

Ts'il?os  
Provincial Park  
**M**ASTER  
**P**LAN

Prepared by  
Cariboo District  
BC Parks Division  
Williams Lake, B.C.



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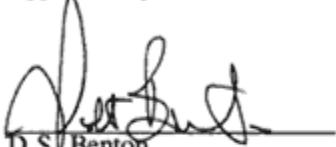
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# Ts'il?os Provincial Park Master Plan

Approved by:



D.S. Benton  
District Manager

Date: 97/03/12



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Date: 97.04.28

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# Preface

## The Legend of Ts'il?os<sup>1</sup>

The legend of Ts'il?os has been maintained through many generations by the Elders of the Xení Gwet'in. To them, Ts'il?osis a place to respect. Ts'il?os keeps watch over the people of Xení and their territory, and his story is told here with the permission of the Xení Gwet'in.

Long ago, before white settlers moved in, Ts'il?os was once a man. Ts'il?os had a wife named ?Eniyud. They lived in the mountains south of Konni Lake. Even though they had six children together, they had trouble getting along with one another. One day, Ts'il?os and ?Eniyud got into an argument. ?Eniyud threw her baby on Ts'il?os' lap. She left two children with him and took the other three away. Ts'il?os turned into a rock along with the two children above Xení Lake. You can still see the baby in his lap today.

?Eniyud and her three children headed toward Tatlayoko Valley. On her way, she planted wild potatoes. When she arrived on the other side of Tatlayoko Valley, ?Eniyud also turned into a rock. Wherever you find wild potatoes growing, she planted them.

The Elders of Xení Gwet'in say that if you point at Ts'il?os, he will make it rain or snow. He will change the weather, usually when you are on foot or horseback, far from home. ?Eniyud is the same, but meaner. The Elders say when you try to camp around her, she will change the weather.

Ts'il?os Provincial Park was created without prejudice to any aboriginal rights and title that the Xení Gwet'in National Government may have.

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<sup>1</sup>This text appears on a brass plaque mounted on a cairn overlooking Ts'il-os. The plaque was presented to the Ts'ílhqot'in People of Xení by Premier Mike Harcourt on January 13, 1994, on the establishment of Ts'il?os Park, and commemorates the commitment of the Province of British Columbia to working with the Ts'ílhqot'in People of Xení on the management of this park.





# Acknowledgements

This master plan has been prepared by BC Parks staff and a volunteer advisory group. Government agencies, interest groups and individuals have also provided important information.

This document reflects the interests and contributions of the members of the Ts'il'os Park Planning Subcommittee of the Local Advisory Group for Ts'il'os Park and the Taseko Management Zone. BC Parks would like to give special recognition to the members of this advisory group who volunteered their time to provide the advice and reach the agreements that make up this plan. The following people have been active participants on the Ts'il'os Park Planning Subcommittee and are signatories to this plan.


Chief Roger William	Xeni Gwet'in
Jim Antonenko	Williams Lake Sportsmen
Brian Brebner	Tsuniah Lake Lodge
Vicki Brebner	Tsuniah Lake Lodge
George Colgate	Nemiah Resident/Recreation Guide
Charyl Flinton	Share Cariboo Chilcotin Resources
Glen Davidson	BC Parks
Heather Kellerhals	Leaseholder
Rolf Kellerhals	Leaseholder
Kris Kennett	BC Parks
Dale Kerr	Local resident/environmentalist
John Kerr	Local resident/kayaker
Karen McLean	Guide outfitter/River Ridge Resort
Joan Merrick	Nemiah Resident
Anna Roberts	Williams Lake Field Naturalists
Jim Sims	Recreation

The planning process has been coordinated by Kris Kennett, Planner, and assisted by Glen Davidson, Resource Officer, and Herb Carter, Area Supervisor. The project has been overseen by the Gwa Najegwaghaten which consists of Roger Williams, Chief of the First Nations of Xeni, Robbin Lulua and David Setah, Councillors with the First Nations of Xeni, Gilbert Solomon of the First Nations of Xeni, Scott Benton, BC Parks District Manager, and Herb Carter, BC Parks Area Supervisor. Roger Norrish, Management Planning Coordinator, and Mike Murtha, Manager of Regional Planning Services, provided assistance and expertise. Headquarter staff in the Parks and Ecological Reserves Management Branch and Planning Services provided useful comments.

# Ts'il?os Provincial Park Planning Subcommittee

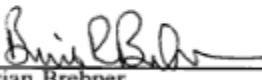
The members of the Ts'il?os Park Planning Subcommittee, the undersigned, have prepared this master plan and reached a consensus agreement on the objectives and actions that are contained in this plan. The Subcommittee requests that the Local Advisory Group endorse this plan for its consistency with the obligations and direction set out in the Chilko Lake Study and that BC Parks approves this plan and implements it according to the intent and principles established in the Chilko Lake Study.

  
Chief Roger William  
Xeni Gwet'in

  
George Colgate  
Nemiah Resident/Recreation Guide

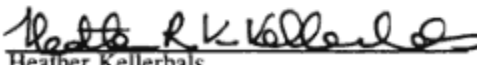
  
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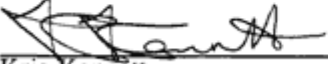
  
Charyl Flinton  
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Vicki Brebner  
Tsuniah Lake Lodge

  
Heather Kellerhals  
Leaseholder

  
Rolf Kellerhals  
Leaseholder

*Bud McLean for*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Karen McLean  
Guide outfitter/River Ridge Resort

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kris Kennett  
BC Parks

*Joan Merrick*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joan Merrick  
Nemiah Resident

See Minority Report, Appendix I  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dale Kerr  
Local resident/environmentalist

*Anna Roberts*  
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Anna Roberts  
Williams Lake Field Naturalists

See Minority Report, Appendix I  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Kerr  
Local resident/kayaker

*Jim Sims*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jim Sims  
Recreation



# Plan Highlights

- Ts'il'os Provincial Park will be managed as a wilderness park that protects important wildlife and their habitat and outstanding wilderness recreation opportunities.
- Over 88 percent of the park is zoned as Wilderness Recreation in recognition of the outstanding wilderness values.
- The plan sets out the working relationship between BC Parks, the Xení Gwet'in and the Local Advisory Group

## **Commitments for management of the natural values of the park include:**

- Management focus is primarily on the protection of natural ecosystems and biodiversity both within the park and in the context of the surrounding landscape.
- Management plans will be prepared for vegetation, wildlife, and aquatic resources.

## **Commitments for management of the cultural values of the park include:**

- The Xení Gwet'in will be important players in the management of the park and their traditional home.
- Heritage overviews and archeological studies will be done to identify and protect important sites and features.

## **Commitments for management of the recreation values include:**

- Visitors will be able to continue to pursue traditional recreational activities that are in keeping with the wilderness character of the park.
- A code of conduct will be developed by the commercial operators to ensure the wilderness experience is maintained over time.
- The park values and resources will be assessed, monitored and managed to ensure that recreation use does not degrade important park values.

# **Section One**

## **Introduction**

# The Master Planning Process

A master plan is prepared by BC Parks as a document to guide park management over a ten-year term. It sets out objectives and actions for conservation, development, interpretation and operation of a park. A master plan relies on information relating to such things as natural resources, cultural activities, recreation uses, and activities occurring on surrounding lands.

The process for preparing a plan involves analysis of the overall goals of the park, patterns of use, management objectives, and possible sources of conflict among park policies. Through the process, various options for managing the park are assessed for their ability to reach a balance between protecting the natural resources from damage and managing human uses of the area.

A master plan not only establishes long-term management direction for a park, but also deals with immediate issues. This means that a plan contains numerous statements describing management actions to be undertaken. Since BC Parks cannot carry out every task at the same time, the plan must also rank the priority of the management actions.

BC Parks prepares master plans with a high degree of public involvement. The general public and public-interest groups have opportunities to provide comments to BC Parks through a variety of means, including public meetings and mail outs. In the case of Ts'il'os Provincial Park, the Chilko Lake Study Team and the Local Advisory Group developed the management direction and master plan respectively. Volunteers play an important role for both groups by representing a variety of interests including: Xeni Gwet'in, field naturalists, guide outfitters, labour groups, leaseholders, local residents, recreation, and tourism operators.

Each section of the master plan provides a statement of direction from the Chilko Lake Study Report and a brief summary of relevant background information. More detailed information can be obtained from the Chilko Lake Study Team Report which is available from the BC Parks District Office in Williams Lake.

This master plan consists of nine main sections:

- 1) context of the plan, which highlights planning issues that are addressed and provides a summary of background information on the park;
- 2) role of the park and its vision statement which provides the general essence of the park significance and the critical goals and principles for long-term management;
- 3) special considerations in working with the Xeni Gwet'in and the Local Advisory Group, and the commitments made by the Chilko Lake Study as part of the agreement to creation of the park.
- 4) park zoning which defines how different areas of the park will be managed;
- 5) objectives and actions for managing the natural and cultural resources;
- 6) objectives and actions for providing outdoor recreation opportunities, access, and information about the park;
- 7) objectives and actions for managing the components, or management units, of the park;
- 8) communication strategy;
- 9) priorities for implementing the management actions.



# Background to Ts'il?os Provincial Park

Ts'il?os Provincial Park was dedicated on January 13, 1994 when the Premier of British Columbia, Mike Harcourt, accepted the Chilko Lake Study Team recommendations and announced the creation of the park. The Chilko Lake Study Team was established in 1991, lead by BC Parks, the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources and the Xeni Gwet'in<sup>2</sup> to develop land use recommendations over the area known as the Chilko Lake Deferred Planning Area. After a year of gathering information and another year of negotiating, the Chilko Lake Study Team recommended that most of the area be protected as a provincial park and a smaller area, the Taseko Management Zone, be available to limited integrated resource use. The team also recommended that a local advisory group be formed to be directly involved in the planning and management of these two areas.

As part of the Chilko Lake Study Team's recommendation, management principles (Appendix A) and an activity matrix (Appendix B) were developed to guide the development of a management plan for the area. The activity matrix describes the range of activities recommended by the Study Team.

At the same time as the park was announced, a memorandum of understanding was signed by the Government of British Columbia and the Tš'ilhqot'in People of Xeni. The memorandum provides assurances to the Xeni Gwet'in that they will be involved in the planning and management of the area. The establishment of the Park is without prejudice to any aboriginal rights and title that the Xeni Gwet'in may have. Ts'il?os Provincial Park encompasses part of the traditional territory of the Xeni Gwet'in and they have identified an area which includes the park as an aboriginal wilderness preserve in their 1989 declaration (Appendix C). The relationship between the Xeni Gwet'in and BC Parks will be strengthened through the development of a joint vision incorporating both societies' values in the planning and management of this area.

BC Parks and Xeni Gwet'in have developed a terms of reference to implement this agreement and work in a cooperative and congenial manner in the management of the park.

## Ts'il?os Provincial Park Master Planning Project

As recommended, a Local Advisory Group has been established to assist in the development of the management plan and the resolution of issues. Given the cross-boundary issues, the management plans for the park and the Taseko Management Zone are being developed in concert, by the Local Advisory Group.

To accomplish this, two planning subcommittees were struck (Figure 1) and are coordinated by an Interagency Planning Team, consisting of representatives from Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, Forests, BC Environment, BC Lands, and BC Parks. Under these subcommittees, working groups are established to examine specific issues.

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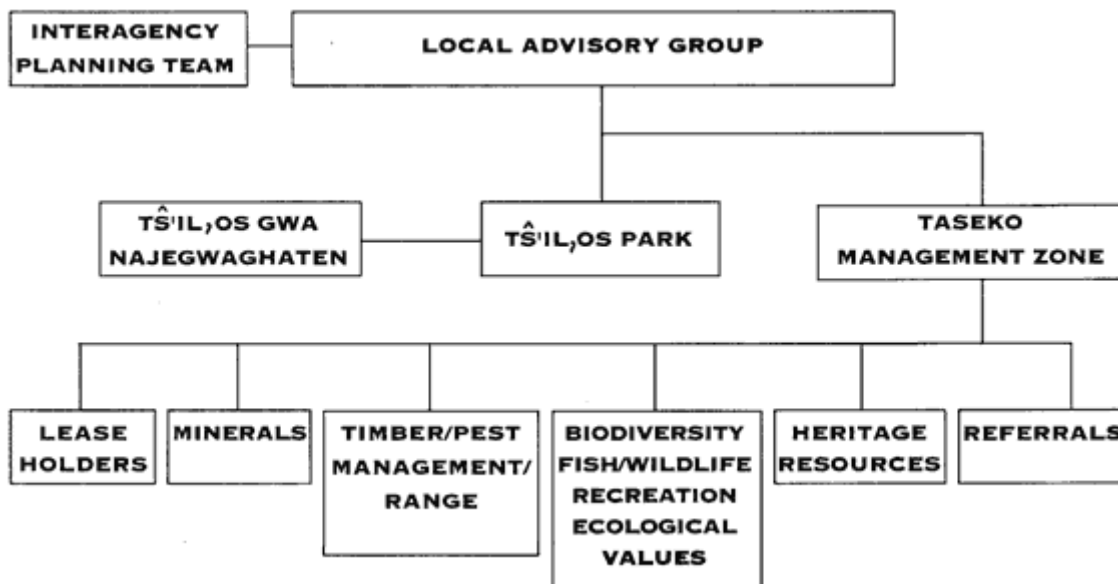
<sup>2</sup>The Xeni Gwet'in were formerly known as the Nemiah Valley Indian Band.

The Parks Subcommittee is guided by a joint committee of BC Parks and Xeni Gwet'in representatives (See Appendix D for the Terms of Reference). The name of this committee is Ts'il?os Gwa Najegwaghaten or in T s'ilhqot'in, "People working together for Ts'il?os ". The Gwa Najegwaghaten was established to implement the Memorandum of Understanding. It liaises with the Interagency Planning Team and the Local Advisory Group.

Through the Gwa Najegwaghaten and the master planning process, BC Parks and the Xeni Gwet'in are working together and developing a common understanding of management and management prescriptions. A Xeni representative who has knowledge of Xeni Gwet'in land use practices and management was contracted to liaise with the Elders and provide advice and assistance in portraying this in the management plan. At the same time, the Xeni were contracted to undertake a cultural heritage overview of the park and the Taseko Management Zone.

The planning for the park is assisted greatly by the recommendations that the Chilko Lake Study Team has provided in its report. The recommendations on the role of the park and the management of activities (Appendix A) forms the basis of this management document.

**Figure 1: Structure of the Local Advisory Group**



## **Relationship with Other Land Use Planning**

As mentioned previously, Ts'il'os Provincial Park was created as a result of the Chilko Lake Study Team. The Team was established at the time of the "Parks and Wilderness for the '90s" program, as a test case in resolving local land use issues. Part way through the work of the Chilko Lake Study Team, the Commission on Resources and Environment (CORE) was established. Given that the Chilko Lake Study followed the principles set out by CORE, only minor adjustments in process were made. Towards the end of the Chilko Lake process, the Protected Areas Strategy (PAS) gained momentum. The proposed protected area was highly rated in meeting the PAS criteria and fills most of the gaps for this ecosection.

The recommendations of the Chilko Lake Study Team are in keeping with the provincial government's initiative to zone and plan the management of the land base. Most of the area has been designated as park and the rest is known as the Taseko Management Zone, where activities will be planned and managed in consideration of the sensitivity of the values within the zone and the adjacent protected area. As part of the negotiated agreement that led to the creation of the park, it is recognized that resource development activities will occur on adjacent lands. This is particularly the case on the eastern boundary of the park where the boundary was drawn, in part, with mineral values in mind. Consequently, resource development may well occur here, and impacts on the park could be a result. The Environmental Assessment Process, which is a legislated review process for major projects and activities, will take into account the proximity of the park and will include requirements for mitigation and reclamation. BC Parks and the Local Advisory Group will be involved in this process.

BC Parks and the Local Advisory Group will be involved in the planning for other adjacent sensitive development zones to ensure that the values in the park are not adversely affected by activities in these areas.

## **Planning Issues**

The master plan addresses a number of planning issues identified by the Chilko Lake Study Team, BC Parks, the Xeni Gwet'in and the Ts'il'os Park Planning Subcommittee.

## **Role of the Park**

Ts'il'os Provincial Park serves both conservation and recreation roles established in the legislative mandate of BC Parks (Appendix E). It protects a section of the Chilcotin Ranges, and provides representation of the Central Chilcotin Ranges Ecosection of the Chilcotin Ranges Ecoregion. It is part of the traditional territory of the Xeni Gwet'in. The park protects the diversity of wildlife habitats and the wildlife dependent on them and provides recreation opportunities for the holiday destination seeker and the wilderness adventurer. This master plan sets direction for managing this dual role with emphasis on maintaining the wilderness character.

## **Relationship with the Xenigwet'in**

A memorandum of understanding has been signed by the Government of British Columbia and the Ts'ilhqot'in people of Xenig. The memorandum provides assurances to the Xenigwet'in that their rights and interests are not prejudiced by the creation of the park and that they will be involved in the planning and management of the area. Ts'il?os Provincial Park encompasses part of the traditional territory of the Xenigwet'in and they have declared an area larger than what is currently a park as an aboriginal wilderness preserve in their 1989 declaration. The Xenigwet'in are concerned about the effect of the park and its visitors on their traditional lifestyle and uses. The relationship between the Xenigwet'in and BC Parks will be strengthened through the Gwa Nejegwaghaten, and the development of a joint vision incorporating both societies' values in the planning and management of this area.

