

Copies of this publication may be obtained at no charge on-line at <http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/clpp/> or from the following locations:

Charleston Lake Provincial Park
148 Woodvale Road
Lansdowne, ON K0E 1L0
Tel: (613) 659-2065

MNR Kemptville District Office
Concession Road
Kemptville, ON K0G 1J0
Tel: (613) 258-8204

Ontario Parks
South Eastern Zone
51 Heakes Lane
Kingston, ON K7M 9B1
Tel: (613) 545-4016

© 2003, Queen's Printer for Ontario

Printed in Ontario, Canada

51788

ISBN 0-7794-4953-3 (print)
ISBN 0-7794-4954-1 (electronic)

Comments or questions should be addressed to:

Ontario Parks, South Eastern Zone
51 Heakes Lane
Kingston, ON K7M 9B1
Tel: (613) 545-4021
Fax: (613) 545-4033
Email: susan.grigg@mnr.gov.on.ca

July 2003

Dear Sir/Madam:

The Ministry of Natural Resources, Ontario Parks is presently engaged in the management plan review process for Charleston Lake Provincial Park. As part of this planning process I am pleased to present the ***Charleston Lake Preliminary Park Management Plan***.

Ontario Parks invites you to participate in the management planning process for Charleston Lake Provincial Park by review and comment on the preliminary park management plan. Open houses will be held following the release of this plan, as part of the public consultation process. Open house dates and venues will be advertised separately. Comments on the document or planning process can be submitted to the Ontario Parks South Eastern Zone office address noted on the inside cover of this document.

The preliminary park management plan contains proposed policies and direction for the protection, development and management of Charleston Lake Provincial Park over the next 20 years. The plan also provides guidance for the preparation of plans for resource stewardship and for the implementation of park policies and the achievement of park objectives. This document offers preferred policy for natural environment class parks as defined by *Ontario Provincial Parks: Planning and Management Policies (1992)*.

For ease of review, this preliminary plan is worded in the style of an approved park management plan (such as, "Ontario Parks will..."). However, this document is a proposed plan and all aspects of it are subject to public review and comment.

The Ministry of Natural Resources is collecting comments and information regarding this management plan review process under the authority of the *Provincial Parks Act* to assist in making decisions and determining further public consultation needs. Comments and opinions will be kept on file for use during the planing period and may be included in study documentation, which may be available for public review.

Under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (1987)*, personal information will remain confidential unless prior consent is obtained. However, this information may be used by the Ministry of Natural Resources to seek public input on other resource management surveys and projects.

Your participation in the planning process for Charleston Lake Provincial Park is appreciated. All comments received will be considered during the preparation of the final park management plan.

Yours truly,



Adair Ireland-Smith
Managing Director
Ontario Parks

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION	1
2.0	SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ISSUES	3
2.1	Background Information	3
2.1.1	The Park and its Region	3
2.1.2	Commercial Activities	3
2.2	A Policy for Charleston Lake Provincial Park	4
2.2.1	Park Goal	4
2.2.2	Park Objectives	4
2.2.3	Zoning Policy	4
2.3	Issues and Alternatives	5
2.3.1	Potential Crown Land Additions (Leeder Block)	5
2.3.2	Park Boundary Delineation	6
2.3.3	Access to Blue Mountain Area	6
2.3.4	Recreational Activities	6
2.3.5	Trails	8
2.3.6	Campground Development	8
2.3.7	Management and Use of Park Islands	8
2.3.8	Management of Cultural Resources	8
2.3.9	Management of Natural Resources	9
2.3.10	Charleston Lake Watershed Health	9
2.3.11	UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve	9
2.3.12	Park Staff Activities	9
3.0	CLASSIFICATION	9
4.0	GOAL	10
5.0	OBJECTIVES	10
5.1	Protection	10
5.2	Heritage Appreciation	11
5.3	Recreation	11
5.4	Tourism	11
6.0	BOUNDARY AND LAND TENURE	12
6.1.1	Role of Neighbouring Lands	13
6.1.2	UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve Designation	14
6.1.3	Charleston Lake Management Plan	14
7.0	ZONING	15
7.1	Nature Reserve Zones	15
7.2	Natural Environment Zones	17
7.3	Historical Zones	19
7.4	Development Zones	19
7.5	Access Zones	23

8.0 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT POLICIES.....23

8.1 Waste Management.....23

8.2 Natural Resources23

 8.2.1 Land and Water24

 8.2.2 Vegetation24

 8.2.3 Fisheries26

 8.2.4 Wildlife27

 8.2.5 Species at Risk28

 8.2.6 Forest Fire Management28

8.3 Cultural Resources29

8.4 Recreational Resources.....30

8.5 Climate Change.....30

9.0 OPERATIONS POLICIES.....30

9.1 Heritage Education31

9.2 Research32

9.3 Partnerships33

9.4 Recreation Management.....33

 9.4.1 Trails34

 9.4.2 Mechanized Use (ATV, snowmobile, motorboats, aircraft, mountain biking)35

9.5 Tourism Services35

9.6 Marketing.....35

10.0 DEVELOPMENT POLICIES35

11.0 PLAN IMPLEMENTATION.....37

 11.1 Partnerships.....38

12.0 PLAN REVIEW AND AMENDMENT38

13.0 PUBLIC CONSULTATION.....39

14.0 KEY REFERENCES40

15.0 APPENDICES41

 15.1 Appendix 1. Background Information, Issues and Plan Alternatives: Highlights of Public Response.....41

 15.2 Appendix 2. Permitted Uses and Development43

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Regional Setting.....2

Figure 2. Park Boundary, Zoning and Development.....20

PREFACE

Consideration of the Ministry of Natural Resources' Statement of Environmental Values under the Environmental Bill of Rights

The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) prepared a Statement of Environmental Values (SEV) in accordance with the provisions of the *Environmental Bill of Rights* (EBR). It describes how the purposes of the EBR are to be considered whenever decisions are made which might significantly affect the environment. This document is available from MNR or on the Environmental Registry (www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/ebr/).

The primary purpose of the EBR is to “protect, conserve and, where reasonable, restore the integrity of the environment.” From the MNR’s perspective, that broad statement of purpose translates into four objectives in its SEV:

- To ensure the long-term health of ecosystems by protecting and conserving our valuable soils, aquatic resources, forest and wildlife resources, as well as their biological foundations;
- To ensure the continuing availability of natural resources for the long-term benefit of the people of Ontario;
- To protect natural heritage and biological features of provincial significance; and
- To protect human life, the resource base and physical property from the threats of forest fires, floods and erosion.

The Ministry’s SEV has been considered throughout the preparation of this preliminary park management plan. An approved park management plan for Charleston Lake Provincial Park will further the objectives of managing Ontario’s resources on an ecologically sustainable basis.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Charleston Lake Provincial Park is a 2353 ha natural environment class park. Planning and management policies for provincial parks state that natural environment class parks *incorporate outstanding recreational landscapes with representative natural and historical features to provide high quality recreational and educational experiences.*

The park is located in the Frontenac Axis area of southeastern Ontario, 15 km north of the St. Lawrence River. It is 60 km northeast of Kingston in the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, and is located centrally in the Ottawa-Montreal-Toronto triangle (Figure 1). The park is situated on Charleston Lake, and includes lands along the western and eastern shores of the lake, and 46 islands or part islands within the lake itself.

When the park was regulated in 1975, it comprised an area of 908.7 ha. A park master plan was approved in 1978 as the official policy for the conservation, development and management of the park. In 1997, the park area was substantially increased through the addition of 1425 ha, including Crown lands within the Blue Mountain area and several Crown islands within Charleston Lake. A minor boundary amendment regulated in 2001 resulted in a park boundary area of 2352.7 ha at the time of this management planning exercise.

Charleston Lake Provincial Park is one of two natural environment class provincial parks located within ecodistrict 6E-10, which is roughly the Frontenac Axis area. Other protected areas within this ecodistrict include St. Lawrence Islands National Park, parks of the St. Lawrence Parks Commission and Conservation Areas operated by local Conservation Authorities. The park is identified as a core area within the Thousand Islands - Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve, an

international designation that recognizes the ecology, land use, partnerships, and challenges facing this area.









The park includes diverse and significant natural, cultural and recreational resources. Located as it is on the Frontenac Axis, Charleston Lake Provincial Park has the rugged character of the Canadian Shield. Extremely steep, rocky slopes follow much of the park shoreline while inland the terrain is equally rugged with a system of abrupt ridges and valleys. Blue Mountain rises 100 m above Charleston Lake and offers spectacular panoramic views. Because of the great diversity of terrain and vegetation communities, the park is host to a large number of species.

The Background Information, Issues and Plan Alternatives document released in 2002 provided an overview of the features of the park, the lands regulated since 1978, the park planning policy outlined in the 1978 Master Plan, and a summary of the issues to be addressed through the plan review. For each issue, proposed policy or policy alternatives to ensure the long term protection, management and use of the park were identified.

This Preliminary Park Management Plan is the proposed management direction for Charleston Lake Provincial Park, including the regulated Blue Mountain area and lands proposed for regulation through this plan. This plan was developed following the policies and guidelines in the *Ontario Provincial Parks: Planning and Management Policies* (1992), and the *Ontario Provincial Park Management Planning Manual* (1994).

The policies in this plan will not abrogate or derogate from any Aboriginal or treaty right recognized or affirmed by the *Constitution Act*.

Charleston Lake

-  Charleston Lake Provincial Park
-  Operating Parks (2003)
-  Non-operating Parks (2003)
-  Canadian Thousand Islands-Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve
-  Counties
-  Major Highways
-  Railways
-  Settlements



This map is illustrative only. Do not rely on it as a precise indicator of routes, locations of features, nor as a guide to navigation.

© 2003, Queen's Printer for Ontario.

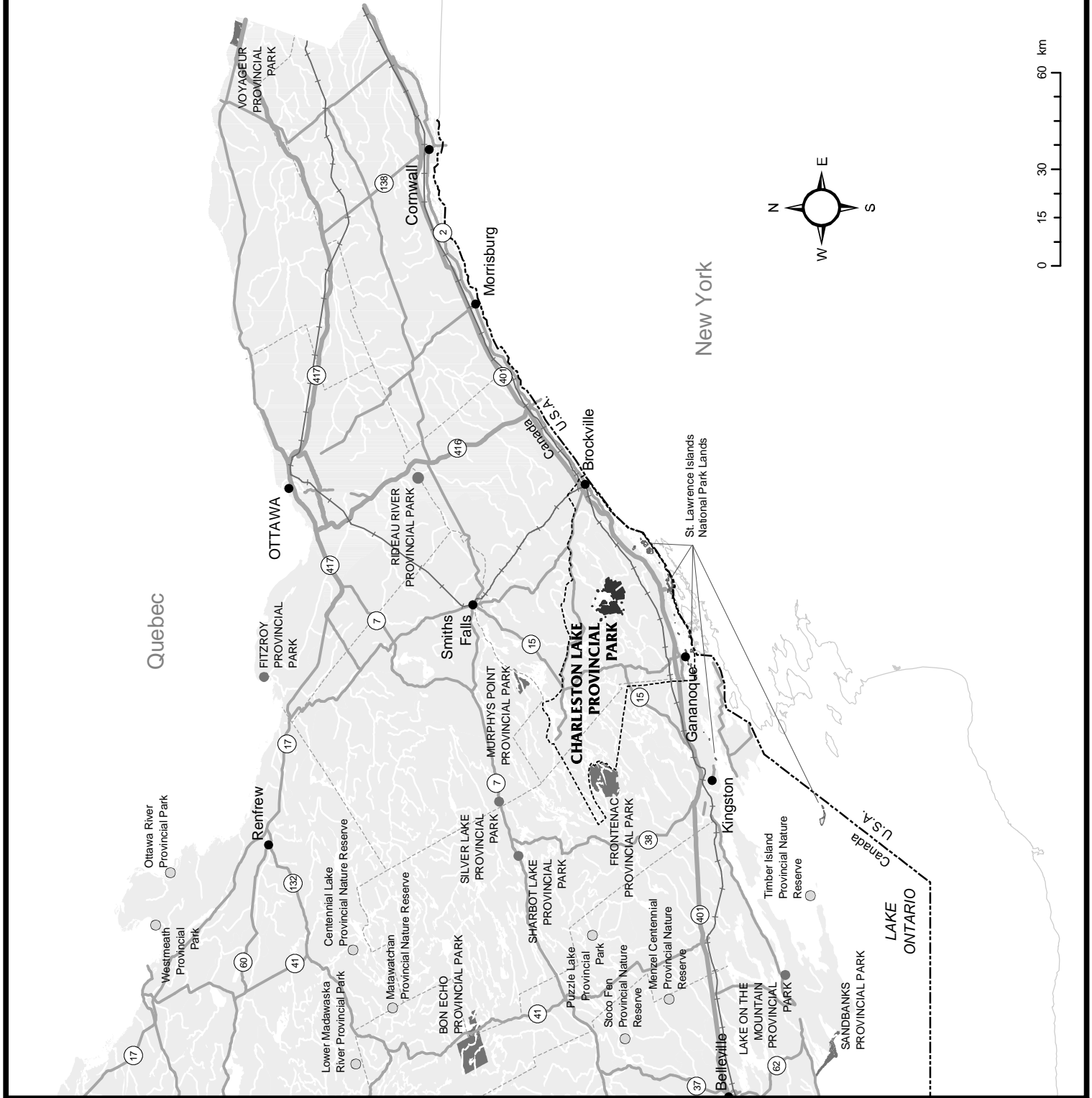
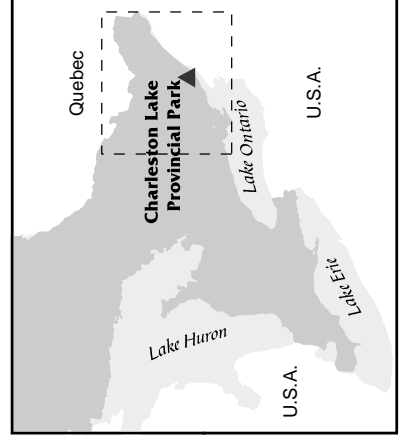


Figure 1: Regional Setting Map

2.0 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The background information, issues and plan alternatives document:

- proposed a classification, goal, objectives and zoning policy for Charleston Lake Provincial Park;
- summarized the most important planning and management issues that had been identified, and proposed either a single policy direction for each issue or provided two or more policy alternatives.

