

Okanagan Region

MANAGEMENT DIRECTION STATEMENT

September 2009



**for Gilpin Grasslands
Provincial Park**

Front Cover photos:

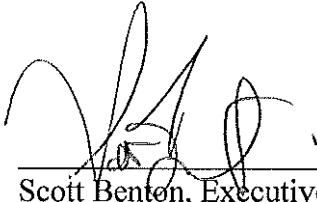
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Gilpin Grasslands Provincial Park Approvals Page

Foreword

This management direction statement for Gilpin Grasslands Provincial Park provides management direction until such time as a more detailed management plan may be prepared. The park was designated to protect a distinctive grassland ecosystem and maintain essential habitat for known provincially-listed species at risk, including blue-listed Bighorn Sheep. In addition, the park provides easily accessible recreational, educational and interpretation opportunities.

Approvals:



Scott Benton, Executive Director
Parks and Protected Areas Division

Date: September 28, 2009

Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Purpose of the Management Direction Statement.....	1
1.2 Setting and Context.....	1
2.0 Protected Area Attributes.....	5
2.1 Conservation.....	5
2.2 Tourism and Outdoor Recreation.....	6
2.3 Cultural Heritage	6
2.4 Economic Contribution.....	7
3.0 Significance in the Protected Area System	7
3.1 Special Natural Features	7
3.2 Special Recreational Features	8
3.3 Cultural Heritage Significance.....	8
4.0 Land Use, Tenures and Interests.....	9
4.1 Access.....	9
4.2 Forestry Tenure.....	9
4.3 Grazing Tenure	9
4.4 Recreation, Guide/Outfitting and Trapping Tenure	10
4.5 Utility Corridors.....	10
4.6 Road Access Permits and Water Licences	10
4.7 Adjacent Patterns of Land Use	10
4.8 Management Commitments.....	11
4.9 Private and Public Stakeholder Interests.....	12
4.10 Other Agency Interests	12
5.0 Relationship with First Nations.....	12
6.0 Relationship with Local Government	13
7.0 Park Role Statement.....	13
8.0 Priority Management Issues, Objectives and Strategies	14
9.0 Zoning Plan	16
9.1 Special Feature Zone	16
9.2 Nature Recreation Zone.....	16
10.0 Consultation and Future Planning.....	21

List of Maps/Figures

Map 1: Context.....	3
Map 2: Overview, Attributes and Proposed Facilities	4
Map 3: Zoning Map.....	18
Figure 1: Appropriate Activities and Facilities Matrix.....	19

Appendices

Appendix 1: Provincial and Federal Designations for Gilpin Grasslands Park Documented At Risk Species	22
Appendix 2: Species at Risk Nomenclature	23
Appendix 3: Road/Trail Definitions	24
Appendix 4: BC Parks Conservation and Recreation Goals.....	25
Appendix 5: BC Parks Zoning Framework	26

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Management Direction Statement

A management direction statement (MDS) provides strategic management direction for a protected area that does not have a full management plan. An MDS does not necessarily negate the need for future more detailed management plans. A management direction statement also describes protected area values, management issues and concerns; a management strategy focused on immediate priority objectives and strategies; and direction from other planning processes. While strategies may be identified in the MDS, the implementation of all these strategies is subject to funding and funding procedures. In addition, all development associated with these strategies within the park is subject to the BC Parks' Impact Assessment Policy. This management direction statement is intended to provide direction and guidelines for managing Gilpin Grasslands Provincial Park for the foreseeable future.

1.2 Setting and Context

- Gilpin Grasslands Provincial Park (788 hectares), a Class A provincial park, is located east of the City of Grand Forks (population 4,132) adjacent to Highway #3. This park was identified for protection through the West Kootenay-Boundary Land Use Plan 'Goal 2' process¹ and formally established as a provincial park in May, 2007.
- Gilpin Grasslands Provincial Park is described in Schedule D of the *Protected Areas of British Columbia Act*, which allows for continuance of the pre-existing range tenure.
- The park has significant grassland and wildlife values, including several provincially at risk arid grassland ecological communities containing numerous provincially red- and blue-listed plant and animal species. Approximately 4 kilometres of the park's southern boundary includes riparian frontage along the Kettle River.
- Situated within the Southern Okanagan Highlands Ecoregion, biogeoclimatic subzones/variants within the park include ICH mk1 – Interior Cedar Hemlock moist cool *Kootenay* variant (70.7 ha.), IDF dm1 – Interior Douglas-fir dry mild *Kettle* variant (75.5 ha.), IDF xh4 – Interior Douglas-fir very dry hot *Boundary* variant (69 ha.) and PP dh1 – Ponderosa Pine dry hot *Kettle* variant (576.3 ha.).
- The park assists in providing contiguous wildlife habitat in a region of the province where much of the land has been cultivated for agriculture and developed for residential purposes. A key characteristic of the park is that it maintains essential winter range for Bighorn Sheep and Mule Deer.

¹ The Goal 2 process was used to identify smaller sites in the West Kootenay-Boundary Land Use Plan area that protect natural, cultural and recreational features of provincial significance. Many Goal 2 areas have yet to be legally established as provincial parks or protected areas.

- The park complements natural and recreational features found in other Kootenay-Boundary provincial parks, specifically Boothman’s Oxbow, Gladstone, Granby, Christina Lake, and Jewel Lake.
- A Ministry of Environment-owned parcel (DL 587S) lies adjacent to the park. DL 587S was acquired by the Province in September, 2008, with the assistance of The Land Conservancy of BC and a third party donor.
- Prior to park establishment, prescribed burning was conducted (at least four times during a thirty year period) over the greater land base to restore and manage fire maintained grassland and dry forest ecosystems.



