

Ayum Creek, Kapoor, Sea to Sea, Sooke Potholes Regional Parks Management Plans

Capital Regional District | March 2010



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Message from the Regional Parks Chair



To ensure park values and visitor opportunities are protected and sustained through the use of best management practices in all facets of park development and management, and to contribute to regional environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

That is the overarching management goal for four connected park units located within a larger system of protected areas known as the Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt: Ayum Creek, Kapoor, Sea to Sea, and Sooke Potholes.

The Regional Parks Committee is pleased to endorse the management plan for these parklands. This comprehensive plan lays out how each of these parks will be protected, managed and developed over the long term.

The management plan has received strong public support. The planning process has involved years of extensive input from the public, First Nations, governments, interest groups, as well as a Management Plan Advisory Group.

Yet the story behind these parks goes back much further, half a century ago, when residents of the region created a vision to protect a large area of land stretching from the Saanich Inlet to the Sooke Basin. This belt encompasses approximately 10,000 hectares of significant natural, cultural and wilderness resources; and it offers outstanding outdoor recreational opportunities.

I am excited that the development of these parks will soon begin! While it will occur in phases over a number of years, the lower portion of the Sea to Sea Regional Park will open to the public in 2010 during phase 1. This accessible wilderness area will offer a range of outdoor activities, including hiking, mountain biking and equestrian use, for park visitors of all ages and abilities.

We will continue to acquire lands to complete the corridor of wilderness and parkland in the belt, making it the largest park area in the Capital Regional District. The lands acquired for parks contribute significantly to the environmental, economic and social sustainability of the region. They provide opportunities for people living in both urban and suburban areas to connect with nature. In addition to contributing to our overall quality of life and providing exceptional outdoor recreation, these parklands protect ecosystems, provide habitat for plants and animals, and support the natural cleansing of water and air.

On behalf of the Parks Committee, I commend staff and the many groups, agencies and individuals who contributed to the management plan, which will guide decision-making for these parks. It moves our vision further along its way, and eventually, towards a lasting legacy we can all be proud of.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Causton', written over a horizontal line.

Christopher Causton, Chair
CRD Regional Parks Committee

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Acknowledgements

CRD Regional Parks would like to gratefully acknowledge the following people for their significant contribution to the Regional Park Management Plan for Ayum Creek, Kapoor, Sea to Sea, and Sooke Potholes regional parks. Completion of this plan would not have been possible without their long-term dedication to this project.

Management Plan Advisory Group

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Contents

Message from the Regional Parks Chair.....	3
Acknowledgements	5
1 Executive Summary.....	11
2 Plan Overview	13
2.1 Description of Plan Area	14
2.2 Geographical Description of the Four Park Units	14
2.3 Purpose for Undertaking the Plan.....	15
2.4 Relationship of the Park to the CRD Regional Parks and Trails System	15
2.5 Links to Other Plans	15
2.6 Public Consultation Process	16
2.7 First Nations.....	16
2.8 Park Management Planning Principles	17
2.9 Park Management Goal	17
2.10 Park Unit Classification.....	18
2.11 Park Zoning.....	18
2.12 Management Themes.....	20
2.12.1 Protecting Ecological Values	20
2.12.2 Protecting Cultural Values.....	20
2.12.3 Accommodating Recreation Values.....	21
2.12.4 Addressing Visitor Safety	21
2.12.5 Motorized Vehicle Access.....	21
2.12.6 Dog Management.....	22
2.12.7 Community Engagement	22
2.12.8 Economic Opportunities	22
2.12.9 Universal Accessibility.....	22
2.13 Plan Implementation	23
3 Ayum Creek Regional Park Management Plan.....	27
3.1 Historical Context	27
3.2 Vision Statement	28
3.3 Direction Statements	28
3.3.1 Environmental Conservation.....	28
3.3.2 Cultural Heritage Management.....	28
3.3.3 Visitor Experience.....	28
3.3.4 Park Development and Operations	29
3.4 Park Development Concept	29
3.5 Zoning Designation	29
3.6 Management Objectives and Actions	29
3.6.1 Environmental Conservation.....	29
3.6.2 Cultural Heritage Management.....	30
3.6.3 Visitor Experience.....	30
3.6.4 Park Development and Operations	31
3.7 Plan Implementation – Key Actions	31
4 Kapoor Regional Park Management Plan.....	35
4.1 Historical Context	35
4.2 Vision Statement	36
4.2.1 Environmental Conservation.....	36
4.2.2 Cultural Heritage Management.....	36
4.2.3 Visitor Experience.....	36
4.2.4 Park Development and Operations	37
4.3 Park Development Concept	37
4.4 Zoning Designation	37
4.5 Management Objectives and Actions	37
4.5.1 Environmental Conservation.....	37
4.5.2 Cultural Heritage Management.....	38
4.5.3 Visitor Experience.....	39
4.5.4 Park Development and Operations	39

4.6	Plan Implementation – Key Actions	40
5	Sea To Sea Regional Park Management Plan	45
5.1	Historical Context	45
5.2	Vision Statement.....	46
5.3	Direction Statements	47
	5.3.1 <i>Environmental Conservation</i>	47
	5.3.2 <i>Cultural Heritage Management</i>	47
	5.3.3 <i>Visitor Experience</i>	47
	5.3.4 <i>Park Development and Operations</i>	47
5.4	Park Development Concept	47
5.5	Zoning Designation	48
5.6	Management Objectives and Actions	49
	5.6.1 <i>Environmental Conservation</i>	49
	5.6.2 <i>Cultural Heritage Management</i>	50
	5.6.3 <i>Visitor Experience</i>	50
	5.6.4 <i>Park Development and Operations</i>	51
5.7	Plan Implementation – Key Actions	53
6	Sooke Potholes Regional Park Management Plan	61
6.1	Historical Context	61
6.2	Vision Statement.....	62
6.3	Direction Statements	62
	6.3.1 <i>Environmental Conservation</i>	62
	6.3.2 <i>Cultural Heritage Management</i>	62
	6.3.3 <i>Visitor Experience</i>	63
	6.3.4 <i>Park Development and Operations</i>	63
6.4	Park Development Concept	63
6.5	Zoning Designation	63
6.6	Management Objectives and Actions	63
	6.6.1 <i>Environmental Conservation</i>	63
	6.6.2 <i>Cultural Heritage Management</i>	64
	6.6.3 <i>Visitor Experience</i>	65
	6.6.4 <i>Park Development and Operations</i>	65
6.7	Plan Implementation - Key Actions	66
7	Plan Monitoring, Evaluation and Review	71
7.1	Plan Monitoring and Evaluation	71
7.2	Plan Review.....	72
8	Glossary of Terms.....	73
9	References	75
10	Appendices.....	77
10.1	Appendix 1. CRD Regional Parks Management Zone Guidelines	79
10.2	Appendix 2. Management Plan Implementation Summary.....	81
	10.2.1 <i>Phase 1</i>	81
	10.2.2 <i>Phase 2</i>	81
	10.2.3 <i>Phase 3</i>	82
10.3	Appendix 3. Supplementary Information	85
	10.3.1 <i>CRD Regional Parks Master Plan</i>	85
	10.3.2 <i>Management Plan Topic Areas</i>	86
	10.3.3 <i>Park Values</i>	89

List of Maps

Map 1	Capital Regional District: Regional Parks	24
Map 2	Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt: Planning Area Context.....	25
Map 3	Sea to Sea Park Management Plan.....	26
Map 4	Ayum Creek Regional Park	32
Map 5	Ayum Creek Regional Park: Development Concept	33
Map 6	Ayum Creek Regional Park: Zoning Designation	34
Map 7	Kapoor Regional Park.....	41
Map 8	Kapoor Regional Park: Development Concept.....	42
Map 9	Kapoor Regional Park: Zoning Designation.....	43
Map 10	Sea to Sea Regional Park.....	54
Map 11	Sea to Sea Regional Park: Development Concept (1 of 3)	55
Map 12	Sea to Sea Regional Park: Development Concept (2 of 3)	56
Map 13	Sea to Sea Regional Park: Development Concept (3 of 3)	57
Map 14	Sea to Sea Regional Park: Zoning Designation (1 of 3).....	58
Map 15	Sea to Sea Regional Park: Zoning Designation (2 of 3).....	59
Map 16	Sea to Sea Regional Park: Zoning Designation (3 of 3).....	60
Map 17	Sooke Potholes Regional Park.....	68
Map 18	Sooke Potholes Regional Park: Development Concept.....	69
Map 19	Sooke Potholes Regional Park: Zoning Designation.....	70

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1 Executive Summary

CRD Regional Parks has prepared a management plan to guide decision-making for four regional park units located within a larger system of protected areas known as the “Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt.” The Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt stretches from the Saanich Inlet to the Sooke Basin (north to south), and from the Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park Reserve to the Sooke River (east to west).



The vision for the Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt is to protect a contiguous area of approximately 10,000 hectares, of which over 8,000 hectares are currently held as provincial, regional, and municipal parks. Additional lands required to complete the SSGBB have been identified in the CRD Regional Parks Master Plan as areas of acquisition interest.

The creation of a Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt is supported by the CRD Regional Parks Master Plan, Regional Growth Strategy, and CRD Corporate Strategic Plan.

The planning area covered by this management plan includes lands owned and managed by CRD Regional Parks within the Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt, with the exception of the Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park Reserve and Galloping Goose Regional Trail. The management plan includes four park units: (1) Ayum Creek Regional Park Reserve; (2) Kapoor Regional Park Reserve; (3) Sea to Sea Regional Park Reserve; and (4) Sooke Potholes Regional Park. Together, these park units comprise approximately 2,645 hectares.

These four park units provide important habitat for a large number of plant and animal species, and protect significant natural features including a major riparian corridor along the Sooke River, mountains, lakes, streams, wetlands, pockets of old growth forest, and rocky bluff ecosystems.

The parks contain significant cultural heritage resources, and are within the T’Sou-ke Nation’s traditional territory. The parks also provide for a range of outstanding non-motorized outdoor wilderness recreational opportunities, including hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian use.

Public involvement with the park management plan includes the establishment of a Management Plan Advisory Group; consultation with other CRD Departments, other levels of government, First Nations, stakeholders, and adjacent land owners; holding a number of public meetings; focus groups; and development of a range of communications strategies and materials.

A single overarching park management goal was created to guide the development of park specific

management objectives and actions. The park management goal seeks:

To ensure park values and visitor opportunities are sustained through the use of best management practices in all facets of park development and management, and to contribute to regional environmental, social and economic sustainability.

Park management plan objectives and actions for each park unit were developed for:

- Ecological conservation
- Cultural heritage management
- Visitor experience
- Park development and operations

The plan will be implemented in three phases according to the needs of each park unit and CRD Regional Parks' strategic priorities. Key actions for each phase are:

Phase 1 focuses on developing basic park infrastructure and visitor services sufficient to open the lower portion of the Sea to Sea Regional Park for sustainable, non-motorized public use. It also includes some project work in Ayum Creek, Kapoor, and Sooke Potholes to protect park assets and enhance the visitor experience.

Phase 2 continues with development of park facilities and services in Sea to Sea and Sooke Potholes Regional Parks. This phase also includes opening Ayum Creek and Kapoor Regional Parks. Other key priorities will be protection of environmental and cultural resources; community engagement; and enhancing visitor services.

Phase 3 focuses on integrating the four park units across a broader landscape as additional lands are acquired and/or opened. A key component of this phase will involve access and trail development. Projects during this phase will be defined and implemented in accord with public need and departmental priorities.

Actions taken as a result of this management plan will be carefully monitored and evaluated to ensure they fulfill their intended objectives and remain in line with park vision and direction statements. The plan will be periodically reviewed and updated to reflect existing conditions and understandings, and to ensure it supports current park management goals and objectives.

2 Plan Overview

CRD Regional Parks has prepared a Park Management Plan to guide decision-making for four regional park units located within a larger system of protected areas known as the “Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt” [SSGGB] (see Map 1, page 24). The SSGGB is defined generally as land from Saanich Inlet to Sooke Basin (north to south), and from the Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park Reserve to the Sooke River (east to west).

The SSGGB vision is to have a contiguous protected area of approximately 10,000 hectares, making it the largest area protected in parks in the Capital Regional District. Currently, 8,064 hectares of the proposed SSGGB are held as provincial, regional, or municipal park land. This represents approximately 82% of the total protected area needed to complete the SSGGB. Additional lands required to complete the SSGGB have been identified in the CRD Regional Parks Master Plan (2000) as areas of acquisition interest (see Map 2, page 25). In addition to the lands addressed in this park management plan, other protected areas in the SSGGB include Gowlland Tod, Goldstream, Sooke Mountain, and Sooke Potholes Provincial Parks; Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park Reserve; and Allman and Ludlow Municipal Parks.

The establishment of the Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt has been a major initiative of the CRD. This initiative involves several municipalities, the federal and provincial governments, and partner organizations. The Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt is a significant focus of the CRD Regional Growth Strategy, the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy, and the CRD Regional Parks Master Plan.



The park management planning process began in September 2006 with the selection of a public Advisory Group to provide advice throughout the planning process, and a series of three public meetings to gather community input into the future of the park lands. Public consultation has been on-going to ensure that a good representation of ideas for the park units is considered in the decision-making process.

The management plan covers four regional park units: (1) Ayum Creek Regional Park Reserve; (2) Kapoor Regional Park Reserve; (3) Sea to Sea Regional Park Reserve; and (4) Sooke Potholes Regional Park. Together these four park units comprise approximately 2,645 hectares. Sooke Potholes was opened to the public as a regional park in 2005; the other three park units have been held as park reserves since their acquisition.

Together, these four CRD Regional Parks provide important habitat for a large number of animal species, including large mammals such as black bear, cougar, wolves, deer, and elk. They also harbour many

threatened and endangered species in a variety of intact habitats. The parks protect significant natural features including a major corridor along the Sooke River, magnificent mountaintop vistas, healthy lakes and streams, wetlands and riparian zones, pockets of old growth forest, and large areas of naturalizing forest and rocky bluff ecosystems.

The parks contain significant cultural heritage resources, and are within the T'Sou-ke Nation's traditional territory. The four parks provide outstanding recreational opportunities for a wide range of non-motorized, sustainable, nature-based activities that enable park visitors to remain in close touch with the natural environment around them.

2.1 Description of Plan Area

The area included in the park management plan encompasses four distinct park units as shown on Map 3, page 26:

- Ayum Creek Regional Park Reserve
- Kapoor Regional Park Reserve
- Sea to Sea Regional Park Reserve
- Sooke Potholes Regional Park

The planning area includes only those lands owned and managed by CRD Regional Parks as identified on the map. The plan area does not include Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park Reserve (SHWRPR) or the Galloping Goose Regional Trail. A park management plan for SHWRPR was approved by the CRD Board in 2001; a management plan update for the Galloping Goose Regional Trail will be completed in a separate planning process.

The plan area does not include adjacent lands which are owned and/or managed by the federal government, provincial government, municipalities, electoral areas, CRD Integrated Water Services, or private parties.

For the purposes of this plan, the three park reserves (Ayum Creek, Kapoor, and Sea to Sea) will henceforth be referred to as regional parks. This is primarily because the management plan is a forward-looking document and it is expected the three park reserves will open as regional parks during the lifetime of this document.

2.2 Geographical Description of the Four Park Units

Ayum Creek Regional Park ("Ayum Creek") is located in the District of Sooke between Sooke Road and the Sooke Basin (Cooper Cove), and is approximately 40 kilometers west of Victoria. It is seven hectares in size and comprised of three distinct parcels divided by Sooke Road and the Galloping Goose Regional Trail. Ayum Creek is the southwest anchor for the Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt.

Kapoor Regional Park ("Kapoor") is located within the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area along the eastern shore of the Sooke River between Sooke Potholes Regional Park and CRD Integrated Water Services lands. To the east and west of Kapoor are private timber lands. Old Wolf Creek divides the park into two sections. The terminus of the Galloping Goose Regional Trail is at the southern boundary of Old Wolf Creek. Kapoor partially includes the historic townsite of Leechtown. Kapoor totals 16.5 hectares in size.

Sea to Sea Regional Park ("Sea to Sea") is located within the Sooke Hills, approximately 40 kilometers west of the City of Victoria within the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area and the District of Sooke. The Sea to Sea is currently comprised of a number of distinct parcels totaling approximately 2,557 hectares. The parcels are bordered on the east by the Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park Reserve and Camp Thunderbird lands, in the north by private timber lands, in the west by Sooke Potholes Regional Park, and in the south by private lands and the Sooke Basin. Sooke Mountain Provincial Park lies in the middle of the parcels.

Sooke Potholes Regional Park ("Sooke Potholes") is located approximately 45 kilometers west of Victoria in

the District of Sooke. It lies immediately north of Sooke Potholes Provincial Park at the terminus of Sooke River Road. The park is bordered by the Sooke River on the west and the Galloping Goose Regional Trail on the east. The park is approximately 64 hectares and 8 kilometers in length.

2.3 Purpose for Undertaking the Plan

The purpose of the regional park management plan is to provide a framework for CRD Regional Parks to achieve exceptional parkland stewardship on its lands and provide an outstanding visitor experience within this management planning area. To achieve this, the plan will:

- Focus on the key strategic issues that relate to these regional park lands.
- Provide park management direction based upon the best information available.
- Set out park management objectives and actions for protecting the natural environment and cultural features of the Sea to Sea lands.
- Identify the types and locations of outdoor recreation uses that will be allowed for visitors to enjoy the park.
- Identify the types and locations of park facilities and outline the services that will or may be provided.
- Identify an implementation timeframe required to achieve the plan.

2.4 Relationship of the Park to the CRD Regional Parks and Trails System

The four park units in this management plan directly contribute to the overall quality of life enjoyed by Capital Regional District residents; they also have regional significance as part of the greater Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt. The purpose of the Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt is to protect a sizeable, contiguous stretch of land for its ecosystem, recreation, and cultural values, and to provide a natural area buffer to the CRD's urban areas.

Each of the four park units uniquely contributes to the larger Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt vision. The Sea to Sea Regional Park is especially valuable for its large land base stretching across more than 2,500 hectares. Ayum Creek Regional Park is small in size, but important as a regional conservation area. Kapoor Regional Park is the northwest anchor of the CRD Regional Parks system, serves as a buffer to the CRD Water Supply lands, and is historically significant. Sooke Potholes Regional Park is an important regional recreation destination, providing visitors with excellent swimming and hiking opportunities.

2.5 Links to Other Plans

The park management plan links to other CRD Regional Parks plans, including the Parks Master Plan (2000), the CRD Regional Parks Business Plan (2008), the Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park Management Plan (2001), the Sooke Potholes Interim Management Guidelines (2005), the Ayum Creek Regional Park Reserve Interim Management Guidelines (2000), the Ten-Year Capital Infrastructure Plan (2006), the Environmental Interpretation Plan (2003), the Universal Access Plan (2003), Management of Archaeological Resources in CRD Regional Parks (1988), and the Ten-Year Conservation Strategy for CRD Regional Parks and Trails (to be completed in 2010). This plan is also linked to Regional Parks' annual operating plans and budgeting process.

Within the Capital Regional District, the plan is linked to the CRD Strategic Plan (2009), the Regional Growth Strategy (2003), the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy (1997), Water Services Agreement with the T'Sou-ke Nation regarding management of Sooke River water flows and the Sooke River watershed (2002), Water Services Sooke River Watershed Management Plan (2008), Water Services Wildfire Risk Assessment Report

(2007), the draft Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Community Parks Plan – (2009), and the proposed Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Rural Resource Lands Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw (2010).

External plans linked to this management plan include the Sooke Mountain Provincial Park Purpose Statement and Zoning Plan (2003), the Transportation & Health Initiative Final Report for the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area and District of Sooke (2007), the District of Sooke Parks and Trails Master Plan (2009), and the District of Sooke Official Community Plan (2010).

2.6 Public Consultation Process

The CRD Regional Parks Committee and Board approved a public consultation process for the planning process in July 2006. The public consultation process includes the following components:

- Establishment of a Management Plan Advisory Group (MPAG) consisting of nine representatives.
- Consultation with other CRD departments, other levels of government, First Nations, and public stakeholders.
- Preparation and distribution of a newsletter to explain the planning process and provide background information on the plan units.
- Three public meetings at the start of the planning process to identify public interests and values.
- Two public meetings to gather input on the draft park management plan and newsletter.
- Preparation and distribution of a newsletter once the final plan is approved.

The purpose of the MPAG is to provide advice and recommendations on the plan as it is developed through the final stage. The MPAG is not a decision-making body; approval of the draft and final plan lies with the CRD Regional Parks Committee and CRD Board.

2.7 First Nations

CRD Regional Parks recognizes that the park units in this plan are within the traditional territories of the T'Sou-ke Nation and Beecher Bay First Nation, and as such, are integral to the well-being and cultural identity of both communities. CRD Regional Parks recognizes that aboriginal people have used the Sea to Sea lands for many thousands of years, and that the T'Sou-ke Nation and Beecher Bay First Nation continue to maintain close ties to their traditional territories. The T'Sou-ke Nation and Beecher Bay First Nation have expressed to CRD Regional Parks their desire to preserve this deep connection to the land within the regional park units covered in this park management plan.

One approach to preserving this deep connection with the land is the T'Sou-ke Nation and Beecher Bay First Nation's interest in carrying on some traditional practices and activities in the four park units, especially as it relates to educating their children and the broader community about their history and culture. The T'Sou-ke Nation and Beecher Bay First Nation have stated they would like to work with CRD Regional Parks to address this and other issues of interest to them.

CRD Regional Parks supports discussions with the T'Sou-ke Nation and Beecher Bay First Nation to identify and address areas of mutual interest. To this end, CRD Regional Parks will work with members of both communities on various issues and projects in the four park units in a collaborative and pro-active manner, with the goal of reaching a workable outcome for all parties. The process of engagement with the T'Sou-ke Nation and Beecher Bay First Nation will be determined in direct discussions with them, and will remain flexible and responsive to changing needs and conditions.

2.8 Park Management Planning Principles

The following park management planning principles have been used to guide the development of this plan:

- CRD Regional Parks comprises a system of protected areas. The system, rather than individual parks, provides for a diversity of ecosystems, special features, and outdoor recreation opportunities and experiences sought. As such, not all types of allowable uses are appropriate within individual park units.
- CRD Regional Parks are established in perpetuity so that the ecological systems they encompass can continue to evolve through natural processes and with the minimum of intervention. Active management/habitat manipulation may be allowed when the structure or formation of ecosystems has already been altered and manipulation is the only possible or best alternative available to restore ecological integrity.
- Use of CRD Regional Parks will be encouraged, where appropriate and consistent with the principle of maintaining ecological integrity, in order to realize the spiritual, recreational, educational, cultural, tourism and health benefits that protected areas can provide. Allowable activities and uses should draw their meaning from association with and direct relation to the natural and cultural resources of the protected area. All uses of protected areas must be assessed in regard to their impact on the ecological systems; the key natural, cultural, and recreational values of particular areas; and their impacts on other users.
- Development within CRD Regional Parks should be fully compatible with the principles of maintaining ecological integrity (with no net loss of species), minimum intervention with natural processes, and minimal long-term impacts. Development should directly complement and be integral to the opportunities being provided and complement the purpose, objectives and role of the particular park.
- CRD Regional Parks recognizes that some First Nations may have interests in individual CRD Regional Parks and trails. CRD Regional Parks will work with these First Nations to identify and address their interests in a mutually agreeable manner.

2.9 Park Management Goal

A single overarching park management goal has been created to guide the development of park specific management plan objectives and actions, as detailed in the four park management plans presented in Chapters 5 through 8. The overarching goal maintains a logical connection between the strategic direction set out in the CRD Regional Parks Master Plan and the plan's management focus.

The following goal will guide the development of park management objectives and actions:

To ensure park values and visitor opportunities are protected and sustained through the use of best management practices in all facets of park development and management, and to contribute to regional environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

Best management practices include, but are not limited to, the following:

- On-going collection, analysis, and use of data in planning and conservation work.
- Reliance on science, and professional and traditional knowledge as the foundation of decision-making.
- Use of the precautionary principle to guide park management decisions.

- Application of an adaptive management framework to monitor and assess the effectiveness of park management actions.
- Adherence to transparent and accountable decision-making.
- Effective utilization of resources.
- Use of an array of communications strategies to relay key park messages.
- Working in partnership with First Nations, park users, organizations, agencies, and government to achieve park management objectives.

2.10 Park Unit Classification

CRD Regional Parks are classified by their predominant characteristics and purpose. Classification can help determine the most appropriate activities for each park and help guide park management planning. A parks classification system is important because the natural environment in each regional park is unique, has its own degree of sensitivity, and can only sustain a certain level and type of human impact without incurring irreversible damage.

The four parks in this management plan fall into three different regional park classifications:

Regional Wilderness Area: Regional wildernesses are generally large in size (> 1,000 hectares), and are managed to conserve ecosystems. Opportunities are provided for visitors to experience park ecosystems firsthand; although only rudimentary services and facilities are provided. The experience is one of remoteness, solitude and harmony with nature. ***The Sea to Sea Regional Park is classified as a Regional Wilderness Area.***

Regional Conservation Area: The primary purpose of a Regional Conservation Area is protection of the natural environment. They contain rare or endangered plant and wildlife species and their supporting ecosystems. Outdoor activities will be permitted, provided they have minimal impact on the natural environment. ***Ayum Creek Regional Park is classified as a Regional Conservation Area.***

Regional Natural Area: A Regional Natural Area protects the natural environment and provides opportunities for a range of appropriate outdoor experiences and activities. These natural areas are not as ecologically sensitive or diverse as Regional Conservation Areas, although they may contain some sensitive and threatened ecosystems. ***Kapoor Regional Park and Sooke Potholes Regional Park are classified as Regional Natural Areas.***

2.11 Park Zoning

Park zones define which activities a park or trail can accommodate and what type of visitor experience the management of the zone aims to provide. CRD Regional Parks has developed six zones that can be applied in regional parks and trails. Zoning designation maps for the four park units are included as part of the individual park management plans (see Chapters 3 through 6).

The six park zone categories and their primary objectives are:

- **Environmental Protection Zone:** To protect ecologically significant areas within CRD Regional Parks through long term science-based land stewardship.
- **Cultural Heritage Protection Zone:** To protect culturally significant areas and features through a long term cultural resource management strategy.
- **Regional Wilderness Zone:** To keep large natural systems functioning and provide a regional wilderness experience for park visitors.

