

# Development Plan for Smoke Bluffs Park, Squamish, B.C.



ADVENTURE  
CENTRE

DOWNTOWN

Presented to the District of Squamish  
by the Smoke Bluffs Park Advisory Group

May 2006



**Development Plan  
for  
Smoke Bluffs Park,  
Squamish, B.C.**

*Submitted to:*

**District of Squamish**

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Squamish Access Society  
Climbers' Access Society of BC  
Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC  
Howe Sound Trials Riders Association  
Residents of the Area  
and  
District of Squamish**

**May 2006**



## Message to the Reader from the Smoke Bluffs Park Advisory Group

This Park Development Plan was more than a year in the making, the result of countless hours of volunteer time for meetings, the exchange and debate of ideas, and consensus-building. The plan is built around a vision for Smoke Bluffs Park, and a framework designed to achieve that vision through the planned enhancement and stewardship of the park by District of Squamish in collaboration with community members, recreation organizations, and other partners.

The Mayor and Council in 2004 committed seed funding and resources to help create this plan through the efforts of our Advisory Group, comprising representatives of local and provincial recreation organizations, other interested citizens, and members of District staff and Council. As elements of the plan began to take shape early in 2005, members of the Advisory Group contacted all residents of the immediate area to invite them to an “open house” meeting to exchange ideas concerning park use, potential enhancements, and any management issues or concerns. Information also has been shared with Squamish Nation and stakeholders including neighbouring landowners and developers, BC Hydro, and BC Transmission Corporation. It is anticipated that various parties having interest in some aspect or other of Smoke Bluffs Park and its management, and members of the general public, may be stimulated by this document to engage in future discussions and decisions concerning the area.

At the outset it may be helpful to clarify what is a “park development plan”.

The Canadian Oxford Dictionary includes the following in its definitions for the verb “develop”:

- *Create or design;*
- *Realize the resource potential of;*
- *Bring or come to an active or visible state;*
- *Make or become bigger or fuller; and*
- *Elaborate more fully and systematically the details of.*

The following definitions are offered for “development”:

- *A stage of growth or advancement; and*
- *A significant change in a course of action, events, circumstances, etc.*

This Park Development Plan is concerned with the appropriate use, stewardship, and enhancement of select parcels of land comprising the Smoke Bluffs Park, and associated legal, governmental and administrative matters. While the core park area (DL 1957) was officially zoned for public use in 1995, additional areas of land owned by the District of Squamish and by others retain non-park zoning despite their intended inclusion in the park. Still other parcels of land that lay adjacent to the park area are designated but not yet developed for residential use, and are not well distinguished from the park “on the ground”. This document outlines the recreation resource values and potential of the Smoke Bluffs Park area, and maps out a course of action designed to bring the area into a visibly fuller and more formalized state as a *bona fide* park that the community can enjoy, share, and leave as a valuable legacy for future generations.

Note that this Park Development Plan at the time of its submission for consideration by the Mayor and Council does not necessarily reflect current District of Squamish policy; the suggested actions and priorities presented herein reflect the judgment and aspirations of the Smoke Bluffs Park Advisory Group.

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## **Acknowledgments**

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To a significant degree it is a product of the shared ideas, personal history, and expertise of volunteer members of the Smoke Bluffs Park Advisory Group, comprising:

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Glenn Woloski – *Heating contractor, trail builder (representing Howe Sound Trials Riders)*

Ethan Askey – *Environmental consultant (Co-Chair)*

It is duly noted that Steve Whittall, Lawrence Redfern, and Ethan Askey also facilitated and contributed to the park development planning process as professional associates of Confluence Environmental Consulting.

### **Photo credits:**

Kevin McLane (oblique aerial views)

Steve Whittall (landscape views)

Andrew Debore (trials riders)

Anders Ourom / Access Society (Adopt-A-Crag 2002)

Ethan Askey (most other photos)

As indicated or uncredited (others).



## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The Outdoor Recreation Capital of Canada

Squamish sits at the head of a scenic fjord, at the foot of massive granite monoliths, and in full view of glaciated mountain peaks. It marks a transition from sea to sky, located mid-way between Vancouver and Whistler along Highway 99. Squamish currently is home to about 15,000 people, and it serves as an outdoor playground for tens of thousands more. Its landforms, forests, wind, and waterways provide for a wide variety of outdoor sports and activities. Added to this natural endowment, there is an expanding system of parks and recreation facilities, forest roads, trails, and other amenities for public enjoyment in settings ranging from downtown oceanfront to Coast Mountains backcountry.

Squamish is gaining wider recognition by people from outside the region as a recreation destination, perhaps most notably for its rock climbing, but also for its great diversity and quality of recreational opportunity. Self-described and officially trademarked as “the Outdoor Recreation Capital of Canada”, Squamish is actively taking steps to enhance its growing reputation and to give shape to its economic and community future in a way that builds on and leverages its “natural capital” for outdoor recreation. In the long tradition of tapping the area’s natural wealth for human benefit, this new direction shows promise as a sustainable complement to other economic and lifestyle aspects of Squamish, and it stands to leave a considerable legacy for future generations.

Continued enjoyable use of Smoke Bluffs Park by residents and visitors - reflecting good stewardship, respectful behaviours and actions, and appropriate enhancements - could be considered a key performance indicator for Squamish in achieving its ambition to be the “Outdoor Recreation Capital of Canada”.

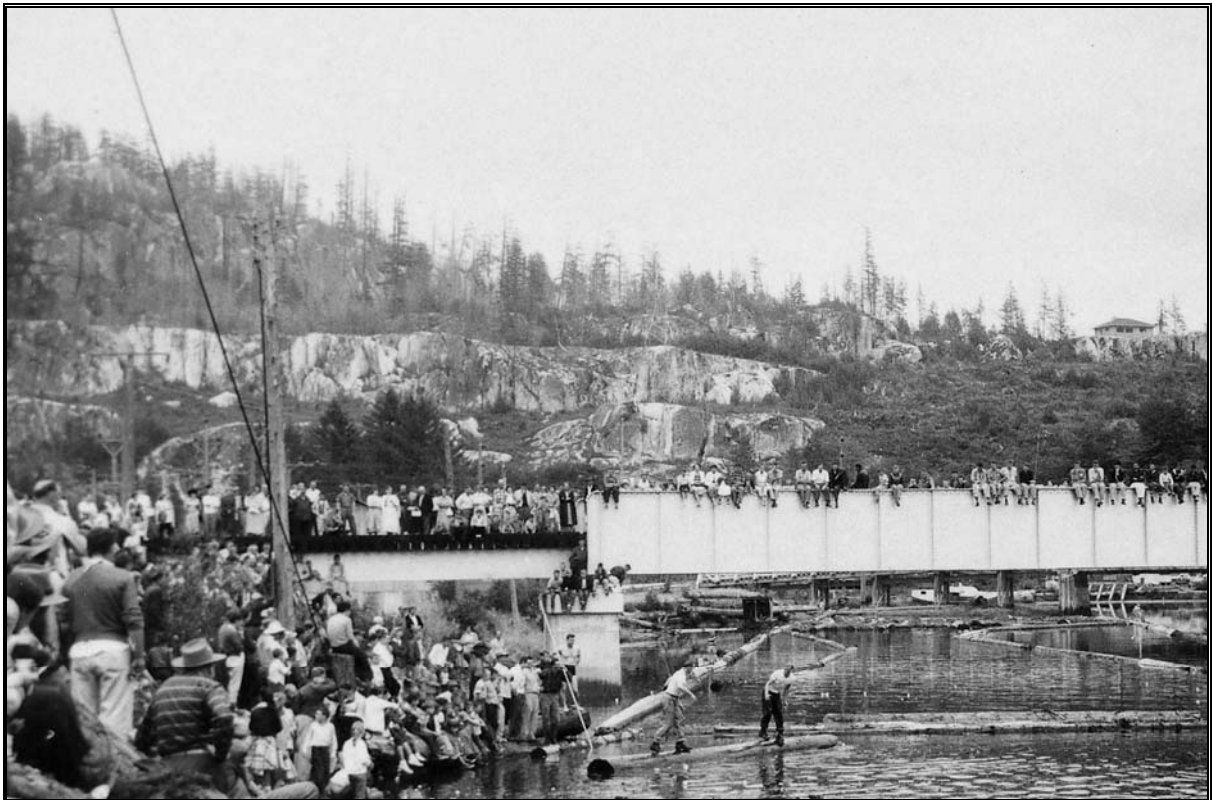
### 1.2 Introducing Smoke Bluffs Park

The Smoke Bluffs area is located immediately to the northeast of downtown Squamish, above Mamquam Blind Channel and along the eastern edge of Squamish River estuary (see *Maps 1* and *2*, attached). It is more or less centrally situated within Squamish, a hub in the local system of recreation trails and amenities. The Smoke Bluffs Park boundary is little more than a stone’s throw from the Squamish Adventure Center on Highway 99, and existing residential areas are adjacent on two sides. For neighbourhood residents, and to a lesser degree for other community members and visitors to the area, it is an easily accessible natural area with a trail system that is enjoyed for climbing, walking, running, biking, hiking and other recreational activities. While the bluffs in this area are dwarfed by the granite monoliths nearby in Stawamus Chief Provincial Park, they are particularly highly valued for rock climbing. The warm, quick-drying south and west aspects and variety of both sport (bolted) and traditional climbing routes established on quality granite crags are key features that earn Smoke Bluffs its popularity within the regional and international climbing community. These bluffs offer many excellent vantage points from which to view Howe Sound, and they present an interesting and undulating landscape for the casual walker and also for the “trials” rider.

Preservation of the area’s unique natural features for public enjoyment and for posterity was an idea first presented about twenty years ago (FMC 1987, Youds 1989), but achieved only recently through the dedication and perseverance of rock climbers and other people who appreciated these natural assets and shared a vision for the area as a legally designated park or protected area of some kind.

### 1.3 A Brief Recent History of the Smoke Bluffs

The area now known as the Smoke Bluffs falls within the traditional territory of the Squamish Nation. Although there are no known artifacts of their historic cultural and subsistence activities in this particular location, people of the Squamish Nation have inhabited this general area since time immemorial. The area's rugged, bluffy terrain presents a prominent backdrop to the port of Squamish and townsite that is shown in historic photos dating back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Being close to town and also to waterways, the more easily accessible lower portions of the present day park area were logged at least once in the past 120 years.



*Logger Sports event on the Mamquam Blind Channel, Smoke Bluffs in background (circa late 1950s)  
Photo courtesy of Squamish Town Center Association – Heritage Project*

In more recent times people have been walking through and exploring what used to be known as “Little Smoke Bluffs” for several decades, at least since the 1950s land subdivision and settlement in the Hospital Hill area. Rock climbing in the Squamish region became increasingly popular following the widely publicized 1961 first ascent of the “Grand Wall” of the Stawamus Chief monolith by Baldwin and Cooper. The first Smoke Bluffs climbing routes were established *circa* 1973. Over the past 30 years, the Smoke Bluffs area has exploded in popularity to reportedly become the most climbed area in the entire country. (The approximately 500 climbing routes in the Smoke Bluffs see an estimated 20,000 climber days per year). Other recreational user groups and increasing numbers of area residents came to explore and enjoy the area. Also, private residential development expanded into this higher elevation area close to downtown.

Concerned at the prospect of more subdivision and development of this area in the mid 1980s, the climbing community rallied to gain broader recognition of the area's unique natural qualities and associated recreational opportunities. They developed a formal proposal first presented in 1985 to local and provincial governments that the area be made a park, or otherwise have some sort of protective land use designation. District Lot 1957 – core of the Smoke Bluffs area used for climbing – was owned by the District of Squamish, and its future was uncertain. Surrounding lands were zoned for residential and industrial use.



The Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC (FMC) in 1987 had purchased three parcels of land (3 hectares total) west of DL 1957, and proposed they be combined with the District’s land to create a park. The FMC land purchase was initiated and supported within the local climbing community, and it was a key initial step taken by local climbers and the broader outdoor recreation community to get due recognition and protection of the area’s natural assets. However, neither BC Parks nor Squamish Council at that time was prepared to establish a park at the Smoke Bluffs.

Throughout the 1990s, with the development of the Harbour Heights subdivision in a key location in the Smoke Bluffs between several of the most popular crags, the FMC and the newly formed Climbers Access Society of BC made continuing efforts to co-exist with the new residents and enhance the area for climbers and residents alike. Protocols were established and communicated within the climbing community to address concerns relating to access, trespass, and waste disposal. Organized volunteer efforts over the years included trail maintenance and clean up. Limited amenities were maintained by user groups and, with the support of the District, a new parking lot was established off Loggers Lane as a means of reducing traffic and parking on residential streets such as Smoke Bluffs Road, Northridge and Plateau Drives.



Volunteers making trail drainage improvements, September 2005 “Adopt-a-Crag” event

Finally, in 2004 renewed efforts to formalize the park were made by a self-organized volunteer group of individuals having personal history and experience in the Smoke Bluffs area. At the Mayor’s request and with District funding, the group explored a park development concept and governance structure. The group’s report on this initiative and its budget request to further park planning and enhancement both were endorsed by Council early in 2005, thereby enabling further collaborative efforts of the District, recreational user groups, and other stakeholders in shaping the future of the Smoke Bluffs Park. Considerable work was done in 2005, with seed funding from the District, additional charitable grants secured by members of the Smoke Bluffs Park Advisory Group, and in-kind contributions of time and materials made by volunteers and local businesses. As a result of improvements made to key trails and the parking lot, and with the installation of directional signage and other amenities, the area increasingly is looking like a park. This Park Development Plan is the final product of the 2005 initiative.

