

Gardom Lake Planning Process

Input to date - as at 16 December 2014

Public Meeting & Online Survey

Approximately 45 people attended the public meeting on the evening of November 24th despite the wild winter weather. The meeting attendees showed how passionate they are about Gardom Lake and helped to explain all the ways that the lake is unique. It was a very productive evening. In addition, an online survey was open from November 7th to 28th to collect input from those people unable to attend the meeting in person; twenty two people filled out the survey.

Background

The Fraser Basin Council facilitated a public meeting at the Rancho-Deep Creek hall on November 24th to kick off the Gardom Lake planning process. The purpose of the meeting was to collect information regarding values and issues around Gardom Lake and to establish a planning committee to guide the planning process. The same information was collected via the online survey. The values and issues collected during the public meeting and the online survey are summarized below.

Values

People value Gardom Lake for many reasons but the one that is most evident is because the lake is unique. There is no other lake proximal to an urban setting that boasts amazing fishing, peaceful surroundings, and a vast array of wildlife. Meeting attendees listed many values about Gardom Lake including:

- Quality fishing, stocking, size, lake structure, unique, insect hatches
- Quality ice fishing for the same reasons
- Bird (loons), turtle (painted turtle) watching, wildlife in general
- Biodiversity
- Education (science, biology, water skills)
- Relatively intact foreshore
- Environmental diversity (wildlife, plants)
- Kayaking/non-motorized boating
- Peacefulness, quiet
- Swimming with turtles, swimming at CSRD Park and in general
- The lake is an "emerald jewel" 1914 newspaper article description of Gardom, still true today
- Skating, snowshoeing, skiing
- Accessibility, proximity to urban areas
- Joyful place, the sounds of children enjoying the lake
- Boating

Issues Identified

As part of the public meeting and the online survey, issues around Gardom Lake were identified. All of the issues were divided into three broad categories: 1. Water 2. Environment 3. People. Below is a list of the issues that were submitted as part of the online survey as well as those collected at the public meeting.

Water

- Water quality
 - sediment, nutrients, leaky septic systems, oil gas, inflow, outflow, inflow stream health
- Water quantity
 - lake level, water withdrawals (private use/fire), aquifer health/recharge areas

Environment

- Fish
 - habitat, populations, stocking rate, non-native introductions (intentional and accidental)
- Plants
 - invasive species (management/prevention), riparian areas
- Animals
 - migratory bird habitat, loon habitat, painted turtle habitat, moose, deer, wildlife in general

People

- Recreation
 - noise from firearms, fireworks, snowmobiles and ATVs on ice, congestion, parking, lack of facilities(bathrooms), garbage/cigarette butts, lack/location of access points, lack of boat launches for trailers, conflict between uses, dogs on beach, traffic on lake, safety in and around parked vehicles on road sides,
- Development
 - shoreline modifications, riparian zone removal
 - commercial development
 - lack of consultation with landowners prior to development
- Regulation & Enforcement
 - existing laws/bylaws, lack of enforcement
 - too many rules and regulations
 - gas boat motors should not be restricted
 - illegal structures/water use
 - septic system health
- Education
 - lack of education regarding the lake, invasive species, biodiversity, riparian areas, species at risk, foreshore health
 - lack of signage
 - lack of quantifiable data regarding lake use/pressure, sensitive habitat, plants

Gardom Lake Planning Committee

A portion of the public meeting was dedicated to the development of the Gardom Lake Planning Committee (GLPC). Similarly, the online survey allowed for respondents to identify people/agencies/groups/etc. that should be involved in the planning process.

Ideally, a planning committee strikes a balance between having broad representation from governments, agencies, industry/business, interest/stewardship groups, and landowners while being a manageable size. The groups identified as members of the GLPC are as follows:

- Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD)
- Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (MFLNRO)
- Ministry of Environment (MoE)/BC Lakes Stewardship Society (BCLSS)
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)
- Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI)
- Syilx Nation
- Secwepemc Nation
- Gardom Lake Bible Camp
- Friends of Gardom Lake/Shuswap Naturalists
- North Okanagan Holding Society (Legion)
- Gardom Lake Community Park Society
- BC Fly Fishing Association
- Salmon Arm Fish and Game Club/BC Wildlife Federation
- Agriculture sector
- Rancho Deep Creek Community Association

A list of individual representatives will be established by the end of November. Committee members must be willing to work collaboratively, be able to attend meetings, and bring information from and to their respective groups throughout the planning process.

The GLPC will be guided by a Terms of Reference that includes the following key points:

- The Fraser Basin Council is an impartial organization that provides support to the GLPC but is not a member
- The planning process, documents, meeting notes etc. will be available online, second public meeting in spring 2015
- The GLPC will operate on a consensus decision making model
- The GLPC has no specific financial responsibilities or budget
- The GLPC will determine if and how to go forward in May 2015

See the Gardom Lake Planning Committee DRAFT Terms of Reference at www.gardomlakeplan.ca