

# *What's in it for the River?*

*A Review of British Columbia's  
Potential Participation in the  
Canadian Heritage Rivers System  
and the Implications for  
Provincial River Management*

Prepared for:  
the Hon. John Cashore  
Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks

Prepared by:  
the Minister's CHRS Advisory Committee  
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The Honourable John Cashore  
Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks  
Legislative Buildings  
Victoria, B.C.

Dear Mr. Cashore,

We are pleased to submit this report and our recommendations regarding the Canada heritage Rivers System for your review and consideration. We have appreciated the opportunity to provide input into this important and timely process and would be happy to assist further as required.

The Committee would like to acknowledge the efforts of the consultant, Mr. Bruce Downie of PRP Inc., who conducted an extensive analysis of the issues and provided considerable advice during the process, and Mr. Gil Scott of BC Parks for his support of, and contributions to the Committee's deliberations.

We feel confident that the recommendations which have emerged will significantly contribute to the future of river management in British Columbia and we look forward to your government's subsequent action.

Respectfully submitted,

The Minister's CHRS Advisory Committee

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## Executive Summary

The Honourable John Cashore, Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks aspired to have the government of British Columbia seriously consider membership in the Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CHRS). CHRS is a cooperative program of the federal, territorial and provincial governments of Canada "to give national recognition to Canada's heritage rivers and to ensure long-term management that will conserve their natural, historical and recreational values for the benefit and enjoyment of Canadians now and in the future. A fundamental principle of the CHRS is that the nomination and management of Canadian Heritage Rivers remain with the responsible government."

British Columbia participated in the 1979/81 federal-provincial task force that recommended the establishment of CHRS. However, the government of British Columbia has, to date, not joined the program. The eight provincial, the two territorial and the federal governments cooperatively direct CHRS. Alberta and British Columbia are the only two stand-outs. A committee appointed by the former Alberta Minister of Environment, the Honourable Ralph P. Klein, recommended that Alberta join CHRS.

In a speech at Riverfest III, sponsored by the Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia on February 1, 1992, the Honourable John Cashore said:

"I am committed to presenting to my Cabinet Colleagues ... a thorough review and recommendations on membership in ... the Canadian Heritage Rivers System program ... We should take a close look at some of the specific of the program and see if ... (it) ... will best serve B.C.'s great rivers ... I have asked ... a team to look at our goals and objectives for river management and see how the CHRS meets those goals ..."

The Minister was motivated to make that commitment at Riverfest III, by his desire as British Columbia's Environment Minister to prompt all British Columbians to champion responsible stewardship of this province's natural resources.

The committee appointed to undertake the review could not find a formally enunciated set of "goals and objectives for river management". Perhaps that is because British Columbians have relied on an inherent perception of such "goals and objectives". During the committee's discussions it became very clear that the condition of our streams and rivers is the gauge we inherently employ to measure our stewardship effectiveness with respect to the entire river basin or watershed. A quality river indicates quality stewardship of the entire basin. The committee believes it is the desire of every British Columbian to live in and contribute to living in a quality environment. By enunciating a commitment to the goal of striving to achieving quality conditions for all our streams and rivers, the CHRS program provides a means for British Columbia to make that commitment to the rest of Canada.

However, upon reflecting on the condition of our rivers, the committee concludes that rivers in British Columbia have been undervalued. Rather than respecting and managing them as important indicators of the health of an ecosystem, there has been a tendency to exploit their economic potential and to downplay the impacts of our widespread land use actions. No program currently exists in British Columbia that has the adequate scope and the support to

address these important concerns. A review of these issues, and the potential mechanisms for addressing them was undertaken.

Joining CHRS would provide a tangible expression of accountability for the effective stewardship responsibilities that British Columbia accepted under the Constitution Act of Canada. Through CHRS, British Columbia would publicly present those rivers or segments of rivers with outstanding natural and/or cultural heritage values for which it desires national recognition.

A parallel and related expression of accountability for effective stewardship responsibilities is also required for residents of British Columbia. A British Columbia Rivers System program reflecting a goals and objectives framework of provincial significance, similar to CHRS' national focus, could contribute to such a measure of accountability. Furthermore, since waterways have historically been used as transportation routes and often connected by heritage trails, it would seem appropriate that any programs adopted to highlight our stewardship responsibilities for heritage rivers also incorporate the province's outstanding trails.

Two major recommendations for government action have emerged:

- that British Columbia join the Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CHRS); and
- that British Columbia Rivers and Trails Program be implemented, reflecting a goals and objectives framework similar to that of the CHRS.

Further detailed recommendations were also developed. Suggested changes to the CHRS are identified which British Columbia should work towards as a member of the system. Details of a proposed British Columbia rivers and trails program are outlined including: goals and objectives, operating principles, establishment of a board, and Board roles and responsibilities.

The recommendations of this report embrace full participation by First nations in this process of river and trail recognition and management. It is a process marked by cooperation and flexibility in which all participants - government, First nations and the public - work together in the interests of safeguarding the river and trails of British Columbia.

# 1.0 Introduction

Rivers in British Columbia have been undervalued. In the past, industrial utilization has prevailed, and rivers have been valued primarily for their value in power generation, effluent transport, agricultural use and fisheries production. In addition, river corridors have served as focal points for community development and transportation throughout the province. However, their contribution to natural environmental systems, their recreational potential and their value to our historical and cultural heritage have not been properly recognized.

Even more so than land areas, it is difficult to isolate or compartmentalize rivers from their broader context and to value them accordingly. Yet surely it is in the best interests of the river, and ultimately of a healthy environment, to work towards a greater recognition of their significance. If this is to be accomplished, the full range of their values must be emphasized, not only in the processes of decision-making but also in the public consciousness.

In spite of the need to highlight the importance and distinctive character of rivers, river management in British Columbia cannot be isolated from broader land use and resource management practices throughout the province. The planning and utilization of resources, encompasses a wide array of activities and involves a broad range of government agencies, crown corporations, industrial interests and public groups. All should specifically recognize rivers as a special and important component of the land and resource base.

At the present time there is no specific statement of goals and objectives for the management of rivers within this province. There is a distinct need to rectify this situation by developing an explicit statement of future direction. In the absence of such a statement, our valuation of river resources must be discerned from all of the activities that impinge on their quality, quantity and aesthetic character.

Unfortunately, a conflicting picture emerges. Many traditional resource activities, through their single purpose focus, continue to degrade our river environments. In other instances, special efforts have been made to protect and appreciate the qualities of a free flowing, unspoiled river, reflecting the growing urgency to maintain a healthy environment. The importance of rivers to the integrity of ecological systems as well as to the people of the communities along their shores, demands strong stewardship. This stewardship must be practiced on all rivers throughout the province, regardless of their special, individual roles.

