

Spike Road Park Management Plan | Engagement Summary

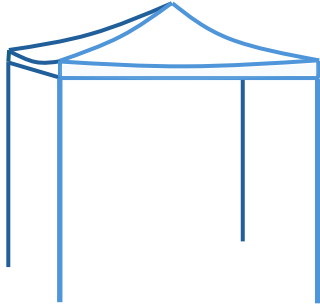
March 2026

Planning Process

The CVRD initiated a management planning process for Spike Road Park in 2023 with public engagement occurring in November, 2025. This report presents a snapshot of what the CVRD heard and learned from that engagement.

PHASE 1 Background study (COMPLETE)	PHASE 2 Engagement (COMPLETE)	PHASE 3 Plan draft, review, and adoption (ON HOLD)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ K'ómoks First Nation cultural values assessment ○ Biophysical Study ○ Park mapping and inventory ○ Agricultural assessment ○ Process planning 	<p><u>Engagement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Website, news release, social media posts ○ Survey ○ Open house events ○ Targeted communications <p><u>Outcomes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Engagement summary 	<p><u>Plan Drafting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Park Vision & Goals to EASC ○ Draft plan to EASC <p><u>Plan review</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ K'ómoks review ○ Public review ○ EASC review <p><u>Outcome</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Final Plan based on feedback and reviews ○ Approved plan
2023 – 2025	2025	ON HOLD

Engagement Highlights



17 People

connected with CVRD staff at open house events held at Spike Road Park and the Merville Fire Hall

29 followers

subscribed to

engagecomoxvalley.ca/maris



Interest Groups

engaged Comox Valley Nature, Comox Valley Land Trust, Backcountry Horsemen, CV Cycling Coalition, the Comox Valley Road Runners, Tsolum River Restoration Society

551 people

engaged via

<https://engagecomoxvalley.ca/spike>



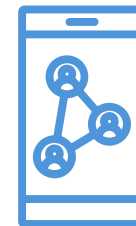
158 Surveys

Completed



146 interactions

on social media



What we heard | Themes

A few **key themes** emerged through the engagement process.

1. Protect wetlands, wildlife habitat, and biodiversity

Respondents overwhelmingly emphasized that the park's ecological integrity—especially its wetlands, marshes, and sensitive species—must be the top priority. People highlighted the importance of preserving habitat for birds, amphibians (particularly Western Toads), salmon, beavers, and other wildlife, and many urged restoration of degraded areas. There was strong support for limiting access in fragile zones, preventing off-trail travel, and ensuring that human use does not disturb nesting, migration, or foraging. Overall, the park is seen as an ecological refuge that should remain intact and resilient. Respondents called for dogs to be leashed—especially during bird nesting and amphibian migration seasons—and for restrictions in sensitive areas. Issues raised included wildlife disturbance, conflicts with other users, dog waste, and off-leash dogs chasing animals. Similarly, many opposed motorized vehicles and expressed worry about e-bikes traveling too fast, startling horses, or reducing the sense of safety and quiet.

2. Maintain a natural, low-development park with minimal disturbance

Many respondents want the park to remain quiet, simple, and largely undeveloped, with only the most essential amenities. They expressed concern about overuse, crowding, and the risk of the park becoming like other heavily trafficked regional parks. People supported small-scale features—such as a few benches, basic toilets, or modest parking—while opposing large infrastructure, paved surfaces, or extensive trail networks. Several also encouraged ecological restoration, removal of unnecessary fencing, and opportunities for volunteer stewardship. The overall sentiment is to keep the park feeling wild and peaceful. Many respondents want low-impact ways to experience the park's natural beauty, especially its wetlands and birdlife. Suggestions included simple bird blinds, elevated viewing platforms, interpretive signs about wildlife and cultural history, and quiet places to sit and observe nature. These features are seen as ways to deepen public appreciation while minimizing disturbance to sensitive habitats. The emphasis is on education, gentle access, and fostering a connection to the landscape.

