

MANAGEMENT PLAN

March 2001



for Bonaparte
Provincial Park



Ministry of Water, Land
and Air Protection
Parks Division

Bonaparte Provincial Park

MANAGEMENT PLAN

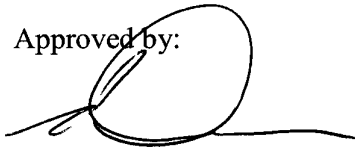
Prepared by
BC Parks
Thompson River District
Kamloops BC



Bonaparte
Provincial Park

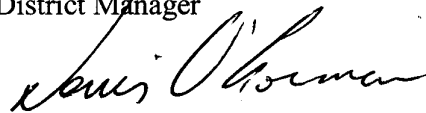
Management Plan

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Plan Highlights

- The management plan confirms the original purpose for establishing Bonaparte Provincial Park: To protect forests, lakes and wetland habitats that typify the Thompson Plateau and to maintain the qualities of the environment and features that form the recreation and tourism appeal of the area.
- The Plan separates the park into two well define zones:
 - ⇒ Natural Environment zoning with recognition of traditional public access, recreation activities and use of trails and lakes in the southern portions of the park.
 - ⇒ Wilderness Recreation zoning over the northern portions of the park with the intent to maintain wilderness values. This zone contains long established wilderness lodges.
- The Plan provides direction for managing the resources of the park. There is emphasis on maintaining the existing natural diversity of plant and wildlife species, and on allowing natural processes to occur. Management actions, however, will be integrated with needs to protect recreation, tourism and conservation values and resource management interests on lands surrounding the park. Commitments include development of fisheries, forest fire, forest insect and vegetation management plans.
- The Plan recognizes continued historical use of the park for cattle grazing, with management co-ordination and administration by the Ministry of Forests.
- The Plan outlines visitor use objectives and strategies to maintain the qualities of the backcountry recreation experience. Management strategies are directed toward maintaining low, dispersed levels of use to ensure a sense of remoteness and solitude. Key strategies relate to:
 - ⇒ Access Management - maintaining established road closures and trail head parking within the southern portion of the park and recommended closure of public access a minimum distance of 1 kilometer from the park boundary on all roads approaching the park.
 - ⇒ Provisions for tourism use with recognition of the traditional wilderness resorts in the northern portion of the park.
 - ⇒ Recognition of traditional fly-in access within the park.
 - ⇒ Recognition of established snowmobile access and use within the southern portion of the park.
 - ⇒ Provision of low profile, basic facilities and maintenance of main trails in the southern portion of the park.
 - ⇒ Limiting information on the park to a general description of the nature and types of recreational opportunities and encouraging low impact camping and wilderness travel techniques.

Introduction

Management Planning Process

Bonaparte Provincial Park was established on April 30th, 1996, as a result of the protected area recommendations contained in the Kamloops Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP). Bonaparte Park was among 58 areas that were recommended for protected area status through the LRMP primarily to protect their ecological values, but with commitment to recognize and allow for variety of pre-existing uses such as recreation, cattle grazing, hunting, trapping and backcountry tourism to continue.

Bonaparte Park is located on the Bonaparte Plateau, 55 kilometers northwest of Kamloops. The park contains 11,848 hectares and provides provincially significant representation of high plateau settings of lakes and forests and associated recreation opportunities.

This management plan is intended to direct long-term development and management of Bonaparte Provincial Park. It is a visionary document that sets the course for moving forward with meeting the variety of aspirations and objectives that were identified at the time the park was established. BC Parks, BC Environment and the Ministry of Forests will be the primary users of the Plan; however, a wide variety of interested individuals and groups will use the plan as reference and to gain understanding of the park purpose and objectives.

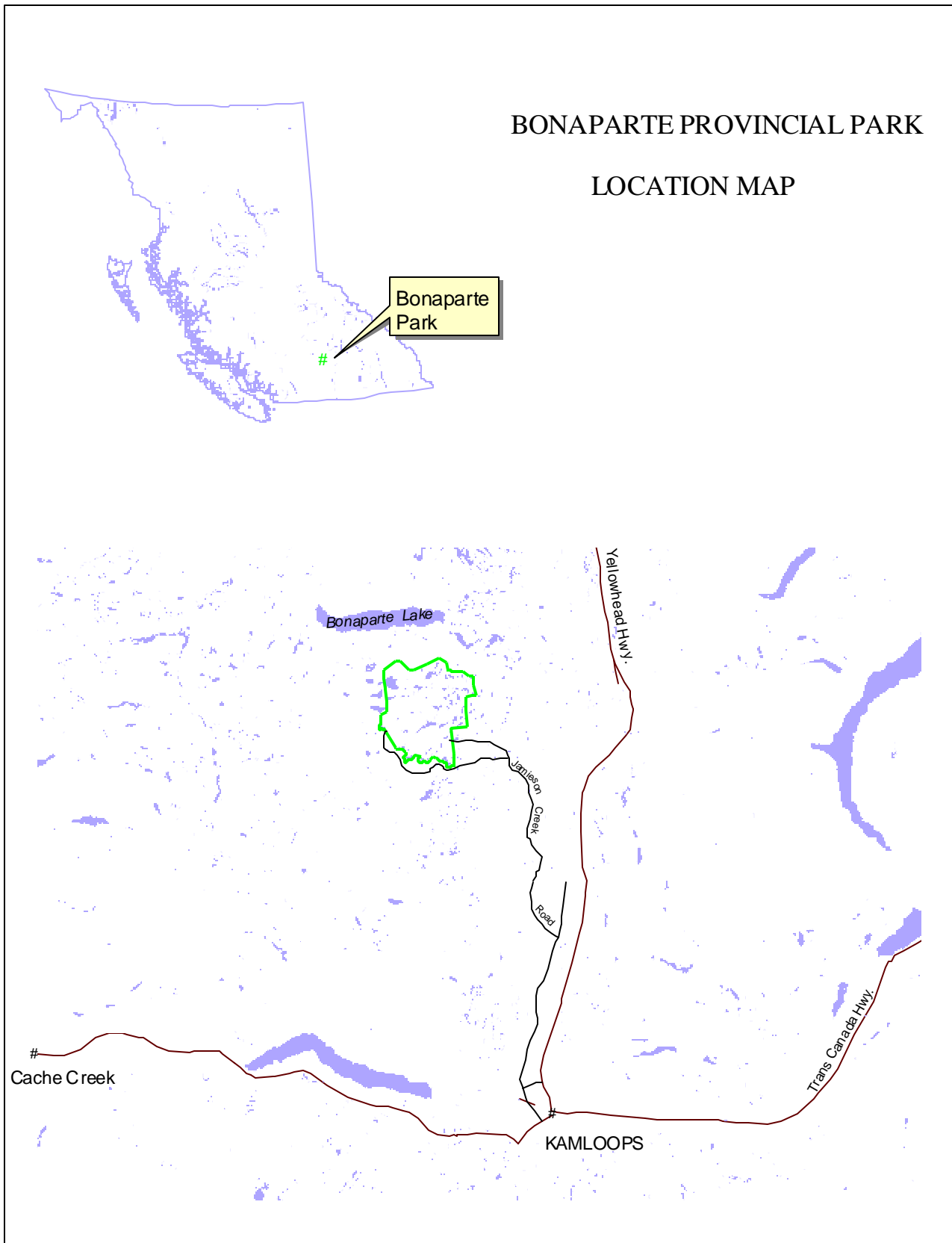
The Bonaparte Park Management Plan states the roles and objectives for use and management of the park and its values. The Plan addresses a number of key issues, that primarily relate to appropriate types and levels of tourism and recreation access and use and strategies for managing vegetation, fisheries, wildlife and wilderness values. The planning process has revealed a wide range of opinions on park access and use, but the common interest of everyone involved has been the retention of the wilderness and natural qualities of the park. This plan strives to strike a balance between the diverse interests, with the overriding principle that protection of the parks conservation values will take precedence.

The Management Planning Project

As one of the more significant parks arising from the Kamloops LRMP and with a complexity of interests and issues, Bonaparte Provincial Park was recognized as a priority for undertaking a management planning process. An Interim Management Direction Statement was developed in 1996 to guide the management of the new park until a full management plan was developed.

As an initial step in the management planning process, all available resource and use data was gathered and summarized in a management plan Background document to serve as an information source and reference for preparing the management plan. The Background document provides a relatively complete summary of values and interests as well as analysis of the management planning issues. The Background document is available for viewing at the Thompson River Park District.

Figure 1: Park Location



The management plan was developed through a working committee comprised of representatives of resource agencies, primary recreation and conservation groups, most of which are in the general Kamloops - Barriere area, and tourism operators, other stakeholders and individuals who have specific interests in the park. Representatives from BC Environment and Ministry of Forests provided expert advice and assisted in preparation of resource management strategies. Decisions were arrived at through consensus based approach, adopting similar principles to those that have been used in the Kamloops LRMP process.

The Kamloops LRMP and the Interim Direction Statement, which provided the management intent and basic objectives for managing the park, served as the framework for developing the plan. The plan is based on the principles and purposes of the Provincial Protected Areas Strategy and draws on the *Park Act* and associated regulations and pertinent zoning, recreation and conservation management policies.

The management plan document focuses on setting strategic goals, objectives and parameters for managing resources and tourism and recreation uses of the park. Throughout the planning process there was conscientious effort to provide strategic direction without getting into details that were operational in nature.

Relationship with other Planning Processes

This management plan has been reviewed and approved in principle by the Kamloops LRMP monitoring table.

It is expected that decisions for managing access on lands surrounding the park will be made in co-ordination with local planning groups and processes, particularly the Bonaparte Local Resource Use Planning (LRUP) Committee, the Deadman LRUP and the 100 Mile House Sub Regional Land Use Plan. There will also need to be co-ordination with management of Tree Farm Licence 35, which adjoins the park to the south and east.

Planning Issues

Park Vision and Role

The management plan provides a long-term vision and identifies the role of the park within a regional and provincial context.

Resource Management

The management plan identifies guidelines for developing vegetation, forest fire and forest insect and disease management plans as well as fisheries and wildlife management strategies.

Access Management

The management plan outlines management strategies for road access to and within the park including recognition of pre-existing access for aircraft and access rights of tourism resorts.

Tourism Use

The management plan provides guidelines for appropriate levels and types of commercial tourism uses of the park. There will be strong recognition of the need to protect the area's wilderness qualities for traditional fly in wilderness resorts. Strategies will ensure consistent and fair management of commercial tourism uses. Zoning, access management and other strategies will be identified as measures to minimize conflicts between commercial and public recreation.

Recreation Use

The management plan identifies compatible recreation opportunities for the park, suitable distribution, types and levels of facilities and uses for the park.

Background Summary

Bonaparte Provincial Park epitomizes the rolling sub-alpine forests, lakes and wetland settings of the high-elevation plateau landscapes of the southern interior of the province. Numerous small lakes and wetlands form the dominant feature of the park.

The lava flow landscape of the park forms a rolling hilly terrain, pocketed by many lakes that are interconnected by gently flowing creeks and marshes. Skoatl Point, south of Dagger Lake, at 1640 meters, and Bare Hill, south of Bare Lake, at 1574 meters, are two prominent remnant lava cones that can be seen from many lakes and ridges in the park.

