/day from 2023 onward until a future fee review is undertaken. The seasonal pass will have an initial increase of \$10.00 with subsequent increases of \$15.00 per year, to a maximum of \$60.00/year from 2023 onward until a future fee review is undertaken. It is important to note that a seasonal pass would be valid at all regional parks with pay parking. A 2023 \$60 season's pass would be cost effective after eight visits.

Table 1: Gradual increases of parking fees over a span of three years.

	Short-Term (2 hours)	Daily	Season
2020	None	\$2.25	\$20.00
2021	\$2.00	\$4.00	\$30.00
2022	No change	\$5.50	\$45.00
2023	No change	\$7.00	\$60.00
2024	No change	No change	No change

Expanded Pay Parking

Proposed, in Table 2, is an option to implement paid parking in an additional nine regional parks in 2022 based on the criteria of highest visitation levels and/or carrying capacity issues. After 2024, the regional parks without paid parking will be reassessed to evaluate if they have reached more than 50,000 visits and/or reached parking capacity for implementation of parking fees.

Before implementing the expansion of paid parking, consultation will be undertaken with key stakeholders in 2021. The success of implementation will require working with the local municipalities and electoral areas and other stakeholders affected for a collaborative approach to parking issues in the area around each regional park. Implementation will be contingent on the feasibility for installation and management of paid parking by a service provider (i.e., is the service delivery contract economically viable).

Table 2: Accelerated implementation of paid parking in regional parks in 2022.

Regional Park	Visitation in 2019
Devonian	64,693
East Sooke	208,121
Elk/Beaver Lake	1,587,494
Francis/King	76,550
Horth Hill	96,216
Matheson Lake	65,152
Mill Hill	51,913
Mount Work	196,607
Witty's Lagoon	98,046

The following regional parks were excluded from the current proposed increase:

- Park Reserves: Ayum Creek, Mill Farm and Sooke River Road Reserves.
- Parks with less than 50,000 visits annually and/or not currently facing the highest capacity issues: Bear Hill, Brooks Point, Coles Bay, East Point, Gonzales Hill, Jordan River, Kapoor, Lone Tree Hill, Matthews Point, Mount Parke, Mount Wells, Roche Cove, Sooke Hills Wilderness, Sea to Sea and St. John Point regional parks.
- Parking not on CRD land: Albert Head Lagoon and Island View Beach regional parks parking lots are not located on CRD land. Discussion with the respective municipalities will be undertaken in 2021 to discuss the feasibility of implementing paid parking in these locations.

Year-round Paid Parking

As part of the Regional Parks Revenue Generation Strategy 2021-2024, it was proposed that pay parking continue on a seasonal basis. Paid parking is not only a source of non-tax based revenue, but helps to address the increasing parking capacity issues that CRD Regional Parks are facing. If applied seasonally, pay parking would generate income from visitors to the region, especially in peak seasons. As not all parks would have seasonal pay parking, residents would still have non-pay parking options for visiting a regional park in peak season and free parking when visiting all parks outside of peak season.

Year-round paid parking would contribute to increased revenue for the regional parks system, and would create a consistent approach. It would also encourage year-round active and alternate transportation choices; however, this option would go beyond the capacity driven approach to the application of paid parking as suggested in the Revenue Generation Strategy.

Some factors to consider are that year-round paid parking may or may not be preferable to a service provider. If visitation patterns continue as they have over the last few years, there is no longer a true “off season”, and capacity issues will continue to be an issue in the winter months.

The change to year-round paid parking along with the expansion of paid parking to nine regional parks total, could ultimately be projected to generate \$2.5 million in annual revenue at the fair market value rates. This estimate is calculated using current visitation trends with assumptions that each visit equals 0.18 car visits with some adjustments for parks which would likely have less car visits per visitor.

This estimate needs to be considered cautiously because the introduction of the short-term parking option, the value of the seasonal pass, the variability of modes of travel to different parks, and the change in visitor use patterns are all variables that influence any gross projections.

Camping

The fees proposed in relation to camping were intended to create efficiencies by streamlining camping fees for consistency across all campgrounds. As such, it is still recommended that a fee of \$25 is implemented to align all three Regional Parks campgrounds.

Other Revised Recommendations

Some regional parks have multiple parking lots for visitor access. In order to be consistent and not drive capacity issues to smaller lots, it is recommended that paid parking be implemented in each lot in a park. However, the stakeholder engagement and subsequent proposals from a service provider would have to be considered.

It is recommended that a two-hour option be implemented rather than an hourly rate as most park visitors spend over an hour in regional parks as supported by the data collected in the 2019 visitor use surveys for Thetis Lake and Sooke Potholes regional parks where parking is implemented already. For visitors who spend close to an hour in regional parks, this would allow for a buffer to reduce generating unnecessary parking infractions should a visit go a little longer than planned.

Alternate Options

The following alternate options were taken into consideration.

Alternate incremental increases (Table 3): a new fee of \$2.00/2 hours is proposed in 2021. The same incremental increases are proposed as Table 1, but the implementation is spread over a longer timeframe. Increases would be implemented in 2021, 2023 and 2025 to offer more time to regional parks visitors to become accustomed to parking fee changes. From 2025 onward the rates will be \$2.00/2 hours, \$7.00/day and \$60.00/season until a future fee review is undertaken.

Table 3: Alternate incremental increases of parking fees over a span of five years.

	Short-Term (2 Hours)	Daily	Season
2020	None	\$2.25	\$20.00
2021	\$2.00	\$4.00	\$30.00
2022	None	None	None
2023	None	\$5.50	\$45.00
2024	None	None	None
2025	None	\$7.00	\$60.00

Slower gradual increase (Table 4): a new fee of \$2.00/2 hours is proposed in 2021 until a future fee review is undertaken. The daily fee will start with an initial increase of \$1.75 and follow with incremental increases of \$1.00

per year subsequently, for a total of \$7.00/day from 2024 onward until a future fee review is undertaken. The seasonal pass will increase by \$10.00 per year, to a maximum of \$60.00/year from 2024 onward until a future fee review is undertaken.

Table 4: Slower gradual increase of parking fees over a span of four years.

	Short-Term (2 Hours)	Daily	Season
2020	None	\$2.25	\$20.00
2021	\$2.00	\$4.00	\$30.00
2022	None	\$5.00	\$40.00
2023	None	\$6.00	\$50.00
2024	None	\$7.00	\$60.00

Slower gradual increase of paid parking locations (Table 5): Table 5 reflects an accelerated increase in the number of regional parks with paid parking over the next three years. East Sooke, Elk/Beaver Lake and Mount Work regional parks would be implemented first as they have over 100,000 visits per year. The following year Francis/King, Horth Hill and Witty’s Lagoon regional parks would be implemented as they are the second highest group in visitation. In 2024, Devonian, Matheson Lake and Mill Hill regional parks would follow. After 2024, the regional parks without paid parking would be re-assessed to evaluate if more than 50,000 visits and/or parking capacity is reached.

Table 5: Accelerated implementation of paid parking in regional parks over three years.

Regional Park	Visitation in 2019	2022	2023	2024
Devonian	64,693			X
East Sooke	208,121	X		
Elk/Beaver Lake	1,587,494	X		
Francis/King	76,550		X	
Horth Hill	96,216		X	
Matheson Lake	65,152			X
Mill Hill	51,913			X
Mount Work	196,607	X		
Witty's Lagoon	98,046		X	

Revenue Generation Strategy – 2021-2024

Capital Regional District – Regional Parks | November 25, 2020

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1. Purpose

The purpose of the Revenue Generation Strategy 2021-2024 is to provide a phased approach to implement fair market value service fees in regional parks. This revenue generation approach will supplement tax-based funding, allowing Regional Parks to address infrastructure and service delivery needs currently not considered in the Regional Parks Sustainability Service Delivery Plan Report Card.

2. Context

The regional parks system has grown from just over 8,400 hectares in 2000 to over 13,000 hectares in 2019. Visits to regional parks and trails have also increased by more than 45%, from 5.2 million in 2010 to 7.6 million in 2019. Additional pressure on park resources and services is expected in the coming years due to population growth, increased visitation and the acquisition of more parkland.

With increased use of the regional parks system comes increased demand for infrastructure and service delivery needs that provide for safe and enjoyable experiences in regional parks and trails. The growing cost of maintaining aging assets across the regional parks and trails system, for example, is a constraint to developing new park infrastructures, opening recently acquired land and meeting the growing pressure for additional service delivery. On average, the cost to manage each hectare of regional parkland is \$957 per year for the current basic service. New strategies for revenue recovery are needed to address growing service delivery pressures, meet rising demand for access to natural areas and outdoor recreation opportunities, and offer value-added experiences for park users, among other needs.

As seen in other parks systems, often government funding is not adequate to meet user demands and, in many cases, the funds available for protected areas management are in decline due to competing governance priorities. Many government park organizations rely largely on tax-based revenue, yet have started supplementing their budgets with revenues from user fees to partially recover costs and to offer value-added services and experiences for visitors. Indeed, revenue recovery strategies have proven an effective method for park and protected area managers to address issues related to rising public demands and growing annual operating costs related to access and recreational services. Similar to other government agencies, Regional Parks needs to address growing demand pressures in its regional parks and trails system. To address this gap, a standardized and tailored cost recovery strategy for Regional Parks is described below.

3. Alignment with CRD Strategic Documents and Priorities

The Regional Parks Revenue Generation Strategy 2021-2024 aligns with Corporate Priority 6a-1 and Board Priority 2d, which specifies the need to “ensure appropriate funding for parks & trails infrastructure, improvements & maintenance by updating the Regional Parks Strategy with consideration to ecological, recreation & reconciliation principles, land acquisition capacity, and expanded partnerships with First Nations & parks user groups”. The Regional Parks Strategic Plan (2012-2021) identifies the strategic action to explore opportunities for generating non-tax revenue as a means to strengthen the management of existing parks and trails.

4. Strategy

At its March 27, 2019 meeting, the Parks & Environment Committee directed staff to identify options during the 2020 budget process for service level adjustments to sustain the Regional Parks service delivery. At the October 23, 2019 Parks & Environment Committee meeting, staff presented the Regional Parks Sustainability Service Delivery Plan Report Card, as well as an Infrastructure Status Report Card, for each regional park and trail that identified that the financial and human resources were no longer sufficient to meet the current asset renewal demands. This meeting resulted in two motions related to Sustainable Service Delivery: 1) that an additional \$925,000 be requisitioned each year for capital reserves to fund the refurbishment and replacement of existing assets, and 2) that staff report back in 2020 on strategies to ensure sufficient funding is in place in future years to sustain the Regional Parks service delivery.

A Regional Parks Revenue Generation Strategy 2021-2024 is provided to support the generation of additional funding through non-tax revenue cost recovery for infrastructure and service delivery needs that are currently excluded from the Regional Parks Sustainability Service Delivery Plan Report Card, as per the second motion of the Parks & Environment Committee meeting. The strategy entails four key components:

- (1) guiding principles
- (2) current service fees review
- (3) expansion of revenue generation opportunities; and
- (4) “service plus” opportunities.

Service Plus is defined as optional value-added services and amenities beyond the core service that specifically benefit the visitor paying for them. Such services and amenities could include, for example, food services,

recreation equipment rentals, merchandise sales, and unique guided experiences, to name a few. A phased approach will be undertaken to address key components two to four of this strategy, to allow for appropriate development and implementation time of the strategy.

A phased approach will also allow for the provisioning of tailored and clear messaging around new service fees in regional parks and trails, providing visitors a transition into the specific revenue generation mechanism being implemented.

5. Guiding Principles

The following principles guide the Revenue Generation Strategy:

- Regional Parks acknowledges that public access to regional parks and trails should be free
- Any service fee should align with the CRD Corporate Plan, Regional Parks Strategic Plan and individual park management plans
- Value-added services provided through a fee should have no or minimal impact on the regional parks and trails natural environment
- Changes in service fees will be made in a transparent and accountable manner and based on fair market value
- Service fees will supplement tax-based funding, allowing Regional Parks to address infrastructure and service delivery needs currently not considered in the Regional Parks Sustainability Service Delivery Plan Report Card

6. Current Service Fees Review

Over the years, Regional Parks has modified service fees ad hoc specifically relating to immediate needs; however, a systematic evaluation of revenue generation for the regional parks and trails system was lacking, leading to the need for a full review of current service fees. To address this gap, a revenue generation review was undertaken, which informed the development of this strategy. The report also provided a comparison with other regional districts and protected area systems across British Columbia to better understand current revenue generation patterns. The report also considered rentals, grants and fines that do not fit within the purpose of this strategy. This approach assessed whether Regional Parks services fees aligned with fair market values implemented across comparable parks systems in British Columbia.

6.1 Proposed Park Use Permit Fees and Charges

The Regional Parks Revenue Generation Review highlighted that Regional Parks service fees did not align with other regional districts and protected area systems in British Columbia, mostly by being lower, or under market-value, in comparison to others. To align service fees to a comparable provincial standard, an overview is provided in Tables 1-3 on how to adjust current service fees to fair market value in 2021. Beyond 2021, fees will be reviewed and adjusted annually, as needed, to ensure the fees continue to align with fair market value, and any need for new service fees will be brought forward at such time. If non-tax-based revenue does not meet system needs, requests for supplementary tax-based revenue would be addressed through the normal budget process.

It is important to point out that some efficiencies to streamline camping fees are proposed. To be consistent across campgrounds, for example, a fee of \$25 is proposed to align to the Spring Salmon Place (KWL-UCHUN) Campground operated by the T'Sou-ke First Nation at Sooke Potholes Regional Park. Such an approach will allow for consistent and clear communication, implementation and enforcement across Regional Parks campgrounds.

Table 1. Camping and parking current service and fees, and proposed new service fees based on regional districts and protected area systems standards in British Columbia. Applicable taxes are not included, unless otherwise noted.

Service	Regional parks or trails	Description	Current Service Fees	New Service Fees
Camping – In designated campsites	Island View Beach Regional Park	Overnight recreational vehicle camping	\$20/night	\$25/night
		Overnight tenting	\$15/night	\$15/night
		Additional vehicle	\$10/night	\$10/night
		Cancellation fee for on-line reservation	One night rate	One night rate
	Jordan River Regional Park	Overnight recreational vehicle or tent camping April 1 to October 31	\$15/night	\$25/night
		Overnight recreational vehicle or tent camping November 1 to March 31	\$10/night	\$25/night
		Additional vehicle	\$5/night	\$10/night
	Spring Salmon Place (KWL-UCHUN) Campground at Sooke Potholes Regional Park	Overnight recreational vehicle camping	\$25/night	\$25/night
		Overnight tenting	\$25/night	\$25/night
		Tent pad for cyclists	\$15/night	\$15/night
		Additional vehicle	\$10/night	\$10/night
		Firewood	\$7/bundle	\$7/bundle
Pay Parking – In designated areas	Thetis Lake & Sooke Potholes Regional Parks	Daily rate	\$2.25	\$7
		Seasonal pass	\$20	\$60

Table 2. Park use permit current service and fees, and proposed new service fees based on regional districts and protected area systems standards in British Columbia. Applicable taxes are not included, unless otherwise noted.

Service	Regional parks or trails	Description	Current Service Fees	New Service Fees
Commercial Filming – Motion picture, television and photography	All	<u>Short Term</u> : Minimal set up, less than 5 days in park	\$80/permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Filming outdoor locations \$500/day Parking \$300/day Staff time for monitoring charged at \$50/hour Indoor locations to be assessed on case by case basis
		Long term: Elaborate set up, no more than 10 days in park	\$400/permit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time for monitoring charged at \$50/hour 	
		Major commercial filming projects that are more than 10 days in a park	N/A	
Commercial Service or Activity (e.g., guided programs, recreational training)	All	Single trip: 1 day	\$40/permit	\$80/permit
		Seasonal: 4 month period	\$200/permit	\$215/permit
		Annual: Jan 1 – Dec 31 inclusive	\$320/permit	\$320/permit
Commercial Dog-Walking	All	Annual (Jan 1 – Dec 31 inclusive)	\$320/permit	\$465/permit
Picnic Shelter	All parks with a picnic shelter	Single day use	\$40/permit	\$50/permit

Table 3. Park use permit current service and fees, and proposed new service fees, based on regional districts and protected area systems standards in British Columbia. Applicable taxes are not included, unless otherwise noted.

Service	Regional parks or trails	Description	Current Service Fees	New Service Fees
Research Activity	All	Such as specimen collections, surveys, inventories and monitoring plots	\$40/permit	\$40/permit
Special Event or Activity	All	Single day use: such as a festival, tournament, competition, show or outdoor ceremony that attracts participants and spectators	\$40/permit	\$145/permit
		Frequent Users:10 or less events/year	\$160/permit	\$500 permit
		Wedding	N/A	\$175 permit
Temporary Service Access	All	Access/ occupancy through a regional park or trail for such purposes as accessing a private property, utility or public works	\$80/permit	\$360/permit

Table 4. Environmental interpretation current service and fees, and proposed new service fees, based on regional districts and protected area systems standards in British Columbia. Applicable taxes are not included, unless otherwise noted.

Service	Regional parks or trails	Description	Current Service Fees	New Service Fees
Environmental Interpretation	All parks	School Programs	\$70/class (non-taxable)	\$100/class
		Enhanced Naturalist Programs – specialty programs with limited registration, guided canoe programs or hikes with guest experts	\$7/person	\$8/person

7. Diversification of Revenue Generation Opportunities

To generate enough revenue to properly fund infrastructure and service delivery needs in Regional Parks, alternative revenue mechanisms need to be identified. Such mechanisms also could be used to help address capacity issues and related impacts on visitor experience and the natural environment, as per the principles identified in this strategy.

With yearly increases of visitation in our regional parks system and limited parking availability, additional seasonal paid parking could help address such capacity challenges, as well as ongoing asset maintenance and renewal costs. Currently, the largest source of user-generated revenue comes from seasonal pay parking from two regional parks: Thetis Lake and Sooke Potholes. This is consistent with findings in other protected areas where parking represents the most reliable cost recovery mechanism. When applied to highly-visited regional parks and trails, paid parking could address capacity limitations by encouraging park users to reach regional parks with alternate forms of transportation, including carpooling, and/or by encouraging park users to visit less-frequented parks that have free parking.

If applied seasonally, pay parking could generate income from visitors to the region, especially in peak seasons. As not all parks would have seasonal pay parking, residents would still have non-pay parking options for visiting a regional park in peak season and free parking when visiting all parks outside of peak season.

The following criteria would be applied to assess which parks would be considered for a pay parking system:

- Over 100,000 visits annually
- Capacity issues and/or alternate transportation options (bus or regional trail connectivity)

The following parks currently fit such criteria: East Sooke, Elk/Beaver Lake and Mount Work regional parks, in addition to Sooke Potholes and Thetis Lake regional parks, which already have pay parking. Additional parks are close to meeting this criteria and would be considered as visits increase or new capacity issues arise.

It is difficult to provide an accurate estimate of what extra revenue expanding pay parking to these three additional parks would generate without a more fulsome implementation plan that takes into account the cost of contracted parking services, number of parking spots available and visitor use patterns. However, by looking at the 2019 revenue from Thetis Lake and Sooke Potholes regional parks, which generated a combined \$190,647 for approximately 600,000 visits, it can be estimated that Elk/Beaver Lake, with an annual visitation of 1.5 million, could potentially generate up to \$500,000 based on the current rates and a similar service delivery contract.

Access points for regional trails will not be considered at this time, as it is a corporate priority to encourage active transportation. However, it is worth noting that some of these locations are experiencing high demand for parking and charging stations, making paid parking a feasible future option to alleviate capacity issues and help provide enhanced service. As the main parking lot at Island View Beach Regional Park is not our jurisdiction, it has not been included.

Expansion of seasonal paid parking to other regional parks beyond Thetis Lake and Sooke Potholes regional parks could increase pressures to neighboring areas. As a result, consultation with stakeholders would need to be undertaken before implementation. This consultation would be undertaken in 2021-2022 as an important step before finalizing an implementation plan.

Table 5: Parks by Paid Parking Criteria

Regional Park	Visitation in 2019	Parking Capacity Issues	Alternate Transportation Options	Suggested added paid parking
Albert Head Lagoon	77,312	yes	no	
Ayum Creek	not available	no	yes (bus)	
Bear Hill	9,703	n/a	no	
Brooks Point	8,776	no	no	
Coles Bay	33,764	no	yes (bus)	
Devonian	64,693	no	yes (bus)	
East Point	not available	no	no	
East Sooke	208,121	yes	yes (bus)	yes
Elk/Beaver Lake	1,587,494	yes	yes (bus)	yes
Francis/King	76,550	yes	no	
Gonzales Hill	44,921	yes	no	
Horth Hill	96,216	no	yes (bus, regional trail)	
Island View Beach	415,375	yes	no	
Jordan River	27,649	yes	no	
Kapoor	not available	no	yes (regional trail)	
Lone Tree Hill	15,710	yes	no	
Matheson Lake	65,152	yes	yes (regional trail)	
Matthews Point	not available	yes	no	
Mill Farm Reserve	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Mill Hill	51,913	no	yes (bus, regional trail)	
Mount Parke	12,972	no	no	
Mount Wells	31,121	yes	no	
Mount Work	196,607	yes	no	yes
Roche Cove	not available	yes	yes (bus, regional trail)	
Sea to Sea	42,389	no	yes (bus, regional trail)	
Sooke Hills Wilderness	9,230	no	no	
Sooke Potholes	166,795	yes	yes (regional trail)	already in place
Sooke River Road Reserve	n/a	n/a	n/a	
St. John Point	not available	no	no	
Thetis Lake	448,918	yes	yes (bus, regional trail)	already in place
Witty's Lagoon	98,046	yes	yes (bus)	

8. Service-Plus Opportunities

Upon the update of the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021, and completion of an outdoor recreation strategy, Regional Parks will explore the development of options for enhanced services and experiences appropriate to regional parks and trails. Options for services and experiences beyond the normal service delivery, such as food services, recreation equipment rentals, merchandise sales, and unique guided experiences need to be considered with the lens of compatibility with the park's natural resources, the vision for regional parks, individual park management plans, cost of service assessment and visitor interest.

To develop a successful and comprehensive business plan for "service-plus" options, the following steps need to be addressed first:

- 1) Gauge support for enhanced services by including questions around this topic in the Regional Parks Resident Survey. Alternatively, an ad hoc service-plus survey or focus groups could be implemented to explore support for service-plus opportunities in regional parks and trails.
- 2) Identify market segments via a thorough market analysis. Such an approach has been undertaken by Ontario Parks and has proven extremely effective in developing successful service-plus opportunities.
- 3) Identify service-plus options and locations appropriate to the park's natural and cultural resources, the park management objectives, the market segment identified and the level of demand.

Based on this baseline information, it would be possible to develop a tailored and comprehensive business plan for "service-plus" options that includes measurable objectives, cost recovery goals, and check-in points to ensure cost recovery strategies are bringing in more resources than they are expending. Such a plan will also allow aligning "service-plus" options to the Regional Parks Strategic Plan mandate and other key CRD strategic plans and strategies.

9. Implementation Timeline

A tentative implementation timeline is proposed for the Revenue Generation Strategy. Such a plan will be adopted based on other key strategies deliverable timelines (i.e., renewal Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021, outdoor recreation strategy) and based on consultation with local municipalities, electoral areas and other key stakeholders.

Table 6: Proposed timeline for the Revenue Generation Strategy implementation

Year	Key component	Action Item
2021	Fees review	Bring updated service and fees bylaw to Regional Parks Committee
2021	Expand	Consultation about paid parking with stakeholders
2021	Service Plus	Start to gauge support for fee-based services through the 2021 CRD Regional Parks Resident Survey or an ad-hoc survey
2022	Expand	Finalize paid parking stakeholder consultation and present implementation plan to Regional Parks Committee
2022	Service Plus	Undertake a market analysis
2023	Expand	Implement seasonal paid parking at new locations
2023	Service Plus	Identify appropriate service-plus options and locations
2024	Service Plus	Develop a comprehensive service-plus business plan for implementation

Revenue Generation Review

Capital Regional District – Regional Parks | November 25, 2020

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Executive Summary

- This report is a snapshot of the revenues generated by Regional Parks in 2019. It provides information on similar permits and fees used across British Columbia and other Canadian protected area systems for revenue generation and offers suggestions on how we could align with those. A total of \$576,468 was recovered in 2019.
- Permits are used to generate revenue and regulate commercial and recreational activities within the regional parks and trails system. The following permits are currently available: shelters (\$40), filming (\$80-\$400), commercial service/activity (\$40-\$320), special event (\$40-\$160), temporary access (\$80), and commercial dog walker (\$320). In 2019, a total of \$27,686 was generated through permits. If the CRD had adjusted the pricing of its current permits in 2019 to be in line with other comparable park system permits, the revenue generation would have increased from \$27,686 to \$54,167, an additional cost recovery of \$26,481.
- Camping is offered at Jordan River Regional Park (\$15), Island View Beach Regional Park (\$20), and Spring Salmon Place (KWL-UCHUN) at Sooke Potholes Regional Park (\$25). In 2019, a total of \$99,954 was generated through camping fees. The Spring Salmon Place (KWL-UCHUN) Campground revenues are not collected by Regional Parks, as this campground is operated by the T'Sou-ke Nation. If the CRD had adjusted the pricing of its current camping fees to be in line with other comparable park system offerings, Jordan River and Island View Beach campgrounds could raise their prices to \$22 a night.
- Currently, only Thetis Lake and Sooke Potholes regional parks (\$2.25/day-\$20/season) have paid parking. The approximate revenue generated in 2019 was \$190,647. If the CRD had adjusted the pricing of its current parking fees to be in line with other comparable park systems, the daily rate could increase to \$7.20 and the season pass to \$59. If the CRD had adjusted the pricing of its current parking passes in 2019 to be in line with other comparable park system fees, the revenue generation would have increased from 190,647 to 601,605, an additional cost recovery of 442,249.
- School programs (\$70), special request programs (\$70), and adult workshops (\$7) are offered as paid interpretive programs. Additional cost recovery is generated through the renting of the Beaver Lake Nature Centre and by receiving donations by visitors to the nature centres. In 2019, a total of \$10,072 was generated by the interpretive programs. If the CRD had adjusted the pricing of its current interpretive programs in 2019 to be in line with other comparable park systems, the revenue generation would have increased from \$10,072 to \$15,698, an additional cost recovery of \$5,626.
- There are a series of properties within the regional parks system that are rented for a yearly revenue generation of \$99,747. Additional revenue can be generated through the review of the current rental rates in the different rental locations across the system. However, operational costs associated with rentals is quite high and, although this does generate some revenue, the ongoing operational costs must be considered.

- Other sources of revenue are currently used for cost recovery, such as the Mount McDonald Tower Licensing, which generated \$109,775 in 2019, and other licensing, which generated \$12,497 in 2019.
- A limitation of this document is the lack of a cost-of-service assessment, which should be undertaken to ensure the cost of all park management related endeavours and services provided are properly accounted for when charging fees.
- The complete park system should be assessed to identify in which parks to focus revenue generation. Strategically concentrating services and service fees in parks that attract a higher number of visitors and commercial users allows Regional Parks to maximize the return on investment and may solve issues related to limited service, such as parking capacity. Revenue generation should be especially explored in an optic of “service plus”, the value-added services Regional Parks can offer to better serve its clients. Such an approach would allow us to market experiences based on user groups and their preferences for service delivery and would help develop more successful revenue generation streams. A thorough market analysis of the regional park system is required to identify new and ad-hoc revenue generation methods.

1. Introduction

Cost recovery strategies are increasingly important to park and protected area managers, especially in the context of rising public demand for access to natural areas and outdoor recreation opportunities, and growing annual operating costs to provide such access and recreational services (Drumm, 2007). Often government funding is not adequate to meet user demands and, in many cases, the funds available for protected areas management are in decline due to competing governance priorities (Clermont, 2006). The establishment and preservation of protected areas is not as clearly linked with revenue generation as other natural resource industries, making the contribution of parks and protected areas to regional economic growth undervalued and less of a priority (Lindberg, 2001). On top of this lack of recognition of the ecosystem services and direct and indirect benefits provided by protected areas to the economy and human wellbeing, some members of the public believe that natural landscapes ‘manage themselves’, and that human management of parks and protected areas is expensive and unnecessary (Clermont, 2006). Consequently, park and protected area managers across Canada and the United States are working to diversify cost recovery streams in an effort to supplement or replace government funding and overcome negative perceptions about maintaining protected areas through public funds.

To offer a better understanding in regard to revenue generation in protected areas, in general, and for Regional Parks specifically, this document offers an overview of existing literature and case studies on revenue generation in Canada and the United States. A summary of the current cost recovery mechanisms employed in Regional Parks follows. Comparisons with other regional districts and protected area systems are also provided to understand current revenue generation patterns in British Columbia.

2. Literature Review – Cost Recovery in Parks and Protected Areas

This section will provide an overview of case studies in Canada and the United States where cost recovery strategies were successfully implemented. These case studies provide guiding principles that maximize cost recovery efforts. An overview of the International World Conservation Union guidelines for financing protected areas is also offered to further expand the understanding around opportunities available for revenue generation (Phillips, 2000).

Only a few case studies on revenue generation in protected areas were found for Canada and the United States, which are described in the following sub-sections. All of the other revenue generation documents found were related to municipal recreation programs, which did not align with protected area users, patterns and demands.

2.1 Cost Recovery in Canadian Parks and Protected Areas

2.1.1 Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Reserve

In 2006, a case study was undertaken to identify financing opportunities for Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Reserve located near Nanaimo on Vancouver Island. The goal of the case study was to evaluate how to meet the financial needs of the park while achieving the protected area conservation management objectives (Clermont, 2006). To develop durable cost recovery strategies, Clermont worked with local communities to assess the value added to the region by the ongoing preservation of the Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Reserve, and ascertain which types of cost recovery strategies were supported by the communities, based on willingness to pay, environmental values, and desire to ensure equitable accessibility. Acceptable strategies were described as ones positively impacting the ecological integrity of the landscape, contributing to a conservation ethic, providing stable long-term funding, generating revenue, and supported by the public and other stakeholders. A series of possible strategies were identified, including:

- certified adventure tourism and ecotourism operations
- boundary and property transfer taxes for those accommodations and bordering properties that benefited from the presence of the protected areas, as well as local tourism operations
- rentals of on-site buildings for short-term accommodation and/or community events and programs
- corporate relationships
- conservation lotteries
- payment for watershed services and ecosystem services
- sale of products such as artwork, on-site gift shops, and calendars; and
- strictly regulated resource extraction (timber, non-timber products).

While the specific strategies identified in this study may not be applicable in other protected areas, the analysis conducted and the description offered about the different revenue generation opportunities is of great interest for other parks, as they can help better understand what options are available for protected areas interested in generating sustainable and long-term funding mechanisms.

2.1.2 Ontario Parks

Since the late 1990s, Ontario Parks (see <https://www.ontarioparks.com/en>) has undergone a significant transformation of its funding structure. As of 2007, 40 of the 85 provincial parks that run tourism and recreation operations operate at a profit (Halpenny, 2007). As of 2013, Ontario Parks recovers up to 80% of its annual operating costs (Eagles, 2014). Due to this success, the provincial government has withdrawn most of its original funding for the Ontario Parks department without adverse effects on park operation or ecological integrity. This success is attributed largely to the impact of market research, the integration of

market research into park operations, the skilled delivery of services by personnel, and the systematic evaluation of the performance of market program goals (Halpenny, 2007). Additionally, the Ontario Parks revenue stream grew from 11 sources in 1995 to 26 sources in 2010, including the additions of: reservation penalties, park fines, merchandise sales, campfire wood sales, camper supply sales, food/beverage vending, recreation equipment rentals (contracted out in some parks), parking fees, and annual vehicle permits (Eagles, 2014). Ontario Parks also transitioned away from contracting third-party operators to undertake some merchandise sales and rental services and used their own seasonal staff, thus retaining more of the revenue generated (Eagles, 2014).

When Ontario Parks decided to undertake an expansive cost recovery strategy, they followed a three-step process: they identified the market segments they wished to serve based on management objectives and park resources, built a market profile for each segment (i.e., each customer/user group and/or stakeholder group), and used targeted marketing rather than mass marketing to reach these audiences, with options for experiences tailored specifically to their tastes. In addition to expanding their offerings based on market research (e.g., adding heated shelters and cabins to campgrounds, expanding natural and cultural interpretive programs), Ontario Parks also shifted to a ‘customer first’ mentality that resulted in the delivery of higher-quality visitor experiences. Paired with strong, department-specific branding and increased promotion of the wide array of experiences available in the provincial park system (e.g., the annual Parks Guide), these adjustments resulted in increased visitation and an increased willingness by visitors to spend money on services (e.g., camping, recreation activities and equipment rental) (Halpenny, 2007).

2.1.3 Parks Canada

While we were not able to retrieve a study or report about revenue generation for Parks Canada, it is important to mention this agency’s efforts and success in generating financial support for its protected areas system through a “value-added” approach of experiencing Canadian National Parks.

According to the Parks Canada website: “To maintain its operations, Parks Canada relies largely on government appropriations and supplements its budget with revenues from user fees. Government appropriations are used primarily to protect Canada’s cultural and natural heritage for the benefit of all Canadians. Revenues generated by fees partially recover the costs required to provide those products and services, for which users receive a personal benefit” (see <https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/agence-agency/tarifs-fees/>).

Parks Canada specifies that visitor fees, which make up about 20% of Parks Canada’s operating budget and never exceed the costs of delivering the service, are collected and used to support programs, services, and facilities, and engage visitors in conservation efforts. In January 2020, this agency has adjusted such fees and announced a public consultation on fees for optional value-added services and amenities to

ensure Parks Canada provides exceptional visitor experiences. No further information is available regarding whether the consultation has taken place or has been postponed due to COVID-19.

2.2 Cost Recovery in the United States Parks and Protected Areas

2.2.1 California State Parks

In 2012, the state of California passed new legislation that emphasized the need for cost recovery in state parks. Two years later, the California Bureau of Research assessed the California Department of Parks and Recreation's (DPR) efforts, in order to identify areas of success and areas of opportunity. This report found that 15% of parks (particularly parks with water features) contributed to over 76% of the costs recovered between 2012 and 2014, which suggested that concentrating cost recovery strategies on a few popular parks was more likely to be successful than a widespread strategy (Ruffolo and Buttice, 2014). This report also found that entry fees were perceived to be an inequitable means of recovering costs, as they impacted some segments of the public disproportionately, and proved difficult to regulate or enforce without expending more resources than were collected (Ruffolo and Buttice, 2014). Instead, the DPR experienced success when focusing on service-related fees that specifically benefitted the visitor paying for them (e.g., outdoor recreation activities, equipment rental) – as long as an adequate cost-of-service assessment was undertaken and used to determine appropriate fees. The cost-of-service assessment did include the cost of employees' time allocated to the service, equipment, and indirect costs (e.g., contract management, strategic planning, ecological impact) to ensure that more resources were collected via fees than expended by providing the service (Ruffolo and Buttice, 2014).

To determine which parks to focus cost recovery efforts in, the DPR categorized parks into three categories: high private benefit (i.e., individual services offered), high public benefit (i.e., activities not associated with an individual service, such as nature viewing), and a combination of both. Cost recovery strategies were focused in the high private benefit parks, where structured recreational activities, equipment rentals, and higher expectations for visitor services (e.g., concession) were apparent (Ruffolo and Buttice, 2014). Conversely, parks with high public benefit generated minimal or no fees, to ensure that the public's right to access natural spaces without barriers was upheld. As a result, service fees were 'opt-in' rather than mandatory, allowing economically disadvantaged members of the public to access state parks at a similar rate as their economically-privileged counterparts. Finally, this report noted that visitors were happier to pay park fees when informed that 100% of the fees collected were reinvested in the park system rather than entering a general revenue stream (Ruffolo and Buttice, 2014).

2.2.2 Western United States

In 2015, cost recovery strategies were identified and evaluated across seven parks and recreation departments in the Western United States to identify the most successful strategies to employ in San Jose,

California (Pinkston, 2015). While this report looked primarily at urban parks and municipal recreation programs, some of the lessons learned are applicable to a regional parks system. In particular, this report found that parking was one of the most consistent cost recovery mechanisms in all seven cities, followed by food vendors and recreation service operators (Pinkston, 2015). Additionally, the departments generally found that increasing existing fees was well-received by the public if clear need was demonstrated by a cost-of-service analysis and if the allocation of proceeds was explicitly identified (i.e., signage explaining that all parking fees were reinvested in the maintenance of the park) (Pinkston, 2015). The public was also more likely to accept fee increases if the offerings were still competitive with private options, as was the case with increasing the fee for a park wedding permit while still offering a significant discount over private venue rentals (Pinkston, 2015).

2.3 Financing Protected Areas – International World Conservation Union Guidelines

In 2000, The World Commission on Protected Areas produced a comprehensive guideline for protected area managers seeking revenue generation mechanisms to fund parks and protected areas around the world (Phillips, 2000). The report deliberately adopts business language, describing parks as “goods and services”, and park visitors as “customers”, to emphasize the relationship between members of the public (customers) and the benefits (goods and services) that they receive because of parks and protected areas, and the need to assign monetary value to these transactions. Like the aforementioned case studies, this report delineates direct use benefits (benefiting the individual) and indirect use benefits (benefiting the public as a whole), and assigns a higher monetary value to the former. This report also clusters park visitors into four groups: residents and neighbours (including neighbouring businesses), commercial customers (tourists and visitors who purchase services), bio-regional customers, and global customers. Identifying these customer groups, as well as the nature of the goods and services provided by protected areas, will help managers identify how to manage protected areas in order to recover costs.

Local communities and businesses derive direct benefits in the form of accessing goods and services, and indirect benefits in the form of regional economic growth resulting from tourism or recreation industries (e.g., accommodations, recreation operators, tourist amenities). These customers may be willing to invest in protected areas through a variety of mechanisms, including: contracting recreation operators or selling permits to operate within protected area boundaries; divesting a small percentage of revenue into a park fund (e.g., 2% of hotel fees or recreation equipment sales), or selling merchandise or products that benefit the park system (Phillips, 2000).

Commercial customers, who derive direct benefits from the use of parks to recreate in or obtain services, can contribute to cost recovery through fees ranging from entry and parking fees to equipment rentals, specialized tours, and concession purchases. To maximize this source of revenue, Phillips recommends market research to clearly identify the customer base preferences and to ensure that meeting this

preference does not compromise the conservation mandate of the protected area (2000). The best source of commercial revenue is a service that is compatible with the park's natural resources, the park manager's conservation mandate, and the customer's preference.

Bio-regional and global customers are largely identified as those who receive indirect, non-use benefits from parks and protected areas, such as carbon sequestering or watershed services. While some fees may be appropriate, they are likely beyond the scope of a municipal or regional government's mandate, and thus will not be discussed in detail in this report.

To better identify stakeholders, customers, and goods and services (current and future), the International World Conservation Union outlines the following key questions:

1. What are the current courses of funding? Can they be relied on indefinitely? What can be done to increase, extend, or strengthen each one of them?
2. Who are the protect area's stakeholders and customers? Which recreational user groups use each park? Tourists? Tourism service operators? Campers? What do they currently contribute to the cost of managing these areas, and could they contribute more?
3. What services are currently being provided? Do users pay for these services? Do these fees cover the cost-of-service? Would users pay more, and under what conditions?
4. What new services could be provided? What is the likelihood of their profitability?
5. What organizations are interested in the conservation of this area? Can they be partnered with?
6. Has the government considered special taxes? Are there one or two key leaders who might be instrumental in the establishment of a 'conservation sales tax' or similar?

This report also calls for a comprehensive business plan, including measurable objectives and cost recovery goals, and check-in points to ensure cost recovery strategies are bringing in more resources than they are expending (Phillips, 2000).

3. Current Cost Recovery Mechanisms

In 2019, a total of \$576,468 was recovered by Regional Parks. For the purpose of this report, grants and fines are not included in the recovery cost calculated in this section. Grants are not considered as a revenue generation mechanism because such financial support varies between years, based on grant availability and success, making this recovery mechanism unreliable. Fines, instead, are used to foster behavioural changes. With the help of educational campaigns, the aim is to foster compliance to bylaws and positive behaviours in regional parks and trails, leading to a reduction in fines-related revenues over time. In Table 1, a detailed description of the overall revenue generated in 2019 is reported. In the following sections, a detailed description of each type of recovery cost is documented.

Table 1: Regional Parks cost recovery in 2019

Type of recovery cost	Cost recovery
Permits	\$27,686
Camping	\$99,954
Parking	\$190,647
Interpretive programs	\$10,072
Donations	\$356
Nature Centre rental	\$3,750
Rentals	\$99,747
Tower licencing	\$109,775
Other cost recovery	\$34,481
Total costs recovered	\$577,992

3.1 Permits

Permits are used to generate revenue and regulate commercial and recreational activities within the regional parks and trails system. The following permits are currently available to the public:

1. Shelter for a permit fee of \$40
2. Filming for a permit fee of \$80 for less than 5 days and \$400 for no more than 10 days of filming
3. Commercial service/activity for a permit fee of \$40 for one-day, \$200 for 4 months and \$320 for an annual permit
4. Special event for a permit fee of \$40 for one-time and \$160 for 10 events or less. The permit fee is not applied if all participants of the event are less than 18 years old.
5. Temporary access for service for a permit fee of \$80 per day; and
6. Commercial dog walker for a permit fee of \$320 per year

In 2019, a total of \$29,686 was generated through permits. Table 2 shows in detail all of the recovery costs generated through each permit type currently used by Regional Parks.

Table 2: Regional Parks cost recovery through permits in 2019

Permit	# of permits	Fee	Cost recovery
Commercial dog walker	37	\$320	\$11,840
Access	10	\$80	\$800
Event (one-time)	64	\$40	\$2,560
Event (> 10 or less events/year)	14	\$160	\$2,240
Film (short-term)	11	\$80	\$880
Film (long-term)	1	\$400	\$400
Shelter rental	140	\$40	\$5,600
Commercial (4 month season)	4	\$200	\$800
Commercial (annual)	12	\$320	\$3,840
Total costs recovered			\$28,960

To understand how permits relate to broader provincial revenue generation patterns, we compared permit fees used in parks in the Regional District of Nanaimo, Metro Vancouver Regional District and the Regional District of Central Okanogan (Table 3). These comparative locations were chosen due to their geographic location and similarity in population demographics. An average cost was calculated using the mean value per permit fee for the four comparative locations selected.

Table 3: Comparison of permitting fees for CRD Regional Parks (CRD), Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN), Metro Vancouver Regional District (METRO), and Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO)

	CRD	RDN ¹	METRO ²	RDCO ³	Average
Shelter	\$40	\$50	\$72	\$40	\$50.50
Commercial permit – recreation activity – day rate	\$40	\$100	150	\$40	\$82.50
Commercial permit – 4 month season	\$200	n/a	\$300	\$150	\$216.70
Commercial permit - annual	\$320	n/a	\$300	\$250	\$290.00
Event – small/one day	\$40	\$100 (\$15 non-profit /sport)	\$335 (day)	\$100	\$143.75
Event – Medium/large/ 10 or less events/year	\$160	n/a	\$500-1485 (day)	\$200-400	\$484.20
Weddings	n/a	\$100	n/a	\$250	\$175.00
Dog walking	\$320		\$460-765 annual		466.25
Filming	\$80-400 (1-10 days)	\$250 (per permit)	\$800-8000 (1-10 days)	\$200 -400 (1-10 days)	\$332.50-2,262.50
Access annual fee	\$80	\$500	\$500	n/a	\$360.00

It is important to point out that weddings are listed under the general category “Events”, which corresponds to \$40 a day.

If the CRD had adjusted the pricing of its current permit offerings in 2019 to be in line with the average calculated based on the other locations considered, the revenue generation would have increased from \$27,686 to \$54,167, an additional cost recovery of \$26,481. In Table 4, a detailed description of recovery costs adjusted to the averages based on the other locations considered is reported.

¹ https://www.rdn.bc.ca/sites/default/files/2019-03/park_use_permit_application_form.pdf

² http://www.metrovancouver.org/boards/Bylaws1/GVRD_Bylaw_1177-Unofficial_Consolidation.pdf

³ <https://www.regionaldistrict.com/media/256802/bylaw1428.pdf>

Table 4: Regional Parks cost recovery through permits in 2019 and cost recovery if the permit were in line with the average based on the other locations considered.

Permit	# of permits	Current fee	Current cost recovery	Fee based on regional average	Cost recovery based on average
Commercial dog walker	37	\$320	\$11,840	\$466.25	\$17,251.25
Access	10	\$80	\$800	\$360.00	\$3,600.00
Event (one-time)	64	\$40	\$2,560	\$143.75	\$9,200.00
Event (> 10 or less events/year)	14	\$160	\$2,240	\$484.20	\$6,778.80
Film (short-term)	11	\$80	\$880	\$332.50	\$3,657.50
Film (long-term)	1	\$400	\$400	\$2,262.50	\$2,262.50
Shelter rental	140	\$40	\$5,600	\$50.50	\$7,070
Commercial (4 month season)	4	\$200	\$800	\$216.70	\$866.80
Commercial (annual)	12	\$320	\$3,840	\$290.00	\$3,480.00
Total costs recovered			\$28,960		\$54,166.85

3.2 Camping

The current camping offerings are:

1. Jordan River: \$15/night + \$5/extra vehicle (May-September), \$10/night + \$5/ extra vehicle (October-May)
2. Island View Beach: \$15/night + \$10 per extra vehicle; \$20/night for RVs
3. Spring Salmon Place (KWL-UCHUN): \$25/night + \$10 extra vehicle; \$15/night bike/walk-in; \$7 firewood

In 2019, a total of \$99,954 was generated through camping fees. Specifically, a total of \$24,557 was generated by the Jordan River Campground and \$75,397 was generated by the Island View Beach Campground. The Spring Salmon Place (KWL-UCHUN) Campground revenues are not collected by Regional Parks, as this campground is operated by the T'Sou-ke Nation.

To understand how camping fees relate to broader Vancouver Island revenue generation patterns, we compared camping fees used in parks close to our regional parks system, such as Goldstream Provincial Park, China Beach Campground in Juan de Fuca Provincial Park, Horne Lake Regional Park, Descanso Bay

Regional Park and Bamberton Provincial Park (Table 5). These comparative locations were chosen due to their geographic location and similarity with CRD Regional Parks. An average cost was calculated using the mean value per camping offering for the six comparative locations selected.

Table 5: Comparison of permitting fees for CRD Regional Parks (CRD), Goldstream Provincial Park (GP), China Beach (CB), Horne Lake Regional Park (HL), Descanso Bay Regional Park (DB), and Bamberton Provincial Park (BP)

	CRD	GP	CB	HL	DB	BP	Average
High season (May-September)	\$15-25	\$35	\$20	\$20-24	\$17	\$20	\$22
Cost per extra vehicle high season	\$5-10	\$12	\$10	n/a	\$8.50	n/a	\$9.50
RVs	\$20	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$20
Low season (October-May)	\$10	\$13	n/a	\$10	\$10	\$11	\$10.80
Cost per extra vehicle low season	\$5	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$5	n/a	\$5

If the CRD had adjusted the pricing of its current camping fees to be in line with the average calculated based on other locations considered, Jordan River and Island View Beach campgrounds could raise their prices to \$22 a night.

A summary of camping fees cost recovery in line with the other parks systems considered is not provided, as the CRD Regional Parks 2019 camping recovery costs diverges from those by including both camping fees and extra vehicle fees.

