

**Garibaldi/Sunshine Coast
District**

**MANAGEMENT DIRECTION
STATEMENT**

November 1999

**for Upper Lillooet Provincial
Park**



**BRITISH
COLUMBIA**

Ministry of Environment
Lands and Parks
BC Parks Division

UPPER LILLOOET PROVINCIAL PARK APPROVALS PAGE

Forward

This management direction statement for Upper Lillooet Provincial Park provides management direction until such time as a more detailed management plan is prepared.

Approvals:

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District Manager

Date: *November 30, 1999*

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Date: *December 9, 1999*

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this management direction statement (MDS) is to provide management direction for Upper Lillooet Provincial Park. This new protected area requires direction in the interim until a full management plan is prepared. While key strategies are identified in this MDS, the completion of all these strategies is subject to funding and funding procedures. As well, all development associated with these strategies within this park is subject to the BC Parks Impact Assessment Policy.

Setting and Context

Upper Lillooet Provincial Park lies 150 km. northwest of Vancouver, B.C. at the headwaters of the Lillooet River. Nearby parks in B.C.'s Coast Ranges include Clendinning, Bishop River, and Ts'yl'os (Figure 1). To reach Upper Lillooet Park, visitors drive to Pemberton and then along the Upper Lillooet Forest Service Road on the north side of the Lillooet River, approximately 70 km., to the boundary of the park. The road ends just outside the park boundary and no other facilities, including trails, exist in the park. The lack of facilities, difficulty of access within the park, and high biodiversity values means Upper Lillooet park will not be encouraged as a destination park, except to those wishing to experience remote wilderness.

The park is comprised of 19,996 ha. of valley bottom old-growth forests, wetland habitats, high alpine ridges and glaciers (Figure 2). The park's main feature, the Lillooet River, is fed initially from the Lillooet Glacier situated just outside the park boundary to the northwest. The first main tributary, the Manatee River, is almost entirely within the park's boundaries. Numerous other streams occur on the north and south sides of the Lillooet River including Mosaic Creek and Job Creek. The high alpine areas in the south are capped by the Mosaic and Job glaciers. The park falls within the Eastern Pacific Ranges (EPR) Ecosection and is comprised of the CWHms1 and MHmm2 biogeoclimatic variants as well as the ATp biogeoclimatic zone. The park contains significant conservation values, as it is one of only five remaining undeveloped watersheds over 5000 ha. in the EPR Ecosection. The wide wetland and fens of the Lillooet River together with south-facing slopes, old-growth forests and high alpine ridges provide critical wildlife habitats within the park including resident salmonid spawning streams, summer black-tailed deer and moose habitats, grizzly and black bear habitats, and mountain goat, wolverine and moose winter habitat.

The park lies within the traditional territory of the Lil'wat Nation and is currently part of the Mount Currie Indian Band's Traditional Use Study. While the Lil'wat Nation is currently not participating in treaty negotiations with the provincial and federal governments, it should be noted that this plan would be subject to the outcomes of treaty negotiations should they enter into the treaty process.

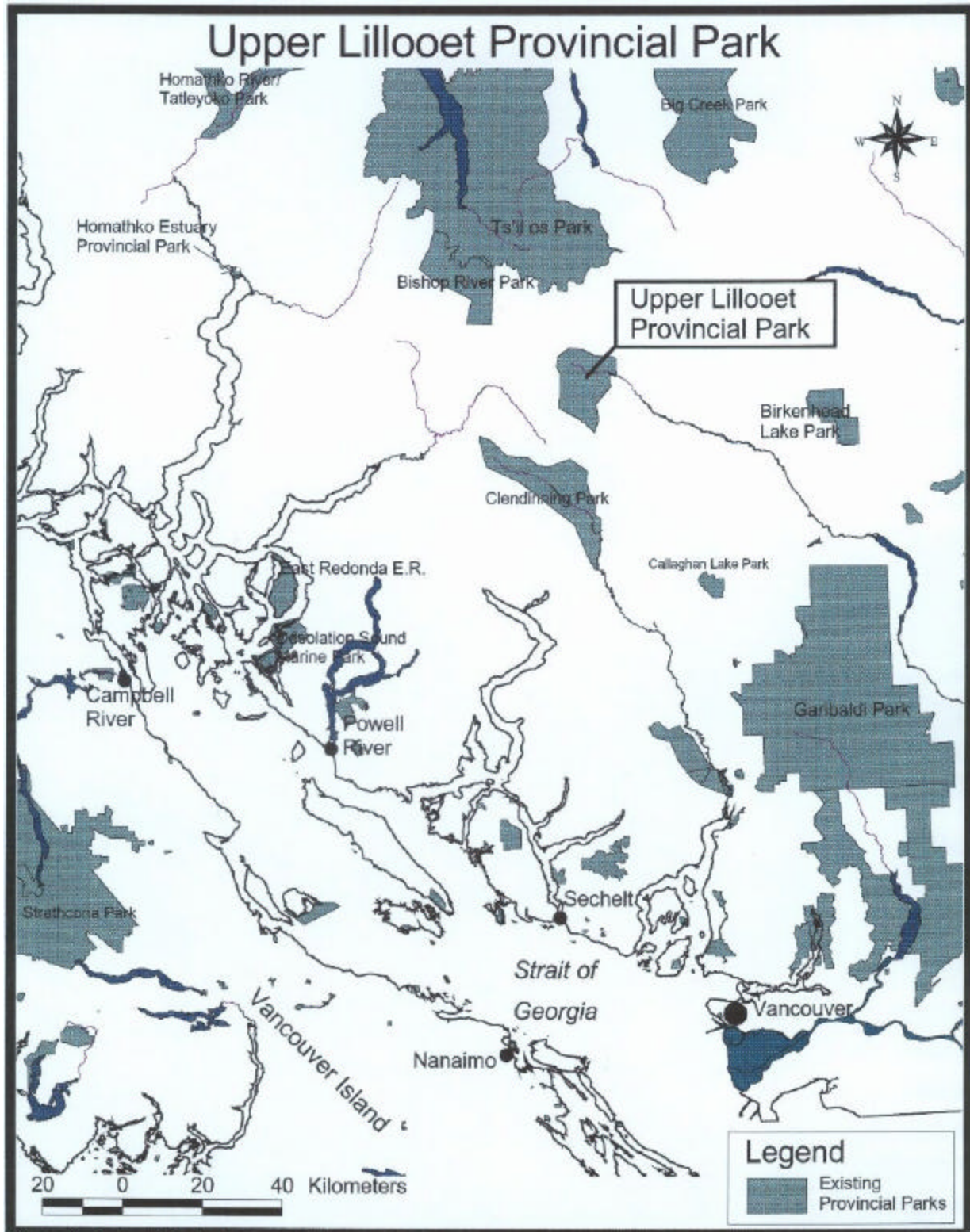


Figure 1. Regional Context

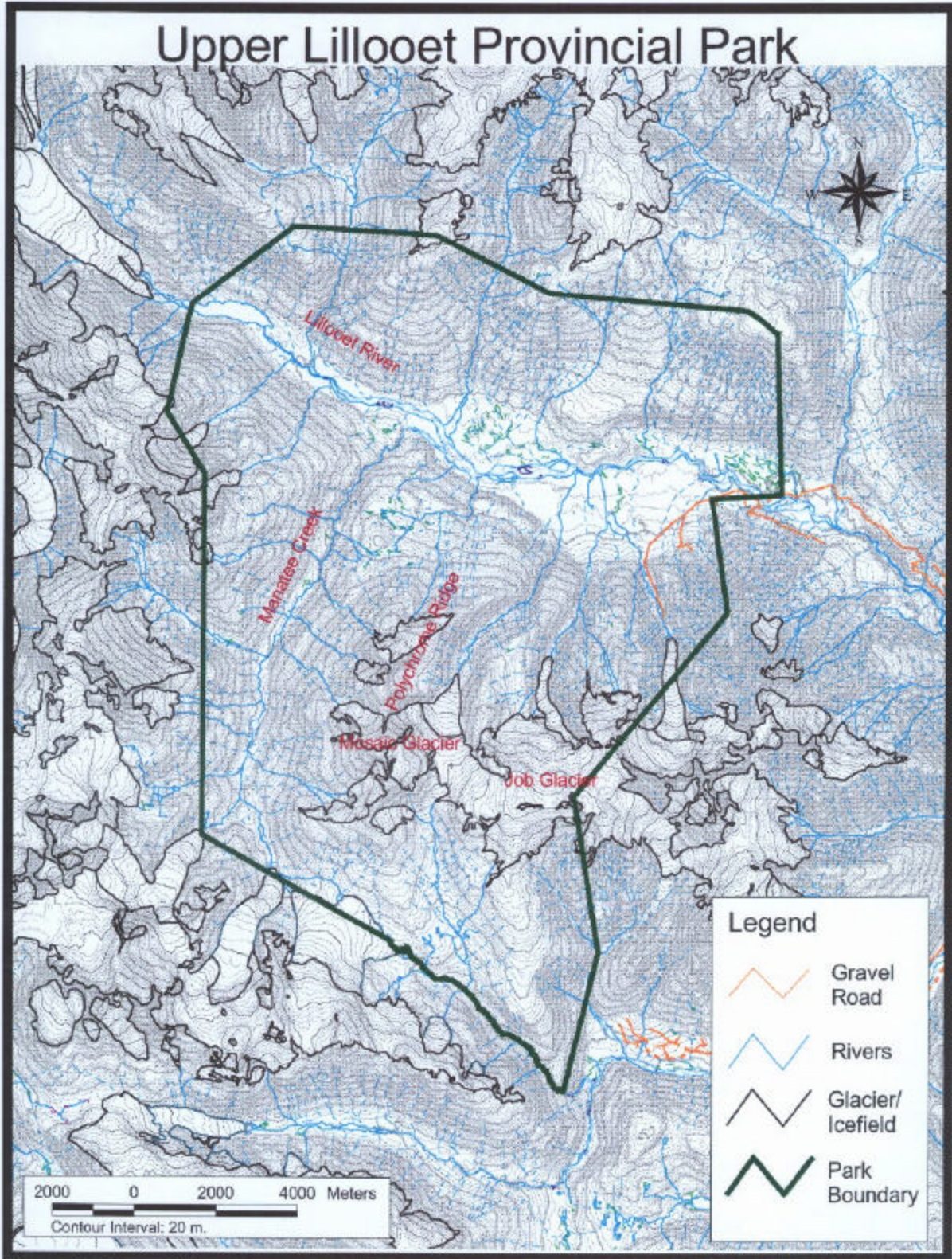


Figure 2. Upper Lillooet Provincial Park

No European exploration of this area is known until Stanley Smith set out in 1893 to determine the fate of two surveyors, Clark and Braden, who disappeared the year before. Only the cap of Clark was discovered somewhere in the Squamish Valley and it is expected this was the area where the two surveyors perished. Smith and his partner Dolittle eventually reached Chilko Lake and Knight Inlet, returning to Vancouver on the *S.S. Comox*.

The area was originally part of a much larger area submitted to the Lower Mainland Inter-Agency Management Committee (IAMC) for consideration under the Lower Mainland Protected Areas Strategy process. In 1995, the Province established the Regional Public Advisory Committee to determine which areas in the Lower Mainland Region would be selected and recommended for protection. Under this process, the Upper Lillooet was forwarded to Cabinet for recommended designation as a protected area at its current size of 19,996 ha. On July 28, 1997, the area was designated as a Class “A” Park under the *Park Act*. The primary purpose of this park will be the protection of conservation values relating to old-growth forests and wildlife values together with opportunities for remote, wilderness-oriented recreation.



Plate 1: View east from Silt Lake down the Lillooet River.

