



State of the Community Report

Wasagaming



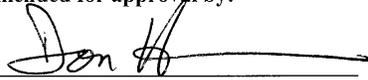
An assessment of the framework for managing land-use and development in
Wasagaming, Manitoba
Riding Mountain National Park of Canada
November, 2006

Approval

Prepared by:

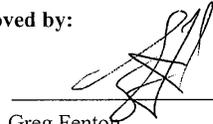
Sharon Vanderschuit, Management Planner
Hugh Penwarden, Project Officer

Recommended for approval by:



Don Huisman
Manager, Townsite & Realty Services
Riding Mountain National Park of Canada

Approved by:



Greg Fenton
Superintendent
Riding Mountain National Park of Canada

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Communities play an important role in achieving all aspects of Parks Canada's mandate. They are

- important staging areas for memorable visitor experiences;
- they provide opportunities for visitors to develop an improved understanding of the park's heritage values;
- they preserve and protect built heritage and other cultural resources;
- and they can reduce the ecological impacts on adjacent park lands by consolidating services and facilities in one area.

This State of the Community Report for the community of Wasagaming in Riding Mountain National Park presents an assessment of the ecological, cultural, economic and social health of the community. This assessment is based on an analysis of progress in implementing the vision in the Wasagaming Community Plan (2000). Emerging issues not captured in the original community plan are also examined. It is the first such report for the community. A number of information gaps will be filled in subsequent reports as the community's monitoring program develops.

A) Overall State of Achievement of Minister's Principles

i. **No Net Negative Environmental Impact and Leadership in Environmental Stewardship**

Aquatic Ecosystems: Funding has been secured for the sewage treatment project and effluent targets have been established. Other initiatives to reduce impacts on the aquatic ecosystem are in the formative stages (e.g. stormwater, Clear Lake Basin management approach).

Vegetation: There is an approved Wasagaming Vegetation Strategy, 2005 being implemented that was developed in consultation with the community. Invasive non-native plant species will be addressed within a park-wide strategy. The community plan restricts lot development and provides guidelines for landscaping.

Wildlife: Work is required on indicators, measures and monitoring of the community's impact on wildlife. In the interim, the number of bear re-locations is being used as an indicator. Due to improved waste management and hazing efforts, bear issues have declined. However, waste management in the subdivisions adjacent to the community is a concern.

Solid Waste Diversion: Recently there has been 5% of the waste diverted from the landfill versus 10% five years ago.

Contaminated Sites: There are two contaminated sites being risk managed until remedial funding is received from the Federal Contaminated Sites Assessment Program.

- #### ii. **Leadership in Heritage Conservation:** the inventory of heritage buildings is up-to-date. Six of the 10 federal heritage buildings are in fair condition and two are in poor condition. Funding is an obstacle therefore partnership are being developed with third parties to occupy and maintain federal heritage buildings not required for park administration or operations. New developments are reviewed by a Development Review Board to ensure guidelines in the

community plan are followed. To date the community's distinctive character is being well preserved.

- iii. **Responsible Growth Management:** Growth in Wasagaming over the past 6 years has amounted to less than 10% of the allowable limit. Quality of life in the community is good with economic vitality linked to visitation numbers.

iv. **Managing Development and Use**

Character: all development proposals are reviewed to ensure consistency with guidelines in the community plan. The community plan also provides a guideline for basic and essential services although this requires updating. RMNPC also uses an appropriate activities review tool to evaluate proposals involving outdoor recreation in the community.

Visitor Experience: generally visitors are satisfied with their experience in the community. Refinement of some indicators and measures is required.

Public Education and Awareness: the community is the focal point for 95% of the visitors. The learning programs have been improved to enhance participation by repeat visitors and a new "Ambassador" program has been initiated for commercial operators and their staff.

- v. **Efficient and Effective Administration:** Refinement of measures for this indicator is required in Wasagaming to reflect the proximity of the community across the park boundary. Many efficiencies and improved stewardship can be realized with shared municipal services and other management practices.

B) Results of Management Effectiveness Monitoring

A number of actions committed to in the community have been implemented by Parks Canada and local businesses. Results have been achieved in all areas and the overall state of the community is good with areas for improvement identified and scheduled for implementation.

C) Condition of Databases

Information gaps have been identified. These gaps, along with indicators and measures, will be refined as the community monitoring framework is developed further.

D) Key Planning Issues

The key planning issues for Wasagaming are outlined in the draft park management plan and include;

- direction to expand on shared municipal services with neighbours in the Clear Lake Basin;
- water and sewer services in the Clear Lake Cabin Area;
- alternatives to annual camping permits for the Clear Lake Cabin Area;
- a review of essential services in Wasagaming with consideration to existing and potential services in the Wasagaming/Onanole corridor, and;
- examination of other governance models for communities for potential application in Wasagaming.

E) Condition and Trend of Indicators

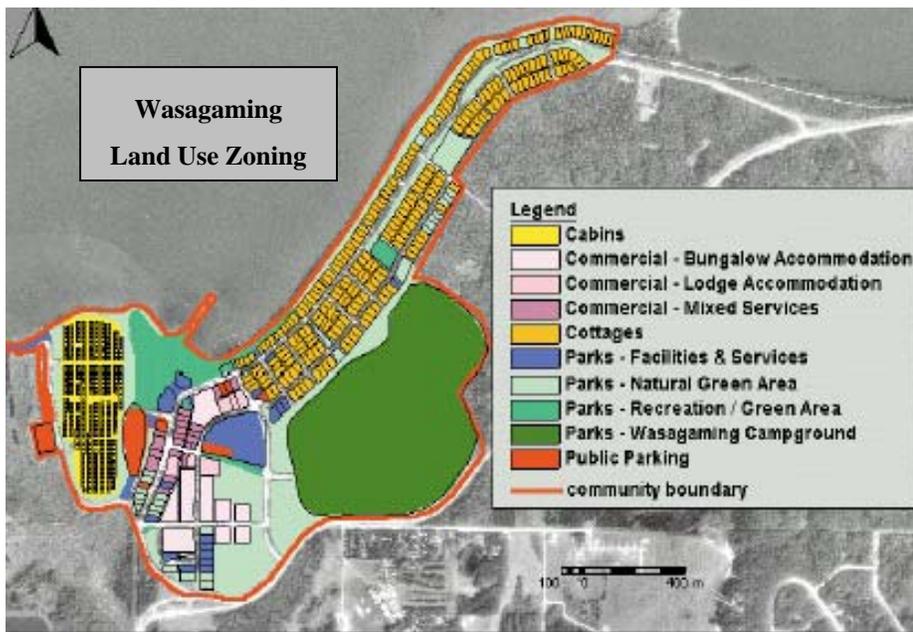
<p style="text-align: center;">Legend</p> <p style="text-align: center;"> Red = poor Yellow = fair Green = good </p> <p style="text-align: center;"> ↓ = getting worse ↔ = no change ↑ = improving </p>		
Indicator	Condition and Trend of Ecosystem	Rationale for Rating
3NEI and Leadership in Environmental Stewardship		
Aquatic Ecosystems		<p>Sewage Effluent Quality and Quantity – the quality of effluent and impact on receiving water is a concern. An upgrade to the treatment system is planned. Stormwater is to be addressed when funding is available.</p> <p>Surface water quality – possible threat to Clear Lake from South Lake which is hyper-eutrophic, likely due to groundwater contamination from inside and outside RMNPC</p> <p>Water conservation – needs improvement</p>
Terrestrial ecosystems		
Vegetation		<p>Non-native invasive species – no inventory to date, will be linked to an invasive plant strategy for RMNPC</p> <p>Landscape composition – preliminary data available, to be refined.</p>
Wildlife		<p>Trail proliferation – preliminary data</p> <p>Wildlife movement</p> <p>Human-wildlife encounters – data on bear re-locations is used, situation has improved in the past 10 years.</p>
Solid Waste Diversion		<p>Diversion from landfill (compost and re-cycling) – the trend since 2002 shows a decline in the percentage of waste being diverted from the landfill</p>
Community Contaminated Sites		<p>Two sites within the community are being risk managed and will be remediated when federal funding becomes available.</p>
Leadership in Heritage Conservation		
Built Heritage		<p>Inventory – complete, 9 recognized buildings, 1 classified and 2 buildings designated by the province</p> <p>Condition rating – Good 10%, Fair 60%, Poor 20%, Closed 10%</p> <p>Designation activities – 275 buildings evaluated since 1996</p>
Responsible Growth Management		
Growth Limits		<p>Square metres of commercial growth – since 1998 only 10% of the allowable growth of floor space has been developed.</p>
Quality of Life		<p>Housing, crime, sense of community</p>
Economic Vitality		<p># visitors, \$ spent, employment</p>

