



**Anhluut'ukwsim La x̄mihl  
Angwinga'asanskwhl Nisga'a  
Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park**

**MASTER PLAN**

*Joint Nisga'a / BC Parks Committee*

1997

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Grant Copeland & Associates



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Consultants:  
Grant Copeland & Associates  
Charles McKay, Nisga'a Parks Ranger

We are pleased to approve this master plan for Anhluut'ukwsim Laxmihl Angwinga'asanskwhl Nisga'a/Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park. The park is jointly managed by the Nisga'a Tribal Council and B.C. Parks.

The master plan emphasizes that the park has been designated and is managed to highlight both Nisga'a culture and history, and the unusual volcanic landscape.

We commit our governments to expeditious implementation of the master plan as demonstration of how the Nisga'a and B.C. Governments work together towards common objectives.

Anhluut'ukwsim Laxmihl Angwinga'asanskwhl Nisga'a/Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park is an outstanding member of B.C.'s park system and a fitting memorial to Nisga'a ancestors.

Approved/Nit'intkw

***Cathy McGregor***

Honourable Cathy McGregor  
Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks  
Government of B.C.

Luu'am'aamhl gagoodim wil hlaa dip hliisa'anhl hli luu ts'eewihl sagootkw tgun, siwatkwsit ahl `Anhluut'ukwsim Laxmihl Angwinga'asanskwhl Nisga'a. Ii lip nihl Nisga'a Tribal Council ganhl B.C. Parks dim t an x'alga<sub>x</sub>at.

Hlaa nihl dim haniit'aahl sagootkw tgun, an mahlihl agugan k'ap t'aahl anhisjoks tgun. Dim t gwinga'atdiit lip wilaa loohl Nisga'a, dim ii tk'al hukskwhl wiit'isim adaawak<sub>k</sub> sisgit ahl agugan t'aahl Laxmihl.

Dim anoogamhl hlaa dim sit'aatkwhl wiit'isim sagootkw tgun, dim wilaa aluut'aa dim t wilaa hooyihl Nisga'a ganhl B.C. Government hahlals tgun dim gan hugax<sub>x</sub>am hookst.

Hlaa niwil hukskwhl `Anhluut'ukwsim Laxmihl Angwinga'asanskwhl Nisga'a' ahl hlagats'uuhl Anhisjoks ahl British Columbia. Ii nigan k'ap t'aat dim ganiil wilaa ax'amgootkwhl ganiye'etgum ganhl ganits'lits'gum.

Nit'intkw/Approved

***Joe Gosnell***

Simo'ogit Hleek<sub>k</sub>  
[Chief Joe Gosnell]  
President  
Nisga'a Tribal Council

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This master plan has been directed by the  
Joint Nisga'a/B.C. Parks Committee

Nihl Committee Dip Gunhl Haxhuksgwit  
Ahl Nisga'a Ganhl B.C. Parks

Past and present members of the Committee  
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Hugh Markides, Co-Chair

Kw'ihl No'ó

[Steve Azak]

Dr. Frank Calder

Axhlaawaals

[Nelson Leeson]

Gordon MacDonald

Wii Ts'imilx

[Charles McKay]

K'aahl T'aa

[Karen Mercer]

Mike Murtha

Minee'eskw

[Rod Robinson, Sr.]

John Trehitt

*Then, when we saw the Nak-nok of the mountains rushing toward us clothed in fire, we fled for our lives. All that day we fled, and at sunset, as we looked back, we saw the spirit cloud with its huge wings outspread following us. We reached the foothills on this side, which we ascended, and there we took refuge, as all were exhausted, and could run no farther. The river of firestone, swept on by the cloud-spirit, drove the river before it across the valley, until it also reached the base of the foothills. Here it heaped up, the river which quenched and cooled the firestone, boiling and thundering, and leaving it heaped up along the bank as it is today. As night fell, the spirit cloud disappeared in the darkness, but the whole valley was on fire, which continued for many days.....*

From a story told by a Nisga'a elder  
to missionary W.H. Collison in 1874.

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## Hli Luu Ts'eewihl Sagootkw

Hlaa nihl ksgoogathl anhisjoks tgunhl t'aat ahl ts'im British Columbiahl siwatkwisit ahl Anhluut'ukwsim Laxmihl, Angwinga'asa'anskwhl Nisga'a, hli adaawagat an mahlihl wilaa sit'aatkwst, witgwit ahl dii lip wilaa loohl Nisga'a. Huxw nihl ksgoogat tgunhl anhisjokshl dim min-gax'algaxdihl aluugigut ganhl mismaaksgum gat.

Hlaa nihl an'alk'al ganhl anhisjoks tgunhl dim hluut'ukwsit hlaxwhl sagootkw tgun: Wil Ksibaxhl Mihl, Lax Mihl, Ksi Wil Ksibaxhl Mihl, Sii Aks ganhl Lisims. Ii hlagats'uuthl Sii T'ax ganhl k' uba akshl lagam gal-golit ts'im Sii Aks ganhl Lisims, wil yuwim hoondii.

Sa'aluut'aayihl sagootkw tgun wilaa t sagagetkwhl Nisga'ahl dii lip wilaa loodiit, gan wilt naam gwinga'atdiit ahl haniijok wilaa t habooldiithl txaa nitkwshl nii wilit lax anhluut'ukwsim ts'eets'kwidd.

Nihl gan k'ap t'aahl anhisjoks tgun, dim wilaa gwinga'atkwhl wilaa jabihl laxmihl, an'alk'al, ganhl lip wilaa loodiit.

Dim japkwshl genx, dim ii bax akhlkwt awa'ahl Wil Ksi Baxhl Mihl. Dim ii japkwshl wilp dim wil lumagoontkwhl wilaa jabihl laxmihl. Ii nihl wilp tgun dim wil luu miilukwhl Nisga'a bagwit ahl txaa nitkwshl galts'ipts'ap. Huxw nihl wilp tgunhl dim hooxditt jidaa hlaat gwinga'atdiit lip wilaa loodiit ahl liksgigadim gat.

Txaa nitkwshl anhisjoks ganhl an'alk'alhl dim lihldiit, dim iit k'aa sagagetkwdiit wilaa wilhl anhluut'ukwsim laxmihl ganhl lax ts'eets'iks.

Gan wilhl hlaa nihl Anhluut'ukwsim Laxmihl ganhl lip wilaa loodiit dim t an gwinga'adihl luusaanaahla'askw ahl txaa nitkws gat dim t an ga'at bagwit ansdo'ohl haniijok.



## Plan Highlights

Anhluut'ukwsim Laxmihl Angwinga'asanskwhl Nisga'a (Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park) is the first provincial park within the Province of British Columbia established to combine interpretation of natural features and native culture. It is also the first provincial park to be jointly managed by a First Nation and BC Parks.

Primary natural features of the park to be protected under this master plan include Wil ksibaxhl Muhl (Wil ksibaxhl Muhl (volcanic crater and cone area), Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed) which extends down Crater Creek, Sii Aks (Tseax River) and along K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River). Secondary features include Sii T'ax (Lava Lake), small scenic lakes along Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River), excellent salmon and Steelhead fishing along Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River), and K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River).

The master plan gives prominence to the rich culture of the Nisga'a people who welcome visitors to their aboriginal territory to share their culture and learn about traditional Nisga'a sustainable management practices.

This outstanding combination of the Park's recent volcanic activity, scenery, and the Nisga'a culture justifies allocation of high priority to the development of the Park.

Development will include the construction of a trail to access the cone area, the construction of an interpretive center, and a Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed) interpretive trail. The interpretive center will include a theater for performances of dancers from the Nisga'a communities and other facilities designed to help the Nisga'a share their culture with visitors from around the world.

Nearly all of the park is protected within management zones where protection of fragile volcanic and wilderness features is the primary management consideration.

With the above combination of natural features and cultural interpretation, Anhluut'ukwsim Laxmihl Angwinga'asanskwhl Nisga'a will provide a world class natural and cultural learning experience.



**Nisga'a Fisherman and fish processing**



Melita Lake



Nisga'a Park Ranger Charles McKay and Tree Cast Near Virgin Cave



Nass River near mouth of Tseax River

## Introduction

Anhluut'ukwsim Laxmihl Angwinga'asanskwhl Nisga'a (Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park) is 17,683 hectares in size. It is a Class A provincial park. As a major addition to the Provincial Park System, the Park requires a comprehensive plan to guide the management of resources and visitor activity over the long term.

A basic function of this Master Plan is to define an optimum balance between protection and use of the resources. The emphasis of this Master Plan on the protection of resources within the park will guide the development of more specific vegetation, wildlife, water, fire, and other management plans.

The Master Plan will influence decisions about the types, levels and locations of recreational use, activities and facilities. The Plan will also identify the desired relationship between the Park and adjacent land use issues such as access roads and forest practices.

A Background Report on the Park has also been prepared to provide information on the rationale behind the Master Plan. .

The Park serves both conservation and recreation roles defined in the legislative mandate of BC Parks (Appendix A). In most of the park, conservation will be the primary management consideration. Protection of the fragile volcanic features of the park will receive special priority.

The Nisga'a Highway through the Park provides relatively easy access to outstanding outdoor nature interpretation opportunities which focus on the volcanic features and scenic natural features of the Park. The Park also provides world class opportunities to learn about the Nisga'a culture.

The Master Plan establishes an overall framework and vision for compatible recreation and education uses in the park. It also addresses the role of various forms of motorized access.

This Master Plan has been developed by the Joint Nisga'a / BC Parks Management Committee. It was formally presented to the Nisga'a Tribal Convention in April 1993 in draft form and distributed to Nisga'a communities and the public for comment and input before it was amended and adopted by the Committee and reviewed and ratified by the Nisga'a Tribal Council and the BC Government.

## The Role of the Park

### Regional and Provincial Context

Anhluut'ukwsim Laxmihl Angwinga'asanskwhl Nisga'a (Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park) is one of the newest additions to the provincial park system and is the first provincial park to be jointly managed by a native Indian organization and BC Parks. It is also the first provincial park to offer combined interpretation of recent volcanic activity and native culture.