Upper Gilpin grasslands



Lower flats adjacent to Gilpin Creek



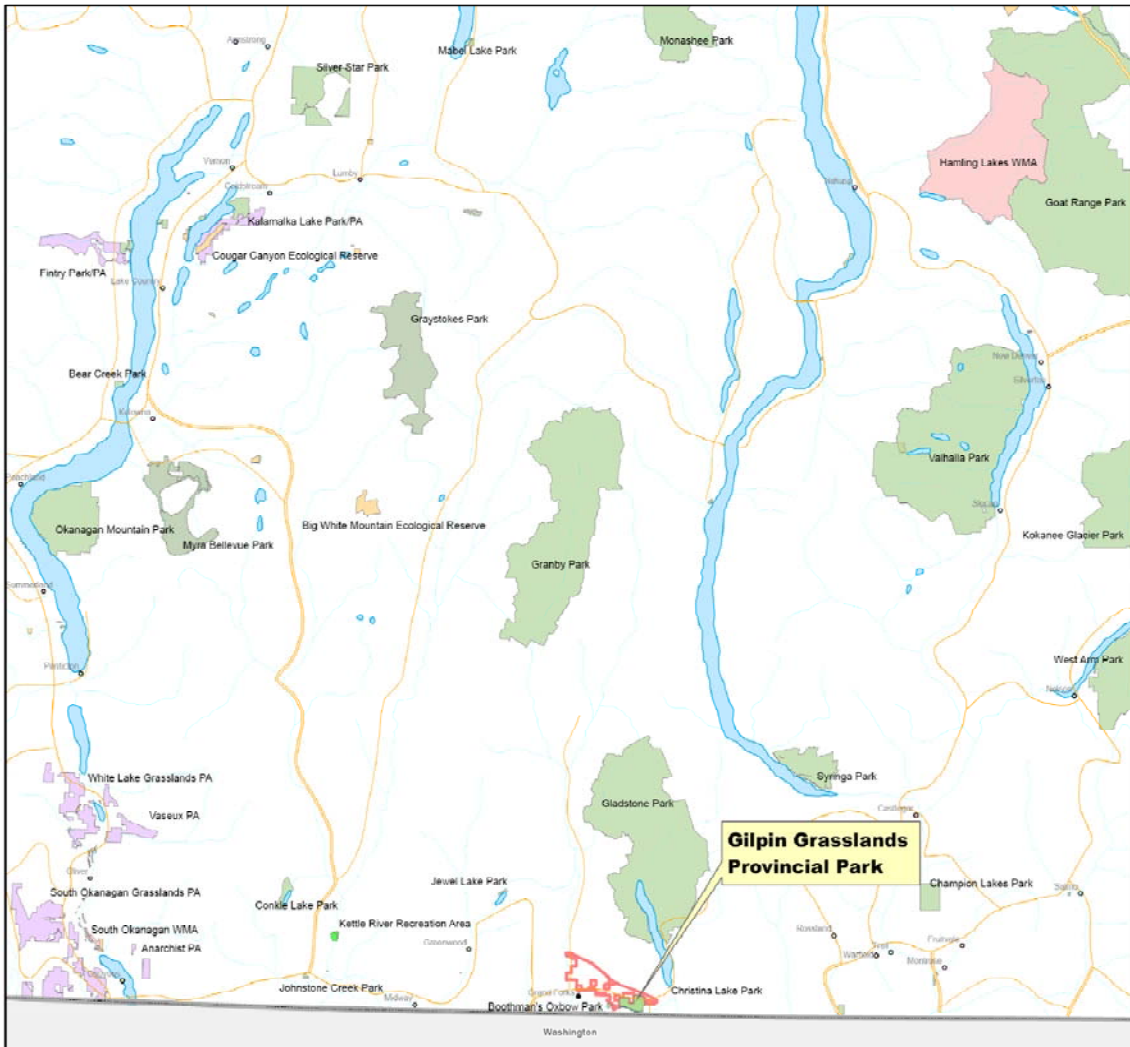
Kettle River shoreline



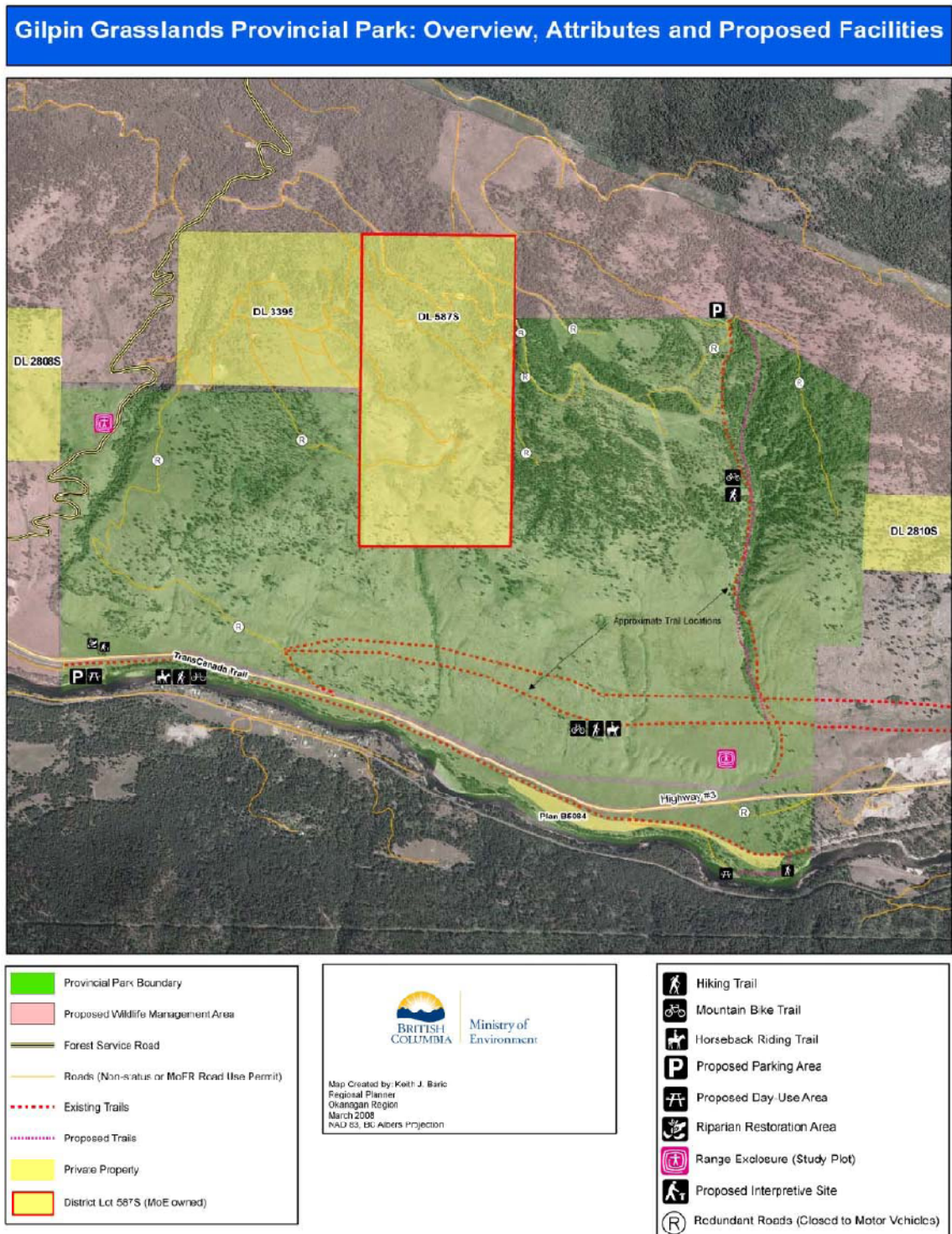
Trans Canada Trail

Map 1: Context

Gilpin Grasslands Provincial Park: Context



Map 2: Overview, Attributes and Proposed Facilities



2.0 Protected Area Attributes

2.1 Conservation

- The park retains a significant component of native grasslands and is integral in maintaining essential winter range for Bighorn Sheep (a blue-listed species²) that were transplanted in the 1980's from the Vaseux Lake area.
- Rocky Mountain Elk (transplanted east of Christina Lake in the 1970's), Mule Deer and White-tailed Deer are known to frequent the park landscape.
- Many Great Basin³ species, though more common in the United States, are rare in Canada, and occur only in extreme southern regions of British Columbia (e.g., Kettle, South Okanagan, and Similkameen valleys). Many species resident in the park reflect this unique climate-based distribution.
- Documented red-listed (provincially endangered or threatened) wildlife species within the park include Badger, Great Basin Pocket Mouse, Lewis's Woodpecker, Speckled Dace, Tiger Salamander and Western Screech Owl. Blue-listed (provincially vulnerable) wildlife species include Bighorn Sheep, Canyon Wren, Gopher Snake, Great Basin Spadefoot (an amphibian), Racer (another snake species), Western Painted Turtle, Western Rattlesnake, and Western Skink.⁴
- The park contains three blue-listed plant species (false-mermaid, northern linanthus, and obscure cryptantha) and 1 red-listed plant species (cup clover); however, current inventories are lacking and more 'at risk' flora are suspected to occur.
- Two red-listed ecological communities have been documented within the park.⁵
- The Kettle River system provides excellent habitat for a variety of fish species, both native and introduced. Native species include the red-listed Speckled Dace, the blue-listed Chiselmouth, Rainbow Trout, Mountain Whitefish, Burbot, Redside Shiner, Northern Pikeminnow, Lake and Peamouth chubs, Prickly and Slimy sculpins, and Longnose and Largescale suckers. The Speckled Dace is found only in the Kettle River system. This species has been located both east and west of the Gilpin Grasslands Provincial Park river frontage. Species introduced into the system include Eastern Brook Trout, Brown Trout, and Common or European Carp.
- Riparian areas of the park along the Kettle River contain unique stands of old growth cottonwood and ponderosa pine.
- The park protects 576 hectares, or 3.5%, of British Columbia's 16,504 PPdh1 biogeoclimatic subzone hectares (and 4.3% of the province's 13,324.5 PPdh1 biogeoclimatic subzone hectares within the South Okanagan Highlands Ecosystem). This particular biogeoclimatic zone is known for its high occurrence of red-listed plant species.

² For more information see Appendix 2.

³ The Great Basin is a large, arid region of the Pacific Northwest. Although primarily situated in the United States, the basin extends northward to include portions of the southern interior of British Columbia.

