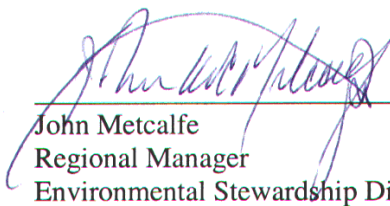


# **PTARMIGAN CREEK PROVINCIAL PARK AND PTARMIGAN CREEK PROTECTED AREA**


## **PURPOSE STATEMENT AND ZONING PLAN**

**July 2003**

Approved by:

  
John Metcalfe  
Regional Manager  
Environmental Stewardship Division

Date: July 17, 2003

  
Nancy Wilkin  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Environmental Stewardship Division

Date: Jan 15/04

## **Ptarmigan Creek Provincial Park and Protected Area Purpose Statement and Zoning Plan**

Ptarmigan Creek is a narrow, steep-sided valley at the north end of the Cariboo Mountains Ecozone above the Upper Fraser Trench. The park and protected area protect 4,633 hectares of the complete, intact watershed of Ptarmigan Creek, a tributary to the Fraser River. The park portion comprises 3,329 ha to the south of the protected area and is generally higher elevation in the watershed. The protected area portion encompasses the northern 1,304 ha which is generally lower elevation in the watershed.

Ptarmigan Creek Park and Protected Area are on the south side of Highway 16, about 5 km west of Crescent Spur, and 165 km east of Prince George. From Highway 16 the park is accessible via the Ptarmigan Creek Forest Road (about 8 km). The northern end of the park and protected area is within 500 m of the boundary of Erg Mountain Provincial Park, and the two parks share the same access road and trailhead. From the trailhead, an 11-km trail follows Ptarmigan Creek to three subalpine lakes near the headwaters.

The park and protected area include excellent habitat for caribou and grizzly bear, and the area is also used by mountain goat.

The Ptarmigan Creek Valley has historically been used for backcountry recreation including hiking, skiing and mountaineering. The park includes glaciers and rock ridges, and is the closest, accessible mountaineering area to Prince George. A trail follows Ptarmigan Creek to three picturesque subalpine lakes.

Protection of this area is through a combination of park and protected area status in order to allow for potential road development through the protected area portion to access timber resources in the West Ptarmigan Valley.

### **Primary Role**

The primary role of Ptarmigan Creek Park and Protected Area is to protect special natural and recreation features of the Cariboo Mountains Ecozone, specifically a complete, intact watershed and old growth forest ecosystem. The park and protected area include an elevational sequence of ecosystems from Interior Cedar Hemlock (ICHwk3), through Englemann spruce/Subalpine fir (ESSFwk1) to Alpine Tundra (AT) at highest elevations.

### **Secondary Role**

The park and protected area's secondary role is to provide opportunities for backcountry recreation, including hiking, mountaineering, hunting, and ski touring in the winter. The narrow, steep-sided Ptarmigan Creek Valley provides recreational access from the upper Fraser Valley through old growth forest to scenic subalpine lakes (Hammel Lakes). Facilities are limited to a rustic 11-km trail, and parking area at the trailhead. A small area at the trailhead was previously managed by the Ministry of Forests as a campsite.

Known Management Issues	Response
Bear/human Conflicts	<p>High bear hazard due to thick vegetation, noise of creek in areas of high habitat values. Bear safety information should be posted at the beginning of the trail.</p> <p>Conduct bear hazard evaluation and determine whether trail needs to be re-directed or is best placement.</p> <p>Develop park-specific Bear-People Conflict Prevention Plan and Bear Emergency Plan</p>
<p>Potential Forest Road through the protected area</p> <p>Public Safety</p>	<p>Will provide increased recreational use and potential backcountry impacts and an increased probability of human-bear conflict. If the road is constructed, monitor impacts and undertake mitigative measures as necessary.</p> <p>Trail is in poor condition with bridge and trail washouts. Trail will not be promoted for recreational use due to public safety concern of river fording.</p>

## Zoning

- Ptarmigan Creek Park and Protected Area will be zoned in their entirety as Wilderness Recreation for the time being to protect a remote, undisturbed natural landscape and to provide unassisted backcountry recreation opportunities dependent on a pristine environment. If the road through the protected area occurs, the road corridor will be zoned Natural Environment.

**Representation**

- ecosection
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant

**Special Feature****Rare/Endangered Values****Scientific/Research Opportunities****CONSERVATION**

Minor representation (less than 1% of provincial protected) of Caribou Mountains (CAM). This ecosection is well represented (37.78%) in the protected areas system. The majority of this is in the Kamloops LRMP planning area. Only 1.7% is protected in the Prince George LRMP planning area, represented by Ptarmigan Creek Park and Protected Area, Erg Mountain Provincial Park, and Sugarbowl/Grizzly Den.

Contributes minimally to the representation of the ICHwk3 (only 0.87% of overall protected areas system representation of this unit even though it is 1 of only 3 sites in the unit); ESSFwk1 (3.7% of overall protected areas system representation of this unit; and AT.

Complete, intact watershed, and old growth forest ecosystem.

Caribou and grizzly bear

Intact watershed

**RECREATION****Representation:**

- backcountry
- destination
- travel corridor
- local recreation

**Special Opportunities****Education/Interpretation Opportunities**

The rustic facilities and remote nature of the park provide opportunities for experienced backcountry users to enjoy a setting minimally impacted by human activities.

