



Newsletter

SPRING 2013

P.O. Box 787, Summerland, B.C. V0H 1Z0

Phone: 250-494-8996 • Email: anglerem@telus.net

48th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the **OKANAGAN SIMILKAMEEN PARKS SOCIETY**

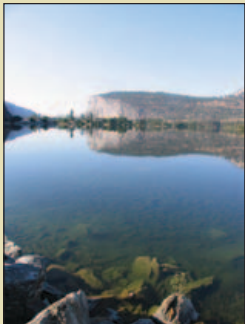
Ancient Okanagan & Amazing New Discoveries!



with special guest speaker

Dr. Murray Roed

*Okanagan geologist and Author of the bestsellers
Okanagan Geology South and Okanagan Geology.*



Also... Dr. Murray Roed's splendid acrylic painting "Summerland Cannonballs" will be auctioned.



AGENDA

✓ Election of Directors

✓ Financial Report

✓ Discussion

CENTRE STAGE THEATRE
in the Summerland Secondary School on Main St.
Friday, April 5, 2013 • 7pm

ALL WELCOME Refreshments NO CHARGE Donations Welcome

EDITORIAL

An aspect of conservationalism that can at times be overlooked, or drowned in the flow of day-to-day occurrences and hot button situations, is balance. Regardless of the issue there are always pros and cons to it. There are always multiple perspectives, needs and desires to contemplate.

We at the Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society run into this aspect of issues frequently. For example, it is harbouring the will to protect a particular endangered species, such as the Northern Spotted Owl. However it is then hearing that the government is planning to do this through a program of hunting and killing the Barred Owls that are competing for territory.

Likewise most of our members would likely be in support of harnessing so called 'alternate energy sources', such as wind generation of electricity, but need to consider the placement and location of the turbines. We have recently heard about plans to construct towers and turbines in areas of valuable forest habitat that would be dissected, and opened up, by roads that would be constructed to erect and maintain the stations and their power-lines.

A recent editorial reflected on the need to retain some habitat for wildlife corridors but in order to achieve this some people and governments have erected fences, enveloped tree trunks in mesh, suggested culls and employed other means of animal proofing areas that come into contact with human establishments. They argue that beavers, deer, geese, coyotes and sheep can destroy their habitat and the parks that we attempt to maintain for them if some of these measures are not taken.

Continued on next page...

Please use the enclosed membership form on the back page to help us carry out our mission.

Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal awarded to BC trail builder Kelley Cook

TERJE VOLD • FORMER NTC REGIONAL TRAILS COORDINATOR FOR BC

The Canadian Trails Federation (CTF) awarded a number of Queen's Diamond Jubilee medals to its members across Canada for the part they played in the 2009 – 2010 federal trails funding program arranged through the National Trails Coalition (NTC), the CTF and, in BC, through the Outdoor Recreation Council. In BC Kelley Cook of Princeton was nominated for her outstanding contribution and a medal has been awarded to her. The following citation for Kelley's award was given by Terje Vold, the NTC's Regional Trails Coordinator for the program in BC, who had extensive dealings with all those in BC who built trails under this federal program.

KELLEY COOK, PRINCETON, BC

Kelley Cook was the project manager for the China Ridge Trails project from June 2009 to March 2010. This project received federal funding approval from the National Trails Coalition (NTC). Kelley worked on the project on behalf of the China Ridge Cross-Country Ski Association located in Princeton, BC.

The NTC Regional Advisory Committee

in BC reviewed all the applications, and the China Ridge trails project was one of the highest ranked non-motorized applications received. It had strong provincial support from the staff of Recreation Sites and Trails BC.

The proposed trail improvements in the China Ridge area would benefit a number of non-motorized summer and winter trail activities including hiking, cycling, horseback riding, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, skijoring and dog sledding.

