# Koocanusa Area Situational Analysis and Recommendations for Crown Land Recreation

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## 1. Introduction

The Koocanusa area is a regionally important tourism and recreation asset, attracting outdoor enthusiasts for activities such as fishing, hunting, camping, boating, wildlife viewing and off-road vehicle use. It is also an area of traditional use for First Nations and falls within the territory of the Ktunaxa Nation. In recent years, increased tourism and recreation have led to an increase in negative impacts on Crown land resources in the area including degradation of sensitive grasslands and wildlife habitat, excessive litter and garbage in the backcountry and public health and safety concerns. In 2014, MLA Bill Bennett and Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations Steve Thomson initiated the Koocanusa Recreation Steering Committee (KRSC) to help address these issues. The KRSC, consisting of representatives from the B.C. Government, Ktunaxa National Council, Tobacco Plains Indian Band, Regional District of East Kootenay and Columbia Basin Trust, commissioned this report to help characterize recreational issues and recommend actions to reduce the most significant impacts in the Koocanusa area.

This report was prepared by a team of consultants led by Jeff Zukiwsky (Zumundo Community and Environmental Planning) and Ingrid Liepa (The Connecting Link), with guidance and support from the KRSC. The specific objective of the project was to characterize recreational issues in the Koocanusa area, and prepare a situational analysis and recommended actions with respect to land and water based recreation activities that have impacts on the provincial Crown land portion of the Koocanusa reservoir area in southeastern British Columbia. The overarching goal is to make recommendations supporting healthy land use that can be effectively implemented to ensure that Crown land resources are not degraded by recreational activities; ensuring ecological integrity and aesthetic value for current and future users and the practicing of Aboriginal rights.

## **Project Scope**

The geographic scope of this project is provincial Crown land in the Koocanusa area of southeastern BC as shown in Appendix A (Koocanusa Area Map). The boundary follows the 1100 metre elevation contour, and extends to the US border in the south and Highway 3 to the Wardner Bridge in the north. The project scope excludes all private lands within the Regional District of East Kootenay (RDEK), including Baynes Lake, Newgate, Jaffray and Wardner, and lands within the Tobacco Plains Indian Reserve.

The situational analysis and recommendations are limited to Crown land recreational activities, primarily off-road vehicle (ORV) and recreational vehicle use, and including mountain biking, boating, fishing, hunting, nature viewing, swimming, horseback riding, large group events and camping.

The following issues are out of scope and not included in the situational analysis and recommendations:

- Hydro system operations related to water levels;
- First Nation treaty negotiations;
- Impacts and issues not directly related to recreational activities;
- Federal and private lands:
- Water stewardship including allocation, quality and quantity; and
- Commercial and industrial activities, except where commercial recreation activities impact provincial Crown land.

#### The Koocanusa Area

The Koocanusa area is a regionally important tourism and recreation asset, attracting outdoor enthusiasts for activities such as fishing, hunting, camping, boating, wildlife viewing and off-road vehicle use. It is also an area of traditional use for First Nations and falls within the territory of the Ktunaxa Nation.

Koocanusa Lake is a 145 km long seasonal reservoir that was created in the 1970s as part of the Columbia River Treaty. It resulted from creation of the Libby Dam in Montana and provides direct flood control benefits to Canada. The communities and area surrounding the Lake are deemed to be an "affected area" and fall within Columbia Basin Trust's Affected Areas Program because they were significantly affected by the creation of the reservoir.

The current year-round population of the Koocanusa area, using the RDEK Area B as a proxy, is approximately 1,746 persons. There are 1190 properties in the Koocanusa study area. Non-resident property owners comprise approximately 37% of the total and are mostly second homeowners or seasonal residents. It is estimated that the area receives over 100,000 visitors every year, with 10,000 to 25,000 visitors on peak weekends during the summer season.

## Report Structure

The report is structured as follows:

- Section two outlines the project methodology in further detail;
- Section three discusses First Nations context and perspective;
- Section four is the situational analysis which outlines the scope, management situation, and gaps and challenges associated with specific recreation issues; and
- Section five provides recommended approaches and tools to mitigate the most significant recreational impacts in the Koocanusa area.

A list of abbreviations and acronyms is provided in Appendix B.

# 2. Methodology

The methodology for determining the characteristics of recreational issues and recommended actions for Crown land recreation was a triangulated approach involving a comprehensive review of literature, consultation with residents, visitors and stakeholders, and a review of approaches and tools from other jurisdictions.

## **Issues List and Background Research**

Background research, including review of existing plans, policies and reports, was conducted to identify known and documented recreational issues and potential solutions in the Koocanusa area. The Issues List (Appendix C) provides a summary of the background research, organized according to the issues and potential solutions. Information from the Issues List was used to develop the situational analysis and recommendations.



Figure 1: Lake Koocanusa at Wardner

#### **Consultation Process**

The consultation process for this analysis occurred between July 23<sup>rd</sup> and December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014. The process engaged First Nations, government, residents and property owners, visitors to the area, local area businesses, and non-governmental and community organizations with interests in the project area. Engagement approaches included face-to-face meetings, telephone interviews, visitor intercept interviews and a resident survey. Regardless of how they were engaged, all individuals were asked for their input on the issues, impacts and management tools and approaches to address Crown land recreation issues in the Koocanusa area. Several field visits to the area, including two separate field outings with Natural Resource Officers, provided valuable opportunities to observe issues and impacts firsthand.

Table 1 provides an overview of the stakeholders consulted and engagement strategies utilized. Appendix D provides additional details and consultation results.

**Table 1: Summary of Stakeholder Consultation** 

Sector	Interests Consulted	Engagement Strategy
First Nations	Ktunaxa Nation Council (KNC)     Tobacco Plains Indian Band (TPIB)	<ul> <li>Face-to-face meetings with KRSC representatives from KNC and TPIB</li> <li>Telephone meetings with 3 interested TPIB residents</li> <li>Surveys hand-delivered to 35 residences on or near the Tobacco Plains Indian Reserve. 6 surveys completed and returned</li> </ul>
Provincial and Federal Government	<ul> <li>Ministry of Forests, Lands &amp; Natural Resource Operations</li> <li>Ministry of Environment</li> <li>Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation</li> <li>MLA Hon. Bill Bennett</li> <li>RCMP - Elk Valley and Cranbrook detachments</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Face-to-face meetings with KRSC representatives and their designated staff specialists</li> <li>Follow up via telephone and email as needed</li> <li>Two separate weekend field trips with Natural Resource Officers</li> </ul>
Regional District of East Kootenay	<ul> <li>Area B and Area C Directors</li> <li>Advisory Planning Committee (APC) for Area B</li> <li>Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC)</li> <li>RDEK Staff: Manager of Special Initiatives, Jaffray/Baynes Lake Fire Chief, Recreation and Control Services Supervisor; RDEK boat launch contractors</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Face-to-face meetings with KRSC representative, elected officials with jurisdiction in the study area, and designated staff specialists</li> <li>Attendance of APC and AAC meetings to gather committee perspectives</li> </ul>
Columbia Basin Trust	CBT KRSC members     CBT Community Liaison for Koocanusa area	Face-to-face meetings and telephone interviews
Lake Koocanusa Residents and Property Owners	1172 property owners within the study area boundaries	<ul> <li>Resident survey mailed to property owners of record. Survey could be completed online or dropped off at one of five locations in the study area</li> <li>290 surveys returned, 14 incomplete</li> </ul>
Commercial recreation and resource businesses operating in the Koocanusa area	<ul> <li>Private campgrounds &amp; RV parks in the study area</li> <li>Sunshine Houseboats</li> <li>Forestry companies</li> <li>BC Hydro</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Face-to-face meetings with private campground owners or on-site hosts &amp; houseboat rental</li> <li>Telephone &amp; email engagement with forestry companies and BC Hydro. One of four forestry companies responded</li> </ul>
Community and non-governmental organizations active in the Koocanusa area	34 organizations identified, including groups with interests in ORV use, rod & gun, hunting & guiding, community, livestock, trails, environment & conservation, invasive species, ecological restoration, tourism services, boating, and equestrian	<ul> <li>Organizations were approached by telephone, email or both</li> <li>21 participated in telephone interviews</li> <li>2 declined</li> <li>11 did not respond</li> </ul>
Visitors to Koocanusa area	Individuals visiting the area, including both short and long term campers, day trippers, individuals with seasonal RV pad leases, and those visiting friends/family with property in the area	98 parties interviewed over three weekends in August in the following locations: Baynes Lake Market, Dorr Road Recreation Sites, Newgate Sandy Shores, Kikomun Provincial Park, and Elk River takeout

#### **Case Studies**

A review of approaches and tools from other jurisdictions was completed to determine how similar issues have been addressed in other jurisdictions, and to inform the recommendations in this report. Five case studies were developed which provide an overview of the processes, engagement tactics, and enforcement mechanisms that have been implemented in these jurisdictions. Case study locations were selected based on their similarities to the Koocanusa area, including:

- The type and intensity of recreational activity;
- The characteristics and severity of issues;
- Physical characteristics; and
- Applicability of solutions based on the jurisdiction's regulatory structure.

Each case study includes the following information:

- A description of the issues and impacts that have been or are in the process of being addressed;
- The location and geographic scope of the issues;
- The agencies responsible for resolving the issues;
- The stakeholders consulted in the resolution process, and any ongoing stakeholder engagement;
- A description of how the issues and impacts have been resolved or mitigated; and
- Successes and challenges related to the implementation or enforcement of issue resolutions.

The detailed case studies are provided in Appendix E.

## **Issues Maps**

Issues maps were developed to spatially present recreational issues in the Koocanusa area. The maps use existing Geographic Information System (GIS) map layers, and additional recreation layers developed through consultation process to help characterize the intersection between important Crown land resource values and intensive use recreation areas including high-use ORV areas and areas popular for long-term occupancy and dispersed camping on Crown land. Six issues maps were developed and are included as Appendix F:

Appendix F1: Access and environmental damage

Appendix F2: Access and disturbance to wildlife and habitat

Appendix F3: Crown land camping

Appendix F4: Wildfire risk

Appendix F5: Crown land grazing

Appendix F6: Invasive species

Maps depicting ORV use, access dispersed camping, long-term occupancy and events on Crown land (F1, F2 and F3) are the product of numerous stakeholder interviews and are intended for discussion purposes only. They should not be relied upon for decision-making unless additional efforts are made to ensure that all sites and boundaries are depicted accurately.

#### **Situational Analysis**

The situational analysis is the detailed characterization of recreational issues impacting Crown land resource values in the Koocanusa area. The analysis represents the triangulation of information gathered through the stakeholder consultation process, background research and additional review of relevant legislation and regulations for managing issues. For each issue, the analysis includes:

• The scope of the issues, including spatial and temporal distribution;

- The current management situation, including the applicable legislation and regulation and enforcement and
- Management gaps and challenges that make effective management difficult.

## Recommendations

The recommendations presented in this report are based on a triangulation of information and perspectives gathered from the background research, stakeholder engagement process and case studies.

# 3. First Nations

The situational analysis process was directed by the Koocanusa Recreation Steering Committee (KRSC) which included representatives from the Ktunaxa Nation Council (KNC) and Tobacco Plains Indian Band (TPIB). Preparation of situational analysis and recommendations was done collaboratively with the KNC, with contribution from the TPIB, in recognition of Ktunaxa rights and title within the Koocanusa area. Many First Nations perspectives and concerns are reflected in the situational analysis.

The Koocanusa area is part of the larger traditional territory of the Ktunaxa Nation. The Ktunaxa are currently at stage four of a treaty negotiation process that may impact Crown land. The current treaty negotiations include a land offer for parcels in the vicinity of Lake Koocanusa; consequently, some of the current Crown land may be administered by the KNC in the future. The treaty process and this situational analysis are independent of each other and any recommendations will not apply to lands acquired by the Ktunaxa Nation through a treaty settlement. In addition, the situational analysis will not affect the on-going treaty negotiations or treaty land offers. However, the KNC may use the situational analysis to develop management strategies for lands they acquire through treaty and other processes.

The Koocanusa area contains recorded archaeological sites and is also likely to contain many more unrecorded sites. These archaeological sites, which encompass thousands of years of habitation and utilization of the area, represent an important historical (pre-contact) connection for the Ktunaxa Nation. As such, the situational analysis includes recommendations to recognize and conserve the archaeological resources within the Area and to mitigate any impacts to these resources.

Non-treaty consultations with KNC take place through the Ktunaxa Lands and Resources Agency (KLRA). Central to engagement with KNC and TPIB is an understanding of the vision and values that underscore the governance of the land:

We... envision ourselves working together as one Nation to responsibly care for the lands and resources within our Territory. Our stewardship of the lands and resources will be based on our sacred covenant with the Creator and our traditional values, which includes the following:

- Ensuring land, air and water will be clean and healthy.
- Ensuring access to, and protection of, traditional foods and medicines.
- Balancing the economic use of land with cultural and spiritual values.
- Ensuring that long-term sustainability and ecological integrity take precedence.
- Following natural law; taking only what you need.

We envision a healthy environment in which all Ktunaxa people can move freely throughout the Territory. We will exercise our rights to derive benefits from the lands and resources without compromising the future for our grand-children and their grandchildren. Not only will our past heritage be preserved but we will be developing new connections with the land and each other.

(Ktunaxa Nation Council, 2011 a:3)

We envision ourselves playing a central role in all decisions pertaining to lands and resources in our Territory. We will manage the lands and resources through healthy working relationships among ourselves and with others based on understanding, respect and equality.

(Excerpt from Teck Line Creek Environmental Assessment, Section C - Ktunaxa Nation Interests)

# 4. Situational Analysis

The situational analysis below characterizes recreational issues in the Koocanusa area. The analysis is based on results of the background research and consultation process and includes the perspectives of First Nations, government, residents and property owners, visitors to the area, local area businesses, and non-governmental and community organizations. The analysis includes, for each issue:

- **Scope:** what are the specific recreational issues; what are their spatial and temporal distributions; and what are the natural, cultural and economic resource values that are being affected?
- **Current management situation:** how is the issue currently being managed; who is involved in managing the issue; and what legislation and regulations apply?
- **Gaps and challenges** based on results from the background research and stakeholder consultation process: why is the current management regime not working; what aspects of the issue are not being effectively managed; and what challenges are expected to continue into the foreseeable future?

The scope of the situational analysis is meant to be general in nature. Issues, management practices and challenges not directly related to Crown land recreation in the Koocanusa area are excluded. In addition, specific details of agencies not directly involved in managing the issues, and specific details of the structure and capacity of management agencies, including their resource and human capacity or assets, infrastructures and planning capability are not included.

The following recreational issues are included in the situational analysis:

- 1. Effects on practicing Aboriginal rights and traditional activities
- 2. Recreational access:
  - o Environmental damage
  - o Disturbance to wildlife and damage to wildlife habitat
  - Water-based recreation
- 3. Crown land camping;
- 4. Large events and gatherings;
- 5. Wildfire risk;
- 6. Crown land grazing;
- 7. Invasive species; and
- 8. Public health and safety.

Several cross-cutting management gaps and challenges are also identified which are more general in nature and do not stem from a specific recreational issue.

## 4.1 Camping and Recreation Trends in the Koocanusa Area

The Koocanusa area offers visitors a variety of camping options, including private RV parks and campgrounds, a provincial park, hosted forestry recreation campsites, un-hosted primitive recreation sites and dispersed camping on Crown land. There have also been reports of private landowners in the area operating "informal" RV and trailer parks.

There are a total of 14 public and private campgrounds offering 40 or more sites each<sup>1</sup>, for a combined total of approximately 1450 campsites. There are three additional hosted sites offering between 9, 20 and 22 sites, respectively<sup>2</sup>. Seven primitive forest recreation sites offer approximately 40 additional camping spots in the area<sup>3</sup>.

Together these operations offer approximately 1540 sites. Of these, 650 are short-term sites, 171 can be reserved, and the remaining sites are either seasonal leases or shareholder-owned recreational campsites. Surveys of the larger provincial and private campgrounds indicated that between 60 to 95 percent of their clientele are from Alberta, depending on the site. Assuming an average party of four and 100 per cent occupancy, a conservative estimate would suggest that these areas accommodate at least 6,000 to 7,000 people on long weekends during the summer. Based on what was reported by campground hosts and operators, average weekend occupancy rates over the summer will range from 60 to 100 per cent, depending on the site. Kikomun Provincial Park has a 100 per cent occupancy rate over the entire summer, whereas some long-term private RV campgrounds see an average occupancy rate as low as 60 to 65 per cent on weekends. Most operators report an 80 to 90 per cent average occupancy rate for summer weekends.

Finally, large areas of easily accessible Crown land around Lake Koocanusa attract significant numbers of campers and recreationalists, and are viewed as an attractive venue for large group gatherings and events that can attract hundreds or even thousands of people, as is the case for spring mud-bogging events. The total number of campers using these areas is not well understood.

The volume of visitors to the Koocanusa area over a typical summer has not been documented. Anecdotal evidence from interviews and surveys suggest that visitor numbers have been increasing steadily since the late 1990s; with a significant spike occurring after Alberta tightened its rules for Crown recreation sites and off-road vehicle use in 2005. Estimates gathered during stakeholder consultations suggest that there are now over 100,000 visitors to the area every summer, averaging 10,000 per weekend and up to 25,000 on long weekends in May and July. Visitor intercept surveys conducted for this project and the 2014 boat inspection survey suggest that approximately 85 per cent of visitors to the area originate from Alberta.

Several notable trends were identified during the consultation process:

- Campers are bringing more and larger camping rigs as well as recreational vehicles and equipment, which is overall increasing the footprint of the average visitor;
- Visitor traffic on local roads, including roads through the Tobacco Plains Indian Reserve, has increased substantially. Speeding and careless driving are specific concerns;
- Dorr Road area is seeing a large increase in dispersed camping in the last several years;
- The number of off-road vehicle (ORV) users in the Flagstone Flats area is estimated to have doubled or tripled in recent years;
- There is stiff competition for reserving campsites at Kikomun Provincial Park and all sites are generally booked for the summer season soon after the online reservation system opens in the spring;
- Efforts by Natural Resource Officers (NROs) to address long-term occupancy on Crown land appear to be reducing the problem in some areas;

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Ayes RV Ranch, Big Pines Resort, Big Springs Campground, Dorr Road Recreation Site, Driftwood Bay Resort, Englishman Creek Recreation Site, Kikomun Provincial Park, Koocanusa Campsite, Koocanusa RV Resort, Loon Lake Recreation Site, Madera RV Ranch, Oestreich RV Ranch, PR Campground, Newgate Sandy Shores Resort and Sweetwater RV.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Sunshine Marina & RV, Gold Creek Bay Recreation Site and North Star Lake Recreation Site

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Edwards Lake, Gold Creek, Kikomun Creek, Rock Creek, Suzanne Lake, Caven Creek/Gold Creek, St. Louie Camp

- There is some evidence that focused use of social media channels has caused unauthorized large group events to locate elsewhere and has also resulted in other authorized events like Wake the Lake and Fozzy Fest to be better stewards and users of the area; and
- Many local residents and residents from adjoining areas like the Elk Valley and greater Cranbrook area are choosing to recreate elsewhere, citing the volume and behaviour of visitors as disincentives. Many are frustrated and/or angry about the progressive degradation of the area over the last 10 to 15 years.

