THE REGIONAL INTEGRATION OF PROTECTED
AREAS: A STUDY OF CANADA’S NATIONAL PARKS

by

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A thesis
presented to the University of Waterloo
in fulfilment of the
thesis requirement for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
Geography

Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, 2008

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Chapter 7: Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks

This chapter presents the results from the Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Park (MR&GNP) case study. It is organized in the same manner as the two previous chapters by first presenting the context within which MR&GNP is situated including its biophysical environment, economy and demographics, history, culture, governance, politics, and participants’ perceptions of the park region. The second section of the chapter lists and reviews several documents gathered as secondary sources in terms of references to regional integration, park policies or directives related to park-region interactions, and information about regional integration initiatives in place in the park region. The third section of the chapter describes the relationships between regional actors and MR&GNP staff. The fourth section of the chapter presents participants’ conceptualizations of regional integration. The final section of this chapter presents suggestions from participants for improving the regional integration of MR&GNP.

7.1 Context

7.1.1 Biophysical Environment

Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks are located in southeastern British Columbia’s Columbia Mountains. The City of Revelstoke is located approximately one kilometre from the entrance of Mount Revelstoke National Park. Other nearby communities are Golden (approximately 150 km east of Revelstoke), Nakusp (approximately 100 km south of Revelstoke), and Sicamous (approximately 70 km west of Revelstoke) (Figure 6).

Mount Revelstoke National Park (MRNP) protects 260 km² of the Selkirk Mountains, including the face and summit of Mount Revelstoke. Glacier National Park protects 1350 km² of the Purcell and Selkirk mountains. The Illecillewaet River flows from the Illecillewaet...
Glacier in Glacier National Park (GNP) into the Columbia River at Revelstoke. The Columbia River Valley, which has been transformed into a series of reservoirs through hydro-electric dams, is a major geographical feature of the MR&GNP region. The Revelstoke Dam is located three kilometres from the City of Revelstoke and within one kilometre of the western boundary of MRNP.

From west to east, the Trans Canada Highway parallels the southern boundary of Mount Revelstoke National Park, travels 14.5 kilometres between the two parks, and passes through Rogers Pass to bisect GNP into northern and southern sections. A major railway also follows this transportation corridor.

The climate of the MR&GNP region is characterized by high precipitation and four distinct seasons. The area is well known for the amount of snow it receives, which has been measured at up to 15 metres per year within GNP. The mean annual precipitation is 1278 mm at Revelstoke and 1995 mm in the subalpine zone (Parks Canada, 2007a).

The ecosystems represented in the region are generally determined by elevation. The valley bottoms are populated by old growth forests of western red cedar and western hemlock. Engelmann spruce, sub-alpine fir, and mountain hemlock are present on mid to upper slopes. Further upslope, parkland meadows transition to alpine tundra (Parks Canada, 2005). More than half of GNP is alpine tundra, rocks, and glaciers (Parks Canada, 2005). Insects and disease are the most common natural disturbances in the park’s valley bottom. Higher elevation forests are also subject to fires, avalanches, and mudslides (Parks Canada, 2005).

Both national parks provide habitat for wildlife species designated by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) including wolverine (a species of special concern), mountain caribou (threatened), and grizzly bear (a species of special
concern). Other vulnerable (or provincially blue-listed) species in the region are the bull trout, cutthroat trout, great blue heron, painted turtle, and short-eared owl. It is well known and accepted that the parks are too small to provide sufficient habitat to maintain populations of many of these species on their own and that many species travel between the parks and external provincial Crown lands.

7.1.2 Economy and Demographics

The MR&GNP regional economy is tied directly to its geographic location and natural resources. The economy is based primarily on forestry, tourism, hydro-electric generation, government services, and transportation (primarily Canadian Pacific Railway). The City of Revelstoke is the service centre for a large geographic region and retail, public services, and government offices are located in the city.

Forestry

The forest industry (including logging, hauling, primary and secondary processing, consulting, and silviculture) accounts for 21% of employment income in Revelstoke (City of Revelstoke, 2006). The main species harvested are western red cedar, engelman spruce, western hemlock, mountain hemlock, Douglas fir, balsam fir, and western white pine. The Revelstoke and Area Land Use Plan, the Kootenay Boundary Land Use Plan, and Higher Level Plan Orders guide forestry management within the region (Province of British Columbia, 2005; Revelstoke Minister’s Advisory Committee, 1999). The plans provide zones of limited or no timber harvest within defined areas of mountain caribou habitat.

Most of the Crown land in the MR&GNP region is leased as timber supply areas to timber companies. There are multiple players in the region and all are regulated by the British
Columbia Ministry of Forests and Range (BCMOFR) within the Columbia Forest District, based in Revelstoke. Within the Revelstoke Timber Supply Area, timber harvesting supports 315 person-years of employment annually and $9.93 million in employment income (BC Forest Service - Forest Analysis Branch, 2004). Downie Timber is the major wood manufacturer in the region and provides direct employment to 200 persons and generates approximately $30 million per year. Several independent contractors undertake harvesting, hauling, road building, forest management, and silviculture operations.

In 1993, following a downturn in the economy as the result of the end of three major hydro-electric dam construction projects, the City of Revelstoke bought a tree farm license (TFL55) north of the city and became the sole shareholder of the Revelstoke Community Forest Corporation. The Revelstoke Forestry Corporation harvests saw and pulp logs in this license. One third of logs are sold to a negotiated buyer and one third of the logs go to local industry partners for processing.

Currently, British Columbia is experiencing a general decline in the forestry industry, which has been negatively affected by a high Canadian dollar and downturn in the United States housing market. This downward trend in revenue and employment is expected to continue.

Tourism

Tourism is a major economic driver in Revelstoke. The 2001 census indicated that 670 persons were employed in accommodation and food services in Revelstoke. Many of these jobs are part time and/or seasonal. Approximate 3.5 millions people drive through MR&GNP each
year and approximately 600,000 travellers stop within the parks. Two-thirds of visitors to the parks are international.