It is intended that the Park be developed as a "flagship" attraction within the provincial park system, complementing other existing attractions in the northwest region of B.C. such as the existing K'san Village near Hazelton, the potential of Kitselas Canyon near Terrace, and the Gwaii Haanas / South Moresby National Park Reserve on the Queen Charlotte Islands which is currently under development.

The Park features the rich culture of the Nisga'a people who have lived in their territory (see Map 1: Nisga'a Territory and Communities) since time immemorial. The Park serves as a memorial to over 2,000 Nisga'a who were killed by the eruption. It is intended that an interpretive center will be constructed within the Park to provide historical natural and cultural interpretation and as a place where the Nisga'a people can share their culture with the outside world.

A key role of the Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park in British Columbia's system of parks will be to study, investigate, and implement traditional Nisga'a sustainable management approaches and techniques.

In achieving a provincial park system that reflects the needs and capabilities of the people it serves, BC Parks has developed a series of conservation and recreation goals, shown in Appendix A. Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park plays a significant role in meeting these goals, as described below.

### Conservation Role

The park provides minor representation of the Nass Basin and Nass Ranges eco-sections. Nearly all of the park is protected in Wilderness Recreation, Special Feature, and Natural Environment Zones where conservation is the primary management consideration. Special efforts are being made to protect the fragile cone area and other volcanic features which are located throughout the park.

Most of the upper Crater Creek watershed is protected as wilderness where natural processes are allowed to continue without human interference or impact from regular recreation use.

Cultural features which include historic Nisga'a villages and supernatural sites are protected.

Map 1 Not Available

Nisga'a Territory & Communities

## **Recreation Role**

Outstanding nature interpretation opportunities are offered within the scenic setting of the park. Relatively easy access is available from the highway which runs through the park. These opportunities have already attracted regional, national and international interest.

Visitors traveling the highway through the park witness the interesting features of the Lax̄ Mihil (the Lava Bed) from the road. Additional opportunities will be developed to provide guided tours via backcountry road / trail to the extremely interesting and scenic cone area, nature interpretation along the scenic Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) and an interpretive trail near the south bank of K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River).

## **Cultural Interpretation**

Development of the proposed Nisga'a cultural and interpretive center will offer visitors an excellent opportunity to learn about past and present Nisga'a culture. The cultural center will include museum and display facilities and a large theater designed to accommodate choreographed Nisga'a dances. It is anticipated that the Nisga'a cultural center will become the park's key tourist attraction.

Visitors will be enticed to spend two days in the park which could include a guided day hike to the cone area, part of a day in the cultural center and on the nearby Lax̄ Mihil (the Lava Bed) interpretive trail, and part of a day exploring other parts of the park and perhaps doing some fishing. This experience, when combined with other regional attractions, will constitute a world class natural and cultural learning experience.

## Park Zoning

In planning and managing parks, BC Parks relies on zoning, which divides a park into logical units to apply uniform and consistent management objectives. Through identification of natural and recreational values, and analysis of existing and projected patterns of access and recreation use, the zoning defines levels and criteria for resource and visitor services management. See Appendix B for description of all zoning categories within the BC Park system.

As shown in Map 2: Park Zoning, Anhluut'ukwsim Laxmihl Angwinga'asanskwhl Nisga'a (Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park) is separated into four zones --- Wilderness Recreation, Special Feature, Natural Environment, and Intensive Recreation. To serve the Park's primary function of conservation, most of the park is zoned under the first three protective designations.

### Wilderness Recreation Zone

The objective of this zone is to protect remote, undisturbed natural landscapes and to provide backcountry recreation opportunities which are dependent on a pristine environment. Facility development is minimal, at a level sufficient to satisfy user needs and concentrate use to protect the overall environment of the park. Approved facilities include trails, trail signs, designated camping areas, and sanitary facilities. The area designated Wilderness Recreation is large enough to allow natural ecological processes to occur largely uninfluenced by human activity, and where low levels of recreation use are permitted but confined to specific primitive facilities and sites.

The zone covers most of the upper Crater Creek watershed above the Cone Special Feature Zone and most of the Park's alpine area. The portion of the park designated as Recreation Area is within this zone.

Helicopter use will be restricted to emergency uses and park improvement projects. No other motorized vehicles will be allowed in the Wilderness Recreation Zone.

### Cone Special Feature Zone

The objective of this zone is to protect and present the rare, fragile, and nationally significant natural features found in the volcanic cone area. To a large extent, this national significance stems from its recent age and accessibility. Visitor access to the cone area may only be allowed on guided tours or under special permit. If necessary for protection, the entire zone may be closed to the public during the off-season by prohibiting access and closing the Ross Lake



Map 2 Not Available

Park Zoning

access road at the Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) bridge. Visitation to the small cone area will not be allowed and other extremely fragile features will be posted off limits. Visitors will be instructed by their guides to stay on the cone trail.

Helicopter access will be limited to emergency purposes, park improvement projects, and, on a permit basis, to transport Nisga'a elders and special guests to the cone area on special occasions.

### **Natural Environment Zone**

The objective of this zone is to protect natural and cultural heritage values, to provide a management buffer and access between the highway corridor and the Wilderness Recreation and Special Feature Zones, and to provide for seasonal snowmobile use along an alpine ridge on the border of the park. Recreational opportunities will be managed in a largely undisturbed natural state to keep impacts below levels that will impair park resources or significantly reduce user satisfaction.

In Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park, this zone encompasses most of Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed) from the Cone Special Feature Zone down Crater Creek, down Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) and west along the south side of K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) to the end of the Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed). The zone also encompasses the Sii T'ax (Lava Lake) area south of Crater Creek and the ridge which borders the southeast boundary of the Wilderness Recreation Zone. The higher levels of use and traffic associated with the highway corridor preclude a sense of wilderness isolation. Facilities within the Natural Environment Zone will be moderately developed with nature and interpretation trails, boater's campsites and picnic sites.

Motorized road access will be limited within the park to the existing highway, an improved Ross Lake access road to the Cone and alpine trailheads, and access roads to the proposed campground, boat launching ramps, picnic areas, and Nisga'a villages. Except for limited industrial access, all other roads will be closed to motorized vehicles. The use of motorized boats will be restricted to small motors on Sii T'ax (Lava Lake).

### **Intensive Recreation Zone**

The objective of this zone is to provide for a variety of readily accessible, facility-oriented recreation opportunities. In Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park this will include areas designated for an interim campground and temporary visitor center, an eventual campground site development bordering the Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River), and the proposed Nisga'a cultural and interpretation center complex near the edge of Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed) and K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River). Small areas near Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) highway bridge, Ksi Luux (Vetter Falls), and the area connecting lower Crater Creek and the Sii T'ax (Lava Lake) picnic site, are also included in the Intensive Recreation Zone. The management intent of this designation is to accommodate high levels of vehicle-based users in as natural a setting as possible.

## Natural and Cultural Resources Management

Anhluut'ukwsim Laxmihl Angwinga'asanskwhl Nisga'a (Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park) contributes to meeting both of the Conservation goals established by BC Parks:

Conservation Goal #1 --- To conserve British Columbia's natural diversity by protecting viable, representative examples of different landscapes.

Conservation Goal #2 --- To protect British Columbia's key natural and cultural features, including outstanding examples of wildlife, old growth forests, waterfalls and cultural artifacts.

This section specifies resource management objectives and describes actions to be undertaken to protect natural features and enhance opportunities for cultural interpretation in the park.

### Geology

The Nisga'a alkali basalt flow is one of the youngest and most accessible volcanic features in British Columbia. According to most estimates, the latest volcanic activity probably occurred during the mid 1770's. The eruption produced a large volume of lava which flowed from the cone down Crater Creek to Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) where a lava dam was formed which substantially increased the area of what is now called Sii T'ax (Lava Lake). Here Lax Mihl (the Lava Bed) turned downstream along the Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) to K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) where it pushed the river to the north side of the valley. Most of the volume of Lax Mihl (the Lava Bed) then turned west and flowed out over the K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) flood plain. This volcanic activity constitutes the primary natural feature of the Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park and the Park is created to commemorate approximately 2,000 Nisga'a who perished during the tragic event. (see Map 3: Major Geological Features)

### Objectives:

- To preserve the natural geologic features of the park.
- To conduct research and provide interpretive facilities and services featuring the Nisga'a volcanic occurrence from both Nisga'a and scientific points of view. The volcanic history and artifacts of the park will serve as its primary natural feature. Research and interpretation will also include the volcanic process and the Nisga'a Cone's relationship to other volcanoes in the Pacific Ring of Fire.

Map 3 Not Available

Geological Features

Actions:

- Protection of fragile special features such as hornitos, tree moulds, fissure caves and vents, and volcanic cones will be given highest priority in park management.

**Picture Not Available**

## Small tree mould

- Conservation of the Cone Special Feature Zone will be closely monitored during the peak summer season by park ranger staff who will serve the dual functions of protecting the area from damage, and providing guiding and interpretive services for visitors.
- Interpretive trails and signage will be developed for the Cone Special Feature Zone and the Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed) area. These outdoor interpretive facilities and services will be supplemented by facilities and services to be offered in the proposed interpretive center. Geologic features are scattered throughout the park. The need to protect them by controlling access requires closure of four wheel drive roads and cat tracks and subsequent enforcement.
- Removing lava from the park is strictly prohibited. Use of lava shall be expressly approved by the Joint Nisga'a / BC Parks Management Committee.

**Water**

High quality water is an important component of the conservation and recreation roles of the Park.

**Picture Not Available**

Ksi Luux (Vetter Falls) during high water

Objective:

- To maintain the pure, unpolluted quality of water within the park for aesthetic, ecological and health considerations.

Actions:

- Avoid water impoundments, diversions and future domestic use projects within the park, except to protect transportation facilities from flooding or erosion.
- Ensure that sanitary facilities are properly designed and located.
- Develop contingency plans with the Provincial Emergency Program and the Ministry of Transportation and Highways to address accidental spills along the highway corridor.

