

Little Qualicum River Regional Park Management Plan Appendices

2013-2023



December 2012



Ursus Environmental

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Date: August 30, 2011.

To: Kelsey Cramer, Park Planner – Recreation and Parks
Regional District of Nanaimo
830 West Island Highway
Parksville, B.C. V9P 2X4

Subject: Environmental Overview of Little Qualicum River Regional Park.

Dear Kelsey:

The following report involved a desktop review of existing information sources and field reconnaissance carried out in early August of 2011.

1.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Little Qualicum River Regional Park (LQRRP) extends across 44 hectares (ha) of forest along the middle reaches of the Little Qualicum River. The Little Qualicum River flows northeast from Cameron Lake for approximately 14 km before passing through a sizeable estuary (measuring about 15 ha in area) near the Strait of Georgia. The LQRRP is located due north of the Little Qualicum Falls Provincial Park, a 440 ha protected area containing forest patches greater than 100 years old. As part of the coastal plain extending across southeast Vancouver Island, terrain in the vicinity of LQRRP is broadly level to gently undulating. The river corridor itself is deeply incised in places, with sections of the river passing through regions with canyons and steep bluffs.

The LQRRP occurs along the western margins of the of Coastal Douglas-fir Biogeoclimatic Zone, within the Moist Maritime Subzone (or CDFmm). This zone has the mildest climate in Canada. It generally experiences warm, dry summers and mild, moist winters (Green and Klinka 1994). Brief periods of drought may occur over mid-to-late summer. Precipitation is lower in the CDFmm than adjacent subzones to the west due to the rain-shadow effect of Mt. Arrowsmith and the Beaufort Mountain Range. Typical forest stands within the CDF zone are dominated by Douglas-fir, Grand Fir and Western Redcedar. Common understorey plants in the CDFmm Subzone include: Salal, Dull Oregon Grape, Oceanspray, and Oregon Beaked Moss (Green and Klinka 1994).

Lands surrounding the LQRRP have historically been part of Vancouver Island's working forest, resulting in extensive areas being covered by stands representing the early seral (< 40 years old) and mid-seral (40 - 80 years old) stages of forest succession. In recent decades, some forested areas near the park have been converted to rural residential and light industrial uses.

High fisheries values are associated with the Little Qualicum River. The reaches of the river within LQRRP, those between the Inland Island Highway and barriers to fish passage at Little Qualicum Falls Provincial Park, are known to support resident Rainbow and Coastal Cutthroat Trout, as well as Steelhead (the latter in winter). Three salmon species (Chum, Coho, and Chinook) have also been recorded in the part of the river that passes through the LQRRP (Ministry of Environment Habitat Wizard website).

2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

2.1 Expected & Documented Wildlife Occurrence

Mammals

Columbian Black-tailed Deer are reported to occur at fairly high densities in the region (Shackleton 1999). The largest ungulates on Vancouver Island, Roosevelt Elk, are apparently absent from the Little Qualicum River watershed (Quayle and Brunt 2003). As indicated in Table 1, deer trails were observed across the park during the August reconnaissance, most often along slopes and near slope breaks. Deer browse sign and droppings were seen along the transmission line and in a few other riverside locations. The sign observed is consistent with fairly high deer use of the park.

Two large carnivore species found on Vancouver Island are expected to occur within the LQRRP; the Black Bear and Cougar. Sign attributed to the former was observed in several parts of the park, particularly around Skunk Cabbage swamps and streamside forest, which are used by bears throughout their active period. Black Bears occur at densities ranging 0.3 to 1.3 bears per 100 ha on Vancouver Island (Davis and Hamilton 1996). Therefore, it is presumed at least one or two bears would be expected to occur in the park at any given time. Seasonal aggregations of bears may occur at LQRRP during the autumn salmon spawning period, but little evidence of concentrated use was found during the fieldwork. A few salmon remains found 20 to 30 m from the river banks were attributed to bear activity in the autumn.

Cougars occur at higher densities on Vancouver Island than in many other locations in western North America, ranging from 1.5 to 3.8 cougars per 100 km². Despite this relatively high density, they are seldom seen, as they range over territories spanning 20 to 200 km². No cougar sign was detected in LQRRP during the fieldwork, but it likely serves as an important movement and dispersal corridor for this species (and several others).

Table 1. Summary of opportunistic wildlife observations at the Little Qualicum River Regional Park (August 2011).

Species	Type of Observation	Comments
MAMMALS (5 species)		
Black Bear	Foraging sign, scat	Feeding sign in all skunk cabbage swamps, Scat on trail under transmission lines. Salmon remains in adjacent forest.
Black-tailed Deer	Visual, browse sign, droppings	Occur throughout park, trails along steep bluffs and along streamside forest. Tracks in south swamp.
Raccoon	Tracks	Small swamp in south end of park.
Beaver	Sign	Dam built near western margins of park in north-central area.
Red Squirrel	Visual, Feeding sign	Middens seen below large fir trees across the site.
BIRDS (20 species)		
American Robin	Auditory	Common and abundant in area.
Belted Kingfisher	Auditory	Heard over river in northern and southern parts of park.
Brown Creeper	Auditory	Regionally Important Species. Uses older stands in central & northern part of park
Cedar Waxwing	Auditory	Heard near Meadowood Way access.
Chestnut-backed Chickadee	Auditory	Heard throughout forested parts of the site.
Common Raven	Visual, auditory	Four seen near transmission line clearing.
Dark-eyed Junco	Visual	Seen in riparian forest.
Hairy Woodpecker	Auditory	Heard in forest west of Koskimo Road.
Northern Flicker	Auditory	Heard in most habitat types.
Pacific-slope Flycatcher	Auditory	Heard in riparian forest in central part of park.
Red-breasted Nuthatch	Auditory	Heard in mid-seral coniferous & mixed stands across the site.
Red-breasted Sapsucker	Visual, sign	One seen near logging road bridge. Feeding sign common on cedars throughout site.
Ruffed Grouse	Visual	Seen in riparian forest below transmission lines.
Song Sparrow	Auditory	Heard near beaver dam.
Spotted Towhee	Visual, auditory	Near small swamp in south end of park.
Steller's Jay	Auditory	In swampy forest in north end of park.
Turkey Vulture	Visual	One over-flight high over transmission lines.
Western Tanager	Auditory	Heard at top of mature conifer in north part of site.
White-crowned Sparrow	Visual	In small shrub swamp in south end.
Winter Wren	Auditory	Heard in riparian forest below transmission lines.

Along with bears, a number of smaller mammals in the region have an affinity for riparian habitats including: Beaver, Raccoon, Mink, and River Otter. A single beaver dam was observed near the north-central part of LQRRP, and several Beaver channels were crossed while hiking through streamside forest in other parts of the park. Raccoon tracks were noted in the southernmost swamp in the park, but this species is expected to occur throughout the site.

A number of other mammals associated with upland forest are expected within the park, including: Marten, Red Squirrel, Deer Mouse, and Dusky Shrew. Of these, only squirrels were directly observed. The high degree of canopy closure, abundant woody debris, and high surface complexity of LQRRP would be well-suited to Marten.

Avifauna

Due to the timing of the fieldwork late in the breeding bird season, only 20 species were noted in and around LQRRP (Table 1). The documented bird assemblage is dominated by forest passerines (10 species), bark-gleaning insectivores (3 species), and woodpeckers (3 species). Other species groups represented among observed birds include: corvids (2 species), grouse (1 species), kingfishers (1 species) and vultures (1 species). Habitat conditions at the site appear suitable for several neotropical migrants commonly associated with forest habitats in the region (e.g. warblers, vireos, and Rufous Hummingbird).

Although a number of veteran trees and snags are present within LQRRP, no raptor nests or raptors were detected during the summer fieldwork. Review of the Wildlife Tree Stewardship (WITS) database revealed that the nearest known Bald Eagle nest occurs about 2 km to the northwest, along Kinkadee Creek (Appendix A). The WITS database includes an American Kestrel nest record located a short distance to the east of the eagle nest. Government-sponsored nest inventory mapping for the rare Queen Charlotte Goshawk places the nearest goshawk nest about 18 km to the south, in the China Creek watershed. It is possible that several species of accipiter (i.e. woodland hawks) and owls frequent or nest in the park.

Great Blue Herons may forage within parts of the LQRRP, but they typically nest in areas closer to marine shorelines. The optimal foraging distance between heronries and rich marine foraging grounds is less than 10 km. According to the WITS database, the nearest heron colony in the watershed is within 1 km of the Little Qualicum River Estuary. No reference to historic heron colonies along the Little Qualicum River was found while reviewing Ministry of Environment publications.

Herptiles

No native amphibians were observed within LQRRP during the August fieldwork but, given the abundance of riparian forest and several wetlands within the park, several species are likely to occur, including pond-breeders and entirely terrestrial amphibians. Common pond-breeders in the region include the Rough-skinned Newt, Long-toed Salamander, Pacific Treefrog, and Red-legged Frog.

The Red-legged Frog is a Provincially Blue-listed species associated with low-elevation sites having an abundance of coarse woody debris (Maxcy 2004). A variety of forest types are used by this species as “core” (or non-breeding) habitat, but riparian stands with a deciduous component are favoured. Swamps, beaver ponds, and quiet parts of the river system represent potential breeding sites for Red-legged Frogs at LQRRP, while moist forest areas represent potential “core” habitat.

Several native salamanders with entirely terrestrial habits may occur within moister parts of the park, particularly where large diameter recumbent logs and a heavy cover of leaf litter are present on the forest floor. These species include the Western Red-backed Salamander, the Wandering Salamander, and the Ensatina. The latter is closely associated with fir-dominated stands having a dense ground cover of mosses (Matsuda *et al.* 2006), a habitat type not observed during the reconnaissance.

In addition to amphibians, two species of garter snakes are expected to occur within LQRRP. Both are common and widespread on southern Vancouver Island, with considerable overlap in habits and habitats. The Northwestern Garter Snake is considered more terrestrial than the other, known as the Common Garter Snake (Matsuda *et al.* 2006).

2.2 Plants & Plant Communities

As given in Appendix A, a total of 53 vascular plants were identified during the August 2011 field reconnaissance including 11 tree species, 21 shrub species, and 21 non-woody plants. The majority of these are common forest-associated species, however, two relatively uncommon plants were noted within LQRRP. A few Snowbrush (*Ceanothus velutinus*) shrubs were seen on slopes below the transmission lines. This species occurs mostly in Washington and Oregon, but a few records exist on southern Vancouver Island. It is adapted to colonize areas following fires (Pojar and MacKinnon 1994). The other uncommon plant, Hairy Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos columbiana*) was seen above the slope break by the transmission lines. This shrub occurs in dry, sunny locations with acidic soils across southern and central Vancouver Island. Both of these shrubs are currently Yellow-listed (i.e. not threatened) by the Conservation Data Centre (CDC Website).

Field reconnaissance identified six different plant communities within the park (Table 2). The Dry Upland Mixed Forest community is of considerable conservation importance (i.e. Red-listed by the CDC). Polygon #52636 in the CDC Rare Element Database (Appendix C) includes parts of the LQRRP, primarily within rock outcrop, steep slope, and ridge crest locations (Figs. 1 and 2). The tree canopy of this plant community is dominated by Douglas-fir, with a lesser occurrence of Arbutus and Lodgepole Pine. The forest understory is comprised predominantly of Dull Oregon Grape and Salal. Both the young and mid-seral successional stages of this plant type are present within the park. As a result, dead and dying trees (i.e. snags) are sparse here, and represent mainly the small diameter classes.

