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GOLDSTREAM  
PROVINCIAL PARK

MASTER  
PLAN

Prepared for: BC Parks  
Malahat District, South Coast Region  
Victoria, BC

by: Doug Leavers Consulting  
Vancouver/Vernon, BC  
March 1993



# Goldstream Provincial Park

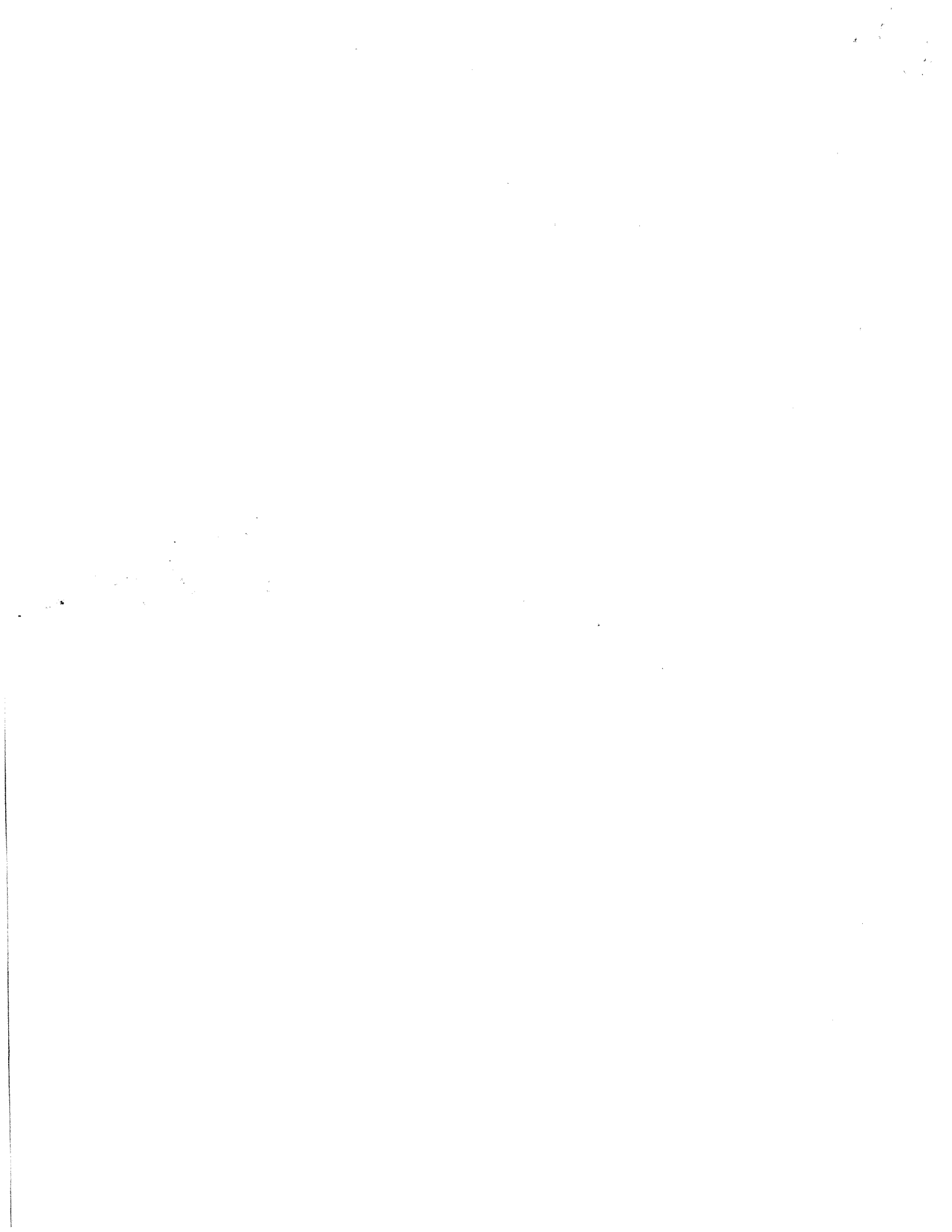
## MASTER PLAN

Recommended: G. David Clark

Date: JUNE 14/93

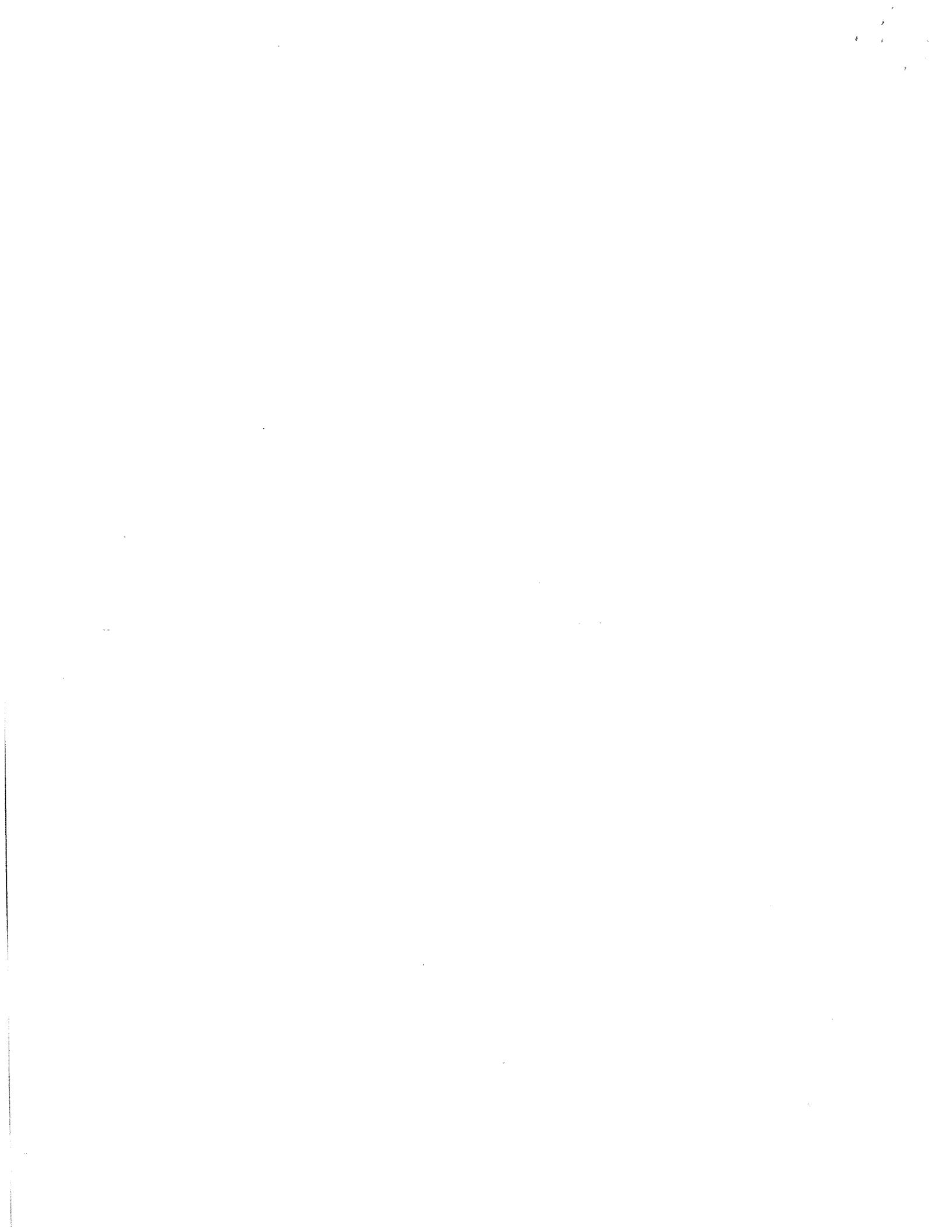
Approved: George Trachsel

Date: July 8/93



# Table of Contents

Plan Highlights .....	1
Introduction	
Plan Purpose .....	3
Key Issues .....	3
Background Report Summary .....	4
Role of the Park .....	5
Park Zoning .....	7
Natural and Cultural Resource Management	
Natural Resources .....	8
Recreation Features and Visual Resources .....	12
Cultural Resources .....	12
Visitor Services	
General Concept .....	13
Information Strategy .....	13
Information and Education Program .....	13
Visitor Opportunities .....	15
Marketing and Promotion .....	17
Management Services .....	18
Plan Implementation .....	19
<hr/>	
Figure 1 - Goldstream Provincial Park .....	2
Figure 2 - Park Zoning .....	6
Figure 3 - Proposed Park Addition .....	9
Figure 4 - Recreation Opportunities .....	16
<hr/>	
Appendix 1 - Goldstream Provincial Park Master Plan Background Report	
Appendix 2 - Master Plan Bibliography	



# Plan Highlights

This update of the 1986 Master Plan for Goldstream Provincial Park reconfirms BC Parks conservation mandate and reviews the role that Goldstream maintains in the province's system of protected areas. Key issues that are resolved in the plan relate to resource protection, the park's boundary, proposed widening of Highway #1 and land uses surrounding the park. These issues are discussed in Appendix 1 - Master Plan Background Report.

Goldstream Provincial Park has maintained importance in the system of BC Parks over several decades. The park plays a major role in conserving significant natural resources and provides opportunities which enhance outdoor recreation goals. Management strategies throughout the park are predicated on the park zoning scheme, which designates Intensive Recreation, Natural Environment and Special Feature zones.

Resource management will be directed toward preserving and presenting the natural features and processes evident in Goldstream Park, while visitor facilities will continue to focus on the park as an important natural outdoor recreation and educational setting.

By and large, the plan promotes the continued operation and management of Goldstream as a "flagship" Provincial Park, recognizing its location within British Columbia's most visited tourist destination area.

