

6.0 Plan Implementation

6.1 Implementation Plan

The implementation of the management plan has been envisioned to occur over a 20 year time period. The actual implementation of the action strategies listed within the management plan will be highly dependent on available resources, funding and partnership opportunities.

6.2 Priority Action Plan

The following tables group the action items into prioritized timeframes.

Ongoing and Awareness Priorities

Theme: Environmental Stewardship	
Item	Action Description
2.2	Preserve wetland habitat for waterfowl, birds, and aquatic wildlife including Melda's Marsh, Cutgrass Swamp, Long Swamp and Short Swamp.
2.3	Preserve forage and denning opportunities for wildlife.
2.4	Continue to ban salal and other plant harvesting within the park. This would not affect First Nation traditional harvesting rights.
2.7	Continue to leave fallen logs within the park to naturally decompose.
2.8	Complete biophysical inventories as required to ensure effective park management.
Theme: Visitor Experience	
Item	Action Description
3.1	Maintain the natural 'wilderness' character of the park.
3.2	Continue to provide non-consumptive, non-motorized, and nature-focused recreation opportunities.
3.3	Ensure future park improvements respect the community's desire to experience nature in a quiet, peaceful setting.
3.4	Ensure future park improvements are aesthetically pleasing, unobtrusive and blend with the natural environment.
4.3	Include information on the park's ecology in park brochures and interpretive materials.
5.3	Ensure KFN reviews and approves all cultural references on interpretive materials and park signage prior to installation or distribution.
6.4	Continue to provide park brochures with trail maps at the parking areas.
7.2	Maintain the current park entrance connections.
7.4	Continue to support a BC Transit stop at the Bates Road parking area.
8.1	Monitor park use and explore options for additional or improved park amenities (such as washrooms and garbage cans) at key locations in the park.
8.5	Ensure vehicular parking is sufficient to meet the needs of day users.
8.6	Monitor horse trailer parking and consider the development of additional parking if appropriate.
Theme: Sustainable Trail Network	
Item	Action Description

9.1	Ensure trail construction, repair and maintenance is done as per current best management practices and that trails are built to withstand designated uses.
9.2	Focus on maintaining the existing trail network rather than creating new trails.
9.3	Base trail maintenance budgets on trail type classification. Fully accessible and higher classified trails are to receive more maintenance funding.
9.4	Continue to keep motorized vehicles off the trail network with the exception of motorized wheelchairs, ebikes or scooters used by individuals with mobility challenges. Service and emergency response vehicles are to be allowed on designated trails.
9.5	Continue to restrict equestrian and bike use to multi-use paths.
9.6	Continue to maintain the three principle beach accesses while recognizing limits pertaining to topography and cost. Restrict additional access points to the beach.
9.8	Continue to use permeable trail surfacing to minimize ecological impacts.
10.1	Trail use conflicts and trail impacts to be monitored. Persistent conflicts or maintenance issues may be addressed through separation or restriction of users as required.
10.2	Monitor unauthorized trail use and enforce as required.
10.5	Maintain current off-leash dog rules and monitor restrictions. Educate users as to why the restrictions are in place and enforce as required.
Theme: Partnerships and Collaboration	
Item	Action Description
11.4	Continue to work with FLNRO in accordance with the lease requirements for Seal Bay Forest.
11.5	Continue to strengthen the working relationship with K'ómoks First Nation.
11.6	Work with neighbours who have active agricultural operations to maintain and prevent land use conflict with adjacent ALR land.
12.1	Continue to work with the local community on new initiatives or significant park changes.
12.2	Continue to collaborate with local volunteer groups to deliver general maintenance within the park.
12.3	Continue to work with the Comox Valley Naturalists Society on park stewardship objectives.
12.4	Continue to partner with the Backcountry Horsemen on horse trail development and horse trail maintenance projects within the park.
12.5	Continue to support special events in the park that are compatible with the uses of the park. Special events would continue to require a permit issued by the CVRD parks department.
Theme: Public Safety	
Item	Action Description
13.3	Continue to monitor the condition of the trails and park infrastructure on a regular basis to ensure they are safe for public use.
13.4	Provide public safety signage and notices as required.
13.5	Continue to work with adjacent landowners on public safety concerns, notably hazardous trees and wildfire risk.
13.6	Continue to impose a 'no smoking' policy within the park during extreme dry weather.
13.7	Work towards gradual replacement of existing hard-plastic drainage piping with hdpe piping.
14.4	Work with North Island Mid Coast Fire Centre, emergency first responders, and the local Search and Rescue organization to ensure adequate access to the park is maintained to meet emergency response needs while not negatively impacting the park's sense of place. This may include vehicular and ATV access to strategic locations, and access to gate keys.