**Vegetation**

Vegetation is an important component of wildlife habitats and contributes to the visual and recreational attractions of the park. Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park contains four of the province's fourteen biogeoclimatic units or zones (Mountain Hemlock, Interior Cedar Hemlock, Coastal Western Hemlock and Alpine Tundra). The park contains large specimens of hemlock, Sitka spruce, and western red cedar and rare associations of moss and lichen communities growing on Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed).

Management of peoples' activities is important to safeguard important recreation values, facilities, and commercial forests on adjacent lands. The dry moss and lichen vegetation of Lax̄ Muhl (the Lava Bed) is particularly vulnerable to fire damage and trampling.

**Picture Not Available**

Lax̄ Muhl (the Lava Bed) lichen

Objectives:

- To maintain natural plant communities and species that create or contribute to the conservation, visual and recreational attractions of Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed park.
- To maintain, where compatible with other park objectives, the established pattern of varied age forest stands and other plant communities, reflecting the natural processes that occur in unmanaged forests.
- To maintain the diversity of wildlife vegetation habitats in the park.
- To preserve special sensitive and rare native plant communities and species, including the sensitive lichens, mosses and liverwort communities associated with the Lax̄ Muhl (the Lava Bed) and cone areas and the alpine flower meadows in the Mt. Hoefft area.
- To encourage low impact scientific studies to improve the knowledge of the park's vegetation.
- To discourage the establishment of non-native species.

- To foster public appreciation of forest and vegetation values.

### **Picture Not Available**

Fragile plants growing on rim of crater require protective management

#### Actions:

- Develop a long-term vegetation management strategy for the park. To a large extent this strategy should be based on the comprehensive *Vegetational Analysis of the Proposed Tseax Park* by Kathy Kromm. Additional information is required on the forest inventory, more work is needed on identifying key wildlife habitats, a detailed assessment of the fire history of the area is required, and research is needed to identify appropriate management techniques which can be utilized in protecting sensitive Lax̱ Míhl (the Lava Bed) vegetation.
- Prepare a fire management strategy to protect the park vegetation, park infrastructure and maintain plant and animal diversity. The strategy should specify public evacuation measures, priority control areas and the most suitable fire control methods. Until the fire management strategy is prepared, all wildfires are subject to initial attack either by the Ministry of Forests or BC Parks. The fire management strategy will include provisions restricting campfires to developed stoves and fire pits within established campgrounds and picnic areas, the posting of signs with information regarding the extreme fire hazards in the park, and a prohibition of controlled burning of vegetation to expose geologic features.
- Protect sensitive or unique vegetation communities from adverse impacts of recreational uses. Methods of protection may include requiring visitors to stay on designated trails, prohibiting the use of horses, mountain bikes, and all forms of motorized travel, and special trail improvement such as boardwalks and paved



surfaces. Environmental impact assessments will be undertaken for all trail and road construction projects.

- Maintain close contact with the Ministry of Forests and industry in the review of the forest harvesting plans in the various drainages adjacent to the park to protect aesthetics, recreation and wilderness values.
- Implement restoration forestry inside and outside the Park and selection cutting outside the Park in the areas shown on Map 4 and described on page 27. Restoration forestry practices will help restore the natural ecology and biodiversity of the original forest type. Selection cutting will be done to preserve visual quality and contribute towards the maintenance of the natural ecology and biodiversity of the original forest type.
- Retain trees and snags for wildlife habitat except those that present a hazard to people or facilities.
- Carefully develop the future Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) campground to preserve as many trees as possible while minimizing the hazards from blowdowns. An environmental impact assessment will be conducted prior to campground construction.

## **Wildlife**

Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park is home to a variety of wildlife species including mountain goat, moose, blacktail deer, wolf, grizzly bear and black bear. In providing protection for these animals, steps must be taken to preserve critical habitats and reduce mortalities resulting from highway traffic and poachers.

Wildlife viewing is a popular recreational opportunity and often enhances the experience of those visiting the park. However, it is important that animals are not disturbed, particularly during winter and when feeding.

### Objectives:

- To maintain and protect the natural diversity of wildlife species and populations.
- To protect and reverse the deterioration of critical habitats. Enhancement may be considered where it is compatible with other park conservation objectives.
- To provide safe public viewing and non-consumptive appreciation of wildlife.
- To encourage scientific research in the park, particularly programs which offer benefits to park management.

Actions:

- Develop a long-term management plan for wildlife in the park based on ongoing wildlife inventory work; analysis of habitat requirements; vegetation management strategy; the role of fire, insect and disease in terms of creating a range of habitats including snags for various bird and animal species; and transboundary management considerations.

**Picture Not Available****Bear hazard area along lower Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River)**

- Care will be taken to minimize potential bear-human interactions in the course of developing recreational facilities. A bear hazard assessment will be undertaken for the Park with priority on the lower Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) and K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) which are prime bear feeding-on-salmon sites. Until this assessment has been completed, the section nearest the mouth of the river (see Map 4) will be posted as a bear hazard area. A special bear hazard sign will be placed at the highway to warn visitors about the bear hazard and urge visitors to stay out of the area.
- Monitor the impact of snowmobile use within the Natural Environment Zone along the ridge on the southeast border of the park on wildlife, particularly the resident mountain goat population.
- Trap lines may be purchased as they become available.
- Traditional Nisga'a sustenance rights will be recognized.
- Trophy hunting and other non-Nisga'a hunting will not be allowed in the park.
- Develop wildlife viewing opportunities which are consistent with other management objectives of the park.

Map 4 Not Available  
Recommended Park Additions and Special Management Areas

- Protect the park's limited wetlands to maintain the natural environment and the diverse bird populations.

## **Fish**

There are three main fish habitats within the park: Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River), Tseax Overflow, and Ts'oohl Ts'ap (Zolzap) Slough. Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) provides the most important habitat in the park area, providing home to all five species of salmon and steelhead. Due to the small size of the runs, the river is restricted in terms of the sports fishery. The Tseax Overflow, located at kilometer 91 of the highway, has steelhead and trout. The Zolzap Slough has a small number of trout and coho with pink and chum salmon found at the lower reaches. Due to low nutrients, Sii T'ax (Lava Lake) does not provide good fish habitat.

A fisheries enhancement project is being conducted by the Nisga'a Tribal Council and the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans on Ksi Sii Aks.

The main issues of concern relative to fishing within the park area are to avoid overfishing and to minimize conflicts with bears feeding on salmon.

### Objective:

- To conserve viable natural fish populations while providing safe opportunities for viewing and an ecologically sustainable level of sports fishing.

### Actions:

- Continue to work with the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Nisga'a Tribal Council on fisheries enhancement projects which are compatible with park management objectives.
- Work with Fisheries and Oceans and BC Fish and Wildlife to conduct a study of the carrying capacity of the Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River), the Tseax Overflow and the Ts'oohl Ts'ap (Zolzap) Slough for sports fishing.
- The level of guided sports fishing will be limited (see page 54).
- Maintain all alpine lakes in their natural state.

## **Park Boundary**

The boundary of the Park reflects compromise between the ideal of following natural features such as mountain ridges and excluding commercially viable forest land to accommodate the long term commitment to the forest industry for logging.

Although most of the existing park boundary is satisfactory in terms of meeting the conservation and recreation objectives of the park, there is a need to make a minor boundary adjustment to protect an important cultural site on Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River).

Objectives:

- To work with other agencies to conserve areas adjacent to the park that have wildlife, recreation and aesthetic value.
- To investigate opportunities to establish park boundaries that follow natural boundaries and modify park boundaries when necessary to protect park values.

Actions:

- Work with the Ministry of Forests, BC Environment, BC Lands and the Kitimat-Stikine Regional District to protect wildlife, recreation and aesthetic values along park boundaries and control access into the Wilderness Recreation and Special Feature Zones.
- Initiate detailed studies and discussion with various agencies, organizations and the holder of the tree farm license to review the area on the east side of the Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) from approximately one-half kilometer north of the Fulmar logging road to the proposed future campground site on the river, as a possible addition to the park (see Map 4). This is necessary to include the historic fish camp which was located on the lake which existed in this area before the Lax Mihil (the Lava Bed). This addition would also provide an important buffer between the logging activity outside the park and the proposed campground and nature trail.
- Work with Tree Farm Licensees and the Ministry of Forests to restore logged areas within the park and to initiate a system of special management in the following areas (Map 4):
  1. The area between the Ross Lake access road and the existing park boundary north of Crater Creek. Forests within this area which have been logged should be restored and unlogged parts preserved. The access road to the Cone Trail will be improved and maintained to two-wheel drive standards.
  2. The lower reaches of Ksga'maal (Shumal Creek) which are visible from the site of the proposed interpretive center on the edge of Lax Mihil (the Lava Bed) bordering K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River).
  3. The visible slopes above the park boundary and at least up to an elevation of 1500 feet on west side of Sii T'ax (Lava Lake). This area should

include the lower part of the Alder Creek valley where a boater's campsite and trail is proposed.

4. Adding a buffer strip along the unnamed creek and canyon south of the Cone area.
- Work with the Nisga'a communities which own the existing Indian reserves bordering Anhluut'ukwsim Laxmihl Angwinga'asanskwhl Nisga'a (Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park) and K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) to ensure that future uses of these reserves are compatible with the management objectives of this plan. Coordinated management is particularly important for Quinogag IR 61 adjacent to the proposed cultural center site which is needed for the site of the proposed reconstruction of an early Nisga'a village and as a take-out for proposed river tours.

### **Inholdings and Other Tenures**

Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park serves as an important transportation corridor linking the Nisga'a communities to Terrace. BC Hydro's transmission line crosses through a section of the park near the north end of Sii T'ax (Lava Lake). Other past and present park uses include logging access roads, gravel pits, and former log sorting. (see Background Report for details). There are also some residential buildings on private property within the park along the east shore of Wii Lax K'ap (Spencer Lake).

#### Objectives:

- To manage non-conforming inholdings and tenures to meet the conservation role of the park.
- To reduce, where possible, the number of non-conforming uses and tenures.
- To minimize environmental and visual impacts of non-conforming uses.