Managing Use: Quality Visitor Experience and Promoting Visitor Understanding		
Character		Conformance with architectural, landscape, sign and site guidelines – provided in the community plan, a Development Review Board examines variances Conformance with basic and essential services – business license applications only approved if there's conformance
Visitor Experience		
Understanding Visitors		Mgmt. decisions influenced by visitor needs/expectations – regular surveys, feedback forms, advisory groups and letters influence management decisions.
Providing Opportunities		Level of participation by target segments in opportunities targeted to their needs/expectations – the number of serviced sites in the Wasagaming Campground and the Pier Project are examples.
Delivering High Quality service		Targets are for 85% overall visitors satisfied and 50% very satisfied – overall the visitors are highly satisfied with services in Wasagaming.
Connecting visitors/residents personally with the place		Data deficient - an attempt to measure visitor knowledge was made in the 2001/2 visitor survey. The high percentage (85%) of repeat visitors likely indicates a strong personal connection to the community, and possibly the Park.
Public Education and Awareness		
Knowledge, Understanding and Support		Sense of personal responsibility and level of understanding of key messages is likely increasing due to improvements in participation levels.
Participation levels		Number of people personally contacted through Parks Canada programs and partner-provided programs .has increased over the past five years.
Number and Type of Opportunities		Learning opportunities (personal and non-personal) offered by Parks Canada have been increased, renewed or new opportunities provided to attract more repeat visitors. There have also been new programs offered by others.
Public Satisfaction		Level of audience satisfaction with Parks Canada learning programs has been high. There is no data for programs offered by others. The level of perceived relevance is not known.
Efficient and Effective Administration		
Asset Condition		Condition ratings – Good (62%), Fair (25%) and Poor (13%) Conditions are declining due to the lack of budget for infrastructure.
Operating Costs		Cost recovery – 100% of the direct costs for water and sewer. Garbage is subsidized by 56%.
Responsibility for Stewardship		Measures to be developed – would likely be related to participation/success of WTA and Development Review Board

STATE OF THE COMMUNITY REPORT WASAGAMING, RIDING MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK

1.0 CONTEXT

Wasagaming, the park community within RMNPC, is located 97 km. north of Brandon and the Trans Canada Highway, 45 km. north of the Yellowhead Highway #16, and 274 km northwest of Winnipeg. The community is situated on the shore of Clear Lake, adjacent to the Park's south boundary and provincial highway #10. The community's physical footprint is less than 1% of the area of RMNPC and encompasses approximately 179 hectares (463.6 acres). Within 5 km. of Wasagaming, outside the park boundary, are various residential subdivisions and the community of Onanole which have a summer population of over 2,000. Wasagaming serves as the "hub" of recreational, educational and cultural activity for the majority of visitors to RMNPC. All land in Wasagaming is federal crown land with some lots being leased to individuals and businesses. There are 254 residential cottage leases, 525 seasonal cabins administered by camping permits, and 46 commercial leases, 510 camping sites in the campground and 3 non-profit organizations who lease federal heritage buildings.



Wasagaming strives to retain its unique village-like atmosphere within a natural setting that makes it an attractive destination for the vacationing public. This popular vacation destination has functioned as a resort and visitor center since 1912. It serves as the hub of recreational, educational and cultural activity for most visitors to the Park. Wasagaming provides services that enable visitors to carry out their activities in the Park and is often referred to as the stepping stone to the rest of the Park. The various businesses offer food services, visitor accommodation, gift shops, clothing, jewellery, groceries and general merchandise. RMNPC issues 135 business licenses each year, with the majority servicing the community. The community also serves as the administration and operational headquarters for RMNPC.

Parks Canada presently provides all municipal services to the community of Wasagaming, including water treatment and distribution, wastewater and solid waste collection, fire protection, road maintenance, snow removal, finance and administration, development review, regulation enforcement, and recreation.



Visitor Centre



Commercial Area

The *Wasagaming Community Plan* was approved in October 2000 following consultation with a Community Plan Steering Committee and Working Groups, as well as the Riding Mountain Round Table. The Plan responds to principles announced by the Minister responsible for Parks Canada in 1998 to guide the community planning process that was taking place in all national park communities. The principles included no net negative environmental impact and leadership in environmental stewardship, leadership in heritage conservation, responsible growth management, managing development and use, efficient and effective administration. The Wasagaming Tenants' Association (WTA) formed in 1998 to provide advice during the development of the community plan. The Association now functions as the key advisory body to Parks Canada in the implementation of the plan, with a focus on municipal services.

A Vision for Land Use in Wasagaming (*Wasagaming Community Plan, 2000*)

Wasagaming will continue to serve as the 'hub' of recreational, educational and cultural activity enhancing the enjoyment and appreciation of Riding Mountain National Park. The facilities and services provided in Wasagaming will serve the needs of its visitors. The community will preserve its village-like atmosphere into which nature and recreation are integrated. It will promote nature and people-oriented activities while building upon and strengthening the cultural, architectural and natural heritage that makes Wasagaming a unique and inviting place.

This vision continues to be valid, meeting the needs of the seasonal residents, visitors and mandate of the Parks Canada Agency related to maintaining ecological and commemorative integrity, the provision of opportunities for learning and quality visitor experiences.

This State of the Community Report is an assessment of the ecological, cultural, economic and social health of the community. This assessment is based on an analysis of progress in implementing the vision in the Wasagaming Community Plan (2000) and meeting the principles announced by the Minister. Emerging issues that are not captured in the community plan are also examined. It is the first such report for the community that uses a standard set of indicators and measures developed for all national park communities. These indicators will be monitored over time and reported in the State of the Community reports every five years. There are a number of information gaps that will be filled

in subsequent reports as the community's monitoring program develops. In addition, annual reports on progress in implementing the park management plan will be provided to stakeholders that will include progress in implementing the community plan.