- **Natural Environment Zone:** To provide easily-accessible natural areas within parks, and to provide areas within parks that can be used for more active recreational pursuits.
- **Outdoor Recreation Zone:** To provide areas within a regional park that can accommodate concentrated recreation use.
- **Park Services Zone:** To provide areas within a park needed to support park services.

The Table in Appendix 1 further defines the six park zones, including their environmental values, preferred visitor experience and activities, and typical infrastructure.

Areas needing the highest degree of protection have been designated an Environmental Protection Zone, Cultural Heritage Protection Zone, or Watershed Buffer Zone, depending upon their predominant values. These three zones take precedence over the other four zones.

The criteria for designating an Environmental Protection Zone include the following:

- Area, feature, or species is rare or endangered.
- Area, feature, or species is very sensitive to human disturbance.
- Area or feature provides important plant or wildlife habitat.

Examples of ecosystem features in this zone include:

- Fresh water bodies (e.g. lakes, rivers, streams, and creeks).
- Intertidal zone.
- Old-growth forest (e.g. trees over 250 years old).
- Riparian and wetland areas.
- Sparsely vegetated areas (e.g. rocky outcrops covered by mosses, lichens, and concentrated pockets of at-risk vascular plant species).

The criteria for designating a Cultural Heritage Protection Zone include the following:

- Area has been identified as having high archaeological potential.
- Area or feature has been identified as having significant historical interest.
- Area or feature has been identified by a relevant First Nation as having sacred or traditional use significance.

Examples of cultural heritage features in this zone include, but are not limited to:

- Identified archaeological sites and features (e.g. shell middens, culturally modified trees, rock art, human burials, lithic scatters, and subsistence features).
- Identified aboriginal sacred and/or traditional use areas.
- Identified historic sites, structures, and artifacts (e.g. post-contact infrastructure, cairns, machinery, artifacts, etc.).

Not all areas or features that should receive protection under the Environmental Protection Zone or the Cultural Heritage Protection Zone have been identified. Individual park zoning maps are delineated at a broad scale, identifying only major zoning categories. More detailed ground-based assessments will be completed prior to any park development activities. These detailed assessments will allow for determination

of individual environmentally sensitive areas and/or cultural heritage resource sites. Once identified, these areas will receive enhanced protection under the appropriate zoning designation.

If new lands are added to any of the four park units in this management plan after the plan has been adopted, an environmental and cultural heritage assessment of the acquired land will be undertaken and zoning designations applied consistent with the protection and enhancement of the area's natural, cultural, and recreational values and features.

2.12 Management Themes

Several management themes were identified during the background information gathering, and Management Plan Advisory Group and public input phases of the planning process. Attention to these priority themes will ensure that conservation, cultural heritage, visitor experience, and operational objectives for park management are met.

2.12.1 Protecting Ecological Values

A variety of ecosystems are supported in the plan area, creating a diversity of habitat for plant and wildlife species, some of which are rare or endangered. In fact, all of the ecosystems mapped in the plan area are designated red or blue-listed plant communities by the BC Conservation Data Centre. Representative ecosystems include old and mature forests, wetlands, and herb-dominated hillsides. The plan area generally represents a landscape of relative wilderness that supports a healthy diversity of ecosystems and habitats.

The ecological integrity of the plan area is affected by the use and management of adjoining areas. Management of ecological values requires coordination and collaboration with adjacent land owners and government agencies.

Although wildfire is a natural ecosystem process in the plan area, past disturbances and the presence of non-native species have increased the potential for a large-scale intense fire. This type of wildfire would have major negative effects on the ecosystems and species in the park and would degrade water quality and wildlife and fish habitat value in lakes and streams. To reduce the potential for such a fire, a focus of park management will be on preventing, detecting and suppressing wildfire.

Within the planning area, the use of best management practices and the "precautionary principle" will ensure that types, levels and areas of recreational use will not compromise other park values. Levels of visitor use and development will be carefully managed to ensure protection of ecological values. Conservation covenants are also in place to guide the form of development and types of recreational use allowed within the park units.

2.12.2 Protecting Cultural Values

Information about cultural values in the plan area is limited. Because all the cultural features have not been identified or assessed, they may be at risk from park use or development. Within the planning area, the precautionary principle will help ensure that types, levels and areas of recreational use do not compromise park cultural values. On-going collection and assessment of cultural heritage information will be a priority within the four park units.

2.12.3 Accommodating Recreation Values

The plan area provides many outstanding recreational opportunities within a spectacular natural environment. Current recreational use in the four park units includes swimming, hiking, cycling, equestrian use, sightseeing, and nature study. To ensure a sustainable balance of conservation values and recreational activities, the park units will be managed to provide for compatible recreational opportunities in some areas, while maintaining wildlife and ecosystem values in other areas.

2.12.4 Addressing Visitor Safety

The wilderness character and size of the Sea to Sea Regional Park in particular, combined with limited facility development and information, and the natural hazards of wildlife, difficult terrain, and changeable weather conditions all combine to create potentially hazardous conditions for unprepared park visitors. The condition of old logging roads and trails can be unpredictable and dangerous to use, particularly in inclement weather. Up-to-date information about park conditions and visitor preparations will be made easily available to park visitors through a variety of means.

Given the public safety risk associated with wildfire in these parks, park visitors will be provided with information on the importance of wildfire prevention. Activities in the parks may be restricted in times of high and extreme fire hazard.

2.12.5 Motorized Vehicle Access

The issue of motorized vehicle access is associated with the Sea to Sea Regional Park. Prior to acquisition as a regional park, the public could access these private forestry lands with motorized vehicles along a network of old logging roads and trails. When CRD Regional Parks acquired the land, motorized vehicle access was prohibited for the following reasons:

- The Sea to Sea Regional Park has conservation covenants placed on it which prohibit public motorized use within the park past the Harbourview Road parking lot gate.
- The Sea to Sea Regional Park is being established as a wilderness area, where the intent of the park is to protect environmental values and to provide opportunities for visitors to engage in recreational activities with a minimal impact on the natural environment.
- The CRD Parks Master Plan (2000) [Bylaw No. 2743] under Visitor-Use Activities (page 51) addresses appropriate and inappropriate visitor use activities in regional parks and trails. Motorized vehicle use is defined as an inappropriate activity within the following context:
 - Appropriate visitor use activities support appreciation and understanding of the natural environment through participation in compatible, minimal-impact activities dependent upon a natural setting for their enjoyment, while...
 - Inappropriate visitor use activities are prohibited by bylaw, cause excessive noise and environmental impacts, and significantly interfere with the enjoyment or activities of other visitors.
- CRD Bylaw 2721, Sections 40 through 44, address motorized vehicle use in regional parks and trails. In particular, Section 40(1) states that no person shall drive any type of motor vehicle in a park or on a trail except in designated areas. The Sea to Sea Regional Park has no roads or trails designated for public motorized vehicle use beyond the Harbourview Road parking lot gate.

CRD Regional Parks supports working collaboratively with stakeholders and the province to prepare a trail plan for the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area that would include opportunities for off-highway vehicle access and use.

2.12.6 Dog Management

Parks within the Regional Park system have a high degree of environmental sensitivity, and inappropriately managed dogs can result in environmental disturbance and habitat/species decline. Other park visitors can also be disturbed by inappropriately managed dogs. Dogs in the four park units are required to remain under control at all times, and in some cases on-leash/on-trail. Some sections of the parks may be zoned off-limits to dogs, depending on the degree of environmental sensitivity, presence of species at risk, or other factors. Rules regulating dogs, and identification of off-limit areas or time periods, will be clearly stated in park communications materials.

2.12.7 Community Engagement

CRD Regional Parks seeks public engagement around park opportunities and challenges. This is desirable from a number of perspectives, including:

- Collaboration with adjacent landowners (e.g. Camp Thunderbird/YMCA) is critically important for achieving mutually beneficial conservation and management goals beyond park boundaries.
- The public is interested in regional parks, and wants to help protect, maintain, rehabilitate, steward, promote, educate, and benefit from the parks.
- Public participation builds support for the parks system, and provides people with opportunities to connect with nature, regional park staff, and each other in healthy and meaningful ways.
- CRD Regional Parks desires to be a vital contributing factor to the region's high quality of life. In this regard, CRD Regional Parks will work with the public to strengthen linkages between public ownership of the regional park system and social, environmental, health, and economic benefits.

Within the four park units, CRD Regional Parks will engage with the public through volunteer, partnership and stewardship initiatives, as well as other types of activities and opportunities.

2.12.8 Economic Opportunities

The park units are uniquely positioned to support compatible economic opportunities within park boundaries and to adjacent communities. Particularly well suited is the Sea to Sea Regional Park with its large wilderness landscape. Appropriate types of commercial activities in the Sea to Sea could include guided hikes, nature walks, and mountain bike and equestrian rides. The T'Sou-ke Nation may be interested in offering cultural tours and activities. The overall goal is to utilize the parks' natural settings and features to provide sustainable economic benefits to local communities. CRD Regional Parks will work closely with approved commercial operators to ensure ecological integrity, park operations, and visitor experience objectives are met.

2.12.9 Universal Accessibility

CRD Regional Parks advocates universal access to its park facilities. Wherever possible, universally accessible features will be incorporated into park design and development projects. Within the four park units, opportunities for developing accessible trails and other features exist most clearly in Sooke Potholes, Kapoor, and Ayum Creek.

2.13 Plan Implementation

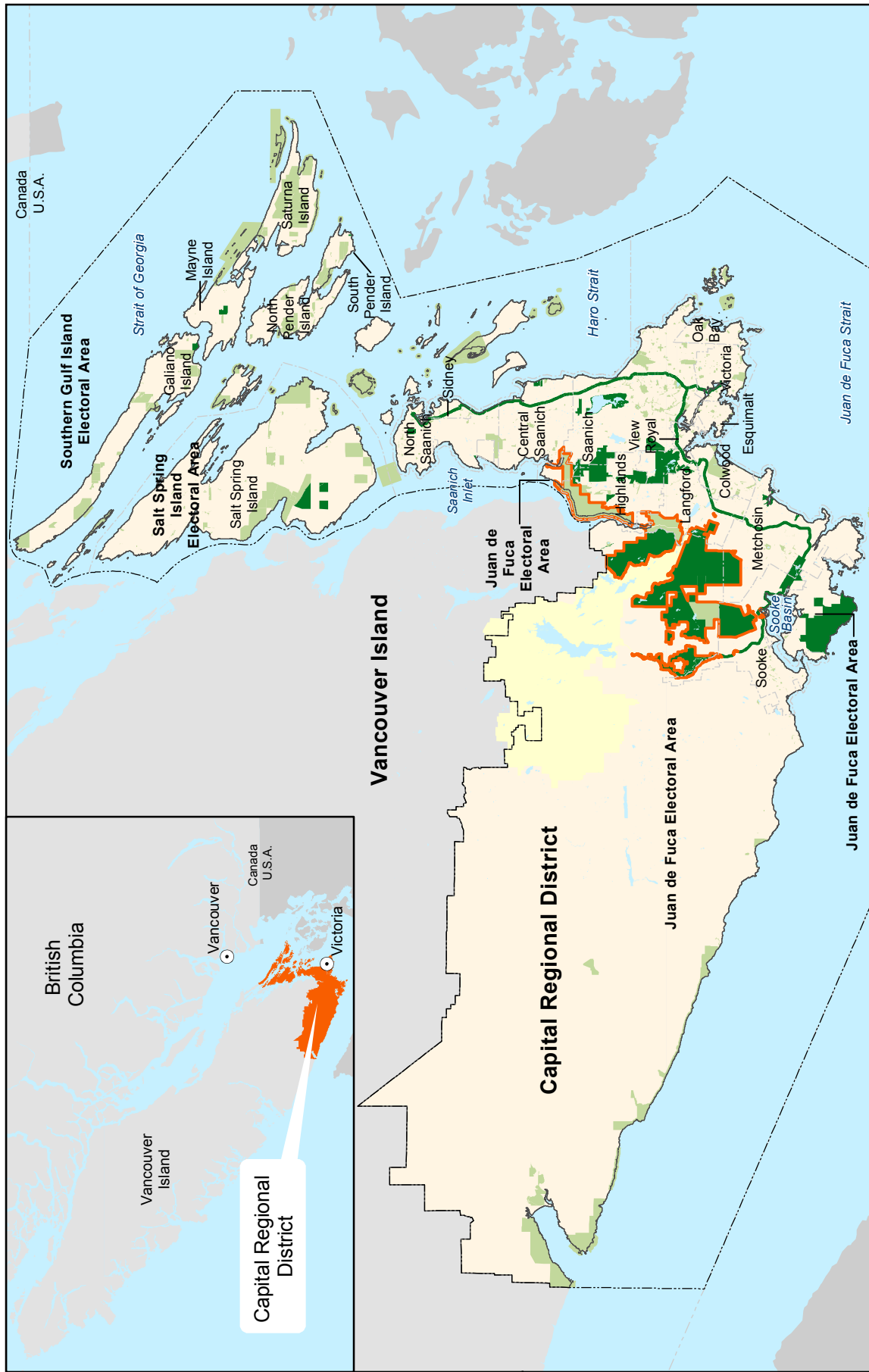
The plan will be implemented in three phases according to the development and operations needs of each park unit. Three of the park units have been in reserve status since acquisition (Kapoor, Sea to Sea, and Ayum Creek); while Sooke Potholes has been open as a regional park since June 2005. The specific requirements of each park unit will be addressed within the following plan implementation framework:

Phase 1 focuses on developing basic park infrastructure and visitor services sufficient to open a portion of the Sea to Sea Regional Park to the public. It also focuses on completing identified facilities at Sooke Potholes to address on-going visitor use and safety concerns. Some basic projects for Ayum Creek and Kapoor are included.

Phase 2 continues with park development once Phase 1 is complete. A primary focus of Phase 2 will be on opening Ayum Creek and Kapoor regional parks. An additional focus will be on completion of the Sea to Sea Regional Park trail network and development of mountain bike opportunities. Phase 2 will also include completing identified park infrastructure projects in the four parks, and undertaking various park management activities as they are identified.

Phase 3 focuses on integrating the four park units across a broader landscape as additional lands are acquired and the Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park Reserve is opened to the public. On-going visitor experience, environmental conservation, and cultural heritage management projects will continue in the four parks during this phase.

An individual plan implementation table listing key actions to be undertaken during each phase is included within each park management plan (see Chapters 5 through 8). An overall implementation summary table is presented in Appendix 2.



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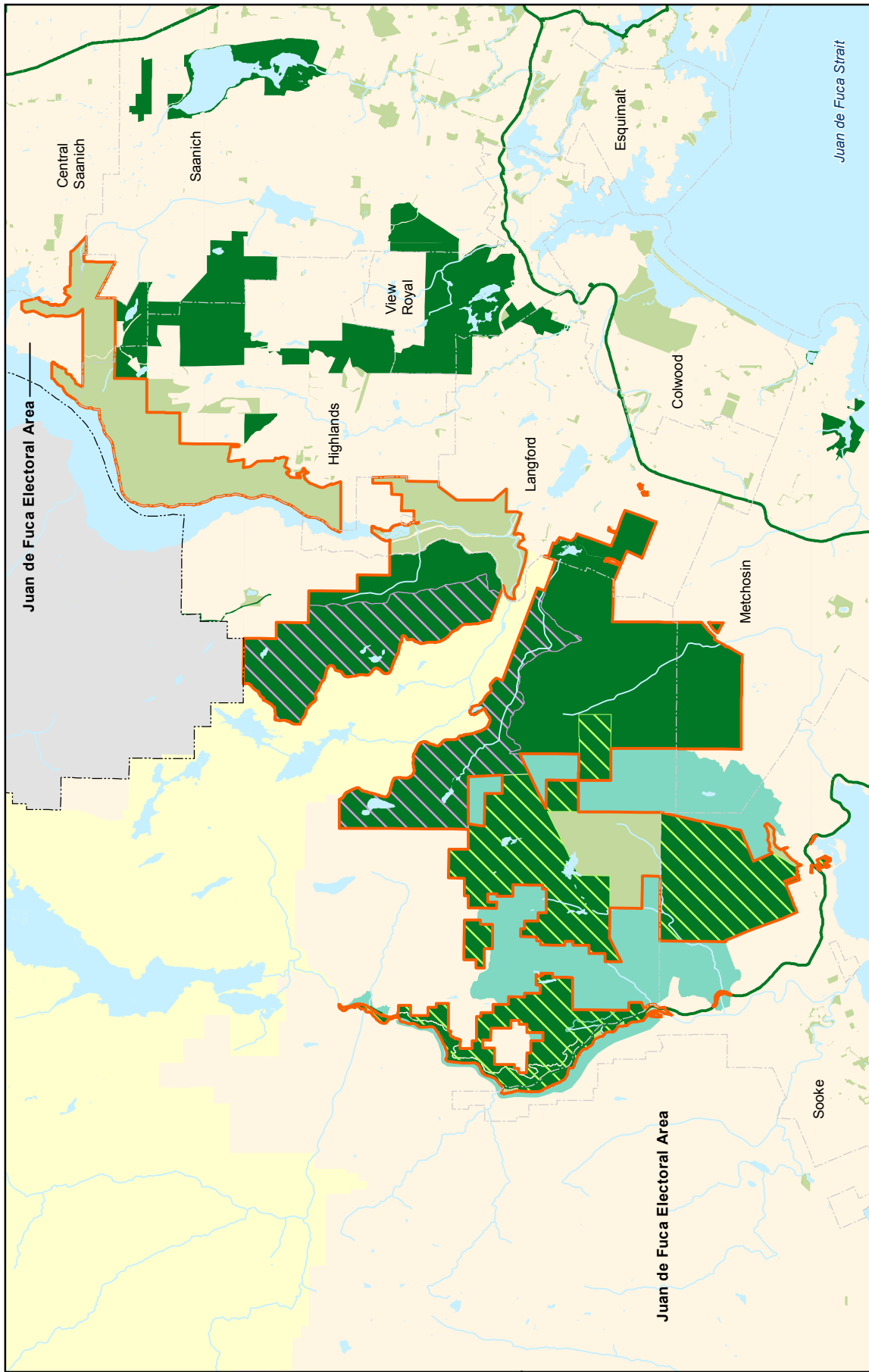
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Map 1 January 2010 S5G8B_RP_Overview.mxd

- Parks in the Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt
- CRD Water Supply Land
- Regional District Boundary
- Municipal / Electoral Area Boundary
- Regional Park
- Other Park
- Canada
- United States








CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT
REGIONAL PARKS





SEA TO SEA GREEN BLUE BELT
PLANNING AREA CONTEXT



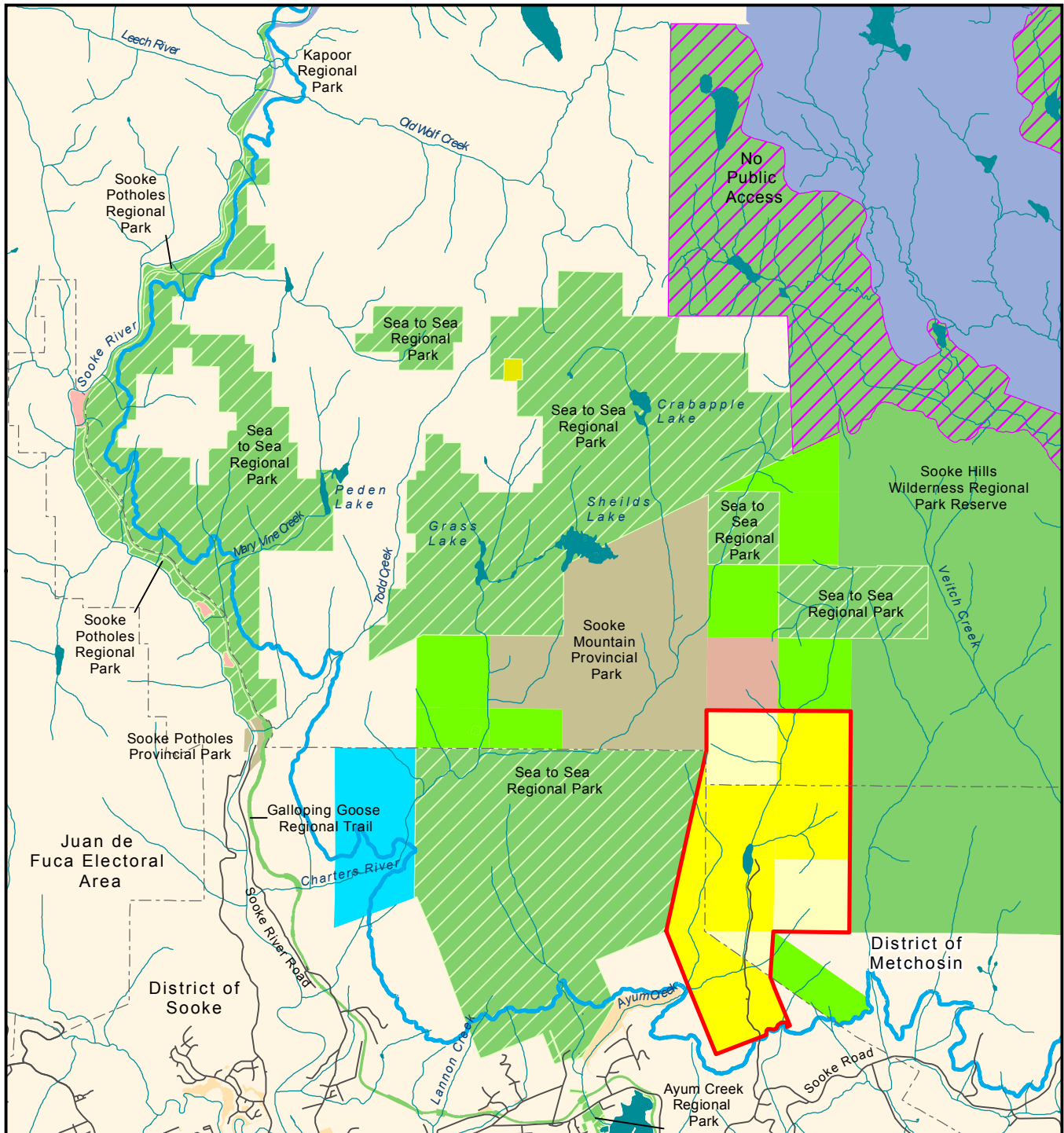
-  Regional Park
-  Other Park
-  Parks in the Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt
-  Sea to Sea Park Management Plan
-  CRD Drinking Water Protection Zone
-  Area with Regional Park Potential
-  CRD Water Supply Land

0 1 2 4 Kilometres

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Map 2 January 2010 SSGBB_Plan_Area_Context.mxd



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Map 3

January 2010

SSGGB_PU.mxd

- Regional Park
- Municipal Park
- Provincial Park
- Protected Area
- CRD Water Supply Area
- Ecological Reserve
- CRD Water Flowline
- Road
- Stream / River
- Lake / Reservoir
- Sea to Sea Park Management Plan Parks
- CRD Drinking Water Protection Zone
- CRD - Water Parcel
- Crown - Leased to YMCA
- Crown - to be transferred to CRD Parks
- Private Parcel
- YMCA - Camp Thunderbird
- YMCA Camp Thunderbird (Owned/Leased)
- Municipal / Electoral Area Boundary

Sea to Sea Park Management Plan

Park Units



3 Ayum Creek Regional Park Management Plan

Ayum Creek was incorporated into the CRD Regional Parks system in April 1998 and has been held in park reserve status since that time (see Map 4, page 32). Ayum Creek operates under a set of interim management guidelines until a park management plan is approved. The primary focus of the interim management guidelines is protection of the park’s natural environment. Under the direction of the management guidelines, no major developments have occurred and there are no visitor facilities within the park. CRD Regional Parks has supported salmon habitat enhancement projects in Ayum Creek; specifically, a back channel and in-stream complexing have been developed.



Ayum Creek was acquired through a partnership of financial contributors which included the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, the Victoria Natural History Society, Habitat Acquisition Trust Foundation (HAT), the Sooke Electoral Area, Mountain Equipment Co-op, Canada Trust, the Society for the Protection of Ayum Creek (SPAC), The Land Conservancy of BC (TLC), and CRD Regional Parks.

TLC holds a conservation covenant with CRD Regional Parks for Ayum Creek. The covenant states that CRD Regional Parks shall recognize the long term public interest in the preservation, protection, and restoration of the ecosystems and biodiversity of Ayum Creek as it flows through the park lands. The covenant stipulates that CRD Regional Parks shall prepare and adopt a park management plan and establish a public advisory group to assist in the preparation of the plan with a member each of TLC, HAT and SPAC.

3.1 Historical Context

Ayum Creek is historically significant to the T’Sou-ke Nation and is a known traditional use site. Elders recall harvesting large runs of chum, coho, steelhead, and trout until the 1930s, while nearby shell middens are full of native oyster shells. Ayum Creek was traditionally known as “Stoney Creek” by the T’Sou-ke, which is roughly translated into “good.”

Ayum Creek, and particularly the mouth of Ayum Creek, was the site of significant industrial development prior to its designation as a park. Early developments associated with Ayum Creek include its role as a construction staging area, together with the adjacent Cooper Cove, during the construction of the Water Board Flow Line between about 1911-1916. When the Canadian National Railway (CNR) line was created linking Sooke to Victoria, a wooden trestle was built across Ayum Creek.

During the 1920s development of the Saseenos subdivision, a dam was built on a tributary of Ayum Creek north of the present park reserve boundaries to provide water, and a system of wooden stave pipes was installed throughout the subdivision. The dam was blown up in 1990, but remnants of it still exist today. In the 1940s, Munn's Mill was built on both sides of lower Ayum Creek. The main mill structure was on the west side of the creek, together with bunkhouses and cottages. The mill burned down in 1956 and was never rebuilt.

3.2 Vision Statement

The vision for Ayum Creek is set 25 years in the future:

Ayum Creek is an ecological wonder. A relatively small stream that winds its way through a mixed forest before entering a small but biologically rich estuary, Ayum Creek provides the greater Sooke Basin with critical spawning grounds for coho and chum salmon as well as steelhead and cutthroat trout.

The abundant streamside vegetation still contains a hundred species of native plants, including some that are quite rare. Global warming has affected some species that formerly occurred in the park, but they have been replaced by other species new to the area. The critically endangered purple martin, one of some 80 species of birds that find a home in this rich environment, is still found flying about Ayum Creek.

