



Carp Lake Park

Management Plan

March 2017



BC Parks

Cover Page Photo Credit: Rob Bell

This document replaces the direction provided in the Carp Lake Provincial Park and Protected Area and Mackinnon Esker Ecological Reserve Purpose Statement and Zoning Plan (2002).

Carp Lake Park Management Plan

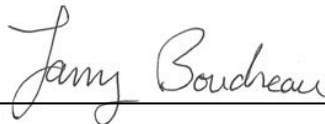
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Vision Statement

Carp Lake Park's natural values are managed to ensure ecological integrity of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. Fish and wildlife populations are healthy and naturally sustaining.

Angling is the main attraction to the park and frontcountry camping facilities are in keeping with the park's natural setting. People of all ages are able to enjoy a semi-remote outdoor recreation experience.

Park visitors are provided with unique opportunities to experience First Nations' history first hand. First Nations are involved in heritage conservation, interpretation and education related to their ancestral use and habitation in the region.

Plan Highlights

Carp Lake Park is a quality angling destination in the north central interior of British Columbia. It also provides key ecosystem representation in the Nechako Lowlands Ecoregion and contains significant cultural heritage values. Key elements of the management plan include:

- encouraging sustainable use of the abundant and natural population of Rainbow Trout;
- protecting the largest contiguous area of sub-boreal spruce forest in the province;
- protecting over 100 recorded archaeological sites;
- working collaboratively with First Nations to manage and protect the natural and cultural resources in the park; and,
- re-establishing and interpreting the historic Duzcho Trail.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Management Plan Purpose

The purpose of this management plan is to guide the management of Carp Lake Park. This management plan:

- articulates the key features and values of the park;
- identifies appropriate types and levels of management activities;
- determines appropriate levels of use and development;
- establishes a long-term vision and management objectives for the park; and
- responds to current and predicted threats and opportunities by defining a set of management strategies to achieve the management vision and objectives.

This management plan was prepared in conjunction with the Mackinnon Esker Ecological Reserve Management Plan because the two areas are adjacent with related management strategies.

1.2 Planning Area

Carp Lake Park is located two hours northwest of Prince George, B.C. The park is situated at an elevation of 840 metres on the Nechako Plateau, and encompasses 38,149 hectares of land and water.

Carp Lake Park can be accessed by travelling 141 kilometres north of Prince George along Highway 97 (the John Hart Highway) to the community of McLeod Lake and then 32 kilometres west on a gravel road. The community of Mackenzie is located 79 kilometres north of the park.

The park area includes Carp Lake, nearby War Lake, numerous smaller lakes and streams, and an eight kilometre waterway that connects Carp and War lakes and forms the beginning of the McLeod River. Two popular campgrounds within the park located on War Lake and Carp Lake, offer a total of 102 fully maintained campsites. The larger Carp Lake campground also has a picnic shelter, horseshoe pits and an adventure playground. Boaters and canoeists may also choose among three island campsites, which offer visitors a more secluded camping experience. A short walk from the park's War Lake campground brings visitors to War Falls, a spectacular cascade of water that comprises two distinct waterfalls separated by about 100 metres of rushing, white water.

A regional context map is provided in Figure 1.

