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Practicum

USER CONFLICTS IN WHITESHELL PROVINCIAL PARK:
A GROUP PROBLEM-SOLVING APPROACH

Submitted by
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of Master of Natural Resource Management

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Abstract

This study is concerned with the problem of user conflicts in provincial parks. A user conflict is defined as the result of two or more activities occurring simultaneously within a recreation area where one activity detracts from enjoyment of the others. The study uses as a single case a disturbance which occurred at the Falcon Lake Campground, Whiteshell Provincial Park, in 1973. About 1200 people were estimated to have been involved in a disturbance that included excessive drinking, reckless driving, etc.

The study methodology applies a small group problem - solving method known as synectics. Four such groups are led through one session each and lists of solutions are developed. These solutions are organized into two alternative objectives and presented as planning and management strategies. The two categories are separation of the conflicting user groups and co-existence of the conflicting user groups. The solutions include the types of facilities which should be provided in parks, site planning considerations, user education programs, parks officer training programs, developing self regulating users and providing for a swift crack down with legal, manpower and other resources available.

The recommendations of this study take the solutions generated and organize them into short term, medium term and long term policies for consideration by Parks Branch. In the short term it is recommended that some parks which may be quickly adapted should request that users choose between social and private single family areas. It is also recommended that Parks officers be given training in group management and that users be made aware of their alternatives when using provincial parks.

In the medium term it is recommended that new parks with amen-

able areas for group and private activities be provided. Programs should be developed for diversions within the park should be initiated; park officer training and user education should continue.

In the long term special use parks are recommended providing for a diversity of recreation opportunities within a parks system. Park officer training and user education should continue.

Executive Summary

This practicum attempts to develop as complete a list as possible of solutions to a user conflict problem which has existed in both provincial and national parks. It uses as its problem statement a description of one such incident in the Whiteshell Provincial Park in Manitoba. The study was carried out using one of many overall methodologies. The alternative study methodologies represent interesting opportunities for future research.

One alternative that could have been used would have been to select one group of seven participants and trained them extensively in the synectics method. This training would have included an in-depth training experience in interpersonal communication, supportive and non-supportive behaviour and the appropriate use of body language. It would also have included in-depth training in the purpose of the synectics method and of the several steps involved in the method. This trained group could then work on the problem over several sessions.

A second alternative would have been to select groups from various cultural, educational and economic backgrounds. Most of the participants used in this study had each achieved at least one university degree. The economic background of each participant was considered to be middle class based on education and occupational criteria.

The study proposed solutions to the problem which in themselves represent areas of useful future research. These would include an assessment of the economic, time and natural resource costs of implementing the solutions on a comparative basis. It would also be useful to investigate the relative effectiveness of the solutions on a comparative basis. A more specific proposal for research would be to investigate the site

design alternatives in a given park and to investigate their effect on the behaviours of the users. A study of the alternatives for and effectiveness of preventive policing measures would be useful. In addition, a longitudinal study of whether the conflicting user groups remain distinct would be helpful to future park planning.

A final and important research need is related specifically to the observation that people working as a team in a problem - solving environment often need training in group skills. Very practical research needs to be done regarding the various means available for training those groups who are expected to act as a team in these situations. Such considerations as on-the-job training, time and resource requirements, and a program should be investigated. Several techniques for problem analysis exist (such as cross-impact matrices, force-field analysis, and the mini-delphi technique) which can be used to heighten the insight of a synectics group into the problem under consideration.

This practicum contributes many ideas generated by people external to direct involvement in provincial parks policy. This input of ideas comprises a significant portion of the possible solutions presented. They therefore also are incorporated in the recommendations which are made. The participants with no formal connection to the Parks Branch contributed outside ideas and also were exposed to other views of the problem than their own. It can be said, generally, that this practicum increased the awareness of some participants regarding the problem and provided an opportunity for direct participation in proposing solutions to the government.

This practicum has also provided the opportunity for each of the four groups to learn about synectics as a problem-solving method and hopefully it may have illustrated some of the difficulties and rewards

of interpersonal communication within groups.

This practicum could have been designed to achieve a more detailed examination of the group dynamics. To this end it would have been useful to employ two or three video-tape cameras to ensure the recording of all body language and verbal communication. It would also have been useful if recorders could have been present at each session to note the specific leadership contests, active listening and supportive or non-supportive behaviours which occurred. Finally, interviews of each participant after the session to determine the motivations and feelings behind their activities could serve to substantiate or clarify the subjective evaluation of the groups given in the main report.

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INTRODUCTION

The use of resources which fall under the management jurisdiction of the public sector has been increasing. Manitoba's Provincial Parks have been subject to increasing use over the past ten years. In response to this increasing use, additional resources have been committed to the provision of recreation opportunities for citizens of the province. At present, the provincial government operates 5,293 campsites¹ in ten² provincial parks. Three of these parks, Spruce Woods Provincial Park, Whiteshell Provincial Park and Bird's Hill Provincial Park, are located within one hundred miles of Winnipeg. The use of campgrounds at these provincial parks has increased more dramatically than at other parks due to their proximity to Winnipeg and the variety of recreation experiences offered. This use of campgrounds is greatest during the months of July and August and particularly on the long summer holiday weekends.

The parks offer a variety of recreation opportunities including swimming, motor boating, hiking as well as camping. In winter they attract snowmobilers, skaters, cross-country skiers, hikers and winter campers. When several of these uses occur simultaneously in the same area, one may be incompatible with the others or have effects which detract from enjoyment of the other activities. This situation is termed a user conflict. Safety factors require that both swimming and motor boating (including water skiing) cannot take place on a limited area of water at the same time. Likewise, cross-country skiing and snowmobiling

¹Personal Communication, Mr. N. Nixon, Director of Research, Research and Planning Branch, Department of Tourism, Recreation and Cultural Affairs, Province of Manitoba.

²Excluding Memorial Park, Winnipeg.

are usually considered to be incompatible for safety and aesthetic reasons such as noise. In this case a user's perception of his environment, such as the noise level, can also define a user conflict. Where a user conflict is defined by the user, a resource manager, or a decision maker, a major policy issue in recreation planning and management exists.³

The problem dealt with in this study is that of a user conflict. It is a problem which has occurred in some Manitoba Provincial Parks and in Riding Mountain National Park located about 150 miles west of Winnipeg. The most recent of these occurrences was during the summer of 1973. Campground disturbances involving large groups of campers resulted in noise, crowds and other disruptive occurrences and provoked critical reaction from some other affected campers. A user conflict exists because one activity has caused other users to receive a lower quality recreation experience. Various characteristics of this situation have become evident. The user conflicts considered here derive from two somewhat different groups of summer campers. Information regarding the age, sex, occupation, length of stay and attitudes of the specifically affected park user is often minimal. Most often it is based on the recollection of various parks managers and officials. Some information is contained in newspaper accounts and personal correspondence. Correspondence regarding this problem is limited to a small number of letters between the public and the Parks Branch. Identification of the specifically affected users is limited to these letters and to police records of those arrested. The lack of information regarding these users and an inability to identify a significant number of them is an important aspect of the problem.

³M. Clawson and J. L. Knetsch, Economics of Outdoor Recreation, Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1966, p. 306

A related aspect is the letters themselves. In some cases these are well articulated and specify possible solutions. In other cases the problem of disturbances is referred to only after other concerns have been dealt with. Still others have dealt exclusively with the problem at one provincial park or another and refer to specific events. In any event no depository or central collection site has been created for collecting these letters as a source of documentation for the problem.