Short Term Priorities (2019 – 2020)

Theme: Environmental Stewardship	
Item	Action Description
1.1	Implement the park management zones strategy.
1.3	Ensure continued protection of the wetland ecosystems and biodiversity present in the Map Reserve.
1.4	Implement the permanent closure of the northern section of the Mitchell Grade trail.
2.1	Minimize ecological fragmentation through closure of unmarked or unsanctioned trails.
Theme: Visitor Experience	
Item	Action Description
4.2	Develop a program to provide seasonal guided nature education walks in the park.
4.4	Educate users about the impacts on the park's natural resources from use of unmarked trails through discreet signage and interpretive materials.
5.1	Work with the K'ómoks First Nation to inventory cultural values and ensure protection of these values into the future.
5.2	Identify First Nation place names and work in collaboration with the K'ómoks First Nation on signage policy within the park.
6.1	Develop a clear and simple signage plan for the park. This will help visitor wayfinding and emergency response.
6.2	Remove all non-conforming signage with the possible exception of signage of historical or cultural significance.
6.3	Install park trail maps at key trail intersections and replace old trail maps to ensure consistent messaging.
6.5	Provide information to download digital map apps.
8.3	Develop a detailed site plan for a new Hardy Road parking area located north of the current location in a cleared area formerly used as a provincial gravel pit. This should consider vehicular and pedestrian circulation, parking and provision of visitor services amenities.
Theme: Sustainable Trail Network	
Item	Action Description
9.11	Re-route a portion of the Horse-Bike Loop trail near Happy Face trail that is steep and eroded. Close the eroded section of trail.
10.6	Implement the trail concept plan.
Theme: Partnerships and Collaboration	
Item	Action Description
11.1	Engage with MOTI to purchase or permanently close unopened road dedications which are adjacent to or wholly enclosed within the Seal Bay Nature Park and Seal Bay Forest boundaries.
11.2	Work with MOTI to ensure all park infrastructure located within MOTI jurisdiction has the proper permits in place.
11.8	Work with FNLRO to establish management direction for the land parcel within Seal Bay Forest previously set aside for the Map Reserve.
12.6	Work with the equestrian community to find a solution to the issue of horse manure within the park.
Theme: Public Safety	
Item	Action Description
13.1	Engage with MOTI to explore ways to increase public safety on the section of Bates Road that passes through the park. This may be accomplished through vehicular speed reduction, traffic-calming measures, installation of signage, fewer crossing points or installation of crosswalks.

13.2	Re-align the horse-bike loop trail off Bates Road to better meet public safety concerns.
14.3	Work with the North Island Mid Coast Fire Centre, local fire chiefs and emergency first responders to develop emergency response guidelines and emergency wayfinding signage for the park.