The MR&GNP region has two distinct tourist seasons: summer and winter. During the summer tourist season, the city and its region are popular stopping points along the busy Trans-Canada Highway. The two national parks are considered major tourism destinations in the summer, along with the Revelstoke Dam, Railway Museum, and the town centre.

From December to April, Revelstoke is a tourist destination. The region is famous for its snow and has been promoted as a “snowmobile mecca” for many years. Rogers Pass is a worldwide destination for backcountry skiing. Other tourism activities in the winter are downhill skiing (at the new Revelstoke Mountain Resort), heli skiing, and cat skiing. There is little tourist use of MRNP in the winter, as the road to the summit of the mountain is closed. However, some locals do use the lower trails for cross country skiing and snowshoeing.

On December 22, 2007, the Revelstoke Mountain Resort started its inaugural season. The ski hill, just south of Revelstoke on Mount Mackenzie, has been a source of speculation for 20 years. The development plan for the resort allows for the construction of 5,000 new housing units, 500,000 square feet of commercial and retail space, and a golf course. The resort has received significant worldwide media attention and is being billed as one of the world’s best ski resorts. The resort and its associated development has been linked to increased real estate prices, higher rents, and concern by some residents about the pace of development in the city (see 7.1.6).
Transportation

The transportation industry plays a significant role in the MR&GNP region. Both rail and highway traffic have increased substantially during the past 30 years from 150,000 vehicles a year using the highway in 1970 to over 1.5 million vehicles in 2000 (Parks Canada, 2005). The Canadian Pacific Railway employs approximately 400 people in Revelstoke.

The Trans Canada Highway passes south of MRNP and through GNP. In the winter, Parks Canada has developed an agreement with the British Columbia Ministry of Transportation (BCMOT) to have their contractor provide winter maintenance of the highway through MRNP. In exchange, Parks Canada maintains the section of the Trans Canada Highway from GNP to Quartz Creek. In the summer, maintenance for this section of highway reverts to the responsible agency.

The world’s largest mobile avalanche control program keeps the road and railway corridor open during the winter using avalanche bulletins, instigating closures, and using artillery to stabilize potential avalanches. Several times each winter the highway between Revelstoke and Golden is closed to traffic, which results in very high commercial truck traffic within the communities.

Demographics

The 2006 census reported a decrease in the population of Revelstoke since 2001 (7500 to 7230). This result is perceived to be misleading as there has been a marked influx in newcomers to the community since 2006, influenced by the development of the new ski resort. Some study participants estimated that the city’s population will increase by 2000 people in the next 10 years.
There is a general observation that the population of long-term residents is ageing and that the people moving to the community are younger amenity migrants. School enrolments in School District 19 have declined in recent years, similar to the national trend.

7.1.3 History

The MR&GNP region has a rich human history. Archaeological surveys have yet to find evidence of First Nations use within the parks however there has been some evidence of the use of the Big Eddy neighbourhood within the City of Revelstoke, possibly as a temporary camp. Three First Nations – Secwepemc (Shuswap), Okanagan, and the Ktunaxa include the parks as part of their traditional territory.

The parks’ histories were shaped by the discovery of the route through the Selkirk Mountains by Major A. B. Rogers, construction of the railway and highways through Rogers Pass, and the rise and fall of resource industries (see 7.1.2). In 1886, in conjunction with Yoho National Park, Glacier National Park was established. These two parks were Canada’s second and third national parks.

The most significant aspect of history of the parks as related to regional integration is the history of the establishment of Mount Revelstoke National Park. In 1908, local citizens of Revelstoke, hearing about the establishment of other national parks, particularly Banff, lobbied the provincial and federal governments to establish a national park on Mount Revelstoke in order to celebrate its scenic beauty and provide recreational opportunities for residents. The Meadows-in-the-Sky Parkway was built between 1911 and 1927 and the park was officially designated in 1914. Early advertisements misleadingly labelled the park as “Canada’s Rocky Mountain Jewel.” This history of park establishment is well-known in the community and is
celebrated each year with the Eva Lake Pilgrimage. MRNP remains the only mountain park established at the urging of local citizens.

The history of the parks’ establishment has not had a negative influence on present regional integration of the parks and only two participants made note of the parks’ establishment histories. This is in marked contrast to the two eastern case studies, Gros Morne National Park (GMNP) and Kejimkujik National Park and National Historic Site (KNP&NHS), whose regional actors have living memories of a difficult period of park establishment.

7.1.4 Culture

Many participants made observations about the culture of both the residents of Revelstoke as well as the staff of the MR&GNP Field Unit. These observations provide important context to the regional integration of the parks.

Culture of the Residents of Revelstoke

The two most significant observations about the culture of the residents of Revelstoke are the different types of residents who live in the community and a strong “sense of community” that is held by residents.

Many participants made the generalization between two different “types” of people who live in Revelstoke: 1) those residents whose families have been living in Revelstoke for several generations, many of whom are employed in the forestry or transportation industries, and 2) those residents who are newcomers to town and have chosen to live in Revelstoke for lifestyle reasons. Some residents in the first group, termed the town’s “old guard” by some participants, have not visited the national parks in their lifetimes but do enjoy motorized forms of recreation such as ATV-ing and snowmobiling in the region. Some of the relative newcomers to town have been labelled the “pogey ski team” – these are residents who work
seasonally and spend many days in the winter backcountry skiing in the region. Some of the relative newcomers to town have strong environmental values. One participant indicated that being an environmentalist was difficult in the community and that some residents are quite hostile to conservation or any criticism of the forestry industry.

There is a strong sense of community in Revelstoke which is probably linked to its geographical isolation, history of self-reliance, and a boom and bust economy. Some participants noted that there are strong linkages between government agencies and community groups and that cooperation is part of the community’s culture. Revelstoke is perceived as a good place for families, safe, and small enough to recognize people on the street. There is a perception that the community is changing quickly and that the new ski hill development is attracting more “cultured” residents to the community and a demand for high-end restaurants and shops.

Culture of MR&GNP Staff

Most participants had a perception about the culture of the employees of the MR&GNP Field Unit. There were differing perceptions of this culture, influenced by participants’ backgrounds and experiences interacting with park employees. These perceptions of the park staff culture influence the parks’ regional integration, particularly in terms of the relationship between residents of the community and park staff.

