

ORIGINAL PURPOSE To preserve an elevational sequence of three biogeoclimatic zones in a transition between coastal and interior climates.

OVERVIEW

Date established:	6 Feb. 1975	Location:	105 km N of Stewart, beside Highway 37
ORC #:	3059	Latitude:	56°54'N
Map number:	104 B/16	Longitude:	130°07'W

Total Area:	2,372 ha	Elevation:	460-1,730 m
Land:	2,372 ha		

Access: Access via Highway 37, but the Ningunsaw River must be crossed to get into the reserve.

Biogeoclimatic Zones: Interior Coastal Hemlock (ICH); Engelmann Spruce – Subalpine (ESSF) Fir; Boreal-Altai Fescue Alpine (BAFA)

Biogeoclimatic Variants: ICH vc Very Wet Cold; ICHwc Wet Cold; ESSFwv Wet Very Cold; BAFAunp Undifferentiated and Parkland

Ecosection: Northern Skeena Mountains

Region: Skeena

Management Area: Stikine

COMPOSITION

Physical: The reserve encloses a rounded mountain on the interior flank of the Coast Mountains. This mountain, in contrast to higher peaks south and west of it, was over-ridden by Pleistocene ice, and is too low to have developed alpine glaciers during the post-glacial period. All slope exposures except southwest are represented. An unnamed creek in the southern part of the reserve has eroded a deep, steep-sided valley into the sedimentary bedrock. Most of the reserve is gently to strongly sloping but small alluvial flats occur along the Ningunsaw River which flows in an arc around the north side of the reserve, marking the reserve boundary for half of its perimeter.

Biological: Wide elevation range, a variety of slope exposures, and frequent snow avalanches, result in considerable habitat diversity. Climatic conditions, that transition between the wet coast and dry interior, promote a diversity of plant species but create problems for zonal classification. This reserve is near the southern limit of the Boreal White and Black Spruce and Spruce-Willow-Birch Zones, the north-eastern edge of the Coastal Western Hemlock and Mountain Hemlock Zones, and north-western extremity of the Engelmann Spruce-Subalpine Fir Zone.

Alluvial lands along the Ningunsaw River are dominated by black cottonwood-alder-willow stands or mixed spruce-cottonwood forest. Western hemlock woods, mixed with either white spruce or lodgepole pine, occur on the lower slopes, and alder-dominated slide paths form ribbons through the forest at middle elevations. Typical subalpine forests are dominated by subalpine fir, Engelmann

spruce, Sitka alder, willows, one-leaved foamflower, and rosy twistedstalk. Barclay's and tea-leaved willows, scrub birch, sweet colts'-foot, and junipers are common near timberline. Alpine communities have not been described.

The reserve provides excellent year-round habitat for Grizzly Bears and good summer through fall range for Moose.

Cultural: Historic Telegraph Trail stretches across the reserve.

MANAGEMENT CONCERNS

SIGNIFICANT SPECIES	BC LIST STATUS	COSEWIC STATUS	CF PRIORITY
Grizzly Bear	Blue listed	Special Concern (2002)	2

THREATS

Climate Change: The warming temperatures and increase in growing degree days that have been projected by the International Panel on Climate Change, may result in the colonization of the alpine areas by migrating/expanding forest systems. Due to its geographical constraints, the alpine habitats may be decreased or lost. The transitional representation of the biogeoclimatic units in this reserve may also change as the distribution and species assemblages of terrestrial communities are altered in response to changes in the environment.

Recreation: Heli-skiing within the park south of the reserve may disturb mountain goats and other wildlife that use the reserve.

SCIENTIFIC NAMES OF SPECIES MENTIONED IN THE NINGUNSAW RIVER ER ACCOUNT

Flora

alder, Sitka (*Alnus viridis*)
 birch, scrub (*Betula nana*)
 colt's-foot, sweet (*Petasites frigidus*)
 cottonwood, black (*Populus trichocarpa* ssp. *trichocarpa*)
 fir, subalpine (*Abies lasiocarpa*)
 foamflower, one-leaved (*Tiarella unifoliata*)
 hemlock, western (*Tsuga heterophylla*)
 juniper, (*Juniperus* sp.)
 pine, lodgepole (*Pinus contorta*)
 spruce, black (*Picea mariana*)
 spruce, Engelmann (*Picea engelmannii*)
 spruce, white (*Picea glauca*)
 twistedstalk, rosy (*Streptopus lanceolatus*)
 willow, Barclay's (*Salix barclayi*)
 willow, plane-leaved (tea-leaved) (*Salix planifolia*)

Fauna

Bear, Grizzly (*Ursus arctos*)

Moose (*Alces americanus*)