This spectacular concentration of ecological diversity was preserved originally through far-sighted, committed public action. The people living near Ayum Creek have long served as stewards of this unique ecosystem, carrying out restoration work on the stream channels and stream banks, significantly improving the quality of fish habitat and greatly enhancing the riparian zone. This local community involvement has only increased over time.

Ayum Creek Regional Park has evolved into an important educational area as visitors from throughout the region come here to learn more about the sensitive salmon habitat, the changing vegetation, the marine life, and the diverse bird populations. But all who visit step lightly on the landscape.

3.3 Direction Statements

These direction statements have been prepared to guide the development of park-specific objectives and actions for environmental conservation, cultural heritage management, visitor experience, and park operations.

3.3.1 Environmental Conservation

Ayum Creek has been heavily impacted by past human use. The primary emphasis in this park will be on conserving and restoring the ecosystems and biodiversity of Ayum Creek and surrounding park lands, with particular emphasis on removal and control of invasive species.

3.3.2 Cultural Heritage Management

Cultural heritage resources will be identified, assessed, protected, and interpreted as feasible. Various artifacts of past human use remain in the park; some may need to be removed or remediated. First Nations history will be documented and interpreted in partnership with the T'Sou-ke Nation and Beecher Bay First Nation.

3.3.3 Visitor Experience

The primary emphasis will be on providing low-key, low-impact recreational activities that lend themselves to education, contemplation, and nature study. The major activities will be walking and nature appreciation.

3.3.4 Park Development and Operations

Park facilities and services will be minimal in keeping with the nature of the desired park experience and the emphasis on environmental conservation. Walking trails and limited communications materials will be some of the most visible signs of park development.

3.4 Park Development Concept

The development concept for Ayum Creek is to keep the park as natural and undeveloped as possible and to ensure minimal visitor impacts to the park environment (see Map 5, page 33). The park reserve will be opened as a regional park in accordance with departmental strategic priorities and visitor demand. In the interim, little change is planned for the park reserve, aside from some possible trail repairs and invasive species management. Prior to the park reserve being opened, a park information kiosk, portal sign, and restroom will be installed. If future upgrades to Highway 14 take away the current parking area, a small parking lot may be developed at the northern boundary of the park.

3.5 Zoning Designation

Ayum Creek is entirely designated as an Environmental Protection Zone (see Map 6, page 34). The park is small in size and surrounded by developed areas. The long-term ecological viability of this park is contingent upon the maintenance of on-going natural processes within park boundaries. The park contains many sensitive ecosystem features which qualify it for the highest level of environmental protection, including an inter-tidal zone and small estuary, riparian area along Ayum Creek, important salmon habitat in Ayum Creek and the constructed back-channel, and patches of old growth forest. The park has some cultural heritage values; these will be protected through its environmental protection zone designation.

3.6 Management Objectives and Actions

3.6.1 Environmental Conservation

Overview

Ayum Creek has been heavily impacted by invasive species, most noticeably periwinkle, blackberry, and broom. The park would benefit from a structured program of invasive species management.

On-going monitoring and evaluation of visitor use levels, usage patterns, and associated impacts will be undertaken, particularly when salmon are present and as use levels increase. During heavy water flows, Ayum Creek should be assessed for the presence of hazards and bank erosion due to log jams and other types of debris.

An on-going relationship with First Nations and volunteers will be nurtured, and their involvement with park management issues, such as invasive species removal, encouraged.

OBJECTIVES

- To determine suitable vegetation patterns that will ensure the maintenance of natural biodiversity.
- To use communications and education to raise public understanding of the park's ecological heritage and issues surrounding its long-term environmental protection.
- To develop an environmental conservation strategy for the park, including a vegetation management plan.

ACTIONS

- Remove non-native species that threaten native plant communities or species.
- Coordinate a public communications program about the park ecosystem.

3.6.2 Cultural Heritage Management

Overview

A recent archaeological assessment found no remaining evidence of aboriginal use or occupation of the park, largely because the site has been heavily disturbed in recent times. However, the park is surrounded by a number of very significant archaeological sites, and there is strong evidence that Ayum Creek was also an important site for pre- and early-contact aboriginal people.

The site is still important to the T'Sou-ke Nation and Beecher Bay First Nation. Many community members have vivid memories of fishing and gathering in and around the park in past years. Every effort will be made to involve the T'Sou-ke Nation and Beecher Bay First Nation in cultural heritage management, and consideration will be given to renaming the park or park features with First Nations names.

The park also has a significant post-contact history. It includes remnants of a former milling operation with its associated structures. Documents mention the presence of Chinese workers living and working at the mill site, and local residents have found remnants of dishes and other items associated with these workers.

The park's human history will be fully documented, from pre-contact to the present, to aid in cultural heritage interpretation and management.

OBJECTIVES

- To inventory, assess, and protect significant cultural heritage resources.
- To work with local First Nations to identify and address cultural heritage issues.
- To include historical and cultural messages in the park's communication and interpretive strategies.

ACTIONS

- Inventory and assess the park's cultural heritage resources.
- Develop a strategy to protect significant cultural heritage resources.
- Work with the T'Sou-ke Nation and Beecher Bay First Nation to identify and address their interests and concerns.
- Incorporate past human use/occupation into interpretive programming .

3.6.3 Visitor Experience

Overview

Ayum Creek Regional Park is small in size, surrounded by private development, and primarily appropriate for walking and nature study activities. Key features include observing salmon in the creek, walking on the tidal flats along the Sooke Basin, meandering along forested trails, and examining the relics of past human use. The park offers visitors an easily accessible and interesting destination featuring a variety of ecosystems and natural/cultural features within a relatively flat and compact area.

OBJECTIVES

- To offer visitor opportunities appropriate for the park setting. These opportunities should focus on walking, nature appreciation, interpretation, education, and research.

ACTIONS

- Provide opportunities for low-impact, walking-oriented, day-use activities.
- Retain Ayum Creek, and surrounding riparian areas, as off-limits to dogs during salmon spawning season; and on-leash/on-trails the rest of the year.

3.6.4 Park Development and Operations

Overview

Park advocacy groups and the public have stated the park should be minimally developed in keeping with its focus as a conservation area. If future demand warrants it, limited park development, appropriate to the setting, may be considered.

Local support for the park is critical for its long-term success and should be pro-actively sought and maintained.

It is important to work closely with the Habitat Acquisition Trust to encourage adjacent land owners to maintain an adequate buffer zone on their properties to help protect the park.

OBJECTIVES

- To develop minimal day use facilities and trails to support lower visitor use levels and protection of the park environment.
- To address visitor safety issues.

ACTIONS

- Install an information kiosk, portal sign, and restroom as visitor demand warrants it.
- Reconstruct trails where bank erosion or other environmental impacts are evident.

3.7 Plan Implementation – Key Actions

Phase 1

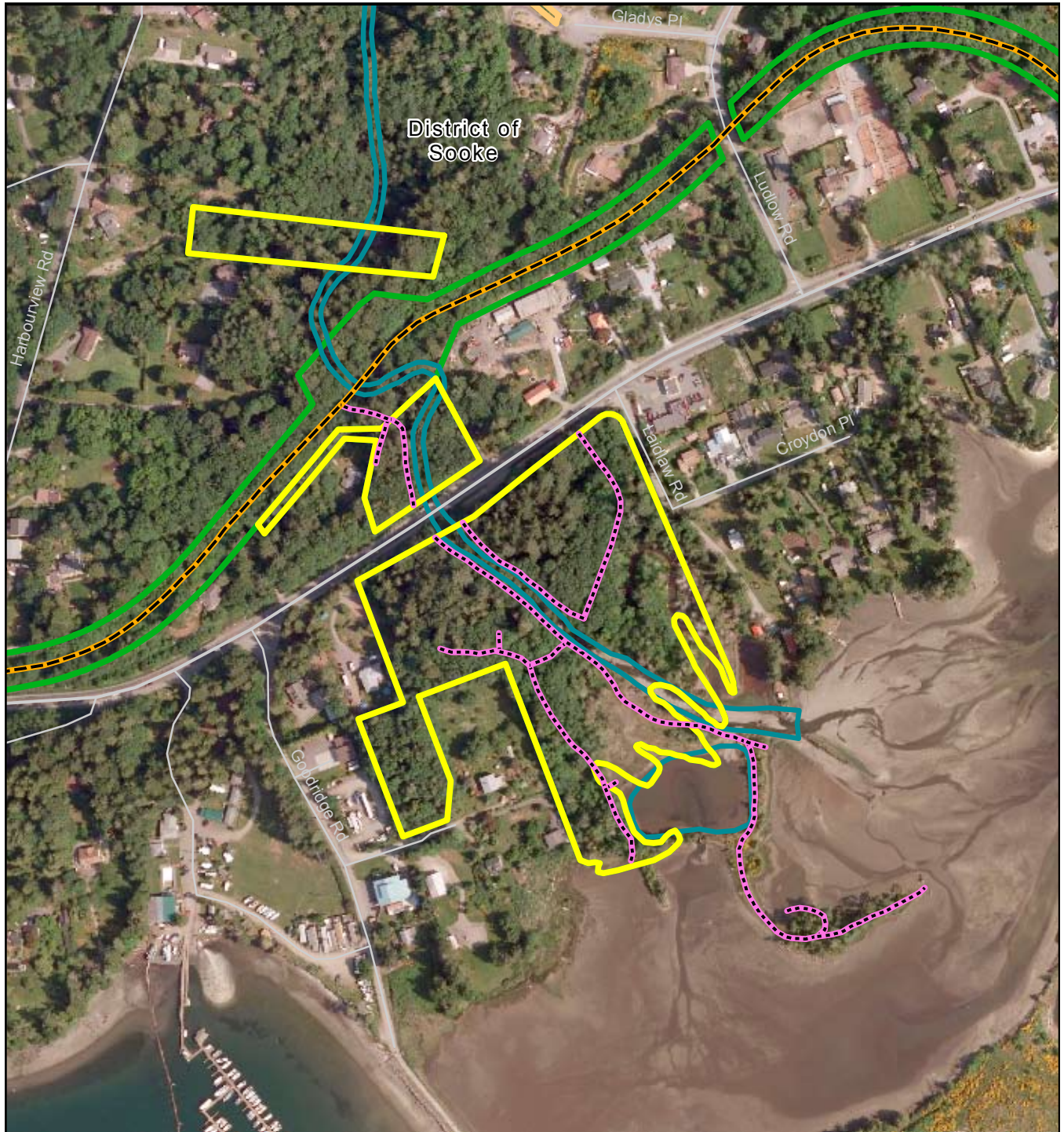
- Assess and repair existing park trails and access points as necessary
- Prepare and implement basic environmental conservation and communications strategies

Phase 2

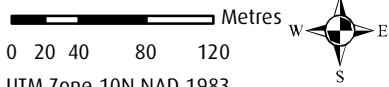
- Open the park with appropriate level of park facilities and services
- Develop and implement comprehensive environmental protection and cultural heritage management strategies
- Develop and implement comprehensive communications, community development, and interpretive strategies

Phase 3

- To be determined based on management concerns, departmental priorities, and visitor needs












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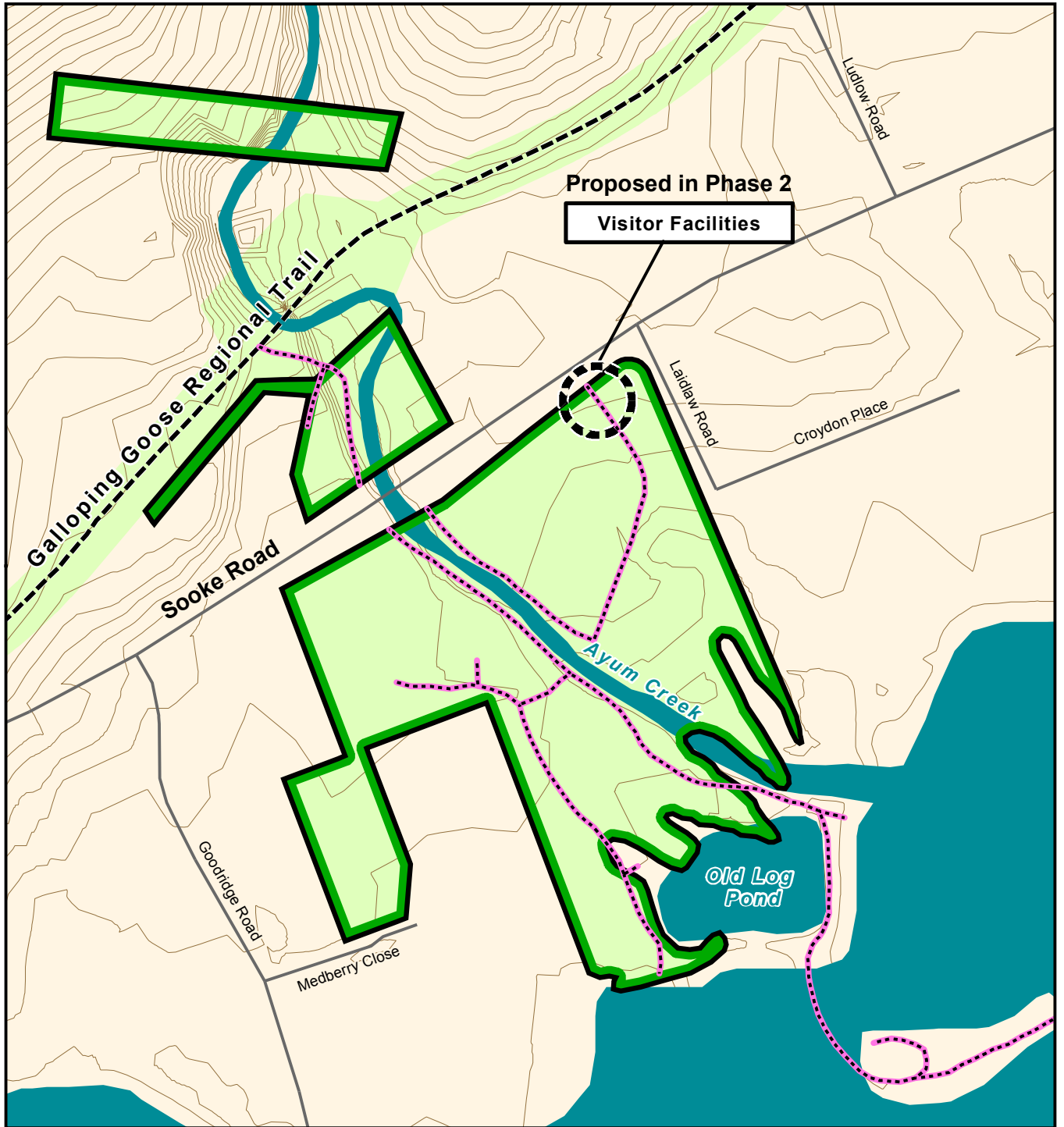
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-  Ayu Creek Regional Park
-  Regional Park
-  Municipal Park
-  Provincial Park
-  Hiking / Equestrian / Cycling Trail
-  Hiking Trail
-  Major Road
-  Minor Road
-  Ayu Creek

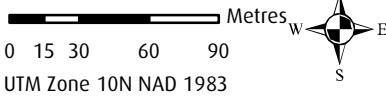
Ayuk Creek Regional Park



Map 4 | January 2010 | SSGBB_MP_AC.mxd



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UTM Zone 10N NAD 1983

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Map 5

January 2010

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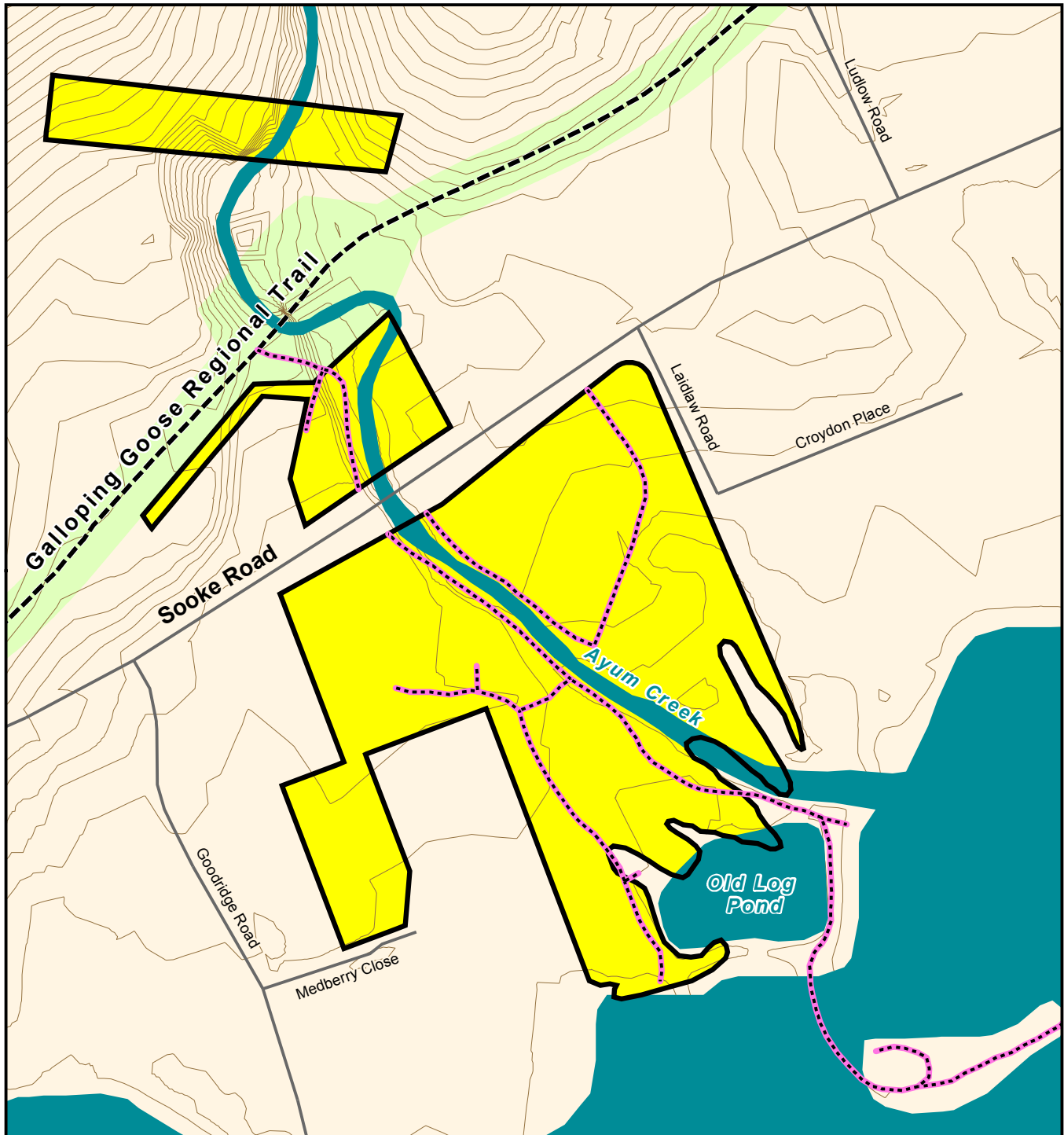
- Park Boundary
- Regional Park
- Hiking Trail
- Hiking / Equestrian / Cycling Trail
- Road
- Contour (2 metre interval)
- Creek / Lake / Reservoir

Ayum Creek Regional Park

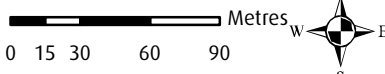
Development Concept



Making a difference...together



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UTM Zone 10N NAD 1983

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Environmental Protection Zone

Park Boundary

Regional Park

Hiking Trail

Hiking / Equestrian / Cycling Trail

Road

Contour (2 metre interval)

Creek / Lake / Reservoir

Ayum Creek Regional Park

Zoning Designation



Map 6 | January 2010 | SSSGBB_MPZ_AC.mxd

4 Kapoor Regional Park Management Plan

The Kapoor family donated this park reserve to CRD Regional Parks in June 2000 (see Map 7, page 41). At the request of the Kapoor family, a plaque was placed in the reserve dedicating the park in the memory of “Kapoor Singh Siddoo (1885 – 1964), pioneer lumberman and visionary, who founded Kapoor Lumber Company, Ltd., which has operated in this area since 1928.” Kapoor lies between the CNR right-of-way and the Sooke River, and contains 1.8 kilometers of river frontage. Kapoor Regional Park is situated at the southern boundary of the Greater Victoria Water Supply area.

4.1 Historical Context

The park is adjacent to the historic site of Leechtown, a mid-19th century gold mining town. The history of Leechtown begins in 1864 with an exploring expedition led by Robert Brown up the Sooke River. According to historical accounts, Brown left the expedition temporarily in the charge of his second in command, Peter Leech, to return to Victoria. By the time Brown returned on July 26th, word had already been sent to Governor Sir Arthur indicating that Leech had discovered gold near the confluence of the Sooke and Leech rivers, and the quantity was estimated to be enough to employ 4,000 men. Soon after, hundreds of



prospectors moved to the area traveling by foot or steam boat, and living in tent camps that became the settlement of Leechtown. A post office, several general stores and a hotel were established. By the fall of 1864, at least 500 men were living at Leech River. At least \$100,000 worth of gold was recovered during the gold rush. However, no huge strikes were made, and the rush lasted only three years. Soon after, the settlements were abandoned. However, even today, the Leech River is the best gold bearing river on Vancouver Island.

The park is also the site of railway logging operations owned by the Kapoor Lumber Company. The Kapoor Lumber Company began operations in the area beginning around 1928. The company was run by Mr. Kapoor Singh, who died in 1964. Portions of the logging train route are now used as the Galloping Goose Regional Trail, the northwest terminus of which is now in Kapoor Regional Park. In the 1930s, Cameron Mill was located in Leechtown, and used up until the late 1930s.

Numerous old trails and roads still crisscross the park property, and although no standing structures remain, some relic mining and logging equipment lies scattered throughout the area. With its proximity to the Galloping Goose Regional Trail, the park has great potential to capitalize on its regional historical significance through appropriate site restoration and interpretive activities. There are no covenants on file for the Kapoor Regional Park Reserve.

Kapoor is historically significant for the T'Sou-ke Nation, and was likely an important traditional use area. Archival research and oral histories indicate the existence of an aboriginal trail traversing through the park to connect Sooke to Saanich and Cowichan. No evidence of aboriginal use is evident in the park today, although this is likely due to the high level of post-contact site disturbance in and around the park.

4.2 Vision Statement

The vision for Kapoor Regional Park in 25 years is:

Located within and adjacent to Kapoor Regional Park, in the 1860s historic Leechtown was a mining community larger in population than Victoria. During the 20th century, a lively logging economy developed in and around the park. Nearly 200 years later the aura of those adventurous times lingers on as the park honours the memory of the frontier town site, offering visitors a journey back in time. These memories also include local First Nations history and traditional cultural practices in and around the park. These early human influences are brought to life through innovative interpretative programs collaborated on by park naturalists, community members, and the T'Sou-ke Nation.

The previously logged forests in the Kapoor lands have grown back considerably as formerly impacted areas continue to regenerate. Special care is given to protecting the park's ecosystems so the full range of biological diversity can continue to flourish. Because of this excellent stewardship, the park provides habitat for a full complement of native plant and animal species, including some that are rare and endangered.

Located at the terminus of the Galloping Goose Regional Trail some six kilometres beyond Sooke Potholes Regional Park, Kapoor Regional Park and Leechtown attracts a range of outdoor enthusiasts drawn by the pleasant forest surroundings and the unspoiled beauty of the Sooke River. This riparian system offers up riverside getaways, inviting swimming holes, and a quiet place to drop in a fishing line. The park also plays an important role in protecting the security of the Greater Victoria Water Supply Area.

Direction Statements

Direction statements have been prepared to guide development of park specific objectives and actions under environmental conservation, cultural heritage management, visitor experience, and park operations.

4.2.1 Environmental Conservation

Kapoor is a highly disturbed site with large areas heavily impacted by invasive plant species. The site also includes significant riparian habitat along the Sooke River, Leech River, and Old Wolf Creek, as well as some naturalizing forest patches. The primary focus of environmental conservation in this park will be on habitat restoration and on-going protection of the natural environment.

4.2.2 Cultural Heritage Management

Kapoor is adjacent to the site of historic Leechtown, and of significant mining and logging operations since settlement times. No standing structures remain in the park, although relicts of the former settlements exist. The park is also associated with pre-historic aboriginal use. The park's rich history will provide an opportunity to educate and interpret the site for park visitors. Culturally significant features will be identified and protected as feasible.

4.2.3 Visitor Experience

Kapoor is ideally located at the end of the Galloping Goose Regional Trail, and is also the northwest anchor of the Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt. With this key location, park visitors will be able to experience a

relatively wild and remote area with comparative ease. The primary focus will be on providing visitors with opportunities to enjoy compatible, nature-based recreational activities, such as swimming, hiking, biking, and equestrian use. Opportunities will also be provided for education and interpretation of the area's natural and cultural history. Community engagement in projects and activities to commemorate the park's rich cultural history will be particularly emphasized.

4.2.4 Park Development and Operations

Kapoor will have minimal facilities and services, in keeping with its remote location and park classification. However, basic services and facilities will be provided at the site. With its proximity to CRD Water Supply Area lands to the north and west, security issues and fire risk management are key concerns and coordination between Regional Parks and Integrated Water Services will be a priority.

4.3 Park Development Concept

The development concept for Kapoor Regional Park is to leave it predominantly natural with minimal facilities development. Facilities will include a day-use area with picnic tables, restroom, park kiosk, hitching posts, and bike racks near the southern boundary of the park (see Map 8, page 42).

A simple trail network will be developed, largely using existing old roads and trails. The Galloping Goose Regional Trail will be extended to the facility development area near the southern boundary of the park. A historic interpretive trail may be developed to showcase some of the remaining mining, logging, and townsite relics. First Nations themes may also be explored and interpreted in partnership with the T'Sou-ke Nation.

Overnight camping will be prohibited until/unless conditions merit further consideration of this activity.

The center of the park will be kept clear of broom and reserved for use as an emergency evacuation and wildfire suppression staging area in the event of fires or other natural disasters.

