



Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services
Administration Office

INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS
ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL PLANNING
COMMITTEE

DATE: 2019 May 28

FROM: ACTING DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION
& CULTURE

FILE: 2410-20

SUBJECT: SOUTH OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN NATIONAL PARK RESERVE

The Environment and Social Planning Committee, at its Open meeting held on 2019 May 06, tabled the above noted correspondence to allow staff time to research information regarding any support from other B.C. local governments or the Union of BC Municipalities for the creation of the South Okanagan-Similkameen National Park Reserve. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Environment and Social Planning Committee with information about the status of the support from the UBCM members and a summary of the Provincial and Federal response to the subject.

An UBCM resolution was brought forward by Osoyoos in 2014 (see attached resolution text of 2014, **Number: B122 Resolution Title: National Park in the South Okanagan-Similkameen**). The UBCM membership endorsed the resolution by a majority vote. Please note the voting procedure does not record which members vote in favour or deny and there was no additional notation on the vote comments indicating receipt of specific letters of support from any municipalities. The vote was a clear majority as there was no call for a second vote.

Positions endorsed by resolutions at the UBCM are then carried to other orders of government for action. The comments recorded by the Provincial and Federal Governments on the resolution and the subject of the creation of a South Okanagan-Similkameen National Park Reserve are summarized as follows:

The Provincial Government, Ministry of Environment, did not support a national reserve for the South Okanagan but did offer to work with various groups in the community to protect environmentally sensitive areas.

The Federal Government indicated protecting species at risk and helping to recover those that have been lost does not require the creation of a national park.

This is for the information of the Committee.



Denis Nokony
Acting Director of Parks Recreation and Cultural Services

HE:tc

Attachment

p:\admin\tc\he\memos\South Okanagan-Similkameen National Park Reserve

cc: Director Corporate Services

Attachment #1**Resolutions Detail**

Year	Number	Resolution Title	Sponsor
2014	B122	National Park in the South Okanagan-Similkameen	Osoyoos

Resolution Text

WHEREAS a proposed national park in the South Okanagan-Similkameen would protect more species at risk, more endangered habitat types, and encompass a greater diversity of ecosystems than any national park in Canada;

AND WHEREAS a national park in the South Okanagan-Similkameen would play an important role in British Columbia's economy as a substantial and recurring source of economic stimulus particularly through tourism, a source of increased community economic development and new investment, and would provide over 500 new, permanent jobs;

AND WHEREAS many governing bodies, such as five regional districts, the BC Chamber of Commerce, the Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association, and local First Nations, have passed formal resolutions asking the Province of British Columbia to return to national park discussions with the Government of Canada;

AND WHEREAS the federal government has waited for the provincial government to follow the recommendation of the steering committee and take the next step toward bringing the economic benefits of the proposed national park to British Columbians:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government sign an agreement with the Government of Canada to continue to formal discussions regarding a proposed South Okanagan-Similkameen National Park.

Convention Decision

Endorsed

Executive Decision**Committee Decision****Provincial Response**

Ministry of Environment

The Ministry of Environment does not support a national park reserve for the South Okanagan at this time. That said, there are a variety of tools to ensure the protection of significant geographic and cultural values, while also providing recreation and tourism opportunities.

The Ministry understands the importance of protecting these values, while also preserving long-standing economic and culturally-significant activities such as hunting and fishing. The Ministry is always open to working with various groups in the region to discuss protection of environmentally important areas and furthering recreation and tourism objectives.

The Ministry followed through on its commitment to meet with local officials and First nations on this issue in November 2014.

Federal Response

Minister of the Environment

Environment Canada agrees that the protection of species at risk in this area is a high priority. However, the recovery of species at risk does not rely on the creation of a national park. Under the National Conservation Plan,

Other Response

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