

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Social Impact Assessment
of the Potential For
National Park Reserve Lands on Bowen Island

Prepared for:

Parks Canada
300 – 300 West Georgia Street
Vancouver, BC V6B 6B4

Prepared by:

Lions Gate Consulting
207-2902 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC
t/f: 604.733.5622
info@lionsgateconsulting.ca



In association with:

Robinson Consulting and Associates Ltd., Victoria, BC
Peak Solutions Consulting Inc., Kamloops, BC

June 27, 2011

Executive Summary

Introduction

Parks Canada has embarked on an assessment of the feasibility of establishing national park reserve lands on Bowen Island. The feasibility assessment determines whether establishing national park reserve lands on Bowen Island is practical and desirable. As part of the feasibility process, Parks Canada has commissioned this study of the social implications of the proposed national park reserve lands.

This social impact assessment identified three key impact areas and related valued social components which are the focus of study (Table ES-1).

Table ES-1 Project Impacts and Related Valued Social Components

Project Impact	General Issues and Concerns	Valued Social Component
Displacement from Park Footprint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land is protected but also removed from alternative future uses • Use levels by residents and visitors may change 	Land Use
Change in Land Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of Local Control to Federal Government; (-) • Protects local character/heritage(+) 	Land Management
Temporary and Permanent Population Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in tourism will increase economic activity and possibly enhance local character and heritage • Conversely, it may adversely affect transportation and ferry services and other quality of life measures. 	Quality of Life

Social Effects

The social effects of the proposed park reserve are summarized in Table ES-2. In terms of land use and management, the conversion of Crown lands to park will entail a transfer of management responsibilities and land use policies to Parks Canada and the authority of the *Canada National Parks Act*. Commercial extraction and motorized recreation activities will cease while the majority of tenure rights will be permitted under the park scenario. The public will see a change in the land management regime, including a change in enforcement presence. Local involvement in land management will also change but is unlikely to be substantively different than current Crown land management. Quality of life indicators would likely improve under the park scenario, but the increase in off-island visitors will aggravate already weak infrastructure, specifically in Snug Cove and on the ferries. The effect of the proposed park reserve will be to bring forward in time infrastructure problems that islander’s will have to deal with in the future anyway, even in the absence of the proposed park reserve.

In summary, and based on community feedback received in the McAllister survey and the Bowen Island Municipality’s National Park Community Advisory Committee Consultation report, we believe the social effects of the proposed park reserve to be positive on many indicators and negative on some others, mainly to do with population effects. Mitigating these adverse effects could effectively bring net social benefits to the community.

Table ES-2 Social Effects Summary

Valued Social Component	Effects
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most Crown tenures rights preserved. • Forestry, mining and other resource extraction not allowed. • Motorized recreation will not be allowed and while most public uses will be allowed the regulatory regime will be more strict than is currently the case. • Municipal community (surplus) land excluded.
Land Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued active local involvement in lands already in protected status. • Greater level of local involvement in Crown land now subject to Integrated Resource Management.
Quality of Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of the national park reserve would be unlikely to create adverse effects in terms of socio-economic indices. • Protection of natural open space would have a positive future effect on real estate values . • Marginal changes in population can be expected to exacerbate the weak spots in some service areas such as ferry services; however, future population growth will force new management solutions anyway, even in the absence of the proposed park.