



Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District

MINUTES OF THE REGIONAL PARKS WORKING GROUP

HELD ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2025, 5:00 PM

Hybrid - Zoom/Board Room, 3008 Fifth Avenue, Port Alberni, BC

MEMBERS

PRESENT:

Mel Francoeur, Backcountry Horsemen
Keith Wyton, Cherry Creek Resident
Chris Hall, Riders of Alberni Valley (ROAV)
Kimi Hashimoto, Hill Climbers
Russ Moen, Cherry Creek Resident
Russell Dyson, Sproat Lake Resident
Wendy Friberg, Broom Busters
Barb Baker, Alpine Club of Canada
Annette Bailey, Alberni Valley Nature Club
Dennis Stofer, Cherry Creek Resident
Judy Carlson, Alberni Valley Outdoor Club

REGRETS:

Joe Lamoureux, Sproat Lake Resident

STAFF PRESENT:

Michael McGregor, Lands and Resources Coordinator
Heather Thomson, Communications Coordinator
Kristin Kerr-Donohue, Administrative Assistant

1. CALL TO ORDER

Michael McGregor recognized this meeting is being held throughout the Nuu-chah-nulth territories.

Introductions – Working Group Members and Staff present.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON/VICE-CHAIRPERSON FOR 2025

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON/VICE-CHAIRPERSON FOR 2025

Michael McGregor conducted the election for Chairperson of the Regional Parks Working Group for 2025.

Michael McGregor declared Keith Wyton to the position of Chairperson for the Regional Parks Working Group for 2025.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Michael McGregor conducted the election of Vice-Chairperson of the Regional Parks Working Group for 2025.

Michael McGregor declared Russell Dyson to the position of Vice-Chairperson for the Regional Parks Working Group for 2025.

Keith Wyton assumed the Chair.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

3. **DISCUSSION**

a. **Terms of Reference – M. McGregor, Lands and Resources Coordinator**

Michael reviewed the purpose of this working group and the mandate with the group. This will be to coordinate communication between local groups and the ACRD regarding regional parks specifically. One annual report and all meeting minutes will be brought to the ACRD Board of Directors by staff, along with any resolutions that are passed by the working group.

b. **Regional Parks History – Group Exercise/Discussion**

ACRD currently manages 5 regional parks:

1. West Coast Multi Use Path – work was completed in late 2023. ACRD manages the 1.2km portion of the trail between the Pacific Rim National Park Reserve, and the District of Ucluelet's sections.
2. Alberni Inlet Trail, Stage 1 & 2 – This trail follows the right of way of the Northern Pacific Railway. 2005 (approx.) it was realized that the grade remained, and work began to develop the trail, with assistance from the Province of BC. This could, one day, connect all the way to the Galloping Goose Trail in Victoria, following the old railway. The trail flows through ACRD, Mosaic, and Crown Land and serves as a good template for working on other trails in the region. There is a 3rd phase of the trail, that has not been officially adopted by the ACRD but will be part of ongoing discussion with the working group.
3. China Creek Park – The property was transferred from the Province of BC to the ACRD, via a Crown Land Grant, in the 1980's and includes the land leased by the Port Alberni Port Authority (PAPA) for China Creek Campground.
4. Mt. Arrowsmith Park – This is the oldest regional park within the ACRD, gifted from Macmillan Bloedel. Was a popular ski area with residents, a chalet and ski-hill functioned up there at one point. When the land was removed from the Tree Farm License and became privately managed forest land, access was greatly reduced since the transfer, only 16 hours of public access weekly.
5. Log Train Trail – This trail was originally a railway for the Bainbridge Lake Mill site, has been leased by the ACRD from the Province of BC since 1993. The ACRD board of directors adopted a new management plan, which requires an

amendment to the lease which ACRD staff are currently negotiating. ACRD leases kilometers 3-21 and Mosaic owns kilometer 1-3. Anticipate the working group will work on the usage of this as the meetings progress.

c. **Regional Parks Present & Future – Group Exercise/Discussion**

ACRD Board of Directors have been discussing what regional parks are going to look like going forward. There has been discussion about the potential to add other parks in the area, including Alberni Inlet Stage 3, Great Central Lake Boat Launch and Hole in the Wall.

Request from the group to bring the ACRD budget and financial information relating to the regional parks to the group to be able to understand the process and how the funding of regional parks works.

1. West Coast Multi Use Path – ACRD is working to establish a maintenance contract. The District of Ucluelet maintains their portion of the pathway, ACRD has requested they maintain our portion as well. Request is going to their board in March, we will know then if an RFP has to go out for this maintenance or not. Trans Canada Trail has approached the ACRD to include the West Coast Multi-Use Path in the Trans Canada Trail system, there is also potential to review other trails in the area to include in the future.
2. Alberni Inlet Trail, Stage 1 & 2 – There is a concept design and costing for the replacement of the Franklin River Bridge. ACRD is actively searching for grant funding to fund the bridge and then add stage 3 of this trail.

Suggestion from the group to reach out to other organizations who are invested in this trail being completed for possible funding sources.