Medium Term Priorities (2021 – 2025)

Theme: Environmental Stewardship	
Item	Action Description
1.5	Implement the permanent closure of the southern section of the Twinflower Lane trail.
2.5	Identify invasive species within the park and administer a program for removal. Emphasis shall be on the most sensitive ecological areas.
Theme: Visitor Experience	
Item	Action Description
4.1	Provide opportunities for self-guided natural history interpretive programming including opportunities to identify flora and fauna and natural system processes.
5.4	Identify the European historic use of the area and the disruption to the old growth ecosystem.
8.2	Develop a detailed site plan for the Bates Road parking area. This should consider vehicular and pedestrian circulation, parking, accessibility and provision of visitor service amenities.
Theme: Sustainable Trail Network	
Item	Action Description
9.7	Work with the Backcountry Horsemen and adjacent landowners to re-align the Horse-Bike loop trail adjacent to the Langlois Road properties.
9.9	Construct a short section of trail near Elmo Road to connect the multi-use trail system within the park boundary.
10.3	Develop the Coupland Loop trail into an accessible trail. Trail should strive to offer viewpoints towards the ravines and ocean while offering access to a variety of natural features. Limits pertaining to topography, cost and environmentally sensitive areas shall be recognized.
Theme: Partnerships and Collaboration	
Item	Action Description
	No medium term partnership priorities
Theme: Public Safety	
Item	Action Description
14.1	Work towards implementing the high level wildfire risk recommendations for the park which are currently being developed as part of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).
14.2	Work with the North Island Mid Coast Fire Centre to identify specific areas of wildfire risk vulnerabilities in the park.

Long Term Priorities (2026 – 2038)

Theme: Environmental Stewardship	
Item	Action Description
1.2	Inventory and map the park's rare and sensitive ecological communities as well as species and ecosystems at risk.

2.6	Consider removal of the abandoned vehicle located near the old gravel pit or use as interpretive opportunity for gravel pit history.
2.9	Initiate further research on the hydrological systems that exist within the park to help better inform park planning initiatives. This includes evaluating the environmental impacts of the Melda's Marsh dam on natural system processes.
2.10	Evaluate the vulnerability of the park to climate change and develop an adaptive strategy to address potential future impacts.
Theme: Visitor Experience	
Item	Action Description
7.1	Explore the feasibility of developing a bike commuter path through the park adjacent to Bates Road.
7.3	Explore future active transportation connection opportunities between adjacent neighbourhoods and the park. This may include a greenway within the Waveland Road right-of-way and connections to the City of Courtenay's greenways system, the Little River ferry terminal and Little River community, the Department of National Defense, the community surrounding the North Island Distance Education School and the Bates Beach community.
8.4	Develop a detailed site plan for a new Huband Road parking area. This should consider vehicular and pedestrian circulation, parking, visitor service amenities, and opportunities for nature-based recreation in forested areas.
8.7	Develop a site plan for the dam area of Melda's Marsh. This should consider the construction of a viewing area overlooking the marsh, a small nature discovery shelter and a washroom facility.
Theme: Sustainable Trail Network	
Item	Action Description
9.10	Consider the construction of a pedestrian only trail near the Hardy Road entrance to help disperse park users.
10.4	Develop the Swamp Loop trail into an accessible trail. Trail should strive to offer access to Melda's Marsh and other prominent natural features while recognizing limits pertaining to topography, cost and environmentally sensitive areas.
Theme: Partnerships and Collaboration	
Item	Action Description
11.3	Continue to work with FLNRO to acquire Seal Bay Forest to ensure protection of the forest in perpetuity.
11.7	Work with the City of Courtenay to ensure future development adjacent to the park is compatible with park objectives of environmental stewardship and connectivity.
Theme: Public Safety	
Item	Action Description
No long term public safety priorities	

6.3 Plan Monitoring and Review

In order for this plan to remain current and aligned to the document's vision statement, the CVRD has planned to revisit this management on a regular basis. This regular internal review, performed by CVRD parks staff, will enable small revisions to the management plan to occur.

The plan will also be re-visited to assess potential impacts to the management plan once treaty negotiations with K'ómoks First Nation has been completed and when development of the City of Courtenay lands adjacent to the park to the south occur.