The disturbance problem is also characterized by an inconsistent on-site reaction of the parks personnel to the problem. In one case the reaction has been to allow campers arriving at the park to choose to camp in the overflow area even when sites are available in the regular serviced campgrounds. The overflow campgrounds have been the sites of the most severe disturbances, and it is therefore possible that some campers are attracted to them with expectations of such an occurrence. In one case parks personnel permitted a disturbance to run its course during the night and sealed the area off to visitors. In another case parks personnel attempted to control the disturbance and persevered until a physical assault on a parks officer occurred. The variety of responses of parks managers may indicate the lack of a clearly stated policy in use when such disturbances are encountered.

The power of enforcement of the parks officer relates to his reaction to a disturbance. These officers have no power of arrest under the Provincial Parkland Act. Arrests are only authorized if the officer is granted special status by the legislature under this Act. This special status authorizes arrest under various other legal statutes. Without it the officer can resort only to evictions from the park. Royal Canadian Mounted Police may be called by the parks officer to assist. Responsibility for strategies used in dealing with the situation and for

calling in the RCMP rest with the parks officer.

A final aspect of the problem is the not all incidents are reported unless they are of a significant scale. The disturbances which were reported have occurred in Grand Beach Provincial Park, the White-shell Provincial Park, in particular at the Falcon Lake campground, and on a minor scale at Birds Hill Provincial Park. At Birds Hill Provincial Park most of the use from Winnipeg is of the day-use variety which may account for the reduced frequency of occurrence.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

This study is concerned with one event as a case in point. The disturbance occurred on the 1973 July first holiday weekend at the Falcon Lake campground. A variety of recreation opportunities exist at Falcon Lake including swimming, motorboating, hiking, camping and others. On this weekend a large number of campers were attracted to the site. As in the past, some of these campers stated a preference for using either the regular campgrounds or the overflow campgrounds. The regular campgrounds are known as the Lakeshore campground and the Beach campground. Campers were permitted to choose a campsite in the Lakeshore, the Beach, or the overflow campground at their discretion.

The Beach, Lakeshore and overflow campgrounds have distinguishing characteristics. The Beach campground contains 289 campsites with attendants on duty and entrance gates. Natural vegetation located in this campground in effect separates the campsites into identifiable areas suitable for one family with tent or trailer equipment. No access to visitors is allowed after 11:00 P.M. The Lakeshore campground is similar in its natural vegetation but contains only 186 campsites. Both the Beach and the Lakeshore campground are designed with a series of individual sites along cul-de-sacs joined by major roads for access. In

both cases washrooms are provided at various points throughout.

The overflow campground is designated as an overflow area and has no developed or serviced campsites. The topography and vegetation resemble an open grassed field. On earlier occasions this has been the site of large group gatherings extending well into the early morning hours. On the weekend in question it is estimated that five hundred camping groups were located here. A crowd estimated at twelve hundred people were involved in the disturbance which was characterized by excessive use of liquor, noise from sound amplifiers electronically connected to car batteries, overcrowding and reckless driving in the overflow area itself. Some attempts at enforcement were made but after midnight activities were left to run their course. Park officers and the RCMP were present. No arrests were made.

This occurrence was used as a specific case from which a range of alternative solutions to the problem could be derived. These alternatives may be of use to parks officials, parks planners and parks policy makers in minimizing the likelihood of such disturbances happening again.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. The study will develop a list of possible policy, planning and management strategies which may be useful to parks officials in preventing such disturbances in the future.
2. The study will test the use of a group problem solving method known as synectics for generating solutions to complex problems.
3. The study will integrate the suggested solutions into a policy for consideration by the Parks Branch.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The study began in October, 1974. It was suggested by Parks Branch that this problem was one which might be difficult to analyze for various reasons and that it might be susceptible to an approach likely to generate innovative solutions. The basic study design rests on the selection of four small groups of up to seven members each. The four groups contained;

- A. seven graduate students from the Natural Resource Institute, Department of Family Studies and The Faculty of Architecture (City Planning) at the University of Manitoba, each at various levels of completion of their respective Master's degrees;
- B. six university professors, one each from the Departments of Biology, Agricultural Economics, Sociology, Business Administration and the Faculty of Law at the University of Manitoba and one from the Department of Geography at the University of Winnipeg;
- C. seven women, all members of a local community club and university graduates with diverse interests ranging from botany, geology and geography to interior design and arctic life;
- D. six Parks Branch staff members, the Eastern Region Parks Supervisor, the Interlake Region Parks Supervisor, the Park Superintendent of Grand Beach Provincial Park, the Public Safety Officer of Parks Branch, a landscape architect and a staff naturalist with Parks Branch.

Each of these four groups was guided through a synectics ses-

sion with the writer as leader. The sessions lasted from two or two and one-half hours. They were held in the Home Economics Building at the University of Manitoba and each was recorded on video tape.

The synectics method itself is a structured method for group problem solving. In his book Synectics, Wm. Gordon calls synectics theory an application of "the integration of diverse individuals into a problem-solving; problem-solving group".⁴ The methodology applied is made up of seven steps. These are:

1. A written problem statement:

This problem statement should be an accurate description of the state of affairs. It indicates the various inter-connecting assumptions which define the problem. The purpose of the statement is to give each participant a common understanding of the problem. In this study a one page problem statement (see Appendix I) was prepared with the assistance of the Parks Branch, and was used throughout by each of the four groups. The problem statement and, in this study, a map of the Falcon Lake Campground were given to each group member at the beginning of the session.

2. Analysis by the expert:

This study was assisted by Mr. Neil Nixon⁵ who acted as the expert on the problem for groups A, B and C. In group D it was felt the participants were sufficiently expert to deal with the problem and Mr. Nixon did not attend this session. In groups A, B and C Mr. Nixon briefly discussed the problem giving enough detail so that the group could develop a common understanding of the problem. All questions from

⁴Wm. Gordon, Synectics: The Development of Creative Capacity, Collier Books, Collier MacMillan Publishers, 1961, New York, p. 3

⁵Director of Research, Research and Planning Branch, Department of Tourism, Recreation and Cultural Affairs, Province of Manitoba

the groups were responded to be either the leader or Mr. Nixon. During the remainder of the session Mr. Nixon sat apart from the group.

3. Suggestions:

This is the first participative step in the process. The aim of this step is to go beyond a superficial understanding of solutions to the problem. Group members are asked for immediate solutions to the problem. They can be wishful solutions, i.e. not necessarily feasible at this point. Each group member is asked to contribute one or more suggestions. Each suggestion is noted by the leader on a flip chart pad so as to be available for later reference.

4. Goals as Understood:

The goals as understood are coherent statements of the suggested solutions which evolved from step 3. All group members formulate at least one each. These goals, therefore, are made up of ideal, wishful and speculative ideas. Their purpose is to break complex problems down into manageable parts. As large a list as is possible is developed. When this has been done the leader chooses one of the goals as understood statements to serve as a focus for the group.

5. The Excursion⁶

The leader asks the group to put the problem out of their mind, to forget about it completely. He asks the group to do one or more of the following three things. Firstly, he may ask for an example of the ideal situation, identified in the goal as understood statement, from

⁶A more extensive treatment with examples of developing an Example, a Book Title based on this example and then a further example can be found in G.M. Prince, The Practice of Creativity A Manual For Group Problem Solving, Collier Books Collier MacMillan Publishers, New York, 1970, pp. 93 - 98

a completely unrelated field. To serve the problem solving method the less directly related the example provided, the better. When the problem under study is a people problem, examples from the physical sciences are sought. When the problem is of a physical science nature, examples from the natural or human sciences are sought. Secondly the leader may ask the group to formulate a two word book title describing the example suggested. The book title should contain a paradox and which describes the chosen goal as understood. This book title is then used as a base from which a further example is developed. Finally, the leader may ask the group to empathize by undertaking a personal analogy of an example given by the group. In the study presented here all three methods of mental excursion were attempted with varying success and in varying order. The personal analogy is considered to be the most useful if a group can undertake unpathetic identification with the subject.⁷ They are mostly used to initiate the groups thinking in preparation for step 6.