## **Management of Park Values**

Ts'il?os was established to conserve vegetation, wildlife and fish habitats, cultural values and special features. These values can be affected by recreation use in the park, and development in and around the park. In response to these factors, conserving the values will depend on obtaining accurate information and actively managing activities to ensure values are maintained. The master plan sets direction for management of these resources.

## **Management and Development of Recreational Opportunities**

The park offers some frontcountry and outstanding backcountry recreation opportunities. Both the Chilko Lake Study Team and the Park Planning Subcommittee expressed a strong interest in maintaining the high quality wilderness experience in the park. The master plan establishes the compatible recreation opportunities for the park, and suitable locations, and provides direction for acceptable levels of use. It also addresses the role of aircraft in the park and provides direction for management of this means of access. Lastly, it outlines appropriate type and scale of public and commercial recreation services that is appropriate for a wilderness park.

# Background Summary

Ts'il?os Provincial Park is located in a relatively isolated and undeveloped part of the Chilcotin (Figure 2). By air, it is 160 km southwest of Williams Lake and 250 km north of Vancouver. Its boundaries encompass 233,00 hectares of rugged mountains, lakes, glaciers, alpine meadows, waterfalls and valleys. It is part of the traditional territory of the Xeni Gwet'in and contains sites of cultural and spiritual significance. As well, it offers outstanding backcountry recreation opportunities and protects the habitat of important wildlife populations.

Ts'il?os provides adequate representation of the Central Chilcotin Ranges Ecosection in British Columbia, which is a transition between the Coast Mountains to the west and the interior plateau in the northeast. It includes five of the province's 14 biogeoclimatic zones, including Interior Douglas Fir, Coastal Western Hemlock, Montane Spruce, Engelmann Spruce-Subalpine Fir, and Alpine Tundra. The park is biologically diverse, with relatively large numbers of biogeoclimatic zones, subzones and ecosystems, which support different plant and animal species. This diversity and contrast in the vegetation and landscapes are a result of the rainshadow effect on the east side of the high mountains and a strong climatic gradient. These ecosystems are largely unfragmented by industrial activity and are dominated by natural processes, making this park an ecologically significant area in British Columbia.

The park provides exceptional nature appreciation such as wildlife viewing and wildflower meadows. Populations of California bighorn sheep, mountain goat, mule deer, grizzly bear, black bear and moose occur in the area. It also offers important resident hunting opportunities, and supports an active guiding industry.

The park includes special features. Particularly noteworthy is Chilko Lake which is a large high-elevation lake with distinctive blue waters and a scenic backdrop. On Chilko Lake itself, there are important features such as Big Lagoon and Little Lagoon, and volcanic dyke formations. Yohetta Valley is special, given its lakes, geology and the resulting distinctive colour and form, its vegetation, and its diverse wildlife populations. Tchaikazan Valley has five glaciers at the headwaters of the river and also has extensive meadows, outwash plains, spruce forests, and a braided river. The largest glacier, the Tchaikazan Glacier, is the only major glacier on the extreme leeward side of the Coast Mountains. Ts'il?os, or Mt. Tatlow, is the scenic focal point from Nemiah Valley and is the highest point in the Chilcotin Range. It is also the namesake of the park, given its association with the Xeni Gwet'in.

The Xeni Gwet'in have traditionally occupied and used the area in and around the park and continue to do so. By virtue of their long and continuous presence in the region, the Xeni Gwet'in assert themselves to be the principal right-holders. In 1989, they stated their rights to this area through their Aboriginal Wilderness Preserve Declaration (Appendix C). Their primary interest is in sustaining the contemporary community of Nemiah Valley through the use and management of the land and its resources. The Xeni Gwet'in's participation and agreement to the park is without prejudice to any aboriginal rights and title that they may have.

As a result of Chilko Lake and varied mountain landscapes, diverse recreation opportunities are available in the park. Chilko Lake offers vehicle-accessible camping, power boating, canoeing, ocean-type kayaking, fishing, sightseeing and windsurfing. The mountains provide high quality wilderness opportunities including wilderness hiking, mountaineering, horseback riding and hunting.



**Plate 1: Ts'ylos Mountain from Nemiah Valley**



# Ts'ilhqot'in Features

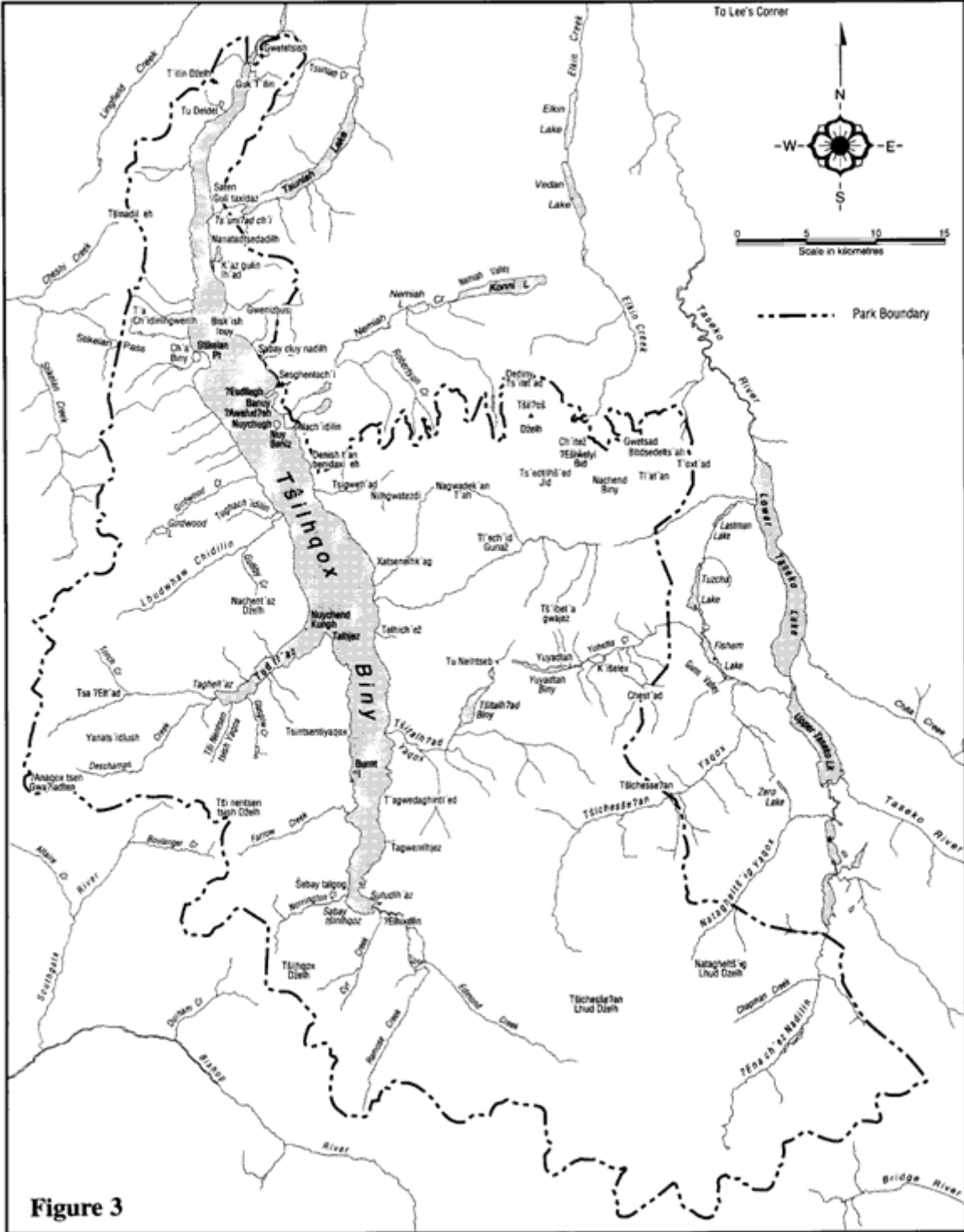


Figure 3



**Table 1: Translations for Ts'ilhqot'in Features<sup>3</sup>**

PLACE NAMES	TRANSLATION	ENGLISH NAME
?Anaqox tsen Gwaiadten	Trail towards Bute Inlet	Bute Inlet trail
Banuy ?Awahxi?eh	Look out point	
Bitdsedelts'ah	People stayed inside this land formation	
Bisk'ish ?Inuy	Named after seagulls having their nests on a island	
Ch'a Biny	A lake situated behind a land form (lagoon)	Big Lagoon
Ch'itez	It was named that because a horse fell with the person riding him	
Chest'ad	A berry name	
Dediny Tš'ilat'ad	Named for numerous groundhogs	
Denish t'an benidaxi?eh	A place covered with kinnikinnick leaves	
?Elhixidlin	Two rivers that come together	Cyr Creek and Edmond Creek Junction
?Ena ch'ez Nadilin	A river flows by ÎEnaytsal people	Lord River
?Ešdilagh	A point	The Point
?Ešiwelyi Bid		
Guk'a T'ilin	River flowing through land form	
Guli taxidaz	Skunk farted into the lake	
Gweniszbus	A round formation	
Gwetetsish	Trees changing colours for fall time	Narrows
Gwetsad	Floating glacier	
K'az gulin lh'ad		
K'is'elex	Lots of willows	
Lhudwhaw Chidilin	Fish spawning place	Tredcroft Creek
Nach'idilin	River flowing into	
Nachend Biny	Jackpine surrounding this lake	
Nachent'az Dzelh		Boatswain Mountain
Nagwadek'an T'ah	A down hill	
Nanatadtsedadilh	People crossing a river	Little Lagoon

<sup>3</sup>Provided with permission from the Xeni Gwet'in.

PLACE NAMES	TRANSLATION	ENGLISH NAME
Natagheltš'ig Lhud Dzelh	A glacier water fall mountain	Glacier Falls Mountain
Natagheltš'ig Yaqox	A water fall river	Falls Creek
Nuy Beniz	Behind the island	Canoe Point
Nuychend Kungh	An island that has a house on it	Bateman Island
Nuychugh	Big island	Duff Island
Sabay cluy nadilh	Dolly varden spawn here or come here	
Sabay tšinhqoz	Lots of dolly varden come here	Southwest tail end of Chilko Lake
Saten		
Sebay talgog	It is called that because the mountain goat that got shot fell into the lake	Near Norrington Creek outlet
Sesghentach'i	River flowing into a lake	Nemiah Bay
Sutudlh'az	Tail end formation of the south end of Chilko Lake	South end of Chilko Lake
T'a Ch'idinlhgwenlh Dzelh	A hill	Huckleberry Mountain
T'agwedaghintl'ed	A wide platform up there	
T'ilin Dzelh	A river flowing by the mountain	Tullin Mountain
T'oxt'ad	A basin that looks like a nest	Vick's Mountain basin
Taghelt'az	Launching a boat into Franklyn Arm	West end of Franklyn Arm
Tagwenilhjez		
Talhjez	A long portion of land extending out into the lake from the main land	Bateman Point
Telhich'ez		
Tl'at'an		
Tl'ech'id Gunaz	Long meadow	Long Valley
Ts'edtilhtš'ed Jid	Named that because a person that fell down a hill and didn't get hurt at all	
Ts'i bet'a gwajex	Far	
Ts'uni <sup>?</sup> ad ch'i	Tail end of the lake that is surrounded by spruce	Tsuniah Creek Inlet
Tsa <sup>?</sup> Elt'ad	Beaver's dam	
Tš'i nentsen tsish Dzelh	A bad shaped mountain because you cannot walk on it	Good Hope Mountain

<b>PLACE NAMES</b>	<b>TRANSLATION</b>	<b>ENGLISH NAME</b>
Tsi Nentsen tsish Yaqox	Bad mountain creek	Good Hope Creek
Tsichesse <sup>2</sup> an Yaqox	Meaning a rock	Tchaikazan River
Tsichesse <sup>2</sup> an	Named for a rock	Tchaikazan Valley
Tsichesse <sup>2</sup> an Lhud Dzelh	Named for rock and lhud meaning glacier	Tchaikazan Glacier Mountain
Tsigwetl'ad	A rock formation going into a lake	
Ts'il <sup>2</sup> -os Dzelh	It was his name, the one that turned into a mountain	Tatlow Mountain
Tsilhqox Biny	Chilcotin people's lake	Chilko Lake
Tsilhqox Dzelh	Snow Mountain Lake	Chilko Mountain
Tsinadil <sup>2</sup> eh	Standing Rock	Cheshi Pass
Tsintsentiyaqox	A place containing lots of douglas fir trees	
Tsitalh <sup>2</sup> ad Yaqox	A creek situated in between mountains	Rainbow Creek
Tsitalh <sup>2</sup> ad Biny	A lake situated in between mountains	Dorothy Lake
Tu Nelhtseb	Smelly lake or swamp	
Tu Deldel	Red water	Green Lake
Tud tl'az	Named that because of the formation of a lake	Franklyn Arm
Tughach'idilin	A river flowing into a lake	Gold Creek
Xatsenelhk'ag	A mountain standing straight and tall	
Yanats'idlush	People freezing while on trail over the mountain	Mountain Knewstubb
Yuyadtah Biny	Lots of lakes	Yohetta Lake
Yuyadtah	Valley of lots of lakes	Yohetta Valley

# **Section Two**

## **The Role of the Park**

## **Regional and Provincial Context**

Ts'il'os Provincial Park is part of the provincial system of protected areas. Other protected areas in the Chilcotin that contribute to the protection of the province's natural and recreational values include Tweedsmuir, Itcha Ilgachuz, Big Creek, White Pelican, Nazko and Nuntsi parks, and Homathko and Churn Creek protected areas. Together, Ts'il'os, Big Creek, South Tweedsmuir and Homathko represent the biological, recreational and ecological diversity of the Central Chilcotin Ecoregion, by protecting ecosystems and wildlife populations where the Coast Mountains meet the Chilcotin Plateau. In addition, these areas contribute to the protection of biodiversity in the region, and in association with the managed forest are integral to conservation of wildlife populations, plant communities and biodiversity.

The area known as Ts'il'os Provincial Park has long been acknowledged as an important conservation and outdoor recreation area. It protects representative, rare and endangered wildlife, diverse vegetation and landscapes, and outstanding wilderness recreation opportunities. Special features and outstanding areas such as Big Lagoon, Chilko Lake, Ts'il'os (Mt. Tatlow) and the Tchaikazan Valley are found in the park.

Ts'il'os Provincial Park offers an opportunity for citizens of British Columbia to gain an understanding of the T̕silhqot'in People of Xeni and their traditional territory. In addition, it provides outstanding and diverse backcountry recreation opportunities in a spectacular mountain setting.

Ts'il'os Provincial Park was declared a park in January 1994, when the Premier accepted the consensus recommendations of the Chilko Lake Study Team and announced the creation of Ts'il'os Provincial Park. At this time, he signed a memorandum of understanding with the Nemiah Valley Indian Band (Xeni Gwet'in) which laid out the principles to guide the development of a cooperative working relationship between BC Parks and the T̕silhqot'in People of Xeni (Appendix F). In 1995, Ts'il'os Provincial Park's boundaries were legislated under the *Park Amendment Act, 1995*.

## **Vision Statement**

The vision statement looks forward to describe the character of Ts'il'os Provincial Park ten years from now. Being clear about the long-term vision helps to guide what should be done in the short-term. The vision statement is an important guide when reacting to changing demands in recreation or when incorporating new approaches to conservation management. When reacting to new recreation demands or new management initiatives, the first priority is to look at the "larger picture" and at the possible long-term effects of a change.

## **Vision Statement**

Ts'il?os Provincial Park is known and will continue to be known as a wilderness park. The main focus of management has been to develop a cooperative working relationship between BC Parks, the Xeni Gwet'in and the Local Advisory Group. The park is carefully managed to protect the important diverse biological resources typical of the Central Chilcotin Ranges Ecoregion in balance with the traditional lifestyles, tourism and recreational pursuits.

Key attributes for Ts'il?os Provincial Park:

- conservation of the diverse biological resources including plant communities, wildlife and their habitat;
- the cooperative relationship between BC Parks, the Xeni Gwet'in and the Local Advisory Group in the management of this area;
- subsistence use by the Xeni Gwet'in;
- management of visitor numbers to protect the natural ecological integrity and to maintain remote, backcountry setting;
- management of outstanding backcountry wilderness opportunities, with recognition of the long-standing recreational pursuits of local people, tourism operators, and the general public. These pursuits include horse riding, backpacking, fishing, hunting, power boating, kayaking, nature appreciation, and photography.

## **Roles**

Ts'il?os Provincial Park contributes to the system of protected areas in British Columbia in the areas of conservation, culture and recreation, as outlined below.

## **Conservation Role**

- Ts'il?os Provincial Park protects ecosystem and biological diversity of the Central Chilcotin Ranges Ecoregion within the Chilcotin Ranges Ecoregion. Five of the province's 14 biogeoclimatic zones are found here including: Interior Douglas Fir; Coast Western Hemlock; Montane Spruce; Engelmann Spruce-Subalpine Fir; and Alpine Tundra.
- In the Protected Areas Strategy analysis, this area contributes highly to biogeoclimatic representation, old growth conservation, conservation diversity and viability, naturalness, and recreation representation and diversity.
- The park is an ecologically significant area in British Columbia, since it is a transition zone where the plant life changes from dry interior to coastal plain associations.
- Together with the adjacent forests, the park is integral to the protection of plant communities, wildlife populations and biodiversity.

