

LOST IN TRANSLATION: A CASE STUDY IN POLICY HERMENEUTICS

By

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We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

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i. Abstract

This paper is a policy analysis of one Ministry of Forests and Range, Protection Branch stakeholder group's perspective on Category 1 Open Fire Restrictions (campfire bans) as defined under the Wildfire Act and Regulation. The Wildfire Act and Regulation, in effect for one wildfire season at the time of this writing, is new legislation that gives the Protection Branch jurisdictional authority to implement Category 1 Open Fire Restrictions (campfire bans) in B.C. Parks. This authority was, under previous legislation, the jurisdiction of the Parks Branch of the Ministry of Environment.

The Ministry of Environment, Parks Branch is a key partner of the Protection Branch in the context of wildfire management. The central question of this research is "How do B.C. Parks staff interpret the intent and application of Category 1 (campfire) Open Fire Restrictions under the Wildfire Regulation?" This research explores the impact that the Wildfire Regulation has had on B.C. Parks staff; it looks at the perspective Parks staff have on the methodology used to implement campfire bans; and it seeks to understand B.C. Parks staff view of the impact of campfire bans on the general public.

ii. Acknowledgements

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Appendix A
Wildfire Regulation Section 20: Category 1 Open Fire Restriction

Appendix B
Summary of B.C. Parks Staff Interviews: Data Collection

A key factor in the success of conflict prevention and resolution regarding natural resources-related issues is the ability of forest managers and stakeholders to understand the source of others'—and their own—worldviews.

(Schauber 2002, p. 24)

1 Introduction

The Wildfire Act and Regulation is newly introduced legislation enacted specifically for use by the B.C. Ministry of Forests and Range, Protection Branch. The legislation was enacted on March 31, 2005 and at the time of this writing, has been in effect for one wildfire season. The key objective of the Wildfire Act and Regulation is to clearly define the responsibilities of all users of forest lands and grass lands with respect to wildfire management.

The Wildfire Act and Regulation is in some ways significantly different from its predecessor, the Forest Practices Code Act of British Columbia. The Wildfire Act, unlike the Forest Practices Code, applies in Provincial Parks and protected areas. Open Fire Restrictions for example, which seasonally prohibit campfires on Crown and private lands outside of organized areas, now apply in B.C. Parks and are the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Forests and Range.

A Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) signed in 2005, outlines the joint working relationship between B.C. Parks and Protection Branch staff that is key to the successful implementation of Category 1 Open Fire Restrictions in B.C. Parks. The B.C. Parks Area Supervisors and Section Heads, who manage parks within the boundaries of a corresponding Fire Centre, have formed working relationships around the coordination of campfire bans and exemptions. (Figures 1 and 2 illustrate the B.C. Park region boundaries and provincial Fire Centre boundaries.)



Figure 1: Map showing B.C. Park Regions
Reprinted by permission from the Ministry of Environment

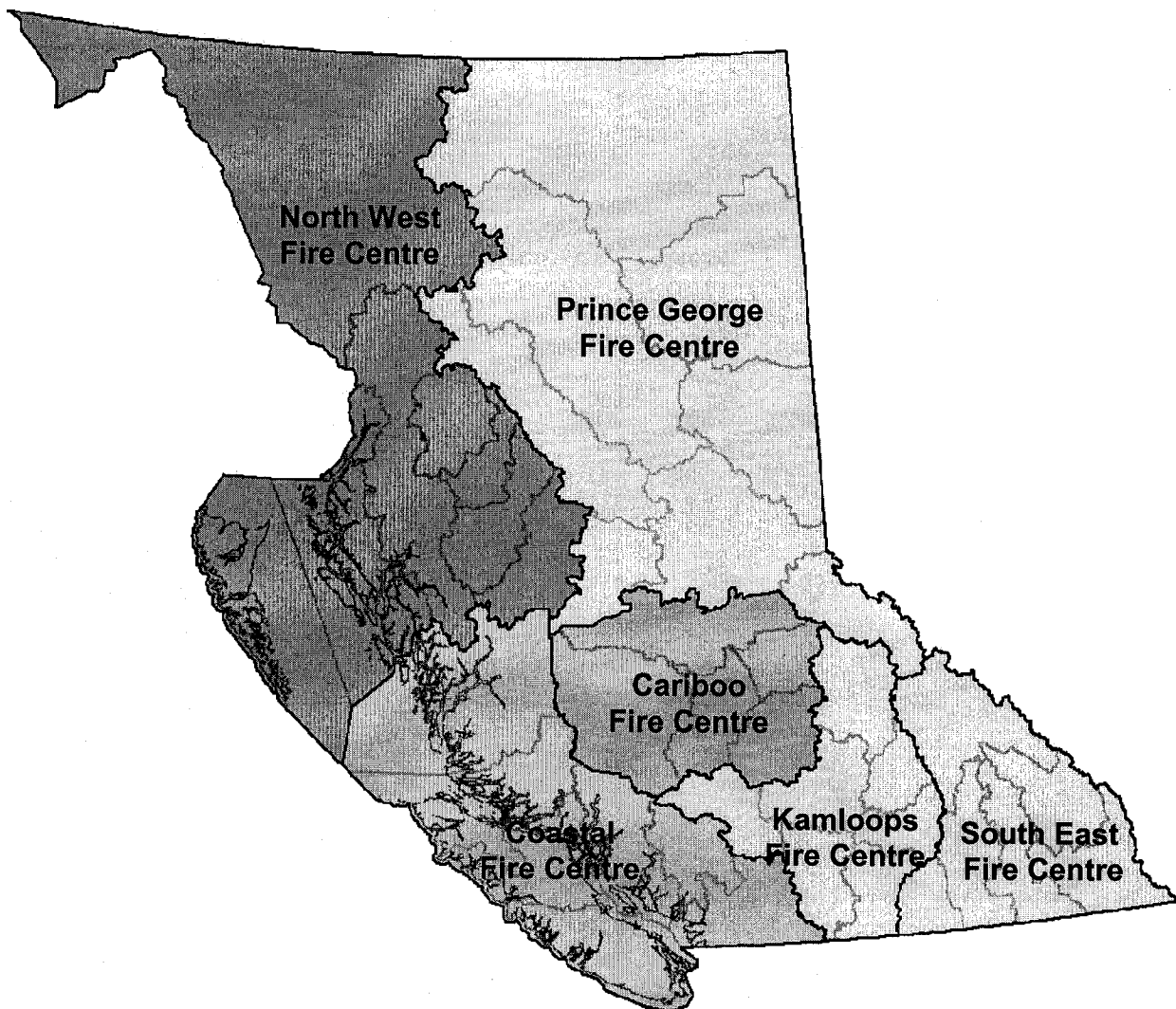


Figure 2: Map showing provincial Protection Branch Fire Centre areas
Reprinted by permission from the Ministry of Forests and Range

This research looks at how one Ministry of Forests Protection Branch stakeholder group (B.C. Parks) is interpreting and applying Category 1 Open Fire Restrictions under the new Wildfire Regulation. B.C. Parks staff are a key stakeholder group of the Ministry of Forests, in part because of their interaction with the public, particularly recreationalists, during the wildfire season. Park visitors interested in the status of Ministry of Forests-implemented campfire restrictions frequently rely on B.C. Parks staff for information. In B.C. an average of 2000 wildfires each year cost the province \$87 million to extinguish.

People cause about half of all wildfires in the province while half are caused by lightning. Open fire restrictions, such as campfire bans, are intended to raise awareness of the risks of wildfire and, ultimately, to reduce the number of person-caused wildfires in B.C. each year.