Relatively few responses were received for stage 2 of the plan review process. Responses were considered in determining proposed policy. This section of the plan identifies the issues that were most commented on during public review of the background information, issues and plan alternatives document, and summarizes how this plan will deal with these issues in a response to comments. Highlights of the public response to the proposed policy and policy alternatives are provided in the Appendix 1. *Background Information, Issues and Plan Alternatives: Summary of Public Response* (September 2002) provides more detail and is available from Ontario Parks. For more information on how this plan responds to each issue, please refer to the sections noted.

2.1 Background Information

Generally, few respondents had concerns with the background information sections of the document. While the document will not be revised, some concerns from respondents about the wording in the background information sections can be addressed here to avoid further confusion. These concerns are addressed below.

2.1.1 *The Park and its Region*

Comments It was suggested that the statement in Section 2.2 that includes "...while much of the area was settled in the 19th century..." is historically erroneous.

Response It should be noted that the "settlement" described under Section 2.2 should have been referred to as "European settlement", and was not intended to diminish the history of use of this area by Aboriginal peoples. The distinction between Aboriginal and post-European use was made in Section 5.6 (Cultural Resources) of the background information, issues and plan alternatives document.

2.1.2 *Commercial Activities*

Comments Two respondents felt that the wording for phase-out of commercial licences implied a date of death for the licensee. Clarification of the policy for use of boats for these activities within no motorboat zones was requested. It was noted that the policy for commercial trapping was not mentioned in this section.

Response Where included in the preliminary park management plan, the wording around phase-out of commercial activities will be changed to: *will be phased-out when either the licence is surrendered, the current licensee dies, or by December 31, 2009, whatever comes first* (Section 8.2.3).

Use of motorized boats by commercial bait fish harvesters may be permitted within the boat restriction zone on Runnings Bay during non-peak periods, with prior written permission from the park superintendent. Commercial fishing is a winter activity, so use of boats is not a concern.

The policy for commercial fur harvesting will be outlined in the park management plan. Charleston Lake Provincial Park is located outside of the planning area for Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use

Strategy (OLL LUS). For parks outside of the OLL LUS planning area, existing commercial fur harvest activities, except for trapping by Status Indians exercising treaty rights, are subject to the same phase-out as that for commercial fishing and bait harvesting noted above, with no new licences permitted. Commercial fur harvest within Charleston Lake Provincial Park has already been phased out (Section 8.2.4).

2.2 A Policy for Charleston Lake Provincial Park

2.2.1 Park Goal

Comments Several respondents objected to “helping to improve the financial self-reliance of the provincial parks system.” being part of the goal of the park.

Response This statement will be removed from the park goal. Fiscal responsibility is a business practice of Ontario Parks, and all operating parks have a role in achieving this goal. Alluding to financial self-reliance in the goal was an intent to recognize the real life situation that, where possible given the protection mandate, provincial parks contribute to financial self-reliance of the park system (Section 4.0).

2.2.2 Park Objectives

Comments Several respondents stated that protection should be the overriding objective for the park, and all other objectives should be secondary (heritage appreciation, recreation, tourism). Several respondents also stated that adopting new business practices should not be an objective.

Response In this plan, the park objectives will be worded to clearly outline the primary objective for the park, which is protection. Although the park may adopt new business practices as part of the operation of the park, this is not a park objective. As stated in the background information, issues and plan alternatives document, as a natural

environment class park Charleston Lake contributes to all four provincial park objectives (protection, heritage appreciation, recreation, tourism) (Section 5.0).

2.2.3 Zoning Policy

Comments Several comments were received related to the zoning policy for the park. Several respondents commented that the zoning for the park should be based on resource significance and reflect the protection goal, and all activities should be secondary to this objective. There were some comments that the Blue Mountain area of the park should be given the highest level of protection, or should be a wilderness zone. The ability of park staff to monitor and restrict use was also questioned (e.g. need for clearly marked boundaries, enforcement).

Response The statement “The types of zones within a park ensure that users get the most out of the park” should be qualified to identify that users get the most out of the park in terms of uses that are compatible with each specific zone, in keeping with the park goal and objectives. It should be clarified that the proposed zoning for the park outlined in this plan has been based on the six principles listed on pages 28 and 29 of the background information, issues and plan alternatives document. These principles clearly state that protection is a first priority. The background document stated that the Blue Mountain area is not of sufficient size or integrity to be considered a wilderness zone. As clarification, “sufficient size” for wilderness zones relates to area available for extensive back-country recreation. While the Blue Mountain Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) as a whole (public and private lands) is larger than the minimum size requirement for a wilderness zone (2000 ha), the area of ANSI included within the park is approximately 1300 ha. Also, although it is a scenic area, it does not

meet the standard of “wilderness” in terms of providing opportunities for extensive back-country recreation, nor does it have the integrity required for wilderness zoning. To allow for traditional uses to continue and protect the most sensitive features of this area, zoning of the Blue Mountain area of the park will be part nature reserve and the remainder natural environment. A proposed zoning plan was presented at the June 2002 Open Houses. This proposed zoning plan was further revised based on the proposed policy for access to Blue Mountain and to ensure the zone boundaries are easily distinguished on the ground. Zoning is more clearly defined in Section 7.0 of this plan (Figure 2). In terms of restriction of uses not compatible with the park, a boundary survey of the Blue Mountain area will assist staff in enforcement (Section 9.0).

2.3 Issues and Alternatives

Comments Two respondents found the introductory section confusing, specifically the wording that differentiated between proposed policy and policy alternatives.

Response In the case of proposed policy, Ontario Parks had determined a preferred policy and was seeking comments on this policy. The policy alternatives were intended as options, and respondents chose their preferred alternative and/or provided comments. If none of the alternatives were to their liking, some respondents made other policy suggestions. All alternatives listed in the document were consistent with provincial park policies and the proposed goal and objectives for the park. This plan will propose one preferred policy for each issue.

2.3.1 Potential Crown Land Additions (Leeder Block)

Comments Many comments were received related to this issue. Several respondents supported the inclusion of

the Leeder Block in the park, although some qualified that any lands added to the park should comply with existing policy (e.g. no hunting, no motorized use). Other responses included allowing all terrain vehicles (ATVs), snowmobiles and hunting in this area, in place of or in addition to allowing these activities in the Blue Mountain area of the park.

Response Based on public response to this issue and consideration of the values of this area, it was decided that this plan recommend the addition of 100 ha of Crown land within the Leeder Block to the park (Section 6.0). This addition includes the significant zone identified in a life science study of the Leeder Block completed during the summer and fall of 2002 (White 2003). It will be zoned natural environment (Section 7.0), and sport hunting will continue to be permitted through a regulation under the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* concurrent with regulation of this area under the *Provincial Parks Act*.

The surrounding Crown land has values that would not be best met by provincial park designation. In recognition of the varied values of this area, the remainder of the Leeder Block will remain as Crown land. MNR Kemptville District will continue to manage the natural, cultural and recreational values of this area to complement the park and the goals and objectives of the Thousand Islands-Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve.

The 2002 life science study confirmed that some areas of the Leeder Block had significant features which would add value to the park, particularly the Crown land immediately east of Charleston Lake and north of Leeders Creek (White 2003). The forests of the block are mainly of mixed composition typical of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Forest Region, and are already represented within the park. There are some areas of conifer plantation, as well as areas of

former pasture or cropland in various stages of natural succession. Plantation areas have value for commercial forestry, and through harvesting and tending can be restored to more representative forest habitat. There are potential forestry resources within the natural forested areas as well. The existing road network is used by snowmobile and ATV clubs and for other recreational activities that are either not permitted within the park itself or are limited (e.g. mountain biking).

2.3.2 *Park Boundary Delineation*

Comments The few comments received on this issue were generally favourable.

Response A boundary survey of the Blue Mountain area of the park will remain a priority (Section 11.0).

2.3.3 *Access to Blue Mountain Area*

Comments Sixty-nine percent of respondents preferred a land access route to Blue Mountain, either on public lands or through agreement with private landowners, or through a combination of these approaches. Thirty-one percent preferred that access remain only by water, from Huckleberry Hollow.

Response In consideration of the traditional use of this area for scenic viewing, this plan will propose an authorized access route for non-mechanized use from Blue Mountain Road, or Mountain Street, to the crest of Blue Mountain (Section 7.1, 9.4, 10.0, 11.0). Such a route will be in addition to access from Huckleberry Hollow.

2.3.4 *Recreational Activities*

Policy alternatives for hunting, all terrain vehicles and mountain biking were identified in the background information, issues and plan alternatives document and the associated questionnaire. Approximately 70 to 80 percent of respondents commented on these issues, either by choosing a preferred

alternative, suggesting a different alternative ("other"), or providing general comments related to these activities.

2.3.4.1 **Hunting**

Comments Of the responses received, most included comments on the issue of sport hunting in the Blue Mountain area. Two policy alternatives were provided, and those who responded to this issue were split into approximately 1/3 each for alternative 1, alternative 2 and other. Both alternative 1 and 2 allowed for sport hunting to continue, with some restrictions for safety of other park users. The 1/3 that indicated a different alternative was mainly against hunting in provincial parks; many suggested phasing this activity out. Several respondents who chose one of the two alternatives also commented that they preferred no hunting.

Response This plan will propose alternative 1; that sport hunting will continue only within the proposed natural environment zone of the Blue Mountain area of the park (NE2), which will include Crown lands proposed for addition within the Leeder Block. The park will seek a restriction on the use of dogs for the purposes of sport hunting, other than to support waterfowl hunting (e.g. game retrieval). This policy honours a previous commitment to continue sport hunting in this area that was made by the Minister of Natural Resources during consultation for the addition of this area to the park, while allowing consideration for safety of other park users. Hunters will be required to inform park staff of their whereabouts and harvest records. Mechanized vehicles may not be used to support this activity. Signage will be placed along the park boundary to inform park users of where the activity of sport hunting may be occurring within the park, based on annual hunting regulations (Section 7.2, 9.4, 11.0).

A proposed zoning plan was displayed at the June 2002 open houses, indicating a nature reserve zone and natural environment zone in the Blue Mountain area of the park. Proposed policy alternatives were designed to allow for sport hunting to continue in the natural environment zone (NE2), while considering the safety of other park users. Following a review of comments on other issues and determination of the intent to have further authorized access through this area, the nature reserve zone was subsequently revised to contain all proposed authorized access routes to Blue Mountain where they fall within the park.

2.3.4.2 Snowmobiling

Comments Several respondents were concerned with snowmobiling within the Blue Mountain area of the park.

Response Snowmobile use will be permitted on the existing Blue Mountain trails when there is a minimum consistent snow depth of 20 cm. Because of the exposed rock knobs and sensitive vegetation prevalent at the crest of Blue Mountain, users will be encouraged to leave machines at the base and proceed on foot. The OFSC will be encouraged to locate an alternate route outside the park for trail users who are travelling from point to point, with a destination other than Blue Mountain. No new trails will be permitted within the park (Section 9.4).

Under adequate snow depth conditions, compaction from the activity of snowmobiling is considered to have a minimal effect on the vegetation and earth science values of the park. The noise and exhaust pollution from this activity may still be a concern to some users. The locations of existing Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC) trails have been determined through consultation with the local Athens and District Snowmobile Club.

2.3.4.3 All terrain and off road vehicles

Comments Two policy alternatives were provided, and 70 percent of those who commented on this issue preferred alternative 1, that individual all terrain vehicle use not be permitted within the park (i.e. current restrictions be enforced), and that park or MNR staff would only use these vehicles if absolutely necessary (i.e. for emergency response such as search and rescue, fire control).

Response There will continue to be no authorized trails for the recreational activity of all terrain or off-road vehicle use, aside from any such use within zone A1 (traveled road) and on any existing trail within zone A2 (right of way). This plan proposes a commitment of park resources to monitor and enforce restrictions on mechanized vehicle use (Section 9.4). The park contains significant earth and life science features that are sensitive to mechanized traffic, and unauthorized mechanized use in the Blue Mountain area has caused severe damage to these park values.

2.3.4.4 Boating

Comments Several respondents supported continuation of the existing policy for restricting boat access to Runnings Bay, Slim Bay and Mud Bay.

Response The park has also identified a concern with noise and wake resulting from excessive speeds of power boats, including personal watercraft, in Boathouse Cove and within the park boundary adjacent to the shoreline. To address this concern, in addition to boating restrictions in Slim Bay, Mud Bay and Runnings Bay, the park will encourage enforcement of existing speed limit restrictions on the lake under Federal boating regulations by the appropriate enforcement agency (currently the Ontario Provincial Police), and may seek or support further regulations to reduce noise and wake concerns (Section 9.4, 11.0).

2.3.4.5 Mountain Biking

Comments Of those who responded to this issue, 67 percent preferred that the current mountain biking policy within the park continue (i.e. only permitted on roads within the development zone/campground area). Twenty-three percent indicated that they would prefer a multi-use trail be created to allow for mountain biking. Several respondents expressed doubt that Ontario Parks would finance the creation of a multi-use trail.

Response Cycling will remain restricted to roadways in the development zone. As part of the phase-out of the existing mountain biking activity on the unauthorized trail to Blue Mountain, opportunities for a mountain biking route within the Crown land of the Leeder Block may be explored as an alternate location for this activity. The park contains significant earth and life science features that are sensitive to mechanized traffic. In the Blue Mountain area, it is probable that an authorized mountain biking trail would increase ease of visitation to this area of the park, and require additional trail design and maintenance. It is the opinion of Ontario Parks that based on the sensitive natural features of the area, a single use, non-mechanized trail will have the least negative impact on this area (e.g. narrower trail, less rutting, less use) (Section 9.4).

2.3.5 Trails

Comments Several respondents suggested using volunteer groups to assist in trail creation, maintenance and monitoring.

Response The park will consider the use of volunteers for trail maintenance and creation; this will be subject to consideration of liability issues. Ontario Parks will consult local stakeholders and user groups during creation of the access route to Blue Mountain (Section 9.4.1, 10.0).

2.3.6 Campground Development

The few comments received on this issue were generally favourable; see Section 10.0 for proposed policy.

