

ORIGINAL PURPOSE To preserve an elevational sequence of habitats from valley bottom wetlands to alpine in an area of wet interior climate

OVERVIEW

Date established:	1 Sept. 1972	Location:	26 km SW of Revelstoke
ORC #:	3043	Latitude:	50°53'N
Map number:	82 L/11	Longitude:	118°33'W

Total Area:	1,249 ha	Elevation:	535-2,160 m
Land:	1,240 ha		
Lake:	9 ha		

Access: The wetlands are accessible via logging road between Three-Valley Gap and Mabel Lake; upper levels via Yard Creek Valley logging roads.

Biogeoclimatic Zones: Interior Cedar-Hemlock (ICH); Engelmann Spruce-Subalpine Fir (ESSF); Interior Mountain-heather Alpine (IMA)

Biogeoclimatic Variants: IMAunp Undifferentiated and Parkland; ESSFvc Very Wet Cold; ESSFwc2 Northern Monashee Wet Cold; ICHwk1 Wells Gray Wet Cool

Ecosection: Shuswap Highland

Region: Okanagan

Management Area: Northern Okanagan

COMPOSITION

Physical: Mount Griffin is situated at the northeastern end of the Hunters Range within the Shuswap Highland. The reserve extends from the southeast side of Wap Creek valley to the peak of Mount Griffin. This irregular hour-glass shaped reserve encompasses 1625 m of elevational range. Wap Creek valley, flat and about 300 m wide, contains two small lakes, wetlands, and a stream which flows south through Wap Lake (outside the reserve) to Mabel Lake. The reserve has steep lower mountain slopes (about 35°), a plateau-like middle section, and slopes averaging about 10° from the plateau to the peak.

Biological: Major vegetation types on the Wap Creek floodplain are willow-alder riparian shrublands; sedge meadows containing at least 12 species of sedges, sphagnum moss, scattered alder and willow; and ponded environments dominated by waterlily, water sedge, and Swamp horsetail.

Forested slopes to about the 1425 m level are within the Interior Cedar-Hemlock Zone, although Douglas-fir and western hemlock predominate, but some lodgepole pine, western redcedar, and paper birch are present. Above this, in the Engelmann Spruce-Subalpine Fir Zone, subalpine fir is the dominant tree, some spruce is present, and black huckleberry and white rhododendron characterize the understory. Small bogs occur in flat subalpine terrain. Above about the 1800 m level the forest assumes a parkland to krummholz appearance, with intervening meadows in which black alpine

sedge, mountain hair-grass, pussytoes, and alpine club-moss are common. Rare plants include crested shield fern and grooved agrimony.

The wetlands have a low capability for waterfowl use because spring flooding coincides with the nesting season. Lower slopes and wetlands are important winter range for moose.

MANAGEMENT CONCERNS

SIGNIFICANT SPECIES	BC LIST STATUS	COSEWIC STATUS	CF PRIORITY
beaked spike-rush	Blue listed		3
crested wood fern	Blue listed		3
Grizzly Bear	Blue listed	Special Concern (2002)	2

THREATS

Climate Change: As temperatures continue to climb and precipitation patterns change, the hydrology is altered and the unique sequence of habitats represented within this reserve may change. Warmer, dryer conditions are projected to drive certain forest systems northward and inland, possibly displacing wetland and alpine ecosystems. This is dependent on many factors including nutrient and moisture availability, the appearance of new or invasive species and changing disturbance regimes.

Agriculture: Due to fencing problems, cattle trespass and graze in the reserve.

RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

A preliminary natural history report has been prepared which can form the basis for monitoring the effects of climate change on species or ecosystem distribution within the reserve. It is particularly of interest because of the presence of wetlands which are anticipated to be affected more rapidly and radically than other ecosystems. The wetlands provide a range of water depth, timing and length of inundation.

SCIENTIFIC NAMES OF SPECIES MENTIONED IN THE MOUNT GRIFFIN ER ACCOUNT

Flora

agrimony, grooved (*Agrimonia striata*)
 birch, paper (*Betula papyrifera*)
 club-moss, alpine (*Diphasiastrum alpinum*)
 Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*)
 fern, crested wood (*Dryopteris cristata*)
 fern, crested wood (*Dryopteris cristata*)
 fir, subalpine (*Abies lasiocarpa* var. *lasiocarpa*)
 hair-grass, mountain (*Vahlodea atropurpurea*)
 hemlock, western (*Tsuga heterophylla*)
 horsetail, swamp (*Equisetum fluviatile*)

huckleberry, black (*Vaccinium membranaceum*)
moss, peat (*Sphagnum spp.*)
pine, lodgepole (*Pinus contorta* var. *latifolia*)
pussytoes (*Antennaria* sp.)
redcedar, western (*Thuja plicata*)
rhododendron, white-flowered (*Rhododendron albiflorum*)
sedge, black alpine (*Carex nigricans*)
sedge, water (*Carex aquatilis*)
spike-rush, beaked (*Eleocharis rostellata*)
spruce, Engelmann (*Picea engelmannii*)

Fauna

Bear, Grizzly (*Ursus arctos*)
Moose (*Alces americanus*)