

Island View Beach Regional Park Bulletin

Draft Park Management Plan

April 2016

CRD



Updating the Park Management Plan

The Capital Regional District (CRD) is updating the management plan for Island View Beach Regional Park because there have been many changes in and around the park since the last plan was written in 1989:

- the park has grown in size
- visitation has increased
- changes in recreational preferences and activities
- campground has been added

- the CRD has a better understanding of the park's natural environment
- more demands on park ecosystems, facilities, and services

It is important to update the plan to include the larger land base and increased visitor use, and to develop strategies to help look after the park in the future. During recent consultations, members of the public brought forward a wide range of issues that need to be addressed in a revised management plan.

Public Engagement

CRD staff is following a four-step public participation process that has been approved by the CRD Regional Parks Committee. The CRD has led an extensive public consultation process to draft the park's management plan. This helps us ensure that a wide range of issues and interests are acknowledged, understood, documented, and considered. Public engagement has included meetings, online response forms, park events, presentations, and discussions with the public, park visitors, Tsawout First Nation, federal, provincial and municipal agencies, interest groups, and park neighbours. These activities have generated hundreds of comments that are helping shape the vision and direction for the park.

Step 1 ▶

Share information about the park's natural environment (Spring 2015)

Step 2 ▶

Identify park management issues and interests (Summer 2015)

Step 3 ▶

Hold community dialogue session (Fall 2015)

Step 4 ▶

Prepare and present a draft plan, seek feedback, and prepare a final plan (Spring to Fall 2016)

About the Park and its Natural Environment

Island View Beach Regional Park was established in 1966 and is located in the District of Central Saanich. The 48-hectare park is the third most visited park in the regional park system and continues to be a popular place to enjoy the natural environment. The park received about 384,000 visits in 2015.

In **Step 1** of the public consultation process, CRD staff presented scientific information about the park's natural environment and ecology at public and stakeholder meetings. The purpose of Step 1 was to develop a common understanding of the natural environment found in Island View Beach Regional Park, and to add to the information base about the natural environment through public feedback.

The park plays an essential role in protecting regional biodiversity while providing a range of opportunities for people to experience the park's spectacular landscape. Island View Beach Regional Park is significant because it is the only coastal protected area on the east side of the Saanich Peninsula north of Mount Douglas Municipal Park (Saanich). The coastal sand ecosystems represented in the park are considered a conservation priority by provincial and national organizations responsible for habitat protection and restoration.

There has been a growing interest in Island View Beach Regional Park from park neighbours, the Tsawout First Nation, key stakeholders, and the public. In particular, we now have a better understanding of the landscape history, visitor profile, linkages across jurisdictions, and the challenges of managing this important coastal landscape.



photo: Nick Page



Park Issues Identified in Public Consultations

In **Step 2** of the public participation process, people brought forward a wide range of issues to be addressed in a revised management plan. Staff gathered this information to ensure there was an understanding by the CRD and the CRD Regional Parks Committee about these issues and interests. Some of the issues identified included:

1. **Camping** – operation, facilities, season, etc.
2. **Dogs** – waste, off-leash/on-leash, safety, protecting the environment, etc.
3. **Environmental Stewardship** – ecological protection, species at risk, invasive species, sand dunes and wetlands, mosquito control, impact of climate change, etc.
4. **Infrastructure** – parking, trails, boat launch, berms and ditches, shelters and washrooms, benches, tables, etc.
5. **Park Management** – development, relationship with neighbours including Tsawout First Nation and District of Central Saanich, partnering with non-government organizations and others, etc.
6. **Park Operations** – maintenance, enforcement, garbage, washrooms, campfires, etc.
7. **Visitor Experience** – signs, interpretation, accessibility, conservation and recreation focus, etc.

Ideas We Heard to Address Park Issues

The issues raised in Step 2 were used to develop a professionally facilitated community dialogue session in **Step 3**. The small group sessions provided an opportunity for a wide variety of people to share ideas on how these issues might be addressed.

Participants expressed appreciation for **recreation activities** and for protection of the **natural environment**. There was a range of opinions about **camping**, including keeping the campground as is, extending the season, adding a campground host, improving services and amenities, removing the RV site from the foreshore, and removing camping altogether from the park.

Contrasting opinions on **dogs** in the park were voiced – from banning dogs outright, to allowing them on- and off-leash in specific areas of the park, to having dogs off-leash everywhere in the park.

There was general consensus that Island View Beach Regional Park is a showcase park for its special **ecological features** on southern Vancouver Island. The suggestions ranged from creating more types of environmental zoning to fencing off areas with **sensitive species and habitats**. Opinions varied about the presence and abundance of species in the park and more research was suggested.