**Smoke Bluffs Park**

Smoke Bluffs Park was established in 2006 by the Municipality of Squamish as a centre for outdoor recreation and appreciation of the natural landscape. The primary purposes of the park are to protect the granite formations and enable public enjoyment of the trails.

The unique natural environment you will find in these pleasant hills, the granite crags, the fine viewpoints over the surrounding mountains and the ocean, the hiking trails, and the sunny ambience are yours to enjoy from the people of Squamish.

Rockclimbing is the principal recreation activity in Smoke Bluffs Park, and began here in the early 1970s. In the 1980s, climbers and the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC began the process to establish this area as a park. Since that time the Smoke Bluffs have become the most popular year-round climbing centre in Canada. The trail system was established by climbers in the early days, and has evolved into what we benefit from today.

When enjoying the many viewpoints, please exercise caution near the tops of cliffs, stay well back from the edges, and act safely for the well-being of climbers and hikers below you.

The Smoke Bluffs Park Commission



Welcoming message and orientation map installed at park entrance kiosk in 2006



## 2.0 THE PARK PLANNING PROCESS

A forward-looking “vision statement” for the park was developed by the Smoke Bluffs Park Advisory Group, and flowing from that vision statement several goals were identified, with the intent of providing a clear focus and direction for future park development and management efforts.

### 2.1 Vision Statement

*Smoke Bluffs Park is a cornerstone of the local parks and recreation system, enjoyed and cared for by the people of this region, and shared with visitors. Its unique natural assets are protected in perpetuity for public use and appreciation. It is connected with other community recreational assets by a network of dedicated trails through surrounding neighbourhoods and green space. Highly visible and easily accessed, the park is a welcoming-ground to Squamish, and a testament to the community known as the “Outdoor Recreation Capital of Canada”.*

### 2.2 Goals for the Park

The ultimate purpose of the Smoke Bluffs Park is to:

1. Protect and retain the granite formations and other natural assets of the Smoke Bluffs area;
2. Enable and enhance public enjoyment of this area and its natural resources in a way that does not diminish its unique qualities and character;
3. Provide for multiple types of recreation activities within the park, primarily by relying on each user group for “self-management” of their activities and interactions;
4. Consolidate the crags in this area under an appropriate management regime that reflects and enhances the Smoke Bluffs’ wide renown for climbing use in particular; and
5. Establish Smoke Bluffs Park as a cornerstone of the Squamish municipal parks and outdoor recreation system, and encourage a strong sense of connectivity with other elements of the system.



*Unique natural assets and recreational opportunities to be protected in perpetuity.*

### 2.3 A Development Plan for the Park

The preparation of a Park Development Plan was identified by the Smoke Bluffs Park Advisory Group to be a high priority action in support of the vision and goals outlined above. Whereas a management plan might be prepared and updated over time by a governing body to provide guidance and coherence for operational activities, a “park development plan” was desired to establish a higher level of policy and planning guidance for District of Squamish and others at this stage in the evolution of Smoke Bluffs Park. It would be concerned not only with protection and enhancement of the unique natural assets and recreational opportunities within the park, but also with the legal and administrative aspects of a collaborative governance structure established for this purpose, and with broader land use planning matters involving areas surrounding the park. The Park Development Plan would address issues relating to access (i.e. for recreation, utility maintenance, land management and emergency access), planned future development beyond park boundaries, and the recognized rights of neighbouring landowners.

In the short term, prioritized amenity development and enhancement efforts will prepare the park for residents and visitors by improving access to and within the park, encouraging appropriate activity, promoting the co-existence of humans and wildlife, and addressing waste management issues. Much work was completed in 2005 towards meeting these goals: the parking lot and select trails were upgraded, directional signage was added at key trail locations, and bear-resistant trash cans and seasonal toilet facilities were installed and maintained.

Now and over the longer term there are a host of issues needing to be addressed and actions taken to promote the appropriate use and enhancement of Smoke Bluffs Park, including issues having more legal, financial, administrative or other complexities than an *ad hoc* group of volunteers or any single District staff member or department may be prepared to address. Accordingly, a formalized governance structure is proposed to oversee the implementation of this Park Development Plan, involving the collaboration of the District (through Council and staff) with volunteer representatives of recreation organizations and citizen members at large through establishment of the Smoke Bluffs Park Commission. Details describing the proposed structure and mandate of this Commission are presented further below, after the following sections outline the most central issues warranting the attention of this governing body, and suggest corresponding strategies and actions for which the Commission would assume responsibility.

#### **2.4 A Summary of Key Issues Affecting Smoke Bluffs Park**

Listed below are various issues (i.e. challenges, opportunities, management considerations) that are specific to the Smoke Bluffs Park and area, and are deemed to be of key importance in the context of this Park Development Plan. These issues are discussed in some detail in the following sections of this document, with the overlap and interplay of certain issues addressed, and with useful background and context presented to throw light on the issues. Strategies and actions are recommended to address these key issues (at least initially), in support of the goals identified above for Smoke Bluffs Park.

The Smoke Bluffs Park Advisory Group has identified these select issues to most warrant attention in the near future, presented in no particular order of importance or priority:

- Establishing (legally, definitively) the boundaries of the Smoke Bluffs Park;
- Assurance of legal protection in perpetuity of the unique natural assets of the Smoke Bluffs;
- Development referral policy for private and Crown land surrounding the park;
- Dedicated public access to the park for residents and visitors;
- Maintenance and enhancement of trails and other amenities within the park;
- Guidelines for vegetation management within and around the Smoke Bluffs;
- Recreational user group interactions with one another and with the environment;
- Planning and design risk assessment;
- Park user safety and responsibilities;
- Interface between the park and residential areas; and
- Governance.

Not all of the above issues are substantively addressed in the present document, as some are more in the domain of operational planning and are therefore anticipated to be addressed in a future park management plan for Smoke Bluffs Park, and/or in management initiatives of the future park governance body.

### 3.0 THE PARK NOW

#### 3.1 Role and Significance of the Park

Smoke Bluffs Park and its distinct natural assets serve at least four key roles, as:

- a central hub in the local parks and recreation system, enjoyed year round by various user groups;
- an opportunity for visitors to the area to be introduced to local outdoor recreation activities;
- a draw for international climbers, when bundled together with Stawamus Chief and other focal areas; and as
- a natural area legacy in the interest of future human and non-human uses and intrinsic values.

#### *Local and Regional Importance*

The municipally serviced parks and recreation system encompasses an uncommonly wide variety of recreation amenities and opportunities including neighbourhood playgrounds and natural areas (Figure 1), sports fields, equestrian facilities, a skateboard park, a marine staging area for windsurfing and kite boarding, a swimming pool and community center and other amenities both indoor and outdoor.

Figure 1: Squamish Municipal Parks

Smoke Bluffs Park	Pavilion Park	Coho Park	Porcupine Park
Rose Park	Arrowhead Park	Pat Goode Park	Edgewater Park
Brennan Park	Bracken Park	Willow Park	John Hunter Park
The Spit	Cottonwood Park	Boulevard Park	McNaughton Park
Squamish Estuary	Kingswood Park	Braemar Park	Northridge Park
Eagle Run	MacDonald Place Park	Glacier View Park	
Merrill Park	Stan Clarke Park	Jura Park	

Other outdoor recreation amenities available locally include but are not limited to: an extensive network of walking and biking trails (on both public and private land); a whitewater kayaking slalom and play area nearby on the Mamquam River; other rivers and creeks presenting varied opportunities for canoeists, kayakers, rafters and anglers; private golf courses; public roads and staging areas for motorized recreation; and public lands including several provincial parks that offer opportunities for rock climbing, hiking, mountaineering, backcountry skiing, swimming, and nature appreciation within minutes of Squamish.

Smoke Bluffs Park is centrally located within this extensive local parks and recreation system (see *Map 1* “Regional Context”). It is adjacent to downtown and existing residential areas. The park area has a long history of recreation use for rock climbing, hiking, dog walking, mountain biking, trials bike riding, nature appreciation, and other activities. Arguably it offers the widest variety of recreation opportunity of any local park. It is highly valued by rock climbers in particular, owing to the unique granite crags, proximity and ease of access, solar aspect, mix of sport and traditional climbing routes (430+ distinct, named routes in total), and opportunities for climbing at varying levels of challenge and difficulty (FMC 1987, McLane 2001). In addition to the *ad hoc* climbing activity occurring there, the Smoke Bluffs area also is a favoured destination for commercial and club-organized instruction and skills-building for rock climbers.

The Smoke Bluffs may be considered as a “local” climbing area not only by Squamish residents, but also by residents of Whistler and Greater Vancouver region as they are only an hour or so away by car in either direction. Smoke Bluffs Park contains some of the most readily accessible and inviting climbing crags for this local/regional community of rock climbers.

*Regional and International Importance*

For reasons described above, the Smoke Bluffs area reportedly is the single most climbed location in Canada, with an estimated 20,000+ climber days/year of activity according the Climbers Access Society. With the growing reputation of the Squamish area in general, and with several climbing guidebooks having been published, expanded, and re-issued over the years, there has been continuing interest and visitation to the Smoke Bluffs by visitors from the broader Pacific Northwest region and from countries around the world. The globally renowned Lonely Planet travel guidebook series in its BC edition (2004) makes repeated references to the international acclaim of rock climbing in the Squamish area.

For climbing and for other recreational pursuits, Smoke Bluffs Park represents the most easily accessible opportunity for regional and international visitors coming through the Squamish Adventure Center and the backpackers' hostel on Highway 99 to experience firsthand the "Outdoor Recreation Capital of Canada"<sup>TM</sup>.

While "Fern Gully" and higher elevation areas of Smoke Bluffs Park can feel relatively remote, and while trail systems linking through public and private land areas beyond the park to the east and north may seem to extend almost indefinitely through forested landscapes and a predominantly natural setting, the park itself cannot be described as a "backcountry" or wilderness area. With reference to a tourism land use zonation system and associated definitions that are used widely within British Columbia (Tourism BC 2005, Confluence 2003), Smoke Bluffs Park would appear to serve a role as providing a valued near-urban recreation/tourism experience setting in the "frontcountry", perhaps transitional to "midcountry".



*Aerial view north/northeast to Smoke Bluffs Park (center of frame) at the present urban/forest land interface*



### 3.2 Park Boundaries and Administration

The approximate boundaries of, and main points of access to, a consolidated Smoke Bluffs Park are shown in *Map 2 (Key Features and Proposed Enhancements)*. The proposed park area is approximately 40 hectares in size, comprising:

- District Lot 1957, a 22 hectare parcel owned by the District of Squamish that encompasses a major portion of the natural assets used for recreation;
- A southern portion of Block 14, DL 760, approximately 1.7 ha of which was recently transferred from the Crown to the District and which includes the Smoke Bluffs parking lot;
- Associated allowances, rights-of-way, and various other (smaller) lots owned by the District; and
- Three parcels of land (3.0 ha total) owned by the FMC (not yet officially incorporated into the park, but considered by the landowner and the District to be imminent).

One identified goal is to have all above-described lands consolidated under the same designation and management regime as a municipal park. The majority but not all of the park area currently is designated as “Greenway” in the Official Community Plan, and is legally zoned for “park and public use”.

According to Section 17 of the District of Squamish zoning bylaw No.1342, 1995, concerning Park and Public Use (P-3) zoning: “The intent of this zone is to accommodate the use of public land to serve the educational, park and recreational needs of the District.” The only permitted land uses in this zone are:

- (a) “accessory recreational facilities;
- (b) accessory residential dwelling subject to Section 4.22;
- (c) accessory uses;
- (d) assembly (public);
- (e) community college and universities;
- (f) public camp sites;
- (g) public golf courses; and
- (h) public parks and playgrounds.”

District of Squamish Park Use Bylaw No. 1752, 2003, which was adopted September 2004 to establish a municipal parks and recreation service and to regulate the use of parks, clearly sets out that a “municipal park” includes the following:

- “any land designated as a park on a subdivision plan or strata plan deposited in the Land Title Office;
- any municipal land dedicated or reserved by the Council as a park;
- any highway closed to traffic and rededicated as a park;
- any land granted to the municipality by the Crown for park purposes;
- any land in respect of which a statutory right of way for park or public trail purposes has been granted to the Municipality; and
- any land transferred to the municipality on condition that it be used as a park.”

The same bylaw establishes overnight park closures (10 p.m. to 6 a.m. each day), and identifies exceptions to and administrative provisions for such closures. Discretionary authority vested in the municipal Director of Operations is limited by a provision that any park use activities authorized to occur outside of these hours shall not cause disturbance to neighbouring residents or cause damage to the park.

### 3.3 Landforms and Physical Attributes

The southern Pacific Ranges of the Coast Mountains comprise sedimentary and volcanic rocks that were intruded by igneous rock (the Coast Intrusions), predominantly granodiorite and quartz diorite. Despite their relative resistance to erosion, the mountains and rocky bluffs of the Squamish area have been heavily scoured by ice and water over eons.