Table 2. Summary of vegetation types observed within the Little Qualicum River Regional Park.

Plant Community	Description	Successional Stages Represented	Distribution in LQRRP
Dry Upland Mixed Forest	Rapidly draining soils supporting Douglas-fir, Arbutus, and pine. Dull Oregon grape and Salal dominate the understory.	Young & Mid-seral	Middle slopes & ridge crests.
Mesic Upland Forest	Average nutrient levels. Canopy predominantly fir with some cedar and alder; Salal and Bracken Fern common on forest floor.	Young & Mid-seral	Middle slopes and benchlands.
Moderately Moist Upland Mixed Forest	Above-average soil nutrients. Canopy of Douglas-fir, Western Hemlock, Western Redcedar & Maple. Sword Fern dominates understory.	Mid-seral	Lower and middle slopes of northern area.
Riparian Mixed Forest	Rich soils support a variety of conifers along with maple, alder, & cottonwood; understory dominated by Salmonberry.	Young, Mid-seral, & Mature	Streamside forest throughout LQRRP.
Treed Swamp	Red Alder and Sitka spruce growing above Skunk Cabbage, Ferns and Salmonberry	Mid-seral	Mostly in the northern part of LQRRP.
Shrub Swamp	Clusters of Pacific Willow growing with dense patches of bulrush, Skunk Cabbage, and other herbaceous plants.	Shrub-herb	Just north of L. Qualicum Falls Prov. Pk. Boundary.
Disturbed Shrubland	Poor to average soil nutrient levels support juvenile conifers, arbutus, and deciduous trees, along with Hairy Manzanita. Juvenile trees brushed periodically.	Shrub-herb	Hydro Transmission Line in central part of LQRRP.

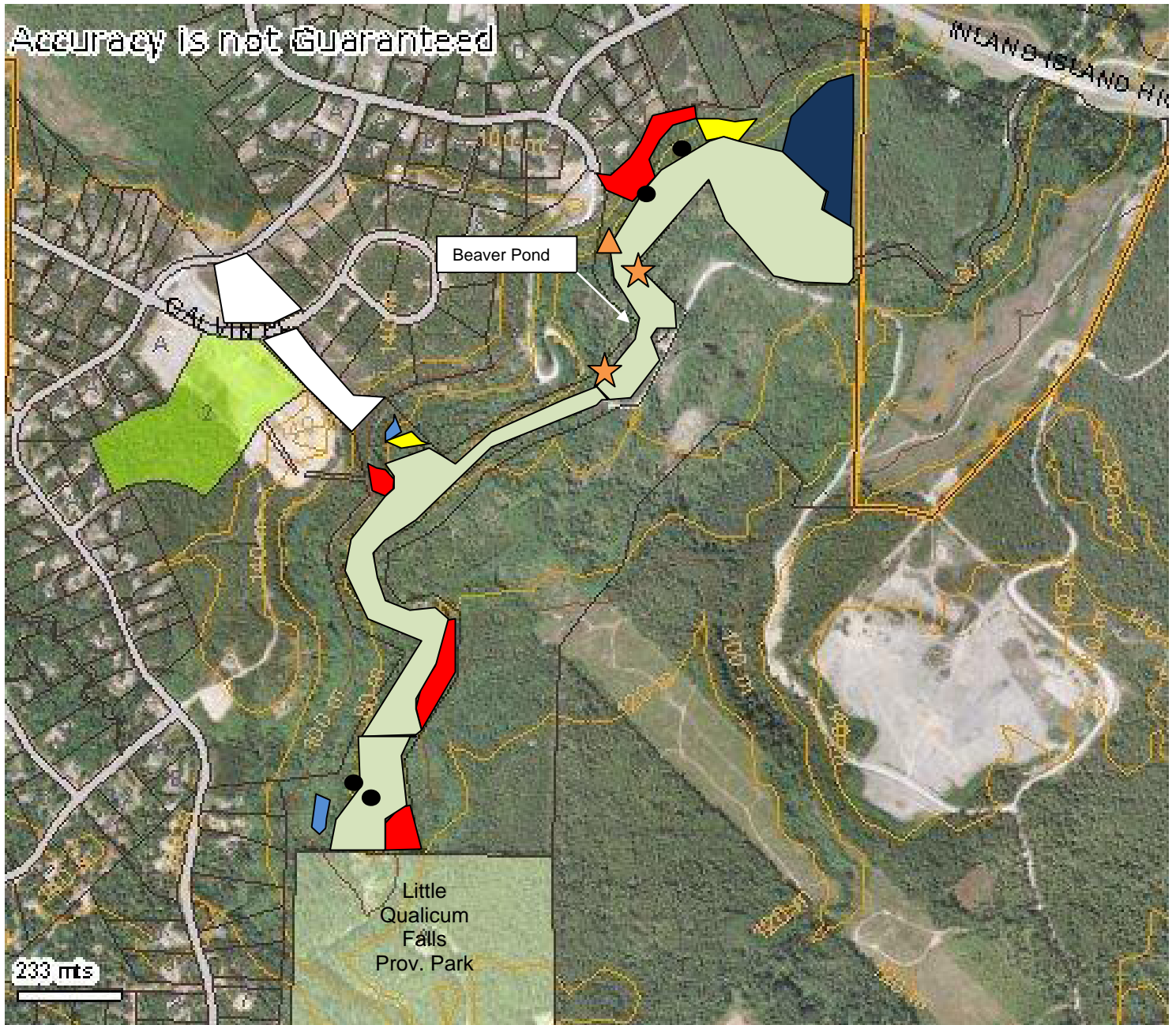


Figure 1. General distribution of main plant communities and site features within Little Qualicum River Regional Park.

Legend

- Red = Dry Upland Mixed Forest (Fir – Arbutus)
- Yellow = Moderately Moist Upland Mixed Forest
- Light Green = Mixed Riparian Forest
- Dark Blue = Wooded Swamp
- Light Blue = Shrub Swamp
- White = Disturbed Shrubland

- Orange Stars = informal camp sites
- Orange Triangle = abandoned car
- Black Circles = veteran trees

Note: unthemed areas are predominantly Mesic Upland Forest.

The Mesic Upland Forest community is distributed across the park on mid-slope and bench land locations. The tree canopy in these areas is typically a mix of Douglas-fir, Western Hemlock, Western Redcedar, Big Leaf Maple, and Red Alder (Fig. 3). The forest understory is highly variable. Mid-seral stands are often dominated by Salal and Bracken Fern with a minor occurrence of Oregon Grape, Sword Fern, Trailing Blackberry, and Red Huckleberry. However, some areas of dense coniferous young and mid-seral forest have very limited understory development. More open stands occasionally support grasses and other herbaceous plants.

The Moderately Moist Upland Mixed Forest community is restricted to areas of richer soil along lower slopes in the central and northern parts of the park. The tree canopy in these areas predominantly Western Redcedar and Big Leaf Maple in the 40 cm to 80 cm diameter range (Fig. 4). There is a lesser occurrence of Grand Fir and Red Alder in the canopy. The forest understory supports a dense cover of Sword Fern with a minor cover of Salmonberry and juvenile shade-tolerant conifers. Snags and coarse woody debris are abundant within this plant community, and a few veteran trees were noted here.

The distribution of Riparian Mixed Forest communities is extensive within the LQRRP. They appear on Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory (SEI) Map 92F.038 along both sides the Little Qualicum River, as Polygons N1255B, N1255D, and N1270A. Structural complexity and plant diversity is generally higher in this community type than in others present in the park. Tree cover is diverse, with a deciduous component consisting of Black Cottonwood, Big Leaf Maple, Red Alder and Bitter Cherry and coniferous component of Douglas-fir, Western Redcedar, Western Hemlock, and Grand Fir. Shrub layers are dense and dominated by Salmonberry. Other shrub species in riparian areas include: Red Elderberry, Devil's Club, Ninebark, Red Huckleberry, Salal, and willows (Fig. 5). As most riparian stands in LQRRP are in the young to mid-seral stage of forest succession, large snags are not very abundant. An exception occurs in the north-central part of the park. Historical logging activity has resulted in high levels of coarse woody debris in riparian areas.

A Treed Swamp plant community occurs in the rich and moist soils of the northern part of the park. This wetland is considered ecologically sensitive, extending across Polygons N1255F and N1255B on the SEI Map Sheet covering the park (92F.038). The semi-open tree canopy of this mid-seral plant community is dominated by Red Alder with clusters of Sitka Spruce and Western Hemlock trees in the 10 – 30 cm diameter range. There is a minor amount of Bitter Cherry in places. The shrub layer here includes a moderate cover of Salmonberry that is interspersed with patches of Devil's Club and Red Huckleberry. Although a number of ferns are common in this plant community, Skunk Cabbage is the dominant plant on the forest floor (Fig. 6).



Figure 2. Mid-seral successional stage of Dry Upland Mixed Forest plant community.



Figure 3. Typical Mesic Mixed Forest in the central part of the park.



Figure 4. Moderately Moist Upland Mixed Forest is restricted to lower slope locations in the park.



Figure 5. Riparian Mixed Forest is the most extensive plant community occurring at LQRRP.



Figure 6. Part of the extensive Treeed Swamp community in the north end of the LQRRP.



Figure 7. Shrub Swamp in the southern part of the park.

Two small (< 0.3 ha) but interesting Shrub Swamp communities were identified during the field reconnaissance. One is located in the southern part of the park, near the Little Qualicum Falls Provincial Park boundary. It features a dense cover of Pacific Willow with patches of Small-flowered Bulrush and Skunk Cabbage. This swamp has a high density of small-diameter snags (Fig. 7). The other Shrub Swamp is located beneath the transmission lines, on the western side of the park. It is dominated by Salmonberry and Skunk Cabbage, with a lesser occurrence of Common Horsetail and Lady Fern.

The Disturbed Shrubland plant community occurs beneath the double circuit 138 kV transmission lines running through the central part of the park. This linear unit extends from Meadowood Way to the edge of riparian forests beneath the transmission line. Vegetation here includes a variety of shrubs and juvenile coniferous and deciduous species that are periodically brushed to prevent them growing close to the lines. The western part of this unit has thin, rapidly-draining soils supporting Douglas-fir, Arbutus, Hairy Manzanita, and Kinnickinnick. Scotch Broom appears well-established within the latter area.



Figure 8. Disturbed Shrubland plant community beneath the BC Hydro transmission lines.

2.3 Existing Access and Trail Networks

The Little Qualicum River Regional Park currently has limited access, particularly with respect to foot access. There are three access points from paved roads (Meadowood Way, Galvin Place, and Corcan Road), and one from a private gravel road (off of Melrose Road). The most extensive informal trail is a foot/ATV trail that skirts the LQRRP boundary for several hundred metres in the west-central region. This trail originates in the park under the transmission line, but veers northeast outside of the park for a considerable length. There is also a short foot/ATV trail from the private gravel road about 400 m east of the bridge crossing the Little Qualicum River. It provides access to the east bank of the river. The RDN constructed trail at Meadowood Way connects to the existing trail network within Little Qualicum Falls Provincial Park, but no trails extend beyond the northern boundary of the Provincial Park.

