Northern Rocky Mountains Park

Kłôwāh’ chô - Big Grass

Management Plan

Draft Nov 2011

BRITISH COLUMBIA

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Cover Photo: ***Tuchodi River – BC Parks Image Bank***

Kłôwāh’ chô - Big Grass ***Kaska First Nations name sake***

Northern Rocky Mountains Park

Management Plan

Approved by:

_____ _____

First Nation Date

_____ _____

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Acknowledgements

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Public Advisory Group:
A genuine thank you is extended to the members of the Northern Rocky Mountains Public Advisory Group for their dedication, support, sharing of knowledge and concern for this wonderful Park. Each member of the Public Advisory Group below had an alternate and represented a sector.

Interest	Representative	Alternate
Aviation- Commercial	Larry Moody	Rob Morrison
Aviation- Recreation	Dwayne Palmer	John Todd
Boating- Commercial	Cam Allen	Guy Scott
Boating- Recreation	Lee Surinak	Doug McKee
Commercial Guide/Outfitting- Hunting	Barry Tompkins	Dave Wiens
Environment/Conservation	Brian Churchill	Wayne Sawchuk
Horse- Commercial Transport	Robert Yorke	Jeff Browne
Horse- Recreation	Elmer Moorman	Marv Patrick
Hunting/Fishing- Local Residents	Dave Turchanski	Tom Fulton
Hunting/Fishing-Provincial Residents	Gerry Paille	Ian Stacey
Local Government	Jack Sime	Hugh Morey
Local Citizen	Barry Clarke	Åsa Berg
Lodge Owners	Chris Winkelmeyer	Neil Sorken
Recreation- Self-propelled	Shannon Soucie	
Snowmobiling- Recreation	Dennis Meier	Tom Fulton
Trapping	Ross Peck	Barry Clarke

Thank you to our facilitator Gail Wallin, and Duncan Barnett of Management Plus Communications Limited for a wonderful job keeping all involved on track and heading in the same direction.

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Funding support from the Muskwa-Kechika Advisory Board is also gratefully acknowledged. And a special thank you to those who have lead the way over the last century and taken care of this awe inspiring country called the Northern Rocky Mountains.

Scott Fraser
BC Parks, Northern Region - Peace Section
Planning Section Head

Vision Statement

The following vision statement describes the desired future state and management regime for the Northern Rocky Mountains Park for the next fifty years. It provides long-term direction for Park managers, while aiding them in making decisions regarding current issues. The vision statement is dynamic and conceptual, allowing for change due to evolving ideas regarding conservation and recreation. This vision statement is also based, in part, on the conservation and recreation contributions of the Northern Rocky Mountains Park to the Provincial Protected Areas Goals. ***See Appendix A***

To protect representative examples of the ecological diversity, the unique wildlife values, and natural and cultural features in the Northern Rocky Mountains Park, while providing a wide range of quality outdoor recreation opportunities. To reflect in the Park plan, the intent and direction of the Fort Nelson Land and Resource Management Plan, and maintain consistency with traditional or historic practices of management and use in self-sufficiency and self-determination.

TREATY 8 FIRST NATIONS VISION STATEMENT

WELCOME to our homeland. The Beaver (Dunne-za, Dane-zaa), Cree, Saulteau, Slavey (Dene), and TseK' hene indigenous groups have occupied these lands since time immemorial. Treaty 8 was signed in the spirit of Peace and Friendship June 21, 1899. British Columbia Treaty 8 Territory is hundreds of thousands of square kilometers in size and includes 8 groups: Blueberry River First Nations, Doig River First Nation, Fort Nelson First Nation, Halfway River First Nation, McLeod Lake Indian Band, Prophet River First Nation, Saulteau First Nations and West Moberly First Nations. Our relationship to the land has and continues to be the spiritual basis for our mode of life. The land has always, and will continue to, provide shelter, food, clothing, and the economic resources for our livelihood. As a First Nation, we have an obligation to implement our inherent rights that are affirmed by the Constitution Act, 1982. This includes sustainability of our resources in order for us to hunt, trap, fish, and continue our mode of life. Prior to the arrival of the Europeans we were actively involved in the management of our territories: the lands understood us and we understood the land. Today, we continue to manage our Territory.

BC Treaty 8 First Nations were not involved in the initial development plans of this Park in regards to its location and why the area was chosen. We would like neighbouring First Nations, outdoor enthusiasts and other visitors to our land who are enjoying the bounties of this Park to acknowledge and respect that you are on Treaty 8 Territory. Please act as a steward of Treaty 8 Territory so that together we will maintain its natural beauty, and cultural resources. This maintenance will be respectful to our current use and for future generations. Please conduct yourself in a manner that respects cultural heritage resources and values. Treaty 8 Territory will always be the home of First Nations for as long as the sun shines, the grass grows and the water flows.

Plan Highlights

The Northern Rocky Mountains Management Plan is a component of the Fort Nelson Resource Management Plan and Muskwa-Kechika Act and was developed through their direction; and the Muskwa-Kechika Management Plan and the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area Recreation Management Plan provide guidance concerning conservation, recreation and cultural heritage roles in values. When completed, the Muskwa-Kechika Wildlife Management Plan will provide guidance for managing wildlife within the Park.

This Management Plan has been endorsed by the Northern Rocky Mountains Public Advisory Group as being

"Consistent with the spirit and intent of each of these land use plans."

This Management Plan was developed with the input of a Public Advisory Group to address the outstanding values of this nationally significant area, from a conservation as well as recreation perspective. As with all Park and Protected Area Management Plans, the approaches and methods used in the plan are adapted to the unique nature of the Park and will not necessarily be used in other Parks and Protected Areas. Throughout this document the term BC Parks will be used and will refer to the BC Parks Component of the Ministry of Environment, Peace Section.

Those who were involved in the establishment of the Northern Rocky Mountains Park (the Park), as well as the travelers and explorers of its lands past, believe there is no place as beautiful, or more majestic, on earth.

The citizens of British Columbia's goal in conserving and protecting this relatively large, undeveloped area, with guidance from the Fort Nelson Land and Resource Management Plan (FNLRMP), is to protect representative natural landscapes and ecosystems, and the outstanding wildlife and natural phenomena, including rare plants, unique landforms, unusual natural processes, and uncommon ecosystems.

At times this Park will be used for scientific research, education, and a variety of recreational activities, but foremost we must ensure that it is protected. Protected doesn't mean prohibited. For centuries, British Columbians and others have traveled the secluded largely pristine areas of the northeast, enjoying the solitude, beauty, and adventure it offers. The

British Columbia Government's Protected Areas are not designed to restrict these pleasures – far from it. In fact, ecologically sustainable public access, use and enjoyment of our natural areas is encouraged.

Extensive consultation with the general public has shown how important it is to recognize traditional uses. Consequently BC Parks involved a Public Advisory Group for the development of this Park plan, and will respect the history, culture and treaty rights of British Columbia's First Nations in its management planning process. The process took approximately 3 years but the Northern Rocky Mountains Park Public Advisory Group (PAG) worked diligently in forwarding their concerns and discussing various issues. It must be noted that the PAG did reach consensus on all of the issues that needed to be addressed. It was clear that some members of the Public Advisory Group were not comfortable with the zoning designations of BC Parks. Nevertheless, through discussion between Peace Region BC Parks and its planning counterparts throughout the province, the terminology of some zones has been re-designed to facilitate more suitable zoning designations. Established local hunting and fishing patterns, and management requirements, were also taken into account.

Most of the recreational use in the Northern Rocky Mountains Park is focused on backcountry activities, with the front country activities limited to the northern portion along the Alaska Highway; the Alaska Highway corridor creates a staging area for low-impact hiking. The Park is available for experienced backpackers looking for rewarding wilderness experiences, solitude and personal inspiration.
The Northern Rocky Mountains Park is rich in biodiversity; its genealogy, species, and ecosystems as well as the processes that link them together. However, preserving isn't just about saving animals and other living creatures. It's also about providing for our own health, quality of life, and opportunity for the future.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Management Plan Purpose

A Park management plan provides direction for the management, conservation and use of a Park. The Northern Rocky Mountains Park Management Plan describes management objectives that relate to the protection and management of lands, waters and resources, and is derived from information relating to such things as natural resources, cultural/heritage values, and recreation uses in addition to activities occurring on surrounding lands. A management plan responds to strategic issues by defining a set of management strategies and the range of uses and activities that can occur within a Park. The Protected Area Strategy (PAS) states:

> **"...a Park management plan will be prepared with public involvement for each area designated, and will provide the objectives and guidelines by which the area will be managed"**

This management plan:

- Establishes a long-term strategic direction for this Park;
- Sets out a vision for the future state of the area;
- Addresses current issues affecting that long-term vision; and,
- Guides day-to-day management.

1.2 Planning Area

The Park incorporates the former Wokkpash Recreation Area, borders Stone Mountain Park to the north, and Kwadacha Wilderness Park to the southwest. The combined area of Wokkpash and the Park, touched by the Alaska Highway on its northern flank, protects a vast portion (666, 961 hectares) of the north-eastern mountain landscape, creating an unparalleled contiguous wilderness area that is largely un-roaded at the present.

The Park is located in the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area (M-KMA), and at 6.3 million hectares, the M-KMA is one of the most significant wilderness areas in North America and is comprised of 1.17 million hectares of provincial Parks surrounded by 3.24 million hectares of Special Management Areas.

Much of the Northern Rocky Mountains are a remote wilderness area with the closest road access via the Alaska Highway on its northern boundary. The nearest communities to the Park along the Alaska Highway are Toad River and Fort Nelson. The city of Fort Nelson lies approximately 200 - 300 km north-east of the Park. It has a year-round population of about 6, 400, with an increase of up to 2, 000 during the winter due to

forestry and oil and gas employment. Fort St. John is the largest city in the Peace region, and has a population of about 20,000 and services more than 45, 000 people.
The area is used by residents of northeast British Columbia, but the profile of the Park extends well beyond local communities. The area is popular for recreation users from other parts of British Columbia as well as attracting other Canadians and international visitors. The larger percentage of recreation use traditionally has focused on hunting and the provision of hunting services. It is expected that the Park will appeal increasingly to those participating in non-hunting recreation activities. Hunting and non-hunting activities, both within the PARK and surrounding areas are expected to remain important to local economies.

Insert Reference Map and possibly a First Nations map depicting their boundaries.

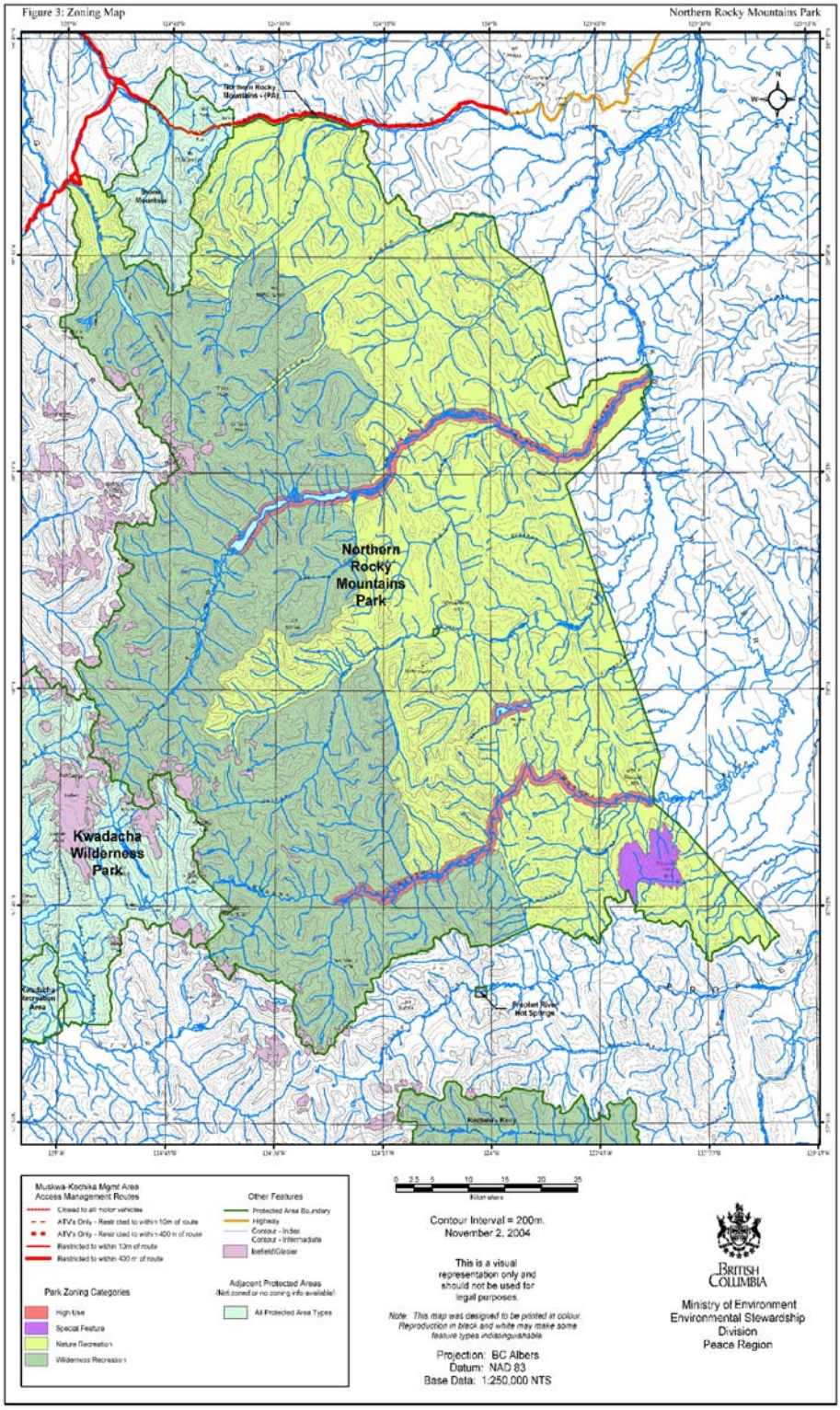


Figure 1: Park Map

1.3 Legislative Framework

The Park was announced in 1997 when the BC Government approved recommendations from the FNLRMP; it was then designated in 1999. The Park is named and described in Schedule D of the *Protected Areas of British Columbia Act*.

Management and development of the Park and protected area are directed by the *Park Act*. Section 8 of the *Park Act* directs that any interest in land in a Park must be authorized by a Park use permit. Section 9 directs that most uses of a natural resource in a Park must be authorized by a Park use permit.

Establishment of the Northern Rocky Mountains Park

- 1969- Recreation reserve was established around Tuchodi Lakes
- 1971 - Area was proposed as the Kechika National Park
- 1980s (early) - Area proposed as Kechika Provincial Forest
- 1980s (mid) - Tetsa and Chisca Rivers considered for Recreation Area and Park status
- 1985 – Master Plan for Kwadacha Wilderness Provincial Park completed
- 1985 – Within Kwadacha was the protection of the headwaters of the Tuchodi River.
- 1988 – Wokkpash as Designated Recreation Area
- 1991- Recommended as a Wilderness Area under the Forest Act
- 1992- Included as an Area of Interest under the Protected Area Strategy
- 1996- Muskwa and Tuchodi Rivers nominated as part of BC's Heritage River System
- 1997- Recommended as a protected area from the Fort Nelson LRMP
- 1998- Area, surrounding special management zones and additional Parks were incorporated into the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area through provincial legislation (M-K Act)
- 1999- Designated as a Class A Provincial Park
- January 2000 – Beginning of Park Management Planning process for the PARK and PAG, completed in December 2003.

Legislation that Pertains to PARK

- Muskwa-Kechika Act and Plan
- Parks Act
- Park Amendment Act 1995
- Environment and Land Use Act
- Forest Act
- Wildlife Act
- Fisheries Act

1.4 Management Committments/Agreements

Muskwa-Kechika Management Area

The Park was established as a result of the recommendations of the Fort Nelson LRMP. The M-KMA encompasses 63, 000 sq. km or 6.3 million ha of northeast British Columbia. In 1998 the M-KMA, as recommended by the FNLRMP, became legally binding with the passing of the M-KMA Act of British Columbia. The intent of the M-KMA is to achieve a balance between economic development and conservation. The overall goal is to maintain in perpetuity the wilderness quality, and the diversity and abundance of wildlife and the ecosystems on which it depends, while allowing resource development in 75% of the non-Park areas. The M-KMA Act specified the creation of five local strategic plans that are consistent with the M-KMA Plan. These five plans are:

Recreation Management Plan
The purpose of this plan is to produce an overview assessment of recreation resources in the M-KMA consistent with LRMP objectives and strategies and the M-KMA Act. This plan will provide directives for the general management of recreation for Parks and protected areas within the M-KMA.

Wildlife Management Plan
The purpose of the Wildlife Managment Plan is to provide comprehensive and long-term guidelines for the management of wildlife resources in the M-KMA.

Oil and Gas Pre-Tenure Plans
The purpose of these plans is to ensure environmentally responsible and timely development of oil and gas resources, by providing results-oriented management guidelines and where appropriate specific prescriptions. Several of these Pre-Tenure plans border the Park.

Park Management Plans
A Park management plan gives direction to the management, conservation, and use of all Class A Parks. Parks and Protected Areas which are adjacent to the Park include: Redfern-Keily, Stone Mountain, Muncho Lake, Dune Za Keyih (includes Dune Za Keyih, Denetiah and Dall River Old Growth) and Kwadacha.

Other Parks and/or Protected Areas within the M-K include Graham-Laurier, Redfern Keily Sikanni Chief Ecological Reserve, Prophet River Hot springs, Toad River Hot springs, Liard River Hot springs, Hornline Creek, and Liard River Corridor;

Landscape Unit Objectives

The purpose of landscape unit objectives is to provide a statement of desirable future condition for a forest resource or forest resource use, which is attainable through management action.

Collaborative Management Agreement – T8/BC Parks Board

Under the Economic Benefits Agreement signed December 2009, both parties, the Doig River, Prophet River, and West Moberly First Nations and BC Parks, agreed to enter into a Parks Collaborative Management Agreement. The T8/BC Parks board began its efforts in 2010 and consists of two members from each party. This agreement will assist its members in reviewing, not only park management plans, but items such as park use permits.

Strategic Engagement Agreement

In 2011 a Strategic Engagement Agreement was created between the Kaska First Nations and the BC Government, and is intended to foster a positive and respectful government-to-government relationship that establishes a Shared Decision Making process and Shared Decision Framework.

1.5 Relationship with First Nations

The Province of British Columbia is committed to a new government to government relationship with First Nations based on respect, recognition and accommodation. New approaches to consultation and accommodation are currently being developed in recognition of this duty[1]. Negotiated collaborative management agreements with First Nations are an example of such processes. The Park Management Plan and subsequent management actions within the plan area will respect First Nations traditional harvesting, cultural activities, and other aboriginal rights and interests. Approval of the Management Plan is without prejudice and is consistent with section .35 (1) of the Constitution Act, 1982[2], which recognizes and affirms aboriginal rights.
Some First Nations did not participate in the Land and Resource Management Planning that led to this Park. However, collaboration with First Nation Governments is essential for the effective implementation of the Management Plan.

