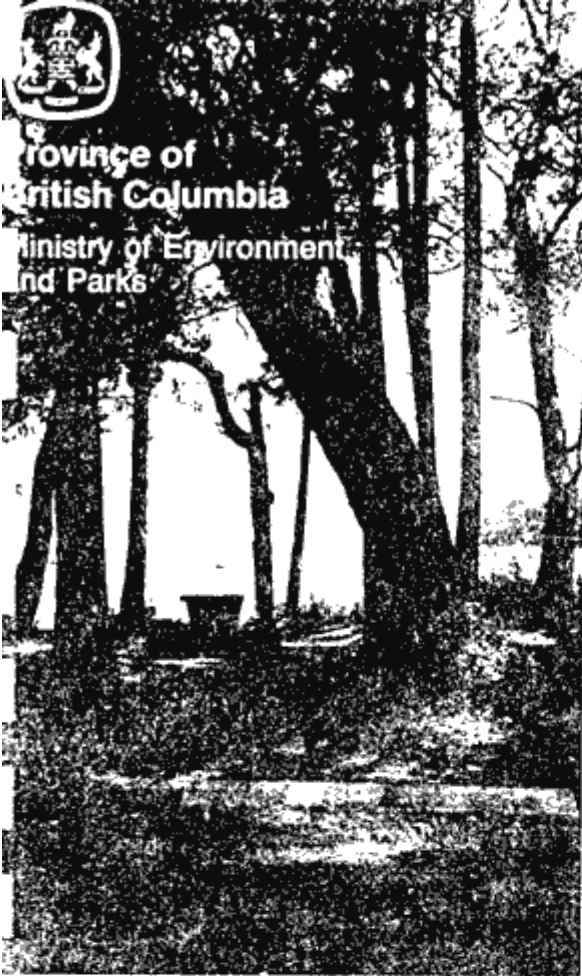


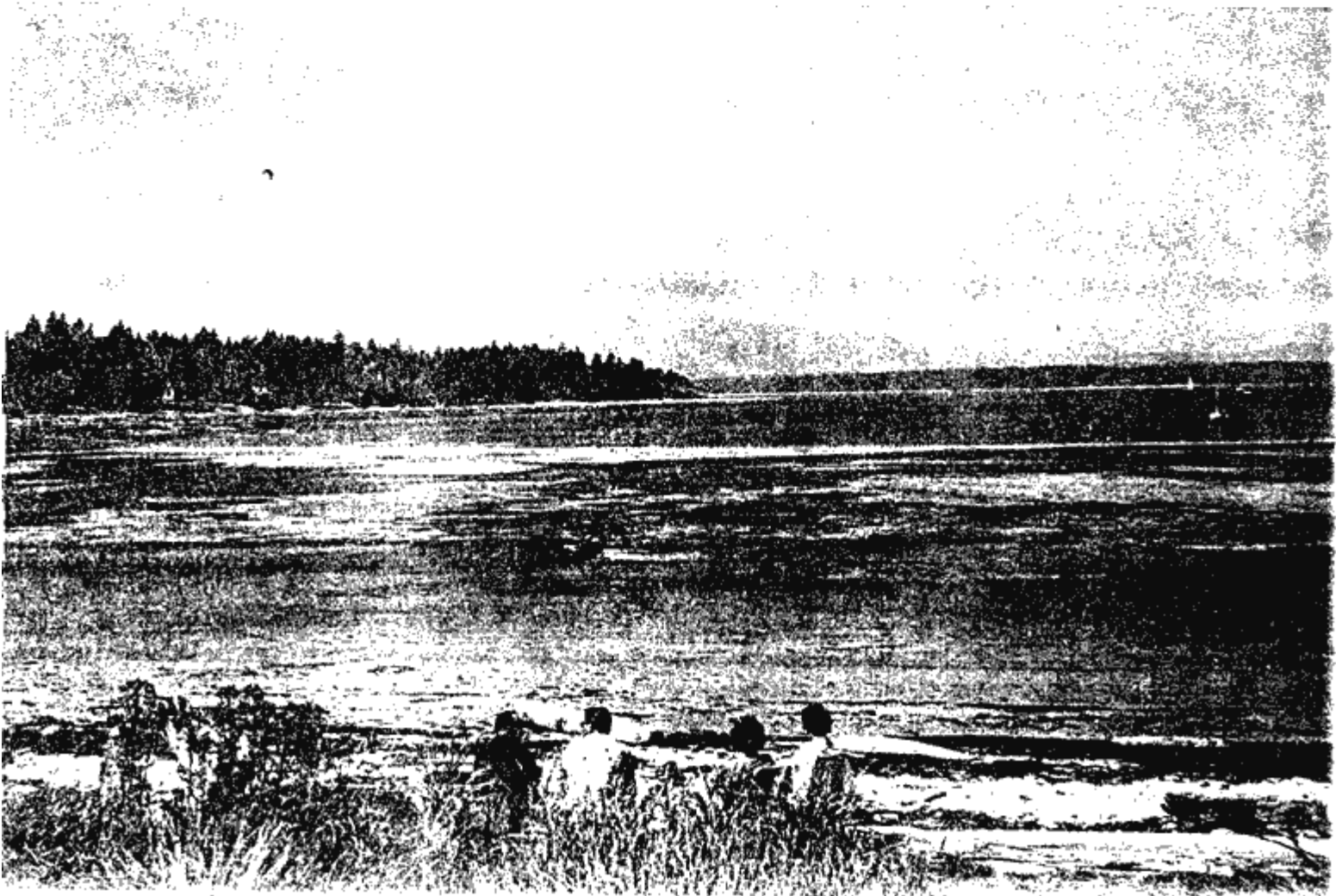


Province of
British Columbia
Ministry of Environment
and Parks



DRUMBEG AND GABRIOLA SANDS

MASTER PLAN



Ministry of Environment and Parks
Parks & Outdoor Recreation Division
South Coast Region

DRUMBEG PROVINCIAL PARK AND
GABRIOLA SANDS PROVINCIAL PARK AND RECREATION AREA

MASTER PLAN

AUGUST 1987

Mr. George Trachuk
Regional Director
South Coast Region

Mr. M. H. Turner
Manager of Planning
and Research
South Coast Region

This master plan for Drumbeg Provincial Park and Gabriola Sands Provincial Park and Recreation Area is submitted for your approval.

M. H. Turner

APPROVED: _____
George Trachuk
Regional Director
South Coast Region

Date

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
I Plan Summary	1
II Background Report Summary	3
A Location and Climate	3
B Park Origins	3
C Park Resources	4
1. Drumbeg Park	4
2. Gabriola Sands Park and Recreation Area	5
III Regional and Provincial Context	6
IV Drumbeg Park	8
A Role of the Park	8
B. Zoning	8
1. Intensive Recreation Zone	8
2. Natural Environment Zone	8
C Resource Management	10
1. Land, Boundaries and Tenures	10
2. Water Quality	10
3. Vegetation	10
4. Wildlife	12
5. Cultural Resources	12
D Visitor Services	13
1. Recreation Opportunities	13
2. Management Services	14
E Plan Implementation	15

V	Gabriola Sands Park and Recreation Area	17
A	Role of the Park	17
B	Zoning	17
	1. Intensive Recreation Zone	17
	2. Natural Environment Zone	17
C	Resource Management	19
	1. Land Classification, Boundaries and Tenures	19
	2. Water	19
	3. Vegetation	19
	4. Wildlife and Fish	20
	5. Cultural Resources	20
D	Visitor Services	20
	1. Recreation Opportunities	20
	2. Management Services	21
E	Plan Implementation	21

Appendix 1 - Background Report:

I	Drumbeg Park	24
A	Park Profile	24
B	Natural and Cultural Resources	25
	1. Natural Resources	25
	2. Cultural Resources	27
	3. Resources Analysis	28
C	Tenures, Occupancy Rights and Jurisdictions	31
D	Recreation Opportunities	32
	1. Visitor Facilities	32
	2. Management Services	36
	3. Park Attendance and Visitor Activities	36
E	Key Planning Issues	38
	1. Natural and Cultural Resource Management	38
	2. Visitor Services	40

II Gabriola Sands Park and Recreation Area	41
A Park Profile	41
B Natural and Cultural Resources	43
1. Natural Resources	43
2. Cultural Resources	45
3. Resources Analysis	46
C Tenures, Occupancy Rights and Jurisdictions	48
D Recreation Opportunities	49
1. Visitor Facilities	49
2. Management Services	53
3. Park Attendance and Visitor Activities	53
E. Key Planning Issues	53
1. Natural and Cultural Resource Management	53
2. Visitor Services	54
 Bibliography	 55

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	Location Map	2
2	Provincial Parks in the Southern Gulf Islands	7
3	Drumbeg Park Zoning and Proposed Development	9
4	Drumbeg Park Proposed Addition	11
5	Gabriola Sands Park and Recreation Area Zoning	18

Appendix 1

6	Drumbeg Park Present Development	34
7	Gabriola Sands Park and Recreation Area Present Development	50

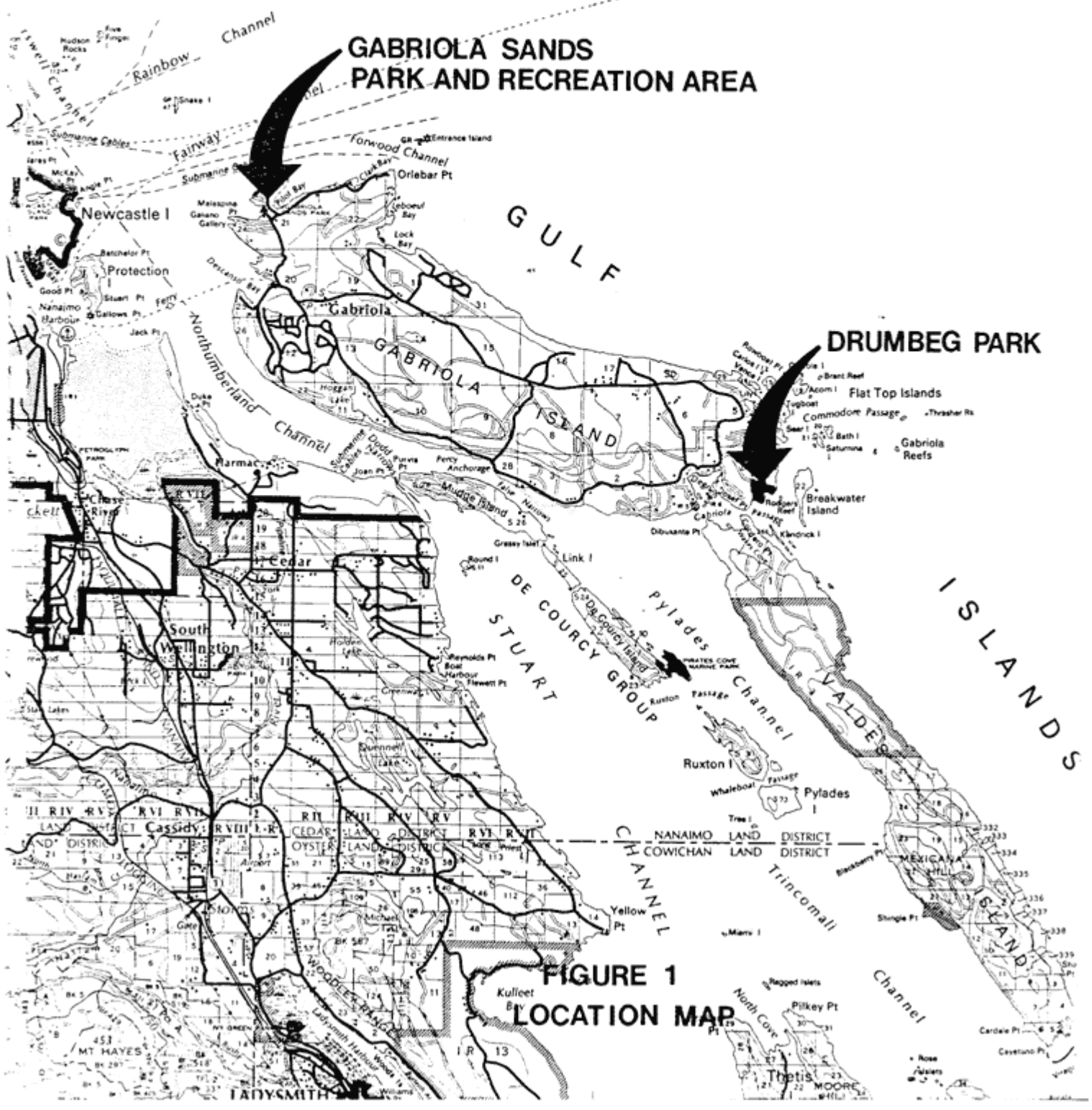
I Plan Summary

This document gives broad, long term direction to the management of Drumbeg Park and Gabriola Sands Park and Recreation Area located on Gabriola Island (Figure 1).