4.4 Zoning Designation

Most of the park is designated as a Natural Environment Zone (see Map 9, page 43) in spite of its significant settler history stretching from the mid-19th century to the mid-20th century. All water-bodies, riparian corridors, and old-growth trees are protected under the Environmental Protection Zone.

Where significant remnants of mining and logging history are found, the individual site or feature may receive protection under the Cultural Heritage Protection Zone. If aboriginal sites or features are identified, they will also receive protection under the Cultural Heritage Protection Zone. Although Kapoor has a rich cultural history, its primary value now is seen to be protection of its natural environment.

4.5 Management Objectives and Actions

4.5.1 Environmental Conservation

Overview

Kapoor Regional Park has been heavily disturbed since the mid-1800's due to resource extraction and human settlement activities. Long-term invasive species management is a priority in this park. The park contains key riparian flood plain habitat which needs on-going monitoring and protection. This work may be undertaken with the help of First Nations and volunteers.

Integrated Water Services maintains an interest in this park due to its proximity to the Greater Victoria Water Supply Area. Regional Parks and Water Services may collaborate on research and other activities relevant to understanding the larger landscape. Potential areas of cooperation include ecosystem and wildlife studies, and ecological inventory, management, and monitoring.

OBJECTIVES

- To maintain and, where feasible, restore native vegetation communities.
- To monitor environmental impacts to park ecosystems.
- To communicate with park visitors about the value of the park's ecosystems, and ways to minimize environmental impacts.

ACTIONS

- Develop an environmental conservation strategy and vegetation management plan; include monitoring of environmental impacts to park ecosystems.
- Minimize disturbance to the riparian areas adjacent to the Sooke and Leech rivers, and Old Wolf Creek.
- Use communications and education to promote a greater understanding of park ecosystems and of the risk of fires.

4.5.2 Cultural Heritage Management

Overview

Kapoor's most visible cultural heritage feature is its post-contact human history, particularly at the former Leechtown site and in later settlement areas associated with 19th- and early 20th-century mining and logging activities.

Although no standing structures remain in the park, scattered artifacts can still be found. These artifacts include old machinery, vehicles, and cabin foundations. Much of the significant artifacts and habitation sites lie outside of park boundaries. Visitor trespass onto these private lands may become a management challenge.

No aboriginal sites or features have been documented in the park, yet evidence indicates aboriginal peoples used this general area quite extensively over many thousands of years. The T'Sou-ke Nation will be consulted about their knowledge of this site and invited to participate in various interpretive activities and cultural heritage projects.

OBJECTIVES

- To document the park's human history.
- To work with the T'Sou-ke Nation to identify issues of interest to them.
- To inventory, assess, and manage cultural heritage resources.
- To include historical and cultural messages in the park's communication strategy.

ACTIONS

- Identify known historical information, and supplement information gaps where feasible.
- Collaborate with the T'Sou-ke Nation on aboriginal cultural heritage issues.
- Assess the significance of cultural artifacts. Remove items with no historical value.
- Ensure park development and communication programs support the protection of cultural heritage resources.

4.5.3 Visitor Experience

Overview

Kapoor is small in size and somewhat isolated at the northwest corner of the Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt. The park is accessible primarily by foot, bike, or horse along the Galloping Goose Regional Trail from Sooke Potholes Regional Park. Because of its small size, park visitors may have a limited area in which to enjoy their recreational pursuits. Park benefits include its fairly short, level, and easy trail system, and its easy water access. Kapoor is suited for day-use opportunities at this time; future conditions may warrant reconsideration of camping.

The location of park facilities and trails south of Old Wolf Creek will help visitors avoid the noise and visual intrusion of the gravel mining extraction operation on the adjacent Kapoor Lumber Company lands. Regional Parks will work with adjacent landowners to create visual buffers with adjacent lands and minimize the effects of adjacent land use activities on the park visitor experience.

Many visitors come to the park expecting to see historic Leechtown, which no longer remains. Much of the evidence of past human occupation is gone, but some remnants still remain. The park's rich cultural history is a key park feature and will be emphasized through the development of appropriate educational and interpretive materials and activities. The public is very interested in the area's aboriginal, mining, logging, and settlement history. Opportunities will be provided for public participation in projects commemorating this unique past.

OBJECTIVES

- To provide park visitors with appropriate information about the range of opportunities available in the park.
- To provide visitors with opportunities to experience, learn about, share, and commemorate the park's natural and cultural history.

ACTIONS

- Provide park visitors with reliable information about park hours, services and opportunities.
- Develop an easy and accessible trail system highlighting the park's natural and cultural heritage values.
- Provide opportunities for public participation in appropriate park projects and activities.

4.5.4 Park Development and Operations

Overview

Park service vehicle access is limited to the Galloping Goose Regional Trail and to active logging roads leading through Water Services and private forest lands adjacent to the park. Gates and fencing on the CRD water pipeline right of way north of Old Wolf Creek have been installed to protect the security of the Water Supply Area and Kapoor Lumber Company lands to the east. The fencing also protects the public from the gravel extraction operation on adjacent Kapoor lands.

Although the entire park is open to public use, travel on the road right of way north of Old Wolf Creek to the Greater Victoria Water Supply Area gate will not be encouraged in order to maintain a buffer to the Water Supply Area and to gravel extraction and forestry activities on adjacent private lands.

Measures should be taken to discourage visitors from trespassing on unfenced Kapoor Lumber Company lands south of Old Wolf Creek. Visitors should also be discouraged from accessing the old water flowline where it comes close to the Galloping Goose Regional Trail in this area.

The park will serve as an emergency evacuation and wildfire suppression staging area in the event of a forest fire with strong southerly winds. Visitors could be evacuated through Water Service lands to the north.

The central area of the park is a former log sort covered with Scotch broom. An annual broom cutting program should be maintained to keep the area clear for an emergency evacuation and staging area.

Operational protocols will be developed with Water Services to clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of CRD Regional Parks and Integrated Water Services staff regarding wildfire protection and detection, security, and emergency services within and adjacent to the park.

OBJECTIVES

- To operate the park as a day-use area only for the foreseeable future.
- To develop a trail network that facilitates easy access to significant features.
- To develop operational protocols to address park security and public safety needs.
- To develop emergency services, by-law enforcement, and fire management strategies to meet park needs and protect the Water Supply Area.

ACTIONS

- Develop a day-use area at the southern end of the park.
- Develop an easily accessible trail network, avoiding environmentally and culturally sensitive areas.
- Complete the Galloping Goose Regional Trail to the Old Wolf Creek Bridge.
- Develop appropriate operational protocols to meet park needs.
- Work with Water Services on fire risk management and watershed security issues.

4.6 Plan Implementation – Key Actions

Phase 1

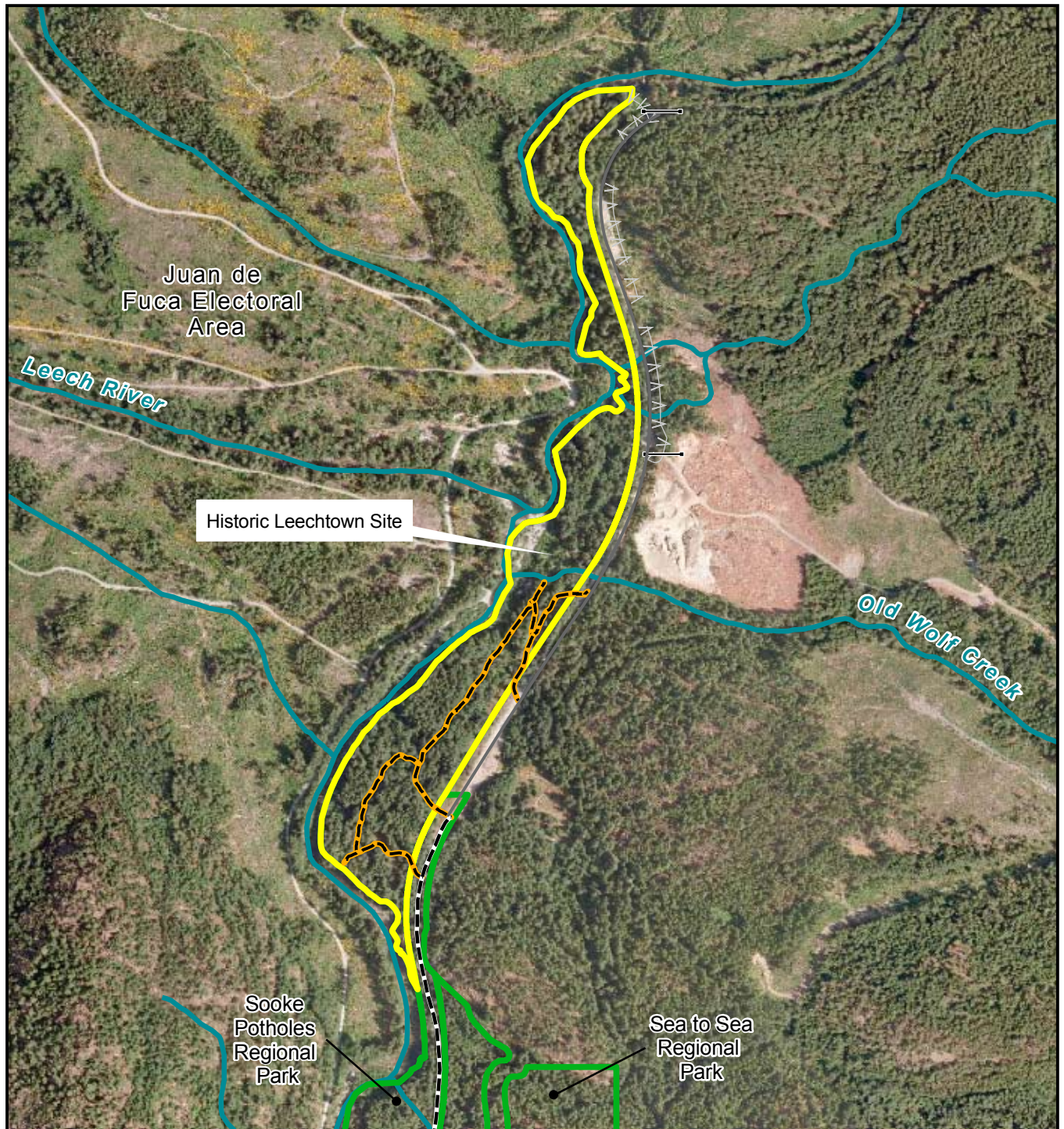
- Complete Galloping Goose Regional Trail to southern boundary of Old Wolf Creek
- Prepare and implement basic environmental conservation and communications strategies
- Develop and implement fire risk management, security, and visitor safety protocols

Phase 2

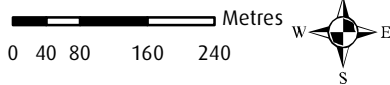
- Open the park with an appropriate level of park facilities and services
- Develop and implement environmental protection, cultural heritage management, communications, interpretive, and community development strategies

Phase 3

- To be determined based on management concerns and visitor needs



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UTM Zone 10N NAD 1983

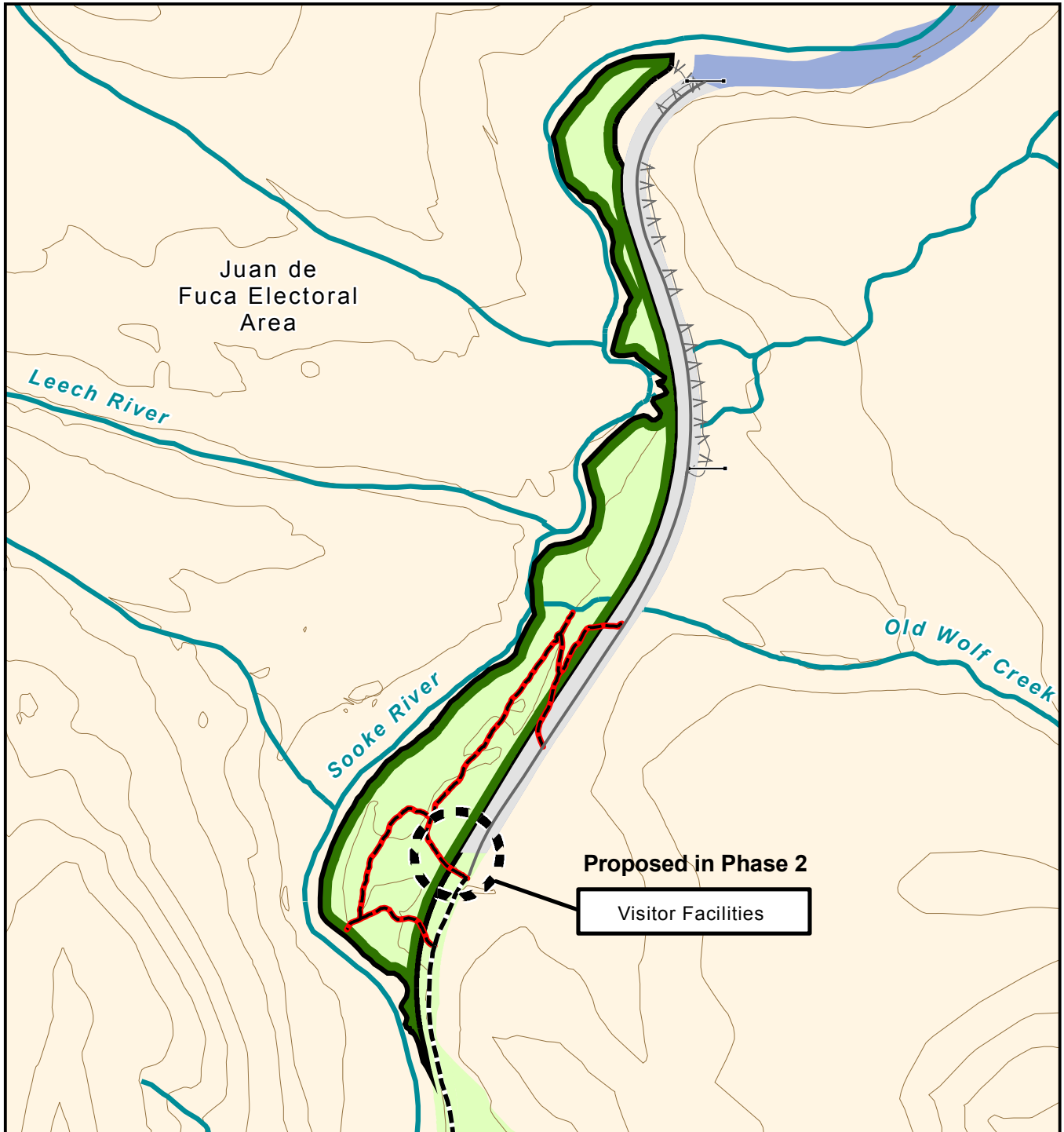
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Map 7 | January 2010 | SSGBB_MP_KP.mxd

- Kapoor Regional Park
- Regional Park
- Municipal Park
- Provincial Park
- Galloping Goose Regional Trail
- Hiking / Equestrian / Cycling Trail
- Stream / River
- Gate
- Fenceline
- Road

Kapoor Regional Park





1:8,000

0 30 60 120 180 Metres

UTM Zone 10N NAD 1983



- Park Boundary
- Regional Park
- CRD Watershed Land
- CRD Right of Way
- Hiking / Equestrian / Cycling Trail
- Galloping Goose Regional Trail
- Contour (20 metre interval)
- Stream / River
- Gate
- Fenceline
- Road

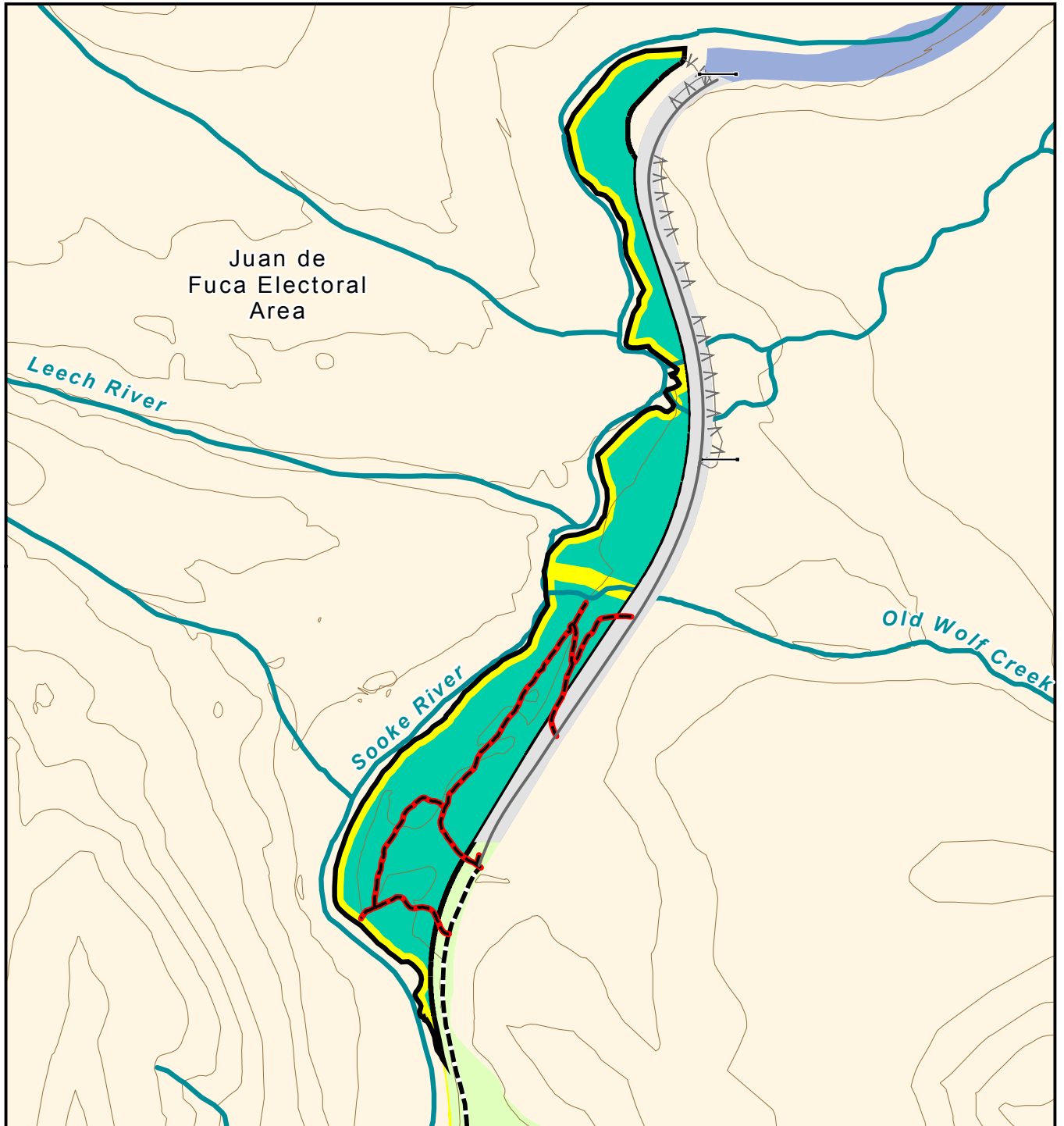
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Map 8 | January 2010 | SSGBB_DC_KP.mxd

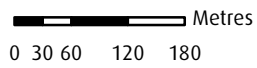
Kapoor Regional Park

Development Concept





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UTM Zone 10N NAD 1983



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- Environmental Protection Zone
- Natural Environment Zone
- CRD Watershed Land
- CRD Right of Way
- Regional Park
- Hiking / Equestrian / Cycling Trail
- Galloping Goose Regional Trail
- Contour (20 metre interval)
- Stream / River
- Gate
- Fenceline
- Road

Kapoor Regional Park

Zoning Designation



Map 9 | January 2010 | SSGBB_MPZ_KP.mxd

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5 Sea To Sea Regional Park Management Plan

In the mid 1990's the Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt Society developed a vision and advocated for the establishment of a green belt (Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt) stretching from Saanich Inlet to Sooke Basin. This Society was instrumental in the establishment of the 4,103 hectare Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park Reserve (SHWRPR) in May 1997. Since the establishment of SHWRPR, CRD Regional Parks has acquired more land for the Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt in several separate acquisitions since 2001.



The land acquisitions have been combined to make the Sea to Sea Regional Park (see Map 10, page 54). The land acquisitions were made possible through CRD Regional Parks' Land Acquisition Fund and with the assistance of the Province, Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC), TimberWest Forest Corporation (TimberWest), The Land Conservancy of BC (TLC), and CRD Water Services.

The Sea to Sea Regional Park is currently not a contiguous parcel of land. Rather, it is divided into several parcels intersected and bounded by public and private lands including Sooke Mountain Provincial Park, Crown lands, Integrated Water Services' Charters River parcel, and private lands including YMCA's Camp Thunderbird. The overall goal is to connect these lands into a contiguous park unit through the transfer of the Charters River parcel, provincial park land, Crown land parcels, and the purchase of adjacent private lands.

Development is limited in the Sea to Sea Regional Park. The park contains many old logging roads and hiking trails offering varying degrees of access. Some historic building foundations remain, and an old fire look-out tower still stands at the top of Mount Manuel Quimper. A parking lot is located at the southern entrance to the park off of Harbourview Road, and some road maintenance work has been completed. No other park facilities have been developed to date. TLC holds conservation covenants over lands in the Sea to Sea Regional Park it partnered with CRD Regional Parks to acquire. The name of the Sea to Sea Regional Park is under review and may be changed.

5.1 Historical Context

The traditional territory of the T'Sou-ke Nation encompasses the Sea to Sea Regional Park. T'Sou-ke oral history includes stories of hunting and gathering within park boundaries. T'Sou-ke women gathered a range of forest products for medicinal, spiritual, household, and food use, and dug edible blue camas in owned and marked plots. On the shores of Shields, Grass, and Crabapples Lakes (known traditionally as

the “Smokehouse Lakes”), seasonal camps were set up to process fish and game for easier transport to the coastal villages. Today, little physical evidence remains of past aboriginal presence within the park.

The Sooke Mountain Provincial Park, which had its beginnings in 1928, lies between two of the park parcels comprising the Sea to Sea Regional Park. Claude L. Harrison, former Victoria City prosecutor and one-time mayor, owned 180 acres in the Sooke Mountain Provincial Park area and was instrumental in obtaining tenure for the Alpine Club of Canada to a portion of Sheilds Lake in the 1920s-1940s. The Alpine Club built a two-story lodge at Sheilds Lake and people used to come up to it by horseback from stables where the Sooke Harbour Hotel (Belvedere Hotel) now stands. Herald Vickers, a naturalist employed by Claude Harrison, also lived on the south side of Sheilds Lake.

Eric Bernard cut poles around Sheilds Lake in the 1940s and 50s. He built a paved road called Mount Shepard Road (the private extension of what is today called Harbourview Road). This road was subsequently used by many residents of Sooke in the 1960s-1970s to access Sheilds Lake and Crabapple Lake for ice skating in the winter. Remnants of paving are still visible. The summit of Mount Manuel Quimper was also used as a fire look-out station.

In the 1960s and 1970s, a damming system for water retention and a cabin were present on the western end of Sheilds Lake. At the northern end of Grass Lake (known locally as “Grassy Lake”) were more cabins, and a cabin was also present at Crabapple Lake. The lake cabins have since been burned down.

5.2 Vision Statement

The vision for this park in 25 years is:

From the exquisite flowering of a calypso orchid to the earnest battering of a pileated woodpecker, from the muffled rustling of a berry-seeking black bear to the frenzied splashing of a spawning salmon, the Sea to Sea Regional Park offers park visitors an expression of nature in full voice. This remarkable environment abounds with natural systems unique to southern Vancouver Island, and CRD Regional Parks and the broader community remain committed to safeguarding the ecological integrity of these lands and waterways in perpetuity.

Not an isolated entity, the Sea to Sea Regional Park complements the broader conservation vision for this area including four other CRD Regional Parks (Ayum Creek, Sooke Potholes, Kapoor, and Sooke Hills Wilderness), Camp Thunderbird lands, Sooke Mountain Provincial Park, Goldstream Provincial Park, and Gowlland Tod Provincial Park. The Sea to Sea Regional Park is a key element in CRD Regional Parks’ evolving vision of an integrated network of parks and trails that provides the public with a gradual transition from the region’s urban settings to more wilderness domains.

Extensive community involvement contributes greatly to the park’s long-term stewardship, while partnerships with other levels of government have strengthened the park’s environmental, social, and economic benefits to the region. In particular, the District of Sooke works closely with CRD Regional Parks to serve as a gateway to this spectacular array of forests, lakes and streams.

Whether it is bird watching, cycling, camping, horse-back riding, fishing, or trekking into the remote back country, the park provides visitors with a full complement of low-impact, nature-based activities. Research and educational programs help foster a greater understanding and appreciation of the natural environment. In keeping with the wilderness setting, facilities and services are minimal, but adequate to serve the needs of park visitors.

The traditional homeland of the T’Sou-ke Nation, this landscape resonates with cultural traditions from generations past and shelters sacred sites. This First Nations heritage is integral to the very essence of the park, and the T’Sou-ke people continue to make important contributions to on-going park management. Among other cultural contributions, the T’Sou-ke people have revived some traditional land-use practices within park boundaries. Their presence provides unique opportunities for visitors to learn more about First

Nations heritage and to increase cross-cultural understanding.

The CRD also works with land owners adjacent to the park to buffer park boundaries through covenants that protect surrounding green space, thus making the park environment more secure. Additional land acquisitions have expanded the park's range even further, thereby increasing connections to other protected areas and contributing to the completion of the visionary Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt.

5.3 Direction Statements

The following direction statements have been developed for environmental conservation, cultural heritage management, visitor experience, and park operations.

5.3.1 Environmental Conservation

The Sea to Sea reserve is notable for its large land base, its variety of habitat types, its landscape complexity, and for the number of plant and animal species it harbours. A primary management focus will be landscape restoration (where warranted), maintenance, and protection in order to ensure the park's long-term ecological viability. On-going programs of ecological and species assessment, research, and monitoring may be implemented in cooperation with partners including Integrated Water Services.

5.3.2 Cultural Heritage Management

The Sea to Sea lands contain First Nations and post-contact cultural heritage resources. Areas of cultural heritage significance will be identified, assessed, and protected from disturbance where possible. Communication and interpretive plans will document the rich history of these lands. CRD Regional Parks will work with the T'Sou-ke Nation and Beecher Bay First Nation on protection and interpretation of sacred sites and cultural artifacts.