BC Parks vision is to build a locally driven, constructive and collaborative relationship which recognizes the early presence of aboriginal peoples, their knowledge and understanding of the land and its processes. We hope to share ideas, management concepts and concerns in order to provide mechanisms for continuing First Nation participation in planning, long and short-term management, and evaluation.

Principles

- BC Parks will promote an understanding and respect of cross-cultural differences.
- Ecological integrity is critically linked to social integrity and First Nations are an important component of the wilderness of North-eastern British Columbia.
- First Nations are key in identifying and evaluating cultural resources.

- First Nations traditional resource harvesting activities will continue in all Parks, including protection for current ways in which these activities are carried out.

BC Parks believes that the management and planning of protected areas can be improved by incorporating First Nations' traditional ecological knowledge and cultural knowledge. To achieve this all parties must work to develop and maintain open and effective communication, including other local communities and the general public. All parties must trust the traditional, as well as the non-traditional (Western scientific management) approaches to resource management. The goal will be to gather, collate and integrate local traditional knowledge with other scientific data to identify, design, establish, monitor and manage Parks.

The relationship between First Nations and the Federal or Provincial governments is considered to be a "government-to-government" relationship. This relationship has its roots in an aboriginal right of First Nations people to be self-governing, and is thus different than the relationship between municipalities and the BC Government, or interest groups and the BC Government.

The relationship between the Treaty 8 First Nations and the Governments of Canada and BC is also somewhat different than that between the Kaska Dena First Nations and the public governments. Some of the rights and interests of the Treaty 8 First Nations have been codified into a Treaty, while the Kaska First Nations do not yet have such an agreement. Since 1995, Kaska Dena Council and the Governments of British Columbia and Canada have been attempting to negotiate a treaty in respect of Kaska rights and interests that will, among other things, give definition to the self-government powers of the Kaska First Nations. This "government-to-government" relationship is recognized in a Letter of Understanding between Kaska Dena Council and the Government of British Columbia in respect of the implementation of the Fort Nelson Land and Resource Management Plan and the establishment of the Muskwa-Kechika Special Management Area. In addition to acknowledging and recognizing the "government-to-government" relationship, this LOU:

- recognizes that the implementation of the Fort Nelson LRMP and the establishment of the Muskwa-Kechika Special Management Area does not undermine or prejudice either the aboriginal claims, rights or interests of the Kaska Dena or the treaty process (including the negotiation of land selection under the treaty process);
- affirms that Kaska Dena Council will be Consulted about the implementation of the LOU, including the establishment of Parks and protected areas and the development of Park management plans;
- allows participation of the Kaska Dena in the planning and management of lands and resources in the LOU area (i.e., the area that is defined by the overlap of the Kaska Traditional Territory with the Fort Nelson LRMP area), including representation on

committees or other similar bodies, such as ad hoc government land and resource planning groups, formed to provide advice on the implementation of the Fort Nelson LRMP and the Muskwa-Kechika;

- guarantees representation of four Kaska members on the Muskwa-Kechika Advisory Board;
- recognizes that the Kaska Dena are entitled to exercise their aboriginal rights within Parks and protected areas within the LOU area, including their right to harvest fish and wildlife using traditional and contemporary harvesting methods, for sustenance, social, and ceremonial purposes;
- commits the BC Government and Kaska Dena Council to negotiate an economic opportunities agreement in respect of economic opportunities for the Kaska Dena in the implementation of the Fort Nelson LRMP and the Muskwa-Kechika, including the Parks and protected areas.

In keeping with the spirit and intent of these provisions of the LOU, it is expected that the Kaska Dena and BC Parks will develop co-operative arrangements to manage this Park complex. This could occur either through the provisions of a treaty or through other types of agreement.

1.6 Relationship with Public Advisory Group

The level of public involvement required to develop Park management plans varies with the complexity of management issues within a particular Park and with the expectations and interests expressed by members of the public. Due to the varied issues and the complexity involved, a high level of public involvement was sought in the development of the Park Management Plan.

The Public Advisory Group was formed to achieve direct engagement of interested and affected groups and individuals in the preparation of the Park Management Plan. This approach required cooperative efforts and significant commitment from the members of the Public Advisory Group. BC Parks will strive to maintain the public advisory group for the Park, and involve the PAG where consultation is warranted; the PAG role does not generally extend to advice on day-to-day operations. In the future the PAG will provide input and advice on outstanding and emerging issues, and proposed variances and changes in management direction.

PAG members will also help to develop a linkage with other plans on adjacent lands that may affect Park. At times they may also be part of a larger annual meeting of other advisory groups involved with the spectrum of issues associated with the Muskwa-Kechika area.

Although an extensive public participation approach was used for the park planning process, BC Parks remains the agency legally mandated to prepare, approve and implement the Park Management Plan.

1.7 Relationship with Other Land Use Planning

The Northern Rocky Mountains Park was recommended for protection in the FNLRMP for its outstanding wilderness character and diverse and abundant wildlife populations. The FNLRMP includes an area of 98, 000 sq. km.

In 1997, the Fort Nelson Land and Resource Management Plan created thirty-seven Resource Management Zones (RMZs), which were grouped into four different categories: Enhanced Resource Development, General Resource Development (with Major River Corridors Sub-Category), Muskwa-Kechika Special Management (with Major River Corridors Sub-Category), and Protected Areas (seven).

In addition to the designations above, the FNLRMP contains specific direction in terms of activities, uses and facilities within the Park, these include: grazing, water control structures, roads, water: motorized activities. The comments and recommendations on each have been applied within this plan. Below are two tables; the first are comments on certain activities/uses/facilities within the Park and the second shows two objectives and their strategies which are to be applied in the Park.

Table 1: Activity/Use/Facility Provisions from the Fort Nelson Land and Resource Management Plan

Activity/Uses/Facility	Comments
Grazing	May be allowed subject to management plan. New tenures can be issued as necessary to support commercial backcountry recreation opportunities.
Water control structures	Small scale water diversion structure allowed (not to be used for small scale hydro-electric development). Intent is to allow commercial operators to provide water supply to base camps.
Roads within protected areas	Roads not allowed.
Water: motorized activities	No motorized boats above Tuchodi Lakes.

Table 2: Commercial Backcountry Recreation and Bear-human interactions

Objective:	Strategies:
1. Ensure Commercial Back Country Recreation (CR) proposals are consistent with the objective and strategies of the	• An inventory of existing and potential CR opportunities is required to guide the allocation. CR activities must be consistent with:

RMZ, and maintain a balance between public recreation and other use.	1. acceptable limits of use; 2. environmental sustainability; 3. greatest benefit to local community; region and province; 4. equitable forage allocation between commercial and non-commercial use; and 5. equitable allocation of suitable campsites. • Manage for wildlife habitat enhancement through subsequent planning processes.
2. Manage to avoid negative bear/human interactions.	• To minimize negative bear/human interactions, public education will focus on informing the public on dealing with bear/human encounters, bear behaviour and the safest human behaviour while in bear country. • Recurring aircraft and riverboat use and access will be sensitive to RMZ values and resource user activities.

The FNLRMP includes the following stipulations for Parks and Protected Areas.

- Logging, mining, hydroelectric and oil and gas exploration and development will not be allowed.
- Allowable uses will be subject to the Park Management Plan
- Trapping activity will be allowed; trap line tenures will be renewable and transferable
- Exotics e.g. Lamas and ostriches are not to be used as pack animals for reasons of disease transfers; unless otherwise proved as safe to native wildlife populations.
- Certain types of off-road motorized recreational vehicles and boats may be restricted either by type of vehicle, time of year or areas designated for use; developed through the Protected Area Planning Process.

1.8 Relationship with Other Agencies

BC Parks works directly with other land and resource management agencies to address specific management issues in the Parks. For example, there is an understanding between staff within BC Parks and the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (FLNRO) with respect to the management of fish and wildlife populations and habitats, to clarify the roles of their Ministries and sections as they relate to various government acts and regulations. To manage livestock grazing, BC Parks and FLNRO (formerly Ministry of Forests) have a formal protocol arrangement by which FLNRO manages range tenures in the Parks under the authority of the Range Act.

BC Parks staff also work directly with staff of the FLNRO in managing wildfire, pests and disease problems, and prescribed burns. Fire management and vegetation management plans for the PARK have been prepared in collaboration with the former Forest Service and Wildlife Branch.

BC Parks will work with the FLNRO and the Ministry of Energy and Mines, and industry, to ensure that resource development plans, more specifically Pre-Tenure Plans, and operations reflect considerations for Park values. To assist in this regard, BC Parks participates in government agency reviews of applications for tenures (permits, licenses, leases) in areas near the Parks where proposed activities could affect Park values or management strategies; this would include crown land Commercial Recreation permits and Pre-Tenure Plans.

1.9 Adjacent Land Use Patterns

Plans have been completed and objectives and strategies for the management of adjacent Resource Management Zones have been established through the FNLRMP process. The adjacent areas currently have very little resource development; some mineral exploration and a few mining areas have been established with associated airstrips to access the area. Forestry and gas and oil development are virtually nonexistent, and as such road access is well removed from the Park boundary. The Churchill Mine Road exists to the west of the Park and the Alaska Highway partially borders the Park on its northern boundary.

It must be noted that the Northern Rocky Mountain Protected Area (764ha) at the northern boundary of the Park was established as a protected area to allow future alignment of the Alaska Highway. A designation as a Protected Area will allow this to happen whereas a Park designation (under the Park Act) would not allow this to occur.

There are also several areas around the Park which require pre-tenure plans. These plans will direct oil and gas operations within the each of the pre-tenure plan boundaries. The conditions within each separate plan could dramatically change the landscape outside of the Park in terms of potential access improvements and viewscapes.

Patterns of adjacent land use can have an impact on Park values. Therefore, the wilderness character of the Park must be considered in adjacent land use decisions. BC Parks will continue building relationships with First Nations, resource managers and stakeholders outside of the Park's boundary, strengthening co-operative measures to sustain Park values.

For example, there are different values, opportunities and users between Stone Mountain and the Park, and BC Parks will try to ensure that any management of Stone Mountain Park be complementary to the Park.

1.10 Existing Tenures and Permits

Northern Rocky Mountains Park is located in a relatively remote, wilderness area, and there are no developed publicly owned facilities within. A number of permitted main campsites are used by the guide outfitters in the Park, and various smaller cabins have been built by guide outfitters in the area for use as hunting and fishing camps. Some additional cabins have also been built for use by trappers and First Nations. There is one private holding of approximately 55ha within the Park.

Tenures and permits at this time are associated with guide-outfitters, trappers and commercial recreation. They usually consist of grazing permits, land tenures and Park Use Permits to operate lodges and smaller cabins associated with guide outfitting, trapping and commercial recreation businesses within the Park.

BC Parks will manage Park use permits within the Park to meet conservation objectives while considering the needs of the holders. It is also an objective of BC Parks to minimize environmental and visual impacts due to the permitted or tenured activities. BC Parks will consult with holders on all aspects of management related to activities, encouraging a feeling of stewardship for the Park. ***See Appendix B*** for a description of all Tenures and Permits.

1.11 Management Planning Process

The management plan for the Park was established as a result of the Fort Nelson LRMP process and associated government-to-government processes with First Nations. A draft management plan was developed based on: management direction from the Fort Nelson LRMP, Public Advisory Group, M-K Board and Park values (natural, cultural, and recreation). Discussions also took place with Ministry of Environment staff, discussions with stakeholders, and public input. Public input into the management plan was also available for review on the BC Parks website for 30 days.

Park management planning takes direction and/or recommendations from the Protected Area Strategy (legislation and policy that is directly or indirectly related to Parks) and other land use initiatives undertaken by provincial agencies. Management of British Columbia's Protected Area system is guided by a set of Cabinet approved protected area management principles.

Protected Areas are not islands. They exist as part of the larger ecosystems and cultural landscapes. Management decisions inside and outside of protected areas should be coordinated and integrated to the greatest extent possible.

Locally, BC Parks endeavours to ensure recognition of the significance that the PARK has for a broad range of private and commercial users, conservationists, First Nations and local citizens. BC Parks appreciates that the Park is critical in supporting public recreation, commercial enterprise, and the conservation and management of significant wildlife and wilderness values. Recognition and acceptance of the requirements for management of large ungulates is of key importance.

BC Parks and the PAG members have followed the intent of the Fort Nelson LRMP and incorporate recommended objective such as:

- General statements on protected areas
- Specific recommendations pertaining to the Park
- General management objectives of the Fort Nelson LRMP.

As well, BC Parks has had to closely monitor its compliance with the MK Act, Park Act, Letters of Understanding with other Government of British Columbia ministries and any agreements with the Kaska Dena Council and Treaty 8 Bands. Additionally BC Parks attempted to ensure the following:

- To seek some level of public involvement in terms of draft reviews.
- To provide long-term vision that encompasses the diversity of natural, cultural and heritage, and outdoor recreation values of the Park.
- To develop management strategies based on the stewardship principle of ecosystem-based management with the fundamental goal of maintaining ecological integrity. A science-based and traditional knowledge based approach will be taken in the implementation and management of this plan.
- To provide long-term direction for the allocation and management of public and commercial recreation opportunities.

2.0 Role of the Protected Area

2.1 Significance in the Protected Areas System

The Northern Rocky Mountains Park contributes to the provincial conservation goals by protecting globally significant representations of ecosystems, diverse and abundant wildlife populations, undeveloped watersheds, wilderness quality, striking mountainous features, as well as cultural-heritage features. The Park contributes to provincial recreation goals by providing outstanding opportunities for backcountry recreation experiences in a wilderness setting where human impact is transitory, minor and in the long-run substantially unnoticeable. Contributions to the Provincial Protected Area include, but are not limited to the following:

- A wilderness character that is diverse with abundant wildlife populations, special landform features, outstanding scenery and rich cultural heritage values that all contribute to the Park's high backcountry recreation values.
- Recreation resource values and opportunities identified for the Park include scenery and wildlife viewing; waterways and lakes providing excellent angling, river boating, rafting and canoeing; hunting, fishing and adventure tourism; and camping, hiking and nature photography.
- Access is mainly by aircraft and boat due to the remoteness of the Park. Horse and foot travel to the Park also occurs. The Park requires a high level of self-determination and self-sufficiency.
- Nationally and internationally significant populations of large mammals such as Stone's sheep, elk, moose, Mountain goat, Grizzly bear, elk and caribou provide important hunting and wildlife viewing opportunities for British Columbia residents, Canada's residents and a large global interest.
- Due to the large area of the Park, multiple-day and week hiking, hunting, and horse excursions are possible using a network of primitive routes, cross-country travel and dispersed campsites.
- The Wokkpash-MacDonald Creek 70km circle route is a spectacular 5-10 day wilderness trip for backcountry adventurers. At the beginning of this trip is the most spectacular example of hoodoo formations in British Columbia. The hoodoos at Wokkpash Gorge are approximately 30 to 90m high and line both sides of the gorge for a distance of 5 km. They are impressive in terms of numbers, size and gravity defying suspended boulders. The immediate area also contains Forlorn Gorge which is a narrow cleft 150 meters deep and 25 meters wide; Fusillier Glacier; and Stepped Lakes.

- The Alaska Highway provides the most convenient access to a portion of the northern boundary of the Northern Rocky Mountains Park and the Tetsa River drainage offers opportunities for day use and multi-day backcountry trips.
- Protection of significant features such as Sleeping Chief Mountain and several impressive glaciers at the headwaters of Tuchodi River system.

WokkPash (BC Parks Image Bank)

The recreation role of the Park is focused on limited, medium-impact opportunities in a mountainous, virtually untouched setting. The emphasis of the Park is to provide the same traditional recreational opportunity that existed previously, and in order to achieve this, the plan has endeavoured to follow guidelines, goals and objectives of the M-K Recreation Plan.

The Park fulfills the ministries backcountry recreation goal, on both a provincial and regional basis, by providing a range of backcountry recreation opportunities:

- Relatively accessible backcountry day and overnight use in or adjacent to the Alaska Highway Corridor with semi established routes and few facilities. Recreation management recognizes traditional activities and use patterns for hiking camping hunting and fishing. Use levels are relatively low and only basic facilities may be provided to meet sanitary and public safety needs to protect the environment.
- More remote and challenging backcountry recreation opportunities in the middle to southern portion of the Park, with emphasis on low, dispersed levels of use. Facilities and Park information will be virtually non-existent, and visitors must be self-reliant and experienced in backcountry travel. Recreation activities compatible with wilderness include: hiking, backpacking, fishing, hunting, river boating, snowmobiling, canoeing, horseback riding, snowshoeing, and nature study.
- There will be some traditional wilderness lodge experiences. Use of the Park area by established wilderness lodges and commercial recreation operators will grant visitors a special opportunity to experience a wilderness environment with relative comfort and security. Aircraft, horses, snowmobiling, hike in, and riverboat will continue as the traditional access modes into the Park.

A large component of the Park's role will be to ensure that local as well as international visitors understand the importance of First Nation history and traditional knowledge, not only within the Park boundaries, but areas outside of the Park. The PAG felt it was important that the history and knowledge base of early Europeans be appreciated and acknowledged as their history closely relates to what and how much of the recreation and work related activities operate today.

2.2 Cultural Heritage

The cultural value of the Northern Rocky Mountains Park relates to the long history of First Nations and non-First Nations trappers, hunters, and expeditions. The Park contributes to preserving cultural heritage values by protecting an area of importance to First Nations and early European history.

It is well known that the First Nations people traveled throughout the Park area, usually from plateaus to mountains and back, due to a lifestyle based on availability of game and other resources and seasonal movements. The ability of the First Nations to cope in the Northern Rocky Mountains before European contact required not only an intricate knowledge of resources and geography, but also an efficient technology. People were dependent on the resources that the mountains and foothills provided them, and their way of life was entirely based on the land.

Information concerning Treaty 8 traditional land use, occupancy and associated sites is incomplete at this time. As Treaty 8 land use studies proceed BC Parks will ensure that these studies, in relation to the Park, are inserted into the Plan. The application of this information may affect various Park management decisions. BC Parks recognizes the requirement to be vigilant when considering what information can be shown as confidentiality is of the utmost importance.

Northern Rocky Mountains Park is located on the outer edges of the Kaska Dena Traditional use area. As would be expected this area does not appear to have experienced the same level of Kaska use as other areas closer to the heart of their territory. Recently compiled information on Kaska land use and occupancy (Kaska Dena Council 1999[3]) lists 33 traditional use sites (out of a total of 9600 for the entire Kaska Dena Traditional Territory in British Columbia). These sites were all associated with hunting, fishing or camping. Important trails are also documented in this compilation of Kaska land use and occupancy information. From this information, it appears that the Kaska accessed the northern part of the Northern Rocky Mountains Park area from a trail along the present-day route of the Alaska Highway, travelling into the heart of the Park along, primarily, the Tetsa River and its tributaries. The north-western border of the Park was accessed by trails along the Racing River, MacDonald Creek, and Wokkpash Creek. The southern part of the Park was accessed by Kaska from the Kwadacha (Fort Ware) area, along the Kwadacha River and across Bedaux Pass to the headwaters of the Muskwa River.

