

SPROAT LAKE

Official Community Plan



Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District

Adopted February 23rd, 2005

Schedule "A"

This schedule is attached to and forms
part of the Regional District of Alberni-Clayoquot
Sproat Lake Official Community Plan By-law No. P1118.

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This plan was prepared by J. G. Masterton, MCIP, Planning Consultant with the help and guidance of the Sproat Lake Advisory Planning Commission and with assistance of the staff of the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District Planning Department and with substantial input from many local residents and groups, notably the Sproat Lake Community Association.

Chapter 1 The Sproat Lake Official Community Plan

Sproat Lake is located 13 km (8 miles) northwest of Port Alberni and adjacent to Highway 4, the road leading to the Pacific Rim National Park and the west coast communities of Tofino and Ucluelet. The Sproat Lake Official Community Plan is based on a long range vision developed by the community in 2003 and stemming from a previously-conducted “visioning” exercise. The plan is intended to guide and protect the community for the next 10 years after which there will be a plan review and adjustment to take into account subsequent changes in legislation, society and technology.

The plan is a regional district bylaw adopted by the regional board expressing social, environmental and economic objectives and policies relating to the general form and character of future land use patterns and related servicing requirements. Sections 875-881 of the Local Government Act outline the required contents of the official community plan and section 882 of the Act defines the adoption procedures for official community plans.

Chapter 2 Community Vision

Any plan must be based on visions of the future, not necessarily tied to the past, with the ability to see opportunity and respond to the challenge.

The “Sproat Lake Vision” as developed by the residents of the community in 2000 foresees a caring community where residents, businesses and visitors work together to maintain the natural environment, especially clean air and water, in a friendly, neighborhood atmosphere. People of all ages, abilities and cultures will interact together in a supportive way to work towards common goals. There will be a strong sense of community spirit with active resident participation towards the betterment of community well-being through improvements to both the community well-being and to the community’s facilities and services. The natural beauty of the area will be appreciated by all, recognizing the need for improved legislation to protect such beauty.

A community focal point on Sproat Lake could increase community sense-of-place, such focus to include upland residential development, a marina, a community meeting place and new commercial activity combined with the continued presence of the water bomber base.

Other aspects of the vision include protected lake and river foreshore, a community-based forest industry, low-impact outdoor recreational activities, increased housing choice especially for retirees, improved airport facilities and a strong economy based on a revitalized forest industry together with an enhanced tourist industry that caters to the region’s outstanding natural beauty in creating a local economic base that is truly sustainable.

Chapter 3 Plan Goals

Social - *Creation of a vibrant, livable rural community with a variety of housing choice, rich in recreational opportunities, with convenient and affordable community services, an accessible lake frontage, open spaces and trails and with the provision of community services to expansion areas in a cost-effective manner.*

Environmental - *Protection of and enhancement of the community's unique environmental assets of lakes, wild mountains, abundant wildlife and fish resources, old growth forests, estuarine environments, plentiful freshwater rivers and streams, with the over-riding goal of increased environmental sustainability while preserving and expanding the current parks system*

Economic - *The provision of a socially balanced community with a diverse economic base that is not over dependent on primary resources but that recognizes the challenges and the opportunities of the new economy, especially the important role of environmental and cultural tourism, yet supporting the confirmation and strengthening of traditional primary industries such as agriculture and forestry.*

Transportation - *Encourage the creation of a cost effective and environmentally sensitive transportation system that caters to residents, visitors and businesses alike in the provision of transportation choice.*

Chapter 4 The Planning Process

Sproat Lake is included in two Official Settlement Plans (OSP's) of the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District - The East Sproat Lake OSP (1985, revised 1998), and the Sproat Lake OSP (1981, revised 1998). In December 2000, at a community meeting, the Sproat Lake community espoused the strengths of living near the lake and also identified key issues to be addressed in a new OCP. At the same time, a "visioning" strategy was drawn up to guide the new plan.

The vision is included in this plan as Chapter 2. In May 2003, the Regional District, through the Electoral Area "D" regional director, requested the Sproat Lake Advisory Planning Commission to commence the OCP review process that resulted in this plan. The new OCP covers a much larger area, encompassing as it does the entire watershed of the lake and includes a portion of Great Central Lake as well as part of the watershed of Nahmint Lake and covers a total area of 39 075 hectares (150 square miles) as shown on Map 1.

The OCP tries to reflect a consensus of opinions received but no plan is perfect and no plan can reflect all the divergent opinions received. However, planning is a dynamic process, just as the community it represents. The plan will be monitored on a regular basis and will also be extensively reviewed in 10 years time to ensure it is current and relevant to the needs of the Sproat Lake community.

In the 2000 visioning session, characteristics of the Sproat Lake area which the community wishes to see retained, protected and enhanced are:

- Lake activities, swimming, boating, fishing
- A community focal point
- Scenic values, lakes and mountains
- Wild rivers and streams
- Quiet, friendly, non-urban feeling
- Community-oriented parks and trails

Such stated vision is used in the development of this plan.

Chapter 5 History and Character of Sproat Lake

The lake is named after Gilbert Malcolm Sproat who arrived in the Alberni valley in 1860 and established the first sawmill in 1861 so starting the long and tempestuous relationship that the region has had with the forest industry. Prior to the European settlement of the area, the aboriginal peoples had a marked presence in the region, being as it was a desirable place to settle, with abundant harvests from the forests and the ocean. The OCP area encompasses two First Nations reserves, Tsahaheh (IR 1) and Klehkoot (IR 2), but such reserves are not subject to any restrictions contained within this plan.

Early European settlement originated around the eastern portion of the lake and it was not until 1855 that a road was constructed to the existing town of Alberni. The focus on settlement on the lake then has carried through today and the location of a residence on the lake is thought to be highly desirable as is testified by steeply rising lot prices. The lake was used as a base for two Boeing float planes in the 1930s and the lake is still used by the two massive Martin Mars water bombers operated by Flying Tankers International, a forest industry consortium. In fact the presence of these iconic 50 year old planes is seen as a source of community pride.

The lake has always had a recreational pull, as testified by the establishment of Klitsa Lodge (1919), a fishing lodge retreat for the wealthy and the building of a summer house for Cornelius Vanderbilt Jr. in 1920 on Arbutus Island. Great Central Lake has also had a recreational attraction as testified by the development of the Ark floating lodge there in 1925.

Early industrial development centered on the forest industry and continues today in the Tree Farm License #44 operated by Weyerhaeuser and the sawing of wood and the milling of paper in Port Alberni. Great Central Lake supported an extensive logging industry centered on logging railways and a sawmill and town of 350 people were established on Boot Lagoon in the mid-1920s and operated until 1952. ([Map 2](#)). Sproat Lake also once supported a sawmill on the location of the current flying tanker base.

In the 1950s, Sproat Lake started to attract permanent residents rather than summer cabin residents and this trend has continued today with very large, luxurious homes being constructed to replace modest homes, a reflection of the lake's attractions and the resulting high real estate prices. The lake has become a quality residential suburb and it seems clear that future growth will be along residential and recreational lines. In the early 1970s the highway to the west coast that had followed an old, winding unpaved mid-elevation logging road on the north side of Sproat Lake was replaced with the current Highway 4, making access to the west coast much easier. This, followed by the establishment of the Pacific Rim National Park at Long Beach and, latterly, the declaration of the UNESCO Biosphere Resource Centre on Clayoquot Sound has greatly accelerated tourist visits to the region and so provided an alternative economic base to the region that is all the more valuable now with the apparent permanent downturn of the forestry industry.

Much of the current character of Sproat Lake is determined by the type of ribbon residential development that has occurred to date, ringing the lake. A number of water-access recreational lots were also approved in the past on Taylor Arm and at the north entrance to

Two Rivers Arm. These have now become defacto permanent residences, some of which experience ongoing problems such as road access to Highway 4 and sewage disposal. This plan recommends both a cessation of ribbon residential development around the lake in favor of compact development with improved public access to the lake and also calls for an end to the approval of any new water access recreational lots along the lake.

Great Central Lake also has had a colorful history with the original mineral exploitation leading to early mining and the discovery of Della Falls. This led to a recreational development of the lake with the establishment of the Ark Resort in the mid 1920s and this continues to this day with boat/canoe trips on the lake and, exploration of the Della Falls area and general hiking. In the 1920s the lake's forestry resources led to the creation of the Great Central Lake town site, a railway-served lumbering community built to serve the new sawmill. The town was eventually linked by road but the town and mill were abandoned in the early 1950s. The lake now provides fishing opportunities and was once an important water supply for the pulp/paper mill in Port Alberni.

Chapter 6 Environment and Conservation

The area covered by the Sproat Lake OCP is an environmentally spectacular area (Map 3) in a region which is itself nationally renowned for the quality of its physical environment. Huge lakes, old growth forests, snow capped mountains, mountain views, abundant wildlife and rich marine life abound in the OCP area.

The plan area encompasses a portion of the important Somass River flood plain as well as the watershed of Sproat Lake and a small piece of the watersheds of Great Central Lake and Nahmint Lake. Sproat Lake has many functions - residential, salmon spawning, sport fishing, water supply, tourism, recreation, culturally significant sites, industrial water supply, water bomber base and some of these are in conflict. Great Central Lake is the largest lake with a depth of 294m and is relatively pristine with no residential development apart from a few float homes. It has become increasingly important for kayaking, back country access to Della Falls and mountain-oriented extreme sports.

Many other minor lakes exist, with many different roles, ranging from electric generation (Doran Lake), irrigation uses within agricultural areas (McCoy Lake), scenic walks (Gracie Lake, Ward Lake, Brigade Lake). There are three main rivers - Somass, Sproat and Stamp all of which have vital fish bearing capacity. Likewise there are sensitive salmon beach spawning areas at the west end of Taylor Arm and where Gracie Creek joins the southwest corner of Two Rivers arm and these areas must be protected to preserve such vital resources.

Otherwise, there is a myriad of smaller creeks and streams many having important fish bearing contributions. The plan recognizes these assets and makes proposals for their protection. It is also recognized, at the same time that increased urban growth around Sproat Lake endangers the current environment unless growth is managed in an environmentally sensitive and sustainable way. Thus stream side protection setbacks and protection of environmental riparian vegetation are essential to protect the aquatic environment of lakes, rivers and streams.

In addition, the area contains a magnificent alpine environment in the Gibson-Klitsa plateau which contains snow capped mountains up to 1 642m (Mt Klitsa), alpine lakes, climbing and cross-country skiing opportunities and hiking trails. This area has already been so identified in a recent recreational study by Weyerhaeuser Inc (the TFL 44 operators).

