



## Notice of Meeting and Meeting Agenda Regional Parks Committee

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Wednesday, June 22, 2022

9:30 AM

6th Floor Boardroom  
625 Fisgard St.  
Victoria, BC V8W 1R7

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R. Mersereau (Chair), G. Young (Vice Chair), G. Holman, B. Isitt, R. Martin, J. Ranns, D. Screech,  
L. Seaton, M. Tait, N. Taylor, C. Plant (Board Chair, ex officio)

The Capital Regional District strives to be a place where inclusion is paramount and all people are treated with dignity. We pledge to make our meetings a place where all feel welcome and respected.

### 1. Territorial Acknowledgement

### 2. Approval of Agenda

### 3. Adoption of Minutes

#### 3.1. [22-234](#) Minutes of the March 23, 2022 Regional Parks Committee Meeting

**Recommendation:** That the minutes of the Regional Parks Committee meeting of March 23, 2022 be adopted as circulated.

**Attachments:** [Minutes - March 23, 2022](#)

### 4. Chair's Remarks

### 5. Presentations/Delegations

*The public are welcome to attend CRD Board meetings in-person.*

*Delegations will have the option to participate electronically. Please complete the online application for "Addressing the Board" on our website and staff will respond with details.*

*Alternatively, you may email your comments on an agenda item to the CRD Board at [crdboard@crd.bc.ca](mailto:crdboard@crd.bc.ca).*

#### 5.1. [22-425](#) Delegation - Daniel Cammiade; Representing Nature Trails Society: Re: Agenda Item 6.1.: Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan

### 6. Committee Business

**6.1.**      [22-409](#)      Renewed Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan

**Recommendation:** [On June 15, 2022, the Transportation Committee (1) endorsed the recommendation to approve the plan on an interim basis; and (2) passed an additional motion arising:]  
That the Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

1. That the Capital Regional District Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032 be approved on an interim basis for one year while engagement with First Nations continues.
2. That bike parking and e-bike charging stations be added to priority action 4-2e.

**Attachments:**      [Staff Report: Renewed Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan](#)  
[Appendix A: Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032](#)  
[Appendix B: Public Engagement Report](#)  
[Appendix C: First Nations Engagement Report](#)  
[Appendix D: Presentation](#)  
[Appendix E: Transportation Committee Staff Report - June 15, 2022](#)

**7. Notice(s) of Motion****8. New Business****9. Adjournment**

The next meeting is July 27, 2022.

To ensure quorum, please advise Tamara Pillipow (tpillipow@crd.bc.ca) if you or your alternate cannot attend.

## Meeting Minutes

### Regional Parks Committee

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Wednesday, March 23, 2022

9:30 AM

6th Floor Boardroom  
625 Fisgard St.  
Victoria, BC V8W 1R7

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#### PRESENT

Directors: R. Mersereau (Chair), G. Young (Vice Chair), G. Holman (EP), B. Isitt, R. Martin (EP) (9:32 am), J. Ranns, D. Screech (EP), L. Seaton (EP), J. Bateman (for M. Tait) (EP), N. Taylor

Staff: L. Hutcheson, General Manager, Parks and Environmental Services; S. Carey, Senior Manager, Legal Services; M. MacIntyre, Manager, Parks Operations, Regional Parks; C. Stewart, Planner, Regional Parks; J. Dorman, Committee Clerk; T. Pillipow, Committee Clerk (Recorder)

EP - Electronic Participation

Regrets: Director(s) M. Tait, C. Plant

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 am.

#### 1. Territorial Acknowledgement

Director Taylor provided a Territorial Acknowledgement.

#### 2. Approval of Agenda

**MOVED** by Director Taylor, **SECONDED** by Director Ranns,  
That the agenda for the March 23, 2022 Regional Parks Committee meeting be approved.  
**CARRIED**

#### 3. Adoption of Minutes

##### 3.1. [22-197](#) Minutes of the February 23, 2022 Regional Parks Committee Meeting

**MOVED** by Director Taylor, **SECONDED** by Director Ranns,  
That the minutes of the Regional Parks Committee meeting of February 23, 2022 be adopted as circulated.  
**CARRIED**

#### 4. Chair's Remarks

Chair Mersereau stated that the Regional Parks Strategic Plan online survey is open until April 4, 2022. Members of the public can access the survey at [getinvolved.crd.bc.ca](http://getinvolved.crd.bc.ca) to offer their input. There is also an online information session on April 1, 2022 from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm.

## 5. Presentations/Delegations

- 5.2. [22-202](#) Delegation - Sarah Gose; Resident of Highlands: Re: Agenda Item 6.1.: Mount Work Draft Management Plan  
S. Gose spoke in support of Item 6.1.
- 5.3. [22-204](#) Delegation - Alon Soraya; Representing South Island Mountain Bike Society: Re: Agenda Item 6.1.: Mount Work Draft Management Plan  
A. Soraya spoke in support of Item 6.1.

## 6. Committee Business

- 6.1. [22-183](#) Mount Work Regional Park - Draft Management Plan

M. MacIntyre spoke to Item 6.1.

Discussion ensued on the following:

- the planned location and improvements to the access point at Willis Point
- the status of discussions with WSÁNEĆ leadership regarding this plan
- consideration of trail connectivity between regional parks
- the methodology of estimating visitors to our parks
- balancing conservation and protection in the parks with the expansion of recreational opportunities
- an alternative to the equestrian bridge proposed at Killarney Lake
- the factors that contributed to the delays in creating this management plan
- clarification of existing ecological inventories in regional parks
- classification and signage of all cycling trails

**MOVED by Director Isitt, SECONDED by Director Taylor,  
The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:**

**That the Mount Work Regional Park Draft Management Plan be made available for public review and comment.**

**MOVED by Director Isitt, SECONDED by Director Taylor,  
That the motion be amended to add the wording "That staff include the addition of bike storage facilities at Killarney Lake in the revised capital budget." after the wording "public review and comment."  
CARRIED**

**MOVED by Director Taylor, SECONDED by Director Isitt,  
That the motion be amended to add the wording, "That staff include the addition of new drinking water fountain stations in the revised capital budget." after the wording "Killarney Lake in the revised capital budget".**

**MOVED by Director Ranns, SECONDED by Director Screech,  
That the amending motion be further amended to include the wording "where domestic water is available" after the words, "drinking water fountain stations..."  
CARRIED  
OPPOSED: Isitt**

The question was called on the amending motion.

**MOVED** by Director Taylor, **SECONDED** by Director Isitt,  
That staff include the addition of new drinking water fountain stations, where  
domestic water is available, in the revised capital budget.  
**CARRIED**

The question was called on the main motion as amended.

**MOVED** by Director Isitt, **SECONDED** by Director Taylor,  
The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District  
Board:  
1. That the Mount Work Regional Park Draft Management Plan be made  
available for public review and comment.  
2. That staff include the addition of bike storage facilities at Killarney Lake in the  
revised capital budget.  
3. That staff include the addition of new drinking water fountain stations, where  
domestic water is available, in the revised capital budget.  
**CARRIED**  
**OPPOSED:** Holman

**7. Notice(s) of Motion**

There were no notice(s) of motion.

**8. New Business**

There was no new business.

**9. Adjournment**

**MOVED** by Director Ranns, **SECONDED** by Director Taylor,  
That the March 23, 2022 Regional Parks Committee meeting be adjourned at  
11:22 am.  
**CARRIED**

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CHAIR

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RECORDER



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## REPORT TO REGIONAL PARKS COMMITTEE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22, 2022

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**SUBJECT**     **Renewed Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan**

### **ISSUE SUMMARY**

To present the renewed Capital Regional District (CRD) Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan for approval on an interim basis for one year.

### **BACKGROUND**

The CRD Board initiated an update of the Regional Parks Strategic Plan at its meeting of December 8, 2021, and extended the 2012-2021 Regional Parks Strategic Plan until July 2022. Staff led the development of an updated Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan) between January and June 2022 (Appendix A). The Strategic Plan reflects current Board priorities, related CRD strategies and corporate knowledge. Input from First Nations, stakeholders, the Regional Parks Committee, Transportation Committee and the public has been considered during the development of the Strategic Plan. Feedback, in general, aligns with the proposed document (Appendices B and C). A presentation outlining the key highlights of the Strategic Plan is provided in Appendix D.

The Regional Parks Committee provided input on the proposed direction for the new Regional Parks Strategic Plan. On February 9, 2022, the CRD Board accepted the proposed vision, mission, values and priority statements for stakeholder, First Nations and public input, and recommended that a lens of conservation and protection of biodiversity be applied to the priorities and processes.

The Transportation Committee provided input on the Strategic Plan at its April 20, 2022 meeting and recommended that the CRD Board change the name of the Strategic Plan to "Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan". The Committee also recommended that the Board direct staff to include actions in the Strategic Plan to improve service levels for regional trails and direct staff to develop a funding strategy for regional trails to support the Strategic Plan.

Engagement with stakeholder groups, park agencies and the public occurred between February and April 2022. In total, 1,228 online surveys were completed, 3 public information sessions held, and 5 focus groups were held with representatives from 44 organizations having interest in conservation, outdoor recreation or community/social wellness. Feedback received is included in Appendix B.

The CRD Board requested staff to engage all First Nations in the region in an early, meaningful and ongoing manner in the development of the Strategic Plan. Fifteen First Nations, whose traditional territories lie within the CRD boundary, were invited to engage in the Strategic Plan update. Engagement with First Nations was facilitated by a consultant between February and June 2022. Input has been received from eight Nations to date, and a summary is included in Appendix C. Many of the First Nations indicated an interest to engage in the process, but could not accommodate the timeline presented, or have not yet responded. Specifically, WSANEC Leadership Council submitted a letter requesting additional information and an extension to the engagement period.

At the June 15, 2022 Transportation Committee meeting, the Committee recommended that the Capital Regional District Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032 be approved on an interim basis for one year while engagement with First Nations continues (Appendix E). The Transportation Committee, at the same meeting, approved a motion that bike parking and e-bike charging stations be added to priority action 4-2e.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

### *Alternative 1*

The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board: That the Capital Regional District Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032 be approved on an interim basis for one year while engagement with First Nations continues.

### *Alternative 2*

That the Capital Regional District Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032 is accepted as a draft for public, stakeholder and First Nations engagement, and the current Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021 is extended until June 2023.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### *Environmental & Climate Implications*

Regional parks and regional trails are vital in helping to achieve the region's climate action, natural resource protection and active transportation goals. The Strategic Plan includes priorities for conservation, including increasing protecting of the region's biodiversity; protecting cultural heritage and traditional cultural use; and partnering in research and monitoring efforts. The Strategic Plan includes priorities for climate action and resiliency, including advancing regional active transportation opportunities; supporting the development of complete communities; aligning service delivery with climate action; ensuring long term and consistent management of regional parks; and strategically acquiring and managing natural areas to address climate mitigation, urban containment and access to green space for a growing population.

### *Intergovernmental Implications*

In developing this Strategic Plan, staff consulted representatives from other park agencies and other CRD divisions to understand how priorities for the CRD's regional parks might align with the goals and objectives of other agencies, with the aim of aligning desired outcomes between groups, strengthening partnerships, clarifying roles and responsibilities of the different agencies, and enhancing information sharing.

Working toward reconciliation with First Nations in the region is a foundational principle of the Strategic Plan. Fifteen First Nations have been invited to engage in the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan renewal and implementation in an ongoing and meaningful manner to determine how to strengthen relationships, and what key priorities and initiatives are most important to work on together over the 10 years. Priorities and actions included in the Strategic Plan draw on past input and recommendations from First Nations in the region, such as those identified in the Special Task Force on First Nations Relations Final Report, as well as from input received from eight First Nations on the Strategic Plan update. WSANEC Leadership Council submitted a letter to the CRD on May 25, 2022 requesting additional information, and stating the Nations represented by the Leadership Council cannot support the Strategic Plan without further engagement. In response

to meetings and correspondence with staff, WSANEC Leadership Council are preparing a process and budget for ongoing engagement. WSANEC Leadership Council's letter of June 15, 2022 has been added at the end of Appendix C. Staff recognize the limitations of the engagement timeline for First Nations to provide meaningful input and that First Nations communities have been under considerable strain over the past two years which, among other factors, have limited the opportunities for dialogue. Staff recommend that the Strategic Plan be accepted on a one year interim basis in order to provide more time to engage and deepen an understanding of the issues and interests relevant to First Nations. An interim approval of the Plan will also provide the opportunity for reconciliation efforts identified in the plan to proceed.

#### *Social Implications*

A focus on accessibility and equity in the regional parks and trails system is included in the updated Strategic Plan with actions in support of enhancing health and well-being by providing equitable access to regional parks and regional trails. A focus on improving visitor experiences to regional parks and trails is also included in the updated Strategic Plan by offering compatible outdoor recreation experiences that are enjoyable, healthy, safe and immersed in nature; and foster stewardship through program delivery, knowledge sharing and collaboration.

#### *Financial Implications*

Financial implications associated with service level adjustments identified by the updated Strategic Plan will be considered by the CRD Board in future service planning processes.

#### *Service Delivery Implications*

The CRD manages and operates the regional parks and trails system, and decision making is supported by advice and recommendations provided to the CRD Board through the Regional Parks Committee and the Transportation Committee. Changes to the operation and management of regional parks and trails will have service delivery implications. A funding strategy will be developed in fall 2023 to facilitate implementation of the regional trail initiatives identified in the Strategic Plan. A priority action included in the Strategic Plan is to develop an Asset Management Plan for regional parks and regional trails that achieves critical infrastructure life cycle renewal.

#### *Alignment with Board & Corporate Priorities*

The 2019-2022 CRD Board Priorities include ensuring appropriate funding for parks and trails infrastructure, improvements and maintenance by updating the Strategic Plan with consideration to ecological, recreation and reconciliation principles, land acquisition capacity, and expanded partnerships with First Nations and parks user groups. The 2019-2022 Corporate Plan envisions that residents of the region have additional land acquisitions and increased access to parks and recreational trails, and have access to convenient, green and affordable multi-modal transportation systems that enhance community well-being. These priorities are key drivers for this renewed Strategic Plan.

#### *Alignment with Existing Plans & Strategies*

The region faces different challenges and opportunities since the Regional Parks Strategic Plan was adopted in 2012. The Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032 is in alignment with a number of recent Board-approved strategies: Regional Growth Strategy, Regional Transportation Plan, Climate Action Strategy and the Special Task Force on First Nations



Relations Final Report. The Strategic Plan creates strong linkages to Board directions, the engagement process, relevant legislation, guidance documents, operational knowledge and the feedback from public surveys.

**CONCLUSION**

The CRD Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan provides a renewed vision, mission, values, priorities and actions to guide regional parks and trails service delivery from 2022 to 2032. This Strategic Plan was developed in consultation with agencies, stakeholders and the public, and with ongoing input from First Nations in the region. Interim approval of the plan for one year will provide additional engagement opportunities with First Nations. During the interim approval period, staff will continue to engage with First Nations in order to deepen an understanding of their issues and interests and allow reconciliation efforts identified in the Strategic Plan to commence.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:  
That the Capital Regional District Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032 be approved on an interim basis for one year while engagement with First Nations continues.

Submitted by:	Jeff Leahy, RPF, Senior Manager, Regional Parks
Concurrence:	Larisa Hutcheson, P.Eng., General Manager, Parks & Environmental Services
Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

**ATTACHMENTS**

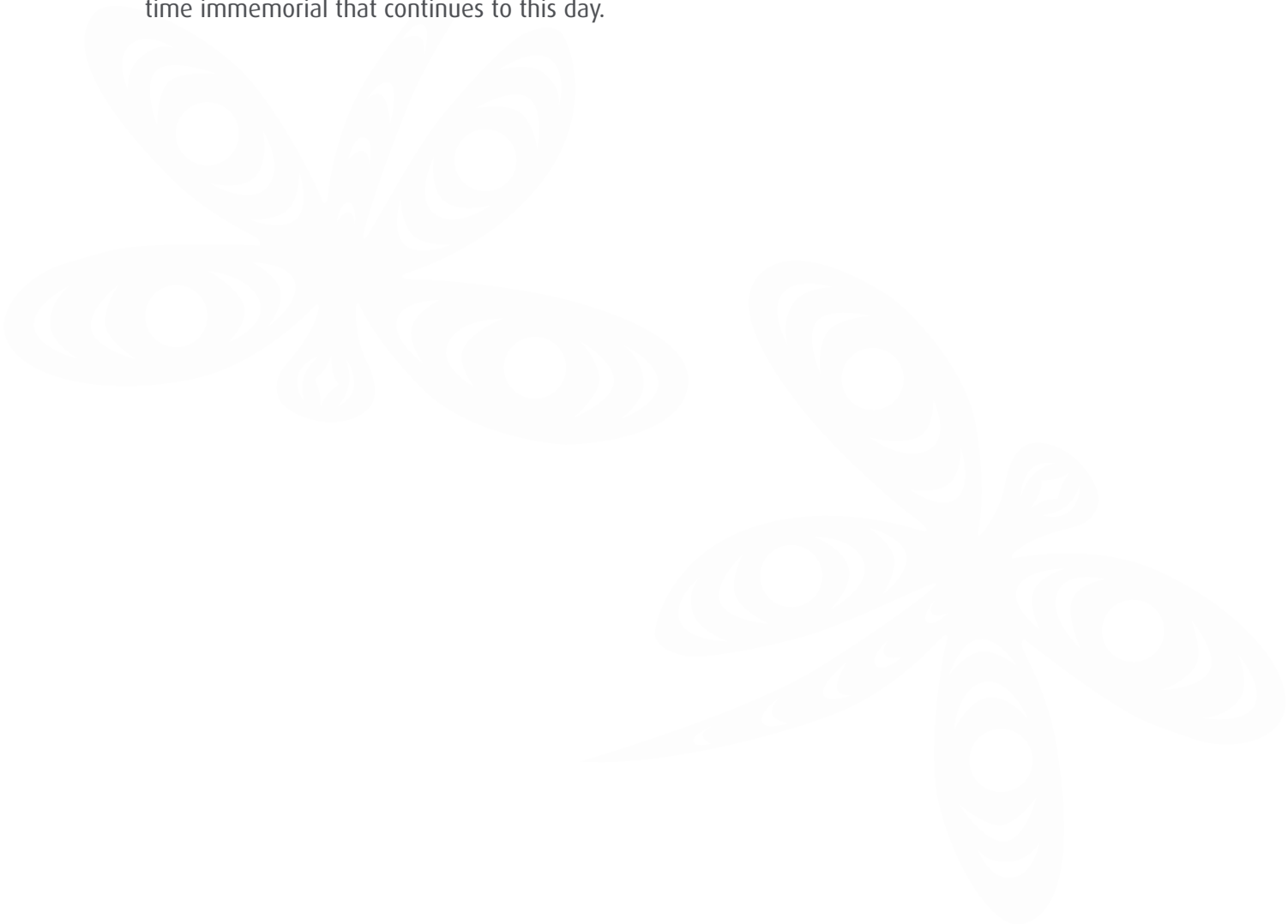
- Appendix A: Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032
- Appendix B: Public Engagement Report
- Appendix C: First Nations Engagement Report
- Appendix D: Presentation
- Appendix E: Transportation Committee Staff Report – June 15, 2022

A close-up photograph of purple flowers, likely crocuses, with several buds and open blossoms. The flowers are set against a soft, out-of-focus green background. A dark green horizontal band is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the title text.

# Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032

## Territorial Acknowledgement

The CRD conducts its business within the traditional territories of many First Nations, including but not limited to BOKÉCEN (Pauquachin), MÁLEXEŁ (Malahat), Pacheedaht, Pune'laxutth' (Penelakut), Sc'ianew (Beecher Bay), Songhees, STÁUTW (Tsawout), T'Sou-ke, WJOŁEŁP (Tsartlip), WSIKEM (Tseycum), and x<sup>w</sup>sepsəm (Esquimalt), all of whom have a long standing relationship with the land and waters from time immemorial that continues to this day.



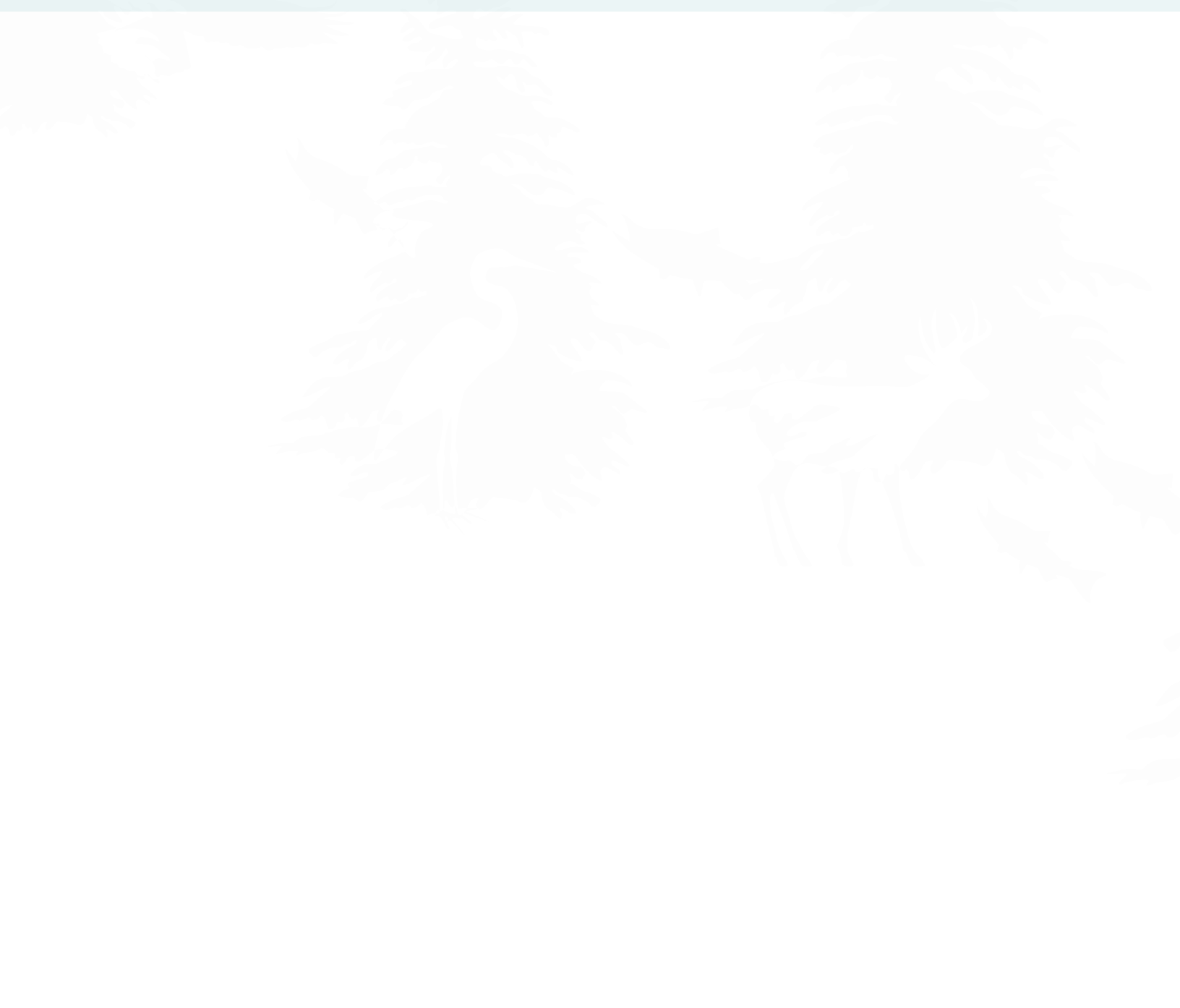
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Cover photo credit: Andrea Rangel

# Organizational Overview

The Capital Regional District (CRD) delivers regional, sub-regional and local services to 13 municipalities and three electoral areas on southern Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. Governed by a 24-member Board of Directors, the CRD works collaboratively with First Nations and all levels of government to enable sustainable growth, foster community well-being, and develop cost-effective infrastructure, while continuing to provide core services to residents throughout the region.



## Executive Summary

The Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan) is an overarching document that provides a long-term vision for regional parks and trails from 2022 to 2032. This updated 10-year Strategic Plan builds on the success of the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021. It is founded on the belief that regional parks and trails provide immense benefits to the region and that it is necessary to plan today to protect those natural areas that are vital to the long-term health of the region's natural environment, cultural heritage and the health of people and of our communities.

The Capital Regional District (CRD) Board initiated an update to the Strategic Plan in December 2021 and set the initial direction for a renewed vision, mission, values and priorities for engagement. This Strategic Plan has been developed with input from First Nations, stakeholder groups and the public, and draws on corporate knowledge and linkages with other CRD strategies.

The highlights of the Strategic Plan are: a commitment to build strong relationships with First Nations in the region and support Indigenous rights; increased efforts to conserve natural areas and cultural heritage; improvements to the visitor experience; preparations for and action on climate change; improved resiliency across the service; and enhanced access to and equity in regional parks and trails.

As the Strategic Plan is implemented over the next decade, monitoring and reporting will be conducted so that the status of actions can be tracked and progress towards achieving the goals can be realized. Minor or major amendments to the Strategic Plan may be considered by the CRD Board over time, in response to shifting priorities.

# 1. Introduction

In 2019, the Capital Regional District (CRD) Board made it a priority to update the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021. The CRD developed this Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032 (the Plan) between December 2021 and June 2022. The Plan updates the former strategy to reflect current challenges and opportunities affecting the region, as well as to incorporate recent CRD initiatives and priorities. The success of this Plan relies on a commitment to superior service delivery, cooperation with partners, and relationships with First Nations.

The Plan is structured as follows: the introduction sets out a renewed vision, values and principles, and mission statements and outlines the engagement process for the Plan update. Section 2 includes a review of the state of regional parks and regional trails in 2022. Section 3 establishes a classification system for regional parks and regional trails. Key priorities and initiatives for regional parks and regional trails are organized in five themes in Section 4. Section 5 outlines the monitoring and reporting structure for the Plan. A glossary of key terms is provided in Appendix A and supporting information is included in Appendices B-E.



Sea to Sea Regional Park



## 1.1 Vision

The vision identifies the desired future state of regional parks and regional trails in 2032:

We have an expanded and connected system of regional parks and regional trails that are rich in biodiversity, respect Indigenous cultural heritage and use, inspire stewardship, are resilient to change, and provide enjoyable outdoor recreation experiences.

The initial direction for the vision statement was set by the CRD Board at the outset of the Strategic Plan update process and input was received from First Nations, stakeholder organizations and the public throughout the engagement process.

This vision recognizes that the CRD must play a prominent role as a leader in expanding the system of regional parks and trails, in collaboratively and respectfully stewarding natural areas, respecting cultural use, and in facilitating health and wellbeing in the face of a changing climate and a rapidly growing region. This Plan sets the course for the CRD to learn from and work with First Nations communities, as long-term stewards of these lands, achieve a rich and resilient network of parks and trails and to encourage a new generation of stewards.

Reaching the desired vision will be successful if the CRD works closely with First Nations communities, other levels of government, organizations, institutions and residents in the region. A focus on equity and accessibility in the Plan is aimed at encouraging broader participation in regional parks and trails.



## 1.2 Mission

The mission defines the fundamental purpose of the regional parks and regional trails system, describing why it exists, what it does, and the level of performance to be met or surpassed. The mission for regional parks and regional trails is to:

- Operate and manage a connected system of regional parks for public enjoyment.
- Foster stewardship by learning from and working with long-term land stewards and by connecting people to nature.
- Operate and manage a regional trail network for active transportation and recreation.
- Be fiscally responsible and accountable in decision-making.



## 1.3 Values

The following values and guiding principles were identified during the development of this Plan. Values and principles define what is important to the CRD and will be applied to guide the implementation of this Plan:

**Access:** Regional parks and regional trails can be accessed by transit, micromobility, cycling and walking.

**Accountability:** Decision-making processes and financial management are transparent and based on the best available information.

**Connectivity:** Biodiversity depends on connected natural area corridors and complete communities depend on connected trail corridors and active transportation networks.

**Conservation:** Regional parks protect, restore and enhance the region's cultural heritage, biodiversity, and rare and unique ecosystems.

**Education:** Promoting literacy of the region's natural and cultural heritage increases awareness of the interconnectedness between humans and the nature and impacts of climate change.

**Equity:** Regional parks and regional trails are inclusive, culturally safe, and accessible to visitors of all ages, abilities and income levels.

**Outdoor Recreation:** Outdoor recreation benefits our health and wellbeing, connects us to each other and immerses us in nature.

**Partnership:** A commitment to developing meaningful partnerships with First Nations that respects Indigenous knowledge, First Nations governance and cultural use, as well as to developing partnerships with other levels of government and organizations in the region.

**Reconciliation:** A commitment to take action towards Indigenous reconciliation by respecting Indigenous laws and strengthening relationships with First Nations communities.

**Resiliency:** Regional parks and regional trails adapt to change by incorporating solutions that take action on climate change, recognize the value of Indigenous cultural knowledge, ensure sustainable service delivery and aim to benefit future generations.

**Stewardship:** A commitment to learning from and implementing approaches from First Nations, who are the long term land stewards, and inspiring residents and visitors to be stewards of the region's natural and cultural heritage by leading by example and showcasing best practices.



## 1.4 Engagement Process

In December 2021, the CRD Board initiated an update to the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021. After initial input was received from the Regional Parks Committee and CRD Board to set the strategic direction of the Plan update, an engagement process was implemented between February and April to seek input on the Plan update from stakeholder organizations representing regional conservation, outdoor recreation and community interests, staff from other park agencies, and from the public (Figures 1 and 2). Collectively, the input received through this engagement process has contributed to the development of the vision, mission, values and principles, key priorities, initiatives and targets identified in this Plan. A complete engagement report accompanies this Plan.

The CRD's boundaries span the traditional territories of many First Nations, who have been taking care of the land since time immemorial. The CRD believes that a positive working relationship with First Nations is good for the whole region. Engagement with First Nations on the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032 is ongoing throughout the development and implementation of this Plan. An engagement report outlining First Nations input to date accompanies this Plan.

FIGURE 1. ENGAGEMENT PROCESS TIMELINE

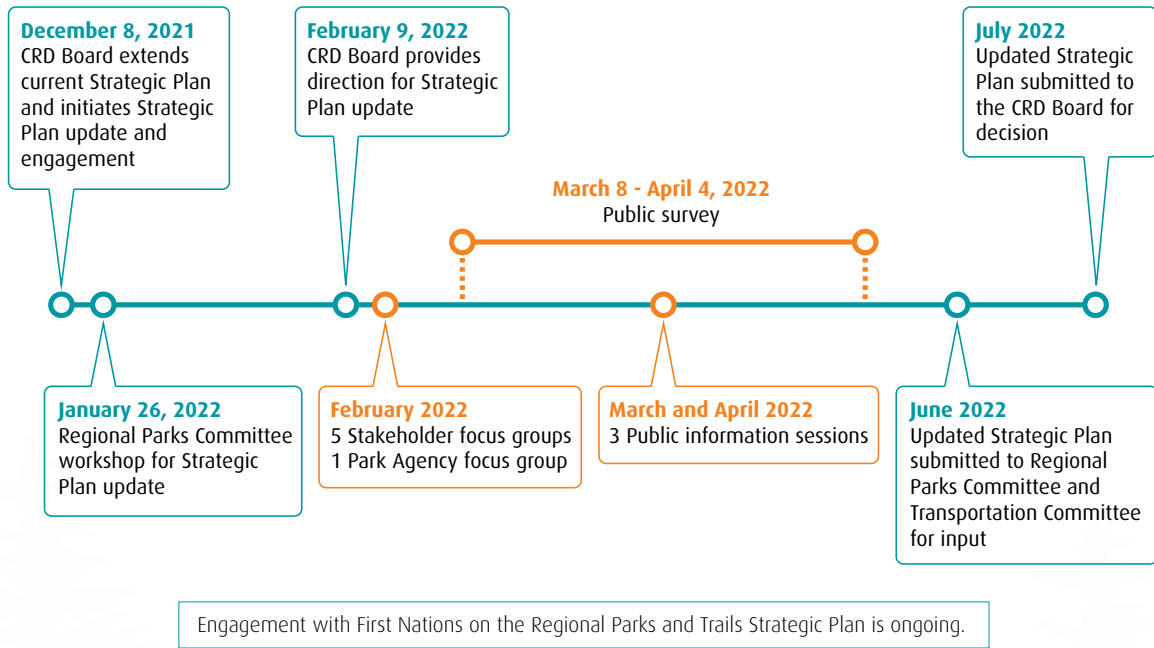


FIGURE 2. ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW





## 2. Regional Parks and Trails in 2022

### 2.1 Regional Parks Service

The CRD is the regional government for the 13 municipalities and three electoral areas that are located on the southern tip of Vancouver Island (Map 1). The CRD covers an area of approximately 238,000 hectares (ha) and extends from Port Renfrew in the west, to the Malahat and Saanich Inlet, to Victoria and the Saanich Peninsula, and Salt Spring Island and the Southern Gulf Islands in the east.

The CRD provides over 200 services in the following categories:

- Regional, where all municipalities and electoral areas are served
- Sub-regional, where two or more jurisdictions are served
- Local, in the electoral areas where the CRD is the local government

The authority to provide a regional parks and regional trails service is granted by the Province of British Columbia (BC) to the regional district primarily through provisions outlined in the *Local Government Act*.

The CRD has provided a service for the provision and maintenance of regional parks and regional trails since incorporation in 1966. The service is a regional service provided to all municipalities and electoral areas in the CRD, as per the “Regional Parks Extended Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1, 1989”, CRD Bylaw No. 1749. The CRD Board is the decision-making authority for the service. The CRD Regional Parks Committee provides input to the Board on matters pertaining to regional parks and regional trails. As of 2022, the CRD Transportation Committee also provides input to the Board on regional trail matters (mobility and recreation, including land acquisition, management, operations and programs for the Galloping Goose, Lochside and E&N regional trails). Funding for the service is primarily through property tax requisition, with additional funding received from non-tax revenue sources, borrowing and grant funding.

In 2022, there are 32 regional parks and four regional trails in the system, comprising over 13,200 hectares (ha) of land (Map 2). Regional parks contribute approximately 27% to the region's network of protected natural areas (Appendix B). Map 2 shows the current extent of parks and protected areas, including federal, provincial, regional and municipal. The CRD's protected watershed lands are also included, as they comprise a significant area dedicated to protection of the region's drinking water supply.

In contrast to most municipal or community park services, regional parks in BC tend to be larger parcels of land located outside of the central urban core and having more limited recreation facilities. Regional parks generally contrast the scale of the vast provincial and federal park systems, and differ from the conservation mandate of conservancies and trust funds. In the CRD, regional parks receive high levels of visitation, offer high-quality facilities, and make up the largest type of park, covering 5.5% of the region's land base (Appendix B). Regional parks are provided for public enjoyment and are compatible with the objectives of protecting biodiversity and cultural heritage. The dynamic of establishing regional parks for the purpose of public use and enjoyment, and for conservation, will become increasingly challenging with continued population growth and development pressure in the region.

Regional trails differ from neighbourhood-scale walking and cycling infrastructure, as they span municipal boundaries and serve as off-street greenway corridors for both active transportation and recreation. Regional trails also differ from provincially-designated Recreation Trails, such as the Kludahk Trail, and iconic hiking trail experiences, such as the Provincial Juan de Fuca Marine Trail and federal West Coast Trail. Regional trails will become increasingly important in supporting the regional transportation mode-shift towards active transportation and micromobility choices, and for improving health and wellness in the region's population.

