

# Backcountry Horsemen of BC

January 23, 2012

## Values:

- Wilderness with minimal or no development (quiet, beauty, terrain, wildlife).
- Shared use trails.
- Work together with other users.

## Concerns:

- The primary concern is protecting the park and natural values.
- Safety issues, with mountain bikes and horses (potential for spooking horses).
- Trails that are not designed for horses.
- Floatplane use has increased and needs to be addressed.

## Recommendations:

- The parks should be left as natural as possible.
- Need to establish ground rules for use of parks and trails.
- Trails:
  - Trails were established by ranchers and packers, and this concept of use should continue.
  - Trails should be for shared use, although there is recognition that some segregation of uses may have to occur.
  - Design shared purpose trails for horses.
  - Trails should be kept as natural as possible, without improvements (boardwalks, bridges). This will help keep use down and maintain the wilderness character of the parks.
  - Trailheads need to be suitable for horses, such as providing enough room for trailers to turn, keeping horses overnight, clean-up requirements or facilities (water system, compost area?).
  - Trails should be identified on BC Parks website, and advertised as to their suitability for different users – make people aware of trail conditions. Let associations participate in spreading the information.
- Grazing:
  - Public should stay away from rancher and outfitter cabins.
  - Grazing areas should be available for public horse use.
  - Must prevent overgrazing by moving grazing areas as needed.
  - Information needed on campsite locations and grazing conditions.
  - Designated campsites may be needed in high-use areas.
- Horses have traditionally used the area and the evidence of their passing should be expected and an acceptable presence on the trails (cleaning up should not be required).
- Signs and information for users, stating that horses are on trails and how to approach.

- Backcountry Horsemen of BC would like to develop a rapport with BC Parks, discuss issues and help develop solutions/education.
- Volunteer work is available, with potential for a stewardship agreement.
- Rules should not be changed without consultation.
- Information should be made available on:
  - “Leave no trace” camping.
  - How to manage horses in the backcountry (e.g. do not tie up to trees).
  - No unnecessary campfires.
  - Clean up after horses at the trailheads.
  - Develop a reporting system for people to report issues, concerns, etc.
- Would like to see standard rules for horses for all parks
- Floatplane access to Spruce Lake should be limited to 2 or 3 trips per day.
- Consider controlling not only motorized access, but motorized accessories such as chainsaws and generators that are not needed for efficient management purposes.
- Public use of parks should be primary; exclusive use by commercial operators should not be permitted except in the immediate vicinity of their camps.