



COMMISSIONED REPORT

Annex to Commissioned Report No. 271

A review of relevant experience of coastal and marine national parks

Case study (8)

Pacific Rim National Park Reserve, Canada

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Sketch profile

Location and size

The Pacific Rim National Park Reserve (PRNPR) is located along the west coast of Vancouver Island, near Ucluelet, SE British Columbia, Canada; it covers an area of about 511 km².

Scope

The park includes Long Beach, several islands, the historic Life Saving Trail, and a variety of marine life. It is divided into three geographically distinct park units: Long Beach, Broken Group Islands (about 100 islands in Barkley Sound), and the West Coast Trail. The park captures the biological and geological diversity found on Canada's west coast. It encompasses rocky shorelines, fjords, estuaries and sub-tidal environments that are typical of the west coast of Canada in its natural state. The park protects habitat for many marine species including, but not limited to, five species of salmon, killer whales, grey whales, Steller sea lions and rockfish. Many large seabird colonies, some with populations of global significance, utilise the estuaries, rocky shorelines and beaches found within the park. Additionally, there are 290 archaeological sites within the park, evidence of the importance of the area to Aboriginals, specifically the Nuu-chah-nulth band.

Objectives

Maintenance of ecological integrity. Ecological integrity is defined by as “a condition that is determined to be characteristic of its natural region and is likely to persist, including abiotic components and the composition and abundance of native species and biological communities, rates of change and supporting processes.” More specifically, the park was created to:

- protect ecosystems and landscape features representative of the natural region;
- consider the existence of significant cultural heritage features or landscapes;
- maintain drainage basin integrity;
- offer opportunities for public understanding and enjoyment.

Status

Park established 1971.

Issues and initiatives

This case study addresses in particular: the importance of public support; “optimal” levels of public consultation; the role of NGOs; iconic species; advisory committees; and increased opportunities for water based leisure and education activities.



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Lessons learned

From our literature search and telephone interviews, the following lessons for successful initiation, implementation and management of a park were learned:

- (i) there must be public support;
- (ii) in the case of the PRNPR, NGOs have played a meaningful role in raising issues and communicating with the public;
- (iii) there must be legislation that supports the designation of an area for protection;
- (iv) having an *iconic species* to fan the interest of the public can really push the development of protected areas;
- (v) it is important to have an advisory board in the planning and management of a protected area;
- (vi) ensure the public are well informed about the park (and what it is meant to achieve); and
- (vii) there is an 'optimal' level of public consultation - too much dialogue can slow the project down but insufficient time for meaningful engagement can result in a bad situation, with unhappy stakeholders.

Recreational benefits from the reserve have been significant. Increased opportunities for sailing, kayaking and diving, all increasingly popular activities, have led to an increase in the number of visitors to the park. The protection provided by the park ensures that the natural environment stays pristine and continues to attract visitors. Communities adjacent to the park have also benefited from a growing tourism industry. On the negative side, an increase in tourism may lead to elevated stress on the natural environment. At this point, Parks Canada has put in place regulations that have helped lessen the potential impacts of more visitors to the park, such as restricting recreational fishing and requiring tourism operators to become licensed.

A key achievement of the PRNPR is the establishment of the rockfish conservation zones throughout the park and the regulation that requires tour operators to apply for a permit in order to operate in the park. The reserve has achieved international recognition because it is part of the core area of UNESCO's Clayoquot Biosphere Reserve.

Background: size, boundaries, history

The Pacific Rim National Park Reserve (PRNPR) is a national park with both a marine and terrestrial component. This summary focuses mostly on the marine component, but also addresses terrestrial issues when necessary and applicable. The PRNPR has been around since 1970. Perhaps for this reason reports documenting the process of establishing the park (the early years) are not readily available.

The overall goal of Parks Canada is to protect a representative sample of Canada's 39 natural regions as identified by the National Parks System Plan (1997). There are currently 39 national parks in Canada, representing 25 of the natural regions. Parks Canada is in the process of establishing parks to represent the remaining 14 natural regions.