PROTECTED AREA ATTRIBUTES

Conservation

The park is comprised of the following biogeoclimatic zones and variants in the Eastern Pacific Ranges Ecosection:

BGC Zone/Variant	Park Area (ha.)	Park Contribution to Total Protected in EPR Ecosection	Total of Zone Protected in EPR Ecosection
ATp	8158	1.69 %	25.77 %
MHmm2	6795	2.33 %	21.61 %
CWHms1	4960	1.28 %	13.64 %
Lake	82	0.45 %	23.54 %

- Protects the upper Lillooet River drainage, one of only a few remaining unlogged watersheds over 5000 ha. in the Coast Mountains.
- Protects high value old-growth forests in the Lillooet and Manatee watersheds.
- Protects an almost pure stand of Douglas-fir (considered rare) on the north side of the Lillooet River opposite Job Creek.
- Contains the blue-listed Cottonwood-Willow-Thimbleberry plant community¹. May contain other rare plant communities associated with the CWHms1 variant (see Appendix 1).
- Smooth willowherb (*Epilobium glaberrimum*), a blue-listed species, occurs near the headwaters of the Lillooet River.
- Contributes towards the protection of valuable habitats for large carnivores and ungulates including:
 - ⇒ Grizzly and black bear habitats such as high alpine areas, sub-alpine forests, avalanche chutes and valley bottom forests;
 - ⇒ Critical old-growth related deer habitats that serve as summer forage areas and winter thermal cover and snow interception areas;
 - ⇒ South facing slopes and rocky bluffs that are key habitats for mountain goats; and
 - ⇒ Wetland marsh and fen areas as well as sandbars that provide winter moose habitats.

¹ BLUE LIST: Includes any indigenous species or subspecies (taxa) considered to be Vulnerable in British Columbia. Vulnerable taxa are of special concern because of characteristics that make them particularly sensitive to human activities or natural events. Blue-listed taxa are at risk, but are not Extirpated, Endangered or Threatened.

- Area in and around the park part of the Garibaldi Volcanic Belt. Some of the most recent volcanic activity in the Coast Mountains in this area including an eruption and block/ash flows about 2,400 B.P. that blocked the Lillooet River. Remnant features of this activity includes pumice deposits and hot springs just outside the park.



Plate 2: Bedrock borne of fire and ice and shaped by glaciers.

Cultural Heritage

- Within the traditional territory of the Lil' wat Nation.
- Area was part of Stanley Smith's historical 1893 journey from Squamish to Chilko Lake. No known remnants of this expedition exists.
- Limited knowledge of First Nations cultural values.

Recreation and Tourism

- High value wilderness area free of roads and amenities.
- No facilities exist.
- Remnants of a stone hut exist on Polychrome Ridge.
- Remote high alpine hiking and backcountry skiing opportunities as well as wildlife viewing and nature interpretation.
- Some historic use of horses to transport backcountry recreationalists into the area.
- Air access is utilized for most recreation activities currently occurring in the park
- Occasional snowmobiling occurring in the park in the north-east portion along the Lillooet River²

Significance in the Protected Area System

- High conservation values - protects important habitats associated with old-growth forests.
- Protects rare or unique habitats such as wetland areas and a large pure stand of Douglas-fir. Known wildlife for this park includes grizzly bear, black bear, black-tailed deer, wolves, wolverine, moose, mountain goat, resident salmonids and non-sport fish, raptors and waterfowl.
- May contribute towards protecting provincially significant plant communities within the CWHms1 variant (see Conservation section above).

LAND USES, TENURES AND INTERESTS

² Snowmobiling will not be permitted in the park due to the high value winter wildlife habitats and sensitive ecology of the northeast portion of the park. Aircraft access to high elevation sites will be the only mechanized access permitted. See the zoning section for more information.

Access

- Primarily by road via Pemberton along the Lillooet Forest Service Road. The road ends at the park boundary in the northeast portion near the Lillooet River. Rough logging roads extending up Meager Creek towards the south end of, but not into, the park.
- Helicopter access has been moderately popular mostly for accessing base camp areas in the alpine portions of the park.

Tenures

- Trapline tenure 0211T001 includes the park.
- The park falls within Wildlife Management Unit 2-11 though this unit does not have a guide outfitter.

Existing Land Use Activities and Facilities

- No facilities exist within the park.
- One commercial tenure (trapping) is known to pre-exist the park. This tenure includes the park area within their overall area but it is not known if active trapping occurs in the park.
- No other commercial activities occur in the protected area.
- The area is open to hunting for black-tailed deer, black bear, wolf, coyote, racoon, skunk, hare, bobcat, cougar, grouse, ptarmigan, coots, snipe, ducks and Canada geese.

