

1. What is a linear Provincial Park?

A linear provincial park is a park that is considerably longer than it is wide. Some are rail trails (i.e., the TransCanada Trail), in other words abandoned railroad beds converted to recreational use, while others use strips of public land next to canals, streams and shorelines. They are often described as “greenways”.

Linear parks help to link areas and points of interest throughout the region, providing healthy and diverse transportation and outdoor recreation opportunities, while at the same time ensuring continuity of ecosystems and minimally interrupted habitats for wildlife.

2. How big is the proposed linear park?

The park represents 235km of watercourse and approximately 20,000 ha of land. Five sections including: the Kedgwick, Little Main Restigouche, Patapedia, Restigouche and Upsalquitch rivers will form the basis of the proposed linear park. The 235 km of waterway also includes the 55km section dedicated as a Canadian Heritage River.

3. What is the rationale for creating this new linear park?

- To pro-actively preserve the nature resource.
- To recognize the international eco-destination value of the region.
- To celebrate the traditional Treaty Rights of Hunting, Fishing, Harvesting and Ceremonial Use of the Resource.
- To serve as an integral aspect of the overall, long-term development of the Appalachian Range Route as an international touring and experiential destination.
- To reward one of Canada’s most vital heritage rivers with deserved investment.
- To attract markets ranging from Maritime touring vacationers to exploratory outdoor adventure semi-enthusiasts and dedicated outdoor adventure enthusiasts.
- To preserve the legacy of the sport angling culture and industry.
- To favor enjoyment for all and foster social well-being of local communities in the region.
- To stimulate investment.
- To create employment.
- To generate economic activity that will help fund important social programs by contributing to the tax bases of both the provincial and federal governments.

4. Will the new linear park have the same status as other NB provincial parks such as Mount Carleton, Sugarloaf, etc.?

Yes. The proposed linear park will be designated as a provincial park and listed in Schedule A-1 of Regulation 85-105 under the Parks Act. This designation will provide the legislative and regulatory authority to enforce rules that are applied in other parks and will enable for the monitoring of recreational use and the promotion of a responsible eco-tourism approach.

5. What is the projected cost of creating this park?

The estimated capital cost is \$5.75M spread out over a three-year period. Capital investment is needed to upgrade the existing camps and campsites to a world class standard and in a style unique to the Restigouche.

6. Will the park include any land along the river system?

Yes. In terms of land boundary for the proposed park the Clean Water Act protects 30m; however, a minimum 200m from the high-water mark is recommended. Where the viewshed from the river exceeds 200m the preference would be to include the entire viewshed to preserve the natural view scape and the protective vegetation cover on the soil. Further analysis will be required to select exact boundaries based on recognizable features such as waterways, roads and bridges.

7. Will private land be incorporated into the proposed park?

Private land within the boundary area will require consultation with property owners to determine the best practice for protecting the viewshed and integrity of the river while balancing the rights for people to legally use their property as they see fit.

8. Will an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) be required before proceeding with any development?

Yes. The Clean Environment Act Regulation (Regulation 87-83) includes a schedule of undertakings that trigger the EIA requirement. For purposes of provincial parks, an EIA is required when provincial parks are either created or undergo significant modification. The EIA for this initiative will be undertaken in year one of the project so that all environmental requirements are clearly defined in advance of the development work, which is planned for years two and three of the project.

9. Will users be required to pay a fee to access the proposed linear park?

One of the negative aspects encountered by those who use the river today is that there is a lack of quality campsites available for overnight adventures which diminishes the experience and places additional strain on an already weakened and fragile eco-system. In order to improve the visitor experience, existing infrastructure will be upgraded and new facilities will be constructed. In addition, park users will be able to reserve their campsites using an on-line reservation system making it possible to better plan their recreational visits. In order to help pay for these upgrades and to pay for regular future maintenance, a fee will be introduced for the use of campsites.

10. What kinds of upgrades are being considered as part of the proposed park concept?

The preliminary park concept envisions: upgrades to road access points to better manage traffic and improve parking capabilities; cabins that can accommodate group trips and provide a way to relieve stress on overcrowded campsites; an increase to the total number of campsites along the river system; enhanced visitor amenities such as vault toilets, picnic shelters and fire pits; the addition of new floating dock systems (one at Montgomery Bridge, Two Brooks and the Rafting Grounds) designed to be compliant with Canadian Standards Association and the Americans with Disabilities Act so as to provide paddle adventure opportunities for those with mobility challenges; improvements to signage so as to provide a consistent approach for the entire area within the park; and improvements to key access points at Montgomery Bridge, Two Brooks and the Rafting Grounds.

11. When will the new linear park be completed and open to the public?

This initial step toward the establishment of a linear provincial park will be followed by: Environmental Impact Assessment, Aboriginal Consultation and Public Engagement, Partnership and Land Use Agreements, Legislation and a Full Management Plan. A project of this complexity with many sites and

management requirements will take a few years to complete. Therefore, the department has developed a phased approach which anticipates the new park being established by late 2021 or early 2022.

12. Will there be opportunity for public input into this initiative?

Yes. The Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture plans to undertake extensive consultations in year one (2019) of this initiative. It is envisioned that the public will have opportunities to become fully informed on this initiative through a combination of public open houses and roundtable discussions within communities within the proposed linear park area. The public will also have opportunities to provide input/comments on the proposed park through the department's website, any surveys conducted by the department, the EIA process, and by writing directly to the Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture.