



Kawartha Highlands

Signature Site

Management Plan
Terms of Reference

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or from Ministry of Natural Resources offices in Bancroft, Minden and Peterborough

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Approval Statement

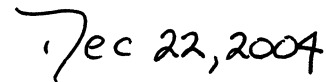
I am pleased to approve the following terms of reference to guide the preparation of the management plan for Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park.

Approval of the terms of reference is the first step in a multi-stage process for preparing a park management plan. In identifying the tasks to be completed, roles and responsibilities, and a tentative work schedule, it provides staff, Aboriginal communities and stakeholders with an outline of the planning and consultation process that is required to complete and approve the management plan.

I encourage all interested parties to participate in the preparation of the Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park Management Plan.



Adair Ireland-Smith
Managing Director
Ontario Parks



Date

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1.0 Introduction

These terms of reference will provide Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources staff, stakeholders, local Aboriginal communities and the general public with an outline of the management planning process proposed for the Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park (KHSSP). This document defines the rationale for initiating a planning process, and identifies the staff, resources and key steps required for the preparation of a management plan for the park.

The Kawartha Highlands Signature Site (KHSS) was identified in 1999 as one of nine Featured Areas, now known as Signature Sites, within the Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy (LUS). It is recognized as having a range of natural and recreational values that warrant special attention and an increased level of planning, management and promotion.

Located on the southern edge of the Canadian Shield, midway between the city of Peterborough and the town of Bancroft, the Signature Site is an approximately 37,500 ha area of Crown land (Figure 1). Much of this large, scenic area is undisturbed, with high quality natural, cultural and recreational values. The rugged bedrock landscape contains numerous small lakes and wetlands, the shorelines of which contain uncommon eastern and southern plant species.

Included in the KHSS is the existing Kawartha Highlands Provincial Park, an approximately 1,800 ha area of Crown land initially regulated under the *Provincial Parks Act* in 1989. This area has been a non-operating park since its regulation (meaning no facilities or onsite staffing), although limited interior camping is permitted on designated campsites. An interim management statement was prepared in 2001 to guide custodial management of this area until such time as a management plan for the entire Signature Site is prepared.

The LUS set out the government's intention to establish the Kawartha Highlands Signature Site as the largest protected area south of Algonquin Provincial Park. A Local Stakeholder Committee (LSC) was established to make recommendations to the Minister of Natural Resources on guidelines for land use, the appropriate protection designation (i.e., regulation of the area as a provincial park, a conservation reserve or some combination of these), and possible boundary refinements. Prior to making their recommendations, the LSC offered

substantial opportunities for public involvement and consultation. *The Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park Act, 2003 (KHSSP Act)* is largely based on the recommendations of the government appointed LSC and further focussed discussions between major stakeholders and the government which resulted in a Charter agreement for the protection of the Kawartha Highlands Signature Site.

The Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Charter, 2003 (the Charter) established the intent of the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) to manage this area as an operating natural environment class provincial park. The Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park will be managed under the provisions of the *KHSSP Act*. The *KHSSP Act* outlines site-specific policy and operational direction for the KHSSP and incorporates the provisions of the *Provincial Parks Act*. Where different than the *Provincial Parks Act*, the *KHSSP Act* will take precedence.

Key components of sound planning for the future of this park are continued public input, stakeholder involvement and Aboriginal community participation. The planning process is designed to encourage and incorporate input, review and comment from a wide cross-section of people such as Aboriginal community representatives, private landowners, environmentalists, business and industry representatives and recreational users. Continued public involvement in planning and management of this area is essential. It is recognized that the input and involvement of nearby Aboriginal communities in the creation of the management plan is critical to the ultimate success of this planning process. A Management Advisory Board (MAB), established under Section 5 of the *KHSSP Act* in August 2003, will provide on-going planning and management advice to the Minister of Natural Resources as a key component of the MNR's commitment to ongoing public involvement.

2.0 Rationale for Management Planning

Ontario Parks is responsible for preparing management plans for all provincial parks in the province. Management plans address topics such as zoning, resource management, operations, development and seasonal uses.