The Parks Canada mandate it to protect and present nationally significant examples of Canada's natural and cultural heritage, and foster public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment in ways that ensure their ecological and commemorative integrity for present and future generations.

The Pacific Rim National Park Reserve (PRNPR) covers 51,077 hectares and is divided into three geographically distinct park units: Long Beach, Broken Group Islands (about 100 islands in Barkley Sound), and the West Coast Trail. The park boundaries extend offshore to a depth of 10 fathoms.

Table 1 Size of the Pacific Rim National Park Reserve

| Unit | marine (ha) | terrestrial (ha) | total area (ha) |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Long Beach | 6,975 | 7,033 | 14,008 |
| Broken Group Islands | 9,110 | 1,582 | 10,692 |
| West Coast Trail | 5,965 | 20,412 | 26,377 |
| Total (ha) | 22,050 | 29,027 | 51,077 |

The establishment of a national park and the drawing of its boundaries are done by Parks Canada in an attempt to establish a park with a size and configuration that:

- protects ecosystems and landscape features representative of the natural region;
- considers the existence of significant cultural heritage features or landscapes;
- accommodates the habitat requirements of viable populations of wildlife species that are native to the natural region;
- includes an undisturbed core which is relatively unaffected by impacts originating from the surrounding landscape;
- considers competing land and resource uses;
- does not fragment sensitive, highly diverse or productive natural communities;
- maintains drainage basin integrity;
- protects exceptional natural phenomena, and vulnerable, threatened or endangered wildlife and vegetation;
- offers opportunities for public understanding and enjoyment;
- results in minimum long-term disruption of the social and economic life particularly in the surrounding region;
- does not encompass permanent communities; and
- considers possible threats to the long-term sustainability of the area's ecosystems.

The normal sequence for establishing a national park is characterised by five steps:

1. identifying representative natural areas;
2. selecting a potential national park;
3. assessing park feasibility;
4. negotiating a park agreement and obtaining clear title; and
5. establishing a new national park in legislation.

Once the boundaries of the park are decided the proposed park must be formally established under legislation of the Parliament of Canada. The entire process of designating and establishing a national park is likely to take many years. The park is then managed by Parks Canada under the laws established by the Canada National Parks Act (CNPA).

The PRNPR captures the biological and geological diversity found on Canada's west coast. The boundaries selected for the PRNPR envelop many features of natural and cultural heritage importance. The park encompasses rocky shorelines, fjords, estuaries and sub-tidal environments that are typical of the west coast of Canada in its natural state. The park protects habitat for many marine species including, but not limited to, five species of salmon, killer whales, grey whales, Steller sea lions and rockfish. Many large seabird colonies, some with populations of global significance, utilise the estuaries, rocky shorelines and beaches

found within the park. Additionally, there are 290 archaeological sites within the park, evidence of the importance of the area to Aboriginals, specifically the Nuu-chah-nulth band.

The West Coast Trail portion of the PRNPR contains an old telegraph trail, established in 1890, which served as a communication link to aid in the rescue of vessels in distress off the SW coast of Vancouver Island. In all, almost 70 boats have gone down along this stretch of coast known as the Graveyard of the Pacific. Today the 77 km hike along the West Coast Trail is a popular attraction for outdoor enthusiasts, drawing some 8,000 hikers per year.

The Broken Group Islands section of the PRNPR is a haven for all sorts of marine life and has become a popular destination for sea kayakers of all skill levels. A number of kayak expedition operators offer trips to the Broken Group Islands. Also, SCUBA diving within the islands is a popular activity.

The timeline for the creation of the PRNPR is given in Table 2 below.