#### Actions:

- Work with the Ministry of Transportation and Highways to upgrade the Nisga'a highway to paved highway standards and eliminate the severe flooding hazard at Sii T'ax (Lava Lake). New highway construction should be limited to the existing road location and access roads to the Nisga'a villages of New Aiyansh and Gitwinksihlkw (Canyon City) and should be carefully planned to minimize disturbance to key heritage sites.
- Continue to work with utility and transportation agencies to minimize visual and environmental impacts. Grooming of vegetation along the existing rights-of-way

will be carefully done by hand methods. Herbicides and the use of large rotary mulchers will not be permitted.

- All previously existing mineral claims within the Park have expired. New mineral claims are not allowed within the Park.
- As funds permit, purchase the privately owned properties within the park and restore this land to its natural condition.

### **Cultural Resources**

The Nisga'a people have lived in K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass Valley) since time immemorial. Through Ayuukhl Nisga'a (Nisga'a law), and Adawaak (oral legends, literature and customs) passed on by successive generations, the Nisga'a way of life has been maintained, through countless centuries before European contact, to the present. Nisga'a cosmology encompasses the harmony and balance between people and the other elements of the environment in which they live. A delicate balance has been integrated into the Nisga'a life to provide for the collective well-being of their families. The Nisga'a way is one of sharing and of being closely related to the land.

### **Picture Not Available**

Nisga'a petroglyph on bank of K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River)

The Nisga'a people wish to share their rich history and culture with those visiting their land. The Nisga'a history and cultural continuity thus constitutes the primary cultural feature of the park.

Nisga'a ownership of the land is based on complex social, spiritual and traditional-legal customs. This traditional ownership encompasses Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed) of K'alii Aksim Lisims (the Nass Valley). Nisga'a title holders within the park boundary are shown on Map 5.

Place names were established by the Nisga'a people long before European contact. These pre-eruption place names are shown on Map 6.

The latest volcanic eruption, which by most accounts occurred during the 1770's, had a profound and tragic impact on the Nisga'a people, most of whom lived along K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) in the vicinity of Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed). Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed) completely buried three Nisga'a villages and pushed K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) across the floodplain to the north. It is

Map 5 Not Available

Nisga'a Title Holders



Map 6 Not Available  
Pre-Eruption Place Names

NOTE:

Further research is being conducted by the Ayuukhl (Nisga'a Law) Committee.

LEGEND

- 1 Lax Wilaxk' ap
- 2 Lax Ksiluux
- 3 Lakalzap
- 4 Gingoix
- 5 Lisims
- 6 Lake
- 7 Ksigimwits ax
- 8 Wilba Yaskw
- 9 Ksiluux River
- 10 Genuu Axwt

Park Boundary

Pre-Eruption River  
Creek Location

**NISGA'A  
PARK  
NISGA'A  
PARK**

estimated that approximately 2,000 Nisga'a perished during the period of the eruption. The Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park has been established as a memorial to those people.

After the volcanic eruption most of the survivors relocated in new villages along the river. Today, many of the descendants of these people live in the Nisga'a villages of Gitwinksihlkw (Canyon City) and New Aiyansh adjacent to the park.

Objectives:

- To protect Nisga'a cultural artifacts, village sites and supernatural places.
- To make Nisga'a history and culture the primary cultural feature of the park and provide appropriate opportunities for the Nisga'a to share their history and culture with visitors.

Actions:

- Removal or alteration of Nisga'a cultural artifacts such as petroglyphs and pictographs is prohibited. Excavation of Nisga'a historic sites is also prohibited without the express permission of the Joint Nisga'a / BC Parks Management Committee. Nisga'a cultural sites will be protected by controlling vehicular access, erecting barricades and fences, a patrolling program by Nisga'a park rangers, and enforcement measures as provided by the Park Act.

**Picture Not Available**

Nisga'a pictographs along Sii T'ax (Lava Lake) have been defaced with graffiti

- Work with the Nisga'a Tribal Council on the development within the park of a world class Nisga'a interpretive center focusing on natural and cultural heritage. In addition to serving as the interpretive center for the park, this facility will also serve as a cultural center for the Nisga'a people. The center will be managed by the Joint Nisga'a / BC Parks Management Committee.

- Provide effective incentives and special training for, and institute hiring of, Nisga'a people to work in the park.

### **Visual Resources**

The Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park is located in an area with high intrinsic visual amenities. Visual highlights include K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) and surrounding mountains. Sections of Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) offer beautiful, interesting lava pools with a lush carpet of moss in a forested setting. The pristine view from the cone of the upper Crater Creek valley to the east and mountains to the west is stunning. The high visual quality of the park is enhanced by the changes which occur through the four seasons, with the fall colors being the most scenic. Boating K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) provides an opportunity to see a very beautiful riverine environment. Visual quality of the park remains high despite substantial depreciation from adjacent extensive clearcut logging.

### **Picture Not Available**

Viewscape as seen looking west down Crater Creek from the main Cone

#### Objective:

- To retain views within and looking outside the park so that the visual qualities and wilderness atmosphere of the park are protected.

#### Actions:

- Work with the Ministry of Forests and adjacent Tree Farm Licensees to minimize visual impacts of logging activities. Selection logging is encouraged within areas which are highly visible from the park, particularly across K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) from the proposed cultural center site and above the west side of Sii T'ax (Lava Lake).

- Work with the Ministry of Transportation and Highways to manage the highway corridor in an environmentally sensitive manner. Existing gravel pits will be re-stored and landscaped to natural conditions after the road is improved and paved.
- Provide and manage a variety of road-side interpretation viewpoints and pull-overs along the highway.
- Locate and design all park facilities in harmony with the visual setting. Signing should incorporate the motif established by the three new entrance signs. Interpretive signs made with the use of high quality fabrication techniques can be adapted to this motif.

### **Outdoor Recreation Features**

Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park protects outstanding natural and cultural features such as the cone and Ta'am Baxhl Muhl (Melita Lake) area, Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) lava pools, falls and grottos, the meeting of lava with K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River), numerous features of Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed), Sii T'ax (Lava Lake), and the Mount Hoeft alpine area. All of these features contribute to Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park's recreation and conservation role, but vary in terms of sensitivity and ability to support visitors. Consequently, they require different management prescriptions. These outdoor recreation features provide for a quality recreational and natural / cultural history learning experience which is unique in Canada.

#### Objective:

- To manage recreational use of resources and special features for minimal impact so that activities are sustainable and the resources are protected for present and future generations.

#### Actions:

- Manage recreation use according to zoning. This will include limiting visitation of the extremely sensitive Cone Special Feature Zone to guided tours and/or permission by special permit, and limited use of the alpine wildflower meadows in the Wilderness Recreation Zone. Due to resource fragility, features and areas may be closed to visitation and/or not promoted for visitation.
- Assess the carrying capacity of Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) corridor and manage sport fishing, nature interpretation, and other recreational uses accordingly.
- Locate and design all park facilities in harmony with the visual setting and the suggestions specified above under Visual Resources.

- Undertake environmental assessment for recreation development projects not specified in this plan.

**Picture Not Available**

Ta'am Baxhl Muhl (Melita Lake) during October

**Picture Not Available**

Ta'am Baxhl Muhl (Melita Lake) without water during April  
Photo by Margaret Vanderberg

## Visitor Services

### General Concept

To provide services to park visitors, BC Parks has four recreation system goals, as presented in Appendix A. Anhluut'ukwsim Laxmihl Angwinga'asanskwhl Nisga'a (Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park) meets all four of these goals and also offers distinctive world-class cultural interpretation experiences with the Nisga'a people.

Recreation Goal #1 --- To provide park attractions and services which enhance tourism travel routes.

The Nisga'a highway connects the Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park with the town of Terrace to the south and via a Forest Road to Highway 37 to the east. As it has been improved, Highway 37 has become a major tourism route leading north from the Yellowhead highway to northern British Columbia, Yukon and Alaska. A range of visitors from local travelers to international tourists enjoy driving north to Alaska. They stop at view-points, picnic sites, interpretive stops and campgrounds. It is intended and expected that a sizable proportion of these tourists will detour on the Nisga'a highway to visit the Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park.

Recreation Goal #2 --- To provide park attractions which serve as or improve key destinations for outdoor recreation holidays.

Once the proposed interpretive facilities are in place, many of those traveling through the area can be expected to spend a day or two in the park to hike into the cone area, utilize the interpretive trails, and participate in the activities offered in the cultural center.

In combination with other First Nation cultural interpretive facilities in the region, it is expected that the Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park will serve as a holiday destination for many persons interested in learning about and meeting indigenous people.

Recreation Goal #3 --- To provide outstanding backcountry recreation opportunities throughout the province. Some sites may feature adventure tourism, while in other areas the wilderness will remain untouched.

Development of a trail and provision of guided tours to the cone area is expected to draw many day hikers interested in learning about Canada's most recent volcanic activity while also experiencing a scenic area.

A few hikers will venture on to hike around scenic Ta'am Baxhl Muhl (Melita Lake) and into the upper Crater Creek Valley. Others may choose to hike up onto

Map 7 Not Available

Recreation Features and Park Facilities

the alpine ridges to experience the extensive meadows of wildflowers and in hope of viewing mountain goats.

Recreation Goal #4 --- To ensure access to local outdoor recreation opportunities for all residents of this province.

Already, many hikers from the local Nisga'a communities and the Terrace Region have bushwhacked into the cone area and explored Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed). A larger number of visitors have come to fish for salmon and steelhead along the popular Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River). With appropriate enhancement, it is expected that the number of local visitors will significantly increase, particularly to hike into the cone area on the proposed access trail and take part in activities offered by the planned Nisga'a cultural center. It is expected that the combination of a short hike into the cone area and a dance performance in the cultural center will draw many regional residents and their guests.

In delivering these world-class experiences, BC Parks will manage for continuity of experience. When visitors receive information on the park, a certain expectation is set. That expectation will be maintained from the time the visitors enter the park until the time they leave. This includes pre-trip information, useful and interesting onsite information, easy access, convenient parking, the provision of a high quality interpretive center, appropriate trails for the varied activities offered in the park, appropriate guide services, effective management of vegetation, good probabilities of wildlife viewing, and meeting friendly, helpful, interesting people of a very different culture.

Key recreation features and proposed park facilities are shown on Map 7 and described below along with access and information strategies.