## 4.2 Effects on Practicing Aboriginal Rights and Traditional Activities

The increase in recreation activity in the Koocanusa area has caused great concern for the First Nations peoples whose traditional lands are being impacted. Consultation with Ktunaxa Nation Council (KNC) and ?akinkum‡asnuq‡i?it (Tobacco Plains Indian Band TPIB) have shown that these activities on reserve, private, and Crown lands are impacting the practice of Aboriginal rights, which generally includes rights to the land, rights to subsistence resources and activities, the right to self-determination and self-government, and the right to practice culture and customs including language and religion.<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that Aboriginal rights are fluid, non-negotiable and embedded in the Constitution.

Recreation impacts on practicing Aboriginal rights and traditional activities stem primarily from easy and uncontrolled access to Crown land, and include but are not limited to:

- Degradation of environmental values, including damage to land, lakes, and rivers, affecting hunting, fishing, and gathering practices;
- Disturbance and damage to wildlife and wildlife habitat affecting hunting, fishing, and gathering practices;
- Increased risk of wildfires;
- Road hazards related to speed, traffic and recreational users crossing reserve lands leading to public health and safety impacts; and
- Tampering with and impacts to archaeological sites and cultural resources exposed through the rising and lowering of water levels and ORV use in the reservoir drawdown zone.

The management situation, including the effectiveness of management actions to mitigate recreation impacts on practicing Aboriginal rights, is elaborated in the situational analysis below. First Nations self-governance, as related to the treaty process, is not discussed and not within scope of the project.

#### 4.3 Recreational Access

Current levels of recreational access to Crown land is causing degradation of various Crown land resources. In fact, every issue is, in some way, related to easy and uncontrolled access to Crown land. Three access-related issues are specifically identified in this section – environmental damage, disturbance to wildlife and habitat and water-based recreation. Although the scope of these issues is similar, particularly environmental damage and disturbance to wildlife and habitat, the management practices and applicable legislation are different.

Several of the other issues, for example wildfire risk, Crown land grazing, invasive species, and health and safety stem from easy and uncontrolled access, but are also affected by long-term occupation of Crown land, dispersed camping and large events and gatherings. These issues are considered separately.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Source: Slattery, Brian. "A Taxonomy of Aboriginal Rights." In *Let Right Be Done: Aboriginal title, the Calder Case, and the Future of Indigenous Rights.* Hamar Foster, Heather Raven, and Jeremy Webber, eds. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007. 111-128.

#### 4.3.1 Environmental Damage

## Scope of Issue

The Koocanusa area contains important and sensitive ecosystems and grasslands. These include:

- Various red-listed (those that are extirpated, endangered, or threatened in British Columbia) and blue-listed (those that are of special concern) plant species. Red-listed species include Blue Grama and Spalding's Campion. Blue-listed species include Sandberg's Desert-Parsley, Slender Wedgegrass, and Montana Larkspur<sup>5</sup>;
- Numerous riparian and wetland areas; and
- Grasslands, which constitute important ungulate winter range, including Class 1 Elk and/or Sheep range in the southwest part of the study area, south of Elko along the northwest shore of the Elk River, around Kikomun Creek and the Blue Bottom Lake area and the area between Sand Creek and the east shore of Lake Koocanusa.

Sensitive ecosystems and grasslands are important not only for their intrinsic ecological values and functions, but also for their value to recreational users including ORV users, mountain bikers, equestrian users, bird and wildlife watchers, hunters and anglers. Natural and environmental assets are highly valued by residents and are a top reason people choose to live or own property in the area.

Large areas of open grassland and forested terrain enable relatively easy access to the vast majority of the region. This ease of access contributes to the ongoing environmental degradation of the area. The Dorr Road area sees particularly intensive ORV use, especially Flagstone Flats and north Dorr for dirt biking. Current recreational activities and access to Crown land by recreational users is therefore causing significant degradation of sensitive ecosystems and grasslands in the area, including visual and aesthetic impacts.

Damage to sensitive ecosystems and grasslands is most prevalent during the spring and summer months, particularly on long weekends when large groups appear, and in the spring when the soil is wet and more susceptible to damage.

High-use ORV areas that specifically overlap with sensitive ecosystems and grasslands include the Fusee Lake area and the Strauss Road area. Both areas overlap with ungulate winter range, and various shoreline access points used to access the land via boat, and are of particular concern during summer months when the water is high and few access points exist (see Appendix F1).

A growing concern is degradation and erosion of unpaved roads in the Koocanusa area due to heavy user volume, as these roads were not designed for the level of use now occurring. In addition, as old roads become impassable due to washouts and erosion, users simply create new roads beside them. The light sandy soils in the area are highly susceptible to loss of vegetation and erosion due to vehicle use.

#### **Current Management Situation**

The primary legislation guiding recreational activities on Crown land that lead to damage to the environment is section 46 of the *Forests and Range Practices Act* (FRPA), which prohibits activities that result in damage to the environment. FRPA provisions are communicated to recreational users primarily through signage posted a recreation sites

**Figure 2:** Signage at Dorr Road Recreation Site

A person(s) causing environmental damage on Crown Forest or Range Land may be subject to penalties of up to \$100,000.00

Forest and Range Practices Act Section 46 (1.1)

MPORTANT HABITAT VALUES AT RISK

Rocky Mountain Forest District For more information contact: 250 426-1700

To report a Forest Crime call: 100-222-8417

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Source: Lake Koocanusa Official Community Plan, 2013

and access points (Figure 2) and on-the-ground communications and education by NROs and Conservation Officers (COs).

NROs and COs patrol Crown land areas and enforce section 46 of the FRPA. A person who contravenes section 46 is subject to fines up to \$1,000,000 or imprisonment of up to three years (s. 87).

#### Gaps and Challenges

- The open grassland and forested terrain in the area is easily accessible, there are no natural terrain barriers to contain motorized users on trails and roads;
- There is no ORV management plan for the Koocanusa area. As such, the communication of appropriate locations for ORV use, and areas where ORV use is prohibited or discouraged, are not well communicated to, or understood by, ORV users in the area;
- Enforcement of violations to section 46 of the FRPA are very difficult as:
  - It is unclear what constitutes 'environmental damage' making it difficult to clearly define appropriate and inappropriate ORV use;
  - COs are required to prove that an individual caused damage offenders must be caught
    in the act or charges will generally not hold up in court because of the evidentiary burden
    of proving damage; and
  - Enforcement officials patrol large areas with large numbers of users and do not have the time/resources for effective enforcement.
- There is no local ORV group to take a lead stewardship role in supporting appropriate ORV use on Crown land;
- Fines from forestry-related offences are not enforceable on visitors from out-of-province and are not tied to driver's license renewal in BC; and
- The Province's approach to ORV use is based on the principle that everything is open to ORV use unless it is closed. This makes regulation more challenging in comparison to other jurisdictions (e.g. many U.S. states.) where public lands are all closed to ORVs unless designated as open. Users are also known to remove closure signs.

## 4.3.2 Disturbance to Wildlife and Habitat

#### Scope of Issue

The Koocanusa area contains important wildlife values and habitats, including:

- Ungulate Winter Range, including Class 1 Elk and/or Sheep range in the southwest part of the study area, south of Elko along the northwest shore of the Elk River, around Kikomun Creek and the Blue Bottom Lake area, and the area between Sand Creek and the east shore of Lake Koocanusa:
- Various red-listed and blue-listed animal species. Red listed species include the Western Screech Owl, American Badger, Lewis's Woodpecker and Williamson's Sapsucker. Blue listed species include Grizzly Bear, Long-billed Curlew, Flammulated Owl<sup>6</sup>,
- Numerous riparian areas and wetlands; and
- Several streams and their tributaries that provide important fish habitat, including Sand Creek; Elk River and Gold Creek<sup>7</sup>.

Wildlife and wildlife habitat are important not only for their intrinsic ecological value but also for their value to recreational users, including bird and wildlife watchers, hunters and anglers.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Source: Lake Koocanusa Official Community Plan (2013)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Source: Upper Kootenay Ecosystem Enhancement Plan (2014)



Figure 3: Trails on Lake Koocanusa Shoreline

Current recreational activities and access to Crown land by recreational users, primarily off-road vehicles, is causing degradation of wildlife habitat and disturbance of wildlife. These impacts are largely the result of three factors:

- Intensity of use, in spring and summer months, and particularly on long weekends when large groups appear;
- · Lack of controls on use and access; and
- Ease of access due to open grassland and forested terrain allows for relatively easy access to the vast majority of the region.

High-use ORV areas that specifically overlap with high quality wildlife habitat include the Fusee Lake area and the Strauss Road area which overlap with ungulate winter range (See Appendix F2).

High volumes of campers and motorized vehicles are degrading fragile soils and vegetation. This reduces the amount of forage available for wintering ungulates. Habitat for ground-nesting birds, small mammals, raptors and great blue heron are also being degraded, and displaced.<sup>8</sup>

## Current Management Situation

The impacts of recreation on wildlife and wildlife habitat are managed primarily through the development and enforcement of Access Management Areas (AMAs) to protect specific wildlife values. Four AMAs currently exist in the Koocanusa area, all of which are designated as refuges for wildlife to reduce the risk of displacement and disturbance by motorized activity, and reduce adverse impacts to habitat quality and effectiveness:

- Sheep Mountain AMA: high value bighorn sheep, elk, mule deer and white-tailed deer winter range;
- Baynes Lake AMA: high quality nesting habitat for long-billed curlews;
- Galton Range AMA: high value winter range for mule deer, bighorn sheep and elk; and
- Linklater AMA: high quality elk and mule deer spring, fall and winter range.

AMAs are designated under the *Wildlife Act* which provides the Ministry of Environment with authority to develop and manage access within sensitive areas or areas of high wildlife habitat value. The Minister may make regulations prohibiting or restricting vehicular access to an area for the purpose of protecting wildlife<sup>9</sup>. AMAs are communicated to recreational users primarily through digital maps available on the Ministry of Environment website, signs posted at access points, and the BC hunting regulations. COs patrol AMAs for violations, and can issue tickets for offences. Some AMAs have motion-sensor video cameras set up to catch violators.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Source: Lake Koocanusa Recreational Land Use Strategy (1991)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Wildlife Act, s.109.

The Koocanusa area also contains several approved and proposed wildlife habitat areas (WHAs). WHAs designate critical habitats in which activities are managed to limit wildlife impacts to a specific species. The following WHAs are included in the Koocanusa area<sup>10</sup>:

WHA	Wildlife Value	WHA	Wildlife Value
4-001	Lewis's Woodpecker	4-129	Williamson's Sapsucker, nataliae subspecies
4-072	Long-billed Curlew	4-136	Williamson's Sapsucker, nataliae subspecies
4-073	Long-billed Curlew	4-137	Williamson's Sapsucker, nataliae subspecies
4-074	Long-billed Curlew	4-138	Williamson's Sapsucker, nataliae subspecies
4-075	Long-billed Curlew	4-139	Williamson's Sapsucker, nataliae subspecies
4-086	Lewis's Woodpecker	4-178	Western Screech Owl
4-087	Lewis's Woodpecker	4-179	Western Screech Owl
4-092	Badger	4-180	Grizzly Bear
4-101	Flammulated owl	4-181	Williamson's Sapsucker, nataliae subspecies
4-112	Data sensitive	4-182	Williamson's Sapsucker, nataliae subspecies
4-114	Western Screech Owl	4-183	Williamson's Sapsucker, nataliae subspecies
4-115	Western Screech Owl	4-184	Williamson's Sapsucker, nataliae subspecies
4-116	Antelope-Brush/Bluebunch Wheatgrass	4-185	Williamson's Sapsucker, nataliae subspecies
4-118	Douglas-fir/Snowberry/Balsamroot	4-187	Williamson's Sapsucker, nataliae subspecies
4-119	Antelope-Brush/Bluebunch Wheatgrass	4-188	Williamson's Sapsucker, nataliae subspecies
4-120	Douglas-fir/Snowberry/Balsamroot	4-193	Williamson's Sapsucker, nataliae subspecies
4-127	Williamson's Sapsucker, nataliae subspecies	4-202	Williamson's Sapsucker, nataliae subspecies
4-128	Williamson's Sapsucker, nataliae subspecies		

Enforcement of recreational activities on Crown land that lead to damage to wildlife and wildlife habitat (e.g. off-road vehicle damage to ungulate winter range) occurs primarily through section 46 of the FRPA which prohibits activities that result in damage to the environment. A person who contravenes section 46 may be subject to a fine not exceeding \$1 000 000, or to imprisonment for not more than 3 years (s. 87).

Section 4 of the *Motor Vehicle (All Terrain) Act* prohibits the use of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) in such a manner as to drive, harass, chase, run over, injure or kill a domestic animal.

A Sensitive Habitat Inventory Mapping (SHIM) project for the Lake Koocanusa Area is scheduled to begin in spring 2015 under the auspices of the East Kootenay Integrated Lake Management Partnership. The SHIM will provide a science-based assessment of areas of highest natural value requiring the highest level of ongoing protection. The SHIM project will include Cultural and Conservation Values Planning (CCVP), which will allow the Ktunaxa to identify cultural and conservation values around Lake Koocanusa.

## Gaps and Challenges

- There is no ORV management plan for the Koocanusa area. As such, the communication of appropriate locations for ORV use, and areas where ORV use is prohibited or discouraged, are not well communicated to, or understood by, ORV users in the area;
- Appropriate recreational use of Crown land to avoid impacting wildlife and wildlife habitat is currently unclear. It is not clear what constitutes 'environmental damage' and what is appropriate behaviour to avoid such damage;

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Information from BC Ministry of Environment – Approved Wildlife Habitat Areas in the Kootenay MOE Region: <a href="http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/cgi-bin/apps/faw/wharesult.cgi?search=wlap\_region&wlap=Kootenay">http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/cgi-bin/apps/faw/wharesult.cgi?search=wlap\_region&wlap=Kootenay</a>

- Enforcement of violations to section 46 of the FRPA are very difficult as:
  - It is unclear what constitutes 'environmental damage';
  - COs are required to prove that an individual caused damage, so they must catch them in the act;
  - Inadequate regulatory tools to fine/charge for damage caused by ORVs and random campers –charges will generally not hold up in court because of evidentiary burden of proving damage; and
  - Enforcement officials patrol large areas with large numbers of users and do not have the time/resources for effective enforcement.
- There is no local ORV group to take a lead stewardship role in supporting appropriate ORV use on Crown land;
- Enforcement of access restrictions in Access Management Areas is difficult due to the large area covered, intensity of use, and time/resource availability of enforcement officials;
- Fines from forestry-related offences are not enforceable on visitors from out-of-province and are not tied to driver's license renewal in BC; and
- The Province's approach to ORV use is based on the principle that everything is open to ORV use unless it is closed. This makes regulation more challenging in comparison to other jurisdictions (e.g. many U.S. states.) where public lands are all closed to ORVs unless designated as open. Users are also known to remove closure signs.

#### 4.3.3 Water-based Recreation

#### Scope of Issue

Lake Koocanusa is a popular summer destination for boaters of all kinds. Approximately 400-500 boats will use the Yaqakxaqlamki Boat Launch on a peak summer weekend. There are several other boat launches in the area, as well as marinas at Koocanusa Campsite, Sweetwater and Gold Bay.

Several concerns related to water-based recreation were identified by residents, visitors and compliance and enforcement officers during the consultation process:

- Racing boats operating without a muffler and creating noise disturbance;
- A growing number of wake boats on the Lake result in a steady stream of large wakes that can be challenging for smaller craft, swimmers and also have greater impact on shorelines;
- Houseboats and other boat traffic at Waldo Island are making swimming at Waldo Beach (a traditional swimming hole for locals) less safe and desirable;
- Boaters and house-boaters are accessing beaches around the lake, in some cases leaving garbage and abandoned campfires behind;
- Houseboats mooring near campgrounds and residences cause noise disturbances at night due to loud music and partying;
- Houseboats dumping raw sewage into the lake;
- A lack of awareness of and/or regard for standard boating safety practices, including consumption of alcohol while boating;
- Many users of the Yaqakxaqlamki Boat Launch are not paying the required fee (estimated to be 30 to 40 per cent of users); and
- Jet skis are travelling up the Elk River from Lake Koocanusa, creating hazards for river users.

#### Current Management Situation

Both RCMP and COs patrol Lake Koocanusa in July and August. Both address boating safety matters and COs will also address matters related to fish and wildlife as well as beach access, e.g. illegal campfires.

#### Gaps and Challenges

The following gaps and challenges related to managing water-based recreation were identified through the stakeholder consultation process

- The large size of Lake Koocanusa creates practical limitations for patrolling and enforcement water-based recreation issues;
- There is a lack of critical facilities for emergency response, including police, ambulance and search and rescue in the area;
- Emergency service personnel are located far away, which increases response time, do not have a permanent presence in the area, and currently do not have resources for consistent on-the-ground presence during peak summer months;
- There is only one boat dock in the area that can accommodate a stretcher;
- Water-based ambulance service is not available; and
- Most people count on not seeing RCMP in the area, so will take their chances with speeding and/or driving under the influence.

## 4.4 Crown Land Camping

#### Scope of Issue

Crown land camping is leading to degradation of high-use areas and localized impacts. This includes long-term occupancy which is defined as camping in the same location for a period exceeding 14 consecutive days, which is prohibited on Crown land in BC; and dispersed camping of less than 14 days, which is permitted under the *BC Land Use Policy (Permissions Policy)*. Crown land camping is intensive in some areas and exacerbated by easy and uncontrolled access to Crown land.

Several negative impacts are associated with Crown land camping:

- Litter and garbage;
- Aesthetic impacts from overuse at specific sites;
- Noise disturbance to proximate users and residents from large party campers;
- Cutting of trees and shrubs for clearings and firewood;
- Disturbance and degradation of First Nations cultural resources and archeological sites;
- Effects on the practice of First Nations rights;
- Health concerns related to litter and human feces and improper dispose of sewage;
- Damage and disturbance to sensitive grasslands and ecosystems (see section 4.2); and
- Increased wildfire risk from illegal and abandoned campfires and public safety concerns associated with communicating to and evacuating large areas of dispersed campers in the event of a wildfire (see section 4.6).

In addition to the localized impacts to the natural environment from long-term occupancy and dispersed camping on Crown land, these activities also negatively impact the quality of the outdoor experience for other users, including blocking access to beaches for day users.

These impacts are of particular concern on long weekends and during spring and summer months when many users and large groups camp and recreate in the area.

Areas identified as high use dispersed camping are outlined in Appendix F3 and include:

- Casey's Cove;
- The area between Sand Creek and the east shore of Lake Koocanusa;
- The shoreline area between Sand Pits and Rock Cliff Islands:

- Rock Creek area;
- Fusee Lake;
- Driftwood Bay;
- Lookout Point;
- Kikomun Creek;
- Elk River;
- Dorr Road area;
- Strauss Road area between Gold Bay North and Oestreich RV Resort;
- Shoreline area between Tony's Point and Robert's Point;
- Caven / Gold Creek confluence area;
- The shoreline area north of Big Pines Campground;
- Frenchman's Point; and
- Marcer's campground.

