

AN EXAMINATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGIONAL
PARK SYSTEM BY REGIONAL DISTRICTS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

by

JEAN ROSE HNYTKA
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We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

Dr. P. Dearden

Dr. C.J.B. Wood

Dr. R.J. Wilson

Dr. N.J. Ruff

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University of Victoria

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Supervisor: Professor Philip Dearden

ABSTRACT

The study examines the characteristics of, and constraints to, regional park development in the regional districts of British Columbia. The B.C. system of 13,000 ha in 94 parks compares favorably to the other regionally administered regional park systems in North America, however, has some shortcomings. The elected Directors of the regional districts are the decision-makers who direct the development of functions such as regional parks by vote. The provincial government initiated a regional park program in 1965 by legislated funding with requirements for park plans. A separate questionnaire for the directors and planners of the regional districts, and unstructured personal interviews with several senior officials of relevant provincial ministries were used to assess the support provided for regional parks.

The provincial government has achieved the development of a relatively advanced system of regional parks within the framework of regional governments. It provided \$13 million to 1982 to acquire and develop regional parks, 97% of which has gone to three regions. Cuts in staff of the provincial Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division and a change in policy has eliminated the grants and further reduced the limited coordinative, technical and administrative assistance previously offered.

Some regions lack regional park establishment which may not necessarily indicate a lack of support. The directors perceive that: (i) the regional park function is costly, (ii) some regions serve a larger number of non-residents than residents and want compensation, (iii) provincial and local parks are insufficient, (iv) operations and

maintenance costs of parks would consume the majority of the regionally generated parks budget in low tax assessment regions, (v) studies of regional needs are required for which some regions have insufficient resources, (vi) Crown lands and/or parks of the private sector preclude the need for regional parks.

Regional support can be inferred from the survey responses: (i) 20 regions have adopted the regional park function, (ii) 72 parks existed at the time of the survey at a regional cost of \$26 million, and 24 have been added since despite the loss of provincial funding, (iii) Official Regional Park Planning and limited park development continue despite reduced assistance from the province in recent years, (iv) the majority of regional officials state that the regional park function is moderately high in relative importance. The regions also express their autonomy along with their support by their desire to: (i) increase regional coordination of parks and recreation planning, (ii) continue with the regional park function as a voluntary one, and (iii) increase the funding from regional and local sources.

The solutions proposed to further develop the regional park system include: (i) funding of the regions which have not been involved, or are only minimally involved, could be done on a park-specific, or project-specific basis, (ii) encouraging Official Regional Park Plan preparation by incentives and technical assistance, (iii) making technical assistance and interagency communication possible through provincially-hosted workshops of regional planners and officials of the various provincial ministries, and/or annual meetings of regional planners, (iv) clear statement by the provincial government of its regional park policy, and an increase in its involvement in making the public,

elected directors and planners aware of the potential for regional parks.

Examiners:



Dr. P. Dearden



Dr. C.J.B. Wood



Dr. R.J. Wilson



Dr. N.J. Ruff



TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|------|
| TITLE | i |
| ABSTRACT | ii |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS | v |
| LIST OF TABLES | viii |
| LIST OF FIGURES | x |
| LIST OF APPENDICES | xi |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | xii |
| CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO REGIONAL PARKS | |
| 1.0 Introduction | 1 |
| 1.1 Origin of the Concept of a 'Regional' Park | 3 |
| 1.2 Regional Parks Defined | 4 |
| 1.3 Outline of Chapters | 13 |
| CHAPTER TWO: ADMINISTRATIVE AND DECISION-MAKING SYSTEMS GOVERNING REGIONAL PARKS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA | |
| 2.0 Introduction | 15 |
| 2.1 Administrative System Governing Regional Park Development | 16 |
| 2.1.1 History and Formation of Regional Districts ... | 16 |
| 2.1.2 The Provincial-Regional Government Relationship | 18 |
| 2.1.3 Regional District Functions | 20 |
| 2.1.4 Regional Parks in British Columbia | 21 |
| 2.2 Regional Decision-Making | 25 |
| 2.2.1 General Characteristics of Decision-making | 26 |
| 2.2.2 Regional Decision-making Relevant to Regional Parks | 31 |
| 2.3 Methodology | 36 |
| CHAPTER THREE: REGIONAL PARKS IN NORTH AMERICA - A REVIEW OF THEIR COMMON CHARACTERISTICS | |
| 3.0 Introduction | 44 |
| 3.1 Regional Parks Administration in the United States of America | 44 |
| 3.1.1 Contrast Between American and British Columbian Regional Parks Administration | 49 |
| 3.2 Canadian Regional Parks | 50 |
| 3.2.1 Regional Parks in Ontario | 51 |
| 3.2.1.1 Regional Park Activities of Conservation Authorities | 51 |
| 3.2.1.2 Regional Park Activities of Regional Municipalities | 53 |
| 3.2.2 Regional Parks in Saskatchewan | 55 |
| 3.2.3 Regional Parks in Manitoba | 57 |
| 3.2.4 Regional Parks in Nova Scotia | 58 |
| 3.2.5 Regional Parks in Alberta | 59 |
| 3.2.6 Regional Parks in Quebec | 59 |
| 3.3 Comparison, Trends and Evaluation of Regional Parks Systems in Canada | 60 |

| | |
|---|---|
| CHAPTER FOUR: COST AS AN IMPEDIMENT TO REGIONAL PARKS | |
| 4.0 | Introduction 66 |
| 4.1 | Characteristics of the Respondents 67 |
| 4.2 | Perceptions of Regional Officials as to Impediments to Parks, Costs and Public Support. 69 |
| 4.3 | Examination of Existing Costs 78 |
| 4.3.1 | Mill Rates 78 |
| 4.3.2 | Per Capita Costs and Actual Taxes 80 |
| 4.3.3 | Costs of Regional Parks Relative to Other Regional Functions 84 |
| 4.3.4 | Costs of Acquisition and Development of Existing Regional Parks 85 |
| 4.4 | Methods of Acquiring Funds and Parklands 89 |
| 4.4.1 | Acquiring Funds 92 |
| 4.4.2 | Acquiring Lands 94 |
| 4.4.3 | Methods Preferred for Acquisition 97 |
| 4.5 | Summary and Conclusions 99 |
| CHAPTER FIVE: REGIONAL SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL PARKS | |
| 5.0 | Introduction102 |
| 5.1 | Perceptions of Regional Officials Regarding Regional Parks102 |
| 5.1.1 | The Need for Regional Parks103 |
| 5.1.2 | Relative Importance of Regional Parks.....103 |
| 5.1.3 | Satisfaction with the Development of Regional Parks105 |
| 5.1.4 | Regional and/or Provincial Funding for Parks ..108 |
| 5.1.5 | Voluntary Adoption of the Regional Park Function114 |
| 5.1.6 | Regional Coordination of Regional Parks117 |
| 5.2 | Summary and Conclusions121 |
| CHAPTER SIX: EXAMINATION OF PROVINCIAL SUPPORT | |
| 6.0 | Introduction125 |
| 6.1 | Provincial Review of Regional District Performance126 |
| 6.2 | Provincial Assistance to Regional Park Establishment129 |
| 6.2.1 | Financial Assistance131 |
| 6.2.1.1 | Cost Sharing131 |
| 6.2.1.2 | Crown Land Reserves135 |
| 6.2.2 | Coordination136 |
| 6.2.3 | Technical Assistance141 |
| 6.2.3.1 | Subregional Systems Planning141 |
| 6.2.3.2 | Official Regional Parks Plan142 |
| 6.3 | Regional Parks as a Level of Provincial Parks .147 |
| 6.4 | Legislation148 |
| 6.5 | Summary and Conclusions150 |
| CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS | |
| 7.0 | Conclusions154 |
| 7.1 | Recommendations160 |

| | | |
|--------------------|---|-----|
| 7.2 | Limitations | 162 |
| 7.3 | Further Studies | 163 |
| 7.4 | The Future of Regional Parks in B.C. | 164 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | | 166 |
| APPENDICES | | 174 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | | |
|----------|---|-----|
| Table 1 | Jurisdictional Responsibility for Recreation Activities and Facilities | 6 |
| Table 2 | Number of Respondents to Questionnaire | 40 |
| Table 3 | Comparison of Regional Parks Systems in Canadian Provinces | 64 |
| Table 4 | Impediments Reported by Regional Planners to the Regional Park Function | 71 |
| Table 5 | Comparison of Mill Rates for the Regional Park Function Initially Established and in 1982 | 80 |
| Table 6 | Factors Restraining Adoption of the One Mill Rate Reported by Regional Planners | 82 |
| Table 7 | Per Capita Cost (\$) of Regional Parks by Regional District | 83 |
| Table 8 | Estimated Taxes Paid (\$) for Regional Parks by Typical Homeowner in the North Okanagan Regional District (1973 and 1982) | 84 |
| Table 9 | Comparison of Costs for Regional Parks and Recreation/Cultural Services (1978 and 1982) .. | 86 |
| Table 10 | Comparison of Regional Park and Recreational Services Costs by Type of Settlement (1973, 1978 and 1982) | 87 |
| Table 11 | Total Expenditures on Regional Park Acquisition and Development from 1965 to 1982 | 89 |
| Table 12 | Proportion of All Regional Park Lands Acquired by Various Methods | 91 |
| Table 13 | Regional Parkland Acquisition Methods Preferred by Directors | 98 |
| Table 14 | Park and Recreation Functions Adopted by Regional Park Districts | 118 |
| Table 15 | Role of Regional Districts in Regard to Regional Parks as Reported by Directors | 120 |
| Table 16 | Preferred Methods to Coordinate and Plan Acquisition and Development as Reported by Planners .. | 122 |

| | | |
|----------|---|-----|
| Table 17 | Preferred Methods for Improved Coordination of Regional Park Planning as Reported by Directors and Planners | 137 |
| Table 18 | Need for Increased Communication as Reported by Regional Planners and Directors | 138 |
| Table 19 | Dissemination of Information About Regional Parks by the Provincial Government | 141 |
| Table 20 | Status of Regional Park Plan by Regional District | 144 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| | | |
|---------|--|-----|
| Fig. 1 | Park Characteristics by Jurisdictional Level.... | 2 |
| Fig. 2 | Regional Districts of British Columbia | 8 |
| Fig. 3 | Regional Parks by Regional District in British Columbia | 10 |
| Fig. 4 | Administrative Structure Governing Regional Parks in British Columbia | 17 |
| Fig. 5 | Regional Decision-making Model in British Columbia | 32 |
| Fig. 6 | Distinction Between Park Types Known to Regional Directors | 70 |
| Fig. 7 | Importance of Factors to Adopt Regional Parks Function | 73 |
| Fig. 8 | Actual Reasons for Adopting Regional Park Function | 74 |
| Fig. 9 | Perception of Public Willingness to Pay for Regional Parks | 76 |
| Fig. 10 | Perception of Tax Base in Regions | 78 |
| Fig. 11 | Need Perceived for Parks by Regional Planners and Directors | 104 |
| Fig. 12 | Relative Importance of Regional Parks to Directors and Planners | 106 |
| Fig. 13 | Satisfaction with Present Level of Regional Park Development Expressed by Directors and Planners | 107 |
| Fig. 14 | Adequacy of Provincial Funding of Regional Park Function Reported by Regional Planners and Directors | 110 |
| Fig. 15 | Preferred Financing for Regional Parks by Directors and Planners | 112 |
| Fig. 16 | Preference for Regional Parks as a Voluntary Function as Reported by Directors and Planners | 115 |
| Fig. 17 | Provincial Assistance Required as Reported by Regional Directors and Planners | 130 |
| Fig. 18 | Type of Assistance Required From Provincial Go- vernment as Reported by Directors and Planners.. | 134 |

LIST OF APPENDICES

| | | |
|---------------|---|-----|
| Appendix A(i) | Regional Director Questionnaire | 174 |
| A(ii) | Regional Planner Questionnaire | 176 |
| A(iii) | Covering Letter to Regional Districts.. | 180 |
| A(iv) | Covering Letter to Regional Directors and Planners | 181 |
| Appendix B | Recreation/Cultural Services and Regional Park Expenditures as a Proportion of Total Expenditures by Regional District (1978 and 1982) | 182 |
| Appendix C | Total Costs for Acquisition and Development for Regional Park Area by Regional District (1965 to 1982) | 183 |
| Appendix D | Operation and Maintenance Costs as Percentage of Total | 184 |
| Appendix E | Regional Park Land Acquired by Various Methods by Regional District | 185 |
| Appendix F | Regional and Provincial Acquisition and Development Costs of Regional Parks (1965 to 1982) | 186 |
| Appendix G | Perceived Need for Parklands by Type .. | 187 |
| Appendix H | Satisfaction in Regard to Status of Regional Park Development | 188 |
| Appendix I | Adequacy of Provincial Funding and Preferred Financial Arrangements | 189 |
| Appendix J | Preferred Financing: Response to Open Question | 190 |
| Appendix K | Properties Acquired Under the Greenbelt Program by Purpose | 191 |
| Appendix L | Chi ² Test Results | 192 |

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO REGIONAL PARKS

1.0 Introduction:

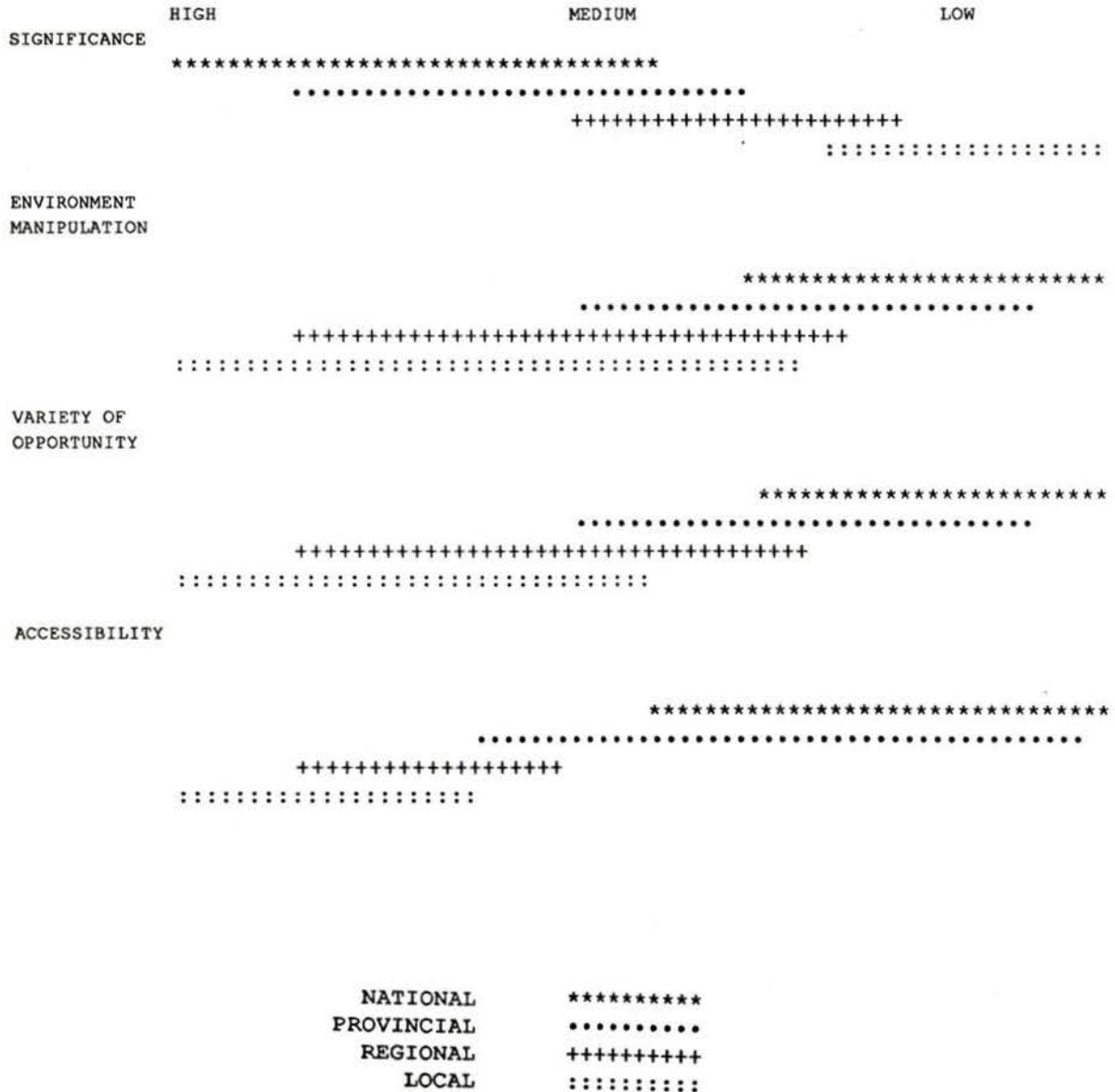
Regional parks constitute, perhaps the least well-known part of the system of parks in Canada. They lack the public profile of most national parks and are not generally developed with the recreation facilities of the familiar municipal parks. The purpose of all levels of parks can be understood within a systems concept for land management initially proposed by Hart (1966):

"...the traditional approach to parks [is] each one is a separate, discrete unit in space and time and is unrelated to other types of parks which may exist in the same region. Yet every land unit, no matter how large or small, bears some relation to all other land units within some logically defined region around it....Each park within each system bears a relationship to the other parks in other systems and to use patterns of the land in which all the parks are situated"(p.3).

This argument as to the complementarity of parks within a total system of parks has come to be the accepted thinking in supplying parks for all purposes. The size, location and management of parks, is a result of biological (species or habitat preservation), physical (particular prehistoric, historic or geological site), and social (location of potential users and political issues) factors which qualify the area for park status. The various jurisdictions have interpreted their relative responsibility within this system in terms of the uniqueness of the resource, the allowable manipulation to maintain the status of that resource, and whether the resource is important to the national, provincial, regional, or local population (Government of Nova Scotia, Department of Lands and Forests, 1976). As shown in Fig. 1, local governments assume the role of providing accessible recreational opportunities for the local population, while the national

FIG. 1

PARK CHARACTERISTICS BY JURISDICTIONAL LEVEL



government aims to protect unique physical, biological and historic features whose use are not compatible with development for intensive recreational activities. Since the objectives of various levels of government are not mutually exclusive, one finds parks with similar features and uses overlapping between jurisdictions (i.e. both regional and local parks provide accessible recreational opportunities).

1.1 Origin of the Concept of a 'Regional' Park

The earliest description of the regional park concept is attributed to Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., the famous mid-19th Century landscape architect, who in addition to his contribution in planning New York City's Central Park, had a vision of a regional park system for New York as:

"mutally supplementary series of parks and subordinate recreation grounds widely dispersed throughout the metropolitan area and linked together by a system of connecting parkways of a width, capacity and scenic quality of which there are no examples in this country" (Doell, et al., 1954, p.35).

In 1866, he also publicly urged the preservation of the hills in the San Francisco Bay area (Trudeau, 1974). Other figures were also important. Charles Eliot, a business associate of Olmsted's, proposed the preservation of large government-owned tracts of land both along the seacoast of Maine and, in particular, around Boston. His emphasis was placed on the "location of large public reserves... determined chiefly with reference to the inclusion therein of the finest scenery of each region or district" (Doell, et al., 1954, p.35). He argued that city boundaries should not limit regional scenic preservation simply because park boards did not wish to establish open space for the use of other municipalities. His efforts resulted in the establishment in legislation of the Boston metropolitan

park system in 1892. Soon thereafter a regional park act in New Jersey set the conditions for the first county park system in the United States (Doell, et al., 1954). The history of the concept of regional parks can be traced from these beginnings. Their evolution and present administrative framework in American and Canadian regional park systems is described in Chapter Three.

1.2 Regional Parks Defined

Regional parks have developed under different administrative bodies in North America with a resulting array of park types. Those criteria which appear generally to be used today to determine the nature of a regional park include:

(i) size: Although the minimum size is variable from region to region, they are relatively large, in contrast to the local community park, to preserve certain biological or physical features of regional interest. In the Capital and Greater Vancouver regional districts of British Columbia, a desired minimum has been set at 60 ha, however within some American regional parks authorities, this figure is 200 ha. providing a buffer zone around features to be protected (Capital Regional Planning Board, 1969; Greater Vancouver Regional District, 1980; East Bay Regional Park District, 1980).

(ii) accessibility (or service radius): The commonly accepted standard used is for a park to be situated within one hour's drive of the majority of the region's population. In one region this has become the primary criteria (Davy, Commission of Outdoor Recreation, State of Virginia, pers. comm.).

(iii) state of development: Land and facilities are to be developed, in general, to a minimum. However, dependent on the administrative body, this criterion is less definitive than others. Parks systems in Saskatchewan

and in areas of the United States are established by a regional administration to serve a regional population but include a variety of recreation facilities from swimming pools to amusement parks. Recently, serviced campgrounds have been introduced in regional parks in British Columbia.

(iv) uniqueness: Many regional administrative bodies recognize land features which are unique or of special significance in some manner within that region. This special attraction is what draws residents from an area beyond the local vicinity.

Recreational opportunities and facilities development between park levels, as envisioned in the ideal park system, is shown in Table 1. In principle, regional parks provide the area and facilities to meet the need for regional recreational activities which are largely based on the natural resources with minimum facility development. Municipal parks usually do not have the size to provide facilities for boating and camping, while provincial and national parks are not as readily accessible to the majority of the population. The needs of the urban day-use visitor are thereby often met in regional parks. Although demands are constantly being made to supply facilities for recreational interests such as roller skating rinks, snowmobiling, archery areas and speedways, most regions maintain primarily the passive recreational activities of hiking, swimming and boating (East Bay Regional Park District, 1980; Sheppard, Koch, Mt. Waddington Regional District, pers. comm.).

The justification then for a regional role in park planning is to satisfy a need of a regional population and to preserve regional landscape beyond the municipal boundaries. As first noted in the 1880s by early regional parks proponents, municipal governments are reluctant to spend funds which would satisfy the demand of a large proportion of users from outside their tax assessment area. Since the potential for overlap exists between administrative levels, integration of services eliminates

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TABLE 1

JURISDICTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR RECREATION ACTIVITIES AND FACILITIES

| Activity of Facility | Level of Responsibility | | | | |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | Municipal | Regional | Provincial | National | Private |
| <u>Sports and Games</u> | | | | | |
| -children's play area | yes | incidental | | | |
| -athletic fields | yes | incidental | | | |
| -golf course | yes | yes | | | yes |
| -recreation and cultural centre | yes | yes | | | yes |
| -commercial sports sports events | yes | | | | yes |
| <u>Observation</u> | | | | | |
| -nature study | some | yes | yes | yes | |
| -sightseeing | yes | yes | yes | yes | |
| -pleasure driving | yes | incidental | yes | yes | |
| <u>Picnicking/Camping</u> | | | | | |
| -picnicking | yes | yes | some | | some |
| -group camping | | some | yes | | some |
| -overnight camping | | | yes | yes | yes |
| <u>Beach Use</u> | | | | | |
| -swimming and beach activity | some | yes | yes | | |
| <u>Water Sport</u> | | | | | |
| -boating, canoeing sailing | some | yes | yes | | yes |
| -water sport (other than boating) | | yes | yes | | incidental |
| <u>Winter Sport</u> | | | | | |
| -skiing | | little | yes | yes | yes |
| -winter sport (other than advanced skiing) | some | yes | yes | incidental | incidental |
| <u>Trail Use</u> | | | | | |
| -strolling | yes | yes | incidental | incidental | |
| -hiking | | yes | yes | yes | some |
| -mountaineering | | | yes | yes | some |
| -trail riding | | yes | yes | yes | yes |
| <u>Fishing/Hunting</u> | | | | | |
| -sports fishing | | yes | yes | yes | yes |
| -hunting | | in special areas only | yes | yes | yes |

Source: Vancouver-Fraser Park District, 1969.

much of the costs of duplication. The 'regional' concept for both recreation and preservation has been recognized and today is implemented by various administrative bodies including regional governments.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

Regional parks in British Columbia have developed with the aid of enabling provincial legislation, the Parks (Regional) Act since 1965. At the same time, the Municipal Act allowed the establishment of regional administration in the 28 newly created regional districts (Fig. 2). An elected Board of Directors governs each district which by vote assumes various responsibilities or 'functions'. Among these functions is that of regional parks. The provincial government maintained support for the development of parks through a program offering financial and technical assistance.

In 1972, Hawksworth (1974) conducted the only examination of the British Columbia regional park system since its conception. She determined that:

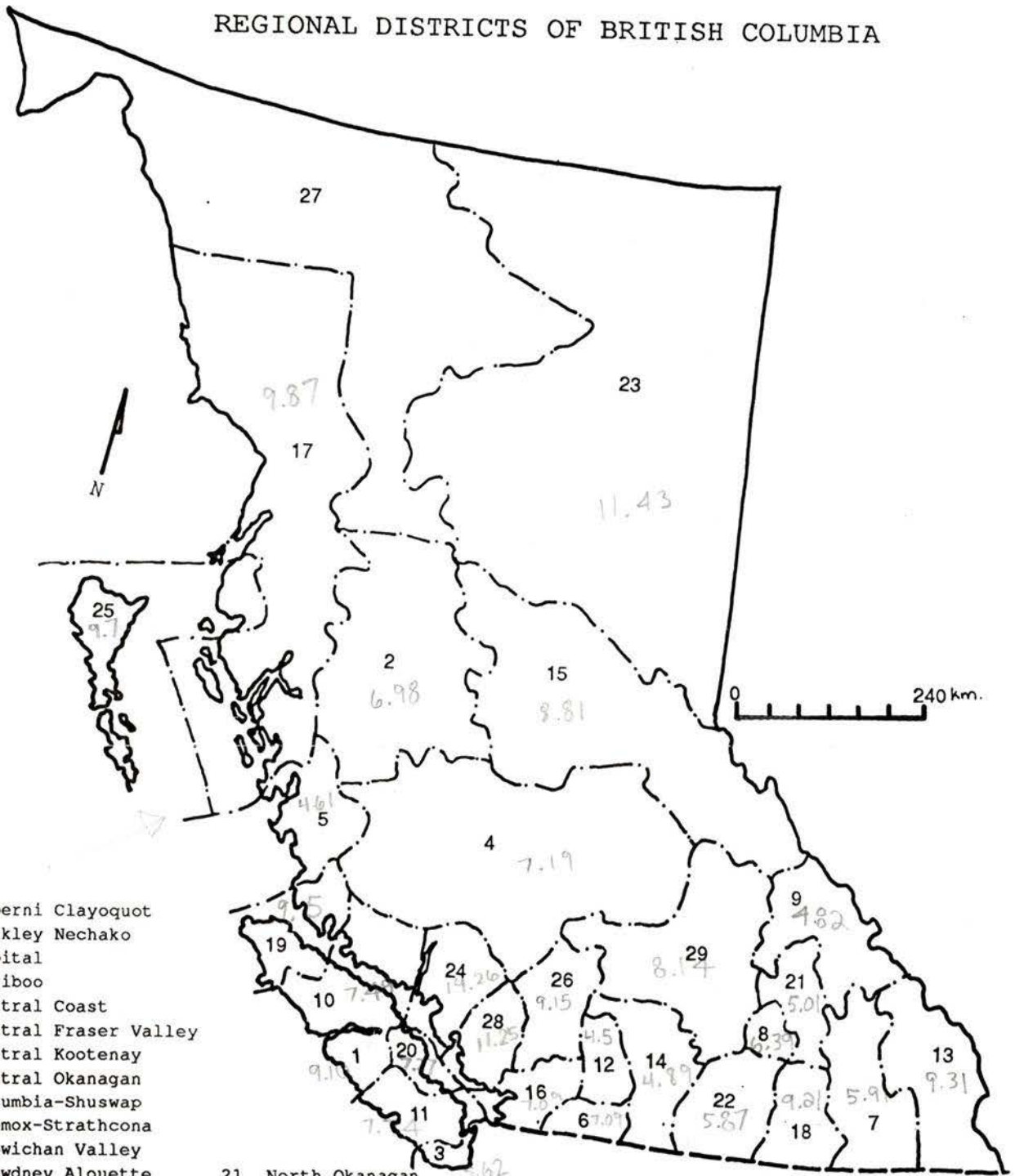
- (i) regional districts do not become involved in regional parks unless politically motivated to do so, and
- (ii) although regional officials in areas without regional parks more commonly reported financial limitations as the single greatest 'hindrance' to planning for regional parks, this "should not, and in fact, does not, constitute a prohibitive barrier" (p.53).

Other explanations for some regional districts not participating in developing parks were offered:

- (iii) in some regional districts, the district tax assessment totals were very low,
- (iv) regional officials were not aware of low regional park expenses, and

FIG. 2

REGIONAL DISTRICTS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 Alberni Clayoquot | 21 North Okanagan |
| 2 Bulkley Nechako | 22 Okanagan Similkameen |
| 3 Capital | 23 Peace River-Liard |
| 4 Cariboo | 24 Powell River |
| 5 Central Coast | 25 Skeena-Queen Charlotte |
| 6 Central Fraser Valley | 26 Squamish-Lillooet |
| 7 Central Kootenay | 27 Stikine Region |
| 8 Central Okanagan | 28 Sunshine Coast |
| 9 Columbia-Shuswap | 29 Thompson-Nicola |
| 10 Comox-Strathcona | |
| 11 Cowichan Valley | |
| 12 Dewdney Alouette | |
| 13 East Kootenay | |
| 14 Fraser-Cheam | |
| 15 Fraser-Fort George | |
| 16 Greater Vancouver | |
| 17 Kitimat-Stikine | |
| 18 Kootenay Boundary | |
| 19 Mount Waddington | |
| 20 Nanaimo | |

(v) residents did not feel parks important enough on which to spend money.

She proposed that the regional park policy of the provincial government should be strengthened to preserve parkland for future demand and to assist those regional governments which become interested in regional parks.

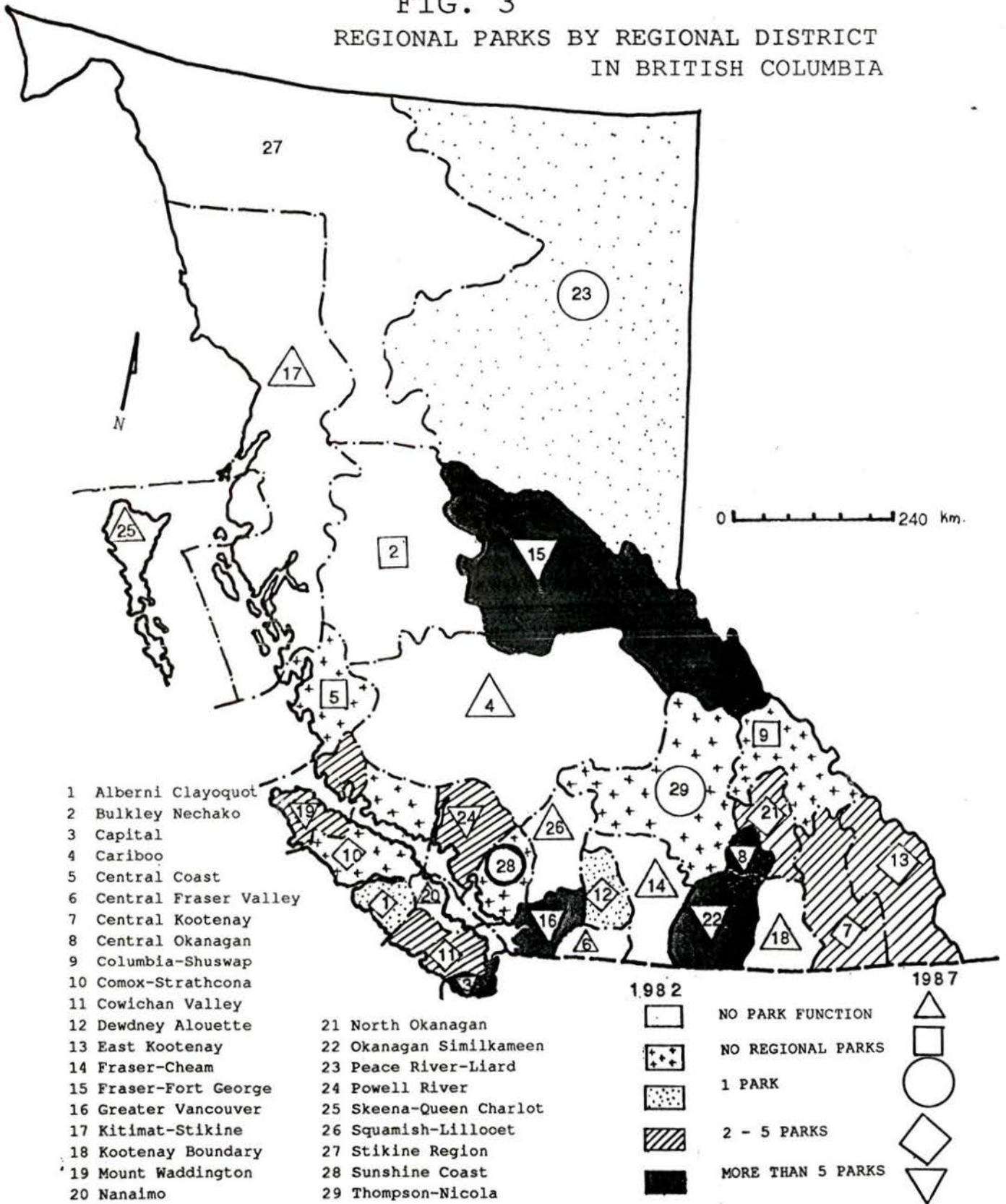
Several years have passed since these conclusions were drawn and seven more districts now are responsible for regional parks . However, almost 20 years after the drafting of the legislation, five of these regions had not acquired any regional parks at the time of this study and 9 regions still had not voted to adopt the parks function (Fig. 3).

This thesis re-examines the question of: What are the problems which cause some regional districts to be less active in planning regional parks than others? The results may be different than Hawksworth's study in that:

- (i) 15 years have elapsed since the former study giving all regions sufficient time to mature in their administrative role,
- (ii) attitudes have evolved with society, and
- (iii) the public and regional officials probably have a greater awareness about regional parks or parks in general,
- (iv) the design of the earlier study has several shortcomings. The problems include:

- The data collected came from three categories of officials, planners, directors and secretary treasurers in each regional district. Despite their differences in role, their responses were reported and discussed as one viewpoint from the regional district. As an example, when asked what problems caused a slowdown in regional park development, regional planners were concerned about the "ambiguity of the definition" of regional parks as might be expected by those responsible for planning them. Meanwhile, secretary treasurers saw the funding system at

FIG. 3
REGIONAL PARKS BY REGIONAL DISTRICT
IN BRITISH COLUMBIA



fault. Each group reported based on its role and experience, so the averaging of such responses could be misleading.

- No indication of importance nor measure of the strength of the responses was given. This might have provided a clear idea of priorities and individual degree of involvement with the issue of regional parks.

- Conclusions were drawn with insufficient support of the data in at least one case where the residents' views of regional parks were felt to be the most important factor impeding regional park growth, although no survey of the residents was conducted.

Further to the limitations of the previous study, the greater maturity of the regional districts, and possible changes in attitudes and awareness of the public and directors which justify another study of the regional park system, changes have occurred in recent years in provincial financial policies. The initiation of the provincial government's economic 'restraint' policy began to affect funding for regional parks in the early 1980s. The time, therefore, was opportune to examine the provincial and regional priorities in order to provide the most effective assistance to the regional districts. In addition to funds, other assistance could be provided. In some regions, this may be more important in creating regional parks than money.

This study attempts to determine if there are problems in establishing regional parks, and if so, what are the problems, and what are the solutions. It was unknown why regional parks had not developed in all regions; whether because of primarily a regional lack of support or whether the provincial involvement or non-involvement had affected the progress of their development. It was assumed that if the provincial government had initiated a regional park program, it had valid reasons for doing so and, therefore, should provide

the necessary assistance to the regions to establish them. The regions determine the development of parks in so far as the public states the need, the elected officials interpret this need and decide on the type and extent of services to the public, and the administration implements the programs to do so. For this reason, both the provincial and regional level of government administration responsible for creating regional parks and the perceptions of those deciding their fate were examined.

Some of the questions basic to this examination include:

- (i) What has happened in regional park systems elsewhere in North America?
- (ii) What growth of the system has occurred in British Columbia?
- (iii) What assistance has been provided from the provincial government?
- (iv) How effective has it been in creating regional parks?
- (v) What are the factors within the regional districts which affect the acceptance of the regional parks as an administrative function?

The context for these questions is developed more specifically in the following Chapter. The results of the examination should allow conclusions to be drawn as to the weaknesses and strengths within the regional park program in British Columbia based on an analysis of responses from provincial and regional officials, and other regional park systems in Canada. Recommendations will be made to refine the existing implementation of regional park administration accordingly, incorporating ideas of the provincial and regional officials and planners.

1.4 Outline of Chapters

In order to examine the components of the basic problem of regional park development, the context of regional parks within the political and administrative framework must be understood. To this end, the following chapter will describe the regional level of administration in British Columbia from its conception, as well as how the responsibilities for parks and recreation resources, especially in relation to regional parks, are divided between the regional and provincial government. The evolution of regional parks in British Columbia will then be described in light of this relationship and the regional administrative structure.

Attention then focusses on the principal actors in controlling regional park development and how they are characterized according to the roles they play. The individuals responsible for regional park creation can be modelled in a typical decision-making system for regional parks in the regional districts of British Columbia. This will aid in understanding the importance of interactions of all actors involved. A review of the literature will point out the influences on the decision - making process. After the administrative systems are explained, a conceptual basis is proposed for the decisions made within the region.

Chapter Three deals with the topic of regional park administrative systems elsewhere in North America, presenting their common characteristics and outlining trends in regional park development. This review allows an evaluation to be made of regional parks here in comparison to other systems evolving under similar conditions.

Chapter Four presents the results of an examination of the costs of regional parks because it was reported, over ten years ago, to be a major cause of a slow start to their development.

Chapter Five examines selected indicators of regional support for regional parks through: (i) the activities enabling parks through finances and planning and (ii) the perceptions of regional park importance and public need of the administrators.

In Chapter Six an analysis of the provincial assistance is made through the reported intentions of the provincial government in establishing a regional park program and from the reports of the regional actors and provincial administrators.

Chapter Seven presents the summary of major findings in the three areas of research - perceived and actual costs of parks, indications of regional support in past actions of the regional district and present perceptions of the regional administrators and the provincial assistance programs and perceptions of their effectiveness held by regional and provincial administrators. It concludes with recommendations to assist further development of a provincially supported system of regional parks, notes the limitations of the study, and suggests further studies following from this one.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND DECISION MAKING SYSTEMS GOVERNING REGIONAL PARKS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

2.0 Introduction

The regional parks of British Columbia were formed within the jurisdiction of the regional district level of government in the mid-1960s. Nearly all functions of the regional district are voluntary and determined within the regional district decision-making body. Regional parks are among those responsibilities taken on as a voluntary activity of the regional district.

In this chapter, the regional district decision structure is described in relation to the various provincial agencies controlling or affecting regional parks, and to the various intergovernmental and advisory bodies specific to regional districts and/or regional parks. Although the interactions with other governmental agencies may affect regional park development, the decisions made by the regional district board are critical to park development and together with the actions of the planning department and the assistance available from the provincial government, determine their extent of development and success. This regional decision-making structure will be examined in the form of a model developed to explain the importance of various factors such as previous attitude development and information flows in forming the perceptions of the decision makers. The model is based on relevant findings from the research literature and describes the elements in political decision-making relevant to the regional park context. This attempts to determine the key influences and points within the decision-making process which may affect, or have an effect on, the development of regional parks.