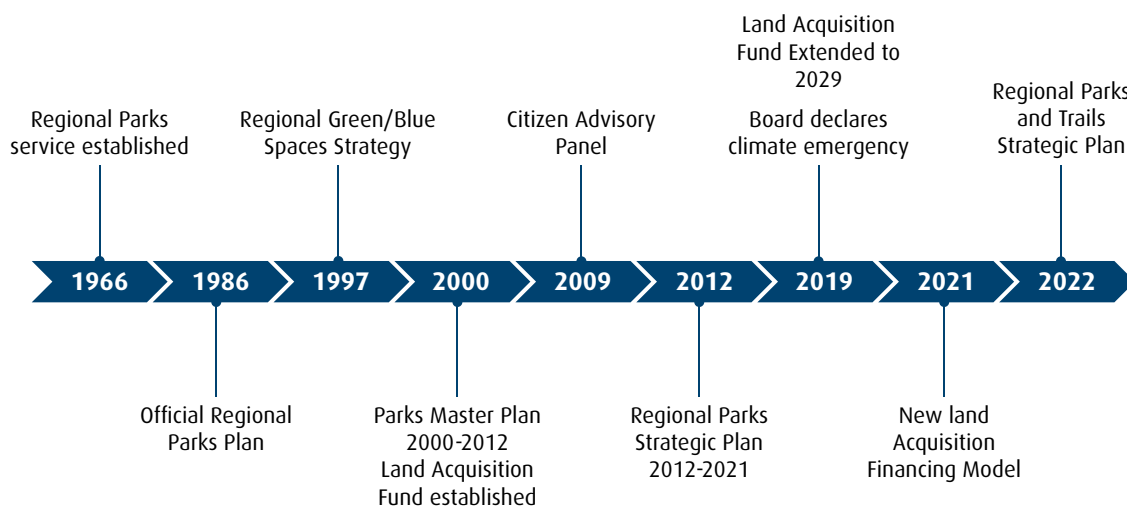




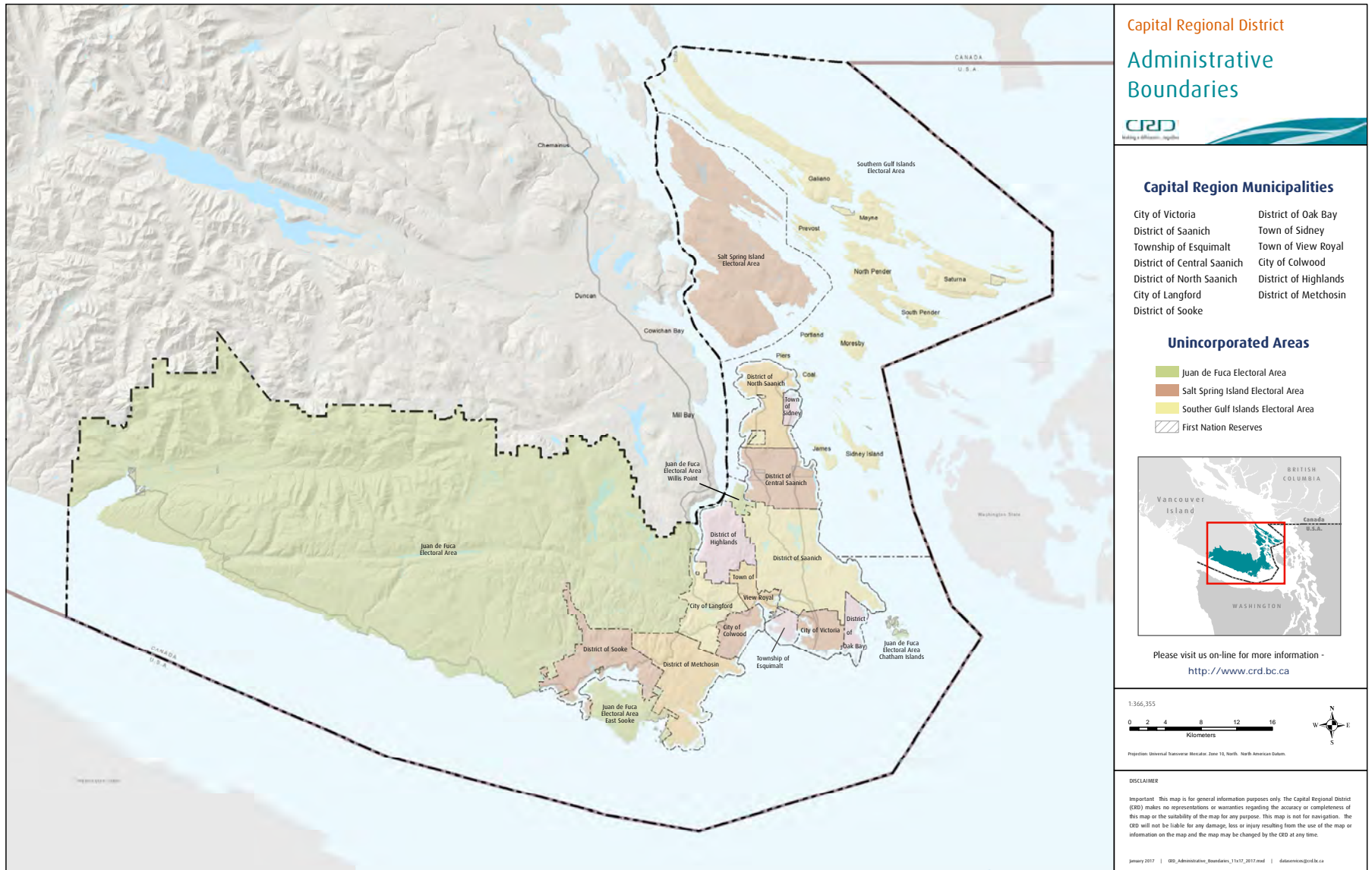
Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park

The management of regional parks and regional trails has been guided by various plans and strategies over the years. The former Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021, developed with extensive involvement by a Citizens Advisory Panel, has provided guidance to service delivery over the past ten years. Many of the foundational principles in the former Strategic Plan are incorporated into this updated Plan, and emerging priorities over the past decade have been considered for inclusion in this updated Plan. Notable milestones impacting regional parks and regional trails are highlighted in Figure 3.

FIGURE 3. ACTION THROUGH THE YEARS

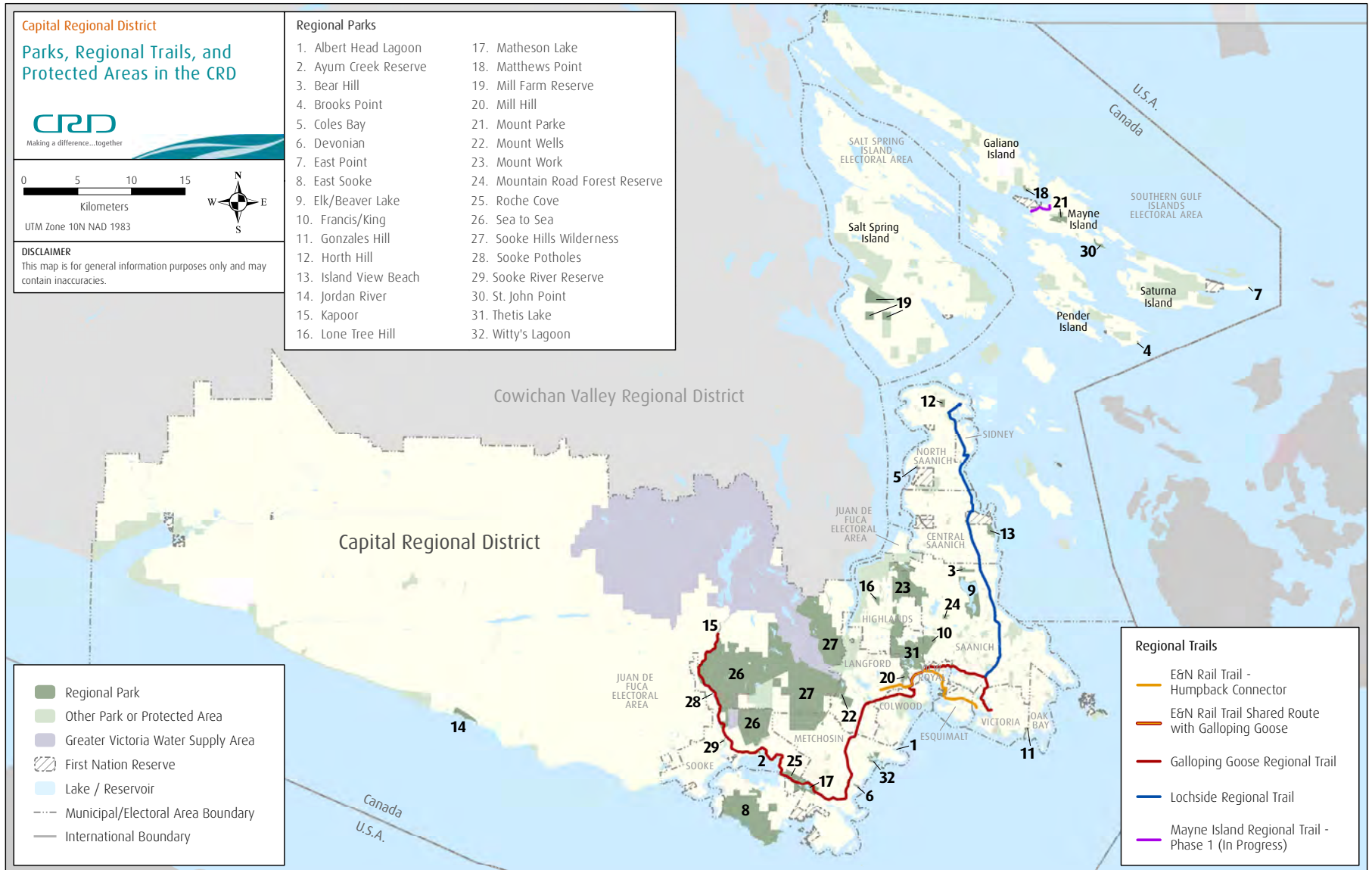


MAP 1. ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES





MAP 2. PARKS AND PROTECTED AREAS IN THE CRD





## 2.2 Cultural Setting

First Nations with traditional territory in the region follow Indigenous laws, assert Aboriginal Rights protected by section 35 of the *Constitution Act*, and many First Nations are also signatories of the Douglas Treaties.

The CRD's 2018 First Nations Task Force Final Report (Final Report) recommends actions and next steps for the CRD's path towards more inclusive models of governance and decision making between the CRD and First Nations governments. The CRD's Statement of Reconciliation underpins this Final Report and guides the organization's initiatives at the Board, leadership and staff level. The CRD can support reconciliation in many ways. Such opportunities are identified in the Final Report including, but not limited to, incorporating traditional knowledge in park management decisions, offering cultural acumen staff training, and involving First Nations in restoration projects. The CRD Corporate Plan 2019-2022 further identifies the need for the CRD to undertake engagement with First Nations regarding greater collaboration and parks operations.

In 2019, the Province of BC enacted the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, committing to upholding the human rights of Indigenous Peoples, and adopted a five-year action plan to advance reconciliation in tangible and measurable ways between 2022-27. Of particular relevance to regional parks and trails are: Article 11 that acknowledges Indigenous peoples have the right to practice and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs; and Article 31 that recognizes that Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions. These articles and actions will influence how the CRD and First Nations in the region work together over the next decade.

The CRD supports the *Heritage Conservation Act* through implementation of the CRD's Protection and Conservation of Heritage Sites Policy. The CRD recognizes the historical, cultural, scientific, spiritual and educational value of archaeological sites to First Nations, local communities, academic institutions, and the public.

Regional parks encompass many cultural heritage values that may or may not benefit from formal protection but are important in telling the history of the region. The CRD seeks to connect people to place through the delivery of interpretive programs, signs and information. An interpretive program was piloted in 2021 to explore the cultural significance of the region through a First Peoples lens. This program will be expanded in 2022.



Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park  
Credit: Rich Mably

## 2.3 Physical Setting

The CRD encompasses a complex geography and climate that includes a range of rich and diverse ecosystems. Regional parks are home to a number of culturally significant plants and animals for First Nations, including camas, saskatoon berry and sword fern. The CRD is located within three Biogeoclimatic zones: Coastal Douglas-fir (CDF), Coastal Western Hemlock (CWH) and Mountain Hemlock (MH) (Map 3).

The CDF zone is home to the highest number of species and ecosystems at risk in BC, of which many are ranked globally as imperiled or critically imperiled. Only 0.3% of BC consists of CDF zone and it is the least protected zone in BC, with many of the protected areas being small, isolated parcels surrounded by development. A significant portion of the total CDF land base has been converted or altered by forestry, agriculture, mining and residential development (Map 4). There is only one subzone of CDF, recognized as CDFmm (Moist Maritime). The CRD currently protects 4% (2,850 ha) of the CDF occurring within the region, which comprises approximately 40% of the regional parks system as a whole (Appendix C).

The CWH zone covers approximately 11% of the province and is comprised of ten subzones, of which three occur within the CRD. While the CWH is relatively well protected across BC, two subzones that occur within the CRD are more heavily disturbed and less protected across their range, including CWH xm1 (very dry maritime - eastern) and CWH sm2 (very dry maritime-western). The CRD currently protects 6.4% (10,360 ha) of the region's CWH, which comprises 60% of the regional parks system (Appendix C).

The MH zone occupies approximately 4% of the province, along higher elevations (900-1,800 m above sea level) of the BC Coast. It consists of three subzones, of which only MH mm1 (moist maritime) occurs within the CRD in an area of 3,473 ha in size. The MH mm1 zone is generally well protected across BC, but is not currently protected by the regional parks system.

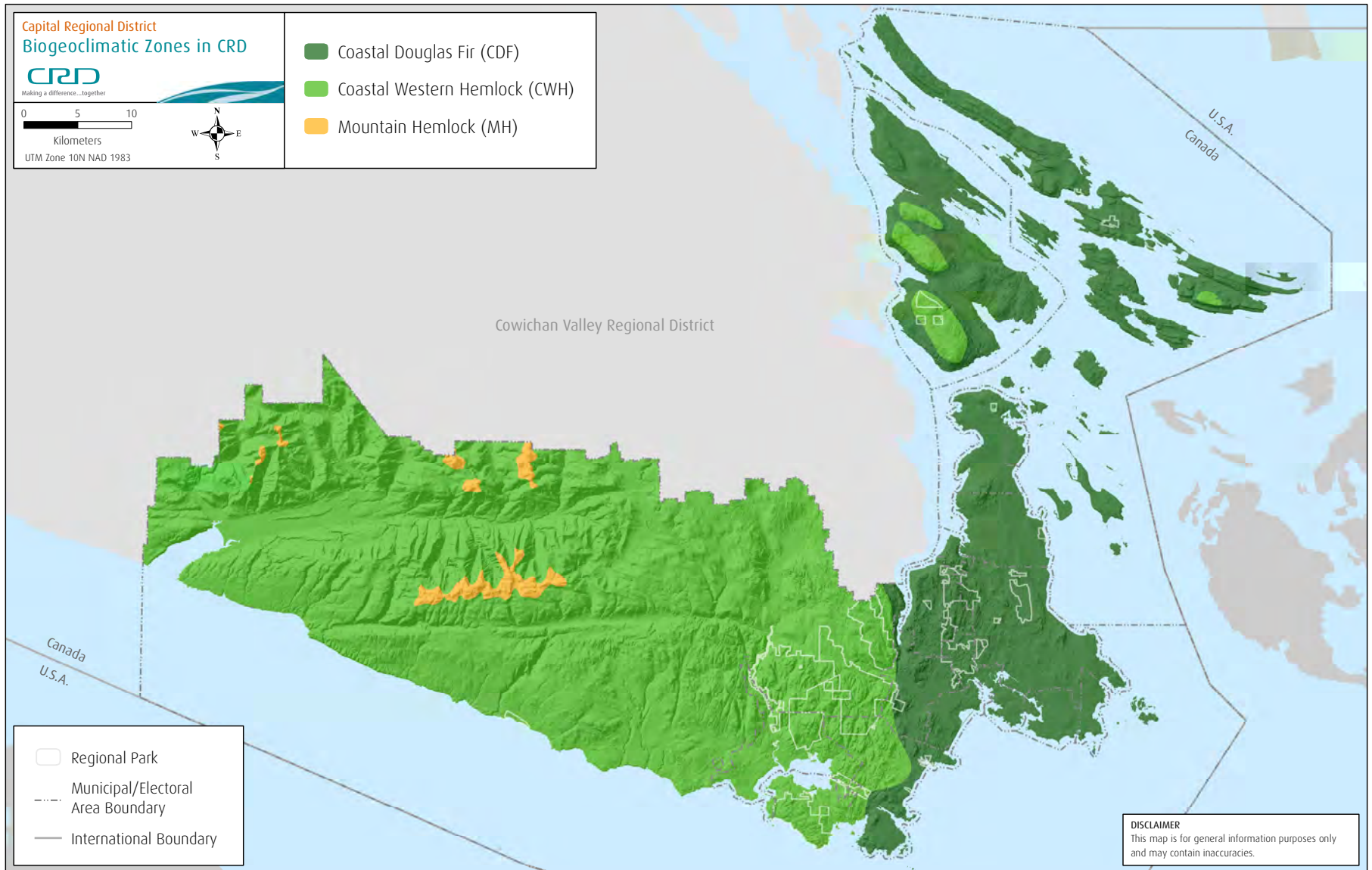
There are several species and ecological communities within the CRD at risk of becoming extinct. The *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) provides federal legal protection for species at risk, and their associated critical habitat, in an effort to recover the species. Critical habitat is identified under SARA to protect habitat necessary for the survival or recovery of species at risk. While SARA applies largely to federal lands, the CRD is effectively responsible for providing protection for species at risk within regional parks. The BC Ministry of Environment Conservation Data Centre conducts provincial assessments of species and ecological communities at risk. The CRD supports conservation by complying with provincial and federal legislation for at risk species and ecological communities in regional parks.

Both federally and provincially listed species at risk, and ecological communities occur across the CRD. Federally, 72 species are known or expected to occur within region parks, comprising 88% of all at-risk species across the Capital Region. Critical habitat has been proposed or confirmed for 11 of those species, covering over 60% of existing regional parks land base. Provincially, 61 species at risk and 18 ecological communities at risk occur within regional parks, comprising 51% and 78% of all species and ecological communities in the Capital Region, respectively. This data may exclude some omitted information due to privacy or data sensitivity purposes.

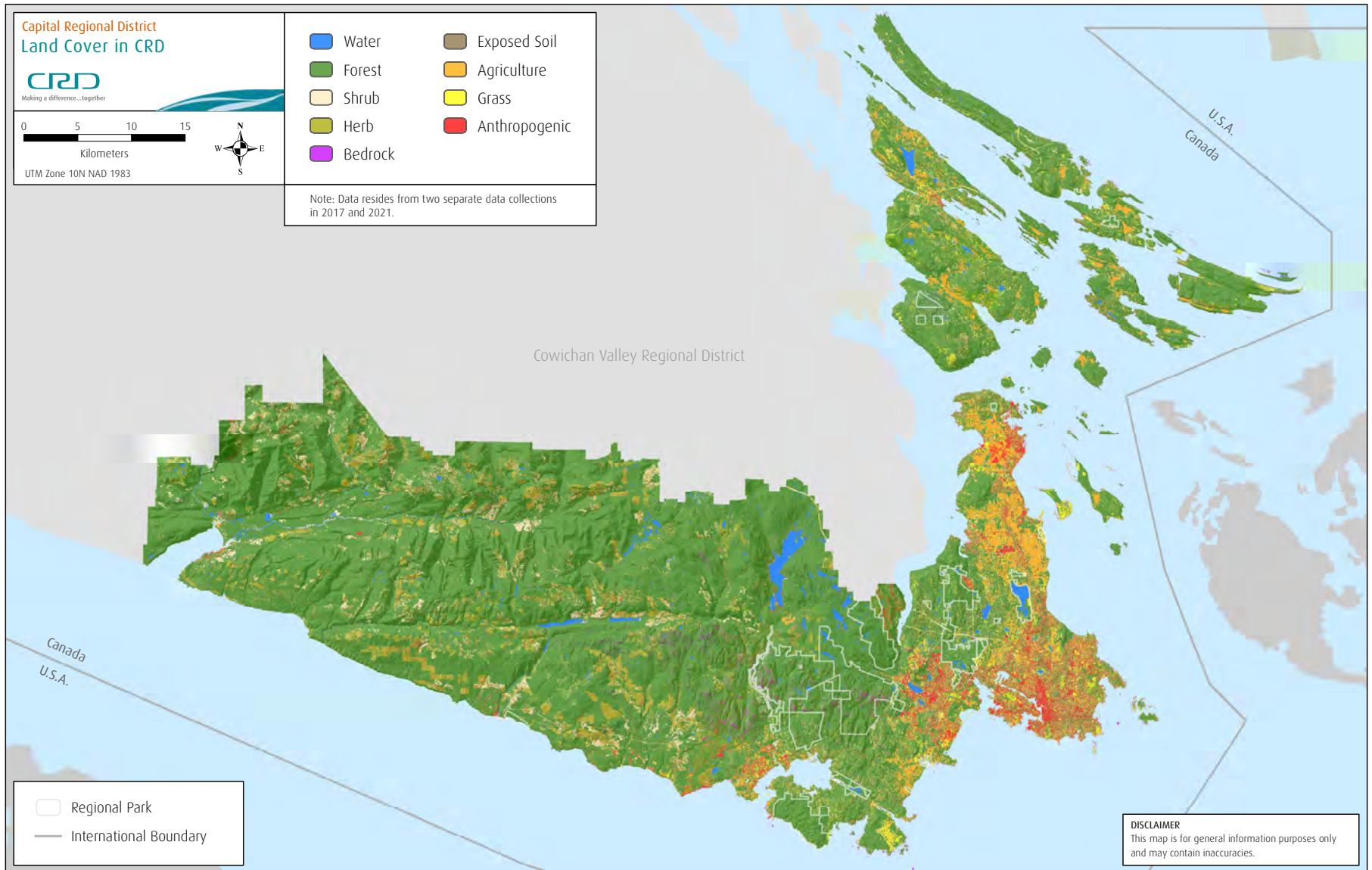
The region includes a mosaic of different land cover types that have changed significantly over the years. Map 4 provides a snapshot in time of the land cover categories comprising the region. The majority of regional park land is dominated by forest land cover (86%) with herb and water (lakes, streams and wetlands) comprising about 8% of regional parks. The remaining land cover in regional parks includes bedrock, grass and shrubs, and very minimal modern anthropogenic features (roads, built infrastructure). Although land cover and land use is in constant flux at the local level, the character of the region is not anticipated to change significantly on a broad scale over the next decade. The urban containment boundary identified in the CRD's Regional Growth Strategy plays a key role in protecting natural areas from outward urban expansion, as has the strategic acquisition of the green/blue belt over the past twenty years.

Regional parks are vulnerable to a number of stressors that threaten the ecological health, function and integrity of important ecological values, both within regional parks and the surrounding land. Threats to the region's ecological values include invasive species, hyperabundant species, urban development, industrial and agricultural land use, and significant or extreme weather events, such as fire, flood, drought, wind, and sea level rise. Ecological values are also vulnerable to pressures within regional parks related to facility development and visitor use. The CRD addresses and mitigates threats to ecological values in regional parks and trails through research, planning, active management, stewardship, monitoring and enforcement in collaboration with First Nations, community members, regional and provincial partners.

MAP 3. BIOGEOCLIMATIC ZONES IN CRD



MAP 4. LAND COVER ANALYSIS



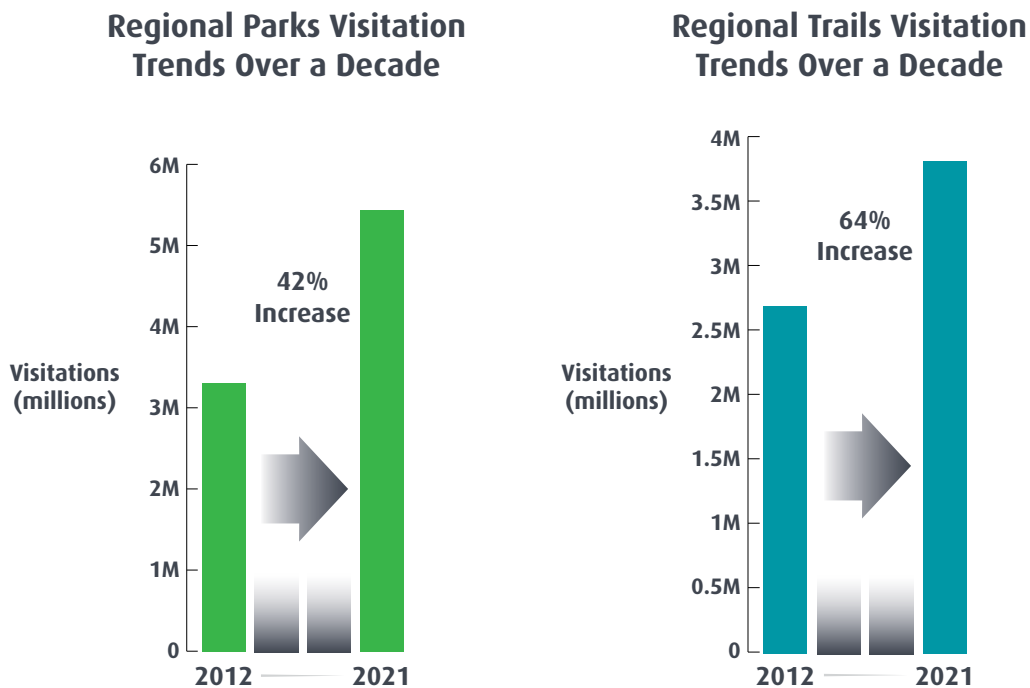
## 2.4 Visitor Experience

Regional parks and regional trails are vital to the region, supporting health and wellbeing, offering social connections, and improving quality of life. Regional parks provide over 300 kilometres (km) of trails and a range of opportunities for outdoor recreation, experiencing nature, learning about natural and cultural heritage, participating in park stewardship, and gathering for events. Regional parks primarily offer day-use activities, but there are currently three campgrounds operating in the system. The regional parks system includes near-urban, rural, and remote opportunities to access nature. Regional parks receive routine maintenance and improvements to ensure public safety, such as waste removal, vegetation clearing, and hazard assessments.

Regional trails are a separated, primarily off-street pathway system connecting urban and rural communities across the region. There are over 100 km of regional trails available for use 24 hours a day, 365 days per year. Regional trails serve as the anchor for the region’s active transportation network and recreational greenway corridors.

System-wide visitation to regional parks and regional trails has increased by 54% since 2012. In 2021, regional trails received over 3.7 million visits and regional parks received over 5 million visits (Figure 4). Visitation rates are determined by a series of vehicle counters at parking lots and trail counters at various locations.

FIGURE 4. 10 YEAR VISITATION TRENDS



Residents of the region value the importance of regional parks and regional trails. The CRD's 2017 Regional Parks Resident Survey results indicate that the public supports outdoor recreation activities in regional parks provided there is no negative impact to conservation values and that the most popular recreational activities in regional parks are hiking, walking, horseback riding, cycling, camping, swimming, paddling, fishing and nature study. Regional trail use is predominantly by cyclists (80%) and pedestrians (20%) in the urban areas, with peak use to weekday morning and afternoon commute times. Regional trail use in the rural areas receives lower volumes and seasonal use, and includes cyclists, pedestrian and equestrians with peak use occurring on weekends and midday.

The CRD offers interpretive programs that deliver education and outreach about natural and cultural values in regional parks. In 2019, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, interpretive programs reached over 3,600 students through school programs, 6,600 park visitors through public programs and park events, and over 2,000 residents through community outreach events. In addition, the CRD operates two nature centres in regional parks that are open to the public and, on average, see over 8,000 visitors a year. In 2021, the CRD piloted an interpretive program in regional parks that explores the cultural significance of the region through a First Peoples lens and is expanding the program in 2022. The CRD supports reinstating Indigenous place names through the regional park naming policy and interpretive signage.







Many opportunities are available for volunteers to be involved in regional parks and trails. The CRD offers volunteer positions as park naturalists, park stewards, mountain biking stewards, and trail ambassadors. There are also opportunities for volunteers to contribute to projects, such as park clean-ups, invasive species removal, restoration and vegetation planting. In 2021, approximately 460 volunteers committed over 5,500 hours to regional parks and trails. Additionally, the CRD holds two license agreements with community organizations for stewardship of mountain-biking trails in two regional parks. Expertise, in-kind contributions, and financial donations contribute to the overall enhancement of regional parks and regional trails and, through working with First Nations, volunteers and organizations, the CRD can strengthen connections with community members and better understand the visitor experience.

Certain uses may be allowed in regional parks and trails on a limited basis, subject to permit, as outlined in CRD Bylaw No. 3675, the “Capital Regional District Regional Parks Services and Facilities Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 1, 2010”. In 2021, 38 special event permits were issued for activities such as festivals and competitions, 63 commercial permits were issued for activities such as filming, training, dog-walking, use of picnic shelters, and research. The CRD recognizes the benefits of enhanced opportunities in regional parks and trails provided that, overall, natural areas and other park users are not negatively impacted.

The CRD delivers a compliance and enforcement program in regional parks and regional trails that emphasizes use of education to gain voluntary compliance leading to better protection of park and trail assets, safer and more enjoyable experiences, and better informed park and trail users. This work is conducted through community outreach, promotional campaigns, volunteers and the park ranger program. In 2021, park rangers conducted over 2,700 hours of patrols and CRD bylaw officers conducted over 1,800 hours of patrols to promote compliance with the “Capital Regional District Parks Regulation Bylaw No. 1, 2018”, CRD Bylaw No. 4225. While voluntary compliance far exceeds the number of ticket violations, the main infractions tend to be related to illegal parking, camping in unauthorized areas, possession of alcohol, off-leash dogs and failure to obey signs. The use of regional parks and regional trails is summarized in Figure 5.

FIGURE 5. USE IN REGIONAL PARKS AND REGIONAL TRAILS





Todd Creek Trestle - Galloping Goose Regional Trail

## 2.5 Park and Trail Facilities

The CRD's system of regional parks and regional trails is comprised of both natural assets and facilities, including over 13,200 ha of land and 300 km of park trails in 32 regional parks, and approximately 100 km of paved and gravel regional trails.

The CRD's 2019 Corporate Asset Management Strategy outlines how the CRD will apply an integrated approach, evidence-based decision-making, and life cycle management to renew infrastructure and determine appropriate levels of service for regional parks and regional trails

The CRD's 2019 Regional Parks Sustainable Service Delivery Plan Report Card provides a summary of the condition of assets in regional parks and trails and a snapshot of the services' financial state to help inform a future asset renewal program and ensure appropriate levels of service delivery.

There were an estimated 273 major engineered assets in regional parks and trails in 2019. Although the majority of engineered assets in both regional parks and regional trails are in good or very good condition, infrastructure such as dams, buildings and bridges have high replacement costs, need to meet public safety standards, and are critical for continued public use. Facilities such as trails, furniture and signage have varying lifespans and renewal needs but are also essential for providing a high quality experience to visitors.

Staff plan, implement, operate and maintain infrastructure in regional parks and regional trails to provide an appropriate duty of care and deliver the service to visitors. This work requires adequate numbers of skilled staff plus equipment, vehicles and supplies. The CRD typically retains contractors to conduct more significant construction and repair projects.

## 2.6 Investment

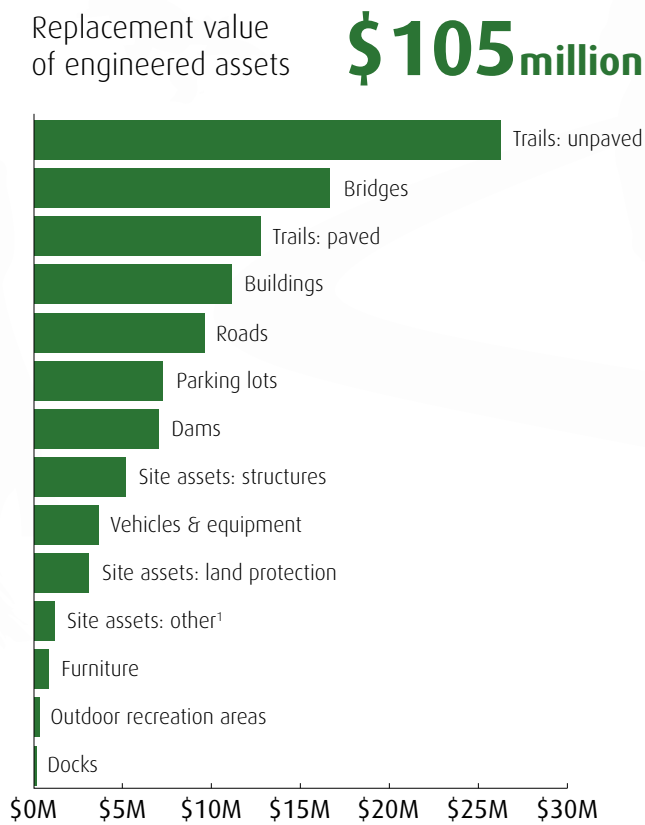
The regional parks and regional trails service is funded primarily through a regional property tax requisition. In 2022, the annual operating budget for regional parks and regional trails was \$16.7 million. The CRD Board Strategic Plan 2019-2022 prioritizes ensuring appropriate funding for parks and trails infrastructure, improvements and maintenance. The CRD Board has also endorsed the appropriateness of the property tax requisition as the primary revenue source for operating costs and continues to seek ways to relieve affordability pressure for taxpayers.

Non-tax revenue does provide a portion of the funding stream for regional parks and trails. Non-tax revenue is generated through the fees and permit provisions in CRD Bylaw No. 3675, "Capital Regional District Regional Parks Services and Facilities Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 1, 2010". Other sources of non-tax revenue may include: donations, facility rentals or lease agreements, bylaw infraction fines, and external grant funding. The CRD conducted a revenue generation review for regional parks in 2019 and determined approximately \$575,000, not including grant funding and bylaw infraction fines, was generated from non-tax sources. In 2022, non-tax revenue comprises approximately 3% of the annual budget for regional parks and trails. In 2022, tax requisition funded \$15.5 million towards the total annual operating budget of \$16.7 million. Additionally, grant funding enhances the overall budget but is dependent on available opportunities and successful applications.

The total 2019 replacement value for all built infrastructure over the current lifespan was estimated at \$105 million. The value of regional trails infrastructure costs make up over 40% of asset replacement value (approximately \$40 million) (Figure 6). These estimates were based on an estimated condition assessment and valuation of existing built assets and do not include enhanced or expanded assets already committed or contemplated in this Plan. Inflation, cost and availability of materials will continue to influence the estimated replacement value of built infrastructure. Due to these factors, the estimated 2022 replacement values for all built infrastructure in regional parks and regional trails over the current lifespan is estimated at \$120,750,000.

Additional financial resources are required to meet critical infrastructure renewal demands, as well as to address expansions to the regional parks and trails system, enhanced protection and monitoring of ecosystems and cultural heritage, improved facility design, planning, monitoring, engagement and outreach efforts. Although grant funding is typically relied upon to develop new facilities, there is increasing need to secure reliable and sustainable funds to support future enhancement to, and renewal of, regional parks and trails.

FIGURE 6. 2019 REPLACEMENT VALUE OF ENGINEERED ASSETS



Number of major engineered assets<sup>2</sup>

**273**

Portion of assets associated with regional trails<sup>3</sup>

**43.5%**

<sup>1</sup>The category of Site assets: other includes water systems, sign posts and utilities.

<sup>2</sup>The total number of major and minor assets is 3,700.

<sup>3</sup>Assets in the regional trails service include asphalt and gravel pavement, bridges and culverts, fencing, pit toilets, and amenities such as rest and water stations.

## 2.7 Land Acquisition

The CRD Board established a Land Acquisition Fund (LAF) in 2000 for the sole purpose of acquiring regional park land. The LAF was initially set at a rate of \$10 per average residential household and has increased over time. In 2010, the LAF was renewed and an increase of \$1 per year was approved. In November 2019, the Board extended the LAF to 2029 at the rate of \$20 per average residential household, with rates set to increase by \$1 each year through 2025 to a maximum of \$25 per average residential household. The LAF collected approximately \$4 million in 2021 for regional park land acquisition.

The CRD's 2022 Financial Plan incorporates a new approach to land acquisition that leverages borrowing capacity to purchase land that would otherwise be unattainable on a pay-as-you-go savings model. The new borrowing-power approach recognizes that, given the current economic development reality and high land costs in the region, land acquisition decisions need to accommodate opportunistic acquisitions of important lands versus saving for a cash purchase. This financing structure is anticipated to create a revenue stream that can be used to debt service up to \$50 million of land purchases over 15 years, thereby leveraging a net increase in land values in excess of \$100 million. The financing structure is aimed at managing revenue and cash flow to increase land acquisition capacity and provide value-added service delivery. Costs incurred for the securement and development of new regional park lands are considered at time of acquisition, and when a park management plan is developed, and are brought forward as budget increases.

The CRD's Regional Parks Land Acquisition Strategy (LAS) identifies criteria for selecting desirable parcels of the land to purchase as regional park. The LAS strives to achieve a 20% contribution of land acquisition funds from partners. To date, the CRD, with support of partners, has acquired approximately 4,800 ha of land since 2000. In that time, the regional park system has grown from 8,400 ha to more than 13,200 ha.

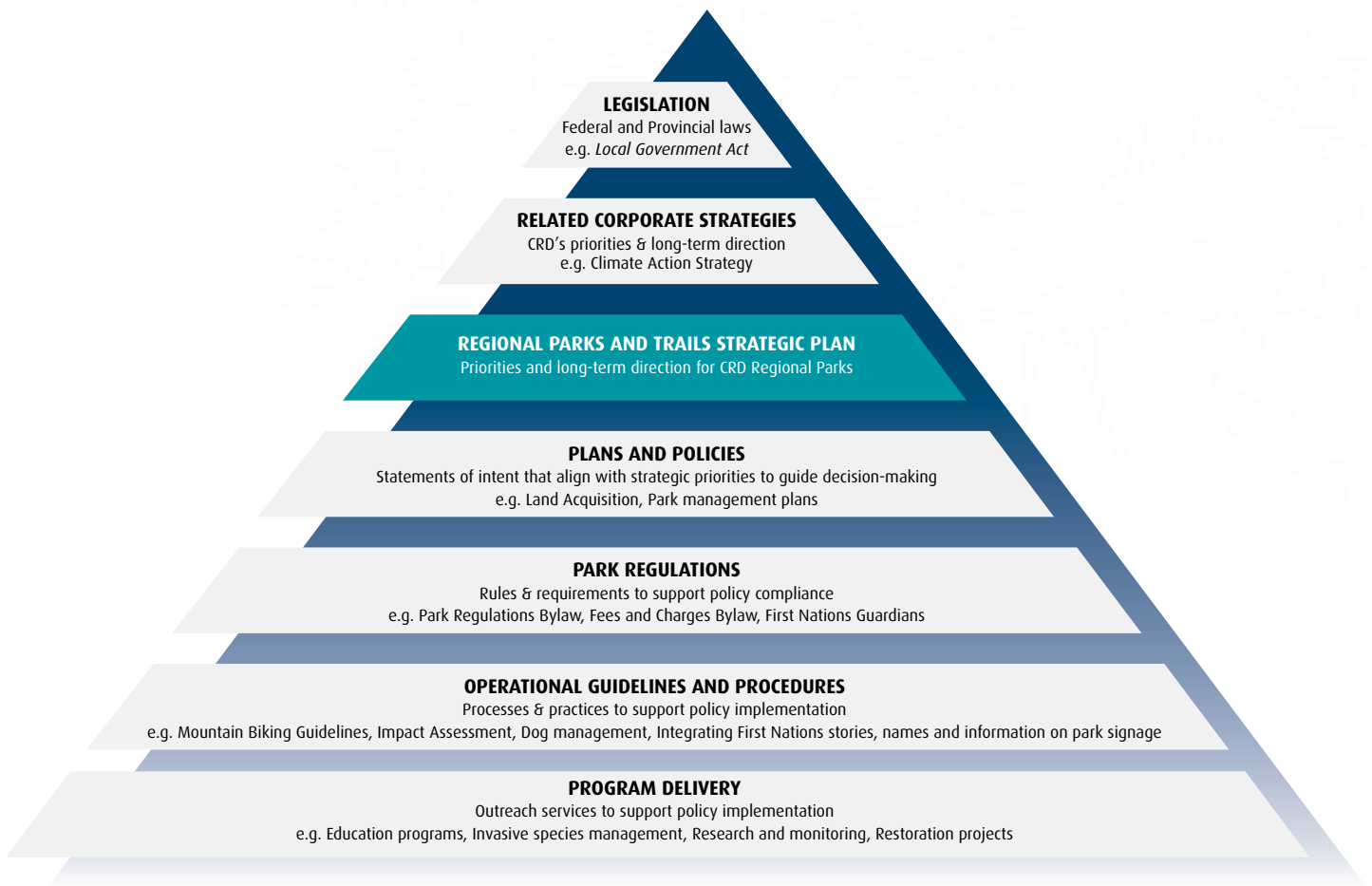
The CRD's Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) requires municipalities to identify regionally significant park lands in the municipal context statements in their Official Community Plans. The CRD is committed to having meaningful discussions with First Nations, municipal, provincial and federal parks agencies operating in the region, as well as with land conservancy organizations and other potential partners when entering into land acquisition decisions.