3.3 Parking

Only two regional parks currently have paid parking from May 1 – September 30:

1. Thetis Lake Regional Park: \$2.25/day OR \$20/season
2. Sooke Potholes Regional Park: \$2.25/day OR \$20/season

The approximate revenue generated in 2019 was \$190,647, with \$153,577 collected at Thetis Lake Regional Park and \$37,070 at Sooke Potholes Regional Park. Collection is through contracted services and the service provider switched to a pay-by-plate system in 2019, which led to increased revenue. Of note, the \$20 season’s pass is valid for both regional parks that have pay parking in effect.

To understand how parking fees relate to broader revenue generation patterns, we compared parking fees used in parks in Saskatchewan Regional Parks, Metro Vancouver Pacific Spirit Regional Park, North Vancouver Regional Parks, Algonquin Provincial Park (APP) and Island 22 Regional Park in Fraser Valley Regional District (Table 6). These comparative locations were chosen due to their similarity with CRD

Regional Parks. An average cost was calculated using the mean value per fee for the seven comparative locations selected.

Table 6: Comparison of parking fees for CRD Regional Parks (CRD), Saskatchewan Regional Parks (SRP), Metro Vancouver Pacific Spirit Regional Park (MVPSRP), North Vancouver Regional Parks (NVRP) Algonquin Provincial Park (APP) and Island 22 Regional Park in Fraser Valley Regional District (I22RP).

	CRD	SRP	MVPSRP	NVRP	APP	I22RP	Average
Hourly	n/a	n/a	\$1.50	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$1.50
Daily	\$2.25	n/a	\$7.50 ⁴	\$3.00	\$15.50-21.00	\$5	\$7.2
Season pass	\$20	\$45	n/a	\$30	\$175.00	\$25	\$59

If the CRD had adjusted the pricing of its current parking fees to be in line with the average calculated based on the other locations considered, the daily rate could increase to \$7.20 and the price for a season’s pass could rise up to \$59.

If the CRD had adjusted the pricing of its current parking in 2019 to be in line with the average calculated based on the other locations considered, the revenue generation would have increased from \$190,647 to \$601,605, an additional cost recovery of 410,958. In Table 7, a detailed description of recovery costs adjusted to the averages based on the other locations considered.

Table 7: Regional Parks pay parking cost recovery in 2019 compared to cost recovery if the rates were in line with an average based on other locations.

Pay Parking	# passes	Current Fee	Current cost recovery	Fee based on regional average	Cost recovery based on average
Daily	69,683	\$2.25	\$156,787	\$7.20	\$501,718
Season pass	1,693	\$20	\$33,860	\$59	\$99,887
Total Costs Recovered	n/a	n/a	\$190,647	n/a	\$601,605

⁴ http://www.metrovancouver.org/boards/Bylaws1/GVRD_Bylaw_1177.pdf

3.4 Interpretive Programs

Three different interpretive programs are offered that generate revenue:

1. School programs for a fee of \$70 per program
2. Special request programs for a fee of \$70 per program
3. Special workshops for a fee of \$7 per participant.

All other interpretive programs and events are free to attend. Additional cost recovery is generated by the interpretive program through the renting of the Beaver Lake Nature Centre and by receiving donations by visitors to the nature centres. In 2019, a total of \$13,625 was generated by the interpretive program. The recovery costs generated through each interpretive program currently used are reported in Table 8.

Table 8: Regional Parks interpretive program cost recovery in 2019.

Program type	Cost recovery
School programs, special request programs and special workshops	\$9,464
Rental of Beaver Lake Nature Centre	\$3,750
Donations	\$356
Recovery cost	\$55
Total costs recovered	\$13,625

To understand how interpretive programs relate to broader revenue generation patterns, we compared interpretive programs used in Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary, Royal BC Museum, Shaw Centre for the Salish Sea, Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites, Goldstream Provincial Park, Rath Trevor Beach Provincial Park and Metro Vancouver Regional Parks (Table 9). These comparative locations were chosen due to their similarity with CRD Regional Parks. An average cost was calculated using the mean value per fee for the eight comparative locations selected.

Table 9: Comparison of interpretive programs fees for CRD Regional Parks (CRD), Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary (SL), Royal BC Museum (RBCM), Shaw Centre for the Salish Sea (SCSS), Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites (FRH&FLNHS), Goldstream Provincial Park (GPP), Rath Trevor Beach Provincial Park (RB) and Metro Vancouver Regional Parks (MVRP).

	CRD	SL	RBCM	SCSS	FRH & FLNHS	GPP	RB	MVRP	Average
Program for max 25 people for 1-3h	\$70	\$80-105	\$99	\$150	\$83	\$130-200	\$130	\$160	\$118.63
Event per participant	\$7	n/a	n/a	\$6	\$3.30	\$5 - 10	\$5 - 10	\$15	\$7.71

If the CRD had adjusted the pricing of its current interpretive programs in 2019 to be in line with the average calculated based on the other locations considered, the revenue generation would have increased from \$9,464 to \$15,698.22, an additional cost recovery of \$6,234.22. In Table 10, a detailed description of recovery costs adjusted to the averages based on the other locations considered is reported.

Table 10: Regional Parks cost recovery through interpretive programs in 2019 and cost recovery if the interpretive programs were in line with the average based on other locations considered.

Interpretive Programs	# of Programs	Current Fee	Current cost recovery	Fee based on regional average	Cost recovery based on average
Program for max 25 people for 1-3h	127	\$70	\$8,890	\$118.63	\$15,066
Event per participant	82	\$7	\$574	\$7.71	\$632
Total Costs Recovered	n/a	n/a	\$9,464	n/a	\$15,698

3.5 Rentals

There are a series of properties within the regional parks system that are rented for a yearly revenue generation of \$99,747. Additional revenue can be generated through the review of the current rental rates for the tenant in the different rental locations across the system. However, operational costs associated with rentals is quite high and although this does generate some revenue, the ongoing operational costs must be considered. Through the Asset Management Optimization Report, tenanted rental buildings are identified as a category of assets that have high life-cycle costs but are not critical to core service delivery.

3.6 Other Revenues

Other sources of revenue are currently used for cost recovery:

- Mount McDonald Tower Licensing, which generated \$109,775 in 2019
- Other licencing, which generated \$12,497 in 2019.

3.7 Recovery Cost over the Last Five Years

An overview of the costs recovered over the past five years by CRD Regional Parks is provided below to offer an overview of cost recovery patterns over a five-year cycle (Table 11 & Figure 1).

Table 11: Regional Parks cost recovery over the past 5 years

Type of recovery cost	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Permits	\$11,165	\$13,300	\$13,100	\$22,787	\$27,686
Camping	\$57,834	\$62,651	\$78,929	\$95,759	\$99,954
Parking	\$88,538	\$90,101	\$100,688	\$97,432	\$190,647
Interpretive programs	\$12,616	\$15,513	\$10,811	\$11,760	\$10,072
Donations	\$336	\$581	\$374	\$403	\$356
Nature Centre rental	\$5,780	\$4,031	\$4,031	\$4,406	\$3,750
Rentals	\$45,914	\$58,851	\$89,610	\$92,183	\$99,747
Tower licensing	\$120,020	\$101,740	\$101,740	\$101,740	\$109,775
Other licensing	\$2,090	\$14,055	\$7,986	\$7,153	\$12,497

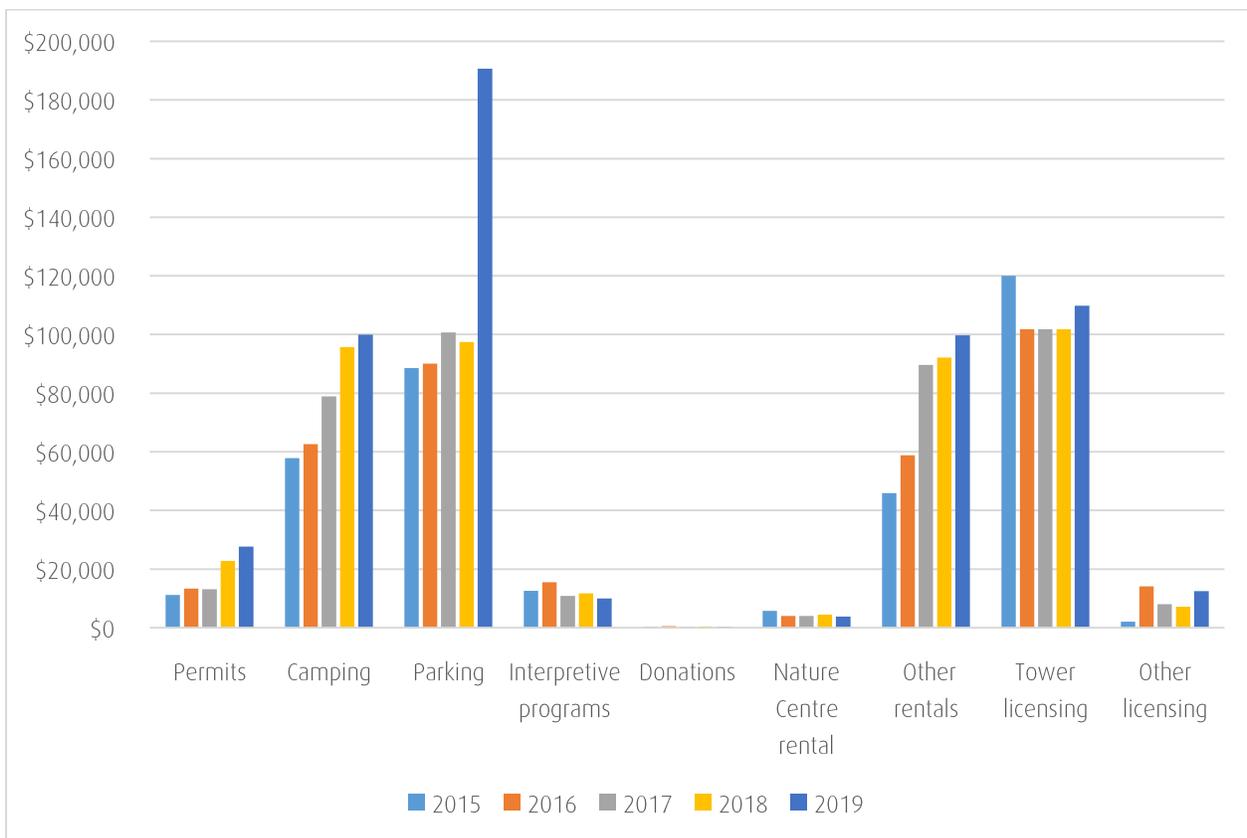


Figure 1: Regional Parks cost recovery over the past 5 years

4. Conclusion

This report is a snapshot of the revenues generated by Regional Parks in 2019. It provides information for similar permits and fees used across British Columbia and other Canadian protected areas systems for revenue generation and offers suggestions on how Regional Parks could align with those. A limitation of this document is the lack of a cost-of-service assessment, which should be undertaken to ensure the cost of all park management-related endeavours and services provided are properly accounted for when charging fees. For example, the operational costs associated with rentals is quite high (i.e., infrastructure maintenance), yet difficult to determine as it's embedded in the everyday work of parks staff. Gaps between costs-of-service delivery and fees received should be identified and used to review and accordingly adapt the current permits and fees of Regional Parks to market values.

Additionally, the complete park system should be assessed to identify in which parks to focus revenue generation. Strategically concentrating services and service fees in parks that attract a higher number of visitors and commercial users allows Regional Parks to maximize the return on investment and may solve issues related to limited service, such as parking capacity. Revenue generation should be especially explored in an optic of "service plus", the value-added services Regional Parks can offer to better serve its clients. Such an approach would allow for market experiences based on user groups and their service delivery preferences and would help develop more successful revenue generation streams. A thorough market analysis of the regional parks system is required to allow for the identification of new and ad-hoc revenue generation offers. Regarding the example of Ontario Parks, market research that helps tailor parks offerings to user demands would be of great support for the enhancement of revenue generation in regional parks.

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Making a difference...together

REPORT TO REGIONAL PARKS COMMITTEE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2021

SUBJECT Initial Engagement Reports for the Mount Work, East Sooke, Matheson Lake and Roche Cove Regional Parks Management Plans

ISSUE SUMMARY

To summarize and present highlights of the initial round of public engagement for the development of management plans for Mount Work, East Sooke, Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

BACKGROUND

In May 2020, the Capital Regional District (CRD) Board provided approval for Regional Parks to initiate three park management planning processes for four regional parks (Mount Work, East Sooke and Roche Cove/Matheson Lake). Project descriptions and engagement plans for each of these management planning processes were provided to the Board in June 2020 and the projects were started shortly thereafter.

The objectives of engagement are to inform people about the park management planning process, to seek input and information and to discuss various interests and ideas about how these lands are to be managed. Two rounds of engagement opportunities are scheduled as part of the preparation of these park management plans. The first round of engagement occurred between June and November 2020. First Nations, government agencies, stakeholders and the public were notified of opportunities for engagement by way of letter, email, advertising and social media. Online surveys were available for at least four weeks.

Initial Engagement Reports have been prepared for Mount Work (Appendix A), East Sooke (Appendix B) and Matheson Lake and Roche Cove (Appendix C) that summarize the engagement steps and key input received for the first round.

Mount Work

The Malahat, Pauquachin, Tsartlip, Tsawout and Tseycum First Nations were notified and provided information by letter of the project and were invited to participate in the planning process. Two meetings and a site visit were held with the WSÁNEĆ Land Use Committee to date that included representatives from the Tsartlip, Tsawout and Tseycum communities. Continued participation is expected as the planning work continues. Input was also provided by staff of eight government agencies. Internal CRD engagement is occurring with Environmental Resource Management staff related to Hartland Landfill activities and solid waste management planning. Additional information regarding engagement with the mountain biking community will be presented with the Solid Waste Management Plan public engagement report, scheduled to be presented to the Environmental Services Committee at its April meeting. Approximately 1,175 people engaged with the CRD in this initial public participation phase through online comment forms, emails/phone calls, interviews and small group meetings.

In general, some of the key themes heard through the engagement process included:

- the diversity of recreational opportunities is appreciated (from swimming or fishing at a lake, to the challenge of hiking or mountain biking in Mount Work’s terrain, to horseback riding)
- protection of ecosystems, species at risk and nature is an important aspect of the park for many people
- acknowledging, honouring and working with First Nations is desirable
- the park provides for health – human health and nature’s health
- more and updated mountain biking opportunities are desired
- there are various issues that need to be considered and addressed (including unsanctioned trail building, conservation needs, parking, trespass on private lands and conflicting desired experiences/attitudes)

East Sooke

Initial conversations have taken place with T’Sou-ke and Sc’ianew First Nations and the CRD is looking forward to further dialogue and to building stronger relationships with these communities. Meetings were held with three local government agencies and two provincial ministries. Twelve interviews were conducted with stakeholder groups representing local conservation, recreation or service delivery interests in the parks. One on-site meeting was held with local residents with an interest in park access. In total, 813 online survey responses and 14 written comments were received from residents and interest groups.

In general, some of the key themes heard through the engagement process included:

- the park is highly valued by virtually all respondents as a rugged, pristine and vast wilderness area close to Victoria; many consider it the “gem” of the regional parks system
- most respondents don’t want the park to be commercialized or overdeveloped
- many respondents are concerned about the increasing number of people using the park and the impacts of this use on the natural environment and the visitor experience
- a large number of respondents expressed concern about the parking situation at Aylard Farm and the difficult access along Becher Bay Road up to the park entrance
- comments about dog management in the park were mixed; 40 respondents spoke favourably about dogs and support maintaining the current under-control policy, while 133 respondents spoke negatively about dogs and support increased regulation of dogs in the park
- the majority of respondents are satisfied with the existing trail system and recreational offerings, while some respondents want new recreational activities considered
- there is strong support for improving trail signage, park mapping and cell coverage in the park to assist with general orientation and for emergency response
- many respondents want to learn more about First Nations culture and history in the park and to ensure that vulnerable cultural heritage features are secured and protected

Matheson Lake and Roche Cove

Initial conversations have taken place with T’Sou-ke and Sc’ianew First Nations and the CRD is looking forward to further dialogue and to building stronger relationships with these communities. Meetings were also held with seven government agencies. Two interviews were conducted with stakeholder groups holding a park-related tenure or agreement, and eight interviews were held with stakeholder groups representing local conservation, recreation or service delivery interests in

the parks. Agencies with specific expertise also provided information relevant to the park management planning process. Additionally, 495 online survey responses and 17 written comments were received from the public and interest groups.

In general, some of the key themes heard through the engagement process included:

- the parks are valued for being pristine and wild
- concern that increased visitation is affecting park values and facilities (parking, washrooms)
- erosion/drainage issues and invasive species removal should be addressed
- important cultural heritage should be highlighted
- the parks are accessible to a broad range of abilities and to the local community
- although the level of recreational opportunities is seen as appropriate, there is a desire for improved access to the lake, continued equestrian access, recognition of rock climbing areas and for mountain biking trails
- conflicts between users (cyclists, dog walkers) are primarily occurring on the Galloping Goose
- additional signage is needed to improve safety, emergency response and compliance

CONCLUSION

The initial engagement phase allows an opportunity for interested parties and stakeholders to provide input at the onset of the planning process. This is important because it provides the CRD with information and insight into what is working well in the parks, what issues may need to be addressed and what people envision for the long-term direction of the parks. In order to achieve the highest degree of public support possible, the work of obtaining preliminary feedback, analyzing comments and addressing interests are important for the next step of developing draft management plans. When draft plans are completed, they will be brought to the Regional Parks Committee and the CRD Board and, subject to Board direction, a second round of public engagement will occur.

RECOMMENDATION

The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

That this report be received for information.

Submitted by:	Jeff Leahy, RPF, Senior Manager, Regional Parks
Concurrence:	Larisa Hutcheson, P.Eng., General Manager, Parks & Environmental Services
Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS

- Appendix A: Mount Work Regional Park – Management Plan Initial Engagement Report
- Appendix B: East Sooke Regional Park – Management Plan Initial Engagement Report
- Appendix C: Matheson Lake and Roche Cove Regional Park – Management Plan Initial Engagement Report

Mount Work Regional Park

Management Plan Initial Engagement Report

Capital Regional District | February 2021



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Executive Summary

The Capital Regional District (CRD) Board initiated three regional park management planning processes in May 2020 for East Sooke, Mount Work, and Matheson Lake/Roche Cove regional parks. The project scope and engagement process for the Mount Work Management Plan were provided to the Board in June 2020 and the project was started thereafter.

Notification letters and emails were sent out between June and September 2020 to Malahat, Pauquachin, Tsartlip, Tsawout and Tseycum First Nations, District of Highlands, District of Saanich, the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area, federal and provincial government agencies with interests in Mount Work, key stakeholders and interest groups, park neighbours, Camosun College and University of Victoria Student Societies.

Two meetings were held with the W̱SÁNEĆ Land Use Committee, including representatives from Tsartlip, Tsawout and Tseycum Nations. In addition, a site visit was held with participation from the Land Use Committee, a cultural worker, and representatives of PEPÁḴEN HÁUT, a society whose mandate includes providing participatory education opportunities about traditional and healthy food systems and restoration and revitalization of native ecosystems in the W̱SÁNEĆ homelands. Although notified of the management planning process, with a follow-up by phone/email, Pauquachin and Malahat Nations did not engage in the process at this stage.

Discussions were held with representatives of Environment and Climate Change Canada (Ecological Gifts Program), the Canadian Forces Base Esquimalt (adjacent rifle range), BC Parks (adjacent Gowlland Tod Provincial Park), BC Ministry of Forest, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (responsible for lakes and fish stocking in Durrance Lake), The Land Conservancy of BC (holder of conservation covenants on two parcels in Mount Work), South Island Mountain Biking Society (agreement with CRD to manage trails in the designated mountain biking area), the Eccentrics hiking group and the Outdoor Club of Victoria, Capital Region Equestrians, and former property owners – the Kinghorn family. Together, 75 submissions were received from government, stakeholders, user/interest groups and the public through email, phone calls and meetings.

In addition, the public was invited to provide input through an online comment form available between September 14 and October 11, 2020. There were 1,114 respondents who provided initial input through the comment forms.

In total, these 1,189 submissions provided a vast number of individual comments. The eight open-ended questions in the comment form alone provided approximately 9,000 comments.

1.0 Introduction

The Mount Work Regional Park management planning process was initiated by the CRD Board in May 2020. As one of the first steps in the planning process, initial engagement began in June 2020 and ran through November 2020.

1.1 Purpose of Engagement

The purpose of engagement is to learn about the different interests and concerns of affected individuals and groups, and to seek input and ideas from people to help make informed decisions. Some goals of engagement included having two-way or multi-way discussions, building ongoing relationships, building understanding and trust, and helping produce plans that reflect organizational needs and public interests.

The initial engagement step allowed interested community members to actively contribute to the planning for a park, before the plan is written. Initial engagement is one of the early steps in the planning process and is used to gather traditional and local knowledge about the park, learn what is important to people, identify issues and seek a range of suggestions for what should be considered in developing the park management plan.

1.2 Limitations of Engagement

Typically, in any planning process, one can expect to get a wide breadth of interests and opinions expressed, including opinions at opposite ends of a spectrum and everything in between. Hence, not all input received will be reflected in the management plan. The input and suggestions help us understand differing interests, inform the discussions during the drafting of the management plan and, where appropriate, are used directly in the plan.

Given the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, some limitations on the engagement process existed. For example, no public open houses or multi-interest workshops were held since large group gatherings were not permitted. A COVID-19 Safety Plan was developed to set out appropriate steps to be taken at any in-person engagement, such as small group meetings and pop-up booths. Modifications were made to limit the size of meetings, ensure adequate physical distancing among participants, use of masks, and appropriate pre-and post-session cleaning protocols. Increased effort was made to directly contact potentially interested individuals and groups, such as park neighbours and various interest groups to notify them of the process and how they could be involved. In this initial engagement phase, much more of the engagement was done through phone meetings, video calls, email conversations, and a limited number of one-on-one or small group meetings. In this case, 75 submissions of comments were gathered through these means, which is considerably more than in a typical (pre-pandemic) park management planning engagement process. Online participation through a comment form is a standard engagement practice that was not impacted by the COVID-19 limitations.

1.3 Who Was Engaged

Through the initial engagement process the following broad groups were contacted:

- First Nations
- Government agencies with interests in or near the park (federal, provincial, regional, local)
- Stakeholders with tenures, licensed, agreements, or permits relating to the park
- Key park user groups/interest groups
- Park neighbours
- Public

More specifically, in addition to the broad public engagement undertaken, five First Nations (Malahat, Pauquachin, Tsartlip, Tsawout and Tseycum Nations) and eight government departments or divisions (Environment and Climate Change Canada, Canadian Forces Base Esquimalt/Naden, BC Parks, BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resources Operations and Rural Development, District of Highlands, District of Saanich, Juan de Fuca Electoral Area, and CRD's Environmental Resource Management Division) were contacted directly. The Land Conservancy of BC, South Island Mountain Bike Society and the Kinghorn family were contacted as key stakeholders with formal agreements with the CRD. Further, 17 user/interest groups were notified or contacted about the project, including hiking groups, mountain biking groups, equestrian groups, rock climbing/bouldering groups, fishing clubs, a fish stocking group, commercial permit holders and conservation groups.

2.0 Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is to summarize the initial engagement process and provide highlights of themes heard or key responses received.

3.0 The Engagement Process

The CRD typically uses a two-stage engagement process for park management planning processes. Initial engagement is used to inform the development of the plan and is undertaken before writing of the plan begins. A second phase of engagement is undertaken once a draft management plan is available. It seeks to gauge the level of support for the management plan and to determine if any changes are needed before the plan is provided to the CRD Board for approval.

3.1 Communications & Engagement Tools

A number of communication and engagement tools are used to inform, consult and involve people in the planning process. Some examples include correspondence (letters, emails), newsletters, advertising,

social media, website, surveys, comment forms, workbooks, meetings, open houses, workshops, in-person or digital discussions/forums and site visits. The following summarizes the flow of the initial engagement process and the tools used.

3.1.1. CRD website

A project webpage was established on the CRD website in June 2020 (www.crd.bc.ca/mtwork-plan). It provides information about the park, the planning process, includes a project newsletter which outlines different aspects of management planning and the stages and timeline for the project.

3.1.2. In-park signs/booths

In June 2020, management planning signs were placed at main access points in the park, outlining the project process and included the project webpage (Appendix A). Once the comment form was launched, posters were also put up at the four parking lots to alert park visitors of the opportunity to provide input (Appendix B). In addition, two pop-up booths were set up in the park in September 2020 as another means to inform park visitors of the planning process and the opportunity to provide comments online. One booth was located at the Ross Durrance Road parking lot and one at the Hartland parking lot. Sixty-four people stopped by the pop-up booths.

3.1.3. Correspondence

Letters were sent to five First Nations in June 2020 providing information about the project and inviting their involvement in the planning process. Letters were also sent to local governments within whose jurisdiction Mount Work rests and federal and provincial agencies based on their interests relating to the park (Environment and Climate Change Canada based on the fact that two parcels of Mount Work were acquired through the Ecological Gift Program, Department of National Defence (CFB Esquimalt), which has an active rifle range adjacent to the park, BC Parks, which manages the adjacent Gowlland Tod Provincial Park) in July and August 2020. In August 2020, emails were sent to other key stakeholders and interest groups and in early September 2020, letters were sent to neighbours within 200m of the park to alert them to the park management planning project, invite their participation and notify them that a comment form would be available online in mid-September 2020 (Appendix C). Outreach to another government department (BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development) and interest/user groups (Golden Rods and Reels, Victoria Fish and Game Club and Southern Vancouver Island Anglers Coalition) occurred over the fall of 2020, as these additional groups were identified as being key.

Follow up was conducted by phone, email, or in-person meetings with at least 20 of the government agencies, stakeholder groups and interest/user groups to prompt involvement and/or to seek answers to specific questions of interest relating to the park situation.

3.1.4. Newspaper advertising

Between September 10 and September 24, 2020, an ad was placed in six Black Press newspapers that are delivered free to regional households (Appendix D). An online ad was also placed in the *Times Colonist* on September 14, 2020, which had over 300,000 views.

3.1.5. Social media posts and advertising

Social media posts were made three times during the September-October 2020 public engagement timeframe on the CRD's Facebook and Twitter accounts. These posts directed readers to the project webpage to complete the online comment form. The posts went out to 3,607 followers on Facebook and 6,623 followers on Twitter.

Facebook ads were also used over two weeks, one in September 2020 and one in October 2020, to make the public aware of the opportunity to participate in the initial engagement process. The targeted demographic for these ads were people who lived in the capital region between the ages of 18-65+. The Facebook ads reached 12,039 people and, on average, they reached evenly across age groups and between genders. Analytics show that 405 people engaged (liked, shared, commented on post) and 338 clicked on the link to the project webpage.

In addition, the College Student Association and University of Victoria Student Association were contacted directly, as a means to engage youth, and both posted information about the project and the opportunity to participate through their social media and/or through key departments/course instructors.

3.1.6. Meetings and site visits

Several in-person or phone meetings were held with representatives of First Nations, government representatives and key stakeholder and interest groups, between July and November 2020, to gather more specific input. Specifically, two meetings were held with the W̱SÁNEĆ Land Use Committee and a site visit was held with participation from the committee, a cultural worker, and representatives of PEPÁḴEN HÁUT, a society whose mandate includes providing participatory education opportunities about traditional and healthy food systems, restoration and revitalization of native ecosystems in the W̱SÁNEĆ homelands.

CRD staff made an online presentation to the District of Highlands Committee of the Whole and met or discussed the project with Highlands staff, Juan de Fuca staff, and Saanich staff, BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development staff.

Meetings and discussions were held with The Land Conservancy of BC staff (phone meeting/email), South Island Mountain Bike Society vice-president (in person/email), former landowners of two parcels that are now part of the park (in person/email), a representative of The Eccentrics hiking group (in person), Outdoor Club of Victoria (email), the Nature Trails Society (email), Capital Region Equestrians representatives (in person/email), and Freshwater Fisheries Society (email/phone), among others.

All 75 written submissions and meeting notes were received through email, phone calls, interviews and meetings.

3.1.7. Online comment form

An online comment form was available through the project website for a month in September-October 2020 (Appendix E). A news release was sent out to the media and was picked up by multiple outlets such as Vibrant Victoria and the *Times Colonist*. The comment form sought public input and local knowledge on a variety of topics through 21 questions. In particular, input was requested about what is important to people at Mount Work, what the CRD's goals should be for the park, people's favourite destinations in the park, what issues need to be addressed through the management plan and opinions about different management tools and strategies. There were 1,114 completed comment forms received.

4.0 Highlights of What We Heard

The 1,189 submissions received through the initial engagement process led to a vast number of individual comments (nearly 1,200 people responded to 21 questions in the comment form and 75 further submissions, many of which include responses to 5-7 specific questions posed by staff). The eight open-ended questions in the comment form alone provided approximately 9,000 comments. This report will provide highlights of some of the key themes or responses heard. It is not intended to document all comments received.

4.1 First Nations

The W̱S̱ÁNEĆ Leadership Council's Land Use Committee met with staff on two occasions and conducted a site visit with staff at Durrance Lake. Engagement with the Land Use Committee will continue as the draft management plan is being developed and further site visits are anticipated. Some of the key messages heard to-date include:

- There is a rich and deep W̱S̱ÁNEĆ history in this area. The SENĆOŦEN name for the place where Mount Work Regional Park is located is W̱M̱ÍYEŦEN.
- The W̱S̱ÁNEĆ people continue to have ties to and use these lands.
- W̱S̱ÁNEĆ people have obligations to the land, water, and all living things as given to them by XA,EL,S (Creator).
- W̱S̱ÁNEĆ people used/use this area for hunting, harvesting, travelling through their territory, as well as for ritual/ceremonial practices and maintaining their connection with nature.
- W̱S̱ÁNEĆ history should be recognized and acknowledged in the management plan and be respected by the CRD and the public.

- SENĆOŦEN places names should be considered for trail names within the park. This will help foster a welcoming feeling for W̱S̱ÁNEĆ people at W̱M̱ÍYEŦEN. Other opportunities to learn about and respect W̱S̱ÁNEĆ culture, values and history should be considered as the management plan is being developed.
- Cultural features and areas exist within the park and they, particularly ancestral sites, must be treated with honour and respect and be protected from disturbance from park use/users.
- Protocols for working with W̱S̱ÁNEĆ cultural workers need to be incorporated into park management.
- Archaeological records should be updated through assessments.
- In line with the CRD's Special Task Force on First Nations Relations, the W̱S̱ÁNEĆ Leadership Council would like to explore the concept of "reconciliation through economic development."
- A potential project suggested was to use an existing First Nations dive team to clean up the bottom of Durrance Lake, particularly to remove bottles and cans that have been discarded there.
- The enhancement of ecological systems that underpin the health of the W̱S̱ÁNEĆ community is important. Maintenance or restoration of habitats and traditional plants is needed for continued access to healthy and abundant foods and medicines. A joint restoration project was suggested between the CRD and PEPÁḴEN HÁUT Society.

4.2 Government

Staff in eight government departments were contacted as part of the engagement process to gather important background information, seek ideas regarding issues that need to be addressed, and understand how the CRD might work together with them in the future. Some of the key messages heard include:

- The management plan should include information about the Ecological Gifts Program and uphold the intent of conserving the ecological values of the lands acquired through this program.
- The Heals Rifle Range is an active, year-round facility that is used day or night by the Canadian Armed Forces and some local law enforcement.
- Public trespass onto the rifle range is an ongoing concern. Safety risks exist due to the active use of the range and potential for ricochets and stray rounds. A spike in trespassing occurred during the spring of 2020. The CRD and CFB Esquimalt should work together to address this issue. Environmental damage to wetlands and critical habitat/species at risk within the rifle range property is also a concern. Blocking of rifle range access points by vehicles/roadside parking is an issue, particularly as it relates to potential access for emergency vehicles into the rifle range.
- The existing Gowlland Tod Provincial Park Management Plan provides the approved management direction for the provincial park. It is part of a broad decision making framework that includes other strategic and operational plans, policies, guidelines and legislation.
- BC Parks is open to discussing issues and interests with the CRD. Parking, unauthorized trail building, and dog management were the main issues noted.

- Fish stocking at Durrance Lake has been going on since the late 1980s. Stock is mainly rainbow trout, and sometimes cutthroat trout, for fishing purposes only (i.e., sterile fish not breeding stock; for “put and take” / “catchable and retainable”). A 5-ton truck is used for stocking, so a boat launch ramp is helpful, though not mandatory. There are some wild cutthroat trout at Durrance Lake that use the inlet stream for spawning in the spring.
- Fishing effort at Durrance Lake has increased from 1,100 days in 1986 to 3,700 days in 2018. Durrance Lake is the 4th highest used lake in the region. It has higher levels of shore anglers than boat anglers. Shore fishing is mainly on the north side of the lake due to slopes (too flat/shallow on south side). Development of the fishing dock was a positive project and the CRD should maintain/improve access for all ages and abilities. In particular, maintain wheelchair accessibility to the fishing dock.
- Decommissioning of mountain biking trails on Hartland Landfill lands would likely occur in the next 10-15 years. No anticipated impact is expected at this time to the parking lots, toilet facility, main access trail, or technical training area that are on Hartland Landfill lands.
- People being on the landfill trails, or parked on Willis Point Road, during landfill-related blasting is a concern.
- Any mountain biking trails lost from Hartland Landfill property will be replaced nearby or elsewhere in the region.
- A planned 10 km loop trail that includes Mount Work Summit Trail, McKenzie Bight Trail, Timberman Trail, Gowlland Tod trail, a connection across through CRD properties by Mary Lake and linking through a Highlands parkland parcel to Thetis Lake and back to Mount Work has been discussed for some time and should be considered in the park management plan.
- Chapter 4 of the District of Highlands Official Community Plan relates to parks and, in particular, Section 4.6 provides policies related to provincial and regional parks. Park and trail objectives include placing a high priority on the conservation of the natural ecosystems through parks; ensure the parks systems include a variety of ecosystems and recreational opportunities. Chapter 5.4 of the District of Highlands Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2001) notes that regional parks are natural areas where remnants of original ecosystems and wildlife habitat can flourish and evolve. They are sources of inspiration and places of recreation for a growing population.
- Parking, illegal trail building, trespassing from the park onto private lands (largely off-leash dogs and mountain bikers; some hikers), and the need for protection of sensitive natural values are all issues that need to be addressed.
- There is recognition of increasing crowding of mountain biking opportunities in the designated mountain biking area but there is also a recognized desire to maintain some wilderness-like areas for walkers to experience without mountain bikes. Also, consider the need to protect water quality of lakes, particularly in Fork Lake, which is used for drinking water by neighbouring landowners.
- Within the District of Saanich, Mount Work is zoned as park. Saanich has a variety of streamside setback requirements for the water bodies that apply within the park.

- Protection of the urban forest is the biggest issue from a regional perspective, as well as protecting the sensitive ecosystems and rare plants and animals identified provincially as being within the park. The park is a major regional green space and should be preserved in its natural state. Resources should go towards managing visitor use in such a way as to preserve this natural state and mitigate impacts to the park as much as possible. Habitat preservation should be a guiding principle of the management plan.
- The Willis Point Community Plan (2003), Bylaw 3027, shows Mount Work as a park. There are no specific policies that relate to regional parks but the bylaw does provide policies regarding environmental areas, wetland and riparian buffers, and trails. Parking at Durrance Lake is noted as an issue in the Community Plan.
- Juan de Fuca development permit requirements apply to the CRD, so any development in riparian areas or on steep slopes would need to address this.
- Within the Juan de Fuca (JdF) Electoral Area, at this time, the regional park is not protected under the fire protection bylaw, so JdF cannot assist with fires in the park.

4.3 Stakeholders/User Groups/Interest Groups

Information was received from the majority of stakeholders and interest groups contacted. Although the input was focused on the interests of each group individually, overall the information received provides background information about the park, its use, and user interests. With greater understanding of the different user groups and their needs and interests, consideration of similarities and differences can be given during planning discussions. Examples of responses provided by these groups include:

- Conservation covenants are registered on the titles of Section 63 and Section 68 of the park and require the CRD to uphold certain restrictions. Unless prior written approval has been provided by the covenant holder (The Land Conservancy of BC), the following restrictions apply: no removal of native vegetation, no herbicides/pesticides shall be introduced, no structures will be built, and no motorized vehicles shall access the area. Some leeway is provided for safety, park maintenance and emergency service requirements. Further, the area is to be used in accordance with the park management plan.
- The covenanted lands have significant ecological values that need protecting, including active ground nesting bird habitat in manzanita/arbutus groves, and rare species such as the red-legged frog, in and around wetlands and riparian areas. Unsanctioned trail building is a major concern and some of the existing informal trails should be decommissioned.
- New trails in Mount Work and throughout the CRD are needed to offset the impacts of trail removal through the Solid Waste Management Plan.
- There are different experiences desired by cyclists undertaking different types of mountain biking. Most of Hartland mountain bike area is cross country in nature, which starts and ends at the same

elevation, though they may go up and down and in between. Gravity/Downhill/Enduro trails start up and go downhill, ending at a lower elevation. Most of new-build trails are gravity trails because it is under-represented in parks and there has been a shift in BC to more gravity riding because new bikes make these more accessible. Need to provide progression/trail options that can push riders a little more each time or as they become more proficient.

- Mountain biking as a sport is increasing and more trails are needed. Generally, 1-3 hours is typical time spent mountain biking. Beginners may ride for shorter times; fitness riders 1-1.5 hours; recreational riders 1-2 hours; tourists/out-of-town riders 3-4 hours (since they've spent time to get there).
- Issues include increasing use, trail braiding/widening, need for purpose-built, single-track mountain biking trails, especially climbing trails, the need for better trail signage, rogue trail building and environmental impacts, and conflicts among trail users impacting trail experiences. Also the smells from the landfill can be significant, especially in the summer.
- From a mountain biking perspective, improvements would include more trail opportunities, signage, like at Whistler, that indicates difficulty and if it is a flow or technical trail, some directional trails, especially for gravity mountain biking, adding a picnic area, shade, water, and grass for aesthetics at the technical training area, multiple-use trails optimized for one particular use, and information kiosks should educate about environmental and cultural values in the park.
- Several areas on the west side of the peak of Mount Work have Douglas-fir trees falling over due to root rot. This has been a problem for 20+ years, but has been worse in the past 10 years. Root rot is a fungal disease that is slow acting and moves through the soil. After trees fall, it can take up to 100 years before the soil is rid of the fungus. Falling trees are a real safety hazard.
- There are several areas on the west side of the park with significant populations of wildflowers that should be protected. In particular, there are Lady Slippers (an orchid), Shooting Stars and some Trilliums.
- First Nation elders should be consulted about potential sacred areas in the park.
- The former Kinghorn landowners specifically asked that locations or trails on Section 56 be given indigenous names. Former landowner trail markers and names could also be retained.
- Jim Kinghorn built his cabin at the south border of Section 63 in the early 1980s. The family started a guest book used by park visitors who stop at the cabin. It should be preserved and enjoyed by all. The cabin gives a location for a break on a walk. It might be nice to provide a storyboard about the history of the area there.
- Loop trails are preferred by hikers. Hikes of 3-6 hours are desirable, with somewhere nice to stop for snacks and lunch. Viewpoints are appreciated.
- Mount Work is an excellent recreational area close to Victoria – a jewel.
- Goals should include preservation/do no harm, education, and providing opportunities for outdoor physical activity. Balance recreation with the need to preserve the environment.

- Hikers are often seeking a wilderness experience on small, interesting trails leading to a lookout of some kind. Enjoying the local flora and fauna is an important aspect of time in the park.
- Issues of increasing traffic on trails. But no conflicts occurring. Weekends are more problematic for crowding. Ever proliferating network of bike trails is an environmental concern.
- Look to other areas like Mt. Tzouhalem or Cobble Hill, where cedar rail fencing blocks environmental areas/off limits areas for examples of how to balance protection and use.
- For Mount Work, the main trail should remain for hiking only. Most other trails should be shared bike/hike trails. Many trails are too narrow to accommodate hiker, biker and horse passing each other.
- Demand for trails in the CRD is increasing dramatically. Promote safe, sustainable trails for non-motorized use.
- There is an opportunity to have a network of highly sustainable trails that can be accessed by multiple users but does not guarantee access to all areas for all users (e.g., there may be areas that are single track designed for running or hiking; there may be others for equestrians and cyclists). Need to design for sustainability with minimal environmental impact and maximum safety and ensure adequate sight lines and strategic links to other trails. Wide, straight, flat trails encourage speed. Winding trails with nature close creates a more natural experience and encourages slower travel.
- Courtesy protocols should be encouraged/promoted.
- Provide signage and information to let users know what to expect and how to respond.
- Goals for Mount Work for next 15 years:
 - Provide natural trail connections between Durrance Lake, Gowlland Tod, Thetis Lake and Hartland mountain bike area.
 - Realign and repair existing trails to sustainable standards (e.g., Summit Trail).
 - Authorize and upgrade rogue trails to bring them up to safety and environmental standards (e.g. Willis Point Road to the Summit Trail).
- Recognizes that single use trails are desired and a necessity. In these cases, educate users through proper signage of the preferred use.
- The Nature Trails Society has proposed a “Heart of the Hills” connector trail route between Gowlland Tod, Thetis Lake/Mount Work, Francis/King and Interurban trails systems with a possible extension to Elk/Beaver Lake and Cordova Bay beach, connecting Saanich Inlet to Haro Strait. Consider including in management plan and naming it.
- There is a great need for Summit Trail to be realigned and repaired, as it is eroding due to existing traffic and design.
- Many equestrians feel they get the boring trails, which is frustrating.
- Desired/enjoyable equestrian experiences start with good parking (some equestrians who want to use the park are not park neighbours who can ride to it). The desired experience is for safe, easy to medium difficulty trails that provide loop or a destination. Wide, sturdy bridges equestrians can ride

over (please make sure bridges are horse friendly, like the ones at Thetis Lake) or areas where we can get our horses around bridge and safely cross the creek/stream. Removal of fallen trees blocking trail or bypass trails is needed. Use gravel on low-lying portions (muddy) of trails. A good experience includes other trail users who understand and yield to horses and where there is good trail signage (not everyone has a good sense of direction). For a good experience, there needs to be a variety of trails and terrains, not just flat old rail/road bed. Riders appreciate loop trails to avoid in-and-back on same trail.

- After work rides are generally 0.5-2 hrs and daytime/weekend rides can range between 1-4 hours typically, with some people doing much longer rides, often taking lunch and stopping for a while (e.g., 6 hours). Generally, a nice ride is a maximum of 10 km.
- Biggest issues are the need for horse-friendly bridges and the need to reopen the Killarney Lake loop trail to horses. Other concerns relate to lack of signage and desire for more trails for equestrian use. Equestrians don't want commercial dog walking with packs of dogs using the park trails.
- Improvements for equestrians include: washrooms, a mounting block or two, somewhere to fill a bucket for horses, a hitching post and vistas at rest stops
- Fork Lake is a source of water for adjacent landowners. Access to the lake has a high potential to increase risk to water quality. There should be no access from the park and the CRD should deactivate the informal trails to Fork Lake and do habitat restoration in the foreshore area.
- The former Barer and Kinghorn properties help protect the Fork Lake Watershed – need to explain to public that lands are covenanted and protect from unsanctioned mountain biking. The management plan should clearly note the covenants and should live up to them.
- A Society of concerned citizens wants to ensure that Mount Work Regional Park is protected and to raise awareness that the CRD's landfill actions may disturb the park. The society noted that there are 12 endangered and threatened species living in Mount Work Regional Park, wildlife species facing imminent extinction or that are likely to become endangered if nothing is done to review their decline. Expansion of the landfill is likely to impact these species and the park through the chemicals in biosolids, increase potential for spills, cutting of trees and elimination of trails.
- Parking is an identified issue, particularly at Durrance Lake and Ross-Durrance Road access to the regional and the provincial park.

4.4 Public

Over 1,100 respondents provided initial input online using the 21-question comment form. A few of the main themes heard included:

Visitor Use: appreciation of the diversity of recreational opportunities, desire for more trail opportunities, importance of being in the outdoors for physical and mental health, need to balance recreation and protection.

- **Natural Environment:** Concern about sensitive areas being impacted by use, pressure from increasing use, desire to not have the park overbuilt.
- **Issues:** parking, unsanctioned trail building, trail erosion, need to educate users about natural values and sensitive features, some user conflicts exist.

Given the volume of information, question-by-question responses are summarized in Appendix E.

5.0 Engagement Evaluation

In terms of evaluating the initial engagement process, it is helpful to have some socio-demographic information. This allows us to evaluate whether our tools were successful in reaching a wide range of interested individuals. Questions 18 and 19 in the public comment form asked about age and residence.

A good distribution in all age categories was seen among public respondents, with all categories being represented. The majority of respondents were between 25 and 64 years of age (62%), with a small number of 18-24 year olds (5%) and 65+ respondents (8%).

Over one half of the respondents live in Saanich (30%) or Victoria (23%). The next largest group of respondents live in Central Saanich (9%). All other locations were lower percentages of respondents (1%-7%), and the only two jurisdictions not represented were the Salt Spring Island and the Southern Gulf Islands Electoral Areas. Given the location of the park, this breakdown of place of residence is not unexpected, with a higher percentage of respondents from those locations closest to the park and lower percentages from people who live further from the park.

Similarly, to help with evaluating the engagement process, Question 20 in the comment form asked about how people first heard about the park management planning process. The highest responses were heard through an organization they belong to (32%), through a newspaper ad (23%), and through social media (18%). Twenty-seven percent (27%) of respondents first heard about the project through all of the other means combined. Given the responses to these three questions, and the volume of responses/comments received, CRD staff believe the engagement process was successful.

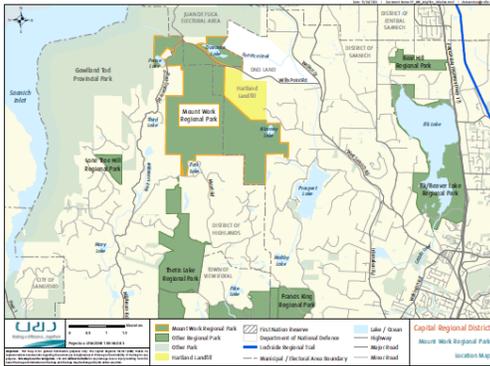
6.0 Conclusion

Even with COVID-19 related changes to engagement opportunities and procedures, there was a high level of interest and input provided through this initial stage of engagement. People were directly and indirectly engaged and provided well over 9,000 comments, suggestions and ideas that will assist as we move toward drafting a park management plan for Mount Work Regional Park. Comments received will be further considered as staff draft the management plan. When a draft plan is completed, a second round of public engagement will occur.

Appendix A: In-park Sign

Planning for the Future of Mt. Work Regional Park

Over the next two years, the Capital Regional District will be developing a management plan for Mt. Work Regional Park to guide environmental conservation, cultural heritage management, visitor use and park development for the next 15-20 years.