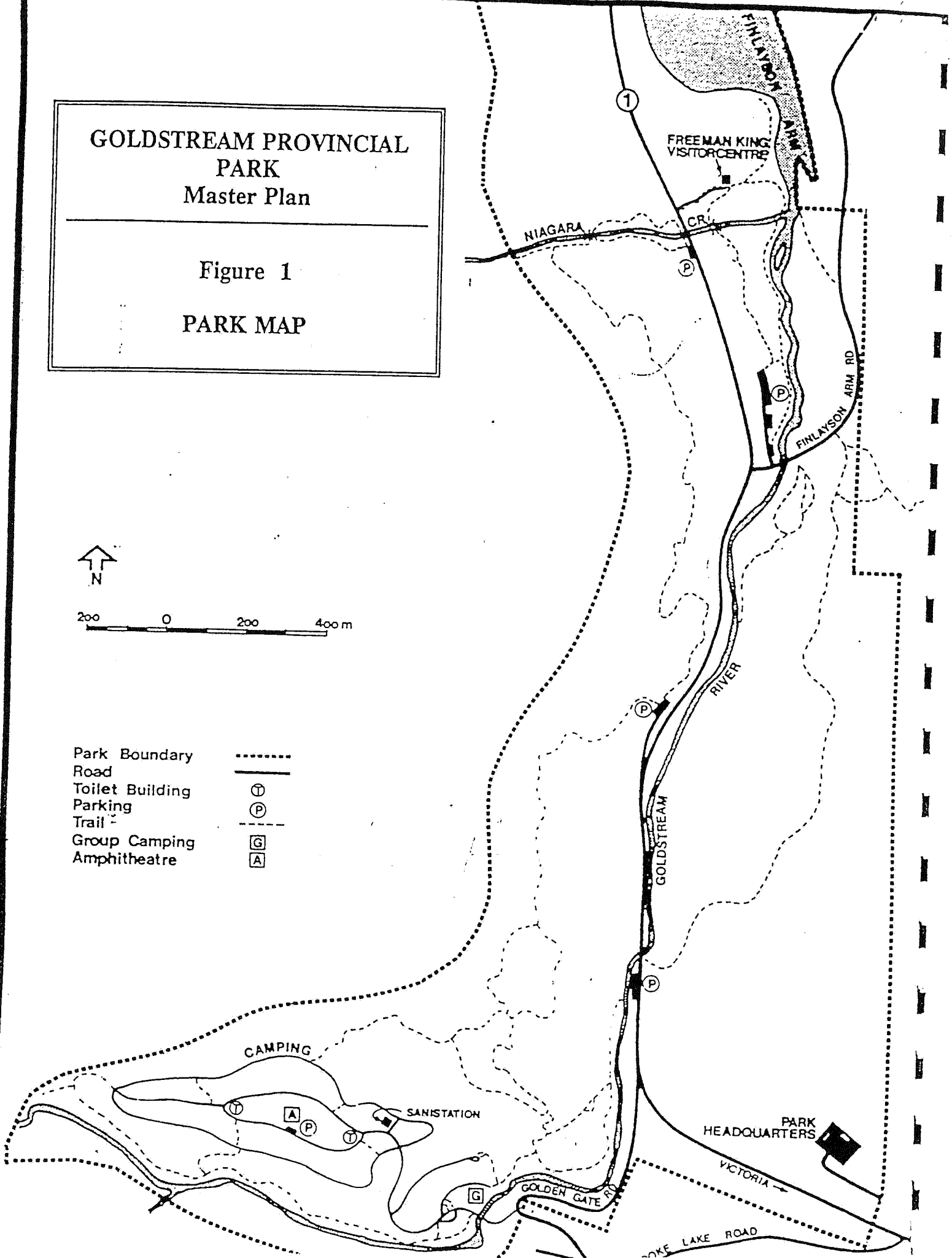
# GOLDSTREAM PROVINCIAL PARK Master Plan

Figure 1  
PARK MAP



200 0 200 400 m

- |                 |         |
|-----------------|---------|
| Park Boundary   | .....   |
| Road            | ————    |
| Toilet Building | ⊕       |
| Parking         | Ⓟ       |
| Trail           | - - - - |
| Group Camping   | Ⓜ       |
| Amphitheatre    | Ⓜ       |





# Introduction

## Plan Purpose

Goldstream Provincial Park is one of the best known and frequently visited parks on Vancouver Island (Figure 1). A Master Plan, approved in 1986, has successfully directed management priority and facility development in the park to date. Now, in accordance with BC Parks policy, this approved update revises and replaces the former Master Plan. It recognizes the dynamic nature of park management planning and brings forward new issues that must be resolved, reconfirms BC Parks conservation mandate and reviews the role that Goldstream Provincial Park maintains in the province's system of protected areas.

## Key Issues

(expanded discussion in Appendix 1)

### Resources Protection

*On-going cooperation with resource agencies and aboriginal groups is required to ensure continued protection of the Goldstream River and its estuary as important fish and wildlife habitat while promoting opportunities for park visitors.*

*Management policies for public use in and around Goldstream's mature trees must recognize the value of the forest as a ecological unit of importance on southern Vancouver Island.*

*Inventory information is required to ensure that rare and endangered species in the park are protected.*

### Park Boundary

*It is imperative that the Mount Finlayson property be acquired to protect the natural and recreational resources represented by this topographic feature.*

*BC Parks must monitor surrounding municipal zoning and land use to ensure their compatibility with management objectives for Goldstream Park.*

### Widening of the Trans-Canada Highway

*Highway expansion through Goldstream Park will have considerable impact on park resources and use opportunities. BC Parks' must prepare its position and be very clear during negotiations with highway planners and engineers.*

## Land-use in the Goldstream Watershed

*Given the importance of the Goldstream River habitat for salmonids, careful coordination and monitoring of downstream impacts must be undertaken to protect water quality and quantity.*

## Background Report Summary

(see Appendix 1)

The climate of Goldstream Park is strongly influenced by the Pacific Ocean and the park's situation at the southern end of Vancouver Island. A typical winter day will be cool and wet, whereas a summer day is likely to be warm and bright.

Goldstream Park is contained entirely within the Coastal Douglas-fir biogeoclimatic Zone. Lower elevations along the Goldstream River support forests of western red cedar and western hemlock; along the river channel, stands of old growth are dated between 600 and 700 years. At higher elevations in the park, typical species include Flowering dogwood, arbutus, Garry oak, lodgepole pine and Douglas-fir. Root rot is a particular disease problem in mature tree species within the park, particularly within the campground.

Coastal black-tailed deer, raccoons, mink, river otters, rabbits and rodents are the most commonly observed, and populous wildlife species in the park; cougar are spotted occasionally. As well, many species of waterfowl winter in southwestern British Columbia and can be viewed in the park throughout the year. Every year from October to December, Chum, Coho and Chinook salmon return to the Goldstream River from the Pacific Ocean to spawn.

Outdoor recreation features in the park relate directly to the natural resources of the Goldstream River valley. In the provincial context, upland recreation features currently protected are of moderate to low significance, however, the proposed addition of Mt. Finlayson to the park will protect viewing and hiking opportunities of much higher significance. Lowland features of high significance include the remarkable salmon run, old growth forest cover and the Finlayson Arm estuary.

# Role of the Park

## Regional and Provincial Context

Goldstream Provincial Park has maintained its importance in the system of BC Parks over several decades. The park's location on the Trans-Canada Highway and adjacent to the provincial capital city has offered it a profile which attracts much attention. Residents of the area use the park as a local retreat and tourists from all parts of the world visit Goldstream as part of their B.C. holiday. In the provincial context, the dry climate of Southern Vancouver Island contributes to the unique character of Goldstream Park; several vegetation species are found in the park that exist in few other provincial parks. The Goldstream River salmon run is rated as an *outstanding* special feature, while Mt. Finlayson is rated *important* as an example of a roche moutonnee<sup>1</sup>.

The South Coast Region's Victoria Planning Unit System Plan (1992) outlines the following contributions to BC Parks' Goals:

## Conservation Role

The park plays a major role in protecting the Goldstream River Chum and Coho salmon run, stands of 600 year old Douglas-fir and Western Red Cedar, a salt marsh, estuary (the only protected one along southern Vancouver Island's east coast), hanging valley and waterfalls. Dense Spike Primrose and Pacific Waterleaf are two of the many rare or endangered plant species found in the park.

## Recreation Role




The park offers camping, picnicking, hiking and nature study. Of particular educational attraction is the salmon run from October to December. The park is also used by canoeists to gain access to Finlayson Arm. Goldstream Park enhances the outdoor recreation holiday destination goal, is situated on a main travel route and provides local day-use recreation.

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<sup>1</sup> Outstanding: Outdoor recreation features considered to be of provincial to international significance.  
Important: Features considered to be of regional to provincial significance.  
(Parks Plan 90 - Special Features for BC Parks)








# GOLDSTREAM PROVINCIAL PARK Master Plan

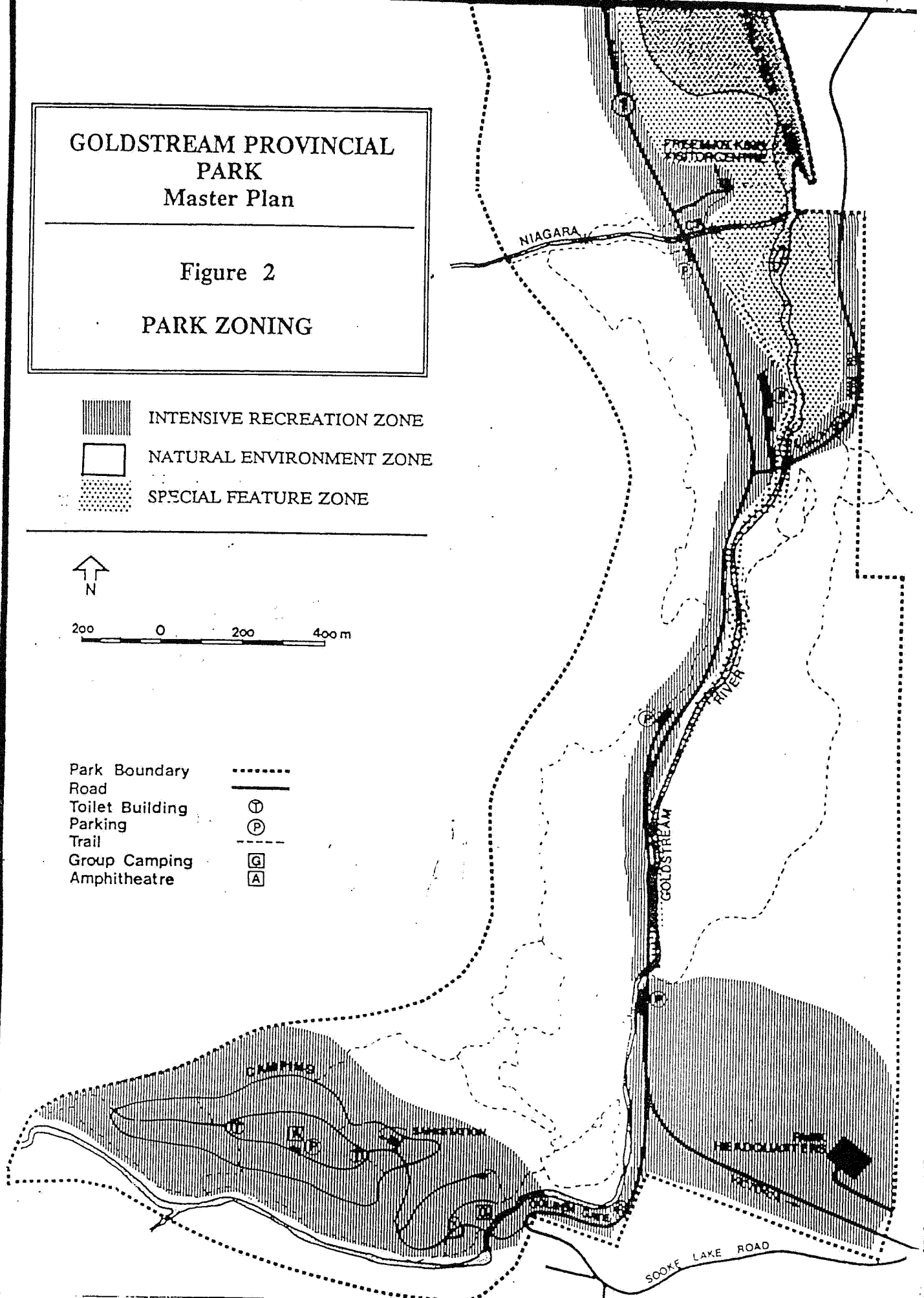
Figure 2  
PARK ZONING

-  INTENSIVE RECREATION ZONE
-  NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ZONE
-  SPECIAL FEATURE ZONE



200 0 200 400 m

- Park Boundary 
- Road 
- Toilet Building 
- Parking 
- Trail 
- Group Camping 
- Amphitheatre 



# Park Zoning

Zoning divides Goldstream Park into smaller units based on definite management objectives (Figure 2). Although the park is predominately zoned for Intensive Recreation, critical natural elements are protected in Special Feature and Natural Environment zones.

## Intensive Recreation Zone

The objective of this zone is to provide for a variety of easy-access outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities. In Goldstream Park, this zone includes all of the areas accessible from Highway #1, the campground, parking lots, Visitor Centre and Malahat District headquarters.

## Natural Environment Zone

In this zone, scenic values are protected and recreation opportunities supplied in a largely undisturbed natural environment. Within the park, most of the valley slopes are included in this zone.

## Special Feature Zone

The objective of the Special Feature Zone is to protect and present significant natural or cultural resources, features, or processes because of their special character or fragility. As such, the salmon spawning areas of the Goldstream River to the Trans Canada Highway Bridge and the Goldstream River estuary are zoned as Special Feature.

# Natural and Cultural Resource Management

## Natural Resources

Resource management will be directed toward preserving the natural features and processes presented in Goldstream Park, subject to the Park Act and Park Act Regulations.

### Land

#### Management Objectives:

- To expand park boundaries to protect natural resources on Mount Finlayson.
- To ensure no negative impact on park land due to reconstruction of Highway #1.
- To ensure no negative impact on park land due to surrounding land use.

#### Actions:

- Pursue the acquisition of Section 80, Highland District, private property on Mount Finlayson (Figure 3). Zone as Natural Environment once acquired<sup>2</sup>.
- Pursue the inclusion of Crown land near Mount Finlayson in Goldstream Park: Sections 81 & 84, Highland District and Lot 95, Highland District (Recreation Reserve). (See Figure 3.) Zone as Natural Environment once added to the park.<sup>2</sup>
- Initiate on-going discussion with Ministry of Transportation and Highways as part of the Island Highway planning process. For the time being, retain the right-of-way within the park; *BC Parks' position is that highway relocation outside the park boundary is the preferred highway improvement option.*
- Maintain close contact with the Capital Regional District and the Provincial Capital Commission to ensure that park values are recognized in all re-zoning proposals adjacent to the park boundary; this is particularly important along the park's southern boundary. There may be some opportunity for joint recreation management of greenbelt land (P.C.C.) along Highway #1 which would include the southern slopes of Skirt Mountain.
- Acquire crown-granted Mineral Claim #R3039; Lot 77.

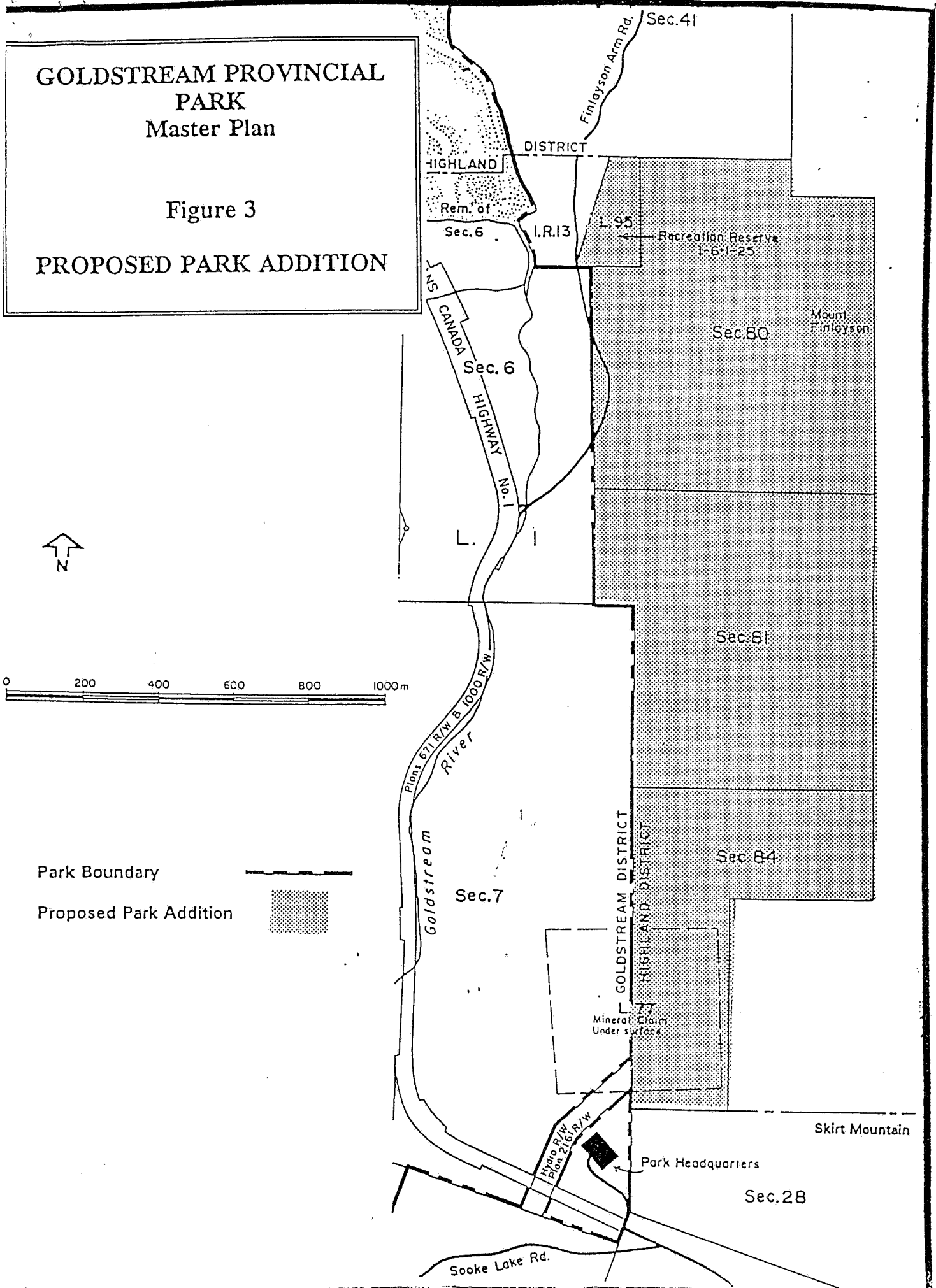
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<sup>2</sup> Some portions of these properties, including Mount Finlayson, may be appropriately protected as Ecological Reserve, based on their significance in the Coastal Douglas fir biogeoclimatic zone.

GOLDSTREAM PROVINCIAL  
PARK  
Master Plan

Figure 3

PROPOSED PARK ADDITION



## Water

### Management Objectives:

- To protect both freshwater and saltwater resources within the park from contamination.
- To ensure adequate downstream flows in the Goldstream River to support fish which are an important park resource.

### Actions:

- Maintain trail edges adjacent to stream banks to avoid erosion and siltation of spawning habitat.
- Participate in emergency response planning with the provincial Environmental Protection Division to protect the Goldstream estuary from oil-spill contamination.
- Ensure on-going monitoring of river flows and turbidity is undertaken to protect fish habitat in lower Niagara Creek and the Goldstream River.

## Forest and Vegetation

### Management Objectives:

- To manage Goldstream Park to enhance its natural forest and vegetation character.
- To present the natural forest and vegetation resource, including rare and endangered species, to park visitors.

### Actions:

- Conduct a thorough inventory of plant species, particularly the rare and endangered, and their occurrence sites, including the Goldstream estuary.
- Develop a *Vegetation Management Plan*<sup>3</sup>, to address issues such as diseased and hazard trees.
- Re-establish ground cover vegetation in day-use areas by routine planting of native species; visitor controls will be necessary to prevent trampling.
- Routinely monitor the condition of forest and vegetation resources as part of the annual park management planning.

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<sup>3</sup> As directed in the 1986 Master Plan



# Visitor Services

## General Concept

Given the variety of other "things to do" in the Southern Vancouver Island and Victoria area, Goldstream Park has become more important as a natural outdoor recreation setting. The opportunity for visitors and residents, both individuals and groups, to experience such an environment close to the city is rare. As such, the park provides an excellent venue for outdoor education, nature viewing and hiking. Destination tourists to the Victoria area appreciate the high quality provincial park campground and picnic site located at Goldstream. *These remain the types of activity which will be encouraged and promoted within the park.*

## Information Strategy

Goldstream Park is situated in a destination holiday tourist area. As visitors to the park come from all over the world, there is a temptation to convey as much information as possible to the masses. Many sources of "tourist" information exist in the city, therefore, a truly effective information strategy must convey a specific, relative message to visitors about the park and its resources. The park Visitor Centre provides an excellent venue; to date, park visitor programs have been very effective in achieving management objectives.

*The strategy for Goldstream Park is to continue to present information that fosters an understanding of natural ecosystems apparent in the park and to introduce programming which conveys the importance of protected areas, including Goldstream Park, to society.*

## Information and Education Program

### Management Objectives:

- To design Information and Education Programs which:

Convey the conservation role of Goldstream Park in the provincial system of protected areas.

Instill an appreciation of the natural environment and natural life cycles evident within the park.

Provide thorough information about in-park facilities and opportunities.

- To manage the Visitor Centre by providing effective displays, programs and contemporary facilities in keeping with its significance to the region.

- To enhance wildlife viewing opportunities.

**Actions:**

- Continue the highly effective outdoor education programs aimed at school age children.
- Introduce stronger "park behaviour" messages to programs in order to foster greater appreciation for natural resources found in all protected areas.
- Encourage federal Fisheries and provincial Fish and Wildlife agencies to participate in visitor program design.
- Ensure that opportunities for program coordination with the Capital Regional District are considered.
- Implement Information themes and Interpretation recommendations from: Regional Visitor Services Information and Interpretation Plan<sup>4</sup>, and Wildlife Viewing Plan for Goldstream Provincial Park, including: facility expansion (theatre), upgraded displays and three-season operation of the visitor centre; and interpretive signing improvements in the park.
- Install Goldstream Park portal signs on Highway #1.
- Sign park trailheads along Highway #1, providing maps and information to hikers.
- Construct viewing platforms at the Estuary and Goldstream River locations.

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<sup>4</sup> completed May 1993

# Visitor Opportunities

## Management Objective:

- To continue to provide a diverse range of outdoor recreation opportunities, including barrier free access, in keeping with BC Parks' general concept for visitor services management:

## Actions:

### Camping

- Relocate group camping facilities, providing toilets and shelter, to support increasing demands from the Victoria area (Figure 4). The present group campsite is situated too close to other campsites (groups can disturb other campers); it is not large enough; and it is not situated close to the desired facilities and points of interest. A prime location for a new group campsite is adjacent and north of park headquarters. This cleared area is serviced, accessible and provides easier, safer access to the day use area and Visitor Centre.
- Redesign the existing group site (main campground) to provide for tenting.

### Picnicking/Day Use

- Improve trailhead parking facilities to accommodate increasing use of the Mount Finlayson trail, once acquired.
- Install night lighting along the Visitor Centre access trail to facilitate programming and special events in the evening at the Visitor Centre.

