

Commercial and Public Recreation Study

for the

Sunshine Coast Forest District

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<to be completed prior to final report>

1. INTRODUCTION

Bracketed by the world class features of Mt Waddington, Desolation Sound and Princess Louisa Inlet, the Sunshine Coast contains assets which attracts international visitors, as well as providing ample recreational opportunities for local residents. The forests, parks, recreation sites and trails, and roaded and non-roaded areas, on both Crown land and private holdings provide residents and visitors with extensive opportunities for numerous outdoor activities. These include hiking, camping, skiing, snowshoeing, mountain biking, horseback riding, mountaineering, rock climbing, angling, hunting, multi-sport riding, canoeing and kayaking, as well as more passive activities such as wildlife or nature viewing. Marine activities include cruising, sailing, sport fishing, sea kayaking and scuba diving.

Tourism and recreation in the Sunshine Coast is strongly linked to land use and is directly dependent on back country, fish, wildlife and other resource values. About one quarter of all visitors directly participate in outdoor activities, while the majority of the remainder place a high value on the wilderness and wildlife attributes found throughout the region. Tourism providers are increasingly using Crown Land resources although this usage is hard to quantify with trend data given the moratorium on commercial recreation tenures that existed through most of the 1990s. Rising park and recreation site visitation, heightened competition for new commercial tenures and anecdotal evidence of unlicensed commercial activity point to increased demand for outdoor recreation and tourism.

Globally, there is increased demand for eco and adventure tourism products, such as those found in the region. The United Nations has declared 2002 the International Year of Ecotourism. Forecast trends suggest that increased use of the backcountry for motorized and non-motorized recreation is expected to continue. Although current demand for tenures by commercial operators is low, tourism operators require secure Crown land tenure to ensure that they can provide the quality services needed to compete at an international level. Public recreationists feel increasing pressure as commercial operations and other competing resource users limit the availability of suitable space for their activities or stretch the limits of carrying capacity. This will place increasing pressure on land use managers to ensure opportunities are available for both public and commercial recreation as they balance the demand for socially and environmentally sustainable recreation with economic diversity.

In November 2001, the Ministry of Forests (MoF), Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management (MSRM) and Land and Water BC Inc. (LWBC - formerly the B.C. Assets and Land Corp) contracted Clover Point Cartographics Ltd. and Geoscape Environmental Consultants to conduct a Tourism, Commercial Recreation & Public Recreation Study for the Sunshine Coast. The purpose of this multi-faceted study is to compile and analyze information on both **tourism** and **recreation** in the Sunshine Coast Forest District in order to assist land managers with local planning and operational activities. The study includes elements of inventory, consultation and analysis.

The information in this report is required for a number purposes: to assist provincial and regional planning processes, to serve as a decision-making aid for individual provincial agencies and to support operational and forest development planning. Such a knowledge base can also be a valuable resource for communities, recreation and tourism groups, businesses and residents of the Sunshine Coast region for their own community and business development needs. The existing recreational features inventory does not meet

current standards and is dated; tourism information, in terms of commercial operators, the activities they engage in and the resources they utilize, is poor.

The tourism and recreation information gap is a liability not only for the higher level planning processes but also for land and resource management itself, including the allocation of Crown tenure. Problems with incorporating tourism and commercial recreation values into higher level plans had less to do with an inherent unwillingness by planning stakeholders to recognize tourism than with a genuine lack of information about who is involved in the industry, what its economic impacts are in terms of employment and community income, where it occurs and how it is linked to the Crown land and resource base. There is a vital need to close the information gap because the competition for resources, and the resulting resource-user conflicts, is more intense than in other areas. Effective planning and managing for multiple-use implies the existence of a credible information base on all resource uses, both public and private.

Public and commercial recreation stakeholders face similar resource challenges, not just with other industrial users like forestry, but between and among themselves. There are conflicts between public use and commercial use of some recreational resources in the study area, just as there are conflicts between competing commercial recreation interests. The ability of provincial land and resource managers to fulfill their mandates while balancing the sometimes conflicting needs for industrial demand, economic efficiency, provincial revenues, community needs and public equity is directly dependent on the quality and integrity of information on all resource users, including tourism and recreation.

1.1 CONTEXT / BACKGROUND

The province has conducted a number of similar studies looking at commercial and public recreation, but had not previously connected both types of recreation under the same study. In particular, two projects were identified by the client as templates from which this study should be based.

Public Recreation Study of the Squamish Forest District (November 2000). Commissioned by the Ministry of Forests and undertaken the Outdoor Recreation Council, this study followed a Public Recreation Inventory conducted by ORC for the BC Assets and Land Corporation. The purpose of the study was to identify high value recreation areas and preliminary motorized/non-motorized zoning. For each Recreation Management Unit identified, the types of activities and current and suggested level of use is identified, and zoning recommendation and management directions suggested. Management directions were based on issues and conflicts identified through discussions with user groups.

Strategic Planning for Commercial Recreation – Squamish District, including the Sea to Sky Corridor. Phase II: CR Management Plan (February 2000). Undertaken by Doug Leavers Consulting & Associates for the BC Assets and Land Corporation, this wide-ranging study primary purpose was:

“To recommend compatible strategies for managing Commercial Recreation opportunities and use through comprehensive assessment of the known biophysical resources and critical Crown land uses in the Sea to Sky /Squamish District planning area.”

In achieving this goal, the report identified broad-based issues regarding commercial recreation, and relates each of these issues to the defined landscape units. Within each landscape unit resource values have been mapped out and a compatibility assessment is undertaken. The result is an assignment of Commercial Recreation Emphasis Objectives and Management Guidelines (zoning for motorized/non-motorized activities in summer and winter) for each unit. Where conflicts exist relating to Commercial Recreation management issues, mitigation options are discussed.

This report also recognizes and build on existing local and regional planning, including:

- *Sunshine Coast Forest District Recreation Plan (November 2000);*
- *Vancouver Forest Region Recreation Strategy and Analysis Report (September 1999);*
- *Powell River Tourism Study (August 1999);*
- *Integrated Watershed Management Plans and Local Resource Use Plans;*
- *Sunshine Coast Forest District Recreation Analysis and Management Strategies Report (Roddan and Rasmussen, 1996); and*
- *Southwest Tourism Resource Inventory (1996).*

MANAGEMENT CONTEXT

A number of provincial and federal agencies have responsibilities related to public and commercial recreation on Crown Land. These agencies, and their roles, are briefly described below. It is important to note that the roles identified are those currently assigned. Given the rapid changes occurring in the Provincial Government today, there is no guarantee that these agencies will have the same areas of responsibilities in the future.

Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management, Resource Management Division:

The Resource Management Division of the Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management supports the development and approval of strategic land and water use plans, including coastal planning and landscape and watershed planning. Under this Division, the Tourism and Recreation Branch and regional tourism planners develop tourism land-use policy, and manage a province-wide inventory of existing tourism activities and capabilities on Crown land.

Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management, Decision Support Services:

Decision Support Services provides government with professional decision support services supports land use planning, Treaty negotiations, sectoral economic development and land tenure allocations. Focus areas include: sustainable resource development, economic development, scientifically based and principled environment management, and open and accountable decision-making. Tourism Opportunities Studies are among the initiatives they are responsible for.

Ministry of Forests:

Responsible for managing recreation on provincial Crown Land outside parks and municipal areas. While not longer accepting responsibility for the management of recreation sites or trails, the Ministry will continue to set policy and standards for the management of forest recreation resources (recreation and visual resource management).

Ministry of Water, Land, and Air Protection – BC Parks Division:

The Parks and Ecological Reserves Management Branch, BC Parks Division, of this Ministry is mandated to manage recreational activities in provincial parks, protected areas, wildlife management areas (recreation is not permitted in Ecological Reserves). This includes the administration of Park Use Permits.

Ministry of Competition, Science and Enterprise, Economic Policy Division:

The Ministry is the provincial ministry responsible for the tourism sector. It provides advisory and support services related to tourism, development and analysis of provincial economic development and employment policies and program initiatives, and development, evaluation, implementation and co-ordination of specific program and project initiatives. It is also the Ministry responsible for Tourism BC.

Land and Water B.C. Incorporated:

A Crown corporation that provides lands and assets marketing and land management services for the Province of B.C. As of 1998, the corporation has the responsibility of managing commercial recreation tenures on provincial Crown land. The framework for this responsibility is laid out in the *Commercial Recreation of Crown Land Policy*, which prescribes the process for application review, selection and allocation. CR policy includes consultation with the public, First Nations, other commercial recreation users and other resource users.

Tourism BC:

This Crown Corporation, under the responsibility of the Ministry of Competition, Science and Enterprise, works with BC's tourism industry to promote the tourist trade and develop programs related to marketing, industry training, and visitor services.

Department of Fisheries and Oceans:

Manages all water bodies within B.C. As part of the management, DFO also provides sport and recreational fishing and boating opportunities. DFO is responsible for small craft rules and regulations, including operator licensing, safety and waste management.

Municipalities and Regional Districts:

The Municipalities of Gibsons, Sechelt, Sechelt Indian Government District, and Powell River and the Regional Districts of Sunshine Coast, Powell River, and Comox Strathcona all have planning functions related to growth and zoning, outdoor recreation and resource use. The role of the Municipalities may be augmented upon release and approval of the new community charter.

B.C. Hydro:

Manages significant water-based outdoor recreation opportunities. B.C. Hydro promotes and manages appropriate commercial and recreational use of the reservoirs, rights-of-way, and other of its properties. Currently does not play a role in recreation in the study area.

Parks Canada:

An agency of the Federal Department of Canadian Heritage. Manages National Parks and National Historic Sites. Currently does not play a role in recreation in the study area, although they have conducted studies regarding the establishment of a marine protected area in the Georgia Strait.

1.2 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Tourism, Commercial Recreation & Public Recreation Study is to:

- **Collect and analyze public recreation data in the Sunshine Coast Forest District to support community and provincial planning efforts, and include;**
 - completion of a seamless recreation features inventory to MoF Resource Inventory Committee (RIC) standards and an inventory of public recreation use for the Lower Sunshine Coast,
 - identification of high value recreation areas and areas where compatibility with other users is appropriate,
 - solicitation of public preferences, expectations, concerns, views and values regarding recreation resources as well as current and desired levels of public use, and
 - preliminary zoning recommendations and general management directions for motorized, non-motorized, winter and summer public recreation use.

- **Collect and analyze tourism and commercial recreation data in the Sunshine Coast Forest District in preparation higher level planning exercises, and include;**
 - an inventory of tourism/commercial recreation operators to revised RIC standards,
 - identification of tourism products offered in the region, and their geographic locations and requisite features and facilities important to their operations,
 - solicitation of issues, expectations, concerns, views and values regarding commercial recreation resources as well as current and desired levels of commercial recreation/tourism use, and
 - an assessment of tourism growth potential by way of high value tourism/commercial recreation mapping, and
 - inform commercial recreation operators about Crown tenure policies.

- **Document and analyze;**
 - land and resource issues raised by tourism/commercial recreation operators and public recreationists,
 - land and resource-related conflicts between tourism, commercial recreation and other resource users, and
 - commercial recreation operators and public recreationists expectations for higher level planning.

1.3 PRODUCTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS STUDY

This study produced a number of products. Foremost among them is this report, which addresses the public and commercial recreation components of the study. Initially envisioned as two separate reports, the significant overlap between the two components suggested the reports should be combined under one cover.

Supporting the results of the study are a series of digital map files depicting commercial recreation points, lines and polygons, all formatted to Resource Information Committee (RIC) standards. Collectively this map data assists the viewer in better understanding the spatial extent of tourism in the District. Also mapped were Recreation Management Units, described in Section 4. These units contain databases allowing them to display high value commercial recreation, public recreation and zoning suggestions. Small-scale copies of these maps are found in the body of the report. Representative maps of

tourism/commercial recreation features and facilities and further discussion of the digital map deliverables is provided in Appendix G.

A Recreation Features Inventory (RFI) of the southern portions of the Timber Supply Area was undertaken simultaneously with the other components of this study. The RFI provides a closer look (1:50,000 scale) at the features and activities that take place in the District and rates the significance of the resulting polygons as Low, Moderate, High and Very High. Research and interviews conducted by the consultant team benefited all components of this study. Products associated with the RFI are an inventory report/manual, MicroStation and ArcInfo map files of the RFI and plots (paper and digital) of the RFI.

1.4 STUDY AREA DESCRIPTION

The study area encompasses all lands and water of the Sunshine Coast Forest District (FD) area, regardless of tenure, ownership or land use factors. The Sunshine Coast FD encompasses 1.9 million hectares of land and water, and is located in the southwest corner of British Columbia, approximately 100 kilometres northwest of Vancouver. The Powell River and Sunshine Coast Regional Districts are contained entirely in the Sunshine Coast FD, as is Electoral Area I and portions of Electoral Area J of the Comox Strathcona Regional District. Approximately 27% of the land is managed through Tree Farm Licenses.

Table 1: Area Statistics

1,400,075 ha	Mainland		
117,291 ha	Sea Islands		
30,403 ha	Lakes		
7,067 ha	Fresh Water Island	382,182 ha	Ocean
1,554,836 ha	Total Land and Lakes	1,937,018 ha	Total Area

THE RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

The Sunshine Coast FD extends from Howe Sound in the south, to include Bute Inlet and the Homathko River at its northern limit, extending eastward from Cortes Island to the height of land. The FD borders the Squamish Forest District in the south, the Chilcotin Forest District in the north, and the Port McNeill and Campbell River Forest Districts to the west. The Sunshine Coast region includes several coastal fjords, most notably Bute Inlet, Toba Inlet, and Jervis Inlet. Its physiography consists of Coast Mountains, raising to 4000 meters, with valley bottom floodplains and valuable estuarine habitats such as the Homathko River/Cumsack Slough complex, the Southgate River, Quatum River, Toba River and Skwawka River. Expansive glaciers are found in the northern portions of the district. Climatically mild, moist winters and warm, dry summers with temperatures ranging from freezing to 30°C characterize the coastal areas. The interior areas are characterized by moist, cold winters and cool, wet summers with temperatures ranging from -10°C to 20°C.

The area's primary biogeoclimatic zones are Coastal Douglas Fir, Coastal Western Hemlock, Mountain Hemlock and Alpine Tundra. The most prevalent tree species in the forested area are hemlock and balsam followed by Douglas-fir and cedar. An estimated 77,000 hectares of the timber harvesting land base consists of stands older than 140 years. Heavy precipitation provides for the moniker "Rain Forest" to be applied to the vegetative regime. Wildlife species in the FD are typical of Pacific Northwest coastal forests, with some species of special management concern, including the Northern goshawk, marbled murrelet and Keen's long-eared myotis.

THE COMMUNITIES

The major communities within the district include the municipalities of Powell River, Sechelt, and Gibsons and unincorporated areas of Pender Harbour and Cortes Island. Historically these communities were resource based with an emphasis on the forest industry. Tourism and recreation opportunities as well as retirement have begun to shift the dependence from the resource-based sectors.

The 2000 estimated population in the Sunshine Coast FD area was 48,565¹. This is a 4% rise from the 1996 Census estimate but the majority of growth was in the Lower Sunshine Coast, as has been the case for the past decade. Population growth between 1996 and 2001 in Sechelt and the Sechelt Indian Government District was 6 and 8% respectively while the population of Gibsons grew by almost 5%. The Powell River Regional District (RD) populations remained relatively flat during this time with a slight population loss (1%) in Powell River, while there was some growth on islands within the Comox-Strathcona Regional District. **Diagram 1: Study Area, Regional Districts and Electoral Areas** is shown to the left.



There are many unincorporated communities in the Sunshine Coast FD. Within the Powell River RD there are roughly 6,600 residents spread among communities such as Lund, Gillies Bay, Lang Bay, Lasqueti

¹ Source: BC Statistics. Although the 2001 Census has recently been released, a breakdown of current population of the forest district was not available at this time. Census divisions available to the consultants transcend forest district boundaries.

Island, Myrtle Point, Paradise Valley, Pebble Beach and Van Anda. In the Comox-Strathcona RD, there are more than 900 residents on Cortes Island and smaller communities on Read Island (mostly at Surge Narrows), Stuart Island, and Redonda Island (Refuge Cove). In the summer time, the population of Stuart and Cortes Islands can reach up to 2,000.

In the Sunshine Coast RD, the majority of the population is actually outside of Sechelt and Gibsons in communities such as Pender Harbour, Madeira Park, Halfmoon Bay, Roberts Creek and West Howe Sound. There are over 13,000 residents in these communities. Below is a table outlining the 2001 Census population estimates:

Table 2: Population Statistics

Name	Type	2001 Pop.	1996 Pop. (Using 2001 Bnd.)	Percent Growth 1996-2001	2001 Dwelling	2001 Area Sq. Km.	1996-2001 Boundary Change
Powell River		19,765	19,936	-0.9	10,286	5,092.06	
Powell River	DM	12,983	13,131	-1.1	5,854	29.77	
Sechelt (Indian Government)	IGD	36	33	9.1	19	0.24	
Indian Reserves	R	677	565	19.8	273	17.1	
Powell River A North of Powell River	RDA	988	1,005	-1.7	1,358	3,898.07	yes
Powell River B South of Powell River to Whelan Road	RDA	1,450	1,379	5.1	749	130.52	yes
Powell River C Whelan Road to Saltery Bay	RDA	2,135	2,289	-6.7	1,076	642.34	yes
Powell River D Texada	RDA	1,129	1,155	-2.3	608	300.45	yes
Powell River E Lasqueti	RDA	367	379	-3.2	349	73.56	yes

Sunshine Coast		25,599	24,914	2.7	14,444	3,778.17	
Gibsons	T	3,906	3,732	4.7	1,936	4.32	
Sechelt	DM	7,775	7,343	5.9	3,880	39.71	
Sechelt (Indian Government)	IGD	795	736	8	375	10.71	
Indian Reserves	R	24	28	-14.3	30	0.15	
Sunshine Coast A Egmont/Pender Harbour	RDA	2,374	2,581	-8	2,156	1,901.64	yes
Sunshine Coast B Halfmoon Bay	RDA	2,353	2,316	1.6	1,550	1,275.93	yes
Sunshine Coast D Roberts Creek	RDA	3,090	2,866	7.8	1,463	143.59	yes
Sunshine Coast E Elphinstone	RDA	3,311	3,367	-1.7	1,396	21.32	yes
Sunshine Coast F West Howe Sound	RDA	1,971	1,945	1.3	1,658	380.8	yes

Comox-Strathcona							
Comox-Strathcona I (Cortes Island)	RDA	938	885	6	671	135.45	yes
Comox-Strathcona J (Quadra Island, adjacent islands and mainland)	RDA	2,548	2,671	-4.6	1,474	9,273.43	yes
Indian Reserves (19 total, 3 in study area)	R	1,385	1,234	12.2	474	17.13	yes

Source: 2001 Census, Statistics Canada, Ottawa - Prepared by: BC Stats, Ministry of Management Services, Victoria

Notes: 1996 Census population counts are adjusted as necessary to enable direct comparisons between 1996 and 2001. The definition of Dwellings changed between 1996 and 2001.

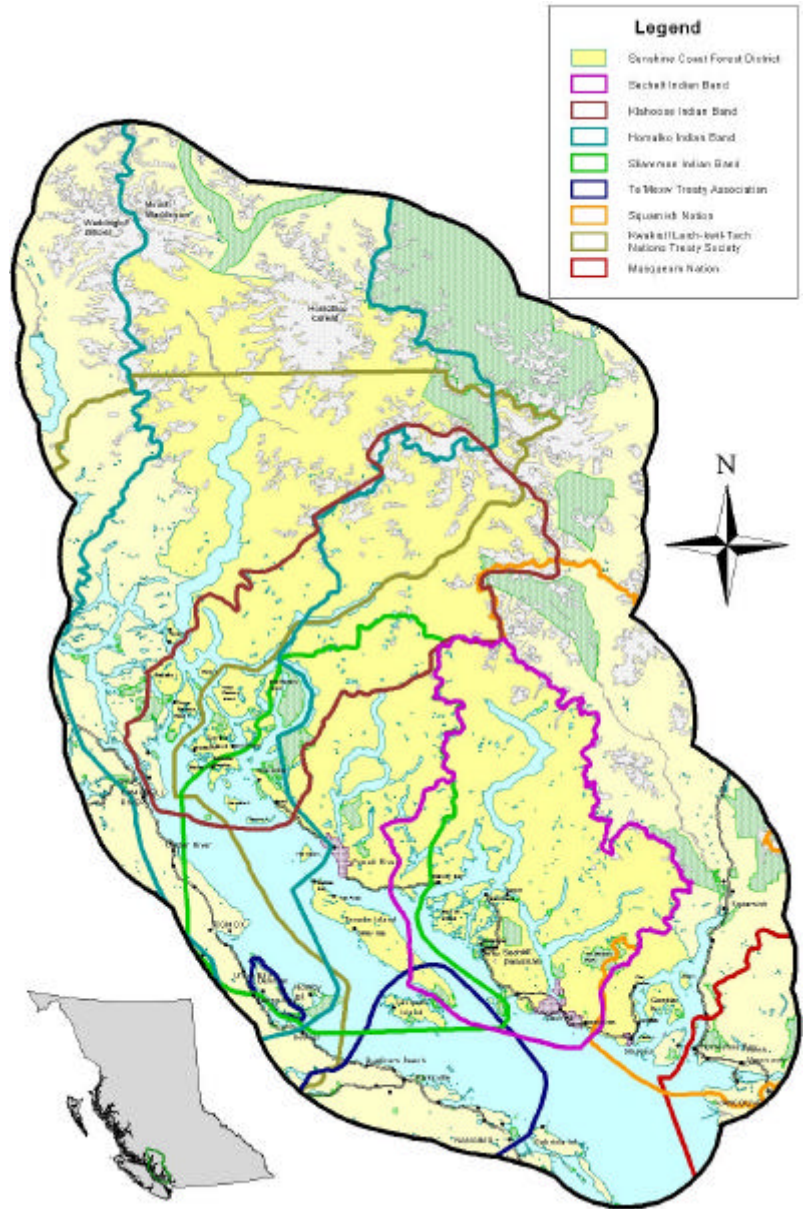
CSD Types:

C = City
 T = Town
 DM = District Municipality
 RDA = Regional District Electoral Area
 VL = Village
 R = Indian Reserve
 IGD = Indian Governmental District

FIRST NATIONS

Eight First Nations have traditional territory in the Sunshine Coast FD, four of which have reserve lands. These four First Nations have a population of about 2,150 people in the FD. **Diagram 2: First Nation Statements of Intent** is shown to the left.

- The **Sechelt** Indian Band has 13 reserves, with the majority of the members residing in Sechelt. Their traditional territory covers Jervis and Sechelt inlets.
- The **Sliammon** Indian Band has six reserves covering an area of 1,907 hectares, the largest of which is Harwood Island #2, covering 847 hectares. The band's principle community is located just north of Powell River and traditional territory is located around Powell River.
- The **Homalko** Indian Band has 11 reserves covering 623.8 hectares and traditional territory around Bute Inlet. The main reserve and Band office is located in Campbell River.
- The **Klahoose** Indian Band has 10 reserves cover a total area of 1357 hectares. Their main reserve and office is located in Squirrel Cove on Cortes Island with their traditional territory which includes Ramsay Arm, East Redonda Island, West Rodonda Island, all of Toba Inlet and Cortes Island.



The other four First Nations with traditional territory in the Forest District are the:

- Squamish Nation;
- Kwakiutl Laich-kwil-Tach K'omox Mamalilikulla Tlowitsis Council of Chiefs (Mamaleqala-Qwe'Qwa'Sot'Enox, Tlowitsis-Mumtagila We Wai kai (Cape Mudge), We Wai kum (Campbell River), Kwiakah, K'omox (Comox) Bands));
- Te'Mexw Treaty Association (Nanoose Band); and
- Musqueam Nation.

THE ECONOMY

The Sunshine Coast FD draws on several key sectors in order to generate its economic activity. In 1996, forestry was the single most important economic base sector accounting for 26% of all income flowing into the region and 17% of its labour force.² The next largest sector was the public sector (education, health, government) at about 20% of community income and 20% of the labour force. Government transfer payments, based in large part on the significant retiree population in the region, is also a key economic component, accounting for 18% of total community income. Tourism is the only other significant economic base sector, with 6% of community income and approximately 8% of the labour force. Tourism accounts for almost 16% of the basic employment in the region.³

The Sunshine Coast FD area's total experienced labour force grew 12% from 18,765 to 20,950 between 1991 and 1996. This growth was slightly lower than for the province as a whole, which experienced labour force growth of 14%.

The economic profiles differ between the northern as southern portions of the Sunshine Coast, with the south being more diversified and benefiting from its close proximity to Vancouver. A significant portion of the labour force commutes daily to work in Vancouver. The north is much more dependant upon the forestry sector which has experienced mill closures and employment declines, which would explain the decline in population.

² Garry Horne, Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations (April 1999), The 1996 Forest District Tables – Local Area Economic Dependencies.

³ Basic sectors or industries are those that bring new money and wealth into the community through export activity. They include the primary sectors (agriculture, mining, forestry, and fishing), manufacturing, some transportation, government and tourism. The non-basic sectors are those sectors through which money is circulated and re-spent once it has been brought into the region by the basic sectors. The non-basic sectors such as retail, most of construction and most of the service industries add to the labour force through "spinoffs", "indirect", "induced" and multiplier effects. Tourism's contribution to the employment base of the sunshine coast is most accurately represented with the basic employment figure.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 DEFINITIONS

The terms tourism and recreation are often used interchangeably; indeed there is significant overlap between the two. For the purpose of this study, following working definitions were established:

Recreation consists of any outdoor or leisure activity where the participant did not pay a commercial operator for the privilege of partaking in the activity. Recreationists can be local residents or travel from outside the region. Participation can span single or multiple day events.

Tourism is any recreation in which a fee for service relationship exists. The World Tourism Organization definition includes that the activity occurs greater than 80 kilometers from the participants residence or involved an overnight stay. Tourism is comprised of two components:

- *Recreation Activities (**commercial recreation**)*
- *Support Services*
 - *Accommodation services*
 - *Food and beverage services*
 - *Transportation services*
 - *Activity support services (e.g. rentals/repairs/sales)*

Each of these components is equally important and they are not perceived separately by the participant. A tourist may require one or both components exclusively or combined. A **tourism product** consists of a combination of recreation activities and support services. Commercial recreation is, by the definition used in this report, a subset of the products offered by **tourism operators**.

