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Pacific Rim

National Park Reserve of Canada

Annual Management Plan Implementation Report

June 2010 to June 2011



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Pacific Rim
National Park Reserve of Canada
Annual Management Plan
Implementation Report

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Cette publication est aussi disponible en français.

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Superintendent's Message

On behalf of Canadians, Parks Canada is proud to protect, present and manage Pacific Rim National Park Reserve, one of the nation's most iconic places. In keeping with the Agency's mandate, we strive to manage the park reserve in a way that fosters public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment, while protecting its unique ecology, human history and rugged beauty. This balanced approach ensures the park reserve remains healthy and inviting for future generations.

The 2010 Pacific Rim National Park Reserve Management Plan provides a strategic framework for both conserving ecological and cultural resources and offering Canadians meaningful and memorable experiences in the park reserve.

Since management planning is a continuous cycle of consultation, decision-making, implementation, monitoring, and reporting, this Annual Report serves as a "report card" to partners, stakeholders, and the public. It ensures that our progress-to-date is shared. This brief summary outlines our accomplishments since the Plan was tabled in Parliament in June 2010.

Following the 40th Anniversary of the park reserve's establishment in 2010, Parks Canada celebrated its 100th Anniversary as the world's first national park service in 2011. It was a year of exciting upgrades including the opening of the completely renovated K'isitis Visitor Centre at Wickaninnish Beach, and the beginning of the installation of a more efficient and ecologically sensitive sewer and water system for the Long Beach Unit. We also made important progress with local First Nations with the signing of the Maa-nulth Treaty.

This report recognizes the accomplishments of Parks Canada and the many partners and stakeholders who contribute to the park reserve. It also reminds us to continue to build on our successes and effective relationships. We embrace this opportunity and look forward to publishing future annual reports – culminating with a management plan review in 2015 – that demonstrate Parks Canada's commitment to the long-term protection and presentation of this spectacular place.

Dave McVetty
Superintendent
Pacific Rim National Park Reserve



STRATEGY 1

Working with First Nation Partners

Pacific Rim National Park Reserve (NPR) has made good progress on this strategy. Pacific Rim NPR will continue to work with First Nation partners and ensure opportunities for active involvement and collaboration.

Management Plan Objective:

Formal, cooperative processes are established for Pacific Rim NPR in collaboration with partner First Nations.

●●○○○ **TARGET:** Structures are formally adopted by 2015.

Negotiations are underway with three partner First Nations, and structures are now in place for three others.

●●○○○ **TARGET:** All Pacific Rim NPR staff and First Nations Cooperative Management Board members have taken cross-cultural awareness training by 2012.

Training started in 2010.

Management Plan Objective:

Visitor experiences within the Park Reserve related to authentic Aboriginal culture and heritage generate Aboriginal economic benefits and increased tourism.

●●○○○ **TARGET:** Number and range of authentic experiences available to visitors are expanded. Visitor satisfaction with the range and quality of experiences is high. Regional economic benefits increase from an identified baseline. Number of visitors to the Park Reserve is increased.

Work has started with all partner First Nations.

●○○○○ **TARGET:** An annual workshop between Parks Canada and First Nations.

Workshops will start in 2011.

Management Plan Objective:

Resource conservation and management of cultural and natural resources is undertaken collaboratively by Pacific Rim NPR and First Nations.

●●○○○ **TARGET:** Increase in number of projects or initiatives that demonstrate collaboration. A greater range and number of formal management mechanisms are in place and supported by all groups and recognised as “collaborative.”

Work has started with all partner First Nations.

TARGET GRADING LEGEND

- No progress yet on this target
- Some progress, more attention needed to reach target on schedule
- Good progress, target can be reached on schedule
- Excellent progress, target nearly reached
- Target has been reached



STRATEGY 2

Protecting and Restoring Cultural Resources and Ecological Integrity

Ecological integrity work is proceeding well; but cultural resources require ongoing active management.

Management Plan Objective:

The cultural resources within Pacific Rim NPR are protected and maintained through an active cultural resource management program in collaboration with the local First Nations.

●●○○○ **TARGET:** First Nations are actively involved with Parks Canada in managing archaeological sites and cultural resources within the Park Reserve.

●○○○○ **TARGET:** Cultural landscape and landscape features within the Park Reserve have been assessed, documented, and are monitored by 2015.