Areas identified as popular long-term occupancy areas are outlined in Appendix F3 and include:

- Covalli area;
- Strauss Road area
- Shoreline area between Tony's Point and Robert's Point
- Umbrella Beach
- Caven / Gold Creek confluence area
- Frenchman's Point
- Casey's Cove

Some of the higher use areas contain illegally built structures, such as decks, sheds and outhouses, and some users have built makeshift docks for shoreline access.

#### Current Management Situation

Rules and regulations regarding temporary occupation of Crown land for recreational purposes are defined in the Permissions Policy, which states that "Any person may camp on Crown land for up to 14 consecutive calendar days. For the purposes of calculating 14 consecutive days, a period of consecutive days is cumulative unless the person and their vehicle and equipment, as the case may be, are not present on the site for a period of at least 72 consecutive hours" (section 6.2.3.2). These regulations are consistent with the Forest Recreation Regulation and also apply to Recreation Sites.



Figure 4: Crown Land Campers (Photo credit: Yvonne Miller)

As stipulated in the policy, the permission to use Crown land is "a privilege which may be limited or rescinded to a greater or lesser extent, from place to place, and from time to time (section 6.1)."

Long-term occupancy and dispersed camping on Crown land is regulated and enforced by NROs through provisions under:

- The Land Act: Section 60 which prohibits the occupation or possession of Crown land without lawful authority, including the construction of a building, structure, enclosure or other works; and
- The Forest and Range Practices Act: Sections 54 and 57 which prohibit the construction or occupation of buildings, trails or other structure on Crown land. Section 58 allows for the prohibition or restriction of recreational activities in order to protect Crown resources and manage recreation.

NROs have authority to require individuals to cease the unauthorized occupation of the Crown land and restore the land to a satisfactory condition. In addition, NROs may seize all illegal improvements or require the person to remove any improvements made by the person on the Crown land (Land Act, section 59.1). This process can take anywhere from four days to several months depending on the circumstances; many cases are resolved within four to 10 days.

Two other pieces of provincial legislation relate to the occupation of Crown Land and impacts identified in the Koocanusa area:

- The *Environmental Management Act*, section 12, prohibits littering in a public place. This is enforced by NROs and COs; and
- The Wildfire Act and Regulations, which are summarized in section 4.5 below.

The RDEK also plays a role in managing issues related to Crown land camping and occupancy, primarily through:

- Provision of waste management and transfer station facilities and services. Two waste management facilities exist in the area, one at the Kikomun-Newgate Road and one near Grassmere. Future plans are for an additional facility in the vicinity of Yaqakxaqlamki Boat Launch:
- Fire protection services in interface areas (see section 4.5 of this report);
- Residential, commercial and industrial development on private lands, the intensity of which affects the number of recreational users on Crown land;
- The Regional Park function provides and manages recreation facilities, including the Yaqakxaqlamki Boat Launch and Dawson's Path;
- The Noise Control Regulation (Bylaw No. 1396) prohibits the making or causing of objectionable noises on private properties within the Koocanusa area;
- The RDEK Campground Bylaw regulates the disposal of waste and wastewater on site at private campgrounds; and
- The RDEK Fireworks Bylaw (No. 2218) prohibits the sale and disposal of fireworks in the area.

#### Gaps and Challenges

- Enforcement of violations under the FRPA and *Land Act* are difficult due to the large area covered and intensity of use. NROs do not have the time or resources for effective enforcement:
- There are insufficient waste management and recycling facilities in the area to deal with the large volume of users, particularly near high-use areas and at high-use times (e.g. long

- weekends). Existing facilities are not well marked and signposted and not easily found by recreational users;
- The 14-day Crown land camping policy is not well communicated, nor is it understood by users or consistently enforced;
- Littering under the Environmental Management Act is difficult to enforce as offenders must be caught in the act or charges will generally not hold up in court because of the evidentiary burden;
- Appropriate Crown land camping etiquette (garbage, size of fire, not damaging environment, etc.) is not well communicated or understood by some users;
- Many of those who occupy Crown land over long time periods and dispersed campers are from out of province. They utilize Crown land for free and do not contribute towards service provision – road development/improvement, waste disposal, land management and reclamation, etc.;
- Many long-term Crown land occupants are either local to the area, or from adjoining communities in the Elk Valley and southern trench area. Some of these individuals have been doing this for many years and exhibit a strong behavior of entitlement about being able to continue this practice;
- Enforcement of Land Act violations is somewhat problematic for NROs. There are no ticketing provisions in this legislation so any enforcement actions are currently time consuming for officers. The current process under section 60 involves the issuance of a written Trespass Notice in one of 3 ways: in person, attached to a unit or structure, or mail. More often than not officers discover trespass camping units where ownership can only be discovered through running license plate information which only a select few officers can do. After the Trespass Notice time period has expired (for mailed notices could be as long as 2 weeks) officers could move to seize the violator's assets. This would involve another visit to site to ensure assets are still there and working with contractors to remove assets to a secure location;
- NROs work limited hours, primarily daytime shifts, and do not have a boat which reduces the effectiveness of monitoring and enforcement on Crown lands;
- Long-term occupiers will often relocate to other areas in the region, or return to the same area once forced to leave a Crown land site. Continuous monitoring and enforcement is required and NROs have limited time and resource availability;
- Many recreational users are unaware of the process for reporting concerns or complaints about Crown land occupancy or associated impacts/activities. [note: the new 1-800-NRO-TIPS line might be really helpful once it goes beyond pilot phase]
- COs do not have jurisdiction to enforce violations under the Land Act. As such they cannot enforce long-term occupation of Crown land; it can only be enforced by NROs.

## 4.5 Large Events and Gatherings

Scope of Issue

Large events and gatherings on Crown land including rave parties, bush parties and other large gatherings, create a variety of impacts, including:

- Site degradation, including impacts to sensitive ecosystems and grasslands and aesthetic impacts;
- Garbage and human waste;
- Public safety issues associated with public intoxication, drinking and driving, drug overdose, etc.;
- Potential impacts to First Nations cultural resources and archeological sites;

- Noise disturbance to nearby residents and other land users; and
- Increased fire risk related to unauthorized and illegal campfires and evacuation challenges.

Popular times and locations of large events and gatherings, some of which occur on private land but have impacts on other Crown land users, include:

- Mud-bogging in the reservoir drawdown zone, with large multi-day events occurring every Easter at Umbrella Beach;
- Raves and large dance parties occurring at various times throughout the year and at various locations, primarily at the Sand Pits and Umbrella Beach;
- Fozzy Fest (at Big Springs Campground in September 2014);
- The Koocanusa Wakesurfing Challenge (at Gold Bay in 2013);
- Wake the Lake (annual house boating party organized by a Calgary "party" company); and
- Large parties on long weekends where hundreds of people can arrive at one place. The highest volumes are reported to occur during the May and July long weekends.

The above listed Crown land events, excluding Fozzy Fest which occurs on private land, are unauthorized events for which permission has not been applied for or granted.



Figure 5: Fozzy Fest 2014

Current Management Situation

The Permissions Policy defines the conditions for which authorization of Crown land use is not required. Authorizations are not required for events:

- Not hosted by a commercial group;
- That do not conflict with existing authorizations;
- Occurring for less than 72 hours;
- With fewer than 200 participants for non-motorized activities and equestrian activities; or fewer than 100 participants for motorized activities; and
- Where no fees are charged to participants.

The Permissions Policy allows for the designation of certain areas of Crown land as application-only areas, within which the Permission Policy would not apply. In application-only areas, no events would be authorized on Crown land without a formal application for an authorization.

Best Management Practices are currently being developed by MFLNRO to provide event organizers with guidelines for appropriate event planning, management and clean up.

If an event does not meet the conditions of the Permissions Policy, an application is required through FrontCounter BC for a Temporary Permit for Special Events. This special events permit is intended to:

- Ensure that event organizers adequately address safety;
- Ensure the Crown land access route and location is available on the day/s of the event;
- Minimize impacts on Tenure holders;
- Avoid conflict with public recreationists or the general public; and
- Minimize impacts on the environment or disturbance to wildlife.

A security of bond can also be requested for temporary special events. No special event permits have been issued for large events and gatherings on Crown land in recent years, with the exception of weddings and films.

Several years ago motorized use of the drawdown area of the Koocanusa reservoir was not discouraged in the hope that this would reduce some of the growth in mud bogging in more sensitive natural wetland areas. This policy has been relatively effective in reducing ORV use and damage in wetland areas outside the reservoir drawdown zone. However, the increase in popularity of mud-bogging and intensity of use in the drawdown zone is leading to increased spillover damage to adjacent crown lands.

On private lands, the RDEK Control of Special Events Bylaw requires a permit for specific special events, and the Noise Control Regulation (Bylaw No. 1396) prohibits the making or causing of objectionable noises on private properties within the Koocanusa area. RDEK is in the process of updating the Special Events Bylaw.

## Gaps and Challenges

- Enforcement related to large events and gatherings, including violations under the Permissions Policy, FRPA, Land Act, Wildfire Act, Environmental Management Act (littering) and criminal offences (public intoxication, impaired driving, drug use, etc.) is difficult due to the large area covered, intensity of use, and time/resource availability of enforcement officials;
- There is no provincial legislation prohibiting noise disturbance on Crown land, and no quiet time requirement;
- Many large events and gatherings (raves, bush parties, etc.) occur at random locations and unpredictable times, making enforcement difficult;
- There is no police station in the Koocanusa area and RCMP enforcement officials are required to come from Fernie or Cranbrook;
- There are insufficient waste management and recycling facilities in the area to deal with the large volume of users, particularly near high use areas and at high use times (e.g. long weekends). Existing facilities are not well marked and sign posted and not easily found by recreational users:
- Littering under the Environmental Management Act is difficult to enforce as offenders must be caught in the act or charges will generally not hold up in court because of the evidentiary burden; and
- There are divergent views on how to manage the Umbrella Beach / Sand Pits area (these views may also apply to other large party hot spots as well). Options that have been suggested include leaving it as is, closing it down, turning it into a day use area only, turning it into a hosted recreation site, establishing it as an alcohol-free zone, requiring users to register and obtain a permit, and applying temporary land use regulations for long weekends.

#### 4.6 Wildfire Risk

#### Scope of Issue

Long-term occupancy and dispersed camping, along with easy and uncontrolled access are leading to an increase in wildfire risk associated with crown land recreation. The increased wildfire risk is largely the result of:

- Unauthorized and illegal campfires, due to lack of knowledge or respect, that are either noncompliant with an active wildfire ban or with the Wildfire Regulation campfire requirements; and
- Difficulty of wildfire evacuation due to the large numbers of users and unregulated nature of recreation in the area.

High risk wildfire areas overlap with high use ORV areas, and popular areas long-term occupancy, dispersed camping and large events and gatherings (Appendix F4). First Nations consultations reported an increase in grassfires over the last several years.

## Current Management Situation

Section 20 of the Wildfire Regulation lays out the circumstances in which a person may light, fuel or use a campfire in or within 1 km of forest land or grass land. The Regulation includes the requirement for campfires users to:

- Establish a fuel break around the burn area;
- Continuously monitor the fire to prevent escape;
- o Be equipped with at least one firefighting hand tool or eight litres of water;
- o Maintain fires in one pile no larger than 0.5m in height and 0.5m in width; and
- o Before leaving the area, ensure that the fire is extinguished.

The Wildfire Regulation also includes requirements for engines including. Off-road vehicles must be equipped with a safe and effective device for arresting sparks and an exhaust system and muffler that are within the manufacturer's specifications (section 8).

The Wildfire Act allows officials to initiate fire bans which restrict or prohibit the lighting, fueling or use of open fires (section 10) and may also restrict access and occupation of Crown land for a specified period of time (section 11). Section 43 of the Wildfire Act lays out various categories of offences and fines, and NROs are responsible for compliance and enforcement of the Wildfire Act and Regulation.

A justice of the peace may issue a warrant under the *Offence Act* to an official to enter land, premises or both and search for and seize evidence of a contravention of the *Wildfire Act* or Regulation (section 20).

Within the RDEK, the Jaffray and Baynes Lake Fire Department have jurisdiction over fire protection services, including interface areas, which may overlap with Crown land. The Jaffray and Baynes Lake Fire Departments also support the enforcement of fire bans and appropriate fire behaviour in Crown land interface areas. In addition, RDEK and surrounding municipalities, under authority of the Local Government Act (section 728), can regulate or prohibit the sale or disposal of firecrackers and other fireworks of every nature or kind.

#### Gaps and Challenges

 Compliance and enforcement officials have limited ability to collect fines from out of province visitors. No inter-provincial agreement exists between BC and Alberta or any other province or state;

- Fines for offences under the Wildfire Act are relatively low compared to other jurisdictions, reducing the effectiveness of compliance and enforcement efforts. Officials may increase the fine amount, but this process requires that the offender have an 'opportunity to be heard' by a court/judge. The process is time consuming and enforcement officials generally do not have the time/resources to pursue it;
- Wildfire Regulations related to engines (section 8) are difficult to enforce due to complexities of identifying appropriate spark arrestors and exhaust systems on ORVs;
- Many Crown land recreation users are unaware of campfire requirements under the Wildfire Regulation, and current signage is inadequate;
- Communicating and enforcing fire bans and other wildfire regulations is very difficult due to the high volume and dispersion of ORV users and Crown land campers;
- NROs work limited hours and do not have a boat which reduces the effectiveness of monitoring and enforcement on Crown lands;
- There are currently no emergency evacuation plans in place for Crown land areas in Koocanusa. The development and implementation of emergency evacuation plans is challenging given the high volume and dispersion of ORV users and Crown land campers;
- Although the RDEK prohibits the sale and disposal of fireworks (Bylaw No. 2218), there is no provincial legislation or agreement prohibiting out of province visitors from bringing them into the region;
- Fire protection services are not available for the majority of the Koocanusa area;
- The Jaffray and Baynes Lake Fire Departments do not have any enforcement capabilities and are unable to issue tickets or fines for offences under the Wildfire Act and Regulation;
- The Jaffray and Baynes Lake Fire Departments will respond to fire and campfire complaints within their fire protection areas. There is no cost-recovery for these calls, even though many may be caused by Crown land users from outside the RDEK; and
- Fire risk reduction, inspection and management standards, relating to campfires, storage of flammable goods, construction of sheds and decks and proximity of structures, are not as well developed for Crown lease campgrounds and RV parks.

## 4.7 Crown Land Grazing

Scope of Issue

The Koocanusa area contains high quality grazing and agricultural land and the vast majority of the plan area is in the Agricultural Land Reserve (see Appendix F5). Recreational activities on Crown land, specifically recreational vehicles, off-road vehicle use and dispersed camping are negatively impacting Crown land grazing tenure and lease holders. Existing impacts on Crown land grazing and agricultural operations from recreational use include:

- Disturbance and degradation of grasslands by ORVs;
- Disturbance and degradation of grasslands from the volume of dispersed campers and recreation vehicles in some areas;
- Cattle fences being left open and livestock escaping;
- Cattle fences being cut or broken for access, and livestock escaping;
- Harassment of livestock by users loud noise, chasing, travelling at high speeds, etc.
- Campers utilizing waterfront spots and displacing livestock inability of livestock to access water: and
- Users leaving garbage on the land.

These impacts are exacerbated by the intensity of use in the area, and the lack of controls that grazing tenure holders have in regards to Crown land access. Recreational activities are creating an additional

work burden for grazing tenure holders related to repairing broken fences, closing cattle gates, cleaning garbage, retrieving cattle that have escaped and cleaning up garbage left behind by campers.

Grazing in the Koocanusa area occurs from mid-May and can last till mid-November. Impacts are prevalent in grazing lands across the Koocanusa area, and are more pronounced during long weekends in summer and hunting season (September - October).

#### *Current Management Situation*

The Province manages Crown land grazing through tenures and leases issued under the Range Act and Land Act respectively. Grazing leases, which are no longer issued by the Province of BC, provide leaseholders with controls over the use of their land by recreational users. Recreational users are required to obtain permission to enter a grazing lease area; it is an offence under section 4 of the Trespass Act to enter without permission. Section 65 of the Land Act authorizes a leaseholder to take legal action against a person (recreational user) who enters an enclosed lease area (areas that are legally fenced or where signs are posted to indicate that no trespassing is allowed) or undertakes an activity in a lease area without permission of the leaseholder.

Grazing tenures, which comprise the vast majority of grazing areas in the regions, only give the tenure holder authorization to utilize the forage. Tenure holders cannot limit access to Crown land or any other activity. Permission is not required for entry into grazing tenure areas.

Section 46 of the FRPA also prohibits recreational activities on Crown land that lead to damage to the environment, including damage to grazing land. This has been interpreted to mean that ORV users must stay on established road surfaces at all times while in grazing areas. As outlined on the Crown land grazing map (Appendix F5), the vast majority of the Koocanusa area contains an active grazing tenure (pasture).

#### Gaps and Challenges

- Recreational users are not required to obtain permission to access Crown land grazing tenure areas and tenure holders have little to no control over recreational use of their tenure area;
- Large tenure areas and the intensity of recreational use in certain areas make consistent enforcement of activities difficult. Enforcement of violations under the FRPA and Land Act is difficult due to the large areas covered and intensity of recreational use. Enforcement officials (COs and NROs) do not have the time or resources for effective enforcement;
- There is a lack of awareness, and sometimes lack of respect, amongst many recreational users regarding the existence and appropriate use of Crown land grazing leases and tenures;
- Ranchers, through their grazing permits, pay for and are required to maintain grazing land
  in an acceptable state. This requirement is challenging due to intensive recreational use and
  impacts in some areas which is degrading the grazing land. Recreational users are creating
  an additional and often unmanageable burden on grazing tenure holders; and
- Many of the recreation users on Crown land are from out-of-province and do not contribute
  to the costs of land management and stewardship, and specifically towards the increased
  burden placed on grazing tenure and lease holders.



Figure 6: ORV Damage (Photo Credit: Yvonne Miller)

# 4.8 Invasive Species

## Scope of Issue

The Koocanusa area contains important and sensitive ecosystems and grasslands. Easy and uncontrolled access to Crown land via boat, ORV, mountain bike and RV, as well as a lack of enforcement of existing land use regulations, is leading to the spread of terrestrial and aquatic invasive species across the area, threatening sensitive ecosystems and grasslands. Invasive species are widespread across the Koocanusa area, and the most prevalent and problematic species are knapweed, hawkweed, cinquefoil, St John's wort and cheat grass. Hot spots for invasives include Big Springs south on the east side of Lake Koocanusa and Gold Creek north on the west side. Cheat grass is of particular concern as it is threatening the Spalding's Campion, a red-listed species, and leads to increased wildfire risk. Appendix F6 (Invasive species) depicts known invasive species areas and high use ORV areas, however GIS data on invasive species is limited.