Most non-staff participants of the study perceived the staff of the MR&GNP Field Unit to be very well educated, well paid, and very involved members of the community. Some staff members hold important roles in community organizations and this was noted by some participants. Some participants who actively work with MR&GNP staff stated that the staff have made an explicit effort during the past three to four years to become more integrated into
the community and that they were now more motivated to work with other agencies. One park staff member explained that park’s approach to communications has not changed since the 1970’s, which is for staff to get out into the community as much as possible and become part of the conversations happening within the community.

However, some non-staff participants had negative views of the local park staff. These negative views were the strongest and most consistent of the four case studies. Several participants perceived that the park staff are “too bureaucratic” and that it takes them long time to get anything accomplished. This descriptor was used by several participants in relation to the amount of time taken to complete some recent infrastructure improvements within the parks:

*So things like that, you know, the right hand doesn’t know what the left hand is doing and it takes so long and it’s painful. And I think that’s the difference between entrepreneurial people and government. (M7)*

There was also a feeling among some participants that the park staff were not very well connected with other activities in the community and that they are operating “within their own bubble” and are “insular”:

*I think the park still somewhat insulates itself. The park has a park perspective and it’s it’s a national perspective. They’re really perceived as kind of being over here on issues. And then there’s other people that are kind of the rest of the pool is over here. And it still is somewhat insular. I think in a way the park staff are in their own little world. Often you see them all huddled together. They go places together. (M8)*

Some participants perceived that the park staff were “environmentalists” and had very strong opinions against forestry and motorized recreation within the MR&GNP region and that they are not willing to acknowledge others’ views. One participant affiliated with the forestry industry noted that some park staff do not make an effort to be sympathetic or understanding toward resource users:
I don’t think I have ever heard a Parks Canada person say “We understand that this isn’t easy, and we understand that families and citizens will be impacted”; it has simply been ecological. That’s not going to go very far, which has happened unfortunately. (M17)

Some participants felt that park staff are inconsistent in their representation on various committees or organizations and that, because they are interacting with different staff members all of the time, it is difficult to develop personal relationships or know the appropriate staff person to contact:

Then Mark came for a while and then Tom and Jane was there too. Jane was there in the beginning and then Jane retired and then Mark came and then Debra came. I don’t mean to make this personal but there is confusion about “who is who in the zoo” so to speak. It shouldn’t be “Oh god I am out of town and nobody’s going to be there” or “She’s sick and nobody’s going to be there”, on a regular basis. That is not really a signal to send. Either they are important or they are not important. (M17)

There was also a strong perception by some participants, particularly those connected with the tourism industry, that the park staff do not want visitor numbers to increase in the parks and that they would prefer for people not to use the park. This opinion appears to stem from a perceived slowness in repairing infrastructure and from the short season of many park facilities such as the Meadows-in-the-Sky Parkway in MRNP.

7.1.5 Governance

Table 22 presents a list of key regional actors for the MR&GNP case study and a brief overview of their responsibilities, decision-making powers, and/or relevance to the park.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Regional Actor</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
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</table>
| **Friends of Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks (“The Friends”)** | • A not-for-profit cooperating association formed in 1986  
• The group’s mandate is to “supports the protection, appreciation, education and understanding of Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks” (Friends of Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks, 2007)  
• Membership of 186 people, mostly residents of Revelstoke  
• Funds a variety of projects from research grants to education publications to outdoor courses  
• Financially self sufficient from proceeds of the Glacier Hut Bookstore that it operates in the park visitor centre at Rogers Pass |
| **BC Ministry of Forests and Range (BCMOFR)** | • Responsible for regulating the forestry industry in BC  
• Revelstoke is located within the Southern Interior Forest Region and, within that, the Columbia Forest District  
• Main office for the Columbia Forest District is located in Revelstoke and employs approximately 26 people |
| **Residents of Revelstoke** | • Population of the City of Revelstoke was 7230 in 2006  
• A mix of multi-generational residents and newcomers |
| **Canadian Avalanche Association (CAA)** | • Canada’s national avalanche organization  
• Promotes avalanche safety  
• Headquarters are in Revelstoke  
• Association has 800 members across Canada who work in avalanche-related activities ranging from research to hazard control and management, to education. |
| **City of Revelstoke** | • Municipal government, governed by a mayor and six councillors  
• 8 departments: Administration, Finance, Public Works, Planning, Building & Bylaw Enforcement, Parks and Recreation, Fire, and Economic Development |
| **First Nations** | • There are no First Nations reserves within the immediate park region (i.e., Revelstoke area)  
• Three nations have overlapping traditional territories and all claim the MR&GNP region  
  o Okanagan Nation Alliance  
  o Ktunaxa Treaty Council  
  o Secwepemc Nation  
• Ktunaxa Nation is currently undergoing treaty negotiations through the BC treaty negotiation process |
| **Columbia Mountains Institute of Applied Ecology (CMIAE)** | • Non-profit society based in Revelstoke  
• Established in 1996  
• Purpose of the Institute is to “increase awareness and knowledge about the ecology of the Columbia Mountains and regional ecosystems by delivering conferences and seminars, providing courses, coordinating research, and communicating research results” (Columbia Mountains Institute of Applied Ecology, 2008) |
| **BC Ministry of Transportation (BCMOT)** | • Tasked with “opening up BC through innovative, forward-thinking transportation strategies that move people and goods safely throughout BC, while helping to revitalize our provincial economy” (British Columbia Ministry of Transportation, 2008)  
• Revelstoke is located within the BCMOT’s southern interior region’s Rocky Mountain District  
• An area office is located in downtown Revelstoke that employs approximately 7 people |
| **Forestry industry** | • Revelstoke is the base of operations for three sawmills, one cedar shake and shingle mill, one pole yard, and several value-added wood manufacturing plants  
• Several smaller forestry contractors operate in the region |
| **Tourism industry** | • Includes several heli-ski companies, the Revelstoke Mountain Resort, accommodation providers, restaurant owners/managers, and snowmobile tour operators  
• Many of the operators are active members of the city’s Chamber of Commerce |
7.1.6 “Hot Topics”

This section examines the region’s “hot topics” which have had a contextual influence on the regional integration of MR&GNP: caribou, the pace of development in Revelstoke, and park entrance fees.