⁴ For complete information on provincial and federal at risk species designations refer to Appendix 1.

⁵ Red-listed ecological communities are bluebunch wheatgrass – arrowleaf balsamroot and ponderosa pine / common snowberry / bluegrasses.

- The park contains a privately constructed game-proof fence that runs parallel to the highway and assists in reducing ungulate mortality associated with motor vehicle collisions. The fence and highway separate the northern portion of the park from the southern portion (which includes a foreshore component of the Kettle River).
- Two range enclosures are situated within the park. Constructed in the mid 1970s, these structures (5 x 10 m and 9 x 30 m in extent) prevent livestock grazing within the contained area and serve as grassland research/study plot sites.
- The park's wildlife and habitat connectivity values are complemented by the close proximity of Boothman's Oxbow Provincial Park (2.5 kilometres to the west), DL 587S (owned by the Ministry of Environment, enclosed on three sides by the park and protecting the upper reaches of Gilpin Creek) and the proposed Gilpin-Morrissey Wildlife Management Area (WMA) (an approximately 3,890 hectare tract of land primarily to the north and west of the park).

2.2 Tourism and Outdoor Recreation

- The area is a recreation destination for many Grand Forks residents who engage in hunting, angling, hiking, mountain biking, and wildlife appreciation. The upland portions of the park provide a panorama of exceptional scenic value.
- The Gilpin Creek Forest Service Road is a favoured travel corridor through the western portion of the park.
- The warm south aspect slopes attract migratory birds early in the year and produce a vivid display of spring and early summer wildflowers drawing visitors/naturalists to the area.
- Grazing Bighorn Sheep are often easily viewed from the highway.
- The Trans Canada Trail (TCT) passes through the lower portion of the park and attracts a variety of non-motorized recreational enthusiasts (i.e., hikers, mountain bikers, and horse riders). The section of the trail that travels from Grand Forks to Christina Lake encourages non-motorized use only.
- Angling, swimming, boating and picnicking opportunities are available along the Kettle River.
- Several mountain bike trails exist within the park and the popularity of this activity is growing both with local residents and visitors.
- The park's close proximity to Christina Lake (a high use summer season destination) makes Gilpin Grasslands an attractive day use outing for tourists.

2.3 Cultural Heritage

- Prior to colonial times, the area was frequented by people from the Sinixt⁶ and Okanagan nations.

⁶ The Sinixt (or Arrow Lakes People) have been regarded as an extinct First Nations since 1956 and are not formally recognized by the Province as part of the formal treaty/land claim process. Descendants of the Sinixt people live in Idaho, Washington, and British Columbia.