3. Support multi-use trails, especially for horses, cyclists, and walkers

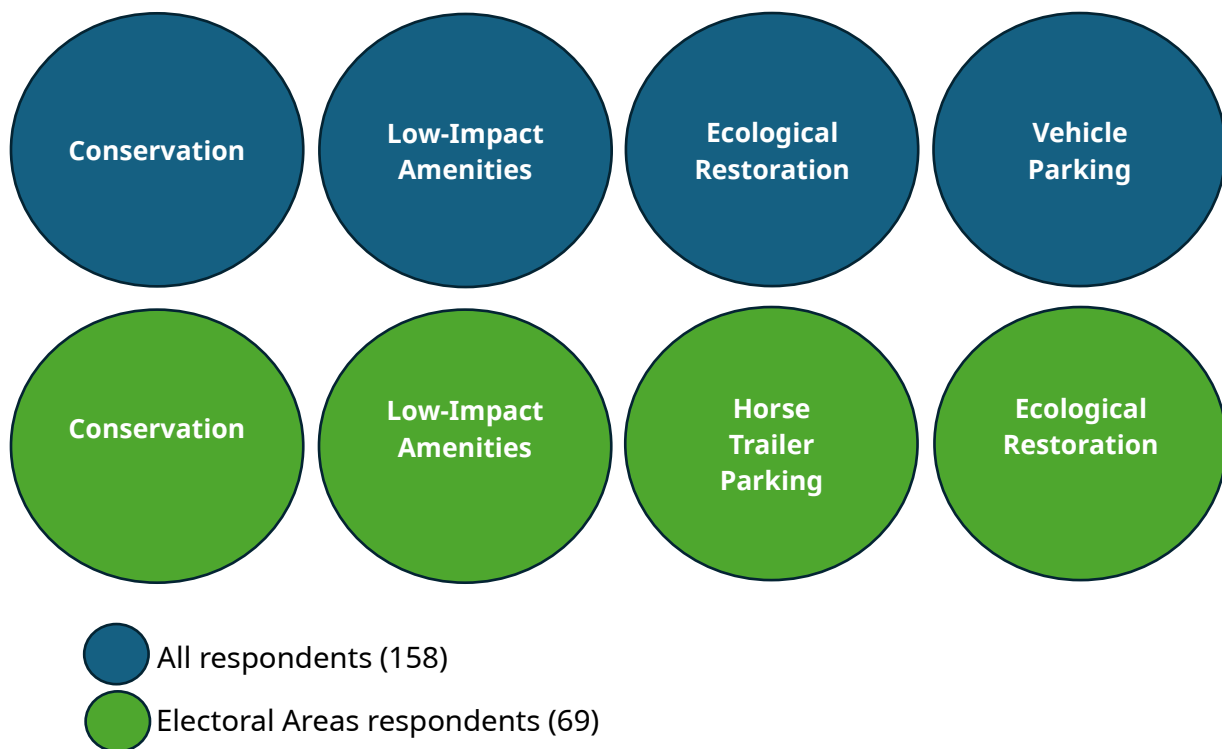
A significant number of respondents value the park as a shared space for walking, cycling, and horseback riding. They emphasized the need for wide, safe trails that allow different users to pass comfortably, along with signage promoting trail etiquette. Horse access was particularly important, with requests for trailer parking, hitching rails, and maintaining equestrian routes that connect to the One Spot Trail. The overall goal is a cooperative, respectful trail system that accommodates multiple forms of non-motorized recreation. Concerns about dogs and motorized vehicles were widespread. The theme reflects a desire for responsible use that minimizes ecological and social impacts. A major priority is finishing the One Spot Trail connection so people can travel safely without being forced onto busy roads or the highway. Respondents want a continuous north-south route that links to Hamm Road, Sprout Road, the

Oyster River, and other cycling and walking networks. Many noted that the One Spot Trail is already a valued community asset and that completing it would improve safety, accessibility, and regional connectivity. Trail surfacing improvements and drainage upgrades were also mentioned to ensure year-round usability.

What we heard | Priorities

What priorities should be considered when developing the park management plan?