The NTC specifications for approved projects included the need for monthly reports, signage and local media coverage, ideally with elected officials. Kelley, on behalf of China Ridge, met and exceeded those expectations. For example, the monthly reports were not just progress on an excel spreadsheet about number of jobs supported, or trail improvements made, but included a quality description of the work done with detailed pictures noting progress. The event with the local MP received great coverage in the local media which could have been a challenge as the MP was from the opposition!

Kelley not only delivered top quality results but did so in a timely manner, seldom having to be reminded, as was sometimes the case with other project managers.

When some additional funding opportunities became available to BC, Kelley quickly lined up other partners to match the federal funding so that additional trail work could be completed. The community of Princeton can be thankful for Kelley's efforts as China Ridge provides both trail opportunities to the local community and it also attracts trail users from other areas who help support the community through their expenditures.

The project completed nearly to 60 km of trail improvements including 17kms of newly built trail, 25kms of upgraded trails, and 16kms of rehabilitated trails.

It was a pleasure to work with Kelley in my role as NTC Regional Trail Coordinator. She stood out in my mind as particularly deserving recognition for her efforts and I hope she will be able to receive a Queens Diamond Jubilee Medal for her hugely successful contributions.

Proposed Addition Parcels

In 2004, an intergovernmental review was conducted to provide strategic recommendations for Crown land management and designation within the Okanagan River valley. This Land Act Review (LAR) resulted in recommendations for approximately 4,300 hectares of Crown land, with the intent being to balance environmental and economic needs.

Most of the 24 Crown land parcels identified for inclusion into SOWMA emanated from the Land Act Review Process.

For more information on the LAR process or the proposed additions, please contact the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations regional office in Kamloops.

...EDITORIAL continued from front

In all three of these examples the pros and cons of the initiatives can be listed, debated and propagated. However it is incumbent on the conservationist to address the issue with as many facts and from as many perspectives as he or she can. This must be done prior to supporting, or opposing, a project or a set of circumstances, in order to achieve a positive outcome in line with his or her philosophical principles.

At the Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society board of directors' table there is usually a good amount of discussion, debate and questioning of the presenters of information, prior to the adoption of a position on an issue. Through the many and diverse lenses, which

are available to the board to examine issues, stances and positions are adopted by the board. While certain situations or solutions may appear counterintuitive on first glance or the 'common threads' of these positions are not immediately evident, take a moment to reflect and rest assured that the issues they address have been well examined.

Examining pros and cons, reflecting and recognizing the need for balance, will do much to protect our parks, protected areas and general environment and the flora and fauna that populate them. It is important to achieve a balanced view of nature, understanding that what may be positive and right in one situation or area, may not be in another. As individuals, and as a parks society, we must always attempt to do our best.

“Ancient Okanagan and Amazing New Discoveries!” at AGM April 5

We are pleased to announce that Okanagan geologist Dr. Murray Roed will be the guest speaker at our 48th Annual General meeting Friday, April 5, in Summerland.

Dr. Roed's presentation, “Ancient Okanagan and Amazing New Discoveries!”, will include fascinating discussion about the origins of the Okanagan Valley, the Okanagan Fault, bedrock carved to a depth nearly twice as deep as the Grand Canyon of Arizona, and strange patterns on the Okanagan Lake bottom.

Over the last three years Dr. Roed instigated a multidisciplinary study of a very old glacial deposit that proved a one million year-old regional glaciation had enveloped the Okanagan and other parts of BC and the Yukon. He also collaborated with Gene and Sandy Ralston and their side scanning sonar system to reveal unusual bottom features of Lake Okanagan that are hard to explain.

Dr. Roed has authored or co-authored six books, including the bestsellers *Okanagan Geology South* and *Okanagan Geology*.

The meeting and presentation will be held at 7 p.m. in the Centre Stage Theatre in the Summerland Secondary School on Main Street. Admission is free; donations are welcome.

“Summerland Cannonballs” painting to be auctioned at AGM!