2.3.7 Management and Use of Park Islands

Comments Picnic sites were an issue for a few lake users and lake residents, and several comments were received. There was some concern that the problem with island picnic sites is lack of supervision and enforcement, and that there should be a better means of maintaining the sites. There was some interest in additional picnic sites on park islands.

Response The park currently has two picnic sites on Deer Island, and five picnic sites along the mainland shoreline. This plan commits Ontario Parks to adequate monitoring and enforcement of island and mainland picnic sites and interior campsites. The Bill Island site will remain closed, because the sensitive features of that island cannot withstand extensive day use activities. Additional picnic sites are not proposed through this plan, because of concerns with monitoring and enforcement of existing picnic sites (Section 10.0).

2.3.8 Management of Cultural Resources

Comments The majority of respondents who commented on this issue supported the proposed policy; further assessment of cultural resources was encouraged (i.e. in the Blue Mountain area and any park additions).

Response Concentrations of significant cultural resources will be protected through zoning (historical zone). Locations of dispersed sites outside of the historical zone will be kept confidential, identified internally as cultural heritage sites, and regularly monitored (Section 8.3).

2.3.9 *Management of Natural Resources*

Comments Several comments were received relating to the proposed policy for species at risk, vegetation management, fisheries management and invasive species management, and were generally favourable. There was some interest in eliminating stocking of Brook Trout from Mud Lake.

Response This plan proposes that a vegetation resource stewardship plan be prepared for the park vegetation, including consideration for significant species (e.g. Pitch Pine). Based on further internal discussion, it was determined that the Scots Pine within the development zone are scattered trees, and are not properly described as “plantation”. Scots Pine within the development zone will be removed or thinned as necessary. Scots Pine plantation areas within the historical zone will be retained for their cultural significance, within their original footprint. The District may continue to stock Mud Lake with native species; a fisheries assessment will be completed to direct future stocking activities. Though sport fishing will continue to be permitted, there will be no mechanized use to support this activity (Section 8.2.2, 8.2.3, 11.0).

2.3.10 *Charleston Lake Watershed Health*

Comments Several comments were received on this issue, and in general were supportive of the proposed policy.

Response The plan will include consideration for the role of the park in the health of the lake, and in the Charleston Lake Management Plan (Section 6.0, 6.1.3).

2.3.11 *UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve*

Comments Several responses were received, and generally agreed that Ontario Parks should support this designation.

Response The Thousand Islands – Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve was officially designated by UNESCO in November of 2002. Ontario Parks will continue its support in principle of this designation (Section 6.1.2).

2.3.12 *Park Staff Activities*

Comments Several comments were received which stressed the need for a fire management plan.

Response We recognize the need for a forest fire management plan for the park. The fire management plan will address both the positive and negative force of fire within the park boundary. As a positive force, fire renews the forest, creates natural habitats and provides diversity on the landscape. Fires that pose a threat to public safety or private property are generally considered a negative force. Completion of a fire management plan will be identified as a priority in implementation of this plan (Section 8.2.6, 11.0).

3.0 CLASSIFICATION

Through park classification, Ontario’s provincial parks are organized into broad categories, each of which has particular purposes and characteristics. There are six classes of provincial parks: wilderness, nature reserve, historical, natural environment, waterway and recreation.

Charleston Lake Provincial Park will continue to be classified as a **natural environment** park. Natural environment parks incorporate outstanding recreational landscapes with representative natural features and historical resources to provide high quality recreational and educational experiences. Charleston Lake has all of these attributes.

4.0 GOAL

The goal for the park is:

To protect Charleston Lake Provincial Park's exceptional natural and cultural heritage, and provide high quality educational and recreational experiences appropriate to and sustainable within the park's environment.

5.0 OBJECTIVES

The Ontario Provincial Parks System has four objectives: protection (which is the park system's primary objective), heritage appreciation, recreation, and tourism. As a natural environment park, Charleston Lake contributes to all four objectives.

The park objectives provide specific direction for park management and are described as follows:

5.1 Protection

To protect significant elements of the park's natural and cultural heritage.

This is the primary objective of the park; all other objectives are secondary. Protection will not be limited to provincially significant features. The protection objective will be accomplished through appropriate park zoning, land use practices and an ecosystem approach to park planning and management. The park ecosystem is defined as the area of influence surrounding the park from an ecological, social and economic point of view. The park ecosystem in this case can be considered at a minimum as the watershed of Charleston Lake or at a greater scale as the area of the Thousand Islands – Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve or ecodistrict 6E-10. Park management will be directed toward maintaining a healthy, diverse and sustainable natural environment,

which will enhance achievement of the park's other objectives.

For ecosystem management purposes, Ontario is divided into 71 ecodistricts based on landform, physiography and climate. Charleston Lake and Frontenac are the two provincial parks within ecodistrict 6E-10, protecting natural environments representative of this ecodistrict. The specific significant natural and cultural features protected in the park's nature reserve, historical and natural environment zones are listed in Section 7.0. These features include provincially significant earth and life science features (e.g. ANSI, wetland), habitat for species at risk and other rare species, and cultural heritage features (e.g. archaeological sites, cultural landscapes).

In this plan, "rare species" refers to species considered to be either provincially or regionally rare. "Regionally rare" species are species that are common in the province, but have been designated by experts as rare in certain areas or regions of Ontario. "Provincially rare" species are those species designated by the Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC) as S3 or higher; each has less than 100 occurrences in Ontario.

Native Ontario species are assigned status designations through complementary review and assessment processes implemented at national and provincial levels. Status designations are assigned at the national level by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC), and at the provincial level by MNR. In this plan "species at risk" means native Ontario species assigned status designations of special concern, threatened or endangered, as listed by MNR on its proposed *Species at Risk in Ontario* list, including:

- Species named by regulation under Ontario's *Endangered Species Act*; and
- Species designated as special concern, threatened or endangered (i.e. not yet regulated) in Ontario by MNR.

As of January 2003, 14 species at risk, 20 provincially significant species and 49 regionally rare species were known to occur within the park. To date, life science studies have concentrated on plants and birds. There are still areas of the park's fauna and flora that have not been fully explored, and future studies may identify other special plant or animal features. Because of this, it is likely that additional species at risk and rare species inhabit the park.

5.2 Heritage Appreciation

To provide opportunities for exploration and appreciation of the park's natural and cultural heritage through interpretation, education and unstructured exploration.

Individual and group exploration and appreciation will continue to be encouraged in Charleston Lake to the extent compatible with and complementary to protection of the park's natural and cultural heritage values, and recreation and tourism objectives. A Natural Heritage Education Plan will continue to provide direction to achieve this objective, through a range of interpretive and educational programmes that reflect the diversity of features and resources in the park. The programmes target a wide variety of user groups. The plan will stress the relationship of the park to its surrounding landscape (ecosystem approach). Specific heritage education facilities and services are described in Section 9.0.

The existing trail system will continue to provide opportunities to interpret natural (terrestrial and aquatic) and cultural (Aboriginal and post-European) features.

5.3 Recreation

To provide day use, camping, and related outdoor recreation opportunities appropriate to the park.

The park will emphasize non-mechanized, natural environment based experiences to the extent compatible with and complementary to protection of the park's natural and cultural heritage values, and its tourism objective. To a great extent the recreation objective was achieved through the previous master plan, through creation of campgrounds, and low-intensity use features such as trails and interior campsites and picnic sites. The types of recreation activities within the park vary depending on the various zones within the park. The park will continue to provide opportunities for camping (e.g. campground and walk-in/boat-in), picnicing, swimming, boating, canoeing/kayaking, hiking, snowshoeing/cross-country skiing, nature appreciation (e.g. bird watching/wildlife viewing), photography, fishing, and hunting.

5.4 Tourism

To provide Ontario residents and visitors with opportunities to discover and experience the park's natural, cultural and recreational environment.

Tourism opportunities will be enhanced by achieving the park's other objectives, and by working with area municipalities and community groups to enhance the tourism and recreation values of Charleston Lake. The park will be promoted on the basis of its natural and cultural heritage values, and appropriate enjoyment and appreciation of those

values. The park will continue to offer day use opportunities for passing travellers as well as destination day use and overnight use opportunities for those attracted from considerable distances. The benefit of attracting day use and overnight visitors to the park will be the contribution to the regional economy through park expenditures and tourist spending. Approximately 90,000 people visit the park each year, including both day users and campers. Based on average visitor spending for provincial parks in southeastern Ontario, the park camper and day use visitor expenditures during fiscal 1998/99 was approximately \$1.5 million. This included visitor spending for items such as food and beverages, fuel and transportation, attractions and entertainment.

Charleston Lake will continue to disseminate information related to surrounding areas and communities, such as park and open space activities, points of interest, and attractions. Tourism development initiatives are further described in Section 9.5.

6.0 BOUNDARY AND LAND TENURE

The park area in regulation at the time of this planning process is illustrated in Figure 2. The park is a combination of patented and unpatented Crown land, with a total regulated area of 2352.7 ha. The regulated park area includes the western area of the park regulated in 1975 (908.7 ha), lands along the eastern shore of the lake largely regulated in 1997 and commonly referred to as the Blue Mountain area (1312.4 ha), and 43 island holdings (131.6 ha), also regulated in 1997.

Ontario Parks included approximately 750 ha of Crown land (Leeder Block) in the planning area for this management planning process, in order to consider

these lands for addition to the park. Information on natural, cultural and recreational values was updated to determine the value these lands would add to the park.

Figure 2 in this plan illustrates the park boundary as the Ontario Government intends to amend it by regulation, and this plan assumes the new boundary to be in place. The park's area will increase to an estimated 2473 ha. The following changes will be made to the park boundary and are included in Figure 2.

Leeder Block

Approximately 100 ha of Crown land within the Leeder Block will be added to the park. This addition is Crown land within the former township of Rear of Yonge and Escott (Concession 7, Part Lots 22 to 24), and within the former township of Front of Yonge (Concession 5, Part Lot 26). This Crown land is known as compartment L76, and part of compartments L38 and L35. Inclusion of the Crown land within Front of Yonge allows for ease of boundary delineation and legal description. It also allows for protection of most of the remaining Crown land portion of the ANSI outside of the Blue Mountain area of the park.

A boundary survey will be required prior to addition of this area to the park. Any adjacent private properties will be excluded from the park boundary.

In recognition of the varied values of this area, the remainder of the Leeder Block will remain as Crown land. MNR Kemptville District will continue to manage the natural, cultural and recreational values of this Crown land to complement the park and the goals and objectives of the Thousand Islands-Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve.

Other Park Boundary Changes

During the planning process some gaps or errors were noted in the regulation plan for the park. This will be remedied through a minor housekeeping amendment. Two additional parcels of Crown land along Charleston Lake will be added to the park. One is a 20 ha parcel that contains the portage between Charleston Lake and Red Horse Lake that is currently maintained by the park, and the other is a small 1.4 ha parcel adjacent to the park boundary on Slacks Bay that includes a cabin used for park purposes.

The addition of Crown land to the park will require an amendment to the District Land Use Guidelines, and a park boundary amendment.

The park boundary will be surveyed to current standards to the extent required for it to be precisely defined in the computerized mapping of the park, as well as on the ground where necessary. The park superintendent may more clearly define the boundary on land (e.g. by signage, planting or fencing as appropriate) and on water (e.g. by signage or fixed or floating markers as appropriate) where needed to protect park values and achieve the policies of this plan.

The park is located within two municipal townships within the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville: Township of Leeds and the 1000 Islands and Township of Athens and Rear of Yonge and Escott. MNR will recommend to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing that the municipalities be asked to ensure that their official plans appropriately identify the park's lands and waters. This will ensure that new development or site alteration near the park is assessed with regard to any potential impacts on the park's natural heritage features and areas in accordance with the Provincial Policy Statement under the *Planning Act*.

Ontario Parks is committed to an ecosystem approach during park planning and management. The regulated park boundary is an administrative boundary, and as such will not be viewed as an ecological barrier between the park and the surrounding landscape. This approach will ensure that park management will consider the relationship between the park and the surrounding environment.

Ontario Parks will support the acquisition of property for the purposes of addition to the park, if it will enhance the values of the park. Acquisition mechanisms include purchase, donation, or other methods of securement through agreement with private landowners (e.g. lease, easement). Ontario Parks would only consider acquiring private land if property that would enhance the values of the park is offered for sale, donation, or other method of securement by willing owners. Adjacent lands could be valuable to the park for protection of natural or cultural values, resource management and/or operational reasons. Such lands include private lands within the Blue Mountain ANSI boundary, properties land-locked by the park (e.g. along the shoreline of Charleston Lake), and lands on islands that are adjacent to the park.

6.1.1 Role of neighbouring lands

Ontario Parks will encourage efforts of neighbours on adjacent lands to protect significant natural and cultural features.

Complementary land use approaches by owners of lands adjacent to the park benefit the natural heritage features of the park and the entire ecosystem. Some provincially significant features (e.g. provincially significant wetlands, Blue Mountain ANSI) cover large areas, and are partly within the park and partly within adjacent private and Crown lands. In recognition of the protection of

significant features on their lands, private landowners of such lands may be eligible for incentives, such as the Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program (CLTIP).

Plans for park lands within the ANSI will be developed in consultation with the public, including the park's neighbours. Ontario Parks will share such plans with its neighbours throughout the planning process. This approach is a cooperative and participatory one, and does not imply provincial control of private property rights.

Forest management of adjacent Crown lands will be geared to complementing the values of the park.

6.1.2 UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve Designation

The park is within the Thousand Islands-Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve, which was officially designated in 2002 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). This is the third Biosphere Reserve in Ontario, out of a total of 12 in Canada. The Biosphere Reserve area has important natural and ecological values and supports a variety of economic, social and recreational activities. The official UNESCO Biosphere Reserve designation will enhance the ability of local people to develop, promote and organize projects and activities linking conservation with social and economic development in their region. The Biosphere Reserve will be administered by an association, with governance including a Board of Directors made up of members from the community with a wide variety of perspectives (e.g. local provincial and federal government, municipalities, landowners, conservation organizations, lake associations, and other organizations).

The park is recognized as one of two core protected areas within the Thousand Islands-Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve. Park staff had membership on the initial Steering Committee prior to the nomination of this area, and Ontario Parks, South Eastern Zone supplied a letter of support in-principle for the nomination, contingent upon broad support for the initiative from the diverse interests in the area. The Biosphere Reserve has been endorsed by the municipal, provincial and federal government authorities in the area.