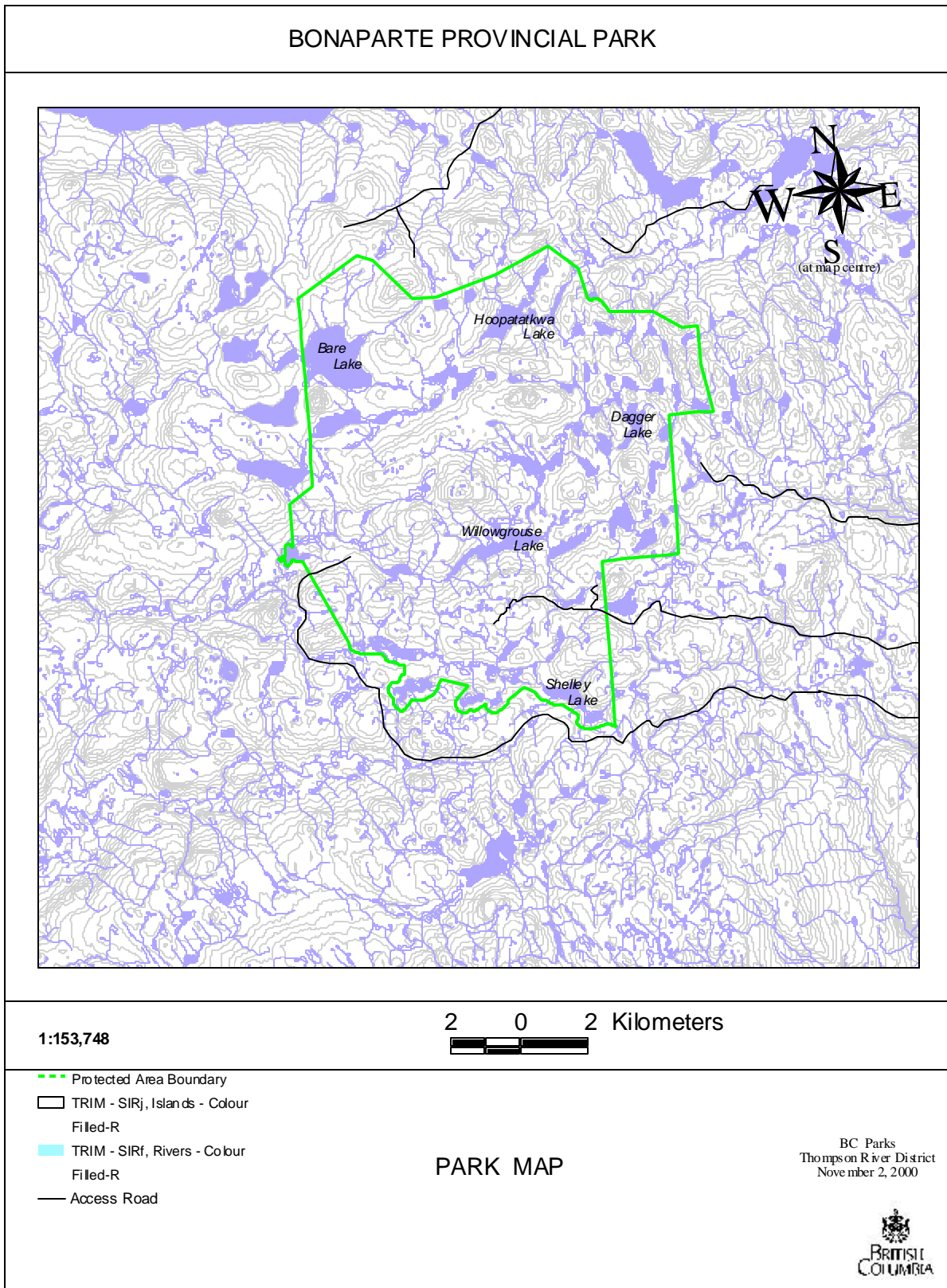
Fire and forest insects and disease have shaped the forest ecology creating a variation of forests with primarily mixed stands of older spruce, subalpine fir and lodgepole pine on the west side of the park and a prevalence of even aged lodge pole pine on the east side. Fires have limited the amount of old growth forests to a few pockets in the northern portion of the park. Much of the forest cover is in heavy canopy with dense undergrowth and windfall but there are many glades of open forest and small meadows. Various wildflowers occur in different habitats throughout the park. The park is known for its early summer displays of fairyslippers orchids.

Over fifty lakes occur in the park, in three major chains or clusters. Bare Lake in the northwest is the largest lake with a surface area of 228 hectares. South of Bare Lake and running east is the Moose-Dumbell Lake chain. Hoopatakwa Lake and the Grant Lake system cover the north east corner of the park. Dominating the eastern section is the Dagger Lake group of lakes leading southwestwards into Willowgrouse and Stadia Lakes. The Hiahkwah-Shelley Lake chain forms the southern boundary of the park. Large marshy areas and wet meadows form linkages between many of the lakes in the park.

The forests and wetland habitats support a variety of wildlife from moose, mule deer, and black bear to cougar, wolf, waterfowl and raptors. Moose use the park from spring to early winter, when heavy snows force them to move to lower elevations. A noteworthy species is the sandhill crane (blue listed – considered vulnerable) that regularly nests in the park. There are no known threatened or endangered wildlife species in the park.

The park contains indigenous wild stocks of rainbow trout of the Deadman Creek system. Some of the lakes in the park were not connected to the Deadman system and probably did not contain trout populations. These indigenous wild stocks are considered of regional significance and should be protected as a genetic strain. From the 1930's and onwards fishermen and fishing camps established trout into many of these barren lakes. All of these early stockings utilized the same indigenous wild rainbow stocks. Trout populations are naturally maintained in most of the lakes in spawning habitats along the various interconnecting creeks. A few of the lakes are periodically stocked to maintain viable fisheries. The productive capacities of some of the lakes have decreased significantly through the unfortunate introduction of pike minnow. Efforts have been made to reduce this coarse fish competition by netting and trapping and introduction of predatory strains of rainbow trout.

Figure 2: Bonaparte Park



Recreational use of Bonaparte Park is very much associated with the numerous attractive small lakes. While upland lakes are common throughout the southern interior of the province, it is the largely wilderness qualities of lakes in the park that accounts for its appeal for many people, both general public users and tourists using wilderness lodges. Through a long history of purposeful management, all of the lakes remain roadless and largely free of visual disturbance from logging. Lakes in Bonaparte Park are not as productive for fish as lower elevation lakes, but are highly valued because of the wilderness setting.

Access to the park is via 45 kilometers of good two-wheel drive logging road. Logging spur roads lead toward the park from various locations, but road access only enters the park in the southern part. A long-standing moratorium has required vehicle restriction for recreation use within a roughly 1-kilometer zone around the whole of the park. Float plane and helicopter access is used by fishing camps to bring in guests and supplies.

Trails and hiking routes interconnect throughout the park allowing for a variety of loop day and overnight trips. Short connecting portages between many of the lakes provide opportunity for canoe circuit routes. The rolling forested hills diversify the visual setting and offer opportunities for a variety of dispersed activities including hiking, backpacking, wildlife viewing, hunting, snow shoeing and ski touring. A well-established winter trail system provides for snowmobile access through the southern portion of the park.

The northern part of the park has a long history of fly-in fishing lodges. It is one of the few remaining areas in the southern interior of the province where people can visit a wilderness setting from the safety and comfort of a Lodge. There are four well established Lodges in the park and while the focus is still primarily on fishing, there is growing trend and acceptance of more diversified uses, particularly relating to people who are looking for quiet and uncrowded conditions, with hiking, nature study and wildlife viewing as other popular opportunities.

Bonaparte Park has a long history of livestock use dating back to at least the 1930's and continues to provide summer grazing for ranchers. The park is bounded to the east and southeast by Tree Farm License lands and to the north and west by Provincial Forest lands.

The area of Bonaparte Park has long been of special interest for protection of wilderness values. Potential timber harvesting encroachment into the area led to establishment of development moratoria in 1974. These moratoria were formally reserved by Order-in-Council in 1976 for wildland recreation with no road access or forest development. Through the last two decades the moratoria areas as well as the surrounding lands were managed through the Bonaparte-Tranquille Local Resource Use Plan. (L.R.U.P.) Special attention was placed on managing access to maintain the roadless condition of the moratoria areas.

In May 1995, the BC government gave approval to the Kamloops Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP). This plan was developed through representatives of business, agriculture, forestry and mining, and environment, recreation and tourism interests. As an important component of the plan, 58 new protected areas were recommended, including Bonaparte Park. As follow up to the LRMP, Bonaparte Park was formally established on April 30th, 1996 through Order-in-Council under the *Environment and Land Use Act*. Subsequently, the park was designated under Schedule E of the *Park Amendment Act*.



Plate 3. Willowgrouse Lake - Typical lake setting in the park.

Vision Statement

The vision statement projects 50 or so years into the future to describe what a visitor to the park would expect to find at that time. This description provides a conceptual context for defining the conservation, recreation and cultural roles of the park. Through understanding and appreciation of this vision, park managers will be able to adapt to changing and perhaps unforeseen circumstances in order to maintain the park setting and values.

Between 2000 and 2050, the Bonaparte Park remains as a relatively undisturbed environment surrounded by lands managed for forestry, wildlife, recreation and variety of related uses. The park continues to protect intact forest and wetland ecosystems, closely representing the natural conditions of the Bonaparte Plateau. Lands adjacent to the park are managed for a variety of uses but in a manner that is sensitive to park values and visitors. Historical cattle use of the park continues. Park wildlife species that epitomize wilderness- moose, wolf, sandhill crane and wild rainbow trout - continue to be sustained at healthy population levels.

Throughout most of the park, there is a pervading sense of wilderness. There is an opportunity to experience solitude and backcountry adventure either by individual initiative or through services and facilities of long established wilderness resorts. The highest level of use is in southern area of the park where there are a greater variety of facilities and permitted activities.

The regional population base has increased dramatically, tourism remains an economic mainstay and pressures brought on by the numbers of people seeking backcountry recreation opportunities has required the imposition of a number of management strategies to maintain the intended levels and types of uses in the park. Years of resource inventory, research, and practical experience through coordination of resource management agencies have provided a much-improved understanding of park ecosystems. This has led to greater confidence in managing park values under stewardship principles of allowing natural processes to prevail as much as possible.



Plates 4 & 5 – Wetland scenes within Bonaparte Provincial Park

Role of the Protected Area

Protected Areas System Context

The outstanding wilderness recreation opportunities and conservation values of the Bonaparte Provincial Park are of both regional and provincial significance.

The forested plateaus of the southern interior of the province have been heavily developed through forestry and other land uses. Protected area representation of these landscapes is distributed through a number of relatively small units from the Okanagan to the Cariboo. Within this protected area system, Bonaparte Park provides one of the most extensive and diverse representations of forested plateau landscapes.

The Northern Thompson Ecosection, as a major landscape component of the Kamloops Region, is represented by a series of six parks starting in the south at Porcupine Meadows and extending north through Tsintsunko, Bonaparte, High Lakes Basin, Emar and Taweel parks. Each of these parks contributes special features that in combination capture the biological diversity of this extensive ecosection. Bonaparte Park, with the complex ecosystem of lakes, wetlands and forests, is the most significant of these park units, providing the best opportunity to conserve natural values.

The Bonaparte Plateau has seemingly limitless number of lakes but few areas remain where roads have not been developed. One of the primary purposes in setting aside the parks on the plateau (Bonaparte, Tsintsunko, Emar, Taweel, and High Lakes Basin) was the recognized need to maintain fisheries and angling experiences in wilderness or natural settings. Of these parks, Bonaparte, with more than fifty lakes in three major chains or clusters, has by far the most concentrations of lakes. Of particular significance, all of the lakes in the Bonaparte remain in roadless, natural settings.