2.0 INDICATORS AND MEASURES

A monitoring program for Wasagaming is being refined to fully report on the status of indicators selected to determine the state of national park communities. These indicators reflect the suite of indicators developed nationally to measure park-wide ecological integrity and progress with respect to environmental stewardship.

Measures to assess most indicators have also been developed, as have reporting standards to be used by all communities. In some cases, measures and standards have not been finalized, and reporting on some indicators will continue to improve as the monitoring program develops over time.

The following are the indicators and measures that are being applied to Wasagaming.

a. No Net Negative Environmental Impact (3NEI) and Leadership in Environmental Stewardship

- i. Aquatic Ecosystems: sewage effluent quantity and quality, surface water quality and water conservation

Terrestrial Ecosystems

- ii. Vegetation: non-native/invasive species and community landscape composition
- iii. Wildlife: trail proliferation, wildlife movement; and human-wildlife encounters
- iv. Solid waste diversion
- v. Contaminated sites.

b. Leadership in Heritage Conservation

- i. Built Heritage: inventory; condition rating, and designation activities.

c. Responsible Growth Management

- i. Growth Limits: square meters of additional commercial growth
- ii. Quality of Life: initial measures include housing, crime, and sense of community
- iii. Economic Vitality: initial measures include number of employees, visitors, and dollars spent.

d. Managing Development and Use

- i. Character: degree of conformance with architectural, landscape, sign, and site guidelines and conformity with basic and essential services.

Visitor Experience

- ii. Understanding visitors: the extent to which management decisions are influenced by an understanding of actual and potential visitors' needs and expectations
- iii. Providing opportunities: target segments participate in opportunities that are targeted to their needs and expectations
- iv. Delivering High Quality Service: targets of 85% overall visitor satisfaction, including at least 50% very satisfied.
- v. Connecting visitors and residents personally with the place: the level of a visitor's connection to the park, comprised of the level of visitor understanding and likelihood of return visit.

Public Education and Awareness

- vi. Knowledge, understanding, and support: sense of personal responsibility, level of understanding of key messages
- vii. Participation levels: number of people reached through Parks Canada and partner-provided learning opportunities
- viii. Number and Type of Opportunities: number of different learning opportunities (personal and non-personal) offered by Parks Canada and by partners
- ix. Public Satisfaction: level of audience satisfaction with Parks Canada and external opportunities, level of perceived relevance.

e. Efficient and Effective Administration

- i. Asset Condition: % poor, fair or good
- ii. Operating Costs: level of cost-recovery for water, sewer and solid waste
- iii. Responsibility for Stewardship: shared decision-making.

3.0 STATE OF THE COMMUNITY

3.1 No Net Negative Environmental Impact & Environmental Stewardship

No Net Negative Environmental Impact (3NEI) means that wildlife, plants, water, air, soil and the processes that connect them will be no worse off tomorrow than they are today. The cumulative impact of development and operations will be positive not negative. No net negative environmental impact is a tool to minimize effects of communities on adjacent park lands. It will be assessed on a cumulative basis, not individual projects. A measurement framework will be the basis for determining success. The results of monitoring will be used to determine the need for further mitigations.

Communities should strive to be models of excellence in applying environmental management systems (e.g. water quality, water conservation, waste management, etc.). Through the application of 3NEI and environmental stewardship the communities can reduce impacts on ecological integrity.

Overall, cumulative progress towards 3NEI for Wasagaming since approval of the 2000 community plan has been fair overall. In striving to be a model of excellence in applying environmental management systems, progress has been made in several areas.

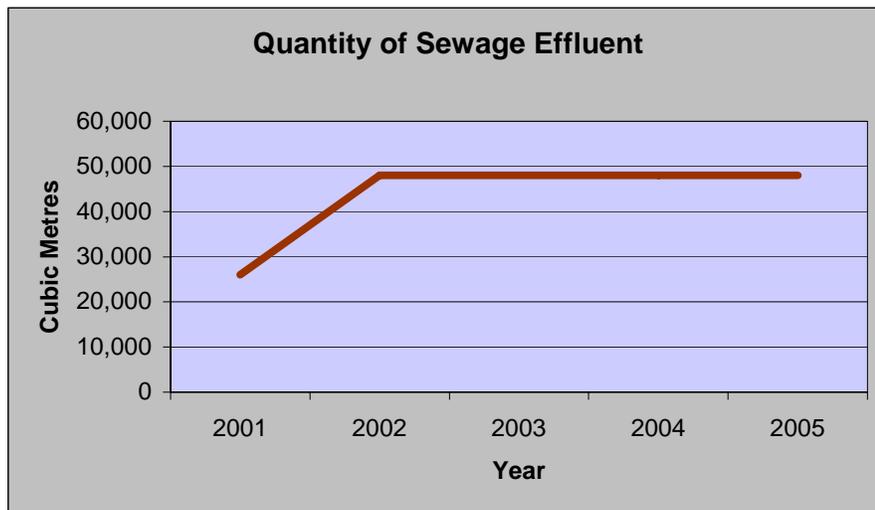
3.1.1 Aquatic ecosystems *Ranking: Poor/Improving*

a) Sewage Effluent Quality and Quantity

The existing sewage treatment system for Wasagaming only provides primary treatment whereas the federal guidelines call for secondary treatment. RMNPC has established targets for effluent quality that are based on the capacity of the receiving waters and are more stringent than the 1976 Environment Canada guidelines. A design to upgrade the sewage treatment system has been completed. The pH levels of effluent is one parameter that often exceeds the guidelines and is a concern due to potential influence on ammonia toxicity levels. The upgraded sewage treatment will produce effluent that meets targets, including pH. The project is to commence in 2006/7. The following table summarizes sewage effluent quality and provides a comparison to provincial and federal guidelines.

Parameter	Environment Canada (1976) Guidelines	Manitoba Provincial Guidelines	RMNPC Effluent Analysis (Average: 2001– 05)	RMNPC Effluent Targets
Total Phosphorus (mg/L)	< 1.0	N/A	0.659	<1.0
Total Ammonia (mg/L)	N/A	Case Specific	0.38	<10
TSS (mg/L)	25	< 30	12	<10 (Apr. 1 – June 15) <25 (June 16 – Mar. 31)
BOD ₅ (mg/L)	20	< 30	10	<20
pH	6 - 9	N/A	9.1	6.5 – 9.0
Total Aluminum (mg/L)	N/A	N/A	N/A	<0.10
Fecal Coliforms (MPN/100 mL)	< 400	< 200	3	<200

The following provides a summary of the quantity of sewage effluent being released.



b) Surface Water Quality

Sewage effluent is discharged into Clear Lake via Ominik Marsh and South Lake. Monitoring of surface water quality in the past has focused on nutrients and the trophic status of Clear Lake. The levels of phosphorous in the lake are not consistent with its status as an oligotrophic¹ lake. “The consequences of an increased availability of the existing phosphorous to algae could result in substantial and potentially rapid change to the trophic status of Clear Lake.” *Hilderman et al, 2005*. South Lake is hyper-eutrophic² and could be a source of phosphorous for Clear Lake. The surface water quality is linked to ground water and adjacent land uses outside of RMNPC.