- There are a total of 5 known archaeological sites (Borden unit classification) within the park boundary. These include sites associated with debris or waste material from past activity (e.g., tool or weapon making) or depressions that were created by human excavation and could represent former locations of storage pits, food processing facilities or semi-subterranean lodges.
- The park is on several long-standing travel routes. Early European explorers, traders and settlers passed through the area on their way to and from the settlement at Kettle Falls in Washington. Similarly, the Dewdney Trail, whose construction eastward from Fort Hope was spurred on by gold rushes in Rock Creek and Wild Horse Creek, was completed by 1865 and became the basis for the Crowsnest Highway (Hwy #3).⁷
- Remnant sections of the Dewdney Trail can be found within the park boundaries.
- A ranch house and customs office associated with early pioneer Ranulph Robert Gilpin (1861 - 1953) were situated near the confluence of Gilpin Creek and the Kettle River. Remnants of the customs office may be observed.

2.4 Economic Contribution

- The local guide outfitting business, which utilizes the park for hunting opportunities, adds economic diversification to communities in the area. The protection of the scenic and regionally significant grasslands and riverfront potentially enhances tourist activity (e.g., length of stay and accommodation, retail purchasing associated with outdoor equipment) in nearby Grand Forks and Christina Lake.
- The ranching sector in the Grand Forks area (and range tenure within the park) assists the local economy in providing employment and adding economic diversity.

3.0 Significance in the Protected Area System

3.1 Special Natural Features

- Retains essential winter range for ungulates, especially for blue-listed Bighorn Sheep.
- Contains terrain features favoured by arid grassland reptile and amphibian species that are considered provincially endangered or threatened or are species of special concern (red- or blue-listed).
- Combined with nearby Boothman's Oxbow Provincial Park, the park provides low elevation connectivity for a variety of species and maintains important riparian values along the Kettle River.

⁷ Dewdney Trail information obtained from Nelson & District Museum, Archives, Art Gallery & Historical Society website: <http://www.virtualmuseum.ca/Exhibitions/Dewdney/english/history/index.php>. Accessed August 17, 2009.

- Protects some of the remnant terrestrial features (i.e., late seral stage⁸ grasslands) of both the Southern Okanagan Highlands Ecosection and the PPdh1 and IDFxh1 biogeoclimatic subzones.

3.2 Special Recreational Features

- Close proximity to the City of Grand Forks and easy access via the Trans Canada Trail make the park an attractive day use area for visitors and the local community.
- Provides opportunities to view and appreciate unique plant and animal species (many are considered provincially or federally endangered) amongst the backdrop of a picturesque grassland ecosystem.
- Secluded foreshore areas along the Kettle River are a destination for anglers, swimmers, and non-motorized watercraft users (e.g., kayakers, canoeists).
- The park is an excellent staging area for hiking and mountain biking opportunities.

3.3 Cultural Heritage Significance

- Contains several registered archaeological sites.
- Park is situated within the asserted territory of the Okanagan Nation Alliance.
- Protection of the park's land base ensures that traditional use sites remain intact for perpetuity.
- Remnant portions of the Dewdney Trail and former ranch site of R. R. Gilpin are located within the park, providing an educational opportunity for visitors to learn more about the colonial/settlement history of the area.



R.R. Gilpin in 1888 (BC Archives, 2007)

⁸ Seral stages are an accepted method for categorizing grassland types. Typically, early seral stages are characterized by grass species that tend to increase in abundance and vigour following disturbance. Over time they are replaced by late seral stage, or “climax” grasses. Native grasslands at or near potential natural condition are characterized by an abundance of mid to late seral grasses.



Gilpin Ranch in 1894 (BC Archives, 2007)

4.0 Land Use, Tenures and Interests

4.1 Access

- Traveling east of Grand Forks on Highway #3, the primary motorized access into the park is via Gilpin Creek Forest Service Road (FSR). The FSR passes through the park for approximately 3 kilometres.
- Other informal access points are situated along Highway #3 to the east; however, the wildlife fence along the north side of the highway precludes vehicle access.
- Access points from the north are via the Sand Creek Forest Service Road (which is accessed from the east side of the Granby River Valley) and from the east by way of the Stewart Creek Forest Service Road.

4.2 Forestry Tenure

- Prior to park establishment, the land area encompassing Gilpin Grasslands Provincial Park was part of the former Pope and Talbot's (now Interfor) forestry licence operating area. Several roads (under Road Use Permit⁹) associated with past timber harvesting activities exist within the park.

4.3 Grazing Tenure

- There is an active range tenure over most of the provincial park (except for the southern-most portions). Mehmam Ranch (Tenure #RAN073397) has an existing cow/calf allotment on the Overton-Moody Range Unit of 1,220 Animal Unit Months

⁹ A Road Use Permit is an agreement entered into under the *Forest and Range Practices Act* that allows a person who has the right to harvest timber under a licence, agreement, or permit, to construct a road, or maintain an existing road on Crown land, other than a Forest Service road. For more information see Appendix 3.

(AUMs) and conducts their grazing activities on Crown land (including the provincial park) under a Range Use Plan.¹⁰

- A corral is located within the park (adjacent to the former Gilpin Ranch site) as are six water troughs situated at key locations on the Gilpin pasture. Range fences associated with directing cattle movement are located primarily north of Highway #3 in the eastern section of the park.

4.4 Recreation, Guide/Outfitting and Trapping Tenure

- There is a single tenure (currently issued through the Integrated Land Management Bureau) for guided kayaking and specified day use areas along the Kettle River that includes all but the very western portion of the park's foreshore.
- The park is located within one Guide/Outfitter territory (Cert. No. 800630) and one Trapping territory (TR0815T001).

4.5 Utility Corridors

- There are a series of utility corridors in the park that exist under statutory right of way. The above ground Fortis power line and the Cascade Water power line are situated north of the highway. The subsurface Telus fibre optics line and Terasen gas line parallel the south side of the highway, adjacent to the existing Trans Canada Trail (the former Victoria, Vancouver and Eastern Railway corridor).

4.6 Road Access Permits and Water Licences

- The land owner of Plan B5084 has a permit (No. CA9-50-98 for the purposes of agriculture) granted by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, which allows the owner to maintain the access from Highway #3 through the park to the nearby private property.
- There are 3 active water licences within the park. F005891 is held by the Ministry of Environment and was used in the past for domestic purposes (a former caretaker house was located near Gilpin Creek in the 1980's and has since been removed). F013209 is held privately by a local rancher for irrigation. C012907 is held by the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands for irrigation.

4.7 Adjacent Patterns of Land Use

- The City of Grand Forks is located 6 kilometres to the west. The park environs are a popular recreational destination for the local community.
- Cattle grazing authorized under the *Forest and Range Practices Act* (Range Tenure No. RAN073397) occurs on pastures adjacent to the park.

