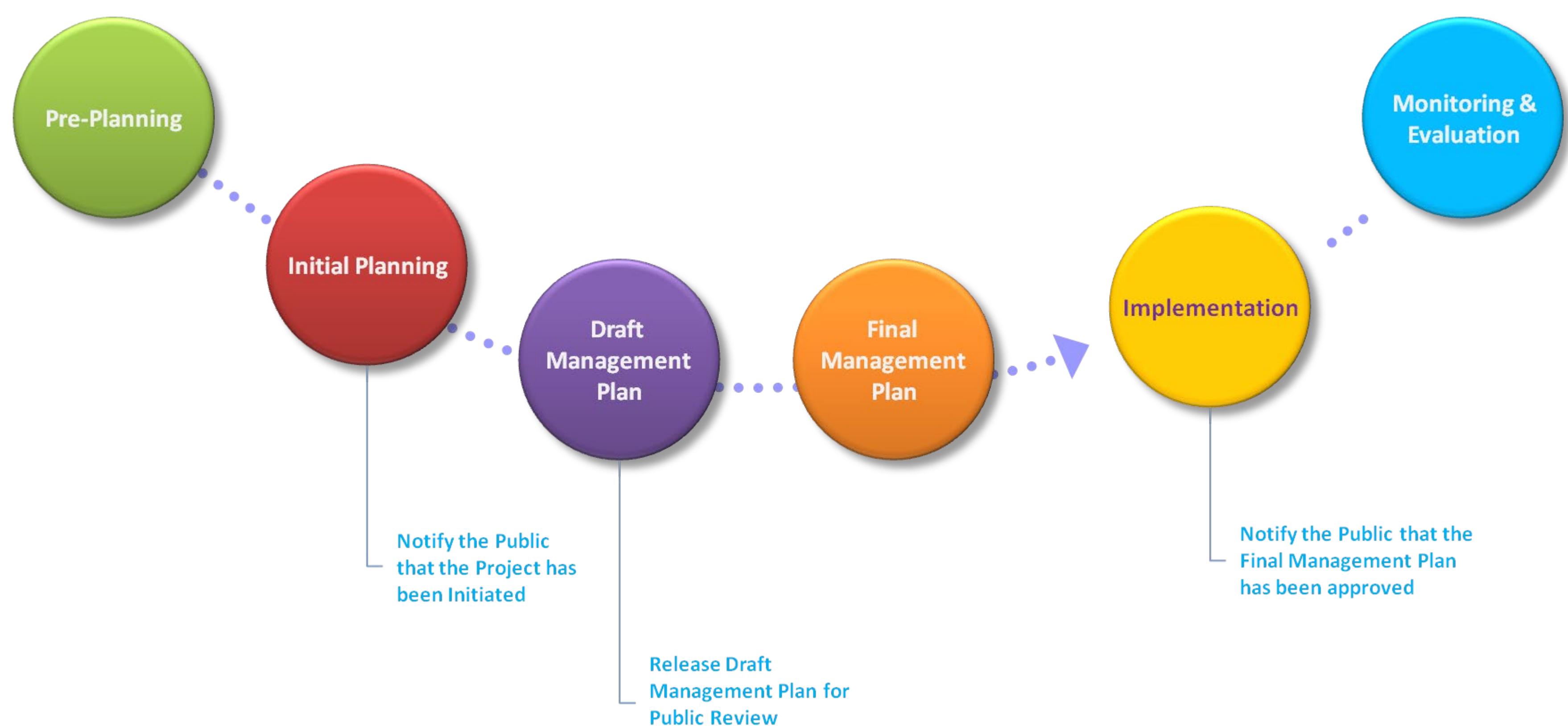


# Steps in the Management Planning Process

Developing a plan for Cathedral Park/Protected Area will follow a multi-stage process.



**The planning process for the park/protected area is currently in the *Initial Planning Stage*.**

***Initial Planning:*** This stage involves reviewing existing information about the park/protected area's values and potential management issues; determining how complex and in-depth the management planning process needs to be; confirming First Nations', local communities, and public interests in the protected area; and developing a process to address the identified interests and concerns.

Following the Initial Planning Stage, a ***Draft Management Plan*** will be prepared.