To reach all of these targets, Pacific Rim NPR will collaborate with partner First Nations to develop a cultural resource values statement by 2012 to guide this program.

●●●○○ **TARGET:** Known cultural resources are appropriately protected and conserved in accordance with the Cultural Resource Management Policy.

●●●○○ **TARGET:** The in-Park Reserve collection of historical objects is identified, maintained, and some are made accessible to the public by 2012.

Management Plan Objective:

Visitors can experience, understand, and support the restoration and protection of natural and cultural resources through learning-based experiences grounded in the park's restoration programs.

●●●●○ **TARGET:** A baseline understanding of public awareness of ecological restoration and species reintroduction programs in the park is established. Levels of occurrence reports and law enforcement incidents have been significantly reduced relative to the current levels.

The park is supporting innovative learning through its ecological restoration activities. Park interpreters develop visitor and school programs that show tangible contributions to ecological and cultural conservation, to public safety, and to human-wildlife interaction.

Culturally modified cedar tree. Parks Canada

TARGET GRADING LEGEND

- No progress yet on this target
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Management Plan Objective:

The components of the coastal realm’s land and seascapes are maintained and restored through both targeted and ecosystem-based management including protection and active restoration in collaboration with local First Nations, governments, and other stakeholders.

●●○○○ **TARGET:** The state of Ecological Integrity in at least one of the Park Reserve’s ecosystems is improved.

The Park Reserve is making measurable improvements in dune and riparian habitats.

●●●○○ **TARGET:** Implement and/or assist in implementing recovery strategies for species at risk for which Parks Canada is the responsible agency as well as other species at risk on/in Park Reserve lands and waters.

●●○○○ **TARGET:** Harvesting protocol(s) are drafted in collaboration with and/or detailed input from the local First Nations.

Work is underway with First Nations and with other government departments.

●●○○○ **TARGET:** The majority of wildlife populations remain viable.

Monitoring studies indicate that some populations are showing improvements while others remain a concern.

Management Plan Objective:

The coastal areas of the park are protected and restored through collaboration and information sharing among communities and Parks Canada.

●●●○○ **TARGET:** An Ecological Integrity outreach strategy for local and off-site (remote) community engagement is operational.

The park is supporting community initiatives with First Nations and the Raincoast Education Society, and promotes public forums to communicate information related to Ecological Integrity. The park will develop strategy to guide these initiatives.

HIGHLIGHT

Integrated Monitoring for Ecological Integrity

The Nuu-chah-nulth term *hishuk ish ts’awalk* means that everything is one and connected. In this spirit, the Management Plan has helped Pacific Rim NPR to integrate the various elements of the Park Reserve monitoring program for Ecological Integrity to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

The Park Reserve monitors the condition of its sand dunes and streams and the effectiveness of related management actions as part of its ongoing projects to rehabilitate these sensitive zones.

The Park Reserve is also responsible for the planning and recovery of four of Canada’s Species at Risk: Seaside Centipede Lichen, Pink Sand-verbena, Dromedary Jumping Slug, and Northern Goshawk. These species are dependent on habitat found in the coastal zone (see Strategy 3). Through the Park Reserve monitoring program, staff assess the population and identify critical habitat for each of these four species.

The Pacific Rim NPR monitoring program suggests that most monitored

terrestrial populations remain stable; however, several marine populations (e.g., shellfish and rockfish) are declining in the Park Reserve since publication of the last State of the Park Report in 2009. Populations of some important species, like the Red-legged Frog, some seabirds, and nesting shorebirds have increased, suggesting that some aspects of the Park Reserve’s Ecological Integrity is improving while work remains to be done in others, primarily in the marine ecosystems. The same can be said about the health of dune and stream ecosystems that are undergoing active restoration. Management effectiveness monitoring has identified some ongoing issues with fish passage, management of large carnivore populations, and the need to further restore abandoned facilities, roads, and utility corridors.

In the next year, Pacific Rim NPR looks forward to the continued integration of its monitoring program with other ongoing operations and building a useful base of information to support the 2014 State of the Parks Report.



STRATEGY 3

Managing the Coastal Zone

Managing the coastal zone of Pacific Rim NPR will continue in collaboration with other federal departments and with First Nations. The Agency is developing a policy framework to more clearly guide priorities and actions.