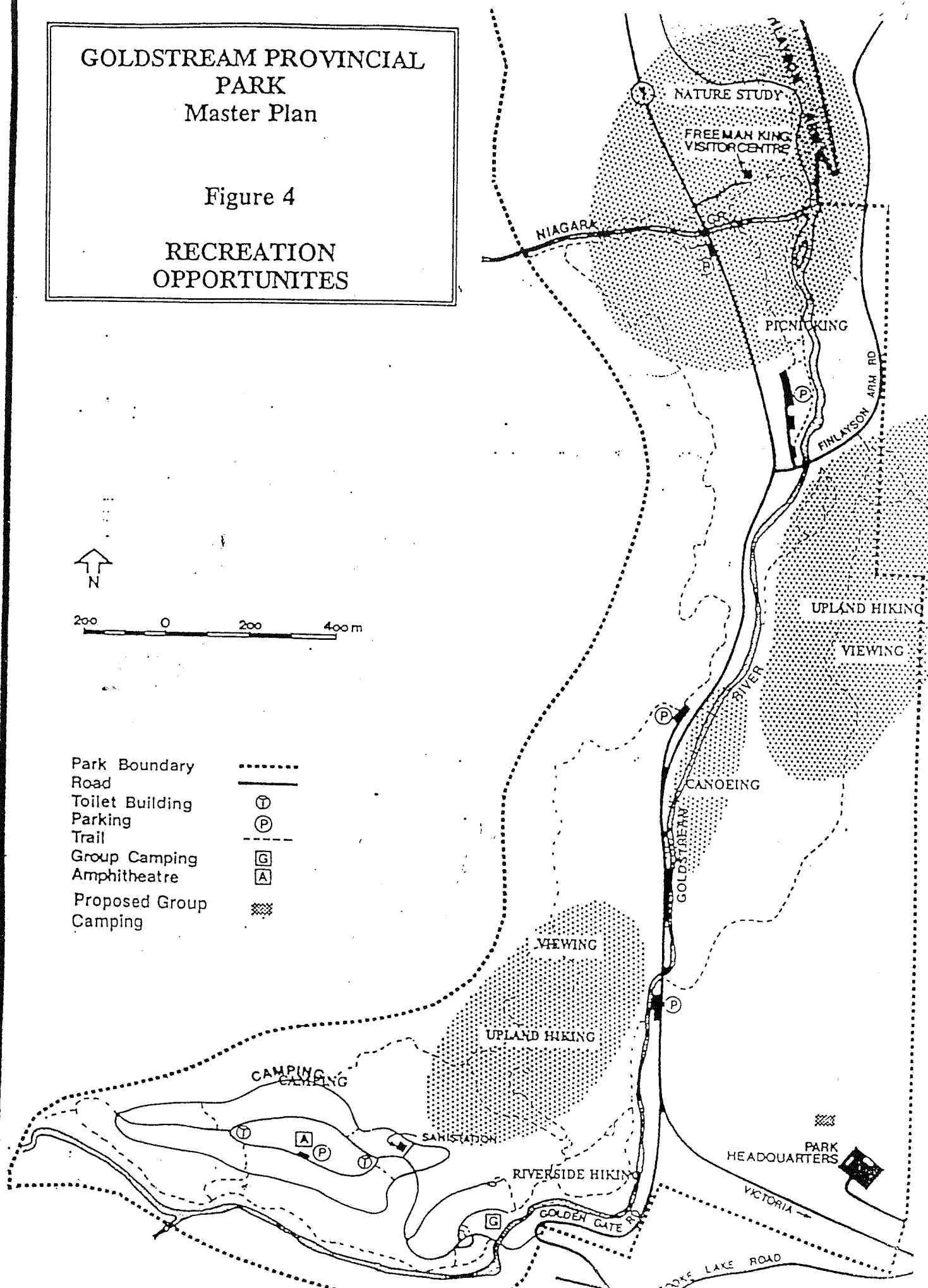
### Walking/Hiking/Biking

- Harden trails within the day-use area to encourage hikers to stay on the trail, thus allowing ground vegetation to recover.
- Upgrade the Riverside Trail to permit easier movement of wheelchairs.
- Upgrade the upper Goldstream River Trail in the vicinity of the campground.
- Upgrade the Mount Finlayson Trail, once acquired.
- In conjunction with BC Parks, encourage the Provincial Capital Commission to develop and manage a system of trails for mountain biking and hiking on the western slopes of Skirt Mountain.

# GOLDSTREAM PROVINCIAL PARK Master Plan

Figure 4

## RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES



Park Boundary	.....
Road	————
Toilet Building	Ⓣ
Parking	Ⓟ
Trail	- - - -
Group Camping	Ⓜ
Amphitheatre	Ⓜ
Proposed Group Camping	Ⓜ

## Nature Study and Appreciation

- Construct wildlife viewing platforms at the estuary and riverside locations proposed in the park's Wildlife Viewing Plan.
- Provide interpretation and information services as outlined in Regional Visitor Services Information and Interpretation Plan.

## Marketing and Promotion

### Management Objectives:

- To encourage use of Goldstream Park throughout the year. Some opportunities and facilities are under-utilized at certain times of the year, i.e. shoulder-season camping, upland hiking.
- To attract local residents during the "off-season".
- To promote the outdoor educational values associated with Goldstream Park.
- To promote group use of the park and its facilities.

### Actions:

- Distribute information regarding group-use facilities to organizations in the Victoria area: the School District, scouts/guides, seniors, churches, community service clubs.
- Focus more information on wildlife viewing opportunities, and seasonal attractions found in the park.
- Promote activities and opportunities where current supply exceeds demand, namely, nature study, hiking and bicycle riding.
- Review the feasibility (cost-benefit) of extending visitor programming over a longer season, thus increasing shoulder season visits to Goldstream. This should be considered in the Annual Management Plan.

# Management Services

## Management Objectives:

- To continue to operate and manage Goldstream as a "flagship" Provincial Park, recognizing its location within British Columbia's most visited tourist destination area.
- To promote measures which reduce the impact of excessive visitor impact on park resources.

## Actions:

- Continue a year-round management operation in the park; prepare Annual Management Plans which fulfil approved development and management actions.
- Monitor changes in environmental conditions and visitor use.
- Participate in southern Vancouver Island planning processes which affect Goldstream Provincial Park.
- Encourage alternate forms of accessing Goldstream Park; suggestions include bicycle lanes to the park, a railway stop (particularly during the salmon run), shuttle bus service from town (salmon run).

# Plan Implementation

Taking BC Parks' budget into account, Annual Management Plans for Goldstream Park, Cycles 1993 - 1998, will include these prioritized actions for thorough implementation of the park Master Plan:

## Priority One Actions

- Pursue the acquisition of Mount Finlayson (Section 80) and the inclusion of Crown Land to the south of Mount Finlayson summit (Sections 81 and 84) and to the northwest (Lot 95) in Goldstream Park.
- Participate in planning initiatives which impact on park resources:
  - . highway planning
  - . municipal land use planning
  - . Water District planning
  - . fisheries management planning.
- Formulate a Vegetation Management Plan.
- Commence resource restoration projects:
  - . trail hardening and edge control
  - . replanting natural ground cover.
- Implement actions from the 1990 Wildlife Viewing Plan, including:
  - . constructing wildlife viewing platforms
  - . interpretive signing
  - . re-designing the visitor centre.
- Continue visitor services' education programs, involving:
  - . Aboriginal peoples
  - . fisheries management agencies
  - . Capital Regional District.
- Upgrade visitor facilities, including:
  - . group campground relocation
  - . trailhead improvement at Mount Finlayson and along Highway #1
  - . trail upgrading - Riverside Trail; Goldstream River Trail
  - . development of tenting sites
- Install Park portal signs.

## Priority Two Actions

- Participate in emergency response planning for Saanich Inlet.
- Conduct a thorough plant species inventory.
- Monitor forest and plant conditions.
- Development of hiking/biking system along the park's east side.





# Goldstream Provincial Park

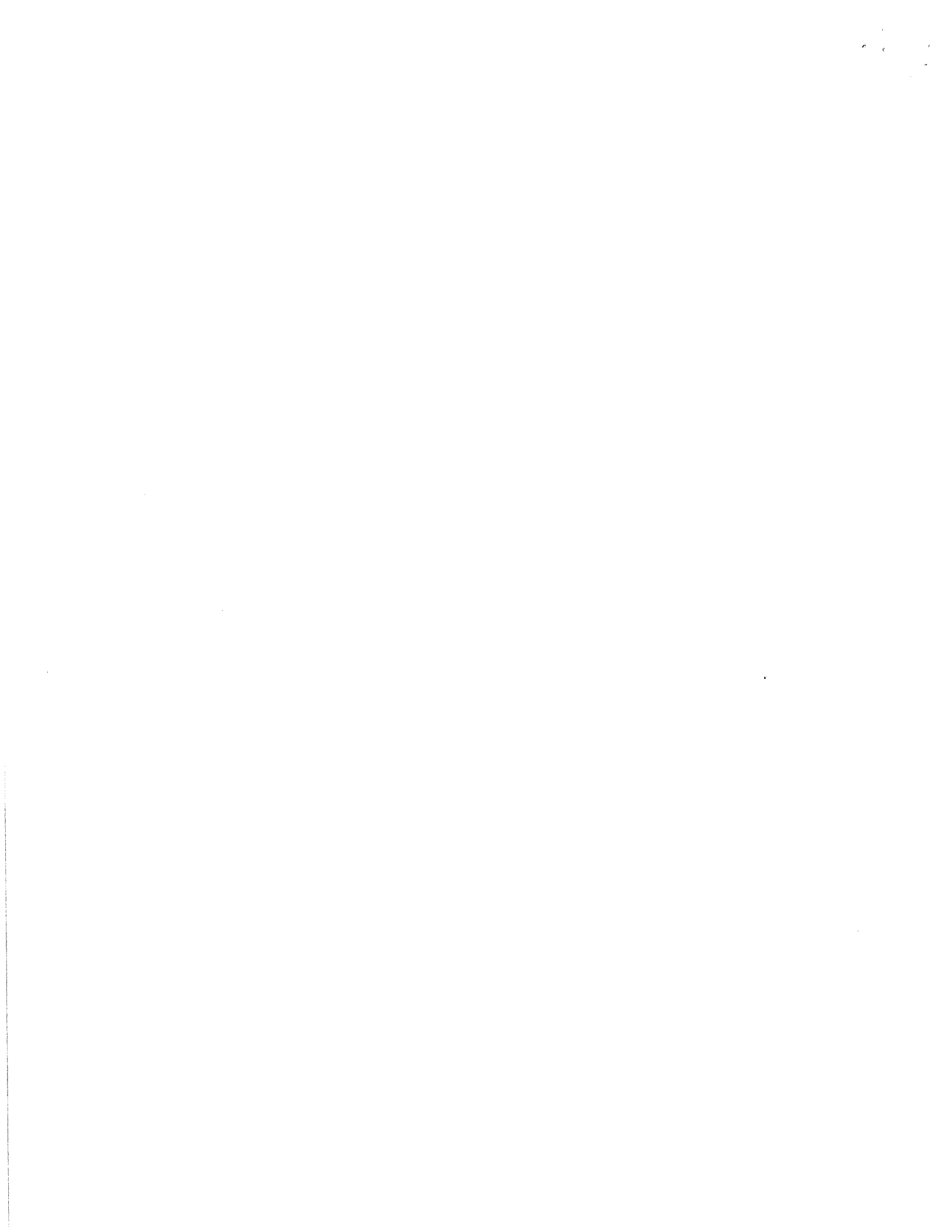
## APPENDIX 1

### MASTER PLAN BACKGROUND REPORT



# Table of Contents

Introduction .....	i
Natural and Cultural Resources	
Natural Resources .....	iii
Cultural Resources .....	vii
Resource Analysis .....	vii
Recreation Opportunities .....	viii
Tenures, Occupancy Rights, and Jurisdictions .....	x
Market Analysis .....	xii
Master Plan Issues .....	xv
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Figure 1 - Goldstream Provincial Park, Regional Context .....	ii
Figure 2 - Goldstream Provincial Park, Park Resources .....	iv
Figure 3 - Goldstream Provincial Park, Recreation Opportunities .....	ix
Figure 4 - Goldstream Provincial Park, Land Status .....	xi



# Introduction

Goldstream Provincial Park, often referred to as one of British Columbia's "flagship" parks, is located 19 kilometres northwest of Victoria at the south end of the scenic Malahat portion of Highway # 1. The park protects 327 hectares of natural resources along the Goldstream River and its estuary at Saanich Inlet (Figure 1).