Smoke Bluffs Park is located at the confluence of three rivers: Squamish River, Stawamus River, and (prior to its change of course in the 1921 flood) Mamquam River. Glacial movement down these valleys 10,000+ years ago, and subsequent erosion by water and wind over time, have influenced the shape and texture of local landforms that were originally produced as a result of rock-forming (granitic intrusion) and mountain-building (uplift) processes. The rock formations in this area are approximately 95 million years old, and are reported to consist of a particularly dense and erosion-resistant form of granite (Youds 1989).

The soils in this area tend to be thin, relatively acidic and weakly developed. Local knowledge, limited field investigation and available information indicates there are three known permanent or ephemeral streams within the park area, some very small wetland areas, and no larger waterbodies. These watercourses and their ecological values are addressed in more detail below.

### 3.4 Ecological Values and Processes

With reference made to the “ecoregion classification” system adopted in British Columbia, which makes the connection between biodiversity and the combination of landforms and climatic processes, Squamish falls within the Southern Pacific Ranges ecoregion. The mountains and other landforms of this area, the glacial history, proximity to the ocean, and prevailing weather patterns all help to explain the distinct vegetation types – and entire ecosystems – in Squamish. The interaction of the earth’s surface with climate at different elevations produces specific soils, plant communities and environmental conditions. Human activities across the landscape also significantly influence plant and animal distributions.

Considered at the ecosystem scale, and with reference made to BC’s biogeoclimatic ecosystem classification (BEC) system, the Smokes Bluffs fall within the dry maritime Coastal Western Hemlock (CWHdm) subzone where Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), western redcedar (*Thuja plicata*), and western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*) tree species can be expected to dominate the forest over time as “climax” species. Shore pine (*Pinus contorta* var. *contorta*) is common in the park, particularly above Mamquam Blind Channel, and a combination of lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta* var. *latifolia*) and red alder (*Alnus rubra*) in much of the park area are indicative of a relatively young stage of forest succession in Smoke Bluffs and surrounding areas. Infrastructure development and maintenance, timber harvesting, and forest fires represent human disturbances to this forest ecosystem in the past century.



View east across the Mamquam Blind Channel to the upland mixed forest of the Smoke Bluffs

Various other tree and understory plant species occur within the park, and several different species of moss and lichen are conspicuous on the granite bluffs in particular. The composition and distribution of distinct plant communities associated with the relatively complex topography of the Smoke Bluffs currently remain unknown, as a detailed vegetation inventory has not yet been completed for the park area.

The Conservation Data Center of British Columbia (CDC) tracking lists indicate there are 32 natural plant communities that are considered to “at risk” (red-listed or blue-listed by the CDC) in the the Squamish Forest District. Environmentally sensitive areas and valued

ecosystem components in this region typically include wetlands, riparian areas, alluvial forests, mature forests, high elevation ecosystems, and connective wildlife movement corridors. Those particular ecosystem types are largely unrepresented in the Smoke Bluffs. The Sea to Sky Sensitive Habitat Atlas developed by Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD 2004) through collaboration with others is a management tool for referencing the location of known or suspected environmentally sensitive areas. For the Smoke Bluffs Park area, the Habitat Atlas (mapsheet 092g.075.1.2) identifies only one potentially environmentally sensitive feature which is a watercourse having “unknown fish presence”. This feature can be identified as the ephemeral watercourse draining the Loop Trail (near Plateau Drive) from the southern park boundary to Little Stawamus Creek.

Field observations indicate there are at least two other watercourses within Smoke Bluffs Park with the potential for having aquatic ecosystem values. The one watercourse drains north generally along the Smoke Bluffs Trail down toward the main parking lot, and then directly into upper Mamquam Blind Channel. The other watercourse appears to emanate from storm runoff from Bughouse Heights area and storm sewer flows from Panorama Place, and then flows generally to the northwest beyond the park boundary, draining through private land (Block 7) to the Blind Channel. These and any other small watercourses and associated riparian areas may represent habitats for amphibian species and other wildlife.

Broadly speaking with respect to the wildlife habitats and species that are thought to occur within Smoke Bluffs Park, the age, composition and structure of the forest in this area suggest it would be less biologically diverse than another forested area having a more natural disturbance regime and more freshwater present. That said, the mix of landscape features and habitat types (e.g. rock outcrops, different stands of predominantly deciduous or coniferous forest) represent a variety of transitional habitats (“ecotones”) providing for different animal cover, foraging, and breeding habitat niches. At least two different reptile species, the northwestern alligator lizard (*Elgaria coerulea principis*) and the common garter snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis*), have been noted in the park. The abundance of rocky outcrops in the Smoke Bluffs presents opportunities for these reptiles to den and bask in the sun.



Northwestern alligator lizard

(Source: screen capture from [www.bcreptiles.ca](http://www.bcreptiles.ca))

The possible presence and distribution of “at risk” wildlife species in the park currently is undetermined, although familiarity with the Squamish area (refer to Envision and Confluence 2005) and with the habitat types represented within the Smoke Bluffs suggests which large and small mammals and bird species may call it home or least spend time moving through and foraging in this area. Of the CDC-listed species, there is some potential in the park for cliff-dwelling and cavity-nesting bats such as Keen’s long-eared myotis (*Myotis keenii*) and Townsend’s big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*), and bird species including Western screech-owl subspecies (*Otus kennicottii kennicottii*) and Band-tailed pigeon (*Columba fasciata*). While black bears (*Ursus americanus*) are not a listed species, they are considered to be of particular interest in park use and management owing to this animal’s predilection to seek out improperly stored or disposed human foods and garbage, and the habituation and human-bear conflicts that can occur as a result.

The “Important Natural Areas and Streams of Squamish” document (FBCN 1998) identifies the land along the western edge of the park as being environmentally sensitive marine and riparian habitat, and describes the importance of having a connective greenway for wildlife movements from this marine area in Mamquam Blind Channel to upland habitats within Smoke Bluffs Park and (presumably) beyond.

### 3.5 Existing Infrastructure and Amenities

While much of the Smoke Bluffs Park represents a “natural” area, within the park boundaries there are various utility and infrastructure elements that are incidental to the park, and also there are certain facilities and amenities that are intended to enhance public recreation use of the park area.

#### *Utilities and Related Infrastructure*

Municipal infrastructure includes an underground water storage area in the southeastern corner of the park near the bottom of the Loop Trail at Plateau Drive. Additionally there is a water main that extends more or less along the southern boundary of the park (buried under the Smoke Bluffs Trail between Panorama Place and Plateau Drive) in an east-west direction and then runs both above-ground and below, and down to Mamquam Blind Channel along a municipal right-of-way through private land in that area.

At the northeastern corner of the park is a small area excluded from DL 1957 that is leased from the Crown by District of Squamish for the District wireless transmission tower (used by Mountain FM) and microwave tower, to which there is a cleared right-of-way from the south that represents the eastern boundary of the park.

Located within the western and southern boundaries of the park, and extending beyond the park in a generally north-south direction, are transmission line corridors maintained by BC Transmission Corporation (BCTC). Within these corridors are four (4) different electrical transmission lines:

- the easternmost line identified as “2L13” and central line “2L09” both carry 230 Kv; and
- the westernmost lines, “60L68” and “60L70”, are 69 Kv.

The presence of these transmission lines within the park has important implications for safety, vegetation management, aesthetics, biodiversity, and access. These issues are discussed to varying degrees in following sections of this document, as they relate to park use and management. The utility service road infrastructure is located primarily within the utility rights-of-way, except for the gated road extension west from Plateau Drive (toward Northridge). The service roads effectively serve a dual purpose for right-of-way utility access and for recreation access, in particular the service road which extends between the Smoke Bluffs parking lot and the base of Burgers & Fries crag.

#### *Park Facilities and Amenities*

The District regularly maintains a limited number and type of facilities (serving a particular function) and amenities (adding value) within the park area. Additionally, the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC (FMC), Climbers Access Society, and other organizations and volunteers have played a longstanding role in the provision and maintenance of specific facilities (e.g. parking lot, outhouses, educational signage) and amenities (e.g. access trails) within and beyond the land owned by FMC within the park area. More detail on this subject is presented in the following two sections of this document, *Sections 3.6* and *3.7*.

The following park facilities and amenities currently are offered within the park, primarily at the main entrances and public thoroughfares along the southern and western edges of the park (see *Map 2*):

- Paved parking lot for approximately 140 vehicles;
- Gravel-surfaced, maintained primary trails (Smoke Bluffs Trail, Burgers & Fries access trail);
- Non-surfaced, non-maintained secondary trails (Loop Trail, other trails to key climbing crags);
- Informational kiosk and trail directional signage for primary and key secondary trails;
- Bear-resistant designed trash cans located at the parking lot trailhead; and
- A combination of outhouses (on FMC land) and portable toilet facilities at 3 key locations.



### 3.6 Locations and Patterns of Recreation Use

Smoke Bluffs Park has an extensive system of trails which over time have been built, to some degree maintained, and used by various recreation user groups. The trail system shown on *Map 2* identifies only the most obvious and well-travelled trails that provide for through-transit of the park and serve to link key locations within the park and surrounding areas. A vast and growing trail system connects Smoke Bluffs Park and downtown Squamish with residential and undeveloped areas of public and private land to the east and north all the way to Alice Lake Provincial Park, including single-track mountain biking trails and multi-use trails along the highway corridor that promote non-vehicular travel between neighbourhoods. An inventory of trails within the park area done using a Global Positioning System (GPS) and Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping software is not yet complete.

#### *Rock Climbing*

The unmapped and unmarked maze of informal climbers' trails provide direct linkages between points of interest to climbers in particular, and they include the roughest, steepest and most minimalist of descent routes off the back side of crags and connector paths between them. As is common in popular climbing areas, informal trails develop as climbers move around in predictable ways to, from and between crags and access points (Access Fund 2001). Since climbers' paths tend to follow the most direct routes possible they can be particularly prone to erosion, depending on the soil type, slope, climate, and extent of use in any given area. The climbing routes themselves, more than 400 of which are named, graded and documented in published guidebooks, could be considered the "third dimension" of the trail system in that they are more or less vertical trails which take a person not from point "x" to point "y", but from the ground up to point "z". The most popular crags (having several or dozens of climbing routes each) are distributed throughout most areas of the park as shown on *Map 2*, with the locations of others indicated in available guidebooks.

#### *Trials Riding*

Somewhere in that space defined by x, y, and z coordinates the motorcycle trials riders have their place in Smoke Bluffs Park. Trials riding is a sport involving balance, skill and concentration, where riders negotiate difficult terrain and obstacles such as logs, boulders, and very steep slopes by balancing on one or both wheels and riding (or hopping) at low speeds. Unlike many other motor sports it does not involve racing. The tires on a trials bike are at very low pressure (~5 psi) and are made of soft rubber with closely spaced knobby tread for maximum grip on rock and other hard surfaces. The highly specialized, seatless bikes typically are powered by single cylinder, two-stroke engines having 250cc displacement, and employing effective muffler systems. Trials riders often ride in the area and are responsible for building some of the trails that are now enjoyed by walkers, climbers and mountain bikers, but few park users report ever seeing or hearing them. While trials riders will stage from or ride within the park, they tend to ride in the northern and easternmost areas of the park and beyond.



*Trials riders have some history in the park*

#### *Mountain Biking*

There is relatively little mountain biking use made of Smoke Bluffs Park owing to its typically steep and bluffy topography, but the Smoke Bluffs Trail provides through-transit of the park and a pleasant ride (except perhaps for the steep hill at the parking lot) for mountain bikers and also by more leisurely bicycle riders. Smoke Bluffs Trail is most busy with mountain bikers in the middle of June each year (and to a lesser extent in the preceding weeks as "training" begins) owing to the internationally renowned "Squamish

Test of Metal” cross-country race which has, for the 10 years of its history, included transit through the park as one leg of the 67 km long race circuit for the 800 riders who compete. Beyond the mountain biking activity described above, most people who engage in this sport locally are only moving through or staging from the park, and looking to get onto the unsanctioned trail system that extends beyond the park into areas of public and private land, predominantly to the east of Smoke Bluffs Park.

#### *Other Recreation and Leisure Activity*

Preceding sections have generally described both the trail system within Smoke Bluffs Park and the more extensive trail network connecting the park to other points and areas of interest beyond. Many of the people who recreate in the park are residents of adjacent neighbourhoods who will walk their dogs, enjoy a family stroll, explore with their friends, or go for a run. Still others are residents of other neighbourhoods in the community, or are visitors to the community, who wish to explore the varied landscape and take in the panoramic views which are readily attained from different trails and viewpoints within the park. Most of this activity is concentrated in the southern and western portions of the park serviced by Smoke Bluffs Trail, while the Loop Trail and lesser footpaths leading to locations such as Smoke Bluffs Summit (radio tower) attract the more able and exploratory walkers or hikers.

There is occasional horseback riding use of the main trails and the emergency access road that extends in a north-south direction along the east side of Mamquam Blind Channel, just west of the park. Birdwatchers and other groups and individuals whose primary interest is in nature appreciation are understood to tend to focus their attention on this western edge of the park also. These trails and roads have linkage (across Loggers Lane) with the Loggers Lane Creek multi-use and nature trails that extend north toward Brennan Park, and they also connect with just a short walk to the main Squamish Estuary trail system.