Diagram 3: Tourism and Recreation Relationship (below) displays the overlap between tourism and recreation:



However, the definitions are further clouded when considering economic impact. The economic impact of tourism is defined by economists as employment and income generated by the spending of non-Sunshine Coast travellers to the study region on such activities as accommodation and food, recreation activities and transportation. Recreation is defined as outdoor activities enjoyed by residents of the District. Although recreationists and tourists are often undertaking the same activities in similar locations, it is typically assumed that spending by resident recreationists does not generate net regional employment and income. This is based on the premise that without local recreation opportunities, residents would simply divert expenditures to other locally produced goods and services. This is likely a conservative assumption, given the availability of high quality recreation opportunities just outside the District.

2.2 APPROACH / GENERAL METHODS

The Sunshine Coast includes a large geographical area with plentiful and exceptional natural resources and opportunities. There were, however, some unique challenges to undertaking this study in the region. Many of the communities are quite small and, although not geographically isolated. Access is primarily via ferry. Cortes is particularly isolated from the rest of the region, with ferry access only via Vancouver Island. However, for purposes of planning, the scope of potential recreation and tourism development opportunities is quite similar for each community.

In addition to the project steering committee, local individuals involved in tourism umbrella organizations, public recreation groups and involved in complimentary functions for municipal or regional governments were approached to form an informal Advisory Group. Members of the group had opportunity to provide comment to the final draft as well as being contacted at various times to provide information on their particular areas of interest. Other resource sector stakeholders, including forestry, aquaculture and environmental interests, were not sought out for consultation since the purpose of this study was to focus on tourism and recreation rather than to become a venue for land use planning. However, recreation and tourism is interrelated with the interests of these other stakeholders, either through quality of life issues, impacts on operations or as a tool to draw public attention and recognition. Therefore their concerns, where articulated to the consultants and related to tourism or recreation, have been incorporated into this report as possible issues, constraints or challenges for the tourism / recreation sector.

The general approach was to develop a thorough understanding of the study area through compiling and analyzing recreation features, corresponding recreation opportunities, issues, concerns and what the local communities perceive as challenges. This was accomplished utilizing a combination of professional expertise and the involvement of local recreationists, discussions with tourism and recreation groups and through the use of public meetings and a web site. Specifically the study:

- *Engaged three local consultants from the Sunshine Coast to liaise with the various communities, help facilitate meetings, and provide insider knowledge on the tourism and recreation features and corresponding concerns, issues and challenges. One of these consultants also created a web site for the exclusive use of the project.*
- *Contacted stakeholders and local experts representing public recreation clubs and tourism organizations in the communities, either in-person or by telephone, as a component of the research and information gathering.*
- *Held a series of public meetings in Sechelt, Powell River and Cortes Island in early February to discuss the study, review the preliminary data and to gain insight into high value recreation areas, public and commercial recreation, concerns, issues, and challenges and where applicable, to identify suggested zoning for motorized and non-motorized areas.*

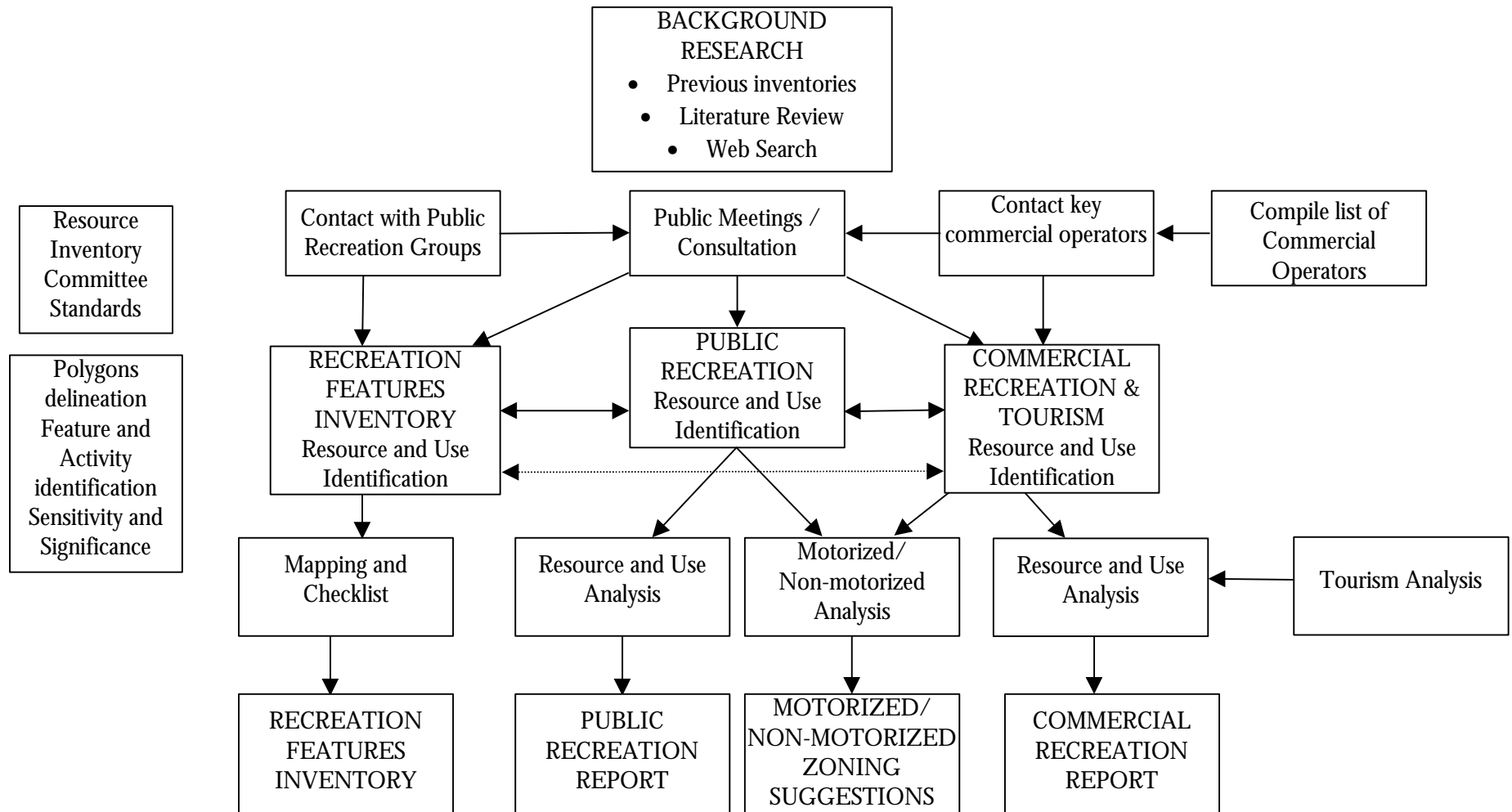
Regular meetings with the project steering committee were held at key junctures during the project. Steering committee members included:

Jim Cameron	Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management
Elisabeth D. Eldridge	Land and Water British Columbia Inc.
Doug Herchmer	Ministry of Forests
Robert Gowan	Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management
David Ingleson	Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management

2.3 METHODS DETAIL

To undertake a study of the public recreation opportunities in a Forest District, a thorough understanding of the recreation resources, the capabilities, constraints and resulting suitability must be undertaken.

Diagram 4: Project Flow Chart (below) presents the flow of tasks undertaken for this project.



In order to analyze features, opportunities and issues associated with public and commercial recreation, the study area was broken into Recreation Management Units (RMU). RMUs consist of large polygons that combine areas with similarities in geography, recreation, access, and administrative boundaries. How locals visualize the unit played a role in their development, as did information compiled from previous studies. Chapter 4 provides a closer description of the process.

Units were then described, identifying unique recreation features, determining recreation activities and the extent of use and identifying present or potential conflicts among recreationists (motorized, mechanized, non-motorized), between recreationists and other resource use, and between public and commercial recreationists. A greater understanding of the recreation use in the District resulted in boundary changes or the creation of sub-units to address specific attributes or unique features for a number of RMUs.

After information had been compiled for each RMU, analysis was undertaken to identify current significance for public and commercial recreation, potential for expansion of commercial opportunities and suggestions for zoning for motorized and non-motorized activities. Each determination of value and zoning suggestion is backed by rationales.

The process of understanding each RMU required input from individuals and groups that undertake public and commercial recreational use. Extensive background research was undertaken using previous studies, publications and the internet. Local public recreation groups, selected adventure tourism operators and knowledgeable individuals were contacted and interviewed using a variety of tools:

- *Direct one-on-one contact (by telephone or in person);*
- *A web site created especially for this project (<http://roughlife.com/sscrts/intro.htm>); and*
- *Public meetings / open houses. In all 4 meeting/open houses were undertaken.*
 - Lower Sunshine Coast (Sechelt) on January 28 and February 20.
 - Upper Sunshine Coast (Powell River) on February 21.
 - Cortes Island (Mansons Landing) on February 22.

Two meetings were held on the lower Sunshine Coast due to high public interest that began early on in the Study. It was felt that interest group issues had to be addressed and that the objectives of the study – recreation – be clearly defined before the planned public meeting. Invitations for this first, informal meeting was by word of mouth. Essentially, the interested parties were asked to tell other groups of the meeting. Much to the credit of the interested parties, the resulting meeting was well attended and there was a wide spectrum of representation - from the local IWA, to public and commercial recreation groups, to environmental groups, to local governments. Appendix E provides a list of meeting attendees.

The following community public meetings / open houses were advertised in the local publications, copies of which can be found in Appendix E. The meetings in Sechelt and Powell River were advertised in the local papers over two publication days. On Cortes Island an advertisement was placed in the local flyer and an article was published in the local paper. Over 350 e-mails were successfully sent to tourism operators and public recreation organizations advising them of the meeting.

At the meetings, attendees were asked to draw on the maps and to provide input in comment sheets provided. Valuable information was provided in through this process. Attendees were asked to provide a written letter or to provide input in the survey contained in the project web with regards to any concerns, interests or contributions. Throughout the process contact with individuals involved with recreation proceeded. Appendix D provides a list of the contacts.

Fieldwork and site visits conducted during this study was limited to areas adjacent to the road network. However, the local consultants' extensive on-the-ground knowledge of the study area was drawn upon heavily. Also, interviews conducted with local residents provided valuable reality-truthing of the analysis conducted for this study.

Public and commercial recreation preferences, expectations, concerns, views and values regarding recreation were compiled throughout the duration of the study through the literature review, consultation process and on-line survey. Issues were grouped into broad categories, and categorized as district wide, or site specific. Issues and challenges are described, and where appropriate resolution mechanisms are identified.

In addition to critique by the Steering Committee, selected local representatives who comprised the informal Advisory Group or who had contributed to the process reviewed and critiqued the report. The inventory of tourism facilities, tourism/recreation features high value areas for public and commercial recreation and zoning suggestions have been mapped using a GIS.

3. TOURISM AND RECREATION ON THE SUNSHINE COAST

The United Nations has declared 2002 as the International Year of Ecotourism. The World Tourism Organization is involved in a number of related conferences, seminars and events, cumulating in the World Ecotourism summit to be held in Quebec this May.

In 2000, tourism activity injected \$9.5 billion into the provincial economy, and generated 11,890 direct jobs. This figure does not include self-employed workers, many of whom work in outdoor recreation and ecotourism. Tourism BC estimates that 10-25% of BC visitors' main trip purpose was to participate in outdoor activities.

B.C. resident use in provincial forests in 1993 was estimated to be about 45 million visitor-days; non-resident outdoor recreation use was estimated at eight million visitor-days. About two-thirds of all B.C. resident outdoor recreation in provincial forests occurs in areas accessible by road. About 35 million user-days of outdoor recreation in roaded areas and about 18 million visitor-days in roadless (backcountry) areas is therefore estimated in provincial forests in 1993. About 60% of all recreation use on Crown land is estimated to occur in provincial forests; and about 40% of use occurs in national, provincial and regional parks. No estimate has been made of use in local parks and on private lands.⁴

3.1 TOURISM AND RECREATION IN BC

A 1996 study⁵ showed that 10.3 million Canadians participated in nature-based recreation. The average Canadian participant spending was \$704 during the year, or \$44 per day of participation. British Columbia exceeded the Canadian average, and was second in expenditures only to the Yukon, with the average participant spending \$902 during the year, or \$45 per day of participation. Expenditures in nature based recreation are shown in the following table:

Table 3: Expenditures On Nature-Related Activities By BC Participants in 1996

Category of expenditure	Outdoor activities in natural areas		Wildlife viewing (1)		Recreational Fishing (1)		Hunting wildlife (1)		Other nature-related activities (2)
	\$ million	%	\$ million	%	\$ million	%	\$ million	%	\$ million
Accommodation	146.4	11.1	7.8	2.9	15.2	5.2	2.8	2.8	-
Transportation	357.0	27.1	30.3	11.3	63.4	21.6	28.5	28.6	-
Food	280.0	21.3	230.5	85.8	39.0	13.3	13.8	13.9	-
Equipment	416.9	31.7			137.9	47.1	54.4	54.7	-
Other items	115.9	8.8	37.5	12.8	-	-			-
Costs for other nature-related activities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	224.4
Total (3)	\$1316.3	100.0%	\$268.5	100.0%	\$293.0	100.0%	\$99.5	100.0%	\$224.4
Average yearly	\$902		\$420		\$545		\$1017		
Average daily	\$45		\$18		\$29		\$50		

Source: Survey on the Importance of Nature to Canadians: A Federal-Provincial-Territorial Initiative. Environment Canada, 1996

⁴ Source Ministry of Forests, Forest Range and Recreation Resource Analysis, 1994.

⁵ Survey on the Importance of Nature to Canadians: A Federal-Provincial-Territorial Initiative. Environment Canada, 1996

Notes:

1. Expenditures for wildlife viewing, recreational fishing and hunting are for main and secondary activities combined. Due to the manner in which the secondary expenditures were calculated, it is not possible to add up the expenditures on activities shown in the table without duplication.
2. Costs for other nature-related activities include expenditures on maintaining, restoring or purchasing land for conservation, nature-related organizations and residential wildlife-related activities. Data on these activities were not broken down by expenditure category.
3. Some figures may not total perfectly because of rounding.

In British Columbia tourism activity has shown steady, but not necessarily rapid, growth during the past five years. Between 1994 and 2000, the tourism component of provincial GDP (in \$1992) increased at an annual rate of 2.3 percent. The tourism share of total provincial GDP has remained at approximately 4.7 percent during this time.

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
BC Total GDP	82.6	84.9	87.0	89.0	90.0	92.0	n/a
Tourism GDP	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.4	4.5

Recent statistics indicate that 30 percent of overnight visitors to BC are from "short haul" regional Canada and the US. Another 15 percent are "long haul" visitors from North America (other provinces, US and Mexico). Altogether, non-resident visitors to British Columbia comprise approximately 52 percent of overnight visitors here, with resident British Columbians making up the rest. In contrast, non-residents accounted for 39 percent of overnight visitors to BC in 1995/96. This points to the growing importance of visitors from outside BC.

In 2000, approximately 22.5 million visitors came to British Columbia, generating revenue of \$9.5 billion.⁶ Prosperity in Alberta and Ontario (BC's two largest out-of-province markets), buoyant economies, and a depreciating Canadian dollar, drove Canadian and foreign tourism demand in British Columbia in 2000 and the early part of 2001.

The US remains the dominant non-resident market for the BC tourism sector. While the US market is approximately five times larger than the overseas market, the latter has seen more rapid growth since the early 1990s. Much of this growth in overseas visits to British Columbia occurred in the Asia Pacific market.

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
USA - Total	5,036	5,369	5,494	5,893	6,549	6,862	7,006
Overnight	2,631	2,880	2,883	3,094	3,425	3,492	3,574
Overseas - Total	963	1,209	1,412	1,430	1,296	1,408	1,476

As a world-recognized hub of transportation and economic activity, Vancouver already has the infrastructure and the profile to attract North American and international visitors. However, world

⁶ Source: BC Statistics, Tourism Indicators, Tourism Industry Monitor, Annual 2000.

tourism statistics support the view that Canada gets only a small share of all international travellers, and BC an even smaller share of that. Those that do come to BC are often inclined to stay within the Golden Triangle (Vancouver-Victoria-Whistler), or avail themselves of tourism products that can be accessed relatively easily -- for example, the Rocky Mountaineer from Vancouver to Jasper, the Trans-Canada Highway to Alberta, or features in and around the Lower Mainland or South Vancouver Island. With it's proximity to the Golden Triangle, the Sunshine Coast is well positioned to draw visitors interested in the available products.

3.2 SUNSHINE COAST TOURISM INDUSTRY STRUCTURE

The tourism industry in the Sunshine Coast is made up of a diversity of business types, from large front country hospitality firms to numerous independent, small business operators. This study has identified 605 businesses engaged in tourism in the area, split between accommodation facilities, commercial outdoor recreation operators, attractions and transportation providers⁷. This is a comparatively high number given the study area's population, and is one indicator of the importance of tourism to the local economy. There are many more businesses in the retail and service sectors which depend in part on tourism markets and revenues. The current inventory of tourism operations can be broken down in the tables that follow. It is important to note that the numbers in the two tables below add up to more than the total number of tourism operators (businesses) identified. This is because some tourism business may have more than one type of primary operation. For instance a kayak operator may offer a bed and breakfast or a RV Park operator may offer guided tours. Charter boat operations that offer overnight experiences are counted as an accommodation provider and an adventure operator.

Table 6: Primary Types of Tourism Operations – Accommodation, Attractions, Transportation and Rental

Accommodation	# of Operations	Attractions	# of Operations	Scheduled / Transportation	# of Operations
Hotel	11	Museum	8	Marine/water taxi	21
Motel	35	Arts/Culture/Gallery	48	Air	12
RV/Campground	38	Recreation	0	Bus	1
Lodge/Resort	24	Industry	2	Rail	0
Camps (hunting/fishing)	3	Winery/Brewery	0	Taxi	5
Huts/Cabins	1	Science/Technology	1	Car Rental	7
Cabins/Cottages	91	Nature	4	Total	46
Guest Ranch/Farm	0	Sports	0		
Bed and Breakfast	149	Golf - public	5	Rentals (Rec. equipment only)	8
Condominiums	2	Golf - private	0		
Hostel	1	Golf-semi-private	1		
Cruise Ship	3	Marina - public	34		
Vessel Lodge	0	Marina - private	3		
Float Camp	4	Ski Facility	0		
Charter boats	23	Other	0		
Motel/Condo	1	Total	106		
Other	4				
Total	390				

⁷ An increase from the 225 identified in the 1996 Tourism Resource Inventory. This inventory excludes businesses involved primarily in retail or food services.

There are 335 tourism businesses offering 390 accommodation facilities/types in the region, with over 60% B&B's and cabins/cottages, followed by RV Parks/campgrounds, motels, lodges and hotels. Six of the motels offered camping. There are 23 charter boat operations (classified as accommodation providers and adventure operators) that have indicated they offer on-board accommodation or overnight experiences.

The high number of marinas and water transportation providers reinforces the concept that the Sunshine Coast, although part of continental North America, is connected to the outside via air or marine transport only.

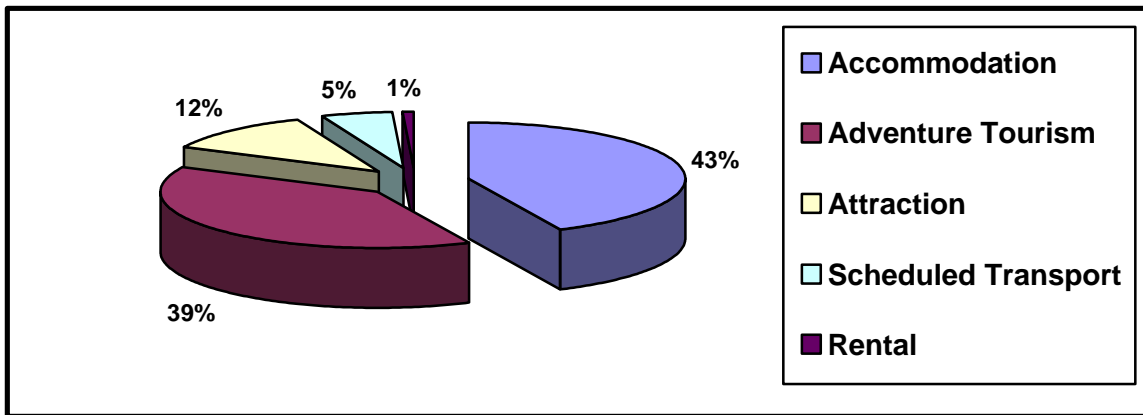
There are 253 outdoor or adventure-based tourism businesses offering 353 primary activities. The majority (75%) of business offerings are marine based lead by salt water fish guiding general marine charters, sea kayak/canoeing, scuba diving and sailing. Land-based operators are also represented, being mostly involved in hiking/mountaineering and nature tours. Cycling tours (mountain biking) is becoming more popular in the region. Air tours are important, as one would expect from a region without road access.

Table 7: Adventure Tourism Operations – Primary and Secondary Activity Types

Adventure Operators	# of operators indicating primary activity	# of operators indicating secondary activity	Adventure Operators	# of operators indicating primary activity	# of operators indicating secondary activity
Marine charters, salt			Air tours/charters		4
Motorized	47	24	Fixed Wing	13	
Sailing	30	7	Helicopter	4	
Salt Water Fishing	85	12	Heli assisted activities	3	1
Scuba Diving	39	13	Hiking/Mountaineering/Nature	29	21
Sea Kayaking/Canoeing	50	21	Birdwatching	-	7
Viewing (culture/heritage)	2	4	Snowshoeing/winter sports	2	1
Viewing (marine mammals)	3	64	Rock climbing	1	2
Viewing (landscapes)	-	45	Cycling/Mountain Biking	7	12
Marine charters, fresh			Rafting/tubing	-	1
Fresh Water Fishing	10	5	Horse and Trail	3	2
Motorized boating	1	-	Guide-outfitter	3	-
Rafting/tubing	-	1	Art /galleries tours	2	-
Bus/Van/Motorcycle tours	4	-	Other / Misc. / Unknown Tour	10	-
ATV	4	-	Rail tours – headquarters in study	1	-
			Total	353	246

In addition to the information presented above, 113 tourism operators (primarily accommodation providers) indicated visitors participated in some kind of unguided outdoor pursuit, including (in order of importance fishing (58), hiking (54), kayaking (49), beach/swimming (47), mountain biking (35), golf (34), motorized water activities (28), landscape viewing (25), other non-motorized boating (20) and diving (20).

Diagram 5: Types of Tourism Businesses in the Sunshine Coast



There is no dominant community for tourism facilities and infrastructure as built facilities and amenities occur throughout the region in proximity to Highway 101. Sechelt, with approximately 56 accommodation facilities (offering over 90 rooms and 80 campsites), 6 marinas (offering over 265 berths), 23 recreation providers, 12 art attractions, a golf course and a number of other related amenities, has a full range of hospitality services to support its travel markets.

Gibsons has a variety of built facilities including approximately 49 accommodation facilities (84 beds and 90 campsites), 2 marinas, 16 adventure travel outfits, 17 attractions (museums, galleries and studios) and a golf course. There is a strong transportation component to tourism in Gibsons as Langdale is the terminus for BC Ferries passengers originating in Horseshoe Bay.

Powell River has 15 hotel/motels/inns and 40 B&B's/cabins (collective providing 230 rooms), 10 camps/RV parks (130 campsites) in addition 5 marinas, a golf course, 9 museums, studios or galleries and 41 recreation providers and 6 rental outfits. BC Ferries provides services to Comox and Malaspina Coach Lines provides bus services which links the communities to Vancouver. Lund surprisingly offers over 50 rooms and 10 campsites in 6 facilities, plus an additional 4 recreation providers.

On the Sunshine Coast, there are just as many tourism operators based outside the major communities as there are in. Roberts Creek offers 29 rooms through 16 facilities, plus 9 galleries and 4 recreation providers. Halfmoon Bay has 18 accommodation providers showing 31 rooms, a marina and 4 recreation providers. Pender Harbour, consisting of the communities of Madeira Park, Garden Bay and Irvines Landing, collectively offer 32 accommodation options (with 80 beds and 132 campsites), 12 marinas a golf course and 22 recreation providers. Almost 50 campsites and 25 rooms are found through Egmont's 8 accommodation providers, which includes 3 marinas. Five recreation providers are also based in Egmont.

Cortes Island has seven B&B's, five cabin/cottage facilities and a hotel offering over 35 accommodation spaces. There is also a marina, lodge, two transportation providers and five tour operators. Savory Island offers 8 facilities to rent, plus there are water taxis available for transport to and from the Island. Texada Island offers 28 beds and 36 campsites through a range of accommodation (B&B to Inn to RV Park). Accommodation and attractions are also available on Gambier and Lasqueti

Islands. At least 12 destination lodge/resorts offering approximately 85 rooms are found scattered throughout the region, primarily in the northwestern reaches.

The proximity of the Sunshine Coast to Greater Vancouver and Vancouver Island means many out-of-area outdoor operators can utilize the region without actually being based there. Whereas resident operators are more likely to be engaged in accommodation services, operators from outside tend to offer guided outdoor services and tours, with a focus on marine charters, kayaking and diving. Greater Vancouver is home base for at least 30 guiding, cruising and adventure touring companies active on the Sunshine Coast. Some 60 others are based other communities adjacent to the district, including clusters at Campbell River, Quadra Island and Comox/Courtenay.

3.3 SUNSHINE COAST MARKET DATA

Communities in the district cater to a mix of tourism markets, including touring travellers, outdoor recreationists, resort visitors and a contingent of excursion visitors from Greater Vancouver. The climate of the lower Sunshine Coast, remarkably dry by coast standards, is a major draw, particularly for Greater Vancouver visitors.

Historical growth in tourism within the district has been very strong. For example, the total labour force in the accommodation and food sector, which is highly correlated with commercial, front-country tourism, has grown about 74% over the 1981-96 period [from 1,000 to 1,740], representing an average growth rate of about 3.8% annually⁸.

Annual room revenues for the Upper and Lower Sunshine Coast grew between 1996 and 2000. Powell River's revenue grew by 12%, while the Lower Sunshine Coast grew at about 6%. By comparison, the growth in BC revenues over the same period was an impressive 32%.