6. Examination:

Based on the choice made by the leader in step 4 as to which method of approach to an example is chosen, step 5 asks the group to describe, analyze and contribute factual and associatory information regarding the problem. The information is also collected on flip chart materials. That which is of an evocative and speculative nature, is of higher value than straight factual information. If the leader has asked for a paradoxical book title in step 5, then he may develop further examples from various unrelated fields and examine them here. If a per-

⁷Three different types of analogy are possible; the one referred to here is the most advanced. Ibid. p. 98

sonal analogy is used the empathetic activities of the group may be considered as a part of the examination step. When further examples are suggested, the process of examination is repeated by returning to start step 5 again.

7. Force Fit:

This is the most difficult of the procedures. It requires that the metaphorical material, developed in steps 4 and 5 be applied to the problem in spite of its seeming irrelevance. By far the major proportion of the work involved in synectics occurs in this step. The first approach to this is a "happening".⁸ This is the easiest and best way to do a force fit step; but it requires that something said in the examination step triggers an idea in the mind of a participant so as to provide new insights to the problem, thereby leading to an innovative solution. The second approach is to choose a few statements from the examination stage, and begin to make some loose connections. As the leader does this, a group member may react with further ideas. The leader then drops his attempt and pursues the participants idea. The third approach is the "forced metaphor".⁹ In this approach five substeps are followed. These include:

1. define the elements of the two things that are being subjected to the force-fit, (the example and the goal as understood),
2. state a dynamic connection between them,
3. release the group from the need for a feasible solution,
4. encourage speculation, and,
5. make the new idea feasible, of implementation.

⁸Ibid. p. 99

⁹Ibid. p. 102

If the derived solution is not made feasible, it is likely that general tautologies will result. In practice then, a force fit using the forced metaphor places the greatest emphasis on making the solution feasible. The fourth approach described is called the "get-fired"¹⁰ approach. In this case the group is asked to contribute ideas they think are so outrageous that the contributor would be fired immediately if his boss were to be presented with it. These methods encourage counterfactual thinking and delay the return to reality. They can help to develop innovative solutions that are feasible.

Prince notes that problems involving people, as the Falcon Lake situation does, are complex and normally have many aspects or points of view to them. For this reason, he suggests that several viewpoints should be initially developed and later combined and evolved into a policy. This is partly the reason why people problems require repeated applications of the synectics method so that a comprehensive handling of the problem can be built up.

In the present study each group developed several solutions but none was able to examine as many of the goals as understood as were originally formulated by the group. This list of solutions was then organized into two categories. These categories provided the framework from which a policy could be formulated.

The effectiveness of the groups in using the synectics method is related to many things. Prince and his fellow researchers have derived eleven indicators "of the major behavioural issues.....important to group effectiveness".¹¹

¹⁰Ibid. p. 104

¹¹Ibid. pp. 17 - 18

These are:

1. Do the group members establish a common understanding of the problem?
2. Do they focus together on a single aspect of the problem, or does each member have his own way of seeing the problem?
3. Do they actually work as a team or as a group of individuals?
4. Do the members take pains to make sure everyone understands each idea?
5. Does anyone use analogies to suggest possible solutions?
6. Do the members REALLY listen to one another?
7. Do the members tend to shoot down ideas quickly?
8. Does the group insist that each idea be a complete solution?
9. Or do they support and improve on an unsatisfactory idea?
10. Do they thoroughly explore one idea before going on to the next?
11. What does the group do about leadership?

These eleven points will be used as reference points in the presentation of the results in regard to group effectiveness. The section following this presentation of results will illustrate these findings with examples taken from the video tapes.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The lack of precise data regarding the problem in terms of the number and identities of participants at any one disturbance, the actual activities of one group which disturbed the other group, the effect of various alternate management strategies, etc., required an innovative problem-solving approach. Traditional analytic methods were made less useful by this requirement, and several parameters in the problem description had to be left vague and generalized.

It is likely that the present study could have gained much insight if specific users involved in an occurrence of the problem could have been identified and participated in a synectics session. One participant in group C had been involved in the disturbance at Falcon Lake on the July first weekend. Those users from the overflow campground and from the regular campgrounds could have participated in a most valuable way by forming separate groups of homogenous campers and a mixed group.

This study tests a method which is still in the developmental stage. Gordon regards his description of the method as a "report of research in progress"¹² and Prince concentrates on evolving useful behavioural characteristics of group participants that reinforce the method, increasing the probability of an innovative solution being reached. Prince's contribution to synectics research is then also developmental. Some subjectivity, mostly originating with the session leader, must then be accepted in directing the group's efforts. All of the groups were introduced to the synectics method for the first time during this study. In group B this was the first time these participants had met as a small group. Several different groups were used so that a range of viewpoints would be suggested rather than a concentration on a smaller number of groups repeating the session. If fewer groups had been used and the sessions repeated then interpersonal communication might have increased.

The list of possible solutions to the problem generated by the four sessions reflects the views of those participants and cannot be said to be a complete list of alternatives. The level of novelty reflected in them also reflects the group characteristics. Finally, the level of detail which can be achieved in the assessment of the resulting solu-

¹²Wm. Gordon, op. cit. p. 151

tions is determined by time and resource considerations.

STUDY RESULTS

Each of the four groups developed a list of suggested solutions, a series of goals as understood and a series of viewpoints regarding problem solutions. The synectics method works from a large list of selected solutions, narrows it down by formulating goals as understood statements, and finally develops more detailed analysis of some of the goals as understood in the form of viewpoints. The results presented draw on all three lists developed by each group. They have been categorized under two headings according to the ultimate solution which they attempted to reach. A third category could have been formulated including solutions for excluding one group or the other from the park. The similarity of these solutions with those suggested for separating the groups resulted in only two categories being used. Several of the solutions presented for separating the groups could be applied to excluding a group from the park.

The categories into which the solutions tended to fall complement each other. The categories are:

1. Separation of the Conflicting User Groups, and,
2. Co-existence of the Conflicting User Groups.

These categories represent ideal and complementary solutions. They are mutually exclusive in the sense that one is the complement of the other and if one were fully realized the other would be unnecessary. They could therefore represent policy options for dealing with the user conflict problems. Each is discussed here in terms of the group-developed alternatives available for their achievement.

The groups suggested that the following actions could be taken separate groups of conflicting users.

- 1 a. The park could have two completely separate areas one for each user group. The separate areas would both contain private and social areas, complete campground facilities such as washroom, campsites and recreational facilities. Opportunities for each group to achieve the desired level of social activity would be available.
- 1 b. The park could have partially separated areas for each user group. Some separate areas would be developed for groups above a certain size and facilities would be located here (such as washroom services and other amenities).
- 1 c. The facilities in a completely separated park and in a partially separated park could be designed so as to act as incentives for the groups to separate into more homogenous user groups aligned by their recreation expectations.
- 1 d. The users could be informed beforehand about the areas, what activities would be permitted in each area and which activities would not be permitted.
- 1 e. The park users could be given the choice of areas based on their own expectations before setting up camp.
- 1 f. The park officers could be trained to act as catalysts that reinforce the actions of either group so that the differences became apparent to the groups. The level of activity which can be reached by any small subgroup (camping unit) before separation from the larger group must occur would be made known to the park officers.
- 1 g. The park officers could be trained in interpersonal and group

management skills with a view to directing the group activities toward separation.