Ontario Parks, South Eastern Zone will continue to be involved in governance of the Biosphere Reserve and provide information upon request. Ontario Parks is supportive of this designation in principle, with the understanding that the designation does not place controls on park policy and that the various stakeholders within the area are supportive.

6.1.3 Charleston Lake Management Plan

Local interest groups have begun the process of preparing a Charleston Lake Management Plan, to ensure that the lake remains beautiful in every way. Through this process, lake health and threshold levels for development and recreational activities on the lake will be determined. The process will result in the production of a long-range management plan for Charleston Lake. As part of the MNR and as the administrator of Charleston Lake Provincial Park, a substantial protected area along the lake, Ontario Parks will continue to have a role in this plan. The park goal, objectives and resource management, operations and development policies endeavor to ensure that park management activities are sustainable and minimize impacts to Charleston Lake.

7.0 ZONING

The lands and waters of Charleston Lake Provincial Park are zoned on the basis of their significance for protection and potential for recreation and development. There are 14 zones as illustrated in Figure 2: 4 nature reserve, 1 historical, 6 natural environment, 1 development, and 2 access zones. There are no landscapes in the park considered to have both the size and integrity needed to qualify as wilderness zones. Each zone permits certain land-uses and is managed in accordance with specific strategies. As a whole, the zones are designed to fulfill the primary goal and objective of the park: protection.

The zone boundaries are shown in more detail on the computerized mapping of the park. It may be necessary to delineate some zone boundaries more precisely on the ground (e.g. NR3), and this will be done as required and as park resources are available.

The following sections briefly describe each zone. The area in ha identified in parenthesis beside each zone description is based on the computerized mapping of the park. The resource management policies, recreation activities, and types of development permitted in each type of zone are summarized in Appendix 2. All resource and recreational uses and facility development will be subject to standard legislation and policies governing provincial parks, as well as the park specific policies in Sections 8.0, 9.0, and 10.0.

7.1 Nature Reserve Zones

Nature reserve zones protect the inherent values of provincially significant natural features, their contributions to the environmental diversity of the park and the park system, and their potential for scientific research and public

appreciation. These zones include any significant earth and life science features that require management distinct from that in adjacent zones, as well as a protective buffer with an absolute minimum of development. The main priority for nature reserves is protection, with some types of research and other uses being permitted. Only limited low-impact activities (e.g. hiking, nature appreciation) and non-destructive scientific research may be permitted. Site evaluations to prove that these activities are not leading to degradation within the zone will also be permitted. Development will be minimal, and may include signs and trails. The park's four nature reserve zones include approximately 40 percent of the total park area.

Zone NR1 - Tallow Rock Bay & Slim Bay (313 ha)

NR1 extends from the development zone (D1) north to Tallow Rock Bay, and includes upland and wetland areas with a range of relatively undisturbed forest types, rock barrens, all waters of Slim Bay and Mud Bay, and the rocky shoreline of Slim Bay. Species at risk (e.g. Black Ratsnake) as well as provincially rare (e.g. Pitch Pine) and regionally rare species are found within this zone. This zone includes approximately 5 km of hiking trail, including 300 m of boardwalk, and the portage from Killenbeck Lake to Runnings Bay. Opportunities for outdoor recreation are designed and developed for low impact, non-mechanized use.

Existing non-mechanized recreational trail use will continue (e.g. hiking, cross-country skiing). Minor trail additions or relocations may occur, based on prior assessment of potential impacts on natural and cultural features, if necessary to further the protection objective of the park or for health and safety reasons.

Zone NR2 - Beech Woods & Hemlock Ridge (103 ha)

NR2 includes an area of rich deciduous forest that is home to rare species and sensitive features. Species at risk such as the Red-shouldered Hawk nests within these woods, and they are also home to the Southern Flying Squirrel. Provincially rare and regionally rare species are found within this zone. Two trails (Hemlock Ridge and Beech Woods) total approximately 5 km and are entirely within this zone. Opportunities for outdoor recreation are designed and developed for low impact, non-mechanized use.

Existing non-mechanized trail use will continue (e.g. hiking, cross-country skiing). Minor trail additions or relocations may occur, based on prior assessment of potential impacts on natural and cultural features, if necessary to further the protection objective of the park or for health and safety reasons.

The adjacent Crown land parcel recommended for addition to the park will be included within this zone. Existing higher intensity development that is more appropriate to development zones (i.e. cabin used as staff quarters) will be permitted to continue as a nonconforming use. This development will be allowed to remain and may be repaired, restored or adapted for appropriate use, but may not be expanded, enlarged or replaced.

Zone NR3 - Blue Mountain (503 ha)

NR3 includes approximately 40 percent of land within the Blue Mountain area of the park, and is an enlargement of the roughly 140 ha area identified in the 1978 master plan. This zone includes the crest of Blue Mountain, and other sensitive features and rare species (e.g. heronry, Black Spruce bog, Pitch Pine). The area is noted for its rugged terrain, scenic view from Blue Mountain, stands of Pitch Pine and other significant

species of plants and animals, and interesting geology. The northern boundary of this zone is the shoreline of Charleston Lake, and the southern boundary is Mountain Street.

Through this plan an authorized access route by land to Blue Mountain is proposed, to address traditional access to this area across land from the south. This access will be in addition to access by water from the Huckleberry Hollow landing. Travel will be restricted to designated trails.

An existing Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC) trail that passes through this zone will be permitted to continue as a non-conforming use. No new trails will be permitted (Section 9.4).

Activities such as overnight camping, open fires, hunting, or travel using mechanized means – other than authorized snowmobile use as described above and in Section 9.4 - are not compatible with this area, and if existing will be phased out through means such as signage, monitoring, or enforcement.

Low impact recreational activities such as hiking, cross-country skiing, wildlife viewing and photography will be permitted on authorized trails. Trail layout will allow for the protection of any sensitive features by avoiding these areas. Archaeological assessment may be required prior to any new trail development. Minor trail additions or relocations may occur, based on prior assessment of potential impacts on natural and cultural features, if necessary to further the protection objective of the park or for health and safety reasons.

The boundary between this zone and zone NE2 will be clearly marked on the ground.

If the parking area for the proposed new trail to Blue Mountain (Section 9.4.1) cannot be located within the road allowance for either Mountain Street or Blue Mountain Road, a section of park adjacent to the traveled road may be removed from this zone and zoned as access, to allow for a staging area for the trail. This area could include the trailhead, parking area, and support facilities (e.g. privies, information display, signs, self-serve fee station).

Zone NR4 - Park Islands (15 ha)
NR4 includes park areas of seven (7) islands (Big Bluff, Bill, Browns, Buck, Faun, Grindstone, Lena). This zone protects Pitch Pine and other rare species and sensitive features found on these islands. Recreational use, including picnicking and docking, will not be permitted.

Ownership of Faun Island will be confirmed, and if determined to not be Crown this island will be removed from the park boundary.

7.2 Natural Environment Zones

Natural environment zones include natural, cultural and aesthetic landscapes in which minimum development is required to support low-intensity recreational activities. Development will be limited to portages, trails, interior campsites, interior picnic sites, signs necessary for route identification and minimal interpretative facilities to support low-intensity recreational uses. The park's six natural environment zones include approximately 55 percent of the total park area.

Zone NE 1 – Westside (181 ha)
Much of the land within this zone as identified in the 1978 master plan has been incorporated into NR1. This zone encompasses all of the park land and water north of Runnings Bay lying east of

NR1. The purpose of this zone is to provide dispersed recreation with comprehensive interpretive programming. This zone includes approximately 7 km of hiking trail and a floating bridge at Slim Bay. Trail facilities are designed to promote exploration and discovery in a natural setting. Four small clusters of interior campsites and one day use picnic site are located within this zone. Opportunities for outdoor recreation are designed and developed for non-mechanized use. There are three private cottage properties adjacent to the park in this area, accessible only by water.

Existing use of designated trails will continue (e.g. hiking, cross-country skiing). Minor trail additions or relocations may occur, based on prior assessment of potential impacts on natural and cultural features, if necessary to further the protection objective of the park or for health and safety reasons.

Zone NE2 - Blue Mountain and Leeder Creek (900 ha)

Zone NE2 includes approximately 60 percent of the Blue Mountain area of the park and the Crown land within the Leeder Block recommended for addition to the park through this plan (Section 6.0). This zone contains provincially significant features (e.g. provincially significant wetland, ANSI) that extend into zone NR3 and beyond the park boundary. Most of the area has a rugged terrain with an alternating ridge and valley topography and rock ridges. There is a diverse ground flora and a range of moderately-mature forest associations with little recent disturbance. There are a number of provincially and locally rare plants along the shoreline of Leeders Creek.

Sport hunting is permitted, in accordance with annual hunting regulations. Other activities such as hiking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and fishing will

continue to be permitted. The existing trail to Mud Lake is in part within this zone. There are two designated picnic sites along the shoreline. Overnight camping and open fires are not compatible with this area, and if existing will be phased out through signage, monitoring and/or enforcement. Four private cottage properties are located on the shoreline of this zone; three are accessible only by water.

Minor trail additions or relocations may occur, based on prior assessment of potential impacts on natural and cultural features, if necessary to further the protection objective of the park or for health and safety reasons. If necessary, once the boundary survey is completed the existing trail to Mud Lake will be rerouted to ensure it is within the park boundary.

The boundary of the Leeder Block area of this zone will be confirmed prior to the regulation process. A right of way through this area to an adjacent private lot is zoned as access (A2).

Zone NE3 - Park Islands (97 ha)
Zone NE3 includes 39 park islands within Charleston Lake, of which 3 are in part park and part private ownership (i.e. Buck, Crow, Deer). The 7 other park islands are zoned NR4. These islands contribute greatly to the charm and appeal of Charleston Lake. Recreational use and development is strictly controlled to protect the shallow soils and sensitive features located on many of these islands. Overnight camping is not compatible with these islands, and picnic sites are located only on those islands with a suitable landbase and terrain. Currently there are 2 designated island picnic sites within this zone, both on Deer Island.

Use is restricted to day use at designated picnic sites.

Zone NE4 - Shoreline Centennial (14 ha)

This zone includes the Shoreline Centennial Trail, one interior camping cluster, and one picnic site. To protect sensitive features the most restrictive policies for NE zones will apply.

Existing non-mechanized trail use will continue (e.g. hiking, cross-country skiing). Minor trail additions or relocations may occur, based on prior assessment of potential impacts on natural and cultural features, if necessary to further the protection objective of the park or for health and safety reasons.

Zone NE5 – Red Horse Lake Portage (20 ha)

This zone is the 19 ha of Crown land recommended for addition to the park, as it adds both natural and cultural heritage value to the park. It contains the portage between Red Horse Lake and Charleston Lake, currently maintained by the park.

Existing non-mechanized trail use will continue (e.g. portaging). Minor trail additions or relocations may occur, based on prior assessment of potential impacts on natural and cultural features, if necessary to further the protection objective of the park or for health and safety reasons.

Zone NE6 – Waters of Charleston Lake (153 ha)

Zone NE6 includes the waters of Charleston Lake that are within the park boundary, described as:

- within 30 m of controlled high water mark of the shoreline of zones NR1, NR3, NE1, NE2, NE4, NE5 and D1.
- within 10 m of controlled high water mark of the shoreline of zones NR4 and NE3 (park islands).

This zone also includes a 10 m width inland from the shoreline of zone D1 along Runnings Bay, other than the

beaches within this area which will remain within zone D1. A width of 10 m inland from the shoreline of zone D1 along Mud Bay is also within this zone. The existing development of the boathouse and docking facility within Boathouse Cove will be permitted to continue as a non-conforming use; these facilities may be repaired, upgraded or replaced when necessary, subject to appropriate approvals.

7.3 Historical Zones

Historical zones encompass the significant cultural resources of a park. They include any significant historical resources that require management distinct from that in adjacent zones. They will support minimum development required for visitor exploration and appreciation and scientific research. Development is limited to trails, signs and interpretive, education, research and management facilities. The park's one historical zone includes an area where there is a concentration of cultural heritage sites.

Zone H1 - Sandstone Island (69 ha)

This zone on the peninsula between Runnings Bay and Slacks Bay is an enlargement of the 39 ha area identified in the 1978 master plan. This area includes several registered cultural heritage sites, including archaeological sites (e.g. rockshelters and associated open air sites) and cultural landscapes (e.g. farmsteads, plantation, fencelines). Interpretive and educational programming occur within this zone, primarily on the Sandstone Island Trail.

Existing non-mechanized trail use will continue (e.g. hiking, cross-country skiing). Minor trail additions or relocations may occur, based on prior assessment of potential impacts on natural and cultural features, if necessary to further the protection objective of the park or for health and safety reasons.

There are cultural heritage sites outside of this zone that, because of their small size and scattered locations, are not included in historical zones. Site records, maps, monitoring reports and files will be treated as sensitive data. The locations of these sites will be kept confidential. All registered sites will be monitored at least annually. The monitoring report will include identification of any non-conforming uses and activities within 100 m of the site, external stressors, description of the condition of the site (e.g. stable, increasing, decreasing) supplemented by photographic evidence, reasons for the condition, and any management activities proposed. If monitoring and enforcement are found insufficient for protection of these sites, measures may be undertaken to discourage human disturbance (e.g. visual screening).

Existing higher intensity development that is more appropriate to development zones (i.e. cabin used as staff quarters) will be permitted to continue as a nonconforming use. This development will be allowed to remain and may be repaired, restored or adapted for appropriate use, but may not be expanded, enlarged or replaced.

7.4 Development Zones

Development zones provide the main access to the park and contain facilities and services for a wide range of day-use and camping activities. The park's one development zone is located on the peninsula between Slacks Bay and Runnings Bay, and includes approximately five percent of the total park area.

There are no Charleston Lake waters within the park's development zone.