Anticipated Project Timing

- Gather background information Summer 2020
- Initial engagement Summer - Fall 2020
- Develop draft management plan Winter 2020-Spring 2021
- Engagement on draft plan Summer - Fall 2021
- Finalize management plan Winter 2021 - Spring 2022
- Board approval of management plan Spring - Summer 2022

Get Involved

Visit the CRD website for more details and to learn about opportunities to participate in the planning process.

www.crd.bc.ca/mtwork-plan

Capital Regional District | Regional Parks

490 Atkins Avenue, Victoria, BC V9B 2Z8

T: 250.478.3344 | www.crd.bc.ca/parks

Capital Regional District @crd_bc

CRD
Making a difference...together

Appendix B: In-Park Posters



PROVIDE YOUR INPUT **Mount Work Regional Park**

The Capital Regional District (CRD) is preparing a management plan for Mount Work Regional Park. This plan will provide strategic guidance for on-going management of the park for the next 15-20 years.

The CRD is gathering initial input from the public on their interests, ideas and concerns. An online comment form will be available on the CRD website. Your suggestions will be considered in developing the draft management plan. Once the plan is drafted it will be posted online for public review.

Provide your initial input online between September 14 - October 11, 2020
www.crd.bc.ca/mtwork-plan



Appendix C: Letter to Park Neighbours



Regional Parks
490 Atkins Avenue
Victoria, BC V9B 2Z8

T: 250.478.3344
F: 250.478.5416
www.crd.bc.ca/parks

FILE COPY

August 31, 2020

File: 6130-30

Dear Park Neighbour:

RE: MOUNT WORK REGIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The Capital Regional District (CRD) has recently initiated a project to develop a park management plan for Mount Work Regional Park. The management plan will guide environmental conservation, cultural heritage management, visitor use and park development for the next 15 – 20 years. As a neighbour to the park, the CRD invites you to participate in the park management planning process. For up to date information on the management planning process please visit the project webpage at: <https://www.crd.bc.ca/project/mount-work-management-plan>.

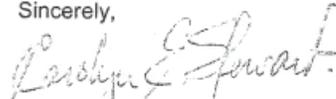
The CRD public engagement process provides two key opportunities to provide input into the planning process. First, the CRD is interested in receiving information and suggestions from the public before the management plan is drafted. An initial comment form will be posted on the project webpage for a month, likely between mid-September and mid-October 2020. If you would prefer to receive a hard copy or to provide your response verbally, please contact me directly. The project team will consider all input received as we begin drafting the park management plan later in the fall.

A second round of engagement will occur once a draft management plan is available. The draft plan will be posted on the project webpage for review and a comment form will be provided. At this time, the draft plan is anticipated in the summer or fall of 2021.

The CRD invites you to participate and welcomes your ideas and input. Please feel free to pass this information on to others whom you think might be interested in being involved.

If you have any questions that are not addressed on the project webpage, please feel free to contact me at 250.360.3368 or cstewart@crd.bc.ca.

Sincerely,



Carolyn Stewart
Park/Trail Planner

Attachments: Mount Work Regional Park Location & Park Maps

Appendix D: Print Ad



PROVIDE YOUR INPUT **Mount Work Regional Park**

The Capital Regional District (CRD) is preparing a management plan for Mount Work Regional Park. This plan will provide strategic guidance for on-going management of the park for the next 15-20 years.

The CRD is gathering initial input from the public on their interests, ideas and concerns. An online comment form will be available on the CRD website. Your suggestions will be considered in developing the draft management plan. Once the plan is drafted it will be posted online for public review.

Provide your initial input online between September 14 - October 11, 2020
www.crd.bc.ca/mtwork-plan



Appendix E: Online Comment Form

Mt. Work Regional Park

COMMENT FORM



Capital Regional District | Parks & Environmental Services

To protect your privacy, this survey is anonymous and will be kept strictly confidential. Please do not provide any information that could identify yourself or others in your responses. No individuals will be identified and no comments will be attributed to any individual in any reports or communication resulting from your input.

Note: Each page of the feedback form will time out after 30 minutes. Please do not use the back/forward buttons on your browser, but rather use the buttons at the bottom of the page and ensure you **click the 'finish' button at the end of the form**, even if you have not answered all of the questions.

1. What makes Mt. Work Regional Park important to you?

2. In your opinion, what should the CRD's Cultural Heritage Goal (e.g. for archaeological sites, First Nations village sites) be for Mt. Work Regional Park?

3. In your opinion, what should the CRD's Environmental Goal be for Mt. Work Regional Park?

4. In your opinion, what should the CRD's Visitor Use Goal be for Mt. Work Regional Park?

5. What activities do you do most often in Mt. Work Regional Park? (Select your top three)

- Bouldering/Rock climbing
- Boating
- Cycling
- Mountain biking
- Fishing
- Geocaching
- Hiking/ Walking
- Horseback riding
- Picnicking
- Relaxing by a lake
- Running
- Swimming
- Water sports (kayaking, canoeing, stand-up paddle boarding, etc.)
- Other: _____

6. Where do you typically enter the park from?

- Durrance Lake parking lot
- Hartland parking lots
- Meadowbrook Road Munn Road parking lot
- Ross-Durrance parking lot
- Ross-Durrance roadside
- Willis Point roadside
- Other: _____

7. Which are your favourite destinations and trails in the park?

8. Do you believe that Mt. Work Regional Park has sensitive ecosystems and habitats that should be protected/maintained?

- Yes
- No

9. Do you believe that Mt. Work Regional Park has sensitive cultural heritage that should be protected/maintained?

- Yes
- No

10. Which of the following management strategies would you support to protect sensitive areas?
(Select all that apply)

- Close key areas to undertake habitat restoration
- Keep visitors a certain distance away from cultural heritage sites or areas with high potential for archaeological resources
- Leave some areas of the park just for nature
- Limit types of use in key areas
- Provide interpretive panels explaining the values/sensitivities of an area
- Use seasonal closures of areas as appropriate for needed protection
- Other: _____

11. Should hiking/walking be permitted in the designated mountain biking area?

- Yes
- No

12. Should dogs be permitted in the designated mountain biking area?

- Yes
- No
- On some trails

13. Should mountain biking be permitted outside of the designated mountain biking area?

- Yes
- No
- On some trails

14. In your opinion, how well is the park working currently?

- Very Well
- Well
- Ok/Acceptable
- Poorly
- Very Poorly

15. Please share any issue at Mt. Work Regional Park that you believe need to be addressed through the management plan.

16. How important are the following amenities to you?

	Not important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Important	Very Important
Loop trail opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
Non-loop, long distance trail opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
Access to the designated mountain bike area from all parking lots	1	2	3	4	5
Use of designated mountain biking area trails for horseback riding	1	2	3	4	5
More parking	1	2	3	4	5
More toilets	1	2	3	4	5
More picnic areas	1	2	3	4	5
Interpretive programs	1	2	3	4	5
Interpretive signs	1	2	3	4	5

17. What do you feel needs to be focused on over the next 10 years in Mt. Work? (Select your top three choices)

- Better access for swimming
- Environmental protection/restoration
- More facilities (toilets, trails, picnic tables)
- Opportunities for education/interpretation on natural and cultural features
- Parking
- Trail improvements
- Other: _____

18. In which age category do you fall?

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65 +

19. Where do you live?

- Beecher Bay First Nation (Scia'new)
- Central Saanich
- Colwood
- Esquimalt
- Esquimalt Nation Highlands
- Juan de Fuca
- Langford
- Metchosin
- North Saanich
- Oak Bay
- Pacheedaht First Nation
- Pauquachin First Nation (BOKÉĆEN)
- Saanich
- Salt Spring Island
- Sidney
- Songhees Nation
- Sooke
- Southern Gulf Islands T'Sou-ke Nation
- Tsartlip First Nation (WJOLÉŁP)
- Tsawout First Nation (SÁUTW)
- Tseycum First Nation (WŠIKEM)
- Victoria
- View Royal
- Other: _____

20. How did you first hear about the Mt. Work Regional Park planning process?

- CRD Board meeting/meeting highlights
- CRD social media post
- CRD website
- Letter or email from CRD
- Newspaper ad
- Newspaper article
- Park sign
- Radio
- Through an organization I belong to
- Through College/University
- Through a friend or relative
- TV news item
- Other: _____

21. Do you have any other information or comments about Mt. Work Regional Park?

The information collected through this survey will be used to determine the public's views, values, attitudes, and satisfaction with Regional Parks and Trails and opinions about management performances (i.e., facilities, services, programs), to evaluate service performance, and to obtain insight and feedback on management and projects. Any personal information collected in this survey is in accordance with Section 26(e) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Please contact [Beatrice Frank](#), Social Science Specialist, at Regional Parks, 490 Atkins Avenue, Victoria, 250.360.3339 if you have questions.

Thank you for taking the survey.

Appendix F: Online Responses

Over 1,100 respondents provided initial input through the online comment form between September 14 and October 11, 2020. The following is a summary from the online responses.

QUESTION 1: WHAT MAKES MT. WORK REGIONAL PARK IMPORTANT TO YOU?

This information will assist in developing a vision for the park.

Key themes heard include:

- The designated, well-maintained mountain biking area (one of the few accessible and well-maintained mountain bike areas close to Victoria, quality mountain biking, legal/dedicated mountain biking, maintained technical trails, high density of trails but not overcrowding on trails).
- The wild/natural characteristics (place of refuge, wild and uncultivated, beautiful forests, beautiful arbutus groves, a triumph for conservation efforts, great views, unique geography).
- The variety of outdoor activities (all types of outdoor activities from hiking to cycling to climbing and swimming, fitness opportunities, cycling on the east half/hiking and trail running on the west half, access to lakes).
- The proximity of the park to people (close to Victoria, close to Esquimalt, close to my home) and the ease of use because of that proximity (I can use it after work, I can use it before work, we don't have to spend a whole day to get to it, can use it any time).
- Health (physical/mental/spiritual/social), peace and serenity that provided a place to destress and relax.

QUESTION 2: IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT SHOULD THE CRD'S CULTURAL HERITAGE GOAL (e.g., for archaeological sites, First Nations village site) BE FOR MT. WORK REGIONAL PARK?

QUESTION 3: IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT SHOULD THE CRD'S ENVIRONMENTAL GOAL BE FOR MT. WORK REGIONAL PARK?

QUESTION 4: IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT SHOULD THE CRD'S VISITOR USE GOAL BE FOR MT. WORK REGIONAL PARK?

These three open ended questions provide a starting point in consideration of management goals for the park. Staff are still reviewing the 1,122 suggestions for visitor use goals. Some key themes raised related to cultural heritage management and ecological protection include:

Cultural Heritage Management

- Preserve/protect cultural heritage features and limit impact/restrict access if needed
- Educate the public about the cultural heritage using signs, interpretive programs, or a cultural trail

- Consult/work with FN on preservation and management of cultural heritage.

Ecological Protection

- Protect ecosystems, species at risk, forest, native species, water quality, remaining natural areas
- Ensure sustainable development/sustainable trails/sustainable use levels, manage use to be sustainable
- Balance land stewardship and recreational use
- Minimize impacts of humans and minimize/limit development
- Restore key areas and remove invasive species
- Respect wildlife needs, keep dogs on leash to protect the environment/wildlife

QUESTION 5: WHAT ACTIVITIES DO YOU DO MOST OFTEN IN MT. WORK REGIONAL PARK? (Select your top three)

Mountain biking and hiking were the most popular activities undertaken at 68% and 63%, respectively. Swimming, cycling, and relaxing by a lake followed.

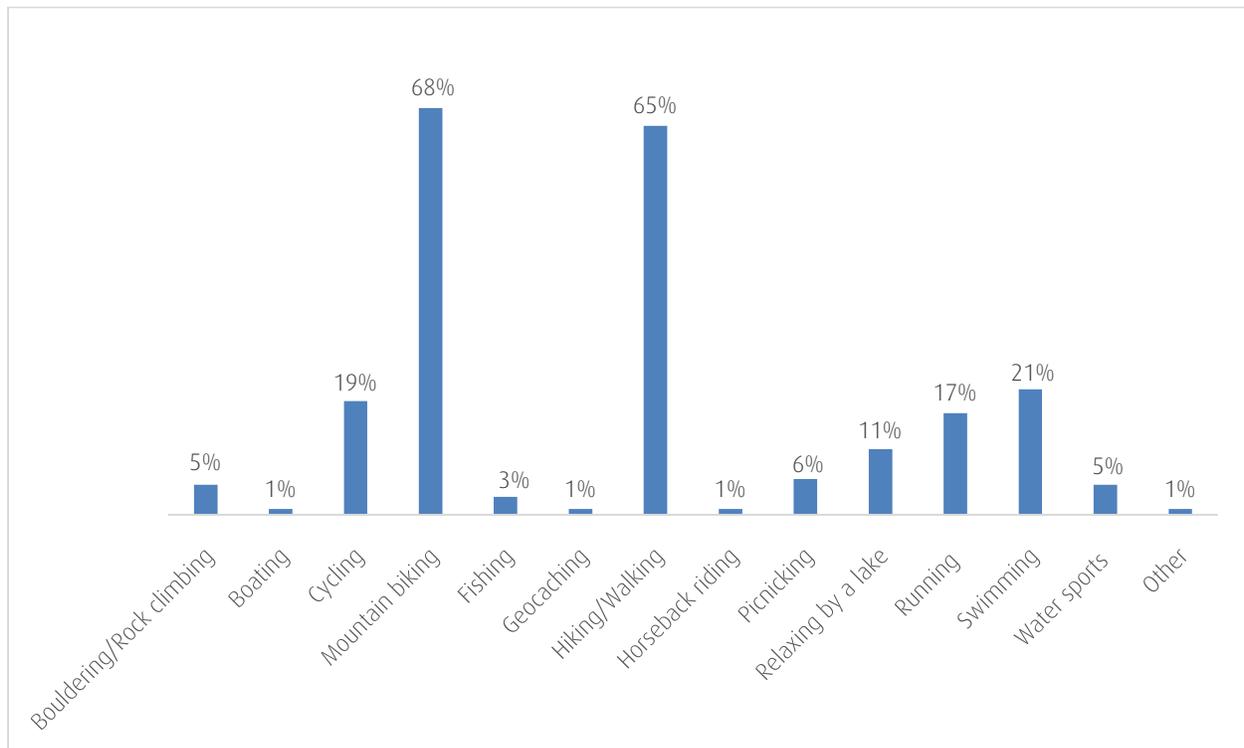


Figure 1: Main activities undertaken by respondents

QUESTION 6: WHERE DO YOU TYPICALLY ENTER THE PARK FROM?

This question will help identify where parking issues may exist or parking needs may arise, based on current patterns and volumes.

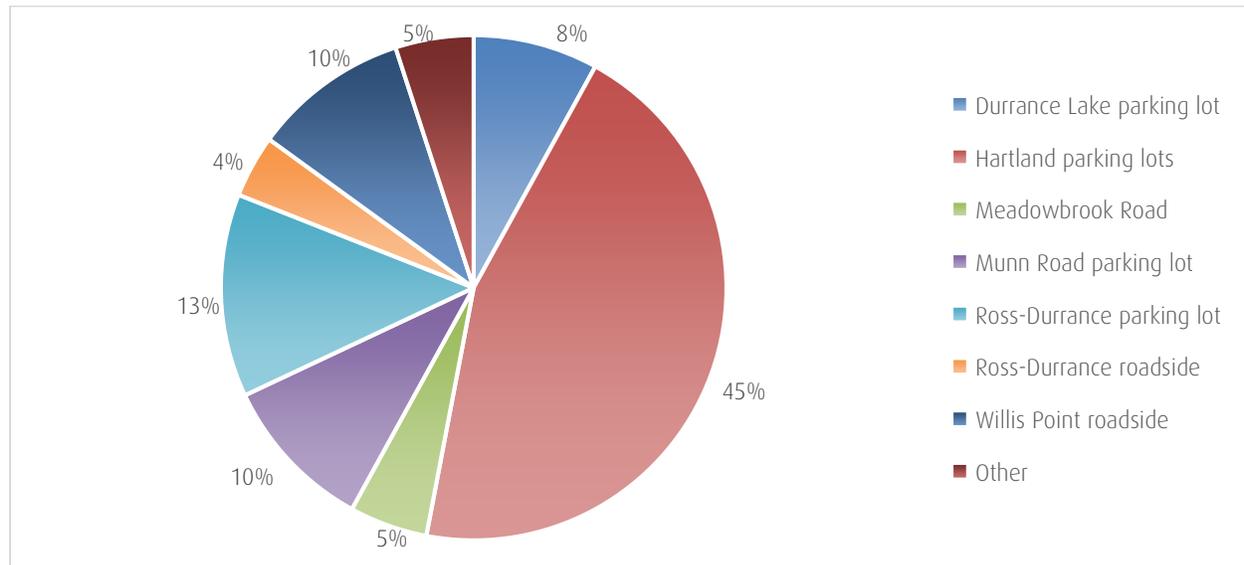


Figure 2: Entry points used most typically by respondents.

QUESTION 7: WHICH ARE YOUR FAVOURITE DESTINATIONS AND TRAILS IN THE PARK?

This open ended question allowed people to identify key destinations without specific prompting through set options. Approximately 1,190 responses were provided and the review has not been completed yet. This information will assist as a formal park trail plan and development plans for different areas of the park are considered over the next 6 months.

QUESTION 8: DO YOU BELIEVE THAT MT. WORK REGIONAL PARK HAS SENSITIVE ECOSYSTEMS AND HABITATS THAT SHOULD BE PROTECTED/MAINTAINED?

QUESTION 9: DO YOU BELIEVE THAT MT. WORK REGIONAL PARK HAS SENSITIVE CULTURAL HERITAGE THAT SHOULD BE PROTECTED/MAINTAINED?

Responses to these questions give an indication of the level of public awareness of these values and/or the potential need for education. Responses may also assist in developing goals for ecological protection and cultural heritage management.

The majority of respondents (85%) believed there were sensitive ecosystems and habitats that should be protected/maintained in Mount Work. Thirteen percent (13%) did not believe there were sensitive

ecosystems or habitat within the park that should be protected. Just over one-half (56%) of respondents believed there sensitive cultural heritage that should be protected/maintained, while 35% of respondents did not believe there were sensitive cultural heritage in the park that should be protected.

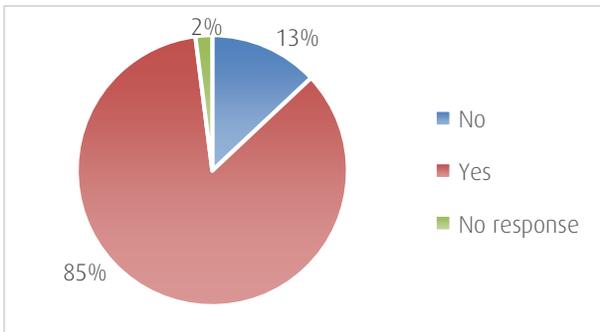


Figure 3: Sensitive ecological values

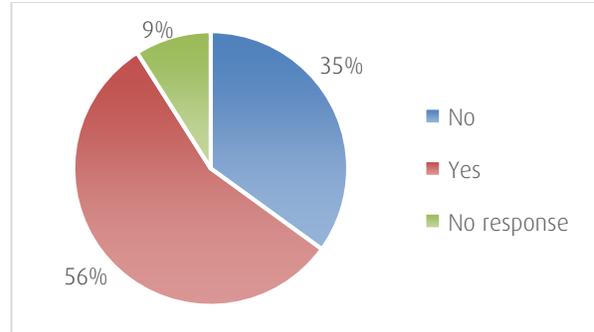


Figure 4: Sensitive cultural values

QUESTION 10: WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES WOULD YOU SUPPORT TO PROTECT SENSITIVE AREAS?

This information provides a starting point for consideration of management options. There was some support for the proposed strategies—from 39%-52% of respondents supported them. Highest support, at approximately 50% of respondents supporting, was for use of interpretive panels to educate people (52%) and keeping visitors away from cultural heritage sites (47%). This seems to be in line with other comments heard in the open-ended questions that suggested management be focused on balancing stewardship and use and protecting key areas but not restricting use.

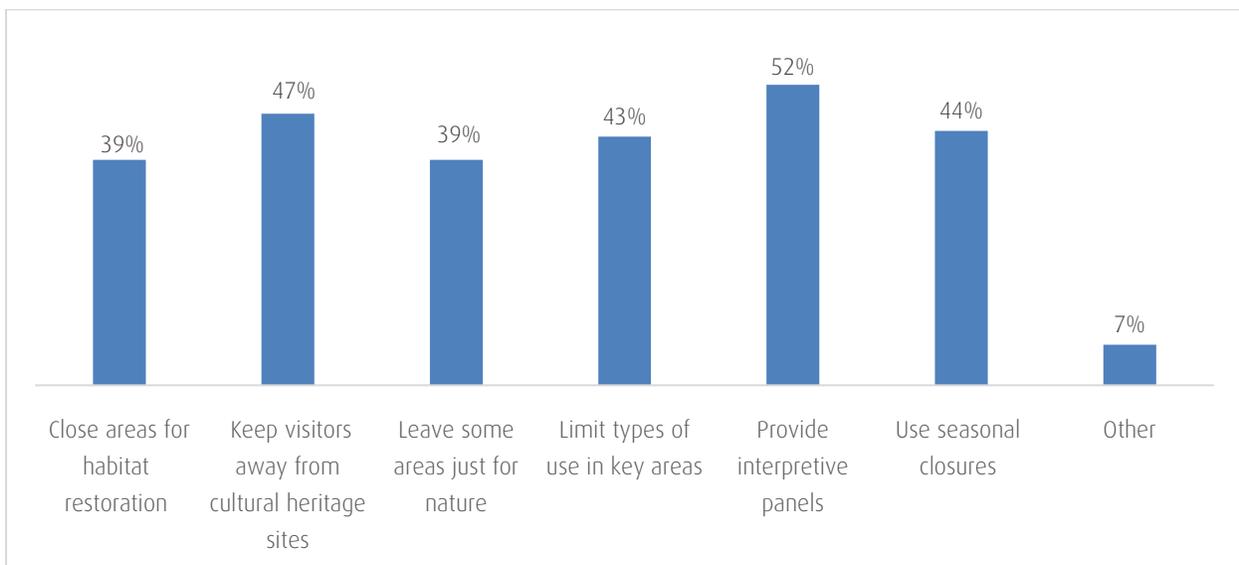


Figure 5: Support for potential management strategies for sensitive area

QUESTION 11: SHOULD HIKING/WALKING BE PERMITTED IN THE DESIGNATED MOUNTAIN BIKING AREA?

QUESTION 12: SHOULD DOGS BE PERMITTED IN THE DESIGNATED MOUNTAIN BIKING AREA?

These two questions provide some initial thoughts that will help as we consider how different uses might be organized within the park.

Nearly 60% of respondents (58%) felt that hiking/walking should be permitted on some trails within the mountain biking area, with 23% indicating hiking/walking should be permitted on all of the trails within the mountain biking area and 17% of respondents indicating hiking/walking should not be permitted within the mountain biking area.

With respect to dogs in the designated mountain biking area, just over one-half of respondents (52%) agreed they should be permitted, while 25% said on some trails and 20% felt dogs should not be permitted in the designated mountain biking area.

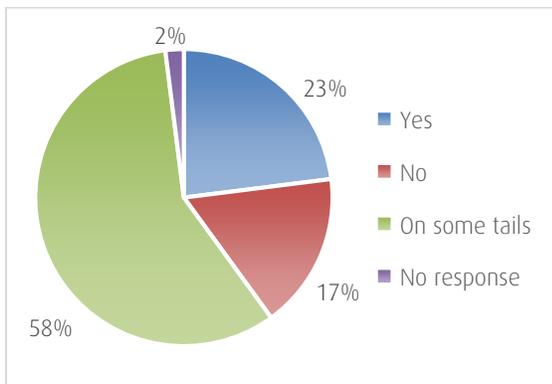


Figure 6: Should hiking/walking be permitted in the designated mountain biking area?

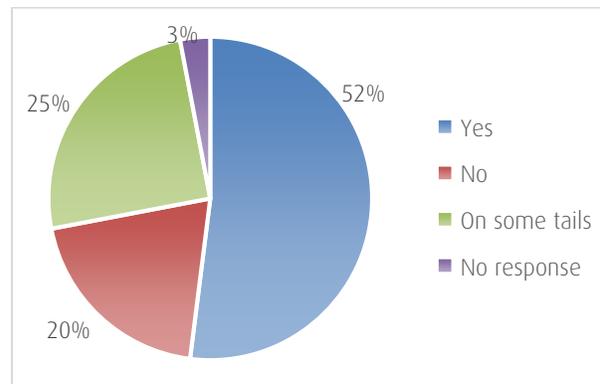


Figure 7: Should dogs be permitted in the designated mountain biking area?

QUESTION 13: SHOULD MOUNTAIN BIKING BE PERMITTED OUTSIDE OF THE DESIGNATED MOUNTAIN BIKING AREA?

Forty-four percent (44%) of respondents said yes, while twenty-seven percent (27%) said no mountain biking should not be permitted outside the mountain biking area and 27% said on some trails.

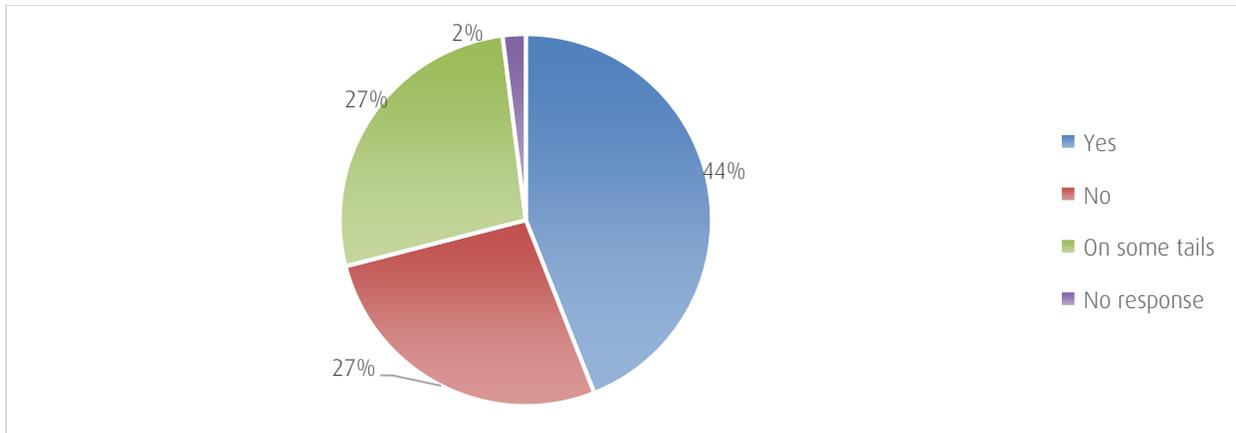


Figure 8: Should mountain biking be permitted outside the designated mountain biking area?

QUESTION 14: IN YOUR OPINION, HOW WELL IS THE PARK WORKING CURRENTLY?

This question relates to, and can be used with, other comments that delve into issues. Nearly one-half of respondents (49%) felt the park was working well to very well currently. Another one-third (33%) replied that the park was currently working ok/acceptable and 16% felt that the park was currently working poorly to very poorly.

As part of the background information gathering for the project, CRD staff identified the following potential issues that need to be addressed:

- Parking
- Trail improvement in the designated mountain biking area
- Trails outside the designated mountain biking area
- Unsanctioned trail building
- Conservation requirements
- Need for interpretive programming/education
- Infrastructure needs/sustainable service

QUESTION 15: PLEASE SHARE ANY ISSUE AT MT. WORK REGIONAL PARK THAT YOU BELIEVE NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE MANAGEMENT PLAN.

Respondents shared their views on what issues they feel exist at the park. Responses may confirm issues already noted by staff and/or raise additional issues. This question also provides the opportunity to see what issues are noted by large numbers of people. At this time, CRD staff are still reviewing the 1,538 comments received through the comment form and adding them to issues raised through other submissions and by staff.

QUESTION 16: HOW IMPORTANT ARE THE FOLLOWING AMENITIES TO YOU?

A list of nine amenities was provided with a five-point scale from not important, slightly important, moderately important, important, and very important. This allows us to focus on things that are important to the public as we consider how best to develop the park and the services/infrastructure needed within the park. The following summary illustrates the percentage of respondents who indicated the amenities were moderately to very important.

- Loop trail opportunities – 83%
- Non-loop, long distance trail opportunities – 80%
- Access to mountain biking area from all parking lots – 64%
- Interpretive signs - 54%
- More parking – 53%
- More toilets – 41%
- Interpretive programs – 36%
- More picnic tables – 25%
- Horse trails in the mountain biking area – 12%

QUESTION 17: WHAT DO YOU FEEL NEEDS TO BE FOCUSED ON OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS IN MT. WORK (Select your top three choices)

This question will assist in identifying potential issues and actions needed, as well as implementation timing. Of greatest importance was trail improvements (73%) and environmental protection (43%). Just over one quarter of respondents suggested education/interpretation should be focused on (26%). Of those who gave “other” comments, the only response with a significant number of responses (16%) related to providing more mountain biking opportunities.

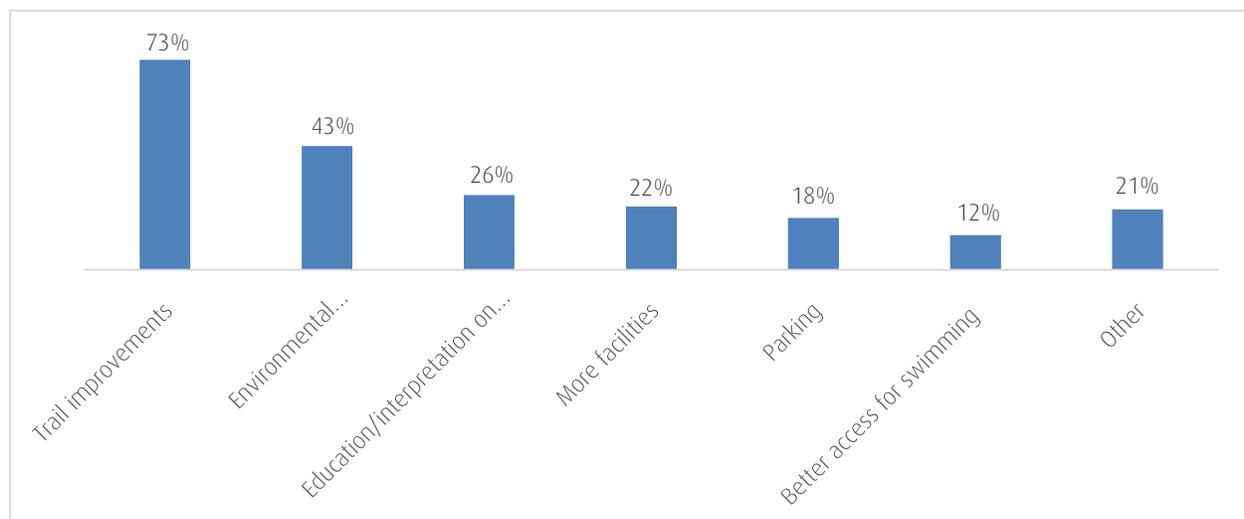


Figure 9: What do you feel needs to be focused on over the next 10 years?

QUESTION 18: IN WHICH AGE CATEGORY DO YOU FALL?

As noted in Section 5 of the Initial Engagement Report, respondents spanned all age groups.

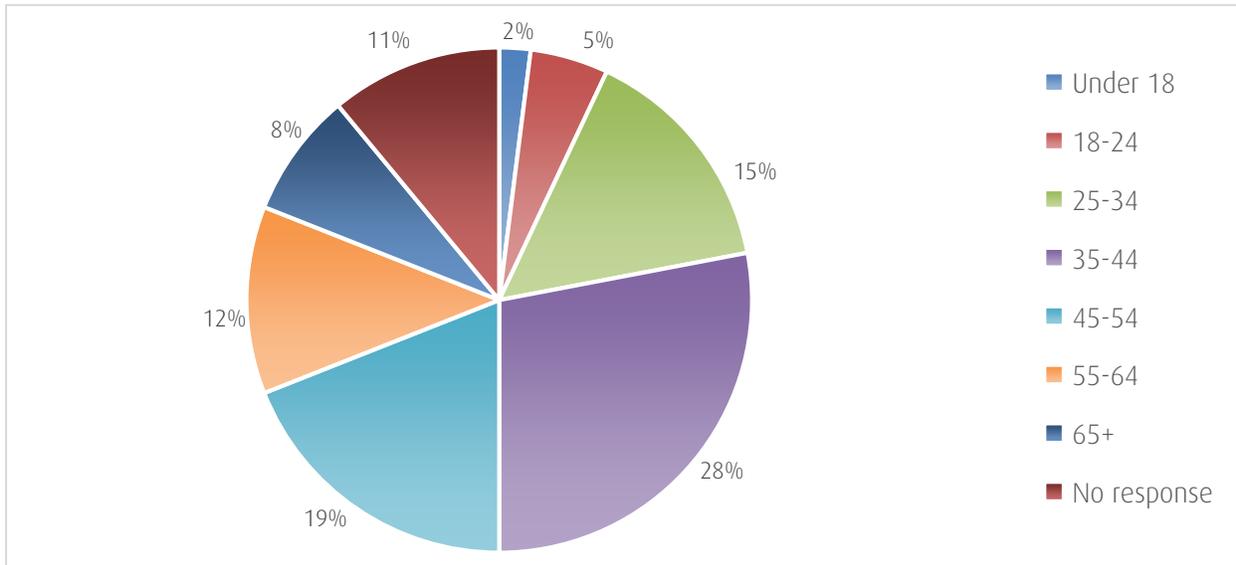


Figure 10: In which age category do you fall?

QUESTION 19: WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

As noted in Section 5 of the Initial Engagement Report, the highest number of respondents were from those municipalities immediately adjacent to the park.

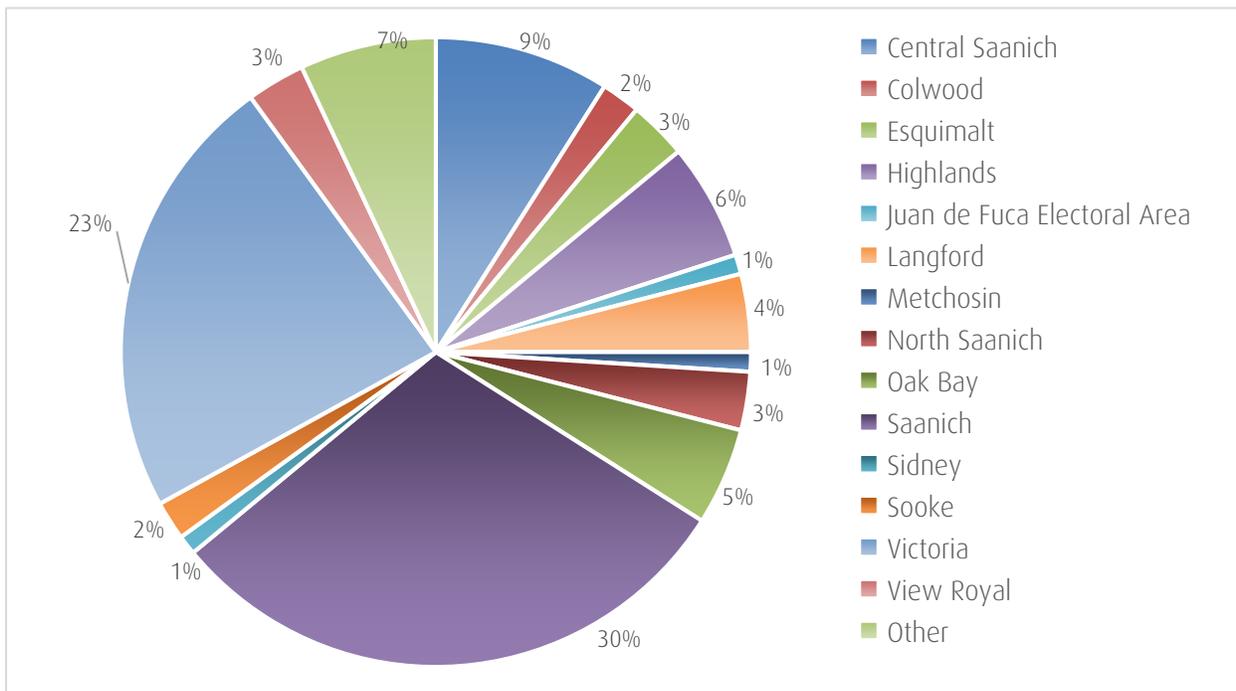


Figure 11: Where do you live?

QUESTION 20: HOW DID YOU FIRST HEAR ABOUT THE MT. WORK REGIONAL PARK PLANNING PROCESS?

Thirteen options were provided, including one or two that were not specifically used as communications tools. The greatest number of respondents heard about the planning process through an organization they belonged to. Project notifications had been provided to mountain biking groups, hiking groups, equestrian groups, and conservation groups with requests for assistance in sharing project information. The second highest response was through a friend or relative, which points to the well-recognized practice of “word of mouth” information transfer. Social media was key for 18% of respondents. The various other tools used (in-park sign, website, letters/emails, newspaper ad/article, board meeting highlights, through college/university) all reached smaller numbers but up to 5% of the individuals.

QUESTION 21: DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER INFORMATION OR COMMENTS ABOUT MT. WORK REGIONAL PARK?

The last question on the comment form allowed participants to provide any other information or comments they desired. Although in many cases, respondents tend to reiterate the points of greatest importance to them or note how much they appreciate the park, this type of question also allows staff to see if there were questions not asked that people wanted to comment on or perhaps if any changes are needed to future phases of engagement. Review of responses to question 21 is still being undertaken.

East Sooke Regional Park

Management Plan Initial Engagement Report

Capital Regional District | February 2021



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1. Executive Summary

The Capital Regional District (CRD) Board initiated three regional park management planning processes in May 2020 for East Sooke, Mount Work, and Matheson Lake/Roche Cove regional parks. The project scope and engagement process for the East Sooke Regional Park Management Plan was provided to the Board in June 2020, and the project was started thereafter.

Two rounds of engagement opportunities are scheduled as part of the preparation of the park management plan for East Sooke Regional Park. This report includes a summary of the initial engagement activities completed and responses received. The aim of this engagement process is to inform First Nations, stakeholder groups and the public about the park management planning process, to seek input and information from affected individuals and groups, and to discuss various interests and ideas about the park.

First Nations, stakeholders and the public were notified of opportunities for engagement by letter, email, advertising and social media. An online survey was available from August 17-September 18, 2020 and meetings and interviews were held between July and November 2020, with First Nations, government agencies and stakeholder groups.

Initial conversations have taken place with T'Sou-ke and Scia'new First Nations and the CRD is looking forward to further dialogue and building a government to government relationship. Meetings were held with three local government agencies and two provincial ministries. Twelve interviews were conducted with stakeholder groups representing local conservation, recreation or service delivery interests in the park. One on-site meeting was held with local residents with an interest in park access. In total, 813 online survey responses and 14 written comments were received from residents and interest groups.

2. Introduction

Regional Parks is developing a management plan for East Sooke Regional Park (Map 1). The CRD Board approved initiation of the planning process for the park, as well as for Mount Work and Matheson Lake/Roche Cove regional parks, in May 2020. The project scope and engagement process were accepted by the Board in June 2020. Public, stakeholder and First Nations engagement was undertaken through the summer and fall of 2020. Feedback from the initial engagement period is summarized in this report and will be used to inform the next step of drafting the management plan. A second round of engagement will be undertaken upon completion of the draft plan.

3. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to summarize the initial engagement process and to highlight responses and key themes received related to the development of a management plan for East Sooke Regional

Park. Although many of the opportunities for engagement were combined with the Matheson Lake/Roche Cove management planning process due to the proximity of the parks and the concurrent planning processes, this report only summarizes the engagement process for East Sooke Regional Park.

4. Engagement Period

The engagement process approved by the CRD Board in June 2020 includes two rounds of engagement opportunities scheduled as part of the preparation of the park management plan for East Sooke Regional Park. This report includes a summary of the initial engagement activities completed and responses received until the end of January 2021.

The first round of public, stakeholder and First Nations engagement for the development of the East Sooke Regional Park Management Plan commenced in June 2020 with the launch of a project webpage. Communication materials were prepared and circulated between June and September 2020. An online survey was available on the CRD website from August 17-September 18, 2020. Interviews and meetings occurred between June and November 2020.

There will be a second public engagement period for review and comment on the draft management plan, and another summary report will be prepared.

5. Focus of Engagement

CRD Regional Parks is committed to involving First Nations, stakeholders and the public in the development of park management plans. The aim of this engagement process is to inform First Nations, stakeholder groups and the public about the park management planning process for East Sooke Regional Park, to seek input and information from affected individuals and groups and to discuss interests and ideas in order to assist Regional Parks with future decision making about the park. Other goals of the engagement process include information sharing, dialogue and discussion, building ongoing relationships, developing understanding and trust, and producing management plans that reflect organizational needs and public interests.

The initial engagement process allows interested community members to actively contribute to the planning for a park before the plan is written. Initial engagement is one of the early steps in the planning process and is used to gather traditional and local knowledge about the park, learn what is important to people, identify issues and seek a range of suggestions for what should be considered in developing the park management plan.

6. Who Was Engaged

6.1. First Nations

The Scia'new and T'Sou-ke First Nations have been invited to participate in the management planning process, as East Sooke Regional Park is part of the Nations' traditional territories and expressed area of interest. Initial conversations have taken place with each Nation and the CRD is looking forward to further dialogue and building a government-to-government relationship.

6.2. Government Agencies

Various government agencies with direct or overarching jurisdiction, or a related interest, in the park have been invited to provide input and expertise in the management plan. These include: the District of Sooke; District of Metchosin; the CRD Juan de Fuca Electoral Area; BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development; BC Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation; and BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. These agencies received written notification of the project and a request for an interview or to provide information.

6.3. Stakeholders

Stakeholders in East Sooke Regional Park are individuals and groups with a higher degree of interest and/or expertise in the park, including its natural environment, visitor experience or management.

Groups known by Regional Parks to be actively involved in local conservation, recreation and service delivery, or groups recommended by other stakeholders, were selected to provide input through interviews. These groups include: Coexisting with Carnivores Alliance; Habitat Acquisition Trust; Rocky Point Bird Observatory; the Land Conservancy of BC; Juan de Fuca Search and Rescue; Juan de Fuca Emergency Program; Metchosin Search and Rescue; Sooke Bike Club; South Island Climbing Association; South Island Mountain Bike Association; and the Greater Victoria Cycling Coalition.

Stakeholders with specific expertise related to the park were contacted to provide relevant information. These groups or individuals were selected from existing contact lists and other public agency networks. They include: BC Conservation Officer Service; CRD Volunteer Park Stewards; Sooke Region Museum & Visitor Centre; Silver Spray Development; and relevant CRD departments.

6.4. Interest Groups

A broad range of user groups known by Regional Parks that may have an interest in the park management plan project were selected to be notified by email about the engagement process and opportunities for input. The identified user groups were selected from a contact list maintained by Regional Parks based on whether they have a local or regional scale focus, represent a recreation, conservation, youth or accessibility interest, and are currently active. Private businesses were not

selected to be contacted; however, park permit holders and individuals requesting to be updated about the project have been added. The list currently includes approximately 75 contacts and will be added to upon request.

6.5. General Public

The general public in the CRD was notified of the park management plan project and opportunities for input. Park neighbours, including property owners and occupants within 300 metres of the park boundary, were also directly notified of the project. Park visitors and residents of the surrounding communities of East Sooke, Metchosin, Sooke and the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area were also notified.

7. Engagement Methods

The project scope and engagement process for the East Sooke Regional Park Management Plan were approved by the CRD Board in June 2020. A number of tools and approaches were used to engage First Nations, public, interest groups, stakeholders and agencies in the project. The following sections describe in more detail the engagement methods used to inform the public about the project, to gather information, views and opinions, and to discuss stakeholder interests.

7.1. Website

A project webpage was established on the CRD website in June 2020 and will be updated for the duration of the management planning project (<https://www.crd.bc.ca/project/east-sooke-management-plan>). The webpage includes an overview of the management planning process, the current status of the plan, opportunities for engagement and staff contact information. Information about the park is also included.

Between June 22, 2020 and January 19, 2021, there were 1,652 number of visits to the East Sooke Regional Park management planning process project webpage.

7.2. Online Survey

An online survey was made available through a link on the project webpage and on the CRD website from August 17 to September 18, 2020. The survey included 28 questions with both quantitative and qualitative responses. To accompany the survey, an information booklet was also posted on the project webpage that provided additional context about the management planning process, an overview of the park's environmental features, cultural heritage and visitor uses, and direction to the project webpage and online survey. Options were made available for completing the survey by phone or in writing.

7.3. Letters/Emails

Direct written outreach, by letter mail and email, was sent to First Nations, government agencies, stakeholders, interest groups and the public informing them of the project and opportunities for input.

Eight letters were sent to First Nations, government agencies and stakeholder groups with a direct interest in the park. There were 696 letters mailed to park neighbours (Appendix 1). Email notices were sent to approximately 75 interest groups plus 20 stakeholders with specific interest or expertise related to the park.

7.4. Social Media

Social media posts were made on CRD’s Facebook and Twitter accounts during August and September 2020 directing people to the project webpage and online survey. These posts went out to 6,623 followers on Twitter and 3,607 followers on Facebook. Facebook ads were boosted throughout the survey process, with a link to the project webpage to complete the online survey. The targeted demographic for these ads were people living in the region aged 18-65+.

Facebook Ads			
Dates	Reach	Post Engagements*	Link Clicks
August 18 - 22	6,722	414	108
September 1 - 5	8,536	596	71
September 8 - 12	5,112	439	36
September 14-18	7,330	499	53
Totals:	27,700	1,948	268

Figure 1 – Facebook Ads (*Post engagements refer to someone liking, sharing, commenting on or otherwise engaging with the post.)

7.5. Advertising

A [media release](#) was issued by the CRD on August 18, 2020 outlining the management planning process and encouraging the public to complete the online survey. Multiple news outlets received the media release. An article was published in the Times Colonist on August 18, 2020.

Print ads were published in multiple newspapers during August and September 2020, while the online survey was available (Appendix 2). The ads directed readers to the project webpage to complete the online survey. Ads were posted in the Goldstream News Gazette and Saanich News on September 9 and 16, 2020 and September 10 and 17, 2020 in the Victoria News.

Posters were placed at various entrances to East Sooke Regional Park notifying park visitors about the management planning process and directing them to the webpage and online survey.

Postcards were mailed to approximately 2,500 residents who accept postal flyers in East Sooke, Metchosin, Sooke and the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area on August 20, 2020. The postcards directed recipients to the project webpage and informed them of the opportunity to complete the online survey (Appendix 3).

7.6. Community Events

Staff hosted a booth at the Sooke Night Market on September 3, 2020, from 5-8 pm. The event provided an opportunity to set up displays about the park management planning process and to speak with the public about opportunities for input, such as the online survey. Staff engaged directly with approximately 50 people.

7.7. Interviews and Meetings

Meetings were requested with T'Sou-ke and Scia'new First Nations, government agencies and stakeholders with direct interest in the park, to share relevant information and to discuss ideas and issues pertaining to management of the land.

Two online meetings were held with the T'Sou-ke First Nation Leadership in July and October 2020. One online meeting was held with Scia'new First Nation Leadership in May 2020. Additional contact has been made by phone and email with both T'Sou-ke and Scia'new First Nations between June and October 2020 to check in, and to facilitate opportunities for future meetings.

A meeting was held with representatives from each local government agency with an interest in the park, these included: the District of Sooke, District of Metchosin and the CRD Juan de Fuca Electoral Area.

