



# Fairbank

Park Management Plan



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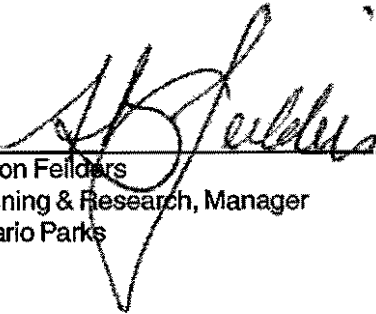
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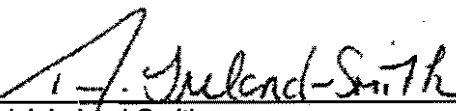
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## APPROVAL STATEMENT

We are pleased to approve this *Management Plan* for Fairbank Provincial Park. It is a statement of policy for the protection, management and development of park resources. It also provides guidance for the preparation of plans for resource management, natural heritage education and development to implement park policies and achieve park objectives.

  
Barton Felders  
Planning & Research, Manager  
Ontario Parks

Date Oct. 27/99

  
Adair Ireland-Smith  
Managing Director  
Ontario Parks

Date Nov. 1999

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## STATEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES UNDER THE ENVIRONMENTAL BILL OF RIGHTS

The Ministry of Natural Resources' Statement of Environmental Values (SEV) was prepared 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.

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 soil, 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 the *Management Plan*. The *Management Plan* for Fairbank Provincial Park will further the objectives of managing Ontario's resources on an ecologically sustainable basis.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Fairbank Provincial Park comprises 105 hectares and is located on Regional Road 4, running north from Highway 17, 55 kilometres west of Sudbury (Figure 1). The park was first opened in 1958 and was formally established by Ontario Regulation 144/57.

The park is situated on a short, broad peninsula on Fairbank Lake. The landscape of the park had been largely influenced by its glacial history. It has a moderately rolling rock landscape with small till-filled valleys, inter-ridge basin and wetlands, with rolling till slopes adjacent to the campsites. The park is located on the Sudbury Nickel Irruptive, an unusual geological formation which scientists believe may have been created after a meteorite struck the earth 1.9 million years ago.

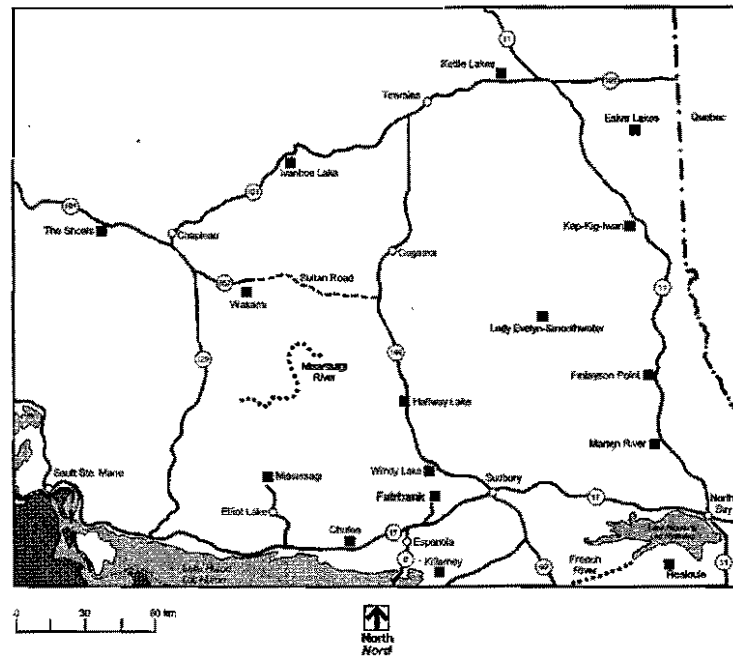
The key characteristic of the Sudbury Nickel Irruptive is that it contains the world's greatest known concentration of nickel/copper ore. Mining this ore has been the major base for economic activity and the strongest influence on development in the area since the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

An interesting feature in the park is the Fairbank fault, a fracture in the earth's crust which is visible from a hiking trail located in the park. Evidence of the retreat of the last Ice Age, about 10,000 years ago, can also be seen in the form of ice-scoured rock outcrops and gravel deposits.