¹ Suitable for water based recreation and propagation of cold water fisheries. Very high clarity and aesthetically pleasing. *Hilderman et al, 2005, p. 22*

² Eutrophic – reduction in aesthetic properties diminishes enjoyment from body contact recreation. Generally productive for warm water fisheries.

View of South Lake (Clear Lake at top of photo)

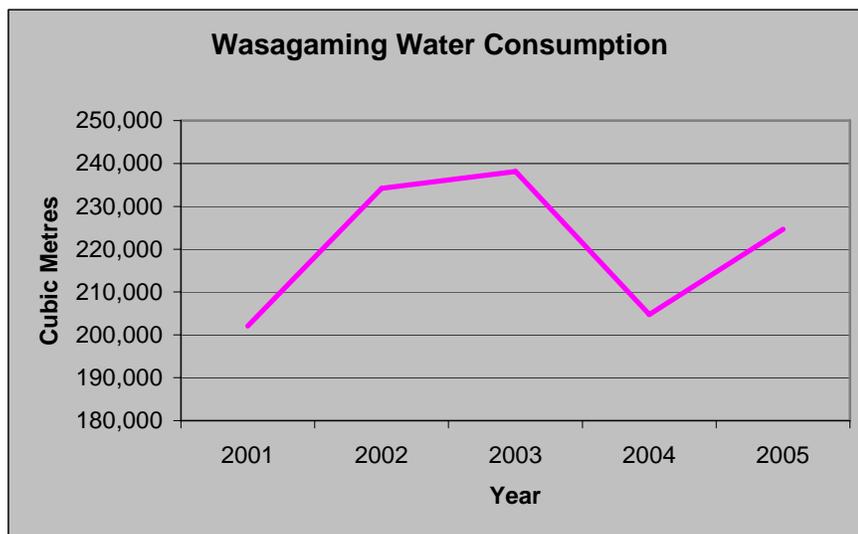


In addition to sewage treatment improvements, a stormwater system upgrade design has been completed which will reduce potential impacts on surface water quality. Implementation of this upgrade will depend on available funding.

To intensify the effort to manage for ecological integrity in the Clear Lake Basin, a study was commissioned that identifies priorities for action (*Securing the Integrity of Clear Lake and Area, 2005*). Many of the priorities for action are reflected in the draft park management plan. One priority is to facilitate the development of a Clear Lake Basin management approach with governments, Keeseekoowenin Ojibway First Nation, landowners, and stakeholders.

c) Water Conservation

Water consumption declined in 2004, possibly due to low visitation, and increased again in 2005. Water conservation fixtures are a requirement in development proposals and have been included in all new or upgraded Park facilities since 2000.



3.1.2 Terrestrial Ecosystems (Vegetation) *Ranking: Good, improving*

a) Non-native, Invasive Species

The Wasagaming Vegetation Strategy was approved in 2005. The Wasagaming Tenants’ Association were consulted and fully support the strategy. Non-native plants in Wasagaming are addressed in the strategy and any actions will be coordinated with an invasive plant strategy for RMNPC. It will not be practical or effective to target all invasive plants, therefore the strategy will identify the highest priority species.

b) Landscape Composition

The table below shows preliminary data that will be refined and used for baseline monitoring to describe landscape classes within Wasagaming. The classes are;

Class 1 – natural areas – dominant vegetation is native and all biomass remains within the landscape unit. Examples include forest patches, grasslands, and wetlands.

Class 2 – areas under active restoration – efforts are in progress to re-establish native species and to make the restored area self-sustaining according to a specific restoration prescription.

Class 3 –built/modified areas– dominant vegetation is non-native and/or the biomass is routinely removed or all or nearly all of the plant cover is absent. Examples include power and other utility line rights of way, abandoned rights of way, fuel reduction zones, lawn areas including playing fields, road surfaces, parking lots, and building and other infrastructure footprints.

There has been some rehabilitation of land within the community. The community plan restricts the amount of development on all leased lots and landscaping requirements are a condition of all development proposals.

<i>Preliminary assessment</i>	<i>Class 1 (m²)</i>	<i>Class 2 (m²)</i>	<i>Class 3 (m²)</i>
<i>2005</i>	<i>1,457,920</i>	<i>91,120</i>	<i>273,360</i>

3.1.3 Terrestrial Ecosystems (Wildlife) *Ranking: Fair, No Change*

a) Trail Proliferation

There’s an estimated 6 kilometres of trail proliferation within the community. There are a number of informal trails leading to and from the cabin area as well as trails along the lakeshore in the cottage area.

b) Wildlife Movement

Wildlife movement within Wasgaming has not been researched or monitored to date. Data on bear encounters (see below) provide an indication of wildlife movement in Wasagaming.

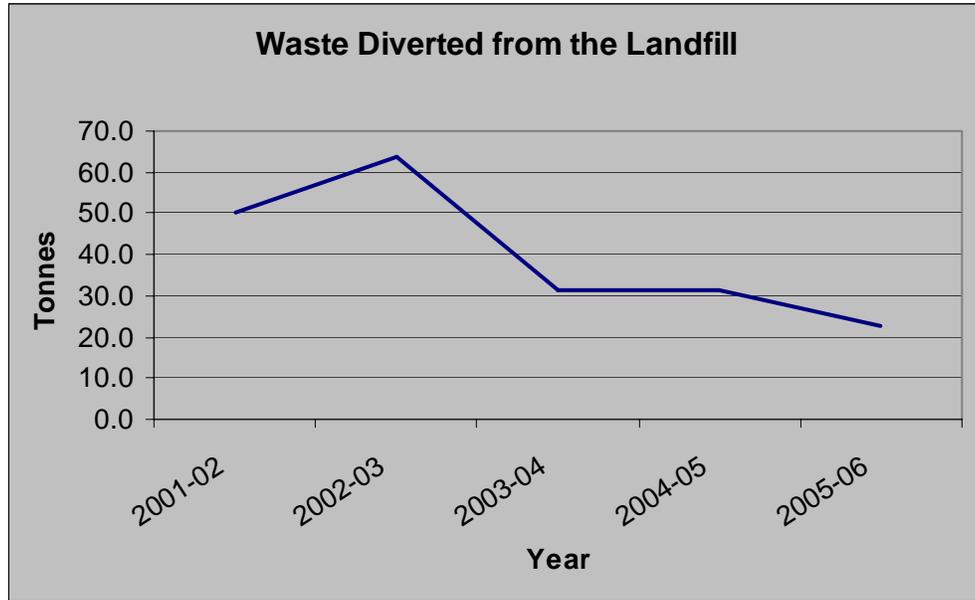
c) Human – Wildlife Encounters

In Wasagaming, bear management actions are being used to assist in measuring the impact of the community on wildlife. The need for bear relocations has been significantly reduced from 1990 levels with the installation of bear-proof containers and enforcement of regulations related to campsite cleanliness. Frequent sightings of bears occur but with quick hazing efforts and a clean

community most bears are prevented from staying or becoming a nuisance. Only one bear had to be relocated in 2006 and the average over the past five years has been two bears per season. Unfortunately several bears venture outside the park where garbage management practices are not as stringent. An estimated 15 bears were destroyed on provincial lands close to Wasagaming in 2006.

