

Skeena District

MANAGEMENT DIRECTION STATEMENT

September, 2000

for Call Lake Provincial
Park



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

Ministry of Environment
Lands and Parks
BC Parks Division

This management direction statement was developed through direction received from the Bulkley Land and Resource Management Plan.



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MEMORANDUM


**BULKLEY GOAL 2 PROTECTED AREAS MANAGEMENT DIRECTION
STATEMENTS - BINDER APPROVALS PAGE**

Forward

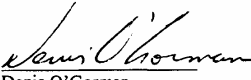
This binder contains five management direction statements developed by BC Parks. The Provincial Government designated these protected areas under *Bill 17, Protected Areas Act of British Columbia* which received Royal Assent on June 29th 2000. The five management direction statements provide strategic direction for these protected areas. Protected areas' roles, strategies and objectives will not change extensively over time. Management actions, implemented through operations plans, however, will change as priorities, funding and support resources come available.

- Burnt Cabin Ecological Reserve
- Call Lake Park
- Netalzul Meadows Park
- Nilkitkwa Lake Park
- Rainbow Alley Park

Approved by:


Hugh Markides
District Manager
Skeena District

Date: Aug. 24, 2000


Denis O'Gorman
Assistant Deputy Minister
Parks Division

Date: 00 09 01

Table of Contents

Call Lake Park

Introduction.....	1
Purpose of the MDS	1
Setting and Context.....	1
Protected Area Attributes.....	1
Conservation.....	1
Recreation and Tourism.....	1
Cultural Heritage	4
Significance in the Protected Areas System.....	4
Land Uses, Tenures and Interests	4
Access.....	4
Existing Tenures	4
Existing Land Use Activities and Facilities	4
Adjacent Patterns of Land Use	4
First Nations Interests	4
Other Agency Interests.....	5
Private and Public Stakeholder Interests	5
Role of Call Lake Park.....	5
Management Commitments and Issues.....	6
Direction from Previous Planning	6
Management Issues.....	6
Management Strategy.....	7
Consultation and Future Planning	8
Zoning	8
Figures	
Figure 1 - Regional Location Map.....	2
Figure 2 - Park Map	3
Appendix I - Table of Acceptable Activities, Uses and Facilities.....	9

Introduction

Purpose

This management direction statement (MDS) provides management for newly created Call Lake Park. It identifies key strategies that will be ranked according to priority and completed as funding permits. The implementation of strategies will be dependent on available funding and agency priorities. In addition, all development associated with these strategies is subject to the BC Parks Impact Assessment Policy.

Setting and Context

Call Lake Park covers 62 ha around Call Lake, about 5 km southeast of Smithers (area population ~12,000; Figures 1 and 2). The park lies within the asserted traditional territory of the Wet'suwet'en people.

The park includes Call Lake and a diverse patchwork of young aspen stands, mixed forest and red-listed scrub-steppe ecosystems on a rolling, ridged landscape south of the lake. The scenic area attracts local residents for a variety of recreational activities. Some of the park's ecosystems have been degraded due to unmanaged use. Call Lake's proximity to town, local recreation and nature appreciation interest, make it well-suited for promoting awareness of the natural environment and ecological restoration concepts and opportunities.

Nearby, Tyhee Lake provides a full-facility campground near to Highway 16, Babine Mountains Park offers extensive backcountry recreation and Driftwood Canyon and Burnt Cabin Bog offer specialised nature appreciation opportunities.