- The whole of Chilko Lake is protected in the park, including the upper reaches of the watershed. This lake is the second largest natural lake in British Columbia fully protected within a provincial park and is considered an outstanding feature with its distinctive blue waters, large size, and scenic mountain environment.
- The park protects outstanding areas such as: Yohetta Valley and its lakes; Tchaikazan Valley and its glaciers and diverse ecosystems; and Ts'il'os (Mount Tatlow), the scenic focal point from Nemiah Valley which has spiritual significance to the Xeni Gwet'in.
- The park protects the habitat of a number of ecologically sensitive species, including grizzly bear, Bighorn sheep, fisher, wolverine, bald eagle, falcons, lynx, moose and Dolly Varden char (bull trout).
- Chilko Lake preserves spawning and nursery grounds for large numbers of salmon important to the commercial salmon fishing industry, aboriginal food fisheries and both salt and freshwater sports fisheries. Salmon are also important for predators such as eagles, black bear, grizzly bear and other fish. The lake supports the most annually consistent populations of spawning salmon on all the Fraser River tributaries.
- 88% of the park is zoned as Wilderness Recreation. In these areas, effects of visitor use on natural resources are minimized.

## Cultural Role

- Ts'il'oss Provincial Park is part of the traditional territory of the Xeni Gwet'in. Their primary interest is in sustaining the contemporary community of Nemiah Valley through the use and management of the land and its resources. Activities they undertake here include, but are not limited to, fishing, trapping, hunting, ranching, guiding and ceremonial activities.
- The park protects many sacred sites of the Xeni Gwet'in. For example, Ts'il'os (Mt. Tatlow) is spiritually significant to the Nemiah and plays a role in the history of the Nemiah and their current land practices. In addition, the park protects archeological sites; a number have been identified and more are anticipated.
- The park encompasses traditional use sites of the Xeni Gwet'in. These are still used today for food and medicinal plant gathering, hunting and cultural activities.
- Mineral exploration, mountaineering, ranching, trapping, guiding and tourism have occurred in the park over the past century, and offer interesting perspectives to the history of the area.

## Recreation Role

- Chilko Lake is a dominant natural and recreation feature in this area and offers exceptional views of the water and the mountains around the shore. Two rustic campsites serve as staging areas to the remote backcountry and as destinations for campers.
- Chilko Lake is a challenge for experienced boaters due to its size and danger of storms. Canoeing, kayak touring, power boating, fishing, and sightseeing are enjoyed by many visitors.
- Ts'il'os (Mt. Tatlow) is the scenic focal point for the Nemiah Valley. The slopes north and south of the summit form extensive alpine meadows. Out of respect for the Xeni Gwet'in, mountaineers are asked not to climb this spiritually significant mountain.
- The rugged mountains provide high quality wilderness experiences. Access is difficult, so high levels of technical skill and stamina are required. Wilderness hiking, mountaineering, horse use and hunting occur here.
- The Yohetta, Tchaikazan and Long Valleys have very high recreational values. Spectacular alpine views, wildlife viewing and routes to other areas such as Chilko Lake and the Coast Mountains are offered here. Recreation use of the area includes hunting, mountaineering, wilderness hiking, boating, fishing, ski-touring, nature study, trail riding and photography.
- The park provides significant potential for information and interpretation of natural, ecological and geomorphological processes, Xeni Gwet'in culture and pioneer history.



# **Section Three**

## **Special Management Considerations**

## Introduction

The history of the negotiated creation of Ts'il'os Provincial Park has resulted in special management considerations. This primarily deals with the Xení Gwet'in and the Local Advisory Group. BC Parks recognizes the expertise and role for working with sister agencies including BC Environment and Ministry of Forests in the management of resources within the park.

## Relationship with the Xení Gwet'in

### Recommendations from the Chilko Lake Study

One of the principles of the Chilko Lake Report is the recognition of the special spiritual and cultural significance of the Chilko Lake area, particularly Mount Tatlow (Ts'il'os), to the Nemiah Valley Indian Band (Xeni Gwet'in) and development with the band of a management plan for the area.

Ts'il'os Provincial Park has been the traditional home of the Xení Gwet'in. They have hunted, trapped, fished, gathered food, lived and ranched in this area and continue to do so. This is a contemporary society. The Xení Gwet'in have revitalized traditional activities and continue to live from the land, while seeking employment from traditional and contemporary sources.

In seeing the changes to their lifestyle and to land use around them, the Xení Elders are anxious about the implications of the increased profile of their traditional lands. They are apprehensive about the park and its ramifications in treaty negotiations. They are also concerned that their lifestyle and their ability to follow traditional practices which may be affected by increased visitation from park visitors, hikers, boaters and hunters.

The government and the First Nation of Xení have signed memorandum of understanding to work cooperatively in the management of this area. The memorandum provides assurances to the Xení Gwet'in that they will be involved in the planning and management of the park. The memorandum also states that the establishment of the park is without prejudice to any aboriginal rights and title that the Xení Gwet'in may have.

In addition to the Memorandum of Understanding, First Nations have sustenance rights for hunting, fishing and food gathering. Sustenance rights are constitutionally protected, that is, they are inherent, not granted rights, and take precedence over non-native privileges. In addition, the Xení Gwet'in have rights to practice traditional and ceremonial activities.

First Nations and Europeans have different approaches to the land as a result of differing values in the two societies. In the past, the European approach to land management has predominated. In the management of Ts'il'os Provincial Park, BC Parks will begin to re-address this, accommodating the Xení Gwet'in approach for the area. However, BC Parks fully

recognizes that this will not occur quickly, but is a goal to work towards. Essential to the process is the responsibility of BC Parks managers and administrators to begin to understand the Nemiah approach and connection to the land. In an effort to address this, BC Parks and the Xeni Gwet'in have established a committee to address park issues of mutual concerns. This committee is known as Ts'il?os Gwa Najegwaghaten, or "people working together for Ts'il?os".

**Objective:**

To develop a long-term, cooperative arrangement and process for the planning, operation, and management of the park between BC Parks and the Xeni Gwet'in.

**Actions:**

- Develop an understanding of the Xeni Gwet'in and BC Parks culture by using cross-cultural workshops.
- Develop an understanding of the operation of the Xeni Gwet'in and BC Parks decision-making systems and utilize both approaches in the management of the park.
- Develop an open and honest relationship with the Xeni chief, councillors and administration, but recognize that it will take time to build trust and rapport. As BC Parks employees change, this will be an ongoing process.
- Develop a means of full consultation with each other on park management, as set out in the Memorandum of Understanding and the terms of reference for the Gwa Najegwaghaten.
- Work with Xeni Gwet'in to identify and manage cultural and gathering sites by undertaking cultural heritage overview.
- Use traditional environmental knowledge in the management of wildlife and plant species.

## Relationship with Local Advisory Group

### Recommendations from the Chilko Lake Study

The Chilko Lake Study Team recommended that BC Parks involve affected interests directly in the development and implementation of a protected area management plan through the creation of a Local Advisory Group.

The Chilko Lake Study Team, made up of representatives from local residents, First Nations, naturalists, labour, industry, recreation, and government agencies, was instrumental in the creation of Ts'il'os Provincial Park. Many of these people have a continuing interest in the planning and management of the park. They are involved on the Ts'il'os Park Planning Subcommittee of the Local Advisory Group which was established to develop management plans for both the Taseko Management Zone and Ts'il'os Provincial Park.

### Objective:

To foster a cooperative relationship between BC Parks, the Xeni Gwet'in, local residents, tourism operators, recreationists, and other government agencies in the stewardship and use of Ts'il'os Provincial Park.

### Actions:

- Hold bi-annual (twice yearly) meetings, or as required, with the Local Advisory Group for the implementation, evaluation and review of the master plan. This will be accomplished through sharing information, assessing resource conditions, monitoring use levels and patterns, updating management actions, and reporting back on implementation. Extraordinary meetings on emergent issues may be initiated by concerned members and coordinated by BC Parks.
- Consult with the Local Advisory Group for clarification of management direction when and where needed. Form working groups, where needed, to develop operational plans.
- Coordinate the management and planning of Ts'il'os Provincial Park with the Taseko Management Zone through the Local Advisory Group.

## Land and Resource Tenures

### Recommendations from the Chilko Lake Study

The Chilko Lake Study Team recommended that existing *Land Act* residential and recreational leases would be honoured and could continue as leases but upon expiry would be converted to park use permit. Alternatively, they could be transferred to a park use permit immediately. Leases and permits could be transferred to the immediate family and their family. If a person wishes to relinquish his or her tenure in favour of a mutually acceptable location outside the protected area, this request should be entertained by the province.

For leases that were no longer wanted, it was the intention of the Chilko Lake Study group that BC Parks should purchase improvements at a fair market value and convert the lease to park land. No new residential or recreational leases or licenses will be permitted within the park.

Current or traditional activities as indicated in the activity matrix (Appendix B) will be honoured, including guide outfitting, angle guiding, trapping, and grazing.

Grazing is allowed by permit in designated areas with minimal competition with wildlife. Grazing of stock by guide outfitters and recreational guides as part of business activities will be based on available forage and biodiversity conservation objectives. Grazing use priorities will be determined as part of the park management plan.

In the Chilko Lake Study Recommendations, BC Parks states how its policies would be applied to the area. For grazing, pre-existing tenures would be honoured under a park use permit and would continue to be managed using Ministry of Forests' range management guidelines. Depending on wildlife forage requirements, grazing by recreation and commercial users would be permitted as the capacity of the site allows.

For trapping, pre-existing tenures will be honoured with the additional requirement of a park use permit. If fur-bearer populations are under stress, BC Parks and BC Environment will work with trapper to manage activities so that the animal population is not threatened. If a trapper wants to sell the trapline, BC Parks may offer to purchase.

Hunting and fishing will continue. BC Parks and BC Environment will work closely with the Band and their system of regulation to ensure conservation of resources. BC Parks and BC Environment will work closely to establish hunting quotas for resident and non-resident hunting, if needed.

Guided hunting and fishing will continue. BC Parks will work with Wildlife Branch and guides to assess the hunting pressure on wildlife populations and regulate quotas as necessary to protect the resource.

A number of tenures predate the establishment of Ts'il'os Provincial Park and include two traplines, five recreational or residential leases, ten grazing tenures, four guide outfitting territories, as well as various smaller *Land Act* licenses (guide camps, trapper cabins, water turbine). These uses, with the exception of grazing, require authority under the *Park Act* through park use permits. According to the *Park Amendment Act, 1995*, the Forest Service will manage the grazing tenures under the *Range Act*. The recreation and residential leaseholders can either: stay with their Lands lease until expiry (and then a park use permit will be issued); or retire their Lands lease in favour of a park use permit.

As negotiated in the Chilko Lake Study, other encumbrances such as mineral tenures and flood reserves have been removed. The two mineral tenures that existed in the park at the time of designation have been extinguished. BC Hydro has agreed to lift the Order-in-Council flood reserves on Chilko Lake, Chilko River, Taseko Lakes, and Taseko River.

### **Objectives:**

To manage inholdings and tenures to meet the conservation role of the park and the obligation to established uses.

To minimize environment and visual impacts of tenures.

### **Actions:**

- Honour existing recreational and residential tenures as *Land Act* leases or as park use permits. Allow transfer of permits and leases to immediate family. Purchase improvements on leases where agreeable by both parties.
- Allow residential and recreational lease and permit holders to access their cabins through the usual means.
- Cooperate with the Forest Service under the Range Management program in honouring and managing existing grazing permits. Ensure that range management plans are prepared, that livestock grazing is assessed, monitored, and managed so that grazing and grassland communities are sustainable and damage is minimized. Grazing activity will not be expanded from the June 1991 allotted animal unit months.
- Authorize current trapping and guide outfitting operations by issuing park use permits for activity and associated structures and camps.
- Investigate opportunities to consolidate facilities, present and future, such as repeater stations and access roads.
- Require permit holders to remove unnatural objects and structures which have no historical significance, are severely dilapidated, or no longer required. The permittee must rehabilitate the site to a natural state when the permit has been terminated.
- Undertake assessment, monitoring and management to limit environmental and visual impacts.

# **Section Four**

## **Park Zoning**

## **Introduction**

BC Parks uses zoning to assist in the planning and management of a provincial park. In general terms, zoning divides a park into logical units to apply uniform and consistent management objectives based on natural, cultural and recreational values, and existing and projected patterns of access and recreation use in relation to specific conservation goals. The zones reflect the intended land use, the degree of human use, and the level of management and development required. At one end of the spectrum, the Intensive Recreation Zone indicates a portion of a park that is appropriate for high levels of recreation and facility development. At the opposite end, the Wilderness Conservation Zones indicate areas of a park that receive the highest level of resource protection and minimal human presence. Between these two extremes, there are three additional zones providing a range of conservation and recreation priorities. See Appendix G for an in-depth description of zoning.

As indicated in Figure 3, Ts'il'os Provincial Park is separated into four zones which include Wilderness Recreation, Natural Environment, Special Feature, and Intensive Recreation. Given Ts'il'os's conservation role, the wilderness zoning is maximized to protect the wildlife habitat and wilderness values of the area. The Wilderness Conservation Zone was not used since government has committed to continue to allow hunting and guide outfitting when the park was created. These activities are not allowed in a Wilderness Conservation Zone.

## **Wilderness Recreation Zone**

The intent of this zone is to place a high priority on conserving the natural environment while providing some level of backcountry use that is compatible with the natural environment and its wilderness atmosphere. Facility development is minimal, at a level sufficient to satisfy user needs and to protect the overall environment of the park. In summary, areas designated Wilderness Recreation are large natural areas where natural ecological processes occur largely uninfluenced by human activity, and where low levels of recreation use are permitted but evidence of human presence is confined to specific primitive facilities and sites.

This zone covers 206,000 hectares or 88% of the park including the following: Long Valley, Yohetta Valley, Tchaikazan Valley, Edmond Creek and the west side of Chilko Lake.



## **Natural Environment Zone**

The objective of this zone is to ensure that facilities do not dominate the natural environment and to provide for a higher level of recreation use than is provided for in the Wilderness Recreation Zone.

In Ts'il?os Provincial Park, this zone encompasses three areas: Tullin Mountain; the Tsuniah Lake Road; and Chilko Lake itself. The lake offers a backcountry experience, particularly at the south end; however, the use of motorboats may preclude a sense of wilderness isolation. Facilities in this area are moderately developed with trails, walk-in campsites and shelters. This zone covers approximately 25,000 hectares or 11% of the park.

## **Special Feature Zone**

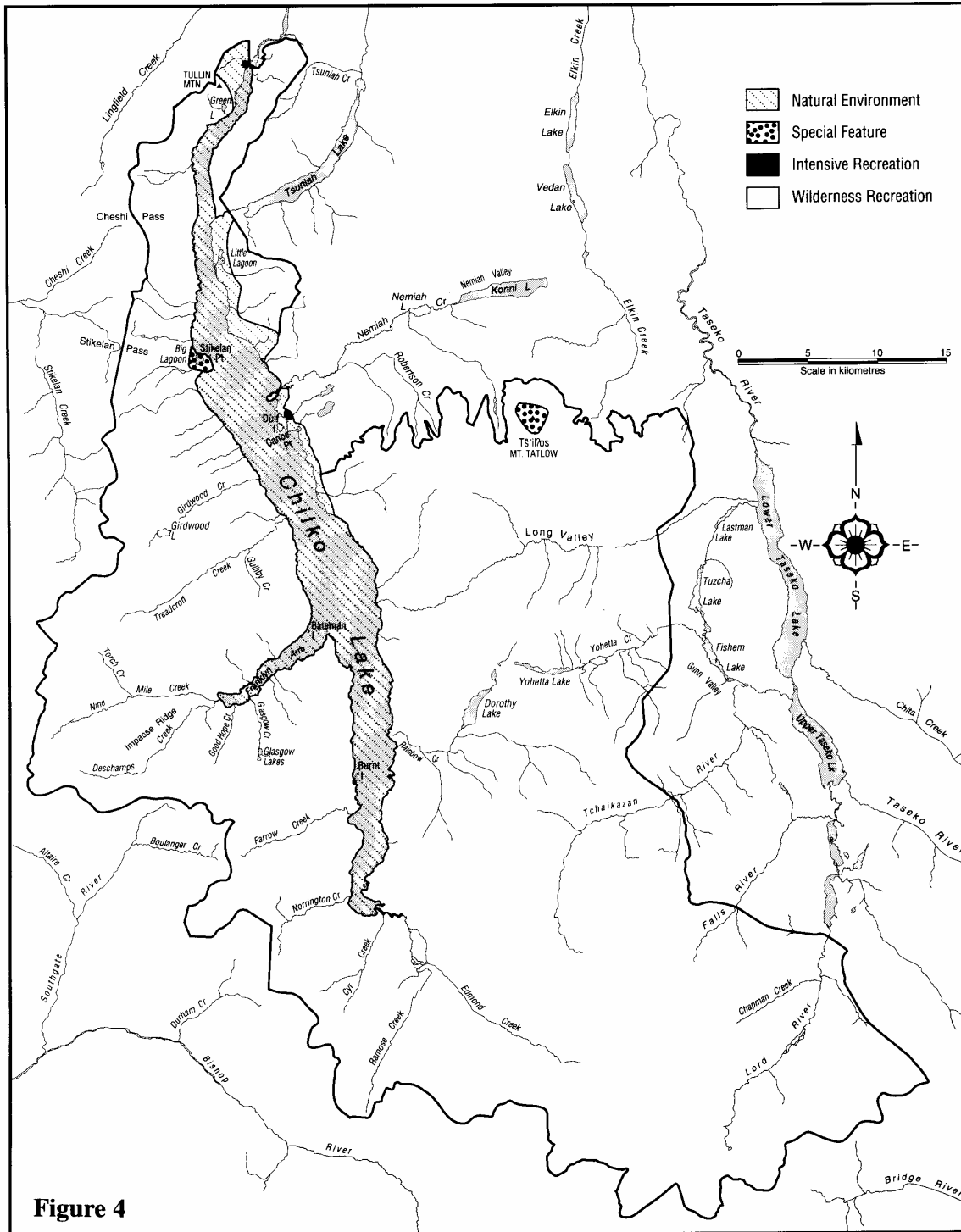
The objective of this zone is to protect and present significant ecological and cultural features. Big Lagoon and the Point are two important ecological features that require special management attention to ensure these values are maintained. Ts'il?os Mountain has also been zoned Special Feature as it is spiritually significant to the Xení Gwet'in (see Preface for Legend of Ts'il?os) and requires specific management to protect its spiritual values. This zone covers approximately 1,200 ha, or 0.5% of the park.