Caribou

As mentioned above, the mountain caribou is a threatened species under COSEWIC due to their low numbers, decreasing population trend, and shrinking distribution. A 2004 population census within the Columbia Forest District\(^{22}\) found that there is a population of approximately 176 (Hooge et al., 2004). In censuses from 1994-1997 the population was between 290 and 373 animals. Since 1992, the leading causes of death in caribou in the district were cited to be predation and accidents (Flaa & McLellan, 1999). The predator-prey system has changed in the region and increased moose and deer numbers and related changes in wolves and cougars may have adversely affected caribou (Flaa & McLellan, 1999).

Since 2005, the Species at Risk Coordination Office (SARCO) has been coordinating accelerated recovery planning for the mountain caribou. In 2006, a draft Mountain Caribou Recovery Strategy was released and in October 2007, after a four month comprehensive consultation process, the government announced its endorsement of the plan.

In 2003, the City of Revelstoke established a Revelstoke Caribou Recovery Committee to communicate and coordinate activities locally. The idea was to create a “made in Revelstoke” solution to the caribou issue. At the time of its creation, it was thought that the committee would satisfy the requirements of a recovery team under the Species at Risk Act.

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\(^{22}\) The Revelstoke herd is defined as “those caribou on either side of the Revelstoke Reservoir from Mount Revelstoke National Park to Mica Creek, and from Glacier National Park on the east, to the height of land in the Monashee Range to the west” (Flaa & McLellan, 1999, p. 639).
With the creation of SARCO in 2005, the committee shifted its role to become a source of local information for SARCO. Some study participants perceived that this group is dominated by members sympathetic to the forest industry and described some conflicts and differences of opinion between the forestry industry and recreationists.

A “Links” group was also developed locally which includes representatives from Parks Canada, the forestry industry, other land users, and the provincial government. The main purpose of this group was to establish a conduit for information between SARCO, the provincial government, and the community of Revelstoke.

Many regional actors have been involved in more than one of these caribou groups. The major issues of contention at the time of the interviews were the impact of motorized recreation (particularly snowmobiling and heli-skiing) on caribou, the most effective method for recovering the population, and the impact that recovery may have on forestry and recreation. There is a general philosophical divide between those connected to the forestry industry who favour control of predators or their alternate prey for recovery and others, including Parks Canada staff, who are in favour of restricting logging and improving caribou habitat.

**Park Entrance Fees**

As with the other case studies, the implementation of an entrance fee for MR&GNP in 1995 was not well received within the local community. According to one local resident, there was a “hullaballo” in the media, especially since the fee was announced suddenly without any public consultation. Local users were accustomed to visiting the parks, particularly MRNP, on a casual basis. Some participants observed that there was a feeling in the community that
MRNP belonged to the local people, which may stem from the history of locals’ lobbying for the creation of the park or the fact that it is geographically close to Revelstoke. Some residents have refused to visit the parks since the fees were implemented. Others residents have reduced their use:

_We were driving back – we went out to Canyon Hot Springs for a swim last summer, and brought a lunch with us; turned around and started coming back, and said, “Let’s stop at the Skunk Cabbage spot and have lunch.” Pulled in there, and we look, and we start doing the math… and that lunch was going to end up costing us for our group $23-24? And…we just loaded the car up, went another 200 yards down the road outside the park and found a picnic table and had a good lunch. And that…that aspect – the parks got greedier…? (M24)_

Changes in Community and Pace of Development

Revelstoke is a rapidly developing and changing community. The main thrust behind these changes is the new Revelstoke Mountain Resort, announced in January 2007. The resort’s approved development plan calls for the creation of 5000 new housing units within the resort’s village area. There has been speculation about the development for the past 20 years. In recent years there has been a surge in property values in Revelstoke with housing prices increasing 150% in less than two years. The vacancy rate in March 2008 was approximately 1%. The lack of affordable housing options within the community has been the subject of many newspaper columns in the local *Revelstoke Times Review*. Other concerns are related to the purchase of properties by non-residents. One participant predicted how the community is going to change:

_Well...you all of a sudden throw in an extra 3,000 [people] looking for a place to eat, we’re going to have a huge problem there as well. Ah, store frontage, rentals...places to live...people are seeing now – come into Revelstoke as a $14 or $15 an hour employee and try to buy a house? Forget it. And try to rent a house? Forget it, you know? So, the social impact is going to absolutely change what Revelstoke will look like from now on. There’s no doubt. (M24)_
Views of the ski resort and its impact on the community are mixed. Participants believed that the resort is the town’s “saving grace” due to the downturn in the forestry sector and that some of the newcomers will bring more cultural opportunities to the town. Others indicated that they were concerned about the ski resort’s impact on housing prices and an increase in home ownership by non-residents.

7.1.7 Park Region

There was a very consistent view among participants that the MR&GNP region is the City of Revelstoke and its immediate region. To many residents, Revelstoke is a “city state” or an “island” because of its geographic isolation and the lack of links with other communities. The community of Golden, 150 km from Revelstoke, is perceived to be quite far away because of the journey required over Rogers Pass and the fact that the Trans Canada Highway between Revelstoke and Golden is regularly closed during the winter. Furthermore, MR&GNP staff noted that there are few connections between the field unit and residents of Golden and that although some Golden residents do backcountry ski in Rogers Pass, most of the connections that Golden residents have with Parks Canada are with staff from Yoho and Kootenay National Parks, to the town’s east. Finally, most of the organizations with which MR&GNP staff regularly interact are located in Revelstoke.

7.2 Review of Documents

Several documents relevant to MR&GNP and the MR&GNP region were reviewed in order to document references to the term “regional integration”, park policies or directives related to park-region interactions, and information about regional integration initiatives in place in the park region. Many of the policies, directives, and initiatives were also discussed by
participants and are thus elaborated on more in the discussion of specific park and actor relationships. Table 23 lists the documents reviewed for the MR&GNP case study.