This is a time of transition. It is a time marked by the emergence of widespread concern for the integrity of our environment. There is increasing recognition of the interrelationships among resources and the effects that thoughtlessness in one area can have on the ability of others to utilize and enjoy associated resources elsewhere. However, the use of integrated approaches in assessing the value of those resources and managing for their utilization, has not been a hallmark of past practice. Single purpose agencies, with single purpose approaches, have pursued their objectives in a competitive and sometimes adversarial milieu. Perhaps more than any other resource component, rivers cry out for special consideration. As the indicators and frequent recipients of all that is wrong in the functioning of drainage systems, their integrity depends on conscientious management of entire ecosystems.

Over the past decade changes have been emerging. A greater emphasis on recognition of associated resource values has been built into the planning and development processes of many resource sectors. While this is an encouraging trend, the task of implementing comprehensive, holistic resource planning and utilization remains enormous.

### **The Minister's CHRS Advisory Committee**

In February, 1992, the Honourable John Cashore announced his intention to review the Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CHRS) and the possibility of British Columbia's participation in that system. Subsequent to that announcement, the Minister appointed a CHRS Advisory Committee, composed of five public representatives, two senior civil servants and an external representative from the current CHRS Board, to carry out the review and make recommendations.

The mandate of the Committee was to review river management practices in the province, the current CHRS program and the relationship between the two. Specifically it was considered important to examine the following:

- the goals and objectives for river management in British Columbia and the implications of a system planning approach to the long term future for rivers within the province;
- the CHRS program objectives and their effectiveness with respect to the management of prominent Canadian rivers to conserve their natural and cultural values and to provide for appropriate recognition and pride in these special areas; and
- opportunities to revise, expand or improve the CHRS program.

On the basis of this review, the Committee was asked to make recommendations concerning the appropriateness of British Columbia joining the CHRS and how the system itself might be improved.

To fulfill this mandate the Committee reviewed a wide range of land management and planning approaches currently in use or under development within the province. The intent was to determine the applicability of these initiatives to the goals and objectives of resource protection and recreation that are at the foundation of concerns for river integrity. The Committee also reviewed the function of the CHRS and its potential contribution to the improvement of river management in British Columbia. This report has been developed from that analysis and from the discussions and ideas of committee members.

## 2.0 Primary Recommendations

- **It is recommended that the Government of British Columbia join the CHRS.**

The primary question before the Committee was whether or not British Columbia should join the CHRS. The Committee believes that joining the system would demonstrate a sense of cooperation and commitment to Canada. Over the centuries, rivers have been at the very roots of our history as a nation, defining the links between the dramatically different geographic and cultural regions of our country. Participating in the CHRS is essentially an offer to share the resources and opportunities we are so privileged to possess in this province, for a greater national benefit. British Columbia has a wealth of resources as well as the expertise and commitment to sustain these resources into the future. Our participation would also fill an important gap by creating a system which stretches from sea to sea. By joining the CHRS, British Columbia would help to strengthen a worthy, cooperative, and truly national program.

This is also an opportunity for our province to make a positive contribution to, and provide leadership in the recognition of heritage values. As a full participating member of the CHRS, British Columbia would be able to broaden and improve the program. The Committee has developed a number of proposals in this regard.

The CHRS is, first and foremost, a flexible program based on the cooperative efforts of all the participating jurisdictions. Its goals are broad and its requirements few. It achieves its strength through the willingness of governments to come together, bringing the best of their heritage resources to a national system. It is a program founded on good will and sharing. It is in the best interests of the province and of Canada, for British Columbia to be a part of that spirit of cooperation and responsibility. The Committee believes the recommendations of this report reflect the spirit of the CHRS program. Cooperation and commitment should be hallmarks of British Columbia's participation, beginning with the willingness to join unconditionally.

- **It is further recommended that the Government of British Columbia implement a provincial Rivers and Trails Program with a goals and objectives framework similar to that of the CHRS.**

Review of the existing programs and initiatives within British Columbia, indicates that there is no system comparable to CHRS that recognizes, and manages for, the natural, cultural and recreational integrity of river corridors. Indeed, river corridors and basins are seldom used as a geographical basis for land use planning.

In addition, the Committee recognizes the need to include in the system other similar corridors that deserve recognition and appropriate management. A more comprehensive and holistic approach would include other waterways and trail corridors. Many significant land and water routes have been extremely important to native cultures and in the recent historical development of the province.

A provincial system which focused on these values would make a significant contribution to current land use activities in the province. It would strengthen present efforts to consider river systems as ecological units and complement broader land use planning processes of which it would necessarily be a part.

The review also recognizes the limitations of a national program such as the CHRS to accommodate the number of river corridors worthy of recognition and protection. A provincial system would have the capacity to address a much broader range of concerns and resources as well as provide the basis for identifying the most significant components as candidates for the national program. The Committee considers such a provincial program to be a prerequisite for the province's participation in the CHRS. Support for such a program is already widespread within government agencies and among the public.

There are many diverse corridor environments in this province that are worthy of special recognition and appreciation. Most would benefit from improved management and greater acknowledgement of their associated values. Natural environment values, cultural heritage values and recreational opportunities are legitimate elements upon which to base selection and management of corridors for a provincial system. By adopting, and where appropriate broadening, the goals and objectives framework of the CHRS, a mechanism could be created for enhancing river and trail management in B.C. while, at the same time, providing a solid basis for participation in the national program. The foundations for the proposed program are described in the following suggested goals, objectives and operating principles.

### **Goals**

- to raise awareness of the intrinsic value of all rivers; and,
- to give special recognition to provincially significant waterways (rivers, lakes, coastlines, etc.) and trail corridors, valued for the character of their natural environment, their contribution to the historic or cultural fabric of the province or the quality of the recreational opportunities they provide (While titled a Rivers and Trails Program, it is the intention that the program would encompass both trails and a diversity of water corridors.)

### **Objectives**

- to promote public awareness of the natural, historic, cultural or recreational values of waterways and trail corridors;
- to conserve those values for which the waterways and trail corridors are to be recognized; and,
- to ensure opportunities for public use, and appreciation of the resources and recreational values of the corridors



## **Principles**

- public participation will be a fundamental component of the decision making processes throughout all aspects of the program
- public awareness of the resource values of designated corridors will be an important part of the program
- regional and aboriginal participation will be ensured in all aspects of the program
- cooperation and consensus will be sought in all aspects of the program
- the selection of corridors will be based on any one or more of the natural, historic, cultural or recreational values
- corridors designated in the system may be sections or complete lengths of waterways or trails
- all planning and management decisions with respect to designated corridors will provide an important contribution to the provincial land use plan/strategy as it is developed throughout the various regions of the province
- management options for designated corridors will range from preservation to integrated resource management strategies capable of sustaining the resources for which the corridor is being recognized
- the system will operate under the ultimate authority of the Cabinet Committee on Sustainable Development (CCSD)

### **3.0 Recommendations With Respect to Participation in the Canadian Heritage Rivers System**

There are exciting opportunities for improving the CHRS program and British Columbia can provide new insights and encouragement for such change to take place. The Committee considers the following suggestions to be important approaches for British Columbia to bring to the CHRS Board.