The Charter directed that preparation of a management plan be initiated within one calendar year of the legal establishment (i.e., proclamation of the Act upon regulation of this site) of the KHSSP. The management plan will address a wide range of issues, and will incorporate the direction that has been identified in the legislation and Charter. It will establish broad resource management policies for the park. The management plan and the resource management policies will provide for the traditional uses that occur within the area and will also respond, where necessary, to the LSC recommendations that have not been specifically dealt with in the Charter.

The management plan will contain provisions that the protection of the ecological integrity of the park is recognized as the overriding priority in the management and administration of the park, so as to preserve, protect and enhance the natural composition and abundance of native species, biological communities and ecological processes in the park (Section 2 of the *KHSSP Act*).

While the management plan will set the overall direction for the management of the park, specific actions needed to implement the plan may be provided in subsequent plans and strategies. These implementation plans will provide further detailed guidance for the operation, management and protection of the parks resources.

The park management planning process will provide:

- A definition of the role of the protected area within the provincial parks and protected areas system;
- The designation of zones for the protection, planning, development and management of the parks natural, cultural and recreational resources;
- Direction in planning, management and development of the park to provide assurance that the environment will be protected and also that the process will be responsive to public interests;

- Direction for new public access roads that may be constructed in the park in accordance with Section 10 (2) of the *KHSSP Act* (see Section 7.0 of this document);
- Guidance for the preparation of subsequent plans required to implement protected area policies and to achieve program objectives;
- A rationale and priorities for the funding of capital development and park operations;
- A record of consultation and input into the planning process; and
- A basis for ongoing monitoring of the development and management of the Signature Site.

The park management plan will include, but not be limited to:

- An overall vision, goal and objectives (already established in the Charter and legislation);
- Zoning;
- Policies for resource stewardship, operations and development:
 - Natural resources (e.g., lands and waters, vegetation, wildlife and fisheries),
 - Cultural resources (e.g., Aboriginal values, historical sites),
 - Operations (e.g., recreation management, natural heritage education, tourism services, marketing and research),
 - Development (e.g., roads and other access points, trails, parking, other infrastructure),
 - Ongoing adjacent communities involvement (e.g., cottage communities, municipalities, recreational users);
- Implementation priorities for stewardship, operations and development;
- Social and economic impact analysis; and
- A summary of all consultation.

The authority and direction for management planning is based upon legislation and policies that govern Ontario Parks and Crown land under the jurisdiction of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR).

3.0 Vision, Goals and Objectives

Some of the documents that provide this authority and direction, and which will be referred to throughout the planning process, are included below.

- *Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park Act*. R.S.O. 2003
- Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Charter. OMNR 2003
- Kawartha Highlands Provincial Park, Interim Management Statement. OMNR 2001
- *Provincial Parks Act*. R.S.O.1990, Chapter P.34
- Ontario Provincial Park Management Planning Manual. OMNR 1994
- Ontario Provincial Parks: Planning and Management Policies, 1992 Update. OMNR 1992
- Provincial Parks Policy PM 1.00 – Implementation Details. OMNR 1989
- Ontario’s Living Legacy – Land Use Strategy. OMNR 1999
- *Environmental Assessment Act*. R.S.O.1990, Chapter E.18
- A Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves. OMNR 2004
- Declaration Order MNR-59/2
- Crown Land Use Policy Atlas. OMNR 2003
- *Environmental Bill of Rights*. R.S.O.1993, Chapter 28
- *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. R.S.O. 1987
- *Public Lands Act*. R.S.O. 1990
- *Crown Forest Sustainability Act*. R.S.O. 1994
- Nature’s Best – Ontario’s Parks and Protected Areas: A Framework and Action Plan. OMNR 1997
- District Fisheries Management Plans 1988-2000. OMNR 1988

While site-specific goals have been developed for the Kawartha Highlands as outlined below, the fundamental goal of the provincial parks system is:

To provide a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities and to protect provincially significant natural, cultural and recreational environments in a system of Provincial Parks.

Derived from that goal statement are four objectives which provide specific direction for the management of the park system: protection, heritage appreciation, tourism and recreation.

