

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.

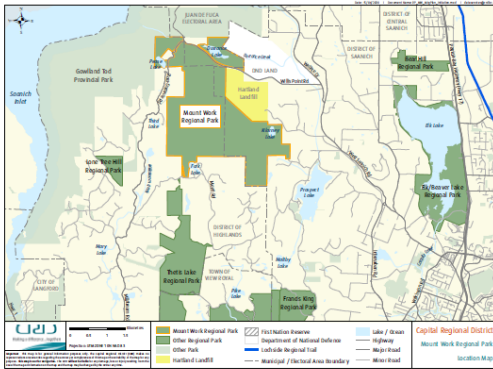
6.0 Conclusion

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



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 (WJOLÉLP)
- 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.

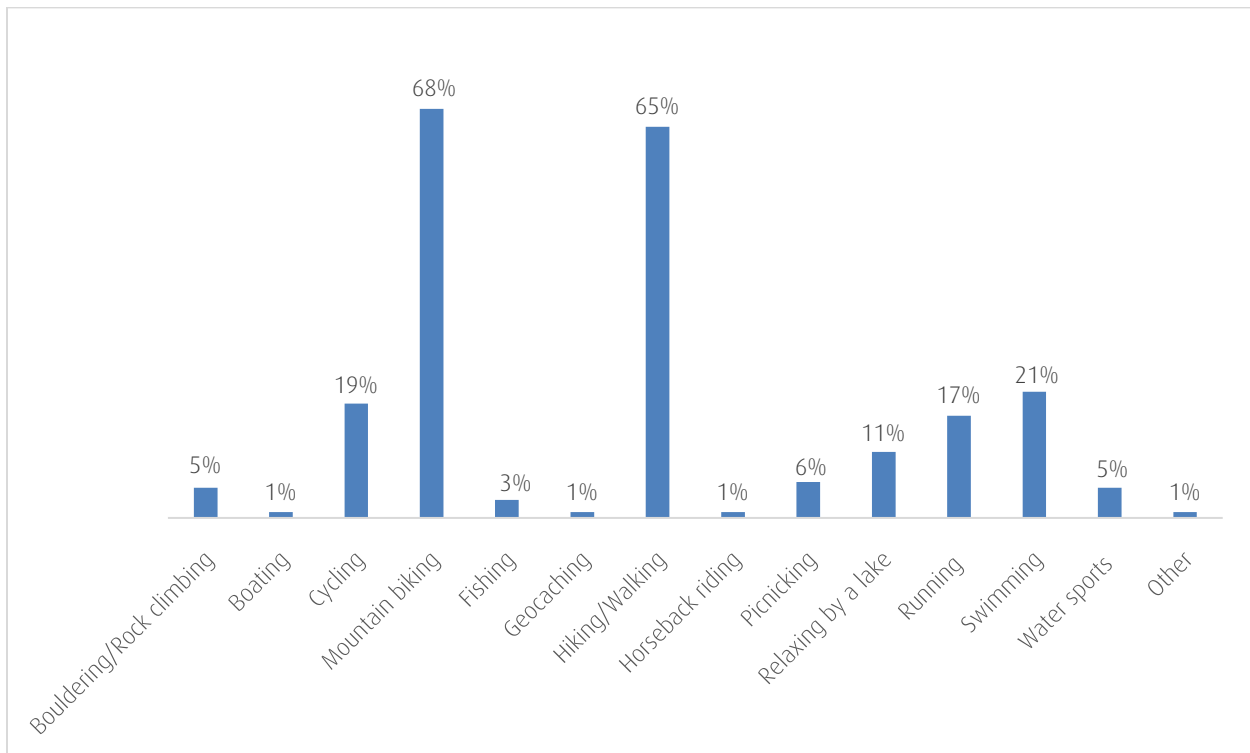


Figure 1: Main activities undertaken by respondents

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.