Dr. Murray Roed's splendid acrylic painting “Summerland Cannonballs” will be auctioned at our AGM April 5. These intriguing cannonballs – possibly “volcanic bombs” -- were embedded in lava near Summerland. There are several theories as to how they originated. You can see a good collection at the Summerland Museum.

Bidding starts at \$300, with half of the proceeds going to the Parks Society.

“Summerland Cannonballs” is just one of many paintings created by Dr. Roed, whose work features images of special geologic landforms in the Okanagan and other faraway places. These paintings have a heritage and environmental quality in that they depict landforms that represent specific processes that created various parts of the landscape, and each is accompanied by a geologic story.



Our New Logo!

The OSPS is pleased to unveil an updated and dramatic new logo. It replaces a black and white logo created in the 1960s that featured a mountain and trees. The new logo includes the society's name, and elegantly captures some significant and recognizable natural aspects of our region: the Mountain Bluebird, California Big-Horned Sheep, sagebrush, water and snow-capped mountain.

Graphic designer Debbie Bowles (www.winkingowl.com) was selected to develop the logo. “The challenge was to take several key recognisable features of this varied and intricate landscape and use the lines, colours and inter-connection of these elements to create a cohesive, elegant and classic design that will stand the test of time,” says Debbie. “Hopefully this new identity will help strengthen the society's visual presence, becoming a familiar symbol that represents the wide range of projects the society undertakes.”

To view the logo in colour, visit www.okanagansimilkameenparksociety.com. It will also appear on our banner and in sponsored events publicity.

Nature Conservancy of Canada set to purchase portion of Elkink Ranch

The Sage and Sparrow Conservation Area is a bold conservation initiative that aims to protect a vast expanse of B.C.'s vanishing grasslands in the South Okanagan Similkameen. Currently the conservation area consists of two separate properties that sit along the Canada-US border near Osoyoos. Linking the two sections of

Sage and Sparrow is a portion of the historic Elkink Ranch known as the South Block. The upcoming acquisition of Elkink South Block by the NCC will more than double the existing conservation area and create a world class refuge for the many rare and endangered grassland species that make their home here. The lands encompassed by the ranch are rich

in at-risk species and include a mosaic of habitat types. The chance to conserve 743 hectares (1,836 acres) of this ranch is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that will make a significant impact on the natural legacy of the South Okanagan Similkameen. NCC hopes to raise another 1.5 million to complete the purchase by June 1st.

From the South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program March 2013 Newsletter

Paper from Waste Straw

Paper made from agricultural waste is good news for forests and for farmers

BY DELORES BROTEN • WATERSHED SENTINEL – NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2012

Prairie Pulp & Paper's Step Forward Paper™ is the first widely available wheat straw-based copy paper in Canada, made from 80% wheat straw fibre with 20% Forest Stewardship Council® certified wood fibre. It is now sold at all Staples stores.

A recent study commissioned by the company and publicized by the environmental non-profit Canopy, which has been working on eco-paper markets for years, compares Step Forward Paper™ with other copy paper types in North America. Results demonstrate that wheat straw-based paper and 100% recycled copy papers have the lowest environmental impact across the seven indicators studied.

However, when using a weighted ranking system for environmental indicators that places greater importance on climate change, Step Forward Paper™ is the best-performing copy paper type studied, with the lowest overall environmental impact.

Fifty per cent of the harvested Canadian boreal forest is currently used to produce paper products. "A key solution to protecting our world's species and climate is finding fibre that doesn't come from our last remaining ancient and endangered forests," said Amanda Carr, Campaign Director with Canopy.

Step Forward is presently made at a facil-

ity in India but Jeff Golfman, president of Prairie Pulp & Paper, says, "Our goal is to establish a market that will support our plans to build a new state-of-the-art facility in the Canadian prairies, which will in turn enable us to produce this straw paper with an even smaller footprint."