As a land management policy designed to reduce the risk of wildfire, this research looked at how B.C. Parks staff interact with the Wildfire Regulation on Open Fire. My central research question was: “How do B.C. Parks staff interpret the intent and application of Category 1 (campfire) Open Fire Restrictions under the Wildfire Regulation?” The data collection for this research was conducted in January 2006 via phone interviews with the B.C. Parks staff who interacted with the Wildfire Act during the 2005 wildfire season. To date, no research or analysis of any aspect of the Wildfire Act and Regulation has been published.

I will begin with a literature review of the links between attitudes and social behavior, as well as of forest and natural resource policy research. I will then develop a case study focused provincially on B.C. Parks staff and their application of Open Fire Restrictions under the Wildfire Regulation. After presenting a summary of the research data and an analysis of the data using qualitative coding techniques, I will conclude with recommendations.

2 Definitions

The following definitions are included to assist readers unfamiliar with the legislative terminology of the Ministry of Forests and Range, Wildfire Act and Regulation, and the Ministry of Environment’s Park Act.

- **"backcountry"** means an area in a park or recreation area that is not frontcountry.

- **"campground"** means one or more campsites managed by an operator or the ministry.
- **"campsite"** means an area in a park or recreation area developed by the ministry to accommodate persons who wish to camp.
- **"category 1 open fire"** means an open fire that burns piled material no larger than 1m in height and 1 m in diameter and includes a campfire that burns such material. In this report, the term "category 1 open fire" is used interchangeably with the term "campfire".
- **"Fire Weather Index"** has the same meaning as under the Canadian Forest Service's publication, the Canadian Forest Fire Weather Index System, as amended from time to time;
- **"frontcountry"** means an area in a park or recreation area within one kilometre of either side of the centreline of a park road or a highway.
- **"open fire"** does not include a fire vented through a structure that has a flue and is incorporated in a building;
- **"protected area"** means
 - (a) a
 - (i) park, or
 - (ii) recreation areaas defined in section 1 of the *Park Act*,
 - (b) an area established under the *Environment and Land Use Act* as a park or protected area, or
 - (c) an area established or continued as an ecological reserve under the *Ecological Reserve Act* or by the *Protected Areas of British Columbia Act*.

The above definitions were obtained from the B.C. Parks Act legislation and from the Wildfire Act and Regulation legislation.

3 Legislation

This research considers issues related to the following pieces of legislation:

- ***Wildfire Act and Regulation*** (B.C.)

Wildfire management legislation for the Ministry of Forests and Range. Section 20 of

the Wildfire Regulation outlines the legal obligations of people using Category 1 open fires. Section 20 of the Wildfire Regulation is included in Appendix A.

- ***Park Act*** (B.C.)

The main legislation governing protected areas in British Columbia. It provides for the designation and administration of provincial parks, recreation areas, and nature conservancy areas.

4 Literature Review

Two areas of study are relevant to this research. The first is of the links between attitudes and resulting social behavior. The research found by the author lends possible explanation to why B.C. Parks staff have embraced the new Wildfire Regulation to varying degrees throughout the province. The second area of study relevant to this research is policy analysis of the Wildfire Act and Regulation specifically, and of forest legislation in general.

Research on the links between attitude and resulting social behavior exists in social psychology literature. Of particular interest to this research is the work of Icek Aizen and Martin Fishbein, social psychologists interested in attitude formation and the effects of attitudes on behavior. Their *Theory of Planned Behavior* suggests that, in general, “the more favorable the attitude, the less perceived social pressure, and the greater the perceived control, the stronger should be a person’s intention to perform the behavior in question.” (Aizen and Fishbein, 1980) Aizen and Fishbein’s theory is useful for identifying how and where to target strategies for changing behaviors. Their theory assumes that “human beings are rational and make systematic use of information available to them.” (Aizen and Fishbein, 1980) It would be appropriate to incorporate aspects of this theory (attitude, social pressure, perceived control) in situations where information is presented to an audience with the intent to change behavior.

In terms of policy analysis of forestry legislation, a small body of research exists on the Forest Practices Code Act of British Columbia, (Cashore et al., 2001, Haley and Luckert, 1990, Marchak et al., 1999), however opportunities exist for analysis of the Wildfire Act and Regulation and its implications on stakeholder groups in the context of its social, environmental, and economic impacts. No research or policy analysis on the Wildfire Act and Regulation has been published to date.

Gannon (1994) describes forest policy analysis as a useful tool for understanding the viewpoints of those whom the legislation affects. “It is not uncommon for people to assume that others see the world through the same lens if they typically interact only with people from their own cultural backgrounds” (Morford et al., 2003, p.5) Similarly, Hadley (1988) looks at public education as a solution to many communication problems. She points out that foresters need to know about more than trees; they need skills to work with people and effectively communicate with those who have different worldviews and attitudes than their own.

It is timely, after one season of application, to solicit stakeholder feedback on the Wildfire Act and Regulation. Chandrasekharan (2002) argues for a feedback mechanism that allows the application of a policy to be continually monitored. “Development of sustainable policy involves a cyclical process of evaluation and analysis, formation, articulation, formulation, instrumentation, implementation and further evaluation.” (Chandrasekharan, 2002, p.3). Chandrasekharan’s (p.3) work outlines the role that policy research can play in the “informed articulation of policies.”

5 Research Goals and Objectives

The purpose of the B.C. Ministry of Forests and Range, Wildfire Act and Regulation is to manage response to, and prevention of, wildfire. This research asked 11 B.C. Parks staff with decision-making powers in Provincial Parks, how they interpret the intent and

application of the sections of the Wildfire Act and Regulation that deal with open fire and open fire restrictions (specifically, campfires and campfire bans).

The goal of this research was to inform Ministry of Forests and Range policy-makers, and ultimately the public, about Open Fire Restrictions in order to promote understanding and more effective public policies. The results of this research may be used to develop:

- Improved and “informed articulation of policies” (Chandrasekharan, 2002, p.1)
- Legislative amendments where required
- An informed and strategic communications plan for Open Fire Restrictions in B.C.

My research objective was to ascertain what B.C. Parks staff know about the Wildfire Regulation section on Category 1 Open Fire Restrictions (campfire bans). Specifically, my research objectives were: to ascertain Parks’ comprehension of the intent of the legislation; to identify organizational influences that may be guiding B.C. Parks’ interpretations of Category 1 Open Fire Restrictions; and to summarize Parks staff’s experience interacting with Open Fire Restrictions during the 2005 wildfire season.

One of the key linkages between B.C. Parks and the Protection Branch is the Wildfire Act and Regulation, specifically Section 20, which addresses Category 1 Open Fire Restrictions. The overriding motivation behind this research was to assess and, if necessary, improve communications between B.C. Parks and Protection Branch staff regarding the Wildfire Act and Regulation, thereby strengthening the partnership that these two organizations share.

6 Research Methodology

As a policy analysis, this research looked at the “operational practicality” of Open Fire Restrictions from the perspective of B.C. Parks staff. Loomis and Helfand (2001)

describe policy analyses as beneficial for recognizing the social/cultural acceptability of a policy.

I chose a qualitative case study methodology to explore B.C. Parks' perspective on the Protection Branch policy on Open Fire Restrictions. Researcher Robert K. Yin defines the case study method as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin, 1984). As a case study in policy hermeneutics, this research considered not only the phenomenon of interest (policy interpretation), but also the role that B.C. Parks' organizational culture might play in the culmination of that phenomenon.