Protected Area Attributes

Conservation

- Bulkley Basin Ecoregion; SBSdk (dry cool sub-boreal spruce subzone)
- several hectares of Saskatoon-slender wheatgrass scrub-steppe community (red-listed)
- high ecological diversity due to rolling topography, including forested and non-forested wetlands, young coniferous and deciduous forest and scrub-steppe grassland
- mix of deciduous forests, grasslands and wetlands provides habitat for variety of mammals and birds
- critical winter and spring moose and deer habitat; spring and summer bear habitat
- several spruce vets may provide cavity-nesting duck habitat

Recreation and Tourism

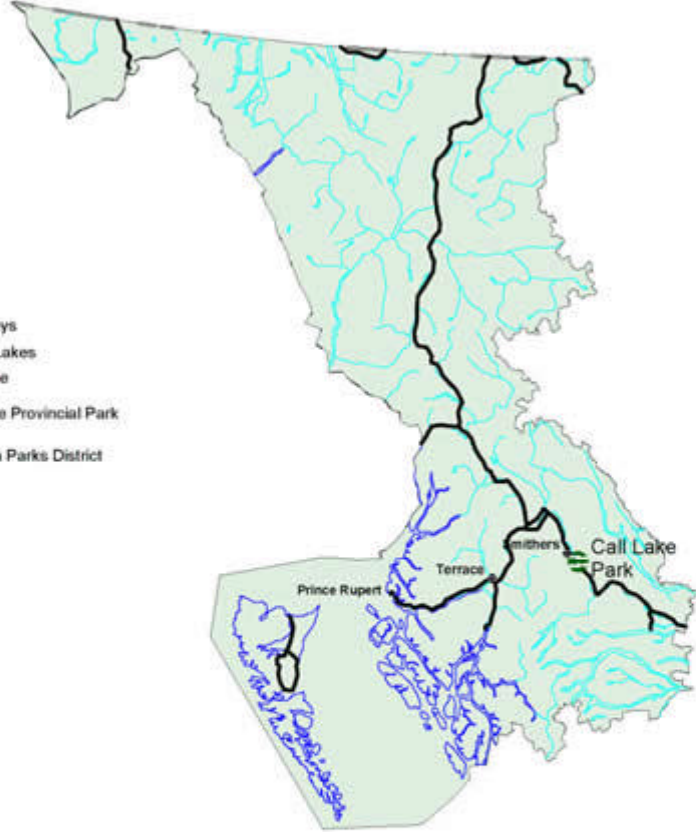
- locally-significant, year-round recreation opportunities (hiking, horseback riding, mountain-biking, fishing, swimming, canoeing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, skating, ice-fishing, nature appreciation, snowmobiling)
- stocked with brook trout by BC Environment

Figure 1

Call Lake Provincial Park Locator Map

Legend

- Highways
- Rivers/Lakes
- Coastline
- Call Lake Provincial Park
- Skeena Parks District



