



Issue Paper

Townsite Vegetation

Riding Mountain National Park of Canada

Wasagaming Community Plan Review 2007

Issue

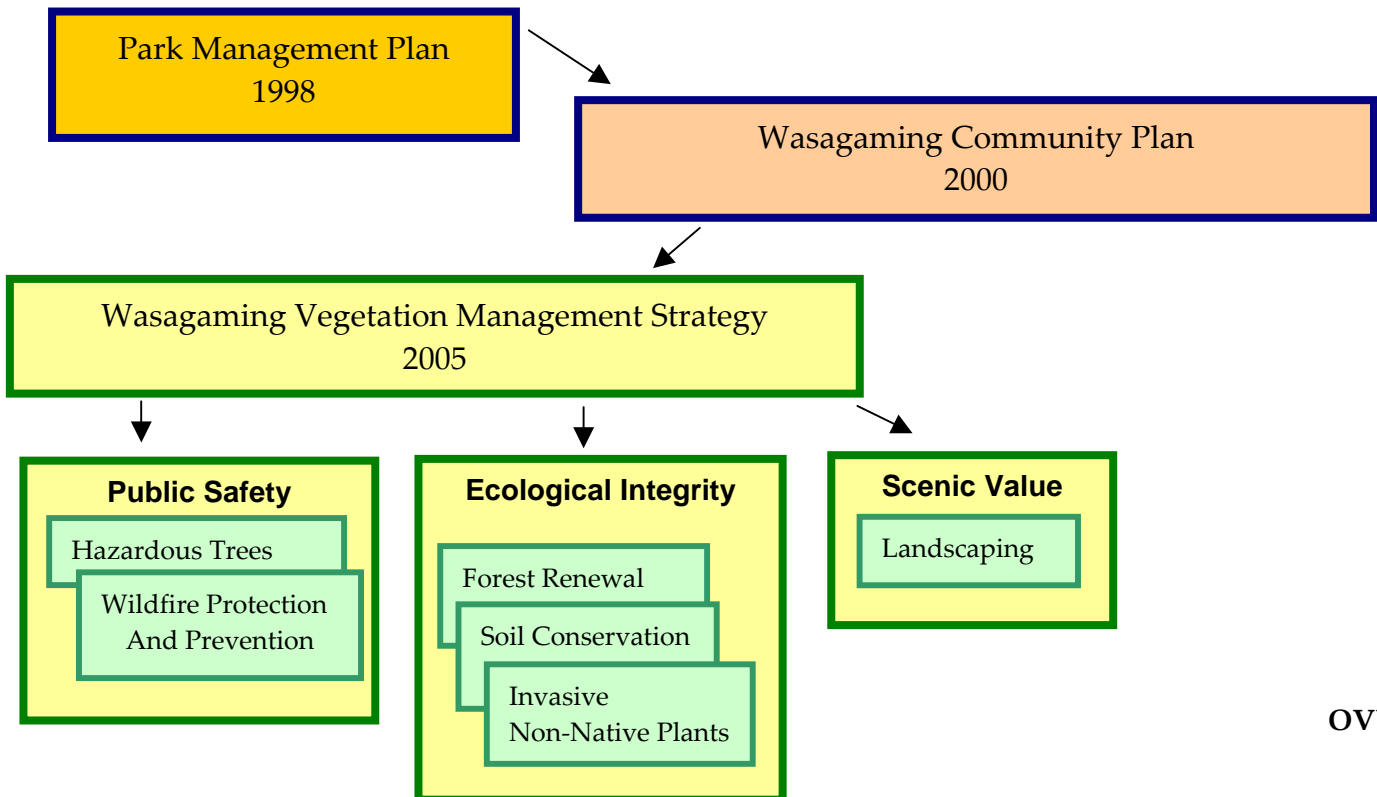
Wasagaming provides a highly vegetated environment for both residents and visitors, and it is important that this character of the community is preserved. However, the mixed-wood forest is aging and the vegetation must be actively managed to ensure public safety, ecological integrity and scenic values are preserved.

Background

The Wasagaming Community Plan (2000) recommended the establishment and implementation of a vegetation management strategy for Wasagaming. Subsequently, representatives of the Wasagaming Tenants' Association worked with Parks Canada staff to develop the Wasagaming Vegetation Management Strategy (WVMS), which was approved by Parks Canada in 2005.

Wasagaming Vegetation Management Strategy Priorities

The following diagram outlines the planning process and the priorities within the vegetation management strategy.



OVER

The following provides some more detail on each of the priority areas.

Wildfire Protection and Prevention –

Fuel Management Initiatives for the Protection of Wasagaming

- Maintaining an 8 kilometer fireguard along Highway 19
- Removing concentrations of coniferous trees along the boundary to the east
- Cutting and burning a fireguard from the Park wood-yard to Hwy. 10 at Tawapit Drive
- Changing forest back into grasslands in the Compound Prairie prescribed burn unit
- Removing dense plantations and heavy fuels adjacent to the townsite
- Communicate “FireSmart Wasagaming” objectives and plans to all leaseholders
- Coordinate and facilitate community work bees for fuel reduction on private lots
- Initiate fuel reduction operations to protect the North Shore Subdivisions
- Initiate fuel reduction operations on Park lands within Wasagaming

Hazardous Trees

Hazard Reduction Initiatives for Public Safety

- Park Directive, ‘Hazard Tree Removal in Wasagaming Townsite’ approved
- Tree Removal Permit System rewritten and applied
- Annual identification and removal of hazardous trees in the Clear Lake Cabin Area.

Forest Renewal – Developed Areas

A more diverse, multi-aged forest structure must be restored in developed sites in Wasagaming, such as the areas around the beach and pier, the Visitor Centre area, and the South Gate.

Soil Conservation – Prevention and Restoration

Soil damage can be reduced, and erosion prevented, by managing visitor use patterns and repairing degraded sites.

Invasive, Non-native Plants

The detrimental effects of exotic plants will be minimized through collaboration with leaseholders in Wasagaming.

Landscaping – Environmental Stewardship

Leaseholders will be encouraged to reduce chemical use and intrusive maintenance techniques through promotion of native plants use in landscaping. “Environmental Management Guidelines for Leased Lots” will be developed in collaboration with the Wasagaming Tenants’ Association.

The Challenge

Both Parks Canada and the community face the challenge of managing aging vegetation to meet public safety, ecological integrity and scenic values.

Questions

1. The “FireSmart Wasagaming” and tree removal permit programs are proceeding well. Which priority from the WVMS do you feel should be addressed next?
2. What issues regarding landscaping of leased lots do you feel need to be addressed in the landscaping guidelines to be developed?