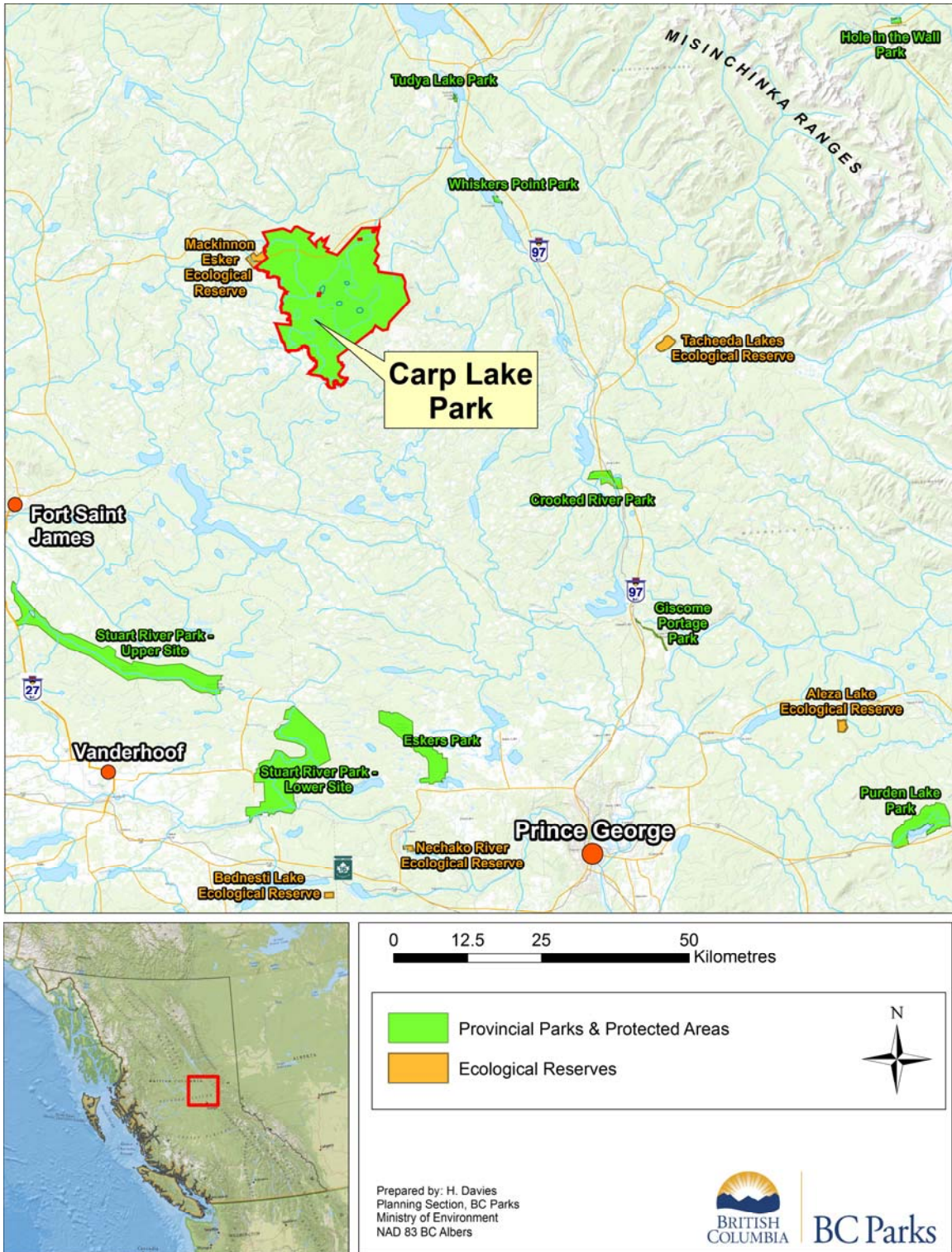


Figure 1: Context Map for Carp Lake Park

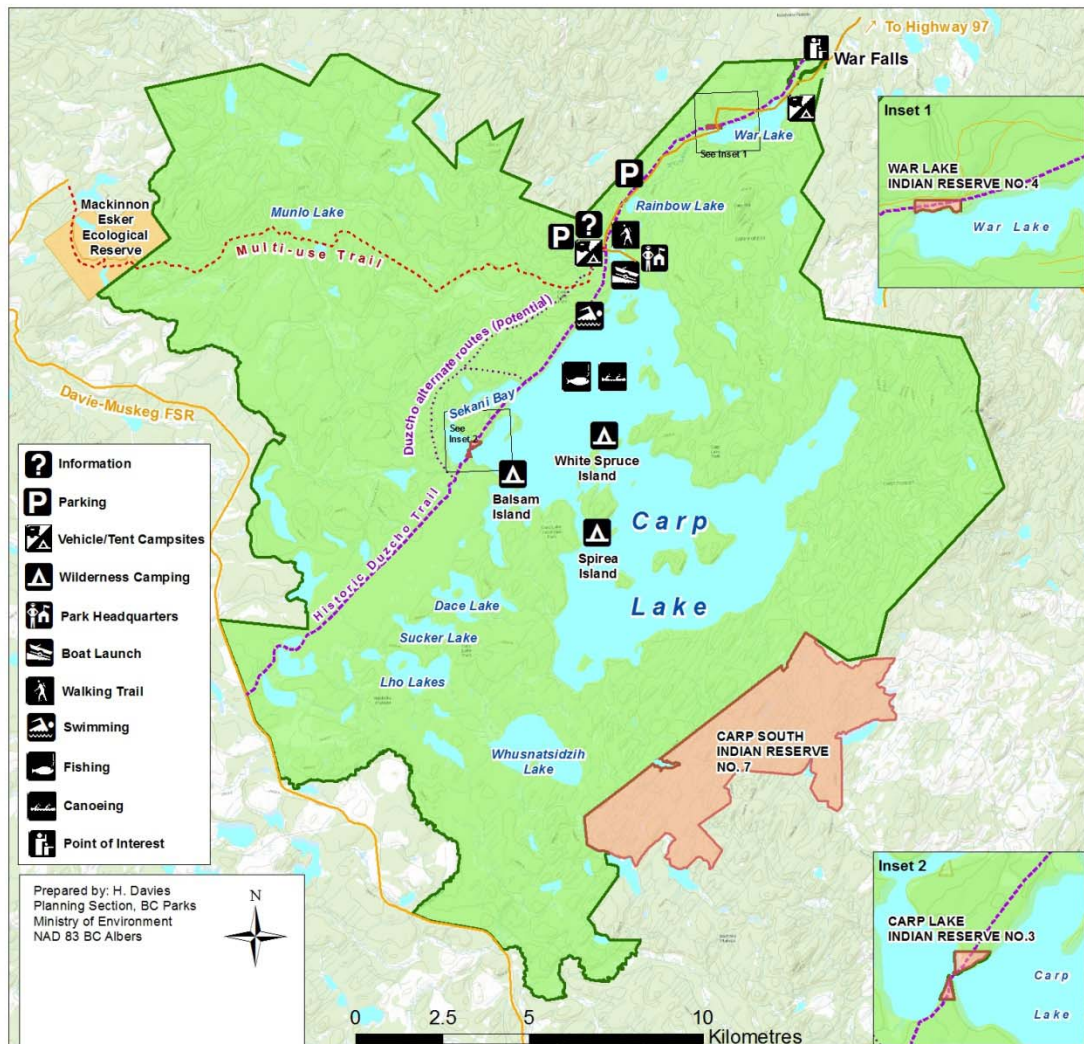


Figure 2: Map of Carp Lake Park

1.3 Legislative Framework

The park was originally established in 1973 when the provincial government set aside 19,344 hectares around Carp Lake as a Class A provincial park. In 1999, the park doubled in size following the recommendations of the Prince George Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP). Carp Lake Park, 38,149 hectares in area, is presently named and described in Schedule C of the *Protected Areas of British Columbia Act*.

Class A parks are dedicated to the preservation of their natural environments for the inspiration, use and enjoyment of the public. Sections 8 and 9 of the *Park Act* are the most pertinent in this regard, and direct that a park use permit must not be issued respecting an interest in land or damage or disturbance of natural resources unless, in the opinion of the minister, to do so is necessary to preserve or maintain the recreational values of the park involved.

1.4 Adjacent Land Use

1.4.1 Forestry

The primary land use adjacent to the park is forestry and the Davie-Muskeg Forest Service Road (FSR) is used to define a portion of the western boundary of the park. The document Best Management Practices for Activities Adjacent to Parks and Protected Areas (2005) has been developed to promote stewardship initiatives. The implementation and monitoring of the best management practices are important to reduce and mitigate the impact from industrial and commercial activities adjacent to the park.

A one kilometre portion of the Carp Lake Road from the park entrance is excepted from the park boundary and ongoing dialogue with the Ministry responsible for Forest Service Roads as well as educational signage is required to ensure park visitor safety when logging trucks are actively using the road.

1.4.2 Indian Reserves

Indian Reserve (IR) 3 and IR 4, both belonging to the McLeod Lake Indian Band, are located on War Lake and Carp Lake respectively. Indian Reserve 7 is adjacent to the southeastern boundary and also belongs to the McLeod Lake Indian Band. Working closely with the McLeod Lake Indian Band is necessary to ensure uses in the reserves and the park are compatible.