3.1.4 Solid Waste Diversion *Ranking: Poor, No Change*

Since 2001, the community has not been able to divert as much waste from the landfill (i.e. amount composted or recycled). There has been a decline from over 10% to less than 5% diverted. Contributing factors include the recent collapse of the market for recycled cardboard and low participation from the community in the recycling program.



3.1.5 Contaminated Sites *Ranking: Fair, No Change*

Contaminated sites have the potential for immediate or long-term hazard to human health or the environment if improperly monitored or, where necessary, if not reclaimed. Parks Canada measures this indicator by examining the level of reclamation activity within communities, with a goal of 100% reclamation over time.

There are two contaminated sites in Wasagaming, the Townsite Washroom (a formerly a gas station) and the West Lift Station. The initial assessments were done in 2000 or earlier and the Townsite Washroom had a more detailed assessment completed in 2001 to further delineate the extent of contamination. Submission to the Federal Contaminated Sites Assessment Program (FCSAP) for remedial funding is pending. Until remediation can be done, both sites are being risk managed.

3.2 Leadership in Heritage Conservation

3.2.1 Built Heritage *Ranking: Fair, Improving*

In Wasagaming there are nine recognized heritage buildings and one classified building, the Visitor Centre. In addition to these federally designated buildings, there are two provincially designated

heritage buildings in the community, the Wigwam Restaurant and Park Theatre. The condition of federal heritage buildings is shown in the table below, with 60% in fair condition.

Heritage Buildings in Wasagaming		
#	Building	Condition
1	Administration Building	Good
2	Casa Loma	Fair
3	Firehall	Fair
4	Tennis Club	Fair
5	Bandstand	Fair
6	150 Ta-Wa-Pit (3-plex)	Fair
7	Visitor Centre	Fair
8	Jamboree Hall	Poor
9	Doctor's Residence	Poor
10	154 Columbine	Closed

Parks Canada has been developing partnership with third parties to occupy and maintain federal heritage buildings not required for park administration or operations. The Wasagaming Historical Society has occupied Casa Loma cottage for a number of years and more recently, an agreement was reached with Keeseekoowenin First Nation to occupy the Firehall. A third heritage building, the RCAF cottage, is just beyond the community boundary and is now occupied by the Manitoba Arts Council.

There are ongoing evaluations of buildings in RMNPC for federal heritage status. There were 275 buildings evaluated in the park over that past 10 years and another 100 are to be evaluated over the next five years.

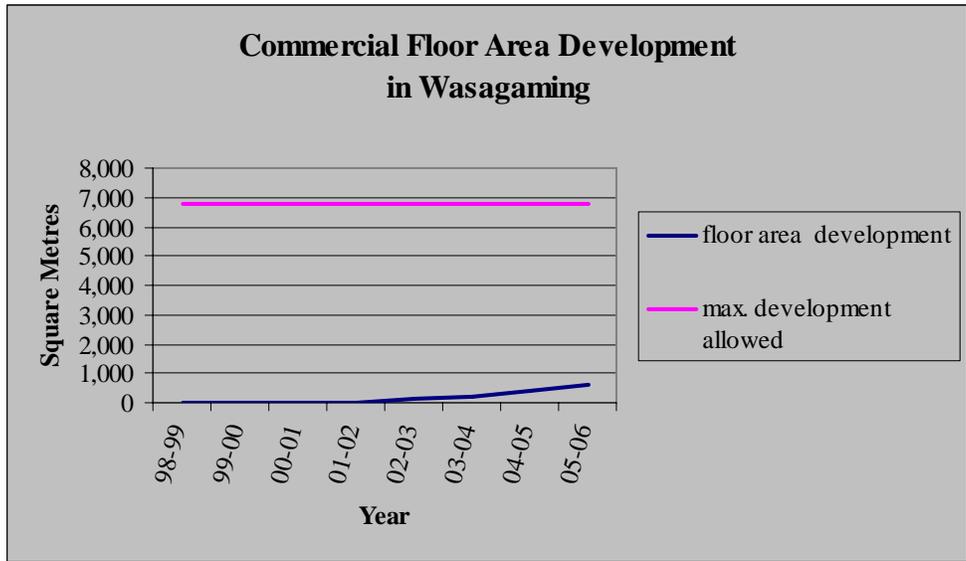
Architectural appearance guidelines in the community plan are applied to new developments and the Development Review Board ensures compatibility between new development and surrounding structures, however new building materials are creating a challenge to the interpretation of the guidelines. Generally efforts have been successful in retaining the community's distinctive character.

3.3 Responsible Growth Management

3.3.1 Growth Limits

Ranking: Good, No Change

Limits to commercial growth have been established in the community plan and legislated in the *Canada National Parks Act (CNPA)*. The community plan states the floor area was 21,820 m² in 1998 and as stipulated in the CNPA, the extent of floor area in the commercial zone cannot exceed 28,586 m². Therefore, 6,766 m² of growth in floor area is allowed. Since 1998, there has been a total of 584 m² of floor space developed, less than 10% of the allowable growth.



3.3.2 Quality of Life

Ranking: Good, Improving

Housing in the community is not a major concern due to the proximity of Onanole and other cottage subdivisions outside the national park. Violent crimes and burglary in the community are rare. Noise complaints and minor vandalism often coincide with social events in the community (i.e. dances). The sense of community is strong with good participation by community associations. The following table summarizes RCMP statistics for 2006.

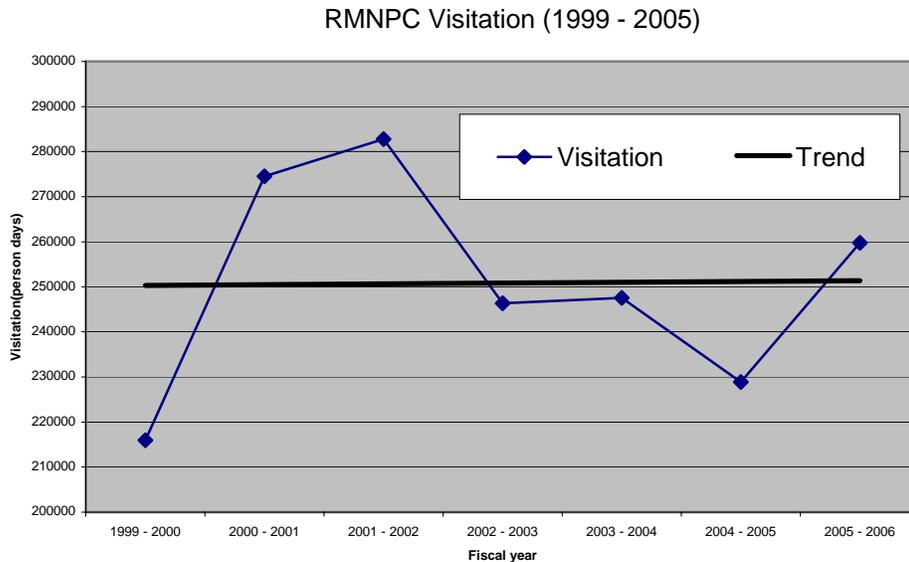
RCMP Statistics 2006 (end of May long weekend to end of September long weekend)	
Offence/Incident Category	Number
Calls for Service	577
Highway Traffic Act offences	182
Traffic Accidents	54
Liquor Control Act offences	51
Disturb the Peace	46
Mischief to Property	36
Theft Under \$5,000	21
Impaired Driving	20
Assault	14
National Parks Act offences	13
Other	84

3.3.3 Economic Vitality

Ranking: Good, No Change

The chart below shows the trend in park visitation over the past 7 years. RMNPC attracts more than 250,000 visitors per year and is a significant tourism destination in Manitoba. Of those visitors, 95% visit Wasagaming. The most popular activities are spending time on the main beach, shopping, eating in restaurants, walking on the pier, and swimming. Golfing is a popular activity that occurs close to the community. An estimated 64% are overnight visitors compared to 35% who are day visitors. There are approximately 46 businesses in the community providing services to these visitors. The

workforce of RMNPC comprises approximately 160 employees. The annual park budget is approximately \$10 million and generates economic impacts in excess of \$50 million annually. The annual budget for Wasagaming is \$1.3 million. There is concern amongst some seasonal residents and commercial operators that high park entrance fees are affecting the community's economic vitality.