Table 2 List of events that led to the initiation and creation of the Pacific Rim National Park Reserve

| Pacific Rim National Park Reserve | | |
|--|---|---|
| Date | Event | Significance |
| 1911 | Parks Canada established | The current agency in charge of managing national parks |
| 1930 | Canada National Parks Act enacted | The primary document for establishing and managing national parks |
| 1970 | PRNPR established | Provides legal protection to the park but many things are still being negotiated. At this time there is no park management plan |
| 1986 | First Pacific Rim Whale Festival held | Celebrates the grey whale's migration that passes through the park |
| 1988 | Canada National Parks Act amended | Restricting commercial development of communities in parks, streamlining the legislative process of establishing parks, and extending measures to protect wildlife in parks |
| 1997 | National Parks System Plan established | Identified 39 natural regions in Canada to protect. Set the course for establishing national parks in Canada |
| 2000 | Clayoquot Sound Biosphere Reserve created | The biosphere reserve includes part of the PRNPR and promotes sustainable resource use, gave PRNPR some international recognition |
| 2001, Feb 19th | Park officially proclaimed | Some land disputes were settled and the development of a management plan could proceed |
| 2002 | Guidelines for commercial operators begin being developed | Commercial operators are a major stakeholder of the park; commercial fishing and kayak touring are major tourist draws for the Broken Group Islands |
| 2007 Feb | Rockfish Conservation Areas go into affect | After several years of planning and consultation, several RCAs went into affect in the PRNPR, restricting the hook and line fishing of rockfish |

Note that the PRNPR is labeled a national park reserve. A national park reserve is a specific provision under the Canada National Parks Act acknowledging that in those parks designated as "park reserves", there may be outstanding rights or interest in the area by

First Nations. Pending the settlement of any such rights or interests through treaty or other negotiations, the park "reserve" status allows the area to be managed with the protection afforded all national parks under the Act.

Purpose and objectives

Maintaining the ecological integrity of areas under protection of the Canada National Parks Act is Parks Canada's primary mandate with regard to the management of the PRNPR. Ecological integrity is defined by Parks Canada as "*a condition that is determined to be characteristic of its natural region and is likely to persist, including abiotic components and the composition and abundance of native species and biological communities, rates of change and supporting processes*" (Canada National Parks Act).

An Ecological Integrity Statement (EIS) outlines how the primary mandate of Parks Canada will be incorporated into the day to day operations of the park. The intent of the EIS is to link the park vision for ecological integrity to all planning documents including the management planning guidelines and annual business plans. The PRNPR's management goals as outlined in the EIS are as follows:

- maintain ecosystem structure;
- maintain or restore natural ecosystem processes and indigenous floral and faunal communities;
- minimise impacts of in-park activities;
- maintain the integrity of cultural resources within the landscape and seascape;
- motivate audiences to practice environmental stewardship; and
- enhance the global biosphere by ensuring that the park practices environmental citizenship.

National parks are designated natural areas that are created to provide a place for humans to interact with natural environments in a non-harmful manner. Thus, park facilities and infrastructure are designed to accommodate visitors and outdoor activities. The activities that take place inside a park are meant to be ecologically benign, causing no negative impacts to the ecosystems that the park protects. Accepting that humans will be using the park when discussing management options for protecting ecological integrity is a model that can be used in other scenarios.

The environmental education facet of managing national parks is another component that can contribute to sustainable development in other scenarios. Raising awareness of the function of ecosystems and their vulnerability to humans can influence people's attitudes and actions towards nature.

Since national parks in Canada are primarily terrestrial, there has been much more written on the role of the terrestrial component of parks in sustainable development. The most prominent examples for the PRNPR are the *forestry management practices* within the park. Objectives regarding the marine component are focused on *limiting fisheries harvests and restricting the business (tourism) activities that take place within the park*.

Legislative framework, management planning and administration

The Minister of the Environment is ultimately responsible for the administration, management and control of all national parks. Maintenance or restoration of ecological integrity, through the protection of natural resources and natural processes, shall be the first priority of the Minister when considering all aspects of the management of parks. The Minister may enter agreements with federal and provincial agencies, local and Aboriginal governments, and other persons and organisations in order to carry out the purpose of the CNPA.