2.1 Administrative System Governing Regional Park Development

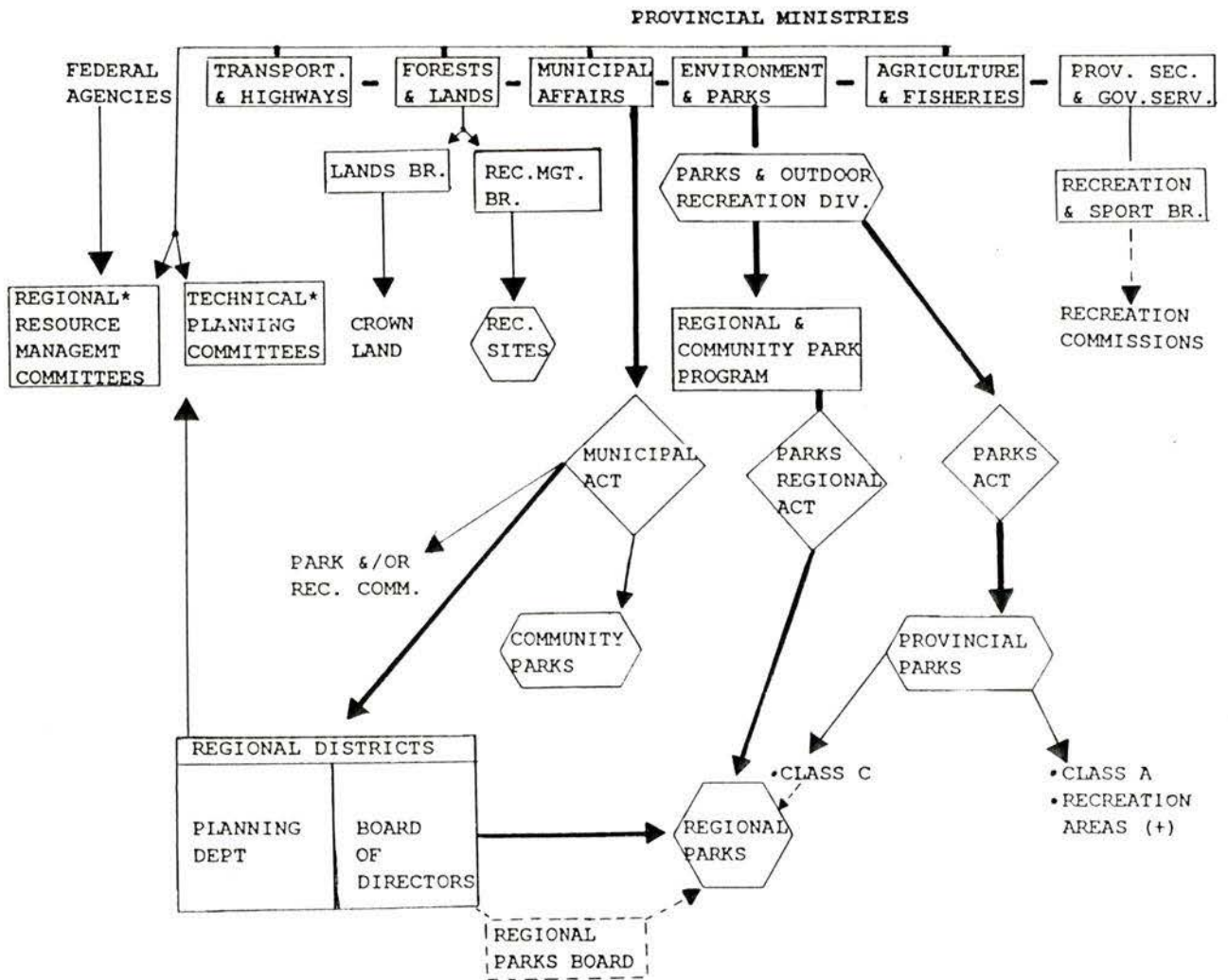
Regional parks are shown in Fig. 4 in relation to the two ministries, Environment and Parks, and Municipal Affairs, directly responsible for legislation establishing them or other voluntary functions of the regional districts and within the context of other ministries involved in recreation planning. The evolution of this administrative structure and the relative powers of the provincial and regional governments is described in the following sections to aid in understanding the interactions of the various government levels supplying regional parks.

2.1.1 History and Formation of Regional Districts

Regional districts in British Columbia evolved in response to numerous provincially-granted responsibilities, many of which were originally the concern of the municipalities. Many municipalities, however, did not have sufficient financial and administrative capabilities, therefore, some services (e.g. school nursing, dental care) were provided through the aid of conditional grants from the provincial government and the use of provincial employees (Swainson, 1983). These services often were extended beyond municipal boundaries in recognition of a "regional community of interest" (Ministry of Municipal Affairs, 1971, p.1). Eventually this led to the formation of such broader administrative units as Boards of Health, School Districts, and water and sewer districts, formed by agreement between municipalities (Swainson, 1983). With this increase in services administered at the local level, the provincial government needed a regional agency to coordinate and set priorities to increase the efficiency of delivery of these various services, and to limit the growing municipal tax burden (Ministry of Municipal Affairs, 1971).

FIG. 4

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE FOR PARKS AND RECREATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA



(+) FORMER CLASS B PARKS ALLOWING RESOURCE EXTRACTION
 (*) DISSOLVED 1983

Amendments to the Municipal Act in 1965 provided the legislative basis for the regional districts (Ch. 290, Sec.767). By 1968, the Letters Patent approved by the Lieutenant Governor had incorporated each of the 28 regional districts and defined their mandatory responsibilities. Further powers may be granted by the Minister in Supplementary Letters Patent determined by decision of each regional administering board, according to public consensus and the particular needs of each region (Ministry of Municipal Affairs, 1971)

2.1.2 The Provincial-Regional Government Relationship

Through the formation of the Regional Districts, 20% of the provincial population within the electoral (non-municipal) areas was removed from the direct responsibility of the provincial government (Swainson, 1983). In fact, both municipalities and the provincial government devolved responsibilities upon the regions.

Certain powers, however, were not delegated since the provincial government conceived of regional districts as service 'agencies', not as a fourth level of government. Certain conditions enforced this:

- (i) Regional districts lack the power to tax residents and must, therefore, requisition the municipalities and electoral areas for revenues for services offered;
- (ii) The Regional Boards are non-partisan, amalgamations of members limited strictly by Letters Patent; and
- (iii) The powers of the region are determined by the interactions of the elected municipal and electoral area members (Ministry of Municipal Affairs, 1971).

Furthermore, the provincial government views the legislative and administrative importance of regional

districts as being less than that of the provincial agencies. Its powers are restricted to human settlement through preparation of official community plans in non-municipal areas (Ch. 290, Sec.944-949), and, until revisions in the Municipal Act in 1983 and 1985, regional and settlement planning (Sec. 807-809). The community plan may designate environmentally sensitive lands and areas for protection of the natural environment (Sec. 945(2) and (4)). The provincial government maintains the role of determining policy for taxation, municipal administration and the regional district structure and powers, and management over natural resources, finances, economic development, social services and transportation.

Although the province emphasizes cooperation with the regions, it limits the input of the Regional Board in decision-making in areas of joint provincial-regional concern. In the past, this was done by the composition of two committees, the Regional Resource Management Committees and the Technical Planning Committees which were both disbanded in 1983. They are described here due to their activities at the time of the survey. The former was responsible for the preparation of regional strategic plans for natural resources and was comprised of appointed directors from the natural resource ministries in each of the established Resource Regions in the province. Local governments did not participate in this process officially, their inclusion being on a consultative basis only. Conversely the role of the Resource Management Committee, in relation to the local governments, exhibited far greater powers:

"(i) to facilitate the coordination of provincial and local government land-use and settlement planning policies and programs, (ii) to review proposed local government official plans and policy statements with respect to their effect on provincial regional plans and on established provincial land-use objectives and policies, and (iii) to provide information and technical assistance to local government in the preparation of official plans" (Government of B.C., 1982,p.7).

Where local planning and/or servicing responsibilities of the governments was concerned, the Technical Planning Committee or regional or local body was contacted (Government of B.C., 1979, p.3). The Technical Planning Committees, comprised of the regional planning director, regional representatives of the provincial ministries of Municipal Affairs, Transportation and Highways, and those governing natural resources, among others, provided advice on planning matters and acted as a liaison between themselves, the ministries of provincial government and the member municipalities (Municipal Act, Ch. 290, Sec.815). This committee was only consultative to the higher committee.

2.1.3 Regional District Functions

The Regional Board of Directors represents the electorate of the Regional District . Each is appointed from a municipal council or elected in the electoral areas. The votes of each director of the Board are proportional to the population in each represented area (Municipal Act, Sec. 778-779).

All regions administer several functions granted under statute as "over-all provincial concerns" (Ministry of Municipal Affairs, 1971). These include regional hospitals, and regulations governing planning, building, zoning and subdivision in the electoral areas, local services in electoral areas, any service to an incorporated municipality on a contract basis (Sec. 770(2)), the disbursement of grants-in-aid to organizations benefiting the region (Sec. 269), and the financing of municipal works and services (Ministry of Municipal Affairs, 1971). Here-in lies the role of the planning department. Recent changes include the removal of regional planning, the services of the advisory committees, and of the regional offices of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs.

Additional or voluntary functions are granted to the regional districts by Supplementary Letters Patent. By 1986, 79 different voluntary functions existed. Among these are local necessities such as sewer systems, water supply systems and garbage disposal. Others are of broader regional importance such as recreational programming and regional parks. Any one function adopted by Letters Patent, which stipulates the cost-sharing agreement and the benefitting member areas of the regional district, need not be adopted and funded by the entire region (Municipal Act, 1979 Ch. 290 Sec 776(2)). Revenue for a function such as regional parks is collected by the Regional District through billing both the participating municipal areas (cities, districts, towns or villages) of a region and the province for services to electoral areas. This is in accord with the mill rate (\$ per thousand assessed property value taxation rate) and the cost-sharing formula for member areas approved in the Letters Patent (Sec. 767 (6 - 6.1)).

2.1.4 Regional Parks in British Columbia

In addition to the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division of the Ministry of Environment and Parks, Fig. 4 indicates that other provincial ministries have a role in providing recreational opportunities. Historically, the provincial government provided and maintained the regional and local recreation sites in British Columbia. The Department of Lands and Forests in the 1940s originally created local use parks (Olcay, 1980). The present Ministry of Forests and Lands, through its Recreation Management Branch, plans 'recreation sites' on Crown forested lands as a result of the demand for management over Crown forested lands used traditionally by locals (Forest Act, 1979, Ch.140, Sec.3-5, Apt; pers. comm.).

New parks proliferated in the 1950's under the

management of a parks ministry. Under the Provincial Parks Act of 1979, provincial parks were grouped according to the conditions granted for resource-use and by the visitor's origin into Classes A, B (now Recreation Areas) and C (Olcay, 1980). Class A provincial parks assist in the preservation or maintenance of the recreational values of the parks involved, virtually all of British Columbia's parks exist in this class. The former Class 'B' parks did not receive the same degree of protection since permits could be issued if not detrimental to the recreation values of the park. Today they are renamed Recreation Areas and allow resource extraction (Munn, pers. comm.). Class C parks were largely the product of the forest ministry in the 1940's and 1950's as "regional and community" parks. Today they receive the same protection as Class A parks. They are, however, small, local parks. The 32 remaining from the original 78 are being transferred to local administration. They are administered by an appointed volunteer park board to develop and operate these parks, which interact with the administration of other local parks.

The regional park function differs from other voluntary functions of the Regional Districts in that a separate Act of the legislature, the Parks (Regional) Act (1979), affects the conditions of their establishment. The Ministry of Environment and Parks administers it along with its provincial park counterpart, the Provincial Parks Act (1979). Other regional functions are subject to the Municipal Act alone, administered by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs.

The legislation defines a regional park vaguely as "any area of land set aside and dedicated as a park under this Act or a municipal park transferred under section 7" (Park (Regional) Act, 1979. Ch. 310. Sec.1). The Parks Branch elaborates slightly more in its program guidelines to the regional districts:

"...a unit of land which may be a natural park, a trail, or a special activity site (eg. boat launch site)...to provide day use outdoor recreation opportunities for the residents of two or more municipalities, i.e. within about one hour travel time of most users' homes..." (Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing, Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, 1980).

Variability exists within each region and between regional districts as to the nature and definition of a regional park. The actual parks within the total B.C. system vary in size from one ha. to 4685 ha., however, a desired minimum park size of 20 ha. was set in the Capital Regional District, and a 60 ha. minimum imposed in the Greater Vancouver region in 1969. Moreover, the definition in terms of density ratio (total acres of parks to regional population) is dynamic, responding to the increase in leisure time, mobility, disposable income and population pressures of the times. A review of the demands on the regional system in the Capital Regional District suggested a change in the density ratio from the minimum 1969 figure of 17 per 1000, to the assessed need in 1980 of 30 acres per 1000 (Professional Environmental Recreation Consultants, 1980) with even more parks targeted for the system in the future (PRP: Parks, Planning and Research, 1986). At least one regional district views these standards as obsolete due to the societal differences of today and the trends of the 1950s and 1960s upon which these ratios were determined. Guidelines for park acquisition are more often determined by site qualities and somewhat by opportunity, as was the case with one fortuitous acquisition by donation of 4685 ha. in the Greater Vancouver Regional District (Hankin, 1985).

Most of the regions have not used a consistent definition in defining a regional park, however, they generally follow the minimum development, natural feature 'rule-of-thumb'. Exceptions are noted such as a speedway and serviced campgrounds, a marina and a planned fish hatchery in three different regions. By 1983, over 8080

ha. of regional parks, notwithstanding conformity to definition, were recognized by the provincial government and protected in 14 regional districts (Fig. 3). Since that time, additions have included 24 parks in 14 regional districts, adding 5,325 ha, 88% of which is in one park.

The original purpose of the Regional Parks Act of 1965 proposed regional parks to exist within special Regional Park Districts managed by Regional Park Boards. Only one regional park district, the Fraser-Vancouver Regional Parks District, was formed and operated from 1967 to 1972 (South, pers. comm.). It was dissolved since the Minister of Municipal Affairs at that time felt that this function would be better administered within the regional district framework (Campbell, pers. comm). The original municipalities on the Fraser-Vancouver Parks Board persist on the Greater Vancouver Regional Board for the parks function only, although they may be member areas of neighboring regional districts. Although conflicting, the adoption of separate legislation to govern regional parks occurred because the fate of regional districts was uncertain (Broome, pers. comm).

Two major sources fund the development of regional parks. Member areas of the regional district which support this function are billed according to the mill rate approved by the regional directors. A mill rate is the tax rate per \$1000 assessed property value and improvements to the lands, taxable for school purposes. A maximum of one mill was allowed under the Parks (Regional) Act (Ch. 310 Sec. 9) with a three mill ceiling for all regulatory functions under the Municipal Act, unless increased by referendum. After 1984, the taxable values were changed in the regional districts (eg. from 10% to 100% of property values of residential properties) and this ceiling changed to one mill for all functions. A second source of funds are grants available from the Ministry of Environment and Parks for one-third of the cost of development, acquisition

and interest payment on loans, and up to one-third of 40% of development or maintenance of regional parks (Parks (Regional) Act, 1979. Ch.310, Sec. 11(2) and 12). Total provincial grants made available amount to \$13 million. None have been granted since the 1981 fiscal budget. As a condition of funding assistance, an Official Regional Park Plan is required within five years of adopting the function or five years after the legislation was passed in 1971 (Ch. 310, Sec.17).

Other assistance provided by the provincial government includes the lease and transfer of Crown lands and of Class C provincial parks. Administrative assistance came from two full-time staff members in the Parks ministry until 1984. At present one person provides part-time administrative assistance on a request basis and processes ministerial approvals for bylaws such as Official Regional Park Plans. Planning and technical assistance was also available from the six regional offices of the provincial parks program (reduced to three offices after 1984). Inter-ministry coordination was formerly offered either from the Regional and Community Parks Program coordinator or the regional offices of the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division.

This summary of the administrative arrangements to establish regional parks and the history and relative powers of the provincial and regional governments provided in this section should assist in understanding the political setting and, therefore, the complexity of the role of the actors in regional decision-making. These interactions will be examined in the following section and related to the research on decision-making.

2.2 Regional Decision-Making

Decision-making in the regional districts on regional park matters can be described in relation to the input of information and the nature and relative role of

the individuals involved in the process. A simplified qualitative model is presented in this section, along with a discussion of the factors affecting political decision-making as a complex group and individual task. The Regional District Board of Directors and, in a sense, the Planning Department, share the responsibility for regional parks in their region. The former elected for a two year term, are the legislative arm while the latter, employed by the regional board, are the executive. This basically political entity responds to often competing interests, and its decision-making may be best presented in the form of a model, presented in Sec. 2.2.2.

2.2.1 General Characteristics of Decision-Making

Several points from the literature on decision making must be emphasized in relation to the decisions made by the regional district board to understand the complexity of the task and, more importantly, the influences which may limit the present park system.

In the simplest of systems, that defined as 'closed', within which the environment of the decision - maker and the complexity of the act of choice are given little weight, it is assumed that a person is ideally 'rational' in his/her decision-making if he/she:

- (i) can clearly formulate goals and objectives in recognition of the decision problem,
- (ii) searches, evaluates and orders all alternatives,
- (iii) takes into account the possible consequences of all actions,
- (iv) in view of this knowledge, can choose the course of action which leads to the best or most preferred consequence (Alexis, 1967; Scott, 1967 in Castles, 1971).

In addition to this rational behavior, ideally the decision-maker has a complete range of information available and has the mental capacity to use this information fully (Castles, et al., 1971).

The decision-maker in an 'open' system is influenced by the social, economic and political environment and is not assumed to recognize all goals and feasible alternatives to an action as in a closed system. The individual is a result of his/her culture, personality and aspirations, and reacts to stimuli according to an 'image' or construct of relationships, experiences, values and emotions (Alexis, 1967). This decision-maker, although able to select rationally and order responses to stimuli, has a limited perspective due to this image. Furthermore, limitations in computational skills and the individual's objectives affect the use of information and lead to biases in the decision process (Alexis, 1967, Downs, 1967 in Castles, et al. 1971). For example, the individual's search for alternatives may:

- (i) exclude data adverse to his/her interests and favor data supporting his/her interests,
- (ii) result in favorable alternatives being presented early, when cost and time limit consideration of alternatives,
- (iii) be limited to simple proposals which are easier to discuss and which lead more easily to consensus,
- (iv) favor the status quo, as often done by incumbents and those whose interests it supports,
- (v) result in 'territorial bargaining' or an exchange of support on issues (Downs, 1967 in Castles, et al. 1971).

The course of action leading to the best or preferred consequence seldom occurs in truth. One view of decision-making suggests that, in the absence of complete information and the ability to use it, the decision-maker

makes an incremental move in the desired direction without exploring all the difficulties of a solution, disregarding many of the alternatives because of the cost in terms of time, energy or money (Lindblom, 1965).

Political decisions are not made by individuals but rather in the context of the group and the external reference groups (constituents or clienteles) (Kirkpatrick, et al., 1976). The process shares characteristics of both individual and group decision-making in what may be described as a process of 'mutual adjustment' where no central coordinator assumes authority (Lindblom, 1965). As politicians who serve the public interest, their actions may be partisan in fulfilling their own objectives, apart from those with whom their decisions are interdependent. A typical group exhibits collective behavior or a group "identity", not a summation of individual behaviors, from its relationships among the interdependent members sharing a common interest (Fisher, 1974, p.18; Olson, 1965 in Castles et al. 1971). The communication of information in political group decision-making plays an especially important role as the basis for bargaining, negotiation and compromise (Kirkpatrick et al., 1976).

In addition to the problems expected by those representing individual interests in a group, are the normal difficulties of group processes as opposed to individual processes, i.e. more conflicts, gaining consensus, greater time required, language constraints in communicating, errors of transmission, and distortion of data among others (Fisher, 1974). Advantages may exist affecting the quality of the decision such as greater efficiency due to larger labor resources and technical specialization, fairness in careful development and analysis of alternatives, greater member satisfaction and morale, better decisions made over time with experience of the group (Swap, 1984). Some tasks require the critical exchange of conflicting viewpoints which could not be made

individually (Fisher, 1974). The quality of the decision may be determined by factors defining the group such as group composition, group leadership, nature of work of the group and its particular decision-making rules and arrangements (Swap, 1984).

Due to the costs involved in extending the search to consider all alternatives, and the loss of efficiency in specialization of members, an outside agency or committee is often used (Downs, 1967 in Castles, et al. 1971). Such specialists are free from direct operational responsibilities of the group but knowledgeable of its goals, rules, behaviors and routines. They can undertake the search and analysis for the decision-makers, who are able to direct the search for relevant data. These actors cannot provide any single correct answer either because of the uncertainties and value judgements involved. However, they are trained to search and present the alternatives and to provide a valid evaluation of information, including a clear statement of the uncertainties involved (Fox and Dunn, in Neilson, 1977).

The limitations of the decision makers in processing information must be known to these outside actors, as well as what content is relevant to their needs in the decision context. For example, it is important to know that an individual's capacity to deal simultaneously with numerous information items is low, yet can be improved by combining items into larger classes of information (Fisher, 1974). Yet the flow of information and content should not be restricted or filtered from the various sources to the point that the relevant material is not provided. On the other hand, many groups continue to request additional information, although beyond an uncertain point new information is not used efficiently or rationally (Fisher, 1974). The timing of presentation of information is also critical. If a position has been taken, even the best quality of new information will have little impact on the

decision process (Alexis, 1967, Fisher, 1974). Furthermore, certain types of information are more important at various stages of decision-making than others which may be more readily attainable to decision-makers (Skjei in Kirkpatrick et al., 1976).

Given that attitudes and biases of the individual predispose him/her in interpreting information, and that that information, to be useable, must be concise yet thorough and presented at an appropriate time in the decision process, it is not surprising to know that the perceptions of the board directors will vary, and that this may differ from reality:

" In actual fact the perceived world is fantastically different from the 'real' world. The differences involve both omissions and distortions, and arise in both perception and inference. ...The decision maker's model of the world encompasses only a minute fraction of all the relevant characteristics of the real environment, and his inferences extract only a minute fraction of all the information that is present even in his model." (Simon, 1959 in Castles, et al. 1971, p.49).

From these perceptions and a list of evaluated alternatives, comes the decision.

Many models in the literature describe the decision process and/or the decision outcome. They can be categorized between the extremes of the economic models of 'rationalist man' (structured decision process, clear organizational goals) and social psychological studies of the role of personality and social influences on decision processes (unstructured decision processes, unclear organizational goals) (McMillan, 1980). The work based on Herbert Simon's "information processing" school of thought broke away from the rationalist approach by examining the constraints on rational choice (eg. incomplete knowledge of consequences, limited perception of alternatives) (Kirkpatrick et al., 1976). It emphasizes the importance

of previous information, the complexity and volume of new information, the role of existing belief systems, levels of cognitive complexity, and factors affecting the search process, the response and perceptions. Recent tendencies in research have been focussed in social psychology, on decisional analysis and definition of decision structures, and in examining decisions made in case studies to determine what factors can increase the predictability of outcomes (McMillan, 1980; Hunt et al., 1984; Clarke et al., 1984). The focus in this study of the regional districts of British Columbia will be on the importance of the individual and the input of information as described in the next section.

2.2.2 Regional Decision-Making Model Relevant to Regional Parks

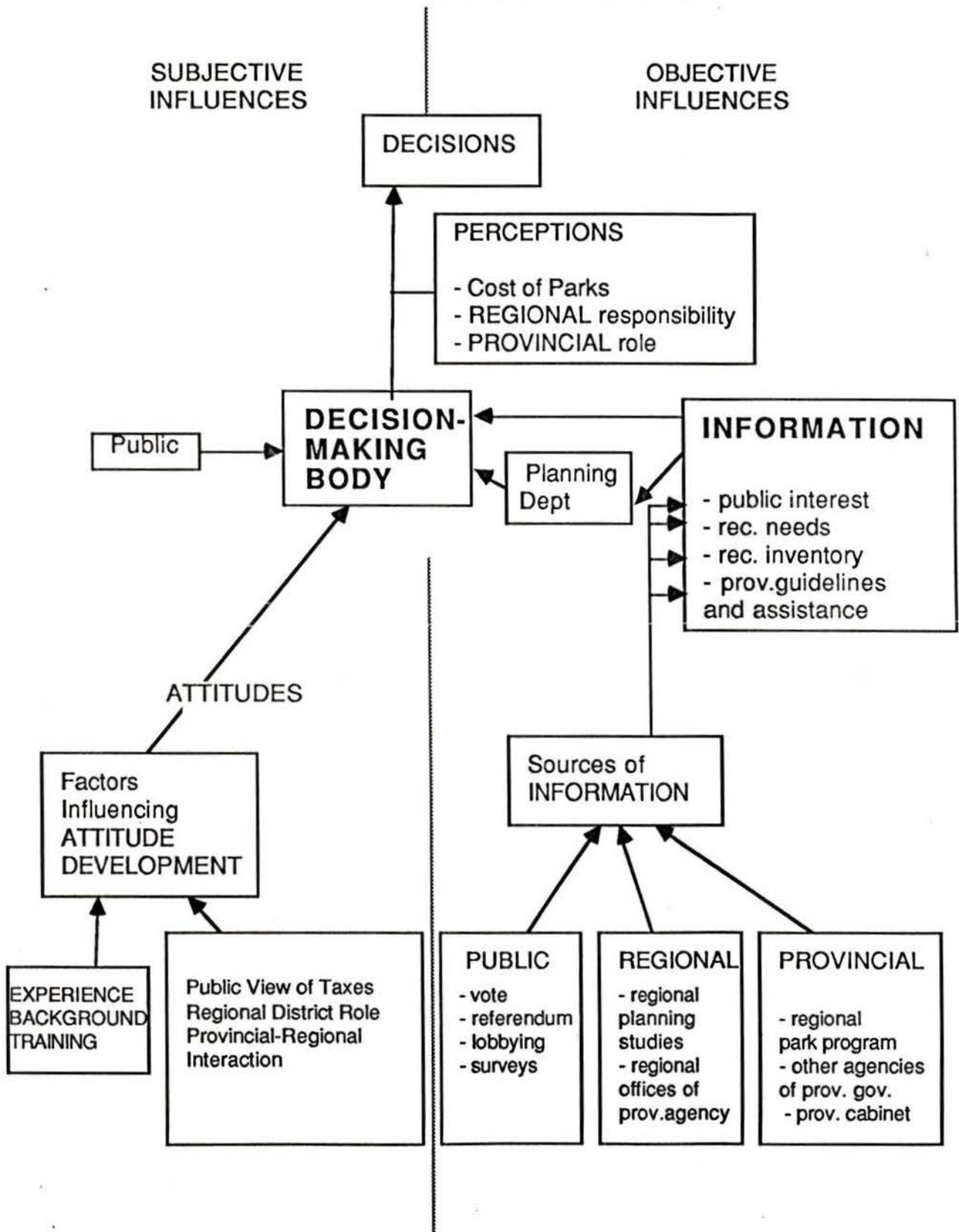
The model presented in Fig.5 describes how subjective factors (eg. conditioning) and objective factors (eg. information presentation) are likely to affect the decision outcome in regard to regional park adoption and development. This study attempts to examine some of these factors and the perceptions influenced by these factors at the individual level in greater detail.

The basic policy decisions to be made by the regional directors in regard to regional parks are whether they are needed in the region and what degree of support should be offered. The Regional Districts have ranged in response from not adopting regional parks, adopting other functions to reserve lands for parks, to the enthusiastic extreme of planning a system of regional parks with adequate staff and funding, and acquiring and developing lands to complete the objectives.

Decisions about regional parks are the result of a group decision by vote by the elected directors. Subjective influences on the vote include the experiences of the

FIG. 5

REGIONAL PARK DECISION-MAKING MODEL



individuals which affect the attitudes formed in general toward parks. Attitude here is defined as:

"a collection of feelings (affects) and beliefs (cognitions) which predispose an individual to react in a certain way to the object of these affects and cognitions" (Schiff, 1972, p.8).

Attitudes then are developed as a result of general past experience. Upbringing, training and education have been shown to lead to the development of a 'construct' system or 'psycho-specialization' typical of those with similar backgrounds. As an example, a professional specialist will reflect the attitude of one who is trained or has been raised to view the environment selectively. Someone who has an orientation towards people will more likely be guided by social considerations in his/her decision-making than someone with an orientation to physical influences (Little in Murphy, 1978). In this model, it is proposed that the board directors likely have developed attitudes towards the topic of parks, the public views on taxation, the role of the regional district, and provincial-regional government interactions.

The objective influences on a decision are the sources, types and timing of information leading to the perceptions held. Perception, in this case more accurately termed 'social perception', is:

"concerned with the impression one has of a social stimuli, as that impression is modified by the perceiver's past experience in general, his previous experience with that same or similar stimuli and the individual's state at the moment he is [perceiving] the stimulus of interest" (Schiff, 1972,p.7).

Perceptions differ from attitudes in that they are:

- (i) more subject to change with the immediate past experience and state of the perceiver,
- (ii) can be a simple reaction to a stimulus without an affective and cognitive component, and
- (iii) have a behavioral component, i.e. people react

on the basis of perceptions (Schiff, 1972).

In the context of this study, someone may have an attitude about the theme of parks in general, but have a perception causing a response to a proposal to situate a park nearby.

The model presents the relative role of planners, the public, the provincial government and the directors in decision-making. "Information" is the stimulus which is perceived in light of an existing attitude(s). This information is usually forwarded to the regional directors via the regional planning department but may come directly from the public and less frequently from the provincial government. Typically the planning department produces a study or planning document on various topics which could include the public's views on issues via referenda or surveys, proposed planning alternatives, and briefing of the actions and programs of the levels of government which concern the region. In this study these may include, among others:

- (i) public input in regional planning regarding the demand for parks,
- (ii) a recreational needs assessment and/or recreation inventory, and
- (iii) an explanation of the provincial assistance available (eg. guidelines, definition, legislation, financing, land availability) in establishing parks.

The planning department is composed of trained professionals with perhaps a different construct system than the elected board directors, thus affecting their attitudes and analysis, and the presentation of information. Some studies of the perceptions of politicians and planners on environmental issues show that planners offer significantly different perceptions than directors and may be more accurate in their prediction of the public views (Kamieniecki, 1977, Tabors in Kamieniecki 1977, and DeGiovanni et al., 1977). In an interpreting and guiding role, planners may have considerable influence over the

perceptions and actions of the directors. For example, if a planner had an interest in developing regional parks, a favorable attitude could be cultivated over time, and a specific park proposal advanced at an appropriate time or "state of the perceiver".

The public affects the decision process through a number of channels, as individuals or lobby groups interacting with individual directors, and through official results of surveys of the broader 'public' view presented as information via the planning department. The strength of the public impact on the process depends on: (i) the importance placed by the directors on communicating with constituents and on representing the 'public interest'. (Depending on the experience of the director this may change or reinforce attitudes held and affect the receptivity to new or additional information on the public view.), and, (ii) the interpretation of survey results and the use made of this information by the planning department.

The provincial government, through setting policy and administering it, may have: (i) a direct effect on decision-making at the regional level through making the regional park function available or not, through providing assistance, and/or (ii) an indirect effect through written information or publications available to increase the awareness of the public, the elected officials and the administrators in the regions.

The decision-making body is the board of directors, who are the perceivers of the public view and assimilators of information relevant to their role and particular decisions. They may act on all aspects of the decision as a group or may assign powers to special committees on specific topics such as regional parks. The dynamics of the directors' interactions are a reflection of the differing processes of individual and group decision-making.

The model described states simply the general

direction of interactions and the development of perceptions from the subjective view of the world and the flow of objective input. The transfer of information and individual perceptions toward establishing regional parks will be studied in the following three chapters. The group interaction is not examined as this would be suited to a case study of regional park development within each region. This study does not attempt to examine the dynamics of each of the 28 regional districts, but rather to describe the perceptions of, and constraints to, regional park development indicated by some of the individuals within the majority of districts. The public view also is not examined since it affects the decision only if expressed to the directors and depending on how this input is used. The directors' interpretation of information and perceptions alone are critical to the decision outcome. The quality of decision, affected by the ability of the decision maker to obtain and process this information, is also not examined. How this affected the design of this study is described in the next section.

2.3 Methodology

Following from the above discussion of the historic and administrative context for regional parks, and of the major actors determining the growth of the regional park system is: (i) a restatement of the purpose within the decision - making framework of the model, and (ii) a description of the methodology used to undertake the study.

This examination of the regional parks in British Columbia will assess the growth of the total system of regional parks and analyze the problems in administering the regional park function. This is done by:

- (i) enumerating the parks by region and obtaining other descriptive statistics,
- (ii) evaluating the system of parks and administrative structure in British Columbia within the

context of other systems and structures in North America, with an emphasis on the Canadian regional park conception,

(iii) obtaining the perceptions of the major actors who decide on the fate of regional parks, and

(iv) analyzing the regional-provincial dynamics in establishing regional parks.

The subjective analysis of the recorded evidence in regional and provincial files and of the perceptions of regional and provincial officials, allows a statement to be made about the support offered for regional parks in British Columbia. From analysis of other North American administrative structures and systems of parks, a relative evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses can be made.

There are four components to the methods used to perform this examination:

PRIMARY DATA:

1. A separate, but related, questionnaire was developed and sent, one to the regional directors and the other to the planners (App. A(i) - A(ii)). This was done to gain an understanding of the perceptions of the directors who make the decisions, and of the planners who analyze and present information vital in the decision - making process to the board directors. Although a pre-test was not performed, the basis for this study came from a similar study of the directors in one of the regional districts performed several months earlier in fulfillment of a graduate course requirement (Hnytka, 1982). In total, the questionnaires were sent to all the directors (335) and 26 planners (26) in the 26 of 28 regions which indicated an interest in participating in the study in the fall of 1982. These were individually addressed along with a letter of introduction to the study (App. A (iv)) and mailed to the regional planning departments which were requested to distribute them and return them as a group of anonymous responses. A follow-up letter was sent in the

case of directors and phone contact was made with the planners within two weeks of the mail-out date. An update of new park acquisitions was conducted in January and February, 1987 by correspondence and follow-up phone contact.

The following problems were encountered in conducting the survey:

(i) Obtaining consent to conduct the survey: - Some Regional Boards awaited questionnaires without sending their written consent as requested in the letter of introduction (Appendix A(iii)). They were included in the study after telephone contact was made. Consequently questionnaires were sent over an extended period between early September and early November, 1982.

(ii) The timing of the study: - Municipal elections held in the fall of the year could have affected the experience of the director in the case of a new council member who would be unaware of the problems in regional park development. This may also have limited the number of responses due to the extra time spent campaigning by the candidates/directors.

(iii) Changes within the provincial government: - The study was designed at a time of many changes in provincial policy where the future of regional districts and all regional functions, such as regional parks, may have appeared unstable to the regional directors, therefore affecting their responses. Further changes were initiated in 1983 by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs which eliminated some of the structures which the respondents commented on, reducing the value in analyzing this information.

(iv) Incomplete responses: - Anonymity of the respondents made follow-up to questions impossible, therefore, when an interpretation was difficult, the response was categorized as invalid.

Despite these difficulties, the results,

nonetheless, contributed meaningful information as a statement of concerns from 23 of the 28 districts (Table 2). Since the study was designed as a descriptive examination of the problems encountered in regional park formation, even a single regional response provided some description of the problems and issues of the region. The variation in perceptions within each region were expected but were not the focus of the study. Each response was added to the totality describing regional problems. In some cases it was valuable to examine the perceptions of the individuals in regions with parks separately from those in regions without parks since it was possible that they would present region-specific problems and suggestions for improvement.

The respondents were 67 directors representing 23 regional districts (20% of the set of directors) and 19 planners from 19 regions. (An additional planner's response came in the form of a letter not specifically addressing questions in the survey.) There were five regions for which there were no responses. Of the total of 67 directors, 48 voiced the views in the 17 regional districts with the regional park function (Park(+)) regions, and 19 described the conditions and views in the 6 regions without (Park(-)). Of the 19 planners, 13 were from regions with regional parks and 6 were from non-park areas. Telephone contact was made with four of the eight planners in regions which did not respond to the questionnaire.

These results are a sample of the set of regional directors and planners in British Columbia. Results are reported as percentages of directors and/or planners sharing a particular perception in Figures and Tables in Chapters Four to Six. Comparisons are made between differing responses of the two subsets of respondents from Park(+) and Park(-) areas. Where the respondents are asked to rank the priority of a selection of choices, a total

ORIGINAL DOCUMENT FOR LEAF 40 WAS FILMED AT END OF THESIS.

TABLE 2

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTIONNAIRE+

| Regional District (# Directors) | REGIONAL DIRECTORS | | REGIONAL PLANNERS | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| | With Parks Function | Without Parks Function | With Parks Function | Without Parks Function |
| Alberni Clayuquot (11)* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0+++ |
| -Bulkley Nechako (15) | 0 | 5 | 0 | 1 |
| Capital (18) | 5 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| -Cariboo (14)++ | 0 | 5 | 0 | 1 |
| Central Coast (5)* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Central Fraser Valley (10) | 2** | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Central Kootenay (20)* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0+++ |
| Central Okanagan (8)* | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Columbia Shuswap (9) | 1 | 0 | (1)*** | 0 |
| Comox Strathcona (18) | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Cowichan Valley (14) | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| -Dewdney-Alouette (9) | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| East Kootenay (13) | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0+++ |
| -Fraser Cheam (12)* | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| Fraser Fort George (14) | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| -Kitimat-Stikine (12) | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| -Kootenay Boundary (13)* | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Mount Waddington (9) | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0+++ |
| -Nanaimo (14) | 0 | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| North Okanagan (13) | 5 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Okanagan-Similkameen (16) | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Peace-Liard (13) | 8 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Powell River (7) | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| -Skeena-Q.C. (9) ++ | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| -Squamish (9)* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Sunshine Coast (8) | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Thompson-Nicola (21) | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Vancouver (24) | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Unknown | 0 | 1 | | |
| Total (335) | 48 | 19 | 13 (+1) | 6 |

+ responses received by regions from September 24, 1982 to Nov. 15, 1982 according to approval from Regional Districts.

++ two regional districts did not receive the questionnaire since no approval or telephone contact was received.

+++ Contacted by telephone.

* Letters of approval not received; questionnaires sent in response to telephone contact, Nov. 3, 1982.

** 3 of the 4 municipalities belong to the Regional Parks Board of the Greater Vancouver Regional District although regional district does not have regional parks function. Directors state they have the function.

*** no response to questionnaire, however, letter offering views of planning department.

- Park(-) regions (Bulkley Nechako adopted partial function in 1986); Dewdney Alouette is acquiring and developing regional parks under a "Parks and Greenbelt Acquisition" Letters Patent, not officially under a "Reg. Parks" Letters Patent.

score is presented using a summation of weighted values.

