

2.4 PUBLIC OPINION ON ACTIVITY & FACILITY SUITABILITY

At the Concept Plan and Master Plan public meetings, the public was asked their opinion on the appropriateness of a list of recreation activities and facilities within three proposed management areas: Preservation, Conservation and Extensive Use. A summary of public views is found in Appendix 2.1.

I. Preservation Areas

Preservation areas were viewed as the most restrictive areas for recreation activities and facilities development. Suitable activities included nature study and observation, photography, canoeing/kayaking, and walking and jogging. Facilities development was viewed as restricted to natural surface trails with limited support for development of interpretive signs/displays, viewpoints and decks, granular trails, pedestrian bridges and washrooms at the edge or perimeter of the preservation area.

II. Conservation Areas

Conservation areas represented areas of greater activity and facility development than preservation areas. A broader range of activities were viewed as appropriate and were mostly related to trail based activities. Water based activities such as canoeing/kayaking, fishing and rowing were also viewed as appropriate.

Facility development viewed as appropriate included granular trails, interpretive signs/displays, natural trails, viewpoints/decks, and pedestrian bridges. Other facilities which were marginally appropriate included washrooms, telephones, paved trails, drinking fountains, day camps and boat/canoe docks.

III. Extensive Use Area

Extensive use areas represent full service areas with a broad range of facilities. These areas should cater to a variety of activities and individuals, large groups and families with children. The most highly supported facilities included: children's playgrounds, washrooms, pedestrian bridges, drinking fountains, parking areas, telephones, fitness courses, amphitheatre, paved trails and equipment rentals.

In many areas of the river valley, recreation activities occur which were not viewed as appropriate within the three management areas. Some of these activities are not permitted at all, such as use of 4WD/ATV's, snowmobiling, recreation vehicle camping and cycling off designated trails. Casual picnicking and x-country skiing cause little damage to the environment, and would not be discouraged from any area on an informal basis. Recreation activities would not be formalized through development unless they were suitable within the management area.

During preparation of the master plan public concern was expressed over the extent of activities/facilities which are permitted in extensive use areas, recognizing that a very broad range of uses occur now and that the vision statement identifies major new facility development as inappropriate. Because of this concern, those activities/facilities which do not fit the vision have been identified (in Appendix 2.1) and would not be accommodated in the future.

Activity and facility proposals are further described in Section 4.2 Park Development Guidelines and Standards and in Chapter 5 Plan Objectives and Proposals.

In conclusion, classifying the river valley into management units which would have varying levels of recreation use and facilities development has general public support. The types of activities and facilities found within the units would be most varied within the extensive use areas, and more restrictive in the conservation and preservation areas.