5.3.3 Visitor Experience

The Sea to Sea lands will provide for a range of outdoor experiences appropriate to its wilderness setting. A primary objective will be to work with user groups on developing compatible, sustainable, low-impact recreational activities. Park zoning will be used to locate and manage recreational activities as appropriate. Only non-motorized recreational activities will be permitted.

5.3.4 Park Development and Operations

Due to its wilderness setting and large size, facilities and services will be minimal, and in keeping with the natural environment. The park will be patrolled and monitored at an appropriate level to protect public safety and reduce the risk of wildfire. Fire management and emergency services protocols will be developed and implemented in cooperation with Protective Services and Integrated Water Services. Main access nodes will be developed at key locations around the park.

5.4 Park Development Concept

The development concept for the Sea to Sea Regional Park is to move ahead slowly with park development based on availability of resources, departmental strategic priorities, acquisition of adjoining land, and consideration of First Nation interests (Maps 11-13, pages 55-57). The park is currently contained within a number of separate parcels, which precludes a comprehensive approach to park development and management at this time. Access to some parcels is uncertain where bordered by private and Crown lands; the future of additional land acquisition is presently unknown.

Given this level of uncertainty, CRD Regional Parks' approach to development in the Sea to Sea is to first open the large parcel of land that surrounds Mount Manuel Quimper. Facility development will consist of

improving the parking area at the end of Harbourview Road, minimally developing the summit of Mount Manuel Quimper, upgrading a hiking loop trail to Mount Manuel Quimper, developing a few mountain biking trails on Mount Manuel Quimper, and developing communications materials.

Other park development will be considered once land issues are resolved. Potential future development includes creation of a backcountry camping area at Sheilds Lake; the establishment of a hiking, equestrian, and mountain biking trail system; and connecting a network of trails across the larger landscape once adjoining lands are acquired or opened—with the goal of connecting to Sooke Potholes Regional Park and the Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park Reserve.

A key focus will be on building partnerships with adjacent landowners and interested stakeholders. An important adjacent landowner is the YMCA, owner of significant lands situated between the Sea to Sea and the Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park Reserve. The YMCA operates Camp Thunderbird (at Glintz Lake), and leases several adjoining Crown land parcels. The YMCA is an important partner with CRD Regional Parks in the management of this large wilderness landscape, and collaborative planning and management efforts will be undertaken with them.

Opportunities also exist to work with the District of Sooke to better integrate their community park and trail system with the Sea to Sea Regional Park. CRD Regional Parks may also want to partner with the District of Sooke on efforts to strengthen the District's position as a "gateway community" to the many nearby recreational and tourism opportunities.

The Sea to Sea Regional Park name is under review and may be changed in the future.

5.5 Zoning Designation

The Sea to Sea Regional Park currently contains four of the seven park zones, although this could be modified as new information is acquired (see Maps 14-16, pages 58-60). The Environmental Protection Zone has been applied to all water bodies, riparian and wetland areas, old growth trees, and rocky outcrops. These areas contain important and sensitive plant and wildlife species and/or habitat, and they are easily damaged or destroyed by inappropriate human use. Not all areas of the park eligible for this zoning designation have been identified or mapped yet. As knowledge of the park increases, this designation may be applied to additional areas of concern, and measures undertaken to protect identified sensitive features.

The Park Services Zone has been applied to the Harbourview Road parking lot area at the southern end of the park. This area will serve as the main entrance to the Sea to Sea Regional Park, and will be developed to accommodate park facilities and visitor services. Future access points will also be designated as Park Service Zones.

The Natural Environment Zone has been applied to that area of the park between Harbourview Road parking lot and the southern boundary of Sooke Mountain Provincial Park (south to north), and between the CRD Water parcel at Charters Reservoir and the YMCA lands (west to east). This area encompasses Mount Manuel Quimper. This part of the park is predominantly second growth forest, interspersed with significant patches of environmentally sensitive rocky outcrops. Recreational use will be concentrated in this part of the park, with significant opportunities for the development of a mountain biking trail network. Hiking and equestrian use will also be accommodated. Environmental assessments will need to be completed prior to any trail or facility development in this area to avoid negatively impacting sensitive environmental features.

The Regional Wilderness Zone has been applied to the remainder of the park land. The wilderness zone will primarily accommodate low levels of dispersed recreational use on single-track and multi-use trails designed for hiking, mountain biking, and/or equestrian use. Backcountry camping opportunities will be developed at Sheilds Lake during Phase 2. Other types of non-motorized, nature-based activities will be considered on a case-by-case basis if issues arise.

5.6 Management Objectives and Actions

5.6.1 Environmental Conservation

Overview

The Sea to Sea Regional Park is part of a larger biogeoclimatic zone harbouring many significant and sensitive species and features. The park protects four distinct watersheds, including Ayum Creek, Charters River, Todd Creek, and Mary Vine Creek. It is proximate to the Sooke River watershed, and buffers a regional park, a provincial park and ecological reserve, and Crown and private forestry lands.

CRD Regional Parks uses an ecosystem management approach to protecting ecological integrity. Maintaining ecological integrity is important not only for the natural systems it protects, but also as the foundation of the Sea to Sea's appeal as a visitor destination. Sustaining this ecological integrity will offer unparalleled opportunities for visitors to observe and experience nature in a semi-wilderness and wilderness setting.

It will take many years of research, mapping, and data collection to obtain a good understanding of ecosystem structures and park functioning at various scales. Studies will need to focus on significant issues and assess the park's environmental well-being over time. This can be done by using indicators that can be monitored at different temporal scales to provide a broad, long-term understanding of changes occurring in the park.

OBJECTIVES

- To maintain biological diversity and natural ecological processes.
- To maintain or restore native flora and fauna communities through appropriate management actions.
- To prevent wildlife from becoming habituated to humans and their facilities to prevent negative encounters.
- To ensure park visitors are aware of the value and status of park ecosystems and species, and of ways they can minimize their negative impacts.
- To demonstrate to the public the role of research and science in decision-making.
- To work with the T'Sou-ke Nation and the public on conservation issues and projects.

ACTIONS

- Develop an environmental conservation strategy and vegetation management plan.
- Conduct environmental impact assessments for all proposed park development projects.
- Develop procedures for preventing and dealing with conflicts between humans and wildlife in order to reduce the risk of injury, or the need to destroy or remove animals.
- Use communication and education to promote a greater public understanding of the park's ecological integrity and biological diversity.
- Communicate the results of research to the public where it impacts decision-making.
- Involve the T'Sou-ke Nation and the public in environmental conservation activities.

5.6.2 Cultural Heritage Management

Overview

The Sea to Sea plan area has a well-documented human history since early European contact and settlement. Some remnants of this post-contact history are still visible on the landscape. The park's aboriginal history is not as well known or documented, although it is clear that native peoples have used the general area for many thousands of years for spiritual, food, medicinal, and other purposes.

The T'Sou-ke Nation's traditional territory encompasses the Sea to Sea Regional Park, and the community wants to maintain a connection to this landscape into the future. CRD Regional Parks will work with the T'Sou-ke Nation to address issues of mutual interest such as access and harvesting rights, identification and management of sacred sites and features, and involvement in park interpretive programming.

OBJECTIVES

- To determine the existence and significance of aboriginal and historic-era sites or features.
- To develop management strategies to protect significant cultural heritage resources.
- To work with the T'Sou-ke Nation to identify and address relevant cultural heritage issues.
- To include historical and cultural heritage messages in the park's communication strategy.
- To encourage public awareness of, and support for, the protection and preservation of the park's cultural heritage resources.

ACTIONS

- Undertake archaeological work to determine the existence of aboriginal and historic era cultural sites and features.
- Engage in discussions with the T'Sou-ke Nation to identify and address issues of interest to them.
- Document the park's post-contact history.
- Develop management strategies for the protection of significant cultural resources.
- Develop park facilities in a way that ensures the protection of cultural heritage resources.
- Include information about the park's cultural resources in park communications and interpretation activities.

5.6.3 Visitor Experience

Overview

The Sea to Sea Regional Park offers a diversity of recreational experiences for people of differing abilities, interests, expectations, and motivations. The common thread running throughout all visitor experiences is the ruggedness of the landscape, and the need to be adequately prepared for a safe and enjoyable experience. Emphasis will be placed on educating park visitors about the risk of wildfire and effective prevention, and restrictions may be put in place on activities in the park during Extreme Fire Hazard periods.

In a wilderness-type park such as the Sea to Sea Regional Park, public safety is a primary concern. Public safety must be a shared responsibility. Visitors must take the level of precautions that reflect the risk involved in their chosen activity. This involves knowledge of natural hazards, proper equipment and provisions, adequate skill and fitness levels, and the ability to cope with emergencies.

One objective of this plan is to work with stakeholders to develop a system of trails with varied difficulty levels and distances in the core recreational use area that will accommodate a variety of recreational activities.

CRD Regional Parks proposes to develop backcountry camping at Sheilds Lake during Phase 2 of the plan.

Dogs will be required to be kept on leash at all times in the park. This protects dogs (and their owners) from hazards such as encounters with large carnivores. It also protects park flora and fauna from undue disturbance.

OBJECTIVES

- To manage outdoor recreation in a way that promotes enjoyment, appreciation, and understanding; and minimizes environmental impacts and conflicts between users.
- To provide opportunities for visitors to learn about the park's values, features, and issues.
- To provide improved access to, and protection of, the summit of Mount Manuel Quimper.
- To provide facilities and services which contribute to visitor safety and enjoyment.
- To provide the majority of visitor services in designated areas.
- To educate visitors about safety considerations and necessary pre-trip preparations.
- To work with the local community to plan and manage trails for approved uses including mountain biking, hiking, and equestrian use.
- To explore community development and partnership opportunities with community-based organizations and First Nations.

ACTIONS

- Manage the park to maximize ecological integrity; limit visitor impacts by providing facilities in designated areas only.
- Provide visitors with reliable park information so they have realistic expectations about services, opportunities, and risks.
- Require dogs to be on leash and on trails at all times. Clearly communicate the safety and environmental reasons underlying this policy.
- Assess existing trail alignments; close, consolidate, realign, relocate, or rebuild as necessary.
- Create a trail system with two use designations: shared-use and single-use:
 - Shared-use trails may accommodate all or some combination of approved uses.
 - Single-use trails will be designed to accommodate a specific type of approved use.
- Work with stakeholders to plan and develop trail opportunities in designated areas.
- Develop backcountry camping opportunities at Sheilds Lake when appropriate.
- Work with community-based organizations and First Nations on partnership opportunities.

5.6.4 Park Development and Operations

Overview

The significant size and disjointed configuration of the Sea to Sea Regional Park presents many operational challenges for park staff. The magnitude of this large wilderness park is unique for CRD Regional Parks, and will require new ways of addressing park development, operations and maintenance issues. Fire risk management will be an on-going concern; CRD staff will collaborate with CRD Water Services to reduce fire risks in the park.

YMCA lands to the east of the park contain significant natural areas that are easily accessed by park visitors. As well, YMCA campers and staff access the Sea to Sea park from their lands. CRD Regional Parks will work with the YMCA to address common management issues.

An objective of park management will be to prevent the decline of large carnivores in the park. Strategies will need to be developed to prevent this decline or displacement. Large carnivores in the park include black bear, cougar, and wolf. The most likely encounter between park visitors and a large carnivore will be with the black bear. A black bear strategy needs to be developed to reduce the potential for bear-human interactions.

At some point in the future, adjoining lands may be opened or added to the park. Additional lands will require new trails and additional park facilities, and may present new park operations and maintenance challenges.

Provincial legislation regulates hunting in Sooke Mountain Provincial Park. Provincial legislation also prohibits hunting in regional parks. Management of hunting-related activities within the Sea to Sea will remain an on-going challenge. Every effort will be made to ensure public safety in the park during hunting season.

OBJECTIVES

- To preserve the park's wilderness character through appropriate facility design, placement, and maintenance.
- To work with adjoining land managers on cross-boundary management issues.
- To adequately address public safety issues through the continuing identification, assessment, and mitigation of risks and hazards.
- To collaborate with CRD Water Services on fire risk management strategies.
- To minimize chances for bear/human interactions that may lead to bear habituation or displacement.
- To implement a "pack it in, pack it out" approach to garbage management.

ACTIONS

- Upgrade selected trails and redevelop the Harbourview Road parking lot to accommodate visitors more efficiently.
- Develop a hiking trail from Sooke Potholes to Peden Lake along Mary Vine Creek.
- Develop a site restoration and visitor access plan for the top of Mount Manuel Quimper.
- Collaborate with the YMCA, CRD Water Services, and others to identify and address common land management issues.
- Collaborate with CRD Water Services on park fire risk management strategies.
- Prepare a communications strategy to explain park rules, regulations, and risks.
- Prepare a bear strategy; include a "no litter" policy to prevent human-wildlife conflicts. Install bear-proof garbage cans where appropriate.

5.7 Plan Implementation – Key Actions

Phase 1

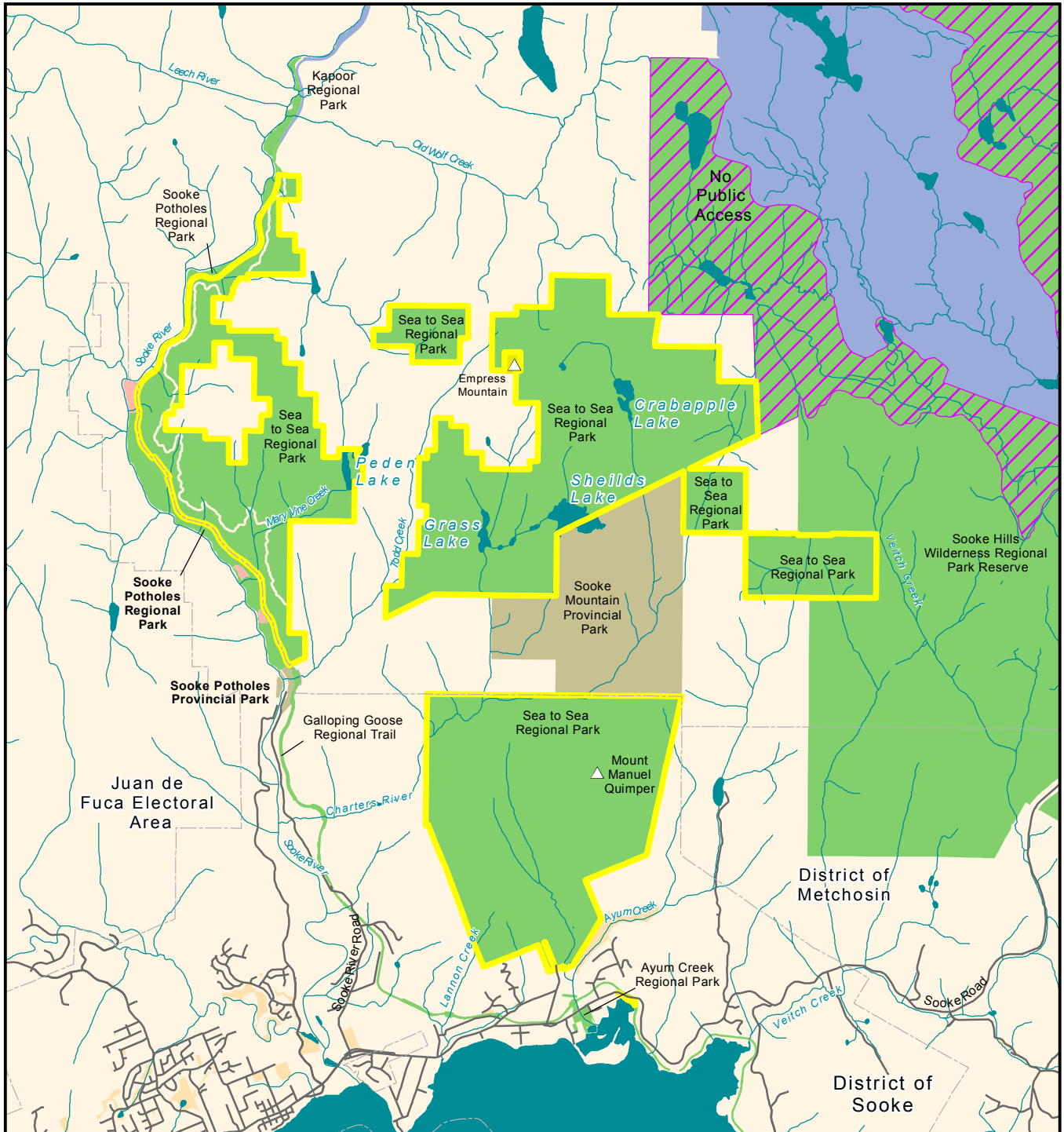
- Redevelop Harbourview Road parking lot
- Develop Mount Manuel Quimper hiking loop trail and additional trails as identified in the trail plan
- Upgrade a system of approved mountain biking trails according to International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) guidelines
- Improve access and visitor facilities at summit of Mount Manuel Quimper
- Prepare operational and communications plans
- Develop and implement fire risk management, security, and visitor safety protocols

Phase 2

- Improve Harbourview Road to Crabapple and Shields Lakes; operate as a multi-use trail and service vehicle access route
- Develop a hiking trail from Sooke Potholes Parking Lot #2 along Mary Vine Creek to Peden Lake; provide minimal facilities at Peden Lake
- Secure access routes to all parcels of Sea to Sea Regional Park
- Build a backcountry campground and day-use area at Shields Lake
- Prepare a mountain biking trail plan for the southern section of the park
- Continue to develop hiking, equestrian, and mountain biking opportunities in the park
- Restore the fire look-out tower on Mount Manuel Quimper summit (with partner funding and support)
- Support appropriate environmental conservation and cultural heritage management projects
- Develop and implement partnerships, community development, and interpretive strategies

Phase 3

- Consider developing additional backcountry camping opportunities if warranted
- Provide trail linkages with the Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park Reserve if it is opened
- Develop trail connections and access points on new lands as they are acquired
- Continue development of hiking, equestrian, and mountain biking opportunities
- Undertake projects based on management priorities and visitor needs as they are identified and as resources become available



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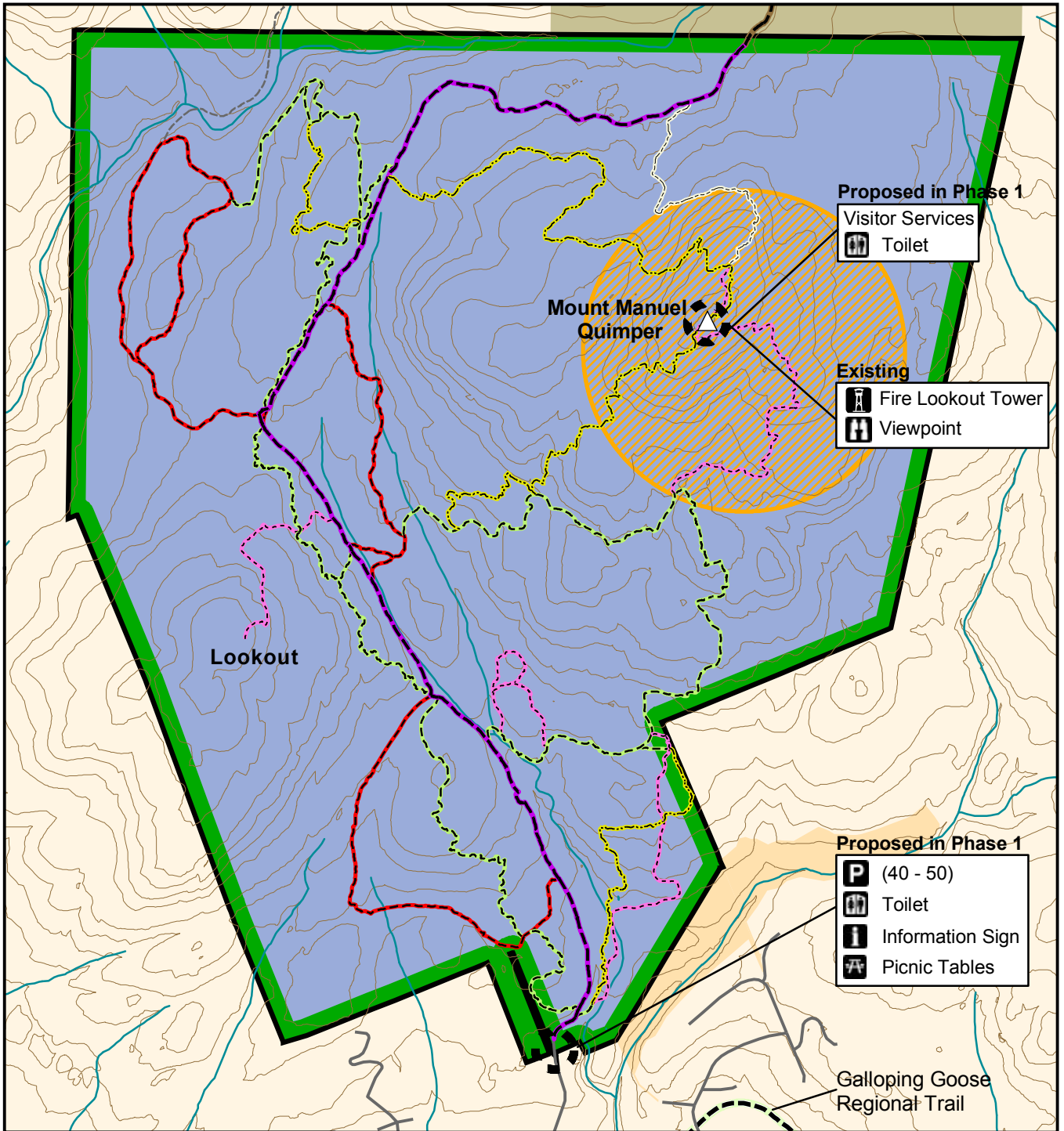
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- △ Summit
- Municipal Boundary
- ▭ Sea to Sea Regional Park
- ▭ Regional Park
- ▭ Municipal Park
- ▭ Provincial Park
- ▭ Protected Area
- ▭ Ecological Reserve
- ▭ CRD Water Supply Area
- ▨ CRD Drinking Water Protection Zone
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Stream / River
- ▭ Lake / Reservoir

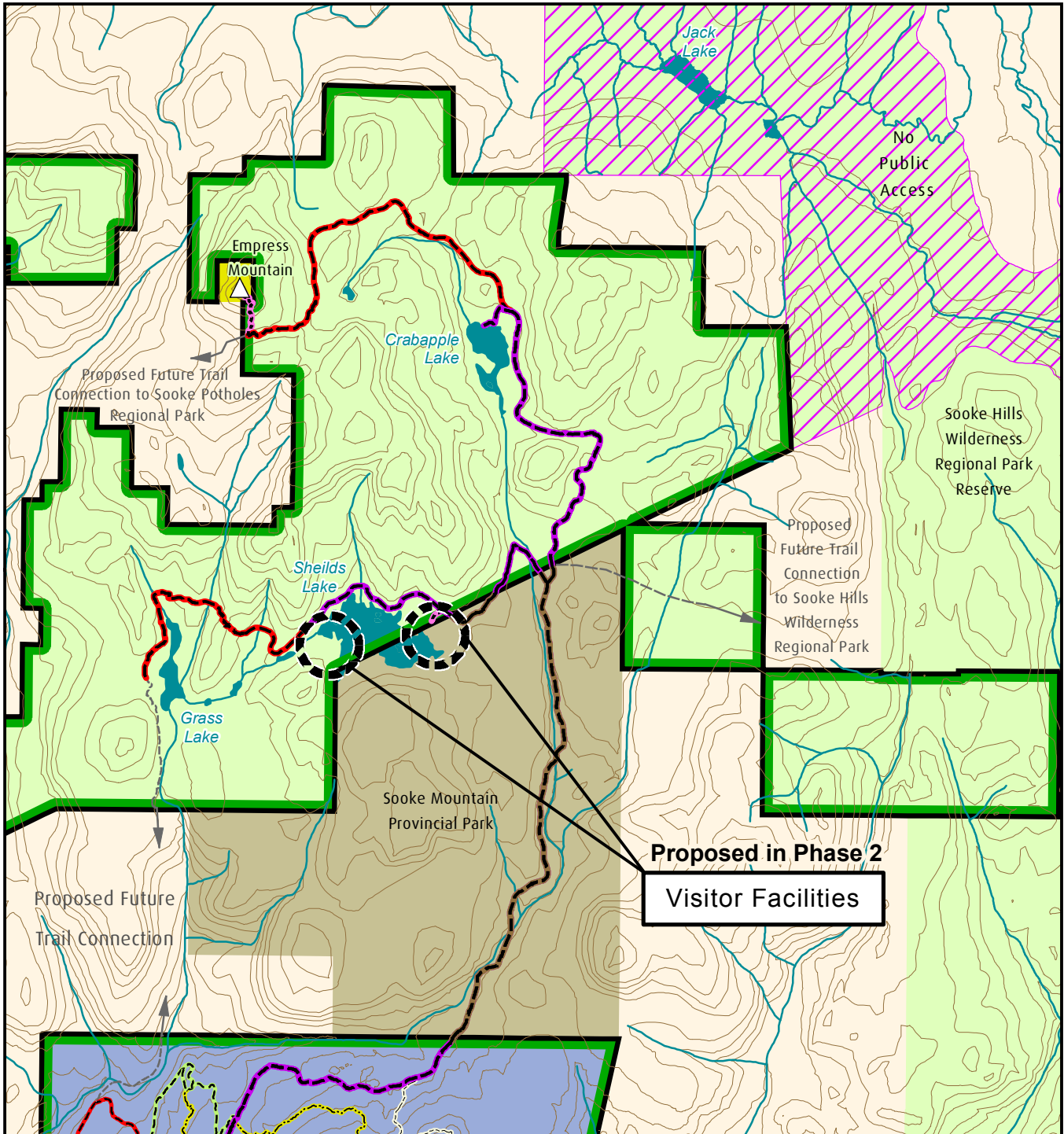
Sea to Sea Regional Park



Map 10 | January 2010 | SSGBB_MP_SS.mxd



<p>1:20,000</p> <p>0 125 250 500 Metres</p> <p>UTM Zone 10N NAD 1983</p> 	<table border="0"> <tr> <td></td> <td>Special Study Area</td> <td></td> <td>Proposed Trail</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Recreational Use Core Area</td> <td></td> <td>Summit</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Hiking Trail</td> <td></td> <td>Regional Park</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Cycling Trail</td> <td></td> <td>Municipal Park</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Hiking / Cycling Trail</td> <td></td> <td>Provincial Park</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Hiking / 1-way Cycling Trail</td> <td></td> <td>Road</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Hiking / Equestrian / Cycling Trail</td> <td></td> <td>Stream / River</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Contour (20 metre interval)</td> <td></td> <td>Lake / Reservoir</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Regional Park Road (Shared-use Trail)</td> <td></td> <td>Park Boundary</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Non-Regional Park Road (Proposed Shared-use Trail)</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		Special Study Area		Proposed Trail		Recreational Use Core Area		Summit		Hiking Trail		Regional Park		Cycling Trail		Municipal Park		Hiking / Cycling Trail		Provincial Park		Hiking / 1-way Cycling Trail		Road		Hiking / Equestrian / Cycling Trail		Stream / River		Contour (20 metre interval)		Lake / Reservoir		Regional Park Road (Shared-use Trail)		Park Boundary		Non-Regional Park Road (Proposed Shared-use Trail)			<p>Sea to Sea Regional Park</p> <p>Development Concept (1 of 3)</p> 
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- Recreational Use Core Area
- Ecological Reserve
- Hiking Trail
- Cycling Trail
- Hiking / Cycling Trail
- Hiking / 1-way Cycling Trail
- Hiking / Equestrian / Cycling Trail
- Regional Park Road (Shared-use Trail)
- Non-Regional Park Road (Proposed Shared-use Trail)
- Summit
- Proposed Trail
- Stream / River
- Lake / Reservoir
- Regional Park
- Provincial Park
- Park Boundary