2. Personal interviews: - Personal interviews were held with various provincial officials including the past and present Assistant Deputy Ministers of the Parks Branch (in successive order, Mr. Bob Ahrens, Mr. Tom Lee, Mr. Vince Collins), and of Municipal Affairs and Housing (Mr. Gary Harkness), and the past Minister (Mr. Dan Campbell) and one of the early planners (Mr. Don South) of Municipal Affairs who 'created' the regional districts, and the past and present provincial directors of the Regional and Community Park program (Mr. George Broom, and Mr. Gil Scott). This provided insight into the thinking of the two ministries, thereby reflecting the government's view on the provincial - regional relationship since the conception of regional parks in 1965. Information was obtained along with their perceptions on:

- (i) the history of regional parks and regional districts,
- ii) the importance of regional parks to the provincial government,
- iii) the involvement in regional park development of the provincial government, historically and at present,
- iv) the future role of the provincial government in regional parks

The interviews were between one-half to one hour in length of unstructured and open-ended questions. Some were general in nature posed to several officials, while others were specific to their area of concern.

The problems encountered at this phase of the study included the rapid evolution of changes in provincial activity in 1983, after the responses were received from the questionnaires. As an example, the former 'freeze' on funding for the acquisition of parks became a normal part of a general restraint policy. These data remain useful as a statement on the degree and perceived effectiveness of

past involvement of the provincial government and statements on the types of assistance most important, still useful despite the changes. The statements made came at a time when the officials' views were perhaps more optimistic than if they were to be sought today. The present economic reality might have changed attitudes and limited the perceived options available.

SECONDARY DATA

3. Supportive data: - Governmental files of the Regional and Community Parks Program were reviewed to document the activity of the Regional Districts in the regional park development, and the funding allocated by the provincial government. Annual financial statements of the Regional Districts and municipal statistics were made available in the Ministry of Municipal Affairs which were used to determine the expenditures on regional parks and other functions. Continued dialogue with the regional planners provided clarification of the statistics obtained in their questionnaires, as well as information specific to their regional case. Most of this data was used to determine the actual financial costs of regional parks, their costs relative to other regional functions and how parklands have been acquired. This information is a basis against which to compare to the perceptions of regional park financing held by the regional directors.

4. Survey of other regional, provincial and state governments or districts: - Letters were sent to each of the American states or previously known regional or special park districts, Canadian provinces and known regional agencies responsible for regional parks. This was done to determine whether regional parks existed in their state or province, under what administrative control, how they were financed and defined, and related questions. This stage was necessary to understand the roots of the regional park movement, and to be able to benefit from the experiences of other administrations in developing regional parks. It was

assumed that the problems encountered in B.C. were likely to be faced elsewhere, and if there were trends in development as suspected, this comparison could illustrate directions to be taken in B.C. policy formulation. These results are discussed in the following chapter.

The problems which arose included the difficulty of following up materials received from the American systems with more dialogue due to the costs. Telephone contact was made with the Canadian respondents in 1984 and again in 1987 to discuss the materials sent in response to the general letter. The information compiled from the U.S. systems represented 40 states and 7 special regional districts as respondents, as discussed in Chapter Three, Sec. 3.1. All Canadian provinces responded with results described in Sec. 3.2.

In the next chapter, the details of the legislative and administrative framework for British Columbia regional parks are contrasted with the regional parks systems found elsewhere in Canada and the United States. Comparisons are made in the interests of advancing other possible alternatives or modifications to the present system in British Columbia. These will be re-examined after the study of regional and provincial perceptions of the existing system.

CHAPTER THREE

REGIONAL PARKS IN NORTH AMERICA - A REVIEW OF THEIR COMMON CHARACTERISTICS

3.0 Introduction:

This chapter outlines the historical development and administrative framework of the regional parks of North America. At the beginning of this study it was unknown where the concept of regional parks originated, or why they came to be. To see if they existed elsewhere in Canada or the United States, a mail survey of regional park systems was conducted with administrators of the natural resource departments. These results were to explain the necessity for a regional level of parks, to describe any trends in the development of the administrative structures, and to allow a summary of the evolution to present date of the programs administered. From this, the British Columbian regional park system could be evaluated within the range of existing structures. This comparison to other systems could assist in the primary aim of the study to examine the British Columbian regional park administration and the perceptions held by the decision - making officials at the provincial and regional levels of government, and to improve the system through innovations from other park systems.

3.1 Regional Parks Administration in the United States of America

The concept of regional parks, and the first models of special administrative districts for regional parks originated within the American park system. Forty American states and 7 special districts provided information on the

existence of regional parks and their administrative structures. These sources and a review of the park planning literature allowed a general description of the jurisdictional levels involved in recreation provision at the regional level.

No legislated provision exists for regional park establishment uniformly across the United States (Winters, pers. comm.). In regional park provision, the federal government plays an important role in administering grants, principally the Land and Water Conservation Fund, for state outdoor recreation planning, and state and local land acquisition and development (U.S. Department of Interior, 1979). The states exercise control over land use, and act through their natural resource, conservation or community development departments to preserve lands and resources, and to designate recreational uses. Statewide recreation plans, integrated with local input, are prepared as a condition for receiving federal grants. Aside from the federal funds for recreation, states raise supplemental finances through the sale of bonds, specific tax increases (eg. sale tax, cigarette tax) and set park user fees to meet the demands for funding from the lower levels of government, the local and municipal governments. These levels must meet the majority of recreational needs and opportunities in the U.S. (U.S. Department of Interior, 1979). Many states grant matching funds to the local governments for recreation planning, and apply for funds for local benefit.

Among these local governments are the counties which plan regional parks along with other resources in a general county plan. Since they serve as a fourth level of government, similar to regional districts in British Columbia, they are described in greater detail. Their importance is seen in serving the unincorporated areas. Funds for recreation do not come directly from the state but as an allotment from the general county budget.

Originally the emphasis of county parks was on the preservation of a large regional system of scenic natural areas (Doell et al., 1954). The function of parks then changed from passive "peaceful enjoyment of an idealized rural landscape" to provision of active recreation (Weir in Doell, et al. 1954, p.13). In theory, when the use or activity becomes that of a neighbourhood park, the county park is to be transferred to the appropriate agency of local government (Government of California, 1974).

Today a range of functions are exhibited; some counties have a large recreational area, large budgets and staff, while others have no parks (Nelson, et al., 1983). Some are involved in resource-based recreation, others in athletic facilities. Multiple-county unions form to plan together for recreation and other services. As a result, vaguely defined county parks have rapidly proliferated. The county, then, appears most often to fill the recreational gaps rather than serve as the lead agency in coordinating the planning of regional recreation opportunities (Nelson, et al., 1983). These differences between the counties, and the lack of continuity in the county role, are due to the different recreational needs of rural areas, the history of government ownership, the composition of the executive, and the available land base (Nelson, et al., 1983).

Aside from the county jurisdictions, various other regional administrations can be created by the states to:

- (i) preserve significant natural resources within the region that cross established local jurisdictional lines (such as open space along rivers in or near urban areas), and/or
- (ii) meet the outdoor recreation demands of the region that can not be met by any one local government in the region (Winters, pers. comm.).

These regional governments can provide recreation plans for a region, possibly single or multiple county, which may not

be limited by county or metropolitan area boundaries. Instead the boundaries are set by recreational use and demand patterns in areas where local government agencies are unable to meet the demand (Government of California, 1974).

Two examples of special regional park districts describe the progressive thinking regarding administration, funding and regional protection of park resources in the United States. The state of California formed the East Bay Regional Park District by legislation in 1933. It received federal funds, along with other local governments, and was authorized to set a regional tax (originally 5 cents per 100 dollars of assessed property value rising to 20 cents). The strength of this regional park district was indicated by its large budget, its large and influential lobby of supporters, and its repeated successful court actions against land developers (East Bay Regional Park District, 1980). State tax reforms in 1978 cancelled regional taxation. Despite state funding, user fee increases and private and public grants, the former revenues have not been restored. The size of the system is 44 regional parks covering 22,449 ha. with 85 kilometers of regional trails (East Bay Regional Park District, 1983). It provides both large natural parks (average size 200 ha.) and recreation facilities.

Another famous regional park district in Michigan near Detroit, is the five county park agency, the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority, established by legislation in 1939. It has the power to create parks and open space drives within or outside of metropolitan regions (Statutes of Michigan, Public Acts of 1939, Act No. 147). The demand for recreation facilities saw a high taxation rate imposed of 25 cents per 100 dollars property value. The preservationist views of the founding members resulted in 11 day-use parks, each greater than 405 ha. in size. They are principally located along water bodies within one

hour's drive of most regional residents (Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority, 1982).

Elsewhere other arrangements for regional parks occur. One example of a state park district operating in regional park activity is found in New York. Here an Advisory Board of appointed members assists a park commissioner. In South Carolina, regional councils of government exist which represent numerous counties and municipalities and undertake studies of recreation needs. In several states, counties coordinate recreational needs and create special land reserves in county park districts (Minnesota, Ohio). Special districts for parks are also created by township and county unions (e.g. Virginia). Water districts in some states create recreational opportunities along rivers or lakes while planning for other purposes (e.g. Mississippi). The largest amount of park holdings, budget expenditures and consequent recreation facility development is generally found within regional metropolitan park authorities such as described in the Huron-Clinton system around Detroit and in Boston, Cleveland and Washington, D.C.

In summary regional parks, first developed in the United States, have evolved within several administrative structures to include:

- (i) regional park districts
- (ii) metropolitan park districts
- (iii) counties
- (iv) special districts
- (v) state districts

From the above analysis there appears to be no generalized system or typical example of regional parks in the United States, rather a range of administrative possibilities for establishing them.

3.1.1 Contrasts between administration in the United States and British Columbia

Contrasts between these structures and the resultant systems of parks, and that found in British Columbia can be generalized. Federal financial support in the United States accounted for, on the average, one-third of the local government funding needs for recreation in 1979 (U.S. Department of the Interior, 1979). In British Columbia there is limited, special endowment of lands purchased with federal funds by private conservation organizations (eg. National Second Century Fund - a \$10 million centennial gift). The state plays a major role in providing technical assistance to other governments and in preparing statewide plans which incorporate local government activity. Financial assistance in many states matches the regional expenditure on acquisition and development of parks. This compares to the one-third financial assistance provided by the provincial government in British Columbia to the regional districts between 1965 and 1982, and limited technical assistance.

The counties, like the regional districts in B.C., serve the non-municipal population of a region, bill member areas for services, and share some of the same reasons for variations in parks (i.e. differing recreational needs of the rural areas, composition of the governing board, and the available land base). County parks have evolved to supply inconsistently defined parks, in reaction to the gaps in service. This could signal a warning for the direction in which regional parks in British Columbia may evolve due to a lack of definition and coordination of activity, enforcement and monitoring of standards.

The two American regional park districts in the previous section, with separate legislation and taxation authorities, were described since the California legislation was the model used for the original Regional

Parks Act of 1965 in British Columbia (Broome, pers. comm.). It similarly allowed the creation of special park districts and boards with independent taxation authority. The experiment with one special regional park district survived only until 1972 in the Fraser-Vancouver region in British Columbia. The advantages of such an arrangement include:

- (i) the specialization of elected members with the sole interest in parks, who could use their influence for this single cause,
- (ii) the possibility of regional park districts forming from electoral areas or municipalities with common features but from different regional districts.
- (iii) possible use of taxation specific to parks which may not be restricted by limits set by the relative importance of other regional functions.

Some of these advantages may be appropriate to reconsider in British Columbia.

3.2 Canadian Regional Parks

Judging from the assortment of possible administrative structures governing regional parks in the United States, it was anticipated that the Canadian provinces and/or regional governments would have also evolved a wide variety of possibly similar models. Other unique models were also expected due to the differences in political systems and history of the provinces and the United States. The provinces were surveyed to determine:

- (i) whether regional parks existed, and if so, under what administrative framework and conditions,
- (ii) whether features of other administrative systems might be applicable in British Columbia, and
- (iii) what trends in regional park development have occurred and whether this may be used to predict changes, and a course of action, if change is

desired, in British Columbia.

Each of the provincial governments responded to the query letter. Follow - up calls were made and information updated in 1987. General evaluations follow a description of each provincial or regional system in the following sections. Comparisons to the British Columbia administrative structure and analysis of trends in development occur in Secs. 3.3.2.

3.2.1. Regional Parks in Ontario

In Ontario, the Conservation Authorities and the Regional Municipalities provide parks serving a regional population. Many provincial parks established in the 1950s and 1960s also protected regional landscapes and served a regional population. The interaction of these regional and provincial agencies in the provision of regional parks is complex due to regional variability and the land-use history.

3.2.1.1 Regional Parks Established by Conservation Authorities:

Conservation Authorities were created by the provincial government as composite bodies in 1946 to operate within regions based on watershed boundaries. The primary purpose of their formation was:

"to study and investigate the watershed and to determine the program whereby the natural resources of the watershed may be conserved, restored, developed and managed" (Statutes of Ontario, Conservation Authorities Act, 1981: Ch. 85, Sec. 21(a)),

In 1954 the Conservation Authorities Act was amended to allow acquisition for recreational purposes (Richardson, 1974). Previous parkland purchase occurred in conjunction with conservation projects such as dams, reservoirs, reforestation and wetland management.

There is great variability between the 293 conservation areas in the 39 Conservation Authorities due to the different cooperative agreements between the private sector, municipalities and other government agencies. No set of standards existed to define or establish the conservation areas during the early years when their greatest development occurred (Richardson, 1974). Generally, similarities do exist since recreational facilities are minimally developed and the recreational activities are of the passive nature. These 'conservation areas', were the first 'regional parks' of Canada. However, many of these parks reflect the greater influence of municipal council members of the Authorities and serve the local population as shown by their small size (46% were less than 45 ha. in 1983) and local accessibility.

Payment for services and facilities is made by the member municipalities, the provincial government and the park user through entry fees. The members' relative share is assessed based on the total taxable assessment, the population, the municipal land area as a percentage of the total within the Conservation Authority, and the grants made available from the province (Dickie, pers. comm.). The provincial government has not chosen to legislate cost-sharing grants but has made 50% 'transfer payments' for acquisition, development, maintenance and land taxes generally available. Supplementary grants made to rural areas increase this up to almost 80% to help offset the low tax base. The total funds allotted over the last 10 years for conservation areas amount to \$38 million along with special grants for priority areas along the Niagara Escarpment (Dickie, pers. comm.).

These parks did not develop without problems. Their proliferation at times appeared chaotic with conservation areas located where the park need was minimally assessed, whereas, in other Authorities the water reservoirs had perhaps greater recreational than water management benefits

(Mungall, pers. comm). At the same time provincial parks increased, also competing for the same funds and lands.

The future of recreation planning by Conservation Authorities is being reassessed. Fewer grants have been issued in recent years (11% of total budget in 1986 compared to 23% in 1976). 'Watershed planning', which includes a recreation component, was initiated in 1984 to rationalize projects of the Authorities. An inter-ministerial committee at present is reviewing their role and relationship to other administrative bodies. Future funding for conservation areas is not guaranteed.

3.2.1.2. Regional Parks Established by Regional Municipalities

Other administrative bodies which have the mandate to create regional parks are the Regional Municipalities. Seven of the ten Regional Municipalities in Ontario provided responses to the information request of 1983. Most Regional Municipalities were formed in the late 1960s and early 1970s under separate statutes (Richardson, 1974; Regional Municipality of York, 1979). They have the authority to pass bylaws to acquire land, to establish, improve and maintain "public parks, zoological gardens, recreation areas, squares, avenues, boulevards and drives" in the Regional area (Ontario Statutes, Regional Municipality of York Act, 1970, Ch. 443 Sec. 173). However, most often these regional lands are owned by the regional municipality but managed by other agencies. Typically the Ministry of Natural Resources manages the forests for preservation, forest products and low intensity recreation while the Conservation Authorities manage parklands as conservation areas and 'environmentally sensitive' areas.

The role of the regional municipalities in park development is summarized in the eyes of one regional municipality as 'partially [as] stimulator, coordinator and

partially in the area of acquisition and owner" (Regional Municipality of York, 1979, p.6). A regional plan is prepared by the Regional Municipality as inter-agency coordinator, which identifies the acquisition priority and the existing or potential resource production (e.g. agriculture, forestry), or area preservation, but makes no commitment in terms of public access or acquisition (Regional Municipality of Durham, pers. comm.). But regional municipalities often decline direct involvement in regional park acquisition, development and management which is seen as a role of the Conservation Authorities due to the history of ownership of flood plains (Regional Municipalities of Halton and Hamilton - Wentworth, pers. comm.; Dickie, pers. comm.). Only in one regional municipality (Ottawa - Carlton), which owns one regional park, do regional parks exist under the administration of the regional municipality. In this case, 75% of the cost of acquisition and all maintenance costs are shouldered by the Ministry of Natural Resources (Regional Municipality of Ottawa - Carleton, pers. comm.). Another regional municipality shared the cost for acquisition (Regional Municipality of Halton) while other administrative or financial agreements may be made. The complexity of arrangements for 'regional parks' owned by the Regional Municipalities is highlighted by two examples: waterfront parks in the Regional Municipality of Halton are funded by the provincial government and the Regional Municipality, acquired and developed by the Conservation Authority, but managed as urban parks by the local municipalities (Regional Municipality of Halton, pers. comm.); the city of Hamilton relinquished a day-use park to the Conservation Authority since the Regional Municipality of Wentworth, which had no parks department, would only pay taxes on the land (Dickie, pers. comm.).

In summary, the regional municipalities seldom directly establish regional parks although it is within

their legislative mandate to do so. It is apparent that a large degree of interaction must exist between agencies in the provision of regional recreation in Ontario. Although Conservation Authorities were established for the primary purpose of flood and erosion control, today they can be seen as an effective regional agency to meet the needs for regional recreation within a complex hierarchy of provincial-regional powers. This role may change because of the current review of relationships.

3.2.2. Regional Parks in Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan has a system of regional parks which has developed since the early 1960s under the Regional Parks Act (1960) which allows creation of regional park authorities to promote recreational uses of parks, assist local governments in establishing regional parks, and in making these parks accessible (Statutes of Saskatchewan, Regional Parks Act, 1979 Ch. 9(1) Sec. 3). They were created due to the perceived gap of rurally based recreation planning after administrative powers shifted from the School Districts to the urban areas (Rathwell, pers. comm.). Each is a corporate body, one for each park, composed of appointed members of participating municipalities and is solely responsible for all aspects of regional parks. The region served by each regional park can be large; for example, one park has 19 municipalities represented by members on its parks authority. In total there are 227 rural municipalities and 200 urban centers represented on these boards.

Regional parks are defined by the legislation to be not less than 6 ha., however, the actual range is from 2 to 1000 ha. with an average size of 49 ha. They must serve a distinct regional function, be more than 80 km. from a provincial park and 40 km. from an existing regional park (Regional Park Regulation, Sec. 8). Development of

facilities, including campsites, are provided for intermediate recreation activities. A total of 101 parks have been established to 1987 (2 parks since 1982) on 7769 ha., with a range of park types serving urban areas, rural residents and tourists (Rathwell, pers. comm.).

Provincial assistance is provided in planning policy, program coordination, in administrative assistance and training, and in monitoring the use and in supplying grants. The grants cover 66% of the costs for acquisition and development of parklands and facilities, and 75% for maintenance (Revised Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1978 R-9.1 Sec. 10 (2); Rathwell, pers. comm.). Total funding to 1987 has been approximately \$24.45 million for capital assistance and maintenance costs. The resulting revenues generated from the parks in the year 1982 alone was \$2.5 million.

This regional parks program has received, and continues to receive, a high degree of political support both locally and provincially. No cuts in funding have occurred in spite of a provincial restraint program, and cutbacks to park funding in other provinces. Technical, administrative and coordinating assistance is available. Four permanent staff are devoted to the program with funds available for seasonal employment. Planning assistance is provided by the provincial park planning branch about 10% of the time, and 66.6% grants are available for consulting services. Research projects, such as park user surveys, and advertising are also handled by the provincial ministries.

Half of the program coordinator's time is spent visiting each park, assisting in the preparation of a five year plan (required under Sec. 5(a) of the Regional Park Act) and grant applications, and in maintaining good public relations (Rathwell, pers. comm.). In addition to these duties, referrals from other provincial ministries are

handled, and technical documents and guidelines are prepared.

This program has been successful in building a workable administrative system of regional and provincial interaction. It enjoys financial success due to the time, labor and funds donated from the volunteer community and revenue - generating efforts. The province also shows strong commitment to funding and planning for the program. The power delegated and the influence and commitment of the past provincial coordinator have doubtlessly contributed to this success. This regional park program is the only example today of a system of single purpose regional park boards in operation in Canada. It appears well-suited to natural area park and recreational facility development in rural environments.

3.2.3. Regional Parks in Manitoba

A regional parks program similar to that developed in Saskatchewan was considered by the provincial government in the early 1970s in Manitoba (Moffat, pers. comm.). Although the legislation was drafted, the perceived high cost of operation and maintenance discouraged the proponents of provincially administered regional parks.

The City Parks and Recreation Department of Winnipeg since the early 1960s has recognized large natural area parks, separate from urban recreation parks. This has developed into a system of two classes of regional parks, natural area user-oriented parks and preservation areas (City of Winnipeg, 1981) Each park must be water-oriented and offer facilities year-round that are not offered by the community. This has resulted in 5139 ha. of large woodland and river bank parks within the city and urban fringe. Most of these parks are riverbank properties acquired for \$5.28 million.

This system offers a regional classification of

recreational land-use and meets preservation objectives to serve the regional population in the area of the largest provincial concentration of people. Since the need for a regional service was formerly recognized by the province, it appears that the present regional model perhaps suits the politics and centralized population with a minimal investment in a new and costly level of provincial administration.

3.2.4. Regional Parks in Nova Scotia

Regional parks in Nova Scotia were identified in the Halifax-Dartmouth Metropolitan Regional Plan allowed by way of the Planning Act of 1969 (Statutes of Nova Scotia, Planning Act, 1969, Ch. 16 Sec. 3(3)). Seven regional parks covering 3,076 ha. were defined "to be large enough to offer a high degree of protection to natural features" and be accessible in an hour (Halifax Dartmouth Metropolitan Area Planning Commission, 1979). The policy permits recreational, forestry, agricultural, campground and other uses, however, a minimal development approach has been taken (Mersebau, pers. comm.).

Some of the identified parklands were acquired but the approval of the regional park concept was delayed for several years by Cabinet and then rejected along with the regional plan (Leedham, pers. comm.). Direction was given in 1984 to proceed with the regional parks identified. However, of the seven originally designated, four have been established as a class of provincial parks, two have been deeded to the municipalities and one is undesignated (Mersebau, pers. comm.). The responsibility for this class of provincial parks has been shared between the departments of Municipal Affairs (designation and land use controls), and Lands and Forests, which also manages provincial parks (acquisition and development) (Leedham, pers. comm.).

The intent of the original regional plan in recognizing the regional level of park needs and in identifying several such candidate areas and a regional authority was exemplary. The loss of opportunity has not been total since the special class of provincial parks may serve the purpose and be the most economically viable and politically acceptable means suited to this metropolitan region.

3.2.5 Regional Parks in Alberta

The call for regional parks in Alberta came about as a result of parks and recreation studies conducted by regional, city and provincial planning agencies in Edmonton and Calgary in 1963 and 1970 (City of Calgary, 1974). The preservation of river valleys and ravines and the recreational benefits of water bodies was emphasized throughout the 1970s. Sites were identified for regional park designation and recommendations were made for legislative controls and formation of a regional parks authority. The provincial response was not favorable. No class of provincial parks provides minimally developed, natural areas for regional use.

In spite of the recognized need since the 1960s for protection of natural features in urban areas, the municipal and provincial agreement necessary was never reached. The land-use pressures of agriculture and urbanization have perhaps precluded the existence of a regional park system comparable with other provinces.

3.2.6 Regional Parks in Quebec

Regional planning, under the Urbanism and Planning Law of 1979, has begun in few municipal regions. The contents of regional plans are stipulated by the provincial government, which also requires that the provincial park

statute, the Park Act of 1977, be used for park planning. The first of the regional municipalities to begin regional planning of provincial parks in 1982 was Montreal. The two types of parks created are conservation and recreation parks which meet the objectives of the regional park definition to be accessible within one hour's drive of the major centers. They can, however, offer a zone of intensive recreation within each.

Provincial parks, then, meet the regional needs for natural area recreation in Quebec. This differs from elsewhere in that the regional administration sets the objectives and incorporates its regional parks within the provincial system of parks (Government of Quebec, Ministry of Leisure, Hunting and Fishing, 1982).

3.3 Comparison, Trends and Evaluation of Regional Park Systems in Canada

From the foregoing discussion in Sec. 3.2, there appears to be similarity between the provinces in the type of administrative structures and in the history of development of regional parks. A general categorization of administrative structures can be proposed as:

- (i) metropolitan park systems (Manitoba)
- (ii) special regional park districts
(Saskatchewan)
- (iii) regional government - primary purpose other than parks (Ontario)
- (iv) regional government - multiple purpose including parks (British Columbia)
- (v) provincial park management (Nova Scotia, Quebec)
- (vi) special districts - resource management purpose may include parks (Ontario)

The British Columbian regional park administration and system is discussed in detail in Sec. 2.1.4 of Chapter Two, but is summarized here in order to make comparisons to

other systems in Canada. Two legislative acts permit regional park establishment governed by two separate ministries, the Ministry of Environment and Parks and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. The Regional Park Act of 1965 allows for creation of a Regional Park Board from the municipalities which join to form a regional park district. Funding may be provided for regional parks up to one-third of acquisition, development, maintenance and interest on borrowing costs. The Municipal Act creates regional districts and Regional Boards of elected members which can choose to adopt functions such as regional parks and set a mill rate less than or equal to one mill. Regional parks are defined as minimally developed areas conserving natural features, of a large size, for day-use purposes and within access of the majority of the population. Provincial grants totalled to \$13 million from 1965 to 1982 for development and acquisition. Coordination has been offered through the provincial Parks Branch and technical assistance available from regional personnel of the same agency.

The status of programs in other provinces can be summarized as follows. Saskatchewan, through the regional park authorities composed of municipal members, plans regional parks and recreation for all municipalities with generous funding and coordination and technical support provided. In Ontario the Conservation Authorities have taken the lead in regional park acquisition, and have extended their management to regional parks in the planning areas of regional municipalities. Its primary role is flood plain management. Nova Scotia has incorporated what was the beginnings of a regional park system for a metropolitan region, into the provincial park system as a special regional class of parks. Manitoba has refrained from establishing regional authorities for regional parks although it had proposed to do so in the 1960s. It has recently developed a metropolitan regional park system in Winnipeg.

along the wooded riverbanks with a high emphasis on preservation. Quebec has applied a provincial park classification to be fit into the regional municipality planning objectives. Alberta has no regional parks, but the municipalities have planned and lobbied throughout the 1960s and 1970s to establish regional authorities to plan for parks. Other provinces have no special "regional" emphasis on park planning.

The trends in Canadian regional park development over the decades can be generally described as:

1940s - 1950s: The local demands were met in parks established by provincial agencies in British Columbia and special watershed districts in Ontario.

1960s: Regional needs were recognized with the passing of legislation in British Columbia and Saskatchewan creating special regional park districts and park authorities. Lobbying in Alberta and Manitoba for a similar regional scale of legislated planning of parks was unsuccessful. Regional planning was initiated in British Columbia. In Ontario many parks, mostly of a local nature, were established.

1970s: Regional parks in Ontario and Nova Scotia were allowed under the new regional planning legislation. The boom of park acquisition continued in the early 70s.

1980s: Other models aside from regional authorities for parks were introduced in this decade. Regional planning was begun in Quebec with the integration of provincial parks within the regional municipalities. The metropolitan region of Winnipeg initiated its program of regional parks acquisition. Cuts in funding have been experienced in Ontario and British Columbia. Nova Scotia's regional plans were scuttled and a regional class of provincial parks was the compromise solution. Saskatchewan remains the most supportive of regional parks in funding and local input.

Sufficient information was available on the systems of regional parks in Canada from the correspondence, the

literature, and phone contact to be able to make some general comparisons as presented in Table 3. It appears that only three provincial governments directly share the costs of regional parks with a regional agency or board, British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Ontario. These cost-sharing grants compared (Column 4), indicate the low level of provincial assistance in British Columbia compared with the other two provinces. Furthermore, operations and maintenance grants are not available and technical assistance is limited in British Columbia.

Specific legislation for regional parks establishment and management exists, in Canada, only in the provinces of British Columbia and Saskatchewan. Legislation for regional planning to include the function of regional parks occurs in British Columbia and Ontario, with these powers rescinded in Nova Scotia.

The definition of regional parks as generally day use parks is ratified in British Columbia, Winnipeg, Ontario (minimal camping), and Nova Scotia (Halifax - Darmouth region). The parks legislation in Quebec describes zones which, theoretically allow camping in all parks with special zones. The regional parks in Saskatchewan permit camping, ski hill development, cottage development, swimming pools and other recreation facilities. This is a result of corporate regional boards which operate all regional parks and recreation facilities in Saskatchewan in contrast to the management of recreation facility development and recreation programs which is separate from park development in British Columbia.

Coordinated efforts in acquisition, development and maintenance occurs in Ontario, British Columbia and Nova Scotia. British Columbia is the only province which manages regional parks within a regional government along with all other regional functions. The degree of provincial support through provincial coordination, technical support and funding is far superior in Saskatchewan than that available

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TABLE 3

COMPARISON OF REGIONAL PARKS SYSTEMS

| Province | Legislation | Regional Authority | Prov. Funding | Recreation Activities | Plan Preparation | Provincial Involvement |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|-----------------------------|---|
| Ontario | Conservation Authorities Act (1954) | Conservation Authority | Acquisition Development, Maintenance and taxes - 50%-80% | passive, minimal development no camping | no | Conservation Authorities Br. of Natural Resources |
| Saskatchewan | Regional Park Act (1960) | Regional Park Authorities | pre-1979 Acquisition-60% Development, Maintenance-75% post-1978 Acquisition-66.6% Devel/Main.-75% | active, development includes golf, pools, ski hills, cottages campgrounds | 5-year | pre 1983 Tourism and Renewable Resources 1983 Parks and Renewable Resources |
| British Columbia | Regional Parks Act (1965) Municipal Act (1965) | possible Regional Parks Board Regional Districts | pre-1983 Acquisition, Development, Debt Repayment 33.3% | passive, minimal development no camping | Official Regional Park Plan | Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing |
| Manitoba | No | City of Winnipeg | No | passive, development includes unique regional facilities | City Parks Plan | No |
| Nova Scotia | Planning Act Parks Act | No | 100% managed as provincial parks | passive, day use | Metro-politan Regional Plan | Lands and Forests Municipal Affairs |
| Alberta | Parks Act (1983) Recreation Development Act (1980) | No | 100% managed as provincial parks | passive, minimal camping | No | Parks and Recreation |
| Quebec | Urbanism and Planning Act (1979) Parks Act (1977) | Regional Municipalities | 100% managed as prov. parks | active no camping | regional management plan | Leisure, Fishing, |
| Newfoundland | No regional | parks planning | | | | |
| New Brunswick | No regional | parks planning | | | | |
| Prince Edward | No regional | parks planning | | | | |

Source: pers. comm. and correspondence with each province and various provincial publications.

in other provinces. Promotion of regional parks is managed by the provincial government in Saskatchewan and Ontario. In British Columbia no provincial publications nor funds for their preparation are available to the regions.

Overall, the development of parks in British Columbia compares quite favorably against the systems developed in other provinces. It has granted a total amount up to 1982 equal to that provided by Saskatchewan, but has since stopped these funds. Ontario has provided grants which were more equitable to the low population regions by granting them additional funds. It has developed regional parks within and through the voting powers of the regional government in special districts. This has not worked elsewhere. Although its special regional park efforts were not supported by the provincial government, the municipalities which form the Greater Vancouver Regional Parks Board have benefited from this alliance in forming regional parks. It has maintained the unofficial policy of developing natural area parks for passive recreational activities, where it has been difficult in other provinces (Saskatchewan and Ontario) to prevent local area demands for small parks and recreation facilities from becoming dominant.

In the following three chapters the focus will be on the perceptions of administrators and the provincial - regional interaction in establishing the British Columbia system of regional parks.

CHAPTER FOUR

COST AS AN IMPEDIMENT TO REGIONAL PARKS

4.0 Introduction

The last chapter showed how the British Columbian regional park system evolved and worked within the context of the other regional park administrative structures and how little is spent in most regions on regional parks. In this chapter, the perceptions of the decision-makers and planners will be examined, since it is they who shape the system of B.C. parks. Hawksworth found that park development is hindered by perceptions of inadequate funding (Hawksworth, 1974). This can be compared to the results of the questionnaire survey in this study (conducted in 1982). Hawksworth concluded from an examination of individual taxes paid for regional parks and the absolute costs of establishing the existing parks, that the costs were relatively low, and that in most regions costs could not be seen as prohibitive. One explanation advanced was that the regional officials were not aware that regional park expenses were low, and were unclear of regional and provincial government financial responsibilities towards regional parks. Furthermore, she concluded that since the public in some areas perceived their rural environment as parkland, they "do not feel parks are important enough to spend money on", and officials therefore, did not use the financial sources available to them (Hawksworth, 1974, p.54).

In this study, it is recognized that the directors' perceptions may not reflect the real demands of the public, but may be the result of influences such as the amount and type of communication with the electorate, and/or subjective biases toward parks in general, as proposed in the regional decision-making model (Chapter Two, Sec. 2.2.1). In recognition of subjective influences on perception, the directors are described in light of

their familiarity with regional districts and with parks. No assessment of the residents' demands was made in this study, however, the officials' perceptions of the public need and the public willingness to spend money on parks was obtained. From the perceptions, shaped by the information received and the biases and attitudes affecting its interpretation, arise the decisions on regional park establishment.

An examination of the true costs of parks to the taxpayer is made to compare the perceptions held by the directors, and to test Hawksworth's findings of low individual costs. Relative cost comparisons are also made between regional parks and recreation services in the regions. An examination of the existing system of parks then provides evidence of how parks can be established, and describes the funding and acquisition methods. Finally, the history of acquisition and preferred methods are briefly examined to be able to predict the demands from the regions in future park development.

4.1 Characteristics of the Respondents

Experience within the regional level of administration and regional politics and familiarity with parks are factors which could affect the perceptions of the directors towards regional parks. Twenty one per cent of the directors responding were new (defined as one year or less) in their positions. This may indicate a high turnover of directors and/or a high receptivity to the survey by new members. Half have gained one to five years experience with their regional district board. Thirty percent of the directors had represented their regions for a long time, from more than five to seventeen years.

Four of the directors believed that their regional district had adopted the regional park responsibility, when it in fact had not, and one director was unaware of the

Regional Board position on this function. These five directors had from three to ten years experience with their regional district. This may reflect their inexperience with the regional parks function.

Nearly 40% of the directors were members of a Parks and Recreation Committee of the Board. Half of the remaining directors represented regions without designated committees.

Aside from their possible official responsibilities in park matters as one of the regional functions, one half of the directors estimate that they and/or their families visit parks, of some type, at least once, but less than five times per year. Thirty one percent frequent parks as many as 20 times per year, and five percent even more frequently. Although most directors include a recreational experience in parks as a part of their lives, nonetheless, there are 12% who estimate they never use parks. Given that B.C. has abundant Crown land and public foreshore, this figure may not exclude recreational activities in park-like settings.

These officials may experience some of the difficulties common to the majority of 290 municipalities with Park Boards in the state of Missouri, which were believed similar to problems encountered by Park Boards in most states:

- (i) board members perform their duties without the benefit of a professionally trained parks and recreation employee,
- (ii) the role of the board members is often not clear in relation to other public officials, employees and the public,
- (iii) few opportunities exist to obtain training in preparation for the responsibilities in parks matters (Zito, 1983).

The planners in this study were not characterized through the survey since the focus of decisions taken on

regional parks is the directors. It was assumed that each was professionally trained as a planner and was familiar with the politics, administrative structure and relationships of regional governments in British Columbia. However, it would have been valuable to substantiate their training and experience in regional districts and with the regional parks function. The results showed that at least one planner was mistaken in his knowledge about the application of the regional parks function.

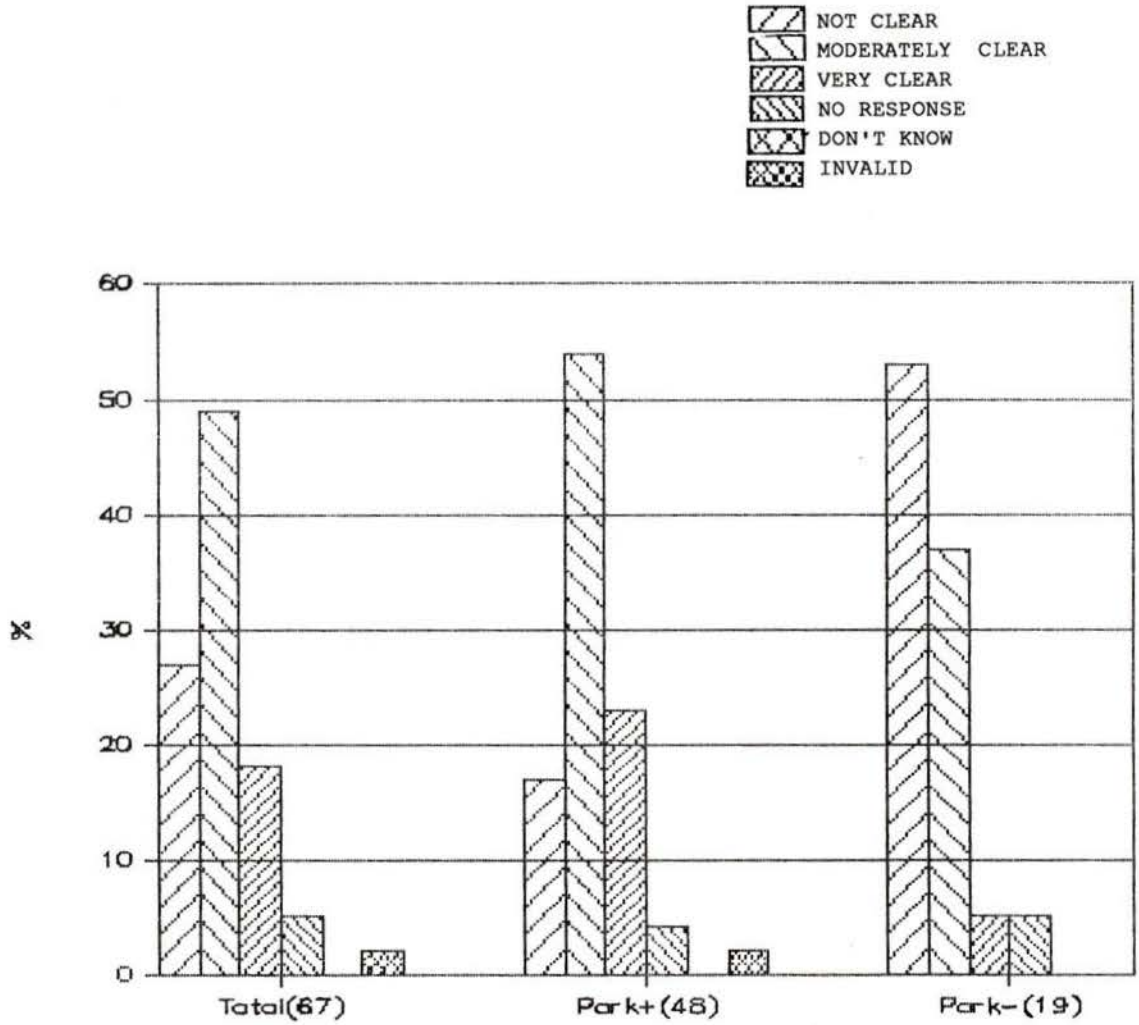
4.2 Perceptions of Regional Officials as to Impediments to Parks: Costs and Public Support

The attitudes of the directors toward regional parks may be affected by their understanding of the various park types. Twenty seven percent of the directors reported themselves to be "not very clear" on the distinction between park types, while only 18% felt "very clear" on the differences (Fig. 6). Proportionately more of the directors in Park(-) regions were unclear of park types than in Park(+) regions. The significance of this difference could not be calculated using a Chi² test due to the small expected values (App.L(i)).