Objective 6.1 To improve the water quality of Sproat Lake and Great Central Lake

- Policy 6.1.1 Aggressive enforcement to prevent residential sewage disposal, pleasure boat/houseboat/float home sewage, grey water and other polluting discharges into lakes
- Policy 6.1.2 Ensure the development of a pump out station at Sproat Lake
- Policy 6.1.3 All new development to be in areas proven suitable for septic tanks and field disposal or otherwise connected to a closed sewage disposal/treatment system
- Policy 6.1.4 Adequate environmental lake setbacks for homes and sewage disposal fields.
- Policy 6.1.5 Minimize run-off into the lake from land clearing

Policy 6.1.6 Work in partnership with the community and the Vancouver Island Health Authority to establish a regular testing of septic systems and the rectifying of malfunctioning systems.

Objective 6.2 To protect minor lakes, rivers and streams from urban encroachment

Policy 6.2.1 Require adequate setbacks for septic fields in any developments adjacent to a water body

Policy 6.2.2 Ensure adequate land clearing restrictions to avoid soil erosion into adjacent water bodies and require retention of natural vegetative riparian strips

Policy 6.2.3 Prevention of seepage of agricultural nitrates and leachates from the landfill site into McCoy Lake and the creeks feeding Sproat Lake

Policy 6.2.4 There shall be no land in filling of any sort into lakes rivers or streams except where deemed, by the appropriate authority, to be beneficial to fishery enhancement

Objective 6.3 To conserve wildlife habitat

Policy 6.3.1 Liaise with the Ministry of Forests and the TFL #44 holders to support a wildlife management plan

Objective 6.4 To conserve aquatic environments in lakes, wetlands, rivers and streams.

Policy 6.4.1 No development of recreational uses at the west end of Taylor Arm including Taylor River and the southwest corner of Two Rivers Arm and the south side of Stirling Arm to preserve sensitive salmon beach spawning areas as indicated on Map 3.

Policy 6.4.2 Retain/rehabilitate natural stream side vegetation as much as possible and minimum setbacks as established by the Province, but in no cases less than 30 m for Sproat Lake, Great Central Lake, the Somass, Stamp and Sproat rivers and 15 m in the case of minor rivers and streams. In areas designated as Development Permit Areas on Map 7, such setbacks may be reduced where environmental studies confirm no adverse effects in water bodies and where a public benefit occurs (such as lake access).

Policy 6.4.3 All major rivers/streams shall have identification signs erected at prominent locations with information about fish-bearing capacities and habitats

Policy 6.4.4 Support environmentally sensitive land development practices and related engineering designs

Policy 6.4.5 Support Robertson Creek and Mainstream Canada fish hatcheries

Policy 6.4.6 Conserve sensitive wetland areas that contribute to aquatic habitat

Policy 6.4.7 Protect Devils Den Lake from the adverse effects of any local gravel extraction

Policy 6.4.8 Press the Provincial Government for local input into decisions affecting water use permits where these affect lake or river water levels.

Policy 6.4.9 Document river/stream fish bearing capacity and plan to increase such capacity.

Objective 6.5 To protect the Somass River estuary from urban encroachment.

Policy 6.5.1 Support the findings of the Somass River Estuary Management Plan by removing non-essential urban designations from Somass River flats

Policy 6.5.2 Support the conservation of the remaining estuarine environment of the Somass River

Objective 6.6 To conserve scenic views.

Policy 6.6.1 Preserve and enhance panoramic Highway 4 views of Sproat Lake and Mount Arrowsmith at suitable locations

Policy 6.6.2 Work with Weyerhaeuser Inc to ensure that forestry operational plans respect current attractive scenic views of the Gibson-Klitsa plateau and the hills overlooking Sproat Lake.

Objective 6.7 To avoid new development in natural hazard areas.

Policy 6.7.1 Recognize the danger of forest fires, steep/unstable slopes and flooding potential in the planning of new residential areas.

Policy 6.7.2 Ensure that development in areas recognized as having hazardous condition complies with the following conditions:

- no clearing of steep slopes prior to approval of development;
- any application on such hazardous sites be required and include certified geotechnical reports outlining any anticipated adverse impacts on the areas hydrology, groundwater, slope stability or other factors affecting development safety.

Objective 6.8 To encourage the development of a comprehensive environmental sustainability plan for Sproat Lake.

Policy 6.8.1 Work with the Sproat Lake Community Association, local residents and businesses and provincial/regional agencies to create a progressive environmental sustainability plan for Sproat Lake that will act as an essential guide for future growth management of the lake area.

Chapter 7 Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

The major land uses in terms of area are agriculture and forestry, the latter by far the largest, containing as it does the vast tree farm license #44 operated by Weyerhaeuser on provincial crown land, which occupies approximately 90% of the entire OCP area. ([Map 3](#)).

Early industrial development in the Sproat lake area centered around the forestry industry and today this single industry dominates the area and the region. Weyerhaeuser is allowed to harvest wood from the crown-owned land on a sustained yield basis for an extended period of time. In addition the company owns land privately for forestry related purposes. Processing of the wood occurs in Port Alberni at the Weyerhaeuser sawmill and the Norske Canada paper mill. The operations in the Sproat Lake area are essentially wood cutting/harvesting operations. Two smaller specialty sawmills, Chalwood Forest Products and Nagaard Sawmill still operate in the Bell Road area and there is a Norske Canada poplar tree farm on the Somass River estuary.

Should the Province's "Working Forests" program be implemented, there would be more opportunities for smaller forestry operators - woodlot operators and First Nations operators - so diversifying the economic base and providing more employment. According to the Statistics Canada 2001 census (Table 1) the population of the area is employed in a variety of occupations, with primary industries (logging, fishing, agriculture) only accounting for 10.4% of occupations. The serious downturn in the forestry industry has had an impact on the region and this might account for the population decrease of minus 1.8% from 1996 (in Port Alberni, the population change 1996-2001 is minus 5.5%). In view of this trend, the economic development agencies promote the expansion of value-added businesses that process wood into furniture, specialized lumber etc. and hopes to see a growth in the tourism industry, capitalizing on the region's natural attractions.

With regard to Table 1, the larger percentage in the business/finance/administration sector in Sproat Lake compared to Port Alberni reflects the attraction of Sproat Lake for up-market housing. The larger percentage of processing occupations in Port Alberni reflect the presence of large forestry-related processing operations and related service industry in that municipality.

Table 1 OCCUPATIONS 2001- Electoral Area D (Sproat Lake)

Sector	Occupation	Percentage (selected comparison with Port Alberni)
management	70	6.3%
business/finance/ admin	190	17.2% (12.5%)
natural and applied sciences	70	6.3%
health	85	7.7%
social science, educ, govt serv, religion	60	5.4% (8%)
art, culture, recreation, sport	15	1.3%

sales and service	205	18.6% (28.9%)
trades, transport, equip operators etc	215	19.5% (13.9%)
primary industry related	115	10.45%
manuf, processing, utility related	75	6.8% (12.6%)
Total	1100	100%

Whether the forestry sector will ever regain its economic dominance of the region is a moot question. This plan expects forestry operations to continue to be a major land use in the OCP area for the foreseeable future. Great Central Lake was also the locale for a short lived “wet wood” recovery industrial operation approved by the Province Ministry of Forests and Canada Fisheries and Oceans for a 5 year operating period after a trial run in 1998. The purpose of this process was to recover sunken logs from older forestry operations.

Agriculture is much smaller in area and is confined to a few areas where soil capability permits agricultural activity, mainly supporting small acreages growing vegetables and fruit. Some land with agricultural capacity are still heavily forested and thus not in intensive agricultural use. This plan intends to protect agricultural land and foresees an increase in agricultural operations supporting agri-tourism (including farm bed and breakfast operations), new agricultural products and produce and organic farming.

The fisheries operations in the Port Alberni area are substantial, ranging from a large commercial fishing fleet to sports fishing and the resultant tourist opportunities offered. Sproat Lake and Great Central Lake are well known as sports fishing lakes from early in the 20th century (Klitsa Lodge 1919 and the Ark Floating resort 1925 respectively). Recent years have seen a decline in the wild fish stock and a decline in the commercial fishing activity. Sports fishing has been similarly affected where salmon are involved. However the two large freshwater lakes have active trout fishing activity, one of the attractions of living close to such large bodies of water.

The Robertson Creek Hatchery, on a tributary of the Stamp River, was started in the late 1970s as a breeding ground for migrating spring and coho salmon and was first mooted as a hatchery location in the 1950s. It first produced pink salmon fry as the underpinning of the sports fishing industry and now produces 8 million chinook salmon and 1 million coho salmon as well as steelhead smolts all to enhance the natural salmon population. The nearby Mainstream Canada fish hatchery at Boot Lagoon, adjacent to Great Central Lake, is a large, complex, private salmon hatchery where the production process involves oxygen injection, ozone disinfection, temperature manipulation and automated grading and auditing systems to produce stock for farmed Atlantic salmon for the consumer market.

The plan will strongly support the protection of fish habitat to ensure a sustainable resource for the future and will seek to support revitalization of the sports fishing industry on Sproat Lake and Great Central Lake as well as other major fishing lakes, rivers and streams in the area.

Objective 7.1 To protect land with agricultural capability from inappropriate urban development.

Policy 7.1.1. Designate all land in the Agricultural Land Reserve for large lot sizes and for agricultural use only.

Policy 7.1.2 Keep residential concentrations well removed from agricultural land to avoid friction between intensive urban uses and agricultural operations.

Objective 7.2 To encourage an increase in agricultural activities

Policy 7.2.1 Encourage the expansion of agri-tourism, wineries, local-produce oriented food production, more variety of agricultural products and organic farming

Objective 7.3 To support a review of land within the Agricultural Land Reserve.

Policy 7.3.1 Liaise with the Agricultural Land Commission to identify sites within the Agricultural Land Reserve that may be excluded where designated for alternate use in this Plan, for example the regional airport, airport business park and the regional motor sports park.

Policy 7.3.2 Review Regional District zoning by-laws to ensure reasonable compatibility with current Agriculture Land Reserve regulations.

Objective 7.4 To encourage management of forest resources to maximize community benefit and provide an active and continuing forest industry.

Policy 7.4.1 Work with the holders of TFL 44 to identify any ways by which TFL 44 can be made to provide more direct benefits to the community together with long term economic stability.

Policy 7.4.2 To identify marginal forestry lands that may be utilized for community purposes such as parks, recreational uses and community structures.

Policy 7.4.3 To work with the Province and forestry companies and the regional economic development agencies to identify new markets for value-added timber products.

Objective 7.5 To ensure that forestry activities are consistent with the environmental policies of this OCP

Policy 7.5.1 Work with the operators of TFL 44 and the Province to ensure consistent adherence to environmental policies

Policy 7.5.2 Take a proactive position on overall forestry plans to ensure consistency with community environmental objectives

Objective 7.6 To work with the Ministry of Forests and the TFL operators to increase community recreational access to forest lands

Policy 7.6.1 Identify parts of TFL 44 suitable for public recreational purposes

Policy 7.6.2 Allow public access to land so identified above including hiking trails, fishing lakes and streams and wilderness campsites

Objective 7.7 To work with government and private agencies to protect fish habitat and a revitalization and expansion of the sports fishing industry on Sproat Lake and Great Central Lake and other fishing lakes, rivers and streams in the area.