***Draft Management Plan:*** During this stage, the planning team will identify the values, vision (the desired future condition) and principles that will guide future management of the park/protected area. Previously identified interests and issues are discussed, and appropriate management direction is developed in the form of a vision, management objectives and strategies, and a zoning plan. The draft management plan must be prepared using the established BC Parks management plan template. As per the BC Parks policy, there must be an opportunity for public review and comment on the draft plan. It is envisioned that the management plan for Cathedral Park/Protected Area will be developed in close collaboration with First Nations.

It is anticipated that a ***Final Management Plan*** will be completed and approved in 2022/23.





## The Management Planning Process

A management plan is a document prepared to guide a park's management for the future. It sets objectives and strategies for conservation, development, interpretation, and operation of the park. It is prepared by BC Parks (Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy).



For the Cathedral Park/Protected Area management planning process, online comment forms and information will be made available at various steps in the process to seek public comment and feedback and help shape the overall vision and strategies to manage park values. The management plan will also undergo consultative engagement with First Nations. Local and regional governments will also be provided an opportunity to comment on the draft management plan at key stages in the planning process.



As part of the management planning process, the general public, public interest groups, and tenure holders have opportunities to provide input through a variety of means, including mail-outs, and internet-based comment forms/information sharing. Focused meetings with key stakeholder groups will also be scheduled.

**There is currently no valid management plan for Cathedral Park/Protected Area. The Cathedral Park Master Plan (1989) and Background Report (1988) will help inform the new management plan for the park.**