Gabriola Island is linked to Vancouver Island via a short ferry route to Nanaimo. The two relatively small provincial parks are typical of the Gulf Islands environment and are cherished by local residents and visitors alike. While each park has its own specific features, they also share important common characteristics and management needs.

Highlights of this master plan include the following:

- construction of a walk-in campground at Drumbeg Park with emphasis toward servicing bicyclists;
- the addition of foreshore to Drumbeg Park to achieve protection of valuable marine resources and associated recreation opportunities;
- changing the classification of Gabriola Sands Provincial Recreation Area to Class 'A' provincial park status;
- improving access and providing day use facilities at Drumbeg Park;
- improving promotion for Gabriola Island provincial parks.



**GABRIOLA SANDS
PARK AND RECREATION AREA**

DRUMBEG PARK

**FIGURE 1
LOCATION MAP**

II Background Report Summary

The following information is summarized from the "Background Report" attached to this plan as Appendix 1.

A. Location and Climate

Gabriola Island is situated off the east coast of Vancouver Island, immediately across from Nanaimo. A regular ferry service crosses Northumberland Channel linking Nanaimo Harbour and Descanso Bay at the north end of Gabriola Island, a distance of some 4.5 kilometres. The population of Gabriola Island is approximately 3,000 people, most of whom live at the northwest end of the island. Drumbeg Park, situated at the southeast tip of the island, is located approximately 16 kilometres, via paved and dirt roads, from the ferry terminal. Gabriola Sands Park and Recreation Area is located two kilometres, by paved road, northeast of the ferry terminal.

The climate, on the whole, is moist, with approximately 90 cm of precipitation falling annually. Summer is the driest season of the year and temperatures are warm, being moderated by cool sea breezes. Average winter temperatures are above freezing.

B. Park Origins

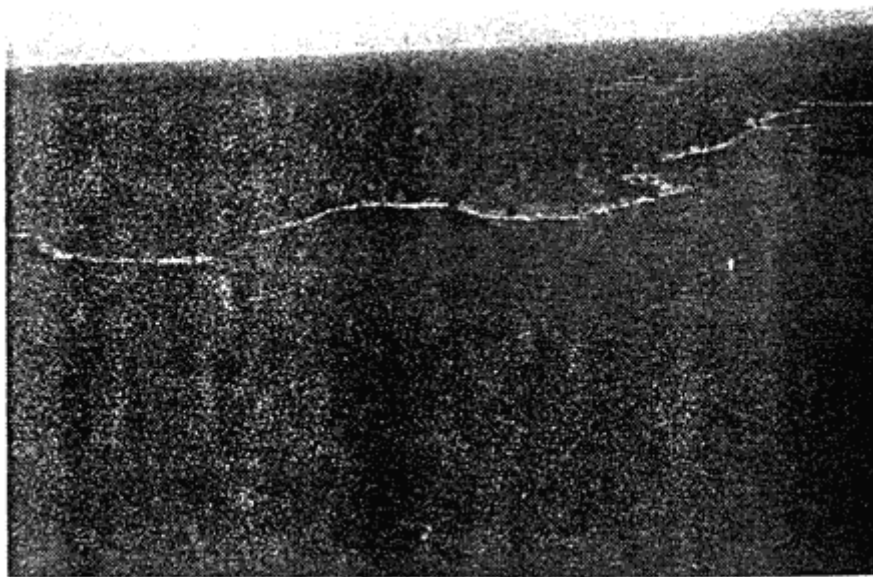
Both parks were previously privately owned rural properties. Gabriola Sands Park was established in 1960, following a donation by Mr. W. Coats and Mr. F. Ney on behalf of Gabriola Sands Resort Company. In 1972, the province established the foreshore of the two bays which border the park as a provincial recreation area. Additional crown land was added to the park in 1983.

Drumbeg Park was established in 1971, following the purchase of the property by the province. The park is named after the Scottish home of the former owner, Mr. Neil Stalker.

C. Park Resources

1. Drumbeg Park

Drumbeg covers 20 hectares of generally flat and rolling upland, including approximately one kilometre of marine frontage. The vegetation is primarily forest cover, dominated by Douglas-fir, with some oak, arbutus, maple and Abies species. Scotch broom is evident along the shoreline and dominates the open grass areas. Presently, there is no development at Drumbeg Park beyond a rough dirt road access, a registration shelter, two pit toilets and a rough shoreline trail. The main attraction of the park is the scenic shoreline dominated by sandstone and conglomerate bedrock. Diving is popular off the park's shoreline. The key planning issues for the park include the addition of foreshore, fire protection, establishing appropriate development and improving access, signage and marketing to reflect anticipated use and proposed development.



Aerial view of Drumbeg Park

2. Gabriola Sands Park and Recreation Area

Gabriola Sands contains 1.4 hectares of a narrow isthmus bordering two large bays to the east and west. Adjoining the park, and divided into two separate parts, is a 5.3 hectare recreation area featuring the foreshores of Taylor Bay and Pilot Bay. The park and recreation area feature 275 metres of waterfront dominated by sandy beaches. The majority of land is cleared and level, making it suitable for a ball field. Western red cedar, Douglas-fir, arbutus, shore pine and bigleaf maple are found along the shoreline and along the park boundary. Principal activities in the park are beach related and picnicking. The important planning issues include reclassifying the recreation area to Class 'A' park status and the need to relocate certain park facilities in the future due to beach accretion.



Gabriola Sands Park and Recreation Area - Taylor Bay

III Regional and Provincial Context

Gabriola Sands Park and Recreation Area and Drumbeg Park are two of twenty provincial parks and recreation areas in the southern Gulf Islands (Figure 2). This system of parks is intended to provide the people of British Columbia and their visitors with park opportunities associated with the marine and upland environments of the Gulf Islands. These opportunities, varying from local day use to overnight use by boaters anchored in the sheltered coves and bays, are influenced by the objectives of the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, by the environment of the park and by the local community plan of the Islands Trust.

The two provincial parks located on Gabriola Island provide upland and foreshore park opportunities for island residents and visitors. Both parks are typical of the Gulf Islands environment.

A proposal for a third provincial park on Gabriola Island at Lock Bay has been completed. A park at Lock Bay would complement the other two parks on the island by conserving a scenic natural area and providing additional opportunities for outdoor recreation.

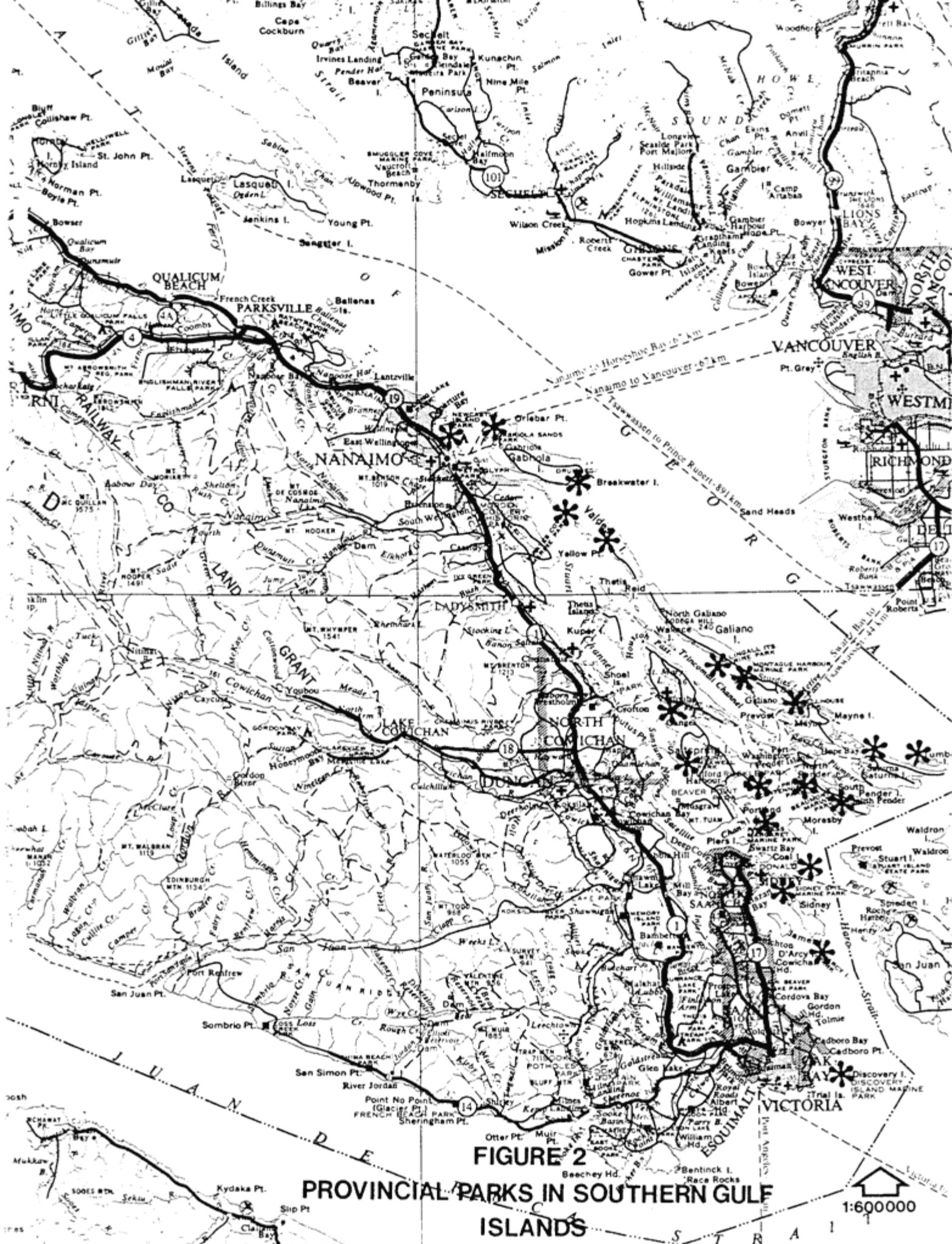


FIGURE 2

PROVINCIAL PARKS IN SOUTHERN GULF ISLANDS

1:600000

IV Drumbeg Park

A. Role of the Park

The conservation role for Drumbeg Park is to protect and present high quality woodland and shoreline resources which represent the typical and special natural elements of Gabriola Island.

The recreation role for Drumbeg Park is to provide opportunities for walking, nature appreciation, walk-in camping, picnicking, scenic viewing, diving and beach activities in association with the shoreline and coastal upland resources of the park.