#### **Current Management Situation**

The primary legislation guiding recreational activities on Crown land related to the control and spread of invasive species include:

- Section 6.4 and 6.5 of the *Wildlife Act* allows for regulations designating a species as a 'controlled alien species' if a non-native species poses a risk to the health or safety of any person or poses a risk to property, wildlife or wildlife habitat;
- The Controlled Alien Species Regulation (under the *Wildlife Act*) controls the possession, breeding, shipping and releasing of alien animals that pose a risk to the health or safety of people or the environment. A list of controlled alien species is maintained by the Ministry of Forests, Lands and National Resource Operations;
- Section 2 of the *Weed Control Act* identifies a duty, on the part of occupiers of land and property, to control noxious weeds;
- Section 8 of the *Plant Protection Act* allows for the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations to prevent the spread of an insect, pest or disease destructive to plants;
- The Weed Control Regulation designates specific weeds as noxious weeds within all regions of the Province (Schedule A – Part I) and in specific regions of the Province (Schedule A – Part II);

- Section 6 of the Weed Control Regulation prohibits the movement of recreational vehicles on a highway that has any noxious weed on it (as defined in Schedule A); and
- The Sheep Mountain AMA is designated, in part, to reduce the spread of invasive species in that area.

Legislation and regulations related to the control of alien species and noxious weeds are enforced by COs and NROs. In the summer of 2014, the East Kootenay Boat Inspection Blitz, a partnership between the East Kootenay Invasive Plant Council (EKIPC), Ministry of Environment, MFLNRO, and Border Guards with the Canadian Border Services Agency, inspected 242 boats in the Koocanusa area at four locations. The main objectives were to familiarize COs with regulations, conduct boat inspections, take necessary enforcement action and raise public awareness. No vessels were found to be transporting prohibited aquatic invasive species.

In addition to boat inspections, EKIPC also works with various stakeholders to address invasive plants in the area. This includes coordinating treatments on utility right-of-ways (using funding provided by Fortis, BC Hydro and TransCanada Pipelines), working with the Kootenay Livestock Association to deliver the Grassland and Rangeland Enhancement Program in the Koocanusa Area - which addresses invasives on Crown land grazing tenures, working with the RDEK to coordinate treatments on private lands under the Neighbourhood Invasive Plan Program, and working with Madera Ranch and the West Side Lake Association to address invasives in the Newgate area. The MFLNRO also conducts ecosystem restoration work in the Koocanusa area, including biological controls and prescribed burns.

The vast majority of residents and visitors did not identify the spread of invasive species as a significant issue during the consultation process.

#### Gaps and Challenges

- Management efforts to stop the spread of invasive species, including boat inspections, biological controls and prescribed burns, are ineffective due to the intensity of use and lack of access controls on recreation in the area;
- Legislation and regulations related to the control of alien species and noxious weeds are difficult to enforce due to the difficulty of field identification;
- There is no strategic plan for controlling the spread of the invasive species in the region. As such, there is not clear and shared management directives or definitions of success;
- Current levels of funding and resources for the control of invasive species are currently inadequate to address the widespread and intensive nature of recreation in the area; and
- The majority of recreation users are unaware of how their activities contribute to the spread of
  invasives, resulting impacts on ecosystems and grasslands, and effective means of controlling
  spread.

## 4.9 Public Health and Safety

Scope of Issue

The reputation of the Koocanusa area as a place to party and recreate without concern for rules or enforcement means that it is attracting more visitors with a lower regard for their safety and the health and safety of others. Issues of concern relate to the following:

1. *Unsafe operation of motorized vehicles, both on-road and off, including boats*: excessive speed, reckless driving, and driving under the influence were identified by many stakeholders as a concern for both

public roads and off-road areas with 91 percent of residents identifying this as an issue. In addition, the RCMP reported that a significant number of campers and trailers do not have working breakaways, and COs reported that they encounter many issues with boating safety. The Baynes Lake and Jaffray area are now seeing about 40-50 ORV accidents per year, including two fatalities in 2014. Failure to wear helmets is an issue. Approximately 25 to 30 per cent of all first responder medical calls in the area are ORV-related. There is also safety concerns related to ORVs driving on public roads.

- 2. *Abandoned campfires, fireworks and wildfire*: the issues associated with abandoned and poorly tended campfires and fireworks are addressed in section 4.6 Wildfire.
- 3. Unsanitary disposal of garbage and human waste: This is an important issue for both residents and visitors that were surveyed. Over 79 per cent of residents responding to the survey reported that they had picked up garbage on Crown land, and increased enforcement of garbage and littering was identified as a priority. Unsanitary disposal of human waste occurs in two forms: informal latrines proximate to random camping areas, and recreational vehicles dumping raw sewage on Crown lands and also on reserve lands. The volume of garbage and human waste left behind can pose health and safety issues for other users.
- 4. *Illegal use of firearms*: Several individuals reported unsafe use of firearms as an issue. This includes shooting firearms at night, shooting at propane tanks, target shooting in areas frequented by recreational users and shooting without a license.
- 5. *Belligerent and aggressive behavior*: Many individuals have reported a general trend toward more belligerent and aggressive displays of behavior by some recreationalists, which results in locals and other visitors being more reluctant to confront disrespectful or illegal behaviors. The likelihood of belligerence tends to increase with drug and alcohol consumption.
- 6. *Property damage, trespassing and vandalism:* Koocanusa residents and TPIB representatives both noted an increase in property damage, trespassing and vandalism, with TPIB reporting that old homesteads and seasonal structures have been subject to both theft and damage. There is little evidence as to whether these acts are being committed by recreational visitors or by other individuals.

Limited mobile phone coverage in the area can also impede timely response to public safety issues, especially on long weekends when there is high demand by cell users.

Other issues identified include air quality issues related to increased traffic on dusty roads and campfires.

#### *Current Management Situation*

The RCMP does not have a permanent presence in the area, and responds to calls by deploying officers from either the Cranbrook or Elk Valley detachments. Seasonal enforcement funds will usually support an enforcement blitz on the May long weekend, although there is no guarantee of sufficient funds being available from year to year. The RCMP also patrols the area by boat approximately three to four times per year.

COs have an overall mandate to support public use of the environment in a way that minimizes risks to themselves and others. Accordingly they have an important role in education, compliance and enforcement of laws relating to protection of public safety. In addition to compliance and enforcement of environment and natural resource legislation, they have authority under the Motor Vehicles Act and the

Liquor Control Act to address public safety issues related to unsafe vehicle use and consumption of liquor in public places. COs also address inappropriate use of firearms.

The Regional District of East Kootenay maintains fire halls in Jaffray and Baynes Lake and has a fire protection area that covers the greater Jaffray and Baynes Lake areas, up to 13 km south of the Baynes Lake fire hall on the Newgate Rd. Services include fire protection and first response.

Similar to policing, there is no ambulance service based in the area, so emergency paramedic response will come from either Fernie or Cranbrook. The closest hospitals and medical centres are in Fernie and Cranbrook. There is no active search and rescue organization in the area.

A Rural Crime Watch organization was established for the south country area in the 1990s. It continues to be active in the area, hosting monthly meetings that are open to the public and attended by an RCMP officer.

#### Gaps and Challenges

- The large size of Lake Koocanusa creates practical limitations for patrolling and enforcement of public health and safety issues;
- There is a lack of critical facilities for emergency response, including police, ambulance and search and rescue in the area;
- Emergency service personnel are located far away, which increases response time, do not have a permanent presence in the area, and currently do not have resources for consistent on-the-ground presence during peak summer months;
- There is only one boat dock in the area that can accommodate a stretcher;
- Water-based ambulance service is not available; and
- Most people count on not seeing RCMP in the area, so will partake in risky and illegal behaviour, such as speeding, driving under the influence, driving ORVs on public roads and driving ORVs without helmets.

#### 4.10 Cross-cutting Management Gaps and Challenges

The following are identified as cross-cutting management gaps and challenges as they do not stem from a specific recreational issue:

- There is currently no visitor information centre, or central information hub, online or
  otherwise, to assist visitors in finding information about the area. Recreation information,
  including appropriate behaviour and locations for camping and recreating in the area, if
  available, is not easily accessible by visitors.<sup>11</sup> In the absence of other brochures or guides,
  visitor centres in Cranbrook and Fernie recommended the Kootenay Rockies Backroad
  Mapbook;
- The Provincial government is no longer engaged in regional planning activities. Recommended actions from the Cranbrook West Recreation Management Strategy have not been implemented, and the Cranbrook West Backcountry Recreation Advisory Committee is no longer being supported;
- The number of visitors camping and recreating on Crown land in the Koocanusa area is unknown:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Visitor Information Centres in Cranbrook and Fernie were contacted to find out what kind of information they provide about the Koocanusa area. Local convenience stores in the Koocanusa Area were also visited to assess the range of visitor information available. These findings could reinforce commonly held perceptions that the Koocanusa area is unmanaged and off the radar screen of government agencies.

- The cumulative effects of recreation, resource extraction, road development, urban development and other activities in the Koocanusa area are unknown;
- Some visitors lack backcountry experience, education and/or stewardship sensibilities;
- Many common offences (littering, abandoned campfires, environmental damage, etc.) have challenging evidentiary burdens and are difficult to enforce;
- Many recreational users are unaware of the process for reporting natural resource violations on Crown land;
- There is a perception amongst certain populations of recreational users that the Koocanusa area is a place where there are 'no rules'. In many cases this perception is actively being communicated to other like-minded users, resulting in higher volumes of poorly-behaved recreational users who exacerbate Crown land impacts;
- Many long time recreational users have expressed anger and dismay about the volume of visitors and environmental degradation, citing a fundamental change in the areas character that has occurred over the last 10-15 years;
- Compared to other districts in the southeastern BC, compliance and enforcement resources are stretched very thin in the Rocky Mountain district, which includes the Koocanusa area. NROs are responsible for about 750,000 hectares each, compared to 400,000 hectares each in other districts. This is further compounded by the district having a relatively high density of backcountry roads, easy-to-access terrain, and influx of visitors from out of province;
- Compliance and enforcement personnel are doing the majority of on-the-ground education and outreach to communicate existing rules and standards of behavior to recreational users. This reduces their ability to focus on compliance and enforcement of natural resource offences; and
- There is little to no cultural information or programs available for recreational visitors related to First Nations in the area, including land stewardship and cultural values.

# 5. Recommendations

Recommendations below represent the perspectives of the consulting team as determined through the background research, First Nations consultation, stakeholder engagement process and case studies. Members of the Koocanusa Recreation Steering Committee (KRSC) provided comment on and support the recommendations.

The recommendations do not allocate responsibility to a specific agency; it is assumed that recommendations will be implemented by the appropriate agency in collaboration with affected stakeholders. Some of the recommendations have been previously identified in other reports, including the Koocanusa Official Community Plan, Cranbrook West Recreation Management Strategy (CWRMS) and Koocanusa Recreation Land Use Strategy. Specifically, the CWRMS contains numerous recreational objectives and strategies, as well as a draft Code of Conduct for recreation activity in the Koocanusa area. The strategy was agreed to by stakeholders and should be used as a foundation for additional recreation planning in the area. Recommendations specific to existing reports and literature are summarized in the Issues List (Appendix C).

The recommendations assume that existing management activities will continue and that current resource allocations will be sustained over time. Specifically, this includes current enforcement and compliance efforts, boat inspections, invasive plant treatments and other management actions. It is also assumed that planned activities will commence, including Sensitive Habitat Inventory Mapping, Cultural Conservation Values Planning (CCVP), an Archeological Overview Assessment, and development of a solid waste management facility in the vicinity of Yaqakxaqlamki Boat Launch.

Table 2 summarizes the recommendations to address recreation issues impacting Crown land resources in the Koocanusa area. Additional details about each recommendation are provided in the subsequent text. Table 2 includes the following summary information about each recommendation:

- The **timeline** to begin implementation:
  - o Immediate: prior to the 2015 summer recreation season;
  - o Short-term: prior to the 2016 summer recreation season; or
  - Medium-long term: after immediate and short-term recommendations have been implemented.
- The recreation **issue(s)** that the recommendation address:
  - $\circ$  A = access:
  - $\circ$  0 = occupancy;
  - E = large events and gatherings;
  - W = wildfire risk;
  - G = Crown land grazing;
  - I = invasive species; and/or
  - H = health and safety.
- The **type** of recommendation:
  - Legislation / regulation;
  - Compliance / enforcement;
  - Stewardship;
  - Education;
  - o Infrastructure; and/or
  - o Planning.
- The human and financial **resources** required to effectively implement the recommendation:

- o High significant additional human and financial resources required;
- o Medium some additional human and financial resources required; or
- o Low –Recommendation can be implemented with existing capacity.
- The **partners**, agencies and stakeholders that should be engaged and involved in implementing the recommendation. To avoid repetition, agencies and stakeholders represented on the KRSC are anticipated to be involved in implementing all recommendations and are therefore not included.

Table 2: Summary of Recommendations for Crown Land Recreation in the Koocanusa Area

	Recommendation	Timeline	Issue(s)	Туре	Resources	Additional Partners
1.	Develop and communicate Crown land recreation guidelines	Immediate	A,O,E,W,G,I,H	Education / Outreach	Moderate	<ul><li> Visitor centres</li><li> Tourism Fernie</li></ul>
2.	Enhance solid waste management facilities	Immediate	O,H	Infrastructure	Moderate	
3.	Develop and implement a Recreation Guardian Program	Immediate	A	Stewardship	Low	
4.	Develop a website and online presence	Immediate	A,O,E,W,G,I,H	Education / Outreach	Low	
5.	Begin capacity building of a local ORV organization/club	Immediate	A,W,C,I,H	Stewardship		
6.	Develop a Crown land recreation management framework	Short-term	A,O,E,W,G,I,H	Planning	High	Stakeholders / public
7.	Create a reciprocal arrangement with Alberta for the collection of fines for natural resource offences	Short-term	A,O,W,H	Legislation / Regulation	Moderate	Government of Alberta
8.	Link collection of fines from forestry-related offences to driver's license renewal	Short-term	A,O,W,H	Legislation / Regulation	Moderate	Insurance Bureau of British Columbia
9.	Support the Ktunaxa Nation and TPIB in development of a Guardian Watchman program	Short-term	A	Education / Stewardship	Moderate	
10	. Develop a terrestrial and aquatic invasive species monitoring and management plan	Short-term	I	Compliance and Enforcement	Moderate	<ul><li> EKIPC</li><li> Canadian Border Services</li></ul>
11	. Develop an invasive species education program for conservation officers	Short-term	I	Education	Low	• EKIPC
12	. Increase education, compliance and enforcement of recreation activities	Medium-long term	A,O,W,I,H	Compliance and Enforcement	Moderate	

Recommendation	Timeline	Issue(s)	Туре	Resources	Additional Partners
13. Develop a Crown land camping registration system	Medium-long term	0	Planning	High	
14. Allocate adequate police enforcement resources	Medium-long term	Е,Н	Compliance and Enforcement	Moderate	• RCMP
15. Develop emergency evacuation plans	Medium-long term	W	Planning	Moderate	
16. Increase fines for offences under the Wildfire Act	Medium-long term	W	Legislation / Regulation	Moderate	
17. Expand and promote options for reporting illegal or dangerous activities on Crown land	Medium-long term	A,O,E,W,G,I,H	Education / Stewardship	Low	
18. Enhance emergency medical response during peak visitor season	Medium-long term	Н		Moderate	BC Ambulance Service     RCMP
19. Improve the process for authorization of organized events on Crown land	Medium-long term	E	Legislation / Regulation	Moderate	
20. Conduct landscape reclamation	Medium-long term	A,G,I	Stewardship	High	Rocky Mountain Trench Society
21. Develop a permanent boat wash facility	Medium-long term	I	Infrastructure	Moderate	• EKIPC
22. Enhance sani-dump facilities	Medium-long term	О,Н	Infrastructure	Moderate	
23. Ensure access management is a consideration in all future land use planning and resource activities	Medium-long term	A	Legislation / Regulation	Low	

### **5.1 Immediate Recommendations**

- 1. **Develop and communicate Crown land recreation guidelines for the 2015 summer season.** This recommendation may be an interim strategy pending completion of a recreation management framework for the area (recommendation #6), or it could be a final strategy if subsequent evaluation indicates it achieved its objectives. These interim guidelines should:
  - Clearly identify where Crown land recreation is encouraged/discouraged based on existing policy direction in the CWRMS;
  - Include a Code of Conduct for recreation activity potentially based on the draft developed through the CWRMS process;
  - Communicate that a recreation management framework is being considered for the area;
  - Be communicated to recreation users through a variety of channels, including printed material, website (recommendation #4), social media, public service announcements and an on-the-ground education campaign during the 2015 summer season; and
  - Engage recreation users to provide feedback on the guidelines for future improvements.
- 2. Enhance waste management facilities and signage, in the area, including analysis and identification of short and long term waste management needs, including signage, transfer stations, solid waste receiving facilities, temporary garbage bins, and a sani-dump. Improved signage indicating the location of existing transfer stations and temporary garbage bins should be installed at priority areas including the exit of Dorr Road and in the Grasmere area. The need for additional transfer stations, solid waste receiving facilities, and/or temporary garbage bins at one or more priority locations should be explored. Priority locations include the intersection of Kikomun Rd and Jaffray Baynes Lake Rd, Baynes Lake, Grasmere, Englishman Creek, Sandy Shores, Strauss Road and/or Gold Bay.
- 3. **Develop and implement a Recreation Guardian Program specific to the Koocanusa area.** This program could be similar to the Elk Valley's Access Guardian Program, but rather than establishing new Natural Resource Officers (NROs) or Conservation Officers (COs), should explore options to complement the existing NROs and COs. Establishing joint recreation guardian and wildfire warden positions should be considered, as should hiring summer students to distribute Code of Conduct information. The program should initially be focused on education of users and appropriate stewardship of the land. The Recreation Guardian Program should include partnership between the RDEK, CBT and Province of BC, and seek opportunities to partner with other agencies, and to coordinate efforts and work collaboratively with the KNC and TPIB through the Guardian Watchmen program (recommendation #9). A cost-sharing agreement, similar to the Elk Valley, would need to be established and approved by the participating agencies.
- 4. Develop a website and online presence for the Koocanusa area as a recreation destination, and to provide Koocanusa visitors with information on how to recreate safely and respectfully. The website should include the recreation guidelines communicated through recommendation #1, and be updated on an ongoing basis as the Crown land recreation management framework (recommendation #6) is developed. The website should also allow for input by recreation users on the 2015 recreation guidelines and Code of Conduct, as well as potential future recreation management plans or frameworks.

5. Begin capacity building of a local ORV organization/club to support implementation of the development and management of the intensive ORV use area (recommendation #6.c.3). Work with the existing Cranbrook ORV club (and potentially the Elk Valley ORV club) to achieve this.