Adjacent Patterns of Land Use

- Active forest development activities occur downstream of the park along the Lillooet River and within Salal and Meager Creeks adjacent to the park.
- Active pumice quarry adjacent to, and east of, the park.

First Nations Interest

- The park is within the Lil' wat Nation traditional territory
- Area may contain important cultural or archaeological sites though no archaeological sites are presently registered with the Archaeology Branch.

Other Agency Interests

- BC Environment - the park has significant wildlife habitats and old-growth forests. The park is part of the Southern Chilcotin Grizzly Bear Management Area.
- Ministry of Forests - adjacent forest development. Hauling on road that provides access to the park.
- Ministry of Energy and Mines - adjacent pumice quarry. Hauling on road that provides access to the park.
- Ministry of Energy and Mines - possible geothermal interest in areas near the park. Exploratory drilling occurred within the park boundaries prior to designation.

Private and Public Stakeholder Interests

- Long history of exploration by members of the mountaineering clubs including documentation of trips by the Alpine Club of Canada.
- Nearby Meager Creek Hotsprings has been a popular recreation area.

Role of the Protected Area

The primary role of Upper Lillooet Park is to protect the wildlife habitats, old-growth forests, geological features and cultural features associated with the Coast Mountains and the Eastern Pacific Ranges Ecosection. The park contains varied habitats and natural values ranging from ecologically important wetlands and pristine forests to high alpine features including glaciers. The key recreation role is to continue providing traditional backcountry recreation opportunities such as hiking and skiing as well as nature appreciation.

MANAGEMENT COMMITMENTS AND ISSUES

Management Direction from Previous Planning

- None

Management Issues

Theme	Issue
Knowledge of values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • further research and data collection required with respect to natural and recreation values for future decision making and management direction. • information required regarding traditional use of this area from First Nations and knowledge of cultural values important to the Lil' wat Nation.
Unauthorized Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • commercial operations such as aircraft access needs review and legitimized through Park Use Permits.
Information sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • liaison required with mountaineering clubs and park users to assist BC Parks in monitoring activity levels in the park.



Plate 3: Wetland complex near the northeast boundary of the park.

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Priority Management Objectives and Strategies:

Objective	Strategy
<p>Increase knowledge of natural and cultural values within the protected area to determine appropriate management strategies to protect these values.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish priorities for the inventory of natural and cultural values in the protected area. • Collect information and advice from the Archaeology Branch, Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture about potential archaeological sites in the protected area. • Seek funding sources for inventories. • Continue to work with BC Environment to establish further information on natural values within the park.
<p>Ensure natural processes are allowed to continue and ensure management decisions protect the conservation values in the park.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to manage the park to protect natural processes and conservation values by not developing park facilities and encouraging only wilderness-oriented recreation in the park. • Determine the use of the park by the holder of the trapping tenure to increase knowledge of wildlife values in the park.
<p>Increase knowledge of rare and endangered species, plant communities and site series within the park with a priority on valley floors and lower elevations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine funding opportunities to carry out vegetation data collection. • Establish links with non-government environmental organisations to share information, data and ideas.
<p>Continue the ongoing relationship with the Lil'wat Nation regarding protected areas in their territory.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to meet and consult with the Lil'wat Nation to gain an understanding and appreciation of the traditional values, interests and use of this park.
<p>Ensure recreation opportunities in the park do not impact natural values or visitor experiences in the park.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage wilderness-oriented recreation opportunities that require minimal facilities and rely on individual backcountry skills such as route finding and no-trace camping.

Objective	Strategy
<p>Confirm and legitimize commercial recreation operations within the park. Ensure new commercial recreation applications are consistent with park goals and values.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research ongoing commercial recreation operations and legitimize through Park Use Permits. • Review new commercial applications and reject those that may impact conservation values, existing recreation values or do not conform to activities allowed under the park zoning.

Consultation and Future Planning Objectives and Strategies:

Planning and management of the protected area will conform to the intent and directions as set forth in the Provincial Protected Areas Strategy. BC Parks is accountable for planning, administration and management of the protected area through application of the laws, policies and regulations granted under the *Park Act*. BC Parks will coordinate with other agencies, various public planning groups and First Nations in developing management plans for all of the new parks arising from the Lower Mainland Protected Areas Strategy process.