The Park is well-known to Victoria residents as a natural feature that conserves areas of old growth forest, waterfalls and salmon spawning habitat. To tourists, the park offers a scenic drive alongside the Goldstream River, estuary and Saanich Inlet, attracting stop-overs at park facilities and viewpoints.

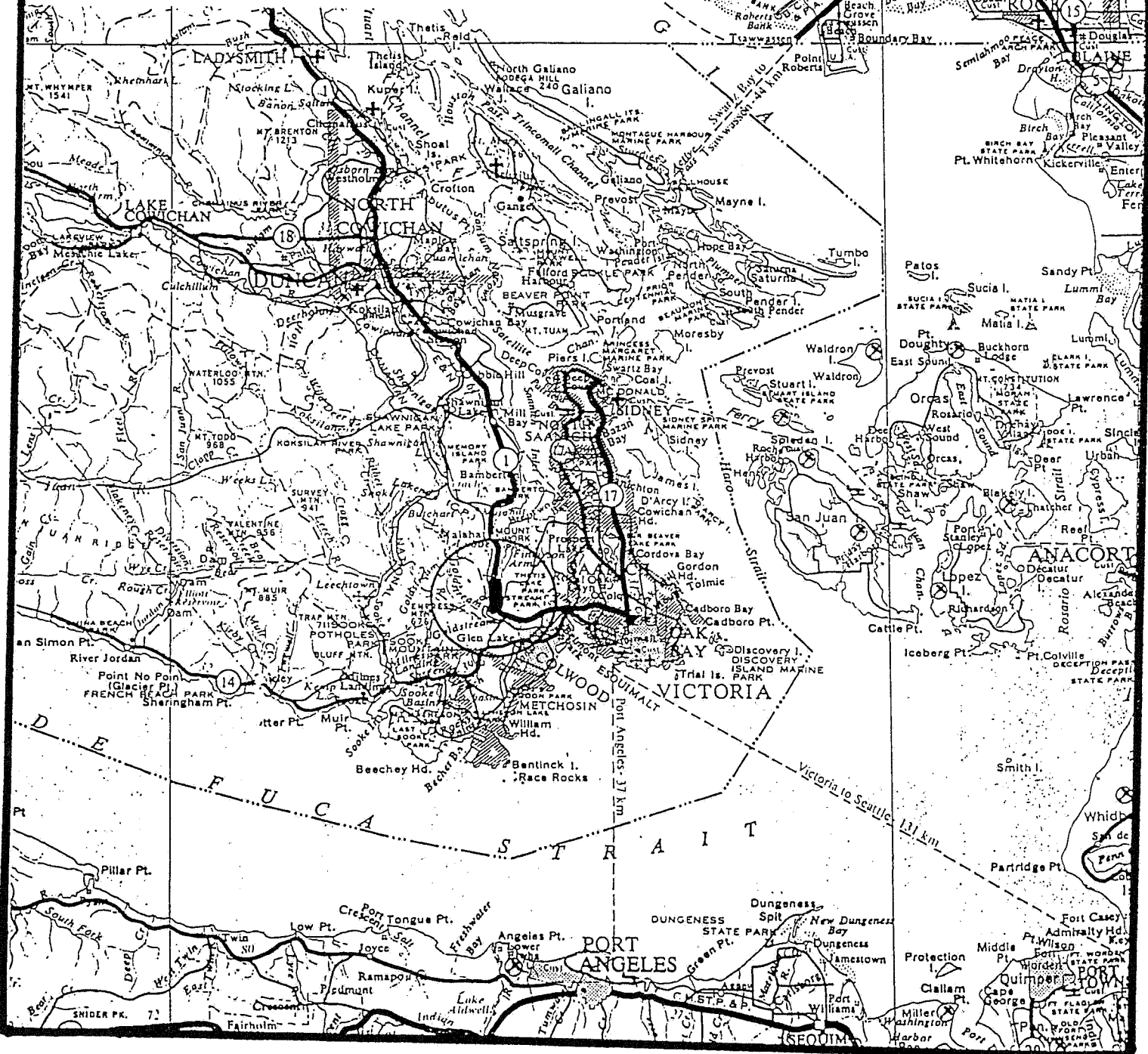
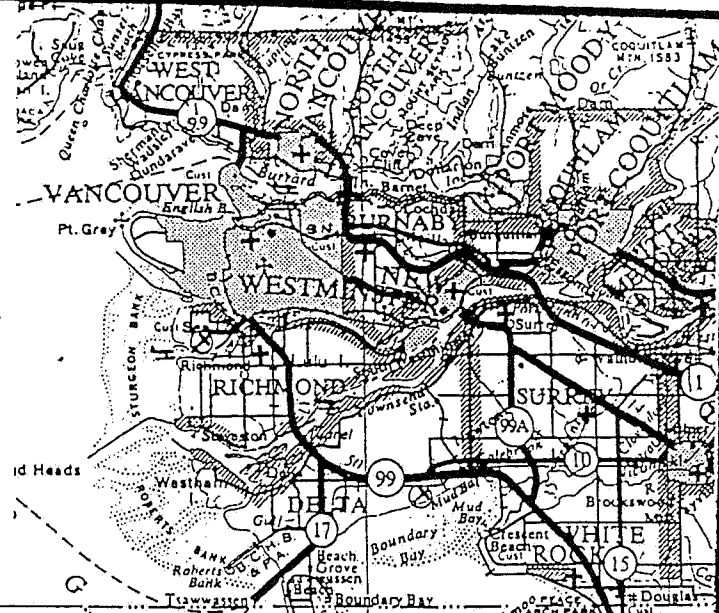
Goldstream was donated for provincial park designation in 1958; most facility development was undertaken in the 1960's and 1970's to accommodate the growing outdoor recreation demands of Victoria area residents and tourists. An Interim Management Plan was completed in 1976 to guide facility development and park management until such time that the park Master Plan was approved in May, 1986.



# GOLDSTREAM PROVINCIAL PARK Background Report

Figure 1

## REGIONAL CONTEXT







# Natural and Cultural Resources

## Natural Resources

### Ecological Classification

Goldstream Park is situated in the Georgia Depression *Ecoprovince* (which separates the Insular Mountains of Vancouver Island from the Coast Mountains of the BC Mainland), Eastern Vancouver Island *Ecoregion*, Nanaimo Lowland *Ecosection*.

### Climate

The climate of Goldstream Park is strongly influenced by the Pacific Ocean and the park's situation at the southern end of Vancouver Island. The Drier Coastal Douglas-fir Biogeoclimatic Zone, tucked into the eastern lowlands of the Island, is in the rainshadow of higher ranges which lie to the west, including the Olympic Peninsula. Thus, the park experiences lighter winter rainfalls and warmer, drier summers than do areas further to the west. Summer rainfall amounts are less than 10% of those typical in winter; average mean temperatures never dip below freezing. A typical winter day will include light precipitation, overcast skies and a day-time temperature just above 1 degree C. Typically, a summer day will be sunny or partly-cloudy, dry and with a temperature in the low 20's.

### Physiography, Geology & Soils

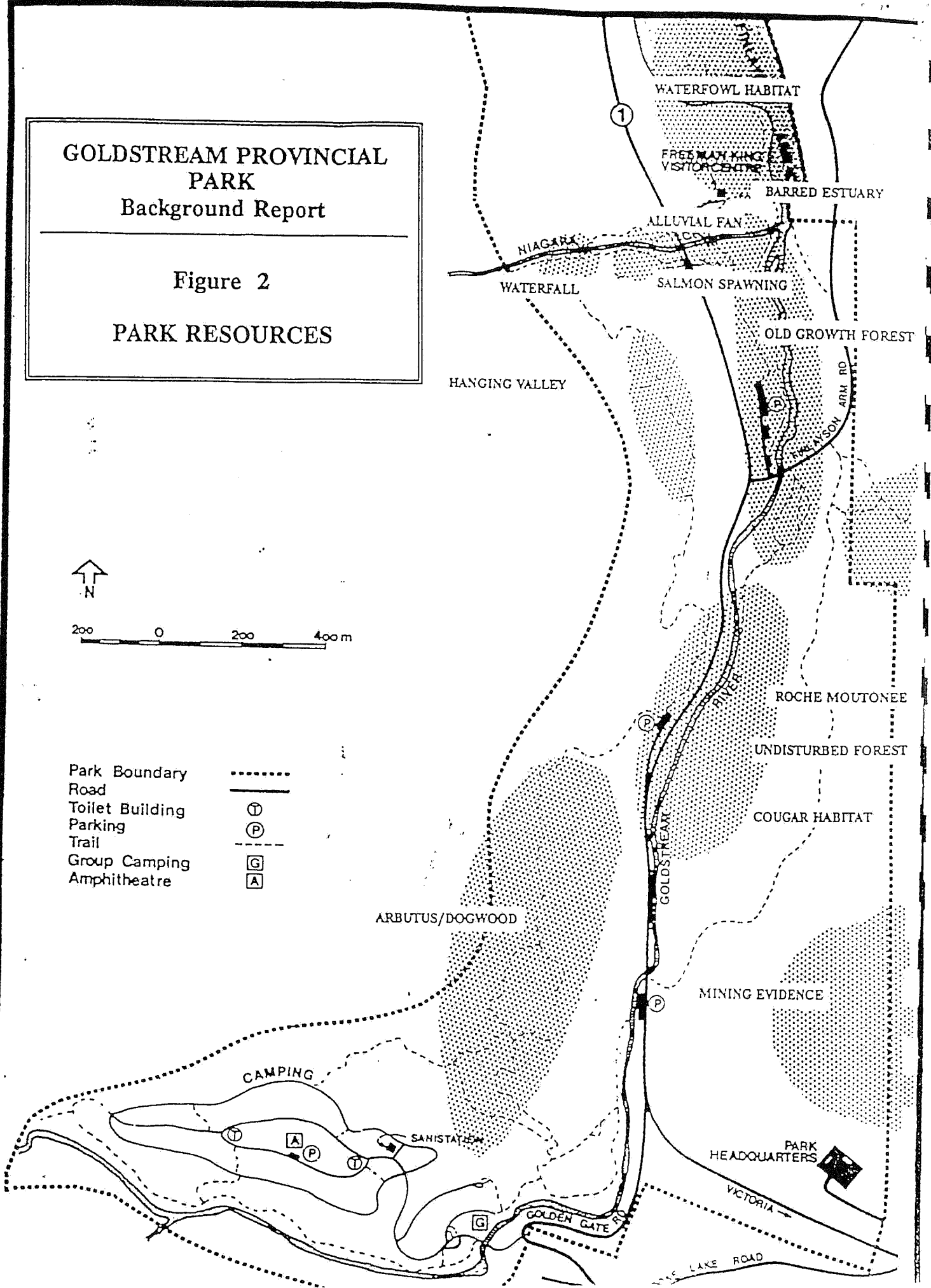
The valley of the Goldstream River cuts through the adjacent highlands creating a relatively confined physiographic environment (Figure 2). Hard igneous and metamorphosed sedimentary rocks that underlie the Park have been severely eroded as a result of a series of relatively recent glacial periods. Rounded mountains such as Mt. Finlayson surround the Goldstream valley. Glacial deposits have partially filled the valley and underlie many areas of the park. Conspicuous land forms visible in and adjacent to Goldstream Park include:

- Roches moutonees (Mt. Finlayson, Mt. Wells)
- a fjord (Saanich Inlet)
- a hanging valley (Niagara Creek canyon)
- waterfalls (Goldstream and Little Niagara falls)
- former meltwater flood channels and ground moraines (streams in the vicinity of the campground)
- an alluvial fan (adjacent to Little Niagara Creek)
- barred estuary (the salt marsh at the Goldstream River mouth)

# GOLDSTREAM PROVINCIAL PARK Background Report

Figure 2

## PARK RESOURCES



Rocks in the park are primarily sedimentary, slates of the Leech River formation (Holland, 1976) laid down over 275 million years ago. These slate beds are visible along the sides of Highway 1. Andesites, argillites and cherts from volcanic periods are common exposures in the valley bottom. These deposits were formed underwater when sea level was much higher than at present.