Sea to Sea Regional Park

Development Concept (2 of 3)

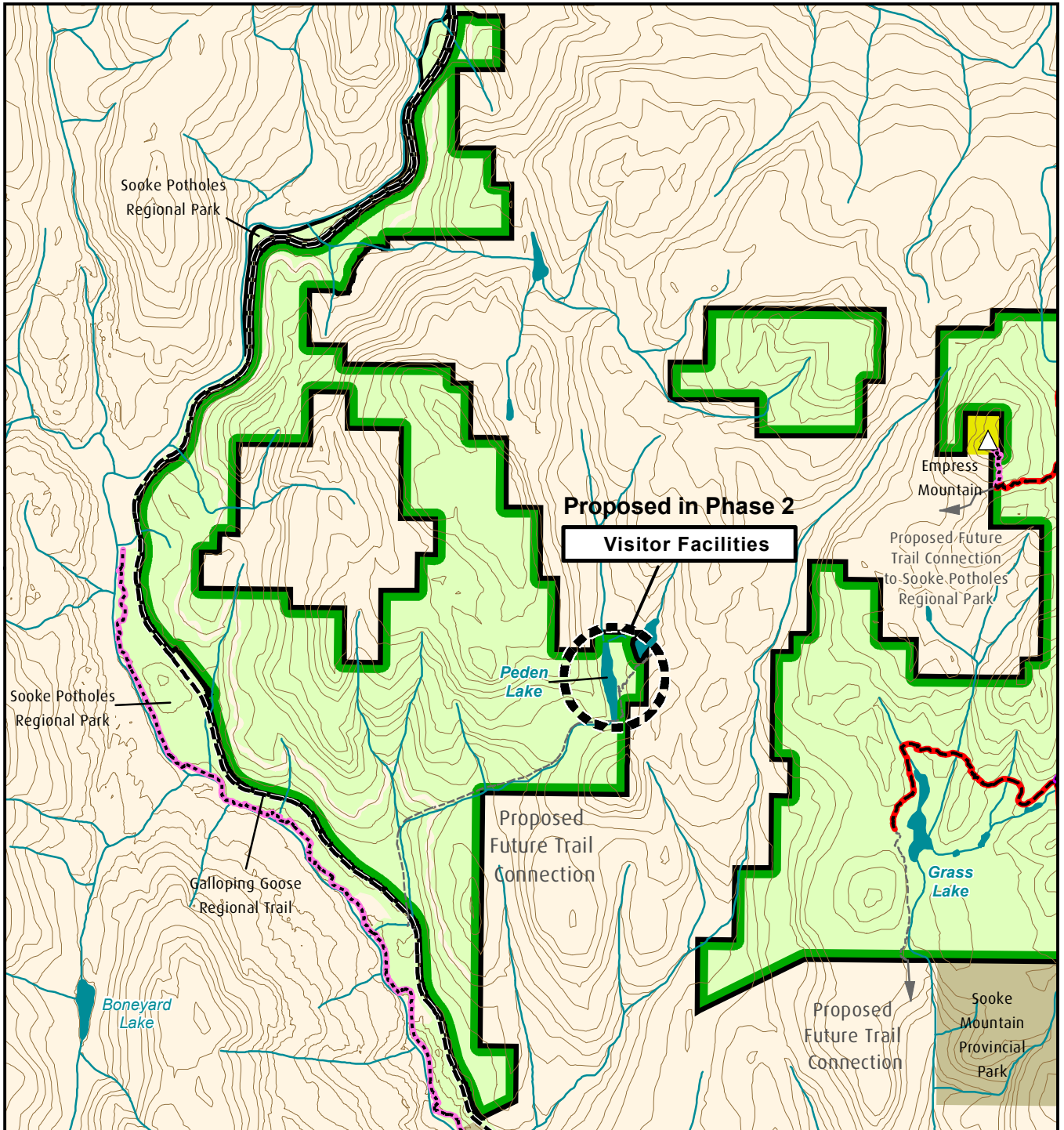


Map 12

January 2010

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CRD Drinking Water Protection Zone



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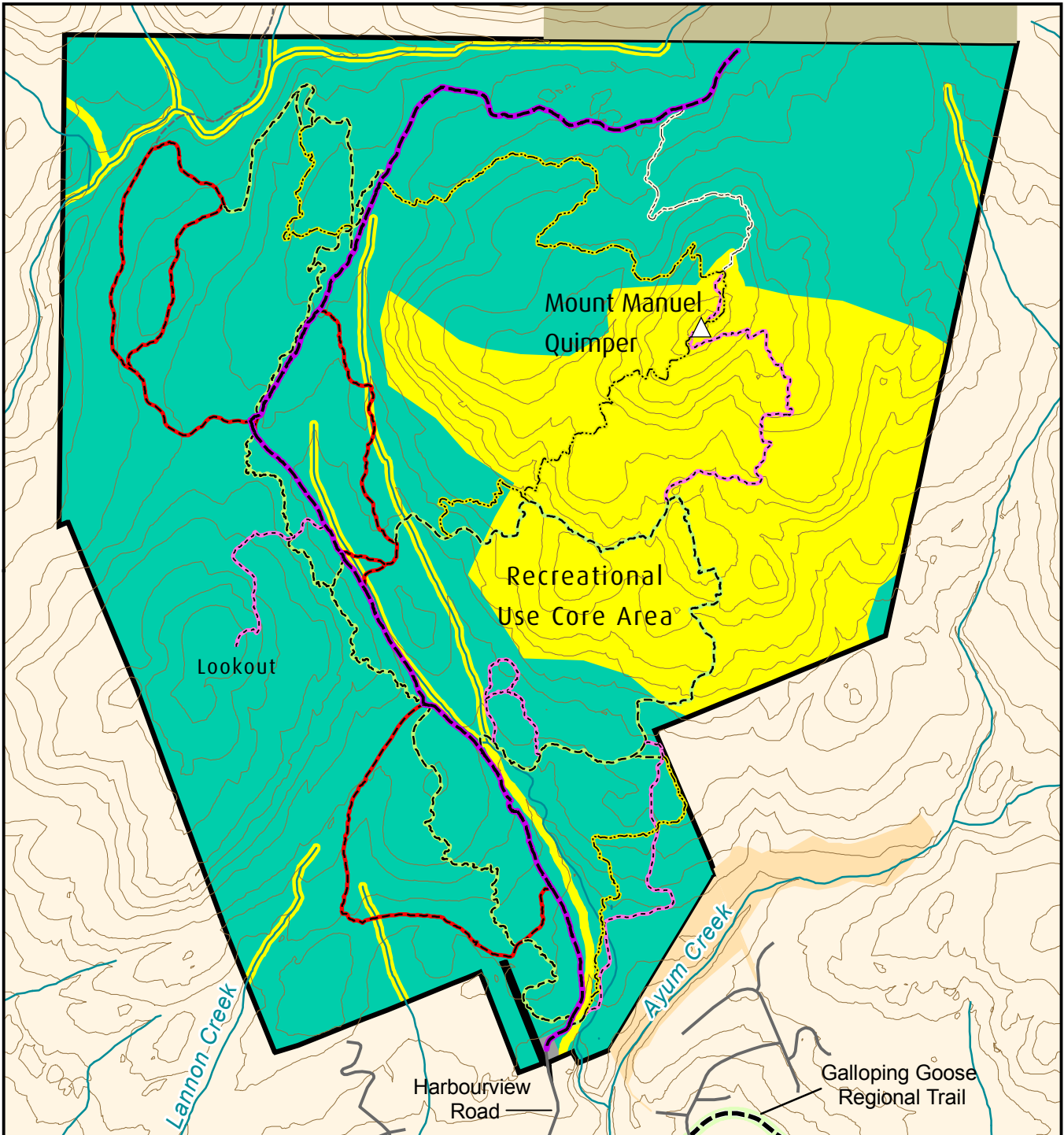
Map 13 | January 2010 | SSGBB_DC_S53.mxd

Summit	Hiking / Equestrian / Cycling Trail
Regional Park	Galloping Goose Regional Trail
Provincial Park	Contour (20 metre interval)
Ecological Reserve	Stream / River
Hiking Trail	Lake / Reservoir
Proposed Trail	Park Boundary

**Sea to Sea
Regional Park**

**Development
Concept (3 of 3)**

CRD
Making a Difference Together



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- Environmental Protection Zone
- Natural Environmental Zone
- Park Services Zone
- Hiking / Cycling Trail
- Hiking / 1-way Cycling Trail
- Hiking / Equestrian / Cycling Trail
- Service Road (Shared-use Trail)
- Hiking Trail
- Cycling Trail
- Contour (20 metre interval)

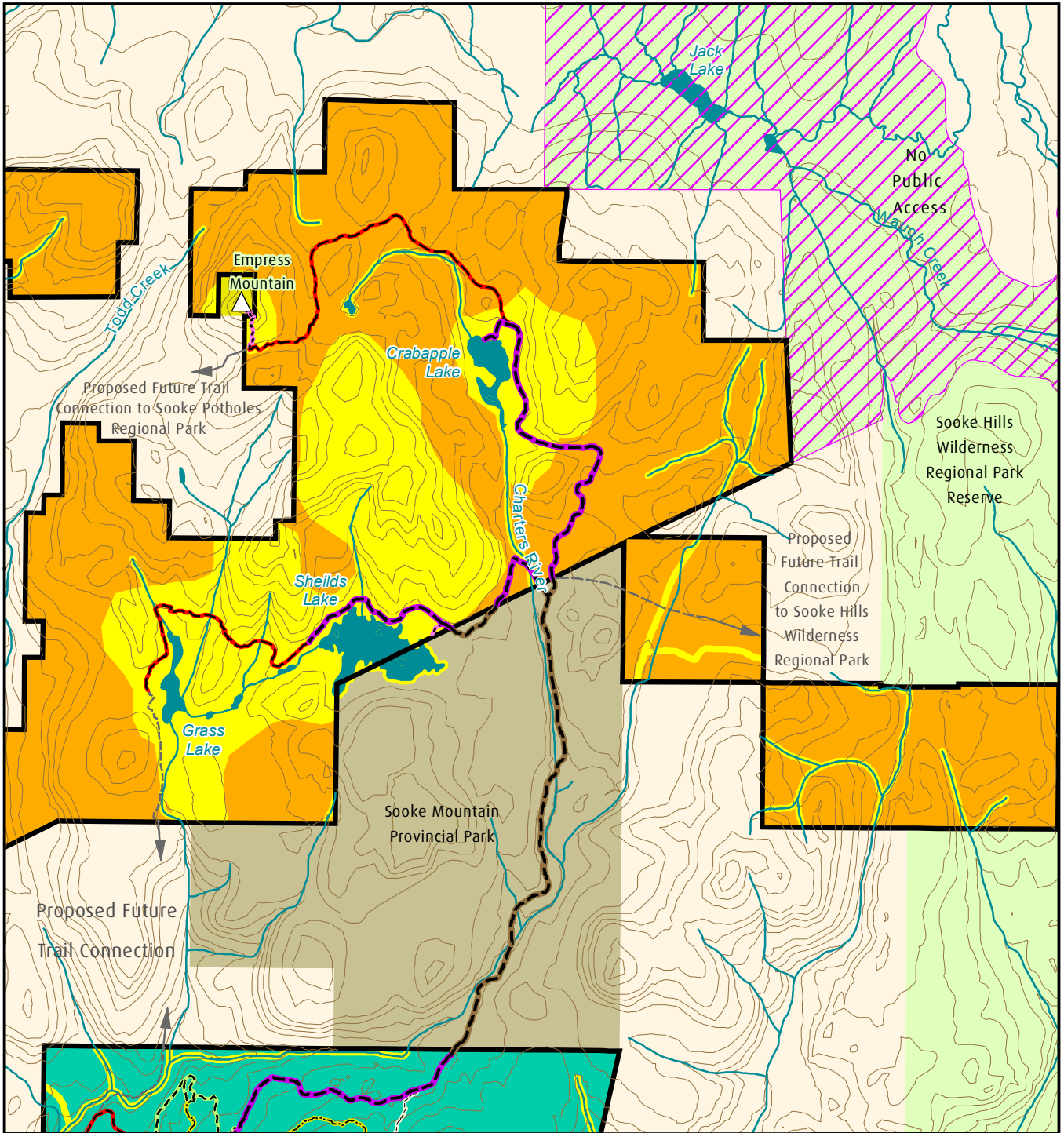
- Summit
- Park Boundary
- Regional Park
- Municipal Park
- Provincial Park
- Proposed Trail
- Road
- Stream / River
- Lake / Reservoir

Sea to Sea Regional Park

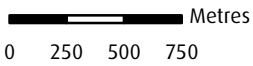
Zoning Designation (1 of 3)



Map 14 | January 2010 | SSGBB_MPZ_SS1.mxd



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Map 15

January 2010

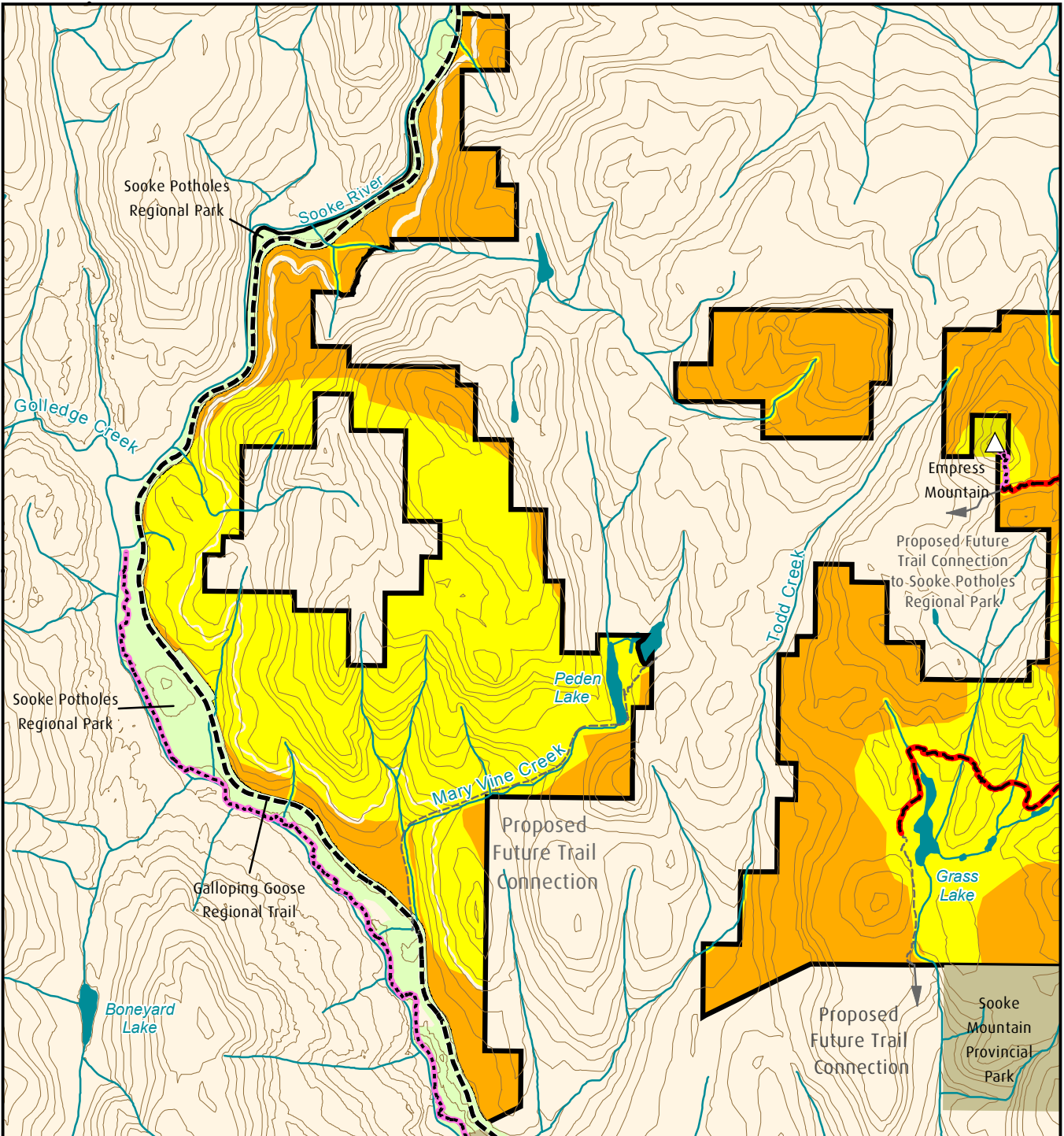
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- Environmental Protection Zone
- Regional Wilderness Zone
- Natural Environmental Zone
- Hiking / Cycling Trail
- Hiking / 1-way Cycling Trail
- Hiking / Equestrian / Cycling Trail
- Regional Park Road (Shared-use Trail)
- Contour (20 metre interval)
- CRD Drinking Water Protection Zone
- Summit
- Hiking Trail
- Cycling Trail
- Proposed Trail
- Stream / River
- Regional Park
- Provincial Park
- Park Boundary
- Lake / Reservoir
- Non-Regional Park Road (Proposed Shared-use Trail)

Sea to Sea Regional Park

Zoning Designation (2 of 3)





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Metres

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UTM Zone 10N NAD 1983



Environmental Protection Zone

Regional Wilderness Zone

Ecological Reserve

Hiking / Equestrian / Cycling Trail

Hiking Trail

Galloping Goose Regional Trail

Contour (20 metre interval)

Summit

Regional Park

Provincial Park

Park Boundary

Proposed Trail

Stream / River

Lake / Reservoir

Sea to Sea Regional Park

Zoning Designation (3 of 3)



Map 16

January 2010

SSGGB_MPZ_SS3.mxd

6 Sooke Potholes Regional Park Management Plan

Sooke Potholes Regional Park (Sooke Potholes) was acquired in March 2005 (see Map 17, page 68). Interim Management Guidelines were approved the same month, and the park was opened to the public in June 2005. Sooke Potholes was acquired in partnership with The Land Conservancy of BC (TLC), who retains ownership of three distinct parcels within the park totaling approximately 8 hectares: the former lodge site, the operations yard, and the campground. CRD Regional Parks works collaboratively with TLC in park development, operations and management. TLC and CRD Regional Parks are bound by a legal agreement defining, among other things, TLC's access rights to its parcels over regional park land, CRD's right of first refusal if TLC decides to sell its parcels, and development limitations on TLC's parcels.



Sooke Potholes has limited facilities within a defined development area, including two parking lots, improved park road, accessible restrooms, signs, trails, campground registration area, and access points to the Galloping Goose Regional Trail. TLC operates the campground between May and October each year. TLC shares the operations yard with CRD Regional Parks. Further park development may be necessary to better manage high visitor use levels during the peak season.

Approximately 8.65 hectares and 3.5 km of Sooke River frontage was added to Sooke Potholes Regional Park in late 2007 as part of the 932 hectare land purchase from TimberWest. This land runs from TLC campground's northern boundary to the southern boundary of Kapoor Regional Park (south to north), and between the Sooke River and the Galloping Goose Regional Trail (west to east). The park extension is only accessible by the Galloping Goose Regional Trail.

Sooke Potholes is subject to a conservation covenant with TLC, which states in part that the lands are to be used for regional park purposes only, that CRD shall prepare and adopt a park management plan for the management of Sooke Potholes Regional Park, and that a public advisory group be established to assist in the preparation of the plan. The covenant stipulates that the public advisory group shall include one representative from TLC.

6.1 Historical Context

Perhaps the first written description of the spectacular Sooke Potholes was made by Captain W.C. Grant in an October 1849 report he prepared for James Douglas, in which Grant referred to the potholes area as "fountains." These potholes were subsequently referred to as the Devil's Potholes. Earlier developments in the vicinity of the Sooke Potholes area, including the Weilers' farm (known in the 1930-1940s as the "Deer Trails"), have been detailed in other documents.

The Sooke Potholes Regional Park is contiguous with the northern end of Sooke Potholes Provincial Park, which was established in 1972 and expanded in 1976. Remains of built structures still exist within the regional park, especially in the area where Mary Vine Creek enters the east side of the Sooke River. The most prominent structure is the remains of a grand wilderness lodge began in the early 1980s and abandoned uncompleted prior to land acquisition for a park in 2005.

The Sooke Water Flow Line lies near the park's eastern boundary; it was made necessary by 20th century demands for water from Sooke Lake to Humpback Reservoir to service Greater Victoria. The line is now abandoned south of Charters River. In 1918, the Canadian National Railway Line (CNR) was built, following along the Sooke River to Leechtown and connecting through to Lake Cowichan and Cowichan Bay. Today the Galloping Goose Trail follows this CNR line as far as Kapoor Regional Park.

6.2 Vision Statement

The vision for the park in 25 years is:

Sooke Potholes Regional Park is a long-standing recreational icon for residents, as well-known as any popular location on the South Island. This well-loved park offers people both a place to play and a place to observe the timeless display of nature.

The deep potholes sculpted out of the sandstone bedrock, the shining rocky cliffs, and the refreshing cool waters of the Sooke River provide an exhilarating recreational landscape. Families enjoy a comfortable outing here, combining a dip in one of the swimming holes with a walk along the river's edge. Less-travelled routes into the remote back country have been spared heavy human impact and the unique ecosystems found there continue to thrive.

Through the course of the four seasons, Sooke Potholes Regional Park continues to attract a cross-section of wildlife, especially in the fall when the salmon return to spawn. Following an age-old pattern, yet another mother bear with two cubs in tow takes an artful swipe at a splashing coho. The snow-white heads of a gathering of bald eagles look on impassively from the trees above as the screech of a glaucous-winged gull reverberates off the polished canyon walls.

6.3 Direction Statements

The following direction statements have been prepared to guide the development of park specific objectives and actions under environmental conservation, cultural resource management, visitor experience, and park operations.

6.3.1 Environmental Conservation

Sooke Potholes contains a range of environmentally significant habitat types, including rocky outcrops, naturalizing forest patches, riparian habitat, and aquatic ecosystems. It provides habitat for a wide range of plant and animal species, some of which are threatened or endangered. The park borders the Sooke River—with its important salmon spawning habitat, and it helps to protect a number of critical tributary streams. The environmental conservation focus for Sooke Potholes will be to restore damaged ecosystems where feasible, and to maintain ecological integrity while managing for seasonally heavy human use.

6.3.2 Cultural Heritage Management

Sooke Potholes has a rich aboriginal and post-contact history. The park area has been impacted by settlers, resource extractors, and developers starting in the mid-19th century and continuing up to recent times. Much of the site has been cleaned up, but visible remnants of past human activity remain. First Nations cultural features and sacred sites are also present in the park. The cultural heritage management focus will be on identifying, assessing, protecting, and interpreting culturally significant heritage resources.

6.3.3 Visitor Experience

Sooke Potholes will continue to grow in popularity as a primary destination for easily accessible high-quality outdoor recreation experiences, particularly along the Sooke River. The park's proximity to the Galloping Goose Regional Trail and its location as a gateway to extensive outdoor recreational opportunities in the Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt will be emphasized and managed. Visitor impacts will be carefully monitored to ensure an appropriate visitor experience continues to be provided.

6.3.4 Park Development and Operations

CRD Regional Parks and TLC will work closely together to ensure that efficient and cohesive park operations, development and management are maintained. Special areas may be designated to provide a higher level of visitor services and facilities, while still emphasizing environmental conservation and sustainability. Appropriate visitor management will be the key to ensuring visitor safety and reducing the potential for conflicts.

6.4 Park Development Concept

The development concept for Sooke Potholes includes accommodating heavy seasonal use while seeking to preserve the natural environment and maintaining an optimal visitor experience. For the foreseeable future, most park development and visitor use will remain concentrated in the lower third of the park (see Map 18, page 69). The upper park road will remain closed to vehicle use except for TLC campground visitors, who use it to drive to the campground. A "riverside" pedestrian trail will be developed from the park entrance to the campground as resources permit. Future development may include upgrading and opening the park road to the campground, developing additional parking nodes, and developing additional trails. The old lodge site area may be redeveloped in partnership with the TLC if they construct a new interpretive centre on their property.

6.5 Zoning Designation

Sooke Potholes Regional Park contains three of the seven management zones (see Map 19, page 70). Most of the park is designated Natural Environment Zone to reflect the management focus of accommodating increased visitor use levels, particularly during summer months. This zone also acknowledges that much of the park landscape has been moderately to heavily impacted by past human use and development, and is thus not in pristine condition.

Some areas of the park are designated Environmental Protection Zone based on the presence of significant natural features that are particularly sensitive to human disturbance. Areas with this designation include water bodies, riparian areas and rocky outcrops.

