



KIMBERLEY NATURE PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Prepared By:



KIMBERLEY NATURE PARK
SOCIETY

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1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Park Status and Stewardship Roles

The Kimberley Nature Park comprises 840 ha of Crown land under tenure to the City of Kimberley via License of Occupation (404517; Appendix A) dated December 1, 2011. The license designates the land for the purposes of Community Park for a term of 30 years.

The vision and efforts to formally establish a wildlife sanctum or a nature park began in the early 1970s. In 1987, the Kimberley Nature Park Society (KNPS) was inaugurated to promote the creation of the Kimberley Nature Park (“Park”) and to steward the existing trail and sign network at the time. Cooperative efforts by the Province, Cominco, the City and KNPS in the 1990s resulted in the ownership of all the land reverting to Crown with the understanding that it would be reserved for Park designation. The City recognized the Park in the 1994 Official Community Plan, Bylaw No. 1846, and later zoned the Park land for “non-motorized activities.” In 2001, the City applied for and received a License of Occupation over the Park area from the Province of BC. This license was renewed in 2011 for a period of 30 years. This License is non-exclusive and does not supersede any existing rights granted to other tenure holders; however, overlapping tenure holders and tenure applicants are encouraged to communicate and collaborate with KNPS to confirm their use(s) align with overarching goals for the Park.

KNPS is a registered non-profit BC Society. (Incorporation No. S0022895; Business No. 81082 6313 BC0001). The City of Kimberley has delegated responsibility to KNPS to manage the Park on their behalf pursuant to this Management Plan and the conditions of the License of Occupation via a Memorandum of Understanding signed in March of 2002. KNPS has been actively managing this area since the mid-1980s and plays a leading role in promoting, planning and stewarding the Park (see Appendix B).

The registered purposes of KNPS are:

- To protect the ecological systems within the Park,
- To maintain and enhance the Park’s total area to meet the biological needs of the fauna and flora (i.e., food, water and cover),
- To preserve the natural history of the area, and to promote outdoor recreational programs that are ecologically sound,
- To promote and encourage by educational means the proper use of the Park by all users, and
- To establish the Park as a study area for public schools, colleges and universities in forestry, wildlife, natural history, ecology, etc.

The KNPS is responsible for the following activities to uphold the primary mandate outlined in the license, which is “the area be managed to minimize impact to vegetation, wildlife populations, and human safety”:

- Planning and implementing ongoing monitoring and maintenance of the Park trail network and infrastructure
- Engaging and collaborating with user groups and KNPS members
- Liaising with regulatory agencies and overlapping tenure holders
- Coordinating volunteer efforts and educational outreach programs

- Coordinating wildfire and invasive plant management efforts
- Monitoring and documenting use (both wildlife and human) and impacts to the Park values
- Maintaining general liability insurance required by the Province and the City

1.1.1.1 Horse Barn Valley

The Horse Barn Valley (HBV) Interpretive Forest was established in 2003 under an agreed partnership between the Province of British Columbia and the KNPS (Agreement No. PA21DRMS001; Recreation Project No. REC6870, renewed 16 January 2021 for 10 years.) While that designation allows for normal forest management practices to continue, it also recognizes the area's important ecological, educational, recreational and heritage values, and gives KNPS a role in their management. Under the partnership agreement, the KNPS prepares an annual partnership engagement agreement summary report and work plan for the area that includes maintenance of trails, boardwalks and signage; hosting interpretive walks; and stewardship of the Halfway Cabin.

1.1.1 THE PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

This Management Plan was established to guide the stewardship of the Park to protect the flora and fauna that inhabit it, provide significant educational and recreational opportunities for the community, and respect the wishes of residents of Kimberley and the Province of British Columbia. It provides a framework for ongoing management to achieve the overarching goal that the Park remains a valued asset for the community in perpetuity. The original Management Plan was approved pursuant to the 2011 Licence of Occupation. This version is intended to provide a streamlined update and does not substantively depart from the original version.

HBV, although not situated within the City of Kimberley municipal boundary, is also managed by KNPS. As such, the management requirements of HBV are considered here for the purposes of this Management Plan.

