

**STRATHCONA PARK PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**(Oct. 9, 2014 – BC Parks Office, Miracle Beach – Black Creek)**

**SPPAC MEMBERS:** Philip Stone, Tawney Lem, Alison Mewett, David Campbell

**Regrets:** Darren Saare, Nick Page, Hardolph Wasteneys, Mick Taylor, Peggy Carswell, Erik Holbek

Note: The quorum for SPPAC meetings is six. There was not a quorum for this meeting, so no recommendations could be made. The discussion proceeded as normal.

**BC Parks:** Andy Smith, Aaron Miller

**Recorder:** John Milne

**Others:** Sandra Borton (potential new SPPAC member), Robert Behrendt (recently retired General Manager of Nyrstar Mines)

**1. Introduction** - members and guests.

**2. Approve agenda** - The minutes of the previous SPPAC meeting were approved online and posted on BC Parks' website.

**3. Nyrstar** - Robert Behrendt

**General Update** - Ivor McWilliams (Nyrstar's Environmental Superintendent) will be retiring in two weeks (end of October). Replacement/recruitment process is currently ongoing. John Knapp is currently replacing Robert Behrendt as acting General Manager while his permanent replacement is being decided.

**Jim Mitchell Lake Spillway & Dam Modification Project**- The original plan was to raise the earthen dam this year and add an inflatable (air bladder) weir at the spill-way next year. This summer's fire hazard forced a shutdown of the project resulting in delays that will impact the amount of work that will be completed in 2014. What doesn't get completed this year will be done by the fall of 2015. Wet weather (during Fall and Winter) also limits what work can be done as this affects the compactability of the material used for the dam modification. There was no further discussion regarding the boat launch/landing sites at either end of lake.

**Tennant Lake Pipeline Rupture** - There are two theories as to why this occurred. The mine had to shut down power generation as this was the driest summer on record. Taking one generator off line affected the others as they are all interconnected. Other generators had to be brought in to make up the shortage in capacity and there were a lot of power outages this summer. Tennant Lake almost ran out of water. Shutting off water may have created an energy surge which ruptured the pipe, or, there could have been air in the pipe which created a water hammer. While repairs were completed, the pipe may have to be reinforced in the future by placing rocks or other material around it. Arnica Creek also ran dry and all other creeks were very low. Some production was lost due to power problems. Four of the twelve diesel generators in use were reliable, however many generators need replacing with new ones. The Jim Mitchell dam modification project will greatly help the power situation and may significantly reduce or eliminate the need for diesel generation in the future. On a side note; the growth of the mine has meant a need for more efficient ventilation to deal with the extra length of tunnels.

TDF (Tailings Disposal Facility) work was completed – the reinforcement/upgrade of the original TDF was completed this summer.

**Closure Plan** – While there is still much research/assessments to be done over the next few years in terms of confirming the best closure strategy/option, it is interesting to note that if the wetlands option for reclamation is chosen, there would be less need for clean fill. Hydrology studies have shown water does not percolate into the tailings much. Underground aquifers are the source of water flowing through the site. Drilling this summer has yielded information on these aquifers. Nyrstar has hired a new engineering company to do research. Choosing the wetland option also means not having to treat as much water, as the potentially acid generating material would be rendered inert. An underground drain system catches this perimeter water to direct it offsite while another system intercepts affected water flowing through the TDF so it can be treated. Grout is pumped underground to fill voids, and create an impervious grout curtain to steer water away from acid generating tailings.

One drawback to the wetlands solution is that it requires a large dam which must be approved by the dam safety branch of government. There may be some short term reclamation done to make things look better while waiting for the final closure. This would be an accepted cost for aesthetics during mine life, realizing that it may all be changed when final reclamation is pursued.

**Spill** - A sump-pump auto control failed, resulting in water with low pH levels (acidic) entering Myra Creek. The pH of this waste was about 4 and was attributed to some residual cement curing accelerant contained in totes that has been emptied into a ditch line (normally water from this ditch would have been pumped up to the mine's water treatment plant). Altogether, about 16,000 L were spilled. Government Ministries conducted sampling and an investigation. The impact was negligible and short duration. Actions, including procedures, have been taken to avoid such a spill from happening again. The problem pump will be exposed to view and a backup system put in place so this kind of accident won't happen again. Other sump pumps will also be investigated to make sure they will work properly. Some mine staff thought the spilled water was clean, when it wasn't. Andy has an inspection report from Mines which he showed. It made some suggestions for the future. The totes which were being used as falling rock barriers will be changed with a better system. There was no evidence of environmental damage. Fish survived the spill.