## **Intensive Recreation Zone**

The objective of this zone is to provide for a variety of readily accessible facility-oriented outdoor recreation opportunities. This includes facilities such as campgrounds, picnic areas, parking areas, and boat launches. The management intent of this designation is to accommodate vehicle-based users in as natural a setting as possible.

In Ts'il?os Provincial Park, this zone encompasses the former Forest Service recreation sites at the north end of the lake and at the end of the Nemiah Valley Road. These two sites, although rustic, are the most heavily visited and developed parts of the park. Located in this zone are simple visitor services and facilities for readily accessible day-use recreation opportunities, overnight camping, and parking at trail heads. Approximately 100 hectares of the park is designated for intensive recreation.

# Ts'íil?os Provincial Park Zoning



**Section Five**  
**Natural and Cultural Values and their**  
**Management**

## Introduction

Ts'il'os Provincial Park has long been recognized as an outstanding natural area. The high profile of Ts'il'os, significance of park resources and increasing demand for backcountry recreation dictates that the park must be protected and managed wisely. The park plays an important role in protecting plant communities and habitat for wildlife populations, and complementing biodiversity of the adjacent landscape. To this end, the following section sets resource management objectives and describes actions to be undertaken to protect natural features and processes. The direction set by the Chilko Lake Study Team is indicated in the boxes that follow the section heading.

In managing the park resources in context of surrounding land use, BC Parks must work cooperatively with its sister agencies of BC Environment and Ministry of Forests in the management of wildlife, fish and vegetation resources both within the park and on adjacent land.

## Water

Ts'il'os Provincial Park protects the whole of Chilko Lake, and the headwaters of the Chilko River which eventually flows into the Fraser River. Chilko river and lake support significant sockeye, chinook, Dolly Varden, rainbow trout and steelhead populations. In addition, Yohetta, Long, Lord River and Edmond Creek valleys contain regionally significant wetlands. Various other rivers and streams, such as Tsuniah and Nemiah creeks, feed the Chilko and Taseko systems. The protection of these rivers and other high quality water resources is an important component of the conservation and recreation role of the park.

During the time of the Chilko Lake Study Team negotiations, BC Hydro agreed to lift the flood reserves on the Chilko lake and river and on the Taseko lakes and river.

A small water turbine exists on Tsuniah Creek to provide hydro electrical power to one of the lodges.

### Objectives:

To protect and maintain the natural qualities of water resources and their ecological processes within the park.

To protect the wetlands in Yohetta, Long, Lord River, and Edmond Creek valleys as representative wetlands and as critical wildlife habitats.

### Actions:

- Do not allow further water impoundments, diversions and future domestic use projects within the park.

- Work with the Forest Service to maintain a high standard of water quality entering the park.
- Ensure that trail development and maintenance minimizes erosion of surface materials into creeks, rivers and lakes.
- Ensure that sanitary facilities are properly designed and located.
- Prepare and provide education on procedures for proper disposal of human wastes.
- Assess, monitor and manage use to ensure proper disposal of human wastes.

## Vegetation

### **Recommendations from the Chilko Lake Study**

In the Chilko Lake Report, the Study Team recommended that prescribed fire management be permitted and an initial attack on all wildfire be done unless otherwise specified under the fire management plan for the park. The intent of pest management activity is to control pest infestations that could threaten commercial forests. Management practices will be reviewed in advance by the local management team. The report also recommended that non-destructive research be permitted.

The rainshadow effect of the Coast Mountains has resulted in the great diversity and contrast in vegetation and landscapes. Ts'il'os Provincial Park contains five of the province's 14 biogeoclimatic zones and encompasses some special vegetation features, such as stands of Interior Douglas-fir. Vegetation also supports the wildlife that move to and from the park and contributes to the visual and recreational attractions of the park. From a landscape level, the park contributes to the diversity and is particularly important in meeting objectives for older seral stages. To ensure the long-term viability of representative vegetation ecosystems and wildlife populations, management of the forests and grasslands both inside the park and outside must be integrated.

Natural disturbances such as fire, disease, and insect infestations are fundamental in maintaining ecosystem complexity. However, there are concerns about how natural disturbances might affect specific conservation goals. Interference with natural disturbances can create "unnatural conditions" for fire or insect infestation patterns. Such unnatural conditions can lead to a build up of the fuel load and may lead to catastrophic fires, which are extremely difficult to manage and can have devastating results. BC Parks also has a responsibility to safeguard important cultural, recreation values, and facilities, to contribute to the overall landscape biodiversity objectives and to be a good neighbour to adjacent commercial forests. As lands outside the park are developed and immature seral stages replace older stages, the ecosystems inside become increasingly important to conserve.

Some wildfire suppression has occurred in the park, but it is not known to what extent the natural fire regime has been altered. Mountain pine beetle occurs in the area and an active beetle management program is being undertaken by the Ministry of Forests. In addition, noxious weeds are creeping into the park, along the roadside and in the alpine, probably introduced in horse feces. Feral horses may be affecting grasslands communities.

In general, BC Parks' management philosophy is to allow natural processes to occur as much as possible. To allow natural disturbances to run their course requires good resource information and an understanding of the consequences.

Active management may be required in order to maintain special vegetation features in the park and the overall landscape biodiversity objectives. Conservation of specific vegetation communities in a protected area this size may require active management strategies. This includes the identification of the area's natural processes and replication under controlled conditions. These strategies require considerable information and study before being implemented.

### **Objectives:**

To maintain natural plant communities for their inherent value and for their contribution to the diversity of wildlife habitats and visual and recreation attractions of Ts'il'os Provincial Park.

To maintain, where compatible with other park objectives, the established pattern of varied-age forest stands and other communities, reflecting the natural processes that occur in unmanaged forests and contributing to the larger landscape biodiversity objectives.

To protect rare, endangered and sensitive native plant communities and species, as they are identified and to prevent the establishment of non-native species.

To encourage low impact, non-destructive scientific studies to improve the knowledge of the park.

To encourage public appreciation of forest and vegetation values.

### **Actions:**

- Develop, in conjunction with BC Environment and other agencies, specific biodiversity conservation objectives which complement objectives for adjacent lands.
- Prepare a vegetation management plan with BC Environment that considers objectives and strategies for: meeting landscape biodiversity objectives; conserving vegetation patterns and rare species; re-establishing natural fire regimes; maintaining public safety; and safe guarding adjacent forest resources. This work will be supported by a biophysical inventory, ecosystem mapping, and rare vegetation inventory and will include:
  - a) fire management plan that will indicate specific circumstances and locations for which wildfires may be allowed to burn or controlled burning to be conducted. This plan will serve to meet landscape biodiversity objectives, protect commercial forests and adjacent

buildings outside the park, resemble natural processes which maintain plant and animal diversity, and reduce the probabilities of a large wildfire. Included will be public evacuation measures, priority control areas and fire control methods.

b) disease and insect management strategy to balance the ecological role of endemic levels with the threat of outbreaks and to meet landscape biodiversity objectives. Insect infestation that could spread to epidemic proportions will be controlled by using low impact, site-specific methods, such as single-tree disposal.

- In the interim, until the fire management strategy is prepared, undertake an initial attack on all wildfire by either the Ministry of Forests or BC Parks to control the fire until the situation is assessed. The fire may be allowed to run its natural course as long as it meets landscape biodiversity objectives, and visitors, adjacent commercial forests and park facilities are not in danger. The intent is to allow natural fires that occur under normal environmental (non-extreme) conditions to follow their natural course.
- Until the disease and insect management strategy is developed, continue spot control of infestations. Use low impact, site-specific methods, such as single-tree disposal. No new access will be created to address beetle problems. Review management practices in advance with the Xenigwet'in and Local Advisory Group.
- Identify and protect sensitive or unique vegetation communities from adverse impacts of recreational uses.
- Assess conditions and monitor camping areas and trails, particularly in alpine areas, to ensure the vegetation is not being damaged. Undertake management actions where necessary.
- Work with BC Forest Service under the Range Management Program and BC Environment to assess, monitor and manage grazing activities to minimize the effect on grasslands.
- Retain trees and snags for various bird and animal species except where there is a hazard to people or facilities.
- Maintain close contact with the Local Advisory Group in the management of the Taseko Management Zone to ensure the resource development plans address aesthetics, recreation, conservation and wilderness values.
- Work with the BC Forest Service, BC Environment and forest companies in the development of forest management guidelines for areas adjacent to the park.
- Assess, monitor and control noxious weeds through mechanical means or proven biological means.
- Develop interpretative information on the vegetation features and values.

# Wildlife

## Recommendations from the Chilko Lake Study

According to the Chilko Lake Study Report, wildlife habitat and population enhancement can occur but activities undertaken should reflect biodiversity conservation objectives. Hunting will continue subject to existing regulations; however, there may be a requirement for limited entry areas and guide quotas. Guide outfitting and trapping will continue under normal regulations. Non-destructive scientific study may be undertaken.

The mountainous terrain of Ts'il'os Provincial Park and the climatic gradient provide a diversity of habitats, ranging from Douglas-fir forests at lower elevations to dry alpine areas at high elevations. Consequently, the park is home to a large variety of wildlife species, including mountain goat, mule deer, black bear, moose, martin, lynx, cougar, beaver, marmot, wolf, shrew, and vole and ecologically sensitive species such as California bighorn sheep, grizzly bear, fisher, wolverine, Bald Eagle, frog, and salamander. Other vulnerable species that are likely to occur here include Peregrine falcon, Vaux's swift, and Townsend's big-eared bat. For many of these species, the adjacent lands are also important habitat. Management strategies for the park should complement the role and strategies of these neighbouring areas.

Suitable habitat is essential for functional ecosystems and healthy wildlife populations. A wide range of species are dependent on maintaining a natural dynamic system. Management for single species is difficult. For example, Bighorn sheep require grazing areas, cavity nesters require standing dead trees and salamanders need rotting detritus. However, given that fires have been suppressed for many years in this area, the habitats are not as natural as they could be.

To address this, some habitat enhancement programs have taken place within the park. A recent burn of the north slopes of Yohetta Valley removed pine and will provide increased forage for deer and sheep. Presently, BC Environment staff are assessing and monitoring revegetation of the burn site. Transplants of California bighorn sheep have been proposed to supplement declining populations in the Yohetta/Ts'il'os area. Given the lack of success of other transplants in the general area, plans for further transplants have been postponed.

Aboriginal and recreational uses of wildlife in the park have implications for management. Sustainment hunting needs must be met. Recreational hunting, guide outfitting, and wildlife viewing must be managed to ensure healthy viable populations. Trapping also needs to be taken into consideration. To address these uses, management objectives and inventory needs must be identified and will vary according to populations levels.

### Objectives:

To conserve and sustain the natural diversity of wildlife species and populations over the landscape.

To protect rare, endangered, sensitive, or vulnerable species.



To protect critical habitats and enhance declining habitats in conjunction with other park resource management and recreation use objectives.

To increase knowledge and understanding of wildlife resources and habitat in the park, and to encourage scientific research in the park, particularly that with direct management benefits.

To manage traditional, recreation, and commercial uses so that conservation objectives are met.

**Actions:**

- Develop, in conjunction with BC Environment and other agencies, specific biodiversity conservation objectives which complement the objectives for adjacent lands.
- Use biophysical mapping and other resources to describe and verify wildlife habitat suitability and to support the management of wildlife within, and adjacent to, the park.
- Develop an inventory plan in collaboration with BC Environment. This will serve to address the resource inventory needs both inside and outside the park. Through inventories, the health of wildlife populations will be assessed and monitored and the occurrence of red- and blue-listed species and other selective species will be identified and monitored. Where necessary, steps will be taken to manage these species.
- Develop a bear management plan in collaboration with BC Environment to address potential bear and visitor conflicts. Produce information package on bear avoidance behaviours for park visitors.
- Develop a long-term management plan for wildlife with BC Environment. Key elements in this strategy include: ongoing wildlife inventories; inventory of habitat requirements of species with particular reference to critical habitats; role of fire, insect and disease in terms of creating a range of habitats including snags for various bird and animal species; role of adjacent lands; and opportunities for research programs. As part of the wildlife management plan and in cooperation with the Gwa Najegwaghaten and BC Environment, develop a strategy which meets the needs of the First Nations for sustenance and ceremonial purposes while conserving viable and sustainable wildlife populations.
- Prepare an environmental assessment of any future recreational development in the Intensive Recreation, Natural Environment and Wilderness Recreation Zones.
- Encourage and utilize, where possible, local naturalist and conservation groups to gather information, such as flora and fauna surveys.
- Protect the park's limited wetlands to maintain the natural environment and the diverse bird populations.
- Consider the enhancement of habitats or populations only to support biodiversity conservation objectives and the maintenance of species at natural levels. Table proposals with Local Advisory Group.

- Develop air access management plan to prevent the harassment of wildlife.
- Assess, monitor and regulate hunting and trapping in conjunction with BC Environment to ensure healthy wildlife populations are maintained. Consult with stakeholders.
- Assess conditions and monitor levels of recreation use to limit the impact on wildlife. Take management actions where necessary.
- Undertake proactive measure to address and avoid conflicts between people and wildlife, such as education, rerouting of trails and closures, if necessary.
- Develop interpretative information on the wildlife features and values.



**Plate 2: California Bighorn sheep**

## Aquatic Resources

### Recommendations from the Chilko Lake Study

According to the Chilko Lake Study Report, fish habitat and populations enhancement can occur if activities reflect biodiversity conservation objectives. Fishing and angle guiding will continue subject to existing regulations.

The Chilko Lake system supports populations of anadromous and non-anadromous fish including: sockeye, chinook and coho salmon; steelhead trout, Dolly Varden char (bull trout), white fish, rainbow trout and kokanee salmon. The migratory species use the Chilko watershed for spawning and rearing before migrating to the Pacific Ocean. The salmon carcasses and juveniles provide nutrients and food which helps to support the freshwater fish. These fish support the Aboriginal food fisheries, the commercial salmon fishing industry and both salt- and freshwater-sports fisheries.

The salmon provide an important food source for predator wildlife species such as black bear, grizzly bear, raptors and other fish. In addition, they are an important source of nutrients in an otherwise nutrient-deficient lake.

Sockeye make up the largest return of salmon to the Chilko Lake system, and is among the most consistent salmon runs in the province. Chilko Lake provides important spawning habitat for this run. The Chilko River is the main nursery stream for steelhead.

In managing the fishery resources, the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans undertakes annual enumeration programs of adult spawning populations and juveniles migrating to the sea. Until 1993, they undertook an experimental lake enrichment program to increase the survival and improve the management of the Fraser River sockeye.

In terms of the freshwater species, the provincial fisheries managers have declared the Chilko River a "high-quality" classified river. Because productivity is typically low in the majority of the areas's lakes and streams, fish population inhabiting these waters are vulnerable to major population declines due to even moderate levels of angler effort and fish harvesting, and habitat alteration. A number of high-altitude lakes located in the park have been reported to support sport fish populations; however, information related to the composition and status of these stocks is unavailable. Approximately 30% of the total aquatic resource in the park has been adequately surveyed.

First Nations people, including the Xeni Gwet'in, have the right to harvest fish in the park for sustenance or ceremonial uses.

### Objectives:

- To conserve all natural fish populations.
- To maintain natural fish habitat.
- To protect spawning habitat of the salmon.

To work with other agencies to enhance, where possible, angling opportunities for frontcountry park visitors.

**Actions:**

- Develop an aquatic resources inventory plan in conjunction with Department of Fisheries and Oceans and BC Environment to gain a better understanding of resources, impacts of angling and harvesting, and implications for populations outside the park. Include current surveys such as enumeration of juvenile sockeye; density and growth rates; populations estimates; smolt out migration; levels of phyto and zooplankton.
- Assess and monitor angling in conjunction with BC Environment and Department of Fisheries and Oceans to ensure natural fish populations are maintained. Assess current sustenance requirements and recreation pressures and determine acceptable quotas. Take management actions where necessary.
- Assess and monitor red and blue listed species, such as bull trout, with BC Environment and Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Develop species plans where needed to address population levels, habitat and harvest.
- Maintain all alpine lakes in natural state; do not stock barren lakes.
- Work with Department of Fisheries and Oceans and BC Environment to assess results of the fertilization program to determine whether it has been beneficial and if it meets the above objectives. Review any continuation of the program with the Xenigwet'in and the Local Advisory Group.
- Develop and distribute educational information on the fish species and habitat requirements.
- Consider conservation enhancement measures if populations are endangered. Use proven enhancement techniques.