1.5 Management Commitments/Agreements

1.5.1 Prince George Land and Resource Management Plan

In January 1999, the provincial government approved the Prince George LRMP. The Prince George LRMP allocates land use and includes a set of guidelines to be applied to the management of Crown lands and resources in the planning area. These guidelines included resource management zone boundaries for new protected areas. Table 1 outlines the recommended permitted uses for the lands added to Carp Lake Park through the Prince George LRMP:

Carp Lake Addition:	LRMP Recommendation
Hunting	Yes, recommended use
Fishing	Yes, recommended use
Fish Stocking/Enhancement	Limited to current tenure use or to designated areas
Trapping	Yes, recommended use
Horse Use and Pack Animals	Limited to current tenure use or to designated areas
Cattle Grazing	No, not a recommended use
Commercial Guiding (hunting)	Limited to current tenure use or to designated areas

Carp Lake Addition:	LRMP Recommendation
Lodges/Cabins	No, not a recommended use
Snowmobiling	Deferred to the BC Parks planning process
Mechanized Activities	Deferred to the BC Parks planning process
Water: Motorized Activities	Deferred to the BC Parks planning process
Aircraft Access	Not an applicable use in this resource management zone
Heli-Skiing/Heli-Hiking	Not an applicable use in this resource management zone
Commercial Guiding (non-hunting)	Yes, recommended use

1.6 Land Uses, Tenures and Interests

1.6.1 Commercial Recreation

Commercial recreation is an important component of the province’s tourism industry and is a major contributor to the provincial economy. Currently, a guide outfitter operates in the park under a park use permit. The guide outfitter has a camp located in the southeast portion of the park.

1.6.2 Trapping

Most of the park is within trapline territory TR0724T009. A portion of three other trapline territories (TR0724T005, TR0724T010, and TR0724T011) extend into the park. Trapline territory holders have the right to trap fur bearing animals within the park but they are required to obtain a park use permit. First Nation trapping for food, social and ceremonial purposes does not require a park use permit.

1.7 Management Planning Process

The management planning process was conducted in collaboration with the Nak’azdli and McLeod Lake Indian Bands and in conjunction with the MacKinnon Esker Ecological Reserve management planning process.

Phase one of the management planning process occurred between the summer of 2008 and spring 2009. This phase involved completing First Nation Traditional Knowledge research, and obtaining First Nations community and public input. Key management issues were identified and discussions occurred with First Nations representatives to set preliminary management direction to address these issues.

Phase two of the management planning process occurred between the summer and fall of 2009. During this phase, a draft management plan was compiled and a workshop with

First Nations and key stakeholders occurred to identify any outstanding issues and to provide input into the proposed management direction.

Phase three of the management planning process occurred in May and June 2011. This phase involved obtaining public input and support for the management plan through a public review of the draft management plan

Phase four of the management planning process involved obtaining the necessary approvals for the management plan.

1.8 Relationship with First Nations

The area First Nations have indicated that Carp Lake Park is either fully or partially within the traditional territories of McLeod Lake Indian Band, Nak'azdli Indian Band, Lheidli T'enneh First Nation, the Halfway River First Nation, the West Moberly First Nation and the Saulteau First Nation. This management plan acknowledges the importance of the natural and cultural values within Carp Lake Park to these First Nations. Depending on the scope of project, ongoing collaboration will occur with respect to the management of the park's natural, cultural heritage and recreational features through First Nation involvement in annual work planning, and project-specific management and planning.

This management plan and its supporting documentation and appendices do not in any way define or limit the title and rights of the First Nations or British Columbia, and will be without prejudice to the positions of the First Nations and British Columbia with respect to the title and rights of the First Nations and British Columbia in regard to administrative and regulatory proceedings, and any litigation or negotiations.

1.9 Relationship with Communities

Carp Lake Park is within the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George and close to the communities of McLeod Lake and Mackenzie. Local communities often have a reciprocal relationship with a local park in that communities provide necessary services to park visitors and the management of the park, while the park itself attracts tourists to the region. All of these activities contribute to the local economy. A park also contributes to the quality of life of people living in the wider region. The residents of Prince George, Fort St. John and Dawson Creek also have an interest in the management of Carp Lake Park. A community's primary opportunity to contribute to setting the management direction for a park is through the management planning process. Ongoing involvement is important to ensure that local communities obtain the most benefits from the park as well as the services needed to support outdoor recreation within the park.

2.0 Values and Roles of the Park

2.1 Significance in the Protected Areas System

Carp Lake Park fulfills regionally and provincially important conservation, cultural heritage, and recreation roles within the province's parks and protected areas system. Some of these include:

- Protecting the largest contiguous area of sub-boreal spruce forest in the province;
- Protecting over 100 recorded archaeological sites including the historic Duzcho/Fort St. James-Fort McLeod Trail; and,
- Providing a high quality angling opportunity in the north central interior of British Columbia.

2.2 Biodiversity and Natural Heritage Values

The natural heritage values in Carp Lake Park are described below and are separated into aquatic and terrestrial ecosystem components.

2.2.1 Aquatic Ecosystem Values

Water

Carp Lake Park includes all of Carp Lake, nearby War Lake, numerous smaller lakes and streams and the eight kilometre long waterway between Carp Lake and War Lake that forms the beginning of the McLeod River. These water resources play a significant role in ecosystem integrity and are important components of the natural, cultural and recreation values of the park. The McLeod River between Carp Lake and War Lake is important as a Rainbow Trout spawning area. The scenic War Falls is located just downstream from War Lake and can be viewed along an established trail.



Wetlands

Interior wetland ecosystems generally include marshes, fens, and swamps. Analogous with the Nechako Lowlands Ecoregion, Carp Lake Park is dotted with wetland ecosystems. These wetlands are important habitat for a variety of species including waterfowl, migratory birds, fish, and Moose. Wetlands in the sub-boreal spruce ecosystem are considered to be one of the most important breeding centres in the world for the Barrow's Goldeneye (BC Ministry of Forests, 1998).

Fish

The numerous lakes and streams within Carp Lake Park support several naturally reproducing fish species including: Rainbow Trout, Burbot, Northern Pikeminnow, White Sucker and Red Side Shiner. The McLeod River between Carp Lake and War Lake is an important Rainbow Trout spawning area.

Occasionally, Bull Trout may be found in the upper stretches of the McLeod River downstream of War Falls. Bull Trout are not immediately threatened or endangered, but are considered to be a species of special concern due to characteristics that make them particularly sensitive to human activities and natural events. As a result, Bull Trout are sensitive to changes in temperature, substrate composition, and habitat complexity (Rieman and McIntyre, 1993; cited in Cannings and Ptolemy, 1998).

2.2.2 Terrestrial Ecosystem Values

Carp Lake Park protects the largest contiguous area of moist cool Sub-boreal Spruce Biogeoclimatic Zone (SBSmk1) in the province and contributes well over half of the total currently represented within the provincial protected areas system. The entire park is within the Nechako Lowlands Ecoregion and provides significant representation of its typical glacial features (specifically drumlins and eskers), contributing over half of the total currently protected within the provincial protected areas system.