Zone D1 - Development Zone (103 ha)

This zone is a refinement of the original 289 ha area identified in the 1978 master

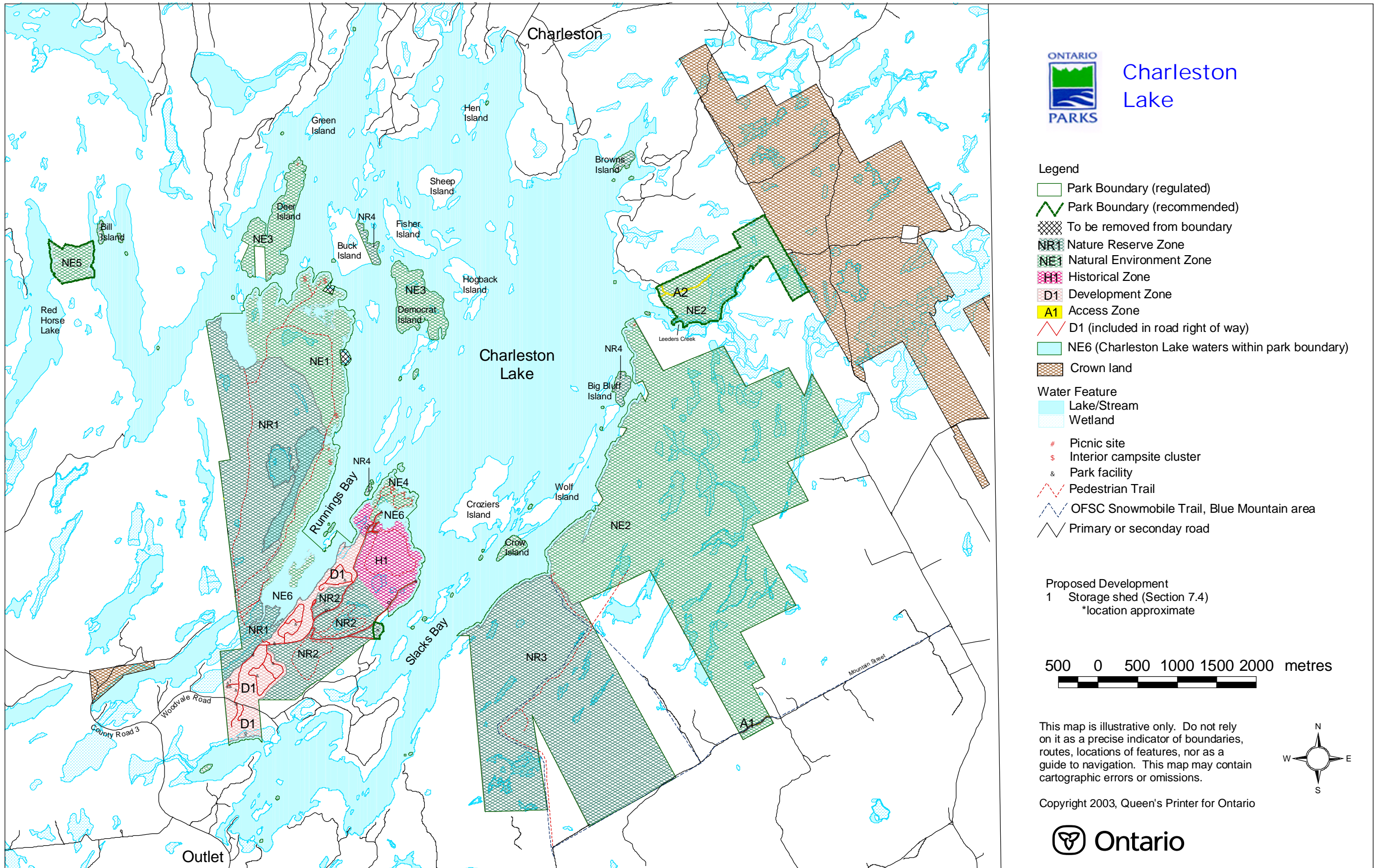


Figure 2. Park Boundary, Zoning and Development

plan, based on a review of natural and cultural resource information. Lands removed from the previous zone boundary were incorporated into zones NR2, H1 and NE4. The purpose of the development zone is to provide moderate intensity day-use and camping activities within an exceptional natural environment. In conjunction with camping, the zone also provides access to Charleston Lake in the form of boat and canoe launch facilities, swimming, fishing, and educational venues. Seasonal activities such as cross-country skiing and snowshoeing are permitted throughout the zone. Snowmobiling is limited to the park's primary road. Cycling is permitted on all public roads within the zone.

Approximately 450 m of Woodvale Road passes through this zone. This plan recommends that the park boundary be amended to exclude this section of municipal road.

This zone contains the existing development in the park: park office, maintenance compound, gatehouse, 2 staff cabins, 3 car campgrounds with a total of 238 developed campsites and 4 associated comfort stations, group camping area with 3 group campsites accommodating a maximum of 120 campers, visitor centre and associated parking areas, amphitheatre and associated parking area, swimming beaches, canoe launch, boat launch, storage barn, wood compound, and wood chip storage area. It also contains trailheads for the Westside System, Shoreline Centennial, Sandstone Island, Beech Woods and Hemlock Ridge trails.

This zone also contains primary and secondary park roads. The primary road is within a 20.116 m road right of way. The secondary park roads are within a 15 m road right of way. The road rights of ways may be widened as required to include traffic islands and junctions. The

secondary road that passes through the NR2, H1 and NE4 zones is restricted to authorized users.

Primary roads will be maintained to provincial parks operating standards for hard surfaced primary interior roads, and will occupy only as much of the right of way as required to meet those standards.

Proposed development for this zone may include the following, subject to Class EA requirements and other approvals:

- Campsites – management may require the development of a limited number of new campsites to allow upgrading or rehabilitating of existing campsites within the three car campgrounds and group camping area. Any upgrading or rehabilitating of the group campsites will not encroach on the deciduous woodland and aquatic marsh communities that are between the current group camping sites and the waters of Charleston Lake included in zone NE6;
- Canoe and Boat Launch – there is presently one canoe launch on Runnings Bay and one boat launch located at Boathouse Cove. These facilities may be upgraded as needed and as funding permits, to provide optimum boat launching facilities or to increase docking space;
- Park Facilities – other facilities located within this zone include the main park office, gate house, trailer dumping station, staff houses, maintenance yard, wood yard, storage shed, amphitheatre, and visitor centre. Facilities in this zone may be upgraded or replaced as needed and as funding permits. An additional storage building may be built near the maintenance yard, as funding permits.
- Cycling trail along main road within road right of way.

7.5 Access Zones

Although by definition access zones are intended to serve as staging areas for access to the park, the access zones within the park identified in this plan are not intended for this use. The two access zones described below are designed to allow existing mechanized use on an existing road and right of way within the park to continue, primarily by adjacent landowners whose access requires crossing through the park.

Zone A1 – Traveled Road (0.9 ha)

This proposed zone consists of the portion of a traveled road (430 m) which, based on current mapping, diverges from the Mountain Street road allowance and passes through the southern edge of the Blue Mountain park boundary. This road provides access to private properties adjacent to the park boundary. The 20.116 m width of traveled road within the park is zoned access to allow for motorized use, subject to confirmation of the location of the traveled road in relation to the park boundary through a boundary survey. This road is not a staging area to access the park.

Zone A2 – Right of Way (1.2 ha)

This proposed zone consists of the right of way which passes through Zone NE2 north of Leeders Creek. This right of way provides access to a private shoreline property adjacent to the park boundary. The 7.3 m width of right of way within the park is zoned access to allow for motorized use. The location of the right of way will be more accurately determined following the boundary survey of the park addition (Section 6.0). This right of way is not a staging area to access the park.

8.0 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT POLICIES

Charleston Lake Provincial Park will be managed in accordance with the policies for natural environment parks as set out in *Ontario Provincial Parks: Planning and Management Policies* (1992) and the specific policies of this plan.

8.1 Waste Management

Sewage from comfort stations and in-building washrooms in zone D1 will continue to be disposed of in septic tank-tile field systems within this zone. Sewage from vault privies will be removed from the park for disposal.

Waste consisting of natural materials, such as leaves and grass clippings, will be reused or composted inside the park where feasible and appropriate. Otherwise, all solid waste will be removed from the park for recycling or disposal.

8.2 Natural Resources

The diversity of plant and animal life, the lake's combination of coldwater and warmwater habitats and the park's attractive scenery have all contributed to the park's significance as a protected area.

Life science survey and evaluation reports were completed for the Blue Mountain ANSI and Charleston Lake Crown islands (White 1994), the west area of the park (White 1998) and more recently for the Leeder Block of Crown land (White 2002). The park supports a diversity of plant and animal species, including species at risk and provincially and regionally rare species. Charleston Lake supports an important coldwater sports fishery.

In this plan, "non-native species" means species not native to Ontario as well as

species native to Ontario but not to the park. Non-native species will not be deliberately introduced. In this plan “invasive species” means species that are likely to spread and negatively affect native ecosystems. Where possible, actions will be taken to eliminate or reduce the threat of invasive non-native species which may be affecting the diversity of naturally occurring populations. Where non-native species are already established and threaten natural or cultural values, a program of control may be undertaken if feasible and practical. Extirpated native species may be reintroduced, and existing populations replenished, if biologically feasible and acceptable, and desirable for perpetuating park values.

8.2.1 *Land and Water*

No dams or weirs will be built in the park. Wherever possible, new development or redevelopment will be undertaken so as not to disrupt natural drainage. Wherever possible, natural drainage will be restored where it has been disrupted by past or present development.

The park is situated on Charleston Lake. The water level of Charleston Lake is controlled by a dam located at the south end of the lake at the community of Outlet, operated by Granite Power. The water level is lowered by more than one metre annually each fall before freeze-up (September to October). Since these annual water level fluctuations have been occurring for over 100 years it can be assumed that the significant vegetation species and communities currently along the lake shoreline are able to persist under these conditions.

The park will keep current records on the status of invasive species in the area through contact with appropriate groups or agencies (e.g. Charleston Lake Association, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters). Park staff will

assist in monitoring efforts related to invasive species within Charleston Lake.

The two beaches along Runnings Bay within the development zone (D1) were created in the past using sand from external sources. Wave action and drift cause beach erosion. In order to maintain a quality recreation beach, various rehabilitation techniques may be utilized, such as adding sand as required to enhance aesthetics and to encourage recreational use. Beach improvements are subject to approval by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, who are responsible for assessing the impacts of shoreline projects on fish habitat and spawning areas.

Mineral exploration or development and aggregate extraction are not permitted within the park boundary.

8.2.2 *Vegetation*

Management will be directed toward promoting the health and diversity of natural vegetation communities, particularly within nature reserve and natural environment zones. A vegetation stewardship plan will be prepared for the park, by Ontario Parks or in consultation with Ontario Parks. Management requirements arising from the vegetation stewardship plan will be based on a review of natural communities combined with park zoning (i.e. vegetation management units). Where appropriate, the recommendations below will be addressed in detail in the vegetation stewardship plan. More specific management direction may be included in the vegetation stewardship plan.

The vegetation stewardship plan may be linked to the fire management plan, which could consider confinement of wildfires in areas of fire-adapted vegetation communities (e.g. Pitch Pine) rather than complete suppression (Section 8.2.6).

A baseline survey of age and health of the Pitch Pine stands will be completed. The non-native conifers (e.g. Scots Pine) planted within the development zone will be evaluated and, if deemed to be invasive, they will be removed or thinned as necessary. Unless the vegetation stewardship plan determines that the Scots Pine plantation areas within the historical zone pose a threat to provincially significant natural values, these plantation areas will be retained as associated with a registered cultural heritage site, within their original footprint.

Native species may be planted for the purposes of campsite or trail rehabilitation and for increasing natural vegetated buffers between campsites. Vegetation may be mowed, cut or pruned only:

- within zone D1, as required to maintain road safety or to the extent necessary to minimize interference with intensive recreational use;
- to enable resource or recreation management (e.g. trail maintenance) authorized by this plan or by an approved implementation plan;
- to enable facility development specifically authorized by this plan; or
- to ensure public safety.

Commercial forest operations are not permitted within the park. Trees may not be cut for the purpose of providing firewood. Unless further direction is provided through a vegetation stewardship plan or other implementation plan, forest management will be limited to selective cutting of hazard trees such as those adjacent to trails, interior campsites and picnic sites, or development and access areas. Standing dead trees will be removed if they pose a safety risk, but otherwise will be left in place as wildlife habitat. In appropriate cases, broken or rotted limbs or crowns may be removed, leaving the lower trunk for wildlife habitat.

Windthrown trees will be left to decompose naturally, unless they pose a threat to health or safety, or interfere with regular park operations. Trees and brush cut in nature reserve and natural environment zones will be left to deteriorate naturally as close as possible to where they have been felled. Trees and brush cut in historical, development and access zones will be left to deteriorate naturally as close as possible to where they may have been felled, or if that is not feasible, may be removed for use as wood chips in the park.

Native insects and diseases affecting vegetation will be allowed to progress naturally, except where they threaten significant natural heritage values in nature reserve, historical or natural environment zones, or significant aesthetic values in development zones, in which case they will be controlled where feasible. The control of non-native insect and disease species may occur where there is a threat to the park's features or adjoining private lands. Where control is undertaken, it will be directed as narrowly as possible to the specific insect or disease so as to have minimal effects on the rest of the park's environment. Non-chemical and species specific controls will be used whenever possible.

Chemical fertilizers will not be used in the park, other than for the purposes of campsite rehabilitation within the development zone. Control of invasive non-native species will follow the direction in the South Eastern Zone Invasive Exotic Plant Management Strategy (Ontario Parks, 2003) and the policies of this plan. Alternatives to chemical pesticides will continue to be used where feasible. Under exceptional circumstances, where pesticides provide the only feasible option for control, chemicals that have low or no soil activity and for which environmental impacts have been tested and shown to be

minimal may be used outside the development zone. In these circumstances, chemical pesticides and suppressants will not be used for any vegetation management other than:

- insect and disease control and fire suppression under the conditions set out in this section of the plan;
- eradication of non-native species, where it has been demonstrated that other methods with less residual impact on the park's environment are not feasible; and
- control of Poison Ivy to ensure user health and safety within the development zone and on park trails.

8.2.3 Fisheries

The fisheries of Charleston Lake and other waterbodies within the park boundary will be managed in accordance with the appropriate MNR Kemptville District fisheries management plan. Wherever possible, fisheries management within the park will seek to maintain and enhance native, self-sustaining fish populations. Certain park waterbodies may be closed to fishing temporarily or permanently for fisheries research or management purposes. Sport fishing is permitted except in areas where fish sanctuaries are established. Fisheries activity in park waters will be subject to regulations outlined in provincial (*Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, Recreational Fishing Regulations*, MNR District fisheries management plans) and federal (*Fisheries Act*) fisheries regulations.