Located on beautiful, spring fed Fairbank Lake, it is an excellent area for camping, picnicking, swimming, and hiking. The park has 160 campsites; with barrier free facilities and campsites available. The park also offers beautiful sand beaches, a day-use area, a picnic shelter, a comfort station with showers and laundry facility, a boat launch, group camping, a trailer sanitation station, and a playground.

The *Fairbank Provincial Park Management Plan* outlines the management direction for the park and its development over the next 20 years.

FIGURE 1 REGIONAL CONTEXT



## 2.0 CLASSIFICATION

Fairbank Provincial Park will continue to be classified as a *recreation* park, one of six classes of Ontario Provincial Parks.

Recreation parks **are areas that support a wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities for large numbers of people in attractive surroundings. The primary role is to provide car camping and day-use opportunities (swimming, picnicking) for Ontario residents and non-residents** (OMNR, 1992).

The *Fairbank Provincial Park Management Plan* has been developed in accordance with the recreation class guidelines as set out in the *Ontario Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies (1992)* and the *Sudbury District Land Use Guidelines*.

## 3.0 GOAL

The goal of Fairbank Provincial Park is **to provide visitors with a variety of traditional day-use and car camping recreation opportunities that complement the natural landscape setting on the south shore of Fairbank Lake.**

## 4.0 OBJECTIVES

Recreation Parks contribute *to the achievement of all four provincial park objectives: protection, recreation, heritage appreciation, and tourism.*

### 4.1 Protection

*To protect the parks aesthetic attributes and natural features.*

There are no known provincially significant natural or cultural features known to occur within the park. The existing locally significant features will be maintained.

Management programs will complement the natural attributes of the campground, beach and picnic areas. New development will be carried out as to minimally change park aesthetics and natural vegetation.

### 4.2 Recreation

*To provide outdoor recreation opportunities for high-intensity day-use and car camping experiences.*

Fairbank Provincial Park contributes to the achievement of the recreation objective by providing:

- a) day-use opportunities; and,
- b) facility-based car camping

The park will continue to provide high quality beach, picnicking, playing, and camping opportunities. The campground functions as a significant stopover and destination for travellers and vacationists. The park offers day-use and car camping.



### 4.3 Heritage Appreciation

*To provide opportunities for exploration and appreciation of the outdoor natural and cultural heritage of Ontario.*

Fairbank Provincial Park's scenic and cultural setting will be interpreted through stories about people and events of the historic logging and mining eras. The park will use various publications such as provincial park leaflets and area brochures to provide background information on these topics for visitors. Viewing areas and a self-guided trail will be provided for visitors to appreciate the park and its surroundings. Some special events and programs will be scheduled to encourage heritage appreciation.

### 4.4 Tourism

*To provide Ontario residents and non-resident visitors with opportunities to discover and experience the distinctive regions of the Province.*

The park offers a public setting where travellers and area residents may camp or visit for the day to enjoy attractive surroundings.

Tourism services adjacent to and within day-use distance of the park, which complement Fairbank's services, are identified in this *Management Plan*. Mutually beneficial promotion programs can be developed between the park and other tourism interests (e.g. City of Sudbury, and the Big Nickel Mine).

## 5.0 PARK BOUNDARY

Fairbank Provincial Park, comprising of 105 hectares, is situated within the geographic Townships of Fairbank and Trill in the Territorial District of Sudbury (Figure 2). The park boundary also extends 92 metres (300 feet) from the shoreline into the water. The land under the water is also part of the park.



## 6.0 ZONING

Recreation parks may contain five different land use zones: access, development, nature reserve, natural environment and historical. Each zone permits certain land uses and outlines park management strategies. Through zoning policies, recreational areas are provided while features of biophysical and cultural significance are protected. Two types of zones will guide resource management and development of the park: a development zone and a natural environment zone (Figure 2).

### 6.1 Lake Shore Development Zone (37.5ha)

*Development zones provide access, where appropriate, for large numbers to the park and facilities and services for a wide range of day-use and camping activities.*

This zone contains all camping areas, day-use infrastructure, the park entrance, the boat launch, the internal road system and the administrative facilities. The major portion of the zone will be oriented toward providing extensive recreation opportunities. This will include: the day-use area containing parking lots, beach, picnic areas and shelter, docking facilities; the campground which provides 160 campsites, comfort station with showers and laundry facilities, and the children's play area. Administration facilities (e.g. staff house, storage) will be physically separated from public recreation facilities.