A few areas of the park are designated Park Services Zone to accommodate a concentration of visitor services and park operations functions.

6.6 Management Objectives and Actions

6.6.1 Environmental Conservation

Overview

Sooke Potholes is environmentally sensitive, containing many identified populations of rare and endangered plant species. Special attention needs to be paid to monitoring visitor impacts along the river's riparian zone as visitors may create new, or use existing, desire line trails along the river. On-going monitoring and management of visitor impacts will be undertaken, and management strategies adjusted as warranted.

Special measures will be undertaken to protect salmon, black bear, and other sensitive species from undesirable human impacts. Dogs will be required to remain on-leash and on trails at all times in the park.

OBJECTIVES

- To maintain biological diversity and natural ecological processes.
- To provide park visitors with information about park ecosystems and species, and ways they can minimize their negative impacts.
- To improve public awareness of natural disturbances, such as fires and floods, and their associated management implications.
- To identify information gaps, and undertake necessary ecological and biological research to fill those gaps.

ACTIONS

- Develop an environmental conservation strategy and vegetation management plan.
- Assess and mitigate negative impacts caused by unwanted desire line trails.
- Include environmental management messages in park communications.
- Identify measures to help protect vulnerable salmon spawning and rearing habitat in the Sooke River and its tributary streams.
- Identify key information gaps and work towards obtaining the necessary information.

6.6.2 Cultural Heritage Management

Overview

Sooke Potholes has an interesting post-contact history, dating from early settlement of the Sooke area to more recent development projects. Most of the park has been disturbed as a result of this past use. The Sooke Potholes area has also been used by aboriginal peoples for thousands of years. The park is within the traditional territory of the T'Sou-ke Nation.

Sooke Potholes has been identified as archaeologically, ethnographically and historically significant. Further archaeological assessments should be completed to identify buried cultural deposits, and a traditional use study undertaken in direct consultation with the T'Sou-ke Nation. Management strategies should be developed to protect valuable cultural heritage resources.

OBJECTIVES

- To identify, assess, and protect significant cultural heritage resources.
- To work with the T'Sou-ke Nation to identify and address issues of interest to them.
- To include historical and cultural heritage messages in the park's communications strategy.
- To encourage public support in protecting the park's cultural heritage resources.
- To work with TLC on developing an interpretive center if the project proceeds.

ACTIONS

- Identify, assess, and protect significant cultural heritage resources. Remove objects with no historical value from the park.
- Ensure park development supports protection of cultural heritage resources.
- Work with the T'Sou-ke Nation on aboriginal cultural heritage management issues.
- Include appropriate cultural heritage messages in park communications and interpretation.
- Support TLC's efforts to build an interpretive center at the old lodge site as appropriate.

6.6.3 Visitor Experience

Overview

Sooke Potholes Regional Park welcomes visitors and provides a diversity of visitor experiences, ranging from swimming, hiking, cycling and camping, to nature and cultural study and appreciation. However, most activities are centered on the Sooke River—particularly in the summer months when people flock to the park to enjoy swimming in the potholes and pools stretched along the river.

Sooke Potholes is truly a four-season park, featuring stunning spring wildflower displays, fantastic summer swimming opportunities, spectacular fall salmon runs, and powerful winter storm watching. Accessing the park can be problematic during periods of heavy rain due to road flooding, while providing adequate parking for visitors can be an issue in summer when visitation is at its peak.

An on-going challenge is to determine where to direct use within the park. People arrive at the park with differing expectations about the type of experience they want. Some visitors come to interact with others, while some seek solitude and quiet. A management objective will be to provide park visitors with opportunities to enjoy a range of compatible park experiences and activities.

OBJECTIVES

- To manage the visitor experience in a way that promotes enjoyment, appreciation, safety, and understanding; and minimizes environmental impacts and user conflicts.
- To provide the majority of visitor services in designated areas.
- To provide accurate and timely information about park services and conditions.
- To provide an opportunity for the public to learn about the park's many values (i.e. ecological, cultural, geological, historical, social, etc.).

ACTIONS

- Use visitor facilities and communications to direct visitor use appropriately.
- Designate park trails for hiking only; cyclists and equestrians will be restricted to park roads. An exception may be the Riverside Trail if it is designated as a multi-use trail.
- Provide most visitor services in the southern portion of the park and keep the northern part of the park relatively undeveloped to provide visitors with a diversity of experiences.
- Develop strategies and community development initiatives to support public stewardship and awareness of park values.

6.6.4 Park Development and Operations

Overview

Sooke Potholes has a number of complex park development, operations, and maintenance issues associated with it. It is a long, linear park with one main road and a single access point. The road is presently inadequate to fully service existing and projected vehicular, bike, and pedestrian use. Re-engineering and hardening the park road is a critical component of effective park management. Pedestrians also need alternatives to using the park road. Completing a full-length riverside trail with identified river access points will provide this alternative and is a park development priority.

The lower third of the park will continue to offer the majority of visitor facilities and services; the middle third will contain fewer facilities and services; and the top third (above TLC's campground) will offer minimal facilities and services. This approach respects the sensitive nature of the park landscape and it provides for a diversity of visitor experiences ranging from easily accessible to more remote.

Sooke Potholes provides access into the adjoining Sea to Sea Regional Park, and some trails will need to be developed to link the two parks together, particularly as additional lands are acquired and new trail routes identified.

Yearly storms regularly flood portions of the park road and topple park trees. Unacceptable damages should be quickly addressed to protect public safety and park assets. Black bears may be present in the park during salmon spawning season. Strategies should be developed to address bear habituation, displacement, and public safety.

OBJECTIVES

- To encourage safe enjoyment of the park through appropriate facility design, location, and management.
- To encourage park visitors to leave their vehicles and experience the park environment by foot, bicycle, or horse.
- To continually examine the park's transportation system to improve the visitor experience, and to reduce negative impacts.
- To assess trails for their environmental and experiential values, and for safety hazards.
- To make communications and education a central aspect of all park initiatives.

ACTIONS

- Conduct a thorough inventory of the park's significant features for park development and maintenance purposes.
- Properly engineer and harden the park road as resources and visitor demand warrants it.
- Provide access and parking nodes along the entire length of the park if/as appropriate.
- Explore off-site parking opportunities.
- Design and build a "Riverside Trail" with appropriate river access points.
- Work closely with TLC on park operations and maintenance issues.
- Require dogs to remain on leash and on trails.

6.7 Plan Implementation - Key Actions

Phase 1

- Complete feasible sections of the Sooke Riverside Trail from park entrance to campground
- Develop limited number of river access points in the northern portion of the park
- Examine parking and transportation issues and implement appropriate management strategies
- Prepare an environmental conservation strategy

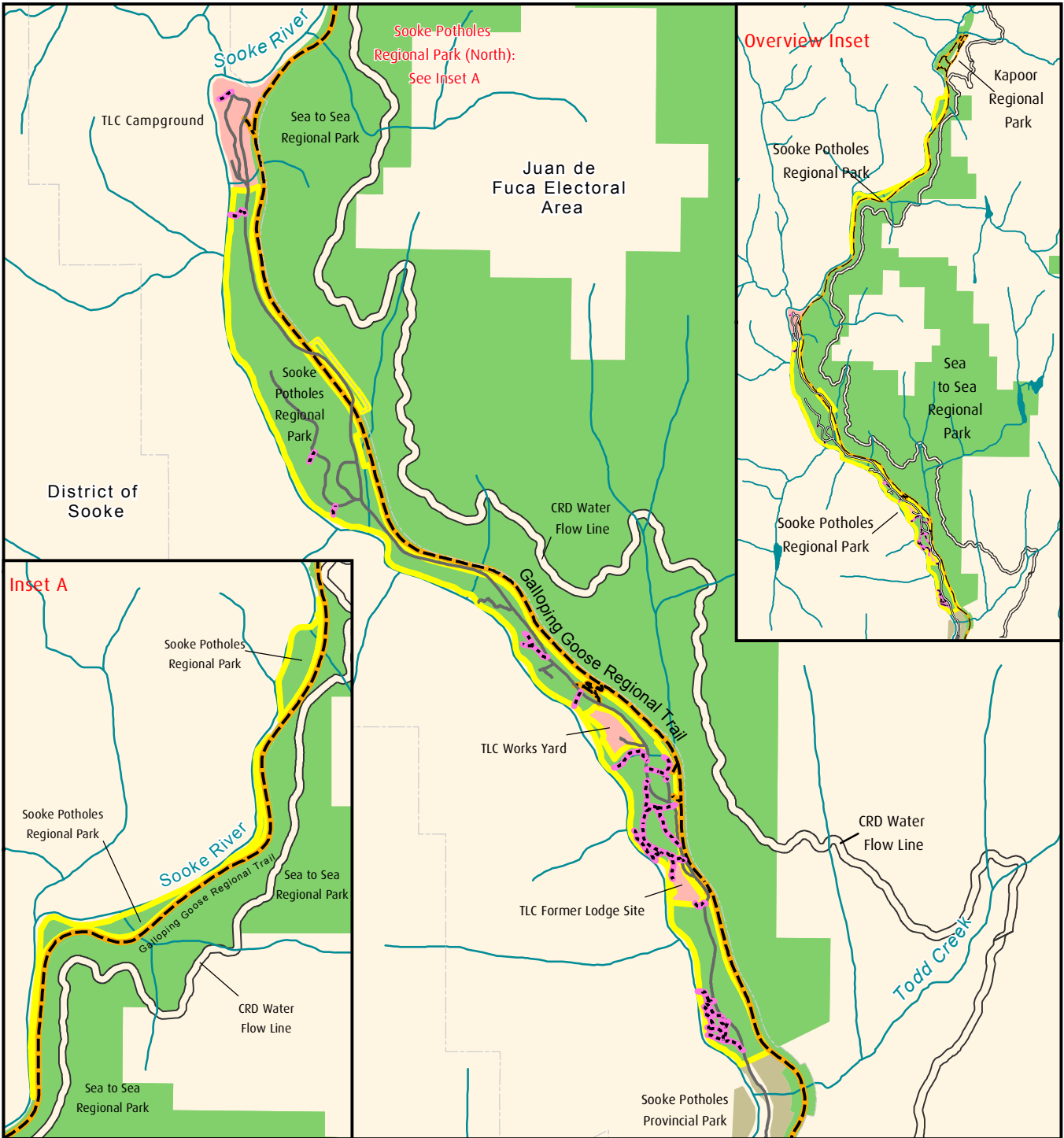
Phase 2

- Investigate the demand for and feasibility of upgrading and opening the park road to campground; implement if warranted and as resources permit
- Finish all sections of the Riverside Trail as resources become available
- Consider developing additional parking areas to accommodate increased visitor use as needs are identified and as resources permit

- Integrate TLC interpretive center into existing park development if site is developed
- Provide additional access points into Sea to Sea Regional Park as feasible
- Undertake additional environmental protection and cultural heritage management projects as needed
- Develop and implement partnerships, community development, and interpretive strategies

Phase 3

- Develop additional trails and access points into Sea to Sea lands as appropriate
- Continue to integrate park operations and development with TLC as appropriate
- Undertake projects based on management concerns and visitor needs as they are identified and as resources become available



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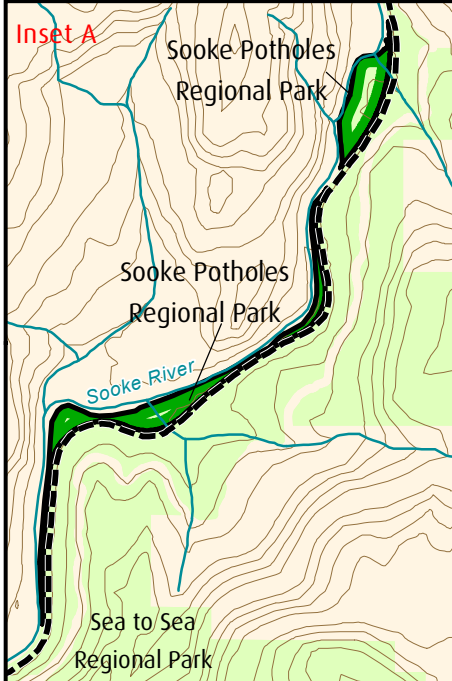
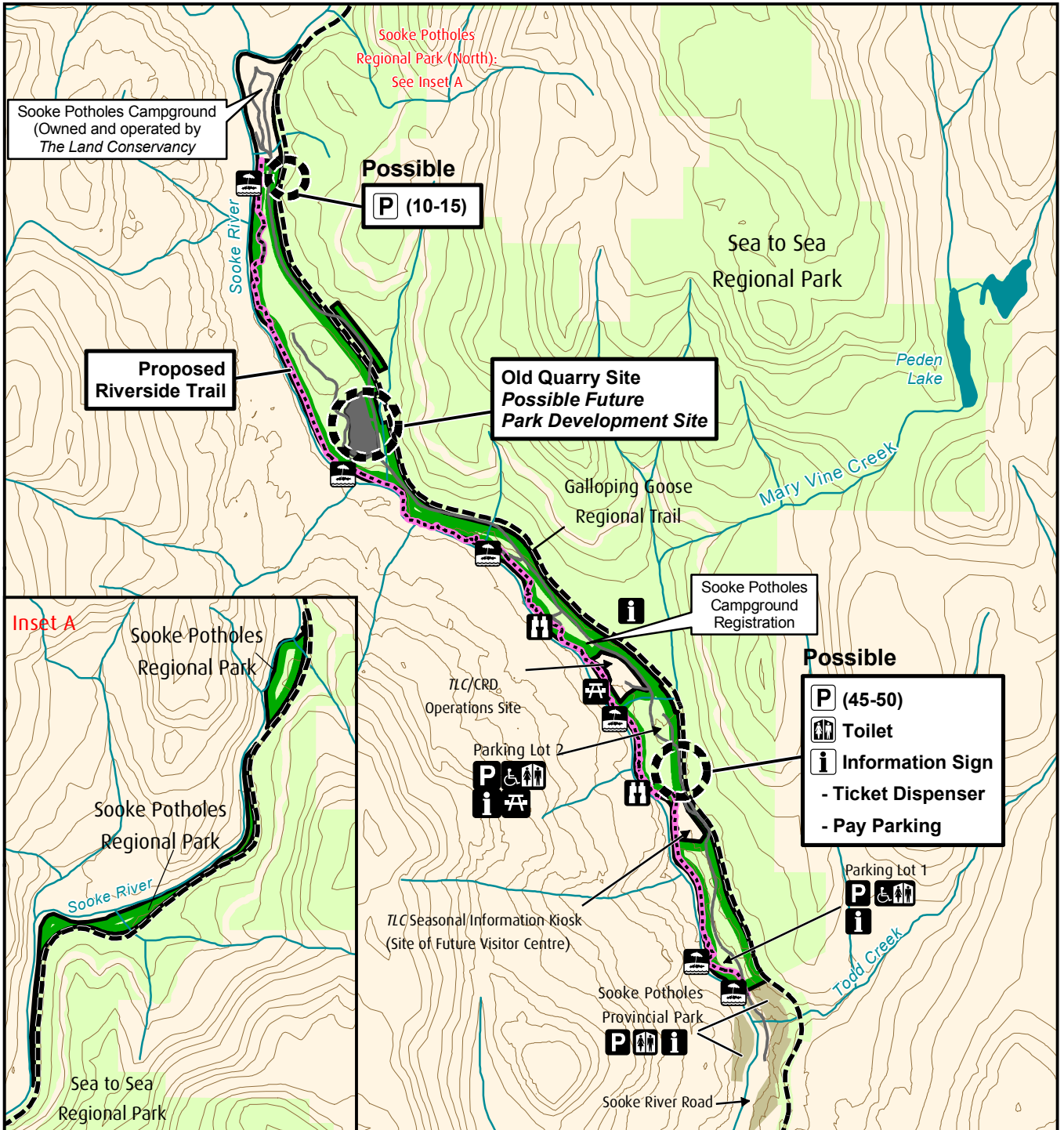
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Map 17 | January 2010 | SSGBB_MP_SP.mxd

- Sooke Potholes Regional Park
- Regional Park
- Municipal Park
- Provincial Park
- Protected Area
- Municipal Boundary
- Park Road
- Hiking / Equestrian / Cycling Trail
- Hiking Trail
- Minor Road
- Stream / River
- Lake / Reservoir

Sooke Potholes Regional Park



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Map 18 | January 2010 | SSGBB_DC_SP.mxd

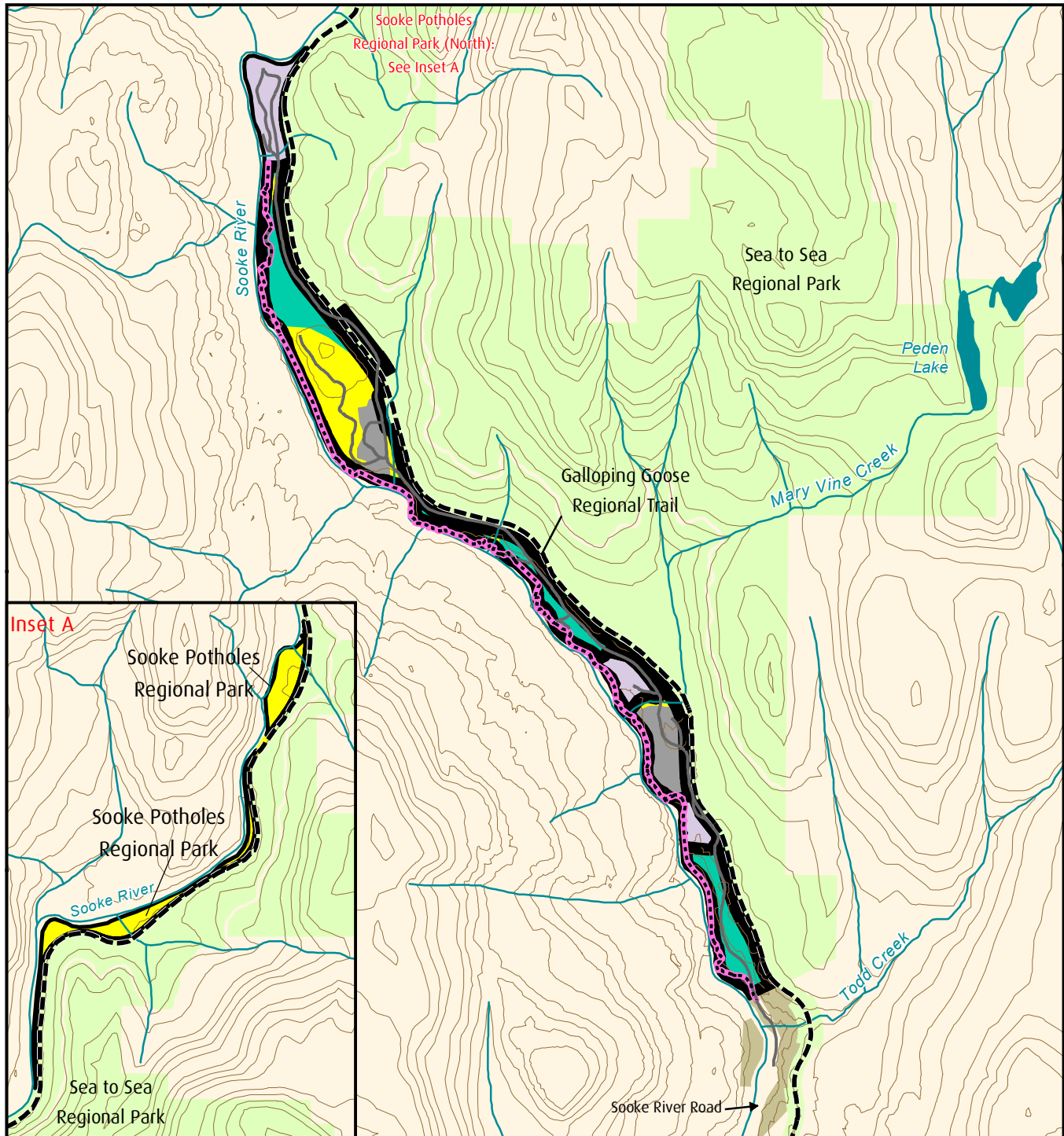
Existing Facilities

- Viewpoint
- Parking
- Toilets
- Accessible Toilets
- Information
- Picnic Area
- Beach

- Park Boundary
- Regional Park
- Provincial Park
- Hiking Trail
- Galloping Goose Regional Trail
- Road
- Contour (20 metre interval)
- Stream / River
- Lake / Reservoir

Sooke Potholes Regional Park

Development Concept



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Map 19 | January 2010 | SSGBB_MPZ_SP.mxd

Park Boundary	Regional Park
Environmental Protection Zone	Provincial Park
Natural Environmental Zone	TLC Parcel
Park Services Zone	Road
Hiking Trail	Stream / River
Galloping Goose Regional Trail	Lake / Reservoir
Contour (20 metre interval)	

Sooke Potholes Regional Park

Zoning Designation

7 Plan Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

It is vital that the actions resulting from park management plans are continually monitored and evaluated in order to ascertain their impacts to the environment, on visitor experience, and to surrounding communities. This park management plan embraces several methods to monitor and evaluate park management decisions, although the primary frameworks will be the use of Adaptive Management and Limits of Acceptable Change.

Park management plans should have a limited lifespan in order to respond to changing conditions and understandings. It is very important for management plans to keep current and vital so that park managers and the public have access to the best information available to make informed decisions about the park's long-term ecological viability, provision of high-quality visitor experiences, and impacts on surrounding communities.

The following two sections highlight how this park management plan will address plan monitoring, evaluation, and review.

7.1 Plan Monitoring and Evaluation

Actions undertaken as a result of this management plan will be carefully monitored and evaluated to ensure they fulfill their intended goals and remain in line with park vision and direction statements.

At the highest level, outcomes of this management plan must fit within CRD Regional Parks' commitment to managing parks within an ecosystem-based management framework. According to one definition of ecosystem management:

...ecosystem management provides a conceptual and strategic basis for the protection of park ecosystems through a holistic view of the natural environment and the complex interactions and dynamic nature of park ecosystems in and outside of park boundaries (Parks Canada, 1999).

Thus, park development, provision of visitor services and activities, and implementation of conservation strategies must fit within the overall context of ecosystem management. Decisions must take into account potential positive and negative impacts to the park and to the broader landscape.

Inextricably tied to the notion of ecosystem management is sustainability. Sustainability can be described in terms of a "three legged stool" supported by a foundation of environmental, social and economic considerations. Clearly, actions undertaken as part of this management plan must support environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

Underlying ecosystem management and sustainability is the concept of adaptive management. Adaptive management will be used to monitor and evaluate decisions arising from this management plan. Adaptive management can be defined as:

The cyclical process of systematically testing assumptions, generating learning by evaluating the results of such testing, and further improving management practices.

Central to the idea of adaptive management is the belief that surprise, uncertainty and the unexpected are normal; that it isn't possible to eliminate them through management actions; and that managers should provide allowance for them. Also central to adaptive management is the belief in a continual learning process in which there are no management failures.

Adaptive management will be used to assess the impacts of recreation, conservation, and development decisions. When applied to an assessment of a particular recreational activity for example, adaptive management will involve monitoring to assess the level of positive and negative impacts on the park

environment and the experience of other park visitors. If monitoring reveals unacceptable impacts, then the activity will be re-assessed.

This re-assessment may result in a variety of management strategies to be considered, such as (1) not allowing the activity to occur any longer in the study area; (2) providing more rules or regulations to better manage the activity; or (3) relocating the activity to a part of the park where the activity may have less impact.

A key factor underlying adaptive management is the idea of taking a precautionary approach to all park management decisions. This “precautionary principle” requires park managers to consider the potential positive and negative environmental impacts of their decisions before making them, given the inherent uncertainty in being able to fully anticipate the consequences of management decisions on natural settings.

A “Limits of Acceptable Change” (LAC) framework will also be used to monitor and evaluate specific sensitive areas of the parks. LAC provides a framework within which the appropriate amount of acceptable change can be identified, and it alerts park managers to the need for management action when changes exceed acceptable limits.

7.2 Plan Review

This park management plan will be periodically reviewed based on departmental capacity to undertake such a review, and the documented need for a review based on changed conditions and/or understandings. The underlying park classifications, management goal, and vision/direction statements should not be revised unless approved through a public consultation process. The major aim of the park management plan review is to update plan area boundaries, park zoning designations, and management objectives and actions to ensure this Regional Park Management Plan remains an effective and useful guide for decision-making.

8 Glossary of Terms

Aboriginal: Any First Nation, Indigenous, Native, Inuit or Metis person, either status or non-status living either on or off reserve.

Archaeology: The study of past human cultures through the analysis of their material and physical remains.

Biological diversity: The variety of life forms in a given area. Diversity can be categorized in terms of the number of species, the variety in the area's plant and animal communities, the genetic variability of the animals, or a combination of these elements.

CRD Regional Parks Master Plan: A strategic document that is system-wide in scope. It provides a vision and purpose for CRD Regional Parks. It also gives direction for achieving the highest standards of public service and stewardship in protecting the natural environment and providing opportunities for outdoor experiences and activities.

Ecology: The study of how organisms interact with each other and their physical environment.

Ecological integrity: The quality of a natural unmanaged or managed ecosystem in which the natural ecological processes are sustained, with genetic, species and ecosystem diversity assured for the future.

Ecosystem management: Management designed to maintain the interactions between all of the species in a given area and their non-living environment.

Ecosystem processes: The four basic processes within an ecosystem: water cycle, mineral cycle, energy flow and community dynamics.

Environmental Impact Assessment: Process by which the environmental consequences of a proposed project are evaluated and alternatives are analyzed. EIA is an integral part of planning and decision-making processes.

First Nations: The name given to an organized aboriginal group or community, especially any of the bands officially recognized by the Canadian government.

Indigenous: Native to a region, whether people, plants, wildlife, or cultural expressions.

Invasive species: Non-native species of plants or animals that out-compete native species in a specific habitat.

Low-impact recreational activities: In this park management plan, the term refers to non-motorized, human-powered activities that rely on the natural environment for their enjoyment, and that can be accommodated in an environmentally sustainable and visitor-friendly manner.

Public Consultation: A process through which the public is informed about proposals fashioned by a planning authority and invited to submit comments on.

Regional Growth Strategy: The CRD Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), developed and approved by the member municipalities and the regional district in partnership, on social, economic, and environmental goals and priority actions.

