

RUBYROCK LAKE PROVINCIAL PARK

PURPOSE STATEMENT AND ZONING PLAN Omineca Region 2005

Approved by:



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Date: Oct. 31 2005

Rubyrock Lake Provincial Park Purpose Statement and Zoning Plan

Rubyrock Lake Provincial Park is located about 70 kilometres northwest of Fort St. James, bordered by three large lakes: Trembleur to the northeast; Cunningham to the southwest; and to the southeast, the north arm of Stuart Lake.

This large park (41,233 hectares) provides the best representation of the Babine Upland Ecosection, contributing 54.98% of the overall protected areas system representation of this ecosection. This ecosection is fragmented and poorly represented in the provincial protected areas system (only 3.65% protected). Rubyrock Lake Provincial Park is characterized by broken terrain dotted with numerous small lakes and wetlands. Close to 80% of the park supports sub-boreal spruce forests, nearly half of which is the moist, cool sub-boreal spruce variant. The park also provides important representation of moist very cold Englemann spruce – subalpine fir forests.

One blue-listed ecosystem is found in the park - hybrid white spruce / hardhack (*Picea engelmannii* x *glauca* / *Spiraea douglasii*) SBS dw3 (06), which is dominated by Douglas-fir, saskatoon and false sarsaparilla. Rubyrock Lake Provincial Park is one of the few areas that capture unique Douglas-fir shoreline ecosystems.

Diverse habitats within the park include important moose and mule deer winter range, waterfowl migration stopover and nesting grounds, good aquatic furbearer habitat, and fish habitat. The park supports a wide variety of wildlife species, including grizzly bear, moose, mule deer, furbearers and waterfowl. Fish species in the area include kokanee, rainbow trout, lake trout, burbot, as well as a small run of sockeye salmon. Sockeye salmon spawn in Fleming, Paula, Sydney and Cunningham creeks.

The park offers high recreational value for boating, hiking, hunting and fishing. Road access to the general area is by the Cunningham Forest Service Road. Boat access is gained via Cunningham Lake, Trembleur Lake, and the north arm of Stuart Lake. There are no facilities provided in the park.

Several traditional First Nations' trade routes and areas of traditional use lie within Rubyrock Lake Provincial Park. Cultural values in the area also focus on European contact and exploration. Aboriginal and heritage trails (currently all unmanaged) that are within or closely border the park include the Trembleur-Stuart trail, the Stuart-Babine trail, the Trembleur-Babine trail, and the trail at Rubyrock Lake. At the westernmost end of Trembleur Lake, in Steamboat Bay, there used to be the remains of an old steamboat.

Rubyrock Lake Provincial Park was established in January 2001 on the recommendation of the Fort St. James Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP).

Primary Role

The primary role of Rubyrock Lake Provincial Park is to provide representation of the Babine Upland Ecosection. The park also captures unique Douglas-fir shoreline ecosystems, and

provides important representation of moist very cold Englemann spruce – subalpine fir forests ESSF mv1).

Secondary Role

The secondary role of the park is to provide wilderness recreation opportunities in an undisturbed area of mixed forest associated with large lakes and rolling mountain topography.

Tertiary Role

The tertiary role of the park is to protect and present cultural values associated with First Nations’ trade routes and traditional use areas, and European contact and exploration.

Known Management Issues	Response
Forest Health	Significant mountain pine and spruce beetle infestation occurs in the park. Monitor. Only implement management action if consistent with updated Mountain Pine Beetle Management Strategy and Assessment Framework.
Access Management	A number of hunting trails have been developed between the north arm of Stuart Lake and Trembleur Lake, and in the Fleming creek area. Monitor for ATV use.
Grassland Management	Initiate prescribed burning program to maintain grasslands (ingrowth removal) according to guidelines in Ecosystem Management Plan.
Boundary Identification	Park boundary marking required at all access points.
Yekooche First Nations	Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Yekooche First Nations has been signed. Continue to communicate and develop working relationship on management issues relating to Rubyrock Provincial Park .
Traditional Use Areas	Through development of a working relationship with the Yekooche First Nations, identify traditional use areas.
Boundary Amendments	Complete park boundary amendments to exclude water tower, cemetery and main access road from the park.