# Cultural Values

## Recommendations from the Chilko Lake Study

The Chilko Lake Study Team recommended that traditional aboriginal activities for sustenance, medicine and spiritual purposes occur and be self-regulated by the Xeni Gwet'in. As one of the management principles set out in the document, the Team recognizes the special spiritual and cultural significance of the Chilko area, particularly Mt. Tatlow (Ts'il?os) to the Nemiah Valley Indian Band (Xeni Gwet'in) and to work with the Band in developing a management plan.

Ts'il?os Provincial Park has been the traditional home of the First Nation of Xeni, past and present. The area contains historical evidence such as archeological and burial sites and modern day use areas such as traditional use sites, hunting areas, trapping areas, food and medicine gathering areas and culture sites. Very little information about these resources has been recorded, but much is known through the Elders. No extensive archeological assessment has been undertaken for the park. A heritage overview, directed by the Xeni Gwet'in, has been completed.

In addition to the First Nation history, Ts'il?os has a strong ranching, guiding and tourism history.

### Objectives:

To work with the Xeni Gwet'in to increase historical and cultural knowledge and protect important cultural and historic resources as they become known.

To provide information and education on the park's human heritage.

### Actions:

- Assist the Xeni Gwet'in with the inventory and assessment of cultural resources for educational and interpretative potential, for scientific needs, and for protective status.
- Develop management strategies for identified heritage sites.
- Undertake a heritage impact assessment prior to any development, particularly near the campsites.
- Investigate opportunities for Xeni Gwet'in to provide information on their culture for park visitors.
- Provide education and information to park visitors on the significance of Ts'il?os and to respect the Xeni Gwet'in's wishes not to climb the mountain.
- Work with the Heritage Conservation Branch of the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism

and Culture and the Gwa Najegwaghaten in the management of archeological and heritage resources.



**Plate 3: Xeni Gwet'in dancers at the opening of the park**

# **Section Six**

## **Recreation Opportunities and Management**

## Introduction

This section of the master plan describes the strategies for managing outdoor recreation and access in Ts'il'os Provincial Park. The main theme of this section is to define how Ts'il'os contributes to people's enjoyment of the outdoors, both through appreciation of the values and through recreation. It looks at how both tourists and local people can experience what Ts'il'os has to offer and how BC Parks plays a role in balancing use of Ts'il'os with protecting its features and values for future generations. The section also deals with how visitors access different areas of the park.

## General Concept

The people of Xeni have traditionally used and are currently using the park for food and medicine gathering, hunting and cultural activities. Recreation uses by visitors can potentially affect their ability to pursue their traditional lifestyle. Park management must balance conservation and First Nations concerns with recreation uses.

To provide services to park visitors, BC Parks has four recreation system goals, as presented in Appendix E. The focus of Ts'il'os Provincial Park is predominantly backcountry recreation although the park also meets two other goals in that it serves local recreation and the campsites at Chilko Lake serves as a outdoor recreation holiday destination.

The Chilko Lake Study Team and the Park Planning Subcommittee emphasized the importance of maintaining remote, roadless wilderness qualities of the park while allowing established activities.

As a backcountry area, Ts'il'os Provincial Park can fulfil wilderness seekers' backcountry expectations in a relatively undisturbed wilderness setting. The sense of solitude and mountain scenery is an integral part of the attraction to the backcountry. The natural, undisturbed character of the park's backcountry is important to maintain, and a high priority will be placed on ensuring the recreation activities have minimal effects on the landscape. As well, minimizing interactions between visitors and wildlife including California Bighorn sheep and grizzly bears will be a priority.

As a holiday destination and a local recreation spot, the park offers a diversity of outdoor recreation activities such as camping, hiking, fishing, boating, and nature appreciation. Combined with superb scenery, the rich tapestry of natural values, and the First Nations and pioneer history contribute to an outstanding destination provincial park. However, given the physical nature of the park, the campsites are limited in their ability to expand and the fishery resource is sensitive to overharvesting. Careful and sensitive management is required.

In delivering this world-class experience, BC Parks will manage for continuity of experience. When the visitors receive information on the park, a certain expectation is set. That expectation will be met from the time the visitors enter the park until the time they leave again. This includes the pre-trip information, on-site information, access, parking, visitor facilities, appropriate trails for the activity, and appropriate management of vegetation and wildlife along trails.



In maintaining a high quality wilderness recreation experience, values must be assessed and use monitored and managed to ensure that recreation use does not affect the environmental and social integrity of the area and the experience. Working with local residents, recreation guides, and recreationists, BC Parks can implement a long-term monitoring program to assess the impact of recreation activity on the park and its resources. Through this system, management actions can be taken in a pro-active manner, rather than reactive. To this end, priority will be given to assessing the condition of the resource, developing a monitoring program, and establishing a database.



**Plate 4: The alpine area behind Ts'il?os Mountain**

# Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

## Introduction

Ts'il'os's natural features provide an attractive setting for a variety of opportunities for outdoor recreation and nature study. These activities must be managed so that they are compatible with the zones, are not detrimental to natural or cultural resources, and are consistent with visitors' expectations. The underlying principle is that visitors' use of the park must not be detrimental to the park's natural or cultural resources. This section describes the recreation activities that visitors undertake to enjoy the outdoors and the solitude of wilderness.

Both public and commercial recreation activities are well-established uses in the park. Early settlers engaged in recreational guiding and continue to provide a safe commercial recreational experience that enhances some visitors' enjoyment of the park and its wilderness. It is important for BC Parks to balance public and commercial recreation use both to ensure fairness of access to the park and to protect the natural values which contribute to the recreation experience.

See Section Four for a discussion of the zoning and management of the park by geographical unit.

## Frontcountry Camping

### Recommendations from the Chilko Lake Study

The Chilko Lake Study Report says that serviced camping will be restricted and limited in size and number and located at logical entry points to the protected area.

Ts'il'os Provincial Park has two rustic campgrounds, one at the north end of Chilko Lake and the other at the end of the Nemiah Valley Road at Chilko Lake. Respectively, they are known as the North End campground and the Movie site, after the Disney movie filmed there in the 1970s. The campgrounds are well-used and require upgrading to provide basic facilities such as designated campsites, fire rings, tables, hand pump and pit toilets. Formal launching facilities are located at the north end and boaters can launch their craft at an undeveloped site at the Movie Site. The primary activity undertaken by campers is fishing, and it is recognized that increased camping could lead to increased fishing pressure.

A number of commercial facilities are located near the North End campsite. They provide facilities for their guests, many of who are visitors to the park. A balance is required to provide a safe recreational opportunity for clients in the park and to protect park values.

In the past, visitors have camped with their vehicles along the Tsuniah Lake Road. The Parks Planning Subcommittee has deemed this as not an acceptable activity for this part of the park.

The First Nations of Xení have traditionally camped and fished along the lake. The two best sites are now campgrounds. The Xení Gwet'in are concerned about their ability to continue this activity in the park.

**Objective:**

To provide basic facilities for frontcountry camping and backcountry access and staging at the two access points to Chilko Lake.

**Actions:**

- Improve campsites to provide basic facilities. Ensure development occurs away from the waterfront to protect the environment and lake aesthetics. Further frontcountry camping opportunities should be pursued outside the park.
- Assess and monitor visitor satisfaction through surveys and comments to determine future development.
- Monitor campground use through visitor attendance and user trends to determine future development.
- Change the names of the campgrounds to reflect the natural and cultural history of the area, in consultation with the Xení and the Local Advisory Group.
- Consider the environmental, economic and social implications if any future recreation development. Undertake environmental and archeological impact assessments. Consult with the local community to address social and economic concerns. The effect of increased fishing pressure on fish populations must be considered.
- Do not allow vehicle camping and fires on the Tsuniah Lake Road. Assess conditions and monitor site degradation and disposal of human wastes; if the impact is noticeable, refer to Local Advisory Group for appropriate management options.
- To avoid bear-people conflicts, undertake preventative measures such as signing, evacuations or closures of the campsite(s) if bears are active in the area.

## Backcountry Hiking and Backpacking

### Recommendations from the Chilko Lake Study

The Chilko Lake Study Team Report indicated that non-mechanical recreation is permitted but restrictions may be specified in the management plan for ecologically or culturally sensitive areas. Climbing is restricted on Mt. Tatlow (Ts'il?os) in recognition of Aboriginal spiritual significance. Primitive camping is permitted and non-serviced camping is restricted with management guidelines to be developed as part of the protected area management plan. The report also recommended that trail development and use be planned in the management planning phase and that restricted areas for some types of trail use for mountain bikes, horses, hikers, and snowmobiles be considered.

Ts'il?os Provincial Park offers a variety of hiking opportunities including short day hikes, backcountry trips, and rigorous wilderness excursions that can lead to the Homathko Icefields and major peaks of the Coast Mountains.

A number of unmarked and unmapped historic routes used by guides and local residents crisscross the park. Very few trails are maintained. People hiking in the park use the established routes and are experienced backpackers.

Interactions between park visitors and grizzlies can result in harm to both visitors and bears. Backpackers may be unaware of techniques to reduce people-grizzly encounters. Backpackers will be advised of appropriate bear avoidance behaviour and of prime grizzly habitat locations to reduce the chances of encountering a grizzly.

Backcountry visitors may hike in remote and physically challenging areas, and need to be independent, self-sufficient and self-reliant. As backcountry visitors increase, public safety and search and rescue abilities will become a concern. A registry for backcountry visitors to assess and monitor numbers of backpackers or their destinations is needed. This will provide baseline information to base management actions where needed. Information should be available to hikers explaining backcountry features and wildlife etiquette and safety.

The First Nations of Xení are concerned about the impacts of visitors on the natural environment and their ability to pursue a traditional lifestyle. Assessment and monitoring program for these activities are needed to provide the basis for a management program.

### Objectives:

To offer a primitive, backcountry trail system for experienced wilderness hikers and backpackers.

To enhance the backcountry visitors' awareness of First Nations, natural features, wildlife etiquette, cultural setting and safety, and techniques for respecting bear habitat and avoiding encounters.

To ensure limited impact to rare and endangered plant communities and wildlife

populations.

To assess and monitor impact of backcountry visitors on natural and cultural values.

**Actions:**

- Maintain major wilderness trails, as developed for each management unit (Appendix H).
- Develop a method to assess conditions and monitor backcountry visitor numbers and destinations to protect the natural values. Monitor levels of use, site degradation, human waste disposal, and garbage. If impacts increase, consult Local Advisory Group for application of appropriate management options (e.g. education on wilderness ethics, designated campsites with fire rings, tent pads and toilets, and permits).
- Prepare information, available at strategic locations for backcountry visitors, explaining First Nations culture and association with the land, natural features, wilderness recreation etiquette and safety, low impact camping, wildlife viewing techniques, and techniques for avoiding bear encounters. Focus on pre-trip planning as much as possible.
- Provide education to large groups of hikers to minimize impacts; encourage small groups of hikers.
- Assist outfitters with trail problems and relocations on user-maintained trails. Proposals for new trail construction will be submitted to BC Parks and reviewed by the Local Advisory Group and should be in keeping with level of use established for an area.
- Develop trail plan for backcountry areas.
- Work with Xení Gwet'in to ensure that recreation use does not impact First Nations activities for food gathering, hunting and cultural activities.

## Angling

### Recommendations from the Chilko Lake Study

The Chilko Lake Report indicates that angling is permitted subject to *Fishing Act* regulations.

Chilko Lake provides high-quality angling opportunities and is one of the leading large-lake fishery resources in the Cariboo-Chilcotin. The lake has long been recognized as a producer of Dolly Varden char and rainbow trout and has gained international recognition for its spectacular scenery and high catch success of native sport fish. The Chilko River is similarly highly regarded for its fisheries values, and recognized as one of the leading wilderness trout rivers in the west Chilcotin. The river supports critical spawning and rearing habitat for resident rainbow trout, Dolly Varden char, Rocky Mountain whitefish and anadromous steelhead trout. To protect the commercial and non-commercial based sport fishery of provincial significance, the river was included in the province's high-quality classified rivers list in 1990. As the park and its fishing opportunities become more well-known, fishing pressure may will increase. Management of this activity will necessary critically important to protect the stocks.

Additional high-quality fisheries and/or significant populations of native fish species are known to exist in most lakes and tributaries in the Nemiah, Brittany, Elkins and Yohetta Creek drainages. The Tchaikazan, Lord, and Taseko rivers and a number of high-altitude lakes also have native fish populations.

First Nations people have the right to harvest fish in the park for sustenance or ceremonial use. The Xenigwet'in traditionally camp and fish along the lake.

### Objectives:

To provide angling opportunities for park visitors without detriment to indigenous fish populations; this is compatible with the conservation objective.

To ensure aboriginal rights are honoured.

### Actions:

- Manage natural fish stocks in collaboration with BC Environment and Department of Fisheries and Oceans, using regulations and zoning to maintain natural fish diversity and populations viability.
- Refer proposed regulation changes to the Xenigwet'in and the Local Advisory Group.
- Work with Gwa Najegwaghaten to ensure aboriginal rights are considered and honoured.
- Prepare and provide information on fishing regulations at the two campsites.

## Boating

### Recommendations from the Chilko Lake Study

The Chilko Lake Report indicates that motor boats are permitted on Chilko Lake and are managed under federal regulations.

Chilko Lake is a dominant feature of the park and is the primary boating lake. It is 80 km in length, and at 1,172 metres, is the largest high-elevation lake in Canada. The lake is accessible by vehicle at the north end and at the end of the Nemiah Valley Road. There is a campsite, previously operated by the Forest Service, at each of these locations. The lake provides boat access to much of the backcountry and a recreational lease.

Chilko Lake is a challenge for experienced boaters because of its size and the danger of sudden winds. Only during calm weather can canoeing, ocean-type kayaking, and power boating for fishing and sightseeing safely take place. Chilko Lake is also an originating point for rafting the Chilko and Chilcotin rivers.

Formal launching is available at the North End. Informal launching can occur at the Movie Site although the prevailing winds may make this difficult. Given the physical limitations at the Movie Site, a formal launch facility will not be developed.

The Xeni Gwet'in have used rafts and boats to access the west side of the lake for hunting, good gathering, trapping and grazing.

### Objective:

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

### Actions:

- Prepare and provide information on the dangers of Chilko Lake.
- Continue to permit commercial rafting use.
- Permit motor-boating on Chilko Lake, but do not allow motor use on Big Lagoon and Little Lagoon. On Big Lagoon, guide outfitters will be allowed to use motors to transport supplies. Consider restrictions on horsepower and type of motor to protect wildlife and for public safety.
- Monitor personal watercraft (e.g., Jet ski, Seadoo) use to ensure safety of other visitors and limit impact to the environment. If boating regulations change to separate personal watercraft from other boats, pursue eliminating use of personal watercraft from park.
- Monitor and manage current levels of commercial house boat use. Establish levels of use according to available campsites and moorage while considering other users such as power

boaters, kayakers, and wilderness seekers. Work with operator to ensure sewage disposal facilities meet provincial health regulations.

- Prepare and provide educational information regarding the importance of Big Lagoon (Moose Lagoon) to prevent harassment of wildlife and damage to vegetation.
- Maintain boat launching facilities at North End campground and continue to allow launching of boats at the Movie site, but do not develop facilities there. If demand dictates, BC Parks will investigate options for a launching facility on the east side in consultation with the Xenigwet'in and the Local Advisory Group.
- Establish baseline data on informal campsites used by boaters. Assess conditions and monitor sites for site degradation, human waste disposal and garbage. If impact is detected, consult the Local Advisory Group for advice on the appropriate management options that are consistent with wilderness character. Undertake only minimal facility development when needed.
- Prepare and provide information on boating etiquette and wilderness ethics.



**Plate 5: Hikers in the Spectrum Pass**



## Horse Use

### Recommendations from the Chilko Lake Study

The Chilko Lake Study Team Reports allows commercial and non-commercial horse back riding under guidelines developed in the protected area management plan, including grazing requirements. Grazing of stock by guide outfitters and recreational guides is allowed as part of business activities, based on available forage and biodiversity conservation objectives.

Historically, horses have been an important means of travel for both commercial operators and members of the public in the area known as Ts'il'os Provincial Park. *Park Act* Regulations state that horse riding is allowed only if declared open. Given the role of horses in Ts'il'os Provincial Park, the park is open to horses.

Horses can do damage to trails and wet areas and can come into conflict with other users such as hikers. Care must be taken to not over-use areas or damage the park's sensitive natural areas. Care must also be taken to ensure that visitors in the background do not detrimentally impact the ability of the Xeni Gwet'in to pursue their traditional activities.

#### **Objective:**

To manage horse use throughout the park to minimize impact on the environment, and conflicts with other users.

#### **Actions:**

- Assess conditions and monitor the effects of horse use and regulate it as necessary to protect the environment using criteria such as party size, camp facilities, forage availability and timing. Trails may be closed during certain conditions (extended periods of rain, soft conditions after a late thaw) to prevent trail damage.
- Prepare and provide information on established horse use and travel to minimize conflict between users.
- Work with Xeni Gwet'in, Local Advisory Group and commercial operators when there are changes from current situation.
- Undertake forage assessments in frequently used areas.
- Encourage all horse users to use weed-free pellets, particularly for large groups. If supply of forage is limited, require the use of pellets.