# 3. Planning Framework

This updated Strategic Plan will help the CRD set priorities, respond to complex challenges, and guide the organization in making decisions that move towards a desired future state for regional parks and regional trails. This Plan will benefit staff, the Regional Parks Committee, Transportation Committee and the Board in making decisions that advance the vision. The updated Strategic Plan will provide better opportunities for First Nations engagement by providing a framework for collaborating on regional parks and trails initiatives with First Nations. The updated Strategic Plan is also intended to create a greater understanding of the CRD's priorities and commitments for regional parks and regional trails going forward.

This Plan applies to the overall management of regional parks and regional trails. The Plan's vision, mission, values and principles, priorities, actions and targets will be implemented through the various plans, policies, regulations and programs guiding regional parks and regional trails (Figure 7). Where existing park plans and policies are inconsistent with the Strategic Plan, updates will be undertaken to bring them into alignment. Financial support for implementation will be determined through operating and capital budgets approved by the Board.

FIGURE 7. STRATEGIC PLAN WITHIN THE HIERARCHY OF OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS



Since 2012, the CRD has adopted a number of key strategies, including the Regional Growth Strategy and Climate Action Strategy, and has committed to support reconciliation with First Nations that have traditional territory in the region. This Plan reflects how the regional parks and regional trails system can support the current CRD Board priorities 2019-2022, and the initiatives identified in the related CRD strategies identified in Figure 8 (Appendix D). Related CRD strategies are available at: [www.crd.bc.ca/plans](http://www.crd.bc.ca/plans)

FIGURE 8. CRD STRATEGIES WITH STRONG LINKS TO THE REGIONAL PARKS AND TRAILS STRATEGIC PLAN







### 3.1 Regional Park Classifications

A park classification system establishes the intended purpose for each park type. The concept of establishing a spectrum of regional park classifications was first adopted in the Official Regional Park Plan, 1987, and continued in the CRD Parks Master Plan, 2000, and the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021. The regional park classification system is established in Figure 9. Existing regional parks are classified as shown on Map 5, and Appendix E, and include: 11 Conservation Areas, 3 Wilderness Areas, and 18 Natural Recreation Area parks. Appendix E shows the current proportion of the regional parks system by classification type. A new Conservancy Area classification has been established in anticipation of emerging interests to protect natural or cultural features, primarily for their intrinsic value to First Nations. Consideration of a new park classification by the CRD Board would constitute a major amendment to this Plan. Consideration of classifying new regional park land or reclassifying existing lands by the CRD Board will constitute a minor amendment to this Plan.

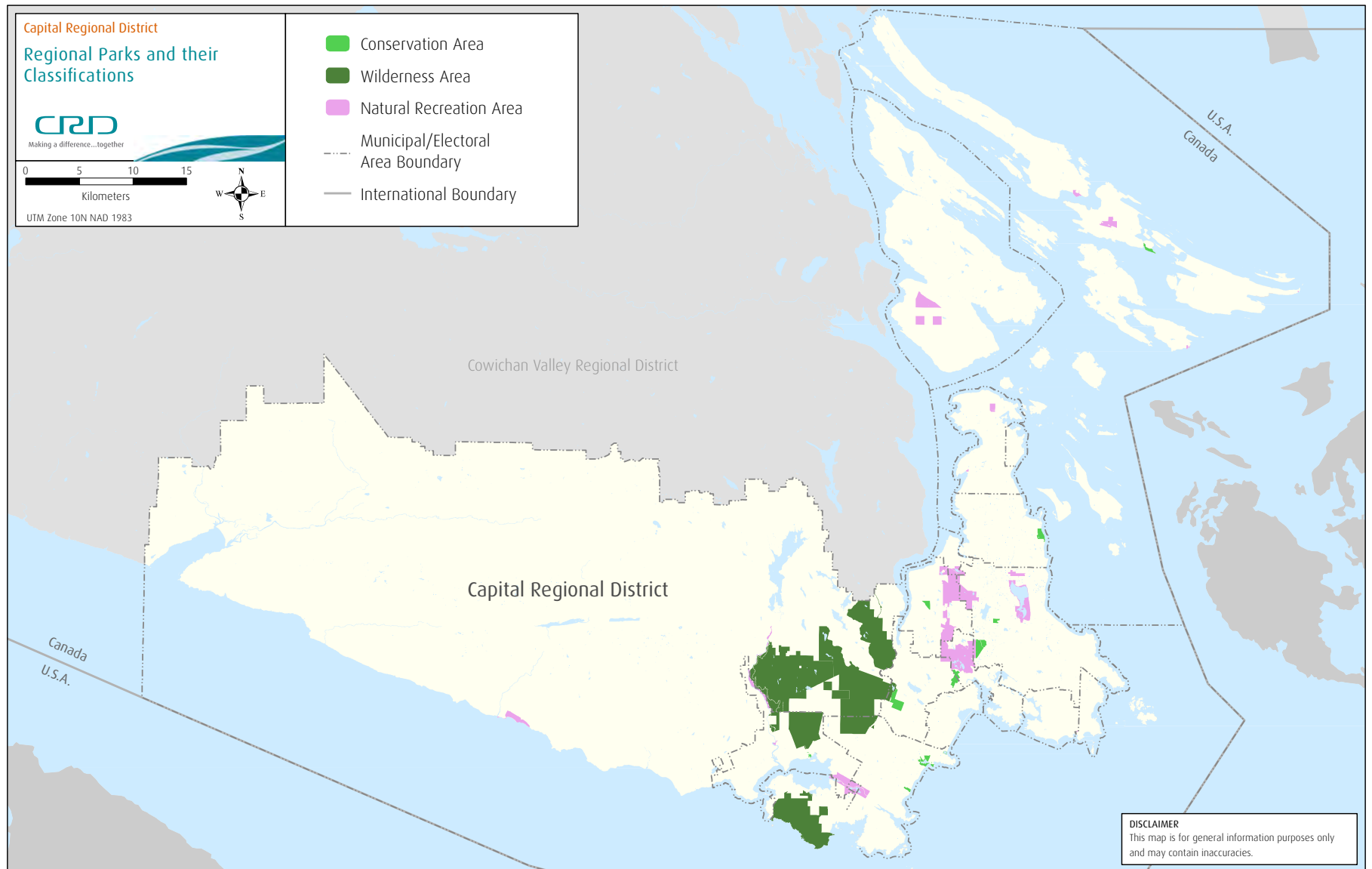
Park management plans set the policy approach for regional parks and will be reviewed and updated to align with this Plan. Of the 32 regional parks in the system in 2022, 18 have management plans, 1 has interim management guidelines, and 13 are without management plans. Of the 18 management plans, 8 have been approved within the past 15 years. Upon acquisition, a park is dedicated by bylaw and a park management plan is prepared and approved by the CRD Board to guide how that park is to be developed and what services will be offered. Park management plans that are informed by assessments of what regional park values are present, input from First Nations, stakeholder groups and the public provide a foundation for evidence-based decision-making and reflect current and future visitor use of regional parks in order to anticipate future pressures on the park and to respect interests and values. Park zoning is used to define appropriate uses, facilities and services offered within different areas of a park based on the present values. It is important that park management plans forecast challenges and opportunities that may impact a park over time, and include mitigation measures and financial considerations to guide decision-making. Regular monitoring and reporting on park management plan implementation provides accountability and transparency.

FIGURE 9. REGIONAL PARK CLASSIFICATIONS



Park Classification	Purpose
Conservation Area	To protect species or ecological communities at risk and to offer visitor experiences that are primarily focused on interpretation of natural and cultural features.
Wilderness Area	To protect large, connected tracts of natural areas and to offer visitor experiences that are primarily focused on remote and secluded outdoor recreation activities.
Conservancy Area	To protect natural assets and areas primarily for their intrinsic cultural use value where there is a traditional use agreement in place and to offer visitor experiences that enhance understanding and appreciation for Indigenous cultural use.
Natural Recreation Area	To protect a connected system of natural areas and to offer visitor experiences that are primarily focused on outdoor recreation activities.

MAP 5. REGIONAL PARK CLASSIFICATIONS



### 3.2 Regional Trail Classifications

A trail classification system establishes the intended purpose for each regional trail type. This Plan builds on the regional trail classification system established in the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021 and is established in Figure 10. Existing regional trails are classified as shown on Map 6 and include: Urban Bike and Pedestrian and Rural Bike and Pedestrian. Consideration of a new trail classification by the CRD Board would constitute a major amendment to this Plan. Consideration of classifying new regional trails or reclassifying existing regional trails by the CRD Board will constitute a minor amendment to this Plan.

The CRD's 2016 Regional Trails Management Plan and 2018 Gulf Islands Regional Trails Management Plan set the current policy approach for regional trails and will be reviewed and updated to align with this Plan. Regional trail management plans are prepared to guide how regional trails will be developed and what facilities are offered. Regional trail management plans are informed by the classification system, as well as by related strategies such as the CRD's 2014 Regional Transportation Plan, input from First Nations, interest groups and the public, and are approved by the CRD Board. It is important the regional trail management plans forecast challenges and opportunities that may impact the regional trails over time and include financial considerations to guide decision-making. Regular monitoring and reporting on regional trail management plan implementation provides accountability and transparency.



Selkirk Trestle - Galloping Goose Regional Trail



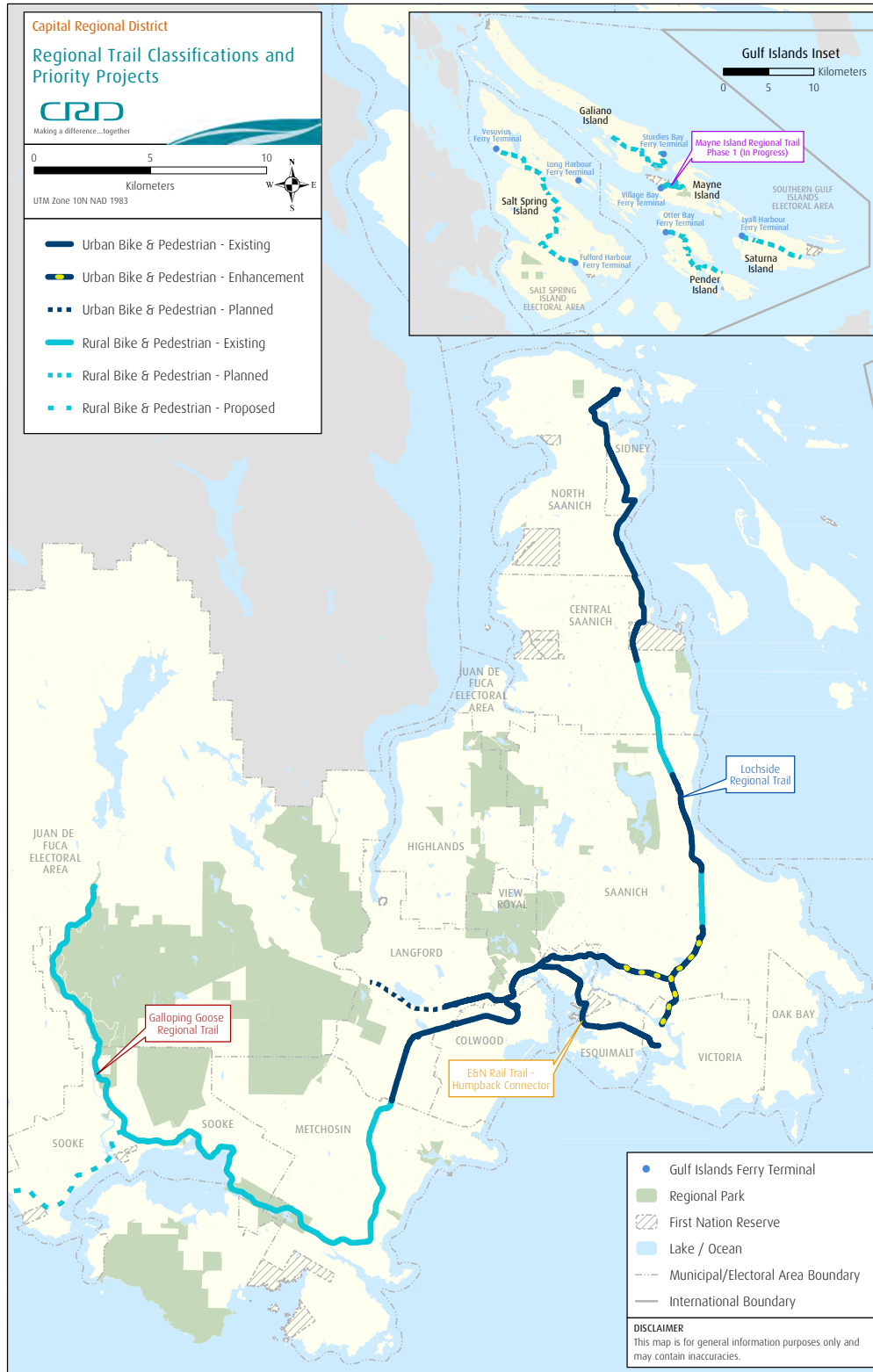
Credit: Bill Irvine

FIGURE 10. REGIONAL TRAIL CLASSIFICATIONS



Park Classification	Purpose
Urban Bike & Pedestrian	To provide an off-street trail corridor in urban areas that is primarily for high volumes of active transportation at peak travel times and accommodates regular recreational use. Trail separation and lighting design standards will be applied to areas with high user volumes and greater trail user differential.
Rural Bike & Pedestrian	To provide an off-street trail corridor in rural areas that is primarily for active transportation and recreation with higher volumes during the summer season and on weekends. Trail design will be dual-direction, shared use with gravel surface, except in areas of higher user volumes or on-street separated facilities, where a paved surface may be considered.

MAP 6. REGIONAL TRAIL CLASSIFICATIONS AND PRIORITY PROJECTS





Lochside Regional Trail

The CRD recognizes there are competing priorities for enhancing and expanding the regional trails network. The following priority projects are identified for the upcoming decade and are shown on Map 6:

- Enhance Urban Bike & Pedestrian trails in high use sections with a separated use pathway and lighting;
- Complete the E&N regional trail;
- Develop the Gulf Islands regional trail network;
- Plan for and develop an extension of the Galloping Goose to connect to Sooke and the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area.

The following criteria will be applied when prioritizing planning, enhancing and expanding the regional trails system:

- Tenure is established for the route corridor;
- Route has a greenway character that is primarily separated from motor-vehicle traffic;
- Route addresses an existing gap in the network that connects to communities;
- Public safety, regulatory requirements and critical infrastructure renewal takes precedent over regional trail expansion projects;
- User volume and user type differential data will inform where enhancements are prioritized;
- Enhancement projects can align with other planned work;
- Funding is secured.

The following guiding principles will be applied to minimize service disruptions on regional trails whenever possible:

- Isolate worksite to allow regional trail to remain open during the work activity;
- Minimize footprint of work site;
- Schedule work activity outside of peak visitation times;
- Provide early and ongoing communication to users;
- Provide a higher standard of care for detours on Urban Bike and Pedestrian trails.



## 4. Strategic Priorities

Strategic Priorities have been developed to guide the CRD towards its desired vision for regional parks and regional trails. The Strategic Priorities are presented in the following theme categories: Reconciliation; Conservation; Visitor Experience; Climate Action & Resiliency; Access & Equity. Supporting actions and timelines for implementation are provided for each priority.





# Reconciliation

**Goal 1: Strong, collaborative and mutually beneficial relationships with First Nations through working in partnership.**

This Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan is a refreshed outlook on strengthening government-to-government relationships and understanding between the CRD and First Nations in the region.

The CRD commits to maintain an open dialogue with First Nations to confirm that Indigenous cultural values and cultural uses are respected and that the priorities and actions remain relevant and meaningful. The Plan will support ongoing engagement with First Nations in the operation of regional parks and regional trails in years to come. Currently, CRD staff are participating in training to better understand Indigenous harvesting rights and practices in regional parks. Work is also underway to formalize traditional use agreements with First Nations to better recognize traditional harvesting rights. At the same time, it is recognized that reconciliation initiatives will be long-lasting and evolve over time.

The CRD's Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action Dashboard highlights a number of areas where the CRD can focus program or policy development in regional parks and regional trails to support reconciliation. The CRD recognizes that each First Nation has individual interests, needs and capacity to engage in these initiatives. In addition to the reconciliation goal and supporting priorities and actions identified here, this Plan identifies many priorities and actions related to working with First Nations.

The CRD will work with First Nations as Treaty settlements are committed and as the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* and action plan is implemented. The CRD supports working with First Nations on common interests and recognizes that how this is achieved will be an ongoing discussion with each First Nation and will evolve as priorities, capacities, and governance structures shift over time. This Plan supports the journey towards strengthened relationships with First Nations and overall increased cultural awareness and respect to improve management of regional parks and trails.



Culturally Modified Tree

The inner bark of the western red cedar is harvested in the spring from the sunrise side of the tree to encourage healing. The bark is then prepared for weaving by soaking it in water and beating it between two stones. It can then be woven into baskets, blankets, mats and hats.

## Priority 1-1

Incorporate First Nation worldviews and knowledge in the ongoing management and operation of regional parks and regional trails.

Actions	Timing
1-1a Work with First Nations to develop and implement priority initiatives related to regional parks and regional trails, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Integrating First Nations stories, names and other information on park and trail signage and communications material;</li><li>• Recognizing traditional place names;</li><li>• Developing cooperative management agreements, traditional use protocols and access agreements;</li><li>• Information sharing;</li><li>• Involving First Nations in land acquisition and park management planning and operations.</li></ul>	Ongoing
1-1b Develop a policy for supporting and clarifying Indigenous cultural use and cultural safety in regional parks.	Short-term

## Priority 1-2

Work with First Nations Governments in service delivery initiatives.

Actions	Timing
1-2a Encourage and invite First Nations interpreters in regional parks.	Ongoing
1-2b Partner with First Nations in conservation and restoration projects.	Ongoing
1-2c Support First Nations guardians in the region.	Ongoing
1-2d Support business relations with First Nations that provide value-added and compatible services in regional parks and regional trails, such as campground operations.	Ongoing



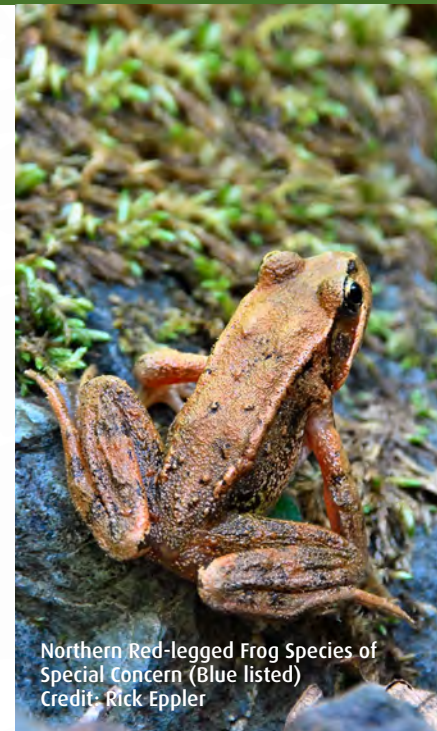
# Conservation

**Goal 2:** Regional parks protect the region's natural assets and cultural heritage for future generations

Regional parks contribute to a large system of connected natural areas that protect natural assets, maintain ecological health, function and integrity, and provide important refuge for a diversity of species, from the threatened blue-grey tailed slug to large carnivores, including wolves, bears and cougars. This complex and diverse system of protected areas is vital to ensuring long-term viability of natural areas, conserving biodiversity and building resilience to changing climates and increasing pressures on the landscape.

Regional parks also contribute to the protection of the region's cultural heritage and archaeological sites protected under the *Heritage Conservation Act*. These sites are culturally significant to First Nations and to post-contact settler history of the region. Careful protection and monitoring of these sites is important to ensure impacts from visitor use and climate change do not degrade their integrity. The CRD's Protection and Conservation of Heritage Sites Policy provides protocol and procedure for ground-altering works near registered archaeological sites and in areas of high potential. Increased staff awareness and involvement by First Nations in the assessment of these sites allows for traditional knowledge to be incorporated into efforts to protect these sites in perpetuity.

New approaches have been adopted by local governments across Canada to recognize that natural assets, such as forests, wetlands, lakes and streams, can provide equivalent or better services compared to engineered facilities, and at reduced costs. Through conservation efforts, the region can sustain ecosystem goods, such as clean air and water, and ecosystem services, such as nutrient cycling, water storage and purification. Important social, cultural and spiritual values can also be improved through natural asset management.



Northern Red-legged Frog Species of Special Concern (Blue listed)  
Credit: Rick Eppler

The Northern Red-legged Frog *Rana aurora* can be found in many CRD Regional Parks. Frogs are often an indicator species, and when their numbers decline, it is often a sign of declining ecosystem health overall. Currently, the Northern Red-legged Frog is provincially listed as special concern in British Columbia. It is designated as a species of Special Concern in Canada.

The CRD's regional parks currently protect a number of important natural assets that provide beneficial ecosystem goods and services. Ensuring ecological health and integrity of natural assets over the long term is challenging as stressors on the park system increase, such as higher visitor use and extreme weather events related to climate change. Understanding the current ecological values and health status of regional parks is fundamental to their effective management and protection. Across the region, information about the ecology of the landscape has been documented for many years. The Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory (SEI) was conducted for East Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands from 1993-97, and updated in 2002, providing information on rare and fragile terrestrial ecosystems. In 2008, Terrestrial Ecosystem Mapping was conducted across the CDF biogeoclimatic zone to further refine and categorize ecosystems identified in the SEI and update standards for data collection and mapping. Other information on ecological values across the CRD that supports conservation planning includes Predictive Ecosystem Mapping, Vegetation Resource Inventory and forestry data, soil mapping, terrain mapping and a number of resources on sea level rise and climate data. Additionally, many research projects have been conducted within regional parks that provide relevant local ecological information.

Traditional Ecological Knowledge is another important source of information that allows First Nations communities to apply their knowledge and practices to help protect their way of life. This knowledge is often specific to a location and includes the relationships between plants, animals, natural phenomena, landscapes and timing of events that are used for lifeways, including but not limited to fishing, hunting, trapping, berry picking, medicinal plant use, agriculture and forestry.

On a global scale, the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity created a Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 that aimed to achieve global protection of at least 17% of terrestrial and inland water and 10% of coastal and marine areas. Other ambitious movements to halt loss of global biodiversity are being undertaken by organizations, including the European Union, International Union for Conservation of Nature and the High Ambition Coalition, aiming to achieve protection of at least 30% of the planet's land and water. Canada is also working to conserve 25% of the nation's land and water by 2025 and 30% by 2030.

The CRD partners with organizations to protect and conserve important species and habitats across the region. A number of local, regional, provincial and federal organizations have identified priorities and best practices for regional conservation planning, such as: the Nature Conservancy of Canada Salish Sea Natural Area Conservation Plan; the Coastal Douglas-fir and Associated Ecosystems Conservation Partnership Conservation Strategy 2015-2020; 2014 Local Government Tools Supporting Species and Ecosystems at Risk Resource Guide for South Coast of BC; and Islands Trust Conservancy Regional Conservation Plan 2018-2027.

The CRD's Regional Growth Strategy aims to protect the region's landscape character, natural heritage and biodiversity by protecting, conserving and managing lands in accordance with the guiding principles of prioritizing ecosystem health and recognizing the benefits derived from healthy ecosystems. The CRD Board Priorities for 2019-2022 reinforce the need to protect and enhance the region's natural areas to achieve environmental resilience. The CRD can directly support the protection and enhancement of the region's natural areas and cultural heritage through park land acquisition, research, monitoring and restoration.

Conservation efforts require a coordinated approach at global, national, provincial and local levels and to include traditional ecological knowledge. The CRD aims to use the most current information, both within the parks system and at a regional scale, to support monitoring and protection of ecological and cultural heritage values over time. An approach that strengthens partnerships and supports evidence-based and transparent decision-making is critical in supporting conservation priorities in regional parks. The CRD will take a leadership role to proactively manage, restore, and protect ecological and cultural values, in regional parks and to support broader conservation efforts in the region.



Deltoïd balsamroot  
Listed as Endangered under the Species at Risk Act  
Credit: Andrea Rangel

## Priority 2-1

Take action to increase protection of biodiversity, ecological integrity and natural assets in the region through improved knowledge, proactive stewardship, and land acquisition.

Actions	Timing
2-1a Complete a State of Natural Values in Regional Parks Report that includes: a review of existing ecological values and an assessment of the ecological health in regional parks.	Short-term
2-1b Prepare and implement a Natural Areas Conservation Plan that includes: an analysis of current and future ecological data needs, including traditional ecological knowledge; goals and targets for research, protection, restoration and enhancement, and watershed management; impact mitigation strategies and methods for long-term monitoring and reporting.	Medium-term
2-1c Protect, restore, enhance and mitigate impacts to important habitat and sensitive ecosystems in regional parks by developing and implementing Impact Assessment and Best Management Practice Guidelines that are informed by research and incorporate traditional ecological knowledge.	Short-term
2-1d Develop a set of Demand Management Tools to mitigate ecological, cultural and recreation carrying capacity in regional parks.	Medium-term
2-1e Support global, national and local conservation targets by increasing protection of the region's large and connected natural areas, rare and at-risk species and ecosystems, natural assets, and representation of diverse ecosystems.	Long-term
2-1f Restore and enhance disturbed and fragmented habitats and ecosystems within regional parks.	Ongoing

## Priority 2-2

Respect and protect cultural heritage sites and traditional cultural use practices.

Actions	Timing
2-2a Ensure parks staff receive training to improve understanding of cultural heritage conservation and Indigenous cultural use in regional parks.	Ongoing
2-2b Invite and incorporate First Nations knowledge in the implementation of the CRD's Protection and Conservation of Heritage Sites Policy in regional parks.	Medium-term
2-2c In partnership with First Nations, develop Cultural Heritage Protection Plans to identify, protect and monitor cultural heritage sites in regional parks.	Long-term

## Priority 2-3

Work with partners in taking care of the region's species, habitats and natural areas.

Actions	Timing
2-3a Support, collaborate, participate and lead initiatives to share knowledge with First Nations, other levels of government, institutions and organizations on regional topics of conservation, biodiversity, species at risk, restoration, and invasive species management.	Ongoing
2-3b Enhance opportunities to and improve regional conservation knowledge by collaborating with partners to share open, transparent and accessible information on the region's natural values while respecting First Nations traditional ecological knowledge and information sharing protocols.	Long-term
2-3c Proactively seek, support and lead partnership opportunities.	Long-term
2-3d Work with First Nations to understand and monitor plants and animals of significance to Indigenous cultural use in regional parks.	Ongoing



# Visitor Experience

**Goal 3:** Visitors to regional parks are involved in stewardship and have enjoyable outdoor recreation experiences

Outdoor recreation opportunities play an important role in the quality of life that attracts people to this region, benefiting mental and physical health, promoting social and community connectivity, and being relatively low-barrier to access. The motivating factors, or user objectives, for visiting regional parks and trails is unique to each individual and depends on the characteristics of the recreation setting. The CRD aims to support a fit for life approach in regional parks by providing a range of different opportunities for broad public use while supporting and protecting ecological values. Regional parks offer a range of visitor use experiences that benefit broad public enjoyment and that are compatible with other park users and with the natural setting.

## **Compatible outdoor activities** in regional parks:

- Are immersed in the natural environment;
- Do not degrade the ecological integrity of the park;
- Are human-powered;
- Encourage an appreciation for and understanding of natural and cultural; and
- Do not significantly interfere with the enjoyment of other park users.

## **Non-compatible outdoor activities** in regional parks:

- Require substantial artificial or built infrastructure;
- Significantly degrade areas of archaeological and cultural importance;
- Do not inspire an appreciation for nature;
- Interfere with the experience of other park or trail users;
- Generate greenhouse gas emissions, pollution, noise or other noxious substances; and
- Permanent commercial or non-park or trail uses.



These visitors are well prepared for a challenging hike over rugged terrain in Sea to Sea Regional Park.





With the increasing popularity of outdoor recreation come challenges for meeting user objectives, including ensuring safety, mitigating environmental damage, and resolving conflict between users. Providing quality outdoor recreation experiences can have positive impacts on increasing environmental and cultural awareness, enhancing stewardship values, and promoting user etiquette and compliance. Opportunities to encourage outdoor recreation, through group training, competitions and events supported through the permit program, are recognized as positive contributions to promoting healthy lifestyles, fostering social connections, and providing economic benefit to the region, provided such activities are sited appropriately and remain secondary to broad public use of regional parks and trails.

The involvement of not-for-profit organizations in stewardship of regional parks and trails can be mutually beneficial. Through formal agreements, organizations may contribute expertise, labour and materials to maintenance and restoration projects that result in improved facility design and user experience, and contribute by disseminating information through their membership. Stewardship opportunities in regional parks and trails offer participants an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of park management challenges, such as human impacts on the natural environment. The CRD invites guidance in these efforts from First Nations, as long-term stewards of the land and water.

Interpretive programs offered in regional parks have a positive effect on educating the public about natural and cultural values and connect people with nature. Programs can be further improved through incorporating First Nations world views. Continued emphasis on interpretive programming and communication material, especially aimed at youth, can encourage a new generation of stewards. Effective communication and messaging, through in-person and media outlets, can also increase public awareness of human impacts on the environment, improve users' preparedness for participating in outdoor activities, and increase awareness of regional park values. Consistent messaging can also target improved behaviour of regional parks and trail users, rather than relying on compliance and enforcement. Over time, rates of voluntary compliance with park regulations are expected to increase, as a result of improved communication and education efforts.

Continued engagement with park users helps the CRD to understand visitor use trends in regional parks. In addition, data sources, such as vehicle and trail counters and resident surveys, inform planning and operational decisions that enhance enjoyment of regional parks.

### Priority 3-1

Offer compatible outdoor recreation experiences that are enjoyable, healthy, safe and immersed in nature.

Actions	Timing
3-1a Develop and implement an Outdoor Recreation Plan that takes into account a range of desired user experiences, user objectives, compatibility, recreation setting characteristics, and establishes a method for long-term monitoring and reporting.	Short-term
3-1b Develop, update and implement Facility Standards and Outdoor Recreation Activity-Specific Guidelines that establish design standards, risk mitigation, and level of service requirements.	Medium-term
3-1c Undertake Resident Surveys to assess visitor use satisfaction and emerging trends related to regional parks.	Every 5 years
3-1d Update Park Use Permit opportunities giving consideration to Indigenous cultural safety, protection of cultural heritage and ecosystem integrity, park land carrying capacity, park classifications, equity, and non-tax revenue generation needs.	Medium-term
3-1e Update Emergency Response Plans for regional parks.	Ongoing
3-1f Expand compatible outdoor recreation opportunities in previously disturbed areas or areas with lower conservation values.	Long-term

### Priority 3-2

Foster stewardship through program delivery, knowledge sharing and collaboration.

Actions	Timing
3-2a Develop and implement an Interpretive Program Plan and provide programs, that deliver natural and cultural heritage information, climate change education, promote health benefits of nature-based activities, and visitor compliance.	Medium-term
3-2b Develop a Volunteer Plan that includes a diversity of opportunities for individuals and organizations to participate in and contribute to regional parks.	Medium-term
3-2c Work with First Nations to provide park visitors with information about First Nations history and cultural use, and to improve cultural safety in parks.	Ongoing



# Climate Action & Resiliency

**Goal 4: Regional parks and regional trails are resilient and take action on climate change**

The CRD Board declared a climate emergency in 2019 and has since committed to take action to address climate change within operations at the regional level and to take a leadership role to pursue carbon neutrality. The CRD's 2021 Climate Action Strategy recognizes that greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions must be reduced and sequestered. In order to respond to climate impacts, efforts must focus on understanding vulnerabilities, ensuring natural assets are resilient and ecological integrity is maintained, and preparing the region's infrastructure and lands.

The CRD can contribute to regional GHG reductions in regional parks and trails by integrating the corporate climate lens framework, making operational choices that reduce GHG emissions, and through the planning, design, and operation of the regional trails system, which serves as the anchor of the region's active transportation network. The CRD's 2014 Regional Transportation Plan put forth a multi-modal transportation network concept for the region that includes sections of regional trails functioning as separated, off-street active transportation corridors. Canada's Active Transportation Strategy, BC's South Island Transportation Plan and the CRD's Regional Growth Strategy target increased active transportation as a personal mobility choice and for enhancing individuals' health and wellbeing. As almost half of the region's GHG emissions come from transportation, the CRD can directly support a shift to low-carbon mobility choices by accelerating infrastructure improvements in regional parks and regional trails that support active transportation and low-carbon mobility choices.

Natural areas provide important ecosystem goods and services, such as carbon storage, water supply and temperature buffering functions, as well as improve resilience to extreme weather events. The CRD can manage ecosystem health and integrity in regional parks to support nature's capacity to mitigate against and adapt to a changing climate. This can be done through acquiring new lands, actively managing and restoring natural areas, building community awareness on climate action, and providing opportunities to engage in stewardship activities.



Yellow Sand-verbena  
Species of Special Concern (Blue listed)  
Credit: Sean Rangel

Yellow Sand-verbena *Abronia latifolia* is a Species of Special Concern that grows in coastal sandy habitats. This flowering plant is the sole source of food for the endangered Sand-verbena Moth, which is dependent on the plant for every stage of its life. Both species face further peril from rising sea levels due to climate change.

Extreme weather events such as flooding, drought and fire could have severe long-term detrimental effects on the regional parks land base, values, and fragile resources, such as archaeological sites, rare and sensitive ecosystems, outdoor recreation spaces, and critical infrastructure and facilities. Understanding and preparing for possible climate impacts to regional parks and regional trails is critical to assessing climate mitigation and adaptation measures and to making informed decisions. Information sharing and incorporating traditional ecological knowledge can further inform climate action and adaptation decisions, thereby increasing resiliency.

Effectively achieving the vision for regional parks and regional trails in the face of increased regional population growth, urban development pressure, changing visitor use expectations and use patterns, and major infrastructure renewal needs requires substantial investment and effective financial management. There are significant funding challenges and competing priorities for expenditures relating to acquiring and opening new parks, upgrading and replacing existing infrastructure, and funding programs to plan and manage the regional parks and trails system. Funding existing and future service delivery demands is also a challenge as the region becomes increasingly diverse and is exposed to disruptive and unpredictable events due to climate change.

Resident surveys conducted in 2017 provided evidence that the public supported an increase in funding to operate regional parks and regional trails and for continuation of the Land Acquisition Fund. These opinions about the level of funding demonstrate support for funding the following priorities over the next five years: repair and maintenance of facilities, environmental restoration projects, and acquisition of more parkland.

The CRD applies an asset management approach to build organizational resilience. Fundamental to adopting an asset management approach is ensuring consistent, systematic and standardized information about facilities to inform decision-making. The CRD embarked on an asset management program with the Regional Parks Sustainable Service Delivery Report Card in 2019, which focused on critical infrastructure renewal needs. Further development of an asset management program will assist with managing each facility's life cycle and determining appropriate levels of service and risk. Consideration can also be given to determining the feasibility of broadening the scope of asset management to include natural assets in the regional parks system.

It is important to balance the capacity of the CRD to operate and manage the system in a fiscally responsible manner, while continuing to expand and improve service, and to balance risks and benefits. In 2019, the CRD Board made it a priority to ensure appropriate funding for regional parks and trails infrastructure, improvements and maintenance. On finalization of this Strategic Plan, a financial plan will be prepared that will comprehensively address all aspects of the funding necessary for the CRD to achieve its vision for regional parks and regional trails.

## Priority 4-1

Advance regional active transportation opportunities that contribute to greenhouse gas reduction.

Actions	Timing
4-1a Update the Regional Trails Management Plan with consideration to regional trail classifications, design standards, priority regional trail projects, and increasing connectivity.	Short-term
4-1b Plan for and implement priority regional trail enhancement and expansion projects.	Ongoing
4-1c Prepare a funding strategy to support implementation of priority regional trail enhancement and expansion projects.	Short-term
4-1d Work with municipalities to develop and implement Operational Guidelines for regional trail service disruptions.	Short-term
4-1e Develop and implement a Micromobility Policy that gives consideration to the use of electric micromobility devices, such as electric-assist bikes and electric scooters, in regional parks and regional trails.	Medium-term
4-1f Support, participate and collaborate in the planning and implementation of a regional active transportation network that improves connectivity, identifies system gaps, and establishes desired design standards and service levels.	Ongoing



Sea to Sea Regional Park  
Credit: Mary Sanseverino

## Priority 4-2

Support the development of complete and connected communities by improving access to regional parks by transit, electric vehicles, micromobility, walking or cycling.