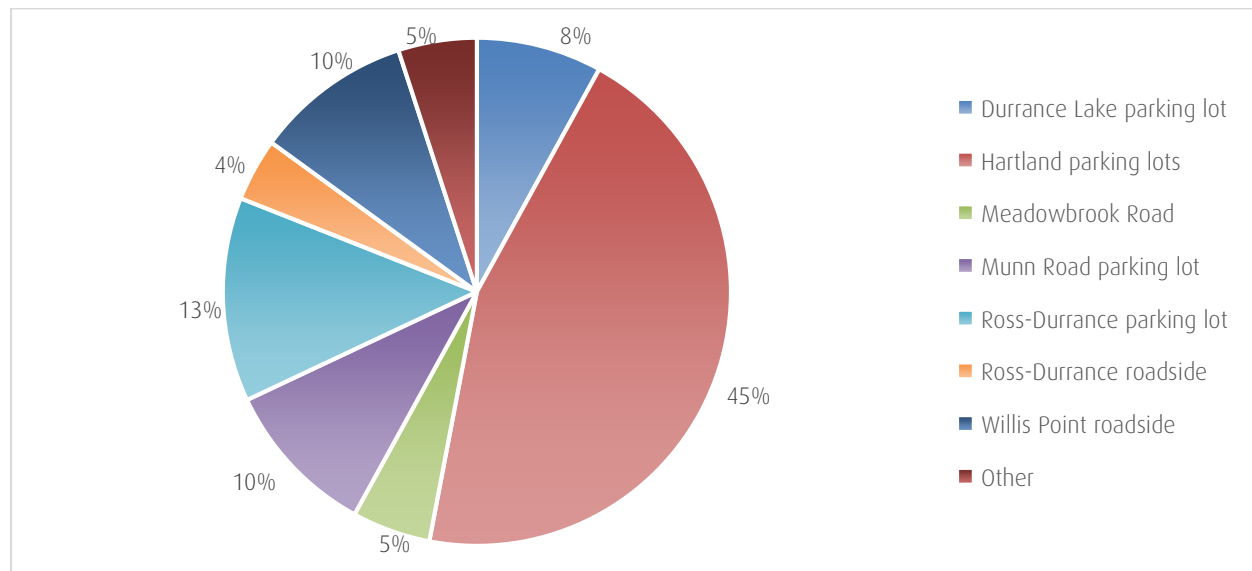


Figure 2: Entry points used most typically by respondents.

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.

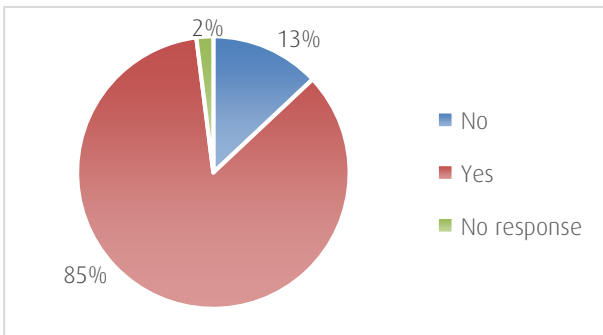


Figure 3: Sensitive ecological values

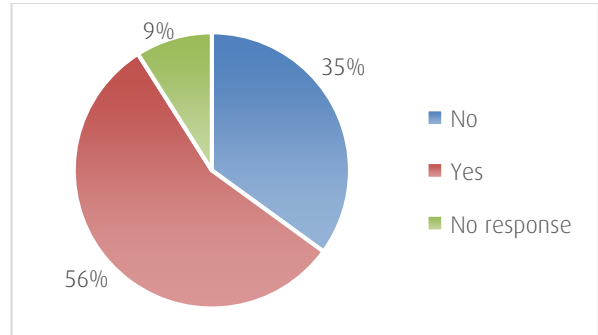


Figure 4: Sensitive cultural values

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.