Table 8: Annual Room Revenue, 1996-2000

	Revenue				Revenue	Prop- erties	Rooms
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000		
Sunshine Coast							
Total	3,252	3,006	3,101	3,383	3,446	24	474
Hotels	2,017	1,533	1,502	1,602	1,603	13	251
Powell River							
Total	3,120	3,482	3,038	3,186	3,478	23	483
Hotels	1,674	1,939	2,265	2,439	2,446	10	311
BC	1,093,339	1,157,585	1,206,090	1,329,347	1,442,699	2,370	89,841

Source: BC STATS, *BC Tourism Room Revenue*, Annual Series 1996-2000.

The geographic origin of study area tourism markets is shown in the table below. The InfoCentre statistics are collected from visitors who actually stop by for information and assistance so they do not represent all visitors, but the profiles do provide an indication of the major visitor markets. At the top

⁸ This data applies to the Sunshine Coast and Powell River Regional Districts, which account for an estimated 97% of the Plan Area labour force. Estimates include business travel.

of the list is the BC market – visitors from within the province dominate visitation in all four communities, with a particularly heavy influence in Sechelt. This is believed attributable in part to the close proximity and thus short commute time to Greater Vancouver markets. North American (e.g. long-haul), regional markets and European markets are all strong as well. The prominence of European markets is much higher on the Sunshine Coast than it is for most other regions of the province, and, again, is partly owing to proximity to the Greater Vancouver destination region. In spite of the close proximity to Vancouver and its sizeable Asian visitor market, visitor centre data shows Asian visitors to be a very small component of the total.

Approximately three-quarters of visitors are in the region for less than three days, with shorter duration stays more common on the Lower Sunshine Coast. The Powell River area appears to draw more longer duration visitors, as more than one quarter of all visitors are staying for more than four days and one in six stay for at least eight days.

Table 9: Selected 2001 Visitor InfoNetwork Statistics

	Item	Sechelt		Gibsons		Pender Harbour		Powell River	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Admin	Parties	12,688		7657				14,732	
	Visitors	19,081		14792		7,745		21,439	
Visitor Origin	Local	5,695		1342				1,994	
	BC	3,499	66%	2507	40%	***	45%	4,760	47%
	Regional *	473	9%	1920	31%	***	30%	1,468	15%
	North America	534	10%	1244	20%	***	17%	2,210	22%
	Asia	99	2%	153	2%	***	2%	183	2%
	Europe	689	13%	463	7%	***	6%	1,477	15%
Nights in Community	Same day	787	20%	1535	24%			1,552	15%
	1-3	2,404	61%	3542	56%			5,919	58%
	4-7	548	14%	781	12%			1,290	13%
	8-14	117	3%	290	5%			865	9%
	15+	108	3%	167	3%			505	5%
Information Requested	Accommodation	2,392	12%	1966	10%			3,027	13%
	Adventure/rec.	2,818	14%	3099	16%			3,492	15%
	Attractions	1,825	9%	2845	14%			4,815	21%
	Events/conf.	856	4%	880	4%			1,303	6%
	Restaurants	766	4%	1255	6%			2,250	10%
	Transportation	2,169	10%	4408	22%			2,368	10%
	Shopping	948	5%	447	2%			1,437	6%
	Parks	1,585	8%	2169	11%			989	4%
	First Nations	331	2%	470	2%			117	1%
	Com. services	2,913	14%	802	4%			754	3%
	Investment/moving	561	3%	228	1%			296	1%
	Site facilities	634	3%	545	3%			1,158	5%
	Other	2,917	14%	524	3%			760	3%
Local Info	Maps	1,019	65%	5362	61%			8,219	55%
	Outdoor Rec.	228	22%	920	11%			6,783	45%
	Other	90	13%	2462	28%			-	0%

Source: BC Tourism

* Regional markets: Alberta, Washington, Oregon, California.

*** Only total visits are available for Pender Harbour visitor centre – visitor origin estimates are based on the 1999 visitor data.

In terms of the types of information requested, over 20% were interested in outdoor recreation consisting of adventure tourism or parks. This is one indication of the importance of outdoor recreation to the region's tourism industry. Another indication is the type of community information requested by visitors to the visitor centres. This usually involves outdoor recreation features. In Sechelt, Gibsons and Pender Harbour, Skookumchuck Narrows is a major destination, while in Powell River, the Sunshine Coast Trail is a major recreation feature of interest, while many other questions relate to canoeing/kayaking and fishing.

Based on information provided through interviews with marinas, patterns of marine use from the lower Sunshine Coast to the upper Sunshine Coast corresponds with their relationship with the population centers of the Lower Mainland. The lower Sunshine Coast has a high percentage of permanent berths occupied by boats whose owners are from outside the region (primarily from the Lower Mainland). In the upper Sunshine Coast, the percentage of occupancy for those from outside the region drops dramatically as does the number of boats with permanent berths in the off-season. Traveling north, participants appear to use marina services in a more transitory manner. This leads to the conclusion that Lower Mainlanders use the lower Sunshine Coast as a staging area for accessing their favourable boating areas. The incentive for this is twofold, first Lower Mainland boaters using Sunshine Coast marinas as a base find savings in the overall travel time to their destination. Secondly, although absorbing costs associated with ferry travel, these individuals see substantial savings in moorage fees.

Freshwater and saltwater angling represents important recreational activities by Sunshine Coast residents and tourists. However, the sport fishery catch, of which Chinook and Coho are the mainstays, has declined dramatically in recent years, first because of stock decline and more recently because of conservation measures. The near-term outlook for stocks is not bright. Effort and catch statistics indicate how dramatic the decline has been over the last 15 years. The effort of tidal anglers in the Georgia Strait has dropped 360% from 582,971 trips in 1986 to 161,892 trips in 2000. The decline in catch numbers is even more dramatic, if not startling – approximately one tenth the fish were caught in 2000 versus 1986. The sport salmon catch in 2000 was seven percent of the 1986 catch.

Table 10: Tidal Angling Effort and Catch, Georgia Strait 1986-2000

	2000	1998	1996	1994	1992	1990	1988	1986
Effort (Boat Trips)	161,892	162,293	288,736	440,744	458,465	524,758	603,331	582,971
Catch								
Salmon	52,148	38,448	233,176	401,611	736,997	773,784	775,616	760,362
Other	58,847	133,306	145,667	195,413	170,978	208,049	309,381	303,693
Total	110,995	171,754	378,843	597,024	907,975	981,833	1,084,997	1,064,055

Source: Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Highway 101 is the main road corridor on the Sunshine Coast, linking communities along its length with Greater Vancouver via BC Ferries. The following table provides summer average daily traffic (SADT) for count stations on the highway. Annual traffic counts at Gibsons, Sechelt and Pender Harbour increased modestly between 1996 and 2000, but Powell River experienced a slight decline. Assuming that resident and commercial traffic remained relatively static during this period, the differences may be attributable to increased visitor traffic.

Table 11: Summer Average Daily Traffic (SADT)

Year	Gibsons ⁹		Sechelt ¹⁰		Pender Harbour ¹¹		Powell River ¹²	
	SADT	% Change	SADT	% Change	SADT	% Change	SADT	% Change
1996	3,157	-	n/a	-	429	-	3,148	-
1997	n/a	-	1,276	-	n/a	-	n/a	-
1998	3,706	-	1,399	9.6	377	-	2,974	-
1999	3,720	0.3	1,815	29.9	708	87.8	2,746	-7.7
2000	3,873	4.1	1,777	-2.1	477	-32.6	2,979	8.5

Source: B.C. Ministry of Transportation

BC Ferries provides a critical transportation link between the Sunshine Coast, Greater Vancouver and Vancouver Island. Traffic volumes are a barometer of tourism activity as the vast majority of visitors arrive and depart on motor vehicles via the ferry system. The terminal at Langdale handles the largest volumes with an average annual rise in passengers of 2.2% over the last 14 year period. The Comox-Powell River and Cortes-Quadra Island routes also experienced consistent and steady gains. Inter-regional ferry travel, however, has remained relatively stable, as the Saltery Bay-Earls Cove and Langdale-Gambier-Keats routes have not seen any appreciable rise in passenger volumes.

BC Ferries does not distinguish between commercial, resident and visitor volumes so the actual visitor component of the passenger volumes is unknown. Overall passenger volumes have grown in step with population growth on the Sunshine Coast.

Table 12: BC Ferries Passenger Volumes, Sunshine Coast Routes, 1987-2001

Route	Horseshoe Bay-Langdale	Saltery Bay-Earls Cove	Langdale-Gambier-Keats	Comox-Powell River	Cortes-Quadra Island
2000/2001	2,513,038	359,436	57,179	347,586	101,070
1999/2000	2,479,318	359,900	57,158	345,262	101,918
1998/1999	2,459,082	369,295	52,707	341,005	104,277
1997/1998	2,460,051	373,771	51,107	338,711	104,998
1996/1997	2,449,688	381,634	52,319	341,073	100,016
1995/1996	2,499,486	395,200	52,647	344,246	96,562
1994/1995	2,462,240	396,392	50,619	334,025	94,603
1993/1994	2,442,360	392,470	46,088	322,693	90,047
1992/1993	2,381,972	385,364	45,010	301,548	89,877
1991/1992	2,310,458	375,370	43,341	295,527	86,453
1990/1991	2,324,194	371,152	40,121	288,558	82,477
1989/1990	2,216,192	364,226	39,677	282,749	82,883
1988/1989	1,994,888	352,088	38,641	270,471	79,970
1987/1988	1,914,360	337,762	35,512	261,266	74,788
% Increase from 1987 to 2001	31%	6%	61%	33%	35%
Average Annual % Change	2.2%	-	0.1%	1.8%	1.5%

Source: BC Ferries

⁹ Route 101(North Road), 0.1 kilometres south of Route 101/School Road. Gibsons. South-bound.

¹⁰ Route 101, 0.3 kilometres north of Brooks Road, north of Sechelt. North-bound.

¹¹ Route 101, approx. 1.0 kilometer south of Earls Cove Ferry Terminal. North-bound

¹² Route 101, at south end of Powell Lake Bridge, Powell River. South-bound.

PARK VISITATION TRENDS

There are 41 provincial parks¹³ and four ecological reserves in the Sunshine Coast FD, several of which account for sizeable visitor volumes that are increasing over time. Day use and campground use, a significant proportion of which is by non-residents, grew 62% and 34, respectively, during over the 1991-2000 period. Data on camping and day use trends for park districts across BC indicate that the Garibaldi/Sunshine Coast District is experiencing high utilization rates during peak summer months and growth rates about double that of the provincial average. Interestingly, registered boat users at provincial parks in the region declined in the 1990s.

Table 13: Sunshine Coast Parks and Protected Areas - Parties Visitation

<i>Attendance</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>1999</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>Attendance</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>1999</i>	<i>2000</i>
Buccaneer Bay	B		775	Porpoise Bay	C – walk in	183	166
Copeland Islands Marine	B	246	218	Porpoise Bay	C - group	217	174
Copeland Islands Marine	C	38	6	Princess Louisa	B	4,133	7,093
Desolation Sound Marine +	B	3,830	4,813	Princess Louisa	C	81	56
Desolation Sound Marine +	C	314	211	Princess Louisa	D	3,534	2,729
Halkett Bay +	B	598	1,046	Roberts Creek	C	1,378	1,367
Halkett Bay +	C	108	314	Roberts Creek	D	14,766	14,419
Ha'thayim Marine	B		1,106	Roscoe Bay	B	383	423
Jedediah Island Marine +	B	2,043	2,419	Saltery Bay	C	2,412	2,326
Mansons Landing *	B	14	10	Saltery Bay	D	13,986	15,343
Mansons Landing *	D	2,778	1,819	Sargeant Bay +	D	22,115	18,629
Okeover Arm	C	599	688	Sechelt Inlets Marine (multisite)	B	1,047	1,014
Okeover Arm	D	4,412	5,690	Skookumchuck Narrows	D	9,692	9,039
Plumper Cove Marine	B	977	531	Smelt Bay	C	1,614	1,544
Plumper Cove Marine	B-dock	729	716	Smelt Bay	D	1,758	2,147
Plumper Cove Marine	B-buoy	836	810	Smuggler Cove Marine	B	1,279	1,290
Plumper Cove Marine	C	466	518	Smuggler Cove Marine	D	5,703	6,316
Plumper Cove Marine	D	2,424	1,611	Teakeme Arm	B	169	98
Porpoise Bay	C	5,705	5,205	Tetrahedron +	D	475	522
Porpoise Bay	D	37,675	34,192	Walsh Cove	B	114	65

Source: BC Parks. Note - several recently created parks do not have visitation data.

B – boating; C – camping; D – day use + has Management Plan in place.

* as of April 1, 2002 front country services will no longer be offered.

Table 14: Sunshine Coast parks and Protected Areas – No Recorded Visitation

Ambrose Lake - (ER)	Francis Point	Inland Lake	Musket Island Marine	Spipiyus
Anderson Bay	Francis Point – (ER)	Lasqueti Island - (ER)	Read Island	Squitty Bay
Bishop River	Garden Bay Marine	Malaspina Peninsula	Rendezvous Island South	Surge Narrows
Duck Lake - (PA)	Harmony Islands Marine	Mount Elphinstone	Simson	
East Redonda Island - (ER)	Homathko Estuary +	Mount Richardson	South Texada Island	

Like other government departments, BC Parks is undergoing a radical shift in the way it conducts business. It is intended that Parks staff will phase out of direct delivery of recreation services, eliminating some facilities, transferring a number of parks or sites to other governments and expanding the role of the private sector in providing facilities and services. At this time, the only park impacted by facility closure in the study area is Mansons Landing on Cortes Island.

¹³ Plus three provincial parks with small components in the FD – Clendinning, Ts'il-os and Tantalus.

FOREST RECREATION SITES

There are 52 Forest Service (FS) recreation sites in the study area, comprising 22 trails and 30 camp/day use areas. Most trails are for hiking and mountain biking and almost all have two-wheel drive access. The most popular trail is the Inland Lake Trail, almost 14 kilometres long and designed for use by the physically challenged, the first trail in Canada designed to provide an outdoor wilderness experience to this group.

There are 27 recreation sites suitable for overnight camping. These facilities support a variety of activities including fishing, hiking, canoeing/kayaking, mountain biking and swimming. Many of the campsites are linked to the popular Powell Forest Canoe Circuit.

The future of the public recreation sites and trails is unclear at this time as the Ministry of Forests has cancelled the entire recreation program and is in the process of either transferring the management of the sites and trails to other parties or canceling sites/trails not transferred and de-activating those that pose high risks to public safety and the environment.

TENURES

Twelve tenures under Commercial Recreation have been issued by LWBC in the FD. These tenures are held by nine organizations, six of whom provide commercial recreation for tourists while three have been secured to provide for public recreation or for non-commercial use by organized clubs. In the coming year, LWBC is about to embark on an exercise to allocate tenure to existing commercial recreation operations currently active on Crown Land in the region without appropriate CR tenure.

Commercial recreation has been tenured in ten provincial parks through the issuance of park use permits (PUP) to 16 tourism operators. Princess Louise Inlet is the most popular destination, with 7 PUP holders provider. Mt. Richardson and Sechelt Inlet Marine each have 3 PUPs. Skookumchuck Narrows and the Tetrahedron each have 2 PUP holders and Halkett Bay, Plumper Cove Marine and Porpoise Bay each have one PUP issued. Surprisingly Desolation Sound has only one PUP, and that is for air transportation. Recreational activities offered include guided ocean kayaking, overnight camping, nature walks, snowshoeing, boat/marine tours, interpretive educational programs, and air and water transportation.

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TOURISM TO THE DISTRICT

Direct tourism employment in the region is estimated at about 2,490, representing almost 16% of total basic employment in 1996. Tourism also comprises almost 6% of total basic income in the region, and is the fourth most important source of earned basic income in the region, despite relatively low average wages in the sector (transfer payments and other non-earned income are higher sources of basic income). Tourism is the third most important contributor to Powell River's economic base (after forestry and the public sector) and the fourth most important on the lower Sunshine Coast (after forestry, public sector and construction). About 34% of total estimated regional tourism employment is in Powell River, about 13% in Sechelt and 10% in Gibsons.

3.4 TRENDS IN COMMERCIAL AND PUBLIC RECREATION

Monitoring, quantifying, and understanding tourism/recreation trends and associated economic impacts is somewhat akin to “pinning Jell-O to the wall”. Future directions are even more nebulous. Nonetheless, it is vitally important that there is an understanding and cognizance of the global, national and regional tourism/recreation trends as well as any shifts in travel patterns, purchasing processes or demographics and psychographics as they pertain to target markets.

The most successful tourism businesses are those that respond to challenges through the use of technology, innovative marketing programs, better training of staff and a genuine understanding of customers/guests.

Trends in Outdoor Recreation and Adventure Tourism	Implications for the Sunshine Coast
Demographics/social	
<p><u>Population shift:</u> The North American population is aging, but still dominated by the “Baby Boomers”. This generation continues to be a major market force. Entry into their highest earning years (ages 45-55), and “empty nests” suggest increased disposable income. This market segment is also seeing increased leisure time as they retire. An awareness for improved health and a better quality of living has resulted in the general population being able to continue to participate in active pursuits as they age.</p>	<p>This market segment is searching for “safe” adventure or ecotourism holidays, such as those offered in the Sunshine Coast. Tourism businesses need to account for age, abilities, time constraints and preferences when developing product and markets.</p>
<p><u>Time poverty:</u> People with families, particularly those at their career peaks, are experiencing increasing pressures on their leisure time. Changing family structures and lifestyles has resulted in a shift to more day-use and weekend use activities, stemming from the major population centers. Money is not a constraint, so families travel on shorter, more frequent holidays.</p>	<p>Vacationers wish to minimize their travel time, increasing time at their destination. The Sunshine Coast is geographically positioned to access markets for the Lower Mainland, Puget Sound and Vancouver Island.</p>
<p><u>Tourism and business travel:</u> There is an increasing trend in combining tourism and business travel.</p>	<p>Businesses offering all-inclusive holiday packages, conference space plus recreational activities will be positioned to access this market share.</p>
<p><u>Increasing diversity:</u> A rise in the number of female and senior participants looking for a special niche or activity specific experience.</p>	<p>Targeted marketing to specific demographic segments will make businesses more competitive.</p>

Trends in Outdoor Recreation and Adventure Tourism	Implications for the Sunshine Coast
<u>Participation rates</u> by all demographic sectors in both motorized and non-motorized recreation is continuing to grow.	Fastest growing activities include wildlife viewing, hiking, backpacking, skiing, camping (primitive and developed), off-road driving and sightseeing.
Trends in Outdoor Recreation and Adventure Tourism	Implications for the Sunshine Coast
Global	
<u>Terrorism and September 11, 2001</u> : The events of September 11 have had profound effects on the tourism industry worldwide. Fear of travel and the economic fallout of the attacks saw tourism numbers immediately and dramatically drop, although some recovery has occurred and that recovery is expected to continue. Foreign policy, war, and terrorist activity will alter tourists' choices of destinations.	Destinations closer to home, particularly those that can be accessed without air travel, will see an increase in popularity. Marketing efforts should be focused on the short-haul traveler (local and Pacific Northwest). Local businesses should try to capitalize on the \$20 million national tourism marketing initiative undertaken by the Canadian Tourism Commission using media and Internet tools.
<u>Fluctuating demand</u> : Tourism demand fluctuates with the global economy. International, national, regional, and local economic conditions affect the ability of people to spend for recreation and leisure. Financial constraints and job uncertainty related to the weakened North American and global economies (post 911) represents a significant impediment to travel.	Operations must be able to plan for these periodic downturns and should not be reliant on one market.
<u>Exchange rate</u> : The value of the Canadian dollar against other currency has a significant impact on the marketability of the Canadian tourism experience.	The Canadian dollar has seen high slippage against the American dollar, making vacations to Canada by Americans a relative bargain. This may also encourage Canadians to travel domestically rather than abroad.
<u>Increased urbanization</u> around the globe resulting in an increased demand for quality wilderness experiences.	The setting need not be pristine, but should be natural. Industrial activity will be perceived differently by various tourists. There are opportunities for interpretation and education.

Trends in Outdoor Recreation and Adventure Tourism	Implications for the Sunshine Coast
Tastes and attitudes	
Travelers are more concerned about the environment than they have been in the past. They want to see and enjoy but not destroy.	Businesses will need to be keenly aware not to exceed the environmental carrying capacity of the resource, or the social carrying capacity required by their clients.
Soft adventure in wilderness-like settings will drive tourism growth in British Columbia	The Sunshine Coast has the assets and proximity to markets to be at the leading edge of this growth.
Travel patterns will continue to shift as what consumers are seek in a travel experience becomes more important than in they travel. The new tourist is experienced, more flexible, independent, quality conscious and harder to please. Tourists are moving away from conventional, group oriented holidays towards more individualized adventurous or educational vacations. In some instances the physical or mental challenge is as important as the destination.	Tourism businesses that provide intimate, authentic experiences providing active, educational, environmentally sensitive and unique events are more likely to thrive. There will also be more demand for holiday customization.
Interest in aboriginal tourism continues to flourish.	There are several First Nation cultures which could be interpreted to visitors, if that is the preferred direction for local First Nations.
Agi-tourism is the latest hot trend.	Farm stays and animal husbandry could be undertaken.

Trends in Outdoor Recreation and Adventure Tourism	Implications for the Sunshine Coast
Technology	
New technology will continually improve travel and recreation products, and entirely new concepts/products (and subsequently new conflicts) will emerge.	New technology will permit access to new areas (as has been the case with modifications to snowmobiles) and also allow entry to participants who might not otherwise have the skill or fitness required to undertake an activity.
The <u>internet</u> has revolutionized marketing, booking and tourism planning. It provides a cost-effective and direct means for small and large businesses to undertake mass promotion. Many travellers make their travelling decisions, and often many of their bookings, with the exclusive use of the internet.	Use of the internet as a source of information and generator of visitation will continue to expand. Tourism operators serious about being in business cannot afford to ignore this phenomenon.

Trends in Outdoor Recreation and Adventure Tourism	Implications for the Sunshine Coast
Competition	
Travel is less of a novelty. Travellers are more highly educated and well-traveled than ever before. They have international choices, and are willing to “search the world” to gain the experience they are seeking.	Local businesses need to be concerned with regards to competition from other competing locations with similar features, not just regarding other operators offering a similar product in the same location.
Estimates are that 25% of tour operators account for over 90% of tour operator revenues in Canada. Further consolidation expected. The trend toward a small number of large operators and a large number of small niche tour operators is well entrenched on a national level. Small operators are less able to compete on the basis of price or marketing so must rely on developing niches, or chose to form alliances with larger organizations.	Large operators tend to be based in large or international markets, such as Vancouver. The Sunshine Coast’s proximity to Vancouver means that there are a number of large operators nearby who could be positioned to take advantage of the opportunities, resulting in less economic benefits to the local communities.
Collaborative marketing efforts have the twin benefits of promoting a region as a cohesive, comprehensive package, and allowing smaller operators to pool marketing funds to permit reaching a larger audience.	Local operators can form marketing cooperatives or work through their regional tourism marketing agency to ensure they, and their region, receives appropriate market share.

ANTICIPATED TRENDS

The region’s historical growth, its proximity to the growing population of the Lower Mainland and increasing worldwide demand for quality outdoor recreation experiences, suggest continued growth in the tourism industry and increasing pressure on / continued improvements in commercial facilities, transportation links and hospitality infrastructure.

Demand for outdoor recreation in the region by residents and tourists will also grow strongly, although perhaps at lower than historical rates, because of expected slower population growth.¹⁴ In the longer term, increasing utilization of some Sunshine Coast recreation resources will create increasing congestion and may result in the imposition of management constraints in some parks and recreation areas that are reaching capacity utilization. These factors may result in diversion of some visitors outside the region.

¹⁴ *Soo TSA Socio-Economic Analysis*, Crane Management Consultants, December, 1994. Participation rates may also decline somewhat as the population ages, although this could be more than offset by increasing participation in younger age groups and older demographic segments continuing participation.

4. RECREATION MANAGEMENT UNITS

"Outdoor Recreation within the Sunshine Coast Forest District will be managed to recognize recreation interests and values, visuals, and special features. As well, development priorities will be set to maintain and manage recreation opportunities in cooperation with local recreation groups, associations and other stakeholders."

Recreation Vision, Sunshine Coast Forest District Recreation Plan, 2000.

Recreation Management Units (RMU) were established to divide the Sunshine Coast Forest District into areas of similar attributes, thus enabling a manageable discussion on the resources, opportunities, issues, concerns and challenges of the District. The principles applied in establishing RMUs and a list of the RMUs, including their size, can be found in Section 4.1.

After RMU boundaries were defined, units were described in terms of notable features and activities; analyzed for their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; current conflicts between commercial and public, motorized and non-motorized recreationists were identified; and an intuitive understanding of the current significance for both public and commercial recreation evolved. Detailed information and the analysis for each RMU are contained in Appendix A. The format used to describe each RMU, including an explanation of each heading, is contained in Section 4.2.

High Value Recreation Areas (HVRA) can be found within each of the RMUs. Section 4.3 describes the HVRA's through the seven principal criteria that were utilized.

Finally Section 4.4 provide a summary of the analysis found in Appendix A. This section includes a table that links the High Value Recreation Areas (HVRA) to RMUs of Current Public Significance (CPS), Current Commercial Significance (CCS) and Commercial Development Potential (CDP). Also included are tables which identify activities found in each RMU and which link communities to RMUs.

The processes described above required literature reviews, exploration of the web and contact with representatives from public recreation user groups, commercial recreation operators and other knowledgeable individuals. The intent was to identify areas regarded as having significant value and to provide insight and understanding on current and potential issues in these areas that may have an effect on the overall opportunities. Through public meetings and additional interviews with selected stakeholders, an understanding was developed wherein a credible evaluation of the current significance of public and commercial recreation opportunities of each RMU could be provided.

4.1 ESTABLISHING RECREATION MANAGEMENT UNITS

The RMU boundaries were initially defined based on broad ecosystem characteristics that were identified as able to support similar recreational activities. The first set of criteria identified areas where:

- High elevation recreation dominates;
- Valley and river opportunities dominates; and
- Marine influence dominates.

Also considered during this “first pass” were:

- The presence of recreation features;
- The influence of residential areas;
- The presence of considerable or notable recreation use;
- Adjacent units in the Squamish FD

The boundaries of the units were further modified, and sub-units defined, throughout the project, based on a number of considerations, including:

- Location of tourism operator use areas;
- Administrative boundaries (parks, regional districts, Indian Reserves);
- Proximity and access to population centers;
- Roads/roadless areas;
- Other resource uses (shellfish tenures, timber harvesting); and
- Input from key stakeholders.