The Minister shall, within five years after a park is established, prepare a management plan for the park containing:

- a long-term ecological vision for the park;
- a set of ecological integrity objectives and indicators; and provisions for
- resource protection and restoration;
- zoning;
- visitor use;
- public awareness; and
- performance evaluation.

[Canada National Parks Act]

Legislation for the management of the PRNPR is determined by several Acts and Regulations. Regulations carry the same binding legal effect as Acts but are put into place by bodies that Parliament has delegated the authority to do so, in the case of the PRNPR the governing body is Parks Canada, which is overseen by Environment Canada.

The most important Acts in regard to national parks are the *Parks Canada Agency Act* and the *Canada National Parks Act*. Parks Canada has established several important Regulations through the CNPA dealing with national parks including: the National Parks Fishing Regulations, the National Parks Wildlife Regulations and the National Parks Business Regulations.

The PRNPR Management Plan is an essential component in the operation of the park. The plan specifies the type and degree of resource protection and management needed to assure the ecological integrity of the park and the management of its cultural resources; defines the type, character and locale of visitor facilities, activities and services; and identifies target groups.

It should be noted that the PRNPR was created as a national park under the Canada National Parks Act. More recently areas in Canada set aside for marine conservation are done so through the National Marine Conservation Areas Program under the direction of the *Canada National Marine Conservation Areas Act*. As with national parks, Parks Canada oversees the process of establishing national marine conservation areas.

As can be expected, there are several reports that outline policies and guidelines that direct ecosystem management in PRNPR. These publications include the Interim Management Guidelines, an Ecological Integrity Statement, and an Ecosystem Conservation Plan.

Relationships between the management body, other institutions and stakeholders

Parks Canada and the Canada National Parks Act really stress the importance of stakeholder involvement in all aspects of establishing and managing national parks. There are many general references to this throughout Parks Canada's guiding Acts and Regulations, but there are very few detailed records available of the actual collaboration that took place, or that continues to take place, in the PRNPR.

Parks Canada's general commitments to collaboration are as follows - during the feasibility assessment stage of identifying a potential national park there is a public consultation period put forth by Parks Canada in order to obtain the views of local communities, Aboriginal peoples, non-government organisations, relevant industries, other government departments and the interested public. Parks Canada provides information regarding the purpose and the environmental, social and economic implications of the national park proposal.

The Minister of the Environment provides opportunities for public participation at the national, regional and local levels, including participation by Aboriginal organisations, bodies established under land claims agreements and representatives of park communities, in the development of parks policy and regulations, the establishment of parks, the formulation of management plans, land use planning and development in relation to park communities and any other matters that the Minister considers relevant (Canada National Parks Act).

On the Parks Canada website they pledge to collaborate with multiple park stakeholders by stating:

- we will work to improve relationships and cooperative activities with Aboriginal people, particularly at the local level; continue to respect existing Aboriginal and treaty rights; and find new ways to work with Aboriginal people toward common goals of conservation, education and economic development;
- we will work collaboratively with federal, provincial, territorial and Aboriginal government agencies to build partnerships for effective ecosystem-based management by participating in regional planning processes, biosphere reserves, model forests and World Heritage initiatives;
- we will advance park values more actively by participating in local and regional processes which may affect the ecological integrity of national parks, and by building partnerships and cooperative arrangements that respect constitutionally-defined jurisdictions;
- we will work with those who market and use national parks to ensure an understanding of the ecological integrity mandate so that we attract park visitors to the right place, at the right time, in the right numbers and with the right expectations.

Clayoquot Biosphere Reserve

The Long Beach portion of the PRNPR makes up the core area (legally protected zone) of the Clayoquot Sound Biosphere Reserve (CSBR), established in 2000 under the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The reserve is overseen by the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust (CBT), a federally registered, British Columbia incorporated, non-profit charitable organisation. The CBT aims to promote sustainable development while maintaining healthy ecosystems. Parks Canada is involved in the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Program as a means of integrating regional planning around parks.