Interviews were also requested with provincial government agencies having related interest or expertise related to the park. Two interviews were conducted.

Interviews were requested with 12 stakeholder groups deemed to have local or specific interest in the park, or at the recommendation of other key stakeholders. Five interviews were conducted with recreation-oriented stakeholder groups and two interviews were held with conservation-oriented stakeholder groups. All others contacted for interviews declined or did not respond to the request.

Interviews were held with five individuals or groups perceived to have expertise or direct knowledge relating to management of the park. These included: CRD Volunteer Park Stewards, BC Conservation Officer Service, the Sooke Region Museum and Visitor Centre, Silver Spray Development and relevant CRD departments.

Staff from Regional Parks have met frequently to exchange information, discuss issues and strategies to advance the park management planning project. These ongoing meetings are not included in this initial engagement report.

8. Limitations

The management planning process for East Sooke Regional Park was initiated in May 2020 at the same time as the management planning processes for Mount Work and Matheson Lake/Roche Cove regional

parks. While synergies and efficiencies were realized by launching the three projects together, it is possible that levels of engagement were affected by multiple planning processes occurring along the same timeline.

Significant limitations to in-person engagement were experienced due to COVID-19 public safety measures. A COVID-19 Safety Plan was prepared and approved in September 2020 outlining protocols for in-person engagement, such as meetings. While one opportunity to host a booth at a community market was realized, many of the typical community events and open houses utilized during a management planning process were not feasible.

Technological tools were heavily relied on during this initial round of engagement due to COVID-19 public safety measures. Lack of access to, and knowledge of, technology can be a limitation to those wishing to participate. Communication materials offered alternatives to participating online, such as by phone or mail.

Finally, the project timeline and allocated resources constrain the project to an extent. Although the timeline for engagement spanned the summer months when many are on vacation or have other priorities, opportunity for completing the online survey was available into September 2020 and meetings and interviews have been accommodated throughout the summer and fall of 2020.

9. Responses

The following is a summary of the responses received through the public engagement process.

9.1. First Nations

Both Scia'new and T'Sou-ke First Nations stated having a strong interest in East Sooke Regional Park in regards to its historical importance and current connection to their cultures. There was a recognition of traditional cultural use in the park and an interest in finding ways to highlight that connection in public education and information. Both Nations stated a strong desire to protect archaeological and cultural resources in the park. High-level aspirations for future protection of lands and resources and for identifying ways to be involved in the park were noted by both Nations, including employment, restoration, monitoring, continuation of harvesting and education. All parties stated an interest in continuing to find ways to work together to protect the land for future generations and to maintain the cultural connection to homelands.

9.2. Government

Staff and elected officials from three local governments and two provincial government departments responded to the request to provide information and ideas. Responses include comments relating to the following topics:

- **Natural environment:** protection of the park’s natural environment and species at risk, removal of invasive species, habitat protection for large carnivores.
- **Social context:** use of Aylard Farm to promote agriculture-related education and activities, protection and interpretation of cultural heritage values, safety issues (Aylard Farm access on Becher Bay Road).
- **Facilities:** increased visitation putting pressure on facilities and maintenance, parking situation at Aylard Farm, need for alternative transportation options to the park, interest in connecting park to Silver Spray development and to the District of Sooke.
- **Land management:** opportunities for land acquisition and connectivity of protected areas, risk of wildfire, need for coordinated emergency response protocols, need for consistent bylaw enforcement (dog management, parking, camping).

9.3. Stakeholders

Interviews were conducted with stakeholder groups with a heightened interest in the park. Highlights from these responses include:

- **Natural environment:** maintain wilderness values in the park, protect sensitive ecosystems, remove invasive species, and monitor environmental conditions in the park.
- **Social context:** consider other types of recreational opportunities in the park, don’t over-develop the park, keep the park natural, manage dogs in the park, and provide easy access to Aylard Farm amenities.
- **Facilities:** improve access and parking situation at Aylard Farm, maintain trail system to a wilderness standard, maintain built facilities at Aylard Farm, improve transportation options to the park, and consider parking issues at other park entrances.
- **Land management:** explore connectivity and land acquisition in vicinity of the park, improve safety and emergency response, consider potential fire risk to adjacent properties.

Seven stakeholder groups having local conservation, recreation or service delivery interest in the park were interviewed. These included: Habitat Acquisition Trust, Coexisting with Carnivores, Metchosin Search and Rescue, South Island Climbing Association, Sooke Bike Club, South Island Mountain Bike Association, and Greater Victoria Cycling Coalition. The following summarizes the responses received:

- **Natural environment:** wilderness designation is a big draw for tourists and park visitors; need to balance this visitor demand with increased protection and monitoring of the park environment, protect the park from habitat fragmentation due to unauthorized trail building.

- **Social context:** conflicts between users (dogs, unprepared visitors, misuse of park resources), encourage alternative modes of transportation to the park, offer appropriate mountain biking opportunities, recognize rock climbing destinations in the park, maintain interpretive programs.
- **Facilities:** improve park maps and signage, name unofficial trails on the park map, improve trail conditions in many locations (erosion, lack of drainage, trail brushing), provide emergency phone in the park.
- **Management:** risk of wildfire, establish emergency response protocols, visitor safety concerns (specifically in interior sections of the park and Coast Trail due to poor cell coverage and challenging terrain), solicit volunteer help to undertake research, restoration and maintenance activities in the park.

Groups and individuals with specific knowledge or expertise related to the park were interviewed. These included: CRD Volunteer Park Stewards, Conservation Officer Service, Sooke Region Museum, a large carnivore expert, Silver Spray developer, and park neighbors. Responses are summarized, as follows:

- **Natural Environment:** increased visitation and development pressures are impacting habitat, the park is important to maintain large carnivores, implement a research program to document wildlife presence/distribution in the park, protect seasonal turkey vulture roosting trees, and maintain Aylard Farm open fields.
- **Social Context:** provide opportunities for educational programs, acknowledge rich cultural heritage, limit wildlife conflicts (education, signage, dog management), keep Aylard Farm accessible to all types of park visitors, keep remainder of park wild and rugged, connect to Silver Spray development and offer recreational opportunities for resort visitors.
- **Facilities:** address trail maintenance issues (erosion, drainage), improve maps and signage, name all official park trails, maintain and/or improve minor park access points.

9.4. Public and Interest Groups

9.4.1. Public comments

Fourteen written comments were received from residents and interest groups. The main themes reflected in the comments include:

- **Natural Environment:** pressures from increased visitation, presence of invasive species.
- **Social Context:** some desire to allow mountain biking, equestrian use and slacklining in the park; addressing conflicts between users (increased visitation, unprepared visitors, dog management).
- **Facilities:** improve signage, overflow parking issues, and improve parking at secondary accesses.
- **Management:** wildfire risk, dog management, improve parking at Aylard Farm.

9.4.2. Online Survey

A 28-question online survey was available through the project webpage and highlighted on the CRD website from August 17 to September 18, 2020. A total of 813 online surveys were completed and submitted. Response analysis of the online survey is provided in Appendix 4. Details on survey methodology are provided in Appendix 5.

10. Conclusion

There was a moderate to high level of participation in the initial engagement process for East Sooke Regional Park. A variety of methods were used to engage with First Nations, stakeholders and the public, including advertising, an online survey, meetings and interviews. Input has been received from T'Sou-ke and Scia'new First Nations, government agencies, a wide range of stakeholders, and over 800 members of the public. Comments received as part of the initial engagement process will inform the preparation of a draft management plan for East Sooke Regional Park.

Appendix A – Park Neighbour Letter



Regional Parks
490 Atkins Avenue
Victoria, BC V9B 2Z8

T: 250.478.3344
F: 250.478.5416
www.crd.bc.ca/parks

FILE COPY

August 13, 2020

File: 6130-30

Dear Park Neighbor:

RE: PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN DEVELOPMENT FOR EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK AND ROCHE COVE & MATHESON LAKE REGIONAL PARKS

The Capital Regional District (CRD) recently initiated projects to develop a park management plan for East Sooke Regional Park and for Roche Cove and Matheson Lake regional parks. As a neighbor to these parks, the CRD invites you to participate in the park management planning process. Please see the attached map showing the locations of the three regional parks.

The CRD public engagement process provides two key opportunities to provide input through the planning process. First, we are interested in receiving information and suggestions from the public before the management plans are drafted. To collect that information, park specific comment forms will be posted to the project webpages between August 17 and September 18, 2020.

The project team will consider all input received as we begin drafting the park management plans in early 2021. We anticipate that the draft management plans will be completed in summer 2021. At that time, another review and comment opportunity will be provided. Depending on the circumstances surrounding COVID-19, a decision will be made about whether we can also host in-person meetings to discuss the draft management plans.

We invite you to participate in one or both of these park management planning processes. Please feel free to pass this information on to others whom you think might be interested in being involved.

For up to date information please visit the project webpages at:

East Sooke Regional Park: <https://www.crd.bc.ca/project/east-sooke-management-plan>.

Roche Cove & Matheson Lake: <https://www.crd.bc.ca/project/roche-cove-and-matheson-lake-management-plan>

If you have any questions or are interested in receiving additional information about the processes please contact the following:

East Sooke Regional Park - Lynn at 250.360.3369 or lwilson@crd.bc.ca

Roche Cove and Matheson Lake regional parks - Emma at 250.642.8102 or etaylor@crd.bc.ca

Sincerely,

Emma Taylor
Park Planner

Lynn Wilson
Park Planner



Appendix B – Print Ad



PROVIDE YOUR INPUT

East Sooke, Roche Cove & Matheson Lake Regional Parks

The Capital Regional District (CRD) is preparing management plans for East Sooke, Roche Cove and Matheson Lake regional parks. These plans will provide strategic guidance for on-going management of these parks for the next 15-20 years.

The CRD is gathering initial input from the public on their interests, ideas and concerns. On-line comment forms will be available on the CRD website. Your suggestions will be considered in developing the draft management plans. Once the plans are drafted, they will be posted online for public review.

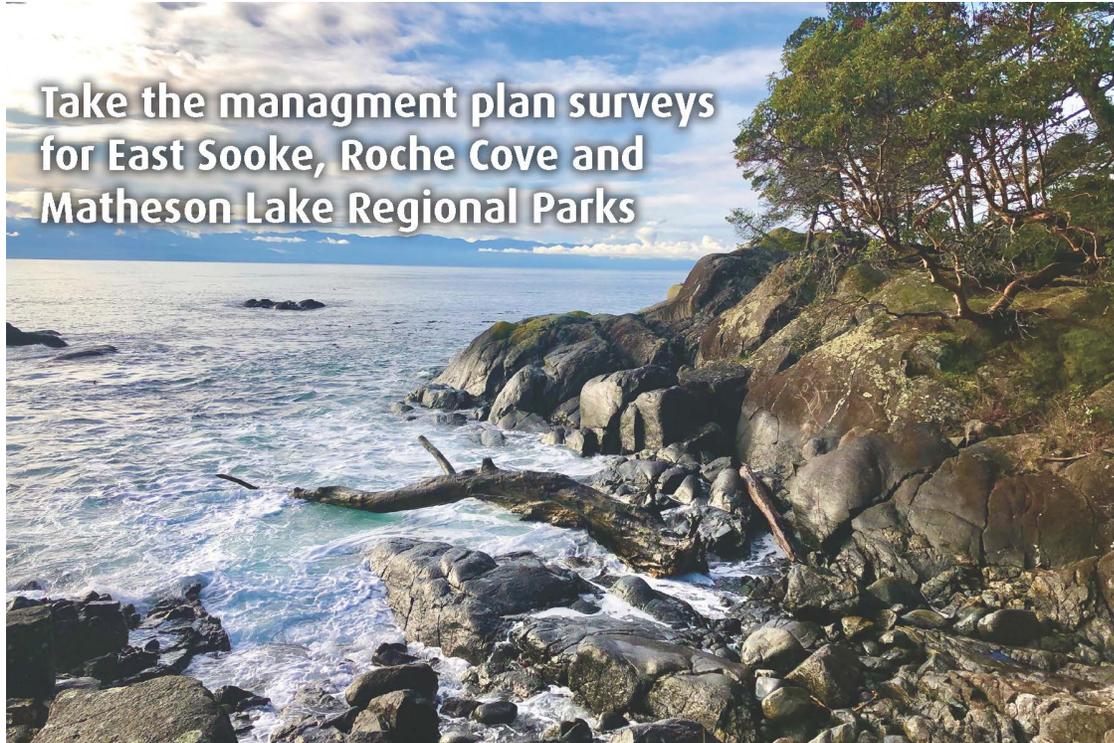
Provide your initial input online between August 17 - September 18, 2020.

www.crd.bc.ca/eastsooke-plan

www.crd.bc.ca/roche-matheson-plan



Appendix C – Postcard



Take the CRD Regional Parks Survey!

Help us plan for the future of East Sooke, Roche Cove and Matheson Lake regional parks

By completing the survey you are helping the CRD to establish a vision and objectives for managing the parks and to understand priorities for environmental conservation, cultural heritage protection, recreation and facilities.

The deadline to complete the survey is September 18, 2020

www.crd.bc.ca



Appendix D – Online Survey Responses

A total of 813 online surveys were filled out between August 17 and September 18, 2020. Below is a summary of the online survey responses.

QUESTION 1: WHAT MAKES EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK IMPORTANT TO YOU?

A total of 766 qualitative comments were provided by respondents to the open-ended question about the importance of East Sooke Regional Park to them. Each comment entailed multiple themes.

The most mentioned themes were:

- **Experiences**: respondents described experiencing the park as wild, beautiful, large, pristine, rugged, and remote. They highly value the park for its mix of rocky bluffs, sandy beaches, riparian areas, dense forests and hilly terrain, and as a special place to be in close contact with nature. Many value the solitude and quiet of the park and the chance of encountering all types of wildlife, while others value visiting the park with friends and family. The park offers a sense of exploration and discovery, while still being accessible. Many described the park as the “gem” of the regional parks system.
- **Outdoor recreation**: respondents repeatedly mentioned how important the park is to them as a place for walking, hiking, beach activities and nature study in a wilderness setting. Respondents particularly like the trail system, with its diversity of trail types, distances and difficulty levels. They like being able to select an experience based on their interests and abilities. They particularly like hiking the Coast Trail with its outstanding views and its challenging terrain. They consider it to be a world class trail and truly representative of Vancouver Island’s west coast experience. Respondents like the easy accessibility, history, beach and beauty of Aylard Farm.
- **Natural environment**: respondents describe the park as a magnificent wilderness park that has functional ecosystems and provides habitat for a wide variety of plant and animal species, including large carnivores, migratory birds and species at risk. They are aware of the uniqueness of the park ecosystems and want to ensure they are preserved for future generations to enjoy.
- **Accessibility**: respondents highly value this park because of its proximity to where they live. They noted that they can leave home and be in the park within an hour of Victoria. They value the accessibility of the trail system and the accessibility of Aylard Farm’s beach area and open fields. Some say that the park is why they live where they do – they chose to live near to the park so that they can enjoy its wilderness setting as often as they want to.

QUESTION 2: APPROXIMATELY HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU VISITED EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS?

The majority of respondents (58%) visited the park between 1-10 times in the past twelve months, with 34% visiting more than ten times.

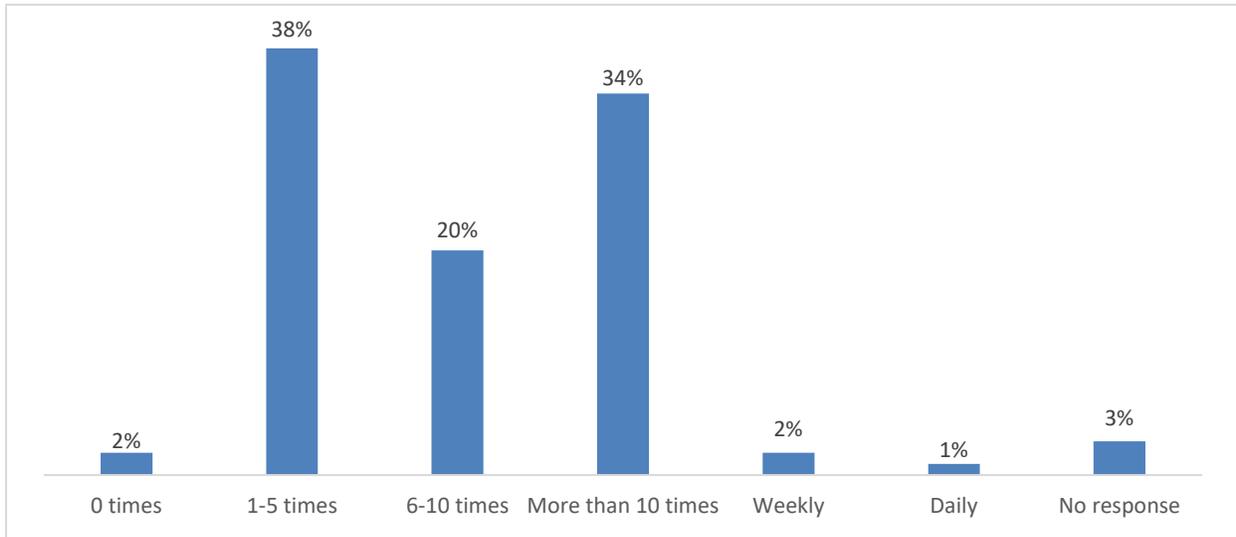


Figure 1: Frequency of visitation by survey respondents to East Sooke Regional Park.

QUESTION 3: WHY DO YOU VISIT EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK?

The majority of respondents visit to experience a wilderness area (92%) and remoteness and solitude (80%), while many visit for the beach (47%) and because it is close to home (49%).

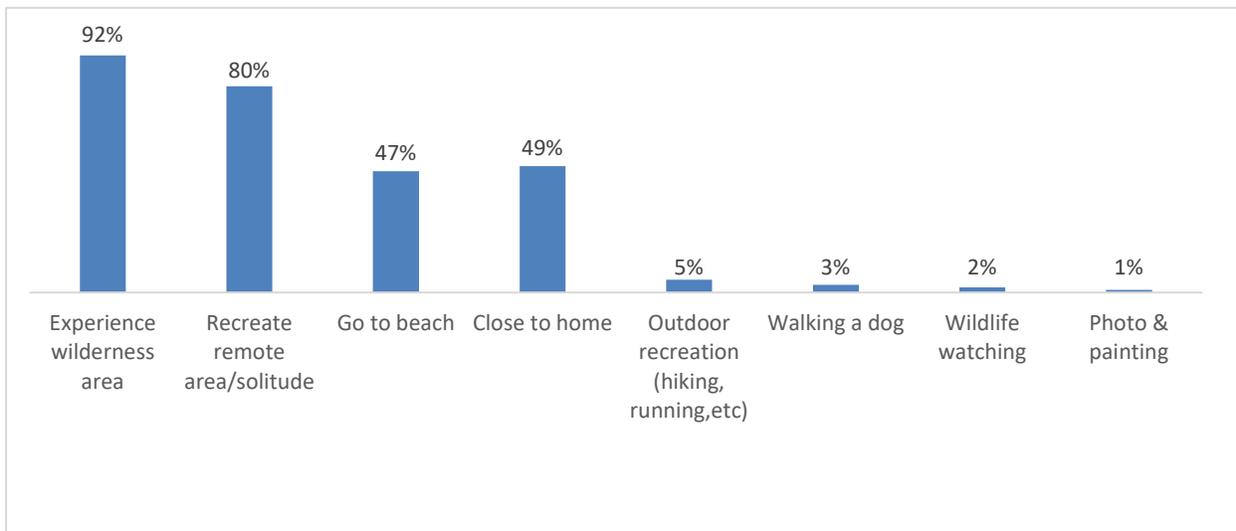


Figure 2: Breakdown of why survey respondents visit East Sooke Regional Park.

QUESTION 4: APPROXIMATELY HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU SPEND IN EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK WHEN YOU VISIT?

Just over half of respondents spend 3-4 hours in the park (51%), while 25% spend up to 2 hours, and 20% spending 5 or more hours in the park.

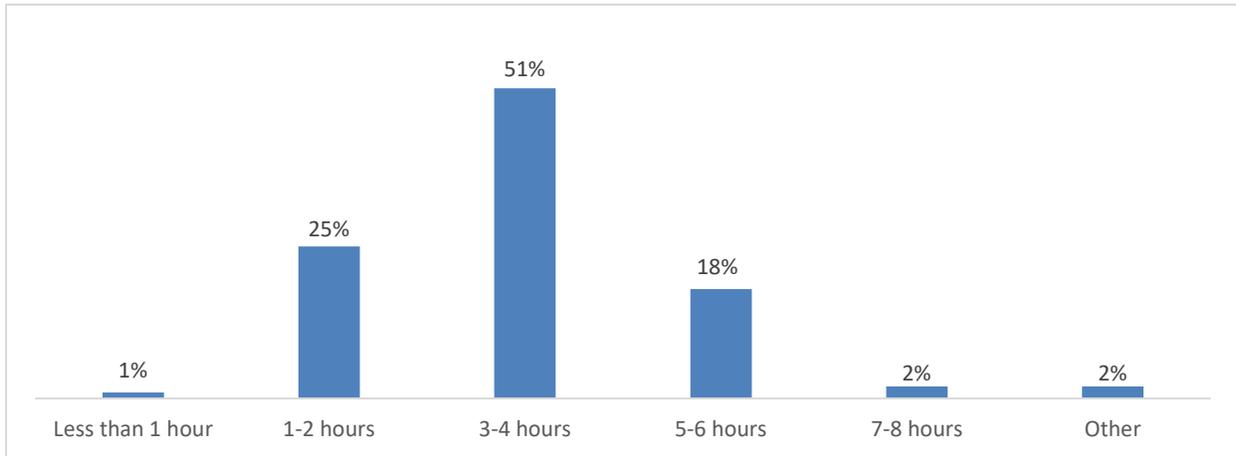


Figure 3: Breakdown of amount of time spent in East Sooke Regional Park by respondents.

QUESTION 5: WHAT DO YOU USE TO NAVIGATE INSIDE THE PARK?

The majority of respondents use their experience or knowledge of the area to navigate inside the park (77%), while many also use CRD wayfinding signs (53%) and CRD maps (38%) to navigate.

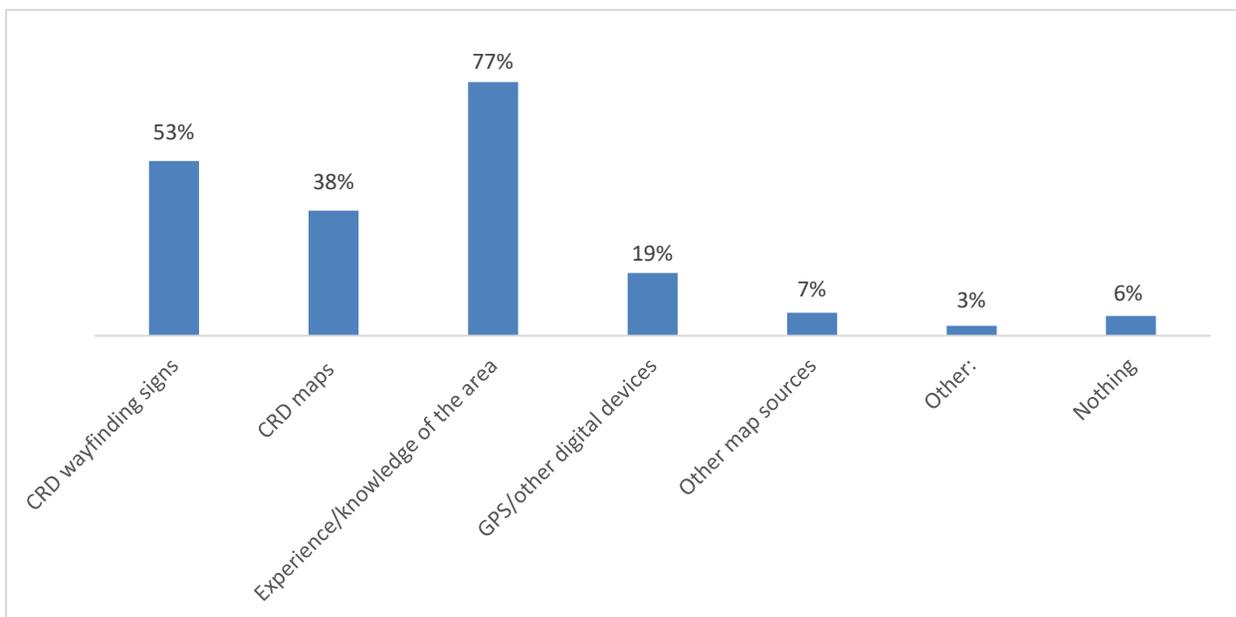


Figure 4: Tools used by respondents to navigate East Sooke Regional Park.

QUESTION 6: WHAT ACTIVITIES DO YOU DO IN EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK?

Virtually every respondent hikes or walks in the park (98%), while many also view plants, animals and the petroglyphs. Half of respondents picnic in the park, while many walk a dog in the park.

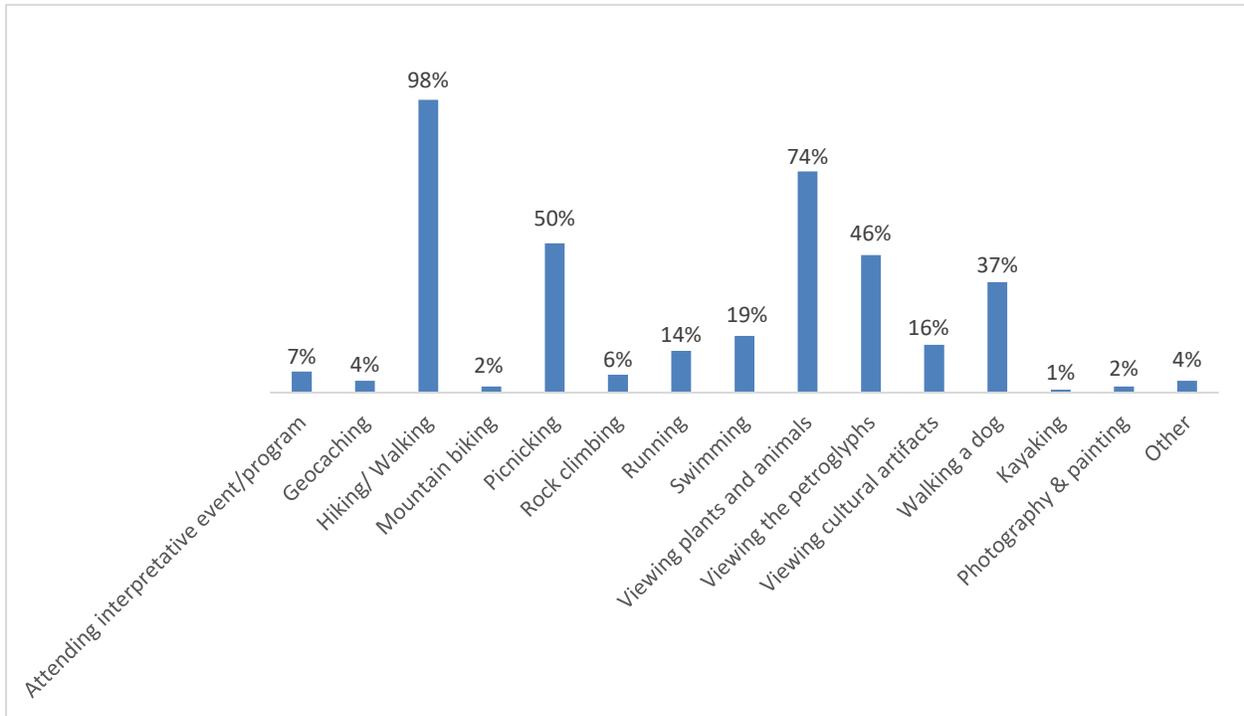


Figure 5: Breakdown of activities survey respondents do in East Sooke Regional Park.

QUESTION 7: DO YOU VISIT THE PARK WITH A DOG?

More than half of the survey respondents indicated that they do visit the park with a dog (59%), while 39% said that they do not visit with a dog.

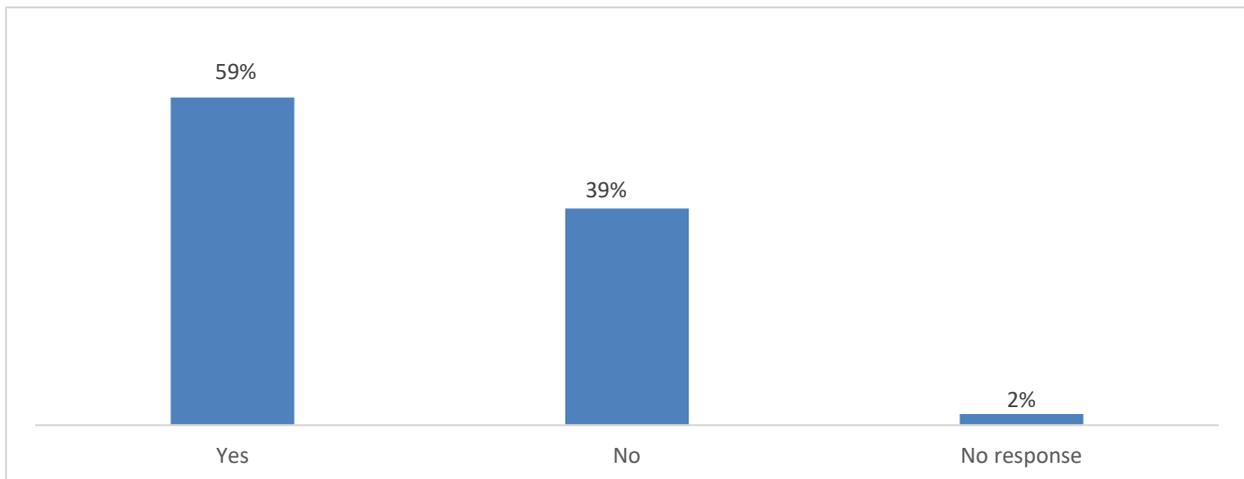


Figure 6: Breakdown of respondents with dogs in East Sooke Regional Park.

QUESTION 8: HOW MANY DOGS DO YOU BRING TO THE PARK?

The majority of respondents who bring a dog to the park only bring one (25%), while 12% bring up to two dogs to the park.

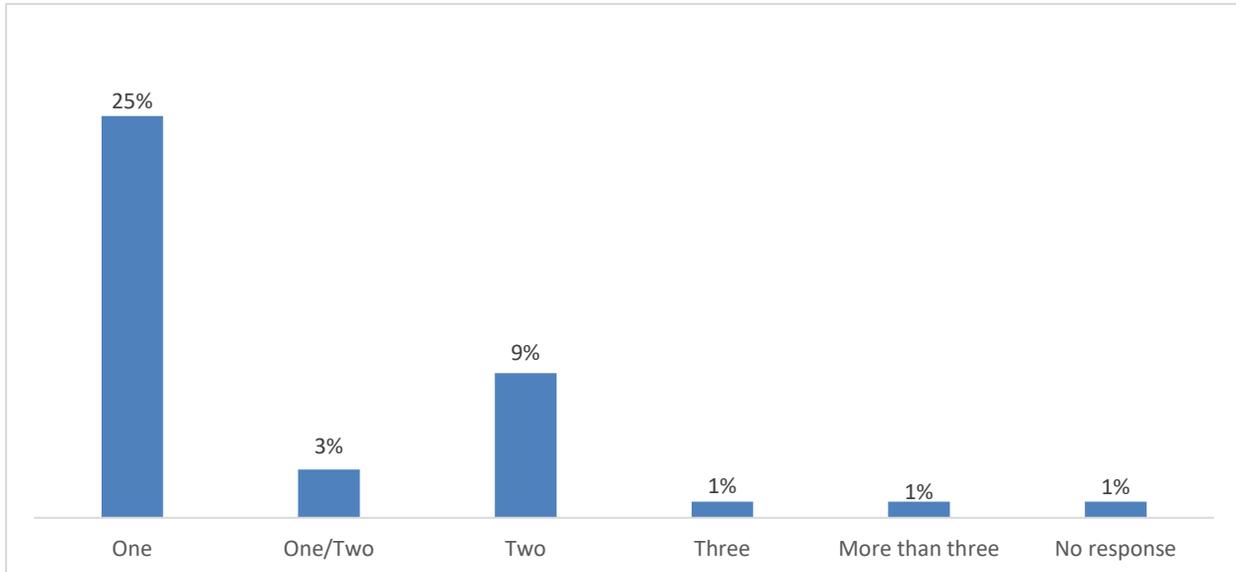


Figure 7: Breakdown of number of dogs respondents bring to East Sooke Regional Park.

QUESTION 9: HOW DO YOU WALK THE DOG IN THIS PARK?

Most respondents walk their dog(s) both on-leash and off-leash in the park (21%), with some only walking their dog on a leash (11%), and a 7% only walking their dog off-leash.

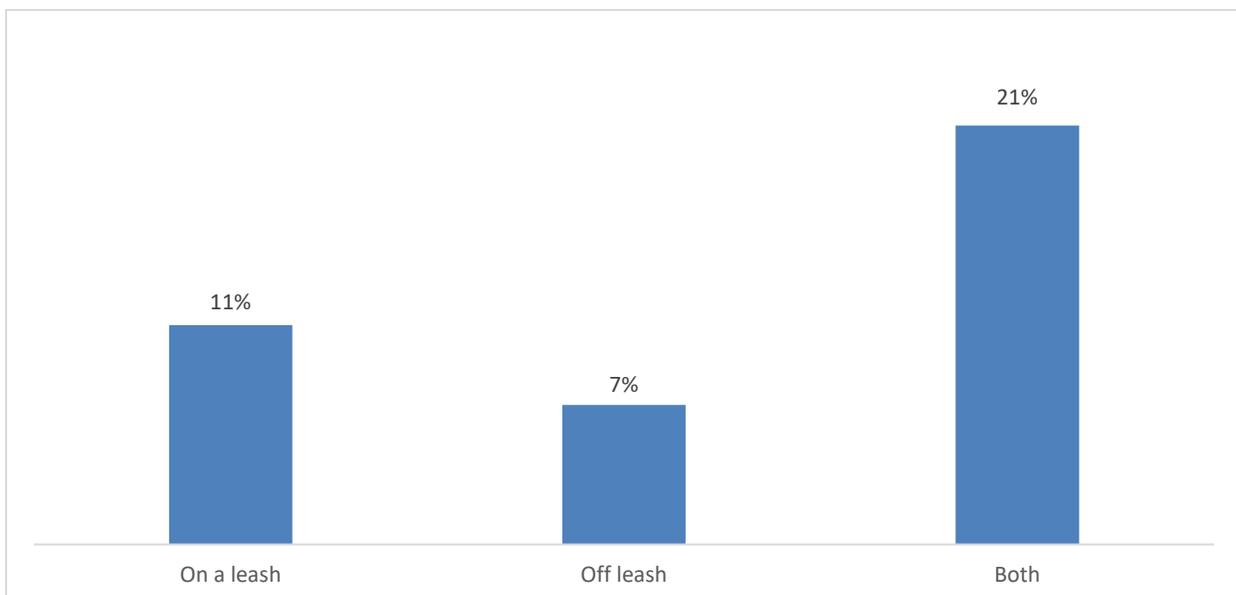


Figure 8: Breakdown of how respondents walk dogs in East Sooke Regional Park.

QUESTION 10: ARE YOU A COMMERCIAL DOG WALKER?

Only one response was received for this question.

QUESTION 11: WHERE DO YOU WALK THE DOG?

Respondents to this question walk their dog in a variety of places in the park, with the Coast Trail being the most frequently mentioned location (32%), followed by Anderson Cove (27%) and general trails in the park (23%).

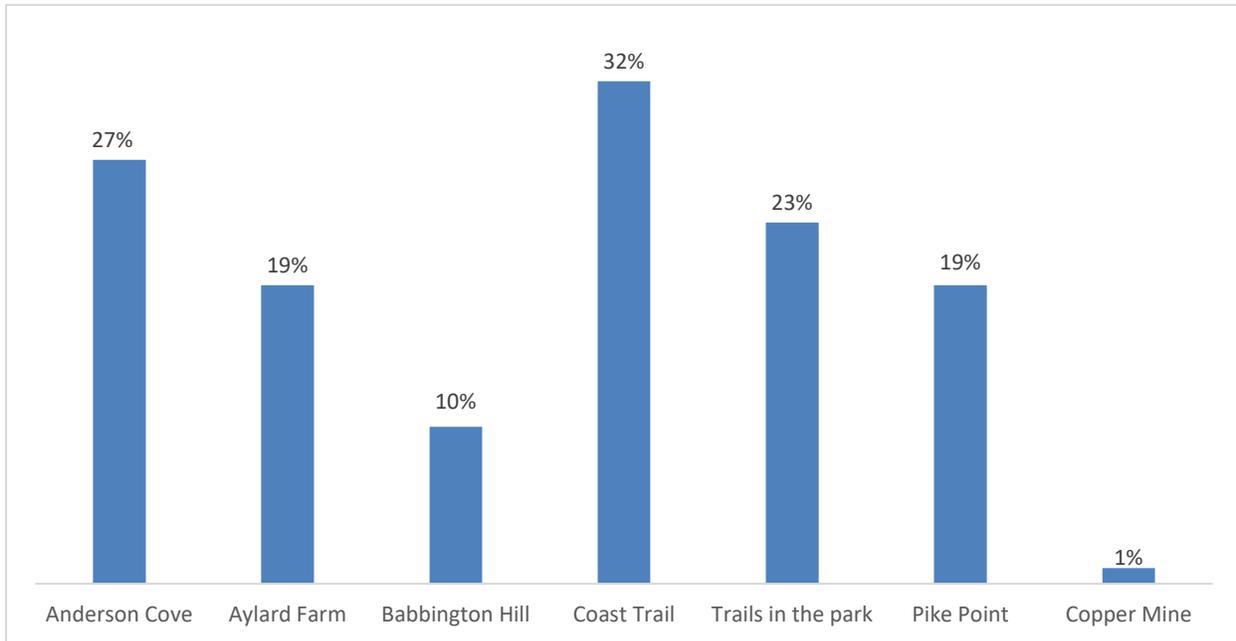


Figure 9: Breakdown of locations that respondents walk their dog in East Sooke Regional Park.

QUESTION 12: PARK MANAGEMENT PLANS TYPICALLY INCLUDE POLICY DIRECTION AND/OR ACTIONS TO ADDRESS KNOWN ISSUES. PLEASE SHARE ANY ISSUES AT EAST SOOKE THAT YOU BELIEVE NEED TO BE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE MANAGEMENT PLAN.

A total of 540 qualitative comments were provided by respondents to the open-ended question about issues that need to be addressed through the management plan. Each comment entailed multiple themes.

The most mentioned themes were:

- **Experiences:** the wilderness values of the park need to be preserved at all costs; the trail system needs to be maintained year-round, but not improved to front-country standards on most park trails; keep Aylard Farm the way it is now—open, accessible, welcoming; maintain the ability of park visitors to fully experience the rugged Coast Trail and interior forest trails; maintain the ability to view wildlife (marine and terrestrial) as part of the park experience.

- **Outdoor recreation:** the park is fine the way it is now; do not change the mix of recreation activities; do not allow mountain biking or camping in the park; consider some mountain biking and a backcountry campground in the park; unmanaged dogs are a big issue – something needs to be done about them; continue to manage dogs as currently; manage litter in the park; address illegal camping; maintain solitude and quiet throughout the park.
- **Natural environment:** invasive species are becoming a problem in the park; overuse of the park is impacting the natural environment; human and dog feces are a growing issue; sensitive species need to be protected; do not build any new trails; keep the interior of the park undeveloped; maintain intact habitat for large carnivores and ungulates.
- **Facilities:** need better signage and maps in the park; sign all official trails in the park; keep the restrooms clean and pick up litter; improve the parking situation at Aylard Farm; the road accessing Aylard Farm is hazardous and needs to be fixed; car break-ins are a problem—need Park Watch back; maintain the trails to a rustic standard and clear off tree blow-downs after they happen; do not over-develop the park; keep park infrastructure to a minimum.
- **Accessibility:** maintain Aylard Farm as an accessible location and improve access to the beach; maintain the trail between Aylard Farm and Beechey Head so it is accessible to most people; improve transportation options to the park so people don't have to drive to there; keep the Aylard Farm fields mowed so that people can walk with or without dogs there.

QUESTION 13: HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS AT AYLARD FARM PARKING LOT?

Q13a. Parking lot full: the majority of respondents (71%) replied that the parking lot is sometimes or often full.

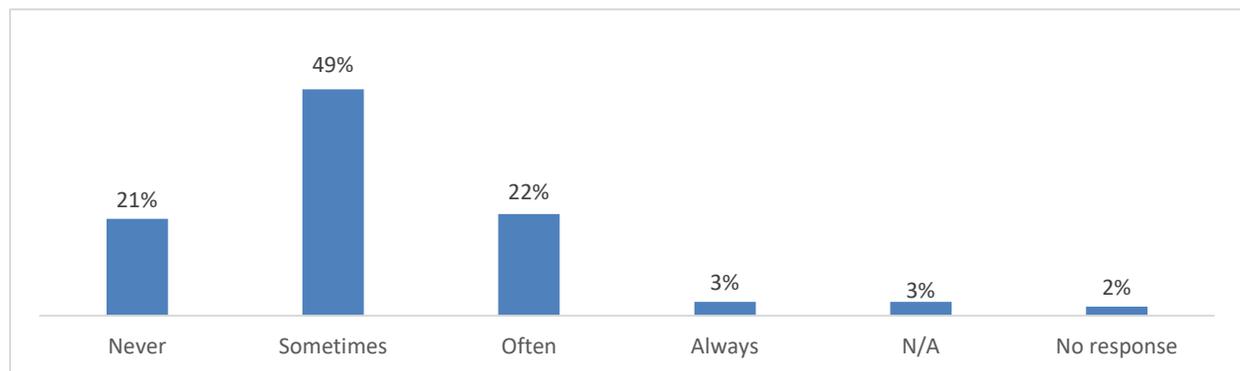


Figure 10: Breakdown of responses to experiencing a full parking lot at Aylard Farm.

Q13b. Cars parked on the side of the road: the majority of respondents (65%) replied that cars are sometimes or often parked on the side of the road.

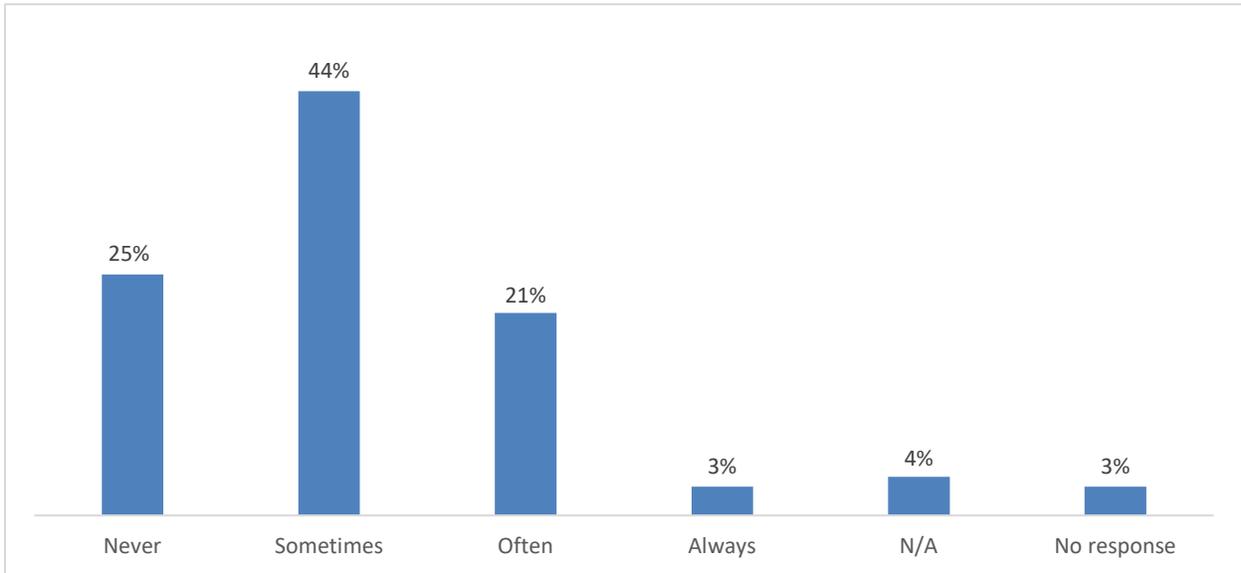


Figure 11: Breakdown of responses to experiencing cars parked on the side of the road.

Q13c. Cars blocking the road: the majority of respondents (65%) responded that cars never block the road, while 23% said that they sometimes or often do.

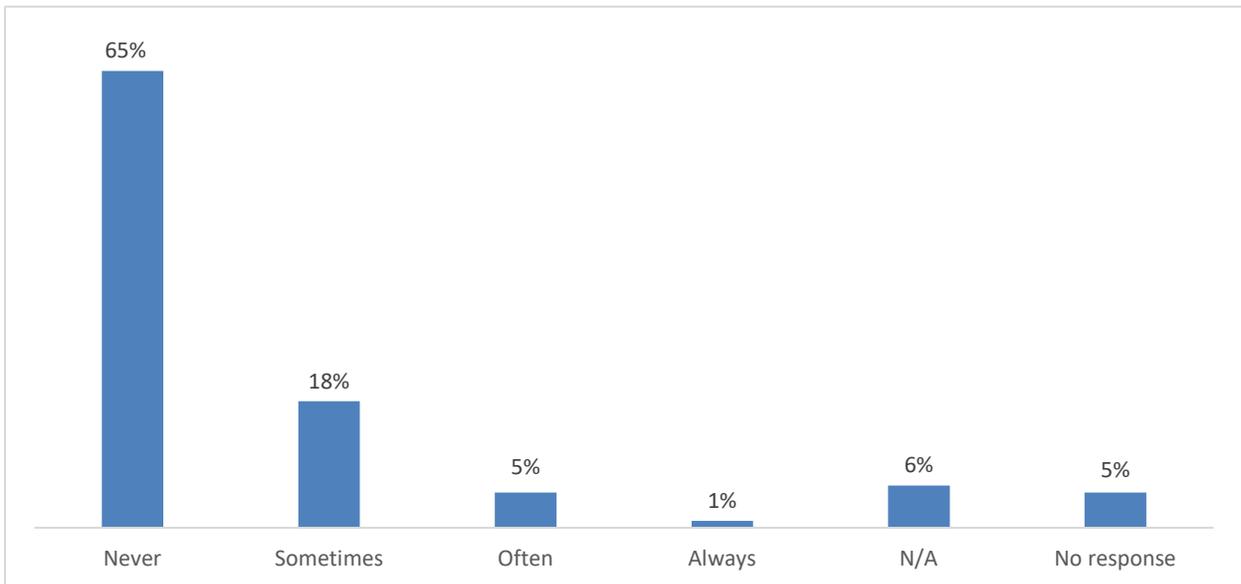


Figure 12: Breakdown of responses to experiencing to cars blocking the road.

QUESTION 14: DID YOU KNOW THAT SENSITIVE ECOSYSTEMS AND SPECIES AT RISK ARE PRESENT IN EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK?

The majority of survey respondents indicated that they are aware that sensitive ecosystems and species at risk are in the park (82%).

