

TSITIKA RIVER

ER #124

ORIGINAL PURPOSE To protect a typical low-elevation fen/bog complex in the Tsitika drainage

OVERVIEW

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|--------------------------|--------------|-------------------|---|
| Date established: | 10 Aug. 1989 | Location: | Tsitika drainage, south of Port McNeill, on northeastern Vancouver Island |
| ORC #: | 3124 | | |
| Map number: | 92 L/8 | Latitude: | 50°20'N |
| | | Longitude: | 126°25'W |

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|--------------------|--------|-------------------|-------|
| Total Area: | 110 ha | Elevation: | 240 m |
| Land: | 110 ha | | |

Access: Accessible via logging roads adjacent to the eastern boundary of the reserve.

Biogeoclimatic Zone: Coastal Western Hemlock (CWH)
Biogeoclimatic Variant: CWHvm1 Submontane Very Wet Maritime
Ecosection: Northern Island Mountains
Region: Vancouver Island
Management Area: Cape Scott

COMPOSITION

Physical: The reserve comprises a flat to gently sloping, wet flood plain that has developed thin peat deposits adjacent to the Tsitika River.

Biological: A variety of bog and fen communities are surrounded by a fringe of forest communities. Bog and fen communities are: (1) Labrador tea-sphagnum moss, (2) shore pine-western redcedar-Labrador tea, (3) sweet gale and (4) deer-grass-cottongrass. The following swamp forests and semi-alluvial communities form a transition to the upland forest: (5) western redcedar-skunk cabbage, (6) red alder-salmonberry-skunk cabbage and (7) red alder-western hemlock-Sitka spruce-salmonberry-lady fern. Unusual species combinations occur in communities #3, #6 and #7 due to watertable changes brought about by past and present beaver activity. The forest community on better drained sites of the Tsitika River banks is: (8) western hemlock-western redcedar-amabilis fir-huckleberry-blueberries.

Roosevelt elk have used this wetland area during spring and early summer; pronounced trails are in evidence. Black-tailed deer are frequent and beaver, wolf and black bear are occasionally present.

MANAGEMENT CONCERNS

SIGNIFICANT SPECIES None listed

THREATS

- Climate Change:** The fen/bog system protected in this reserve may be altered due to changes in drainage patterns and hydrology. Warming temperatures may increase evaporation, lower the water level and contribute to changed water quality in these wetland habitats, possibly resulting in new species assemblages.
- Forestry:** Insufficient buffer zone increases windthrow risk within reserve.
- Forestry:** Adjacent logging creates fringe effect and opens access to the reserve, increasing the introduction of non-native invasive species. Increased sedimentation in riparian habitats are also a result.
- Forestry:** Harvesting adjacent to reserve boundaries increases risk of unauthorized harvesting within the reserve.
- Program constraint:** Lack of funding for aerial inspections of park boundaries directly abutting tenured crown land and private land.
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RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES Diverse plant communities and rare species are protected in the reserve.

SCIENTIFIC NAMES OF SPECIES MENTIONED IN THE TSITIKA RIVER ER ACCOUNT

Flora

alder, red (*Alnus rubra*)
cabbage, skunk (*Lysichiton americanus*)
cotton-grass, narrow leaved (*Eriophorum angustifolium*)
fern, lady (*Athyrium filix-fernina*)
fir, amabilis (*Abies amabilis*)
gale, sweet (*Myrica gale*)
hemlock, western (*Tsuga heterophylla*)
Labrador tea (*Ledum groenlandicum*)
moss, peat (*Sphagnum spp.*)
pine, shore (*Pinus contorta* var. *contorta*)
redcedar, western (*Thuja plicata*)
salmonberry (*Rubus spectabilis*)
spruce, Sitka (*Picea sitchensis*)

Fauna

Beaver, American (*Castor canadensis*)