

DRY GULCH PROVINCIAL PARK

PURPOSE STATEMENT AND ZONING PLAN

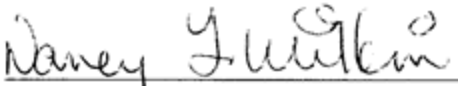
February 2003

Approved by:



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Date: 13-02-03



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Date: 25-02-03

DRY GULCH PROVINCIAL PARK Purpose Statement and Zoning Plan

Primary Role

The **primary** role of Dry Gulch Park is to contribute to a rare mixed forest and grassland habitat which also serves as an important wildlife corridor within the East Kootenay Trench Ecosection.

Within the Rocky Mountain Trench, resort and agricultural development have dramatically reduced winter range for ungulates, especially for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep. These ungulates prefer areas with low precipitation and south-facing grasslands, such as those contained within Dry Gulch Provincial Park.

The summer migration of sheep, elk and deer from lower elevations in the Trench to higher alpine areas is further facilitated by contiguous, undeveloped sections of open canopy Douglas-fir and stream habitat. The park, although small in size, plays an integral role in maintaining this connectivity and is the second largest contributor of IDFdm2 north of Columbia Lake.

Secondary Role

The **secondary** role is to maintain recreation and nature appreciation opportunities in a serene open forest and grassland setting, all within close proximity to a popular tourist highway route.

The park is the first road accessible provincial park traveling south on Hwy 93/95 from Alberta. The location allows for an excellent opportunity to introduce non-residents to the provincial park system. Furthermore, it complements the eleven other provincial parks that enhance the tourism travel routes in southeastern British Columbia, which in turn, supports tourist destination opportunities in local communities.

With its easterly boundary shared with Kootenay National Park, the park provides overnight accommodation for visitors that have come to enjoy the many recreational opportunities of the national park and the Radium Hot Springs area.

Known Management Issues	Response
Mountain sheep habitat at risk due to lack of natural fire.	Work with adjacent Kootenay National Park to prepare a management/strategy plan to restore sheep habitat.
Conflict with parks policy in terms of park providing water for users down stream.	Develop a strategic plan to address issue.
Non-native invasive plants (spotted knapweed) threatening natural resources.	Strategy required to address control of invasive species such as spotted knapweed.
Unknown ecological values associated with stream that flows through park.	Conduct an overview/assessment of the stream focusing on species at risk.

Known Management Issues	Response
Recreational significance of the park unknown for the area.	Assessment and future management options required.
Ecological connection and role to Kootenay National Park unknown.	Work with Parks Canada to assess the impact of facilities and associated use on the ecological resources. Prepare a management objective.

Zoning

Intensive Recreation (approximately 5 ha or 17% of the park)

Objective: To provide for a variety of readily accessible, facility-oriented outdoor recreation opportunities.

Natural Environment (approximately 24 ha or 83% of the park)

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

Conservation

- Representation
- ecosection Total PA system representation within East Kootenay Trench is very low (0.68%). Dry Gulch contributes minimally to the total protected area (0.94%).
- biogeoclimatic subzone / variant Minor contributor to a very under-represented subzone/variant in the PA system; <1% of IDF dm2 protected; Dry Gulch contributes 1% of overall protected area representation of the IDF dm2. Only one other PA (Burges and James Gadsden) has IDFdm2 representation north of Columbia Lake within the East Kootenay Trench.
- Special Feature Cumulative effects of forest in-growth (fire suppression), noxious weeds and human development have impacted mixed forest/ grassland ecosystems. Remnant features of the natural landscape are preserved in the park and provide vital habitat for species at risk.
- Rare/Endangered Values Blue-listed bighorn sheep and red-listed open forest/grassland ecosystem.
- Scientific/Research Opportunities None identified.

Recreation

- Representation
backcountry Not applicable.
- destination None identified.
- travel corridor Small vehicle campground (26 sites) along Highway 93/95.
- local recreation None identified.
- Special Opportunities None identified.
- Education/Interpretation Opportunities None identified.

Cultural Heritage

- Representation Not yet assessed.
- Special Feature None identified.

