

Skeena District

MANAGEMENT DIRECTION STATEMENT

September, 2000

for Netalzul Meadows Provincial
Park



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

Ministry of Environment
Lands and Parks
BC Parks Division

This management direction statement was developed through direction received from the Bulkley Land and Resource Management Plan.



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MEMORANDUM


BULKLEY GOAL 2 PROTECTED AREAS MANAGEMENT DIRECTION STATEMENTS - BINDER APPROVALS PAGE

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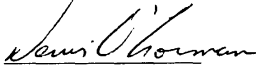
This binder contains five management direction statements developed by BC Parks. The Provincial Government designated these protected areas under *Bill 17, Protected Areas Act of British Columbia* which received Royal Assent on June 29th 2000. The five management direction statements provide strategic direction for these protected areas. Protected areas' roles, strategies and objectives will not change extensively over time. Management actions, implemented through operations plans, however, will change as priorities, funding and support resources come available.

- Burnt Cabin Ecological Reserve
- Call Lake Park
- Netalzul Meadows Park
- Nilkitkwa Lake Park
- Rainbow Alley Park

Approved by:


Hugh Markides
District Manager
Skeena District

Date: Aug. 24, 2000


Denis O'Gorman
Assistant Deputy Minister
Parks Division

Date: 00 09 01

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Introduction

Purpose

This management direction statement (MDS) provides management for newly designated Netalzul Meadows Park. It identifies key strategies that will be ranked according to priority and completed as funding permits. All development associated with these strategies is subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Policy.

Setting and Context

Netalzul Meadows Park covers 297 ha in the Harold-Price watershed, about 50-km north of Smithers, a community of about 12,000 people. (see Figure 1 for park location). The area is not accessible by road. The park lies within the asserted traditional territory of the Wet'suwet'en and Ned'u'ten people.

Located in the mid-reaches of Netalzul Creek, the park is comprised of an unusual shrub-carr and wet meadow complex and a spectacular waterfall with rare plant species in the spray zone. The water tumbles 100 m through a narrow chasm into a gorge before joining Harold Price Creek 1.5 km downstream. The valley-bottom shrub-carr/wet meadow complex is unique in the region.

As well as its conservation role, the park will attract naturalists, complementing the fossil beds protected at Driftwood Canyon Park and the moor bog at Burnt Cabin Bog Park, both northeast of Smithers. Tyhee Lake Park, 16-km southeast of Smithers on Highway 16, provides lakeshore recreation and full-facility camping. Nearby Babine Mountains Park provides extensive wilderness recreation opportunities and Babine River Park offers river wilderness adventure.

Protected Area Attributes

Conservation

- Babine Upland Ecoregion; SBSmc2 (moist cold sub-boreal spruce subzone, Babine variant)
- calciphytic spray zone supports rare plant species
- provincially rare Aster-Peavine-Meadow plant community
- summer and winter habitat for moose (winter browse is uncommon at this elevation)

Recreation and Tourism

- wildlife viewing, nature appreciation and study
- spectacular 100-m waterfall
- hunting, hiking

Cultural Heritage

- cultural features not identified to BC Parks
- a traditional use site may exist within the park

Figure 1

Netalzul Meadows Provincial Park Locator Map

Legend

- Highways
- Rivers/Lakes
- Coastline
- Netalzul Meadows Provincial Park
- Skeena Parks District