Five planners from Park(-) regions each reported that the major impediment to adopting the regional park function is the perceived cost to the regional district (Table 4). Only one of these regional districts (Bulkley-Nechako) has adopted the function since the survey, in 1986. The planner from the region reports that the directors perceive the liability insurance costs as too high. Therefore, the region has not adopted any parks in the past, nor since the function has been adopted. Another regional district (Dewdney Alouette) has used a "Parks and Greenbelt Acquisition" function to acquire and develop two parks to date, still without an official regional parks function.

Fig. 6

DISTINCTION BETWEEN PARK TYPES KNOWN TO REGIONAL DIRECTORS



Is the definition and function of regional parks clearly distinct from provincial and municipal/local parks?

TABLE 4

IMPEDIMENTS REPORTED BY REGIONAL PLANNERS TO THE REGIONAL PARK FUNCTION

1. Costs

- Board directors desire to minimize local tax levy
- no long term policy and financing guarantees
- perceived costs in becoming involved in parks function
- perceived increase in cost of government with any new function
- concerns re: fiscal impacts of acquiring, developing and maintaining parks

2. Other

- political fear that provincial government will transfer provincial park management to local taxpayers
- reluctance to support local parks to meet needs of Vancouver population
- difficulty in distributing parks equitably
- no knowledge of demand for regional parks or priority
- no major demand from any segment of the population
- good access to Crown land
- some political reluctance to provide social amenities
- not fully adopted by all member areas due to disagreements between municipalities on lands and programs needed; fear of dominance by larger municipalities

(Number of Planners = 6)

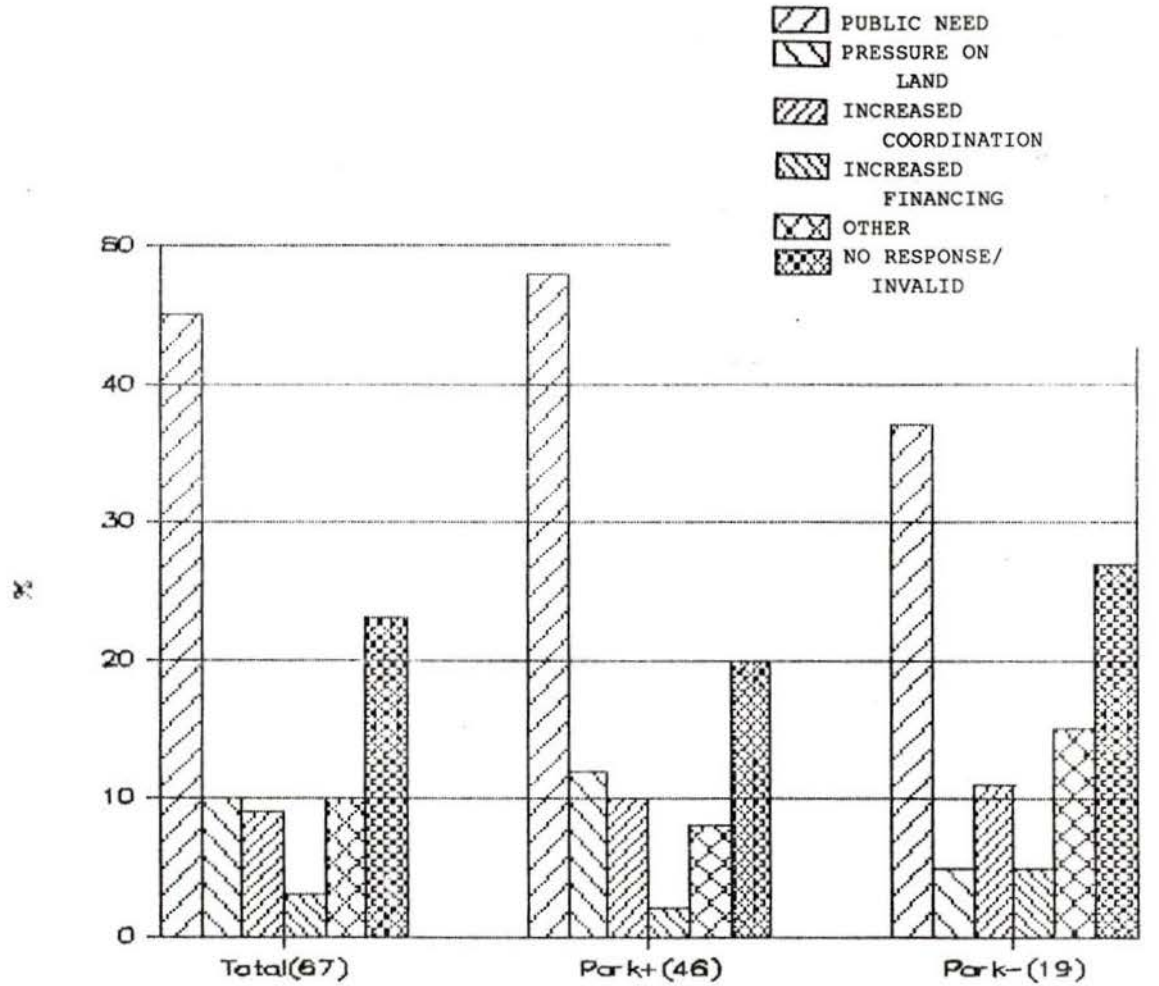
When asked to report which factors were the most important reasons to adopt regional parks, about half of the directors gave greater importance to the "public need" than other factors including "increased finances" from the list of options (Fig. 7). There was no significant difference between the perceptions of importance of parks to the directors in regions with or without the park function at an $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance (App. L (ii)). However, directors from Park (+) regions reported, in response to an open question, by a 2 to 1 margin, that the actual reasons for adopting the function in their regional district were "financial benefits" compared to the "public need" (Fig. 8). The difference stated in regard to the importance of factors and the actual reasons for adopting parks by the Park(+) directors is significant at an $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance (App. L(iii)).

As many planners believed that financial benefits were responsible for park function adoption as was the public need (Fig. 8). In addition, coordination of park planning between jurisdictional levels and within the regions were seen as other important reasons. The apparent difference in responses between planners and directors in Fig. 8 could not be tested by a Chi^2 test since the expected values were too small (App. L(iv)).

One particular case demonstrates the opportunistic development of regional parks in at least one district (Alberni-Clay Regional District) where the Regional Board did not want the regional park function (McManus, pers. comm.). The belief of the directors was that park provision should not be a regional function since Crown and accessible private lands provided sufficient recreational space. The Regional District, however, received the donations of two properties. They resolved this situation by turning these parks over to private management and financing. A similar approach is taken by the Columbia Shuswap Regional District. Although it presently has no

Fig. 7

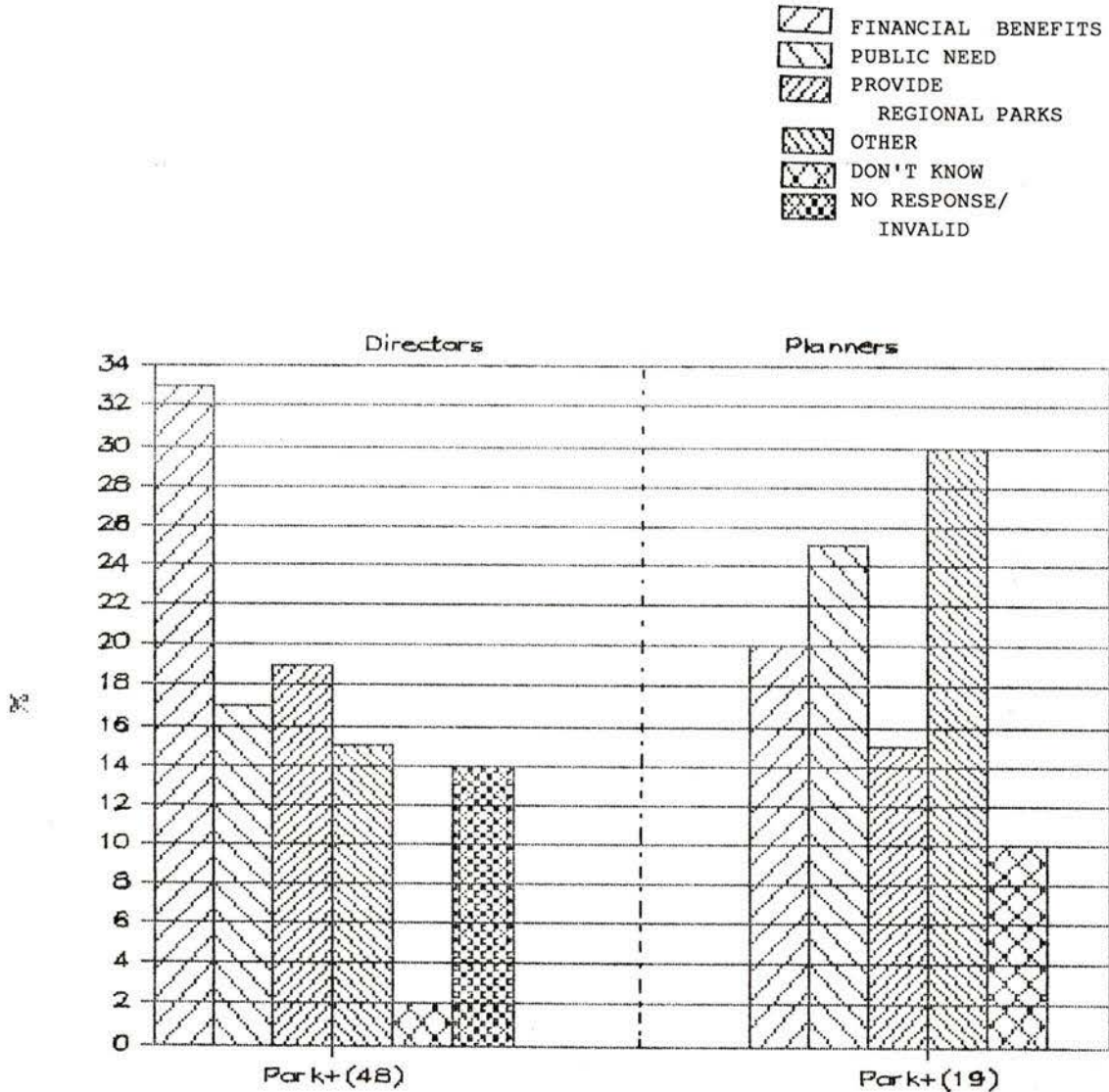
IMPORTANCE OF FACTORS TO ADOPT REGIONAL PARK FUNCTION
REPORTED BY DIRECTORS



What factors would be sufficient cause to adopt the regional park function?

Fig. 8

ACTUAL REASONS FOR ADOPTION OF REGIONAL PARKS FUNCTION AS REPORTED BY DIRECTORS AND PLANNERS



What were the reasons for adopting the regional park function?

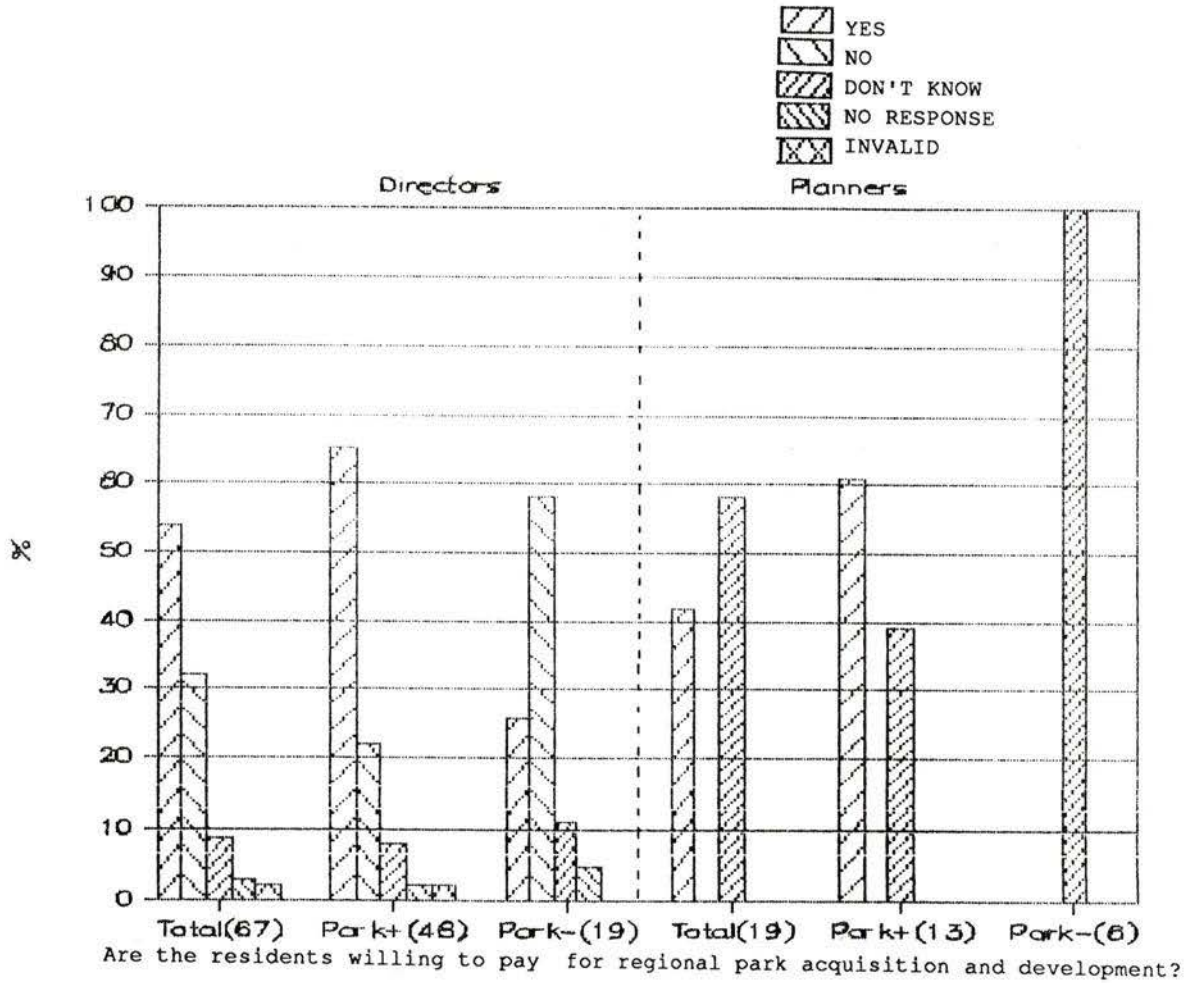
parks, it would not manage them but only hold title to the park land if private interests managed them (Pellett, pers. comm.). The Bulkley-Nechako region, the most recent to adopt the regional park function in 1986, has acquired funds for operations and maintenance costs in support of various recreational activities but has not yet targeted acquisition of any regional parks (Anderson, pers. comm.). This function may be used to fund recreational activity costs in other regions.

Both planners and directors were asked if the public was willing to pay for regional parks. Half of the directors (54%) perceived that the public was supportive, including 26% of those directors in the non-park regions (Fig. 9). However, most directors in the Park(-) regions did not feel that the public was willing to pay the park costs. The difference in responses of the Park(+) and Park(-) groups is significant at an $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance (App. L(v)). Most planners (58%) did not make any prediction of the public view on financing parks, yet none felt the public in their regions was unwilling to support park costs. The people in the Park(+) regions were perceived by the eight planners from those regions as content to pay for this service.

From these three figures, it appears that the directors as politicians recognized the public need of regional parks as one of the major reasons to establish them. That many of the directors who adopted regional parks did so for the financial benefits available, indicates that they perceived the cost of parks as a concern of the people. Half of the directors, including several from Park(-) regions, felt that the residents of their region would find the costs of regional parks acceptable. However, as many as one-third felt that the costs did not justify the cause. This supports the planners' reports that costs, as perceived by the directors, are an impediment to regional parks.

FIG. 9

PERCEPTION OF PUBLIC WILLINGNESS TO PAY FOR REGIONAL PARKS BY DIRECTORS AND PLANNERS



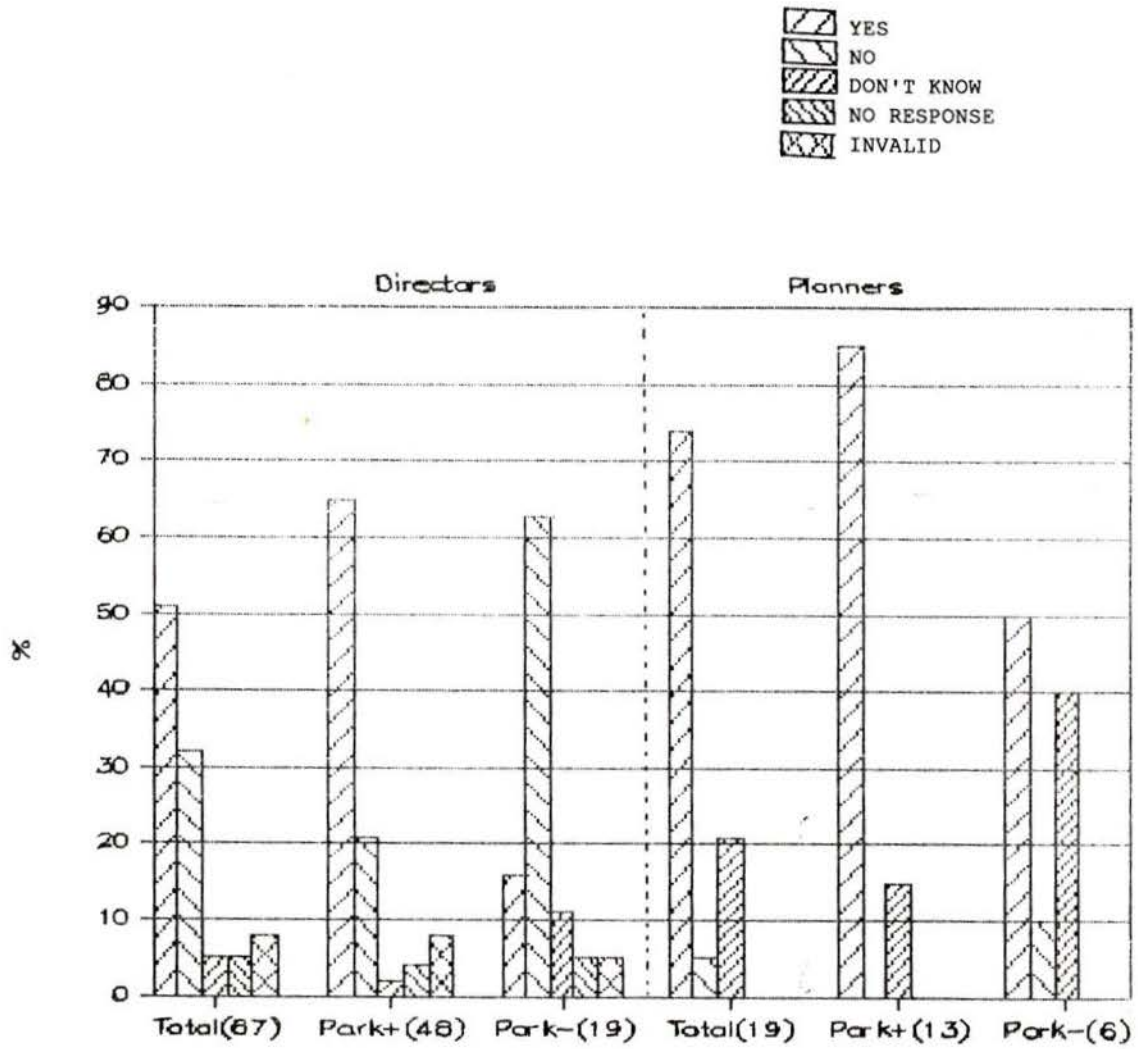
The planners believed that population and urbanization were very important factors in deciding to adopt the regional park function (33%) and especially important factors in acquiring and developing parks (56%). This is substantiated by the directors' responses to a similar question: "Is the population sufficient in the regional district to support the cost of the regional park function?". Sixty five percent of the directors in the Park(+) regions felt that the population and, therefore, tax base was adequate, equal in number to those who felt the population was willing to pay for parks (Fig. 10). In Park(-) regions, 63% of the directors felt the population was not sufficient. The χ^2 test value indicates this difference to be significant at an $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance (App. L(vi)). Some of the factors reported by directors as more important than population in creating regional parks include: (i) the need to reserve lands ahead of population pressures on land availability (3 responses), and (ii) tourist use or demands for parklands (3 responses).

Most of the planners (74%) felt that it was sufficient, especially in Park(+) regions, but also in half of the Park(-) regions. Only one planner, compared to 22 directors, stated that the population size was insufficient. The difference in directors and planners responses, however, is not significant at an $\alpha = 0.05$ level (App. L(vii)).

A comparison of the population in regions with the function, to those without, shows that four Park(+) regional districts had less than 20,000 residents in 1982, while six Park(-) regional districts had more than 33,000. It appears, then, that population alone, should not be seen as a limiting factor to the adoption of the regional park function. This suggests that the population and tax base perhaps above a certain minimum, need not restrict park development, although the perceptions of the directors about the tax base may.

FIG. 10

PERCEPTION OF TAX BASE FOR REGIONAL PARKS TO DIRECTORS AND PLANNERS



Is the population sufficient in your regional district to support the cost of the regional park function?

4.3 Examination of Existing Costs

This section will provide data on park costs which can be used to evaluate the affordability of parks and can be compared to the perceptions of costs reported in the previous section.

4.3.1 Mill Rates

Under the Parks (Regional) Act, the regional district may requisition funds from the municipalities and from the provincial government up to a maximum rate of one mill. (As of 1984 these rates were converted to a cents per \$1000 to reflect changes in the assessment of taxable land value). No mill rate needs to be set when the regional park function is adopted. Table 5 shows that the mill rates were set well below the allowable limit in almost all regional districts. Only four of eighteen districts have set a one mill rate in the Letters Patent (also suggested in the Capital Regional District in 1986). (Mill rates have been changed since 1984 to reflect the increase in percentage of land assessment values for taxation purposes, from 10% to 100% for residential lands. The present mill rates still raise the same revenue, and are equivalent to the former mill rates, therefore, have not been changed here; eg. the Capital Regional District 1984 mill rate of 0.75 is 0.109 mills today). Of the mill rates actually used in 1982, all but two are below 50% of the one mill rate. Part of the reason for this may be due to the Municipal Act (Sec. 767), which states a maximum limit for all voluntary functions adopted (3 mills until 1984, 1 mill today). The nominal mill rates used were also common in the early years of the regional park program (Hawksworth, 1974).

The regional planners were asked to rank the importance of several potential reasons for the low mill

TABLE 5

COMPARISON OF MILL RATES FOR THE REGIONAL PARK FUNCTION
INITIALLY ESTABLISHED AND AT PRESENT

| Regional District | Date First Adopted | in Initial Letters Patent | MILL RATE | | Used in 1982 budget) |
|----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| | | | Present Letters Patent | | |
| Alberni Clayuquot | 1970 | 0.5 | 0.5 | | 0 |
| Bulkley Nechako | 1986 | n/a | n/a | | n/a |
| Capital | 1966 | 0.5 | 0.75 | | 0.54 |
| Central Coast | 1976 | * | * | | N/A |
| Central Kootenay | 1966 | * | * | | 0.09 |
| Central Okanagan | 1974 | 1.0 | 1.0 | | 0.10 |
| Columbia Shuswap | 1966 | * | * | | 0 |
| Comox Strathcona | 1971 | 0.25 | 0.25 | | 0.23 |
| Cowichan Valley | 1972 | 0.1 | 0.1 | | 0.07 |
| Dewdney Alouette | 1977 | 1.0 | N/A | | 0.21 |
| East Kootenay | 1967 | * | 1.0 | | 0.09 |
| Fraser Ft. George | 1969 | 0.5 | N/A | | 0.15 |
| Greater Vancouver | 1967 | 0.5 | 0.5 | | 0.35 |
| Mt. Waddington | 1966 | 1.0 | 1.0 | | N/A? |
| Okanagan Similkameen | 1974 | * | 1.0 | | 1.0 |
| Peace River Liard | 1976 | 0.25 | 0.25 | | 0.05 |
| Powell River | 1970 | 0.25 | 0.25 | | 0.048 |
| Sunshine Coast | 1975 | 0.10 | 0.10 | | N/A |
| Thompson Nicola | 1980 | 0.25 | 0.25 | | N/A |

* unspecified in Letters Patent; left open with maximum of one mill
N/A not available

rates. They specified political, not financial, reasons as one of the major causes (Table 6). The public may not re-elect a politician who increases taxes. Another factor emphasized by the populous Greater Vancouver Regional District is that in an area of high land value, a low mill rate raises a large sum of money, whereas high revenue in less well-endowed regions can only be raised by raising the tax rate.

4.3.2 Per Capita Costs and Actual Taxes Paid

Dividing the regional assessment total for the member areas of each function by the population of the members areas, then divided by 1000 is the method of obtaining an index of per capita for regional parks (at a one mill rate). This differs from the actual taxes paid but provides a simple relative measure for comparison between regions. The results of this calculation are presented in Table 7. In 25 of 28 regions, the per capita cost is less than \$10 at the one mill rate. Since the actual mill rates used in the 1982 budget were lower than one mill, so were the per capita costs.

In the examination of actual taxes paid by all regional district residents for regional parks, an average figure of taxes paid by a 'typical' homeowner is calculated for residents in the North Okanagan. This region is used since calculations were done in 1973 for regional parks (Hawksworth, 1974). Taxes paid then for regional parks at one mill were approximately 1% of the total taxes paid. In Table 8 the taxes paid for regional parks by a typical homeowner in 1982 in the North Okanagan at a one mill rate are even lower than in 1973 (a range from \$7.60 to \$10.40 in 1982 compared to \$11.38 to \$12.58 in 1973 in the three locations examined). Given that inflation has increased the average income, this would today represent much less than 1% of the total taxes paid.

TABLE 6

FACTORS RESTRAINING ADOPTION OF THE ONE MILL RATE REPORTED BY
REGIONAL PLANNERS

| Restraining Factors | Primary Factor No. of Planners |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Low rates preferred by the Board for political reasons | 4 |
| Incremental increases preferred | 2+ |
| Greater amount of funds unnecessary at this time | 3+ |
| Residents of the region unwilling to pay higher taxes | 0 |
| Other | 2 |
| No response | 3 |
| No regional park function | <u>6</u> |
| TOTAL | 19 |

+ one planner stated two factors, not ranked

TABLE 7

PER CAPITA COST (\$) OF REGIONAL PARKS BY REGIONAL DISTRICT

| REGIONAL DISTRICT | EXISTING MILL RATES (1982) | PER CAPITA COST | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| | | AT ONE MILL | AT ACTUAL MILL (1982) |
| ✓ Alberni-Clayuquot | N.A. | 9.10 | N.A. |
| ✓ +Bulkley-Nechako | - | 6.98 | - |
| ✓ Capital | (0.75) | 5.62 | 3.04 |
| ✓ +Cariboot+ | - | 7.19 | - |
| ✓ Central Coast | - | 4.61 | 0 |
| ✓ +Central Fraser Valley | - | ++ | - |
| ✓ Central Kootenay | (.10) | 5.91 | 0.60 |
| ✓ Central Okanagan | (.10) | 6.39 | 5.66 |
| ✓ Columbia-Shuswap | 0 | 4.82 | 0 |
| ✓ Columbia-Strathcona | (.023) | 7.48 | 0.17 |
| ✓ Cowichan Valley | (0.07) | 7.74 | 0.53 |
| ✓ Dewdney Alouette | (0.21) | 4.50 | 0.95 |
| ✓ E. Kootenay | (0.09) | 9.31 | 0.88 |
| ✓ +Fraser-Chem | - | 4.89 | - |
| ✓ Fraser Ft. George | (0.15) | 8.81 | 1.36 |
| ✓ Greater Vancouver | (0.33) | 7.09 | 2.29 |
| ✓ +Kitimat-Stikine | - | 9.87 | - |
| ✓ +Kootenay-Boundary | - | 9.21 | - |
| ✓ Mount Waddington | - | 9.50 | - |
| ✓ North Okanagan | 0 | 5.01 | 0 |
| ✓ +Nanaimo | - | 7.27 | - |
| ✓ Okanagan-Similkameen (*) | (0.95) | 5.87 | 5.58 |
| ✓ Peace River-Liard | (0.05) | 11.43 | 0.59 |
| ✓ Powell R. | (0.048) | 14.26 | 0.68 |
| ✓ +Skeena Queen Charlottes | - | 9.70 | - |
| ✓ +Squamish-Lillooet | - | 9.15 | - |
| ✓ Sunshine Coast | 0.06 | 11.25 | 0.67 |
| ✓ Thompson-Nicola | 0 | 8.14 | 0 |

* Oliver and Electoral Area C Only

+ did not have regional park function therefore, no park expenditures
N.A. not available

++ Municipalities part of Greater Vancouver Regional District

S47

TABLE 8

ESTIMATED TAXES PAID (\$) FOR REGIONAL PARKS BY A TYPICAL HOMEOWNER IN
THE NORTH OKANAGAN REGIONAL DISTRICT (1973* and 1982**)

| | Vernon | | Coldstream | | Electoral Area | |
|--|--------|--------|------------|---------|----------------|--------|
| | 1973 | 1982 | 1973 | 1982 | 1973 | 1982+ |
| Market value of land and improvements (av.) | 29 400 | 75 900 | 28 000 | 104 150 | 27 000 | 76 700 |
| Assessed (=Tax) Value of Land and Improvements++ (av.) | 12 575 | 7 590 | 11 875 | 10 415 | 11 375 | 7 670 |
| Actual mill rate | .30 | N.S. | .30 | N.S. | .30 | N.S. |
| Taxes paid for Regional Parks | 3.75 | - | 3.54 | - | 3.39 | - |
| Full mill rate | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| Taxes paid for Regional Parks | 12.58 | 7.59 | 11.88 | 10.42 | 11.38 | 7.67 |

* values derived by Hawksworth (1974)

** data for 'typical' homeowner made available by B.C. Assessment Authority, Vernon

+ School District 22 used as typical rural area

++ the assessment rates changed from 50% of market value in 1973 to 10% in 1982 (Foisey, B.C. Assessment Authority, pers. comm.).

N.S. rate not set or used in budget; no revenues collected.

4.3.3 Costs of Regional Parks Relative to Other Regional Functions

The costs of regional parks relative to other regional functions indicate a low per capita investment in regional parks. In 1973 the cost to the typical taxpayer of hospital services in the North Okanagan was \$20. This compares to \$3 for regional parks (Hawksworth, 1974). This particular difference may be justified in light of regional priorities, so comparison to recreation and cultural services is perhaps more relevant. From data presented in Appendix B which compares, by region, actual expenditures for recreation/cultural services and regional parks, average per capita costs for the two functions can be compiled and the percentage of total regional expenditures spent on each function can be detailed as summarized in Table 9. These per capita costs and the proportion of total regional expenditures were low. As much as 53% of the annual regional expenditures in one regional district in 1978 (Mt. Waddington Regional District) and 37% in 1982 has been spent on recreation/cultural services. Regional parks, however, never consumed more than 10% of the total regional expenditures. Although the proportion of annual expenditures of recreation services and facilities has decreased since 1978 (average percentage of total expenditure 15.9% (1978) to 13.4% (1982)), annual per capita costs have increased by nearly 60% to \$18 (Table 9).

The average per capita cost in 1978 was approximately \$1 for regional parks in all districts with the function, compared to \$13 for urban and district parks and \$11 for town parks in British Columbia (Table 10). This compares to the even higher cost of recreation facilities at each level. This examination of regional, municipal and community park costs demonstrates the high costs of facility - oriented urban parks and recreation and the minimal costs for passive recreation. Acquisition costs

TABLE 9

COMPARISON OF COSTS FOR REGIONAL PARKS AND RECREATION/CULTURAL SERVICES
(1978+ and 1982++) IN REGIONAL DISTRICTS

| Regional Function | Per Capita Costs** | | Percentage of Total Expenditure** | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| | 1978 (\$) | 1982 (\$) | 1978 (%) | 1982 (%) |
| Recreation/Cultural Services* | 11 | 18 | 16 (max=53) | 13 (max=37) |
| Regional Parks | 1 | 2 | 3 (max=10) | 2 (max=6) |

* includes recreation facilities, recreation commission grants, cultural buildings and facilities

** average for all regional districts

+ based on unpublished document, Regional and Community Park Program, Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing, 1978

++ based on analysis of annual regional financial statement, Ministry of Municipal Affairs

TABLE 10

COMPARISON OF REGIONAL PARK AND RECREATIONAL SERVICE COSTS IN B.C.

| | | Per Capita Costs | | Population (Average) |
|--------------------|--------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| | | Parks (\$) | Rec/Cult (\$) | |
| Cities* | 1973 | 7.10 | 18.84 | 28,282 |
| | 1978 | 13.18 | 37.71 | 30,191 |
| | 1982 | n/a | n/a | |
| Towns* | 1973 | 6.40 | 12.66 | 4,120 |
| | 1978 | 11.11 | 20.38 | 5,010 |
| | 1982 | n/a | n/a | |
| Districts* | 1973 | 7.33 | 13.96 | 21,800 |
| | 1978 | 13.16 | 33.14 | 24,592 |
| | 1982 | n/a | n/a | |
| Regional Districts | 1973 | n/a | n/a | 78,074 |
| | 1978 | 1.03 | 10.94 | 87,811 |
| | 1982+ | 1.79 | 17.53 | 118,625 |
| | 1982++ | 1.52 | 18.65 | 49,402 |

- * Source: unpublished study by Regional and Community Parks Program, Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, 1978
- + includes GVRD + CRD, based on analysis of regional district financial statements
- ++ excludes GVRD + CRD, based on analysis of regional district annual financial statements
- n/a not available for all towns, cities and districts in B.C. A similar contrast could be made from 1978 figures collected by the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division; 1973 figures unavailable for regional districts.

for regional parklands are also generally lower due to lower rural property values.

4.3.4 Costs of Acquisition and Development of Existing Regional Parks

The previous section shows that the costs of acquiring regional parks is minimal in comparison to other local parks. Most of the existing regional parks in British Columbia have been acquired and developed without major expenditures. Table 11 indicates that total cumulative expenditures on regional parks since 1965 to 1982 for acquisition and development in 14 of 19 Park(+) regional districts, is less than \$1 million, facilitating the establishment of 34 parks (Appendix C supplies a detailed breakdown). Overall costs were greatest in the urbanized areas of Greater Vancouver, Central Okanagan and Capital Regional Districts. Almost half of the regional parks have been acquired and developed without the expense assumed in these three districts. These figures show that the cost of acquisition and development need not be a burden to the taxpayer or regional government.

The update on park acquisitions for all but one of the regions (in response to canvassing the regions by mail and phone in 1987) adds another 24 parks, deletes 2 and adds 5325 ha. of land. One very large park in the Greater Vancouver region accounts for 88% of this total (4685 ha.). Of the remaining 658 ha. only 126 ha. have been purchased in two parks (at a cost of \$415,000 in the Capital and Okanagan Similkameen regions).

The major proportion of expenditures for regional parks in most regional districts in the year of 1981 and/or 1982 (where data was available) was not on acquisition and development but on operating costs (Appendix D). This figure varies depending on the assessment totals of the regions. In low population areas \$30,000 operating costs may be 90% of the annual budget (eg. Powell River Regional

TABLE 11

TOTAL EXPENDITURES ON REGIONAL PARK ACQUISITION AND
DEVELOPMENT FROM 1965 TO 1982*

| Range of Total Cost (\$) (1965-1982) | # Regional Districts | # Regional Parks |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------|
| less than 1000 | 5 | 1 |
| 1000 to 99,999 | 5 | 18 |
| 100,000 to 199,999 | 2 | 8 |
| 300,000 to 999,999 | 2 | 5 |
| more than 1,000,000 | 3 | 37 |
| data not available | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> |
| Total | 19 | 70(2) |

* Summarized from data in Appendices C and E.
(2) Not officially registered as regional parks.

District), whereas the Greater Vancouver and Central Okanagan regions spent less than 30% on operating costs. No provincial grant has been made available for these costs in British Columbia despite the provision in the legislation. To accommodate these high relative costs, some regional districts (eg. Sunshine Coast, Mt. Waddington) have used manpower from federal employment programs and volunteer local labor and donations.

4.4 Methods of Acquiring Funds and Parklands for Regional Parks

Various acquisition methods have been used to build up the system of parks, although purchase costs have been applied to acquire about half of the total regional park area in British Columbia (Table 12). Where the majority of land is privately owned, such as in the populated Greater Vancouver, Capital and Central Okanagan regions, most of the regional parkland was purchased as opposed to other methods of acquisition. The park area purchased in the Capital Region and Greater Vancouver Region accounts for approximately 90% of the total area of purchased parklands, and 93% of the cost for purchase of all regional parklands (4003 of 4278 ha. at 21.62 million of 23.307 million to 1982, see Appendix C and E). The Capital Region had purchased 50% of its regional parklands while the Central Okanagan and Greater Vancouver Regions had purchased 82% of their park systems to 1982 (Appendix E). Other regional districts generally have not chosen to purchase parklands.

The importance of purchase in the past in acquiring the majority of park area is now being rapidly replaced with other acquisition methods as land costs escalate in the urbanized areas. Only 126 ha. have been purchased in two parks since 1982 at a cost of \$415,000. Of the total 13,167 ha. presently in the regional park system, only 33% has been purchased.

TABLE 12

PROPORTION OF ALL REGIONAL PARK LANDS ACQUIRED BY VARIOUS METHODS (TO 1982)

| Methods of Acquiring Regional Park Lands | % of Total Regional Park Land Area Established |
|--|--|
| Purchase (regional taxation borrowing grants trust funds) | 53 |
| Provincial Crown Land Transfer | 16 |
| Provincial Crown Land Lease | 15 |
| Municipal Government Land Donation | 7 |
| Provincial Park Transfer (Class C) | 4 |
| Donations/Bequests | 2 |
| Subdivision | 3 |
| Development Cost Charges | 0 |

4.4.1 Acquiring Funds

Four methods are available to obtain funds for acquiring regional park lands:

(i) Tax Revenue:

Under the Municipal Act, the regional districts requisition the municipal and provincial governments for services according to an agreed upon mill rate. The maximum allowed by the Parks (Regional Act) is one mill, but under the Municipal Act a 3 mill ceiling was used for all regional functions until 1985. (The tax rate thereafter changed, and a new ceiling was established.) This can be exceeded by vote of the public through referendum.