Geology

Carp Lake Park lies within the Nechako Plateau, a component of British Columbia's vast interior plateau. Over most of the area around Carp Lake, the Nechako Plateau is covered by glacial drift materials or till. Most of the deposits are thought to be less than eight metres deep but some deeper depressions are thought to be overlain with up to 100 to 150 metres of material. Because of these extensive glacial deposits, bedrock exposures are sparse and most areas of the park are well drained. The only exceptions are the old melt-water channels from receding glaciers, which tend to contain more fine textured sands and organic soils. Bog conditions prevail in these channels and in other low lying depressions.

The many drumlin features in the park are a result of the last glacial advance rearranging the glacial till into elongated hills. These landform features provide evidence to the direction of the last ice flow. Other prominent landform features include Carp Hill, a resistance mass of rhyolite and dacite rock, and an esker complex found south of Carp Lake by Esker Bay.

Vegetation

Vegetation communities are the basis for most wildlife habitat and contribute to the visual and recreation attractions of the park. Most of Carp Lake Park falls within the Sub-boreal Spruce Biogeoclimatic Zone. A small area of the park falls within the Engelmann Spruce/Sub-alpine Fir zone. Characteristic tree species of these zones include lodgepole pine, white spruce, subalpine fir, trembling aspen, paper birch, black cottonwood, scrub

birch, mountain alder and Sitka alder. The climax forest cover appears to be dominated by white spruce and subalpine fir. Natural disturbance processes such as fire, disease and insect outbreaks, are fundamental to maintaining the complex forest ecosystems.

Wildlife

Moose are the most prevalent large mammal in the park. They feed regularly in the marshes and waterways around Carp Lake and the cows often seek refuge from predators on islands during calving season. Other mammals found in and around Carp Lake include Grizzly Bear, Black Bear, Wolves, Wolverine and Porcupine.

Waterfowl are also common particularly during migrations and nesting seasons. As many as seventeen nesting pairs of Common Loon have been counted on Carp Lake. Ruffed Grouse are commonly seen, particularly on the islands.



2.3 Cultural Values

Carp Lake has long been used by aboriginal people and continues to be important to First Nations for food, social and ceremonial purposes. These traditional uses are recognized as important values to conserve and protect. Over one hundred archaeological sites have been recorded around Carp Lake and only half of the lakeshore has been surveyed. Of particular importance is the First Nation trail used by the fur traders as a supply route between Fort McLeod and Fort St. James. This trail is referred to as the Duzcho Trail in recognition of the original aboriginal route.



When Simon Fraser returned to Fort McLeod in 1806, he made the first known documentation of First Nations at Carp Lake. In his journal he stated that James McDougall, "...informed us that several of the Carriers are daily expected here, and that all the Indians of this place are at the Carp Lake, where there are immense numbers of fish of the Carp kind¹, ..." (Lamb, 1966). The aboriginal people referred to in Simon

¹ "Fish of the carp kind" likely refers to the Northern Pikeminnow.

Fraser's journal are likely ancestors of the present day Tse'khene Indian Band (McLeod Lake Indian Band) and Nak'azdli Indian Band. The following provides a brief history of the Tse'khene and Nak'azdli people as provided by these First Nations and from their perspective.

A brief history of the Tse'khene people

In order to understand the history of the Tse'khene people of McLeod Lake, it is necessary to examine the history of the larger Sekani Nation. The Sekani are a western extension of the Athapaskan speaking people of northern Canada (MLIB, 2009). They are traditionally a society of nomadic hunters and were known to have lived in smaller family groups, or bands, spreading out across the territory where they would be free to migrate in harmony with the seasonally available resources (Denniston, 1981). Before European contact, four main Sekani groups existed. These included: the Tse'khene, the Yutuwichan, the Sasuchan, and the Tseloni. The Yutuwichan (meaning "Lake People") and the Tse'khene (meaning "People of the Rocks") are said to have eventually gathered at McLeod Lake where they were more readily able to access the Fort McLeod trading post (Jenness, 1937).

Today, the Sekani that settled in and around McLeod Lake are formally known as the McLeod Lake Indian Band or Tse'khene. They are a highly independent, business-oriented people. The band has established several successful band managed businesses and reached an agreement with government adhering to Treaty 8 in 2000 (MLIB, 2009). Carp Lake remains an important area within the Tse'khene traditional territory.

A brief history of the Nak'azdli people

In order to understand the history of the Nak'azdli people, it is necessary to understand the history of the larger Carrier Nation. The Carrier people or Dakelh, meaning people who "travel upon water," are Athapaskan speaking peoples. They live in north central British Columbia extending from the Coast Mountains to the Rocky Mountains. They have a well-established social and governance system called the Bahl'ats. In Bahl'ats, the social structure and territorial boundaries are affirmed, disputes are settled, and wealth distributed (CSTC, 2007).

A key component of the Bahl'ats system is the keyoh. A keyoh is a geographically specific land base where the family head or hereditary chief is the steward of that piece of land (CSTC, 2007). Carp Lake is within the Julian Family Keyoh and the Julians are members of the Nak'azdli Indian Band. The Julians also hold trapline rights in much of the park. As such, the area around Carp Lake has important cultural value to the Julian family and Nak'azdli Indian Band.

Historic Duzcho Trial/ Fort McLeod-Fort St. James Historic Trail

The historic trail between Fort McLeod and Fort St. James was part of a network of aboriginal trails prior to the arrival of Europeans to the area. Figures 2 and 3 show the approximate location of the trail through Carp Lake Park. The trail was known as the

Duzcho Trail meaning “big log” or “big log jam”. This trail was used as a trade and communication route linking the Carrier and Sekani people. After the establishment of the first fur trading posts west of the Rockies at McLeod Lake and Stewart Lake in 1805 and 1806 respectively, the trail became an important overland route linking Fort McLeod and Fort St. James. There are a number of references to the trail in early fur traders’ journals and winter travel using dog sled was a common means of travel.

Cultural Use

Many of the archaeological sites in Carp Lake Park are found in relatively close proximity to the lakeshore and to the historic trail between Fort McLeod and Fort St. James. This appears to suggest that Carp Lake was an important seasonal stopping ground for food and as a trade route between the Carrier and Sekani First Nations. Cache pits are the most common archaeological feature but other features include a fish weir, a stone cairn, and habitation sites. Today, the natural resources in the park remain an integral part of the food, social and ceremonial harvesting and cultural activities of local First Nations.