Two informal riverside camping areas were encountered in LQRRP during the field reconnaissance, both in the north-central part of the park (Figure 1). The camp sites are accessed via short ATV trails from the private gravel road. There is a well-used beach area a short distance east of the Qualicum River Bridge, where the river widens into a small lagoon. This area has a loop road to provide parking off of the private gravel road.

3.0 POTENTIAL PARK DEVELOPMENT/ MANAGEMENT ISSUES

3.1 Trail & Facility Development

The relative narrowness of LQRRP and the steep terrain present in many parts of the park is likely to provide some challenges to the creation of a single trail traversing the entire park in a north-south direction. Trail development within the southern part of the park seems to present the fewest challenges, particularly if the ATV path leading from the transmission lines can be utilized during construction. Given that a southern trail could connect to the adjacent and heavily-used Provincial Park, it should probably be considered the highest priority for trail development. In such a case, the new trail/trail extension should seek to avoid the small swamp in the south end of LQRRP, as well as the few scattered veteran trees on slopes above the river. Swamp habitats in general should be avoided during trail development within LQRRP, as they are heavily used by bears and amphibians, and require raised boardwalks to prevent damage to sensitive plant communities.

A short destination trail leading from the west side of the Little Qualicum River Bridge to a beaver pond about 250 m to the north (Fig. 1) would also appear to present few engineering or environmental challenges, as the terrain is fairly level in this region. Although the beaver pond is mostly or entirely outside of the regional park, it appears unlikely to be impacted by development, and provides an interesting viewing point with long sight lines. The main environmental concern for trail development in this area would be cutting of trees during the breeding bird season, and the potential to impact nesting birds. This could be avoided by scheduling clearing activities outside of the breeding season. The steep terrain north of the beaver pond, near the end of Corcan Road, appears difficult to build trail through.

Areas around the loop road, on the eastern side of the Little Qualicum River Bridge, appear to be well-suited to development to typical amenities such as picnic tables, interpretive signage, parking lots, and toilets. The area has been previously disturbed and supports mostly introduced grasses and young forest.

3.2 Erosion-sensitive Areas

Although LQRRP features a number of steep areas, only two erosion-prone areas were detected during the field reconnaissance, both located in the northern part of the park. One occurs in near a large bend in the Little Qualicum River, about 1 km upstream of the Inland Island Highway. The river here appears to be cutting through a poorly consolidated sand deposit comprising the north bank. The other area of sensitive soils was seen on a steep slope about 70 m to the west, within a Moderately Moist Upland Mixed Forest unit. Soils in this area appear to have a significant silt component, and a sizeable uprooted tree was observed here. Given the terrain at the site, and the significant fisheries values of the Little Qualicum River, it is recommended that specialist geotechnical advice be obtained as part of the LQRRP trail planning process whenever steep slopes are involved.

3.3 Invasive Species Management

Much of LQRRP is minimally disturbed and supports natural forest cover. The two main areas of potential concern with respect to invasive vegetation are the transmission line corridor, and roadside areas on the east side of the Little Qualicum River Bridge. While the non-riparian part of the transmission line corridor is periodically maintained by BC Hydro, the frequency of brushing there may not be frequent enough to limit the proliferation of Scotch Broom, which appeared abundant in the area southeast of Galvin Place and northwest of the slope break. The concern is that poor vegetation maintenance practices along the transmission line could impact the persistence of uncommon Hairy Manzanita shrubs occurring there.

Roadside vegetation in the area just east of the Little Qualicum River Bridge includes several invasive species including Scotch Broom, Canada Thistle, and Tansy Ragwort. Efforts to control/remove invasive species in this area should be considered prior to any planned developments near the loop road that would involve exposing native soils, or importing soil.

3.4 Dumping and Abandoned Vehicles

Considering the size of the LQRRP, and its easy vehicular access, there appears to be few problem areas with dumping at present. Some litter was evident at the two informal camp sites, and one historically abandoned vehicle was found in the northern part of the park. No evidence of dumping that would act as wildlife attractants was found during the reconnaissance, but there is a possibility that deer remains are disposed of in or near the park during the hunting season. Signage to deter illegal dumping may be useful to avoid wildlife-human conflicts generated by this irresponsible act.

It has been a pleasure to conduct this work on your behalf. Please feel free to contact me if you require any additional assistance with planning at this site.

Best regards,

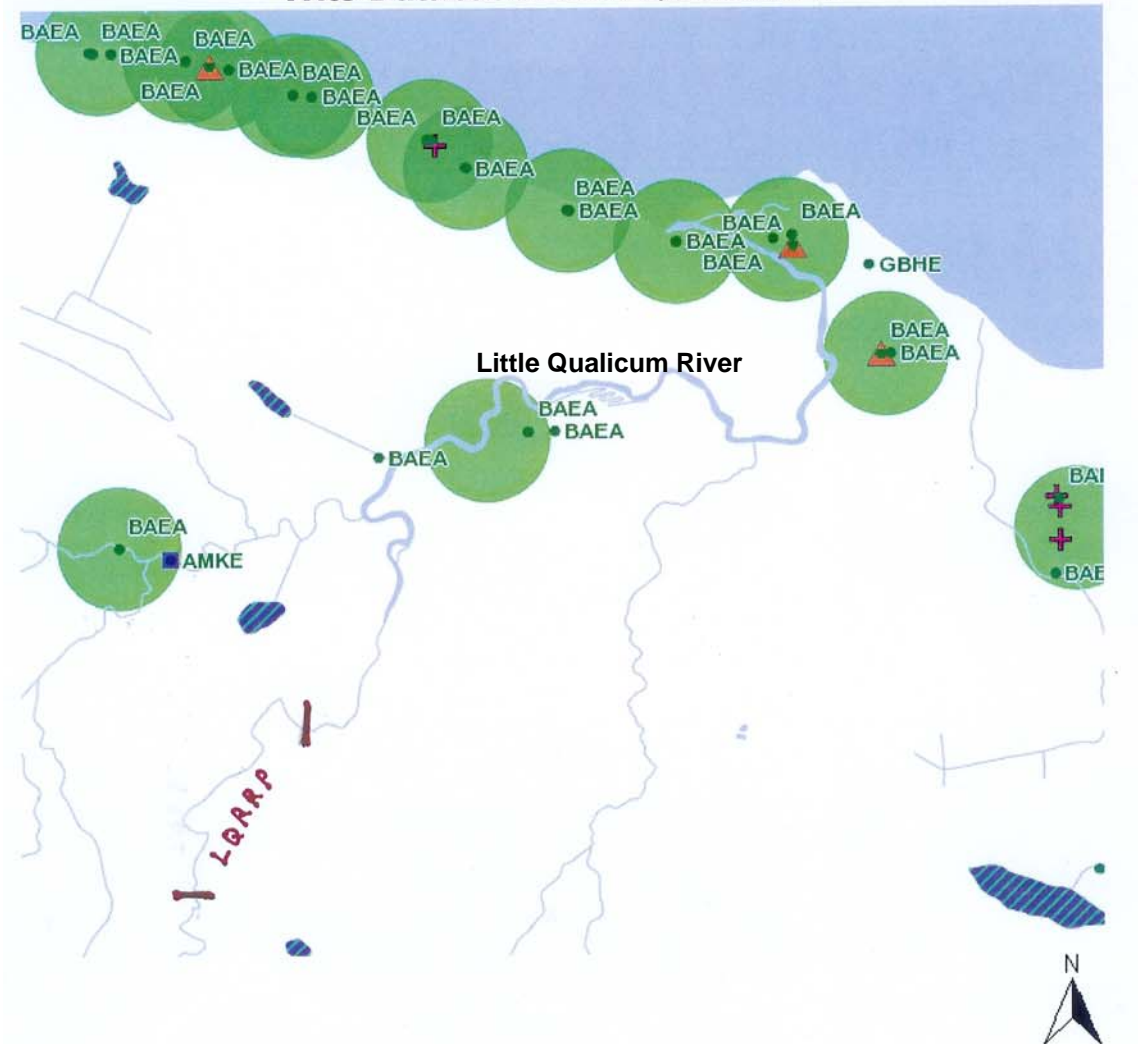
Joe Materi, R.P.Bio.

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Appendix A – Wildlife Tree Stewardship Nest Inventory results for areas in the vicinity of Little Qualicum River Regional Park.

Wits Database Little Qualicum R



1:50k

**Appendix B - Plants Identified at Little Qualicum River Regional Park
in August of 2011.**

Common name

Scientific name

TREES - 11 species

Arbutus	<i>Arbutus menziesii</i>
Big leaf maple	<i>Acer macrophyllum</i>
Bitter cherry	<i>Prunus emarginata</i>
Black cottonwood	<i>Populus balsamifera</i> ssp. <i>trichocarpa</i>
Douglas-fir	<i>Psuedotsuga menziesii</i> ssp. <i>menziesii</i>
Grand fir	<i>Abies grandis</i>
Lodepole pine	<i>Pinus contorta</i>
Red alder	<i>Alnus rubra</i>
Sitka spruce	<i>Picea sitchensis</i>
Western hemlock	<i>Tsuga heterophylla</i>
Western red cedar	<i>Thuja plicata</i>