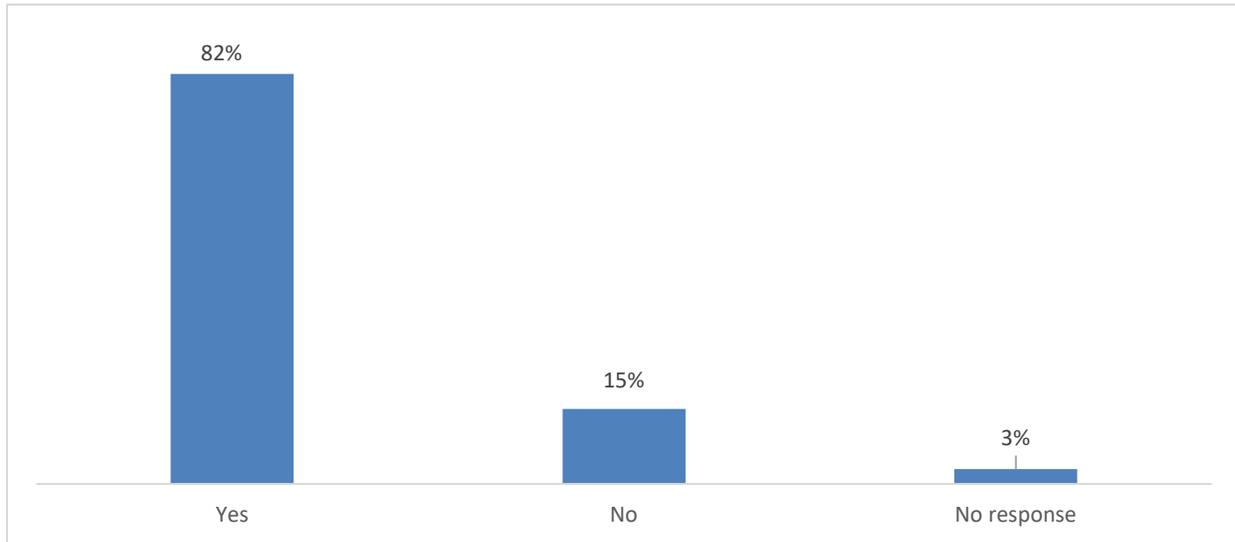


Figure 13: Breakdown of responses to knowledge about sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in East Sooke Regional Park.

QUESTION 15: WOULD YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE THE FOLLOWING MEASURES TO PROTECT SENSITIVE ECOSYSTEMS AND SPECIES AT RISK IN THIS PARK?

Q15a. Providing additional park signage: The majority of survey respondents (75%) support providing additional park signage to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in the park.

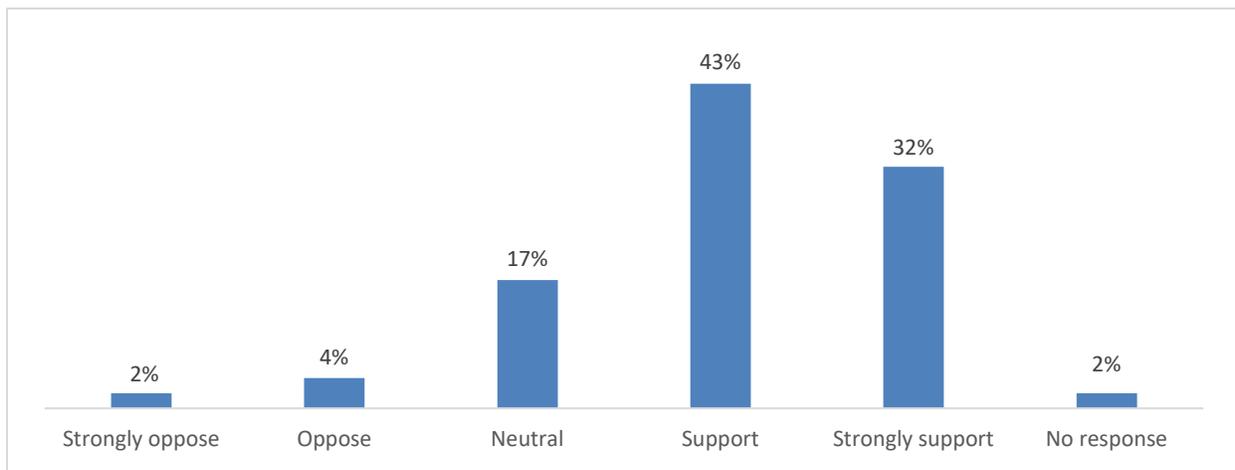


Figure 14: Breakdown of responses to providing additional park signage to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q15b. Installing interpretive panels: The majority of survey respondents (74%) support installing interpretive panels to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in the park.

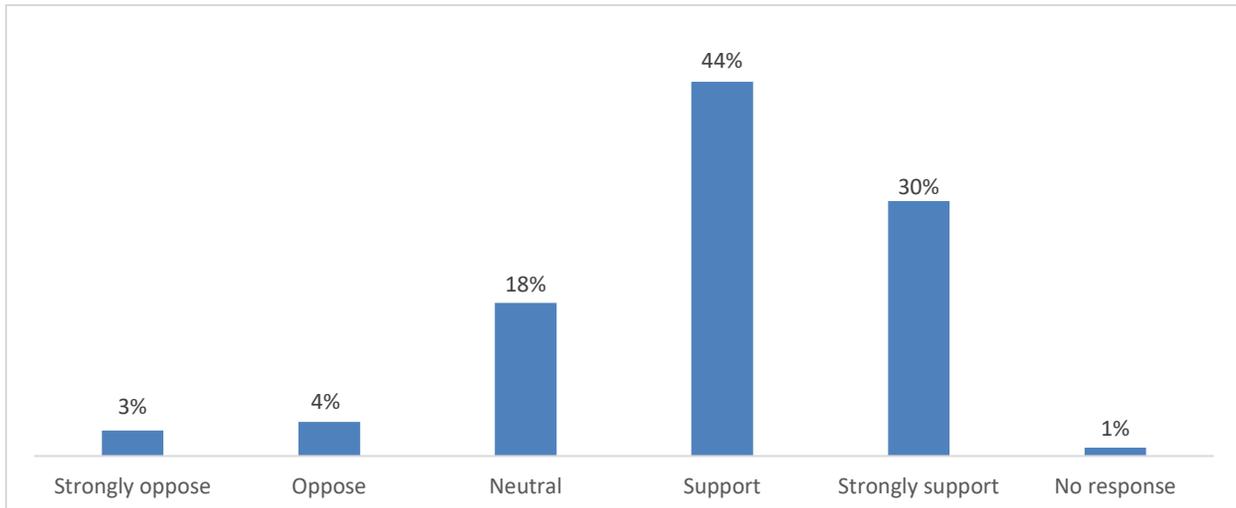


Figure 15: Breakdown of responses to installing interpretive panels to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q15c. Offering interpretive programs: Most respondents to this survey indicated that they supported or strongly supported offering interpretive programs (58%) to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in the park, while 32% were neutral about it.

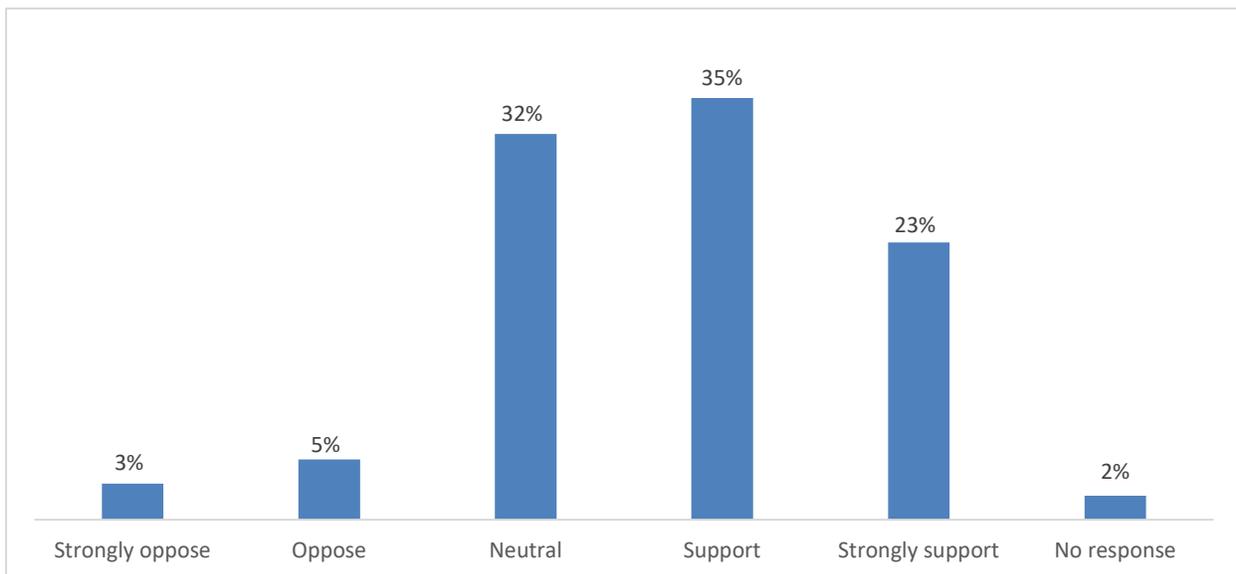


Figure 16: Breakdown of responses to offering interpretive programs to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q15d. Closing areas for habitat protection: The majority of respondents to this survey (73%) indicated that they supported or strongly supported closing areas for habitat protection to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in the park.

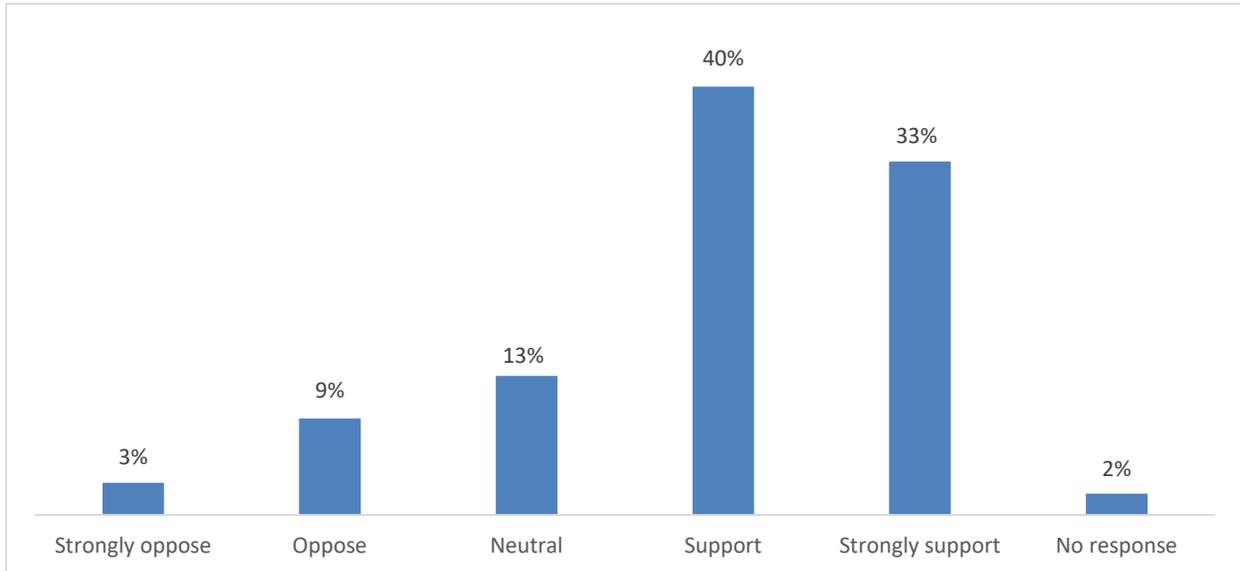


Figure 17: Breakdown of responses to closing areas for habitat protection to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q15e. Limiting certain types of recreational activities: The majority of respondents to this survey (71%) indicated that they supported or strongly supported limiting certain types of recreational activities to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in the park.

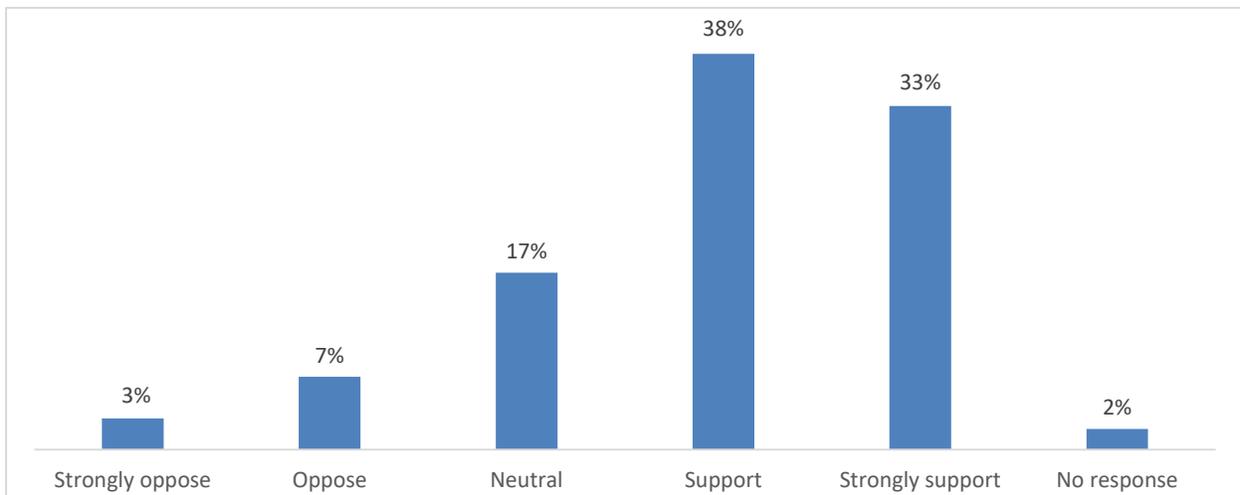
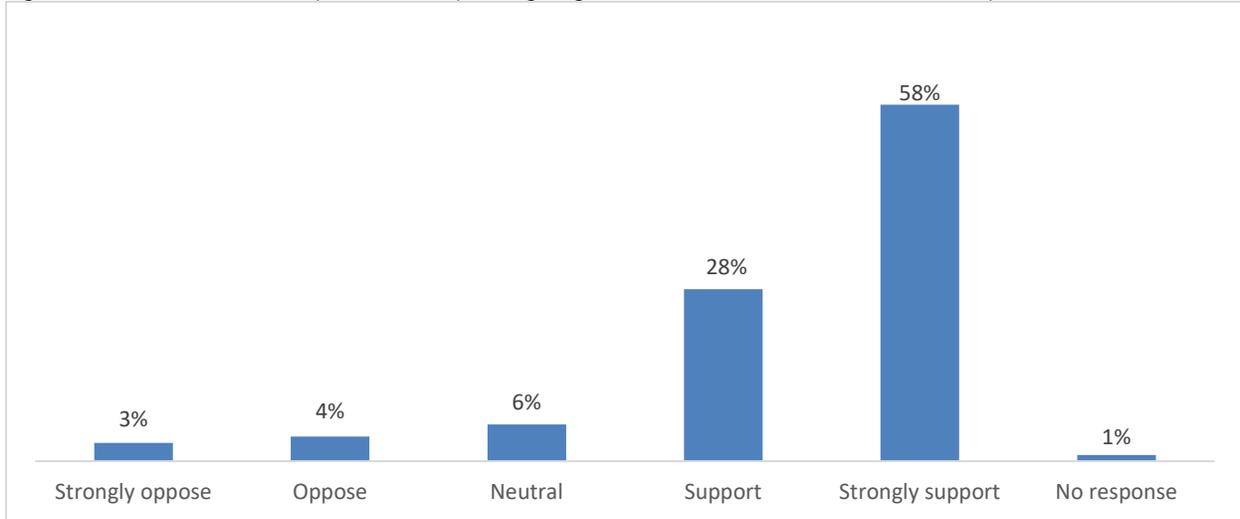


Figure 18: Breakdown of responses to limiting certain types of recreational activities to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q15f. Requesting dogs to be on-leash in sensitive areas: The majority of respondents to this survey (86%) indicated that they supported or strongly supported requesting dogs to be on-leash in sensitive areas to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in the park.

Figure 19: Breakdown of responses to requesting dogs to be on-leash in sensitive areas to protect sensitive



ecosystems and species at risk in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q15g. Allowing seasonal closures for species protection: The majority of respondents to this survey (67%) indicated that they supported or strongly supported allowing seasonal closures to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in the park.

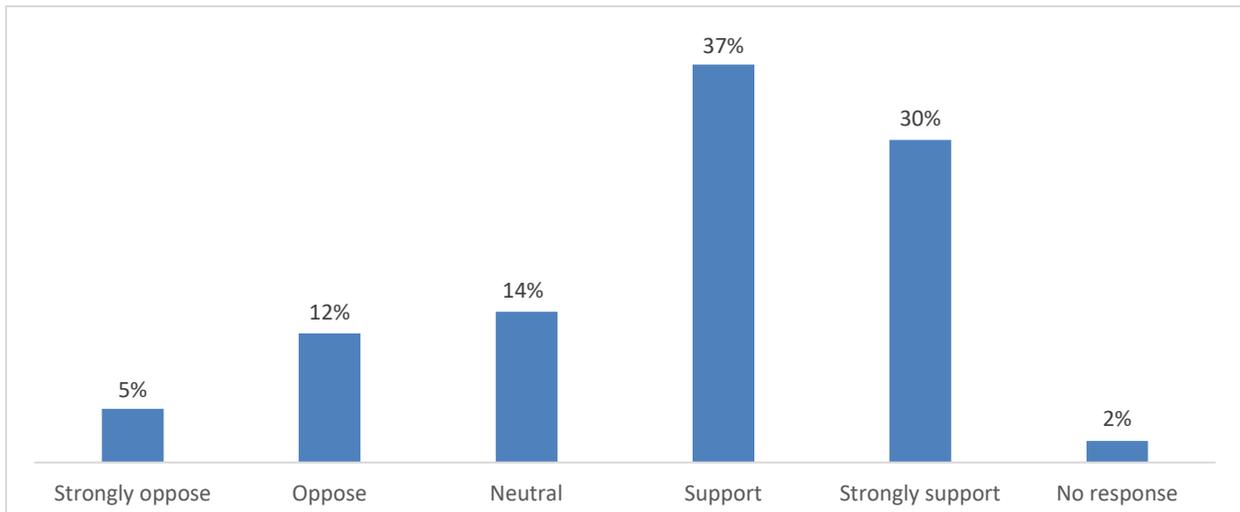


Figure 20: Breakdown of responses to allowing seasonal closures for species protection in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q15h. Restoring habitat: The majority of respondents to this survey (88%) indicated that they supported or strongly supported restoring habitat to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in the park.

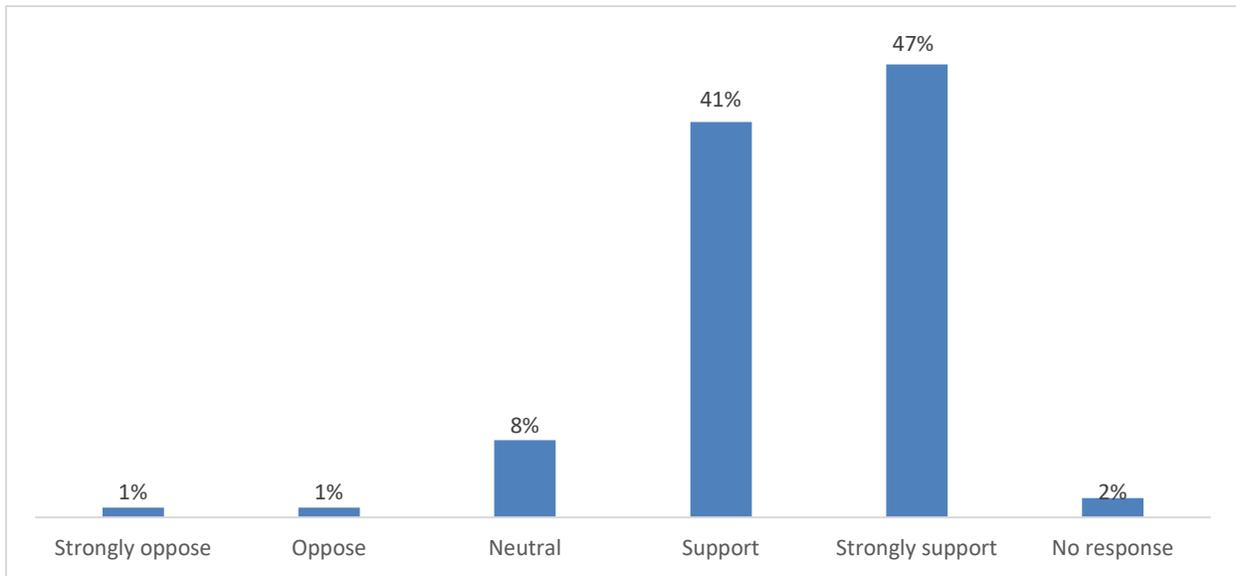


Figure 21: Breakdown of responses to restoring habitat to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in East Sooke Regional Park.

QUESTION 16: DID YOU KNOW THAT CULTURAL HERITAGE SITES ARE PRESENT IN EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK?

The majority of respondents (85%) stated that they were aware that cultural heritage sites are present in the park.

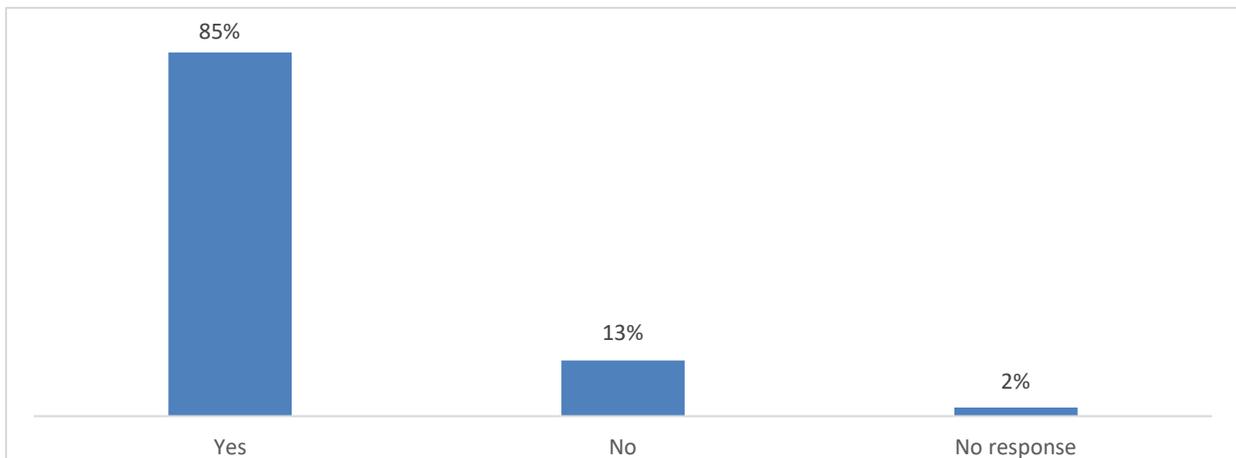


Figure 22: Breakdown of responses to knowing that cultural heritage sites are present at East Sooke Regional Park.

QUESTION 17: WOULD YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE THE FOLLOWING MEASURES TO PROTECT CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THIS PARK?

Q17a. Providing additional park signage: The majority of respondents to this survey (77%) indicated that they supported or strongly supported providing additional park signage to protect cultural heritage in the park.

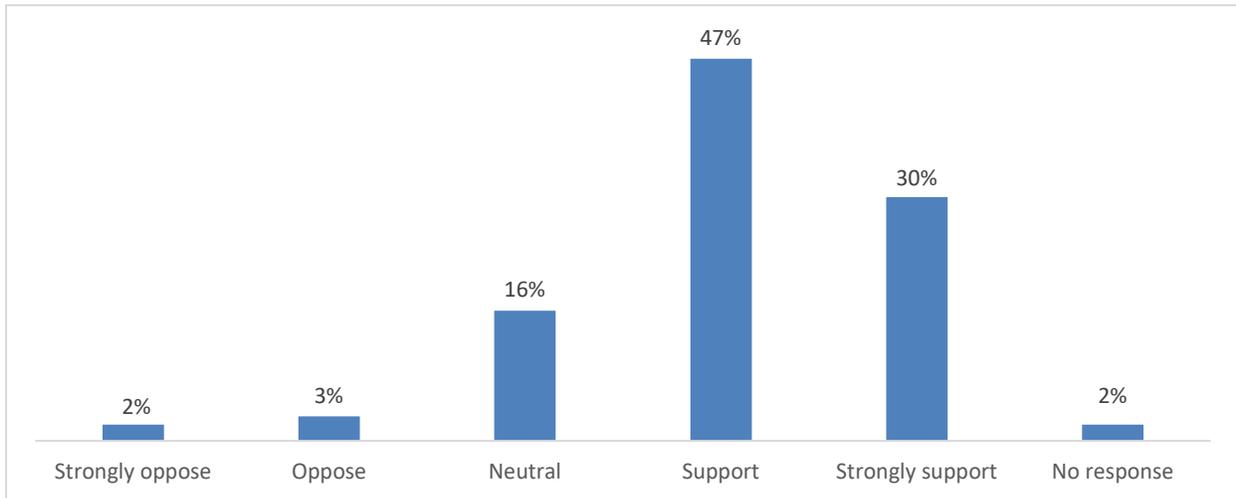


Figure 23: Breakdown of responses to providing additional park signage to protect cultural heritage sites in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q17b. Installing interpretive panels: The majority of respondents to this survey (78%) indicated that they supported or strongly supported installing interpretive panels to protect cultural heritage in the park.

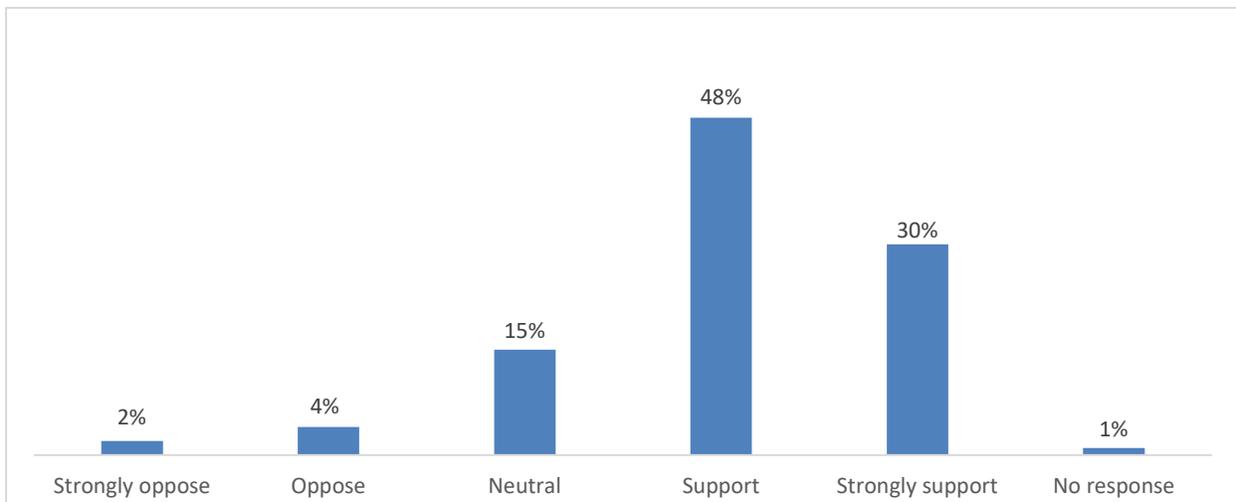


Figure 24: Breakdown of responses to installing interpretive panels to protect cultural heritage sites in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q17c. Offering interpretive programs: The majority of respondents to this survey (59%) indicated that they supported or strongly supported offering interpretive programs to protect cultural heritage in the park, while 30% were neutral.

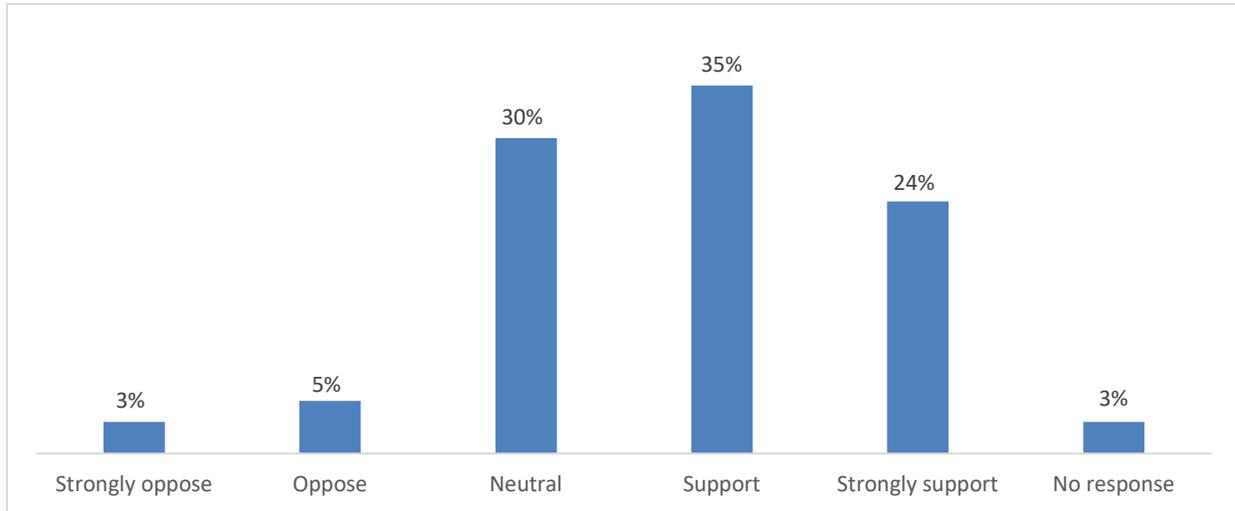


Figure 25: Breakdown of responses to offering interpretive programs to protect cultural heritage sites in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q17d. Information on social media and website: The majority of respondents to this survey (71%) indicated that they supported or strongly supported providing information on social media and website to protect cultural heritage in the park.

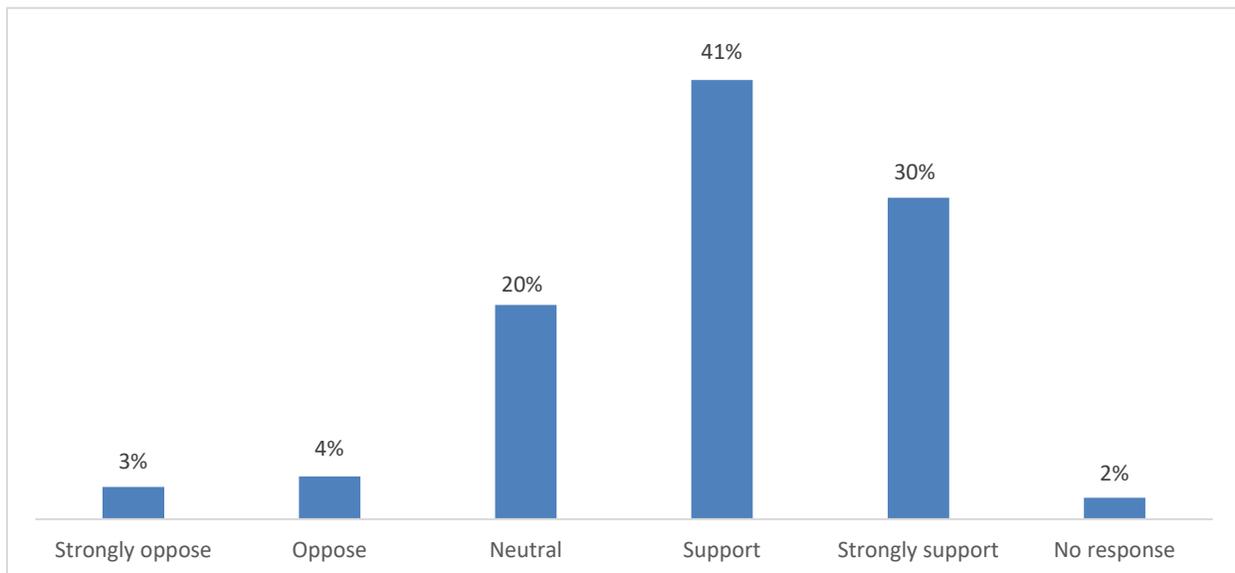


Figure 26: Breakdown of responses to providing information on social media and website to protect cultural heritage sites in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q17e. Closing areas for cultural heritage protection: A little more than half of respondents (54%) support or strongly support closing areas for cultural heritage protection, while 38% oppose or strongly oppose this action.

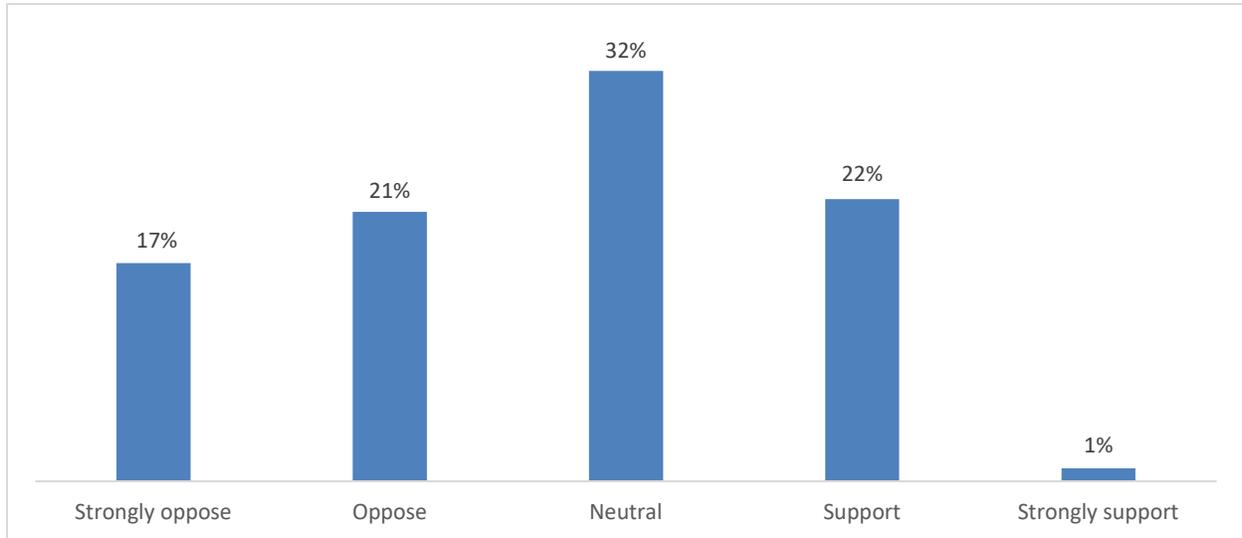


Figure 27: Breakdown of responses to closing areas for cultural heritage protection.

Q17f. Requesting dogs to be on leash in sensitive areas: The majority of respondents to this survey (82%) indicated that they supported or strongly supported requesting dogs to be on-leash in sensitive areas to protect cultural heritage in the park.

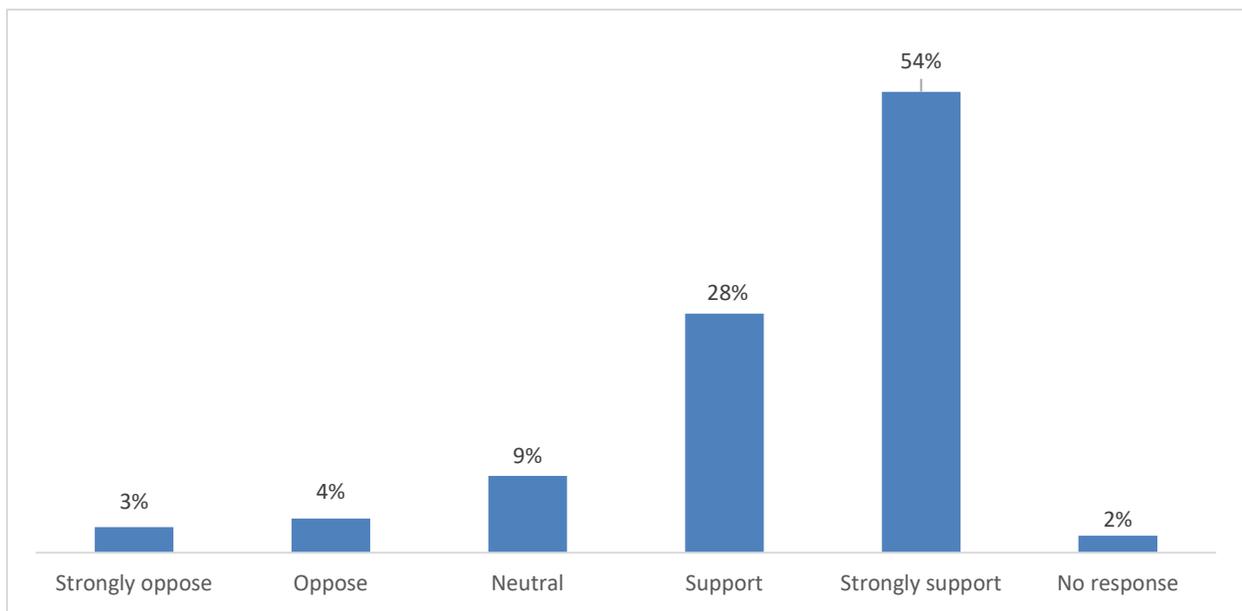


Figure 28: Breakdown of responses to requesting dogs to be on-leash in sensitive areas to protect cultural heritage sites in East Sooke Regional Park.

QUESTION 18: IN EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK, HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH:

Q18a. Experiences: The majority of respondents to this survey (90%) indicated that they were very satisfied or completely satisfied with their experience in the park.

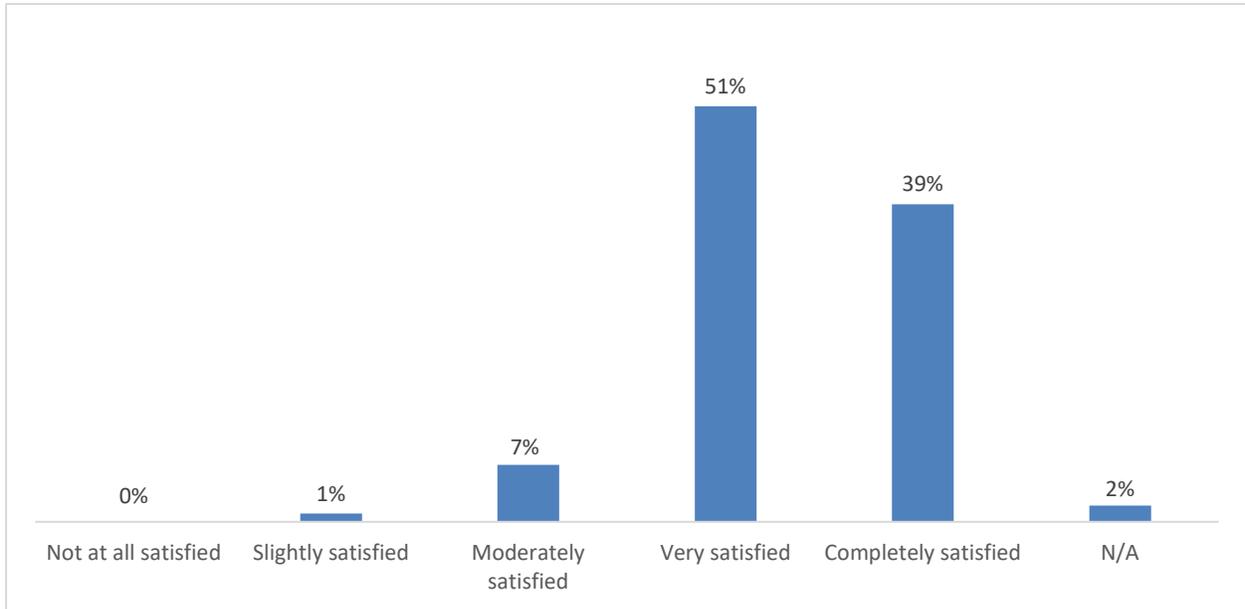


Figure 29: Breakdown of responses to park experience satisfaction level.

Q18b. Natural environment and species protection: The majority of respondents to this survey (60%) indicated that they were very satisfied or completely satisfied with natural environment and species protection in the park, while 35% were not at all satisfied to moderately satisfied.

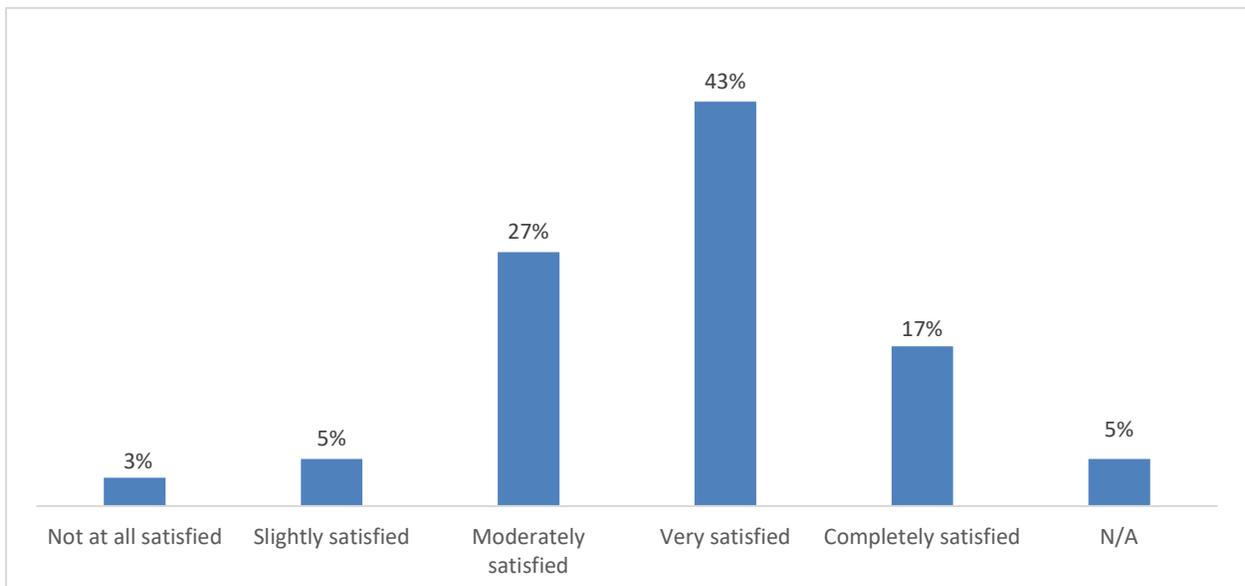


Figure 30: Satisfaction level with natural environment and species protection.

Q18c. Outdoor recreation opportunities: The majority of respondents to this survey (84%) indicated that they were very satisfied or completely satisfied with outdoor recreation opportunities in the park.

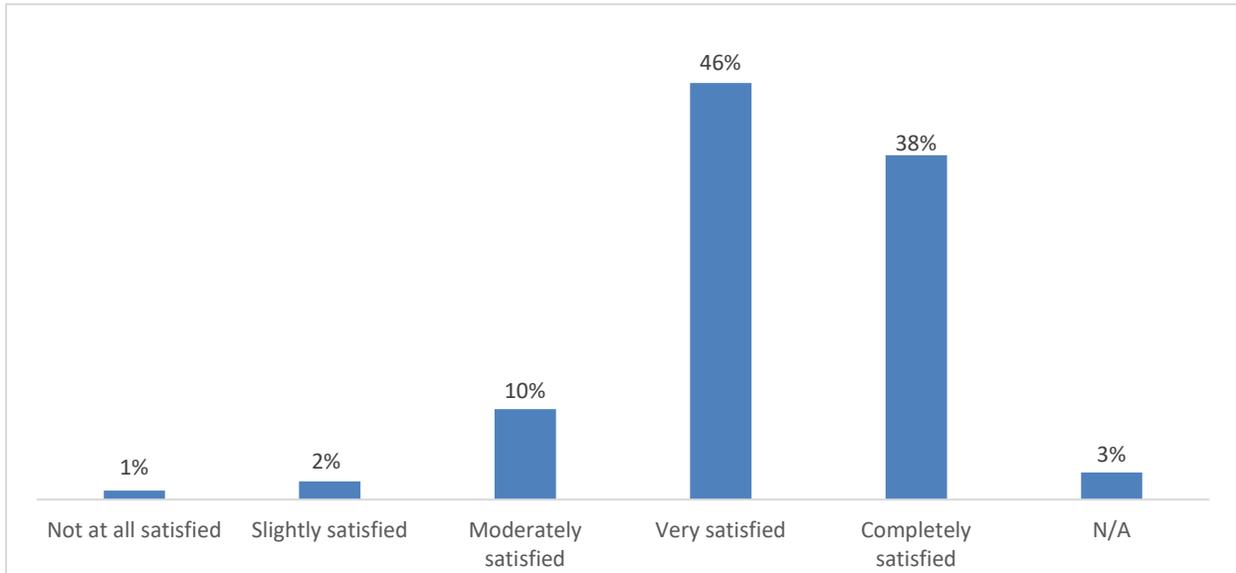


Figure 31: Satisfaction level with outdoor recreation opportunities.

Q18d. Trails: The majority of respondents to this survey (83%) indicated that they were very satisfied or completely satisfied with the trails in the park.

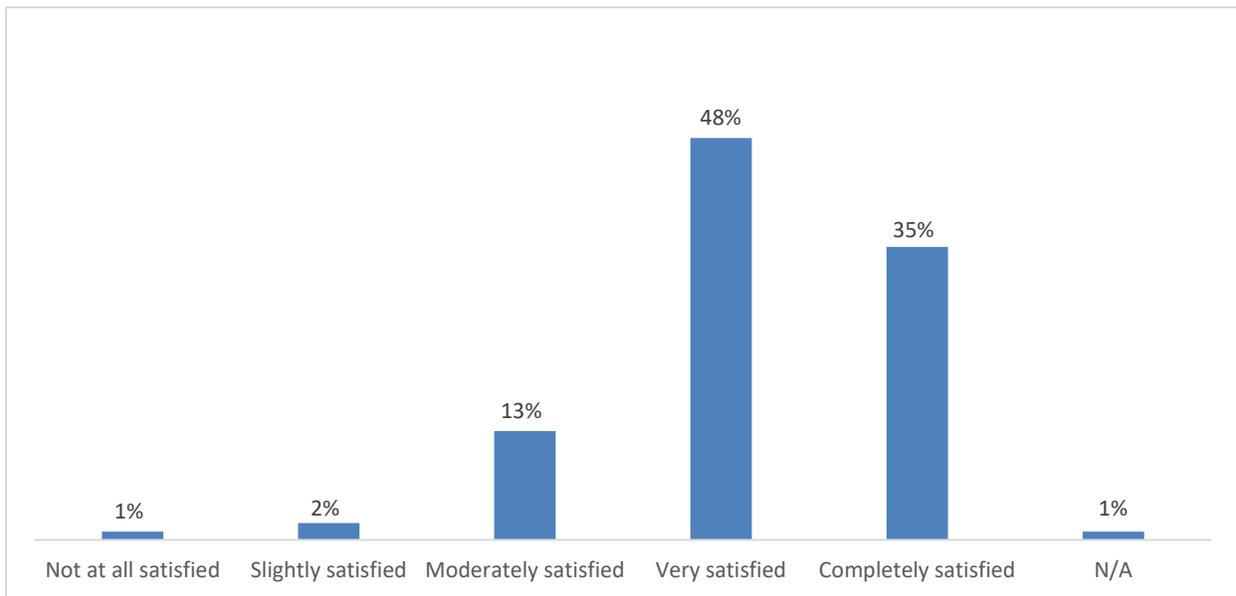


Figure 32: Satisfaction level with park trails.