## **5.2 Short-Term Recommendations**

- 6. Develop a Crown land recreation management framework for the Koocanusa area that reflects the values of the KNC, TPIB, BC Government, CBT and RDEK. The framework should be based on evaluations of the effectiveness of the 2015 recreation guidelines and Code of Conduct (recommendation #1), and use the existing CWRMS as a starting point. Prior to commencing development of the framework, a stakeholder engagement plan should be developed to determine how and where to engage stakeholder, public and First Nations interests. As part of the framework the Koocanusa area should be delineated, managed and communicated to users as a Special Management Area with different rules and regulations on Crown land to protect public safety and the environment. The recreation management framework should include the following elements:
  - a. A clear and spatially defined framework area. It is recommended that the framework area be smaller than the situational analysis study area in order to create a more manageable management area and focus on the main areas of concern for recreation.
  - b. Consideration of the recreational carrying capacity of the area, potentially in the form of a study or assessment. A study or assessment should aim to evaluate and determine acceptable or appropriate levels of recreation, including the physical, ecological and social limits to recreation use and development and the necessary infrastructure required to manage recreation impacts.
  - c. Consideration of the cumulative effects of recreation, resource extraction, road development, urban development, and other activities in the area;
  - d. Designation of areas of Crown land where specific recreational activities are to be encouraged and prohibited. This includes:
    - 1) Designation of existing roads and trails on which off-road vehicle (ORV) use is to be permitted and not permitted. It is recommended that ORV use be permitted on designated and clearly marked hard surface roads and trails only, and specifically not permitted anywhere else, including TPIB reserve lands. ORV use should also be prohibited in sensitive ecosystems and habitats, based on results of sensitive plant and wildlife habitat inventories, and areas of high archeological and cultural value based on the results of the Archeological Overview Assessment for the area, with additional archeological assessment as needed.
    - 2) Identification and designation of broad area(s) of Crown land where dispersed camping is encouraged. Such area(s) should be selected so as to allow for easy management and containment of recreation impacts. Area(s) designated for dispersed camping should be clearly marked and communicated, and area(s) not designated should be prohibited and communicated as such. The provision of basic services, including pit toilets and fire rings, should be considered in designated Crown land camping areas.
    - 3) Designation of one or more areas to be used specifically for intensive, managed ORV use, including mud-bogging in the reservoir drawdown zone. The area(s) should be of sufficient size to meet the needs of this user group with easily definable boundaries to contain the use. The intensive ORV area

- would require ongoing funding for management, including trail maintenance, reclamation, compliance and enforcement.
- 4) Designate specific site(s) for authorized events to occur on Crown land and in the reservoir draw down zone.
- e. Designation of the aforementioned areas must be enshrined in legislation to allow for effective compliance and enforcement. The simplest means of achieving this would be to designate the entire Koocanusa Area as a recreation site, as well as recreation trails, under section 56 and 58 of the FRPA. This designation would allow for recreation to be permitted and prohibited in specified areas, trails to be built, improved, and maintained, and off-trail enforcement to occur. Designation of such a large area as a recreation site is unprecedented in BC and there may be challenges with implementation and enforcement. Alternatively, there are a variety of other legislative tools available that could be used to achieve similar objectives in specific areas:
  - Lease agreement(s) for development of a Regional Park;
  - o Access restrictions under Section 32 of the Off Road Vehicle Act;
  - Access and/or Crown land camping restrictions under the Permissions Policy as an 'Application-only Area';
  - Access and/or Crown land camping restrictions under an Access Management Area through the Wildlife Act; or
  - Access and/or Crown land camping restrictions under a Wildlife Management Area through the Wildlife Act.
- f. An education and communications strategy, including:
  - o signage and maps posted at major access points;
  - o a foldable map/brochure;
  - o newspaper, radio, television and social media advertisements;
  - o on-the-ground outreach teams serving as Koocanusa hosts/ambassadors;
  - o and online and digital content, including digitally geo-referenced maps which enable field navigation.

Communication materials must be of high-quality and clearly illustrate:

- Appropriate behaviour on Crown land roads, trails and camping areas, including:
  - Disposal of garbage and human waste;
  - Pet etiquette;
  - Noise and disturbance issues (quiet times);
  - How to avoid the spread of invasive species;
  - The existence of grazing tenures and the need for respectful access and use of grazing land; and
  - How to reduce fire risk, including how to make and tend a proper fire, how to extinguish your fire, where to build a fire and fines for offences.
- o Areas where ORV use is prohibited, why it is prohibited, and fines for violations;
- o Designated hard surface roads and trails where ORV use is permitted;
- Designated houseboat overnight mooring zones;
- Other values and uses in the area, such as cultural values, Ktunaxa Nation values and uses, and range values and uses; and
- Historical, stewardship and cultural information and education pertaining to Ktunaxa Nation.

A roadside check stop at key entry access points (Four Corners, Grassmere, etc.) should be utilized on long weekends in the first year to distribute communications materials to recreational users. Materials should also be available at public locations

- in the area, including local convenience stores, and distributed to visitor information centres in Cranbrook, Elk Valley and beyond.
- g. An enforcement strategy which includes an increased presence of compliance and enforcement staff, particularly for the first one to two years to ensure users are clearly informed of the new rules and regulations.
- h. Determination of the need for development of:
  - o Additional day use recreational facilities, including beach access;
  - No-wake zones on the lake;
  - o Additional RV parks, campgrounds and recreation sites on Crown land; and
  - o Alcohol-free zones to encourage more family-oriented camping in certain areas.
- 7. Create a reciprocal arrangement with the Province of Alberta for collection of fines for natural resource offences.
- 8. Link collection of fines from forestry-related offences under the Wildfire Act and Forest and Range Practices Act to driver's license renewal in BC.
- 9. **Support the Ktunaxa Nation and TPIB in development of a Guardian Watchman program for the Koocanusa area.** The program is meant to educate and employ Nation members as active land stewards working alongside COs, NROs and the RCMP, providing information and educating recreational users about appropriate land stewardship. The program should be modelled off the successful Guardian Watchmen program implemented by Coastal First Nations<sup>12</sup>, and be implemented in collaboration with other agencies through the Recreation Guardian Program (recommendation #3).
- 10. Develop a terrestrial and aquatic invasive species monitoring and management plan for the area to gain a better understanding of the distribution of invasive species and ensure a rapid response to new infestations. This work should be undertaken in cooperation with, or potentially by, the relevant Invasive Species Council active in the area.
- 11. Develop an invasive species education program for COs to support effective identification of invasive species.

## 5.3 Medium-Long Term Recommendations

Implementation of the recommendations below should commence once the immediate and short-term recommendations have been implemented. These recommendations are meant to be in priority order.

12. Increase education, compliance and enforcement of recreation activities on Crown land. This includes all natural resource violations, garbage, long-term occupancy, abandoned campfires, terrestrial and aquatic invasive species control, water-based recreation issues and criminal offences such as driving under the influence and speeding. This recommendation should be part of an overall strategy and linked to other recommendations, such as the recreation guardian recommendation (recommendation #3), website (recommendation #4), and a recreation management framework (recommendation #6).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> See: http://coastalguardianwatchmen.ca/guardian-watchmen-programs-overview

- 13. Develop a Crown land camping registration system, available online and at select local businesses, requiring recreational users to register for camping on Crown land in the Koocanusa Area. In addition to discouraging dispersed camping, this registration system is intended to help NROs and COs track how many people are in the area at any given time, and where they are camping. The registration system should:
  - have a fee that is high enough to encourage dispersed campers to increasingly utilize private, commercial and public recreation camping sites;
  - be free for BC residents;
  - be implemented as a pilot program under the Permissions Policy as an 'Application-only Area'; and
  - Use the monies collected to cover costs related to Crown land recreation, including waste management, compliance and enforcement and site rehabilitation/restoration.
- 14. Allocate adequate police enforcement resources including a permanent presence in the Koocanusa area between the months of May and September.
- 15. Develop emergency evacuation plans for areas designated for intensive ORV use and dispersed camping under recommendation #6.
- 16. Increase fines for offences under the *Wildfire Act* to be commensurate with other jurisdictions, such as Alberta and Montana.
- 17. **Expand and promote options for reporting illegal or dangerous activities on Crown land.** This includes the 1-800-NRO-TIPS line and the existing Rural Crime Watch programs. Alternatively create a new citizen stewardship program, to better engage local residents in Crown land recreation management.
- 18. Enhance emergency medical response by establishing a seasonal paramedic/ambulance station in the Koocanusa area and a water ambulance service during the peak visitor season.
- 19. Improve the process for authorization of organized events on Crown land. This includes improving the conditions for events not requiring authorization under the Permissions Policy and temporary permits for special events. The conditions for events not requiring authorization should be expanded to include provisions related to noise disturbance and quite times. Applications for temporary special event permits should require:
  - Quiet times to avoid causing noise disturbance to other Crown land users and residents (1:00 to 7:00);
  - Requirement for a security presence at the event;
  - Requirement on the part of event organizers to educate attendees (e.g. through signage, brochures, etc.) regarding appropriate Crown land behaviour; and
  - Adequate sanitary and garbage facilities during the event.

These requirements should also be included in the best management practices developed under the Permissions Policy for organized events on Crown land

20. Conduct landscape reclamation work in highly disturbed areas, in partnership with local groups, agencies and other stakeholders, to return the landscape to a natural state.

Reclamation work should follow implementation of a Crown land recreation management

framework (recommendation #6) that clearly delineates areas where ORV's are permitted and prohibited.

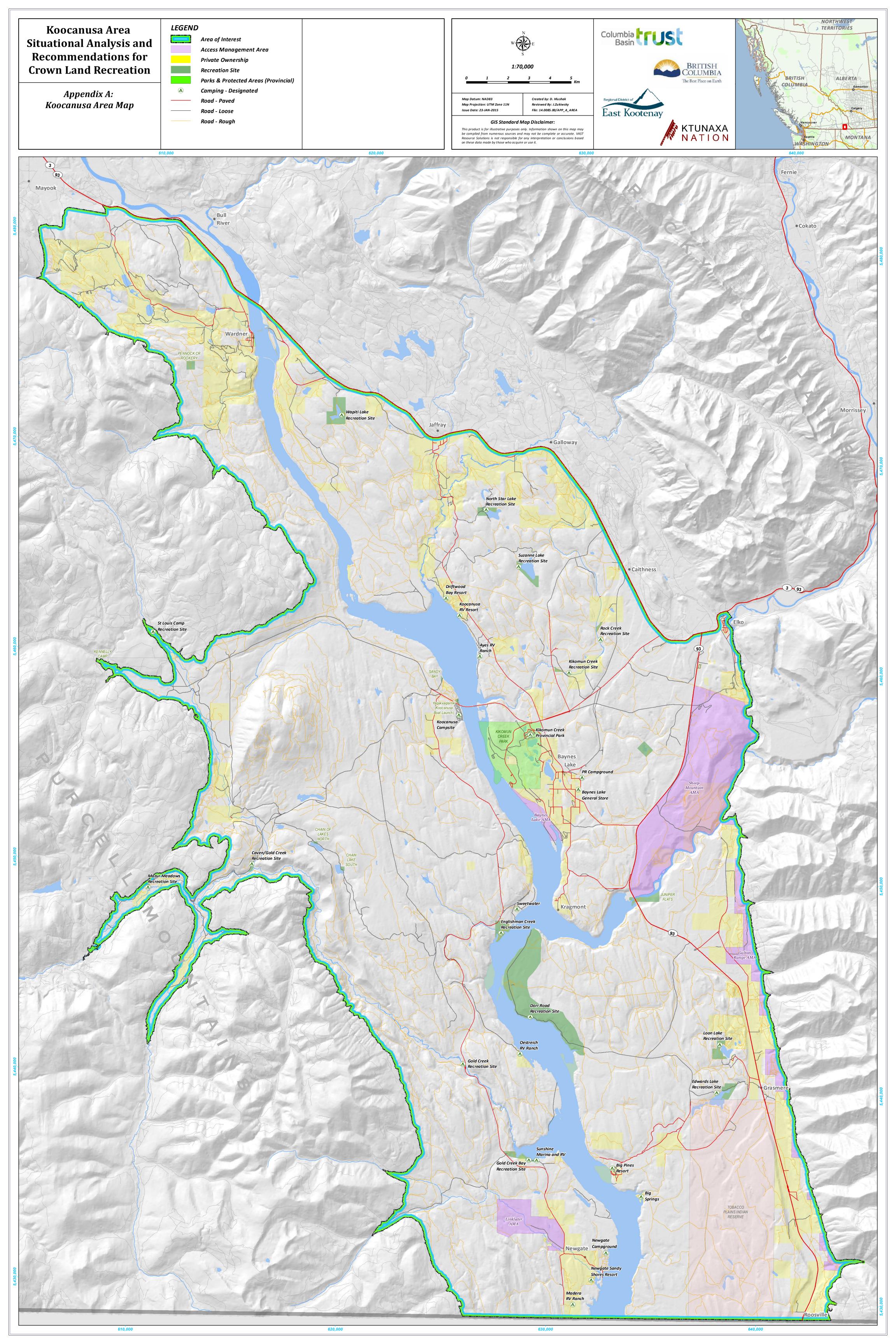
- 21. Develop a permanent boat wash facility, including information and education about reducing the spread of invasive species, at the Yaqakxaqlamki Boat Launch.
- 22. **Provide a publicly available sani-dump facility for convenient sanitary disposal for Crown land users, as needed.** The need for a sani-dump and potential locations should be identified in the initial assessment undertaken regarding waste management (recommendation #2) Priority locations are in the vicinity of the RDEK transfer station on Kikomun-Newgate Road and near Grasmere.
- 23. Ensure access management is a consideration in all future land use planning and resource activities, including timber harvest proposals and plans and other resource development activities that create additional roads and access in the area.

## 6. Implementation

The following should be considered when implementing the recommendations in this report:

- Implementation should occur through a multi-stakeholder committee or organization which includes the KRSC, members of the previously existing Cranbrook West Backcountry Recreation Advisory Committee, and local residents and organizations.
- This report, along with ongoing implementation activities, should be effectively communicated to First Nations and all stakeholders consulted during the development process, including local residents, businesses and property owners.
- Best efforts should be made to fund implementation activities using provincial and other funds so as to avoid, if possible, additional property taxes for Koocanusa Area residents.
- Additional financial and human resources are required to effectively implement the
  recommendations in this report. Members of the KRSC will have to consider funding sources and
  approval processes for implementation of recommendations. Resources should be committed
  and allocated as soon as possible by contributing agencies.
- It important that implementation occur in concert with First Nations and continuously reflect the stewardship and cultural values of ?akinkum‡asnuq‡i?it TPIB and Ktunaxa Nation, including:
  - Recognition, protection and conservation of land and cultural values and activities including archaeological sites and traditional harvesting activities;
  - Inclusion of KNC stewardship principles;
  - Recognition of KNC rights and title and avoidance of further impacts to hunting and gathering opportunities; and
  - Participation of First Nations in ongoing land use planning and management activities.

# 7. Appendix A: Koocanusa Area Map



# 8. Appendix B: List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AAC	Agricultural Advisory Committee
AMA	Access Management Area
APC	Advisory Planning Committee
ATV	All-Terrain Vehicle
BC	British Columbia
BC Hydro	British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority
BLOCP	Baynes Lake Official Community Plan
CBT	Columbia Basin Trust
СО	Conservation Officer
CWRMS	Cranbrook West Recreation Management Strategy
EKIPC	East Kootenay Invasive Plant Council
ESRD	Alberta Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Resource Development
FPB	Forest Practices Board
FRPA	Forests and Range Practices Act
GIS	Geographic Information System
KRSC	Koocanusa Recreation Steering Committee
KLRA	Ktunaxa Lands and Resources Agency
KNC	Ktunaxa Nation Council
LKRLUS	Lake Koocanusa Recreational Land Use Strategy
LKOCP	Lake Koocanusa Official Community Plan
MARR	Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation
MFLNRO	Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly
MOE	Ministry of Environment
MVUM	Motor Vehicle Use Map
NF	National Forest
NRO	Natural Resource Officer
OHV	Off-Highway Vehicle
ORV	Off-Road Vehicle
PLUZ	Public Land Use Zone
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RDEK	Regional District of East Kootenay
RGS	Regional Growth Strategy
RV	Recreational Vehicle
TPIB	Tobacco Plains Indian Band
UKEEP	Upper Kootenay Ecosystem Enhancement Plan
US	United States of America
WHA	Wildlife Habitat Area

## 9. Appendix C: Issues List

Background research, including review of existing plans, policies and reports, was conducted to identify known and documented recreational issues and potential solutions in the Koocanusa area. The Issues List provides a summary of the background research, organized according to the issues and potential solutions identified that were previously identified. Information from the Issues List was used to develop the situational analysis and recommendations.

The following references are cited in the Issues List tables below:

- Baynes Lake Official Community Plan (2011). Regional District of East Kootenay Bylaw No. 2319. [BLOCP]
- Cranbrook West Recreation Management Strategy (2005). Min. of Sustainable Resource Management [CWRMS]
- Lake Koocanusa Campfire Ban and Recreation Issues (2009). Forest Practices Board [FPB]
- Lake Koocanusa Official Community Plan (2013) [LKOCP]
- Regional Growth Strategy Policy (2004). Regional District of East Kootenay. [RGS]
- Lake Koocanusa Recreational Land Use Strategy (1991). Lake Koocanusa Recreation Strategy Comm. [LKRLUS]
- Upper Kootenay Ecosystem Enhancement Plan (2014). Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program and Columbia Basin Trust. [UKEEP]
- Upper Kootenay Ecosystem Enhancement Plan (2014). Notes from Community workshops Dec. 9 and 10, 2013 [UKEEP notes]

Statements in the tables below were inserted verbatim from the referenced document.