Research data was collected from participants via phone interviews. According to McNamara (1999), the overall purpose of interview methodology is "to fully understand someone's impressions or experience". McNamara cites one of the advantages of interview methodology is that it offers access to a full range and depth of information,

Mcnamara also describes a number of disadvantages of interview methodology including costliness and the risk that the interviewer will bias the client's responses. As employer supported research, I was granted the opportunity to carryout phone interviews during business hours from my place of work. This helped to reduce my overall costs as well as, I believe, lend relevance to my research. In terms of reducing the risk of biasing client responses, I utilized a structured interview approach, which helped to lend objectivity to the interviews, and, while not eliminating them altogether, reduced opportunities to influence client responses.

Phone interviews were used to complete the data collection for this research. Phone interviews were conducted during business hours while participants were at their workplace. Interviews were structured (see Table 1) and lasted between 20 and 45 minutes.

A non-random sampling technique was used to target the 13 Park Area Supervisors and Section Heads throughout B.C. who worked in parks and interacted with the Wildfire Act and Regulation in 2005. Of the 13 B.C. Parks staff who were asked to participate in the interview research, 11 were amenable and available to take part.

The phone interviews were recorded and transcribed for ease of documentation and data analysis. The following outline details the basic interview process:

1. Obtained names and office phone numbers of the 13 Park Area Supervisors and Section Heads in B.C. who worked in parks and interacted with the Wildfire Act and Regulation in 2005.
2. Phoned all Park Area Supervisors on January 16, 2006, one week before the phone interviews began. During this introductory call, I introduced the purpose of the research and requested participation in the interview.
3. Interview questions were pre-tested to ensure clarity of wording, appropriate length and sufficient opportunity to provide feedback.
4. Phone interviews began on January 23, 2006 and continued until February 13, 2006. Interviewees were asked to consent to having the interview recorded.
5. This research was subject to ethics approval by Royal Roads Ethics Approval Board as well as by the Board for the Parks and Protected Areas Branch of the Ministry of Environment. Research participants were required to consent to their participation prior to the interview. Participants were advised of their ability to withdraw at any time during or after the interview. Participants were also guaranteed anonymity in the final research report and any subsequent publication of the research.
6. Of the 13 B.C. Parks staff contacted, 11 were available and willing to participate in this research.

Table 1 Structured Interview Questions

Interview Questions

1. What is your role in your organization in the context of Open Fire Restrictions?
 2. What does the term “Category 1 Open Fire Restriction” mean to you?
 3. Traditionally, what are some reasons why B.C. Parks restrict the use of open fire?
 4. What criteria have B.C. Parks used in the past to prompt consideration of a Category 1 Open Fire Restriction?
 5. Traditionally, have Open Fire Restrictions been considered differently in backcountry versus front country parks?
 6. Was the process used to implement Category 1 Open Fire Restrictions in B.C. Parks last summer (2005), different from in previous summers? If so, how was the implementation process different last summer?
 7. Is there anything about the process used to implement Category 1 Open Fire Restrictions in 2005 that you think should be different? If so, what would you change about the process for implementing Category 1 Open Fire Restrictions?
 8. Did you or your office communicate with a representative of the B.C. Forest Service, Protection Program in implementing Category 1 Open Fire Restrictions last summer (2005)? If so, how would you describe that working relationship?
 9. Were any B.C. Parks in your area of responsibility excluded (exempt) from Category 1 Open Fire Restrictions last summer? If so, please describe the process used to formalize those exemptions.
 10. Did you receive any feedback from Park visitors last summer about Category 1 Open Fire Restrictions? If so, please describe the nature of that feedback.
 11. Do you think the public understanding of Category 1 Open Fire Restrictions could be improved? If so, please describe how public understanding could be improved.
-

7 Researcher’s Perspective

In “Designing Qualitative Research”, Rossman and Rallis (1998) describe eight characteristics of qualitative researchers, one of which is that researchers are “sensitive to their personal biographies and how these shape the study.”

As a Fire Information Officer with the Ministry of Forests and Range, Protection Branch I have been involved in introducing the Wildfire Act and Regulation to staff and key stakeholders, and have a vested interest in recognizing opportunities for improved communications around Open Fire Restrictions.

Through this research, I gained an understanding of B.C. Parks staff perspective on Open Fire Restrictions toward the goal of developing processes and information pieces that lead to greater understanding of fire restrictions not only by Parks staff, but also by the public as a whole.

8 Data Analysis

Seven themes of interest were identified using a thematic data coding process that was in turn, used to interpret the interview data collected from 11 B.C. Parks staff in February, 2006 (see Table 2). A summary of the data collected for this research is in Appendix B.

The qualitative data coding process, “guided by intuition and experience about what is important and what is unimportant” (Bernard, 1996) resulted in the identification of the following themes: terminology, new legislation, restricting campfires, allowing campfires, managing campfires, public understanding, and redefining relationships.

Table 2 Data Analysis Themes and Associated Interview Question(s)

Theme	Interview Question(s)
1. Terminology	What does the term “Category 1 Open Fire restriction mean to you?
2. New Legislation	In your experience, was the process used to implement Category 1 Open Fire restrictions (campfire bans) in B.C. Parks last summer (2005) different from in previous summers?
3. Restricting Campfires	Traditionally, what are some reasons why B.C. Parks restrict the use of open fire?
4. Allowing Campfires	Were any B.C. Parks in your area of responsibility exempt from Category 1 Open Fire restrictions last summer? If yes, please describe the process used to formalize those exemptions.
5. Managing Campfires	Are Open Fire Restrictions considered differently in backcountry versus frontcountry parks? If yes, how? Did you receive any feedback from Park visitors last summer about Category 1 Open Fire restrictions? If yes, please describe that nature of that feedback.
6. Public Understanding	Do you think public understanding of Category 1 Open Fire restrictions could be improved? If so, how?
7. Redefining Relationships	Did you or your office communicate with representatives of the Protection Branch last summer (2005)? If yes, how would you describe that working relationship?

8.1 Familiarity with the Wildfire Act and Category 1 Open Fire restrictions

Given that the Wildfire Act and Regulation is relatively new (in effect for only one wildfire season at the time of this report), this research was interested to know how familiar B.C. Parks staff are with the legislation in general, and with the section on campfire bans in particular.

Of the 11 B.C. Parks employees interviewed, all conveyed an understanding of the fact that Category 1 Open Fire Restrictions include campfires. All interviewees were also

aware of a key change in the legislation, which is that the Ministry of Forests and Range, Protection Branch now has jurisdiction for implementing wildfire restrictions within B.C. Parks.

B.C. Parks staff member Dave McIntosh* described his understanding of the jurisdiction for implementing open fire restrictions, as follows: “The decision to implement Category one restrictions is the sole authority of the Ministry of Forests and Range... the Wildfire Act supersedes the Park Act and so the Category 1 Open Fire Restriction is automatically applied to all parks in the regional restriction area.”

All B.C. Parks staff interviewed were clearly aware of the authority that the Wildfire Regulation represents to implement Category 1 Open Fire restrictions in B.C. Parks, a power that was newly introduced when the Wildfire Act was enacted in 2005. Under the previous legislation (the Forest Practices Code Act of British Columbia), B.C. Parks had the authority to implement campfire bans in B.C. Parks.

All but three of the B.C. Parks staff interviewed described the definition of a Category 1 Open Fire restriction in very general terms, namely as “a campfire ban”. In the legislation, a Category 1 Open Fire is specifically defined according to size, rather than by fire type (campfire, backyard fire etc.). Three of the B.C. Parks staff interviewed did specify that a Category 1 Open Fire is of a particular size. “A Category 1 Open Fire restriction means it’s a ban on campfires... A meter by a meter high, that kind of thing,” said B.C. Parks staff member Ryan Taylor.