#### **The Province of British Columbia should:**

- **encourage more public representation on the CHRS Board**

Broadening board membership will bring new perspectives to the future evolution of the CHRS program. British Columbia should show leadership in this regard. At present, senior bureaucrats of the parks agencies within each jurisdiction make up the CHRS Board. Public representatives would represent a much broader range of interests from within their own jurisdiction and also contribute to the Board's openness and public accountability.

Designating the Chairperson of the provincial Rivers and Trails Board to represent British Columbia on the CHRS Board (see Rivers and Trails Program: Board roles and responsibilities, Page 14) will demonstrate our commitment to achieving a higher profile for the CHRS program and to a more open process of establishing and operating the system. Designating a public representative to the CHRS Board will help in achieving that openness. Linking Board representation to a provincial body organized and mandated to oversee the development of a provincial waterways and trails system will make such representation more informed.

#### **Furthermore, the Province of British Columbia should work towards:**

- **improving the capacity of the system to more readily include and recognize rivers which meet the heritage criteria, despite being heavily populated and of major industrial and economic significance**

Some of the most prominent Canadian rivers are presently absent from the system. Ways need to be found to make their designation possible. Forging ahead with present initiatives and making some changes to the selection criteria, levels of funding support, and milestones for nomination and management planning, may assist in achieving this end.

- **incorporating aboriginal interests and the associated cultural values of rivers, and ensuring meaningful involvement by aboriginal people in the CHRS program**

The involvement of First Nations people is fundamental in celebrating the heritage of this country. A revised CHRS system should demonstrate that reality and encourage a new partnership. Consultation with native people, both with respect to program directions and the revision of criteria for river selection and designation, is a crucial first step.

- **developing effective strategies for monitoring the system**

Monitoring processes within the system have generally been neglected. Greater attention needs to be paid to maintaining the quality of rivers once they have been designated. Mechanisms for supporting individual jurisdictions in this endeavour need to be developed. Monitoring will become even more important as more developed river corridors are accepted into the system. Effective and meaningful base line data should be established now, so as to facilitate future evaluation procedures.

- **broadening the scope of the program to include other waterways, trails, and coastlines**

The principles of the program should not be restricted only to rivers. There is a need to link other significant features, such as waterways, trails and coastlines, into a national system.

- **broadening the links with interest groups in all areas of the CHRS**

Expanding the profile of the program is important for the CHRS. Greater use of the public interest group network that already exists would contribute significantly to increased public awareness of the program. There has been a tendency, consistent with the wilderness emphasis of the system, to build the strongest links with environmental conservation organizations. Stronger links should be developed with heritage groups, recreation organizations and commercial recreation associations. Expanding links to the media could also be beneficial.

- **encouraging joint river nominations wherever more than one order of government is involved**

Although some interjurisdictional cooperation has been evident since the onset of the program, there have also been some inconsistencies in this regard. Where rivers cross jurisdictional boundaries it is important that interjurisdictional consultations occur before river nominations are made. Interprovincial cooperation has generally been good and is a less critical concern because designation of river segments often eliminates the need for joint initiatives. However, federal nominations should always be jointly undertaken with the affected province or territory and joint nominations with First Nations should be pursued wherever applicable. International rivers will inevitably require joint nomination by three (3) or more orders of government.

- **ensuring that the CHRS Secretariat remain clearly responsible to the Board**

In any national program such as this, the role of the federal government is crucial. In the case of CHRS, their involvement as an equal participant, and at the same time, major provider of resources, has been laudable. There may be a tendency, however, when funding and staff for the Secretariat have originated from, and continue to be a part of the organization of one member of the system, for direct responsibility to the Board to diminish.

## **4.0 Recommendations With Respect to a Provincial Rivers and Trails Program**

The need for implementation of a provincial corridors program for waterways and trails is considered an important conclusion of the present review and an essential element of land use activities in the province. In addition to identifying the need for such a system, the CHRS Advisory Committee attempted to construct an initial framework for its implementation. It was considered that the program should not only conform to the principles and objectives of the CHRS but express the new directions for land use planning and decision making in British Columbia.

The following recommendations outline some of the fundamental elements of program development and operation. Provision of any additional detail was considered beyond the present scope of this Committee. These suggestions seemed important to ensure the program's compatibility with the goals and objectives for river management in British Columbia and with the directions for an evolving CHRS system.

### **It is recommended that the Province of British Columbia:**

- **establish a Rivers and Trails Board with the appropriate authority to direct this program.**

The Committee believes that attempting to coordinate the efforts of a variety of government Departmental interests and mandates is difficult to do from within a system which is structurally inadequate to accomplish this task. The existing compartmentalization of resources and associated management actions, does not provide a responsive or effective environment for dealing with integrated resource issues. Because a rivers and trails system would involve a wide variety of management interests and mandates, a public body would be the logical vehicle to oversee its operation. A river and trails Board would ensure proper selection, planning, management, promotion and monitoring of all components of the system. It would also provide a higher profile for the program which, in turn, would encourage greater public support and involvement.

It is recommended that the board be created with the following characteristics:

- the board, through the Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks, should be responsible to the Cabinet Committee on Sustainable Development;
- the board should initially be established by an Order In Council (O.I.C.) to ensure a legislated mandate. In future, consideration should be given to developing specific legislation;
- the role of the board should be to further the goals and objectives of the program, and in particular, to:
- maintain the currency of criteria

- ensure and coordinate public involvement in the process
- assess and select rivers and trails candidates
- ensure management plans are prepared
- recommend rivers and trails for designation by O.I.C.
- coordinate efforts of the responsible government agencies in assessment, planning, management and monitoring of corridors
- ensure consistency of program initiatives and process with the provincial land use planning strategy and process
- administer the processes of selection, designation, management, monitoring and communications
- report annually to the CCSD and the public
- represent the province in all aspects of its relationship to the CHRS program
- the composition of the board should adhere to the following principles:
  - independence from government
  - cooperative participation from the general public, First Nations and government officials
  - relatively small size to make board action more efficient and effective (7 - 9 members)
  - selection on the basis of personal credentials and experience rather than affiliation. Members should demonstrate an appreciation for, and commitment to, the vision and implementation process of the system.
  - O.I.C. appointments for initial members; the Minister making renewal appointments
  - staggered five (5) year terms for members. Initial appointments should be varied to create this staggered replacement of Board members.
  - the Board should elect its own chairperson. The Chairperson should not be a provincial government official.
  - a technical committee from within government, with representation from the spectrum of the agencies with interest in, and a mandate for management of waterways and trail resources should be assembled. This body should meet regularly in support of the board's action.