During the development of the Charter agreement, a vision for this area was determined and agreed upon by the signatories. As stated in the Charter (page 5),

“Our vision for the Kawartha Highlands Signature Site would be that of a legacy of protection and stewardship, ensuring that the semi-wilderness characteristics are preserved. The protection of the ecological integrity of the area is of paramount importance. Long-term protection of both natural and cultural heritage values is required for the preservation of this unique area. Careful management is required to protect the environmentally sensitive aspects of the area, and to maintain it for the benefit of future generations. Traditional activities including cottaging will continue to be an integral component of the area, and diverse low-density recreational opportunities will continue to be available. Continued public involvement in the planning and management of this area is essential. Management of the area will respect the existing private lands and tenure within the park.”

4.0 Planning Area

Section 2 of the *KHSSP Act* outlines the purposes or objectives of the Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park:

2. The purposes of this *Act* are to ensure,

- (a) *that the protection of the ecological integrity of the Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park is recognized as the overriding priority in the management and administration of the Park, so as to preserve, protect and enhance the natural composition and abundance of native species, biological communities and ecological processes in the Park;*
- (b) *that the policies governing the Park, including its management, will protect the Park's natural and cultural values, maintain its traditional uses and provide the opportunity for recreational activities that are compatible with the natural heritage values and semi-wilderness character of the Park;*
- (c) *that the Park will be managed so as to permit continued access to and enjoyment of private property and of Crown land that is subject to a land use permit, licence of occupation or lease under the Public Lands Act where that private property or Crown land is surrounded by Park lands or abuts Park lands; and*
- (d) *that decisions with respect to the development and any major revision of the management plan for the Park are made with prior public consultation.*

All Charter stakeholders agreed that the protection of the ecological integrity of the Kawartha Highlands is essential, and is the overriding priority. To achieve this objective, management of the area should consider and address:

- how natural ecological processes may be sustained;
- how genetic, species and ecosystem diversity will be assured for the future; and
- how the area should be managed in the context of the broader ecoregion.

Particular consideration must be given to protecting and managing the populations and habitats of any endangered, threatened or species of special concern that may be identified.

The planning area for the park management plan will include all lands and waters to be regulated under the *Provincial Parks Act* as the KHSSP (Figure 1), an area of approximately 37,500 ha. The regulated area will exclude all private land holdings surrounded by or adjacent to this site.

While planning will deal specifically with lands and waters within the park boundaries, it will recognize the effect that activities on adjacent lands outside of the park boundaries may have on park management, operations or activities.

5.0 Planning Organization

Due to the complexity of Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park and its significance on a local and provincial level, a planning team approach will be taken. The planning team will consist of a project team, Management Advisory Board and support staff.

The South Eastern Zone Manager's office will provide overall project coordination, guidance and direction. The Zone Manager will have approval authority for all management planning documents prior to review and approval by the Manager, Planning and Research Section and the Managing Director, Ontario Parks.

The project team, supported by a significant consultation process, will develop the management plan. The MAB will provide on-going planning and management advice to the Minister of Natural Resources and the project team. The project team will also receive guidance and assistance from technical support people or groups. Table 1 outlines the KHSSP management planning team.

Table 1: Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park Management Planning Team

PROJECT TEAM	AFFILIATION / LOCATION
David Coulas	Park Superintendent and Project Manager, Bancroft
Nancy Wilson	Project Planner, Bancroft
Jennifer Fay	Senior Park Operations Technician, Bancroft
Pam Lawrence	Senior Park Clerk, Bancroft
Kim Harris	GIS Database Technician, Bancroft
Graham Cameron	Biologist Intern, Bancroft
Susan Grigg	South Eastern Zone Park Planner, Kingston
MANAGEMENT ADVISORY BOARD (As of January 2005 – new appointments possible on yearly basis)	AFFILIATION / LOCATION / APPOINTMENT END DATE
Kim Dunford	Chair, Apsley; August 5, 2006
Wally Hobbs	Vice Chair, Port Hope; August 5, 2006
Dana Dvorak	Member, Toronto; August 5, 2005
Murray Kidd	Member, Lakefield; August 5, 2005
Donald LaCombe	Member, Kinmount; August 5, 2006
Wendy Lyttle	Member, Newmarket; August 5, 2006
John Marsh	Member, Peterborough; August 5, 2006
Kathy Reid	Member, Norwood; August 5, 2005
Lorne Sellick	Member, Courtice; August 5, 2005
Vacant	Vacant Members (2)
ADVISORS AND SUPPORT STAFF	AFFILIATION / LOCATION
Various internal staff in Ontario Parks and MNR; external partners; NGO; stakeholders; public and Aboriginal communities. The Board may establish sub-committees to assist this process.	