A total of 49 units were defined this way. After dividing into sub-units, 68 units or sub-unit were established.

Table 15: Recreation Management Units – Names and Area

	RMU	AREA (ha)		RMU	AREA (ha)
1	Howe Sound	25327	23d	Saltery Bay / Mt. Troubridge	10339
2a	West Marine Interface	53863	24	Horseshoe Valley - Lake Canoe Route	18506
2b	Sechelt Inlet Marine Interface	1203	25	Upper Lois	4491
2c	Gibsons	3935	26	Knuckleheads	5889
2d	Roberts Creek	8099	27	Freda	9704
2e	Sechelt	3740	28	Powell Divide / Emma	17411
2f	West Sechelt	8453	29	Eldred River	8591
3	Port Mellon	12377	30	Rainbow Beartooth	13260
4	Mt. Elphinstone / Dakota	6295	31a	Lower Powell Lake	9312
5	Tetrahedron	22798	31b	Inland Lake	4944
6	Sechelt Inlet / Tzoonie	33338	31c	Goat Lake	2770
7	Thormanby / Halfmoon Bay	8005	31d	Goat Island	6862
8a	Pender Harbour Coastal	4225	31e	Upper Powell Lake	13547
8b	Pender Harbour Lakes	794	32	Haslam Lake	6219
8c	Pender Harbour NUF	5549	33	Powell / Daniels	40393
9	Caren	10331	34	Tin Hat / Lewis Lake	4727
10	Narrow / Salmon Divide	28388	35	Theodosia / Olson	19290
11	Phantom / Tantalus	41794	36	Savary / West Malaspina	44541
12	Earle Range	63098	37a	Desolation Sound	13896
13	Jervis Inlet	46260	37b	Okeover Inlet	6878
14	Skookumchuck	4939	38	Bunster Hills / Sliammon	16077
15a	Ruby / Sakinaw	6762	39	Toba	39390
15b	Agamemnon Channel	2348	40	Bute	92390
16	Nelson Island	20445	41	Waddington	87569
17	Hotham Sound	13792	42	Homathko River	46868
18	Mt. Wellington	16209	43	Homathko Icefield	115765
19	Princess Louisa	11418	44	Southgate / Bishop	78863
20	Tinniswood	38607	45	Southgate / Toba Divide	158551
21	Britain / Skwawka	37316	46	Toba River	98891
22a	Texada Island	104527	47	Quatam - Tahumming River	85946
22b	Lasqueti Island	29674	48a	Redonda	67970
23a	Powell River	20221	48b	Stuart	23593
23b	Duck Lake / Lang Creek	10462	49a	Cortes	35587
23c	West Lake / Hammil Hill	1362	49b	Read / Maurelle	22033

4.2 DESCRIPTION OF RECREATION MANAGEMENT UNITS

A description and analysis was undertaken for each RMU. The analysis summarizes the inventory of information collected regarding each unit, suggests current commercial and public recreation significance (with rationale) and makes recommendations with regards to zoning. The intention is to provide information that will guide land managers with regards to public and commercial recreation in each of the RMUs. Descriptions and analysis mirrors the following format. Detailed information and analysis on each RMU based on this format is contained in Appendix A.

GENERAL UNIT DESCRIPTION:

This section contains a brief overview of the assets and activities found in each area.

Primary Features: Identify the primary recreation features found in the RMU.

Main Recreation Activities: Specify the primary activities undertaken in the RMU.

Description: Narratives to further illustrate the features and activities found in the RMU while exploring the opportunities, constraints and issues.

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats): Discussion of each to further elucidate the points identified in the narrative.

ELABORATION ON CONFLICTS:

This section contains a set of questions regarding commercial and public recreation issues and conflicts, as well as identifies conflicts and issues with recreation and other resource use.

Are there current commercial/public recreation conflicts Potential?

What are these conflicts? This question deals solely with recreation conflicts between commercial (guided) and public (unguided) use. Examples of conflict may be commercial and public use of the same campsites, overcrowding, or exclusionary practices.

Are there current conflicts/issues between recreation & other resource users? Potential?

What are these conflicts/issues? This questions deals with recreation and other resource users (forestry, mining, aquaculture, etc.).

Is there a mechanism or forum to address these conflicts or issues? This question helps to determine what methods or mechanisms are in place to address the conflicts and issues. An absence of mechanisms weighs negatively on both commercial and public recreation opportunities.

PUBLIC RECREATION:

This section draws upon the previous descriptions and provides an analysis of the current significance.

Current Public Use: A cursory review of the types and level of unguided use.

CURRENT SIGNIFICANCE (Low=1, 2, 3, 4=High): Subjective ranking by the consultants on the importance of the RMU for public recreation in the Sunshine Coast FD? Based on the RMU descriptions, issues and constraints.

Rationale: The rationale outlines key influencing factors as to why the rank has been assigned as such.

4.3 HIGH VALUE RECREATION AREAS

Value is a subjective term. Individuals may value one particular area over another for a variety of reasons, including: environmental appeal, features/experience available, density of use, other uses in same area and access. Access can be seen as one of the key criteria; indeed, many areas that might be considered moderate have been upgraded due to access considerations. To identify areas within the RMUs that have the highest public recreation value - High Value Recreation Areas (HVRA) – a screen using seven principal criteria was utilized: diversity of features, a range of difficulty, the opportunity for a multi/single day experience, aesthetics, access, and unique features¹⁵. A high value recreation area need not contain elements from each criteria factor; they can excel in one or more and thus be considered an outstanding candidate. The associated RMU's are noted in brackets beside the identified HVRA. The discussion of high value recreation areas is made without prejudice towards pending First Nation land claims.

- **Diversity of Features (Multi-Feature):**

Recreationists seek areas that have a diversity of features, and hence allow for a multifaceted experience.

- The presence of coves, sand beaches, hiking trails and islands on the Thormanby Islands (7) is inviting to a wide range of recreationists.
- The presence of trails, campsites, lakes, creeks and fish on the Powell Forest Canoe Route (24, 31a, 31c) are sought after by canoers as well as campers, fishermen, boaters.
- The presence of trails, lakes and coastline along the near urban sections from Gibsons to Lund (2a, 23a, 36) provide scattered opportunities that are readily accessible.
- The South Powell Divide (28), Knuckleheads (26) and Tetrahedron (5) have a number of important recreational features (peaks, ridges, lakes, rolling alpine/sub-alpine and trails) within close proximity to each other.

- **Range of Difficulty (Multi-Level):**

The needs of novices (safe, unthreatening, lower skill levels) and enthusiasts (challenging, higher skill levels) are different. An area that provides a range of difficulties for particular activities is likely to attract a wider audience.

- Howe Sound (1), Sechelt Inlet (6), Powell Forest Canoe Route (24, 31a, 31c), and Desolation Sound (37a) provide opportunities for kayakers with a wide range of skill levels.
- The mountain biking trails of Elphinstone (2d) slope provide opportunities for a range of skill levels.
- Eldred Valley (29) has a wide range of climbing faces suitable for all skill levels.
- The presence of marinas and a wide array of anchorages provides for opportunities in the region for boaters of all skill levels. (RMU 1, 2a, 2b, 7, 13, 19, 22a, 22b, 36, 37a, 37b 39, 40, 48, 49).

- **Opportunity for a Multi / Single Day Experience:**

Multi or single day excursions in natural settings can provide recreationists with a feeling of escape from urban living and a connection with nature. The routes taken can be linear, circuitous or multi circuit. Areas that provide for both opportunities can attract greater interest.

¹⁵ Derived from the *Soo TSA Recreation Management and Strategy Report* Geoscape1996.

- Sunshine Coast Trail - numerous entry points allow for use of portions of or the entire trail (RMU 23d, 23b, 32, 31b, 38, 37b).
- Tetrahedron (5) and Knuckleheads (26) – relatively easy access, open and semi-open terrain, the presence of cabins, and the trail network provides opportunities for short or longer stays.
- Access points on the Powell Forest Canoe Route (RMU 24, 31a, 31c) permits for either single or multi-day canoeing opportunities.
- Multiple staging areas for sea kayaks allow for quick access to unique features, including those that provide suitable camping, allowing for single or multi-day opportunities. Examples include Howe Sound (1), Sechelt Inlet (6), Thormanby (7), Nelson Island (16), Jedediah (22b), Copeland Islands (36), Desolation Sound/Okeover (37) and Cortes Island (49).
- **Aesthetics:**

Areas that are visually pleasing are more often sought. Landscape features that increase the aesthetic value include streams, lakes, rivers, waterfalls, hot springs, ocean vistas, natural appearing forests (both old growth and visually managed forest), mountain vistas, alpine, sub-alpine, valleys and glaciers.

 - Notable scenic areas with pleasing aesthetics include Sechelt Inlet (6), Phantom Lake (11), Princess Louisa Inlet (19), Knuckleheads (26), South Powell Divide (28), Desolation Sound/Okeover (37), Daniels Lake (33), Bute Inlet (40), Southgate/Bishop Rivers (44), Southgate/Toba Divide (45) and Redonda Island (48).
 - Locations that, although containing many physical elements with high visual aesthetics, are disrupted by discordant industrial impacts include Tetrahedron Park (views from Mt. Steele and Tetrahedron) (5), Panther Peak (3), and Mt. Hallowell (9).
- **Access:**

The effort required to arrive at recreation sites reflects the recreationists degree of exertion or ability to pay. Ease of access separates the casual user (requires easy access and less willing to pay) and enthusiast (willing to expend more time, pay more, assume more risk or undertake greater hardships to access a feature).

 - Locations with casual ease of access range from the near urban forests or coastlines to remote features that can be accessed via air transport. Air access can consist of travel to a destination feature (with costs related directly to transport time) or as part of a touring package (generally within an hour total flight time, thus a 60 km radius from a departure location). Features closest to departure locations are more inclined to receive a greater number of visitors. Features within 60 km of Sechelt/Gibsons and Powell River include all the marine-accessible features within (RMUs 1 to 18, 21 to 39 and 48,49).
 - Enthusiasts may utilize logging roads, marine transport or air transport to reach a staging area and travel via self propelled means to subsequently access the desired feature. Multi-day stays are a norm and the time (and costs) to access these areas is of less importance to the enthusiast. By this definition, all RMUs in the District are accessible.
- **Unique Features:**

Some recreation activities are best enjoyed in and around features most conducive to the activity (examples include kayaking around island groupings or hiking in sub-alpine/lake settings). Some activities, such as rock climbing, hang gliding and windsurfing, require sites with extremely specific landscape features.

- **Unique features** that are most conducive to supporting an activity includes:
 - Desolation Sound (37a), Jedediah (22b), Thormanby Island (7), Copeland Islands (36) and Paisley Island (1). These contain archipelagos that provide opportunities for kayak exploration.
 - Ruby and Sakinaw Lakes (15a) and nearby portage trails link to each other and to Agamemnon Channel (15b) and provide a rare congregation on the Sunshine Coast, which is generally comprised of scattered small lakes.
 - Mount Daniels (8c) is a solitary mountain feature with significant First Nations heritage value.
 - Pender Harbour (8a) is a unique sheltered harbour, with high use levels.
 - Sechelt Inlet (6) is a unique inland fjord, close to a population center.
 - Powell Forest Canoe Circuit (24, 31a, 31c) contains a provincially rare string of lakes linked by short portages.
 - Savory Island (36), Thormanby Island (7) and Palm Beach (23a) have substantial sand deposits suitable for beach activities.
 - Princess Louisa Inlet (19), a fjord with dangerous tidal rapids at the mouth, provides protected boating within and contains world-renowned scenery.
 - Dakota Ridge (4) and the Knuckleheads (26) have rolling open terrain in high elevation that is conducive to Nordic skiing and ski touring, as well as snowmobiling.
 - The South Powell Divide (28), the Knuckleheads (26) and Tetrahedron (5) have significant recreation features (peaks, ridges, lakes, rolling alpine/sub-alpine and trails) within close proximity to each other.
 - Caren Range (9) with ancient trees and Elphinstone Slope (2d, 4) with mushroom and forest features are suitable for nature interpretation. Locales with old growth close to population centres are increasingly rare; these areas include sections around Tuwanek (Hidden Grove) (2e) and along the Sunshine Coast Trail (RMU 23d, 23b, 32, 31b, 38, & 37b).
 - The Sunshine Coast Trail, although not natural, is a unique 180 km feature that provides access to the area (23d, 23b, 32, 31b, 38, 37b).
- **Specific landscape** features include:
 - Eldred Valley (29) has cliffs, boulders and rock faces highly sought by rock climbers.
 - Skookumchuck Narrows (14) has standing waves that are highly sought by whitewater kayakers.
 - Mt. Waddington (41) and other peaks in the District are highly sought by mountaineers.
 - Extensive remote icefields are highly sought by ski mountaineers. These include the Homathko (43) and Southgate (45).
- **The Opportunity to Experience Wilderness Settings:**

Recreationists seek areas where they commune with nature in relative solitude. The absence of artificial sounds and modified visuals is important.

 - The District has extensive backcountry that is suitable for experiencing wilderness settings. There are also pocket wilderness areas in the front country (e.g. Elphinstone Slope, Mt. Daniel, and Crowston Lake) and mid country (e.g. Tetrahedron, Knuckleheads, Caren and others) wherein one can experience wilderness-like settings.

4.4 RECREATION MANAGEMENT UNIT DISCUSSION

Appendix A provides a complete analysis of the 49 RMUs and their respective sub units using the methodology identified under *Description of Units* above.

The following table links the High Value Recreation Areas (HVRA) to RMUs of Current Public Significance (CPS), Current Commercial Significance (CCS) and Commercial Development Potential (CDP). A CPS or CCS of 1 is low and 4 is very high. CDP is defined as High, Moderate, or Low.

Table 16: Recreation Management Units (RMU), High Value Recreation Areas (HVRA), Current Public Significance (CPS), Current Commercial Significance (CCS) and Commercial Development Potential (CDP).

	RMU	HVRA / Discussion	CPS	CCS	CDP
1	Howe Sound	Paisley Islands. Boat access, limited land-based opportunities.	3	3	H
2a	West Marine Interface	Coastline features. Trails	4	4	M
2b	Sechelt Inlet Marine Interface	Lowland old growth (Hidden Grove, Heritage Forest) Coastline features. Trails	4	4	H
2c	Gibsons	Near urban forest. Trails	4	2	M
2d	Roberts Creek	Elphinstone slope. Near urban forest. Coastline features.	4	3	M
2e	Sechelt	Near urban forest. Trails	3	2	M
2f	West Sechelt	Near urban forest. Trails	4	3	M
3	Port Mellon	Timber harvesting roads provide access to outstanding lake, ridge, river and peak features. Visual aesthetics are compromised. Panther Peak. Rainy River Valley.	2	1	L
4	Mt. Elphinstone / Dakota	Dakota Ridge has significant winter recreation opportunities.	4	3	H
5	Tetrahedron	Tetrahedron Park – Close proximity of features and good access.	3	2	L
6	Sechelt Inlet / Tzoonie	A unique inland fjord.	4	3	H
7	Thormanby / Halfmoon Bay	Thormanby Island and mainland coves and bays.	4	4	M
8a	Pender Harbour Coastal	Pender Harbour is a unique natural harbour.	4	4	M
8b	Pender Harbour Lakes	Small lakes are sub-regionally rare.	4	3	M
8c	Pender Harbour NUF	Near Urban Forest (NUF). Mt. Daniels.	4	3	H
9	Caren	Old growth stands with oldest trees in Canada, intermixed with harvested areas.	3	2	M
10	Narrow / Salmon Divide	Distant location and technical requirements limit recreation use.	1	1	L
11	Phantom Tantalus	Phantom Lake, Tantalus Range, many peaks, lakes and valleys. Intense harvesting in the west unit affects aesthetic values.	3	2	L
12	Earle Range	Distant location and technical requirements limit recreation use.	1	1	M
13	Jervis Inlet	Closest fjord to the lower mainland and passage to Princess Louisa Inlet.	3	3	M
14	Skookumchuck	Skookumchuck rapids attract whitewater enthusiasts, scuba divers and viewers.	4	4	H

	RMU	HVRA / Discussion	CPS	CCS	CDP
15a	Ruby / Sakinaw	Lakes that link to ocean allowing for a kayak circuit opportunity. Limited shore opportunities.	2	3	M
15b	Agamemnon Channel	Scuba diving. Connects with lakes for a kayak circuit opportunity.	2	3	L
16	Nelson Island	Protected bays and coves and extensive coastline attract cottagers and boaters.	3	2	M
17	Hotham Sound	Spectacular scenery and some anchorages and pullouts.	3	3	M
18	Mt. Wellington	Distant location and technical requirements limit recreation use.	2	2	M
19	Princess Louisa	World-renowned scenery and protected anchorage. Mt. Albert.	4	4	L
20	Tinniswood	Distant location and technical requirements limits recreation use.	1	1	L
21	Britain / Skwawka	Distant location limits recreation use.	1	1	L
22a	Texada Island	Texada Island has unique cave and karst features. Extensive industrial use. Ferry access from Powell River.	2	1	M
22b	Lasqueti	Jedediah Islands are unique features. Extensive private lands. Ferry from Vancouver island.	3	2	M
23a	Powell River	Near urban forest. Coastline.	4	3	M
23b	Duck Lake / Lang Creek	Lang Creek. Near urban forest. Sunshine Coast trail	4	3	M
23c	West Lake / Hammil Hill	Hammil Lake area. Near urban forest.	4	2	L
23d	Saltery Bay/ Mt. Troubridge.	Mt. Troubridge. Near urban forest. Coastline. Sunshine Coast trail	4	3	L
24	Horseshoe Valley – Lake Canoe Route	Unique string of lakes that with Goat and Powell Lake allow for a road linked canoe circuit.	4	4	H
25	Upper Lois	Mt. Diadem, snow caves and cliffs. Wildlife. Accessible.	3	3	M
26	Knuckleheads	Alpine, Subalpine, lakes, cabins, trails in close proximity.	4	3	M
27	Freda	Alpine, Subalpine, lakes, ridges, old growth and roaded access.	3	3	M
28	Powell Divide / Emma	Unique long distance ridge hike and supportive features such as lakes, viewpoints, trails and cabin.	4	3	M
29	Eldred River	Eldred Valley cliffs (world class climbing)	4	3	M
30	Rainbow Beartooth	Mountain peaks: Beartooth, Slide, Baldy, Twin Peaks, and the Rainbows. High Falls. Old growth.	2	2	L
31a	Lower Powell Lake	Large lake. Part of the Canoe Circuit. Floating homes. High local use.	4	4	H
31b	Inland Lake	Lake with beaches and wheelchair accessible trail. High use.	4	3	M
31c	Goat lake	Part of the Canoe Circuit.	4	3	M
31d	Goat island	Trails and small lake.	2	2	L
31e	Upper Powell Lake	Large lake. Float homes. More remote.	2	2	L
32	Haslam Lake	Community Watershed.	1	1	L
33	Powell / Daniels	Daniels Lake is very scenic.	2	2	M
34	Tin Hat / Lewis Lake	Accessible mountain ridges and lakes with Tin Hat Mountain providing views.	4	2	M
35	Theodosia/ Olson	Ridge, rivers and lakes.	2	2	L
36	Savary / West Malaspina	Extensive sand deposits (Savary), Copeland Islands, coast of west Malaspina.	4	4	M
37a	Desolation Sound	Desolation Sound is a world class feature.	4	4	H

	RMU	HVRA / Discussion	CPS	CCS	CDP
37b	Okeover Inlet	Okeover Inlet has world class attributes and is a working inlet.	4	4	H
38	Bunster Hills/ Sliammon	Accessible ridge walks. Rolling alpine suitable for winter activities.	4	2	L
39	Toba	Distant location and fjord setting limits recreation use.	1	3	L
40	Bute	Distant location and fjord setting limits recreation use.	1	3	M
41	Waddington	Distant location and technical requirements limits recreation use.	1	2	L
42	Homathko River	Distant, difficult to access, extensive logging, and difficult terrain for bush hiking. Loss of heritage features.	1	1	L
43	Homathko Icefield	Distant location and technical requirements limits recreation use.	2	1	L
44	Southgate / Bishop	Distant location and technical requirements limits recreation use.	1	2	L
45	Southgate / Toba Divide	Distant location and technical requirements limits recreation use.	2	1	L
46	Toba River	Distant location limits recreation use.	1	1	L
47	Quatam-Tahumming River	Distant location limits recreation use.	1	1	L
48a	Redonda	High quality recreation features and opportunities. Boat access.	3	4	M
48b	Stuart	High quality recreation features and opportunities. Boat access.	3	4	M
49a	Cortes	Quality recreation opportunities, relatively distant or boat access.	3	3	H
49b	Read, Maurelle	Distant.	2	1	L

The completed analysis of **Public Recreation** using the process described above identified:

- 29 RMU - Very High Current Significance
- 14 RMU - High Current Significance
- 13 RMU - Moderate Current Significance
- 12 RMU - Low Current Significance

The completed analysis of **Commercial Recreation** using the process described above identified:

- 13 RMU - Very High Current Significance
- 24 RMU - High Current Significance
- 18 RMU - Moderate Current Significance
- 13 RMU - Low Current Significance

The completed analysis of **Commercial Development Potential** using the process described above identified:

- 11 RMU – High Development Potential
- 32 RMU - Moderate Development Potential
- 25 RMU - Low Development Potential

To further discussion of the RMU's, a table has been created, summarizing key recreation activities / tourism products which are available.

Table 17: RMUs and Activities

RMU	Water								Summer Land Non-motorized (NM)					Land - motorized			Winter - NM		Others				
	Marine Cruising Destination / Anchorage	Scuba	Ocean kayaking/ Canoeing	Whitewater kayak/ Rafting	Lake Canoeing	Beach / Lake Activities	Salt Water Fishing	Freshwater Fishing	Hiking	Mountain Biking	Horseback Riding	Mountaineering (summer / winter)	Rock Climbing	ATV / Dirt Bike	4 x 4	Snowmobiling	Nordic Skiing	Snowshoeing	Lodges, Cabins, (Midcountry / Backcountry) Park Campsite	Wildlife Viewing	Nature Interpretation	Scenic Viewing	Cultural Interpretation
1	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓										✓				
2	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓
3								✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓								
4									✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	
5						✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
6	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓												✓			✓	✓
7	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓										✓		✓	✓	
8	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓									✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
9									✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓			✓		
10									✓			✓										✓	
11					✓			✓	✓			✓							✓			✓	
12								✓	✓					✓								✓	✓
13	✓	✓	✓				✓					✓										✓	✓
14	✓	✓		✓				✓												✓	✓		
15		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓										✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
16	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓										✓			✓	
17	✓	✓	✓				✓															✓	
18							✓	✓	✓			✓		✓								✓	
19	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓													✓	
20								✓				✓											
21								✓	✓					✓								✓	
22	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓						✓	✓	
23	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓						✓	✓	✓
24					✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓				✓			✓	
25								✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓							
26									✓			✓				✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
27								✓	✓				✓			✓							
28									✓			✓						✓				✓	
29								✓					✓	✓							✓	✓	
30									✓			✓						✓				✓	
31					✓	✓		✓	✓												✓	✓	

RMU	Water							Summer Land Non-motorized (NM)				Land - motorized		Winter - NM		Others							
	Marine Cruising Destination / Anchorage	Scuba	Ocean kayaking/ Canoeing	Whitewater kayak/ Rafting	Lake Canoeing	Beach / Lake Activities	Salt Water Fishing	Freshwater Fishing	Hiking	Mountain Biking	Horseback Riding	Mountaineering (summer / winter)	Rock Climbing	ATV / Dirt Bike	4 x 4	Snowmobiling	Nordic Skiing	Snowshoeing	Lodges, Cabins, (Midcountry / Backcountry) Park Campsite	Wildlife Viewing	Nature Interpretation	Scenic Viewing	Cultural Interpretation
32					✓		✓															✓	
33						✓	✓	✓						✓	✓							✓	
34								✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
35							✓							✓							✓	✓	✓
36	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓												✓		✓	✓	
37	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓										✓		✓	✓	
38								✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓				✓	
39	✓		✓				✓													✓		✓	
40	✓						✓													✓		✓	
41											✓										✓	✓	
42							✓	✓												✓	✓	✓	✓
43											✓											✓	
44				✓			✓													✓	✓	✓	
45											✓											✓	
46				✓			✓				✓									✓	✓	✓	
47											✓											✓	
48	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓											✓	✓		✓	
49	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓										✓		✓	✓	✓

To assist interested parties, a table has been created which links RMUs to communities that have a vested interest.

Table 18: RMUs and Communities

	Keats/ Gambier	Port Mellon	Gibson	Sechelt	Pender Harbour	Earles Cove/ Egmont	Lang/ Saltery Bay	Powell river	Squamish	Lund	Texada Island	Lasqueti	Mansons L/ Whaletown Harbour	Squirrel Cover	Stuart island
1	✓	✓	✓												
2a			✓	✓											
2b				✓											
2c	✓		✓												
2d			✓	✓											
2e				✓											
2f				✓	✓										
3	✓	✓													
4			✓	✓											
5			✓	✓											
6				✓											
7				✓	✓										
8a					✓										
8b					✓										
8c				✓	✓										
9				✓	✓										
10			✓	✓											
11			✓												
12					✓	✓	✓								
13					✓	✓	✓								
14						✓									
15a					✓	✓									
15b					✓	✓									
16					✓	✓	✓								
17						✓	✓								
18						✓									
19			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓								
20			✓	✓				✓							
21						✓	✓								
22a								✓			✓				
22b				✓	✓						✓	✓			
23a							✓	✓							
23b							✓	✓							
23c							✓	✓							
23d							✓	✓							
24							✓	✓	✓						
25								✓							
26								✓							
27								✓							
28								✓							
29								✓							
30								✓							

	Keats/ Gambier	Port Mellon	Gibson	Sechelt	Pender Harbour	Earles Cove/ Egmont	Lang/ Saltery Bay	Powell river	Sliammon	Lund	Texada Island	Lasqueti	Mansons L/ Whaletown Harbour	Squirrel Cover	Stuart island
31a								✓	✓						
31b								✓							
31c								✓	✓						
31d								✓							
31e								✓							
32								✓							
33								✓							
34								✓							
35								✓							
36								✓	✓	✓					
37a								✓	✓	✓					
37b			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓					
38								✓							
39								✓		✓		✓	✓		
40								✓		✓		✓	✓		
41								✓							
42								✓							
43								✓							
44								✓							
45								✓							
46								✓							
47								✓							
48a					✓			✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
48b					✓					✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
49a					✓					✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
49b										✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

5. COMMERCIAL POTENTIAL ANALYSIS

The Sunshine Coast Forest District will be managed to provide “sustained availability of an innovative range of high quality Commercial Recreation operations that will attract clients and derive profitability from the outstanding natural features and market attractiveness associated with the ... District.”

