


NECHAKO RIVER ECOLOGICAL RESERVE

PURPOSE STATEMENT


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Approved by:



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Date: March 26/03

Nechako River Ecological Reserve Purpose Statement

The Nechako River Ecological Reserve is located 30 km west of Prince George, 2.5 km northeast of Isle Pierre on the north side of the Nechako River. The ecological reserve is 133 ha in size, and protects the most vigorous known tamarack stands west of the Rocky Mountains for genetic representation.

The ecological reserve lies on relatively flat benchlands above the Nechako River, on glacial lake clays.

The feature of primary interest is a shallow, boggy, flat-bottomed depression, apparently an old meltwater channel or former course of the Nechako River. The depression supports fairly open stands of tamarack trees of good size for this species. There are small standing water areas among the bog forest.

Upland forests on level ground are dominated by white and Engelmann spruce or their hybrids, with areas of mixed forest. Parts of the upland have been logged, but the tamarack-black spruce bog forest appears to be in a natural state.

This ecological reserve was established in December 1975. Adjacent lands to the west and south of this ecological reserve, the Nechako River Valley Special Resource Management Zone, are managed for scenery and recreation under direction of the Prince George Land and Resource Management Plan. Lands to the north and east are managed for agriculture and settlement as the Prince George Core Resource Management Zone.

Primary Role

The primary role of Nechako River Ecological Reserve is to protect the best known growth of tamarack in the Sub-Boreal Spruce Zone, and is important for preservation of genetic stock for future establishment of the species in other locations.

Known Management Issues	Response
Mountain pine beetle	No action to be taken in the ecological reserve.
Cattle grazing on adjacent lands	Monitor for introduced species
Access across private land is required to get to the ecological reserve	Investigate the feasibility of negotiating a formal agreement respecting access across the adjacent lands.

CONSERVATION

Representation

- ecosection
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant

Contributes minimally to the representation of the Nechako Lowlands Ecosection (NEL) – 4.68% of this ecosection is protected provincially; this ecological reserve contributes only 0.23% of the overall representation of this ecosection.
Contributes minimally to the representation of the SBS dw3 (4.24%); the ecological reserve contributes only 0.45% of the overall representation of this variant.

Special Feature

X Most vigorous known tamarack stands west of the Rocky Mountains

Rare/Endangered Values

Unknown

Scientific/Research Opportunities

X Tree genetics and forest ecology

RECREATION

Representation:

- backcountry
- destination
- travel corridor
- local recreation

X Nature appreciation opportunities

Special Opportunities

Education/Interpretation Opportunities

X Forest genetics

CULTURAL HERITAGE

Representation

Special Feature

OTHER MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Other Designations

Relationship to Other PAs

X Adds to representation of Nechako Lowland Ecosection by Carp Lake Provincial Park, and nearby parks of Stuart River, Eskers and Dahl Lake.

One of 148 ecological reserves established to protect

natural ecosystems and phenomena for research and education purposes across the province

Co-operative Management Arrangements

Partnerships

X Ecological Reserve Warden (Laird Law appointed September 1986)

Vulnerability

X The Conservation Risk Assessment Process identified 2 risk factors (the shape and the size of the ecological reserve) for the ecological reserve and rated them as moderately significant. One stressor/threat was identified for the ecological reserve: grazing/feeding which was rated as low significance.

Relationship to Other Strategies

Area: 133 hectares

Date of establishment: December 4, 1975