Management Plan Objective:

Marine resources in Pacific Rim NPR are managed in accordance with clear direction developed in collaboration with First Nations.

●●○○○ **TARGET:** As a first step, a marine management strategy is drafted for waters within the boundaries of Pacific Rim NPR by March 2015.

The Parks Canada Agency is developing its policy framework for marine management.

Management Plan Objective:

Protect, conserve and manage marine resources within selected areas in Nuu-chah-nulth territories and Pacific Rim NPR.

●●○○○ **TARGET:** Candidate areas for marine zoning are reviewed and recommendations put forward by 2015.

The Parks Canada Agency is developing its policy framework for marine management.

Management Plan Objective:

Integrated management of coastal zone resources occurs on a regional scale.

●●○○○ **TARGET:** A common vision for managing coastal resources on a regional scale outside of the national Park Reserve boundaries is developed between Pacific Rim NPR, First Nations, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Environment Canada, and local communities.

Pacific Rim NPR is a member of the West Coast Aquatic Management Board. It is working with neighbouring communities to have the Tofino Mudflats (including Grice Bay within the Park Reserve) identified as a Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve.

●●○○○ **TARGET:** Trans-boundary working relationships in the coastal zone are established.

Pacific Rim NPR participated in the Barkley Sound Planning Forum. It is working with the Huu-ay-aht First Nation to monitor predators at Pacific Rim NPR's largest seabird breeding colony.

●●●○○ **TARGET:** Pacific Rim NPR, as a recovery team member, helps to complete three recovery strategies and/or action plans for key marine species by 2015.

Three marine recovery strategies were completed with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. The Park Reserve has established a dedicated Species at Risk position.

TARGET GRADING LEGEND

- No progress yet on this target
- Some progress, more attention needed to reach target on schedule
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- Target has been reached

Management Plan Objective:

Visitors and off-site audiences understand Pacific Rim NPR's role in marine ecosystem management and the value of ocean ecosystems.

●●●○○ TARGET: On average, 60% of visitors surveyed state that they learned about the complexity of marine ecosystems and, as a result, the need for integrated management of these ecosystems.

The Sand Dune and Stream Restoration projects have employed Park Reserve interpreters to help communicate the value of this work.

●●●○○ TARGET: The percentage of Canadians who consider that they learned about the complexity of marine ecosystems is increased.

The 2011 visitor survey has collected baseline information for summer visitors to the Long Beach Unit. Future research will be able to measure changes to visitors' perception of learning.



Wickaninnish Dunes in the Long Beach Unit of Pacific Rim NPR. Parks Canada/J. Koreski

HIGHLIGHT Sand Dune Restoration

Pacific Rim NPR is restoring the Wickaninnish Beach sand dunes. These grasses restrict the natural shifting of these magnificent dunes and choke out native species. Left unchecked, the rare dune ecosystem would be lost and reclaimed by the forest. Last year, the Park Reserve removed hectares of invasive European Dune-grass with the help of volunteers. Hundreds of volunteers contributed more than 1,000 hours to remove this invasive grass.

An integrated effort by Parks Canada employees has restored more than 5 hectares of habitat in which to re-introduce Pink Sand-verbena, one of Canada's species at risk. Recently, Canada had only one Pink Sand-verbena

plant left. Today, Pacific Rim NPR has forty-six Pink Sand-verbena plants. All are producing seed, a significant advance in the restoration of this species.

The dunes now look much different than they did just two years ago. Guided by Pacific Rim NPR scientists, teams of volunteers and Park Reserve employees have removed much of the invasive grass and many of the new trees, replacing them with a more natural dune system and replanted natural species. 2011 also marked the rediscovery of the endangered Yellow Sand-verbena Moth in the dunes by a Young Canada Works student and several volunteers. This represents only the fourth known location in Canada and one of only 10 in the world.

Pacific Rim NPR is moving into the third year of this 5-year project ahead of schedule. In the year ahead, the Park Reserve will be continuing its volunteer program and focus on removing the invasive species. The Park Reserve's scientists will be collecting more information to better understand the effectiveness of this program to inform the 2014 State of the Park report and to guide future investments in habitat restoration.



STRATEGY 4

Enhancing Community Relations and Visitor Experience

The establishment of the Visitor Experience team and an ongoing investment in visitor research ensures continued progress on this strategy.