The Step Forward manufacturing facility is one of the only elemental chlorine free (referred to as ECF) facilities in India, using chlorine dioxide in its bleaching process. Prairie Pulp & Paper's future plans for producing 100% agricultural residue paper in Canada include a Total Chlorine Free (called TCF) process.

Canopy says there is enough leftover straw in North America every year to meet many of our paper needs without logging our ancient forests, and the market is there: "Our straw paper market survey has already quantified an annual demand for 800-thousand tonnes of straw paper products. We need business and government to put the infrastructure in place to seize this opportunity."

Research Report: Comparative Life Cycle Study of Step Forward Paper™, Prairie Pulp & Paper, October 2012 www.prairiepaper.com

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

❑ Of the seven impact categories studied, Step Forward Paper™ has the lowest life cycle environmental impacts with regard to non-renewable energy use, greenhouse gas

emissions, wastewater volume and aquatic acidification

❑ Step Forward Paper™ is approximately 50% less energy intensive than virgin tree-based paper

❑ In each category studied, Step Forward Paper™ performed better than 30% recycled and virgin tree paper types

❑ One ream of Step Forward Paper™ copy paper (a 500-sheet package) represents a savings of 2.7 kilograms of carbon dioxide equivalent (kgCO₂e) when compared to typical North American virgin-tree based copy papers

❑ Purchasing Step Forward Paper™, instead of virgin tree-based paper, saves one acre of forestland from being cut down for every nine cases sold

❑ Transportation from India to Canada represents only 12% of Step Forward's life cycle emissions

❑ Every hectare of wheat cropland in Manitoba can produce enough straw for 1.5 tonnes of straw paper annually

❑ Step Forward Paper™ provides comparable or superior benefits to 100% recycled for the price of 30% recycled

National Park Study Released by Okanagan Nation

OKANAGAN NATION COMMITS TO EXPLORING PARTNERSHIP WITH PARKS CANADA

The four South Okanagan Bands are now seeking a common vision for a Syilx/Parks Canada protected area. For the past year, the bands have been engaged in collaborative discussions with

Parks Canada. Chief Robert Edward, Lower Similkameen Indian Band, states "Our rights as Syilx people come with responsibilities and obligation to the natural world, just as they always have."

From the South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program March 2013 Newsletter

South Okanagan Wildlife Management Area

A Bird's-Eye View

The South Okanagan Wildlife Management Area (WMA) was established in April 1994 to protect several distinct, and quickly disappearing, habitat types including riparian habitat associated with remnant oxbows of the Okanagan River and arid antelope-brush and sage brush dominated grassland benches. This 461 hectare WMA consists of multiple low elevation parcels primarily along the Okanagan River south of McIntyre Bluff to Osoyoos Lake.

The riparian and upland areas preserve habitat for many species at risk, including provincially red-listed Yellow-breasted Chat and Western Screech Owl, and blue-listed Racer, Western Skink and Great Basin Pocket Mouse. Red- and blue-listed ecological communities are also an important feature of this WMA.

The Okanagan Basin continues to experience very high developmental pressures. The South Okanagan WMA, coupled with other protected areas in the vicinity, serves as a wildlife and habi-

tat refuge within a landscape dominated by urban development, orchards and vineyards.

The greater land area, which includes the WMA, has a long history of cattle ranching. The WMA reflects this established use, both by retaining grazing and hay-cutting tenures and in onsite historic ranching structures (Haynes' Ranch buildings).

The remnant oxbows in the South Okanagan WMA are scenic in any season.



The South Okanagan WMA contains invaluable riparian and grasslands habitats and historic features.

What is Wildlife Management Area (WMA)?

"An area where conservation and management of wildlife, fish and their habitats is the priority land use but other uses may be permitted." A WMA is a provincial Conservation Land, designated under the British Columbia Wildlife Act. To date, there are 23 approved WMAs in BC, each with a different suite of allowable activities based upon the uses that were established when the WMA was designated and land uses that are compatible with the intent of the WMA's designation.