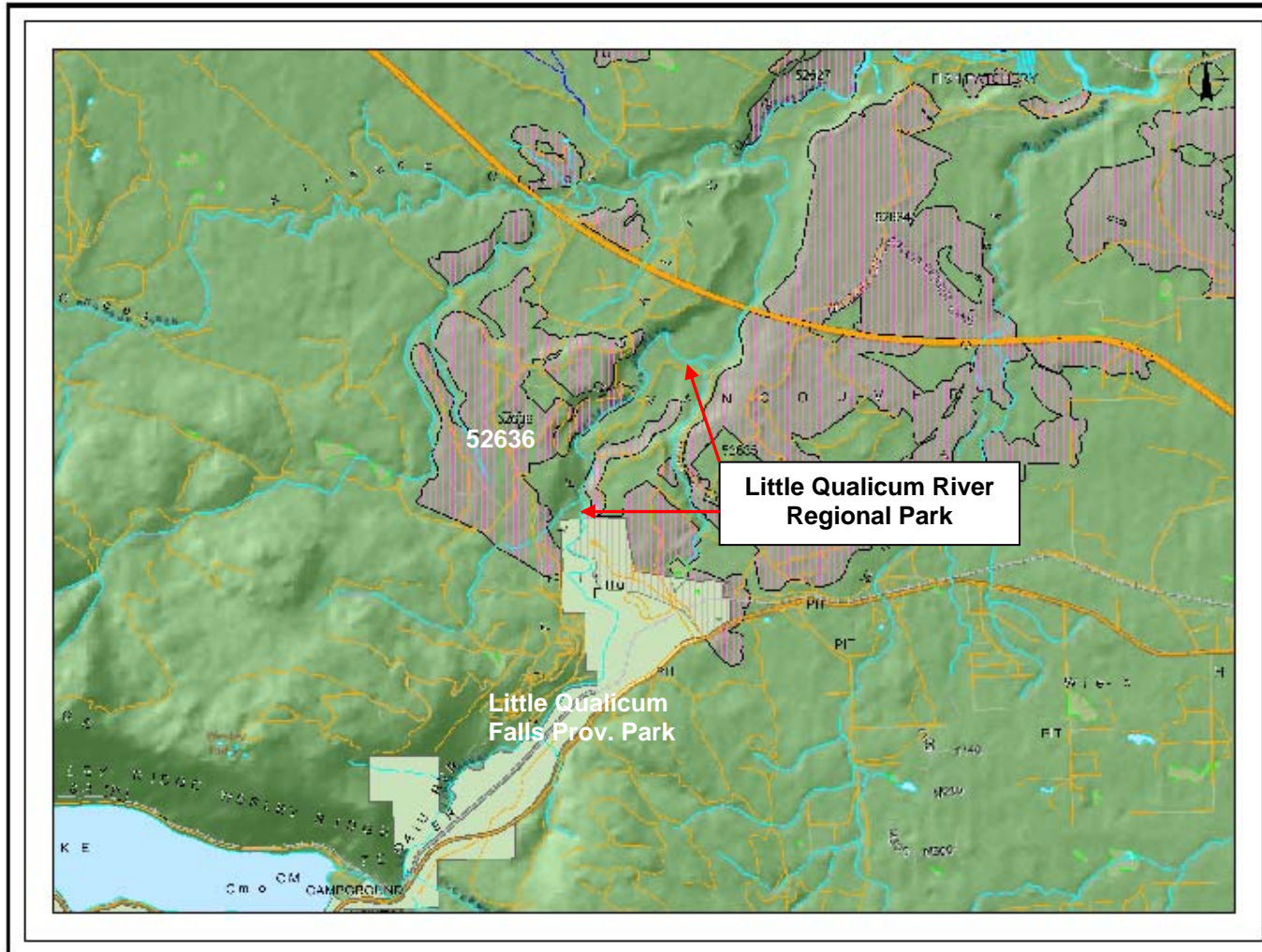
SHRUBS - 21 species

Common snowberry	<i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>
Devil's club	<i>Oplopanax horridus</i>
Dull Oregon grape	<i>Mahonia nervosa</i>
Goatsbeard	<i>Aruncus dioicus</i>
Hairy Manzanita	<i>Arctostaphylos columbiana</i>
Kinnickinnick	<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>
Nootka rose	<i>Rosa nutkana</i>
Oceanspray	<i>Holodiscus discolor</i>
Pacific ninebark	<i>Physocarpus capitatus</i>
Pacific willow	<i>Salix lucida</i> ssp. <i>lasiandra</i>
Red elderberry	<i>Sambucus racemosa</i> ssp. <i>pubens</i>
Red huckleberry	<i>Vaccinium parvifolium</i>
Salal	<i>Gaultheria shallon</i>
Salmonberry	<i>Rubus spectabilis</i>
Saskatoon	<i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i>
Scotch broom	<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>
Snowbrush	<i>Ceanothus velutinus</i>
Stink currant	<i>Ribes bracteosum</i>
Thimbleberry	<i>Rubus parviflorus</i>
Trailing blackberry	<i>Rubus ursinus</i>
Twinflower	<i>Linnaea borealis</i>

FERNS & HERBS - 21 species

Bracken fern	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>
Canada thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>
Common horsetail	<i>Equisetum arvense</i>
Cooley's hedge-nettle	<i>Stachys cooleyae</i>
Curled dock	<i>Rumex crispus</i>
Deer fern	<i>Blechnum spicant</i>
Henderson's sedge	<i>Carex hendersonii</i>
Lady fern	<i>Athyrium filix-femina</i>
Pearly everlasting	<i>Anaphalis margaritacea</i>
Queen's cup	<i>Clintonia uniflora</i>
Reed canary-grass	<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>
Three-leaved foamflower	<i>Tiarella trifoliata</i>
Skunk cabbage	<i>Lysichiton americanum</i>
Small-flowered bulrush	<i>Aquilegia formosa</i>
Stinging nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>
Sword fern	<i>Polystichium munitum</i>
Tall mannagrass	<i>Glyceria elata</i>
Tansy ragwort	<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>
Vanilla-leaf	<i>Achlys triphylla</i>
Wall lettuce	<i>Lactuca muralis</i>

Appendix C - Conservation Data Centre Rare Element Database search results.





BC Conservation Data Centre: Occurrence Report (52636)

August 10, 2011

Pseudotsuga menziesii / *Mahonia nervosa*

Douglas-fir / dull Oregon-grape

Field definition document available at <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/atrisk/ims.htm>

This is a summary report. For a complete record contact the CDC (cdcdata@gov.bc.ca).

Identifiers

Occurrence ID:	8392	Status:	
Shape ID:	52636	Global:	G2
Type:	Ecological Community	Provincial:	S2
		BC List:	Red
Data Sensitive:	N		

Locators

Survey Site: LITTLE QUALICUM RIVER, NORTHWEST OF

Directions:

Survey Information

First Obs. Date: 1998 **Last Obs. Date:** 2007

Occurrence Data: This occurrence is a mix of young to mature Douglas-fir stands. There are some inclusions of younger stands with a more recent forest harvesting history.

Occurrence Rank and Occurrence Rank Factors

Rank: E Verified extant (viability not assessed) **Rank Date:**

Rank Comments:

Condition of Occurrence:

Size of Occurrence:

Landscape Context:

Description

General Description: This occurrence is located on undulating terrain south of the Island Highway and west of Little Qualicum River.

Habitat:

BGC: CDF mm

Documentation

References: Canadian Wildlife Service, Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks Vancouver Island Region, and B.C. Conservation Data Centre. 1993-1996. Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory groundtruthing forms. Unpub. field forms.
Canadian Wildlife Service, Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks Vancouver Island Region, and B.C. Conservation Data Centre. 1997. Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory: East Vancouver Island and Gulf Islands. Clover Point Cartographics Ltd., Victoria.
Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory [SEI] of East Vancouver Island and Gulf Islands: Sensitive Ecosystems Mapping, Disturbance Mapping and Re-evaluation of Major Riparian Corridors. 2004. Prepared by Axy's Environ. Consulting Ltd. for Environ. Can., Can. Wildl. Serv., B.C. Minist. Sustainable Resour. Manage., and B.C. Minist. Water, Land and Air Prot., and the Habitat Conserv. Trust Fund. 66 mapsheets, 1:20 000 scale.
Terrestrial Ecosystem Mapping [TEM] of the Coastal Douglas-fir Biogeoclimatic Zone. 2008. Prepared for B. Zinovich, Integrated Land Management Bureau, B.C. Minist. of Agric. and Lands, Nanaimo B.C. by Madrone Environmental Services, Duncan B.C. 1:20,000 spatial data.

Version

Version Date: 24-JAN-11

Mapping Information

Estimated Representation Accuracy: Medium

Confidence Extent: ?

August 10, 2011

Little Qualicum River Regional Park Management Plan

ENGAGEMENT #1 SUMMARY: Survey, Workshop & Stakeholder Interviews

Introduction

Public engagement is integral to the development of the Little Qualicum River Regional Park (LQRRP) Management Plan. Overall, the process includes 3 stages: two Workshops with corresponding online surveys, and one final Open House to present the Draft Management Plan. The following provides a summary of the first stage.

Overview of Input Received

Both the Survey and Workshop addressed similar content. Input was sought on: park issues, key words for the creation of a long-term vision statement, draft management principles and, park-use ideas for future management and development of the park. Forty-one (41) people completed the online survey, which was available from April 13 to May 11, 2012 on the RDN website. It was also available in hard copy at the Workshop. The majority of respondents were from Electoral Area 'F' (68%), or from Qualicum Beach (17%). Twenty-one (21) people attended the first Workshop, held on Saturday, April 28th from 1-4pm at the Qualicum Beach Civic Centre. Workshop participants were grouped to represent either the Community Park or the Regional Park. Of the 21 people there, nine (9) represented the LQRRP at two tables. However, all participants at the Workshop were invited to provide feedback on both parks.

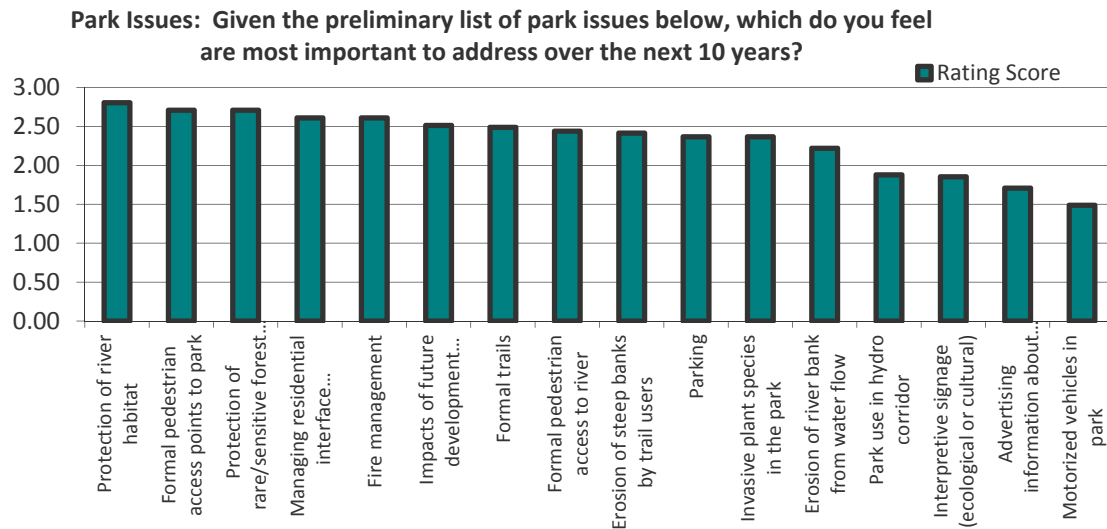
In addition, six (6) key stakeholder interviews were conducted to gain further information from specific organizations about the LQRRP and implications for future management and development of the park. The organizations interviewed were: Mid-island ATV Club, BC Parks - Ministry of Environment Parks & Protected Areas, Wicklow West Holdings, BC Hydro, Dashwood Fire Department (Meadowood Fire Hall), and Ozero Gravel Operations.

Park Issues:

The park issues that surfaced as the most important to address in the management plan, through both the online survey and the workshop, fall into two primary themes – *Environmental protection* and *Park Access*.

The weighted average of the results from the survey indicate protection of the river, protection of rare and sensitive ecosystems and fire management as 3 of the top issues to address regarding environmental protection. Protecting salmon spawning areas and erosion along the river bank were noted by workshop participants.

Access issues that ranked near the top in the online survey include: formal pedestrian access points to the park, managing the residential interface, impacts of future development, and formal trails within the park. Workshop participants and comments via the survey highlighted the topic of motorized access through the park for ATVs, while noting the importance of protecting the river from motorized vehicles.

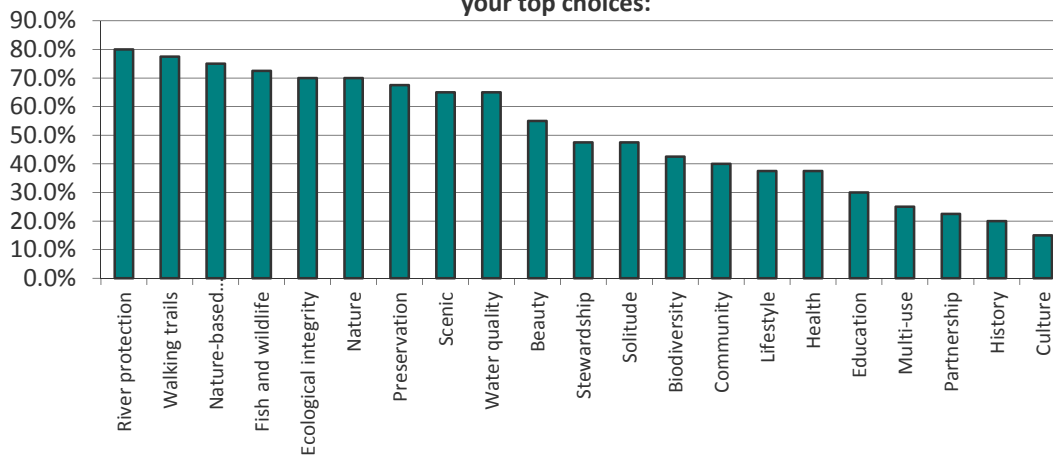


Vision:

The Figure below demonstrates the most popular words to consider when developing the vision for the LQRRP as indicated through the online survey. Emphasis is on ecological integrity (river, fish and wildlife) and on nature-based recreation and trails is apparent.