**It is recommended that the Province of British Columbia:**

- **ensure that the selection and planning procedures of the program reflect the principles being established by C.O.R.E. within the provincial land use planning framework; and, further ensure that the legislative requirements are in place to enable long term protection of identified resources and opportunities.**

Both the Rivers and Trails Program, and the CHRS are part of a larger framework for land use planning within the province. Properly structured, they will effectively contribute to, and strengthen both the Protected Areas component and the Multiple Resource Use Lands component of the provincial land use plan.

A continuing concern is that the success of the program may be hampered by the lack of a specific legislative base. However, there are legislative revisions presently underway which will have an important bearing on a rivers and trails system. Until such time as these are complete, it will be difficult to determine the specific legislative needs of the program. Because of the trend toward consolidation of legislation, creation of any new legislation should be considered carefully. On the other hand, an inadequate legislative base could completely undermine the effectiveness of the program. This is a crucial issue which should be addressed in the on-going legislative revisions and in the development of implementation mechanisms for the provincial land use strategy. A further assessment of legislative requirements will be essential as the program takes shape and as the land use planning context becomes more clearly defined.

**It is recommended that the Province of British Columbia:**

- **provide funding to the Rivers and Trails Board, including support for a secretariat to facilitate the activities and public consultation efforts**

The provincial government will need to provide funding support for the program. Funding for the province's participation in CHRS, as well as for operation of the provincial system, should be administered by the board. This will include joint funding contributions from the federal government for system and background studies and for nominations to the CHRS program. Determining the appropriate balance between independently administered funds and the support provided for studies and plans within the various participating provincial Ministries, is considered beyond the scope of these recommendations. This will have to be detailed in a subsequent definition of program structure and operation.

**It is recommended that the Province of British Columbia:**

- **transfer existing provincial initiatives that are compatible in their goals, objectives and management approaches to be encompassed within the program**

The new program will provide an opportunity to consolidate related initiatives into a stronger program with greater public support and political commitment.

**It is recommended that the Province of British Columbia:**

- **direct the board to develop a provincial framework for the system and to raise the profile of the program within the general public**

Conducting a systems study will provide an opportunity for widespread public involvement in the program. Through such an exercise, priorities for river and trail corridors can be identified and modifications to the program criteria and processes can be explored. By coordinating this effort, the newly created Board can establish important and ongoing mechanisms for public input.

## 5.0 Implementation

The CHRS Advisory Committee considers this an opportune time for the Government to act on the recommendations of this report. Land use planning initiatives are in the formative stages and as such, incorporation of the additional considerations outlined in this report would be relatively straightforward. There is also a certain urgency in public concern over river issues. Government statements, particularly those in response to pressure from river recreation organizations, have led to high expectations. Some significant positive action would be appreciated.

From the perspective of the CHRS, the time is also right for action. The only other jurisdiction currently not participating in the CHRS is Alberta. This province has recently completed a similar review of their participation in the program through consultation with a public committee. The report presented to government from that committee has similarly recommended that the province join the CHRS system. Some coordinated action on the part of the two provinces could have an important impact on the CHRS program. In particular, it could help to strengthen certain shared program suggestions dealing with public involvement and the accountability of the CHRS Board.

Advising other provincial, territorial and federal governments of British Columbia's decision to join the CHRS system should be undertaken as soon as provincial Cabinet approval is received. Participation on the CHRS Board could commence with the summer 1993 meeting. In anticipation of that participation, the provincial system should be more fully detailed and a Rivers and Trails Board established, so that a public representative for CHRS can be identified. This Committee believes that public representation of British Columbia interests should be considered a prerequisite for participation in CHRS and further, that participation on that Board should not proceed without a provincial Rivers and Trails Board and program structure in place.



# APPENDIX I

## 1.0 The Canadian Heritage Rivers System: Overview and Analysis

The CHRS program is intended to give national recognition to the important rivers of Canada, to ensure the integrity of their natural and human heritage values through appropriate long term management, and to provide recreational opportunities for the appreciation of their heritage values for residents and visitors to Canada.

The present program is outlined below, followed by an assessment of the aspects where changes to the system would improve the compatibility of the program with the principles and practices of conservation and management in British Columbia.

### 1.1 Program Overview

#### 1.1.1 Principles

The program has been established and operated on the basis of the following principles:

- the cooperative system will respect traditional jurisdictional powers of the participating governments with respect to land ownership, area selection and management;
- agencies will cooperatively encourage the establishment, growth and public awareness of the CHRS;
- the Canadian Parks Service (CPS) may financially assist in preparatory studies and plans related to the nomination and/or management of rivers proposed for inclusion in the system;
- each river jointly designated by the Minister responsible for CPS and the appropriate Minister(s) of the government with jurisdiction over the river, upon the advice of the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board;
- the system will be one category only, Canadian Heritage River, with no distinct classifications or categories
- a river may qualify for designation on the basis of either its natural heritage or human heritage value. Recreational values may support the case for designation but are not considered a sole justification;
- river management will reflect the conservation and interpretive objectives of the values recognized by the river's nomination; and
- discussion will take place to promote maximum cooperation with the United States in achieving the objectives of the system where rivers being considered form part of the international boundary or flow between the two countries.

### 1.1.2 Selection Guidelines

The selection of rivers to the system is based on a two-fold set of criteria, Heritage Value Guidelines and Integrity Guidelines. The intention of the program is that only rivers of outstanding value from a national perspective would be considered for the system. They could be of outstanding value in terms of either their natural heritage values or their human heritage values. In addition, outstanding recreational values add strength to the proposal.

Outstanding natural heritage values include: representation of major stages and processes of the earth's evolutionary history; representation of significant ongoing fluvial, geomorphological and biological processes; unique, rare or outstanding natural features or phenomena; areas of exceptional natural beauty; habitats of rare or endangered plants and animals; or outstanding concentrations of plants and animals of Canadian interest and significance.

Outstanding human heritage values include: significant influence, over a period of time, of various historical themes (eg. native people, settlement patterns, transportation) on the historical development of Canada; association with persons, events, or movements of Canadian significance; historical or archaeological structures that are unique, rare or of great antiquity; and concentrations of representative historical or archaeological structures.

Criteria for assessing recreational values include: possessing a combination of recreational opportunities and natural values that combine to create an exceptional recreational experience; and the capability to support recreational use without significant loss to the heritage values.

Integrity guidelines focus on the capability of the area to maintain the quality of the characteristics for which it is being considered. The area must be of sufficient size and encompass the ecosystem components necessary to ensure long-term protection of its heritage values. Adequate water quality is also noted as an essential component of this integrity.

### 1.1.3 Structure and Process

A Canadian Heritage Rivers Board (CHRB) is composed of representatives from each of the participating jurisdictions as appointed by the minister(s) responsible. The federal government has two representatives, one from each of CPS and the Dept. of Indian and Northern Affairs. The Board usually meets twice a year and is supported in its functions by a Secretariat provided by CPS.