Actions	Timing
4-2a Advocate for expanded transit service to regional parks.	Ongoing
4-2b Align implementation of parking fees where regional parks can be easily accessed by transit, walking or cycling as a disincentive to motor vehicle use, excluding vehicle parking for people with disabilities.	Short-term
4-2c Prioritize regional park and regional trail projects that improve multi-modal access between parks and communities.	Ongoing
4-2d Undertake a study of regional parks access points to inform parking lot safety improvements, multi-modal access, and low-carbon mobility incentives.	Medium-term
4-2e Plan for and implement Electric Vehicle and Electric Micromobility charging stations at high-use regional park accesses.	Medium-term

## Priority 4-3

Align service delivery and infrastructure improvements in regional parks and regional trails with climate action.

Actions	Timing
4-3a Incorporate a Climate Action Lens into service delivery, facility development and asset renewal that prioritizes low-carbon and energy efficient investment in regional parks and regional trails.	Medium-term
4-3b Determine the feasibility of considering natural assets in an asset management plan for regional parks.	Long-term
4-3c Develop and implement an Asset Management Plan for regional parks and regional trails that achieves critical infrastructure life cycle renewal, is well-planned, managed, and funded, is consistent with legislative requirements and receives First Nations input.	Medium-term
4-3d Conduct a Service Level Review of regional trails to understand current levels of service, forecast emerging needs and required adjustments.	Medium-term



CRD Regional Parks crew putting out a fire.

### Priority 4-4

Ensure the long-term and consistent management of regional parks and protected natural areas.

Actions	Timing
4-4a Implement a Park Management Planning Process that is efficient, adaptable, evidence-based, and addresses service level needs, financial implications and climate mitigation measures.	Ongoing
4-4b Engage and involve First Nations governments, stakeholders and the public in the preparation and implementation of park management plans to ensure transparency, knowledge sharing and adaptability.	Ongoing
4-4c Support protection of the CRD’s Greater Victoria Water Supply Area from unauthorized activities, incompatible adjacent land uses, and from climate-related weather events through park management, land acquisition and sharing information.	Ongoing
4-4d Work with partners to share knowledge, assess and identify options to improve regional parks capacity to mitigate against and adapt to a changing climate, including ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration, water storage, and buffering severe weather events.	Medium-term
4-4e Support monitoring of ecosystem health in the CRD’s Greater Victoria Water Supply Area and investigate expanding to regional parks.	Ongoing

## Priority 4-5

Strategically acquire and manage natural areas to address climate mitigation, urban containment, and access to green space for a growing population.

Actions	Timing
4-5a Work with First Nations, Municipalities and Electoral Areas, and organizations to identify regionally significant parkland and determine alignment of goals and objectives.	Ongoing
4-5b Work with First Nations to update land acquisition criteria to incorporate cultural use values and areas of cultural significance.	Short-term
4-5c Update regional park land acquisition criteria and prioritize land acquisition that reflects CRD Regional Parks values, including consideration of areas that contribute to climate change mitigation, enhance biodiversity, buffer urban development, increase connectivity of natural areas, improve ecological integrity, and provide increased area and diversity of outdoor recreation opportunities.	Ongoing
4-5d Support the long-term protection of the region's natural assets through inventories, monitoring, land acquisition and partnerships.	Ongoing



Volunteers removing invasive species in Mill Hill Regional Park





# Access & Equity

Goal 5: Regional parks and regional trails are inclusive and accessible

Regional parks and regional trails are a public good that belong to everyone in the region. The benefits of experiencing and interacting with nature for physical and mental well-being are felt by many. Medical professionals from the World Health Organization to Doctors of BC are advocating for equitable access to nature to safeguard the physical and psychological wellbeing of residents. Factors such as lack of access to transportation and proximity to parks can be barriers preventing members of society from enjoying the benefits of parks and trails. Increased benefits of accessing nature and public spaces can be realized when they adapt to the needs of diverse populations, such as people of all ages, ethnic backgrounds, mobility levels and income brackets. The CRD's Regional Growth Strategy supports development of complete communities that include more opportunities to walk, cycle and use public transit conveniently. Ideally, recreation and green space can be easily accessed in a 10-minute walk or 15-minute bike ride. BC's Active Transportation Guide recommends specifications to be followed in the development of active transportation infrastructure while offering design choice to improve the user experience for all ages and abilities.

The concept of equity recognizes that people may require different resources or opportunities to meet a goal, as they have different needs and circumstances. Aspects of equity relate to procedural and distributive fairness. Procedural equity is the representation of multiple perspectives in decision-making. Distributive equity refers to spatial or locational access to a service and the related social factors affecting access to those services. Efforts to increase equitable, or fair, access to parks and protected areas are being promoted by the Convention on Biological Diversity (Aichi Target 11) at the global scale to provincial initiatives offering free park passes. Understanding barriers to accessing parks and trails in the CRD is limited, but a new partnership initiative to apply a gender equity lens to regional trails is being piloted in 2022.



Accessibility mats like this one located at Thetis Lake's main beach allow for access to the water for visitors with mobility aids.



Accessibility is about creating communities and offering services that enable everyone to participate fully without barriers. The 2018 *Accessible Canada Act* aims to achieve a barrier-free Canada by 2040 by identifying, addressing and preventing accessibility obstacles. The *Accessible British Columbia Act* and upcoming regulation will require public-sector organizations to develop accessibility plans and public-feedback mechanisms. A barrier is anything that hinders the full and equal participation in society of persons with a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or functional limitation. New accessibility standards being developed and applied at the federal and provincial levels will inform regional efforts to improve accessibility.

### Priority 5-1

Enhance health and well-being by providing equitable access to regional parks and regional trails.

5-Actions	Timing
5-1a Develop and apply an Equity Lens to inform management and operation of regional parks and regional trails.	Ongoing
5-1b Conduct an Inclusion and Accessibility Assessment of regional parks and regional trails that assesses barriers and deterrents to access.	Short-term
5-1c Replace the 2003 Universal Access Plan for Regional Parks with new Accessibility Guidelines that provide objective information about the visitor experience, such as descriptions of trail terrain, length, and slope, to empower visitors to make appropriate individual choices and to better align user expectations with self-preparedness and ability.	Medium-term
5-1d Develop a Park Use Permit Policy that gives consideration to providing equitable access to programs, ensuring events and commercial activities align with CRD Regional Park values, and that fees reflect impacts on park facilities and users.	Medium-term
5-1e Work with First Nations to improve Indigenous cultural safety in regional parks.	Ongoing



## 5. Monitoring & Reporting

Over the next ten years, the actions contained within this Strategic Plan will form the basis of service plans and work plans that are approved by the Board annually as part of the financial planning process. Collaboration with CRD divisions, First Nations Governments, municipalities, park agencies, and stakeholders will be integral to this process.

As progress is made in the implementation of this action plan, knowledge and understanding of impacts to regional parks and regional trails will continue to develop. To remain flexible and adaptable, and to support consistent implementation over time, CRD staff will:

- Prepare a funding strategy to accompany implementation;
- Continue to identify opportunities for external grant funding and partnerships;
- Share knowledge and best practices with others;
- Participate in professional development to improve service delivery;
- Continue to monitor data to track progress over time;
- Evaluate progress and adjust actions, as needed.

## 5.1 Performance Indicators and Reporting

Progress on the implementation of the 10-year Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan will be reported annually. Figure 11 summarizes the intended reporting indicators identified for each strategic priority area proposed for annual reporting. For each goal area, an action status will reflect general progress made towards all actions supporting that goal. This helps to summarize at-a-glance progress made on actions that may not be easily measurable or reflected in another indicator, such as actions that are ongoing or taking place over a long period. For other measures, an icon is provided to indicate the desired direction of the indicator over time (increasing or decreasing), if applicable.

Minor amendments to the Strategic Plan will be brought forward when necessary to update factual information and to update the park and trail classifications, as new additions to the system are identified and established.

Major amendments to the Strategic Plan will involve First Nations, stakeholder and public engagement and will be considered by the CRD Board for approval.



Thetis Lake Regional Park

FIGURE 11. ANNUAL INTENDED REPORTING INDICATOR

Goal area	Intended reporting indicator
 <p><b>Goal 1: Reconciliation</b></p>	<p>↑ 1-1 Reconciliation workplans are developed with each First Nation</p>
	<p>↑ 1-1 Traditional use agreements are initiated with all First Nations in the region</p>
	<p>↑ 1-2 Increased participation in Indigenous perspectives programs and presentations</p>
	<p>↑ 1-2 Increased number of conservation and restoration projects in partnership with First Nations</p>
	<p>↑ 1-2 Increased number of economic opportunities made available to First Nations</p>
 <p><b>Goal 2: Conservation</b></p>	<p>↑ 2-1 Increased area of regional park land protected</p>
	<p>↑ 2-1 Increased area of regional park land restored</p>
	<p>↑ 2-1 Increased protection of at risk species and ecosystems in regional parks</p>
	<p>↑ 2-2 Increased percentage of First Nations collaborating with CRD on cultural heritage protection projects</p>
	<p>↑ 2-2 All staff receive cultural awareness training</p>
	<p>↑ 2-3 Increased conservation and research partnerships</p>

FIGURE 11. ANNUAL INTENDED REPORTING INDICATOR

Goal area	Intended reporting indicator
 <p><b>Goal 3:</b> Visitor Experience</p>	 3-1 Maintain high rates of visitor satisfaction
	 3-1 Increased area available for compatible outdoor recreation
	 3.2 Review and update interpretive program content every 4 years
	 3-2 Increased number of volunteer hours
 <p><b>Goal 4:</b> Climate Action &amp; Resiliency</p>	 4-1 Increased use of regional trails
	 4-1 Completed regional trail priority projects
	 4-1 Minimized regional trail service disruptions
	 4-2 Increase Electric Vehicle charging stations at park accesses
	 4-3 Reduced operational greenhouse gas emissions
	 4-3 Maintain critical infrastructure in good condition
	 4-4 Increase the percentage of parks with management plans less than 15 years old
	 4-5 Increased area of regional park land  4-5 Increased representation of all regional park classifications
 <p><b>Goal 5:</b> Access &amp; Equity</p>	 5-1 Improved accessibility to regional parks and regional trails
	 5-1 Cultural awareness information is incorporated into new park kiosks

## Appendix A: Glossary

**Archaeological Site:** A heritage site or object protected by the *Heritage Conservation Act*.

**Accessibility:** The quality of being easily used, approached or understood by a wide range of people and, in some cases, adapted for specific uses.

**Biodiversity:** The variability among living organisms from terrestrial, marine and other ecosystems, and includes variability at the genetic, species and ecosystem levels.<sup>1</sup>

**Conservation:** The practice of preserving, protecting and/or restoring the natural and cultural environment and species within for future generations.

**Cultural Heritage:** Includes tangible and intangible heritage embedded into artifacts, sites or monuments that have a diversity of symbolic, historic, artistic, aesthetic, ethnological, anthropological, scientific or social values.<sup>2</sup>

**Ecosystem Goods and Services:** Provision of services by natural systems that benefit the region and thereby offset, complement or, in some cases, eliminate the need for engineered solutions, such as but not limited to soil quality and stability, water treatment and storage, recharge of aquifers, and air quality regulation.

**Facility:** A piece of equipment, infrastructure or amenity in a regional park or regional trail, such as but not limited to: trails, signs, benches or bridges.

**Fit-for-Life:** Describes the majority of individuals' level of participation in an activity, where their motivation for participation is driven primarily by the enjoyment of engaging in the physical activity; participation may include recreational-level competition and training but is not the primary motivation.<sup>3</sup>

**Invasive species:** Any species not native to a particular ecosystem whose introduction causes, or is likely to cause, economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.<sup>4</sup>

**Level of Service:** a measure of the quantity, quality and reliability of service performance in relation to service performance goals, including consideration of legal requirements, community expectations and technical standards.

**Micromobility Device:** Small, lightweight modes of transportation designed for individual use that may have an electric motor, such as but not limited to, bicycles, electric bicycles, scooters, electric scooters, self-balancing devices.

**Natural Assets:** A biophysical or biological attribute of a natural ecosystem.

**Outdoor Recreation:** Physical, social and intellectual activities that are immersed in a natural outdoor setting, are dependent on the natural landscape, are compatible with and relatively low-impact on the natural environment, and that directly or indirectly foster appreciation for the natural environment.

**Recreation Setting Characteristics:** The qualities and conditions of a specific area that influence users' experiences and motivations to recreate there.<sup>5</sup>

**Resilience:** The capacity of social, economic and environmental systems to cope with a hazardous event, trend or disturbance, responding to reorganizing in ways that maintain their essential function, identify, and structure while also maintaining the capacity for adaptation, learning and transformation.<sup>4</sup>

**Stewardship:** Responsible use and protection of the environment and cultural heritage through conservation and sustainable practices to improve ecosystem resilience and human wellbeing.

**Sustainable service delivery:** the process of providing services to the community with the lens of economic, social and environmental well-being, today and into the future.<sup>6</sup>

**Traditional Ecological Knowledge:** The knowledge, practice and belief concerning the relationships of living beings to one another and to the physical environment that has been developed by First Nations over centuries of living as part of the environment.

**User Experience:** The intrinsic reward individuals gain from participating in an activity.

**User Objectives:** The user experience an individual seeks or the reason why an individual chooses a particular recreation activity or location.

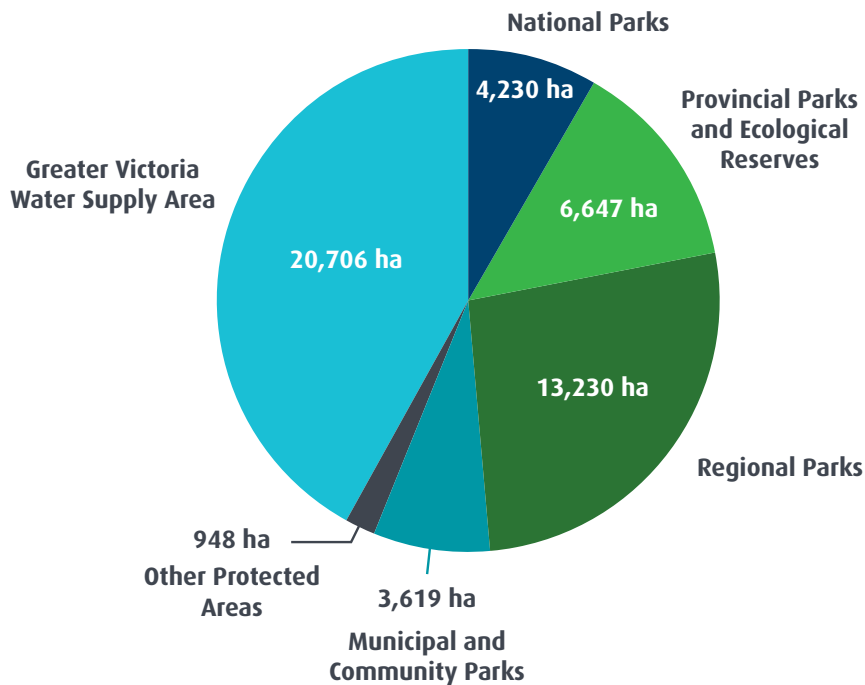
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# Appendix B: Parks and Protected Areas in the CRD

Parks and Protected Areas



PROTECTED AREA TYPE	HECTARES	% of CRD Land Base
National Parks	4,230	1.78%
Provincial Parks and Ecological Reserves	6,647	2.79%
Regional Parks	13,230	5.56%
Municipal and Community Parks	3,619	1.52%
Other Protected Areas*	948	0.40%
Greater Victoria Water Supply Area	20,706	8.7%

Total Parks and Protected Areas	49,380	20.75%
---------------------------------	--------	--------

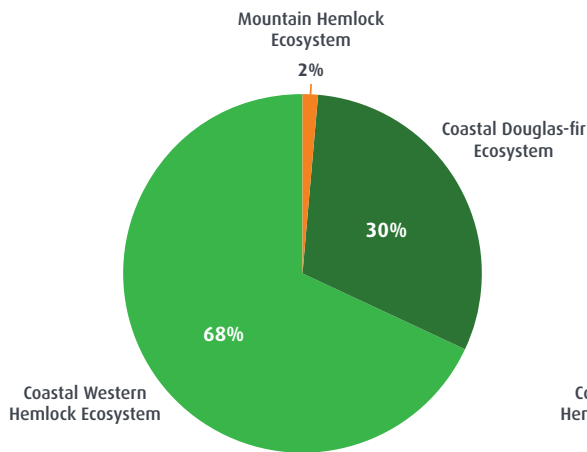
Total CRD land base	238,000
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\*Note, this may not include a complete data set of privately protected lands that are protected in fee simple or conservation covenants

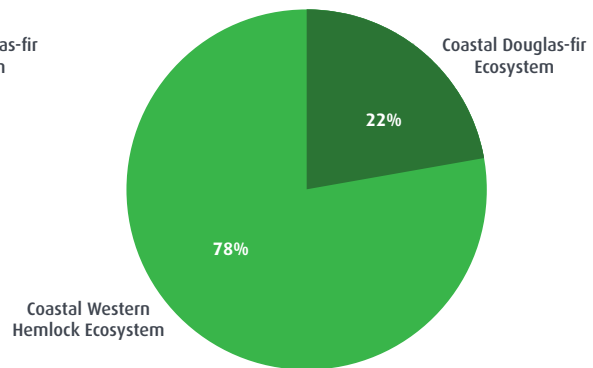
# Appendix C: Ecosystems and Species at Risk in the CRD

## Biogeoclimatic Ecosystems

### Capital Regional District



### Regional Parks

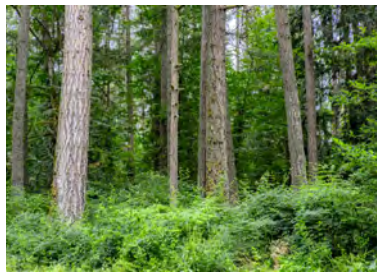


BIOGEOCLIMATIC ECOSYSTEM TYPE	HECTARES
Mountain Hemlock	3,473
Coastal Douglas-fir	72,636
Coastal Western Hemlock	162,056

BIOGEOCLIMATIC ECOSYSTEM TYPE	HECTARES
Coastal Douglas-fir	2,853
Coastal Western Hemlock	10,360



Coastal Western Hemlock



Coastal Douglas-fir

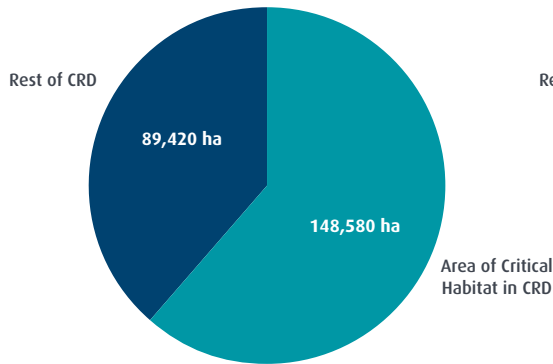


Mountain Hemlock

# Appendix C: Cont.

## Area of Critical Habitat designated for Species at Risk

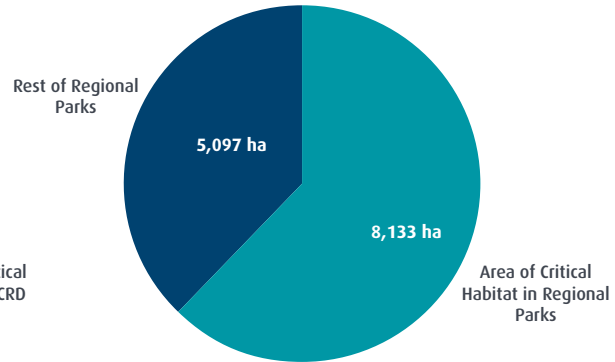
### Capital Regional District



CRITICAL HABITAT (AREA)	HECTARES
Area of Critical Habitat**	148,580
Rest of CRD	89,420

\* Identified for species at risk

### Regional Parks



CRITICAL HABITAT (AREA)	HECTARES
Area of Critical Habitat**	8,133
Rest of Regional Parks	5,097

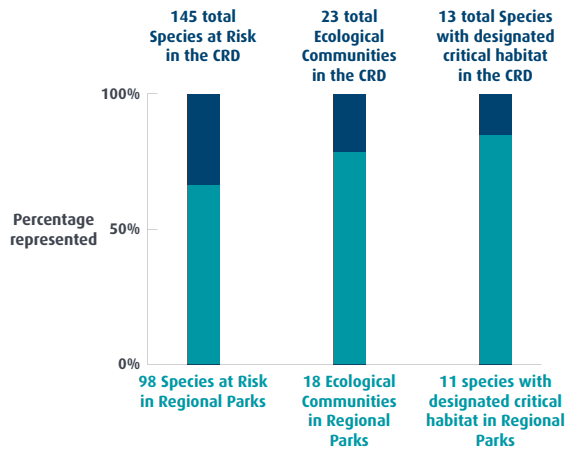
\* Identified for species at risk

## Regional Parks Representation of Species at Risk, Ecological Communities, and Critical Habitat in the CRD

SPECIES AT RISK	COUNT
In the CRD	145
In Regional Parks	98

ECOLOGICAL COMMUNITIES	HECTARES
In the CRD	23
In Regional Parks	18

CRITICAL HABITAT	COUNT
In the CRD	13
In Regional Parks	11



# Appendix D: Related CRD Strategies and Plans

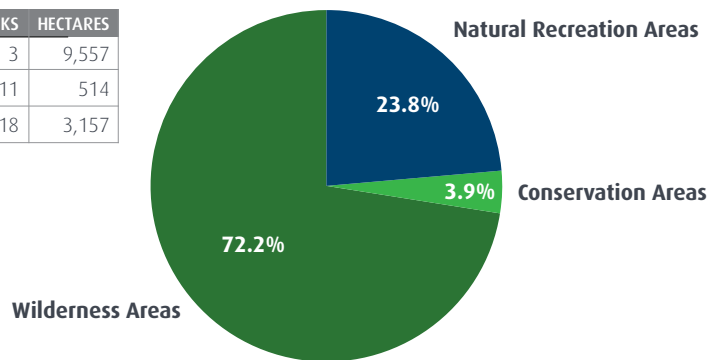
CRD Plans intersecting with regional parks and trails	Regional Parks and Trails Strategy Goal				
	1	2	3	4	5
2019-2022 Board Priorities	•	•	•	•	•
Advocacy Strategy (2019)	•	•	•	•	•
Climate Action Strategy (2021)		•	•	•	•
Corporate Asset Management Strategy (2019)			•	•	•
Corporate Plan (2019-2022)	•	•	•	•	•
First Nations Task Force Final Report (2018)	•	•		•	•
Regional Food and Agriculture Strategy (2016)				•	
Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy (1997)		•		•	
Regional Growth Strategy (2018)		•	•	•	•
Regional Parks Land Acquisition Strategy (2020-2021)		•	•		
Regional Parks Strategic Plan (2012-2021)		•	•	•	
Regional Trails Management Plan (2015)			•	•	•
Regional Transportation Plan (2014)			•	•	•
Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan (2017)				•	
Statement of Reconciliation	•	•		•	•

# Appendix E: Regional Park Classifications

	REGIONAL PARK	CONSERVATION AREA	WILDERNESS AREA	NATURAL RECREATION AREA	HECTARES
1	Albert Head Lagoon				7
2	Ayum Creek				6.4
3	Bear Hill				48.7
4	Brooks Point				6
5	Coles Bay				3.6
6	Devonian				13.5
7	East Point				0.8
8	East Sooke				1,458
9	Elk/Beaver Lake				443
10	Francis/King				107
11	Gonzales Hill				1.8
12	Horth Hill				36
13	Island View Beach				52
14	Jordan River				100
15	Kapoor				12.6
16	Lone Tree Hill				31
17	Matheson Lake				157
18	Matthews Point				24
19	Mill Farm Reserve				315
20	Mill Hill				71.6
21	Mount Parke				91
22	Mount Wells				121
23	Mount Work				754
24	Mountain Road				19.8
25	Roche Cove				160
26	Sea to Sea				3,979
27	Sooke Hills Wilderness				4,120
28	Sooke Potholes				72
29	Sooke River Reserve				7
30	St. John Point				27
31	Thetis Lake				923
32	Witty's Lagoon				56

Regional Parks Land Base by Classification

PARK CLASSIFICATION	NUMBER OF PARKS	HECTARES
Regional Wilderness Areas	3	9,557
Regional Conservation Areas	11	514
Regional Natural Recreation Areas	18	3,157







| **Capital Regional District**

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Twitter: @crd\_bc  
Facebook: Capital Regional District

# Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan

## Public Engagement Report

Capital Regional District | June 2022





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# 1. Executive Summary

The Capital Regional District (CRD) Board initiated an update of the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012–2021 in December 2021. The Regional Parks Committee conducted a workshop to set the direction for the Strategic Plan update in January 2022 and the CRD Board approved this material for engagement in February 2022.

Engagement opportunities on the Strategic Plan update were provided between February and May 2022. The aim of the engagement process was to inform First Nations, stakeholder groups and the public about the park strategic planning process—to seek input and information from affected First Nations, agencies, stakeholder groups and individuals about the proposed vision, mission, values and key priorities to guide regional parks and trails over the next decade. This report includes a summary of the engagement process and responses received. A separate report is provided outlining engagement with First Nations.

Key stakeholder organizations were invited to participate in a series of focus groups on the Strategic Plan update in February 2022. In total, 44 stakeholder groups participated in one of five focus groups. Agencies with interest in parks and protected areas were invited to participate in a focus group or interview. Staff from seven agencies participated in a focus group and an interview. Three interviews were held with user groups who self-identified as having interest in the Strategic Plan update. An online survey was available between March 8 and April 4, 2022. A total of 1,228 surveys were completed. Three online information sessions were held with 26 members of the public participating.

Feedback received from the engagement process is highlighted in the Response section of this report. The Moving Forward section discusses the key concepts that were considered for incorporating into the updated CRD Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan.

## 2. Introduction

The Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021 has set the overall vision, goals and objectives for regional parks service delivery over the past 10 years. The 2012-2021 Strategic Plan was primarily led by a volunteer Citizens Advisory Panel (CAP) and included extensive engagement with stakeholders, the public, government, First Nations and other park agencies. The Strategic Plan considered many of the trends, challenges and values that are still relevant today, such as increased visitation to regional parks and trails and the need for increased environmental protection. At the same time, many things have changed in the region since the adoption of the plan in 2012. For example, climate action and reconciliation with First Nations are key priorities of the CRD.

The CRD Board initiated an update of the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021 on December 8, 2021 and a workshop was held with the Regional Parks Committee in January, 2022 to set the direction for the Strategic Plan update. On February 9, 2022 the CRD Board directed staff to seek input from First Nations, stakeholders, other agencies and the general public on a proposed vision, values, mission statement, and priorities and to apply a lens of conservation and protection of biodiversity to the priorities and process.

A new Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan will be brought forward in July 2022 that will set the direction for regional parks and trails over the next decade.

## 3. Purpose of the Engagement Report

The purpose of this report is to summarize the engagement process and to highlight responses and key themes received related to the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update.

The goal of engagement is to receive feedback from First Nations, stakeholders, user groups and the public on the proposed vision, values, mission, and key priorities that were approved by the CRD Board in February, 2022 to be considered in the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update (Appendix A). Feedback received through the engagement process from government agencies, stakeholder groups and the public is summarized and analyzed in this report and considered in the updated Strategic Plan. A separate report includes feedback received from First Nations.

The CRD is committed to involving First Nations, stakeholders, agencies and the public in the development of strategic plan. The aim of the engagement process was to inform First Nations, stakeholder groups, agencies and the public about the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update process, and to seek input and information from affected individuals and groups to assist the CRD with setting the future direction for regional parks and trails. Other goals of the engagement process included information sharing, dialogue and discussion, building ongoing relationships, developing understanding and trust, and producing a Strategic Plan that reflects organizational needs and public interests. The engagement process allowed interested individuals and groups to actively contribute to the Strategic Plan before the plan was updated. Engagement was one of the early steps in the update process and used to gather traditional and local knowledge about regional parks and trails, learn what is important to people,

identify issues and priorities, and to seek a range of suggestions for what should be considered in updating the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032.

## 4. Engagement Period

This report includes a summary of the engagement activities completed and responses received between February and May 2022 from stakeholder groups, government agencies and the general public. A separate report includes a summary of engagement with First Nations.

The engagement process for the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update commenced in February 2022 with a media release and the launch of a project site on the “get involved” webpage: [www.getinvolved.crd.bc.ca](http://www.getinvolved.crd.bc.ca) (hereafter ‘project webpage’). Focus groups and interviews were held between February and March 2022. An online survey was available from March 8 to April 4, 2022. Information sessions were offered online on March 1, March 16 and April 1, 2022. Communication materials were published through the engagement process on the project webpage, on social media and in newspapers. Engagement with First Nations was facilitated by a consultant beginning in February 2022.

## 5. Who Was Engaged

### 5.1. First Nations

Fifteen First Nations whose traditional territory lies within the CRD boundary were invited to participate in the Strategic Plan update process. A separate engagement report outlines the First Nations engagement process.

### 5.2. Park Agencies

Six agencies with direct or overarching jurisdiction, or a related interest in the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update, were invited to provide input and expertise. These included: Parks Canada; Cowichan Valley Regional District; BC Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (BC Parks and BC Recreation Sites and Trails); Islands Trust Conservancy; and BC Parks and Recreation Association. Representatives of these agencies received written notification of the Strategic Plan update and an invitation to participate in an interview and/or focus group session to share information and provide feedback.

### 5.3. Stakeholders

A total of 85 stakeholder groups were identified for participation in focus groups. Three broad categories of stakeholder groups to be invited to participate in the focus groups were identified, as follows: cultural/social interests, conservation interests and outdoor recreation interests. A balance of stakeholders from each category were invited to each focus group to promote a diversity of perspectives in the discussion. A list of the stakeholder groups selected to participate in the focus groups is provided in Appendix B.

### 5.4. User Groups

Approximately 200 user groups known by the CRD to have an interest in regional parks and trails were notified by email about the Strategic Plan engagement process and opportunities for input. The user groups were selected

from a master contact list maintained by Regional Parks and includes organizations that may represent a recreation, conservation, youth, or accessibility interest, and are currently active. Private businesses were not selected to be contacted.

Additional groups identified through the snowball sampling technique that did not meet the stakeholder selection criteria but who self-identified as having a special interest in participating in the Strategic Plan update were invited to participate in an interview. These user groups included:

- South Island Disc Golf Society
- Vancouver Island Slackline Association
- Local experts.

### 5.5. General Public

An online survey was made available to the general public through a link on the project webpage between March 8 and April 4, 2022. The survey included 16 questions with both quantitative and qualitative responses. A total of 1,228 surveys were completed. Survey methodology is outlined in Appendix B and survey responses are included in Appendix D.

The general public in the CRD were notified of the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update via media releases, newspaper advertisements and social media. The public was directed to the project webpage and had the opportunity to register to receive notifications about the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update. Between February 9, 2022 and May 1, 2022, there were approximately 2,400 visits to the project webpage, with 1,228 visitors engaging by taking the survey, 1,400 informed by viewing photos, downloading documents, and visiting the FAQ page, and 2,200 becoming aware about the project by viewing at least one page (Figure 1). Visitation peaked in March and April 2022 when the online survey and information sessions were available.

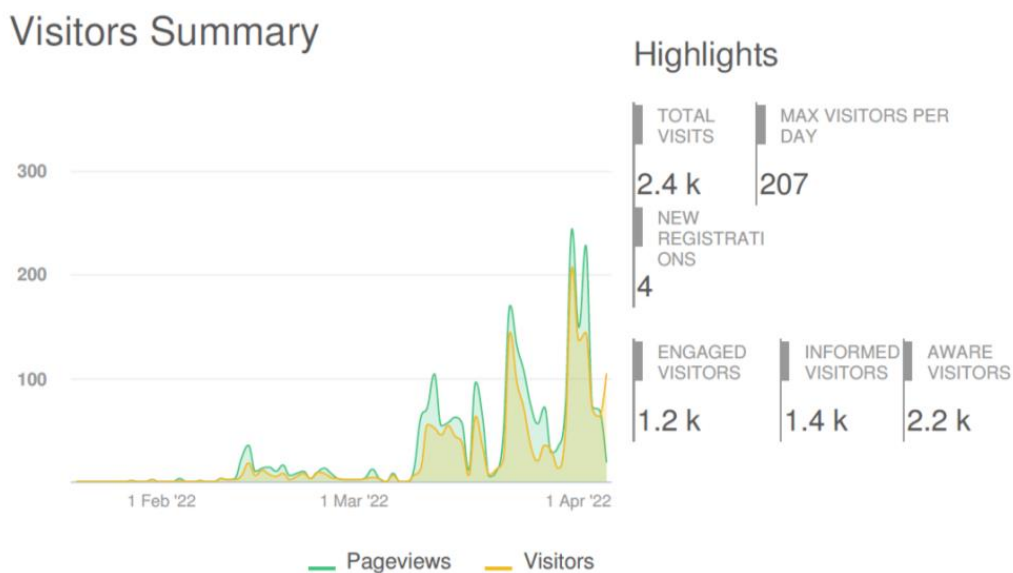


Figure 1: Visitation to project webpage between February 9 and May 1, 2022.

## 6. Engagement Methods

The project scope and engagement process for the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update were approved by the CRD Board in February 2022. A number of tools and approaches were used to engage First Nations, agencies, stakeholders, user groups and the public including: focus groups, interviews, an online survey, public information sessions, advertising, a project webpage and social media. The engagement methods are outlined in detail in Appendix B.

## 7. Responses

The following is a summary of the feedback received related to the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update.

### 7.1. First Nations

See separate First Nations engagement report.

### 7.2. Park Agencies

A focus group and an interview were held with staff representatives from Cowichan Valley Regional District, Islands Trust Conservancy, Parks Canada (Gulf Islands), BC Parks, Recreation Sites and Trails BC, and the BC Parks and Recreation Association. While these agencies preferred not to offer comments about the values and principles, vision, mission and priorities proposed for the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan as it was beyond their capacity and role, comments and suggestions were offered about how to strengthen partnerships, align desired outcomes between groups, clarify roles and responsibilities of the different agencies and enhance information sharing.

### 7.3. Stakeholders

#### 7.3.1. Feedback about the Values and Principles

Overall, stakeholders were supportive of the proposed values and principles. Minor changes to the wording and additional values were offered by stakeholders, including leadership, partnership, stewardship, connectivity, education, and accountability.

#### 7.3.2. Feedback about the Vision

Stakeholders suggested the proposed vision statement encompasses too many ideas and concepts, potentially making it difficult for CRD Regional Parks to achieve. Stakeholders indicated that the term 'exceptional' is too subjective to be included in the vision. Stakeholders also pointed out the importance of including the word 'compatible' in front of outdoor recreation. Stakeholders proposed moving some of the important concepts into the mission and value statements, such as cooperation, respect, resiliency, and cultural heritage. The following new concepts were proposed by stakeholders to strengthen the vision: connectivity, active transportation, inspiring stewardship and education. These concepts are already present in the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021 and stakeholders suggested they become prominent in the updated plan.

### 7.3.3. Feedback about the Mission

Stakeholders suggested the mission statements could be simplified and should better reflect the dynamic relationship between conservation and compatible outdoor recreation. The function of regional trails for active transportation was suggested to be highlighted, as well as the role the CRD plays in providing environmental education and leadership. Additionally, stakeholders stressed the importance of incorporating a lens of First Nations reconciliation, accessibility, equity, and climate action in all the services the CRD provides, where feasible.

### 7.3.4. Feedback on the Priorities

Stakeholders reviewed a series of priority statements that focused on the following themes: conservation and recreation; access and equity; climate action and resiliency; and reconciliation. The proposed themes were generally supported and aligned with stakeholder's views. However, the priority statements were deemed by some stakeholders as too complex and needing to be broken down. While the compatibility of conservation and outdoor recreation was debated, stakeholders shared common views towards the role of both conservation and compatible outdoor recreation in developing nature stewardship. Stakeholders indicated the need for incorporating research, best practices and education to ensure protection of biodiversity and to provide quality compatible outdoor recreation opportunities. Other suggestions offered by stakeholders included: more responsive park management and planning; expanding land acquisitions; buffering development; active transportation and transit opportunities; consideration of commercial activity in parks; improving facility design; improving transparency and accountability; and taking a leadership role in research, collaboration, and promotion of parks through marketing and communications. Prioritizing reconciliation with First Nations was supported by stakeholders and perceived as most appropriate to determine through direct engagement with First Nations. Stakeholders expressed general interest in learning about cultural heritage and reconciliation activities, where appropriate.

### 7.3.5. Additional Comments

Stakeholders were given the opportunity to add any further comments about regional parks and trails. The majority of the comments were about general support and appreciation for regional parks and trails and about opportunities to network with other stakeholder groups. Other comments focused specifically on: obtaining clarification about regional park bylaws and management processes; different levels of government jurisdiction across the region; impact of humans and increasing visitation; land acquisition criteria; and specific facility development, among others. It was stressed by the facilitator that the focus group was on the Strategic Plan update and those important comments would be noted and redirected to the appropriate planning processes concerning regional parks and trails. Comments from the stakeholder focus groups are listed by theme in Appendix C.

## 7.4. User Groups and Public

A total of 1,228 online surveys were completed and submitted. The main themes reflected in the comments include:

- Respondents' age was evenly split between categories, with the exception of younger people whose participation was lower. The majority of respondents to the survey live in Saanich (27%), Victoria (19%) and Langford (11%) and are couples with dependent children (41%), followed by parent(s) with one or more dependent children (28%) and adults living alone (14%).