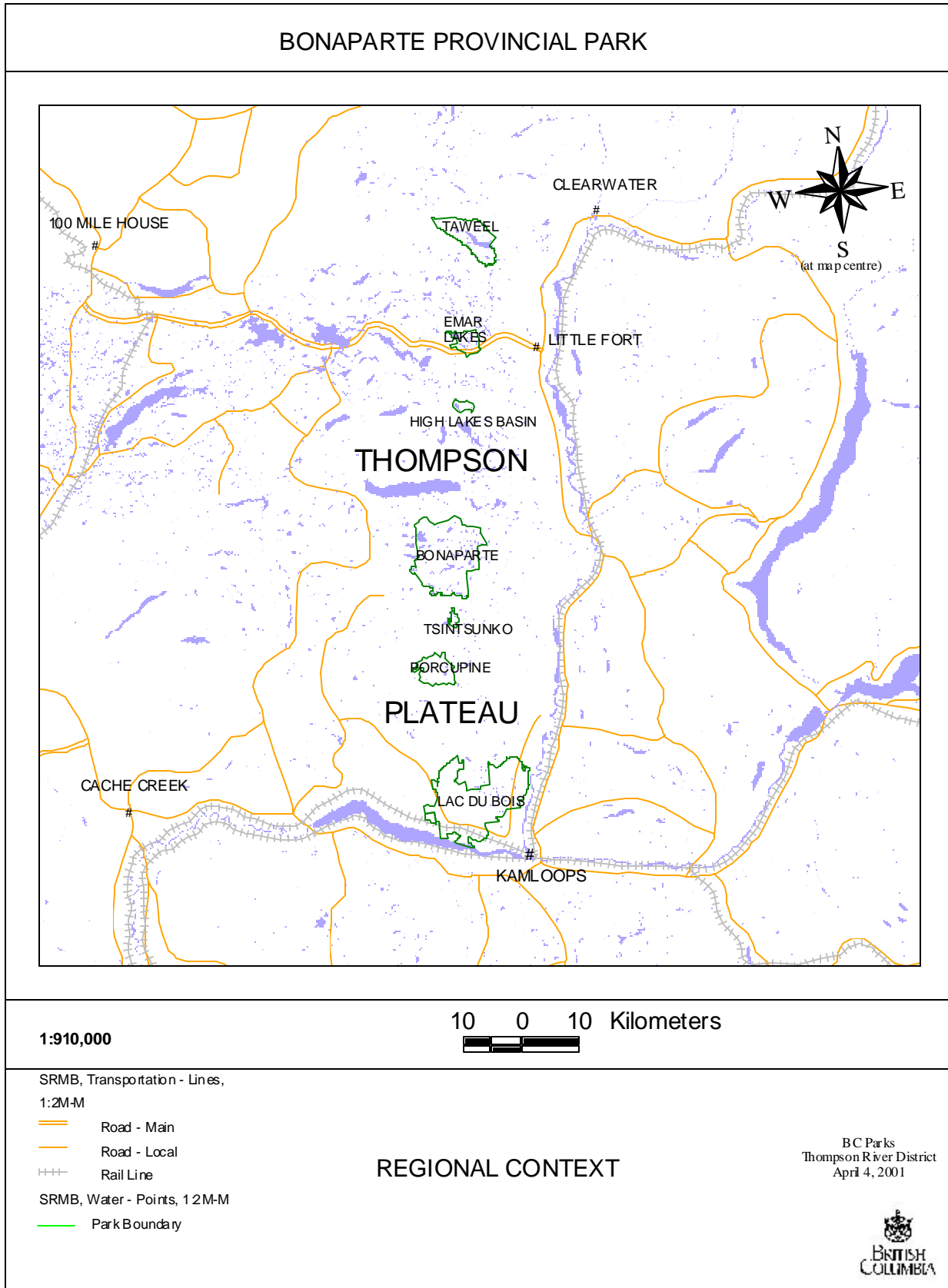
There is a long history of tourism use in Bonaparte which in many respects portrays the time when most of the interior plateau country was remote and access was either made by float plane, walk-in or pack horse. Bonaparte is one of the few parks on the interior plateaus that is of sufficient size to maintain traditional wilderness tourism opportunities.

The historical use of the park for ranching and fly-in tourism use is of local cultural significance and interest. While First Nation's historical use of the area is not well known, it is suspected that the park may have heritage values for local native bands.

The park will provide long term opportunity for study and research of natural aquatic and forest upland ecosystems as well as protecting genetic strains of various plants and animals that are indigenous to the area.

In the strictest definition of wilderness, Bonaparte Park is considered relatively small and while a portion (approximately 10%) was previously logged, it is one of the largest and most pristine pockets of wildland remaining on the plateau landscapes of the Southern Interior. It is also one of the few parks of sufficient size to allow for continued use by the variety of year round recreation interests that are traditionally associated with plateau forest and lake settings.

Figure 3: Regional Context



Conservation Role

Bonaparte Park contributes to the provincial park system conservation goals by:

- Representing the high elevation plateau landscape of the Thompson Plateau, in particular montane spruce forest settings of lakes and wetlands.
- Inclusion of Skoatl Point, south of Dagger Lake, and Stockton Hill, south of Bare Lake, as features that reflect the geologic history of the area.
- Maintaining the character and qualities of the environment and features that form the aesthetic, recreation and tourism appeal of the park.
- Protecting rare plant communities and species.
- Protecting habitats for wild rainbow trout, moose, wolf, sandhill crane and other species that typify forested plateau environments of the Southern Interior.
- Emphasis on letting natural processes to occur with recognition that special consideration and allowances will be imposed to meet park recreation, tourism and resource management objectives and conservation management interests on lands surrounding the park.

Recreation Role

The park fulfills the Ministry's backcountry recreation goal, on both a provincial and regional basis, by providing a range of backcountry recreation and tourism opportunities:

- Relatively accessible backcountry day use and overnight use in the southern portions of the park with established trails and few facilities. Recreation management recognizes traditional activities and use patterns for hiking, camping, canoeing, fishing, backpacking, hunting, nature study and photography, ski touring, snowshoeing, horse use and snowmobiling. Use levels are relatively low and only basic facilities are provided to meet sanitary and public safety needs and to protect the environment.
- More remote and challenging backcountry recreation opportunities in the northern portion of the park, with emphasis on low, dispersed levels of use. Facilities and park information are limited and visitors must be self reliant and experienced in backcountry travel. Recreation activities compatible with wilderness include: hiking, backpacking, fishing, hunting, canoe touring, horse back riding, ski touring, snow shoeing, nature study and photography.
- Traditional wilderness lodge experiences. Use of the park area by long established wilderness lodges provides special opportunity for people to experience the wilderness environment with relative comfort and security. Aircraft, horse use and hike-in continue as the traditional access modes into the lodges.

Cultural Heritage Role

The cultural significance of the park relates to the long history of fly-in fishing camps and ranching use of the area. Traditional uses of the area by First Nations are presently unknown. The park will not have interpretive focus. However, visitors will be informed and provided a perspective of the cultural history of the park and the relationship that present use by ranchers and fishing resorts has with the park and its history.

Special Management Considerations

The Kamloops LRMP identified the Protected Area Strategy Categories of Natural Environment and Wilderness as the two major zones for the park. Provision was also made for a Strict Preservation Zoning category if necessary for the protection of orchid beds. The LRMP provided specific strategies for park management:

- The Shelley Lake area (southern portion of the park) will be managed for public recreation use.
- Where consistent with the access management plan, allowance will be made for limited mechanized access (including snowmobiles) on primitive roads or trails. All such use will be subject to conditions identified in the management and development plan for the park.
- Existing access into the park will continue, for example horse and aircraft access.
- Access adjacent to the park will be managed in accordance with the defined objectives and strategies of the park.
- Motor boat use will be allowed on a site-specific basis.
- A wildlife corridor in the form of an ecosystem network will be established between the park and Bonaparte Lake.

The LRMP process had recognized the importance of Tourism use in the park and there is understanding that maintenance of traditional wilderness based resorts will be a management focus.

Designation under the *Park Amendment Act, 1997* ensures that all existing liens, charges, and encumbrances other than those applying to commercial logging, mining or energy exploration and development will continue to be authorized through issuance of park use permits. This policy recognizes all existing *Land Act* tenures (Wilderness Resort operations), Special Use Permits, water rights, guide/outfitting licences, and other legal tenures and rights.

Consultation with First Nations is an ongoing process.

Livestock Grazing in the Park

The *Park Amendment Act, 1997* directed that range tenures and grazing use within the park will continue to be managed where they occurred at the time of park establishment in accordance with the *Range Act* and the *Forest Practices Code Act*.

The area in and around the park has been used for grazing for many years. The Kamloops LRMP directs that existing grazing tenures are an allowed use in parks which will be permitted to continue and will be renewable and transferable, subject to the Grazing Policy developed by the LRMP table (Section 2.1.1.1 and Appendix 9 of the Kamloops LRMP). Livestock grazing in

Bonaparte Park continues to be administered and managed by the Ministry of Forests through Grazing Licences and associated Range Use Plans, as required by the *Forests Practices Code of British Columbia Act*. This is facilitated by the *Park Amendment Act* and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Forests and BC Parks. The LRMP directs the Forests Practices Code is to be used as the base for range management in the park, and that Range Use Plans, determined and approved by a local level planning group, may establish management practices which exceed the Code.

During the Bonaparte Park planning process an agreement was reached on a recommendation to government agencies regarding livestock strategies and monitoring of specific plant communities within the park. The District Manager of the Kamloops Forest District has authorized the implementation of these strategies, which are outlined in Appendix D: “Operational strategies for livestock use in Bonaparte Park”. A map is included in Appendix D that portrays the special areas of interest for long term monitoring and management of livestock.

Park objectives include ensuring that cattle grazing use in the park is based on sound environmental management principles. BC Parks will co-ordinate with the Ministry of Forests in the management of cattle use in the park. BC Parks management prescriptions will include:

- Drift fences may be used to assist in management of livestock.
- Recognize established cattle movement trails in the park and the continued ability to maintain these for livestock use and to enable ease of horse and rider access to manage livestock.
- Potential exclosures as appropriate, such as to protect any future identified rare or endangered plant or animal species.
- Special attention will be made to ensure that recreation trails do not create undesired access for cattle into the northern portion of the park – the “unfenced minimal livestock drift only area”.
- Maintain compatibility between livestock use and recreation/tourism uses through trail upgrading where appropriate, to meet both the needs of livestock use and recreation use, as well as to minimize the impacts of trail use on the environment.