B. Zoning

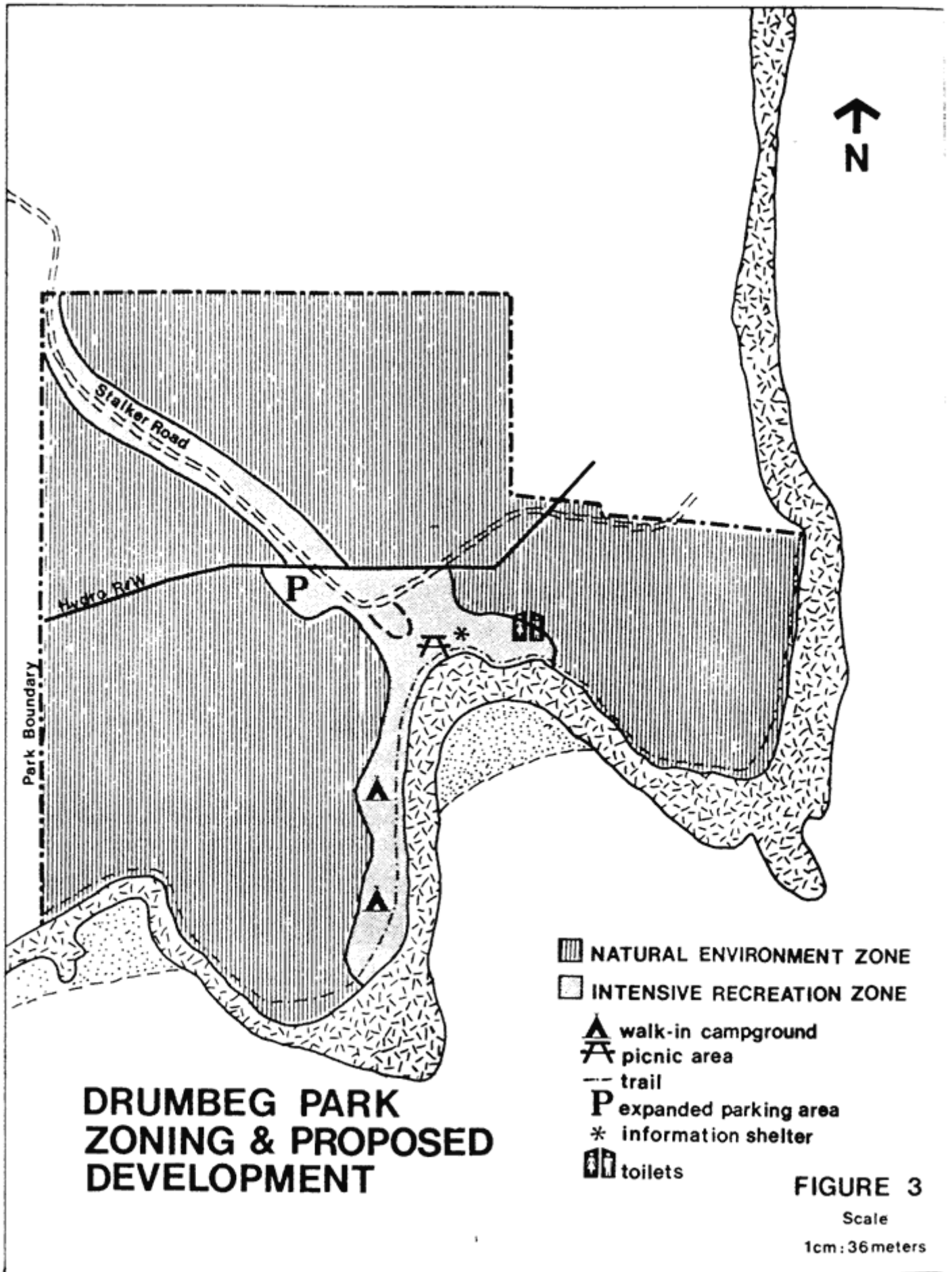
Zoning is a general means of guiding the delivery of management policies and services, as well as the development of facilities. Drumbeg Park is accessible by road; however, due to lack of development and poor signage and promotion, the park does not receive a great deal of visitation. Two zones comprise the park (Figure 3):

1. Intensive Recreation Zone

Use, development and management will focus upon the shoreline and upland surrounding the bay. Walk-in camping will be established on the west side of the road near the shoreline. Day use will be concentrated at the head of the bay.

2. Natural Environment Zone

The balance of the park, including the majority of the upland forest, will remain in its undeveloped, natural state.



C. Resource Management

The following management objectives and actions are based upon the *Park Act*, associated regulations and appropriate ministry and division policies.

1. Land, Boundaries and Tenures

Objective:

Drumbeg Park will be expanded to include adjacent foreshore and marine areas so natural resource values and recreation opportunities are protected.

Specific Actions:

Pursue the addition of adjacent foreshore and marine environment including the eastern portion of Gabriola Pass between Joseph Point on Gabriola Island and Cardero Point on Valdes Island then east to include Rogers Reef (Figure 4).

2. Water Quality

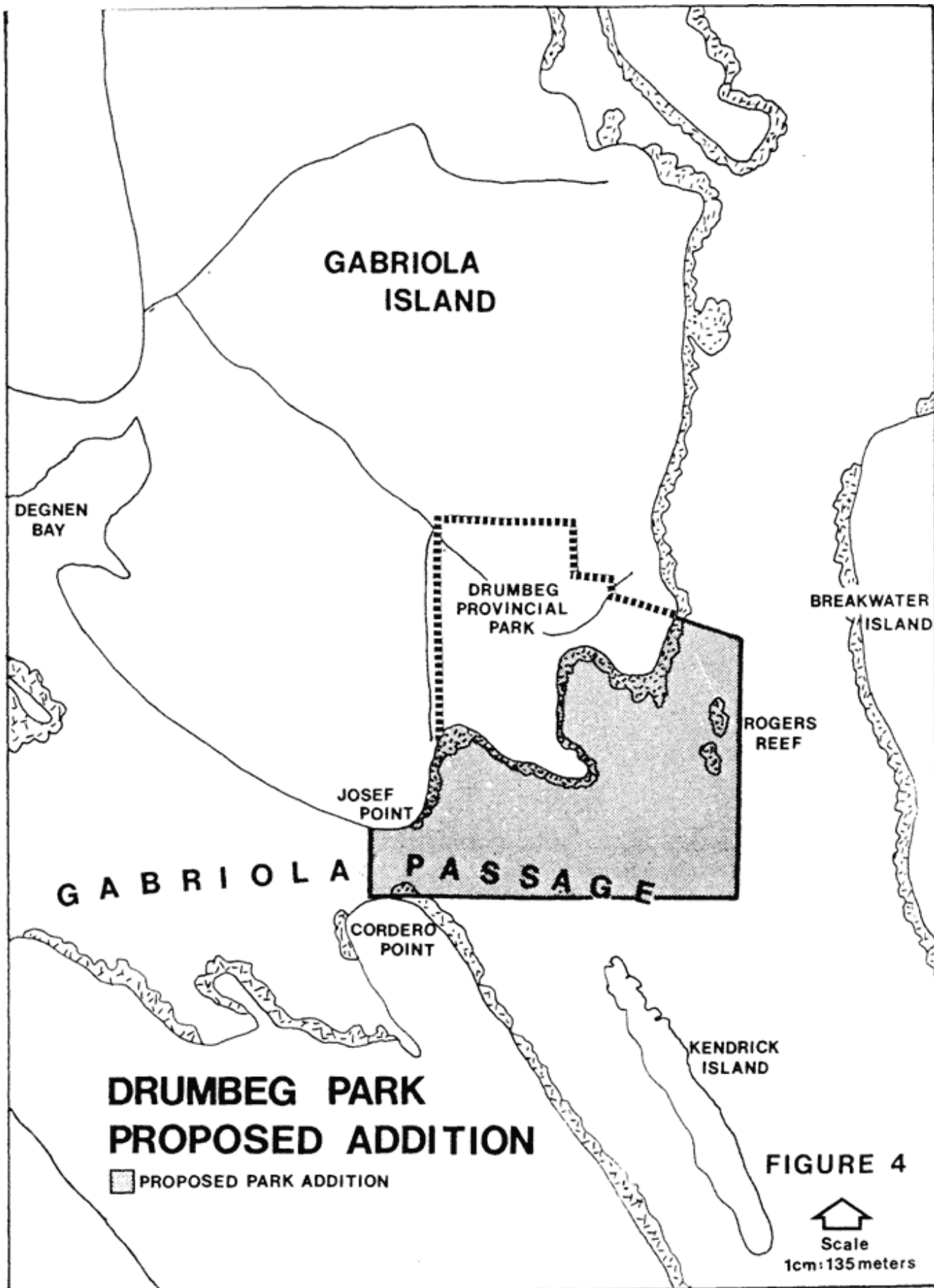
Objective:

The natural qualities of water bodies within Drumbeg Park will be maintained.

3. Vegetation

Objective:

- a) **To retain the natural woodlands and grasslands in this park as evolving ecosystems.**



- b) **To suppress all wildfires.**
- c) **To reduce fire hazard in the intensive recreation zone by manipulating vegetative fuels.**

Specific Actions:

- a) Campfires will not be permitted.
- b) Remove shoreline broom, which has an extremely high flammability, in the camping area.
- c) Reduce hazardous vegetative fuels adjacent to and on trails.

4. Wildlife

Objective:

To retain or enhance natural conditions that prevail in woodland, grassland and shoreline components, so that the present complement of wild species inhabiting Drumbeg Park is sustained.

5. Cultural Resources

Objective:

To protect significant archeological resources from destructive development or uses.

D. Visitor Services

1. Recreation Opportunities

Objective:

To encourage auto-access day use, bicycle destination use, upland walking, picnicking, viewing, nature appreciation and shoreline and underwater recreation.

Specific Actions:

a) Auto-access day use

Drumbeg Park contains good day use opportunities. Upgrading of Stalker Road and expansion and formalization of parking are required. Visitors will walk to the day use area from the parking area. No parking will be permitted near the shoreline.

b) Auto-access camping

Auto-access camping facilities will not be provided at Drumbeg Park. An alternative for campers will be a walk-in camping area.

c) Bicycle destination use

Walk-in camping will be provided west of Stalker Road along the shoreline to encourage bicycle destination use.

d) Picnicking

A picnicking area will be developed in close proximity to the shore and parking area at the head of the bay.

e) Boat access use

Overnight anchorage will not be encouraged.

f) Walking

The shoreline trail will be upgraded. The rough road along the bay will be rehabilitated and will form part of the shoreline trail.

g) Underwater Recreation

Diving is an important recreation activity off the shores of Drumbeg Park. Designating the foreshore fronting Drumbeg Park and a portion of Gabriola Pass to the west, as an extension of Drumbeg Park, should protect this activity. Boat access is the most common way for divers to reach these sites, although many divers reach them via the park.

2. Management Services

a) Operation base

Drumbeg Park is operated as part of the Strathcona District.

b) Fire suppression

Wildfires will be controlled.

c) Promotion

Objective:

- i) **To complement present public information media, eg. Provincial Parks of Vancouver Island brochure, with visitor information at the main ferry access and within Drumbeg Park.**
- ii) **To increase roadside signage to direct visitors to the park.**

Specific Actions:

- i) Develop a Visitor Services plan covering all provincial parks on Gabriola Island. As part of this plan, consideration should be given to an information shelter located at Descanso Bay ferry landing which would provide information regarding access and opportunities for Drumbeg Park and Gabriola Sands Park and Recreation Area, as well as the proposed Lock Bay provincial park, should the latter be designated as a park.
- ii) Themes associated with Drumbeg Park for application in the Visitor Services plan include the marine life offshore, native Indian history associated with the archeological sites and fluvial landforms.

E. Plan Implementation

1. Initiate action to add foreshore and marine component to the park.

2. Improve access road and provide an expanded designated parking area and block vehicle access beyond parking area.
3. Develop a day use picnic area at head of bay.
4. Develop a walk-in campground with individual tenting sites.
5. Upgrade shoreline trail.
6. Prepare a Visitor Services plan and implement recommendations.

V Gabriola Sands Park and Recreation Area

A. Role of the Park

The conservation role for Gabriola Sands is to protect and present attractive shoreline and foreshore resources which represent the typical and special natural elements of Gabriola Island.

The recreation role for Gabriola Sands is to provide day use opportunities for beach recreation, swimming, boating and picnicking at the shoreline and ball games in the open areas of upland.

