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**REPORT TO REGIONAL PARKS COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21, 2017**

SUBJECT **2017 Draft Island View Beach Regional Park Management Plan**

ISSUE

A 2017 draft management plan has been prepared for Island View Beach Regional Park.

BACKGROUND

A Capital Regional District (CRD) Board-approved public participation process to update the 1989 Island View Beach Regional Park Management Plan was undertaken between 2014 and 2016. In November 2016, the Regional Parks Committee considered a draft management plan, and recommended that the CRD Board approve the draft plan. In December 2016, the CRD Board referred the draft park management plan back to the Regional Parks Committee for further consideration.

At its January 2017 meeting, the Regional Parks Committee passed a motion to provide the Friends of Island View Beach (FOIVB) and Rocky Point Bird Observatory (RPBO) and other stakeholder groups an opportunity to work together to make recommendations on how the draft management plan could be revised. The FOIVB and RPBO invited two additional stakeholder groups to participate in this process: the Capital Region Dog Owners (CRDO) and the Victoria Natural History Society (VNHS).

The stakeholder groups were unable to reach consensus on revisions to the plan and two separate submissions were received. Regional Parks staff considered the FOIVB/CRDO and the RPBO/VNHS submissions, along with other input received during the public consultation process, in the preparation of the 2017 revised draft management plan (Attachment 1). Attachment 2 summarizes key elements of the FOIVB/CRDO and RPBO/VNHS submissions and identifies how they were addressed in the 2017 draft management plan.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

That the Regional Parks Committee recommend to the CRD Board:

That the Island View Beach Regional Park Management Plan be approved.

Alternative 2

That the Island View Beach Regional Park Management Plan be referred back to staff for further review.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The 2017 draft management plan seeks to strike a balance among the diversity of opinions expressed during the public consultation. Although the stakeholder groups tasked with revising

the management plan were unable to come to consensus, there are key areas of agreement between the recommendations submitted by the two groups that have been incorporated into the draft plan. These include:

- a day-use area at the south of the park where dogs would be prohibited seasonally, between June 1 and September 15;
- the development of a second day-use area where dogs may be off-leash at all times of the year;
- a seasonal requirement for dogs to be on-leash in the wetland areas of the park between April 1 and July 31;
- dogs allowed off-leash and under control at all times on the Coast Loop Trail, other than for the seasonal prohibition of dogs in the day-use area noted above; and
- seasonal equestrian use is proposed on a new Wetland Loop Trail.

This management plan also proposes new facilities that will enhance the visitor experience, including trails in areas of the park that currently have no officially designated trails, new day-use facilities and improvements to existing trails.

During the public consultation period, comments were received about the need for better enforcement of park regulations. Regional Parks staff will work with stakeholders to educate visitors about park rules, the park's key features and sensitive ecosystems. Opportunities will be created to volunteer as park stewards or to participate in specific volunteer events. Bylaw enforcement will be present at the park, with increased service levels being proposed in the upcoming budget.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Island View Beach Regional Park includes some federally-listed species at risk in the coastal sand ecosystem and provides habitat for a variety of other wildlife. This management plan will enhance protection for these species and their habitats, while providing improved access to other areas of the park. For example, access to the wetland areas of the park will be provided through the development of a new trail in the Environmental Protection Zone. Off trail access for visitors will be accommodated in the proposed Natural Environment Zone.

Seasonal dog on-leash restrictions are proposed in these zones to protect ground-nesting birds during the breeding season. A restricted active restoration area is proposed in the northeast of the park, to better protect important habitat areas for coastal sand ecosystem-dependent species.

ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

The actions in the Island View Beach Regional Park Management Plan are prioritized as high, medium, low, and ongoing. A total of \$50,000 has been identified in the 2017 Capital Plan to develop some of the proposed improvements. The annual mosquito control program and maintenance of the ditch system and the coastal berm are included in the core budget of the Regional Parks service and are an ongoing yearly expense.

Key implementation actions in the management plan will be addressed through available core funding and the service planning process. Service planning allows for the identification and introduction of previously unidentified priority items to the CRD's budgeting process, including costs associated with increased presence of bylaw enforcement.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The 2017 draft management plan includes objectives, policies and actions that address comments received from the federal and provincial governments, the District of Central Saanich and the Tsawout First Nation throughout the planning process. Unfortunately, due to scheduling issues, CRD staff were unable to meet with the Tsawout First Nation prior to submitting the draft plan to the Regional Parks Committee. However, Tsawout interests previously recorded and confirmed include fencing, collection of traditional-use plants, collaborating on conservation of the coastal sand ecosystem, installing signage at the northern boundary, and trespassing onto the reserve from the park. Actions identified in the draft plan address these items; and where more work is needed, staff remain committed to work with the Tsawout First Nation to address their interests.

CONCLUSION

The 2017 draft management plan seeks to achieve a balance between public access and environmental stewardship. The plan identifies internal park zoning, a park development concept, and access rules for people, dogs, and equestrians. The 2017 Capital Plan for Regional Parks identifies \$50,000 for proposed improvements. Funding for projects beyond 2017 will be addressed through the CRD’s Service Planning process.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Regional Parks Committee recommend to the Capital Regional District Board:

That the Island View Beach Regional Park Management Plan be approved.

Submitted by:	Mike Walton, Senior Manager, Regional Parks
Concurrence:	Larisa Hutcheson, P.Eng., General Manager, Parks & Environmental Services
Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

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Attachments: Attachment 1 – Island View Beach Regional Park Draft Management Plan
Attachment 2 – Stakeholder Recommendations Comparison Table