¹⁰ For more information on Range Use Plans see http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hra/Publications/legislation_policy/RangeUseandRangeStewardshipPlans.pdf

- A few kilometres east of the park, a proposed run-of-the river hydro electric dam (Cascade Heritage Power Park) above Cascade Falls on the Kettle River is currently under review.
- DL 587S is owned by the Ministry of Environment and is currently managed for wildlife habitat protection by the Parks and Protected Areas Division.
- International Forest Products Limited (Interfor) has a forestry licence that surrounds the park (licence #A18969).
- Other private land abuts the provincial park, specifically DL 2808S, DL 3395, DL 719, and DL 2810S. These lands are primarily undeveloped (with the exception of small seasonal residences on some sites).
- The trans-provincial Crowsnest Highway (Highway #3) bisects the lower southern half of the provincial park.
- A proposed Wildlife Management Area (approximately 3,890) is located to the north and east of the park.

4.8 Management Commitments

Gilpin Grasslands Provincial Park was originally identified as a ‘Goal 2’ site following the Kootenay Boundary Land Use Plan. General management strategies for protected areas identified during the land use planning process include¹¹:

- To develop comprehensive park master plans, over time, for each new protected area in order to ensure the maintenance of the conservation, recreation and cultural heritage values within the new protected areas.
- To recognize the legal rights of pre-existing tenure holders and landowners within newly established parks in the region, and to deal fairly with those interests.
- To protect key park values (i.e., red- and blue-listed species, sensitive flora and wildlife habitat) and adjacent private property, as appropriate, from natural occurrences in protected areas.
- To maintain ecosystem representation and ensure protection of key representative features.
- To ensure protection of key species and their habitats.
- To maintain backcountry recreation opportunities.
- To plan and manage parks in a manner which reflects the cultural heritage of the area.

¹¹ For more information on strategies/objectives for protected areas established under the Kootenay Boundary Land Use Plan see http://ilmbwww.gov.bc.ca/lup/lrmp/southern/kootenay/implementation_strat/4.htm.

4.9 Private and Public Stakeholder Interests

- *Grand Forks Wildlife Association*
 - Interest: To provide local expertise and knowledge on fish and wildlife resources and assist in management efforts on Crown land.
- *Boundary Naturalists*
 - Interest: Field trips for birding and botany, bluebird trail monitoring, Christmas Bird Count, and conservation issues. The group is a member of BC Nature.¹²
- *Christina Lake Stewardship Society*
 - Interest: Dedicated to the conservation of Christina Lake's watershed and natural resources. Issues the society engages in include forest health, fish species, aquatic plants, species at risk, lake and stream monitoring, and water quality.
- *Grand Forks Stock Breeders Association*
 - Interest: Range use and domestic livestock advocacy and stewardship in the vicinity of Grand Forks.

4.10 Other Agency Interests

- The Regional District of Kootenay Boundary (matters relating to tourism, private in-holdings, and connectivity).
- Integrated Land Management Bureau (focus on adjacent land tenure management, and Crown land disposition, and implementation/monitoring of the Kootenay Boundary Land Use Plan).
- Ministry of Agriculture and Lands (access to Crown land for livestock grazing and promotion of land management activities which encourage agricultural practices).
- Ministry of Forests and Range (matters relating to range/forestry tenure).
- Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts (implementation and coordination of the Provincial Trail Strategy¹³ which is associated with the Trans Canada Trail).

5.0 Relationship with First Nations

- The Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) supported the establishment of the park, acknowledging that there was a need for greater protection of environmental values in the area. However, the nature of aboriginal rights and title on the property are not mutually agreed upon between the ONA and the Province of British Columbia.

¹² BC Nature is a federation of local natural history groups and represents 50 local nature clubs throughout BC.

¹³ For more information on this initiative see the Background Report (Phase 1) at <http://www.sitesandtrailsbc.ca/about/provincial-trail-strategy.aspx>.

- Management and management planning of the park will require ongoing consultation with First Nations. Aboriginal rights will be honoured and protected subject to conservation, health and safety concerns. Consultation with First Nations will be conducted before implementing any of the management strategies that potentially may affect First Nations interests.

6.0 Relationship with Local Government

- Ongoing consultation with the City of Grand Forks is required to ensure local community needs are considered, and where appropriate, addressed within the management of Gilpin Grasslands Provincial Park.

7.0 Park Role Statement

The primary role of Gilpin Grasslands Provincial Park is to protect a remnant grassland ecosystem and an uncommon riparian area along the Kettle River. The park provides essential wildlife habitat for a variety of provincially designated red- and blue-listed species, including Bighorn Sheep.

Together with neighbouring Boothman's Oxbow Provincial Park, which retains an important wetland and natural river frontage, Gilpin Grasslands serves as an important ecological benchmark in an era of climate change and intensified adjacent land use activity and development.

The secondary role of the park is to maintain low impact, compatible recreation and interpretation opportunities within a scenic area of the Kettle River Valley. The park also contains significant heritage qualities increasing the cultural value of the area to First Nations, the local community and visitors.

8.0 Priority Management Issues, Objectives and Strategies

Issue	Objective	Strategies
<p>Past and current land use activities have impacted the grassland, riparian and river ecosystem</p>	<p>Conserve natural ecosystems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement an Ecosystem Management and Restoration Plan for the park with emphasis on maintaining and restoring native grassland values and controlling invasive weed spread. • Monitor and assess grassland/forest/riparian ecosystem health through species inventory and accumulating ecological baseline data. • Close redundant roads¹⁴ within the park to motor vehicle use and liaise with tenure holders to ensure tenured activities on closed roads are addressed or discuss alternative access routes. • Monitor off-road use and utilize enforcement and compliance tools when appropriate. Use fencing/barriers and interpretive signage to aid in restoring damaged grasslands and sensitive areas. • Work with Ministry of Forests and Range to ensure existing Range Use Plan integrates with park management and complements park values. Adjustments in the Range Use Plan should be closely coordinated with Ministry of Environment. • Work with Ministry of Forests and Range to identify areas of known range use impacts and mitigate using modern range management practices (including fencing, riparian armouring, off-channel watering). • Support initiatives that reduce wildlife mortality along Highway #3 and encourage safe wildlife movement in the Kettle River corridor. • Take steps to add DL 587S (parcel owned by the Ministry of Environment) to Gilpin Grasslands Provincial Park.

¹⁴ See Appendix 5 for a description of roads.