5.1 Project Team Roles and Responsibilities

A Project Team consisting of MNR staff (both Ontario Parks and District) will have an array of responsibilities, including: gathering and analyzing resource information; managing the planning process; overseeing contractors and consultants; developing planning options for review and consultation; and preparing planning documents. This team will deliver the products associated with the completion of the KHSSP management plan.

Under the direction of the project manager, project team members will use their technical and professional expertise to address issues that arise during the planning process and to produce planning documents leading to an approved

management plan. The collective responsibilities of the team members are as follows:

- function as a Team through regular contact at planning team meetings;
- ensure that appropriate planning guidelines are followed and that all legislative requirements are met;
- ensure that the MAB is substantially involved in the management planning process;
- collect, review and update KHSSP background information;
- encourage integration of park planning and District program objectives;
- organize and implement effective consultation;
- attend related meetings and information centers as required;

- assist in reviewing and responding to input;
- prepare and review various management planning products and documents; and
- make appropriate modifications to products and documents as required in light of public and Aboriginal community input and internal and external reviews.

For management planning, the following are the roles of project staff:

5.1.1 Project Manager

The project manager will have the following responsibilities:

- Project lead and chair of project team meetings;
- Main contact for project team on concerns and issues, and for media relations;
- Provide background on issues and operational matters;
- Maintain communications with the South Eastern Zone Manager and the planning team, including the MAB, throughout the management planning process;
- Maintain communications with the Aboriginal communities, local communities, stakeholders and interested parties;
- Encourage Aboriginal communities and stakeholders to actively participate in the planning process;
- Coordinate and implement the planning schedule and arrange and facilitate meetings as required;
- In consultation with the planning team, determine planning priorities;
- Maintain public relations on matters pertaining to the planning process and provide liaison with interested individuals, groups and organizations;
- Provide technical direction on planning and park operations;
- Provide coordination with provincial planning initiatives;
- Provide the lead on natural and cultural heritage values protection;
- Complete work planning, coordinate communications and prepare funding proposals for Ontario Parks South Eastern Zone Manager.

5.1.2 Project Planner

The project planner's responsibilities will include:

- Lead preparation and review of various management planning products and documents;
- Provide background on prior public process for KHSSP, past issues, intent of the accepted LSC recommendations and Charter development,
- Coordinate release of planning documents at each stage of the planning process;
- Coordinate all consultation and communication requirements, including media, translation requirements under *French Language Services Act*, preparation of ads, open house displays, visual aids and comment forms;
- Ensure adherence to requirements and conditions of the *Environmental Assessment Act*, *Environmental Bill of Rights*, and the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*;
- Coordinate map production with GIS staff;
- Provide support documents following all planning stages to summarize comments received;
- Seek District input and provide advice on District initiatives, opportunities and issues;
- Interpret management intent of adjacent land use designations in Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy; and
- Serve as contact for management activities on adjacent Crown lands in Bancroft District.

5.1.3 Senior Park Operations Technician

The senior park operations technician's responsibilities will include:

- In consultation with the project team, lead the environmental assessment process for potential new public access roads (prepare terms of reference for environmental study report and coordinate preparation);
- Review of various management planning products and documents;
- Provide information about current operations, facilities, resource management issues and community concerns; and
- Overall assistance to the project manager and project team.

5.1.4 Senior Park Clerk

The senior park clerk's responsibilities will include:

- Compile mailing lists for all interested park users, public, Aboriginal communities, organizations and individuals;
- Updating mailing lists at each stage of planning;
- Recording responses during each stage of planning; and
- Provide administrative assistance to the project manager and project planner.