B. Zoning

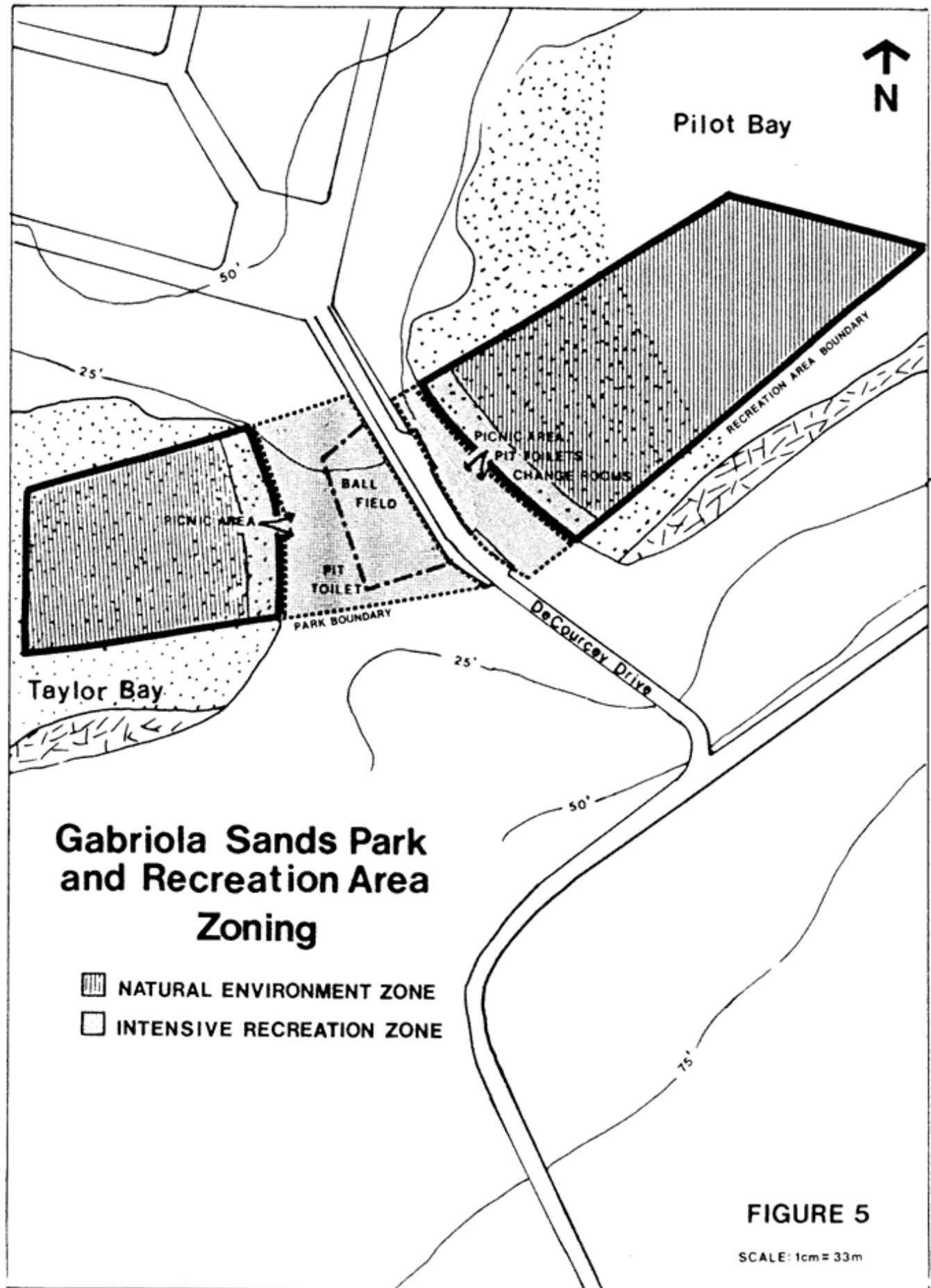
Gabriola Sands Park and Recreation Area is very small and is easily accessible by road. It receives over 9,000 visits per year. In keeping with the division's recreation and conservation roles, two zones are found in the park (Figure 5):

1. Intensive Recreation Zone

The entire upland and beaches will be zoned intensive recreation, reflecting the use and development of the park. On both sides of the road are day use facilities.

2. Natural Environment Zone

The foreshore of the park is zoned natural environment to reflect light use and the absence of development.



C. Resource Management

1. Land Classification, Boundaries and Tenures

Objective:

To reclassify Gabriola Sands Recreation Area to Class 'A' park status.

2. Water

Objective:

To allow wave and tidal action to impact the beaches and upland as part of a natural process.

Action:

Major efforts will not be made to hinder the beach accretion process at Pilot Bay.

3. Vegetation

Objective:

a) **To retain the few remaining woodlands in Gabriola Sands Park in their natural state.**

b) **To suppress all wildfires in this park.**

4. Wildlife and Fish

Objective:

To retain or enhance natural conditions in the upland, shoreline and marine components of Gabriola Sands Park and Recreation Area so that the present wildlife and fish populations are sustained.

5. Cultural Resources

Objective:

To protect remaining significant archeological resources from disruptive uses.

D. Visitor Services

1. Recreation Opportunities

Objective:

To encourage auto-access day use, including beach-related activities, picnicking and ball play.

Specific Actions:

- a) Existing day use facilities at Gabriola Sands Park are adequate. As Pilot Bay beach accretes, the picnic tables, park benches, pit toilets and change houses shall be moved to the west side of the park.
- b) Boat-access use - overnight anchorage will be permitted in Taylor Bay and Pilot Bay.

- c) Upland recreation - the playing field appropriate for ball games will be maintained as it is.

2. Management Services

- a) Operation Base

Gabriola Sands Park and Recreation Area is operated as part of the Strathcona District.

- b) Fire Suppression

Wildfires will be controlled.

- c) Promotion

Objective:

To complement present public information with visitor information at the main ferry access point.

Specific Action:

Develop a Visitor Services Plan for the provincial parks on Gabriola Island. Themes pertaining to Gabriola Sands Park and Recreation Area for application in a Visitor Services plan include beach accretion formation, local community use of the park and foreshore marine resources.

E. Plan Implementation

In order of priority, the following actions are to be implemented:

1. Change classification of recreation area to Class 'A' park status.
2. Prepare a Visitor Services plan and implement recommendations.
3. As beach accretion progresses at Pilot Bay, relocate facilities to west side of park as is necessary.

APPENDIX 1
Background Report
for
Drumbeg Park
and
Gabriola Sands Park and Recreation Area

BACKGROUND REPORT

I Drumbeg Park

A. Park Profile

Drumbeg Park consists of 20 hectares of upland on the southeasterly tip of Gabriola Island in Georgia Strait. The park has approximately one kilometre of marine frontage. Established in 1971 as a Class 'A' park, Drumbeg Park is named after the Scottish home of a former owner of the land, Mr. Neil Stalker.



Drumbeg Park shoreline

The climate is generally moist with annual precipitation averaging 90 cm. About 30% of the annual precipitation falls between April and September, with August being the driest month. While summers tend to be quite dry, the air temperature is usually moderated by a cool sea breeze. Average winter temperatures are above freezing. Primary wind directions are southeast and northwest.

B. Natural and Cultural Resources

1. Natural Resources

a) Topography

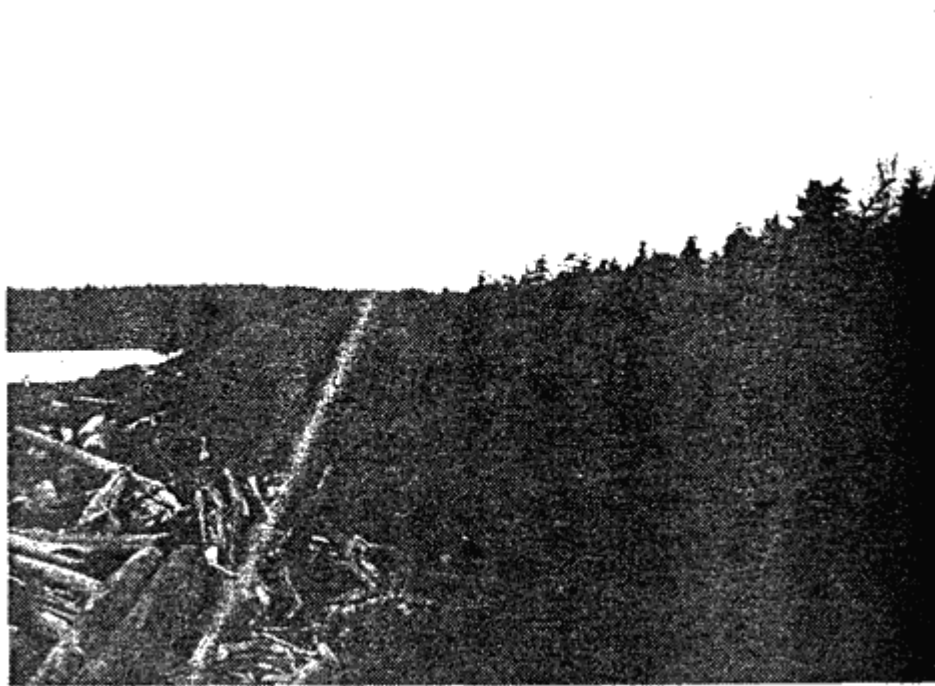
The park is generally flat to rolling, with slopes generally less than 15% declining southward from a maximum elevation of 25 metres.

The soil is generally shallow, particularly near the shoreline, and has a sandy to gravel texture, with sandstone and conglomerate bedrock close to the surface.

b) Vegetation

The forest cover, present over the majority of the park area, is primarily Douglas-fir, with some oak, arbutus, maple and Abies species. Understory species include Scotch broom, grasses, honeysuckle and thimbleberry. Near the shoreline, and especially in the extreme eastern section of the park, Scotch broom has expanded its occupation of open grass areas. Thus, since the park's establishment, what were once open meadows are now dense thickets of tall broom with an herbacious understory consisting of grasses and vetches.

At the tips of the two points of land which extend out into Gabriola Passage, the vegetation is primarily influenced by soil depth over bedrock and wave and wind exposure. Species composition includes mainly grasses, with some low growing forbs.



Scotch broom and shoreline trail

c) Water

There are no streams or lakes in the park.

d) Wildlife

No inventory of wildlife exists for the park. It is assumed that, as a natural area, the typical variety of coastal wildlife, particularly small mammals, inhabit the park.

Shorebirds such as herons and gulls have been sighted frequently. Other species such as lesser yellowlegs and sanderlings should be common.

Although not included within park boundaries, marine life off the park's shoreline is bountiful. Giant urchins, sea peaches, grunt sculpins, rockfish, giant barnacles, burrowing cucumbers, dogfish and octopus have been recorded.

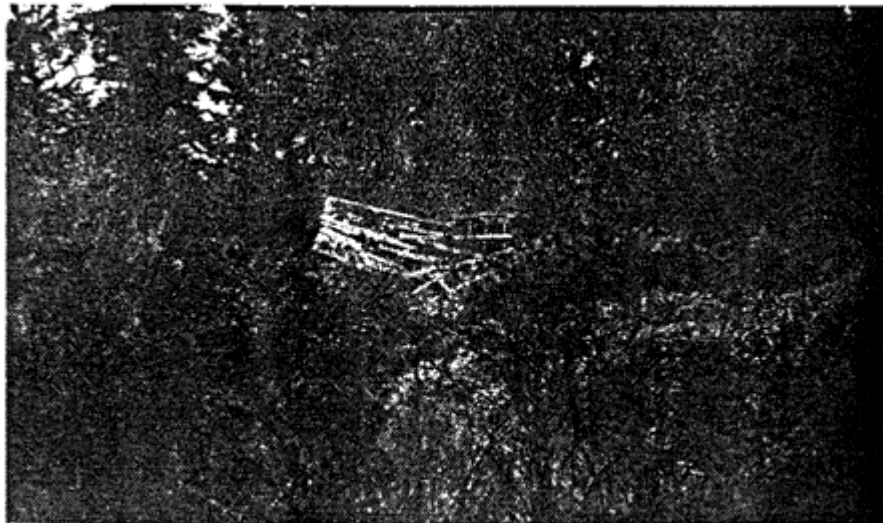
2. Cultural Resources

a) Archaeological

A midden extends along the majority of the park's shoreline. This midden constitutes two recorded archeological sites designated as DgRw14 and DgRw15. The condition of the shell midden is considered good on average, with some areas noted as fair due to construction, road, landscaping and wave action.

b) Historical

There are no significant historical features in the park. Two dilapidated sheds exist near the northeastern boundary. It is possible that the open area near these sheds was once part of a farm and was used for grazing.