**Future Operations** - The mine is on the verge of developing a new ore body which means there is enough ore for another 15 - 20 years. This also means some reclamation can be done before final closure. This new ore body location is approximately under Arnica Lake. Access would be made from the current underground operations.

Nyrstar's Closure Plan was submitted on time, but the Ministry won't get to it for awhile because the Mount Polley disaster is taking the majority of their time. There will be broader community engagement next year and will be led by Robertson Geotechnical Consultants. SPPAC is welcome to make suggestions about the broader public process. This public process should be very inclusive as there is a lot of public interest. A number of options should be presented to the public. The Closure Plan must be technically and aesthetically correct. Tawney reviewed points from a previous SPPAC meeting regarding the closure plan development (March 27th, 2014) Tawney will send these points to Ivor to share with Robertson Geotechnical Consultants.

Tawney presented Robert with a retirement gift on behalf of SPPAC. The committee thanks Robert for all he has done and the contributions he has made to communication between Nyrstar and SPPAC. Andy also presented a gift of appreciation on behalf of B.C. Parks.

#### **4. Strathcona Update - SPPAC questions**

Andy's Park Update is appended below.

- Update to the update - Parks has a new Assistant Deputy Minister named Jim Standen who has replaced Lori Halls. ADM's do get moved around between Ministries to broaden knowledge..
- Clayoquot Wilderness Resort's work plan is being submitted soon. It will be in the form of a draft work plan. The draft was received from the consultants by CWR this week. It will be reviewed by CWR and a second draft will be sent to parks for their review and comment prior to sharing with SPPAC. While Andy doesn't see any problem making the work plan available to others, Andy can't commit to releasing it beyond SPPAC as that isn't part of the normal process for permits, however, the Regional Director can make that decision. This work plan could be requested through the "FOI" process. Andy will follow up on releasing this beyond SPPAC as it is in the public domain. It could be made available via SPPAC to the public through SPPAC's Facebook page. SPPAC will comment on it when it's available. An alternate approach could be to ask CWR to make it public or it could be added as an attachment to the SPPAC minutes or agenda. This is not normal process, but there is a lot of public interest in this issue. SPPAC should follow up on this, rather than park staff. Andy advised that no specific format was requested but expects it to follow a format similar to the "Tom Ward" report done a number of years ago. It will be prescriptive in nature with details as to locations and what kind of upgrades or work needs doing at each. Andy and other staff will ground truth the work plan by walking the route and checking it against the plan.
- Phillip commented the Elk River trail looks in good condition.
- Phillip really likes the new No Fire signs installed this summer.
- Andy spoke about camping ethics such as grey water, etc. There is a need for signage in many key campsites.
- Phillip believes the Philips Ridge parking lot at Nyrstar mine needs improving. He thinks it's an eyesore as it is. He described it as a "visual nightmare"

#### **5. Old Cabin at Megin Lake - Andy**

This cabin has deteriorated to the point of being a safety issue. It has been closed. It was identified in the Master Plan as being useful and at that time was recommended to be maintained. It is for this reason that the issue is being brought to SPPAC for their opinion. This is a similar scenario to Sid's cabin a number of years ago. In that case, after discussing the condition and value of the cabin, SPPAC recommended that the stove be removed and that the cabin be monitored until unsafe to enter, at which time it would be closed. The Megin cabin situation is the same. There is no money to repair or replace it. Float plane operators land there and have been the primary cabin users in the past, but now understand and accept that it's not safe. SPPAC has no concern with the cabin being closed or removed.

#### **6. Croteau Group Campsite update - Andy**

Strategic Natural Resource Consultants Inc. have been contracted to develop a design plan for the new Croteau Lake Group site. A site survey/assessment has been completed and design criteria discussed. The design will be worked on over the next few months. While some form of shelter is needed, due to high costs no permanent shelter is being contemplated initially but rather a various options for a seasonal shelter is being researched. A new sign information shelter has already been erected at the access junction to the site. A new style toilet is also being designed in a hope to significantly reduce the need for annual fly-outs.

## **7. Capital Program Update - Andy**

There was a total of \$60,000 spent during the 2014 season. The funds were used to complete enhancements to the Battleship to Kwai Lake trail. At this time, there is no prediction of what the 2015 capital budget will be, or what the priorities will be in the region.