The role of the CHRB is essentially threefold: to recommend to the appropriate ministers, the designation of rivers to the system which meet the selection guidelines; to give national recognition to the heritage rivers within the system and the system as a whole; and, to monitor the system and recommend removal of rivers from the system that no longer meet the selection guidelines.

The nominating and managing agency for each river is responsible for all aspects of the study, research and planning related to the nomination of the river to the system. In addition, each agency is required to table a management plan for the river with the board that clearly sets out the management actions that will ensure the maintenance of the qualities for which the river was nominated. The CHRB has developed a standard nomination form to assist in the consistent assessment of each river according to the selection criteria. A maximum three year time frame has been established between the time of river nomination and the lodging of a management plan with the CHRB.

## **1.2 Areas of Potential Growth and Change**

### **1.2.1 Goals and Objectives**

The directions of the program are both suitable and valuable. As a cooperative program it espouses two major thrusts: (1) to work towards greater long term integrity of significant Canadian rivers corridors; and (2) to extend the public recognition of the value of these rivers both among Canadians and internationally. These directions are very broad, recognizing the authority of provincial jurisdictions and, at the same time, the contributions that can be made by working together in larger joint ventures. It is the commitment of the participating parties that gives the program its strength and value. If jurisdictions want to recognize rivers of value in their own areas and present them for wider appreciation and support, this forum provides such an opportunity. It is in having rivers identified as being among those nationally recognized for their natural cultural or recreational values that provides support for the protection of those values. The added visibility of special areas designated under a program that is national in scope significantly contributes to the public awareness of the values the rivers of the system possess.

The integrity goal of the program is realized by individual jurisdictions as the managing authority for the rivers they have nominated. The designation of a river to the CHRS provides the basis for heightened protection strategies in the management of the river corridor and can focus interagency efforts on maintaining the heritage values for which the river was nominated. The CHRS itself has no mandate, nor should it have, to become involved in the management strategies used to ensure the integrity of the resources of the river corridor. However, the opportunity does exist for CHRS to extend its influence on the continuing integrity of rivers through a concerted, effective effort to monitor the results of management actions prescribed in the management plan. Efforts to improve the monitoring capability of the system to ensure that the values of rivers in the system are effectively maintained would contribute significantly to the goal of working towards the long term integrity of the resources of designated rivers.

Similarly, public recognition of the rivers in the system would benefit from greater attention and effort. Considerable effort has been devoted to this aspect of the program and many initiatives serve this goal well such as the fact sheets prepared for each river, magazine articles, the promotional material on the system as a whole such as brochures and calendars, and the recent initiative to have the rivers highlighted on a Canadian stamp series. However, even greater efforts could be made particularly within individual jurisdictions as well as on a national scale. Resources and energy might more effectively be channeled into this area even as a priority over expanding the system.

The program directions clearly specify rivers as the essence of the program. While this is understandable given the evolution of the program, the principles could apply equally to other configurations of resources. This focus has been advantageous in the early stages of the program because it has provided a concise and consistent target for developing a cohesive system. The focus has probably worked to the disadvantage of the system as a result of the discrepancy among jurisdictions with respect to the size, character, and suitability of rivers within their boundaries. Expanding the program to include other features such as waterways, trails, coastlines would have the opposite implications. It would dramatically affect the complexity of the system and require considerable effort and coordination to maintain the focus of the program and ensure the benefits could be realized. At the same time it might provide more equitable opportunities for all jurisdictions to participate.

Beyond these prominent aspects, is the need for some form of cooperative venture among the participating jurisdictions to provide national recognition to a wider variety of resources. The CHRS program has established the value of such a cooperative and flexible approach and in the absence of other vehicles might serve well in the recognition and management of other special features.

### 1.2.2 Selection and Management

The strength of the selection criteria used within the CHRS comes from the flexibility with which they can be interpreted and the intention to reflect river values within each jurisdiction that warrant national recognition. Outstanding characteristics in all aspects of natural features, human heritage and recreation, encourage selectivity on the part of jurisdictions to ensure that the best examples are included in the system. At the same time it is specifically stated that 'the selection guidelines will be applied in a manner which will allow all the provinces and territories of Canada to participate'.

Another strength of the selection criteria is the ability of a jurisdiction to focus on a particular set of values in the designation of a river, whether it be natural resources or human heritage. This broadens the system and provides opportunities for both wilderness oriented rivers and those in a urban setting to be accommodated. Such a system better reflects the diversity and character of the country than one with a single focus.

The integrity guidelines are similarly valuable. They are the essential elements that define the integrity of the resources being recognized. It is this baseline assessment of the river values at the time of nomination that will be used to determine the long term integrity of those values and the continued place of a river within the CHRS.

Some problems with the selection criteria generally, are associated with specific interpretations of key words such as outstanding, unimpaired or Canadian significance. More importantly, however, the exclusion of rivers with man-made impoundments has significant implications. While its beneficial outcome of creating a system of visibly natural river corridors is obvious, the problems are less obvious.

One implication of this criterion is the resulting balance of rivers and river segments that are nominated to the system. A logical outcome, which has been born out by the character of the system to date, is that there will be a preponderance of wilderness oriented rivers and fewer

rivers from more developed regions of the country. Another implication, also reflected in the present system is the tendency towards nominating river segments rather than entire river courses.

It is also important to recognize that although the human heritage values are less restrictive with respect to man-made impoundments, the trade-off for the nominating jurisdiction is that the long term integrity of the river values only applies to those values for which the river was nominated. Thus the opportunity to utilize the protection aspect of the program along developed river corridors tends to be reduced.

These are difficult problems to address given the concern for the quality of rivers that make up the system and the intention to promote them as representatives of river heritage values across the country. Striking the balance between high quality environments and representative and effective progress towards improved resource management is the challenge. However, it would seem essential that the system encourage, and make more readily possible, the nomination of some of Canada's most significant rivers. Flexibility within the program must be explored to allow such designations.

This concern is perhaps even more prominent when consideration is given to the management planning requirement for candidate rivers before they are formally designated within the system. Such developed rivers demand major amounts of time, energy and resources to address management concerns. By their very nature they are multi-jurisdictional, frequently involving different layers of government and private land owners, as well as a broad range of competing land use interests, government agencies, industry sectors and public interest groups. Complicating the situation is the tendency for the agencies represented on the CHRS to not be the only, or in many cases not even the primary, government agency with managing responsibility over the resources identified as central to the nomination.