The Northern Rocky Mountains Park area has a very strong historical First Nations presence. The Park area was traditionally used by several First Nations groups, including the Beaver, Kaska, Sekani, and Slavey peoples. The Park Complex falls within the Treaty 8 traditional territories of the Prophet River, Halfway River, Fort Nelson, Doig River, Saulteau, West Moberly, McLeod Lake and Blueberry River First Nations, as well as the Kaska Dena and Fort Liard First Nations.

The First Nations who traversed this country to make a living for themselves were nomadic hunting people who lived in small family groups. Traditionally, a diversity of plants and animals were used for various purposes, ranging from foods to utility to medicine. This included, but was not limited to, moose, wood bison, elk, caribou, bear, goat, sheep, various avian/waterfowl and furbearing species. As well they consumed Northern pike, trout, Arctic grayling, and whitefish, and berries such as saskatoons, choke cherries, huckleberries, cranberry, blueberries. An important activity was the gathering of root masses, mosses, fungi, poplar/aspen, cottonwood, white & black spruce, birch, willow, and lodgepole pine.

The summer/fall activities included the hunting of large and small game, fishing, plant collecting, and the preparation of food for long-term storage for the upcoming winter months. Groups aggregated at traditional camping sites and social activities such as singing, gambling, and courting were important during the summer months. People broke up into smaller bush communities during the winter/spring season.

The timing and availability of plant and animal resources were critical to the success of the First Nations lifestyle and ultimately their survival. Certain plants, for instance, could only be collected in specific locations, either because of their medicinal strengths or their rarity in the landscape. Some fungi, for example, were collected in the winter to burn for their smell, and as a mosquito repellent later in the year.

Good short-term camp locations were chosen based on the animals and plants in the area, and tended to be placed near creeks and on dry ground. As a consequence of the hunter-gatherer lifestyle that the First Nations enjoyed, their shelters consisted of quickly assembled yet versatile structures. Long-distance travel made up a significant component of First Nations life. Overland trails were important transportation routes with game trails being extensively used, especially to intercept animals. Where land trails occasionally proved impractical, water travel was also carried out by canoe in the late spring to early fall months.

Contact with European explorers and fur traders precipitated a dramatic change in lifestyle of these original inhabitants of the Northern Rocky Mountain Park area. People tended to take on a less nomadic lifestyle as they congregated and settled around forts and trading posts. But even today, the First Nations people of the area continue to pursue many of the land use activities that their ancestors pursued. As in the past, their present-day way of life is intimately tied to the land and its resources, particularly its wildlife resources. The same transportation routes that were travelled by First Nations people years ago are navigated by horse, snowmobile, and river boat today. And although modern methods are used to hunt

and trap wildlife, First Nations people of the area are still today heavily dependent on wild game for sustenance and, in the case of trapping furbearers, sometimes travel long distances along the same trails their ancestors walked.

Non-Native history in the Park primarily consists of trapping, fur-trading, guiding, packing and hunting; all of these activities continue today. Horse supported geologic survey expeditions were common in the pre-helicopter era, and were important in establishing early routes and increasing the general knowledge of the area.
American botanist Mary Henry first traveled through and explored the area of the Park in 1931. She was the first person to catalogue plants in north-eastern BC and her party contributed greatly to the mapping of this uncharted area. A mountain in the Park bearing her name (Mt. Mary Henry, located south of Mile 390 of the Alaska Highway) recognizes the important contribution she made to the early exploration of northeast British Columbia.

Knox McCusker, who surveyed the Peace River Block for the Dominion of Canada, was Mary Henry's guide, outfitter and topographer. "Mac" McCusker was an important person in this Park's history. Like all early travelers, McCusker followed First Nations traditional routes and trails that had been in use for hundreds of years throughout the area. The aboriginal people followed game trails and river valleys to trap, hunt, gather, and to trade back and forth between tribes. The first white traders, trappers and guide outfitters used these same trails. Before McCusker surveyed the topography on the 1931 Henry expedition, the region north of the Prophet was uncharted and Mary Henry referred to it as the "blind spot" of Canada, in the National Horticultural Magazine October1934.

In 1934, Charles Bedaux led an expedition through the Park along the Muskwa River in an attempt to establish an east-west route through the Northern Rocky Mountains; the historical “High Trail.” Since the 1930s, packers and guide outfitters have conducted commercial big game hunting operations in the Park. These operators have played an important role in shaping human use patterns of the Northern Rocky Mountains. Mt. Peck and Mt. Gary Powell reflect this history and pay tribute to two of the pioneer guides in this Park, Don Peck and Gary Powell.

Mount Sheffield was "named by E.C.W. Lamarque, DLS (Dominion Land Surveyor), as a result of his exploration and survey as advance party to the Bedaux Expedition, 1934." (data was provided by Janet Mason, Provincial Toponymist, BC Geographical Names Information System, Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management). Bert Sheffield and his brother Kelly were both trappers in the area and, like many trappers of that time, they were happy to get work in the off season with various expeditions. Bert and his partner Henry Couvoisier trapped along the Muskwa River and up to the Tuchodi Lakes. They pulled off the Great Fur Robbery at Old Fort Nelson in the spring of 1936. Sheffield and Couvoisier robbed the Hudson Bay Post of a stockpile of fur and cached it. They were arrested at Kluachesi Lake on charges of trapping out of season. There wasn't enough evidence to charge them with the fur robbery until they were seen trying to retrieve some stolen fur from a cache the following year. They fled the country but were picked up in Sweet Grass Montana and brought back for trial in Prince George. Bert and Henry were then convicted

of their crime, served a year in jail, and were back trapping in the Fort Nelson area the fall of '38.

On March 9, 1942 construction of the famed Alaska Highway commenced. Long considered one of the construction achievements of the world, the Alaska Highway had a large impact on the availability of access to the area in and around the PARK. Started as a wartime measure designed to provide a land route for war material and equipment to Alaska from the Canadian provinces and the American states, the Alaska Highway was punched through 1,500 miles of mountains, muskeg and mosquitoes, in just over 8 gruelling months. More than 11,000 American troops and 16,000 civilian workmen from Canada and the United States, as well as 7,000 pieces of equipment were thrown into the formidable task of penetrating a vast, untamed wilderness.

2.3 Natural Heritage

Geology, Soils and Landforms

An important aspect of the Park are the spectacularly exposed geological structures, including huge folds, thrust faults, rugged castellated peaks, glacially sculpted U-shaped valleys, cirques and hanging valleys. The Park was glaciated approximately 25,000-10,000 years ago, and as ice sheets receded, the area was covered by glacial lakes, which covered the lowland between the Muskwa and Prophet Rivers, and the lower Sikanni Chief River.

The mountains in the area formed due to the rocks being bent, folded, faulted and uplifted by north-eastward compression from western British Columbia. Consequently terrain in the study area is mountainous, and is characterized by rocky steep-sided slopes separated by high and wide valleys. In comparison to the southern Rocky Mountains, the Muskwa Ranges show evidence of more complex tectonic deformation resulting in much more dramatic geological structures.

Glaciers and perennial ice patches are known to subsist within the Park borders, and usually occur at elevations exceeding 2400 m. Spectacular geological formations, escarpments and chevron folds exist in the layers of Sleeping Chief Mountain, Mount Sylvia (2942 meters) and Mount Mary Henry (2614 meters).

Soil development is poor to non-existent in the more elevated alpine areas, while valley bottoms frequently have well-developed and well-drained soils. Exceptional abandoned fluvial features (i.e. meanders, terraces) are also found along the Tuchodi River, Dead Dog Creek, and Gathto Creek. Accomplished fluvial & lacustrine terraces and colluvial/alluvial fans are located along the Tuchodi River and Gathto Creek, as well as along the shorelines of Tuchodi and Kluachesi Lakes. Lateral moraine tills, as well as glacio-lacustrine deposits tend to be at higher elevations and likely related to more recent, small glacier movements dating to the latter portion of the Holocene.

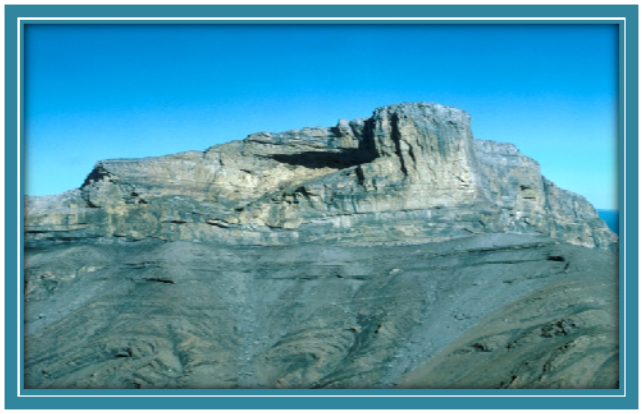


Plate 3 Alpine (Conrad Thiessen)

Plate 4 Lush Valley (BC Parks Image Bank)

Vegetation

The Park lies mostly within the Northern Boreal Mountains ecoprovince. The Northern Boreal Mountains ecoprovince consists mainly of mountains, foothills and wide valleys. The climate is relatively dry. Vegetation is dominated by the Boreal White and Black Spruce (BWBS) zone at low elevations, the Spruce-Willow Birch (SWB) zone at middle elevations, and the Alpine Tundra (AT) zone at high elevations.

Plate 5 Holzworth Meadows (Conrad Thiessen)

Three biogeoclimatic sub zones fall within the Park and include the moist, warm Boreal White and Black Spruce sub zone (BWBSmw), moist, cool Spruce Willow Birch sub zone (SWBmk) and Alpine Tundra sub zone (AT). The SWBmk and AT are found within the Eastern Muskwa Ranges, while in the foothills, BWBSmw dominates the valley bottoms (creating significant wetlands in some areas) and is replaced by either SWBmk or AT higher elevations. The eastern most border of the Park falls within the Muskwa Plateau ecosection and BWBSmw sub zone. The eastern quarter lies within the Taiga Plains (TP) ecoprovince, in the Muskwa Plateau ecosection.

The Northern Rocky Mountains Park encompasses old-growth white spruce forest along alluvial sites in the major river valleys, and secures large representative areas of Spruce-Willow-Birch and alpine tundra zones within the northeastern slopes of the Rocky Mountain foothills.

The Spruce–Willow–Birch Subalpine zone occupies the middle elevations and inter-montane valleys of the northern Rocky Mountains, at elevations ranging from 900 to 1500 m. An intermittent to closed forest cover of white spruce, lodgepole pine, and aspen dominates in the valley bottoms and on lower slopes, while more elevated areas are predominately covered with subalpine fir. In the more protected valleys, large mature white spruce forests are common on north and west facing slopes, as along the Tuchodi River, and in areas of moderate to poor drainage. Forests of large, mature lodgepole pine are commonly found on more southerly slopes. The under story typically consists of willow, juniper, sedge, kinnickinnick, and grasses. Where drainage is not well developed, willow and scrub brush wetlands can be found along the creeks.

Plate 6 (Conrad Thiessen)

The Alpine Tundra zone occurs at elevations between 1400 and 2700 m in the study area, and is relatively treeless. Krummholz subalpine fir, Engelmann spruce white spruce, and lodgepole pine can occur in clusters at lower elevations. Alpine vegetation is dominated, where present, by willows, sedges, mosses, lichens and grasses. Stone's sheep, Mountain goat, elk, caribou, moose, Grizzly bear, wolves, wolverine and fox have been observed in the

AT zone, and are responsible for many of the major game trails observed at these elevations.

Some of the blue-listed species known to occur in the Wokkpash portion of the Park include: Rock sedge, Whitish rush, Entire-leafed daisy, Arctic rush, Tundra milk-vetch, Swamp willow herb and Fragile sedge. Inventories have not been exhaustive and other rare and endangered or threatened species may exist. ***See Appendix E*** for Red and Blue Listed Species List.

Water

At the headwaters of the Tuchodi River in the Battle of Britain Range is the Lloyd – George Icefield, the largest in the Northern Rocky Mountains. Many smaller unnamed glaciers feed the lakes, rivers, and creeks. The lakes within the Park are relatively small such as Tetsa, Kluachesi and Wokkpash Lakes, with the largest lake being Upper Tuchodi Lake at 7, 760,000 sq. m. The Northern Rocky Mountains Park protects six undeveloped watersheds:

- Wokkpash Creek to 5 km upstream from its confluence with the Racing River.
- The Tetsa River upstream from its confluence with the North Tetsa River.
- Three-quarters of the Chischa River, 13 kilometres west of the Muskwa River.
- The entire Tuchodi River.
- Gathto Creek approximately 19 kilometres west of the Muskwa River.
- The Muskwa River upstream of Crehan Creek.
-

The Park protects a vast network of mountain streams that drain into the undeveloped upper portions of the Muskwa and Tetsa Rivers. Portions of Gathto, Kluachesi, and Wokkpash Creeks; as well as all of the Tuchodi River are located within the Park boundaries at the headwaters of the Muskwa, Chischa and Tetsa Rivers.

Fire

Within the Park, as with many northern-forested areas, fire is an important agent of ecological change. Wildfires are a significant agent of renewal in the Northern Canadian Rocky Mountains, and play an important role in the maintenance of ecosystem diversity; also for retaining or restoring what already exists in given area, considering natural ecosystems and biodiversity. Historically, fire within the Park has also been used to maintain desired seral stages for the management of target wildlife species, rather than for ecological management objectives. Prescribed fire is historical and has led to habitat mosaics that optimize biological diversity at the landscape level; it is a manageable entity and by way of its use, catastrophic wildfire and disease are prevented.

Wildlife

The Northern Rocky Mountains area is a part of a complex predator-prey system with a high density and diversity of large mammal species. When managing the diverse wildlife populations and their habitat components BC Parks understands that the ecological systems in this Park are not static, but are dynamic and subject to change based on disturbances such as fire, avalanche, climate change, and human impact. The habitat mapping for the Park depicts a range of wildlife values from low to high. Based on MoE habitat mapping, the majority of the Park lies within the moderate to high habitat range; especially for Mountain goat, Moose, Grizzly, Wolf, Caribou, Elk and Stone's sheep.

The Park secures extraordinary habitat for regionally, as well as nationally, significant wildlife. Overall, the Park plays a critical role in maintaining wildlife movement corridors along the northern portion of the Rocky Mountains and provides recruitment areas, not only for surrounding wildlife populations, but for the larger Muskwa-Kechika area.

Threatened species (blue-listed) known to inhabit the Park include Grizzly bear, Fisher, Philadelphia Vireo, Northern Long-Eared Myotis, and Sandhill crane. Special Care must be taken when making management decisions to consider the habitat requirements of these species. ***See Appendix E*** for Red and Blue Listed Species List.

Wildlife within the Park includes, but is not limited to:

- Several species of large mammals including moose, caribou, Whitetail deer, Mule deer, wolves, Grizzly bear, Black bear, Mountain goat, elk and Stone's sheep.
- Furbearing species include the fisher, martin, lynx and wolverine, and there have been rare sightings of Mountain lion.
- Various bird species use portions of the area as important staging and migration routes. Examples include: several species of grouse and ptarmigan, Canada and Snow goose, Trumpeter swan, Buffleheads, gyrfalcon, Boreal owl, Connecticut warbler, Sharp-tailed sparrow and Upland sandpiper.

Approximately one half of the M-KMA Stone's sheep population is located within the Park's boundary. Prior to the designation of the Northern Rocky Mountains Park, Stone's sheep were on British Columbia's blue list of species at risk. However, as a result of the Park protecting a significant portion of the province's Stone's sheep habitat, along with other protected areas and the M-KMA, they were down-listed to the yellow list in 1998. These are the rarest of North American sheep and this is a result of a managed system and management will be a requirement on a long term basis. At present the population for Stone's sheep in the Park is between 2500 and 3000. This was based on the model for sheep age-sex classes from data from BC Environments count in 1994 and reviewing hunting data since that count.

Data on habitat usage and population numbers on other wildlife such as furbearers, small mammal and bird species is deficient; BC Parks anticipates, and it is their desire, that

research will be on going in the future, encouraging academic and private research to focus on filling the deficiencies.

Plate 7 Stone's Sheep (BC Parks Image Bank)

Plate 8 Stone's Sheep (BC Parks Image Bank)

Fisheries

Although the Northern Rocky Mountains have not been extensively inventoried in relation to fish populations, lakes and rivers within the Park are populated by diverse fish communities. Dolly Varden, Lake Trout, Whitefish, and Longnose sucker are known to exist in the Tuchodi Lakes, while Arctic Grayling, Burbot, Dolly Varden, Longnose Sucker, and White Sucker have been captured in Kluachesi Lake. It is important to note that the PARK has secure numbers of Bull trout, and the waters within the PARK contain important habitat for Bull trout (blue-listed). The list of species in the PARK includes Arctic Grayling, Longnose

sucker, Lake whitefish, Mountain whitefish, Burbot, Dolly Varden, Rainbow trout, Lake trout and Sculpin.

Stocking of lakes has taken place historically in several areas in the Park and has met with a varying degree of success. The lakes and streams are generally sensitive to over harvesting and changes in habitat and it will be very important to manage fish populations and habitat carefully.

2.4 Recreation

Recreational values in the Park include hunting and fishing, horseback riding, snowmobiling, river boating, and hiking; providing a recreational opportunity that is unique across the protected areas system. The Parks main use time is in the summer and fall with most access via horse travel and riverboats.

2.5 Other Park Attributes

3.0 Management Direction

3.1 Vision

The PARK will be managed as a world-class area for wildlife, the preservation of wilderness, and recreation. The Park will maintain in perpetuity a wilderness quality and diverse and abundant wildlife and ecosystems, while allowing a sustainable level of recreation, and will employ a traditional knowledge and science-based ecological approach for all levels of management

3.2 Management Issues, Objectives and Strategies

Biological Diversity and Natural Environment

Management Issues/Interests:

- Fish populations are potentially vulnerable to over-fishing due to presumed slow growth rates and late maturity.
- The Park contains high value Grizzly Bear habitat. Recreational use could result in negative human-bear interactions.
- There is little or no ground-based information on the location/distribution or state/numbers of species, and ecological communities of conservation concern, in the Park. Recreational use of the Park could negatively impact species and ecological communities of conservation concern.
- Snowmobiling within the Park, as well as in adjacent areas, may affect the Caribou, Goat and Sheep population in the Park.
- Development on the landscape surrounding the Park will continue to alter adjacent habitat and access. Oil and Gas development is occurring east of the Park and could potentially affect Park values, including wildlife that uses areas outside of the Park. Mineral claims near the northwest boundary of the Park could result in new access and ongoing exploration and development may have potential effects on Park values.
- Global climate change will continue to alter weather patterns, hydrology, and vegetation, with resulting effects on fish and wildlife and human activity. Potential effects of climate change include: melting glaciers and a resulting long-term reduction in water supply; reorganization of ecosystems including potential new ecosystems; changes in wildlife ranges including the possibility of extirpation of wildlife from the Park or Park complex; and, increased likelihood of wildfire and forest insect epidemics.

- The Park plays a very important role in maintaining fresh water sources for the northeast portion of the Province. Fresh water research is being increasingly valued as the links between clean water and healthy ecosystems are becoming more clearly understood by the public as well as industry.
-
- Fire has also been used to manage range for horse use. Where fire is used to create and maintain range for horses within the Park its use will only be on traditionally treated sites that are best suited for grass production and where the possibility of escapement is low.