Trailer sites also exist in this zone and are available during the operating season.

### 6.2 Forested Natural Environment Zone (43.5 ha)

*Natural environment zones include aesthetic landscapes in which there is a minimum of development required to support low-intensity recreational activities.*

This zone encompasses the main forested areas of the park and is intended to provide protection and management activities to support low-intensity recreation. Management will permit natural ecological processes to continue. This zone will be recognized for its interpretive and outdoor educational value and will provide a forested natural setting with self-guided interpretive trails.

At the present time, one hiking trail exists.

Motorized recreational vehicles, with the exception of maintenance equipment, will not be permitted in the natural environment zone.

## 7.0 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT POLICIES

Fairbank Provincial Park will be managed according to the planning and management policies for recreation class parks, the approved Management Plan, and minimum operating standards. A park Operating Plan, which will be consistent with the Provincial Operating Standards, will be kept current to implement and guide the specific operational aspects of managing the park's natural and cultural resources.

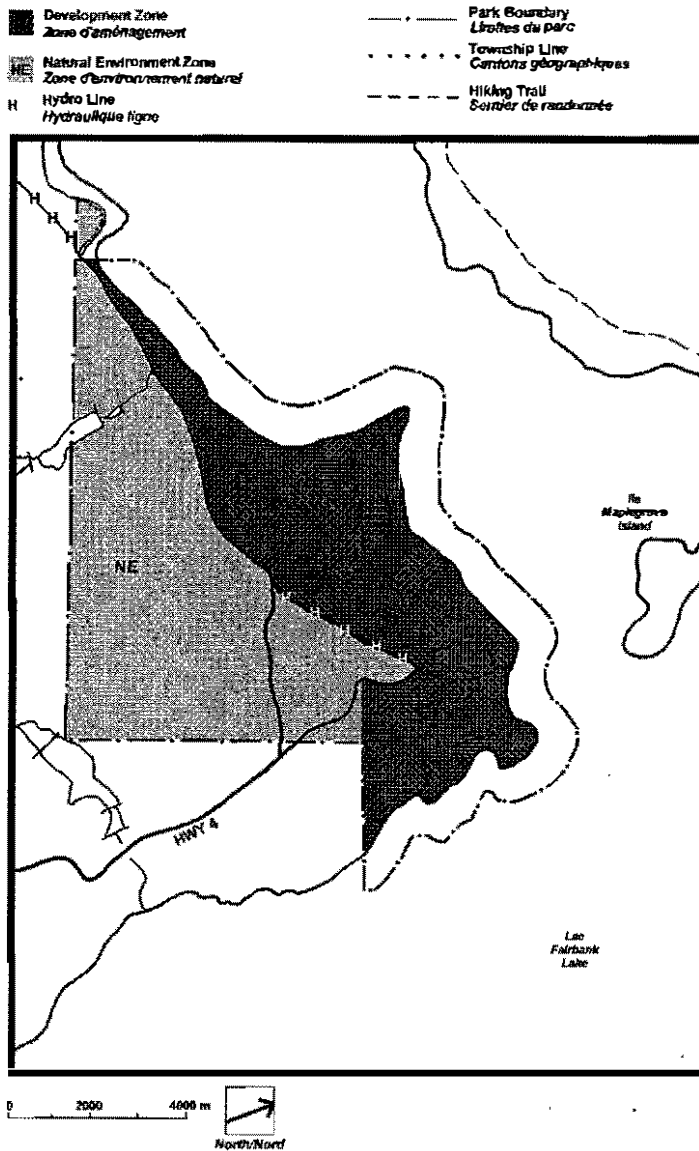
The policies herein are presented separately. Plan implementation recognizes that the components are inter-related and that integrated management is required to achieve overall park objectives.

### 7.1 Vegetation Management

Plant and vegetation surveys will be encouraged in the park to document species diversity, the presence of non-native species and plant community characteristics. Vegetation in the park will be managed to fulfill protection and recreation objectives. A Vegetation Management Plan has been prepared for the development zone of the park. The overall intent is to maintain a regenerating tree and shrub succession. Priorities also include measures to rehabilitate lakeshore sites, on a continuous basis, to prevent erosion and destabilization of retaining banks.