An example of this scenario is the Grand River in Ontario. A Steering Committee, composed of representatives from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), the CHRS Secretariat and the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA), has been established to guide the preparation of the management plan. The MNR has delegated the actual preparation of the plan to the GRCA. However, involvement and financial support from both the Ministry of Culture and Communications and the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation whose mandates give them direct jurisdiction over the human heritage and recreation values for which the river was nominated. (Although significant natural heritage values were identified in the background studies, 'human impoundments' disqualified the river for nomination under natural heritage values.) A major effort to draw out public interest in the planning program has only begun to scratch the surface since within the drainage 60 municipalities are affected and at least 200 known interest groups with an interest in human heritage or recreation have been identified.

The scale and complexity of the jurisdictional puzzle and the resulting implications for the planning program have logically led to tying the management planning program for CHRS status into a more comprehensive planning review of the basin. This can result in positive spin offs in terms of the comprehensiveness of management commitments, but can also have negative implications in terms of the available time and resources, as well as the value and profile attributed to the CHRS values in the larger planning context. By working with the

GRCA, however, a strong and identifiable regional perspective has been brought to the planning and management task for the Grand River.

In another case, that of the St. Croix River in New Brunswick, a Memorandum of Understanding was used to create the St. Croix International Waterway Commission. The objectives of the Commission were to:

- protect and manage an increasingly valuable natural and recreational resource for current and future usage;
- encourage and maintain a high quality back country recreational and educational experience for users of the resource;
- encourage tourism, based on identified themes, with resultant economic benefits to the region;
- protect and promote awareness of human heritage resources including both Amerindian and early European;
- ensure coordination in the planning and management of a shared resource;
- establish the mechanisms and processes to be used to ensure fair representation of all user groups thereby minimizing conflicts; and
- obtain optimal benefits from recreational and educational use of the resource while recognizing the historic and current economic importance of the forest resource including its management and commercial utilization.

The Commission undertook a preliminary management plan that identified the international goals and policy directions for the future. The intent is to celebrate an international heritage, maintain environmental integrity and support a sustainable, locally appropriate economy. The plan provides a framework upon which a bilateral implementation process can be established. Policies and actions were developed in the plan on the human heritage, natural heritage, recreational opportunities, economic development and waterway management.

The international heritage recognition component in this case appears to be very significant yet at the same time a wide range of land uses are being balanced within that context while meeting all the selection criteria and meeting the integrity guidelines.

### 1.2.3 First Nations Recognition

One of the areas within the criteria that deserves specific attention because of its broader implications is the recognition of First Nations interests in the rivers of many areas of the country. The CHRS was not created with the concept of First Nations involvement in the resource issues and government of most jurisdictions in this country that exist at the present time. Things have changed, and the CHRS needs to change with them.

In recognition of existing rivers within the system that have been presented, at least partially, on the strength of the aboriginal interests in the area, the system has been flexible enough to

accommodate these interests. The governments of the NWT and Yukon have been particularly sensitive to the involvement of native communities and have worked in partnership with communities and organizations in the nomination of rivers within their jurisdiction. Recently, expressions of interest by native groups in the CHRS have been seen in land claim settlements, since the designation provides another mechanism for ensuring the protection of natural landscapes, historic uses and traditional values in important areas.

These kinds of partnerships are likely to become increasingly common as native interests in all aspects of resource and political development in the provinces expand. And there is nothing in the CHRS program, directions or guidelines that hinders such an evolution. However, this is due more to the flexibility of the program rather than through any conscious effort to include First Nations interest in the directions and operation of the program. Positive steps to improve the recognition of the human heritage values associated with native use and the role of First Nations as stewards of river resources into the future, could be made.

Individual jurisdictions can expand the role of First Nations people in the development and operation of the CHRS as has been the case in the north. Formal recognition of these actions could be reflected in the documented directions for the program and promotional material that the Board develops. It is less clear if there is a role to involve First Nation organization representatives from the perspective of representing national interests. However, the Board should be sensitive to the needs and aspirations of the native people and attempt to respond in meaningful ways.

Changes to the selection criteria for human heritage values are more easily addressed. They should be cooperatively rewritten to reflect a more sensitive partnership in the identification and management of important cultural resources. First Nations people should take the lead role in such a re-definition.

#### 1.2.4 Board Composition and Role

The three-fold role of the Board, to recommend designation of rivers, to promote national recognition of designated rivers and to monitor and maintain the quality of the system, is consistent with the overall goals of the program and the nature of the cooperative relationship that exists among the participating jurisdictions. An aspect which might be an area for change is not so much the role itself but how the Board goes about achieving that role. Presently the functions of the Board are highly internalized. The members of the Board are senior civil servants representing each participating jurisdiction with two representatives from the federal government. There is accountability for each member to their own government agency, but no formal mechanisms for the Board as an entity to be accountable to the public or to even open the Board activity to public scrutiny. This inward focus tends to run counter to the very goals of the program which are to recognize and promote significant Canadian rivers through cooperative efforts.

Efforts might be made to help the Board move more effectively towards such openness and accountability. Perhaps the most fundamental step in that process of change would be greater public representation on the Board. The choice of representative from each jurisdiction is totally at the discretion of the participating government. Selecting a prominent public figure rather than a senior bureaucrat would immediately bring another perspective and process of

participation. This may not be a feasible option for some jurisdictions where there is no existing mechanism of accountability of the individual to the policies and budget control of the government. However, such arrangements can be created, and in fact by so doing, the government would be contributing to the increased profile of the program.

The Board has explored the possibility of public representatives in the past but rather than replacing existing bureaucratic representation, greater consideration was being given to increasing the size of the board. The complications of equity among the participating jurisdictions could be seen as a problem with minor increases, while increasing the Board size to allow two representatives from each jurisdiction would make the Board unworkable.

Other aspects of the how the Board carries out its mandate, besides the issue of membership, should also be considered. The public accountability of the Board and the openness of the meetings, activities and decisions could be greatly enhanced. Expanding its promotional activities would seem to be an important priority. Benefits would also be gained from establishing long term working relationships with a variety of public interest groups who are focused on the aspects of the systems mandate

Another element of the Board's functioning that is inwardly focused is the operation of the Secretariat. Although in the initial stages of the system development and under circumstances of limited funding, the connection of the Secretariat to the organizational structure of the CPS could be viewed as an advantage, this circumstance may not prove to be the case in the long term. The Board must ensure that the Secretariat is responsive to the Board as a whole and is not dominated by the interests of one member.



## **APPENDIX II**

### **2.0 River and Trail Management in British Columbia: Analysis**

#### **2.1 Goals and Objectives**

From the variety of new planning initiatives and processes, there are common threads that reflect the new directions for resource management in British Columbia, not only for rivers and river basins but for the entire complex of social and environmental activity throughout the province. It is these common threads that can be seen as the goals or the vision of what it is that we want to achieve as a province and the character of the process that we want to be a part of in working towards those ends. These are the fundamental principles and significant strengths of the land use and environmental agenda of British Columbia.