## Mountaineering

### Recommendations from the Chilko Lake Study

The Chilko Lake Study Team Report indicated that non-mechanical recreation is permitted but restrictions may be specified in the management plan for ecologically or culturally sensitive areas. Climbing is restricted on Mt. Tatlow (Ts'il?os) in recognition of Aboriginal spiritual significance.

The west side and Tchaikazan Valley offer spectacular climbing opportunities. Although Ts'il?os (Mt. Tatlow) is a climbing opportunity, the Xeni Gwet'in have requested that visitors do not climb the mountain, out of respect for spirituality the Xeni associate with Ts'il?os. This includes the face of the mountain and the associated peaks, or Ts'il?os and his children including the baby that sits in his lap and two children that stand nearby.

Among the first historical records of Chilko is the Goddard and Keese expedition of 1908. Goddard, an American explorer, and Keese, a local Ts'ilhqot'in, circumnavigated the lake in a dugout canoe and climbed all the major peaks.

#### Objective:

To continue to provide opportunities for a variety of mountaineering opportunities.

#### Actions:

- Manage climbing in accordance with the Wilderness Recreation zoning.
- Develop information and interpretative displays for recreationists regarding the spirituality associated with Ts'il?os Mountain and the request of the Xeni Gwet'in.
- Do not allow climbing of Ts'il?os Mountain.

## Paragliding

Some recreational paragliding occurs at the north end of the lake. Paragliders hike up Tullin Mountain, jump from the peak and usually land at the Chilko Lake airstrip outside the park. They use the same airspace as aircraft accessing the lodges at the north end of the lake. This activity is not appropriate as a commercial opportunity.

#### Objective:

To manage paragliding at existing levels so that low numbers of people pursue this activity in the park.

**Actions:**

- Assess and monitor use to ensure that it does not become an aviation hazard, threatens falcons and other wildlife, or diminish the park's wilderness atmosphere. Take management actions where necessary.
- Allow paragliding in the Tullin Unit only.

**Mountain Biking****Recommendations from the Chilko Lake Study**

The Chilko Lake Study Report recommends that the management plan consider restricted areas for some types of trail use, such as mountain bikes.

Mountain biking has become a popular outdoor recreation activity. However, the trails in the park were built for pedestrians and horses and for the most part, are too steep, narrow or muddy for bikes. In addition, alpine areas are vulnerable to the impact of bike tires, which can remove the vegetation and accelerate erosion. *Park Act* Regulations state that cycling is allowed only on designated trails in provincial parks.

**Objective:**

To provide opportunities for mountain biking on roads and low elevation trails so that there is minimal impact on the environment or conflict with other users.

**Actions:**

- Assess and monitor mountain bike use and undertake management actions where necessary. These may include trail improvement, further restrictions on bike use. residents.
- Permit mountain biking on existing roads, on the Yohetta Valley trail as far as Yohetta Lake and in the North Chilko Lake Unit, as designated.

## Hunting

### Recommendations from the Chilko Lake Study

According to the Chilko Lake Study Report, hunting will continue subject to existing regulations; however, there may be a requirement of limited entry areas and guide quotas. Guide outfitting will continue under normal regulations.

First Nations people have traditional hunting rights for sustenance purposes. According to recent court judgement, these rights take precedence over other forms of harvest. The First Nation of Xenii has hunted and continue to hunt in the park area to provide food for their families.

Hunting is also a recreational and commercial (guide outfitting) activity that has occurred for a long time in the park. The park is covered by four registered game guide-outfitting territories.

It is BC Parks philosophy to manage hunting conservatively to ensure healthy wildlife populations, while offering hunting opportunities. A spectrum of management techniques, including open seasons, limited entry permits, hunting closures, and motor vehicle restrictions are used to regulate hunting.

### Objective:

To manage wildlife according to the vision statement using sound and accepted wildlife management principles, in order to maintain healthy wildlife populations and provide sustainable hunting opportunities.

### Actions:

- Work with BC Environment and the Gwa Najegwaghaten to develop means to ensure sustenance hunting needs are met and that the wildlife populations are viable.
- Assess, monitor and regulate hunting in cooperation with BC Environment to ensure healthy wildlife populations are maintained. Utilize or obtain updated wildlife information in order to manage for healthy wildlife populations and appropriate harvesting levels. Harvest levels will be adjusted upwards or downwards according to fluctuations in wildlife populations. Review proposed changes with the Gwa Najegwaghaten, the Local Advisory Group, recreational hunters and guide outfitters.
- Prepare and provide educational information for park visitors on the background to sustenance and recreational hunting. This will provide an explanation of this activity and to avoid conflicts between user groups.

## **Nature Study and Culture Appreciation**

Ts'il'os Provincial Park's outstanding natural and cultural resources have appreciation, interpretation and educational potential. Activities, such as self-guided hikes and interpretive programs, are popular and can build an appreciation for the historical and natural features of the park. These activities promote stewardship and support for the park and its values. In addition, they complement the tourism industry of the region and further enhance visitor opportunities.

Wildlife viewing and wildflower appreciation are popular recreational opportunities which can strengthen the bond visitors have with the park. When viewing wildlife, animals should not be disturbed through viewing, particularly in times of physiological stress during winter or spring. In addition, nature study activities should not interfere with the ability of the Xeni Gwet'in to pursue their traditional activities and lifestyle.

### **Objectives:**

To promote stewardship for the parks and its values.

To encourage visitor appreciation and understanding of the park's natural and cultural heritage.

To provide public viewing and non-consumptive appreciation of wildlife and native plants.

### **Actions:**

- Develop and implement interpretive strategies for the park focused on First Nations and cultural heritage, the contribution of the park to the protected areas system, its natural values (vegetation and wildlife), and wilderness ethics.
- Work with Gwa Najegwaghaten to provide educational materials and opportunities for the appreciation of First Nations and the park.
- Develop educational material on wildlife viewing including information on ethics particularly when animals are vulnerable to stress or intrusion.
- Develop educational material on native wildflowers and the plant communities.
- Complete an environmental impact assessment before undertaking any development of trails or facilities.
- Assess wildlife viewing opportunities in park.
- Work with tourism operators to encourage private sector development of environmental educational opportunities.

## Winter Recreation

### Recommendations from the Chilko Lake Study

The Chilko Lake Study Report recommended that off-road vehicle use may be permitted only for licensed activities (such as trapline access, access to property by leaseholders).

Winter activities represent a small segment of recreational use in Ts'il?os Provincial Park. With the rugged terrain, high avalanche hazards, and unreliable snow conditions, opportunities are limited to cross-country skiing, backcountry skiing, and snowshoeing.

#### Objective:

To encourage safe, low impact winter recreation activities.

#### Actions:

- Permit snowmobile and ATV access for licensed activities (trapping, leaseholders, beetle control, stock grazing) only. All other activities are prohibited.
- Prepare and provide information about opportunities and hazards for skiing and snowshoeing.
- Develop an air access management plan to address helicopter assisted activities, such as support to ski mountaineers.
- Permit established commercial guided winter use such as backcountry skiing in low hazard areas.
- Do not allow snowmobiling in the park.

## Recreational Guiding

### Recommendations from the Chilko Lake Study

Recreational guiding is an established activity that has been a long standing use. The Chilko Lake Study Team recommended that this use be recognized and existing uses continue. It also recommends no new permanent structures be constructed and the guide outfitters continue to maintain trails in their territories.

For recreational guiding, permits will be granted to pre-existing operators to operate within the protected area. Under the management plan, appropriate numbers for specified areas will be determined to protect the resource and the experience.

Recreational guiding can enhance some visitors' enjoyment of Ts'il?os Provincial Park. Guiding is a commercial activity and requires a park use permit from BC Parks. Generally, guiding opportunities are judged on their possible impacts on natural values, facilities and trails, the wilderness character and other visitors. In essence, protection of the natural resources is a high priority and, as such, limitations or restrictions on recreation may be implemented.

Established recreational guiding activities in Ts'il?os Provincial Park include: trail rides, fishing, hunting, backpacking, hiking, nature appreciation, photography expeditions, boat tours and trapping.

In providing recreational opportunities in a park, there are two considerations. First, recreation use must be balanced with conservation and protection of the natural values for which the park was created. Secondly, private and commercial recreation must be balanced to allow the opportunity for members of the public to recreate in this wilderness and to allow long standing commercial operators to continue to provide a high quality wilderness experience. To protect the wilderness qualities of the park, limits may have to be placed on both user groups, private and commercial.

Additionally, commercial uses can have an impact on the ability of the Xeni Gwet'in to continue to pursue traditional activities in the park area. Management of recreation guiding activities must also take this activity into account.

### **Objective:**

To maintain recreational guiding within acceptable limits of impact.

### **Actions:**

- Authorize by park use permit existing guide outfitters, angling guides and trapping guides. Work with BC Environment for any changes with angle guides and guide outfitters.

- Authorize by park use permit pre-existing historical backcountry recreation operators. Before issuing new permits, determine optimal number of user-days according to environmental, social and economic carrying capacities. Quotas may be set for commercial guides and a limit set on public when monitoring shows the carrying capacity is close to being exceeded. If carrying capacity is exceeded, as permits are relinquished, they will not be reissued; activity will continue but at a lower level.
- Using suitable environmental and social indicators, assess the current conditions and the carrying capacity of the backcountry. Develop a backcountry management plan to manage recreation and balance commercial with public recreation. Develop and implement a monitoring program to ensure the protection of natural values.
- Evaluate current number of commercial backcountry recreation guiding opportunities. Identify opportunities for new operators of existing activities with the Gwa Najegwaghaten and the Local Advisory Group. As new activities are identified through applications, these will be considered by BC Parks and the Gwa Najegwaghaten as to the appropriateness of the activity for a wilderness park and the spirit of the activity matrix of the Chilko Lake Study Team. Screened activities will be reviewed by the Local Advisory Committee.
- Work with commercial operators to develop a code of conduct.
- Require all commercial permit holders to develop a five-year business plan that is compatible with this master plan, to be updated and approved annually for their operations in the park.
- Assist guides with trail problems and relocations on user-maintained trails. Proposals for new trails must be reviewed by BC Parks and the Local Advisory Group prior to any construction.



## Aesthetic Values

Aesthetic values relate to scenery inside and around the park, water and air quality and opportunities for solitude and quietness. Resource use and development can potentially affect all of these.

The scenery in and around Ts'il'os Provincial Park is fundamental to the visitor's experience. Mountains and lakes all contribute to the park's scenery. Park visitors can view areas outside the park from some locations. For example, from Tullin Mountain, hikers can see areas to the north of the park. Development in this area adjacent to the park can affect the viewscape and the experience for the park visitor.

As part of the negotiated agreement that led to the creation of the park, it is recognized that resource development activities will occur on adjacent lands. This is particularly the case on the eastern boundary of the park where the boundary was drawn, in part, with mineral values in mind. In the subsequent Cariboo-Chilcotin Land Use Plan, this area has been designated as a Special Resource Development Zone, which recognizes the sensitive nature of this area. Resource development activities will be carried out in a manner that respects natural values. It is quite conceivable that resource development will occur here, and there may be impacts on the park as a result. The impacts on scenic values, water and air quality and of noise should be mitigated as much as possible. Approval, such as the Environmental Assessment Process, will take into account the proximity of the park and will include requirements for reclamation.

### Objectives:

To retain aesthetic features within the park so that the visual, water, and air qualities and wilderness atmosphere of the park are protected.

To retain aesthetic qualities viewed from without the park and negotiate minimal impacts where necessary outside the park.

### Actions:

- Work within adjacent land use planning processes in conjunction with the Gwa Najegwaghaten, Local Advisory Group and with other agencies including the Ministry of Forests, the Ministry of Transportation and Highways, and the Ministry of Employment and Investment to protect values in the park and outside its boundaries. This includes minimizing impacts on scenic values, water and air quality and of noise through activities such as logging, mine infrastructure and gravel pits. Focus on areas with important scenic and recreation values.
- Work with mineral exploration companies and within the Environmental Assessment Process to mitigate the impacts of exploration and development in areas adjacent to the park.
- Locate and design all park facilities in harmony with the visual setting and the character of

the Cariboo-Chilcotin. Ensure that any development, particularly in backcountry areas of the park, will be oriented and designed to have a minimal effect on the natural scenery.

- Work with the communities of North Chilko and Nemiah Valley in the planning of park facilities so that they are in keeping with the character of the area and blend with the natural setting.

## **Outdoor Recreation Features**

Ts'il?os Provincial Park contains a number of natural features, such as Chilko Lake, extensive ice-capped mountains, and remote valleys. These features offer a spectrum of backcountry opportunities, although much of the park is rugged and best suited to experienced mountaineers, boaters and hikers in pursuit of a challenging wilderness experience. Access is difficult and often increases the expectations for a high-quality experience. The easily accessible areas are limited and could receive more use and impact as the profile of this park increases. In addition, some areas, such as alpine areas, are more sensitive to visitation than others and have less ability to support visitors.

From a landscape perspective, Ts'il?os Provincial Park ensures a quality experience which may not be available on the Crown lands outside the park, which are managed for a multitude of values including resource development and extraction, natural resource conservation and maintenance, commercial and non-commercial recreation and tourism. Given its wilderness qualities and values, management of values and resources should take a precautionary approach to ensure these qualities are maintained.

### **Objectives:**

To ensure that recreation promotion, development and use are compatible with conservation objectives, First Nations' values and outdoor recreation features.

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

### **Actions:**

- Manage recreation use according to zoning so that outdoor recreation features and natural resources will be minimally affected.
- Develop a program using techniques such as photo documentation and vegetation analysis to assess conditions and monitor use in popular backcountry areas to develop baseline data with which to assess the desired maximum level of visitors. This will provide baseline data for assessing the limits to acceptable change and managing that change.
- Using baseline data, develop a backcountry management plan to control recreation use. Set limits of use with indicators of acceptable impacts. In that plan, develop strategies, such as

limited access, to minimize the effect of recreation use of sensitive features such as alpine meadows.

- Locate and design all park facilities in harmony with the visual setting.
- Undertake environmental impact assessment for all recreation development. Consult with the local community to determine the social and economic implications.



**Plate 6: Horse riders in the Spectrum Pass**

## Access Strategy

### **Recommendations from the Chilko Lake Study**

The Chilko Lake Study Team recommended that the roadless and remote character of the area be maintained and that helicopter access and helicopter-based activities be restricted. Heli-skiing and heli-hiking may be permitted in specified areas under the management plan and under special guidelines under license. Helicopter access may be controlled by permit in areas specified by the management plan to protect specific features and the experience of other users. Fixed-wing air access is restricted; overflights and landings may be controlled in areas (e.g. some small lakes).

There are two main roads which lead to the park. One is the Nemiah Valley Road (or the Whitewater Road) and ends at the Movie Site. The other is the Chilko Lake Road, off of Highway 20, and terminates at the North End campsite.

Two other roads provide access. The Tsuniah Lake Road is a rough road allowing leaseholders and the Xenigwet'in to get to Henry's Crossing and their territories. It can be impassable when wet and is not suitable for recreation vehicles. The other road is the Lord River Mining Road which runs from the Nemiah Road into the Taseko Management Zone. It provides access to the Yohetta Tchaikazan area for hikers, horse riders and leaseholders.

Hikers and horse riders can gain access to the park from Tatlayoko Lake via a trail through the Stikelan Pass.

Within the park, powerboat is the main access on the lake and the backcountry on the west side of the lake. Routes into the backcountry are used by hikers and horse riders.

Helicopter can also provide access. The Chilko Lake Study advised that heli-hiking and heli-skiing be assessed under the management plan. The Park Planning Subcommittee recommends that, given the remote, character of the area, only limited access by helicopter is appropriate. Intensive use of helicopters, such as heli-skiing, heli-hiking and heli-fishing where a helicopter is acting as a lift or makes frequent landings in an area in a day, is not appropriate. Commercial helicopter access is controlled through permits; a helicopter requires a park use permit to land in the park.

Concerning air access in general, BC Parks does not have jurisdiction over the airspace and can only regulate landings. Frequent overflights are not appropriate for this park. Flight seeing should only occur at low frequencies. BC Parks will work with both commercial and non-commercial pilots to develop a code of conduct that protects wildlife, recreation and wilderness resources and that focuses on educating and informing all park visitors.

The management of the different types of access is important to maintain the wilderness qualities of the park as access is one way of keeping visitor numbers low. Consequently, roads within the park will not be improved but remain in rough condition and that helicopters are managed. No new roads within the park will be built.

## **Objectives:**

To provide existing level of visitor access to experience the park, while minimizing effects on wildlife, vegetation and other visitors' enjoyment.

To manage aircraft landings in the park in association with conservation objectives.