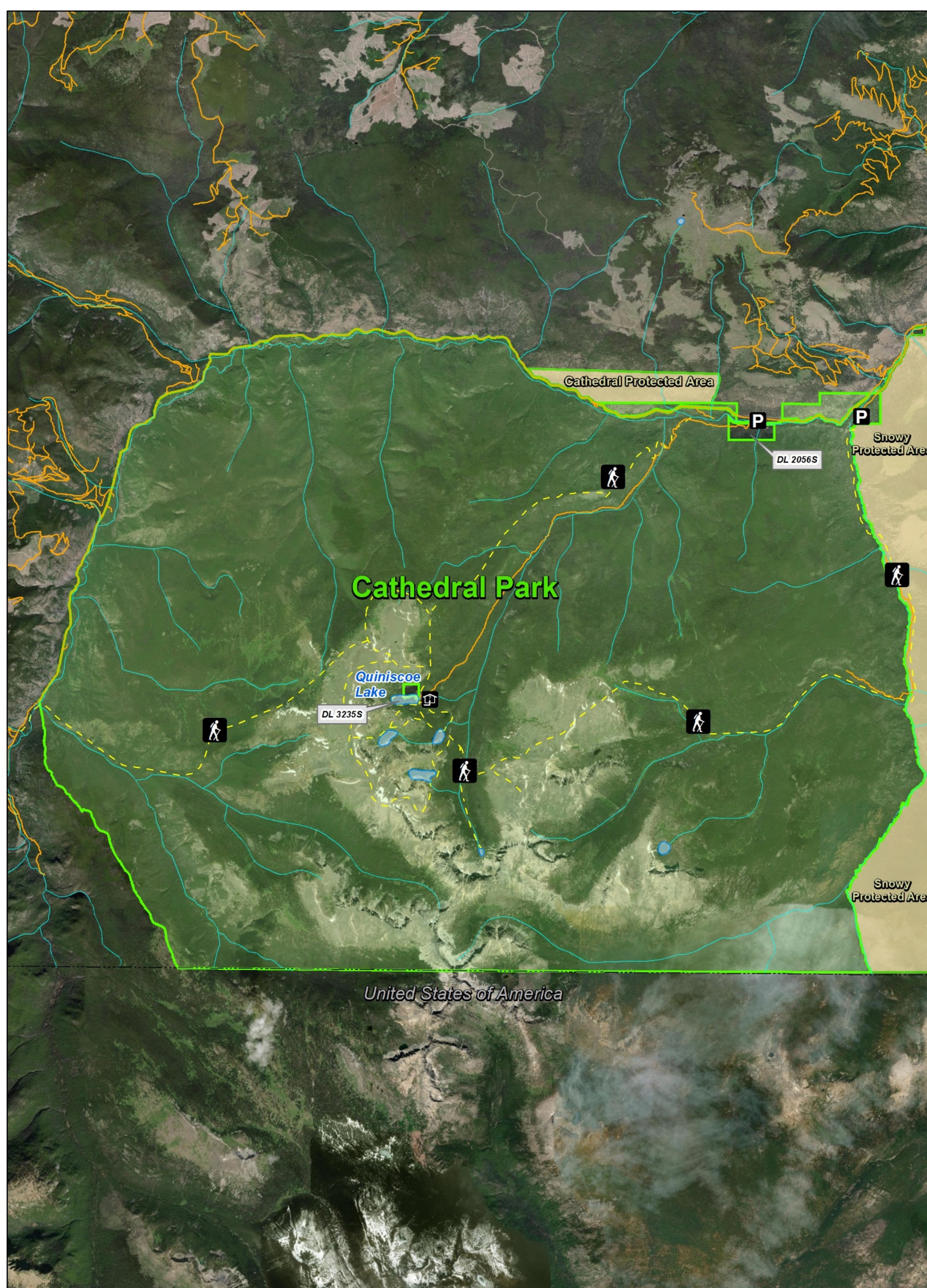


# Landscape Context

Cathedral Park/Protected Area is situated in the North Cascade Ranges Ecoregion and Okanagan Range Ecosection in the Southern Interior portion of the province. The site lies approximately 30 kilometres southwest of Keremeos. It is bordered on the east by Snowy Protected Area (25,889 hectares), provincial Crown land to the north and west, and to south by the Pasayten Wilderness in the United States.

The park boasts varied terrain and landscape features, including sub-alpine and alpine lakes, unique geological formations, windswept ridges, and old-growth forested valleys.

Cathedral Protected Area (353 hectares) was established on April 18, 2001, to enhance the ecological viability of Cathedral Park and to protect low elevation forests. This small protected area is an addition to the larger existing park, but for the interim is designated under provisions of the *Environment and Land Use Act*.



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# Establishment Background

Cathedral Park was established in 1968 and originally encompassed 7,372 hectares. In 1975, 25,900 hectares was added to the park and shortly thereafter, in 1976, additional lands were added (former mineral claims) bringing the total size of the park to 33,077 hectares. In 2001, as a recommendation of the Okanagan-Shuswap LRMP an additional 353 hectares of land was designated adjacent to the existing park as a protected area (under provisions of the *Environment and Land Use Act*).

In 2019, BC Parks acquired two strategic parcels (DL 2056S and DL 3235S - comprising 82 hectares) which were private inholdings of the park. To date the total area under BC Parks administration is 33,512 hectares.



## Cultural History

The land within what is now the park was used by First Nations for thousands of years. Seasonal camping, hunting, fishing and plant gathering were common and today Cathedral Park/Protected Area protects these cultural and traditional use sites. The park falls within the traditional territories of the Okanagan Nation (Syilx) and Nlaka'pamux Nation. The park contains numerous registered archaeological sites.

To facilitate easier access by horseback, between the 1930s and 1960s additional trails and cabins were constructed in the area (specifically at Quiniscoe Lake). A jeep road to Quiniscoe Lake was built in 1966, soon followed by a private two story lodge in the mid 1970s and other associated infrastructure to support lodge operations.





# Recreation Values

Cathedral Park offers a variety of activities for visitors, albeit in a more remote, wilderness setting. There are two formal vehicle accessible campgrounds along the Ashnola River (Lakeview Trailhead and Buckhorn) whereas for hikers and backpackers, the amenities available in the core area include the lodge accommodations and campground at Quiniscoe Lake.

Backcountry camping sites are located at Lake of the Woods and Pyramid Lake. More secluded wilderness areas of the park offer no-trace camping opportunities.



Cathedral Lakes Lodge Ltd. offers a range of accommodation options and amenities at Quiniscoe Lake. The lodge also offers a shuttle service to and from their base camp operations along the Ashnola River. Both lodge guests and park visitors are able to use the shuttle (fee for service).

There are five lakes within the park which support viable sport fisheries. With the exception of the core area of the park, hunting is permitted during specific periods of the year. Dogs are not permitted in the core area of Cathedral Park. Horse riding is permitted in the park and is primarily focused on areas outside of the core.

Visitor use of the park spans from spring into the early fall. Hiking is a predominant activity and the park offers an assortment of trails in the subalpine and alpine. Popular routes within the park are the Lakeview Trail, Rim Trail, Ladyslipper Lake Trail and Goat Lake Trail.