Objective	Strategy
<p>Ensure natural values that extend beyond administrative boundaries are considered in development activities and ensure nearby development does not adversely impact park values.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review development plans in adjacent areas to ensure values associated with the park that may cross the park’s administrative boundaries (such as wildlife and recreation values) are considered and incorporated.
<p>Ensure a management plan is developed for the park as per BC Parks policy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While a management plan will be required for this park as per BC Parks policy, low recreation use and low threats to conservation values results in this MDS as sufficient management guidance until a management plan is warranted. Review any new or emerging issues during the Annual Management Plan process to determine if the Upper Lillooet Management Plan should be ranked higher in the district priority.
<p>Continue to develop and build a working relationship with First Nations regarding park management and protection of park values.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to consult with the Lil’wat Nation on issues such as management strategies and new information obtained that may be of benefit to both the Lil’wat Nation and BC Parks.

Zoning Plan

Approximately 87 % of the park will be zoned as Wilderness Recreation because of the high conservation values and high remote wilderness-oriented recreation values. Air access is permitted but is the only mechanized access allowed. Hunting is permitted as per the Provincial hunting regulations. About 13% of the park including the fen area of the Lillooet River and the stand of almost pure Douglas-fir are zoned as Special Feature for their important conservation and habitat values. Outdoor recreation activities will not be encouraged within the Special Feature Zone (Figure 3).



Plate 4: High alpine area near Mosaic Glacier.