Policy 7.7.1 Identify and protect sensitive fish spawning areas

Policy 7.7.2 Support the continued operations of the fish hatcheries at Robertson Creek and Boot Lagoon

Policy 7.7.3 Work with Federal and Provincial agencies regarding the revitalization of stocks of indigenous fish species.

Policy 7.7.4 Encourage the operation of a new trout hatchery at Boot Lagoon for enhancing the stocking of local lakes with indigenous trout species.

Chapter 8 Parks, Open Space and Trails

The Sproat Lake area contains a considerable amount of park space (Map 4), ranging from provincial parks through local parks. At the same time the community sits astride Highway 4 leading to Pacific Rim National Park, a major national attraction.

The future of the two provincial parks on the north side of the lake - Sproat Lake Park and Taylor Arm Park - seems assured given that they provide accommodation for people traveling on Highway 4 to the west coast. However with provincial economic cutbacks, the future of Fossli provincial park, a day picnicking location on the south side of the lake is currently unclear; it may be decommissioned as a regional park or re-created as a regional or local park. The Windy Bay Park Reserve on Taylor Arm could also be considered for a future regional or local park catering to wilderness camping. The Stamp River Provincial Park facilities are on the east side of the river and consideration should be given to a pedestrian bridge over the Stamp River to allow access to such facilities from the Sproat Lake side of the river.

There are two rough forestry campsites on the south side of Taylor Arm at Snow Creek and Antler Creek and Snow Creek is the subject of negotiations with First Nations as to future management. This plan strongly supports the retention of such wilderness camp sites as they provide not only wilderness camping but also invaluable access to Sproat Lake for boat launching, windsurfing etc. Great Central Lake also functions as the jumping off point for a whole host of outdoor activities in the wild areas to the north of the lake in the Vancouver Island Mountain Range with a whole range of strenuous activities from canoeing to kayaking to mountain climbing, cave exploration, “extreme” sports and backpacking.

Future recreational access to Great Central Lake is also regarded as a positive step towards supporting the claims of the Alberni-Clayoquot region as an outdoor recreation magnet and this should be fulfilled by the development of a recreational master plan for the lake area. Should this be done, then the situation pertaining to the possible use of this lake by houseboats and current use by float homes (and possible sewage spillover into the lake) must be addressed.

In terms of local parks, the plan stresses the need for better access to the lakes and more local parks to serve east Sproat Lake residents. Where wharfs and piers have been illegally constructed on road allowances access to Sproat Lake, these should be removed through an active enforcement program. Two undeveloped local parks on the Somass River (Seaton and Somers parks) are owned by the City of Port Alberni and some consideration should be made regarding the opening up of these parks for better public access. This may be accomplished by either a transfer to the Regional District to enable the parks to be developed as local parks for the East Sproat Lake residents or by the development of these areas by the City of Port Alberni as local parks, with developed trails, signage and proper access roads. Discussions should be opened with the City on this issue

An ongoing problem in recent years has been the proliferation of spontaneous camping along Sproat Lake with resultant litter, noise, human waste and fire hazard problems. To combat this problem, it is recommended that the Regional District approach the Provincial government to take over the operation of Fossli Provincial Park and establish rough

campsites here as an alternative to the spontaneous campsites that spring up every summer on the south side of Sproat Lake.

The Gibson-Klitsa plateau has been identified as an area of great natural beauty with an outstanding alpine environment of high rugged mountains and small alpine lakes. This area, although part of TFL 44 is currently used for such recreational opportunities as mountain climbing, trail hiking, fishing and cross-country skiing. Trails in the area were constructed by the Ministry of Forests in 1996-2000.

The 2000 visioning session reveals that access to the pleasures of the rural countryside is one of the reasons people treasure living here. Table 2 indicates the amount of park space in the planning area. Park reserves also exist on crown land on Two Rivers Arm(32 ha) and on the Sproat River (15ha) but no plans have been developed for the future use of such reserves. However, the Two Rivers Arm park reserve at Windy Bay could function as a new regional or local park with a wilderness campsite.

TABLE 2 PARKLAND

Park	Size	Facilities	Status
Sproat Lake	39 ha	Campground	Provincial Park
Stamp River / Stamp Falls	327 ha	Campground	Provincial Park
Fossli	53 ha	Undeveloped-nature trail	Provincial Park
Taylor Arm	71 ha	Campground	Provincial Park
Seaton	8.2 ha	Undeveloped, some trails	Local Park (Owned and operated by City of Port Alberni)
Somers	12.8 ha	Undeveloped-some trails	Local Park (Owned and operated by City of Port Alberni)
Cougar Smith	2.3 ha	Tennis Courts, playground	Local Park (ACRD)
Faber	1.03 ha		Local Park (ACRD)
Sander	0.36ha		Local Park (ACRD)
Total	514.69 ha		

Objective 8.1 To support the retention and enhancement of existing provincial parks - Sproat Lake, Taylor Arm, Stamp River and Fossli.

- Policy 8.1.1 Confirm the intentions of the Province to continue the operation of the three provincial parks on Sproat Lake
- Policy 8.1.2 Examine with the Province ways to enhance the attractiveness of such parks
- Policy 8.1.3 Study the feasibility of a pedestrian bridge over the Stamp River to allow access to Stamp River Provincial Park from the area west of the river
- Policy 8.1.4 Press for improvements to the boat ramp and boat ramp parking at Sproat Lake Provincial Park.

Objective 8.2 To identify suitable new areas for local parks

- Policy 8.2.1 Ensure major new developments provide local park space, or cash in lieu for a future local parks acquisition fund for example the bomber base site development should make provision for local recreation needs such as a local park, baseball diamond and a picnic site

Objective 8.3 To implement the Sproat lake Trail System

- Policy 8.3.1 Review and amend the current trail system plan
- Policy 8.3.2 Develop a short term plan to facilitate the creation of the Sproat Lake trail system.

Objective 8.4 To improve access to Sproat lake

- Policy 8.4.1 Evaluate all access points to the lake to determine the level of public accessibility that may be achieved
- Policy 8.4.2 Strive to increase lakefront open space on Sproat Lake excluding road allowances where possible, but being respectful of the privacy and security of lake front residences.
- Policy 8.4.3 Actively discourage use of road allowances for illegal structures such as floats and wharves, illegal land uses and disruptive social activities.

Objective 8.5 To protect agricultural activity in areas affected by a trail system.

- Policy 8.5.1 Work with the Agricultural Land Commission and agricultural operators to ensure that the design of pedestrian trails is such that there is no negative impact on agricultural operations.

Objective 8.6 To maximize public access to the Stamp, Somass and Sproat Rivers whilst preserving riparian setbacks to preserve river ecologies

- Policy 8.6.1 Explore with the Province the opportunities of conversion of the Sproat River park reserve to a local park with trail access through it providing public access to the Sproat River and enabling a link between Sproat Lake and Seaton Park
- Policy 8.6.2 Ensure that any new trails along the rivers respect a natural riparian setback to protect riverside wildlife and aquatic habitat.

Objective 8.7 To facilitate development and use of Somers and Seaton Parks as local parks

Policy 8.7.1 Encourage the City of Port Alberni to provide access trails, picnic areas and signage within Seaton Park and Somers Park

Policy 8.7.2 Open a dialogue with the City of Port Alberni to either effect a transfer of these parks to the Regional District as local parks or to facilitate Regional District sponsored parks programming that caters to local District residents.

Objective 8.8 To discourage spontaneous camping on Sproat Lake

Policy 8.8.1 Work with the Province and the TFL 44 operator to document the locations, extent and impact of spontaneous wilderness camping on Sproat Lake, including the impact of illegal garbage and sewage disposal

Policy 8.8.2 Explore the possibility of Fossli Provincial Park providing some wilderness camping spaces

Policy 8.8.3 Review with the Province the future status of Fossli Provincial Park, either as a provincial park or as a future local park

Policy 8.8.4 Review with the TFL operator the idea of the Two Rivers Arm park reserve being developed as a wilderness camping site to relieve pressure of individual wilderness camping along the south shore of Sproat Lake, including the concept of a new portage route connecting Taylor Arm and Two Rivers Arm

Objective 8.9 To support establishment of a scenic corridor along the north side of Sproat Lake

Policy 8.9.1 Work with the TFL 44 operators and the Province to protect a scenic view corridor on Highway 4 along Sproat Lake

Objective 8.10 To expand trail usage.

Policy 8.10.1 Encourage continued use of trails for multiple uses including horseback riding

Chapter 9 Residential

Sproat Lake began as a residential lake and no wonder, with its recreational charms and its mountain - enhanced views, not to mention the fishing within it, but increased residential and recreational demands on the lake have resulted in conflicts between houseboat users and lakeside residents. This also provides an example of the clash of demands as the lake provides drinking water as well as a convenient flushing receptacle for houseboats and recreational boat marine toilets.

Because of the poor soil conditions in some areas surrounding the lake, septic tanks do not perform well, and leaching into the lake occurs so that increased residential densification means that a solution to sewage disposal must be found. This might lie in the provision of a communal sewer or new innovative, environmentally sensitive methods of sewage treatment and disposal. New areas for residential development at appropriate densities are identified in the plan and these would be phased in at such times as the servicing issues - water supply and sewage disposal - are resolved and planned for.

Most of the residential development is concentrated at the eastern portion of Sproat Lake and that is the area which will support new residential development. Such development should also be supported by the creation of a new community focal point containing some retail services and some recreational/tourist services, such focal point to be designed and developed using progressive environmentally sustainable principles.

In the past, recreational water - access lots have been created on the south side of the lake. This plan recognizes that such residential development should not be encouraged in the future if we are to avoid rural sprawl and further environmental problems for the lake. A number of water access-only recreational lots were created on the north side of Taylor Arm and were granted road access when Highway 4 was built. These lots suffer access problems (direct access to Highway 4) and servicing problems (sewage disposal) so some study is needed to determine if these areas could qualify for a zoning change to regular residential zoning and allow permanent residence. They are also an example of the dangers of creating water-only access recreational lots when circumstances alter and such lots are used for permanent living but without adequate services.

Currently there are, according to the 2001 Canada census, 2016 people living in the planning area. In 1981 there were 2335 people and since the 1996 census, there has been a drop in population of 1.8%. Table 2 below, from the 2001 Canada Census, indicates the population breakdown.

