

# Joffre Lakes Park Visitor Use Management Strategy - What We Heard

June 2021

The draft Joffre Lakes Park Visitor Use Management Strategy (VUMS) was posted for public comment between March 5 and April 4, 2021. A summary of that public comment can be found on the Joffre Lakes Park project page. Several major themes were raised in the public comment which we would like to address in this document.

## Day-Use Pass

Respondents were generally in favour of implementing a day-use pass at Joffre Lakes Park, with only a minority (9%) stating that they were against the proposal.

Response: BC Parks will move forward with piloting day-use passes at the park for summer 2021. The day-use pass pilot program is the same program being implemented at four other provincial parks including Garibaldi Park, Stawamus Chief Park, Golden Ears Park, and Mount Robson Park.

## Day-Use Pass Implementation

Many respondents had questions and comments concerning *how* the day-use pass would be implemented. Specifically, respondents wanted to have the ability to reserve a day-use pass earlier than the day of their visit to the park.

Response: In a process separate from the Joffre Lakes VUMS planning process, BC Parks consulted with numerous stakeholders and people who used day passes last year. The feedback helped inform the day-use pass pilot program this summer. A key change to the program for this season is that day-use passes will be available for reservation the day before the intended visit to a park. For more information on how the day-use pass will be implemented at Joffre and at other parks, please see <https://bcparks.ca/reserve/day-use/>.

## Visitor Education and Enforcement

Many respondents commented on the need to have a stronger staff presence at Joffre Lakes Park to educate visitors on responsible behaviour and to enforce the day-use pass and park regulations.

Response: The implementation of the day-use pass at Joffre Lakes Park includes hiring additional staff to enforce the day-use pass requirement and to share responsible recreation messaging with park visitors. Responsible recreation messaging will be delivered as part of BC Parks' partnership with the BC Parks Foundation to introduce more than 30 full-time discover parks ambassadors to welcome visitors and provide information about safe and responsible recreation.

## Mountaineering, Winter Recreation, & Backcountry Skiing Values

A focused group of respondents (13%) felt the draft VUMS inadequately addressed the values of mountaineers, winter recreation, and backcountry skiers. These respondents also felt the VUMS lacked clear management direction for these types of uses. Respondents were concerned the day-use pass could severely inhibit mountaineering activities in the park depending on how it would be implemented.

This group of respondents also wanted to see stronger commitments to plowing parking spaces and creating opportunities for winter camping at Joffre Lakes Park. Several peaks accessed via the park (i.e.

Joffre, Matier, and Slalok) are popular and even iconic mountaineering and ski mountaineering destinations, and respondents wanted parking and camping opportunities provided to honour the importance of these destinations to the mountaineering and winter user groups.

Response: The draft VUMS and many of its management strategies target summer use in the park. BC Parks will work with Lil'wat Nation and N'Quatqua to determine the steps for addressing concerns about winter recreation. BC Parks is targeting fall 2021 for communication on these next steps.

In the meantime, BC Parks, Lil'wat Nation, and N'Quatqua will move forward with finalizing and implementing the VUMS this summer. The park needs visitor management for the summer, and the VUMS, in its current form provides that direction.

Winter recreationalists also had concerns about the day-use pass, but it is important to note the VUMS *does not propose a visitor cap and day-use pass for the winter season. Winter recreationalists will not need a day-use pass.*

### [Joffre VUMS and its Relationship to the 1989 Master Plan](#)

A few stakeholders provided comment to BC Parks stating the relationship between the Joffre VUMS and the 1989 Master Plan is unclear. Questions were posed including - does the VUMS replace the Master Plan? Is it supplemental to the Master Plan? Will there be a new Management Plan (the new term for Master Plans)?

The Joffre Lakes VUMS was drafted to replace existing management direction for the park for the foreseeable future. Stakeholders felt that some members of the public were unaware the VUMS would replace management direction and would have engaged differently in the planning process if they had known this.

Response: The Joffre Lakes VUMS part of a visitor use management pilot project and is the first time BC Parks has explored its use for parks and protected areas. Adjustments will be made to the strategy if necessary.

Like our approach for addressing mountaineering and winter recreation at Joffre Lakes Park, BC Parks will work with Lil'wat Nation and N'Quatqua to consider the role of the Joffre Lakes VUMS in providing management direction for Joffre Lakes Park. We will target having communication on how the VUMS aligns with traditional management planning policies in the fall.