

# A Consultation Summary for the Aulavik National Park of Canada Management Plan Update – Summer and Fall 2011

Consultations on the draft management plan for Aulavik National Park of Canada were completed over the summer and fall of 2011. Inuvialuit, stakeholders and interested Canadians were invited to share their views on the draft management plan for the park.

Input was gathered over a five week period in early summer 2011 (June 6- July 11, 2011), during Stage 2 of our management planning process, from public meetings with local leadership and residents held in 3 Inuvialuit Settlement Region communities, as well as through invitations to comment sent out to stakeholders and general public through mailings and public service announcements in local / regional newspapers. We heard from a variety of organizations and individuals including: community members from Inuvik, Sachs Harbour and Ulukhaktok; regional Inuvialuit and co-operative management land claim boards; other government departments; external researchers, staff, park visitors and other interested Canadians.

All comments received were gathered together, analyzed and summarized for the Parks Canada planning team and the Aulavik Management Planning Working Group. The Working Group met in late August 2011 to review comments received and provide guidance to Parks Canada on how to use that feedback to revise the draft park management plan.

In fall 2011 (September and October 2011), the revised draft park management plan was presented for final review and recommendation by local Inuvialuit organizations (Sachs Harbour Hunters & Trappers Committee, Sachs Harbour Community Corporation) as well as regional Inuvialuit and co-operative management land claim boards (Wildlife Management Advisory Council – Northwest Territories, Fisheries Joint Management Committee and , Inuvialuit Game Council).

## What We Heard

Comments provided by Inuvialuit, Stakeholders and interested Canadians during consultations in Summer 2011 are summarized below. Input and views are organized by key management plan sections. Within each section, we report by issue on what we heard and what we did with that input to update of the Aulavik National Park Management Plan.

<b><u>Vision</u></b>	
What Was Heard	Comments about the vision were limited. A few respondents said they liked everything about the park vision, while some disliked that the park was too costly to visit and thereby limited to a specialized market.
Final Draft Response	While the plan has strategies to diversify the opportunities to experience Aulavik and to reduce the cost to visit, the park will continue to have visitation limited by cost and remoteness. Without changing the intent and scope, some changes were made to improve the wording of the vision.

## Strategy 1 – Maintaining and Enhancing Visitor Opportunities

What Was Heard	<b>Expanded / improved visitor service offer.</b> There was support from Sachs Harbour and Ulukhaktok for making improvements to or replacing the Green and Polar Bear cabins, in order to use them as base camps for supporting visitor activities, research and monitoring programs, and youth camps. Some people expressed concern that changes to the cabins and their use would not be in keeping Aulavik's wilderness character.
Final Draft Response	Improvements to the two cabins will be kept simple and practical to for use as base camps for park operations, third party research and youth camps, and as emergency shelters for Inuvialuit hunters and park visitors. In keeping with the wilderness character and zoning of Aulavik, improvements will address public safety and basic comfort needs. Green Cabin will continue to serve as the starting point in the park for most visitors.
What Was Heard	<b>Make access to park more affordable.</b> Some respondents commented that actions need to be taken to make air access into Aulavik more affordable.  While some supported the storage of canoes at Green Cabin as part of reducing costs to fly into the park, one respondent suggested that such storage could attract bears and impact the wilderness aesthetic.  Parks Canada will explore and, where practical, implement ways for visitors to reduce their costs of travelling into and out of Aulavik, for example, by assisting visitors in finding cost-share opportunities for aircraft charters. This will entail working with outfitters, air charters and others.  The storage of outfitter canoes at Green Cabin or other suitable locations, to allow space on aircraft for more passengers is a possible means to help reduce per-person trip costs. Canoe storage facilities would be designed and constructed to maintain Green Cabin as a base camp, with safety as a key consideration.
Final Draft Response	