- The majority of participants to the survey responded that it is very important to have the proposed values and principles of conservation (80%) and recreation (80%) in the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan, followed by resiliency (74%), equity (66%), accessibility (62%) and reconciliation (58%).
- More than half of the respondents to the survey identified stewardship (52%) and education (43%) as additional values to be included in the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update.
- The majority of respondents (83%) support to strongly support the proposed vision for the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan.
- All five mission statements proposed for the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan obtained more than 65% of respondents support to strongly support.
- When asked what should the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan give priority to over the next 10 years, the themes that scored the highest support were: land acquisition (High=66%), biodiversity protection (High=58%), and providing buffers between parks and urban development (High=50%). All other priorities scored lower, ranging between medium-high to medium-low priority.
- Respondents were given the opportunity to provide comments about how CRD Regional Parks can support reconciliation with First Nations. A total of 734 comments were received. The opportunities most commonly identified by respondents were: promoting the sharing of Indigenous knowledge through education, interpretation, and programming (n=266) and consulting First Nations directly in regard to regional parks and trails management (N=153) so to ensure their priorities are met.
- Respondents were given the opportunity to provide additional comments about regional parks and trails. A total of 932 comments were received, with many providing multiple feedback statements and suggestions about the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update. For conservation, respondents were concerned about the overuse and impacts they witnessed in the regional parks and trails (n=65) and suggested to focus on biodiversity and ecosystem preservation (n=132) and land acquisition (n=100). For outdoor recreation, respondents suggested, in general, to offer more opportunities to recreate in regional parks and trails (n=83), with some specific stakeholder groups advocating for more disc golfing (n=138), mountain biking (n=120) and horse riding (n=47) opportunities. Respondents (n=113) took also the opportunity to express their appreciation towards the CRD and the possibility to participate in the survey.

#### 7.4.1 Additional Input from User Groups

Three interviews were conducted with representatives from user groups who self-identified as having interest or knowledge in the Strategic Plan update. The main themes reflected in these interviews were: compatible outdoor recreation; stewardship; decision-making processes; conservation and protection of biodiversity; research and evidence-based decision-making.

A total of 15 public comments were submitted to the [parksplanning@crd.bc.ca](mailto:parksplanning@crd.bc.ca) email. The main themes reflected in these submissions include: the engagement process; park development and park uses; conservation; regional trails; climate change; health and well-being; and governance.

The feedback obtained aligned with previous comments provided by stakeholders through the focus groups and by the public through the survey.

#### **7.4.2 Additional Input from Municipalities**

A letter was received from the District of Metchosis, dated May 3, 2022, regarding the Strategic Plan update (Appendix E). The main themes reflected in this submission include: conservation and biodiversity lens, protection of wildland areas, biodiversity, carbon sequestration, and securing habitat for apex predators.

## **8. Moving Forward**

The Regional Parks Committee held a workshop in January 2022 to set the direction for engagement on the Regional Parks Strategic Plan update. At its February 9, 2022 meeting, the CRD Board proposed a renewed vision, mission, values and principles, and strategic priorities based on the themes of conservation & recreation, access & equity, climate action & resiliency, and reconciliation. This material was presented to First Nations, stakeholder groups and the public for feedback between February and May 2022. At its meeting of April 20, 2022, the Transportation Committee recommended the Plan be called Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan and that specific content relating to regional trails be included. This emphasis on the regional trails function of the CRD regional parks service has been strengthened throughout the Plan and particularly through the concepts of connectivity, mobility, active transportation and accessibility.

While engagement results indicated overall support for the proposed vision, stakeholder feedback suggested the desired future state of regional parks and trails should be simplified in an attempt to make the vision more obtainable. Based on this feedback, the concept of cooperation has been removed from the vision but inserted into sections of the Plan that address stewardship and partnerships. The concept of respecting Indigenous cultural use and cultural heritage has been strengthened. Stakeholder feedback about the vision suggested adding concepts of connectivity, active transportation, inspiring stewardship and education. The vision has been amended to add the concept of connectivity to reflect the function of regional trails, active mobility in general, and the importance of connected greenspaces. The vision has also been amended to add the concept of inspiring stewardship, of which an element is education. A glossary has been included in the updated Strategic Plan to clarify terms used throughout the document.

Throughout the engagement process, the values of conservation and outdoor recreation received the most support. The other proposed values and principles (accessibility, equity, reconciliation and resiliency) received support as well. Refinements to the wording of the values and principles has been done in an attempt to better reflect their meaning. The additional values and principles of accountability, connectivity, education, leadership, partnerships, and stewardship were suggested by stakeholders and incorporated into the public survey questions. The public survey results indicate strong support for including education and stewardship as values in the updated Strategic Plan. The values of accountability and connectivity received less support overall but have been included as they provide a stronger foundation for the Plan and were themes heard throughout the engagement process. These values and principles have been developed and incorporated into the updated Strategic Plan. Edits to the values and principles have also been made to better reflect the role of regional trails in the CRD.

While more than 65% of public survey respondents support or strongly support all five mission statements proposed for the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan, stakeholders suggested the mission statements should be simplified to better reflect the dynamic relationship between conservation and compatible outdoor recreation, reflect the function of regional trails for active transportation, as well as how regional parks provide opportunities for environmental education and stewardship. The mission statements have been revised to highlight these core functions of the service. All other concepts originally proposed in the mission statements have been removed as they are adequately represented elsewhere in the Plan and their importance is not lost.

The engagement materials presented a series of priority statements that focused on the following themes: conservation & recreation; access & equity; climate action & resiliency; and reconciliation. Overall, the engagement process indicated that the priority statements were deemed as too complex and needing to be broken down or streamlined.

Overall, the engagement process highlighted that prioritizing reconciliation was perceived as most appropriate to determine through direct engagement with First Nations. The engagement process also revealed general public interest in learning about cultural heritage and reconciliation actions, where appropriate. The priorities for reconciliation have been given prominence in the Plan and the proposed actions support ongoing engagement with First Nations to determine how to strengthen relationships, respect Indigenous laws and cultural use, and make tangible progress towards reconciliation. Continued efforts by the CRD to deliver cultural awareness education and adhere to cultural heritage protection are also included in the Plan.

The main topic of interest and importance throughout the engagement process was the dynamic between conservation and recreation. Many common views were expressed about the role of both conservation and compatible outdoor recreation in developing nature stewardship. The Plan attempts to focus on how conservation and recreation may be compatible to achieve the mutual goal of nature stewardship and how to address causes of tension between conservation and outdoor recreation through improving research, planning and monitoring to improve transparency, protection of natural assets and cultural heritage, and improve outdoor recreation experiences. The concepts of conservation and visitor experience have been addressed separately in the Plan in order to ensure each is given due consideration and the duality between the concepts does not detract from their importance. The conservation priorities of land acquisition and environmental restoration and monitoring are highlighted in the Plan, and were the priorities with highest rates of support by public and stakeholders. The outdoor recreation priorities of developing partnerships, incorporating best practices/improving facility design, and doing responsive park planning are highlighted in the Plan, and were the priorities with the highest rates of support by public and stakeholders. Also, knowledge sharing, improved communication and education are key elements raised in the engagement process and have been incorporated into the Plan.

Climate action and resiliency ranked of high interest to participants in the engagement process. The key priorities suggested by participants include: buffering urban development with new park land, working with government agencies to connect green spaces and apply a climate action lens to service provision. These aspects have been incorporated into the Plan.

Of the priorities presented under the access and equity theme, feedback received through the engagement process indicated the highest level of support for providing accessibility to parks and trails for people of different ages, abilities and incomes and for enhancing connectivity between communities and parks. The role of regional trails and transit in providing low-barrier access between communities and parks was highlighted throughout the engagement process, and have been incorporated into the Plan.

In addition to the input received through the engagement process, staff have also incorporated relevant priorities and actions from related CRD strategies and corporate commitments into the updated Strategic Plan. These related CRD strategies underwent separate engagement processes and have been approved by the CRD Board. Staff expertise has also been incorporated into the updated Strategic Plan to refine terms, review for consistency and alignment between divisions.

How the input received to date from First Nations has been incorporated into the Strategic Plan update is included in a separate report.

## 9. Limitations

The CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update was initiated in December 2021 and the delivery of an updated Strategic Plan was set for June/July 2022. It is possible that such a short timeline may limit the engagement abilities of participants. Significant limitations to in-person engagement were experienced due to COVID-19 public safety measures. Many of the typical community events and open houses utilized during a planning process were not feasible. Technological tools were heavily relied on during this engagement process due to COVID-19 public safety measures. Lack of access to, and knowledge of, technology can be a limitation to those wishing to participate. Finally, the project timeline and allocated resources constrain the project to an extent.

## Appendix A: Engagement Materials

CRD

# Regional Parks Strategic Plan Update 2022



March - April, 2022  
Public Input

### Vision 2032

We work cooperatively and respectfully to steward and expand an exceptional system of regional parks and trails that is rich in biodiversity and cultural heritage, resilient to change, connects people to nature and provides healthy outdoor experiences for all.



### Mission



Ensure regional parks and trails are resilient by delivering a sustainable service that is adaptable and takes action on climate change.



Foster stewardship of ecological and cultural resources by informing, engaging and collaborating with the public, volunteers, partners, and First Nations.



Provide access to regional parks and trails that facilitates healthy, safe and enjoyable outdoor recreation experiences for all.



Secure a diverse and connected system of regional parks and trails that protect and restore the integrity of our region's biodiversity and cultural landscapes.



Work with First Nations in taking care of the land and water.

# Values and Principles



**Accessibility** – We provide access to nature for all ages and abilities



**Conservation** – We work together to protect, restore and celebrate the region's natural and cultural landscapes



**Equity** – We work together to ensure regional parks and trails are inclusive and maintained as a common good



**Reconciliation** – We are committed to work towards reconciliation with First Nations



**Recreation** – We offer outdoor recreation experiences that improve our health and well-being



**Resiliency** – We take action on climate change by being adaptive and using resources sustainably with a view to benefiting future generations



## **Additional Values and Principles:**

Leadership

Partnership

Stewardship

Connectivity

Education

Accountability

## Conservation & Recreation

- Conserve biodiversity
- Enable outdoor recreation
- Work with partners
- Foster stewardship



## Access & Equity

- Enhance health & well-being
- Promote complete and connected communities
- Ensure economic fairness
- Accessibility & equity lens



## Climate Action & Resiliency

- Align sustainable service delivery with climate action
- Advance regional active transportation
- Develop partnerships
- Acquire and manage natural areas



## Reconciliation

- Incorporate First Nations reconciliation objectives
- Provide space for cultural use
- Strengthen engagement
- Support shared prosperity



**KEY PRIORITY STATEMENTS  
REGIONAL PARKS STRATEGIC PLAN**

**February 2022**

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**Conservation & Recreation**

- Take action to conserve biodiversity through acquiring land, restoration and monitoring of ecosystems across the region (UN; LAS; RGS, 2.1; RPSP, p.9)
- Enable users to recreate and have outdoor recreation experiences that are enjoyable, safe and compatible (RPSP, p.9 & 12)
- Work with partners in taking care of the land and water and providing sustainable outdoor recreation (Board, #6d & #6b-1 & #6b-2; RPSP, p.10; LAS)
- Foster stewardship through program delivery, knowledge sharing and leading by example (RPSP, p.10)

**Access & Equity**

- Enhance health and well-being by providing nature and outdoor recreation experiences for all ages and abilities (Board, #6e; RPSP, p.9)
- Promote complete and connected communities by ensuring recreation, parks and green space can be easily accessed by transit, walking or cycling (RGS, 3.1 & 4.1; RPSP, p.9)
- Ensure economic fairness by managing regional parks and trails as a common good (RGS 5.1; Revenue, p.4)
- Strengthen an accessibility and equity lens in service delivery

### Climate Action & Resiliency

- Align sustainable service delivery and infrastructure improvements with climate action (RGS 7.1; CAS, 1.1 & 5.1; RPSP)
- Advance regional active transportation opportunities that contribute to greenhouse gas reduction (CAS, 3.7; RPSP; RGS, 4)
- Develop partnerships for the long-term consistent and connected management of green space and ecosystem services (RPSP; Board, #5a-5).
- Strategically acquire and manage natural areas to address climate mitigation, urban containment and access to green space for a growing population (RGS 7.1, CAS, 5.1; RPSP)

### Reconciliation

- Incorporate First Nation worldviews, knowledge and reconciliation objectives in the management of natural assets and cultural heritage (Board, #3a-3 & #6d; RPSP; FNSR; RNTF, p.44-45)
- Provide space for cultural and ceremonial use, food and medicine harvesting, traditional management practices and reclaiming Indigenous place names (Board, #3a-3 & #6d; RPSP; FNSR; FNTF, p.44-45)
- Strengthen engagement with First Nations in service delivery initiatives (Board, #3a-3 & #6d; RPSP; FNSR; FNTF, p.44-45; LAS)
- Seek partnerships, share information and deliver fair and equitable services in working with First Nations on achieving their economic goals (Board, #3a-3 & #6d; RPSP; FNSR; FNTF, p.44-45)

#### Reference Abbreviations:

Board	Capital Regional District 2019-2021 Board Priorities
CAS	Climate Action Strategy 2021
FNSR	First Nations Statement of Reconciliation
FNTF	First Nations Task Force Final Report, 2018
LAS	Land Acquisition Strategy 2020-2021
RGS	Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), Bylaw No. 4017, 2018
RPSP	Regional Parks Strategic Plan (RPSP) 2012-2021
Revenue	Draft Revenue Generation Strategy, 2021
UN	United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030

# Appendix B: Engagement Methods

## Interviews

Interviews were offered by CRD Regional Parks staff to representatives from park agencies with interest in the region who could not attend a focus group, and with experts or representatives from user groups who did not meet the stakeholder selection criteria and self-identified as having interest in the Strategic Plan update. Four interviews were conducted in February and March 2022. Interviews were held by phone or virtually by Zoom or Teams and lasted approximately one hour. CRD staff took notes during the interviews for later analysis and review.

## Project Webpage

A project webpage was established on the CRD’s Get Involved online platform in February 2022 and was updated for the duration of the Strategic Plan update (<https://getinvolved.crd.bc.ca/regional-parks-strategic-plan-update>). The project webpage includes an overview of the Strategic Plan update process, the proposed vision, values, mission statements, and priorities accepted by the CRD Board for engagement, as well as outlines opportunities for input, CRD staff contact information, frequently asked questions (FAQs), and key documents informing the Strategic Plan update.

## Information Sessions

Three online information sessions were held via the Zoom platform on March 11, March 16 and April 1, 2022. Each session included a presentation about the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update and a question and answer session. Each webinar lasted one hour. A total of 26 participants attended the three webinars.

## Letters/Emails

Email notices were sent to approximately 200 user groups with potential interest or expertise related to regional parks and trails. Email notices were also sent to seven park agencies with a direct interest in the Strategic Plan update.

A project email account was created for receiving comments and inquiries about the Strategic Plan update: [parksplanning@crd.bc.ca](mailto:parksplanning@crd.bc.ca). A total of 15 email submissions were received from members of the public or individuals representing a user group or special interest group. One letter was received from the District of Metchocin (Appendix F). Delegations and written submissions provided to the CRD Board are not included in this report.

## Social Media

Social media posts were made on the CRD’s Facebook and Twitter accounts during February, March and April 2022, directing people to the project webpage and online survey. These posts went out to 7,813 followers on Twitter and 5,500 followers on Facebook. As well, some stakeholder and user groups shared information and links to the project webpage on their own channels. Facebook ads were boosted throughout the survey process, with a link to the project webpage to complete the online survey. The targeted demographic for these ads were people living in the region aged 18-65+. Figure 2 outlines the level of engagement with the Facebook ads.

Reach	Reactions	Shares	Link Clicks	Comments
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19,356	44	25	911	7
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Figure 2: Facebook Ad Engagement

## Advertising

Two media releases were issued by the CRD on February 9 and March 18, 2022 outlining the Strategic Plan update and engagement process, and encouraging the public to complete the online survey. Multiple news outlets received the media release. An article was published by Black Press Media on March 11, 2022.

Print ads were published in multiple newspapers during March and April 2022, while the online survey was available (Figure 3). The ads directed readers to the project webpage to complete the online survey. Ads were posted in Black Press Media papers and the Times Colonist (Figure 4).

Publication	Date
Oak Bay News	March 10, 2022
Peninsula News	March 10, 2022
Sooke News Mirror	March 10, 2022
Goldstream News Gazette	March 10, 2022
Saanich News	March 10, 2022
Times Colonist	March 8, 2022

Figure 3: Newspaper Ad Dates

## Public Feedback Opportunity



### The Capital Regional District Is seeking input on the **Regional Parks Strategic Plan Update**

*CRD Regional Parks protects and manages over 13,300 hectares of natural areas in 32 regional parks and three regional trails on southern Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands.*

The updated Regional Parks Strategic Plan will set the direction for regional parks and trails over the next decade, defining the vision for our regional parks and providing guidance for the CRD to consistently achieve desired outcomes.

Learn more, attend information sessions and take the survey online at: [getinvolved.crd.bc.ca/regional-parks-strategic-plan-update](https://getinvolved.crd.bc.ca/regional-parks-strategic-plan-update)

The logo for the Capital Regional District (CRD), consisting of the letters 'CRD' in a bold, white, sans-serif font, set against a dark teal background that features a stylized white wave or mountain shape.

Figure 4: Newspaper Advertisement



## Online Survey

An online survey was made available through a link on the project webpage from March 8 to April 4, 2022. The survey included 17 questions with both quantitative and qualitative responses. Some survey questions had multiple statements to be completed.

Close-ended questions were measured through a five-point rating scale ranging from strongly support to strongly oppose or by offering pre-determined categories. Close-ended questions were used to reduce the response burden for participants. Open-ended questions were also included to allow respondents the option to offer additional comments and clarify their responses. Questions about participants' demographic characteristics (i.e., age, residency) were also included in the questionnaire.

### Analysis

The Engagement HQ's analytics framework provided by the Get Involved platform was used to analyze descriptive statistics, which are reported as a percentage for all quantitative questions of the survey. Content analysis was performed to analyze qualitative comments provided by participants in a replicable and systematic manner. Specifically, all qualitative data were categorized using codes, which allowed identifying code themes and response patterns.

### Rationale

It is important to acknowledge that the aim of the survey was to offer an easy-to-access venue for the public to provide input about the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update. The information obtained through this participation tool is not intended to be representative of the whole population of the capital region. Hence, the data reported in this document will not be generalized to the broader population.

The survey was used to ensure that insights, concerns and experiences of participants interested in the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update dialogue are documented and considered. The information retrieved through this participatory tool complement the insights provided by the other engagement approaches reported in this document. The data in this report should therefore be interpreted in conjunction with the overall engagement process outcomes.

### Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and Privacy Impact Assessment

All responses in the survey were voluntary, thus participants had the choice to skip any question they did not wish to answer. All information was collected in compliance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (see <https://www.crd.bc.ca/freedom-of-information>). A Privacy Impact Assessment (CRD PIA #21-055) was developed for this project to ensure research involving humans was conducted in compliance with ethics and local legislation.

## Stakeholder Focus Groups

Focus groups are an ideal participation methodology to involve stakeholders in providing feedback on a defined topic through facilitated discussion. Participants are encouraged to engage on topics as well as to respond to and reflect on narratives conveyed by other participants in the group.

Key stakeholder groups were invited to participate in one of five focus group sessions to provide feedback on the proposed vision, values, mission, issues and key priorities to be included in the Strategic Plan update. A diversity of perspectives and experiences was sought for participation in each focus group. Each focus group aimed to include 18-20 participants representing different stakeholder interest groups.

Staff developed objective criteria to select key stakeholders for participation in a series of focus group discussions about the Strategic Plan update in February 2022. Stakeholder groups were selected from a master contact list compiled by Regional Parks. The master contact list is updated by staff based on local knowledge, previous contacts, past participation in engagement activities, referrals, and general interest inquiries. The master contact list currently identifies approximately 200 stakeholder groups in the CRD, British Columbia and Canada potentially interested in the CRD's regional parks management and projects.

The rationale and criteria for stakeholder selection were provided in the stakeholder engagement report provided to the February 9, 2022, CRD Board meeting. The rationale was to achieve a diversity of perspectives and experiences for participation in focus groups discussions about the Strategic Plan update. The following selection criteria were applied to evaluate the suitability of stakeholder groups for participation in the focus groups:

- being located in the CRD (yes=1 or no=0).
- representing a broad outdoor recreation, conservation/nature and/or cultural/social interest (yes=2 or no=0).
- having knowledge and experience related to CRD Regional Parks (yes=2 or no=0).
- having an interest and experience in working in multi-stakeholder groups (yes=1 or no=0).
- self-identifying as a First Nation (yes=1 or no=0).

Similar criteria have been successfully applied by the CRD to engage a diversity of stakeholder groups in previous engagement processes, including, recently, the Mountain Biking Advisory Committee and the Land Evaluation project.

A snowball technique was also used to expand the list of possible interest groups. Snowball sampling is a recruitment technique in which invited stakeholders are asked to assist in identifying other potential subjects that may have been missed from initial screening. The same criteria used to select the initial stakeholders was applied to potential subjects for consistency in selection.

Stakeholder groups receiving a score between five and seven were selected to be invited to participate in focus groups. A list of the stakeholder groups invited to participate in focus groups about the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update are included in Table 1. Of the 88 stakeholder groups invited, 44 participated in a focus group session.

Targeted emails/phone calls were used to invite stakeholders to the focus groups. Through the invitation, CRD staff explained the purpose of the focus group and requested confirmation of interest to participate. If no interest was expressed, other stakeholder groups representing a similar interest, but possibly having lower scoring criteria, were invited to participate to ensure representativeness in opinion across groups participating to the focus groups. An online poll was circulated to all interested stakeholder groups offering a range of 18 possible dates and times to participate in a focus group. Dates and times for the five focus group sessions were selected by CRD staff based on the availability of participants.

A total of five focus groups were conducted with stakeholders in February 2022. Each focus group was held virtually on Zoom and lasted approximately two hours. The focus groups were attended by 44 stakeholder groups: 27 representing outdoor recreation groups, 12 representing conservation groups, and 5 representing community groups.

An additional focus group was conducted with representatives from seven park agencies with interest in the region. This focus group was held virtually on Zoom and lasted approximately one hour. Representatives from five agencies attended.

The focus group sessions were taped for later analysis and review by CRD staff. The results of the focus group sessions will be used to inform further public engagement, to incorporate into the Strategic Plan update, and will be provided to the Regional Parks Committee and CRD Board for consideration.

Table 1: Stakeholders selected to participate in focus groups

Community Interests	Stakeholder Group [* indicates the stakeholder group participated]
Economic	Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce Tourism Victoria Urban Development Institute Tourism Association Vancouver Island
Community	<b>Greater Victoria Placemaking Network*</b> Creating Community Wellness Society South Island Prosperity Project Parks and Recreation Foundation Victoria Metchosin Foundation Victoria Foundation Community Social Planning Council

	Sooke Region Communities Health Network
Education	<b>Royal BC Museum*</b> YMCA-YWCA of Vancouver Island Shaw Centre for the Salish Sea
Accessibility & Equity	Victoria Disability Resource Centre <b>Community Living Victoria*</b> SPARC BC Power To Be <b>Building Bridges Community Support*</b>
Youth & Family	Post-secondary Student Societies <b>Camosun College Student Society*</b> Family Services of Greater Victoria
<b>Conservation</b>	<b>Stakeholder Group</b>
Nature Stewardship	<b>Victoria Natural History Society*</b> <b>Greater Victoria Nature Hood*</b> Gorge Waterway Action Society (GWAS) <b>Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary*</b> Raincoast Conservation Foundation Pacific Wild Alliance Salt Spring Island Conservancy Galiano Conservancy Association
Land Stewardship	Greater Victoria Greenbelt Society <b>Habitat Acquisition Trust (HAT)*</b> <b>The Land Conservancy (TLC)*</b> Ancient Forest Alliance Land Trust Alliance of British Columbia
Wildlife	<b>Juan de Fuca Salmon Restoration Society*</b> SeaChange Conservation Society Wilderness Committee <b>Peninsula Streams Society*</b> <b>Goldstream Volunteer Salmon Enhancement Association*</b> Rocky Point Bird Observatory World Fisheries Trust Watershed Watch Salmon Society <b>Coexistence with Carnivore Alliance*</b>
Invasive Species	<b>Coastal Invasive Species Committee*</b>

Experts	University of Victoria* Camosun College Royal Roads University* Vancouver Island University University of British Columbia
<b>Outdoor Recreation</b>	<b>Stakeholder Group</b>
Rock Climbing	South Island Climbing Association (SICA)* Climbers' Access Society of British Columbia*
Hiking & Running	Southern Vancouver Island Nature Trails Society* Alpine Club of Canada* Vancouver Island Trail Association Kludahk Outdoors Club* Juan de Fuca Community Trails Association* RunVictoria* Outdoor Club of Victoria Victoria Club Tread* Salt Spring Island Trail & Nature Club*
Geocaching & Orienteering	Victoria Orienteering Club*
Horse Riding	Backcountry Horsemen of BC - South Vancouver Island* Capital Regional Equestrians* Elk Beaver Lake Equestrian Society*
Dog Walkers and Associations	Capital Region Association of Dog Professionals* Citizen Canine Dog Owners Association*
Mountain Biking & Cycling	Sooke Bike Club* South Island Mountain Biking Society (SIMBS)* Dirty Girlz Bike Club* Capital Bike (formerly Greater Victoria Cycling Coalition and Greater Victoria Bike to Work Society)* Wheelhouse Cycling Society* Cycling BC*

Water Sports	<p><b>Surfrider Foundation Vancouver Island*</b>  Victoria City Rowing Club  <b>Rowing BC*</b>  Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC  Amalgamated Conservation Society  Diving Industry of Victoria Association  <b>South Island Sea Kayaking Association*</b>  Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club (VCKC)  <b>Victoria Fish and Game Protective Association*</b>  <b>(snowball)</b></p>
Youth & Community	<p><b>Victoria Youth Paddling Club*</b>  <b>Greater Victoria Youth Rowing Society*</b>  KidSport  YMCA/YWCA Vancouver Island  Outdoor Recreation Council of BC</p>

## Appendix C: Focus Group Responses

Focus group recordings were transcribed and any personal information that would make persons or organizations recognizable was removed. All the comments provided during the focus groups are listed in Table 2. Comments are divided based on the proposed strategic plan material, listed in no particular order, and grouped into broad categories for the purpose of analyzing themes.

Table 2: Stakeholder comments grouped by theme

<b>Comments about vision, mission, and values statement</b>	
<b>General</b>	Strongly support, surprised to see climate change above recreation in list
	Hard to oppose. Mother statements. How can we support these values through implementation?
	Vision is nebulous
	Mission statement needs to put collaboration first before ‘informing...’. Mission – doesn’t speak to interrelationship. Need cohesive statement, interdisciplinary statement
<b>Prioritization</b>	Necessary to establish priorities, alternative is conflicting needs
	Many issues/barriers. How are we going to get to vision given current reality? ie. Wear and tear on parks, huge problems, lack of parks west of Sooke, FN, Forestry, tourists, lack of understanding, small land base protected.
	Recognize all priorities are good but how do they interact? How do we deal with conflict? Need to prioritize values? Have a framework for decision-making. How can conservation be paramount?
	Doing nothing is prioritizing status quo
<b>First Nation</b>	Important to include reconciliation
<b>Equity &amp; Accessibility</b>	Equity, inclusiveness, access needs to be broadened (i.e. support different languages)
	Hard to use parks without car. No car = no access to parks. No bus service. Need transit to trailheads, buses should have bike racks, multiple trailheads, access parks at various points. Accessibility should not = owning car.
	Agree with what is presented but not prioritized. Support accessibility but not at cost of sustainability.
<b>Climate change &amp; resiliency</b>	Transportation corridor/use not reflected. Need land for trails – guide us to come together. Land is not for all uses. Climate change is major challenge
	Consider “regenerative” sustainability principles, not just protection but “enhancement” of environmental, social and cultural aspects
<b>Conservation &amp; Biodiversity Lens</b>	Regional parks are faced with impossible task of providing conservation and recreation. There is no vast land base to resolve the tension

	Lens of conservation most important, define the top interest, give guidance to Board. But land isn't pristine, baseline is rapidly changing due to development and logging, need higher respect for recreation. Main focus is to conserve environment. Trail degradation from use needs to be managed by creating alternate routes around sensitive areas
	Board motion to have lens of conservation and biodiversity is not represented here. Should be the overarching principles. Agree. What does it mean 'lens of conservation and biodiversity'?
	Vision and values – where is biodiversity value highest? Not all use is appropriate everywhere. Buffer zones are needed. Conflict with wildlife is highest at boundaries of parks. Need corridors for connectivity, connect islands of nature
	All-important but need to be focused on conservation and biodiversity. Need to look forward. We are on verge of crisis and collapse. Need protection. Challenge is need walls around growth. Find places with natural integrity, stop development, have buffer zone, connected natural areas.
	A way to protect areas by making them controlled access. If left to public will, uncontrolled, then degradation will occur and ecology will be undermined. Way to manage ecological impact is: control access/use ex: Thetis Lake has massive use, CRD controls where people walk with well-defined trails and split rail fences.
	Thetis Lake is a recreation park with fishing, swimming etc. what about maintaining the environment there? CRD spends huge money on aerator at Elk Beaver Lake but not addressing invasive fish species. How do we correct this in the Vision?
	Observed people not understanding what they're doing in parks i.e. not prepared to be in nature (flip flops). Many rogue trails. Population growth increasing Victoria to Otter Point, clear cuts everywhere are squeezing out animals. Put animals first in some places. It's a problem
	Wilderness really acts as corridor for wildlife habitat, a greenbelt, and some parks could be long term regeneration of logged land.
<b>Land Acquisition</b>	Seems CRD is tackling not enough land buying. CRD is an urban environment not a wilderness environment. Commercial interests are taking wilderness away.
	Grateful for CRD parks. If CRD doesn't buy it then it will get developed. Protected in perpetuity it becomes natural.
<b>Recreation</b>	Add to recreation 'connection to nature' or 'relationship to nature'
	Tension between bikers and hikers, e-bikes, mountain bikes. Margin is fuzzy. Damaging to the environment. Trails should be for both biking and hiking. Need to rely on respect and a hierarchy of users (ie. yield to hikers), not more regulations. Damage to trails from users is a concern.



	Need for studies trails and access. Sees increase population and use. People use apps and maps to discover new places, most use in front country parks, day trips, easy access areas. Objective should be to create sustainable trails. Many old existing trails are down watercourses, eroded and braided. Need to create exciting trails, flows trails that are interesting to the user. This should be in front country areas where facing pressure. Concentrate human use away from wilderness areas and areas of ecological sensitivity, wildlife.
	Condense areas for recreation then set aside rest for wilderness.
<b>User Groups</b>	Where is mention of non-motorized recreation? Absence of clarity, Strategy needs to include self-contained wording to clarify and have no assumptions on this. Same with word Inclusive – what does this mean?
	Where are motorized sports going to go? May be conflict if don't offer an opportunity for them. Agree that need to clarify non-motorized. Motorized sports use Tanksy and logging roads. They are a nuisance but need somewhere to go. Mission statement needs to clarify excludes motorized recreation. Supports no motorized use, environmental protection is key. More accessible places have more damage.
	Orienteering requires off trail walking, can lead to tension. Group tries to keep minimal impact but technically nowhere allowed to go in parks.
	"Compatible" uses, concerned with dogs. Should provide dog parks. Dog parks not great for all dogs, sterile environment, dogs need stimulation, should enforce behavior like we do with motorized use, but enforcement costs \$. Dog professionals self-police, educate. Good example of underutilized partner of CRD.
<b>Communication</b>	Evolution of signage, biking should be restricted to certain trails, there is a sense that biking inherently leads to degradation. Need clarity on rules
<b>Education &amp; Etiquette</b>	See increase in number of emergency responses in parks. Educating people is missing from material. Need to create respect for nature. Garbage, accidents etc. all result of lack of education
	Agree with everyone. Need to add etiquette messaging. Elk Lake has large conflict between users but it doesn't need to be there. Result of lack of education and etiquette. Yield signs not enough, not working.
	CRD education is not accessible to most people using social media. Opportunity to partner with stakeholders to promote messaging through their group forums which are more trendy and effective. Outreach needs to focus on etiquette, trail standards, no rogue trail building, and unsanctioned trails are due to people being bored with the experience or the trails not functioning for their purpose.
<b>Stewardship &amp; Partnerships</b>	Multifunctionality: ability to have different uses, different by season etc... A way of addressing conflict. Need to foresee conflict between uses and beings. Create stewards: how successful has CRD been in creating stewards? I.e. through

	interpretive programs, kid programs. Are we growing a new generation of stewards? Need to create stewards of all ages and abilities.
	Pleased that we are communicating with FLNRO and MOSAIC. Access agreements are needed over forest land, some parks have no access. Higher levels of government need to end long term logging tenures.
<b>Comments about priority statements</b>	
<b>General</b>	'Enabling' users is too passive. Consider 'Promote' recreation. Making people aware of facilities and park use contributes to healthy lifestyle. Give people a push, be more direct, sell or 'market' the facilities.
	'Enable' is interesting choice of word, support it. Implies the idea that CRD helps groups take part in their activity. "take action" seems above and beyond what CRD Parks' role is. Enable is a good balance between priorities. Strongly support the "enable users to recreate" statement. This applies to surfing at Jordan River. Groups do water quality testing at Jordan River to ensure it is 'safe' to be in water
	Provide space is vague. Opportunity?
	Regional Growth Strategy and current strategic plan include goals for access to parks. Complete communities, parks should be accessed within close proximity to neighborhoods by walking and biking. Do gap analysis on this. Municipal role to coordinate park acquisition. Everyone should have access to nature. How to restore land? Evaluate other values of land if protected. Also need broaden regional trail network, include other municipal trails.
	Suggests Connectivity – where is this concept? Connectivity. System being connected for all creatures and humans for different purposes i.e. Transportation and species habitat. Connectivity doesn't indicate transportation strongly enough. Need transportation lens on trail network
	The themes/categories for priority statements will never be perfect, but it all makes sense. Could separate out transit. Transit is applicable to accessibility and equity as well as climate. Ex. Size of parking lot at Thetis is concern. Teenagers have hard time accessing parks.
	In the vision what does 'exceptional' mean? Each activity will have a different definition of what is an exceptional system. Ie. Langford has a 'world class' climbing park but what does it mean. Nothing has happened for climbing in CRD parks for over 20 years.
	8 sets of priorities seems too much. Need a clear statement upfront what is #1 priority. Would not want to be held accountable to achieving this list if I was manager. Too many challenges to address.