### **Access Strategy**

The primary access to Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park is the Nisga'a Highway which connects south to Terrace and east via a Forest Road to Cranberry Junction on Highway #37. A branch of this highway provides access to the community of Laxgalts'ap (Greenville) from a junction just west of New Aiyansh.

The Ministry of Transportation and Highways is currently in the process of upgrading the Nisga'a Highway by raising the grade above the annual flood level along Sii T'ax (Lava Lake) and by paving the road north from the current end of pavement south of the Park. The Ministry of Forests road from Nass Camp to Cranberry Junction also needs upgrading to accommodate future park visitors using this route to connect with Highway 37 north to Alaska or to return south to the Yellowhead Highway. To a large extent, the development potential of the Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park depends on these highway improvements.

Along the section of this route which traverses the park are a number of viewpoints, interpretive stops, and picnic sites. The highway provides convenient access to the Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed) and to forest access roads leading to higher elevations.

The use of aircraft is unnecessary in the Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed) portion of the park because of the convenient road access. The use of aircraft to gain access to the cone



area will also be unnecessary for most people once the proposed access trail is developed. The use of aircraft to gain access to the wilderness area can be disruptive of wildlife and can spoil the wilderness experience of hikers. The use of other motorized means of transport such as motorboats, motorcycles, snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles is likewise disruptive of wildlife and park visitors immersed in nature.

Objectives:

- To provide paved highway access to and through the Park.
- To provide appropriate controlled access to the backcountry and the cone area without causing detrimental impacts to the environment, wildlife and park users.
- To limit aircraft use in the park to emergency and other essential uses.
- To limit the use of other motorized vehicles in the park.

**Picture Not Available**

Nisga'a Highway provides easy access to Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed)  
Photo by Gary Fiegehen

Actions:

- Work with the Ministry of Transportation and Highways to eliminate the flooding hazard along Sii T'ax (Lava Lake) and complete the paving of the Nisga'a highway to and through the Park, and to improve the connecting route from Nass Camp to Cranberry Junction.
- Work with the Ministry of Forests and the Tree Farm Licensee to control access that may be created as a result of harvesting activities outside the park.

- Float plane landings are not permitted in the park. Helicopter landings and low level flying are limited to rescue use, firefighting, transportation of materials needed in park enhancement projects, and for the occasional flying of elders and their guests. Permits from the Joint Nisga'a / BC Parks Committee will be required for all uses except emergencies. Low level flying over the park will be discouraged.
- Motorboat use in the park is not permitted except on K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) and Sii T'ax (Lava Lake). Guided boat trips on K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) are encouraged. The use of motors on Sii T'ax (Lava Lake) is limited to a maximum of 10 horsepower. The use of canoes on Melita Lakes and the scenic lakes along Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) is encouraged.
- Improve to two-wheel drive standards the Ross Lake access road from the highway to the cone trailhead.
- Limit the use of snowmobiles to existing access roads and to the Natural Environment Zone on the ridge bordering the southeast border of the park.
- Limit the use of motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles to existing roads.
- A highway bridge to Gitwinksihlkw (Canyon City) is scheduled for completion during the fall of 1995. The existing pedestrian bridge will be retained subject to approval by the Gitwinksihlkw Band Council and due consideration of operating hazards and maintenance cost.

### **Information Strategy**

An exceptional and unique opportunity exists in Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park to educate and inform visitors from the region and elsewhere about volcanic activity and about the Nisga'a culture. Because of the park's remote location, a well organized and effective information program is vital to achieve its great potential.

Development of the proposed Nisga'a interpretive center will provide the necessary facility to communicate Nisga'a legends and stories and explain the science of volcanic activity.

Purposes of providing information include:

- To create an awareness of the role of the park in achieving the goals of the provincial park system;
- To promote an understanding of and appreciation for the natural and cultural resources of the park and the surrounding region;

- To instill a sense of stewardship for the park and the park system;
- To provide visitors with information that will enhance their use and enjoyment of the park's facilities and services; and
- To provide information on other provincial parks in British Columbia.

This information will be directed at highway travelers, backcountry hikers, day-users and holiday seekers. Specific target groups include: incidental highway travelers; informed highway travelers; British Columbia residents; and European and Japanese visitors interested in First Nation culture.

The provision of information to park visitors, both inside and outside the park, is approached through two means:

1. Awareness and pre-trip planning, and
2. Orientation and the provision of general information combined with natural and cultural heritage education.

### **Awareness and Pre-Trip Planning**

Specific information on pre-trip planning and park awareness is included in the Provincial Parks of Northern B.C. brochure which is available from most BC Parks offices and BC Tourism Infocenters. The district office in Smithers and the proposed Nisga'a interpretive center will distribute detailed information on specific areas and resources within the park. Private sector advertising also contributes to regional awareness and provides pre-trip planning information.

Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park is one of the newest major parks in the BC system of provincial and national parks and for this reason it is not well known to the public. However, the combination of its special volcanic features and the rich Nisga'a culture will likely generate considerable interest as the park develops, particularly the development of the cone trail, on-site interpretive trails and services, and the proposed Nisga'a interpretive center.

#### Objective:

- To provide information about Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park for visitor awareness and pre-trip planning.

#### Actions:

- Awareness of the new park will be enhanced as part of packaged information provided by BC Parks and the North-by-Northwest Tourism Association on the de-

- veloping system of parks in northern British Columbia which feature First Nation culture.
- Individual brochures on the Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park will be produced and illustrated with Nisga'a art, the appropriate use of the distinctive red color, and the high quality of design achieved in Nisga'a publications. These brochures will feature the natural history of volcanic activity and the Nisga'a culture.
  - A video will be produced of the Nisga'a Dancers telling their story of Lax Muhl (lava flow). This video will be utilized in the interpretive center when the dancers are not performing and for promotional use outside the park.
  - Once the proposed Nisga'a interpretive center has been designed, brochures, video and other information will be targeted to tour bus operators in an effort to include visits to the Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park into their itineraries.
  - Visitor use will be encouraged during the summer and fall seasons when interpretive staff will be available.

#### Orientation and Provision of General Information Combined with Natural and Cultural Heritage Education

Park orientation and information, and natural and cultural heritage education will be provided on a year-around basis through the proposed Nisga'a interpretive center, on-site signs, and park brochures. During the summer and early fall seasons, information and interpretive services will be intensified by providing guided tours to the cone area and Nisga'a dance performances and other services in the proposed interpretive center.

The proposed Nisga'a interpretive center featuring live Nisga'a dance performances will play a major role in the dissemination of information on the park and will serve as one of the major draws to the park. Careful design and planning will be required for the programs, dance and story telling performances, and for other activities and displays to be provided at the proposed interpretive center.

Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park, in conjunction with other protected areas and native Indian cultural interpretation facilities in the northwest part of the province, represents an excellent opportunity to share the best from different cultures. The Nisga'a cultural heritage, when combined with the interesting volcanic features of the park, constitutes a solid basis to develop the Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park as one of the "flagship parks" in British Columbia.

The park has an important role to play in heritage education and interpretation, and in informing visitors of the natural and cultural resources of both the park and the province. Support and understanding for the mandate of BC Parks and management of the park can thus be cultivated. An additional benefit from a heritage education program will be the development of a heightened sense of stewardship for the park and an enhanced appreciation of the Nisga'a culture.

Objectives:

- To supply a large audience with useful information about the cultural and natural resources and recreational opportunities of the Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park, how it fits into the BC Parks system, environmental stewardship, Nisga'a culture, and public safety.

**Picture Not Availables**

Park visitors exploring the fissure and ice caves in the cone area, an activity which presents an opportunity for the provision of on-site interpretive services. Photos by Margaret Vanderberg

- To provide an education program geared to the visitor profile and focused on the two major heritage themes --- Nisga'a culture and volcanic history.
- To inform visitors of the BC Parks system and the need for conservation in parks.

Actions:

- Design and develop a comprehensive interpretive plan for the park based upon a theme which incorporates Nisga'a art, philosophy, life style, and place names. The interpretive theme will also provide information on the natural sciences, particularly the science of volcanology.
- Develop the proposed Nisga'a interpretive center. An initial priority in the implementation of this master plan will be to develop a conceptual design, feasibility assessment, and financing plan to construct the center and related facilities. The preferred site for the center is the promontory on the edge of the Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed) directly across the K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) from Shamal Creek. If this riverfront site does not prove feasible for development, alternative sites will be investigated including the Vetter sort area and the proposed Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) campground area. The final decision on location will not be made until a feasibility study and an environmental impact assessment have been completed. Another early task will be to develop well-researched policies for the operation of the center.

**Picture Not Available**

View to the north across K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) to Shamal Creek from the proposed Nisga'a interpretive center site

Facilities to be provided by the interpretive center include the following:

1. An auditorium designed especially for live performances of Nisga'a dancers and the telling of Nisga'a stories. The auditorium will be designed for special effects and audio-visual presentations featuring video film of live volcanic activities and computer animation depicting Nisga'a stories of Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed). The auditorium will also be utilized for Nisga'a Tribal Conventions and other meetings;

**Picture Not Available**

Proposed interpretive center site as seen from K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River)

2. Museum, archive and research library facilities to properly store, display and protect Nisga'a artifacts, many of which will be returned from museums throughout the world;
3. Dioramas and other displays explaining the Nisga'a culture and the natural history of the park. Interpretive themes will include traditional Nisga'a activities such as eulachon and salmon fishing, fish drying, hunting, trapping, canoeing, spiritual aspects and sites important to the Nisga'a way-of-life, traditional Nisga'a resource management, volcanic history and features of the park, wildlife and biodiversity of the park, and others;

**Picture Not Available**

View to the west looking down K'alii Aksim Lisims  
(Nass River) from the proposed interpretive center site

4. Park headquarters including central office, communication facilities, and equipment storage;
  5. Public washrooms;
  6. Cafeteria and/or restaurant facilities to feature indigenous Nisga'a food;
  7. Nisga'a arts and crafts production, training, demonstration and sales facilities;
  8. Office and marketing facilities for guided tours within the Park and within the traditional Nisga'a territory outside the Park;
  9. Reconstruction of a traditional Nisga'a village on the south shore of K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) below and west of the proposed main cultural center building. (Use of this site for this purpose is subject to a flood hazard assessment.) The replica village will include demonstrations of fishing, fish drying, food storage and preparation, canoeing and other traditional Nisga'a activities; and
  10. Accommodations for a resident caretaker in the vicinity of the center.
- A temporary visitor center will be developed. The temporary center will provide basic visitor services such as information on the park and washroom facilities.
  - The high standard of design and craftsmanship employed in the park entrance signs and information facilities will be maintained in the development of park facilities. Nisga'a artisans and resource people with knowledge of the Aiyansh volcanic ac-

tivity and Nisga'a history will be actively involved in the design and construction of signs, interpretive trails and the proposed interpretive center.