## **Actions:**

- Develop an air access management plan to address helicopter and fixed-wing landings in the park that considers objectives and strategies to: protect wilderness quality and experiences; avoid disturbance to wildlife populations and habitats; and avoid conflicts with recreational users. Issues to be addressed include: regularity and frequency of use; size of machine, fuel caches, wildlife, particularly at sensitive times of the year; size and number of parties; and conflicts between different uses.
- Control helicopter landings through permits. Give full consideration to impacts on wildlife and other users when developing permit conditions.
- Continue to work with companies and private pilots who fly over the park to control noise and disruption to wildlife and park users. Develop a code of conduct in conjunction with pilots.
- Control commercial float plane landings through permits.
- Work with the B.C. Aviation Council in controlling private float plane use to protect wildlife, recreation and environmental values.
- Minimize the number of helicopter flights and landings in the park by government personnel and contractors.
- Maintain current level of access. Work with the Gwa Najegwaghaten, local residents and the Local Advisory Group in establishing levels of maintenance for roads in the park. If and when an alternative to the Tsuniah Lake Road is developed, investigate opportunities to limit access to the Tsuniah Lake Road. Work with government agencies, such as Ministry of Transportation and Highways and Ministry of Forests, and the Xeni Gwet'in to maintain roads approaching the park in a manner which is consistent with wilderness aspects of the park. New roads should not be considered.
- Allow residential and recreational lease and permit holders continued access to their cabins through usual means.
- Work with mineral exploration companies and within the Environmental Assessment process to mitigate the impacts of exploration and development in areas adjacent to the park.

# Management Services

## Recommendations from the Chilko Lake Study

The Chilko Lake Study Team report and this plan, as developed and recommended by the Ts'il'os Provincial Park Subcommittee, form the basis of management direction in the park. The management regime and subsequent activities within the park boundaries are guided by the activity matrix and the direction of the master plan. Traditional aboriginal activities are honoured.

To ensure adherence to the activity matrix and master plan, BC Parks will work closely with the Local Advisory Group in the plan's implementation and consult with this group on management direction.

The park is administered by the BC Parks Cariboo District in Williams Lake. Staff 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. This includes, but is not limited to: collecting data on resources; managing resources and cultural values; regulating public use to ensure safe and proper use of the park and its facilities; maintaining trails, cabins and other facilities; managing permits covering all commercial uses within the park; assessing and monitoring impacts of recreational users, and minimizing the impact of visitors, facilities and activities.

As part of the Memorandum of Understanding that was signed between the Province of BC and the Xeni Gwet'in, a management team consisting of representatives from BC Parks and Xeni Gwet'in has been established. This Committee is known as Ts'il'os Gwa Najegwaghaten, or people working together for Ts'il'os. This group deals with issues of common concern to both the Xeni Gwet'in and BC Parks.

### Objectives:

To carry out management responsibilities according to the *Park Act*, *Park Act* Regulations and this master plan.

To develop a close working relationship with the Xeni Gwet'in.

### Actions:

- Develop a cooperative relationship with the Xeni Gwet'in as described in the Memorandum of Understanding.
- Provide a seasonal ranger program, as funding allows.
- Investigate opportunities to use volunteers and others to supplement management services.

- Work closely with Xeni Gwet'in and the Local Advisory Group in managing the park.
- Prepare annual operational plans and include data collection, assessment, monitoring and managing activities.



**Plate 7: Hikers on the shore of Yohetta Lake**

# **Section Seven**

## **Communications**



## **Introduction**

Providing current information on all aspects of Ts'il'os Provincial Park is an important function of visitor management. Information can play a number of key roles. First, it can serve to set visitor expectations and assist in the planning of holidays and recreation activities. Secondly, information can promote outdoor etiquette and careful use of the park's resources. And thirdly, information can create an awareness and appreciation about cultural features, natural setting and conservation.

Ts'il'os Provincial Park is primarily a backcountry wilderness park, providing opportunities for protection of wildlife and their habitats and backcountry recreation. It offers the challenges of a backcountry park that is rugged and remote. Many visitors come as guests of commercial operators and others drive three hours off Highway 20 to see the lake.

Park information is discussed in more detail in four sections: 1) promotion and marketing; 2) awareness and pre-trip planning; 3) orientation information; and 4) natural and cultural resource information.

## **Marketing and Promotion**

Promotion of a park can affect the level of use and the type of visitors it attracts. Consequently, promotion strategies must be consistent with the objectives of the park.

The conservation significance and wilderness values of the park must be incorporated in strategies for marketing the park. There are concerns that promoting backcountry recreation can lead to significant increases in visitors, which in turn can affect the park resources and wilderness qualities. Even the frontcountry areas, traditionally the target of most promotion strategies, have limited capacity for increased visitation. Consequently, care must be taken in the type of promotion and marketing program undertaken. An aggressive advertising campaign is not appropriate for this park.

The concerns of the Xeni Gwet'in must be considered in developing strategies for marketing the park. Given that the park is their home, marketing and promotion must reflect sensitivity and respect for the Xeni Gwet'in.

Besides BC Parks, the Cariboo Tourist Association, lodges, operators and others promote the park. Coordination is needed to ensure that promotional information is consistent, accurate and in keeping with park objectives, and that marketing is consistent with the role of the park and objectives of the master plan.

Public awareness of Ts'il'os Provincial Park is high. The awe-inspiring scenery, the history and concerns of the Xeni Gwet'in and individual lodges and operators have all shared in raising the profile of the park.

### **Objectives:**

To ensure the promotion and marketing of Ts'il?os Provincial Park is consistent and appropriate for a wilderness park.

To portray Ts'il?os Provincial Park's role in conserving important habitat and biodiversity

To portray Ts'il?os Provincial Park's role in culture of the Xeni Gwet'in.

To provide accurate and appropriate information for low use and low impact backcountry opportunities and challenges.

**Actions:**

- Work with Xeni Gwet'in, operators, government agencies, tourism associations and the media to portray the park in an appropriate manner and create expectations fitting of a wilderness park.
- Work with operators through a code of conduct to develop a coordinated approach in advertising as to not unduly promote the park.
- Use a low-key approach to promoting and advertising the park.
- Create an information strategy that will focus on maintaining low backcountry use level. Focus any advertising/promotion on retaining wilderness character of park.
- Develop an 'image bank' to supply tourism operators and other advertisers with images suitable for advertising and promotion of a wilderness park.

## Awareness and Pre-Trip Planning

Awareness and pre-trip planning information can help to set expectations and influence attitudes and behaviours. Specific information on pre-trip planning is available from BC Parks' offices in Williams Lake and Victoria, and the Band Office in Nemiah Valley. Printed brochures which describe park resources, facilities and trails are also available at BC Tourism Infocentres. People may wish additional information if they are planning an extended backcountry trip into the park. This information is available from the BC Parks' Cariboo District Office in Williams Lake.

Private sector advertising can contribute significantly to regional, provincial and international awareness. It can also provide pre-trip planning information.

### Objectives:

To provide consistent, current and accurate information about Ts'il'os Provincial Park to visitors to plan their trip.

To supply information to orient visitors in Ts'il'os Provincial Park.

To supply information about other local recreation and tourism opportunities and provincial parks.

### Actions:

- Work with local businesses, communities, tourism associations, and media in providing appropriate pre-trip planning information in a responsible manner.
- Ensure brochures and handouts on Ts'il'os remain current and accurate.
- Provide safety and information signs where needed.
- Maintain the natural character of the Wilderness Recreation Zone by limiting signs to cases where they are necessary for the safety of visitors or for the protection of sensitive sites.
- Continue to work with local tourism associations, Chambers of Commerce, and tourism operators in providing regional tourism and outdoor recreation information.
- Develop a communication plan to ensure visitors receive information that builds expectations appropriate for a wilderness park/behaviour appropriate for wilderness park.

## **Orientation Information at Ts'il?os Provincial Park**

Orientation information is provided in park brochures and on signs in the park to help people become oriented in the park and to become aware of what opportunities are available. In-park handouts are also practical ways to inform park visitors both on specific areas and on educational information. For example, handouts can inform backcountry visitors about wilderness recreation etiquette and safety, low impact camping techniques and bear avoidance techniques.

Signs, including information boards, trail signs and road-side signs can both provide information and create an identity for the park. Interpretative and informational signs can provide important on-site educational and safety information.

### **Objectives:**

To supply information to help orient park visitors.

To provide information for backcountry visitors about wilderness recreation etiquette and safety.

### **Actions:**

- Provide safety and park information where needed in the Intensive Recreation Zone. Use sparingly in the Natural Environment Zones.
- Use information and safety signs in the backcountry areas only when absolutely necessary. The intent is to maintain the natural visual quality through the Wilderness Recreation Zones.
- Prepare and provide information on outdoor safety, wilderness and conservation ethics, firewood conservation, cultural values, human waste disposal, bear safety, low impact park use, mountain bike and horseback etiquette, role of sustenance and recreational hunting.

# Natural and Cultural Heritage Education

Ts'il'os represents a significant wilderness area protecting the region's ecological diversity. It can provide an important role in sharing information about conservation, ecology, natural processes and features, and culture and history of Chilcotin residents and the Xeni Gwet'in. This type of information helps to cultivate an understanding of how Ts'il'os is linked to the current lifestyle of the residents and how it shapes and influences the Nemiah culture today. It also has a role in conserving special features and biodiversity on a regional, provincial and national level.

In addition to conservation and recreation, Ts'il'os Provincial Park has unique themes that could be used in an education program. The major themes are:

- i) Natural Heritage: regional landscapes, active glaciation, zonation of alpine areas, and the ecological diversity of the Chilcotin Mountains.
- ii) Cultural Heritage: the archeological evidence, role in First Nation culture, role in ranching, guiding and tourism business.
- iii) Wilderness Recreation: opportunities available in the park, outdoor safety, wilderness and conservation ethics, firewood conservation, human waste disposal, bear safety, low impact park use, mountain bike and horseback etiquette.

## Objectives:

To share information about natural and cultural features and values in the area in order to foster and maintain appreciation and understanding of Ts'il'os significance and the importance of protecting these features and values.

## Actions:

- Develop a communication strategy for the park which incorporates the regional Interpretation and Information Plan prepared by BC Parks in 1989. BC Parks will work with the Gwa Najegwaghaten and local community to develop a communications strategy that will consist of information, interpretation, education, outreach programs, and community relations.
- Use off-site signs and brochures to describe and interpret themes that are located in remote and sensitive areas, and the Wilderness Recreation Zone.
- Develop educational and information brochures on conservation (vegetation, wildlife) cultural and recreation values.

**Section Eight**  
**Plan Implementation**

## Introduction

This section compiles all of the actions listed throughout this master plan into three lists. Within these lists, the actions are in an abbreviated form and in the general order that they appear in the plan. Consult original section for the full wording.

The first is the Highest Priority Actions which highlights the highest priority actions that require attention in the near future.

The second list is the Task or Project Oriented Actions. These are the actions that are a specific task or project. Park managers will review this list for upcoming budgets and annual work plans for staff.

The third list is the On-going Monitoring Actions which describe the actions that require on-going or monitoring types of tasks or projects. This list will be reviewed regularly by park managers to ensure that the overall spirit and intentions of this master plan are being followed.

Implementation of actions outlined in this master plan is dependent on the availability of BC Parks' financial and staff resources, and will be affected by the needs of other parks in the Cariboo District and in the rest of the park system. Approval of this plan does not constitute automatic approval of funding for implementation.



**Plate 8: View north of Chilko Lake from Honeymoon Point**

## **High Priority Actions**

### **Relationship with the Xeni Gwet'in**

- Develop an understanding of the operation of the Xeni Gwet'in and BC Parks decision-making systems and utilize both approaches in the management of the park (page 25).
- Develop an open and honest relationship with the Xeni chief, councillors and administration (page 25).
- Develop a means of full consultation with each other on park management (page 25).
- Work with Xeni Gwet'in to identify and manage cultural and gathering sites by undertaking cultural heritage overview (page 25).

### **Relationship with Local Advisory Group**

- Hold biannual meetings, or as required, with the Local Advisory Group for the implementation, evaluation and review of the master plan (page 26).
- Coordinate the management and planning of Ts'il?os Provincial Park with the Taseko Management Zone through the Local Advisory Group (page 26).

### **Land and Resource Tenures**

- Honour existing recreational and residential leases and permits for current tenure holders or their immediate families (page 28).
- Cooperate with the Forest Service under the Range Management Program to honour and manage existing grazing permits, and prepare and monitor range management (page 28).
- Authorize current trapping and guide outfitting by issuing park use permits (page 28).

### **Vegetation**

- Assess conditions and monitor camping areas and trails, particularly in alpine areas, to ensure the vegetation is not being damaged (page 37).
- Work with BC Forest Service under the Range Management Program and BC Environment to monitor grazing activities and minimize affect on grasslands (page 37).
- Maintain close contact with the Local Advisory Group in the management of the Taseko Management Zone (page 37).
- Develop interpretative information on vegetation features and values (page 37).

### **Wildlife**

- Develop a bear management plan in collaboration with BC Environment to address potential bear and visitor conflicts. Produce information on bear avoidance behaviours for park visitors (page 39).



- Develop air access management plan to prevent the harassment of wildlife (page 40).

### **Cultural Values**

- Assist the Xeni Gwet'in with inventory and assessment of cultural resources for educational and interpretative potential, for scientific needs, and for protective status (page 43).
- Provide education and information to park visitors on the significance of Ts'il'os and to respect the Xeni Gwet'in's wishes not to climb the mountain (page 43).

### **Frontcountry Camping**

- Change the names of the campgrounds to reflect the natural and cultural history of the area, in consultation with the Xeni and the Local Advisory Group (page 49).
- Do not allow vehicle camping and fires on the Tsuniah Lake Road. Assess conditions and monitor site degradation and disposal of human wastes; if the impact is noticeable, refer to Local Advisory Group for appropriate management options (page 49).

### **Backcountry Hiking and Backpacking**

- Develop a method to assess conditions and monitor backcountry visitor numbers and destinations to protect the natural values. Consult Local Advisory Group for application of appropriate management options (page 51).
- Prepare information, available at strategic locations for backcountry visitors, explaining wilderness ethics (page 51).
- Develop trail plan for backcountry areas (page 51).

### **Horse Use**

- Assess conditions and monitor the effects of horse use and regulate it as necessary to protect the environment using criteria such as forage availability, party size, camp facilities, and timing (page 55).

### **Winter Recreation**

- Develop an air access management plan to address helicopter-assisted activities, such as support to ski mountaineers (page 60).

### **Recreational Guiding**

- Authorize by park use permit existing guide outfitters, angling guides and trapping guides. Work with BC Environment for any changes with angling guides and guide outfitters (page 61).
- Authorize by park use permit pre-existing historical users. Determine the numbers of permits according to environmental, social and economic carrying capacities. Total numbers may increase or decrease depending on outcome of analysis (pages 62).
- Assess condition and carrying capacity of the backcountry and appropriate levels and indicators of use. Develop a backcountry management plan to balance commercial with

public recreation. Develop a monitoring program to ensure the protection of natural values (page 62).

- Work with commercial operators to develop a code of conduct (page 62).

### **Outdoor Recreation Features**

- Assess condition and monitor use in popular backcountry areas to develop baseline data with which to assess the desired maximum level of visitors (page 64).
- Develop a backcountry management plan to control recreation use accordingly. Set limits of use with indicators of acceptable impacts. Develop strategies to minimize the effect of recreation use of sensitive features such as alpine meadows (pages 64, 65).

### **Access Strategy**

- Develop an air access management plan to address helicopter and fixed-wing landings in the park (page 67).

### **Management Services**

- Develop a cooperative relationship with the Xeni Gwet'in (page 68).

### **Marketing and Promotion**

- Work with operators, government agencies, tourism associations and the media to portray the park in a manner that creates an expectation fitting of a wilderness park (page 73).
- Work with operators through a code of conduct to develop a coordinated approach in advertising as not to unduly promote the park (page 73).
- Create an information strategy that will focus on maintaining low backcountry use level. Focus any advertising/promotion on retaining wilderness character of park (page 73).
- Develop an 'image bank' to supply tourism operators and other advertisers with images suitable for advertising and promotion (page 73).

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

- Work with local businesses, communities, tourism associations, and media in providing appropriate pre-trip planning information in a responsible manner (page 74).

# Task or Project Actions

## Water

- Prepare and provide education on proper disposal of human wastes (page 35).

## Vegetation

- Develop, in conjunction with other agencies, specific biodiversity conservation objectives which complement objectives for adjacent lands (page 36).
- Prepare a vegetation management plan that considers objectives and strategies for conserving vegetation patterns and rare species, natural fire regimes, public safety, and forest resources. This work will include fire management plan and a disease and insect management strategy (pages 36, 37).

## Wildlife

- Develop, in conjunction with other agencies, specific biodiversity conservation objectives which complement objectives for adjacent lands (page 39).
- Use biophysical mapping to describe and verify wildlife habitat suitability and to support the management of wildlife within, and adjacent to, the park (page 39).
- Develop an inventory plan in collaboration with BC Environment (page 39).
- Develop a long-term management plan for wildlife in the park (page 39).
- Develop interpretative information on the wildlife features and values (page 40).

## Aquatic Resources

- Prepare a resource inventory in conjunction with Department of Fisheries and Oceans and Fish and Wildlife Branch (page 42).
- Develop and distribute educational information on the fish species and habitat requirements (page 42).

## Cultural Values

- Develop management strategies for identified heritage sites (page 43).

## Frontcountry Camping

- Improve campsites to provide basic facilities. Ensure development occurs away from the waterfront to protect the environment and lake aesthetics (page 49).

## Angling

- Prepare and provide information on fishing regulations at the two campsites (page 52).

## Boating

- Prepare and provide information on the dangers of Chilko Lake (page 53).

- Prepare and provide educational information regarding the importance of Big Lagoon (Moose Lagoon) to prevent harassment of wildlife and damage to vegetation (page 54).
- Prepare and provide information on boating etiquette and wilderness ethics (page 54).

### **Horse Use**

- Prepare and provide information on established horse use and travel to minimize conflict between users (page 55).