In natural environment zones, the MNR Kemptville District may stock native fish species into park lakes for the purposes of providing opportunities for sport fishing, when in accordance with an approved MNR District fisheries management plan. The impact of stocking on native fish populations must

be considered. The MNR District will notify Ontario Parks prior to any fish stocking or other management activities that may occur within the park boundary.

Mud Lake, within natural environment zone NE2, is stocked with Brook Trout. As there are few cold-water fisheries within southeastern Ontario, Mud Lake provides valuable sport fishing opportunities (Sport Fishing Division 10). Stocking of native species in Mud Lake has occurred for over 30 years as a management tool to provide additional opportunities for angling in the local area. An assessment of the health of the fishery of Mud Lake and the recreational value of the lake will be completed by Ontario Parks or for Ontario Parks in consultation with MNR Kemptville District staff. The assessment methods may include: creel census, gill netting, and Near Shore Community Index Netting (NSCIN). Stocking of native species may continue subject to additional direction to be determined by Ontario Parks in consultation with the MNR District, based on an evaluation of natural and recreational values of the fishery. Any such direction will be incorporated into the appropriate MNR District fisheries management plan. Stocking will cease if assessment indicates that the lake has an established, self-sustaining population that will provide a long-term fishery, or if assessment indicates that the stocking program is resulting in unacceptable impacts on populations of fish native to the lake.

Mechanized use to support the activity of sport fishing is not permitted within the boating restriction areas within the park, or on park lands, such as the Blue Mountain area of the park (i.e. ATVs). This restriction will be enforced. Publications providing information on fishing opportunities within the park will identify these restrictions, as an effort to assist in the implementation of

restrictions on all terrain vehicle use and off-trail snowmobile use within the Blue Mountain area of the park.

There are four commercial licences that include areas within the park boundary: one commercial food fishing licence and three commercial bait harvesting licences. Existing commercial fishing and bait harvesting on waterbodies wholly enclosed by the park (e.g. Mud Lake) will be phased out when either the licence is surrendered, the current licensee dies, or by December 31, 2009, whatever comes first. No new operations will be permitted in the park.

Provincial park policy prohibits the use or possession of bait fish within natural environment class parks. In order to comply with provincial park policy and reduce the risk of accidental introductions, Ontario Parks will seek to establish regulations under the appropriate legislation to prohibit the use or possession of live bait within waterbodies wholly contained within the park (Section 11.0). The *Ontario Recreational Fishing Regulations* list some restrictions on bait fish within Charleston Lake (e.g. live or dead alewife, gizzard shad, lake herring/cisco).

8.2.4 *Wildlife*

The management of wildlife will be directed toward promoting healthy and diverse populations. Management will follow environmental assessment requirements and approved species specific management plans (i.e. recovery plans).

Commercial fur harvesting has been phased out of the park as per provincial park policy, and new operations will not be permitted. Status Indians exercising treaty rights are permitted to continue commercial fur harvesting in all parks, subject to applicable legislation and

regulation. The transfer of traplines is permitted between Status Indians. Animal populations, including nuisance domestic animals, may be controlled when essential to protect human health and safety, natural heritage values, the health of species outside the park, or the values for which the park was established. The park will use visitor education to reduce conflicts between visitors and healthy native animals. Conflicts that have arisen due to visitor behaviour, such as feeding and littering, will normally not be considered as endangering human health and safety and will normally not require animal control. When animal control is necessary, techniques with minimal effects on the balance of the park's environment will be used. Any animal control measures (e.g. hunting, trapping) will be implemented directly by, or under the direct supervision of, Ontario Parks.

Ontario Parks is monitoring the deer population by studying the effects of deer browse on vegetation growth.

Raccoon Rabies

The park is within a high-risk area for raccoon rabies. A high-risk area is a 50-kilometre buffer zone around confirmed raccoon rabies cases. The MNR implemented a control program within this area in 2000 to help contain the outbreak. Under the authority of the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act*, raccoon rabies carrier species (e.g. raccoons, skunks, and foxes) found or trapped in the high-risk area cannot be moved or relocated within the high-risk area. This is designed to stop the spread of the disease. The MNR uses a variety of tools to battle the spread of rabies in wildlife. These include: site control where a rabid animal has been found, trap-vaccinate-and-release programs, and aerial baiting to immunize rabies carrier species and reduce the spread of the disease.

The MNR works in co-operation with local Health Units, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, the public and municipalities to increase public awareness of rabies. Detailed information on raccoon rabies is posted in the park each year. Control of rabid animals or rabies within the park will be subject to Declaration Order MNR-62 (Wildlife Rabies Control Program).

8.2.5 *Species at Risk*

Species at risk and their associated habitats will be protected, in keeping with the park's protection objective and provincial park policy directives (PM 11.03.02, Ontario Parks Policy, 1998). Populations of species at risk and rare plants will be monitored. The park may undertake management actions for species at risk as supported by research and directed through approved recovery plans or other species specific management plans.

Recovery plan work for some species (e.g. Black Ratsnake) will continue through co-operation between Ontario Parks and MNR District staff. Initiation of recovery plans for other species will be encouraged. The 1992 *Draft Charleston Lake Provincial Park Black Rat Snake Management Plan* will be reviewed in light of the recovery plan in progress and information collected through research. Research by qualified groups or individuals that is related to protection of species at risk will be encouraged when it may aid in species protection and recovery.

Status designations assigned to native Ontario species in MNR's proposed *Species at Risk in Ontario* list dated December 17, 2002 were referred to during preparation of this plan.

8.2.6 *Forest Fire Management*

The park is within the Southern Ontario fire management zone as identified in the Draft Forest Fire Management Strategy for Ontario (MNR 2002). This fire management zone is Outside the Fire Region (OFR) as defined in the *Forest Fires Prevention Act* (FFPA). The Southern Ontario Zone was created to reflect the role municipalities provide in the delivery of forest fire response. Within this zone, municipalities lead fire protection and management activities, under the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act* (FPPA) and through municipal by-laws. Provincial parks negotiate fire protection support with their local municipalities.

MNR does not have a mandate to provide forest fire protection under the FFPA in the area OFR. However, the Ministry's mandate to manage natural resources on lands of special interest (i.e. including provincial parks) includes planning and ensuring an adequate level of protection from fire. Where the level of protection is deemed inadequate relative to Ministry interests, the Ministry will liaise with the municipality to identify shortfalls and may agree to assist the municipality to elevate protection (AFFM Policy No. FM:2.04). Park staff may assist the municipality in suppression of fires, within the park boundary only, as training and equipment allow. Suppression techniques that have the least residual impact on the park's environment will be used whenever feasible. Protection from fire will be provided in all cases where life and property are threatened.

Forest fire management is the strategy of fire control and fire use practised in concert with land use objectives and conducted in a manner that considers environmental, social, and economic criteria. A forest fire management plan will be developed for the park. A fire

management plan provides for the rational use and control of fire based on an assessment of fire history, risk to facilities and other values, role of fire in the ecosystem, and park objectives. The plan will identify priorities for management and protection relating to the use of fire (i.e. prescribed fire), fire prevention, and fire control activities in the park to meet land use objectives.

The fire management plan may be linked to the vegetation stewardship plan, and could consider confinement of wildfires in areas of fire-adapted vegetation communities (e.g. Pitch Pine) rather than complete suppression (Section 8.2.2).

The fire management plan should consider any implications of climate change related to forest fire management. All fires within the park will be managed in accordance with the associated zone designation as outlined in the park management plan, the Provincial Forest Fire Management Strategy and the park's forest fire management plan. In the absence of a forest fire management plan (i.e. in the interim), any fire management work will follow the direction stated in the Provincial Forest Fire Management Strategy.

8.3 Cultural Resources

Archaeologists have identified many sites exhibiting evidence of aboriginal use within the park, including traditional use and archaeological sites, such as open-air campsites and rockshelters. The park also contains cultural landscapes and associated built heritage sites (e.g. farmsteads, fencelines, pillars). The Blue Mountain area of the park has had little evaluation of cultural heritage values, and archaeological work may be needed prior to any trail development identified in Section 7.2.

Significant cultural features will be protected from incompatible development wherever they occur in the park. Incompatible resource uses and recreational activities will be restricted or prohibited where necessary to protect significant cultural heritage values. Archaeological and historical artifacts may only be removed and heritage landscapes altered as part of approved cultural heritage research or management projects.

There have been studies of cultural heritage sites in the west area of the park. Several registered archaeological sites have been identified, with each site having an assigned Borden number. Further study will be encouraged. Management strategies for any archaeological sites found in the future may range from allowing the site to evolve without human interference, to research, excavation, and rehabilitation. Protection and management will be undertaken in consultation with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Recreation and First Nations. Cultural features within the historical zone will be managed according to policies for that zone. For registered cultural heritage sites outside of this zone, human interference will be discouraged, and these sites will be monitored annually and recognized as being significant on internal mapping. Monitoring will include assessment of stressors, identification of any management actions that require mitigation, and a photographic record (Section 7.3).

An archaeological assessment of the Blue Mountain area of the park, and any other areas added to the park and not yet assessed, will be completed when resources permit. The zoning plan for the park may be modified if, following further archaeological assessment, it is determined that any concentrations of cultural heritage sites require

management different from that provided in the current zoning plan.

8.4 Recreational Resources

Where deemed necessary, surfaces such as crushed rock screenings or wood chips may be added to park trails or campsites to reduce compaction of soil, damage to exposed roots and lessen the possibility of user injury. Trails will be clearly marked and signed to reduce deviation from the main route. Boardwalks, bridges and stairs may be constructed along trails to assist with erosion control and to ease difficulty of travel in extreme terrain. Trails are discussed further in Section 9.0.

Intensive recreational activities will be restricted to the development zone (D1) (e.g. car camping, beaches). The park provides opportunities to experience significant vistas and scenic landscapes, through low-intensity activities (e.g. hiking). Walk-in or boat-in campsites and picnic sites allow backcountry experiences along the lakeshore.

8.5 Climate Change

There is scientific evidence that human activities are changing the atmospheric concentration of several greenhouse gases (e.g. carbon dioxide, methane), which in turn affects the global climate, causing a warming trend in average global temperatures. Forests can act as a carbon sink, by removing and storing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Accordingly, forested lands, such as the park and surrounding Crown or privately owned forested lands, can help to moderate the effects of climate change. Global warming alters temperature and precipitation patterns. Some may consider a warming trend beneficial because of lower heating costs and longer, warmer growing seasons. However, the potential negative impacts of global warming are significant and could include an increase in the

frequency and intensity of severe weather events such as thunderstorms, ice storms, tornadoes, floods, droughts and heat waves. Rising temperatures and altered precipitation patterns could contribute to a drop in lake water levels, which would affect recreational uses and lake water quality of Charleston Lake. In addition, forests could be affected by an increase in the frequency of fires, insect infestation and diseases due to changes in temperature and precipitation. Climate change could also affect the distribution and abundance of habitat and populations of flora and fauna, resulting in a change in species composition within the park (MOE 2001).

These effects of climate change may influence the resource management policies of the park over the long term, and possibly within the 20 year term of this plan. In the event of longer and warmer summers, park visitation may increase, resulting in operational issues (e.g. increased impacts on trails and campsites). These effects should be considered during scheduled reviews of this plan, and activities adapted if required. Operational activities should stress conservation of flora and fauna and reducing energy usage, by the park and park users.

9.0 OPERATIONS POLICIES

Charleston Lake Provincial Park's operating plan will continue to provide Ontario Parks staff with the information required to operate the park on a day-to-day basis. The plan will provide specific direction for the management and operation of all park facilities and activities. In addition to the policies that follow, the plan will address such topics as budgets, staffing, maintenance, enforcement, and emergency services. The park operating plan will be consistent with this plan and the Ontario Provincial Parks Operating Standards,

and will be reviewed annually and updated as required.

Self-serve facilities may be developed, and individual volunteers and partner organizations may be involved in park programs, to ensure that park operations continue to meet the standards of the park operating plan (Section 9.3). Ontario Parks has the right to suspend operations of any facilities or services due to funding limitations, but in so doing will ensure that heritage values are not impaired and customer service standards are affected as little as possible.

Various new business practices may be introduced into park operations in accordance with the mandate of Ontario Parks. These may include:

- improving operating efficiency and controlling costs;
- contracting out some operating functions, if it is proven that outsourcing will provide better or similar service at a reduced cost; and
- improving customer service standards.

Ontario Parks' staff may use mechanized vehicles (e.g. motorboats, snowmobiles, motor vehicles) in the park to the extent necessary for efficient park management and operations. In approving research applications (Section 7.2), Ontario Parks may authorize researchers to use motorboats and motor vehicles to the extent necessary for research to be conducted safely and efficiently. Both Ontario Parks' staff and approved researchers will conform wherever possible to the limitations applicable to recreational users, and will travel through the park on foot wherever possible. Any other public agency may use any craft or vehicle for emergency rescues in the park, subject to the approval of the park superintendent.

A survey by an Ontario Land Surveyor of the park boundary in the Blue Mountain

area remains a priority to assist staff in resource management, protection, public safety and enforcement (Section 11.0). Park operations will be geared to minimizing environmental impacts. This could be accomplished in part by reducing energy use (e.g. through use of energy efficient fixtures, solar power), noise and light pollution (e.g. radio restrictions), and vehicle emissions within the park (e.g. encourage cycling rather than motorized vehicle use).

9.1 Heritage Education

Heritage education in provincial parks is intended to develop visitor awareness and appreciation of Ontario's natural and cultural heritage, fostering a commitment to protecting that heritage for all generations. Heritage education opportunities are meant to be educational and recreational, formal and informal, and accessible to all. There are three components of heritage education in parks: information, interpretation, and outdoor recreation. The level of service that each park provides depends on its significance and visitation. At Charleston Lake, heritage education is at the major activity level, the highest available.

The 1991 Visitor Services Management Plan (now referred to as a natural heritage education strategy) will continue to guide the park's information and communications services and interpretive and recreational programs. It will be reviewed annually and updated as required. The park will continue to offer:

- a comprehensive, high quality information system;
- a full range of interpretive and educational programs and opportunities, from unstructured individual exploration to organized programs directed to a variety of audiences; and
- appropriate outdoor recreation skills programs (e.g. canoeing).

