

# City of Prince George Bear Smart Park Audit

## Background

In 2011, Council committed to achieving Provincial Bear Smart status in an effort to reduce potential human/bear conflict within Prince George. In 2019, Council was presented with a report outlining the outstanding requirements towards achieving the provincial designation. Council directed staff to pursue the report recommendations which included tasks such as pursuing an audit of bear hazards in City Parks.

An audit of bear hazards in City parks was originally completed over 10 years ago through the Northern Bear Awareness Society 2008 'Bear Hazard Assessment for Prince George, British Columbia' report. This audit included an assessment of various City parks against identified bear habitat and travel corridors. The information below builds on the initial 2008 assessment to include bear hazard ratings for each City park, along with bear smart guidelines to help reduce these hazards.

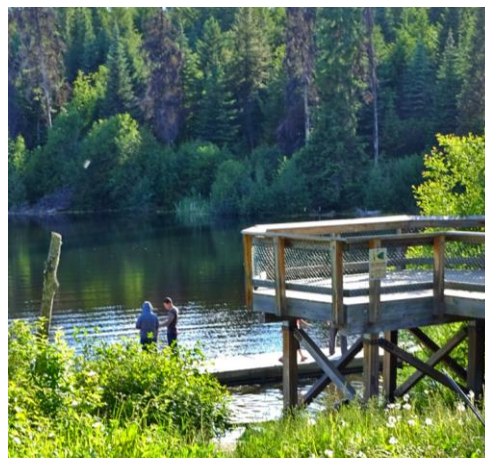
## Bear Hazard Rankings

Each City park has been assigned the following Very High to Low bear hazard ranking based on the 2008 report findings, as well as the level of development within each park.

- **Very High (VH)** – Natural area along or near the 2 major rivers
- **High (H)** – Riparian areas and greenways connecting to the major rivers
- **Medium-High (MH)** – Within or adjacent to larger natural forested areas
- **Medium (M)** - Within or adjacent to smaller natural forested areas
- **Low (L)** – All other areas

## City Park Audit

An audit was conducted on 169 City Parks and resulted in a total of 16 Very High, 10 High, and 12 Medium-High ranked bear hazard sites. More than half of the parks were ranked as Low (94) while the remaining parks were ranked as a Medium (37) bear hazard. The Very High to Medium-High ranked sites are listed in the following table while the complete park audit data analysis is available in eDoc #531127.



Popular waterfront parks like Cottonwood Island Park or Forests for the World are high bear hazard areas.

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Park	Classification	Developed	% Forested	Waterfront
<b>VERY HIGH (VH) BEAR HAZARD</b>				
Cottonwood Island Park	Nature	Y	100%	Y
Fish Trap Island	Green Space	N	89%	Y
Fraser River Benchland Park	Green Space	N	100%	Y
Heritage River Trail System	Nature	Y	30%	Y
Hudson's Bay Wetland Nature Park	Nature	Y	62%	Y
Kiwanis Park	Nature	Y	38%	Y
Klein Quarry	Green Space	N	31%	Y
LC Gunn Park	Nature	Y	100%	Y
McMillan Ck. Fishing Park	Nature	Y	74%	Y
McMillan Creek Regional Park	Public	Y	100%	Y
Nechako Riverside Park	Nature	N	100%	Y
North Nechako Park	Green Space	N	100%	Y
Parkridge Creek Park	Green Space	N	100%	Y
Rustad Park	Green Space	N	100%	Y
Williams Park	Green Space	Y	100%	Y
Wilson Park	Nature	Y	89%	Y
<b>HIGH (H) BEAR HAZARD</b>				
Bob Martin Park	Neighbourhood	Y	0%	Y
Ferguson Lake Nature Reserve	Nature	Y	55%	Y
Forests for the World	Nature	Y	97%	Y
Hazelton Park	Nature	Y	17%	Y
Latrobe Park	Neighbourhood	Y	94%	Y
Lheidli T'enneh Memorial Park	Major	Y	16%	Y
Moore's Meadow Park	Nature	Y	0%	N
North College Park	Neighbourhood	Y	98%	Y
Otway Ski Centre	Special Purpose	Y	73%	N
Paddlewheel Park	Neighbourhood	Y	9%	Y
<b>MEDIUM-HIGH (MH) BEAR HAZARD</b>				
Chancellor Park	Green Space	N	100%	N
Chief Memorial Park	Green Space	Y	87%	N
Cranbrook Hill Greenway	Nature	Y	100%	N
Delisle	Green Space	N	100%	N
Elgin Park	Green Space	N	100%	N
Exhibition Park	Special Purpose	Y	27%	N
Fairburn Park	Neighbourhood	Y	74%	N
Haldi Road Park	Green Space	Y	100%	N
Nechako Cutbanks Park	Green Space	Y	100%	N
UNBC Connector Trail/Ginter's M.	Nature	Y	100%	N
Valleyview Reserve	Green Space	N	100%	N
Volunteer Park	Athletic	Y	10%	N

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## Recommendations

City parks with a Very High to Medium-High bear hazard rating should adhere to the following bear smart guidelines listed below.

- **Solid Waste** – Provide bear-resistant garbage cans and maintain them regularly.
- **Signage** – Provide bear warning signs at trailheads and in active bear corridor areas.
- **Play Areas** – Locate play areas away from heavily vegetated areas.
- **Vegetation** – Plant bear-resistant species and remove and/or thin the vegetation near trailheads, trail switchbacks, and near play areas to improve lines of sight.

Developed parks with a Very High or Medium-High bear hazard ranking represent the highest priority areas and should be addressed first to help reduce potential human/bear conflict. On-site assessments and infrastructure upgrades for these priority areas are recommended for execution in 2020 and 2021, with remaining areas to be addressed in subsequent years pending available Bear Smart capital funding and operational resources.

## Resources

Bear Hazard Assessment for Prince George, British Columbia (October 2008):

[https://www.northernbearawareness.com/Documents/NBA\\_Bear\\_Hazard\\_Assessment\\_2008.pdf](https://www.northernbearawareness.com/Documents/NBA_Bear_Hazard_Assessment_2008.pdf)

Bear Smart Status Implementation 2019 Update:

[https://princegeorge.ca/City%20Services/Documents/Environment/PG\\_Bear\\_Smart\\_Status\\_Implementation\\_-\\_2019\\_Update.pdf](https://princegeorge.ca/City%20Services/Documents/Environment/PG_Bear_Smart_Status_Implementation_-_2019_Update.pdf)

City Park Bear Hazard Audit (spreadsheet) – eDoc #531127