

Original BowenBEAT Homepage Content

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world.

Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has. - Margaret Mead

Welcome to the Bowen BEAT! This is a grassroots website with a frankly partisan aim: to defeat or delay approval of a National Park on Bowen Island.

Don't get us wrong! We're committed to the same values as all Bowen Islanders, including those promoting the park. Specifically, we stand for:

- Preserving the island's ecological balance and environmental integrity;
- Protection of Crown Lands from industrial/residential development;
- Protection of Bowen's watershed and foreshore areas;
- Preserving and enhancing Bowen's heritage resources .

But, we believe these goals can be best achieved by Bowen Islanders themselves under existing regulatory structure – without relinquishing control of the island to a far-away bureaucratic federal agency.

Further, we believe the action initiated by Bowen Council to gain approval for the park does not serve the best interests of island residents. Here's why:

Certain Councilors who control a majority of Municipal Council would urge you to approve turning over control of 40 percent of the island – including all of Crippen Park -- to a federal agency via closed-door negotiations between Parks Canada, the BC government, First Nations governments, the GVRD and the Municipality of Bowen Island. Acceptance of the proposal would inevitably mean a major change in how Bowen Island is governed -- but residents have had no input to negotiations and results are not available to the public.

• A private developer would be required to provide and pay for an independent environmental and socio-economic impact assessment prior to seeking approval of a project of this magnitude. The same should be required of Parks Canada. Instead, the agency has stated that – after approval of its proposal – plans will evolve over a 5-year period. In other words, we will not have the details to provide a trustworthy assessment of the immediate and long-term impacts of park development on the lifestyles, privacy and pocketbooks of Island residents.

No thinking person signs a blank cheque, without knowing what he or she is getting (or, in this case, giving up). Yet this is precisely what's being asked of Bowen Islanders.

What's really driving such a questionable agenda? [Read more](#).

BEAT challenges the stronger, well-organized Bowen park lobby with demands for truth and transparency!

In a David vs. Goliath challenge, here are BEAT's explicit priorities:

- To provide sufficient fact-based argument for residents to reject creation of a national Park on Bowen Island – NOW, while opinions are being solicited and before the process moves forward.
- Should the proposal move forward based on Parks Canada's preliminary studies, to demand that Bowen Island residents have a majority YES or NO vote on whether to proceed with implementation.

- Should the proposal be accepted by Bowen Council, that any vote of acceptance be delayed until such time as all **legal challenges** and **measurable** impacts to the community are presented to the public, including, but not limited to: legal mandate of Council to initiate the proposal; quantifiable social and economic impacts on residents; division of powers – federal, provincial, municipal; ferry access issues; and effects of privacy, property values and property taxes.

Do YOU belong on the BEAT? ... Click [invitation](#) to join our uphill battle

Bowen BEAT welcomes ALL visitors, but it is NOT an OPEN forum. This is a sounding board for those who wish to post opinions and seek discussion of reasonable arguments in opposition to the proposal (based on currently available public information) and the many Island residents who question the approval process being forced on the community.

Those wishing to promote the concept of a National Park – or raise “straw man” spectres of uncontrolled industrial/residential development unless we place the island under federal jurisdiction are invited to post their views elsewhere.

We encourage ALL visitors to browse through the following sections –

[Behind the BEAT](#) - a brief history of the proposal.

[The HARD Questions](#) - where we present and request answers to big questions -- Council's mandate, transfer of government power, First Nations issues, protection of Crown Lands ..

..... PLUS all of the “quality of life” issues at stake, including ferry capacity, loss of privacy, increased risk of fire and crime, access to Crippen Park, dog walking, impact on property values and taxation ... and other potential losses.

The [News and Views](#) section, where opinion papers (including the [Bowen Park Reality Checks I and II](#)), letters and other public comment are posted, is open to all site visitors.

Those who wish to join the [Discussion Forum](#) are asked to join the site as members. It's FREE and completely confidential. To guarantee privacy while generating maximum opportunity for open discussion, this section of the Bowen BEAT is accessible to members only.

It is urgent that all Bowen Islanders understand what is at stake in this process. Go through the website - draw your own conclusions. If you feel this information warrants consideration, please forward the link to others.

Gayle Stevenson and Michael Cornelissen

BowenBEAT website co-administrators.

Bowen Island, February 2011.