Commercial Recreation Vision, modified from the Management Plan for Commercial Recreation – Sea to Sky Corridor / Squamish District, 2000.

In this section of the report, a select group of RMUs in the Sunshine Coast Forest District are analyzed for their commercial recreation development potential. The methodology for choosing the RMUs with the best potentials is outline in the following paragraphs.

Section 5.1 outlines the rational for and results of pre-screening RMUs. Prescreening is based on the analysis undertaken in Appendix A. Section 5.2 delves into the pre-screened RMUs, utilizing a series of tables and checklists, to further analyze the RMUs. The 17 pre-screened RMUs are shortlisted to 12, then lumped to 4 commercial areas. Section 5.3 details the commercial analysis for each of the four areas, in terms of activities demand, business development capacity, operator capacity, community value, community support, conflicts/issues and opportunities.

5.1 PRE-SCREENING OF RMUS

There are hundreds of tourism businesses operating within the Sunshine Coast Forest District, with most of the RMUs experiencing at least some commercial activity, and a few responsible for considerable levels of commercial development. Selecting RMUs best suited for further analysis of commercial potential is based on resource, market and socio-economic considerations. Our consultation with tourism operators and community stakeholders have provided feedback on the relative attractiveness of the RMUs based on both their current level of use and future capabilities. Potential ranges from the very low to the very high. In order to focus the commercial potential analysis on the best candidates, a two-fold selection process was developed:

- *Undertake a pre-screen of RMUs and, based on the resource analysis provided in Appendix A, identify those with high current significance or high future development opportunities for commercial purposes. This pre-screen would result in a list of RMUs with high commercial potential.*
- *The RMUs depicting high commercial potential would then be subjected to a more detailed review using a check-list of resource and socio-economic criteria. The resulting short-list of RMUs would be further analyzed for their commercial development potential.*

The results of the pre-screen are presented in the following table.

Table 19: Pre-screened RMUs

RMU	Rationale	
1	Howe Sound	Moderate to high current significance with high potential opportunities.
2a	West Sechelt Marine	Extensive coastline with high current significance and moderate development opportunities.
2b	Sechelt Inlet Marine	The residential / industrial / coastal interface within Sechelt Inlet. This RMU is the staging area for the entire Sechelt Inlet with high current significance and moderate development opportunities.
4	Mt. Elphinstone / Dakota	A high elevation area consisting of two very separate sub-units. Dakota Ridge is the more significant of the two with high public value and moderate current significance. There are high development opportunities in relationship with the public user groups.
6	Sechelt Inlet / Tzoonie	The extensive inlet complex has moderately high current significance and high development opportunities.
7	Thormanby/Halfmoon Bay	A remarkable RMU with sand beaches and sheltered coves. It has high current significance and moderate development opportunities.
8a	Pender Harbour Coastal	This sheltered RMU has high current significance and moderate development opportunities.
14	Skookumchuck	The narrows are of international significance and thus has high current significance and high development opportunities.
17	Hotham Sound	The high cliffs and waterfall, anchorages and pull outs signifies an RMU with a high current significance and a moderate development opportunity.
23d	Saltery Bay / Mt. Troubridge	An extensive coastline with high current significance and moderate development opportunities.
24	Horseshoe Valley – Lake Canoe Route	As an important component of the Powell Forest Canoe Circuit, this RMU has high current significance and high development opportunities.
31a	Powell Lake	A section of the Powell Forest Canoe Circuit, this RMU has high current significance and high development opportunities.
31c	Goat Lake	A section of the Powell Forest Canoe Circuit, this RMU has high current significance and high development opportunities.
36	Savary / West Malaspina	Savary Island, Copeland Islands and the western shores of the Malaspina Peninsula present a high current significance and high development opportunities.
37a & b	Desolation Sound / Okeover	Desolation Sound, Okeover Inlet and the east section of Malaspina Peninsula make up this world class RMU. High current significance and moderate development opportunities with working solutions on capacity and shared resources.
48	Redonda Stuart	Dramatic islands with anchorages and sports fish, this RMU lies at the head of Georgia Strait and the entry to the central coast. High current significance with moderate development opportunities.
49a	Cortes	A remote rural island with a diversity of features, moderate current significance and high development opportunities.

5.2 SHORT-LISTING OF RMUS

A short-list of RMUs was compiled based on a review of natural resource capabilities, existing product and market development and compatibility with other resource values. The check list used to undertake this analysis is shown in following Table 20. A total of 17 resource, market and socio-economic criteria were established. Each was assigned a weighted scale for ranking the RMUs relative to each other. Total scores were tallied and grouped as described in the following table.

Table 20: Checklist Scoring Template

Group	Score	Conditions	Potential
1	-4 to 20	Average features, low demand, lack of compatibility with other values, significant obstacles to commercial development.	Low potential
2	21 to 34	Average features, some demand for products, numerous development constraints	Some potential
3	35 to 48	Attractive features, moderate to high demand conditions, existence of commercial development capacity, some constraints	Good potential
4	49 to 77	Quality features, moderate to high demand conditions, high compatibility with other resource values, few obstacles to development	High potential

Table 21: Recreation Management Unit Tourism Analysis Table

Criteria		Low<>High	
Resource Criteria			
UNIQUENESS OF KEY FEATURES	Rates the uniqueness of the resource. The implication is that a unique feature will attract a higher number of tourists/ recreationists from areas where the feature is scarce. <i>The greater the numbers that the feature can attract the higher the significance. Local populations may be sufficient to generate a high number.</i>	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
SUPPORTIVE FEATURES	Rates the availability of supportive features integral to the viability of a primary recreation activity, i.e. ocean kayaking excursions generally require campsites with freshwater and sheltered landing. <i>The more available supportive features, the greater the significance.</i>	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
TYPES OF ACTIVITIES	Rates the types of activities that can take place in the RMU. <i>The greater the number of activities, the greater the significance and potential demand.</i>	1 2 3 4 5 6	
TYPE OF SETTING	Rates the types of setting particular to the RMU. Is the setting regionally scarce? Rating is dependent on the primary activity. <i>The rarer the setting, the greater the significance.</i>	1 2 3 4	
CULTURE HERITAGE FEATURES	Rates of the presence of First Nations and Post-contact cultural and historical artifacts including petroglyphs, totems, canneries, village sites and other man made evidence of habitation and land use. Sites sensitive to damage could be subject to constraints, and therefore lower values. <i>Generally however, the more cultural heritage features the higher the significance.</i>	1 2 3 4 5 6	
ACCESS TO STAGING AREA	Rates the accessibility of the staging area to the markets. <i>The greater the accessibility, the greater the significance.</i>	1 2 3 4 5	
ACCESS FROM STAGING AREA TO RESOURCE	Rates access from the staging areas to the optimal resources or activity sites. Rating is dependent on the activity and setting. Enhanced access such as shuttling is not a factor. <i>The better the access, the greater the significance.</i>	1 2 3 4 5 6	
EXISTENCE OF SUPPORTIVE INFRASTRUCTURE	Rates the current availability of infrastructure integral to the viability of the product, i.e. snowmobiling requires trails or logging roads. <i>More supporting infrastructure leads to greater significance.</i>	1 2 3 4 5	
CARRYING CAPACITY	Rates the ability of the feature to absorb the numbers of recreationists. <i>Rank decreases with the lesser ability of the RMU to absorb recreationists.</i>	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0	
Market and Socio Economic Criteria			
ACTIVITIES DEMAND	Rates the overall demand of the identified activities available in the RMU. Are the present or potential activities in high demand for the target market? <i>The higher the demand the greater the significance.</i>	1 2 3 4	
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY	Rates the presence of key tourism inputs such as skilled workforce, infrastructure and capital is an asset. <i>The more or better developed tourism inputs, the higher the significance.</i>	1 2 3 4 5	
OPERATOR CAPACITY	Rates the presence of skilled commercial operators is an asset. <i>Local operators receive greater significance than outside operators.</i>	1 2 3 4 5	
PRIME SEASON	Rates the extent of the optimal season for the activity. <i>The longer the season the higher the significance.</i>	1 2 3	
COMMUNITY VALUE	Rates the overall benefits to the community/region in terms of economic value. <i>Jobs created, type of jobs(e.g. year-round versus seasonal) created, and employment income are measures – as they increase, the significance rises.</i>	1 2 3 4 5	
LOCAL SUPPORT	Rates the level of local support for developing commercial opportunities in the RMU. <i>Note local support for the commercial opportunity increases the significance. Active objections can hinder an opportunity and results in a negative rating.</i>	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5	
PUBLIC RECREATION CONFLICTS	Rates the level of conflicts between public and commercial operators has an effect on a successful operation. <i>More conflicts are reflected by a lower significance.</i>	-4 -3 -2 -1 0	
RESOURCE USE CONFLICTS	Rates competing use of the same resource by other commercial entities (fish farms, timber harvest, mining), private lands or park exclusions. Competition for the same resource may have a negative impact on the success of a tourism operation. <i>More conflicting uses are reflected by a lower significance.</i>	-4 -3 -2 -1 0	
-4 to 20	21 to 34	35 to 48	49 to 77
1 Low Potential	2 Some Potential	3 Good Potential	4 High Potential

Table 22: Checklist for Short-listed RMUs

<i>RMU</i>	1	2a	2b	4	6	7	8a	14	17	23d	24	31a	31c	36	37	48	49a
Resource Criteria																	
Uniqueness of key features	6	5	4	5	5	9	7	9	6	4	7	5	5	6	9	6	6
Supportive features	4	3	4	4	5	7	5	5	4	3	6	4	3	5	6	3	5
Types of activities	5	5	4	3	5	4	4	5	2	5	5	4	4	4	6	4	5
Type of setting	3	2.5	3	4	3	4	3	4	4	2.5	4	3	4	4	4	4	4
Culture heritage features	1	2	3	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1
Access to staging area	5	5	5	5	5	4.5	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2
Access from staging area	6	6	6	3	6	4	6	4	3	6	4	5	4	4	3	2	4
Supportive infrastructure	3	3.5	5	2.5	2.5	4	4	2.5	1	2.5	4	3	3	4	4	3	4
Carrying capacity	0	0	-1	0	-1	-3	-3	-1	0	0	-1	0	-1	0	-3	-1	0
Market and Socio-Economic Criteria																	
Activities demand	3	2	3	2	4	4	4	4	3	2	4	4	4	3	4	4	3.5
Business development capacity	6	6	6	6	6	5	5	6	3	5	5	5	5	4	6	4	4
Operator capacity	4	5	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	3	3	3
Prime season	2	2	2	1.5	2	2	2	2	1.5	2	2	2	2	2	2	1.5	2
Community value	4	2.5	3	4	3	3	3	4	2	3	4	4	4	3	4	2	3
Public recreation conflicts	0	-1	-1	0	-1	-1	0	0	0	0	-2	-1	-1	-3	-1	-1	-1
Resource use conflicts	-3	-1	-1	0	-2	-2	-1	-1	-1	-1	0	-1	0	0	-3	-1	-1
Local support	0	0	3	5	4	0	0	3	0	0	4	2	4	0	0	1	1
Total Score	49	47.5	52	49	52.5	49.5	49	56.5	37.5	44	55	48	49	44	49	38.5	45.5
Rank (4 High - 1 Low)	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	3

5.2 SHORT-LISTING OF RMUs (continued)

Because the 17 RMUs were included in the short-list based on their existing commercial activity or future potential, their scores on the checklist were relatively high (i.e. all scored either a 3 or a 4). Conversely, no RMUs registered a rank of 1 or 2, because the low-scoring RMUs had already been eliminated through the short-list. The top twelve RMUs were as follows:

Table 23: Top Twelve RMUs

• Skookumchuck (RMU 14)	• Horseshoe Valley (RMU 24)
• Sechelt Inlet / Tzoonie (RMU 6)	• Sechelt Inlet Marine (RMU 2b)
• Thormanby / Halfmoon Bay (RMU 7)	• Mt. Elphinstone / Dakota (RMU 4)
• Howe Sound (RMU 1)	• Pender Harbour Coastal (RMU 8a)
• Desolation Sound/Okeover (RMU 37)	• Goat Lake (RMU 31c)
• Powell Lake (RMU 31a)	• West Sechelt Marine (RMU 2a)

Further analysis of the list led to the conclusions that four areas, Thormanby/Halfmoon Bay, Howe Sound, Pender Harbour Coastal and West Sechelt Marine, were well-developed and unlikely to benefit from any attempts to increase backcountry commercial recreation opportunities. They scored well mainly because of their outstanding natural features and proximity to developed staging areas on the Sechelt Peninsula. The remaining eight areas were grouped into larger geographic zones, as follows:

Table 24: Commercial Areas

Commercial Area	RMU
Sechelt Inlet	Sechelt Inlet/Tzoonie (RMU 6)
	Sechelt Inlet Marine (RMU 2b)
	Skookumchuck (RMU 14)
Elphinstone/Dakota	Mt. Elphinstone/Dakota (RMU 4)
Horseshoe/Powell (canoe circuit)	Horseshoe Valley (RMU 24)
	Goat Lake (RMU 31c)
	Powell Lake (RMU 31a)
Desolation Sound	Desolation Sound (RMU 37a)
	Okeover Inlet (RMU 37b)

Skookumchuck Narrows (14) was combined with the highly rated Sechelt Inlet (6) and the marine interface north of Sechelt (2b) to provide a complete multi-activity experience within the Sechelt Inlet.

Dakota Ridge (4) provides a diversity of opportunities that have broad community support for public use. The difficulty inherent in establishing this area for public use suggests an opportunity for commercial affiliation, a comprehensive picture of which becomes evident through more detailed analysis.

Powell Lake (31a) and Goat Lake (31c) were combined with Horseshoe Valley (24) to provide an analysis of the complete Powell Forest Canoe Circuit.

Desolation Sound (37a) and Okeover Inlet (37b) are internationally significant destinations constrained with competing resource users and carrying capacity issues. With proper management, consultation and community cooperation, the RMU has tremendous commercial potential.

The selection of the short-listed RMUs does not imply an absence of development potential in other areas of the forest district. An operator may decide to develop a commercial recreation venture because of the availability of other key inputs such as capital or management experience, even though natural features or the existing pattern of tourism development may not appear favourable for that particular product. A community may decide that commercial development is not desirable even though the potential economic impacts, such as employment, appear beneficial. Crown tenure for a particular activity in an RMU may be unavailable due to high potential for conflict among other resource users, or among other recreation activities. Conversely, an RMU may contain features of tremendous significance where potential conflicts could be mitigated through management techniques, permitting the opportunity to be developed.

The influence of such factors on the development process are difficult to assess and sometimes intangible. They rarely behave in isolation, usually interacting with each other and making an assessment of the commercial potential even more complex. Through the short-list exercise, the consultants have attempted to account for as many development-related factors as possible, rank the factors for each area as objectively as possible, and then identify the RMUs with the *best* potential for commercial development.

5.3 COMMERCIAL ANALYSIS

5.3.1 SECHELT INLET

The commercial potential of the Sechelt Inlet RMUs revolves around the reasonably convenient access from a well-developed staging area in Sechelt to numerous quality tourism features between Porpoise Bay and Egmont, including the Skookumchuck Narrows. A mix of market potential, existing infrastructure and manageable resource use challenges rank Sechelt Inlet as a favourable area for future commercial development. The prime opportunities relate to water-based activities, but there are linkages to a variety of secondary land-based activities.

Primary activities	Secondary activities
Ocean Kayaking	Viewing
River (Whitewater) Kayaking	ATV
Marine Cruising	Hiking
Scuba Diving	

ACTIVITIES DEMAND¹⁶ (SECHELT INLET continued)**Ocean Kayaking:** (with sub-component River Kayaking)

- Self propelled vessels allow participants to gain a closer appreciation of the surrounding landscape and permits users to access areas unobtainable to larger, motorized travellers.
- Average kayakers - baby boomers, travelling as a couple or with friends.
- Most participants are Canadian. In BC, only 10% of kayaking participants are from outside the province, mostly the northwestern US.
- Rapid market growth for this sport, doubling user numbers in the 1990s.
- Participation rate of about 7% of BC residents.
- Market has been limited by a misconception that the activity requires strength, stamina and skill (which is only partially true depending on the setting, conditions, and objectives chosen).
- One quarter of all kayak trips in BC is undertaken with guided assistance.
- Key market segments include the experienced adventure kayaker interested in multi-day trips and the casual kayaker looking for a safe adventure for a single day or overnight trip. This second group is much more likely to decide to go kayaking once they have arrived in an area.
- Canada is recognized as a top global destination for this sport among the US market.
- Marketability in Sechelt is good. Skookumchuck Narrows is a world-class river kayak play area. There is potential to link to multiple activities, high quality features, relative safety (protected from open ocean), and close proximity to staging areas. Less exposure to open-ocean and associated hazards than other, better known areas. However, Sechelt does not have the market exposure of other prime kayaking touring destinations in BC such as Broughton Archipelago and Nootka Sound, where key features such as whale watching (Broughton) or native culture (Nootka Sound) are important attractors.

Marine Cruising:

- The activity consists of conventional small vessel adventure/ecotourism marine cruising segment, usually involving sailing vessels or motor yachts with under 20 passengers.
- Average participant - 45 years or older, predominantly female, travel as couples.
- Primarily Canadian participants but the US market is also sizeable.
- According to the Canadian Tourism Commission [1997], marine cruising was ranked highest among tourism products for uniqueness, marketability (appeal), per diem revenue, and resource potential.
- Diversity of environment in the Sechelt Inlet provides for a variety of related activities, including fishing, camping, nature observation, hiking, swimming, and wildlife viewing. Shore excursion opportunities are important for this product.

Scuba Diving:

- An underwater adventure activity, usually involving discovery and exploration of marine environments or historic installations (e.g. shipwrecks or flooded settlements).
- This market contains two key segments - "participant market" includes those who are current divers or who have tried scuba diving and will go again, and "potential market", those who are aware of scuba diving and are interested but have not tried the sport.

¹⁶ Greater detail on the activities described in the section of the report can be found in Appendix B.

- 1.8% of US population consider themselves to be active divers, ¼ of these are enthusiasts. 77% of all diving days are by enthusiasts.¹⁷
- The Sunshine Coast is considered by many to be among the top diving locations in the world. Some Vancouver-based hotels feature scuba diving in Sechelt Inlet as a regional outdoor attraction. There are numerous underwater attractions, including two purposely-sunk vessels.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY (SEHEL T INLET continued)

- Proximity to Sechelt as a staging area with services, accommodation, rentals and guides is an advantage.
- Beaches, several suitable anchorages, and camping in southern reaches of the inlet provide required features.
- Shore excursion opportunities in Sechelt and Egmont.
- Local entrepreneurs have a high degree of familiarity with the area.

Gaps:

- Shortage of water access and staging areas within the Inlet (outside of Sechelt).
- Lack of infrastructure for garbage/refuse disposal.
- Little interpretation of cultural features.
- Operators currently offering kayaking/diving in the inlet often do not advertise their products as such and may be difficult to find.

OPERATOR CAPACITY

Existing CR tenure:

- None
- Three tourism operators have Park Use Permits for Sechelt Marine Park

Existing operators:

- Marine cruising and charters operators are well represented on the Sunshine Coast – there are at least 19 charter operators and more vessels are available for rental from resorts and lodges. Approximately half of the operators are sailing outfits and the remainder motor vessels/yachts. There are also numerous operators based in the Vancouver and the Comox/Campbell River areas who regularly use the Sunshine Coast for cruising. Existing operators are capable of serving additional visitors.
- There are 21 kayak operators in the study area, two focusing on Sechelt Inlet. Few rentals are available in Sechelt, as most outfits are found in Powell River/Lund. There are 40 larger ocean kayaking companies in the province, among which are five very large expeditionary ocean kayaking companies with major guiding capabilities.
- Kayakers in Skookumchuck are generally self-guided river kayakers or incoming on international river kayak tours.
- There are 25 diving operators, majority of whom are specialized dive tours based out of Greater Vancouver. Three dive operators based in Sechelt and several resorts in Pender Harbour/Madeira Park have dive services.

¹⁷ Outdoor Industry Association, *Human Powered Outdoor Recreation State of the Industry Report 1997*, KPMG.

COMMUNITY VALUE (SECHELT INLET *continued*)

- Marine cruising visitors are high average spenders leading to positive employment and income benefits for communities.
- Kayakers and divers have lower per diem spending, but capital purchases for both groups can be high. Of all non-motorized outdoor recreation groups, divers spend the most annually on equipment. However, purchases are generally undertaken in major commercial centers. Rental and shuttling opportunities for these activities can be significant.
- Expansion of all three activities most likely to benefit existing operators, who would generate moderate increases in employment and local spending.
- Proximity to Greater Vancouver means opportunities may be taken by out-of-area operators, resulting in spending and multiplier leakage's.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

- High level of support from District of Sechelt and economic development agencies.
- Resistance to development in some neighborhoods.
- High level of support in Egmont.

CONFLICTS ISSUES

- Objections to public beach use for commercial activities around Porpoise Bay and Tuwanek.
- Boat and kayak use numbers may be approaching carrying capacity in some areas. Assessing and seeking solutions to Limits of Acceptable Change in high use destinations such as Skookumchuck (e.g. a locally devised code of ethics).
- There are visual landscape considerations along all inlets.
- Management of human waste, especially in high traffic areas or location in proximity to sensitive sites.
- There appears to be a dearth of suitable stopping locations north of Narrows Inlet.
- The use of powerboats may have a negative impact on non-motorized activities like kayaking in certain locations.

OPPORTUNITIES*Facility Development:*

- Expediting, supplies and rental services to self-guided users in Sechelt.
- Developing "softer" kayaking products linked to existing resort/lodge facilities.
- Sechelt Inlet Trail – the unroaded west shoreline has potential for a semi-wilderness trail.
- Water access, pull-outs, floating platforms and possibly floating huts to facilitate kayak use in remote areas. Some recreational users have suggested a safety cabin at Tzoonie Narrows.
- Shuttling of kayakers and divers within Sechelt Inlet.
- Development of campgrounds. Enhanced facilities at current sites south of Narrows Inlet and establishing campgrounds north of Narrows Inlet.

Market Development: (SECHELT INLET continued)

- Joint marketing between out-of-area operators and local hospitality/services for all activities.
- Increased community marketing and packaging to entice soft adventurers, including day-trippers from Greater Vancouver, to engage in guided services. Emphasis should be on proximity and convenience of access.
- Targeting of “stressed out” professionals in Greater Vancouver/Seattle for softer kayaking tours.
- In the kayak market, positioning of the area as an alternative to the remote and relatively exposed locations on the coast, where a high degree of preparedness for safety and logistics increases costs.

Service Development:

- Cultural presentations, displays and programs based in Sechelt that could be linked to outdoor products by encouraging more on-shore excursions.

Capacity Development:

- Regional cooperation between First Nations and non-First Nations’ residents is essential because it is difficult to attract senior government support and capital for critical infrastructure investments. If approached from a broad, regional perspective, infrastructure needs can be more reasonably assessed and planned for and take advantage of collective community action. Excluding or marginalizing legitimate resident or stakeholder interests will only prolong the establishment of the necessary buildings blocks for tourism and economic development.

5.3.2 ELPHINSTONE/DAKOTA

The primary opportunity is cross-country skiing at Dakota Ridge, which has relatively convenient access to Gibsons and Sechelt. As long as winter road access can be assured, future development could attract the Lower Mainland ski market as well as local users and help expand the tourism season and the local economy.

<i>Primary activities</i>	<i>Secondary activities</i>
Cross-country Skiing	Snowshoeing
	Tubing / Tobogganing

ACTIVITIES DEMAND

Cross-country Skiing:

- Nordic skiing is typically undertaken as a day-use activity on a compressed base of open snow or on broken trails with machine-set tracks for the skis to travel on. Settings are generally frontcountry areas near urban centres or destination resorts. Loops of varying distance increments and difficulty are important for this product to be successfully implemented.
- The activity is well suited to families as equipment is relatively inexpensive and skill levels and fitness requirements are minimal. The activity is well suited for unguided participation from a central base.

- In Canada, cross-country is more likely to be undertaken by women than men, and more than one third of all participants travel in a family group. The vast majority of provincial participants are BC residents.
- Statistics from the US indicate the average Nordic skier to be a women between the ages of 35-54, with a college education, and a household income in excess of \$50,000(USD). In the US, Nordic skiing is projected to have the third highest growth rate in participation, following only sailing and downhill skiing. The majority of Nordic skiers also participate in other outdoor sports such as hiking, camping and fishing; 25 percent are also alpine skiers.¹⁸
- The overall market for Nordic skiing is small but growing strongly. It has one of the lowest participation rates among North Americans, but future projections for participation are encouraging.
- Participation has been increasing amongst senior citizens as the activity has been promoted as an excellent way to enjoy the outdoors and maintain a good level of fitness. Nordic skiing is one of the few activities where participation increases with age.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY (ELPHINSTONE/DAKOTA continued)

- Close proximity to Gibsons and Sechelt, as well as the Langdale ferry terminal, and therefore the Vancouver market.
- The hospitality sector is well-positioned to respond to any increase in demand for winter tourism in the study area.

Gaps:

- A facility/service gap that would have to be addressed if Dakota Ridge was to gain destination status.
- There are major infrastructure requirements for cross-country skiing as access, parking, signage, rentals, hospitality services, hut and fee collection, ski patrol, grooming and off-season trail maintenance all have to be addressed. While this may appear prohibitive, many cross-country ski areas have transformed into multi-use, winter playgrounds or resort areas.¹⁹ This is to have a broader market appeal including couples and families. Resorts such as Whistler have seen cross-country ski visitation grow at a faster rate than downhill visits through investments in facilities and services.

OPERATOR CAPACITY

Existing CR Tenure:

- None.

Existing Operators:

- No commercial-scale ski tour operators. Two accommodation operators in Sechelt and one in Gibsons advertise cross-country as an activity. Two operators based in Roberts Creek, and one based in Powell River indicate snowshoeing is commercially offered or undertaken by their guests.
- Well-serviced hospitality industry features dozens of accommodation and food service establishments.
- Transportation services are also available to and from Greater Vancouver.

¹⁸ SnowSports Industries America, 1999.

¹⁹ SkiTrax, p.29, December/Holiday 1999.

COMMUNITY VALUE (ELPHINSTONE/DAKOTA continued)

- High value to the community for any expansion of winter use. Of most benefit is the broadening of the tourism season in an area where there is a very high concentration of visitors in the peak summer months. The opportunity to infill unused capacity in the hospitality industry could generate employment and income benefits and bring more stability to the industry. Likewise commercial interests may benefit the community by assuring continued road access.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

- Local advocacy for cross-country skiing in the area is performed by the Dakota Ridge Winter Recreation Society. The Society has also advocated non-motorized winter use through its *Dakota Ridge Project Outline 2001*. A business plan has been developed.

CONFLICTS ISSUES

- In the Dakota Bowl, there is potential for conflict between motorized and non-motorized use. Snowmobilers and cross-country skiers can coexist, but in general they do not mix well. The difference between the two activities is that the spatial requirements for skiing are quite small and localized, whereas snowmobiles can be localized (e.g. hill climbing and play areas) or geographically extensive (touring). The sounds from snowmobile use extends the reach from an activity area. These two users groups have differing attitudes on use and enjoyment of the natural environment and there is often little common ground on backcountry use.
- Long term access to Dakota Ridge is not secured, although there is an agreement with timber licensees and MoF to reduce the possibility of road decommissioning.
- The Ministry of Forests has played a key role in the advancement of this activity for Dakota Ridge. The changing mandate may set-back additional development.
- LWBC should be involved in order to secure tenure under the Land Act.

OPPORTUNITIES*Facility Development:*

- Potential for a shuttling service from the ferry.
- Lodge/resort.
- Hut development.

Market Development:

- Cross-country packages targeted at Greater Vancouver skiers as an alternative to the North Shore Mountains. Position as a convenient, easy-to-learn and low-cost outdoor activity. The main challenge is to create an awareness of the Sunshine Coast as a cross-country destination.
- Multi-activity packages will be of interest to avid skiers and destination skiers, as both have a relatively high interest in other outdoor activities.
- Creation of marathon, half-marathon and loppett events on which to base marketing efforts.

5.3.3 HORSESHOE/POWELL - THE POWELL FOREST CANOE CIRCUIT

The Powell Forest Canoe Circuit is a popular paddling route that connects the lower Powell Lake with ten lakes and several portages to form a 5-day route, encompassing 80 kilometers of paddling and 10.7 kilometers of portages. The circuit is well-known by canoeing enthusiasts from throughout the province. Key activities include canoeing/paddling, fishing, hiking and camping, all of which can be serviced and staged from Powell River. The potential for multi-day and multi-activity products leads to the conclusion that this area could be developed for its commercial recreation opportunities, if some of the area's resource use conflict issues can be addressed.

Primary activities	Secondary activities
Lake Activities / Canoeing	Hiking
Resorts / Lodges	Wildlife Viewing
Huts / Cabins	Fishing

ACTIVITIES DEMAND

Lake Activities / Canoeing:

- Lakes and rivers in the area are conducive to an array of recreation activities, notably kayaking, fishing and canoeing. Of particular importance is the presence of canoe circuits, which are regionally scarce in the continental northwest.
- There are two market segments, recreational paddling and whitewater, with the latter entailing more skill and experience.
- The average participant is a male under the age of 35 who is travelling with friends. Importantly, among Canadian canoeing operators, the resident market represents only about half of business, with German and US markets very significant. This clearly separates canoeing from kayaking, which is oriented more toward resident markets.
- Canoeers have a high level of interest in other activities, primarily nature observation, wildlife viewing and fishing. Operators able to combine unique packages can gain a competitive advantage.
- Opportunities in the Powell Forest Canoe Circuit are lake-based, so the key market segment is the recreational paddler. The canoe circuit is found in a unique setting, competing with the better known Bowron Lakes and less well known Sayward Forest Canoe Circuit. Expedited access from Vancouver and Seattle is a drawing card. Powell Lake attracts a high level of interest among current visitors - it represents the single most popular information request at the visitor centre.

Resorts / Lodges:

- A lodge or resort can serve as a regional anchor, supporting a variety of regional activities that includes hiking, fishing, wildlife viewing, canoeing/kayaking and Nordic skiing.
- Guests can participate in activities independently or access the services of a guide. Resorts need not directly employ guides but could draw on the services of other local tourism operators with whom they maintain a working relationship.
- Resort guests on the Sunshine Coast can be divided in the following ways:
 - Corporate versus personal traveler.
 - Soft adventure versus activity enthusiast.

- Lodges are increasingly targeting the corporate market as a technique to expand their operating season. Soft adventurers look for a lodge that will provide the best overall “experience”, in terms of accommodation, food and activities. Activity enthusiasts select a lodge based on its location and support for a particular activity, like fishing.
- The accommodation market on the Sunshine Coast has not been strong in recent years. Between 1996 and 2000, motel revenues dropped 20%, primarily due to the decline in the sport fishery adversely affecting visitation. However, during this time there was an overall increase in accommodation revenues, suggesting that non-motel properties, specifically hotels and resorts/lodges, have seen their revenues increase more than 20%.

Huts / Cabins: (HORSESHOE/POWELL continued)

- Huts are generally built to support selected outdoor activities for use by enthusiasts and hard adventure seekers and are not a destination themselves. However, huts are now being designed and built to provide greater access to the backcountry for specific markets, particularly to the soft adventure market. The key advantage of huts is eliminating the need to carry equipment such as tents and cooking supplies.
- Establishing huts lowers the risk associated with some outdoor activities, thereby broadening the market appeal to the soft adventure market and increasing the viability of guiding operations.
- Huts can exist in isolation as a single destination or provide a circuit as a hut-to-hut system. They can range from rustic to four star and be based on land on water (floats). Activities supported by the hut product in the study area would be primarily water-based. The Powell Forest Canoe Circuit has outstanding scenery and beaches and a perimeter large enough to support a string of huts.
- Soft adventurers value huts for the comforts offered (relative to tents), the access provided to more remote outdoor areas and amenities such as cooking facilities. The hard adventure traveler values the proximity to desired features and shelter provided from the elements. Huts on the Powell Forest Canoe Circuit could accommodate both of these markets.

Rental and Shuttling:

- The availability of quality canoes and necessary supportive equipment (tents, stoves etc) allows the tourist to arrive with just personal gear.
- Shuttling options include skirting the less recreationally attractive sections of Powell Lake and allowing for shorter trip options with multiple staging areas accessed via land and water.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

- Proximity to Powell River and its core of existing services should facilitate development of opportunities in the Powell Lake area.
- Lodges, and to a lesser extent huts, are capital intensive, limiting market entry. Attracting new capital or financing is potentially difficult as overall visitation to the area has not grown significantly in recent years.
- Maintenance and managing shared use of huts is an issue. Local recreation clubs have created many of the Province’s existing hut facilities on Crown land.

Gaps: (HORSESHOE/POWELL continued)

- Lack of a closed canoe circuit in the Horseshoe Valley.
- Lack of facilities, particularly campsites with ancillary facilities such as sanitation.
- Secured maintenance of the canoe route. Proposed closure of MoF recreation sites and trails would have a major negative impact on commercial recreation values.

OPERATOR CAPACITY**Existing CR Tenure:**

- None.

Existing Operators:

- The majority of lodges on the Sunshine Coast cater to the sport fisherman, who in turn have been drawn to the area for its traditionally strong fish resources, and supportive features.
- Lake-based activities are not a large component of the Sunshine Coast lodge sector.
- Some operators, such as the Sonora Resort and Conference Centre, specialize in the corporate market.

COMMUNITY VALUE

- The average river and lake-based adventure operator employs between five and eight employees on a seasonal basis, therefore the longer the season, the better the employment potential. The economic development potential of adventure products in the Horseshoe/Powell Lake area is favourable, although there is a limited operating season.
- A lodge's economic impact for a community can be very favourable for several reasons. First, land-based lodges generate job and income opportunities for nearby communities through site development, investment and ongoing operations. Second, lodges target specific markets and draw in visitors who might not otherwise visit a region, thus diversifying the local tourism market. Finally, lodges can extend partnership opportunities to adventure operators for guiding or other services, thereby enhancing the viability of small businesses in the region.
- A hut system requires similar support staff as other accommodation operations.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

- The District of Powell River actively promotes the Powell Forest Canoe Circuit. Local residents have expended considerable volunteer efforts into infrastructure development.
- The Powell Lake Strategic Plan has issued a moratorium on new home construction, which would also impact new commercial development.
- Weyerhaeuser has expressed concerns regarding the transfer of responsibility for maintenance of forest service recreation sites from the Ministry of Forests to the licensee. It is unknown if there is any community support for the transfer of management/maintenance responsibilities and the ensuing liability of the existing forest service recreation sites and trails to local entities.

CONFLICTS ISSUES

- Visual quality is a critical component for some of the activities with the highest development potential in the area, particularly lodge/resort development. Visitors invariably expect a wilderness or wilderness-like experience - timber harvesting is seen to have a negative impact on tourism business. The scenic quality is of greater importance to out-of-province visitors, particularly those

participating in the higher end of the market. Soft adventure travellers are seen as more willing to accept altered or near-urban lodge setting, depending upon how the product is marketed.

- Conflicts between motorized and non-motorized is problematic in the area, especially around Dodd Lake. Local residents, who place a high value on the land surrounding these lakes, undertake much of the motorized use, while visitors undertake much of the non-motorized use.
- Numerous houseboats along southern shores of Powell Lake, many of which are unlicensed, limit foreshore access.

OPPORTUNITIES (HORSESHOE/POWELL continued)

Facility Development:

- Lake-based hut system, featuring access to an outstanding outdoor recreation feature (i.e. Powell Forest Canoe Circuit). The 10th Mountain hut system in Colorado, the marine hut system in Alaska and the alpine hut system in the southern Canadian Rockies have all been successful because they have enhanced an existing product (e.g. ski touring, ocean kayaking, mountaineering, respectively). The same could be done in the Powell Lake area, although the moratorium prohibiting new cabin construction may necessitate conversion of existing cabin and hut facilities for a hut-to-hut system to be implemented.
- Specialized, full-service lodge/resorts, featuring spas, retreats, and business and small convention facilities, accessing lake-based activities could be developed.
- Both a hut-to-hut system or lodge development would require a viability assessment for a specific site(s) (preparation of a site location guide). The formation of a destination lodge attraction team, in conjunction with Powell River economic development, would also facilitate development.

Market Development:

- Key markets for the aforementioned facilities include the Pacific Northwest and German markets.
- There is potential for linkages to the First Nations culture, including native canoe experiences.

Capacity Development:

- Opportunity prospectus – A package identifying the opportunity, required documents for permitting and existing land use issues that will need to be addressed should be developed. The purpose of the prospectus is to attract investment, lower risk and increase interest in facility development. If there is no interest among existing operators or local entrepreneurs, the prospectus can be marketed to outside operators.
- Tourism cooperative - local entrepreneurs could work with existing tourism operators through a cooperative to promote sustainable tourism activities. Cabin rentals could be organized through the cooperative. School-based eco-tourism programs targeting Lower Mainland schools could also be undertaken as one way to increase exposure for the circuit. A cooperative would also allow multi-day packages and services to be marketed more efficiently.
- First Nations interpretation is virtually untapped and could significantly enhance opportunities.
- Public/private partnerships to maintain forest recreation sites, and perhaps enhance them with hut facilities, should be considered to assure continued access for tourists and resident users.

5.3.4 DESOLATION SOUND

Desolation Sound is a world-renowned destination with dramatic landscapes of low shorelines, high cliffs, islands and mountainsides. The calm, clean and warm waters of Okeover Inlet lie to the south. Two provincial parks, Desolation Sound Marine Park and Malaspina Peninsula Park assure pristine conditions. The region is a very popular kayaking and marine cruising (sailing and motor boating) destination with good access. This popularity has placed strains on the carrying capacity. Resource conflicts between residents, tourism operators and oyster growers are a major concern and potentially damaging to overall economic development of the area. These combinations of issues within a world class destination challenge the area stakeholders to arrive at working solutions that can be of benefit to all.

Primary activities	Secondary activities
Ocean Kayaking	Nature Observation
Marine Cruising	Wildlife Viewing
Hiking	Swimming
	Scuba Diving
	Fishing

ACTIVITIES DEMAND

Ocean Kayaking:

- See section 5.3.1.
- Desolation Sound is similar to other popular kayaking destination in BC, such as the Broughton Archipelago, in experiencing heavy use and possibly reaching the limits of acceptable change during the peak season. Even so, the infrastructure of the area remains minimal and will need to be developed to take full advantage of the market potential while managing for undesired impacts. Campsite development with basic sanitary services is an immediate need.

Marine Cruising:

- See section 5.3.1.

Hiking:

- Hiking occurs in frontcountry and wilderness settings usually through short-term (day use) excursions following marked trails.
- Backpacking is very similar to hiking but is of a longer duration (multi-day), requires packing more equipment and is usually associated with camping.
- The hiking market in Canada has a very broadly based demographic profile with an even distribution across age groups and by gender. BC and Canadian residents make up three quarters of the market, while equal shares of the remaining quarter are accounted for by US and overseas visitors.
- Hiking has a very good participation rate, and therefore high demand, among Europeans.
- In North America, hiking has been one of the fastest growing outdoor pursuits over the last 20 years because of its relative safety and suitability over a broad range of landscapes.
- The Malaspina Peninsula has excellent resources and unique features with market potential.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY (DESOLATION SOUND continued)

- Powell River has suitable hospitality and other services. Some services are available from Cortes Island.

Gaps:

- Limited campsites for kayakers and small boaters. Many of the existing campsites are over capacity or lack suitable facilities.
- Difficult for commercial operators to obtain park use permits.
- Pump-out facilities are a significant distance from the prime activity area.
- Major issue for Sunshine Coast Trail is care and maintenance. Presently, this is done primarily through volunteer and user efforts. Regular, sustained commercial use may require additional arrangements.

OPERATOR CAPACITY***Existing CR Tenure:***

- A small portion of CR tenure in RMU 36 extends into the area at Wednesday Lake.

Existing Operators:

- Approximately 20 operators offer hiking tours, mostly out of the Lower Sunshine Coast. Five operators are based in Powell River.
- Five operators in Powell River and Cortes Island offering kayak tours and rentals.

COMMUNITY VALUE

- Marine cruising visitors are high average spenders, leading to positive employment and income benefits for communities.
- Expansion of kayaking, cruising and hiking most likely to benefit existing operators, who would generate moderate employment gains and local spending.
- Proximity to Greater Vancouver and Vancouver Island means opportunities may be taken by out-of-area operators, resulting in spending and multiplier leakages.
- Further involvement by First Nations, including incorporation of cultural interpretation features, could provide additional value to the communities.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

- While Powell River Municipality is generally supportive of further commercial recreation development, the Regional District is on record as opposing any new development in Okeover Inlet because of conflicts with mariculture facilities.

CONFLICTS ISSUES

- Human waste is a very important issue for oyster farmers, as bivalves require clean water to ensure a safe and marketable product. Monitoring the discharge of human waste and garbage is also problematic.

- Competition for bays and coves suited to commercial recreation and other resource uses remains high.
- There is significant conflict between tourism operators and oyster farmers regarding visuals associated with farming infrastructure and marine access along the western foreshore of Okeover Inlet.
- Commercial use of existing trails and permanent or semi-permanent campsites, or new development of the same, would require CR tenure and has several attenuating risks. First, it may not be possible to secure exclusive use of the features from LWBC, thus limiting the operators' ability to manage use by others and control carrying capacity. Second, an operator would have to ensure access to the trailhead, most likely via logging roads over Crown land, was secure over the long-term. Third, harvest plans for areas surrounding the trails or campsite would require close monitoring to ensure minimal impacts on the feature and quality of experience.

OPPORTUNITIES (DESOLATION SOUND continued)

Facility Development:

- Coastal campsites with sanitary facilities - possibly floating self-contained huts.
- Pump-out station for marine cruisers.

Market Development:

- Multi-activity packages linking hiking with nature observation, wildlife viewing and either canoeing on Powell Lakes or kayaking/marine cruising in Okeover Inlet.

Capacity Development:

- Reduce conflict between tourism recreation and mariculture values so they can co-exist in a properly managed environment. Possible ways to achieve this goal are to:
 - Encourage community round table processes to foster cross industry and resident communication;
 - Undertake planning efforts to resolve land use incompatibilities; or
 - Adopt industry operational standards to reduce conflict with other resource users.
- Work towards identifying and developing a code of ethics for tourism operators involved with the various product areas offered in the area. This could be done in cooperation with LWBC and BC Parks. Standards developed by industry associations in BC and other jurisdictions can provide guidance for these efforts. By adhering to a set of standards, tourism operators will ensure that they are delivering a top quality product using "best practices" while minimizing conflicts with other resource users.
- Compilation of a "resource book" (documenting historic, natural and economic information) and a citizens advisory committee for the Sunshine Coast Trail. Other possibilities include:
 - Preparation and distribution of interpretive maps from Powell River.
 - Development of the trail information in a community brochure and new trail signage.
 - Possible construction of wildlife viewing or interpretation platforms in areas of high wildlife viewing incidence.
 - Work with the local businesses to determine if a local drop-off and pick-up service can be established.

6. ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Through interviews and meetings with tourism operators, recreation groups and key stakeholders, as well as the literature review, a picture has emerged of outdoor recreation use and the potential issues and areas of conflict on the Sunshine Coast Forest District.

Recreation and tourism opportunities in the Sunshine Coast are linked to the marine, lake and mountain landscapes and features, the relatively sparse local population concentrated along the coast, and the close proximity to the population centers of the Lower Mainland. Most outdoor recreation users indicated that utilization of recreation features was low to moderate, with the exceptions of near urban sites and selected accessible high value features that attract provincial, national and international attention.

Issues and concerns have been broken into two broad groupings, those that transcend the entire District and those that are specific to sites or areas in the Lower, Upper and Outer Sunshine Coast, which generally relate to their unique set of circumstances. The *Lower Sunshine Coast's* circumstances are its proximity to the Lower Mainland, a larger, more widely distributed local population (than the remainder of the District) and a unique set of recreation features, including Sechelt Inlet, Thormanby Island, Pender Harbour and Dakota Ridge. The *Upper Sunshine Coast's* circumstances are associated with the provincially significant recreation features such as Savary Island, the Powell Forest Canoe Route, Desolation Sound and the Eldred River rock monoliths, all of which have tremendous potential as tourism attractors. Lower, geographically concentrated population and restricted access focuses use to specific areas within close proximity to the population centers on the upper Sunshine Coast. The *Outer Sunshine Coast* including Cortes, Stuart and Lasqueti Islands, with low populations and relative remoteness, bring a set of issues and concerns that are unique to these island communities. Beyond these sections lie the remote hinterlands of fjords, mountain ranges with towering peaks and glaciers and forested valleys that provide challenging recreation opportunities in the midst of ever decreasing wilderness.

The issues and challenges are first identified as they apply to the entire District, then to a particular section of the district or specific RMUs. Each issue or challenge is described, followed by a diagram that depicts nine possible mechanisms that could move the challenges towards acceptable resolution. Suggested resolution mechanisms, both those currently being employed and those that could be undertaken, are highlighted in the diagram. Specific suggestions are then discussed. Appendix C provides greater detail on the dispute resolution mechanisms, and more general information on dispute resolution. The salient issues of concern for the public users and commercial operators found throughout the Sunshine Coast Forest District have been grouped into nine broad categories, which are summarized as follows.

- **Commercial And Public Use**

- *Resource competition between public recreationists and commercial operators.* Recreation users can be self-guided (public) or guided (commercial). The public recreation use of Crown lands is a long established right. Land and Water BC Inc. permits commercial recreation use of Crown lands through the issuance of Commercial Recreation (CR) tenure. CR tenures are non-exclusive; holders are not permitted to exclude public use of an area, although other commercial recreation providers offering a comparable product can be excluded. Increased commercial and public recreation activity in high value (or high use) recreation areas may result in competition between

public and commercial users for camping areas, trails and even visual landscapes. Conflict can escalate through increased use until the certainty of an enjoyable experience is compromised for both groups.

- Lack of commercial *recreation operating standards and qualifications*. A lack of standards extends from renting equipment (and the unsafe or damaging use of the rented equipment by unguided patrons) to use of an area by untrained or unaware participants to use exceeding social or environmental carrying capacity in a particular area.
- Where there are licensed operators and/or existing recreation activity standards, *the lack of enforcement* may impede compliance resulting in crowded or unsafe conditions, affecting the reputation of the tourism industry.
- *Untenured and/or unauthorized commercial recreation operators* in an area can preclude establishing or enforcing regulations or guidelines necessary to assure quality recreation for both legitimate commercial operators and the recreating public.

- **Motorized And Non-Motorized Conflicts**

- Recreation conflicts between *motorized and non-motorized groups* range in intensity, depending on the levels of use by each group, the availability of areas to transfer use for one of the user groups, and the willingness of groups to compromise and negotiate. Conflicts are usually asymmetrical (one way) depending on the level of adverse effect one group has on the other. The noise and exhaust fumes of motorized activities may intrude on the experience of non-motorized activities where the opposite is usually not the case, resulting in motorized users tolerating or being indifferent to non-motorized groups.
- Conflict exists at two levels: Direct contact, where users interact in the conflicting area, and indirect confrontation, where sides begin to form interest groups and become identified with opposing platforms. Compromises, shared use or other proposed resolutions to these conflicts may not result in satisfaction among either user group, particularly with those in an asymmetrical relationship, as each may be seeking differing experiences while competing for the same resource. Inaction invariably results in increased conflict among users as well as decreasing levels of satisfaction with their experience. Some recreational activities may require a specific area for which no substitution can be made.

- **Recreation And Other Resource Users**

- *Compatibility and integration of recreation with other resource use*, including forestry, aquaculture, mining, community watersheds, and other uses of the landscape that have an effect on the setting of an area. Other resource use can impact recreation through the alteration of a natural viewscape, sound intrusions, destruction of recreation features such as trails, or exclusion of recreation due to zoning or competing resource use.

- **Recreation And Wildlife**

- Recreation can impact *wildlife and sensitive ecosystems* in a variety of forms, from the harassment of wildlife through the noise from motorized access habitat disturbance caused by mushroom pickers or hikers. Of prime concern are impacts related to stress and energy depletion during the birthing seasons or at critical winter habitats. There are also implications related to the impact of recreation on red and blue listed species or in rare or sensitive habitats. Some forms of recreation, or recreational use of areas at designated times of the year, may need to be restricted to preserve wildlife values.

- **Private Land And Recreation**

- There is potential for conflicts between *recreationists and private landowners*. Recreational access to beaches, trails on Crown land, and along shores can be limited by the presence of private lands. In contrast, private landowners are concerned of anti-social behaviour, excessive use, destruction of infrastructure and disturbance of the environment. They are also concerned with respect to trespass trails on private lands (see liability below).
- *First Nation traditional uses and land claims*. The scope of impending land claims and resulting territorial transfers and land use decisions creates a level of uncertainty for recreational use and infrastructure development.

- **Recreation And Supporting Bodies (Government And Private)**

- The *divesting of the maintenance of recreation trails, roads and other facilities* announced by the Ministry of Forests, BC Parks and the Federal Government will have exacting consequences on the recreational landscape in the Region. Cancellation of recreation sites and trails will occur and decommissioning or deactivation may take place at some sites and trails where there is a high risk of environmental damage or there is a public safety issue that must be addressed. The Federal government has been actively seeking responsible agents to take over management of public wharves, heavily used by recreational boaters.
- The timetable imposed by the Provincial government to achieve its goal to cancel high risks sites and complete site/trail transfers and cancellations is perceived by public participants in this study to be in haste and lacking in consultation with recreation user groups.
- Regulation of commercial recreation has the benefit of ensuring the appropriate use of an area, of limiting the potential for conflict in an area and of deriving revenue for the commercial use of public lands. However, operators must currently approach *two different agencies*, with differing rules and mandates, if they wish to operate in Protected Areas and on adjacent Crown land. There is also concern among commercial operators that *reductions of staffing* at relevant government ministries will result in an *inability to provide timely services* related to the licensing and regulatory processes (referrals, providing feed-back on other regulations, enforcement etc). Related challenges include the *licensing of guides* in both Crown and Provincial Park lands.
- Outdoor recreation is a subset of tourism. There is a perception among some community members and local and regional governments that the solution to a community's economic problems is the introduction of heavy industries because tourism jobs provide only marginal incomes. In actuality, *tourism provides an opportunity for economic diversification*, provides a significant proportion of the basic employment and imports new income to a region. Local governments are becoming cognizant of these benefits, which they can support through proactive involvement in providing funds and assistance in developing recreation opportunities or tourism plans.
- In the rush to transfer responsibility for recreation and tourism development from provincial agencies to non-profit recreation groups or private entrepreneurs there is an expectation that they will have the same capacity to manage the resource as government bodies have. This approach fails to recognize that each have different mandates. Private operators need to create a profit - many recreation sites and trails cannot be profitable as they were established to provide a public service. Non-profit recreation organizations are often run by volunteers and usually financially stretched, thus unable to provide an equivalent level of management.