As prescribed by the natural heritage education strategy, the principal themes of park interpretation are:

- North/South Transition (Frontenac Axis Geology, Ecology of the Axis – the “Tension Zone”); and
- Humans and the Environment (Aboriginal history, early European settlement, early recreation).

With the implementation of this park management plan, increased emphasis will be given to:

- interpreting the park's cultural heritage, including Aboriginal heritage, European settlement, and recreation;
- interpreting the implementation of the natural heritage management policies of this plan and any resource stewardship plans;
- providing appropriate information related to the protection of species at risk;
- providing information about the many benefits of parks to society (e.g. education, research, human health, quality of life);
- better promoting park programs and services in the Kingston to Brockville area, and increasing community involvement;
- providing information about the park role in the Thousand Islands – Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve;
- providing more services in spring, fall, and winter; and
- providing more and better services to school groups.

9.2 Research

Research by qualified individuals that contributes to the knowledge of natural and cultural history and to environmental and recreational management will be encouraged.

All research projects will require the written authorization of Ontario Parks, and must be consistent with provincial

parks research policies and all applicable legislation, including health and safety legislation. Research activities will also conform with *Ontario Parks, A Research and Information Strategy* (1997), as it relates to current science, research, and information needs, as well as Ontario Parks priorities. Natural sites altered by research activities will be rehabilitated as closely as possible to their previous conditions.

The following general fields of research are particularly appropriate to Charleston Lake Provincial Park and will be encouraged:

- landforms, vegetation, wildlife, fish and archaeology of the park;
- evolution of the park's landscapes in relation to natural processes and human activity;
- ecological restoration and management in the park;
- ecological impacts of interior campsites and picnic sites;
- the status of species at risk and rare species and communities; and
- optimal relationships between heritage protection and recreational enjoyment within the park.

Ontario Parks will evaluate and decide upon each application to conduct research using the following criteria, in addition to the research policies and strategies for provincial parks, the South Eastern Zone Research and Information Strategy (2001), and policies in this section of the plan:

- the subject matter of the research relative to the above priorities, and whether the proposed research complements existing research work and data;
- whether the park is a particularly suitable environment for the research, versus whether the research could be equally well conducted elsewhere;

- the methodology to be followed and the sensitivity of the resources to be investigated;
- for research on the islands, the researcher's skills and preparedness for safe boating without support from Ontario Parks; and
- the researcher's qualifications and experience, and past record, if any, in Charleston Lake or other provincial parks.

9.3 Partnerships

The Friends of Charleston Lake Park is a not-for-profit organization that has been a partner with the park since 1993. The Friend's goal is to assist in the natural and cultural heritage interpretative programs at the park. Whether through the sponsorship of written material, the underwriting of interpretive programs, the purchase of visitor centre displays and equipment, or the operation of their Friends' Nature Shop, the Friends provide invaluable assistance to the park.

Other formal partnership agreements may be established between Ontario Parks and third parties. Partners will represent the local community, and local and provincial interests. Partners will work with Ontario Parks to implement the approved park management plan and follow provincial park policies and regulations (Section 11.0).

9.4 Recreation Management

Entry to the park will be controlled year round and day use and camping fees will be collected from all park visitors during the operating season.

Cross-country skiing will continue to be permitted on marked trails that are groomed and track-set dependent on weather conditions and available resources.

Cycling will continue to be permitted on roads within the development zone and within access zone A1. Cycling will not be permitted on interpretive or pedestrian trails.

Snowmobiling will be permitted only on authorized OFSC trails in the Blue Mountain area (zone NR3), on the primary park road within the development zone (D1), and within access zone A1. Snowmobile use will be permitted on the existing Blue Mountain trails when there is a minimum consistent snow depth of 20 cm. Because of the exposed rock knobs and sensitive vegetation prevalent at the crest of Blue Mountain users will be encouraged to leave machines at the base and proceed on foot. The OFSC will be encouraged to locate an alternate route outside the park for trail users who are travelling from point to point, with a destination other than Blue Mountain. No new trails will be permitted within the park.

Sport hunting is permitted to continue within natural environment zone NE2 (Figure 2, Section 7.2). This recognizes the Ministry's commitment to continuing this traditional activity within the Blue Mountain area of the park, and allows for continuing this activity in the Leeder Block area recommended for addition to the park. In an effort to separate hunting from other recreational activities in the park, the pedestrian trails to Blue Mountain will be located outside of zone NE2. Ontario Parks will seek a restriction on the use of dogs for hunting within the zone NE2 area of the park, other than for the purposes of waterfowl hunting. Hunters will be required to inform park staff of their whereabouts and harvest records. Mechanized vehicles may not be used to support this activity. Signs will be placed at controlled entrances to this park area, indicating that hunting is permitted within zone NE2, and may be occurring based on annual hunting regulations.

The following recreational activities will not be permitted in the park:

- all-terrain vehicle use;
- aircraft takeoff and landing; and
- horseback riding.

Park values potentially affected by boating activities include amphibian and waterfowl nesting habitat along shorelines, and remote qualities of interior campsites and picnic sites. Federal regulations generally limit motorboat speeds to 10 km/h within 30 m of shore. Ontario Parks has boating restrictions in place for the waters of Runnings Bay, Slim Bay and Mud Bay within the park boundary. Ontario Parks will seek enforcement of speed limit restrictions on Charleston Lake under the *Canada Shipping Act* boating regulations. Ontario Parks will encourage compliance with present and future boating regulations through signage and other communications, visitor education, and enforcement. If the approach described herein does not adequately protect park values of concern, Ontario Parks may seek or support further regulations to restrict boating within the park boundary.

9.4.1 Trails

Trails in the park will be for non-mechanized use (e.g. hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing), aside from authorized snowmobile use as described above, and wheelchair use on stone chipped portions of the Westside Trail System. Existing trails within the west area of the park will continue, with no new trails outside the development zone (D1). New non-mechanized use trails may be created, and will be formally named as they are developed. Trail development policies and standards are discussed in Section 10.0. Opportunities for trails within lands recommended for addition to the park will be evaluated based on environmental values and

access considerations. Partnerships for trail maintenance will be explored. The park includes the following trails. The zone(s) that the trail passes through are noted in parenthesis.

Interpretive Pedestrian Trails (trail guide)

- Beech Woods (Zone NR2)
- Hemlock Ridge (Zone NR2)
- Shoreline Centennial (Zone NE4)
- Sandstone Island (Zone H1)

Pedestrian Trails (self guided)

- Westside Trail System (Tallow Rock Bay East and West) (Zones NE1, NR1)
- Quiddity Trail (lookout and portage) (Zones NE1, NR1)
- Portage between Red Horse and Charleston Lake (Zone NE5)
- Blue Mountain trails (Zones NE2, NR3)

Proposed New Pedestrian Trail to Blue Mountain (Zone NR3)

Unauthorized trails that begin on private lands south of Blue Mountain have traditionally been used for foot travel to the crest of Blue Mountain, largely during the fall season. Ontario Parks intends to provide an authorized pedestrian access to the crest of Blue Mountain over land from the south. In determining the location of the access route park staff may consider public land and agreements with private landowners for the existing trail routes. Trail design must be compatible with sensitive features and values of this area of the park, and respect any conditions of agreements with landowners. The trail will complement the existing authorized trail from Huckleberry Hollow.

The exact location for this trail has not been confirmed. Implementation of this direction will be subject to determination that the trail can be developed without impairing park values, and determining the location for access points (e.g. from

the municipal road to the south). Other factors to consider prior to implementing this direction include: trail design, parking, signs, user safety, and park resources (e.g. monitoring, enforcement, search and rescue).

Snowmobile Trail

- Athens and District Snowmobile Club trail (existing: Zone NR3, A1)

9.4.2 Mechanized Use (ATV, snowmobile, motorboats, aircraft, mountain biking)

Other than snowmobile use described above (Section 9.4), there will continue to be no authorized trails for mechanized recreational use. The park contains significant earth and life science features that are sensitive to mechanized traffic, and in the Blue Mountain area unauthorized all terrain vehicle use has caused severe damage to these park values. This plan proposes a commitment to park resources for monitoring and enforcement of restrictions on recreational mechanized vehicle use (e.g. ATV). Existing unauthorized trails will be closed and blocked, and rehabilitated if feasible (Section 11.0).

Buoys stretching across the bay north of Whitefish Island and Pike Island restrict motorboat access to waters of Runnings Bay within the park boundary. Motorized vessels are not permitted within Slim Bay or Mud Bay, in order to preserve their serene nature and habitat for wildlife species such as the Common Loon, Largemouth Bass, and Osprey. These boating restrictions will continue, in order to protect natural features and for safety reasons. Where necessary, other restrictions may be implemented as described above.

9.5 Tourism Services

Tourism services, such as the rental of recreational equipment (e.g. canoes, bicycles), may be developed and operated either through concession agreements or by Ontario Parks directly.

9.6 Marketing

A marketing plan will be prepared for the park consistent with the overall marketing strategy of Ontario Parks. The plan will develop strategies for:

- promoting the park on the basis of its natural and cultural heritage values and recreational opportunities, and appropriate enjoyment and appreciation of those values and opportunities; and
- promoting spring and fall use.

10.0 DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

All development undertaken or permitted by Ontario Parks will be carried out in accordance with approved site and development plans that meet development standards for provincial parks. The *Environmental Assessment Act* and other pertinent acts will be adhered to. The location, design, and materials of all facilities will as much as possible reflect the natural environment character of the park. Durable, low maintenance, and energy efficient designs and materials will be used wherever possible.

Any restoration or reconstruction of cultural heritage features will conform to high standards of cultural authenticity and will complement, not interfere with, the features themselves.

Any new utility lines required by Ontario Parks will be built underground within rights of way of open roads wherever possible.

Figure 2 shows existing development and specific major new developments authorized by this plan. The new trail to Blue Mountain authorized by this plan is not illustrated, as the location is yet to be determined (Section 9.4.1). Within the limits established by this plan, the final location and extent of all development will be determined through site and development planning processes.

Trails

Park trails are for pedestrian use only and may have stiles or other suitable barriers installed to prevent unauthorized access. New trails or trail segments and associated viewing decks or blinds will be built to standards appropriate to their trail type. For the proposed new trail to Blue Mountain indicated in Section 9.4.1, proposed locations and standards will be made available for public review and comment before the trail is built. Trailheads may display a map of the trail system highlighting the current location of the user. Minimum impact ethics for park users may be prominently displayed.

Roads

Woodvale Road

Woodvale Road is a municipal road, maintained by the Township of Leeds and the 1000 Islands. Approximately 450 m of this road passes through the development zone of the park (D1), and motorized use will continue. Ontario Parks will recommend that this road be removed from within the park boundary. Prior to any work on the road adjacent to the park (e.g. surface, culverts, etc), the township will be encouraged to notify the Park Superintendent. Ontario Parks will work with the township to mitigate any impact road maintenance may have on the park.

Mountain Street and Blue Mountain Road

These traveled roads are municipal roads, maintained by the Township of

Leeds and the 1000 Islands. Based on current mapping, approximately 430 m of Mountain Street diverges from the road allowance and passes through the park boundary. The location of this section of road in relation to the park boundary will be confirmed through a boundary survey. If confirmed to be within the current park boundary, Ontario Parks will recommend that this road be excluded from the park boundary. In the interim this section of traveled road has been zoned access (A1) to allow mechanized use to continue (Section 7.5). Prior to any work on the road within or adjacent to the park (e.g. surface, culverts, etc), the township will be encouraged to notify the Park Superintendent. Ontario Parks will work with the township to mitigate any impact road maintenance may have on the park.

Campgrounds

No expansion of the 3 campground areas within the development zone (D1) is proposed by this plan. Routine campsite maintenance may occur. Within the 3 car campgrounds some existing campsites may be closed and replacement sites created to allow for site rehabilitation.

Picnic areas

There are 5 mainland picnic areas and 2 island picnic areas within the park. These sites will continue, and use will be adequately monitored and regulations enforced. No new sites are proposed by this plan.

Boat Launch

There is one designated boat launch in the park. No new boat launches will be developed; the existing launch may be maintained as necessary subject to appropriate approvals.

Docking

Subject to obtaining appropriate approvals, a dock may be located at the Huckleberry Hollow landing to facilitate

water access to the trail to Blue Mountain.

11.0 PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Managing the park (e.g. stewardship, developments, operations) will be subject to Ontario Parks' environmental assessment requirements in accordance with the *Environmental Assessment Act*.

Implementation priorities

Priority will be given to completing the following major initiatives, as resources permit. Except where indicated otherwise in this plan, or as required under the *Environmental Assessment Act*, no further public consultation will be required for these developments to proceed.

In order to effectively manage the park, various resource stewardship plans will be prepared, and are listed among the initiatives that follow. A natural heritage education operating plan and park operating plan are already in place, and will be updated on an ongoing basis. Resource stewardship plans will be made available for public review and comment in advance of approval or amendment.

Implementation or site plans will precede major development or resource stewardship initiatives, and will include an appropriate level of public consultation.

General Operations

- Survey park boundary in Blue Mountain area of the park, Zone NR3 and NE2 (Section 9.0)

Administration

- Seek restriction of use of dogs for hunting, Zone NE2 (Section 9.4)
- Seek regulation under existing legislation (e.g. *Fisheries Act*, *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act*) to prevent the use or

possession of live bait within waters wholly contained within the park (Section 8.2.3)

- Review natural heritage education strategy annually and update as required (Section 9.1)

Development and Related Operations

- Create pedestrian trail to Blue Mountain as authorized land access (e.g. site plan and trail plan, meet EA requirements), Zone NR3 (Section 9.4.2)
- Build storage building near maintenance yard, Zone D1 (Section 7.4)

Amending Boundary Regulation

- Regulate areas of Crown land recommended for addition to the park by this plan (Section 6.0)
- Complete minor amendments to the boundary (Section 6.0, 10.0)

Resource Stewardship

- Close and block ATV trails in the Blue Mountain area of the park, and monitor and enforce restrictions, Zone NR3 and NE2 (Section 9.4.2)
- Complete fisheries assessment of Mud Lake, Zone NE2 (Section 8.2.3)
- Prepare vegetation stewardship plan (Section 8.2.2)
- Prepare forest fire management plan (Section 8.2.6)
- Complete studies/inventories to identify and manage species at risk in the park and monitor other species (Section 8.2.5)
- Support UNESCO Biosphere Reserve designation (Section 6.1.2)

Cultural Resources Management

- Monitor registered cultural heritage sites annually (Section 8.3)
- Complete archaeological assessment of the Blue Mountain

area of the park and any other areas added to the park and not yet assessed (Section 8.3)

11.1 Partnerships

Ontario Parks will continue to encourage and assist the growth and development of the Friends of Charleston Lake Park. Ontario Parks will continue its existing partnerships with the Friends and explore new ones. Partnerships could be explored with other agencies, community and interest groups, and the private sector. Such partnerships will be essential to the achievement of the park's protection, heritage appreciation, recreation and tourism objectives.