Zoning

Rubyrock Lake Provincial Park has been zoned Nature Recreation and Wilderness Recreation.

- Nature Recreation (protection of scenic values and provision of backcountry recreation opportunities in a largely undisturbed natural environment) along a corridor between Trembleur and Stuart Lake (2% of the park or ~733 hectares).
- Wilderness Recreation (protection of a remote, undisturbed natural landscape and provision of backcountry recreation opportunities dependent on a pristine environment where air access may be permitted to designated sites) for the remainder of the park (98% of the park or ~40,500 hectares).

CONSERVATION

Representation

- ecosection
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant

- X Provides best representation of Babine Upland (BAU) Ecosection – 3.65% of this ecosection is protected provincially; 54.98% of this protection is from this park
- X Important representation of Englemann Spruce-Sub-alpine Fir moist very cold, Nechako variant (ESSFmv1): 7.88% of this variant is provincially protected; Rubyrock Lake Provincial Park is the largest contributor to this representation, contributing 41.92% of this protection.

Sub-boreal Spruce dry warm, Stuart variant (SBSdw3): 4.24% of this variant is provincially protected; this park contributes 20.67% of the overall protected areas system representation of this variant, placing it second behind Stuart River Park and Stuart River Protected Area (57.41%).

Sub-boreal Spruce dry cool (SBSdk): 5.32% protected provincially; 11.28% of provincial protection

Sub-boreal Spruce moist cold, Babine variant (SBSmc2): 13.13% protected provincially; contributes 6.87% of provincial protection.

Sub-boreal Spruce wet cool, Takla variant (SBSwk3): 2.22% protected provincially; although the park only contributes a small area (~580 ha), it contributes 6.1% of provincial protection ranking second behind Mount Blanchet (83.71%).

Special Feature

Rare/Endangered Values

- X Listed ecosystem SBS dw3 (06) (blue-listed) Listed species: grizzly bear (blue-listed), American bittern, Northern goshawk

Scientific/Research Opportunities

RECREATION

Representation:

- backcountry
- destination

- X Wilderness recreation opportunities for boating, hiking, hunting and fishing

- travel corridor
- local recreation

Special Opportunities

Education/Interpretation Opportunities X Ecosystems and cultural use associated with large lakes

CULTURAL HERITAGE

Representation X First Nations’ trade routes and traditional use areas; European contact and exploration

Special Feature unknown

OTHER MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Other Designations

Relationship to Other PAs X Rubyrock Lake Provincial Park is complemented by Sutherland River Provincial Park in Skeena Region in providing representation of the fragmented and poorly represented Babine Uplands Ecosection. While several small and medium size parks are found along the Stuart/Trembleur/Takla lakes system, Rubyrock Lake and Mt. Blanchet are the only large Goal 1 parks.

Co-operative Management Arrangements Memorandum of Understanding with the Yekooche First Nations in process.

Partnerships

Vulnerability The Conservation Risk Assessment (CRA) Process identified 3 risk factors (the shape, watershed integrity, and the size of the park) for the park and rated them as low significance. Six stressors/threats were identified for the park: fire suppression was rated as highly significant; while lodges, cottages, hunting, sport fishing and snowmachines were all rated as low significance. Since the completion of CRA, forest health has emerged as a major stressor.




Relationship to Other Strategies Rubyrock Lake Provincial Park was identified for protected area status through the Fort St. James Land and Resource Management Plan in 1999.

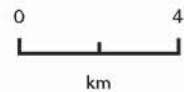
Area: 41,233 hectares
Date of establishment: January 25, 2001.



Projection: UTM Zone 10
Datum: NAD83



-  Nature Recreation
-  Wilderness Recreation
-  Protected Area Boundary



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