Issue	Objective	Strategies
Past and current land use activities have impacted the grassland, riparian and river ecosystem (cont'd)	Conserve natural ecosystems (cont'd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure consistency in management with adjacent lands (i.e., the proposed Gilpin-Morrissey Wildlife Management Area).
Significant cultural heritage features require permanent protection	Protect existing heritage values within the park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buffer known archaeological sites, colonial heritage values and First Nation's traditional use sites from current recreational activities using Special Feature zoning. • Work with First Nations to determine traditional uses and identify cultural values. • Ensure continued access by First Nations for traditional use practices. • Develop interpretive information and signage for the former Gilpin ranch site.
Access to, and enhancement of, recreational opportunities	Ensure recreational access and activities (existing or proposed) do not negatively impact conservation values in the park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study the feasibility of installing small scale day-use facilities south of Highway #3 and along the riverfront area of the Kettle River (as identified in Map 2). Ensure riparian and riverfront areas remain intact and protect high fishery values. • Determine environmental impact and safety issues of pre-existing mountain bike trails (created prior to park establishment) and formally designate these trails for multiple use, including mountain biking, horse riding and hiking, if compatible with BC Parks' standard (trail modification may also be necessary). • Investigate locations to designate new non-motorized trails to add diversity to the existing trail network. • Post signage notifying users of the park's off-road vehicle activity ban and of the non-motorized use designation for the portion of the Trans Canada Trail within the park. • Construct a pedestrian trail for day use public access to the Kettle River that circumnavigates private parcel (identified as Plan B5084 on Map 2).

Issue	Objective	Strategies
Access to, and enhancement of, recreational opportunities (cont'd)	Ensure recreational access and activities (existing or proposed) do not negatively impact conservation values in the park (cont'd).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to address potential access and traffic concerns along Highway #3.
Land uses existed prior to park establishment	Recognize/ensure continuance of pre-existing authorized land uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that interest holders for land uses authorized under provincial statute that existed prior to park establishment (e.g., utility right of ways and tenures) obtain a Park Use Permit.

9.0 Zoning Plan

The Parks and Protected Areas Division uses zoning as a tool to assist in the planning and management of a provincial park. In general terms, zoning divides a park into logical units for management. It applies uniform and consistent management objectives based on natural, cultural and recreational values, and existing and projected patterns of access and recreation use in relation to specific conservation goals. The zones reflect the intended land use, the degree of human use, and levels of management and development permitted. There are five zoning options: Intensive Recreation, Nature Recreation, Special Feature, Wilderness Recreation and Wilderness Conservation.

Gilpin Grasslands Provincial Park is separated into two management zones: Special Feature and Nature Recreation (Map 3).

9.1 Special Feature Zone:

The objective of this zone is to protect and present significant natural or cultural resources, features or processes because of their special character, fragility and heritage values.

The area encompassing the Special Feature Zone represents a total of 783.5 hectares. A large percentage of the park is a Special Feature Zone owing to its sensitive grassland habitat, known species at risk (i.e., red- and blue-listed) and significant cultural heritage values. This zoning is intended to concentrate and focus recreation use (i.e., utilizing Nature Recreation zoning described below) to areas which can support current and future public use without creating detrimental impacts on the park's sensitive ecosystem.

9.2 Nature Recreation Zone:

The objective of this zone is to protect scenic values and to provide for recreation opportunities in a largely undisturbed natural environment.

The area encompassing the Natural Recreation Zone is approximately 4.5 hectares. This zone includes a riverfront area south of Highway #3 that is intended to include a future parking area and picnic/day use facilities. An additional day use area on the eastern edge of the park along the foreshore of the Kettle River will accommodate walk-in access from the Trans Canada Trail.

Map 3: Zoning Map

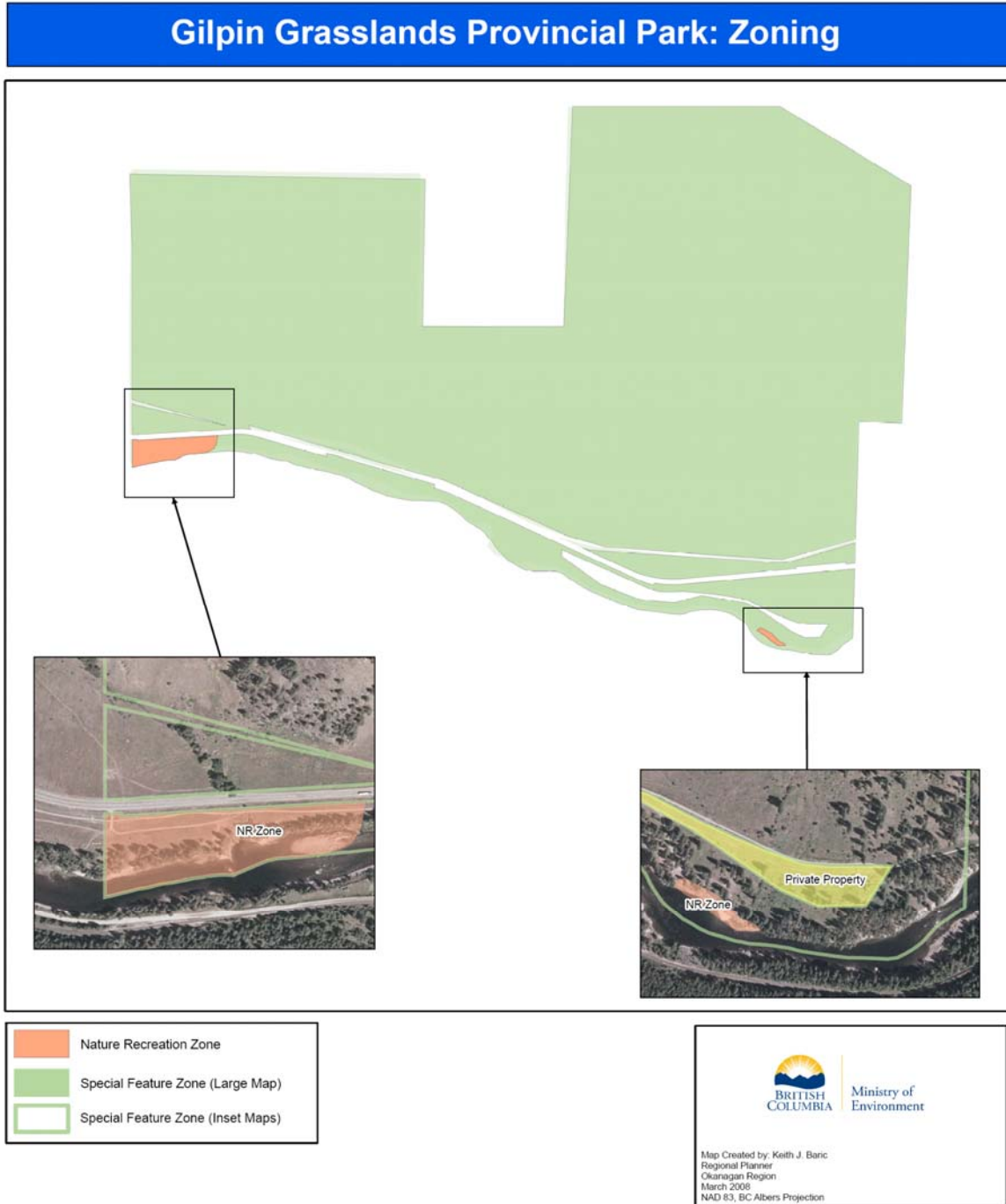


Figure 1: Appropriate Activities and Facilities Matrix

Activity/Facility	Appropriate in the Nature Recreation Zone	Appropriate in the Special Feature Zone	Comments
Activity			
Angle Guiding	Y	Y	
River Shore Activities (e.g., swimming)	Y	Y	
Boating (power)	Y	Y	Ensure power boating does not negatively impact park values. Discourage high horsepower boats from using foreshore areas.
Boating (non-power)	Y	Y	
Camping – backcountry	N	N	
Camping – auto accessible	N	N	
Campfires	Y	N	Permitted only in riverfront day-use area
Commercial Recreation (facility-based)	N	N	
Commercial Recreation (no facilities)	M	M	Future commercial nature appreciation activities may be permitted provided activities do not have a negative impact on the park's conservation values.
Exotic Insect/Disease Control	M	M	
Exotic Pack Animal Use	N	N	
Filming (commercial)	M	M	
Fire Management (prescribed fire management)	Y	Y	As per Ecosystem Management and Restoration Plan
Fire Management (prevention)	Y	Y	
Fire Management (suppression)	Y	Y	
Fishing	Y	Y	
Fish Stocking and Enhancement	M	M	
Forest Insect/Disease Control	Y	Y	
Grazing (domestic livestock)	N	N ²	As per Range Use Plan
Guide Outfitting	Y	Y	
Hiking/Backpacking/Walking	Y	Y	Designated trails only
Horse/Non-Exotic Pack Animal Use	Y	Y	Designated trails only
Hunting	Y	Y	
Mechanized Off-road Access (non-motorized – i.e., mountain biking)	Y	Y	Designated trails only

Activity/Facility	Appropriate in the Nature Recreation Zone	Appropriate in the Special Feature Zone	Comments
Activity			
Motorized Off-road Access (not snowmobiles – i.e., 4x4, motorcycles)	N	N	
Alien Invasive Weed Control	Y	Y	
Rock Climbing	Y	N	
Scientific Research (manipulative activities)	M	M	
Scientific Research (specimen collection)	M	M	
Skiing (cross-country –trails)	Y	Y	Designated trails only
Snowmobiling	N	N ²	For tenured trapping use only
Trapping	Y	Y	
Facility			
Boat Launches	N	N	
Picnic Areas (vehicle access and serviced)	Y	N	As identified
Camp sites (other)	N	N	
Communication Sites	N	N	
Interpretation and Information Buildings	Y	Y	As identified
Roads and Parking Lots	Y	N	As identified
Trails (hiking, cross-country skiing, mountain biking, horse)	Y	Y	As identified
Utility Corridors (power/transmission lines and other rights-of-way)	N ²	N ²	
Water Control Structures	N ²	N ²	As per Range Use Plan

Legend for the Matrix of Appropriate Activities and Facilities

Y	appropriate
N	Not appropriate
N¹	Not appropriate except for expressed management purposes as identified in the Management Plan
N²	Not appropriate, but if the specific activity or facility existed at the time of establishment of the protected area, it is normally appropriate for it to continue
M	May be appropriate
N/A	Not applicable

10.0 Consultation and Future Planning

The Parks and Protected Areas Division of the Ministry of Environment is accountable for planning, administration and management of the park through the application of the *Park Act* and its associated regulations and policies.

Revisions or updating of this management direction statement will be coordinated by the Parks and Protected Areas Division with involvement of other agencies, the Regional District of the Kootenay Boundary, the City of Grand Forks, First Nations government, and various stakeholders as required.

Appendix 1: Provincial and Federal Designations for Gilpin Grasslands Park Documented At Risk Species

Species	Status		
	Provincial ¹⁵	COSEWIC ¹⁶	SARA Schedule
Amphibians			
Great Basin Spadefoot	Blue	Threatened	Listed
Tiger Salamander	Red	Endangered	Listed
Birds			
Canyon Wren	Blue	Not At Risk	
Lewis's Woodpecker	Red	Special Concern	Listed
Western Screech Owl <i>macfarlanei</i> subspecies	Red	Endangered	Listed
Fish			
Speckled Dace	Red	Endangered	Listed
Mammals			
Badger	Red	Endangered	Listed
Bighorn Sheep	Blue	-	-
Great Basin Pocket Mouse	Red	-	-
Reptiles			
Gopher Snake <i>desertcola</i> subspecies	Blue	Threatened	Listed
Racer	Blue	Special Concern	Listed
Western Painted Turtle	Blue	Special Concern	Listed
Western Rattlesnake	Blue	Threatened	Listed
Western Skink	Blue	Special Concern	Listed
Invertebrates			
Rocky Mountainsnail	Blue	-	-
Plants			
cup clover	Red	-	-
false-mermaid	Blue	Not At Risk	-
northern linanthus	Blue	-	-
obscure cryptantha	Blue	-	-
Ecological Communities			
bluebunch wheatgrass – arrowleaf balsamroot	Red		
ponderosa pine / common snowberry / bluegrasses	Red		

¹⁵ BC CDC – Conservation Data Centre. This provincial entity assesses the status of species in BC. Inclusion on the red or blue list makes a species eligible for legal listing under the BC *Wildlife Act*, but does not itself convey any legal status or protection. For information on the definitions and development of red and blue lists, refer to Appendix 2.