3.4 Managing Development and Use

3.4.1 Character

Ranking: Good, No Change

All development and redevelopment proposals are reviewed to ensure consistency with the character, sign, site, and landscape guidelines in the Wasagaming Community Plan. All business license applications are reviewed against the guideline in the community plan for basic and essential services. Applications for development variances are reviewed by the Development Review Board and recommendations made to Parks Canada. The guidelines regarding landscaping do not cover all aspects that potentially affect the character of the community (e.g. lawn ornaments, fences, retaining walls, kitchen tents, trampolines). Proposals that involve an outdoor recreation activity are assessed using RMNPC's appropriate activities review tool and Parks Canada's activity assessment framework presently being developed.

3.4.2 Visitor Experience

Information on visitor needs and expectations comes from the 2001/2 RMNP Visitor Survey. This survey provides information about visitors to the community because virtually all visitors reported stopping at the Wasagaming townsite (i.e. 95% of the park visitation). The Visitor Centre is located in the core of Wasagaming. It's a focal point and the information hub of RMNPC. Of the total visitors coming to RMNP an estimated 56% went to the Visitor Centre.

a) Understanding Visitors

Ranking: Good, No Change

RMNPC regularly collects information through surveys every five years to better understand the visitors. Information related to the users of Wasagaming can be extracted from this data set.

Management decisions are influenced by this information as well as other forms of visitor feedback (i.e. feedback forms, letters, advisory groups).

b) Providing Opportunities *Ranking: Good, No Change*

“Spending time with family” and “a recreational experience” were the two most important factors that determined why visitors came to Wasagaming. People are generally satisfied with the opportunities available. Because demand often exceeded supply for services sites in the campground, some modifications have been made provide more serviced sites. The occupancy of those sites has been high. Improvements to the main beach and pier were targeted to the visitor needs and expectations. The level of use has not been measured since the project was completed, however the next visitor survey (i.e. 2007) is expected to provide that information.

c) Delivering High Quality Service *Ranking: Good, No Change*

The following indicate satisfaction levels activities, services and facilities from the 2001/2 survey. Generally, satisfaction levels were high with some concerns as to whether there was value for the entrance fee³. Since 2002, investments have been made to upgrade sites in the campground, replace highway and directional signs and repair facilities along the lakeshore such as docks and the Lakeshore Trail.

○ ○ ●	spending time with family/friends
○ ○ ●	enjoying a family tradition
○ ● ○	seeing wildlife in its natural environment
○ ○ ●	sense of security
○ ○ ●	special event
○ ○ ●	variety of nature trails
○ ○ ●	availability of picnic areas
○ ● ○	type of campsites available
○ ● ○	clarity of road/directional signs
○ ○ ●	staff courtesy
○ ○ ●	service in official language of choice
○ ○ ●	availability of learning opportunities
○ ● ○	as a learning experience
○ ○ ●	as a recreational experience
● ○ ○	value for entrance fee
○ ○ ●	OVERALL

**Levels of Satisfaction with
Activities, Facilities and Services**
(Visitor Survey 2001/02)

- The green light indicates **high satisfaction**
- The amber light indicates **good satisfaction**
- The red light indicates **potentially low satisfaction**

d) Connecting Visitors/Residents Personally with the Place *Ranking: Good, No Change*

Attempts were made in the 2001/2 visitor survey to measure level of visitor knowledge but the methods are questionable. Refinement is required in the future to assess the level of visitor understanding about RMNPC. Wasagaming has high repeat visitation (i.e. 85%) which could indicate a strong personal connection with the place.

³ The Wasagaming Tenants’ Association, an advisory board to the Superintendent in the implementation of the Wasagaming Community Plan with representatives from each of the Wasagaming Chamber of Commerce, the Clear Cabin Owners’ Association and the Clear Lake Cottage Owners’ Association, continue to voice their concern for park entry fees and the potentially negative impacts that they are having on the Wasagaming business community and some visitors to the national park.

3.4.3 Public Education and Awareness

a) Knowledge, Understanding and Support

Ranking: Fair, Improving

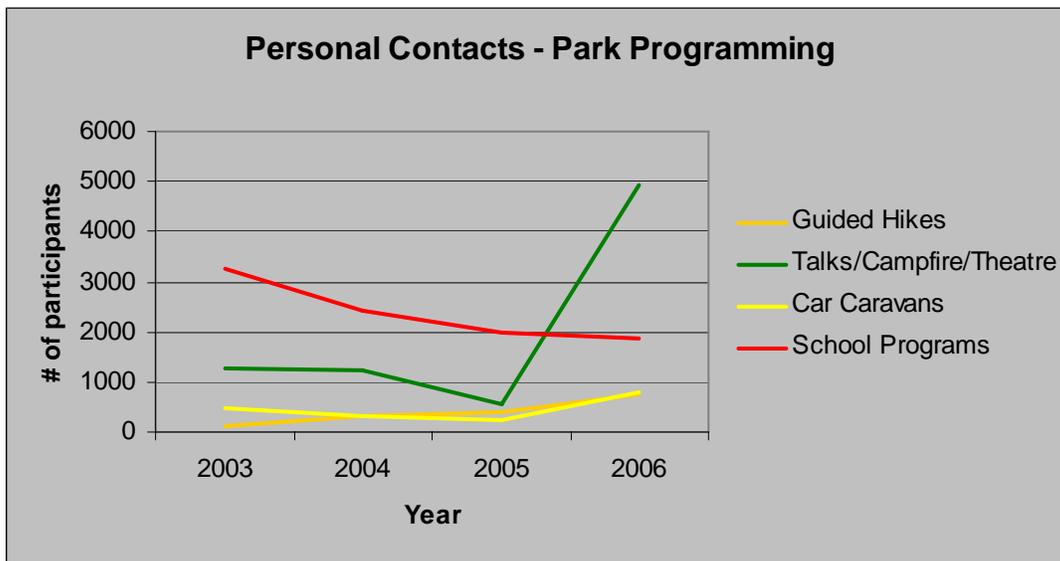
Some indication of knowledge is available from the visitor survey (see 3.5.4). One of the heritage tourism objectives in the community plan is “to ensure the fundamental marketing [messages] for the Park and Wasagaming are those of ecological and commemorative integrity with the focus being on increasing awareness”. In the past year a number of new opportunities are available to visitors. This has led to increased participation levels which in turn should equate to increased knowledge, understanding and support. Also, RMNPC has initiated the “*Ambassador*” program with tourism providers to enhance awareness amongst their staff about Wasagaming and its role in a national park, similar to the “*Banff Best*” program. The Wasagaming Tenants’ Association and the Chamber of Commerce have started to acknowledge the importance of a green community and their roles/responsibilities.