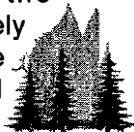
Campsites will continue to be monitored for trees which exhibit limb dieback and are potential hazards to the public. Replacement planting will be implemented where necessary. It is also recognized that some decay is desirable to provide habitat for wildlife in the campground setting. Generally, trees will be removed either if there is threat to public safety and property or where it is necessary to meet the park's recreation objectives. In the development zone, trees may be removed for development and management purposes according to approved site plans. Vegetation control will be permitted where necessary for existing public utilities and rights-of-way.

**FIGURE 2 ZONING**



Insects and diseases will be controlled where aesthetic or natural values are threatened. Where control is necessary, it will be directed as narrowly as possible to the specific problem so as to minimize effects on other components of the park environment. Spraying will follow guidelines established by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ontario Ministry of Environment and Energy. Biological controls will be used in preference to chemicals where feasible.

All forest fires occurring within the boundaries of the park will be actively suppressed. Protection from fire will be provided in all cases where life and property are threatened.



**7.2 Lands and Waters**

The management of land will be directed to complement the goal and objectives of the park.

The management of water will be directed toward the maintenance of good water quality and sufficient water quantity for fisheries habitat and recreational purposes. Drinking water will be monitored weekly and beach water quality will be monitored on a monthly basis unless further testing is required. Park staff will collect water samples and submit them for analysis to identify acceptable standards for human health and safety.

**7.3 Fisheries Management**

Fisheries management will continue to function in accordance with policies and regulations prevailing in the area. Sport fishing will be encouraged. Specific management direction will be provided through the *Sudbury District Fisheries Management Plan (1990)* to ensure quality angling.



**7.4 Wildlife Management**

Hunting and commercial trapping will not be permitted within Fairbank Provincial Park. Controls will be established when necessary to protect human health and safety. Controls will only be directed at habitats or populations and individuals requiring attention. Any hunting or trapping required to control select animals will be implemented under the strict supervision of, or directly by, the Superintendent in cooperation with the district MNR staff.

**7.5 Landform Management**

Lake front campsites have visible erosion and compaction problems at the shoreline. These sites will be addressed utilizing a combination of techniques to stabilize shore areas including:

- a) re-contouring erosion prone areas where feasible to redirect surface run off;



- b) controlling pedestrian circulation by strategically locating stairs to allow lake access;
- c) re-establish natural vegetative cover to secure slopes; and,
- d) site planning and rehabilitation of lake shore campsites.

## 8.0 OPERATIONS POLICIES

The Operating Plan will be updated to provide staff with necessary operational information to carry out day-to-day park operations. The plan will also address budgeting, staffing, maintenance schedules, enforcement, and emergency services. The provisions of the plan will be consistent with the approved Ontario Provincial Park Minimum Operating Standards and will be reviewed annually and updated as required.

### 8.1 Natural Heritage Education

Natural heritage education will be managed in accordance with the *Management Plan* and Provincial Park Operational Policies, Procedures, and Standards. The Natural Heritage Education Plan will be revised in keeping with the direction provided in the *Management Plan*.

The primary purpose of natural heritage education will be to inform park visitors about the recreational activities and services in the park and surrounding area. Approaches such as publications, display panels and self-guided trails will be the main methods used to deliver park information,

recreational, interpretation skills, and outdoor education. Direction for natural heritage education will be taken from the Zone Natural Heritage Education Plan.

#### 8.1.1 Information

Information about park resources, management facilities, programs, and nearby attractions and services will be made available to the public. This information will be disseminated at key points throughout the park such as the gatehouse, park office, and bulletin boards.

#### 8.1.2 Interpretation

Interpretive information about natural and cultural features in the area will mainly be provided through park literature. Some interpretive programs may be offered on a limited basis.

The park provides an excellent facility base for groups to explore and learn about the natural and cultural resources of the area. Groups and individuals will continue to be encouraged to use the park for educational purposes that are compatible with park policies.



#### 8.1.3 Recreation

Recreation information will acquaint park visitors with recreation opportunities and facilities available in the park and area. Where required, information will be portrayed to improve visitor skills in order to ensure safe use and maximum enjoyment of the park. Some recreational skills instruction may be provided on a limited basis.



## 8.2 Research

Scientific research by qualified individuals, which contributes to the knowledge of natural and cultural history and to environmental and recreational management, will be encouraged in the park. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) will encourage institutions to undertake research projects.