5.1.5 GIS Database Technician

The GIS database technician's responsibilities will include:

- Preparing map products required for management planning purposes;
- Entering comments received during process into consultation database;
- Collecting information required for the management planning process; and
- Overall assistance to the project manager and project team.

5.1.6 Biologist Intern

The biologist intern's responsibilities will include:

- Providing biological knowledge to assist planning team;
- Providing biological input into documents prepared for consultation (Background Information);
- Collecting information required for the management planning process; and
- Overall assistance to the project manager and project team.

5.1.7 Zone Park Planner

The zone park planner's responsibilities will include:

- Provide guidance, policy direction and interpretation, and planning assistance to the project team;
- Assist in preparation and review of various management planning products and documents and submit for approvals;

- Assist project planner with ensuring adherence to requirements of the *Environmental Assessment Act*, *Environmental Bill of Rights*, and the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* throughout the process; and
- Coordinate Corporate Office and South Eastern Zone office technical or professional guidance as required.

5.2 Management Advisory Board

The MAB was established through the *KHSSP Act* (Section 5). The Board consists of approximately 10 members plus a chair, all appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, representing the diverse interests of local and provincial stakeholders and users, but not representing specific groups, organizations or associations. The role of the Board is to provide advice to the Minister who retains the final decision-making authority. The Board is governed by a Terms of Reference which describes their mandate, operating practices and administrative procedures. The Charter has indicated that the Board will "play a substantial role in the preparation of the management plan for the KHSS...".

The *KHSSP Act* (Section 5(3)) outlines the specific functions of the MAB:

- (3) *The management advisory board shall provide advice to the Minister with respect to the planning and management of the Park including,*
 - (a) *the identification of roads or trails that are to be approved as pre-existing roads and trails for the purposes of this Act;*
 - (b) *the preparation of the management plan for the Park;*
 - (c) *advertising and marketing with respect to the Park;*
 - (d) *Park fees;*
 - (e) *matters relating to the long-term sustainability of the Park; and*
 - (f) *such other matters as may be specified by the Minister.*

6.0 Integration and Support

For the management planning process, the Board's responsibilities will include:

- receiving and reviewing research and other pertinent information provided by the project team;
- providing the planning team with ongoing feedback from the community on matters pertinent to management planning;
- maintaining positive lines of communication with the public at large through continued involvement in consultation both formal and informal;
- recommending roads and trails that should be approved as pre-existing roads and trails;
- working with the project team on the formulation of planning documents, specifically the Management Options, Preliminary Management Plan and final Management Plan for approval; and
- providing advice to the Minister on the Final Management Plan for the Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park.

Recommendations from the Board must meet the spirit and intent of the Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Charter (June 2003) and contribute to the realization of the Vision for the Park, including the protection of the ecological integrity, which is of paramount importance.

The Board will strengthen the communication aspect of their work with a webpage on the Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park official website. This will include the posting of information relevant to their undertakings, for example, the approved Terms of Reference for Board work, biographies of members, meeting summaries and all newsletters which have been released for information purposes.

5.3 Advisors and Technical Support

Staff from the Ontario Parks South Eastern Zone Office and Planning and Research Section, Bancroft District Office, Southern Regional Office, and other federal and provincial government agencies will provide ongoing support and assistance to the KHSSP Planning Team as required. In addition, advice or support will be encouraged and/or sought from the general public, Aboriginal communities, stakeholder groups, non-government organizations and academic experts. This advice or support may be in the form of participation on sub-committees as required by the Board.

To be relevant and effective, this management plan should not be prepared in isolation. Activities on surrounding landscapes may affect the park's natural processes, and similarly, park management and operations activities can have impacts on surrounding private and public lands. Lands adjacent to the park will also be considered during the planning process. Although the plan will not specifically prescribe management policy for these lands, it is important that they be considered in the management planning process given the potential for park operations, and activities of adjacent landowners, to affect one another. This greater ecosystem approach complements the priority of protection for the KHSSP.

MNR District staff will be consulted to ensure a strong link between Signature Site Park objectives and the management of adjacent Crown lands within Bancroft District. Park users, adjacent landowners, residents of the nearby communities, Aboriginal communities, interested stakeholders and other Crown ministries will be consulted during the planning process to ensure that their interests and all relevant resource planning and management programs are considered when establishing policy for KHSSP.