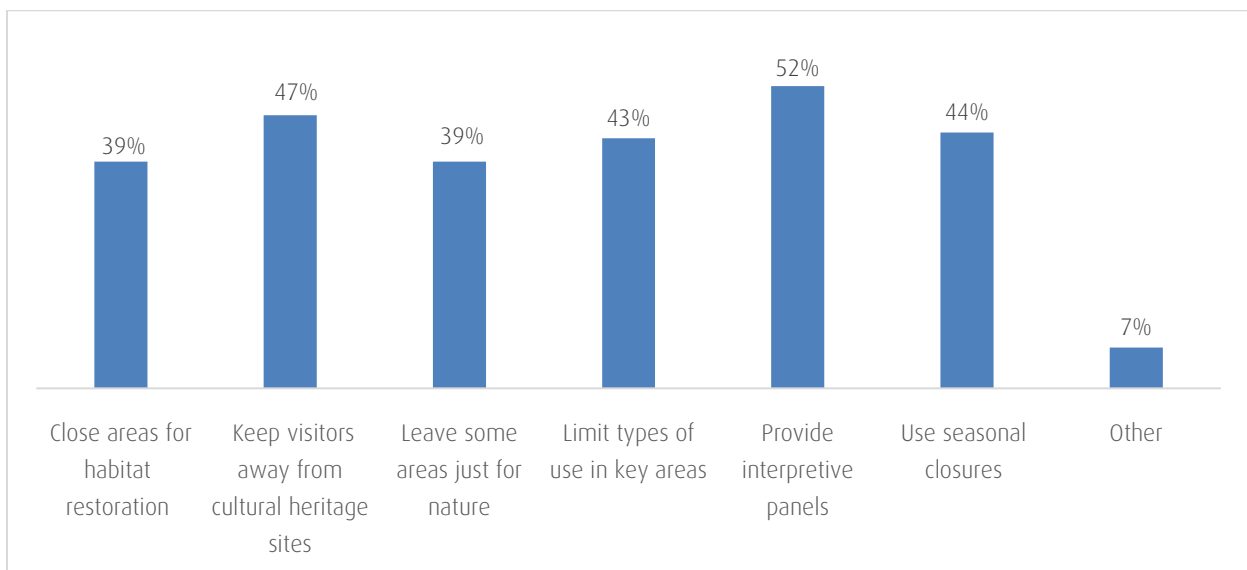


Figure 5: Support for potential management strategies for sensitive area

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.

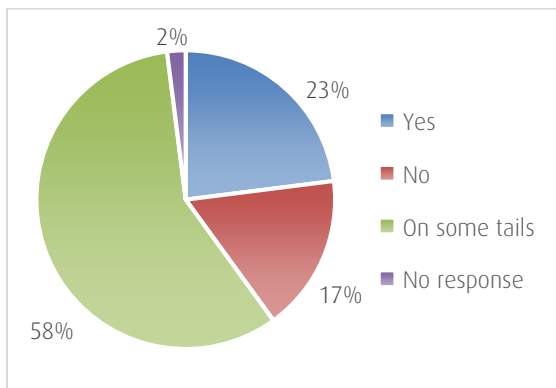


Figure 6: Should hiking/walking be permitted in the designated mountain biking area?

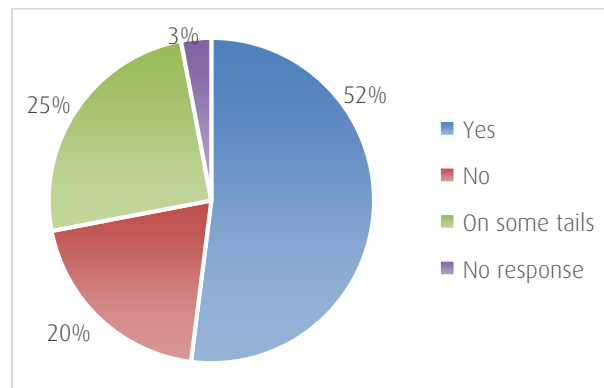


Figure 7: Should dogs be permitted in the designated mountain biking area?

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.