Table 3 POPULATION 2001 - Electoral Area D (Sproat Lake)

Age Group	Number	Percentage (comparison with BC)
0-4 years	70	3.5% (5.2%)
5-14	270	13.4% (12.8%)
15-19	170	8.4% (6.9%)

20-24	75	3.7% (6.3%)
25-44	430	21.3% (30%)
45-54	480	23.8% (15.3%)
55-64	280	13.9% (9.7%)
65+	235	11.7% (13.6%)
TOTAL	2016	100%

As the table indicates the area is much more middle aged in relation to British Columbia. The 45-64 age group in Sproat Lake is 37.7% compared to the Province at 25%. This will mean more attention to seniors needs and services in the coming years, especially the demand for health care. There is also a significant deficiency in the number of young people after the age of 20 compared to the Province as a whole indicating that young people move on out of the planning area, in search of jobs, education etc. An economic development strategy to provide employment prospects to young people to retain their vitality in the area needs to be encouraged. The provision of affordable housing and rental housing needs to be encouraged to attract and sustain a younger population. Heed should also be paid to the special housing needs of seniors.

The new plan anticipates approximately an additional 200 people can be accommodated within the plan boundaries over the next 5 years and 400 in total over the next 10 years. This will be achieved through intensification, infill and development of three areas - Bell Road/Stuart Avenue area, the area east of Faber Road (District Lot 120) and Lakeshore Road. There are 954 private dwellings in the area and growth at the rate of 2% is expected over the next 10 years. This will create an additional 190 dwellings, a rate of 19 new dwellings per year.

The provision of overall urban-type utilities such as piped water and sewage disposal would increase development levels and lot sizes would, of necessity be much smaller, an issue which might be inconsistent with the stated objective of retaining the rural atmosphere which the residents cherish. However, studies should be done to determine where communal water and sewage systems might be installed to cater to increased density and use.

Objective 9.1 To protect Sproat Lake from the adverse effects of residential development

- Policy 9.1.1 Support or encourage vigilant enforcement by the relevant authority having jurisdiction to ensure there is no sewage disposal or sewage percolation into the lake
- Policy 9.1.2 Approve no further residential ribbon development on lake along Taylor Arm except for those areas already so designated on Plan Map No. 6, but instead encourage development infill on Sproat Lake Arm
- Policy 9.1.3 For major developments, place reliance on communal water and sewage disposal systems

Objective 9.2 To provide a choice of housing for all ages and income groups

Policy 9.2.1 Prepare a study of housing demand over the next 10 years to determine potential housing needs for different age and income groups and gaps in supply, including any needs for affordable housing, rental housing and housing for seniors.

Policy 9.2.2 Coordinate such residential housing demands with long range regional housing demands as part of a valley-wide strategy

Objective 9.3 To allow residential development behind the lake access to the recreational facilities of the lake.

Policy 9.3.1 Improve local residential access to Sproat Lake via street end access points and lake view corridors

Objective 9.4 To discourage further the development of water-only access recreational lots

Policy 9.4.1 Introduce a Regional District policy to allow no further zoning for recreational or water-access lots on Sproat Lake

Policy 9.4.2 Examine the current recreational lots on Taylor Arm to determine if they should qualify for traditional residential zoning taking into account current problems with road access and servicing

Objective 9.5 To discourage any new residential, float home or recreational lot development on Great Central Lake except in the Boot Lagoon area

Policy 9.5.1 All float homes to be brought up to meet provincial float home building code standards i.e. flotation and stability; design and construction; provision of utilities(electrical and gas); plumbing and sewage disposal; wharf and pier construction; moorage; access; cleanliness; fire protection and given 10 years to comply

Policy 9.5.2 Work with the appropriate agencies to ensure that no water licence approvals be granted for new float homes on Great Central Lake until a new float home and recreational lot plan for the lake is developed.

Objective 9.6 To encourage infill residential in the Bell Road/ Stuart Avenue area

Policy 9.6.1 Allow low density rural residential infill based on current servicing levels

Policy 9.6.2 Consider higher residential densities in this area (including a small area west of McCoy Lake Road) based on the future provision of a community water system through the Tseshah Reserve

Policy 9.6.3 Prepare a local plan for this area to integrate development with future developments on the Tseshah Reserve

Objective 9.7 To provide for in-home employment by allowing housing choice

Policy 9.7.1 Provide in the zoning bylaw for home-based businesses and live/work units in residential zones.

Chapter 10 Commercial

There is a very small commercial base in the area (Map 2) as a result of the small population and the very low residential densities. Most of the commercial land use is related to tourism, a natural thing since the area has a magnificent environment that would naturally attract tourists.

Since the 1920s with the establishment of the old Klitsa lodge on Sproat Lake and the Ark floating resort on Great Cental Lake the area has catered to visitors wishing a fulfilling outdoor experience- fishing, sightseeing, boating, mountain hiking, kayaking etc. With the initiation of the improved Highway 4 to the west coast (currently 800, 000 visitors /year pass through on way to the Pacific Rim) campgrounds, motels and RV Resorts have proliferated on the north side of Sproat Lake, especially on Lakeshore Road and this plan encourages these uses to remain. Bed and Breakfast operations have also concentrated along Faber Road.

On Faber Road, the Fish & Duck Pub rents out houseboats and there is a small scale convenience market to serve the local population (Lakeshore store). It is recognized that Port Alberni will continue to supply the bulk of commercial needs for the residents of the area in terms of retail shopping and other commercial needs- banking, personal needs items, etc.

On the Tsahaheh Reserve #1 on Pacific Rim Highway a small convenience store/gas station has been developed to cater to reserve members and the local community as well as travelers on the Pacific Rim Highway.

Objective 10.1 *To support the existing neighborhood store*

- Policy 10.1.1 Ensure that Regional District bylaws allow the continuation of the neighborhood store on Lakeshore Road
- Policy 10.1.2 Encourage new residential development infilling on the west side of Sproat Lake Arm in the vicinity of the Lakeshore neighborhood store

Objective 10.2 To limit the houseboat industry on Sproat Lake

- Policy 10.2.1 No support for any planned development that increases the number of houseboats on the lake
- Policy 10.2.2 Support the development of a sewage pump-out facility to serve the lake and the successive implementation of a “no dump” zone on the lake
- Policy 10.2.3 Study opportunities of phasing out or reducing the number of houseboats currently operating on Sproat Lake.

Objective 10.3 To encourage some commercial/recreational development on Great Central Lake to relieve pressure on Sproat Lake

- Policy 10.3.1 Develop a recreational master plan for increased recreational use of Great Central Lake, identifying which recreational uses might be suitable for the lake, including wilderness campsites, float homes and houseboats
- Policy 10.3.2 Investigate the possibilities of additional resort development in the Boot Lagoon area near the Ark resort, including new lakeside campsites and a marina
- Policy 10.3.3 Ensure current float homes meet environmental standards and do not pollute the lake
- Policy 10.3.4 Explore with the TFL operator the possibility of increased public access to the south shore of Great Central Lake

Objective 10.4 To support continuation and expansion of the resort development area on Lakeshore Road and the bed and breakfast industry throughout the area ensuring that stringent environmental and 'good neighbour' standards apply.

- Policy 10.4.1 Ensure that zoning bylaws allow for continued operation and expansion of tourist-oriented businesses on Lakeshore Road and Faber Road but also that bed and breakfast businesses are properly operated according to bylaw requirements
- Policy 10.4.2 Minimize conflict between tourist-oriented businesses and adjacent residences by requiring adequate landscaped buffers around the business use

Objective 10.5 To encourage expansion of sports fishing

- Policy 10.5.1 Examine current sport fishing opportunities in Sproat and Great Central Lakes and identify ways to enhance indigenous fish stocks.
- Policy 10.5.2 Work with economic development agencies and the Province to publicize the advantages of sports fishing vacations in the Sproat Lake area.
- Policy 10.5.3 Support the successful continuation of the steelhead sports fishing industry based on the Somass and Stamp Rivers.

Chapter 11 Industry and Employment

There is a small industrial complex at the Alberni Valley Regional Airport (Map 2) that include air transport-related uses - Coulson Aircrane, Canadian Aero Technologies (which provides aero engine overhaul services) and, since this is the heart of a large forestry region, a BC forest fire crew. It seems that this area is most suitable for the expansion of a small industrial park that could include consumer service industries, manufacturing and other air service related industries.

Since much of the airport is within the ALR, a decision on removal from the ALR is needed before any such expansion can come to fruition. However, the airport is ideally suited for industrial growth with good road access and air links.

Close to the Somass River estuary, Weyerhaeuser and Coulson Forest Products both operate truck/machinery storage and repair yards and Weyerhaeuser has a regional office located nearby. These serve the needs of the tree farm licence and are historical uses. Consideration should be given to the relocation of these uses within TFL 44 but away from the environmentally sensitive areas of the Somass estuary.

The intent of the plan is to reduce in area the industrial designations close to environmentally sensitive areas and to compensate for this by the creation of additional industrially designated land at the airport.

Much new growth in the world's economy is based on knowledge-based businesses - computer software, internet sales etc which can be located anywhere outside urban areas. Areas which have a high degree of natural beauty, such as the Alberni Valley may be attractive to these type of foot-loose businesses, depending on where the proprietors seek to live. It is recommended that any new economic development strategy take this into account.

The area has a huge supply of timber, much of which is shipped out in a semi-processed state. If value-added products emanating from wood - furniture, toys, kitchen implements, jewellery, wooden bowls, wood art - could be encouraged to locate here, this would provide local employment working on a local resource and may be a valuable add-on to the tourist industry. Imaginative government financing and assistance is needed to encourage local entrepreneurs.

For the area's gravel deposits in the area of the landfill site, a gravel resource management plan is needed to be done by the Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management for DL 268 and DL 307 to identify the extent of the resource and to ensure comprehensive equitable development of this valuable resource for the benefit of the region provided there are provided adequate buffering standards for gravel extraction sites and the subsequent reclamation of worked out gravel areas. Similarly, gravel deposits are present near the airport.

It is estimated that there are normally between 5 and 10% of the regular jobs in home based businesses, so it is assumed that there are 50-100 home-based businesses - hairdressing, sales etc in the area. This plan recommends that such use of residential premises be expanded to

take advantage of convenient wireless technology - the internet, cell phones - and that the zoning bylaw be amended to allow easier use of residential properties for home based businesses and live/work residences too, provided that such uses are regulated to minimize disturbances to neighbors- delivery trucks, parking problems etc. It is also recommended that there be a business licence system introduced both as a means of revenue and as a source of information.