Table 23: Results of review of documents for MR&GNP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>References to “regional integration”</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None found</td>
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**Park policies or directives related to park-region interactions**

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<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• “Key outcome for public education: level of connection/engagement of residents who participate in outreach programs is increased after participation” (p. 5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• “Staff of Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks work with provincial and regional organizations, such as Tourism BC, the Columbia Mountains Institute, the B.C. Rockies destination marketing organization, and media organizations, to extend the reach of park messages” (p. 33)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• “Park staff work with the mass media (newspaper, radio, television and filmmakers) to extend the reach of park messages” (p. 33)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• “Mount Revelstoke and Glacier has a very positive relationship with the local newspaper, which offers a regular column space for national park and site stories” (p. 33)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• “Mount Revelstoke and Glacier currently offer a menu of eight classroom and on-site programs aimed at young people and linked to the British Columbia school curriculum” (p. 34)</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mount Revelstoke National Park of Canada and Glacier National Park of Canada and Rogers Pass National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan</th>
<th>Parks Canada (2005)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning context</td>
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<tr>
<td>• “Recognizing their place as part of a larger ecosystem, the parks place a high priority on working with neighbouring land managers” (p. 6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• “Parks Canada acknowledges the interests of First Nations, in particular the Ktunaxa-Kinbasket, Secwepemc and Okanagan First Nations, in the planning and operation of these two national parks and the national historic site and welcomes the potential for increasing their involvement” (p. 6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• “Ecosystem-based management is a holistic approach that involves working with others to achieve common goals. Productive, positive, long-term relationships are the key to its success” (p. 8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• “Integrated management is essential” (p. 8)</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management principles</th>
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<tr>
<td>• “Cooperation and collaboration with neighbouring land management agencies and stakeholders (such as private and non-profit organizations, education and government agencies) help protect ecological and commemorative integrity” (p. 9)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• “Parks Canada is active in influencing marketing and promotion that affect visitor demand within the regional ecosystem” (p. 9)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Strategic goals</th>
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<td>• “Using an integrated approach, Parks Canada and other land managers in the Columbia Mountains Natural Region improve the health of the larger ecosystem through their protection and use of the landscape” (p. 19)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• “Parks Canada and First Nation communities work together to build relationships</td>
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and develop opportunities for First Nations’ people to present their heritage” (p. 27)
- “Parks and site opportunities, facilities and services complement those within the regional ecosystem” (p. 43)
- “Ecological, social, cultural and economic systems in the greater ecosystem benefit from integrated management” (p. 67)
- “Key policy, land-use and planning decisions are timely, fair and consistent, and are arrived at in an open and participatory manner” (p. 67)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal regional integration initiatives in place or recently in place (2006-2008)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Advisory Committee</td>
<td>Parks Canada (2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LINKS group (caribou information)</td>
<td>Parks Canada (2008)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As with the two previous case studies, there were no specific references to “regional integration” in the documents reviewed. However, the current park management plan and state of the park report make numerous references to the importance of working with regional actors (Parks Canada 2005, 2008). Fewer documents on regional integration initiatives were found for this case study, however many of the initiatives in place were more informal and did not have accompanying documents to review (see 7.3 and 8.1.2 for more information about these initiatives).

7.3 Park and Actor Relationships

This section examines the relationship between MR&GNP and the key regional actors identified in section 7.1.5.

7.3.1 Friends of Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks

There has been a working relationship between Friends of Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks and the field unit since “The Friends” was established in 1986. The organization was described by some participants as being able to do activities that the park is not able to do under its mandate, such as operate the bookstore at Rogers Pass. It is also perceived as an essential link between the parks and the community through both its activities
and events and as a source of volunteers for projects, such as the recent renovation of the
Glacier Hut Cabin in GNP. “The Friends” board members are generally strong supporters of
the parks:

*People on the board are interested in the national parks, they’re interested in the
knowledge and understanding of the park, they’re interested in learning more about the
park. They’re interested in protecting, or at least understanding the wildlife, the
habitat, the vegetation, those kinds of things. And so that’s why our programs are sort
of geared towards those things. People that want to get to know other people that like
to go in the outdoors. (M8)*

The relationship between park staff and “The Friends” has changed over the years.

During the early years of the organization, there was more personal involvement of park staff
in the “The Friends”. The association had a very active naturalist committee which some park
staff were very involved in. Several participants perceived that the relationship between the
two groups has deteriorated in recent years. According to one park staff person, the board is
less supportive of park management than in the past and has undertaken some projects outside
of the original mandate of the organization:

*There’s tension because of the types of things that “The Friends” want to do and it
some of it isn’t in the parks and I don’t have a problem with that because it’s all part of
the Greater Columbia ecosystem. But I know there’s, not everybody has the same
perception and they have an agreement with parks and this is the reason that they were
established and we provided seed funding and all that stuff. (M1)*

One “Friends” representative explained that some members have been critical of the
length of time that it has taken for the field unit staff to complete some important projects, and
that this has influenced the relationship in recent years:

*So the management team of course became very defensive because we would go to
these meetings and say “How come this isn’t done yet?” and “How come that isn’t
done yet?” When you have this huge, you know amount of people working upstairs and
you have or in the field or wherever and these things are not getting done. How come
they’re not getting done? (M8)*
We had volunteered for a project a number of years ago and it was three or four years and that project kept changing and the goal posts kept changing and so and we kept saying “Yes, we want to do this.” And we had a team of volunteers organized two years in a row and for a number of reasons it didn’t get done. And so finally we said you know we can’t do this. And we backed out of the project. (M8)

Some participants also perceived a poor communication system between the two organizations. For example, “The Friends” is rarely mentioned in the field unit’s management team meeting minutes and the attendance of park staff at “The Friends” bi-annual meetings has been brief:

No, I don’t know – Friends has their AGM and Mark shows up and gives his “Thank you to the Friends for caring”, then he leaves, doesn’t stay for the whole meeting. (M2)

Since the research interviews were undertaken, there has been a change in the individuals involved in the relationship between MR&GNP and “The Friends” and there has been a deliberate commitment to improving the relationship and communication pathways between the two organizations.