The first of these is the strong environmental focus on resource and land use planning and management reflected in the concept of sustainability. There is an increasingly pervasive understanding that past approaches to resource development and use are not able to be continued into the future - that real, exhaustible limits on resources are seen on the near horizon. This is not a perception that produces answers but certainly affects the way people perceive the validity of their immediate actions.

A second factor is the increasing recognition of a strong interrelationship and interdependence of environment, economy and social systems. This awareness is creating more holistic approaches to resource use issues and bringing more serious consideration to factors that have frequently been downplayed or ignored.

A third and extremely important factor is the shift towards greater public decision-making. The rights and responsibilities of the public in the decisions that affect them are being recognized in a new way. Participation in processes that seek to achieve consensus among the full range of interests is creating a greater sense of worth among participants and greater commitment to the outcomes.

A fourth factor is the improved coordination of government action in planning and management efforts. Interagency activities and consultation are evidenced in virtually all new program initiatives. Finally, there is also a new and welcome recognition of the First Nations interests in resources and their role in the decision-making and management processes.

An expression of vision and goals does not immediately dispel the difficulties and hurdles inevitably encountered along the way to such an end. There are many reasons why caution still needs to be exercised in accepting this vision. It is definitely not the present reality. There is a long history of other attitudes and processes as well as disparate initiatives to overcome and coordinate. Even more daunting are the existing structures and functions of government which are compartmentalized and fragmented. Resources have been allocated according to previous concepts of resource management and government operation, resulting in massive budgets, infrastructure and human resources in some areas such as forestry, and a relative paucity in other areas such as tourism, native affairs and resource protection.

There is a very human aspect to the problems of this significant transition period as well. Changing the words about the new approach to decision making or the new basis upon which resource decisions are to be made does not necessarily change the people. Many people have invested years of competent energy into a way of doing business that they understand and with which they are comfortable. It is not always easy to unlearn the lessons of the past. In the public too, many of these ideas are new and learning to effectively apply them will be an often long and difficult process. Coupled with this, is the fact there is little in the way of a track record upon which to build - everything is new, and there is a lack of trust in government by public to reorient its approach.

In determining a strategy for river management in British Columbia, it is critical to reflect the positive, emerging principles that make up the future vision of resource use and decision-making in the province. Sustainability of resources, holistic planning approaches, broadly based consensus decision making, coordinated planning and management must be the basis for proposed strategies for river management. At the same time, awareness of the potential problems should help lessen their impact on the success of the planning and management strategies undertaken. Identifying competent and committed individuals, establishing efficient processes and committing necessary resources are ways that the difficulties can be minimized.

## **2.2 BC Rivers and Trails Program (BC RTP)**

In 1985, following several years of broad public advocacy and interagency discussion, the Minister of Lands, Parks and Housing announced that government had established the "Recreation Corridors Program". The goal of the program was "to identify, protect and provide for the recreational use of selected corridors of provincial and regional significance". The program required interagency participation, public input and local government input where appropriate, in the development of management plans for these selected river and trail corridor candidates. The Ministry of Forests and the Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing (BC Parks) were assigned to joint management of the program.

The program was announced through the release of a list of thirty-two (32) candidates for study as potential recreation corridors. This list was developed jointly by the Ministry of Forests, the Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing (BC Parks) and the Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia. Upon completion of the assessment of a candidate trail or river, those recommended for registration were to be placed on a provincial register as "Recreation Corridors". This provincial register is simply a list of "Recreation Corridors" contained within a BC Parks file. To date the following eight (8) "Recreation Corridors" have been placed on the register:

- Roderick Haig Brown Provincial Park (Adams River) (Park Act)
- Bowron Lakes Provincial Park (Park Act)
- Gitnadoix River Provincial Recreation Area (Park Act)
- Skagit Valley Provincial Recreation Area (Park Act)
- Alexander Mackenzie Heritage Trail (Nuxalk - Carrier Grease Trail) (Heritage Conservation Act)

- Murtle/Mahood/Clearwater River in Wells Gray Park and Recreation Area (Park Act)
- National Trail (Horseshoe Bay to Indian Arm - local government and Provincial Park)
- Stikine/Spatsizi River within Spatsizi Provincial Park and Stikine Provincial Recreation Area (Park Act)

In 1990, the Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia encouraged the Ministries of Forests and Parks to conduct an evaluation of the program's effectiveness over the first five years. This evaluation revealed that it was ineffective in achieving its stated goal. The ineffectiveness was attributed to the following factors:

**Terminology:** The word "recreation" created expectations of "single use protection" rather than "integrated use management" as the program intended.

**Focus on parks:** The first 2 corridor studies ended in Recreation Area designation and 5 corridor candidates were already designated to some extent under the Park Act.

**Process:** The program did not identify a distinct planning process, responsibilities, approval authorities, or final product.

**Mix of issues:** Some corridor study candidates involved land use issues (eg. Inside Passage, Lower Stikine), while others focused on recreation use and management issues (eg. Cowichan River, Chilliwack River). This led to confusion as to the role of the Recreation Corridors Program.

**Designation/Registration:** The lack of a specific land/water designation proved confusing when identifying a candidate as having achieved Recreation Corridor "status".

**Area affected:** The Program did not identify whether a "corridor" is limited to the waterway or trail, or whether it includes the entire viewshed.

**Lack of commitment:** The program was given no budget, full-time staff, formal authority or strategic direction to enable implementation.

Despite these drawbacks, the evaluation also indicated that there continues to be strong public and agency support for the program concept. Some of the key attributes of the program are that it is flexible, enhances interagency cooperation, has a province-wide systems approach, provides for local government and public participation, and relies on the mandates, resources and management strategies of a range of agencies. A significant benefit from the program, in some specific cases, has been the increased awareness of recreation issues and improved communication between agencies and with the public. It was suggested that the program may have been attempting to meet principles for "sustainable" resource management before "sustainable development/environment" became a global philosophy and household phrase.

This evaluation resulted in a presentation to the Cabinet Committee on Sustainable Development recommending that:

- the program be renamed the British Columbia Rivers and Trails Program;
- the program be revitalized; and,
- the Canadian Heritage Rivers System be reviewed with the objective of assessing, and making a recommendation on, the potential for British Columbia to participate in the System.

Increasingly over the past few years, British Columbia has been experiencing a land use controversy that has been characterized by valley by valley disputes. Given the fact that the Ministries of Forests and Parks had been preoccupied with responding to these individual disputes - preparing an Old Growth Strategy and developing the Parks and Wilderness for the 90s Strategy - the BC Rivers and Trails Program could not be assigned priority attention. Instead, regional interagency committees were requested to deal with specific river and trail issues which they determined were of priority within their integrated land use actions. The Assistant Deputy Minister of Parks volunteered to become the recipient of the resultant regional corridor management plans with the intent of managing these in an interim manner, until the Ministries of Forests and Parks could develop this into an effective program within the developing provincial land use framework. During this interim phase, integrated corridor management plans were completed by interagency committees chaired by BC Parks, for the Peace River and the Clearwater River (downstream from Wells Gray Park), and corridor management planning projects are underway for the South Okanagan Trail (BC Parks), the Kettle Valley Railway (Forests) and the Cowichan River (BC Parks).