The park, located on the western edge of the Saanich Peninsula, contains soil groups typical of the area: Brunisols and Gleysols. The former are well drained soils which are typical in upland areas of the park. Gleysols are poorly drained silty clay loams developed from marine deposits, therefore found in the lower elevations, particularly along the Goldstream River.

## Vegetation

Goldstream Park is contained entirely within the Coastal Douglas-fir biogeoclimatic Zone. Largely undisturbed by man, forest succession within the park has been influenced by soil composition, fire, disease and flood cycles.

Lower elevations along the Goldstream River support forests of western red cedar, western hemlock, western yew, grand fir, red alder, big leaf maple and black cottonwood. Along the river channel, stands of western red cedar old growth are dated between 600 and 700 years. At higher elevations in the park, where conditions are drier, typical species include Flowering dogwood, arbutus, Garry oak, lodgepole pine and Douglas-fir. Currently, mature Douglas-fir stands within the park have developed increased disease susceptibility. Root rot has created some hazardous tree conditions in the day-use and campground areas.

Mosses and lichens are plentiful along the river and liverworts are found near little marshes and river eddies. Ferns grow throughout Goldstream's forests - bracken, sword and maidenhair. Shrubs found in the park are salal, Oregon grape, red huckleberry, salmonberry, thimbleberry and ocean spray, mixed with flowers such as trillium, twinflower and calypso orchid.

## Fish and Wildlife

Coast black-tailed deer, raccoons, mink, river otters, rabbits and squirrels are the most commonly observed, and populous, wildlife species in the park. Frogs, garter snakes and salamanders are also seen, especially along the Goldstream River. Bear and cougar, two of the larger species inhabit the park's vicinity, although sightings are rare due to the close proximity of Highway 1 and the E. & N. Railway.

Avian species which include the park within their ranges are osprey, ravens, crows, herons, and dippers. As well, many species of waterfowl winter in southwestern British Columbia and can be viewed in the park throughout the year. While none of the species are unique to the area, the park is the best birdwatching location around Victoria.

Chum, coho and chinook salmon spawning occurs from October to December each year as upwards of 25,000 salmon return to reproduce in the Goldstream River, entering via Finlayson Arm from the Pacific Ocean.

The 1990 Wildlife Viewing Plan for Goldstream Provincial Park includes fish and wildlife inventory information and annotated mammal, bird, amphibian and fish species lists.

## Outdoor Recreation Features and Visual Resources

Outdoor recreation features in the park are closely associated with the resource base of the Goldstream River valley.

In the provincial context, upland features currently protected in the park are of moderate to low significance, offering opportunities for use and appreciation of the vegetation resource (eg. hiking along the dry, rocky ridges amongst flowering dogwood and arbutus trees). Rocky outcrops provide points from which to view the river and Saanich Inlet. The proposed addition of Mt. Finlayson to the park will protect viewing opportunities of much higher significance.

Lowland outdoor recreation features are concentrated along the Goldstream River and Niagara Creek. Here, moderate significance ratings have been assigned to select visual and recreation features such as the Niagara Creek waterfall, the Goldstream River and mature forest stands along its banks. High recreation values in the park area are derived from the educational benefit of special natural features identified by Parks Plan 90 - Special Features for BC Parks. In it, the Goldstream River salmon run and the Saanich Inlet fjord are rated as *outstanding* special features; Mt. Finlayson is rated *important* as an example of a roche moutonnee<sup>1</sup>.

North and south of the park, visual corridors are apparent to travellers along the Trans Canada Highway. Vistas from lookouts along the "Malahat" include the entire park, the Goldstream estuary and Mount Finlayson. From Victoria, visitors travelling north enter the park from relatively undeveloped land. Here, the Provincial Capital Commission is intent on designating a greenbelt corridor to protect highway vistas.

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<sup>1</sup> Outstanding: Outdoor recreation features considered to be of provincial to international significance.  
Important: Features considered to be of regional to provincial significance.  
(Parks Plan 90 - Special Features for BC Parks)

# Cultural Resources

## Archaeological

The Goldstream River has been a traditional Aboriginal fishery, although groups have not apparently inhabited the park area. It is suggested that the cool shaded valley and the flood frequency in the Goldstream River dissuaded Indian occupancy; no middens, buildings or gathering places have been discovered to date.

## Historical

A brief gold rush to Peter Leech's "Gold Creek" around 1858 prompted the first European visitors to the park area. The only remaining evidence of mining activity is some small scale workings on the flank of Mt. Skirt.

The Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway, constructed in 1896, horse logging activity in the early 1900's, and construction of the Trans-Canada Highway are other significant historical occurrences particular to Goldstream Park.

## Resource Analysis

The park's natural and cultural resources can be analyzed in the context of BC Parks' system goals.

**Conservation** Resources protected in Goldstream Park include those typical of the Nanaimo Lowland Ecoregion as well as those considered to be of important and outstanding provincial significance. The park contributes significantly to BC Parks' Conservation goals of, (a) protecting representative landscape areas of the province, and (b) protecting areas containing important or outstanding special natural and cultural features.

**Recreation** Outdoor recreation opportunities protected within the existing boundaries of Goldstream Park are quite typical of many BC Parks. Analysis based on BC Parks' Recreation goals - (a) tourism travel routes; (b) holiday destinations; (c) backcountry, and; (d) local recreation supply - suggests that Goldstream contributes to the supply of recreation opportunities within the Southeastern Vancouver Island holiday destination area, although only a slight contribution is made to Highway #1 tourism travel route facilities or to regional outdoor recreation facilities. No contribution to the backcountry<sup>2</sup> recreation objective is made, however, the addition of Mount Finlayson to the park will provide some "backcountry" experience for park visitors.

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<sup>2</sup> Defined as being of a park area greater than 1000 ha in size.

# Recreation Opportunities

Recreation opportunities are outlined on Figure 3.

## Hiking

An extensive trail system provides opportunities for visitors to access both upland and riverside features. Trails of short (10-15 minutes) and long (1-2 hours) duration have been developed and maintained for visitor use.

## Camping

A large destination campground has been operated in the park since the 1960's, occupying the majority of the park's southwestern area. Group camping is offered here as well, although the facility is not adequate to meet regional recreation demands from organized groups.

## Day Use and Appreciation

A large picnic ground, an amphitheatre and several nature trails provide park visitors with day-use facilities.

The Freeman King Visitor Centre showcases the area's natural and human history. Guided walks, talk and shows are part of the interpretive program. A former plan to provide access and parking closer to the Visitor Centre has been re-assessed because of resulting disturbance to a sensitive habitat type.

Bird life is the most reliable wildlife viewing feature in the park.

Interpretation and viewing opportunities relating to the salmon spawning are offered to individuals and groups as part of the park visitor services programs.

## Marine

The Goldstream River provides a canoe route which leads to the salt marsh and estuary at Finlayson Arm.

**GOLDSTREAM PROVINCIAL  
PARK**  
Background Report

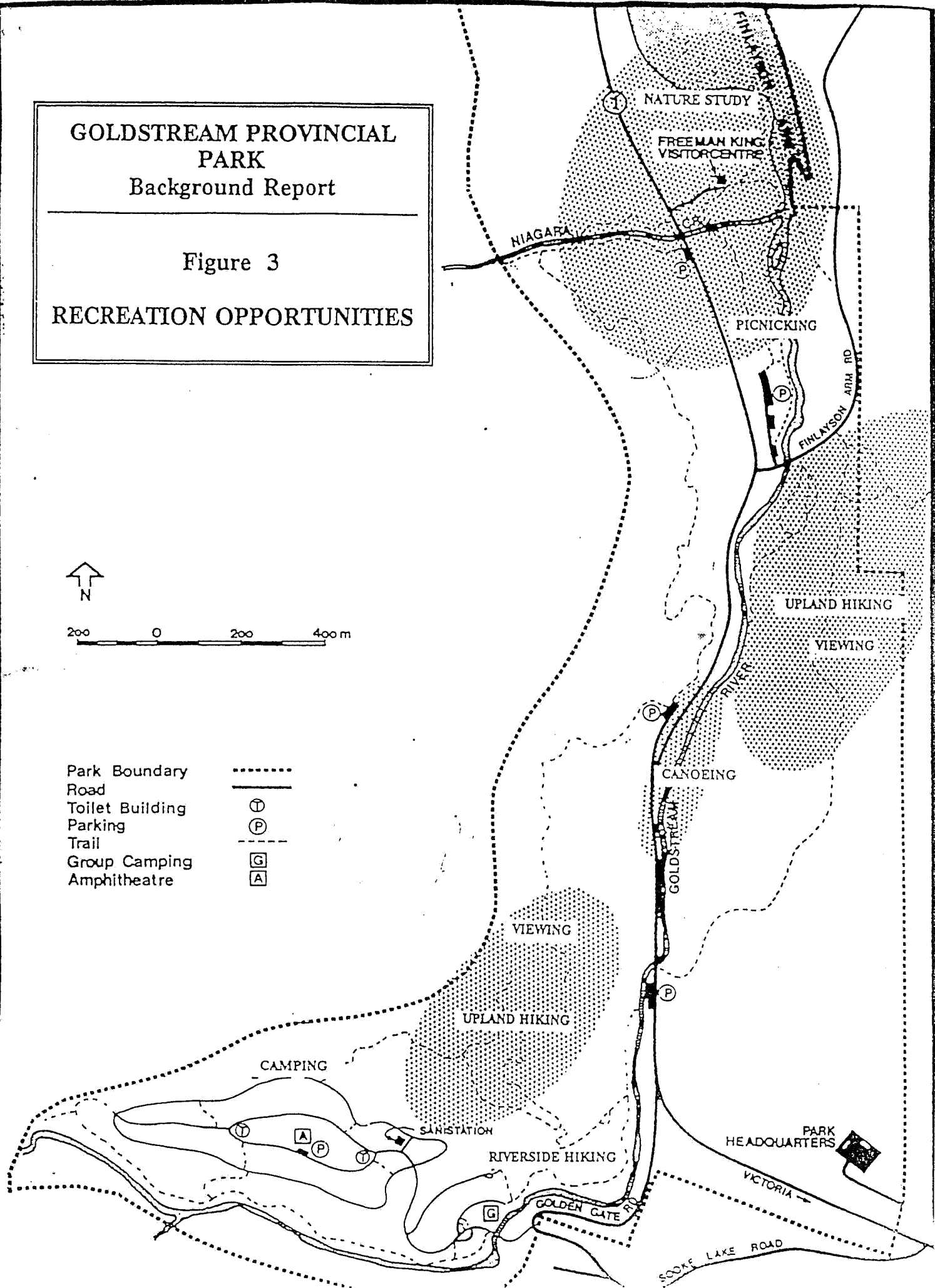
Figure 3

**RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES**



200 0 200 400 m

Park Boundary	.....
Road	————
Toilet Building	⊕
Parking	Ⓟ
Trail	- - - -
Group Camping	Ⓜ
Amphitheatre	Ⓜ



# Tenures, Occupancy Rights, and Jurisdictions

## Leases and Use Permits

PUP 0633	- B.C. Hydro and Power Authority	- Transmission line
PUP 1050	- B.C. Telephone Company	- Telephone Cable
PUP 2281	- "	- Public Telephones
PUP 2144	- Cownden Contracting Limited	- Facility Operations

## Fee Simple Lands

One Crown-granted mineral claim (Lot 77) overlaps the eastern boundary of Goldstream Park, including a portion of non-forested area just north of the District headquarters (Figure 4).