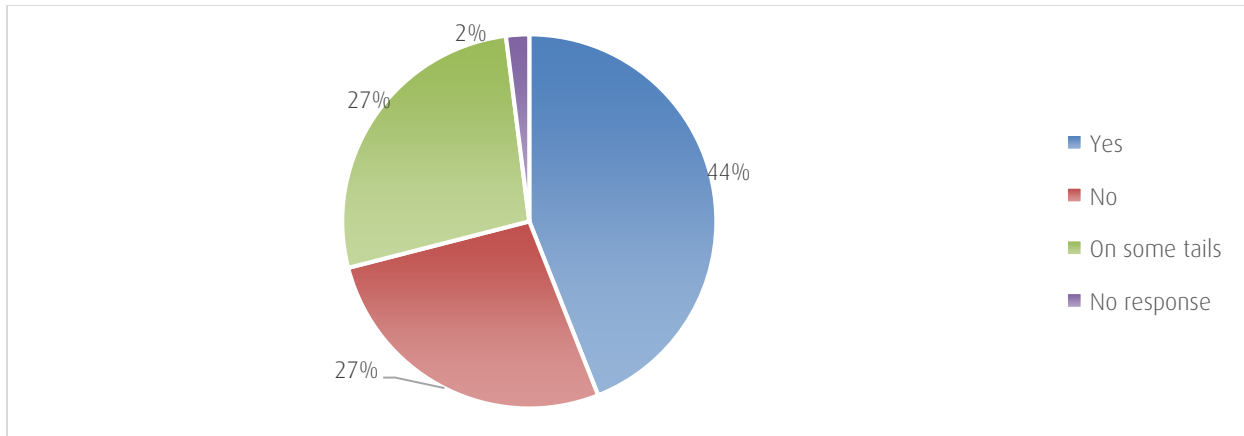


Figure 8: Should mountain biking be permitted outside the designated mountain biking area?

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.

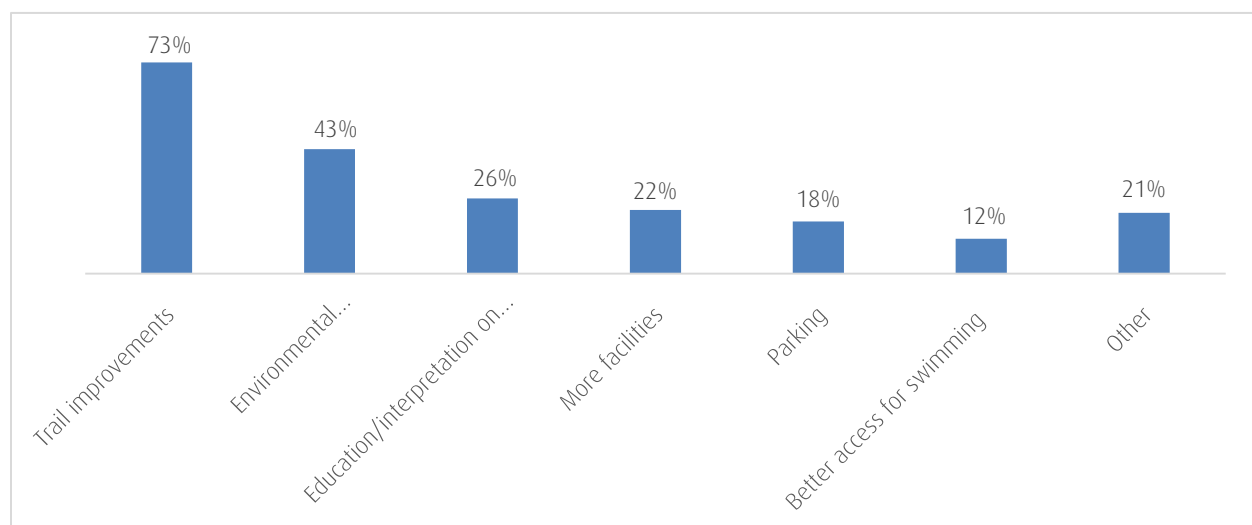


Figure 9: What do you feel needs to be focused on over the next 10 years?

QUESTION 18: IN WHICH AGE CATEGORY DO YOU FALL?