- **Liability**
 - Liability is a concern with regards to public and commercial access to both Crown and private lands. Recent revisions to the Occupiers Liability Act (1998) have substantially reduced the liability of an occupier of undeveloped private lands towards a trespasser or individual utilizing the land for the purpose of a recreational activity. In summary it states that a person who enters the premises is deemed to have willingly assumed all risks, if the occupier receives no payment or other consideration for the entry or activity. The exception is a payment or other consideration from a government or government agency or a non-profit recreational club or association and if the occupier is not providing a living accommodation.²⁰.
- **Access To Prime Recreation Areas**
 - *Access to many high value recreation areas requires the use of logging roads.* Of particular concern is access to high elevation recreation destinations, particularly in the winter months. Another important concern is access roads that are suitable for two-wheel drive vehicles, as these are important for generating use by tourists. Lack of suitable funds for snowplowing to *maintain off-season use* affects winter opportunities.
 - *Restricted use of active industrial roads* - Many of the region's roads are logging roads actively in use by the forest industry. Safety concerns have resulted in road restrictions during working hours, as well as the installation of gates, both of which restrict access to recreationists.
 - *Decommissioning of inactive forest roads* dramatically reduces outdoor recreation options for motorized recreationists and may inhibit access to destinations for non-motorized users. Deactivation is a legal requirement of the District Manager under the Forest Practices Code of BC Act. Restricted access through *MoF's divestiture of forest service roads* and the *role of the new Wilderness Road designation* by MoF is a concern among recreational users.
 - *Marine access* or access to the foreshore is a concern among recreational users.
 - *Trespass facilities on Crown land* – Concern that trespass facilities, such as floating cabins on Powell Lake, may preclude public recreation or the development of commercial opportunities.
 - *Alienation of public lands* - Concern over possible privatization or assignment of exclusive commercial operator rights to prime public recreation features. There is an unsupported perception that government may find the granting of Crown land leases in key recreational features to be attractive.
- **Carrying Capacity**
 - High recreation use levels can have an *effect on the environment, the setting (social perception) and the overall recreation experience.* Wilderness-like settings are sought after commodities, and one of the key selling features for adventure tourism in the Sunshine Coast. Safety is also a concern when over-capacity of available camping facilities force latecomers to search for other suitable areas. Health concerns arise for sites that are over-capacity due to a dearth of sanitary facilities or potable water.
 - Current relative low numbers of public and commercial recreational users has minimized carrying capacity issues to a few high profile locales.

²⁰ Refer to the Occupiers Liability Act [RsbC 1996] Chapter 337 and the overview of changes (March 1999) produced by the former Land Use Coordination Office. An electronic copy of these recent amendments may be obtained at: http://www.legis.gov.bc.ca/1998-99/1st_read/gov16-1.htm, summary - <http://www.luco.gov.bc.ca/trancan/fall982.htm>. An electronic copy of the pre-amendment Occupiers Liability Act may be obtained at http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/stat/O/96337_01.htm.

6.1 DISTRICT-WIDE RECREATION USE ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

6.1.1 COMMERCIAL AND PUBLIC RECREATION USE CONFLICTS / CARRYING CAPACITY

Although identified as a District wide issue, *carrying capacity* conflicts fall within specific High Value Recreation Areas (HVRA) that attract both guided and unguided recreationists, including Phantom Lake, Sechelt Inlet, Smugglers Cove, Thormanby (Grassy Point), Copeland Islands, Desolation Sound, Northeast Cortes, Stuart, sections of Redonda Islands and remote but popular mountains and glaciers in the outlying sections. The severity of conflicts is inherent in the identified carrying capacity, or limits of acceptable change, for an area. The carrying capacity and subsequent conflicts between commercial and public recreationists begin to be reached at varying degrees depending primarily on:

- *Actual and perceptual remoteness* which is principally determined by distance and difficulty of the access. The more distant a location or more difficult to access, the higher the expectations are for experiencing the solitude of wilderness. Conversely, areas closer to the urban centers may receive higher levels of use and reach their carrying capacity sooner than more remote locales.
- *Availability of suitable rest or camping areas.* Regardless of remoteness, the number of facilities (camping sites, resting spots and sanitary facilities) limits the carrying capacity of an area. Generally, the more accessible a HVRA is, the greater the number of recreationists one would expect to visit the area. In HVRAs with few designated campsites, competition is intense. The competition between public recreationists can be heightened if tenured commercial recreational operators begin to occupy these limited camping areas. Displacement results in more dispersed use, which may further negatively impact the carrying capacity of an area.

Whereas public recreationists perceive the increased numbers of public recreationists as a potential inevitability in HVRAs, the occupation by commercial operators is not accepted as fair competition and is further perceived as an alienation of public lands. This perception is dependent on the amount and type of commercial activity and the actions or legitimacy (licensing) of individual operators. There is a need to provide more information, education and co-operation between the public and commercial recreation stakeholders in popular areas.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Land and Water BC (LWBC) has a mandate to license guided commercial operations that operate on Crown lands. The licensing is not exclusive of public recreationists. License approval should therefore refer to the present and potential carrying capacity for both public and commercial recreationists to ensure that the limit has not or will not soon be reached. This assures that the needs of both the public recreationists and commercial groups will be met.*
- *Managing the numbers of public recreationists may be more difficult but solutions may be found in:*
 - *Enhancing infrastructure at existing sites (e.g. human waste facilities);*
 - *Developing and designating additional sites;*
 - *Allowing a natural devolution of an area, driving recreationists to seek their experience elsewhere;*
 - *Limiting the numbers of recreationists into an area (both at any given time and over a period of time); or*
 - *Assigning or setting recreation management objectives for HVRAs (eg. ROS objectives).*

6.1.2 GOVERNMENT SUPPORT OF RECREATION / LIABILITY CONCERNS

Government's *Core Services Review* concluded that managing *Forest Service Recreation sites and trails* is not a core priority of the Ministry of Forests. The MoF is therefore divesting the responsibility for managing sites and trails and will seek other parties to take over these responsibilities. Sites and trails not transferred will be cancelled and those that pose high risks to public safety and the environment will be de-activated. To ensure forest resource values are protected, the MoF will continue to set policy and standards for the management of forest recreation resources (recreation and visual resource management). Timelines for these events are as follows:

- March 2002 - advertise sites/trails for transfer
- May 2002 - complete site/trail cancellations and risk assessments
- June 2002 - remove structures & deactivate sites/trails with high risks
- March 2004 - complete site/trail transfers or cancellations

- The future management of recreation sites and trails is uncertain for the recreation groups who have a tradition of involvement in the development of trails, and the Forest companies that have been involved in the maintenance of recreation sites and roads. The costs of managing the sites and trails are greater than many recreation groups are capable of supporting and the issues surrounding liability and how it affects responsible groups and companies is currently not well understood. Many recreation groups are disappointed that their past contributions of time and energies are not being considered in the decision imposed by the Provincial government. Meanwhile, the proposed timetable for the removal of structures and deactivation of sites and trails considered to have high risks leaves little room for discussions among the various recreational groups, forest companies, other agencies and the Ministry of Forests.
- Public recreation groups willing to take on the responsibility of recreation sites and trails through management agreements do not have clear direction as to which agency is responsible for such agreements.
- There is a general lack of knowledge regarding the Occupiers Liability Act and how it protects responsible government, organizations or individuals regarding recreation use on Crown and private lands.

BC Parks has disappeared as a separate agency and is now combined with former Environment Fish, Wildlife and Habitat staff in a new Environmental Stewardship division of the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection. Field staff are organized in nine regional offices. It is intended that *Parks staff will phase out of direct delivery of recreation services*, eliminating some facilities, transferring a number of parks or sites to other governments and expanding the role of the private sector in providing facilities and services. Currently planned Park closures impact one area – Mansons Landing Provincial Park on Cortes Island. Interpretive programs in parks have also been cancelled.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Discussion must occur to satisfy government intention to divest itself of recreation sites, trails and provincial parks without adversely and irreplaceably compromising recreational and tourism opportunities on Crown lands.*

- *The risk assessment of structures and deactivation and subsequent removal of sites and trails with high risks must be undertaken jointly with the MoF and the recreation groups who have traditionally been involved in their development and maintenance.*
- *Forest companies and public recreation groups must strive to gain a better understanding and more complete information with regards to liability and responsibility under the Occupiers Liability Act. This also holds true for any other legal precedents and requirements which may assist these organizations to fully undertake the responsibility of managing recreation sites and trails.*

6.1.3 ACCESS TO PRIME RECREATION AREAS

Public and commercial operators expressed concerns over the MoF plans to divest itself of Forest Service Roads (FSR's) and the decommissioning of inactive forest roads, as these roads constitute the primary means of access to key recreation features. Levels of decommissioning may range from designating a road as a Wilderness FSR (4x4 access) to returning the road to its natural state through the removal of bridges and other vital structures. With recent cutbacks in funding the long term existence of access roads is in jeopardy.

- The *Core Services Review* has determined that the MoF will be divesting all FSR's except for approx.2000 km that provide access to communities and serve as school bus routes by 2004/2005. All industrial FSR's will be transferred to forest licensees or other government agencies.
- A new category of road will be established through legislation called a Wilderness FSR. This type of road will require lower maintenance standards and provide 4-wheel drive access for backcountry recreation, commercial operations, and access to cabins, isolated residences, parks and recreation sites. Maintaining access will be incidental- if access cannot be maintained to a 4-wheel drive standard at a reasonable cost such that deactivation makes a better business case, the road will be deactivated to a self-maintained condition and closed.
- There are concerns regarding continued access to trailheads and to the integrity of the trails themselves. There have been instances in the Sunshine Coast where roads have been decommissioned, essentially denying access to important trailheads and also of significant trails that have had debris placed over them or have had sections destroyed.

Alienation of public lands - Concern over possible privatization or assignment of exclusive commercial operator rights to prime recreation features. There is an unsupported perception that government may find the granting of Crown land leases in key recreational features such as Phantom Lake to be attractive. Local residents have identified this as an issue.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Commercial and public recreation (hence tourism) is affected by road deactivation and decommissioning of roads.*
- *High value recreation areas and near urban areas, because of their significance to tourism and recreation, require an Access Management Plan. This plan should clearly identify the social benefits, including a cost / benefit analysis, and the implications of maintaining a road on wildlife and environmental values.*
- *Public recreation involvement in maintaining access and associated liability issues must be explored, clarified and communicated to all affected parties.*

- *Key recreation resources, such as trails and staging areas, should be clearly identified by interested parties to the MoF. Stakeholders may wish to enter into agreements regarding the maintenance of these features integrity. The level of deactivation for roads that access key features should be considered and deactivation should reflect access needs. Key trails must continue to be treated with due care during industrial operations and their ongoing maintenance needs must be assured by the recreation groups or other responsible body.*

6.1.4 RECREATION AND OTHER RESOURCE USERS

Recreational use within community watersheds raises the specter of contamination of a community’s water supply.

- Throughout the Sunshine Coast there is concern about the proper management of the communities water sources. The lower Sunshine Coast has limited freshwater resources and an increasing population. Most of the reservoirs are of a modest size and the watersheds are under constant pressure from logging and other interests. Over 50% of Tetrahedron Provincial Park is located within the Chapman, Gray and McNair community watersheds of the Sunshine Coast Regional District. Any increase in recreation use in these watershed areas may have an adverse impact on water quality. In the upper Sunshine Coast, recreation use of Haslam Lake and Sliammon Lake that was traditionally accepted is now discouraged. However, close proximity to regional population centre and the presence of desirable features continue to draw recreationists to these areas.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Dialogue between watershed managers and recreation stakeholders should provide clear expectations. Some watersheds may be suited for limited use for certain activities, but generally would have lower carrying capacity than other locales. Where recreation is acceptable, the allowable carrying capacity should be monitored using indicators derived from a Limits of Acceptable Change process. In areas where the carrying capacity has been or is being reached, regulation of entry numbers may be required. Where necessary, new areas outside of community watersheds should be found that can minimize the impact of recreational pursuits. If use jeopardizes the water supply, areas should be designated as non-recreation zones. Patrolling and education by responsible groups and agencies can assure compliance in no use zones.*

6.2 RECREATION USE ISSUES AND CHALLENGES ON THE LOWER SUNSHINE COAST

The respondents from the lower Sunshine Coast expressed apprehension that the proximity to the Lower Mainland and a steadily growing local population will result in greater use of the nearby recreation resources by commercial and public recreational users. Many residents of the lower Sunshine Coast previously lived in the Lower Mainland and expressed concerns that the “unbridled” urban expansion seen there could eventually spill over to the Sunshine Coast, bringing a host of negative issues related to the quality of life and quality or sustainability of the recreational resources.

6.2.1 GAMBIER ISLAND (RMU 1)

Gambier Island has excellent bays to the south, a forested hinterland, private lands along the shore and lies close to the populations of the Lower Mainland.

- **Recreation And Other Resource Users**

- Gambier Lake is an important destination feature. Many local residents feel that timber harvesting should not impact this feature, the surrounding area and the trails that lead to it.
 - *Local residents have a proposal to turn between 120 and 370 ha of the Crown land surrounding Gambier Lake into a Provincial Park.*
- There has been discussion of open pit mines on Gambier.
 - *Development must account for public concerns, including recreation access and visuals.*

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- **Private Land And Recreation**

- Access to the trails on the island is uncertain because of the need to go through private lands.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Discussion and agreements between public recreationists and private landowner must be established to the satisfaction of the landowner.*
- *A clear understanding and better communication of the responsibilities under the Occupiers Liability Act would assist in educating landowners, who may then be more inclined to allow public use of a right-of-way.*

6.2.2 GIBSONS TO SECHLT (RMU 2A) AND THORMANBY ISLANDS, SERGEANTS BAY / SECRET COVE AND PENDER HARBOUR (RMU 7, 8, 15)

This extensive coastal area with cobble and pebble beaches falls near the lower Sunshine Coast's population centers. This area includes numerous intricate waterways, harbors, coves and islands and is of great interest to ocean kayakers, cruisers, fishers and vacationers who own or rent cabins. Residential homes and Highway 101 line the coast with public access assured at specific points. To the interior there is significant volumes of public recreation with pressure from motorized and non-motorized users. There are numerous trails throughout the area, consisting mainly of old logging roads, newly constructed (activity specific) trails, and powerline access roads.

- **Private Land And Recreation**

- Development of waterfront for residential purposes limits foreshore access for public and commercial recreation users.
- Public access for recreation places a strain on adjacent residential dwellings and properties. Commercial users access the foreshore in front of private dwellings, causing friction between residents and tourism operators. Regulations are in place that ban fires and impose a curfew.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Zoning regulations can limit residential impact along the coast and provide adequate access to shoreline features.*
- *Adequate enforcement to existing bylaws is a requirement to ensure public access and residential comfort and safety.*

- **Carrying Capacity**

- Proximity to rural developments, anchorages, sheltered waters, beaches and other unique and recreationally attractive features draw considerable numbers of recreationists and this results in very high use of specific, desirable features and associated facilities.
- The shortage of funds for maintenance of existing recreation use sites and development of new recreation infrastructure is placing a strain on the existing carrying capacity.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *There is a need to address the increasing number of recreationists by providing for additional facilities and by adequately maintaining existing facilities.*
- *Funding requires an investment from the various levels of government as well as soliciting for private funding. The high tourism value of this area requires appropriate public investment.*

• **Motorized And Non-Motorized Conflicts**

- There is increasing motorized use (primarily by off road motorcycles) on the same trails and abandoned roads frequented by the horseback riders and hikers. Degradation or destruction of trails (many of which have been constructed and maintained by non-motorized groups), noise, speed, exhaust and impact on the "wilderness" setting are the primary objections of the non-motorized users to motorized presence. Horseback riders are concerned that motorized users may startle the horses, causing them to bolt.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Dialogue between the different groups is essential for a workable solution.*
- *Identify behaviour changes that will reduce friction between users. Use a code of ethics.*
- *Segregated use can be voluntarily chosen to meet the different recreation requirements.*
- *Options include temporal segregation (encouraging conflicting groups to use areas at different times), directing user groups to less used areas, and education as to competing users needs and desires.*
- *Designate use area utilizing traditional local use as a basis. Identify who has developed the trails.*
- *It may be useful to develop a "closed unless open policy" for motorized recreation. This would result in identifying areas most suitable for motorized activities and opening these areas for use.*

6.2.3 ELPHINSTONE SLOPE (RMU 2D, 4)

The slope area east of Gibsons and Sechelt is known as the Elphinstone Slope. This slope experienced a huge fire in the late 1800's; since then a second growth forest has grown around large veteran trees that survived the fire. This area is noted for its variety of mushrooms and non-chlorophyll plants. Community watersheds for Gibsons and Roberts Creek are found in the area. Lobbying has been underway to set aside this area from resource extraction while providing for trail and interpretive recreational opportunities.

• **Recreation And Other Resource Users**

- High timber values give rise to significant harvesting interests. Timber harvesting has negative impacts on recreational trails and opportunities in the area, and on the general setting of the near-urban old growth.
- Environmentalists and naturalists are concerned about biodiversity. A rare species of mushroom is found in the area. Large volumes of recreational use may negatively impact the natural values.
- Residents are concerned about the quality of their water being affected by other resource users.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Dialogue between the various interest groups and the logging companies must be open and realistic. Big trees, known mushroom habitat, recreation trails and other important features must be clearly identified and input into Forest Development Planning*

• **Motorized And Non-Motorized Conflicts**

- There is increasing motorized use (primarily off road motorcycles) on the trails and abandoned roads frequented by the horseback riders and hikers. Degradation or destruction of trails (many of which have been constructed and maintained by non-motorized groups), noise, speed, exhaust and impact on the "wilderness" setting are the primary objections of the non-motorized users to motorized presence. Horseback riders are concerned that motorized users may startle the horses, causing them to bolt.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Dialogue between the different groups is essential for a workable solution.*
- *Identify behaviour changes that will reduce friction between users. Use a code of ethics.*
- *Segregated use can be voluntarily chosen to meet the different recreation requirements.*
- *Options include temporal segregation (encouraging conflicting groups to use areas at different times), directing user groups to less used areas, and education as to competing users needs and desires.*
- *Designate use area utilizing traditional local use as a basis. Identify who has developed the trails.*
- *It may be useful to develop a "closed unless open policy" for motorized recreation. This would result in identifying areas most suitable for motorized activities and opening these areas for use.*

6.2.4 HIDDEN GROVE (RMU 2B)

Hidden Grove, a plot of land within the Municipality of Sechelt and adjacent to the Sechelt Heritage Forest, contains vestigial and regionally scarce old growth low elevation forest that can be readily accessed. While the area lies close to residential communities and is primarily used by locals, it has potential for regional recreational interest and use. Some trails have been constructed and more are planned. Extensive lobbying for both the preservation and extraction sides of the debate has been undertaken for the area.

• **Recreation And Other Resource Users**

- High timber values and close proximity to the market makes this a valuable area for timber extraction. Historically, plans to remove the forest have met with a continual opposing lobby. There is a high level of community support, including local government, for this old growth forest to be preserved. Preservation lobbyists are using recreational access as a means to promote the area.
- The Municipal boundary, expanded in 1986 through a Letters Patent, incorporates this area. Conservation proponents assert that the new municipal boundary has not been recognized by the Ministry of Forests or the Timber Licensee. The Ministry of Forest however still retains the authority to issue timber sales.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Dialogue between the forest companies, Ministry of Forests, Municipality of Sechelt and local stakeholders must be open and arrive at a suitable solution.*

• **Private Land And Recreation**

- An increase in use of this area may result in conflicts amongst recreational users and between users and adjacent residents.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Commercial operators require tenure from Lands and Water BC (LWBC) if they utilize Crown lands for more than a specified period of time each year. Residents can address concerns when these commercial opportunities are advertised and public comment is solicited.*
- *Public recreation is difficult to regulate. Proper signage, adequate parking, better education and more communication may help to alleviate potential conflicts.*

6.2.5 DAKOTA RIDGE CROSS COUNTRY SKI AREA (RMU 4)

A prominent ridge to the west of Dakota Bowl, this area is one of the few potential Nordic ski areas on the Sunshine Coast. It is situated in ideal terrain with substantial snowfall ideal for the Nordic activities. A local community group (Dakota Ridge Winter Recreation Society - DRWRS) is intensively lobbying to develop basic cross-country ski facilities including trail construction and grooming, parking and all weather road access²¹. There are a number of challenges with the development of the ski area that are currently being addressed by the DRWRS. These challenges include:

• **Motorized And Non-Motorized**

- Some current, with the potential for increased, conflict with snowmobile users in the winter on the skier ascent and descent tour from Parking lot B to Dakota Ridge and on groomed trails or in areas most suitable for skiing.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

²¹ Proposal for the area is contained in the *Dakota Ridge Winter Recreation Area Project Outline 2001*. Dakota Ridge Winter Recreation Society.

- *User groups should continue to engage in dialogue.*
- *Logging operations are opening up new potential territories for both activities. There is room for motorized activities to expand into other areas thereby reducing conflict.*
- *Security access gate at Parking Lot B preventing access into trail area (most applicable to 4x4s).*

• **Recreation And Other Resources And Access To Prime Recreation Areas**

- Access maintenance over an extensive logging road system for year-round access, particularly in the winter months.
- Presence of industrial traffic increases accident risks with recreationists.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Proponents should enter into discussion and agreements with the Forest Licensees and Ministry of Forest regarding use and upkeep of the Forest Service road.*
- *The government should provide clear direction on their role in management agreements to road access.*
- *Proper signage advising people of the need for chains/winter tires, active logging, snow conditions, risk assessments, etc. Distances and route should also be included along with emergency numbers.*
- Proximity of Chapman Creek and Dakota Creek Community watersheds to the proposed cross-country ski area.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *An written agreement between the DRWRS and the Sunshine Coast Regional District water planning department states that there are "no concerns or jurisdiction over the Dakota Ridge area in regards to water management other than...Dakota Creek - which is not considered to be a primary future source" for water²².*
- *The west boundary set by the DRWRS responds to the sensitivities of Chapman Creek.*

• **Recreation And Supporting Bodies (Government And Private)**

- Uncertainty as to Provincial government involvement in the development of the Dakota Ridge project.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

²² Ibid.

- *This is probably the greatest uncertainty for the development of this opportunity. Following decision of the MoF Core Services Review to divest the Ministry of all responsibilities for managing outdoor recreation there is uncertainty as to how this will affect the current state of cooperation between the volunteers, the licensees and the various levels of government. Continued dialogue and accelerated membership pressure is required to ensure that the project is not compromised. A partnership with the private sector may be needed to assure funding.*
- *Proponents will have to apply to LWBC to obtain tenure under the Land Act.*

6.2.6 TETRAHEDRON PROVINCIAL PARK (RMU 5)

The park is an attractive sub-alpine plateau with extensive trail system, four well maintained overnight cabins, and numerous lakes and tarns. Reasonably consistent snow and decent backcountry skiing can be found in the Park. This area is completely surrounded by timber harvesting operations, impacting visuals as well as access.

- **Motorized And Non-Motorized**

- Some snowmobile use takes place in the park, contravening the existing park management plan.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *User groups and BC Parks should engage in dialogue as to what is acceptable use within the Park.*
- *Logging operations are opening up new potential territories for recreation activities. There is room for motorized activities to expand into other areas thereby reducing the need to enter the park.*
- *Areas outside the Park should be identified for snowmobile use and if required – designated. Regulation, patrols and education should ensure compliance. Designation should ensure an appropriate sound buffer and sensitivity to the community watershed.*

- **Recreation And Other Resource Use**

- The majority of the high use area in the park is located within the SCRD's community watershed.
- Trails in the park have been lightly built. Any increase in recreational use will degrade the trails and further tax the existing (inadequate) system for dealing with human waste.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *The level of use in the Park must be kept to a minimum or the areas in which people recreate be kept away from the community watershed, to ensure that the water values within the watershed are not compromised.*
- *In areas of high use, facilities must developed to keep up with the demand.*
- During times of active logging, park users are pitted against off-road logging trucks for use of access roads.

- *Proper signage advising people of the need for chains/winter tires, active logging conditions, risk assessments, etc. Distances and route should also be included along with emergency numbers.*
- *There is an opportunity for a local entrepreneur to rent radios to determine the location of the trucks.*

• **Recreation And Supporting Bodies (Government And Private)**

- With a minimal road maintenance budget, winter access to the park is unpredictable and can be limited.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Discussion and agreements with the Forest Licensees and Ministry of Forests or other responsible agency about use and upkeep of the Forest Service road.*

6.2.7 SECHELT INLET HERITAGE TRAIL (RMU 6, 14)

The 30 km Sechelt Inlet trail is intended to link Egmont to Sechelt along the unroaded west shores of Sechelt Inlet, using Crown land. Features along the proposed route include old growth forests, diverse aquatic, avian and terrestrial biota, First Nations heritage (pictographs, culturally modified trees) and post-contact heritage. In 1999 letters of support were received from the Elders of the Sechelt Nation, the local MLA, the Sunshine Coast Regional District, and a number of conservation societies. The trail provides an important southern link to the Sunshine Coast Trail (already in existence in the upper coast).

• **Private Land And Recreation**

First Nation traditional uses and land claims

- Support from the Sechelt First Nations is critical to the implementation of this trail.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *An open line of communication between the Sechelt First Nation and the proponents of the trail could lead to a solution that meets all interests.*

6.2.8 SECHELT INLET (RMU 6)

The inlet is a haven for ocean kayakers, cruisers and fishers. This inland waterway has small pebble and shingle beaches, a number of striking waterfalls and truly dramatic scenery. The scuba diving in these waters is outstanding. The potential for increased recreation use is high here. There are a total of 9 wilderness campgrounds with 28 units provide basic amenities (not including Porpoise Bay Provincial Park).

• **Commercial and Public Use**

- Kayaking on Sechelt Inlet has increased in popularity to the point that, when commercial tours and independent paddling parties converge on smaller camping areas, users can overwhelm the sites, exclude use and create a situation with safety implications.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *The licensing of kayakers by LWBC and BC Parks can help to track the numbers of commercial operators in relationship to public use in the inlet, thereby assuring that the carrying capacity has not been reached.*
- *Commercial operators with License of Occupations can be asked to develop their own sites to assure that public sites are left open for public use.*

• **Carrying Capacity**

- Capacity at the limited number of recreation sites can easily be reached with increased popularity resulting in increased encounters, potential for dispersed use, and issues related to waste management.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Limited access points (see below) provide opportunities for regulating numbers of kayakers into the inlet.*
- *A circuit can be developed whereby kayak travel through the inlet can be undertaken clockwise or counterclockwise. The benefits will be in the reduction of encounters and greater regulation of campsite use.*

• **Recreation and other Resource Users**

- Visual impacts of timber harvesting can have a negative impact on the recreational experience.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Forest companies must be cognizant of the visual values in the inlet.*
- *Public recreation groups and commercial operators must ensure through referral that proper visual impact assessments are undertaken in the inlet.*

- Other commercial enterprises such as power generation and mariculture impact this corridor.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Open dialogue between the various resource sectors and tourism interest groups as to what is needed to be viable within their sectors.*
- *Cognizance of the LWBC about the potential areas of conflict will reduce the future conflicts.*

• **Access To Prime Recreation Areas**

- The inlet has limited access points, primarily from Sechelt to Tuwanek and Porpoise Bay, which is both a constraint and an asset. Limited campgrounds and currents reduce access opportunities near Egmont. The result is a linear route.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Shuttling of kayaks can allow kayakers to paddle in one direction.*
- *A circuit can be developed whereby kayak travel through the inlet can be undertaken clockwise or counterclockwise.*

6.2.9 SKOOKUMCHUCK NARROWS (RMU 14)

The Skookumchuck Narrows is a truly world class recreation feature on the lower Sunshine Coast featuring massive tidal rapids at the mouth of Sechelt inlet. When the conditions are right the hydraulics are unsurpassed for white water kayaking and surfing. The rapids can be a danger to inexperienced boaters.