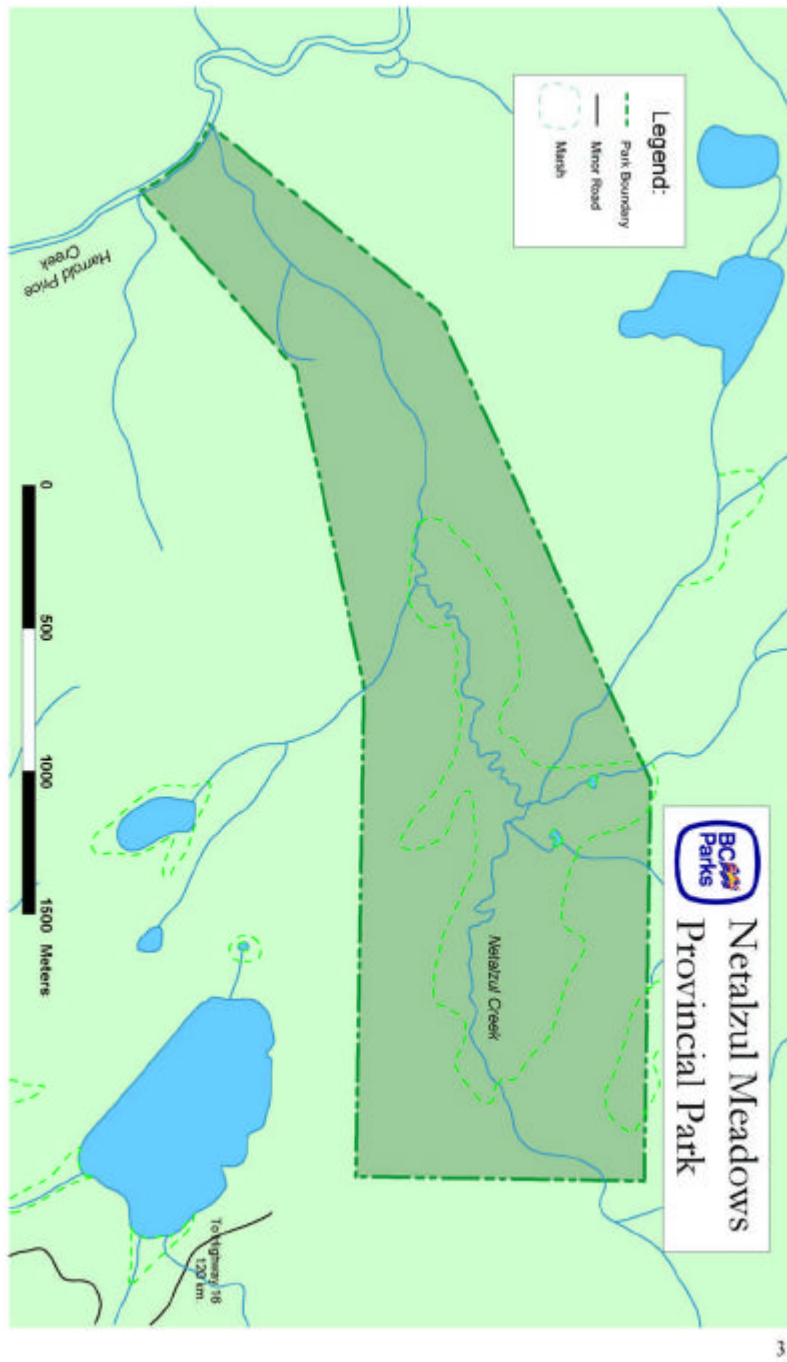


0 100 200 300 Kilometers

Scale 1:6,000,000



Figure 2



Significance in the Protected Areas System

- protects under-represented forested and non-forested SBSmc2 ecosystems of the Babine Upland Ecosection
- protects provincially significant special feature (Netalzul waterfall), supporting rare plant species

Land Uses, Tenures and Interests

Access

Upper Fulton Forest Service Road currently runs to within 1 km of park boundary. This road is scheduled for semi-permanent deactivation, allowing ATV access to a cutblock northeast of Camp Lake. Temporary Forest Service Roads will run within 1 km of the park (to the north, east and south) to remove beetle-killed trees. An ATV trail runs from the Camp Lake cutblock 1-km north to the meadows within the park. A rough foot trail runs west towards the waterfall.

Existing Tenures

- one trapping license includes the park area
- one guide-outfitter uses the area

Existing Land Use Activities and Facilities

- ATV trail to meadow; rough foot trail towards waterfalls
- wildlife blind for hunting and wildlife viewing
- log building foundation
- very light use for guided hunting and wildlife viewing (6 trips/yr.) and unguided hiking and hunting

Adjacent Patterns of Land Use

- surrounded by crown land subject to timber harvest (Forest License A16829); one existing cutblock within 1 km of park; three beetle salvage blocks planned within 1 km

First Nations Interests

- asserted traditional territory of the Wet'suwet'en and/or Lake Babine Nation
- Aboriginal Rights will be honoured and protected subject to conservation and safety concerns
- Wet'suwet'en staff have indicated the plan is acceptable to the Wet'suwet'en Chiefs following a review of the draft plan and a meeting with BC Parks staff
- Lake Babine Nation has expressed concern on the process of designation and ongoing consultation

Other Agency Interests

- BC Environment has an interest in the exceptional moose winter range in the area and concerns about increased ATV access in the watershed leading to increased legal and illegal hunting success