Objective 11.1 To create a business park at the regional airport

- Policy 11.1.1 Identify a location for a small business park at the regional airport and take steps to allow for the proper zoning and subdivision of such an area
- Policy 11.1.2 Take steps to initiate removal of the regional airport from the Agricultural land reserve to facilitate its development and the creation of the business park
- Policy 11.1.3 Work with economic development agencies to identify potential clients for airport business park space

Objective 11.2 To protect gravel sources

- Policy 11.2.1 Request the Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management to undertake a gravel resources management plan for the areas included in District Lots 268 and 307
- Policy 11.2.2 Recognize the importance of a reliable gravel supply to the general growth of the region and work to protect such sources from urban development that precludes exploitation of such use
- Policy 11.2.3 Ensure that any gravel resource exploitation plan excludes and protects Devil's Den Lake

Objective 11.3 To limit the location of industrial uses in close proximity to environmentally sensitive areas in the Somass River estuary

- Policy 11.3.1 Work with industrial uses in close proximity to the Somass River Estuary to ensure that current operations can be environmentally compatible with the findings of the Somass Estuary Management Plan

Objective 11.4 To provide for the growth of home-based businesses

- Policy 11.4.1 Review all applicable zoning bylaws to ensure that home based businesses can operate in residential areas, with suitable protection for nearby residences

Chapter 12 Tourism and Culture

If the forestry industry is not as robust as in past years and if employment levels and economic impact on the region substantially reduced, the slack has been more than taken with the accelerated growth of the tourism industry. From sports fishing to extreme sports, from kayaking to bird watching, from water skiing to cross-country skiing, all aspects of the area's magnificent physical attractions are being explored with a view to increasing the desirability to visitors. Sports tourism and its associated events - mountain bike events, mountain film festivals, sports book festivals, salmon festivals etc are all part of the diverse tourist attractions that could benefit the community. Winter sports in the region suffered a setback with the demise of the Mt Arrowsmith ski facility. However other winter sports activities can be considered, from skating on Devils Den Lake to snowmobiling and cross country skiing on the Mt Klitsa plateau. In fact an outstation on the Mt Klitsa plateau could complement summer and winter activity for any new resort development on Sproat Lake. A new motor sports park near the airport could also act as a visitor attraction to the area.

Tourism brought in substantial revenue to the region in 2002 and there is further expansion potential, with the growth of eco-tourism and agri-tourism. In terms of the latter, based on what is occurring in other parts of the region and on Vancouver Island, potential exists for the sale of organic produce, wool products including clothing, foodstuff preparation, wineries, plants and shrubs, petting farms and freshwater fish. Special farm tours, corn mazes, baked goods, special events (medieval night, son-et-lumiere etc) and educational tours are all possible to expand farm income and make farming more attractive as well as providing the visitor more reasons for staying an extra night in the community.

In addition, the area's extensive First Nations settlement history and culture provides new scope for the visitor industry - canoe trips, interpretive centers, feast houses, historical recreations and sweat lodges. The First Nations cultural presence provides visitors with a new dimension which complements the physical beauty of the area- a dynamic combination. The thrust of this plan, therefore is to encourage the growth and coordination of the tourism and culture sectors in tandem.

The regions old industrial base also holds many fascinations to visitors and could be examined with a view to diversifying the economic base - use of abandoned logging railways, interpretive information about old logging camps and company towns, exploration of old mill sites and old mining sites.

The Pacific Rim highway offers few services to the visitor for most of the length of Sproat Lake and indeed almost to the Pacific Ocean so it is recommended that small tourist rest stops be considered at intervals to allow visitors to stop, refresh themselves and take in the scenery at selected viewpoints.

There are a number of bed and breakfast businesses in the planning area ([Map 2](#)), mainly related to Sproat Lake, on Faber Road and Stirling Arm Road and these provide a vital extension of the conventional accommodation industry and should be encouraged to expand and to offer the tourist a unique 'Sproat Lake' experience. RV parks and campgrounds abound in the area from the Ark Resort on Great Central Lake, to Arrowvale Campground on Hector Road, Lakeshore Campgrounds and Cottages, Tall Timbers Holiday Resort and

the Maples Resort, all on Sproat Lake. The West Bay Hotel at the western end of Sproat Lake Arm contains 14 rooms.

Karst limestone formations exist south of Two Rivers Arm such formations providing distinct vegetation and topography as well as providing possible opportunities for cave exploration.

House boat rentals on Sproat Lake, based at the Fish and Duck pub on Faber Road are popular summer uses of the lake but these only amount to eight in number and there is little chance of expansion owing to neighborhood opposition (noise, lake pollution) and the new water zoning that has recently been applied to the lake and restricts house boat overnight mooring to areas on Two Rivers Arm and Taylor Arm. The plan recommends expansion of campground/RV park uses along Sproat Lake in locations that provide protection of neighboring residential uses from noise and other disturbances and that provide suitable environmental safeguards for the lake.

Objective 12.1 To encourage increased tourism experiences based on First Nations settlement and culture

Policy 12.1.1 Work with the Tseshaht and Hupacasath First Nations to include information about First Nations history and culture and identify opportunities to experience such in any major new resort development

Policy 12.1.2 Work with the First Nation to identify tourism opportunities on the reserves on Highway 4

Objective 12.2 To showcase and encourage the development of eco-tourism and agri-tourism

Policy 12.2.1 Work with local tourist operators to identify the demands and opportunities for increased eco-tourism and agri-tourism in the area and work with local farmers and tourist operators to plan for such opportunities

Objective 12.3 To promote better transportation connections to the region

Policy 12.3.1 Encourage the regional airport authority to consider regular flight connections with Tofino, Comox, Vancouver and Victoria.

Policy 12.3.2 Work with the Province to press for incremental improvements to Highway 4 through the Sproat Lake area

Objective 12.4 To review all regional district bylaws with the intent of making them more accommodating of visitor services and requirements

Policy 12.4.1 Review the zoning bylaws with respect to any impediments they offer to the maintenance and expansion of tourism-based accommodation such as bed and breakfast businesses, resort development and recreational vehicle-oriented parks, and correct such impediments after due consultation with the visitor industry

Objective 12.5 To explore other opportunities for cultural and sports tourism

Policy 12.5.1 Work with economic development agencies to produce an economic development strategy for tourism that includes more opportunities for tourism in the region including book fairs, salmon festivals, extreme sports film festivals, mountain bike festivals events, ironman triathlons etc

Objective 12.6 To encourage the development of rest stops for visitors at selected viewpoints along the Pacific Rim Highway, -coffee sales, local fruit etc

Policy 12.6.1 Work with the Ministry of Highways to identify suitable areas for visitor rest stops on Highway 4.

Policy 12.6.2 Encourage the regular culling of vegetation at the Highway 4 rest stop at Sproat Lake to preserve panoramic views of the lake

Policy 12.6.3 Work with the economic development agencies to identify visitor need at highway rest stops, including commercial opportunities

Objective 12.7 To support the growth of the visitor industry

Policy 12.7.1 Encourage the expansion of the bed and breakfast/guesthouse industry

Policy 12.7.2 Work with local tourism operators to develop a tourist strategy to include opportunities for longer stays, more things to do, development of international markets, extreme sports expansion

Policy 12.7.3 Make provision to meet the special needs of seniors and older travelers

Policy 12.7.4 Coordinate any tourist promotion activity in the area with that of major tourist assets in the region (e.g. Pacific Rim National Park and McLean Mill)

Policy 12.7.5 Identify the demands for wilderness camping opportunities on Sproat Lake and Great Central Lake and develop a program to deliver such opportunities through either the Province or through the Regional District

Objective 12.8 To encourage development of industrial and historic tourism

Policy 12.8.1 Provide more tourism activities based on either the re-creation of old logging camps for visitor living/dining experiences or the erection of interpretive signs regarding the logging history of the Great Central Lake area and identifying former logging camp locations around the lake

Policy 12.8.2 Review the Great Central Lake area for opportunities for the development of more walking trails based on old logging railway routes

Policy 12.8.3 Expand the range of tourism attractions in the area by encouraging industrial archaeology-based tourism based on original forest industry

Chapter 13 Transportation and Circulation

Road System - the area is dominated by the Pacific Rim Highway (Highway #4) which traverses the Island and connects Port Alberni to Tofino/Bamfield on the west coast and Parksville on the east coast of the Island. From the city boundary west, the road is winding and tortuous and severe delays are experienced in the summer months when the west coast recreational traffic is at its peak. It is estimated that over 800, 000 vehicles pass along the Pacific Rim Highway every year and illustrates the great tourist drawing power of the west coast, providing some opportunities for the expansion of the tourist industry within the community. However Highway 4 to the west coast is a difficult and winding experience for visitors and the Province should be encouraged to develop a plan for improvement of Highway 4 from the Island Highway (Highway 19) all the way to the Ucluelet junction. The 1981 Regional Road Network study also identified two bypass routes that would:

1. take Highway 4 north -east of the Great Central Lake Road intersection, crossing Stamp River near Plymouth Road; and
2. utilize Hector Road connecting the Sproat River bridge on Highway 4 across the Stamp River near Withers Road. However no action has been taken in the intervening years to implement these proposals and neither is there any timetable in the immediate future.

No transit services are available to serve Sproat Lake but some consideration might be given to discussing with BC Transit the possibilities of a summer service to the lake from Port Alberni.

Rail System - the rail system has all but been abandoned now that the E&N railway is no longer used by the major paper industry to ship products out. A once extensive system of main line and logging railways are now memory only and there is no possibility of any change in this except for the possibilities held open by the tourist industry.

Water transport - Port Alberni is a deep water port and is still used for deep sea exports of paper and timber products. There is no other use made of water transport (apart from the use of Sproat Lake by the water bombers) except for recreational purposes - tours of Sproat Lake and excursions to Della Falls at the west end of Great Central Lake and First Nations canoe tours on the Somass River

Airport - The Alberni Valley Regional Airport on Airport Road is operated by the Regional District and is basically a 4, 000 foot runway capable of accepting commuter planes and a small office/waiting room. New radar and GPS systems allow IFR landings. A new weather station and GPS systems allow IFR landings and there is also a fuel service depot and plans for a future float plane strip. There are no scheduled flights to Comox, Vancouver or Victoria but the airport is still considered as a vital link in the promotion of the tourist industry. There are no immediate plans to expand the service at the airport. The airport does provide the nucleus of a small industrial complex for businesses with an air connection - Coulson Aircranes, Vancouver Island Helicopters etc- and this should be encouraged to expand.

There is little provision for the pedestrian or biking tourist and the success of the Log Train Trail provides some rationale to consider the Sproat Lake Trail System as a necessary tourist service as well as benefitting local people.

Objective 13.1 To urge the implementation of the recommendations of the 1981 Alberni Valley Road Network report

- Policy 13.1.1 Encourage the Ministry of Transportation to press for improvements to Highway 4 to make it a safer and more pleasant drive
- Policy 13.1.2 Work with the Ministry of Transportation, should the Highway 4 bypass route identified in the above report be considered for implementation, to ensure the route selected has the least impact on the community and agricultural operations.
- Policy 13.1.3 All new developments will be reviewed with the Ministry of Transportation to ensure road standards and intersection design meet with Ministry of Transportation standards.

Objective 13.2 To support the upgrading of the Alberni Valley Regional Airport leading to regularly scheduled flights to other municipalities

- Policy 13.2.1 Work with economic development agencies and the Regional Airport Authority to identify how the regional airport can be made more operational in terms of air links outside the region and within the region
- Policy 13.2.2 Identify current deficiencies in services offered by the regional airport and develop a long term plan to upgrade the airport operation
- Policy 13.2.3 Work with the Airport to identify future demands for float plane facilities

Objective 13.3 To encourage the development of other forms of non-mechanized transportation

- Policy 13.3.1 Identify opportunities for the expansion of trail systems including walking trails, horse trails and bicycle routes connecting the Sproat Lake area

Objective 13.4 To encourage some summer transit links between Sproat Lake and Port Alberni

- Policy 13.4.1 Initiate discussions with BC Transit or private operators about possible summertime service to Sproat Lake from Port Alberni to serve visitors and campers.