A range of opinions was offered on **structures**, such as the **coastal berm, ditch system, and boat launch**, and the role they play across a complex of jurisdictions. Although there is CRD Board direction to continue to maintain the berm,

ditches, and mosquito abatement program, participants wanted to discuss these issues. There were divided opinions on removing and keeping the berm. There were suggestions to study its function and how it impacts adjacent habitats. There were opinions on managing **mosquitoes** in the park, including maintaining the berm, ditches, and gates. Studies were suggested to evaluate mosquito management and more environment-friendly pest management options. Some suggested the boat launch (which the CRD does not own) remain where it is for recreation, while others were concerned about its impacts on the foreshore and beach.

Many participants felt that **Tsawout First Nation** presence should be strengthened at the park. We heard that there should be more information about the heritage, culture and traditional use of this area by First Nations.

Participants suggested CRD provide more **garbage and recycling bins**. There was a desire for greater **staff presence** or **park stewards** who could be engaged in different activities such as education, maintenance, patrols, and enforcement. We heard ideas for more signs on trails and for boardwalks through the marshes.

Many participants noted that the management plan needs to recommend studies to determine the potential impacts of climate change and what management strategies could play a role in adaptation for, or mitigation of, those impacts.

Drafting the Park's Management Plan

Out of the suggestions and ideas we heard in Step 3, Regional Parks staff have developed a draft management plan for consultation. The draft park management plan addresses the issues identified and ideas presented by a wide variety of groups, sectors, and interests using a combination of available information and synthesis of public input collected through the planning process. The report of the community dialogue

session, prepared by an independent community engagement consultant and facilitator, helped guide development of the park management plan. In this final step of the process, **Step 4**, the draft plan is now out for public review and feedback. This feedback will be used to develop a final management plan that will be submitted for the approval of the CRD Regional Parks Committee and CRD Board.

Highlights of the Draft Park Management Plan

- 1. Camping:** The draft plan proposes to reconfigure the campground in a phased approach to reduce the footprint, improve day-use opportunities and natural values, and implement an online reservation system.
- 2. Dogs:** Current CRD bylaws require visitors to stay on park trails when exploring the park. Their dogs can be off-leash but owners must have them under control at all times. The draft plan proposes that dogs be on-leash and stay on the trails with their owners in the part of the park that is north of Lamont Road. South of Lamont Road, in the Natural Environment Zone, dogs would continue to be allowed off-leash, as long as they are under the control of their owners. In the long term, as part of a dog management strategy, an enclosed off-leash dog area is proposed.
- 3. Environmental Stewardship:** The draft plan proposes to improve the loop trail with a boardwalk to allow greater accessibility while protecting a sensitive ecosystem.
- 4. Park Infrastructure:** The draft plan states that the coastal berm, the ditch system, and the mosquito control program will be maintained as per the CRD Board direction of 2012 and 2013. The draft plan also includes the CRD Board direction to monitor the effectiveness of the berm and ditches, and the mosquito abatement program, as well as their impact on coastal dune and wetland ecosystems.
- 5. Park Management:** The draft plan proposes to assess implications of climate change/sea level rise on visitor facilities at the park and determine long-term actions. Collaboration with the Tsawout First Nation, District of Central Saanich, and other levels of government on items of mutual interest is also highlighted in the plan.
- 6. Park Operations:** The draft plan proposes to review operational practices for waste management, consider recycling bins in the day-use area, develop and implement a sign plan for the park, and develop an integrated bylaw compliance strategy with other levels of government.
- 7. Visitor Experience:** The draft plan proposes to develop an education and communications strategy, and seek interest and involvement of the Tsawout First Nation community in education and interpretive activities.



Guiding Principles for the Draft Plan

The purpose of a management plan is to provide a framework to manage the park, including overarching direction through the park vision, park zoning, development concept, and management goals.

Island View Beach Regional Park is classified as a **Regional Conservation Area**. This classification recognizes the park's significant natural environment and sensitive coastal ecosystems and species in the context of the system of regional parks. A park's classification system may be changed by a resolution of the CRD Board.



The **Park Vision** sets out the desired conditions that the CRD is striving to achieve at Island View Beach Regional Park 20 years into the future. Key aspects of the draft vision include:

- People come year round to connect with nature
- Park classification (Conservation Area) guides decision making
- Actions are taken to respond to climate change
- Coastal ecosystems are protected and restored
- Outstanding visitor experiences are offered
- Active public engagement is undertaken
- Park is recognized as part of a larger coastal landscape
- Collaboration and adaptive management are part of the management framework

The **Regional Parks Strategic Plan (2012-2021)** guides the development of park management plans by outlining the vision, mission, and purpose of the regional park system and identifying goals and strategic priorities. It provides a park classification and zoning framework that reflects the management focus of each park in the system.