It is logical that B.C. Parks staff would define Category 1 Open Fire Restrictions in the context of their interaction with them. Of the various forms that a Category 1 Open Fire

* Note: The names of the B.C. Parks staff interviewed for this research have been changed to protect their identities.

Restriction can take, it is campfires, specifically, that are of interest to B.C. Parks staff. While many did not specifically outline the complete definition of what a Category 1 Open Fire is, most interviewees knew where to find the definition in the Wildfire Regulation.

Although not directly asked of the interviewees, three B.C. Parks staff members commented on the amount/type of training they received when the Wildfire Act and Regulation came into effect. One interviewee mentioned that he traveled to a Fire Centre that was outside of his region in order to receive training presentations about the Wildfire Act and Regulation. Another interviewee commented that he hadn't received any training in the Wildfire Act and Regulation. "No real training on the Act, just sort of the Internet access," said Kevin Saunders. The B.C. Parks Internet site has pages dedicated to legislation, including the Wildfire Act and Regulation.

A third interviewee expressed similar concern for the lack of instruction that Parks staff received about the Wildfire Act. "I don't believe the Wildfire Act has been adequately explained to staff. Spring meetings between Ministry of Forests and Range Fire Centres and B.C. Parks have been encouraged and this would provide a great setting to ensure full understanding of the Act and Regulations," said Stephen Williams.

The fact that at least three interviewees received little or no training/orientation to the Wildfire Act and Regulation provides possible explanation as to why interviewees would provide only general definitions of Category 1 Open Fire.

8.2 Restricting campfires in B.C. Parks

The 11 B.C. Parks staff interviewees were asked to describe, based on their own experience, the various motives that inspire the seasonal implementation of campfire bans in B.C. Parks (other than through implementation by the Ministry of Forests and Range). All interviewees recognized the value of public safety, property, and recreation values as

reason to prohibit the use of campfires in designated park areas. In addition, interviewees cited a number of other reasons to seasonally ban campfires in B.C. Parks. (see Table 3)

Table 3 Reasons to Ban Campfires in B.C. Parks

Reason	Number of interviewees commented
Concern for public safety	11
Concern for surrounding property	11
Concern for recreation values	11
Air quality concerns	3
Protection of fire fighting tools and resources during high fire activity	3
Fire prevention when hazard is high	2
Protection of conservation values	1
Avoid liability issues re. fires spreading to non-Park land	1
Economics (prohibitive costs of supplying firewood	1

It is likely that those who expressed concern for air quality are responsible for parks that are located within proximity of residential or other developed areas. Quantities of smoke from campfires can negatively affect air quality, especially if the venting index is low and smoke is not adequately carried up and away from the burn area. “Where you have a big campground [in an area where] pollution is already being pushed to the top of a valley, and then you start putting campfire smoke on top of that and the air quality deteriorates. We work with the Ministry of Environment quite often.” said Jeff Anderson.

Fuel conservation concerns have also caused some area supervisors to declare campfires permanently forbidden in parks due to concern for “the protection of conservation values”. (Al Smith). Dave McIntosh elaborated on the concern for conservation values in saying that “open fires require fuel and in many areas, the affect of people gathering fuel is deleterious to the natural and conservations values of the area. Many parks are closed to open fires on a permanent basis because of this.”

McIntosh also indicated that under the Park and Recreation Area Regulation, fires are banned in all parks that are under 2000-hectares in size unless it is a front country park with campsites and fire rings.

Ryan Taylor presented a unique perspective on the banning of campfires in B.C. Parks, one based on economics. “Years ago B.C. Parks initiated removing of fire rings from all our day use areas [because the costs of providing firewood were becoming prohibitive]. And it was just felt that people in day use areas could bring hibachis or barbecues... we didn’t need to be providing firewood for them to have big bonfires... and we restricted it just to the campsites.”

This research suggests that regional differences in geography and proximity to populations and development have contributed to the fact that B.C. Parks staff offer a wide variety of reasons for wanting to ban campfires in parks. This variation reflects B.C. Parks’ staff local knowledge of issues and concerns related to wildfire in parks, and a professional obligation to protect values, both within, and around, B.C. Parks.

8.3 Exemptions from campfire bans

While campfire bans and associated exemption requests are extremely rare in some parts of the province due to climatic features that reduce the wildfire danger and therefore negate the need for bans (or exemptions), even during the summer months, other, more fire-prone parts of the province see campfire bans on an annual basis. During the 2005 wildfire season, some B.C. Parks, which were affected by regional Category 1 Open Fire restrictions, requested exemptions in order to allow for campfires within designated areas of the park. This research was interested to know what prompts B.C. Parks staff to want to allow campfires within designated park areas, even when campfires are banned elsewhere in the region.

Discussed below, are two key reasons that B.C. Parks staff interviewees cited for seeking exemptions from Category 1 Open Fire restriction imposed by the Ministry of Forests and Range, Protection Branch during the 2005 wildfire season:

1. The decision by the Protection Branch to impose a campfire ban was deemed suspect and of questionable validity; local conditions did not seem to warrant the issuance of a campfire ban.
2. B.C. Parks had sufficient fire prevention tools/mechanisms onsite to adequately reduce the risk of wildfire and safely allow campfires in some parks.

8.3.1 Campfire bans implementation process

Five of the 11 B.C. Parks staff interviewed expressed concern for lack of clear criteria for the implementation of Category 1 Open Fire Restrictions during the 2005 wildfire season. Under the Wildfire Act and Regulation, the Ministry of Forests and Range has the authority to implement campfire bans in B.C. Parks. However some parks staff were concerned about the implementation of campfire bans when they didn't seem to be warranted. "I really did question last summer, whether or not a total fire ban for that region was based on real science, or it was based on political pressure," said Ryan Taylor. "So as a result, I applied for exemptions for every road-accessible campground in the region."

Taylor, and others, explained the difficulties that B.C. Parks staff encounter when minimum, pre-determined fire weather indices are not used as the basis for decision-making when it comes to the implementation of campfire bans. When the reasons for implementing campfire bans are not clear, it is difficult for B.C. Parks staff to explain campfire bans to their customers: recreationalists and park visitors. The result is that B.C. Parks staff have to try to defend a decision that was not theirs to make, and in the process, risk losing credibility with the public.

The proposed solution to clarifying the implementation process for campfire bans, according to B.C. Parks staff, is two-fold:

1. Ensure that the Ministry of Forests and Range implements Category 1 Open Fire Restrictions only when baseline fire weather indices are reached. The decision to prohibit campfires should be defensible and based on science.
2. Maintain clear and ongoing communications between Ministry of Forests and Range, Fire Centre staff and local B.C. Parks representatives regarding the implementation of campfire bans.

8.3.2 Campfire ban exemption process

Interviewees were asked to describe the criteria they consider important for justifying the exemption of a park from a campfire ban. Park exemptions are not new to the Wildfire Act and Regulation; they were used under the Forest Practices Code Act of British Columbia as well.

B.C. Parks staff cited a wide range of characteristics that they felt should make a park eligible for exemption from a Category 1 Open Fire restriction. (See Table 4) The argument to be made in seeking an exemption is that a given park has reduced its risk of wildfire due to escaped campfires to such an extent that it can safely allow campfires under certain conditions in certain parks.

Table 4 Exemptions from Campfire Bans: Suggested Criteria

Reason	Number of interviewees commented
Campsites in frontcountry parks	
24-hour, or otherwise “adequate” supervision	7
Campsites with steel fire rings	6
Campsites with gravel pads	4
Campsites that are road accessible	2
The presence of fire suppression tools onsite	1
The presence of a fire hydrant within the park	1
Campsites that limit the size of allowable fires	1
Not in proximity of interface areas	1

Six B.C. Parks staff interviewees expressed concern for lack of clear criteria for exemptions and consequential difficulties in justifying park exemptions to the public. Alex Anderson commented that “the exemption process is unclear and inconsistent province-wide,” said Anderson. “According to our MOU, decisions around exemptions are jointly made by the Ministry of Environment [B.C. Parks] and the Ministry of Forests and Range [Protection Branch].” However interviews with B.C. Parks staff suggest that in reality the decision-making process for exemptions is not clear and a joint decision-making process, as per the MOU, might help to rectify the problem.

Regarding exemptions, two interviewees indicated a reluctance to seek exemptions from campfire bans. “Exemptions are very rare because it leads to too much public confusion.” said Jeff Anderson. Anderson’s perspective is that when a Category 1 Open Fire Restriction is in effect but a number of parks are exempt from it, the public has difficulty knowing where campfires are and are not allowed.

This research suggests that clarity around campfire bans would increase if Protection Branch staff utilized clearly defined and provincially standardized exemption criteria. Ultimately however, it is suggested that if scientific criteria (fire weather indices) were consistently used to justify the implementation of a campfire ban, B.C. Park exemption-requests might be less frequent in some areas. Establishing clear implementation processes would improve the understanding of campfire bans, both by B.C. Parks staff, and by the general public.

8.4 The Wildfire Act and Regulation versus previous legislation

As a relatively new piece of legislation (in effect for one wildfire season) this researcher was interested to know if B.C. Parks staff experienced any major differences operating under the Wildfire Act and Regulation vs. operating under the previous legislation (the Forest Practices Code Act of British Columbia).

B.C. Parks interviewees noticed little to no change in operations related to open fire restrictions under the Wildfire Act versus the Forest Practices Code Act of British Columbia. No one expressed dissatisfaction with the Wildfire Act, and two interviewees even described specific support for the fact that the responsibility for declaring and communicating campfire bans no longer lies with B.C. Parks. “I used to have far more autonomy (as far as open fire restrictions) and it was basically my decision which in some ways was a little nerve-wracking,” said Ryan Taylor. “Because the Forest Service now has that control to be able to put on the Category 1 Fire restriction... to be very honest, it takes all the pressure off my shoulders.”

Another interviewee expressed support for the authority of the Wildfire Regulation with regard to Category 1 Open Fire restrictions, because the Protection Program makes decisions about campfire bans that are based on numeric weather indices. The interviewee fully supported the use of a scientific decision-making process for the implementation of campfire bans because it is defensible and can be easily explained to the public.

One B.C. Parks staff-member expressed concern for what he described as “campfire bans forced by political pressure”. The interviewee described support for the Wildfire Act, “as long as bans are based on defensible indices” because they reflect actual fire danger conditions. In total, three interviewees talked about the importance of implementing campfire bans based on scientific weather data in order to maintain credibility with the public.

8.5 Backcountry versus frontcountry parks

Interviewees were asked if, and how backcountry parks are managed differently from frontcountry parks. All 11 interviewees suggested that there are management differences between the two, and that they relate to the fact that backcountry areas are more remote and generally more difficult to access, and are therefore automatically included in

Category 1 Open Fire restrictions issued by the Protection Branch. Front country parks, while normally implicated by the same Ministry of Forests and Range open fire restrictions, are more accessible, often supervised, and better equipped to fight fire (if necessary). As such, exemptions are sometimes requested by B.C. Parks Area Supervisors, but only for designated frontcountry park areas.

Ryan Taylor provided a good history of how, before the Wildfire Act and Regulation came into effect, campfire bans in frontcountry areas were often implemented in stages. “In frontcountry parks, our restrictions used to be a little bit more staged. We traditionally would do things like having small cooking fires only within restricted hours... before going into a total fire ban... Of course now that things have changed, that’s totally different,” said Taylor.

Another interviewee, Kyle Hamilton, described a staged implementation process for campfire bans that continues today, after the implementation of the Wildfire Act. “When the Fire Centre wants to put a closure on, we basically move with them at the same level in the sense that all backcountry areas will be under that closure. Frontcountry, supervised campgrounds are not normally going to go under that closure immediately.” said Hamilton.

Hamilton went on to describe how frontcountry parks, which are supervised and have fire rings and gravel sites, are at a much lower risk of fire and that allows B.C. Parks and the Protection Branch (Fire Centre) to agree to allow the public to have campfires in the those designated frontcountry parks. “But if those [fire weather] indices continue to decline, and we don’t get any changes in weather, we get to a point where we say the risk is too high now... therefore we are going to impose a full ban across supervised campgrounds and backcountry parks.” said Hamilton.

Province-wide, there seems to be general support for the automatic implementation of campfire bans (when required) in remote backcountry parks with limited access and

increased risk of wildfire. B.C. Parks staff of some frontcountry parks (those with sufficient ability to reduce risk of spreading wildfire) suggested that they may request exemptions in order to delay, or altogether avoid, the implementation of campfire bans in select areas.

8.6 Public support and understanding of campfire bans

All of the B.C. Parks staff interviewed agreed that the public acceptance of campfire bans is currently high and has increased since the 2003 wildfire season, the year when homes were lost in the Okanagan-area of B.C. due to wildfire. “Since Kelowna, most of our visitors are very, very happy to have fire restrictions on because now they actually do understand what it’s about,” said Ryan Taylor. “Whereas prior to Kelowna, any time we tried to put fire restrictions on it was like pulling teeth.”

Jeff Anderson agreed with Taylor’s opinion, saying, “It’s been my experience that when we bring in campfire bans, most of the time the public is glad... they’re happy to see us taking responsibility and they’re quite compliant and it does not affect our attendance.” Anderson went on to say, “It makes them [the public] nervous when we allow campfires out there when they know it’s really dry.”

Al Smith also acknowledged general support for campfire bans, but qualified his answer by saying that public support is high— as long as the bans are justifiable. In other words, campfire bans become a hard sell if it’s raining or cool outside. Smith’s answer makes reference again, to the perceived need for clarity on the process and science behind the implementation of campfire bans.

Interviews with B.C. Parks staff suggested overall agreement that the public’s acceptance of campfire bans is relatively high, however interviewees also indicated that, in their opinions, more could be done to improve the public’s understanding of why and where campfire bans are implemented.

8.7 Improving public understanding of campfire bans

The B.C. Parks staff interviewed for this research had a number of suggestions for improving public understanding of campfire bans. Because the authority to implement campfire bans in B.C. Parks is now in the hands of the Ministry of Forests and Range under the Wildfire Act and Regulation, communicating information about bans and restrictions is the responsibility of information staff at Fire Centres throughout the province. A provincial MOU between the Ministry of Forests and Range, Protection Branch and the Ministry of Environment, B.C. Parks Branch, outlines that all open fire restrictions will be communicated by the Ministry of Forests and Range Information Officer, while the communications role of B.C. Parks is to supply park-specific information to the public.

Based on anecdotal and impressionistic information, interviewees suggested that while communication of campfire ban information is currently adequate, it could be further improved upon. B.C. Parks interviewees had four key suggestions for improving the nature of public information around campfire bans:

1. Use plain language in public information pieces
2. Clarify why Category 1 Open Fire restrictions are implemented
3. Clarify where campfires are, and are not, banned
4. Clarify where campfire exemptions apply

8.7.1 Use plain language in public information pieces

Interviewee Jeff Anderson advised the use of plain language terminology when describing the details of campfire bans to the public. Anderson recommended avoiding legislative jargon and keeping in mind who the messaging is intended for; an example is using the term “campfire restriction” – which the public can understand, versus the term “Category 1 Open Fire restriction” – which the public may not understand.

