



Mundy Park Forest 2014

Forest Management Plan Overview

Vision Statement: *Mundy Park is a regionally significant nature refuge for people and wildlife and a defining landmark in Coquitlam. This sanctuary offers residents and visitors opportunities for recreation, nature appreciation and education. The City of Coquitlam sustains the park for future generations by protecting its wildlife habitat, recreational values and natural heritage through environmental stewardship.*

Mundy Park's Checkup

Mundy Park: Urban forest, open spaces, sports fields, trails—many things to many people. But mostly, it's Coquitlam's natural treasure.

Just like a regular checkup with your family doctor, Mundy Park needs its own health check, the once-over to be sure everything is running smoothly.

This 'checkup' is known as a Forest Management Plan and we have just completed one on Mundy Park. Forest Management Plans are assessed and reviewed on a large scale over decades.

So how did Mundy Park fare? Good news - the park is in good health. With a few tweaks and a good plan, it will only get healthier.

The technical document is available for reading at coquitlam.ca/mundy, but in this handout we'll outline the basics for you—the path to a healthy future for our natural gem.

About Mundy Park

Mundy Park is the largest City-owned forested park in Coquitlam, and was dedicated as an Urban Forest Park in 1993. This means the Park is committed for the public's use and enjoyment, which includes the management, conservation and enhancement of the native flora and fauna.

Mundy Park's 400 acres of un-fragmented second-growth forest, two lakes and several streams are home to a variety of native plant communities and wildlife species.

Thousands of people regularly use the trail network and facilities. But unfortunately, Mundy Park suffers the impacts that are typical of urban parks, including invasive plant infestations, yard waste and garbage dumping, illegal fires, and unsanctioned trails.

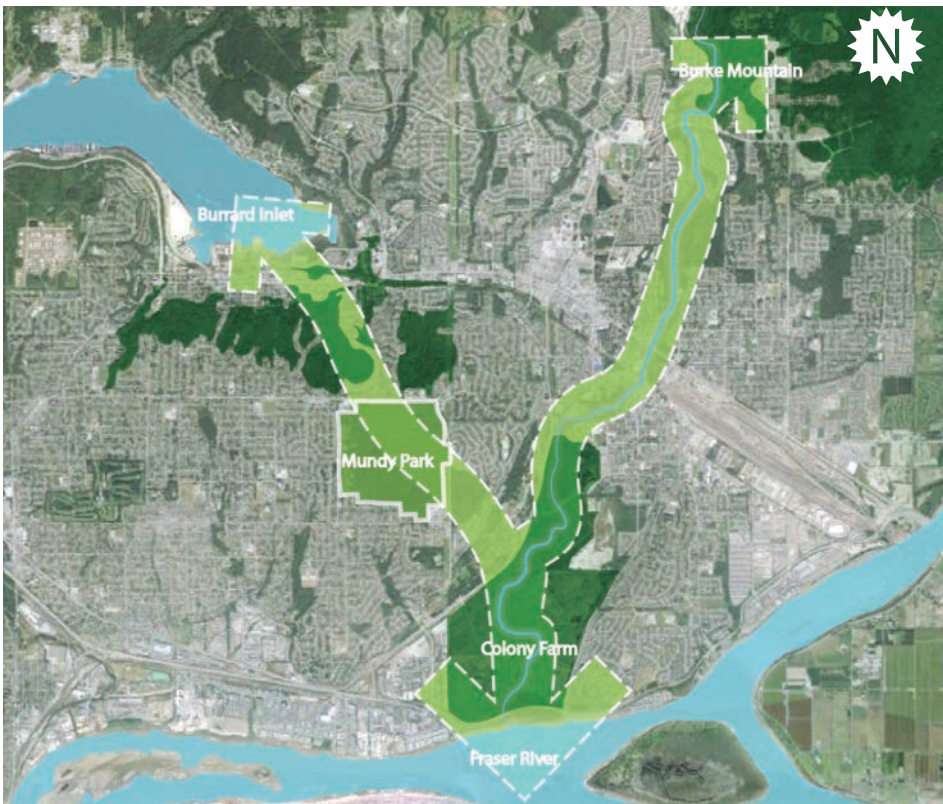
So why have an urban forest park? Studies have shown that outdoor interaction with the natural environment has a positive impact on physical and mental health. Or on a broader scale, a healthy forest leads to a healthier and safer community.