2.4 Recreation Values

There are a number of outdoor recreation opportunities such as boating, camping, hunting, hiking, and scenic viewing. There are vehicle accessible campsites on Carp Lake and War Lake, along with three island campsites on Carp Lake (White Spruce, Spirea, and Balsam islands). The island campsites are purposely left in a semi-rustic condition so visitors can enjoy the natural environment setting. Visitor use in the park is currently well below the peak, which occurred in 1977 with 6,903 parties recorded. The annual number of people visiting the park between 2000 and 2016 has stayed relatively constant at approximately 1,500 parties per year. This is primarily due to a variety of factors, including an increase in similar local recreation opportunities, changes in recreational trends (e.g. larger recreational vehicles), and access along the Carp Lake Road.

Carp Lake Park provides a high quality angling experience in the central interior of British Columbia and angling is the main reason visitors come to the park. Rainbow Trout is by far the most popular angler catch. Angling is the single most popular recreation activity within the park.

A small network of maintained trails is available between the Carp Lake Campground to Rainbow Lake, continuing along the McLeod River to War Lake and the scenic War Falls. Another maintained trail is provided from the Carp Lake Campground south along the lake to a sandy beach. As the condition of the Duzcho Trail improves as a result of restoration efforts (e.g. clearing and marking the trail), more day hiking opportunities may be available.

The main attraction to Carp Lake Park in the winter is ice fishing. A user maintained cabin in Kettle Bay is provided for overnight stays. Winter users must travel the unplowed FSRs to access the park and there are no formal staging areas outside of the

park. As such, winter recreation opportunities are limited. Local residents are the main users in the winter and typically access the park by snowmobile.

2.5 Climate Change

The climate trend in the sub-boreal interior is typified by warmer temperatures and more precipitation. The increase in precipitation is relatively constant throughout the year, whereas the increase in temperature is most noticeable in the winter months. What this means for the species and ecosystems in Carp Lake Park is not fully understood. Research indicates that generalist species, or those that can more easily adapt, are more likely to have better survival than species that are slow to adapt or require very specific habitat requirements. Additionally, natural disturbance patterns (e.g., wildfire, drought, flood, insect infestation) may become more frequent as a result of the above-mentioned environmental changes.

3.0 Management Direction

3.1 Management Objectives and Strategies

3.1.1 Aquatic and Terrestrial Ecosystem

As is typical in the sub-boreal spruce ecosystem, the park contains dense forests on gently rolling hills mixed with numerous wetlands and provides habitat for a variety of plant and wildlife species. Moose is the most common large ungulate and wetlands support a wide variety of waterfowl. Since Carp Lake Park protects a large contiguous tract of the sub-boreal spruce ecosystem, species and ecosystems have a higher probability of being healthy and naturally sustaining. This allows for a greater opportunity for species and ecosystems to adapt to pressures such as climate change.

Aquatic Ecosystems

While the McLeod River between Carp Lake and War Lake is an important Rainbow Trout spawning area, further surveys are necessary to understand the importance of other creeks and waterways to fish resources.

There was concern during the 1980s that angling pressure was having a negative effect on the population status of Rainbow Trout in Carp Lake; however, a creel survey conducted in 2004 showed that Rainbow Trout appeared healthy and there were no apparent problems with the productivity of the lake (Clarke, 2005). Current visitor numbers in the park are well below numbers in the 1970s and early 1980s, meaning that pressures on the fish populations have decreased. If visitor numbers rebound, evaluation of angling pressure on the Rainbow Trout population would be considered a priority.

The population status of Burbot is unknown at Carp Lake. During the 1991 creel survey, an estimated 252 Burbot were removed from Carp Lake. Burbot were not assessed in the 2004 creel survey. Without a population status for Burbot in Carp Lake, or current

creel survey data, it is a challenge to determine if fishing pressure is impacting the population. Conducting a creel survey and determining the status and health of Burbot is a high priority.

Terrestrial Ecosystems

Natural disturbance processes, such as fire, disease and insect outbreaks, are fundamental to maintaining complex forest ecosystems. However, management actions are sometimes required within parks to reduce risk of catastrophic wildfire which can threaten public safety, recreation infrastructure and adjacent land values (e.g., commercial forest values). In recent years, this risk has increased due to an increase in fuel loading caused by the removal of fire from the ecosystem and insect outbreaks.

The Fire Management Plan for Carp Lake Park (2000) assessed the fire hazard throughout the park and the extent of the bark beetle outbreak. The plan identified that a short-term goal should be to maintain as much old-growth spruce as possible, while a long-term goal should be to implement a stand-conversion program in order to achieve a mixture of seral stages. Three areas of the park were identified for potential prescribed fires. Further assessment is required to determine if prescribed fire is a feasible management option. A detailed fire history study will help to understand a natural range of seral stage distribution in the park.

Management Objective	Management Strategies
<p>Maintain the long-term natural diversity of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor adjacent land use activities and access points to identify issues that may impact park values. • Liaise with First Nations, provincial natural resource ministries and the Fraser-Fort George Regional District to ensure park values are integrated into adjacent land use planning. • Ensure best practices for boat re-fueling and camping are clearly communicated to park visitors. • Conduct a wetland classification overview to identify highly productive wetland habitat. • Conduct surveys of the creeks flowing into Carp Lake to gain a better understanding of fish spawning habitat. • Conduct a detailed fire history study that extends beyond the park boundary. Based on this study, establish a natural range of seral stage and species distribution within Carp Lake Park. Once a natural range of seral stage and species distribution has been identified, work closely with the Ministry responsible for forestry to implement measures to maintain these targets. Consider working with a university or college

Management Objective	Management Strategies
	to complete this assessment.
Increase knowledge of Burbot population, distribution and health in Carp Lake.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate Burbot into periodic creel surveys to understand angler effort and exploitation patterns in Carp Lake. Creel survey questions should include assessment of Burbot angling effort with attention being paid to developing more accurate survey methods (i.e., set-line count surveys). As informed from angler use studies, conduct a population assessment to determine status of Burbot in Carp Lake.
Gain a better understanding of the effect of climate change on species and ecosystems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and monitor key environmental elements and the rate at which they are changing in Carp Lake Park such as snow depth, ice break-up, and creek temperatures. Identify species sensitive to the potential negative effects of climate change and identify options for managing those effects.

3.1.2 Cultural Values

It is important to ensure the archaeological sites and traditional use sites are conserved and protected within the park. As such, four Cultural Zones have been established to highlight areas where greater emphasis on minimizing potential impacts to cultural heritage resources is required. It should also be noted that even though there are no recorded archaeological sites in the Carp Lake and War Lake campgrounds, new sites may be identified in the future and impact mitigation measures may be needed at that time.