Objective 13.5 *To improve road access to the regional solid waste landfill site.*

- Policy 13.5.1 Work with the Ministry of Transportation, First Nations and local residents to upgrade road access to the regional solid waste landfill site from Highway 4 via McCoy Lake Road.

Chapter 14 Public Utilities

There are a number of public utilities present in the planning area ([Map 5](#)):

Water Supply - Norske Canada holds a license to divert 260, 000 cubic meters per day of water from Sproat Lake for industrial purposes and this is accomplished by way of a small weir at the north east corner of the lake. The water from the lake is diverted via the main intake on Stirling Arm via a pipeline to Norske mill. The pipeline was recently upgraded by Norske at a cost of \$10m. Norske also maintains the weir and the outlet on Sproat Lake.

A water license was also granted to Macmillan Bloedel (Norske Canada's predecessor) for the storage and release of 98 million cubic meters of Great Central Lake water but it is estimated that with major improvements to the mill's effluent discharge this amount of dilution water can be reduced. Fisheries requirements for the two fish hatcheries will govern whether the barrier can be removed as it would cause a 14 ft drop in water level which could also affect any future regional water supply.

Residential water supply is provided by way of individual intakes from Sproat Lake for residences around the lake and by private wells for those properties away from the lake. A 1995 regional water supply report stated that "the occasional localized high coliform counts in Sproat Lake ... are caused by unsewered residential runoff along the eastern shores of the lake" (referring to the vicinity of the Norske mill intake). The 1995 study concluded that a regional supply was best served from Great Central Lake. The lake surface is controlled by a dam built to ensure regulated downstream flows into the Somass River to provide dilution at the point of discharge of the wastewater from the mill. This method of dilution is now considered unnecessary by the mill operators.

A regional water supply system using Great Central Lake and supplying the Sproat lake area would cost approximately \$45m according to the 1995 study by Koers and Associates Engineering Ltd. The problems of float homes discharging sewage into Great Central Lake needs to be eliminated if this lake is to be used as regional water supply. In the absence of agreement on a costly regional supply system, individuals must rely on private wells so it is of extreme importance that the Sproat Lake water is kept clean and healthy if it is to continue as a major supplier of potable water. This will require vigilance regarding malfunctioning septic systems and an assurance that any new major developments will be provided with a sewage system that is environmentally friendly and pollutant-free. In addition, certain uses of the lake - for example houseboats - will need to be strictly regulated as to size, mooring locations and sewage disposal.

While the Ash River hydro-electric project is outwith the plan area, it will affect water flow within the plan area. Therefore, it is recommended that the Regional District liaise with Norske Canada and BC Hydro to ensure the necessary water flow to the Stamp River system as per the recommendations of the Ash River Water Use Plan.

Studies have also been made of the options of providing a water supply system to the Bell Road\Stuart Avenue area. This area is served by septic systems but evidence of e-coli contamination of wells has raised the issue of piped water being supplied to the area. One option is an extension of piped water through the Tseshah reserve (the water being supplied

by Port Alberni under agreement). This would require support from the City of Port Alberni and the Tseshahat band.

For single family residences, sewage disposal is provided by individual septic systems and some problems have been experienced at the eastern end of Sproat Lake due to malfunctioning septic systems and the discharge of coliform bacteria into the lake. Other potential sources of pollution such as discharge from houseboats and recreational boat users and the industrial use of the lake for water bomber storage and maintenance need to be carefully examined to ensure continued purity of water supply and the Sproat Lake Marine Patrol, which operates in the summer months, could be considered for some environmental patrolling outside the summer period.

A small hydro - electric power plant is operated at the west end of Taylor Arm using water diverted from Doran Lake to produce power for the regional grid. Such small power operations are desirable if they are environmentally friendly, sustainable, create local employment and diminish the need for huge, expensive power plants. A large power transmission line right of way also crosses the area linking Great Central Lake with the Norske Canada paper mill.

A regional solid waste landfill site operates off McCoy Lake Road under a regional solid waste management plan approved by the provincial Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection. The land currently controlled by the ACRD for the landfill is sufficient to provide for solid waste disposal for the region for 91 years. The operation is inconspicuous to the public because of its remote location and it operates according to all applicable environmental requirements, so no changes to this operation are envisaged by this plan. The adjacent TFL area to the east could provide further expansion for the landfill for up to 300 years and some discussions with the adjacent landowner to explore this option is warranted.

Objective 14.1 To protect the water quality of Sproat and Great Central Lakes

- Policy 14.1.1 Ensure that major new developments are provided with non-polluting community sewage systems
- Policy 14.1.2 Continuance and expansion to a year round basis of the Sproat Lake Marine Patrol

Objective 14.2 To support the long term creation of a regional water supply system based on Great Central Lake

- Policy 14.2.1 Encourage the Regional Board to make a statement supporting a preference of a long term regional water supply being from Great Central Lake as per the 1995 study “ Alberni Valley Regional Water Study”.
- Policy 14.2.2 Examine the impact on water supply options and on fish hatchery operations should the current barrier owned by Norske Canada be declared surplus to paper mill water requirements and it be mooted for removal.

Objective 14.3 To support the continuation and expansion of the regional solid waste landfill site

- Policy 14.3.1 Support the continued operation of the current regional landfill site.

Policy 14.3.2 Explore with the adjacent landowners the options of very long term expansion of the landfill site

Objective 14.4 To encourage the expansion of small, environmentally friendly and sustainable hydro power plants in the area.

Policy 14.4.1 Work with BC Hydro to examine opportunities for more small scale hydro plants in the Sproat Lake area, considering the economic advantages and the possible environmental impact of such plants

Objective 14.5 To encourage the extension of piped city water through the Tseshabt reserve to serve the Bell Road/ Stuart Avenue area and to the Alberni Valley landfill site.

Policy 14.5.1 Work with the City of Port Alberni and the Tseshabt First Nation to allow for the extension of a piped water system through the reserve to serve the Bell Road/ Stuart Avenue and landfill areas to allow for more intensive residential growth.

Policy 14.5.2 Work with the City of Port Alberni and the Tseshabt First Nation to allow for the extension of piped water through the Tseshabt Reserve to service the Alberni Valley landfill site area.

Objective 14.6 To enact the recommendations of the Ash River Water Use Plan

Policy 14.6.1 Work with Norske Canada and BC Hydro to ensure the continuation of necessary water flow to the Stamp River system as per the recommendations and protocols established by the Ash River Water Use Plan.

Chapter 15 Community Facilities and Services

The Sproat Elementary school on Pacific Rim Highway (Map 5) was closed in September 2003, (enrollment in K-6 was 150 students, with the K-Grade 5 students being relocated to the Alberni Elementary school and the Grade 6 students to the A W Neill Junior Secondary school). A possible First Nations educational use of the school has also been identified since the school has now been purchased by the Tseshahst First Nation. Such school closures are unfortunate as they remove some of the social glue holding a community together and it is to be hoped that the school will not be lost forever to the community.

Fire protection for the Sproat Lake area is provided by three fire halls in the community operated by the Sproat Lake Volunteer Fire Department. These offer adequate fire protection to the community and no immediate changes are needed in the level of fire protection.

Recreational facilities are provided in the City of Port Alberni at the Echo Community and Aquatic Center under an agreement by which the Sproat Lake Electoral Area contributes to the operation of these facilities. Tennis courts are provided at the Cougar Smith Regional Park off Faber Road, the site of the former Faber Road elementary school which was closed permanently several years ago, as well as at Lakeshore Community Hall.

The Sproat Lake area is also served by the Vancouver Island Regional Library branch in Port Alberni which shares adjacent premises with the Alberni Valley Museum within the Echo Center complex.

The Alberni Valley Moto-Cross Association operates a small moto -cross site for members off Trill Pit Road, west of Devils Den Lake. This site is ideally suited because of its isolation from residential uses. There is a proposal to create a bigger and better located motor sports complex north east of the Alberni Valley Regional Airport to tie into the current part time use of the airport as a drag racing strip. A private club operates a water ski park facility, with clubhouse, on leased land on the south side of Stirling Arm.

Hospital and medical facilities are provided in the city of Port Alberni at the West Coast General Hospital, a regional-serving facility operated by the Vancouver Island Regional Health Authority and long term care for seniors is provided for the region at the Westhaven long term care facility within the hospital complex. There are no specific services for youth or seniors in the Sproat Lake area, a function of the small population and the rural nature of the area; such services as are needed are being met in Port Alberni.

Objective 15.1 To work with the Tseshahst First Nation to examine the use of the closed Sproat Lake Elementary School by the community

Policy 15.1.1 Identify potential community benefit of the closed Sproat Lake Elementary School and work with the Tseshahst First Nation to facilitate continuing community use of the school.

Objective 15.2 To facilitate the orderly development of a new motor sports complex adjacent to the Alberni Valley regional airport

- Policy 15.2.1 Work with motor sports user groups and the TFL 44 operators to identify the long term needs of the regional motor sport and moto-cross operations and facilitate the development of an integrated regional motor sports facility on an expanded site east of the regional airport.
- Policy 15.2.2 Work with the Agricultural Land Commission to ensure that the operation of the facility and the associated access roads do not negatively impact adjacent agricultural operations.

Objective 15.3 To review fire and rescue service to the community

- Policy 15.3.1 Work with the Sproat Lake Volunteer Fire Department to review long term growth in the Sproat Lake area to determine the most efficient provision of fire service, through a National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) certified process.
- Policy 15.3.2 Continue to explore the possibilities of expansion of the existing fire and rescue protection area.

Chapter 16 Heritage Conservation

The substantial First Nations presence in the area is evidenced by the existence of petroglyphs at the eastern end of Sproat Lake (Map 2) and various other spiritual/cultural sites of significance. In addition, the close-by presence of the Tseshaht and Klehkoot (Hupacasath) reserves provides the opportunity for the community to work with the First Nations peoples to provide a concept that would celebrate the culture of First nations peoples, either in the form of development on the reserves - sweat lodge, canoe tours, feast house, museum of First nations culture etc. - or in some form in the bomber base mixed use area.

Industrial archaeology, where the remains of old logging sites, sawmill sites and old mining locales are identified and preserved or re-created, could be an important addition to the experience of visitors to the area as well as preserving local historic locations. At Great Central Lake, on Boot Lagoon, are the remnants of a logging community that existed from the mid 1920s to the early 1950s. This community of 350 people clustered around the sawmill and connected to the Island railway system was a good example of the settlement pattern created by early development of the logging and saw milling industry in remote locations, made possible by the railways.