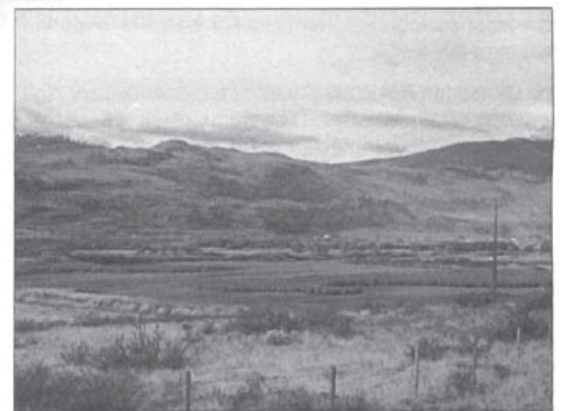
Planning for the Future

WHAT IS A WMA MANAGEMENT PLAN?

A management plan is a document prepared to guide a WMA's management for the future. It sets objectives and strategies for conservation, development, interpretation, and operation of the WMA. The management plan also addresses issues that require immediate attention within the WMA. These issues include activities permitted within the WMA and management of natural and cultural values.

A management plan is a document prepared by the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations with public involvement. The spirit and intent outlined in a management plan is a reflection of a society's values, interests and priorities. As part of the management planning process, the general public, public interest groups and First Nations governments have opportunities to provide input. Periodically, management plans are reviewed and updated.

Currently, a draft plan is in the early stages of development for the WMA. It builds on previous management direction that was provided for the WMA.



Remnant Okanagan River oxbow within the SOWMA



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 26, 2013

Governments Urged to Move Forward to Next Stage of Park Establishment in South Okanagan – Lower Similkameen

Osoyoos British Columbia: The Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) has released a new report, deeming the National Park South Okanagan Lower Similkameen as feasible to move ahead to the next phase of negotiations., “It has taken eight years to ensure that the Okanagan Nation is in a position to be able to weigh in on what’s important to the Syilx people and how the future of the land and people should be protected. There is now sufficient confidence to carry forward to the next phase of discussion of a potential park,” said Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, Chair of the Okanagan Nation Alliance.

The report, “*Building a Syilx Vision for Protection*”, was developed by the Syilx Parks Working Group, and came from our people upholding their responsibility to protect the land from encroachment by people who have a different view of utilizing the land and resources. Parks Canada has been more receptive to how the Park will be operated. There is now a growing relationship, and greater trust and respect,” stated Chief Edward of the Lower Similkameen Indian Band.

There still remain matters to be addressed through discussions. For example, the current Park plan is insufficient in size to promote the Syilx vision for protection of Syilx cultural and ecological integrity in the South Okanagan. Another outstanding issue is the role of British Columbia.

“The Okanagan Chiefs look forward to discussing with the Province of BC the findings of this report. One key interest in this area is protection of certain rights and values and a National Park reserve is one mechanism worth exploring through further negotiations” said the Grand Chief Phillip.

The next phase will provide additional information and seek clarity on how issues, such as Syilx inherent rights (harvesting, hunting), collaborative decision-making, and the inclusion of traditional ecological knowledge in park management and decision-making will be included in potential park management and decision-making models.

-30-

For More Information Contact:

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip
Okanagan Nation Alliance Chairman
(250) 490-5314

Chief Robert Edward
Lower Similkameen Indian Band
(250) 499-8991

Chief Clarence Louie
Osoyoos Indian Band
(250) 498-9132

OKANAGAN NATION ALLIANCE 106-3500 Carrington Road, Westbank B.C. V4T 3C1

South Okanagan/Lower Similkameen National Park Reserve Okanagan Nation Feasibility Study

In January 2011 the Government of Canada and the Province of BC released a positive assessment of feasibility that failed to include the Syilx Okanagan Nation perspective and interests. In August 2011 Parks Canada allocated funding to commence work on a Syilx Feasibility Study to allow for the inclusion of the Okanagan Nation perspectives.