Due to the fact that most access into the Park is via its waterways, BC Parks will endeavour to monitor the effects of camping sites on and in close proximity to all waterways. The PAG and BC Parks agreed that the most effective way of promoting clean water within the Park is through education. The PAG and the user groups it supports must educate all users on the importance of maintaining the excellent water quality that exists in the Park today. This can be achieved by promoting:

- low impact water removal techniques or approaches
- the negative effects of erosion along waterways from poor recreational practices
- the importance of packing out what you packed in
- proper sanitation practices

include management strategies that reflect the idea that the natural flora of the Park must remain unthreatened from not only recreational activities but to avoid the introduction of invasive flora. Increased awareness by users will reduce the chance introduction of weed species, and park management must limit the interference in ecological processes. Active management may be needed to maintain or restore significant natural features or processes, or where it becomes necessary to eliminate threats caused by weeds and/or foreign species.

Water quality is expected to be very good, based on the remoteness of the area and lack of development in the area; however some water quality testing has been conducted. Shielding these areas from future development and heavy recreational pressures will aid in the preservation of unpolluted water resources that will be important to future generations.

While fire will be used for expressed management purposes, the extent and timing of such actions needs to be determined with consideration of maintaining the integrity of the ecosystem for the long-term goals of the Park. Fire will be used to manage ecosystem diversity, using a science-based approach. Landscape objectives will be guided by this principle. The use of fire within the Park will continue to be a tool used to achieve both ecological and species habitat aims, and where naturally occurring wildfires arise they will normally not be extinguished, unless special values are at risk.

Subsequent to the Park, prescriptions for fire management may be developed in consultation with FLNRO and the M-KMA Wildlife Management Plan (WMP). The wildlife plan for the M-KMA was drafted concurrently with the development of the Park Management Plan. Therefore, comments and recommendations from the public advisory group regarding each topic were factored into the management plan through the development process.

The PARK will be guided by the guidelines and objectives of the M-KMA Wildlife Management Plan. The Muskwa-Kechika Wildlife Management Plan will provide comprehensive and long term guidance for the management of wildlife resources in the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area. The Muskwa-Kechika Wildlife Management Plan is to be implemented under the following principles:

1. Contribute to the management of the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area as an ecological whole.
2. Recognize the critical role of habitat in the management of all wildlife in the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area.
3. Manage to improve the status of priority wildlife within a sustainable, natural range of variability. Improved status means a higher probability that a population will exist at or above a threshold number (or density) over the medium (5-20 years) to long (>20 years) term as a result of management. Where possible, desired conditions will be established for each wildlife species and will include:
    a. Ensuring populations of sufficient size that they can continue to fluctuate, without risk of extirpation during periods of low abundance, and meet social needs.
    b. Managing the risk from human use (e.g. hunting, industrial, and recreational activities) to ensure that low population thresholds are not reached.
    c. Working within the bounds and range of natural processes.
4. Follow the precautionary principle as defined in the Glossary (Appendix G).
5. When considering management actions, conservation will be a priority.
6. Recognize the intrinsic value of biodiversity and the elements comprising and supporting biodiversity, and manage to maintain these, as a priority.
7. Establish objectives and strategies based on ecosystem management, rather than on risk-based management for minimal wildlife and ecosystem values. Goals, objectives, standards, guidelines and monitoring requirements will be stated in objective, measurable terms so that activities and human users can be held accountable to the goals.
8. Follow principles of adaptive management as defined in Appendix B Adaptive Management.

9. Consider management implications and impacts at three timescales: the short term (1-4 years), the medium term (5-20 years), and the longer term (>20 years).
10. Incorporate First Nations' Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and other local knowledge and the best available scientific information, as well as being open to innovative tools and techniques.
11. Direct human activities to minimize adverse impacts allowing native ecosystems to function as naturally as possible (that is, without management intervention).
12. Ensure that wildlife and their habitats are managed in cooperation with First Nations' existing aboriginal and treaty rights toward wildlife populations that will sustain the exercise of aboriginal rights.
13. Provide clear and consistent direction for wildlife resource managers, natural resource users, tenure holders and the general public.
14. Provide opportunities for sustainable public use of wildlife resources, while maintaining consistency with provincial biodiversity and conservation policy.
15. Seek the cooperation and involvement of relevant levels of government, First Nations, affected stakeholders, and the general public in addressing wildlife management issues and concerns of importance.

Where wildlife populations, or their habitat, are threatened (indirectly or directly), BC Parks under the Park Act, may restrict or prohibit any recreation uses that are causing impacts temporarily or permanently. This is done as part of our "protection-first" mandate and stated policies, and will be based on consultations with affected interests, including First Nations and other interested public. All activities are, and will continue to be, analyzed and managed through the Park Use Permits, and/or field monitoring and analysis by MoE staff.

Goal	Objective	Management Strategies
Intact Park values	**The carbon footprint from Park operations is minimized.**	• Measure carbon footprint of Park activities (both management and visitor activities). • Minimize greenhouse gas emissions from Park and protected area management actions. • Use "green" technology for designing and developing new facilities where feasible. • Convert existing facilities using "green" technology where feasible.
	Effects of climate change on Park values are better understood.	• Summarize/evaluate potential effects of climate change on Park and protected area weather, hydrology, vegetation, fish and wildlife based on existing information. • Use the summary to determine appropriate actions for managing climate change impacts. • Encourage research/monitoring of the effects of climate change on Park and protected area values and ecosystem functioning.
	The public, industry and communities are aware of the ecological services and benefits that	• Highlight the ecological services and benefits that this Park and protected area provide for downstream users, communities and industry (e.g. on Park signs, in brochures, in newspapers, on the BC Parks website, etc.).

	the Park provides.	
	Access management planning adjacent to the Park considers Park values.	• Support and participate in any interagency access management plan in areas adjacent to the Park.
	Forest harvesting activities and related access on neighbouring lands have minimal impacts on Park values.	• Work with FLNRO and forest licensees to minimize the effects of forest harvesting activities and related access on adjacent lands on Park values.
Healthy fish populations and fish habitat	**Fish populations are at or higher than current levels.**	• Assess angling use levels. • Consider angling restrictions if use levels are too high. • Work with FLNRO to ensure angling regulations are appropriate and enforced.
Healthy wildlife populations and habitat	**Grizzly Bears and American Black Bears continue to occupy the Park and interactions with humans are avoided.**	• Conduct bear hazard assessments for current facilities and trails. • Reduce potential for bear-human interactions where necessary. • Conduct bear hazard assessments for facilities and trails proposed in the future. • Support access management initiatives to conserve Grizzly Bears in landscape units adjacent to the Park.
	Caribou use the Park during both summer and winter.	• Implement motorized access restrictions consistent with those established by the Fort Nelson LRMP. • Implement strategies that are consistent with Crown Land Caribou Herd Recovery Plans if they are relevant within park boundaries
	Mountain Goats are not adversely affected by recreational activities.	• Assess Mountain Goat population size and determine distribution of Mountain Goat habitat, especially winter and kidding areas. • Assess whether current levels of recreational activities affect Mountain Goats and implement strategies to reduce effects where necessary, especially in natal areas.
Naturally functioning species and ecological communities of conservation concern	**Species and ecological communities of conservation concern are viable and are protected from human disturbance.**	• Assess current facilities and trails for impact on or overlap with species and ecological communities of conservation concern. • Re-route trails and remove facilities where possible to avoid negative impacts to species and ecological communities of conservation concern. • Avoid species and ecological communities of conservation concern for any future proposed facilities and trails.
Naturally functioning and resilient ecosystems and processes	**Park lands are not isolated from the larger ecosystem in which they are embedded.**	• Identify important links between ecosystems within the Park and areas outside the Park. • Work with adjacent land managers to maintain connectivity between the Park and the broader landscape.

Cultural Heritage Management

Management Issues/Interests:

- The Kaska First Nation and Treaty First Nation signatories want to ensure that cultural heritage resources are protected.
- The Kaska First Nation and Treaty First Nation signatories are interested in having a greater connection with the Park.
- The Kaska First Nation and Treaty First Nation signatories are interested in sharing in the management and planning of the Park.

Archaeological Sites

Where archaeological sites are known to exist, BC Parks will ensure that all archaeological sites will be protected within the Park. The FNLRMP states:

> "The cultural heritage resources reflect past and present uses by aboriginal and non-aboriginal peoples. Three categories of resources are evident: archaeological sites containing physical remains of past human activity; historical sites often consisting of built structures or localities of events significant to living communities; and traditional use sites which often lack the physical evidence of human-made artifacts or structures, but maintain cultural significance to living communities.
>
> The majorities of currently identified archaeological sites within the Fort Nelson area consist of surface or thinly buried scatters of stone tools and/or flakes. Such finds indicate where these tools were manufactured or repaired. More complex sites may include other types of features, such as the remains of cooking hearths and post molds where temporary shelters and food drying racks were erected. Traditional use sites may include: sacred sites, resource gathering sites such as berry picking and hunting grounds and sites of a legendary or past event of cultural significance. Some known historical sites of interest date from 2000 to 5000 BC."

-

Goal	Objective	Management Strategies
Intact cultural heritage and historical resources	**Cultural heritage resources and historic sites are identified and protected.**	• Perform historical and ethnographic research and cultural heritage field inventories if developments are proposed. • Identify threats to cultural heritage resources and implement protective measures. • Educate rangers on how to identify cultural heritage resources. • Promote First Nations language by indicating place names (creeks, lakes, summits) on maps and other publications.

First Nations people reconnect with the Park	**First Nation people use the Park for traditional and sustenance activities.**	• Maintain opportunities for First Nations traditional, sustenance and harvesting activities. • Increase public and First Nations community awareness regarding traditional, sustenance use and harvesting activities. • Deliver community workshops that facilitate the sharing of Park management issues and gather input from traditional knowledge. • Support management approaches that help maintain wildlife populations for traditional and sustenance activities.
	The Park names are meaningful to the First Nation.	• Identify were First Nation language place names can be applied to the Park. • Recommend legislation be revised to be consistent with new Park names.
Healthy local tourism industry	**The Park contributes to local employment, especially cultural tourism associated with the Park.**	• Encourage tourism operators to establish working relationships with the First Nations and seek opportunities for mutual benefits. • Permit and support development of appropriate cultural tourism activities. • Identify and allocate appropriate tenured opportunities to assist local economic diversification, particularly local First Nations.
Collaborative Park stewardship with the First Nation	**Foster collaborative Park stewardship between British Columbia and the First Nations in a government-to-government manner.**	• Consider undertaking a formal agreement for collaborative stewardship. • Engage First Nations in management of the Park. • Include First Nations in management activities and monitoring.
Communication of cultural heritage	**Visitors to the Park are aware of the rich cultural heritage of the Park.**	• Provide cultural heritage information in interpretive materials. • Facilitate education and sharing of First Nations culture through the use of historical names in the Park.

Recreation Management

Management Issues/Interests:

- **BC Parks will endeavour to follow the guidelines and/or objectives of the M-KMA Recreation Management Plan. Where the M-KMA Recreation Management Plan deviates considerably from the objectives of BC Parks, BC Parks will ere on the side of biodiversity, ecological integrity and environmental stewardship.**

- The quality of the experience for visitors must maintain the sense of remoteness and naturalness.

- Campsites must, as much as possible be left to be transient in nature with no formal improvements evident. Impacts must be monitored

Environmental Stewardship fisheries staff will monitor angling to ensure that natural fish populations are maintained, and where necessary, angling may be closed as needed to protect populations from falling below sustainable levels. Other initiatives such as habitat

enhancement may be considered for any area of the Park if it is necessary to maintain natural fish populations.

BC Parks objective is to allow conservative backcountry angling opportunities for Park visitors without jeopardizing the current natural diversity and productivity of aquatic systems and maintaining natural fish populations. ***See Appendix E*** for Red and Blue Listed Species List.

- Consideration will be given to traditional use patterns and effective strategies in order to provide a fair balance in terms of access and use of the Park for both the general public and clients of backcountry operators. The design and nature of facilities, services, and Park information can undoubtedly influence Park user enjoyment so care will be taken in the creation of each.

- Greater awareness of minimum-trace camping by users will help reduce site impacts, thereby maximizing resource protection and visitor experience.

Goal	Objective	Management Strategies
Intact healthy bear population and a safe recreational experience	To lessen human bear interactions, especially in hunting season and at campsites	• A Bear Cache Program was implemented in 2004 with an underlying purpose of reducing human bear conflicts and secondly to educate the public • BC Parks supports the strategies and objectives of the Peace Region Bear-People Conflict Prevention Plan for Protected Areas
Safe use of dogs in the Park	To allow dogs in the Park within certain limitations	• Dogs must be under control at all times • dogs as pack animals and dog sledding is permitted • dog sledding competitions are prohibited • public education on potential dog related diseases and encouragement of vaccination
Prohibit the transmission of potential diseases being transferred by non-indigenous/exotic species (i.e. camelids - llamas and alpacas), domestic goats and sheep, and ostriches to wildlife.	To prohibit non-indigenous/exotic species within the Park	• The use or introduction of non-indigenous/exotic species within the PARK is strictly prohibited; this includes use for recreational, domestic, packing, pets/companions, and exotic farming. BC Parks acquired supporting direction on this issue from the FNLRMP and the M-K Wildlife Management Plan.

Quality of the experience for visitors to the Park	Maintain the sense of remoteness and naturalness, freedom to choose where to travel, and self-reliance dependent on personal abilities.	• Management must reflect a strong public viewpoint, being sensitive to the values and perceptions of Park users. The Park must try to maintain low dispersed levels of use.
Clean, well dispersed campsites	Continue to let campsites be transient in nature with no formal improvements evident.	• By way of monitoring keep damage such as soil and vegetation loss minimal • Install low impact facilities where use is continual and heavily utilized.

Hunting and Fishing

All hunting and fishing activities will continue as they have in the past. The Park will be guided by the guidelines and objectives of the M-KMA Wildlife Management Plan, once it is completed, and the BC Hunting and Fishing Regulations.

Guide Outfitting

Guiding and Outfitting will continue within the Park, and as in the past, all activities that relate to a guide/outfitting operation will be controlled by the permitting system put in place by MNRO and BC Parks, and the guidelines of the PARK.

Trapping

Trapping has also had an enormous historical influence within the non-native and First Nations community, and that continues today throughout the Park. The Fort Nelson LRMP states that the plan area has historically been subject to trapping. BC Parks recognizes this and therefore the PAG and BC Parks recommends that trapping be an "allowable use" in the Park, maintaining existing full rights.
Snowmobiles, for the use of maintaining trap lines, are acceptable across the Park.

Man Strategies

- More than any other Park in Northeastern BC, the Northern Rocky Mountains Park where its main user group is the hunting community. The direction of harvest levels must be thoroughly discussed and be long-term.

Objective

To maintain wildlife numbers at healthy level while allowing hunting.

Man Strategies

The approach will follow those used by the Wildlife Section of FLNRO, and those guidelines set forth by the Muskwa - Kechika Wildlife Management Plan. The Muskwa-Kechika Wildlife Management Plan will follow

an ecosystem based management approach to guide management of wildlife and wildlife habitat in the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area (M-KMA). Ecosystem management is defined in the M-KWMP as:

Integrating scientific knowledge and socioeconomic values to manage for biological diversity and ecological integrity as well as natural resources use over the long term.

Goal	Objective	Management Strategies
Wilderness recreation opportunities in a natural setting Non-Indigenous Species (Exotics) Range Wildlife Harvest Firearms Fuel Storage Campsites	**Park visitors enjoy wilderness recreation with few facilities and with minimal impacts.**	• Assess location, extent and status of current trails. • Public Use Cabins/Structures • Timber Removal for Firewood and Structures • Dogs Facilities Expansion and Replacement
	To minimize negative bear/human interactions	• public education on dealing with bear/human encounters, bear behaviour and the safest human behaviour - PAG supported • promote and encourage, o packing out of garbage o safe food and garbage management o clean, complete burning of combustibles garbage o encourage adequate food caching by commercial operators o proper behavior in bear country o bear awareness training for commercial staff o education through user groups, clubs and organizations • prohibit burying of garbage
	Park and protected area visitors are aware of Park values and recreational opportunities in the Park.	• Provide information on Park and protected area values, recreational opportunities and visitor safety on the brochure and website.
Maintain low-impact traditional access methods (walking/hiking, horseback, canoe and	**Impacts of motorized activities on wilderness recreation are minimized.**	Follow Fort Nelson LRMP direction on motorized use including: • no motorized boat use on North Burnie Lake, South Burnie Lake, and Shea Lake; •
	Proposed new Park facilities and changes to existing Park facilities comply with Ministry standards and impact assessments.	•

- **Timber Removal for Firewood and Structures**

Timber, both live and dead and down, has traditionally been removed for campfire fuel and for building/repairing minor structures such as tent poles and meat racks within the Park. BC Parks, keeping with the traditional theme, endorses the use of timber in the Park for the above traditional uses. BC Parks goal is to minimize visual and ecological impacts, and consequently recommend that following

- Use of dead standing and downed material as your first option.
- If the use of live timber is required it is asked that the user remove timber from prescribed burn areas (if known) and primarily deciduous timber. Relocation of firewood, the movement of firewood from one site to another, is also an alternative.
- For heavily-used or tenured campsites, a proactive site-specific management plan may be required by permitted or tenured user groups, and where non-permitted or non-tenured, by BC Parks.
- It is requested that all users of the Park please try to positively educate others as to good timber removal practices.
- All removed timber must have stumps flush cut to the ground to maintain the visual quality of the area.

Facilities Expansion and Replacement

M/I

Buildings, cabins and sheds, are the main type of facilities that exist in the Park area. Smaller structures such as toilets and food caches also exist. Presently sites with facilities may consist of main base camps (base of operations), satellite camps (secondary camps, annual use, seasonal use) and spike camps (short term, low impact, intermittent, some facilities, no buildings). Patterns of use may and most likely will change in the future.

Objective

Man Strategies

- permit on a case by case basis
- consider each proposal based on the surrounding landscape.
- A proponent may bear any cost of an onsite assessment of each proposal.
- BC Parks has agreed to not construct toilet structures except where absolutely required due to high use activity, which is generally in high use corridors.
- As well, small-scale water diversion structures are allowed, by permit (not used for small-scale hydro-electric development). The intent is to allow commercial operators to provide water supply to base camps.

facilities and infrastructure should not create an added or artificial attraction.