Additional ecological surveys will be required to establish basic information on park features and to refine zoning and management prescriptions. Research will conform with the *Ontario Parks Research and Information Strategy (1998)*. All research programs will require the approval of the OMNR and will be subject to Ministry policy and other applicable legislation.

## 8.3 MARKETING

The *Fairbank Provincial Park Marketing Plan (1980, revised 1985)* will be updated to reflect a broader service for visitors and to provide direction for joint marketing of the park and area attractions as per the ideas in the *Park Business Plan (1996)*. Marketing of the park will endeavour to increase visitation through the following objectives: increase the length of stay, attract day users staying in the local area by promoting local tourist services, and provide attractions and special events to maintain the interaction between the park and commercial sector. New marketing initiatives will reflect the enterprising spirit of Ontario Parks.

A new marketing initiative such as the development of seasonal campsites will provide a broader service to the visitor and will help to achieve the park's objectives.

## 9.0 DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Facility upgrading and new development will be undertaken in Fairbank Provincial Park to enhance its role as a near urban park, providing diverse recreational opportunities for local seasonal residents and area visitors. All development will be implemented in accordance with this Management Plan, approved site and development plans and Environmental Assessment Act requirements. The location, design, and materials of all facilities constructed within the park will, to

the furthest extent possible, reflect its recreational character.

All facilities in the park will be maintained to provincial park standards and according to approved procedures. The Operating Plan will be updated as required to reflect current park operations.

Any future development will be considered through the site planning process and if not proposed in this *Management Plan*, an official amendment to the plan will be required.

The following facilities will be requested through work program planning, special funding initiatives and corporate/local partnerships.

### 9.1 Park Roads

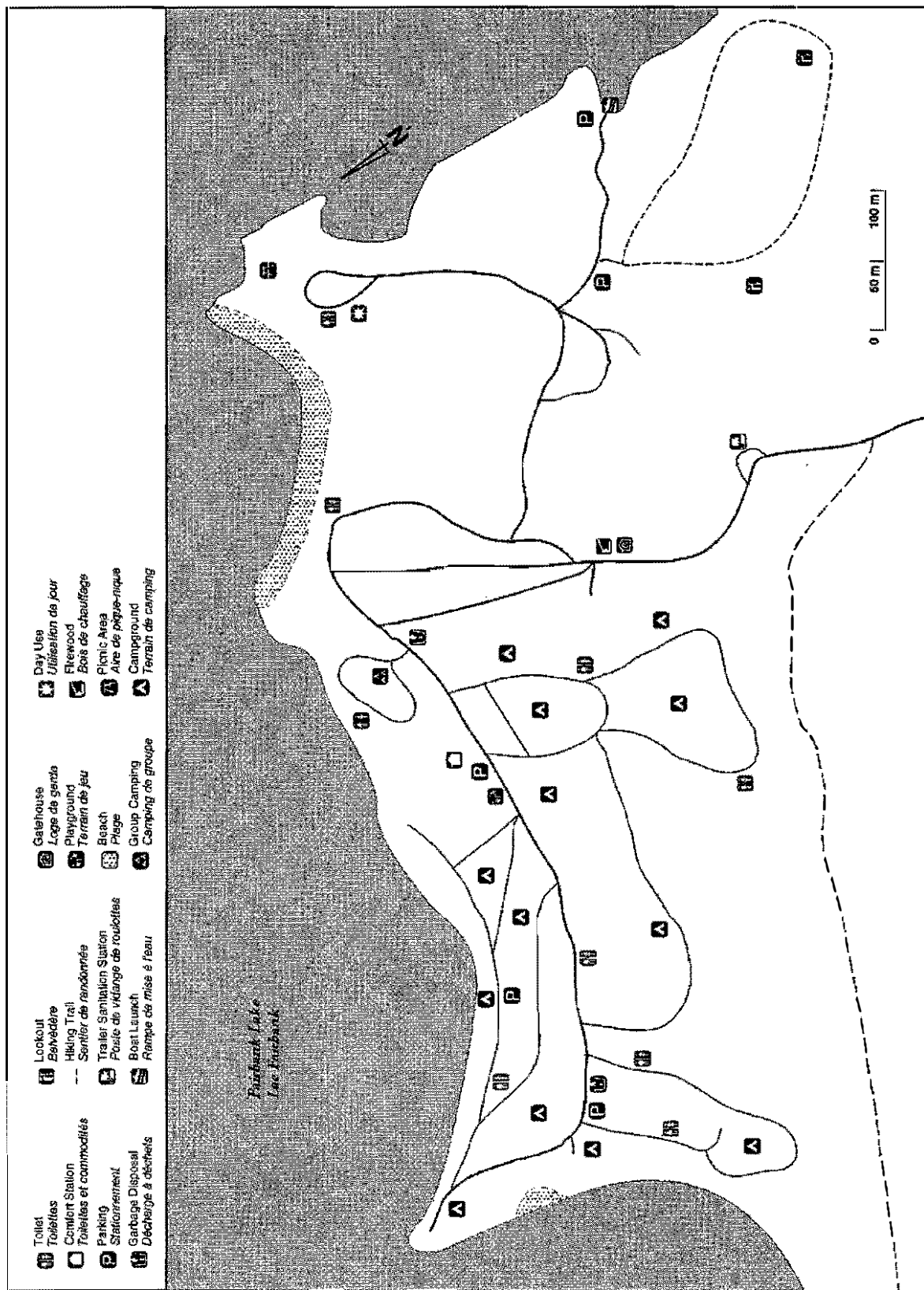
The park entrance road and campground roads will be well maintained to control dust and maintain their integrity. Necessary repairs and resurfacing of existing roads will be undertaken as required to provide a safe travel surface. Consideration of pedestrian traffic will be addressed before undertaking any road repair projects.



