

PAARENS BEACH PROVINCIAL PARK

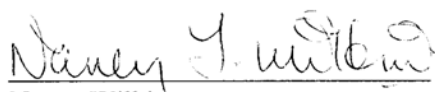
PURPOSE STATEMENT AND ZONING PLAN

December 2002

Approved by:


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Environmental Stewardship Division

Date: Dec 19, 2002


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Environmental Stewardship Division

Date: February 12, 2003

PAARENS BEACH PROVINCIAL PARK

Paarens Beach Provincial Park is 11 km west of Fort St. James, on the south shore of Stuart Lake. The main feature is a wide sandy beach. The park is 50 ha in size.

Primary Role

The primary role of the park is to provide camping and beach access for residents of Fort St. James and for visitors to the area. The park is very popular with residents of Fort St James.

The boat launch provides access to fishing and exploring Stuart Lake, one of British Columbia's largest lakes. Mt. Pope and three new boat-access only provincial parks have also been established along Stuart Lake through the Protected Areas Strategy.

Known Management Issues	Response
Low Occupancy	Although marketing efforts have been directed at Paarens Beach for the past 15 years, the park still has one of the lowest occupancy rates in the system (34% in July/Aug. and 25% for the season). As a result of low occupancy, one campground loop has been 'mothballed' beyond point of return and requires removal of table pads to enable the site to be restored to a natural state. (Both ecosection (3.65%) and biogeoclimatic sub-zone variant (4.24%) are under represented).
Facility Maintenance	The existing campground is in poor condition – sites are overgrown, pad shoulders and roads need redefinition.
Forest Health	Overmature aspen and cottonwood provide a potential safety risk. Complete hazard tree assessment. However, before trees are removed, a decision should be made as to the status of the campground. Otherwise, trees which are contributing to biodiversity objectives may unnecessarily be removed.

Zoning

Paarens Beach Park includes 2 zones:

- Intensive Recreation (provision of a variety of readily accessible, facility-oriented outdoor recreation opportunities) on the north side of Sowchea Road (approximately 20 ha or 40% of the park).

- Natural Environment (protection of scenic values and provision of backcountry recreation opportunities in a largely undisturbed natural environment) on the south side of Sowchea Road (approximately 30 ha or 60% of the park).

CONSERVATION

Representation

- ecosession X Babine Upland (BAU). 3.65% of this ecosession is protected, Paarens Beach contributes 0.66%.
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant X SBSdw3 – 4.24% protected. Paarens contributes 0.10%

Special Feature

Rare/Endangered Values

Scientific/Research Opportunities

RECREATION

Representation:

- backcountry
- destination X Some destination use by visitors to Fort St James National Historic Site.
- travel corridor
- local recreation X Day use by local residents

Special Opportunities

Education/Interpretation Opportunities

CULTURAL HERITAGE

Representation

Unknown

Special Feature

OTHER MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Other Designations

Relationship to Other PAs

Sowchea Bay, located 4 km down the road, had a July-August occupancy of 85% in 2001. July/August 3 year average of 78%. Mount Pope, north of Fort St James provides hiking opportunities. Four marine access sites were established on Stuart Lake and the Stuart River, through the Fort St James LRMP. Rubyrock, Sutherland, Francois, Carp Lake and two ERs are also located within 75 km.