Research shows that recreation in a natural environment lowers blood pressure, lowers blood sugar levels in diabetics, reduces the levels of stress hormones, and moderates the symptoms of AD/HD, autism, dementia, depression and an array of mental health disorders. These benefits are significantly greater than those resulting from the same amount of exercise indoors.

The "hub"

Mundy Park is part of the urban green infrastructure network, which is made up of linked woodlands, wetlands, fields and waterways in Metro Vancouver. This network is composed of **hubs** and **corridors**, with the hubs being the larger green spaces, and the corridors being the "pathways" that join them together.

Mundy Park, draining north into Burrard Inlet and south into the Fraser River system, is a hub—a critical hub, actually—and forms the core of a green network, providing key benefits to Coquitlam including a healthier environment and great recreational opportunities. This helps make our community a better place to live!



Mundy Park is a "hub" within Metro Vancouver's urban green infrastructure network



The Mundy Park Forest Management Plan

The Mundy Park Forest Management Plan (FMP) is a detailed assessment and review process that spells out the goals and objectives needed to manage our forest in the best way for the decades ahead. The FMP has been prepared by a team of planners, foresters and biologists.

The FMP focuses on the wooded areas of the park, and does not cover the sports fields, the facilities area or the BC Hydro right-of-way. The FMP assesses the climate, land, plants and animals, and also the unique considerations of its urban environment and you, our park visitor. The Plan then recommends what can be done to improve the areas that aren't as good as they could be.

The Nuts and Bolts

What makes up a forest management plan? Where does it start, and how does it end?

The FMP is organized into six sections:

1. access and recreation management
2. natural features
3. risk management
4. community involvement, public education and awareness
5. monitoring program, and
6. implementation plan

These sections map out the current condition of Mundy Park, what needs improvement, how important it is, how to do it, and how long it will take for these changes to happen.

You'll learn more about each of these sections in the pages ahead.

1. Access and Recreation Management

Demand for outdoor recreation is growing. In 2013's annual Ipsos Reid Citizen Satisfaction Survey in Coquitlam, 95% of respondents said that parks, trails and other green space are important to them.



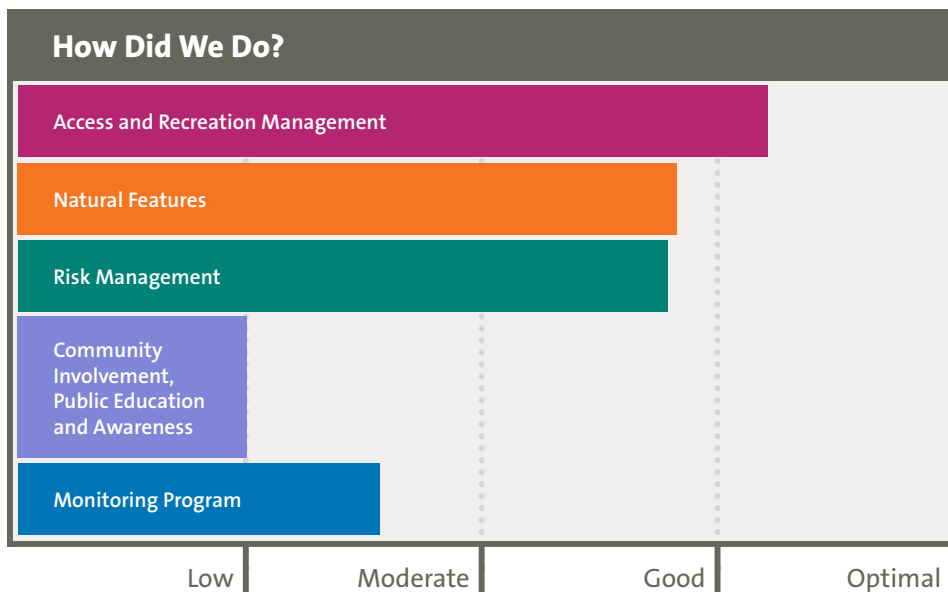
That same survey discovered that 97% of the people who used the City's parks, trails and other green spaces were "somewhat to very satisfied" with these services. Compared to survey results in the Lower Mainland (92%) and province-wide (93%), our rating is considered high. Other surveys conducted annually in Mundy Park between 1999 and 2009 showed an average score of 90% when users rated