0 100 200 300 Kilometers

Scale 1:6,000,000

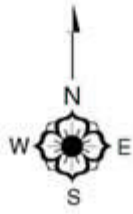
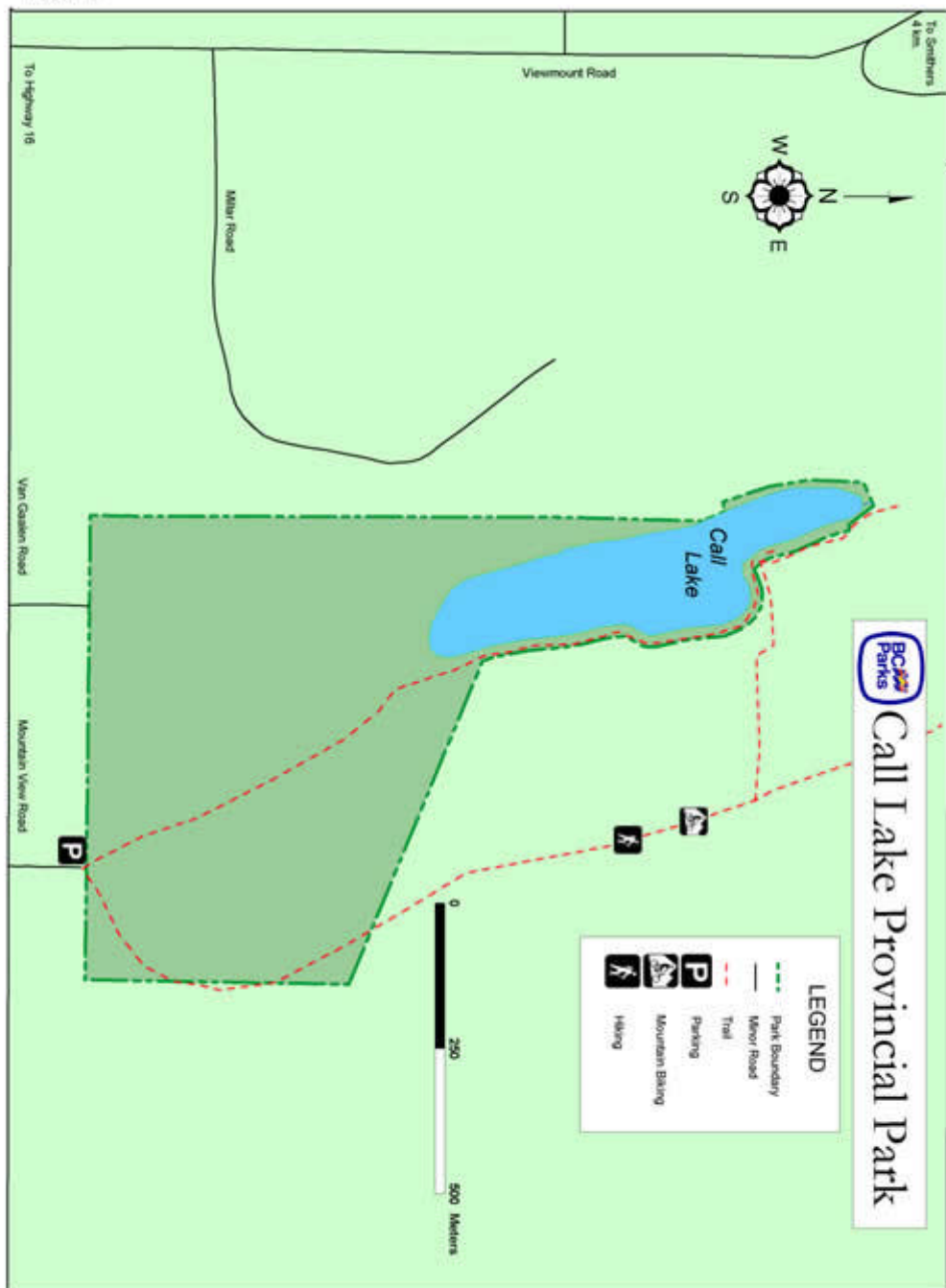


Figure 2



Cultural Heritage

- likely subject to historical burning for berry production
- other attributes not identified to BC Parks

Significance in the Protected Areas System

- protects remnant valley-bottom under-represented SBSdk within Bulkley Basin Ecosection
- protects red-listed scrub-steppe community
- provides diversity of local recreation and nature appreciation opportunities
- provides excellent opportunity for promoting public awareness of ecological stewardship and restoration

Land Uses, Tenures and Interests

Access

Hiking trails to the south of the park begin at the ends of VanGalen and Mountainview Roads, running north of Highway 16. To the northeast, trails continue through crown land. A public right-of-way bisects the Millar Road subdivision, accessing the east side of Call Lake. Many informally-developed trails run throughout the park.