Dilapidated shed in northeast corner of park

3. Resources Analysis

The purpose of this section is to briefly describe the significance of major park resources relative to provincial park system conservation and recreation programs.

a) Conservation Program

i) Natural Landscape Representation

Drumbeg Park is located within the "Gulf Islands Special Landscape". The park's area is too limited for representation of this landscape; however, it is one of many small parcels of parkland on the Gulf Islands.

ii) Marine Environment Representation:

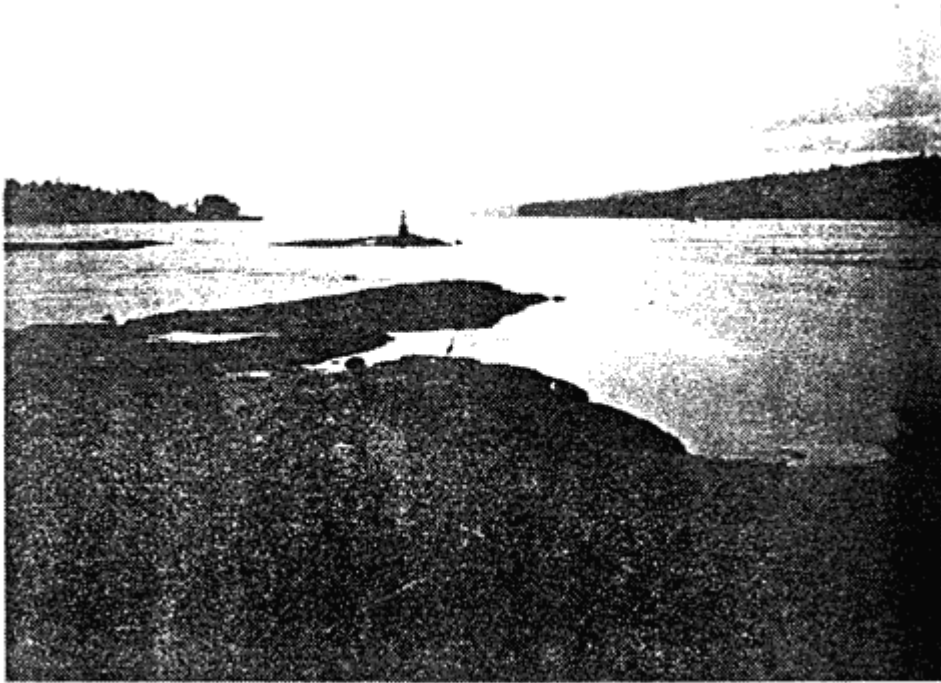
There is no foreshore or underwater component.



The park shoreline features interesting rock formations resulting from tidal erosion

iii) Outstanding Features/Resources

The shoreline of the park, with its southern exposure on the northside of Gabriola Pass, offers high scenic values. The archeological midden is of local significance; it is a valued and fragile resource but is not rare or unusual.



View south of Rogers Reef

b) Recreation Programs

i) Backcountry

The park's area is too limited to offer backcountry recreation opportunities.

ii) Boating

The sandy shore at the head of the bay is suitable for car top boat launching. The bay offers temporary anchorage for a few boats at a time during periods of calm or north winds, which are fairly common conditions during summer.



Head of bay featuring a pebble sand beach

iii) Road Access

There is regularly scheduled ferry service between Nanaimo and Gabriola Island. Paved secondary roads connect the ferry landing and the southwest portion of the island, a distance of approximately 16 kilometres. A dirt road leads from the main road into the park.

The park is well suited to day use, with an adequate amount of developable land for overnight capability as well. There is excellent capability for leisure walking, nature appreciation, picnicking, swimming, snorkeling and scuba diving. There is adequate developable land for camping.

iv) Winter

The climate is too mild for activities oriented to snow and ice.

C. Tenures, Occupancy Rights and Jurisdictions

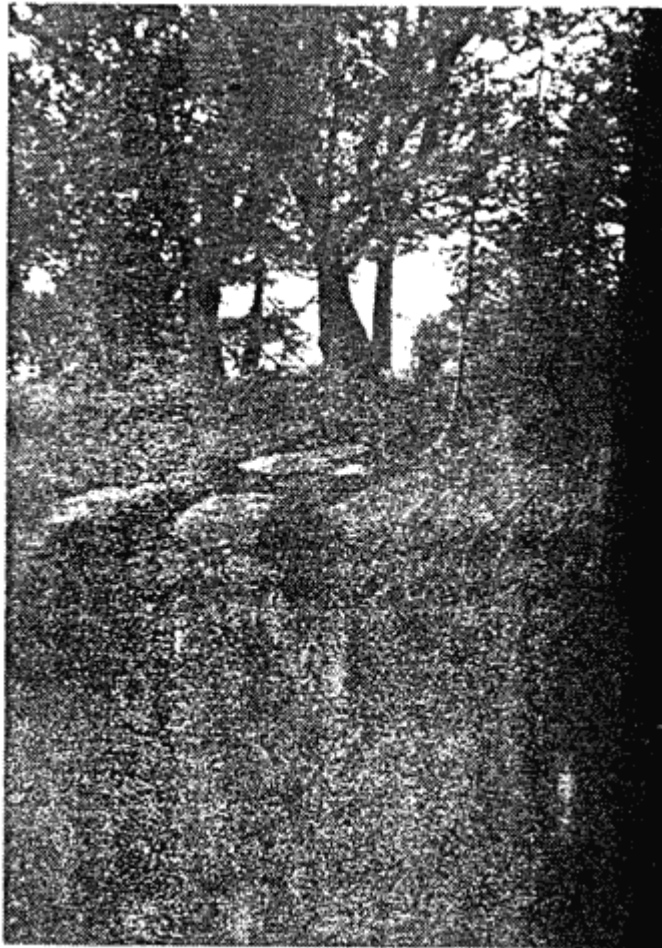
1. General Status - *Park Act*, Class 'A' status, Category 6, including the fractional SE 1/4 of Section 4, Gabriola Island, Nanaimo District except Lot 1, Plan 16560, 20 hectares more or less of upland.
2. Rights-of-Way - B.C. Hydro powerline - width 30 feet (PUP 723)
- Stalker Road - width 66 feet
3. Archeological Sites - DgRw 14, 15 are protected under the *Heritage Conservation Act*

D. Recreation Opportunities

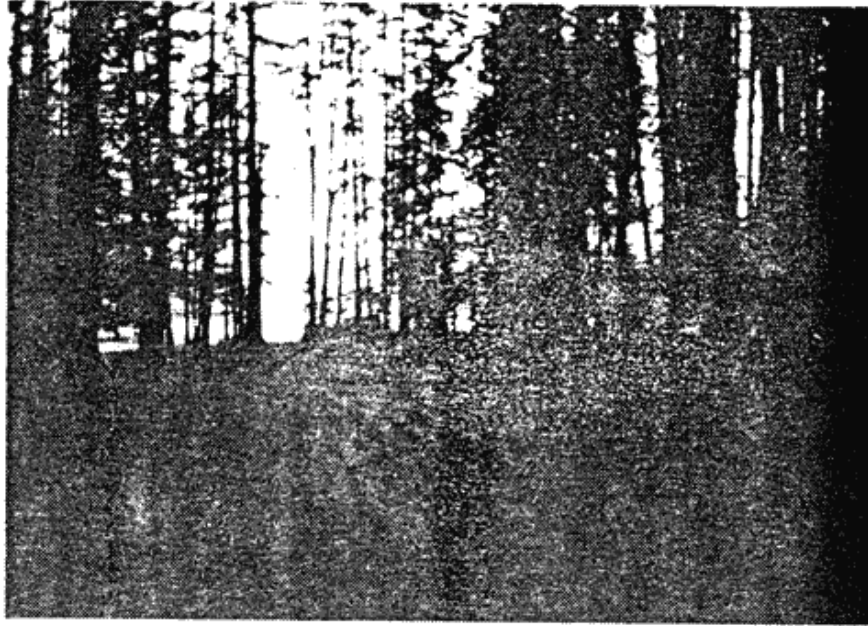
1. Visitor Facilities (Figure 6)

a) Parking and Access Road

A narrow dirt road leads from the northwest corner of the park to a turnaround at the head of the bay. A rough clearing near the bay is capable of accommodating approximately five vehicles. A rough section of road extends along the eastern bank of the bay.



Rough road leading along bay

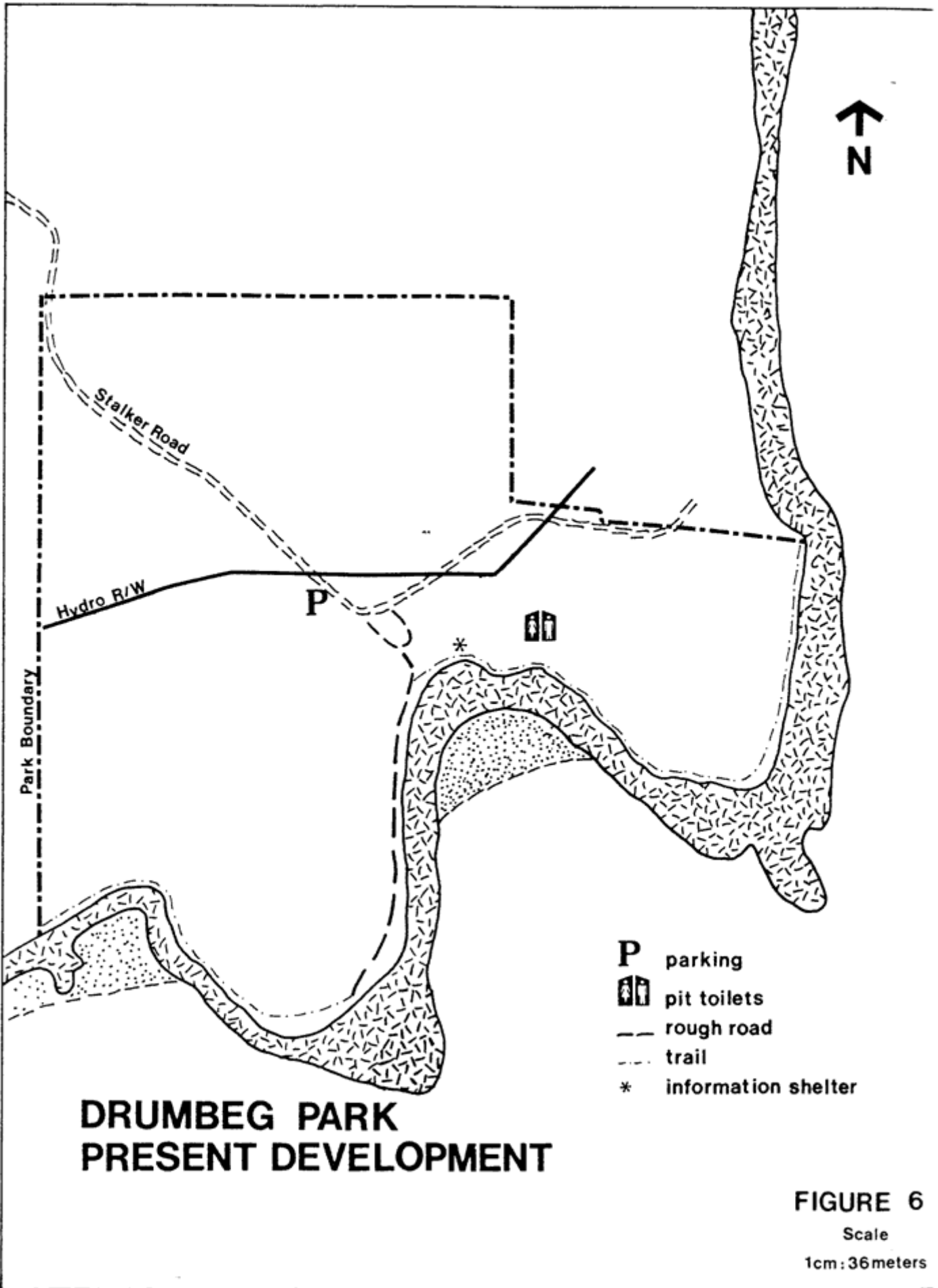


Stalker Road leading to head of bay and parking area on right



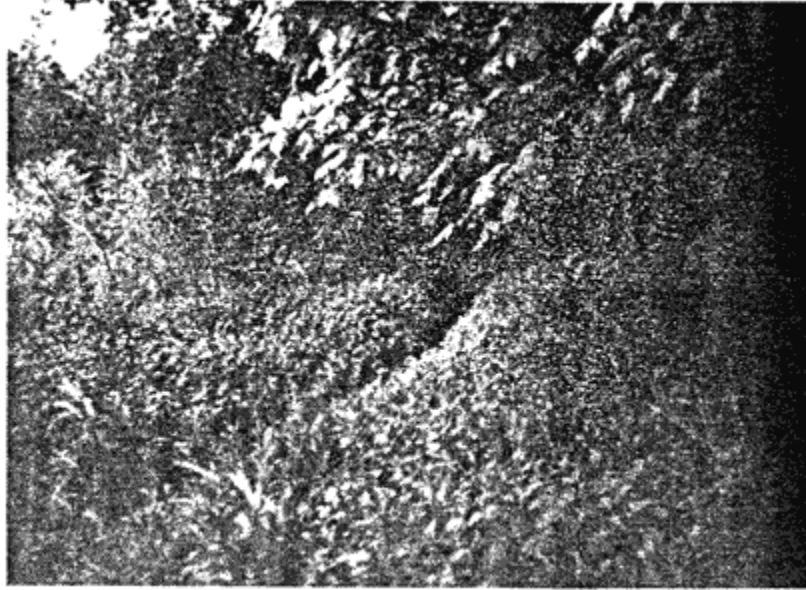
Turnaround near head of bay

- 33 -



b) Toilet System

Two pit toilets are provided east of the parking area near the shoreline trail.