(ii) Borrowing

The formation of the Municipal Finance Authority in British Columbia as a special finance agency created under the Municipal Finance Authority Act (1969), has assisted its member municipal governments in obtaining loans from national and international money markets at preferred repayment rates. Financing was previously difficult to obtain for the individual municipality (Nikon, pers. comm.; Municipal Finance Authority, 1982).

Borrowing funds and servicing debt by annual tax revenues over the debt period is important in reducing the immediate cost to taxpayers especially where large or expensive blocks of land are purchased (Professional Environmental Consultants, 1980). This is the case in the regional districts of Capital and Greater Vancouver where average park size is large (171 ha. and 236 ha., respectively in 1983). Both regions have shouldered the responsibility of debt repayment, indicated as 31% and 21% of the total expenditure in 1982 (App. D). The maximum loan amount authorized in 1972 for Greater Vancouver region was \$5 million and \$2 million for the Capital and Central Okanagan regions. This money has been invested elsewhere in addition to purchasing parks and has generated revenue

for use through interest (Broome, pers. comm.).

(iii) Grants

One-third cost-share grants for acquisition and development were available under the Parks (Regional) Act by approval of the Minister (Environment and Parks as per 1986, Ch. 310, Sec.12). Grants may be made available for "the purpose of acquiring or developing regional parks and regional trails, or both, but no grant in any year shall exceed one-third of the total expenditures of the regional park district in that year for those purposes". Where park lands are not purchased, grants may be made for development or maintenance but not exceeding one-third of 40% of the annual expenditures (Sec 11(2)).

Both acquisition and development grants were generally granted to the full one-third amount of total costs (Malcolm, pers. comm.). Maintenance grants, however, have not been provided. Until 1981, these funds came from the Ministry budget, based on regional district budget submissions. In 1981 up to \$10 million was available for park land purchase under the Regional and Community Park Assistance Program from the accumulated wealth in the Crown Land Fund, a collection from property sales for housing developments (Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing, 1981).

The regional costs totalled \$23.3 million for acquisition and \$3.1 million for development, with \$13 million in grants given to 1982 (App. F). In addition separate grants have been made to the three regional districts which have borrowed to finance regional parks under Sec. 12 of the Act, amounting to \$214,000 in the year 1982 alone. No grants have been made since through this Ministry, however, at least two regional districts have recently received a substantial amount (\$357,000) for development costs in two parks from another source. The Lottery Fund, administered by the Provincial Secretary and Government Services, provides one-third grants for capital works projects . New guidelines are likely to alter their

availability to exclude parks development (Massey, pers. comm.).

(iv) Development Cost Charges

Another method available to acquire funds for parks is for local government to levy development cost charges on all sub-division or land development under Sec. 719 of the Municipal Act (1979). This is warranted to offset government capital expenditures required to support the development and is used to buy open space for the needs of new residents. At the date of this survey this method provided a negligible amount of parkland.

4.4.2 Acquiring Lands

(i) Crown Land Grants and Transfer from Other Levels of Government

Crown land reserves for recreational use are one of the primary responsibilities of the provincial government in assisting the development of regional parks (Hawksworth, 1974). Both the Greenbelt program and the Use Recreation and Enjoyment of the Public reserves (UREP) have been established for this purpose. The Greenbelt Protection Fund Act (1972) was passed to "encourage establishment and preservation of areas of lands commonly known as green belts throughout the province" (Greenbelt Protection Fund Act, 1972, Ch. 24). A \$25 million fund was administered to acquire greenbelt areas to be used for parklands without camping, for forestry reserves, for lease for farming and other purposes (British Columbia Land Commission, 1975). A further \$5 million in 1973 was to be used to encourage local participation of the Regional Districts, municipalities and other organizations. Under a new Greenbelt Act of 1977 all land holdings were reviewed. The remaining funds went into general revenues and acquisition ceased (Huck, pers. comm.). Lands may be available for regional parks from this source.

UREP reserves are part of an on-going process of land reservation since the early history of government in British Columbia. They can be established under the provincial Land Act along with various others such as wildlife areas, grazing reserves, and gravel reserves.

Class 'C' provincial parks are managed by the provincial government. They are surplus to the needs of provincial parks and are available for transfer upon request to the local governments. Thirty-two remain under provincial administration.

From Table 12 it can be seen that 47% of the regional park system had been acquired by means other than purchase to 1983. In order of greatest use, Crown Land grants, Crown Land lease and transfer from other levels of government have been the main means of parkland provision to most regional districts other than to the Greater Vancouver, Capital and Central Okanagan regions.

Of this 47% or 3802 ha. of land, 1301 ha. or 16% was donated from Crown land reserves created for recreational purposes (eg. UREP and other crown reserve lands). Municipal parks also contributed 7% to the regional park system. Only one property was from the Greenbelt reserve status.

Since the 1982 survey the system has grown by 5325 ha. of which all but 126 ha. have been acquired by the various non-purchase means described above (App.E). Many have pursued municipal and provincial park transfers and one will jointly manage municipal-regional parks (Capital Regional District, 1986; Comox-Strathcona Regional District, 1987).

(ii) Crown Land Leases:

Crown land leases are administered by the Lands Branch of the Ministry of Forests and Lands. Lands which are suitable for future purposes of the Crown may only be leased as parks. This provides no permanent protection necessary to preserve the values in these parks. One

regional district (Mt. Waddington) is unable to purchase or obtain clear title otherwise to parks due to the large forestry land - holdings. These leases contributed approximately 15% to the regional park system in 1982 and will likely increase in importance as resource users compete for forestry, grazing and settlement property (Table. 12).

(iii) Subdivision:

Parklands could be obtained by subdivision under Sec. 729(10) of the Municipal Act until legislative amendments in 1985. The Local Approving Officer had the authority to require the developer to dedicate as open space, up to 5% of the land being subdivided. Regional districts could 'dispose' of or transfer donated lands in order to acquire preferred land. This added very little area to the existing regional park system to 1982 (Table 12). Those lands donated often have been too small, or were unsuitable for parks. More often they have not been acquired by the Approving Officer (Munn, pers. comm.).

One regional district which has not adopted the regional park function, nor acquired land under its Parks and Greenbelt Acquisition Letters Patent, is now facing the issue of parkland acquisition in response to land subdivisions (Nanaimo Regional District). The amended Municipal Act of 1985 (Sec. 992) allows developers to provide cash in lieu of lands, or if the Regional Board has specified its park plans in the community park plans, it may be able to select between the 5% land donation or cash options. This may bring about greater activity in parks planning in at least one regional district in the future due to subdivision (Magor, pers. comm.).

(iv) Donations and Bequests

There have been a small number of donations of private lands, adding a negligible amount to the system in 1983. There are a number of national conservation agencies and funds (eg. Nature Conservancy of Canada, National Second Century Fund) which have objectives to secure "privately

owned land of unusual ecological value" (B.C. Land Commission, 1975). Some of these land areas have been donated to some of the regional districts. However, land donations are unreliable in an active acquisition program and, if not priority lands, may consume funds for maintenance which may be better used elsewhere (Professional Environmental Recreation Consultants, 1980). One regional district which originally had adopted the Parks and Greenbelt Acquisition function to accept donated lands has since used it to continue designating regional parks (Dewdney Alouette).

4.4.3 Methods Preferred for Acquisition:

Since most regional districts do not purchase lands for regional parks the directors' statements of preference for acquisition methods is expected to reflect this. Planners, who have experience in planning the existing system, were also asked to report the past, present and preferred methods of acquiring parks. The most obvious trend is the increasing use and preference of "no cost" alternatives such as Crown and private land grants as land prices rise, in contrast to the past use of purchasing lands. The directors' preferences parallel the report of the planners in this respect (Table 13). Other costly options such as borrowing and establishing trust funds were ranked with low priority by the directors, as were the purchase of lands. Subdivision and Class C lands were of interest to the planners, but not the directors who perhaps were less familiar with these land transfers. At least two regions have prepared Official Regional Park Plans in the last year with extensive use of land grants proposed for potential parkland (eg. Comox-Strathcona has proposed 54 parkland areas with non-purchase acquisition priorities. The Capital Regional District has established new goals for parks in new areas and has proposed the transfer of 7 municipal and provincial Class A parks).

TABLE 13

REGIONAL PARKLAND ACQUISITION METHODS PREFERRED BY DIRECTORS

| Acquisition Methods | First Preference |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| Crown Land Transfers | 14 |
| Bill Member Areas | 8 |
| Provincial Grants | 8 |
| Development Cost Changes | 7 |
| Private Land Grants | 8 |
| Subdivision Parks | 2 |
| Purchase | 2 |
| Class "C" Park Transfer | 2 |
| Capital Borrowing | 2 |
| Trust Funds | 3 |
| Other | 1 |
| No Response | 10 |
| Invalid* | 12 |
| Don't Know | <u>1</u> |
| Total (no. of responses) | 80 |

* multiple first preference accepted but limited to two options

4.5 Summary and Conclusions:

From the survey of the directors, it was found that they generally reported the public need as the most important factor in adopting the regional park function. Yet of these directors in Park(+) regions, twice as many stated that the reason the function was actually adopted was due to the financial and material benefits available.

Most directors thought that the public was willing to pay for parks and could financially afford them in the Park(+) regions. The reverse was seen in the Park(-) regions where the majority felt that the public was not willing to pay taxes for parks and that their region could not afford them, although a few felt that both were possible. Planners did not provide much clarity to the picture, in that, except for 61% in the Park(+) regions, they were not sure about public willingness. They were more certain about the tax base; a large majority of those in Park(+) regions felt it was adequate, a feeling shared by only half in Park(-) regions.

Evidence of the low actual and relative costs was presented through a number of cost calculations. Even if the full one mill rate were used, the annual per capita cost was less than \$10 in all but three regions. The actual taxes and the percentage of the total taxes paid for regional parks by the typical homeowner have decreased since 1973. Other regional functions such as recreation and cultural services consumed as much as 50% of the annual regional expenditures in 1978 compared to the maximum of 10% for regional parks. The cost of regional parks may be perceived by the directors as similar to the costs for urban or community parks, and for this reason the distinction was made to show urban parks to be many times costlier.

Additional evidence of low costs for regional parks was seen in the existing system. Most regional districts had

spent relatively little (less than \$1 million each) to form 34 parks or 47% of the total system. In the past, acquisition by purchase was the primary method used in only three urbanized regions. Since 1982, 24 new parks have been added but only two of these were purchased adding relatively little parkland area. Operating and maintenance costs can absorb the majority of the regional park budget in some regional districts with low assessment totals, however, innovative use of local labor, such as has become common place in Saskatchewan, and federal employment programs have kept these costs low in at least two regions.

Nearly half of the regional parkland area at the time of the survey was not purchased. This has now increased to 67%. The non-purchase of lands will increase in importance as the preferred method for establishing parks according to statements of preference of the planners and directors in this study, and the indications in some of the planning documents prepared since then.

In conclusion, from the examination of perceptions of the directors and planners, there is some evidence that perceived costs impede park development. One such example is that the directors recognize public need as the most important factor in adopting the regional park function, yet more directors felt this was done for financial benefits rather than to serve the public will. Costs, then, are a consideration in establishing the existing regional parks. The low mill rates also serve as evidence of unwanted high taxes, however, because there are overall limits placed on all functions shared in the region, these rates may be only as high as allowed in comparison to other priorities in the region. The planners report in some regions that they were kept low for political reasons, also supporting the suggestion that perceived costs limit regional park development. Although directors in the Park(+) regions generally view the public as willing to pay for regional parks and that the regions can afford them, it

appears that other factors are perhaps more important to the majority of directors in the Park(-) regions who stated the opposite. In these regions, directors also reported that factors other than public need and financing would be important reasons to adopt regional parks such as: (i) increases in the population, and (ii) increasing the awareness of the public about the regional park role. Several other impediments besides costs stated by the planners include: (i) present good access to Crown land, (ii) reluctance to support neighbouring populations, (iii) no knowledge of demand or priority, (iv) political reluctance to supply social amenities.

The evidence of low per capita costs, low taxes paid for parks, and low costs relative to other local park types or recreation suggest that regional parks should not be seen as a costly function. Operating costs can also be reduced, although it is believed that certain minimum costs may be substantial in some low tax base regions. The evidence of increasing non-purchase acquisition of parklands since 1982 suggests that the regions recognize these other options. These examples provide support for the involvement of Park(-) regions which can at least acquire lands while they are available for future regional demands if these needs are unknown at present.

CHAPTER FIVE

REGIONAL SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL PARKS

5.0 Introduction

The last chapter described regional directors as being rarely officially involved in regional park issues (as non-members of a parks committee or in regions without one), seldom frequenting parks as a leisure activity, and one of five of whom were new to the regional districts. In addition, one of three could not distinguish between regional and other park types. Parks were perceived as a cost not supportable in the Park(-) regions. However, the evidence refutes the claim of high regional park costs in most regional districts. With this background, the perceptions of the directors will be examined in this chapter to see whether further impediments, besides perceptions of cost, exist to the establishment of regional parks.

5.1 Perceptions of Regional Officials Towards Regional Parks

In this section, the perceptions of the directors and planners are presented on the topics of:

- (i) the need for parks,
- (ii) the relative importance of regional parks,
- (iii) the satisfaction felt with the existing status of parks,
- (iv) the funding and coordination responsibility of the regional districts and the province,
- (v) the voluntary adoption of the park function

5.1.1 The Need for Regional Parks

In Chapter 4, according to the views of directors and planners, a major criterion in adopting the regional park function would be the need of the public. The need perceived by directors and planners for parks and the type of park appears in Fig. 11 (a more detailed breakdown is available in Appendix G). Generally, directors perceived very little need for regional parks alone (8%). Forty-five percent of the directors did indicate a need for parks, but provincial and/or local parks, not regional parks. Sixteen percent of all directors felt there was no need for any parks in their regions. The majority (78%) of the Park(-) directors expressed a greater need for provincial/local parks or no need for regional parks. In the Park(+) group, 54% did not perceive a need for more regional parks, possibly because the number of regional parks was adequate in several regions or that other types were a priority. The difference between Park(+) and Park(-) groups was not significant at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ (App. L(viii)).

In contrast, 47% percent of the planners supported regional parks in combination with other park types, and 16% for regional parks alone. This difference from the directors' responses is significant at $\alpha = 0.05$ (App. L(ix)). The planners' support was especially noticeable in the Park(+) regions (nearly 70% wanted regional parks, alone or with other parks).

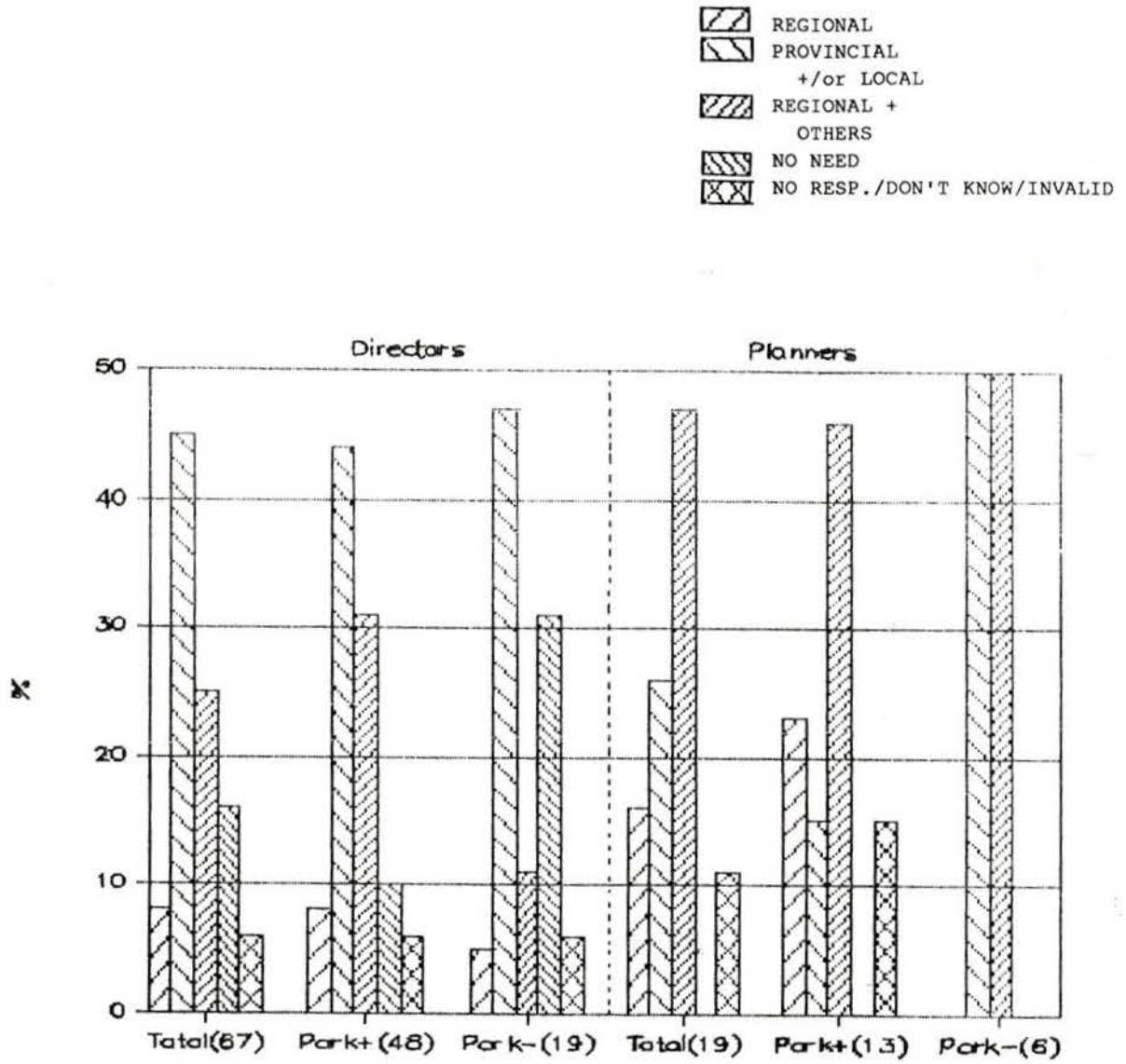
These results should be noted in light of the finding in Chapter Four (Sec. 4.1) that 27% of the directors did not know the distinction between park types and that five were unaware of the status of the regional park function in their region.

5.1.2 Relative Importance of Regional Parks

Since the overall mill rate for all voluntary functions

FIG. 11

NEED PERCEIVED FOR PARK TYPES BY DIRECTORS AND PLANNERS



Do you perceive a need for more parks of any sort in your regional district?

adopted by the regional district was restricted by the Municipal Act to three mills, the importance of the regional park function among the other regional functions affects the limit set for regional park tax requisition and likely the expenditure of the planning department's staff time. The directors and planners were asked to rank the importance of regional parks among other regional functions. The directors (67%) generally assigned moderate importance to regional parks, but a few classified them as a very important regional function (15%) or not important (18%) (Fig. 12). Park(-) directors appear to assign a lesser importance to regional parks than the Park(+) directors, but this was not possible to test for significance because of the low expected values (App. L(x)). Most of the planners (79%) felt that regional parks were of moderate importance, while 21% found them unimportant.

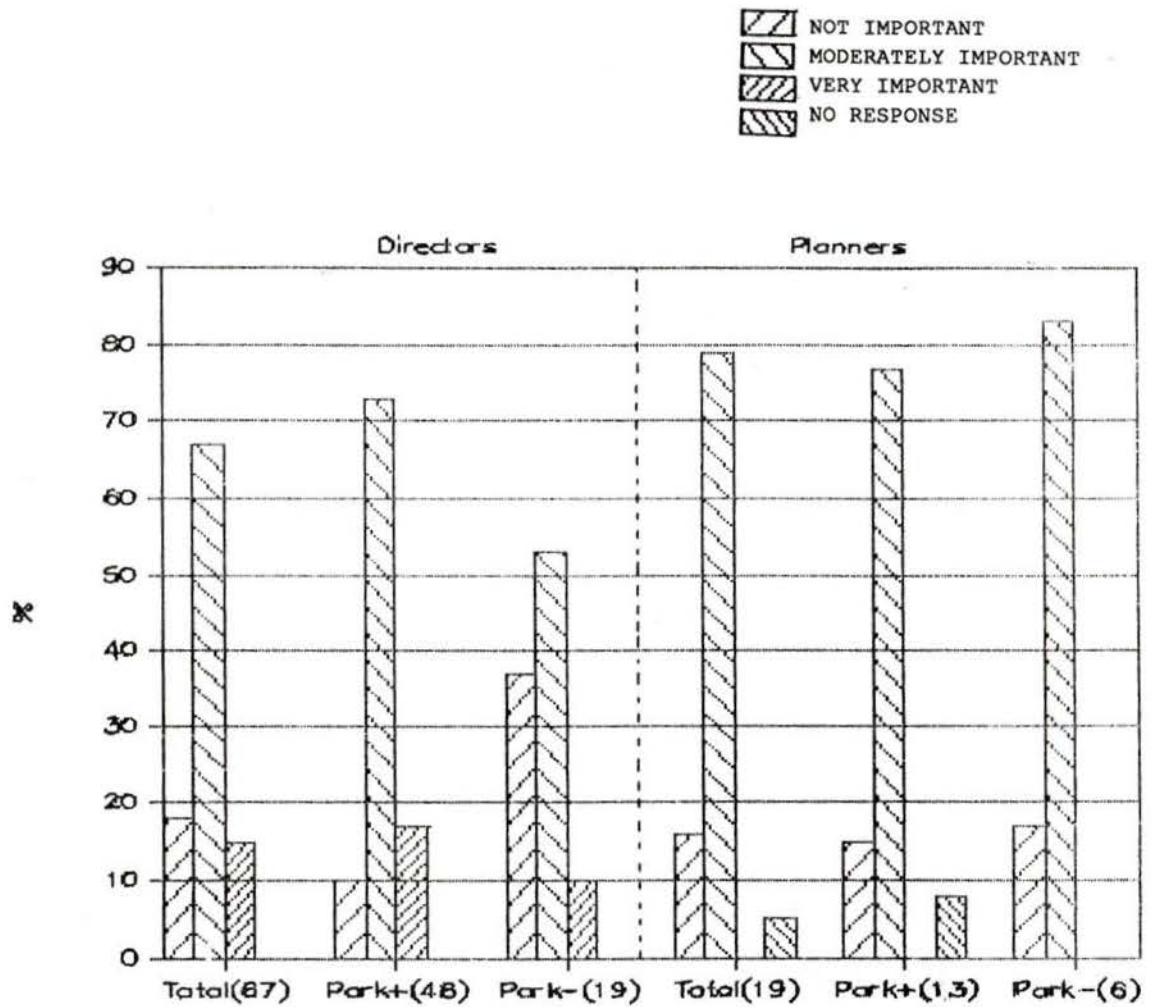
5.1.3 Satisfaction with the Development of Regional Parks

The responses to the question "Is the present status of regional park development satisfactory in your regional district?" show further indication of the support for regional parks (Fig. 13). Approximately one half of the directors were unhappy with the state of park development in 1982. This represents about half in the Park(+) regions. In Park(-) regions, 32% of the directors were satisfied, and 21% uncertain. The difference in satisfaction between these two groups is significant at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ (App. L(xi)).

To achieve satisfaction with regional park development, directors in Park(+) regions most commonly reported the need to obtain certain park types (28%), to obtain more funding and new parks (18%), and to achieve a better distribution of parks, develop existing parks and increase coordination with local government and the private sector (10% respectively) (Appendix H). None of the directors in

FIG. 12

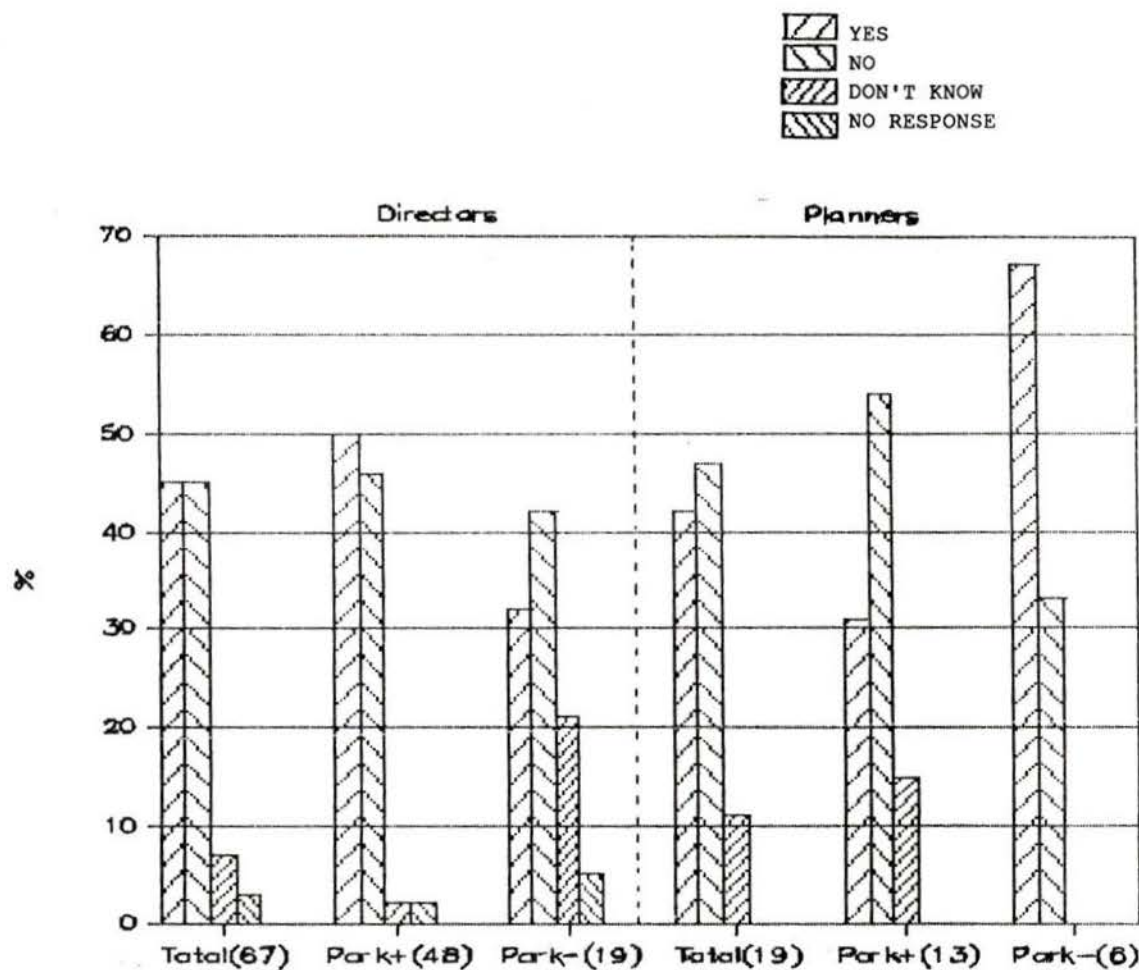
RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF REGIONAL PARKS TO DIRECTORS AND PLANNERS



How would you rank regional parks among other regional concerns?

FIG. 13

SATISFACTION WITH PRESENT LEVEL OF REGIONAL PARK DEVELOPMENT
EXPRESSED BY DIRECTORS AND PLANNERS



Is the present status of regional parks satisfactory in your regional district?

the Park(+) regions wished to abandon the regional park function. Four directors in Park(-) regions who were dissatisfied wanted the regional park function, 3 did not state any objectives, one wanted to revert the regional parks responsibility to the province unless the budget could be increased.

Similar to the directors' responses, about half of the regional planners were dissatisfied with the present level of involvement in regional park development (47%). There is no significant difference between the response of the planners and directors at $\alpha = 0.05$ (App. L(xii)). Planners in the Park(+) regions, who expressed dissatisfaction, required an increase in funding from the tax levy and from the provincial government. Of the six planners in Park(-) regions, 2 were dissatisfied and had initiated studies to show a need for regional parks which were to go to the Regional Boards in 1984. Three directors from these two regions also wished to acquire regional parks. These regions to date remain without the regional park function, one of which has had reductions in planning staff which presently hampers necessary park studies (Nanaimo Regional District, Magor, pers. comm.).

5.1.4 Regional and/or Provincial Funding of Regional Parks

Funding was the most commonly reported cause of dissatisfaction in Park(+) and Park(-) regions in the previous section. Two methods of funding parks preferred by the directors (Sec.4.3.3) were the billing of member areas and the use of provincial grants. Yet an examination of mill rates in the previous chapter showed that mill rates were much lower than the rate allowed by the legislation. The various reasons offered by planners for this ranged from political appeasement of taxpayers, to a lack of greater funds necessary at the time. These low

mill rates can also be understood in light of the perceptions of most directors that regional parks are only of moderate importance.

Another aspect of financial support for the regional park function is the regional share assumed of the provincial regional cost-sharing agreement for regional park support. Under the Parks (Regional) Act the Minister may make grants of up to one-third of the total expenditure of the regional park district for acquiring or developing regional parks and regional trails.

Regional officials were asked if the provincial share of the cost of regional parks was adequate. (The questionnaire was sent when the funding was first 'temporarily' suspended so they could not know that the funds would not be resumed to date.) Thirty-three percent of the directors felt it was sufficient, including four of the directors in Park(-) regions (Fig. 14). Forty-two percent felt the funds inadequate, mostly those (70%) from the Park(+) regions who spoke with some practical experience (App. I). There is no significant difference between the two groups of directors at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ (App. L(xiii)).

Of the directors content with the provincial cost-sharing proportion, three suggested improvements to these arrangements to include:

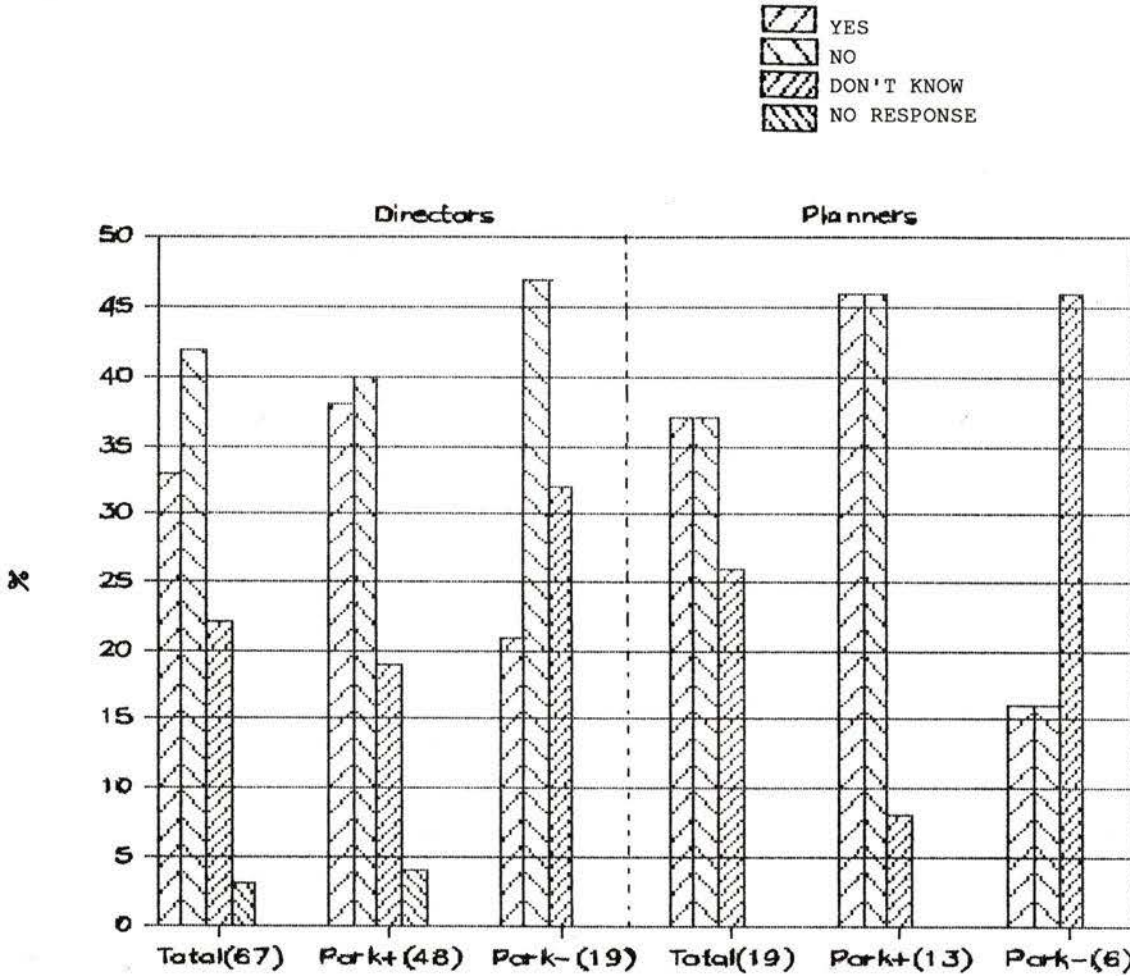
- (i) obtaining guaranteed long-term funding commitment at a specified level;
- (ii) providing funds based on project-specific need;
- (iii) municipalities should pay for regional parks related to use.

In contrast to most responses, one director requested no provincial involvement.

Of those 28 directors (42%) who expressed dissatisfaction with the provincial funding, 70% required a general increase in provincial funds and 55% specified the need for at least 50% of the park funding from the province.

FIG. 14

ADEQUACY OF PROVINCIAL FUNDING OF REGIONAL PARK FUNCTION
TO DIRECTORS AND PLANNERS



Is the provincial one - third cost - sharing plan for regional parks adequate?

Increases are necessary to:

- (i) assist in the purchase of large blocks of lands from private owners,
- (ii) cover the cost of supplying parks, facilities and highways to tourists,
- (iii) cover operations and maintenance costs,
- (iv) conduct studies and prepare plans.

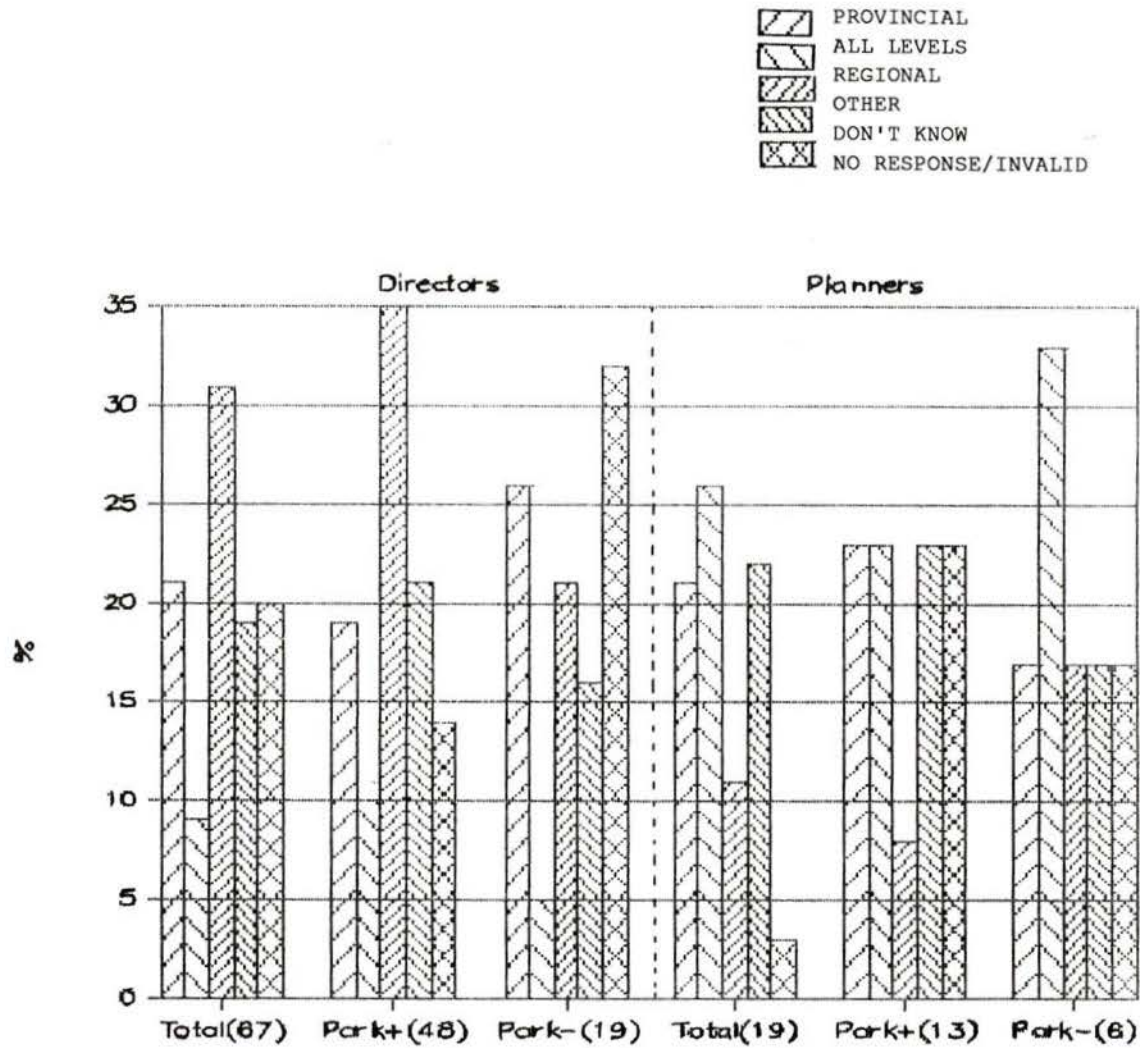
Others specified the need for more provincial parks and reliable payment of provincial grants within a specified short time period. Of the ten directors in Park(-) regions who expressed dissatisfaction with financing, 80% felt the need for a general increase in provincial funds. Similarly nearly 70% of the 19 dissatisfied directors in Park(+) regions felt an increase was necessary.

Some bias was expected to be expressed towards the senior level of government owing to the history of their relationship, therefore, an open-ended question was asked : "How should regional parks be financed?" It was anticipated that their responses would more accurately reflect their thinking. In contrast to the 42% of the directors who formerly stated that provincial funding should be increased, only 21% felt that an increase in solely provincial funding was needed to finance regional parks (Fig. 15). This difference between reports of provincial financial assistance in response to the two questions is significant at a significance level of $= 0.05$ (App. L(xiv)). Nine percent felt that provincial funding should be combined with support from other levels of government (federal/regional/local), but did not isolate the provincial government as having the sole or major responsibility (App. J). Furthermore, 31% of the directors suggested that regional taxation be the basis for park funding, some with qualifying comments such as:

- (i) initially through taxes, eventually self-supporting
- (ii) taxation on a per capita basis,
- (iii) tax benefiting areas by park user origin.

FIG. 15

PREFERRED FINANCING FOR REGIONAL PARKS BY DIRECTORS AND PLANNERS



How should regional parks be financed?

Others specified that some method was needed to supplement regional taxes (eg. development cost charges, user fees, trust funds). These results suggest that the regions are not wholly dependent on provincial funding. A test of difference between the responses of the Park(+) and Park(-) directors was not possible because of the low expected values (App. L(xv)).

In contrast to the 22% of the directors in the first question who did not know what a suitable funding arrangement would be, the responses to the open-ended question on financing did not reflect this level of uncertainty. There was a 8% invalid and 12% non-response rate, however, suggesting that many may not have analyzed the situation or did not distinguish this question from the former or were uncertain.