“I think we all have to be careful in the words we use in communicating with the public,” said Anderson. “One of the initiatives the fire management team was working on was developing some standardized language, which is important.”

Government organizations have a reputation for use of jargon, especially in the context of legislation. Anderson’s recommendation is to clean-up the language used to describe open fire restrictions under the Wildfire Regulation, in order to ensure that the audience the legislation is intended to benefit, actually comprehends the messaging.

8.7.2 Clarify why Category 1 Open Fire restrictions are implemented

Two interviewees described the importance of not only describing where campfire bans are in effect, but why. Interviewees suggested that the criteria used by the Ministry of Forests and Range to implement campfire bans should be conveyed to the public using plain language in order to justify the existence of the ban. Stephen Williams advised that “a more structured and documented process to determine when local bans are invoked would provide more due diligence by the province.”

Interviewees suggested that while campfire bans are a relatively easy sell, the public still wants to see the logic behind the decision to limit the use of fire in B.C. Parks.

8.7.3 Clarify where campfires are, and are not, banned

Four of the 11 B.C. Parks staff interviewed expressed concern for public information during the 2005 wildfire season that did not adequately explain the geographic boundaries of campfire bans. Jeff Anderson commented that “The messaging is important and in my opinion, we should be trying to bring in campfire bans across an entire region. We shouldn’t be having some areas open and some areas closed, or provincial campgrounds closed but private campgrounds open. We need to have one simple message go out when we do bring on campfire bans.” Anderson is suggesting that not

only should the messaging be clear, but also that efforts should be made to implement campfire bans across broad geographic areas that are easily defined.

Regardless of whether bans are implemented over broad expansive areas or in specific geographic regions, two interviewees commented on the importance of choosing well-known landmarks and boundaries to describe the areas affected by campfire bans.

Dave McIntosh recommended improving the overall accuracy of public information provided by Ministry of Forests and Range information officers. McIntosh also suggested ensuring that information about campfire bans (where and why they are in effect) be posted on both the B.C. Parks and the Protection Branch websites.

8.7.4 Clarify where campfire exemptions apply

Three interviewees pointed out a mistake made in public communications around campfire bans during the 2005 wildfire season. Interviewees commented that there was an implication in news releases and other information distributed by the Protection Branch last year, that in the context of exemptions, entire parks were described as exempt from the campfire ban, and it was therefore suggested that campfires were allowed throughout the entire park.

The reality was, according to three B.C. Park interviewees, that only *designated areas* within some parks were exempt from the campfire ban. These designated areas might have included supervised camping areas in frontcountry parks. Interviewees commented on the importance of making it clear that when a park has been exempted from an open fire restriction, it isn't the whole park that is exempt; rather only specified areas within a park may be allowing campfires.

Dave McIntosh suggested including an explanation in public news releases, advertisements, and on websites, that while a particular Park is closed to fires,

“designated campgrounds” within the park have been exempt. McIntosh and others were concerned that the public was misled last year, into thinking that where some Parks had been exempt from the Ministry of Forests and Range-imposed Category 1 Open Fire restriction, the public was permitted to have campfires anywhere within that park. The B.C. Parks staff interviewed felt that because of the existence of unsupervised backcountry areas within some parks, campfires cannot safely be permitted in all areas of a park.

8.8 Working relationship: B.C. Parks and the Protection Branch

Overall, B.C. Parks staff described good working relationships with contacts at their local Fire Centre. Dave McIntosh described the working relationship he’s had with the Protection Branch as “cordial, cooperative and productive.”

The B.C. Parks supervisors who operate within the overlapping boundaries of a corresponding Fire Centre, are encouraged to form working relationships with their local Fire Centre staff. This working relationship is dedicated largely to the coordinated implementation of campfire bans and exemptions. Before the Wildfire Act and Regulation went into effect, a revised MOU between B.C. Parks and Protection Branch staff outlined that the implementation of campfire bans would be a cooperative decision.

While interviewees described generally positive working relationships between Protection Branch and B.C. Parks staff, they also suggested some variation in the degree to which the relationships are fostered in a deliberate, formal way.

The joint MOU suggests the scheduling of an annual meeting between Protection Branch and B.C. Parks staff to review and make plans for the coming fire season. In some regions, these meetings are held at a local zone-level between the regional B.C. Parks staff and the Fire Centre zone staff. In other areas, larger, more centralized meetings are

held at least once, and up to two times per year, between Fire Centre representatives and the B.C. Parks staff responsible for parks within the same geographic area.

Interviewee Jeff Anderson described his working relationship with the local Fire Centre. “Every spring we meet with the Fire Centre... We review fire management plans and talk about communications,” said Anderson. “The Protection Branch hires a communications person for the summer, so we get introduced and correspond all summer long on campfire bans, the wording for new releases, updates on fires... so the spring meeting is important.”

Another interviewee described a much less formal relationship with Protection Branch staff. “That’s something we need to do, have some pre-season meetings again with the Forest Service staff, put faces to names and just review the procedures again on an annual basis,” said Al Smith. “I mean, we keep in contact. We have a good rapport with each other and that works very well. But we don’t have regular sit-down meetings very often, on a regular basis.”

Overall, the B.C. Parks staff interviewed for this research describe positive working relationships with their local Fire Centre staff. Some regions however, are more conscientious than others when it comes to organizing regular meetings (as per the joint MOU) to update policies and procedures, and reconfirm contact information.

9 Conclusions

This research was intended to discover three things:

1. B.C. Parks staff's comprehension of the intent of the legislation;
2. Organizational influences that may be guiding B.C. Parks' interpretation of Open Fire Restrictions;
3. B.C. Parks staff's experience interacting with Open Fire Restrictions during the 2005 wildfire season.

B.C. Parks staff's comprehension of the intent of the legislation

Of the 11 B.C. Parks employees interviewed, all conveyed an understanding of the fact that Category 1 Open Fire Restrictions include campfires. All interviewees were also aware of a key change in the legislation, which is that the Ministry of Forests and Range, Protection Branch now has jurisdiction for implementing wildfire restrictions within B.C. Parks.

If there is a lack of clear understanding for what a Category 1 Open Fire Restriction is, or how and why it is implemented, some B.C. Parks staff interviewed for this research might suggest it is because they haven't been adequately oriented to the decision-making process that the Protection Branch utilizes to make decisions around campfire bans.

When the reasons for implementing campfire bans are not clear, it is difficult for B.C. Parks staff to explain campfire bans to their customers: recreationalists and park visitors.

Organizational influences that may be guiding B.C. Parks' interpretation of Open Fire Restrictions.

While B.C. Parks staff clearly have a broad understanding of Category 1 Open Fire restrictions, interviewees did not detail in their definition how, specifically, a Category 1 Open Fire restriction is defined under the Wildfire Regulation. There are three possible explanations for the variations in understanding that B.C. Parks staff have of the Wildfire Regulation:

1. Some B.C. Parks staff expressed concern for not receiving training or orientation to the Wildfire Act and Regulation, particularly those sections in the legislation that relate to open fire restrictions. This lack of orientation to the legislation may have reduced B.C. Parks staff familiarity with it.
2. Some parts of the province, because of climatic and geographic differences, don't experience the same need for campfire bans as other parts of the province. Where campfire bans are infrequent, there may be less incentive to interact with the Wildfire Regulation.
3. The degree to which B.C. Parks staff and Protection Branch staff interact at a local level may affect the overall interest, and ultimately the level of understanding, that B.C. Parks staff have for the Wildfire Act and Regulation.