Trail leading to toilets

c) Trails

A rough trail runs the length of the park's shoreline.



Park information shelter and shoreline trail

2. Management Services

The park is inspected weekly by park staff based at Rath Trevor Beach Provincial Park. Regular maintenance is contracted to the private sector.

3. Park Attendance and Visitor Activities

a) Recorded Use

Due to lack of formal development and poor directional signing from the main roads, use is relatively low. Recorded day use has been erratic in the past:

Recorded Day Use Volume (in persons)	
Number of Visitors	Months/Year
4756	1986 (June, July, August)
No Record	1985
2719	1984 (August)
9110	1983 (July, Sept., Oct.)
1827	1982 (June, July, Aug., Sept.)
No Record	1981
4651	1980 (July, August)

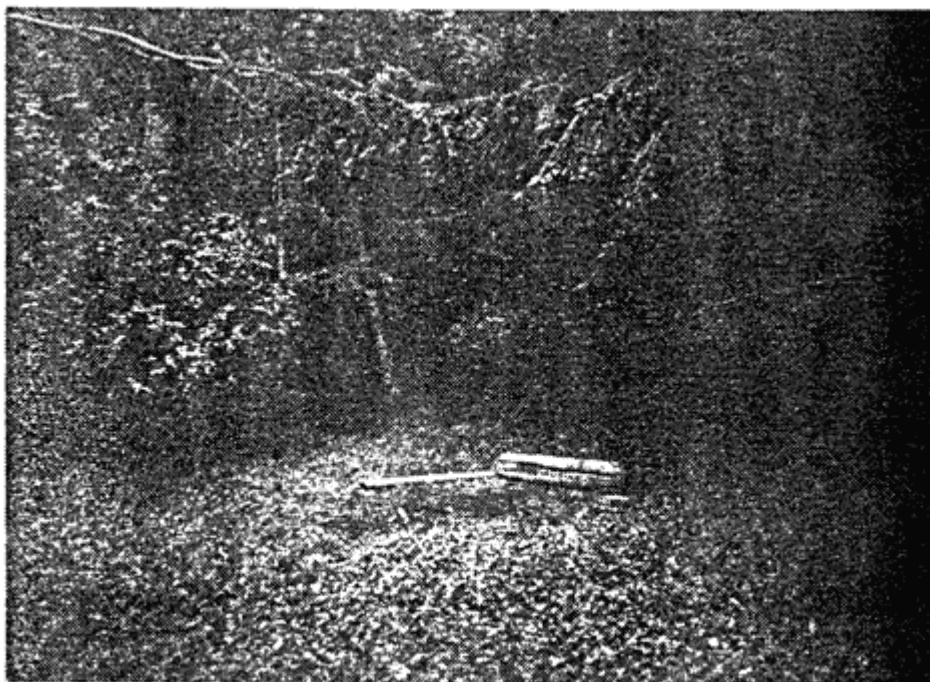
Special permission is given yearly to the Sapperton Rod and Gun Club to camp in the park during the May Day long weekend.

b) Unrecorded Use

Walk-in Day Use - Due to the sparse settlement near the park, it is doubtful that many people visit the park for a stroll without using vehicles or bicycles. However, it is

likely that some people park their vehicles just west of the park boundary and walk into the park along the shore.

Camping - Although camping is discouraged, there is evidence that it occurs on the west side of the park near the shoreline. Remains of campfires are found near the shoreline as well.



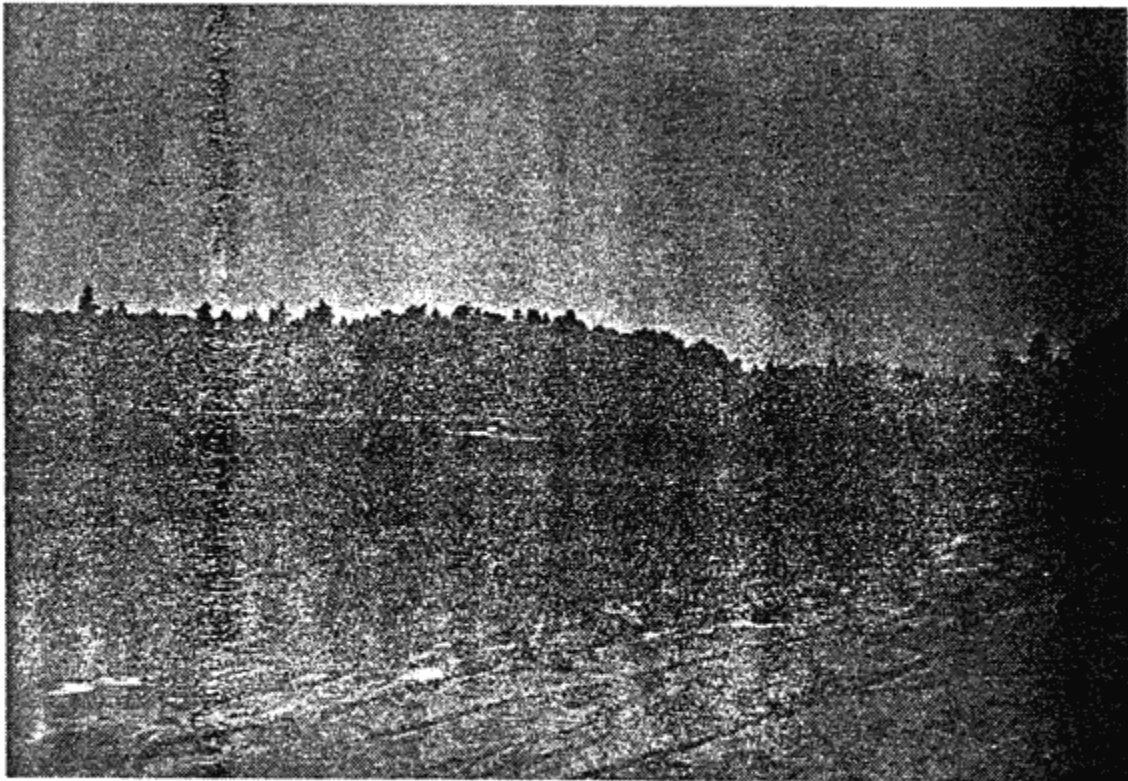
Remains of campfires

E. Key Planning Issues

1. Natural and Cultural Resource Management

a) Boundary Extension

The waters adjacent to the park are enhanced by current-fed marine life, making the area popular with intermediate and advanced divers and snorkelers and sport fishermen. Divers frequently utilize Drumbeg Park to access these waters. The master plan will address a possible extension of the boundary of the park to include the waters from Gabriola Passage east to Rogers Reef.



The foreshore and marine environment are attractive visual and recreational features, but are not within park boundaries - View of Gabriola Passage

b) Vegetation Management

Certain areas of the park have been identified as having a high to extreme fire hazard rating. Measures to reduce the fire hazard through the manipulation of vegetative fuels must be addressed in light of any development and increased use.



Evidence of 1987 fire suppressed by
local volunteer fire department

c) Cultural Resources

Two archeological sites are situated along the majority of the park's shoreline one to five meters above the high water mark. Any proposed development must be sensitive to these middens.

2. Visitor Services

a) Defining Appropriate Levels of Development and Use

The level of development required to facilitate visitor opportunities must be addressed. Of particular importance is whether camping should be permitted and, if so, at what levels.

b) Improving Signage and Marketing

Drumbeg is not a well known park, nor is there adequate signage or marketing to facilitate visitor use. Improved signage and marketing is aligned closely with the proposed level of development and use.

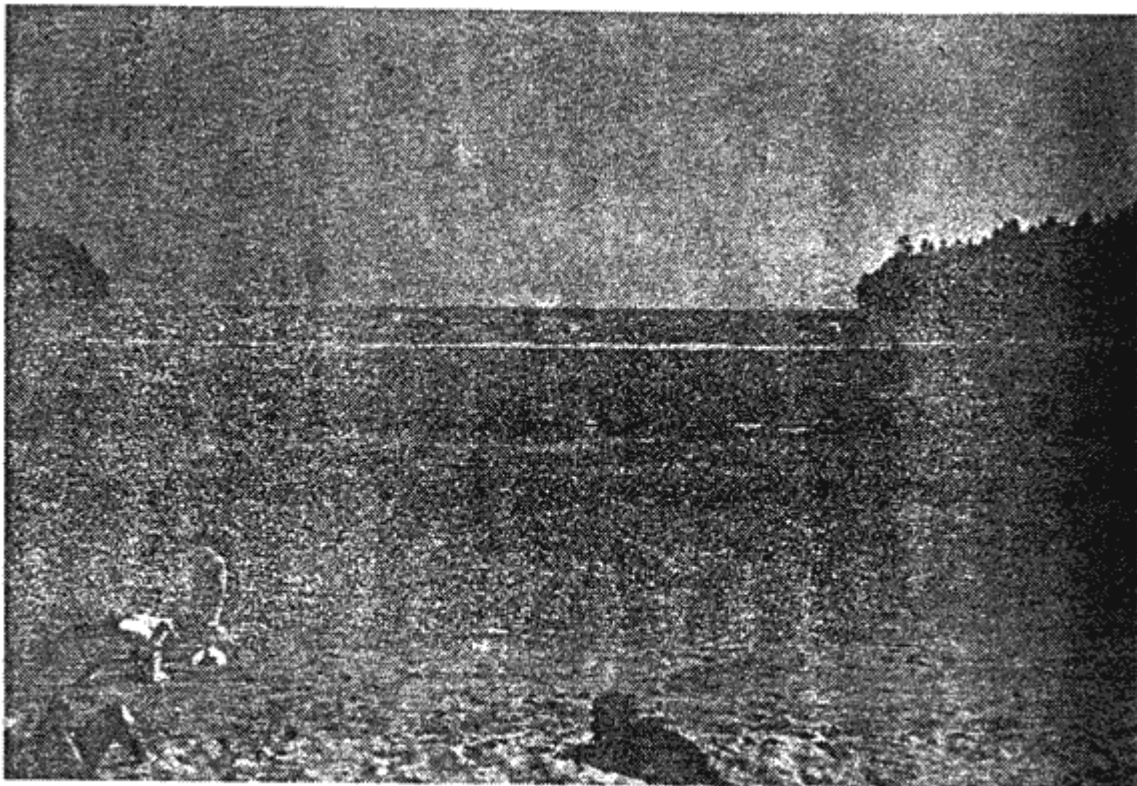
c) Improving Access

Any further development or marketing of Drumbeg Park will necessitate improved access.

II Gabriola Sands Park and Recreation Area

A. Park Profile

Gabriola Sands Provincial Park, established in 1960, consists of 1.4 hectares of land at the northern end of Gabriola Island. The province dedicated a further 5.3 hectares of foreshore in 1972, as provincial recreation area. The park is situated on a narrow isthmus and is divided in half by a paved road which provides access to a residential community lying north of the park. The recreation area contains two parcels of foreshore, one extending into Taylor Bay to the west, the second into Pilot Bay to the east. There is approximately 150 metres of sandy beach within the park and recreation area at the head of each of these bays.