- 1 h. The activities that would be appropriate in each of the park areas respectively, could be delineated and the officers and park users made aware of them. The officers could be given the resources to enforce these regulations.
- 1 i. Less stringent regulations could be applied in the social area of the park, whether the park is designed with completely separate facilities or partially separate facilities.
- 1 j. The park officers could undertake a swift crackdown on offenders when regulations were broken.
- 1 k. The park users could become self-regulating groups by having one user from each camping unit identified as being responsible for the activities of his group. This individual could be given some reward such as free admission for his effort.
- 1 l. The names of park users who break the regulations could be made known to other campers.
- 1 m. Letters from camper to camper could be encouraged regarding specific disturbances and regulations broken.
- 1 n. All park users could be required to identify themselves before entering the park.

To obtain cooperation among the campers the scale of the disturbance would need to be reduced. This could be achieved in various ways.

- 2 a. The park could have smaller single unit campsites only, so that groups of unmanageable size do not form.
- 2 b. The park could have entertainment facilities providing other outlets for the large groups.

- 2 c. The users could be given incentives to co-operate such as help in organizing social activities of their design occurring in the park.
- 2 d. The users could be educated about their responsibility in relation to other campers regarding the need to co-exist. The impact of one group on the other could be shown to the groups.
- 2 e. The Parks Officers could be trained to reward co-operation among park users regarding noise, liquor abuse and other disturbance problems.
- 2 f. The Park Officers could be trained to impose negative sanctions or limitations on those campers who break the regulations.
- 2 g. The Park Officers could be trained in interpersonal and group management skills so as to encourage co-operation.
- 2 h. The Park Officer could be given the resources to enforce regulations outlining the permissible activities in parks.
- 2 i. The users could become self-regulated by identifying one member to take responsibility for their actions. This user could be rewarded.
- 2 j. The Park Officers could be trained in effectively cracking down swiftly and efficiently on groups breaking the regulations.
- 2 k. Users could be identified upon entering the park and held responsible for their actions.

A second result of this study was the observation of the actual behavior of the four groups using the synectics method to generate solutions to complex problems. These observations are drawn from video tape recordings of each session. The group's effectiveness in achieving these solutions is related to the eleven indicators outlined above.

As might be expected, some groups were more effective than others. This is evident in the number and kinds of solutions which were generated. The group of park managers (Group D) developed the most extensive list of solutions (13 suggestions), likely because of their past experience with the problem. The group of graduate students (Group A) did almost as well (12 suggestions) while the other two groups attained somewhat lower totals (7 suggestions each).

The kinds of solutions generated varied in the methods developed by the groups for attaining them. For example, the problem solution of user education was identified by two groups. The other two groups suggested that "reasonable people only" should be admitted to parks and that "the rights and behaviours of users should be defined legally." These two solutions are less operative than user education. The group of parks managers viewed user education as a long range possibility achieved by working with young users to prevent future problems. The group of graduate students, on the other hand, viewed user education as a more active and immediately attainable solution if incentives were implemented for the users to undertake self-education or self-regulation. An individual user, rewarded in some manner (eg. free camping) for accepting the responsibility for the actions of other members of his immediate camping group, is likely to use peer pressure and education by discussion on the site when disturbances begin. In addition, this group suggested that education of one group by the other could be attained, if those campers who were disturbed were assured some means of communicating their feelings directly to other campers who had created the disturbance. A greater degree of innovation is apparent on the solutions from Group A than from Group D in this case. The innovativeness of this group is reflected in the intergroup communication which occurred.

Group A exhibited more of the characteristics of an effective group than did any of the others, on the whole. Every group did have some shortcomings either deriving from a few individuals or from the group as a single entity. There were more examples of negative behaviours in Group B than in any other. The negative behaviours observed included an inability or unwillingness to establish a common understanding of the problem. Each member chose a single view of the problem when this common understanding was attempted. The participants repeatedly mentioned that suggested solutions or goal statements would not be contributed until a "precise statement of the problem" was achieved. It is notable that Group B did not undertake step 5 (the Excursion). There was no evidence of associative thinking or of empathy in using analogies. This group did not co-operate within the group and it contained a participant who did not speak at all after suggestions had been recorded. It is notable that Group A spent the longest time of any group discussing the problem to arrive at a common understanding. Once the group agreed that this point had been reached there was only one further question later in the session, and that was of a technical nature. Groups C and D fell between the two extremes. In Group C the questions asked were normally of a general nature formulated so as to lead to story-telling opportunities. This indicated a desire by some participants to dominate the discussion rather than achieve a common understanding of the problem. In Group D, the group of parks managers, there were several points of view expressed and held to by the participants. The understanding of the problem which they brought to the session reduced the need for analysis by the expert to achieve a common understanding. There was discussion within the group as to the problem to be dealt with.

A third result of this study was the formulation of a possible

policy option based on the integration of derived solutions into an organized policy for Parks Branch. This is undertaken in the final section of this practicum.

DISCUSSION

The Results

The solutions generated clearly vary as to the cost of implementation, the time required for implementation, and in terms of their general applicability. Several need to be more fully investigated with respect to dollar cost and some need to be more specifically described and expanded on. It is only after this kind of treatment that policy options known to be feasible can be defined.

The proposal that a complete set of park facilities be provided for both groups clearly implies a very large cost to the public sector in providing such facilities, but in need nor be rejected out-of-hand. A minor variation on this idea would call for special use parks, developed within a systems framework such that the system as a whole was capable of satisfying the range of recreation opportunities, rather than attempting to provide for this diversity of opportunity in each park. It is likely that this proposal is feasible for the province to realize in the long run. The demand for these specialized facilities may not exist now, but it may be anticipated in the future. The proposal to institute partially separated parks with some areas designated for these conflicting user groups and single camping unit facilities may serve as an interim measure while careful observation of activities in the parks over the next few seasons take place.

Proposals for solutions to the problem using site design considerations were plentiful. All groups suggested the use of natural vegetation barriers between group and single unit camping areas. The idea that incentives for the groups to separate could be designed into group and single unit areas was most interesting. The origin of this

idea lay in the examination of natural forces causing physical bodies, such as geologic structure, to separate. When this idea was applied to the parks problem, both positive and negative incentives were discussed as being analogous to the natural forces.

The possible positive incentives include the location of a park controlled liquor outlet in the group area. Also special facilities, such as larger open areas, musical instrument hook-ups and less stringent rules, could attract the more social campers to this area. In this case a ring of campsites located around a large open area firepit could prove useful. This type of campsite could be located in a valley separated by natural vegetation which would help minimize noise problems. Also, as the suggestion for an outdoor discotheque would indicate, facilities for dancing and amusements might be located here. Distance from the single unit camping area could be increased where natural vegetation of a suitable type does not exist.

The negative incentives would include the reverse design considerations such as well treed individual campsites only. The use of natural vegetation was seen as important here for minimizing group formation. Stringent rules regarding the use of liquor and certain electronic equipment as well as noise levels would need to be strictly enforced to assure these users that their recreation expectations regarding prohibition of noise, crowds and late hours would be met.

One group reconized the problem of turning campers away at the park gate when they arrived late or if the park were full. One solution to this aspect of the problem, as they suggested, would be to have signboards en route to the park indicating how full the park is. Also, announcements to this effect on the local radio stations could be used. Thus, any one arriving would already know that the park was full.

A second solution could be to have alternative stopping off points with specified uses. In this connection Group A's proposal for the use of porta-parks may be of some benefit. (Group C's proposal for a floating platform accomodating social campers is of a similar nature). The porta-parks could be vacant lots or parking lots when not in use but they could be prepared so as to accomodate small numbers of campers at times when use is expected to be heavy. The campers requested to use the porta-parks could come from either the social, group campers or the family-oriented, individual camper groups. Such porta parks could be located outside the park probably along the major accers roads to the park.

User education regarding the use of parks was mentioned by some of the groups. It was slmost entirely directed at providing information to them regarding permissable activities and identifying areas where these activities would be condoned. Little examination was made of such alternatives as education regarding parks in general or about this problem in particular and its implications. It would seem most use-ful if all three types of information were considered. They need not be presented in the same information package. Information regarding site constraints on certain areas of the park and about the user conflict problem would be most useful to campers at the time they are choosing a site. Information about parks in general could be distributed at any time.

There were proposals dealing with the training of park officers. These included suggestions that training be provided in group management skills. The intent here is to equip the officers with inter-personal communication skills and with organizational planning skills which would lead directly to an increased ability to focus on problems which arise and to deal with them on site. It was also suggested that these park

officers must have the resources at hand to solve these problems. This may mean increased enforcement powers or added support from the RCMP when user conflict problems arise. At present the park officers are empowered under the Provincial Park Lands Act only to order users

"(c)... To cease or refrain from any action, omission, or conduct that is dangerous to life or property or detrimental to the public interest, and to the other users."¹³

"(d)... To inform the officer of

- (1) the name, address, and occupation of the person, and
- (11) any fact or intention relating to the use by the person of the provincial park lands."¹⁴

The park officers may also evict and remove

- "(a) any person making an unauthorized use of the provincial park lands; and
- (b) any person failing to comply with any provision of this Act or the regulations; or
- (c) any person creating a nuisance or disturbance or committing a trespass."¹⁵

Proposals with regard to additional powers required by the park officers were made. The measures suggested called for; a stricter enforcement of existing regulations and the development of policies regarding allowing visitors in the overflow area, driving in and out of the overflow area, increasing the patrol staff, providing a park attendant who would stay later into the night, obtaining more RCMP help, and barring previous offenders. These proposed control measures might be categorized

¹³ Revised Statutes of Manitoba, Chapter 20, The Provincial Park Lands Act, s. 10(1) (c)

¹⁴ Ibid. s. 10(1) (d)

¹⁵ Ibid. s. 10(3) (a) (b) (c)

as regulatory solutions, in that they imply an overriding need for officer enforcement. There might be an associated increase in the number of officers required to enforce the added regulations.

A final proposed solution to achieving separated user groups was to make the groups self-regulating. This would likely be the most effective method of all for achieving separation. One method of implementing the idea was developed and has been noted in the discussion above. Another part of this self-regulating user group solution lies in user education and in site design considerations. If an identified member of a user group takes responsibility for his camping unit and is assisted as required by park officers, and if campsites are designed to accommodate only certain numbers of people as well as certain noise levels, this solution becomes realistic.

Those solutions generated by the groups to achieve co-existence among the user groups were similar in some ways but emphasized different solutions. There was a large amount of emphasis placed on the provision of entertainment facilities which would provide opportunities for social activities without creating the kinds of disturbances which have occurred in the past. Facilities mentioned above such as dancing areas and group areas with central firepits, seem useful here. In addition organized entertainment functions, such as the folk festival held in the past, can be important. A very interesting idea was presented in a proposal that users should be encouraged to plan and manage some of these entertainment activities themselves. Current interest in the arts and in crafts would seem to suggest that participation by users, particularly the young, in these activities could benefit both user groups. At least one of the synectics groups felt that if facilities such as a stage, or amphitheatre were provided the users would be able to develop their own

programs. Any encouragement by Parks Branch in this regard would probably increase this kind of activity, thus diminishing the influence of groups that create disturbances.

Proposals regarding site design were also made with respect to encouraging co-existence. Smaller single unit campsites only could be provided. Similar suggestions as to natural vegetation barriers were made as for designing to separate the user groups. The site design considerations could include the above suggested entertainment facilities. Respective suggestions regarding user education, park officer training and enforcement were made, with the objective of attaining co-existence instead of separation of the groups.

THE GROUPS

The discussion of results of this study includes a more detailed treatment of the working groups because of the novelty of the problem-solving method used. It is felt that some value may be derived from a recording of the author's evaluation of the groups as problem solving teams. This recording will apply the criteria developed by Prince and suggested above.¹⁶ It will give examples to illustrate its contention taking examples from the video-tape recordings. It will then go on to make some comments about group effectiveness. Finally, several other determinants of group effectiveness will be discussed.

Prince notes that "questions 1 and 2 deal with the issue of defining the problem."¹⁷ Groups that achieve a common understanding of the problem and who are able to focus on a single aspect of the problem

¹⁶See G.M. Prince, op.cit. pp. 17-18 and in this report p. 12

¹⁷G.M. Prince, op. cit. p. 17

are more likely to develop useful and implementable solutions, otherwise there is confusion.¹⁸ The group of graduate students came closest to achieving this common understanding. The following example illustrates the type of clarification that was requested.

A: "Could you clarify the use of liquor illegally?"

Leader: "It refers to underage drinking."

A: "What are the regulations in terms of drinking in the park?"

Is it that you can drink on your own site?"

Expert: "Yes"

A: "That's allowed, but wandering around out on the road, that isn't?"

Expert: "Yes"

B: "Maybe you could go through the ways to explain the numbers?."

A full twenty-five minutes was spent by this group on problem clarification, calling on the expert repeatedly to answer questions. When the synectics session began and suggestions were asked for by the leader only one further question was asked of the expert. By comparison Group B continued to consult the expert throughout the synectics session until step 5 (The Excursion) was reached. The questions posed by this group were not related to clarification but to gathering as much information as possible regardless of its relation to the problem. The following questions were posed during step 3 (Suggestions).

A: "What do we know about the ethnic composition of these people?"

Expert: "Very little."

A: "Do we have any information regarding their economic status, I mean, whether they are college students or non-college students?"

B: "Is it those people who arrive late?"

¹⁸Ibid. p. 26

The questions indicate an immediate search for simple straightforward solutions. At best they could be considered attempts to understand the user group rather than the problem. During step 4 (Goals as Understood) a third participant would not agree that a "precise" problem definition had been reached and therefore a solution could not be suggested. In Group C only a short period of time was spent questioning the expert about the problem. The majority of the time before the session began was spent explaining the problem solving method to the group. This group tended to use step 2 (Analysis by the Expert) as a forum by which personal experiences could be introduced and related. In Group D the participants were park managers and other employees of the Parks Branch and no time was spent on step 2. This group did however make use of step 3 (Suggestions) to relate personal views of the problem and relate past experiences with it.

Several important points are illustrated here, and some problems that the groups had later on have their origins in this part of the session. Since Group A was able to accept the problem as complex and multi-faceted, they were later able to focus each participant's attention on various aspects of the problem through the session. Group B was unable to do this at any time later in the session, and when one member had the attention of the group and was expressing his ideas other members withdrew from the discussion. Group B therefore tended to act as a group of individuals rather than a team. Prince calls both withdrawal from discussion and a lack of consensus regarding problem definition sources of frustration for groups.¹⁹ In both Groups C and D the initial response from participants led to the relating of personal views and experiences. It was useful to the session as a whole to allow this because it relea-

¹⁹Ibid. p. 14

sed some pressure felt by participants as to presenting arguments they felt to be important. Once these had been verbalized and the participant rewarded by having the idea duly recorded on the flip-chart pad in use, Groups C and D showed evidence of both working as a team and as a group of individuals. Group C tended more toward the team approach while Group D tended more toward a group of individuals. Evidence of this was apparent in Group C in their ability to empathize a co-existing relationship among animals, birds, and insects. Group D showed fewer examples of supportive behaviour such as building on another participant's idea. They also tended not to shoot down or immediately criticize another participant's idea. Group A, having had previous training which described such behaviour were aware of what would happen when it occurred. They were the only group to successfully apply these behavioural criteria.