The Plan identifies guiding principles, comprising two overarching goals and three pillars. The guiding principles direct routine planning activities for defining priorities and actions on an annual/cyclical basis. The specific priorities and actions are not documented in this Management Plan but will be provided to the City, community users and regulatory agencies as often as practicable.

The Plan is a living document that will be reviewed and updated as needed. Efforts will be made to ensure that the Plan is substantially consistent with other City planning documents such as the Recreation Trails Master Plan, the Fire Mitigation Plan, and the Official Community Plan (OCP).

The approved Management Plan (2011) was prepared by KNPS in consultation with the City of Kimberley, government agencies, adjacent landowners, Park user groups and the general public.

1.2 BACKGROUND

1.2.1 PARK DESCRIPTION

The Park consists of 840 ha of largely undeveloped land lying south of Kimberley Alpine Resort, Trickle Creek Golf Course and Swan residential subdivision; west of the residential areas of

Kimberley and Forest Crowne; north of the St. Mary Lake road; and directly inside the city's western boundary. HBV is a 210 ha area of Crown land adjacent to the Park immediately west of the municipal boundary bordering Dipper Lake. Together, the Park and HBV showcase an extensive (approximately 60 km) maintained trail system. The official trail guide can be found [here](#).¹

There are six major access points around the perimeter of the Park, as listed below. Most of the entrances have kiosks with a large map and a bulletin board for notices.

- Kimberley Nordic Center (restricted access in Winter)
- Swan Avenue
- Higgins Street
- Jimmy Russell Road off of St. Mary Lake Road
- St. Mary Lake Road across from Kimberley Riverside Campground
- Matthew Creek Forest Service Road spur

1.2.2 BIOPHYSICAL SETTING

The Park is situated on forested land along the eastern slopes of the Purcell Mountains at the edge of the Rocky Mountain Trench. The Park rises from an elevation of 975 metres along the St. Mary Lake road in the south to a height of 1,600 metres on the shoulder of North Star Mountain. Two smaller hills, Bear Hill and Myrtle Mountain, complicate the topography in the centre of the Park and help shape its diversity. In parts of the Park, bedrock rises right to the surface, while in other areas, deep layers of sand, gravel and water-rounded cobbles deposited at the end of the last ice age shape its contours. The Park's complicated topography, created by bedrock upheaval and post-glacial deposition and erosion, provides a great diversity of microclimates.

The climate of the Park is affected by two main regimes. Moisture-laden Pacific air moves eastward across the province, dropping rain and snow on the western slopes of successive mountain ranges, and Rocky Mountain Trench air masses bring Arctic air from the north in winter and warm, dry, continental air from the south in summer.

Water flows into the Park from the heights of North Star Mountain, and the area is drained by a series of ponds and two small creeks flowing northeast toward Kimberley and southwest to the St. Mary River. The creeks in the Park flow both above and below ground, disappearing into glacial sediments or cracks in the bedrock and reappearing on the surface as springs, sometimes kilometres away. Some of the ponds and sloughs in the Park are full of water year-round, while others dry up completely by late summer.

The Park is home to over 500 species of plants, fungi and lichens, 29 species of mammals, 97 species of birds and nine species of reptiles and amphibians. Seven special places that represent unique ecosystems and habitats have been identified in the Park, including Sunflower Hill (open grassland/high-quality elk habitat), Creek Trail (wet cedar glen), Myrtle Mountain (bedrock outcrops), Duck Pond (wetland moose habitat), Eimer's Lake (glacial kettle western painted turtle habitat), Williamson Sapsucker (WISA) Wildlife Habitat Area and Rockslide Trail (warm talus slopes/pika habitat).

¹ https://www.kimberleynaturepark.ca/_files/ugd/2e36a1_78ef225128c1448fb64ba71ff26ffc3e.pdf

1.2.3 HUMAN USE

The Park area has been used by the Ktunaxa people for hunting, for food gathering, as a travel corridor, and as a source of raw material for tool making for thousands of years. Early European settlers used the Park area for timber harvesting and explored it extensively for mineral deposits. These industrial activities left a legacy of narrow roads that still exist, and over the years, volunteers have created numerous footpaths that link the roads.