## **8. New Backcountry Toilet Pilot Program - Andy**

Andy has been researching the latest technology about composting toilets at elevation using worms. A replacement toilet at main Bedwell Lake and a new toilet at the Croteau Lake group site will be used as test cases. BC Parks is hoping to integrate a toilet design from France and utilize the expertise of consultant Geoff Hill of Toilet Tech Solutions. The new style toilet separates urine and feces and incorporates a conveyer system (foot pedal operated) to move fecal matter into storage compartment in the rear of the toilet facility. A new design is being developed using a system of removable totes and if successful, the need to fly out material may be extended up to once every 8 - 10 years. Currently, fly outs from each toilet average 2 - 3 times per season.

Phillip spoke of ways of dealing with human waste in other areas by packing it out. He gave a number of examples where there are problems in the park. "Wag" bags (name brand) are used. There are areas that are heavily used with no facilities. Andy advised that while he is aware of this method adopted in some USA parks, it requires enough personnel to enforce regulations, receptacles at trailheads to collect waste, and sufficient funds to deal with the waste once it is collected. It is however, one of the best practices to evolve even if we may not have the ability at this time. This is being done in other areas, so culturally many hikers are ready to accept this practice.

## **9. Strathcona Park Enhancement Account Funds**

Andy created an initial list of potential Strathcona Park projects/initiatives along with a map showing locations and shared it with SPPAC last spring. Although SPPAC was to review and share this information as part of the public engagement project they were working on, timing and workloads have not allowed this to happen. It was suggested that this information be added to the Strathcona Update section for the SPPAC to easily review and consider in terms of recommending priorities. SPPAC may also wish to post on Facebook for potential public feedback and further recommendation to BC Parks. Funds for these projects may come from the Strathcona Park Enhancement Fund account, regional annual budgets or future sponsors/donors.

SPPAC still controls the balance of Legacy Fund which was established during the Centennial Expedition. There was some previous discussion regarding donating the balance to SWI for their use in supporting programs and annual volunteer operations, however no final decision was made.

## **10. SPPAC Terms of Reference**

The new draft Terms of Reference for SPPAC are appended below following the Park Update.

A discussion on the revised draft took place. Tawney reviewed the new terms and the following comments were made:

-SPPAC members may attend other meetings to collect information, but not while representing SPPAC..

-Some items have been updated to reflect changes in practice.

-Composition Section "b" puts more focus on diversity.

-Composition Section "e" cleans up some of SPPAC's methods.

-Composition Section "f" references for those applying to be SPPAC members are no longer being asked for.

-Selection Criteria Section "a" asks for more general knowledge than before and emphasizes a commitment to Strathcona's Master Plan.

-Selection Criteria Section "c" the composition matrix is downplayed except for skills related to the mine contained in "d".

-Selection Criteria Section "e" applicants are considered on their own merits, not as representing a group.

-Procedures Section "b" - the requirements for a quorum is changed to 50% + 1.

- Procedures Section "d" - the maximum term has been reduced to 5 years from 7, to keep members fresher. An annual turnover of 2 members is required so there aren't too many terms up at once.

-Procedures Section "f" - public input is encouraged with a lead time of 1 month to place items on SPPAC's agenda.

-Procedures Section "h" is new. SPPAC may request permission to hold a public meeting and to create subcommittees.

-Procedures Section "e" - the Regional Director will respond with a written rationale for not accepting any of SPPAC's recommendations. It was suggested that this language be softened by adding "where appropriate" and change will to "may".

The new draft Terms of Reference recommendations will go to Don Cadden, Regional Director, after SPPAC has agreed on these terms. The electronic discussion on this will continue for the next while.

Phillip advised SPPAC of his attendance concerns due to ferry schedule changes. Friday nights work better for him, unless it's a daytime meeting.

## **11. Public Engagement Initiative - Tawney**

This is covered under section 16.

## **12. Volunteer Agreements - Andy**

**-General update - see Andy's park update below.**

### **Communication with the Heathens**

The Crest Creek camp with the Heathens was discussed. Communication between Parks and the Heathens has improved and a recent meeting has resulted in moving an MoU forward. New signs are being made for the Crest Creek area and a new sign information shelter is being constructed for erection next season. Chris Barner is working on an update of a 10 year plan for the area (this was recently submitted to BC Parks since the Oct SPPAC meeting). A guidebook for the area is being developed by the Heathens which may result in an increase in use, and more pressure to camp nearby. Exploring the potential for a campground in the area is captured in the Master Plan. How to pursue this? Andy suggested that a committee be formed (perhaps the Climbing Committee which Philip Stone would like to form) to discuss and confirm what the public envisions, which then could be used to identify potentially suitable locations and/or issues and concerns. Andy also advised that campers will likely have to pay to camp. A "free camp" would not be supported by the Park Facility Operator whose operating area of Crest Creek Crags

is within, and it would not be fair to those other campers who are required to pay elsewhere in the park. There is already an unofficial temporary annual campsite located behind the Crest Lake Day-Use Area, but it does not meet any BC Parks standards. There needs to be a discussion about the vision of the campsite and its location. The campsite can be rustic and be acceptable to the climbing community. The climbing or other identified committee would be the ones to recommend where a campsite could be located and what it might look like. The campsite should be within walking distance to the climbing area. There are possible sites outside of the park which may be suitable. How rustic the campground is determines what fees are charged. Would it be operated by the Park Facility Operator and be part of their bundle? There are lots of options available. The question about development and operating money is always relevant.

Phillip agreed he would take the lead in trying to develop a climbers committee. The Heathens, BC Parks and SPPAC should have a representative on the committee, but there should be other stakeholders and other interested public reps involved as well.

### **13. Climbers Steering Committee**

See the above item for this.

### **14. ACC-VI Request for Presentation - Tawney**

Phillip will attend and use the opportunity to promote the Crest Creek climbing area.

### **15. Nyrstar Closure Plan - Andy**

For information on this see the Park Update.

### **16. Be a Park Hero – proposed concept - Alison**

This would involve setting up a format to go online and a picture with some comment. A template for this would be created and visitors would fill it in. There could be a delay built in so someone could vet the feedback to make sure it's acceptable. There would have to be permission given if the BC Parks logo was used. If not, the graphics would have to change to something else. Would this be done on BC Parks website or on SPPAC's Facebook page? All posts would say "Be a Parks Hero, Leave no Trace". If this was on Facebook, it could be shared with others. The question is - would BC Parks host this or should this be a SPPAC initiative? If the latter, the Regional Director would have to approve it. It may be more appropriate for a group like CPAWS to host this since it is broader based than just Strathcona Park.

Sandra Borton (guest and potential new SPPAC member) suggested using a hashtag to upload what we want and had a lot of good ideas about how to this could be done. There could be different campaigns for different periods of time. She has a lot of good ideas about using social media, twitter, etc.

Tawney spoke about public outreach and how to increase the profiles of SPPAC and Strathcona Park. There should be a communications subcommittee of SPPAC. Tawney has some recommendations to make on this topic. Phillip has a Facebook page on climbing and mountaineering on Vancouver Island with 1200 members which is very active. SPPAC posts get on Phillip's site. SPPAC also has an email list that is growing.

The purpose and outcomes of a campaign need to be defined first.

### **17. Recruitment Update - Andy/Tawney**

Andy and Tawney are working on a list of new members. Three new people are interested in becoming SPPAC members. There needs to be at least one more. Erik will be contacted regarding his interest in continuing as a SPPAC member.

## **18. New Chairperson**

Five SPPAC members are now retiring. Phillip is staying on for awhile for continuity. Phillip will become SPPAC's new chairperson.

Tawney was thanked for being such an effective chair. All agreed she has done a wonderful job of chair.

SPPAC members present confirmed Phil Stone as the new chair. Phillip will help with the recruitment as will Tawney, but due to her new job she is not as available as before. This is Tawney's last meeting. Andy presented gifts to David and Tawney as tokens of thanks for their service on the committee.

**Next meeting - Friday, January 23rd, 2015**

**Strathcona Update for SPPAC**  
**Oct 9, 2014 (BC Parks Black Creek Office)**

**Strathcona Staffing**

Park Facility Operator - Jerry McArthur, Windy Park Operations, will finish his current contract at the end of October. Jerry has not submitted a bid for the new 10 year contract. Therefore, after starting to look after the Strathcona backcountry maintenance with Osprey Park Operations in 2004m and then continuing with his own company, Windy Park Operations, in 2007, Jerry will not be continuing as the Park Facility Operator.

Seasonal staff – our first year Ranger, Adam Vojnic completed his term Sept 1<sup>st</sup> and will be invited back in spring of 2015. Jeff Hoy continues as Senior Ranger until his term ends on November 7<sup>th</sup>.