For the expansion and/or replacement of facilities the following criteria (conditions, standards) will apply:

- No new facilities on new sites of any arrangement, size, or shape; this does not apply to trap line cabins.
- No landscaping is to occur, i.e. automated cutting of grass/vegetation and shaping of vegetation/trees.
- Tents should be the first option before expansion or replacement.
- BC Parks will encourage the use of alternative energy such as solar and wind.
- Generators, motors and pumps must be muffled, and must be enclosed.
- All facilities that are expanded or replaced must:
  - be rustic or log-type in appearance i.e. log vs. plywood where practical, rough lumber
  - any painting must be colour compatible (including roof) with the surrounding environment i.e. neutral colours like brown/green
  - be single story only, except for existing structures and caches.
  - conform to legislation on setback from all watercourses, including standing water
  - in most cases not exceed its original size i.e. existing foundation
- Expansion/replacement of existing facilities may occur:
  - to promote better outcomes for environmental (i.e. site degradation), health and safety reasons
  - based on limits similar to existing levels with allowance for a specific variance (i.e. + specific %)
- Expansion of existing facilities for new commercial recreation activities will be guided by the above factors and:
  - must be authorized by permit under the Park Act.
  - can only occur on the existing site and conform to the size and style of similar facilities in the PARK
  - can be considered for increased client use with different and more varied recreation activities
  - must provide a similar type of experience compared to what existed previously
  - must be consistent with wilderness and wildlife values of the Park and the greater picture of the M-KMA.
  - must be compatible with existing commercial and non-commercial users
  - maintain a traditional recreation experience

- **Public Use Cabins and Structures**

There is currently one cabin in the Park that existed prior to Park designation (D.L # 2622). This cabin, located at Wokkpash Lake, was originally a guide outfitter cabin, which now serves as a BC Parks ranger cabin. Cabins built for trapping purposes are not public use cabins and consequently they are not covered under this section.

One of the most dominant structures used by recreationalists such as river boaters and horseback riders is the wall tent. These structures must be easily removed in a short time frame and all timber used for tent poles must follow the guidelines under "Timber Removal for Firewood and Structures" and "Campsites;" wall tents are not recognized by BC Parks as permanent structures. A related issue of concern over the last several years in the Park is that of the pre-hunting season storage of wall tents and any associated equipment i.e. food, fuel, stoves, etc. These structures are erected in mid to late summer by both tenured/permitted and non-tenured/non-permitted individuals in order to secure a camping spot for the upcoming hunting season. Under the Park Act, except as authorized by a Park officer, no person shall store, cache or leave equipment or supplies in a Park or recreation area for a period of more than 14 days in a calendar year.

Caches, intended for the storing and protection of meat and other foods or goods, must be temporary in design; an exception may apply where they are associated with a cabin or facility, authorized by Park permit. They must be rustic or log-type in appearance i.e. log vs. plywood where practical or rough lumber, non- painted and single story.

For the use of, or construction of, cabins or caches the following criteria (conditions, standards) will apply:

- No new public cabins will be allowed unless authorized by BC Parks through a Park permit; all requests will be viewed on a case by case basis.
- Existing public cabins or caches are to be removed when they are deemed by BC Parks to be no longer safe, usable or needed.
- No maintenance is required by BC Parks on existing cabins.
- Small temporary structures are acceptable and may be present at campsites, e.g. latrines and showers

- **Campsites**

Although not extensively inventoried, over 110 campsites have been readily identified in the Park. In the backcountry, camping occurs at either established or pristine sites. Established sites refer to areas that already show disturbance from overnight use and exhibit noticeable impacts such as vegetation loss, loss of organic litter layer and exposure of mineral soil; these may be classified as hardened campsites. Camping that occurs at pristine sites is associated with sites that have never been used, or if they have been used, it has not been for some time so that any previous impact is impossible to detect.

Containment of camping use should be practiced throughout the entire Park. Designated sites may be implemented at popular places and sensitive areas where the spreading out of camping sites, random campsites, can have enormous impacts. These sites may include lakes, river corridors and alpine meadows. Elsewhere in the Park, dispersed camping may be encouraged in areas that receive little use.
PAG has suggested the following standards for spike/fly/satellite camps or commercial tent sites:

- Use of site is limited to 14 days (Park Act), unless authorized by letter
- Encourage self-supporting tents
- All poles left standing against trees when not in use.
- Structures to be dismantled after use
- Use existing dry poles where possible but allow use of cut green poles to a maximum of 10cm in diameter
- Choose campsites that are more resilient to use (avoid sensitive areas such as wetlands)

Although structures may not seem appropriate in a wilderness area, they may be used to confine impacts and prevent excessive deterioration. The most commonly accepted structures include stock-holding facilities, toilets, and fire pits; fire pits can be used to mark designated campsites as well as confining campfires. The PAG was very adamant that installing toilets at high use sites is necessary. Other items that may be appropriate in the Park include cut poles for hanging meat and tent structures.
The major factors that influence how much change (level of impact) occurs at a campsite include:

- The amount and frequency of use the site receives;
- The type and behaviour of the users;
- Party size and length of stay; and
- The environmental conditions of the site.

In summary, BC Parks encourages camping at established sites or more resilient sites, to prevent the proliferation of new campsites. In higher use areas, camping will be encouraged at established sites. Established sites would not be marked as designated campsites, unless consultation with stakeholders reveals that it is necessary for environmental reasons. Given that sensitive areas for wildlife are known and mapped, campsites located within these areas may be relocated or eliminated, or may be closed during certain times of the year.

Sanitation problems and the requirement for toilets, as well as fire pits/rings at campsites will be seriously reviewed by BC Parks and will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Education will be the first step, and is the preferred step, used to remedy the situation.

BC Parks, where funding and staffing exist, will endeavour to provide education to the public on the importance of self-reliance when in the backcountry. BC Parks will encourage the pack it in/pack it out concept, and low impact camping and good camping ethics such as backcountry sanitation, use of existing sites in high use areas, and where needed will address negative visitor behaviour (e.g. tree damage, building of structures and littering). BC Parks will endeavour to promote good management practices, and to address damages i.e. site clean-up, re-mediation, seeding. BC Parks recognizes that different levels of management may be applied due to the impact of use on the site. BC Parks will try to involve the PAG by soliciting suggestions on levels and indicators for some of the above issues.

- **Range**

In late 2002 the issue of increased pressure on range resource was identified to the Peace-Liard Mangers. This pressure has been amplified due to increased resident use, commercial recreation opportunities, and requests for increases in existing tenured use. As a result four agencies jointly agreed to become involved in a project supported by the M-K Trust Fund - M-K Range Project. This project was submitted for continual funding to resume assessments in the rest of the M-K.

The projects objective is to evaluate areas of greatest concern for conflict and overlapping use and to ensure range and back country resources were adequately managed. Below are the overall impressions of the initial area with recommendations following below:

- All sites within the PARK are fully allocated given current tenured, recreational and wild ungulate use.
- Combined use near some base camps is so heavy that there is no residual cover, browsing of shrubs was extreme, and bare ground and weeds becoming issue.
- Burning frequency should be reduced in uplands above Gathto Creek, Muskwa River, Tuchodi River and Beckman Creek.
- Several campsites badly trampled and had damaged trees where horses have been tethered.
- Some areas are at or above their carrying capacity of combined horse/wildlife use. In most areas, there is not sufficient forage to allow for new Range Act tenures.
- Poor distribution of horse use adjacent to some camps has led to damaged streams and uplands.
- Frequent burning has created early-seral plant communities, soil erosion, and poor upland hydrological function. Forage quality and availability is reduced where burning has converted sites to hairy wild rye.

- Altai fescue communities are significant (rare globally) and are being affected by overgrazing and heat injury from fire. The trend towards earlier (early in the season) use is also a concern.

Recommendations:

- Additional horse grazing could be available if horses picketed or hobbled at greater distances from campsites and base camps
- Season of use needs to be managed more closely
- some areas should be managed on a yearly graze-half/rest-half rotation (or switch back rotation)
- BC Parks encourages recreational users to carry alfalfa pellets for saddle horses and pack stock
- New applicants should provide better details of intended use areas and should cover costs associated with site evaluation
- Brushing is preferable to burning for reduction in shrub cover on many sites
- Range use plans should be evaluated and measures required to correct problems with over-utilization
- Other areas of concern were the over wintering of horses, possible reclamation needs/opportunities and the use of hitching rails or lines.

At this time MoF will review RUP's, in consultation with BC Parks, based on field assessments and meet with tenure holder to develop management strategies. Range permits will be restricted to support the minimum number of allowed horses, not to enable increases. BC Parks will deal with problems to do with range use by way of continued monitoring and where applicable, reductions will be made rather than prescribed burning applications.

Firearms

BC Parks will give blanket approval for the carrying and safe discharge of firearms at any time of the year in the PARK for:

- Personal protection (consistent with Wildlife Act);
- Protection of property (consistent with Wildlife Act);
- Trapping and hunting; and
- Sighting.

- **Fuel Storage**

All persons and/or companies, including but not limited to – commercial and non-commercial operators of aircraft (fixed wing and rotary) and river boaters, are responsible for fuel management, including:

- Fuel storage over 500 litres will only permitted at major infrastructure sites, and must be stored in designated centralized locations that can be monitored i.e. guide-outfitter camps. Sites will be identified and information distributed by BC Parks.
- Fuel storage is allowed, but only ***above high water levels***
- ***All*** fuel containers must be marked with 'name (person responsible for removal), address, phone and date' with a permanent tag, decal or marking. If fuel containers are found unmarked they can be removed by BC Parks. Fuel containers left more than 2 years will be considered abandoned and can be removed.
- All persons and/or companies are responsible for removal of ***all*** fuel containers and outdated fuel
- Empty containers must be removed within the same season
- Recommend that plastic fuel containers not be left over-winter unless in a secure site, inaccessible to animals.

Commercial operators must obtain a Park permit for fuel caches, and they must submit the information listed above and an inventory of fuel caches managed by them on an annual basis.

The PAG recommended that education initiatives, for both commercial and non-commercial groups and individuals, should be provided through brochures, notices, etc. Information to be provided would consist of proper fuel storage and identifying high-risk areas. The PAG also recommended that the CORE program include information for safe and responsible fuel storage.

Commercial recreation infrastructure and services will be allowed as per the FNLRMP, within the context of the surrounding wilderness setting. Existing operations will be managed to avoid incremental encroachment on the values of the Park. Generally, changes or enhancement to commercial operations will be limited to current tenure or permit areas. It must be noted that there may be an increase in environmental impacts to the Park, and it is hoped that operators strive to utilize the best practices possible within the PARK.

Education Issues

- Recreation experience to be self-initiated, self-planned and self-reliant.

- Encourage and increase awareness of best practices to be utilized and recognize that these may change over time.
- Minimize impact of recreation on ecological integrity.

Plate ? Tuchodi Lakes (Rob Honeyman)

Both by Blake Parker

Plate 6: Muskwa River (Wayne Sawchuk)

Commercial Recreation

The management of commercial backcountry recreation (CR), within the Protected Areas and Muskwa-Kechika Special Management Category of Resource Management Zones, was discussed at length by the FNLRMP. The FNLRMP Working Group provides the following recommendations that will affect the management of commercial backcountry recreation activities. The intent of this recommended guidance is to maintain a balance between non-commercial public use and other use.

- The PAG has suggested that an inventory should be completed of existing, on hold and potential, CR opportunities to guide the allocation of future CR tenures; this is dependent on staffing and resources or would need to be contracted out.
- Commercial backcountry recreation activities must be consistent with:
    1. acceptable limits of use
    2. environmental sustainability
    3. greatest benefit to local community, region and province
    4. equitable forage allocation between commercial and non-commercial use
    5. equitable allocation of suitable campsites.
    6.

The M-K Management Area Recreation Management Plan, under "Principles to guide the Review of Commercial Applications" states the following.

> "The legislation, policies and guidelines of BCALC and BC Parks presently guide the review of commercial recreation applications. These policies and guidelines

include principles in respect of: protecting environmental integrity and maintaining biological diversity; maintaining public access; providing a balanced mix of recreational experiences; ensuring compatibility of overlapping tenures; fair and open consultation taking into account locally established priorities and public interests; meaningful consultation with First Nations; providing economic opportunities for First Nations; and considering the implications of present and future treaty provisions."

Commercial recreation activities within provincial Parks take direction from the *Park Act*, generally not resulting in any alienation of Park land or exclusive rights associated with the activity. In addition, the intent of permitting commercial recreation is to enhance the experience of Park users consistent with the values of a particular Park, not solely to provide economic development opportunities. Factors to consider when evaluating commercial recreation applications:

1. Maintain and Protect Ecological and Environmental Integrity of the M-KMA
2. Consider Rights and Interests of First Nations
3. Maintaining Public Access and Use
4. Be Cautious in Allocating New Commercial Recreation Interests
5. Leave Room for Future Allocations
6. Give Preference to Applicants with Good Track Records
7. Involve Local Residents in Commercial Recreation Activities
8. The use and capacity of specific lakes be reviewed in consideration of future commercial recreation activities, with due consideration of existing tenure holders and their facilities.

As government direction evolves, BC Parks will work with other agencies and user groups to review and process existing and new applications. Those that are approved will be reviewed after the PARK has been approved. The Ecosystems Section of Ministry of Natural Resource Operations will consider how impact assessments will be done for each permit.

Commercial Operators

While backcountry recreation operators provide different levels of services and facilities, clients primarily visit the Park to experience and enjoy the wilderness setting. Therefore marketing and promotion by backcountry recreation operators must be consistent with the Park vision and purpose.

Commercial operators are not allowed to advertise site-specific information on resource features i.e. bat caves, sensitive wildlife areas (licks, spawning areas), ecologically sensitive areas, favorite fishing holes, cultural sites, hunting sites, trails and campsites. BC Parks, where staffing and money is available, will ensure that every effort is made to publish public information about the PARK that is consistent with the Park vision.

Commercial Recreation Trapping

Although already governed by the Wildlife Act, where certain issues need to be addressed, Commercial Recreation Trapping (CRT) will be guided by Park Use Permit which could include guidelines and a management plan (i.e. specific species, harvest targets, etc.)
The Public Advisory Group has requested that the following guidelines be adhered to:

- CRT must only take place within active trapping season and within legal boundaries under the Wildlife Act.
- Any overnights must utilize existing buildings or existing camp sites
- New cabins for the primary reason of trap-line tours is not acceptable.
- In order to protect the wildlife and the environment a Park Use Permit may identify acceptable and non-acceptable sites, and address capacity issues for recreation trapping (i.e. group size, access method, etc.) if necessary.

Access Management

Introduction

Access management presents the single most effective means to retain the isolation and wilderness quality of the Park. Access management must relate to the management zoning principles and defined recreation and conservation roles for the Park. The majority of the ground-based access in the PARK mostly derives from along the Alaska Highway corridor (entry points in the Wokkpash and Stone Mountain Provincial Park and Tetsa River drainage), and somewhat less along the eastern boundary.

Management Issues/Interests:

Horse/Mule Use
Horses will continue to be a method of recreation access and transport into and within the Park. The management of horse use will be such as to maximize recreation enjoyment while not degrading Park resources, including range. Both trails and camps for horse users will remain rustic in nature, and while horse use will generally not be restricted, actions may be taken in high use areas to minimize social and environmental impacts. Horse range will be managed to minimize conflict with wildlife species. For horses over and above those required for guide outfitters and packers, BC Parks will request they be removed by the permitted owner.

Public use will be authorized so that individual permits will not be required; it has been suggested that a phone in system could be implemented in the future to aid in management decisions.

There was some discussion within the PAG about feral horses. Concerning feral horse the M-K WMP states:
"Domestic or feral horses can have significant grazing impacts. Guide-outfitting operations in the past often turned horses out to winter in the mountains. As a result, numerous feral horses persist in certain areas: there are approximately 15 to 20 individuals in the Fort St John Forest District, and there were up to 500 trespass horses in the Fort Nelson Forest District. Available forage, riparian values, reducing stand complexity, and physical disturbance are a few possible effects of domesticated or feral animals grazing on local wildlife and habitat. In order to prevent negative impacts, available range **should be closely monitored** and **conservatively allocated**. Areas for grazing **should be selected for minimizing impacts**, avoiding riparian areas. Effects of non-indigenous grazing on other wildlife and their habitat **should be examined**, with particular attention to Red- and Blue-listed species."

BC Parks may, dependent on money, staffing, and the degree of environmental impact, conduct the following:

- monitor stock use and levels
- require registration by phone or internet (provide name, number of animals, time in Park, etc.)
- give commercial operators priority for grazing in site specific (base and satellite) campsites areas
- in high use public areas, authorize temporary structures on a case-by-case basis i.e. hitching posts, caches, corrals, etc., to address problems or issues.

Note:

> **Where demand exceeds supply, the non-commercial users will take priority, except the commercial operator's takes priority where they have infrastructure and licensed tenure. Where licensed tenure conflicts with resident and wildlife use, Animal Unit Months may be reduced by way of mutual agreement with the Ministry of Forests or by way of a Park permit; this may be done by discussion with the operator.**

The following, **are not mandatory**, but are **recommendations** by the PAG and BC Parks to ensure that all users obtain a wilderness experience, and to engage in environmentally sound horse use.

- Due to the possible introduction of noxious weeds the PAG has recommended that users hold over their horses 24 hours before going into the PARK. Although this may be problematic for most users, it will ensure the continued survival of traditional floral/grass species. For the above mentioned reason users are also encouraged to carry supplemental and/or packaged weed free feeds.
- Due to soil degradation and to minimize conflicts, users are encouraged to graze horses/mules away from sensitive wildlife species, easily degraded sites/soils, and are requested to attempt to graze at a good distance from tenured sites or campsites.

- All horse/mule users are asked to educate the public about issues which address:
  - Minimum impact techniques to prevent multi-trails from developing; reduce impacts at campsites, trails, etc.
  - Hobbling and picketing
  - Pre-training of horses prior to entering a Park
  - Information on healthy horses and risk of contagious diseases i.e. swamp fever tests for horses
  - New options for corralling, etc.
  - Ways to avoid introducing weeds
- Concerning year-round grazing:
  - Maintain horse grazing at existing permitted levels, as developed and approved through Range Use plans or BC Parks permits.
  - Permit/Tenure holders are responsible for the control of their horses.
  - Any potential increase in numbers of permitted horses will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
  - When horse use is found to compromise wildlife use, such as elk, horse use will be reduced.

- Routes

Routes are a traditional means of travelling in the backcountry and are crucial to the wilderness experience, but there is great concern over the appropriate level of route development in the PARK. As stated in the vision statement BC Parks goal is "to protect natural and cultural features while providing a wide range of quality outdoor recreation opportunities, and to maintain consistency with traditional/ historic practices of management and use in self-sufficiency/self-determination. BC Parks believe that by having no managed route development and keeping routes unadvertised in the PARK, these measures will uphold its commitment to the vision for the PARK.

Traditionally in the PARK routes have not developed to any standard and have been maintained by various user groups such as the guide outfitters, packers and resident hunters. BC Parks recognize the use of routes for trapping, snowmobiles and other pursuits that may have historic significance. Route use intensity varies greatly throughout the PARK constrained by a heavy cover of vegetation and terrain features often limiting the spread of erosion; most main pack routes are generally confined to the valley floor. The 70-km MacDonald/Wokkpash circle route is the only route which has been, and will continue to be, advertised by BC Parks in the Stone Mountain Park/Wokkpash area brochure and government website; minimal maintenance and upgrades have occurred along this route.

Any discussion on route maintenance will incorporate information on existing routes, user levels, safety and environmental issues (avoidance of sensitive areas for wildlife, vegetation and soils) and wilderness experience. Existing routes located within these

areas may be relocated or eliminated, or closed during certain times of the year, and all routes will be primitive in nature and very limited.