- Signage related to the Wilderness Recreation Zone will be concentrated as much as possible at trailheads. Minimum trail markers will be used within this zone.
- Work with BC Tourism to provide regional and provincial tourism information to potential tourism markets.

### **Marketing and Promotion**

The image of Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park will be built on the outstanding experiences of visitors which in turn will be based upon the park's unique natural and cultural features and services. The proposed Nisga'a interpretive center will serve to significantly strengthen the image. School programs and special events will also help to increase the use and appreciation of the park. Because of the relatively remote location of the park, specific marketing and promotion efforts will be needed to make the public aware of what the park offers.

#### Objective:

- To portray the significance of Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park's unique natural and cultural features to interest the public in visiting the park.

#### Actions:

- Project Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park's image to specific markets and groups of tourists who are interested in volcanic natural history and Nisga'a culture by disseminating high quality brochures on the park and by distributing the proposed Nisga'a dance / story-telling video to schools, tourist industry associations, bus tour operators, and museums which feature native Indian heritage. Places to be targeted include the UBC Museum of Cultural Anthropology, the Royal BC Museum in Victoria, the Prince Rupert Museum, the U.S. Sitka National Historical Park and the Alaska State Museum in Juneau.
- Develop in partnership with BC Tourism, a promotion campaign targeted at growing international markets which are interested in First Nation heritage such as Germany and Japan. This could include the arrangement of performances of the Nisga'a dancers in these countries.



## Management Services

The Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park is the first park in the BC Parks system which is jointly managed by a First Nation organization and BC Parks. The park is administered by the Skeena District under the direction of the Nisga'a / BC Parks Joint Management Committee. This master plan contains key policies and a plan-of-action which have been approved by the Management Committee and forms the official development plan for the park. All activities, visitor services and development projects must be consistent with the policies and actions specified in the plan. Staff will ensure that various management responsibilities are carried out according to the *Park Act* and its Regulations and the established policy and procedures of the Ministry. Cases where conflicts may arise with the Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park Master Plan (e.g.: conflicts with Nisga'a Law and customs) will be referred to the Nisga'a / BC Parks Management Committee.

Management responsibilities include but are not limited to: protecting the natural and cultural heritage of the park; regulating public use to ensure safe and proper use of the park and its facilities; maintaining trails, ranger cabin(s), the proposed interpretive center and other facilities in the park; managing permits covering all commercial uses within the park; minimizing the impact of visitors, facilities and activities; and collecting data and conducting research.

### Objectives:

- To carry out management responsibilities according to the guidelines of this Master Plan and the directions of the Nisga'a / BC Parks Management Committee.
- To maintain staff within Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park to provide enforcement, resource management, interpretation, facility maintenance, and safety services.

### Actions:

- Provide other necessary staffing for the park, including seasonal Nisga'a interpreters and rangers. This will include a seasonal ranger and guide program for the cone special feature area which is essential to adequately protect this sensitive area.
- Develop a park headquarters office in the proposed Nisga'a interpretive center. This office will be staffed with Nisga'a interpreters when it is open to the public.

## Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Due to its outstanding natural features and associated Nisga'a cultural heritage, it is anticipated that with the proposed enhancement and promotion specified in this plan, the use of the Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park will quickly grow to a level which will make the park one of the most important in the BC Parks system. Although present use levels are very low, recreation use could grow to the point where it could be detrimental to the conservation goal of protecting the park's natural and cultural resources. This is especially true in terms of the numbers of people visiting sensitive sites such as the cone area.

The following section sets objectives for the provision of acceptable recreation opportunities and describes actions to be undertaken to provide these activities and protect the environment.

### Angling

Sport fishing is currently the most popular recreational activity in Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park. Fishing guides have applied to operate on the lower Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) and many unguided recreational anglers also utilize this area. Anglers also fish along the upper section of Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) and to a lesser extent in the Tseax Overflow and Ts'oohl Ts'ap (Zolzap) Slough areas.

A major conflict occurs between bears feeding-on-salmon and recreational anglers near the confluence of the Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) with the K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River).

Due to low productivity, fishing activities are limited in Sii T'ax (Lava Lake).

#### Objective:

- To provide sustainable and safe angling opportunities for park visitors.

#### Actions:

- Maintain the level of sports fishing within the long term ecological carrying capacity of the fishery as determined by a comprehensive study to be carried out in cooperation with Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans and BC Fish and Wildlife.
- A study will be conducted by a bear biologist of the conflict between bears feeding-on-salmon and sports fishing on the lower Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River). An immediate priority is to post a sign at the trailhead leading to the lower Ksi Sii Aks

- (Tseax River) from the highway, warning anglers and other visitors about the existing grizzly hazard and the need to protect this valuable fishing site for bears.
- Enhance safe opportunities to view salmon spawning on Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) and provide appropriate interpretive signs.
  - Provide interpretation of the Nisga'a salmon and eulachon fisheries at the proposed interpretive center. Visitors will be encouraged to view native salmon fishing from the center and from tour boats operating on K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River).
  - Encourage the serving of fresh and dried salmon on the menus of the food service to be located in the proposed interpretation center.
  - All other lakes and streams within the park shall be preserved in their natural states to preserve aquatic biological systems.

### **Backcountry Hiking**

Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park offers a limited amount of backcountry hiking in the upper Crater Creek valley and on the alpine ridge leading to Mt. Hoeft.

#### Objective:

- To develop a range of backcountry hiking opportunities within the Wilderness Recreation Zone which minimizes the impact on the environment and conflicts between users.

#### Actions:

- Develop primitive trails from Melita Lake into Crater Creek valley and from the Cone trail parking lot up to and along the alpine ridge to Mt. Hoeft.

### **Boating**

Exceptional and varied boating opportunities exist within the park and on K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) adjacent to the park. These include the possibilities of guided tours on K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) utilizing modern power boats and traditional Nisga'a canoes. Although the best way to experience the power and beauty of the river is by boat, the current is very strong and can be dangerous, particularly during periods of high water in the early summer and fall.

Other boating opportunities include the use of small boats on Sii T'ax (Lava Lake) and canoes on the small scenic lakes along Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) north of Fulmar Creek.

### Objective:

- To provide boating activities consistent with the natural setting of the park.

### Actions:

- Encourage the development of tour boat services on K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) in conjunction with the operation of the park. Possibilities include floating the river from a put-in across from Old Aiyansh downstream to a take-out west of the proposed Nisga'a interpretive center or near Gitwinksihlkw (Canyon City).
- Maintain the two existing boat launching ramps on K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) and Sii T'ax (Lava Lake).
- Restrict the motors on Sii T'ax (Lava Lake) to 10 horsepower or less.
- Motorized boats are not allowed in other parts of the park.
- Provide a convenient canoe and kayak launching site at the small lakes along Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) north of Fulmar Creek.
- Experiment with the use of canoes on Melita Lake by guided tours of the cone area.
- Provide educational information regarding boating hazards within the park, particularly on K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) during high water.

### **Frontcountry Camping**

Although there is a limited need for campground facilities in the park at the present time, the demand for these facilities is expected to increase significantly after the park is enhanced, particularly after the Nisga'a highway is paved, the completion of the proposed Nisga'a interpretive center, and the commencement of guided hikes to the cone area. Due to their seasonal demand, the development and operation of full service campground facilities are very expensive and generally require significant subsidies. For this reason, the development of full service campgrounds in the adjacent Nisga'a villages is not recommended.

Camping was initially very limited within the park. This policy was modified to allow camping in a new campsite in the Vetter Sort area during the summer of 1993. Primitive campsites are also provided by the Forest Service south and east of the park which are occasionally utilized by fishermen and other visitors to the area.

The development of a quality campground facility may be economically justifiable in the future to provide facilities for those wishing to stay overnight in the area in order to

participate in guided activities offered in the park, to purchase Nisga'a arts and crafts, to experience the performances of the Nisga'a dancers, and purchase food services.

Objective:

- To provide adequate campground facilities within the park to provide a convenient place to stay for visitors extending their visits to more than one day to participate in activities offered in the park.

Actions:

- Complete the development of a temporary seasonal campground with minimum facilities in the Vetter Sort area. Facilities will be limited to outhouses and campfires.

**Picture Not Available**

Site of possible future Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) campground

- Once the proposed Nisga'a interpretive center is completed, consider the development and assess the impact of a quality campground facility on a site on Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) approximately 2.5 kilometers north of the Fulmar Creek logging access road. This campground would be constructed to normal BC Parks campground standards and operated on a contract basis.
- Once the proposed Nisga'a interpretive center is operating, consider conducting a feasibility assessment of the private development of additional bed and breakfast lodging accommodations for Park visitors within the Nisga'a communities outside the Park.

Horseback Riding and Mountain Biking

There is presently very little horseback riding or mountain bike use within the park. Lax Muhl (the lava bed and cone area) is extremely vulnerable to damage by both horses and mountain bikes and neither horses or mountain bikes can be safely used on the rough and unstable lava and cinders.

For these reasons it is the policy in the Park to restrict the use of horses and mountain bikes to the highway and developed access roads.

## **Mountaineering**

There is very limited terrain which is suitable for challenging mountaineering within the park.