**1) New Backcountry Maintenance Contract** – the new BC Parks “PRISM” program (Parks Recreation Integrated Services Management) is currently being implemented with the awarding of new Park Maintenance contracts throughout the Province. All contracts ending this fall were re-tendered and are currently being finalized. As the Strathcona Backcountry contract has not been finalized, we are unable to confirm who the new contractor/Park Facility Operator will be. We hope to be able to confirm the successful bidder by November 1, 2014. The new contract will be for 10 years.

**2) Nyrstar**

□ Nyrstar Mine Closure Plan – no new information since our last meeting. Ministry of Mines has agreed to accept Nyrstar’s initial assessments, research and conceptual plan options as an interim report, allowing them to gather more information, including public comment, prior to submitting a formal Closure Plan in approximately 3 years. SPPAC will be kept up to date on the progress of this plan development.

□ Jim Mitchell Lake Dam Modification Project – The forest closure due to extreme fire conditions, delayed the start of this project. Work resumed with gravel pit preparation and hauling during the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of September. It is not known how long Nyrstar will continue work this year as it will likely be weather dependant, however, it is not planned to complete this project until 2015

□ Robert Behrendt, Nyrstar Myra Falls Operations, Mine Manager, has announced his retirement as of October 1, 2014 and is being replaced by John Knapp.

□ Ivor McWilliams, Environmental Superintendent, has also announced his retirement as of November 1, 2014. No replacement has been identified at this time.

□ Tennant Lake water pipeline ruptured and while it had to be shut down for a couple of weeks, the repairs have now all been completed.

□ Spill incident – Sept 5<sup>th</sup> a 16,000 litre spill was reported into Myra Creek. Water mixed with some residual “cement accelerant” and contained within 16 plastic totes, was emptied into what should have been a closed ditch line where it should have been pumped up to their treatment facility. However, the sump pump failed to turn on and the water, with very low pH levels, entered into Myra Creek. The source was immediately contained and all agencies were notified according to protocol. Ministry of Environment did their testing of the creek and lake to confirm extent and any possibility of long term impacts. It appears that the mixing of the contaminant (acidic water) with the high volume of creek and lake water, has had minimal impact. Nyrstar is required to submit a complete report in the near future.

**3) Capital Projects** – Total approximately \$60,000 for 2014

□ The remaining 1/3 of the Battleship/Kwai Lake trail enhancements (2/3 of this project was completed in 2013) was completed the last week of September. New boardwalk has been installed in many wet and braided sections. The 2014 work was completed by the same contractor as in 2013 - “Great Installations”.



□ Also being done this season is the assessment and design work for trail enhancements along the Helen Mackenzie Lake Trail (between lake junction and west, where trail starts up headwall towards ranger cabin). Only the worst sections of this trail will be focussed on as it is not practical to invest a significant amount of funds in a costly complete upgrade. If capital funds are secured, the trail enhancement work should begin in 2015 and carry over into 2016. There are no estimated costs at this time.

**4) CWR Park Use Permit** – No new update since the last meeting. CWR has confirmed that their consultant did assess the trail and is currently finalizing the first draft of a work plan for BC Parks review. The draft is expected sometime in October.

**5) Croteau Lake Group Site** – Strategic Natural Resource Consultants Inc., has been hired to develop a design for the future group site. There had been some hope that some efficiencies and cost savings could be found in utilizing the capital project crew while they were working on boardwalk this summer, however, timing didn't allow for this. An initial draft design is expected by end of October. Once finalized, it will be determined whether materials can be purchased this fiscal to allow for an early construction start in Spring/Summer 2015. As part of this development, a new toilet design is being contemplated to try and severely reduce the amount of fly-outs. If successful, this can be adopted all over Strathcona and potentially elsewhere in the province. It is also hoped that other new ideas can be piloted at this group site to ensure that impacts are minimized and costs are kept low. The initial funding for this project is coming from the Nyrstar donation (\$50,000) which was "ear-marked" specifically for this.

**6) Backcountry Bedwell Lakes Trail - The** toilet at Main Bedwell Lake scheduled to be replaced this season has been temporarily delayed due to a change of facility design. While it had been determined to replace the expensive high snow load toilet building with a simpler, less expensive TAJ fly out toilet (same as that used at Baby Bedwell Lake), discussions regarding a new design at Croteau forced a rethinking of the Bedwell replacement. Although there are still funds (\$8000 + \$3000 helicopter) to pursue something this year, winter weather will dictate what can be achieved. The current thought is to modify the existing structure to accommodate a new type of toilet.