Q18e. Picnic tables: Of the survey respondents, 40% were very satisfied or completely satisfied with the picnic tables in the park, while 28% were not at all satisfied to moderately satisfied, and 32% had no opinion.

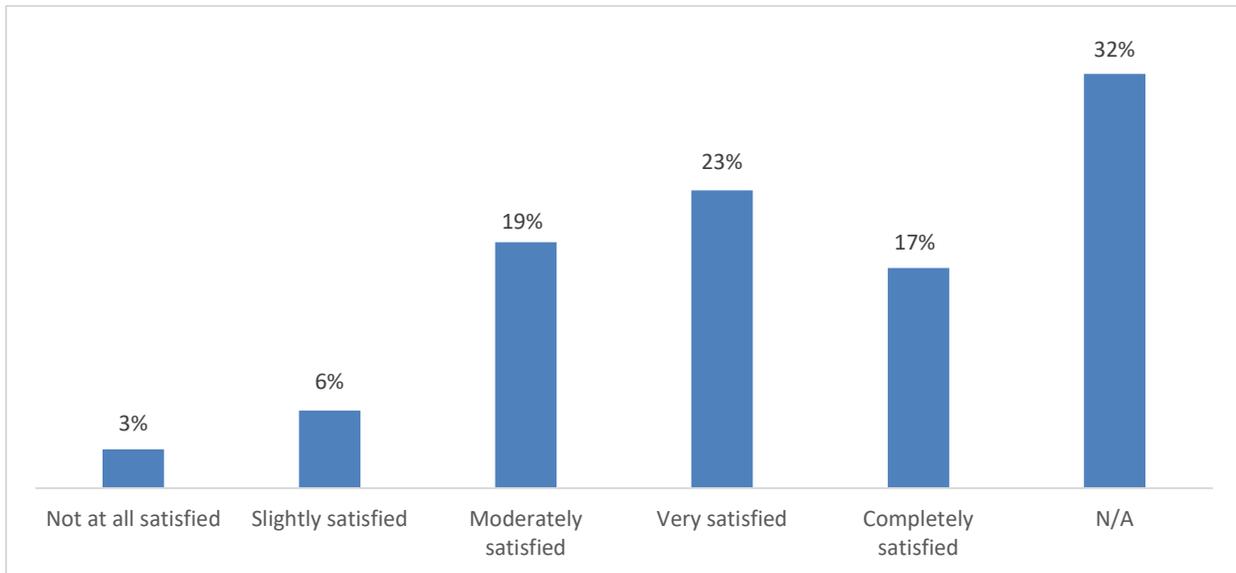


Figure 33: Satisfaction level with park picnic tables.

Q18f. Parking: Slightly more than half of survey respondents (53%) stated that they were not at all satisfied to moderately satisfied with parking in the park, while 44% were very satisfied to completely satisfied with the parking.

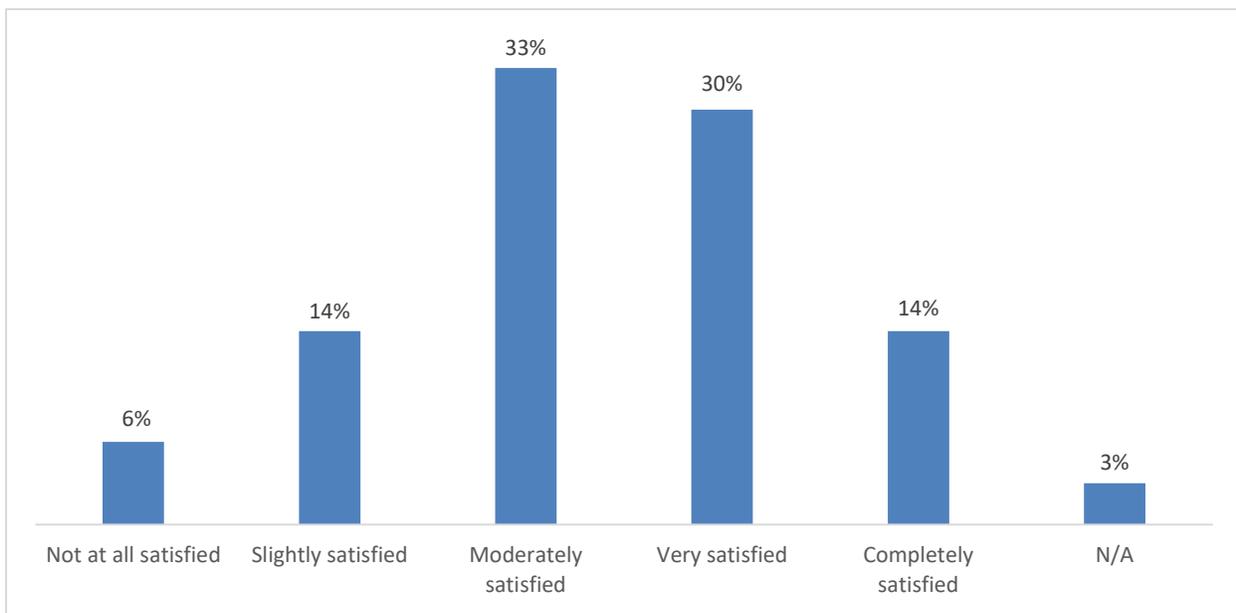


Figure 34: Satisfaction level with parking in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q18g. Group shelter: Survey respondents were split between being very satisfied to completely satisfied with the group shelter (50%), not at all satisfied to moderately satisfied (25%), and having no opinion on the group shelter (25%).

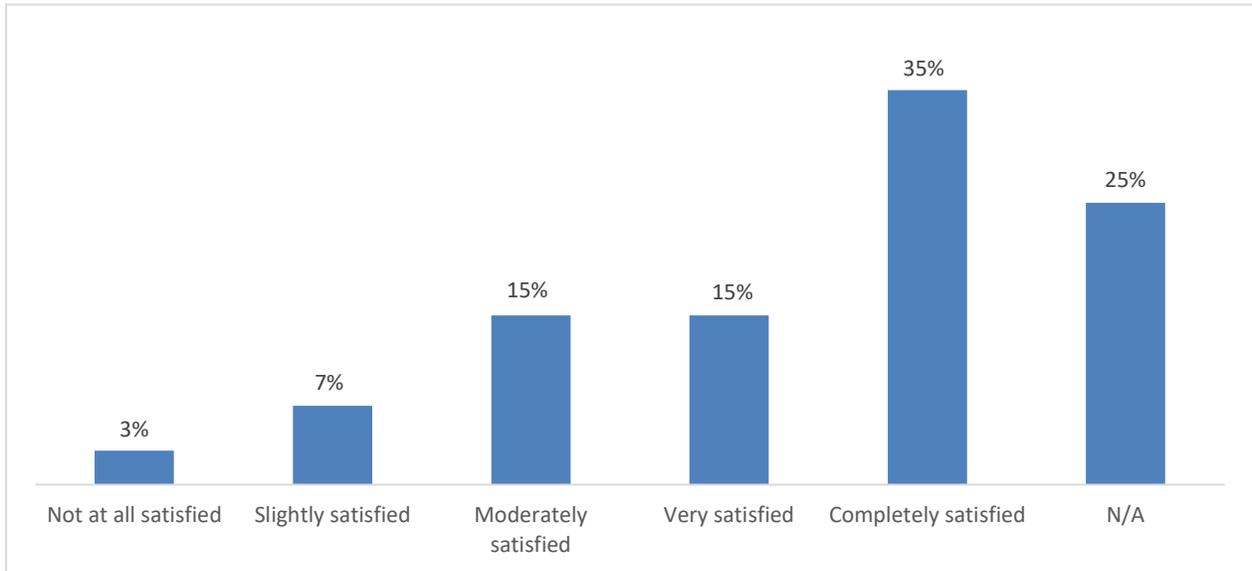


Figure 35: Satisfaction level with the group shelter.

Q18h. Overall cleanliness: The majority of respondents to this survey (80%) indicated that they were very satisfied or completely satisfied with the overall cleanliness of the park.

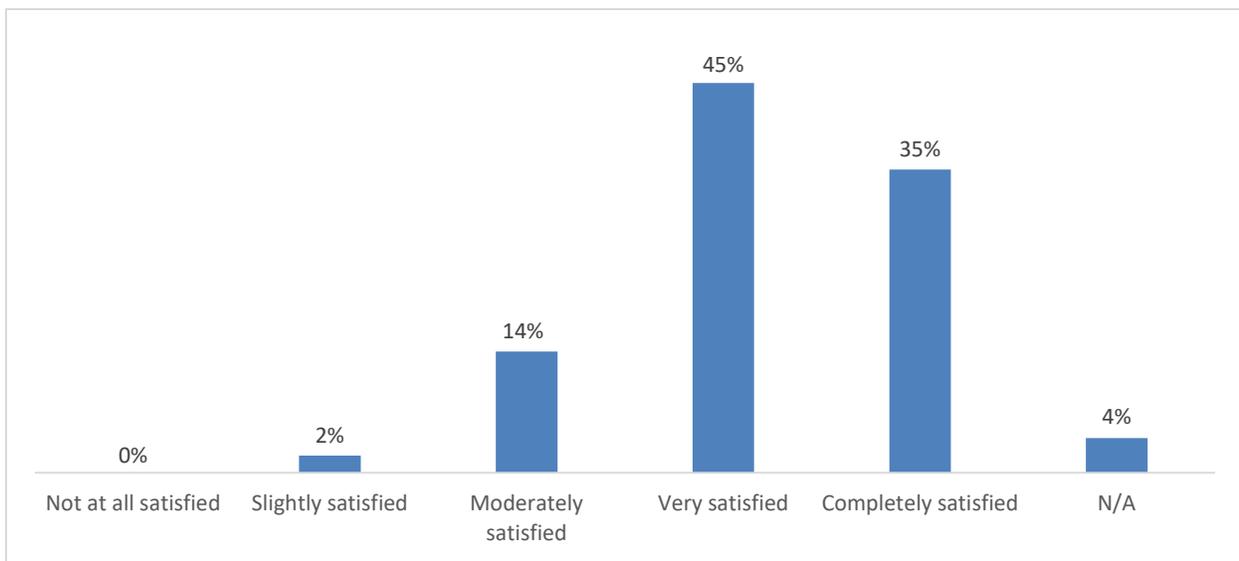


Figure 36: Satisfaction level with overall cleanliness in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q18i. Education/nature programs: The greatest percentage of survey respondents (48%) had no opinion on the education/nature programs in the park, while 28% were very satisfied to completely satisfied, and 24% were not at all satisfied to moderately satisfied with education/nature programs.

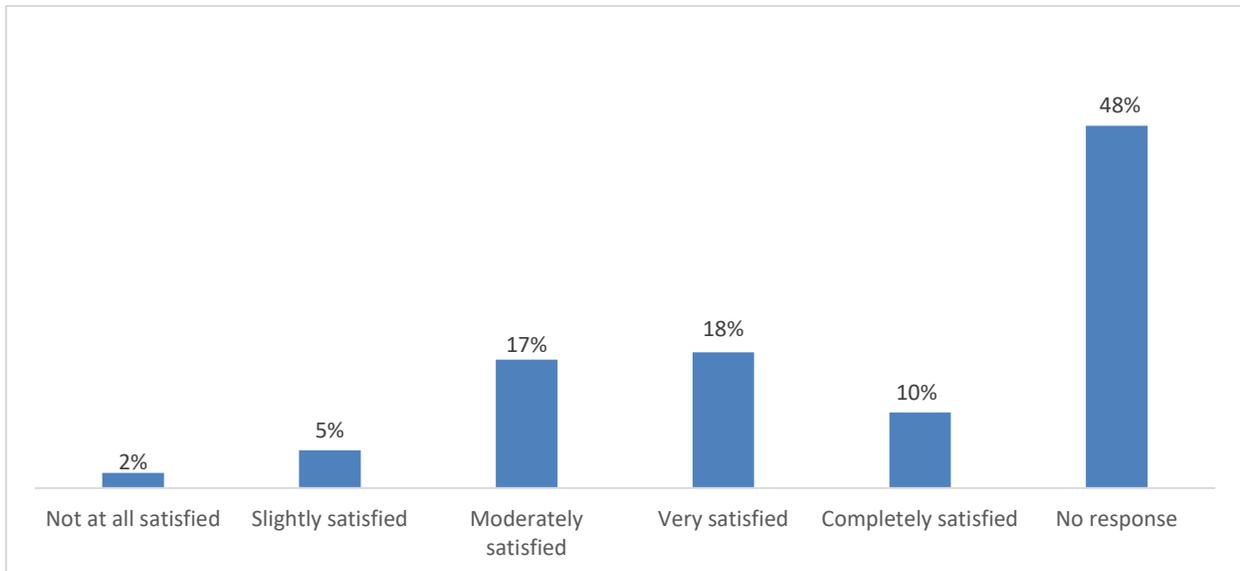


Figure 37: Satisfaction level with park education and nature programs.

Q18j. Welcome/orientation signs: Slightly more than half of respondents (58%) were very satisfied or completely satisfied with the park welcome/orientation signs, while 32% were not at all satisfied to moderately satisfied with the welcome/orientation signs and 10% had no opinion.

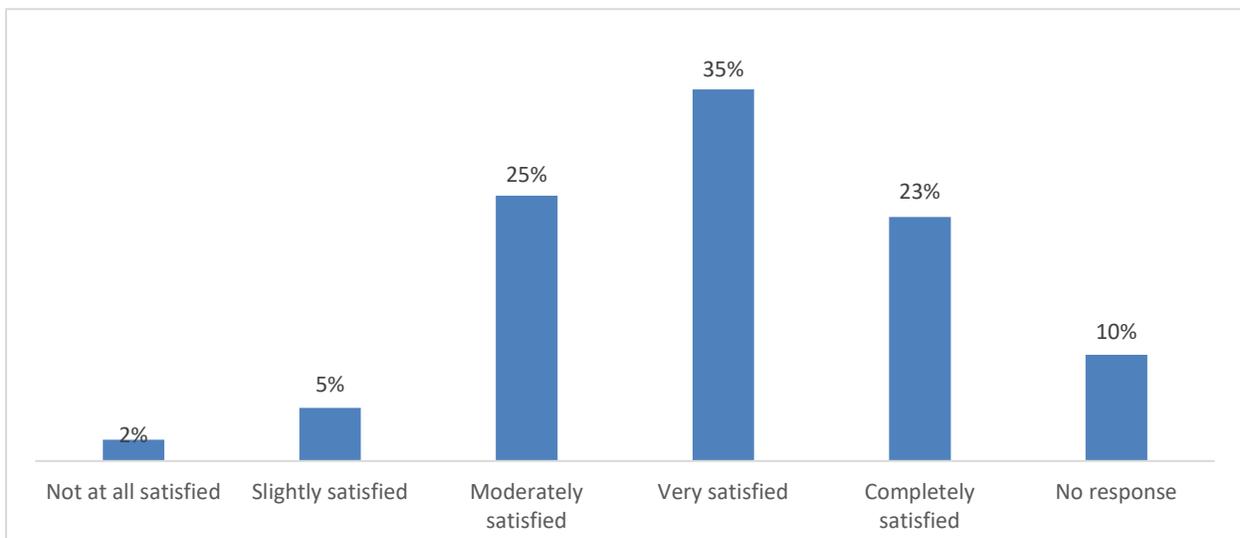


Figure 38: Satisfaction level with park welcome and orientation signs.

Q18k. CRD park maps: The majority of respondents to this survey (63%) indicated that they were very satisfied or completely satisfied with the CRD park maps, while 28% indicated that they were not at all satisfied to moderately satisfied with the CRD park maps.

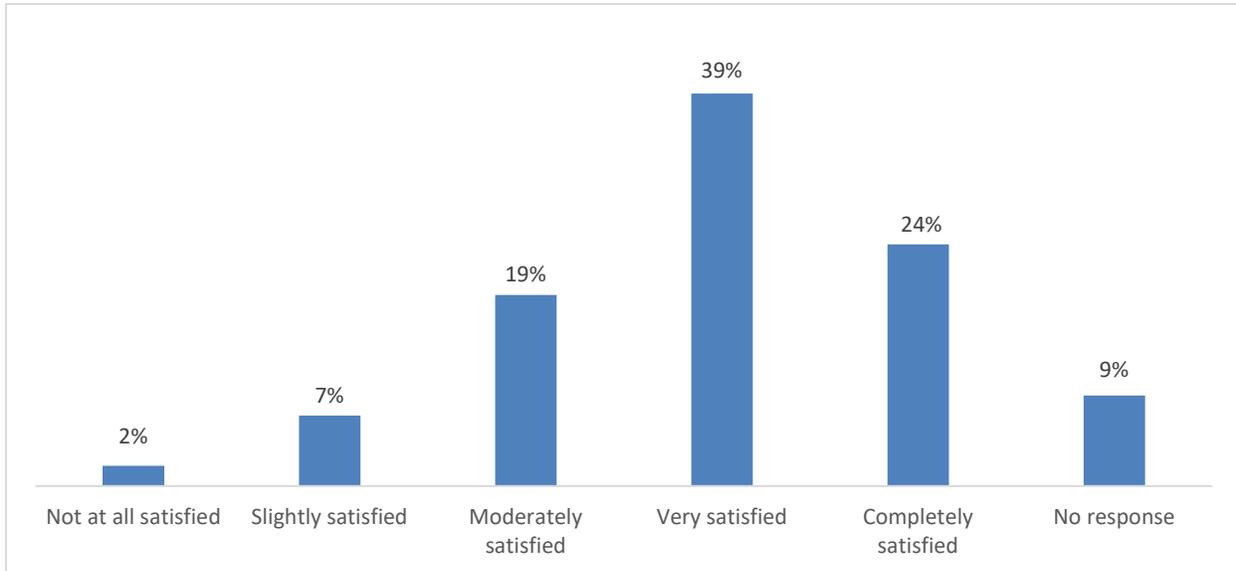


Figure 39: Satisfaction level with CRD park maps.

QUESTION 19: HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A COUGAR, BEAR AND/OR WOLF IN EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK?

The majority of survey respondents (79%) indicated that they had never seen a cougar, bear and/or wolf in the park.

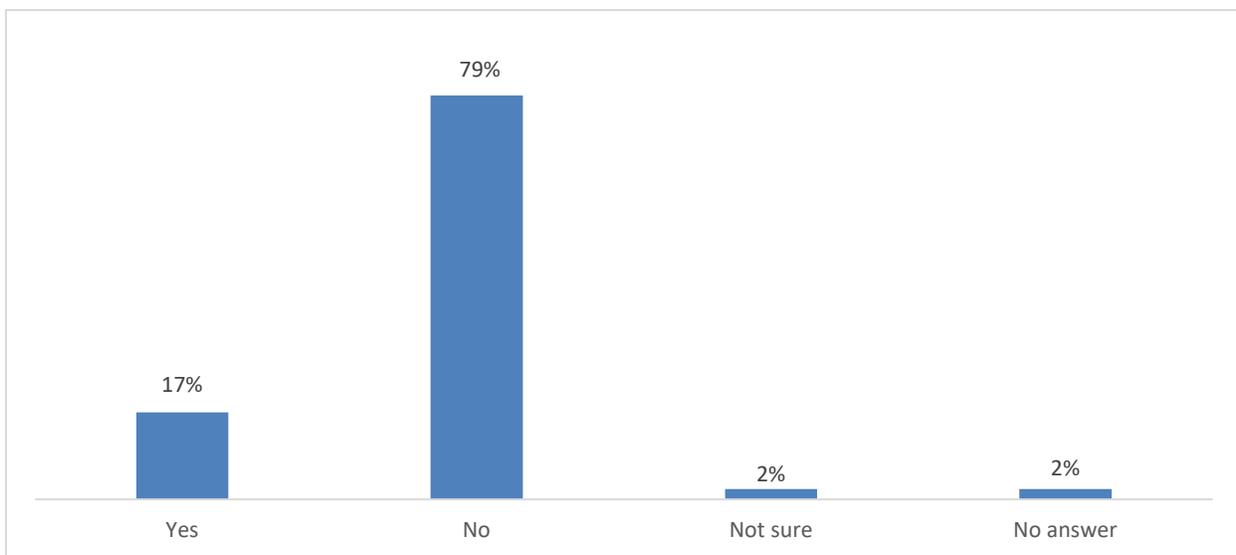


Figure 40: Respondents' sighting of cougars, bears and/or wolves in East Sooke Regional Park.

QUESTION 20: WHAT DID YOU SEE?

Of the survey respondents who had seen a large carnivore in the park, the majority (15%) had seen a bear, while 5% had seen a cougar, and only 1% had seen a wolf.

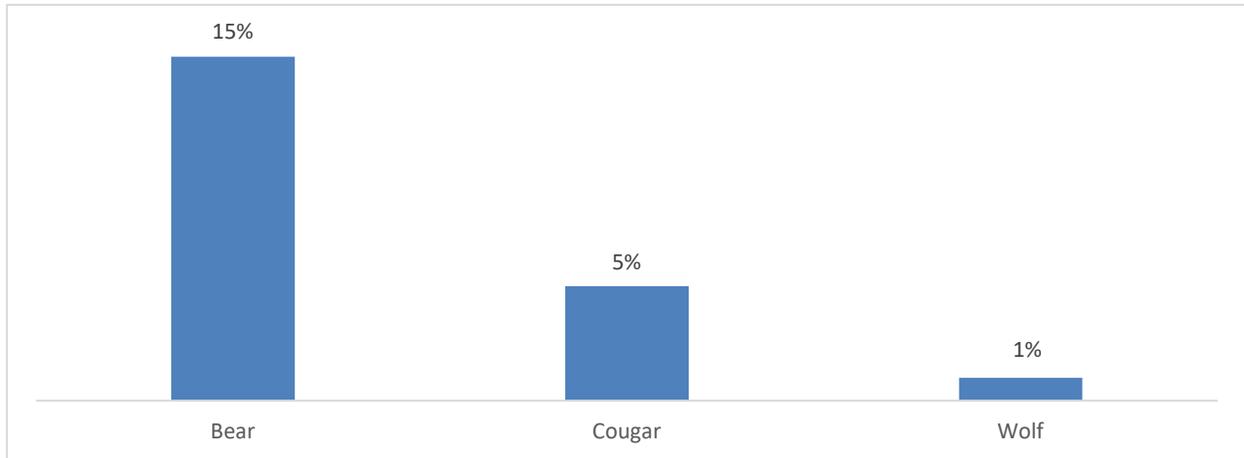


Figure 41: Respondents' sighting of cougars, bears and/or wolves in East Sooke Regional Park.

QUESTION 21: WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO PREPARE FOR POSSIBLY ENCOUNTERING COUGARS, BEARS AND/OR WOLVES?

Slightly more than half of survey respondents (51%) stated that they read information signs about large carnivores in the park, while 53% stated that they travel in groups.

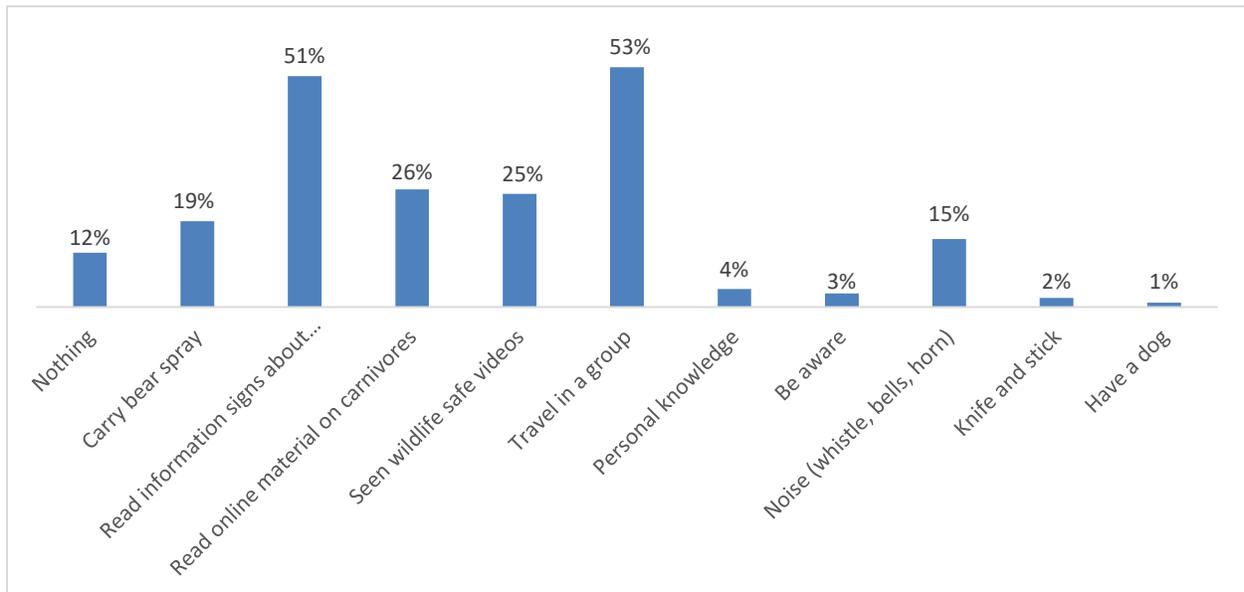


Figure 42: Breakdown of respondents' preparedness for encountering carnivores in East Sooke Regional Park.

QUESTION 22: IN WHICH AGE CATEGORY DO YOU FALL?

Respondents to the survey were distributed similarly between the age categories 25-65+. There was low input to the survey from youth and younger adults.

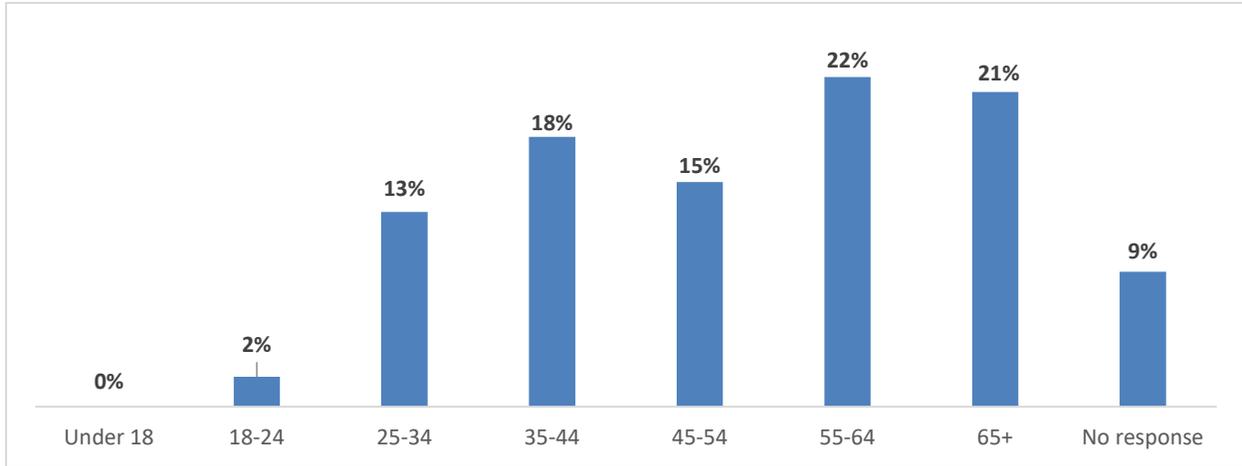


Figure 43: Breakdown of respondents' age categories.

QUESTION 23: WHICH MODE OF TRANSPORTATION DO YOU USUALLY USE TO ARRIVE TO EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK?

The majority of survey respondents (94%) arrive to the park by motor vehicle.

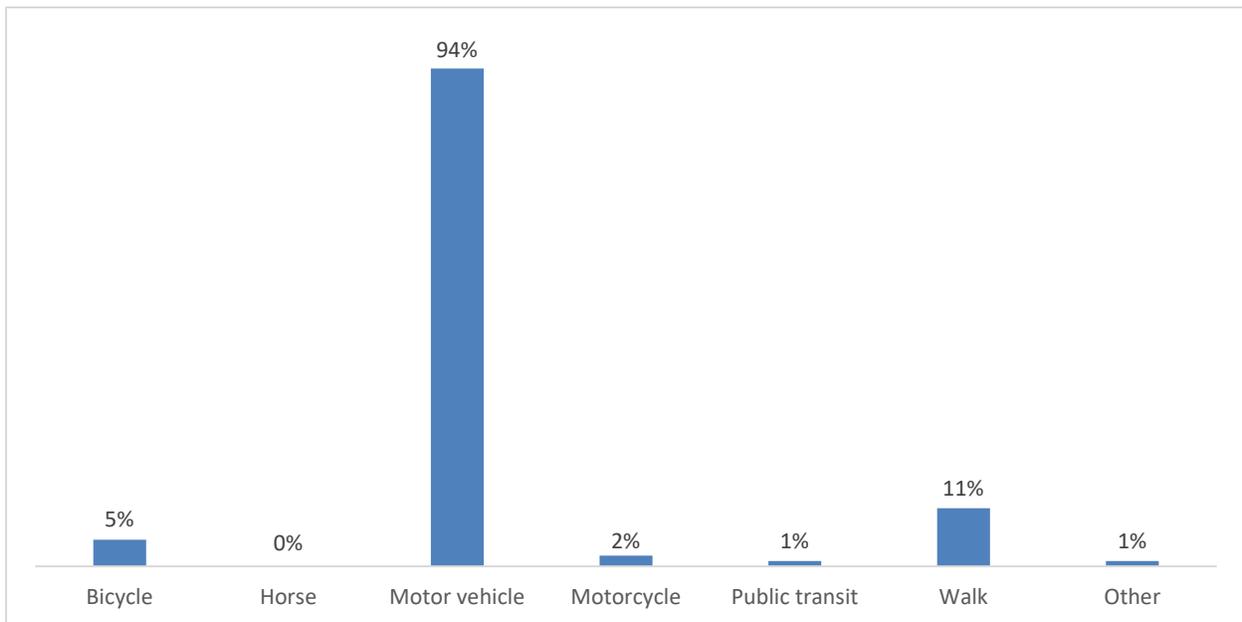


Figure 44: Respondents' mode of transportation to East Sooke Regional Park.

QUESTION 24: WHICH PARKING LOT DO YOU USE THE MOST WHEN VISITING EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK?

The majority of survey respondents most frequently use the parking lot at Aylard Farm (69%) when visiting the park.

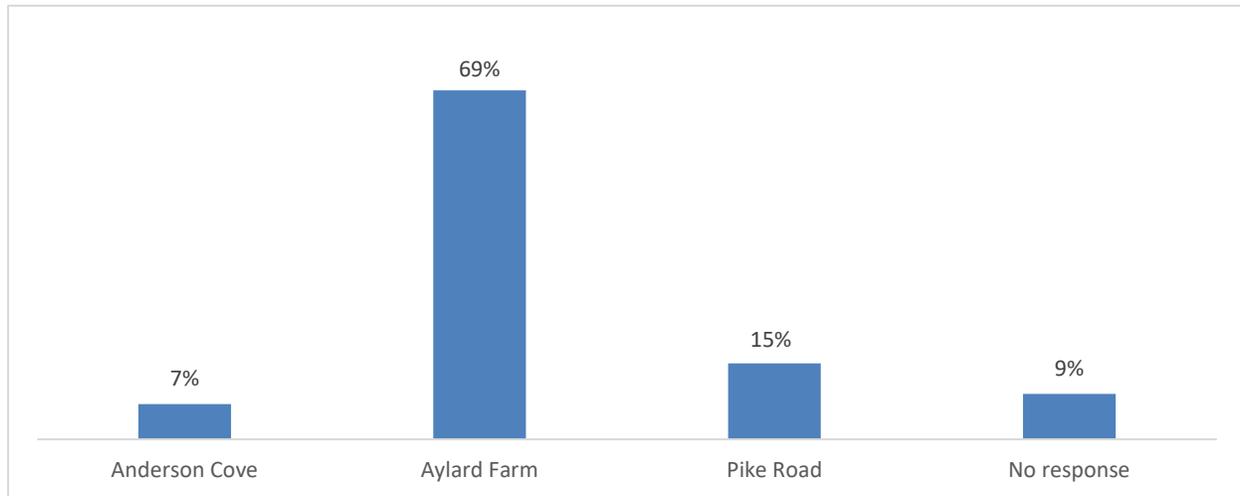


Figure 45: Respondents’ use of parking lots when visiting East Sooke Regional Park.

QUESTION 25: WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

Survey respondents come to the park from throughout the capital region, but the highest percentage come from the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area, Metchosin, and Sooke (40% combined), with Saanich and Victoria coming in second (31% combined).

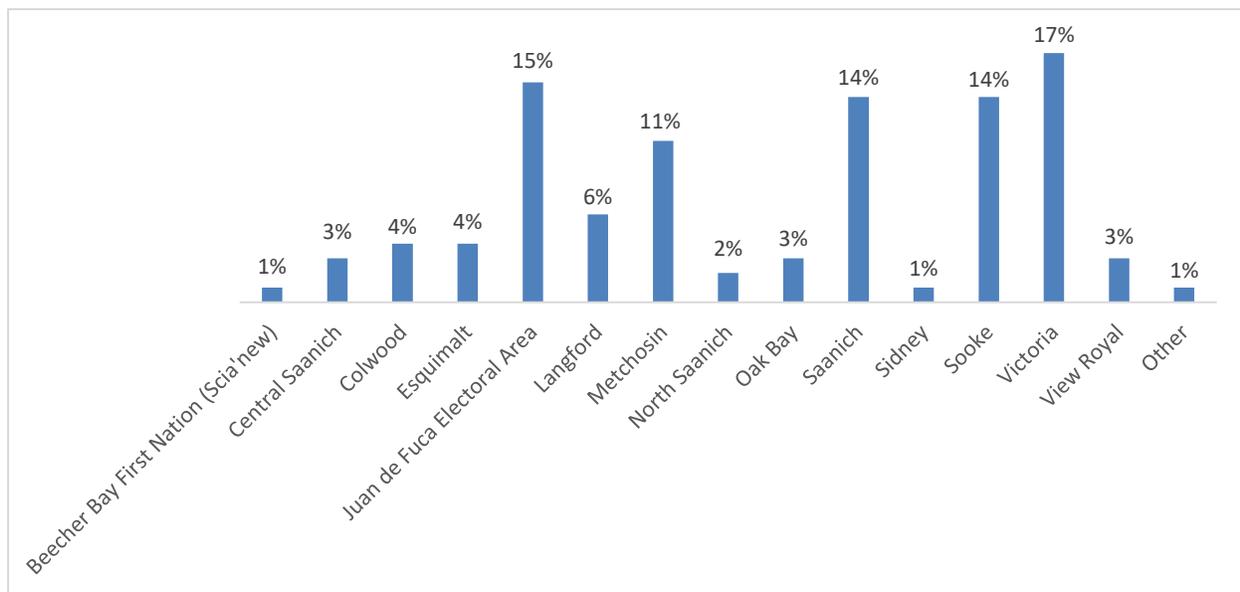


Figure 46: Breakdown of where park visitors live.

QUESTION 26: WITH WHOM DO YOU USUALLY VISIT EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK?

The majority of park visitors come to the park with family or friends (82%).

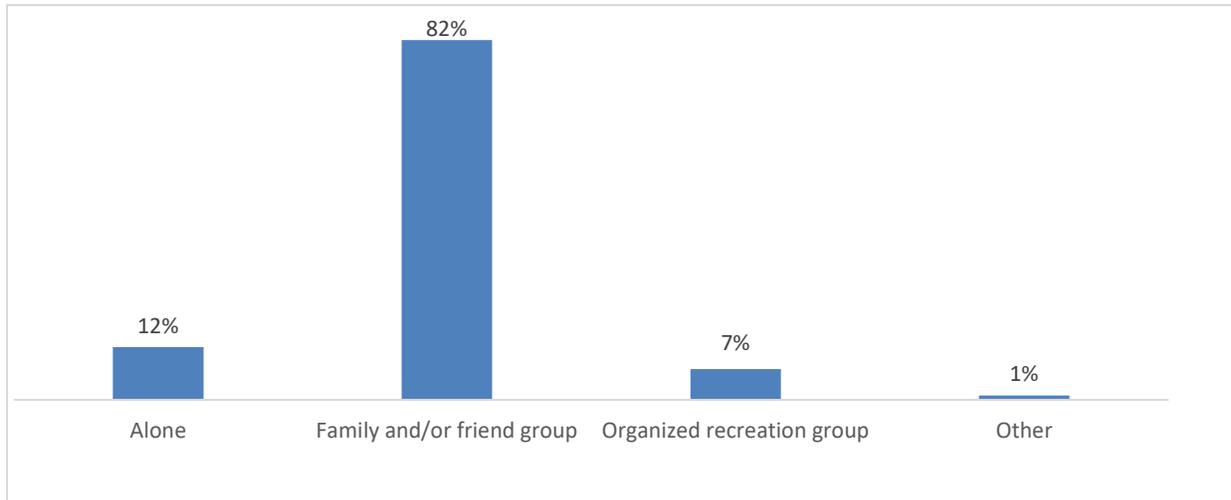


Figure 47: Breakdown of who visitors come to East Sooke Regional Park with.

QUESTION 27: WHAT IS THE MAIN SOURCE OF INFORMATION YOU USE TO FIND OUT ABOUT EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK?

Survey respondents use a variety of information sources to find out about the park, but the most common sources are the CRD website (51%), family and friends (36%), and word of mouth (33%).

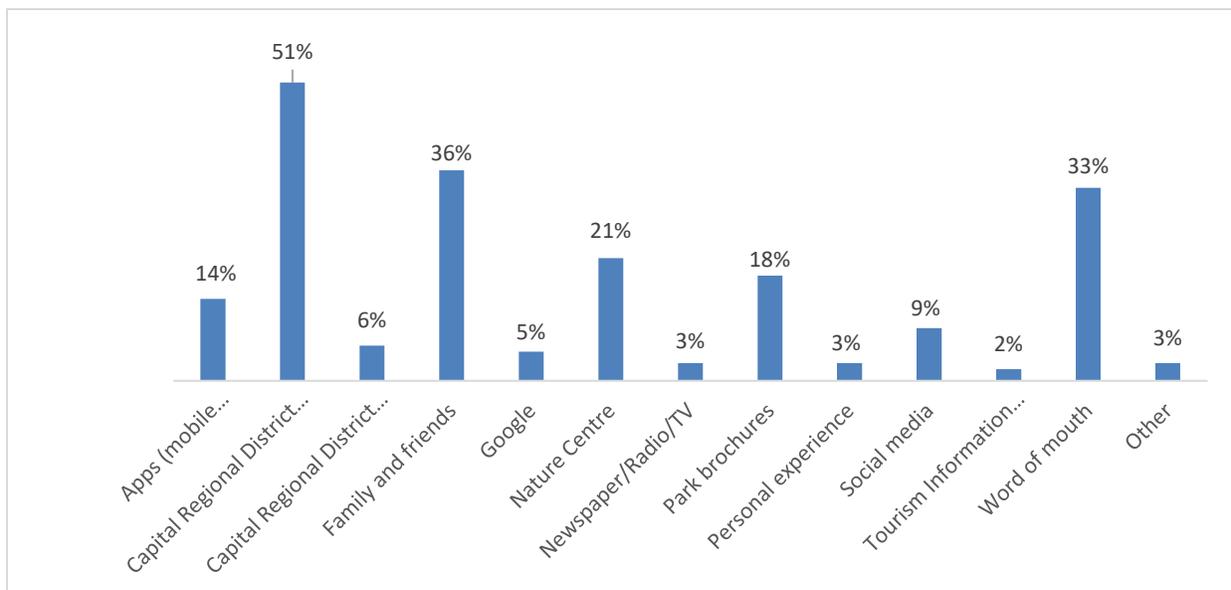


Figure 48: Breakdown of main sources of information to find out about East Sooke Regional Park.

QUESTION 28: DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER COMMENTS ABOUT EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK?

A total of 494 qualitative comments were provided by respondents to the open-ended question asking if there were any other comments about East Sooke Regional Park. Each comment entailed multiple themes.

The most mentioned themes were:

- **Experiences**: keep the park natural; don't change anything about the park; keep the park wild and pristine; keep the park as it is and do not commercialize or over-develop it; protect the petroglyphs at Beechey Head; honour First Nations culture in the park; do not let increasing numbers of people ruin the park; protect this beautiful park at all costs.
- **Outdoor recreation**: ban dogs or require them to be leashed in the park; continue to maintain dogs under control in the park; do not allow mountain biking or camping in the park—there are better places for those activities; consider allowing some mountain biking and backcountry camping in the park; keep the trail system rugged and challenging, in line with the wilderness designation; manage the trails by Aylard Farm to improve accessibility and higher visitor use; rebuild unsafe sections of the Coast Trail.
- **Natural environment**: protect the park's sensitive ecosystems; remove invasive species; provide more interpretation and education about the park's natural environment; educate new people about how to respectfully visit the park; protect seasonal migratory birds that stop-over in the park; ensure that the park is a place where flora and fauna can thrive; maintain landscape connectivity and intactness; protect habitat for large carnivores.
- **Facilities**: require dog owners to pick up dog feces and deposit them in garbage cans; install more restrooms to cut down on human feces in the park; improve the parking situation at Aylard Farm; improve the road into Aylard Farm; maintain park facilities and keep washrooms clean and garbage cans emptied; install better signs and maps on the trails; bring back printed brochures to prevent roaming charges (USA) when navigating by phone in the park; post signs about cougar or bear sightings; do not put gravel on park trails.
- **Accessibility**: consider a shuttle between the Aylard Farm and Pike Road entrances so people can hike the Coast Trail end-to-end; work with BC Transit to get bus access to the park; keep Aylard Farm accessible to everyone; consider some improvements to parking at secondary entrances to the park; work with park neighbors on parking and access issues; do not expect all areas of the park to be accessible to everyone—only Aylard Farm and the Pike Road Trail.

Appendix E – Online Survey Methodology

Methods

A survey with 28 questions focused on visitor use patterns, respondents' opinions, and management directions related to East Sooke Regional Park was available on the CRD website from August 17 to September 18, 2020. The questionnaire was designed to take 15-25 minutes to complete.

Some survey questions had multiple statements to be answered. Close-ended questions were measured through a five-point rating scale ranging from strongly support/completely satisfied to strongly oppose/not-at-all satisfied or by offering pre-determined categories. Close-ended questions were used to reduce the response burden for participants. Open-ended questions were also included to allow respondents to offer additional comments and clarify their responses, if they wished. Questions about participants' demographic characteristics (i.e., age, residency) were also added to the questionnaire.

Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0 (IBM 2017) was used to analyze descriptive statistics, which are reported as percentages for all quantitative questions of the survey. To analyze the qualitative comments provided by participants in a replicable and systematic manner, content analysis was performed. Specifically, all qualitative data were categorized using codes, which enabled the ability to identify code themes and response patterns. Both dimensions of a content analysis, quantitative (focused on counting and measuring) and qualitative (focused on interpreting and understanding), were used to offer insights on respondents' opinions about the East Sooke Regional Park Management Plan.

Rationale

It is important to acknowledge that the aim of the survey was to offer an easy to access venue for the public to voice their opinions about what should be considered when drafting the East Sooke Regional Park Management Plan. The information obtained through this participation tool is not intended to be representative of the whole population of the island or the capital region. Hence, the data reported in this document will not be generalized to the broader population.

The survey was used to ensure that insights, concerns and experiences of participants interested in the East Sooke Regional Park management plan dialogue are documented and considered. The information retrieved through this participatory tool complement the insights provided by the other engagement approaches reported in this document. The data in this report should therefore be interpreted in conjunction with the overall engagement process outcomes.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act & Privacy Impact Assessment

All responses in the survey were voluntary, thus participants had the freedom to skip any question they did not wish to answer. All information was collected in compliance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (see <https://www.crd.bc.ca/freedom-of-information>). A Privacy Impact Assessment (CRD PIA #20-018) was developed for this project to ensure research involving humans was conducted in compliance with ethics and local legislation.

Matheson Lake & Roche Cove Regional Parks

Management Plan Initial Engagement Report

Capital Regional District | February 2021



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1. Executive Summary

The Capital Regional District (CRD) Board initiated three regional park management planning processes in May 2020 for East Sooke, Mount Work and Matheson Lake/Roche Cove regional parks. The project scope and engagement process for the Matheson Lake and Roche Cove Regional Parks Management Plan were provided to the Board in June 2020 and the project was started thereafter.

Two rounds of engagement opportunities are scheduled as part of the preparation of the park management plan for Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks. The aim of the engagement process is to inform First Nations, stakeholder groups and the public about the park management planning process; to seek input and information from affected individuals and groups; and to discuss various interests and ideas about these lands. This report includes a summary of the first round of engagement completed and responses received.

First Nations, stakeholders and the public were notified of opportunities for engagement. An online survey was available from August 17-September 18, 2020 and meetings and interviews were held between July and November 2020, with First Nations, government agencies and stakeholder groups.

Initial conversations have taken place with T'Sou-ke and Scia'new First Nations and the CRD is looking forward to further dialogue and building a government to government relationship. Meetings were also held with seven government agencies. Two interviews were conducted with stakeholder groups holding a park-related tenure or agreement, and eight interviews were held with stakeholder groups representing local conservation, recreation or service delivery interests in the parks. Agencies with specific expertise also provided information relevant to the park management planning process. Additionally, 495 online survey responses and 17 written comments were received from the public and interest groups.

2. Introduction

Regional Parks is developing a joint management plan for Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks. In May 2020, the CRD Board approved initiation of the planning process for these parks, as well as for East Sooke and Mount Work regional parks. The project scope and engagement process were accepted by the Board on June 24, 2020. Public, stakeholder and First Nations engagement was undertaken through the summer and fall of 2020. Feedback from the initial engagement period is summarized in this report and will be used to inform the next step of drafting the management plan. A second round of engagement will be undertaken upon completion of the draft plan.

3. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to summarize the initial engagement process and to highlight responses and key themes received related to the development of a management plan for Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks. Although many of the opportunities for engagement were combined with the East Sooke Regional Park management planning process due to the proximity of the parks and the concurrent planning processes, this report only summarizes the engagement process for Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

4. Engagement Period

The engagement process accepted by the CRD Board in June 2020 includes two rounds of engagement opportunities scheduled as part of the preparation of the park management plan for Roche Cove and Matheson Lake regional parks. This report includes a summary of the initial engagement activities completed and responses received until the end of January 2021.

The first round of First Nations, stakeholder and public engagement for the development of the Matheson Lake and Roche Cove Regional Parks Management Plan commenced in June 2020 with the launch of a project webpage. Communication materials were prepared and circulated between June and September 2020. An online survey was available on the CRD website from August 17-September 18, 2020. Interviews and meetings occurred between June 2020 and January 2021.