cleanliness, maintenance, access, services, safety and expectations. With that in mind, you'll start to see surveys being conducted while you're in the park in order to get up-to-date information from park users.

The many **trails** of Mundy Park are either managed, official trails, or trails that are unmanaged and unapproved. Trail users range from walkers to bikers to dog walkers, to name a few.

One of the City's goals is to continue to provide safe recreational opportunities for our park visitors while ensuring that the trails and facilities meet your needs, and are in good shape.

The short answer is yes—there is always room for improvement, but the overall situation is good. For example, there are many unapproved trails, and we don't know them all. The goal here is to account for them, add some to the maintained trail network, and to restore the remainder back to their natural state, all under the guidance of the City's Master Trail Plan.



2. Natural Features

The goal of the natural features checkup is to get a good sense of the health of our urban forest. Breaking this down, we need to understand the park's ecology, the state of invasive species and species at risk, and the condition of our aquatic environment.

Mundy Park is a **large urban second-growth forest**, and is fairly flat with many wet areas. There are a number of distinct ecosystems within the park, varying with the forest cover, nearness to water, soil conditions, and other factors - they are all in good health.

There are areas where more young trees are needed to balance the thick shrub growth to ensure the long-term future of the forest. Throughout the next decade, you'll notice efforts to restore these areas to support the trees that should be growing there.

That being said, the **understory plant**

communities (plants growing on the forest floor) are healthy, with the wet and dry areas all supporting plants common to the region. Yet, there are concerns about the impact of human feet. When people walk off the managed trail system, they damage plants and compact soils. And in some areas, especially next to Mundy Lake, the growing conditions are so sensitive that damage is easily done and difficult to fix. Over the next few years you'll begin to see work being done to identify and restore any degraded areas and introduce additional rare and endangered plants that require these unique growing conditions.

Mundy Park sustains many **insects and diseases** that are naturally found on the south coast, and none were found to be out of sync with their environment. Not always a bad thing, pests and disease can contribute to a healthy forest as it ages. The idea is to keep an eye on it, to



make sure it doesn't get out of hand in a negative way.

Although Mundy Park has healthy and stable plant communities, there's opportunity for **invasive plants** to get a foothold. Invasive plants or animals are generally considered to be non-native introduced species, and can thrive unchecked in a new environment due to a lack of predation or competition. The park is surrounded by residential and commercial development, and your backyard gardens and landscaping can introduce uninvited greenery to the forest. The goal is to eradicate all invasive plants from the forest within five years. But it will take time, staff and volunteers to identify and get rid of them.

While **invasive animals and insects** aren't a big issue in the park, the American Bullfrog, which has done a good job of establishing itself throughout the Lower Mainland, does



raise some concerns. Left unchecked, these frogs will eat anything it can get its mouth around. The plan is to determine the best way to reduce the bullfrog population and monitor for any other invasive animals and insects that may have become established in the Park.

Mundy Park's two lakes, Mundy and Lost, are able to support an abundance of life, including fish and amphibians. In order to protect the **aquatic life** these areas will be further protected and enhanced.

Beyond the needs of aquatic wildlife, other park animals need safe places to hide, nest and rest. But great **nesting trees** for birds and animals aren't that common in the park. So, you will see efforts to create more nesting opportunities, including floating habitats and bird and bat boxes.