- Snowmobiling

The lands within the PARK were not traditionally used by snowmobiles except around the lower Gathto/Kluachesi area; the limitations are due to geography and lack of snow. Once again most access is gained from the Alaska Highway corridor, but travel is also enabled along the Wokkpash Trail, along the eastern boundary and its river corridors, and in the southeast corner via Bat Creek. In the past several years more snowmobiling activity has occurred on a more frequent basis, and groups tend to now advance further into the backcountry. Routes into the backcountry are minimal due to the terrain, and consequently snowmobiling may not be an issue in the Nature Recreation Zone.

- **Snowmobiles may be allowed in the Wilderness Recreation Zone and Special Feature Zone by Park Use Permit only. Use is only allowed in the Nature Recreation Zone and High Use Area.**

Restrictions:

- No snowmobile competitions or commercial recreation snowmobile tours.
- No extreme snowmobiling, i.e. repetitive hill climbs.
- For the protection of wildlife in extreme winter conditions e.g., extreme cold, deep snow crusting, BC Parks may use temporary or permanent recreational snowmobiling closures, i.e. zoning restrictions in tundra/alpine areas, seasonal access, designated routes, etc. Where snowmobiling is shown to be in conflict with wildlife and their habitats restrictions may be applied.

Education Issues:

- Respect and use of facilities
- Respect and avoidance of key winter habitats and avoidance of all wildlife species where possible.
- Signs at key locations, e.g. trailheads, Park boundaries, may be erected if required.
- A possible registration system could be used when required. A phone-in or internet system could track usage and data.
- Use of temporary signs for safety may be required, such as active trapping in an area; to be removed as soon as the trail is clear.

- Riverboat Use

Riverboats have long been used to access backcountry areas of the Park by commercial and non- commercial users, and will continue to be a popular method of accessing the core of the Park. Primary waterways supporting use in to the Park are the Muskwa and Tuchodi Rivers, with moderate use in mid-summer, and highest use through the hunting season until water levels become too low to support travel.

The use of conventional riverboats within the Park is allowed; although three areas are asked to be avoided. In the future if pressure on the shoreline flora and fauna and fishery and hunting values continue, an effort may be made to close these areas of concern through a public process:

- Travel within the "Wilderness Recreation Zone" other then within the High Use Areas, is discouraged.
- Riverboat use is discouraged on the Gathto River from the PARK boundary west into the Park.
- As per the specific direction of the Fort Nelson LRMP "No motorized boats above Tuchodi Lakes", riverboat use is extremely discouraged on the Tuchodi River above Upper Tuchodi Lake. The water ways are under Federal Regulations and as such this will not be enforced until this process is approved by the Government of Canada.

BC Parks recognizes the need for commercial river transportation. However, in the future should over capacity become an issue, preference will be given to private operators rather than commercial operators, based on the maximum capacity of the system to sustain boating levels. Over capacity may be defined where the number of trips per day that a single operator or vessel makes on the PARK river systems exceeds the capacity of the rivers to sustain levels of boating activity. While travel on primary rivers like the Muskwa and Tuchodi, will generally be unregulated, actions may be taken to reduce impacts to wildlife, fish habitat and for environmental and safety reasons.
BC Parks will attempt to use the tools of promotion and awareness of minimum impact techniques as the initial tool to reduce impacts, and hopefully this will result in greater stewardship of riparian areas. BC Parks, dependent on staffing and funding levels, will endeavour to monitor and evaluate current, historic and future demands of riverboat use in the PARK. It is the belief of BC Parks, the PAG, and other users that we all need to promote environmentally and socially responsible riverboat use. This may be provided through stewardship agreements with riverboat clubs and users, and by promoting educational topics such as the following:

- discouragement of night travel for safety reasons
- discouragement of river use in and around gravel shoals and on smaller tributary systems; this may alleviate pressures on spawning Bull trout populations.
- promotion of proper fuel storage, re-filling and the need to remove all empty containers from the Park.
- promotion of boat registration, licensing and safety equipment
- discouragement of impaired boating, and
- reminder to boaters of provisions of relevant Acts

Where the need arises, signage may be needed on the Park boundary.

Aircraft and Airstrips

Low frequency use of aircraft will be allowed. Low frequency use was defined by the PAG as: 'will not include any time of day restrictions, and not to substantially vary from current -use, i.e. patterns, type.'

Float planes, wheeled aircraft and helicopters are used to access a variety of locations within the Park. Fixed winged aircraft have been accessing the PARK area for over 60 years with use particularly concentrated at guide outfitter camps and lakes; however additional landing locations occur in the Park at minimally maintained strips and suitable river bars. Generally, the use of aircraft to access the Park is limited by topography and by the availability of landing sites. Floatplane use is limited by the extent of ice on lakes, and the frequency of suitable water bodies for some areas.

The use of aircraft within the boundaries of the PARK will not substantially vary from the historical use patterns (aerial status quo). The landing of aircraft and over-night stays for several days is a traditional occurrence and will continue within the PARK. The landing of aircraft in high altitude plateaus is allowed, but strongly discouraged by BC Parks, and may be subject to review if there are conflicts with wildlife resources. Commercial Recreation aircraft use will be evaluated and terms of conditions may be included in the Park Use Permit (PUP) for these clienteles.

Helicopters offer opportunities to access a broad range of sites within the Park. However in comparison to fixed-wing aircraft, helicopter use for recreation and commercial purposes makes up a small proportion of total air traffic over and into the Park, and is extremely costly.

Restrictions

- No new or expanded airstrips. An exception would be where BC Parks sees a need for improvements and/or new strip due to an environmental or a safety reason.
- No cutting of timber and/or brush for heli pad construction.
- No construction of new docks on lakes or rivers, although through a BC Parks permit, replacement of an existing dock may be allowed – a structure consisting of the same footprint, no more.
- No use of hang gliders, para-sails, hot-air balloons, base-jumping, kite-surfing, parachuting, skydiving and powered parachutes.

BC Parks may:

- Review the need for maintenance of airstrips based on discussion with proponents.
- Request reporting from non-commercial/private operators for survey and use pattern purposes.
- Limit the use of helicopters to certain zones/areas of the Park to minimize conflicts (i.e. designate flight paths, heli landing) or where problems are identified (i.e. with wildlife).

- Develop voluntary over-flight guidelines (fixed wing/helicopter) to address specific wildlife concerns (i.e. goat issues)
- Minimize the use of helicopters to help ensure protection of existing wilderness values and traditional uses

For fuel storage please refer to 'Fuel Storage' under Recreation Management.

In addition to the guidelines for aircraft and airstrips commercial operators, if permitted, will:

- be requested to submit a heli-assisted activity application to BC Parks for an internal review. A draft would then go to a limited public discussion as per BC Government policies to minimize conflicts with traditional uses
- be regulated by requiring the commercial operators of aircraft to acquire a Park Use Permit, either as a separate document, or as part of a ground-based activity permit, for which the operator is supplying their own aircraft, and
- be subject to:
    - demonstration of compatibility with existing users and an acceptable level of environmental impacts.
    - development of designated areas of operation
    - by request, reporting level of use - compile data on dates, number of trips, landing sites (using GPS), number of people, specific site information. Users to record information and submit to BC Parks, and data to be reviewed annually, (accessible and available to public) and where problems are clearly identified BC Parks may develop restrictions in order to protect wildlife (i.e. site specific areas or issues)
    - demonstration of avoidance of wildlife conflicts
    - defining sensitive times and dates for wildlife and ensuring that heli activities avoid these times i.e. Oil and Gas guidelines, restricted dates and areas to directly relate to a specific wildlife concern
    - demonstrating the use of direct routes for activities (avoid sight seeing)

Restrictions

- Commercial heli- skiing operations will not be allowed.

BC Parks may:

- Limit the use of all commercial aircraft to certain zones or areas of the Park to minimize conflicts with other Park users (i.e. designate flight paths, landing sites) or where problems are identified (i.e. with wildlife).
- Allow the use of helicopters to support such activities as heli-hiking, heli-climbing, alpine tours, etc., subject to an impact assessment prior to permitting; the PAG was extremely concerned about the occurrence of commercial helicopter use during fall hunting season.

- Review the need for maintenance of airstrips based on discussion with proponents.
- Request reporting from non-commercial, commercial and private operators for survey and use pattern purposes.

Develop voluntary over-flight guidelines (fixed wing/helicopter) to address specific wildlife concerns (i.e. goat issues)

Restrictions

- There will be no road development or creation of new access management routes within the Northern Rocky Mountains Park, and the use of ATV's is prohibited except where permitted by Park permit for localized commercial use and on the M-K access routes.
- Sea-doos, jet-skis, hovercrafts, airboats, hydrofoils and other non-traditional powered boats are not allowed for environmental, social and safety reasons.
- For closures concerning "Riverboat Use" and "Snowmobiling" please refer to the appropriate sections.

3.3 Zoning

Zoning is an integral tool used to assist in the planning and management of a Provincial Park/ Protected Area. In general terms, zoning divides a Park into logical spatial units to apply uniform and consistent management objectives based on natural, cultural and recreational values, and existing and projected desired patterns of access and recreation use in relation to specific management goals. In the development Parks and Protected Areas zones, BC Parks utlizes the "Protected Area Zoning Descriptions." ***See Appendix C***. BC Parks and the members of Public Advisory Group agreed to use three zones in the PARK. It was agreed that a Wilderness Recreation Zone would be located in the west, a Nature Recreation Zone to the East and a Special Features Zone around Sleeping Chief. There was also agreement that BC Parks would show four High Use Areas. These High Use Areas are highlighted to depict areas where either riverboat or fixed wing traffic is the highest. In general the highest use coincides with the summer/fall recreation and/or hunting seasons.

For descriptions of what uses will and will not be allowed in each zone ***See Appendix D.***

Please refer to Figure ?? for Park Zoning Map

Wilderness Recreation Zone

To protect a remote, largely undisturbed natural landscape and to provide backcountry recreation opportunities dependent on a wilderness environment, where air access will be permitted to existing air-strips and traditional water landings.

Zone Description

The Wilderness Recreation zone covers the entire western side of the Park, from its southern boundary to the Hoodoo's around Wokkpash Lake. It more or less dissects the Park in half running north and south. In addition, this zone includes the headwaters of the Muskwa, Tuchodi, Chischa and Tetsa Rivers, as well as Gathto and Wokkpash Creek. This zone is very pristine and remote, and mainly consists of high alpine and precipitous cliff habitats, as well as several small glaciers. Within the PARK, the Wilderness Recreation Zone at 288,912ha covers 43.4% of the Park.

Zone Rationale

Reasons for defining this largest part as wilderness recreation zone include the following:

- The land and waters are largely free of human use evidence.
- The landscape is remote and largely undisturbed.
- The area embraced within this zone provides the Park visitor with a superb wilderness experience, generally free from artificial noise and light pollution. Traversing the land and waters within this zone will take the visitor to an experience similar to what the early European explorers would have found centuries ago.

The following table depicts changes to the Wilderness Recreation Zone. The wording was agreed upon between BC Parks and the PAG, to better portray the area, and issues within. All changes are bolded, italicized and underlined below.

Objective To protect a remote, ***largely*** undisturbed natural landscape and to provide backcountry recreation opportunities dependent on a ***wilderness*** environment where air access ***will*** be permitted to existing air-strips and traditional water landings.
Means of Access Non-mechanised & non-motorised - except ***will*** permit low frequency air access to existing air-strips and traditional water landings; foot, canoe (horses will be allowed).
Recreation Opportunities Backpacking, canoeing, kayaking, river rafting, nature and historic appreciation, hunting, fishing, cross-country skiing, ***camping***, snowshoeing, horseback riding, specialised activities (e.g., caving, climbing), and ***snowmobiling (except in Special Feature Zone) where authorized by a Parks letter of permission.***

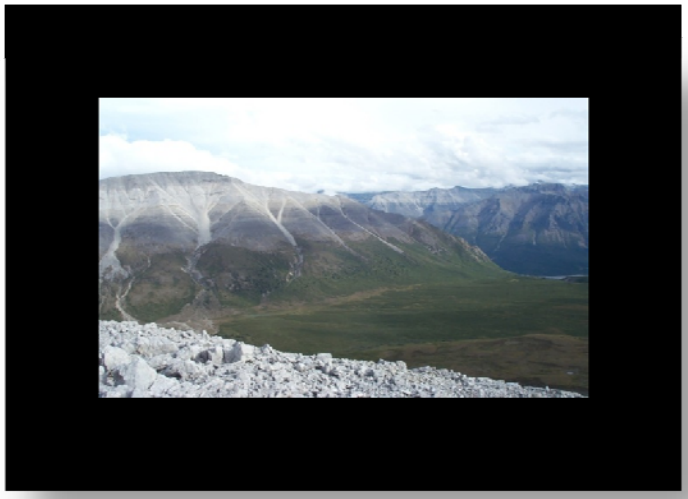


Plate ? Conrad Theissen – Dead Dog Creek

Nature Recreation Zone

To protect scenic values and to provide for backcountry recreation opportunities in a largely undisturbed natural environment

Zone Description

This zone covers over half of the Park stretching from the Parks southern boundary to its northern boundary where it meets the Alaska Highway. It covers the entire eastern boundary and bumps up against the wilderness recreation zone on the west. This zone is the most accessible, with the Muskwa and Tuchodi Rivers running through it, Kluachesi Lake in its southern portion, and the Tetsa River on the northern boundary. Most of the main guide and outfitter facilities lie within this zone as well as the only private land. It is associated with high alpine plateaus, larger, broader valleys than the wilderness recreation zone, wetland complexes, and large, grassy slopes. Within the PARK, the Nature Recreation Zone at 373,023 ha covers 55.8.0% of the Park.

Zone Rationale

Reasons for defining this larger part of the Park as a Nature Recreation Zone include the following:

- Recognize the existence of existing traditional routes and more recent access routes such as the watercourses.
- Indicates the intent of BC Parks to provide awesome backcountry recreation that is somewhat accessible. There will also be provision for higher levels of visitor use

where people will see interesting features in a natural environment; however, visitors must expect to see other people in the Park participating in similar activities.

High Use Area – Within Nature Recreation Zone

Area Rationale

In reviewing the zoning options the Public Advisory Group wanted to acknowledge the high use of the above mentioned watersheds. They hoped to have these areas stand out on the mapping product without zoning them. The high use areas are regions where higher compliance and enforcement presence may be warranted; as well as more emphasis will be needed in the realm of public self-regulating efforts. High Use Areas are highlighted to depict where either riverboat, fixed wing and/or snowmobile traffic is the highest. In general the highest use along these corridors coincides with the summer/fall recreation and/or hunting seasons.

Area Description

The High Use Area is linear in shape and coincides with several waterways: the Muskwa and Tuchodi Rivers, and also encompasses the Tuchodi Lakes and Kluachesi Lake.

Plate ? Kluachesi Lake BC Parks

Special Feature Zone

To protect and present significant natural or cultural resources, features or processes because of their special character, fragility and heritage values

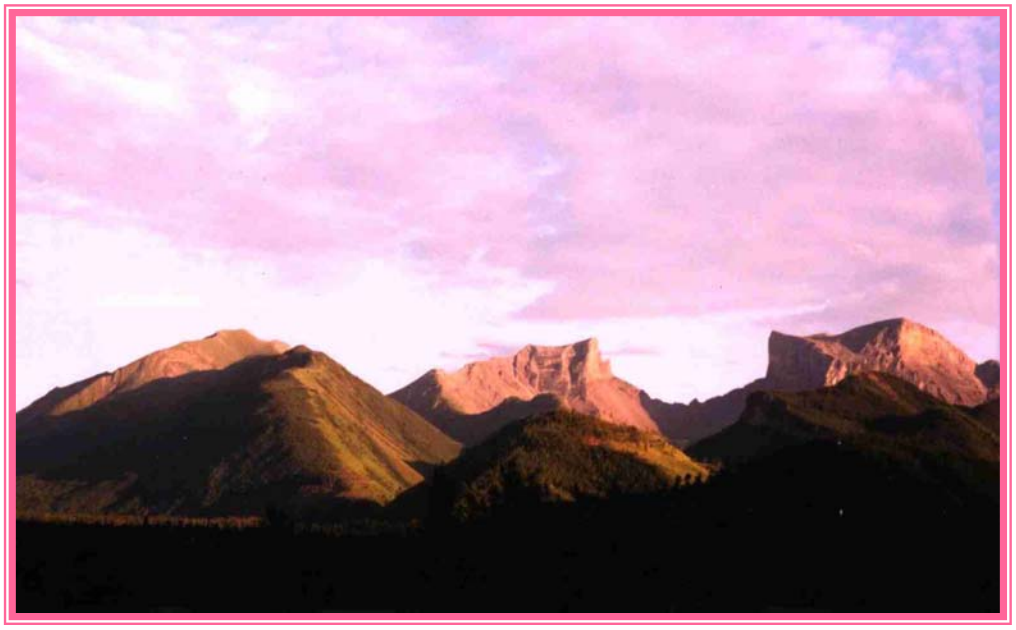
Zone Description

Characterized by rocky steep-sided slopes and separated by a contiguous high and wide valley, Sleeping Chief Mountain is an impressive geological formation. Supporting various wildlife species, due to its varied habitats, Sleeping Chief forms a large bowl like region that sits apart from the mountains surrounding it. Within the Park, the Special Feature Zone at 5,026ha covers 0.8% of the Park.

Zone Rationale

This special feature has been chosen for its cultural, wildlife and scenic values; with its impressive, well defined chevron folds it is an outstanding physiographic feature. Its boundary was chosen in order to protect the upper elevation habitats and scenery.

Plate 1: Sleeping Chief BC Parks



4.0 Plan Implementation

4.1 Introduction

The management plan forms a basis from which BC Parks and other agencies can set priorities to meet management objectives. Implementation of most strategies will be of an operational nature, but others such as fisheries management require more detailed planning; this is dependent on financial and staffing capacity of BC Parks. In addition, implementation of actions is affected by the management needs of other Parks in the Peace Region and the entire Protected Areas System.

Management will be limited so that it does not interfere in ecological processes, unless active management is needed to maintain or restore significant natural features or processes; natural ecosystems will continue to occur without a large amount of management intervention. As mentioned in "The Role of The Class A Park," BC Parks states:

> Where impacts from uses negatively affect conservation values BC Parks, in consultation with the PAG, under the Park Act, may, at its discretion, restrict or prohibit such uses temporarily or permanently. This is done as part of our "protection-first" mandate and stated policies, and will be based on consultations with affected interests, and other interested public. All activities are, and will continue to be, analyzed and managed, with emphasis being placed on promoting best practices through education.

BC Parks will try to ensure that First Nations, public interest groups, individuals and stakeholders are consulted where appropriate in various follow-up management planning processes. BC Parks may, again dependant on finances and staffing, provide a forum for public review of annual activities; either in conjunction with the FNLRMP Committee, the Public Advisory Group, the M-K Committee, or as a separate meeting of key interest groups and stakeholders.

4.2 Public Involvement and Consultation

Public involvement and commitment is beneficial in attempting to sustain Park values. Through increased awareness of backcountry ethics, stewardship of the Park by communities, groups, commercial operators, and individuals will help protect Park values. The role of the public for providing ongoing input to Park management is that of a stewardship role.