5. Focus of Engagement

CRD Regional Parks is committed to involving First Nations, stakeholders and the public in the development of park management plans. The aim of the engagement process is to inform First Nations, stakeholder groups and the public about the park management planning process for Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks, to seek input and information from affected individuals and groups, and to discuss interests and ideas to assist Regional Parks with future decision making about these lands. Other goals of the engagement process include information sharing, dialogue and discussion, building ongoing

relationships, developing understanding and trust, and producing management plans that reflect organizational needs and public interests.

The initial engagement process allows interested community members to actively contribute to the planning for a park before the plan is written. Initial engagement is one of the early steps in the planning process and is used to gather traditional and local knowledge about the parks, learn what is important to people, identify issues and seek a range of suggestions for what should be considered in developing the park management plan.

6. Who Was Engaged

6.1. First Nations

The Scia'new and T'Sou-ke First Nations have been invited to participate in the management planning process, as Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks are part of the Nations' traditional territories and expressed area of interest. Initial conversations have taken place with each Nation and the CRD is looking forward to further dialogue and building a government-to-government relationship.

6.2. Government Agencies

Various government agencies with direct or overarching jurisdiction, or a related interest in the parks, have been invited to provide input and expertise in the management plan. These include: the District of Sooke; District of Metchosin; the CRD Juan de Fuca Electoral Area; BC Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development; BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (TRAN); and BC Transit. These agencies received written notification of the project, and a request for an interview or provide relevant information.

6.3. Stakeholders

Stakeholders are groups with park-related tenures or agreements, or individuals and groups with higher degrees of interests or expertise in the parks, their environment and their management.

Stakeholders with direct park-related tenures or agreements were contacted in writing requesting their participation in the management planning process. These stakeholders include: the Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC, which manages the fishery stocking program; the Mt. Matheson Conservation Society, which holds a statutory right of way with the CRD on community trail access from Cains Way; and the Sooke Salmon Enhancement Society, which holds the rights to Matheson Dam.

Groups known by Regional Parks to be actively involved in local conservation, recreation and service delivery, or groups recommended by other stakeholders, were selected to provide input through interviews. These groups include: Coexisting with Carnivores Alliance; Habitat Acquisition Trust; Rocky Point Bird Observatory; the Land Conservancy of BC; Juan de Fuca Search and Rescue; Juan de Fuca

Emergency Program; Metchosin Search and Rescue; Sooke Bike Club; Metchosin Equestrian Society; South Island Climbing Association; South Island Mountain Bike Association; and the Greater Victoria Cycling Coalition.

Stakeholders with specific expertise related to the parks were contacted to provide relevant information. These groups or individuals were selected from existing contact lists, and other public agency networks such as: BC Conservation Officer Service; CRD Volunteer Park Stewards; Sooke Region Museum and Visitor Centre; and relevant CRD departments.

6.4. User Groups

A broad range of user groups known by Regional Parks that may have an interest in the park management plan project were selected to be notified by email about the engagement process and opportunities for input. The identified user groups were selected from a contact list maintained by Regional Parks based on whether they have a local or regional scale focus, represent a recreation, conservation, youth, or accessibility interest, and are currently active. Private businesses were not selected to be contacted; however, park permit holders and individuals requesting to be updated about the project have been added to the selected list. The list currently includes approximately 75 contacts and will be added to upon request. For protection of privacy reasons, the list has not been included in this report.

6.5. General Public

The general public in the CRD were notified of the park management plan project and opportunities on how to provide input. Park neighbours, including property owners and occupants within 300 metres of the park boundary, were also directly notified of the project. Park visitors and residents of the surrounding communities of East Sooke, Metchosin and Sooke were also notified.

7. Engagement Methods

The project scope and engagement process for the Matheson Lake and Roche Cove Regional Parks Management Plan were approved by the CRD Board in June 2020. A number of tools and approaches were used to engage First Nations, public, user groups, stakeholders, and agencies in the project. The following sections describe in more detail the engagement methods used to inform the public about the project, to gather information, views and opinions, and to discuss stakeholder interests.

7.1. Website

A project webpage was established on the CRD website in June 2020 and will be updated for the duration of the management planning project (www.crd.bc.ca/project/roche-cove-and-matheson-lake-management-plan). The webpage includes an overview of the management planning process, the

current status of the plan, opportunities for engagement and staff contact information. Information about the parks is also included.

Between June 22, 2020 and January 11, 2021, there were 1,060 number of visits to the project webpage.

7.2. Online Survey

An online survey was made available through a link on the project webpage and on the CRD website from August 17 to September 18, 2020. The survey included 26 questions with both quantitative and qualitative responses. To accompany the survey, an information booklet was also posted on the project webpage that provided additional context about the management planning process, an overview of the park’s environmental features, cultural heritage, visitor uses, and direction to the project webpage and survey. Options were made available for completing the survey by phone or in writing.

7.3. Letters/Emails

Direct written outreach, by letter and email was sent to First Nations, government agencies, stakeholders, user groups and the public informing them of the project and opportunities for input.

Eight letters were sent to First Nations, government agencies and stakeholder groups with a direct interest in the parks, such as a tenure or agreement. There were 696 letters mailed to park neighbours (Appendix A). Email notices were sent to approximately 75 user groups plus 20 stakeholders with specific interest or expertise related to the parks.

7.4. Social Media

Social media posts were made on the CRD’s Facebook and Twitter accounts during August and September 2020, directing people to the project webpage and online survey. These posts went out to 6,623 followers on Twitter and 3,607 followers on Facebook.

Facebook ads were boosted throughout the survey process, with a link to the project webpage to complete the online survey. The targeted demographic for these ads were people living in the region aged 18-65+. Table 1 outlines the level of engagement with the Facebook ads.

Facebook Ads			
Dates	Reach	Post Engagements*	Link Clicks
August 18 - 22	6,722	414	108
September 1 - 5	8,536	596	71
September 8 - 12	5,112	439	36
September 14-18	7,330	499	53
Totals:	27,700	1,948	268

Table 1: Facebook Ads (**Post engagements refer to someone liking, sharing, commenting on or otherwise engaging with the post.*)

7.5. Advertising

A media release was issued by the CRD on August 18, 2020 outlining the management planning process and encouraging the public to complete the online survey. Multiple news outlets received the media release. An article was published in the Times Colonist on August 18, 2020.

Print ads were published in multiple newspapers during August and September 2020, while the online survey was available. The ads directed readers to the project webpage to complete the online survey. Ads were posted in the *Goldstream News Gazette* and *Saanich News* on September 9 and 16, 2020 and September 10 and 17, 2020 in the Victoria News (Appendix B).

Posters were placed at various entrances to Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks notifying park visitors about the management planning process and directing them to the webpage and online survey.

Postcards were mailed to approximately 2,500 residents in East Sooke, Metchosin and Sooke on August 20, 2020. The postcards directed recipients to the project webpage and informed them of the opportunity to complete the online survey (Appendix C).

7.6. Community Events

Staff hosted a booth at the Sooke Night Market on September 3, 2020 from 5-8 pm. The event provided an opportunity to set-up displays about the park management planning process and to speak with the public about opportunities for input, such as the online survey. Staff engaged directly with approximately 50 people.

7.7. Interviews and Meetings

Meetings were requested with T'Sou-ke and Scia'new First Nations, government agencies, and stakeholders with direct interest in the parks to share relevant information and to discuss ideas and issues pertaining to management of the lands.

Two online meetings were held with T'Sou-ke First Nation Leadership in July and October 2020. One online meeting was held with Scia'new First Nation Leadership in May 2020. Additional contact has been made by phone and email with both T'Sou-ke and Scia'new First Nations between June–October 2020 to check in and to facilitate opportunities for future meetings.

A meeting with representatives from each local government agency having jurisdiction in the parks was held, which included: District of Sooke, District of Metchosin, and the CRD Juan de Fuca Electoral Area.

Interviews were also requested with provincial government agencies having related interest or expertise related to the parks. Four interviews were conducted. All others contacted for interviews declined or did not respond to the request.

Interviews were requested with 14 stakeholder groups deemed to have local or specific interest in the parks, or at the recommendation of other key stakeholders. Five interviews were conducted with recreation-oriented stakeholder groups and two interviews were held with conservation-oriented stakeholder groups, and comments were received from one service provider. All others contacted for interviews declined or did not respond to the request.

Interviews were held with ten individuals or groups perceived to have expertise or direct knowledge relating to management of the parks, such as: CRD Volunteer Park Stewards, BC Conservation Officer Service, the Sooke Region Museum and Visitor Centre, and relevant CRD departments.

8. Limitations

The management planning process for Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks was initiated in May 2020 at the same time as the management planning processes for both East Sooke and Mount Work regional parks. While synergies and efficiencies were realized by launching the three projects together, it is possible that levels of engagement were affected by multiple planning processes occurring along the same timeline.

The Galloping Goose Regional Trail (GGRT) bisects Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks but is regulated by the Regional Trails Management Plan and is therefore not within the scope of the park management planning project. Participants may have provided input related to management of the GGRT that cannot be directly considered as part of the management plan.

Significant limitations to in-person engagement were experienced due to COVID-19 public safety measures. A COVID-19 Safety Plan was prepared and approved in September 2020 outlining protocols for in-person engagement. While one opportunity to host a booth at a community market was realized, many of the typical community events and open houses utilized during a management planning process were not feasible.

Technological tools were heavily relied on during this initial round of engagement due to COVID-19 public safety measures. Lack of access to, and knowledge of, technology can be a limitation to those wishing to participate. Communication materials offered alternatives to participating online, such as by phone or mail.

Finally, the project timeline and allocated resources constrain the project to an extent. Although the timeline for engagement spanned the summer months, when many are on vacation or have other priorities, opportunity for completing the online survey was available into September 2020 and meetings

and interviews have been accommodated throughout the summer and fall of 2020. Project financial expenditures were primarily focused on advertising, however, cost savings were realized by combining promotional material with the East Sooke Regional Park management planning process.

9. Responses

The following is a summary of the responses received through the initial engagement process.

9.1. First Nations

Both Scia'new and T'Sou-ke First Nations stated they have a strong interest in these parks in regard to the historical importance and current connection to their cultures. There was a recognition of traditional cultural use in parks and an interest in finding ways to highlight that connection in public education and information. Both Nations stated a strong desire to protect archaeological and cultural resources in the parks. High-level aspirations for future protection of lands and resources and for identifying ways to be involved in the parks were noted by both Nations, including employment, restoration, monitoring, continuation of harvesting and education. All parties stated an interest in continuing to find ways to work together to protect the lands for future generations and to maintain the cultural connection to homelands.

9.2. Government

Staff and elected officials from three local governments, three provincial government departments within BC Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, and BC Transit responded to the request to provide information and ideas. Responses include comments relating to the following topics:

- **Natural environment:** a need for environmental protection and monitoring; removal of invasive species; negative impacts from increased visitation.
- **Social context:** protection and education of cultural heritage values; safety issues (Gillespie Road crossing); conflict between users (dogs, cyclists).
- **Facilities:** increased visitation puts pressure on facilities and maintenance; planned future expansion of transit routes would service both parks.
- **Land management:** opportunities for land acquisition and connectivity of protected areas; access to water is steep and rocky; risk of wildfire; need for coordinated emergency response protocols; need for increased and consistent enforcement (alcohol, dog management).

9.3. Stakeholders

Interviews were conducted with stakeholder groups holding a park-related tenure or agreement, including the Freshwater Fisheries Society and Mt. Matheson Conservation Society. Highlights from these responses include:

- **Natural environment:** maintain lake quality and aquatic habitat; remove invasive species.
- **Social context:** expand opportunities and programs for recreational fishing.
- **Facilities:** improve access to the lake.
- **Land management:** explore connectivity and land acquisition in vicinity of the parks; improve safety and emergency response.

Eight stakeholder groups having local conservation, recreation or service delivery interest in the parks were interviewed, which included: Habitat Acquisition Trust, Coexisting with Carnivores, Metchosin Search and Rescue, Metchosin Equestrian Society, South Island Climbing Association, Sooke Bike Club, South Island Mountain Bike Association, and Greater Victoria Cycling Coalition. The following summarizes the responses received:

- **Natural environment:** increased visitation and development pressures are impacting habitat.
- **Social context:** conflicts between users, especially on Galloping Goose Regional Trail (dog management); support for local accesses to parks; encourage modes of alternative transportation to access parks; tendency for unauthorized trail building to occur if recreational demand is not met; desire for mountain biking opportunities (especially beginner and family-oriented); recognize rock climbing destinations in parks; allow continued equestrian access.
- **Facilities:** improve signage; mark unofficial trails; trail condition is poor in many locations (erosion, lack of drainage).
- **Land management:** risk of wildfire; establish emergency response protocols; safety concerns (specifically at Roche Cove/Galloping Goose Regional Trail/Gillespie Road); volunteer groups are willing to partner but have limited resources.

Groups and individuals with specific knowledge or expertise related to the parks were interviewed, including: CRD Volunteer Park Stewards, Conservation Officer Service, Sooke Region Museum, and staff from relevant CRD departments. Responses are summarized as follows:

- **Natural environment:** increased visitation and development pressures impacting habitat; maintain/improve lake quality; conduct an inventory of plant and animals in parks; habitat for carnivores.
- **Social context:** determine which unofficial trails should be official; opportunities for educational programs; acknowledge rich cultural heritage; limit wildlife conflicts (education, signage, dog management, garbage facilities).
- **Facilities:** address trail maintenance issues (erosion, drainage), improve signage.
- **Land management:** safety concerns (specifically at Roche Cove/Galloping Goose Regional Trail/Gillespie Road); provide emergency response accesses.

9.4. Public and User Groups

9.4.1. Public comments

Comments were received from 17 residents and user groups. The main themes reflected in the comments include:

- **Natural environment**: pressures from increased visitation.
- **Social context**: desire for more mountain biking opportunities, conflicts between users (increased visitation, dog management).
- **Facilities**: improve signage, overflow parking issues on rural roads.
- **Land management**: wildfire risk, dog management.

9.4.2. Online survey

A 26-question online survey was available through the project webpage and highlighted on the CRD website from August 17 to September 18, 2020. A total of 495 online surveys were completed and submitted. The majority of respondents were above age 55 and most were residents of Metchosin. Details on survey methodology is provided in Appendix D. Response analysis of the online survey is provided in Appendix E. The main themes reflected in the comments include:

- **Natural environment**: keep the parks pristine, wild and beautiful; protect rich natural habitat and the variety of plants and wildlife.
- **Social context**: support for the variety of trails; the parks offer an appropriate level of recreational opportunities (primarily hiking, swimming, dog walking and cycling); accessible to community and to a range of abilities; highlight cultural heritage.
- **Facilities**: rustic trails; crowded parking; need for more washrooms.
- **Land management**: address environmental degradation, erosion and invasive species; improve trail maintenance and signage; pressure from increased visitation (overcrowding) and conflicts between user groups; desire for mountain biking opportunities; improve access to lake; address dog management issues; increase enforcement and improve etiquette messaging; expand park boundaries.

10. Conclusion

The initial public engagement for Matheson Lake and Roche Cove Regional Parks Management Plan commenced in June 2020. A variety of methods were used to engage with First Nations, stakeholders and the public, which included advertising, an online survey, meetings and interviews. Input has been received from T'Sou-ke and Scia'new First Nations, government agencies, a wide range of stakeholders, and over 500 members of the public. Comments received as part of the initial engagement process will help inform the preparation of a draft management plan for Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks. A second engagement opportunity will be provided on the draft plan.

Appendix A – Letter to Neighbours



Regional Parks
490 Alkins Avenue
Victoria, BC V9B 2Z8

T: 250.478.3344
F: 250.478.5416
www.crd.bc.ca/parks

FILE COPY

August 13, 2020

File: 6130-30

Dear Park Neighbor:

RE: PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN DEVELOPMENT FOR EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK AND ROCHE COVE & MATHESON LAKE REGIONAL PARKS

The Capital Regional District (CRD) recently initiated projects to develop a park management plan for East Sooke Regional Park and for Roche Cove and Matheson Lake regional parks. As a neighbor to these parks, the CRD invites you to participate in the park management planning process. Please see the attached map showing the locations of the three regional parks.

The CRD public engagement process provides two key opportunities to provide input through the planning process. First, we are interested in receiving information and suggestions from the public before the management plans are drafted. To collect that information, park specific comment forms will be posted to the project webpages between August 17 and September 18, 2020.

The project team will consider all input received as we begin drafting the park management plans in early 2021. We anticipate that the draft management plans will be completed in summer 2021. At that time, another review and comment opportunity will be provided. Depending on the circumstances surrounding COVID-19, a decision will be made about whether we can also host in-person meetings to discuss the draft management plans.

We invite you to participate in one or both of these park management planning processes. Please feel free to pass this information on to others whom you think might be interested in being involved.

For up to date information please visit the project webpages at:

East Sooke Regional Park: <https://www.crd.bc.ca/project/east-sooke-management-plan>.

Roche Cove & Matheson Lake: <https://www.crd.bc.ca/project/roche-cove-and-matheson-lake-management-plan>

If you have any questions or are interested in receiving additional information about the processes please contact the following:

East Sooke Regional Park - Lynn at 250.360.3369 or lwilson@crd.bc.ca

Roche Cove and Matheson Lake regional parks - Emma at 250.642.8102 or etaylor@crd.bc.ca

Sincerely,

Emma Taylor
Park Planner

Lynn Wilson
Park Planner



Appendix B – Print Ad



PROVIDE YOUR INPUT

East Sooke, Roche Cove & Matheson Lake Regional Parks

The Capital Regional District (CRD) is preparing management plans for East Sooke, Roche Cove and Matheson Lake regional parks. These plans will provide strategic guidance for on-going management of these parks for the next 15-20 years.

The CRD is gathering initial input from the public on their interests, ideas and concerns. On-line comment forms will be available on the CRD website. Your suggestions will be considered in developing the draft management plans. Once the plans are drafted, they will be posted online for public review.

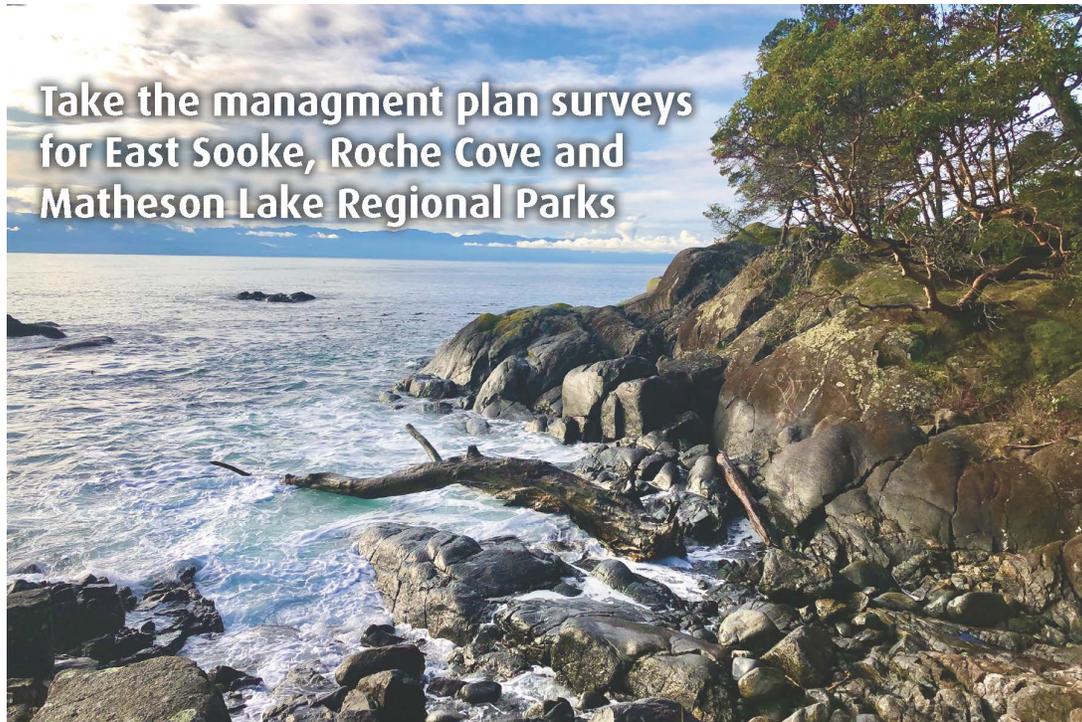
Provide your initial input online between August 17 - September 18, 2020.

www.crd.bc.ca/eastsooke-plan

www.crd.bc.ca/roche-matheson-plan



Appendix C – Postcard



Take the CRD Regional Parks Survey!

Help us plan for the future of East Sooke, Roche Cove and Matheson Lake regional parks

By completing the survey you are helping the CRD to establish a vision and objectives for managing the parks and to understand priorities for environmental conservation, cultural heritage protection, recreation and facilities.

The deadline to complete the survey is September 18, 2020

www.crd.bc.ca



Appendix D – Online Survey Methodology Methods

A survey with 26 questions focused on visitor use patterns, respondents' opinions, and management directions related to Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks was available on the CRD website from August 17 to September 18, 2020. The questionnaire was designed to take 15-25 minutes to complete.

Some survey questions had multiple statements to be completed. Close-ended questions were measured through a five-point rating scale ranging from strongly support/completely satisfied to strongly oppose/not at all satisfied or by offering pre-determined categories. Close-ended questions were used to reduce the response burden for participants. Open-ended questions were also included to allow respondents to offer additional comments and clarify their responses, if they wished. Questions about participants' demographic characteristics (i.e., age, residency) were also added to the questionnaire.

Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0 (IBM 2017) was used to analyze descriptive statistics, which are reported as a percentage for all quantitative questions of the survey. To analyze the qualitative comments provided by participants in a replicable and systematic manner, content analysis was performed. Specifically, all qualitative data were categorized using codes, which allowed identifying code themes and response patterns. Both dimensions of a content analysis, quantitative (focused on counting and measuring) and qualitative (focused on interpreting and understanding) were used to offer insights on respondents' opinions about the Matheson Lake and Roche Cove Management Plan.

Rationale

It is important to acknowledge that the aim of the survey was to offer an easy to access venue for the public to voice their opinions about what should be considered when drafting the Matheson Lake and Roche Cove Management Plan. The information obtained through this participation tool is not intended to be representative of the whole population of the island or the capital region. Hence, the data reported in this document will not be generalized to the broader population.

The survey was used to ensure that insights, concerns and experiences of participants interested in the Matheson Lake and Roche Cove management plan dialogue are documented and considered. The information retrieved through this participatory tool complement the insights provided by the other engagement approaches reported in this document. The data in this report should therefore be interpreted in conjunction with the overall engagement process outcomes.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and Privacy Impact Assessment

All responses in the survey were voluntary, thus participants had the freedom to skip any question they did not wish to answer. All information was collected in compliance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (see <https://www.crd.bc.ca/freedom-of-information>). A Privacy Impact Assessment (CRD PIA #20-018) was developed for this project to ensure research involving humans was conducted in compliance with ethics and local legislation.

Appendix E – Online Survey Responses

A total of 495 online surveys were filled out between August 17 and September 18, 2020. Below is a summary of the online survey responses.

Section 1: Parks Values

QUESTION 1: WHAT MAKES MATHESON LAKE AND ROCHE COVE REGIONAL PARKS IMPORTANT TO YOU?

A total of 454 qualitative comments were provided by respondents to the open-ended question about the importance of Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks to them. Each comment entailed multiple themes.

The most mentioned themes were:

- **Experiences:** respondents described experiencing the parks as pristine, wild and rugged, with beautiful sceneries, and with few people. Quietness and solitude were also mentioned as an important feature of their experience in such parks (Figure 2).
- **Outdoor recreation:** respondents mentioned the importance of a series of recreational opportunities (i.e., hiking/walking, swimming, the beach and biking) and valued the variety of rustic and connected trails present in the parks (Figure 3).
- **Natural environment:** respondents valued the richness in natural habitats (i.e., lake, ocean, forest), plants and wildlife that both parks offer (Figure 4).
- **Accessibility:** respondents noted the parks were close to home, the city, and easy to access (i.e., connection to Galloping Goose, easy to walk) (Figure 5).

The qualitative responses were coded to identify emerging themes and then quantified to evaluate their relevance. Below is a breakdown of the themes extracted from this qualitative question.

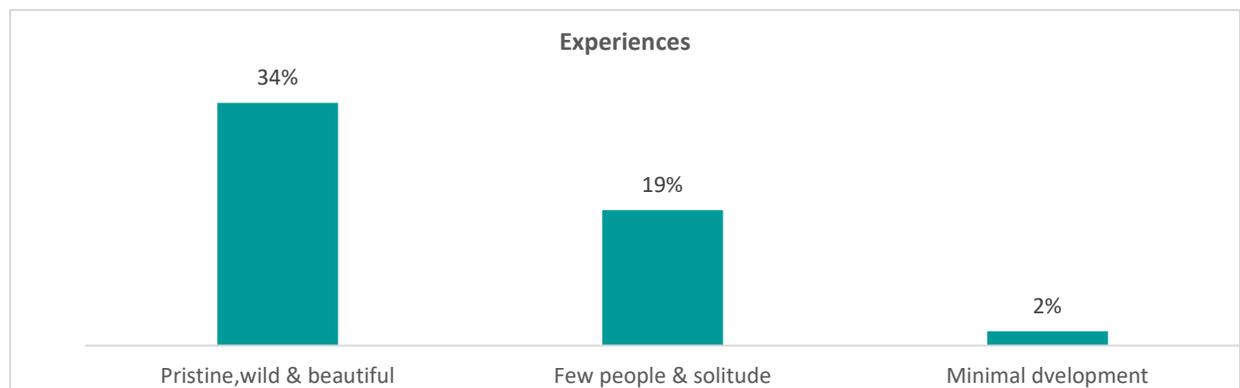


Figure 1: Reasons mentioned by respondents when referring to the importance of their **experience** in Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.



Figure 2: Reasons mentioned by respondents when referring to the importance of **outdoor recreation opportunities** in Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

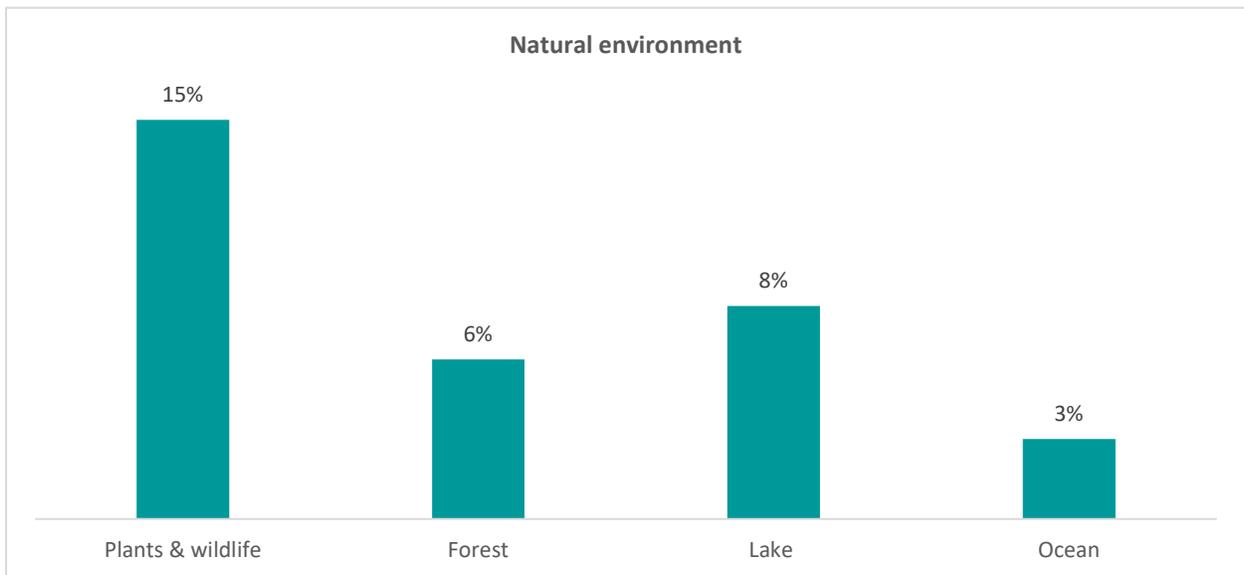


Figure 3: Reasons mentioned by respondents when referring to the importance of the **natural environment** at Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

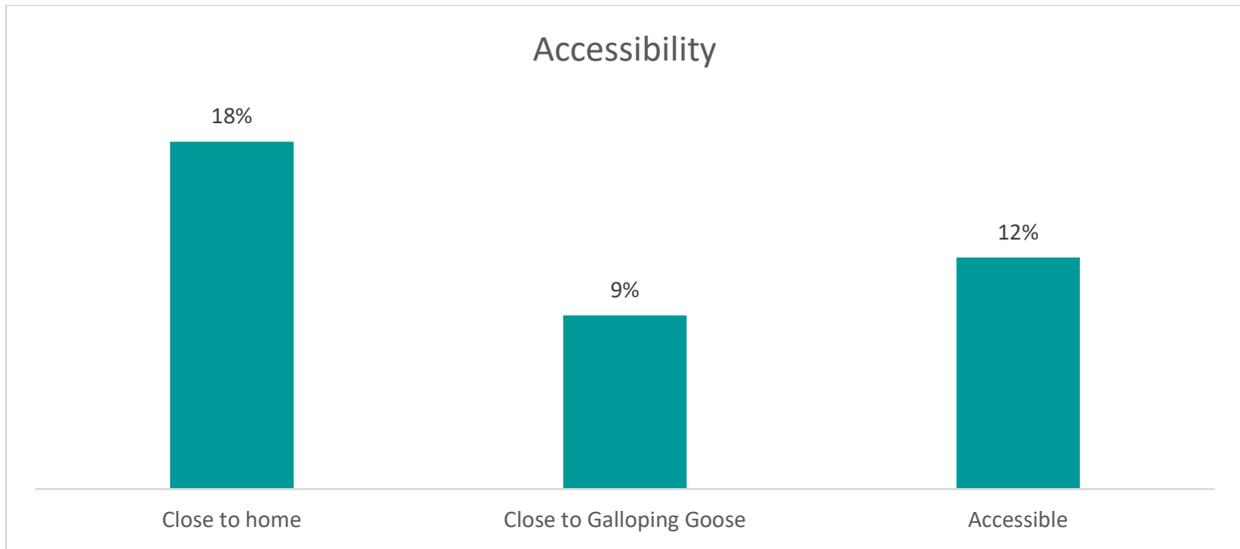


Figure 4: Reasons mentioned by respondents when referring to the importance of **accessibility** at Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

Section 2: Outdoor Recreation

QUESTION 2: WHAT ACTIVITIES DO YOU DO IN MATHESON LAKE AND ROCHE COVE REGIONAL PARKS?

There were 495 responses. Most respondents engaged in walking/hiking, viewing plants and animals, swimming, walking a dog and cycling.

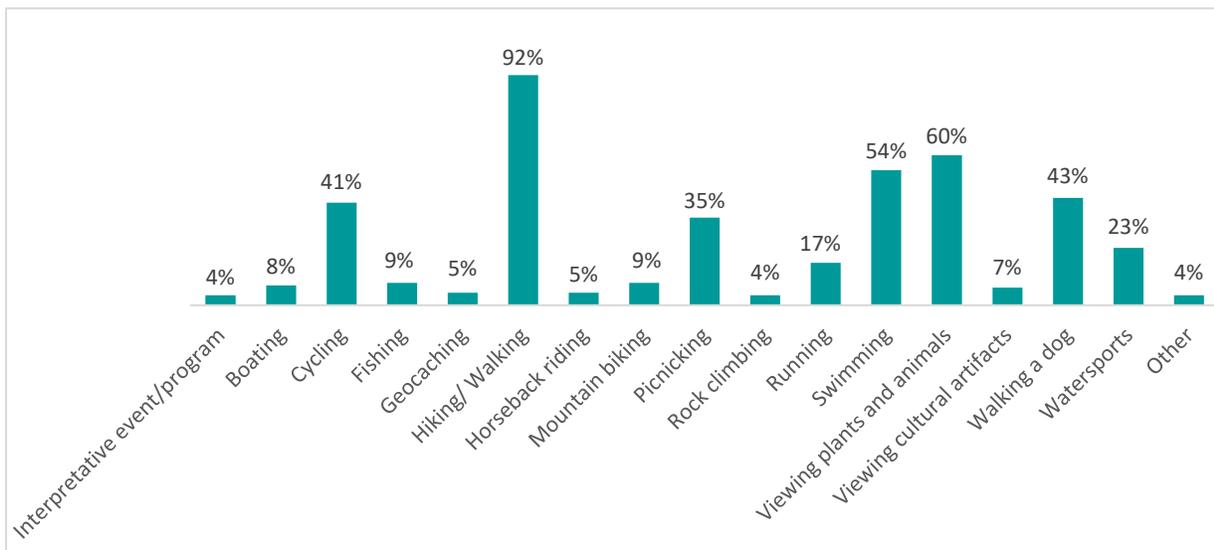


Figure 5: Types of activities conducted at Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks by respondents.

QUESTION 3: WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE LEVEL OF OUTDOOR RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED IN THESE PARKS?

There were 495 responses. The majority of respondents felt there was about the right level of outdoor recreation opportunities offered in these parks.

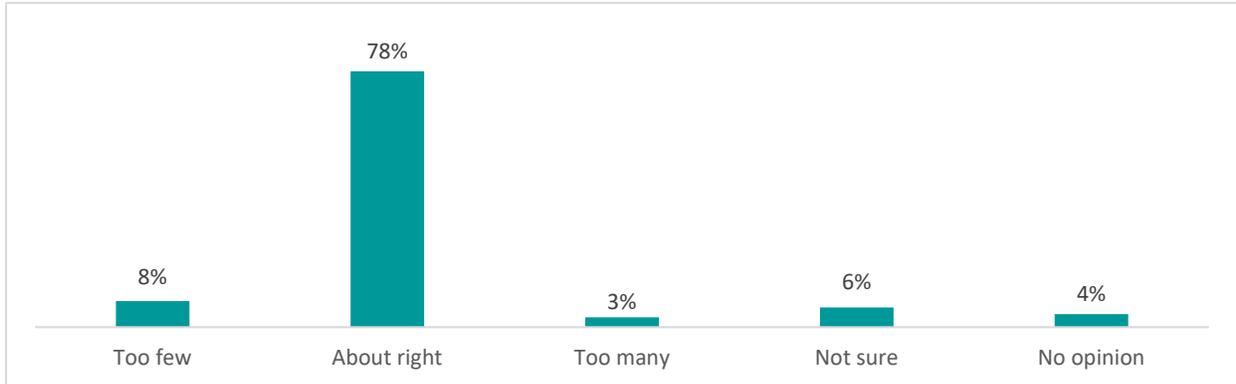


Figure 6: Respondents' perception of the **level of outdoor experiences** offered at Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

Section 3: Use Patterns

QUESTION 4: WHAT ARE YOUR USUAL DESTINATIONS AT MATHESON LAKE AND ROCHE COVE REGIONAL PARKS?

There were 495 responses. Most respondents visited the Matheson Lake Loop trail, the Galloping Goose Regional Trail and Matheson Lake.

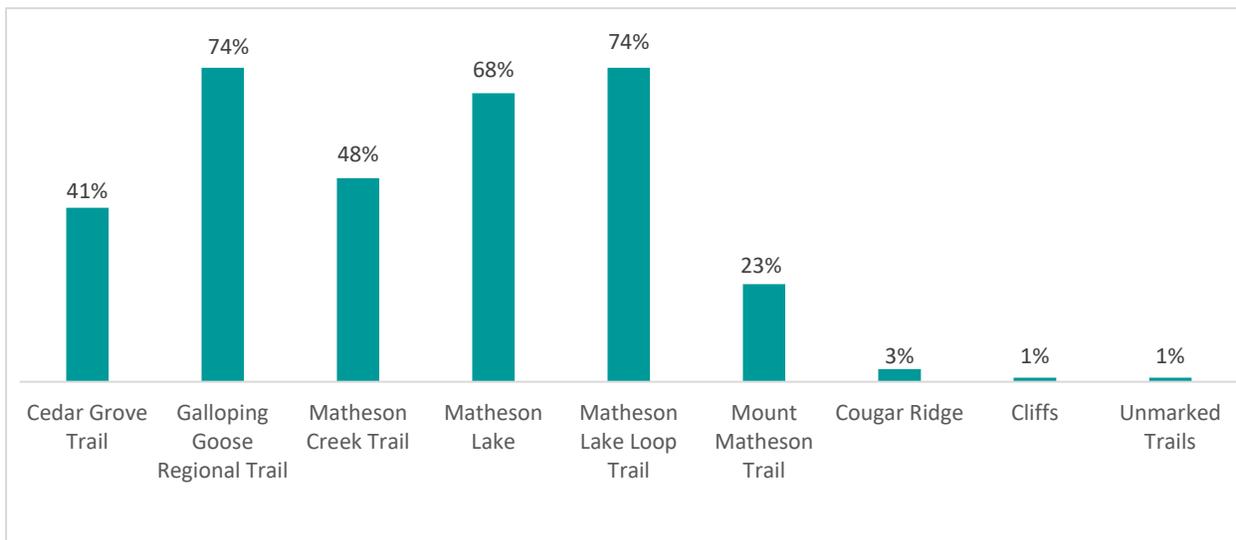


Figure 7: Park destination goal of respondents.

QUESTION 5: APPROXIMATELY HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU VISITED MATHESON LAKE AND ROCHE COVE REGIONAL PARKS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS?

There were 495 responses. Most respondents visited these parks frequently.

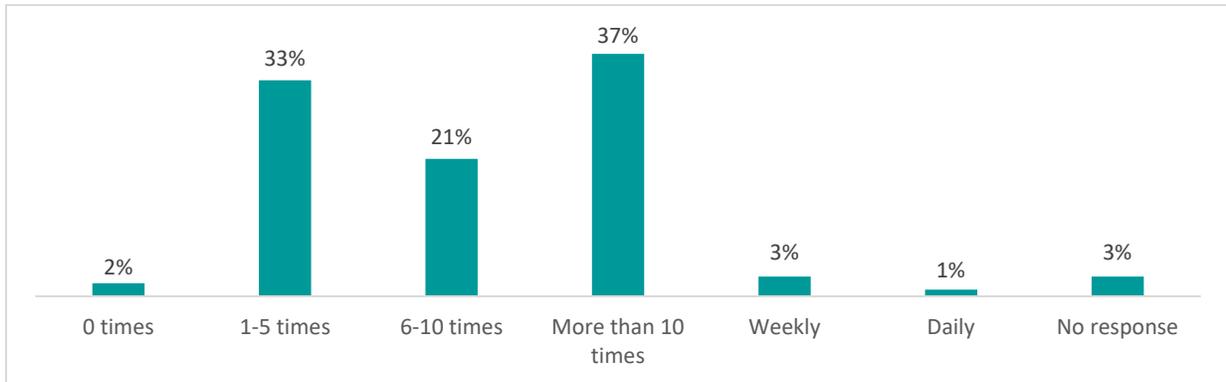


Figure 8: Frequency of visitation by survey respondents.

QUESTION 6: APPROXIMATELY HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU SPEND IN MATHESON LAKE AND ROCHE COVE REGIONAL PARKS WHEN YOU VISIT?

There were 495 responses. The majority of respondents indicate they spend between 1-2 to 3-4 hours in these parks.

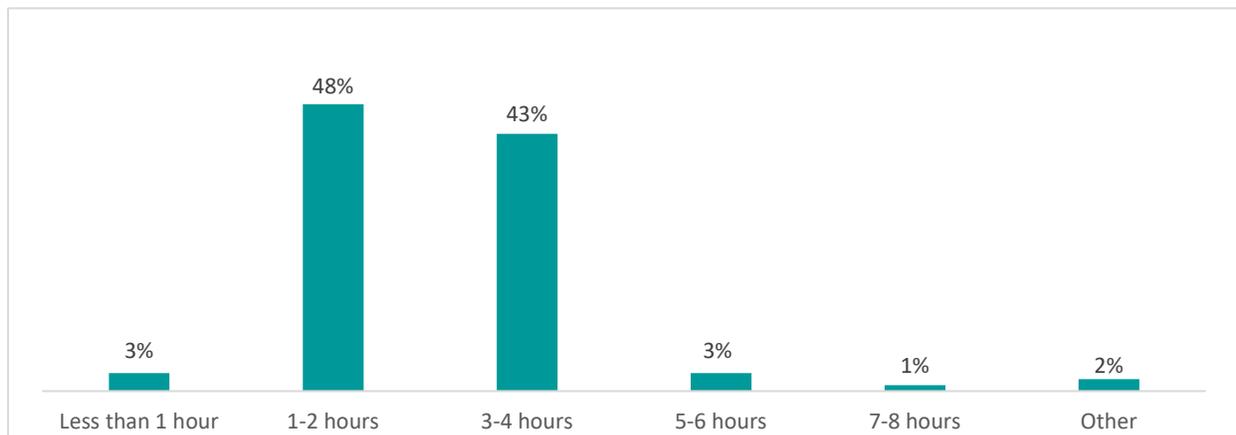


Figure 9: Breakdown of the amount of time spent in the park by respondents.

QUESTION 7: WHAT DO YOU USE TO NAVIGATE WHEN INSIDE THE PARKS?

There were 495 responses. The majority of respondents used their experience and CRD wayfinding signs to navigate these parks.

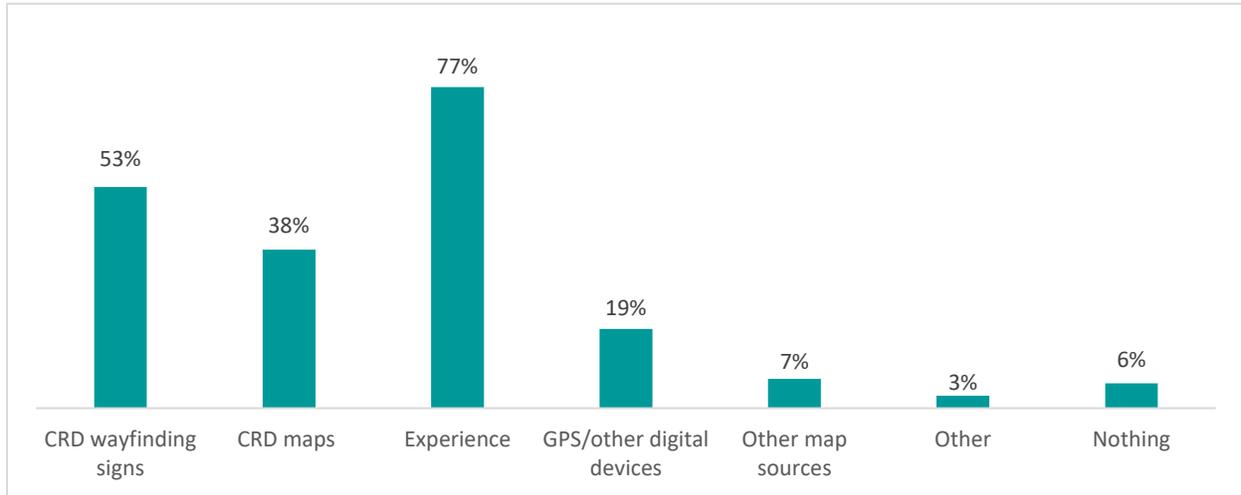


Figure 20: Tools used by respondents to navigate Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

QUESTION 8: WHAT IS THE MAIN SOURCE OF INFORMATION YOU USE TO FIND OUT ABOUT MATHESON LAKE AND ROCHE COVE REGIONAL PARKS?

There were 495 responses. Nearly half of the respondents used the Capital Regional District website to learn about these parks.

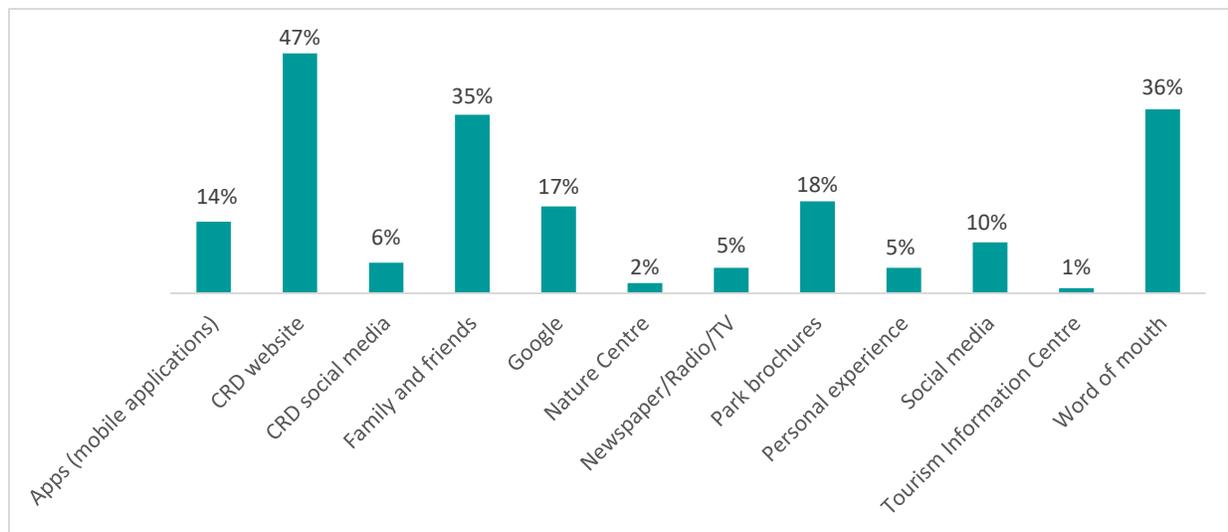


Figure 11: Breakdown of respondents' source of information about Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

QUESTION 9: WITH WHOM DO YOU USUALLY VISIT MATHESON LAKE AND ROCHE COVE REGIONAL PARKS?

There were 495 responses. The majority visited these parks in a group of family and friends.

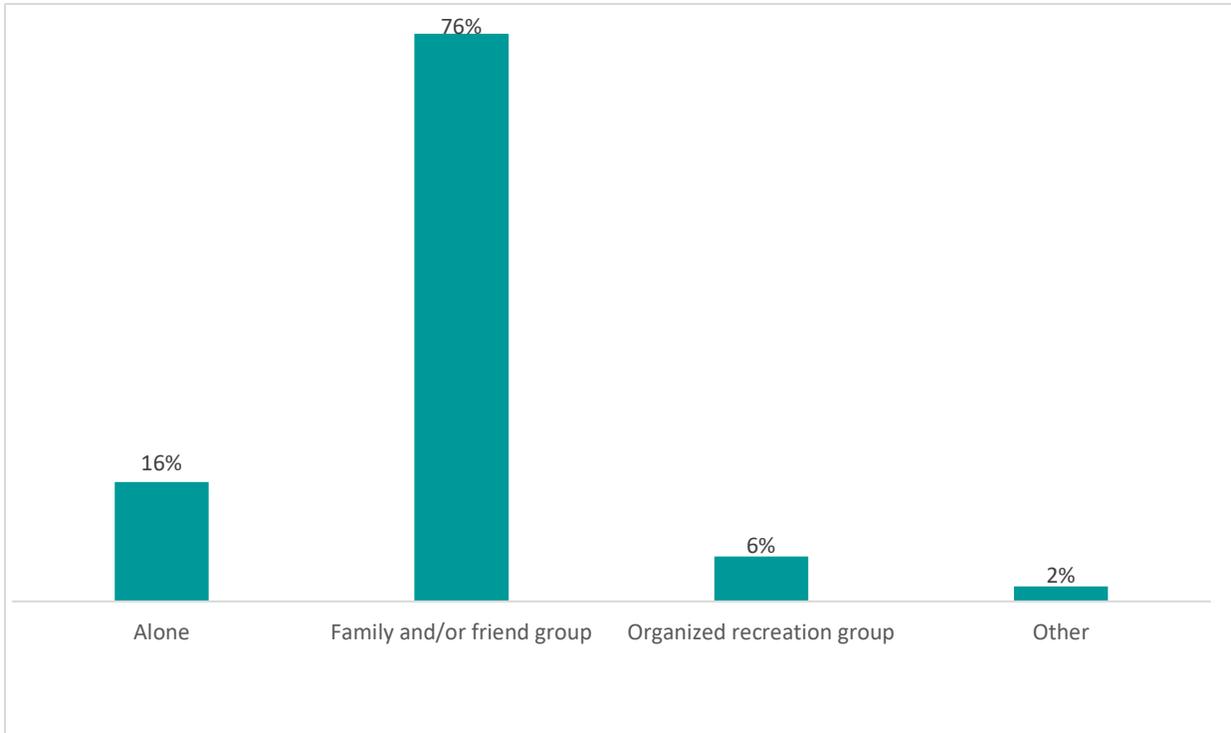


Figure 12: Breakdown of the group composition of respondents visiting Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

QUESTION 10: DO YOU VISIT THE PARKS WITH A DOG?