In the Lower Mainland, **habitat** is limited for plant and animal **species at risk**. Mundy forest is a large, healthy forest with a range of ecosystems making it a perfect place to restore and enhance habitat for these species. You'll notice that special attention will



be given to protect these species at risk.

Our understanding of Mundy Park's ecology is in great shape, but we need to act on a few things, particularly healthy, natural forest regeneration. We're generally good on the invasive species front, but we need to do things in a more organized way, and be more thorough with our inventory. We're very clear and complete with our assessment of the aquatic environment, with the exception of water quality evaluation. And our species at risk understanding and action is just okay—there's room for improvement!



3. Risk Management

Making Mundy Park safe for the community is very important. Hazardous trees, wildfire and conflicts with wildlife are things that need to be well understood so that visitors can experience the park safely.

Trees along the trails in the Park are assessed proactively for hazards during regular trail

inspections and additional assessments are completed when park users express concerns about particular trees. All hazardous trees are removed or pruned to eliminate the hazard. These practices will continue to ensure the safety of trail users.

Wildfires haven't been a big issue in the park, but there is potential because of human activity along the edges of the park and

the trail system. Cigarettes, matches, illegal bonfires and vandalism are all concerns.

Starting now you'll begin to see work to improve awareness and remove illegal bonfire pits, among other initiatives.

Conflict with wildlife is rare, though bear and deer are often observed in the Park. The wildlife conflict awareness program will be

further enhanced.

For your safety, managing hazardous trees, wildfire risks, and wildlife conflicts will create a better park for all. We are currently doing well with our knowledge in these areas, but there is room for improvement. On the plus side, Mundy Park isn't in a particularly dangerous location for risks associated with wind, fire and snow.

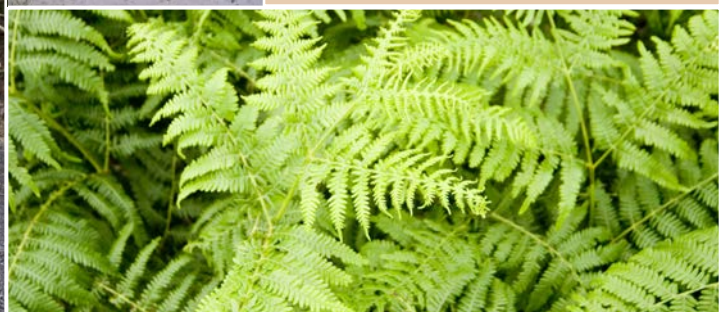
4. Community Involvement, Public Education and Awareness

Nature-based education is a “natural” for Mundy Park. People build awareness, understanding and stewardship by learning in this natural setting.

Children, along with nature and school groups, are the clear winners of the nature-based learning. And when joining forces with universities and other learning and research initiatives, the sky's the limit for what can be accomplished within Mundy Park. Currently not ideally organized, we would benefit from a more coordinated and prioritized approach.

For your part, **volunteerism and community participation** are needed to make the forest management plan come to life. The FMP calls for work in new areas that will create great opportunities for volunteer involvement to grow. And, as a nice side effect, pride in our park will also grow.

For community involvement, public education and awareness, the goal is to get you—the park users—involved with planning and improving the park. This will help ensure our Plan is successful. The best way to do this is for you to tell us that you're interested—we will listen! We'll post opportunities, but you can also visit, call or email parks@coquitlam.ca to tell us that you're keen to be involved.



Be a Mundy Park Champion!

There will be new opportunities to volunteer to help maintain and improve Mundy Park. These may include:

- Planting and nurturing trees
- Restoring and protecting sensitive native plant communities
- Removing invasive species
- Reintroducing aquatic life
- Restoring wetland habitats
- Building bird and bat boxes
- Monitoring wildlife

Reach us at 604-927-6300 or via email at parks@coquitlam.ca to tell us you're interested!