A new area map sign for the Main Bedwell Lake information shelter has been drafted and is being finalized. It will be fabricated this winter for installation in the spring of 2015. When additional funds area available, a second map sign will be fabricated for the Baby Bedwell Lake information shelter.

**Elk River Trail Upgrades** – Two new aluminum food caches were installed at the two campsites to replace old style cable caches. BC Hydro did assist by paying for the helicopter time, which they included in their met station replacement project nearby.

**Arnica Lake** – Rangers re-located the z-best toilet again this season (new site flooded in 2013). Hopefully this new location will prove adequate for the next several years. Repairs to some of the tent pads and a bridge replacement are still required. Assessment was completed and materials have been purchased for work in 2015.

**Gold Lake Access** – While the road is still open, the bridge at or near Grilse Creek is still scheduled to be decommissioned. Once done, the road will only be accessible by ATV, bike or hiking. It is approximately 5-6 km from bridge site to trailhead.

**Della Falls Trail** - Although the trail was inspected this season and the cable car had some annual maintenance done on it, the brush work and minor bridge repairs could not be completed. Unfortunately the Port Alberni Search and Rescue team was unable to volunteer this season due to other priorities. The PASAR does hope to help out again next season.

**7) Park Enhancement Funds (PEF)** – The Island Region was allocated additional funds for 2014 and Volunteer Groups had the opportunity to submit proposals for park projects up to \$3500 each. Like previous years, all proposals were assessed by the Regional Management Team and they made their final selections the first week of June. The supported projects specifically including Strathcona are: Strathcona Wilderness Society (SWI) - Program Support = \$1,000; Royal BC Museum - Study of High Elevation Invertebrates in Vancouver Island Provincial Parks = \$5,000.

□ **TrailRider Program** - In addition to the regional PEF program, BC Parks also used Strathcona's specific PEF account to support SWI with the acquisition of a TrailRider (\$7000) and partnered with them to establish the long term envisioned Strathcona Park TrailRider Program. The TrailRider is a one wheel all-terrain wheelchair powered by volunteer "sherpas". While SWI had originally proposed to purchase the TrailRider, they were unfortunately not successful with their grant application to Coast Savings. However, BC Parks knew from the beginning that this was possible and was prepared to fully fund the TrailRider. Five trips were completed this summer along with one rescue (used to wheel an injured visitor from Kwai Lake back to Trailhead). The program will continue in 2015 with stronger promotion, events and media coverage.

□ **Friends of Strathcona Park new "NO Fire" sign initiative** – Five signs were developed and installed at trailheads (Bedwell Lakes, Paradise Meadows, Della Falls, Elk River, Arnica Lake and Comox Glacier). The signs have received high praise from the public and we hope to continue with more signs as funds allow. BC Parks also plans to install miniature cabinets at backcountry camps in order to house NO Fires Allowed artwork produced by school groups. BC Parks hopes FOSP will continue leading this initiative.

**8) Volunteer Support** – BC Parks continues to encourage and support volunteers and groups who can assist in accomplishing mutually agreeable goals. All volunteers must have authorization to work in a park, to ensure mutual support for the project; ensure volunteer safety and insurance coverage; and to pool resources, both financial as well as personnel.

CDMC – have entered into a Partnership Agreement to help maintain the Comox Glacier Trail, Gem Lake Trail and the Forbidden Plateau Traverse Trail. While some general maintenance work was done on the Glacier Trail, the Traverse trail has been assessed, collaborative brushing project completed, sign inventory completed (new signage being ordered) and a meadows by-pass trail being upgraded for use. No work was done this season on the Gem Lake trail due to logging road restrictions.

**Comox Bluffs ER** – two volunteer wardens have entered into an agreement to continue monitoring this ER and do simple maintenance, such as fire pit removal and garbage clean-up along with monthly reporting.

**Comox Valley Jeep Club** – are eager to enter into an agreement with BC Parks to help monitor Wood Mountain Park as well as the historic east entrance to Strathcona Park. The club wishes to help close off access to unauthorized 4x4 use, clean up garbage, address liability issues, erect and maintain new signage (both regulatory and interpretive or map signs) and any other project that is mutually agreed to. The club wishes to enhance their image and credibility (which was tarnished by independent unethical 4x4 recreationists), by contributing to the community.