## Other Tenures and Interests

First Nation's use of the fishery resource has been traditional within the park. Adjacent reserve land provides access to the park. The South Island Tribal Council represents various bands with rights to fish the Goldstream River.

Trans Canada Highway #1, and its right-of-way, is within park boundaries and has not been removed to date.

## Trespasses

Commercial clam harvesting has taken place within park boundaries. Although not an occupancy trespass; this commercial use is in conflict with park management objectives.

## Statutory Jurisdictions

The *Park Act* is subject to the *Environment and Land Use Act*, the *Waste Management Act* and Section 19 of the *Mineral Tenure Act*. The *Heritage Conservation Act* and the *Wildlife Act* are also applied in areas managed under the *Park Act*.

## Special Regulations

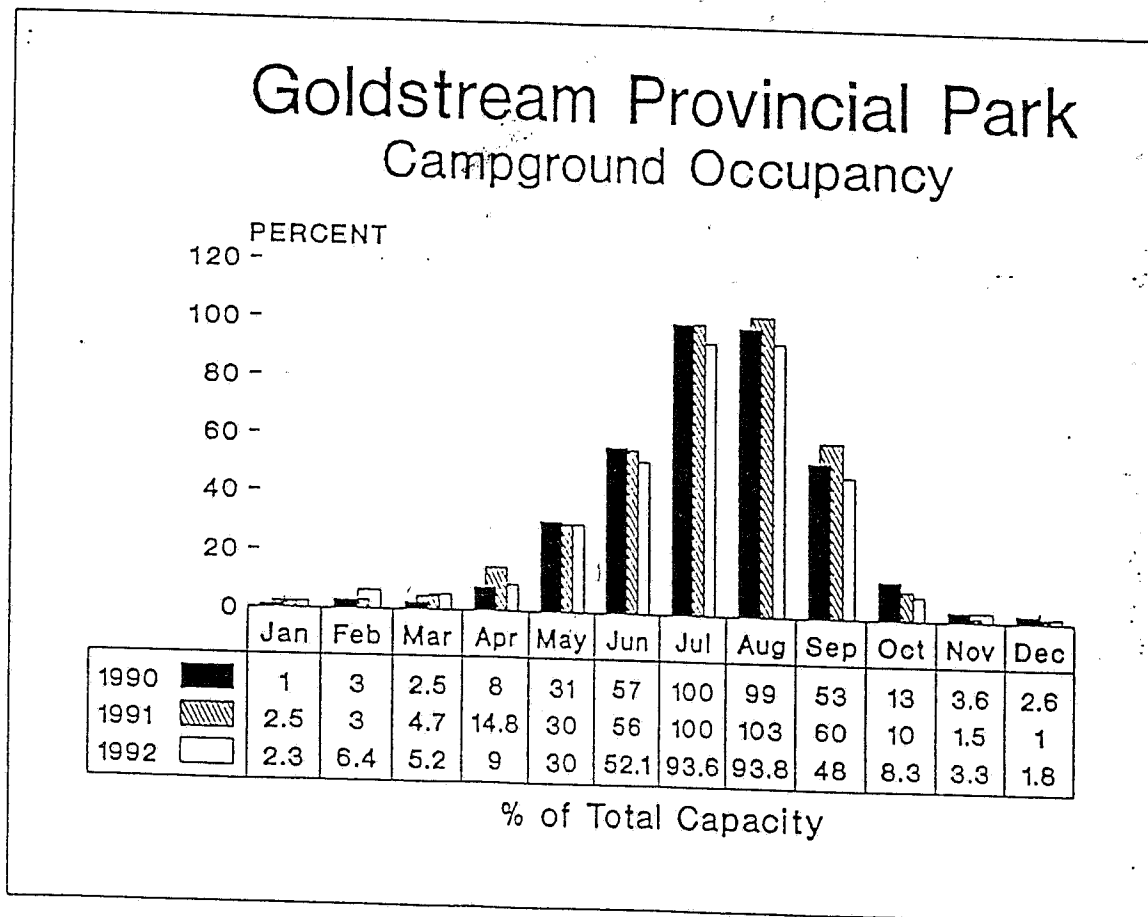
The federal *Fisheries Act* applies to the foreshore and Goldstream River; the federal *Navigable Waters Act* applies to the foreshore. There is no hunting, nor discharge of firearms, permitted within the park in accordance with the *BC Wildlife Act*.



# Market Analysis

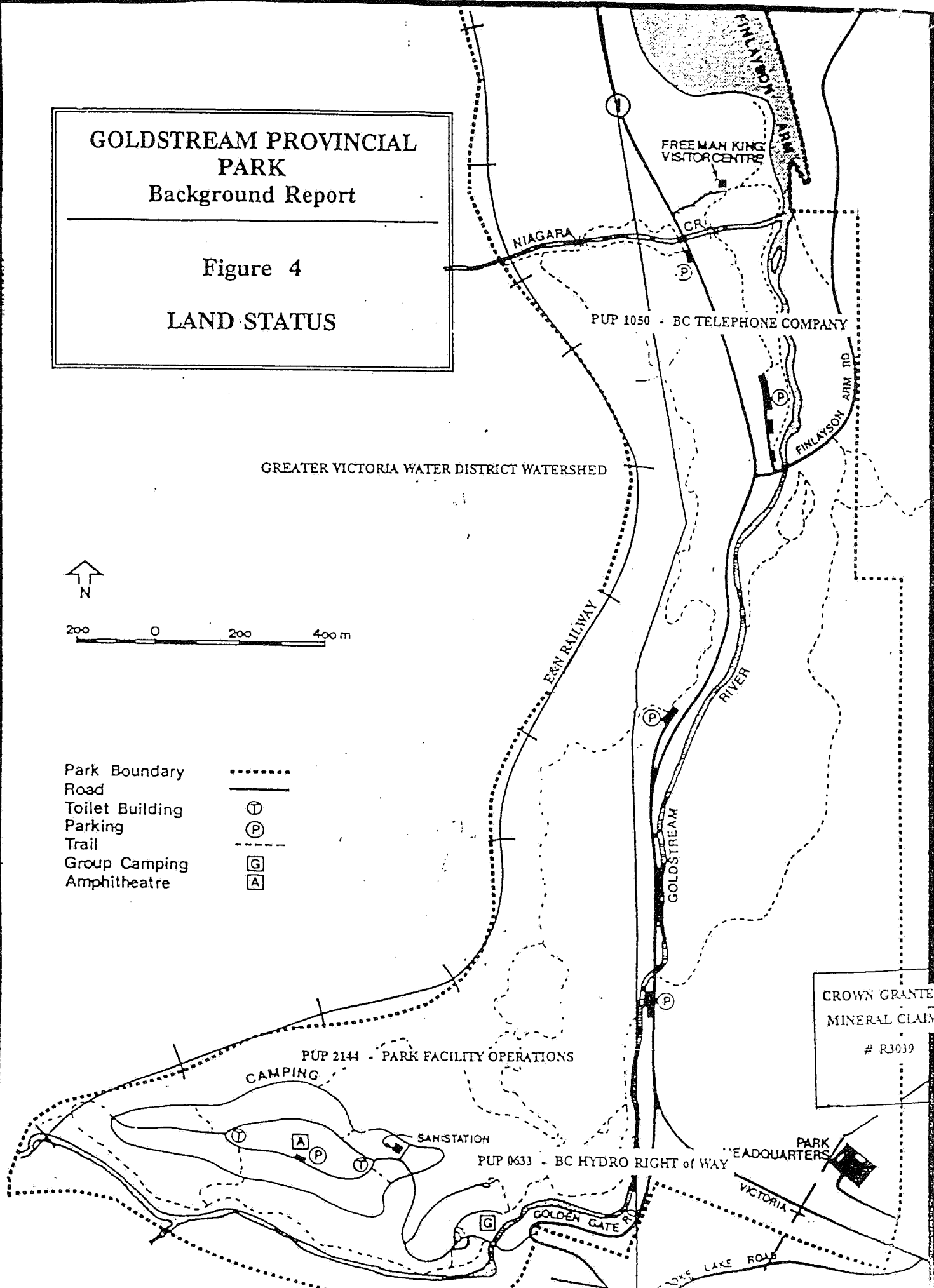
## Existing Use

Annual campground visits average over 17,000 parties, or 54,400 persons; a figure that has been constant for the past decade. During the months of July and August, campground occupancy averages 90 - 100%, while tapering off to less than 50% for most other months of the year. It is noted that tenting is returning as a popular accommodation form in the campground; over 65% of campers in the park use tents. Most campers originate from British Columbia, the western United States and Alberta.



# GOLDSTREAM PROVINCIAL PARK Background Report

Figure 4  
LAND STATUS



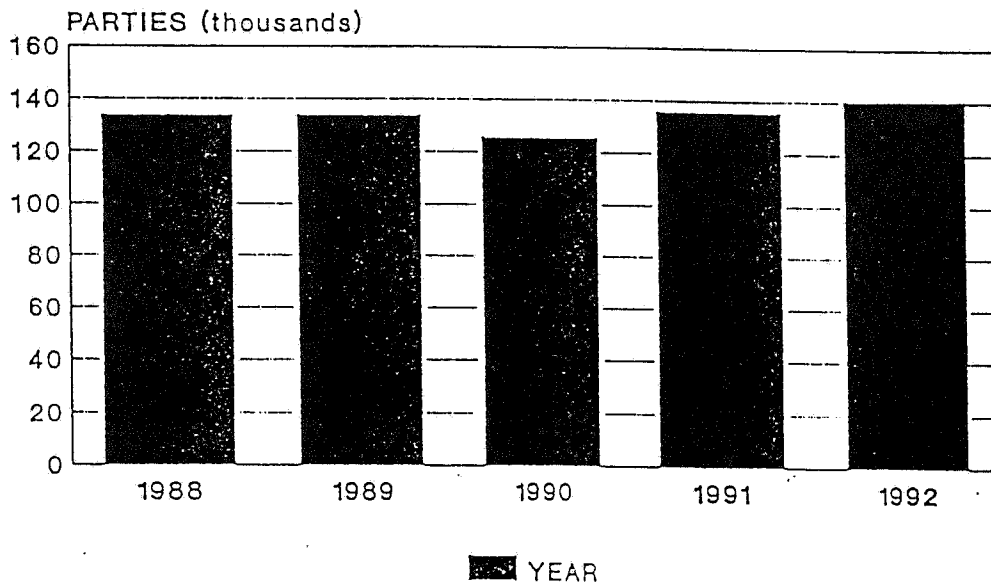
200 0 200 400 m

- Park Boundary ..... (dotted line)
- Road ——— (solid line)
- Toilet Building (T) (circle with T)
- Parking (P) (circle with P)
- Trail - - - - - (dashed line)
- Group Camping (G) (square with G)
- Amphitheatre (A) (square with A)

CROWN GRANTED  
MINERAL CLAIM  
# R3039

Day use visits, tied directly to traffic volume along Highway #1, are distributed between the picnic site, parkway corridor stops and the Visitor Centre. Like statistics for campground use, day use visits appear to have remained quite constant, averaging approximately 130,000 - 135,000 parties (455,000 - 427,000 persons) per year. During the October to December spawning period, the park exceeds its day-use capacity by a significant measure. School groups continue to represent the largest segment of visits during the spawning period; the park plays a significant role in the outdoor education component of many school programs.