Used as an accessible mountaineering area for residents of Robson Valley and Prince George

Connection with Erg Mountain Provincial Park provides visitors with a choice of complementary recreation destinations.

Old growth forest values, and wilderness-dependant species like grizzly bears and caribou.

**CULTURAL HERITAGE****Representation**

Unknown

## **Special Feature**

### **OTHER MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

#### **Other Designations**

##### **Relationship to Other PAs**

Complements the conservation and recreation opportunities protected in other parks of the Cariboo Mountains Ecosection (including Erg Mountain, Sugarbowl/Grizzly Den, Bowron, West Twin, Upper Raush). Most significant is the connection with Erg Mountain Provincial Park.

##### **Co-operative Management Arrangements**

##### **Partnerships**

##### **Vulnerability**

The Conservation Risk Assessment Process identified 3 risk factors (the shape, the size of the park, and watershed integrity) for the park and rated them as low significance. Four stressors/threats were identified for the park: Roadways, aircraft, gravel pit and fire suppression were all rated as low significance.

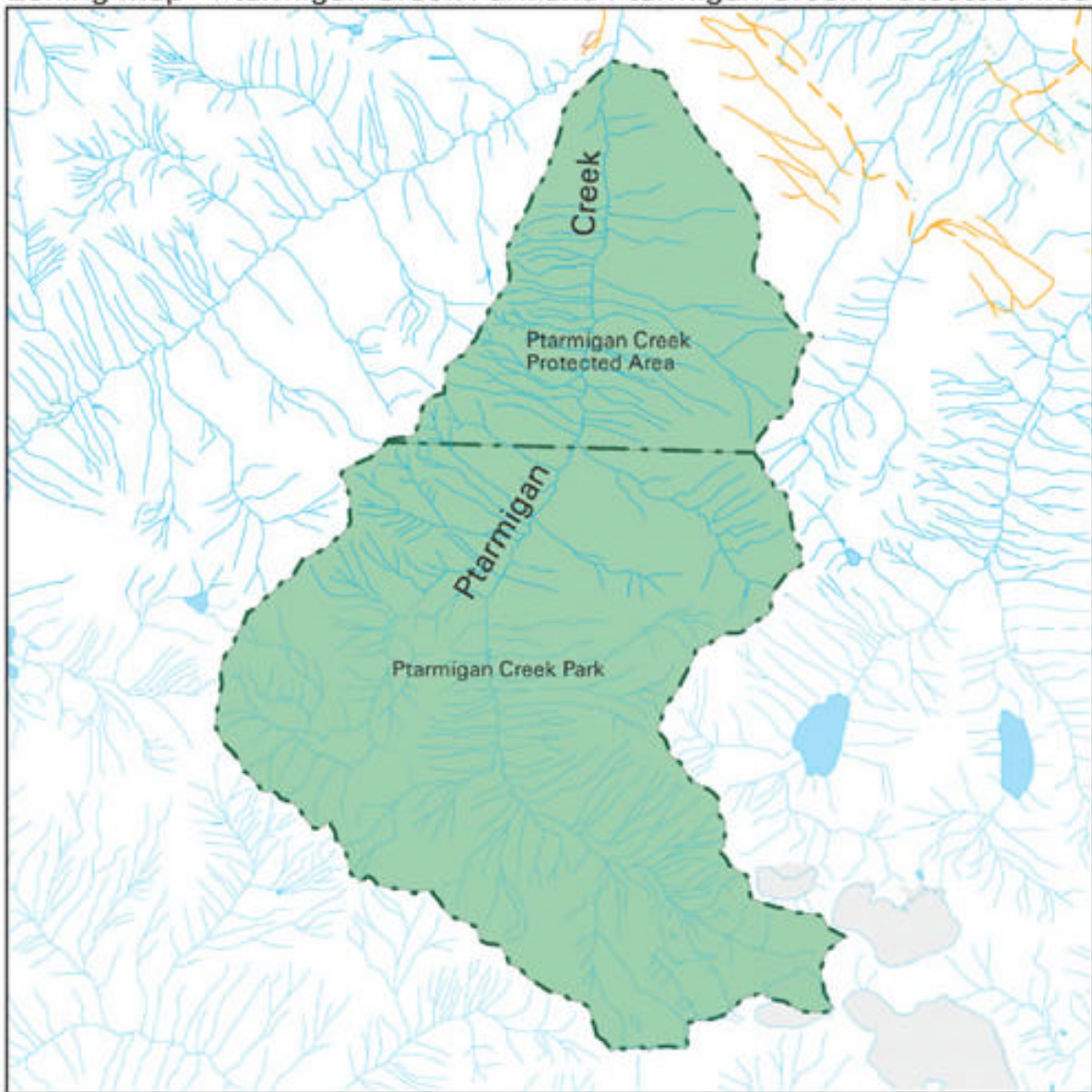
##### **Relationship to Other Strategies**

Park and Protected Area were established under direction of the Prince George LRMP

**Area:** Park: 3,329 hectares ; Protected Area: 1,304 hectares

**Date of establishment:** Park: June 29, 2000; Protected Area: January 25, 2001

## Zoning Map - Ptarmigan Creek Park and Ptarmigan Creek Protected Area



Projection: Alberta Equal Areas  
Datum: NAD83



Wilderness Recreation  
Icefield  
Protected Area Boundary



Produced in Apr 2003 for  
Ministry of Water, Land and Air  
Protection by MSRM, Decision  
Support Services

This is a visual representation  
only and should not be used for  
legal purposes.