The historic trail between Fort McLeod and Fort St. James is overgrown and there is interest to re-establish the trail by recognizing and interpreting the pre- and post-colonial significance of the trail in British Columbia. Figures 2 and 3 show the approximate location of the trail through Carp Lake Park. A portion of the historic trail goes through IR 3, therefore an alternate route should be considered around Sekani Bay. During the management planning process, it was suggested that the Duzcho Trail be used for a dog sled race. Although only a portion of the trail is in Carp Lake Park, BC Parks supports the concept.

Management Objective	Management Strategies
Work closely with First Nations in managing and protecting the natural and cultural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to conduct research with First Nations to increase the knowledge and understanding of pre-contact history of the area.

Management Objective	Management Strategies
within the park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure First Nations are involved in the ongoing management of the park and project specific management and planning wherever possible. • Work closely with First Nations to protect the cultural heritage features in the park, putting a high priority on monitoring and mitigating impacts of recreation on the Carp Lake islands. • Where appropriate, develop educational and information material on the cultural heritage features in the park focusing on the themes of traditional use, the historic trail and trade. • Establish a monitoring program to assess impacts on known cultural heritage features. • Implement measures to protect cultural heritage features where needed.
Re-establish the Duzcho Trail and interpret its historic significance to Northern British Columbia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work closely with First Nations and British Columbia Recreation Sites and Trails to re-establish the historic Duzcho Trail. • Consider working with Parks Canada, First Nations and British Columbia Recreation Sites and Trails to seek National Historic Site Designation from Fort St. James along the trail to Fort McLeod. • Develop and display cultural heritage and trail use information at key locations along the trail especially around the campground at Carp Lake.

3.1.3 Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

The outdoor recreation values in Carp Lake Park are reflective of the park’s natural setting. The abundance of fish and wildlife and the expansive lakes and waterways, together with the facilities, recreation activities and site location (30 kilometres away from the main highway), allow visitors to enjoy a semi-remote natural environment experience.

Access

The park access road is occasionally used by logging trucks. It is important to liaise with the Ministry responsible for forestry and forest companies, and to post signs on the access road to promote visitor safety.

An old logging road through Carp Lake Park and MacKinnon Esker Ecological Reserve was the main access to Carp Lake from Fort St. James. This access route is overgrown but will remain as a multi-use trail. The ecological reserve boundary is recommended to

be modified to remove the route and have it added to Carp Lake Park (see MacKinnon Esker Ecological Reserve Management Plan).

Floatplane landings and take-offs are allowable uses on Carp Lake.

Camping

Vehicle accessible campsites are available at the War Lake and Carp Lake campgrounds. In addition, there are water accessible campsites located on White Spruce, Balsam and Spirea islands.

Remnants of an old Forest Service recreation site are located at Munlo Lake, 11 kilometres from the Carp Lake campground along the multi-use trail between Carp Lake and the Mackinnon Esker Ecological Reserve. This site could be developed as an alternate camping and angling destination should there be a need to increase recreation opportunities.

Day Hiking

A small network of maintained trails is available between the Carp Lake Campground and Rainbow Lake. This trail continues along the McLeod River trail to War Falls. Another maintained trail is provided from the Carp Lake Campground south along the lake to a sandy beach. As the condition of the Duzcho Trail improves, more day hiking opportunities will be available.

Angling

Providing quality angling experiences is a high priority for the management of Carp Lake Park. These experiences will be provided while encouraging sustainable use and stewardship.

At Carp Lake, in order to avoid bear/human conflicts as a result of fish carcasses, a fish carcass disposal program is required.

Hunting

Hunting is an allowable use within Carp Lake Park. The entire park is within Wildlife Management Unit 7-24. For safety reasons, hunting is not permitted within 400 metres on either side of a park road including campground roads.

Boating

Motorized boating is an allowable use on Carp Lake and War Lake. A concrete boat launch is provided along with a trailer parking lot at Carp Lake and a gravel boat launch is provided at War Lake. There are also opportunities for canoeing, kayaking and small boat sailing.

Horse Use

Currently, there is no horse use permitted in Carp Lake Park. Future horse use may be considered on the Duzcho Trail and the multi-use trail between Carp Lake and

Mackinnon Esker Ecological Reserve provided appropriate measures are taken to mitigate impacts.

Mountain Biking

Mountain biking is appropriate on park roads, the multi-use trail between Carp Lake and MacKinnon Esker Ecological Reserve, and on the Rainbow Lake and Carp Lake Campground trails.

Winter Recreation

Snowmobile use in Carp Lake Park is permitted on unplowed park roadways, frozen waterways and the multi-use trail between Carp Lake and MacKinnon Esker Ecological Reserve.

Commercial Recreation

Commercial recreation activities considered appropriate in Carp Lake Park include guide outfitting, angle guiding, and other guiding services consistent with outdoor adventure tourism.

Management Objective	Management Strategies
Encourage sustainable use of the fishery in Carp Lake.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote family angling events in conjunction with established events such as Parks Day and B.C.’s Family Fishing Weekend and use these events to educate the public on sustainable fishing practices. • Conduct angling compliance checks as a means to monitor angling use. • Evaluate the need to conduct creel surveys if attendance increases to 4,000 parties per year.
Provide a variety of compatible and safe outdoor recreation opportunities to diversify visitor experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that adequate direction signs and information appropriate to the anticipated users are provided on all trails. • Implement backcountry recreation impact monitoring (BRIM) activities on the island campsites and promote the stewardship and use of the island campsites through education and information material. • Ensure BC Parks’ impact assessment process is used when considering new recreation opportunities that are compatible with the park objectives. • Liaise with the Ministry responsible for Forest Service Roads and post signs on the Carp Lake Access Road to ensure visitors are aware when the road is being used by logging trucks. • Follow the direction provided in section 3.2.2 of this

Management Objective	Management Strategies
	<p>management plan pertaining to specific recreation and tourism activities (<i>Access, Camping, Day Hiking, Angling, Hunting, Boating, Horse Use, Mountain Biking, Winter Recreation, and Commercial Recreation</i>).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage dog sled use of the Duzcho trail, including a potential annual race between Fort St. James and Fort McLeod provided: (a) the trail is re-established to a standard appropriate to sustain the type of use; (b) the cultural heritage values are protected; and (c) the necessary approvals are in place inside and outside of the park.