Zoning

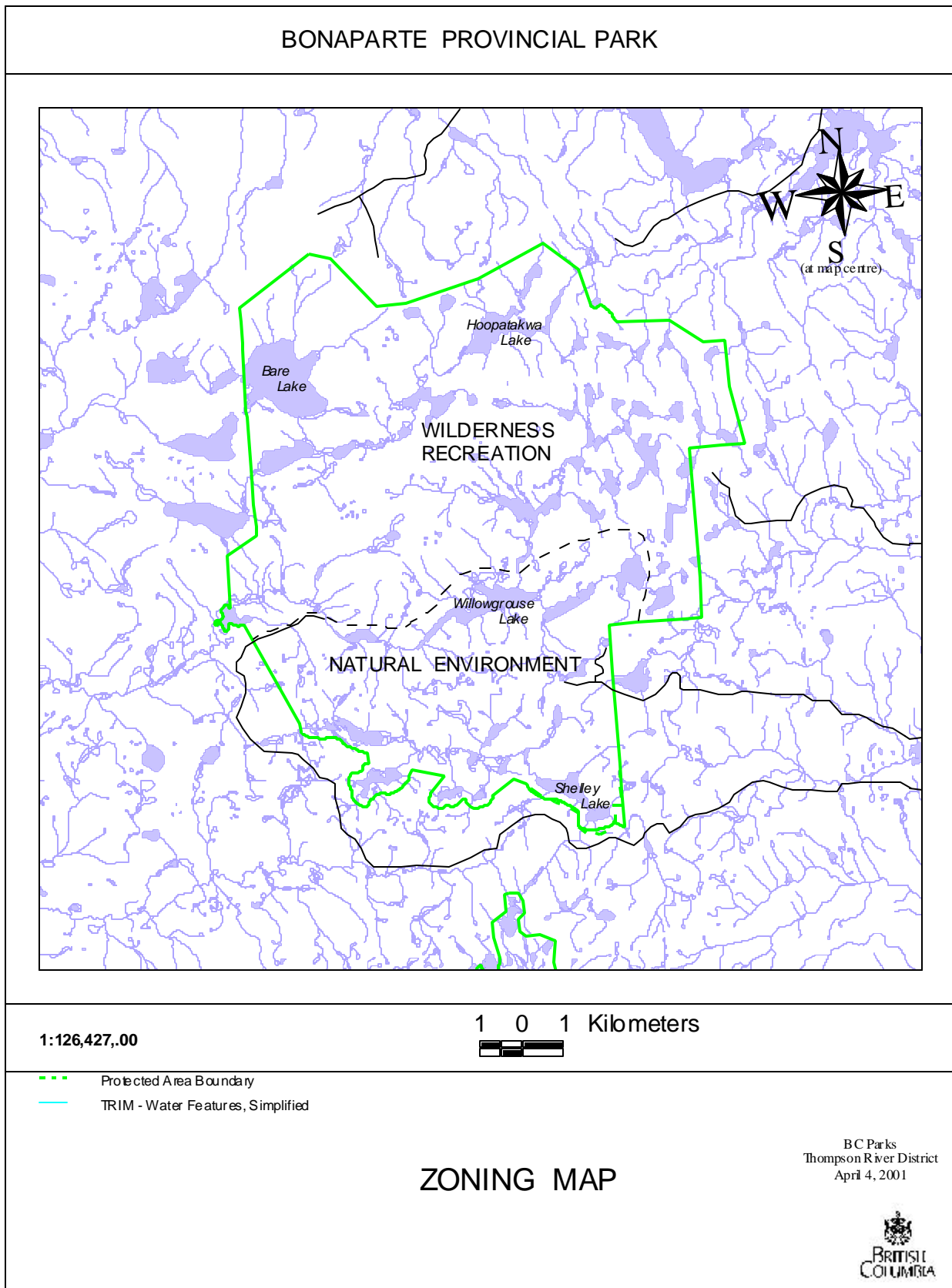
Zoning criteria essentially reflect the intent to maintain the backcountry/wilderness setting of the park. The “Natural Environment”, “Wilderness Recreation” and “Special Feature” zones, as defined under the provincial park zoning policy, apply to management objectives for the park. General management guidelines for these zones are outlined in appendix B.

The southern portions of the park covering the Shelley-Hiahkwah and Adler-Tuwut-Willowgrouse-Stadia lake chain systems are included in the Natural Environment Zone. This zone covers 3,888 hectares or approximately 33% of the park. The primary objective of this zone is to maintain all lakes as unroaded and to protect the natural environment values and backcountry recreation opportunities of the area. Several roads (Homecabin and Windy Lake-Willowgrouse) enter the park in this zone and provide staging areas from which to hike to the various lakes. The overall intent is to manage for relatively low levels of dispersed backcountry use. Facilities will be limited to requirements of meeting basic public health and safety standards and to manage recreation use impacts. Trails will be maintained to backcountry standards. There will be no maintained connection of trails between the Natural Environment Zone and the Wilderness Recreation Zone.

The major portion of the park, including the lake systems of Dagger, Hoopatakwa, Bare and Moose, is zoned as Wilderness Recreation with the intent of protecting the natural environment of lakes, wetlands and forests and to provide recreation opportunities in relatively remote wilderness setting. The Wilderness Recreation Zone covers 7,960 hectares or approximately 67% of the park. This zone will maintain the traditional fly-in, horse pack or walk-in wilderness resort opportunities of the area. Visitors will have the choice of using facilities and services of the resorts or the freedom of exploring the area on their own. Use will be managed to maintain low, disperse levels.

The park management plan makes allowance for application of Special Features zoning should any sites that may be found in the future which have rare, endangered or sensitive biotic features. Under this zone, special provisions can be made for protection of the feature.

Figure 4: Zoning Map



Natural and Cultural Resources Management

Introduction

Resource management will be directed toward conservation of natural features and processes and to ensure the maintenance of a quality environment for public enjoyment and recreation. Much of the plateau environments have been altered and as more roads and resource developments occur, the park will become increasingly important as a representative example of original unaltered environments of southern interior plateaus. With over 12,000 hectares within its boundaries, the park provides one of the better opportunities within the provincial park system to protect and maintain these representative land and aquatic habitats. The conservation and recreation values of this park dictate a cautious approach to resource management.

The park management plan background was developed as reference source for description of resource values in the park. Provincial park policies provide the context for developing resource management objectives and strategies for the park. Management directions also recognize the need to co-ordinate with other agencies inside the park and on surrounding lands.

The objectives and strategies as defined in this management plan set forth strategic direction and framework for more detailed operational level planning.

Land

Land Act tenures that existed before the park was established will be converted to Park Use Permits. The Park Use Permits will honor and convey all pre-existing rights and conditions that applied under the *Land Act* tenures.

Objectives

To recognize and ensure continued uses, rights, and tenures that were in place at the time the park was established.

Strategies

- Existing rights and conditions will be converted to Park Use Permits.

Water

The park setting is very much dependent on the pristine appearance and clear, cold waters of its lakes and streams. Park managers must take care to protect this resource for obvious environmental, health and aesthetic reasons.

Objectives

To maintain the quality of the water in lakes and drainage's in the park.

Strategies

- Ensure that proper sanitary facilities are established for all use sites in the park.

- Ensure that no unnatural (toxic) pollutants are introduced into the park.
- Periodically monitor selected lakes and watercourses in the park for water quality.



Plate 6. Wetland habitats occur throughout the park.

Vegetation

Development of forest and vegetation management guidelines for the park must take into account a complex array of considerations.

Natural occurring fires and insects have been constant and major factors in the forest ecology of the park, creating a mosaic of forest types. Park forests are at various stages of succession with mixed older aged spruce, subalpine fir and lodgepole pine on the east side and even aged stands of lodgepole pine on the west side. A number of cutblocks (occupying approximately 10% of the park and mostly in the southern portion) received silviculture treatments, including replanting before the park was established. Recurring fires have prevented development of old aged forests and the oldest forests in the park are only in the 140-year range.

With the extensive areas of forest harvesting on the plateau that are in early successional stages, the park has special value in representing natural older forest types. However, the diversity of plant and animal species found in the park depends on maintenance of different types of forests and plant communities.

Many of the forest stands in the park are at a susceptible stage for insect attack, particularly by mountain pine beetle and to a lesser extent, spruce bark beetle. Park forests are also at a stage and condition where catastrophic fires could occur in very dry years. Wetlands and other natural occurring breaks in the park are insufficient to stop the type and size of fires that can occur in drought conditions.

With well-established and valuable tourism facilities and operations in the park, there is concern not only for protection of life and property but also for the maintenance of aesthetic and recreational features. The park is surrounded by lands that contain significant timber values and where investments have been made on forest roads and silviculture.

Objectives

To manage for ecological integrity, maintaining the diversity of plant species, associations and varied aged forests which represent the natural vegetation patterns and conditions of the Bonaparte Plateau, and which form the inherent visual and wilderness recreation setting of the park. Emphasis will be placed on maintaining a large component of older aged forest types.

To allow natural successional processes to occur within limits set for protection of life and property and the maintenance of the wilderness recreation and visual values of the park.

To protect rare and sensitive plant communities and species, as they are identified.

To protect wildlife habitats, particularly for threatened species.

To work with other agencies to co-ordinate resource management interests inside and outside of the park.

To discourage the introduction of non-native plant species.

To ensure that cattle grazing use in park is based on sound environmental management principles.

To encourage low impact scientific studies to improve the knowledge of the parks plant species, particularly in relationship to regional landscape biodiversity objectives and the need to maintain a natural genetic source of plant species.

Strategies

- Continue management of fires in line with established Ministry of Forest and BC Parks policies and protocol agreements until a long-term fire management plan is ready for implementation. The Parks District Manager will co-ordinate with the Ministry of Forests in the planning and conduct of fire fighting measures. All fires will be dealt with promptly. Mechanized ground access will be employed in exceptional circumstances where there is no other recourse to protect resorts and values outside of the park.
- Provide opportunity for public review and consultation in the development of vegetation management plans. Any planned large-scale vegetation disturbance (1 hectare or larger) will be submitted to public consultation.
- Allow cutblocks to regenerate naturally.

- Develop a fire management plan for the park. The plan will include:
 - ⇒ Public evacuation measures
 - ⇒ Inventory and mapping including:
 - forest hazard types
 - fire history
 - natural fire regimes
 - fuel breaks (topographic, water, wet meadows, forest cuts and openings, open spaced forests)
 - existing fuel breaks and potential development of new fuel breaks
 - rare habitats and species, and habitats and species that are fire sensitive
 - permanent structures – resorts
 - visitor use – trail heads, roads, heavy use areas
 - adjacent values
 - recreation and visual values
 - ⇒ Recognize opportunities to allow wildfires to burn under manageable conditions. Develop a set of contingency strategies to allow for some discretion in decisions relating to the level of control effort for manageable fires. Parameters for decision making will be based on a number of factors including moisture indices, season, fuel loading, public safety, potential impacts to property values inside and outside of park, potential impacts to recreation and visual value, wind and naturally occurring firebreaks. A primary tool in decision making will be a map to reflect:
 - Areas of high concern - relating to protection of life and property, protection of critical plant and wildlife species, protection of outside interests
 - Areas of moderate concerns - protection of recreation and visual values
 - Areas of low concerns - where fuel breaks will slow or stop fire and where there are no particular conservation or recreation values, and where there is potential to establish pockets of new forest openings.
 - ⇒ Strategies to allow for prescribed burning to maintain ecosystem diversity and as control measures for insect and disease management and potentially for reduction of fuel load accumulations.
 - ⇒ Allowances to reduce risk of fire around resorts. Spacing of trees, reduction of ladder fuels and removal of understory fuel loading will be permitted within the perimeter of resorts.
- Preparing insect management guidelines and strategies. Key elements in this strategy will include:
 - ⇒ Annual monitoring of insect populations and distribution in the park.
 - ⇒ Predetermined contingency plan for managing insect infestations based on potential impacts on conservation, recreation, property values and adjacent interests. Control measures will include:
 - Allowing insect infestation to run its course.
 - Pheromone traps and trap trees.
 - Single tree removal – burning, peeling.
 - Multiple tree treatment – prescribed burns, burn on site.
 - Modifying forest structure around periphery of resorts through spacing, removal of susceptible trees.
 - Chemical (MSMA) application - if approved by park policies.

⇒ Appropriate control action will be determined by BC Parks in coordination with Ministry of Forests and BC Environment. Control measures will be integrated with those outside of the park.

- Accept blowdown as a natural disturbance factor leading to ecosystem renewal in the park. However, blowdown will be removed where it obstructs trails and roads and where it poses a safety risk in high use areas and around facilities. Measures may have to be taken to deal with blowdown if there is threat that it may lead to insect infestation.
- Establish a program to monitor introduction of non-native plant species and, where feasible, to remove or reduce occurrences within the park.

Fisheries and Aquatic Resources

The majority of the lakes and interconnecting creek systems flow west and south into the Deadman River drainage. The grouping of lakes in the northern portion (Hoopatakwa chain) flow east and north into the Peterson Creek drainage. Most of the lakes in the park are nutrient deficient and at the high plateau elevations endure long snow bound winters with relatively short open water seasons. The wild rainbow trout populations in the park originate from the native rainbow stocks of the Deadman River drainage. This particular strain of rainbow trout evolved to cope with the long winters and aquatic conditions of the Bonaparte plateau with special adaptation of early spawning occurring under the ice on very small, fine gravel streams.

In the early pioneering era of the 1930's fishing camps and interested outdoorsmen placed trout into many of the lakes that were barren of trout. All of these stockings were made through simple transfer from adjacent lakes utilizing the same native wildstocks. It is estimated that over 95% of the rainbow trout fisheries in the park are maintained through natural spawning.