Workshop participants reiterated these points, with emphasis on habitat and watershed protection, expanding the park boundary to aid in this regard. Active park-use should be concentrated in specific areas to minimize environmental impact (e.g. in the hydro corridor). Reference to stewardship, partnership and education was more clearly communicated by workshop participants.

Park Vision: Below are some key words that could be incorporated into an overarching vision for the Little Qualicum River Regional Park. Please select your top choices:



Management Principles:

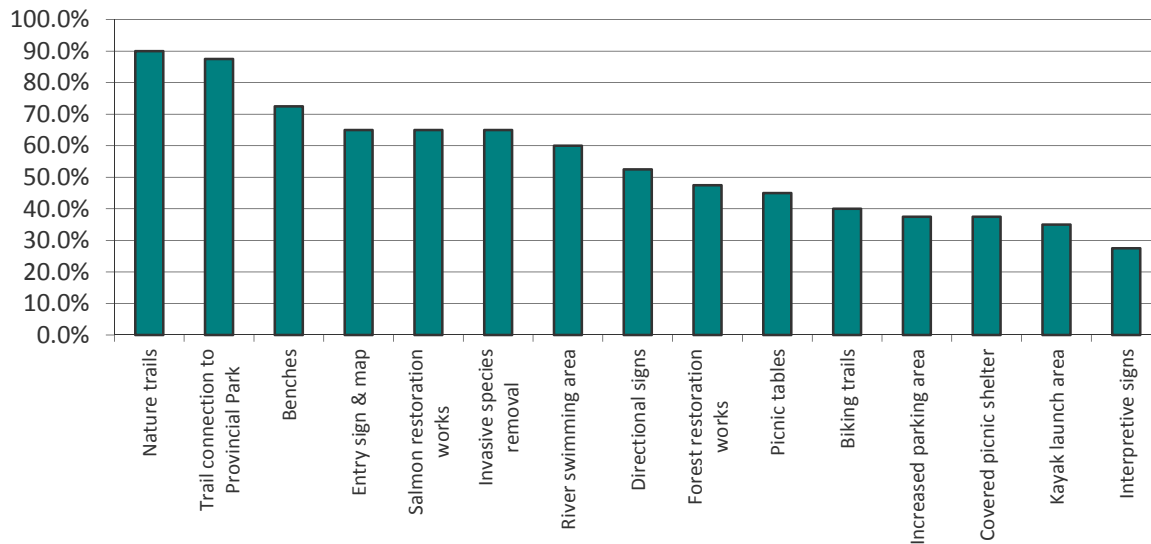
Overall, the three guiding draft principles presented at the first Workshop and through the online survey were well supported by the community. Comments pertained to clarifying the term “leave-no-trace” and to incorporating reference to education and protection of the park for future generations. (Survey responses shown in table below).

Draft Principle	Agree	Disagree
A strong commitment to conservation and environmental stewardship will guide management initiatives.	39	1
Recreational activities within the park will respect natural features and practice a ‘leave-no-trace’ code of conduct.	36	5
A cooperative management approach will engage stakeholders, volunteers and other organizations to ensure a collaborative method for achieving park projects.	39	1

Park-use & Management Ideas:

The most common topics for future park-use and management as identified by survey respondents are shown in Figure 5. Emphasis is on trails, site amenities such as benches and signage, and ecological restoration including salmon habitat and invasive vegetation removal. Additional comments provided by survey respondents reiterate the importance of protecting the river and minimizing impacts of park uses on the natural ecosystem, while ensuring uses such as horseback riding and biking occur in appropriate areas.

Park Use & Site Features: What site features or future park use opportunities will be most important to incorporate into the park over the next 10 years? Check all that apply:



Workshop participants had the opportunity to graphically convey some of the ideas for future park management and use (Figure 6). The main concepts that were communicated include:

- Park Zoning (designating conservation and active-use areas)
- Further bioinventory research
- Site Amenities/ Improvements (benches, signage, trail development, formal day-use/swimming area, formal shared-use crossing at bridge for motorized and non-motorized vehicles)
- Park Policies/ Guidelines (e.g. no fires, dog management guidelines)
- Shared-uses with Meadowood Community Park (washrooms, active use in hydro corridor)
- Partnerships/ Stewardship (e.g. Initiate 'Friends of Little Qualicum River Regional Park', work with BC Hydro to restore vegetation)
- Future parkland acquisitions on both east and west sides of river to enhance habitat protection.



Stakeholder Interviews:

Organization	Summary of Input Received
Mid-island ATV Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Riders tend to want to get out of populated areas to crown land, no issue to ride 150 miles /day • Challenge with forestry roads getting decommissioned • Challenge with new development and parkland that intersects ability to get from A to B • No interest in riding in parks • People ride under power lines because gravel roads are there • Safety is paramount • Management Plan could address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Area to park ATVs to access store or parks ○ Proper signage at crossings ○ Use term 'shared-use' at places where motorized vehicles may occur
Wicklow West Holdings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many constraints to development including riparian, steep slopes, ALR, current zoning and market demand • Village Centre concept between community and regional parks is challenge because half of lot is geotechnically un-usable for development • Timeline is undetermined for all development in surrounding WWH lands – many challenges, several starts and stops over last 20 years • Development on east side of river or from end of Corcan Rd, not likely for very long time – limited developable land on east side of river (salmon spawning channels, floodplain, steep slopes, expensive to cross river), construction of river crossing infeasible (high \$\$) • Ozero currently controls and maintains private gravel road from end of Corcan Rd • SROW from end of Corcan Rd to river and east to regional park is in favour of RDN to develop trail and parking area. Main concern with this corridor is safety conflict with gravel trucks on the private road • Opportunities for trail and parking within SROW will increase in time if/when gravel operations cease, however, access would only be to the river, not on private land on east side of river. (A separate agreement would be required to use private lands on east side of river)
BC Parks - Ministry of Environment Parks & Protected Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential of trail connection from regional park to provincial park is a concern from BC Parks perspective – this would introduce an uncontrolled access to the provincial park in an area that is already a safety concern for the public due to the narrow canyon and waterfalls in close proximity • Existing trail that leads towards the regional park from the provincial park is not sanctioned and would require a formal impact assessment to develop it as a formal BC Parks trail - new trail designations result in increased costs for maintenance as well • If a trail connection is considered in the future, it would be pedestrian only • There are no plans for future acquisitions or major improvements to the provincial park. • RDN to look at alternatives to providing neighbourhood connections that do not direct people into the provincial park.
BC Hydro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation Management within Hydro Corridors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mow/mulch (debris left on site) broom and other woody plants that have

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ potential to grow to over 3m in height at maturity ○ Avoid fire concern by finely chopping and leaving piles no more than 0.5m depth ○ Goal is to encourage low growing ground cover of native sp. ○ May apply stump/stem herbicide to aggressive plants (not previously done in RDN parkland) ○ Don't typically replant except in riparian areas with appropriate sp. ○ Try other techniques in riparian areas such as removing tops (red cedar only), tall slashing stems, ring girdling deciduous stems to minimize impact of clearing. ○ Typically revisit a site every 6-8 years to address taller vegetation ● Park use within Hydro Corridors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Main concern is material-use and maintaining set-backs from towers/guy wires (10m), and wires (no closer than 6m) ○ Projects that reduce future maintenance for BC Hydro desirable ○ RDN to refer to ROW compatible guide for activities within ROW ○ RDN to notify Hydro at least 1-year before desired works to plan for possible cost-sharing opportunities ○ Hydro would consider contributing in-kind services such as site prep/clearing, invasive weed management where all adjacent properties have a written and working plan to manage their lands ○ BC Hydro access to ROW and towers needs to be maintained.
Ozero Sand & Gravel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ozero expects all gravel works in the area to be complete within 2 years (both Ashling and Meadowood pits). ● Maintenance of the bridge across the LQR and the private gravel road by Ozero would cease at this point. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ozero currently spends likely \$10k/year on bridge maintenance, which is an estimate for materials at cost, since they perform the labour. ○ Bridge does not meet safety standards for vehicles – engineered assessment would likely be required for RDN to permit safe vehicle or ATV crossing (\$\$). ○ Ozero does not currently manage road for dust, though does place chip surfacing to maintain road (about \$50k spent in past) ○ Primary issue with road is ATV use that degrades surface ○ Closures of the road occur on weekends and in the dry summer months and during snowfall. ● RDN can formalize pedestrian access to the regional park at the bridge location by way of the SROW from the end of Corcan Rd. Implications include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Safety concern for pedestrian access along this route while gravel works still in place ○ Current uncertainty around future management of private gravel road
Meadowood Fire Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fire/emergency response around the LQRRP is split between the Dashwood Fire Dept and the Coombs-Hilliers Fire Dept – the boundary is the River itself. ● The access road and bridge would need to be serviceable to allow the Meadowood Fire Dept to respond to an incident on the east side of the river. ● Any trail closures or smoking bans that the RDN may implement in a park over peak fire season is the responsibility of the RDN to enforce. ● A Fire management plan for the Regional Park is a good idea and the plan should reference working with the Dashwood Fire Dept and the Ministry of Forests to develop this plan.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ATV use in the area is prominent – there may be conflict between pedestrian use of the private road when the gate is closed and ATVs.
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Next Steps

Based on the input received to date, next steps include:

- Development of a draft vision statement, goals and objectives for the LQRRP management plan
- Development of a draft conceptual master plan for the park