A very basic ski hill with a large cabin was developed at Myrtle Mountain in the early 1930s, and in 1934 a small cabin was built for recreation at what was then known as Silver Lake (Dipper Lake). In the 1940s the local army militia used the old logging trails to access Myrtle Junction, where they constructed a rifle range for target practice. A group of recreational pensioners maintained the bush trails in the 1960s. They snowshoed and hiked throughout the area and were also recruited to lead residents on weekly hikes.

The Park has a robust multi-use, all-season trail network that supports a variety of recreational activities for all ages and skill levels. The trails are designated for non-motorized use with a mix of old roads and singletrack trails hand-built mostly by volunteers. Walking, running and mountain biking are popular activities in the snow-free seasons, and snowshoeing, cross-country skiing and fat biking occur in winter. Off-leash dogs are welcome in the Park as long as owners clean up after them and ensure they do not harass wildlife or other Park users.

In addition to general use by individuals, the Park is also used for organized outings and events throughout the year. The KNPS plans and leads thematic guided walks for members and non-members alike. Community and school groups utilize the Park for education and recreation purposes and for promotional and fundraising activities. Adventure tourism and fitness businesses use the Park for training programs (e.g., mountain bike courses and group treks).

1.2.4 THE VALUE OF THE PARK

The Park is an important community asset that preserves valuable wildlife habitat and biodiversity while providing extensive educational and recreational opportunities for both local community members and visitors.

The Park ecosystems and habitats are thriving and unique with a number of species at risk. Importantly, these habitats and species are not well-represented in areas already protected in the province. Previous studies of wildlife habitat in the area have identified several major biophysical units that support a wide variety of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and insects. Four-hundred and fifty-nine plant, lichen and fungus species and 176 animal species have been identified over the years. The Park contains patches of old-growth forest and provides a wildlife corridor from the bottomlands of the Rocky Mountain Trench into the higher reaches of the Purcell Mountains. There are many small water bodies, bogs and creeks as well as two larger ponds that support aquatic communities. Some wildlife species use the land seasonally, many others reside year-round, and yet others merely pass through. The relatively undisturbed nature of the area provides sanctuary and cover necessary to sustain these populations.

The Park's diverse topography and extensive trail network provide great recreational opportunities for a wide variety of non-motorized outdoor pursuits. The Park is frequently used by local schools for educational outings and by local naturalists as a study area.

The Park has long been seen as a valuable lifestyle amenity for the community, and residential developments adjacent to its boundaries feature the Park in their promotional materials. The value of the Park to Kimberley's tourism strategy has been recognized and it is being promoted by tourism marketing agencies. It is expected that, as areas surrounding Kimberley become increasingly modified by logging and development, the Park's value to the community as a "Gateway to Nature" will continue to grow. As the Park's value grows, so does the importance of Park stewardship.

2 PLANNING CONTEXT

2.1 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

2.1.1 PLANNING GOALS AND PILLARS

KNPS is responsible for the stewardship and management of the Park and HBV. Established to promote, plan and steward the Nature Park and its large network of multi-use trails, KNPS's mission is to achieve a vision of the Park as a "Gateway to Nature" by promoting a setting for respect, understanding and enjoyment of nature.

KNPS's activities are pivotal in preserving the Park's natural habitat and ensuring it remains a valuable community asset in future decades. KNPS seeks to be proactive and forward-looking in adapting to changing environmental conditions and community needs, so that the Park remains a valuable natural and recreational resource for the Kimberley community.

The overarching strategic goals driving KNPS's ongoing activities are to:

- Manage the Kimberley Nature Park to maintain and, where possible, restore environmental and ecological values, while supporting the Park's education and recreation goals.
- Engage the community to foster a shared understanding of, and responsibility for, the conservation and management vision of the Kimberley Nature Park.

The three pillars that are the foundation supporting the Kimberley Nature Park Management Plan are Conservation, Education and Recreation. The following sections provide the strategic objectives for each pillar.

