

KLANAWA RIVER ECOLOGICAL RESERVE

PURPOSE STATEMENT

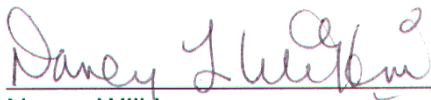
August 2003

Approved by:



Dick Heath
Regional Manager
Environmental Stewardship Division

Date: August 8/03



Nancy Wilkin
Assistant Deputy Minister
Environmental Stewardship Division

Date: Jan. 21/04

KLANAWA RIVER ECOLOGICAL RESERVE Purpose Statement

Ecological reserves are areas selected to preserve representative and special natural ecosystems, plant and animal species, features and phenomena. The key goal of ecological reserves is to contribute to the maintenance of biological diversity and the protection of genetic materials. All consumptive resource uses and the use of motorized vehicles are prohibited. Research and education activities may be carried out but only under permit.

Primary Role

The **primary** role of Klanawa River Ecological Reserve is to protect endangered forest plants within a floodplain Sitka spruce forest on the west coast of Vancouver Island. This 90 hectare ecological reserve, located near the West Coast Trail Unit of the Pacific Rim National Park Reserve, comprises a forested floodplain that bisects the lower Klanawa River in a section about 5 kilometres north of its mouth. This site protects two endangered plants -- redwood sorrel and Scouler's corydalis. The redwood sorrel is not represented elsewhere in the provincial protected areas system and this site was deemed as the best occurrence of this rare plant.

Containing some of the last old-growth stands of western hemlock, western redcedar and Sitka spruce in the immediate area, this ecological reserve also provides protection to a host of wildlife that frequent the river corridor. Marbled murrelets, an endangered bird species, could potentially nest in this area because of the intact stands of old-growth forest required for their nesting habitat. The Klanawa River has coho, chum and chinook salmon, winter-run steelhead, sculpin, Pacific lamprey and cutthroat populations.

Management Issues

Known Management Issue	Response
Lack of knowledge of cultural values and First Nations interest in area	➤ Consult with First Nations to gather information on cultural values and interest in this area.
Lack of knowledge of natural values	➤ Undertake inventory of plant communities and species at risk.
Lack of public awareness of ecological reserve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Install boundary and regulatory signage at key locations to create a better understanding and appreciation for the ecological reserve. ➤ Increase presence and monitoring capabilities through recruiting a volunteer warden from local naturalist groups.
Viability of the ecological reserve and its ability to protect the community of wood sorrel as a result of small size (less than 140 ha) of the ecological reserve and it being surrounded by clear cuts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Investigate the option of including riverside corridor and remaining mature forest (330 ha) to the south boundary of the ecological reserve to improve its ecological integrity and to protect the core area from blowdown. ➤ Work with Ministry of Forests and industry to minimize the impact of forestry development on the ecological reserve and ensure values are considered in development plans.
Severe decline of fish numbers in Klanawa River over the last 5 years – potentially as a result of forestry activities and high gravel movement in river	➤ Work with Ministry of Forests, Fisheries and Oceans Canada to maintain, and possibly restore, fish populations in the river.

Conservation

- Representation
- ecosection Klanawa River Ecological Reserve contributes very minimally (0.04%) to the representation of the Windward Island Mountain Ecosection of which 17.42% is protected provincially.
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant Klanawa River Ecological Reserve contributes very minimally (0.07%) to the representation of the Coastal Western Hemlock (CWHvm1) variant which has 7.01% protected provincially.
- Special Features Old growth forests, alluvial floodplain, excellent site for rare plants, salmon-bearing river
- Rare/Endangered Values *Red-listed* redwood sorrel *Oxalis oregana* (best site in the province for this species) and Scouler's corydalis (listed as Threatened by COSEWIC, known in Canada only in the Nitinat and Klanawa River basins and an area west of Cowichan Lake). Distinctive plant community: Sitka spruce / sword fern / wood sorrel otherwise absent from Canada (common on the Olympic Peninsula). The Sitka spruce / sword fern association is *blue-listed*. Potential habitat for the *red-listed* marbled murrelet -- a significantly higher number of murrelets have been sited in the ER than at the next most likely nesting habitat at Carmanah Walbran Provincial Park.
- Scientific/Research Opportunities Opportunity to study floodplain forest communities and successional processes. Changes in community structure due to exposure by surrounding clearcuts may be another research topic.

Recreation

- Representation
backcountry Not Applicable
destination Not Applicable
travel corridor Not Applicable
local recreation Not Applicable
- Special Opportunities None known at this time
- Education/Interpretation Opportunities Potential destination for Bamfield Marine Station for courses related to terrestrial vegetation. Offsite interpretation / education on undisturbed environment and rare species in contrast with surrounding areas without increasing visitation.

Cultural Heritage

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Representation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Huu-ay-aht (Ohiaht) First Nation through the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council traditional lands under treaty negotiation |
| Special Feature | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | High potential for cultural values – general area is rich in evidence of the Huu-ay-aht and the Ditidaht First Nations with numerous archaeological sites, i.e. many CMTs, possible village site along Klanawa River (not yet confirmed or located) |

Other Management Considerations

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Other Designations | <input type="checkbox"/> | Not Applicable |
| Relationship to other PAs | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Part of a system of protected areas on Vancouver Island. |
| Co-operative Management Arrangements | <input type="checkbox"/> | Not Applicable |
| Partnerships | <input type="checkbox"/> | Not Applicable at this time |
| Vulnerability | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Klanawa River drainage continues to be a major harvesting area with adjacency issues such as logging roads, potential windfall and vandalism/removal of park resources and unauthorized recreational use. Severe decline of fish numbers in Klanawa River over the last 5 years – concern over forestry activities and high gravel movement in river. Area not large enough to protect redwood sorrel (less than minimum recommended size of 140 hectares), ecological viability of the ER is questionable without protection of timber stands to south. |
| Relationship to other Strategies | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Recommended for protection in the Goal 2 component of the Vancouver Island Land Use Plan. In 1989, MacMillan Bloedel identified this site's high aesthetic quality, in combination with old growth spruce and recommended that it be protected. |

Area: 90 hectares

Date of establishment: April 30, 1996