Taylor Bay



Parking area with Pilot Bay in background

Gabriola Sands was originally donated by Mr. W. Coats and Mr. F. Ney, on behalf of Gabriola Sands Resort Company, and was classified as a Class 'C' park in 1960. One year later, the province reclassified Gabriola Sands as a Category 4, Class 'A' park.

The climate is typically cool, dry summers and warm, wet winters. The least amount of precipitation falls in spring and summer. While summers tend to be quite dry, the air temperature is usually moderated by cool sea breezes from the southeast and northwest.

B. Natural and Cultural Resources

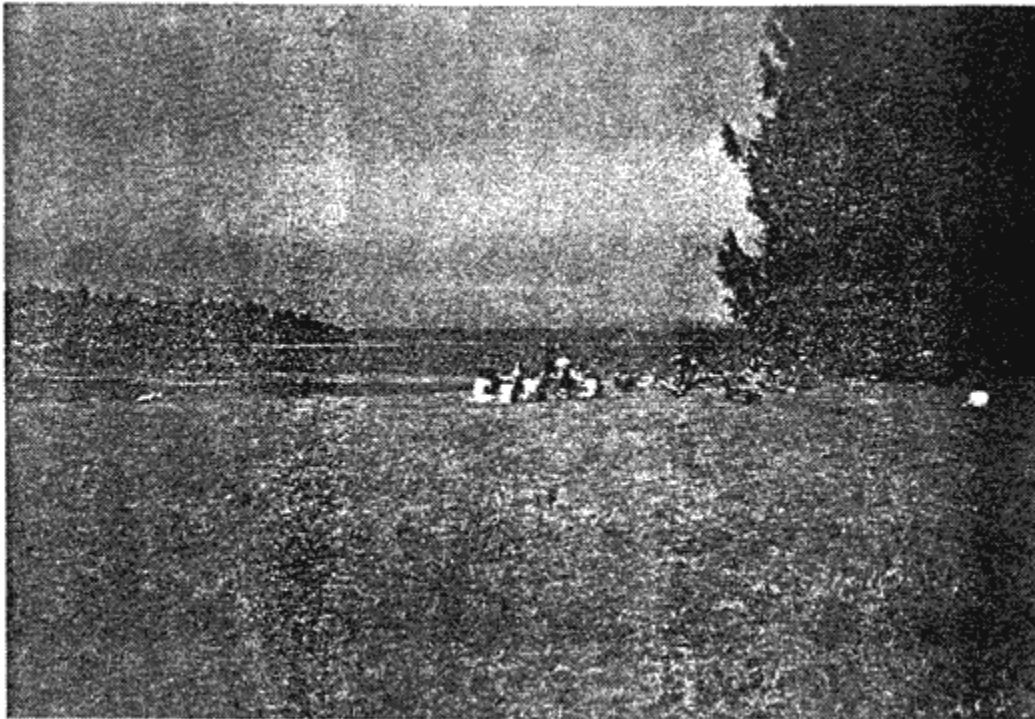
1. Natural Resources

a) Topography

The park is generally flat with the grassy upland being no more than one to five metres above sea level. The soil is typically sandy gravel, particularly near the shorelines. The beaches are predominantly sand, with no exposed bedrock.

b) Vegetation

The majority of the park on the larger west side of the road has been cleared of forest and planted with grass. East of the road and along the park boundary and shore and in small groves on the west side of the road are red cedar, Douglas-fir, arbutus, shore pine and bigleaf maple.



Taylor Bay on the park's west side

c) Water

There are no creekbeds. Fresh water supply is from a well. The adjacent recreation area contains approximately 300 metres of tidal frontage and 5.3 hectares of shallow tidal water within the "Georgia Strait Marine Environment". Tidal action is eroding the bank at Pilot Bay.



Pilot Bay beach accretion

d) Wildlife

Gabriola Sands is a small park with rural residential development close by. Wildlife is restricted to mostly small mammals and shorebirds. Due to the sandy bottom of the foreshore, marine life is not abundant in the recreation area. Hunting is not permitted.

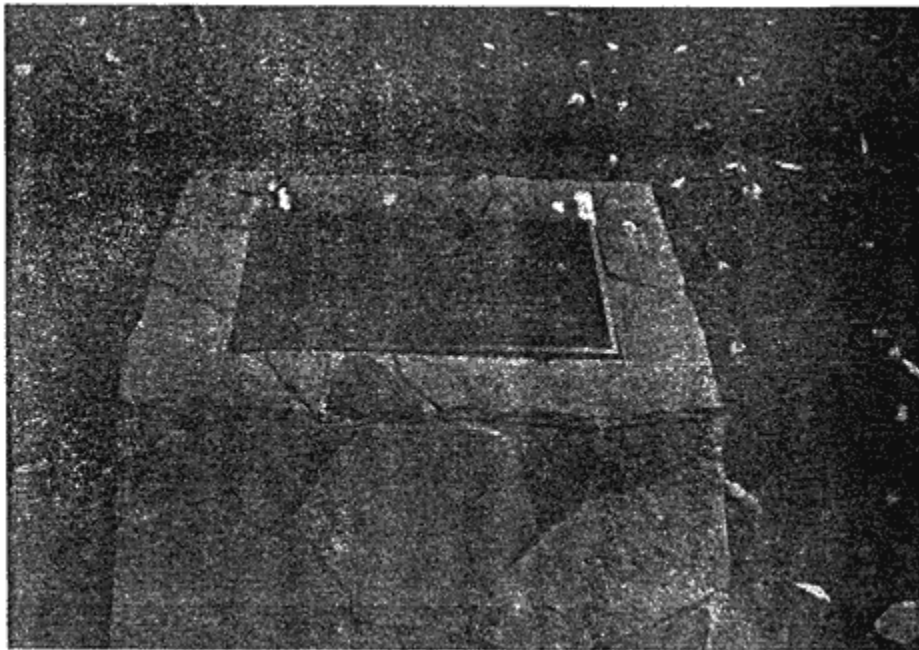
2. Cultural Resources

a) Archeological

Two provincially designated archeological sites (RhRx 17 and 18) are situated at the heads of Taylor Bay and Pilot Bay. Both sites are shell middens and are considered in fair condition despite being disturbed in the past.

b) Historical

A plaque dedicated to Gabriola Sands Resort Company is situated on the west side of the park.



Dedication plaque located on west side of park

3. Resources Analysis

The purpose of this section is to briefly describe the significance of major park and recreation area resources relative to provincial park system conservation and recreation programs.

a) Conservation Programs

i) Natural Landscape Representation

The park is located within the "Gulf Islands Special Landscape". The park's area is too limited for representation; however, it is one of many small parcels of parkland in this special landscape.

ii) Marine Environment Representation

Gabriola Sands Recreation Area is located within the "Georgia Strait Marine Environment". The total hectarage and characteristics of the foreshore are too limited for adequate representation; however, it is valuable since very few other parks or recreation areas in the Gulf Islands include the foreshore within their boundaries.

iii) Outstanding Features/Resources

The two beaches are very suitable for beach play and swimming. The archeological middens are of local significance; it is a valued and fragile resource but is not rare or unusual.

b) Recreation Programs

i) Backcountry

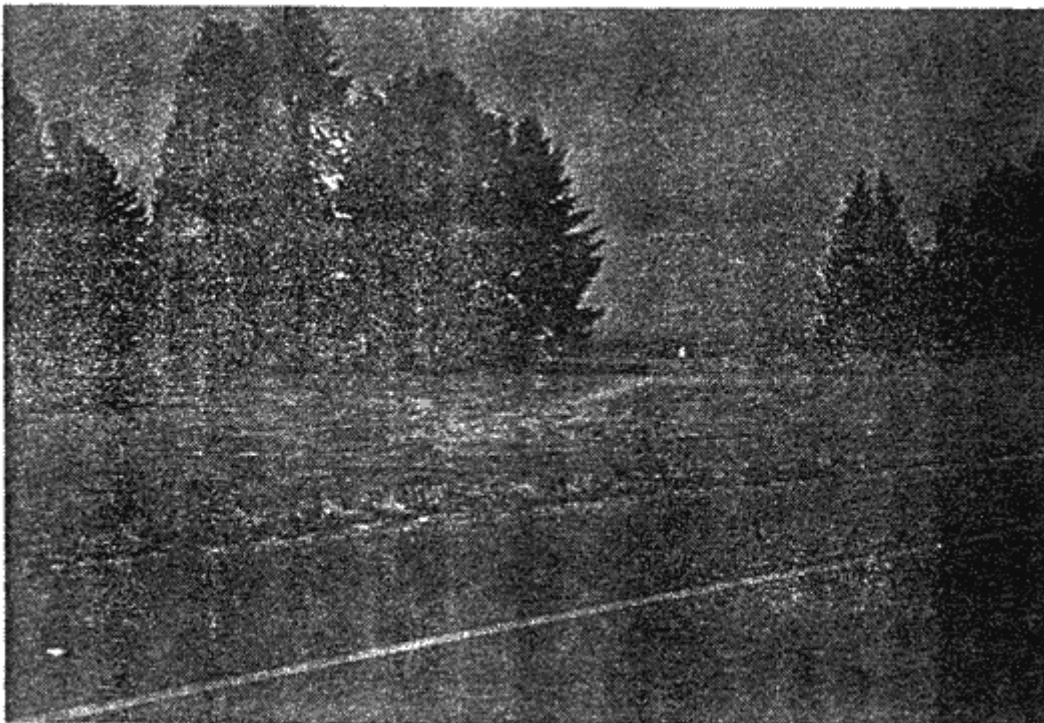
The park's area is too limited to offer backcountry recreation opportunities.

ii) Boating

The sandy beaches are suitable for launching car top boats. Anchorage capability is only fair due to the sand and gravel nature of the ocean beds and the winds. Few boaters anchor overnight in these bays.

iii) Road Access

Regularly scheduled ferry service exists between Nanaimo and Gabriola Island. Paved secondary roads connect the ferry landing and the park, a distance of approximately two kilometres.



Ball field and west side of park - DeCourcy Road in foreground

Gabriola Sands offers excellent opportunity for sand beach-oriented day use activities, especially picnicking and swimming. A level field area, on the west side of the park, is suitable for ball games such as soccer, football or baseball. The park is too small to be suitable for overnight use.

iv) Winter

The climate is too mild for activities oriented to winter, snow or ice.

C. Tenures, Occupancy Rights and Jurisdictions

1. General Status

a) Park - *Park Act*, Class 'A' status, Category 6, including:

First: Lots 61 and 100 of Section 21, Plan 12655;

Second: Lot 1 of Section 21, Plan 13612;

Third: The land situated between Lots 1 and 100, Plan 12655 and between Lots 60 and 61, Plan 12655 that is shown as park land on Plan 12655, Gabriola Island, Nanaimo District.

b) Recreation Area - *Park Act*, Recreation Area status, foreshore adjacent to Gabriola Sands Provincial Park.