The draft **Park Development Concept** summarizes the general direction for how the park will be managed and developed. It identifies generally, the location and types of infrastructure that will be available in the park. Key aspects in the park development concept for Island View Beach include:

- Keep the park natural and protect and restore priority areas
- Provide visitor facilities that offer positive visitor experiences and are appropriate to a Conservation Area classification
- Keep the majority of development in the southern section of the park, as it is currently
- Maintain existing park facilities, with modifications to some to improve visitor experience or to protect or restore sensitive environmental features
- Develop a trail through a portion of the coastal wetland
- Study and collaborate on a dog management strategy
- Assess implications of climate change and sea level rise on visitor facilities and determine long-term actions



photo: Nick Page

Proposed Park Use Map and Chart See map on next page

Together with the park classification, **Park Zoning** is used to manage the natural environment and public activities. The zones are intended to inform decision makers and the public more specifically on use and management within defined areas. Three management zones are proposed for the park in the draft management plan. All three zones allow access for recreation with increasing degrees of sensitivity for environmental protection. Municipal and provincial areas, such as the road ways, rights-of-way, and the foreshore/beach area below high tide line, fall outside the park boundary.

Activity	CRD Zoning			Outside Park Boundary	
	Outdoor Recreation	Natural Environment	Environmental Protection	Municipal Roadways / Rights-of-Way	Foreshore Below High Tide
Walking trails	✓	✓	✓		
Off trail use in day-use, beach and picnic areas	✓			✓	✓
Dogs on-leash and on trail			✓		
Dogs off-leash and under control *	✓	✓		✓	✓
Horses				✓	✓
Cycling				✓	✓
Camping	✓				
Infrastructure maintenance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Outdoor Recreation Zone

- widest range of activities
- majority of park infrastructure
- off trail park use
- dogs off-leash and under control
 - * except for campground and designated beach and picnic areas in the summer

In the long term, as part of a dog management strategy, an off-leash dog area is proposed. The public and stakeholders would be involved in the development of this strategy.

Natural Environment Zone

- activities compatible with conservation
- south of Lamont Road park use proposed is on trail, dogs off-leash and under control

This zone creates a buffer between environmental protection and outdoor recreation zones.

Environmental Protection Zone

- high ecological significance, high sensitivity to disturbance
- primarily for conservation
- allows controlled activities
- north of Lamont Road park use proposed is on trail, dogs on-leash and on trail

This zone is intended to promote the protection and recovery of identified species at risk and their habitats while allowing compatible use of the area by visitors.

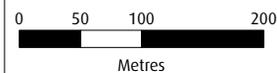
- Park use on designated trails
- Dogs on-leash and on trail north of Lamont Road

- Park use on designated trails
- Dogs off-leash but under control south of Lamont Road

- Foreshore/beach area below high tide line outside of park boundary

- Horses and cyclists on roads in the park

- Park use anywhere
- Cyclists in campground and on roads
- Dogs off-leash but under control and on-leash in campground and when passing through designated beach and picnic areas in the summer



UTM Zone 10N NAD 1983

DISCLAIMER

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Aerial photo flown 2013

- Existing Trail
- Proposed New Trail
- Island View Beach Regional Park
- Approx. Current Natural Boundary
- Outdoor Recreation Zone (Proposed)
- Natural Environment Zone (Proposed)
- Environment Protection Zone (Proposed)
- Municipal Right of Way
- Municipal Road
- Municipal Park
- First Nation Reserve
- Road
- Parking
- Information
- Toilet
- Campground
- Accessible Group Picnic Shelter
- Accessible Toilet

Capital Regional District
Proposed Park Use Map



Help Us Finalize the Plan

We want to hear from you about the draft management plan. Your feedback will be used to develop a final park management plan, which will go to the CRD Regional Parks Committee and CRD Board for approval.

Attend a Town Hall Meeting

Thursday, May 26 | Da Vinci Centre | 195 Bay St.
Open House 5:30-6:30pm | Meeting 6:30-9:30pm

Saturday, May 28 | Greek Community Hall | 4648 Elk Lake Dr.
Open House 12-1pm | Meeting 1-4pm

Open house format consists of information on display of the draft plan and an opportunity to talk one-on-one with CRD staff.

Town Hall Meeting format includes a presentation, questions and clarifications, small-group discussions, short plenary, and wrap-up.

Talk to CRD Staff at the Park

CRD Staff will be at the park this summer to answer questions and gather feedback about the draft plan.

Saturdays on May 21, June 18, July 9 | 10am-3pm
in the day-use area near the picnic shelter.

Download the Draft and Provide Feedback Online

www.crd.bc.ca/islandviewbeach. Deadline is July 10, 2016.



For more information:

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