Riparian Zone: The part of the watershed immediately adjacent to the stream or other waterbody.

Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt: The Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt is a visionary undertaking that will create a 10,000 hectare corridor of protected wilderness and parkland stretching from Saanich Inlet in the east to the Sooke Basin in the southwest.

Te'mexw Treaty Process: The Te'mexw Treaty Association (TTA) entered the treaty process in July 1995,

and is in stage four of the six-stage process, negotiating an agreement in principle. The treaty process is facilitated by the BC Treaty Commission and is voluntary and open to all First Nation in British Columbia. The Te'mexw Treaty Association includes five First Nations: Beecher Bay, Malahat, Nanoose, T'Sou-ke, and Songhees.

Terrestrial: Operating, living, or growing on land.

Visitor Experience: When visitors are satisfied that both their needs and their expectations have been met or exceeded.

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10 Appendices

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10.1 Appendix 1. CRD Regional Parks Management Zone Guidelines

Management Zones	Objectives	Environmental Values	Visitor Experience and Activities	Typical Infrastructure
Environmental Protection Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To protect ecologically significant areas within regional parks through long term science-based land stewardship To protect culturally significant areas and features through a long term cultural resource management strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas with rare or endangered species and ecosystems needing the highest degree of ecological protection In some areas, visitor access may be restricted. Ecological features associated with culturally significant sites may be protected as part of the culturally significant features of the park or trail (e.g. heritage orchards) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature study Environmental interpretation Visitor experience is centered around appreciation of natural features. Cultural appreciation and interpretation Historical appreciation Visitor experience is one of appreciating and understanding the cultural context of the feature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low-impact nature trails and other infrastructure that enhance appreciation of the natural feature(s) Low-impact nature trails and other infrastructure that enhance appreciation of the cultural feature(s)
Regional Wilderness Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To keep large natural systems functioning and provide a regional wilderness experience for park visitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contiguous land areas large enough to protect the natural values Areas with outstanding natural features that create a memorable visitor experience Ecosystems are functioning in a sustainable fashion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities dispersed over a wide area Some backcountry areas could be available for hiking, cycling, and horseback riding Visitor experience is one of being in a wilderness setting Backcountry camping may be permitted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long distance hiking, equestrian and cycling trails Trails to viewpoints
Natural Environment Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide easily accessible natural areas within the parks To provide areas within the parks that can be used for more active recreational pursuits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas where outdoor activities take place in conjunction with protection of natural features Less remote than wilderness Can act as a buffer between wilderness and recreation zones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities less dispersed than in a wilderness zone, and more accessible to visitors Horseback riding, cycling and hiking, shoreline activities Visitor experience is one of participating in outdoor activities in a natural setting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hiking, walking, equestrian and cycling trails Viewpoints Pathways Picnic areas Open fields
Outdoor Recreation Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide areas within a regional park that can accommodate concentrated recreation use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outstanding recreation features Natural values may be compromised to allow higher level of activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities more concentrated- e.g., beach activities, swimming, boating, fishing, picnicking, multi-use trails, group picnic areas Visitor experience includes active participation in outdoor recreation activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change rooms Concessions, Boat launch sites Beaches Group picnic shelters Nature houses
Park Services Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide areas within a park needed to support park services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural values secondary to park service needs Considerable landscape modification allowed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitor-oriented and park operation services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parking lots Storage areas Washroom buildings Park operations buildings

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10.2 Appendix 2. Management Plan Implementation Summary

10.2.1 Phase 1

Ayum Creek

- Assess and repair existing park trails and access points as necessary
- Prepare and implement basic environmental conservation and communications strategies

Kapoor

- Complete Galloping Goose Regional Trail to southern boundary of Old Wolf Creek
- Prepare and implement basic environmental conservation and communications strategies
- Develop and implement fire risk management, security, and visitor safety protocols

Sea to Sea

- Redevelop Harbourview Road parking lot
- Develop Mount Manuel Quimper hiking loop trail and additional trails as identified in the trail plan
- Upgrade a system of approved mountain biking trails according to IMBA guidelines
- Improve access and visitor facilities at summit of Mount Manuel Quimper
- Prepare an operational plan
- Prepare a communications plan
- Develop and implement fire risk management, security, and visitor safety protocols

Sooke Potholes

- Complete feasible sections of the Sooke Riverside Trail from park entrance to campground
- Develop limited number of river access points in the northern portion of the park
- Examine parking and transportation issues and implement appropriate management strategies
- Prepare an environmental conservation strategy

10.2.2 Phase 2

Ayum Creek

- Open the park with appropriate level of park facilities and services
- Develop and implement environmental protection, cultural heritage management, communications, interpretive, and community development strategies

Kapoor

- Open the park with an appropriate level of park facilities and services
- Develop and implement environmental protection, cultural heritage management, communications, interpretive, and community development strategies

Sea to Sea

- Secure access routes to all parcels of Sea to Sea Regional Park
- Develop hiking trail from Sooke Potholes Parking Lot #2 to Peden Lake along Mary Vine Creek; provide minimal visitor facilities
- Improve Harbourview Road up to Crabapple and Sheilds Lakes as conditions permit; operate as a multi-use trail and service vehicle access
- Build a back-country campground and day-use area at Sheilds Lake as appropriate
- Prepare a mountain biking trail plan for the southern section of the park
- Develop hiking, equestrian, and mountain biking opportunities in the park
- Restore fire look-out tower on Mount Manuel Quimper summit (with partner funding)
- Support appropriate environmental conservation and cultural heritage management projects
- Develop and implement partnerships, community development, and interpretive strategies

Sooke Potholes

- Investigate the demand and feasibility of upgrading and opening the park road to the campground; implement if warranted and as resources permit
- Finish all sections of the Riverside Trail as resources become available
- Consider developing additional parking areas to accommodate increased visitor use as resources permit
- Integrate the proposed TLC interpretive center into existing park development if site is developed
- Provide additional access points into Sea to Sea Regional Park as feasible
- Undertake additional environmental protection and cultural heritage management projects as needed
- Develop and implement partnerships, community development, and interpretive strategies

10.2.3 Phase 3

Ayum Creek

- To be determined based on management concerns and visitor needs

Kapoor

- To be determined based on management concerns and visitor needs

Sea to Sea

- Consider developing additional back-country camping opportunities if warranted
- Provide trail linkages with the Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park Reserve (SHWRPR) if it is opened
- Develop trail connections and access points on new lands as they are acquired
- Continue development of hiking, equestrian, and mountain biking opportunities

- Undertake projects based on management priorities and visitor needs as they are identified and resources become available

Sooke Potholes

- Develop additional trails and access points into Sea to Sea lands as appropriate
- Continue to integrate park operations and development with TLC as appropriate
- Undertake projects based on management concerns and visitor needs as they are identified and resources become available

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10.3 Appendix 3. Supplementary Information

10.3.1 CRD Regional Parks Master Plan

In September 2000, CRD Regional Parks adopted a CRD Regional Parks Master Plan (Master Plan) [Bylaw No. 1, 2000]. The purpose of the Master Plan is to provide a vision and purpose for CRD Regional Parks. It is a system-wide, strategic document that establishes frameworks for managing the regional parks and trails system. The Parks Master Plan will be updated in 2009-2010.

According to the 2000 Master Plan, the purposes of the CRD Regional Parks system are:

- To establish and protect a network of CRD Regional Parks in perpetuity that represent and help maintain the diverse range of natural environments in the Capital Regional District.
- To provide opportunities for outdoor experiences and activities that foster enjoyment of and appreciation and respect for the region's natural environments.

The Master Plan bounds park management plans through its mandate of environmental conservation (as the highest priority) followed by provision of visitor experiences appropriate to each regional park or trail.

The Master Plan provides general direction around the four topic areas addressed in this park management plan as follows:

Environmental Conservation

Protecting the natural environment is the primary responsibility of CRD Regional Parks. This encompasses all aspects of the natural environment: land, air, water, plants, and wildlife. Environmental management is based on two cornerstone concepts: environmental conservation and environmental stewardship.

The Master Plan defines environmental conservation as:

- The careful protection, use, and planned management of living organisms and their vital processes, to prevent their depletion, exploitation, destruction or waste (p. 45).

The Master Plan defines environmental stewardship as:

- The caring, thoughtful and cautious management of the land and associated natural and cultural values, and passing on healthy ecosystems to future generations (p. 46).

The Master Plan's environment protection guidelines include:

- Adopting an ecosystem-based approach to managing CRD Regional Parks and trails.
- Promoting naturally functioning ecosystems through conservation, enhancement, and restoration activities.
- Protecting habitats of rare, threatened, or endangered species.
- Undertaking only limited alterations to the natural environment.
- Matching outdoor recreation uses and facilities with the capabilities of the natural environment to support such uses while ensuring minimal negative impacts.

Cultural Heritage Management

CRD Regional Parks has a responsibility to protect the legacy and the history of the peoples who occupied land that is now a regional park. Many cultural features in CRD Regional Parks relate to First Nations, while others relate to the history of post-contact settlement of the region.

Cultural heritage management guidelines include:

- Protecting and conserving cultural features in their original place.
- Working cooperatively with First Nations to protect and manage First Nations sites and artifacts within regional parks and on trails.
- Preparing an inventory of all cultural features within CRD Regional Parks.

Visitor Use

CRD regional parks and trails have a special role to play in providing opportunities for outdoor activities. However, not all activities are appropriate, nor can be accommodated in parks. The two major goals of managing visitor use are:

- To provide opportunities for a range of experiences and activities that have a minimal impact on the natural environment, are appropriate to the purpose of each park or trail, and best serve visitor needs.
- To provide essential services and facilities that will have minimal impact on the natural environment, address public safety, and foster enjoyment and appreciation of CRD Regional Parks and trails.

Park Development and Operations

The operations function of CRD Regional Parks plays a critical role in achieving the purpose of regional parks and trails. Operations refers to the day to day services that enhance people's use and safe enjoyment of regional parks and trails, while protecting the natural environment and safeguarding CRD's financial investment in equipment and facilities.

Park operation guidelines include:

- Conducting routine maintenance of facilities.
- Following development and maintenance procedures that offer a high degree of safety to the public, protect the natural environment, and avoid impacts to historic/cultural features.
- Assisting with habitat enhancement and restoration projects;
- Maintaining and updating a wildfire prevention and suppression program, and public safety protocols (e.g. search and rescue/emergency response).

10.3.2 Management Plan Topic Areas

Park management objectives and actions were developed under four topic areas in this management plan: (1) ecological conservation; (2) cultural heritage management; (3) visitor experience; and (4) park operations. The focus of the four topic areas is:

Ecological Conservation

The primary mandate of CRD Regional Parks is to ensure that ecological integrity is protected by maintaining the full range and diversity of the natural environment in perpetuity. Ecological integrity means that ecosystems need to be unimpaired by stresses, have naturally functioning ecological processes, and contain a full complement of native species that can maintain their populations. To achieve this goal, CRD Regional Parks has adopted an ecosystem-based approach to CRD Regional Parks' management.

This park management plan utilizes an ecosystem-based management approach by emphasizing the connectedness of the four park units. The plan area stretches across a large landscape ranging from mountain top to ocean foreshore. The land and the sea are connected by complex ecological processes. Although the coordinated management of large, contiguous networks of protected areas is a key requirement for ecosystem based management, each park unit also has unique, smaller-scale environmental issues.

An integrated approach, linking management actions at different levels, is critical to successfully protecting the ecological integrity of the entire plan area. By taking this approach, CRD Regional Parks will better be able to manage complex ecosystem processes and more effectively address conservation concerns as they arise.

A key element of ecological integrity is a park's biodiversity. Maintaining a park's natural biodiversity is the best way to protect ecological integrity. There are several types of biological diversity including landscape, community, species, and genetic. Each requires special attention to ensure its continuing viability:

- Landscape diversity includes all ecosystems in an area, plant and animal communities, and the physical habitat;
- Community diversity encompasses all the species living together in a particular habitat;
- Species diversity refers to the variety of plants and animals in an area; and
- Genetic diversity refers to the variation in genetic make-up among individuals of the same species.

Biodiversity is linked to ecological processes, such as fire, flood, predation, pollination, and seed dispersal. These natural processes, and the physical environment that produces and supports the diversity of life, will be maintained in the four park units.

The Parks Master Plan provides an environmental management framework that addresses how CRD Regional Parks will ensure the maintenance of environmental integrity and biological diversity in regional parks (page 47). These guidelines also apply to the four park units.

How CRD Regional Parks will ensure environmental integrity and biological diversity:

- Acquire land
- Planning
- Ecological inventory and mapping
- Research and monitoring
- Environmental education
- Environmental impact assessments
- Public information

CRD Regional Parks is committed to protecting ecosystem integrity. With this mandate, alteration to the natural environment within the Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt will be minimal; and ecosystem functions will be protected through conservation, enhancement, and restoration activities.

Cultural Heritage Management

The four park units each have a unique human history ranging from prehistoric occupation by aboriginal peoples to more modern-day use by settlers, resource extractors, and recreationists. The cultural heritage diversity present in the four parks is an invaluable legacy for residents of the Capital Regional District. This legacy carries with it an equally important responsibility to identify and protect these resources for the benefit of current and future generations. Inherent challenges exist to conserving this cultural legacy. It is tied to the inadequate information available to document the significance, or even the existence, of some sites and/or artifacts. As well, CRD Regional Parks has limited resources to undertake cultural heritage research and management actions.

The four park units are within the traditional territory of the T'Sou-ke Nation and Beecher Bay First Nation.

The T'Sou-ke Nation and Beecher Bay First Nation have an interest in the past and present use of the four park units. The T'Sou-ke Nation and Beecher Bay First Nation belong to the Te'mexw Treaty Process, and through this treaty process, CRD Regional Parks is engaging with them to identify cultural heritage issues of interest to all parties.

Local communities also possess a wealth of knowledge about historical human use and development within the four park units. The Sooke Museum in particular is an invaluable resource for historical documentation of the social, cultural, and physical development of Sooke and surrounding areas.

CRD Regional Parks has a responsibility to protect the legacy and the history of the peoples who occupied or used lands that are now part of the four CRD Regional Parks. Working within its available means, CRD Regional Parks will reach out to the T'Sou-ke Nation, Beecher Bay First Nation, and the local community to engage them in identifying, assessing, protecting, and interpreting the cultural heritage resources found within the four park units.

Visitor Experience

The four park units are ideally situated to offer a diversity of visitor experiences, ranging from low-key nature contemplation along a tidal estuary, to remote backcountry hikes along wind-swept ridges offering panoramic views of the Sooke Basin and Olympic Mountains, to exhilarating swims in scoured out Sooke River "pot-holes" with family and friends, to challenging single-track rides down specially built mountain bike trails. The landscape characteristics of the four park units largely determines the type of visitor experience appropriate for a given area, as well as the level of visitor services necessary to provide a safe and enjoyable visit.

CRD Regional Parks is committed to providing park visitors with opportunities to engage in a diversity of appropriate activities within these four park units. A key challenge will be to provide recreation opportunities appropriate to the landscape that fulfill differing visitor motivations, expectations, and abilities. Safety considerations and the potential for user conflicts come into play when determining the type and location of visitor activities.

Perhaps the most important consideration is what the land itself can sustain without being irreversibly damaged. An on-going management challenge will be to protect ecological integrity and biological diversity while providing safe, enjoyable, and diverse visitor opportunities. Utilizing appropriate visitor management and community partnership strategies, education, and communication are ways of ensuring these interests will be addressed.

Park Development and Operations

The operations function plays a critical role in achieving the purpose of a particular park. Operations functions include providing the day-to-day services that enhance a visitor's safe use and enjoyment of the park, while protecting the natural environment. The four park units will demand different levels and types of park operations functions, some of which have not been encountered in other CRD Regional Parks to date. For instance, given the large size and wilderness characteristics of the Sea to Sea Regional Park, new skills and knowledge will be demanded of park staff, and new operations and maintenance protocols will need to be developed and implemented.

Impacts associated with new recreational opportunities will need to be carefully monitored and addressed, such as potential impacts associated with back-country camping at Sheilds Lake, or issues arising from the development of a comprehensive trail network. Fire management and visitor safety will also need to be addressed in day-to-day management of the four park units. These challenges can best be achieved by structuring the park operations function to take full advantage of available departmental resources, skills, and knowledge, and supplementing available resources when necessary.

10.3.3 Park Values

Ecological Values

The plan area is a fairly undisturbed and undeveloped landscape, although some disturbance by road and trail building, logging, and introduced plant species has occurred. A variety of ecosystems are supported in the area creating a diversity of habitat for plant and wildlife species. Numerous rare plants and ecosystems are recorded in the plan area, including old and mature forests, wetlands, and herb-dominated hillsides.

The plan area is within the Nanaimo Lowland Ecoregion of the Georgia Depression Ecoregion. Most of the plan area is in the dry maritime western variant subzone of the Coastal Western Hemlock biogeoclimatic zone (CWHxm2), with a smaller amount in the eastern variant of the same subzone (CWHxm1).

Climate in the CWHxm is usually warm and dry in the summer and moist and mild in winter, with relatively little snowfall. Forests in this subzone are dominated by Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*) and smaller amounts of western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*). Major understory species include salal (*Gaultheria shallon*), dull Oregon grape (*Mahonia nervosa*), red huckleberry (*Vaccinium parvifolium*), *Hylocomium splendens* and *Kindbergia oregana*. Other common plants include vanilla-leaf (*Achlys triphylla*), twin-flower (*Linnaea borealis*), sword fern (*Polystichum munitum*) and bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*).

The highest value wildlife habitat in the plan area appears to be associated with wetlands, riparian areas, old-growth coniferous stands, and mature coniferous stands with veteran trees. Several lakes provide permanent water sources, marshy edges, and riparian influence around their perimeters. Wetland habitats seem to be relatively rare in the plan area. Wetlands provide breeding habitat for pond-breeding amphibians, foraging and nesting habitat for waterfowl, foraging habitat for Great Blue Herons, Osprey, Belted Kingfishers, Black Bear and Roosevelt Elk.

Very narrow bands of riparian-influenced forest occur along many creeks. Summer water flows in these creeks appears to be very low. Of the major creeks in the study area, only the lower reaches of the Charters has anadromous fish. Even though the creeks are small and riparian influence is limited, the creeks provide water for wildlife, travel corridors for mammals, and moister habitat than exists on adjacent slopes. Low bench and high bench floodplains also contain a diversity of habitat and plant species.

The Sooke River is predominantly protected along its eastern edge by CRD Water Lands, Kapoor Regional Park, Sooke Potholes Regional Park, and Sooke Potholes Provincial Park. Four watersheds are protected within the plan area (Ayum Creek, Charters River, Todd Creek, and Mary Vine Creek).

Mature (80-250 years old) and old-growth (>250 years old) forests are relatively rare in the four park units. Given the long history of logging in the plan area, and in southern Vancouver Island, mature forest, and especially old-growth forest, is becoming increasingly rare habitat. There are large expanses of younger-aged forest, and some recently logged areas which, while providing good habitat for some wildlife during some seasons, are a common habitat type on Southern Vancouver Island.

Herbaceous terrestrial plant communities are associated with the dry, rocky uplands and support a diverse mix of vegetation species. The very dry sites often have a variety of mosses, grasses and lichens, while lush meadows of grasses and wildflowers grow where more moisture and soil is present. Hairy manzanita is often a dominant shrub on dry, rocky sites. These sites are very sensitive to human disturbance.

All of the ecosystems mapped in the plan area are designated red or blue-listed plant communities by the BC Conservation Data Centre (CDC). Rare plants have been found within or adjacent to the plan area. Sites with the greatest potential for rare and endangered species in the plan area are wetlands and herbaceous terrestrial landscapes.

Non-native species are found throughout the plan area. Scotch broom is the most common. Broom is found primarily on south facing dry rocky slopes, and along the wider trails and roads. Other non-native species present include sweet vernal grass, hairy cat's ear, soft brome, wall lettuce, Himalayan blackberry,

periwinkle, and English holly. Upland herbaceous ecosystems have minimal introduced grasses, and little broom exists on the north facing slopes.

The plan area contains many distinct environmental features, some of which are unique to the area. More detailed mapping and field work will help to more clearly define and describe these features, and to assist with developing protection strategies. The following is a list of some of the special features found in the plan area.

- Ecologically significant mountains including Mount Manuel Quimper and Empress Mountain
- High diversity of freshwater bodies, including seeps, creeks, streams, lakes, wetlands, and rivers
- High representation of herb-dominated hilltops and sensitive hillside ecosystems
- Patches of old-growth and mature forests
- High frequency of scattered Douglas-fir veteran trees
- Presence of mature high bench floodplains
- Unique series of wetlands around Peden Lake
- Almost complete protection of four intact watersheds
- Presence of many rare plant species in herbaceous terrestrial and wetland ecosystems
- Most of the plan area is in the dry maritime western variant subzone of the Coastal western Hemlock biogeoclimatic zone (CWHxm2), which is poorly represented in protected lands on Southern Vancouver Island
- At least 107 native plant species recorded in Ayum Creek, including two rare species, and over 100 species of birds have been recorded.
- Numerous fish species in the Sooke River including steelhead, coho, chum, rainbow trout, cutthroat trout, and Dolly Varden char.
- Presence of large carnivores in the parks, including black bears, cougars, and wolves.

Although some disturbance by road building, logging, and introduced plant species has occurred in the parks, this disturbance is minimal. Overall, the park lands represent a landscape of relative wilderness that supports a healthy diversity of ecosystems and habitats.

Cultural Heritage Values

The Sea to Sea planning area is rich with historical documentation and oral history concerning the T'Souke First Nation, early settlers and settlements, early industry and resource extraction, and recreational use. However, very little archaeological work has been completed within or near the park units. A recent field survey has identified several areas with archaeological potential within the individual park units. The field survey recommended undertaking detailed archaeological field studies and Traditional Use Studies (TUS) in Kapoor, Sooke Potholes, and the Sea to Sea regional parks.

T'Sou-ke Nation

The planning area is within the traditional territory of the T'Sou-ke Nation, one of six groups that comprise the "Northern Straits" cultural group. "Northern Straits" or "Straits Salish" is comprised of the T'Sou-ke, Songhees, and Esquimalt (Lukungun), Saanich, Samish, and Lummi groups who occupied Southern Vancouver Island between Sheringham Point and Saanich Inlet, as well as the San Juan and southern Gulf Islands, and the mainland shore from Point Roberts and Boundary Bay to Deception Pass.

T'Sou-ke ("Sooke") is an Anglicization of the indigenous term, said to mean "stickleback," due to the common presence of this fish at the Sooke River mouth. The general subsistence pattern of the T'Sou-ke was focused

on salmon fishing. Traditionally, the T'Sou-ke occupied the area around Sooke Harbour and their traditional territory extended from Beechey Head to Otter Point, and beyond to the Jordan River. The inland boundary of the T'Sou-ke included all headwaters of the Sooke River and the various creeks and tributaries within the above area. Reserves were allotted by the Joint Reserve Commission in 1877. Today, the nation occupies two reserves totaling 67.2 hectares in Sooke, with a population of about 250 persons. The T'Sou-ke Nation has Douglas Treaty rights and is currently negotiating a modern treaty as part of Te'mexw Treaty Process (a modern treaty process led by the Provincial government).

Early European Exploration of the Sooke Area

Captain Manuel Quimper undertook the first major European exploration of the Strait of Juan de Fuca on behalf of the Spanish Crown. Quimper arrived in Sooke and claimed possession of the area in the name of the King of Spain on June 23, 1790. He encountered two aboriginal settlements with an estimated 500 inhabitants. The Spanish claim was abandoned two years later. In 1843, James Douglas investigated the region in his endeavor to find a suitable location for a new fur-trading post, and in 1846 Captain Henry Kellett surveyed Sooke Harbour. In 1849, Captain Walter Colquhoun Grant became the first independent European settler in Sooke, purchasing 100 acres of land and establishing one of the earliest lumber mills at Vietch Creek. Grant did not stay long, leaving to prospect for gold in California and later returning to England.

Before a carriage road from Victoria was finally opened in 1872, travel to Sooke was made by canoe, steam ship or via a rough trail. In 1922, The Canadian National Railway opened a passenger service from Victoria to Sooke, with stations at Rocky Point, Hutchinson Cove, Saseenos, Milne's Landing, Leechtown, and Sooke Lake.

Visitor Use Values

Recreational Opportunities

The four park units have a long history of recreational use. The more recent recreational opportunities have primarily been hiking and mountain biking, although horse riding, swimming, fishing, camping, and nature study are also popular activities. Kapoor is primarily known as the end of the Galloping Goose Regional Trail and for its historic significance, offering visitor's easy access to short, level trails and Sooke River frontage. Sooke Potholes is well-known for its outstanding Sooke River swimming opportunities in the numerous pools and potholes located throughout the length of the park, offering some of the best freshwater swimming in the region. The park also offers plenty of opportunities for hiking and nature study, as well as cycling on the park road and nearby Galloping Goose Regional Trail. Camping is offered at the TLC-owned and managed campground at the northern end of the park. The Sea to Sea offers a wide range of recreational opportunities, including wilderness hiking and fishing, mountain biking, horse riding, and other types of rugged and adventurous outdoor activities. Ayum Creek is primarily a spot to quietly contemplate nature as expressed through its old growth trees, salmon spawning creek, and rich tidal estuary.

Human Disturbance

Logging and associated activities, such as road building, are the most significant sources of human disturbance within much of the plan area. Most of the original Douglas-fir stands have been logged and the remaining older forests are usually found on rocky hilltops and steep slopes.

Old roads and skid trails are distributed throughout the plan area. Many of these old roads are now used as trails by hikers and mountain bikers, creating an extensive network. The use of off-road vehicles such as four-wheel drive trucks and motorcycles has been relatively light recently. Four-wheel drive vehicles once accessed park lands through private property adjoining park boundaries, but in the past few years, CRD Regional Parks has placed obstacles at the main entrance points. This has been effective in keeping most off-road vehicles out of the parks. Bicycles, horses, and hikers still access the trails regularly.

Sheilds Lake, Peden Lake, Grassy Lake, and Crabapple Lake have historically been used as camping sites. A cabin, built by area hikers, is located at the south end of Peden Lake. All other standing structures, with the exception of the historic fire look-out tower at the summit of Mount Manuel Quimper, have burnt down or been dismantled.

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