Management Plan Objective:

Pacific Rim NPR has an improved understanding of its neighbouring communities and stakeholders, so that it can attract current markets, consider new markets, and determine how best to engage interested stakeholders.

●●○○○ **TARGET:** Increased visitation from an established baseline, including a 3% per year increase in visitation over the life of the management plan. Increased engagement or perceived opportunities to influence Park Reserve management decisions by stakeholders.

Pacific Rim NPR will introduce a new attendance measuring program/system to increase reliability and validity for 2012.

●●●○○ **TARGET:** A common strategy exists to manage stakeholder/external relations and participation in local events.

Pacific Rim NPR is developing a clear and simple process for reviewing special events for 2012.

Management Plan Objective:

Visitors to Pacific Rim NPR enjoy and are satisfied with their visit to the Park Reserve.

●●●●○ **TARGET:** Social science work, seeking the following results related to visitor experience, has been completed by 2013:

- 90% of surveyed Park Reserve visitors enjoyed their visit;
- 90% of surveyed Park Reserve visitors are satisfied with their visit and on average, 50% of surveyed visitors are very satisfied with their visit;
- on average, 85% of surveyed visitors consider the place as meaningful to them;
- 80% of surveyed visitors feel that a trip to the recently updated Interpretive Centre at Wickaninnish Beach enhanced their visit.

Pacific Rim NPR conducted a comprehensive visitor survey for the Long Beach Unit and West Coast Trail in 2011. There are plans for a Broken Group Islands survey in 2013. Targeted measurement is planned in 2012 and 2013 to assess the effectiveness of projects with explicit public education objectives.

Management Plan Objective:

Visitors develop a sense of connection to Pacific Rim NPR and an appreciation of the need for protection, conservation, and restoration of its cultural and natural resources.

●●●●○ **TARGET:** Social science work, seeking the following baseline results related to visitor experience, has been completed by 2013:

- 60% or more of visitors consider that they learned about the natural and or cultural heritage of the place; and
- Visitors identify preferred delivery methods and content for education opportunities.

Management Plan Objective:

A range of appropriate visitor opportunities are facilitated and the surrounding region that complement the Park Reserve's coastal realm.

●●●○○ TARGET: Number and variety of visitor experiences available increases from baseline. Visitors are satisfied with the availability and variety of experiences available.

Pacific Rim NPR hired a new Product Development Officer in 2010.

Management Plan Objective:

Parks Canada optimizes public safety, prevention, and response capabilities within Pacific Rim NPR by partnering with public safety organisations and through collaborative public safety planning, training and communications.

●●●○○ TARGET: The number of public safety incidents related to park facilities is reduced from the baseline.

●●○○○ TARGET: Regional public safety issues are clearly understood by the park.

●●○○○ TARGET: The park's public safety response capabilities are enhanced through collaboration.

Pacific Rim NPR has a reliable database of safety incidents. It will clarify its role in regional public safety incidents and is developing an integrated prevention and response system that supports recent Agency policy.

TARGET GRADING LEGEND

- No progress yet on this target
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Staff conducting Visitor Survey in Pacific Rim NPR.
Parks Canada/D. Gray



HIGHLIGHT

2011 Visitor Survey

Last year, Pacific Rim NPR established a Visitor Experience Team to fulfill its Management Plan goals and to coordinate the Park Reserve's investments in visitor programs and services, new product development, marketing, and promotion.

This year, Pacific Rim NPR conducted a major visitor survey in the Long Beach Unit and on the West Coast Trail to address Park Reserve management plan commitments, collect performance data for Agency reporting, and to inform partner opportunities and joint investments with local communities and First Nations. With recent, valid, and reliable visitor survey results, Pacific Rim NPR and its partners will better be able to focus investments in areas that will be most effective at fulfilling Management Plan and partner objectives.

One of the most basic survey goals is to refine the Park Reserve's method for estimating attendance in the Long Beach Unit, the most heavily-used of the Park Reserve's three units. The Park Reserve has no gate at which to count visitor arrivals, and many visitors have annual passes, so attendance can't be determined by simply counting pass sales. This survey of highway traffic will give the Park Reserve a reliable profile of visitors, their activities, their preferences, and their satisfaction.

Targeted social science projects in future years will focus on the Broken Group Islands, and allow the Park Reserve to complete reviews of the services available prior to the next Management Plan review in 2015.



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