Iconic geological formations along the high alpine ridges within the park, such as 'Smokey the Bear', the 'Giant Cleft' and the 'Boxcar' are favourite day destinations.

The park also contains a component of the Centennial Trail which runs east-west.



# Conservation Values

As part of the Okanagan Ranges, Cathedral Park and Protected Area represents the range of plant and wildlife associations, from the valley bottom in the Ashnola drainage to alpine summits, that typify the leeward, dry interior conditions of the Cascade Mountains. The dry, windswept alpine tundra of the park contains plant associations and species that are rare within the province and unique within the provincial protected area system.

Montane Spruce, Interior Douglas-fir, Engelmann Spruce-Subalpine Fir, and Interior Mountain-heather Alpine are the four biogeoclimatic zones that encompass the park. Whitebark Pine, a blue-listed species in the province occurs within the park in select locations as well as the red-listed Mountain Sagebrush/Pinegrass ecological community.

Forest fires have played a key role in creating the diverse mosaic of vegetation over the park's landscape, whereas forest health issues (e.g., Spruce Budworm) has also affected ecosystem dynamics, with significant tree die-off in certain portions of the park.



Mountain goats, which are regularly seen on Cathedral Ridge, are the primary viewing species in the park, as well the landscape offers both winter and summer range for Bighorn Sheep and Mule Deer. Black bears also frequent valley drainages and are occasionally observed in the alpine/subalpine areas of the park. Grizzly bears likely utilized the landscape within the park historically, but adjacent land use/human encroachment has significantly impacted their population.

Other common mammal species include Hoary Marmot, ground squirrels, Mountain Pika, Snowshoe Hare, Red Squirrel and Chipmunk. Canada Jay, Clark's Nutcracker, Franklyn, Blue grouse, Ptarmigan, Harrier, Chickadee, Kinglet, and White Crown Sparrow are the most commonly observed bird species. A rare butterfly is known to occur along the western flank of Cathedral Park- the Sonoran Skipper is a species of concern in the province.



# Management Issues and Opportunities

A key goal of the new management planning process for Cathedral Park and Protected Area is to develop strategies to address known management issues/opportunities.

There are a variety of management issues and opportunities that exist in the park (see below for select examples).

## Park and Lodge/Base Camp Infrastructure and Park Consolidation

Several campgrounds within the core area require modification and/or reconfiguration to meet demand and reduce wildlife/ecological impacts. The infrastructure/land base associated with Cathedral Lakes Lodge is now under the ownership of BC Parks and alignment with park standards is a key focus in future management and oversight. It is also desired that the lands comprising the Cathedral Lakes Lodge and Base Camp be added to the Class A park.

Consolidation of the adjacent protected area with the park should also be given consideration (but requires a government mandate to move forward for designation as Class A park).

## Visitor Use

The park is highly popular in summer months (demonstrating a steady annual increase in visitation) with a significant portion of core area being accessed using the lodge's shuttle service to Quiniscoe Lake. Campsites within the core area are often at capacity/overflow, while the lodge is also fully booked in peak season.

Adjacent Snowy Protected is reliant on access through Cathedral Park (via the Ewart Creek corridor). This corridor is heavily used by hikers, hunters, horse riders and the commercial guide outfitter.

## Helicopter Use/Overflights

A park use permit allows for use of select portions of the park for helicopter flight training. Research indicates that helicopter flight training is having a detrimental effect on wildlife species within the park, specifically Mountain Goat and Bighorn Sheep.

## Forest health/Wildfire Risk

Forest health issues within the park require ongoing monitoring and prescriptions to reduce fuel build-up and address fire interface issues. The terrain characteristics of the park and lodge/core area place the risk to facilities and human safety at a high level.

## First Nations/Indigenous Interests

Cathedral Park and the surrounding landscape is culturally and spiritually important to First Nations. Both historical and pre-historical information regarding the use of the park is deficient. Future management and operational direction related to the park will focus on a collaborative approach model with First Nations.

## Wildlife/Human Interface

Monitoring of Mountain Goat populations within the park have revealed a direct correlation with preferential habitat to that of campground locations/areas of high visitor use. This use is having a negative effect on Mountain Goat behaviour and increased stress/mortality. The park is also within an area that has attributes that would support Grizzly Bear recovery.



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