#### **Recreation Access - Environmental Damage**

1100100011100000 2			
	ATV use has resulted in trails throughout the area. Users do not know which trails are better than others - in terms of reducing impacts [FPB]  Activities and action BV complex and ATV use are precised by some residents to be et an even the area's complex.		
	<ul> <li>Activities such as boating, RV camping, and ATV use are perceived by some residents to be at, or over, the area's carrying capacity [LKOCP]</li> </ul>		
Scope of Issue	• Natural and environmental assets are highly valued by residents and are a top reason people choose to live or own property in the area [LKOCP]		
	<ul> <li>Throughout the planning process, many individuals raised concerns that unregulated RV camping and ATV use were leading to substantial impacts on both the environment and quality of life [LKOCP]</li> </ul>		
	<ul> <li>Fragile soils and vegetation adjacent the reservoir are being degraded by vehicular access and off-road vehicle use [LKRLUS]</li> <li>Recreational use threatens wetland and riparian ecosystems, stream ecosystems, and upland and dryland habitats. [UKEEP]</li> </ul>		
Potential Solutions Identified	<ul> <li>Users of Crown land for recreation purposes are encouraged to act in a socially and environmentally responsible manner [BLOCP]</li> <li>The establishment of an Area B Regional Park on Crown land between the Kragmont subdivision and Lake Koocanusa is supported [BLOCP]</li> </ul>		
	Residents and visitors accessing Crown land are encouraged to minimize impacts to grazing, habitat, wildlife and sensitive soils by		

- restricting motorized use to existing trails [BLOCP]
- Develop a recreation code of ethics (draft in Appendix 4) in consultation with the Advisory Committee [CWRMS]
- Ensure recreational activities are not significantly contributing to degradation of water quality. Implement measures such as bridge and ford stabilization, road/trail stabilization, and campsite stabilization or relocation, to reduce impacts on water quality from recreation activity [CWRMS]
- Restrict off hard surface recreation access where there is evidence of degradation caused by recreation [CWRMS]
- Restrict motorized use to hard surfaces only in areas with slopes over 40% [CWRMS].
- Restrict overland travel by mechanized vehicles in unrestricted areas when the ground is wet [CWRMS]
- Restrict motorized use to hard surfaces only in areas enhanced to produce natural grasslands [CWRMS]
- Engage recreation stakeholders in grasslands ecosystem restoration projects [CWRMS]
- Restrict mechanized use within and adjacent to riparian areas to Hard Surfaces only [CWRMS]
- Monitor and identify causes of degradation to wetlands and riparian ecosystems caused by recreation and undertake measures to address the degradation [CWRMS]
- Manage recreation access to avoid known sensitive habitats for rare and endangered species, wildlife or vegetation. Where
  recreation is identified as having an impact on rare and endangered species...develop and implement mitigation strategies in
  consultation with the Advisory Committee. Options for mitigating the impacts may include removal of access and restoration of
  habitat, relocation of access if required and/or implementing seasonal restrictions to avoid disturbance [CWRMS]
- Expedited establishment of a means of identifying and educating off-road users, particularly non-residents [CWRMS]
- Identify appropriate intensive use areas for recreation and ensure these areas are of sufficient size to meet the needs of the user groups with easily definable boundaries to contain the use. Encourage cooperative management of these intensive use areas among user groups, local residents and responsible agencies. Provide information and educational programs to publicize the location, rationale and need for Intensive Use areas to gain increased public acceptance [CWRMS]
- The Minister should consider establishing a reciprocal arrangement with Alberta for collection of fines for forestry-related offences [FPB]
- The Minister should consider establishing an amendment to link collection of Wildfire Act and Forest and Range Practices Act fines to driver's license renewals [FPB]
- Residents and visitors accessing Crown land are encouraged to minimize impacts to grazing, habitat, wildlife, and sensitive soils [LKOCP]
- Residents and visitors accessing Crown land are encouraged to minimize impacts to grazing, habitat, wildlife, and sensitive soils and should be aware that any motorized vehicle use off existing trails is prohibited by law [LKOCP]
- Restrict boat access to designated areas which can be monitored and controlled [LKOCP]
- Undertake an Archaeological Overview Assessment to identify areas with potential to contain archaeological sites and recognize known sites [LKOCP]
- Develop an off-road vehicle management plan for the Lake Koocanusa area which identifies existing roads and trails on which off-road vehicle use is permitted, an education and enforcement strategy which directs off-road vehicle users to appropriate locations, and ensures user compliance with regulations [LKOCP]
- Encourage measures to reduce the impact of off-road recreational vehicle use on environmentally sensitive lands [RGS]
- Protect environmentally sensitive areas [RGS]

- Access should be restricted through an education/information initiative rather than relying on regulatory authority alone [LKRLUS]
- ORV access should be onto clearly defined, properly located and maintained roads [LKRLUS]
- Conduct reclamation work on informal routes/trails that are subject to erosion/'braided' access (once access is clearly defined) [LKRLUS]
- Access management should be a consideration in all future timber harvest proposals/plans and other resource development activities that create additional roads/access in the area [LKRLUS]
- Implement access controls until resource concerns have been addressed [LKRLUS]
- Implement Vehicular controls in sensitive areas [LKRLUS]
- Protect the cactus site on the peninsula at the south end of Newgate [LKRLUS]
- Improve education and outreach for public awareness of threats and challenges to stream ecosystems, wetlands and riparian ecosystems [UKEEP]
- Support work that seeks to resolve access and recreation management issues that affect conservation/ restoration/ enhancement objectives (e.g. increase signage and education, 'Access Guardian' program) [UKEEP]
- Conduct sensitive habitat inventories to identify areas of critical importance that can be protected through land purchases, covenants, creation of protected zones, or stewardship agreements [UKEEP]
- Increase community-based water monitoring of small streams and compile water quality data into an accessible online resource [UKEEP notes]
- Increase awareness of impacts of motorized vehicles; designate trails; restrict motorized use in certain areas; enforce regulations; license ORVs [UKEEP notes]

#### Recreation Access - Disturbance of Wildlife and Habitat

Scope of Issue	<ul> <li>Activities such as boating, RV camping, and ATV use are perceived by some residents to be at, or over, the area's carrying capacity [LKOCP]</li> <li>Throughout the planning process, many individuals raised concerns that unregulated RV camping and ATV use were leading to substantial impacts on both the environment and quality of life [LKOCP]</li> <li>Fragile soils and vegetation adjacent the reservoir are being degraded by vehicular access and off-road vehicle use. This reduces the amount of forage available for wintering ungulates. Habitat for ground-nesting birds, small mammals, raptors and great blue heron are also being degraded, and they are being displaced [LKRLUS]</li> <li>The rapid expansion in road networks and off-road vehicle use has resulted in a dramatic increase in public use of lands. This increase negatively impacts sensitive fish and wildlife populations and their habitats [UKEEP]</li> <li>Recreational use threatens wetland and riparian ecosystems, stream ecosystems, and upland and dryland habitats. [UKEEP]</li> </ul>
Potential Solutions Identified	<ul> <li>Users of Crown land for recreation purposes are encouraged to act in a socially and environmentally responsible manner [BLOCP]</li> <li>The establishment of an Area B Regional Park on Crown land between the Kragmont subdivision and Lake Koocanusa is supported [BLOCP]</li> <li>Residents and visitors accessing Crown land are encouraged to minimize impacts to grazing, habitat, wildlife and sensitive soils by restricting motorized use to existing trails [BLOCP]</li> <li>Develop a recreation code of ethics (draft in Appendix 4) in consultation with the Advisory Committee [CWRMS]</li> <li>Recreation access and development, both public and commercial, shall comply with impact mitigation guidelines for all species and</li> </ul>

- habitats as described in current best management practices, (e.g. "Wildlife Guidelines for Commercial Backcountry Recreation in BC", MWLAP, 2002 and "Identified Wildlife Management Strategy", MELP, 1999, and future revisions) [CWRMS]
- Work with private landowners to maintain or establish wildlife migration corridors across private lands where fencing is diverting wildlife into dangerous areas and increasing the stress on the animals (e.g. highways) [CWRMS]
- Restrict motorized use and mountain bikes to hard-surface only in ungulate winter range 7) in the summer (April 2 and November 30) for the area south of Elk River, on both sides of Lake Koocanusa (LU 35 & 37) [CWRMS]
- Restrict mountain bike use in the Galton Range (LU C13) to hard surfaces and close lambing areas to mountain bikes between March 1st and June 14th [CWRMS]
- Establish winter and summer non-motorized areas within 300m of the goat and sheep winter ranges [CWRMS]
- Restrict motorized recreation access to roads and identified travel corridors in Class 1 & 2 mountain goat and bighorn sheep winter range and class 1, 2 & 3 moose winter range in the winter [CWRMS]
- Restrict (make recommendations for) motorized and Hard Surfaces access in mid-elevation grasslands [CWRMS]
- Manage recreation access and activities to avoid known wildlife habitat features. Where recreation access is identified as having an impact on a wildlife habitat feature...mitigate impacts by...removal of access and restoration of habitat, relocation of access and/or implementing seasonal restrictions [CWRMS]
- Establish a reciprocal arrangement with Alberta for collection of fines for forestry-related offences [FPB]
- Develop an off-road vehicle management plan for the Lake Koocanusa area which identifies existing roads and trails on which off-road vehicle use is permitted, an education and enforcement strategy which directs off-road vehicle users to appropriate locations, and ensures user compliance with regulations [LKOCP]
- Residents and visitors accessing Crown land are encouraged to minimize impacts to grazing, habitat, wildlife, and sensitive soils and should be aware that any motorized vehicle use off existing trails is prohibited by law [LKOCP]
- Protect wildlife corridors [RGS]
- Develop concentrated camp spots to minimize impacts on wildlife and wildlife habitat [LKRLUS]
- Conduct sensitive habitat inventories to identify areas of critical importance that can be protected through land purchases, covenants, creation of protected zones, or stewardship agreements [UKEEP]
- Support education and outreach for public awareness of threats and challenges to stream ecosystems, wetland and riparian ecosystems, upland and dryland habitats [UKEEP]

## **Long-Term Occupancy and Dispersed Camping**

## Scope of Issue

- Develop a recreation code of ethics (draft in Appendix 4) in consultation with the Advisory Committee [CWRMS]
- Despite campfire bans, there is a persistent problem with illegal and abandoned campfires [FPB]
- Litter and human feces pose a risk to public safety. Some campers improperly dispose of sewage disease can be associated with garbage and human waste [FPB]
- Campers set up on grasslands, which creates risks to flora and fauna [FPB]
- Activities such as boating, RV camping, and ATV use are perceived by some residents to be at, or over, the area's carrying capacity [LKOCP]
- Throughout the planning process, many individuals raised concerns that unregulated RV camping and ATV use were leading to substantial impacts on both the environment and quality of life [LKOCP]

- The lack of facilities to handle waste products is the single largest health concern in the Koocanusa area [LKRLUS]
- Heavy use sites have various issues hazardous conditions, old toilet structures, vegetation damage and overcrowding and fire hazard [LKRLUS]
- Lack of clear access corridors, defined camping areas, fire rings and sanitary facilities has resulted in a general aesthetic decline on high use sites [LKRLUS]
- Widespread littering and cutting of trees and shrubs to provide clearings and firewood [LKRLUS]
- Reduce negative impacts associated with unregulated camping by supporting the creation of new RV parks, campgrounds and recreation sites in areas that are in close proximity to existing development nodes, are serviced by suitable road networks, and offer access to visitor and emergency services [LKOCP]
- Proposals for the creation of camping facilities such as Provincial recreation sites or private commercial campgrounds within the plan area are directed to the following locations: Sweetwater Subarea, Umbrella Beach/Plumbob Creek, former Flagstone town site, Crown land adjacent to Marcer Road between Sweetwater and the Kikomun-Newgate Road, south shore of Gold Bay east of Abbey Road, the eastern half of District Lot 2708, the southeast quarter of District Lot 2704, and the portion of Lot 1 District Lot 11493 east of the Kikomun-Newgate Road [LKOCP]
- The Crown lands adjacent to the following locations are supported for the expansion of privately owned campgrounds: (i) Big Springs; and (ii) Koocanusa Lake Campsite and Marina [LKOCP]
- Expansion of the Oestreich RV Ranch...to include additional recreational vehicle sites...is supported [LKOCP]
- The development of managed campground facilities...is encouraged in order to mitigate negative impacts associated with ongoing unregulated camping [LKOCP]
- The continued operation and creation of additional short term RV camping sites for recreational use at Kikomun Provincial Park is supported in order to alleviate pressure of unregulated RV camping on surrounding Crown land [LKOCP]
- Additional short term RV camping sites at the provincially managed Dorr Road, Englishman Creek and Gold Bay Recreation Sites is supported in order to alleviate pressure of unregulated RV camping on surrounding Crown land [LKOCP]
- The establishment of day use recreational facilities at Flagstone, Gateway and the outlet of the Elk River as RDEK parks or provincially managed recreation sites is supported [LKOCP]
- Develop a privately owned and operated RV sani-dump in the vicinity of the RDEK transfer station on Kikomun-Newgate Road [LKOCP]
- Improve signage at the exit of Dorr Road and in the Grasmere area to indicate the distance and direction to the nearest transfer station [LKOCP]
- The establishment of additional public access points to Lake Koocanusa as RDEK parks or provincially managed day use recreational sites along both the east and west shoreline is supported [LKOCP]
- The development of a transfer station or other type of solid waste receiving facility on the west side of Lake Koocanusa in the vicinity of Yaqakxaqlamki Boat Launch will be investigated [LKOCP].
- Enhancement of the basic day use, non-commercial visitor services provided at the boat launch facilities at Yaqakxaqlamki Boat Launch such as picnic tables, lighting, washrooms and garbage collection is supported [LKOCP].
- The Province is encouraged to develop a management plan and enforcement strategy pertaining to unauthorized occupation of Crown land by recreational vehicles and associated structures [LKOCP]

### Potential Solutions Identified

#### KOOCANUSA AREA SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CROWN LAND RECREATION

**Large Events and Gatherings** 

Scope of Issue	•
Potential	
Solutions	
Identified	

### Wildfire Risk

Wildin C Mai	
Scope of Issue	<ul> <li>Wildfire evacuation is difficult and, in some cases, impossible because of the unregulated nature of recreation in the area [FPB]</li> <li>Unplanned campsite development (dispersed) is also an issue as people build fires near dry vegetation [LKRLUS]</li> </ul>
Potential Solutions Identified	<ul> <li>Develop a recreation code of ethics (draft in Appendix 4) in consultation with the Advisory Committee [CWRMS]</li> <li>Establish a reciprocal arrangement with Alberta for collection of fines for forestry-related offences [FPB]</li> <li>Applications for rezoning of parcels which include land rated as high for fire hazard probability will be considered with respect to FireSmart principles [LKOCP]</li> <li>Designated campfire locations that meet protection standards and designated sites that allows for better monitoring and patrolling during fire season [LKRLUS]</li> </ul>

## **Crown Land Grazing**

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Scope of Issue	<ul> <li>Recreational activities increase stress on wildlife and cattle, particularly during calving season [LKOCP]</li> <li>The Province recognizes that increased recreational use in the area has impacted agricultural operations, and that any future commercial recreational proposals on Crown land should be considered in relation to grazing operations [LKOCP]</li> <li>High speed tourist traffic endangers free ranging livestock [LKRLUS]</li> </ul>		
Potential Solutions Identified	<ul> <li>Residents and visitors accessing Crown land are encouraged to minimize impacts to grazing, habitat, wildlife and sensitive soils by restricting motorized use to existing trails [BLOCP]</li> <li>Land use decisions within the plan area will minimize impacts to agricultural operations [LKOCP]</li> <li>Rezoning applications for the development of new campgrounds should include development contributions to assist in mitigating the impacts of the proposed development, including contributions to address the impact of off-road vehicle use on adjacent agricultural operations [LKOCP]</li> <li>Residents and visitors accessing Crown land are encouraged to minimize impacts to grazing, habitat, wildlife, and sensitive soils and should be aware that any motorized vehicle use off existing trails is prohibited by law [LKOCP]</li> <li>Buffers between properties on which farming is taking place and adjacent non-agricultural properties will be established through setbacks within the Zoning Bylaw. Measures such as fencing and screening should be utilized to ensure that farm operations are adequately protected and buffered [LKOCP]</li> <li>Develop an off-road vehicle management plan for the Lake Koocanusa area which identifies existing roads and trails on which off-road vehicle use is permitted, an education and enforcement strategy which directs off-road vehicle users to appropriate locations,</li> </ul>		

and ensures user compliance with regulations [LKOCP]

#### **Invasive Species**

### • Fragile soils and vegetation adjacent the reservoir are being degraded by vehicular access and off-road vehicle use. This encourages the spread of noxious weeds [LKRLUS] Scope of • The rapid expansion in road networks and off-road vehicle use has resulted in a dramatic increase in public use of lands. This Issue increase negatively impacts sensitive fish and wildlife populations and their habitats, and exacerbates the spread of invasive species [UKEEP] • Property owners and occupiers are required to control and manage invasive plants in accordance with applicable Regional District bylaws and Provincial Acts and regulations [BLOCP] • Recreational users within the plan area are encouraged to inspect their ATVs, mountain bikes, boats and vehicles for invasive plants to assist in the prevention of the spread and establishment of these plants [BLOCP] • Develop a comprehensive noxious weed management plan to address issues which may include access controls [CWRMS] Document and monitor all known areas of noxious weed infestation [CWRMS] • Develop a strong information, education and enforcement program including enforcing the Noxious Weed Act to control the noxious weed problem [CWRMS]. Monitor and control invasive species at designated public access points [LKOCP] • Recreation users within the plan area are encouraged to inspect their ATVs, mountain bikes, boats and vehicles for invasive plants and animals to assist in the prevention of the spread and establishment of these species [LKOCP] • The Regional District encourages management of Crown land in an environmentally responsible manner that: maintains diverse plant communities by managing invasive and noxious plants [LKOCP] Monitor and control invasive species at designated public access points. Restrict boat access to designated areas which can be **Potential Solutions** monitored and controlled [LKOCP] **Identified** • The development of a boat wash facility at the Yaqakxaqlamki Boat Launch to reduce the spread of invasive species, including but not limited to Dreissena polymorpha (zebra mussel), is supported [LKOCP] • Support work that seeks to resolve access and recreation management issues that affect conservation/ restoration/ enhancement objectives (e.g. increase signage and education, 'Access Guardian' program) [UKEEP] • Support the development of invasive species monitoring and rapid response plans. Identify areas where invasive species are likely to establish or have already established. - Invasive plans threaten the productivity of native wetland and riparian ecosystems; e.g. Eurasian Watermilfoil, Spotted & Diffuse Knapweed, Dalmatian & Yellow Toadflax, Common Tansy, Perennial Pepperweed, Orange Hawkweed, Purple Loosestrife, Leafy Spurge. Expected outcome: better understanding of the distribution of invasive species in the Program area and the ability to respond quickly to new infestations [UKEEP]. Support education and outreach for public awareness of threats and challenges of wetland and riparian ecosystems. Threats include consequences of unauthorized introductions of invasive species and recreational use. Examples include educational signage and stewardship [UKEEP] • Increase number of conservation officers available to identify and help manage spread of invasives, especially zebra mussels,

Didymo, St. John's wort, Eastern Brook Trout [UKEEP notes]

## **Health and Safety**

Scope of Issue	<ul> <li>Litter and human feces pose a risk to public safety. Some campers improperly dispose of sewage - disease can be associated with garbage and human waste [FPB]</li> <li>Public safety is also at risk from ATV use. Without designated trails, there is a possibility of riders driving into dangerous areas or through someone's camping area, leading to collisions [FPB]</li> <li>Concerns from local property owners about vandalism and personal safety and security of property (in Newgate area) [LKRLUS]</li> </ul>
Potential Solutions Identified	• The Board recommends the government assess the risk to public safety and the environment, in the Lake Koocanusa area, caused by unmanaged recreation use. The assessment should identify and assess problematic areas by issue, and identify the resources needed to implement appropriate management measures, such as recreation orders. The government should designate a lead agency to coordinate the process and its implementation [FPB].

## 10. Appendix D: Consultation Results

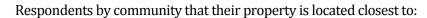
### A. Summary of Resident Survey Results

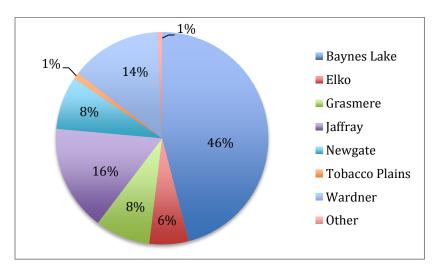
Surveys were mailed to 1172 registered property owners in the Koocanusa area, resulting in 298 completed surveys, from 283 distinct property addresses, a response rate of 24%. Seven properties had more than one respondent. The results show strong alignment around certain issues and management solutions, as summarized below. The complete survey results, including text responses, can be made available upon request.