2.1.2 CONSERVATION

Conservation of the Park's soils, water, flora and fauna is a top priority for this Management Plan. Understanding the ecology of the area and ensuring the continued function of its ecosystems provides a base upon which human activities will be sustainably planned and carried out. The impacts of human activity will be monitored on an ongoing basis. Changes to activities will be implemented if negative effects on the natural systems are identified. Particular attention will be given to recording and understanding historical use by the Ktunaxa people and to the protection of their cultural heritage. The following high-level objectives guide KNPS work under the pillar of conservation:

- Conserve soils, waters, flora and fauna
- Protect rare, threatened or endangered habitats and species
- Maintain the Park in its natural state with trails, bridges and signs to facilitate use
- Monitor the impacts of human activity
- Develop a comprehensive inventory of natural and cultural features
- Record and understand historical use by the Ktunaxa people
- Implement fire, pest and invasive plant management plans for the area

2.1.3 EDUCATION

Education is key to balancing sustainable use and conservation, as well as inspiring the next generation of environmental stewards. Through our programs and activities, KNPS aims to impart knowledge about the Park's biodiversity, ecological and cultural significance, as well as

the importance of sustainable recreation. The following high-level objectives guide KNPS's work under the pillar of education:

- Foster understanding and respect for natural processes and biodiversity
- Promote the Park as an outdoor classroom
- Expand the Park's role in academic research and education programming
- Cultivate partnerships with schools, colleges, and the scientific community

2.1.4 RECREATION

Maintaining the Park's extensive trail network and facilities is a key responsibility of KNPS. This includes regular upkeep and enhancements to ensure the Park remains accessible, safe and enjoyable for all users. The following high-level objectives guide KNPS's work under the pillar of recreation:

- Maintain a network of safe, clearly marked trails
- Encourage year-round day use for non-motorized forms of recreation
- Support responsibly organized recreational activities and events
- Support accessible enjoyment of nature and natural systems
- Discourage overnight camping and higher-impact uses

2.2 PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS

The KNPS refreshes the strategic priorities every three years and develops an annual action plan based on these priorities and pillars. In order to maintain flexibility for these key planning activities, the priorities and actions are not embedded in the Management Plan. Rather, the following sections provide important context for the areas of focus under the three pillars that will continue to be relevant for the duration of the License of Occupation and beyond.

2.2.1 TRAILS AND ACCESS

The Park is designed to balance the natural state of the setting with user preferences and needs. KNPS manages the Park with the vision of a sustainable trail network, designed to minimize maintenance requirements and limit ecological impacts of ongoing recreational activities. Toward this goal, the Park is limited to non-motorized uses (City Bylaw 1850) but also requires certain infrastructure (e.g., footbridges and signage) to support the diversity of users. The existing trail system has evolved over time, largely due to volunteer efforts to build and maintain trails, improve signs and develop maps, and supports a range of uses, including hiking, running, biking, skiing and snowshoeing.

The trail network is well established, and new trail development is limited to rerouting existing trails to reduce hazards and improve safety for users. However, the 40+ km trail network requires ongoing surveillance to identify issues, as well as planning to assess and prioritize projects for maintenance and upgrades that are needed to prevent or minimize soil erosion, ecosystem damage and risk to users. Items that require assessment include trail surfaces, boardwalks and stream-crossing structures (e.g., bridges and culverts), as well as kiosks and signage.

KNPS manages an inventory of the existing trails and infrastructure throughout the Park. All trail maintenance, building, re-routing or decommissioning must occur in consultation with KNPS and conform with requirements outlined in the License of Occupation and all applicable regulations

and best practices. Importantly, any changes to the trail network or other ground disturbances must be reported to the Province and may impact the License of Occupation requirements (i.e., may require an amendment). Additions to the trail system will only be sanctioned if they are deemed necessary and adhere to best management practices and requirements outlined in the LOO.

On an annual basis, the KNPS, in collaboration with the Kimberley Trails Society and other user groups, identifies priorities and defines scope of work for maintenance and upgrades to be completed for the year. Trail monitoring and maintenance activities are conducted in accordance with available best practices for sustainable natural surface trails for multiple user types.

Given the size and diversity of the Park, a number of entrances are required. Some existing entrances do not have adequate parking space and adjacent residents have been negatively impacted. KNPS monitors access issues and conducts outreach to address complaints as needed. Options to improve access and parking are limited, but new development in adjacent areas may be leveraged to offer future opportunities for access points.