There are a couple of picnic tables each located at the parking lot and at the base of Burgers & Fries crag, both of which locations can see congregations of people in warmer weather. Other than these locations, people tend to be more or less widely dispersed on the trails and at the crags throughout the park area.

### **3.7 Stewardship and Management Activities**

The District of Squamish is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the park and its limited facilities. District staff (and contractors) work within operating budgets to maintain road access and parking at the northwest corner of the park, regularly collect and dispose of trash from the bins in several locations, and to some degree upgrade and maintain Smoke Bluff Trail and associated drainage structures.

Pre-dating the District management role in the park, numerous individuals and organizations historically have taken certain initiative and responsibility for stewardship of the Smoke Bluffs area and both its natural and constructed assets. For example, the Climbers Access Society paid for the original surveying of the land that was eventually purchased by the District and improved as a parking lot, and they also procured funding for and organized much work on the trails. The FMC with federal funding had built the original Loop Trail, and installed outhouses. The current Smoke Bluffs Park Advisory Group, which includes representation from these and other organizations, also embodies that notion of shared responsibility at an “executive” level. On the ground, these individuals and legions of other volunteers have done and continue to do hundreds of hours of work annually including trail building and maintenance, litter collection, and educational (i.e. code of conduct) signage design and installation. For several years running there have been “Adopt-A-Crag” events which bring focus to work parties on priority stewardship projects.



*Adopt-a-Crag 2002 Smoke Bluffs work party*

#### 4.0 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE PARK

This Park Development Plan is concerned with documenting and communicating higher level policy and planning guidance in support of the vision and goals articulated by the Smoke Bluffs Park Advisory Group (refer to *Section 2.0*, above), with the intent of giving an appropriate focus and direction for future park development, enhancement and management efforts. Guidance is offered below in the form of suggested strategies and actions that have the support of the Smoke Bluffs Advisory Group.

#### 4.1 Park Boundaries

Smoke Bluffs Park as shown on *Map 2* is in fact not yet a reality; the core of this park area, DL 1957, and other smaller parcels and rights-of-way are owned by the District of Squamish, but three key parcels of land to the west within the park boundaries shown remain private land under the ownership of the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC (FMC). The FMC intends for this land to be included within the park through a protective covenant agreement and land transfer to the District in 2006. Note that the proposed consolidated park as shown also has very approximate boundaries to the south and north which need to be confirmed and possibly adjusted to reflect the proposed consolidation that is detailed in *Figure 2*, below.

Figure 2: A Proposed Consolidated Smoke Bluffs Park Area

Land Parcel	Ownership	OCP Designation & Zoning *	Comments
DL 1957	DOS	Greenway <i>Park &amp; Public Recreation (P-3)</i>	22 hectare (54 acre) site containing a significant proportion of the natural assets and recreation resources of Smoke Bluffs Park.
Ref. Plan 5496, DL 1957 (R/W)	DOS	Greenway <i>Resource (RE)</i>	Primary service road/trail access from parking area to climbs within Smoke Bluffs Park, includes significant natural assets and recreation resources.
Part of Block 14, DL 760 (southern portion, in Ref. Plan 2624)	DOS	Residential <i>Park &amp; Public Recreation (P-3)</i>	Approx. 2 ha area contains the only non-residential parking lot for Smoke Bluffs Park. Constrained by BCH & PA R/W (Ref. Plan 5496).
REM Block 14, DL 760 (southern portion, Plan 4715)	Crown	Residential <i>Rock Processing (I-7)</i>	Area to the east of the parking lot, and south of the rock quarry and processing area (Glacier White #1 mineral claim), contains natural assets valued for recreation. Constrained by BCH & PA R/W (Ref. Plan 5496).
R/W land areas west of DL 1957	DOS	Greenway <i>Resource (RE)</i>	Several small parcels of District-owned land, associated road allowances and rights-of-way, adjacent to DL 1957. Traversed by primary and secondary trails to access climbs and viewpoints overlooking Howe Sound.
Blocks 8 and 9, Plan 4566	FMC	Greenway <i>Park &amp; Public Recreation (P-3)</i>	Three parcels (Blks 6, 8, 9) total 3 hectares (7.5 acres). FMC and DOS to negotiate the details of a land transfer.
Lots 1-24, Block 6 Plan 4566	FMC	Greenway <i>Light Indust. (I-1)</i>	Three parcels (Blks 6, 8, 9) total 3 hectares (7.5 acre). FMC and DOS to negotiate the details of a land transfer.
Northernmost lot, Block 4 Plan 4566	DOS	Residential <i>Residential (RS-1)</i>	Proposed neighbourhood play park area off Smoke Bluffs Road near Panorama Place.
Lots 1-11, Block 1 Plan 4566	DOS	Residential <i>Residential (RS-1)</i>	Moist seepage area/meadow off Plateau Dr. road end, traversed by eastern extent of Smoke Bluffs Trail
Lots 1-8, Block 2 Plan 4566	DOS	Residential <i>Residential (RS-1)</i>	East of Northridge Drive at southeast corner of park area, traversed by eastern extent of Smoke Bluffs Trail

Additional public and private lands surrounding the park area identified at present may also be of value for consolidation into the park. To this end, the District in October 2004 had registered with the provincial government its interest in acquiring select parcels of land, but that initiative to date has had no known results. Without knowing the status or specifics of the confidential government to government discussions, it would appear that District acquisition of both the Crown land located at the southwest corner of the park area, where improved access to the park from the west (refer to *Section 4.3*) may be made possible in the future, and DL 5212 to the northeast would be of potential value for park consolidation.

With respect to adjacent private lands, there are notable natural assets for recreation and certain environmental values represented on both the west and east sides of the park. However, current land values in Squamish may be prohibitive of land acquisition in these areas for consolidation into an expanded park, and the landowners in question may have other ambitions for the future of their property. The challenge for the District and the Smoke Bluffs Park Commission will be to achieve dedicated trail rights-of-way where necessary or desirable through private land that is not consolidated into the park area, such that recreational and residential land uses may be mutually enhancing.

The following strategies and associated actions are suggested to address park boundaries and consolidation.

*Strategy (1):* Initiate a priority program of investigation and land consolidation into Smoke Bluffs Park

*Recommended Actions:*

- District of Squamish to review land use planning documents and available data to determine the fit of OCP designation with current zoning for all parcels proposed for consolidation into the park (refer to *Fig. 2*, above), and pursue OCP and zoning bylaw amendments necessary to facilitate consolidation
- District of Squamish to confirm legal boundaries, ownership status and assets/liabilities of all parcels
- District of Squamish to identify and address any encroachments on the park boundaries
- District of Squamish to refer findings of legal land search and other investigation to Smoke Bluffs Park Commission for review and recommendations on priorities for consolidation
- District of Squamish and FMC to complete negotiations leading to the transfer of ownership for 3 parcels of land currently owned by FMC
- District of Squamish to advance discussions and complete negotiations with the Province regarding acquisition of key Crown land for consolidation into the park
- District of Squamish to take all other necessary steps and actions to achieve park consolidation.

*Strategy (2):* Explore and pursue over time the acquisition of additional lands that would complement and enhance the existing park area

*Recommended Actions:*

- District of Squamish to refer findings of legal land search and other investigation to Smoke Bluffs Park Commission for review and recommendations on priorities for consolidation
- District of Squamish to advance discussions and complete negotiations with the Province regarding acquisition of additional Crown land for consolidation into the park
- District of Squamish to take all other necessary steps and actions to further park consolidation.



## 4.2 Protection of Natural and Cultural Assets

Smoke Bluffs Park currently comprises District Lot 1957 and associated rights-of-way owned by the District of Squamish, which encompass much of the natural assets that are enjoyed for recreation. As indicated in *Figure 2*, above, the 22 hectare DL 1957 is designated in the Official Community Plan (OCP) as “Greenway” and zoned “P-3, Park and Public Use”. With respect to reserving the land and its associated natural assets from future residential or industrial development or use, this P-3 zoning is understood to be the most protective municipal legal designation that District of Squamish can apply to the land without precluding the various public recreation activities that occur within the park. Beyond municipal zoning, other mechanisms including protective covenants on the property also could be considered.

Other District-owned lands adjacent to DL 1957 currently are designated as “Residential”, and zoned either for residential development or for resource use, despite their potential value for consolidation into Smoke Bluffs Park. (It should be noted that P-3 zoning may not be feasible/allowable for transmission line rights-of-way or other land uses that are incidental to the park, without amendment of the zoning bylaw). One of the three distinct blocks of land owned by the FMC and intended for inclusion in the park currently appears to be zoned for light industry. A primary goal of this Park Development Plan is to facilitate the consolidation of all land owned by the District and FMC, and possibly additional areas of land, under the same legal zoning and management regime as a municipal park.

In addition to park boundaries being confirmed and appropriate land use zoning being applied to the area within the park, other initiatives are warranted to promote the protection of natural and cultural assets of the Smoke Bluffs. The most prominent features and key natural assets of the park are the granite formations. Certain crags in the Smoke Bluffs area that are valued for rock climbing are situated on Crown and private land areas beyond park boundaries to the west and east. The District of Squamish may have various mechanisms available to promote the protection of such natural assets in the course of an approval or referral process for the subdivision, development, and/or disposition of any of these parcels surrounding the park, for example through park dedication of a certain percentage of the parcel area.

Protection of the granite formations and other natural features and processes within the park is not solely a matter of reserving these areas from development by way of drawing park boundaries around them. These natural assets in fact may be affected to varying degrees by rock climbing (e.g. by bolting of routes) and other recreational activities that legitimately occur within the park, and also certain park-related developments could entail alteration and degradation of the natural environment. Such issues have been raised locally in the context of management planning for provincial parks including Stawamus Chief, Shannon Falls, and Murrin Provincial Park, as reflected in the “Rock Climbing Strategy” (Province of BC, no date). BC Parks in cooperation with the rock climbing community has developed a strategy to balance climbers’ needs with protection of the environment, which acknowledges that human activity will result in some modification to the natural environment, but also affirms that certain protocols and measures designed to minimize impact are desirable. Locally and internationally, rock climbing organizations have proactively addressed such issues (i.e. self-regulated) through promotion of “codes of conduct” and other forms of communication, education, and on-the-ground actions (e.g. refer to Access Fund 2001). These initiatives are concerned not only with protection of the natural asset, but also they are concerned with protecting the freedom or privilege of access to and use of the asset for recreation purposes.



*The granite formations are key natural assets of Smoke Bluffs Park*

Recreation user groups, individuals, and the District of Squamish (and possibly others) clearly have roles and certain responsibilities with respect to stewardship of the natural assets and environmental values that are represented in Smoke Bluffs Park. The nature of these roles is suggested in this document, while the specific matters and responsibilities associated with these roles remain to be addressed in more detail in a future Management Plan for Smoke Bluffs Park and possibly a supplementary Rock Climbing Strategy. The future Smoke Bluffs Park Commission also may want to implement a long-term program of monitoring and assessment to understand and manage the environmental (and social and economic) effects of recreational activity associated with the Smoke Bluffs (e.g. per Reilly 2005, Confluence 2005).

While it could be said that the Smoke Bluffs area over the past half century has been “culturally modified” as a result of recreational activity, and in a contemporary sense there are cultural values associated with it, the discussion of cultural assets and values typically is set in a more historic and often aboriginal context. The Smoke Bluffs fall within the traditional territory of the Squamish Nation, whose people have inhabited this general area since time immemorial. There are no known artifacts of their historic cultural and subsistence activities in this particular location, and Squamish Nation to date has not identified any sites of cultural significance or concern. However, there is the possibility of such sites being discovered in the Smoke Bluffs. Archaeological remains in British Columbia are protected by the *Heritage Conservation Act*.

The following strategies and associated actions are suggested to address protection of the natural and cultural assets that are associated with Smoke Bluffs Park.

*Strategy (1):* Attain legal protection of natural assets and any found archaeological sites within the park

*Recommended Actions:*

- District of Squamish to review zoning for all parcels of land consolidated into the park, and amend zoning bylaws (as/where appropriate) to ensure protection of, and public access to, natural assets
- District of Squamish to pursue trail dedications within the park, if/as warranted
- District of Squamish and FMC to explore a mutually agreeable protective covenant on the lands currently owned by FMC (and possibly the larger park area), as a precursor to land transfer
- District of Squamish to enter into protective covenant agreement for FMC land transfer
- District of Squamish to develop and communicate an appropriate protocol concerning the potential discovery (e.g. during vegetation removal or soil excavation), protection from disturbance, and reporting of any found cultural artifacts or archaeological sites within the park.

*Strategy (2):* Develop an improved understanding of the natural and cultural assets associated with the park

*Recommended Actions:*

- Conduct an inventory of the crags located within and surrounding the present park area, noting attributes such as climbing features/routes, physical conditions, and land ownership status
- Establish “current baseline” conditions within the park to inform future assessment of change in social (i.e. recreation experience) and environmental conditions, and consideration of what type and degree of human-caused change is considered acceptable.

*Strategy (3): Work with neighbouring landowners/developers to protect natural assets outside of the park*

*Recommended Actions:*

- District of Squamish to refer to Smoke Bluffs Park Commission in a timely manner all development permit applications and subdivision plans received for lands adjacent to the park
- District of Squamish (and the Smoke Bluffs Park Commission, if/as appropriate) to engage in dialogue with land development proponents to communicate park values and goals
- District of Squamish to pursue park dedications for natural assets located outside of park boundaries
- District of Squamish to pursue trail dedications for trails extending beyond the park boundaries
- District of Squamish to dedicate resources to explore and/or implement other feasible and appropriate actions concerning the protection of natural assets.