	Provincial government, CRD and municipal agencies all deal with climate change, collapse of biodiversity, deal with growth/development. Contentious issues, have to make tough choices. Need to direct growth elsewhere
	CRD needs to be accountable for implementation. Also, access and conservation could be counter-active. Need a framework for transparency and accountability. Ex: wilderness area vs recreation area, spectrum of ecosystem vs. human priorities. Develop accountability table that outlines what takes priority. Strengthen this classification framework
	Classification system can address these issues. Rowing is grandfathered in. Levels of classification can be more specific, talk about habitat, recreation.
<b>Conservation &amp; Recreation</b>	Overarching goal should be to connect us with nature and to enjoy nature. Enjoying nature is what connects us all to the place and to each other. "Create and maintain recreation infrastructure such that users can recreate and enjoy nature." 'Take action' is strong, 'enable' is not strong enough
	Biodiversity – does this mean 'representative ecosystems' or 'species at risk' or? How is ecosystem representation targeted? Does it also mean acquire land for recreation? Nature needs half – also needed to be more specific to how it applies to each neighborhood in region. Rare butterfly on edge of highway only needs small space. Nature's needs are different for different species. Need to be informed about what species need to survive.
	Where is 'lens of conservation and biodiversity'? Seems implicit. Need more explicit statement? Is conservation meaning exclusion zones, has exclusionary connotation. Need to define what this means. Or does it mean stewards and a relationship with environment? Conservation implies protecting environment over other interests. Support creating kid stewards. Add Education to mission and values. Conservation – hard to define but necessary. Doesn't need to connote exclusion. Use metrics or principles or Mitigation Framework to capture conservation values. Statements need to connote respect and understanding of what each species needs
	Recreation and conservation theme seems odd – conservation and recreation seem opposite. Conservation and recreation are not compatible. The plan implies they are but not sure how
	Conservation and recreation are not a contradiction. The values are determined by a relationship to and ownership of an area. A fear response imagining recreation causes degradation is not helpful. Which is more important conservation or recreation? Pure conservation = no recreation. 'Balance' between them. Where there are high conservation values, limit recreation. Depending on the location the outcome might be different depending on factors

	<p>Conservation and recreation – go hand in hand but cause challenges. Characterized as priorities, get handle on ‘balance’. Use the term loosely. How are they reconciled? Use ‘no net losses of biodiversity to define this. Or Mitigation Framework (how you achieve no net loss: try not to disturb, if yes then minimize disturbance, if no then restore, if can’t then offset or compensate elsewhere.” Use this framework to set goals</p>
	<p>‘Promotion’ idea is used by BC Parks to diffuse use in high volume areas by attracting people to lesser known parks. Highlight diversity of spaces.</p>
	<p>Bullet #1 Conservation &amp; Recreation theme – sounds like ecological reserves. Bullet #2 change to create new trails and opportunities (frame more positively)</p>
	<p>Recreation is mechanism to inculcate caring for nature</p>
	<p>We impact nature by being here, driving, using trails</p>
	<p>Add transportation to Conservation &amp; Recreation theme heading. No. 3. Need to recognize transportation function of parks and trails, not just bike and pedestrian trails. Galloping Goose history as rail line, now recreation corridor, conflicts arise. Uses changes, need thought. MOTI should be in charge of transportation. CRD takes over different functions beyond Regional Parks.</p>
	<p>Conservation &amp; recreation – access to recreation and create buffers on or outside park. Work with municipalities on this. Concentrate use in front country, set aside vast areas with lower density activity</p>
	<p>Conservation should be upfront in Plan. Be clear that conservation and biodiversity is primary objective. Recreation has to be compatible with the primary objective of conservation and biodiversity. Under the foster stewardship statement- add education.</p>
	<p>Put recreation first then conservation 2<sup>nd</sup> and add buffer zones, use infrastructure to keep people in right place</p>
	<p>If live in urban areas then focus is recreation. If live in Sooke then conservation is key.</p>
	<p>Conservancy groups establish exclusion zones with their land acquisition – how to find the balance between human use and conservation</p>
	<p>What about engaging all the animals and plants who don’t have a voice? How do you incorporate their input? Ask them what they need. Bring in experts to speak for the species.</p>
	<p>Like the idea. Recreation is viewed in opposition to conservation but equally strong values for recreation. Need to break down silos. We will get further together. Create a culture of conservationists through recreation.</p>
	<p>Conservation focus on endangered species. Does CRD have a Species at Risk plan? Applying a biologist’s lens and looking at climate mitigation: there is nothing to access if nature is destroyed or degraded. Be more explicit about what</p>

	conservation means for CRD. What is CRD's commitment to conservation? What is CRD's approach to climate mitigation?
	Conservation is high priority but need to fund more land for recreation use. Acknowledge intent to offer users/taxpayers what they want and expect. Conservation is strongest value but people expect to do the activity they love. This goes towards raising/inculcating stewards.
	See this dynamic between human use and conservation. The activity is an opportunity to connect to nature (not just exercise). Build appreciation and awareness about connecting with nature, create allies for environment
<b>Land Acquisition</b>	Emphasis on what kind of land is acquired i.e. Land for trail runners, mountain biking etc. Need to know what land needs to be conserved.
	Setting direction for land acquisition? What about this? What is land acquisition criteria and why not more land purchased west of Sooke. Values for climate mitigation, biodiversity, combat rapid rate of destruction. Value for different values, ie. Recreation. Logged forests can be restored, not pristine to begin with as history of logging over past 1-200 years. Strategic direction for land acquisition is missing from material. Current criteria is for intact ecosystems only.
	CRD is trying to do the impossible. Need more public space through land acquisition. Now operating with limited land base. Closing areas to recreation might push pressure to other places. Dilute people. Don't close things off.
	Urban development adjacent to park boundary is issue. Ex. JDF trail has windfall from adjacent clear-cut. No buffer to protect park values. Adjacent development needs to protect the park values. Lack of buffers around parks. Discuss buffers with municipalities. Ie. View from Sea to Sea Park to Central Mountain detracts from park vista value.
	Support offshoots from Galloping Goose to various destinations. Sooke Hills Wilderness Trail is very steep. Need contiguous areas. I.e. South Side of Mt. Wells Park.
	Fiscal responsibility for managing and opening banked parks and trails. Is fiscal responsibility a value/principle?
<b>User groups</b>	Where can e-bikes go? Need to address the dangers of high velocity e-bikes on trails, particularly the Galloping Goose. Offer more bike parking
	Support overnight kayaking, need overnight parking, boat launches, marine rescue considerations, Island View Beach ideal location
	Aging, need suitable facilities for older folks and equestrians. Maybe separating bike paths from other recreation uses.
	Could have restricted areas, provide access only to groups participating in program, like Sooke watershed tours

	Access and equity. Our Group’s mission statement is “enhance health and wellbeing...”very similar to what is listed in priority statement. Support increasing parking fee if transit is provided.
	Parks are for everyone, not just bikers or mountain climbers. CRD could raise level of enjoyment of all, put in amenities like allow snack bars (but too away as led to garbage), and more water fountains. Thetis and Elk – amenities needed.
	Example is rowing at Elk Lake. I don’t take it for granted. Need to work to maintain public support. Advocacy – role to ensure members understand conservation values. Groups are leaving CRD because the park culture is not supportive of their objectives. Need to understand complexity of multi-stakeholder interests or will lead to alienation of stakeholder groups. Create space for users rather than force out.
	Concerned by whether CRD should be everything to everybody. CRD has an established stakeholder following. Majority could say rowing doesn’t fit in CRD parks therefore it is no longer allowed. Concerned if certain uses get taken away. Rowing does not seem to be reflected here in this material. Need to consider ‘sport’. Needs to be acknowledged so expectations are set. Talk about how sport complements/supports conservation, accessibility, health. Ex: rowing boathouse has reduced footprint. There are shared values.
	Inherent competition between user types e.g. Events (triathlons) vs. individual users. Identify certain parks for multiple users, need communication plan. Recognize it is annoying when events are on, need transparent communication. Review what is the rationale for allowing or not allowing events through permit system.
	Is there appetite to include sport as well as recreation? Sport can live under umbrella of recreation but also ‘sport for life’ and ‘competition’. Challenge of being sport host or event host: sense is they are working against /counter to CRD park values. Not much support for events. Competition seems an unwelcome activity in CRD parks. Rowing society and user group includes UVic, Youth Rowing, Claremont Sport, Rowing Canada. Elk Beaver Lakes have 100s rowers a day including coaches, volunteers, regattas, events. We understand pressures that events have: safety, parking, impact on other users. If rowing is included as recreational use in park then identify where does ‘sport’ fit in? where does sport tourism fit in CRD parks?
	More education about horse impacts on environment, we are good stewards with eyes on ground.
<b>Education</b>	“Shaping” experience. Currently there are no park stewards present in parks, obvious trail damage, lack of trail improvements, need trail standards. Need to set expectations for maintenance.

	Consider streamlining users into parks (i.e. Mt Work), develop facilities for certain user groups, but problem is users become territorial, consider rotating uses around system. Issue is lack of transit, hard for youth to access parks (i.e. Elk Lake) as no transit, busy highway.
	Prioritize education, more than 'informing'. Next generation – need to increase awareness of nature. CRD's approach is too casual, need to create future leaders to care about parks
	Where is education in this material? 'foster stewardship' implies education but not clear. 'leading by example' what does this mean? Focus should be on etiquette (ie. no fires, no waste, dogs) to achieve conservation. Education should focus on species, biodiversity.
	Education is a big part. Give more consideration to education as a priority. People value things when they understand them. Education should be part of plan now and going forward. Increasing population requires more education, more publicity about programs
	Education. Often push back to plans when brought to public and controversy results if not enough education about plan. Opportunity to educate? How does the plan apply to problems on the ground? How are people enrolled in this plan? Educate public about why the priorities in plan are important.
<b>Management &amp; Infrastructures</b>	Need evidence-based research program (involving partners)
	Need to see a commitment by CRD to create and maintain infrastructure for all themes. Add 'strengthen maintenance of park infrastructure'. Maybe under access & equity. Need a "variety" of outdoor recreation to "connect with nature"
	A priority should be to have updated all management plans for all parks and have a schedule for renewal. Also should have a standard for facilities. Set renewal targets for management plans, need to capture changing trends, set a commitment to update plans and address changes.
	Management plans are not flexible enough, too 'set in stone', need to incorporate changes every 1-2 years. Planning is always behind, not dynamic enough. What about holding a forum?
	Need safe access (link to infrastructure)
	Support expanding facilities for recreation.
	Concerned about implementation of past plans ie. Concerned that trail in Mill Farm has not been completed
	Concern with management when looking at land's carrying capacity and heavy recreational use. Need to be practical.
<b>Communication</b>	More signage. Education is more than signage, more interpretation, learn from experts

	CRD has good data and mapping but how is data linked to park webpage?
<b>Stewardship &amp; Engagement</b>	Prompt relationship with partners, foster stewardship and partnerships with stakeholders. Need way to maintain relations with stakeholders (annual renewal sessions). Groups have used and maintained sites for decades. Strengthen relationship with groups like SICA. Elk Beaver Advisory Committee is example. Need data collection and data sharing
	A disconnect between strategic plan and management plan engagement, need ongoing involvement of stakeholders in implementation. Be responsive to needs of stakeholders. Review of strategic plan is opportunity for input, how do we input ongoing through implementation?
	Need involvement through all processes from strategic planning to tactile planning and infrastructure development, program evaluation.
	Promoting activities (ie. Songhees Friendship Centre, climbing activities with FN youth & Vic Native Friendship Centre) – build relationships and trust. Rec leaders interested in getting support to collaborate on enhancing recreational opportunities
	Friends of Parks model, could expand this concept to monitor the state of the park system, monitor invasive species, etc.
	Cross pollinate across groups i.e. Volunteers, organizations, users. More than just a website, need to share contact and get people together.
	Individual users vs. stakeholder groups. Values are different. Focus on groups as stewards or champions. Stakeholder groups can support delivery of CRD messages. Not just CRD’s responsibility. Need a marketing strategy to educate public on what are CRD’s values and goals. Also need champions to connect people with the cause. Success through partnerships.
	Events. Need social networking bench/platform to showcase when events are occurring, like a community intranet for people to know what is happening in parks. Hold stakeholders in the process, have more engagement that lasts.
	Targets – commit to climate action and conservation. Need species monitoring targets. Other models? Copy or learn from other methods and organizations. Collaborate, student partnerships, policy development to action/implement on the ground. Sharing knowledge/partnerships is key.
<b>First Nation</b>	Reconciliation – build bridge between First Nations and non-indigenous people (through park signage, sharing info, traditional uses, learning from First Nations cultures). Reconciliation, CRD has role to lessen cultural divide. Show our common interest in parks
	Support of land acquisition for treaty and reconciliation. Collaboration and reconciliation. Co-Learning with First Nations, have deep ties with places. True partnership to steward. Economic development will be challenge! Commercial



	enterprise i.e. harvesting. How to deal with this or balance it? Be aware of emerging theme, anticipate and avoid breakdown of relationship with First Nations
	Interrelation between First Nations and conservation. Many interrelationships in the material. Consider info graphic or diagram to represent material to show interconnections
	Need to extend land acquisition goal to recreation and FN priorities.
	Reconciliation #1 “management of natural assets...” too limited. Extend to land acquisition. “Provide space for” is vague. Important concept but needs clarifying.
	Reconciliation #1 FN lens TEK tied to conservation – should move up under Conservation theme?
	Regional Growth Strategy struggled with Douglas Treaty rights. Some reconciliation is above Regional Parks plan.
	Reconciliation – what about indigenous language? Names of mountains, Alpine Club created interactive map. Also use First Nations plant names and uses. This is educational opportunity. Names tell stories, words have power. History can be told through naming. This should be separate bullet. First Nations tree names, used as medicine, First Nation parks and place name.
	Use DRIPA as lens through which everything is viewed/considered. A decolonizing lens. Fostering stewardship – get at the root of what it means. What is CRD’s responsibility to align conservation and recreation.
	Reconciliation seems like appendage to conservation and management. What about ‘co-management’ of parks. Land acquisition is an opportunity for co-management. Transition crown lands to First Nations. FN collaboration should occur through all goals.
<b>Climate change &amp; Resiliency</b>	What can we do for climate change? We can make change on environmental stewardship by taking action on invasive species, this is doable. But how do we mitigate damage to infrastructure from climate change?
	Active Transportation – make it easier to get around without cars. Trend is more parking lots, and bigger ones, this contradicts climate action. Also need to consider mitigation efforts that do not destroy nature (i.e. Flood mitigation, hard/built approach vs. natural methods).
	Existing land base – recognize small tradeoffs for larger gain ie. Paving trails is bad but reduces car use, therefore net positive. Larger picture.
	Parks would benefit from transit service, more bike stands, carpooling. If parking is problem then people are discouraged from visiting and might find alternatives. Increase trail connectivity. I.e. Sooke Hills Wilderness Trail does not link to rest of park. Reduce car dependency. Give options. Not just access by relying on car

	<p>'Urban containment' under climate action, what is this? The idea of 'containment' is supportable, but short of buying land, how is this achieved? Lofty goal, how does Parks achieve it? Might be beyond Regional Parks' mission/ability. Too big for Parks service alone. Separate out 'urban containment by...' highlight in Vision, at higher level or clarify HOW to achieve this. Ex. Land acquisition criteria would be different to achieve urban containment than to achieve conservation of natural areas</p>
	<p>Connectivity (network, transportation lens). Urban containment may be more municipal than Regional parks.</p>
<b>Accessibility</b>	<p>As an aging member, accessibility and inclusion are priorities. Problem with aging population is how do you make parks accessible to older people? Could be another conflict between conservation/recreation</p>
	<p>Accessibility for all ages and abilities good, but accessibility is not extensive. People with access issues want increased access to parks to address health and well-being</p>
	<p>There is room for improvement. How can it be implemented? Curious about last Strategic Plan accomplishments, specifically about planning and opening land banked parks and trails and the classification system</p>
	<p>Access and equity - need access to parks by transit. Reality is that car use is high. Address car parking overflow where there is no transit.</p>
	<p>Tension about events creating times when park is over capacity. Need to partner with Transit. People with disabilities rely on vehicles, lack of spots for disabled car parking</p>
	<p>Access and equity – go farther than 'apply lens'. Identify and understand barriers to accessibility in parks and trails.</p>
	<p>Students have seat on Transit Commission. There is a limited envelope of funding and competing priorities. Hard to change transit routes because of this.</p>
	<p>Accessibility can balance with conservation from equestrian rider perspective. Preserve access to parks. Access is getting limited with development in region. Need more consultation. Promote leave no trace concept through their equestrian group. Willingness to work with all users. Users are also eyes on ground and can share information when see habitat loss.</p>

# Appendix D: Online Survey Responses

A total of 1,228 online surveys were filled out between March 8 and April 4, 2022. Below is a summary of the online survey responses.

## Section 1: Values & Principles

### QUESTION 1: How important is it to have each of these proposed values and principles in the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan?

- **Accessibility** – we provide access to nature and communities for all ages and abilities
- **Conservation** – we protect, restore and enhance the region’s biodiversity
- **Equity** – we keep regional parks and trails inclusive and maintained as a common good
- **Reconciliation** – we commit to reconciliation with First Nations
- **Recreation** – we offer compatible outdoor recreation experiences that inspire nature stewardship and that improve our health and well-being
- **Resiliency** – we take action on climate change with a view to benefitting future generations

The majority of participants to the survey responded that it is very important to important to have the proposed values and principles of conservation (80%) and recreation (80%) in the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan, followed by resiliency (74%), equity (66%), accessibility (62%) and reconciliation (58%).

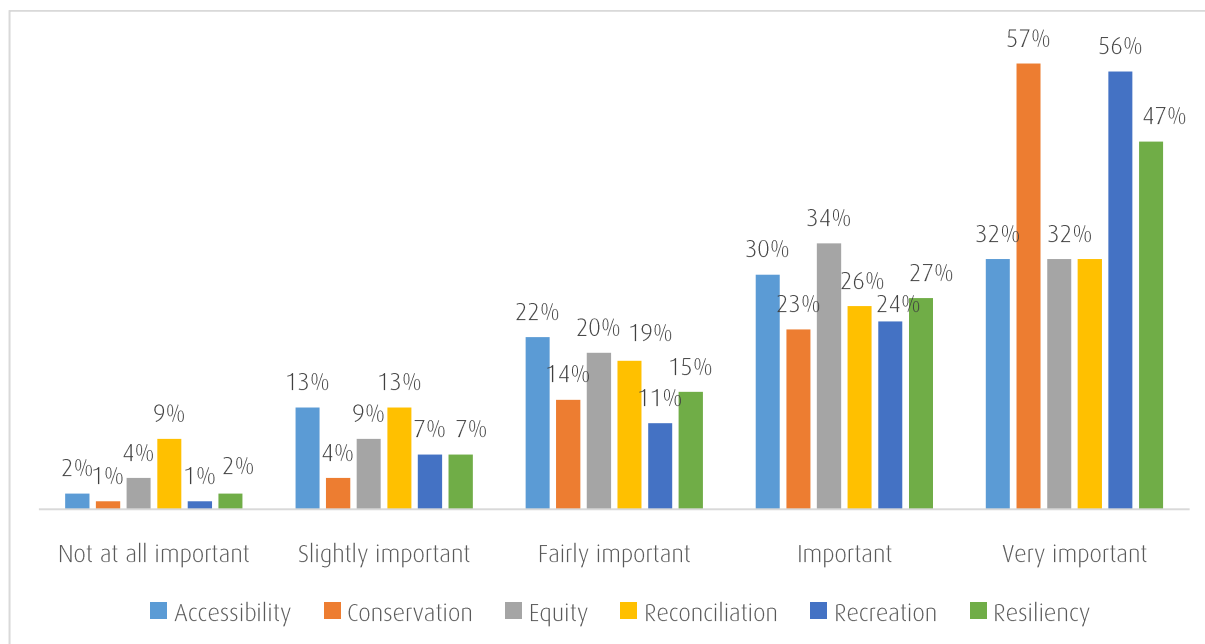


Figure 1: Percent breakdown of respondents’ opinion about the importance of the proposed values and principles in the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan.

**QUESTION 2: Should any additional values be included in the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update? Check all that apply.**

More than half of the respondents to the survey identified stewardship (52%) as an additional value to be included in the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update. Education (43%) was also recognized by most respondents as an additional value to be included. All of the other values proposed are supported by approximately 30% or less of the respondents (Figure 2).

A total of 93 comments were offered by respondents in the category ‘Other’. Such comments either refer to the values already proposed in the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan or to themes not related to values (e.g., enforcement, land acquisition, etiquette, etc.). Respondents also suggest to define the additional values proposed so to clarify their meaning.

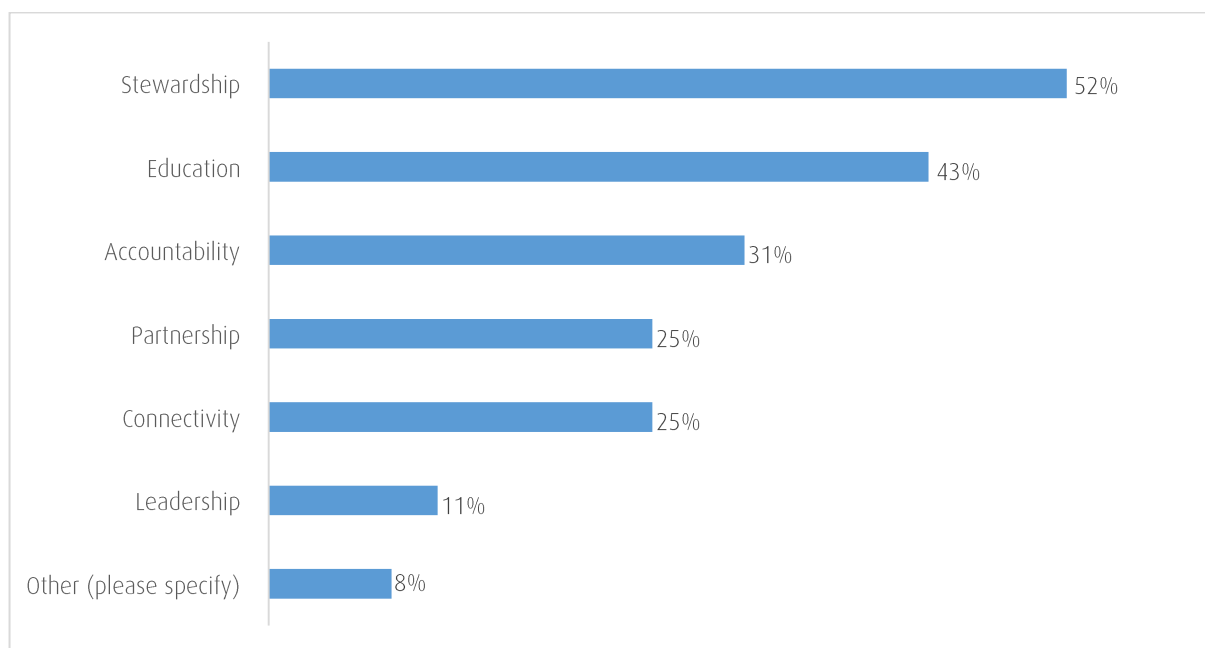


Figure 2: Percent breakdown of respondents’ opinion about which additional values could be included in the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

**Section 2: Vision**

**QUESTION 3: Do you support or oppose the proposed vision statement: “We work cooperatively and respectfully to steward and expand an exceptional system of regional parks and trails that is rich in biodiversity and cultural heritage, resilient to change, connects people to nature and provides healthy outdoor experiences for all”?**

The majority of respondents (83%) support to strongly support the proposed vision for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

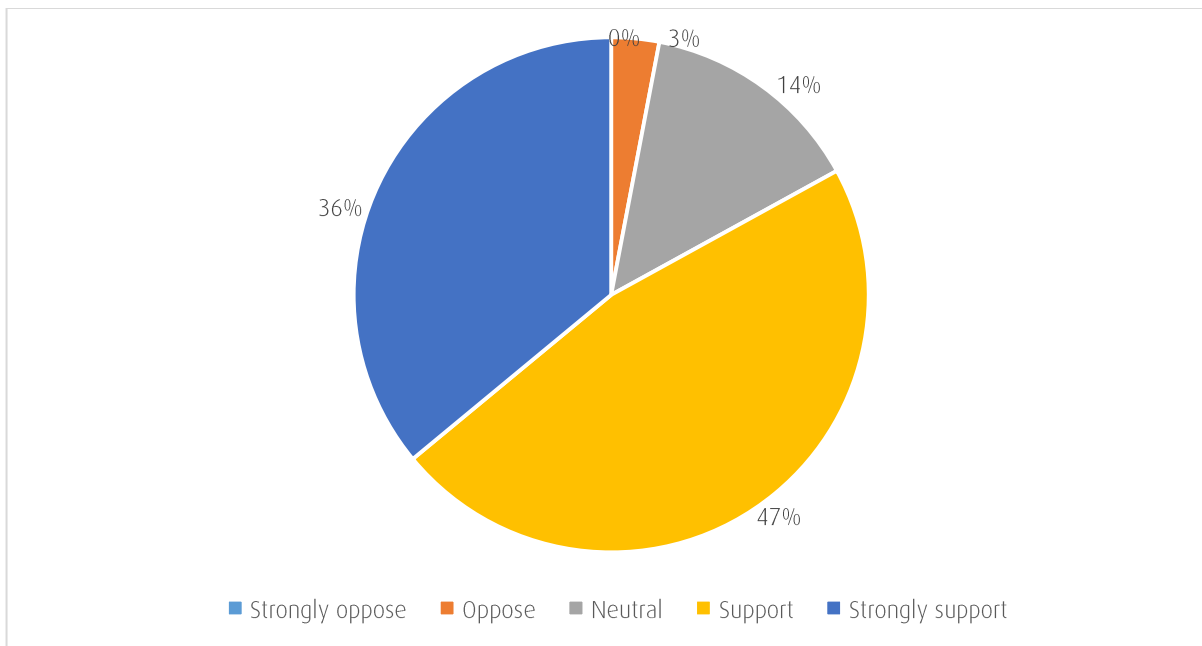


Figure 3: Percent breakdown of respondents' opinion about the vision proposed for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

Those who did not support the proposed vision (3%) believe that the statement includes too many concepts (n=14), is too complicated (n=11), misses some ideas (n=8) or is unobtainable (n=6). Other comments offered by those opposing the vision (n=20) believe that the statement is vague, open to interpretation and/or is trying to please too many and opposing interests.

### Section 3: Mission

#### **QUESTION 4: Do you support or oppose the proposed mission statement: "Ensure regional parks and trails are resilient by delivering a sustainable service that is adaptable and takes action on climate change"?**

Most respondents (74%) support to strongly support the proposed mission statement for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

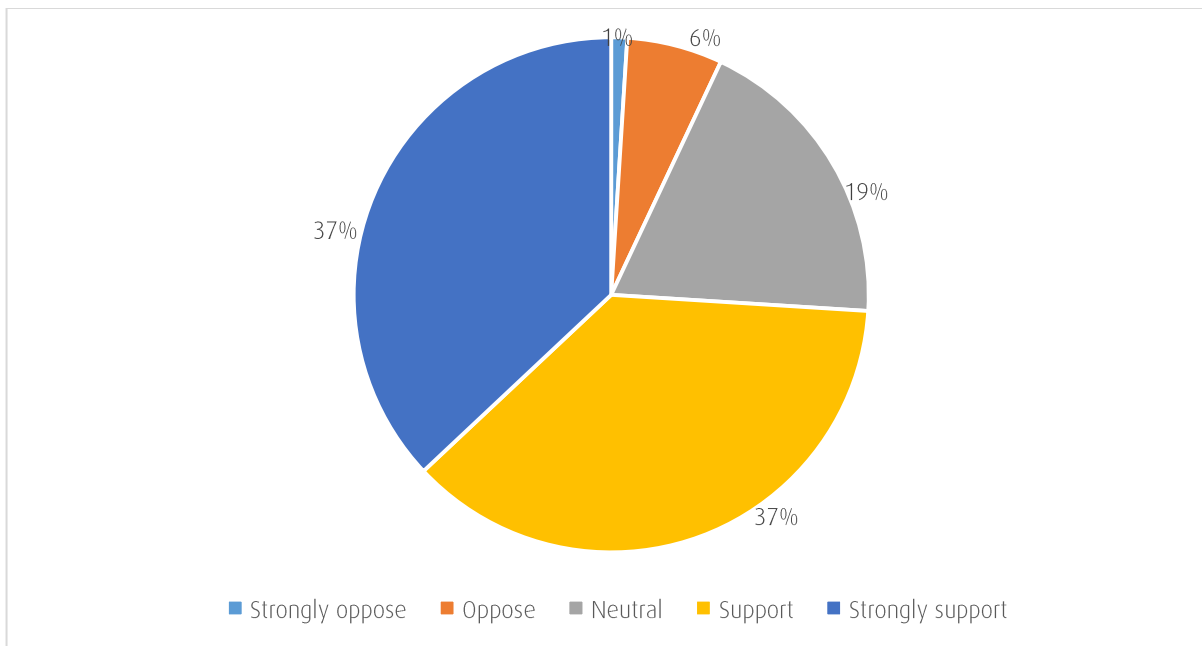


Figure 4: Percent breakdown of respondents' opinion about the mission statement "Ensure regional parks and trails are resilient by delivering a sustainable service that is adaptable and takes action on climate change" proposed for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

Those who do not support the proposed mission statement (7%) believe that the statement is unobtainable (n=25), includes too many concepts (n=21) and is too complicated (n=16). Other comments offered by those opposing the mission statement (n=41) stated that the meaning is unclear and open to interpretation. Some respondents questioned the importance of having climate change as a mission statement in the Regional Parks Strategic Plan update since it is out of scope and being a result of good park management. Additionally, some participants expressed the need to clarify the terminology used in the mission statement, such as what "delivering sustainable service" means.

**QUESTION 5: Do you support or oppose the proposed mission statement: "Foster stewardship of ecological and cultural resources by informing, engaging and collaborating with the public, volunteers, partners, and First Nations"?**

Most respondents (79%) support to strongly support the proposed mission statement for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

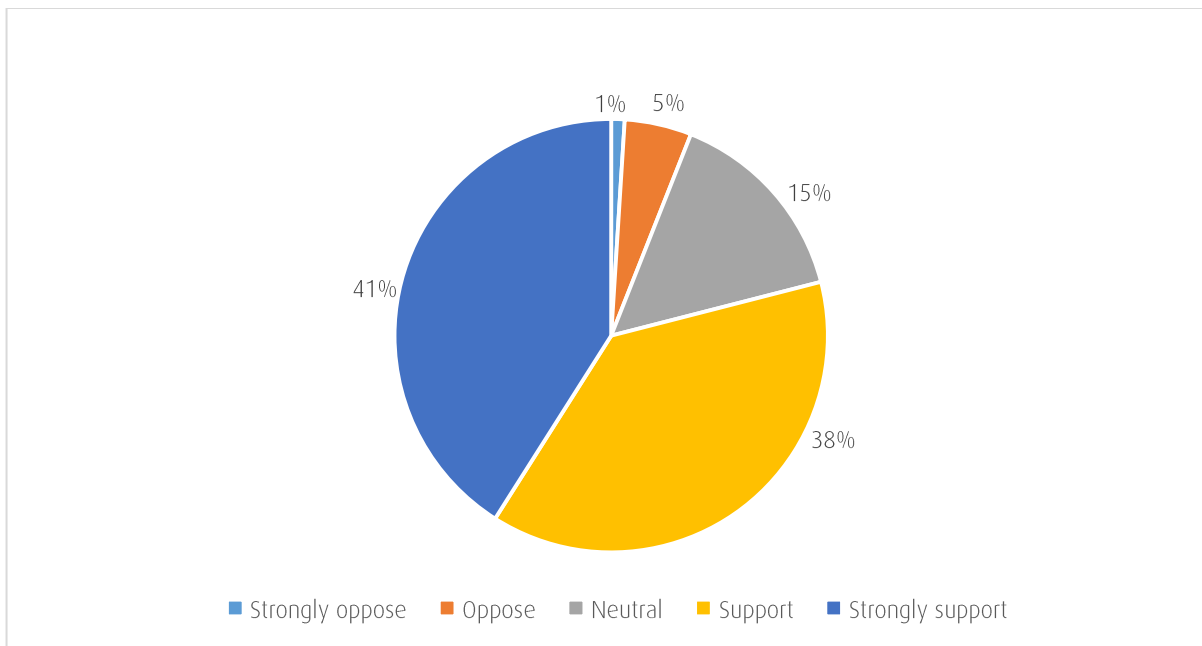


Figure 5: Percent breakdown of respondents' opinion about the mission statement "Foster stewardship of ecological and cultural resources by informing, engaging and collaborating with the public, volunteers, partners, and First Nations" proposed for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

Those who do not support the proposed mission statement (6%) believe that the statement is unobtainable (n=17), too complicated (n=16) and misses ideas (n=14). Other comments offered by those opposing the mission statement (n=30) are that its meaning is too general and politicized, as well as open to interpretation. Some respondents do not support separating people in different groups and suggest to use more inclusive language that encompasses all groups.

**QUESTION 6: Do you support or oppose the proposed mission statement: "Provide access to regional parks and trails that facilitates healthy, safe and enjoyable outdoor recreation experiences for all"?**

Most respondents (81%) support to strongly support the proposed mission statement for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

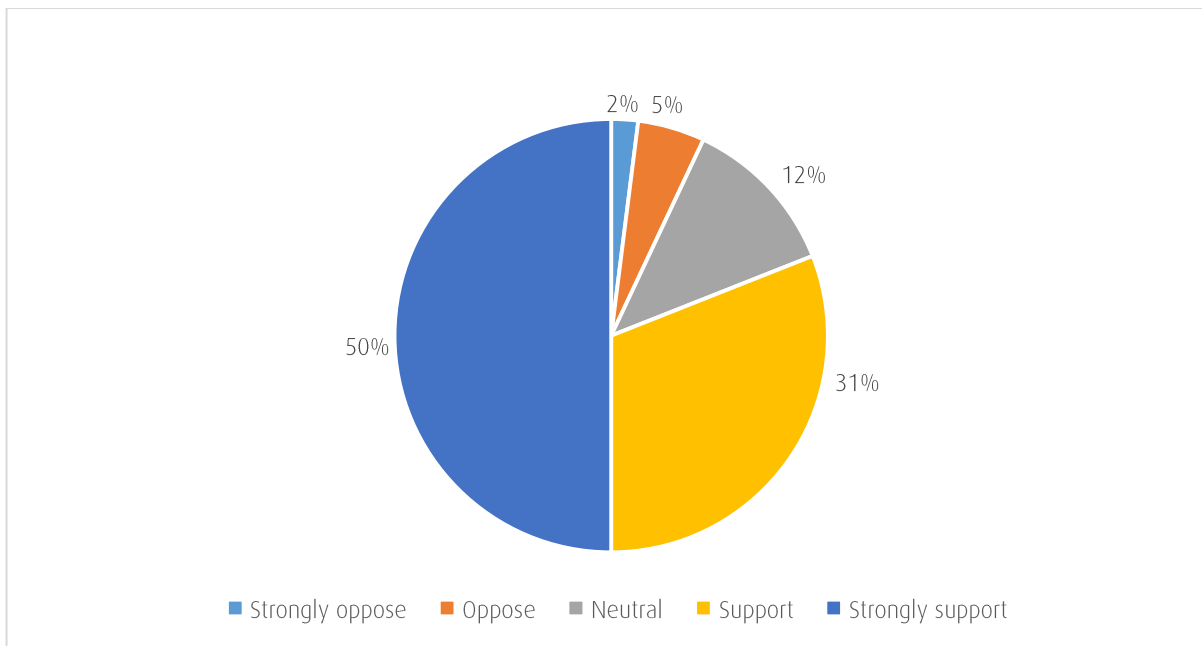


Figure 6: Percent breakdown of respondents' opinion about the mission statement "Provide access to regional parks and trails that facilitates healthy, safe and enjoyable outdoor recreation experiences for all" proposed for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

Those who do not support the proposed mission statement (6%) believed that the statement misses ideas (n=14). Other comments offered by those opposing the mission statement (n=61) provide insights on such missing ideas as respondents specified that the statement as proposed is oriented solely towards recreation, without any element of biodiversity conservation. Respondents also feel that the statement could be misinterpreted and be highly subjective. Especially the terminology "for all" is criticized as respondents feel that while regional parks should be for all, not all outdoor recreation should be accommodated everywhere in regional parks.

**QUESTION 7: Do you support or oppose the proposed mission statement: "Secure a diverse and connected system of regional parks and trails that protect and restore the integrity of our region's biodiversity and cultural landscapes"?**

Most respondents (84%) support to strongly support the proposed mission statement for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.



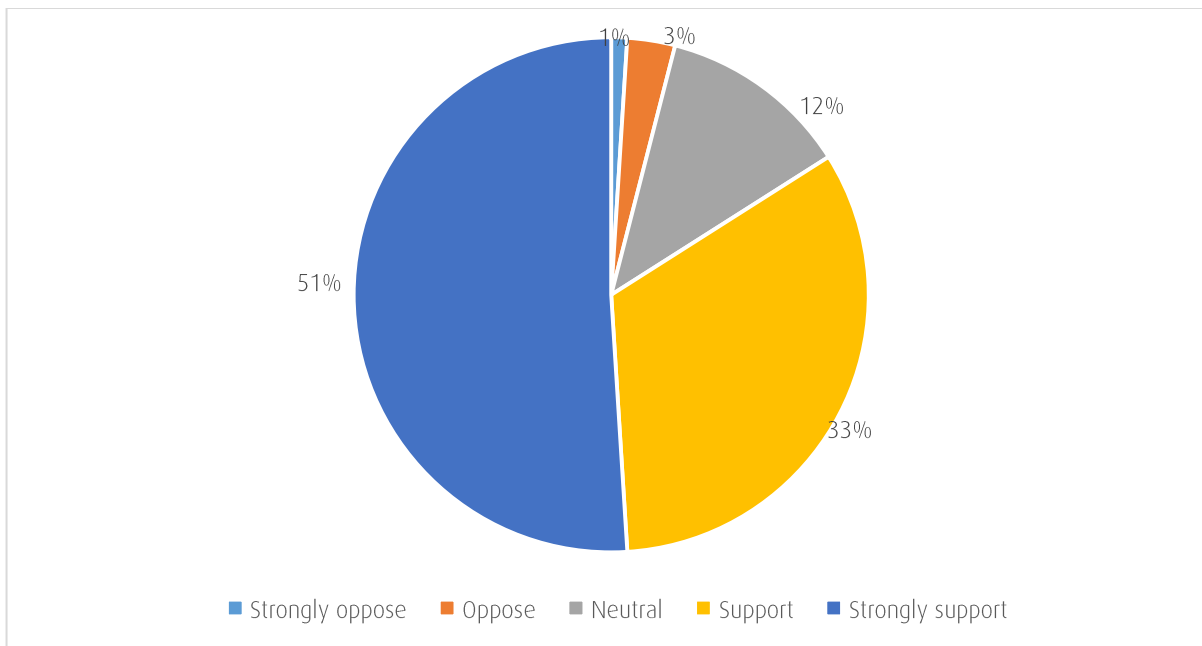


Figure 7: Percent breakdown of respondents' opinion about the mission statement "Secure a diverse and connected system of regional parks and trails that protect and restore the integrity of our region's biodiversity and cultural landscapes" proposed for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

Those who do not support the proposed mission statement (6%) believe that the statement is too complicated (n=11) and unobtainable (n=10). Other comments offered by those opposing the mission statement (n=30) are about concerns around limiting recreational use for biodiversity protection. Respondents feel that parks should have a dual mandate of providing recreation and conservation, thus separating these concepts in two mission statements creates antagonism rather than balance between these components. Respondents also feel that the statement is vague and that some terminology is unclear, especially the term "cultural landscape".

**QUESTION 8: Do you support or oppose the proposed mission statement: "Work with First Nations in taking care of the land and water"?**

Most respondents (69%) support to strongly support the proposed mission statement for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

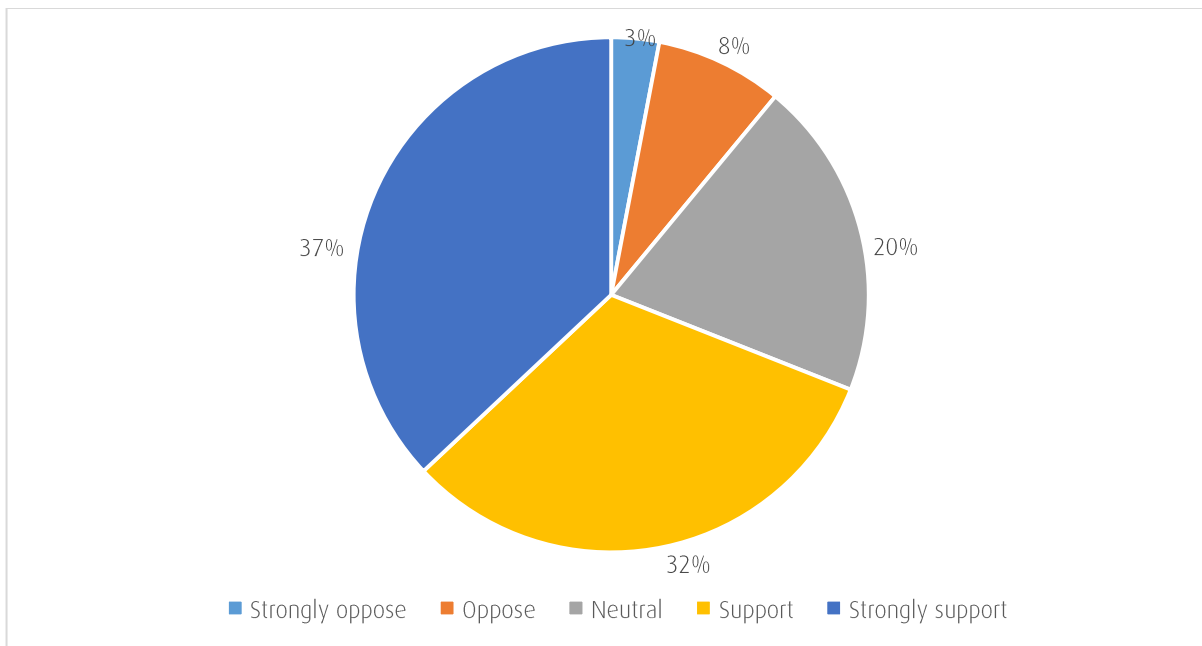


Figure 8: Percent breakdown of respondents' opinion about the mission statement "Work with First Nations in taking care of the land and water" proposed for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

Those who do not support the proposed mission statement (11%) believe that the statement is unobtainable (n=36) and misses ideas (n=29). Other comments offered by those opposing the mission statement (n=59) are that the wording used is limiting because respondents believe everyone should care of and benefit from the land and water within the regional parks and trails system. Respondents are also concerned that this statement singles out a group, thus clashes with the idea of fostering stewardship across diverse groups proposed in the first mission statement. Some respondents suggest to focus the mission statement on building lasting relationships with First Nations and to commit to stewarding the land and water in alignment with First Nations traditional knowledge and practices.