Prince identifies "good listening as perhaps the single most important aspect of Synectics training".²⁰ He goes on to quote Carl Rogers who proposes "...that the major barrier to mutual interpersonal communication is our very natural tendency to judge, to evaluate, to approve or disapprove, the statement of the other person, or the other group."²¹ Rogers proposes a solution by suggesting that,

"Real communication occurs, and this evaluative tendency is avoided, when we listen with understanding. What does this mean? It means to see the expressed idea and attitude from the other person's point of view, to sense how it feels to him, to achieve his frame of reference in regard to the thing he is talking about."²²

²⁰Ibid. p. 41

²¹Ibid. p. 42

²²Ibid. p. 43

The latter statement by Rogers is the ideal. None of the groups achieved this consistently, but some showed excellent examples of its occurrence. There were however far more examples of its absence and some examples of participants' not being heard at all.

Group A and Group C provided the best examples of its occurrence. In the session with Group A during step 6 (Examination) this exchange occurred while discussing separation of the groups.

A: "have a physical boundary; the greater the distance between the two the better."

B: "Yea, like at Riding Mountain National Park they have a separate young people's area: Sleepy Hollow campground."

C: "Or have a porta park, an area used for a park only when you need it. Otherwise it is just a field, a vacant lot or a parking lot." This carries the concept a bit further."

In Group C during step 5 (the Excursion) the example of co-existence led to a role playing situation in which one participant became a hippopotamus, another became a parasite on the hippo's back and a third became a bird seeking the parasite as food. In this case the idea of mutual benefit for the two groups was developed. During the acting out of this example participants empathized with their respective roles and with the roles of the other participants. The same group exhibited examples of not listening or ignoring. When asked to describe or give a metaphor for co-existence one member replied, "It all boils down to enforcement."

In Group D there was more evidence of not listening than of listening. In general, suggestions here were ignored as well as ideas. When alternative entertainment forms were suggested then a participant detailed the suggestion with examples, but it wasn't picked up or expan-

ded on by others as a useful idea.²³ In Group B practically no listening occurred. When ideas or suggestions were given they were immediately explained, supported and described by the contributor. They were then dropped from the discussion until the original contributor found another opening for the idea to be presented again.

THE GROUPS AND THE RESULTS

The variation in the various groups' handling of the synectics method is apparent, and can be seen by using some of Prince's indicators. The reasons for this must be speculative at this point. Some would, however, be intuitively obvious and should be noted.

Group A had about a two month history of weekly meetings at the time the session was held. The meetings had focussed on small group communication skills and some of the students had studied together in the past. The session had a dual purpose for this group; to teach them about the synectics method and to aid in the research for this report.

Group B had no formal history of having met to discuss any subject and one member participated from outside the University of Manitoba faculty. This participant's limited contribution is therefore somewhat understandable. The group was formed as a multidisciplinary team and would likely have benefited greatly from training in synectics before attempting as complex a problem as the Falcon Lake situation. There was no evidence of competence in interpersonal communication in this group of specialists.

Group C had a one year history of bi-weekly meetings held for the purpose of informal discussion of issues that interested the group.

²³ Silence or ignoring contributions can be particularly harmful. See G.M. Phillips, Communication and the Small Group, Second Edition, The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., Indianapolis, 1973, p. 61, and N.R.F. Maier, Problem-solving Discussions and Conferences: Leadership Methods and Skills McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1963, p. 110

This group seemed to have established an informal communication pattern with some formal hierarchical characteristics.

Group D contained Parks Branch staff who had worked together for various lengths of time and in various positions. The direct relation of the jobs held by these participants to the problem under consideration both helped them and hindered them in using the method. On one hand each person had a clear grasp of the problem; and on the other he was most familiar with the manner in which his job was affected by the problem.

None of the groups had had previous synectics training before the sessions were held. The effectiveness of any one group may have been influenced by other factors than experience with the synectics method. Group problem solving is also influenced by problem type, by the personalities of the participants and by leadership style.²⁴ The effects may be evident in the determination of the goals of the group itself. Participants usually try to have their own goal or area of special expertise selected. The personalities of the participants will also likely be reflected in the kinds of solutions generated. For groups that have been active for some time a group personality may result with each member finding a niche in that personality which dissipates the discomfort of a first meeting.

Though the development of a group personality cannot be fully explained it appears to be related to the personalities of the members, the nature of leadership, the nature of the task set for the group and a serendipity factor.²⁵ The influence of leadership is dependent on how the leader sees his role with respect to the group. The leader of a

²⁴G.M. Phillips, op. cit., pp. 34-75

²⁵Ibid. p. 54

synectics works with a set of behavioural guidelines and plays an important role in the process. This role is outlined in an appendix to this report.

An important implication of this study would be the relationship of the group structured problem solving experiences to the increasing use of team management.²⁶ Teams are increasingly being set up to manage a particular area of responsibility or to work on certain kinds of problems. A structured problem-solving approach can be very useful to them when faced with complex problems that require innovative solutions. It is apparent from this study that innovative solutions are achievable by suitably trained personnel without long term experience with the problem. It is also apparent that personnel working closely with a certain problem can gain valuable insight using the synectics method. This insight may have gone undiscovered for some time due to job commitments, institutionalized routine or other constraints.

Teams have been found to be most effective when they are set up to apply their skills to amenable problem areas. When they deal with multi-dimensional problems, when many departments are involved, or when the activities of one agency affects the activities of many other agencies, teams are ideally suited to the task. The interpersonal communications skills which were clearly shown to be essential to the synectics method are also essential to these teams, whatever their problem-solving approach. Established teams could therefore gain both insight regarding their problems and group management skills by using the synectics method as part of a larger set of techniques in interpersonal relationships.

²⁶Other kinds of structured experiences which complement synectics are described in J.W. Pfeiffer and W.E. Jones (eds.), The Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators, University Associates, 1974

CONCLUSIONS:

The conclusions that can be drawn from this study are concerned with the possible policy, planning and management strategies available to the Parks Branch as developed by the four groups and with the use of the group problem solving method known as synectics. The development of an integrated park policy dealing with the user conflict disturbances is based on the strategies suggested by the groups.

1. It can be concluded from this study that Parks Branch faces two alternative objectives, which are not mutually exclusive, with respect to this problem. They are to separate the conflicting user groups or to facilitate the co-existence of the conflicting user groups. The achievement of these objectives is enhanced by applying suitable site planning considerations, education of the user with respect to his alternatives, and training of the park officers with respect to working with groups. In addition, education of the park officers with respect to law enforcement and methods of achieving self regulated user groups could be applied.
2. It can be concluded from this study that the synectics method of group problem-solving is capable of generating problem solutions with groups that have little or no past experience with the problems. In addition, the method encourages the development of innovative solutions to complex problems. The most effective use of the method is achieved by groups who have a history of working together in discussing and solving problems and who have developed inter-personal communication skills and techniques of structural group interaction.

3. It can be concluded from this study that an integrated policy for use by Parks Branch in dealing with the user conflict problem is attainable. The policy can include various strategies with various time, money and labour requirements. Organized into time horizons, those strategies are:

A. Short Term (1 to 4 years)

a. For parks with areas capable of being quickly adapted, users should be asked to choose between social or private areas based on information given to them as regards permitted activities, visitors, etc.

b. For parks with areas capable of being quickly adapted park officers should be trained in group management skills, enforcement guidelines and the use of enforcement resources.

c. Users of parks with areas capable of being quickly adapted should be oriented to becoming self-regulating by identifying one camping unit, by encouraging correspondence among users regarding disturbances and by identifying all members of the camping unit upon arrival at the park.

d. Careful observation of the use of group and private camping areas should be recorded for use in future planning of provincial parks. Problems should be noted and incorporated into the future planning criteria.

B. Medium Term (5 to 10 years)

a. New parks and parks without existing amena-

ble areas should be provided with suitable facilities for group and private activities based on observations of the use of similar camping areas recorded above.

b. Programs and plans for new parks and existing parks should be designed so as to act as incentives for the users to become more homogeneous groups based on recreation expectations.

c. Park officer training in group management skills and in enforcement should continue.

d. Users should be informed as to the variety of opportunities being provided in the parks and that they should be prepared to choose their alternatives based on recreation expectations.

e. Programs orienting users to becoming self-regulated should continue.