Around the protected core area (which gives long-term protection to the landscapes and ecosystems) the CSBR has; a buffer zone (where activities are organised so they help support the conservation objects of the core areas); and a zone of cooperation (where people work together to use the area's resources in a sustainable manner). As well as the Long Beach portion of the PRNPR the core area of the CSBR includes 16 provincial parks and two ecological reserves. The CSBR has no legislative authority. The legal protection comes from the federal and provincial parks within.

The Clayoquot Biosphere Trust was established in 2000 to manage a trust fund granted by the federal government to the communities of the CSBR in order to support regional research, education and training facilitation. The essential purpose of the CBT is twofold: to advance the objectives of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve; and to advance the economic, social, and environmental sustainability objectives of local communities.

The CBT is currently operating under their 2007-2009 business plan, which defines 6 key objectives:

1. *Strengthening CBT's role as the organisation responsible for upholding the spirit and intent of the biosphere reserve* - Developing education and public awareness programs, which will create a greater awareness of the biosphere reserve;
2. *Enhancing the CBT Trust Fund* - Developing and advancing fund raising and fund enhancement, which will lead to continued growth and effective management of the current fund with a view to maximising community benefits through educational scholarships, project funding, and collaborative partnerships;
3. *Enhancing Advisory Committees* - Enhancing the marine/aquatic, terrestrial, education, culture, and community development Advisory Committees as advisory bodies to the CBT Board of Directors on project funding priorities, CBT strategic directions and to serve as innovators in areas such as community dialogue and consensus-based decision-making;
4. *Leading and facilitating an indicator monitoring program* - Leading in the development and facilitating implementation of a comprehensive indicator monitoring and reporting process involving the CBT Board of Directors, Advisory Committees, communities and specialists as required. These indicators will address the full suite of sustainability questions including conservation, sustainable economic development and community health;
5. *Improving outreach and pursuing targeted initiatives and partnerships* - Improving outreach to all the communities through assertive CBT Board of Directors action and staff participation in community events/activities and support for community priorities, and pursuing targeted initiatives and partnerships to provide significant community benefit and provide opportunities to develop collaborative funding in research, education and training;
6. *Strengthen CBT's role as a leader in the national and international UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves* - Continue to collaborate closely with CBRA and UNESCO colleagues with a view to securing stable financial federal government support for other Canadian Biospheres, sharing information and developing common communication products.

According to Robert Shepherd, the superintendent of the PRNPR, the CBT and the PRNPR work well together if only on a limited basis (being that only the Long Beach portion of the park is within the biosphere reserve). There are several PRNPR employees that sit on CBT committees and the two organisations collaborate on things like identifying and monitoring indicators, community outreach and research. Robert also said that he has not noticed any changes in PRNPRs popularity or anything else since the establishment of the biosphere reserve.

Research

Parks Canada encourages scientific research within national parks. They believe that increasing the scientific understanding of natural systems in the park will help improve park management while adding to the broader understanding of natural systems in a relatively undisturbed state. There are a number of research priorities for the PRNPR as determined by Parks Canada. One specific study taking place in the PRNPR by DFO and Parks Canada is looking at abalone recovery. With funding in part from the Interdepartmental Recovery Fund this research project is studying factors that impact reproduction and recruitment of northern abalone.

First Nations

The First Nations band Nuu-chah-nulth plays an active role in collaborating with Parks Canada in the management of the PRNPR. As First Nation communities often have a historical tie to areas protected as national parks, their collaboration is wanted and needed. As mentioned earlier the Nuu-chah-nulth has a claim to the land protected by the PRNPR. Thus, their involvement is critical to moving park management plans forward. The inclusion of Aboriginal and traditional knowledge as well as local knowledge is also encouraged in all research projects.