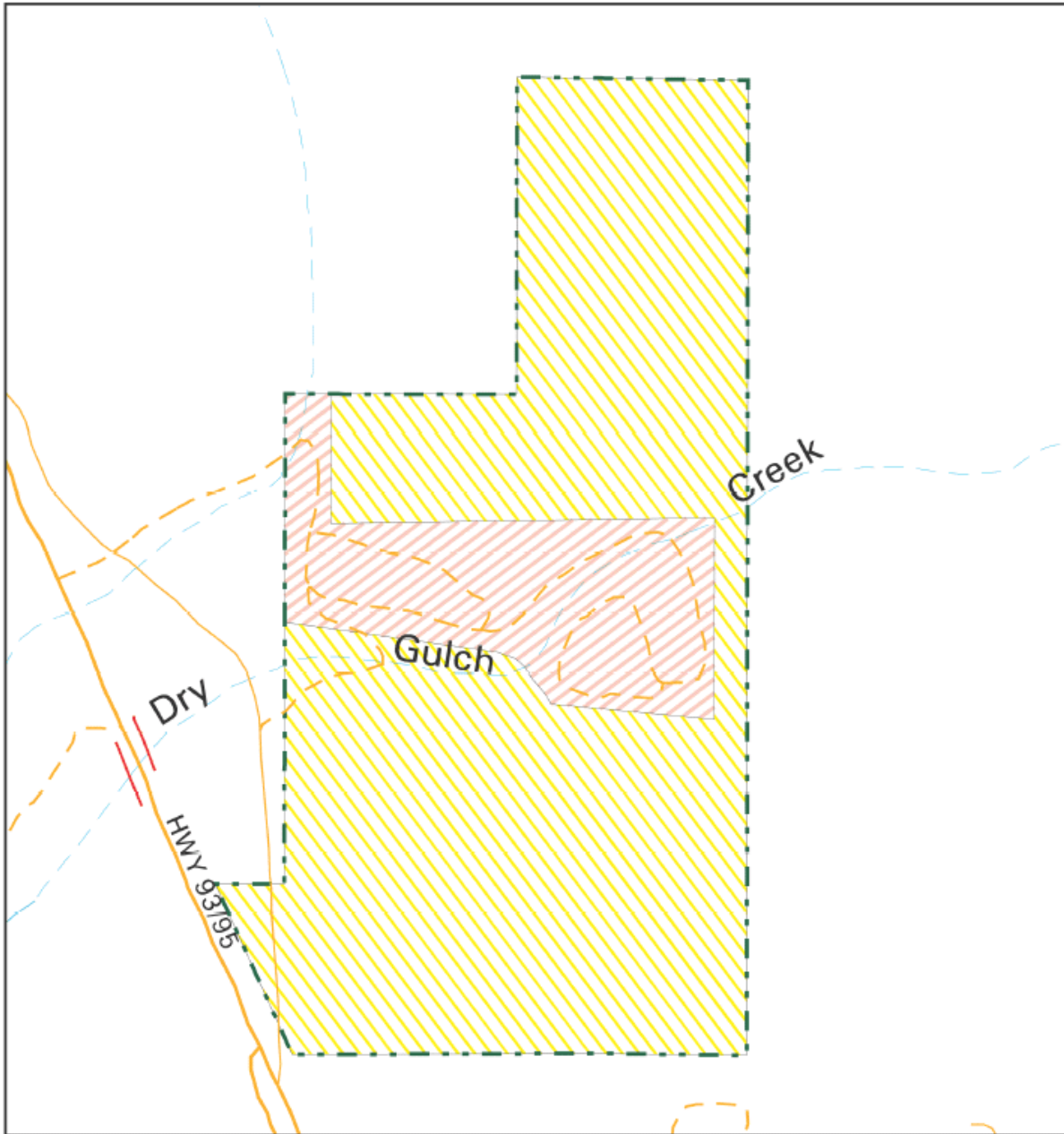
Other Management Considerations

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|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Other Designations | <input type="checkbox"/> | None identified. |
| Relationship to other PAs | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Adjacent to Kootenay National Park; 1 of 11 provincial parks that contribute to enhancing tourism travel routes in southeastern BC. |
| Co-operative Management Arrangements | <input type="checkbox"/> | None identified. |
| Partnerships | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Work with Kootenay National Park on sheep habitat restoration plan. |
| Vulnerability | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | High conservation risk given possible recreational impacts. |
| Relationship to other Strategies | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Habitat Conservation Trust Fund Project: Assess and increase populations and determine seasonal habitat preferences of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep in the East Kootenay Trench. |

Area: 29 hectares




Date of establishment: March 15, 1956

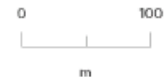
Zoning Map - Dry Gulch Provincial Park



Projection: Albers Equal Areas
Datum: NAD83



-  Intensive Recreation
-  Natural Environment
-  Protected Area Boundary



Produced in Jan 2003 for
Ministry of Water, Land and Air
Protection by MSRM, Decision
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