The Charter has specifically identified the need to work closely with Municipalities: "Planning of the Park should be coordinated with the municipalities so as to respect municipal responsibilities. Municipal support is essential to ensure that the park vision and values are fully considered in the review of any proposals for new lots, plans of subdivision or commercial development on private lands within or close to the park." (Charter, page 10)

An amendment to the Crown Land Use Policy Atlas may be required to address any changes to permitted activities and use.

7.0 Planning Process and Schedule

The Signature Site Park management planning process will follow the Ontario Provincial Park Management Planning Manual (1994) but will be adapted specifically for the Kawartha Highlands to ensure that the planning process meets the expectations of the stakeholders involved to date (a “made in Kawarthas” process). This initiative will build on existing resource management direction found in the *KHSSP Act* and Charter. The major steps in the process and their tentative completion dates, along with the consultation components, are outlined in Table 2. The process is intended to guide the project to completion of an approved park management plan for KHSSP. The planning schedule reflects the goal of project completion by Fall 2007. The planning schedule also reflects the significant interest in all KHSSP consultations to date by exceeding the minimum timeframe requirements for receiving comments during the stages for reviewing both the management options document and the preliminary park management plan.

The proposed schedule recognizes:

- the significance of the resource;
- the complexity of the issues to be addressed;
- the size of the area involved;
- the number of communities and stakeholders who will be participating in the process; and
- the desire for comprehensive public and Aboriginal participation.

Opportunities for public and Aboriginal involvement will not be compromised to meet the identified timeframes within this document.

Access to the park and park facilities is one of the issues to be addressed through management planning. As part of consideration of this issue, the planning process will also include the evaluation of potential new public access roads within the park as provided for in Section 10 (2) of the *KHSSP Act* (Charter, page 11):

“Despite subsection (1), two new roads may be constructed in the Park, one of which shall provide public access to the Park from the western border of the Park and the other shall provide public access to the Park from the eastern border of the Park...”

Consultation on access, including the location of two potential new roads, will occur during the management planning process. This process will include an examination of the potential effects that these proposed public roads will have in and around the park. Because the protection of the ecological integrity of the park is recognized as the overriding priority in management planning, an assessment of the effects that creating these proposed roads will have on the natural environment is very important. This would include a study of the potential effects on aquatic and other plant and animal species, shoreline habitat, watershed considerations, etc. As well, management planning must take into consideration the effects that these proposed roads may have on cottagers, adjacent residential communities, existing Treaty and Aboriginal rights, and the effects on cultural and recreational values of the park. This study will likely require the services of an independent consultant who will assess various road options, undertake consultation and provide his or her recommendations regarding these roads to the planning team. This process will follow A Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves, in accordance with the Ministry’s requirements under the *Environmental Assessment Act*. Harmonization of the Class EA process and the management planning process will occur (i.e. these processes will take place concurrently).

Table 2: Summary of Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park Management Planning Process

STAGE IN PLANNING PROCESS COMMUNICATIONS	TOPICS TO ADDRESS	PRODUCTS AND PROPOSED SCHEDULE	PUBLIC AND ABORIGINAL CONSULTATION AND STRATEGIES
Terms of Reference and Background Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning area • Planning team and responsibilities • Integration • Schedule • Public consultation • Advisory committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional context • Resource characteristics • Adjacent land uses • Land tenure • Access • Existing development • Market analysis • Planning constraints 	Approved Terms of Reference Early Summer 2005 Background Information Late Summer 2005	Invitation to Participate (45 days) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media notice • Direct mailing • Environmental Registry posting and Opportunity to Review Background Information (45 days) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media notice • Direct mailing • Environmental Registry posting
Management Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key management/policy concerns • Alternative strategies for addressing key areas of concern (for example, access road options) 	Management Options Summer 2006	Opportunity to Review Management Options (60 days) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media Notice • Direct Mailing • Environmental Registry posting • Information Centre
Preliminary Park Management Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classification, objectives, and zoning • Draft resource stewardship, development and operations policies • Implementation priorities • Summary of key issues • Summary of consultation 	Preliminary Park Management Plan Spring 2007	Opportunity to Review Preliminary Park Management Plan (60 days) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media notice • Direct Mailing • Environmental Registry posting • Information Centre
Approved Park Management Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public input incorporated • Classification, objectives, boundaries and zoning • Resource stewardship, development and operations policies • Implementation priorities • Summary of consultation 	Approved Park Management Plan Fall 2007	Opportunity to Inspect Approved Park Management Plan (60 days) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media notice • Direct Mailing • Environmental Registry Decision Notice