3.2 Zoning Plan

In general terms, a zoning plan divides a park into logical management units within which certain activities/uses are permitted and a particular set of management objectives apply. Zoning is often used to physically separate incompatible activities or uses within the park and provides visitors and managers with a quick visual representation and appreciation of how a particular park is managed. Zones are designed to reflect the physical environment, existing patterns of use and the desired level of management and development in a given management unit.

Carp Lake has three types of management zones. The objective for each zone and a brief discussion on the size, zone boundary and management intent is described below. A zoning map is provided in Figure 3.

3.2.1 Carp Lake/War Lake Intensive Recreation Zone

Zone Description

This zone is 267 hectares in size and makes up 0.7 % of the park. The boundary is defined by the footprint of existing recreation infrastructure, including park roads and surrounding area. Management actions will be geared toward ensuring public safety, maintaining natural features, and delivering quality recreation services. It is also important to minimize potential impacts to cultural heritage values by restricting use to hardened areas.

Objective and Management Intent

To provide vehicle-accessible outdoor recreation opportunities in a natural setting.

3.2.2 Carp Lake Nature Recreation Zone

Zone Description

This zone is 36,586 hectares in size and makes up 95.7 % of the park. It covers the majority of the park, including waterbodies, and emphasizes scenic values and backcountry recreation opportunities in a largely undisturbed natural setting. Management actions will be oriented to maintaining a natural environment and high quality recreation experiences (primarily angling).

Objective and Management Intent

To protect scenic values and provide nature recreation opportunities in a largely undisturbed natural environment.

3.2.3 Carp Lake Cultural Zone

Zone Description

This zone is 1,366 hectares in size and makes up 3.6 % of the park. There are four subzones within this Cultural Zone:

- 1) McLeod River;
- 2) Carp Islands;
- 3) Carp Lake – Sekani Bay; and,
- 4) Duzcho Trail west.

These subzones highlight areas where greater emphasis on minimizing potential impacts to cultural heritage resources is required. Use on existing trails and the island campsites will continue while confining activities to hardened areas. Re-establishing and interpreting the Duzcho Trail is supported. Management actions will be oriented toward working with First Nations to maintain and conserve cultural heritage resources.

Objective and Management Intent

To recognize and protect the special cultural heritage values associated with Carp Lake and the Duzcho Trail.

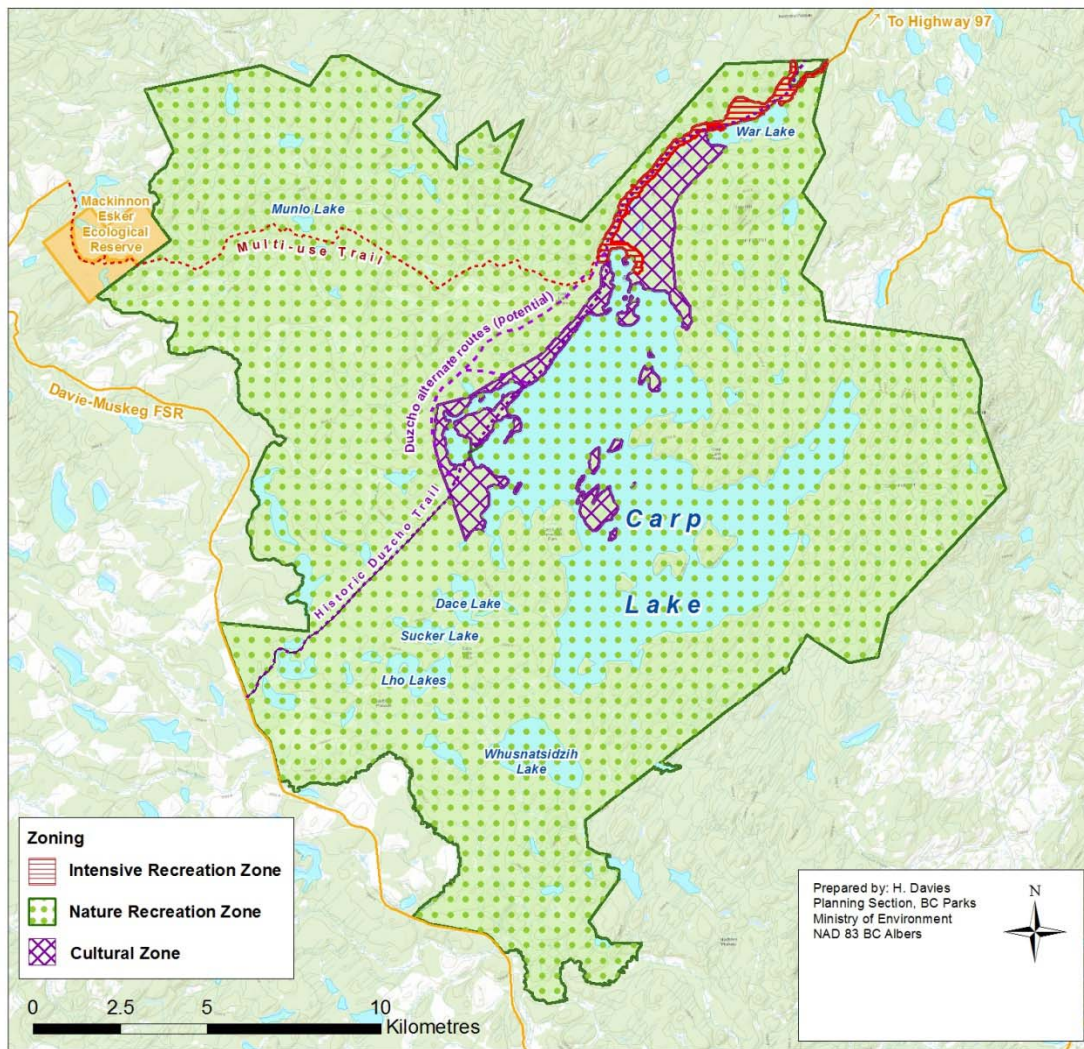


Figure 3: Zoning Map

4.0 Plan Implementation

4.1 Implementation Plan

BC Parks will seek project-specific funding and partners to implement high priority strategies. Specific projects will be evaluated for their priority in relation to the overall protected areas system. Many of the initiatives contemplated are not funded as part of core BC Parks activities so jointly seeking funds with outside partners will be a key aspect of the management plan implementation.