### 9.2 Park Signs

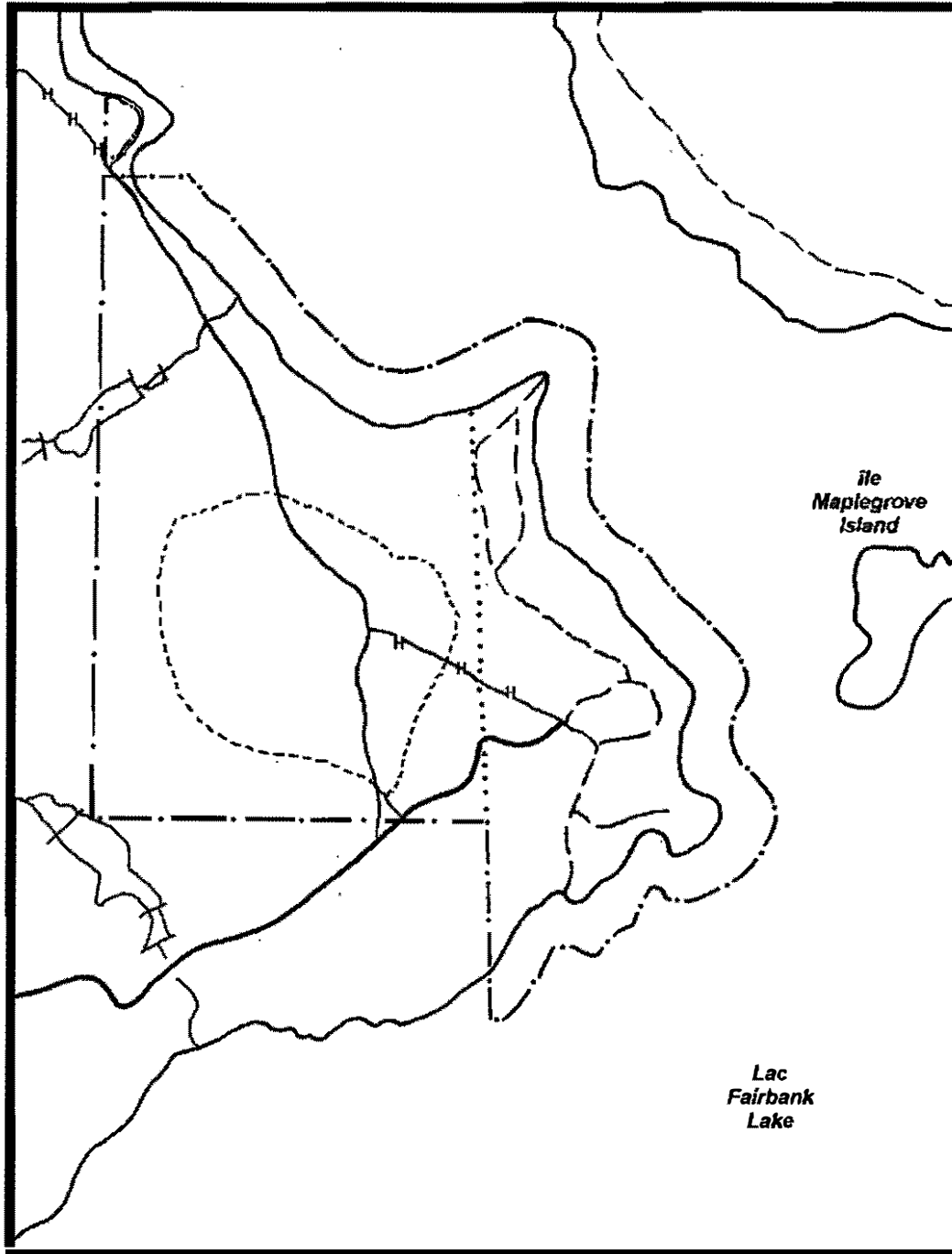
Park signs will be upgraded in accordance with a sign plan that will be prepared for the park.