Existing Tenures

- trappers

Existing Land Use Activities and Facilities

- informally-developed, unmanaged system of ridge and gully trails extending through park and beyond the boundary
- previously grazed by cattle
- local people use trails for a range of activities from hiking and cross-country skiing through mountain biking and horseback riding to snowmobiling and ATV travel
- fishers, particularly local families, angle for stocked trout in Call Lake

Adjacent Patterns of Land Use

- within forest ecosystem network corridor
- private lots surround south, west and north of Call Lake Park; many rural residential lots are developed, development is increasing
- crown land, with grazing license, lies to the northeast

First Nations Interests

- part of the asserted traditional territory of the Wet'suwet'en
- Aboriginal Rights will be honoured and protected subject to conservation and safety concerns

- Wet'suwet'en staff have indicated the plan is acceptable to the Wet'suwet'en Chiefs following a review of the draft plan and a meeting with BC Parks staff.

Other Agency Interests

- BC Environment has an interest in winter range for moose and deer
- BC Environment stocks Call Lake with trout
- Ministry of Forests manages grazing activities on adjacent crown land
- Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako has an interest in zoning land surrounding the park (Official Community Plan reviewed in 1999)

Private and Public Stakeholder Interests

- recreational users: hikers, mountain bikers, skiers, skaters, horseback riders, snowmobile users, ATV users, fishers (Bulkley Valley Mountain-biking Club, Back Country Horsemen Society of BC)
- local residents: Smitheers and Telkwa communities, particularly park neighbours
- trappers
- Bulkley Valley Naturalists

Role of Call Lake Park

Call Lake Provincial Park serves a conservation role by protecting a relatively tiny (less than 62 hectares) remnant of the Bulkley Basin Ecoregion and the dry cool sub-boreal spruce subzone (SBSdk), an ecosystem under-represented in the protected areas system. A key aspect of this conservation role is the protection of a red-listed shrub-steppe plant community, in the mostly developed Bulkley Valley. In the Bulkley Valley, Call Lake Park complements the much larger Babine Mountains Park that protects SBSmc2 ecosystems, and the Tyhee Lake and Driftwood Canyon parks that also protect extremely small remnants of the SBSdk ecosystem.

Call Lake Park performs a limited recreation role by providing locally significant recreation opportunities for walking, mountain biking, horseback riding, skiing, skating and angling. The park has high potential for promoting public awareness through ecological stewardship, restoration and nature appreciation programs.

Management Commitments and Issues

Direction from Previous Planning

The Bulkley Valley LRMP recommended Call Lake for protection in 1996. The LRMP also recommended Call Lake be included in a landscape corridor, maintaining connectivity across the landscape.

Management Issues

The following management issues require attention:

Theme	Issue
Public safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • combination of users (hikers, horse riders, mountain bikers, snowmobilers, skiers) may pose safety concerns
Protecting ecological values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inventory of natural features is incomplete • red-listed ecosystems are highly disturbed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ cattle grazing has led to soil erosion and introduced invasive non-native plants ➢ fire suppression has led to encroachment by aspen and shrub species ➢ uncontrolled public access, particularly ATV and 4-wheel drive use, has eroded and compacted soil and introduced invasive non-native plant species • increased development outside park may impact park ecosystems • moose calve on south-facing slope
Protecting recreational values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • history of diverse use with low levels of conflict • snowmobiling, horse riding and ATV use is by local residents who leave from home • fishing for stocked trout is a popular activity • trails in park link with trails on crown land
Protecting cultural values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cultural features not identified to BC Parks
Park neighbours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access to the north of the park currently involves trespass on private land

Management Strategy

The following table describes management strategies to deal with outstanding issues raised. In addition, figure 1 contains a list of acceptable land and resource uses for this park.