## **Recreational Guiding**

Commercial activities that are appropriate for Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park include guided services for power boating, rafting and traditional Nisga'a canoeing on K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River), guided sports fishing on Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River), guided hikes to the cone area, campground operation, and the provision of food services and sales of arts and crafts in the proposed Nisga'a interpretive center. In addition, it is expected that an entrance fee will be charged for the Nisga'a dance performances with proceeds to be utilized for the operation of the dance troupes, including remuneration of performers.

To maintain the integrity of the park and provide opportunities for both local operators and visitors, there must be limits on commercial guiding activities. The level of guiding will depend primarily on the environmental carrying capacity of the resource and the maintenance of a high quality visitor experience.

### Objectives:

- To encourage recreational guiding which provides high quality visitor experiences in the park at an operational level within the limits of the carrying capacity of the park's natural and cultural resources.
- To provide and sustain culturally appropriate employment opportunities for the Nisga'a people.

### Actions:

- Park use permits are required for all recreational guiding in the park. All guiding activities must meet the above objectives.
- Encourage the development of guided boat tours on K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) utilizing traditional Nisga'a canoes, rafts and/or power boats.
- Encourage the development of package guided interpretive tours of Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed), K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River), and cone area which include a dance performance and a traditional meal.
- Limit the level of guided sports fishing and other recreational angling to the environmental carrying capacity of the Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River). Limits will be jointly established by BC Parks, the Nisga'a Tribal Council, the Federal Department of

Fisheries and Oceans, and BC Fish and Wildlife. The carrying capacity assessment will include a study to be undertaken by a bear biologist on the bear-feeding-on-salmon conflict with recreational anglers and hikers.

- Require all commercial permit holders to develop a five-year business plan that is compatible with the provisions of this Master Plan. Business plans will be updated and approved annually for operations in the park.
- Permit commercial canoeing and boating on Sii T'ax (Lava Lake) and the use of canoes on Melita Lakes.
- Interpretation of Nisga'a culture shall be by Nisga'a people.

### **Resource Appreciation**

Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park's outstanding natural and cultural resources have very significant appreciation, interpretation and education potential. Activities, such as guided hikes and interpretive programs, are generally popular and can build an appreciation for the natural and cultural heritage represented by the Park and the Nisga'a people. Providing these activities strengthens the tourism industry of the region and further enhances visitor opportunities, which are particularly important to the elderly, non-hiking and special needs visitor categories. The proposed Nisga'a interpretive center will serve a major role in providing information on these activities and directing use.

#### Objectives:

- To encourage greater visitor appreciation of the park's natural and cultural heritage.
- To expand opportunities for day-use.

#### Actions:

- Complete an Interpretation and Education Plan for the park.
- Develop interpretive programs and information materials explaining the park's natural and cultural resources.
- Develop and implement special interpretive strategies for the cone area and interpretive trails. Interpretive trail development project priorities are:

1st Cone Trail. A trail will be constructed to the cone area. (See Map 8: Recreation Features --- Detailed Photomaps of the Interpretive Center and Cone Areas) The route approaches the cone area from a trailhead on the Ross Lake forest

access road and crosses Crater Creek below lower Melita Lake. This route minimizes the chance of damage to lava features, provides access to the best cone viewpoint, and provides a common trailhead which can be utilized for the Mt. Hoefft alpine trail as well as for the cone trail. Due to the extremely high sensitivity of the features in this area, the use of the cone trail will be limited to guided tours and special permits only.

2nd Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed) Interpretive Trail. A short circular interpretive trail will be developed. The trail will be approximately 500 meters in length, paved for wheelchair access, and designed to lead visitors on a self-guided circle tour of a representative and particularly interesting cluster of lava bed features. Illustrated interpretive signs will be utilized to explain the significance of the features. If the site recommended by Wuorinen in his *Geomorphological Interpretation of the Proposed Txeax Provincial Park* is chosen, the interpretive trail will be accessed by a 1.3 kilometer K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) hiking trail which will follow the river along the edge of the lava bed from the interpretive center and a 600 meter tram connecting with the highway. (See Map 8)

3rd Nature Study Trail. A nature interpretive trail approximately 900 meters in length will be developed along the intricate and scenic west shore of the Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) lake area north of Fulmar Creek. This trail will feature the beautiful moss covered lava formations, evolving forest ecology and animal life along the shore of the small lakes which form this section of the river. The trail is easily accessed directly from an existing pullout on the highway and the Fulmar Creek logging road. The use of canoes will be encouraged on the lakes and an interpretive sign will be provided explaining and illustrating the pre-eruption Nisga'a fishing camp which was located on the east shore of the river.

**Picture Not Available**

Moss covered lava along proposed Nature Study Trail



Map 8 Not Available

Recreation Features --- Photomaps of the Interpretive Center and Cone Areas

- 4th Crater Creek Interpretive Trail. A short interpretive trail approximately 200 meters in length will be constructed in a easterly direction on Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed) from the existing park information sign at Crater Creek.
- Where feasible and appropriate, provisions for handicap access will be considered in the development of the Lax Muhl (Lava Bed) Interpretive Trail, the Nature Study Trail and the Crater Creek Interpretive Trail.
  - Other trails to be developed and maintained in the Park include:
    1. K'ali Aksim Lisims (Nass River) Hiking Trail. Subject to a bear hazard assessment, a 1.3 kilometer trail will be developed along the edge of Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed) from the proposed cultural center. This trail will be designed to accommodate hikers during the summer season and cross-country skiers during the winter months.
    2. Riverfront Fishing Trail. If the proposed Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) Campground is developed, a trail could be constructed the short distance from the campground to the Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River), upstream about 200 meters along the west bank of the river to the falls, perhaps downstream along the west bank, and perhaps across the river on a pedestrian bridge to provide access to the east bank of the river.
    3. Lower Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) Fishing Trail. Subject to examination of the conflict with Grizzly bears feeding on salmon, the existing route utilized by hikers and fishermen which follows the west bank of the river from the highway could be improved into a trail.
    4. Sii Tax (Lava Lake Trail). A short trail could be constructed about 200 meters along the shoreline on the north end of Sii T'ax (Lava Lake) from the existing Sii T'ax (Lava Lake) Picnic Site.
    5. Secondary Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed) Interpretive Trail. A longer interpretive trail could be developed in the vicinity of the proposed interpretive center. This trail could be approximately 1 to 1.5 kilometers in length and follow a circular route leading west from the center and intersecting the K'ali Aksim Lisims (Nass River) Trail.
    6. Nisga'a Village Trail. A short trail will be required to provide access to the riverfront below the cultural center to the site where an early Nisga'a village could be replicated and boat tours could depart and arrive. This trail will pass through Quinogag Indian Reserve 61. The Nisga'a Village Trail could be extended into a

loop route along the K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) and through the cottonwood forest between the riverfront and edge of the Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed).

7. Mt. Hoeft Alpine Trail. A 13 kilometer wilderness trail and alpine route will be marked and slashed out from the start of the Cone Trail. Improvements of this trail will be kept to a minimum.
  8. Upper Crater Creek Wilderness Trail. A wilderness trail route will be marked and slashed out from the Cone Trail near Melita Lakes. Improvements to this trail will be kept to a minimum.
  9. Other access trails may be developed in the future to special feature areas such as the large vertical tree moulds located about 400 meters south of mile 30 near the west end of the park, Wilba Yaskw (Virgin Cave) area near mile 32, the large tumulus between mile 32 and mile 33 and tree moulds north of the highway between mile 33 and 34. These trails are presently rated as low priority and will require specific approvals from the Management Committee.
- Develop appropriate viewing opportunities for wildlife and the salmon fishery at appropriate locations. These viewing opportunities will be integrated with interpretive displays in the interpretive center.
  - Work with the New Aiyansh Band Council to develop a trail outside the Park about one kilometer in length from the village to a viewpoint of Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed).

## **Sightseeing**

The Nisga'a highway traverses the park, exposing the traveler to the Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed) and mountain scenery. Pull-overs, interpretive signing and short interpretive trails along the highway at Crater Creek serve to enhance this sightseeing experience by focusing upon the smaller features of the Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed) and other heritage values of the area. The proposed Nisga'a interpretive center will be readily accessible from the highway.

### Objective:

- To provide a pleasant viewing experience for visitors traveling through the park.

### Actions:

- In conjunction with the Ministry of Transportation and Highways, continue to develop and maintain a variety of road-side viewpoints as interpretive stops of interest, focusing on the park's resources and conservation mandate.

- Provide information both inside and outside of the park describing opportunities for viewing.
- Provide information and interpretive programs on the park and the province at the proposed Nisga'a interpretive center.

### **Winter Recreation**

Winter recreation activities within the park are limited to cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, backcountry skiing and snowmobiling. Lax̄ Míhl (the Lava Bed) is generally covered with snow between November and March, limiting the viewing of Lax̄ Míhl (the Lava Bed) features. Existing demand for cross-country skiing and backcountry ski touring within the park is presently very low.

The smaller Melita Lake has been known to drain during the winter and early spring months. Prospects of ski touring into the cone area has not been evaluated.

The rough nature of the Lax̄ Míhl (the Lava Bed) poses dangers to cross country skiers and snowmobile users. Windy conditions are very common on the open Lax̄ Míhl (the Lava Bed). Cross country skiing activities on the Lax̄ Míhl (the Lava Bed) will be limited to developed trails.

The Lax̄ Míhl (the Lava Bed) can be easily damaged by snowmobiles. Snowmobile use and helicopter skiing are incompatible with the Wilderness Recreation Zone concept. Snowmobilers have utilized the ridge which forms the southeast boundary of the Wilderness Recreation Zone, gaining access to this area from the Cedar Creek drainage south of the park.

#### Objective:

- To encourage safe, low impact winter recreation activities.

#### Actions:

- Investigate the feasibility of developing cross-country ski trails in the park for local users, particularly along K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) and Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) between Gitwinksihlkw (Canyon City) and New Aiyansh and into the cone area. These trails or portions of them could serve multiple uses, such as hiking, walking and/or bicycling during the summer and cross-country skiing during the winter.
- The use of snowmobiles within the park will be limited to the Ross Lake access road, other forest access roads when these roads are not being used by cars and trucks, and the ridge which borders the southeast edge of the wilderness recreation zone. Snowmobiles are not permitted on Lax̄ Míhl (the Lava Bed), on Sii T'ax (Lava Lake) or within the Cone Special Feature or Wilderness Recreation Zones.