At some time pike minnow was introduced into some of the lakes in the Deadman system through haphazard and ill-conceived stockings. The pike minnow is a very adaptable species that has impacted the rainbow trout populations in a number of the park lakes. Efforts have been made to reduce this coarse fish competition by netting and trapping and introduction of predatory strains of rainbow trout. Special angling regulations have also been applied to maintain the rainbow fishery.

Many of the lakes in the park have a long history of fishing use and the opportunity to fish for wild rainbow trout in a wilderness setting continues as a primary attraction for park users and tourism resort guests. Under provincial park policies, conservation of natural fish populations takes precedence over consumptive use, but management for sport fishing is permitted when directed through a park management plan, particularly where there is an established history of management initiatives.

Objectives

To conserve and maintain the natural diversity and productivity of aquatic ecosystems in the park.

To ensure that fisheries management actions do not adversely affect indigenous aquatic life forms.

To maintain healthy native wild populations of rainbow trout.

To provide undisturbed representative aquatic ecosystems to serve as benchmarks to monitor and compare with areas that are modified or used for human activities in the park and in similar ecosystems outside of the park.

To provide for a variety of backcountry angling opportunities within the park.

To maintain viable fisheries associated with established tourism resorts in the park.

Strategies

- Undertake lakes and fisheries inventories, including invertebrates.
- Develop a fishery management plan in co-ordination with BC Environment. The plan will identify specific objectives for individual lakes or groupings of lakes. The plan will recognize management flexibility to meet objectives for individual lakes. Management will be focussed on managing angling use rather than stocking and habitat manipulation. Trapping, netting, fish stocking including the use of sterile predatory strains of rainbow trout and other appropriate actions will be permissible.
- Inventories and fishery management planning will identify one or more representative lakes or lake systems within the park that will be set as control benchmarks for monitoring and research studies. Management direction will be taken to minimize human use of these lakes, including angling.
- Special restrictions on tackle, catch limits and size restrictions will only be applied as necessary to meet fishery objectives.

Wildlife

Bonaparte Park includes habitats and corresponding animal species that represent much of the naturally occurring diversity and conditions of high elevation plateau environments of the southern interior of the province. For many of the species, particularly wide ranging ones such as wolves, moose and migratory birds, the park forms partial or seasonal habitats. Most game species are open to hunting either through the general hunting season or through limited entry permits. The relatively difficult access has limited hunting use of the park to those that wish a backcountry hunting experience. Wildlife viewing is becoming an increasingly important part of park and tourism experiences.

There have been few wildlife surveys conducted in the park and most have been related to population levels and distribution of moose. Of the estimated of 400 to 600 moose using the park and surrounding area the majority migrate in winter to lower elevation habitats. Anecdotal information from naturalists, fish camp operators and others that know the area well have provided lists of animal and bird species for the park, which can serve as the basis for monitoring and more detailed inventories.

The Kamloops LRMP directed that a “wildlife corridor in the form of an ecosystem network will be established between the park and Bonaparte Lake.” This objective applies to land outside of the park and will be addressed through interagency co-ordination.

Objectives

To maintain the natural diversity of wildlife species and to allow the natural establishment of other native species associated with the habitats found in the park area.

To protect rare, endangered, sensitive and vulnerable species.

To provide for public viewing and non-consumptive appreciation of wildlife.

To ensure that all uses (hunting, viewing, and appreciation) are managed to maintain natural population levels and minimize disturbance.

To encourage scientific wildlife studies and inventories, and research programs in the park where compatible with other objectives.

Strategies

- Undertake wildlife inventories on an ongoing basis. Records and observations of staff, ranchers, tourism operators and the public will provide the basis for long term monitoring of wildlife populations and conditions.
- Manage wildlife in close co-ordination with BC Environment and other agencies. Maintenance of wildlife populations within the park will call for integration with management strategies outside of the park, particularly relating to overlapping habitats and the maintenance of migration routes and connectivity corridors between habitat types. Specific efforts will be made to meet LRMP direction to maintain ecosystem connectivity from the park to Bonaparte Lake.
- Incorporate wildlife considerations in vegetation and fire management planning. Implications to wildlife will be important factors in assessments and actions to manage forest fires and insect and disease outbreaks. Of particular concern will be the retention of older undisturbed forest types as habitats that have been and continue to be depleted outside of the park.
- Set hunting regulations in cooperation with BC Environment. Regulations will be conservative and designed to provide for low, disperse levels of use. Hunting and trapping use of the park will be monitored.
- Work with Ministries of Forest and the Forest companies to maintain road closures and motorized access restrictions in and around the park.
- Ensure that efforts are made to minimize impacts of facility developments and visitor use on wildlife habitats or disturbance of wildlife. Aircraft use, snowmobile use and other uses will be monitored for impacts and special measures may be instituted, in consultation with users groups, to eliminate or reduce impacts. Proactive measures may also be applied to avoid conflicts between people and wildlife, such as education, rerouting of trails and closures, if necessary.

Cultural Resources

There is no known archaeological evidence of First Nations use of the park, however, native groups may have traveled into the area of the park for hunting and gathering activities. There is a rich lore of information about the historic use of the area for fly in fishing camps and for ranching.

Objective

To record and, where appropriate, protect cultural resource values which relate to First Nations and early ranching and fish camp operations in the park.

Strategies

- Conduct a heritage resource inventory to include archaeological resources, old cabins and other evidence of historical use.
- Take appropriate measures to record and protect identified cultural resources.

Recreation and Visual Resources

Much of the attraction and essence of the visitor's experience to Bonaparte Park relates to the impression of naturalness. Lakes form the primary recreation feature in the park; most are small and provide an intimate setting of enclosed forests. Such lake settings are vulnerable to overuse impacts and can be easily marred by vegetation disruptions and inappropriate developments.

Objectives

To ensure that visitor use and facility developments pose minimal impacts to recreation and visual features of the park.

To ensure that resource management activities account for protection and maintenance of recreation and visual values.

Strategies

- Ensure that location and design of facilities in the park are in harmony with the visual setting.
- Ensure that management plans and prescriptions for fire and insect control incorporate appropriate measures to protect the visual setting and recreation features of the park.
- Maintain close involvement with the review of forest development plans and other types of development in areas adjacent to the park to present the case for minimizing impacts to recreation and visual values.

Recreation Opportunities and Management

Introduction

As described in the Park Vision and Recreation Role Statements (page 14), the overall intent is to maintain the wilderness character and quality of recreation opportunities in the park.

Management objectives and strategies must reflect the strong public viewpoint that the park be managed to maintain low and dispersed levels of use and experiences. The Kamloops LRMP provides strong direction for retention of wilderness tourism opportunities, particularly relating to the historic and well-established fly-in lodges.

Park managers must be sensitive to the values and perceptions of park users. The quality of the experience as sought by many visitors to the park, depends on maintaining the sense of remoteness and naturalness, freedom to choose where to travel, and self-reliance and dependence on personal abilities. The design and nature of facilities, services and park information can very much influence park user enjoyment. While there are basic requirements for public safety and travel in the park, facilities should not create added and artificial attraction.

Considerations and strategies must be put forward to provide a fair balance in access and use of the park for both the general public (non-tourism users) and clients of tourism operators. Park zoning is based on established use patterns, setting emphasis for tourism use in the Wilderness Recreation Zone, and the focus for general public access and use in the Natural Environment Zone.

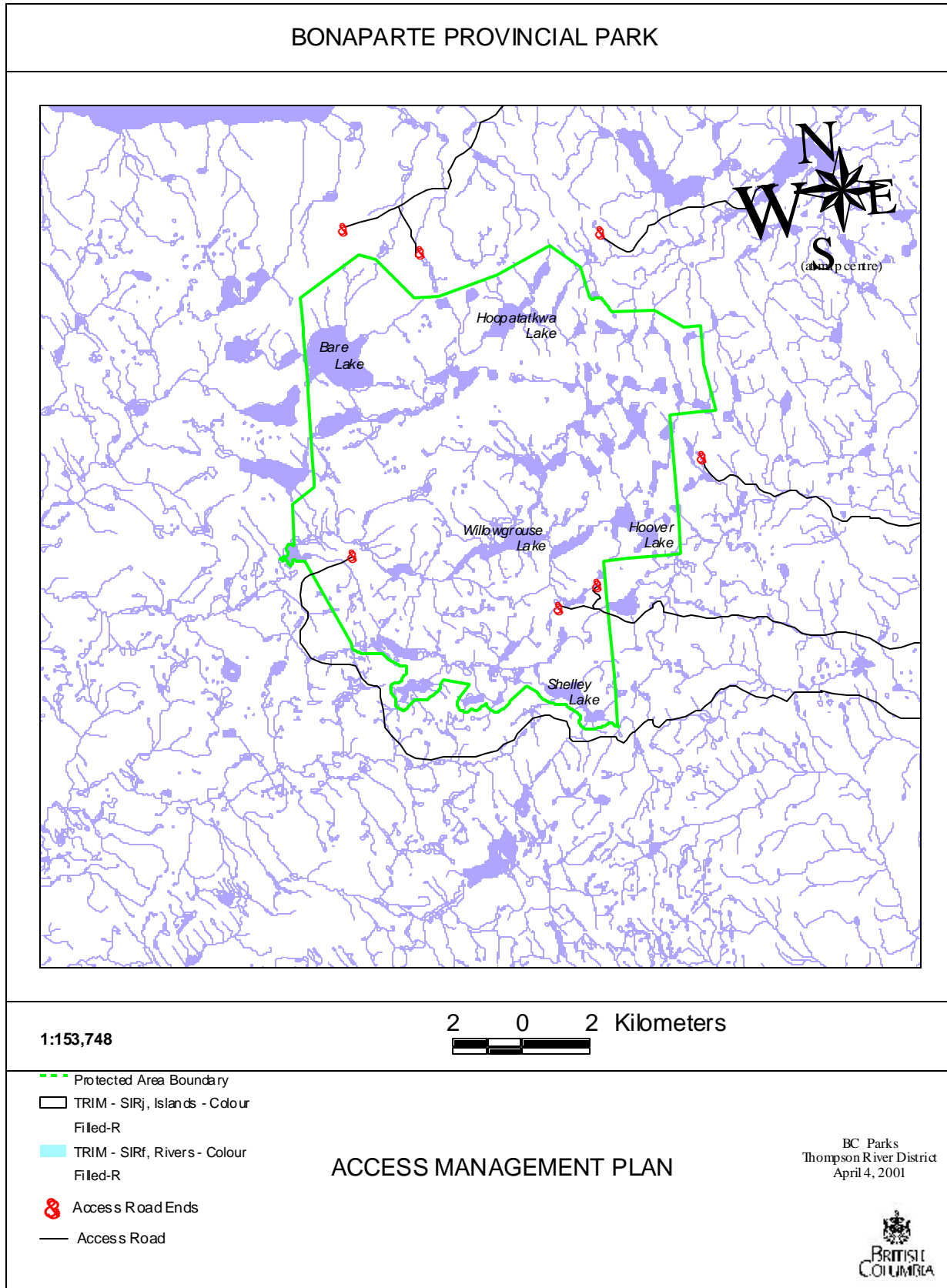
Strategies must also be directed to minimize conflicts between user types and interests in the park. Park zoning, access management, design and location of facilities and the type and nature of park information will be primary factors in ensuring compatibility between the various user interests. It will be essential to consult and work with the public user groups to ensure that the objectives and strategies as directed by this management plan are appropriately interpreted and applied.

Access Management Strategy

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.

Prior to park establishment, moratoriums on resource development and imposition of special restrictions on vehicle access ensured that the various lakes in the area remained roadless. Unless there are special requirements, access management strategies for the park should adopt the existing access controls that have been in place for some time and are well recognized and accepted by the public. Public acceptance of vehicle access restrictions is predicated on the principle that regulations must apply to everyone.

Figure 5: Access Management



The Kamloops LRMP directed that the park management plan identify conditions for vehicle access and use of the park with recognition that some allowance will be made for limited mechanized access (including snowmobiles) on primitive roads or trails. The access management strategy for the park will form the recommended basis for the Ministry of Forests and other agencies to plan and manage public vehicle access around the periphery of the park.