Little Qualicum River Regional Park Management Plan -SURVEY #1

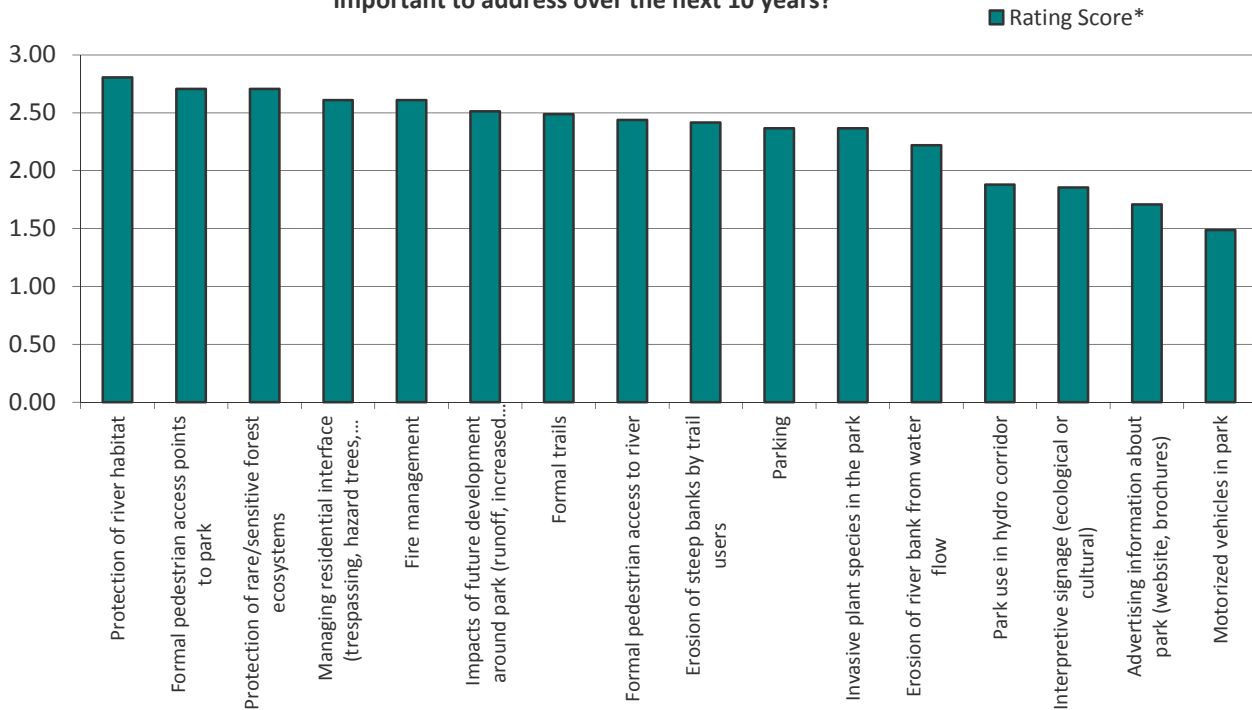
Question #1

Park Issues: Given the preliminary list of park issues below, which do you feel are most important to address over the next 10 years?

Answer Options	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Response Count	Rating Score*
	3	2	1		
Protection of river habitat	36	3	1	40	2.80
Formal pedestrian access points to park	32	6	3	41	2.71
Protection of rare/sensitive forest ecosystems	32	7	1	40	2.71
Managing residential interface (trespassing, hazard trees, fire management)	26	14	1	41	2.61
Fire management	30	7	3	40	2.61
Impacts of future development around park (runoff, increased development)	23	16	2	41	2.51
Formal trails	25	11	5	41	2.49
Formal pedestrian access to river	24	11	6	41	2.44
Erosion of steep banks by trail users	25	10	4	39	2.41
Parking	23	10	8	41	2.37
Invasive plant species in the park	24	10	5	39	2.37
Erosion of river bank from water flow	20	11	9	40	2.22
Park use in hydro corridor	14	11	13	38	1.88
Interpretive signage (ecological or cultural)	13	11	15	39	1.85
Advertising information about park (website, brochures)	7	16	17	40	1.71
Motorized vehicles in park	7	7	26	40	1.49
answered question				41	
skipped question				0	

*Rating Score is calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the total number of responses

Park Issues: Given the preliminary list of park issues below, which do you feel are most important to address over the next 10 years?



Little Qualicum River Regional Park Management Plan -SURVEY #1

Question #2 - Open-ended responses

What other issues are you aware of that are missing from this list? Please specify, or comment on the list provided above.

Answer Options	Response Count
	11
<i>answered question</i>	11
<i>skipped question</i>	30

Number	Response Date
1	Pet area The River and Falls need to be protected. There needs to be dog bags and waste
2	recepticles
3	Safe and easily accessible access to the park. Integration with the provincial park & community park. Cooperation with other public insitutions on the river (municipal park, fish hatchery).
4	The erision of banks due to water flow is a natural process, and I don't think we should disturb or hinder that.
5	Facilitate the creation of stewardship groups from the neighbourhood of the park
6	We need to have Fishing access for the public as well as retaining habitat.
7	river crossing/through road access (Ozero private road)
8	Fencing off Park from Private Property to prevent, livestock being killed by off leash dogs. Dog refuse bags and refuse cans. Major problem of dog S@#t now, inviting more people to let their dogs terrorize the neighborhood should be controlled.
9	Although ATVers don't require parks there must be some access so they can get through or around the parks. Motorized recreation is here to stay and promotes access for everyone. It is best to plan the access in the park now rather than wait for the ATVers to find their own way. Sign: ATV Route Pedestrian Route. Atvers need a narrow bridge to cross the river so that the waterway is protected.
10	removalpicking of native plants & cutting of trees for firewood by public; ban on hunting & use of firearms;
11	How will this park tie into adjoining parklands? Increased recreational user impacts on surrounding property owners.

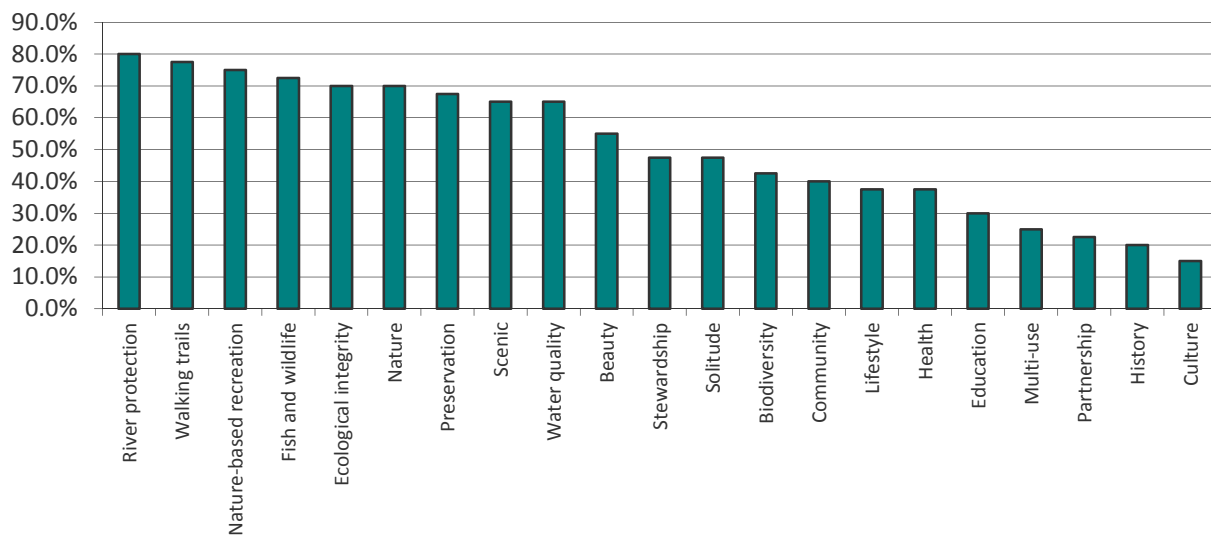
Little Qualicum River Regional Park Management Plan -SURVEY #1

Question #3

Park Vision: Below are some key words that could be incorporated into an overarching vision for the Little Qualicum River Regional Park. Please select your top choices:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
River protection	80.0%	32
Walking trails	77.5%	31
Nature-based recreation	75.0%	30
Fish and wildlife	72.5%	29
Ecological integrity	70.0%	28
Nature	70.0%	28
Preservation	67.5%	27
Scenic	65.0%	26
Water quality	65.0%	26
Beauty	55.0%	22
Stewardship	47.5%	19
Solitude	47.5%	19
Biodiversity	42.5%	17
Community	40.0%	16
Lifestyle	37.5%	15
Health	37.5%	15
Education	30.0%	12
Multi-use	25.0%	10
Partnership	22.5%	9
History	20.0%	8
Culture	15.0%	6
answered question		40
skipped question		1

Park Vision: Below are some key words that could be incorporated into an overarching vision for the Little Qualicum River Regional Park. Please select your top choices:



Little Qualicum River Regional Park Management Plan -SURVEY #1

Question #4 - Open-ended responses

Are there other words that are missing?

Answer Options	Response Count
	6
<i>answered question</i>	6
<i>skipped question</i>	35

Number	Response Date
1	Spiritual
2	Salmon.
3	Watershed Management
4	Natural integrity uncomromized.
5	Atv
6	fun, family, shared use,

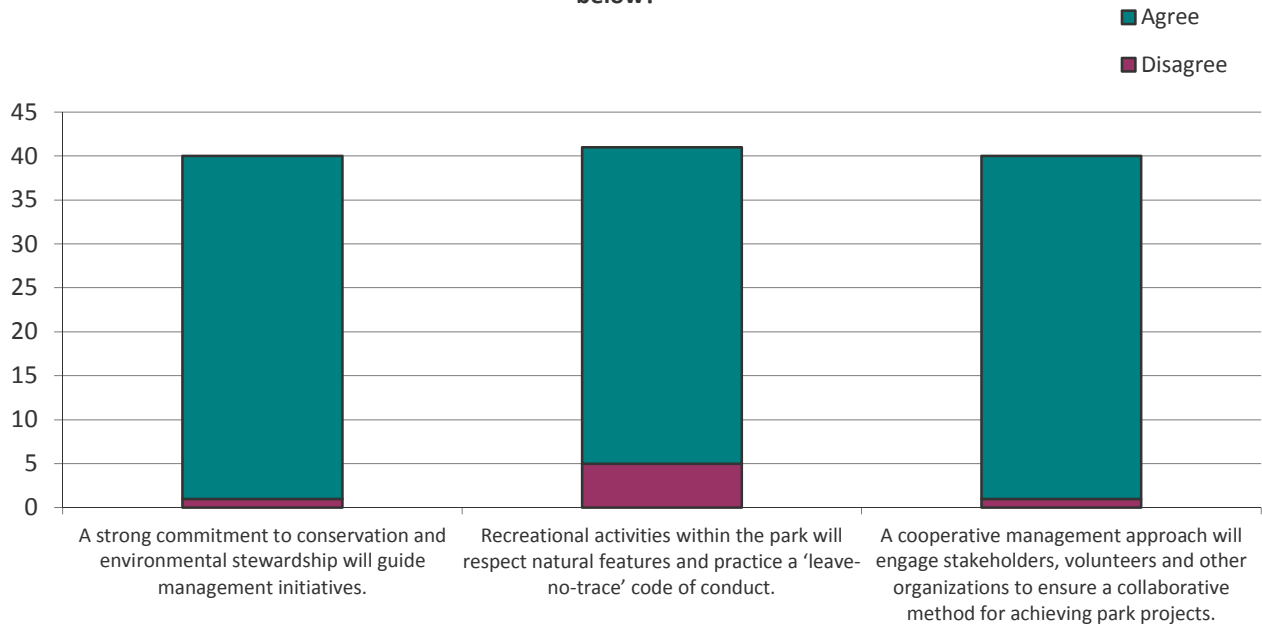
Little Qualicum River Regional Park Management Plan -SURVEY #1

Question #5

Draft Park Principles: Draft guiding principles for the future management of the Little Qualicum River Regional Park are presented below. Do you agree with the statements below?

Answer Options	Agree	Disagree	Response Count
A strong commitment to conservation and environmental stewardship will guide management initiatives.	39	1	40
Recreational activities within the park will respect natural features and practice a 'leave-no-trace' code of conduct.	36	5	41
A cooperative management approach will engage stakeholders, volunteers and other organizations to ensure a collaborative method for achieving park projects.	39	1	40
<i>answered question</i>			41
<i>skipped question</i>			0

Draft Park Principles: Draft guiding principles for the future management of the Little Qualicum River Regional Park are presented below. Do you agree with the statements below?