## Section 4: Priorities

### QUESTION 9: "What should the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan give priority to over the next 10 years for conservation and compatible outdoor recreation"?

Based on respondents feedback on conservation and compatible outdoor recreation (Figure 9), high priorities with more than half of the respondents support were:

- acquire more land (High=66%)
- protect biodiversity (High=58%)

Additional high priorities identified by respondents were:

- undertake environmental restoration and monitoring (High=44%)
- develop partnerships with outdoor recreation groups (High=41%)
- provide compatible outdoor recreation experiences (High=38%)

All of the other priorities listed in the survey were evaluated by participants as high/medium to medium priorities.

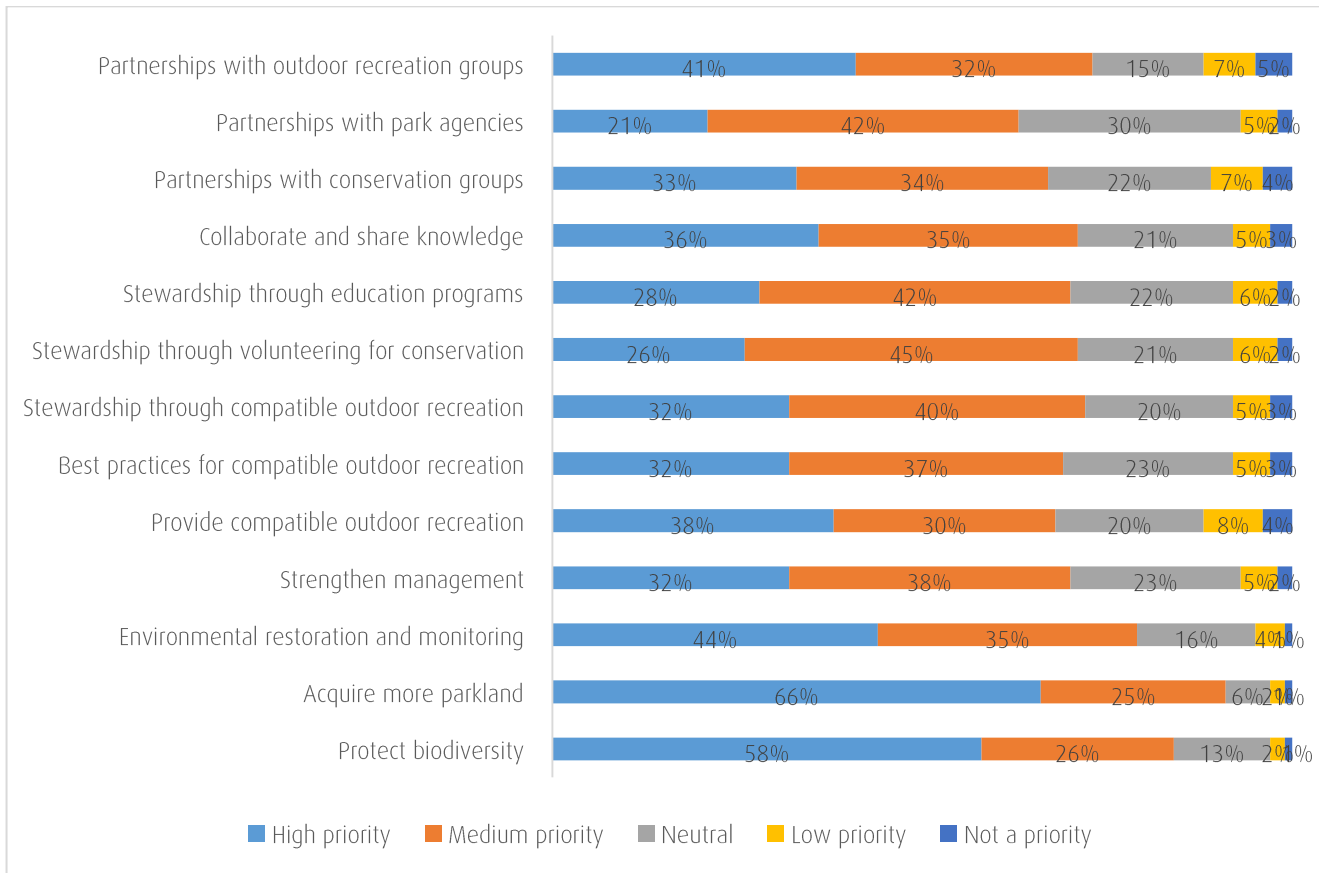


Figure 9: Percent breakdown of respondents' opinion about CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan priorities over the next 10 years for conservation and compatible outdoor recreation.

**QUESTION 10: "What should the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan give priority to over the next 10 years for access and equity"?**

Based on respondents feedback on access and equity (Figure 10), high priorities identified by respondents are:

- provide accessibility to parks and trails for people of different ages, abilities and incomes (High=40%)
- enhance connectivity (High=39%)

All of the other priorities listed in the survey were evaluated by respondents as high/medium, medium or low priorities.

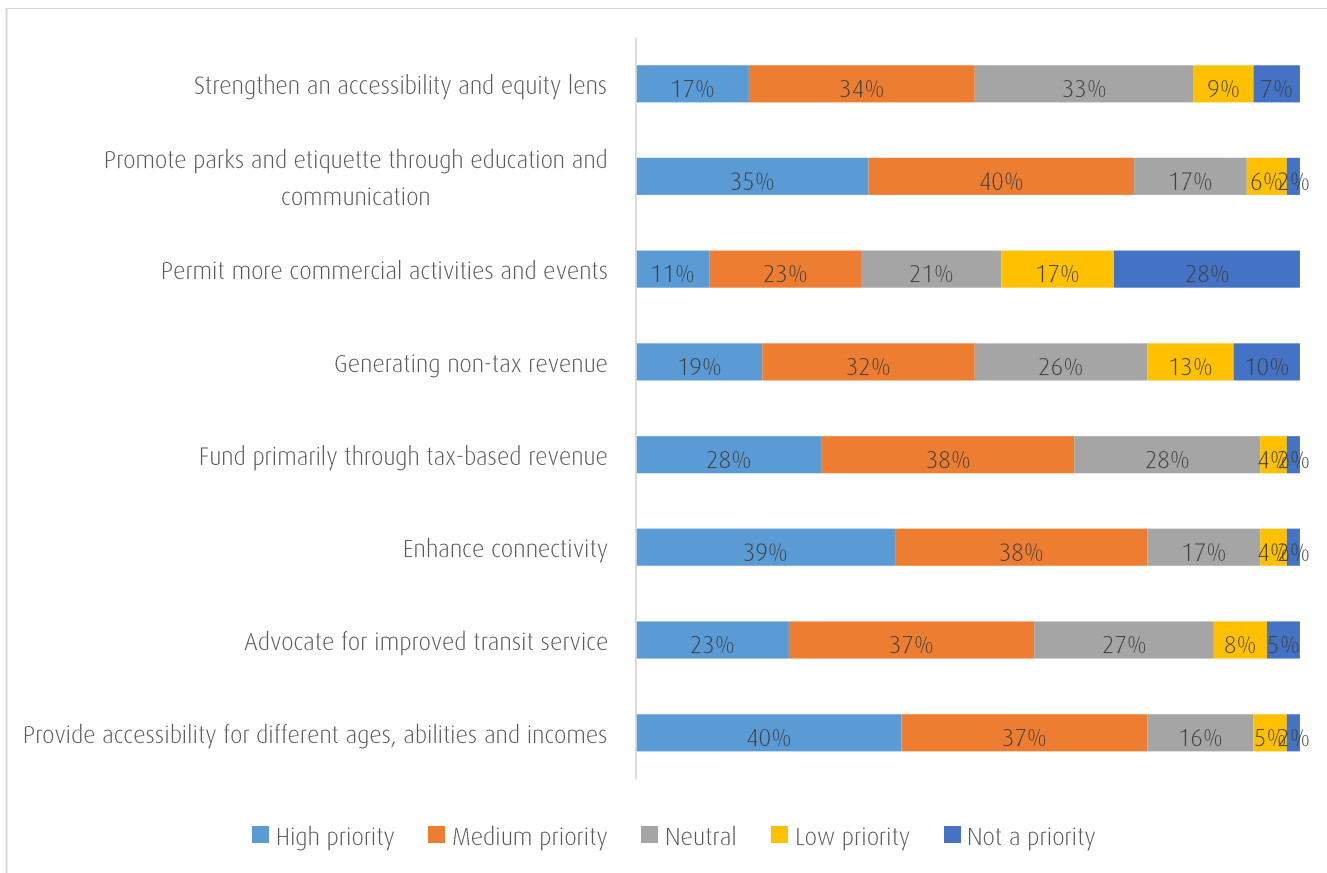


Figure 10: Percent breakdown of respondents' opinion about CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan priorities over the next 10 years for access and equity.

### QUESTION 11: "What should the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan give priority to over the next 10 years for climate action and resiliency"?

Based on respondents' feedback on climate action and resiliency (Figure 11), high priorities identified by respondents are:

- Provide buffers between parks and urban development (High=50%)
- Work with government agencies to connect green spaces (High=45%)
- Apply a climate action lens (High=41%)

All of the other priorities listed in the survey were evaluated by participants as medium priorities.

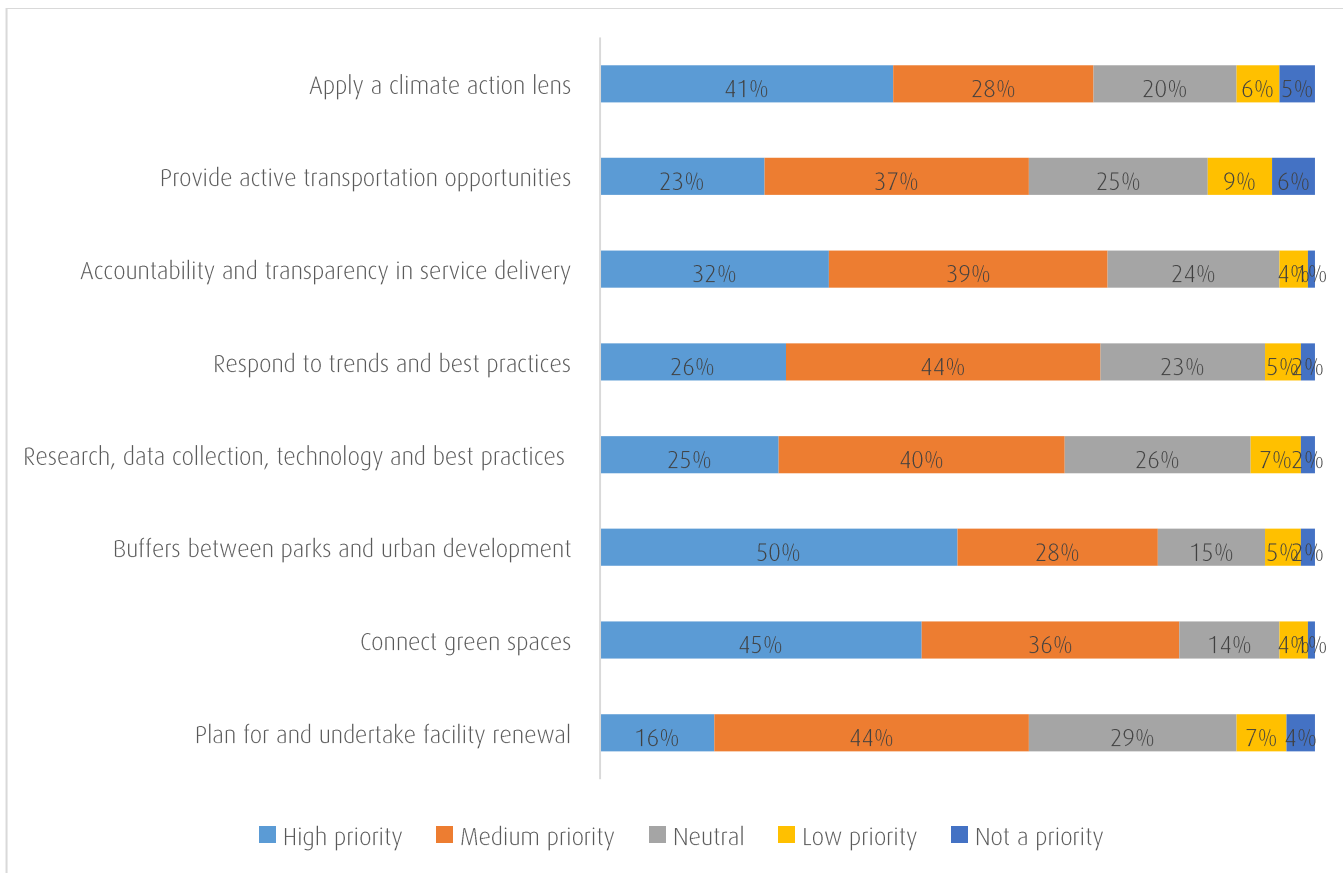


Figure 11: Percent breakdown of respondents' opinion about CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan priorities over the next 10 years for climate action and resiliency.

### QUESTION 12: "What do you see as opportunities for how CRD Regional Parks can support reconciliation with First Nations"?

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide comments about how CRD Regional Parks can support reconciliation with First Nations. A total of 734 comments were received, with many providing multiple suggestions about the possible opportunities CRD Regional Parks could support in the spirit of reconciliation. The most suggested opportunity identified by respondents (n=266) is promoting the sharing of Indigenous knowledge through education, interpretation and programming in CRD Regional Parks. Another suggestion offered by respondents is that CRD Regional Parks engages and consults First Nations directly in regard to regional parks and trails management (N=153) so to ensure their priorities are met. Using Indigenous place names (n=105) and strengthening partnerships and collaborations with First Nations followed as a suggestion (n=90). Other recommendations provided by participants to the survey in relation to First Nations are to support cultural traditional uses (n=77), provide employment (n=52) or foster economic prosperity in other ways (n=48), and implement resource management practices (n=42). It is important to highlight that some respondents (n=53) feel that reconciliation is better suited to other levels of government or other CRD activities and departments rather than Regional Parks.

## Section 5: Demographics

### QUESTION 13: "In which age category do you fall"?

Respondents age was evenly split between categories, for the exception of younger people whose participation was lower (Figure 12)

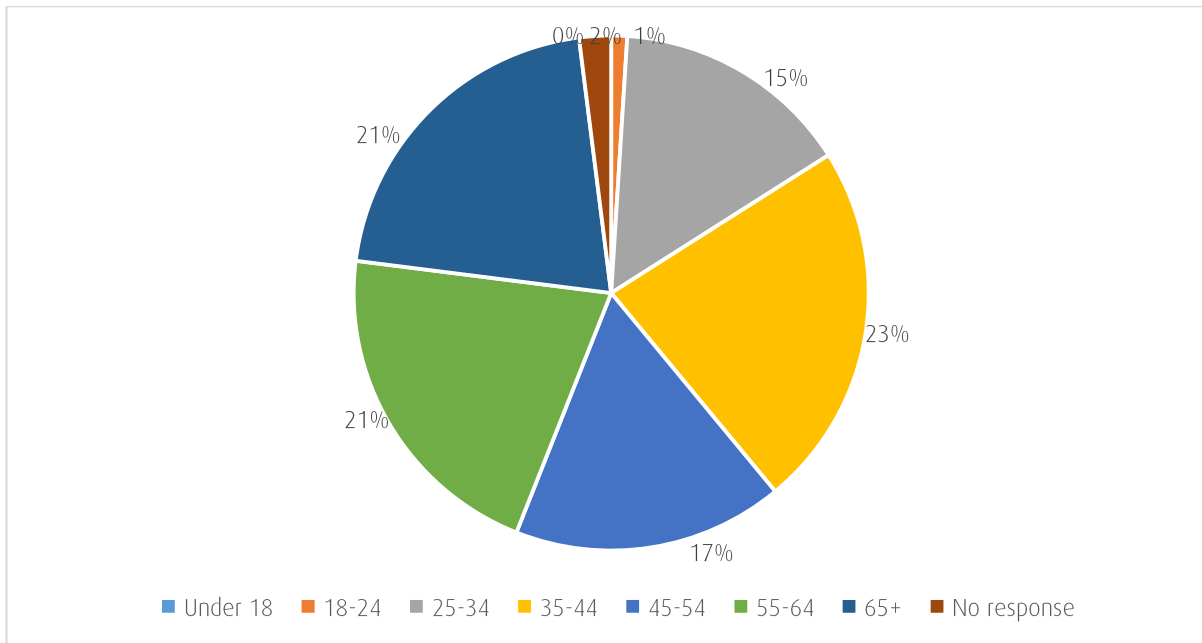


Figure 12: Age distribution of those who took the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update survey.

### QUESTION 14: "Where do you live"?

The majority of respondents to the survey live in Saanich (27%), Victoria (19%) and Langford (11%).

Municipality of Residence	Respondents Rate
Beecher Bay First Nation (SC'IANEW)	0%
Central Saanich	5%
Colwood	3%
Esquimalt	4%
Esquimalt Nation	0%
Highlands	2%
Juan de Fuca Electoral Area	3%
Langford	11%
Metchosin	3%
North Saanich	4%
Oak Bay	4%
Pacheedaht First Nation	0%

Pauquachin First Nation (BOKÉĆEN)	0%
Saanich	27%
Salt Spring Island Electoral Area	1%
Sidney	1%
Songhees Nation	0%
Sooke	4%
Southern Gulf Island Electoral Area	2%
T'Sou-ke Nation	0%
Tsartlip First Nation (WJOLEŁP)	0%
Tsawout First Nation (S7ÁUTW)	0%
Tseycum First Nation (WSIKEM)	0%
Victoria	19%
View Royal	3%
Other (please specify)	4%

Table 13: Residency of those who took the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update survey.

**QUESTION 15: “Please indicate the type of household in which you live”?**

The majority of respondents to the survey are couples with no dependent children (41%), followed by parent(s) with one or more dependent children (28%) and adults living alone (14%).

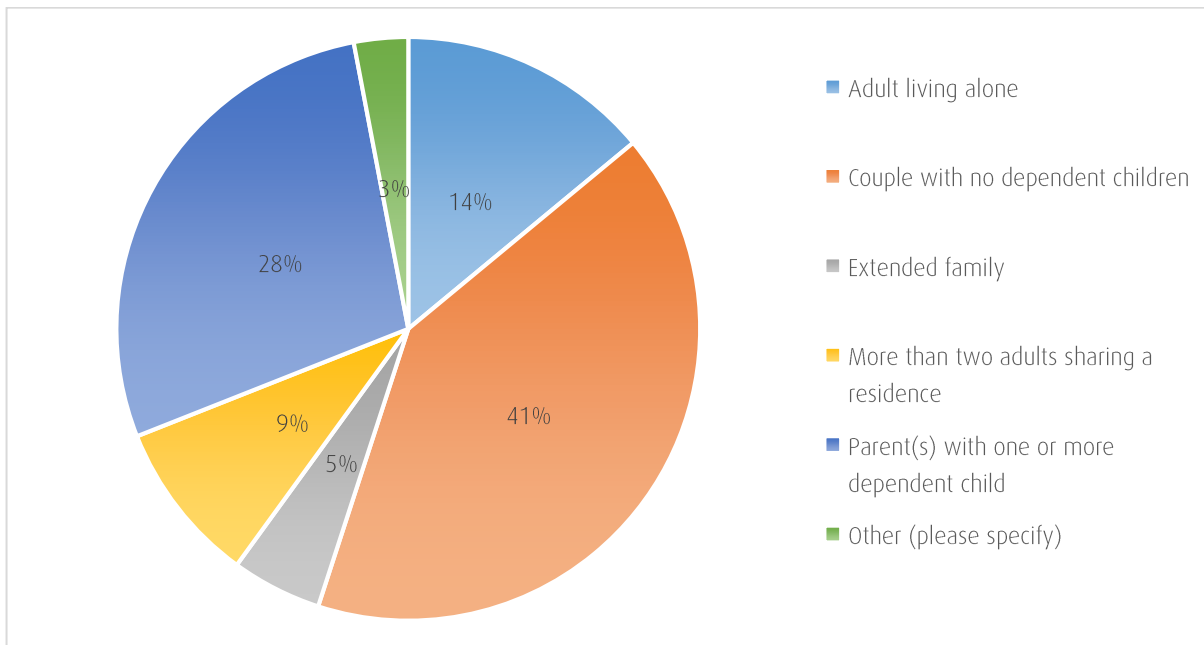


Figure 14: Household distribution of those who took the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update survey.

## Section 6: Other Comments

### **QUESTION 16: “Do you have any other comments about your regional parks and trails?”**

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide additional comments about regional parks and trails. A total of 932 comments were received, with many providing multiple feedback statements and suggestions about the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update. Most respondents’ comments focused either on conservation or outdoor recreation themes. For conservation, respondents were really concerned about the overuse and impacts they witnessed in the regional parks and trails (n=65) and suggested to focus on biodiversity and ecosystem preservation (n=132) and land acquisition (n=100). For outdoor recreation, respondents suggested in general to offer more opportunities to recreate in regional parks and trails (n=83), with some specific stakeholder groups advocating for more disk golfing (n=138), mountain biking (n=120) and horse riding (n=47) opportunities. Respondents also offered suggestions on how to improve regionals parks and trails management (n=52), advocated for more and improved facilities (n=52) and stressed the importance of providing more education (n=52) and better accessibility (n=42). Another emerging theme was dog management, with some respondents advocating for dog off-leash opportunities (n=21), while others reporting issues related to dog out of control and the need for leashing policies (n=62). Respondents (n=113) took also the opportunity to express their appreciation toward CRD Regional Parks and the possibility to participate in the survey.



## Appendix E: Letter from District of Metchosin



### DISTRICT OF METCHOSIN

File No. 0360-20-08

May 3, 2022

**CRD EXECUTIVE OFFICE**  
*Received*

**MAY 16 2022**

Board of Directors  
Capital Regional District  
625 Fisgard Street  
PO Box 1000  
Victoria, BC V8W 2S6

Dear CRD Board Directors:

**Re: CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan**

The District of Metchosin Environmental Advisory Select Committee through Metchosin Council would like to provide input to the proposed vision, mission, values, principles, and priorities for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update. We recognize that the Board directed a lens of conservation and biodiversity be applied to the process and Plan. We support that position.

We recognize that CRD Regional Parks are varied in size, ecological composition, and function. Our concern is the protection of the wildland portion of CRD Regional Parks that now or could in the future provide habitat to the large mammals, including predators, which would naturally perform their ecosystem functions in these areas. Examples would be the Sooke Wilderness Park, the Sea-to-Sea Wilderness Park and much of East Sooke Park.

We would like to see a separate vision and mission statement for these wildland areas within a park or encompassing the whole park. Specifically, we are concerned with two critical ecological functions that must be maintained within the wildland area of CRD Regional Parks: sequestering carbon and supporting biodiversity. Ecosystems that sequester carbon are being lost at an alarming rate, yet these ecosystems are critical for mitigating climate change.

Supporting biodiversity ensures the ecosystem continues to ensure clean air and clean water. Maintaining biodiversity in wildland parks must take into consideration all living things, from micro-organisms to apex predators.

Given the continual land conversion on southern Vancouver Island, wildland parks are increasingly important refuges for apex predators. Human contact must be minimized to support the ecosystem as a whole and ensure that the apex predators continue to live and breed within the wildland parks. Applying maximum protection to the wildland areas also ensures the future of these areas for carbon sequestration.

4450 Happy Valley Road, Victoria, B.C. V9C 3Z3  
Administration Office (250) 474-3167 Fax 474-6298  
Building Inspection Department (250) 474-3196 Fax 474-6298

Thank you for your consideration in applying maximum protection to wildland ecosystems within the CRD Regional Parks as part of your CRD Regional Parks management plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Rains", written over a circular stamp or logo.

John Rains  
Mayor

cc. Larissa Hutcheson  
General Manager, Parks & Environmental Services

# Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan

## First Nations Engagement Report

Capital Regional District | June 2022



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# 1. Executive Summary

The Capital Regional District (CRD) began engagement with First Nations, stakeholders and the public in February 2022 on an update to the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021, sharing a new vision, mission, values and principles and priorities for feedback.

The CRD Board has stated its commitment to engage First Nations communities respectfully and appropriately in regional strategies, decision making and shared interests. Input was initially sought from 15 First Nations whose traditional territories overlap the CRD and whose ancestors have been taking care of the land since time immemorial. Implementation of the new plan will include ongoing consultation and engagement with First Nations.

This report summarizes the input received from First Nations between February 16 and May 31, 2022 and is reflective of key interests expressed by First Nations who were available to participate. The report includes key themes that emerged in the feedback received. Given the restricted timeframe for engagement on the Plan development and the intense demands on First Nations communities over the past two years, this input is not reflective of the interests and concerns of all First Nations, nor should it be considered comprehensive in all cases, given time constraints.

Through meetings, email and phone communication, initial input has been received to date from: Esquimalt Nation, T'Sou-ke First Nation, Sc'ianew (Beecher Bay) First Nation, Penelakut Tribe, and Lyackson First Nation, and the WASANEC Leadership Council on behalf of the WJOLÉLP (Tsartlip), WSÍKEM (Tseycum) and S'ÁUTW (Tsawout) First Nations. Songhees First Nation had no specific feedback to provide prior to May 31, 2022. Communication is ongoing with Quw'utsun (Cowichan Tribes) and MÁLEXEL (Malahat), Pacheedaht, BOKÉCEN (Pauquachin), Halalt and Stz'uminus (Chemainus) First Nations. Communication has yet to be initiated with Ts'uubaa-asatx (Lake Cowichan), Tswwassen, and SEMYOME (Semiahmoo) First Nation.

Key themes heard during the engagement include the need to consider how to ensure the rights to Indigenous cultural practices within regional park areas traditionally used for hunting, fishing, harvesting and gathering are protected; the need for education and consideration of the public around cultural uses; the need to consider creative ways to support the protection of lands by Indigenous peoples for conservation; and an interest in working together on the co-management of lands to ensure their preservation and enhancement.

Recommendations based on the feedback include the collaborative development of Nation-specific work plans between the CRD and First Nations on specific areas of interest; revision to statements in the proposed vision, values and priority statements to reflect input heard to date; and an openness to further adaptation, as needed, during plan implementation to reflect the priorities of First Nations who have not had the opportunity to provide input to date.

## 2. Introduction

The CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021 has set the overall vision, goals and objectives for a regional parks service over the past 10 years. The 2012-2021 Strategic Plan was primarily led by a volunteer Citizens Advisory Panel (CAP) and included extensive engagement with stakeholders, the public, government, First Nations and other park agencies. The Strategic Plan considered many of the trends, challenges and values that are still relevant today, such as increased visitation to regional parks and trails and the need for increased environmental protection. At the same time, many things have changed in the region since the adoption of the plan in 2012. For example, climate action and reconciliation with First Nations are key priorities of the CRD.

The CRD Board initiated an update of the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021 on December 8, 2021 and a workshop was held with the Regional Parks Committee in January 2022 to set the direction for the Strategic Plan update. On February 9, 2022 the CRD Board approved a proposed vision, values, mission statement, and priorities for engagement and to apply a lens of conservation and protection of biodiversity to the priorities and process.

The CRD Board directed staff to engage all First Nations in the region in an early, meaningful and ongoing manner in the development of the Strategic Plan. Consistent with the CRD Corporate Plan goal to strengthen relationships with First Nations, and CRD Board priority to work with First Nations to create new regional planning and decision-making systems together on their traditional territories. The CRD embarked on consultation with First Nations regarding the Strategic Plan update with assistance from a consulting firm.

A new CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan will be brought forward for approval in July 2022 that will set the direction for regional parks and trails over the next decade. The CRD acknowledges the limited opportunity for First Nations to engage on the Plan development and invites ongoing dialogue with First Nations to fully develop and implement the Plan.

## 3. Purpose of the Engagement Report

The purpose of this report is to summarize the engagement process with First Nations and to highlight responses and key themes received related to the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

The goal of engagement is to receive feedback from First Nations on the proposed vision, values, mission, and key priorities that were approved by the CRD Board in February 2022 to be considered in the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update (Appendix A). Feedback received through the engagement process is summarized and analyzed in this report and considered in the updated Strategic Plan, which will be presented to the Board in July 2022. A separate report includes feedback received from agencies, stakeholders and the public.

## 4. Engagement Period

This report includes a summary of the engagement activities completed and responses received between February and May 2022 from First Nations. Engagement with First Nations is ongoing and will continue throughout finalization and implementation of the Strategic Plan.

## 5. Focus of Engagement

The CRD is committed to involving First Nations respectfully and appropriately in the development of regional strategies, decision making and shared interests. The aim of this engagement process was to inform First Nations with traditional territories in the CRD about the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update process, to seek input and information from interested and affected Nations on the proposed vision, mission, values and key priorities for the Strategic Plan update, and to discuss interests and ideas to assist the CRD with future decision making about regional parks and trails. Other goals of the engagement process included information sharing, dialogue and discussion, building ongoing relationships, developing understanding and trust, and producing a Strategic Plan that reflects First Nation's interests, organizational needs and public interests. Engagement was one of the early steps in the Strategic Plan update process and used to gather traditional and local knowledge about the regional parks and trails, learn what is important to First Nations, identify issues and priorities, and to seek a range of suggestions for what should be considered in updating the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032.

## 6. Who Was Engaged

First Nations whose traditional territory lies within the CRD boundary were identified to engage in the Strategic Plan update process. Engagement on the Strategic Plan update has occurred with 15 First Nations to date and ongoing engagement will be expanded to include 18 First Nations governments (Appendix B). No contact has yet been made with Ts'uubaa-asatx (Lake Cowichan), Tsawwassen and SEMYOME (Semiahmoo) First Nations.

## 7. Engagement Methods

The project scope and engagement process for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update were approved by the CRD Board in February 2022. A team of consultants were retained by the CRD to conduct engagement. To accomplish an engagement program that provides meaningful opportunities for input within the timeframes identified for the project, the consultants used a number of approaches to engage First Nations. Hence, engagement methods varied depending on the preferences and priorities identified by First Nations.

## 7.1. Letters and Information Package

First Nations were provided with an introductory letter from the CRD in late January 2022, notifying of the upcoming engagement on the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update. First Nations were provided with a second letter and information package from the consultant in early March when the CRD's Get Involved online engagement platform was officially live. The information package included:

- Overview of the update to the Strategic Plan.
- Highlights of First Nations content in the current Strategic Plan.
- Information about the CRD's timeline for this update.
- Invitation to meet one-on-one or engage with CRD in an alternative method.
- Invitation to submit a written response on how to improve the content of the Strategic Plan.
- Workshops may be considered, if desired, to meet with multiple Nations.
- Offer of capacity funding.
- Summary of what CRD has already heard from First Nations in past conversations and processes.

## 7.2. Meetings, Emails and Phone Calls

First Nations were contacted by both phone and email with follow-up information, meeting requests, and other information as requested. Follow-up attempts to contact Nations were conducted by phone and email to determine interest in providing input. Meetings took place with individual First Nations, in-person or virtually, as requested. Follow-up meetings occurred to confirm feedback shared was properly captured and additional thoughts could be shared, as appropriate. The following table outlines the contacts made with First Nations during the engagement period:

First Nation	# emails, phone calls, meetings	Status of Feedback
Beecher Bay	5	Input received from Beecher Bay CAO
Cowichan Tribes	8	No confirmation of an interest to meet before May 31
Esquimalt	6	Input received from Esquimalt Executive Director
Halalt	10	No confirmation of an interest to meet before May 31
Lake Cowichan	0	No contact initiated
Lyackson	7	Initial input received from Lyackson Consultation Coordinator; Interest in further engagement with Chief and Council; Insufficient time for feedback before May 31.
Malahat	8	No confirmation of an interest to meet before May 31
Pacheedaht	11	No response after multiple attempts



Pauquachin	13	No capacity to engage before May 31
Penelakut	9	Initial input received from Band Manager and Member of Elders Committee.
Semiahmoo	0	No contact initiated
Songhees	15	No feedback provided within the timeline identified.
Stz'uminus	7	Chief expressed interest in meeting but no date confirmed
Tswawassen	0	No contact initiated
T'Sou-ke	25	Input received from Chief and Council
WSANEC (Tsartlip, Tsawout and Tseycum)	27	Information provided by CRD as requested. Letter received from Director of Operations: not in support; additional information requested; extension to provide feedback requested.

Table 1: Contact with First Nations during the engagement period.

## 8. Responses

Feedback was provided through meetings, phone calls, emails and written submissions, according to the preferences of each First Nation.

The following is a summary of the feedback received from First Nations between February 16 and May 31, 2022, related to the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update. This summary has not been reviewed by First Nations.

A letter, dated May 25, 2022, was received from WSANEC Leadership Council, representing Tsartlip, Tsawout and Tseycum First Nations, requesting additional information and stating that support for the Strategic Plan cannot be provided without further engagement (Appendix C). WSANEC Leadership Council are preparing a process and budget for ongoing engagement, June 15, 2022 letter attached in Appendix C.

Chemainus, Songhees, and Stz'uminus First Nations also expressed interest in providing feedback but were not able to do so before May 31<sup>st</sup>.

Lyackson and Penelakut have provided initial feedback on the Strategic Plan update and expressed interest in further engagement opportunities. Beecher Bay, T'Sou-ke, and Esquimalt have provided input and are open to further dialogue.

Responses have not yet been received from Pacheedaht, Halalt, Malahat and Pauquachin First Nations and Cowichan Tribes. Continued efforts to engage these Nations are underway.

## 8.1. Responses on Vision, Mission and Values

The following section describes specific feedback provided on the proposed vision, mission, values and principles for the Strategic Plan update.

### 8.1.1. Proposed Vision

Some First Nations stated challenges of commenting on a vision statement for CRD regional parks and commented on the need for public education around land and greater dialogue with the CRD on the vision statement, but appreciated it is a good starting point.

### 8.1.2. Proposed Mission

No feedback has been received on the proposed mission statements to date.

### 8.1.3. Feedback on Proposed Values & Principles

A First Nation commented on recognition of the spirit behind identifying reconciliation as a proposed value is based on an ongoing conversation within Canadian society sparked by UNDRIP and DRIPA and that working with First Nations in fostering stewardship of the lands and waters is within the CRD's purview. However, it was cautioned that reconciliation is a broad term and collaborative dialogue on what that means to a relationship between the CRD and First Nations is needed. It was suggested by First Nations that long-term, positive, and meaningful relationships should be developed with specific, measurable goals and objectives to work on and towards together.

## 8.2. Feedback on Proposed Priority Statements

During the engagement process, First Nations were asked to share any specific priorities or efforts they wished to undertake regarding regional parks and trails, and/or for any other feedback they wished to share. The following points were shared:

- Meaningful consultation on the CRD's plans for regional parks was noted as an ongoing need and interest.
- The importance of a broader relationship with the CRD and open, clear dialogue to help in building a lasting and productive relationship.
- Improved understanding of the CRD's roles and responsibilities for regional parks and trails.
- Improve dialogue to develop a shared understanding of what reconciliation in action means for the CRD and First Nations.
- The protection of land and water and opportunities for collaboration.
- Establishing clear understanding of Indigenous rights.

- Protection of areas within regional parks and trails for cultural use, potentially through agreements or other mechanisms.
- Providing proactive education for the public about Indigenous rights and cultural use, including interpretive signage and place naming.
- Improving cultural safety for Indigenous peoples in regional parks.
- Working with partners on establishing protected areas.
- Working with partners on conservation efforts and inventories.
- Participation throughout planning process and on interests related to archaeologically sensitive areas, environmental implications, economic benefits and considerations, protection of cultural practices, and any infringement of Douglas Treaty rights.
- Working towards co-management of regional parks through agreements or other mechanisms.

## 9. Limitations

The CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update was initiated in December 2021 and the delivery date for an updated Strategic Plan was set for June/July 2022. First Nations engagement on the Strategic Plan update was limited by this restricted timeline and did not allow for deeper discussion and input at the outset of the Plan development.

Fifteen First Nations were initially identified for engagement on the Strategic Plan update. Subsequently, it was determined that three First Nations were not included in the initial engagement outreach. An invitation to start dialogue on the Strategic Plan priorities will be offered after direction is received from the CRD Board.

First Nations communities have been under considerable strain over the past two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, provincial fires and floods, and the discoveries of unmarked graves of children adjacent to former residential schools. Given these, and many other factors of relevance to individual Nations, the opportunity for dialogue on the Strategic Plan update was limited. Therefore, this report is not reflective of the views of all First Nations identified for engagement. Dialogue is ongoing to deepen an understanding of the issues and interests raised by First Nations and this feedback will be reflected in the ongoing work of the CRD and is not included in this report.