There were 495 responses. Most respondents visited these parks with one or two dogs.

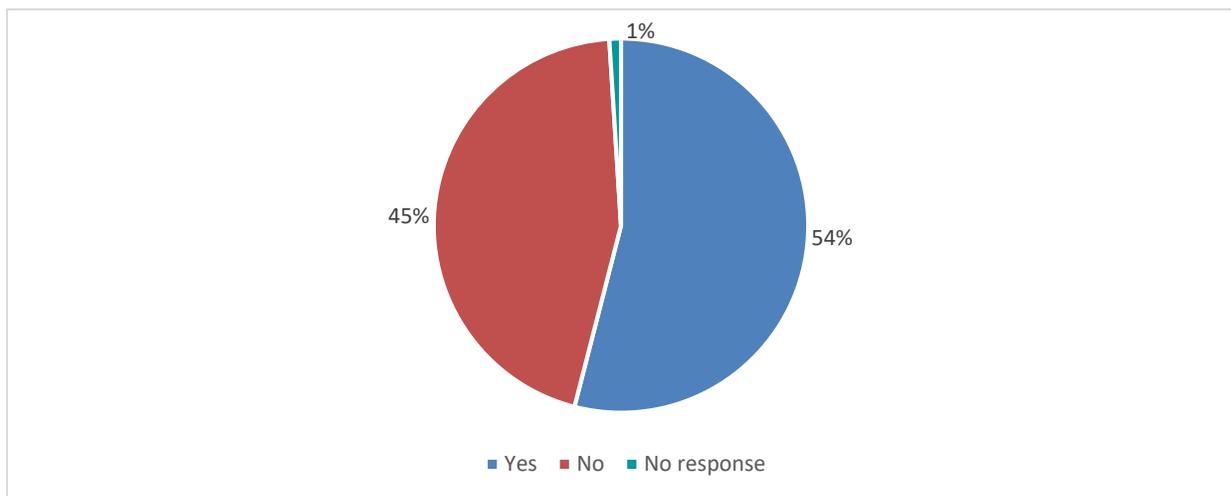


Figure 13: Respondents with dogs in Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

QUESTION 11: HOW DO YOU WALK THE DOG IN THIS PARK?

There were 267 responses. Most respondents walk their dog both on and off leash in these regional parks. Only two respondents identified themselves as a commercial dog walker.

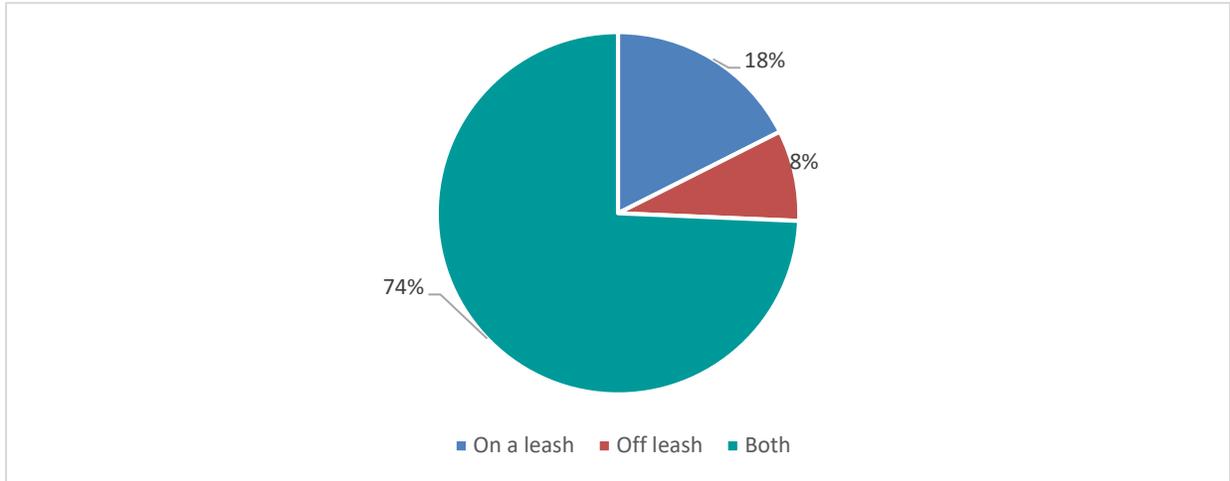


Figure 34: Respondents' methods of walking their dogs in Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

QUESTION 12: WHICH MODE OF TRANSPORTATION DO YOU USUALLY USE TO ARRIVE TO MATHESON LAKE AND ROCHE COVE REGIONAL PARKS?

There were 495 responses. The vast majority use a car, followed by bicycles, to reach these parks.

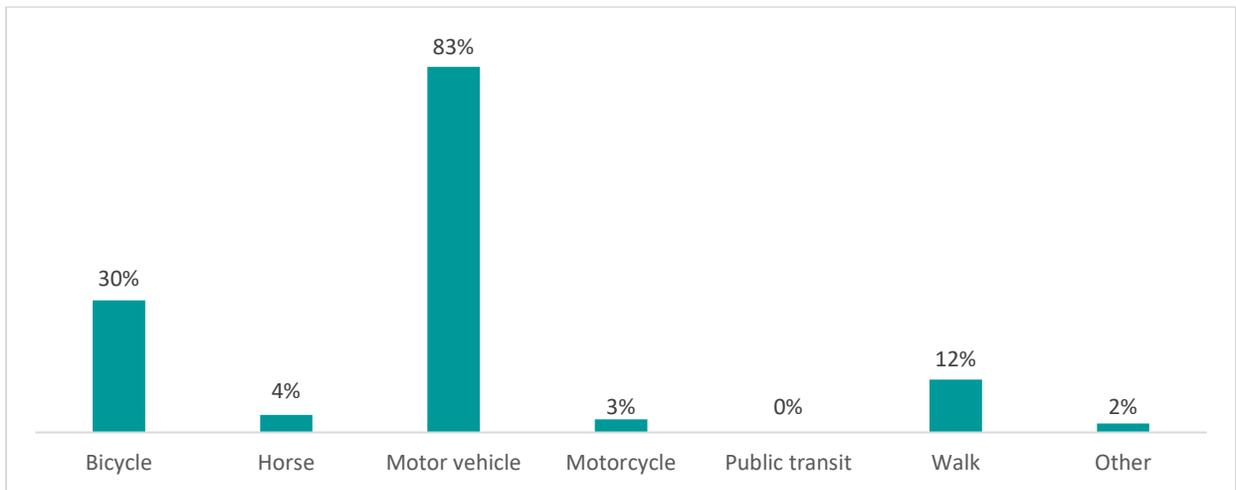


Figure 15: Breakdown of the mode of transportation used by respondents to reach Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

Section 4: Management Implications

QUESTION 13: PARK MANAGEMENT PLANS TYPICALLY INCLUDE POLICY DIRECTION AND/OR ACTIONS TO ADDRESS KNOWN ISSUES. PLEASE SHARE ANY ISSUES AT MATHESON LAKE AND ROCHE COVE REGIONAL PARKS THAT YOU BELIEVE NEED TO BE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE MANAGEMENT PLAN.

A total of 344 qualitative comments were provided by respondents to the open-ended question about issues at Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks. Each comment entailed multiple themes. The qualitative responses were coded to identify emerging themes and then quantified to evaluate their relevance.

The most mentioned themes were:

- **Natural environment:** respondents were concerned about environmental degradation, erosion and invasive species (Figure 17).
- **Social context:** respondents were mostly concerned about the increase in visitor use pressures in both parks and conflict between user groups (i.e., walkers versus cyclists versus dog owners). Respondents also mentioned as an issue some visitors' disruptive and illegal behaviours (i.e., loud music, drinking, smoking). Another social issue emerging from the comments was dog behaviour, where respondents complained about dog waste, and reported the presence of dog out of control harassing people and wildlife (Figure 18).
- **Land managements:** respondents pointed out that limited parking is available in both locations, and signage is lacking (i.e., wayfinding, visitor etiquette, rules). Several respondents suggested to improve trail maintenance in areas of recurrent flooding (Figure 19).

Below is reported a breakdown of the themes extracted from this qualitative question.

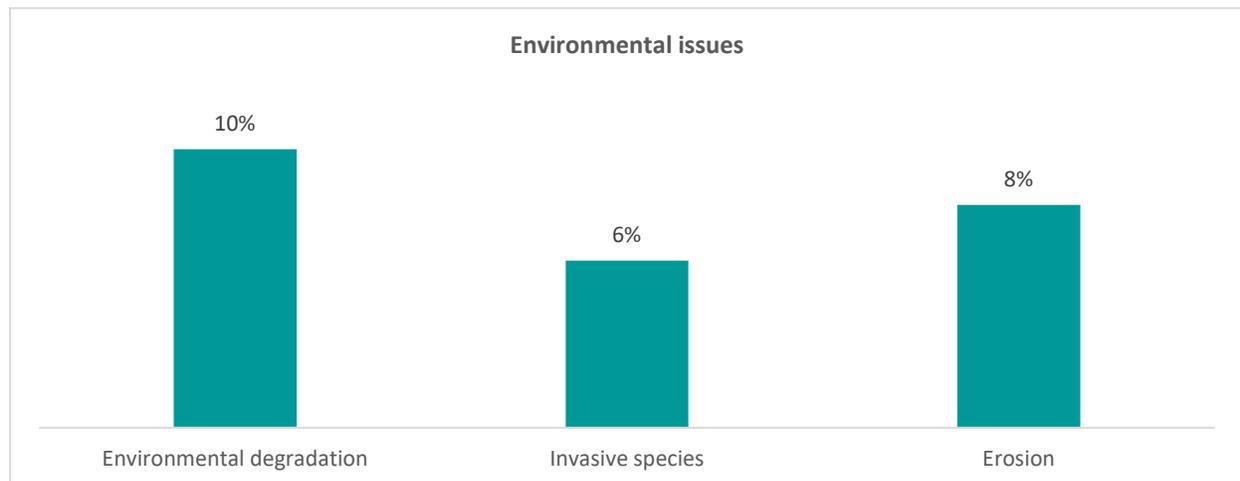


Figure 16: Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks **natural environment issues** noted by respondents.

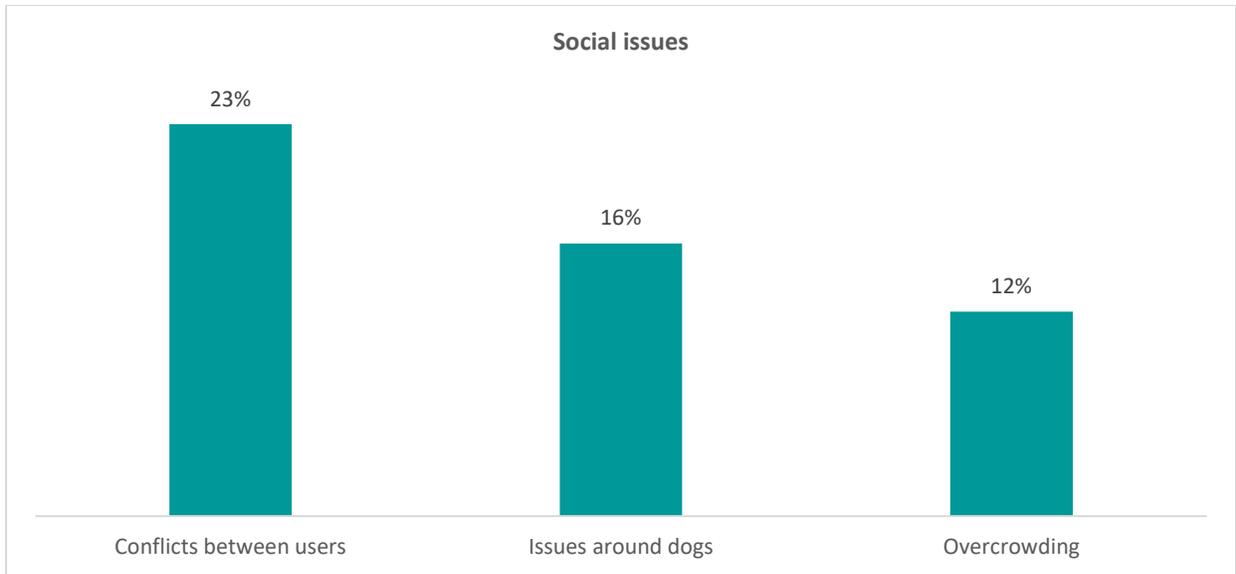


Figure 17: Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks **social context** noted by respondents.

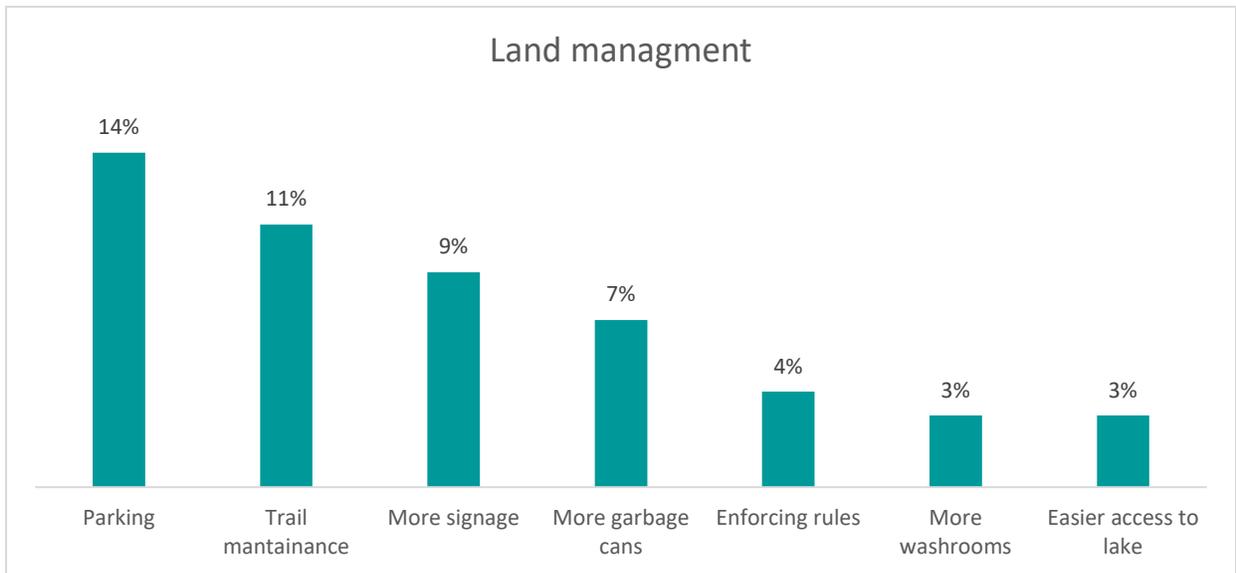


Figure 18: Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks **land management issues** noted by respondents.

QUESTION 14: DID YOU KNOW THAT SENSITIVE ECOSYSTEMS AND SPECIES AT RISK ARE PRESENT IN MATHESON LAKE AND ROCHE COVE REGIONAL PARKS?

There were 495 responses to this question. The vast majority of respondents were aware of the presence of sensitive ecosystems and species at risk at Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

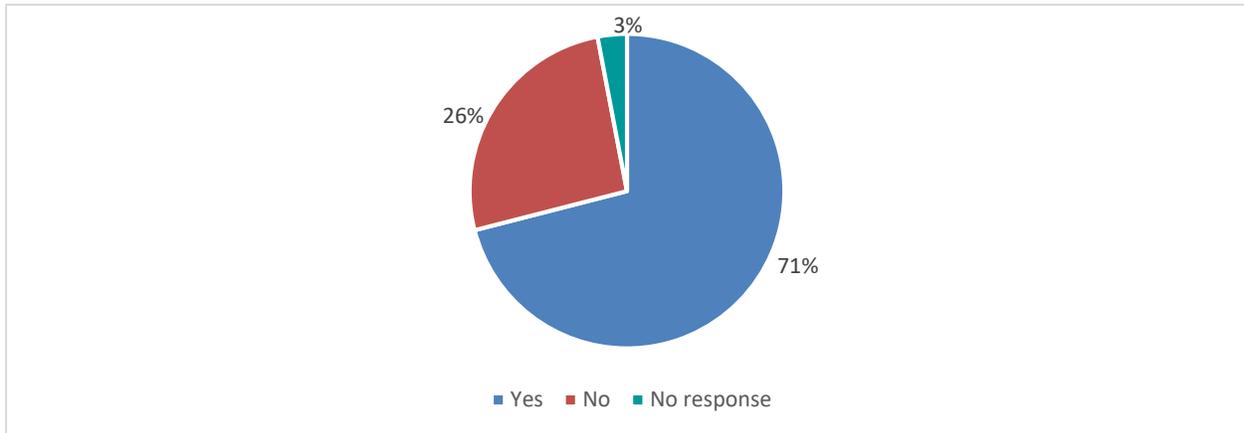


Figure 19: Respondents’ knowledge about sensitive ecosystems and species at risk at Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

QUESTION 15: WOULD YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE THE FOLLOWING MEASURES TO PROTECT SENSITIVE ECOSYSTEMS AND SPECIES AT RISK IN THESE PARKS?

There were 495 responses. The majority of respondents support all measures listed.

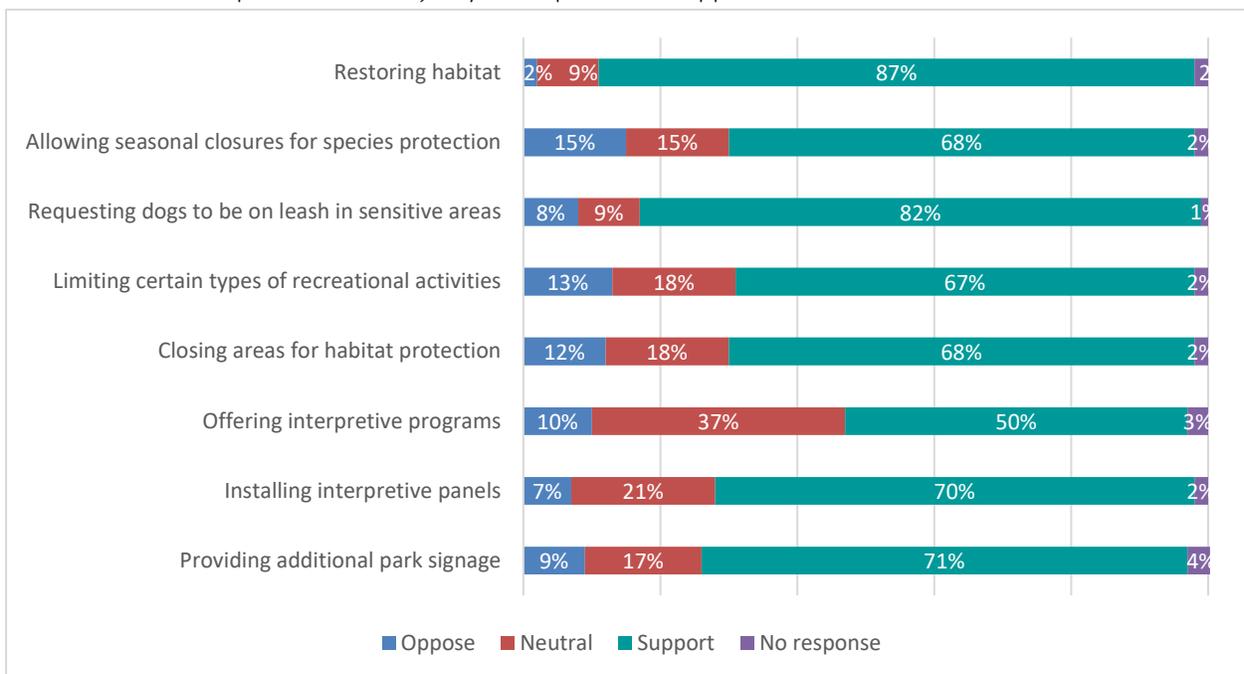


Figure 40: Breakdown of respondents’ support or opposition for **measures to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk** at Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

QUESTION 16: DID YOU KNOW THAT CULTURAL HERITAGE SITES ARE PRESENT IN MATHESON LAKE AND ROCHE COVE REGIONAL PARKS?

Most of the 495 respondents did not know about cultural heritage sites in these parks.

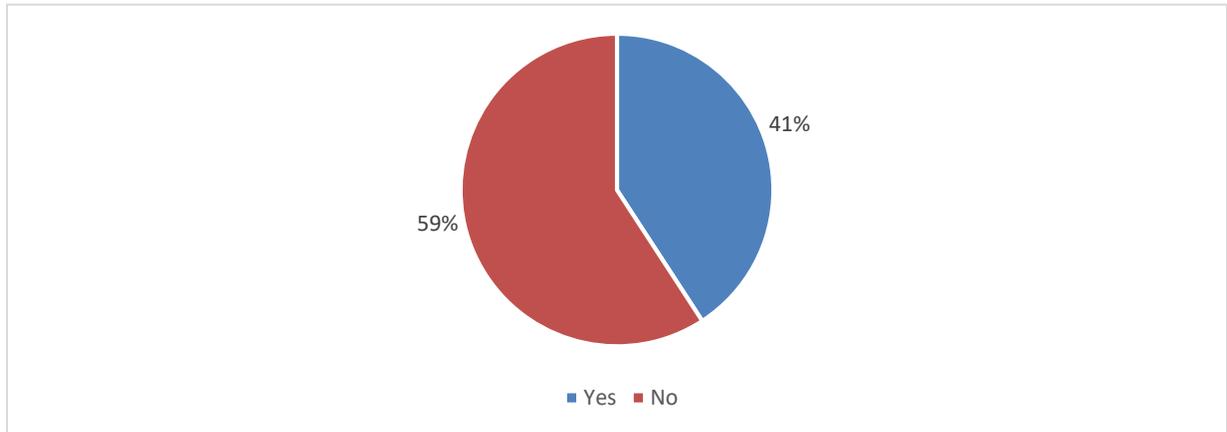


Figure 51: Respondents’ knowledge about **cultural heritage** at Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

QUESTION 17: WOULD YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE THE FOLLOWING MEASURES TO PROTECT CULTURAL HERITAGE SITES IN THESE PARKS?

The majority of the 495 respondents support all measures listed.

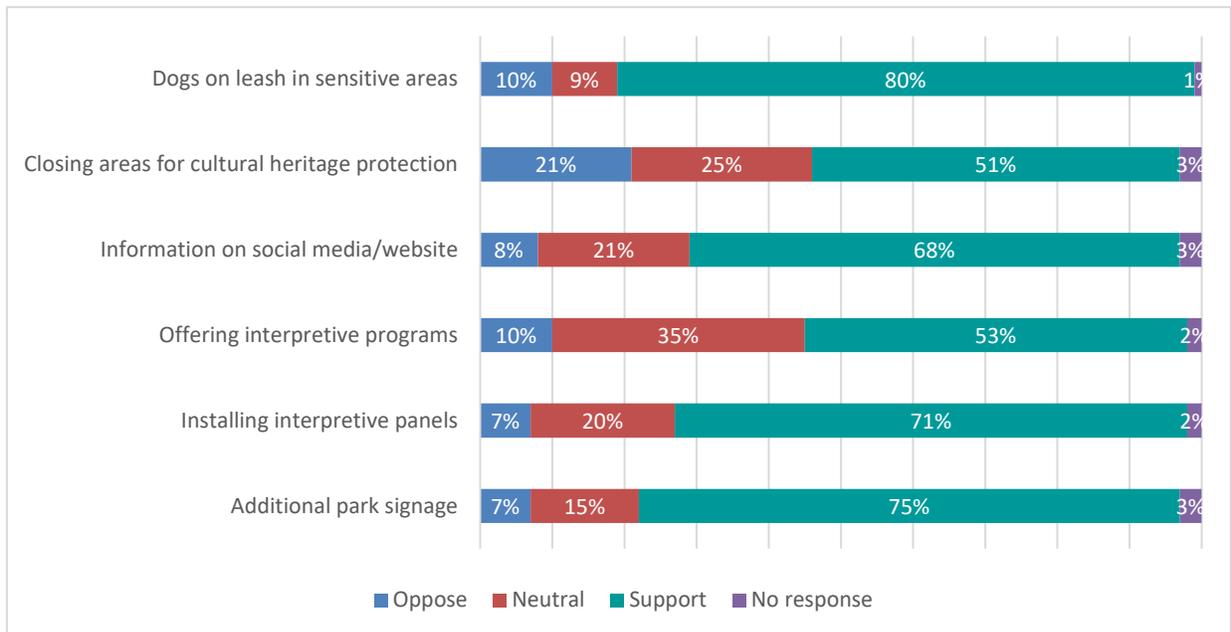


Figure 62: Breakdown of respondents support or opposition for **measures to protect cultural heritage sites** at Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

Section 5: Satisfaction

QUESTION 18: IN MATHESON LAKE AND ROCHE COVE REGIONAL PARKS, HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE FOLLOWING OFFERS?

There were 495 responses. The majority of respondents were satisfied with their experiences, outdoor recreation, trails, and overall cleanliness. Lower satisfaction was expressed for natural environment and species protection, parking, signage and mapping. Respondents were unsure how to comment on education/park nature programs and picnic tables.

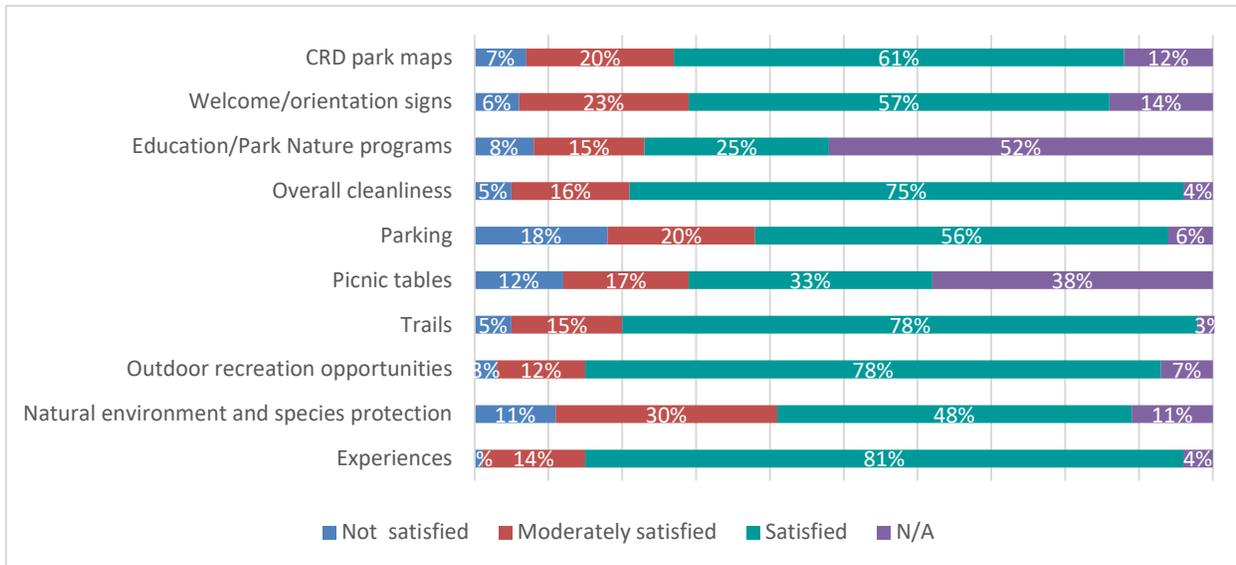


Figure 23: Breakdown of respondents' satisfaction with different offers at Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

Section 6: Carnivores

QUESTION 19: HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A COUGAR, BEAR AND/OR WOLF IN MATHESON LAKE AND ROCHE COVE REGIONAL PARKS?

There were 495 responses. Most respondents have not seen carnivores in these parks.

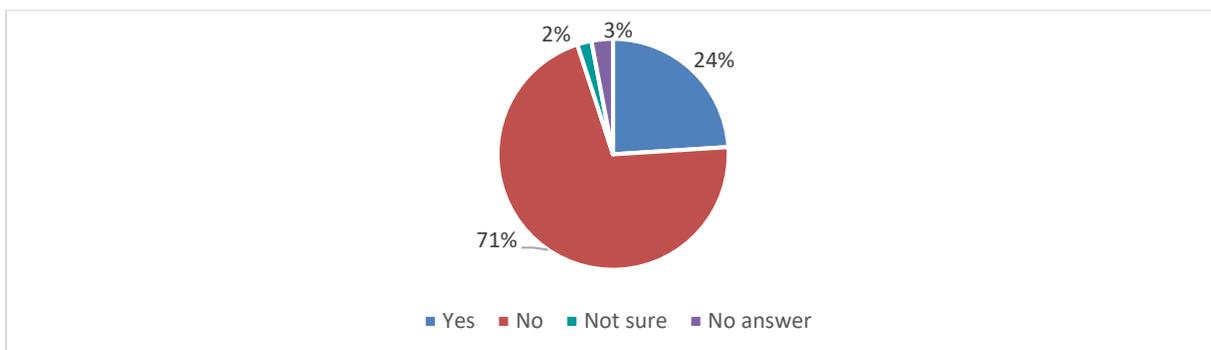


Figure 24: Respondents' sightings of cougars, bears and/or wolves in Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

QUESTION 20: WHAT DID YOU SEE?

Of the 119 respondents who saw carnivores in these parks, the majority encountered bears.

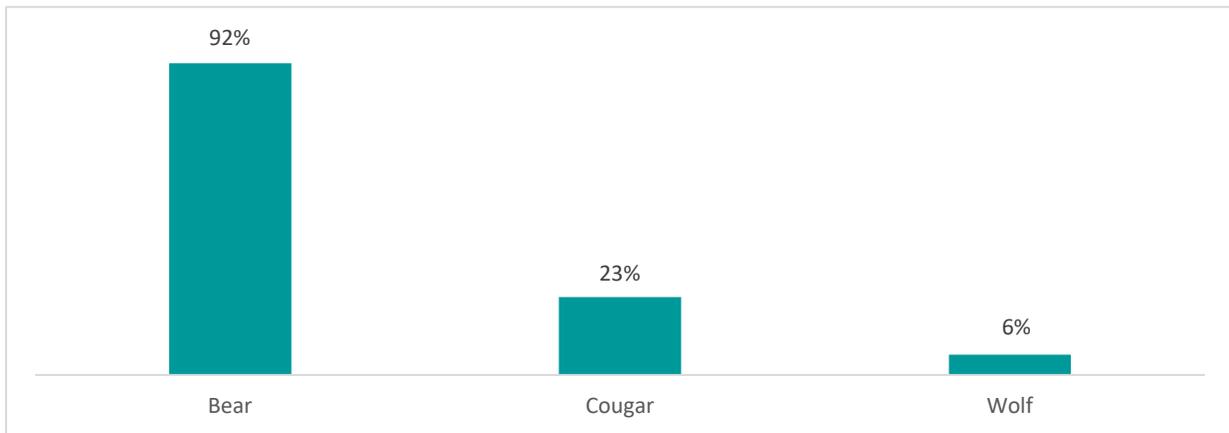


Figure 25: Respondents' sightings of cougars, bears and/or wolves in Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

QUESTION 21: WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO PREPARE FOR POSSIBLY ENCOUNTERING COUGARS, BEARS AND/OR WOLVES?

There were 495 responses. More than half of the respondents stated they have read signs about carnivores in the park or travel in groups.

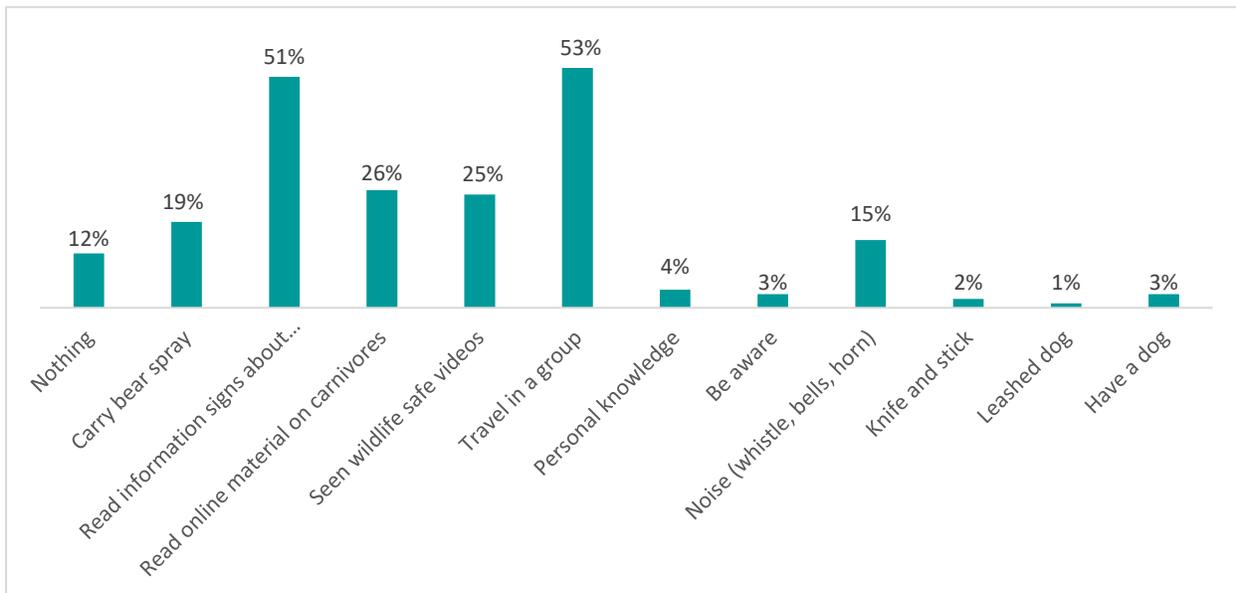


Figure 26: Breakdown of respondents' preparedness for encountering carnivores in Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

Section 7: Other Comments

QUESTION 22: DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER COMMENTS ABOUT MATHESON LAKE AND ROCHE COVE REGIONAL PARKS?

A total of 289 qualitative comments were provided by respondents to the open-ended question about final comments on Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks. Each comment entailed multiple themes. The qualitative questions were coded to identify emerging themes and quantified to evaluate such themes relevance.

The most mentioned themes were:

- **Natural environment:** respondents stressed the importance of maintaining the natural environment of these parks, suggested focusing on environmental protection, invasive species removal and erosion, and advocated for buying more land around these regional parks.
- **Social context:** once again, respondents mentioned conflicts between user groups and overcrowding as a main concern in both parks. Respondents used this section to express their support and opposition for dogs on-leash and off-leash. Respondents also mentioned the need to focus on cultural heritage through a First Nation lens.
- **Land management:** respondents were divided between increasing or not increasing parking in these parks, as visitation pressure is already high. Some respondents suggested adding signage about etiquette, the environment or for wayfinding. Other suggested more enforcement. Respondents also mentioned better trail management, where needed, and offering mountain biking opportunities. Some respondents wish a boat launch to facilitate access to the lake with paddle boards, kayaks, and boats. Finally, having more washrooms was also seen as important in these parks.

Some participants (11%) expressed gratitude for the opportunity to engage in the management planning process and toward the CRD for the upkeep of these parks.

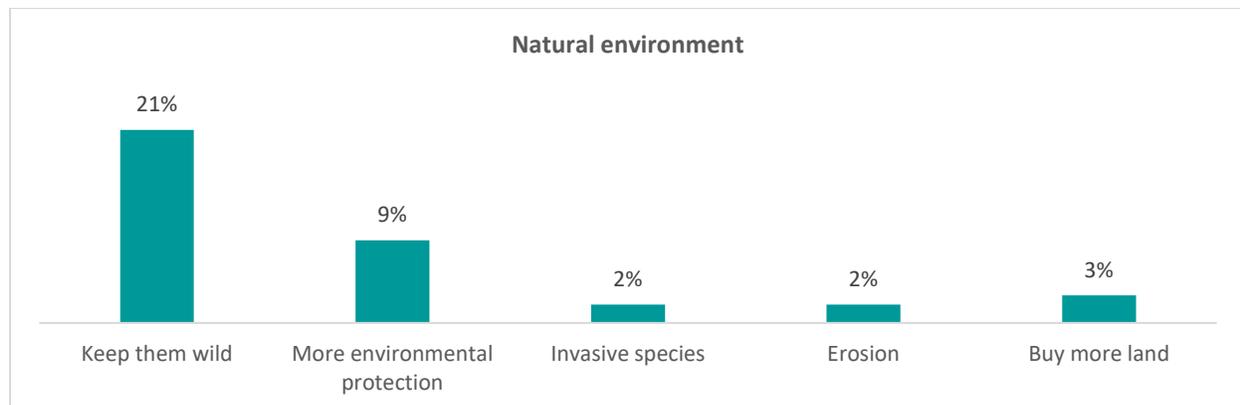


Figure 27: Breakdown of the final comments related to the **natural environment** at Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

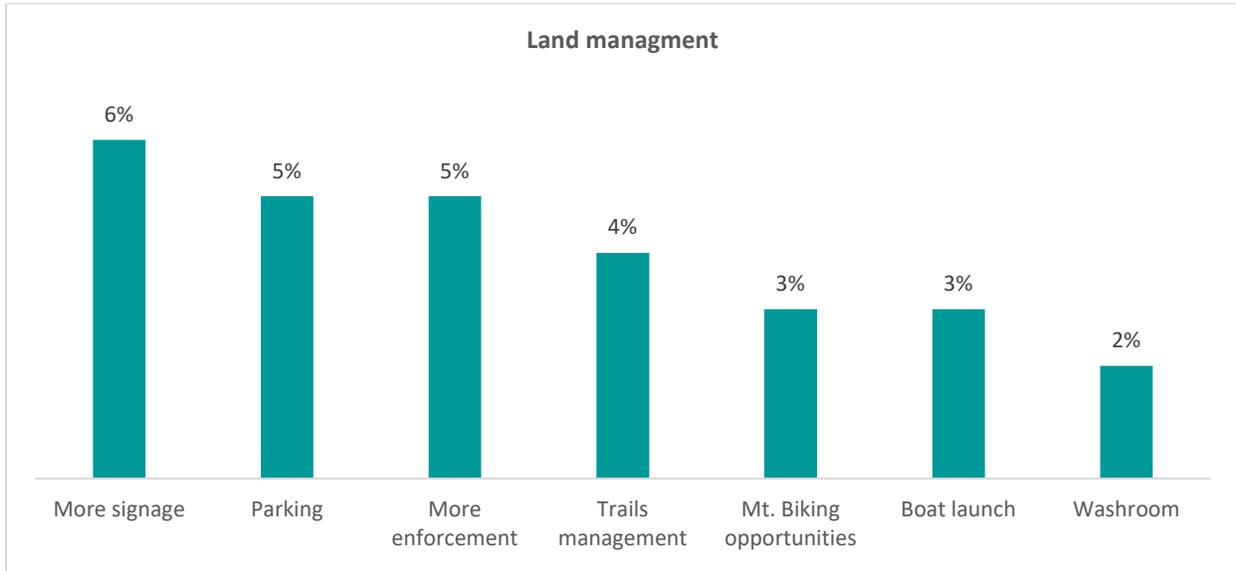


Figure 28: Breakdown of the final comments related to **land management** at Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

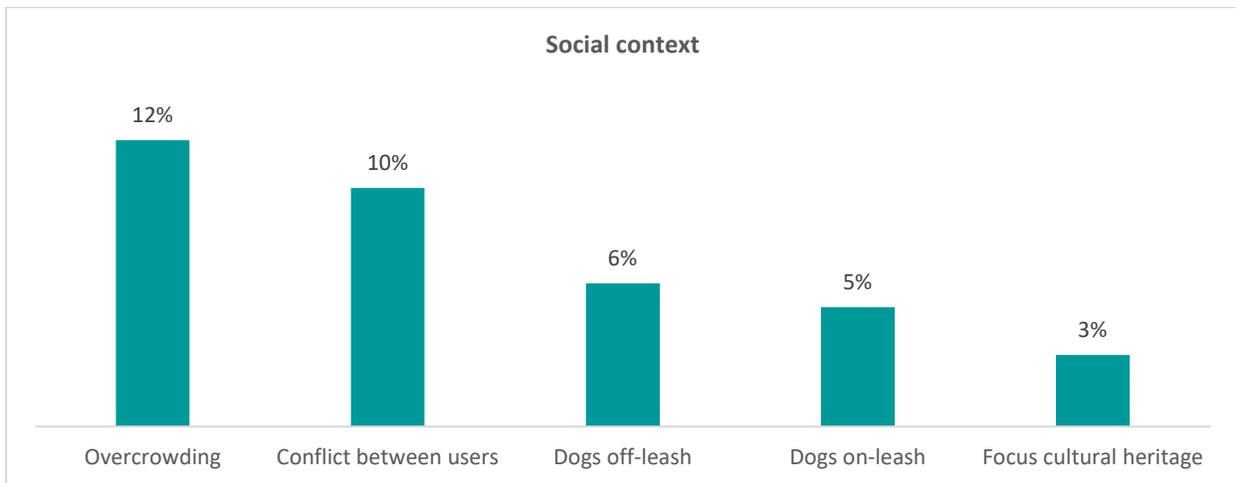


Figure 29: Breakdown of the final comments related to the **social context** at Matheson Lake and Roche Cove regional parks.

Section 8: Demographics

QUESTION 23: IN WHICH AGE CATEGORY DO YOU FALL?

There were 495 responses. Respondents to the survey were distributed similarly between the age categories 35-65+. There was low input to the survey from youth and younger adults.

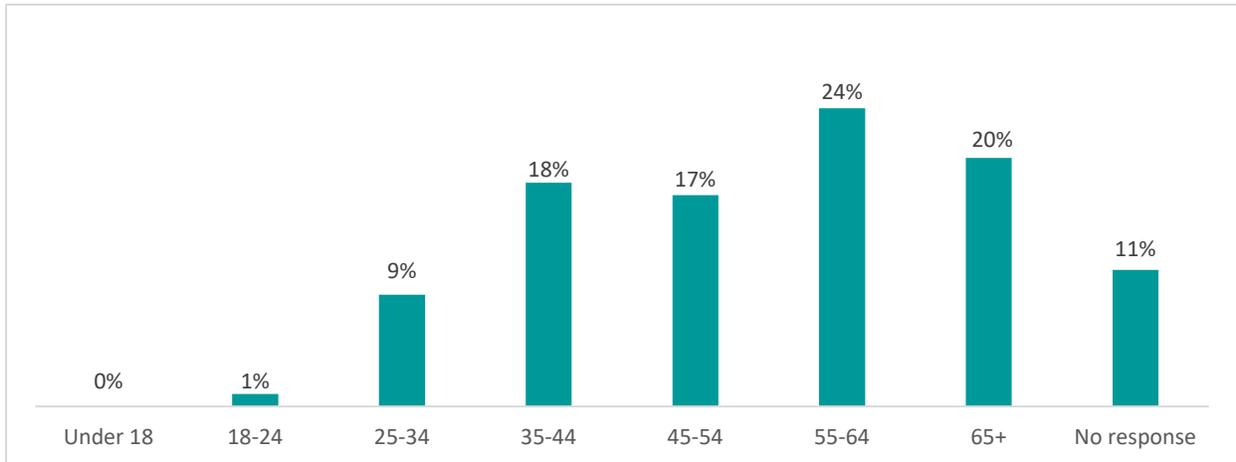


Figure 30: Age distribution of respondents.

QUESTION 24: WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

There were 495 responses. Most respondents lived in Metchosin and Sooke, the municipalities closest to the parks, and in Victoria.

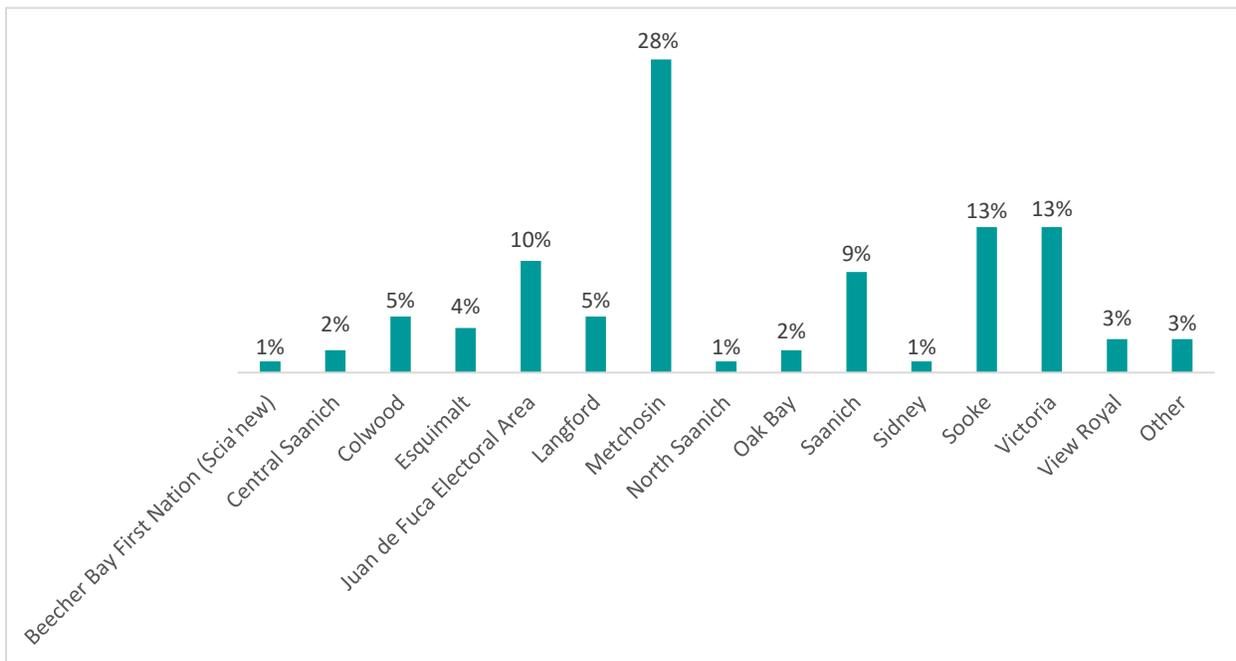


Figure 31: Breakdown of where visitors live.