

**ORIGINAL PURPOSE** To preserve representative Interior Douglas-Fir ecosystems, together with a chain of small lakes and associated wetlands

#### OVERVIEW

<b>Date established:</b>	10 Dec. 1981	<b>Location:</b>	13 km S of Vernon, E of Kalamalka Lake
<b>ORC #:</b>	3108		
<b>Map number:</b>	82 L/3	<b>Latitude:</b>	50°09'N
		<b>Longitude:</b>	119°19'W

<b>Total Area:</b>	553 ha	<b>Elevation:</b>	450-870 m
<b>Land:</b>	541 ha		
<b>Lake:</b>	12 ha		

**Access:** Vehicular access south from Cosens Bay or north from Oyama on four-wheel-drive track which follows transmission line right-of-way along west boundary. Permission is needed to cross gated private or leased land north and south of the reserve.

**Biogeoclimatic Zone:** Interior Douglas-Fir (IDF)  
**Biogeoclimatic Variants:** IDFxh1 Okanagan Very Dry Hot; IDFmw1 Shuswap Moist Warm  
**Ecosections:** Northern Okanagan Basin; Northern Okanagan Highlands  
**Region:** Okanagan  
**Management Area:** North Okanagan

#### COMPOSITION

**Physical:** The reserve lies on the moderately rugged western slopes of the Grizzly Hills. The major physical feature is a narrow, relatively straight, sometimes canyon-like valley the length of the reserve. This appears to be a structural fault further eroded by glacial meltwater. A chain of six elongated lakes, two of which have three basins separated by wetlands, lie in the canyon bottom. Drainage through them is to the south. The valley bottom is narrow and steep cliffs occur on both sides of some lakes.

**Biological:** Coniferous forest covers most of the reserve. Small areas dominated by ponderosa pine, sumac and bluebunch wheatgrass occur on south-facing slopes at the south end of the reserve. Mixed stands of Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine cover most of the remaining area. Common understory species on southern exposures are common and Rocky Mountain juniper, kinnikinnick, arrow-leaved balsam-root, bluebunch wheatgrass, and Wallace's selaginella. Soopolallie, falsebox and pinegrass are abundant on north-facing slopes. Trembling aspen and Douglas maple occur in moist draws. Pondweed communities occur in the lakes, and cattail-bulrush stands between several lakes. Small areas dominated by paper birch, western redcedar, or a mixture of these occur in the valley bottom. Fifty-eight species of lichens, nine liverworts, 47 mosses, 84 fungi and 318 vascular plants have been recorded.

Fifty-six species of birds have been noted. Ring-necked and mallard ducks and Canada geese nest at the lakes. Mammals include Mule and White-tailed Deer,

Black Bear, Beaver, Muskrat, Coyote, Red Squirrel, chipmunk, and voles.  
 Interesting reptiles here are the Northern Alligator Lizard, Western Blue Racer, Rattlesnake, and Painted Turtle.

**MANAGEMENT CONCERNS**

SIGNIFICANT SPECIES	BC LIST STATUS	COSEWIC STATUS	CF PRIORITY
Canyon Wren	Blue listed	Not At Risk (1992)	4
Painted Turtle pop. 2	Blue listed	Special Concern (2006)	2
Racer	Blue listed	Special Concern (2004)	2
Western Rattlesnake	Blue listed	Threatened (2004)	2
White-throated Swift			4

**THREATS**

**Climate Change:** The wetlands and small lakes in this reserve may be subject to drying and/or increased water temperature and associated changes in species assemblage. Changes in water quality may also result from altered hydrology, warmer water and increased sedimentary deposition. This, too, would alter the community composition.

**Forest health:** Fire suppression has resulted in forest ingrowth and an accumulation of fuel load.

**Recreation:** A rock climbing route is being developed through the reserve.  
 User-created trails for mountain biking may be affecting the habitat. Mountain biking is allowed, but trail building is not.

**RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES**

A comprehensive natural history report is available.

**SCIENTIFIC NAMES OF SPECIES MENTIONED IN THE COUGAR CANYON ER ACCOUNT**

**Flora**

- aspen, trembling (*Populus tremuloides*)
- balsamroot, arrowleaf (*Balsamorhiza sagittata*)
- birch, paper (*Betula papyrifera*)
- cattail, common (*Typha latifolia*)
- Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*)
- falsebox (*Paxistima myrsinites*)
- juniper, common (*Juniperus communis*)
- juniper, Rocky Mountain (*Juniperus scopulorum*)
- kinnikinnick (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*)
- maple, Douglas (*Acer glabrum* var. *glabrum*)
- pine, ponderosa (*Pinus ponderosa*)
- pinegrass (*Calamagrostis rubescens*)
- pondweed (*Potamogeton* spp.)
- redcedar, western (*Thuja plicata*)
- selaginella, Wallace's (*Selaginella wallacei*)

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soopolallie (*Shepherdia canadensis*)  
sumac, smooth (*Rhus glabra*)  
wheatgrass, bluebunch (*Pseudoroegneria spicata*)

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**Fauna**

Bear, American Black (*Ursus americanus*)  
Chipmunk (*Neotamias* spp.)  
Coyote (*Canis latrans*)  
Deer, Mule (*Odocoileus hemionus*)  
Deer, White-tailed (*Odocoileus virginianus*)  
Duck, Ring-necked (*Athya collaris*)  
Goose, Canada (*Branta Canadensis*)  
Lizard, Northern Alligator (*Elgaria coerulea*)  
Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)  
Muskrat, Common (*Ondatra zibethicus*)  
Racer (*Coluber constrictor*)  
Rattlesnake, Western (*Crotalus oreganus*)  
Squirrel, Red (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*)  
Swift, White-throated (*Aeronautes saxatalis*)  
Turtle, Western Painted, Intermountain – Rocky Mountain population (*Chrysemys picta pop.2*)  
Vole, Red-backed (*Myodes* spp.)  
Wren, Canyon (*Catherpes mexicanus*)