*Strategy (4): Promote appropriate stewardship of natural assets and the environment*

*Recommended Actions:*

- Recreation user group organizations to continue to encourage and coordinate volunteer work by members that is directed at “preventative maintenance” of constructed assets (e.g. trails) that have the potential to negatively affect the natural environment
- Recreation user group organizations to develop and implement “codes of conduct” (or similar self-regulating protocols that are specific to the recreation activity) to minimize their impact on the natural environment
- Further to above, and with specific focus on protecting the unique granite formations in perpetuity and promoting continued climbers’ access, develop a Rock Climbing Strategy that is similar in nature and intent to that developed by climbers and BC Parks in relation to master plans for provincial parks in the region.
- District of Squamish and Smoke Bluffs Park Commission to coordinate and complete environmental inventory work with the aim of identifying valued ecosystem components and processes for park planning and management consideration
- District of Squamish to dedicate the necessary resources for key services (e.g. garbage collection, toilet servicing) relating to public use of the park, and having the potential to affect such use, or aesthetics, or natural values or processes of the park area
- Responsible authority (e.g. District of Squamish, BCTC) to dedicate the necessary resources for maintenance of key structures (e.g. road and trail drainage structures) and other operational activities (e.g. control of invasive plants/weeds), as appropriate, to protect the natural environment.



*Good stewardship by recreation user groups will help preserve future access to and use of the natural assets of Smoke Bluffs Park*

### 4.3 Enhancement of Natural Assets and Amenities

Smoke Bluffs Park is a near-urban, people-oriented place in a more or less natural setting. Granite formations present many potential terrain hazards in and around the park, and certain areas remain more difficult to access than others. However, an existing trail system and other improvements also present opportunities for people to explore and enjoy the park. Significant efforts were made in 2005 and 2006 to enhance the park for residents and visitors by improving access to and within the park, with the upgrade of the parking lot and certain trails, installation of directional signage, and addition of bear-resistant trash cans and seasonal toilet facilities. The Smoke Bluffs Park Advisory Group envisions further work being done to enhance use and enjoyment of the park's natural assets over time, some of which would entail more of the same type of basic improvements as have been done in recent years, and some being more capital-intensive investments in select park-related amenities and access improvements.

It should be noted that discussions to date among rock climbers and other recreation interests currently represented in the Smoke Bluffs Park Advisory Group have underscored a desire to cautiously approach this matter of park improvements. In keeping with the BC Parks management approach to nearby Stawamus Chief and its "Backside Trail", for example, there is a desire to provide signage at the main entrance(s) to the trail system which alerts park users to some of the inherent and unmarked hazards in the park, but not to install safety fencing (or additional signage) in specific locations where natural hazards may be present. There are simply too many such locations to adequately mark and safeguard them all, and overall there is a shared belief that visitors to such parks should assume responsibility for themselves. And with respect to rock climbing, BC Parks seems to acknowledge that climbing routes are best left to climbers to manage and improve as a self-regulating group, subject to a strategy or protocols developed in consultation with regulatory decision-makers and designed to minimize the impact of their activities.

Overall, management and enhancement of the recreational asset base of Smoke Bluffs Park by District staff and by user groups will benefit from planning and "due process". Initiatives like tree cutting, trail building, and especially any larger projects should be planned, approved, and undertaken in ways that are consistent with an overall plan endorsed by the Smoke Bluffs Park Commission to ensure these actions (and their implications) are well considered, coordinated with other actions, and made accountable for.

A parks and recreation master plan prepared for Squamish identifies the Smoke Bluffs as a special focus area in addressing current and future community needs for park and recreation facilities. In this context, local residents ranked the enhancement of waterfront access and trail systems as their highest priority for services provided by District of Squamish. Various potential improvements (e.g. signage, provision of shelter, drinking water, public telephone, campground) were suggested by Urban Systems (2000) to be designed and constructed in consultation with the local rock climbing association and local residents as "development initiatives that would enhance the long-term function" and "usability" of the Smoke Bluffs.



Photo courtesy of RockCraft Designs

*Hand-crafted boulder features could be installed under shelter in a neighbourhood play park...*

The Smoke Bluffs Park Advisory Group had incubated a few concepts for park enhancement, and in May 2005 shared them with residents of the neighbourhoods adjacent to the park who responded to an invitation to an open-house on that particular subject and on the status of park planning efforts more generally. Feedback from that meeting, and further consideration of the proposed enhancements, is reflected in the current status of these concepts as detailed below. The location of each of these proposed enhancements is shown on Map 2.



### *Enhanced Park Access and Trail System*

Improved multi-use trail access to and within Smoke Bluffs Park has been identified as a high priority enhancement (or suite of enhancements), fundamental to the enjoyable use and sharing of the park. Improvements made to the parking area off Loggers Lane, maintenance and upgrading of Smoke Bluffs Trail and Loop Trail, and installation of signs (both informational and directional) distributed along the trail system are among the highest priorities, as reflected in the 2005 and 2006 budget requests to Council made by the Smoke Bluffs Park Advisory Group. While trail maintenance activities have been ongoing for years in the Smoke Bluffs through the work of volunteers, significant upgrades to the parking lot and trail system were planned and executed in 2005 and these were complemented by the design and installation of signage with District funding. Additionally, specific trail system enhancements were explored in 2005 (as described under the next two sub-headings), and in one instance designed and implemented, to provide new opportunities to share the park “frontcountry” with visitors to the area.

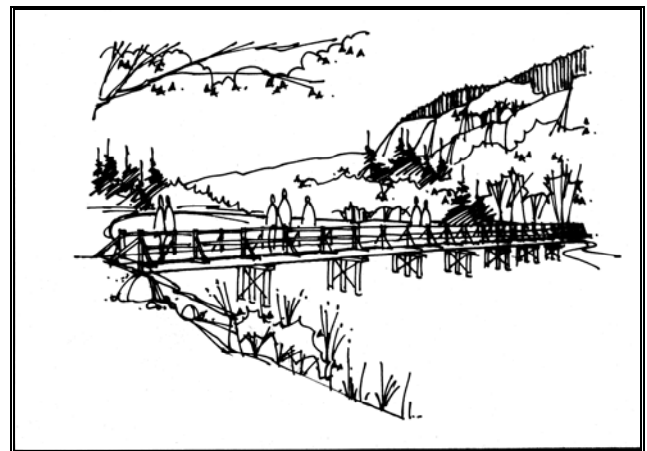
Continuing maintenance and improvements to the existing trail system and associated amenities (e.g. bear-proof trash cans, outhouses, signage) will be needed to facilitate and enhance public use of Smoke Bluffs Park in the future, and new trails also are envisioned to provide improved connectivity between the park and surrounding areas. Considering that the park conceivably could be almost completely encircled by residential neighbourhoods at some point in the future, the park’s trail system ultimately may become the hub to “greenway” travel routes connecting these neighbourhoods with one another and with downtown to the west. Envisioned as a cornerstone of the local parks and recreation system, Smoke Bluffs Park and its trail system also will tie into the corridor trail network connecting sites to the south and north like Stawamus Chief and Alice Lake Provincial Parks, and beyond via the future Sea-to-Sky Trail.

### *Pedestrian Bridge Access to the Park from the West*

Pedestrian access to the park (and to adjacent neighbourhoods via the park) from downtown Squamish and from the Squamish Adventure Center would be greatly facilitated by a foot bridge spanning half the width of Mamquam Blind Channel between Rose Park and “The Spit”. Located somewhere between Cleveland Avenue and Loggers Lane, this linkage between the two municipal parks conceivably could be created with the additional construction of stairs at the near-vertical District right-of-way which juts from the western boundary of Smoke Bluffs Park. Alternatively, there appear to be other possible options for improved pedestrian access to the park from the west. However, the combination of significant capital outlay required for bridge construction, an environmentally sensitive marine location, and present land ownership patterns in the area suggests that this particular park enhancement is a longer term, “bigger picture” prospect.



*View north across Blind Channel from Rose Park toward Crag X in Smoke Bluffs Park*

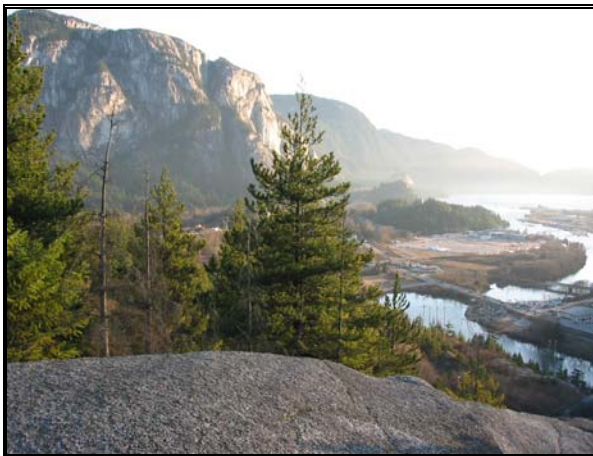


*Artist rendering of same view with pedestrian bridge*

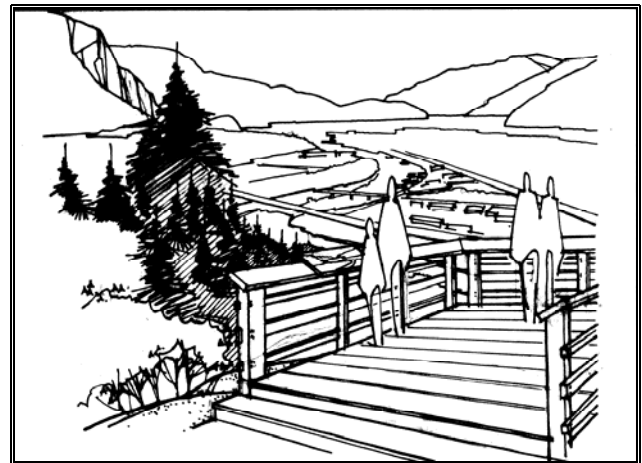
### *View Lookout Trails and Structures*

The development of easily accessible trails leading to viewpoints over downtown Squamish, Howe Sound, and surrounding mountains and granite monoliths is consistent with the stated vision of Smoke Bluffs Park as being a “welcoming-ground for visitors”. Particularly with the recent development of the Squamish Adventure Centre on Highway 99 at Loggers Lane just a few hundred metres from the western boundary of Smoke Bluffs Park, there are excellent opportunities for visitors to experience either vicariously or first-hand the “Outdoor Recreation Capital of Canada” with only a short walk into the park. Visitors walking along the Smoke Bluffs Trail and other main trails including the well-marked Viewpoint Trail may be able to watch climbers ascend Neat and Cool crag or other highly visible crags, and they can take in panoramic views from several different vantage points.

Different locations and design treatments were considered by the Smoke Bluffs Park Advisory Group for the development of a “destination view lookout” or lookouts that would be suitable for “typical tourist” visitors to the park, and also be of minimal concern or disruption to regular park users such as climbers. Contrary to the photo and artist concept presented immediately below, neither this location at the top of Smoke Bluff Wall nor the viewing platform treatment ultimately were chosen for the first “official” park viewpoint. Instead, a new access trail was constructed leading from the top of Pixie Corner stairs to a more suitable location above Penny Lane crag where there are no climbing routes directly below, there is less vertical relief (i.e. fall distance), and where the spacious, more or less level top of the rock bluff requires no constructed platform for viewing. The resulting park amenity is a good example of minimal development work being needed to enhance a natural asset for public use and enjoyment. Other potentially suitable locations where some vegetation management and trail improvements could create destination view lookouts include above Octopus’s Garden and at Smoke Bluffs Summit (the Mountain FM tower).



*View south to Stawamus Chief and Howe Sound*



*Artist rendering of same view from viewing deck*

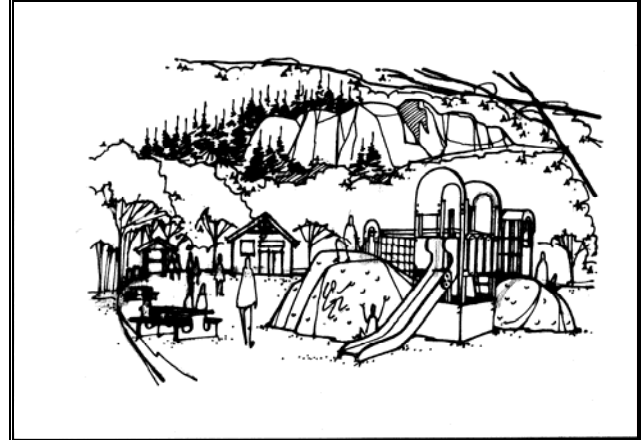
### *Rendezvous and Play Park Amenities*

The former climbers’ parking area off Smoke Bluffs Road, which is gated at present and not used for any particular activity other than transit (being located on the Smoke Bluffs Trail), has the potential to be transformed into a pedestrian-access rendezvous point and amenity both for neighbourhood residents and visiting park users. As illustrated in the photo and artist’s concept below, enhancements could include and some landscaping, installation of a children’s play structure – possibly incorporating climbing-themed features such as bouldering sculptures designed for all-ages climbing (pictured above, made in Vancouver), with overhead shelter from rain – a drinking water tap, washrooms, bear-proof trash bins, and trail map.