7.3.2 British Columbia Ministry of Forests and Range

According to participants there is a closer relationship between park staff and the Ministry of Forests and Range (BCMOFR) at the technical and operational level than at the managerial level. Park staff comment on the province’s annual allowable cut regulations and regularly work with BCMOFR staff to share data on joint wildlife research projects. There are also some formal agreements in place between the agencies about such things as fire management. There is no regular communication between the agencies at higher levels of the organizations.

One participant from the BCMOFR indicated that the MR&GNP Field Unit has been inconsistent in who works on regional issues, particularly with regard to the multiple caribou
committees, and that it is difficult to work with park staff with inconsistent levels of understanding about forestry and caribou.

There is also a perceived difference in values about land use between staff of the two agencies. One participant perceived that some MR&GNP staff “want the park to extend forever” and are not very open-minded about other land uses such as mining, forestry, or recreation. She described an ecological restoration project for Mount Revelstoke that she perceived to be a double standard:

Like coming over to Mt Sale and removing the alpine [vegetation] to put it on Mt Revelstoke, it’s kind of a double standard, that some people don’t really, it frustrates some people. It’s not a big deal, but people bring that up once in a while. It’s easy to throw glass at houses but parks have screwed up their ecosystem, they just come over to the provincial land and screw up theirs, you know rip up the alpine and move it. (M6)

7.3.3 Residents of Revelstoke

Glacier National Park and Mount Revelstoke National Park have been in existence for several generations. Unlike the GMNP and KNP&NHS case studies, the parks’ existence is not controversial. None of the study participants indicated any concerns with the park regulations or purported that the park land should be used for other purposes. Furthermore, the parks are being overshadowed by many other issues within the region, particularly the ski hill development and ensuing pace of development in Revelstoke. Finally, unlike the Waterton townsite, Parks Canada is not the only government agency in the community.

Some participants perceived the parks as having positive impacts on the community. The parks, particularly MRNP, are one of many attractions that are marketed to tourists through Revelstoke’s Chamber of Commerce’s Visitor Centre and at hotels in town. One segment of the community (see 7.1.4) is comprised of regular users of the parks and some members of this group perceive MRNP to be “their park” and are aware of the history of
MRNP’s establishment due to the lobbying of local residents (see 7.1.3). Residents hike, ski, and cycle in the parks year round. Some residents avoid the park because of the entrance fee and because they prefer to recreate in other, less “touristy” areas. Other residents of Revelstoke have never visited the summit of Mount Revelstoke.

“I actually think there’s people who like to think that Mount Revelstoke National Park is part of their identity of living in town, but I think for many of them, they don’t ever actually use it. It’s nice to have and I never go there. (M2)

Several participants, including park staff, felt that the benefits of the parks for the community are not understood or very well appreciated. Although Parks Canada is one of the major employers in town, it does not have the same presence that other employers have, such as Canadian Pacific Railway or Downie Timber. Several community participants felt that Parks Canada’s mandate was not very well publicized or understood by residents.

Some residents of Revelstoke who were interviewed did not regularly interact with park staff and were asked how often and through what means they heard about the park. They responded they are aware of the park through articles written by park staff in the local newspaper, *The Revelstoke Times Review*, through Park Canada’s visitor publication, and through occasional advertisements for events held by Parks Canada or “The Friends”. Some participants explained that this low level of communication indicated to them that park staff do not place as much effort into human and social issues as they do to ecological issues. Some participants perceived that the park publication is out of date and that there has been less publicity about some popular events in recent years, particularly the annual Eva Lake pilgrimage. This has let to the perception by some that the park does not want to organize community events:

*For a few years there was a real lack of encouragement from the park to do any kind of public things. The moonlight ski was barely advertised for a few years. The Eva Lake*
Pilgrimage almost died a couple of years ago. And Parks Canada doesn’t do a “take a hike day” anymore, which were your community events. (M8)

When asked about the most recent management planning consultation process (2003-2005), only a few participants recalled it. Park staff indicated that the open houses were not very well attended by the public but that there were separate meetings for invited regional actors that were more productive. One contextual factor that may have affected the community’s willingness to become involved in the consultation process is that the community’s “hot topics” (7.1.6) and other consultative processes have overshadowed the park in recent years.

Several participants pointed out that there were not very many connections between local school children and park staff. Several participants with school-aged children noted that their children have not been taken to the parks on field trips and perceived that field trips are the most important and obvious connection between school children and the parks. Entrance fees for school children are perceived to be a major barrier for these trips. One park staff member explained that in the past there was a staff person who conducted in-class and in-park school programs. There are also some programs that have been designed to fit into the BC school curriculum that are available “on demand” for teachers to implement. The teacher who was interviewed for this study was not aware of the availability of these programs.

7.3.4 Canadian Avalanche Association

The relationship between the field unit and the Canadian Avalanche Association (CAA) was perceived to be very strong by participants. Prior to the establishment of the CAA, avalanche programs in BC were quite insular, with little interaction between operators such as heli-ski companies, national parks, or the Canadian Pacific Railway and no mechanism to facilitate interaction between these organizations.
The CAA, based in Revelstoke, and MR&GNP staff have had a close working relationship since the CAA was created. During the 1960’s and 1970’s, Parks Canada was seen as the leading avalanche operator in Canada and many Parks Canada staff were fundamental in the establishment of the CAA. The CAA staff communicate with MR&GNP staff on all levels from the Chief Executive Officer of Parks Canada to MR&GNP park wardens:

*It’s a pretty free flow of contact and two way flow of information through all levels of the operational hierarchy.* (M16)

*If I were to rate the relationship on a scale of one to ten, it would be a, for sure, an eight or a nine.* (M16)

Operationally, park staff are involved with CAA avalanche training programs in Rogers Pass. There is also on-going dialogue with avalanche staff at Rogers Pass about developmental programs, data management, data structure, and the Canadian Avalanche Information System. A 1993 avalanche accident in Rogers Pass killed 7 students from Calgary. This accident prompted Parks Canada to increase the amount of information available to backcountry users, providing the most detailed avalanche bulletin in Canada.

