

SOOKE POTHoles PROVINCIAL PARK

PURPOSE STATEMENT AND ZONING PLAN

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Dick Heath
Regional Manager
Environmental Stewardship Division

Date: March 14/03



Nancy Wilkin
Assistant Deputy Minister
Environmental Stewardship Division

Date: March 23/03

SOOKE POTHOLES PROVINCIAL PARK Purpose Statement and Zoning Plan

Primary Role

The **primary** role of Sooke Potholes Provincial Park is to provide access to a popular swimming area along the Sooke River. Other recreational activities include picnicking and wildlife viewing. Renowned for the water carved potholes, the seven-hectare park is a major destination for many local and regional day users and swimmers who enjoy recreating in the river's unique potholes. The potholes are outside of the park boundaries.

The **secondary role** of this park is to protect remnant old growth Douglas-fir and associated plant communities that line the Sooke River. This important chinook and coho salmon spawning river also serves as a primary wildlife corridor as it connects the Sooke Hills and Capital Region greenbelt.

| Known Management Issues | Response |
|---|--|
| Housing and commercial development is underway adjacent to the park. This development may impact existing park facilities and infrastructure (i.e. parking lot, motorized access). Increased use and adjacent development may also impact on the natural values associated with the park including wildlife and plant communities; unknown threats to salmon and river water quality. | Monitor and provide input to local development planning processes regarding adjacent developments to determine potential impacts, if any, on park values. |
| Existing park facilities are located in the road right-of-way in the name of the District of Sooke. | Pursue formal agreement with the District of Sooke. |
| The Sooke River potholes swimming site is located beyond the park boundary. | Install boundary signage. |
| High level of vandalism and lack of staff presence in park. | Increase community awareness and promote local resident stewardship. |
| Existing park boundary does not include portions of the Sooke River. | Add river foreshore to park in order to manage recreational use. |
| High regional recreation use (not provincially significant) and main features are outside the existing park boundary. | Undertake an evaluation of the park's contribution to protected area system objectives and investigate potential transfer to a more appropriate regional or local park agency. |

Zoning

The entire park (7.28 hectares) is zoned Natural Environment. A parking area, signage and pit toilets are located within the District of Sooke's road right-of-way.

Conservation

- Representation
- ecosection Situated in the well represented Leeward Island Mountains Ecosection. (16% protected provincially). Sooke Potholes contributes minimally (<0.01% of overall representation) and quality of representation is poor due to small size).
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant CWHxm2 variant (only 4.13% of CWHxm2 protected in the PA system); Sooke Potholes contributes minimally (0.05% of overall representation) and quality of representation is poor due to small size.
- Special Feature Provide access to unique locally and regionally significant water-carved Sooke River potholes.
- Rare/Endangered Values Sierra wood fern (*Theliptryx navedensis*), a red-listed plant, is found in the park; *Lupinus rivalaris* may also be found in or around the Sooke potholes.
- Scientific/Research Opportunities

Recreation

- Representation
backcountry destination
travel corridor Close proximity to Galloping Goose trail.
local recreation Important regional day use and destination to popular Sooke Potholes.
- Special Opportunities
- Education/Interpretation Opportunities High level of visitation and opportunity for wildlife viewing of spawning salmon.

Cultural Heritage

- Representation Unknown although traditional First Nations fishing activities most likely occurred in this area.
- Special Feature

Other Management Considerations

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Other Designations | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Potential transfer to regional/local park agencies. |
| Relationship to other PAs | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Important linkage to Sea-to-Sea Greenbelt Space initiative; Galloping Goose recreation corridor. |
| Co-operative Management Arrangements | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Agreement with District of Sooke to provide park facilities within their highway right-of-way. |
| Partnerships | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Vulnerability | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Vandalism, fire, high level of visitation and adjacent land development. |
| Relationship to other Strategies | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Adjacent to CRD Galloping Goose recreation corridor. |

Area: 7.28 hectares

Date of establishment: September 7, 1972