Some efforts should be made to preserve what remains and to provide educational information to give visitors some concept of how early life in resource towns was conducted. In conjunction with the McLean sawmill, such a development could provide to local residents and visitors a good educational experience to settlement history in the area and a boost to the tourist industry. Culturally modified trees (where First Nations stripped the bark from trees for canoe and clothes making), heritage tree stumps (evidence of springboard chops) and corduroy roads (early logging trails where the logs were extracted using wooden log roads that resemble corduroy) are all worthy of preservation as part of an overall tourism strategy. Similarly, old logging railway routes should be mapped and their future use as trails made part of the tourism strategy

The plan proposes a utilization of logging railway trails for a system of community pedestrian/biking/horse riding trails where these do not interfere with active logging operations. Along the route there should be interpretive stops so that travelers can begin to appreciate the important role that logging railways played in the early expansion of the logging industry.

There is a long history of the forestry industry in the community, going back to the 19th century, so there should be some recognition of this contribution to the community's development by the creation of a forestry industry interpretive center. If and when Flying Tankers have no need for the Martin Mars water bombers, efforts should be made for the community to retain one at Sproat Lake in recognition of the unique naval aviation history the planes represent and the link with Sproat Lake and the forestry industry that they embody. This could be a major tourist attraction as a part of a forestry interpretive center at the bomber base mixed use area.

The current Sproat Lake Community Hall on Bomber Base Road is in poor shape and needs either rehabilitation or replacement within the bomber base mixed use area.

Objective 16.1 To identify historic and cultural resources in the community

- Policy 16.1.1 Protect what remains of the site of the old Great Central Lake mill townsite at Boot Lagoon and provide explanatory signs for visitors
- Policy 16.1.2 Identify significant heritage tree stumps and preserve the best examples within a local park
- Policy 16.1.3 Negotiate with Flying Tankers Inc to preserve one of the Martin Mars water bombers in the community, at Sproat Lake, when no longer needed for fire fighting duties
- Policy 16.1.4 Create a forest industry interpretive/history center at the bomber base mixed use area.
- Policy 16.1.5 Map and conserve old logging railway beds as community trails, with interpretive information signs at regular intervals along the trail.
- Policy 16.1.6 Rehabilitate or replace the Sproat Lake Community Hall in a new, close by location.
- Policy 16.1.7 Protect First Nation cultural and archaeological heritage sites in the Devils Den Lake area, the Somass Estuary, the Alberni Inlet and on the Sproat Lake and Great Central lake sides.

Objective 16.2 To encourage local First Nations to create cultural attractions that celebrate their contribution to the history of the community and region

- Policy 16.2.1 Identify, with area First Nations, suitable locations where First Nations culture and heritage could be celebrated and shared with visitors and the community in general

Chapter 17 Special Areas

The plan recommends that the community be provided with a visual and functional community focal point in the area of the current bomber base. This should be on Sproat Lake to take advantage of the traffic generated by the attraction of the Pacific Rim National Park and to showcase the lake. This center should service the community and be a viable commercial and social center. A eco-resort/marina, small scale local commercial uses, community open space, a new fire hall, a community center, low density residential uses at densities comparable to the residential 1 designation on the Plan Map (Map 6), a forest industry interpretive center and tourist related commercial uses can all be examined as future uses of the site. Such an a small scale environmentally sustainable eco-resort/marina could also emphasize use by non-motorized craft such as kayaks, canoes and sailboats to protect the lake's ecology.

Such a focal point can also be integrated into the fabric of the visitor industry as over 800,000 visitors a year pass by on the way to the west coast. Direct access from Highway 4 to this center would be an essential element of its success, requiring the assent of the Ministry of Transportation. In addition there is the recreational and visual attraction of the lake. An eco-resort/marina would provide great recreational, fishing and tourism opportunities and the close-by presence of the two Martin Mars water bombers, themselves a unique national institution, augments the location. Such a center should also have good pedestrian connections to the surrounding community. The center would have an integrated design for all buildings, signs and landscaping and could feature a First nations cultural center in recognition of the considerable presence of First Nations in the history of the area.

Objective 17.1 To ensure any potential development of the bomber base mixed use area is based on a comprehensive development plan prepared by the developer in consultation with local residents and business owners.

- Policy 17.1.1 Ensure any future comprehensive development of this site contains flexible zoning regulations.
- Policy 17.1.2 Work with the landowner to effect community control of the Sproat Lake Community hall
- Policy 17.1.3 Ensure the provision of a community water system
- Policy 17.1.4 Provide a community sewage disposal system that protects the water quality of Sproat Lake
- Policy 17.1.5 Develop sign and design guidelines that reflect the community's history and geography with use of local building materials
- Policy 17.1.6 Ensure the provision of public open space on the lakefront
- Policy 17.1.7 Ensure either the refurbishment of the existing community hall on a separate lot, with such lot being dedicated to the community at no cost or a satisfactory alternative provision of community space

Objective 17.2 To provide for more intensive infill development in the Bell Road/Stuart Avenue Area

- Policy 17.2.1 Prepare a local plan for the Bell Road/Stuart Avenue area that identifies residential infill opportunities within the area outlined in this plan for Rural Residential.

Policy 17.2.2 The local plan should include a further stage of more intensive future development should a piped water system be provided to this area

Chapter 18 Plan Implementation and Staging

Plan Implementation:

There are a number of specific major steps recommended following the completion of this plan, these are separate from the myriad of actions needed to realize the policies of the plan.

- 18.1 *Annual monitoring of plan* - an annual audit should be undertaken in conjunction with the community via the Sproat Lake Advisory Planning Commission to assess what steps are taken annually to implement the plan - financially and physically.
- 18.2 *Bomber base mixed use area plan* - Any development of the bomber base mixed use area will require the preparation of a comprehensive development plan prepared by the developer, in conjunction with local residents and local business owners around Sproat Lake. Such a plan to contain recommendations of; probable uses and densities, type and location of public art, traffic and pedestrian circulation, parking provision, landscaping and open space, building form and sign guidelines, and utilization of development principles and state-of-the-art techniques which will guarantee that the project meets the highest standards of environmental sustainability.
- 18.3 *Urban design guidelines* - guidelines for public buildings, emphasizing special architectural, artistic or historic features that might be considered.
- 18.4 *Transportation and Traffic studies* - related to the impact of development nodes as proposed in the plan.
- 18.5 *Sproat Lake Tourism Development Strategy* - to review and recommend ways in which the tourist industry might be expanded.
- 18.6 *Zoning Bylaw* - the zoning bylaw will be reviewed to determine innovations in zoning and subdivision designations and regulations that are needed to implement the plans objectives.
- 18.7 *Development Cost Charge Bylaw* - put a cost charge bylaw in place to ensure that new development pays the full costs associated with development.
- 18.8 *Review of Local Government Options* - Work with the local community and the Province to identify options for local government for the Sproat Lake area, including becoming a separate municipality to increase local participation in the management of development of the Sproat Lake area as envisaged in this plan.
- 18.9 *Protection of Agricultural land* -Work with the local agricultural community, the Agricultural Advisory Committee, the Ministry of Agriculture Food and Fisheries and the Agricultural Land Commission to protect farmland while balancing community needs for other uses identified in this plan such as regional airport, business park and regional motor sports.

- 18.10 *Work with First Nations in the implementation of their land use plans* - cooperate with Tseshaht and Hupacasath First Nations in the development and implementation of their land use plans and work to ensure the integration of these plans with the Sproat Lake OCP.
- 18.11 *Systematic implementation of plan policies* - The Regional district should undertake the systematic implementation of key plan policies over a 5 year period as indicated in Table 4 below.

TABLE 4 - PLAN POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

	Short Term Action (1-3 years)	Mid Term Action (4-6 years)	Long Term Action (7-10 years)
CHAPTER 6	Amend Zoning By-law to add requirement for instruction of pump out stations for zones containing marina uses, as well as to establish adequate building setbacks.	Liaise with the Ministry of Agriculture on the establishment of areas in the vicinity of all lakes where agriculture fertilization should be controlled.	Liaise and establish contract with TFL holder and Ministry of Forests re requirements to produce wildlife management plan for the Sproat Lake watershed within 5-7 years.
	Establish areas of soil suitability for septic field disposal.	Establish protocols and agreements with Provincial agencies and TFL holder on vista/viewpoint management requirements along Highway 4.	
	Establish protocols with provincial agencies on conditions where package treatment and new technological treatment systems may be permitted and under which circumstance		
	Establish protocols and Board policy on use of non-removal of vegetation covenants, where these would apply and the magnitude of these.		
	Establish comprehensive amendments to zoning by-law protecting productive wetlands; conserving prime and sensitive fish habitats and other significant areas of sensitivity; establishing a non-development envelope around Robertson Creek, Devil's Den and the Somass Estuary and environs.		
	Establish protocols with provincial agencies and TFL holder on: - Interface fire hazard issues and responses; - Mandatory community input requirement for water use permits (changes to existing permits or new permit applications).		
	Develop a by-law to restrict vegetation removal in the critical riparian areas of lakes and rivers		
	Establish contact with relevant provincial and federal agencies and develop protocols on mandatory testing of sewage disposal systems and siting setbacks.		

CHAPTER 7	Establish protocols with provincial agencies, community forest operators and TFL holders on strengthened role of community and local government input into resource planning options as mandatory components in the processes.	Establish protocols and work plan with the regional Agriculture Committee on producing: - best practices scenarios relating to size of and necessity for agricultural “buffer areas”; - a local plan outlining viable new agriculture activities for the area.	
	Establish a process by which local tourism operators, in conjunction with provincial and TFL holder can produce a “Recreational Access Plan” for the Sproat Lake watershed.		
	Establish protocols with First Nations to address and assess status of policy outlines and applicability of these on a bi-annual basis.		
	Encourage local tourism operators to explore the feasibility of establishing a u-catch trout farm and hatchery at Boot Lagoon.		
CHAPTER 8	Establish protocols with Provincial Parks on: - partnership needs; - local government acquisition of Windy Bay and Fossli Parks and the Sproat River Parks Reserve; - development of further facilities at Sproat Lake including new launch/parking areas; - continuation of Marine Patrol Partnership.	Establish ,with First Nations and the Province, an overall outdoor recreation plan within 5 years. The plan to include public access, trails, water access, park land, amenity areas, linkages to the West Coast and Alberni Valley , identification of areas for camping activity, the carrying capacities of such areas, limits on use, services required and options for cost recovery.	
	Establish protocols with Provincial Parks on initiating regular bi-annual meetings (prior to season and in the fall) to coordinate resources and assess/amend objectives		
	Establish protocols and agreements with Sproat Lake Parks Committee on delegation of parks functions and operations in the area to an established local parks commission.		
CHAPTER 9	Initiate changes to Zoning By-law, particularly relating to “vacation home zones”, to inhibit the use of such zoning options in the Sproat Lake area outside the Great Central lakehead area and the northern portion of Taylor Arm	Initiate a proactive infrastructure plan for the lake area to include communal potable water systems, sewage disposal options and increased fire protection.	Produce a float home and recreational lot plan for Great Central Lake in conjunction with and liaison with relevant provincial agencies as a long term priority.