C. Long Term (beyond 10 years)

a. New parks should be considered as a part of the system of recreation opportunities available in the province. Provision for special use parks should be made.

b. New special use parks should incorporate incentives through design and programs to attract homogeneous user groups.

c. Park officer training in group management skills and in enforcement should continue.

d. Users should be informed as to the variety of opportunities being provided in the parks so that they should be prepared to choose their alternatives based

on recreation expectations.

e. Programs orienting users to becoming self-regulated should continue.

APPENDIX 1: PROBLEM STATEMENT USED BY THE GROUPS:

The Problem Statement

Falcon Lake Provincial Park contains two planned campgrounds plus one overflow area. The Beach Campground (#2, Map) contains 289 campsites, the Lakeshore campground (#1, Map) contains 186 campsites and the overflow camping area has accommodated 500 sites (#10A, Map). This overflow area has no designated sites, no designated parking area and no adequate gate or attendant regulation. This overflow area was restricted to 200 sites following the situation outlined below. In the two organized campgrounds no visitors are allowed to enter after 11:00 P.M. The natural vegetation of the two organized areas separates campsites but the vegetation of the overflow area is sparse and resembles an open field.

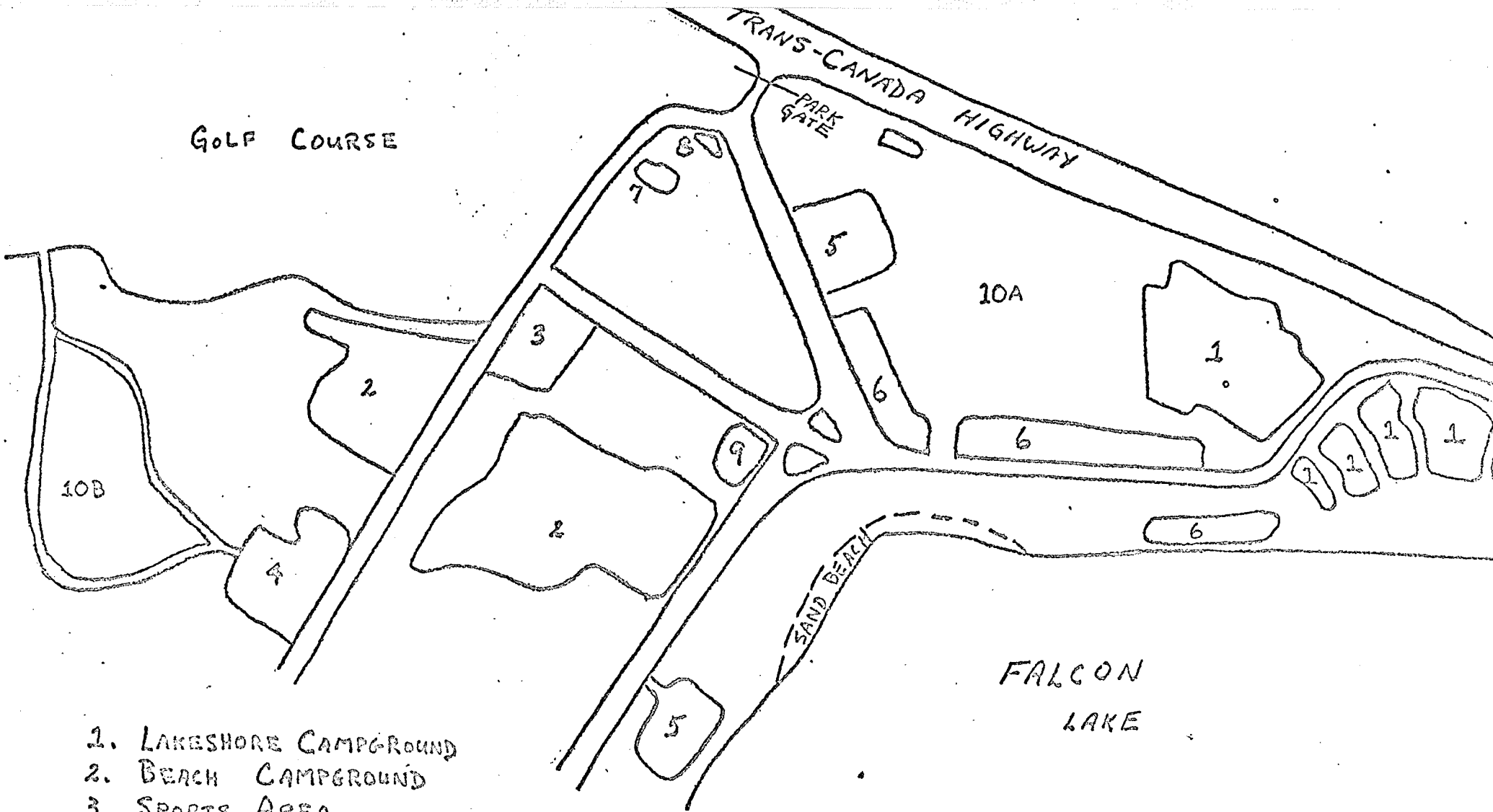
The overflow area, therefore, allows campers to congregate in large groups because its open natural characteristics and lack of roads or designated campsites do not restrict such gathering. When such groups form noise generated by the campers, their music and their social interaction disturb other campers. At Falcon Lake there is only parking in the visitors area (#5, Map) outside the overflow. Group behaviour has included the use of drugs and/or liquor illegally, reckless driving, drunkenness and loud vocal exchanges within the group and between the group and Parks staff. Disturbances have occurred similarly in the regular campgrounds but on a smaller scale.

Incidents which have occurred within the past three seasons of summer camping range from out-of-control disorders involving 1200 people to smaller individual groups of from five to six people. Summary evictions and charges have been enforced where possible. The ages of the campers involved ranges from 15 to 26. Charges have included fines up to \$100.00

Park regulation enforcement now includes special constable au-

thority given to parks officers. Support from RCMP detachments have been available with four constables involved in park patrols. One and two man patrols now operate in the parks from 8:00 P.M. to 7:00 A.M. assessing trouble areas.

The campers who seek the social group gatherings prefer to camp in the overflow area even if regular sites are available and park officers sometimes prefer to assign the overflow campsites to them so as to minimize disturbance of campers in the organized campgrounds.



GOLF COURSE

TRANS-CANADA HIGHWAY

PARK GATE

10A

10B

SAND BEACH

FALCON LAKE

1. LAKESHORE CAMPGROUND
2. BEACH CAMPGROUND
3. SPORTS AREA
4. MAINTENANCE
5. PARKING
6. PRIVATE DWELLINGS (SEASONAL)
7. STAFF
8. ADMINISTRATION
9. SHOPPING CENTRE
10. OVERFLOW CAMPING A. OLD
B. NEW

APPENDIX 11: SUGGESTIONS, GOALS AS UNDERSTOOD
VIEWPOINTS DEVELOPED BY EACH GROUP

GROUP A

Suggestions.

1. Separate the groups
2. Have less stringent rules
3. Have a clear definition of use areas
4. Have a site design that encourages or discourages behaviours
5. Have a swift crackdown
6. Restrict use to regular sites
7. No facilities for liquor allowed
8. Have a user oriented design based on user motivation
9. Restrict the number of users and inform the public when the parks are full, using road signs, radio announcements, etc.
10. Use porta-parks, small lots temporarily used as parks
11. Organize the demand, book in advance
12. Have self policing users, t.v. cameras, hidden microphones public areas, letters sent from camper to camper regarding behaviour.