Franklin River crossing is the main issue in completing the third stage of the trail. The location of where the new bridge will be placed is still up in the air without funding secured. In 2024 the ACRD Asset Management team started a bridge condition assessment; all bridges will be reviewed by an engineer in June of 2025. Working group members noted that the bridge over Chesnucknuw Creek, the bridge has washed out every winter for the last three years, looking at putting in an aluminum bridge, this has not been reviewed by an engineer. Bridge is believed to be located outside of park on stage 3.

Suggestion that a letter from the group would be beneficial to support the inclusion of Stage 3 of the trail in the regional parks plan.

3. China Creek Park – Current lease expires in 2029. The ACRD Board of Directors moved to do a long-term (20 year) lease extension with the Port Alberni Port Authority (PAPA), this required a Notice of Disposition of Land be released to the public, which was advertised in January of 2025 and closes in February.

Request from the group to move the gate at China Creek from the top of the hill to the bottom, to allow easier access to the waterfront during the off-season months. Michael will discuss with PAPA the options to move this and bring it back to the group.

4. Mt. Arrowsmith Park – The ACRD sits on a working group with Mosaic and the Province to discuss public access on private roads. Discussion has been focused on the Ash Main Logging Road, hoping to discuss public access on Mount Arrowsmith with Mosaic, direction from the ACRD Board of Directors would help if the working group wanted to pivot the conversation to Mt. Arrowsmith. Potentially adding signage on Mount Arrowsmith in 2025. Comment from the group that trail maintenance is a constant issue in the alpine and sub-alpine areas and that a trail condition assessment would be beneficial for all the regional parks.

Suggestion to invite other trail organizations in other regions to a future meeting to discuss how they manage their trails. Invite to the Trans Canada Trail staff as well to attend a future meeting.

5. Log Train Trail – The lease renewal has progressed in 2025, anticipating a draft lease from the Province of BC soon. No formal information from the province about what requirements will be needed. They have done a legal and insurance review, there are some liability concerns to be addressed through the lease, also need to discuss access points to the trail. This group and the ACRD Board of Directors will review the draft lease when it has been sent over. The new lease will reflect the management plan that was adopted by the ACRD Board of Directors, looking at a multimodal motorized use pathway.

Group members noted that there is a bridge near the McLeans Mill site that is currently falling apart and should be closed to the public. Currently no agreements with Mosaic to remedy this, Michael forwards all complaints to Mosaic and will advise them of this. There is direction from the ACRD Board of Directors to establish more access sites to the Log Train Trail. Request to the group to continue to communicate issues and identified dangers to Michael. Working on draft signage for the trail but waiting on the lease to be finalized. Discussion followed regarding directional signage on the trails to prevent hikers getting lost.

The ATV Club and the motorized community have access allowed from Mosaic, however have to carry 2 million liability and ICBC Roadcrossing Insurance, this access excludes the first 3 sections of the trail that are owned wholly by Mosaic.

Request to include in the next agenda the asset/bridge assessment report as it applies to the regional parks.

Request to have City of Port Alberni staff included in this discussion as they are owners of some of the trail as well.

Group members have encountered hunters in full-size trucks on the trail and would like to see gates installed to prevent this.

The group discussed the portion of the trail that requires travel on Desmond Road to Horn Lake Road. It is expected that there will be permits that can be applied to from the RCMP to travel on this section via ATV. There will also be adjustments to the access points to improve this section.

Question from the group on what the maintenance budget looks like. Service requests can be forwarded from this group to the ACRD Board of Directors

Suggestion from the group to potentially hold individual meetings focused on each park. Tentatively schedule next meeting for two months from this date (April 24, 2025), to discuss sectioning the Log Train Trail for different user groups, with a sooner meeting called if the draft agreement is received from the Province of BC before April 24.

Regarding trucks being on the trail, the management plan specifically states that Trucks, Cars, & SUVs are not allowed on the trail, however there are no plans for enforcement. Enforcement of this will be discussed by the group at a future meeting.

The group suggested inviting a representative from Mosaic at a future meeting and discussed other possible organizations that could be represented on the working group.

Request to have a parks budget review on the agenda for the next meeting.

4. CARD STORMING ACTIVITY

Three questions were placed on boards around the room, the working group was asked to provide their thoughts on the following questions, responses included:

1. What do you value most about ACRD Regional Parks?
 - Natural surroundings
 - Promoting healthy lifestyles
 - Acknowledging wildlife habitat
 - Positive impact on mental health
 - Nature
 - Environment
 - Safety
 - A place for kids and adults to ride horses
 - Variety of trails
2. What is a keyword or phrase that is important to you to help guide park and/or trail development?
 - Full consultation before decisions
 - Active transportation

- Opportunity
 - Community
 - LTT to Inlet Trail to Runners Trail and South
 - Community
 - Connectivity for recreation
 - Nature
 - Sustainable accessibility
3. What is your top concern for ACRD parks?
- Safety
 - LTT areas to enter, most are Mosaic entrances
 - Expiring leases
 - Maintenance of trails
 - Balancing recreation opportunities for all user groups
 - Coordination of land managers/owners
 - Increasing use means more wear on trails, spread people out by creating more trails

11. ADJOURN

Certified Correct:

Keith Wyton,
Chairperson

Kristin Kerr-Donohue,
Administrative Assistant