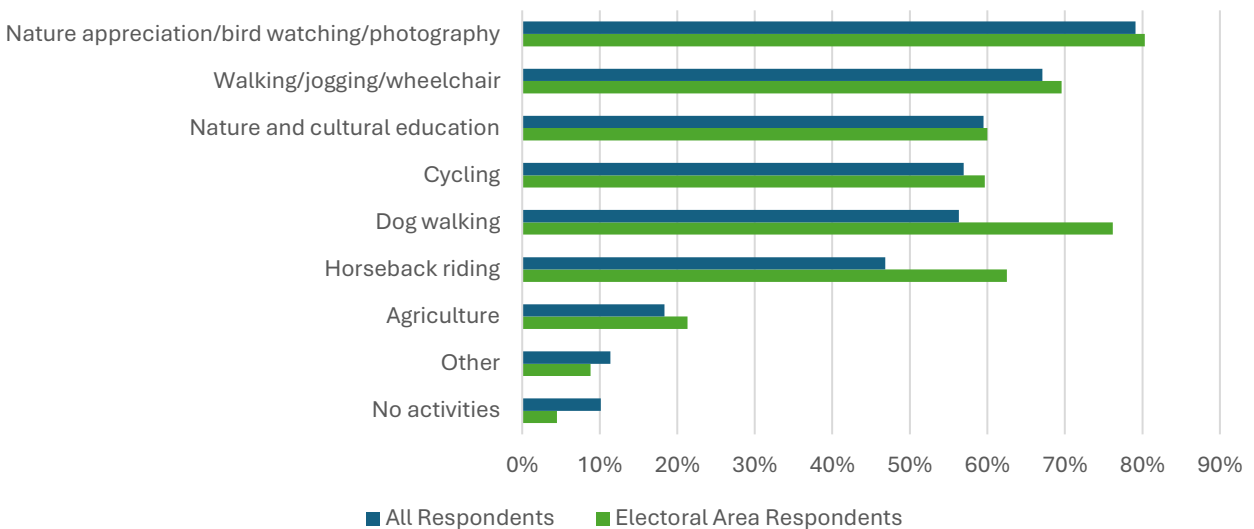
Survey respondents identified clear priorities for how the new park should be designed and managed, with strong emphasis on environmental protection (87%), particularly for wetlands and habitat for species like Western Toad, keeping access focused on the One Spot Trail and restricting access to ecologically sensitive areas. A majority of respondents support low impact development (66%) with amenities such as information panels and viewing platforms or bird blinds to experience the park without disturbing it. Restoration of degraded ecosystems is also a priority for many respondents (59%). Nearly half of respondents indicated vehicle parking (48%) and dog leashing (45%) as priorities. Some respondents urged fiscal restraint when planning amenities for the park. Responses from Electoral Area residents generally align with these priorities but place relatively greater emphasis on equestrian needs such as horse trailer parking.



What we heard | Activities

What activities would you like to see in Maris Nature Park?

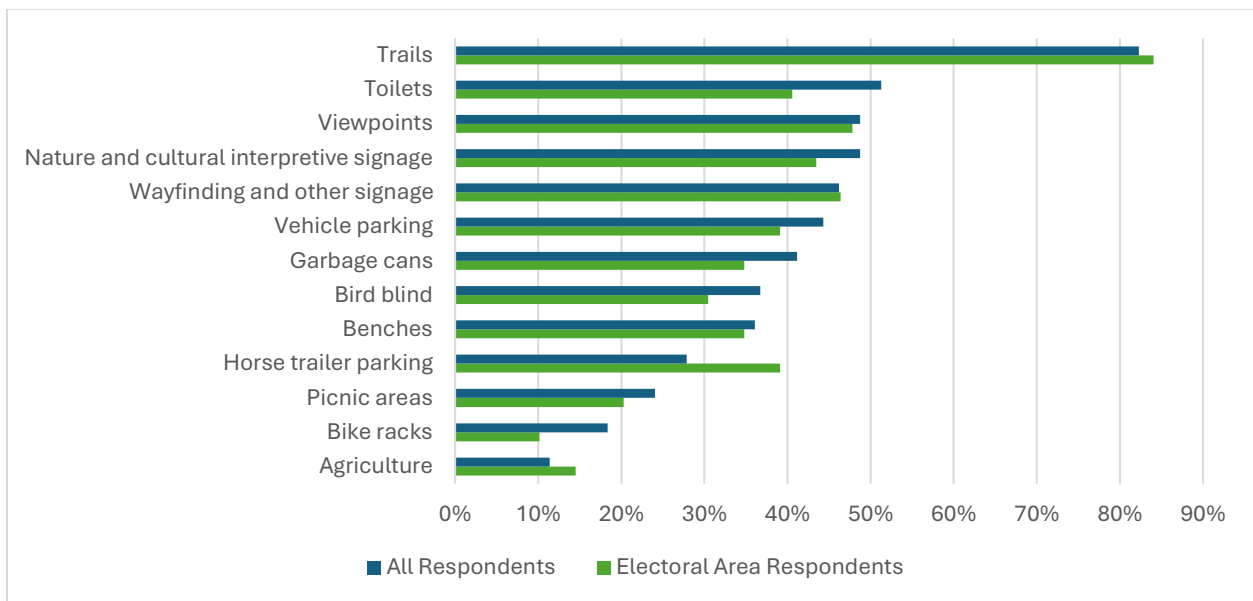
Respondents express a strong desire to protect the park's ecological integrity, emphasizing wetland preservation, biodiversity, and limiting human disturbance through measures such as restricting access, keeping dogs leashed, prohibiting e-bikes, and potentially confining most activity to the One Spot Trail corridor. Most value opportunities for quiet, nature-based experiences such as bird watching and photography (79%). Many also value active recreation opportunities in the form of walking and jogging (67%), cycling (57%), and dog walking (56%). Nature and cultural interpretation is also important for a majority of respondents (59%). Responses from Electoral Area residents are largely aligned with those of all respondents; the largest differences being dog walking, with 76% of Electoral Area respondents expressing support versus 56% of all respondents, and horseback riding, with 63% Electoral Area respondents in favour versus 47% for all respondents. Dog walking and horseback riding are already common activities within the adjacent One Spot Trail.