In the PRNPR, the Nuu-chah-nulth is the most prominent First Nations. They submitted a comprehensive land claim in 1980 and they have been negotiating with the federal government since. The entire PRNPR is within the Nuu-chah-nulth land claim. Parks Canada says the First Nations are an important part of park planning and management. The reason PRNPR is a national park reserve and not just a national park is because there are still negotiations taking place with First Nations. They are most likely negotiating over access to resources and land. Once the negotiations are complete it is my understanding that the park will no longer have the title of reserve and the authority will fall solely on Parks Canada, unless there is some agreed upon sharing of authority, which does not appear to be the case currently. These negotiations are difficult and time consuming, as shown by the fact that the PRNPR has been labelled a reserve for over 30 years now.

Key planning and management elements/mechanisms

The primary objective of creating a national park is to protect the ecological integrity found within the park boundaries. There are several components that contribute to achieving this objective. One of the keys to the management of the PRNPR is the fact that Parks Canada has the final say in park planning, management and use. Parks Canada undoubtedly consults with other entities, but they have the authority to manage the park as they see fit. Having a clear primary mandate along with supporting principles, objectives and regulations gives Parks Canada a solid foundation to work with.

Ecosystem Based Management

Additionally, Parks Canada claims to be taking an ecosystem-based management (EBM) approach in managing the PRNPR. Parks Canada's EBM approach takes into consideration the fact that ecosystems are complex, ever-changing and are not constrained by political boundaries. Given their commitment to EBM and collaborating with various park stakeholders, Parks Canada's approach to managing the PRNPR can potentially be quite effective.

Management plan

Obviously, the creation of a management plan is an important step in managing the PRNPR. As required by the Canada National Park Act, the Minister of the Environment has to prepare a management plan containing a long-term ecological vision for the park, a set of ecological integrity objectives and indicators and provisions for resource protection and restoration, zoning, visitor use, public awareness and performance evaluation. Every five years, the Minister is required to review the management plan and make amendments as necessary, while every two years, a state of the parks report should be tabled in each house of Parliament. Having an established process of developing and revising management plans is an important feature with regards to the management of national parks.

Visitors

With over 700,000 visitors per year, human disturbance is one of the biggest stresses on the PRNPR. As such, visitors are forbidden to collect natural or cultural objects, hunt wildlife or camp outside of designated areas. Regulating the use of the park by tourism operators is another important component of managing the PRNPR. Under the Canada National Park Act, any tour operators working within the park are required to apply for and obtain a national park business license. Tour operator guidelines are currently being determined.

Zoning

The national parks zoning system is an integrated approach by which land and water areas are classified according to ecosystem and cultural resource protection requirements, and their capability and suitability to provide opportunities for visitor experiences. The zoning of the marine component is as follows:

- **Zone 1 - Preservation** - Areas which contain or support unique, threatened or endangered natural or cultural features, or which are among the best examples of the features that represent a marine natural region. Preservation will be the key consideration. Motorised access and circulation will not be permitted. Other access and use will be strictly controlled. No facility or service development will be allowed. It should be noted that research can take place in Zone 1, but only with permission.
- **Zone 2 - Natural Environment** - Highly representative marine areas which provide opportunities for non-consumptive recreational use, public education and research in as natural an area as possible. Resource harvesting will be kept to a minimum. The use of non-motorised transport will be encouraged. Only minimal facility development will be allowed.
- **Zone 3 - Conservation** - Areas which can provide for a broad spectrum of outdoor recreation and public education activities consistent with the conservation of a marine park. Related facilities for conservation area administration, public education and visitor service will be allowed. Approved fisheries and motorised transportation will be permitted. "Approved fisheries" have to do with regulation. There are few fishing regulations specific for the marine component of the PRNPR. One exception is the harvest of shellfish. There are some specific harvest regulations regarding clams, mussels and geoducks.
- **Environmentally Sensitive Areas** - Areas within an existing zone with significant and sensitive features, which require special protection. An ESA may accommodate some levels of controlled visitor activity. Area-specific guidelines are developed for each ESA.