7.1 Stage 1 – Terms of Reference and Background Information

The terms of reference provides Ministry staff, Aboriginal communities, stakeholders and the general public with an outline of the process that will be used to produce a management plan for the KHSSP.

The background information document will be prepared to support the development of the management plan. It will describe the park and its regional context. Topics which will be addressed in this document include earth and life science characteristics, recreation and cultural resources, existing development, access, adjacent land uses, tenure identification, market analysis, planning constraints, etc.

Once the terms of reference have been approved by the Managing Director of Ontario Parks, an *Invitation to Participate* will be issued to announce the commencement of the planning process and give interested parties the opportunity to inspect the terms of reference. An *Opportunity to Review the Background Information* document will be provided when this document has been approved.

7.2 Stage 2 – Management Options

The management options document serves as an intermediary step between the background information document and preliminary park management plan. Based on the information collected and public and Aboriginal communities input received up to this point in the planning process, any number of key areas of concern may be defined. An ‘area of concern’ may arise due to differing perspectives on a particular aspect of the park and its management, or as a result of incomplete information. The resolution of concerns is critical to developing a sound management plan that has broad public support. With this goal in mind, the planning team will develop a number of alternatives for each key area of concern that attempt to satisfy divergent interests to varying degrees. The alternatives put forward for consideration will be evaluated according to their potential beneficial and negative impacts, consistency with policy, feasibility and cost. Options for access road corridors will be presented in this document. At this stage, there is an *Opportunity to Review the Management Options* document.

7.3 Stage 3 – Preliminary Park Management Plan

The preliminary park management plan will establish the policy framework and management direction for KHSSP. The plan will be prepared considering relevant provincial legislation, Ministry policies, background information collected and public and Aboriginal input received. The preliminary plan will contain policy statements regarding the park’s classification, goal, objectives, zoning, resource stewardship, operations, development, and implementation priorities. Sections summarizing the significant issues and consultation completed will be included. Within this document, the recommended option for access road corridors will be presented.

The preliminary plan will serve as the Ministry’s preferred statement of management direction and policy for the park, and will be released for external review and comment through an *Opportunity to Review the Preliminary Park Management Plan*.

7.4 Stage 4 – Approved Park Management Plan

The feedback received on the preliminary park management plan will be used to prepare the park management plan that goes forward for final approval from the Managing Director of Ontario Parks. The content and structure of the final plan are essentially the same as for the preliminary plan. This plan will contain the final decision regarding access roads.

Upon approval of the plan, Ontario Parks will issue a notice announcing a final *Opportunity to Inspect the Approved Park Management Plan*.

8.0 Public and Aboriginal Consultation

Continued public and Aboriginal participation and consultation is critical to the success of the KHSSP management planning process.

Public and Aboriginal involvement shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following input opportunities as outlined in Table 2 above: invitation to participate and opportunity to review background information; opportunity to review management options; opportunity to review the preliminary park management plan; and opportunity to inspect the approved park management plan. Consultation opportunities for this park will meet or exceed the minimum requirements of the Ontario Provincial Park Management Planning Manual (1994).

The notice at each stage will at minimum be in the form of:

- direct written invitations to local and regional offices of relevant government ministries, municipalities, aboriginal communities, interest groups, adjacent landowners, and other stakeholders including individual members of the public on the mailing list which has been compiled;
- proposal and decision file notices posted on the Environmental Registry website as required under the *Environmental Bill of Rights*;
- paid notice in local media to advise of the opportunity to become involved; and
- links to planning documents provided on the KHSSP website.