What we heard | Amenities

What amenities would you like to see considered in the management plan?

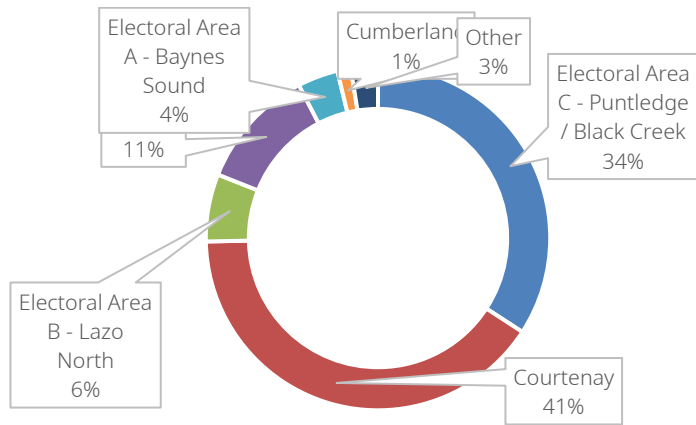
Trails stand out as the top priority for most respondents (82%) and about half of respondents support adding toilets (51%), viewpoints (49%), nature and cultural interpretive signage (49%), wayfinding and other signage (46%), and vehicle parking (44%). There is also some support for garbage cans (41%), bird blinds (37%), and benches (36%), horse trailer parking (28%), a picnic area (24%), bike racks (18%), and agriculture-related uses (11%). Other suggestions include equestrian-friendly features such as a paddock or tie-up area and a boardwalk offering access into the marsh and wetland. Several respondents highlight the value of minimal ecological impact, requesting limited infrastructure and low-disturbance trails, while others note opportunities for recreation through off-leash dog walking, a pump track, or a small bike skills park to support local riders outside of Cumberland. Access to drinking water is mentioned as a practical need, with additional comments provided elsewhere in the survey for further context.



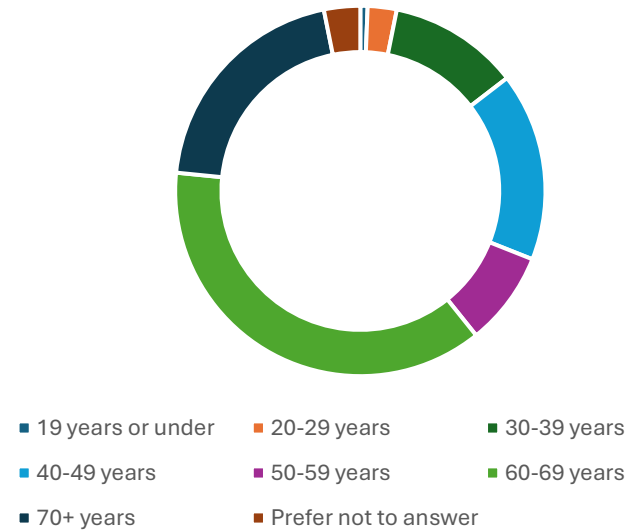
What we heard | Who we heard from

Where do you live and what is your age?

The majority of survey respondents were from the City of Courtenay and Electoral Area C.



Over half (52%) of survey respondents were over the age of 60 and just 4% of respondents were under the age of 30.



What we heard | How we reached people

Digital engagement included a project page, park website, social media posts, and an online survey.