**Heathens Mountaineering Club** – while poor collaboration has affected relations over the last several years, discussions between the club and BC Parks has opened up an opportunity to rebuild relations. The club is redrafting a 10 year plan for the Crest Creek Crags climbing area which will form the basis of a long term Memorandum of Understanding with BC Parks. BC Parks is committed to supporting this long term group to collectively achieve common goals. At the Heathens request, a new bear proof garbage container has been installed at Hidden Wall, and new signage is being developed with the club's input. The club has also been authorized to erect some of their own carved wooden signs to provide more direction to visitors.

**Friends of Strathcona Park** – were invited to enter into a long term Partnership Agreement (the group has signed two short term project based agreements in the past), but as they have no proposed projects identified within the park at this time, they have declined the need for an agreement.

**Strathcona Wilderness Institute** – As SWI functions fully under an active, but no-fee Park Use Permit, there is no need to switch to a Partnership Agreement if they don't want to. There are some pros and cons either way.

**9) Strathcona Potential Projects List** – No update (waiting for SPPAC member response). A list and corresponding location map were developed and presented to SPPAC identifying potential projects and initiatives within Strathcona Park worth considering for future implementation. The non-prioritized list was developed only to identify projects and intended to be used to add to or delete as more input and discussion takes place. The projects do not have any committed funds associated with them, although current Park Enhancement Funds in Strathcona's account could be a potential funding source should various projects be supported. Some of these projects or initiatives could also be pursued in partnership with local support groups if they are interested.

# **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

## **STRATHCONA PARK AND STRATHCONA-WESTMIN PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **Mandate**

The Committee shall provide advice to the BC Parks, West Coast, Regional Director on the management of Strathcona and Strathcona-Westmin Provincial Parks by reviewing and commenting on:

- a. the implementation of the approved Master Plan,
- b. Annual Management Plans when requested by Regional Director,
- c. specific issues referred by the Regional Manager, staff and SPPAC,
- d. permit applications when requested by Regional Director,
- e. public issues and concerns, and
- f. adjacent issues that have the potential to impact the Park.

### **Meeting Requirements**

- a. The Committee will meet formally at least four times a year. Meeting locations will vary, with the goal of increasing the accessibility of the meetings to committee members and the public.
- b. The Committee may be requested to attend other additional public meetings as SPPAC members by the Regional Director (SPPAC members may not attend any public meetings officially as SPPAC without prior authorization from the Regional Director). If members are attending meetings unofficially (to become more aware of issues and to collect information), they should refrain from commenting as a SPPAC member.
- c. Additional Committee meetings may be called to review specific issues.
- d. Committee meetings will be open to the public and will be advertised on the BC Parks website, social media, or through other means as determined from time to time, to increase the visibility of the ads.
- e. Committee meeting ads will be posted a minimum of two weeks in advance of the meeting.

### **Composition**

- a. The Committee will be made up of no more than 11 people.
- b. The make-up of the Committee should reflect a diversity of relevant interests, expertise and knowledge.
- c. The Committee will reflect the principles of employment equity.

- d. With the exception of the BC Parks Strathcona Area Supervisor who will be a permanent member, no employee of BC Parks, operations contractor, or permittee shall be a member of the Committee. The BC Parks, Regional Section Head may participate at any SPPAC meeting as a guest at their own discretion.
- e. BC Parks regional staff will solicit volunteers to serve on the Committee by:
  - i) Mail out to any existing appropriate mailing lists, i.e. BC Parks; SPPAC.
  - ii) Other advertising methods: e.g.: word of mouth; email to known clubs, groups, organizations and individuals; social media.
  - iii) Public Notices on the BC Parks Strathcona website.
- f. Potential candidates will be asked to submit a resume of qualifications and experience, and a brief statement outlining their reasons for wanting to be a member of this Committee.
- g. The BC Parks Area Supervisor (or designate), along with the current Chairperson of the existing Advisory Committee and/or the new approved incoming Chairperson, will review all applications. Recommendations for new Committee members will be provided to, and confirmed by, the Regional Director.