B.C. Parks staff's experience interacting with Open Fire Restrictions during the 2005 wildfire season

B.C. Parks staff interviewed for this research noted no major changes in operations regarding campfire bans under the Wildfire Act and Regulation versus under the Forest Practices Code Act of B.C. There was also indication of support for deferring to the Ministry of Forests and Range, Protection Branch for decision-making regarding the implementation of campfire bans.

This research concludes that B.C. Parks staff are generally agreeable with the jurisdiction given to the Protection Branch for open fire restrictions (under the Wildfire Act and Regulation) because as the provincial agency responsible for wildfire management, the Ministry of Forests and Range is viewed as best-suited to be making decisions regarding campfire bans. It is noted however, that in order for the working relationship between B.C. Parks and the Protection Branch to be a successful one, strong and ongoing communications are extremely important. Both agencies (Parks and Protection) must

ultimately be able to defend decisions to ban campfires in B.C. Parks to the public. Thus, clear implementation criteria are important.

10 Recommendations

The following eight recommendations are based on the results of this research and are organized according to the subsections listed in the 'Data Analysis' chapter (see page 15).

Subsection 1: Familiarity with the Wildfire Act and Category 1 Open Fire restrictions

Some B.C. Parks staff expressed concern for not receiving training or orientation to the Wildfire Act and Regulation, legislation that is implemented by the Ministry of Forests and Range, but that B.C. Parks staff of the Ministry of Environment, interact with.

Recommendation: While some B.C. Parks staff attended Fire Centre-hosted training sessions for the Wildfire Act and Regulation, others did not. It is recommended that all B.C. Parks staff who interact with local Fire Centre staff around the implementation of Category 1 Open Fire restrictions, be provided training opportunities, especially for the sections of the Wildfire Regulation that deal with open fire restrictions. Such training could be provided either by the Ministry of Forests and Range, the Ministry of Environment, or as a joint effort between the two organizations.

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Subsection 2: Restricting campfires in B.C. Parks

B.C. Parks staff cited nine motivating factors for restricting the use of campfires in parks.

Recommendation: It is recommended that Protection Branch staff involved in the implementation of open fire restrictions familiarize themselves with the issues that

motivate B.C. Parks staff to want to restrict the use of campfires in parks. While the decision-making authority to restrict open fire in parks lies with the Ministry of Forests and Range, B.C. Parks staff of the Ministry of Environment are a key partner, and being familiar with local B.C. Park concerns and issues will assist in the building of an effective partnership.

...

B.C. Parks staff also noted a lack of clarity regarding the decision-making process and criteria used to implement Category 1 Open Fire restrictions.

Recommendation: The proposed solution to clarifying the implementation process for campfire bans, according to B.C. Parks staff, is two-fold:

1. Ensure that the Ministry of Forests and Range implements Category 1 Open Fire Restrictions only when baseline fire weather indices are reached. The decision to prohibit campfires should be defensible and based on science.
2. Maintain clear and ongoing communications between Ministry of Forests and Range, Fire Centre staff and local B.C. Parks representatives regarding the implementation of campfire bans.

...

Subsection 3: Exemptions from campfire bans

B.C. Parks staff also noted a lack of clarity regarding the decision-making process for exempting a given B.C. Park from a Category 1 Open Fire restriction.

Recommendation: Based on the feedback of B.C. Parks staff, it is recommended that the requirements for consideration of park exemptions from Category 1 Open Fire restrictions be clarified and standardized in practice. Results of this research suggest that clarifying exemption criteria will assist B.C. Parks staff in managing their areas of responsibility, and will also help to improve communications with the public.

...

Subsection 4: The Wildfire Act and Regulation versus previous legislation

B.C. Parks staff interviewed for this research noted no major changes in operations regarding campfire bans under the Wildfire Act and Regulation versus under the Forest Practices Code Act of B.C.

Recommendation: While no major operational differences were perceived by B.C. Parks staff working under the Wildfire Act and Regulation versus under the Forest Practices Code Act of B.C., it is again reiterated (as per recommendations under Section 1) that an effort should be made to provide B.C. Parks staff with an overview and/or training session for relevant sections of the Wildfire Act and Regulation. This recommendation is to ensure that B.C. Parks staff are versed in the implications of the new legislation.

...

Subsection 5: Backcountry versus frontcountry park areas

All 11 B.C. Parks interviewees described management differences between frontcountry and backcountry parks. The major outcome of this perceived difference, in the context of campfire bans, is an inclination for B.C. Parks staff to request exemptions for designated

frontcountry park areas. Province-wide, there is general support for the automatic implementation of campfire bans in remote backcountry parks, while B.C. Parks staff of some frontcountry parks (those with sufficient ability to reduce risk of spreading wildfire) suggested that they may request exemptions in order to delay, or altogether avoid, the implementation of campfire bans in select areas.

Recommendation: It is recommended that Protection Branch staff involved in the implementation of open fire restrictions familiarize themselves with the different ways that B.C. Parks staff view backcountry versus frontcountry parks in terms of wildfire management capabilities. While the decision-making authority to restrict open fire in parks lies with the Ministry of Forests and Range, B.C. Parks staff (Ministry of Environment) are a key partner, and being familiar with local B.C. Park's perspective on frontcountry versus backcountry parks will assist in the building of an effective partnership.

...

Subsections 6 and 7: Public support and understanding of campfire bans

B.C. Parks staff suggested overall acceptance on behalf of the general public, for campfire bans. However interviewees did advise steps to improving public understanding of when, where and why campfire bans are put into effect.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the following four steps be incorporated into Ministry of Forests and Range-issued communications to the media and public, regarding campfire bans. For further description of each point, see section 8.7 (*Improving public understanding of campfire bans*).

1. Use plain language in public information pieces
2. Clarify why Category 1 Open Fire restrictions are implemented
3. Clarify where campfires are, and are not, banned
4. Clarify where campfire exemptions apply

Subsection 8: Working relationship: B.C. Parks and the Protection Branch

While all B.C. Parks interviewees described positive working relationships with the Protection Branch staff at their local Fire Centre, some interviewees indicated that they met regularly with Fire Centre staff (annually or twice annually) while others did not.

Recommendation: It is recommended that a minimum of one annual meeting be scheduled between B.C. Parks and Protection Branch staff to review policies and procedures and ensure contacts are updated.

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11 Appendices

Appendix A

Category 1 open fire (From the Wildfire Act and Regulation)

20 (1)

The circumstances in which a person described in section 5 (1) or 6 (1) of the Act may light, fuel or use a category 1 open fire in or within 1 km of forest land or grass land are as follows:

- (a) the person is not prohibited from doing so under another enactment;
 - (b) to do so is safe and is likely to continue to be safe;
 - (c) the person takes reasonable precautions to ensure the fire is contained in the burn area;
 - (d) while the fire is burning the person ensures that the fire is watched and patrolled by a person to prevent the escape of fire and the person is equipped with at least one fire fighting hand tool;
 - (e) before leaving the area, the person ensures that the fire is extinguished.
- (2) Without limiting subsection (1), a person who lights, fuels or uses a category 1 open fire must ensure that the fire does not escape.
- (3) If a category 1 open fire spreads beyond the burn area or otherwise becomes out of control, the person who lit, fueled or used the open fire
- (a) immediately must carry out fire control and extinguish the fire if practicable, and
 - (b) as soon as practicable must report the open fire as described in section 2 of the Act.
- (4) A person to whom subsection (3) applies may discontinue carrying out fire control if relieved from doing so by an official.