The PAG recommended that BC Parks consider the following options for public involvement/consultation:

- Public Forums with PAG member participation
- Presentation to key interest groups
- Provision of information to interested people on a mailing list
- Maintenance of an updated website
- Information should focus on stewardship, responsibility, wilderness profile

- Include the range of recreational choices
- BC Parks is to identify/respond to (not promote) the general areas where specific activities can/cannot occur
- Presentation to the MK Board if requested
- Avoid providing information and the promotion of sites including bat caves, sensitive wildlife areas (i.e.: licks, spawning area), ecologically sensitive sites, favourite fishing holes, cultural sites, hunting sites, trails and campsites.

4.3 Monitoring Strategy

Many of the above mentioned goals and strategies require BC Parks to have an ongoing management responsibility. These include tasks such as consultation and implementation of lower level plans. It is also important to monitor the effects of activities, make necessary adjustments to management practices, and ensure that the conservation and recreation goals of the Park are being met. The following bullets describe some of these goals, but it must be noted that any monitoring by BC Parks is dependent on financial and staffing availability. This list is not in order of importance.

- Ensure that activities conform to the zoning requirements for the Park.
- Ensure that tenure holders' practices are consistent with Park values and allow these to continue.
- Follow the guidelines of the Wildlife and Recreation Management Plans created for the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area.

4.4 Enforcement

Management presence within the PARK will consist of the use of a "roaming presence" approach, rather than establishing facilities. The method of travel for patrols will be appropriate to task with the priority being given to foot travel, and subsequently to horse and mule, riverboats, snowmobiles and lastly to fixed wing and rotary aircraft. Multi-tasking in the field and interacting with Park users within the Park is an objective of all enforcement staff working within the PARK area; to be proactive in looking for solutions when there is a problem. The role of MoE staff will be to provide public education to users, including interest groups and organizations, and developing educational tools and materials. This would include the encouragement of self-policing by user groups. Where funding and staffing numbers exist, the collection of baseline data, inventories, and monitoring will be performed.

Plate 7: Ranger Patrol BC Parks

Plate 8: Coordinated Patrol BC Parks

4.5 Communications

Introduction

Public perceptions of use (e.g. recreation opportunities and conditions in the PARK) depend immensely on the nature and methods used to convey information, and type of information that is made available. The sensitivity of the ecosystems within the PARK, and the limited capacity of the PARK to sustain human use, dictates that there should be little or no promotion to encourage use. However, there should still be access to information regarding the nature and type of opportunities that are available in the Park. The public should also be made aware that this Park is not particularly suited to inexperienced or ill-equipped users.

Marketing and Promotion

Direction from the M-K Recreation Management Plan with respect to promotion recommends that other than designated AMA routes, non-status camps, routes and airstrips should not be mapped nor advertised. Although established routes and designated campsites within a provincial Park may be mapped and/or advertised as determined by Park management plan zoning, the general intent is that routes, campsites and airstrips will be unmapped and unadvertised; except where required to protect ecological values, wilderness recreation experiences or for safety reasons.

The PARK vision role statements and management objectives are directed towards maintaining low dispersed levels of use. Marketing and promotion of any Park can affect the level of use and type of visitors it attracts and consequently, any promotion must be consistent with the objectives for the PARK. Park users and stakeholders have expressed a strong desire to maintain a traditional, unstructured nature and quality of recreation opportunities and experiences in the Park. In this context, the overall intent is to allow people to research and explore the PARK without benefit of detailed brochures, elaborate trim maps, or specific information about fishing or highlighting natural features or attractions.

Signage

The use of signs within, and on the boundary, of the PARK was fully discussed by the PAG. All signs within PARK will be temporary signs and generally will be placed on the outside of the Park. Signs may be required for safety issues or area closures. Temporary signs will be aluminum and/or metal and they will be easily installed & removed, except where an indication of vandalism is evident, and more stringent installation methods are needed. Permanent signs at Park boundaries or outside of the Park include educational, informational and regulatory signs. Permanent signs will be constructed considering aesthetics and the best fit-to-environment, as well as the best use of materials for construction.

BC Parks will attempt to discuss the placement of site-specific information signs with operators and stakeholders. BC Parks will strive to ensure closures by specific regulation rather than as authorized by a Park officer, and will attempt to co-ordinate with M-KMA signs, when possible.

4.6 High Priority Strategies

Many of the strategies require immediate attention and should have the highest priority for implementation. These include information gathering as well as implementation and enforcement of regulations. The following list is not in order of importance.

Park Management

- Ensure all stakeholders are informed of the PARK guidelines and objectives/strategies, and are aware of the importance of self-monitoring and helping in the education of all users.
- Protect important First Nations sites and features by keeping their location undisclosed.
- Encourage all commercial users to work together.

Motorized and Mechanized Use and Access

- Work with industry interests in adjacent RMZ's to ensure alternative access is considered away from Park boundaries.
- No new landing strips or heli-pads will be constructed within the Parks boundaries.
- Monitor motorized access on all lakes and the Tuchodi, Gathto and Muskwa Rivers.

Facility and Infrastructure Management

- Upgrade existing facilities as necessary, but maintain the same ecological footprint.
- Establish no new facilities within the PARK, except for areas where impacts are causing degradation of Park values; ensure that facilities match the Parks wilderness setting.
- Regulate facility development and maintenance through mechanisms including approval by BC Parks, monitoring facility condition, requiring that facilities be maintained and uphold a rustic appearance by tenure holders, and regulating waste disposal within the Park.
- Ensure that facilities match the wilderness setting.

Research and Assessment

To be prioritized where staff, funding and time permits

- Assess recreational uses and associated impacts to ecology within the Park, if potential negative impacts are identified, then conduct research to determine the appropriate mitigation measures.
- Assess all new proposals for facility expansion or activities to ensure they will not negatively impact natural, cultural or recreational values. Focus on areas of impacts to the natural environment and to the wilderness recreation experience.
- Conduct overview, and where strategic, in-depth inventories and research of flora, fauna, fish, avian species, air quality, mammal, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates, water and air quality, critical habitats, listed species and the fire regime in the Parks. Studies should include population mapping, distribution, presence/not detected, critical habitat mapping, habitat requirements and migration pattern studies.

Implementation

- To ensure that Park values are protected, limitations and restrictions for access, activities and uses may be considered.
- Implement greater spatial or temporal restrictions for activities as necessary and/or adjust management strategies accordingly. Limitations and restrictions will be based on degradation of Park values.
- Promote education and awareness of minimum impact techniques.
- Designate and maintain routes and (hardened) campsites in areas where Park values are impacted.
- Use zoning to limit access if use levels increase and negative impacts become an identified conservation issue.

4.7 Task or Project Strategies

Many of the strategies involve research projects or short-term tasks. These should be implemented as soon as possible; however it is not vital that they be completed immediately. The following list is not in order of importance.

- Develop vegetation, wildlife and fire management plans in cooperation with relevant agencies; utilize existing plans where necessary e.g. MoF Range Use Plan, M-K Wildlife Management Plan.
- Design a method to collect informal information for various Park values from commercial operators and other Park visitors.
- Integrate the strategies and objectives of the M-K Wildlife Plan, M-K Recreation Plan and Fort Nelson Land and Resource Management Plan.

Consultation

Consult First Nations, commercial operators, the Ministry of Energy and Mines, Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management, Oil and Gas Commission, Ministry of Forests, leaseholders/tenure holders, industry, and user groups to:

- Establish requirements and methods to protect Park values concerning access, environmental impacts and visual quality.
- Ensure that the commercial activities are not negatively affecting the wilderness experience for Park visitors.
- Encourage a feeling of stewardship in the PARK.
- Ensure protection of significant habitats and listed species by limiting activities in areas with identified vulnerable Park values.
- Plan and implement studies regarding possible recreational impacts.

Education

- Provide management messages through the Parks Internet Website, and convey information to visitors in person and by written communication in partnership with other agencies and groups.
- Provide information about the effects of motorized boating on the environment.
- Provide information about the value of wildlife trees and downed wood as an important part of the natural ecosystem.
- Educate on the consequences of introducing non-native species to the Park.
- Encourage participation in ‘best practices’ regarding motorized and non-motorized activities.
- Encourage horse users to use process supplemental feed for their horses and provide recommendations regarding horse use on the Parks webpage.
- Encourage Commercial Operators to work together in their day to day operations.

Recreation

- Assess all proposed commercial recreation operations individually to determine if they are compatible with the Park vision and roles.

4.8 Ongoing Monitoring Strategies

A majority of the strategies require ongoing management responsibility. These include tasks such as consultation and implementation of lower level plans. It is also important to monitor the effects of activities and make the necessary adjustments to management practices. This is the only way to ensure that the conservation and recreation goals of the Park are being met. The following list is not in order of importance.

- Ensure that tenure holders' practices are consistent with Park values and allow these to continue.
- Maintain standard data gathering of tenure holder information, and client monitoring by permittees
- Develop standard monitoring strategies for other recreational users; with the assistance of the PAG and other user groups.

Mechanized and Motorized Use and Access

- Follow the guidelines of the Park Act and the M-K Access Management Area Regulation.
- Monitor recreational access in the Park and its impacts on natural, cultural and aesthetic values to determine if future access restrictions are necessary e.g.
    1. Motorized boat activity.
    2. Snowmobile activity.
- Monitor commercial access along Park boundaries and assess the impact that existing or proposed commercial recreation activities have on public access.
- Monitor recreational activities such as horse use, recreational fishing activities, snowmobiling and hiking for erosion, soil compaction or impact to the value.
- Gather data about the recreational fishery from anglers.
- Monitor aircraft periodically to determine whether there are detrimental effects to wildlife.

Facility and Infrastructure Management

- Regulate facility expansion and maintenance through mechanisms including approval by BC Parks, monitoring facility condition, requiring that facilities be maintained and uphold a rustic appearance by tenure holders.

Research and Assessment

To be prioritized where staff, funding and time permits

- Monitor human activity, e.g. mechanized and motorized use, and the surrounding natural environment for impacts to ecological integrity, biodiversity, water quality, exotic species introduction and impacts, and specific flora and fauna.

Horse Use

- Regulate horse use if necessary for conservation purposes.

Enforcement

- Ensure that all pertinent regulations and restrictions are enforced.

- Encourage partnerships and shared enforcement excursions with Conservation Service, Land and Water, etc.

5.0 References

Personal Communications:
Joanne Nelson, Project Geologist, Ministry of Energy and Mines
Water and Land BC
Ministry of Forests, Ft St John District
Gary Vince, previous guide outfitter
Resources:
Fish Wizard

Fort Nelson LRMP

GOAT Ministry mapping and data collection.

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6.0 Glossary

Access: a way or method of approach, (includes paths, trails, routes, corridors, roads, rails, etc.), to a specified interest;
Access management: the process of planning, developing, regulating and deactivating a way or means of approach to a specified interest;
Archaeological sites: locations that contain physical evidence of past human activity for which the application of scientific methods of inquiry (i.e. survey, excavation, data analysis, etc.) are the primary source of information. These resources do not necessarily hold direct associations with living communities. Examples of archaeological sites include shell middens, lithic scatters, cache pits and pit house remains.
(from: Douglas Glaum communication, April 1996)
Backcountry: an area in a Park or recreation area that is farther than one kilometre from either side of the centreline of a Park road or a highway;
Base camp / facility: a facility that is the main location or one of the main locations for a commercial or industrial operation;
Biodiversity or biological diversity: the variety of plants, animals and other living organisms in all their forms and levels of organization, and includes the assortment of genes, species and ecosystems, as well as the evolutionary and functional processes that link them;
Biogeoclimatic zones: the geographic areas having similar patterns of energy flow, vegetation and soils as a result of broadly homogeneous climate. *(from: Biodiversity Guidebook, September 1995)*
Blue-listed species: those that are considered to be vulnerable and "at risk" but not yet endangered or threatened. Populations of these species may not be in decline, but their habitat or other requirements are such that they are vulnerable to further disturbance;
Camelid: of the camel family, i.e. Llamas and Alpacas.
Camp: to occupy a campsite, to set up a tent or other shelter or to remain overnight;
Campsite: an area in a Park or recreation area developed by the ministry, or a crudely fashioned site created by user groups over years of use, to accommodate persons who wish to camp;

- random - unregulated and haphazardly designed sites, created as the need arises.
- dispersed - camping in designated sites, or where non-designated, the sites are widely separated and on a more regular basis year to year. Dispersed camping refers to pristine sites that are not identifiable as campsites, or otherwise reflect light, occasional use.

Connectivity: a qualitative term used to describe the degree to which late successional ecosystems are linked to one another to form an interconnected network. The degree and characteristics of these linkages are determined by topography and Natural Disturbance Type (NDT).

- Specific types of connectivity are: upland to upland, upland to stream, upland to wetland, cross-elevational ***(from: Biodiversity Guidebook, September 1995)***;

Conservation: the careful protection, utilization, and planned management of living organisms, and their vital processes to prevent their depletion, exploitation, destruction, or waste;
Conservation Data Centre: a division of BC Environment that tracks species and plant communities that are considered threatened or endangered at the provincial, national or global level;
Critical habitat: part or all of a specific place occupied by a wildlife species or a population of such species and recognized as being essential for the maintenance of the population or ecosystem processes. The habitats may be well defined, geographically concentrated, critical niches or species-specific critical ecological components widely distributed across the landscape *(from: Draft Wildlife Habitat Areas Field Guide, October 1994);*
Crown land: land owned by the government;
Cultural heritage feature: a human work, or a place that gives evidence of human activity or has spiritual or cultural meaning, and that has been determined to be of historic value to the province, a community, or an aboriginal people;
Domestic animal: a vertebrate that has been domesticated;
Ecosection: a natural region distinctive in landform, hydrology, vegetation and climate;
Ecosystem: a community of animals, plants and bacteria and its interrelated physical and chemical environment;
Facility: something that is built, installed, or established to serve a particular purpose;
Firearm: includes a rifle, shotgun, handgun, spring gun or any device that propels a projectile by means of an explosion, compressed gas or spring, but does not include a longbow or crossbow;
Fly camp: a facility which is accessed by aircraft, includes a fire ring;
Fragmentation: a process whereby large contiguous forest patches are transformed into one or more smaller patches surrounded by disturbed areas. Fragmentation occurs naturally by fire, disease, wind and insect attack. It also occurs due to human actions, such as forestry, mining, road building, seismic activity, etc. It can lead to declines in biodiversity;
Frontcountry: an area in a Park or recreation area within one kilometre of either side of the centreline of a Park road or a highway;
Guide: a person who, for compensation or reward received or promised, accompanies, assists or provides a service to another person, for hunting of big game;
Guideline: a preferred or advisable course of action respecting Park and protected area management. Guidelines imply a degree of flexibility, based on administrative judgment or feasibility to apply the guideline, and are consequently not normally enforceable through legal means;
Habitat: the place or type of site where an organism or population naturally occurs. Species may require different habitats for different uses throughout their lifecycle;
Hardened campsites: those with a high degree of soil compaction, water will not permeate the ground and vegetation growth in inhibited;
Hunt: to shoot at, attract, search for, chase, pursue, follow after or on the trail of, stalk or lie in wait for wildlife, or to attempt to do any of those things, whether or not the wildlife is then or subsequently wounded, killed or captured,
(a) with the intention to capture the wildlife, or
(b) while in possession of a firearm or other weapon;
Infrastructure: man-made i.e. single meat pole between two trees up to cabins/sheds, etc.

Issue: problems and unrealized opportunities respecting land and resources that a management planning process will address. Identification and documentation of planning and management issues is an important step in the planning process as a basis for assembling relevant planning information and for developing appropriate management objectives and strategies;
Land and Resource Management Planning (LRMP): the sub-regional integrated resource planning process for British Columbia. LRMP considers all resource values and requires public participation, interagency co-ordination and consensus-building in land and resource management decisions;
Low Frequency: will not include any time of day restrictions, and not to substantially vary from current -use, i.e. patterns, type
Low Impact/No Trace: (limited management by BC Parks – responsibility lies with the operator to ensure a low impact condition)
Best Practices

- leave campsite as close to a natural environment state as possible
- Consistent with public camps – consistency means across the board application to the public and commercial operators
- Dependent on type of campsite (i.e. satellite, spike, fly), but may include:
    7. Store camp infrastructure (i.e. tent poles) in an unobtrusive manner
    8. Remove all garbage
    9. Bury or remove human waste
    10. Clean up all evidence of fire pits

Maintain: to keep in an existing state (as of repair, efficiency, or validity): preserve from failure or decline;
Manage: to handle or direct with a degree of skill or address; to treat with care; to exercise executive, administrative, and supervisory direction of;
Management Direction Statement: a concise strategic document that describes: a) protected area values; b) management issues and concerns; c) a management strategy focused on immediate priority objectives and strategies; and, d) directional statements from other planning processes;
Management strategy: a method for achieving an end or objective;
Natural resources: land, water and atmosphere, their mineral, vegetable and other components, and includes the flora on and fauna on and in them;
Objective: a concise, measurable statement of a desirable future condition for a Park value, activity or use which is obtainable through management strategies and actions;
Old-growth: a climax forest that contains live and dead trees of various sizes, species, composition and age class structure. The age and structure of old growth forests varies significantly by forest type and from one biogeoclimatic zone to another. *(from: Biodiversity Guidebook, September 1995)*;
Operator: a person authorized by a Park use permit or resource use permit to operate facilities in any part of a Park or recreation area;
Packing: means transporting people or their equipment or supplies, for compensation or reward received or promised, for hunting by residents and non-residents, and includes providing accomodation, catering, and equipment services in the course of that transporting;

(This agreement is not authority under the Wildlife Act for you to act as a guide or as a guide for fish as those terms are defined in the Wildlife Act.)