b) Participation Levels

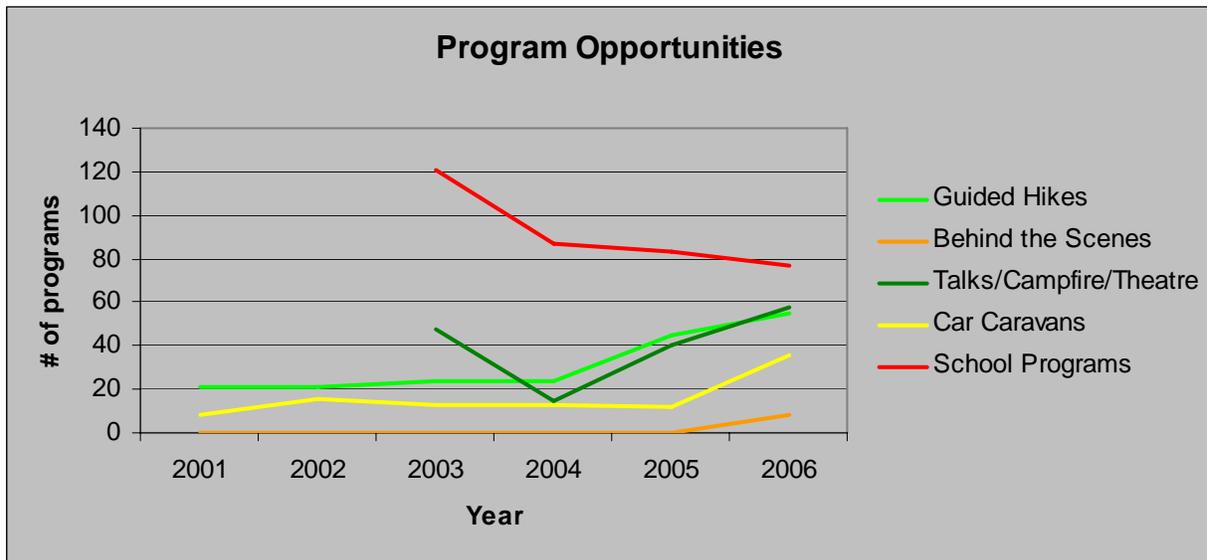
Ranking: Good, Improving

Friends of Riding Mountain offers two regular programs during the visitor season. Participation levels have been fairly consistent over the past four years with approximately 800 personal contacts in 2006. The Keesee Sharing Lodge has also been offering programs, however statistics are not available.

For programs offered by RMNPC, there were approximately 6,500 personal contacts made in 2006, with an additional 1,900 contacted through school programs. The participant levels for the major programs are shown on the graph below.



Non-personal media contacts are difficult to measure. Statistics taken from a door counter at the Visitor Centre indicate visitors’ exposure to various displays, discovery room, or video presentations in the building. In 2001-2002, approximately 680 people per day passed through the Visitor Centre. At peak times there can be as many as 2,500 people per day. Data for other years is not available, however staff feel there’s been slight increases over the last five seasons.



c) Number and Type of Opportunities

Ranking: Good, Improving

Because approximately 85% of the visitors have been to Wasagaming in the past, the intention is to develop at least one totally new learning opportunity each year to make sure returning visitors will be attracted to the program. Recently, close to 50% of the learning opportunities have been renewed.

Guided hikes - Fair, Improving

Guided hikes include historical tours, garden tours and adventure hikes. These programs have been attended on a consistent basis over the last five years and recently more guided hikes have been offered.

Behind the scenes – Good, No Change

This new program was offered in the last two seasons. It includes tours of park facilities (i.e. water treatment plant, warden facility and wildlife lab).

Talks – Good, Improving

This style of interpretation event draws the greatest number of park visitors. Park interpretive staff have created innovative programs ranging from music and theatre to lectures. The programming has grown to represent approximately two thirds of all park personal interpretation program participation.

Bike tours – Good, No Change

Bike tours have been a challenging style of program and participation fluctuates.

School Programs – Fair, Improving

Because planning for school programs has to occur during the peak season, the Park has been scheduling fewer school programs to allow for more planning and preparation time for summer programs.

Car Caravans – Good, Improving

This program originates in Wasagaming, however most messaging is done outside the community. This style of program is popular with visitors indulging their desire to see and learn about wildlife. Caravans are predominantly wildlife themed and they introduce core park conservation messages and a basic level of understanding. There is a high level of demand for this type of program as people are often turned away, however they are provided with information to do a driving tour independently.

Displays – Poor, Improving

Many displays require recapitalization. Recently new information kiosks were located throughout Wasagaming where orientation and current information can be posted.

Brochures – Good, Improving

The park visitor guide has been re-formatted and is a popular source of information for visitors. A new trail guide that visitors can purchase has been developed by Friends of Riding Mountain.

d) Public Satisfaction

Ranking: Good, No Change

The level of audience satisfaction with Parks Canada learning programs was high as measured in the 2001/02 Visitor Survey. Satisfaction levels will not be measured until the next survey in 2007. At present, RMNPC does not have data on satisfaction levels for programs offered by others. Also, the relevance of programs to visitors is not known and will likely be measured in the next survey.

- The green light indicates **high satisfaction**
- The amber light indicates **good satisfaction**
- The red light indicates **potentially low satisfaction**

○ ● ○	number of guided hikes
● ○ ○	content of outdoor theatre programs
○ ○ ●	content of Visitor Centre exhibits
○ ○ ●	quality of Visitor Centre services
○ ○ ●	availability of learning opportunities
○ ● ○	as a learning experience
○ ○ ●	availability of Park information
○ ○ ●	OVERALL interpretation activities that you participated in

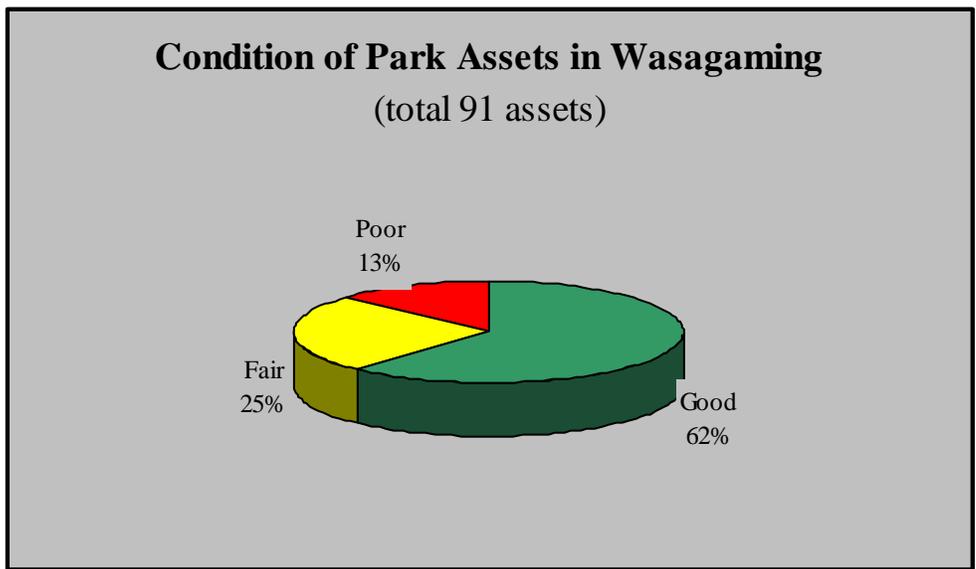
Levels of Satisfaction with Learning Opportunities
(Visitor Survey 2001/02)