Environmental assessments

Furthermore, environmental assessments are required for any proposed activity or alteration to take place within park boundaries. These environmental assessments are available online for public viewing.

As described by the National Parks of Canada Fishing Regulations, no person is allowed to fish within park boundaries without the proper permit.

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans (under the authority of the Fisheries Act) is in charge of managing fisheries within the boundaries of national parks. Additionally, Canada's Oceans Act 1996, puts in place new legislation to manage Canada's marine resources. DFO's Pacific Region has taken a multi-faceted approach to ocean management through Integrated Management (IM), Marine Protected Area (MPA), and Marine Environmental Quality (MEQ) programmes. Also, under the direction of the DFO is the West Coast of Vancouver Island Aquatic Management Board, which is being developed because of increased pressure from coastal and marine stakeholders for a group with an advanced role in marine decision-making and management. All of the above can play a role in marine management inside national parks.

The 1997 '*State of the Parks*' report listed sport fishing as one of the most common stressors on Canada's parks. The Broken Group Islands (BGI) have a high number of recreational fishers that are threatening local populations of rock cod. As a result the BGI adopted a voluntary no fishing policy within its waters. Randall and Rawlins (undated) have written a paper that examines visitor attitudes of voluntary policies, using the BGI as a case study. In 2002, DFO permanently closed a large portion of the Broken Group Islands to finfish fishing, in an attempt to protect rockfish.

The DFO was instrumental in the Broken Islands voluntary ban on fishing when they brought to light the issue of decreasing rockfish stocks in the late 1990s. Parks Canada agreed with this and began pushing for closure of the entire BGI to finfish fishing. A voluntary ban was initiated in 2000 by Parks Canada, with the endorsement of DFO. I think that it was voluntary because DFO did not support a full ban and Parks Canada does not have the legal authority to implement a ban on all finfish harvesting. There were negotiations taking place between DFO and Parks Canada, with Parks Canada pushing for closing the whole Broken Group Islands. DFO didn't support this and as a compromise they came up with the Rockfish Conservation Areas. DFO's fisheries management perspective gives more consideration to the social ramifications of fully closing such a large area, where Parks Canada does not fully consider the same ramifications.

Beginning in 2002 DFO initiated a rockfish conservation strategy to protect and rebuild rockfish stocks. Consultation with First Nations, recreational and commercial harvesters, and other interested parties was the main method used in the selection of potential Rockfish Conservation Areas. The consultation and planning process carried on for several years and in February of 2007 a number of RCAs went into effect. There are multiple Rockfish Conservation Areas within the PRNPR's boundaries.

Ardon and Wallace 2005, point out many flaws with the RCA designation process. Their primary concerns are an insufficient use of science in determining what areas to designate as RCA, an under-representation of rockfish habitat over 100 metres depth, the lack of cooperation between the DFO and Parks Canada, and the level of transparency in site designation.

Examples of actions to conserve, enhance and promote sustainable development

As the principle agency in charge of managing the PRNPR, Parks Canada has established a few environmental learning programs and experiences. From late June to early September each year park interpreters offer daily programs on the natural and cultural heritage of the park. These programs include guided seashore/tide pool and rainforest walks. Park interpreters are available for questions at the Wickaninnish Center in Tofino. This information centre and interpretive facility focuses on the natural and cultural history of the PRNPR and is open from mid March to mid October. There is also the opportunity to set up specifically tailored educational programs for schools or groups. Parks Canada should be contacted in advance to set up such a tour.

Parks Canada also endorses Elderhostel, a non-profit outdoor education travel expedition company for adults. Elderhostel runs a program that brings people to the PRNPR and teaches them about the marine mammals and birds that reside in the area and about the region's salmon fishing. This program educates adults about the ecological systems that occur in the park, specifically centered on whales and seabirds.

