

To: Regional and Corporate Services Committee

Date: 2018-06-12

From: David Urban, Manager of Outdoor Recreation Planning

File No: 6120-01-General

Subject: Annual Operating Schedule for Provincial Parks within the Fraser Valley Regional District

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Fraser Valley Regional District Board write a letter to BC Parks seeking clarification on the operating periods for the Provincial Parks within the region experiencing high visitation and request that, at a minimum, both Alexandra Bridge Provincial Park and Bridal Falls Provincial Park extend their operating periods.

STRATEGIC AREA(S) OF FOCUS

Support Environmental Stewardship
Foster a Strong & Diverse Economy
Support Healthy & Sustainable Community
Provide Responsive & Effective Public Services

PRIORITIES

Priority #4 Tourism
Priority #5 Outdoor Recreation

BACKGROUND

At last month's Regional and Corporate Services Committee meeting, a discussion ensued about asking the Province to extend their operating periods for both Alexandra Bridge Provincial Park and Bridal Falls Provincial Park for the benefit of the public since both parks are popular destinations in the off-season. As the discussion continued, there was consensus further research was needed as to the operating periods for the more popular provincial park to better inform the Board's request to the Province.

DISCUSSION

A review of the more popular provincial park webpages in the region was conducted to identify operating dates for each park. Unfortunately, this information was not listed for all parks. With help from BC Parks, all but Alexandra Bridge Provincial Park operation dates were confirmed. The annual operating schedules for key provincial parks within the Fraser Valley Regional District are listed in the table below.

Provincial Park	Location	Operating Period
Alexandra Bridge Provincial Park	Electoral Area A	Unconfirmed
Bridal Veil Falls Provincial Park	Electoral Area D	April 1 to October 8
Chilliwack Lake Provincial Park	Electoral Area E	April 1 to October 8
Coquihalla Canyon Provincial Park	Electoral Area B	April 1 to October 31
Cultus Lake Provincial Park	Electoral Area H	Year round
Emory Creek Provincial Park	Electoral Area B	May 1 to October 31
Kilby Provincial Park	District of Kent	Year round
Manning Provincial Park	Electoral Area B	Year round
Nahatlatch Provincial Park	Electoral Area A	May 1 to October 31
Rolley Lake Provincial Park	District of Mission	March 29 to October 8
Sasquatch Provincial Park	District of Kent, EA B & C	Year round
Silver Lake Provincial Park	Electoral Area B	April 27 to October 8
Skagit Valley Provincial Park	Electoral Area B	April 27 to October 8

For comparison Shannon Falls Provincial Park in the Sea-to-Sky corridor dates and hours of operation are as follows:

March 15 to May 7 - 7:00 am to 9:00 pm

May 8 to September 15 - 7:00 am to 10:00 pm

September 16 to October 15 - 7:00 am to 9:00 pm

October 16 to March 14 – 24 hours a day

COST

Not applicable.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information available, there appears to be quite the variation in the operating dates for provincial parks in the region. With outdoor recreation gaining popularity throughout the region and demand for visitations to the Provincial Park network, now appears to be a good opportunity to begin the discussion with the province about extending certain park operating dates for the benefit of the residents of British Columbia and visitors from abroad.

COMMENTS BY:

Barclay Pitkethly, Director of Regional Programs Reviewed and supported

Mike Veenbaas, Director of Financial Services No further financial comment.

Paul Gipps, Chief Administrative Officer Reviewed and supported