Highlights of the survey responses are as follows:

- Quality of life for many residents has been significantly impacted by the volume and nature of
  recreational activities happening in and around Lake Koocanusa. There is considerable anger
  and frustration with the continued escalation of visitor numbers and unchecked behavior
  without corresponding action by governmental authorities to stem the growing tide of issues and
  impacts;
- A significant number of residents are angry or anxious about the prospect of new management
  controls, rules and costs that may be imposed largely as a result of the substantial and growing
  impacts of unmanaged recreation in the area, as they are already disproportionately bearing
  many of the current costs and impacts caused by visitors from outside the area;
- There appears to be a significant divide between locals and second homeowners in the project area. A significant number of local residents expressed concern about non-local property owners and visitors being given a voice in the project's stakeholder engagement process;
- Top issues for residents and local property owners were illegal and abandoned campfires, improper disposal of human waste, property vandalism, and unsafe or reckless driving. All of these scored 90% or higher in terms of concern;
- Highest priority management options are increased enforcement of littering, fire bans and
  unattended campfires, large events on Crown land (e.g. human waste, littering, noise, etc.), and
  vehicle-related offences such as drinking and driving and reckless driving. All of these scored
  90% or higher in terms of support;
- Developing new camping areas was the least supported management option at 57 per cent; and
- Random camping scored lowest in the list of issues and impacts, i.e. the lowest level of concern, at 65 per cent.

Many of the comments or suggestions made by residents have been incorporated into the sections on gaps and challenges and/or management recommendations. Additional results are summarized below.





The top ten preferred recreational activities for local property owners are:

Swimming/beach time	88%
Walking/hiking	79%
Nature/wildlife	
viewing	76%
Fishing	73%
Boating (motorized)	61%
Boating (self-	
propelled)	55%
ATV or dirt-biking	55%
Camping	49%
Mountain biking	37%
Hunting	36%

Residents and local property owners were either somewhat concerned or very concerned about the following issues:

Illegal and abandoned campfires	95%
Improper disposal of human waste	93%
Property vandalism	91%
Unsafe or reckless driving	91%
Degradation of grasslands and sensitive	
ecosystems	87%
Degradation of creeks and streams	87%
Long-term squatting on Crown land (>14	
days)	85%
Harassment of wildlife or grazing animals	85%
Excessive noise & partying	83%
Aggressive behaviour to other	83%

recreationalists or property owners	
Trespassing on private land	82%
Unauthorized trail making	81%
Unauthorized structures on Crown land	80%
Cutting down trees on Crown land	77%
Reckless boating	77%
Random camping on Crown land (<14 days)	65%

Support or strong support was expressed by residents and property owners for the following management options:

Increase enforcement of littering	93%
Increase enforcement of fire bans and unattended campfires	93%
Increase enforcement related to large events on Crown land (e.g. human waste,	
littering, noise, etc.)	93%
Increase enforcement of vehicle-related offences such as drinking and driving and	
reckless driving	91%
Increase the number of garbage bins for solid waste near high use areas and ensure	
high visibility signage for them	85%
Improve education and management to reduce the spread of invasive species in the	
Koocanusa area	84%
Increase enforcement of motorized activity that damages sensitive ecosystems and	
disturbs wildlife	83%
Increase enforcement of motorized activity that disturbs grazing animals or causes	000/
damage to private property (e.g. fences)	83%
Implement a user-permit system for camping on Crown Land (similar to fishing	
license or hunting permit) and use permit fees for garbage collection, trail	
maintenance, enforcement and education programs. Local residents would not be	000/
charged a permit fee	80%
Increase education and information available to support appropriate recreation	700/
behaviour on Crown land (e.g. maps, signage, kiosks, brochures, etc.)	78%
Develop an off-road vehicle management plan for the Koocanusa area that directs	
off-road vehicle users to appropriate locations and includes an education and	760/
enforcement strategy Restrict recreational access in some areas to protect important wildlife and wildlife	76%
habitat	75%
Close random camping areas that have been on-going problem areas in terms of	75%
garbage, human waste and noise issues	75%
Restrict recreational access to ecologically sensitive ecosystems and grasslands to	7370
hard-surfaces only	74%
Install outhouse facilities in high use random camping areas	68%
Develop additional campgrounds, RV parks and forestry recreation sites in	00%
alignment with the Lake Koocanusa Official Community Plan	57%
anginitent with the Lake Mootahusa Official Community Fian	3770

When asked if they had ever personally picked up garbage and litter left by other campers, 79% of residents and local property owners said yes.

### B: Summary of Koocanusa Area Campground & RV Park Surveys

Fifteen public and private campgrounds/RV parks in the area were identified as having 40 or more campsites and were the focus of this survey. Owners or hosts of twelve campgrounds were interviewed using a template survey to gain a better understanding of how recreational issues and impacts on Crown land are being experienced by users of these areas.

Highlights of findings are as follows:

- The majority of clientele are coming from Alberta (ranging from 60 to 95% depending on the site)
- They offer approximately 1500 sites in total, with approximately 600 of those being short term sites and 171 that can be reserved. The remaining sites are either seasonal leases or shareholder-owned recreational campsites.
- o Top five concerns were:
  - Excessive noise and partying
  - Abandoned campfires
  - Improper disposal of garbage
  - Illegal camping/squatting on Crown land
  - Belligerent/aggressive behavior of recreationalists
- There were no clearly favoured management options, with suggestions spanning a spectrum that includes better recreation use planning that includes designated areas and trails for ORV use, more signage and infrastructure for garbage and waste, more educational efforts, collection of user fees for camping and ORV use, stronger enforcement, and a call for more locals to step up and get involved in stemming the tide.

## **C: Summary of Visitor Intercept Surveys**

Visitor intercept surveys were conducted in key locations over three weekends in August, including the September long weekend. These efforts resulted in 98 parties intercepted in the following locations:

- o Baynes Lake Farmers Market
- o Kikomun Provincial Park
- o Dorr Road Recreation Site (North and South)
- Newgate/Sandy Shores
- Elk River takeout area

Two separate visits to the RDEK boat launch to intercept visitors were unsuccessful.

Just under 85% of the intercepts were Albertans. Party sizes ranging from 1 to 31, with 70% of the parties between 1 and 4. Approximately 52% of the visitors were staying at public or private campgrounds, 33% owned property in the area, and 12% were staying with friends or family with property in the area. Two-thirds indicated that they visit the Koocanusa area two or more times per year, and 19 volunteered that they have been coming for five or more years.

When asked about concerns with recreational issues and impacts, 21% were not aware of any issues and did not have any concerns. This group of respondents was strongly correlated with the individuals staying in either the provincial park or with friends or family on private property.

The top five concerns expressed by visitors - based on an open-ended question inquiring about their concerns – are expressed in the table below. Given the open-ended nature of the question, a wide array of concerns were expressed, with many respondents offering only one or two concerns for consideration.

Litter/garbage	43%
, ,	TJ /0
Excessive noise	36%
ORV use and attitudes	20%
Environmental	17%
damage/destruction	
Random camping/squatting	14%

Over 68% supported creation of a user fee for random camping, with many underscoring the importance of those fees being used to support enhanced education, monitoring, enforcement, garbage systems, etc.

When asked about issues that should be subject to fines and enforcement, the level of opposition to enforcement was significantly higher for the following areas:

Trespassing	32%
Unregulated camping	18%
Noise	15%
Property damage	15%

Based on asking an open-ended question about management options, the top ten management suggestions from intercepted visitors were as follows:

More policing and enforcement, including bigger fines, check	
stops, recording license plates, enforcement on water, etc.	
More education on camping & recreation ethics/stewardship	
Designate specific areas & trails for ORV use	
Introduce user fees & permits for random camping and/or ORV	
use	
More designated campsites/campgrounds, including for families	13%
- reservable	
Better access maps and information for Koocanusa – central	12%
resource – including rules/regulations	
More trash and recycling bins, garbage bag dispensers at high use	11%
locations	
Better, stronger regulations (random camping, quiet times,	10%
mooring locations, access to environmentally sensitive areas)	
Designate specific areas for large random camping parties	
Mandatory safety/stewardship course for ORV users	
More public access to lake/beaches, including boat launches	6%

## D. Summary of TPIB survey results

In November 2014, 35 surveys were either mailed or hand-delivered to band members living on or near the Tobacco Plains reserve. The survey was identical to that used for the resident survey summarized above and did not pose any specific questions related to the impacts of recreational activities on

practicing aboriginal rights. At the same time, the survey format included a number of open questions related to issues, impacts and enforcement, providing an opportunity for respondents to identify practicing aboriginal rights as a concern. Six surveys (17%) were completed and returned. The results show similar views, concerns and trends to those documented in the resident survey. Half of the respondents (3) indicated concern about unmanaged ORV use in the area and its impacts on public safety, dust and air quality, and land values.

### E. Summary of organizations contacted and interviewed:

Lake Koocanusa Community Council

East Kootenay Invasive Plant Council

Rocky Mountain Trench Natural Resources Society

Kootenay Livestock Association

Waldo Stockbreeders Association

**Grasmere Stockbreeders Association** 

Local Community & Recreation Societies (e.g. Triangle Women's Institute, Wardner, Elko)

Kootenay Backcountry Horsemen

**Kootenay Power Boat Association** 

Kootenay Rockies ATV Club

Kootenav Rockies Tourism

**Kootenay Conservation Program** 

Elkford ATV Club

**Kootenay Power Boat Association** 

East Kootenay Integrated Lake Management Plan

Cranbrook Visitor Information Centre

Fernie Visitor Information Centre

Tourism Fernie

West Side Lake Association

Cranbrook-based organizer of a large spring mud-bogging event (no formal organization)

## Declined or no response

East Kootenay Guides & Outfitters Assn

Elk River Alliance

East Kootenay Wildlife Association

Wildsight

**Rocky Mountain Naturalists** 

Friends of Lake Koocanusa

Cranbrook Rod and Gun Club

Fernie Trails Alliance

Fernie Rod and Gun Club

Baynes Lake & Jaffray Recreation Societies

East Kootenay Hunters Association

## 11. Appendix E: Case Studies

The following five case studies were reviewed:

- 1. Bear Creek Recreation Site (Central Okanagan, BC)
- 2. Ghost Waiparous Area (western Alberta)
- 3. Kootenai National Forest Koocanusa Reservoir Area (northwestern Montana)
- 4. Upper Arrow Lakes Reservoir Drawdown Area Management Plan (Revelstoke, BC)
- 5. Chilliwack River Valley FRPA Section 58 Order (Lower Mainland, BC)

Several lessons were learned from the case studies which have been incorporated into the recommendations for Crown land recreation in the Koocanusa area. The following is a brief summary of the key lessons learned the case studies:

- Containing and controlling ORV use through specific designation of permitted and restricted areas, along with good communication of outreach materials (trail maps, online, local radio and printed media etc.), has proven to be an effective means of reducing recreation impacts in other jurisdictions such as Bear Creek, Ghost-Waiparous, and Kootenai National Forest;
- Restricting Crown land camping and recreation use in areas of existing intensive use, as
  done in the Chilliwack Valley, is possible if sufficient resources are allocated and
  stakeholder consultation completed;
- Restrictions to public use should be legally enforceable through the application of Provincial legislation. Voluntary restrictions such as the Code of Conduct in place for the Upper Arrow Lakes Drawdown Area are not as effective;
- Providing basic camping facilities in designated areas can be effective at reducing negative impacts by moving recreational users from unmanaged dispersed camping areas to designated sites;
- Providing a managed network of designated, purpose-built ORV trails will attract ORV users and reduce pressure and associated impacts on unmanaged riding areas;
- Ongoing funding and support for education, outreach, and enforcement has been key to success in most case study areas;
- A strong and well-supported local stewardship group is an important success factor; and
- Implementing recreation management measures as part of a well-planned and strategic effort is more likely to be successful than measures implemented unsystematically.

#### **Bear Creek Recreation Site**

#### Context

The Bear Creek Recreation Site comprises approximately 35,000 ha of Crown Land located approximately 15 km northwest of Kelowna, BC. It is the largest Recreation Site, and the largest managed Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) area in the province. It currently contains approximately 200 km of designated, signed, and maintained OHV trails as well as two developed campgrounds.

The area was designated as a Recreation Resource Management Zone in the Okanagan-Shuswap Land and Resource Management Plan that was completed in 2001. In addition to a 40 year history as a destination for off road vehicle use, the area is also used for other forms of recreation as well as commercial uses such as forestry, ranching and gravel quarrying. The Bear Creek Recreation Site is also located within one of the five community watersheds operated by the District of West Kelowna (Lakeview Service Area). The area also borders private property with residences.

### **Scope of Issues**

Prior to implementing mitigation measures, issues of concern in the area stemmed from two primary activities: OHV use and unmanaged dispersed camping.

Impacts associated with OHV use included:

- Damage to sensitive grasslands, particularly from motorcycle hill climbs on steep open slopes, the creation of new OHV trails, and braiding of existing trails;
- Soil erosion from poorly located OHV trails;
- Disturbance of wildlife;
- Water quality concerns related to soil erosion;
- Impacts to livestock on range lands; and
- Excessive noise.

Impacts associated with unmanaged dispersed camping included:

- Large parties;
- Site degradation from littering and garbage accumulation;
- Water quality and health concerns from lack of toilet facilities; and
- Damage to soils and vegetation from new campsites becoming established.

#### **Solutions**

- 1. The area was designated as a provincial Recreation Site in 2007, managed by the Recreation Sites and Trails program of the BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations. This designation enabled the provincial government to implement legislative controls to manage motor vehicle use and to enter into a stewardship agreement for the management of a motorized recreational trail system and associated designated campgrounds. It also provided a means to secure funding to achieve management objectives.
- 2. A stewardship agreement was signed between the Recreation Sites and Trails program and the Okanagan Trail Riders Association to co-manage the Recreation Site.
- 3. An operations plan was completed in 2010 to provide guidance for the implementation of a managed, sustainable OHV trail system.
- 4. A designated trail system was established, and OHV use was restricted to the designated trails only. Trails were inventoried, mapped, and classified by their width (single track for motorcycles only and double track for motorcycles and quads) and their difficulty (green -

- easiest, blue more difficult, and black most difficult). A "trail ranger" program was initiated using volunteers from the OTRA to monitor the trail system for maintenance issues, compliance with regulations, and to educate users. In 2013 a \$15/day trail fee was imposed to cover operational costs.
- 5. A trail rehabilitation and construction program was initiated, and is still ongoing, to ensure the trails are sustainable. Actions have included closing and re-routing unsustainable trail sections, establishing drainage and erosion control, bridging creek crossings and wet areas, and construction of new, sustainably built trails. The trail system caters to all abilities, from beginner to expert. There are skill development areas designed for young and beginning riders.
- 6. A grassland rehabilitation program was completed to restore sensitive areas impacted by off-trail OHV use. This involved installing permanent barriers and signage to exclude OHVs from sensitive areas, scarifying and re-seeding hill climbing areas.
- 7. Fencing and cattle guards were installed to prevent problems with livestock ranging in the vicinity of the trail system.
- 8. An educational program was initiated and presented in the form of signs, brochures, maps, and by having an on-site host and trail rangers. The objective was to inform users about trail and grassland restoration efforts and the rationale behind them, responsible OHV riding etiquette and responsible camping and campfire practices.
- 9. Significant enforcement resources were dedicated to the site for the first 2 years. This joint effort by the RCMP and the BC Conservation Officer Service was primarily focused on reducing the number of weekend parties taking place in the area.
- 10. A designated campground with basic facilities was established at the main trailhead staging area, and a smaller, more rustic campground established a short distance away.

#### Results

Overall this project has been very successful in achieving management objectives. Specifically, successes have been noted on the following:

- A solid relationship has been built between the land manager (Recreation Sites and Trails BC) and the stewardship group (Okanagan Trail Riders Association) and the cooperative management situation is functioning well.
- Cross country OHV travel and hill climbing has been curtailed, and impacted grasslands have largely been rehabilitated.
- Water quality has improved and impacted stream and riparian area crossings have been rehabilitated through trail upgrades and re-routing initiatives.
- Compliance with OHV guidelines and policies has dramatically improved through the combination of enforcement, education, and through the informal "peer pressure" exerted on non-conforming riders from respectful users.
- Dispersed random camping, while still permitted, is not a problem in the area anymore because camping parties are generally choosing the camp at the designated sites where there are basic visitor facilities.
- Incidences of partying and non-respectful dispersed camping have significantly decreased.
- The Recreation Site has become a major tourism draw for the area through a combination of media reports, local marketing efforts, and word-of-mouth. The trail system, designed specifically for OHV use, has gained a reputation for high quality riding on interesting and well maintained trails and is attracting many non-residents to the area.

#### Challenges

Despite the overall success of this project there have been many challenges along the way. Some challenges are ongoing. The following is a summary of challenges with the project:

- Gaining consensus on management objectives with area stakeholders proved challenging.
- The area's transition has taken time to implement. It has been ongoing for 8 years and there are still projects identified in the operations plan that have not been completed.
- The transition has required a big investment of volunteer labour. This requires the involvement of a healthy stewardship organization with the capacity to conduct on-site work and fundraising activities.
- The transition required a lot of funding to get to its current state. As of 2011 over \$1.5 million had been spent on the project. Approximately 1/3 of that funding came from the BC Government with the remainder coming from a combination of successful grant applications and funding initiatives. The recently implemented trail fees are returning approximately \$40,000-50,000 annually.
- Isolated incidences of parties and vandalism are still occurring; however, these events are not typically associated with recreational users of the managed campgrounds and trails system.

#### Reference

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## **Ghost - Waiparous Area**

#### Context

The Ghost-Waiparous Area comprises approximately 150,000 ha of public forest land located along the eastern edge of the Rocky Mountains approximately 70 km northwest of Calgary, Alberta. The area is very popular with outdoor recreationists due to its scenic mountainous terrain and close proximity to Calgary.

The area has been known as a destination for Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) use since the 1960's with its extensive network of trails, roads, and seismic cut lines. OHV use in the area increased significantly in 1978 when a number of former OHV riding areas were closed to motorized use with the creation of Kananaskis Country southwest of Calgary. In addition to OHV use, the Ghost – Waiparous Area is also popular for other recreational activities including hiking, hunting, rock and ice climbing, fishing, and horseback riding.

In 1988 a land use planning process resulted in the *Ghost River Sub-Regional Integrated Resource Plan*. Increasing demand for recreational opportunities in the area over the following 15 years, due in part to the city of Calgary's rapid growth, led to problems with user conflict, public safety, and damage to natural resource values. In 2005, following a 2-year public consultation process, the *Ghost-Waiparous Operational Access Management Plan* was completed by an advisory team comprised of representative from several provincial and municipal government agencies. An update to this access management plan is planned within the next few years, in conjunction with the implementation of the 2014 South Saskatchewan Regional Plan.