The Syilx Parks Working Group was formed and given the task to complete the Feasibility Study from an indigenous perspective, with Parks Canada participating as an observer. The Syilx Parks Working Group was composed of Okanagan Nation Alliance and the four southern Okanagan Nation member communities: Osoyoos Indian Band, Lower Similkameen Indian Band, Upper Similkameen Indian Band and the Penticton Indian Band.

The study found that it is feasible to explore further discussions with Parks Canada about a future National Park Reserve, so long as Syilx Title, Rights and interests are protected and respected. The Syilx Parks Working Group advocates a collaborative and consensus based model with Parks Canada similar to those in Gwaii Haanas.

The Report also found that the current Parks model is insufficient in size to promote the broader vision for protection of Syilx cultural and ecological integrity in the South Okanagan Lower Similkameen. Additional work should be initiated to address the broader Syilx vision for protection of land and culture. A *Socio-Cultural, Environmental and Economic Impact Assessment* has determined that a National Park Reserve has some potential to provide some additional benefits to Syilx people and culture, through increased research funding and employment opportunities.

The group identified a number of First Nations' issues to address in negotiations, and that solutions should be worked out through negotiations. The issue of the participation of British Columbia remains outstanding.

Some Issues Identified and Addressed:

- Okanagan Nation Title and Rights
- An appropriate legislative mechanism for National Park Reserve establishment
- Developing an understanding of Okanagan Culture, Values and worldview and Perspective
- Decision making leading to potential Nation Park reserve establishment
- Socio - economic impacts to Okanagan People
- Geographic scope of the National Park Reserve concept
- Role of the Province of British Columbia Government

BC Government at War with Wolves

Draft Management Plan for the Grey Wolf in BC Under Fire

Text and photos by Ian McAllister

2012 continued to see a province-wide government-supported assault on BC's wolves. As if it wasn't difficult enough for these highly social, intelligent apex predators to make a go of it in BC, the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (wildlife in BC is strangely not managed by the Ministry of Environment) released its Draft Management Plan for the Grey Wolf in British Columbia.

The plan starts out by referring to many of the important ecological functions that wolves contribute to BC's natural environment, and if you stopped reading it half-way through you might think that BC was managing wolves with some regard to conservation. However, by Section 7: Current Management Framework of the draft, it becomes apparent that the overriding objective is to increase wolf hunting, trapping and kill-control programs across the province.

The plan recommends splitting management objectives into two zones. The first zone, (where livestock predation is an issue) is to encourage extermination of wolves by all means and "includes year-round open seasons and/or no bag limits, and in some cases targeted removal of individuals or packs." The second zone describes wolf management as "... primarily concerned with providing hunting and trapping opportunities with controls on harvest through specified season lengths and bag limits." There is no discussion of habitat protection for endangered caribou or alternative livestock protection methods but the plan does recommend aerial killing of wolves as the most humane method of kill-control.

The plan is full of references to the "harvesting" of wolves, as if they are some kind of crop like wheat or barley. It further states the lofty objective to "... ensure self-sustaining populations throughout the species range." But what does this mean for wolves in this province when the government reports that more than 34 per cent of a wolf population can be harvested "sustainably"?

There is no discussion of quality of life for wolves or of what it actually means to disrupt the social bond of a pack or extended family with trapping, hunting, poisoning, aerial killing and other legal means outlined in the plan. Nor does it reference the evolutionary impact of reduced genetic diversity

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2013

caused by unnatural levels of human-caused mortality.

Under section 7.1.1 titled "Harvest Management," the plan refers to "... ethics such as fair chase and humane treatment are recognized." Yet, poisoning wolves in their natal dens and the use of leg-hold traps are accepted methods to kill wolves. The BC government even allows the baiting of wolves before they are run down with high-powered snowmobiles and shot in a state of exhaustion. In the Peace region of northern BC, local residents are sponsoring wolf-kill contests that give cash prizes to contestants for killing the smallest and the largest wolves. All sanctioned by the BC government.