On an ongoing basis, the KNPS plans and coordinates work to address the following:

- Removal of windfall and detritus from trail surfaces
- Mitigation of erosion from snowmelt runoff and over/mis-use
- Installation of new and repair of damaged or ineffective and deteriorated boardwalks and stream crossings
- Installation and maintenance of signage to clearly mark trails for user orientation and safety and to promote good trail etiquette practices
- Installation of signage to identify entrance locations and clarify access limitations
- Installation of new and maintenance of kiosks for posting maps and providing important safety and awareness information.

2.2.2 PUBLIC SAFETY

There are inherent risks associated with use of any natural area. These risks will be assessed and mitigated through ongoing trail maintenance activities (as described above), education, and other means (as outlined below) that are compatible with the goals of the Park.

Key areas of public safety risk to be managed:

- Dogs need to be under control and trails kept free of excrement.
- Park users need to practice proper trail etiquette, use only non-motorized equipment and maintain control of that equipment at all times.
- Inherent risks are present in the Park, and users need to understand those risks and be responsible users.
- Organizations using the Park for activities, whether under permit or not, need to maintain their own liability insurance.

2.2.3 NATURAL HISTORY

The Park trails and their use pose the greatest potential for human impact on the ecology of the area. The Province, through the License of Occupation, has required that management of the area minimizes “the impact on vegetation, wildlife populations, and human safety.” Finding a balance between the human desire for more access and different uses and the needs of the

flora and fauna is inherently challenging, but it starts with a good understanding of the natural functions of the systems and the potential drivers of effects (i.e., effects assessment).

The assessment of effects is based on a comprehensive understanding of the natural systems. KNPS has been conducting monitoring activities and promoting research in the Park for decades and has compiled valuable information on many wildlife and plant species inhabiting the Park. As our knowledge base grows, and we learn more about the species and habitats within the Park, we may discover specific areas, ecosystems or species that are in need of protection or enhanced management, or we may identify natural agents of change (e.g., pine beetle, mistletoe, root rot) that represent perceived threats to areas outside the Park.

Monitoring and research also allow for tracking of changes over time that could indicate that negative impacts have occurred or are imminent. The observed or projected changes allow for the identification of key thresholds that can be used to define measurable objectives, which may trigger management decisions to avoid, minimize or mitigate effects.

To develop the capacity to assess and manage effects of human use on the natural values of the Park, the KNPS will:

- Review the compiled information on an ongoing basis to identify knowledge gaps and scope research programs to address gaps.
- Continue and expand on the long-term monitoring programs to build the knowledge base necessary to identify negative effects.
- Build relationships with academic institutions and government agencies to leverage available expertise to develop the knowledge base and evaluate impacts.
- Work with neighbours, the public and experts to identify species of concern.
- Track Park use to identify pressure points and impacts.
- Design and implement special measures to protect rare, threatened or endangered habitats and species.
- Build a framework for decision-making to trigger management actions that could be taken to address observed indicators of negative impacts of Park use to ecological values.

2.2.4 SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREAS

There are a number of specific areas within the Park that have unique and important values and deserve special attention from a conservation perspective. Over time, site-specific plans will be developed for the following four areas, with further areas to be added in the future:

2.2.4.1 EIMER'S LAKE

This area contains a number of unique elements, including a sphagnum bog, a Labrador tea meadow and a trout population, found nowhere else in the Park. The area is easily accessible and provides some unique opportunities for nature interpretation. KNPS has identified Eimer's Lake as being sensitive to disturbance, and its protection may require special measures.

2.2.4.2 SUNFLOWER HILL

The southern slopes of the Park and the benches above them merit special consideration, as they support grassland ecosystems and key ungulate winter range. Although the area has recovered well from mechanical thinning and prescribed burning, which occurred in 2006 and 2008,

managing impacts of invasive weeds and recreation are ongoing priorities for this special part of the Park.

2.2.4.3 MYRTLE JUNCTION

This central meeting place contains some important heritage values, as well as being a nexus for a variety of trails. It is adjacent to a riparian area and provides an excellent location for group interpretive activities.

