ORIGINAL PURPOSE

To protect vegetation typical of the Middle Grassland in

interior British Columbia

OVERVIEW

Date established: 10 Dec. **Location:** In Batchelor Hills, 5 km N

ORC#: 1981 of Westsyde near

3110 **Kamloops** Map number:

92 I/16 50°49'N Latitude: Longitude: 120°20'W

Total Area: 35 ha **Elevation:** 560-670 m

Land: 35 ha

Access: Access by foot (1 km) west from road north of

Westsyde. The reserve is within Kamloops city limits.

Bunchgrass (BG) **Biogeoclimatic Zone:**

Ponderosa Pine (PP)

BG xw 1 BG Nicola Very Dry Warm Biogeoclimatic Variant:

PP xh 2 PP Thompson Very Dry Hot

Thompson Basin

Ecosection: Thompson Kamloops **Region:**

Management Area:

COMPOSITION

Physical: The reserve lies in the Batchelor Hills area of the Thompson

> Plateau, adjacent to the valley of the North Thompson River. Soils are predominantly dark brown Chernozems of the McQueen Association, developed on morainal deposits. These are well drained soils of silty loam to silty clay-loam

texture. The climate is generally dry.

Biological: About two thirds of the reserve is grassland, the remainder

> is forested. Grasslands are fairly typical of the Middle Grassland elevational zone in British Columbia which occurs above the sagebrush-bunchgrass zone of the valley bottoms and below the fescue-dominated zones at higher levels. Typical communities here, especially on southerly exposed slopes, are dominated by bluebunch wheatgrass and Sandberg's bluegrass. Prickly-pear cactus may be locally abundant, and well-spaced ponderosa pine trees occurred in some areas. These have mostly been killed by mountain pine beetle (2007-2009). Other characteristic plants include junegrass, needle-and-thread grass, yarrow,

Nuttall's pussytoes, pasture sage, arrow-leaved balsam-root, cut-leaved daisy and oyster plant. Communities on northerly exposed slopes show affinities with the Upper Grassland elevational zone, being dominated by rough fescue, bluebunch wheatgrass and Thompson's paintbrush, or by rough fescue and death-camas. The steeper north-facing slopes above McQueen Creek support Douglas-firpinegrass stands.

A variety of showy spring wildlflowers is present, including arrow-leaved balsam-root, nodding onion, heart-leaved arnica, upland larkspur, fleabanes, yellowbell, old man's whiskers, large-fruited desert-parsley and silverleaf phacelia.

Fauna has not been surveyed. Lands in this area are important winter range for mule deer.

MANAGEMENT CONCERNS	
SIGNIFICANT SPECI	ES None listed
THREATS	
Climate Change:	Due to the warm and dry conditions that have been projected for the interior of British Columbia, the grassland communities represented in this reserve may expand.
Forest health:	Fire suppression has resulted in fuel accumulation, and forest ingrowth. The recent mountain pine beetle infestation will result in a temporary increase in fuel when the trees fall down, but that will take care of the forest ingrowth concerns.
Non-native species:	Dalmation Toadflax, Knappweed, and Sulphur cinquefoil have been introduced by cattle.
Utilities and utility corridors:	Fibre optic line near reserve increases potential for spread of weeds into reserve.
RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES	The reserve protects pristine grassland that has been affected very little by grazing or recreational use.
ER WARDEN ACTIVITIES	 Monitor/report un-approved recreational use Monitor/report prohibited grazing Survey flora & fauna present in ER Monitor for invasive plants (control or eradicate where possible)

SCIENTIFIC NAMES OF SPECIES MENTIONED IN THE MCQUEEN CREEK ER ACCOUNT

Flora

arnica, heart-leaved (Arnica cordifolia)

balsom-root, arrow-leaved (Balsamorhiza-sagittata)

bluegrass, Sandberg's (Poa secunda ssp. sandbergii)

cactus, prickly-pear (*Opuntia fragilis*)

death-camas (Zigadenus spp.)

desert-parsley, large-fruited (Lomatium macrocarpum)

Douglas fir (Pseudotsuga menziesii)

fescue, rough (Festuca campestris)

fleabane (*Erigeron* spp.)

grass, needle-and-thread (Hesperostipa comata ssp. comata and ssp. intermedia)

Junegrass (Koeleria macrantha)

larkspur, upland (Delphinium nuttallianum)

old man's whiskers (Geum triflorum var. ciliatum and var. triflorum)

onion, nodding (Allium cernuum var. cernuum)

oyster plant (Tragopogon dubius)

paintbrush, Thompson's (Castilleja thompsonii)

phacelia, silverleaf (*Phacelia hastata*)

pine, ponderosa (Pinus ponderosa)

pinegrass (Calamagrostis rubescens)

pussytoes, Nuttall's (Antennaria parvifolia)

sagewort, prarie (Artemisia frigid) aka pasture sage*

wheatgrass, bluebunch (Pseudoroegneria spicata ssp.)

yarrow (Achillea spp.)

yellow bell (Fritillaria pudica)

INVASIVE

cinquefoil, sulphur (Potentilla recta)

knapweed (Centaurea spp.)

toadflax, Dalmatian (Linaria genistifolia spp. dalmatica)

Fauna

Deer, Mule (Odocoileus hemionus)