- BC Environment and the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund share an interest in protecting the rare plant communities identified in the area
- Ministry of Forests Research Program has an interest in protecting the ecological values of the meadows; they have carried out vegetation surveys since 1978 and are concerned about the impacts of recreational use on ecological values

Private and Public Stakeholder Interests

- Bulkley Valley Naturalists, Sierra Club
- local residents: Smithers, Telkwa, Hazelton, Moricetown communities
- BV Rod and Gun Club
- guide outfitter
- trapline holders

Role of Netalzul Meadows Park

Netalzul Meadows Park serves primarily a conservation role within the British Columbia protected areas system. The park protects under-represented forested and non-forested moist cold sub-boreal spruce (SBSmc2) ecosystems of the Babine Upland Ecoregion. Key aspects of this conservation role are protection of the regionally unique shrub-carr/wet meadow ecosystem with many rare plants and breeding birds and protection of a provincially significant special feature - a spectacular waterfall supporting rare plant species in its spray zone. The Prince Rupert Protected Areas Team designated the area as biologically and physically exceptional.

Secondarily, Netalzul Meadows Park provides outstanding nature appreciation and ecological research opportunities.

Management Commitments and Issues

Direction from Previous Planning

The Bulkley LRMP recommended Netalzul meadows and waterfall as a protected area in 1996.

Management Issues

The following management issues require attention:

Theme	Issue
Protecting ecological values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access to meadows has introduced non-native weedy plant species • increased opportunities for access (particularly motorised or horse) may disturb meadow ecology, displace wildlife and increase hunting (legal and illegal)
Protecting recreational values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • guide outfitter has history of guiding wildlife viewing and hunting in the park
Protecting cultural values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significance of cultural features is unknown
First Nations Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interest in ensuring aboriginal rights are respected • Lake Babine Nation concern on the process of designation and ongoing consultation

Management Strategy

The following table describes management strategies to deal with outstanding issues raised. In addition, figure 1 contains a list of acceptable land and resource uses for this park.

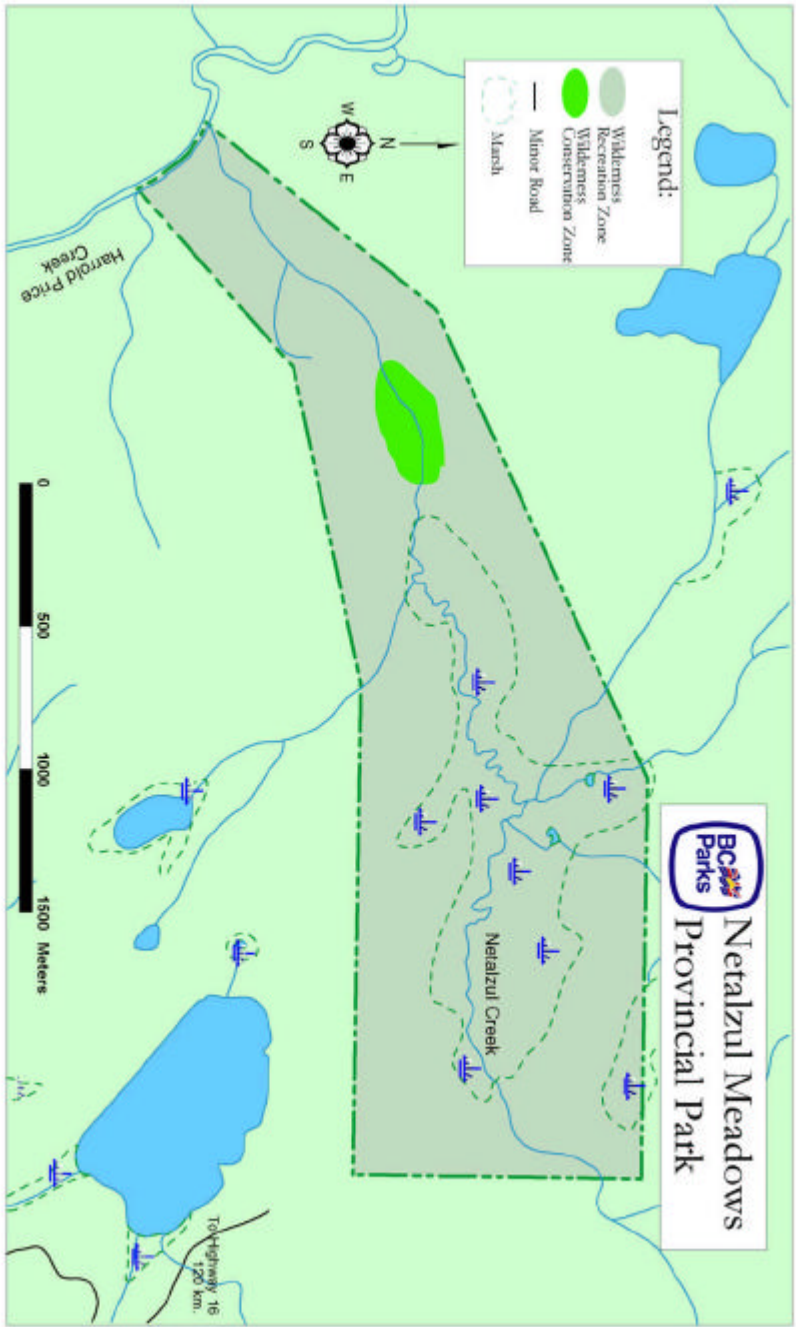
Priority Management Objectives	Priority Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the park's natural values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory fauna and flora; prepare Ecology Information Summary • Minimise non-native plant proliferation; monitor proliferation • Limit access to foot access only • Work with forest licensee and Ministry of Forests to write a higher level plan objective ensuring no permanent road access within 1 km of park boundary • Do not permit livestock grazing • Minimise trail development; avoid trails through meadows; investigate relocating existing trail through forested area to south (collaborate with Ministry of Forests through section 6 of Park Act) • Manage moose hunting in co-operation with BC Environment • Monitor use and any impacts of increased use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the park's recreational values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with guide outfitter to address trail location and maintenance, wildlife blind and access issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the park's cultural heritage values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate and collate existing information on cultural heritage values; prepare Cultural Features Information Summary; investigate possible Traditional Use Site
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Nation Values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal Rights may be exercised subject to safety and conservation concerns • Meet with the Lake Babine Nation to discuss park issues including the designation process • Meet with the Wet'suwet'en as issues require • Follow ministry guidelines on consultation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No development is anticipated