Little Qualicum River Regional Park Management Plan -SURVEY #1

Question #6 - Open-ended responses

If you disagree with one or more of the draft principles, please explain why:	
Answer Options	Response Count
	5
<i>answered question</i>	5
<i>skipped question</i>	36

Number	Response Date
1	Leaving No Trace is never Practiced and cooperative management is an oxy moron.
2	People are very disrespectful of nature and property, inviting more people to the district will create more destruction and garbage.
3	A motorized path through the park will aid ATVers in their quest to go further into the back country.
4	I do not know what a leave no trace means
5	"Leave -no-trace" can be construed by different user types as something else, eg an atv or motorcyclists going down a trail will leave tire track or ruts and a hiker will say that they are leaving a trace of their activity.

Little Qualicum River Regional Park Management Plan -SURVEY #1

Question #7 - Open-ended responses

Are there other guiding principles that should be considered?	
Answer Options	Response Count
	5
<i>answered question</i>	5
<i>skipped question</i>	36

Number	Response Date
1	user pay rather than taxpayer
2	Lights
3	education
4	Plan now for "shared" (motorized and non-motorized) so their is no conflict later.
5	private road access & river crossing to change to public

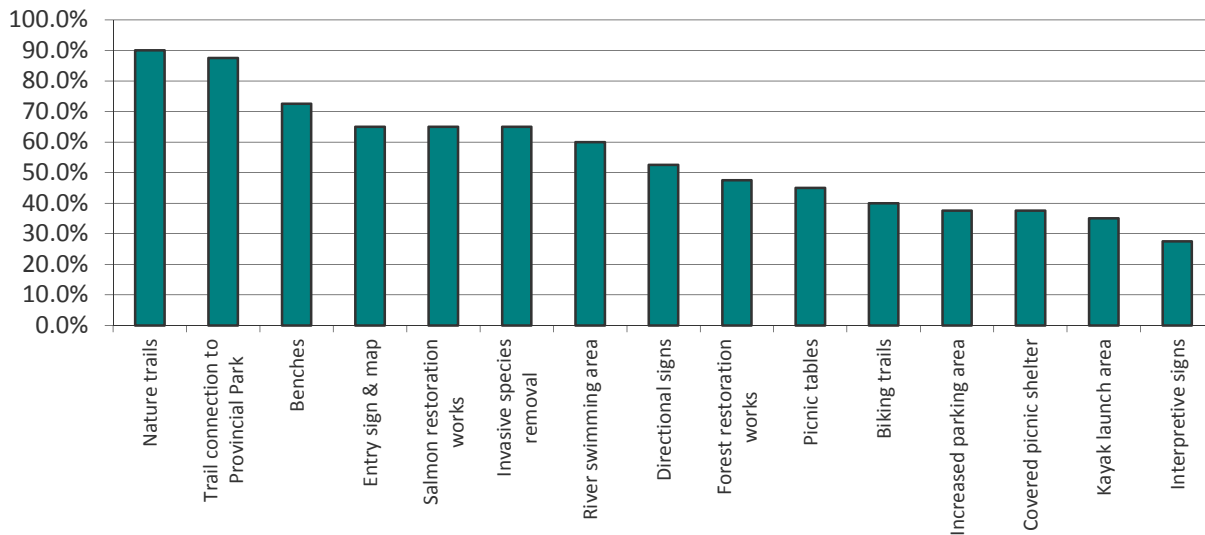
Little Qualicum River Regional Park Management Plan -SURVEY #1

Question #8

Park Use & Site Features: What site features or future park use opportunities will be most important to incorporate into the park over the next 10 years? Check all that apply:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Nature trails	90.0%	36
Trail connection to Provincial Park	87.5%	35
Benches	72.5%	29
Entry sign & map	65.0%	26
Salmon restoration works	65.0%	26
Invasive species removal	65.0%	26
River swimming area	60.0%	24
Directional signs	52.5%	21
Forest restoration works	47.5%	19
Picnic tables	45.0%	18
Biking trails	40.0%	16
Increased parking area	37.5%	15
Covered picnic shelter	37.5%	15
Kayak launch area	35.0%	14
Interpretive signs	27.5%	11
answered question		40
skipped question		1

Park Use & Site Features: What site features or future park use opportunities will be most important to incorporate into the park over the next 10 years? Check all that apply:



Little Qualicum River Regional Park Management Plan -SURVEY #1

Question #9 - Open-ended responses

Others (please specify):

Answer Options	Response Count
	8
<i>answered question</i>	8
<i>skipped question</i>	33

Number	Response Date
1	a washroom???
2	Pet area Community groups should be invited to present salmon restoration or forest restoration works, and the RDN can work collaboratively by designating areas as 'no access' for recreational use, but I don't think that it is the RDN's madate to actually fund/carry out restoration projects.
3	re-planting where required
4	Protect the river corridor, practical locations for trail development and use of hydro corridor for bike park and ATV activities.
5	No biking or kayaking.this will disturb the fish habitat. Too small for kayaking and bikes ruin trails where ruts render growth impossible.mud ruins the spawning beds.Just because there is a spawning channel, doesn't mean fish don't spawn down stream.
6	Not to sure about a connection to the provincial park.
7	Trails ok for horse use
8	

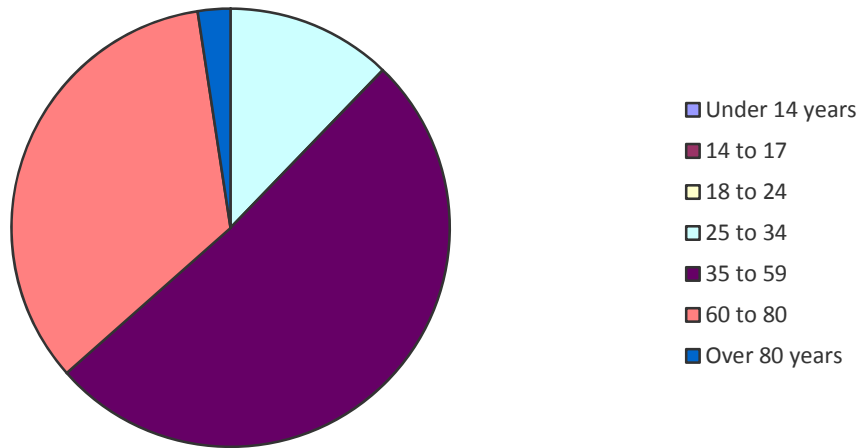
Little Qualicum River Regional Park Management Plan -SURVEY #1

Question #10

About you: Please indicate which age range best describes your age:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Under 14 years	0.0%	0
14 to 17	0.0%	0
18 to 24	0.0%	0
25 to 34	12.2%	5
35 to 59	51.2%	21
60 to 80	34.1%	14
Over 80 years	2.4%	1
answered question		41
skipped question		0

About you: Please indicate which age range best describes your age:



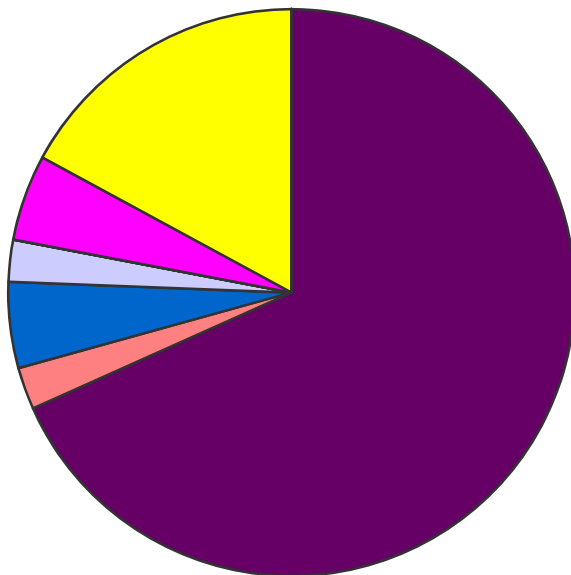
Little Qualicum River Regional Park Management Plan -SURVEY #1

Question #11

Which community do you live in?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Electoral Area A (Cassidy, Cedar, Yellow Pt., S. Wellington)	0.0%	0
Electoral Area B (Gabriola Island)	0.0%	0
Electoral Area C (Extension, Arrowsmith, Benson, E. Wellington, Pleasant Valley)	0.0%	0
Electoral Area E (Nanoose Bay)	0.0%	0
Electoral Area F (Coombs, Hilliers, Errington, Whiskey Creek, Meadowood)	68.3%	28
Electoral Area G (French Creek, Dashwood, Englishman River)	2.4%	1
Electoral Area H (Shaw Hill, Qualicum Bay, Deep Bay, Bowser)	4.9%	2
Nanaimo	2.4%	1
Lantzville	0.0%	0
Parksville	4.9%	2
Qualicum Beach	17.1%	7
Other	0.0%	0
answered question		41
skipped question		0

Which community do you live in?



- Electoral Area A (Cassidy, Cedar, Yellow Pt., S. Wellington)
- Electoral Area B (Gabriola Island)
- Electoral Area C (Extension, Arrowsmith, Benson, E. Wellington, Pleasant Valley)
- Electoral Area E (Nanoose Bay)
- Electoral Area F (Coombs, Hilliers, Errington, Whiskey Creek, Meadowood)
- Electoral Area G (French Creek, Dashwood, Englishman River)
- Electoral Area H (Shaw Hill, Qualicum Bay, Deep Bay, Bowser)
- Nanaimo
- Lantzville
- Parksville
- Qualicum Beach
- Other

Little Qualicum River Regional Park Management Plan

ENGAGEMENT #2 SUMMARY:

Survey & Workshop

Introduction

Public engagement is integral to the development of the Little Qualicum River Regional Park (LQRRP) Management Plan. Overall, the process includes 3 stages: two Workshops with corresponding online surveys, and one final Open House to present the Draft Management Plan. The following provides a summary of the second stage.

Overview of Input Received

Both the Survey and Workshop addressed similar content. Input was sought on: draft vision, draft management goals, and the preliminary conceptual master plan. The survey sought more specific feedback on the park management objectives that support each goal. Participation in the second round of engagement was much less than the first round. This may in part be related to the simultaneous Meadowood Community Park Design process and participants focusing their attention on the Community Park over the Regional Park. Only two (2) people completed the online survey, which was available from June 8 to Jun 29, 2012 on the RDN website. It was also available in hard copy at the Workshop. Respondents were from Electoral Area 'F'. Thirteen (13) people attended the second Workshop, held Saturday, June 16 from 9-12noon at the Lighthouse Community Centre. Workshop participants were grouped to represent either the Community Park or the Regional Park. Of the 13 people there, three (3) represented the LQRRP. However, all participants at the Workshop were invited to provide feedback on both parks.

Draft Vision:

Overall, participants were in support of the draft vision and no revisions were proposed.

Draft Management Goals:

All feedback supported the management goals. Participants suggested changing the words "limits" to "minimizes" and "impact" to "footprint" in Goal #2. RDN staff will work to re-word this Goal with these comments in mind.