Appendix B

Summary of B.C. Parks Staff Interviews: Data Collection

MOE, BC Parks Staff - Cat.1 Open Fire Restriction Interview Results					
Name	Topic Aware of Cat.1 Def'n/Jurisdiction	Reasons given for Cat.1 bans in Parks	Criteria for Exemptions	Wildfire Act vs FPCA	Backcountry vs frontcountry Parks: Differences?
Bob Preston*	Clear on Def'n. Aware of MOFR jurisdiction	Protection of life, property or recreation values	Proximity to interface areas	No major differences noted	Backcountry areas are protected for broader, ecosystem based values.
Dave McIntosh*	Clear on Def'n. Aware of MOFR jurisdiction	Limit risk of spreading campfires. Air quality concerns, on-site fuel conservation concerns.	Adequate supervision, steel fire rings, gravel pads; presence of fire suppression tools.	No major differences noted	Standard to automatically restrict backcountry when MOFR implements a Cat.1 ban b/c backcountry parks aren't supervised. Exemptions may be requested for front country areas.
Stephen Williams*	Clear on Def'n. Aware of MOFR jurisdiction	Limit risk of spreading campfires. Restrictions imposed on adjacent crown lands. Lack of supervision/fire equipment		No major differences noted	Standard to automatically restrict backcountry when MOFR implements a Cat.1 ban b/c backcountry parks aren't supervised.
Alex Chalmers*	Clear on Def'n. Aware of MOFR jurisdiction	Limit risk of spreading campfires.	Unclear and inconsistent provincial		Standard to automatically restrict backcountry when MOFR implements a Cat.1 ban. Reluctant to restrict front country parks if possible.
Ryan Taylor*	Clear on Def'n. Aware of MOFR jurisdiction	Limit risk of spreading campfires. Air quality concerns	Overnight campgrounds with fire rings, road accessible, supervised.	Notes less opportunity for input on restrictions. Appreciates emphasis on indices-based decision making.	Standard to automatically restrict backcountry when MOFR implements a Cat.1 ban b/c backcountry parks aren't supervised.
Kyle Hamilton*	Unclear on Def'n. Aware of MOFR jurisdiction	Lack of supervision/fire equipment. Protection of avifauna resources during high fire activity; protection of Parks facilities, public safety.	Gravel sites with fire rings; limit on size (small), supervised Parks only.	Notes new requirement to list all exempt Parks in public information	Standard to automatically restrict backcountry when MOFR implements a Cat.1 ban b/c backcountry parks aren't supervised.
Jack Shields*	Unclear on Def'n. Aware of MOFR jurisdiction	Public safety; facilities protection; liability if fire spreads to private land.	24h supervision, fire pits and gravel sites.	Appreciates emphasis on indices-based decision making.	Standard to automatically restrict backcountry when MOFR implements a Cat.1 ban b/c backcountry parks aren't supervised.
Kevin Saunders*	Unclear on Def'n. Somewhat unclear on jurisdiction.	Limit risk of spreading campfires. Protection of avifauna resources during high fire activity.	24h supervision, fire pits and gravel sites.	Notes lack of training/orientation to Wildfire Act.	Standard to automatically restrict backcountry when MOFR implements a Cat.1 ban b/c backcountry parks aren't supervised.
Jeff Anderson*	Unclear on Def'n. Aware of MOFR jurisdiction	Protect public safety; protect air quality. Limit risk of spreading campfires.	24-h supervision; advises against exemptions (too confusing for public)	No major differences noted.	Standard to automatically restrict backcountry when MOFR implements a Cat.1 ban b/c backcountry parks aren't supervised. The increased fire risk in pine beetle areas also prompts closures.
Al Smith*	Unclear on Def'n. Aware of MOFR jurisdiction	Protection natural values; protect public safety.	24-h supervision; fire rings; fire hydrants in Parks.	No major differences noted. Appreciates emphasis on indices-based decision making.	
Chris Friesen*	Unclear on Def'n. Aware of MOFR jurisdiction	Protect life and property; Limit risk of spreading campfires		Notes development of Communication MOU.	Standard to automatically restrict backcountry when MOFR implements a Cat.1 ban b/c backcountry parks aren't supervised. Avoids implementing bans in front-country parks with supervision. 2-3 Parks normally exempt/seek exemptions in front country parks that are near interface areas (regardless of supervision).

*= pseudonym

Lost in Translation: A Case Study in Policy Hermeneutics

MOE, BC Parks Staff - Cat.1 Open Fire Restriction Inter						
Name	Sense of public understanding of C	Sense of public support for Cat.1	Suggestions for improving Cat.1 implementation	Suggestions for improving public understanding	Relationship with Fire Centre	Additional Comments:
Bob Preston*	Possible confusion over the use of tech in public information, "Cat.1" etc.	Support has increased since wildfires			Have received good direction from Fire Centre.	
Dave McIntosh*				Clarify that while a Park is closed, designated campgrounds may have exempt. Also more info about who are banned or not. Clarification of for public benefit.	Working relationship is cordial, cooperative and productive.	
Stephen Williams*			Formalize the implementation/exemption process.	Ensure the public understands what are implemented.	Effective working relationship with Protection Branch.	This is an important subject and MUST be jointly managed by MOFR in order to maintain public Historic escaped campfires in Parks w/ fire almost non-existent. believe Wildfire Act has been adequately explained to MOE staff.
Alex Chalmers*	Feels public understanding has increased		Recommends annual meetings with Fire Centre (as per MOU) to improve implementation process.	Be clear about where bans do and apply.		
Ryan Taylor*	Concerned about public confusion around boundaries of campfire bans. Concern defending campfire bans to the public if indices don't warrant a ban.	Feels support is high since 2003. People pleasantly surprised when fires are allowed during the summer, but expect to be allowed.	Recommends joint MOFR/MOE releases re. fire bans. Recommends improved messaging to clarify boundaries and exemption process.	More explanation as to why some allow fires and others don't. Decision making should always be based on (indices) so as to be defensible.	Good, but minimal. Suggests val annual meetings with Fire Centre.	Exemptions should specify the nature of overnight camping affected.
Kyle Hamilton*	Concerned about defending campfire public when indices don't warrant a ban			Better clarification where bans aren't in effect. More advance notice taking bans off or putting them on	Very good relationship.	A problem with the Wildfire Act is clarity around exemptions.
Jack Shields*	Concerned about public confusion when some Parks is banned and others is not clarity around exemptions.	Support for closures is high. Feels a pressure to close frontcountry parks w/ hot/dry. Fire Departments also put close Parks.			Meets annually with local zone staff relations with Fire Centre.	Use of indices makes it easier to close.
Kevin Saunders*	Concerned about public confusion when some Parks is banned and others is not clarity around exemptions.		Advises following MOFR indices in implementing bans.	Suggest limiting Cat.1 fires in front parks to mealtimes hours only.	Meets annually with local zone staff relations with Fire Centre. Would see more coordinated training between Fire Centre and Parks.	
Jeff Anderson*	Feels public understanding has increased (recommendations >)	Feels public is very supportive of ban think Park attendance is affected during campfire bans, except during very dry like 2003.	Feels Fire Centre is reluctant to put for fear of negative public feedback would like to consult more with Fire re. local conditions variability.	Strive for consistent application of over broad areas. Clearly describe geographic boundaries of ban and better public understanding. Use language.	Meets annually with local zone staff relations with Fire Centre.	
Al Smith*		is supportive when defensible based on indices.	Advises ensuring adherence to indices as criteria for implementing	Decision-making should always be on science (indices) so as to be defensible.	Meets with local zone staff periodically not w/ Fire Centre as a whole.	
Chris Friesen*	Concerned about public confusion when some Parks is banned and others is not clarity around exemptions. Advises avoid jargon in public notices.	Public support is good.			Meets annually with local zone staff relations with Fire Centre.	

*= pseudonym