Consultation and Future Planning

Use of the area may increase with park designation and increased nearby road access. As use increases, BC Parks will consult with stakeholders to design measures to maintain the exceptional ecological values of the area. BC Parks will consult with the Wet'suwet'en and Ned'u'ten (Lake Babine Nation) about their use of the area and park management.

Preliminary Zoning

The waterfall and influenced area will be zoned as Wilderness Conservation to protect the rare plant community. The rest of the protected area will be zoned Wilderness Recreation to protect a remote, undisturbed natural landscape and to provide backcountry recreation opportunities dependent on a pristine environment. Use may be controlled to protect the environment. Recreation opportunities include nature appreciation, hiking and hunting.



**Appendix I. Netalzul Meadows Park – Table
of Acceptable Activities, Uses and Facilities**

Activity/Use/Facility	Acceptable Uses
Aboriginal Rights	Y
Hunting	Y
Fishing	N
Trapping	Y
Grazing (domestic livestock)	N
Recreational gold panning/rock hounding	N
Utility corridors	N
Communication sites	N
Horse use/pack animals	N
Guide outfitting (hunting)	Y
Guide outfitting (fishing)	N
Guide outfitting (nature tours)	Y
Guide outfitting (river rafting)	N
Cat-assisted skiing	N
Ski hills	N
Commercial recreation (facility-based)	N
Commercial recreation (non- facility-based)	N
Backcountry huts	N
Water control structures	N
Fish stocking and enhancement	N
Road access	N
Off-road access (snowmobiling)	N
Off-road access (motorised)	N
Off-road access (mechanical activities)	N
Motorised water access	N
Aircraft access	N
Fire management (suppression)	Y
Fire management (prescribed fire management)	M
Fire management (prevention)	M
Forest insect/disease control	N1
Noxious weed control	Y
Exotic insect/disease control	N1
Scientific research (specimen collection)	Y
Scientific research (manipulative activities)	M

Y = allowed subject to conditions identified in the management direction statement or management plan

M = may be permitted if compatible with protected area objectives

N = not allowed

N1 = allowed for expressed management purposes only

N2 = present and allowed to continue, but not normally allowed