2.2.4.4 WILLIAMSON'S SAPSUCKER Wildlife Habitat Area

In 2008, an 80-hectare area within the boundaries of the Park was officially established as the Williamson's Sapsucker Wildlife Habitat Area (Order Wildlife Habitat Area #4-108, BC Ministry of Environment, 30 October 2008.) The designation protects breeding areas of the endangered Williamson's Sapsucker. The provincial government did some work on developing a treatment plan for the area to improve habitat and reduce forest fire risk and, should that plan be finalized, it will be reviewed and supported by the KNPS.

2.2.4.5 HORSE BARN VALLEY

Horse Barn Valley (HBV) is a 210-hectare area located on the western border of the Park. Although HBV is outside of the Park and Kimberley City limits, KNPS has the responsibility through its partnership agreement with the Province of BC to manage the area. HBV is a scenic and ecologically diverse area with important features that are locally unique. HBV requires special management attention to monitor impact by user groups and other stakeholders. KNPS works closely with fire mitigation groups, forestry and other resource stakeholders to ensure oversight and compliance verification according to the agreement, and to minimize impacts of these activities on the natural environment

2.2.4.6 MARGINS OF THE PARK

KNPS has identified that the margins of the Park are particularly vulnerable to user impact on conservation efforts, requiring special management considerations, primarily with respect to the introduction and spread of invasive species. The margins are generally high-use areas near entrances, bordering residential areas, the golf course, the Nordic Center and other populated areas. KNPS will continue to monitor and assess the margin areas.

2.2.5 CULTURAL HERITAGE

The Park area contains a number of pre- and post-contact heritage sites. It has been used by the Ktunaxa people for quarrying and transitory hunting activities, and perhaps as a travel corridor. There are several post-European contact historical resources, including one of Kimberley's former ski hills, and several early mineral exploration and sawmill sites.

The trail system is well-established, and no new additional disturbance is anticipated that could impact archaeological or cultural and heritage resources. However, if additions to the trail system or other ground disturbances are proposed, an archaeological assessment is required, and necessary protective actions will be taken to protect cultural heritage values pursuant to conditions of the License of Occupation.

Overall, the KNPS intends to:

- Seek opportunities to foster knowledge of and appreciation for the human history of the Park area for users.

- Record, protect and interpret the cultural and heritage resources.
- Protect archaeological values during any ground disturbance activities.
- Engage with the Ktunaxa Nation to collaborate on research, archival and interpretation projects that are of particular interest to them.
- Liaise with the Ktunaxa Nation regarding educational opportunities for the Park.

2.2.6 INVASIVE PLANTS

Non-native, invasive plants and noxious weeds could potentially take over where native plant species usually thrive, upsetting the ecological balance of the area. It is important to find safe ways to prevent the spread of these weeds and, over time, to eradicate them. In the past, KNPS has identified 11 areas for ongoing control of invasive plants in the Park. Importantly, the control of noxious weeds is a condition of the License of Occupation.

On an ongoing basis, the KNPS completes the following activities to control invasive, non-native plants while protecting native species and ecosystem functions from negative impacts:

- Build and maintain a partnership with the East Kootenay Invasive Species Council.
- Update the invasive plant inventory and maps for the Park.
- Liaise with regional weed control officers to identify invasive weed species (e.g., knapweed, toadflax, blueweed) and assign priorities for their control.
- Keep up to date on best practices for controlling high-priority invasive species.
- Coordinate invasive plant management campaigns.
- Educate Park users to identify invasive plants, report observations and pull weeds.
- Monitor for outbreaks and for effectiveness of management campaigns.

2.2.7 WILDFIRE

The Park is situated inside the Kimberley municipal boundary and adjacent to both existing and future neighbourhoods. The Park and HBV are smaller parts of a much larger set of treatment areas that the City and Province of BC are managing to reduce fire risk on the south-west side of the City.

On one hand, wildfire is a significant risk for the community, but on the other, fire has always played an important role in natural ecosystems, and the long-term ecological impact of fire suppression on habitat and forest health is of concern. The wildfire management strategy for the Park strives to balance these conflicting conditions.

Key management objectives for the Park pertaining to wildfire risk are to:

1. Reduce the risk for the community by establishing proactive wildfire interface protection.
2. Coordinate emergency response in the event of a wildfire.
3. Restore ecological function and values where wildfire management actions are required.
4. Minimize the impact of fire mitigation treatments on the natural processes of the Park.