BC Parks uses Annual Management Plans to track issues in provincial parks and protected areas on a priority and annual basis. The issues and strategies presented in this plan will form the basis of the Annual Management Planning process for Carp Lake Park. BC Parks strives to ensure First Nations' values and inputs are reflected in the development of the Annual Management Plan for the park. Management results will be monitored against stated objectives, and work plans may be revised as part of the collaborative management process. Alternate implementation strategies for priorities not funded as part of core ministry activities may be pursued by BC Parks or its partners.

In addition to any legislation or policies highlighted in the management plan, there are numerous other provincial policies and guidelines which will be considered during management plan implementation. This includes items such as: BC Parks' policies on permitting, conservation, commercial recreation guidelines and policies, BC Parks bear-people conflict prevention plan and impact assessment processes.

4.2 High Priority Strategies

The following strategies have been identified as high priorities for implementation:

1. Conduct angling compliance checks as a means to monitor angling use.
2. As informed from angler use studies, conduct a population assessment to determine status of Burbot in Carp Lake.
3. Work closely with First Nations and British Columbia Recreation Sites and Trails to re-establish the historic Duzcho Trail.
4. Implement backcountry recreation impact monitoring (BRIM) activities on the island campsites and promote the stewardship and use of the island campsites through education and information material.
5. Where appropriate, develop educational and information material on the cultural heritage features in the park focusing on the themes of traditional use, the historic trail and trade.
6. Evaluate the need to conduct creel surveys if attendance increases to 4,000 parties per year.
7. Recommend that the road/trail be removed from the ecological reserve and added to Carp Lake Park.

4.3 Plan Assessment

In order to ensure that the management direction for Carp Lake Park remains relevant and effective, BC Parks staff will ensure that the management plan is assessed by BC Parks staff on a regular basis (i.e., at least every 5 years). Minor administrative updates may be identified and completed at any time (e.g., correct spelling errors, update protected area details where needed), and will be documented according to BC Parks guidelines.

If an internal assessment reveals that the management plan requires more significant updating or substantial new management direction is needed, a formal review by BC

Parks may be initiated to determine whether the management plan requires an amendment or if a new management plan is required.

The management plan amendment process or development of a new management plan includes an opportunity for public input.

5.0 References

BC Conservation Data Centre. 2008. BC Species and Ecosystems Explorer. BC Ministry of Environment. Victoria, B.C. Available: <http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/eswp/>.

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Jeness, Diamond. 1937. The Sekani Indians of British Columbia. Anthropological Series 20, National Museum of Canada Bulletin 84, Ottawa.

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Appendix 1: Appropriate Use Table

The following table summarizes existing and potential future uses in Carp Lake Park that are and are not appropriate in each zone. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all uses that may be considered in this protected area in the future.

Please note that appropriate uses may be geographically restricted (i.e., only allowed in certain areas of Carp Lake Park) or are only appropriate at certain times of the year. Please ensure that you are well informed of any use restrictions as indicated in the table. It is important to review relevant sections of the management plan when interpreting the table.

Appropriate Use Table Legend		
N	Not an appropriate use	The use is not appropriate in the indicated zone. If the use currently exists but the management planning process has determined that the use is no longer appropriate in all or part of the protected area, the management plan will include strategies for ending the activity (e.g., phasing out, closing).
Y	May be an appropriate use	Some level or extent of this use may be appropriate in the zone indicated. The management plan may provide guidance on the appropriate level of use and may address specific restrictions or planned enhancements (e.g. capacity, designated areas for a particular activity, party size, time of year, etc.). For new or expanded uses, this symbol indicates that the use <u>may be</u>

Appropriate Use Table Legend		
		considered for further evaluation. The appropriateness of some activities may not be confirmed until a further assessment (e.g., BC Parks Impact Assessment Process) or evaluation process (e.g., park use permit adjudication) is completed.
N/A	Not an applicable use in this zone	It is not feasible for the use to take place in this zone (e.g., mooring buoys in a terrestrial zone).

Activity/Facility	Carp Lake/War Lake Intensive Recreation Zone	Carp Lake Nature Recreation Zone	Carp Lake Cultural Zone	Comments
Recreational Activities/Uses				
Aircraft Landing/Takeoff	N/A	Y	N/A	Floatplane access on Carp Lake is allowed.
Boating (human powered and electrical)	N/A	Y	N/A	
Boating (combustion engine)	N/A	Y	N/A	
Camping (designated sites)	Y	Y	Y	
Camping (wilderness style-undesigned sites)	N	N	N	
Fish Stocking	N/A	N	N/A	No stocking
Fishing	N/A	Y	N/A	
Hiking	Y	Y	Y	
Hunting	N	Y	Y	Entire park is WMU 7-24. Hunting is not permitted within 400 metres on either side of a park road including campground roads.
Commercial Guiding (non-hunting)	Y	Y	Y	
Land-based Mechanized Activity (e.g., mountain biking)	Y	Y	Y	On existing park roads and trails
Land-based Motorized Activity (e.g., 4x4, motorcycles, ATV-does not include snowmobiles or aircraft landings)	N	N	N	
Horse and Pack Animal Use	Y	Y	Y	May be considered on the Duzcho Trail and the multi-use trail between Carp Lake and Mackinnon Esker ER
Snowmobiling	Y	Y	Y	Restricted to unplowed park

Activity/Facility	Carp Lake/War Lake Intensive Recreation Zone	Carp Lake Nature Recreation Zone	Carp Lake Cultural Zone	Comments
				roadways, frozen waterways and the multi-use trail between Carp Lake and MacKinnon Esker ER
Recreation Facilities/Infrastructure				
Boat Launches	Y	N	N	Existing only
Boat Wharves and Docks	Y	N	N	Existing only
Cabins, Huts and Shelters (as defined in the Fixed Roof Accommodation Policy)	Y	Y	N	Existing only. No new facilities in the park, except to mitigate impacts to park values, or for BC Parks management purposes.
Lodges (as defined in the Fixed Roof Accommodation Policy)	N	N	N	
Administrative buildings and compounds	Y	N	N	
Campgrounds (vehicle accessed))	Y	N	N	
Picnic Areas (vehicle accessed)	Y	N	N	
Designated Camping Sites (not vehicle accessed)	Y	Y	Y	
Parking Lots	Y	N	N	
Visitor information buildings	Y	N	N	Information shelters only.
Roads	Y	N	N	
Trails	Y	Y	Y	
Other Activities/Infrastructure				
Commercial Filming	Y	Y	Y	
Communication Sites and Towers	Y	N	N	Small portable communication towers may be permitted for park management purposes or for park operator communications
Grazing	N	N	N	
Trapping	Y	Y	Y	
Utility Corridors	N	N	N	