Priority Management Objectives	Priority Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Call Lake Park is safe for public use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider adopting BC Outdoor Recreation Council's code of ethics for trail use between use groups • Identify safety issues of concern in consultation with local stakeholders; monitor conflicts between user groups
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the park's natural values. Initially, the priority will be on eliminating previous summer motorized uses and focusing trail use to avoid impacts on sensitive ecosystems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory fauna and flora; prepare Ecology Information Summary • When possible, add ridge on northeast side with red-listed community to park (currently under grazing licence); file request with BCAL; consult with licensee and Ministry of Forests to grandfather grazing licence • Prepare Trail Rehabilitation Plan; map all trails; assess condition, use and damage; include measures to remove unnecessary side trails and re-seed them with native plant species; develop and post signs; seek community support for trail rehabilitation • Promote awareness of rare plant communities: develop and post signs describing plant communities and the issue and control of invasive plants • Pursue opportunities for ecosystem rehabilitation; support proposals similar to the BV Naturalist's proposal for ecosystem stewardship • liaise with park neighbours to maintain park ecosystem • Consider implementing Conservation Stewardship Program • Prohibit summer motorised activities to minimise damage to native vegetation; follow standard procedures for compliance and enforcement, including barriers to access if necessary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the park's recreational values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map trails; as part of Trail Rehabilitation Plan, note best trails to maintain for recreational use; upgrade trails as necessary for safety of park users • Co-ordinate with BC Environment to continue stocking lake with trout • Co-ordinate with Ministry of Forests to manage trail system within and outside park as one unit (see Section 6 of Parks Act) • Consider implementing Park Watch Program • Allow existing snowmobile use; monitor use; if safety issues, user conflicts, ecosystem impacts or increased levels of use warrant, snowmobile use may be prohibited in future • If user conflicts arise, consider managing use in consultation with users • Consider building a boardwalk at the south of Call Lake linked to the two ridge trails
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the park's cultural heritage values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate and collate existing information on cultural heritage values; prepare Cultural Features Information Summary in consultation with the Wet'suwet'en
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop appropriate facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities will be limited to planned trail network (see Trail Rehabilitation Plan, above)

Consultation and Future Planning

Call Lake is ideal for promoting community involvement in park protection and management. BC Parks will continue to consult with BV Naturalists and BV Cycling Club about ecosystem management, stewardship and trail maintenance, and with local residents to encourage community stewardship. When the Bulkley-Nechako Regional District community planning process begins, BC Parks will request that the area immediately north of the park be identified as an area of interest for inclusion into the park. When planning the official trail system, BC Parks will consult with Ministry of Forests to ensure consistency within the park and on crown land.

BC Parks will continue to build a relationship with the Wet'suwet'en and will consult with the Wet'suwet'en on future site management actions where appropriate.

Zoning

The entire park is zoned as Natural Environment to allow for a full range of recreational activities while managing use to limit impacts on natural features. Facility development and active management are anticipated to be minimal, and use anticipated to be relatively low and transitory.

Appendix 1. Call Lake Park - Table of Acceptable Activities, Uses and Facilities

Activity/Use/Facility	Acceptable Uses
Aboriginal Rights	Y
Hunting	N
Fishing	Y
Trapping	N2
Grazing (domestic livestock)	N
Recreational gold panning/rock hounding	N
Utility corridors	N
Communication sites	N
Horse use/pack animals	Y
Guide outfitting (hunting)	N
Guide outfitting (fishing)	N
Guide outfitting (nature tours)	N
Guide outfitting (river rafting)	N
Cat-assisted skiing	N
Ski hills	N
Commercial recreation (facility-based)	N
Commercial recreation (non-facility-based)	N
Backcountry huts	N
Water control structures	N
Fish stocking and enhancement	Y
Road access	N2
Off-road access (snowmobiling)	N2
Off-road access (motorised)	N
Off-road access (mechanical activities)	Y
Motorised water access	N
Aircraft access	N
Fire management (suppression)	Y
Fire management (prescribed fire management)	M
Fire management (prevention)	M
Forest insect/disease control	N1
Noxious weed control	Y
Exotic insect/disease control	N1
Scientific research (specimen collection)	M
Scientific research (manipulative activities)	M

Y = allowed subject to conditions identified in the management direction statement or management plan

M = may be permitted if compatible with protected area objectives

N = not allowed

N1 = allowed for expressed management purposes only

N2 = present and allowed to continue, but not normally allowed