3.5 Efficient and Effective Administration

3.5.1 Asset Condition

Ranking: Good, getting worse

There are 91 assets in the community that are park-owned. The majority (62%) are in good condition, however in recent years there’s been minimal investment in assets so the condition ratings are expected to decline. Investments in washroom/shower buildings in the Clear Lake Cabin area will be dependent on the outcome of consultation to determine whether residents want to invest in individual services rather than communal washroom/shower buildings.



3.5.2 Operating Costs

Ranking: Fair, Improving

The direct costs for water and sewer are 100% cost recovered. Approximately 56% of the garbage costs are subsidized by the Park. The garbage regulations (i.e. fees) are in the process of being revised; public consultation for the regulation change has been completed. Recovery of appropriate indirect costs needs to be examined and implemented following consultation.

3.5.3 Responsibility for Stewardship

Ranking: Fair, Improving

The Wasagaming Tenants' Association (WTA) is the key advisory body to Parks Canada in the implementation of the community plan with a focus on municipal service levels. The WTA has been effective; the roles and responsibilities have been determined although not yet formalized. Another example of the community's responsibility for stewardship is the Development Review Board. The community plan directed the establishment of a review and appeal board, in consultation with the WTA, to provide advice on development proposals and appeals. The Board has been functioning well and contributing to stewardship and growth management in Wasagaming.

4.0 EVALUATION OF MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Since approval of the community plan in 2000, a wide variety of actions have been implemented by both Parks Canada and local businesses. Of the 57 actions committed to in the plan, 34 were accomplished. The major barrier to achieving results related to the other 23 actions was lack of funding. The table below lists the top ten key actions that address the Minister's principles for communities in Canada's national parks.

No Net Negative Environmental Impact (3NEI) and Leadership in Environmental Stewardship		
	Management Action	Result
1.	Drinking water management -new water treatment plant completed in 2004 that meets Parks Canada's proposed water quality guidelines.	-a reliable potable water supply -opportunity to expand the water distribution outside the park boundary and share the cost of the treatment plant.
2.	Wastewater management -established effluent standards based on receiving waters -completed a design for an upgraded treatment system, project to commence in 2006/07	-minimize impact on aquatic ecosystems -opportunity to offer sewage treatment to residents outside the park boundary and share the cost of the service.
3.	Stormwater management – upgrade design complete	- higher surface water quality for experiential, ecological integrity and human consumption purposes

4.	Partnering with neighbouring communities - municipal services -agreement for water services -commitment in principle for sewage treatment -solid waste services shared (landfill costs/recycling program) -agreement for structural fire services	- higher level of environmental protection for RMNPC and the region - more efficient and effective management
Leadership in Heritage Conservation		
	Management Action	Result
5.	Heritage Buildings -Building Review & Description Analysis completed -investments in 2 federal heritage to bring condition rating up to good as a condition of partnerships with non-profit third parties, one of which is Keeseekoweenin First Nation	-improved condition/protection of buildings -enhanced knowledge, understanding and support -shared responsibility for asset condition
Responsible Growth Management		
6.	Legislation of boundary and growth limits	-footprint of the community is defined -restrictions on development in the cottage, cabin and commercial areas will contribute to managing environmental impacts
Managing Development and Use		
7.	Wasgaming Main Beach and Pier Project -pier structure modified to reduce impact on natural processes, conditions improved in the beach area	-decision made using a consultative process with community members which enhanced understanding and support -project meets visitor needs/enhances the experience, maintains heritage values and protects ecological processes
8.	Sign Project -all highway and directional signs replaced with signs with the new Parks Canada corporate image	-responds to visitor needs -increased visitor satisfaction
Efficient and Effective Administration		
9.	Responsibility for Stewardship - Wasagaming Tenants' Association has been active and effective. A Development Review Board was formed and is functioning well.	-enhanced knowledge, understanding and support -shared responsibility for stewardship -more efficient and effective management
10.	Cost Recovery – regulation changes made for water and sewer so 100% of the direct costs are recovered. For garbage services, a regulation change has been initiated.	-effective management of municipal services

5.0 CONDITION OF INFORMATION BASE

Information gaps have been identified during the development of this report and include;

- non-native invasive species
- landscape composition
- trail proliferation
- wildlife movement and human-wildlife encounters
- quality of life
- economic vitality
- visitor experience – connecting visitors personally with the place
- knowledge, understanding and support

Indicators, measures and related information gaps will be refined through the ongoing development of the community monitoring framework.

6.0 CONCLUSION

Although the vision for the community remains valid, there are issues related to development adjacent to the community that need to be addressed. The draft Management Plan for RMNPC, that is expected to be approved by December/06, provides direction for the next community plan review. There are some concerns with respect to indicators related to aquatic ecosystems, solid waste diversion, public education/awareness, and efficient/effective administration.

Completion of the sewage treatment project will reduce threats to the Clear Lake Basin. However, Wasagaming is only one 'neighborhood' within a larger Clear Lake Basin community. Greater integration with neighbors will help to reduce environmental impacts as well as the cost of municipal infrastructure. Therefore, the next community plan needs to provide direction to expand on shared municipal services (e.g. water, wastewater treatment, solid waste disposal, development review) in partnership with the Rural Municipality of Park.



Improved participation and support by the community of the recycling program is required to increase diversion of waste from the landfill. To gain a better understanding of the community's issues with the recycling and composting programs, Parks Canada will continue to rely on input from the Wasagaming Tenants' Association. This issue is addressed in the community plan, however some more work is needed to address outstanding issues.

Public education and awareness, and integration of the Parks Canada mandate in general, are adequately addressed in the Wasagaming Community Plan. Progress has been made recently with programs for repeat visitors and commercial operators. However, the indicators and measures for managing development and use require refinement and there is direction to do this in the park management plan.

Efficient and effective administration indicator uses asset condition as a measure. There are a number of assets in fair to poor condition in Wasagaming and investments will be contingent on funding. Regular visitor surveys will provide the information required to establish priorities for recapitalization of assets. The community plan review will be the opportunity to review options for water and sewer services in the Clear Lake Cabin Area that will meet the needs and wants of those seasonal residents. The next community plan also needs to address other issues that will increase effectiveness and efficiencies in managing the community. Issues include the following:

- a review of essential services in Wasagaming with consideration to existing and potential services in the Wasagaming/Onanole corridor;
- alternatives to annual permits for the Clear Lake Cabins; and
- examination of other governance models for communities for potential application in Wasagaming.

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