## 10. Moving Forward

The Regional Parks Committee held a workshop in January 2022 to set the direction for engagement on the Regional Parks Strategic Plan update. At its February 9, 2022 meeting, the CRD Board proposed a renewed vision, mission, values and principles, and strategic priorities based on the themes of conservation & recreation, access & equity, climate action & resiliency, and reconciliation. This material was presented to First Nations for feedback between February and May 2022.

Based on feedback received by First Nations to date about strengthening awareness and improving accommodation of Indigenous cultural use in regional parks and trails, the vision has been modified to include improved respect for cultural heritage and cultural use.

The mission statements have been revised to highlight the long-standing stewardship of the land and water by First Nations and ways the CRD can learn from and work with First Nations on conservation efforts.

First Nations stressed the importance of strengthening relationships between the CRD and First Nations and putting reconciliation commitments into action. The values and principles have been revised to recognize this feedback. Additionally, the conservation and stewardship values focus on the importance of protecting cultural heritage and incorporating traditional ecological knowledge.

Information has been included in the Plan that aims to further clarify the role and responsibility of the CRD in relation to the provincial *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* and the *Heritage Conservation Act*, the CRD's Statement of Reconciliation, and initiatives such as the calls to action identified in the CRD's Special Task Force on First Nations Relations Final Report.

With respect to First Nations interests in working with partners, including the CRD, in expanding conservation efforts and protecting land and water, a new Conservancy Area regional park classification has been developed that contemplates protection of natural assets primarily for the intrinsic cultural use values present. The Plan also highlights opportunities for establishing traditional use agreements with First Nations for use of regional parks and trails, as well as ways to improve cultural safety during cultural use activities, such as improved public awareness initiatives.

First Nations stressed the need to establish and maintain working relationships with the CRD. A goal of the Plan is to have strong, collaborative and mutually beneficial relationships with First Nations in the region. Recognizing emerging changes impacting First Nations and CRD governance, the Plan identifies the need to remain flexible to accommodate specific priority interests and capacities going forward, such as conducting inventories or developing interpretive signage that reflects Indigenous cultural heritage, and to involve First Nations in service delivery initiatives, such as campground operations.

Protection of archaeological sites and cultural heritage was identified by First Nations as a priority for the CRD. A focus on cultural heritage conservation has been included in the Plan, as well as ways to incorporate First Nations traditional knowledge in conservation efforts.

## Appendix 1 – Engagement Materials

CRD

# Regional Parks Strategic Plan Update 2022



March - April, 2022  
Public Input

### Vision 2032

We work cooperatively and respectfully to steward and expand an exceptional system of regional parks and trails that is rich in biodiversity and cultural heritage, resilient to change, connects people to nature and provides healthy outdoor experiences for all.



# Mission



Ensure regional parks and trails are resilient by delivering a sustainable service that is adaptable and takes action on climate change.



Foster stewardship of ecological and cultural resources by informing, engaging and collaborating with the public, volunteers, partners, and First Nations.



Provide access to regional parks and trails that facilitates healthy, safe and enjoyable outdoor recreation experiences for all.



Secure a diverse and connected system of regional parks and trails that protect and restore the integrity of our region's biodiversity and cultural landscapes.



Work with First Nations in taking care of the land and water.

# Values and Principles



**Accessibility** – We provide access to nature for all ages and abilities



**Conservation** – We work together to protect, restore and celebrate the region's natural and cultural landscapes



**Equity** – We work together to ensure regional parks and trails are inclusive and maintained as a common good



**Reconciliation** – We are committed to work towards reconciliation with First Nations



**Recreation** – We offer outdoor recreation experiences that improve our health and well-being



**Resiliency** – We take action on climate change by being adaptive and using resources sustainably with a view to benefiting future generations



## **Additional Values and Principles:**

Leadership

Partnership

Stewardship

Connectivity

Education

Accountability

## Conservation & Recreation

- Conserve biodiversity
- Enable outdoor recreation
- Work with partners
- Foster stewardship



## Access & Equity

- Enhance health & well-being
- Promote complete and connected communities
- Ensure economic fairness
- Accessibility & equity lens



## Climate Action & Resiliency

- Align sustainable service delivery with climate action
- Advance regional active transportation
- Develop partnerships
- Acquire and manage natural areas



## Reconciliation

- Incorporate First Nations reconciliation objectives
- Provide space for cultural use
- Strengthen engagement
- Support shared prosperity



**KEY PRIORITY STATEMENTS  
REGIONAL PARKS STRATEGIC PLAN**

**February 2022**

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**Conservation & Recreation**

- Take action to conserve biodiversity through acquiring land, restoration and monitoring of ecosystems across the region (UN; LAS; RGS, 2.1; RPSP, p.9)
- Enable users to recreate and have outdoor recreation experiences that are enjoyable, safe and compatible (RPSP, p.9 & 12)
- Work with partners in taking care of the land and water and providing sustainable outdoor recreation (Board, #6d & #6b-1 & #6b-2; RPSP, p.10; LAS)
- Foster stewardship through program delivery, knowledge sharing and leading by example (RPSP, p.10)

**Access & Equity**

- Enhance health and well-being by providing nature and outdoor recreation experiences for all ages and abilities (Board, #6e; RPSP, p.9)
- Promote complete and connected communities by ensuring recreation, parks and green space can be easily accessed by transit, walking or cycling (RGS, 3.1 & 4.1; RPSP, p.9)
- Ensure economic fairness by managing regional parks and trails as a common good (RGS 5.1; Revenue, p.4)
- Strengthen an accessibility and equity lens in service delivery

### Climate Action & Resiliency

- Align sustainable service delivery and infrastructure improvements with climate action (RGS 7.1; CAS, 1.1 & 5.1; RPSP)
- Advance regional active transportation opportunities that contribute to greenhouse gas reduction (CAS, 3.7; RPSP; RGS, 4)
- Develop partnerships for the long-term consistent and connected management of green space and ecosystem services (RPSP; Board, #5a-5).
- Strategically acquire and manage natural areas to address climate mitigation, urban containment and access to green space for a growing population (RGS 7.1, CAS, 5.1; RPSP)

### Reconciliation

- Incorporate First Nation worldviews, knowledge and reconciliation objectives in the management of natural assets and cultural heritage (Board, #3a-3 & #6d; RPSP; FNSR; RNTF, p.44-45)
- Provide space for cultural and ceremonial use, food and medicine harvesting, traditional management practices and reclaiming Indigenous place names (Board, #3a-3 & #6d; RPSP; FNSR; FNTF, p.44-45)
- Strengthen engagement with First Nations in service delivery initiatives (Board, #3a-3 & #6d; RPSP; FNSR; FNTF, p.44-45; LAS)
- Seek partnerships, share information and deliver fair and equitable services in working with First Nations on achieving their economic goals (Board, #3a-3 & #6d; RPSP; FNSR; FNTF, p.44-45)

#### Reference Abbreviations:

Board	Capital Regional District 2019-2021 Board Priorities
CAS	Climate Action Strategy 2021
FNSR	First Nations Statement of Reconciliation
FNTF	First Nations Task Force Final Report, 2018
LAS	Land Acquisition Strategy 2020-2021
RGS	Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), Bylaw No. 4017, 2018
RPSP	Regional Parks Strategic Plan (RPSP) 2012-2021
Revenue	Draft Revenue Generation Strategy, 2021
UN	United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030

## Appendix 2 – First Nations with Traditional Territories in CRD

First Nations with traditional territories within the CRD boundary were identified to engage in the Strategic Plan update process. Engagement activities will be ongoing throughout development and implementation of the Strategic Plan.

To date, engagement on the Strategic Plan update has commenced with the following First Nations:

1. Pacheedaht First Nation
2. Sc'ianew (Beecher Bay) First Nation
3. T'Sou-ke Nation
4. Esquimalt Nation
5. Songhees Nation
6. WJOLELP (Tsartlip) First Nation
7. BOKEĆEN (Pauquachin) First Nation
8. SĀAUTW (Tsawout) First Nation
9. WSİKEM (Tseycum) First Nation
10. MÁLEXEL (Malahat) First Nation
11. Stz'uminus (Chemainus) First Nation
12. Quw'utsun (Cowichan Tribes)
13. Halalt First Nation
14. Lyackson First Nation
15. Penelakut Tribe

Engagement will be expanded to include the following First Nations:

1. Ts'uubaa-asatx (Lake Cowichan) First Nation
2. Tsawwassen First Nation
3. SEMYOME (Semiahmoo) First Nation

## Appendix 3 – Letters from WSÁNEC Leadership Council



**WSÁNEC**  
LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ENHANCING RECOGNITION OF, AND RESPECT  
FOR, WSÁNEC DOUGLAS TREATY RIGHTS AND  
WSÁNEC ABORIGINAL RIGHTS AND TITLE

May 25, 2022

Judy Kitts and Sarah McPherson  
Strategic Communications and Consultation  
Jemma Scoble and Associates Consulting Inc.  
Via e-mail: [kittsjconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:kittsjconsulting@gmail.com) and [sarah@jscobleconsulting.com](mailto:sarah@jscobleconsulting.com)

Re: File: 0620.20 - CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT PARKS STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATES

ÍY SŁÁĆEL Ms. Kitts and Ms. McPherson,

Welcome to WSÁNEC Territory. I am contacting you because you are responsible for project management and community consultation regarding the WSÁNEC Leadership Council (WLC) interest in the Capital Regional District (CRD) Regional Parks Strategic Plan and the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area (JdF) Community Parks Strategic Plan updates. I also understand that the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021—which outlines the vision, mission and goals for regional parks and trails—expired and that the CRD Board has extended its term until an updated strategic plan is prepared and brought forward to the Regional Parks Committee (planned for June 2022).

The WSÁNEC Technical Advisory Committee (WTAC) met on May 17, 2022 to review the Briefing Materials that we received in March, which included the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan: Draft Vision, Mission, Values & Principles, and Priority Statements. The WTAC also reviewed staff input on where improvements could be made to improve the 2012-2021 Strategic Plan with a focus on WSÁNEC interests, and they spoke about some initial ideas for input and key priorities for the next 5-10 years. There was an extensive discussion, and the consensus was that more thought and broader community input would be required prior to providing a response to the proposed Vision, Mission, Values & Principles, and Priority Statements.

Given the above, the WLC requests an extension to the given deadline (May 31, 2022) in order to further consider the incorporation of WSÁNEC interests into CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan and how to reconcile WSÁNEC land-based interests with the potential for an expanding regional park system. To this end, we request additional information, based on references in the 2012-2021 Regional Park Strategic Plan, including:

1. **Current level of protection:** Almost 20% of the CRD landbase was protected in 2012 – 11% in protected areas and 8.4% in the Greater Victoria Water Area (p. 24). What is the present level of protection, given acquisitions over the past ten years?

WSÁNEC LEADERSHIP COUNCIL | 800B STELLY'S X RD. | BRENTWOOD BAY BC | V8M 1J4 | 778-351-4999 | WWW.WSÁNEC.COM



2. **The proposed regional parks and trails:** In the expired/extended Plan, the CRD provides a map with a vision/plans for the system over the next ten years and beyond (p. 79): We did not receive anything comparable for the 2022-2031 period, even though the proposed vision includes provisions to “work cooperatively and respectfully to steward and *expand* an exceptional system of regional parks and trails”. Can you provide an updated map illustrating areas of interest for expansion, and commit to further engagement on ideas for future acquisition of lands?
3. **WSÁNEĆ Management of “Cultural Landscapes”:** We note in the draft mission the intent to collaborate on securing a diverse and connected system of regional parks and trails that protect and restore the integrity of our region’s biodiversity and “cultural landscapes.” Our culture has been ignored and our people have often been made to feel unwelcome and excluded from regional parks. We wish to discuss further how to truly recognize what the CRD calls “cultural landscapes” and work toward alternative management and decision-making models for these places.
4. **Juan de Fuca Electoral Area (JdF) Community Parks Strategic Plan updates:** We have yet to receive any information on the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area (JdF) Community Parks Strategic Plan updates. When can we expect to collaborate on proposed updates?

After extensive discussion, the WTAC asked that WLC staff bring the 2022-2031 Updates back to the WTAC for further discussion. With the extent of alienation that has already occurred in our homelands, these updates are contentious. As a result, we are conveying the WTAC’s request for additional information and that we can not support the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan updates without further engagement. Please contact Laurie Whitehead, Referrals Manager, at [laurie.whitehead@wsanec.com](mailto:laurie.whitehead@wsanec.com) to follow up with the requested information and to schedule a meeting to discuss extending the timelines.

Sincerely,

Gord Elliott, Director of Operations  
WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council

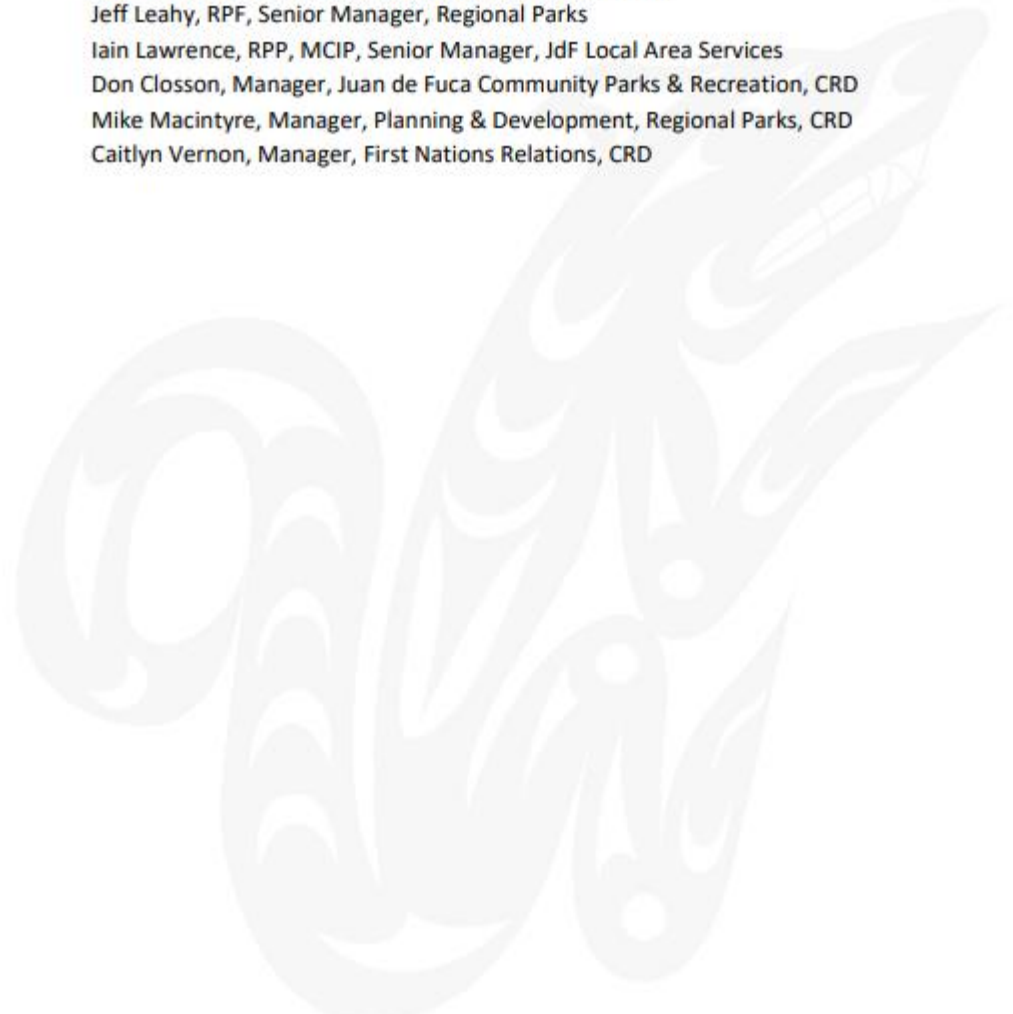




**WSÁNEĆ**  
LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ENHANCING RECOGNITION OF, AND RESPECT  
FOR: WSÁNEĆ DOUGLAS TREATY RIGHTS AND  
WSÁNEĆ ABORIGINAL RIGHTS AND TITLE

cc: Chief Don Tom, Chairman, WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council  
WLC Staff (Justin Fritz, Laurie Whitehead and Dave Paul)  
Jeff Leahy, RPF, Senior Manager, Regional Parks  
Iain Lawrence, RPP, MCIP, Senior Manager, JdF Local Area Services  
Don Closson, Manager, Juan de Fuca Community Parks & Recreation, CRD  
Mike Macintyre, Manager, Planning & Development, Regional Parks, CRD  
Caitlyn Vernon, Manager, First Nations Relations, CRD





June 15, 2022

Jeff Leahy, RPF  
Senior Manager, Regional Parks, Capital Regional District  
Via e-mail: [jleahy@crd.bc.ca](mailto:jleahy@crd.bc.ca)

Re: CRD Parks Strategic Plan Update

Dear Jeff Leahy,

Thank you for our June 6, 2022 lunch meeting and your letter of June 7, 2022. I am just sending a quick note to confirm that WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council (WLC) staff acknowledge receipt of your letter, which includes responses to our requests for information, and your proposed plan for moving forward. Following from our meeting and in anticipation of next steps, WLC staff are preparing a workplan and budget for the engagement process when it resumes in July, that will include resourcing estimates for a process to develop a traditional use agreement/collaboration framework, and allocations to support collaborating on identification of regionally significant parkland, exploring alignment of goals and objectives, and developing land acquisition criteria.

We note that the proposed Plan includes working with First Nations to:

- a. Improve protection of cultural heritage sites;
- b. Provide park visitors with information about First Nations history and cultural use in parks;
- c. Improve indigenous cultural safety in parks;
- d. Understand and monitor plants and animals of significance to Indigenous cultural use;
- e. Prepare and implement Park Management Plans;
- f. Support First Nations guardians; and
- g. Develop and implement priority initiatives related to regional parks and trails identified by First Nations.

For the above, and in particular in the spirit of working with WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council (WLC) to prepare and implement Park Management Plans, we request an extension to the timeline for engagement and input on the Mount Work Regional Park draft Management Plan. We also wish to flag that as per communications via the WLC/CRD Land Altering Works Quarterly meeting on June 2, 2022 and a subsequent site visit on June 10, 2022, our interest in discussing the future of the Residence building in advance of proposed asbestos removal and steps to demolish that



building proceeding. WLC look forward to having staff fully engaged in prioritizing and participating in development of Management Plans for regional parks that fall within WSÁNEĆ territory. We also look forward to receiving information about the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Strategic Plan update.

HÍŠKWE,

Gordon Elliott, Director of Operations,  
WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council

- c.c. Gord Elliott, Director of Operations, WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council  
Justin Fritz, Policy/Negotiations Manager, WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council  
Chief Don Tom, Chairman, WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council  
Dave Paul Jr., CRD Liaison, WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council  
Mike Macintyre, Manager, Planning & Development, Regional Parks, CRD  
Caitlyn Vernon, Manager, First Nations Relations, CRD  
Iain Lawrence, RPP, MCIP, Senior Manager, JdF Local Area Services  
Larisa Hutcheson, General Manager, Parks and Environmental Services, CRD

# **Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022 – 2032**

June 22, 2022  
Regional Parks Committee

# Presentation Outline



1 Strategic Plan Update Process

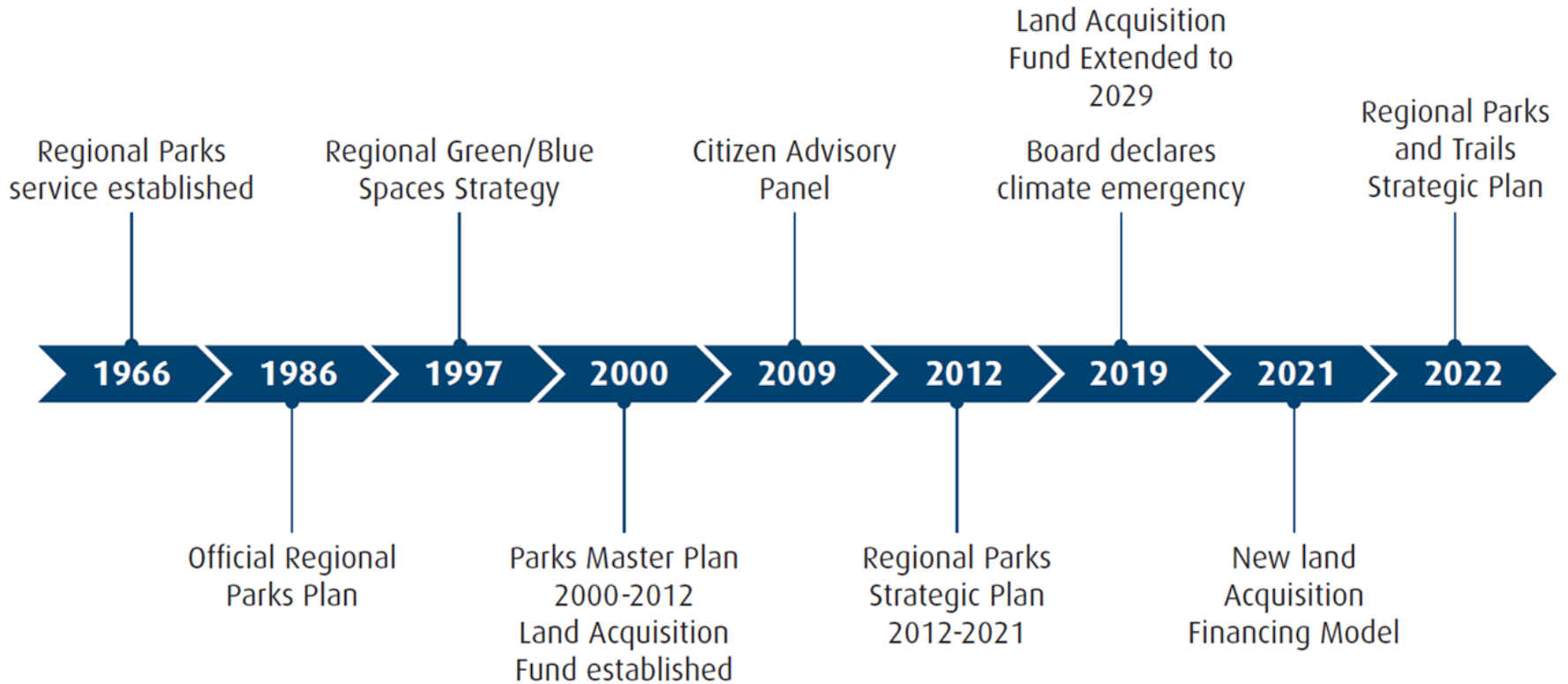
2 Engagement

3 Vision, Mission, Values

4 Regional Park & Trail Classifications

5 Priority Areas

# Update Process





# Update Process

CRD

**December 8, 2021**

CRD Board extends current Strategic Plan and initiates Strategic Plan update and engagement

**February 9, 2022**

CRD Board provides direction for Strategic Plan update

**March 8 - April 4, 2022**  
Public survey

**July 2022**

Updated Strategic Plan submitted to the CRD Board for decision

**January 26, 2022**

Regional Parks Committee workshop for Strategic Plan update

**February 2022**

5 Stakeholder focus groups  
1 Park Agency focus group

**March and April 2022**

3 Public information sessions

**June 2022**

Updated Strategic Plan submitted to Regional Parks Committee and Transportation Committee for input

Engagement with First Nations on the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan is ongoing.



# Engagement

CRD



**2,400**

Visits to project webpage



**44**

Stakeholder groups attended  
5 focus groups



**1,228**

Completed surveys



**26**

Attended 3 public information  
sessions



**19,000**

Reached on Social Media



**15**

First Nations invited to engage  
long-term

## Summary of First Nations Input

- Define reconciliation and put into action
- Importance of developing meaningful relationships, building trust and improving understanding of roles and responsibilities
- Need for increased awareness of Indigenous rights and cultural use practices
- Interest in land acquisition, conservation, stewardship, planning, partnerships and economic prosperity
- Limitations to participation relate to capacity, priorities and timeline

## Summary of Stakeholder and Public Input

- Vision could emphasize connectivity, regional trails and stewardship
- Mission could be simplified and reflect regional trails function
- Values of most importance are conservation, recreation and resiliency
- Values to add are accountability, connectivity, education, partnership and stewardship
- Priorities of most importance are: land acquisition, biodiversity protection, buffering urban development
- Emphasize role of conservation and outdoor recreation in developing stewardship
- Put First Nations first and determine priorities through direct engagement

We have an expanded and connected system of regional parks and regional trails that are rich in biodiversity, respect Indigenous cultural heritage and use, inspire stewardship, are resilient to change, and provide enjoyable outdoor recreation experiences.



# Mission



- Operate and manage a connected system of regional parks for public enjoyment.
- Foster stewardship by learning from and working with long-term land stewards and by connecting people to nature.
- Operate and manage a regional trail network for active transportation and recreation.
- Be fiscally responsible and accountable in decision making.

- Access
- Accountability
- Connectivity
- Conservation
- Education
- Equity
- Outdoor Recreation
- Partnership
- Reconciliation
- Resiliency
- Stewardship

# Regional Park Classifications

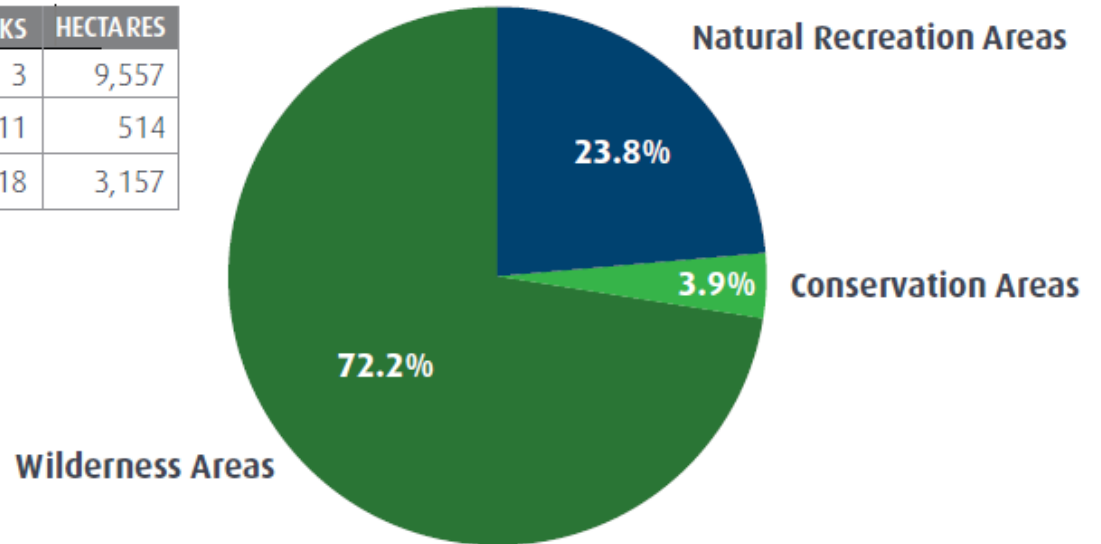


Park Classification	Purpose
Conservation Area	To protect species or ecological communities at risk and to offer visitor experiences that are primarily focused on interpretation of natural and cultural features.
Wilderness Area	To protect large, connected tracts of natural areas and to offer visitor experiences that are primarily focused on remote and secluded outdoor recreation activities.
Conservancy Area	To protect natural assets and areas primarily for their intrinsic cultural use value where there is a traditional use agreement in place and to offer visitor experiences that enhance understanding and appreciation for Indigenous cultural use.
Natural Recreation Area	To protect a connected system of natural areas and to offer visitor experiences that are primarily focused on outdoor recreation activities.

# Regional Park Classifications

Regional Parks Land Base by Classification

PARK CLASSIFICATION	NUMBER OF PARKS	HECTARES
Regional Wilderness Areas	3	9,557
Regional Conservation Areas	11	514
Regional Natural Recreation Areas	18	3,157





# Regional Trail Classifications



To provide an off-street trail corridor in urban areas that is primarily for high volumes of active transportation at peak travel times and accommodates regular recreational use. Trail separation and lighting design standards will be applied to areas with high user volumes and greater trail user differential.

To provide an off-street trail corridor in rural areas that is primarily for active transportation and recreation with higher volumes during the summer season and on weekends. Trail design will be dual-direction, shared use with gravel surface, except in areas of higher user volumes or on-street separated facilities, a paved surface may be considered.



## Reconciliation

**Goal: Strong, collaborative and mutually beneficial relationships with First Nations through working in partnership.**

1-1 Incorporate First Nations world views and knowledge in the ongoing operation of regional parks and regional trails.

1-2 Work with First Nations Governments in service delivery initiatives.



## Conservation

**Goal: Regional parks protect the region's natural assets and cultural heritage for future generations.**

2-1 Take action to increase protection of biodiversity, ecological integrity, and natural assets in the region through improved knowledge, proactive stewardship and land acquisition.

2-2 Respect and protect cultural heritage and traditional cultural use practices.

2-3 Work with partners in taking care of the region's species, habitats and natural areas.



## Visitor Experience

**Goal: Visitors to regional parks are involved in stewardship and have enjoyable outdoor recreation experiences**

3-1 Offer compatible outdoor recreation experiences that are enjoyable, healthy, safe and immersed in nature.

3-2 Foster stewardship through program delivery, knowledge sharing and collaboration.



## Climate Action & Resiliency

**Goal: Regional parks and regional trails are resilient and take action on climate change**

4-1 Advance regional active transportation opportunities that contribute to greenhouse gas reduction.

4-2 Support the development of complete and connected communities by improving access to regional parks by transit, electric vehicles, micro mobility, walking or cycling.

4-3 Align service delivery and infrastructure improvements with climate action.

4-4 Ensure the long-term and consistent management of regional parks and protected natural areas.

4-5 Strategically acquire and manage natural areas to address climate mitigation, urban containment and access to green space for a growing population.

## Access & Equity

**Goal: Regional parks and regional trails are inclusive and accessible**

5-1 Enhance health and well-being by providing equitable access to regional parks and regional trails.



## Monitoring and Reporting

- Provision for considering major or minor amendments
- Annual reporting cycle
- Performance indicators to track progress





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## REPORT TO TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2022

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**SUBJECT**     **Renewed Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan**

### **ISSUE SUMMARY**

To present the renewed Capital Regional District (CRD) Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan for approval on an interim basis for one year.

### **BACKGROUND**

The CRD Board initiated an update of the Regional Parks Strategic Plan at its meeting of December 8, 2021, and extended the 2012-2021 Regional Parks Strategic Plan until July 2022. Staff led the development of an updated Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan) between January and June 2022 (Appendix A). The Strategic Plan reflects current Board priorities, related CRD strategies and corporate knowledge. Input from First Nations, stakeholders, the Regional Parks Committee, Transportation Committee and the public has been considered during the development of the Strategic Plan. Feedback, in general, aligns with the proposed document (Appendices B and C). A presentation outlining the key transportation highlights of the Strategic Plan is provided in Appendix D. A more in depth Strategic Plan presentation will be provided at the June 22, 2022 Regional Parks Committee meeting.

The Regional Parks Committee provided input on the proposed direction for the new Regional Parks Strategic Plan. On February 9, 2022, the CRD Board accepted the proposed vision, mission, values and priority statements for stakeholder, First Nations and public input, and recommended that a lens of conservation and protection of biodiversity be applied to the priorities and processes (Appendices B and C). Engagement with stakeholder groups and the public occurred between February and April 2022. Engagement with First Nations is ongoing and feedback received prior to May 31, 2022 is included in Appendix C.

Engagement with First Nations was facilitated by a consultant using a series of engagement methods from February to June 2022. First Nations whose traditional territories lie within the CRD boundary were invited to provide comment for input into the strategic plan (Appendix C). Staff will continue to seek meaningful and respectful engagement with First Nations during the interim approval period of the Strategic Plan. An interim approval will also provide the opportunity to initiate reconciliation efforts identified in the Strategic Plan.

The Transportation Committee Terms of Reference was approved by the CRD Board on March 9, 2022. The purpose of the Committee includes providing input into the Regional Parks Strategic Plan. The Transportation Committee provided input on the Strategic Plan at its April 20, 2022 meeting. The Committee recommended that the CRD Board change the name of the Strategic Plan to "Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan". The Committee also recommended that the Board direct staff to include actions in the Strategic Plan to improve service levels for regional trails, including detour reroute considerations, trail maintenance, network expansion, education and enforcement activities to support mode shift and reduce user conflict. The Committee also recommended that the Board direct staff to develop a funding strategy for regional trails to support the Strategic Plan, which also includes the trail widening and lighting plan.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

### *Alternative 1*

The Transportation Committee recommends to the Regional Parks Committee:  
That the Capital Regional District Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032 be approved on an interim basis for one year while engagement with First Nations continues.

### *Alternative 2*

That the Capital Regional District Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032 is accepted as a draft for public, stakeholder and First Nations engagement and the current Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021 is extended until June 2023.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### *Alignment with Board & Corporate Priorities*

The 2019-2022 CRD Board Priorities include ensuring appropriate funding for parks and trails infrastructure, improvements and maintenance by updating the Strategic Plan with consideration to ecological, recreation and reconciliation principles, land acquisition capacity, and expanded partnerships with First Nations and parks user groups. The 2019-2022 Corporate Plan envisions that residents of the region have additional land acquisitions and increased access to parks and recreational trails, and have access to convenient, green and affordable multi-modal transportation systems that enhance community well-being. These priorities are key drivers for this renewed Strategic Plan.

### *Alignment with Existing Plans & Strategies*

The region faces different challenges and opportunities since the Regional Parks Strategic Plan was adopted in 2012. The Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032 is in alignment with a number of recent Board-approved strategies: Regional Growth Strategy, Regional Transportation Plan, Climate Action Strategy and the Special Task Force on First Nations Relations Final Report. The Strategic Plan creates strong linkages to Board directions, the engagement process, relevant legislation, guidance documents, operational knowledge and the feedback from public surveys.

### *Intergovernmental Implications*

In developing this Strategic Plan, staff consulted representatives from other park agencies and other CRD divisions to understand how priorities for the CRD's regional parks may align with the goals and objectives of other agencies, with the aim of aligning desired outcomes between groups, strengthening partnerships, clarifying roles and responsibilities of the different agencies, and enhancing information sharing.

Working toward reconciliation with First Nations in the region is a foundational principle of the Strategic Plan. Fifteen First Nations have been invited to engage in the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan renewal and implementation in an ongoing and meaningful manner to determine how to strengthen relationships and what key priorities and initiatives are most important to work on together over the next 10 years. Priorities and actions included in the Strategic Plan draw on

past input and recommendations from First Nations in the region, such as those identified in the Special Task Force on First Nations Relations Final Report, as well as from input received to date from eight First Nations on the Strategic Plan update. WSANEC Leadership Council submitted a letter to the CRD on May 25, 2022 requesting additional information, and stating the Nations represented by the Leadership Council cannot support the Strategic Plan without further engagement. Staff recognize the limitations of the engagement timeline for First Nations to provide meaningful input and that First Nations communities have been under considerable strain over the past two years which, among other factors, have limited opportunity for dialogue. Staff recommend that the Strategic Plan be accepted on a one year interim basis in order to provide more time to engage and deepen an understanding of the issues and interests relevant to First Nations. An interim approval of the Plan will also provide the opportunity for reconciliation efforts identified in the plan to proceed.

### *Social Implications*

A focus on accessibility and equity in the regional parks and trails system is included in the updated Strategic Plan. Initiatives that promote complete and connected communities by ensuring recreation, parks and green space can be easily accessed by transit, walking or cycling, and that strengthen an accessibility and equity lens in service delivery, are proposed that build on concepts in the Regional Growth Strategy and regional transportation priority areas. A focus on improving visitor experiences to regional parks and trails is also included in the updated Strategic Plan to encourage health and well-being, deliver interpretive education and foster stewardship.

### *Environmental & Climate Implications*

Regional parks and trails are vital in helping to achieve the region's climate action, natural resource protection and active transportation goals. The Strategic Plan includes priorities for conservation research and monitoring, and for climate action and resiliency, including advancing regional active transportation opportunities that contribute to greenhouse gas reduction.

### *Service Delivery Implications*

The CRD's Regional Parks division manages and operates the regional parks and regional trails system, while decision making is supported by advice and recommendations provided to the CRD Board through the Regional Parks Committee and the Transportation Committee. Changes to the operation and management of regional parks and regional trails will have service delivery implications.

The updated regional trails classification system proposes two distinct trail types to recognize the different functions: Urban Bike & Pedestrian and Rural Bike & Pedestrian. Priority regional trail improvement projects to be implemented over the next 10 years include: enhance high use sections of the Galloping Goose and Lochside by creating a separated-use pathway with lighting; E&N Phase 5, develop the Gulf Islands regional trail network; plan for and develop an extension of the Galloping Goose west. A funding strategy will be developed in fall 2023 to facilitate implementation of the regional trail initiatives identified in the Strategic Plan.

### *Financial Implications*

Financial implications associated with service level adjustments identified by the updated Strategic Plan will be considered by the CRD Board in future service planning processes.

**CONCLUSION**

The CRD Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan provides a renewed vision, mission, values, priorities and actions to guide regional parks and trails service delivery from 2022 to 2032. This Strategic Plan was developed in consultation with agencies, stakeholders and the public, and with input from First Nations in the region. Interim approval of the plan for one year will provide additional engagement opportunities with First Nations. During the interim approval period, staff will continue to engage with First Nations in order to deepen an understanding of their issues and interests and allow reconciliation efforts identified in the Strategic Plan to commence.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Transportation Committee recommends to the Regional Parks Committee:  
That the Capital Regional District Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032 be approved on an interim basis for one year while engagement with First Nations continues.

Submitted by:	Jeff Leahy, RPF, Senior Manager, Regional Parks
Concurrence:	Larisa Hutcheson, P.Eng., General Manager, Parks & Environmental Services
Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

**ATTACHMENTS**

- Appendix A: Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032
- Appendix B: Public Engagement Report
- Appendix C: First Nations Engagement Report
- Appendix D: Presentation