

# regional parks **summary** of the draft strategic plan



Help shape the future of regional parks and trails in the Capital Regional District. We want to hear your feedback on the draft of the strategic plan to set the direction for regional parks and trails over the next decade and beyond.

LONE TREE HILL REGIONAL PARK  
- From the summit, the view sweeps across the Malahat and the Highlands to Victoria and the distant Olympic Mountains.

PHOTO BY: Rachel Grigg  
FLICKR PROFILE: Ray L G



SOUTHERN GULF ISLANDS - *Hikers can enjoy spectacular vistas of the Gulf Islands and the Lower Mainland.*

PHOTO BY: Evan Leeson

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## foreword

As highlighted in the Draft Strategic Plan, the Citizen Advisory Panel (CAP) and the majority of the public felt that Regional Parks is on the right path and nature protection and conserving biodiversity should be Regional Parks' top priority. Building on this solid protection mandate, the CAP also feels strongly that the CRD, as part of the Regional Sustainability Strategy, needs to embrace a commitment to manage at least half of the land and water in the region for the conservation of nature. An expanded regional parks and trails system would be a core part of this larger conservation vision, but would require a sustained commitment by the CRD and a wide range of private, First Nations and public partners to realize this ambitious and achievable objective.

Much as the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy 20 years ago helped define this region, we are now at another critical juncture in this region's evolution. If we are to sustain the diverse ecosystem and plentiful outdoor recreation opportunities that this region is blessed with well into the future, bold and innovative actions need to be taken. The CAP feels that this Strategic Plan provides an initial "roadmap" for Regional Parks and the CRD towards this larger vision.

Dave Chater

Chair, Citizen Advisory Panel

# citizen advisory panel



GALLOPING GOOSE REGIONAL TRAIL - Whether you're commuting to work, meandering on a weekend afternoon or pacing yourself from Victoria to Sooke, the trail is yours to enjoy and yours to protect.

PHOTO SOURCED FROM  
CRD IMAGE LIBRARY

The Citizen Advisory Panel has prepared a Draft Regional Parks Strategic Plan. It represents the work and discussions of the Panel and CRD staff over the past 15 months and incorporates the rich and deep input received from the community, interest groups and other park agencies. The volunteer panel includes residents from throughout the region, and represents a wide age range of people with diverse interests and knowledge.

The purpose of the panel is to provide advice to the CRD Regional Parks Committee on preparation of the Regional Parks Strategic Plan and to recommend a final plan to the committee.

This draft Strategic Plan represents the work of the members.

Dave Chater (chair)  
Maleea Acker (vice-chair)  
John Chapman  
Jenny Clark  
Timothy Conlin  
Dustin Creviston  
Jeffrey Doyle  
Marnie Essery  
Deanna Henry  
Jim Knock  
James MacPherson  
Bob Peart  
Steven Peterson  
Paul Reeve

## vision for regional parks

Capital Regional District (CRD) parks and trails secure the region's ecology and quality of life by establishing, in perpetuity, an interconnected system of natural lands. Parks and trails protect and restore our region's biodiversity, offering compatible outdoor recreation and education opportunities and accessible, nourishing, joyful connection with the natural world and our cultural heritage. They support the health of our region, its inhabitants and the planet as a whole.

In this century, regional parks and trails will become part of a larger integrated and connected system of natural areas. Together, these areas would conserve at least half of the region's land base for nature, thereby sustaining life supporting ecological processes. Achievement of this larger integrated and connected system of natural areas could be accomplished through a wide variety of conservation methods, on private and public lands and through collaboration within the CRD and with partners such as other levels of government, First Nations, conservation organizations and private landowners. By conserving at least half of the regions' land base for nature, residents would be living and working in harmony with the environment.

# mission of regional parks

The mission statements define the fundamental purpose of Regional Parks, describing: why it exists, what it does in order to achieve the vision, and the level of performance to be met or surpassed.

The mission of Regional Parks is to:

1. Establish and expand a diverse and connected system of regional parks that protect the region's biodiversity, varied ecosystems and landscapes.
2. Establish and expand a regional trails system that connects communities of the capital region and connects the CRD to the Cowichan Valley Regional District and to Metro Vancouver.
3. Manage the regional parks and trails system as a whole and as part of a network of parks and trails in the CRD.
4. Conserve and restore parklands so that they retain their ecological and cultural integrity.
5. Provide a range of compatible and accessible non-motorized outdoor visitor experiences and activities, for people of all ages and abilities, throughout the regional parks and trails system that foster enjoyment of and appreciation and respect for the region's natural environment.
6. Provide the necessary facilities and services for safe and enjoyable use of regional parks and trails.
7. Practice and facilitate wise stewardship of ecological and cultural values through the use of best management practices and a planned, scientific and precautionary approach, with targeted protection and enhancement actions.
8. Minimize the impact of facilities and visitor use on the ecological and cultural integrity of the parks.
9. Provide leadership to help guide land use decisions that affect Regional Parks' interests and serve as a leading advocate for the protection of the region's green and blue spaces.
10. Integrate the interests of First Nations in park management.
11. Contribute to the regional economy.
12. Work in partnership to accomplish the vision for Regional Parks.
13. Engage residents of the CRD and visitors to regional parks and trails in park planning and management in open and inclusive processes.
14. Provide environmental and cultural interpretation that focuses on the visitor's relationship to nature, natural processes, ecology, the value of natural conditions, and the cultural history and stories of the parklands and trails.
15. Provide information to parks and trails visitors about the ecological and cultural values of the parklands and trails, visitors' role in park stewardship, and the connection of how regional parks and trails help achieve the CRD's Strategic Plan and Regional Sustainability Strategy.