Every year in March, the PRNPR hosts the Pacific Rim Whale Festival which celebrates the migration of an estimated 22,000 grey whales along the west coast of Vancouver Island. The festival puts on a number of marine education/interpretation and First Nation's recognition events throughout the week.

Some personal perspectives on the history and operation of the park

Conversation with John Macintosh

In the late 1960s, some citizen groups, including the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) began making noises about getting the Pacific Rim established as a national park. The process is not clear to me, but it appears they entered into discussions with provincial and federal officials to get things moving. The Canadian Sierra Club pushed to have the area protected. Also, the park was established to satisfy the goal of Parks Canada, which is to create parks that represent the 29 unique 'nature regions' in Canada.

The proclamation of the park was stalled for almost 30 years because of the difficulty of settling private land claims. The parks boundaries have been changed during this time as more settlements are processed.

Conversation with Nick Irving

Nick is employed by Parks Canada and has done work on both national parks and national marine conservation area projects. He had a lot to say on the differences between the two Acts that guide the management of each. The National Parks Act and the NMCA Act are very similar. One of the biggest differences is that NMCA management plans take into account sustainable use within the area while the NP management plans do not accommodate sustainable use.

A very noticeable difference between NPs and NMCAs is that commercial fishing is allowed in NMCAs and not in NPs. Also, with NMCAs, it is necessary to produce an interim management plan prior to establishing the park, whereas a NP can be established and a management plan can be implemented at a later date.

Nick made the point that having an *iconic species* to fan the interest of the public can really push the development of protected areas. The PRNPR does not really have an eco-symbol. They do have a number of marine mammals that could be considered iconic, but there is not one in particular that shines above the others. Gwaii Hanas has adopted the sea otter as their iconic species and the proposed southern straits NMCA will likely use the killer whale.

Nick described the importance of an advisory board in the planning and management of a protected area. Many contemporary protected areas have created an advisory board that is composed of 5-15 individuals that represent different stakeholder groups. Protected areas that have advisory boards include Saguenay, the Great Barrier Reef, Australia and the Florida Keys. The advisory board provides advice to the managing body. An advisory board will often meet at least once every year. In the case of national parks, where the management plan is revised every 5 years with public consultation, the board allows for more regular interaction between the management body and stakeholders. Nick's opinion is that advisory boards are quite helpful in creating successful protected areas.

One thing that can hamper the development of a protected area is having a public that is not well informed about the park (and what it is meant to achieve) and the management and planning processes that must occur in order to move the park forward. The public needs to be given a clear message on what a protected area is and what the roles of the different organisations are. In short, a confused public with a lack of clarity is likely to be a stumbling block to the implementation of the park.

Also, there is the question of how much public consultation to have. Too much consultation can slow the project down and water down the objectives of the park. Not allowing enough time for public consultation can result in a bad situation, with stakeholders that are upset. Hence, a delicate balancing act is needed here.

Conversation with Tom Tomascik

The difference between NPs and NMCAs is that NMCAs manage for sustainable use and NPs do not. Again, a good example is commercial fishing. However, commercial fishing is going on in the Broken Group Islands (BGIs) - a commercial crab fishery. This is allowed to happen because the fishery was going on before the park was designated and was 'grandfathered in' as okay.

Kayaking is one of the main tourist draws to the BGIs. People have been coming there for years and Tom is not aware of any trend in the numbers of kayakers, although he says that it appears that there have not been more or less people visiting over the past 10 years. Also, sport and commercial sport salmon fishing are huge in the BGI.

According to Tom, things that positively influence the creation of a park:

- you must have the support of the public;
- in the PRNPR, NGOs have played a meaningful role in raising issues and communicating with the public. According to Tom, NGOs were the driving force. SeaPaws, Living Oceans Society and WWF are all significant players in marine conservation in Canada;
- you must have legislation that you can use to designate an area for protection. Canada has the Oceans Act, the NMCA Act and the NP Act, all of which can be used.

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