The nearest such neighbourhood park with children's play structures is located on Westway Avenue in Valleycliffe. Preliminary indications are that residents of Smoke Bluffs Road and the Hospital Hill neighbourhood would not be averse to such enhancement of this area provided there are no significant increases in vehicle traffic, parked cars, and late-night activity.



View toward Penny Lane from Smoke Bluffs Road



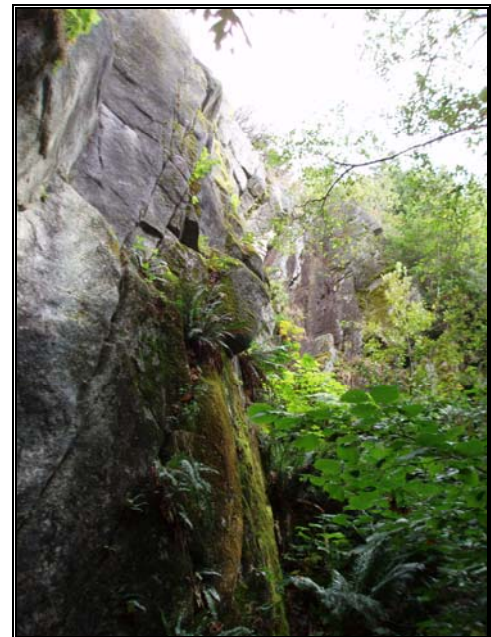
Artist concept for Smoke Bluffs Road neighbourhood park

### Vegetation Management

There are several distinct but inter-related issues to consider in Smoke Bluffs Park with respect to forest and ground cover and its management, namely:

- Vegetation encroachment on climbing crags;
- Vegetation encroachment on transmission lines;
- Aesthetic considerations;
- Ecological considerations; and
- Wildfire hazard management.

Large areas (possibly all) of the forested land base that now falls within Smoke Bluffs Park have been affected over time by various disturbances including natural wildfire, human-ignited fire, timber harvesting, residential development, and right-of-way forest clearing and conversion. Forest management activities are performed by crews contracted to BC Hydro on a regular basis within the transmission line rights-of-way to prevent tree encroachment on the two 230 kv lines and the two 69 kv lines that run through the park. It is understood that BC Hydro routinely engages District of Squamish operations staff in dialogue concerning these activities, to discuss among other things their aesthetic and ecological implications. However, at the present time it appears there is no other active management of the forest and ground cover within the park to address matters such as invasive plants, forest health, community-wildland interface fire hazard management, and park enhancement. These and related matters are complex and they involve many parties having different mandates and responsibilities. Policies and guidelines for vegetation management warrant being addressed in a future management plan for Smoke Bluffs Park.



Vegetation encroachment on a crag



Having the responsibility for oversight of park stewardship and enhancement for public use, the Smoke Bluffs Park Commission will assume a lead role in validating and addressing the specific concern of vegetation encroachment on climbing crags, viewpoints, and trails. The granite formations that are the key natural assets of this park support approximately 500 different climbing routes, most of which are single-pitch climbs distributed across the forested landscape of the park. Selective clearing of trees along the base of crags, and regular cleaning of vegetation and debris from the individual climbing routes, is necessary to maintain and enhance these natural assets for climbing.



*There is the potential to enhance the park with removal of some trees and debris to open up views and climbing routes at sites like this near High Crag*

A priority-driven program of vegetation clearing also may represent a management tool to help alleviate congestion at the most popular crags (where the heavier climbing traffic serves to keep routes clean) by presenting a wider array of climbing opportunities at secondary crags.

Selective clearing of trees, cutting back shrubs, and removal of debris along trails and at existing and potential new viewpoints can be reasonably anticipated to enhance the recreation experience for all park users.

The following strategies and associated actions are suggested in relation to enhancement of natural assets and amenities in Smoke Bluffs Park.

*Strategy (1):* Identify and elucidate the priority areas/features that are valued by different recreation user groups, and user group patterns of activity within and beyond the park, and incorporate this information into park management and regional land use planning initiatives

*Recommended Actions:*

- Develop a long-term vision for a trail network extending through the park and adjacent existing and future neighbourhoods, as a top priority action (groundwork for near-term plans for enhancement)
- Coordinate with SORCA and others contributing to the development of a Trails Strategy for the District, and incorporate the resulting trail development and enhancement strategy into the OCP
- Reflect in future updates to the DOS Park and Recreation Master Plan the long-term vision for Smoke Bluffs Park being enhanced by good trail connectivity within the broader District system of parks and recreation amenities, and with existing and future neighbourhoods
- Explore a spatial and/or temporal “zoning” system to facilitate use and enjoyment of the park by different recreation user groups, and possible activity-specific enhancements in certain areas that provide incentive for the activity to occur in appropriate locations, so as to separate the potentially less compatible activities (e.g. motorized trials bike riding and self-propelled activities).



*Strategy (2):* Develop and implement a planned program of park asset enhancements over a 5-year period

*Recommended Actions:*

- District of Squamish to dedicate resources annually to park asset maintenance and enhancement
- District of Squamish, Smoke Bluffs Park Commission, and recreation user groups to pursue outside funding and in-kind contributions to park enhancement that will leverage seed funding by the District
- Smoke Bluffs Park Commission to be referred all development/enhancement initiatives proposed for the park including District initiatives, and recommend priorities for enhancement.

*Strategy (3):* Rely on recreation user group “self-management” to the extent possible and appropriate, in particular for enhancements of the recreation asset base that are activity-specific

*Recommended Actions:*

- District of Squamish to encourage the different recreation user groups to engage in maintenance and enhancement initiatives through consultation with the Smoke Bluffs Park Commission
- District of Squamish to encourage the different recreation user groups to develop and disseminate activity-specific “Codes of Conduct” or similar protocols and strategies to promote awareness and accountability for recreation user practices, behaviours and interactions.

*Strategy (4):* Establish “due process” and transparency in decision-making concerning park enhancement

*Recommended Actions:*

- District of Squamish to coordinate and incorporate appropriate study, planning, design, risk assessment and consultation into decision-making process concerning potential park enhancements
- Smoke Bluffs Park Commission to be referred all development/enhancement initiatives proposed for the park including District initiatives, and recommend priorities for enhancement.

*Strategy (5):* Develop and implement a policy and/or program to promote non-park area land development and management practices that are aligned with park enhancement objectives

*Recommended Actions:*

- District of Squamish to consider the development of a referral policy for public and private lands surrounding Smoke Bluffs Park, and for utility corridors within the park
- District of Squamish (and the Smoke Bluffs Park Commission, if/as appropriate) to engage in dialogue with land development proponents to communicate park values and goals
- District of Squamish (and the Smoke Bluffs Park Commission, if/as appropriate) to develop a Memorandum of Understanding with BC Hydro and BC Transmission Corporation, and associated protocols for regular communication and cooperation, concerning utility management activities and practices in relation to park goals and the protection and enhancement of recreation assets.

## 5.0 PARK OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

District of Squamish is responsible for routine maintenance and operations of the municipal parks system, mostly comprising smaller neighbourhood parks and constructed facilities. The physical setting, natural assets, amenities, recreation activities and specific user groups in Smoke Bluffs Park are unlike those in other municipal parks in Squamish. Accordingly, the Smoke Bluffs Park Advisory Group envisions that a management plan will be prepared specifically for Smoke Bluffs Park. It would be prepared and updated over time at the direction of the Smoke Bluffs Park Commission to provide guidance and coherence for operational activities and tasks performed by District staff, for ongoing park stewardship and enhancement initiatives undertaken by the District and others, and for park user groups.

The management plan would outline broad policies and specific protocols that reflect the vision, goals, and strategic approaches presented in this Park Development Plan as a foundation document for park planning and management. More specifically, the management plan would address the following, and possibly other, items (to be confirmed by the Smoke Bluffs Park Commission):

- Park access strategy addressing vehicle traffic and parking, multi-modal access, trail connectivity;
- Interface between the park and adjacent neighbourhoods and private land;
- Maintenance and enhancement of the trail system within the park;
- Maintenance and enhancement of amenities within the park;
- Environmental inventory and valued ecosystem components;
- Vegetation management guidelines;
- Forest fire prevention and preparedness ;
- Park use and management in relation to utility rights-of-way and other land uses in the park;
- Waste management;
- Recreation use locations, activities, practices, and user behaviours;
- Interactions between recreation user groups;
- Recreation use capacity and management issues;
- Park user safety and risk management; and
- Commercial activities in the park.



*View west along the southern park boundary, on Smoke Bluffs Trail near Northridge Drive*

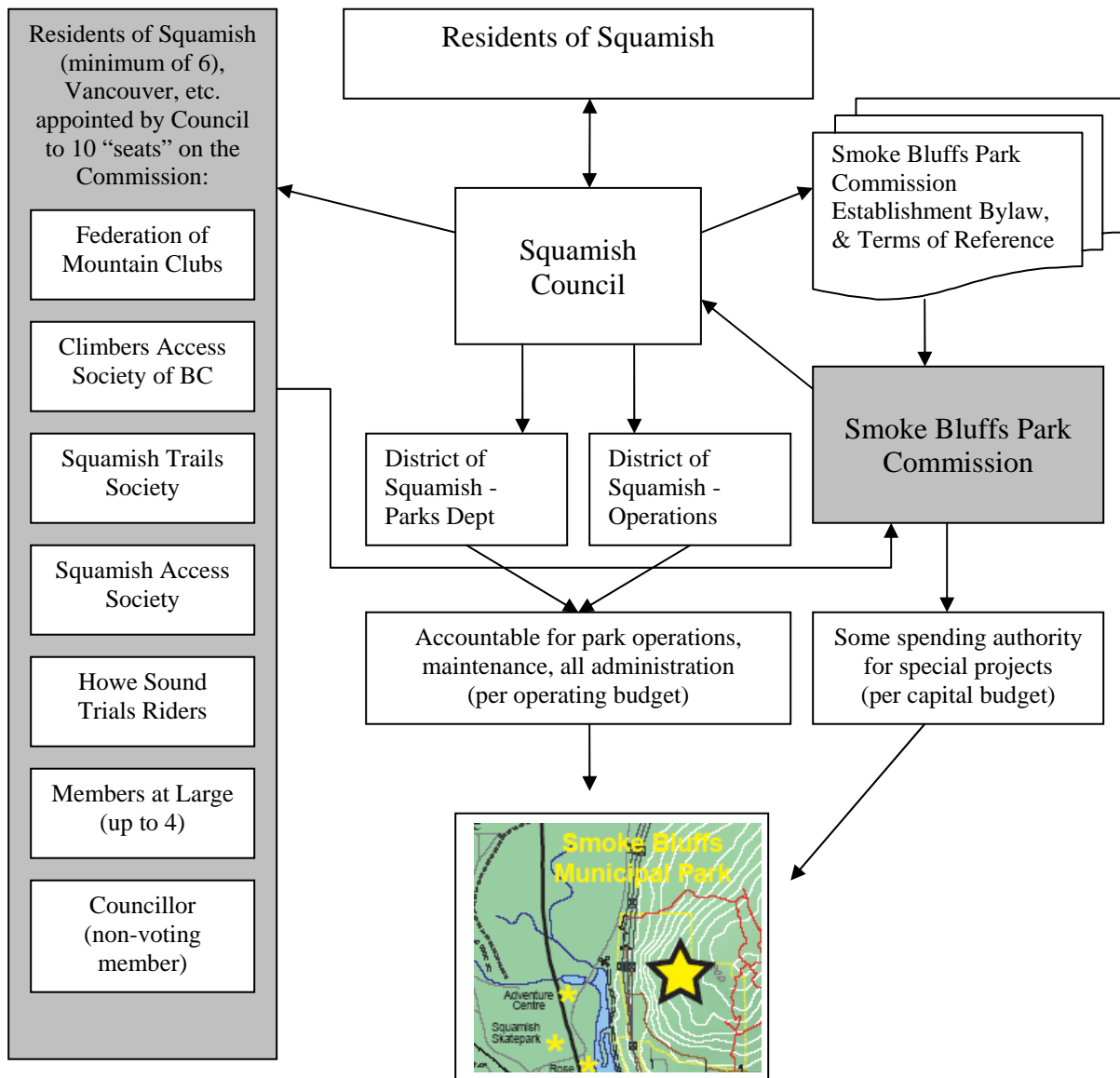
## 6.0 COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE

A forward-looking “vision statement” for the park was developed by the Smoke Bluffs Park Advisory Group, and flowing from that vision statement several goals were identified with the intent of providing a focus for future park development and management efforts. As outlined above in this Park Development Plan, certain approaches or strategies are suggested to achieve the identified goals. A formalized governance structure is proposed to oversee the implementation of this Park Development Plan, involving the collaboration of the District (through Council and staff) with volunteer representatives of recreation organizations and citizen members-at-large through establishment of the Smoke Bluffs Park Commission.

The proposed structure and mandate of this Commission is briefly described below and further detailed in appendices to this document.