2. Rights-of-Way - Park is divided by DeCourcy Drive, width 72 feet.

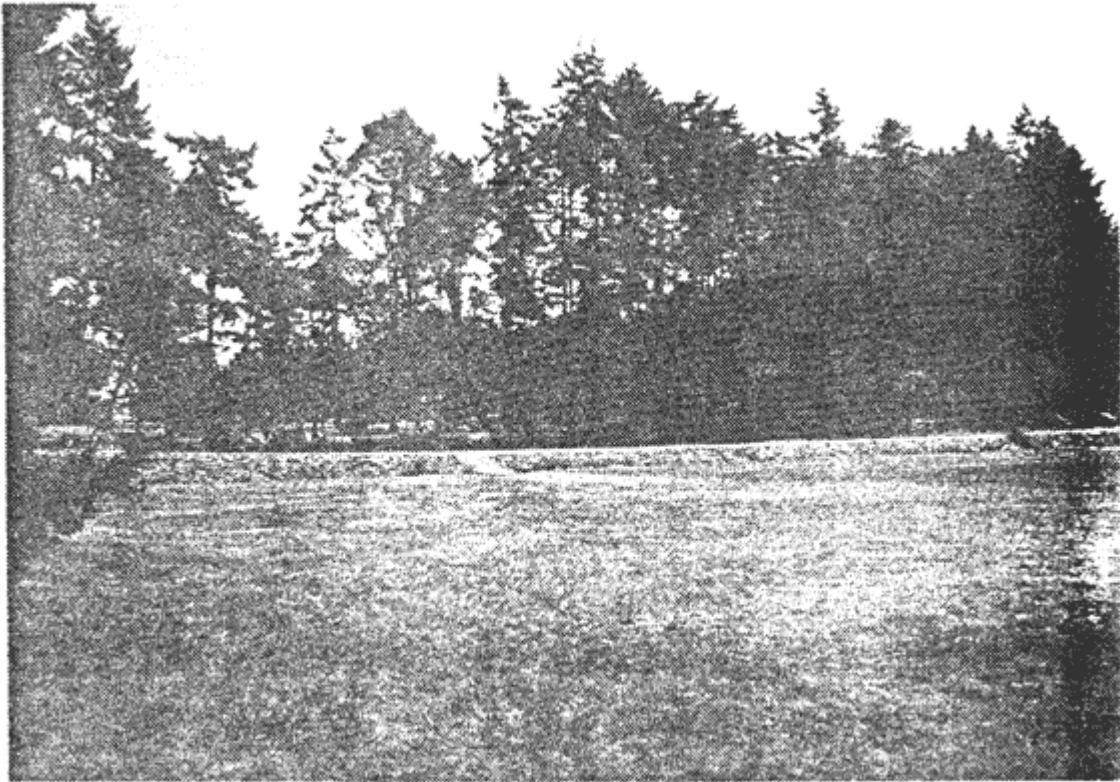
3. Archeological Sites - RhRx 17 and 18 are protected under the *Heritage Conservation Act*.

D. Recreation Opportunities

1. Visitor Facilities (Figure 7)

a) Parking and Access Road

A paved road bisects the park. There are two parking areas on the east side of the road, holding a total of 24 vehicles.



Parking lots at east side of park



Pilot Bay

50'

25'

PICNIC AREA

BALL FIELD

PIT TOILET

PICNIC AREA
PIT TOILETS
CHANGE ROOMS

PARKING

PARKING

DeCourcy Drive

25'

50'

75'

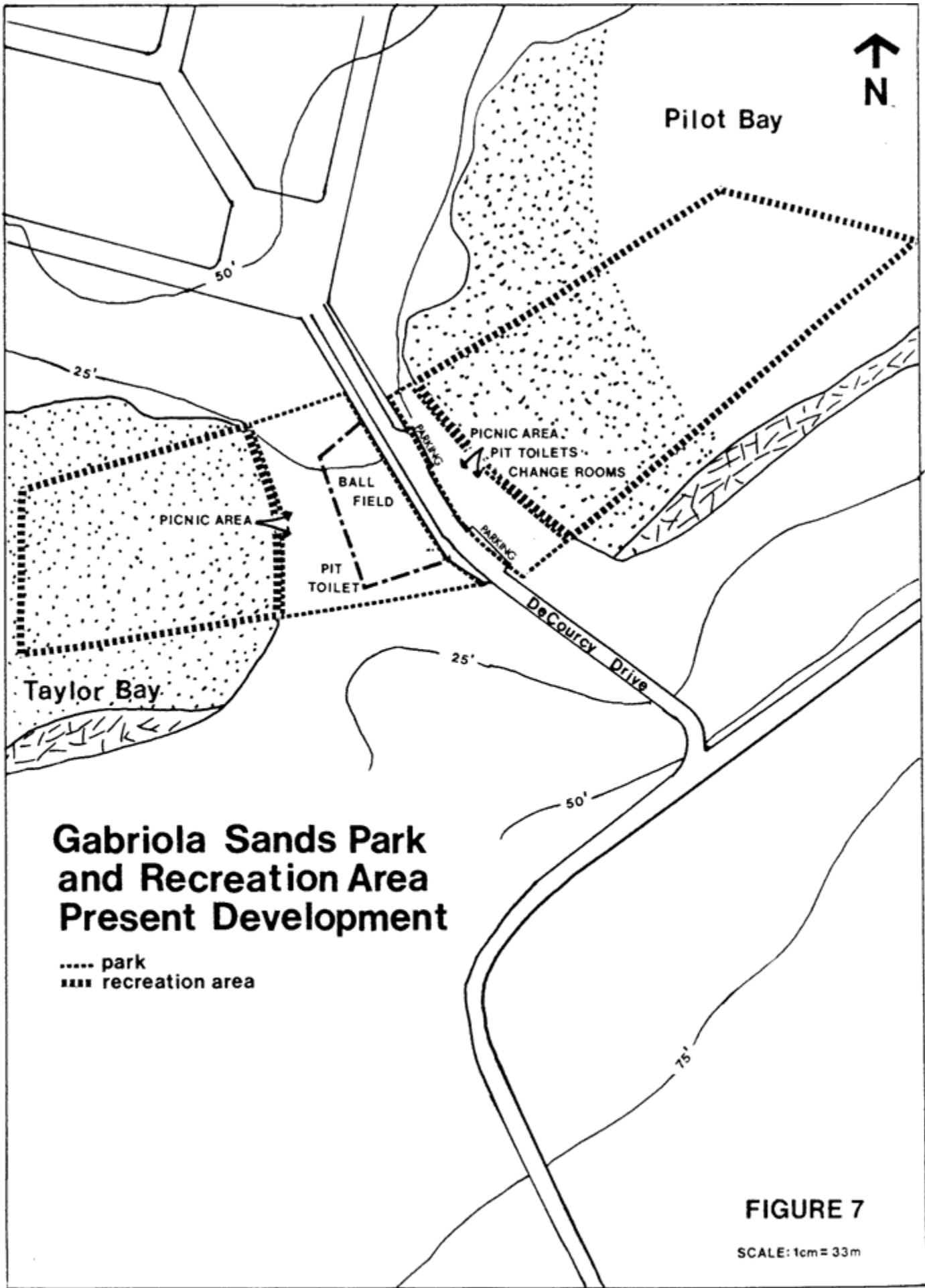
Taylor Bay

Gabriola Sands Park and Recreation Area Present Development

..... park
xxxx recreation area

FIGURE 7

SCALE: 1cm = 33m



b) Toilet System

Four pit toilets are provided. two near each beach. Change houses are connected to the toilets at Pilot Day.



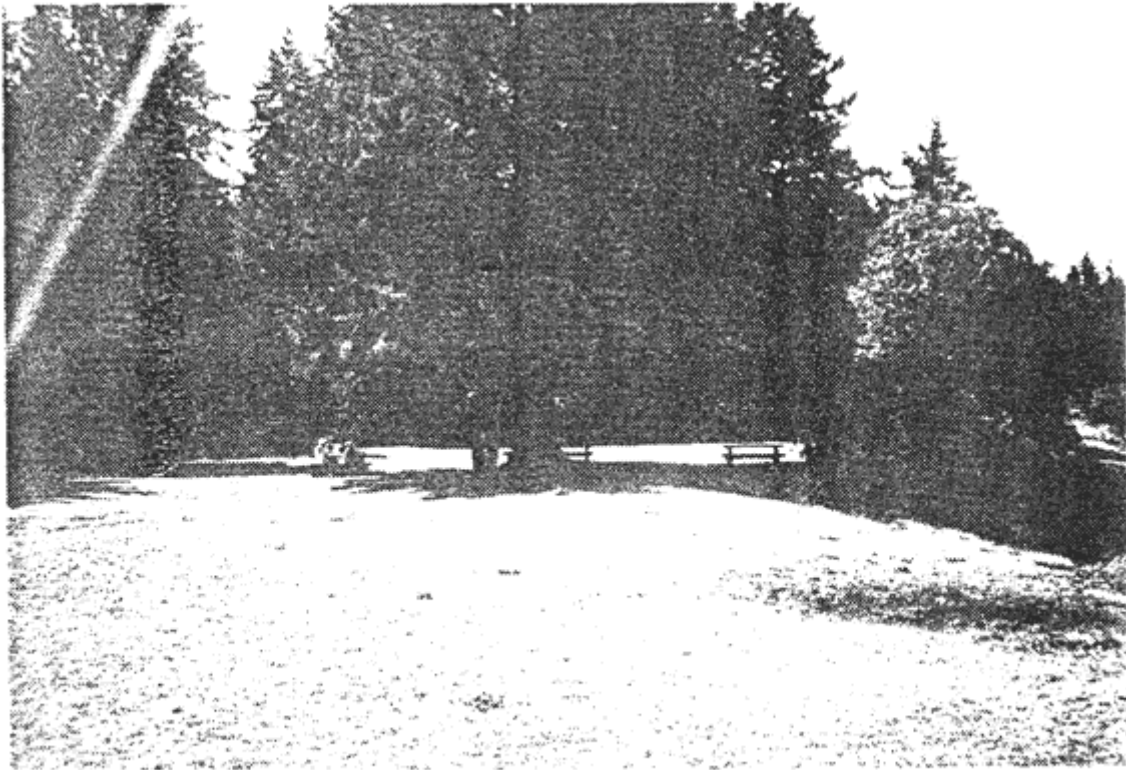
Picnic area and change houses at Pilot bay

c) Trails

Except for a short trail along the eastern shoreline, there are no trails.

d) Day Use

A day use pump water system is in place. Nine picnic tables and three benches are situated along both shorelines. A registration shelter providing park information is located at the parking area.



Picnicking at Taylor Bay

2. Management Services

The park is inspected weekly by park staff based at Rath Trevor Beach Provincial Park. Regular maintenance is contracted to the private sector. No other services are provided.

3. Park Attendance and Visitor Activities

a) Recorded Use

Recorded day use has been inconsistent in recent years with no record for visitation in 1983 and 1984. Recorded day use volume for May, June and July in 1985 totalled approximately 10,000 persons, while in 1986 approximately 9,000 persons visited in July, August and September.

Use is predominantly by local island residents, many of whom walk to the park from residential areas close to the park. The west side of the park at Taylor Bay receives more use than the east side due to more favourable summer wind conditions. The ball park, one of two on the island, experiences heavy use as well.

E. Key Planning Issues

1. Natural and Cultural Resource Management

a) Beach Stabilization

Accretion of the beach at the head of Pilot Bay is threatening vegetation and park development over the long term. Policies are required regarding the desirability of beach stabilization in view of the fact that accretion is a natural process.

b) Classification

There are no resource tenures or commitments within Gabriola Sands Recreation Area. As such, the recreation area is a viable candidate for reclassification to Class 'A' park status to ensure the greatest protection in the future.

c) Cultural Resources

Two archeological sites are situated along the park's shorelines. These sites have been disturbed in the past. Any changes to the park's development must be sensitive to these middens.

2. Visitor Services

a) Defining Appropriate Levels of Development and Use

The park and recreation area are appropriate for day use, beach-oriented activities. Present development serves day use visitors. The master plan must determine if any new development or upgrading is necessary.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ince, John and Köttner, Hedi, 1982. *Sea Kayaking Canada's West Coast*. Raxas Books, Vancouver.
- Pratt-Johnson, Betty, 1976. *141 Dives in Protected Waters of Washington and British Columbia*. Gordon Soules Book Publishers, Vancouver.
- Province of B.C., Ministry of Environment and Parks, Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, 1986. *Parks Data Handbook*. Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, Visitor Services, Victoria.
- Province of B.C., Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing, 1984. *Eastern Vancouver Island Coastal and Marine Data Atlas*. Victoria.
- Province of B.C., Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing, Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, 1982. *Natural Regions and Regional Landscapes for British Columbia's Provincial Park System*. Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, Victoria.
- Province of B.C., Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing, Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, 1985. *Parks Data Handbook*. Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, Visitor Services, Victoria.
- Province of B.C., Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing, Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, 1984. *Parks Data Handbook*. Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, Visitor Services, Victoria.
- Province of B.C., Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing, Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, 1983. *Parks Data Handbook*. Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, Visitor Services, Victoria.

Province of B.C., Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing, Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, 1982. *Parks Data Handbook*. Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, Visitor Services, Victoria.

Province of B.C., Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing, Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, 1981. *Parks Data Handbook*. Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, Visitor Services, Victoria.

Province of B.C., Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing, Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division and Pacific Forest Research Centre, Canadian Forestry Service, 1978. *Fire Control Survey for Drumbeg Park*. Victoria.