### **Mountaineering**

- Develop information and interpretative displays for recreationists regarding the spirituality associated with Ts'il'os Mountain and the request of the Xení Gwet'in (page 56).

### **Hunting**

- Prepare and provide educational information for park visitors on background to sustenance and recreational hunting (page 58).

### **Nature Study and Culture Appreciation**

- Develop and implement interpretive strategies for park (page 59).
- Work with Gwa Najegwaghaten to provide educational materials and opportunities for the appreciation of First Nations and the park (page 59).
- Develop educational material on wildlife viewing including information on ethics particularly when animals are vulnerable to stress or intrusion (page 59).
- Develop educational material on native wildflowers and plant communities (page 59).
- Assess wildlife viewing opportunities in park (page 59).
- Work with tourism operators to encourage private sector development of environmental educational opportunities (page 59).

### **Winter Recreation**

- Prepare and provide information about opportunities and hazards for skiing and snowshoeing (page 60).

### **Recreational Guiding**

- Evaluate current number of commercial guiding opportunities. Applications for new operators of existing activities and new activities will be considered by BC Parks and the Gwa Najegwaghaten according to the appropriateness of the activity for a wilderness park and the spirit of the activity matrix of the Chilko Lake Study Team. Screened activities will be reviewed by the Local Advisory Committee (page 62).

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

- Develop communication plan (page 74).

## **Orientation Information at Ts'il?os Provincial Park**

- Prepare and provide information on wilderness ethics (page 75).

## **Natural and Cultural Heritage Education**

- Develop a communication strategy of information, interpretation, education, outreach programs, and community relations (page 76).
- Develop educational and information brochures on conservation (vegetation and wildlife), cultural and recreational values (page 76).



**Plate 9: View south of Chilko Lake from the Movie Site campground**

## **Ongoing or Monitoring Actions**

### **Relationship with the Xenigwet'in**

- Develop an understanding of the Xenigwet'in and BC Parks by using cross-cultural workshops (page 25).
- Use traditional environmental knowledge in the management of wildlife and plant species (page 25).

### **Relationship with Local Advisory Group**

- Consult with the Local Advisory Group for clarification of management direction when and where needed (page 26).

### **Land and Resource Tenures**

- Allow residential and recreational lease and permit holders to access their cabins through usual means (page 28).
- Investigate opportunities to consolidate facilities, present and future, such as repeater stations and access roads (page 28).
- Require permit holders to remove unnatural objects and structures and rehabilitate the site to a natural state when the permit has been terminated (page 28).
- Undertake monitoring to limit environmental and visual impacts (page 28).

### **Water**

- Do not allow further water impoundments, diversions and future domestic use projects within the park (page 34).
- Work with the Forest Service to maintain water quality entering the park (page 35).
- Ensure that trail development and maintenance minimizes erosion of surface materials into creeks, rivers and lakes (page 35).
- Ensure that sanitary facilities are properly designed and located (page 35).
- Monitor use in area to ensure proper disposal of human wastes (page 35).

### **Vegetation**

- Until the fire management strategy is prepared, undertake initial attack on all wildfires by either the Ministry of Forests or BC Parks. Assess situation to decide if the fire may be allowed to run its natural course (page 37).
- Until disease and insect management strategy is developed, continue low impact spot control of infestations. No new access will be created to address beetle problems. Review management practices in advance with the Xenigwet'in and the Local Advisory Group (page 37).

- Retain trees and snags for various bird and animal species except where there is a hazard to people or facilities (page 37).
- Work with the BC Forest Service, BC Environment and forest companies in the development of forest management guidelines for areas adjacent to the park (page 37).
- Monitor and control noxious weeds through mechanical means or proven biological means (page 37).

## **Wildlife**

- Prepare an environmental assessment of any future recreational development in the Intensive Recreation, Natural Environment and Wilderness Recreation zones (page 39).
- Encourage and utilize, where possible, local naturalist and conservation groups to gather information, such as flora and fauna surveys (page 39).
- Protect the park's limited wetlands to maintain the natural environment and the diverse bird populations (page 39).
- Consider the enhancement of habitats or populations only to support biodiversity conservation objectives and the maintenance of species at natural levels. Table proposals with Local Advisory Group (page 40).
- Monitor and regulate hunting and trapping in conjunction with BC Environment to ensure healthy populations are maintained. Consult with stakeholders (page 40).
- Assess conditions and monitor levels of recreation use to limit the impact on wildlife (page 40).
- Undertake proactive measure to address and avoid conflicts between people and wildlife, such as education, rerouting of trails and closures, if necessary (page 40).

## **Aquatic Resources**

- Develop an aquatic resources inventory plan in conjunction with Department of Fisheries and Oceans and BC Environment to gain a better understanding of resources, impacts of angling and harvesting, and implications for populations outside the park (page 42).
- Assess conditions, and monitor angling in conjunction with BC Environment and Department of Fisheries and Oceans to ensure natural fish populations are maintained. Assess current recreation pressures and sustenance requirements and determine acceptable quotas (page 42).
- Monitor red and blue listed species, such as bull trout, with BC Environment and Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Develop species plans where needed to address population levels, habitat and harvest (page 42).
- Maintain all alpine lakes in natural state; do not stock barren lakes (page 42).
- Work with Department of Fisheries and Oceans and BC Environment to assess results of the

fertilization program to determine whether it has been beneficial and if it meets the above objectives. Review any continuation of the program with the Xeni Gwet'in and the Local Advisory Group (page 42).

- Consider enhancement measures if populations are endangered. Use proven enhancement techniques (page 42).

### **Cultural Values**

- Undertake a heritage impact assessment prior to any development, particularly near the campsites (page 43).
- Investigate opportunities for Xeni Gwet'in to provide information on their culture for park visitors (page 43).
- Work with the Heritage Conservation Branch of the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture and the Gwa Najegwaghaten in the management of archeological and heritage resources (page 44).

### **Frontcountry Camping**

- Monitor visitor satisfaction through surveys and comments to determine future development (page 49).
- Monitor campground use through visitor attendance and user trends to determine future development (page 49).
- Consider environmental, social and economic implications of any future development. Undertake environmental and archeological impact assessments (page 49).
- To avoid bear-people conflicts, undertake preventative measures such as signing, evacuations or closures of the campsite(s) if bears are in the area (page 49).

### **Backcountry Hiking and Backpacking**

- Maintain major wilderness trails, as developed in Management Unit plans (page 51).
- Provide education to large groups of hikers to minimize impacts; encourage small groups of hikers (page 51).
- Assist outfitters with trail problems and relocations on user-maintained trails. Proposals for new trail construction will be submitted to BC Parks and reviewed by the Local Advisory Group and should be in keeping with established level of use (page 51).
- Work with Xeni Gwet'in to ensure that recreation use does not impact First Nations activities for food gathering, hunting and cultural activities (page 51).

### **Angling**

- Manage natural fish stocks in collaboration with BC Environment and Department of Fisheries and Oceans using regulations and zoning to maintain natural fish diversity and



populations viability (page 52).

- Refer proposed changes in regulations to the Xení Gwet'in and the Local Advisory Group (page 52).
- Work with Gwa Najegwaghaten to ensure aboriginal rights are considered and honoured (page 52).

## **Boating**

- Continue to permit commercial rafting use (page 53).
- Permit motor-boating on Chilko Lake, but do not allow motor use on Big Lagoon, except for transporting of supplies by guide outfitters. Consider restrictions on horsepower and type of motor to protect wildlife and for public safety (page 53).
- Monitor personal watercraft use. If boating regulations change and separate personal watercraft from other boats, pursue eliminating use from park (pages 53, 54).
- Monitor current levels of house boat use. Establish levels of use according to available campsites and moorage while considering other uses such as power boaters and kayakers (page 54).
- Maintain boat launching facilities at North End campground and continue to allow launching of boats at the Movie Site, but do not develop there. If demand dictates, BC Parks will investigate options for launching facility on the east side in consultation with the Xení Gwet'in and the Local Advisory Group (page 54).
- Assess conditions and monitor informal campsites used by boats on the south end of the lake for physical damage, human waste disposal and garbage. If impact is detected, consult the Local Advisory Group for advice on appropriate management options that is consistent with wilderness character. Undertake only minimal facility development when needed (page 54).

## **Horse Use**

- Work with Xení Gwet'in, Local Advisory Group and commercial operators when there are changes from current situation (page 55).
- Undertake forage assessments in frequently used areas (page 55).
- Encourage all horse users to use weed-free pellets, particularly for large groups. If supply of forage is limited, require the use of pellets (page 55).

## **Mountaineering**

- Manage climbing in accordance with the Wilderness Recreation zoning (page 56).
- Do not allow climbing of Ts'il?os Mountain (page 56).

## **Paragliding**

- Establish a means of monitoring use to ensure that does not become an aviation hazard, threaten falcons and other wildlife, or diminish the park's wilderness atmosphere (page 56).
- Allow paragliding in the Tullin Unit only (page 56).

### **Mountain Biking**

- Assess conditions and monitor mountain bike use and undertake management actions where necessary (page 57).
- Permit mountain biking on existing roads, on the Yoietta Valley trail as far as Yoietta Lake and in the North Chilko Lake Unit, as designated (page 57).

### **Hunting**

- Work with BC Environment and the Gwa Najegwaghaten to develop means to ensure sustenance hunting needs are met and that the wildlife populations are viable (page 58).
- Monitor and regulate hunting in cooperation with BC Environment to ensure healthy wildlife populations are maintained. Utilize or obtain updated wildlife information in management. Adjust harvest levels upwards or downwards according to fluctuations in wildlife populations. Review proposed changes with the Gwa Najegwaghaten, the Local Advisory Group, recreational hunters and guide outfitters (page 58).

### **Nature Study and Culture Appreciation**

- Develop and implement interpretive strategies for park focused on First Nations and cultural heritage, the contribution of the park to the protected areas system, its natural values (vegetation and wildlife), and wilderness ethics (page 59).
- Complete an environmental impact assessment before undertaking any development of trails or facilities (page 59).

### **Winter Recreation**

- Permit snowmobile and ATV access for licensed activities (trapping, leaseholders, beetle control, stock grazing) only (page 60).
- Permit established commercial guided winter use such as backcountry skiing in low hazard areas (page 60).
- Do not allow snowmobiling in the park (page 60).

### **Recreational Guiding**

- Require all commercial permit holders to develop a five-year business plan (page 62).
- Assist guides with trail problems and relocations on user-maintained trails. Proposals for new trails should be reviewed by BC Parks and the Local Advisory Group prior to any construction (page 62).

### **Aesthetic Values**

- Work within adjacent land use planning processes in conjunction with the Gwa Najegwaghaten, the Local Advisory Group and with other agencies to protect values in the park and outside its boundaries. Minimize impacts on scenic values and water and air quality and the impacts of noise through industrial activities. Focus on areas with important scenic and recreation values (page 63).
- Work with mineral exploration companies and the Environmental Assessment process to mitigate the impacts of exploration and development adjacent to the park (page 63).
- Locate and design all park facilities in harmony with the visual setting and the character of the Cariboo-Chilcotin (page 63, 64).
- Work with the communities of North Chilko and Nemiah Valley in the planning of park facilities (page 64).

### **Outdoor Recreation Features**

- Manage recreation use according to zoning so that outdoor recreation features and natural resources will be minimally affected (page 64).
- Locate and design all park facilities in harmony with the visual setting (page 65).
- Consider environmental, social and economic implications for all recreation development. Undertake environmental and archeological impact assessments (page 65).

### **Access Strategy**

- Control helicopter landings through permits. Give full consideration to impacts on wildlife and other users when developing permit conditions (page 67).
- Continue to work with companies and private pilots who fly over the park to control noise and disruption to wildlife and park users. Develop a code of conduct in conjunction with pilots (page 67).
- Control commercial float plane landings through permits (page 67).
- Work with the B.C. Aviation Council in controlling private float plane use to protect wildlife, recreation and environmental values (page 67).
- Minimize the number of helicopter flights and landings in the park by government personnel and contractors (page 67).
- Maintain current level of access. Work with the Gwa Najegwaghaten, local residents and the Local Advisory Group in establishing levels of maintenance for roads in the park. If and when an alternative to the Tsuniah Lake Road is developed, investigate opportunities to limit access to the Tsuniah Lake Road. Work with government agencies and the Xeni Gwet'in to maintain roads approaching the park in a manner which is consistent with wilderness aspects of the park. New roads should not be considered (page 67).
- Allow residential and recreational leaseholders and permit holders continued access to their cabins through usual means (page 67).

- Work with mineral exploration companies and with the Environmental Assessment process to mitigate the impacts of exploration and development in areas adjacent to the park (page 67).

### **Management Services**

- Provide a seasonal ranger program, as funding allows (page 68).
- Investigate opportunities to use volunteers and others to supplement management services (page 68).
- Prepare annual operational plans and include monitoring activities (page 69).
- Work closely with Xeni Gwet'in and the Local Advisory Group in managing of the park (page 69).

### **Marketing and Promotion**

- Use a low-key approach to promoting and advertising the park (page 73).

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

- Ensure brochures and handouts on Ts'il'os remain current and accurate (page 74).
- Provide safety and information signs where needed (page 74).
- Maintain the natural character of the Wilderness Recreation Zone by limiting signs to cases where they are necessary for the safety of visitors or for the protection of sensitive sites (page 74).
- Continue to work with local tourism associations, Chambers of Commerce, and tourism operators in providing regional tourism and outdoor recreation information (page 74).

### **Orientation Information at Tḡ'il-os Provincial Park**

- Provide safety and park information where needed in the Intensive Recreation zone. Use sparingly in the Natural Environment Zones (page 75).
- Use information and safety signs in the backcountry areas only when absolutely necessary (page 75).

### **Natural and Cultural Heritage Education**

- Use off-site signs and brochures to describe and interpret themes that are located in remote and sensitive areas, and the Wilderness Recreation Zone (page 76).

# **Section Nine**

## **Summary of Public Review**

# Introduction

Part of the terms of reference for this planning process was to seek broader public review of the plan developed by the Parks Planning Subcommittee. First, the larger Local Advisory Group of the Taseko Management Zone and Ts'il'os Provincial Park reviewed the document for its adherence to the obligations and direction set out in the Chilko Lake Study. Then, over four hundred plans were distributed to the people on the Ts'il'os mailing lists and to anyone who expressed an interest. Finally, public meetings and open houses at Williams Lake and Tatla Lake and in the Nemiah Valley from June 13 to June 20, 1996.

Written and verbal comments from open houses, meetings and letters were reviewed by the Parks Planning Subcommittee. Below is a summary of the key issues and the perspective of the Subcommittee in addressing those concerns.

## Summary of Key Issues

### First Nations

Comments focussed on First Nations' ability to pursue traditional activities, to influence management of the park and to receive economic benefits from activities in the park.

**Subcommittee's Perspective** - First Nations have a legal right to pursue traditional activities in the park and a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Xeni Gwet'in and the Province of British Columbia to work together in the management and planning of the park. In addition, the master plan has indicated in many different places that BC Parks will work with the Xeni Gwet'in and the Local Advisory Group in the management and planning of the park. Representatives of the Xeni Gwet'in have been involved in developing the plan and have ensure that the group and BC Parks has considered and incorporated, and will continue to, their perspectives. BC Parks will manage commercial recreation to ensure that the Xeni Gwet'in will have opportunities available when they have developed their eco-tourism strategy.

### Recreational Use

Potential increasing levels of use and the impacts on the environment and the wilderness experience are a concern. Other comments were that traditional activities should continue and the level of commercial activities may be too great for a wilderness park.

**Subcommittee's Perspective** - Monitoring levels of use and taking management actions where necessary are high priority action items. The master plan recommends that: an assessment be undertaken to establish a baseline; a monitoring program be established to be implemented by user groups and Parks staff; and management strategies be developed in conjunction with the Local Advisory Group to address impacts quickly and effectively. Traditional activities will continue in accordance with *Park Act* Regulations and will be managed to limit environmental impacts. Existing commercial activities will continue and potential impacts will be monitored. New commercial activities will be screened for their appropriateness as an activity in a wilderness park.

## **Access**

Air access and the Tsuniah Lake Road were two areas of concern. The plan did not give enough direction on helicopter use and seemingly was contradictory. Sightseeing flights were also an concern. Increased use on the Tsuniah Lake Road is a safety hazard for livestock and could result in a change of experience.

**Subcommittee's Perspective** - Intensive helicopter use is not an appropriate use in the park of this type. Helicopters can be permitted for low intensity access, not intensive uses. The Province has no jurisdiction governing sightseeing flight. However, the Subcommittee recommends that only limited flight seeing take place and that BC Parks works with all the operators, including pilots, to develop a code of conduct to protect wildlife, recreation and wilderness values of the park. Flight seeing is not considered an acceptable activity in the Ts'yl-os Unit.

BC Parks will not be improving the Tsuniah Lake Road for all weather traffic, but will work with the local community to establish levels of maintenance to allow local traffic. Recreational traffic may be diverted through advertising other routes that are more passable and more appropriate for sightseeing.

## **Resource Management**

Range management was raised as a concern, particularly the effect of increased tourism on cattle and grazing.

**Subcommittee's Perspective** - the master plan indicates that the range will be managed by the Forest Service and BC Parks will develop educational materials for visitors to develop an understanding for ranching and the requirements of cattle. Trail and campground maintenance will have to be carefully considered to ensure that the cattle are not harassed and that the visitor has a good experience.