Planners appear somewhat more supportive of the one-third provincial share than were the directors (i.e. 37% adequate, 37% inadequate and 26% uncertain), although the Chi^2 value calculated indicates the difference is not significant at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ (App. L(xvi)). Planners in Park(+) regions were divided on this matter. Most of those in Park(-) regions did not state an opinion, reminiscent of their lack of commitment to the questions of public need and willingness to pay for parks in Sec. 4.2. Of the six planners from Park(+) regions who express dissatisfaction with the provincial cost share scheme, five specify the need for a funding increase to assist in the purchase:

- (i) of large blocks of land from private owners, and
- (ii) of lands in highly urbanized areas (App. I).

One planner requested a re-assessment of regional - provincial objectives in regard to regional parks with adequate financing to achieve these objectives.

The planners' responses to the open question "How should regional parks be financed?" varied less than to the

one-third cost-sharing question (App. J). Only 23% of the planners with the parks function desired an increase in provincial funds. Others favored joint provincial /regional /local funding schemes or other arrangements (development cost-charges and user fees). Only one planner did not offer an opinion on suitable funding arrangements compared to five planners in response to the question on provincial cost-sharing. It appears that neither planners nor directors were able to agree on a solution to appropriate funding when asked in light of provincial cost-sharing. However, both groups were more willing to have the regions assume a substantial share of the costs than formerly stated in response to the provincial cost-share question.

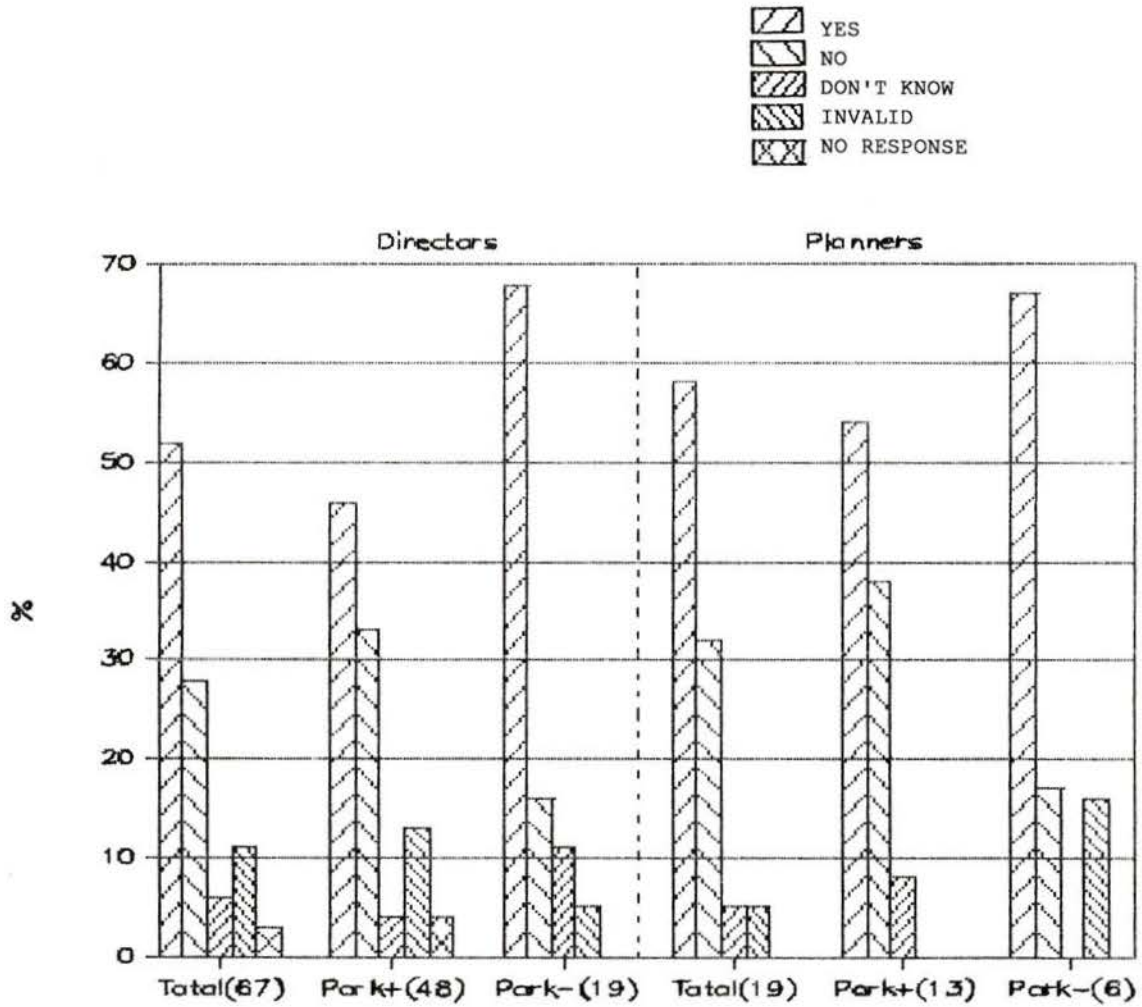
5.1.5 Voluntary Adoption of the Regional Park Function

Some functions are imposed on the regional districts as statutory obligations such as hospital funding and municipal financing. Others are adopted voluntarily by letters patent including recreation facilities and programs and regional parks. The activity in each region varies. The provincial coordinator in the late 1970s described the situation when some districts were reluctant to take on functions while others took on too many functions and supplied inadequate service at too great an expense (Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, Regional District Review, 1977).

The regional officials in this study were asked the question: "Should the adoption of the regional parks function remain a voluntary responsibility?" to test if those who supported the regional parks function would be prepared to support its mandatory instatement. Half of the directors supported the voluntary nature of the function (Fig. 16). About half of the directors in the Park(+) regions and two-thirds of those in the Park (-) regions were advocates of the voluntary nature of the parks

FIG.16

PREFERENCE FOR REGIONAL PARKS AS A VOLUNTARY FUNCTION
AS REPORTED BY DIRECTORS AND PLANNERS



Should the adoption of the regional park function remain voluntary?

function. This difference is not significant at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ (App. L(xvii)). Of those directors and planners in Park(+) regions who were expected to show greater support for their legislated status, less than half wanted the function as a mandatory one. The Chi^2 value shows no significant difference between the response of the directors and planners groups at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ (App. L(xviii)). Those who supported the mandatory function felt that the voluntary function resulted in too few member areas in the region uniting which made it impossible to raise enough revenue, did not save truly regional lands, and/or made coordination difficult. The freedom of choice by voluntary adoption was advocated to maintain local autonomy, to allow recognition of the diversity which exists, and to be able to decline functions if viewed as excessive in costs. This concurs with the view that imposed functions are generally unpopular and are believed by the regions to be expensive to administer (Municipal Affairs, 1978).

The pattern of greater support for the voluntary function in the Park(-) regions was also seen in the planners responses. The planners similarly desired autonomy in regional functions to reflect the regional diversity. Among those who wanted regional parks as a mandatory function, were three directors and one planner from Park(-) regions indicating their desire to acquire regional parks.

Further to electing any function voluntarily, the regional board may designate the benefiting area in the regional district served by the proposed function, and which municipalities and electoral areas or part of them share in the costs of the function (Municipal Act, 1979, Ch. 290, Sec. 767(15)). Designated areas of a region can thereby support a function without the participation of all electoral areas and municipalities (partial representation). In several regional districts, parks and

recreation functions have been adopted in separate areas which has created a complex maze of administrative structures. The regional park function, however, is one which has the full participation of all member areas in most of the regional districts (Table 14).

The regional directors in this study were asked whether the regional park function should be adopted by the entire region (full representation) or partially. Forty percent of all directors and approximately half of those in Park(+) regions felt that full representation was necessary. The directors in Park(-) regions were not supportive of full representation. The high uncertain or invalid response rate (40%) suggests a lack of awareness of this option or a misunderstood question.

5.1.6 Regional District as Coordinator of Parks

The activity of regional districts in recreation service provision can simply be administrative in reaction to community requests (eg. tax collection) or directly active through measures such as coordination and technical planning assistance. Since local governments deal with up to 13 different provincial ministries and departments, the role of the regional district as coordinator could potentially serve a major role in the planning of recreation services within this network to:

- (i) develop policies and to establish priorities consistent with the goals and objectives for parks and recreation service between municipalities and electoral areas,
- (ii) act as primary provider for electoral areas,
- (iii) liaise and cooperate with individual communities and provincial agencies,
- (iv) provide, operate and manage recreation areas (e.g. parks) and facilities (Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, submission to the Regional District Review, 1977).

TABLE 14

PARK AND RECREATION FUNCTIONS ADOPTED BY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICTS
 (# REGIONAL DISTRICTS WITH FUNCTION)* (1986)

| Status of Function | Regional Parks | Community Parks | Recreation Facilities** | Recreation Programs*** |
|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Full | 14 | 1 | 0 | 9 |
| Partial | 5(1)+ | 9 | 21 | 10 |
| None | 8 | 18 | 7 | 9 |
| Total | 28 | 28 | 28 | 28 |

* Source: Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Statistics Relating to Regional and Municipal Governments in British Columbia 1986.

** Includes arenas, pools, recreation centers, golf courses, etc.

*** Any service to recreation to include sports and culture offered to regional communities providing organization, planning administration and/or grants

+ Dewdney Alouette is acquiring and developing regional parks under a "Parks and Greenbelt Acquisition" Letters Patent.

Some responsibility for coordination was assumed as a result of the districts' mandatory involvement in community planning, where recreation services came to be seen as an element of the plan (Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, 1977 submission to Regional District Review).

Regional districts could be directly or indirectly involved in the combined parks and recreation function which may be adopted with full or partial representation. At present there is a complexity of administrative structures, including over 400 regional and local recreation commissions and volunteer groups which have been formed under the Municipal Act. They have served to organize referenda on tax increases for recreation programs and facility functions and to make grant applications for services (McKay, pers. comm.). Regional districts may be more effective than recreation commissions in administering these functions in that they have legal and jurisdictional powers uncommon to these local bodies. However, none to date have adopted the parks and recreation function combined. As a step in this direction, a few studies of parks and recreation administrative structures have been conducted at the request of the regional districts (eg. Regional Districts of Alberni-Clayuquot, and of Nanaimo). This may indicate a changing role of regional districts in parks and recreation planning.

In regards to the optimal administrative structure and arrangements for regional parks, both groups of regional officials were asked to comment on the need for regional staff to assume regional park responsibility. Approximately 21% of the directors expressed the view that the greatest need for staff involved in the parks and recreation function is to coordinate recreation and park planning at the provincial, regional and local level (Table 15). This supports the statement that parks at all levels are needed, not just regional parks, which requires greater

TABLE 15

ROLE OF REGIONAL DISTRICTS IN REGARD TO REGIONAL PARKS
AS REPORTED BY REGIONAL DIRECTORS

| Possible Role+ | Most Important Function # (%) | Total Score* | No. of Respondents #(%) |
|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Coordinate Recreation and Park Planning at Provincial/ Regional/Local levels | 14(21) | 74 | 34** |
| Coordinate Park Acquisition and Development | 10(15) | 80 | 34 |
| Plan Regional Parks | 7(10) | 100 | 34 |
| Manage Regional Park Matters | 3(4) | 103 | 34 |
| No Need for Regional Staff for Regional Parks | 13(19) | | 13 |
| No Response | | | 6(9) |
| Invalid | | | 12(18) |
| Other | | | <u>2</u> (3) |
| Total | | | 67(99) |

* indicates weighted total of complete and incomplete responses e.g. value of 1 for highest rank given to option, value of 4 for least important value of 4 assigned for each incomplete response to give the maximum cumulative score

**34 respondents ranked 4 options

+ Is there a need for staff employed by the Regional District to: (rank in order of importance)?

coordination. However, almost as many (19%) stated no need for any regional staff for regional parks. This negative response may be due to staff already employed in the role, or to concerns about new duties competing for limited staff time. The lack of present involvement in park coordination can be understood in this context.

Planners were asked to supply their professional opinion on the best method of coordinating all levels of park acquisition/development in the regional district. Greater priority was assigned to a committee of municipal and electoral area members than for the coordinating role to be assumed by either the provincial government or the regional district alone (Table 16). Other combinations of regional, provincial, local and volunteer members on a committee was supported in at least five regional districts who reported other options for coordination. The need for coordination was stated by all but one region.

5.2 Summary and Conclusions:

About 60% of the regional directors surveyed placed little emphasis on regional parks, with about one in five not needing any parks of any type, although they had earlier stated that the public in several of these regions were willing to pay for parks and the tax base was adequate. Conversely about 60% of the planners supported regional parks alone and with other park levels. This was especially evident in the Park(+) regions. In the Park(-) regions few directors saw any need for regional or any parks although planners in three districts did.

A large majority of both directors and planners felt regional parks were a moderately important function in comparison to others. Directors, however, were more extreme in their statements than planners, a few of whom felt that regional parks were not important, a few others who felt they were very important.

About half of the total respondents were dissatisfied

TABLE 16

PREFERRED METHODS TO COORDINATE AND PLAN ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT
AS REPORTED BY PLANNERS

| By What Method Should Coordination of Park Acquisition, Development and Planning of Provincial, Regional and Municipal Parks Occur in Your Regional District? | Most Preferred Method (# Responses) | Total Score* | No. of Respondents |
|---|---|-----------------|--------------------|
| By Municipal and Electoral Area Member Committee | 6 | 22 | 11** |
| By Provincial Coordinator | 3 | 32 | 11 |
| By Regional District Employee | 2 | 25 | 11 |
| By Volunteers/Rec. Commissions | 0 | 35 | 11 |
| Other | | | 5 |
| Invalid*** | | | 2 |
| No Need for Coordinator | | | <u>1</u> |
| Total | | | 19 |

* Total weighted score of complete and incomplete responses (highest rank has a value of 1, lowest preference and incomplete responses have value of 4; total is cumulative sum)

** Number of respondents ranking four options

*** did not rank selection

with the present status of regional park development in their regional district. Both groups of regional officials from Park(+) regions reported the lack of funding as a major constraint to achieving satisfaction in regional park development. Directors expressed the need to obtain land for certain types of parks and to develop existing parks. No officials with the park function were dissatisfied directly because of having the regional park function. Of the officials from Park(-) regions six officials (4 directors, 2 planners) wished to adopt the park function.

Over 40% of the directors indicated disapproval with provincial funding. This was more pronounced in the Park(-) regions. This question may have stimulated over-reporting, since less than one quarter of the directors reported the need for increased provincial funding in response to an open question on preferred financing. The high number of undecided directors may suggest that they possibly did not know of the provincial cost-share program. Contrary to the directors, about 40% of the planners approved of the provincial sharing of costs. Those in Park(-) regions, in contrast to the directors, were largely uncertain about the adequacy of the statutory rate of provincial funding.

In regard to the general question of financing, contrary to the former responses requesting provincial assistance, the support expressed by the directors for regional taxation and local initiatives was high. The planners were more decisive in response to the open question. Few expressed the need for increased provincial funds, but suggested that some combination of provincial /regional /local support was suitable.

The regional park function should remain voluntary according to over half of the directors and planners. This was especially supported by those in regions without the function. Although it was expected that directors and planners in Park(+) regions would be in favor of a

mandatory function for regional parks, this did not occur. Regional autonomy to make choices according to the regional diversity and needs was given as the principle reason for these responses. Less than half of the directors felt that full representation of all member areas in the region was necessary, even though most regions have this status. Those directors in the Park(+) regions were more supportive than other directors.

Half of the directors stated the need for regional staff involved in coordination of parks and/or recreation. The highest priority was given to regional coordination of parks and recreation of all types, while as many others saw no need for regional staff involvement. The planners who defined how this coordination should occur, stated municipal and electoral area committees and various combinations of provincial /regional /local, appointed and volunteer member committees, but little support was given to provincial or regional staff as coordinators.

In conclusion, it appeared that the regional directors in this study were generally supportive of regional parks indicated by the reports of their relative importance, the desire of regional officials to improve the existing parks or to adopt the function, and to assume a large role in funding regional parks and in coordinating all park acquisition in the region. Although the need for regional parks was not perceived by many directors, it was expressed by most planners. It is possible that the directors lacked information from this source. In many areas studies of the public demand have not been undertaken, in part because of planning staff shortages. The need for regional autonomy in adopting the function, for regional coordination, and for regional funding of parks was noted, although provincial assistance was required by most regional officials in the area of funding.

CHAPTER SIX

PROVINCIAL SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL PARKS

6.0 Introduction

Provincial involvement with regional parks has occurred because of the 'spill-over' effect benefitting the province as a whole, the use of regional facilities by residents from other regions and by tourists, and the inability of the local administration to handle maintenance and operation problems of a growing recreational demand (Hawksworth, 1974). The province also wants to transfer Class C and other local use parks and land holdings to the regional level.

In the previous chapter, the directors placed little emphasis on the need for regional parks alone, although a large majority felt that they were of moderate importance compared to other regional functions. Half of the directors were dissatisfied with the existing state of regional parks, demanding more funding and parks, or a better distribution and development of parks. They were generally seen to want to retain autonomy in selecting optional functions such as regional parks and in coordinating regional and other parks by some local body.

In this chapter, the provincial involvement in developing the powers of the regional districts and in supporting the growth of the regional park system is examined. One assumption is that the province, as the proponent of regional parks legislation and the administrator of a regional parks program, would be responsible for providing assistance to the regions to achieve the objectives of creating regional parks in that program. An evaluation of the assistance given was made based on:

- (i) the historic relationship of the provincial government to regional districts;
- (ii) the perceptions of senior provincial officials

concerning the role of the provincial government in assisting regional park formation; and
(iii) the perceptions of the regional directors and planners about the level of assistance given in the past, and about what is needed.

6.1 Provincial Review of Regional Districts

In Chapter Two the regional district functions were seen to evolve in an accumulative manner, transferred from other levels of government. Problems arose due to the vaguely defined powers. Resistance to the powers assumed by the regional districts has led to a number of provincial reviews of their purpose and performance; for instance, in the late 1970s a powerful lobby from the rural areas aimed to remove regulation over rural land from the zoning powers of the regional districts (Harkness, pers. comm.). The provincial government responded by forming a committee empowered to examine:

- (i) "the jurisdictional role of regional districts, including an examination of present and future functions and responsibilities;
- (ii) the structural and administrative organization of regional districts including internal and external boundaries; regional district/provincial ..., regional district/municipal ..., and regional district/citizen relationships; and the provincial financial support policy for regional districts." (Municipal Affairs, 1978, p.iii).

Report recommendations primarily suggested ways to strengthen regional districts:

- (i) the provincial government should publicize the role of regional districts to the public and throughout government ministries;
- (ii) regional districts should conduct public relations programs;
- (iii) the province should provide sufficient funding for functions required of the regional districts;

(iv) the responsibilities and authority of regional districts should be clearly defined in legislation to avoid confusion as to their role, stating mandatory and voluntary functions and additional powers;

(v) a familiarization program for new regional board members should be introduced due to their present lack of understanding of the regional planning function and of the Board's role and responsibilities;

(vi) senior officials of the regional districts should belong to the Regional Resource Management Committee;

(vii) the function of the Technical Planning Committee should be strengthened to deal with long-range considerations represented by senior officials of the provincial ministries,

(viii) funding to increase staff for regional and settlement plan preparation should occur.

All of the above recommendations would likely have been of indirect assistance to the further promotion and expansion of the regional park system, and likely to other functions. None of the recommendations were adopted. Instead, the provincial government attitude toward regional districts was displayed through three options examined for change:

- (i) abolition of regional government;
- (ii) retention of the existing system;
- (iii) the introduction of a new regional government through a county system (Municipal Affairs, 1979).

The first was unattractive since the province would then have to supply the rural areas with services. A succession of Ministers of Municipal Affairs drafted legislation and selected prototype "counties" for experimentation, but were unsuccessful in implementing a new system.

One measure which weakened the powers of the regional districts came about as a result of amendments to the Municipal Act in 1983. Rather than strengthen the regional planning ability through increased staff, and improve the

functioning of the Technical Planning Committees and Regional Resource Management Committees, each was abolished. This measure was taken to appease some of the larger municipalities which felt restrained in planning and zoning powers as reflected by the statement announcing these changes: "... to streamline the development approval process and to strengthen the autonomy of municipal government" (Ritchie, Minister of Municipal Affairs).

Yet another review was begun in 1983. The "Father" of Regional Districts, the former Minister of Municipal Affairs from 1965 to 1972, Mr. Dan Campbell, evaluated the efficiency of regional district operations. Many of Campbell's recommendations mirrored those made several years earlier. In particular,

- (i) the precise role of regions needs definition to be defended as public policy,
- (ii) greater support is needed from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs personnel in the regions, and as coordinator between other agencies and the regions,
- (iii) public information should be prepared explaining the history, role and status of regional districts (Ministry of Municipal Affairs, 1986).

A concurrent departmental review has examined the problems in the build-up of various functions, some handed down by provincial ministries without initial contact with Municipal Affairs. It has recommended a simplification in the process of adopting functions and the granting of greater powers. Some of the changes may allow:

- (i) statutory definition of the various service powers (local services such as sewers to small areas and general services such as regional parks applied to large areas at low expenses), now created within each region by Supplementary Letters Patent, to be replaced by bylaws defining the powers required (approval by referendum in the former case and by a vote of the

Board in the latter),

(ii) general services such as regional parks may not be restricted to spending limits such as the previous ceilings for all voluntary functions,

(iii) the possible change in weighting of the directors votes may give the rural areas greater say in regional matters.

These changes would allow greater freedom and provide powers similar to those of the municipalities, but presently are unavailable to the regional governments (Legislation Review Committee, 1986). These are recommendations which could possibly carve a new future for the regional districts and regional parks.

This period of review has likely undermined the security of the regional districts, its directors and planners. The confusion of the Regional Boards, noted in the last review, as to their role has likely worsened, possibly expressed as reluctance to get involved in new functions or to promote increased spending on functions such as regional parks.

6.2 Provincial Assistance to Regional Park Establishment

The Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division has stated its rationale in assisting regional park formation (non-resident and tourist use of regional parks and the transfer of Class C parks to local government), and administers the enabling legislation. This has never been printed as an official policy for regional parks, although this was the first task of the present part-time coordinator of the Regional and Community Parks Program in 1984 (Scott, pers. comm.).

The forms of assistance available are examined in this chapter. Planners and directors in this study were asked if the province should provide more assistance to regional parks. Fifty-seven percent of the directors (mostly those

from Park(+) regions) wished a greater involvement of the province (Fig. 17). Approximately half of those in Park(-) regions were uncertain as to whether provincial assistance was needed. This difference is significant at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ (App. L(xix)). Most planners (84%) suggested ways in which assistance could be provided by the province. Specific aspects of this assistance are discussed in the following sections.

6.2.1 Financial Assistance

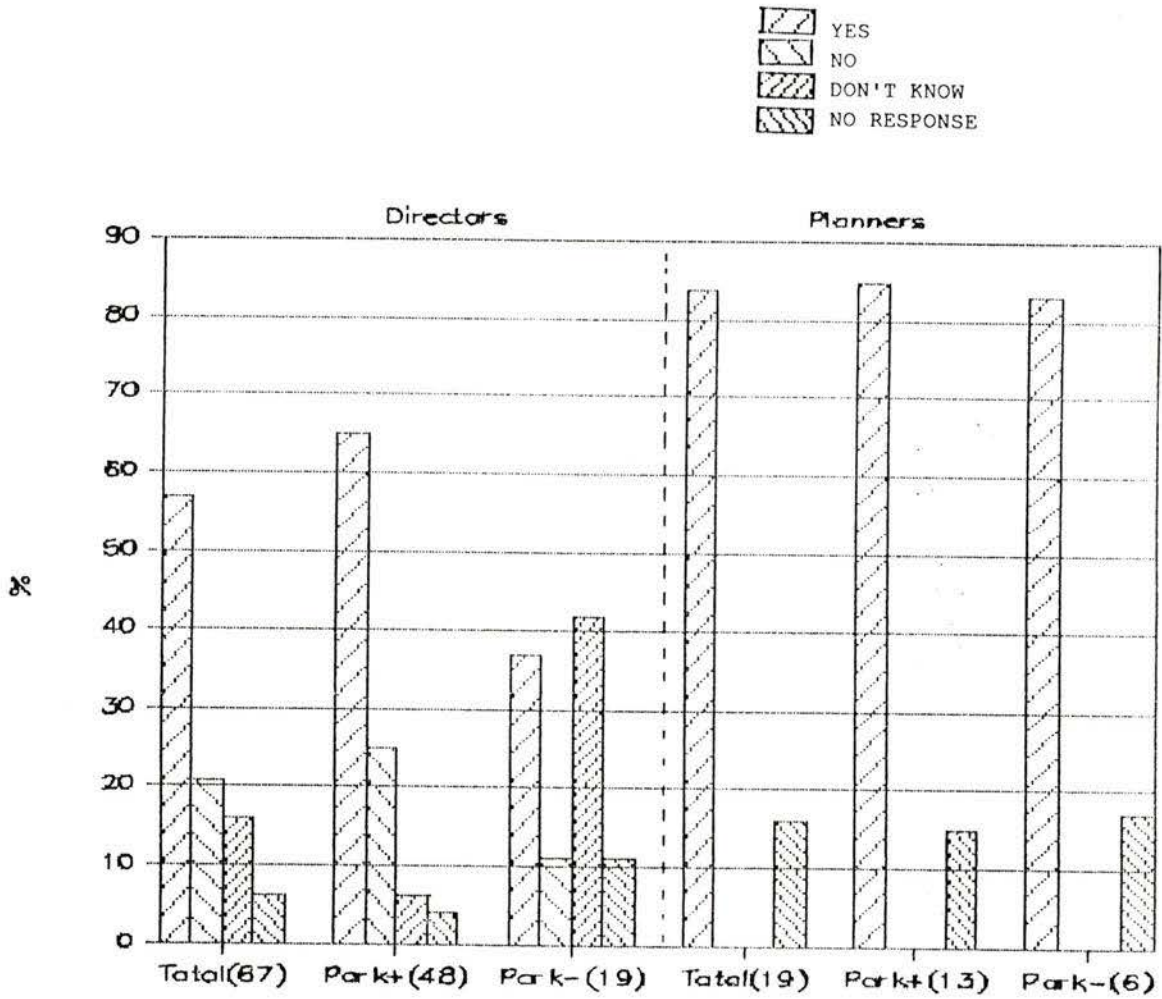
Various suggestions were offered by the regional officials in Chapter Five to increase and/or ensure stability in funding for regional parks. About half of the responses specified that a change in financing was necessary. Some of the possible sources of provincial funding included cost-sharing grants described by the legislation and a special fund, the Crown Land Fund. This section describes these funding mechanisms and how they have contributed to the regional parks system.

6.2.1.1 Cost-Sharing

Cost-sharing programs by federal, provincial and local levels of government increased in importance since World War II (Swainson, pers. comm.). The federal government decreased its activity as the number and costs of programs increased. The provincial government often stepped in or increased its support where the federal government withdrew. Through the Parks (Regional) Act (1979), grants administered by the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, were made available to an amount of one-third of the total expenditures for acquisition and/or development of regional parks as discussed in Chapter 4 (Sec. 4.4.1). Within the first five years, the regional district must spend or set aside 60% of the annual revenue on acquisition of regional parks or trails. If acquired without purchase, then all of

FIG. 17

PROVINCIAL ASSISTANCE REQUIRED AS REPORTED BY REGIONAL DIRECTORS



Should the province be doing more to assist in the Regional Park Program?

the annual revenues can be spent on development or maintenance, but the regional district may then only receive grants of one-third of 40% of the total park expenditures (Ch.310, Sec.11). From 1967 to 1982 the province honored its commitment to all applications for grants, supplying one-third of the cost of acquisition and development, but not maintenance and operations, to a total of \$13 million (App. F). These grants went primarily to three regional districts - Greater Vancouver, Capital and Central Okanagan. Others used this opportunity only minimally.

The active involvement of few regions probably reflects the fact that one-third grants alone were not sufficient incentive for most regional districts. Cost-share ratios examined in other regional park programs in the provinces of Saskatchewan and Ontario, shows that a much lower expression of financial support exists in British Columbia (i.e. 66.6% of acquisition costs, 75% development assistance in Saskatchewan; 50 - 80% of acquisition, development, maintenance and land taxes in Ontario). In Chapter Five, as many as 42% of the directors in this survey felt that more provincial funding should be provided. At least 30% of these were from Park(-) regions showing that the cost-sharing ratio used has not been a sufficient incentive in some regions. Others justified the petition for an increased rate due to the high level of non-resident use by tourists and neighbouring metropolitan populations. Regions such as Fraser-Cheam, for example, have been hesitant to take on the regional park function since it would supply and pay the greater share of the cost for a service to the population of the Greater Vancouver area.

Senior officials in the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division indicated through interviews that no rationale for setting this one-third proportion could be given. The cost-sharing program was to be seen as an "incentive program" (Lee, pers. comm.) which supplied "enough to

probably make them go and to keep them going" (Ahrens, pers. comm.). This level of assistance was felt to be sufficient since a large amount of funds was available to the most populated regional districts and Crown Lands were freely available elsewhere (Lee, pers. comm).

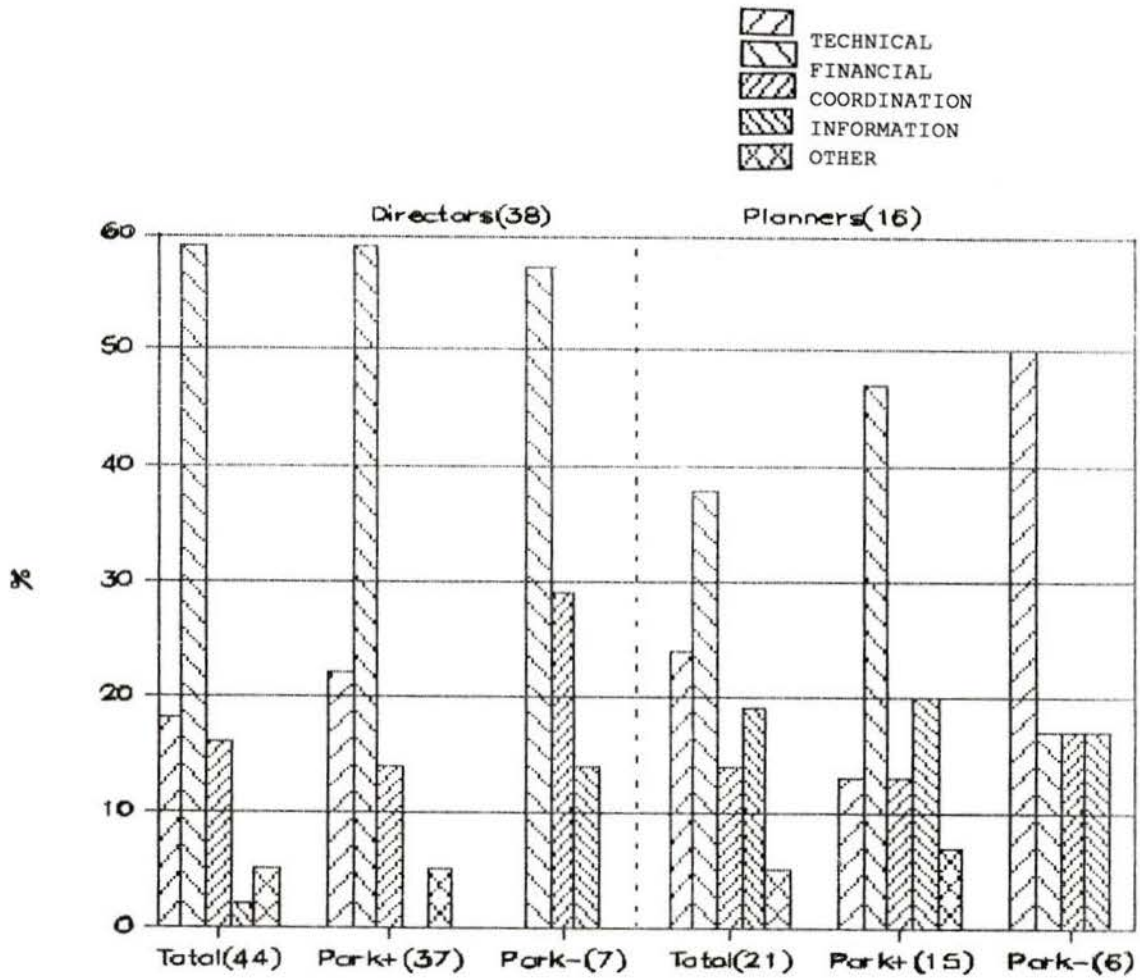
In this survey, two-thirds of the 38 directors who stated that assistance was needed, specified financial assistance (60% of the responses due to multiple answers) (Fig. 18). Half of the planners agreed with this need. Their considerations were quite specific to their regions, and often went beyond the restrictions stipulated in the cost-sharing legislation. Three regions needed funding for maintenance and operations. In some regions in 1981 and 1982, this consumed as much as 80% of the parks budget. One region needed funds to conduct various studies. Another required greater flexibility in financing. Others felt that funding should be determined specific to the regional need, since one region had no provincial parks and supplied the only natural parks, while another catered to high tourist use. From this, it may be inferred that the stipulations on the use of and the amount set in the cost-sharing grant did not meet the needs of several regional districts.

Other incentives may overcome problems of this type, where other assistance is more important, or additional to, the need for financing. For example, in three Park(-) regions, coordination with government departments, provincial workshops of regional members, and assistance in promoting regional parks to the public were more important than financial assistance. These suggestions may be timely in describing the next stage of provincial support in the life cycle of cost-share programs.

No funds have been granted since 1982. Will provincial funding of the regional parks program be resumed? At least one senior official stated that political support existed for regional parks and believed that they would maintain a high profile (Ahrens, pers. comm.). This is verified by

Fig. 18

TYPE OF ASSISTANCE REQUIRED FROM PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
AS REPORTED BY DIRECTORS AND PLANNERS



the "performance evaluation" of Regional Districts where the system of parks in the Capital and Greater Vancouver regions were highly praised, and by the recent plans for major expansion in the Capital and Comox-Strathcona regional system of parks. The most likely conditions under which provincial funding will be resumed include strong public demand which the local government can not finance, and/or better economic times (Ahrens, pers. comm.). The importance of public relations or promotion of regional districts and regional parks is emphasized by this statement.

6.2.1.2 Crown Land Reserves

The opportunity to fund the acquisition of regional park lands was available through the Greenbelt Fund described in Chapter Four, Sec. 4.4.2. About \$25 million was set aside for the purchase of lands for parks without camping and other uses, and an additional \$5 million was added to encourage local establishment of parks. A fairly high percentage of lands allocated (15%) were not categorized. Lands officially designated for regional parks amount to only one property. In contrast, 32% of greenbelt land areas became provincial parks (App. K) (Executive Committee submission, Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing, 1983). These results reflect the disorganized fashion in which lands were acquired without firm policy direction for the acquisition or disbursement of the funds or lands.

An unofficial policy of restricting these lands from becoming regional parks was applied since other sources of funds and lands were available (Huck, pers. comm.). However, the major barrier to land acquisitions and transfers as reported by Ahrens was the lack of a definition of "greenbelt" (pers. comm.). A revised definition has been used since 1983 to re-evaluate the

current land holdings and to assign them to the most suitable government program or to dispose of them. Although the Regional and Community Park Program has not granted funds since 1982, this source was officially cited as a reason to restrict land donation for region parks (Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing, Executive Committee submission, June 23, 1983). Information on whether these lands have entered the regional district holdings as parks or reserves is not available at present.

6.2.2 Coordination

Coordination and communication of regional district activities has not been strengthened by provincial governmental assistance despite the recommendations in various provincial reviews. In fact, the provincial -regional interagency committees which existed at the time of the survey were abolished. In this survey, the directors and planners both state coordination as a major form by which the province could assist (Fig.18). As the preferred method to improve coordination of regional park planning, they selected increased public relations (Table 17). The levels of interaction affecting regional parks are: (i) provincial - provincial, (ii) provincial - regional, and (iii) intra - regional.

(i) provincial-provincial: Planners, in particular, reported the need for increased activity of the provincial Regional and Community Park personnel (Table 17 and 18). Although the interagency role was the responsibility of the provincial coordinator, the need for more interaction indicates that this method of coordination was not adequate for all regional districts. This was shown through the low priority given to coordination by the Regional and Community Park section as stated by the directors. Many directors and planners would prefer the opportunity to directly contact the various provincial agencies (see "Other" category in Table 17 and "Direct Contact" response in Table 18).

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TABLE 17

PREFERRED METHODS FOR IMPROVED COORDINATION OF REGIONAL PARK PLANNING
AS REPORTED BY REGIONAL BOARD MEMBERS AND PLANNERS

| Method Preferred* | DIRECTORS | | PLANNERS |
|---|--------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|
| | FIRST PREFERENCE** Total # (%) | SCORE*** | SCORE**** Total # (%) |
| -Increase public relations to increase public support and awareness | 14 (21) | 68 | 9 |
| -Plan regional parks in larger planning units | 7 (10) | 108 | 4 |
| -Host provincial workshops of regional district planners and provincial agencies | 4 (6) | 101 | 7 |
| -Increase planning and guidelines publications | 4 (6) | 111 | 5 |
| -Increase interagency role played by the regional and community parks section of the provincial parks | 2 (3) | 124 | 8 |
| -Host regional workshops | 1 (1.5) | 130 | 9 |
| | <hr/> 32 | | <hr/> 13 |
| -Other | 4+ (6) | | 3++ |
| -Invalid | 12 (18) | | 0 |
| -No response | 17 (25) | | 3 |
| -Don't know | 2 (3) | | 0 |
| Total | <hr/> 67 | | <hr/> 19 |

* What methods might improve provincial/regional coordination efforts of park planning for regional needs?

** the option was rated as method of first choice by the number of directors reported

*** the score is a cumulative total of ranked choice multiplied by a weighting, e.g. the option is preferred as first choice by 4 (number of directors) x 1 (weighted value assigned to first choice) + as second choice (6 (directors) x 2 (value)) + (number of non-ranked responses x 6 (highest value given to least preferred option)) = Score. Low score indicate a higher priority.

****planners were not asked to rank responses therefore multiple choices were made; all choices were assigned a value of 1

+ Directors indicated first preference in 'other' category to include:

- encourage feedback from local advisory committee and forestry recreation personnel to identify future park/rec. sites
- plan in small planning area
- direct contact with Parks Branch
- plan with Ministry of Forests and forest companies

++ Planners describe "other" options to include:

- allow regional district access to provincial park plans and priorities in order for regional comment
- direct contact between provincial agencies and elected board members
- all of the above

TABLE 18

NEED FOR INCREASED COMMUNICATION AS REPORTED BY REGIONAL PLANNERS
AND DIRECTORS

| With what Agency/Board would increased communication most improve regional park planning? | Directors First Priority (#) | Planners First Priority (#) |
|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| -Provincial Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division | 12** | 8 |
| -Direct Contact of Various Ministries | 5 | 1 |
| -Regional District Board | 7** | 3 |
| -Technical Planning Committees | 2 | 0 |
| -Resource Management Committees | 1 | 2 |
| -Other | 0 | 0 |
| -Invalid* | 11 | 2 |
| -No response† | 9 | 0 |
| -Don't know | 11 | 2 |
| -No need | <u>10</u> | <u>1</u> |
| TOTAL | 67 | 19 |

* did not rank choices, two respondents stated no need for communication but nonetheless ranked choices

† three respondents stated there was a need for increased communication without stating with whom

** one respondent chose two first priorities

The planners supported the need to increase communication through provincially hosted workshops for regional planners and provincial agencies (Table 17). At present the provincial coordinator role has been weakened to handle by-law approvals with almost no communication with the regions. Future activity is expected to decrease further to a role as advisor to the Lands Branch of the Ministry of Forests and Lands on lands suited for provincial and regional parks (Collins, pers. comm.).