• **Motorized And Non-Motorized**

- There is a potential for jet skis or jet boats to utilize the rapids, although the localized area of the rapids limits jet boat usage, as they generally require a larger area. Use of jet skis may pose the threat of conflict as there is considerable resistance to their use due to the noise generated. A dearth of jet ski use has culminated in no conflicts to date.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *The rapids have developed an international audience of non-motorized users (whitewater kayakers, hikers to view the rapids). Jet skiing may disturb these very localized activities.*
- *The allowance of motorized use of this important feature should be defined through consultation and guidelines or regulations.*
- *A number of tools can be used to ensure sharing of the resource among recreational users, if required, with the focus on different use times.*
- *A difficulty lies in determining the agencies responsible for regulating use of this marine feature.*

• **Recreation And Other Resources**

- Views of the landscape surrounding the Narrows is impacted by gravel extraction and logging.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *The increased interest in the Skookumchuck Narrows has not only brought whitewater kayak enthusiasts but also viewers. The view of the landscape across the narrows has been compromised by considerable harvesting and gravel operations. The land is private and falls outside provincial jurisdiction. Dialogue with the landowners may help to mitigate the visual impacts.*

• **Carrying Capacity**

- Potential for whitewater kayak use to be over capacity during prime tidal flows.
 - *Self-regulation by the whitewater enthusiasts will assure carrying capacity. As popularity increases, notices on a web site regarding use (as well as tide times) can help enthusiasts plan their expeditions.*

• **Recreation And Supporting Bodies (Government And Private)**

- Shortage of overnight facilities in the area
 - *The increased popularity of whitewater kayaking the rapids will continue to draw enthusiasts and sightseers to the area. Inadequate facilities need to be addressed with potential for camping facilities closer to the rapids.*
 - *LWBC tenures to develop full facility campsites on Crown land would help the situation.*

6.2.10 PHANTOM LAKE (RMU 11), DANIELS LAKE (RMU 33)

Phantom Lake is a subalpine lake with good fishing surrounded by extensive rock features and mature forest. A regionally spectacular and popular fly-in access lake, it was identified as significant during the Lower Mainland Protected Areas Strategy Assessment. Daniels Lake, in the upper Sunshine Coast, offers many of the same attributes. Local residents suggested that the lakes, although difficult to access, must always remain within the public domain.

• **Commercial and Public Use**

- There is concern that commercial recreation providers could alienate the lakes to the local recreating public through the construction of a lodge and the desire for exclusive use.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Holders of a LWBC License of Occupation cannot exclude public use.*
- *Any granting of Crown tenures must account for public sentiment.*

6.3 RECREATION USE ISSUES AND CHALLENGES ON THE UPPER SUNSHINE COAST

The upper Sunshine Coast does not receive the same types of public recreation use pressures as the lower Sunshine Coast. A smaller local population base, greater distance from the Lower Mainland and the perceived need for additional ferry service limit the numbers of out-of-district recreationists. The local recreationists, however, are prolific users and are actively involved in developing and assuring access to their recreational opportunities. Meanwhile, the presence of unique recreation features, including the Powell Forest Canoe Circuit, Desolation Sound, the Knuckleheads, Savory Island, Copeland Islands and the Sunshine Coast Trail, continue to draw regional and international attention, with some of those features achieving over-capacity at certain times of the year.

Recreational infrastructure development is impressive. The Ministry of Forests has provided tremendous opportunities for recreationists with the development of numerous sites and the support of trail development, including a wheel chair accessible trail around Inland Lake. Local recreation clubs and dedicated individuals contribute much personal time into development and maintenance of infrastructures. Thanks to the good citizenship practices of the Timber Forest Licensee (Weyerhaeuser), the visual landscape management and the recreation site maintenance along the Powell Forest Canoe route has been assured.

6.3.1 OKEOVER INLET / DESOLATION SOUND / MALASPINA PENINSULA (RMU 37)

Okeover inlet is a sheltered, warm water inlet accessible by paved road and is a favourite staging area for recreational kayakers to access Desolation Sound. The shoreline hosts a variety of accommodation options, restaurants and rental outfits.

Planning for the Okeover Inlet is undertaken through the Okeover Roundtable. The Roundtable was established in November 2000 to bring together Provincial and Federal government staff, local governments, First Nations, NGOs, community groups, business associations and concerned citizens to facilitate the development of stewardship projects to protect the water quality of Okeover Inlet. The Roundtable is a consensus driven body that is currently chaired by the Powell River Regional District and the Sliammon First Nation. No time limit has been set on the roundtable operations, and it is hoped that the Roundtable will continue to function as a community led initiative to protect water quality in Okeover Inlet.

Desolation Sound Marine Park is a world class destination that attracts international visitors who travel the area in kayaks, sailboats and powered yachts. During the summer boating season the area has been noted to contain over a hundred boats of all sizes visiting the area of searching for anchorages and is considered over capacity. Camping for kayakers is becoming increasingly saturated and dispersed campsites are increasingly common. Recreational use is planned for under the 1989 BC Parks Management Plan.

- **Recreation And Other Resource Uses:**
 - Shellfish must be raised in pristine conditions. Oyster farmers are concerned about the pollution be recreational users, resulting from the lack of waste management facilities. The concerns of waste management include dispersed camping amongst kayakers and small boats along the inlet's shores.

By way of an example, the Curme Islands are heavily used for camping, yet do not have adequate facilities as evidenced by the amount of waste within the forest and along the shorelines.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Addressing the problems requires the recognition and acceptance that recreationists (kayakers and small boaters) and oyster farms are both an existing and fundamental part of the landscape; and that dispersed camping use is a consequence of the inherent popularity of the area putting pressure on existing facilities. This recognition should allow dialogue to take place between the various stakeholders, including commercial operators, recreation user groups, government agencies and the oyster farmers, to come to a suitable solution focusing on funds for development of more outhouse facilities²³.*
- *The existing infrastructure of the Okeover Roundtable should be utilized to help facilitate a resolution.*
- Some of the many yachts that frequent the region either flagrantly or unintentionally disregard waste disposal guidelines in the park. There is a dearth of nearby pump-out stations, with the nearest being found in Madeira Park, Comox or Campbell River.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *There are suggestions for pump-out stations at Squirrel Cove on Cortes Island or at the Lund Marina to allow boats with smaller holding tanks a place to sanitarily discharge their waste within easy reach of their destination.*
- Disagreements regarding the scenic quality (views of the activities taking part on the water) and allocation of marine-based uses has occurred between landowners, land based tour operators and oyster farmers. The focus of the conflict within Okeover inlet is the location of tenured oyster operations in relation to high-value tourism use areas occupying the west shore of the inlet.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *The solution of this problem lies in continuing dialogue with proper facilitation, ideally through the Okeover Roundtable. The multi-use capability of Okeover inlet is integral to a sound diversified economy. An agreement between the stakeholders benefits recreation and tourism in the area.*

²³ The BC Marine Trails society estimates that composting toilets require investment of \$18,000-\$25,000 each.

• **Carrying Capacity**

- The international renown of Desolation Sound draws immense volumes of recreationists (both local, regional, provincial and international) into the area.
- The shortage of funds available to BC Parks for new or upgraded infrastructure development have led to tremendous problems of waste management and site availability.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *There is a need to address the increasing number of recreationists by providing for adequate numbers of facilities and by adequately maintaining existing facilities or by promoting alternative destinations nearby which have greater capacity to absorb increased usage.*
- *BC Parks and LWBC may regulate the numbers of commercial operators to manage carrying capacity, although currently there is a surprisingly small number of tenures or permits issued for commercial use, given the international significance of the feature.*
- *Funding requires an investment from the various levels of government and soliciting for private funding. The high tourism value of this area can benefit the greater community.*

• **Commercial And Public Use**

- The presence of many commercial tourism operators raises by public recreation users that they may be displaced.
- *Commercial operators within Desolation Sound Provincial Park must have Park Use Permits otherwise they are in trespass. Those on Crown Lands may be in non-compliance of LWBC licensing regulations.*

6.3.2 SUNSHINE COAST TRAIL (RMU 23, 32, 31B, 37)

The Sunshine Coast Trail (SCT) starts at the tip of Malaspina Peninsula, runs along the west shore of the Malaspina Peninsula Inlet and winds its way through the mountains and forests of the upper Sunshine Coast, through Tree Farm License 39 (TFL), Crown, Provincial Park, Ministry of Transportation and Powell River Municipality and Regional District lands for almost 180 kilometers before arriving at its destination of Saltery Bay. The majority of the trail has received protected status in one form or another. The trail has a number of access points, making it suitable for day as well as overnight use. Facilities range from official campsites with outhouses and picnic tables to rudimentary tenting sites, with the majority of the infrastructure found in the upper portions of the trail. A business plan was created in 2000 to facilitate the development of the trail and associated amenities.

In the Malaspina Peninsula the trail is set within the Malaspina Provincial Park, mainly traversing higher elevations due to the steepness of the landscape near the shoreline. The trail touches the foreshore only at Feather Cove (in the north) and at Cochrane Bay.

• **Recreation And Other Resource Users**

- Oyster farmers have raised concern that hikers within the Malaspina do not have proper facilities and human waste may pollute sections of the inlet and do damage to their stock. Trail proponents

have pointed out that pollution from a land based trail situated a considerable distance from the shore is unlikely to have negative effects.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Discussions between the stakeholders must be rational and honest.*
- *As part of Malaspina Provincial Park, the development of outhouse facilities requires approval from BC Parks and input from the Okeover Round Table.*

• **Recreation And Supporting Bodies (Government And Private) And Concerns Regarding Liability**

- The British Columbia Forest Service (BCFS) manages thirty kilometers of the trail below the park. The trail also makes use of several forest service recreation sites. As outlined earlier in this document, the recent CORE review has eliminated the management of recreation sites and trails from the MOF mandate. This will add a tremendous financial strain on the volunteer organizations that presently maintain the trails and sites. A further threat is the real potential that sections of the trail will be decommissioned if deemed a potential risk.
- There is concern among trail proponents regarding liability risks.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Alternative management arrangements will have to be made for the portions of the trail and for use of the sites currently managed by the Ministry of Forests.*
- *Discussion must be in place to satisfy government intention to divest of recreation sites and trails without adversely and irreplaceably compromising recreation as well as tourism opportunities on crown lands.*
- *The risk assessment of structures & deactivation of sites/trails with high risks and their subsequent removal must be undertaken with the involvement of the recreation groups who have traditionally been involved in their development and maintenance.*
- *A clear direction must be provided to the companies and public recreation groups with regards to liability protection under the Occupiers Liability Act and any other legal precedents and requirements that are required for these organizations to fully undertake the responsibility of managing the recreation sites and trails.*

• **Private Lands And Recreation (First Nations)**

- Near the Sliammon areas of interest, the trail travels inland linking viewpoints and old growth forest. The Sliammon, Canada and British Columbia are in the midst of treaty negotiations. Proponents of the SCT are concerned that the absence of a right-of-way for the trail could result in the need for the trail to be relocated after the treaty is complete.
- Options for the completion of the trail initiative and any resultant action is not likely to be inaugurated until after the Sliammon First Nation treaty negotiations have been concluded.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Continual discussion between stakeholder recreation groups and the Sliammon on the benefits of the trail to regional economic diversity and well being should be conducted.*

• **Recreation And Other Resource Use**

- Access through the TFL 39 lands has been secured through a long-term lease with Stillwater Timberlands (Weyerhaeuser) through the Community Advisory Group (CAG). This arrangement has assured buffers between 10 and 30 meters on either side of the trail alignment. In some patches of old growth, the buffers widen to between 100 and 200 meters.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Powell River Parks and Wilderness Society directors, who oversee the trail, will need to continue the open lines of communication with Stillwater Timberlands to ensure the corridor is adequate for maintaining the values represented by the trail.*

6.3.3 THE SOUTH POWELL DIVIDE TRAILS (RMU 28)

The South Powell trails (there are three distinct trails that lead into the alpine) fall within the TFL and are very popular with local recreationists. Of paramount importance is the continual integrity of and access to the trails.

• **Recreation And Other Resource Use**

- In two circumstances, slash was drawn over the trails destroying those sections and creating a hazard for hikers.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Continued dialogue with Weyerhaeuser is required to assure that the integrity of the trails are not compromised by timber harvesting.*

6.3.4 STILLWATER AND GOAT MAINLINE ACCESS (RMU 24,25,26,27,28,29,30)

- **Access To Prime Recreation Areas**

These mainlines provide access to the backcountry south of Powell River, including Smith Range, Powell Forest Canoe Route (north of Lois Lake), the Knuckleheads, Freda Lake, Goat Lake, Emma Lake, the South Powell Divide, the Eldred River Valley, and the climbing walls of West Main Buttress. The roads also constitute the main access into active forestry operations.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Continued dialogue with Weyerhaeuser and Forest Licensees is required to assure that the integrity of agreed upon important recreation access roads are not compromised by road decommissioning.*
- *Recreation groups should be informed prior to the decommissioning of roads identified as key access routes.*

- **Recreation And Other Resource Users**

- Because of the narrow width of the logging roads and the use of off-road logging trucks, it is extremely dangerous to combine recreational and logging vehicle use. Therefore the roads are restricted from public use during the weekdays from 5 a.m. to 6 p.m. This has the impact of limited access to certain recreational features, and inhibiting the development of commercial opportunities.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Recreationists can use radios to keep track of truck activity. Making this a mandatory requirement would furnish opportunities to provide rental radios.*
- *Weyerhaeuser has a proposal, supported by the Stillwater Timberlands Community Advisory Group, to create one way loops allowing the first 13 kilometres of the road network north of Powell River to be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. An extension beyond this would widen the existing road to the Dodd Lake Campsite. The proposal involves significant cost and will require encouragement, drive and initiative from local politicians and the provincial government. This proposal will provide access to recreation sites and significant recreational opportunities adjacent to Powell River.*

- **Concerns Regarding Liability**

- The recent shift of responsibility for road maintenance from the Ministry of Forests to licensees results in concern related to liability.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *The Provincial government must provide clear direction to the companies and public recreation groups with regards to liability protection under the Occupiers Liability Act if these organizations are to take over responsibility of management of forestry roads, and provide public access on the roads.*
- *With regards to recreational use, this situation could be addressed through extending the licensees liability coverage to include recreation use and through the existing Occupiers Liability Act legislation.*

6.3.5 KNUCKLEHEADS (RMU 26)

The Knuckleheads are an area north of Lois Lake, which have significant recreational features. There is potential for conflict between motorized and non-motorized recreation and tourism. To mitigate this conflict, an alternate site for snowmobile riding must be established, possibly at the head of Freda Valley. Freda Lake is frozen over during winter months and can be passed to the end of the valley. The whole of Freda Valley north of Phelan Lake and the adjacent J-branch, Windsor Main and K-branch (with its semi-alpine plateau and lakes) appears to offer a vast winter recreation area that could be explored by skidoo.

- **Access To Prime Recreation Areas**

- Road closures and decommissioning will limit access for recreation.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Current logging plans propose cut blocks near the summit above the plateau. Once harvesting is complete, good access to the Knuckleheads should be assured, provided the road remains open for recreational use and is not fully deactivated.*

- **Concerns Regarding Liability**

- The recent shift of responsibility for road maintenance from the Ministry of Forests to licensees results in concern related to liability.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *The Provincial government must provide clear direction to the companies and public recreation groups with regards to liability protection under the Occupiers Liability Act if these organizations are to take over responsibility of management of forestry roads, and provide public access on the roads.*
- *With regards to recreational use, this situation could be addressed through extending the licensees liability coverage to include recreation use and through the existing Occupiers Liability Act legislation.*

• **Motorized And Non-Motorized**

- There is potential for conflict between snowmobile use and cross-country skiers, telemark skiers and snowshoers. Consideration should be given to creating one area where people can recreate without motorized recreation, and an area where snowmobiles can run unfettered by those recreationists seeking a silent experience.
- The same area designated for motorized recreation in the winter can also be used for motorized recreation in the summer. Roads in these areas lend themselves to exploration by ATV; dirt bikers that have shown a desire to access high mountain lakes with views of Marmot, K, Freda and Sentinel mountains and the Powell Forest Canoe Route.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Dialogue between the different groups is essential for a workable solution.*
- *Identify behaviour changes that will reduce friction between users. Use a code of ethics.*
- *Segregated use can be voluntarily chosen to meet the different recreation requirements.*
- *Options include temporal segregation (encouraging conflicting groups to use areas at different times), directing user groups to less used areas, and education as to competing users needs and desires.*
- *Designate use area utilizing traditional local use as a basis. Identify who has developed the trails.*
- *It may be useful to develop a "closed unless open policy" for motorized recreation. This would result in identifying areas most suitable for motorized activities and opening these areas for use.*

6.4 RECREATION USE ISSUES AND CHALLENGES ON THE CORTES AND ADJACENT ISLANDS

Cortes Island is serviced by a ferry from Quadra Island and is considered relatively remote. The residents have undertaken a process equivalent to Landscape Level Planning wherein they have identified and mapped the essential information regarding the islands timber, recreation, ecosystem and other values. This process is part of an initiative that is being undertaken to establish the Cortes Community Forest. There is strong community support for this initiative and the Cortes Community Forest Society could serve as a local referral body.

• **Commercial And Public Use**

- There is concern that commercial development will exclude local residents who want to be able to direct the outcome of any CR proposal. Existing tourism operators are just “getting by” - new opportunities are needed to increase the vitality of existing operators.
- There is a proposal to develop hiking trails in the north part of the island. The Regional District has expended considerable funds to develop a trail network in the regional park near Mansons Landing.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Any proposed commercial recreation must fit within existing zoning. If a use is not specified within the zoning parameters it is not permitted.*
- *Advertising with regards to LWBC announcements and referrals must be in local papers or newsletters, not the Campbell River newspaper.*

• **Recreation And Other Resource Users**

At present there are no conflicts between recreationists and other resource users. The oyster farms within Gorge Harbour have established dialogue with the local tourism operators and accommodation providers that allows for the presence of oyster farms in close proximity to the tourism operations. Some of the agreements include keeping the oyster rafts tidy. Many of the rafts use wood and not colored floatation barrels, resulting in an image that is of interest for the tourist.

- One primary drawback is the lack of an opportunity for tourists to sample oysters. The lack of an inspection facility does not allow for sampling of oysters and limits growers from being part of the tourism draw.
 - *Local inspection for oysters would allow sampling of island grown oysters, providing an added allure to Cortes Island. The requirement of a processing facility limits the option but hopefully with proper lobbying from oyster growers and local communities, the rules regulating inspections will allow for local inspection.*

• **Carrying Capacity**

- Squirrel Cove and Cortes Bay are extremely popular amongst boaters. There is an opportunity to develop pump out stations that can benefit both boaters and residents. A composting facility on the island is required to dispose of the septic and would also benefit local residents.
 - *Regional support for a pump out station and corresponding composting facility is required. There is a demonstrated need for this type of facility in the northern Gulf Island.*
 - *Funding sources could include Federal, Provincial and Regional sources.*

7. MOTORIZED AND NON-MOTORIZED CONFLICTS

Trail conflicts can and do occur among different user groups, among different users within the same user group, and as a result of factors not related to users' trail activities at all. In fact, no actual contact among trail users need occur for conflict to be felt.

—ROGER MOORE, Conflicts on Multiple-Use Trails:
 Synthesis of the Literature and State of the Practice, 1994

Recreation conflicts between *motorized and non-motorized groups* are usually asymmetrical (one way) depending on the level of adverse effect one group has on the other. The noise and fumes of motorized activities may intrude on the experience of non-motorized activities where the opposite is usually not the case. This allows the motorized group to tolerate or even indifferent to the non-motorized group. Conflict exists at two levels: Direct contact and indirect confrontation were sides begin to form interest groups and become identified with opposing platforms.

Inaction as well as resolutions to these conflicts may not be to the satisfaction of either for it is the quality of the recreation experience that causes conflict, not competition for resources.

Conflicts between motorized and non-motorized recreationists in the Sunshine Coast Forest District are minimal. The low population base relative to the land area has allowed for a dispersion of recreation activities. However, there are increasing indications in key areas of the potential for conflict, a number of which have been addressed in the Issue and Concerns chapter in this report.

7.1 CONFLICT BETWEEN OFF ROAD VEHICLES (ATV AND DIRT BIKES) AND HIKERS / HORSEBACK RIDERS

The focus of these developing conflicts is in the Near urban forests of the Lower Sunshine Coast (RMU 2, 8) including Elphinstone Slope (RMU 2d, 4) and the Caren Range (RMU 9). The increasing motorized use (primarily off road motorcycles) in the trails and old roads frequented by the horseback riders and hikers. Destruction of trails (many of which have been constructed and maintained by non-motorized groups), noise, speed, exhaust and impact on the "wilderness" setting are the primary objections of the non-motorized users to motorized presence. Horseback riders are concerned of about the startling of the horses that may cause them to bolt.

At present there is no contact between the two groups and there is ample opportunity to start embarking on the framework for an equitable arrangement at this early stage.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Dialogue between the different groups is essential for a workable solution.*
- *Areas segregating use can be voluntarily chosen to meet the different recreation requirements.*
- *Encourage conflicting groups to use areas at different times, to direct larger groups to less used areas, or to inform one type of user where the busiest areas are for opposing types.*
- *Identify behaviour changes that will reduce friction between users. Use a code of ethics.*
- **Designate use area** utilizing traditional local use as a basis. *Identify who has developed the trails.*
- *It may be useful to develop a "closed unless open policy" for motorized recreation. This would result in identifying areas most suitable for motorized activities and opening these areas for use. Hence in certain areas such as the high use near urban forests of Elphinstone Slope or near residential areas, ATV and motorbikes can only use designated trails.*
- *In the areas close to the Knuckleheads (RMU 25,26,27), ATV use can be channeled into the Freda/Jenna lake, Upper Lois Valley and certain branch roads. These area are very suitable for motorized use.*

7.2 CONFLICT BETWEEN SNOWMOBILES AND NORDIC SKIERS

A prominent ridge known as Dakota Bowl (RMU 4), and the Knuckleheads (RMU 26) are areas with suitable terrain and snowfall ideal for the Nordic activities. In both areas local community groups are active in developing plans for winter nordic opportunities (Dakota Ridge Winter Recreation Society - DRWRS and the Knuckleheads Winter Recreation Association - KWRA).

In Dakota Ridge there is increasing and potential conflict with snowmobile use in the winter on the skier ascent and descent tour from Parking lot B to Dakota Ridge and on groomed trails or in areas most suitable for skiing.

In the Knuckleheads, the very low number of snowmobiles has not affected skiing and snowshoeing opportunities.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *Dialogue between the different groups is essential for a workable solution.*
- *Logging operations are opening up new potential territories for both activities. There is room for motorized activities to expand into other areas thereby reducing conflict.*
- *Security access gate can help to prevent access into trail areas (most applicable to 4x4s).*
- *Voluntary segregation of the activities will help to meet the different recreation requirements.*
- *Conflicting activities can be encouraged to use areas at different times, to direct larger groups to less used areas, or to inform one type of user where the busiest areas are for opposing types.*
- *Behaviour that will reduce friction between users should be identified through a code of ethics.*
- **Designate use areas** utilizing traditional local use as a basis. *Identify who has developed the trails.*
- *It is suggested that both Dakota Ridge (identified by the DRWRS) and the Knuckleheads (as identified by KWRA) be non-motorized to protect the recreation experience for the Nordic skiers and snowshoers. An adequate buffer strip should allow for sound as well.*

- *In the areas close to the Knuckleheads (RMU 25,26,27), snowmobile use can be channeled into the Freda/Jenna lake, Upper Lois Valley and certain branch roads. These area are very suitable for motorized use.*

7.3 PERSONAL WATERCRAFT AND SHORE RECREATIONISTS

At present the use of Personal Watercraft (PWC, often called Seadoos) are incidental or localized. Where it does occur; the noise, the proximity to the shore and the associated user behaviour (primarily a perception) conflicts quickly arise with many shore recreationists as well as homeowners. All the coastal areas (RMU 1,2,6,7,8,23,36,37 and 49) close to population centers in the lower and upper Sunshine Coasts are noted to have incidental use. The lakes including those along the Powell canoe Route (RMU 24 and 31) and Powell Lake (RMU 31) are noted to have PWC.

Residents of the Study Area have voiced a concern regarding any increase in PWC use.

Issue Resolution Options								
1 Dialogue	2 Find new areas	3 Change use patterns	4 Develop Ethics Code	5 Patrol & educate	6 Regulate	7 Designate use areas	8 Carrying capacity	9 Difficult to resolve

- *At present the activity is unorganized and dialogue has to be aimed at individuals.*
- *If feasible, areas away from residential concentrations and public beaches and coastal parks should be volunteered.*
- *PWC use can be undertaken at certain times of the day.*
- *Behaviour that will reduce friction between users should be identified through a code of ethics.*
- **Designate use areas** *in locations where there would be minimal conflicts. These areas along the coast must yet be ascertained although enclosed waterbodies such as Gorge Harbour (RMU 49), Okeover Inlet (37a) Thormanby and vicinity (RMU 7), Pender harbour (RMU 8a) should all be protected from PWC use.*
- *To preserve the world class quality of the Powell Forest Canoe Circuit, the smaller lakes should be restricted from PWC as well as all powerboats. These lakes would include Dodd, Horseshoe, Nanton, Ireland and Windsor Lakes.*

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APPENDIX A – DETAILED RECREATION MANAGEMENT UNIT DESCRIPTIONS

APPENDIX B – PRODUCT PRE-FEASIBILITY PROFILES

APPENDIX C - EXPLANATION OF MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

APPENDIX D – PUBLIC RECREATION STAKEHOLDERS / CONTACTS

APPENDIX E – OPEN HOUSE

APPENDIX F – CORRESPONDENCE

APPENDIX G – DIGITAL DATA