Co-operative Management Arrangements

Partnerships

Vulnerability

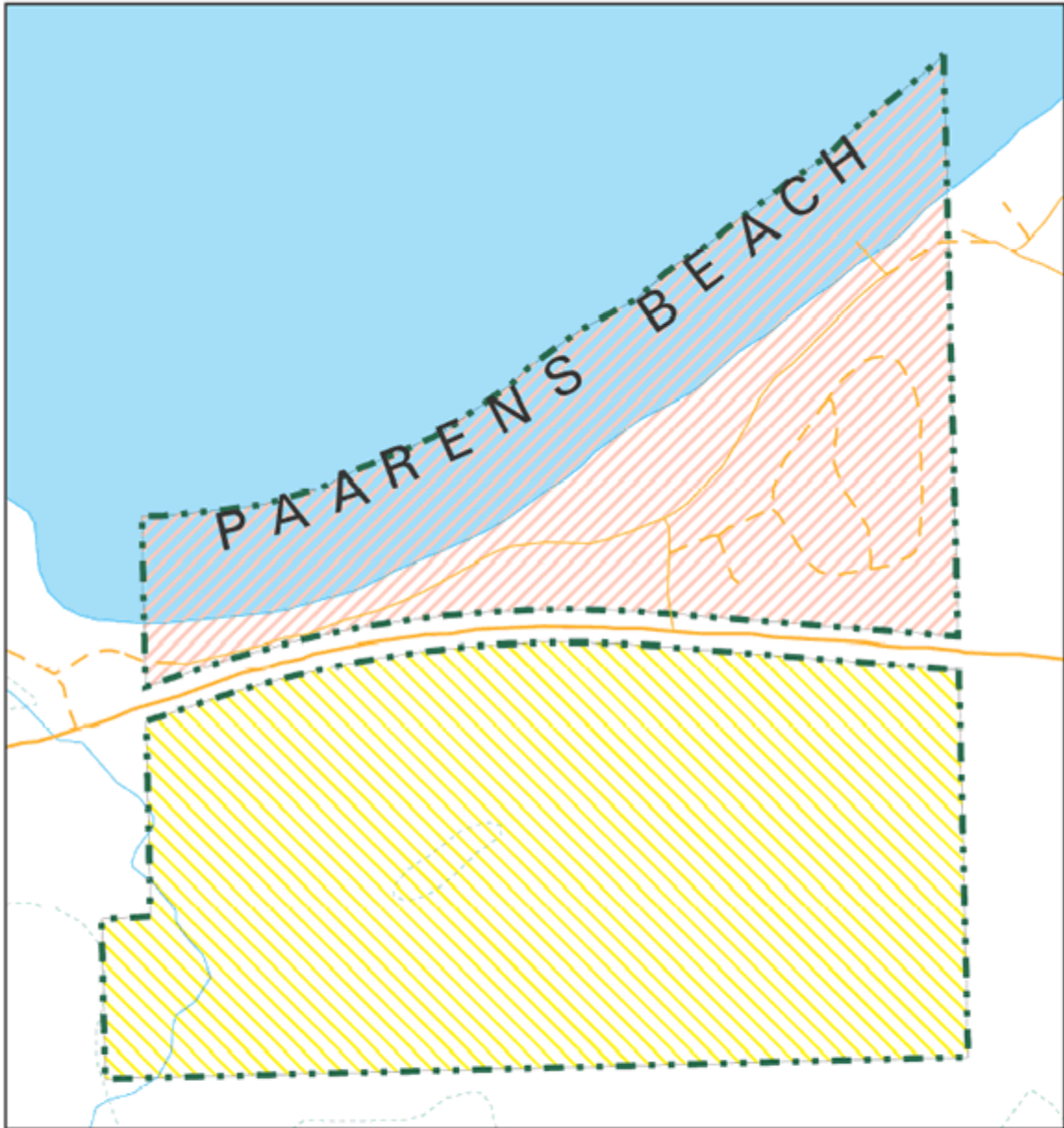
The Conservation Risk Assessment Process identified 2 risk factors (the shape and the size of the park) for the park and rated them as moderately significant. Two stressors/threats were identified for the park: roadways and petrochemical spill/potential which were both rated as low significance.

Relationship to Other Strategies

Area: 50 ha




Date of establishment: May 8, 1972

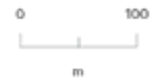
Zoning Map - Paarens Beach Provincial Park



Projection: Albers Equal Areas
Datum: NAD83



-  Intensive Recreation
-  Natural Environment
-  Protected Area Boundary



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