What Was Heard	<b>Approaches to increase awareness and visitation</b> – Suggestions from the communities and the public included working with the adventure cruise industry, building on the rich culture and stories of the region (including using the Smithsonian's MacFarlane Collection), working with other Inuvialuit groups to find funding for existing youth group programs in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, and promoting the Thomsen as an Arctic wilderness paddle destination suitable for most ages and ability levels.
Final Draft Response	Parks Canada will explore new opportunities for park visits with emerging Northwest Passage cruise ship tours. If there is demand, guidelines will be developed with cruise ship operators to encourage connection to the park and ensure protection of natural, cultural and paleontological resources.  The MacFarlane Collection is from the MacKenzie Delta area and not related to Banks Island. While outside the scope of the Aulavik management plan, the Western Arctic



<b>Strategy 2 – Keeping Aulavik Healthy and Enduring</b>	
What Was Heard	<p><b>Monitoring / maintaining park health.</b> The Canadian Wildlife Service identified the need to include specific objectives and actions for species at risk.</p> <p>The possibility of park boundary expansion and/or creation of buffer zones to keep Aulavik healthy and protect the park's watershed were raised at the Sachs Harbour meeting.</p>
Final Draft Response	<p>A new objective and action has been added for managing species at risk in the park. Parks Canada will work closely with cooperative management partners in assisting Environment Canada with the Peary caribou recovery strategy.</p> <p>Expanding the park boundary is not being considered by Parks Canada. Most of the main watersheds of Aulavik, including the Thomsen, Muskox, Woon and Mercy rivers, are within the park boundaries.</p>
What Was Heard	<p>Mention of <b>research</b> during this stage of consultation to support this strategy was limited. A community member from Ulukhaktok suggested research was needed in the park for looking at contamination in migratory bird feeding areas.</p> <p>A geologist suggested that the Banks Island Mercy reef tract is world famous and world class and as such deserves mention in this plan due to scientists' interest in understanding ancient reef ecosystems, mass extinctions and global climate change.</p>
Final Draft Response	<p>No contaminated sites are in the migratory bird sanctuary area.</p> <p>The significance of the fossil reefs is now noted in the management plan.</p>

<b>Strategy 3 – Engaging Inuvialuit Settlement Region (ISR) Communities</b>	
What Was Heard	<p><b>Engaging youth</b> from the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (ISR) was mentioned by community members. Suggested approaches for engagement included youth camps, building on existing Inuvialuit programs, in-school programs delivered by Parks Canada, incorporating museum collections into youth program delivery and exploring organized trips to southern museums.</p>
Final Draft	<p>Engaging ISR youth through camps, in school programs (such as the existing Environmental Stewardship Program) and working with school curricula, will continue to be an important part of Aulavik programs. Organizing youth trips to southern museums is outside Parks Canada's responsibility to lead. Parks Canada will work with funded Inuvialuit groups to support their visits into the park.</p>
What Was Heard	<p>Wildlife Management Advisory Council-NWT and a few community members from Sachs Harbour commented on how to better connect the community to the park through cooperative management approaches such as <b>establishing a park management board</b>. Two concerns were raised regarding formation of a park management board: the need to have the community at the core of any board approach and concerns about representatives on boards not reporting back to the community.</p>

Final Draft Response	In agreement with Inuvialuit cooperative management bodies and Sachs Harbour community organizations, a park specific co-operative management process will be considered, and if determined desirable, established within the five-year period of the plan. A board would not replace Parks Canada's requirement to work with WMAC-NWT.
----------------------	---

#### Strategy 4 – Bringing Canadians Closer to Canada's Northern Heritage

What Was Heard	Input received on ways to connect and bring Canadians closer to Aulavik was received from various stakeholders (community members, external researchers, and Parks Canada staff) and included approaches based on both traditional and new media.
Final Draft Response	Parks Canada will consider technologies and media that are practical to implement.

#### Administration and Operation

What Was Heard	Comments regarding the Green Cabin, Polar Bear Cabin and Banks Island Migratory Bird Sanctuary #2 are discussed in Strategies 1 and 2.
----------------	--

#### Zoning

What was Heard	One respondent raised concerns about possible impacts on visitor experience and wildlife from guided snowmobile based touring.
Final Draft Response	Snowmobiling as an activity in the park is not being planned or promoted. The plan gives only the process and conditions for considering commercially guided over-snow vehicle tours by Inuvialuit beneficiaries, should there be interest and demand.