

About the Survey

Community members and stakeholders are invited to participate in BC Parks' Joffre Lakes Visitor Use Management Strategy planning process by completing a short survey. The survey will be open until April 4, 2021. We appreciate your time completing the questionnaire and look forward to receiving your feedback.

The survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. It offers an opportunity for you to share:

- your values and concerns about the park,
- your level of support for proposed management actions, and
- your feedback on the content within the draft Visitor Use Management Strategy.

Past Survey Results

To gather input on measures to improve safety and management of the park, BC Parks conducted surveys of park users, both in-park, and online. A total of three surveys were conducted in January 2019, April 2019, and June to September 2019. The online survey was available on the BC Parks website and promoted through social media and other channels. The in-park surveys were conducted on-site, predominantly on weekends.

- To read the full results of the surveys, visit the Joffre Lakes Park website at: <http://bcparks.ca/parks/joffre-lakes/>

Background on the Visitor Use Management Action Plan and Strategy

Joffre Lakes Provincial Park, located in the Sea-to-Sky Corridor, has grown in popularity as an outdoor recreation and camping destination, with over 190,000 people visiting the park in 2019. This growth has resulted in concerns around impacts to the park environment, visitor experience, and public safety.

To address these concerns, BC Parks, in partnership with the Lil'wat Nation and N'Quatqua, created a 2019 Visitor Use Management Action Plan at Joffre Lakes Park. This Action Plan contained a number of strategies to address the pressing issues within the park in the short term over the 2019 season. A Visitor Use Management Strategy has now been drafted, building on the Action Plan to create long term management direction for the park.

The 2019 Joffre Lakes Visitor Use Management Action Plan, and Action Plan Review can be found on BC Parks website located at: <http://bcparks.ca/planning/management-plans/joffre-lakes/>

Why are we developing a Visitor Use Management Strategy?

- The number of people visiting Joffre Lakes Provincial Park has grown exponentially; park attendance has increased 222% since 2010.
- This increased use has led to concerns around sustainability and how to manage use in a manner that balances recreation and conservation, while recognizing First Nations' interests.
- Most visitors arrive by vehicle, and parking demand often exceeds capacity. This has led to hazardous parking along Highway 99 (Duffey Lake Road), and dangerous conditions for pedestrians and motorists alike.

What is the purpose of a Visitor Use Management Strategy?

The objective of the Visitor Use Management Strategy is to review current visitor use issues and opportunities and develop a plan to improve visitor experience, park management, and public safety. The strategy identifies short and long-term initiatives that will improve the overall visitor experience, address safety concerns, recognize First Nations interests, and protect the park's natural and cultural values.

Why is BC Parks exploring the creation of a visitor capacity?

Attendance at Joffre Lakes Park has increased substantially in the last 10 years. This growth has prompted research into the level of visitor use that the park can accommodate, while achieving and maintaining the vision for the park. Results from in-park and online surveys conducted in 2019 showed wide-spread support for the implementation of a visitor cap at Joffre Lakes Park.

What is visitor capacity?

Visitor capacity is a component of visitor use management and is defined by the U.S. Interagency Visitor Use Management Council as the "maximum amounts and types of visitor use that an area can accommodate while achieving and maintaining desired resource conditions and visitor experiences that are consistent with the purposes for which the area was established."¹

¹ <https://visitorusemanagement.nps.gov/VUM/Framework>

Through the 2019 Joffre Lakes Visitor Use Management Action Plan, a vision was created for the park. Through the visitor use management planning process, it was determined that visitor use levels at Joffre Lakes Park are negatively impacting important park values as well as the visitor experience.

Identifying visitor capacity and implementing actions to maintain use within that capacity is based on a variety of considerations and is one of many tools available to ensure the protection of values within the park.

Protecting Values

Capping visitation will protect the values identified in the park vision through:

- Providing a better visitor experience: Park survey results have shown that a cap will improve the overall visitor experience by reducing the number of visitors who feel crowded in the park;
- Improved safety: A cap will decrease traffic congestion and improve vehicle flow, parking, and daily visitation/vehicle patterns;
- Improved stewardship of the natural environment: A cap will match visitation levels to available space on trails and viewpoints, and reduce likelihood of off-trail exploring and trail braiding.

How did we determine visitor capacity for Joffre Lakes Park?

Our methodology for identifying a visitor carrying capacity is based on a review of academic literature, recommendations from the International Union for Conservation of Nature, and the United States Visitor Use Management Framework.

To identify the visitor capacity of Joffre Lakes Park, we analyzed the relationship between the number of visitors and the following attributes: visitor experience, perceptions of safety, and environmental impacts. These attributes were selected because they offer the best available information at this time and have a clear relationship with the number of visitors in the park.

Based on this analysis, we have identified the visitor carrying capacity of the park to be 1,500 people per day, during the peak season period, which is between May and September. Analysis of attendance trends over the past three years highlights that the proposed capacity would not have a large effect on weekday use; however, it would reduce peak use on weekends. This visitor capacity will be assessed over time to see whether it helps improve conditions within the park. This number may require adjustment over time.

Reservation System

BC Parks is exploring the implementation of a day-use pass using a reservation system that enables visitors to acquire a pass in advance of their visit to Joffre Lakes Park. A key advantage of the day-use reservation system is the ability for visitors to know ahead of time whether a permit is available for the day of their planned visit. There will be no fee associated with the day-use pass.

Monitoring and Assessment:

BC Parks will be monitoring a number of indicators to assess whether we are achieving better protection of recreational, cultural, and natural values in the park as a result of management actions. If monitoring efforts indicate a decline in conditions, new management actions may be considered and/or current management actions may be adjusted.

Next Steps

- After reviewing survey responses, a Visitor Use Management Strategy will be finalized and published in Summer 2021.
- A link to the survey is located here: <http://bcparks.ca/planning/management-plans/joffre-lakes/>