	Establish protocols with Provincial agencies on discouragement of “water access only” subdivision.	Prepare, in consultation with First Nations as well as relevant Federal and Provincial agencies , a local plan for the Alberni Valley Airport and environs	Prepare, in consultation with First Nations as well as relevant provincial federal agencies, a local plan for the Great Central Lake lakehead
	Prepare, in consultation with First Nations and the responsible Provincial and Federal agencies, a local plan for the following areas: - Bell Road/Stuart Avenue area	Initiate a sub-regional study related to impacts on all land uses and economic sectors of governance options for Sproat Lake. Ensure that current float homes on Great Central Lake are upgraded to provincial float home standards with respect to construction, utility provision, sewage disposal, wharf and pier construction and fire protection as per policy 9.6.1. Amend building and zoning by-law to broaden home occupation options for the Sproat Lake area. In addition, limits on bed and breakfast operations should be initiated and enforced as a priority.	Amend Building By-law and Zoning By-law to reflect requirement for upgraded construction standards and service requirements for float cabins.
CHAPTER 10	.	Establish agreements with Forest Industry Flying Tankers Ltd regarding community acquisition of a Martin Mars water bomber and establish an acquisition fund on behalf of the community	
CHAPTER 11	Establish contact with Provincial agencies and develop protocols for gravel extraction permit processes, to include local community input in decision making, and establish a mutually agreed strategy on timing, siting and methods for long term gravel extraction. Liaise with the Somass Estuary Management Planning Team to incorporate the main recommendations of the management plan into this OCP, including working with the Port Alberni Port Authority.	Establish and prioritize an Economic Development Plan for the airport lands in conjunction with the proposed Airport local plan.	
CHAPTER 12		Liaise with First Nations in conjunction with proposed local plans and policies, to incorporate First Nations cultural aspects into development and to provide coordinated tourist-related development options for First Nations as defacto community partners in promoting the area. Establish, by by-law, formal signage control including design and siting parameters ,for the Sproat Lake area.	Through local economic development agencies, explore the implications of industrial heritage/archaeological based tourism/display options for the Sproat Lake/Great Central Lake “corridor”. Establish policy relating to both the protection of as well as the opening up of First Nations archeological sties.
CHAPTER 14		Ensure valid and meaningful community input into amendments to the Solid Waste Management Plan for the Alberni Valley Landfill operation and/or expansion or intensification of landfill use.	

CHAPTER 16			Explore and investigate a regional strategy respecting location, community benefits and community impact of small scale hydro-electric operations in the watershed.
CHAPTER 17,	Implement, within two years, the necessary analysis required to valid governance options for the Sproat Lake Community, with the intent of initiating a referendum.	Investigate and establish , a Development Cost Charge by-law relating to parks and water and sewer system cost recovery where and when appropriate.	
	Initiate and establish methods of monitoring of plan objectives and reporting of such audits to the community, in September annually.	Establish design guidelines for all commercial, industrial, multi-family and institutional building by appropriate regulation.	

Plan Staging:

1. **Residential Staging** - There are currently 954 units within the plan area and this is expected to increase to 1,144 units at the end of the 10 year plan period, a difference of 190 units. Over the 10 year period, therefore residential construction will average approximately 19 units per year or a 2% annual growth rate. Over the next 5 years there will be an increase of 95 units at an average of 19 units per year.

2. **Commercial Staging** - There are approximately 5000 square feet of commercial space in the area and this will increase incrementally to 10,000 square feet in 10 years or at a rate of 1,000 square feet per year. Over the next 5 years there will be an increase of 5,000 square feet or 1,000 square feet per year.

3. **Industrial Staging** - Approximately 105 acres of designated industrial land exist currently. It is proposed that 20 new acres of industrial land will be added near the Regional Airport over the next 10 years at a rate of approximately 2 acres/year. Over the next 5 years it is anticipated that 10 acres of industrial land will be added to the current inventory at an average of 2 acres per year.

Chapter 19 Plan Map

The Plan Map (Map 6) illustrates graphically the objectives and policies of this plan. The following legend pertains to uses designated on the plan map:

- Residential 1 - min lot size 0.25 ha (0.6 acres)
- Residential 2 - min lot size 1 ha (2.5 acres)
- Acreage Residential- minimum lot size 2 ha (4.9 acres)
- Rural Residential - minimum lot size 4 ha (9.9 acres)
- Rural - minimum lot size 10 ha (24.7 acres)
- Commercial
- Tourist Commercial
- Institutional
- Bomber base mixed use
- Industrial
- Agriculture
- Forestry (forest related activities, TFL activities)
- Open Space
- Recreation
- Conservation
- Recreational Residential
- Lakeshore Resort Area (includes single family residential and recreational resorts)
- Fish Hatchery (includes Robertson Creek and Mainstream Canada Fish Hatcheries).

Chapter 20 Development Permit Areas

Pursuant to the Local Government Act, those lands shown on Map 7 as Development Permit Areas are so designated for purposes of :

- a) environmental protection, and
- b) regulating the form and character of commercial, industrial and multi-family residential uses.

1. Justification:

- a. Environmental protection. The magnificent, high quality natural environment is what makes the Sproat lake area unique and it is the intent of this plan to protect such natural environment by ensuring that all development within development permit areas respects and is sensitive to the physical environment and the wildlife and plant ecologies that exist there and to allow development to make as small a footprint on the natural environment as is possible.
- b. Regulating form/character of commercial/industrial/multi-family residential uses to create a high quality built environment that reflects the rural character of the area, to respect the natural environment, to encourage sustainable development and to reflect the community's unique environment and history.

2. Specific Guidelines

- a. Protection of Natural Environment, its Ecosystems and Biological Diversity
 - i. Sproat, Somass and Stamp rivers: There shall be a 30m riparian setback from the top of the bank. Such riparian vegetation to be left undisturbed and no development, structures, fill or landscaping allowed within the riparian zone. A certified environmental impact study is required for all developments within 60m of the river bank, such study to be requirement of the development permit and to identify any adverse effects on the land's natural environment and visual resource and which addresses the means by which the impact of development can be minimized. Where development is necessary to effect repairs to roads or utilities, the affected land should be replanted with compatible types of native vegetation. Agricultural operations are exempted from the provisions of this sub-section.
 - ii. Conservation areas: No development in areas marked for conservation on Map 7 (Devil's Den Lake, the Somass River estuary,

Alberni Inlet shoreline, the west end of Taylor Arm at the Taylor River estuary, the south west end of the Two Rivers Arm and the south side of Stirling Arm) except those activities that complement and sustain environmental conservation.

- iii. Other creeks and minor rivers: There shall be a 15m riparian setback on other creeks and rivers in the planning area, such setback to allow the riparian vegetation to remain undisturbed.
 - iv. Great Central Lake Tourist Recreational Area: There shall be a 30 meter riparian setback from the lake. This may be reduced where a comprehensive development plan is prepared and an environmental study confirms no adverse impact on the lakes ecology through such reduced setback and where public benefits accrue from such reduced setbacks (e.g public access to the lake).
- b. Regulating the form and character of commercial, industrial and multi-family residential uses:
- i. Bomber Base Mixed Use
 - a) A comprehensive landscape plan to be submitted featuring extensive use of native vegetation
 - b) West coast architectural theme featuring local timber and stone
 - c) Minimal use of stucco, brick and pastel colors
 - d) Local First Nations cultural emblems and colors to be emphasized
 - e) Signs to be unobtrusive and integrated into building structure, according to an approved preliminary sign strategy
 - f) View opportunities of Sproat Lake and the Mt Klitsa range to be created and emphasized by selective vegetation thinning
 - g) Provision for comprehensive pedestrian circulation and connection to Sproat Lake, the water bomber base and Sproat lake Provincial Park
 - h) Interpretive displays featuring First nations settlement and culture in the area and the Martin Mars water bombers history and connection to Sproat Lake
 - i) Strong physical and visual focus on Sproat lake with emphasis on the environmentally sustainable eco-resort/marina.
 - j) All utility structures - telephone, electrical and power - to be well screened with natural vegetation screens or decorative wooden screens

- k) Loading bays, garbage and storage areas to be properly located and screened from public areas
 - l) Identification and protection of sensitive ecological areas
 - m) Utilization of development principles and state-of-the art techniques which will guarantee that the project meets the highest standards of sustainability
- ii. Highway 4 At Seaton Road (Highway House)
- a) The scale, shape and siting of proposed structures should relate to neighbouring properties and should avoid impeding sight lines along the highway as far as possible;
 - b) The shape, siting, roof line and exterior finish of buildings should be sufficiently varied to avoid visual monotony, yet reflect the west coast experience and tradition;
 - c) Adequate on site parking shall be provided in accordance with requirements of the Zoning By-law and the Ministry of Highways
 - d) A landscaped strip no less than 3 metres in width shall be established and maintained along the highway frontage (except for approved points of access) and along property lines with adjoining non-commercial uses.
- iii. Lot C, District Lot 90, Alberni District, Plan 67476 at Bell Road and Hector Road.
- a) All buildings, structures and mobile homes, for both industrial and residential purposes, shall be sited outwith areas identified as hazardous. Required setbacks shall be as determined by a geotechnical engineer.
 - b) Permits for industrial development will address such factors as the location of buildings, parking, traffic circulation, access and egress, fuel storage, drainage, paving of outside storage areas, berming, fencing and screening.
 - c) All storage and handling areas and all areas for storage of finished products shall be paved as will all access roads;

- d) Any fuel storage will be within an impervious berm designated to one and a half times the capacity of the fuel to be stored;
 - e) Site drainage shall be designed to include oil and grease traps as and where appropriate;
 - f) Berming, fencing and screening shall be required along Hector and Bell Road with the exception of one access and egress point.
- iv. Great Central Lake Tourist Recreational Area:
- a) A comprehensive landscape plan to be submitted featuring extensive use of native vegetation.
 - b) View opportunities of Great Central Lake to be emphasized by selective vegetation thinning and by thoughtful location of buildings and structures.
 - c) A comprehensive pedestrian circulation plan to be submitted that includes provision for major public access to Great Central Lake.
 - d) A strong visual and physical focus on Great Central Lake.
 - e) Minimum use of stucco, brick or pastel colours, instead an emphasis on local timber and stone in building materials used on site.
 - f) An interpretive display focusing on the history of Great Central Lake, the local forestry industry's history and the Boot Lagoon townsite to be incorporated and accessible for public viewing.
 - g) All loading bays and garbage/storage areas to be properly located and screened from public view.
 - h) All utility structures - telephone, electrical and power - to be well screened with natural vegetation on wood screens.
 - i) Incorporation of First Nations culture emblems and colors into the architectural design.

- j) Utilization of development principles and state-of-the-art techniques which will guarantee that the project meets the highest standards of environmental sustainability.