Consultation events (e.g., public open houses, meetings, workshops and presentations) will be held as required throughout the process. If optional planning steps are necessary, additional public and Aboriginal consultation opportunities will be provided to address them.

Aboriginal community participation in the management planning process and implementation of the plan is highly desirable and considered critical to a successful plan. Both Curve Lake First Nation and the Kawartha Nishnawbe have been made aware of the future planning and opportunities to become involved through presentations made to both Chiefs and their Councils. Both communities have expressed an interest in being involved and the planning team will continue to work with the communities to determine their specific areas of interest.

A key component of the consultation will be to find opportunities for partnership and cooperation between MNR and local communities and stakeholders in the protection, management and operation of the park. The Aboriginal communities, for example, will be invited to identify traditional heritage uses and sites, and to work in cooperation with MNR in protecting aboriginal heritage. Similarly, other communities, interest groups and users will be invited to assist in identifying and protecting park values and resources.

8.1 Plan Contact List

Park Policy PM 11.02.02 prescribes mandatory contacts to receive public notices and any planning documents associated with the planning process. These mandatory contacts are primarily stakeholder or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with provincial interests. This list has been incorporated into the mailing list that has been developed for the Kawartha Highlands during the past four years of public involvement in planning for this site. The mailing list includes Aboriginal communities, municipalities, adjacent landowners, tenure holders, recreational users, other local stakeholders and the general public who have indicated an interest in being involved.

All public and Aboriginal input will be treated in accordance with the provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* to ensure confidentiality of personal information.

Beyond the formal avenues and opportunities built into the planning process, planning team members will be available for informal discussions, meetings and presentations on Signature Site Park-related issues involving interested individuals and groups.

9.0 Budget

Comments should be sent to:
David Coulas, Park Superintendent
Kawartha Highlands Project Office
Ministry of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 500, Bancroft, ON K0L 1C0
Telephone: (613) 332-3940 Ext. 255

Comments may also be sent via e-mail to the following
address: kawartha.highlands@mnr.gov.on.ca

8.2 Use of Media

All formal public notices will be included in the local newspapers associated with the English language in Bancroft, Lakefield and Peterborough.

8.3 Environmental Registry

The preparation of the management plan for the KHSSP will be posted on the Environmental Bill of Rights (EBR) registry as a policy proposal at the terms of reference stage. The posting will be updated at each subsequent stage of the planning process to reflect new information and identify opportunities for involvement. A final policy decision notice will be posted upon approval of the park management plan and a Statement of Environmental Values will be prepared to document how the purposes of the EBR have been considered and incorporated into the KHSSP management planning process. The registry is an important tool for ensuring that residents of Ontario are aware of opportunities to participate in the making of environmentally significant decisions of the government.

Information pertaining to the planning process will be made available for public access on the Internet through the *Environmental Bill of Rights* environmental registry at:
http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/env_reg/ebr/english/index.htm.

8.4 Internal Distribution

Standard briefing notes will be used to inform or advise MNR Area, District, Zone, Regional and Main Office staff of significant developments (e.g. release of documents) in the planning process.

The MNR will allocate sufficient funds for the preparation of the KHSSP Management Plan. The Charter is specific in its recognition that the area requires sufficient funding to become an operating provincial park and that management planning needed to be initiated and completed as soon as possible:

“It is the intention of the Ontario Government that the Kawartha Highlands area will be established by regulation under the Provincial Parks Act and will become an operating natural environment class provincial park.” (page 6)

“Preparation of a management plan will be initiated within one calendar year of the legal establishment (regulation) of the KHSS Park. The objective is to have an approved park management plan within two years of the initiation of planning.” (page 9, 10)

“... it is recognized that the park will require substantial funding for planning, initial capital development, and annual operating and maintenance costs. Regulation of the area as a provincial park will allow the use of the provincial parks Special Purpose Account (SPA).” (page 17)

The government is committed to moving forward with management planning for the KHSSP and is beginning the planning process with the release of this document and the invitation to participate. Capital projects (for example, infrastructure such as new access roads, parking lots, park office) which are identified in the approved Management Plan will be budgeted for through Ontario Parks' financial planning processes.



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