This is the kind of program that requires commitment from all parties, especially major players such as the Ministries of Environment, Lands and Parks, Forests, Tourism and Culture, local government and First Nations. The positive characteristics of the program lie in its flexibility, interagency cooperation, province-wide systems approach, and provisions for participation by local government and the public. In fact, the program, if developed and managed well, would very beneficially span the Protected Areas and Integrated Resource planning spectrum.

However, despite its viability, the "program" has neither been effectively developed, nor received official government approval and recognition. For these reasons, it has received little senior level commitment within government ministries.

### **2.3 Relationship to First Nations Process and Issues**

First Nations people in British Columbia are only recently being afforded the opportunities to become leaders in their own resource management planning and development and partners in the processes described above. Their attention has been justifiably focused on the establishment of clear understandings of their jurisdictional powers with respect to self-government under the constitution and resolving land claim issues in many areas of the province.

A preliminary statement outlining the First Nations approach to integrated resource management, adds a cultural dimension to the principles espoused in the new planning initiatives discussed above. Common principles are identified such as the holistic view of the environment, the relationship between environmental decisions and the social fabric of the community, and a meaningful community involvement process that fosters participation and commitment. However, the cultural element that transcends those principles is "a well developed, shared land ethic that is understanding and respectful of all components of the land". Here is the essence of sustainability.

## **2.4 Relationship to CORE**

The vision and goals for resource and land use practice in the province are made explicit in a number of important initiatives that are relevant to the management of river systems. The focal point of these initiatives is CORE. The mandate of CORE to establish the provincial land use planning context and the processes by which regional efforts can be undertaken, puts it at the apex of coordination in land use planning. It is, therefore, essential that river management planning be directly linked into the framework that CORE develops.

It is also concluded from the analysis of the current situation in British Columbia, that there is a distinct need for focusing conservation efforts on river and trail corridors. This need stems from two perspectives. The first is the special character of corridors within the protected areas system. There is potentially a different relationship between land uses along a river or trail corridor than exist in other protected areas such as a park, wilderness area or ecological reserve (eg. the Babine River). This difference is reflected in the protected areas framework being built into the provincial land use planning framework. The second is the character of the recreational experience and the demand for those experiences throughout the province. Recreation has been and continues to be a prominent component of the land use patterns in the province. The very linear nature of the experience provides opportunities to integrate its land use requirements with a wide variety of other interests without jeopardizing the recreational values (eg. the Lower Peace River Corridor Plan).

Provisions to adequately protect these corridors while utilizing other resource values in a compatible manner can be accomplished if the right levels of priority setting and cooperation are achieved. There is a natural tendency to view river conservation and management systems as being specifically related to the Protected Areas component of the Provincial Land Use Strategy and to a certain extent that relationship is an important one. However, it is equally important, if not more so, to recognize the connection with the Multiple Resource Use Lands component. River conservation and management are most likely to be associated with areas requiring integrated resource management. Indeed, if currently constituted protected areas were able to satisfy the need for effective river corridor management, there would be no need for a provincial river and trails system. The fact is, however, that adequate 'protected area' designations do not exist in the transition zone between complete environmental preservation and non-renewable resource extraction. A rivers and trails system can contribute to that gap.

## **2.5 Other Influences**

There are a number of other influences among the current resource planning and management initiatives that support the development of a river and trails system. The revisions to the Water Act represent an important opportunity to extend conservation efforts to a wider variety of watercourse uses than has been traditionally applied. Two major aspects to the revisions support this: the principles of sustainable stewardship that are identified as the basis from which the provisions of the Act are to be administered; and the emphasis on planning, recognizing a wide range of interests over regional and basin specific areas.

Although clearly a special case due to its size and scope, the Fraser Basin Management Program is an example of how environmental principles are affecting the approach to river planning and management. The characteristics relating to goals and objectives of the program, the local involvement and decision-making processes, the cooperative involvement of a full spectrum of government and private interests, and the commitment of resources to ensure results, should be considered in developing a provincial rivers and trails system.

Another extremely important influence in support of the development of such a system is the need to recognize recreation as part of the integrated resource management spectrum and to be able to direct specific management actions to river and trail corridors. It seems that conservation and management actions with respect to river corridors in particular has not reflected the environmental and recreational values that they possess.

## **2.6 Legislation**

The relationship of legislation to a provincial rivers and trails program appears to be inconclusive. In spite of a plethora of existing legislation that bears on the conservation and management requirements of such a program, the legitimate and crucial issue seems to be one of focus. Does the legislation have the specific focus that would enable the corridor to retain its long term integrity and identity as a significant resource or recreational entity within a larger resource management unit? The evidence supporting the need for specific program legislation appears to be inconclusive.

The weakness of the current state of the legislative base for such a program is that without being identified as a specific protected area unit, the long term nature of the commitment to resource uses in the area of the corridor are difficult to ensure. However, it is the new directions in integrated resource planning that question the need for yet more legislation. Consolidating legislative mechanisms would appear to be the trend rather than the reverse. Indeed some of the most significant pieces of legislation are currently under review (eg. the Water Act) and indications are that improvements in the valuation of and maintaining the integrity of non-consumptive, instream uses of water will result from such a revision. It is also critical to note the massive changes anticipated in the legislative basis for Environmental Assessment, another key component of a waterways and trails system.

The uncertainty around legislative amendments would suggest that conclusions on the advisability of legislation in this area should await further development of the provincial planning framework.

## **APPENDIX III**

### **3.0 Minister's CHRS Advisory Committee Members**

David Anderson  
B.C. Steelhead Society  
Environmental Policy Consultant

Mark Angelo  
Associate Dean, Renewable Resources/Biosciences, B.C.I.T.  
Rivers Committee Chair of the Outdoor Recreation Council  
Author of numerous articles and papers relating to the management and preservation of rivers

Arlene Galisky  
C.G.A., Businesswoman and long-time northern interior resident  
Allied Rivers: activist for improved resource stewardship  
Benefit Plan Administrator for Conifer in Prince George

Don Kasianchuck  
Executive Director, Water Management Division  
B.C. Ministry of Environment, Lands & Parks

Jake Masselink (Chair)  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
B.C. Ministry of Environment, Lands & Parks

Sophie Pierre  
Co-chair, First Nations Summit Task Group  
Coordinator, Ktunaxa-Kinbasket Tribal Council

Norm Richards  
Director, Provincial Parks and Natural Heritage Policy Branch  
Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources

Andrew Thompson  
Professor Emeritus, Faculty of Law, University of British Columbia  
Former Director, Westwater Research Centre, University of British Columbia  
Presently practicing law in environmental/natural resource-related area