Snowmobile use of the ridge area within the Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park is limited to within the Natural Environment Zone adjacent to this ridge and is conditional upon avoidance of conflicts with wildlife, particularly the mountain goat population of the park. This snowmobile use area is generally above timber line and steep slopes near the top of the ridge. Use of the existing hut near the lake within the ridge area shall be limited to emergency and day use purposes. The hut shall be open to public use.

- The use of helicopter skiing is not permitted within the park.
- Experiment with commercial guided backcountry skiing activities. Possible destination areas to be explored in winter include the alpine ridge above upper Crater Creek leading to the Mt. Hoeft area. Ski Touring guides operating within the park must be well qualified in avalanche and winter safety.

## Plan Implementation

In this section, major capital development projects presented in this master plan for the Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park are listed and ranked in terms of relative implementation priority.

Projects	Priority
Cone Trail (and access road improvements)	High
Interpretive Plan	High
Conceptual Design & Feasibility Study for Interpretive Center	High
Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed) Interpretive Trail	High
Interpretive Center	High
Nature Study Trail	Medium
Crater Creek Interpretive Trail	Medium
K'alii Aksim Lisims (Nass River) Hiking Trail	Medium
Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) Campground	Medium
Riverfront Fishing Trail	Low
Lower Ksi Sii Aks (Tseax River) Fishing Trail	Low
Sii T'ax (Lava Lake) Trail	Low
Secondary Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed) Interpretive Trail	Low
Nisga'a Village Trail	Low
Mt. Hoeft Alpine Trail / Route	Low
Upper Crater Creek Wilderness Trail / Route	Low

Work on the high priority projects will proceed as follows:

1. Construction of the Cone Trail and the development of trailhead parking lot and improvements to the access road, will commence as soon as possible.
2. A comprehensive interpretive plan will be prepared for the Park. The interpretive plan will include an evaluation of alternative locations and detailed design of a Lax Muhl (the Lava Bed) Interpretive Trail.
3. A conceptual design and detailed feasibility assessment will be commissioned for the interpretive center building complex described on pages 44-46. This will include a comprehensive site access and servicing assessment, development of construction and operating revenue/cost estimates, and the preparation of a workable financing plan.

In addition to the implementation of above capital improvement projects, a resource management plan will be prioritized and undertaken as funding permits.

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Appendix A

BC Parks System Goals

# BC Parks System Goals

In the Park Act, BC Parks must:

- conserve significant and representative natural and cultural resources, and
- provide a wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities.

## Conservation

Within the conservation mandate, BC Parks has two goals:

- Goal 1 Protection of Representative Landscapes** - To conserve British Columbia's natural diversity by protecting viable, representative examples of our different landscapes.
- Goal 2 Protection of Special Features** - To protect British Columbia's key natural and cultural features, including outstanding examples of our wildlife, old growth forests, waterfalls and cultural artifacts.

## Recreation

Within the recreation mandate, BC Parks has four goals:

- Goal 1 Tourism Travel Routes** - To provide park attractions and services which enhance tourism travel routes.
- Goal 2 Outdoor Recreation Holiday Destinations** - To provide park attractions which serve as or improve key destinations for outdoor recreation holidays.
- Goal 3 Backcountry** - To provide outstanding backcountry recreation opportunities throughout the province. Some sites may feature adventure tourism, while in other areas the wilderness would remain untouched.
- Goal 4 Local Recreation** - To ensure access to local outdoor recreation opportunities for all residents of this province.



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Appendix B

Zoning in BC Parks

	<b>Intensive Recreation</b>	<b>Natural Environment</b>
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	To provide for a variety of readily accessible, facility-oriented outdoor recreation opportunities.	To protect scenic values and to provide for backcountry recreation opportunities in a largely undisturbed natural environment.
<b>USE LEVEL</b>	Relatively high density and long duration types of use.	Relatively low use but higher levels in association with nodes of activity or access.
<b>MEANS OF ACCESS</b>	All-weather public roads or other types of access where use levels are high (see "Impacts" below).	Mechanized (power-boats, snowmobiles, all terrain vehicles), non-mechanized (foot, horse, canoe, bicycle). Aircraft and motorboat access to drop-off and pickup points will be permitted.
<b>LOCATION</b>	Contiguous with all-weather roads and covering immediate areas, modified landscapes or other high-use areas.	Removed from all-weather roads but easily accessible on a day-use basis. Accessible by mechanized means such as boat or plane.
<b>SIZE OF ZONE</b>	Small; usually less than 2,000 ha.	Can range from small to large.
<b>BOUNDARY DEFINITION</b>	Includes areas of high facility development in concentrated areas.	Boundaries should consider limits of activity/facility areas relative to ecosystem characteristics and features.
<b>RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES</b>	Vehicle camping, picnicking, beach activities, power-boating, canoeing, kayaking, strolling, historic and nature appreciation, fishing, snowplay, downhill and cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, specialized activities.	Walk-in/boat-in camping, power-boating, hunting, canoeing, kayaking, backpacking, historic and nature appreciation, fishing, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, river rafting, horseback riding, heli-skiing, heli-hiking, and specialized activities.

<b>Special Feature</b>	<b>Wilderness Recreation</b>	<b>Wilderness Conservation</b>
To protect and present significant natural or cultural resources, features or processes because of their special character, fragility and heritage values.	To protect a remote, undisturbed natural landscape and to provide backcountry recreation opportunities dependent on a pristine environment where air access may be permitted to designated sites.	To protect a remote, undisturbed natural landscape and to provide unassisted backcountry recreation opportunities dependent on a pristine environment where no motorized activities will be allowed.
Generally low.	Very low use, to provide solitary experiences and a wilderness atmosphere. Use may be controlled to protect the environment.	Very low use, to provide solitary experiences and a wilderness atmosphere. Use may be controlled to protect the environment.
Various; may require special access permit.	Non-mechanized; except may permit low frequency air access to designated sites; foot, canoe (horses may be permitted).	Non-mechanized (no air access); foot, canoe (horses may be permitted).
Determined by location of special resources; may be surrounded by or next to any of the other zones.	Remote; not easily visited on a day-use basis.	Remote; not easily visited on a day-use basis.
Small; usually less than 2000 hectares.	Large; greater than 5,000 hectares.	Large; greater than 5,000 hectares.
Area defined by biophysical characteristics or the nature and extent of cultural resources (adequate to afford protection).	Defined by ecosystem limits and geographic features. Boundaries will encompass areas of visitor interest for specific activities supported by air access. Will be designated under the <i>Park Act</i> .	Defined by ecosystem limits and geographic features. Will be designated under the <i>Park Act</i> .
Sight-seeing, historic and nature appreciation. May be subject to temporary closures or permanently restricted access.	Backpacking, canoeing, kayaking, river rafting, nature and historic appreciation, hunting, fishing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding, specialized activities (e.g. caving, climbing).	Backpacking, canoeing, kayaking, river rafting, nature and historic appreciation, fishing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding, specialized activities (e.g. caving, climbing).

	<b>Intensive Recreation</b>	<b>Natural Environment</b>
<b>FACILITIES</b>	May be intensely developed for user convenience. Campgrounds, landscaped picnic/play areas, trail accommodation or interpretative buildings; boat launches, administrative buildings, service compounds, gravel pits, disposal sites, wood lots; parking lots, etc.	Moderately developed for user convenience. Trails, walk-in/boat-in campsites, shelters, accommodation buildings may be permitted; facilities for motorized access e.g. docks, landing strips, fuel storage, etc.
<b>IMPACTS ON NATURAL ENVIRONMENT</b>	Includes natural resource features and phenomena in a primarily natural state but where human presence may be readily visible both through the existence of recreation facilities and of people using the zone. Includes areas of high facility development with significant impact on concentrated areas.	Area where human presence on the land is not normally visible, facility development limited to relatively small areas. Facilities are visually compatible with natural setting.
<b>MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES</b>	Oriented toward maintaining a high quality recreation experience. Intensive management of resource and/or control of visitor activities. Operational facilities designed for efficient operation while remaining unobtrusive to the park visitor.	Oriented to maintaining a natural environment and a high quality recreation experience. Visitor access may be restricted to preserve the recreation experience or to limit impacts. Separation of less compatible recreational activities and transportation modes. Designation of transportation may be necessary to avoid potential conflicts (e.g. horse trails, cycle paths, hiking trails).
<b>EXAMPLES OF ZONING</b>	Campground in Rath Trevor Beach Park; Gibson Pass ski area in E.C. Manning Park.	Core area in Cathedral Park; North beach in Naikoon Park.

Special Feature	Wilderness Recreation	Wilderness Conservation
Interpretative facilities only, resources are to be protected.	Minimal facility development for user convenience and safety, and protection of the environment e.g. trails, primitive campsites, etc. Some basic facilities at access points, e.g. dock, primitive shelter, etc.	None.
None; resources to be maintained unimpaired.	Natural area generally free of evidence of modern human beings. Evidence of human presence is confined to specific facility sites. Facilities are visually compatible with natural setting.	Natural area generally free of evidence of modern human beings.
High level of management protection with ongoing monitoring. Oriented to maintaining resources and, where appropriate, a high quality recreational and interpretative experience. Active or passive management depending on size, location, and nature of the resource. Visitor access may be restricted to preserve the recreation experience and to limit impacts.	Oriented to protecting a pristine environment. Management actions are minimal and not evident. Managed to ensure low visitor use levels. Visitor access may be restricted to protect the natural environment and visitor experience.	Oriented to protecting a pristine environment. Management actions are minimal and not evident. Managed to ensure low visitor use levels. Visitor access may be restricted to protect the natural environment and visitor experience.
Tidepools in Botanical Beach Park; Sunshine Meadows in Mount Assiniboine Park.	Quanchus Mountains Wilderness in Tweedsmuir Park; Wilderness Zone in Spatsizi Park.	Central Valhalla Wilderness in Valhalla Park; Garibaldi Park Nature Conservancy area.

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Appendix C

Bibliography

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