GOALS AS UNDERSTOOD

1. Self Policing group
2. Separation of the groups
3. No alcohol
4. Police Enforcement
5. A signed contract agreeing to conditions
6. A user-designed park
7. A central Winnipeg Parks office for information
8. A physical design which designates activities by site

VIEWPOINT

1. Separating the groups as rocks are separated by faulting, requires a lubrication of the conflicting demands. Options should be provided for each demand such as a talent night, a folk festival, movies and opportunities for the young. There could be a graduation or laying in design, buffer zones. Facilities conducive to the relevant atmosphere could be provided.

GROUP B:

Suggestions

1. Close the park off completely
2. Have isolated campsites, separate sites
3. Have a limited number of sites
4. Have increased enforcement
5. Define the objectives of the users
6. Have more parks with suitable facilities
7. Segregate the users

GOALS AS UNDERSTOOD

1. To accomodate multiple use of limited land area and to facilitate this so that it is no longer uncomfortable
2. To avoid conflict
3. Define the rights and behaviours of the users in legal terms.

VIEWPOINTS

1. Use a zoning mechanism to designate uses with a least use
2. interior grading to an intensive use exterior
3. Identify homogenous users
4. Change the structure of the park to decrease interaction.
Provide more natural vegetation in the overflow.
5. Use negative sanctions to reduce conflict such as signs.
Also segregate different type of use.

GROUP C:

Suggestions

1. Have a platform in the water, off the beach, with a scheduled departure for use by party seekers
2. Give something constructive to try to meet the needs of both sectors
3. Have more natural vegetation in the overflow area
4. Have a young people's area across the road separated by an overpass
5. Permit reasonable people only
6. Ban electronic equipment
7. Have different kinds of parks

GOALS AS UNDERSTOOD

1. Provide opportunities for pleasure users
2. Provide opportunities for social and quiet campers
3. Have no parks, only private places to go
4. Have separate interest areas, each with physical comforts and entertainment
5. Have a boat or vehicle to allow noisy, social groups to go off on their own
6. Have a more helpful site plan including large treed campsites, limits on the number of tents, and more vegetation
7. Create self-enforcing co-existence

VIEWPOINTS

1. Inform users beforehand what is expected and what the consequences will be
2. Create a symbiotic relationship in which both groups can win and no one is injured. This requires education of the public and facilities designed to user standards. The public needs

a feeling that the park is theirs. They should be allowed to make some choices

3. Have better site planning to provide some amenities yet be surrounded by nature
4. Have a family camping area and a separate teenage area, each with social and private areas

GROUP D:

Suggestions

1. Enforce control measures;
 - a) no visitors allowed in the overflow at late hours
 - b) no driving in and out
 - c) increased patrol staff
 - d) a park attendant that stayed later until one or two
 - e) increased use of the RCMP in the overflow
 - f) bar previous offenders
2. Eliminate the overflow as it is incompatible with the Parks Act
3. Re-educate the user and the Parks Branch
4. Eliminate liquor and drugs
5. Provide other entertainment opportunities in the parks
6. Limit the number of users in the campground
7. Define a quality experience for the user and the planner as per crowds, social needs, etc.
8. A physical separation of different kinds of activities
9. Have smaller separately planned campsites
10. Eliminate young age groups
11. Use signs as warning devices
12. Have a controlled liquor outlet in the park with none allowed in from outside

GOALS AS UNDERSTOOD

1. Town facilities would exist
2. Increased policing by the RCMP
3. An educated user who would accept some noise and realize his activities affect others
4. Provide group campsites with little policing
5. Distribute users by preference for activities
6. Provide various activity facilities, entertainment

VIEWPOINTS

1. Condoning Falcon Lake activities leads to their continuing.
More enforcement is needed

GROUP D:

VIEWPOINTS COND'T

2. Separate the groups
3. Educate the young users
4. Have a balanced site design

APPENDIX 111: SOME COMMENTS ON LEADING A SYNECTICS SESSION

This appendix is included for readers who become interested in synectics as a problem solving method. In the course of this study I had the opportunity to lead four sessions with quite different small groups. Some observations regarding the leadership experience may be useful.

Firstly it should be noted that Prince gives a very useful set of guidelines for leaders.¹ They are listed here but should be examined in the text for his comments explaining the guidelines based on his experience with the synectics method. The guidelines are:

- a) Never go into competition with your team
- b) Be a 200% listener
- c) Do not permit anyone to be put on the defensive
- d) Keep the energy level high
- e) Use every member of your team
- f) Do not manipulate your team
- g) Keep your eye on the expert
- h) Keep in mind that you are not permanent

The attitude taken by the session leader is very important to group's effectiveness. The leader must be, above all, sensitive to his group. This is emphasized by Prince in his guidelines where listening is concerned, where participants not being put on the defensive are concerned, and with manipulation of the team. It is, however, important enough to be restated here.

What is required is the ability of the leader to see himself as a clarifier, or reflective mechanism, who restates what a participant has said to be sure that he and the other participants have understood. Understanding ideas is the result of listening and is crucial to the session. The restatement of a suggestion that accomplishes this and that regards the contributor is one that attempts a restatement from the point

¹G.M. Prince, The Practice of Creativity A Manual for Dynamic Group Problem Solving, Collier Books, Collier MacMillan Publishing Company, 1970, New York, pp. 58-65

of view of the contributor.

The effect of a supportive attitude and empathetic body language² is to increase the openness of group operation. Negativism and criticism are played down by doing this. Some groups, certainly those meeting for the first time, seem to be highly critical and have trouble establishing communication norms upon which they can base contributions. All groups must endure this phase. Therefore, if possible, a group should meet a few times before a synectics session is attempted. These preliminary meetings could be used to assess the expertise available for finding disciplines from which examples can be taken. They could also be used for developing a common understanding of the problem to be used. The lack of a common understanding subverts any possibility of the group becoming a team and developing supportive behaviour patterns.

The leader's attempts to keep the energy level high are partly a function of his leadership style. A high energy level in a synectics session is based on the listening and supportive behaviour patterns developed by the group. It is a sign that the group is involved as a team and often indicates that useful solutions are close to being developed. The energy level is a subjective state made up of communication linkages that encompass the group and as such it must build up during step 3 (Suggestions), step 4 (Goals As Understood) and peak during step 5 (Excursion). Keeping this energy level high is very important to step 6 (Examination) and step 7 (Force Fit). The energy level is most important in step 7, the most difficult of all the procedures. There is no sure fire method for achieving a high energy level and it should be tailored to the group. One method that has been found to work is simply

²A. Mehrabian, Silent Messages, Wadsworth Publishing, 1971, is an excellent source of information on this.

drawing on the listening and restating to ask several difficult questions of the group. Hopefully, one of these questions will trigger an idea among one of the members. The methods suggested by Prince³ are also useful but difficult to apply to groups not previously trained in synectics. An awareness, on the part of the group, of what these methods are meant to do is essential to their use. The group should be held together as much as possible and for as long a time as possible. Interruptions such as coffee breaks destroy any momentum built up. It appears that attempts to repeat examinations and or excursions for several goals as understood statements may be too much for a group to handle at one session. Consideration should therefore be given to bringing a group back to repeat the exercise at periodic intervals.

It was apparent that the groups containing women were evidently more capable of empathetic analogy. It may be that this results at least partly from the sociological roles women are expected to play in their normal lives. The detailed analogy undertaken by group C (all women) and the attempt made at it by group A (one woman) suggest this.

A final observation would be that the study could have used one group of seven participants and trained them extensively in the synectics method as well as interpersonal communication, supportive behaviour, and the appropriate use of body language. This trained group could then work on the problem over a number of sessions as well as on other problems.

³G.M. Prince, op. cit., pp. 98-105

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