### 7.3.5 City of Revelstoke

There are regular informal and formal interactions between MR&GNP staff and staff of the City of Revelstoke. Parks Canada has a representative on some city committees such as the Traffic Safety Committee and the Planning Committee. There is communication about on-going issues such as road closures and joint participation in recent projects such as the development of the Nels Nelson ski jump area. One participant explained that the city originally wanted to remove a section of Mount Revelstoke National Park to develop the former ski jump area as a tourist attraction. City staff wrote a letter to the Chief Executive
Officer of Parks Canada requesting the removal of the section of land from the park. This quickly got the attention of park staff and a partnership approach was initiated:

> So we had a group from the city and different organizations in the city, city council, city economic development officers on it. So we all worked together to put together the interpretive plan and to figure out what we do with the trails and that kind of stuff so that was really positive. (M1)

Informally, staff members of both agencies see each other at many community events. The field unit superintendent interacts with the mayor on a regular basis and the mayor has visited the park management team:

> The mayor has come in and talked to our management team about some of the city issues and priorities and things they’d like to see from Parks Canada. [He has suggested] it’s more about being more welcoming to people in the city and having special things for them, special events where they can come out and see the changes that we’ve made and so on and we’ve done a bit of that. So I think they were all great suggestions. (M1)

### 7.3.6 First Nations

Three different First Nations have claimed the Revelstoke area as traditional territory: the Secwepec (Shuswap) Nation, the Ktunaxa Nation, and the Okanagan Nation. A fourth nation, the Sinx’t also claims the region as its territory however the Sinx’t are not formally recognized by the Government of Canada.

Several factors have contributed to a somewhat distant relationship between MR&GNP and First Nations. First, the parks are not geographically very close to any First Nations reserves. The nearest community is the Spallumcheen Indian Band, located near Enderby, approximately 110 km southwest of Revelstoke. The First Nation governments are located in Kamloops, Cranbrook, and Westbank, all more than 250 kilometres from Revelstoke. The 2006 census indicates that 215 people self identified as First Nations in Revelstoke (3%), compared to 4.7% within British Columbia (Statistics Canada, 2007). There has been no
evidence found of historic use of the two national parks, but some archaeological evidence was uncovered in the Big Eddy district of Revelstoke. The two parks do not have sweet grass or sage, plants that are commonly sought out for traditional use by First Nations and First Nations have to pay a day use fee to use MRNP or GNP.

That being said, there have been some interactions between First Nations and the field unit staff, particularly in the area of fish habitat restoration as well as interpretation. The Canadian Columbia River Inter-tribal Fisheries Commission (CCRIFC) is a First Nations fisheries committee based in Cranbrook. The main objective of CCRIFC is to restore salmon in the Columbia River. Park staff have been supportive of the organization and the two organizations have exchanged information about water birds, fish habitat, and the recent Revelstoke 5 hydroelectric upgrade environmental assessment.

Other interactions have occurred between park staff and First Nations about a historical interpretation walk that has been developed on the summit of Mount Revelstoke. The park invited representatives from three First Nations to design interpretive materials for the project and to develop a personal interpretation program. Several people did contribute material for the project however no personal interpretation programs were developed by First Nations the due to capacity issues (lack of time, finances) and the travel distance to Revelstoke.

**7.3.7 BC Ministry of Transportation**

Parks Canada and the BC Ministry of Transportation (BCMOT) interact about numerous issues including safety and emergency preparedness, road maintenance, and highway accidents. Participants from both agencies stated that the relationship between the two agencies has improved significantly in recent years.
In 2004, an agreement was negotiated between the BCMOT and Parks Canada about responsibility for road maintenance of the Trans Canada Highway between Revelstoke and Golden. The agreement states that the BCMOT is responsible for the section of the highway from Revelstoke through Mount Revelstoke National Park to the border of Glacier National Park. In return, Parks Canada maintains the road through GNP and a section from the eastern boundary of the park to Quartz Creek, 15 kilometres past the park. During the winter, the staff of both agencies communicate constantly with one another and with the BCMOT’s contractor in an attempt to make the trip between Revelstoke and Golden seamless for the public. There are regular management meetings before, during, and after the winter season. Participants described these meetings as productive although there are miscommunications that arise:

_Some of those meetings get kind of emotional along the lines of “This is your job, you should have done this”, “No you should have done that, not you.”_ (M15)

Two participants noted that there is no coordinated system for making a decision on road closures and that communication at the lower levels could be improved.

Participants from both agencies indicated that the agencies have the same objective when it comes to the transportation corridor and that a good working relationship has been formed through these mutual objectives and the fact the agencies are forced to work together:

_We’re all looking for economy. We’re all looking for ways to partner. We’re all looking for ways to save money and provide a better level of service because the public demands that. Whether it’s highway maintenance or public safety, or environmental management, we’re all in the same boat; and we’re all under more scrutiny than we’ve ever been by the taxpayer and the public. They want an accounting; they want to know “Why are you both doing the same thing? Why can’t you do it together?” Simply put, so I’ve noticed a much higher degree of motivation to work together, particularly in the last five or six years._ (M14)
7.3.8 Columbia Mountains Institute of Applied Ecology

The mid-1990’s was an active period of applied ecological research in the Revelstoke area by Parks Canada staff as well as academics and other government researchers. Several researchers, including key Parks Canada staff, thought that the various research projects could benefit from coordinated efforts. The Columbia Mountains Institute of Applied Ecology (CMIAE) was created in 1996 in order to facilitate this coordination (Colombia Mountains Institute of Applied Ecology, 2008). The Institute’s original mandate was for research, collaboration, and education. There was serious consideration given to establishing a research building with offices. This idea has since faded somewhat and CMIAE’s niche has evolved to hosting conferences and offering continuing education courses.

Parks Canada and CMIAE have a cooperative agreement in place. The park donates $3000 per year to the agency and, in exchange, CMIAE’s mandate is improve to the management of the ecological region. There is also a Parks Canada staff member on CMIAE’s board, but the staff member is not officially representing Parks Canada.

7.3.9 Forestry Industry

MR&GNP staff interact with members of the forestry industry in various capacities. As outlined below, participants had a variety of opinions about these interactions.

Park staff have been involved in a habitat restoration program in cooperation with the Revelstoke Forestry Corporation. The park has commented on several of the Corporation’s management plans. One staff member of the Corporation said that there were no problems between the organizations and that the relationship was good.

Others in the industry have interacted with park staff on the various caribou committees. There are some notable differences of opinion about the appropriate solution to
the caribou issue (see 7.1.6). Some forestry industry participants indicated that they felt that Parks Canada was acting as a “watchdog” to the industry and being adversarial instead of offering supportive criticism, and that some people within the forestry industry felt threatened by this approach. Several participants noted that Parks Canada’s opinion on caribou has not been communicated clearly and that there has been inconsistency in staff participation at various meetings.

When asked about park planning, an employee of a local timber mill indicated that they had not been made aware of Parks Canada’s latest management planning exercise and that the park staff have not made any comments on the mill’s recent forest stewardship plan. He also indicated that neither organization had made it explicit that each other’s participation was invited to these planning processes.

7.3.10 Tourism Industry

The relationship between MR&GNP and the regional tourism industry is based primarily on the national parks’ status as tourist attractions in the community. Members of the industry regularly refer visitors to Revelstoke to the parks.

A common perception among some tourism industry participants was that Parks Canada has a desire to “remain empty” and that it was not “tourist friendly.” One participant stated that he has observed many tourists in Revelstoke during the shoulder seasons (spring and autumn) who were disappointed that the Meadows-in-the-Sky Parkway on Mount Revelstoke was closed. Other factors related to the above-mentioned perception stem from the perceived length of time it takes to fix infrastructure problems within the park, the (perceived to be) out-of-date visitor publication that is distributed by the field unit, and the inability of Revelstoke’s Chamber of Commerce to sell parks passes.
In 2004, a change in federal government policy regarding purchasing advertising impacted the park’s ability to easily advertise in regional tourism brochures. Parks Canada continues to be able to purchase advertising, however, the process for purchasing marketing advertisements is very complex, requires much more lead time, and requires approval at very senior levels of government. As a result, the MR&GNP field unit decided to stop buying advertisements intended for marketing or promotion purposes. Parks staff have attempted to compensate for this restriction by writing more newspaper articles in the local newspaper.

7.4 Participants’ Conceptualizations of Regional Integration

Table 24 presents participants’ conceptualizations of what regional integration means and what the goals of regional integration should be.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 24: Participants’ conceptualizations of regional integration for MR&amp;GNP case study</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meaning of “regional integration” and how it is undertaken</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Finding ways to work with regional actors so it is seamless. (M14)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Park planning is a community-based process, open to public input. There are annual presentations to city hall on park activities. Park staff are active in the community. There is a standing committee of park neighbours. (M17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A symbiotic relationship between the park, city, and surrounding landscapes. Communal planning where objectives that may be slightly different are somehow mashed together and come to something that will work for all parties. (M27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- How the park fits into the regional economy and the regional psyche. (M9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Regional integration is how we fit into our community and how our community fits into us. (M20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Everyone’s concerns are equally weighted and there is a constant balance between what all the parties are bringing to the table. (M25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- How the park interacts with the community and what it does to forage partnerships in the community. Park staff participating in community events. (M25)</td>
</tr>
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| **Goals of regional integration** |
| - The park is well-blended into the community. (M26) |
| - Park management goals consider the region. (M17) |
| - There is understanding and support for each others’ “raison d’être”. (M5) |
| - The park is integrated economically into the community. (M2) |
| - The park is part of the town’s way of life. (M12) |

7.5 Improving Regional Integration

This section summarizes participants’ suggestions for how the regional integration of MR&GNP could be improved. Participants’ suggestions for how the regional integration of MR&GNP could be improved were primarily related to increasing interactions and improving
relationships with regional actors, hosting more community events, getting involved in activities that are not necessarily directly connected to the parks, and communicating the park’s mandate more clearly.

Some participants suggested that the park should organize more informal and social events with regional actors, particularly other government agencies. Others suggested implementing more regular “catch up” meetings with other regional actors, for example an annual presentation to city council by park staff on park activities. One local resident strongly suggested that the park should have a formal citizen’s advisory committee made up of residents who are committed to exchanging information between the park and regional actors and who would provide advice on park issues and activities.

The relationship between “The Friends” and MR&GNP is a vital one with regard to regional integration. Some suggestions from participants for improving this relationship included having more frequent meetings with park managers, formalizing (writing down) communications in order to avoid miscommunications, and developing stronger personal relationships between the individuals involved in the relationship.

Many participants expressed disappointment with the perceived shift away from community events in the parks. Several participants indicated that there should be more opportunities for school children to go on field trips to the parks, more classroom visits from park staff, and that students going on field trips to the parks should not have to pay the park entrance fee:

*Why don’t they come down to the classrooms and start giving talks about snow safety, avalanche safety, do little field trips up to the ski chalet? We could do snow study example and talk about things where people, the kids start to get the sense of getting out there. Get in there and work with the teachers to organize hikes.* (M27)
Finally, a few participants perceived that park staff were not as “out there” in the community as they should be:

*I just think they can be more involved, more cooperative, and spend some money in the towns. Helping support whatever it is that the town is trying to do. (M3)*

7.6 Chapter Summary

The regional context of Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks is one of intense land use and rapid change. Parks Canada is not perceived to be a major player in a region dominated by transportation, tourism, and forestry. The presence of the parks is not debated, since they are perceived to have always been there. Park staff have several long-standing relationships with regional actors, particularly the Province of British Columbia, Canadian Pacific Railway, the Canadian Avalanche Association, and the City of Revelstoke. Perceptions of park staff’s connections with the tourism industry and local community are varied. Some of participants’ suggestions for how the regional integration of MR&GNP could be improved were increasing interactions and improving relationships with regional actors; hosting more community events; park staff becoming involved in activities that are not directly related to the parks; and communicating the park’s mandate more clearly with regional actors.