## Goldstream Provincial Park Day Use Attendance



The demand for group use camping and day-use appears to be growing, according to requests received by the District office. Group use of the campground increased in 1989 and is now steady at about 750 parties per year. It is noted that this number generally represents the capacity of group camping facilities at Goldstream. In an effort to meet demands, several regular sites have been converted to group sites over the past few seasons. However, other locations in the park may be much better suited for group camping use. Of particular note is a site nearer to park headquarters. Located on the east side of Highway 1, this site would provide safe pedestrian access to the day-use area and Visitor Centre.



## Promotions and Information

Goldstream Park is promoted and marketed through published park brochures and maps, tourist guide books, articles on the salmon spawning phenomenon and word of mouth. The park's Visitor Services program promotes activities within the park to visitors and organized groups attending the nature house, day-use area and campground.

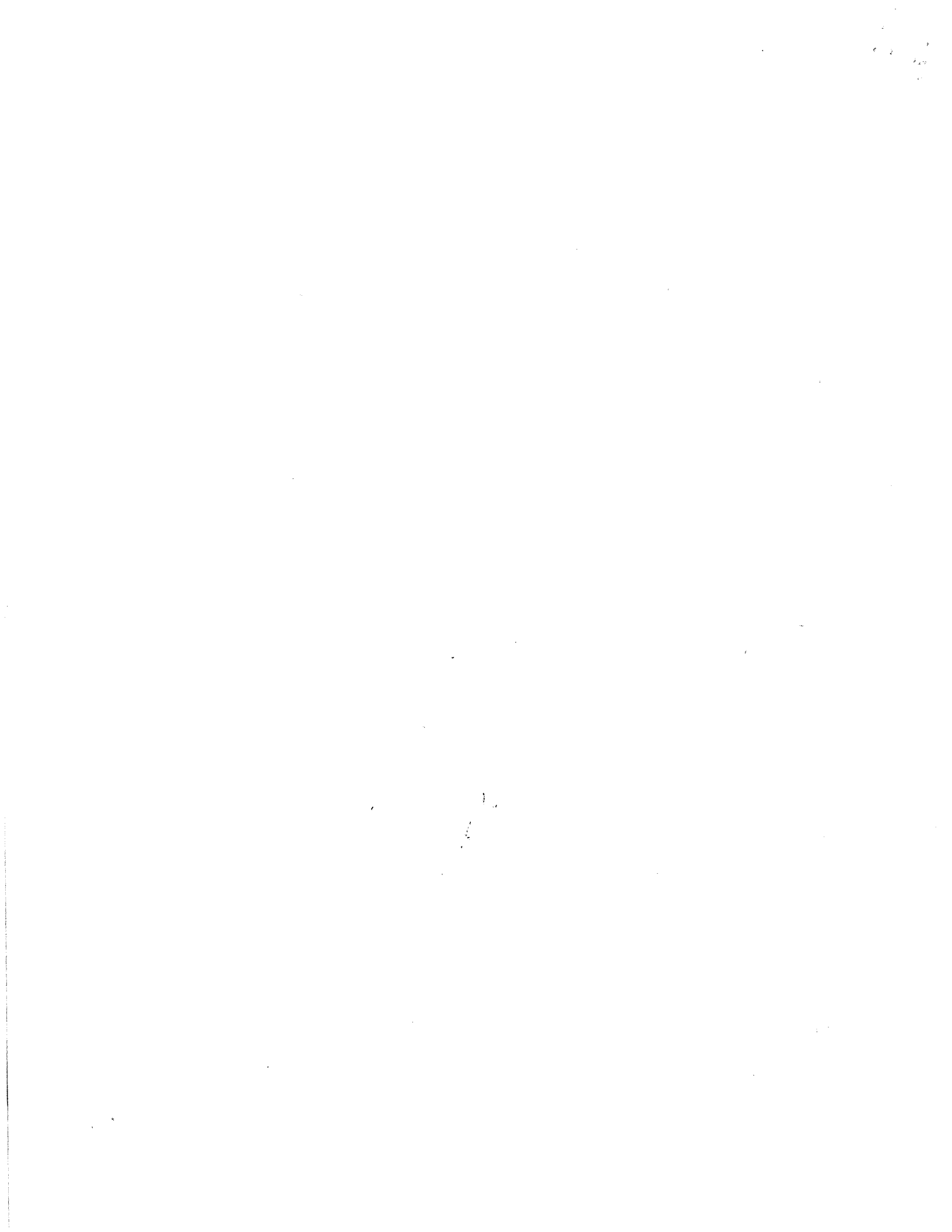
Located alongside Highway #1, adjacent to the tourist destination city of Victoria, all tourists travelling along the Island Highway pass through Goldstream Park. Campground directional signs indicate basic park facilities, however, most pull-outs and points of interest are unmarked.

## Park Products

Goldstream, an Urban class park<sup>3</sup>, is the most intensively visited provincial park on Southern Vancouver Island and, because of its roadside location, much of its recreational use is *walking* and *picnicking*. Although similar opportunities are available at other park sites in the area (eg. Thetis Lake Regional Park), the variety of activities and, particularly, the natural biophysical features, are attractions uniquely characteristic of Goldstream Park. *Camping* continues to be very popular with visiting Victoria area tourists; private sector operators also offers this activity, although not always in a natural setting. Nature programs offer *outdoor education* benefits to local residents, senior citizens and school groups. *Hiking*, particularly outside the park on Mount Finlayson, attracts many regional groups and individuals to the park area, while the Goldstream River estuary is a popular destination for *wildlife viewing*.

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<sup>3</sup> Recreation Opportunity Spectrum classification, Ministry of Forests



# Master Plan Issues

## Resources Protection

i) Goldstream Park is especially known for the chum, coho and chinook salmon which spawn annually in the Goldstream River. Protected by the park's natural environment and the integrity of water quality, success of the annual spawn provides many social and economic benefits to British Columbia, including outdoor education. Other than BC Parks, BC Environment and the federal Ministry of Fisheries and Oceans (Salmonid Enhancement) have management responsibilities within the habitat area. Aboriginal fishing has been a traditional activity along the river during the spawning season, although no particular issue has been raised recently.

*On-going cooperation with resource agencies and Aboriginal groups is required to ensure continued protection of the river's quality as a reproduction habitat while promoting opportunities for park visitors.*

ii) The Goldstream River estuary is a rich habitat which offers an opportunity for many people to view birds and other wildlife which are typical of southern Vancouver Island. As the only estuary fully protected on the east coast of the Island, the need to closely monitor any changes to its overall quality is important. Commercial use of the estuary for clam harvesting has been reported. As well, the estuary is subject to accidental contamination from Saanich Inlet.

*BC Parks must ensure that the richness of the Goldstream estuary is protected from any harmful occurrences which may jeopardize its quality as a park resource.*

iii) The forest of Goldstream Park is a vital resource requiring careful management. Alongside the river channel, stands of western red cedar old growth are dated between 600 and 700 years old, and are of tremendous value to biological systems within the park. In addition, Goldstream's forest provides a rare opportunity for visitors to view old growth specimens near to a large urban centre; its importance as an educational resource is obvious. Concern about dispersed walking through the area has been raised, as has the reduction of natural forest groundcover throughout the day-use area.

Disease has infected the mature forest in some areas of the park. Throughout the campground, hazard trees (diseased by root rot) have been systematically cut down according to management policy. The integrity of the forest depends on healthy second growth to replace killed trees.

*Management policies for public use in and around Goldstream's mature trees must recognize the value of the forest as a ecological unit of importance on southern Vancouver Island.*

iv) Rare and endangered species in the park are subject to disturbance from recreational use and facility development. A detailed inventory of these species and their locations is not available, therefore making management of them difficult.

*More thorough inventory information is required to ensure that rare and endangered species in the park are protected.*

## **Park Boundary**

i) Expansion of Goldstream Park has been a land management priority for many years. The inclusion of Mount Finlayson (Section 80) is an initiative considered important for protection of natural resources in and around Saanich Inlet. This was also confirmed as a public priority forwarded in the "Parks and Wilderness for the 90's" program and has been recognized in BC Parks' System analyses of the Victoria area. Public access to the Mount Finlayson trail has recently been restricted because of private property.

ii) Crown property south of Mt. Finlayson summit (Sections 81 and 84, Highland District) and the Recreation Reserve to the northwest (Lot 95, Highland District, BC Lands file 0244531) are important as a visual resource and for outdoor recreation. Here there is potential for development of hiking and mountain bicycling trails to serve park visitors.

*It is imperative that the Mount Finlayson property be acquired as soon as possible to protect the natural and recreational resources represented by this topographic feature. In addition, Sections 81 and 84 and Lot 95 would enhance outdoor recreation opportunities in Goldstream Park and provide additional visual corridor protection along Highway #1.*

iii) The Provincial Capital Commission is trying to assemble greenbelt land to protect visual quality along the Highway #1 corridor into Victoria. Of particular note is a proposed property exchange adjacent to the southwestern park boundary. Here, land use changes and development adjacent to the park may have an influence on the park, and the Malahat District office site.

*BC Parks must monitor surrounding municipal zoning and land uses to ensure their compatibility with management objectives for Goldstream Park.*



# Goldstream Provincial Park

## APPENDIX 2

## BIBLIOGRAPHY



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  - . Visitor program information
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6. Capital Regional District, Victoria, B.C.
  - . Personal contacts
7. Provincial Capital Commission, Victoria, B.C.
  - . Personal contacts
8. Greater Victoria Water District, Victoria, B.C.
  - . Personal contacts



## Widening of the Trans-Canada Highway

Plans to expand the number of highway lanes passing through the Malahat portion of Highway #1 have been considered for several years. Along the Trans-Canada Highway, average summer daily traffic volume exceeds 24,000 vehicles through the park's south portal.<sup>5</sup> The Island Highway portion has been improved north and south from Goldstream, however is still two-lane within park boundaries.

*Highway expansion through Goldstream Park will have considerable impact on park resources and use opportunities. BC Parks' must prepare its position and be very clear during negotiations with highway planners and engineers.*

## Land-use in the Goldstream Watershed

The Greater Victoria Water District is responsible for land-use management in the catchment and supply areas of the Goldstream watershed. Current planning initiatives of the G.V.W.D. include multiple use designations which permit logging in non-catchment areas. A new Management Plan is being formulated for the Water District, which will be referred to BC Parks for input.

*Given the importance of the Goldstream River habitat for salmonids, careful coordination and monitoring of downstream impacts must be undertaken to protect water quality and quantity.*

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<sup>5</sup> Personal Communication - Ministry of Transportation and Highways