Other means of communicating with the provincial agencies would be through inter-jurisdictional committees. Few planners or directors expressed the need for communication through the Technical Planning Committees or the Regional Resource Management Committees (Table 18). This response may be a reaction to the manner in which these committees functioned in the past, i.e. the futility of the former in dealing with provincial - regional affairs, and the exclusion of regional districts in the latter. Both these committees have been removed from operation since 1983, rather than changed to suit the needs of the regional and the provincial governments.

(ii) Provincial-regional coordination: The provincial coordinator and the regional offices of the Parks Branch supplied coordination with the regional districts through the Community and Regional Parks Program and through system planning activities. Regional planners report that regional interaction with these personnel has been infrequent. Of all groups in Table 18, increased communication was most needed with the provincial Parks division - however, no distinction was made between the coordinator at headquarters or the regional personnel. Despite the regional need expressed in this survey, changes in 1984 within the Community and Regional Parks program have reduced the number of regional offices from the six at the time of the survey, to three and removed the full-time provincial coordinator and staff positions.

To promote the regional district and regional parks, information must be distributed to the regional directors, planners and the public. Although 80% of the planners have received some information on regional parks (Table 19), they nonetheless emphasized it as next in importance to finances as the type of assistance most needed from the provincial government (Fig. 18). Less well-informed were the directors, about 40% of whom had received some information on regional parks at the time of the survey. This problem is amplified by the possible yearly turn-over of some of the directors.

The public also, has had very little information on regional parks from the provincial government. No provincially supported public relations program exists. A few of the larger regional districts have made public information available on a park specific basis, and/or have regional plans for parks.

(iii) Intra-regional coordination: Planners strongly supported some type of regional coordination for parks planning in the region (Chapter 5, Sec. 5.1.6). Fifty three percent felt that the regional and/or local committees should be the coordinators of all park acquisitions in the region, with or without provincial members. This perhaps restates the desire for regional autonomy formerly expressed as the desire to retain voluntary adoption of all functions (Sec. 5.1.5). Greater interaction of the Regional Boards on regional parks matters was also desired (Table 18).

6.2.3 Technical Assistance

One of five directors stated that a general increase in technical assistance should be provided by the provincial government (Fig. 18). Planners placed a greater relative emphasis on technical assistance than did the directors. Specific suggestions included input in policy formulation,

TABLE 19

DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION ABOUT REGIONAL PARKS
BY THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

| Distribution Of Information Type* | Received Information | |
|--|-----------------------|----------------------|
| | (Directors) (#)(%) | (Planners) (#)(%) |
| Defining the Regional Parks and Role | 22 | 11 |
| Establishing Guidelines for Plan Preparation and Policy Formulation | 13 | 11 |
| General Information on Regional Parks | 21 | 12 |
| All of the Above | <u>11</u> | <u>6</u> |
| Total Individuals Receiving Any Information | 29(43) | 15(80) |
| No Information Received | 12 | 1 |
| No Response | 22 | 1 |
| Don't Know | 3 | 1 |
| Other | 1 | 0 |
| Invalid | <u>-</u> | <u>1</u> |
| Total Individuals | 67 | 19 |

* Question: Have you received information prepared by the Province of the following types:

assistance in the performance of inventory and greater interaction once the regional parks function is adopted. One region suggested that the province clearly state its own objectives for regional parks, to be adopted by all ministries, as their major contribution to assisting regional parks development. Two existing planning exercises where greater interaction can occur are described in the following sections.

6.2.3.1 Sub-regional Systems Planning

Systems planning activity has been undertaken since the late 1970s in British Columbia to coordinate park planning activity at all levels. The province has been divided into planning units within provincially designated 'landscape' regions. Within each unit a sub-regional systems plan is prepared. This includes a comprehensive inventory of natural landscape recreational features, heritage resources, and recreational activity areas and park areas at all government levels. The purpose of the plans is "to provide a statement of direction for use in discussion with other Ministries on a variety of initiatives such as regional planning and management, major resource development projects, tourism planning, etc." (Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing Policy No. 2.1 B31, 1981).

This level of planning activity is compatible in scale of area with regional district regional park planning. Assistance from the planner in the regional office of the Parks Branch is available to the regional districts. The planners in this study contacted the provincial parks headquarters very infrequently (65% less than twice per year), and the regional offices were contacted once every two to three months. This may have decreased since, due to the reduced number of regional offices and staff available for contact.

6.2.3.2 Official Regional Park Plans

Since 1971, the Parks (Regional) Act has required that regional districts which adopt the regional park function must, within the first five years or five years after pronouncement of the Act, prepare a regional park plan (1979, Ch. 310, Sec.17). This Official Regional Park Plan is designated as a bylaw by ministerial approval. It should outline the regional policies, goals and time frame for regional park acquisition and development (Parks and Outdoor Recreation Branch, 1982, unpublished document). Compliance is prompted by the threat of the Minister withholding grants issued under the Act. All 14 regional districts with the regional park function have adopted it over 10 years ago, except for Thompson Nicola (1980) and Bulkley-Nechako (1986). However, to date, only six plans have been completed (two since the survey) (Table 20). This was originally examined with the view that this might indicate a lack of support of regional districts for the parks function. In discussions with regional planners and provincial staff, several reasons were offered as explanations for the low level of compliance:

(i) Section 2 of the Act inadequately describes the content of an Official Regional Park Plan as a "general scheme, without specified detail, indicating present and projected regional parks...expressed in maps, plans reports or by other means". Furthermore, until 1982, no written guidelines or clarification of these requirements existed (Broome, pers. comm.).

(ii) The provincial government has never followed through on the threat of withholding grants available (Malcolm, pers. comm.). As evident in Chapter Four, grant requests from regional districts other than the Capital and Greater Vancouver regions are minimal, and until 1981 all funding demands from all regional districts were met. Since there was no need to

TABLE 20

STATUS OF REGIONAL PARK PLAN BY REGIONAL DISTRICT (1987)

| Status of Regional Park Plan | Regional Districts (#) | Regional Districts |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Complete | 6 | Fraser Ft. George, Peace Liard, CRD*, GVRD*, Dewdney Alouette (1983), Comox Strathcona (1985-1987) |
| In Preparation | 7 | Cowichan Valley, East Kootenay, Mt. Waddington, N. Okanagan, Okanagan- Similkameen, Powell River, Sunshine Coast |
| No Plan | 7 | Alberni Clayquot, Central Coast, Central Kootenay, Columbia-Shuswap, Thompson- Nicola, Central Okanagan, Bulkley- Nechako |
| No Regional Park Function | 8 | Cariboo, Central Fraser Valley**, Fraser Cheam, Nanaimo, Kitimat-Stikine, Kootenay Boundary, Skeena-Queen Charlotte, Squamish-Lillooet |
| Total | 28 | |

* GVRD regional park plans prepared in early to late 1960's, revised CRD plan 1986

** Central Fraser Valley - 3 of 4 municipalities are included within the GVRD Regional Park Board

restrict any requests, the comparison of priorities from the plans were not needed (Broome, pers. comm.).

(iii) The demand that all regional districts complete regional park plans arose from the fact that regional plans had been prepared by both the Capital and Greater Vancouver regions prior to regional district incorporation (Broome, pers. comm.). These were prepared by the municipalities (or regional planning boards) to present a systematic analysis of the need for parks, an inventory of recreation features and open space, and of the acquisition plan for budgeting purposes. This approach aided in lobbying for funds from the province and in cultivating provincial support for the idea of a regional park program. The requirement that other regional districts also produce plans to be eligible for provincial funds was more a political action than a necessity.

(iv) No systems plan for provincial parks existed so this requirement for regional districts to do so was viewed by some provincial administrators as extreme.

(v) Most regional districts do not have planning capabilities in the form of permanent staff, funds, etc. equivalent to that of the larger metropolitan areas of Vancouver and Victoria. In fact, many regional districts often use consultants to meet planning needs. Some regional districts such as Fraser Cheam continued to do so for most planning needs until 1980. An examination of the dates of adoption of the regional park function and the formation of regional district planning departments, shows that in several cases the function was adopted many years before planners were hired to plan and administer regional functions. Present staff shortages may still prohibit compliance, especially when the believed purpose of the plans is to apply for provincial funds, which were none the less granted.

(vi) Attempts to change the regional district structure since 1978 made the role of the provincial Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division toward regional parks less clear.

As can be seen above, numerous factors have prevented the preparation of these park plans, none necessarily implying a lack of regional support for regional parks.

There are several advantages to the regions to have such studies done. Since most of the available land for parks is Crown land and several resource ministries compete for its use, the available information in these plans would be an asset in negotiations with these other users. In one case, the availability of a regional parks plan might have increased the availability of funding. In fiscal 1981, the Regional and Community Park Assistance Program made \$1.2 million in grants available to both community and regional parks. Only 22% of these funds went to regional parks. The rest went to the municipalities for community parks since many of the regional districts were not sufficiently prepared to prioritize regional park and community park needs (Broome, pers. comm.). The importance of the information available in a plan has also not been available to directors in their decision-making role. Many did not know the distinction between park levels in this survey (Chapter Four, Sec. 4.1) and were possibly unaware of the financial benefits and the various acquisition methods.

Why did the provincial government not encourage the preparation of a regional plan in view of the obvious advantages? Senior officials of the Parks Branch, serving as Assistant Deputy Ministers at various times since 1965, offered explanations (Lee, Ahrens, Collins, pers. comm.):

(i) The province wished to maintain a positive image in the regions and the planning exercise was not well received, therefore, no pressure was applied and assistance was largely advisory.

(ii) The province assumed that regional districts, aside from the Greater Vancouver and Capital regions,

were not doing any comprehensive planning due to a lack of interest.

(iii) Often a regional plan was not needed to determine what properties were needed and whether acquisitions were sound.

Added to the lack of incentive to prepare the plans, is the financial cost of studies. At least one planner in a non-park region stated that monies for studies were necessary regardless of the one-third funding for acquisition and development of parks (Sec. 5.1.4). No funding for regional park plans has been provided by the provincial government. In another recreation program in British Columbia, the Recreation Facility Assistance Program (active until 1982), up to \$25,000 was available for the preparation of a recreation master plan (Government of B.C., 1981; McKay, pers. comm.). In Saskatchewan, funds have been available for plan preparation and for outside consulting services.

6.3 Regional Parks as a Level of Provincial Parks

In Table 17 many directors prioritized the planning of regional parks in larger planning units as a method of improving the coordination in regional parks planning. Although the type of planning units were not specified, one such option would be to incorporate them within the planning administration of provincial parks. Regional park needs are met in other provinces such as Alberta, Quebec and, to some extent, in Nova Scotia and Manitoba through the provincial parks. In 1984 one senior official of the Parks Branch anticipated little expansion of the provincial parks system and strong competition for funds within the Parks Branch for regional and provincial parks (Collins, pers. comm.). The regional park responsibility, due to a 1984 reorganization, falls within the same program activity

as provincial parks, whereas formerly it was a separate program with coordinator and staff. Given the cessation of funding for regional parks, senior officials in the Parks Branch were asked to respond to the suggestion that regional parks be subsumed as a class of provincial parks or that regional needs be met by the provincial park system.

Changes to the provincial park system were seen to be justifiable to officials of the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division. As many as one-third of them were deemed inappropriate to the system (Broome, pers. comm.). Many small parks in the Class A category served primarily local needs. Thirty-five Class 'C' parks have been transferred to regional and municipal administration since 1968 for similar reasons, with 32 remaining. The future system of provincial parks is being "rationalized", contrary to the "history of emotion and politics" that created many of them (Collins, pers. comm.). At least one regional district has proposed the transfer of provincial parks to the regional parks system; for example, the Capital Regional District has justified and targeted the acquisition of two of the Class A parks in their recently completed Regional Park review process (PRP: Parks and Research, 1986). Although many present provincial parks serve regional needs, the status quo of regional parks administration is likely to remain (Collins, pers. comm.).

6.4 Legislation

Two areas of legislative reform are possible in assisting regional park development. One of these is the Municipal Act and administration affecting all regional functions. This has been briefly described in Sec. 6.1. as a possible simplification of the Letters Patent process and clear definition of powers according to the Legislation Review Committee recommendations. A solution remains to be

found in integrating other legislation, such as the Parks (Regional) Act, into the new system of statutory powers and self-imposed budgeting.

The Parks (Regional) Act itself requires amendment. It is weak in inadequately defining a regional park as:

"any area of land set aside and dedicated as a park under this Act or ... any municipal park or portion of it ... [transferred to the jurisdiction of the Regional Parks Board] ... for the purpose of development and maintenance as a regional park under the terms and conditions mutually agreed on" (Secs. 1 and 7).

This has provided no guidance as to minimum size, recreational activities or degree of development allowed. This was not available in print to the regional districts until 1980 when an unofficial Parks Branch publication was distributed upon request. Due to the vagueness of the definition and legislation in the past, some local use parks not serving regional needs were included in the regional park system.

The Act provides little protection for regional parks whereas specified uses and restrictions are stated for classes of provincial parks within the Provincial Parks Act. As an example, regional park lands "which at the time of acquisition are shown to be surplus to park needs" or designated to be surplus by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, may be sold or exchanged for other land to be used for regional park purposes (Ch. 310 Sec. 4(g)). At least one region has discussed exploitation of the natural resources of the parks, eg. the Capital Regional District confronted the issue of "selective" logging to "reduce the burden of taxation" (Times Colonist, September 22, 1983). One Parks Branch executive stated that the province should not interfere in the sale of regional assets since the local public would prefer that the provincial government have no management responsibility over the regional parks (Lee, pers. comm.). The current Assistant Deputy Minister stated that although the Ministry has not prescribed

protective management in the legislation, it will set a "good example" promoting a preservation ethic for natural area parks (Collins, pers. comm.). This, of course, was stated before the review of park boundaries and resource extraction feasibility studies for 24 park and proposed wilderness areas in 1986 (Wilderness Advisory Committee, 1986)

The need for changes to the legislation was acknowledged by the past full-time provincial coordinator (Broome, pers. comm.). However, some fear of losing many of the positive aspects through changes has kept some potential advocates of a new Act from promoting this need. The present Assistant Deputy Minister indicated that an amended Act is likely to come about eventually as a part of the re-evaluation process of all parks legislation, especially the Parks Act, and following the review of regional districts and changes to the Municipal Act (Collins, pers. comm.). Given the weakening of the preservation objectives occurring at present within provincial parks, this is no guarantee that any changes in the Parks (Regional) Act will be an improvement.

6.5 Summary and Conclusions:

The majority of the directors (57%) and planners (84%) stated the need for increased provincial assistance. Of these, two-thirds of the directors (60% of the responses) specified that the need was greatest for financial assistance. Almost half of the directors wanted the provincial government to increase its cost-share agreement. Some regions must service a greater non-resident population (tourists, neighbouring metropolitan areas) than others. Other regions felt that costs for services not specified in the legislation (eg. studies) or specified but not given (such as maintenance and operations) needed reimbursement. A region-specific evaluation of the needs was felt

necessary by several directors. Other incentives were suggested as more important than direct financing in three non-park regions to include improved coordination, province-wide workshops and promotion of regional parks. The cost-share funding which stopped in 1982, will likely only be resumed if the public demand cannot be met in the regions and the economy improves.

Crown land programs such as the Greenbelt program, designed for local use, did not enter the regional systems due to restrictions and poor definition of the program. The UREP reserves have become regional parks in the past, and will become increasingly important as a source due to non-purchase objectives of the regions.

According to the regional officials, improved coordination of regional park planning could best occur by improving public relations to increase public support. Many planners wanted greater interaction with the Regional and Community Park section and wanted it to better represent regional park interests in interagency dealings. A few directors and planners suggested direct contact with other provincial agencies and inter-jurisdictional workshops. The now non-existent Technical Planning and Regional Resource Management committees were not supported by the regional officials as a means to communicate their needs. This does not rule out some workable form of an inter-jurisdictional committee. Intra-regional coordination was the method selected by planners to plan all parks in the region, not by provincial or regional district staff.

Although a large majority of planners received information on regional parks, the directors were not as well-informed. The public, in general, is also uninformed about regional parks since only a few of the larger regional districts disseminate information.

The directors felt that technical assistance could be improved upon in formulating policy, conducting inventory

and in ongoing communications once the regional park function is adopted. Assistance through the Parks Branch sub-regional systems planning process to help in the preparation of Official Regional Park Plans is available. There was infrequent contact made earlier with these offices and with the reduction in staff and offices in the province since this survey, this has likely not increased. Official regional park plans are required but are not promoted by the provincial administration for various reasons to include not wanting to appear to interfere and not being able to fund their preparation. The value in having these plans available to justify park acquisition to the regional public and politicians, to negotiate with provincial ministries for land acquisition, and to bid for grants and services among those of the other regional districts and municipalities has not been reinforced.

Regional parks will not likely be integrated into the provincial park system now that the regions no longer have acquisition grants. Instead, the transfer of provincial parks and Crown lands to the regions is expected.

Although the legislation for regional parks was admitted to be weak by provincial officials, the provincial government has not made alterations. Its future plans in reviewing all parks legislation and the Municipal Act is ongoing.

In conclusion, this analysis shows that the technical and coordinating assistance provided by the provincial government has in the past been weak. Changes in 1983 and 1984 to the administrative support within both Municipal Affairs and Environment and Parks have likely further reduced the ease and frequency of communication and coordination. Crown land grant programs have not been properly implemented to assist regional districts in acquiring regional park lands (about 30% of present holdings from Crown land transfers and leases), although this intention exists. Funding support for acquisition and

development costs has been granted, but was insufficient for most regional districts which needed funding for staff, studies and operation and maintenance in addition to the one-third acquisition/development cost-share grants. In comparison to other provinces, this level of assistance is low. The sparse information on regional parks which exists has been received in the regions by most planners, but not by the directors suggesting regional distribution problems. Promotion of the regional districts and/or regional parks has been recommended in past provincial reviews and was the primary method stated by respondents in this study to improve regional parks coordination. This appears to be one of the most important needs to be addressed.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.0 Conclusions

From this examination, there is adequate information to evaluate why the adoption of the regional park function has not occurred in all regions and what problems might hinder their creation. The constraints noted, such as information flow, lack of funding and coordination, and the perceptions of the regional decision-makers and the developers of provincial policy allow several conclusions to be drawn.

The examination of taxes, mill rates and methods of establishing parks shows that costs should not impede regional park creation. This was the conclusion also drawn by Hawksworth. Lands are available in most regions through transfer and by lease in areas of Crown forests. Adopting the function costs nothing and may allow the regions to take advantage of opportunities as they arise with minimal effort and cost. The perceptions of cost, however, were shown in this study to have impeded parks adoption and the advance in their planning in some regions. This was indicated by many directors' reports that the park function was adopted for the financial benefits available, the directors who stated the public as unwilling to pay for regional parks despite the low costs, the planners' reports of impediments in the Park(-) regions and possibly by the low mill rates set.

The regions have been generally supportive of the regional parks function since: (i) 20 have adopted it, or a similar letters patent, (ii) they have made considerable progress in establishing 72 regional parks up until the date of the survey, and have continued with park acquisition (94 parks at present), (iii) preparation of Official Regional Park Plans and development of the

existing parks continues despite reduced assistance from the provincial government and staffing problems, (iv) the majority of regional officials state that the regional park function is of moderately high relative importance, (v) none of the directors in Park(+) regions did not want regional parks when given the opportunity to express their dissatisfaction, but proposed various additions in park types, changes in distribution and in funding arrangements, (vi) almost all Park(+) regions have adopted the function for all member areas of the region, although the directors state that this is not necessary. The self-reliance and support of the regions is indicated by the desire of the regional officials to: (i) increase regional coordination of parks and recreation planning, (ii) interact directly with provincial agencies of government, (iii) continue with the regional park function as a voluntary one, and, (iv) increase the funding from regional and local sources.

However, many districts have not provided regional parks since: (i) compensation for serving tourist and non-resident use is felt by some directors to be inadequate, (ii) provincial park and local park development is perceived as inadequate in some regions, (iii) costs of operations and maintenance would consume the entire parks revenues generated in areas with a low population base, (iv) studies of regional needs are required for decisions to be made in some regions, (v) there is a lack of awareness of the role of regional districts in park provision, and of regional parks in general, (vi) few regions have adequate planning and support staff, (vii) some directors feel that regional recreational needs are adequately served by vast areas of Crown land and/or by development of the private sector. Even the regions with the parks function have felt limited due to the lack of funding, and in the lack of available land by purchase or by other acquisition methods.

The provincial government is given credit in

recognizing the need for a regional level of parks, for providing a level of funding, and for its integration of the two operations of regional government and regional planning for parks when successful models elsewhere in Canada have been few. However, it appears that the provincial government did not adequately assess the regional districts' needs for assistance, outside of the highly urbanized well-staffed regional districts. Since these latter were the proponent areas which lobbied the province to accept the regional park concept, they had already developed their planning documents and capitalized on the funding available while most other regions were still struggling with the implementation of regional governments. For many of these regions, the one-third cost share proportion of provincial grants may never have been sufficient incentive to consider developing regional parks. Other types of assistance are required in addition, and/or the the amount of funding increased, to bring them to a level where they could seriously consider becoming involved in planning regional parks.

The assistance which was most commonly reported as a necessity in 1982 included:

funding: Most regions want more. Aside from the fact that all could use more, in comparison to other successful regional park systems in Ontario and Saskatchewan which provide at least 50% grants, the 33% cost-share ratio in British Columbia is low. These funds have ceased since 1982. The result is that the two most-populated regions have received the great majority of the funds. Acquisition costs in many regions have become almost prohibitive. Regions are now identifying parkland priorities through regional park plan preparation and appear to be advancing in their stage of regional parks evolution through non - purchase acquisition means. One regional district which had no parks in 1982 has now acquired three parks and plans to establish another 54 in the next few years.

Operations and maintenance grants are specified in the provincial legislation as available to an amount of 33%. None have been granted whereas in Ontario and Saskatchewan these have been available in substantial amounts. As noted in Hawksworth's study and in the results of this study, this is a possible impediment, in several regions, especially those with low assessment totals.

Aside from direct funding of acquisition, lands are available through various programs. Among those specific to parks are the Greenbelt and the UREP reserves. Virtually no lands from the Greenbelt properties are known to have entered the regional park system, while 32% became provincial parks. The UREP program has contributed less than 16% of the regional park system to 1982. Both reserve systems are being reviewed and lands are being transferred to 'appropriate' levels or agencies of government. Despite the recognition by Hawksworth in 1974 of the need for the province to preserve areas for future regional demand, aspects of some programs have restricted use for regional parks or for unknown reasons, have not been used widely by the regions.

technical assistance: Planners and directors in the study stated this as next in importance to funding. The infrequent contact of the Parks Branch headquarters and regional offices are reflected in the stated primary need to communicate more with this agency. The need for studies was emphasized by one director in one non-park region where funds and technical expertise were lacking. The existence of plans for regional parks would be useful in justifying their existence and in rationalizing any acquisition and development objectives. These have not been prepared by many regions, more because of the lack of enforcement by provincial officials of this requirement for political reasons than because of the lack of support in the regions. The provincial government did not encourage their preparation in spite of the advantages. This lack may have

resulted in the irreversible loss of opportunities to acquire lands and/or funds in the past.

Coordination: The directors felt that a comprehensive role of the regions should be played in coordinating recreation and park planning at the provincial /regional /local levels. Yet an equal number did not need feel that regional staff was necessary for this purpose. Planners, as well, generally did not view regional staff as the remedy for improved coordination, but specified that another regional source, a committee of municipal and electoral area members would be preferable. The most commonly supported method to improve coordination was to improve public relations, awareness and support. Planners, in particular, emphasized this option as well as the need for provincial and regional workshops of regional planners and provincial agencies. Although little support existed for a provincial coordinator, the area of inter-agency communication was recommended as one where the Regional and Community Parks Program could be more active. The lack of provincial coordination and minimal administrative assistance offered by this program since 1984 would likely have improved difficulties.

Information: The need for improved public relations and information made available to Board members and provincial agencies was recommended in the 1978 and 1986 provincial reviews of the regional districts and in Hawksworth's study. Information was not received by most of the directors in this study, although most of the planners had received some form of information from the provincial government. Planners, however, did specify that more planning and guidelines publications would improve coordination of regional park planning. Directors also stated that regional boards could be communicating more on the topic of regional parks. The lack of information to the public, in general, and the lack of orientation materials for new directors has not promoted regional parks

in the regional districts.

These needs are likely greater now than in 1982 due to the increased land prices, cutbacks in regional staff of the provincial ministries and of some regional districts, and reduction in the coordination and guiding role of the provincial Parks and Outdoor Division.

In regard to the influences on the decision-making as depicted in the model, it is apparent that there are two general constraints to the decision outcome: (i) the provincial-regional interaction, and (ii) the flow of information to the decision-makers and the public. The importance of these two factors to attitude formation and in developing perceptions from the existing information was emphasized in the earlier discussion.

Overall, the British Columbia government has established a fairly well developed system of regional parks in comparison to other provinces in Canada. The fact that 94 parks exist is somewhat of an accomplishment when seen in light of the several other provinces which have either not recognized or addressed the need. British Columbia was progressive in the 1960s in enabling parks through, not one, but two, methods of establishment (special park districts and later regional districts). Although there are flaws in the delivery and type of service from the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs to the regional districts, on the whole, there appears to have been sufficient support available for several of the more populated regional districts to become involved in regional park planning. Their further development could, however, be enhanced in the regions outside of the Capital and Greater Vancouver regional districts.

7.1 Recommendations

Consideration of other regional park administrative

structures, the responses of the planners and directors and discussions with provincial officials have resulted in the following recommendations:

Funding assistance of the provincial government should be resumed to the regions which want to become involved in planning regional parks dependent on factors of inability to support parks alone, possibly on a park specific basis. This regional assistance should be greater than the one-third cost-share ratio and/or extended to other costs such as: operations and maintenance, staff needs, studies and planning needs, the degree of non-resident use of the region or provided on a project-specific basis. Since many of the regions which have acquired numerous parks in recent years are now developing them, development cost assistance should be considered with or separate of acquisition and other costs as above. Other sources of funding for capital works projects may be available from provincial and federal programs besides the Regional and Community Parks Program. A review of these programs and promotion of them to the regional districts will benefit these regions entering this stage of regional park expansion and development.

Official Regional Park Plans should be promoted in recognition of the value to the regions in targeting the acquisition of parklands. This could be done as a prerequisite to funding application (which would need to be supplied to prepare them in some regions). Although formerly required this was not enforced. A suggestion from one region to include regional park plans as part of the Official Community Plan required of each regional district and municipality by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs has merit in that it may assist in the integration of regional planning and parks planning.

The provincial government should make acquisition of Crown lands possible for inclusion in regional parks. The current UREP and Greenbelt property reviews should promote regional park use of these lands and eliminate restrictions

(eg. access to the cost-sharing grants of the Regional and Community Park Program which have not been available for years may limit Greenbelt properties from regional use). Other sources should be brought to the attention of the regional districts.

Technical assistance provided through occasional workshops of provincial and regional planners was supported by the planners in this study. This could be organized and hosted by the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division to allow the exchange of ideas and expertise between regions and to promote personal contact with Parks staff from Headquarters, with the regional offices of the Parks Division and officers from the Lands Branch.

Interagency coordination was identified as one of the major needs of the directors and planners. Planners felt this could be done through the Regional and Community Parks Program. Others felt a provincial workshop of planners and agencies of the various ministries would improve the situation. Some regional directors wanted direct access to the provincial agencies. These options should be examined.

The role of the Regional and Community Park Program of the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division should be defined in a stated regional parks policy. Given the needs of the regions stated above, this role should also be strengthened since it has not been involved to an appreciable extent in recent years. The loss of the Technical Planning and Resource Management Committees, and the regional officers of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs has left regions without formal contact with the provincial ministries. A balance between regional autonomy and necessary communication must be reached and interaction facilitated. At least one full-time coordinator should assist in interministerial liaison, possibly in application for funding, employment and other grants from various sources, and in facilitating the establishment of regional parks. This person(s) could be employed by either the Ministry of

Municipal Affairs and/or within the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division with the option to integrate regional park and regional community planning.

Public relations is the most important need of the regional districts. Few regional directors received any information from the province on what a regional park system is or could be. Several were not aware that their regions were involved in planning regional parks, and others were possibly not aware of the details of establishing them. The interaction between regional districts also may be minimal on park matters. Many of the provincial ministries do not appear to understand the role of regional districts. Furthermore, the province has never informed the public in any way about regional park existence, except for one pamphlet explaining the existence of the Regional and Community Park Assistance Program which operated for one year. This lack of promotion is also due to the regional districts, few of which advertise regional park existence. They also should be budgeting for information and awareness of the directors and the public.

7.2 Limitations of the Study

The survey was conducted in late 1982. Aside from changes in provincial administration of the regional park program and a continued freeze on grants, few changes have directly affected regional parks. The comments of the directors generally remain as valid and relevant today as they were then. The problems of 1982 remain. The completion of this study in 1987 has allowed an examination of how some of the regional districts have reacted to funding cuts, which they stated were critical to park development. Recommendations made, therefore, more realistically reflect the political climate which earlier was in transition.

The sample of directors was small (20% response rate)

but was fairly well distributed over the participating regions. Information describing the conditions of each regional district and some details on the position of the Regional Boards was also available through the participation of the majority of planners.

Initiatives proposed as a result of the 'Performance Evaluation' and the Legislation Review may alter how regional districts operate in the near future. The utility of some of the recommendations may depend on how, and if, the regional powers are redefined.

7.3 Further Studies

This study looked at a provincial overview of the problems in creating regional parks. No attempt was made in this study to weigh the importance of any component of the decision model presented, or to determine all of the constraints or their relative importance specific to each region. Further studies of the regional park system could be focussed on:

(i) describing a typology of regions presenting typical constraints affecting regional park adoption and park creation; eg. regions with a low assessment total and abundant Crown land such as Alberni-Clayuquot, Kootenay Boundary and Cariboo Regional Districts; regions with moderately high assessment totals and population with a large amount of private land holdings such as in Fraser-Cheam and Nanaimo Regional Districts. A formula could be developed to use in determining the type and level of assistance most important for park development in each type of region.

(ii) specific aspects of regional park decision-making in regional districts or by the provincial government. Current research on decision-making presented in the literature evaluates various decision-making structures and processes in an attempt to improve the quality of

the decision. Some questions in this type of analysis are: What information is vital to the decision? How can greater objectivity, if desirable, be attained? What improvements in communication are necessary? Who should make the decision? What rules and arrangements could aid in decision-making?

(iii) study of the public awareness and demand for regional parks. This could be done to assist some of the regions which are interested but experience problems such as understaffing and funds for such studies.

(iv) the awareness of the regional districts (Boards and Planning Departments) of the possible methods for land acquisition. A follow-up study of the Greenbelt and UREP reviews could describe the interaction between the Lands Branch of the Ministry of Forests and Lands, the Ministry of Environment and Parks and the Regional Districts in regard to transfer of Crown lands for recreational purposes.

(iv) to what extent do planners influence the Regional Board on particular functions or issues? Another aspect addressed in the literature only since the late 1970s is how well the elected officials and planners can predict the public view.

7.4 The Future of Regional Parks in British Columbia

From the discussions with various regional district planners about the progress in regional park development since the survey, it appears that the regional districts which have parks will continue to acquire and develop parks. Following a few years of relative inactivity after the provincial funds ceased in 1982, the regional districts responded with other tactics. Land purchase will be limited due to high land prices and reduced availability in areas of large Crown Land areas and Tree Farm Licence holdings. Land transfer and lease will continue to be

utilized. The increased pressure to "rationalize" Crown land holdings (eg. UREP, Greenbelts, provincial park boundaries, Class C parks, reclassification of Class A parks) may result in a flurry of activity in the regions to acquire regional park lands or reserves. Reserve funds are now being drawn upon in some regions for development of the existing parks and new options are being examined (eg. local labour and employment programs, other government grants).

Official Regional Park Plan preparation may be initiated by the interests and available time of the planners or the directions of the Board may be limited by staff time. During the study period more planners appeared to be taking the step of advancing studies and plans to the Regional Boards. Their awareness and increasing experience with regional park matters may be influential in encouraging Regional Boards to further regional park development.

Discussions with provincial personnel in Municipal Affairs and the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, suggest that the regions may soon have greater powers to administer the regional park function. They will be better able to determine the public acceptance of parks through requisitioning funds independent of other regional functions. The regional directors indicated that the regions could contribute a greater share to financing regional parks, and the changes in function adoption may remove this constraint. The support from the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division is not expected to increase without greater regional and public demand.

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ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS FOR LEAVES 174 to 191 WERE FILMED AT END OF THESIS.

8. Is the definition and function of regional parks clearly distinct from provincial and municipal/local parks?

not clear 1 2 3 4 5 very clear

9(a) Should the regional park function remain a voluntary responsibility?

 Yes No Don't Know

(b) Why? _____

10. Should the regional park function be adopted with partial representation (taxation of benefiting areas only)?

 Yes No Don't Know

...or with full representation?

 Yes No Don't Know

11. What factors would be sufficient cause to adopt the regional park function? (rank in order of preference)

- expression of need and public support
- increase in population to provide suitable tax base
- pressure on available land and rising land prices
- change in attitudes of the regional board members
- increased guidance from the province
- increased coordination of park planning with provincial, municipal and community agencies
- increased financing
- increased awareness of the regional park role and responsibility
- other (specify) _____

12. What are the preferred methods to establish and/or fund regional parks in your regional district? (rank in order of preference)

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <u> </u> development cost changes | <u> </u> subdivision land dedication |
| <u> </u> trust funds | <u> </u> private land grants |
| <u> </u> capital borrowing | <u> </u> crown land transfer |
| <u> </u> provincial grants | <u> </u> purchase |
| <u> </u> bill member areas | <u> </u> transfer of provincial parks (Class 'C') |
- other (specify) _____

13. Is there a need for staff employed by the regional district to: (rank in order of importance)

- coordinate park acquisition/development?
- manage regional park matters?
- coordinate recreation and park planning at the provincial, regional and park levels?
- plan regional parks?
- other (specify) _____

14(a) Are open space lands dedicated by subdivision suitably controlled in your regional district?

 Yes No Don't Know

(b) If not, what method would be more suitable? (rank in order of preference)

- regulation by bylaw
- regional district assuming the Approving Officer duty
- other (specify) _____

SECTION B Provincial-regional interaction in park planning.

1. Would increased communication with any of the following agencies improve regional park planning in your regional district? (rank in order of importance)

 Yes No Don't Know

- provincial Parks and Outdoor Recreation division
- direct contact of the various ministries (specify) _____

- Technical Planning Committees
- Resource Management Committees
- Regional District Board
- Other (specify) _____

2(a) Has/was any pressure been exerted on the regional district to adopt the regional park function?

 Yes No Don't Know

(b) If so, is the pressure:

- internal? What source? _____
- external? What source? _____

3. Have you received information prepared by the province of the following types: (check if applicable)
- defining the regional parks and their role?
 - establishing guidelines for plan preparation and policy formulation
 - general information on regional parks
 - other (specify)

4. What methods might improve provincial/regional coordination efforts of park planning for regional needs? (rank in order of preference)
- plan regional parks in larger planning units (eg. Vancouver Island region)
 - increase interagency role played by the regional and Community Park section
 - host regional workshops
 - host provincial workshops of regional district planners
 - increase public relations to increase public support and awareness
 - increase planning and guidelines publications to be prepared and distributed
 - other (specify)

- 5(a) Should the province be doing more to assist in the regional park program?
 Yes No Don't Know

(b) If yes, what type of assistance?

6. How would you rank regional parks among other regional concerns?
not important 1 2 3 4 5 very important

7. Do you have any further comments on regional parks?

Use this page for any extra comments you may wish to make or views you may want to express which were not requested by the questions.

THANK YOU VERY KINDLY FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY!

11. Has an Official Regional Park Plan been prepared in compliance with grant requirements under the Parks (Regional) Act?
 Yes In Preparation No Don't Know

SECTION B Your perceptions toward regional park matters will be requested in this section to gain insight into the special conditions within your regional district.

1. What are/were the major impediments to adopting the regional park function within your regional district?
 Don't Know

2. What priority have regional parks among other regional concerns? (Circle one letter)
 not important 1 2 3 4 5 very important

- 3(a) Should the adoption of the regional parks function remain voluntary?
 Yes NO Don't Know

(b) Why? _____

4. Is the population in the regional district sufficient to support the costs of a regional park system?
 Yes No Don't Know

5. How important is population size and urbanization in determining whether:

- (a) to adopt the regional park function?
 not important 1 2 3 4 5 very important
- (b) to acquire and develop regional parks?
 not important 1 2 3 4 5 very important

- 6(a) Is there a need for more parks of any sort at present in your regional district?
 Yes No Don't Know

- (b) If so, what type?
 regional provincial local
- (c) If so, how is this need expressed?

- 7(a) Are the regional residents willing to pay for regional parks:
 Yes No Don't Know

- (b) How should regional parks be financed?

- (c) Is the provincial 1/3 cost-sharing agreement for regional park funding adequate?
 Yes No Don't Know

- (d) What funding arrangement would be more suitable?

- 8(a) Is there a need to coordinate and plan park acquisition and development of provincial, regional and municipal community parks in your regional district?
 Yes No Don't Know

- (b) If so, by what method should this be achieved? (rank in order of preference)
 provincial coordinator
 officer employed by the regional district
 committee of municipal and electoral area members
 volunteers/recreation commissions
 other (specify)

- 9(a) Are open space lands dedicated by subdivision suitably controlled in your regional district?
 Yes No Don't Know

- (b) If not, what method would be more suitable? (rank in order of importance)
 regulation by bylaw
 regional district assuming the Approving Officer duty
 other (specify)

SECTION C Assessment of interaction between governments in park planning

1. Would increased communication with any of the following agencies improve regional planning in your regional district? (rank in order of importance)
 Yes No Don't Know

- _____

 provincial Parks and Outdoor Recreation division
 direct contact of the various ministries (specify)
 Technical Planning Committees
 Resource Management Committees
 Regional District Board
 other (specify)

2(a) Is there a need for integration of park planning with the private sector, other regional or provincial agencies in your regional district?

Yes No Don't Know

(b) If so, specify _____

3. How frequently does the regional planning department interact with:

| | # Contacts per year | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | 1 | 1-2 | 3-6 | 7-12 | 13+ |
| Provincial headquarters - Parks dept. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> (check one) |
| Regional staff- provincial parks dept. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> (check one) |

4(a) Has/was any pressure been exerted on the regional district to adopt the regional park function?

Yes No Don't Know

(b) If so, was the pressure:
 internal? What source? _____
 external? What source? _____

5. Have you received information from the province in: (check if appropriate)

- defining the regional parks and their role
- establishing guidelines for plan preparation and policy formulation
- general information on regional parks
- other (specify)

6. What methods might realistically be proposed to improve the coordination of planning efforts between provincial ministries and the regional districts?