The park has a long history of aircraft use. Snowmobiling is well established and has been recognized as an appropriate use in the southern most portion of the park

Objectives

To ensure access management is consistent with the intended vision, roles and prescribed zoning for the park.

To work with Ministry of Forests and other agencies in managing public vehicle use on roads approaching the park. Pre-established public vehicle management plans outside of the park will be adopted where consistent with park management objectives.

To recognize the long established aircraft use in the park

To recognize the established snowmobile access and use of the southern portion (Natural Environment Zone).

Strategies

- Close all of the park to A.T.V. use
- Apply access management for the Natural Environment Zone including land outside of the park:
 - ⇒ Maintenance of established road closure and trailhead parking for Home Cabin Road at west side of Deadman Creek.
 - ⇒ Maintain road access to trailheads to Willowgrouse and Adler trails.
 - ⇒ Recommend establishment and maintenance of public vehicle closures on all existing and future roads leading into the park from the Home Cabin Road.
 - ⇒ Recommend public road access closures at 1 kilometer or thereabouts from the park boundary on all other present and future access roads. Recommendations for future logging road closures will be based on the principle that the roads should be closed at some reasonable distance from the park (1 kilometer) where there is appropriate physical location to ditch or block the road.
 - ⇒ Allow for snowmobile access on the traditional routes entering the park in the Natural Environment Zone.
- Apply access management for the Wilderness Recreation Zone including land outside of the park:
 - ⇒ Recommend maintenance of pre-existing closures around the northern boundaries of the park (Bare Lake, Hoopatkwa etc.).
 - ⇒ Recommend closure of the Canine road at a suitable location east of the park.
 - ⇒ Recommend closure of Skitchine access to 1 kilometer or thereabouts.
 - ⇒ Recommend closure on all access roads approaching Elbow, Heller, Island and Secrets lakes and on all other roads approaching the eastern park boundary.
 - ⇒ Recommend closure of all other existing and future roads approaching the northern, eastern and western boundaries of the park. The 1-kilometer distance will be

recommended with location dictated by terrain suitability for establishing effective blockage.

⇒ Close all of the Wilderness Recreation Zone from snowmobile use.

- Monitor aircraft use and impose restrictions only if there are apparent environmental or social impacts. Changes to aircraft use will require consultation with the Floatplane Association and relevant interests and user groups.

Commercial Tourism Activities

Protection of the wilderness setting for tourism was a primary and recognized purpose for establishing Bonaparte Park. In recommending the park, the Kamloops LRMP directed that the rights and privileges that resort operators enjoyed prior to park designation be continued. There was also recognition that changes and flexibility in how resorts are managed and used would be required to ensure continued economic viability.

A major component of visitor use in this park is provided through tourism operators. Use of the park area by long established wilderness lodges provides special opportunity for people to experience the wilderness environment with relative comfort and security. As well tourism recreation interests in the park have and continue to evolve and while fishing remains the primary attraction, resorts are catering to people who are coming to the park for a variety of interests. These are opportunities that could not be provided by BC Parks and, in this context, tourism operators are partners in the provision of public services and facilities.

The Wilderness Recreation Zone encompasses all of the operating areas of resorts that existed at the time the park was established. The operating areas of the four pre-existing resorts – Hoopatakwa, Bare, Skitchine and Plateau - essentially occupy the entire Wilderness Recreation Zone. Through long established use, the resorts have created and maintained a system of trails connecting through the various main lakes in the Wilderness Recreation Zone. These trails also allow the general (non-tourism clients) public to hike and travel through the park. Through the years the resorts have also established at a scale and capacity that optimizes occupancy while ensuring a wilderness experience for their guests.

The park is also used by fishing guides that operate independently of the resorts. There is also potential for a variety of guiding and other tourism uses in the park such as hiking guiding.

Objectives

To recognize the long history of wilderness lodges and other related tourism uses as integral and complementary providers of recreation services in the park.

To ensure that tourism facilities and services provided are in keeping with the purposes of the park and meet the provisions as set out in park zoning and management directions. The types, nature and scale of activities and levels of use must be compatible with the physical and social carrying capacity of the park.

To ensure compatibility between use of the park by tourism guests and by the general public.

To recognize that flexibility may be required to allow for special needs arising for repair, upgrade and replacement of tourism facilities.

To ensure consistency and fairness to all tourism operators. No resort will have special privileges, access or operating rights over other resort operators.

Strategies

- Allow fishing guides to continue to operate in the park. Independent fishing guides will be discouraged or not permitted to fish lakes where conflicts with the established resorts would arise.
- Commercial tourism facilities will only be permitted in the Wilderness Recreation Zone. Low profile, non-facility based tourism activities may be permitted in the Natural Environment Zone.
- No new resorts will be permitted in the park and occupancy rights for resorts will be set by the number of bed nights as specified under tenures held at the approval date of this management plan.
- No new trails, boat access points or “off resort site” facilities will established, unless warranted for protection of the environment. Main access trails connecting the resorts to the park boundary can be maintained to maximum 2-meter width. All other trails will of type 3 – 4 park standards (narrow tread width).
- All resorts will continue to have rights to transport guests and supplies through use of helicopters, floatplanes, horse and by foot.
- Resorts will be permitted to operate on a year round basis and to provide a variety of activities. All activities will comply with park objectives, strategies and zoning policies, *Park Act* and other Government regulations. Activities include but are not limited to the following:
 - ⇒ Ski touring, snowshoeing
 - ⇒ Business group retreat and meetings – all seasons
 - ⇒ Fishing – fly fishing, ice fishing
 - ⇒ Canoe and boat rental
 - ⇒ Guiding – angling, hiking, canoe etc.
 - ⇒ Wildlife viewing and photography
 - ⇒ Education
 - ⇒ Retail sales
 - ⇒ Horse drawn sleighs
 - ⇒ Hunting guiding and accommodation
- Special allowance will be made for repair, upgrade and replacement of facilities. Short term, time-limited, mechanized access will be permitted to bring in equipment and materials. To minimize environmental impacts, air access will be the preferred option; however, snowmobile use may provide a viable alternative (i.e. snowmobile removal of boats in winter). Mechanized ground access could be considered as a last resort if environmental impacts can be mitigated. Decisions will not set precedence and each request for special access allowance will be evaluated on the basis of specific circumstances. BC Parks may take proposed plans for special access considerations to public review table for advice.
- Applications for new tourism uses within the park will be referred to any resorts that may be impacted. BC Parks will consider concerns and interests of the existing tourism operators in any decisions to permit new tourism uses.
- Resorts have discretion as to services they will provide to general public (non-guests).
- BC Parks may have to take action to reduce conflicts or problems imposed by general public use on resort operations. Actions could include routing public hike-in routes and lake access points away from resort sites. Any actions will ensure the continued public right and use of

the area. Evolving use will be evaluated within the context of the park vision and zoning plan.

Fishing

Fishing has been a primary attraction of the park area for many years. The many lakes offer a variety of fishing experiences, most with abundant populations of small rainbows and a few with large rainbows. All of the lakes are in a natural roadless condition and most of the fifty or more lakes are situated in small, secluded settings. Much of the appeal for many park visitors is the opportunity to fish secluded lakes where there is little likelihood of meeting or seeing other people.

Objectives

To provide for a range of recreational fishing opportunities in a backcountry setting.

Strategies

- Maintain all lakes in roadless access status.
- Manage through fisheries regulations with application of special catch restrictions to protect fisheries stocks and in some circumstances to maintain stocks of large trout.
- Encourage ethical fishing activities.
- Provide little if no information on the status of fisheries in the Wilderness Recreation Zone.

Camping

The overall management and development intent for the southern portions of the park as allowed for in the Natural Environment Zone is to maintain a backcountry recreation environment with some trails and basic public facilities. In the northern portions, as designated by the Wilderness Recreation Zone, the objective is to provide opportunity for people to camp and recreate in a wilderness environment.

Vehicle based camping should not become an attraction in the park. However, there is a well established use pattern of people using various road ends inside of the park as overnight base for undertaking day trips into lakes and as staging areas for backpacking excursions.

The park offers numerous opportunities for backpacking and canoe trekking routes. With modern camping equipment and use of stoves and low impact camping techniques, people can camp at durable and obvious sites at most of the lakes and leave little trace of their stay-over.

Objectives

To maintain informal vehicle based camping opportunity at various road ends in the park in the Natural Environment Zone.

To provide opportunities for backpacking and canoe trekking camping in the park.

Strategies

- Provide basic facilities required to meet sanitary and public safety needs and to protect the environment at road ends in the Natural Environment Zone. Toilets and fire circles will be

appropriate. Tables or other special facilities or amenities will not be established as convenience or added attraction.

- Recommend against any road end camping facilities outside of the park. No facilities will be provided for public road end or backcountry camping in the Wilderness Recreation Zone
- Encourage use of stoves and low impact camping equipment and techniques in the park.
- No camping facilities or sites will be provided in the park for backpacking or canoe camping unless required for sanitation and public safety and protection of the environment. Monitor use and degree of change in the park and designate campsites if required to manage public use and impacts on lakes.

Hiking

The park provides attraction for hikers who are experienced and enjoy the challenge and rigors of backcountry travel. Hikers require knowledge and abilities to travel and find their way through the rolling forested topography of the park. There are trails and routes that connect through the various lakes and meadow systems. Many of the trails are ill defined; some lead into a maze of directions or disappear in meadows and forests. Trails in the Wilderness Recreation Zone are maintained by the established resorts and most of these provide reasonable connection through the various lake chains and meadow systems. Skoatl Point, as a dominant feature, is a natural attraction and hiking destination, however, the route up the open rock face of the point is steep and somewhat challenging.

Objectives

To provide for hiking on established trails in the Natural Environment Zone.

To allow for people to hike and travel through the Wilderness Recreation Zone, without additional facilities beyond those established by the resort operators.

Strategies

- Maintain long established and recognized access and interconnecting trails to key lakes in the Natural Environment Zone, including Shelley-Hiakwah, Willowgrouse-Tuwut, and Adler. Trails will be maintained to basic backcountry standards (Type 3/4 park standards – see appendix) – narrow, varied gradients and periodically cleared of windfall.
- BC Parks will not develop or improve trails or routes in the Wilderness Recreation Zone. Non resort users will use the trails that are in place and used/maintained by the various resort operators. BC Parks will not sign these trails.
- Deliberate intent will be made to ensure no maintenance of trails or routes connecting between the Natural Environment Zone and the Wilderness Recreation Zone.
- Special attention will be made to ensure that trails do not create unwanted access for cattle.
- Maintain a trail route to and from Skoatl Point in the park – via the Adler Lake trailhead. The trail will terminate at the base of Skoatl Point. Trailhead (Adler) information will advise that there is no developed, marked or maintained route from the base to the top of Skoatl Point and that this section involves very steep and challenging terrain and should only be undertaken by experienced hikers.

Horse Use

The trails, soils, vegetation and general environmental conditions of the park are not particularly suited to horse use. There is very little public horse use in the park. The closed-in forest habitats are not attractive to horse users.

Objective

To allow recreational horse use throughout the park within acceptable levels of impact to trails and the environment.

Strategies

- Permit horse use throughout the park. Horse use will not be promoted. No special facilities will provide for public horse use activities in the park.
- Horse use will be monitored and, if use and related impacts dictate, the park or portions of the park may be closed to public horse use.

Mountain Biking

Limitations for suitability and attraction for horse use (wet soils, enclosed trails, etc.) also apply to mountain bike use.

Objective

To allow mountain bike use throughout the park within acceptable levels of impacts to trails and the environment.

Strategies

- Permit mountain bike use throughout the park. Mountain Bike use will not be promoted. No facilities or trail upgrading will be undertaken to service public horse use activities in the park.
- Mountain bike use will be monitored and, if use and related impacts dictate, the park or portions of the park may be closed to this activity.