**FIGURE 3 CAMPGROUND DEVELOPMENT**



**FIGURE 4 PARK DEVELOPMENT**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| — Existing Hiking Trail<br><i>Sentier de randonnée actuels</i>     | ..... Township Line<br><i>Cantons géographiques</i> |
| - - - Proposed Hiking Trail<br><i>Sentier de randonnée proposé</i> | H Hydro Line<br><i>Hydraulique ligne</i>            |
| - · - · - Park Boundary<br><i>Limites du parc</i>                  |   |





### 9.3 Playground

A quality family play facility will be added adjacent to the main beach area. This will consist of a multi-use accessible play structure incorporated into a barrier free pathway accessing the beach, shelter area and Fairbank Lake. The development of this play facility will be completed in conjunction with the provision of accessible washroom facilities. These will replace existing deteriorated facilities and will also serve as change houses for beach users.

### 9.4 Sanitation Services

Park visitors regularly identify the need for improved washroom facilities located within walking distance of the main beach area. Currently, two vault privy units service this location. These deteriorating structures will be removed and replaced. These new units will allow barrier free access as well as doubling as change rooms.

### 9.5 Campground

Several sites are underused in the campground. Approximately 15 of these campsites will be converted to accommodate leasing of the sites on a seasonal basis. In the event that a demand can be identified, site planning will identify campground expansion potential along the undeveloped shore of the existing campsites.



### 9.6 Park Administration Area

The park office will be upgraded to provide improved office and storage space and a functional space for the park store. This will involve renovations to the building interior and structural work on the building's exterior. The existing building will be used. No expansion will be necessary.

The existing entrance to the park provides a limited parking/waiting buffer space for vehicle registration. Congestion regularly occurs during high use times when the majority of travellers enter the park. Expansion of parking facilities will provide a safe alternative to existing conditions.

### 9.7 Service Concession

A partnership agreement may be developed with a community based business to establish a mobile store service in the park. This will provide park users with an opportunity to obtain basic supplies right in the park. Opportunities to expand this idea to include future services as demanded will be developed through a "park partnership theme".

### 9.8 Boat Launch



An old launch structure requires upgrading and due to the nature of this structure it will be necessary to remove foreign debris from the lake. A dock will be installed to accommodate fluctuating water levels. A site plan will determine the best suitable approach to this project.

### 9.9 Partnerships

Emphasis will be given to developing partnerships for items such as development proposals, recreation and other activities. This *Management Plan* encourages partnerships including but not limited to the following:

- Site plans and installation of a dock structure.
- Develop partnership agreements with local business as required and implement mobile store service concession.
- A geological interpretive trail.

## 10.0 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Implementation of this *Management Plan* will involve resource management, natural heritage education, and the development of approved facilities. Implementation of the plan will be based on work program planning, special funding initiatives and corporate/local partnership agreements.

Park Operating Plan will be updated as facilities are upgraded or developed. Park operations will meet or exceed the minimum Provincial Operating Standards.

The following briefly summarizes the main priorities for implementation over the next twenty (20) years.