Park: includes land managed and administered by the minister under section 6 of the Act; Crown land established or continued as a Park by or under this Act or the *Protected Areas of British Columbia Act;*

Park ranger: a Park officer appointed by the minister as a Park ranger;

Park use permit: a licence, issued under the Act, authorizing an activity or a course of behaviour or conduct, or the occupancy, use, development, exploitation or extraction of a natural resource on or in a Park;

Permanent structure: those that will remain without marked change, i.e. cabins, tent platforms, hardened campsites, and may include tent floors, etc;

Predator-prey system: a combination of a population of large predators, a complex of prey populations, and the environment in which this relationship exists. In the Fort Nelson Forest District, there are two large predator-prey systems: bears and wild ungulates; and wolves and wild ungulates. Any network of areas designed to maintain large predator-prey populations must include the centre of their occurrence and the vital linkages or movement corridors between them;

Pre Existing Use: refers to all activities that occurred in the Park prior to establishment of the Park but does not include First Nations

Protect: to cover or shield from exposure, injury, or destruction: guard;

Protected area: a designation of areas of land and water set aside to protect natural heritage, cultural heritage or recreational values (includes provincial Park, ecological reserve and protected area designations);

Protected area management planning: the activity of describing a desirable future end state for natural, cultural heritage and recreation values within a designated protected area, and of identifying the means by which that end state will be achieved. Protected Area management planning involves the collection and analysis of diverse information to develop management objectives and strategies to achieve those objectives;

Protected area management plan: the report that is the product of a protected area management planning process (see above);

Protected area role statements: articulate the reasons the protected area or Park exists; they do not include mandates for management or other legislative requirements;

Protected Area Strategy (PAS): British Columbia's strategy to develop and expand the provincial protected area system to protect 12 per cent of the provincial land base by the year 2000. The goals of the strategy are to protect viable, representative examples of natural diversity in the province, and special, natural, recreational and cultural heritage features;

Recreation area: means Crown land reserved or set aside for public recreational use and established as a recreation area by or under the Act;

Red-listed species: those that are either extirpated, endangered or threatened, or are being considered for such status. Any indigenous taxon (species or subspecies) threatened with imminent extinction or extirpation throughout all or a significant portion of its range in BC is endangered. Threatened taxon are those indigenous species or subspecies that are likely to become endangered in BC if factors are not reversed;

Regionally important species: those that are not red- or blue-listed, but require management practices that differ from standard integrated resource management guidelines in order to fulfill critical habitat needs; or locally or regionally threatened or

declining species or those that may reasonably be expected to decline without protection of critical habitats;
Rehabilitation: to re-establish to condition of good health;
Restoration: the process of repairing damage caused by humans to the diversity and dynamics of indigenous ecosystems;
Riparian habitat: a distinct wildlife habitat zone located in riparian areas (land adjacent to the banks of rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands). Riparian areas are dominated by continuous high moisture content and influenced by adjacent upland vegetation. They incorporate ecosystems that are biologically diverse, frequently containing the highest number of plant and animal species found in a forest. Riparian areas provide critical habitats, home ranges and travel corridors for wildlife and serve to maintain ecological linkages throughout the forest landscape by connecting hillsides to streams and upper-elevation stream headwater areas to valley bottoms.
(from: Riparian Management Area Guidebook, March 1995)
Route: a general area defined by geography to enable travel from Point A to Point B; may or may not be passable;
Satellite camp/ facility: a facility with one permanent structure, excluding pit toilets, that is used for temporary accommodation, storage of supplies or fuel, or as an emergency shelter or an improved helicopter landing site;
Sensitive species: those plant or animal species susceptible or vulnerable to activity impacts or habitat alterations;
Snowmobile: a snowmobile as defined in the Snowmobile Regulation, B.C. Reg. 65/72;
Species at risk: (a) any species that in the opinion of the deputy minister of MELP or a person authorized by that deputy minister is threatened, endangered, sensitive or vulnerable, (b) any threatened and endangered plants or plant communities identified by the deputy minister of MELP or a person authorized by that deputy minister, as requiring protection, and (c) regionally important wildlife as determined by the deputy minister of MELP or a person authorized by that deputy minister;
Spike camp: a site with no permanent improvements or structures maybe used on a exclusive basis, used regularly, includes fire ring, for temporary tenting accommodation or the storage of supplies;
Strategy: a method of achieving a management objective;
Structure: any building or permanent improvement constructed, placed or established on *Park Act* lands, excluding pit toilets;
Sustainable Development: The Bruntland Commission defined sustainable development as "the management of the human use of the biosphere so that it may yield the greatest sustainable benefit to present generations while maintaining the potential to meet the needs and aspirations of future generations." For natural resources development to be sustainable it must take account of economic, social and ecological factors of the living and non-living natural resource base, and of the long-term and short-term advantages and disadvantages of alternative actions.
Temporary structure: those that last for a limited time, i.e. tent frames and tent floors;
Threatened or endangered species: indigenous species that are either threatened or endangered, and identified as 'red-listed' by the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks *(from: Biodiversity Guidebook, September 1995)*;

Traditional: defined through the LRMP process; refers to traditional knowledge as well as activities such as river boating that occurred prior to Park creation.
Traditional use sites: any geographically defined site that has been traditionally used by one or more groups of people for some type of activity. These sites will often lack the physical evidence of human-made artifacts or structures, but will maintain cultural significance to a living community of people. Traditional use sites are usually documented with the assistance of oral, historical and archival sources. Examples of such sites include: sacred sites, ritual bathing pools, resource gathering sites and sites of a legendary of past event of cultural significance *(from: Douglas Glaum communication, April 1996)*;
Trap: to trap, snare, net or use any other device to take or capture wildlife;
Trapping cabin: a cabin used for shelter and for storage of trapping supplies on a periodic but temporary basis in conjunction with the operation of a trapline;
Ungulate: a hoofed mammal;
Vulnerable species: those that are not threatened or endangered but are sensitive and particularly at risk, and identified as 'blue-listed' by the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks *(from: Draft Wildlife Habitat Areas Field Guide, October 1994)*;
Waste: waste as defined in the *Waste Management Act*;
Watershed: an area drained by a particular stream or river. A large watershed may contain several smaller watersheds;
Wilderness: an area generally greater than 1000 hectares that predominantly retains its natural character and on which human impact is transitory, minor and in the long-run substantially unnoticeable;
Wildlife: (a) a vertebrate that is a mammal, bird, reptile or amphibian prescribed as wildlife under the Wildlife Act, S.B.C. 1982, c.57 (b) a fish, or including (i) any vertebrate of the order Petromyzoniformes (lampreys) or class Osteichthyes (bony fishes), or (ii) any invertebrate of the class Crustacea (crustaceans) or class Mollusca (mollusks), from or in the non-tidal waters of the Province, and (c) an invertebrate or plant listed by the Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks as an endangered, a threatened or a vulnerable species, and includes the eggs and juvenile stages of these vertebrates, invertebrates and plants;
Yellow-listed species: those identified by the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks that require a management emphasis on a regional basis.

Appendix 1:Appropriate Activities and Facilities Table

Activity/Use/Facility	Acceptable Uses by Zone				Comments
	WR	NR	SF	HU	
Licensed Hunting, Fishing and Trapping	Y	Y	Y	Y	Subject to hunting, fishing and trapping regulations.
Commercial Trapping	Y	Y	Y	Y	Traditional activity continues. Existing tenures are renewable and transferable but additional tenures will not be issued.
Horse/Mule Grazing	Y	Y	N	Y	Public recreation purposes only, and by permit for guide/outfitting and packing
Horse/Mule Grazing - Commercial	N	N	N	N	No new permit/tenures As per FNLRMP allowed subject to management plan
Horse/Mule Use - Pack Animals	Y	Y	Y	Y	No exotic species allowed
Camping (No Trace)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Request "No Trace"
Hiking and Walking	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Natural and Cultural Values Appreciation (i.e. Birding, Photography, wildlife viewing…)	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Skiing (Helicopter) – Commercial and Non-Commercial	N	N	N	N	
Skiing (Cross-country)	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Skiing (Other)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Unassisted skiing and telemarking allowed.
Snowshoeing	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Rock/Ice Climbing **Mountain Climbing**	M	M	N	M	May be allowed in certain areas depending on wildlife and habitat concerns. No permanent bolts allowed. Park Use Permit required.
Guide/Outfitting	Y	Y	Y	Y	Park Use Permit required.
Activity/Use/Facility	**WR**	**NR**	**SF**	**HU**	**Comments**
Packing	Y	Y	Y	Y	Park Use Permit required.
Commercial Recreation (i.e. Heli-Tours, Heli-Hiking, River Tours, Glacier Tours, Trapline Tours)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Park Use Permit required.
Commercial Recreation – Horseback Tours, Kayaking Tours	Y	Y	Y	Y	Park Use Permit required.
Aerial Sight Seeing Tours	N	N	N	N	

Training Schools	N	Y	N	Y	Park Use Permit required.
Road Access – Motorized (Vehicular)	N	N	N	N	
Snowmobile Access	M	Y	M	Y	Snowmobiling may be allowed in the WR and SF Zone, only where authorized by Park use permit.
Other Motorized Land Access (Not Snowmobiles)	N	N	N	N	
Mountain Bike Access	N	Y	N	Y	
Motorized Water Access (i.e. rafting, river boating)	N	Y	N	Y	Sea-doos, jet-skis, hovercrafts, airboats, argos, hydrofoils and other non-traditional powered boats are not allowed for environmental, social and safety reasons. To view closures for riverboats please refer to Access Management – Riverboat Use.
Non-Motorized Water Access (i.e. kayaking, river-rafting, canoeing)	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Rotary Aircraft Access and Landings	Y	Y	Y	Y	The landing of aircraft in high altitude plateaus is strongly discouraged by BC Parks
Fixed Wing Aircraft Access and Landings	Y	Y	N	Y	Although not mandatory it is requested that landing be kept to existing airstrips and traditional water landings.
Non-Motorized Access (i.e. Dog Sleds, Horse Sleds)	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Fish Stocking and Enhancement	N_1	N_1	N_1	N_1	
Activity/Use/Facility	**WR**	**NR**	**SF**	**HU**	**Comments**
Fire Management (Prevention and Suppression)	N_1	N_1	N_1	N_1	Management must recognize need to protect public safety/facilities, values on adjacent lands, etc.
Prescribed Fire Management	N_1	N_1	N_1	N_1	
Forest Insect / Disease Control	N_1	N_1	N_1	N_1	Mitigative actions permitted where there is a need to prevent unacceptable damage to values on adjacent lands, prevent damage to significant recreation features or values, etc.
Exotic Organism Control	Y	Y	Y	Y	Under direction of Park staff.
Noxious Weed Control	Y	Y	Y	Y	Under direction of Park staff.
Removal of Wildlife/Fish for Transplants	Y	Y	Y	Y	May be allowed subject to consultation with MoE staff and by Park permit.
Ecosystem and Habitat Restoration	Y	Y	Y	Y	Subject to consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Branch.

Wildlife Habitat Enhancement	Y	Y	Y	Y	Subject to consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Branch.
Wildlife Management	Y	Y	Y	Y	Subject to consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Branch and M-K Wildlife Plan.
Oil & Gas	N	N	N	N	
Forestry	N	N	N	N_1	
Scientific Research	Y	Y	Y	Y	Manipulative activities normally not allowed. Specimen collections allowed only if data conclusions provide increased scientific knowledge or protection and/or understanding of protected area values. Park Use Permit required.
First Nations Rights	Y	Y	Y	Y	May be limited for ecosystem sustainability concerns.
Filming (Commercial)	Y	Y	Y	Y	If there are no impacts on conservation, cultural, or recreation values in the Park. Park Use Permit required.
Administrative Buildings and Compounds	N	N	N	N	
Boat Launches	N	N	N	N	Exceptions are for existing launches. Park Use Permit required.
Activity/Use/Facility	**WR**	**NR**	**SF**	**HU**	**Comments**
Interpretation and Information Structures	N_1	N_1	N_1	N_1	
Trail Maintenance	N_1	N_1	N_1	N_1	
Trail Building	N_1	N_1	N_1	N_1	
Water Control Structures	N	Y	N	Y	Park Use Permit required.
Backcountry Huts and Shelters (Private Use)	N	N	N	N	
Backcountry Huts and Shelters (Public Use)	N	N	N	N	
Power Lines / Transmission Lines and Other Rights-of-Way	N	N	N	N	
Communication Sites	N_1	N_1	N_1	N_1	Allowed for essential protected area management communication needs.

ZONES	ACCEPTABLE USES
WR = Wilderness Recreation NE = Natural Environment SF = Special Feature HU = High Use Area	Y = allowed subject to conditions in PARK M = may be permitted if compatible with PARK N = not allowed N_1 = allowed - expressed management purposes only

Appendix 2: Tenures and Permits

Registry/File Number	Description
809244	Agriculture; grazing
801996	Hunting/Fishing Camp
8005299 Site 5 of 7	License of Occupation
8009710	License of Occupation
805299 Site 1 of 7	License of Occupation
8006448	License of Occupation
L3820 (0202621) 2624 (0314433)	License of Occupation
8000589 Site 4	License of Occupation
8002799 Site 9	License of Occupation
8006639 Site 6 of 7	License of Occupation
8002799 Site 2 of 7	License of Occupation
8000589 Site 5	License of Occupation
8002799 Site 11	License of Occupation
8000589	License of Occupation
8008433	License of Occupation
8005596	License of Occupation
7401686	License of Occupation

Appendix 3:

Appendix E: Fort Nelson Forest District Red/Blue Listed Species

Rare Vascular Plant Tracking List: Fort Nelson Forest District

Scientific Name	English Name	Provincial Status
Androsace chamaejasme ssp. lehmanniana	sweet-flowered fairy-candelabra	Blue
Aster puniceus var. puniceus	purple-stemmed aster	Red
Astragalus umbellatus	tundra milk-vetch	Blue
Botrychium crenulatum	dainty moonwort	Blue
Braya purpurascens	purple braya	Blue
Carex bicolor	two-coloured sedge	Blue
Carex heleonastes	Hudson Bay sedge	Blue
Carex incurviformis var. incurviformis	curved-spiked sedge	Blue
Carex lapponica	Lappland sedge	Blue
Carex membranacea	fragile sedge	Blue
Carex misandra	short-leaved sedge	Blue
Carex petricosa	rock sedge	Blue
Carex rupestris ssp. rupestris	curly sedge	Blue
Carex tenera	slender sedge	Blue
Chamaerhodos erecta ssp. nuttallii	American chamaerhodos	Blue
Cicuta virosa	European water-hemlock	Blue
Claytonia tuberosa	tuberous springbeauty	Blue
Draba alpina	alpine draba	Blue
Draba cinerea	gray-leaved draba	Blue
Draba fladnizensis	Austrian draba	Blue
Draba glabella var. glabella	smooth draba	Blue
Draba lactea	milky draba	Blue
Draba porsildii	Porsild's draba	Blue
Elymus calderi	Yukon wildrye	Blue
Elymus sibiricus	Siberian wildrye	Blue
Epilobium davuricum	swamp willowherb	Blue
Epilobium hornemannii ssp. behringianum	Hornemanns willowherb	Blue
Epilobium leptocarpum	small-flowered willowherb	Blue
Eriophorum vaginatum ssp. vaginatum	sheathed cotton-grass	Blue
Eutrema edwardsii	Edward's wallflower	Blue
Galium labradoricum	northern bog bedstraw	Blue
Glyceria pulchella	slender mannagrass	Blue
Gymnocarpium jessoense ssp.	Nahanni oak fern	Blue

parvulum		
Impatiens aurella	orange touch-me-not	Blue
Juncus albescens	whitish rush	Blue
Juncus arcticus ssp. alaskanus	arctic rush	Blue
Kobresia sibirica	Siberian kobresia	Blue
Lesquerella arctica var. arctica	arctic bladderpod	Blue
Leucanthemum integrifolium	entire-leaved daisy	Blue
Lomatogonium rotatum	marsh felwort	Blue
Lupinus kuschei	Yukon lupine	Blue
Luzula kjellmaniana	Kjellman's wood-rush	Blue
Luzula nivalis	arctic wood-rush	Blue
Luzula rufescens	rusty wood-rush	Blue
Malaxis brachypoda	one-leaved malaxis	Blue
Minuartia austromontana	Rocky Mountain sandwort	Blue
Minuartia elegans	northern sandwort	Blue
Minuartia stricta	rock sandwort	Blue
Minuartia yukonensis	Yukon sandwort	Blue
Muhlenbergia glomerata	marsh muhly	Blue
Oxytropis arctica	arctic locoweed	Blue
Oxytropis jordalii ssp. davisii	Jordal's locoweed	Blue
Oxytropis jordalii ssp. jordalii	Jordal's locoweed	Blue
Oxytropis maydelliana	Maydell's locoweed	Blue
Oxytropis scammaniana	Scamman's locoweed	Blue
Penstemon gormanii	Gorman's penstemon	Blue
Physaria didymocarpa var. didymocarpa	common twinpod	Blue
Pinguicula villosa	hairy butterwort	Blue
Pinus banksiana	jack pine	Blue
Poa abbreviata ssp. pattersonii	abbreviated bluegrass	Blue
Polemonium boreale	northern Jacob's-ladder	Blue
Polemonium occidentale	western Jacob`s-ladder	Blue
Potamogeton perfoliatus	perfoliate pondweed	Blue
Potentilla biflora	two-flowered cinquefoil	Blue
Ranunculus sulphureus	sulphur buttercup	Blue
Rumex arcticus	arctic dock	Blue
Salix petiolaris	meadow willow	Blue
Salix raupii	Raup's willow	Red
Salix serissima	autumn willow	Blue
Sarracenia purpurea ssp. gibbosa	common pitcher-plant	Blue
Saxifraga hieraciifolia var. hieraciifolia	hawkweed-leaved saxifrage	Blue
Saxifraga hirculus ssp. hirculus	yellow marsh saxifrage	Blue
Senecio atropurpureus	purple-haired groundsel	Blue
Senecio congestus	marsh fleabane	Blue
Senecio sheldonensis	Mount Sheldon butterweed	Blue
Senecio yukonensis	Yukon groundsel	Blue

Silene involucrata ssp. involucrata	arctic campion	Blue
Silene repens	pink campion	Blue
Silene taimyrensis	taimyr campion	Blue
Sphenopholis intermedia	prairie wedgegrass	Red
Sphenopholis obtusata	prairie wedgegrass	Red
Tofieldia coccinea	northern false asphodel	Blue
Trichophorum pumilum	dwarf clubrush	Blue
Woodsia alpina	northern woodsia	Blue

Vertebrate Animal Tracking List: Fort Nelson Forest District

Scientific Name	English Name	Provincial Status
Freshwater Fish		
Hiodon alosoides	Goldeye	Blue
Coregonus artedi	Cisco	Red
Coregonus autumnalis	Arctic Cisco	Red
Salvelinus confluentus	Bull Trout	Blue
Salvelinus malma	Dolly Varden	Blue
Stenodus leucichthys	Inconnu	Blue
Notropis atherinoides	Emerald Shiner	Red
Notropis hudsonius	Spottail Shiner	Red
Pungitius pungitius	Ninespine Stickleback	Red
Birds		
Botaurus lentiginosus	American Bittern	Blue
Cygnus buccinator	Trumpeter Swan	Blue
Melanitta perspicillata	Surf Scoter	Blue
Haliaeetus leucocephalus	Bald Eagle	Yellow
Grus canadensis	Sandhill Crane	Blue
Asio flammeus	Short-eared Owl	Blue
Vireo philadelphicus	Philadelphia Vireo	Blue
Dendroica tigrina	Cape May Warbler	Red
Dendroica virens	Black-throated Green Warbler	Blue
Dendroica castanea	Bay-breasted Warbler	Red
Oporornis agilis	Connecticut Warbler	Red
Wilsonia canadensis	Canada Warbler	Blue
Ammodramus nelsoni	Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow	Red
Mammals		
Myotis septentrionalis	Northern Long-eared Myotis	Blue
Ursus arctos	Grizzly Bear	Blue
Martes pennanti	Fisher	Blue
Gulo gulo luscus	Wolverine, luscus subspecies	Blue
Rangifer tarandus population 14	Caribou, Boreal population	Blue
Rangifer tarandus population 15	Caribou, Northern population	Blue
Bison bison athabascae	Wood Bison	Red

Province of British Columbia. *The New Relationship With First Nations and Aboriginal Peoples: Overview*. Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation. http://www.gov.bc.ca/arr/newrelationship/new_relationship_overview.html (April 15, 2008).

[2] Province of British Columbia. 1996. *Constitution Act*. RSBC1996, c.66. Queen's Printer, Victoria, BC. http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/stat/C/96066_01.htm (October 26, 2006).

Mount Smythe Glacier?