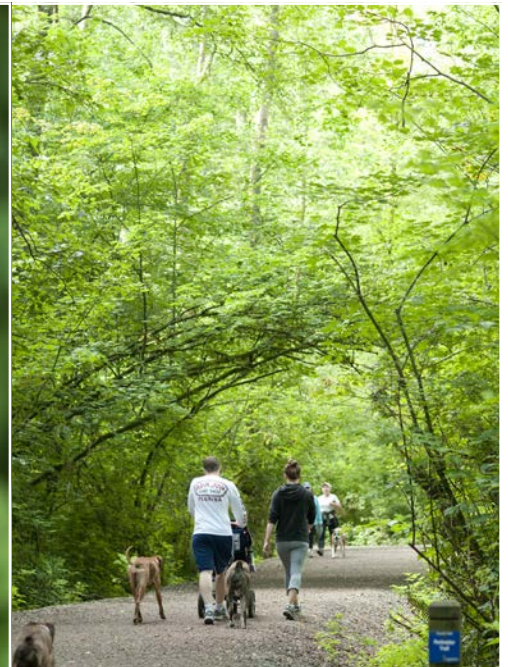
5. Monitoring Program

The time frame to see the full effectiveness of a forest management plan can be measured in the hundreds of years. Monitoring on these terms is a challenge! So how is it done? By thinking long-term and adapting.

Through an **adaptive management** approach, we practice continual learning—as time passes, we learn and we adapt. Every 10 years or so, the forest management plan is updated to reflect the state of the forest and current best practices. The goal is to see the challenges in advance, and fix them before they become a serious problem.

Wildlife indicators are also used to effectively monitor the health of an ecosystem. Some animals, like certain frog species, are very sensitive to environmental change. If you see populations change, then you know there's a problem.

When **water quality** is monitored, we track the health of the aquatic systems. If water quality degrades, then wildlife and plant life also deteriorates. Water quality monitoring allows us to identify and correct the problem. It is preventative health care for the woods—monitoring the ecology of Mundy Park is good for the long-term health of our urban forest.



6. Implementation Plan

In order to make the Mundy Park Forest Management Plan a reality and **achieve our vision**, we need the City, community groups and the public working together in a coordinated approach. We also need to bring in the latest research and skills through collaboration with other levels of government and learning institutions with expertise in forest management best practices.

The table below outlines the actions recommended in the Mundy Park FMP. This will help ensure Mundy Park remains a natural gem for current and future generations of Coquitlam residents and visitors alike. For a complete implementation table, please view the Forest Management Plan at coquitlam.ca/mundy.

Ongoing	1-2 years	1-5 years	5-10 years
Construct and maintain trails as per Master Trail Plan standards.	Survey Park users to determine their satisfaction.	Educate residents living in the interface area of the risk and prevention of wildfires.	Decommission all small unsanctioned access trails around Mundy Lake.
Close all unauthorized trails.	Examine further opportunities for recreation.	Eradicate all invasive plants from Mundy Park.	Update the Forest Management Plan every 10 years.
Protect the integrity of natural habitat for species at risk.	Rehabilitate areas where there is evidence of past bonfires.	Deactivate unsanctioned trails within 30m of streams and restore native plant communities.	Reduce fire risk via strategic pruning of lower branches at residential interface.
Work with the Painted Turtle Recovery Team to implement a program to manage invasive turtles.	Restore degraded areas by planting native plants.	Implement a tree planting program to ensure forest regeneration.	
Conduct bird nesting surveys.	Create a reservoir of endangered and threatened plants.	Create protected floating islands on both lakes.	
Enhance bat habitat.	Address the problem of yard waste dumping.		
Establish a wildlife conflict education program.	Develop educational programs and volunteer initiatives.		
Monitor forest health for sudden changes to plant communities and health.			

Legend

Access and Recreation Management
Natural Features
Risk Management
Community Involvement, Public Education and Awareness
Monitoring Program
Implementation Plan

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

of the forest in Mundy Park for a chance to win one of three \$100 gift certificates to Coquitlam Centre.

coquitlam.ca/mundy

For more information please visit coquitlam.ca/mundy or call 604-927-6300

Above all...