¹⁶ COSEWIC – Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. This federal entity provides science-based recommendations for legal listing under the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA). The federal “legal list” is Schedule 1 of SARA.

Appendix 2: Species at Risk Nomenclature

Red List: Includes any ecological community, and indigenous species and subspecies that is extirpated, endangered, or threatened in British Columbia. Extirpated elements no longer exist in the wild in British Columbia, but do occur elsewhere. Endangered elements are facing imminent extirpation or extinction. Threatened elements are likely to become endangered if limiting factors are not reversed. Red-listed species and subspecies have – or are candidates for – official Extirpated, Endangered or Threatened Status in BC. Not all red-listed taxa will necessarily become formally designated. Placing taxa on these lists flags them as being at risk and requiring investigation.

Blue List: Includes any ecological community, and indigenous species and subspecies considered to be of special concern (formerly vulnerable) in British Columbia. Elements are of special concern because of characteristics that make them particularly sensitive to human activities or natural events. Blue-listed elements are at risk, but are not Extirpated, Endangered or Threatened.

The Red and Blue lists serve two purposes:

To provide a list of species for consideration for more formal designation as Endangered or Threatened, either provincially under the British Columbia Wildlife Act, or federally by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC).

To help inform setting conservation priorities for species/ecological communities considered at risk in British Columbia. The rankings highlight species and ecological communities that have particular threats, declining population trends, or restricted distributions that indicate that they require special attention. These lists serve as a practical method to assist in making conservation and land-use decisions and prioritize research, inventory, management, and protection activities. For example, Operational Planning Regulations in the *Forest and Range Practices Act* use the Red and Blue lists in the development of the list of Identified Wildlife.

Red and Blue lists have been produced since 1992.

Further information on the development of the Red and Blue lists can be found in:

For more information, view the BC Conservation Data Centre Species Explorer

<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/atrisk/toolintro.html>.

Harper, B., S. Cannings, D. Fraser and W.T. Munro. 1994. Provincial lists of species at risk. Pp. 16-23 in Biodiversity in British Columbia. L.E. Harding and E. McCullum (eds.), Canadian Wildlife Service, Delta, B.C.

Appendix 3: Road/Trail Definitions

Forest Service Road:

A road constructed, modified, or maintained by the Ministry of Forests and Range under the provisions of the *Forest and Range Practices Act*, or declared a Forest Service road. Forest Service roads are used to provide access to managed forest land.

Road Use Permit Roads:

An agreement entered into under the *Forest and Range Practices Act* that allows a person who has the right to harvest timber under a licence, agreement, or permit, to construct a road, or maintain an existing road on Crown land, other than a Forest Service road.

Non-Status Roads:

Several categories of resource roads can be built or established under the *Forest Act* or the *Forest and Range Practices Act*. Non-status roads (roads without tenure from the ministry or other agencies) are not within the jurisdiction or responsibility of the Ministry of Forests and Range except where the ministry is required to take action as an agent of the province. In these cases, activities on non-status roads must be limited to minimizing any site-specific risks (to users or the environment) that come to the attention of the District Manager of MoFR. However, restoring access is not an acceptable objective of any such work.

Single Track Trails:

A single-track trail is one where users must generally travel in single file (pedestrians and mountain bikes).

The trail bed of single-track trails is typically 12 to 18 inches wide. Single track trails tend to wind around obstacles such as trees, large rocks and bushes. The tread of single track is almost always natural surface.

Redundant Roads:

An existing road that may or may not start from one common point and then travel to the same destination (often within close proximity to its partner road).

Appendix 4: BC Parks Conservation and Recreation Goals

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.

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.

BC Parks Conservation Goals

Goal 1: Landscapes

To conserve B.C.'s natural diversity by protecting viable, representative examples of our 139 ecosections.

Goal 2: Special Features

To protect B.C.'s key natural and cultural features. These have been identified as physical, biological or cultural elements and evaluated as to abundance, significance and value in terms of conservation, education and recreation.

BC Parks Recreation Goals

Goal 1: Tourism Travel Routes

To provide parks and services which enhance tourism travel routes.

Goal 2: Outdoor Recreation Holiday Destinations

To provide park attractions which serve as or improve key destinations for outdoor recreation holidays.

Goal 3: Backcountry

To provide outstanding backcountry recreation opportunities throughout the province.

Goal 4: Local Recreation

To ensure access to local outdoor recreation opportunities for all residents of this province.

Appendix 5: BC Parks Zoning Framework

Protected Areas Zone Descriptions			
	Intensive Recreation	Nature Recreation	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 associated 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).	Motorized (powerboats, snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles) and non-motorized (foot, horse, canoe, bicycles). Aircraft and motorboat access to drop-off and pick-up 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 mechanized 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 hectares.	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 and 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, snow play, downhill and cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, specialized activities.	Walk-in or boat-in camping, power-boating, hunting, canoeing, kayaking, backpacking, bicycling, historic and nature appreciation, fishing, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, river rafting, horseback riding, heliskiing, helihiking and specialized 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 or play areas, trail accommodation or interpretative buildings, boat launches, administrative buildings, service compounds, gravel pits, disposal sites, woodlots; parking lots, etc.	Moderately developed for user convenience. Permitted: trails, walk-in or boat-in campsites, shelters, accommodation buildings, facilities for motorized access (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 as both recreation facilities and 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 to maintaining a high-quality recreation experience. Intensive management of resource and control of visitor activities. Operational facilities designed for efficient operation while unobtrusive to park visitors.	Oriented to maintaining a natural environment and 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 Rathrevor Beach Park; Gibson Pass ski area in E.C. Manning Park.	Core area in Cathedral Park; North beach in Naikoon Park.	Botanical Beach tidepools in Juan de Fuca Park; Sunshine Meadows in Mt. 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, depending 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, depending on a pristine environment where no motorized 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-mechanized & non-motorized. May permit low-frequency air access to designated sites; foot, canoe and horse access may be permitted.	Non-mechanized & non-motorized; foot, canoe and horse access 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, specialized activities (e.g., caving, climbing).	Backpacking, canoeing, kayaking, river rafting, nature and historic appreciation, fishing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding, specialized activities (e.g., caving, climbing).
Facilities	Minimal facility development for user convenience and safety, and protection of the environment e.g., trails, primitive campsites. Some basic facilities at access points, e.g., dock, primitive shelter.	None.
Impacts on Natural Environment	Natural area generally free of evidence of 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 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.