### 10.1 Resource Stewardship

This will involve:

- Encourage plant/vegetation association surveys and mapping-potential partnership with educational institutions in Sudbury (e.g. Laurentian University or Collège Boréal).
- Update the development zone Vegetation Management Plan.
- Encourage archaeological and historical studies and outdoor education uses.
- Conduct another Life Science Survey.
- Shoreline erosion rehabilitation.
- Update the current sign plan for the park.

### 10.2 Natural Heritage Education

*This will involve:*

- Preparation of a Natural Heritage Education Plan, implementing communication and interpretation efforts to encourage day-use and overnight stays in the park and area.

### 10.3 Development

The following facilities and improvements will be done in phases as funds and resources permit. Priority will be placed on safety oriented projects. Revenue generating initiatives will be pursued through Ontario Parks guidelines. It should be noted that phasing and priorities may be adjusted to meet changing needs.

#### Phase 1

This phase will address health and safety concerns in the park. Completion of this phase will provide washroom facilities at the main beach area and replace/rehabilitate the boat launch area.

#### Priority

1. Prepare/update park operating plans.
2. Upgrade washroom facilities.
3. Remove the existing dock structure and rehabilitate the site.



#### Phase 2

Completion of this phase will provide improved camper services and implementation of revenue generating initiatives.

#### Priority

1. Conversion of approximately 15 campsites to seasonal leased sites.

#### Phase 3

Completion of this phase will provide for expanded recreational opportunities including beach play facilities adjacent to the main beach area, development of hiking/interpretive trail and upgrade to administrative facilities.

#### Priority

1. Phase in creative, accessible play structure.
2. Multi-purpose access to beach and lake.

3. Improve the administration area (roof) including upgrading of the park office to provide park store services and enlarge the parking area.
4. Monitor camper preferences and demand; site planning will evaluate campsite potential along shoreline west of the existing campground.

*Special Funding Initiatives include:*

1. Road improvement of the entrance and expanded parking area.

#### **10.4 Social and Economic Impact Analysis**

Fairbank's visitation has changed significantly in recent years. In 1995 and 1996, occupancy of the campgrounds during the July-August peak season averaged 34% and 35% respectively. During the 1997 operating season, occupancy during the peak July-August season averaged 52%.

Expenditures made by Ontario Parks to operate Fairbank, and by park patrons who visit the park, translate into economic impacts (figures related to visitor expenditures were drawn from the 1996 Park User Survey). Based on an initial total expenditure of \$1.24 million, the following economic impacts were generated using the Social and Economic Impact Model, (SEIM) licensed to MNR:

- Regional Gross Sales (or Regional Gross Output)- \$1,527,570.00
- Wages & Salaries - \$1,133,705.00
- Provincial Person Years of Employment - 34.2
- Regional Person Years of Employment - 18.3

The projects and activities identified in this management plan are generally neutral in terms of their social impacts, both within the park and in the surrounding area.

## **11.0 PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

The planning process followed several methods of consultation which enabled the public to comment on the management planning for Fairbank Provincial Park.

These methods consisted of:

### ***Mailing Lists***

- Mandatory mailing list (PM 11.02.02).
- Mail out of *Preliminary Management Plan* to those on the mandatory mailing list and to individuals who requested to be put on the mailing list.
- A notice indicating plan approval and where copies may be obtained was mailed to mailing list members once the plan has been approved.

### ***Media***

- Media ads in the following newspapers: Sudbury Star, Northern Life and Le Voyageur (ads were posted during the Invite to Participate, Preliminary Plan and Approved Plan stages).

### ***Public Meetings***

- Public meetings on request or as the Superintendent deemed necessary, were held over the duration of the project.

The Park Superintendent met with the Fairbank Campers Association.

### ***Environmental Bill of Rights Registry***

- EBR Notices were posted (during the Invite to Participate, Preliminary Plan and Approved Plan stages) which provided the opportunity for public comment.

### ***Comment Sheet***

- The *Preliminary Management Plan* included a comment sheet for public input and submissions were directed to the Park Superintendent.

In August 1998, the *Preliminary Management Plan* was released for public comment and review. During the consultation period 4 written comments were received.

All comments received were considered during the completion of this *Management Plan*.

The *Fairbank Provincial Park Management Plan* will be reviewed on an ongoing basis throughout its 20 year lifespan.

## 12.0 REFERENCES

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