As illustrated in the following schematic, the Smoke Bluffs Park Commission would be established through bylaw enacted by District of Squamish Council. The Commission would comprise ten members including one District Councillor (a non-voting member), four members-at-large, and five representatives of the recreation organizations who have participated in the Smoke Bluffs Park Advisory Group to date and whose memberships include the principal users of this park. All members of the Commission would be appointed by Council, with recommendations for appointment made by the current Commission. Members-at-large would be selected to serve on the Commission with consideration given to their particular experience, skill sets, and/or association with the park relative to current park management initiatives.

*Schematic Concept of the Proposed Collaborative Governance Model for Smoke Bluffs Park*



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## **APPENDICES**

### Appendix A: Mapping

Map 1: Smoke Bluffs Park Regional Context (1:25,000 scale)

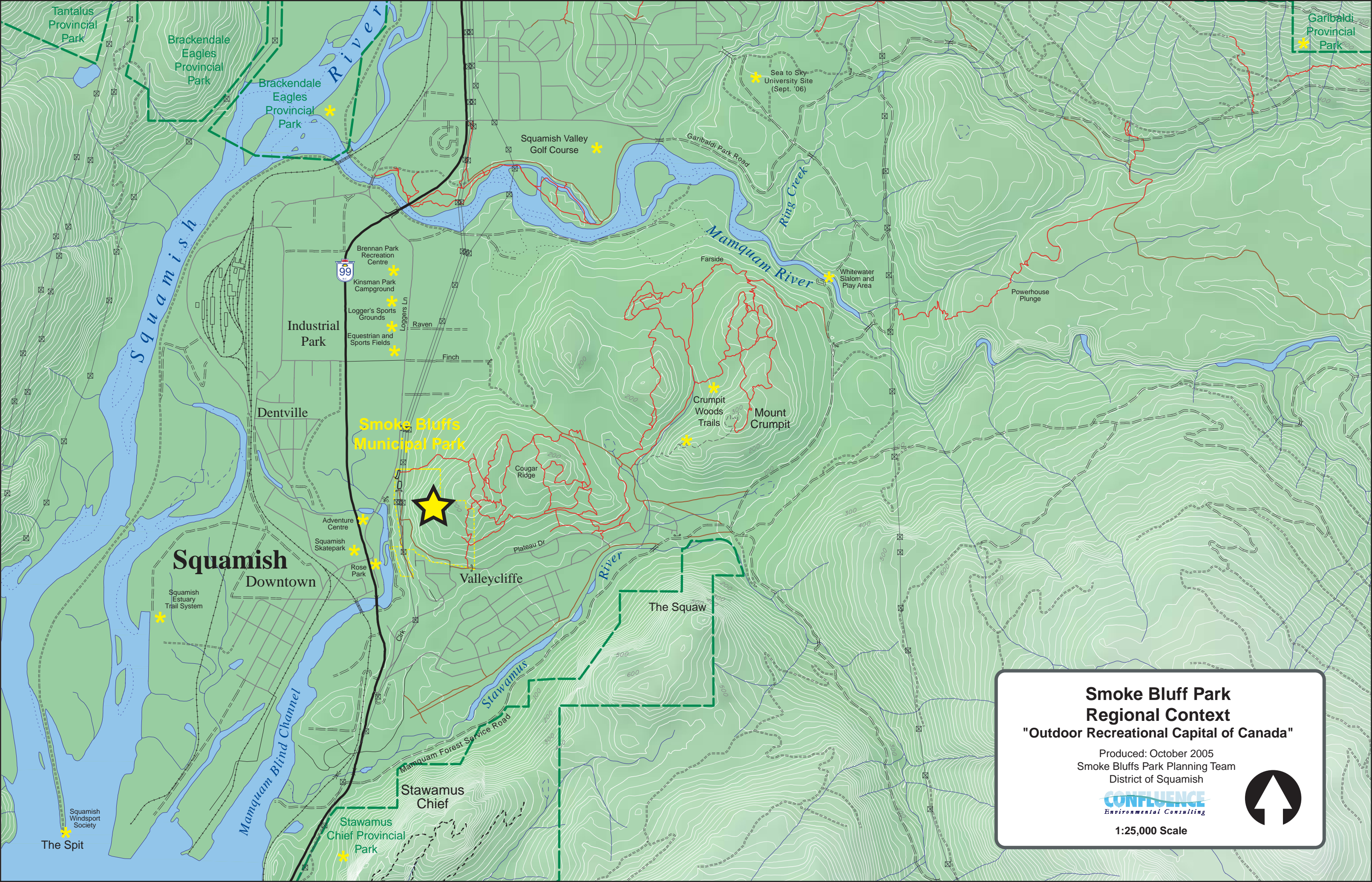
Map 2: Smoke Bluffs Park Key Features and Proposed Enhancements

### Appendix B: District of Squamish Smoke Bluffs Park Commission Establishment Bylaw

### Appendix C: Appendix D: District Squamish Smoke Bluffs Park Commission Terms of Reference

**Appendix A: Mapping**






**Smoke Bluff Park  
Regional Context  
"Outdoor Recreational Capital of Canada"**

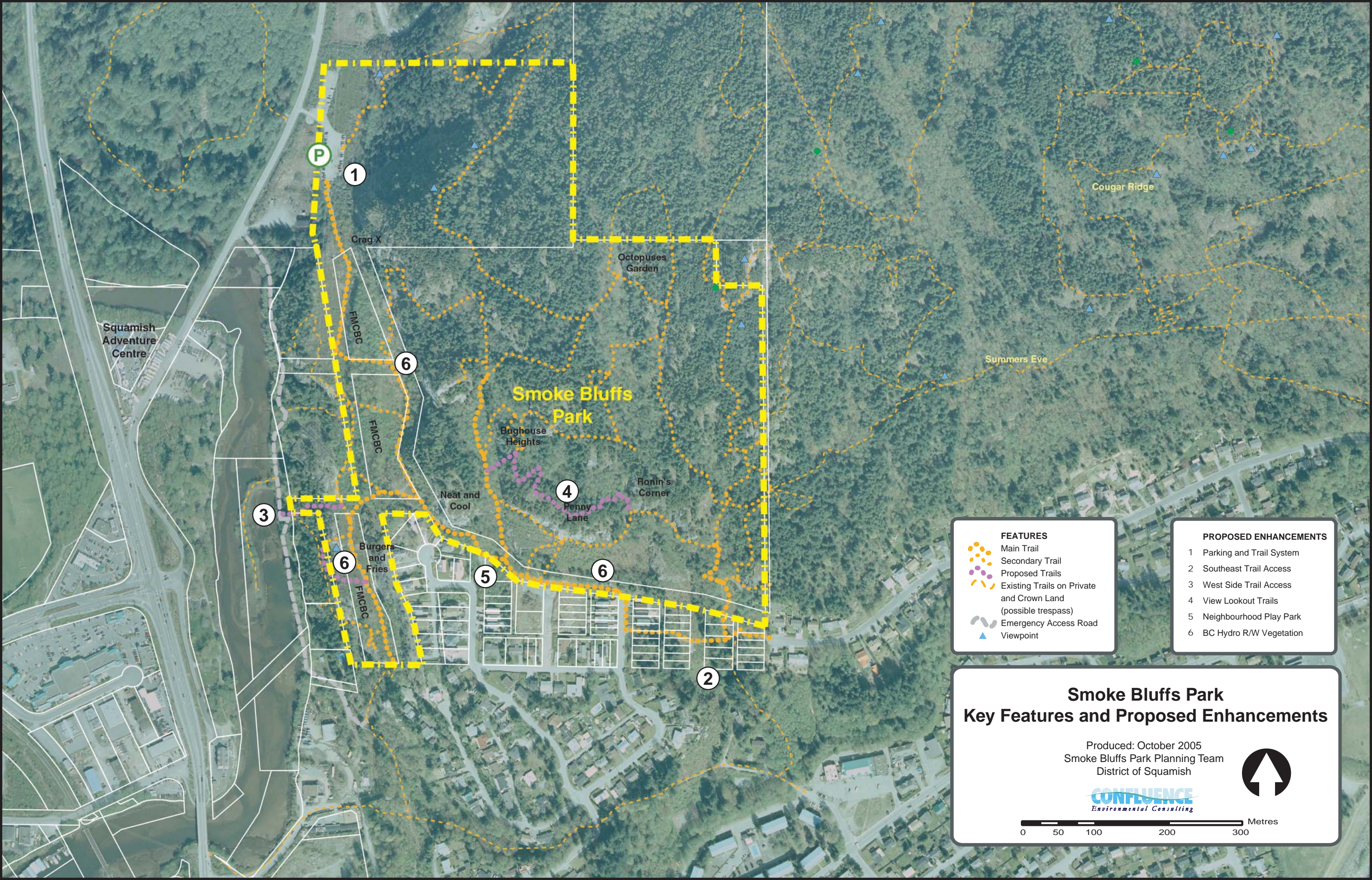
Produced: October 2005  
Smoke Bluffs Park Planning Team  
District of Squamish

**CONFLUENCE**  
Environmental Consulting

1:25,000 Scale







**FEATURES**

- Main Trail
- Secondary Trail
- Proposed Trails
- Existing Trails on Private and Crown Land (possible trespass)
- Emergency Access Road
- Viewpoint

**PROPOSED ENHANCEMENTS**

- 1 Parking and Trail System
- 2 Southeast Trail Access
- 3 West Side Trail Access
- 4 View Lookout Trails
- 5 Neighbourhood Play Park
- 6 BC Hydro R/W Vegetation

**Smoke Bluffs Park**  
**Key Features and Proposed Enhancements**

Produced: October 2005  
 Smoke Bluffs Park Planning Team  
 District of Squamish



**Appendix B: Smoke Bluffs Park Commission Establishment Bylaw**

## DISTRICT OF SQUAMISH

### Smoke Bluffs Park Commission Establishment Bylaw Bylaw No. 1935

A bylaw to establish the Smoke Bluffs Park Commission and to delegate to that Commission authority relating to the Smoke Bluffs Park

#### WHEREAS:

- A. The Council of the District of Squamish is authorized by section 143 of the *Community Charter* to establish and appoint a Commission to manage property and licenses held by the District;
- B. Council wishes to create a Commission, and to delegate to it the authority to steer the development of the Smoke Bluffs Park;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the District of Squamish in open meeting assembled enacts as follows:

#### SHORT TITLE

- 1. This Bylaw may be cited as the “District of Squamish Smoke Bluffs Park Commission Establishment Bylaw No. 1935, 2006”.

#### ESTABLISHMENT

- 2. There is hereby established a Commission to be known as the Smoke Bluffs Park Commission (the “Commission”).

#### PURPOSE

- 3. The Smoke Bluffs Park Commission will act as steward of the Smoke Bluffs Park and advise the Council of the District of Squamish (“Council”) and staff of the District of Squamish (“Staff”)and in particular:
  - (1) assist Council by overseeing the implementation of the Smoke Bluffs Park Development Plan;
  - (2) assist in setting the terms of reference for, and preparation of, the Smoke Bluffs Park Management Plan (the “Management Plan”);
  - (3) consider and advise Council and Staff on the content, policy directions, and implementation of the Management Plan;
  - (4) assist and advise Council in preserving Smoke Bluffs Park as an area for Rock Climbing in the District of Squamish;

- (5) act in an advisory capacity to Council on projects and policies pertaining to the Smoke Bluffs Park, including input on the Parks and Recreation Master Plan;
- (6) inform Council on any Smoke Bluffs Park related matter which, in the opinion of the Commission or Council, requires such reporting; and

generally work to promote appropriate stewardship, enhancement and use of the Smoke Bluffs Park.

#### DELEGATED AUTHORITY

4. The Council hereby delegates to the Commission the following authority:
  - (1) function as an independent advisory Smoke Bluffs Park planning and policy recommending body;
  - (2) establish priorities for District capital and operating budgets and capital investments pertaining to Smoke Bluffs Park;
  - (3) make requests of the District Staff to provide information describing capital and operating expenditures, and the status of municipal plans and initiatives, pertaining to Smoke Bluffs Park; and
  - (4) spend money, through District Staff, within an annual budget approved by the Council.

#### LIMITATION OF THE DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE COMMISSION

5. The Commission is not empowered to manage on a day to day operational basis or maintain Smoke Bluffs Park, park property or recreation facilities; conduct the recreation program within the District; or enter into agreements and contractual obligations.

#### REPORTS TO COUNCIL

6. The Commission shall:
  - (1) submit to the Director of Recreation, Parks & Tourism, for submission to Council, annually by the deadline established within the District's procedures for preparation of the Financial Plan each year an annual work plan for the following year, including financial and policy implications, and a five-year financial plan for capital costs associated with the development and enhancement of the Smoke Bluffs Park;
  - (2) submit annual reports to Council by the end of February each year describing the prior year's activities of the Commission to Council;
  - (3) submit regular reports to Council providing records of any revenue and expenditure activities.



#### INFORMATION

7. The Commission may gather information required to fulfill its purpose from various sources. The Commission can:
  - (1) assign Commission members to sub-committees or working groups as may be required from time to time to provide the Commission with advice on specific policies, proposals and initiatives;
  - (2) seek information from the elected officials and Staff assigned as Resource Persons to the Commission;
  - (3) invite individuals or groups to attend Commission meetings to provide the Commission with information related to specific policies, proposals or initiatives.