Canoeing and Boating

The lengthy and narrow trails in the park pose arduous conditions for packing in heavy boats and canoes. However, the advent of float tubes (belly boats) and other light portable watercraft has allowed for relatively easy walk-in use of lakes for fishing. There are a number of obvious interconnecting canoe loops that can be made through the park, but there is very limited capacity to absorb such use without impacting on existing users, including the established tourism operators.

Objective

To permit boating and canoeing use throughout the park.

Strategies

- Provide no special facilities or measures for boating or canoe use. Trails will not be widened or improved for the specific purpose of allowing for easier boat access.

- Boating and canoeing will not be promoted and there will be no mention of canoe routes in park information.

Hunting

Hunting is allowed in Bonaparte Park for upland birds, waterfowl and big game species. A number of species including moose are managed on limited entry hunting permit basis. The park receives light hunting pressure, but provides hunters with backcountry hunting experience, and valued opportunity to get away from the largely roaded hunting conditions of the rest of the Bonaparte plateau.

Objective

To permit hunting use throughout the park.

Strategies

- Permit hunting in conjunction with hunting regulations for the Wildlife Management Unit.
- Exempt the park for the No Hunting - No Shooting Restrictions on park roads.

Snowmobiling

Snowmobile access to and within the lower portions of the park are well established, with maintained trails, including a section of the trans provincial snowmobile trail, and maintained public winter cabins.

Objective

To recognize and allow for continued snowmobile access and use in the Natural Environment Zone. The Wilderness Recreation Zone will be closed to snowmobile use.

Strategies

- Apply zoning principles - snowmobiling is permissible in the Natural Environment Zone but not in the Wilderness Recreation Zone.
- Continue ongoing liaison and support of the Kamloops Snowmobile Club and any other organizations that may wish to be involved in maintaining snowmobile opportunities in the park. BC Parks will rely on snowmobile club(s) to groom and maintain trails and maintain cabins.
- Snowmobile use will be monitored to ensure acceptable impacts to wildlife and other recreational users.

Ski-touring and Snowshoeing

Although winter access can be difficult, the park provides excellent opportunity for snowshoeing and ski touring for wilderness enthusiasts.

Objective

To provide for wilderness snowshoeing and ski-touring opportunities.

Strategies

- The whole of the park is open to these activities, but no efforts will be made to maintain trails or routes in winter. There will be no track setting for skiing.

Carrying Capacities

Bonaparte Park has a relatively low human carrying capacity. Fisheries and other resources have low capacity to absorb use without impact.

Current use pressures in the park are relatively light and the many lakes, trails and access points allow people to avoid contact with others and to experience wilderness solitude. Most of the lakes, however, are small and have enclosed settings where there is limited capacity to accommodate more than one or two parties without losing the feeling of wilderness. While people can be somewhat dispersed, the threshold for maintaining wilderness and backcountry experiences at each of the small lake settings is also very low.

Carry capacities for tourism operators are relatively easy to set through limitations on “number of beds” occupancy. Overtime there will be greater pressures placed on the park by the growing regional and provincial population base. The challenge for park managers will be provide fair balance between tourism users and the general public.



Plate 7 Wetlands

Objective

To maintain the backcountry/wilderness experience and opportunities in the park.

Strategies

- Determine carrying capacity numbers for individual lakes, lakes systems, trails and road end facilities. Quantified carrying capacity levels would serve as indicators for monitoring and managing public use and resort uses.
- Take deliberate management directions to maintain a low public use profile for the park. The park will not be promoted and there will be no promotional brochures produced for the park.
- No facilities will be established in the Natural Environment Zone that will create an attraction. Trails and facilities will be developed and maintained at primitive backcountry standards and levels.
- Special efforts will be made to maintain low dispersed use levels in the Wilderness Recreation Zone. There will be no public facilities other than the trails and boat access points established by the resort operators.
- Use will be monitored and operational measures may be applied to manage and limit visitor use if required to maintain the desired use levels. Measures could include further restrictions on access, longer hike-in routes, more stringent fisheries regulations and, potentially, application of a park reservation system.

Management Services

Bonaparte Park is administered from the Thompson River District office of BC Parks in Kamloops. Staff ensures that the various management responsibilities are carried out according to the *Park Act* and *Park Act Regulations*, this management plan, established policies and procedures of the Ministry and a variety of other provincial acts and regulations.

Close co-ordination will be required with other agencies and interests to implement access management and resource management strategies for the park. There will also need to be ongoing co-ordination with tourism operators, stakeholders and public interest groups to ensure that the intent and directions as forth in this management plan are appropriately implemented.

Objectives

To carry out management responsibilities through co-ordination with other agencies, stakeholders and interested public in accordance with the *Park Act*, *Regulations* and this management plan.

Strategies

- Prepare annual operating plans to address the implementation of this management plan.
- Assess optimal numbers and distribution of visitors. Monitor uses and manage to ensure that the appropriate levels and distribution of users is maintained as well as the compatibility between the various user interests and the interests of tourism operators.
- Encourage visitors to practice low impact camping and backcountry travel techniques.
- Co-ordinate with forest companies, particularly with Weyerhaeuser (Tree Farm Licence 35), the Kamloops Forest District and 100 Mile Forest Districts to manage public recreation access around the periphery of the park.
- Work with Ministry of Forests and BC Environment in managing park resources, particularly relating to grazing use, fire and forest health management and fisheries and wildlife management.
- Work closely with tourism operators in provision of facilities and services in the park.
- Ensure ongoing consultation with stakeholders, especially ranchers.
- Continue to foster working relationships with groups and individuals that may have interest in assisting in the management of the park.

Communications

Introduction

Public perceptions and use will very much depend on the type, nature and methods that information will be conveyed about the conditions and recreation opportunities found in the park. The sensitive environments and limited capacity of the park to absorb people dictates that there be little or no promotion made to encourage use. However, people should have access to information about the nature and type of opportunities available in the park. People should also be made aware and forewarned that this park is not particularly suited to inexperienced or ill equipped users.

In complementing management objectives and directions for the general public, wilderness tourism operations provide alternative opportunity for people to experience the park with relative comfort and sense of security.

Promotion and Information

Promotion of a park can affect the level of use and type of visitors it attracts. Consequently, promotion strategies must be consistent with the objectives for the park.

The Park Vision, Role Statements and management objectives are directed towards maintaining low, dispersed levels of use. Park users and stakeholders have expressed a strong desire to maintain the 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 on their own, without benefit of detailed brochures or elaborate trail maps, or specific information about fishing at individual lakes or highlighting of natural features or attractions. Information, therefore, will be very basic, outlining access roads, road ends, trailhead staging areas and the few main trails.

While tourism operators provide different levels of services and facilities, clients are primarily visiting the park to experience and enjoy the wilderness setting. Promotion and advertising by tourism operators should be in keeping with the park vision and purposes.

Objectives

To not promote or directly encourage park visitation.

To provide basic information about the nature of the park, conditions of trails and facilities found in the park.

To provide basic signing and information at key trailheads in the southern portion of the park.

To provide no signs on trails or routes in the northern portion (Wilderness Recreation Zone).

To ensure that tourism advertisement complements the vision and purposes of the park.

Strategies

- Ensure that no intended promotion of the park is created in any information produced by BC Parks.
- Review promotional material of resorts and tourism operators to ensure there is no conflict with park management intents.
- Provide basic park information about road accesses, trailheads and main trails in the park. Information will clearly describe the general nature and intent of the park, provide cautions about the general lack of facilities and services and discourage inexperienced people from using the area. Park information will direct people to services of tourism operators.
- No information will be provided about canoe routes, specific lake fisheries or features or attractions of the park.
- Specific caution will be made at the Adler Lake trailhead about the challenges of hiking up Skoatl Point.
- Information should strongly encourage the use of low impact equipment and techniques for travelling and camping in the park.
- Information should point out the long established history of cattle grazing in the area, and that this activity is recognized as a legitimate use of the park.
- No interpretation facilities or signs will be provided in the park. However, information on the park will give perspective on the history and use of the area by First Nations, ranchers and wilderness tourism operators.

Plan Implementation

The management plan forms the basis from which BC Parks and other agencies can set priorities to meet management objectives. Implementation of most of the strategies will be of an operational nature, but others such as fisheries and fire management will require more detailed planning. Follow through on these strategies is dependent on the availability of financial and staffing capacity of BC Parks. In addition, implementation of actions is affected by the management needs of other parks in the Thompson River District and the entire protected area system.

BC Parks will ensure that public interest groups, individuals and stakeholders are consulted where appropriate in various follow up management planning processes. BC Parks will provide a forum for public review of annual activities in the park either in conjunction with the Bonaparte Local Resource Use Planning Committee or as a separate meeting of key interest groups and stakeholders.

Appendix A: Goals for Protected Areas

BC Parks has adopted the goals of the Protected Areas Strategy¹:

Goal 1: Representativeness

To protect viable, representative examples of the natural diversity of the province, representative of the major terrestrial, marine and freshwater ecosystems, the characteristic habitats, hydrology and landforms, and the characteristic backcountry recreational and cultural heritage values of each ecosection.

Wherever possible, protected areas should combine natural, cultural heritage and recreational values. Where it is not possible to combine these in a common area, they may be represented separately. Where it is not possible to represent all values, the natural values will be given priority.

Goal 2: Special Features

To protect the special natural, cultural heritage and recreational features of the province, including rare and endangered species and critical habitats, outstanding or unique botanical, zoological, geological and paleontological features, outstanding or fragile cultural heritage features, and outstanding outdoor recreational features such as trails.

Many protected areas will be set aside primarily to protect rare or vulnerable features. Others will combine protection with giving people the opportunity to appreciate and enjoy the intrinsic value of the areas. Others will be protected to attract people to experience and appreciate their natural and cultural heritage.

¹Province of British Columbia. 1993. A Protected Areas Strategy for British Columbia, Victoria,

Appendix B: BC Parks Recreation Goals

BC Parks has four recreation goals²:

- *Tourism Travel Routes*: to provide parks and services, which enhance tourism travel routes. We would like to help BC build a worldwide reputation for offering tourism opportunities along major highways, lakes and the Coast;
- *Outdoor Recreation Holiday Destinations*: to provide park attractions that serve as or improve key destinations for outdoor recreation holidays. We want to help the province build a reputation for world-renowned natural holiday destinations;
- *Backcountry*: to provide outstanding backcountry recreation opportunities throughout the province. We want to build the province's reputation for backcountry recreation by protecting and managing our most outstanding wilderness areas;
- *Local Recreation*: to ensure access to local outdoor recreation opportunities for all residents of the province.

