

APPENDIX C

Summary Results from Public Open Houses

A. First Open House – January 29, 1998

Attendance and Demographics

A total of 200 members of the general public attended the Open House of which 48% were from Burnaby, 25% from the Tri-cities area (Coquitlam, Port Moody, and Port Coquitlam), 13% from Vancouver, 6% from New Westminster, and 7% from outer lying districts as far as Squamish. The largest age group represented was 35-44 years of age followed by 25-34 years. Of those who responded to the questionnaire, the majority were male (66%).

There were 175 questionnaires completed for an 87.5% response rate. Form letters from 57 participants were received from the mountain bike community requesting that the conservation area remain open to mountain bikers. A petition with five signatures and three letters was received from the Burnaby Horsemen's Association expressing that horses should have the right to use the trails of Burnaby Mountain.

Visitation and Access

Three-quarters of respondents use the conservation area all seasons of the year. The conservation area is frequently visited five or more times per month (57%) with the most popular means of arrival by bicycle (39%) and by car (38%). The most popular access points are along North Road (33%) and from trailheads at Hastings (13%).

Activities and Facility Use

The most popular activities were mountain biking on steep trails followed by hiking or walking, entertaining visitors, and recreational biking. Correspondingly, trails for biking and hiking are the most frequently used conservation area facilities. Just over half of respondents (59%) feel that facilities are meeting their expectations. The most common reasons for facilities not meeting expectations related to the condition of trails and the need to recognize existing trail uses.

The most popular trails for hiking or walking were Joe's Trail (Trail 'G') followed by Cardiac Hill ('H'), Mel's ('J'), Perimeter ('F', 'G' and 'H'), and the Powerline right-of-way ('M1' and 'M2'). The most popular trails for mountain biking were Joe's ('G') followed by Mel's ('J'), Cardiac Hill ('H'), Perimeter ('F', 'G' and 'H'), and the Powerline right-of-way ('M1' and 'M2').

Resource Management Priorities

All of the biophysical resource management issues presented in the questionnaire were valued relatively high in importance with the top three being: i) retention and enhancement of forested areas, ii) protecting streams from degradation due to trail use, and iii) reducing conflicts between deer and vehicles. The least important

biophysical resource management issue was improving wildlife interpretation.

Of the cultural, recreational and visual management issues presented in the questionnaire, the highest average importance ranking was for the construction of bridges, barriers, cross drains and other trail improvement to permit more intensive trail use while protecting the environment. Other issues ranked considerably lower in importance. The issue judged to be the least important was providing viewpoints accessible by car.

The questionnaire also presented a number of management "ideas" relating to trail use and interpretation. Most ideas were judged as moderately important and all ideas ranked closely. The greatest support was for: i) relocating or closing trails in environmentally sensitive areas, ii) providing signs and maps to orient users, and iii) providing signs with rules for trail use and other activities within the conservation area. The management idea that received the least support was the provision of viewing platforms or towers at key viewpoints.

Conservation Area Vision

A draft vision statement for the conservation area was displayed at the Open House. Approximately half of respondents (49%) agreed with the proposed vision. An additional 25% did not agree, 6% were unsure, and 20% did not comment. Of those who did not agree with the vision, the most common reason was that the vision did not explicitly define allowable recreation activities.

Additional Comments

Respondents were asked if there were any activities or facilities not currently available, that they would like to see in the conservation area. Some of the typical responses were:

- legalizing or improving the mountain biking trails (20 responses);
- legalizing or providing access for equestrian use (10); and
- leave the conservation area the way it is (8).

Respondents were asked if there were any current activities or facilities not felt to be appropriate to the conservation area. Some of the typical responses were:

- mountain biking (16);
- motorcycles (15); and
- further development, e.g., paving, parking, restaurants, housing (13).

Respondents were asked what they value most in the conservation area. Some of the typical responses were:

- natural setting, wilderness, forests, wildlife, ecosystem aspects (76);
- mountain biking trails (41); and
- the trail network in general (32).

B. Results of Second Public Open House – September 30, 1998

Attendance

A total of 106 members of the general public attended the Open House of which 75% were from Burnaby. Eighty-six questionnaires were completed for a response rate of 81.1%.

Conservation area Vision, Mandate and Policies

Participants were asked whether they supported the vision, mandate and policies.

- 80.2 % supported the vision
- 73.3 % supported the mandate
- 72.1 % supported the policies.

Draft Concept Plan

Participants were asked whether they supported the proposed Concept Plan for the conservation area and the reasons for their response.

- 57.0 % supported the plan
- 21.0 % did not support the plan
- 3.5 % were unsure
- 18.5 % did not provide a "yes" or "no" response.

Many of those who supported the plan liked the compromise between different types of uses and between recreational use and conservation. Many of those who did not support the plan were concerned about allocation of trails among users, loss of bike access to some trails, and that proposed improvements would alter the natural character of the trails.

Long-term Options

Participants were asked whether they supported the inclusion of a number of "long-term options" in the Management Plan.

- 66.3 % supported a lower loop connection on the north side between the former target range sites and the Harry Jerome Sports Centre.
- 62.8 % supported creation of a parallel route above Mel's Trail to separate use on this popular trail.
- 54.6 % supported designating some trails on the south slope as single-use trails.

Priorities for Implementation

A number of recommendations for conservation area management were presented at the Open House. Participants were asked to help prioritize which recommendations were most important by listing their top three priority items. The recommendations most frequently listed were:

- upgrading trails highly prone to erosion, where appropriate;
- developing and implementing a Vegetation Management Plan;
- preventing damage from trail use in more ecologically sensitive areas;
- finalizing evaluation criteria for the mountain bike conditional review; and
- protecting watercourses and wildlife habitat.

The recommendation that received the least support was the re-naming of trails.

C. Results of Third Open House – October 28, 1998

Attendance

105 members of the public attended the Open House. Of the participants, 46 submitted written comment sheets, seven made oral presentations to the Parks and Recreation Commission, and over 20 provided oral comments during a questions and answer period.

Comments on the Plan

The most frequently mentioned comments on the Management Plan were:

- It is unfair to single out mountain bike use as the only activity subject to conditional review (received 8 similar responses);
- The City of Burnaby should allow volunteers (i.e., mountain bikers) to help maintain trails and provide input into trail standards (7 responses);
- Equestrian use should be permitted on the Trans-Canada Trail (6 responses);
- The plan represents a good compromise (5 responses); and
- Trail closures will result in erosion and degradation of remaining trails (4 responses).

Management Priorities

Participants were asked to list their top three priority items for implementation. The following items appeared the most frequently:

- install proper signage and trail maps (7 responses);
- maintain and/or upgrade trails (7);
- initiate watercourse protection and restoration measures (7);
- retain consolidated blocks of habitat and/or minimize fragmentation (6);
- enforce mountain bike conditional use (6);
- enforce leash regulation (6);
- provide trail linkages to other parks, neighbourhoods, or SFU (5);
- initiate education programs (5);
- develop a Vegetation Management Plan (4); and
- establish a public advisory committee (4).