Draft Goal

1. The park's river, forest and shrubland ecosystems are protected and enhanced.
 2. Outdoor recreation within the park limits environmental impact. Park users respect each other and nature.
 3. A cooperative management approach ensures collaboration on park access, development, stewardship and maintenance activities.
-

Draft Management Objectives:

Feedback on the draft management objectives was sought through the online survey only. Both respondents agreed with all of the draft objectives, except the following, where one respondent agreed and one disagreed. Unfortunately, no comments were provided to explain why there was some dissatisfaction with the following objectives:

- Invasive vegetation is actively controlled by an inventory, removal and monitoring approach.
- Public safety is considered above recreational or experiential opportunities within the park.
- Education about park values and uses are posted online and on signage in the park.

Preliminary Conceptual Master Plan:

Feedback on the preliminary conceptual master plan received through the workshop and online survey is summarized in the following categories:

Park Zoning

- Agreement with Conservation Area and Active-Use Areas (Hydro corridor and near river)
- Desire to see Conservation Area expanded in south portion of park. Avoid locating trails in the area and work with future development to ensure trail connections provided along new roads (eg. Sidewalks) with a short trail connection to the switchback trail.

Site Amenities/Improvements

- Interpretive signs will be important to communicate about wildlife in the area and how to avoid conflicts (cougars, bears, fish – need to post fishing regulations if fishing permitted)
- Majority of amenities (picnic tables, benches, garbage can, and toilet) should be close to where people will use them (near the river in Active-use area).
 - Park maintenance access to this area will affect what amenities can go there, may need to locate garbage and toilets on west side of river for more direct access).
- Garbage cans need to be wildlife proof, consider “big belly” garbage can to reduce maintenance needs
- Consider composting toilet for reduced maintenance needs
- Trail development (with stairs) along narrow band at southwest arm of regional park is a high priority, as is formalized day-use near the Glory Hole.
- Multi-use gravel trails, revegetation with native species and possibly a bike park are ideas for the Hydro corridor that were supported via the survey.

Park Access and Parking

- Parking off Meadowood Way is not big enough – consider expanding if possible.
- It would be more accessible if parking could go near the bridge on the west side of the river – this will require looking at the safety requirements of the gravel road to the bridge. For the

short term, parking at the end of Corcan Rd may have to suffice. Pedestrian access on the gravel access road may have to be limited to weekends when the gate is closed.

- An engineering study to examine the requirements for making the haul bridge safe for pedestrian crossing is important.
- For ATVs to pass through the park at designated crossing locations (eg. The bridge), a review of the parks Bylaw is required to permit this use in parks. Main implication is liability/safety within the park.
- If the gravel road within Stat. Right of Way from the end of Corcan no longer provides for gravel trucks, could it be partially paved to allow for a more accessible bike/pedestrian route to the river?
- Most important aspect of the haul bridge is as a pedestrian crossing in the case of fire or other emergency. People need to be able to cross the river, which would hopefully serve as a natural fire break and allow for emergency pick up on the east side.

Uses better suited/shared with Community Park

- Washroom facilities
- Parking if needed
- Bike park was suggested for area under hydro corridor, but this use appears to be accommodated within Community Park – hydro corridor to strive for revegetation with native species.
- ATV staging area, provided parks Bylaw amended to permit this use.

Partnerships/ Stewardship

- Work with BC Hydro to revegetate the hydro corridor with native species
- Clarify the easement over the bridge and whether another gravel operator could continue extraction works if /when Ozero discontinues operation.

Priorities

- Trail development (with stairs) along southwest arm of regional park is a high priority, as is formalized day-use near the Glory Hole.

1. Draft Park Vision: The following vision was created using the key words that were supported and generated in the last public engagement session. To what extent are you satisfied with the Draft Vision Statement below? "Bordering both sides of the Little Qualicum River, the Regional Park provides protection for a forest and river wildlife corridor within the greater watershed. Recreational activities minimize environmental impact and promote balance between park use and ecological integrity. Open communication encourages partnerships, stewardship, and long-term support for the park's vision."

	Select One	Response Count
Completely Satisfied	100.0% (2)	2
Reasonably Satisfied	0.0% (0)	0
Somewhat Unsatisfied	0.0% (0)	0
Completely Unsatisfied	0.0% (0)	0
answered question		2
skipped question		0

2. Please suggest any changes you feel should be made to the Draft Vision Statement:

	Response Count
	0
answered question	0
skipped question	2

3. Draft Management Goals: Below are Draft Management Goals for the Little Qualicum River Regional Park. Do you agree with the draft goals?

	Agree	Disagree	Response Count
The park's river, forest and shrubland ecosystems are protected and enhanced.	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	2
Outdoor recreation within the park limits environmental impact. Park users respect each other and nature.	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	2
A cooperative management approach ensures collaboration on park access, development, stewardship and maintenance activities.	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	2
		answered question	2
		skipped question	0

4. Please suggest any changes you feel should be made to the Draft Management Goals.

	Response Count
	0
answered question	0
skipped question	2

5. Goal: Ecosystems are protected and enhanced

	Agree	Disagree	Response Count
Objective: New development in the park avoids locations where environmentally sensitive areas are known to exist.	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	2
Objective: Protective fencing or barriers minimize erosion at key locations along trails or the river bank.	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	2
Objective: Invasive vegetation is actively controlled by an inventory, removal and monitoring approach.	50.0% (1)	50.0% (1)	2
Objective: Interpretive signage, where appropriate, will educate park users about wildlife, vegetation and sensitive ecosystems in the park.	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	2
Objective: Wildlife/Hazard trees are removed only in the event they pose a safety risk to the public.	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	2
Objective: Lands adjacent to the park are considered for preservation of environmentally sensitive habitat or recreational value and access is formalized through agreements with adjacent landowners.	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	2
answered question			2

skipped question

0

6. Goal: Recreation limits environmental impact.

	Agree	Disagree	Response Count
Objective: Public safety is considered above recreational or experiential opportunities within the park.	50.0% (1)	50.0% (1)	2
Objective: User activity areas are not located in areas that may conflict with wildlife use.	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	2
Objective: Site furniture is situated to enhance visitor enjoyment and minimize user-conflicts.	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	2
Objective: Leave-no trace Code of Conduct is expressed on signage and supported by regular park maintenance in day-use areas of the park.	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	2
Objective: Low-impact, non-motorized, passive activities are supported within the park.	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	2
Objective: Clear signage informs park visitors of park use regulations and recreational opportunities within the park.	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	2
			answered question 2

7. Goal: Collaboration on park access, development, stewardship and maintenance.

	Agree	Disagree	Response Count
Objective: Neighbouring land managers are consulted regarding formalized pedestrian access points and trails within and to surrounding neighbourhoods.	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	2
Objective: Potential for ATV access through the park will require consultation with adjacent private land owners.	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	2
Objective: Steelhead and other fish habitat is protected and enhanced with the collaborative efforts of the BCCF and MoE.	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	2
Objective: Volunteers are trained and supported in park initiatives (eg. invasive plant removal).	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	2
Objective: Education about park values and uses are posted online and on signage in the park.	50.0% (1)	50.0% (1)	2
Objective: Fire risk management is determined in collaboration with local fire department and the BC Forest Service.	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	2

Objective: Vegetation management and habitat enhancement within the hydro corridor is achieved through collaboration with BC Hydro.	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	2
Objective: Formalizing access (vehicular or pedestrian) to the park from the end of Corcan Rd will arise from further consultation with adjacent landowners and organizations.	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	2
Objective: Community partnerships may contribute to the development of park furnishings and trails through in-kind donations and other forms of support.	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	2
answered question			2
skipped question			0

8. Please suggest any changes, additions or deletions to the Draft Management Objectives.

	Response Count
	0
answered question	0
skipped question	2

9. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the various elements or aspects presented in the Conceptual Master Plan:

	Completely Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Completely Disagree	Response Count
Defining park zones (e.g. Conservation Zone & Active-use Zone)	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2
Day-use area along river corridor in locations shown (picnicking, fishing, swimming)	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2
Active-use area along hydro corridor in location shown (biking, horseback riding, walking)	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2
Parking area near gate at the end of Corcan Rd as shown	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2
Shared parking area with Meadowood Community Park as shown	50.0% (1)	50.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2
Pedestrian use along private access road from the end of Corcan Rd when the gate is closed	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2
No pedestrian use along private access road from the end of Corcan Rd due to safety conflict with gravel trucks and other vehicles when the gate is open	50.0% (1)	50.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2
Detailed engineering study to upgrade bridge for safe and	50.0% (1)	50.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2

separate pedestrian crossing					
Caution signage at bridge crossing and vegetation clearing to improve sightlines	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2
Permit ATV parking within designated parking area at end of Corcan Rd	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2
Formalize proposed multi-use trail connections with adjacent landowner in locations shown	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2
Formalize proposed road shoulder connections with Ministry of Transportation in locations shown	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2
Neighbourhood trail connection with stairs at south end of park	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2
Future regional connection from north end of park	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2
Formalize parkland use agreements to include additional lands for recreation or conservation, if future opportunity arises	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2
Install benches in locations shown	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2
Install picnic tables in locations shown	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2
Install garbage can in location shown	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2
Install signage at trail junctions as shown	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2

Install interpretive kiosk at parking area at end of Corcan Rd	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2
				answered question	2
				skipped question	0




10. If desired, please comment on the above elements or aspects.

					Response Count
					0
				answered question	0
				skipped question	2

11. Are there other ideas that have not been represented on the conceptual master plan that you feel should be shown? Please share:

					Response Count
					0
				answered question	0
				skipped question	2


12. The active-use area within the hydro corridor could provide different recreational and educational opportunities. Below are some examples of what could occur in the future. Please select those that you feel are most appropriate:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Multi-use gravel trail(s)		100.0%	2
Revegetation with native plants		100.0%	2
Habitat creation (eg. Brush piles for snakes; wildflowers for butterflies) and interpretive signage along rustic trails		0.0%	0
Christmas tree farm or other multi-year crop		0.0%	0
Bike park (soil mounds and valleys for bike play)		100.0%	2
		answered question	2
		skipped question	0


13. Are there other ideas for active-use in the hydro corridor that are not included above?

	Response Count
	1
answered question	1
skipped question	1

14. About you: Please indicate which age range best describes your age:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Under 14 years		0.0%	0
14 to 17		0.0%	0
18 to 24		0.0%	0
25 to 34		0.0%	0
35 to 59		0.0%	0
60 to 80		100.0%	2
Over 80 years		0.0%	0
		answered question	2
		skipped question	0

15. Which community do you live in?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Electoral Area A (Cassidy, Cedar, Yellow Pt., S. Wellington)		0.0%	0
Electoral Area B (Gabriola Island)		0.0%	0
Electoral Area C (Extension, Arrowsmith, Benson, E. Wellington, Pleasant Valley)		0.0%	0
Electoral Area E (Nanoose Bay)		0.0%	0
Electoral Area F (Coombs, Hilliers, Errington, Whiskey Creek, Meadowood)		100.0%	2
Electoral Area G (French Creek, Dashwood, Englishman River)		0.0%	0
Electoral Area H (Shaw Hill, Qualicum Bay, Deep Bay, Bowser)		0.0%	0
Nanaimo		0.0%	0
Lantzville		0.0%	0
Parksville		0.0%	0
Qualicum Beach		0.0%	0
Other		0.0%	0
answered question			2

skipped question	0
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16. If you are interested in receiving emails with further information about the park management planning process, please provide your email address below:

	Response Count
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	0
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answered question	0
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skipped question	2
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Page 2, Q13. Are there other ideas for active-use in the hydro corridor that are not included above?

1 ATV/Motorbike access to non park areas to help keep these motorized vehicles from destroying park values.

Jun 23, 2012 7:11 AM