GREAT BLUE HERON - *Witty's Lagoon Regional Park, Vancouver, Island*

PHOTO BY: James R. Page  
FLICKR PROFILE: wild prairie man

# management goals

The management goals will assist in daily decision-making and provide a direction for the future of regional parks and trails. They also create a framework for developing detailed operational policies. The management goals of the draft plan are:

## PROTECTING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

### Goals

1. To establish and manage a system of regional parks that protects the diverse range of ecosystems and species of the capital region, including ecosystems and species identified as most at risk of disappearing.
2. To establish, where possible, regional parks boundaries that follow ecological or watershed borders, with adequate buffers from uses and activities on adjacent lands, and to link regional parks to other parks areas by natural area corridors.
3. To protect and conserve biological diversity and give rare, threatened or endangered species special management attention.
4. To recognize fundamental processes of change in natural ecosystems, allowing them to evolve over time, and permitting natural processes to dominate whenever possible.
5. To maintain and restore healthy, viable ecosystems in regional parks and on regional trails.
6. To minimize the negative effects of human activities on the natural environments of regional parks and trails.
7. To remove invasive plants and animals.
8. To undertake research and management activities that improve the understanding of parks ecosystems and the ability to sustain them.
9. To encourage environmental learning and sharing of knowledge among Regional Parks staff, other park agencies, the public and research institutions.
10. To provide parks visitors with stimulating educational experiences that offer them a greater appreciation of the region's natural ecosystems and cultural resources, and that motivate them to conserve and protect those ecosystems and resources for future generations.
11. To provide current, accurate and comprehensive environmental information to visitors to help them understand and enjoy regional parks and trails.
12. To employ best management and sustainability practices as part of Regional Parks' environmental ethic in all aspects of managing and operating regional parks and trails.
13. To employ best land-management practices that conserve natural resources, promote biodiversity and contribute to reducing greenhouse gases.

## CULTURAL FEATURES

### Goal

To protect cultural resources within regional parks and on regional trails.



SEA BLUSH - *Sooke Potholes Regional Park, Vancouver Island.*

PHOTO BY: James R. Page  
FLICKR PROFILE: wild prairie man

## VISITOR USE ACTIVITIES

### Goals

1. To provide, for regional residents and visitors of all ages and abilities, opportunities for a range of experiences and activities that foster enjoyment and appreciation, have a minimal impact on the natural environment and are compatible to the purpose of each park or trail.
2. To provide opportunities for camping in some regional parks.

### Compatible Outdoor Activity

Regional parks and trails have a special role to play in providing opportunities for outdoor activities.

They have a long history of use by individuals, families and organized groups, but not all activities are appropriate, nor can they be accommodated in all regional parks. An compatible outdoor activity:

- depends on a natural environment;
- has a minimal impact on the natural environment; encourages an appreciation for and understanding and enjoyment of the natural environment; and
- is compatible with other park or trail uses.

### Non Compatible Outdoor Recreational Activity

A non-compatible outdoor activity:

- has a significant impact on the natural environment and environmental integrity;
- significantly interferes with the enjoyment or activities of other visitors;
- causes excessive noise;
- involves the use of motorized vehicles or equipment;
- involves commercial services (unless they are program-oriented, personal services); and/or
- is prohibited by law, bylaw or regulation.

## FACILITIES

### Goals

1. Design parks and trails facilities following best management practices to avoid or minimize impacts on the natural environment and historic/cultural features.
2. Include accessibility and universal design as primary considerations in any new facility development or upgrading project.
3. Prohibit permanent private sector commercial facilities in regional parks.

## strategic priorities

Six strategic priorities are identified that would guide the work of Regional Parks over the next five years and include:

1. Strengthen the management of existing parks and trails.
2. Plan for and open existing land banked park reserves and trails.
3. Strengthen community involvement, education and partnerships.
4. Prepare for future land acquisitions.
5. Promote the health benefits of regional parks and trails.
6. Engage in planning for regional sustainability.





# how the strategic plan is being prepared



## provide your feedback

Community consultations are being held throughout the district to review the Draft Strategic Plan. We want to hear what you think. A report on the results of your feedback, together with a recommended final plan, will be sent to the CRD Board in the summer.

The complete Draft Regional Parks Strategic Plan, online feedback form, and resource information can be found at [www.crd.bc.ca/parks](http://www.crd.bc.ca/parks).

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EASTERN TRILLIUM -  
*Trans Canada Trail,  
Vancouver Island*

PHOTO BY: Bill Irvine  
FLICKR PROFILE: wjis21



## community consultations

**May 3** – Victoria – Da Vinci Centre, 195 Bay Street (Upper Room)

**May 4** – Westshore – Juan de Fuca Rec Centre; 1767 Island Highway (Kinsmen Fieldhouse) – located behind JDF rec centre lower park

**May 5** – Saanich Peninsula – Central Saanich Cultural Centre; 1209 Clarke Road (Lower Room), Brentwood Bay

**May 10** – Sooke Community Hall; 2037 Shields Road (Lower Hall)

**May 11** – Salt Spring Island, 145 Vesuvius Bay Road (Portlock Park – Meeting Room)

MEETING TIMES

**6 – 7pm** Open house

**7 – 9pm** Presentation and facilitated discussion  
Southern Gulf Island residents: public meetings will be held on Galiano, Mayne, Pender and Saturna islands in May. Details can be found on the website and in local newspapers.