To achieve these objectives, the KNPS collaborates with the City of Kimberley, Kimberley Fire Department, the Province, logging companies and local communities concerning fire management activities that will help to protect the community from potential wildfire while maintaining the ecological, aesthetic and recreational values of the area. Human safety, City bylaws and provincial fire regulations will be given high priority when organized recreational and maintenance activities are being planned.

KNPS will continue to consider the use of prescribed burning for habitat restoration or wildfire risk reduction.

On an ongoing basis, the KNPS completes the following activities:

- Collaborate and coordinate with the Kimberley Fire Department, the Province and commercial enterprises regarding risk reduction and wildfire management planning.
- Pursue opportunities to reduce wildfire fuel loading in the Park.
- Maintain and map emergency access routes and water supply locations.
- Communicate with the KNPS membership and the public about ongoing fire mitigation activities in the Park.
- Communicate campfire restriction to users through outreach and signage.
- Coordinate a firewood salvage program to help reduce fuel loading.
- Continue to pursue fuel reduction measures that enhance ecosystem and biodiversity values.

2.2.8 PROGRAMS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

The Park is a microcosm of the natural world. It is also a place of human activity, in the past and the present. As such, the Park serves as an outdoor classroom and a resource for studies and research. Current public use of the Park is mostly informal, by individuals and small groups. A number of local organizations, including KNPS, mountain bike groups, the Kimberley Scouts and some schools make larger organized visits to the area.

The License of Occupation provides non-exclusive use of the subject land-base by the City of Kimberley for Community Park use, which means other organizations are entitled to apply for tenure to support their business activities within Park boundaries. However, KNPS and the City encourage these organizations to prepare and offer activities that are compatible with the Park's pillars of conservation, recreation and education. Any commercial activity on provincial Crown land must be authorized by license or permit issued by the Province. As this area is within the municipal boundaries, a business license from the City is also required. A notification process exists that allows the City, in consultation with the KNPS, to receive and review proposals for organized events and activities.

On an ongoing basis, the KNPS completes the following activities related to education programs and special events:

- Plan organized educational outings to promote awareness of the natural values of the Park.
- Liaise with commercial recreational enterprises to ensure transparent communication and responsible use for preparation, implementing and follow-up of commercial events.
- Encourage individuals, groups and businesses to organize and promote events that are compatible with the conservation, education and recreation goals.
- Continue to devise educational and interpretive activities and materials for Park users.
- Support the inclusion of learning objectives in local school programs regarding recreational impacts on trails and habitat.
- Seek opportunities to foster knowledge, understanding and respect for the natural world and the cultural history that is represented in the Park with Park user groups.

2.2.9 ENHANCING COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Community engagement is an essential component of our strategy. Responsible stewardship of the Park requires strong buy-in and participation from the community to achieve the goals and initiatives outlined in this Management Plan. The KNPS strives to engage the Park users through outreach and educational programming to raise awareness about the Park's ecological values and how to protect them. By strengthening our community presence, we grow the network of supporters and volunteers who share our vision and can help advocate for Park stewardship and conservation priorities. Effective communication ensures that our message reaches a broad audience, enhances public understanding and inspires individuals to contribute to the Park's care and preservation.

Developing and maintaining community support will require ongoing liaison with Park neighbours to identify and rectify any concerns they may have. It will also be important to continue outreach to tourism and lifestyle promotion agencies in the community to foster an appreciation of the Park as a significant, integral component of the Kimberley lifestyle and economy.

On an ongoing basis, the KNPS completes the following activities related to enhancing community relations and awareness of KNPS mandates and activities:

- Meet with agencies and companies that promote tourism and real estate development in Kimberley to explain the role and value of the Park to the community.
- Seek opportunities to communicate all aspects of the Management Plan's updates and implementation to the residents of Kimberley
- Advocate with the City to recognize the Kimberley Nature Park in future revisions of the Official Community Plan.
- Seek opportunities to share knowledge and experience gained through management of the Park with other community groups.

3 APPENDICES

Appendix A. License of Occupation

Appendix B. City/KNPS Memorandum of Understanding

Appendix A

Appendix B