

9. REGIONAL PARK ADDITION: CONSERVATION COVENANT AREA

Goal: Protect lower lying wetland areas, field-forest edge and mature Douglas-fir and Western redcedar forests.

CONSERVATION COVENANT AREA ADDITION: In 2003, 24.1 hectares were added to Mount Geoffrey Nature Park (part donation and part purchase from the Cross family). The area is protected by a conservation covenant that is held by Conservancy Hornby Island and The Land Conservancy of BC. The covenant requires management of the land for conservation values first and foremost.

The covenant area includes coast Douglas-fir forest and a low lying, seasonally wet field. The field-forest edge provides habitat for raptors, songbirds and other wildlife.

The conservation covenant stipulates that a site management plan be prepared for the covenant area.



Objectives	Draft Strategies
<p>Protect and enhance the ecosystems and biodiversity of the conservation covenant area.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Retain field/forest edge habitat and control Canada thistle and other invasive plants by mowing the field. 2. Inventory native plants and animal species found within conservation covenant area. 3. Prepare a site management plan to protect native species and to control invasive species. 4. Manage recreational use to minimize impact on natural environment within covenant area.

10. CROWN LAND MANAGEMENT AND FUTURE OF THE CROWN LANDS

Goal: Protect the recreation and natural environment values of the Crown lands into the future.

CROWN LAND MANAGEMENT: A few people are illegally removing downed trees or cutting standing trees in the Crown forest for their own use or sale. The Province does not issue fire-cutting permits on Mount Geoffrey's Crown lands because it is within the rare Coastal Douglas-fir ecosystem and because of its role as a groundwater recharge area.

Hornby Island's Official Community Plan indicates silviculture on the Crown lands should only be undertaken in the context of a forest management plan. The Hornby community has reviewed silviculture on Mount Geoffrey in the past (e.g. Heart of Hornby study in 2000) but has been unable to identify a type of tenure that would enable silviculture while meeting conservation objectives. To date, the community's priority has been for the land to be protected for groundwater recharge and protection, recreation and conservation purposes.

It is not within the CVRD's expertise or mandate to facilitate firewood cutting or silviculture on the Crown lands. The CVRD's focus is the trail system and natural environment.

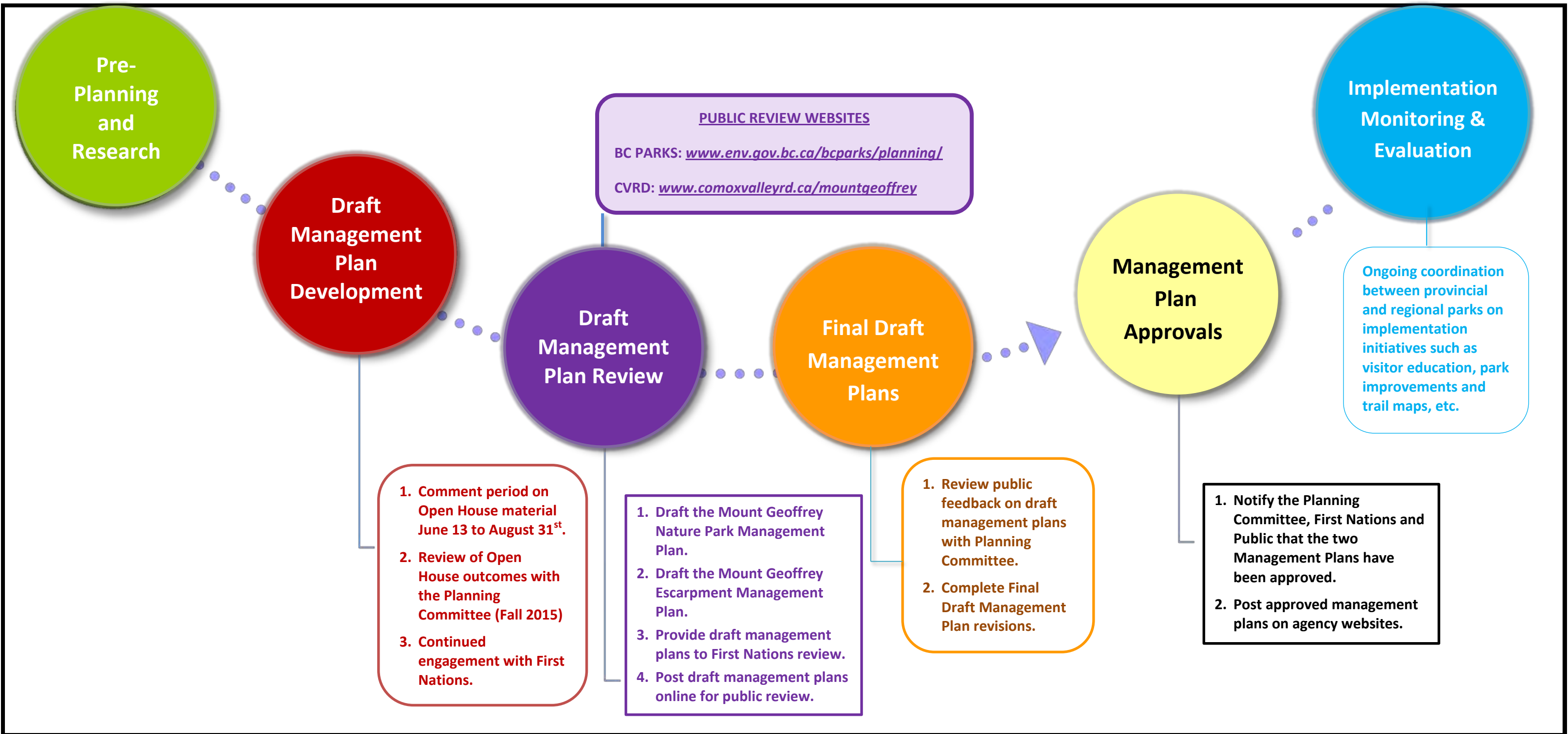


FUTURE OF CROWN LANDS: The CVRD holds a permit to manage the trails on the Crown lands. The CVRD could apply for a legal designation of the recreational values of the Crown lands and enter into a partnership agreement with the Province of BC. This would give the trail system and surrounding natural environment a higher level of protection. Other interests in the land would be required to respect and manage for the recreational values. A legal designation and partnership agreement with the Province would also allow the CVRD to enforce rules such as no motorized access or no camping or campfires. The long-term goal for the Crown lands is protected status.

Objective	Draft Strategies
Manage the Crown lands for recreation and nature protection.	1. The CVRD, through the Regional Parks Committee, will continue to manage the area for recreation while seeking to minimize impacts on the natural environment.

Objective	Draft Strategies
Ensure protection of the Crown lands into the future.	1. In the short term, seek legal designation of the Crown land trails and enter into a partnership agreement with the Province. 2. Explore other options to secure long-term protection of the Crown lands.

11. NEXT STEPS



DID WE MISS ANYTHING? PLEASE PROVIDE US WITH ANY FURTHER COMMENTS