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

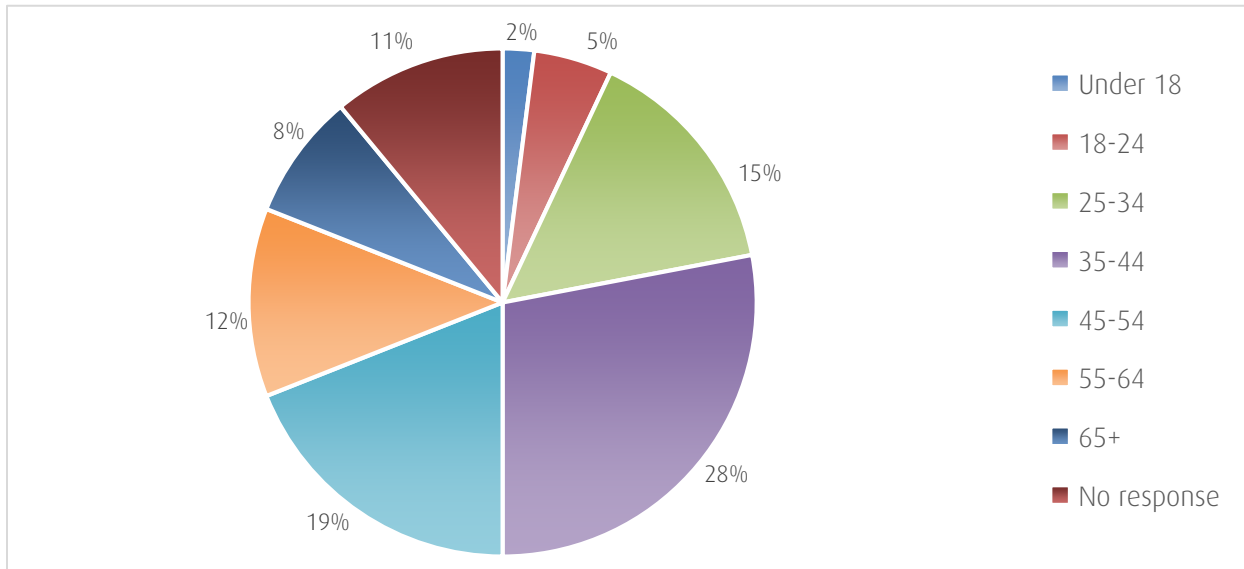


Figure 10: In which age category do you fall?

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.

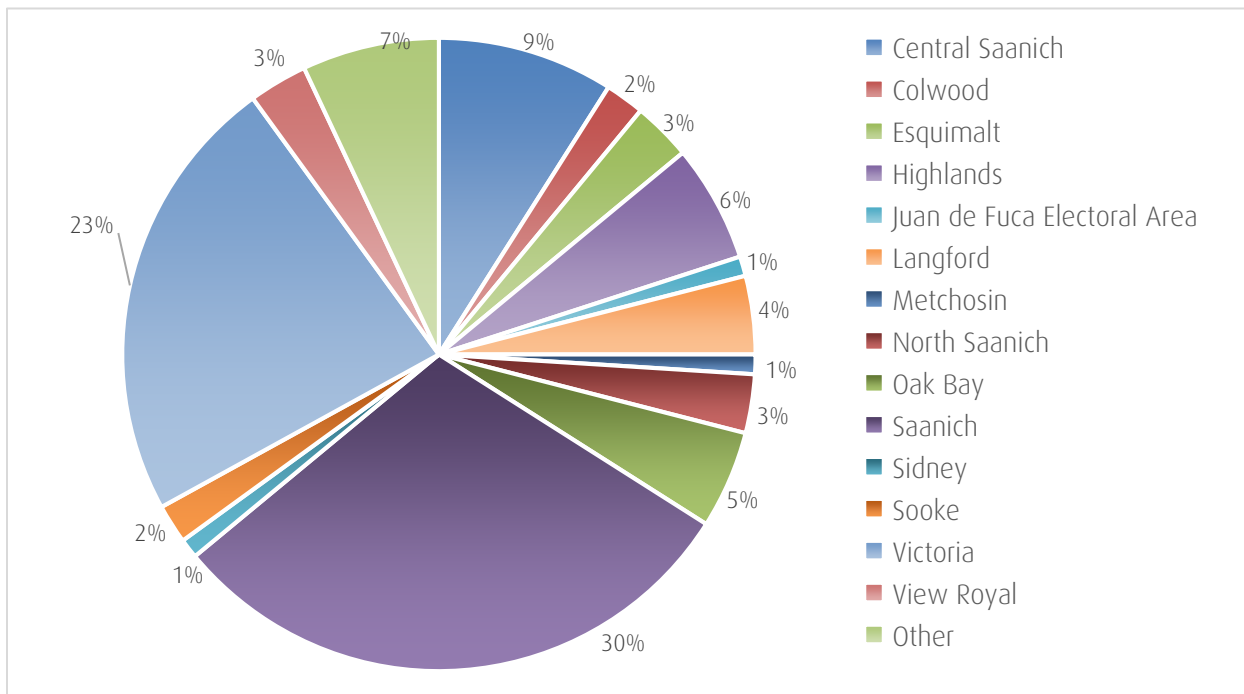


Figure 11: Where do you live?

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.