#### COMPOSITION AND APPOINTMENTS

8. The Smoke Bluffs Park Development Commission is comprised of nine voting members.
  - (1) The membership must include:
    - (a) one member of the Climbers' Access Society of British Columbia;
    - (b) one member of the Federation of Mountain Clubs of British Columbia;
    - (c) one member of the Squamish Trails Society;
    - (d) one member of the Squamish Access Society;
    - (e) one member of the Howe Sound Trials Riders Association; and
    - (f) four members at large who are residents of Squamish and two of whom are rock climbers with experience climbing in the Smoke Bluffs.
  - (2) Members referred to in articles 8 (1) (a) through (e) and one alternate for each must be selected and appointed by Council from nominees submitted by the Climbers' Access Society of British Columbia, Federation of Mountain Clubs of British Columbia, Squamish Trails Society, Squamish Access Society and Howe Sound Trials Riders Association respectively.

The four members at large must be selected and appointed by Council from nominees submitted from the general public and the Commission. Council may in any case decline to appoint a nominee and may request more nominations.

#### TERM AND TERMINATION

- (3) (a) Members serve at the pleasure of Council.
- (b) Each member and, if applicable, their alternate, will be appointed for a two year term which may be renewed for one or more subsequent terms.
- (c) Council may terminate the appointment of any member at any time.

#### RESIGNATION AND ABSENTEEISM

- (4) A member may resign by submitting to Council a letter of resignation. Any member who is absent from three consecutive monthly meetings, without leave of absence from the Commission or without reason satisfactory to the Commission, will be deemed to have resigned from the Commission, and may be replaced by Council.

#### REMUNERATION

- (5) All members will serve without remuneration. All expenses reasonably incurred in the carrying out Commission business may be reimbursed by the Director of Financial Services of the District of Squamish with approval of the Director of Recreation, Parks & Tourism.
- (6) The Secretary of the Commission is the Director of Recreation, Parks & Tourism or other Staff designated by the Director.

#### RESOURCE PERSONS TO THE COMMISSION

9. The following persons may participate in meetings of the Commission in a resource capacity but must not vote:
  - (1) The Mayor and one member of Council appointed by Council;
  - (2) Chief Administrative Officer;
  - (3) Director of Recreation, Parks & Tourism or the Director's designate;
  - (4) Manager of Operations; and
  - (5) Any other District of Squamish staff designated by the Chief Administrative Officer.

#### CHAIR AND DEPUTY CHAIR

10. The Chair and Deputy Chair of the Commission must be elected annually by a majority vote of the members. The terms of a Chair or Deputy Chair shall not exceed two consecutive years. The Chair, or the Vice-Chair in the absence of the Chair, must preside at all meetings.

## PROCEDURES

11. (1) The Commission will meet regularly on a schedule, to be determined by motion of the Commission at their first meeting, and amended thereafter by motion, but not fewer than four regular meetings will be held by the Commission in any one calendar year.
- (2) The Secretary, in consultation with the Chair and District staff, will have prepared an agenda for each meeting. Items specifically referred by Council to the Commission will be added to the next appropriate meeting agenda. The agenda will be distributed in accordance with the District's Procedure Bylaw.
- (3) Meeting notice and procedures will be in accordance with requirements for Commissions stated in the District's Procedure Bylaw and will be consistent with the rules of procedure for Council to the extent that they are applicable.
- (4) Special meetings of the Commission may be called as deemed necessary by the Chair or any two members of the Commission. Except where notice of a special meeting is waived by a unanimous vote of all members, the Secretary must, at least 24 hours before a special meeting of the Commission, give advance public notice of the time, place and date of the meeting by way of a notice posted on the notice board in the Municipal Hall foyer and give notice of the special meeting to the members.
- (5) A quorum is four members. If there is no quorum present within 15 minutes after the meeting is scheduled to begin, the recorder will record in the minutes the names of the members present at the end of fifteen minutes, and that meeting will stand adjourned until the next scheduled meeting.
- (6) As soon as there is a quorum of members present, the Chair will call the meeting to order. If the Chair does not attend within fifteen minutes after the time appointed for a meeting, the Deputy Chair will call the meeting to order or if the Deputy Chair is absent, the Secretary shall chair the meeting until the members present have, by resolution, elected one of their members to Chair that meeting.
- (7) All questions before the Commission will be decided by a majority of the members present at the meeting. Each of the members, including the Chair, has one vote. There is no abstention of vote; if a member is present at a Commission meeting but does not indicate their vote, their vote will be counted in the affirmative. Tie votes will be counted in the negative.

- (8) The Director of Administrative Services will ensure minutes of Commission meetings are kept, approved, signed by the Chair and available for public inspection in accordance with the *Community Charter* and Procedure Bylaw.
  
- (9) All meetings of the Commission must be open to the public except where the public is excluded from such meetings in accordance with the *Community Charter Act*, but members of the public will not be entitled to address the Commission unless previously listed on the meeting agenda or with the permission of the Commission approved by motion. The Commission is a local public body for the purposes of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

SEVERANCE

- 12. If at any time, any provision of this bylaw is declared or held to be illegal, invalid, or *ultra vires*, [beyond the delegated authority], in whole or in part, then the provision shall not apply and the remainder of this bylaw shall continue in full force and effect and be construed as if it had been enacted without the illegal, invalid, or *ultra vires* provision.

READ a first, second and third time this      day of                      , 2006.

ADOPTED this      day of                      , 2006.

---

Ian Sutherland, Mayor

---

Robin Arthurs, Director of  
Administrative Services



**Appendix C: Smoke Bluffs Park Commission Terms of Reference**

**SCHEDULE “A”**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE  
SMOKE BLUFFS PARK COMMISSION**

**1. PURPOSE OF COMMISSION**

The Smoke Bluffs Park Commission will act as steward of the Smoke Bluffs Park and advise the Council of the District of Squamish (“**Council**”) and staff of the District of Squamish and in particular:

- (a) assist in setting the terms of reference for, and preparation of, the Smoke Bluffs Park Management Plan (the “**Management Plan**”);
- (b) consider and advise Council and Staff on the content, policy directions, and implementation of the Management Plan;
- (c) submit to Council by the first of October each year a one-year financial plan for capital costs associated with the development and enhancement of the Smoke Bluffs Park;
- (d) submit annual reports to Council by the end of December each year describing the activities of the Commission to Council;
- (e) act in an advisory capacity to Council on projects and policies pertaining to the Smoke Bluffs Park, including input on the Parks and Recreation Master Plan;
- (f) inform Council on any matter which, in the opinion of the Commission or Council, requires such reporting; and
- (g) generally work to promote appropriate stewardship, enhancement and use of the Smoke Bluffs Park.

**2. LIMITATION OF THE DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE COMMISSION**

The Commission is not empowered to manage or maintain Smoke Bluffs Park, park property or recreation facilities or conduct the recreation program within the District.

**3. COMPOSITION OF THE COMMISSION**

Residency

- (a) The Commission will be composed of ten members known as Commissioners, of whom:
  - (i) at least seven Commissioners must be residents of the District of Squamish, including the Councillor; and
  - (ii) the only Commissioners who may not be Squamish residents will be those Commissioners who represent the Climbers’ Access Society of British Columbia, and the Federation of Mountain Clubs of British Columbia.

Commissioners from User Groups

- (b) Council will appoint up to five Commissioners on the basis of nominations from the following not-for-profit bodies, each of which will be given the opportunity to be represented on the Commission at all times:
  - (iii) Climbers' Access Society of British Columbia;
  - (iv) Federation of Mountain Clubs of British Columbia;
  - (v) Squamish Trails Society;
  - (vi) Squamish Access Society; and
  - (vii) Howe Sound Trials Riders Association

(collectively, the “**User Groups**”).

In the event that a User Group changes its name or formally amalgamates with a not-for-profit body that is not another User Group, then the renamed User Group or the resulting amalgamated body will be substituted for that User Group in the above list.

In the event that two or more of the User Groups formally amalgamate with each other, the amalgamated User Group may request that Council appoint two Commissioners from the amalgamated User Groups' nominees.

In the event that a User Group is dissolved or converted into a Company, the User Group will be struck from the above list, and the number of Commissioners appointed by Council on the basis of User Groups' nominations will be reduced by one.

Councillor Commissioner without voting right

- (c) Council will appoint one Councillor to sit as a Commissioner. The Councillor who is appointed as a Commissioner will not vote, but will otherwise participate and advise the Commission.

Commissioners at Large

- (d) Council will appoint the balance of the Commissioners from any of the following:
  - (i) the list of nominees prepared and submitted to Council from the outgoing Commission, pursuant to paragraph 4(a); and
  - (ii) residents of the District at large, who may be nominated by current or past Commissioners Interested individuals may nominate themselves by written submission to the Smoke Bluffs Park Commission.

4. **APPOINTMENT AND MEMBERSHIP**

Nominations

- (a) The outgoing Commission will prepare a list of nominees, including User Group representatives and representatives at large, for the next Commission and submit this list to Council at the beginning of December, annually. Each of the User Groups referred to in paragraph 3(b) may submit one or more nominees to represent their User Group.
- (b) Council may in any case decline to appoint a nominee and may request the Commission or the User Group, as the case may be, to submit a further nomination.

#### Appointment

- (c) Council has the authority to approve any individuals nominated by the outgoing Commissioners and the User Groups, and to appoint the Councillor Commissioner and Commissioners at Large as it deems fit.
- (d) Appointments will be made prior to the first Commission meeting of January in each year.

#### Term and Termination

- (e) Commissioners will serve during the pleasure of Council.
- (f) Commissioners-at-Large will be appointed for a one year term, which may be renewed for one or more subsequent terms.
- (g) Council may terminate the appointment of any Commissioner at any time, and Council will provide notice and the reason for such termination in writing.

#### Resignation and Absenteeism

- (h) A Commissioner may resign from the Commission on presentation of written notice at a regular meeting of the Commission. Any Commissioner who is absent from three consecutive monthly meetings, without cause or without notice to the Chair, will be deemed to have resigned from the Commission, and may be replaced by Council.

#### Vacancies

- (i) Any vacancy on the Commission other than a vacancy caused by the resignation of a Councillor will, for the expired portion of any term, be filled by Council from the list of nominations from which the Commissioner was appointed, or Council may invite fresh nominations from the Commission.

#### Remuneration

- (j) All Commissioners will serve without remuneration. All expenses reasonably incurred in the carrying out of Commission business may be reimbursed by the Treasurer of the District with approval of the Director of Operations.

**5. CHAIR AND DEPUTY CHAIR**

- (a) The Commission, at its first meeting of January each year, will elect a Chair and Deputy Chair from its membership. The Chair and Deputy Chair are annual appointments that can be renewed.
- (b) The Chair must be an individual who was nominated by one of the User Groups.
- (c) The Chair and the Deputy Chair will hold office for one year.
- (d) The Chair, in consultation with District staff, will prepare and approve all meeting agendas. The Chair will ensure that minutes are taken, distributed to the Commissioners, and archived in the Commission's Minute Book.
- (e) The Deputy Chair will act in the absence of the Chair.

**6. ADVISORY PERSONS TO THE COMMISSION**

The following persons may participate in meetings of the Commission in an advisory capacity but must not vote:

- (a) Director of Parks or his/her designate, and
- (b) Administrator or his/her designate;
- (c) Manager of Operations or his/her designate; and
- (d) any other District of Squamish staff.

**7. PROCEDURES GOVERNING THE CONDUCT OF THE COMMISSION**

- (a) A quorum is four Commissioners. If there is no quorum present within 15 minutes after the meeting is scheduled to begin, the recorder will record in the minutes the names of the Commissioners present at the end of fifteen minutes, and that meeting will stand adjourned until the next scheduled meeting.
- (b) As soon as there is a quorum of Commissioners present, the Chair will call the Commissioners to order. In case the Chair does not attend within fifteen minutes after the time appointed for a meeting the Deputy Chair will call the Commissioners to order, or if the Deputy Chair is absent, the Commissioners will appoint a chairperson who will preside during the meeting or until the arrival of the Chair or Deputy Chair.
- (c) All questions before the Commission will be decided by a majority of the Commissioners present at the meeting. The Commissioners will each have one vote, except for the Council member. The Chair of a meeting may cast a deciding vote.
- (d) Meeting notice will be in accordance with the District's Procedure Bylaw.



- (e) The Commission will meet regularly on a schedule to be determined by the Commission, but not fewer than four regular meetings will be held by the Commission in any one calendar year.
- (f) Special meetings of the Commission may be called as deemed necessary by the Chair and any four Commission members: each member will be given adequate notice of a special meeting of not less than four days.
- (g) The minutes of the proceedings of all meetings of the Commission will be maintained in a Minute Book and, when signed by the Chair or Commissioner presiding, will be forwarded to the District's Director of Administrative Services.
- (h) The rules of procedure for the Commission will be consistent with the rules of procedure for Council to the extent that they are applicable. The Chair of the Commission, will add items specifically referred by Council to the Commission to the agenda of the next appropriate meeting of the Commission.
- (i) All meetings of the Commission must be open to the public except where the public is excluded from such meetings in accordance with the *Community Charter Act*, but members of the public will not be entitled to address the Commission except with the Chair's permission. The Commission is a local public body for the purposes of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

## 8. FINANCIAL OPERATION

Records of the revenue and expenditure activities of the Commission will provided to Council in accordance with Council Policy.

## 9. CONDUCT OF COMMISSIONERS

Commissioners should be careful when speaking in public or to the media and should always regard themselves as being regarding by the public as members of the Commission.