There are no recommendations to protect habitat for wolves or their prey. No discussion about the importance of wolves to the tourism industry, long term scientific studies, or education. Despite the fact that 2009 saw a record amount of wolves killed in BC, it is clear that the overall intention is to increase open season, open-limit and unregulated killing of wolves.

This plan was in development for well over a year and yet not a single wildlife conservation group or non-government biologist was consulted, nor was it sent out for scientific peer-review. Instead, the draft plan was quietly released in early November 2012 with less than a month given for public comment. Thankfully, over 2,500 submissions were received with the vast majority in support of scrapping the plan and in favour of wolf conservation.

The province will not say when they will release a final management plan for BC wolves, but if it is based on the current draft plan, the future remains very bleak for one of our most iconic and ecologically important land mammals.

◆
Ian McAllister is an award-winning author and photographer and founder of Pacific Wild.

Bears continue to suffer from trophy hunting in the Great Bear Rainforest even though the commercial bear viewing industry continues to provide revenue and employment for coastal communities. In September 2012, ten coastal First Nations declared a ban on trophy hunting in their respective territories and are looking to the province to enforce a similar policy.

MEMBERSHIP FORM Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society • Box 787, Summerland, B.C. V0H 1Z0

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Donation: _____ (Income Tax Deductible) I wish to receive the OSPS newsletter by email



Learning From OUR PAST – Newsletter Clips from Spring 2005

National Park Notes

Ottawa is in the midst of a three-year study to explore the idea of a national park in the South Okanagan-Lower Similkameen, beginning with a series of open houses in the region that attracted 900 people.

The next phase is to determine the criteria for including lands in the park, create some boundary options, and generate a study to show how a park would benefit the local economy.

The study area covers 2,400 square kilometres - an area roughly extending south of Penticton to Osoyoos, east to Bridesville and west to Keremeos - but the ultimate boundaries of any park would be substantially smaller than the study area.

No specific boundaries have been proposed, but during the recent creation of the Gulf Islands National Park, several provincial parks in the area were rolled into the national park, along with new lands purchased by Ottawa.

In the South Okanagan, the list of new protected areas includes 9,364-hectare South Okanagan Grasslands, 25,889-hectare Snowy, and 3,741-hectare White Lake Grasslands.

Cathedral Park and Crater, should be

included in any management plans for a National Park.

Thirty percent of B.C.'s endangered and threatened species are found in the South Okanagan, an area beset by residential development, orchards and vineyards. As a result, the South Okanagan is rated one of the four most endangered landscapes in Canada.

February 2005

Rules Set For Drilling In Wildlife Area

New plans guiding a potential \$16 billion worth of oil and gas development in one of B.C.'s most spectacular regions were announced on Friday by the provincial government.

The new 'pre-tenure' plans detail environmental requirements for companies undertaking exploration and development of presumed oil and gas reserves in the 64,000 square kilometre Muskwa-Kechika region in north central B.C.

They are expected to guide development of the area through strategies that were custom developed by the government in consultation with a stakeholder group that includes

local environmental groups, area residents, municipal governments, aboriginals and tourism interests.

The plans give direction for conservation of biological diversity, soil and water resources, as well as targets for minimizing disturbance to the general area.

The Vancouver Sun, Sat., May 29, 2004

Dwindling Glaciers Could Lead To Water Shortages

We used to say the freshwater held in ice in the Rocky Mountains is about the equivalent of the Great Lakes. Used to anyway.

This warning was repeated last week by water ecologist David Schindler of the University of Alberta. He said we need to plan now for the time when our rivers might dry to a trickle by the end of every summer. With the loss of glacier mass comes a loss in annual river flow.

The less glacier there is on the mountain, the faster what's left of it disappears.

Penticton Herald ~ Jan. 31st, 2005