## Scope of Issues

The three primary concerns that were expressed during the public consultation process leading up to the 2005 Ghost-Waiparous Operational Access Management Plan were unmanaged motorized OHV use, random camping, and large parties.

OHV use and random camping were identified as being threats to the natural resource values, while OHV use, large parties, and random camping were identified as activities that have a negative impact on the enjoyment of other recreational users.

### **Solutions**

- 1. The area was designated as a Public Land Use Zone (PLUZ) under the administration of the Alberta Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Resource Development (ESRD). This designation enabled government to implement legislative controls to protect sensitive natural resource values and manage conflicting land use activities.
- 2. A stewardship committee was formed with representation from various recreational user groups, industry, and other stakeholders.
- 3. A designated trail system was established, and a trail management strategy was implemented in collaboration with the stewardship committee. The trail management strategy is adaptive, with flexibility to add or remove trails from the system, and to impose seasonal closures to reduce damage to resource values. Changes, additions, or major maintenance projects on the trail system must be recommended by the stewardship committee prior to undergoing a referral and approval process by the ESRD.
- 4. OHV use was restricted to designated trails only. Trails have been inventoried and classified into three types according to their suitability for vehicles of various types (Motorcycle, Quad/Side by Side, Truck). Trails are well signed, with numbered posts located at intervals that correspond to points on the accompanying map of the Ghost PLUZ. In addition to the standard map, a digital geo-referenced and GPS compatible map has been made available for download to enable recreationists to know exactly where they are located in relation to map

- features, including areas where restrictions are in place.
- 5. Random camping was limited to camp sites located at least 1 km away from the boundaries of Provincial Recreation Areas or other restricted areas. Provincial Recreation Areas are managed by Alberta Parks with outdoor recreation as the prime objective. They often contain developed and managed camping facilities. There are 8 Provincial Recreation Areas within the Ghost PLUZ.
- 6. Increased education, compliance, and enforcement effort, with ongoing monitoring of activity and the addition of extra resources during peak use periods. Education and prevention efforts were focused on Alberta's "Respect the Land" program. The education, compliance, and enforcement work was carried out by a combination of forest officers, conservation officers, and "Guardians", seasonal employees that would patrol the roads and trails to complete monitoring, education and outreach work.

#### **Results**

In general the management of the Ghost-Waiparous area has improved since the implementation of the 2005 *Ghost-Waiparous Operational Access Management Plan.* There have been some notable successes, but there are also some ongoing challenges.

### **Successes**

- The creation of the Ghost Stewardship Monitoring Group is a major success. While there were many challenges involved with establishing this as a functional body, it is now a very well organized and committed group of volunteers that are invaluable in assisting the Alberta government manage the area.
- The increase in education, compliance, and enforcement resulted in a significant increase in regulatory compliance and a reduction in environmental damage.
- The digital GPS map is proving to be an effective tool to help recreationists comply with regulations by showing them where they are in relation to restricted areas.

#### Challenges

- Establishing a functional stewardship group took a lot of work over multiple years. It also required the involvement of a private facilitator to assist in achieving compromise among the stakeholders.
- The sustainability of the trail system was and still is a major challenge because it is essentially comprised of old industrial access roads that were not designed for repeated, heavy OHV use. The trail system has received a lot of improvements over the years but there are still many problem areas to address. This problem is compounded by the increasing number of OHV users accessing the area combined with the technological advancement of these vehicles that makes access faster and easier than in the past.
- Random camping is still having an impact on the natural environment. This is particularly noticeable near water and riparian areas. This is because these areas are typically more sensitive to disturbance than drier areas and because these sites are experiencing heavy use because most parties prefer to camp near water.
- Parties and disrespectful camping practices are still occurring; this is almost exclusively happening on long weekends (especially the May 24 long weekend each year). Party sites are typically left in a mess when the users leave the area. As most of the party-goers tend to camp in tents, human waste disposal associated with these events is a problem. This contrasts to the typical camping party that utilizes a self-contained RV with toilet facilities and holding tanks that are used for the duration of the stay.

- Funding for restoration of ecosystems damaged from past OHV use has been very difficult to obtain. The majority of restoration work to date has been completed using equipment operated by industrial users working in the area on a voluntary basis.
- Recent changes to regulatory policy has removed enforcement role from Forest Officers; while this has had minimal effect on educational/outreach initiative, this change has resulted in a reduced capacity for law enforcement.
- The successful "Guardian" program has been eliminated due to recent funding reductions in the ESRD.

### References

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#### Kootenai National Forest - Koocanusa Reservoir Area

#### Context

Federally-administered lands in the Kootenay National Forest (NF) in the vicinity of the Koocanusa Reservoir near the Canada-United States of America (US) border include lands within approximately 5 km of the high water mark on both the east and west sides of the reservoir and extends from the international border south for approximately 11 km to the town of Rexford, Montana. The area shares many of the same characteristics as the Lake Koocanusa area on the Canadian side of the border: a mix of open forests and grasslands with relatively gentle topography adjacent to the reservoir. The area includes a mixture of Kootenai National Forest lands (approximately 40%), private lands (approximately 40%), and Montana state lands (approximately 20%), and is a popular destination for boating, camping, and Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) use.

### Scope of Issues

There are currently few specific issues related to the use of NF land in the Koocanusa Reservoir area. This has been the situation for some time, as there has been no need to implement measures to address land use issues in recent years.

## **Regulatory Structure**

There have been no specific issues identified that have required the implementation of solutions for many years. The current regulatory structure on all NF lands in the US is generally sufficient to address many of the issues experienced in the Koocanusa area. Below is a description of the current camping and OHV Recreational Opportunities in area.

## **Camping Opportunities**

- There are four developed campgrounds on NF land within the case study area. The Rexford Bench site located at the south end of the study area adjacent to the town of Rexford features full facilities (potable water, flush toilets, sani-dump, boat launch etc.) while the other three (Tobacco River, Swisher Lake, and Gateway Boat Camp) are more rustic with fewer visitor facilities. The Gateway Boat Camp, located on the east shore of Lake Koocanusa adjacent to the international border is primarily accessed by boat, with alternate hike-in access.
- Vehicle-based dispersed camping is permitted along most roadways open to vehicle traffic, as indicated on the *Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM)*.

### **OHV Opportunities**

- The most current *MVUM* shows that OHV use is limited to the designated Douglas Hill OHV area and areas below the high water mark on Lake Koocanusa. There are no Forest Service Roads open to OHVs; all vehicles on these roads must be legal for highway travel.
- The Douglas Hill OHV area contains approximately 200 acres of designated OHV (highway and non-highway legal) cross-country area and 9 miles of designated trails (highway and non-highway legal).
- Approximately 3,600 acres of designated cross-country OHV area (highway and non-highway legal vehicles) is located below high water mark on Lake Koocanusa. Within the drawdown area there places where vehicle use is not permitted to protect identified archaeology sites; these sites are marked on the ground for easy identification by OHV users.
- These two designated OHV use areas are fully managed by NF staff. The NF does receive
  occasional assistance by volunteer groups but there are no formal stewardship or comanagement agreements in place. There are no trail fees to use either the Douglas Hill OHV

Area or the Koocanusa drawdown area.

• There is an annual weekend OHV event held in early spring in the reservoir drawdown area called "Penco Fun Days" that typically draws 1500-2000 participants. This event has been occurring for approximately 18 years.

#### Results

Below is a description of the regulatory structure on NF Lands across the US. These regulations have been in place for many years.

## Camping and Land Occupancy

- Camping on NF lands occurs at both designated sites and at dispersed sites.
  - Designated sites are managed campgrounds with individual camp sites, toilets, and other visitor facilities such as sani-stations and boat launches. Most have supplied drinking water. Fees are charged at most sites during the summer operating season.
  - O Dispersed sites are non-designated locations where camping is permitted. In most cases these are undeveloped sites with no facilities provided; however, pit toilets may be in place near popular dispersed camping areas. There are no fees charged or permits required for dispersed camping.
- All camping on NF land is subject to a 14 day maximum length of stay. If a party would like to continue camping after the 14 day maximum a new site must be chosen that is a minimum of 5 miles away from the original site.
- At least one person must occupy a camp site during the first night after camping equipment has been set up. Leaving the site unoccupied for subsequent nights is allowed only with the permission of a forest ranger, up to the 14-day maximum length of stay.
- Dispersed camping that is vehicle-based (i.e. vehicle is located at camp site) is restricted to permitted areas. These areas are shown on the *MVUM* for the forest district, which is updated each year. Permitted areas are shown on the map as being permitted on the left side, right side, or both sides of identified roads. Limited cross country vehicle travel is permitted to access the campsites, up to a maximum of 300 feet from the road edge, as long as this travel does not cause resource damage. No cutting or damaging of vegetation is allowed when accessing dispersed camp sites.
- Dispersed camping that is non-vehicle based (i.e. hiking/biking/horse access) is not restricted to designated sites. Vehicles may be left parked in safe areas within 1 vehicle length of the road when non-motorized dispersed camping away from the road.
- All users camping at dispersed sites must practice "leave-no-trace" backcountry ethics.

## OHV Use

- Motor vehicle use is tightly regulated; the operation of *ANY* vehicle on NF land is restricted to designated roads and trails. The designated routes are shown on the district's annually-updated *MVUM*. The current map will show which roads and trails are open to *Highway Legal Vehicles* and which roads and trails are open to *All Vehicles*.
- Wheeled cross-country travel (motorized or non-motorized) is also restricted to designated areas and shown on the *MVUM*.
- In addition to restrictions on where motorized use is permitted, there are also seasonal restrictions on when motorized use is permitted and restricted on several roads within the case study area. These seasonal restrictions are displayed on the *MVUM*.
- OHVs operated on Forest Service Roads must be registered as a motor vehicle with a licence plate. They must be street legal and the operator must have a valid driver's licence. Helmets are required for drivers or passengers under 18 years of age.

 OHVs operated on designated OHV trails or cross country areas must have a Montana OHV registration decal; un-licenced operators must have completed at OHV safety course and have received a Safety Certificate. OHVs must also be equipped with a spark arrestor and must meet a 96 DBA sound limit.

### Organized Recreational Events

- A *Special Use Authorization* is required for organized recreational events that are commercial in nature (there are fees charged or income derived from the event), that involve more than 75 participants/spectators, or that require occupation or building in order to hold the event.
- All proposals for *Special Use Authorizations* are reviewed by the National Forest for appropriateness prior to approval. All approved events are charged a fee.

## **Review of Current Regulatory Compliance**

In general there are few problems with compliance with camping, OHV, and organized event regulations in the case study area. This is primarily because these regulations are applied universally on National Forest lands in the US and have been in place for many years. The regulations are generally well known and well accepted by the public. However, to ensure that compliance remains good the NF does conduct regular compliance and enforcement patrols, particularly on weekends throughout the summer. Most efforts are focused on compliance and enforcement rather than education because most people who are found contravening the regulations are doing so knowingly. The notable exception to this appears to be Canadian recreationists; this user group is reported to have the lowest rates of compliance because they are not accustomed to the strict regulations and typically require more education of what is and is not acceptable on NF lands.

## **Dispersed Camping**

- The dispersed camping areas are considered "un-managed"; however, due to the popularity of some areas a small crew of seasonal staff complete regular visits to the sites to ensure they are maintained in a clean and safe condition.
- Occasionally some camps are left in place for more than 14 days. In these cases all the equipment is removed and confiscated by forest officers.

### OHV Use

- Compliance with OHV regulations is generally good. Occasionally new, unsanctioned motorized trails/routes are discovered. These are targeted for enforcement patrols and through the use of surveillance equipment, and are restored to a natural condition as much as possible.
- Extra enforcement is conducted for the large *Penco Fun Days* event each year.

#### **Boat-Related Issues**

• Few boat-related issues have been reported. There appears to be very little use of houseboats on the US portion of the reservoir at this time. The only boat-related issue that was noted is long-term beaching of boats on the shoreline of the reservoir adjacent to private land. None of the private land holdings in the area are true waterfront parcels because in all cases there is a 300-foot wide strip of NF land that is between the reservoir high-water mark and private land lot boundaries – it is on this NF land that the boats are left. This problem is an issue every year.

#### Reference

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## Upper Arrow Lakes Reservoir Drawdown Area Management Plan

#### Context

The Upper Arrow Lakes Reservoir Drawdown Area extends along the Columbia River from Revelstoke at the north end, to Arrowhead, 38 km to the south. This section of the Columbia Valley averages approximately 2 km in width and is very flat, which means that when the water levels in the Arrow Reservoir are low (typically from late fall to early spring) much of the reservoir, with the exception of the river channel, is comprised of exposed grasslands, wetlands, and beach areas. In total the drawdown area is approximately 5000 hectares and is made up of a mixture of BC Hydro property (60%), Crown land (35%), and private or municipal property (5%).

When accessible, the drawdown lands are used by local residents for walking, cycling, nature viewing, dog walking, cross-country skiing, horseback riding, and off-road vehicle riding. Most of these activities occur on old roadways railway beds, and other pathways that pre-date the creation of the reservoir. The drawdown lands contain important fish and wildlife habitat, primarily in the wetland and estuary areas.

In 2002 a Code of Conduct was developed to promote responsible recreational use of the drawdown zone. In 2005 the Upper Arrow Lakes Reservoir Drawdown Management Plan was created to provide guidance to BC Hydro on the management of the drawdown zone.

## **Scope of Issues**

One objective of developing the Upper Arrow Lakes Reservoir Drawdown Management Plan in 2005 was to address issues associated with recreational use of the drawdown zone. Specific concerns included:

- Conflicts between recreational users (primarily motorized vs. non-motorized users);
- Damage to sensitive ecosystems and disturbance of wildlife from the use of motorized vehicles in the drawdown lands;
- Trespassing and vandalism on private land in and adjacent to the drawdown lands;
- Litter and dumping:
- Parties and noise; and
- Campfires and potential for wildfires.

#### **Solutions**

A number of actions recommended in the management plan have been implemented:

- 1. Formation of a Liaison Committee to provide ongoing advice and input on the implementation of the management plan:
- 2. Prohibiting camping and campfires;
- 3. Zoning areas where the use of motorized vehicles is permitted and not permitted;
- 4. Conducting a public education/outreach campaign to inform the users of the Code of Conduct and other rules and regulations pertaining the use of the drawdown lands;
- 5. Posting educational signage at designated access points:
- 6. Gating, ditching, and blocking roads and routes to limit access at problem areas on Private, Crown, and BC Hydro land;
- 7. Seasonal students patrolling the drawdown lands to conduct outreach and educational activities as well as monitor compliance with Code of Conduct.

#### Result

#### Successes

Compliance with the Code of Conduct and other rules and regulations increased in the years
following the implementation of the plan, and has now stabilized at a reasonable level. This
has resulted in fewer incidences of parties, dumping, damage to the environment, and
person-caused wildfires; and

Relationships between BC Hydro and stakeholder groups has improved, which has
increased the level of voluntary compliance with the Code of Conduct and other rules and
regulations.

## **Challenges**

- The Code of Conduct and management plan recommendations are generally voluntary without legally binding and enforceable regulations. BC Hydro land cannot be legally designated to manage public use (i.e. Wildlife Management Areas, FRPA Section 58 orders etc.) in the same way as Crown land;
- Enforcement and educational resources are limited; the summer outreach staffing program is no longer in place. BC Hydro is therefore quite reliant upon the RCMP and Provincial enforcement agencies to deliver these services;
- Property boundaries in the drawdown lands are not clearly distinguishable, leading to difficulty for users to determine where their activities are permitted in relation to private, BC Hydro, and Crown-owned property;
- There are still ongoing problems with vandalism of educational signage;
- Several of the problematic access points originate from private land with limited options; and
- Organizational budgeting changes within BC Hydro have resulted in less resources being dedicated to implementing the recommendations of the management plan.

### Reference

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## Chilliwack River Valley FRPA Section 58 Order

#### Context

The lower Chilliwack River Valley includes a 5 km stretch of valley bottom adjacent to the Chilliwack River downstream of the Tamihi Bridge. The Chilliwack River Valley experiences heavy recreational use, with camping, hiking, angling, motorized vehicle use, and white-water paddling. There are several Provincial Recreation Sites with basic camping facilities located along the Chilliwack River.

### **Scope of Issues**

The popularity of the lower Chilliwack Valley has been creating problems related to overuse of unmanaged sites on Crown land since the late 1980's. Most of the issues were related to overnight camping and partying at unofficial campsites and parking areas. Specifically, the problems included garbage, vandalism, tree cutting, human waste disposal, out of control campfires, and noise complaints as well as damage to sensitive ecosystems from the use of motor vehicles, particularly around creeks and shoreline areas.

#### **Solutions**

The issues described above continued to get worse until a decision was made in 2006 to identify and implement solutions. A working group consisting of representatives from various Federal, Provincial, Regional and Municipal governments and local First Nations was formed to come up with a strategy. This group consulted with local stakeholder organizations and in the end decided to conduct a pilot project to use Section 58 of the Forest and Range Protection Act to prohibit overnight camping and parking in the lower Chilliwack River corridor outside of designated Provincial Recreation Sites.

The Section 58 order was implemented in 2007, in conjunction with other actions to support compliance with the order. Other actions included:

- An educational campaign with signs, brochures, newspaper articles, and TV interviews;
- Placement of garbage bins in several key sites;
- Increased presence of compliance and enforcement staff; and
- Engineered solutions to close problematic access points to vehicle use (gates, ditches, lock block barriers etc.).

#### **Results**

The implementation of the Section 58 order and associated actions has required a lot of effort and investment of resources over the years but it has been very successful in resolving the issues. There are, however, some ongoing challenges.

#### Successes

- The public outreach campaign was successful in communicating the changes to camping and parking regulations;
- The increased enforcement presence was critical to ensuring a good level of compliance. This was most important for the first 2-3 years to break to cycle of abuse of these sites;
- Traditional impacted camping/party spots and access roads have begun to grow in and recover from past abuse; and
- The visitor experience of camping parties at nearby managed recreation sites has improved, and attendance at these sites has increased.

## Challenges

• Implementing the Section 58 order required a lot of consultation with users and stakeholder

groups to ensure buy-in;

- Initially there was a lot of participation and financial contributions from the agencies that
  participated in the working group discussions, but now that the solutions have been
  implemented and most of the problems resolved, these contributions have largely dried up.
  Finding a source of long-term funding to perform basic operational maintenance (sign
  replacement, garbage bin servicing, maintaining road closures etc.) has been challenging;
  and
- In the first few years after the implementation of the Section 58 order some of the problems were simply shifted to other sites further up the valley. This created the need to dedicate effort towards discouraging overnight camping and partying at those sites, where overnight use of Crown land is still legally permitted. These efforts have been focused on engineered access controls and have proven to be successful because now the problem users need to travel quite a distance up the valley, which is enough of a deterrent to prevent significant issues.

#### Reference

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KOOCANUSA AREA SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CROWN LAND RECREATION

## 12. Appendix F: Issues Maps

Appendix F1: Access and environmental damage

Appendix F2: Access and disturbance to wildlife and habitat

Appendix F3: Crown land camping

Appendix F4: Wildfire risk

Appendix F5: Crown land grazing Appendix F6: Invasive species