²Ministry of Parks. 1990. Preserving our Living Legacy: Parks Plan 90. Victoria, BC

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Appendix C: BC Parks Management Planning Zone Descriptions (1997/98)

Protected Areas Management Planning Zone Descriptions			
	Intensive Recreation	Natural Environment	Special Feature
Objective	To provide for a variety of readily accessible, facility-oriented outdoor recreation opportunities.	To protect scenic values and to provide for backcountry recreation opportunities in a largely undisturbed natural environment.	To protect and present significant natural or cultural resources, features or processes because of their special character, fragility and heritage values.
Use Level	Relatively high density and long duration types of use.	Relatively low use but higher levels in association with nodes of activity or access.	Generally low.
Means of Access	All-weather public roads or other types of access where use levels are high (see "Impacts" below).	Motorised (powerboats, snowmobiles, all terrain vehicles), non-motorised (foot, horse, canoe, bicycles). Aircraft and motorboat access to drop-off and pickup points will be permitted.	Various; may require special access permit.
Location	Contiguous with all-weather roads and covering immediate areas, modified landscapes or other high-use areas.	Removed from all-weather roads but easily accessible on a day-use basis. Accessible by mechanised means such as boat or plane.	Determined by location of special resources; may be surrounded by or next to any of the other zones.
Size of Zone	Small - usually less than 2,000 ha.	Can range from small to large.	Small - usually less than 2000 hectares.
Boundary Definition	Includes areas of high facility development in concentrated areas.	Boundaries should consider limits of activity/facility areas relative to ecosystem characteristics and features.	Area defined by biophysical characteristics or the nature and extent of cultural resources (adequate to afford protection).
Recreation Opportunities	Vehicle camping, picnicking, beach activities, power-boating, canoeing, kayaking, strolling, bicycling, historic and nature appreciation, fishing, snowplay, downhill and cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, specialised activities.	Walk-in/boat-in camping, power-boating, hunting, canoeing, kayaking, backpacking, bicycling, historic and nature appreciation, fishing, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, river rafting, horseback riding, heli-skiing, heli-hiking, and specialised activities.	Sightseeing, historic and nature appreciation. May be subject to temporary closures or permanently restricted access.
Facilities	May be intensely developed for user convenience. Campgrounds, landscaped picnic/play areas, trail accommodation or interpretative buildings, boat launches, administrative buildings, service compounds, gravel pits, disposal sites, wood lots; parking lots, etc.	Moderately developed for user convenience. Trails, walk-in/boat-in campsites, shelters, accommodation buildings may be permitted; facilities for motorised access - e.g., docks, landing strips, fuel storage, etc.	Interpretative facilities only - resources are to be protected.
Impacts on Natural Environment	Includes natural resource features and phenomena in a primarily natural state but where human presence may be readily visible both through the existence of recreation facilities and of people using the zone. Includes areas of high facility development with significant impact on concentrated areas.	Area where human presence on the land is not normally visible, facility development limited to relatively small areas. Facilities are visually compatible with natural setting.	None - resources to be maintained unimpaired.
Management Guidelines	Oriented toward maintaining a high quality recreation experience. Intensive management of resource and/or control of visitor activities. Operational facilities designed for efficient operation while remaining unobtrusive to the park visitor.	Oriented to maintaining a natural environment and a high quality recreation experience. Visitor access may be restricted to preserve the recreation experience or to limit impacts. Separation of less compatible recreational activities and transportation modes. Designation of transportation may be necessary to avoid potential conflicts (e.g. horse trails, cycle paths, hiking trails).	High level of management protection with ongoing monitoring. Oriented to maintaining resources and, where appropriate, a high quality recreational and interpretative experience. Active or passive management depending on size, location, and nature of the resource. Visitor access may be restricted to preserve the recreation experience and to limit impacts.
Examples of Zoning	Campground in Rath Trevor Beach Park; Gibson Pass ski area in E.C. Manning Park.	Core area in Cathedral Park; North beach in Naikoon Park.	Botanical Beach tidepools within Juan de Fuca Park; Sunshine Meadows in Mount Assiniboine Park.

Protected Areas Management Planning Zone Descriptions		
	Wilderness Recreation	Wilderness Conservation
Objective	To protect a remote, undisturbed natural landscape and to provide backcountry recreation opportunities dependent on a pristine environment where air access may be permitted to designated sites	To protect a remote, undisturbed natural landscape and to provide unassisted backcountry recreation opportunities dependent on a pristine environment where no motorised activities will be allowed.
Use Level	Very low use to provide solitary experiences and a wilderness atmosphere. Use may be controlled to protect the environment.	Very low use to provide solitary experiences and a wilderness atmosphere. Use may be controlled to protect the environment.
Means of Access	Non-mechanised & non-motorised - except may permit low frequency air access to designated sites; foot, canoe (horses may be permitted).	Non-mechanised & non-motorised (no air access); foot, canoe (horses may be permitted).
Location	Remote - not easily visited on a day-use basis.	Remote - not easily visited on a day-use basis.
Size of Zone	Large - greater than 5,000 hectares.	Large - greater than 5,000 hectares.
Boundary Definition	Defined by ecosystem limits and geographic features. Boundaries will encompass areas of visitor interest for specific activities supported by air access.	Defined by ecosystem limits and geographic features.
Recreation Opportunities	Backpacking, canoeing, kayaking, river rafting, nature and historic appreciation, hunting, fishing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding, specialised activities (e.g., caving, climbing).	Backpacking, canoeing, kayaking, river rafting, nature and historic appreciation, fishing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding, specialised activities (e.g., caving, climbing).
Facilities	Minimal facility development for user convenience and safety, and protection of the environment e.g. trails, primitive campsites, etc. Some basic facilities at access points, e.g., dock, primitive shelter, etc.	None.
Impacts on Natural Environment	Natural area generally free of evidence of modern human beings. Evidence of human presence is confined to specific facility sites. Facilities are visually compatible with natural setting.	Natural area generally free of evidence of modern human beings.
Management Guidelines	Oriented to protecting a pristine environment. Management actions are minimal and not evident. Managed to ensure low visitor use levels. Visitor access may be restricted to protect the natural environment and visitor experience.	Oriented to protecting a pristine environment. Management actions are minimal and not evident. Managed to ensure low visitor use levels. Visitor access may be restricted to protect the natural environment and visitor experience.
Examples of Zoning	Quanchus Mountains Wilderness in Tweedsmuir Park; Wilderness Zone in Spatsizi Park.	Upper Murray River watershed within Monkman Park; Garibaldi Park Nature Conservancy Area.

Appendix D: Operational strategies for domestic livestock grazing in Bonaparte Park

(January 2001)

The Bonaparte Park planning group recommended (with BC Parks agreement) that the following *operational* livestock grazing strategies be included with the Bonaparte Park plan. These livestock use strategies are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Forests, hence these strategies occur as an appendix to the Bonaparte Park Plan. These strategies are operational and will be revised over time. Please contact the Kamloops Forest District office for the most recent operational strategies and measures for livestock grazing in the Bonaparte Park (Kamloops Forest District: Phone 371-6500).

The Bonaparte Park planning group submitted a consensus-based recommendation to government. The Forest Service implemented plant community monitoring & inventory in the park in 2000 to gather information. (The report and plant community photos can be viewed upon request at the Kamloops Forest District). Subsequent meetings of interested Bonaparte Park planning group members provided further recommendations, responding to the plant monitoring results (November 9th & December 14th 2000). The District Manager considered the recommendations from these meetings and the results of the plant monitoring report, and authorizes the following strategies:

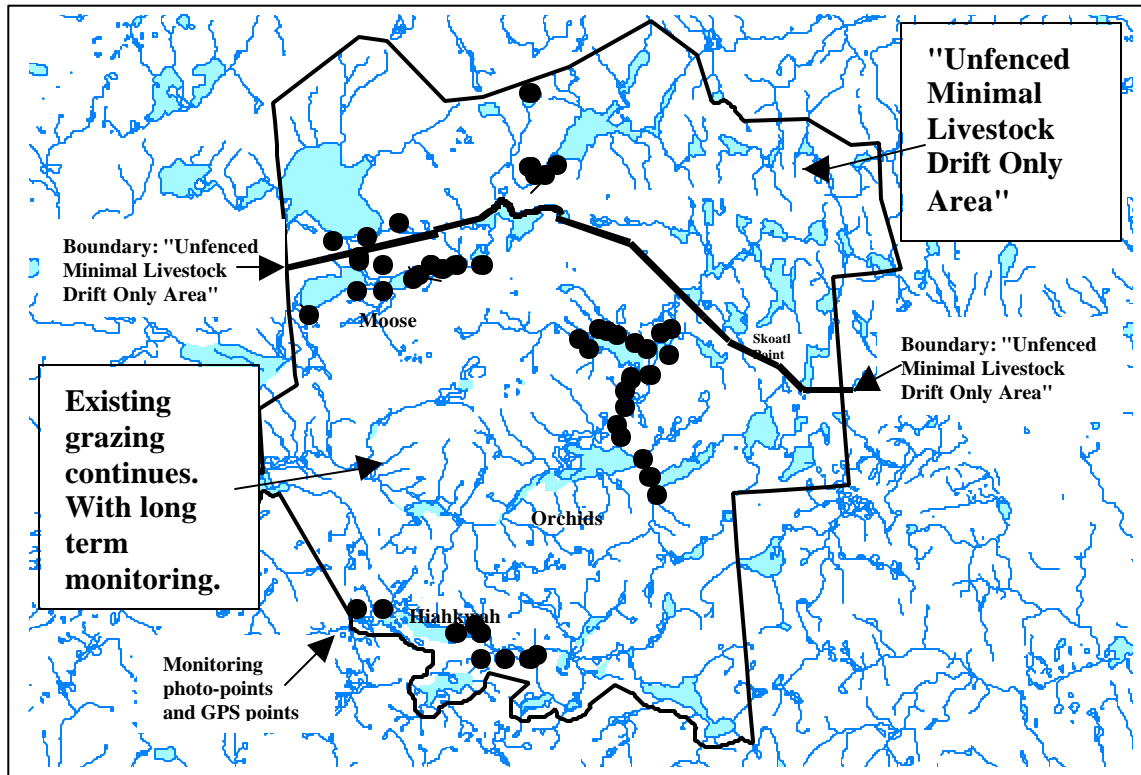
Current operational strategies to be implemented by the Ministry of Forests:

1. The existing grazing tenures are to continue in the park, renewable and transferable, and subject to the grazing policy of the Kamloops LRMP.
2. Measures will be included in Range Use Plans:
 - To maintain an '*unfenced minimal livestock drift only area*' in the northern portion of the park, whose boundary is depicted on the attached map, dated February 2001.
 - To continue to achieve overall utilization in the park of light to moderate levels (outside of the '*unfenced minimal livestock drift only area*').
3. The Ministry of Forests will co-ordinate efforts with BC Parks for the following:
 - Long term monitoring, at appropriate intervals, of potential livestock impacts to plant communities, specifically in the special interest areas of the two meadow systems (Moose and Hiahkwah) and in the orchid sites. Subject to the availability of funding,
 - Specific monitoring of potential livestock impacts on rare and endangered species may occur as warranted in the future. Subject to the availability of funding.
 - The 1-2 hectare exclosures recommended in the December 11, 1999 submission are to be deferred until future need is determined, as discussed at the November 9th 2000 meeting based on 2000 plant inventory results which show minimal impact from livestock. Future determinations will consider the results of long term plant inventory, and public recommendations through a consensus-based process.
4. These livestock use strategies listed above may be revised in the future for major extenuating circumstances (e.g. wildfire). If this does occur the Forest Service will use a consensus based process to develop recommendations for the statutory decision-maker (the District Manager).

The Ministry of Forests remains the government agency responsible for the administration of livestock grazing tenures in the Bonaparte Park. The LRMP document and relevant legislation (such as the Range Act, Forest Practices Code of BC Act, Park Act, Park Amendment Act) remain the legal authority for the administration of grazing use in Parks.

Figure 6: Map of Grazing

Bonaparte Park Map of Grazing and Monitoring strategies January 2001



Monitoring: Black Dots on the map locate the photo-points and GPS sites that were established in 2000 on the following specific areas of interest:

1. Plant communities within the Hiahkwah Lake Meadow system
2. Plant communities within the Moose Lake meadow system.
3. Orchids in vicinity of Willowgrouse, Mollimarn , & Hoopitatkwa Lakes

Fairy slipper (Calypso bulbosa) is common throughout the area. Thirty-four (34) GPS points were established and 5 photo-points (PP) in 2000, to be re-monitored periodically.

Other orchid species found during 2000 inventory:

- *Amerorchis rotundifolia*: Round-leaved orchis: Hiahkwah Lake. In 1 Photo-point.
- *Corallhoriza trifida*: Yellow corralroot: north Mollimarn, Tuwut Lakes. In 5 PPs.
- *Goodyera oblongifolia*: Rattlesnake plantain: east Willowgrouse.
- *Listera convallarioides*: Broad-leaved Twayblade: east of Willowgrouse In 3 PPs.
- *Listera cordata*: Heartleaved Twayblade: east of Willowgrouse & Mollimarn. In 1 PP