### **Selection Criteria**

- a. All members must have a general knowledge of the Park, and have a strong commitment to the vision and philosophy of the Master Plan.
- b. Potential committee members should also confirm they are able to listen and process information in a professional manner, without pre-determined bias, prior to providing their own opinions.
- c. The goal is for the Committee to be comprised of members with a broad range of knowledge and abilities. Therefore, some additional skills/knowledge that are desirable include, but are not limited to:
  - i. Provincial perspective on outdoor recreation issues,
  - ii. knowledge of BC's Park System,
  - iii. park interpretation
  - iv. human and natural history,
  - v. resource conservation and management,
  - vi. outdoor recreation,
  - vii. environmental law,
  - viii. planning and research,
  - ix. engineering/trades, and
  - x. aboriginal issues and culture.
- d. Given the presence of a mine in the Park, there may be some selection priority to ensure that there is one person with expert knowledge of geology or mine operations on the Committee at all times.
- e. Members will be selected on their own merit and not as representatives of any special interest group(s) with which they may be associated. Affiliation with a group will not preclude consideration for membership unless that affiliation negatively impacts a

potential member's ability to remain unbiased.

- f. Members may be selected to provide regional representation.

### **Procedures**

- a. The Committee will operate on a consensus basis. If consensus cannot be achieved, all positions will be forwarded to the Regional Director.
- b. 50% + 1 committee members will be considered a quorum.
- c. The Committee will elect a chairperson and review as needed to maintain the effectiveness of the Committee.
- d. Committee members will serve a minimum of two (2) years, and a maximum of five (5) years. To provide some continuity to the Committee, an attempt will be made to limit the annual turnover to two (2) committee members. Variances to these terms may be made by the Regional Director to maintain the effectiveness of the Committee after soliciting input from Committee members.
- e. The Committee is appointed by and reports to the Regional Director who reserves the right to make amendments to the committee structure and membership as required. The reasons for any decisions in these matters will be publicly stated.
- f. The Chairperson and the BC Parks Strathcona Area Supervisor will prepare agendas. BC Parks will provide relevant background information on issues referred to the Advisory Committee for consideration. The public may suggest topics for discussion/presentation, if submitted in writing, to either the Chairperson or BC Parks staff, at least one month in advance of the next meeting to allow committee brief discussion as to the relevance and appropriateness of the topic and if supported, confirm which meeting it should be presented at.
- g. BC Parks will provide a secretary to record minutes and those minutes will be distributed to each member and will be posted on the Strathcona Park website and other digital forums for public viewing.
- h. The Committee may request approval from the Regional Director to arrange public meetings or use other methods (e.g. email, social media) to gather information and receive input on an issue. Funding for public meetings will be at the discretion of the Regional Director.
- i. The Committee may utilize subcommittees (made up of current SPPAC members) to advance the work of the Committee. Funding for subcommittees will be at the discretion of the Regional Director.
- j. The Committee has no authority to commit funds, enter into contracts or represent BC Parks.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

- a. Committee members will endeavour to stay informed of Park issues and public perspectives by gathering information from a variety of sources (e.g. personal activities within the Park; discussions with other Park users; monitoring the news or social media).
- b. Members will participate in online discussions between meetings, and come prepared to all meetings to discuss agenda topics and make recommendations.
- c. Members will make best efforts to attend all meetings. If a member misses two consecutive meetings, their membership will be reviewed by the Chairperson and BC Parks Strathcona Area Supervisor. Only the Regional Director can terminate a member from the Committee.

## **Recommendations**

Concerns or advice from the Committee will be in the form of written recommendations to the Regional Director.

If the Committee cannot come to a consensus recommendation, all opinions will be forwarded to the Regional Director.

Where appropriate, the Regional Director will respond in writing to SPPAC's recommendations. In the event that SPPAC's recommendation is not followed, the Regional Director will provide a written rationale of how the recommendation was considered and the reasons for not accepting the recommendation.

## **Remuneration**

Members of the Committee will serve without remuneration, but BC Parks will pay appropriate and necessary pre-approved out of pocket expenses that arise directly out of the performance of their duties as members of the Advisory Committee, in accordance with the Financial Administration Act and Regulations.

## **Conflict of Interest**

Conflict of interest occurs when a Committee member's personal interests are in conflict, or could be perceived to be in conflict, with the member's role as a Committee member.

All members have a responsibility to identify potential conflicts, whether the conflict involves himself or herself or another member and regardless of whether the potential conflict is perceived or real.

If a member has a conflict, they will declare it and leave the meeting while the issue is being discussed. The member will not try to influence the discussion or resulting decision in any way. The conflict will be recorded in the minutes.