- plan regional parks in larger planning units (eg. Vancouver Island region)
- increase interagency role played by the Regional and Community Parks section of the provincial parks
- host regional workshops
- host provincial workshops of regional district planners and provincial agencies
- increase public relation program to increase public support and general awareness
- increase planning and guidelines publications to be prepared and distributed
- other (specify)

7. What should the province be doing to assist in the regional parks program?

8. Do you have any further comments on regional parks?

APPENDIX A(iii)

COVERING LETTER TO REGIONAL DISTRICTS

Dear Chairman of the Board:

As a graduate student at the University of Victoria, I am undertaking research toward completion of my M.A. thesis in Geography. The topic I have chosen is the evolution and development of regional parks. A brief review of American and other Canadian regional park systems will be included, however, the emphasis will be on the B.C. regional park system.

I am requesting the cooperation of the Board members in each Regional District to respond to questions revealing their beliefs, attitudes and perceptions toward regional park development in their regional district and in B.C. in general. This short questionnaire will be mailed to the Regional District office, addressed to the attention of each Board member and thereby distributed. The anonymity of each member will be assured by returning the questionnaire unsigned and sealed to the Regional District office where all the responses will be forwarded to me as a package of grouped responses. A separate questionnaire to obtain park statistics (number, cost, method of establishment, etc.) will be completed by the planning department of the Regional Districts.

The information obtained will remain confidential for purposes of my thesis research and will not be used to isolate members which will in any way incriminate them or endanger this confidentiality. The cooperation and participation of each member will be gratefully appreciated. Should any member have reservations or specific enquiries, please write to the above address. I would request that this matter be discussed by the Board members and your written approval be given to begin this study. I will then forward the questionnaires as approved by the University committee on Human Subjects in Research and by my graduate advisory committee.

The results will be analyzed and published in the form of a thesis available at the University of Victoria. Depending on the results obtained, a paper and/or presentation may be prepared for the annual meeting of the Canadian Association of Geographers in 1983. Should the Board members wish to review the results of this study, the opportunity will be made to do so. This will also assure the members of the proper use of the data and the anonymity of their responses.

The time for completion of the study is March, 1983. It is therefore necessary to request return of the questionnaire within approximately two weeks of receipt. Any late responses will be accepted but the analysis will be more efficient if there are few late returns.

I would like to thank you for your attention to my request for assistance. I hope the above information is sufficient to explain the nature of my work and my intentions. Your response for the Board at the earliest time possible would be appreciated.

Sincerely,

Jean Hytka
Graduate Student

APPENDIX A(iv)

COVERING LETTER TO REGIONAL DIRECTORS AND PLANNERS

Dear :

I am a graduate student at the University of Victoria undertaking a research study toward completion of a Master of Arts (M.A.) degree in Geography. The topic of my research is regional park development, with emphasis on the B.C. regional park program.

To complete my research I am requesting your cooperation in the way of completing the enclosed questionnaire. Your views and opinions on regional park development will form the basis of my data. Each Regional Board member in each of the Regional Districts will be a respondent in this study. A similar questionnaire will be sent to planners in each Regional District to obtain statistics on the regional park system and to gain their views.

With the data from these sources, I will plan to document the history of regional park development in British Columbia, assess their present status and their success in meeting the provincial government objectives as outlined in the regional park program. Your response will provide insight into an examination of the problems in this program. Hopefully, from this I may formulate revisions and propose future objectives.

Please return your response form, unsigned and sealed, to the Regional District office where it will be returned in a package with all other forms. This will ensure your anonymity. Confidentiality is thereby also assured since the group analysis will not allow isolation of any one member.

The questionnaire is designed to simplify your task with instructions where necessary. Space is provided to freely express your views and concerns. Your thoroughness and attention will be greatly appreciated.

The results will be compiled and presented in a thesis available at the University of Victoria in 1983. This can be reviewed at request. If you should have any concerns about your participation in this study, please describe these on the response forms. This may be an opportunity to meditate on the problems and progress related to recreation in your regional district, and to express them fully in a meaningful way.

Again, thank you for your time and interest!

Sincerely

Jean Hytka
Graduate Student

Enc.

APPENDIX B

RECREATION/CULTURAL SERVICES AND REGIONAL PARK EXPENDITURES AS
A PROPORTION OF TOTAL EXPENDITURES BY REGIONAL DISTRICT (1978,1982)

| REGIONAL DISTRICT | TOTAL REGIONAL EXPENDITURE \$ (x10 ³) | | REC/CULT \$ (x10 ³) | | EXPENDITURES (% TOTAL) | | REGIONAL PARK \$ (x10 ³) | | EXPENDITURES (% TOTAL) | |
|-----------------------|---|--------|---------------------------------|-------|------------------------|------|--------------------------------------|-------|------------------------|------|
| | 1978 | 1982 | 1978 | 1982 | 1978 | 1982 | 1978 | 1982 | 1978 | 1982 |
| | Alberni Clayuquot | 1,000 | 1,600 | 2 | 8 | 0.2 | 0.5 | 0 | .9 | 0 |
| Capital+ | 12,850 | 30,849 | 2,119 | 3,936 | 16.5 | 12.7 | 513 | 1,062 | 4.0 | 3.4 |
| Central Coast | 71 | 97 | 2 | 7 | 2.8 | 7.2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Central Kootenay | 2,584 | 4,482 | 759 | 1,462 | 29.4 | 32.6 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0.1 |
| Central Okanagan | 2,723 | 8,557 | 414 | 838 | 15.2 | 9.8 | 279 | 467 | 10.2 | 5.5 |
| Columbia Shuswap | 2,086 | 3,583 | 201 | 273 | 9.6 | 7.6 | .2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Comox Strathcona+ | 3,482 | 7,826 | 703 | 1,738 | 20.2 | 22.2 | 4 | 18 | 0.1 | 0.2 |
| Cowichan Valley | 3,910 | 8,221 | 863 | 2,490 | 22.1 | 30.3 | 185 | 28 | 4.7 | 0.3 |
| Dewdney-Alouette | 1,006 | 5,252 | 1 | 7 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 26 | 58 | 2.6 | 1.1 |
| East Kootenay | 2,956 | 7,870 | 118 | 124 | 0.4 | 1.6 | 42 | 47 | 1.4 | 0.6 |
| Fraser Ft. George | 3,918 | 8,536 | 162 | 259 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 32 | 109 | 8.2 | 1.3 |
| Greater Vancouver+ | 36,362 | 45,273 | 536 | 1,291 | 1.5 | 2.9 | 2,360 | 2,742 | 6.5 | 6.1 |
| Mt. Waddington | 917 | 1,770 | 488 | 654 | 53.3 | 37.0 | 26 | 90 | 2.9 | 5.1 |
| North Okanagan | 3,549 | 8,355 | 1,634 | 2,585 | 46.1 | 30.9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Okanagan Similkameer. | 2,901 | 5,203 | 591 | 533 | 10.4 | 10.2 | 36 | 44++ | 1.2 | 0.9 |
| Peace River-Liard | 3,519 | 11,442 | 302 | 2,228 | 16.8 | 19.5 | 51 | 61 | 1.5 | 0.5 |
| Powell River | N/A | 1,671 | N/A | 55 | N/A | 3.3 | N/A | 37 | N/A | 2.2 |
| Sunshine Coast+ | 793 | 1,782 | 171 | 327 | 21.6 | 18.4 | N/A | 11 | N/A | 0.6 |
| Thompson Nicola | N/A | 11,419 | N/A | 1,561 | N/A | 13.7 | N/A | .1 | N/A | 0 |
| Average | | | | | 15.9 | 13.4 | | | 2.9 | 1.6 |

+ The recreation function and the park function are not adopted in some regional districts by all member areas. GVRD includes all member areas and part of Central Fraser Valley municipalities and Dewdney-Alouette for the parks function. Some regional districts have a 'partial' function (benefiting areas only) so per capita cost would be higher than indicated.

++ Partial representation of Oliver and one electoral area.

APPENDIX C

TOTAL COSTS FOR ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT FOR REGIONAL PARK
AREA BY REGIONAL DISTRICT (1965 to 1982)

| Reg. Dist. | Date of Reg. Park Function | # Parks | Total Area (ha.) | Regional District Acquisition (\$x10 ³) | Cost of Development (\$x10 ³) | Total (\$x10 ³) |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|---------|------------------------|--|---|--------------------------------|
| Alb-Clay | 1970 | 1 | 516 | 0 | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| Capital | 1966 | 15 | 2 570 | 2 247.5 | 693.2 | 2,940.7 |
| Central Coast | 1976 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| C. Kootenay | 1966 | 2 | 30 | 43.9 | 0 | 43.9 |
| Central Ok. | 1974 | 8 | 167 | 1 214.0 | 212.5 | 1,426.5 |
| Col-Shuswap | 1975 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Com-Strath. | 1971 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Cow. Valley | 1972 | 2 | 16 | 176.4 | 32.7 | 209.1 |
| Dewdney Al. | 1976 | 1 | 10 | 33.7 | 67.5 | 101.2 |
| E. Kootenay | 1967 | 2 | 184 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fraser Ft. George | 1969 | 7 | 269 | 104.9 | 43.4 | 148.3 |
| GVRD | 1967 | 14 | 3 307 | 19 372.3 | 1 790.3 | 21,162.6 |
| Mt. Waddington | 1966 | 2 | 393 | 0 | 200 | 200.0 |
| N. Okanagan | 1966 | 2 | 8 | 15.9 | 37.3 | 53.2 |
| Okan-Similkameen | 1974 | 7 | 131 | 28.0 | 0.7 | 28.7 |
| Peace R. | 1976 | 1 | 41 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Powell R. | 1970 | 5 | 268 | 1.0 | 0 | 1.0 |
| Sunshine C. | 1975 | 0 (2*) | 170 | 70.0 | 10.0 | 80.0 |
| Thompson-Nic. | 1980 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Total | | 70 | 8,080 | 23,307.6 | 3,088.6 | 26,396.2 |

* Not officially registered as regional parks with Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division.

** Based on both regional planner reports and provincial Reg. and Com. Park Program records; where discrepancy existed, the planner's estimate was chosen based on the assumption that information available at the region was more likely to be accurate.

APPENDIX D

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE COSTS AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL
(1981 and 1982)

| Regional District | | Total Expend. (x 10 ³) (\$) | Operating Costs* (% of Total) | Capital Fund, Dev. & Acquis. (% of Total) | Other** (% of Total) | Debt Charges (% of Total) |
|----------------------|------|---|--|--|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Capital | 1981 | 888 | 55.9 | 10.8 | 5.7 | 26.0 |
| | 1982 | 1 062 | 62.3 | 1.4 | 4.5 | 30.6 |
| Central Okanagan | 1981 | 420 | 25.9 | 18.8 | 8.1 | 47.1 |
| | 1982 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Comox Strathcona | 1981 | 10 | 64.6 | - | 35.4 | - |
| | 1982 | 18 | - | - | - | - |
| Cowichan | 1981 | 24 | 18.2 | 72.8 | 8.9 | - |
| | 1982 | 28 | 25.8 | 46.4 | 8.5 | 19.2 |
| Dewdney-Alouette | 1981 | 51 | 81.9 | 18.1+ | - | - |
| | 1982 | 57 | 86.1 | 29.6 | - | - |
| East Kootenay | 1981 | 44 | 83.8 | 4.4 | 9.0 | - |
| | 1982 | 47 | 86.0 | - | 14.0 | - |
| Fraser Ft. George | 1981 | 92 | 51.1 | 33.6 | 13.6 | - |
| | 1982 | 109 | 44.7 | 15.4 | 39.3 | - |
| Greater Vancouver | 1981 | 2 762 | 22.4 | 49.0 | 11.5 | 19.0 |
| | 1982 | 2 742 | 30.7 | 34.2 | 18.0 | 21.1 |
| Mount Waddington | 1981 | 121 | 53.4 | 46.6 | - | - |
| | 1982 | n.a. | - | - | - | - |
| North Okanagan | 1981 | 5 | 3.7 | 96.3 | - | - |
| | 1982 | n.a. | - | - | - | - |
| Okanagan-Similkameen | 1981 | n.a. | - | - | - | - |
| | 1982 | 44 | 96.8** | - | - | - |
| Peace River-Liard | 1981 | 45 | 72.6** | 2.3 | - | - |
| | 1982 | 61 | 64.0 | 20.6 | - | - |
| Powell River | 1981 | 31 | 95.0 | - | - | - |
| | 1982 | 37. | 97.3 | - | - | - |

1- obtained from annual district financial statements, Municipal Affairs

*- includes research (planning), promotion (advertising, nature interpretation, and administration

**- includes salaries, employee benefits, equipment, repairs, maintenance (recreation services, assumed operating cost)

+ - includes some unspecified maintenance costs

n.a. - not available

(-) - no expenditure

APPENDIX E

REGIONAL PARK LAND ACQUIRED BY VARIOUS METHODS BY REGIONAL DISTRICT

| Regional District | # Parks 1982 | Total Area* (ha.) | Parkland By Acquisition Method (ha.) | | | | | | | Parks Post-1982 Area | | Total Parks+++ Area | |
|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|----------------------|-------|---------------------|--------|
| | | | Purchase | U. R. E. P. & other Crown Grants | Lease | Munic. Park | Prov. Park | Sub-Div. | Dona-tion | (#) | (ha.) | (#) | (ha.) |
| Alberni-Clayoquot | 1 | 516 | | | 516 | | | | | 1 | 16 | 2 | 532 |
| Capital | 15 | 2 570 | 1 283 | 585 | 153 | 403 | 20 | | 121 | 1 | 117 | 16 | 2,703 |
| Central Coast | 0 | | | | | | | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Central Kootenay | 2 | 30 | 9 | | | | 21 | | | 2 | 2 | 4 | 32 |
| Central Okanagan | 8 | 167 | 137 | 17 | | | | 13 | | N/A | N/A | 8(7) | N/A |
| Columbia-Shuswap | 0 | | | | | | | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Comox-Strathcona | 0 | | | | | | | | | 3 | 162 | 3 | 162 |
| Cowichan Valley | 2 | 16 | 6 | | | | | | | 3 | 29 | 5 | 45 |
| Dewdney Alouette | 1 | 10 | 10 | | | | | | | 1 | 16 | 2 | 26 |
| East Kootenay | 2 | 184 | 0 | 184 | | | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 186 |
| Fraser Ft. George | 7 | 269 | 74 | 170 | 25 | | | | | 2(-1) | 27 | 8 | 296 |
| Greater Vancouver*** | 14 | 3 307 | 2 715 | 110 | 150** | 182 | | 150+ | | 1 | 4667 | 15 | 7,974 |
| Mount Waddington | 3 | 393 | | 3 | 390 | | | | | 4 | 141 | 7 | 534 |
| North Okanagan | 2 | 8 | 8 | | | | | | | 0 | 0 | 2 | 8 |
| Okanagan-Similkameen | 7 | 131 | 1 | 124 | | | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 9 | 8 | 140 |
| Peace River-Liard | 1 | 41 | | | | | 41 | | | 0 | 0 | 1 | 41 |
| Powell River | 5 | 268 | 12 | | | | 256 | | | 2(-1) | 34 | 6 | 302 |
| Sunshine Coast++ | 0(2) | 170 | 8 | 108 | | | | 54+ | | 1 | 16 | 1(2) | 186 |
| Thompson-Nicola | 0 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 71 | 1 | 0 |
| TOTAL (% of total) | 70(+2) | 8 080 | 4 278 (53) | 1 301 (16) | 1 234 (15) | 585 (7) | 339 (4) | 218 (3) | 125 (2) | 22 | 5309 | 92(+2) | 13,167 |

* obtained from provincial records

** Right-of-way 21 year agreement

*** includes Central Fraser Valley Regional District municipalities

+ Regional District owned land

++() not registered officially as regional parks

N/A not available

+++ actual area of new GVRD park is 4685 ha. but additions and deletions from other parks in the system reduce this figure to 4667; other total area figures may differ from sum of columns 2 and 11 because of additions and deletions to existing parks since 1982.

APPENDIX F

REGIONAL AND PROVINCIAL ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT COSTS
OF REGIONAL PARKS (1965 TO 1982)

| DISTRICT | PROVINCIAL COSTS* | | | REGIONAL COSTS* | | | TOTAL COSTS | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| | Acquis. (x10 ³) | Dev. (x10 ³) | Total (x10 ³) | Acquis. (x10 ³) | Dev. (x10 ³) | Total (x10 ³) | Acquis. (x10 ³) | Dev. (x10 ³) | Total (x10 ³) |
| Alberni-Clayoquot | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0 | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| Capital | 1,123.8 | 346.6 | 1,470.4 | 2,247.5 | 693.2 | 2,940.7 | 3,371.3 | 1,039.8 | 4,411.1 |
| Central Kootenay | 21.9 | 0 | 21.9 | 43.9 | 0 | 43.9 | 65.8 | 0 | 65.8 |
| Central Okanagan | 607.0 | 0 | 607.0 | 1,214.0 | 212.5 | 1,426.5 | 1,821.0 | 212.5 | 2,033.5 |
| Cowichan Valley | 88.2 | 16.3+ | 104.5 | 176.4 | 32.7+ | 209.1 | 264.6 | 49.0 | 313.6 |
| Dewdney-Alouette | 16.9+ | 33.8+ | 50.7 | 33.7+ | 67.5+ | 101.2 | 50.6 | 101.4 | 151.9 |
| East Kootenay | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fraser Ft. George | 52.4 | 21.7+ | 74.1 | 104.9 | 43.4+ | 148.3 | 157.3 | 65.0 | 222.4 |
| Greater Vancouver | 9,686.3+ | 895.1+ | 10,581.4 | 19,372.3 | 1,790.3 | 21,162.6 | 29,059.0 | 2,685.4 | 31,744.0 |
| Mount Waddington | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 200.0 | 200.0 | 0 | 200.0 | 200.0 |
| North Okanagan | 8.0 | 18.7+ | 26.7 | 15.9 | 37.3+ | 53.2 | 23.9 | 56.0 | 79.9 |
| Okanagan Similkameen | 14.0+ | 0.3+ | 14.3 | 28.0+ | 0.7+ | 28.7 | 42.0 | 1.0 | 43.0 |
| Peace R.-Liard | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Powell River | 0.5 | 0 | 0.5 | 1.0 | 0 | 1.0 | 1.5 | 0 | 1.5 |
| Sunshine Coast | 0 | 0 | 0 | 70.0+ | 10.0+ | 80.0 | 70.0 | 10.0 | 80.0 |
| Total | 11,682.2 | 1,332.5 | 13,014.7 | 23,307.6 | 3,088.6 | 26,396.2 | 34,989.8 | 4,421.1 | 39,410.9 |

*Reported in provincial files based on grant applications and approvals except where regional planner reports differ (+)

APPENDIX G

PERCEIVED NEED FOR PARKLANDS BY TYPE

| PARK TYPE | REGIONAL DIRECTORS # (%) | | | REGIONAL PLANNERS # (%) | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------|---------|----------------------------|---------|---------|
| | Park(+) | Park(-) | Total | Park(+) | Park(-) | Total |
| Regional | 4(8) | 1(5) | 5(8) | 3(23) | 0 | 3(16) |
| a) Provincial | 13(27) | 4(21) | 17(25) | 0 | 1(17) | 1 (5) |
| b) Local | 7(15) | 4(21) | 11(16) | 2(15) | 1(17) | 3(16) |
| c) Provincial and Local | 1 (2) | 1 (5) | 2 (3) | 0 | 1(16) | 1 (5) |
| Cumulative (a+b+c) | 21(44) | 9(47) | 30(45) | 2(15) | 3(50) | 5(26) |
| d) Reg. and Prov. | 6(13) | 1(5) | 7(10) | 1 (8) | 0 | 1 (5) |
| e) Reg. and Local | 5(10) | 1(5) | 6 (9) | 2(15) | 3(50) | 5(26) |
| f) Reg. and Prov. and Local | 4(18) | 0 | 4 (6) | 3(23) | 0 | 3(16) |
| Cumulative (d+e+f) | 15(31) | 2(11) | 17(25) | 6(46) | 3(50) | 9(47) |
| No Need | 5(10) | 6(31) | 11(16) | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| No Response | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2(15) | 0 | 2(11) |
| Don't Know | 1 | 1 | 2 (3) | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Invalid | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Respondents | 48(100) | 19(100) | 67(100) | 13(100) | 6(100) | 19(100) |

APPENDIX H

SATISFACTION IN REGARD TO STATUS OF REGIONAL PARK DEVELOPMENT

| Is the present status of Regional Parks satisfactory in your Regional District? | Directors #(%) | | | Planners #(%) | | |
|---|-------------------|---------|--------|------------------|---------|-------|
| | Park(+) | Park(-) | Total | Park(+) | Park(-) | Total |
| Yes | 24(50) | 6(32) | 30(45) | 4(31) | 4(67) | 8(42) |
| No | 22(46) | 8(42) | 30(45) | 7(54) | 2(33) | 9(47) |
| Don't Know | 1 (2) | 4(21) | 5 (7) | 2(15) | 0 | 2(11) |
| No Response | 1 (2) | 1 (5) | 2 (3) | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 48 | 19 | 67 | 13 | 6 | 19 |

OBJECTIVES TO ACHIEVE SATISFACTION

| No. of Responses | Directors | Planners |
|------------------|--|----------|
| | <u>with function:</u> | |
| 4 | - require more funding for development, maintenance and operations; high costs of acquisition for preferred areas | |
| 6 | - develop specific park types (cave parks, beaches, etc.) | |
| 3 | - increase coordination with municipalities, developers and private sector | |
| 3 | - improve operation/maintenance policies (fire control, policing, etc.) and reduce operation costs | |
| 2 | - achieve better distribution of parks | |
| 2 | - acquire additional parks, develop existing ones | |
| 2 | - no response | |
| 22 | | |
| | <u>without function:</u> | |
| 4 | - assume regional park function | |
| 1 | - gain increased budget or revert to provincial responsibility | |
| 3 | - no response | |
| 8 | | |
| | <u>Planners</u> | |
| | <u>with function:</u> | |
| 4 | - increase funding - funds insufficient from tax levies and provincial government; planners time used to obtain finances | |
| 2 | - increase acquisition and activity in park planning | |
| 1 | - prepare regional park plan to improve planning | |
| 7 | | |
| | <u>without function:</u> | |
| 2 | - adopt park function | |
| 2 | | |

APPENDIX I

ADEQUACY OF PROVINCIAL FUNDING AND PREFERRED FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

| Is the Provincial 1/3 Cost-Sharing Plan for Regional Parks Adequate? | Directors | | | Planners | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | Park(+) #(%) | Park(-) #(%) | Total #(%) | Park(+) #(%) | Park(-) #(%) | Total #(%) |
| Yes | 18(38) | 4(21) | 22(33) | 6(46) | 1(16) | 7(37) |
| No | 19(40) | 9(47) | 28(42) | 6(46) | 1(16) | 7(37) |
| Don't know | 9(19) | 6(32) | 15(22) | 1(8) | 4(46) | 5(26) |
| No Response | 2(4) | 0 | 2(3) | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 48(101) | 19(100) | 67(100) | 13(100) | 6(99) | 19(99) |

Preferred Financial
Arrangements*:

| | | | | | | |
|--|----|----|----|---|---|---|
| -Increase Provincial Funding | 13 | 7 | 20 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| -Other (see text) | 7 | 2 | 9 | 4 | 1 | 5 |
| -Present Funding Inadequate but no Suggestions | 3 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Total | 23 | 11 | 34 | 7 | 2 | 9 |

*those respondents stating inadequate provincial cost-sharing; multiple responses recorded

APPENDIX J

PREFERRED FINANCING: RESPONSE TO OPEN QUESTION

| Funding Method | Regional Directors | | | Regional Planners | | |
|--|--------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | Park(+) | Park(-) | Total | Park(+) | Park(-) | Total |
| | #(%) | #(%) | #(%) | #(%) | #(%) | #(%) |
| Provincial grants - >1/3 prov. assistance | 9(19) | 5(26) | 14(21) | 3(23) | 1(17) | 4(21) |
| Joint Federal, Provincial. Regional Taxation, Local Initiative | 5(10) | 1(5) | 6(9) | 3(23) | 2(33) | 5(26) |
| Regional Taxation* | 17(35) | 4(21) | 21(31) | 1(8) | 1(17) | 2(11) |
| Existing Methods** | 2(4) | 0 | 2(3) | 2(15) | | 2(11) |
| Other*** | 8(17) | 3(16) | 11(16) | 1(8) | 1(17) | 2(11) |
| Don't Know | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1(8) | 0 | 0 |
| Invalid | 3(6) | 2(11) | 5(8) | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| No Response | <u>4(8)</u> | <u>4(21)</u> | <u>8(12)</u> | <u>2(15)</u> | <u>1(17)</u> | <u>3(16)</u> |
| Total | 48(99) | 19(100) | 67(99) | 13(100) | 6(101) | 19(101) |

* includes suggestions such as eventually self-supporting; on a per-capita basis; plus cost-development charges; tax benefiting area based on post user origin; plus user fees and trusts.

** plus more use of volunteers

*** includes: integrate into provincial park systems, specified area financing, user fees, cost shared by industry of development cost changes, minimum government financing, self-help funding by community groups, local government and local tourist business.

APPENDIX K

PROPERTIES ACQUIRED UNDER THE GREENBELT PROGRAM BY PURPOSE

| Purpose | Properties | Area (ha) | % of Total |
|------------------------------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| Fish and Wildlife | | | |
| -Habitat Conservation | 6 | 3,530.28 | 36.4 |
| -Parks - Provincial | 5 | 3,135.68 | 32.3 |
| - Municipal | 6 | 38.31 | 0.4 |
| - Regional | 1 | 3.32 | |
| -Unspecified | 25 | 1,447.89 | 14.9 |
| -Agriculture | 21 | 658.37 | 6.7 |
| -River Park Dyking | 23 | 248.71 | 2.6 |
| -Natural State | 11 | 188.09 | 1.9 |
| -Tourists | 3 | 91.38 | 0.9 |
| -Unspecified | 8 | 45.30 | 0.5 |
| Municipal and Regional District | 8 | 45.3 | 0.5 |
| -Other | 9 | 319.10 | 3.3 |
| Total | 118 | 9,806.43 | 99.9 |

Source: Executive Committee submission, Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing, June 24, 1983

APPENDIX L

Chi² Test Results

Conditions:- must be at least two independent samples and at least two mutually exclusive categories of observations,
 - no category with expected frequency less than 1, and no more than one category in five with expected frequencies less than 5.

$$\text{Test Statistic } \chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^k \sum_{j=1}^l (O_{ij} - E_{ij})^2 / E_{ij}$$

Where:

- k = the total number of categories
- l = the total number of samples
- O_{ij} = the observed frequency, category i, sample j
- E_{ij} = the expected frequency, category i, sample j

The following test statistics were calculated and compared to the critical values of CHI² at = 0.05 level of significance.

(i) Is the definition and function of regional parks clearly distinct from provincial and municipal parks?

| | DIRECTORS | | Total |
|----------------------|-----------|----------|-------|
| | Park(+) | Park(-) | |
| Not Clear | 8 (12.9) | 10 (5.3) | 18 |
| Moderately clear | 26 (16.5) | 7 (9.4) | 33 |
| Very Clear | 11 (14.3) | 1 (3.4) | 12 |
| No Response/ Invalid | 3 (2.9) | 1 (1.13) | 4 |
| Total | 48 | 19 | 67 |

The significance of the difference between responses of the two groups of directors is not possible to calculate due to low expected frequencies.

(ii) What factors would be sufficient cause to adopt the regional park function?

| | Directors | | Total |
|----------------------|-----------|----------|-------|
| | Park(+) | Park(-) | |
| Public Need | 24 (22.2) | 7 (8.8) | 31 |
| Other | 14 (15.0) | 7 (6.0) | 21 |
| No Response/ Invalid | 10 (10.8) | 5 (4.25) | 15 |
| Total | 48 | 19 | 67 |

$$\chi^2 = 1.8900$$

$$\chi^2_{\alpha} = 0.05 \text{ (d.f.=2)} = 5.9915$$

Both groups of directors do not differ significantly at the significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ in their perception of public need and other factors as causes to adopt the regional park function.

(iii) Comparison of importance of factors in adopting regional parks and the actual reasons for which the function was adopted to directors in the Park(+) group.

| | Directors | | Total |
|--|-------------------|----------------|-------|
| | Important Factors | Actual Reasons | |
| Financial Benefits | 1 (8.5) | 16 (8.5) | 17 |
| Public Need | 24 (16) | 8 (16) | 32 |
| Other | 13 (14.5) | 16 (14.5) | 29 |
| No Response/ Don't Know/ Invalid | 10 (9) | 8 (9) | 18 |
| Total | 48 | 48 | 96 |

$$\chi^2 = 21.7678$$

$$\chi^2_{\alpha} = 0.05 \text{ (d.f.=3)} = 7.8147$$

The difference in responses of this group are significant.

(iv) Actual Reasons for Adopting the Park Function as Perceived by Directors and Planners

| | Actual Reasons | | Total |
|--|----------------|----------|-------|
| | Directors | Planners | |
| Financial Benefits | 16 (14.1) | 4 (5.9) | 20 |
| Public Need | 8 (9.2) | 5 (3.8) | 13 |
| Other | 16 (17.6) | 9 (7.4) | 25 |
| No Response/ Don't Know/ Invalid | 8 (7.8) | 2 (3.2) | 11 |
| Total | 48 | 20* | 68 |

* five planners gave multiple responses

The expected values are too small to calculate the significance of the difference in this case.

(v) Are the residents willing to pay for regional park acquisition and development?

| | Directors | | Total |
|--|-----------|-----------|-------|
| | Park(+) | Park(-) | |
| Yes | 31 (25.8) | 5 (10.2) | 36 |
| No | 11 (15.8) | 11 (6.2) | 22 |
| Don't Know/ No Response/ Invalid | 6 (6.5) | 3 (2.6) | 9 |
| Total | 48 | 19 | 67 |

$$\chi^2 = 9.072$$

$$\chi^2_{\alpha=0.05}(\text{d.f.}=2) = 5.9915$$

The difference in perceptions of the two groups of directors is significant at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$.

(vi) Is the population sufficient in your regional district to support the cost of the regional park function?

| | Directors | | Total |
|--|-----------|-----------|-------|
| | Park(+) | Park(-) | |
| Yes | 31 (24.4) | 3 (9.6) | 34 |
| No | 10 (15.8) | 12 (6.2) | 22 |
| Don't Know/ No Response/ Invalid | 7 (7.9) | 4 (3.1) | 11 |
| Total | 48 | 19 | 67 |

$$\chi^2 = 14.05$$

$$\chi^2_{\alpha=0.05}(\text{d.f.}=2) = 5.9915$$

The difference between perceptions about sufficient population is significant between the two groups of directors.

(vii) Comparison of Perceptions of Population between Planners and Directors

| | Population | | Total |
|----------------------------|------------|-----------|-------|
| | Directors | Planners | |
| Yes | 34 (37.4) | 14 (10.6) | 48 |
| No | 22 (17.9) | 1 (5.1) | 23 |
| Don't Know/ No Response | 11 (11.7) | 4 (3.3) | 15 |
| Total | 67 | 19 | 86 |

$$\chi^2 = 5.8253$$

$$\chi^2_{\alpha=0.05}(\text{d.f.}=2) = 5.9915$$

The difference between the perceptions of planners and directors regarding the tax support of the population in their regions is not significant.

(viii) Do you perceive a need for more parks of any sort in your regional district?

| | Directors | | Total |
|---|-----------|-----------|-------|
| | Park(+) | Park(-) | |
| provincial and/or local or no parks | 26 (29.4) | 15 (11.6) | 41 |
| regional, regional and others | 19 (15.8) | 3 (6.2) | 22 |
| no response/ don't know/ invalid | 3 (2.9) | 1 (1.1) | 4 |
| Total | 48 | 19 | 67 |

$$\chi^2 = 3.6895$$

$$\chi^2_{0.05}(\text{d.f.}=2) = 5.9915$$

The two groups of directors do not differ significantly in their perceptions of need for regional parks.

(ix) Perception of Need for Prks of Directors Compared to Planners

| | Directors | Planners | Total |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-------|
| Prov and/or local or no parks | 41 (35.8) | 5 (10.2) | 46 |
| Regional/Regional and Other | 22 (26.5) | 12 (7.5) | 34 |
| No Response/Don't Know/Invalid | 4 (4.7) | 2 (1.3) | 6 |
| Total | 67 | 19 | 86 |

$$\chi^2 = 7.352$$

$$\chi^2_{\alpha=0.05}(\text{d.f.}=2) = 5.992$$

The difference between the directors and planners perception of need for parks is significant.

(x) How would you rank regional parks among regional concerns?

| | Directors | | Total |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|-------|
| | Park(+) | Park(-) | |
| Not important | 5 (8.6) | 7 (3.4) | 12 |
| Moderately | 35 (32.2) | 10 (12.8) | 45 |
| Very | 8 (7.2) | 2 (2.8) | 10 |
| Total | 48 | 19 | 67 |

The test of significance cannot be calculated due to low expected values.

(xi) Is the present status of regional parks satisfactory in your regional district?

| | Directors | | Total |
|------------------------|-----------|----------|-------|
| | Park(+) | Park(-) | |
| Yes | 24 (21.5) | 6 (8.5) | 30 |
| No | 22 (21.5) | 8 (8.5) | 30 |
| Don't Know/No Response | 2 (5.0) | 5 (2.0) | 7 |
| Total | 48 | 19 | 67 |

$$\chi^2 = 7.367$$

$$\chi^2_{\alpha=0.05}(\text{d.f.}=2) = 5.992$$

The difference in satisfaction expressed in this study is significantly different between the two groups of directors.

(xii) Planners versus Directors expression of satisfaction with status of regional park development.

| | Satisfaction | | Total |
|--|--------------|----------|-------|
| | Directors | Planners | |
| Yes | 30 (29.6) | 8 (8.4) | 38 |
| No | 30 (30.4) | 9 (8.6) | 39 |
| Don't Know/ No response/ Invalid | 7 (7.0) | 2 (2.0) | 9 |
| Total | 67 | 19 | 86 |

$$\chi^2 = 0.0483$$

$$\chi^2_{\alpha} = 0.05 \text{ (d.f.=2)} = 5.9915$$

Directors and planners did not differ significantly in their expression of satisfaction with regional parks development.

(xiii) Is the provincial one-third cost-sharing plan for regional parks adequate?

| | Directors | | Total |
|----------------------------|-----------|---------|-------|
| | Park(+) | Park(-) | |
| Yes | 18 (15.8) | 4 (6.2) | 22 |
| No | 19 (20.1) | 9 (7.9) | 28 |
| Don't Know/ No Response | 11 (10.8) | 6 (4.3) | 15 |
| Total | 48 | 19 | 67 |

$$\chi^2 = 2.516$$

$$\chi^2_{\alpha} = 0.05 \text{ (d.f.=2)} = 5.992$$

The difference in perception between groups of directors is not significant.

(xiv) Difference between the directors perception of adequacy of provincial funding and their preference for financing.

| | Directors | | Total |
|--|-----------|-----------|-------|
| | Adequacy | Preferred | |
| Increase prov. financing | 28 (21) | 14 (21) | 42 |
| Other | 22 (26) | 30 (26) | 52 |
| Don't Know/ No Response/ Invalid | 17 (15) | 13 (15) | 30 |
| Total | 67 | 67 | 134 |

$$\chi^2 = 6.4302$$

$$\chi^2_{\alpha} = 0.05 \text{ (d.f.=2)} = 5.9915$$

The difference stated between the directors' assessment of adequacy and their preferred financial arrangements is significant.

(xv) Comparison of Perceptions of Adequacy of Funding Between Groups of Directors

| | Directors | | Total |
|-------------|-----------|----------|-------|
| | Park(+) | Park(-) | |
| Yes | 18 (15.8) | 4 (6.2) | 22 |
| No | 19 (20.1) | 9 (7.9) | 28 |
| Don't Know | 11 (12.2) | 6 (4.8) | 17 |
| No Response | | | |
| Total | 48 | 19 | 67 |

$$X^2 = \underline{1.6301} \quad X^2_{\alpha=0.05} (d.f.=2) = \underline{5.9915}$$

There is no significant difference at $\alpha = 0.05$ of perceptions of adequacy between the two groups of directors.

(xvi) Adequacy of Funding as Perceived by Directors and Planners

| | Adequacy | | Total |
|-------------|-----------|----------|-------|
| | Directors | Planners | |
| Yes | 22 (22.6) | 7 (6.4) | 29 |
| No | 28 (27.3) | 7 (7.7) | 35 |
| Don't Know/ | 17 (17.1) | 5 (4.9) | 22 |
| No Response | | | |
| Total | 67 | 19 | 86 |

$$X^2 = \underline{0.1569} \quad X^2_{\alpha=0.05} (d.f.=2) = \underline{5.9915}$$

The difference between the directors' and planners' perceptions of adequacy is not significantly different.

(xvii) Should the adoption of the regional parks function remain a voluntary responsibility?

| | Directors | | Total |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|-------|
| | Park(+) | Park(-) | |
| Yes | 22 (25.1) | 13 (9.9) | 35 |
| No | 16 (13.6) | 3 (5.4) | 19 |
| Don't Know/ | 10 (9.3) | 3 (3.7) | 13 |
| Invalid/ | | | |
| No Response | | | |
| Total | 48 | 19 | 67 |

$$X^2 = \underline{3.0328} \quad X^2_{\alpha=0.05} (d.f.=2) = \underline{5.9915}$$

Directors in the two groups do not differ significantly in their perceptions of the voluntary adoption of the regional park function at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$.

(xviii) Voluntary Adoption of the Regional Park Function as Seen by Planners and Directors

| | Voluntary Adoption | | Total |
|--|--------------------|-----------|-------|
| | Directors | Planners | |
| Yes | 35 (35.8) | 11 (10.2) | 46 |
| No | 19 (19.5) | 6 (5.5) | 25 |
| Don't Know/ Invalid/ No Response | 13 (11.7) | 2 (3.3) | 15 |
| Total | 67 | 19 | 86 |

$$x^2 = 0.795$$

$$x^2_{\alpha} = 0.05 (d.f.=2) = 5.9915$$

There is no significant difference between the perceptions of the directors and planners in regard to the voluntary adoption of regional parks at the significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$.

(xix) Should the province be doing more to assist in the Regional Park Program?

| | Provincial Assistance | | Total |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|-------|
| | Directors | | |
| | Park(+) | Park(-) | |
| Yes | 31 (27.2) | 7 (10.8) | 38 |
| No | 12 (10.0) | 2 (4.0) | 14 |
| Don't Know/ No Response | 5 (10.8) | 10 (4.3) | 15 |
| Total | 48 | 19 | 67 |

The significance of the difference in responses between directors could not be calculated using the Chi² test due to low expected values.

VITA

Surname: HNYTKA Given Names: Jean Rose

Place of Birth: Teulon, Manitoba

Date of Birth: 28 October, 1954

Educational Institutions Attended:

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------|
| University of Manitoba | 1972 to 1976 |
| University of Calgary | 1979 |
| University of Western Ontario | 1980 |
| University of Victoria | 1981 to 1987 |

Degree Awarded:

B.Sc. (Honors) 1976 University of Manitoba

Publications:

Ontario Ministry of Health, Thames Valley District Health Council. 1980. Needs Assessment for Speech Pathology Services in Oxford County, Ontario. (unpublished document).

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Author



JEAN ROSE HNYTKA

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