Existing partnerships with the Friends of Charleston Lake Park that will be continued include:

- Producing interpretive and educational materials;
- Employing student interpreters and researchers;
- Staging special events; and
- Operating the Friends of Charleston Lake Park Nature Shop in the Visitor Centre.

Future partnership areas that Ontario Parks may explore include:

- Increasing naturalist involvement in natural heritage inventory, research and stewardship, including monitoring of species at risk;
- Increasing community involvement in heritage education;
- Fostering corporate sponsorships of exhibits, programs, and special events; and
- Assisting with the Charleston Lake Management Plan as park resources are available.

12.0 PLAN REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

The approved Charleston Lake Park Management Plan may be reviewed as required at any time during its 20 year term, to confirm or revise its policies, or to address new issues or changing conditions. A review will require full public consultation.

In the interim, the plan may be amended. An amendment involves proposed changes to the plan's management or development policies that are consistent with the classification, zoning, goal and objectives of the park. Amendments can be either major or minor, and may be processed to correct existing or include new information (PM 11.02.03, Ontario Parks Policy, 1998).

- A major amendment would involve any change that would represent a marked departure from the plan's original intent and direction. Such changes could have significant impacts on the park's environment, affect users of adjacent lands, or result in significant public reaction. Major amendments will require full public consultation.
- A minor amendment would involve administrative or housekeeping changes that would not alter the plan's intent, affect the park's objectives or its ability to meet those objectives, or have any significant impacts on the park's environment or use. Public notice will be given of a minor amendment. Ontario Parks will determine what, if any, public consultation is needed prior to approval.

Anyone may initiate an amendment process by submitting a proposed amendment, with an explanation of its purpose, to Ontario Parks, which will determine whether and under what conditions the amendment process should proceed.

13.0 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The terms of reference for this management planning project were approved by the Managing Director of Ontario Parks in June of 2001. Public involvement in the development of the management plan for Charleston Lake Provincial Park began in August of 2001, with the mailing of the invitation to participate to individuals and groups believed to have an interest in this project. An advertisement was placed in local newspapers, and a notice was placed on the Environmental Registry of the *Environmental Bill of Rights*, announcing a 45 day opportunity for public review and comment on the terms of reference. In addition to requests to remain on or be added to the contact list for the project, 10 respondents submitted comments on the management planning process during the terms of reference stage. These comments were related to: protecting and preserving the park, concern about recreational activities on Charleston Lake, ensuring the health of Charleston Lake, the park's role in working with other stakeholders in the Charleston Lake area, the addition of Crown lands within the Leeder Block, the need for trails and trail maintenance, access to the park, and the role of the park in the UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve.

The background information, issues and plan alternatives document was released in February of 2002. Approximately 250 copies of the document and an accompanying questionnaire were distributed in February and March by either regular mail (print copy) or by email (link to electronic copy) to mandatory contacts, those who responded to the invitation to participate, and local media. A notice was posted on the Environmental Registry announcing the 45 day review period. Respondents were asked to send their questionnaire

and/or comments to Ontario Parks by April 20, 2002 (or bring it to an open house).

Open houses scheduled for March 21 and 23, 2002 were postponed because of an Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) strike; a notice to this effect was placed in local papers. Following the OPSEU strike, notice was sent by regular mail or e-mail that the open houses were rescheduled for June 5 and 8, 2002, and the comment period was extended to June 14, 2002. An advertisement was placed in local papers. A total of 41 responses were received for this stage of the project. Section 2.0 identifies the issues that were most commented on during public review of the background information, issues and plan alternatives document. Other highlights can be found in the Appendix.

Ontario Parks is committed to continuing consultation with government agencies, other ministries, interest groups and the public throughout this management planning process. The methods of consultation to be utilized during release of the preliminary park management plan are as follows:

Mailing Lists

- Mandatory Mailing List – as per Provincial Park Policy (PM 11.02.02)
- Individuals/groups/agencies that responded to the Invitation to Participate
- Adjacent commercial bait harvesters and commercial fishing operators
- New individuals/groups who request to be added to the mailing list at any stage

Newspaper advertisements

Newspaper advertisements or notices will be placed in the following newspapers:

- The Gananoque Reporter
- The Kingston Whig-Standard
- The Brockville Recorder & Times
- The Ottawa Citizen

Posted Notices

Notices of open houses or meetings will be posted in various public buildings in the Kingston, Brockville and Ottawa area, and at the park.

Environmental Registry

A notice will be posted on this website advertising of the opportunities for the public to comment.

Ontario Government

During public consultation, all Charleston Lake Provincial Park planning documents will be available at the park, the Ontario Parks South Eastern Zone office in Kingston, and the MNR Kemptville District Office.

14.0 KEY REFERENCES

All documents were prepared by and for MNR except as noted, and are available for inspection at the Ontario Parks, South Eastern Zone office. Copies of the asterisked documents are available without charge on request from Ontario Parks, 51 Heakes Lane, Kingston, Ontario K7M 9B1, (613) 531-5724. Planning documents produced for each stage of the process will be available on line at <http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/clpp/>.

Beyond 2000, 2000.

Background Information Issues and Plan Alternatives: Summary of Public Response, 2002.*

Charleston Lake Provincial Park Master Plan, 1978.

Charleston Lake Provincial Park Background Information, Issues and Plan Alternatives, 2002.*

Charleston Lake Provincial Park Natural Heritage Education Operating Plan, 2002 (updated annually).

Index List of Vulnerable, Threatened, Endangered, Extirpated or Extinct Species of Ontario, regularly revised.

Invasive Exotic Plant Management Strategy, Ontario Parks South Eastern Zone, 2003.

Life Science Survey and Evaluation of the Blue Mountain ANSI and Charleston Lake Crown Islands, by David J. White, 1994.

Life Science Survey and Evaluation of Charleston Lake Provincial Park, by David J. White, 1998.

Life Science Survey and Evaluation of the Leeder Block of Crown land, by David J. White, 2003.

Ministry of Natural Resources Statement of Environmental Values, 1995.

Ontario Parks, A Research and Information Strategy. Park One: Setting Priorities, 1997.

Ontario Provincial Park Management Planning Manual, 1994.

Ontario Provincial Parks: Planning and Management Policies, 1992.

Research and Information Strategy 2001 – 2006, Ontario Parks South Eastern Zone, 2001.

15.0 APPENDICES

15.1 Appendix 1. Background Information, Issues and Plan Alternatives: Highlights of Public Response

Section 13.0 of the preliminary park management plan outlines how the public has been involved in management planning for Charleston Lake Provincial Park. This appendix provides highlights of public response to the background information, issues and plan alternatives document released in February of 2002. A full summary of public response is available from Ontario Parks.

Respondents

Ontario Parks received a total of 41 responses to the background information, issues and plan alternatives document, representing about 16 percent of the documents distributed. Twenty-six of the responses (62 percent) were from individuals, of which 92 percent were permanent or seasonal residents from the park's local area (United Counties of Leeds and Grenville). Fifteen interest groups and public agencies also responded. Most of the responses were in the form of a completed questionnaire, but some were by letter or brief.

Responses

The responses for the issues for which policy alternatives were identified are summarized below, as well as frequent comments (received from two or more respondents). Comments received from two or more respondents on proposed policy and other sections of the document or the process as a whole are also summarized.

Access to Blue Mountain Area

Alternative 1: Access by water only from Huckleberry Hollow	22%
Alternative 2. Determine land access route entirely on public lands	44%
Prefer other alternative	12%
No response	22%

<u>Frequent comments:</u>	respondents commenting
Secure land access public or private	3
Prefer alternative 2 only if environmentally feasible	3

Hunting

Alternative 1. Hunting continues, restrict use of dogs to waterfowl	24%
Alternative 2. Hunting continues, restrict dogs and no archery	22%
Prefer other alternative	29%
No response	24%

<u>Frequent comments:</u>	respondents commenting
No hunting/No hunting - phase out	9
Chose Alternative 2 but prefer no hunting	3

All terrain and off road vehicles

Alternative 1. Not permitted except as necessary by park staff	56%
Alternative 2. As in Alt. 1, but allow for disabled person use	12%
Prefer other alternative	15%
No response	17%

<u>Frequent comments:</u>	respondents commenting
Allow in Leeder Block	2
All terrain/motorized wheelchair rather than ATV for alt.	2

Mountain Biking

Alternative 1. Allow on trail to Blue Mountain, access from water	2%
Alternative 2. Create a multi-use trail in Blue Mountain and Leeder Block	17%
Alternative 3. Leave as is, only on roadways in development zone	46%
Prefer other alternative	7%
No response	27%

<u>Frequent comments:</u>	respondents commenting
Allow user groups/volunteers to maintain trails	4
Alternative 2 if will be financed (doubted trail will be built)	3

Classification, Goal, Objectives, Zoning Policy

	respondents commenting
Park goal – should not include improving self-reliance of park system	5
Overriding objective should be protection	5
Zoning should be based on resource significance	4
Blue Mountain area should be considered a wilderness zone	3
Adopting new business practices should not be an objective	3

Proposed Policies

	respondents commenting
Support proposed cultural resources policy	5
Support preparation of a fire management plan	5
Support continuation of existing boating policy	4
Support proposed species at risk policy	4
Eliminate stocking of fish in Mud Lake	4
Support UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve	4
Use volunteers for trail maintenance	3
Support proposed policy for Charleston Lake watershed health	3
Preamble hard to follow/confusing	2
Support potential addition of Leeder Block	2
Support addition of Leeder Block if follows restrictive policy (no hunting)	2
Support proposed campground development policy	2
Invasive species – “will be protected” not possible	2

General Document and Planning Process Comments

	respondents commenting
Blue Mountain – concern with enforcement, access (dock), monitoring	7
Favourable comment on document/process	7
Concern about park resources (enforcement of policy)	2
Preserve core areas/avoid fragmentation/no new roads	2
Rephrase statement on timing of phase-out for commercial licences	2

15.2 Appendix 2. Permitted Uses and Development

The permitted uses in this table are in accordance with *Ontario Provincial Parks: Planning and Management Policies* (1992).

The permitted uses and development policies in this table will not abrogate or derogate from any Aboriginal or treaty right recognized or affirmed by the *Constitution Act*.

	Nature reserve zones	Historical zone	Natural environment zones	Development zone	Access zones
<u>Commercial Activities (Section 8.0)</u>					
Aggregate Extraction					
Commercial bait fishing					
Existing	Y		Y		
New					
Commercial fishing					
Existing	Y		Y		
New					
Commercial fur harvest					
Existing					
New					
Commercial hydro development					
Commercial timber harvest					
Commercial tourism					
Mineral exploration/development					
<u>Management Activities (Section 9.0)</u>					
Fire suppression	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Fish stocking	Y		Y		
Existing roads (non-park use)				Y	Y
<u>Appreciation Activities (Section 10.0)</u>					
Nature appreciation-self guided	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Photography and painting	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Research	Y	Y	Y	Y	
<u>Recreation Activities (Section 9.0)</u>					
All-terrain vehicle use					
On trails					Y
Off trails					N
Boating (powered) ¹			Y/NE6 ²		
Camping			Y/NE1, NE4 ³	Y	
Cycling				Y ⁴	Y
Horseback riding					Y
Non-motorized recreation travel (canoeing, kayaking, hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Rock climbing					
Snowmobiling	Y/NR1 ⁵		Y/NE2 ⁵	Y ⁶	Y
Sport fishing	Y		Y		
Sport hunting			Y/NE2		

	Nature reserve zones	Historical zone	Natural environment zones	Development zone	Access Zones
<u>Development permitted</u>					
Walking trails	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Bike trails				Y	Y
Basic day use facilities ⁷	Y ⁸	Y	Y	Y	
Intensive day use facilities ⁹				Y	
Campgrounds			Y/NE1, NE4 ¹⁰	Y	
Interpretive facilities	Y ¹¹	Y ¹¹	Y ¹¹	Y	
Visitor information and service facilities				Y	
Necessary signs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Roofed accommodation	Y/NR2 ¹²	Y/H1 ¹²			
Access roads and parking	Y/NR2, NR3 ¹³	Y/H1 ¹³	Y/NE4 ¹³	Y	
Main roads and entry station				Y	

Notes to Table 1

Y Permitted

Y/xx Permitted in zone(s) xx only

Y/xxi Permitted in zone(s) xx only, and only under the conditions in note i.

Blank Not permitted or not possible

¹ As long as commercial bait harvesting and bait fishing are permitted in accordance with Section 8.0, licenced harvesters are not subject to the restrictions shown for this use within Runnings Bay.

² Ontario Parks has a restriction on motorized boating within Slim Bay, Mud Bay and the boat restriction area on Runnings Bay. Ontario Parks will seek to restrict personal watercraft from these areas, as well as from Boathouse Cove and within the park boundary adjacent to interior picnic and camping sites.

³ Interior campsites (boat-in, walk-in), vault privies.

⁴ On roads only.

⁵ On existing authorized OFSC trails only; existing non-conforming use to continue.

⁶ On primary park road only.

⁷ Individual picnic sites, vault privies, etc.

⁸ Vault privies only, as required to support walking trail use only.

⁹ Picnic shelters, group picnic areas, comfort stations etc...

¹⁰ Boat-in / walk-in only (i.e. low intensity).

¹¹ Minimal facilities only.

¹² Existing development only; permitted as a continuing nonconforming use (see Section 7.1, 7.3)

¹³ For access to walking trails only.

The park superintendent has the authority under the *Provincial Parks Act* to close any part of the park (i.e. land or water) to any use, or to restrict any use, for any period of time. In public use areas, this authority would only be used for emergency closures, either to protect park values or to ensure public safety.