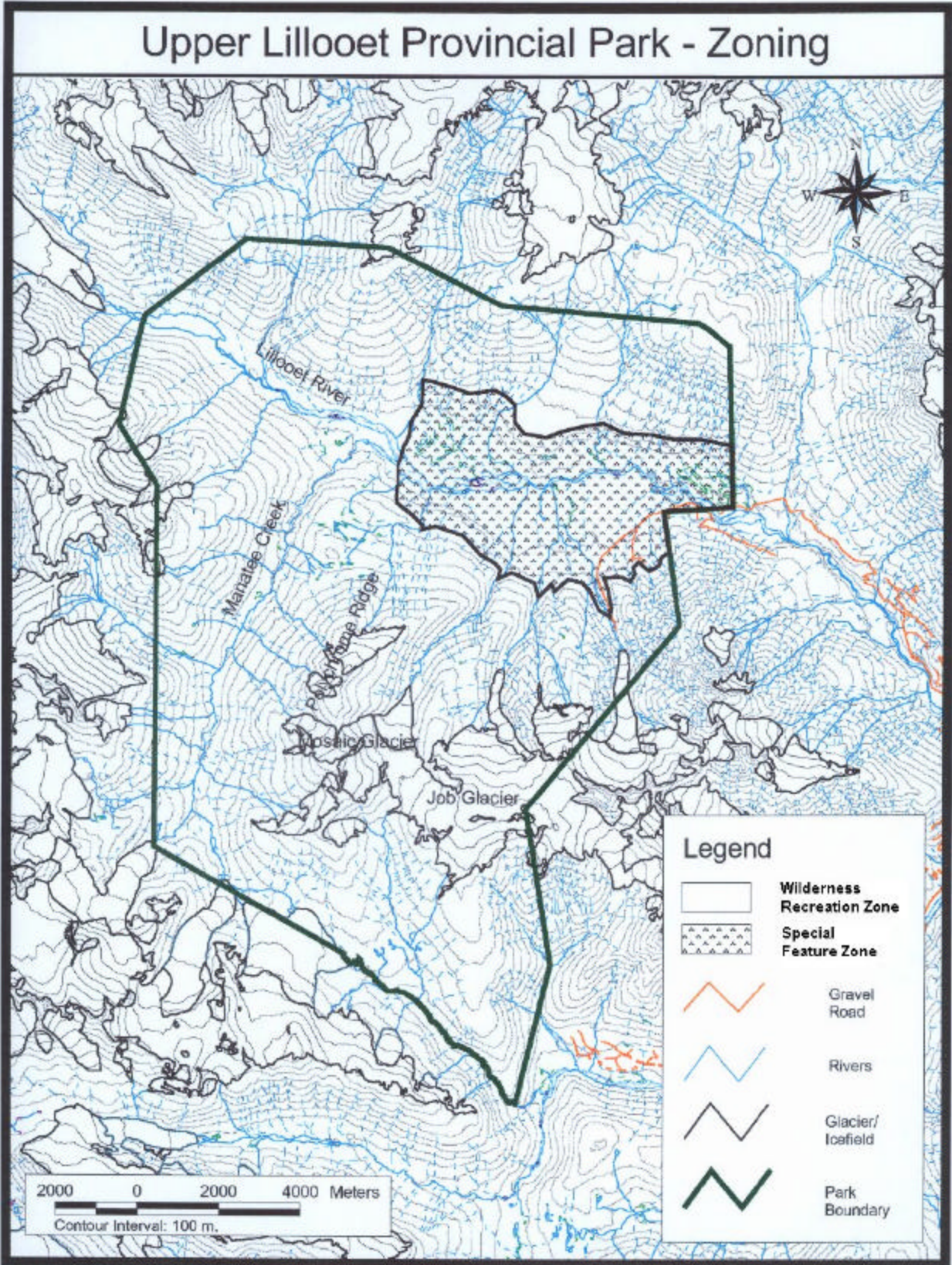


Figure 3. Upper Lillooet Provincial Park Zoning

Acceptable Uses and Facilities

The following table provides a summary of acceptable uses, activities and facilities at Upper Lillooet Provincial Park.

Activity/Use/Facility	Acceptable Uses
First Nation Traditional Use	Y
Hunting	Y
Fishing	Y
Trapping	Y
Grazing (domestic livestock)	N
Recreational Gold Panning/Rock Hounding	N/A
Utility corridors	N
Communication Sites	N
Horse Use/ Pack Animals	Y
Guide Outfitting (hunting)	N/A
Guide Outfitting (fishing)	N/A
Guide Outfitting (hiking/backpacking/nature tours)	Y
Guide Outfitting (river rafting)	M
Cat-Assisted Skiing	N
Ski Hills	N
Commercial Recreation (facility-based)	N
Backcountry Huts	M
Water Control Structures	N
Fish Stocking and Enhancement	N
Road Access	N
Off-road Access (snowmobiling)	N
Off-road Access (motorized)	N
Off-road Access (mechanical activities)	N
Motorized Water Access	N
Aircraft Access	Y
Fire Management (suppression)	N1
Fire Management (prescribed fire management)	Y
Fire Management (prevention)	N1
Forest Insect/Disease Control	M
Noxious Weed Control	N1
Exotic Insect/Disease Control	M
Scientific Research (specimen collection)	M
Scientific Research (manipulative activities)	M

Y= allowed subject to conditions identified in the management direction statement or management plan

M= may be permitted if compatible with protected area objectives

N= not allowed

N1= allowed for expressed management purposes only

N2= present and allowed to continue but not normally allowed

Appendix 1: Potential Rare and Endangered Plant Communities

Plant Community	Site Series	Ranking* (1998 data)
Western hemlock/Amabilis fir-step moss	CWHms1/01	Blue
Douglas fir-western hemlock-falsebox	CWHms1/03	Blue
Amabilis fir-western redcedar-oak fern	CWHms1/04	Blue
Amabilis fir-western redcedar-Devil's club, moist subarctic	CWHms1/06	Blue
Sitka spruce-salmonberry, moist subarctic	CWHms1/07	Red
Cottonwood-Red-osier dogwood	CWHms1/08	Blue
Cottonwood-willow-thimbleberry	CWHms1/09	Blue

* RED LIST: Includes any indigenous species or subspecies (taxa) considered to be Extirpated, Endangered, or Threatened in British Columbia. Extirpated taxa no longer exist in the wild in British Columbia, but do occur elsewhere. Endangered taxa are facing imminent extirpation or extinction. Threatened taxa are likely to become endangered if limiting factors are not reversed. Red-listed taxa include those that have been, or are being, evaluated for these designations.

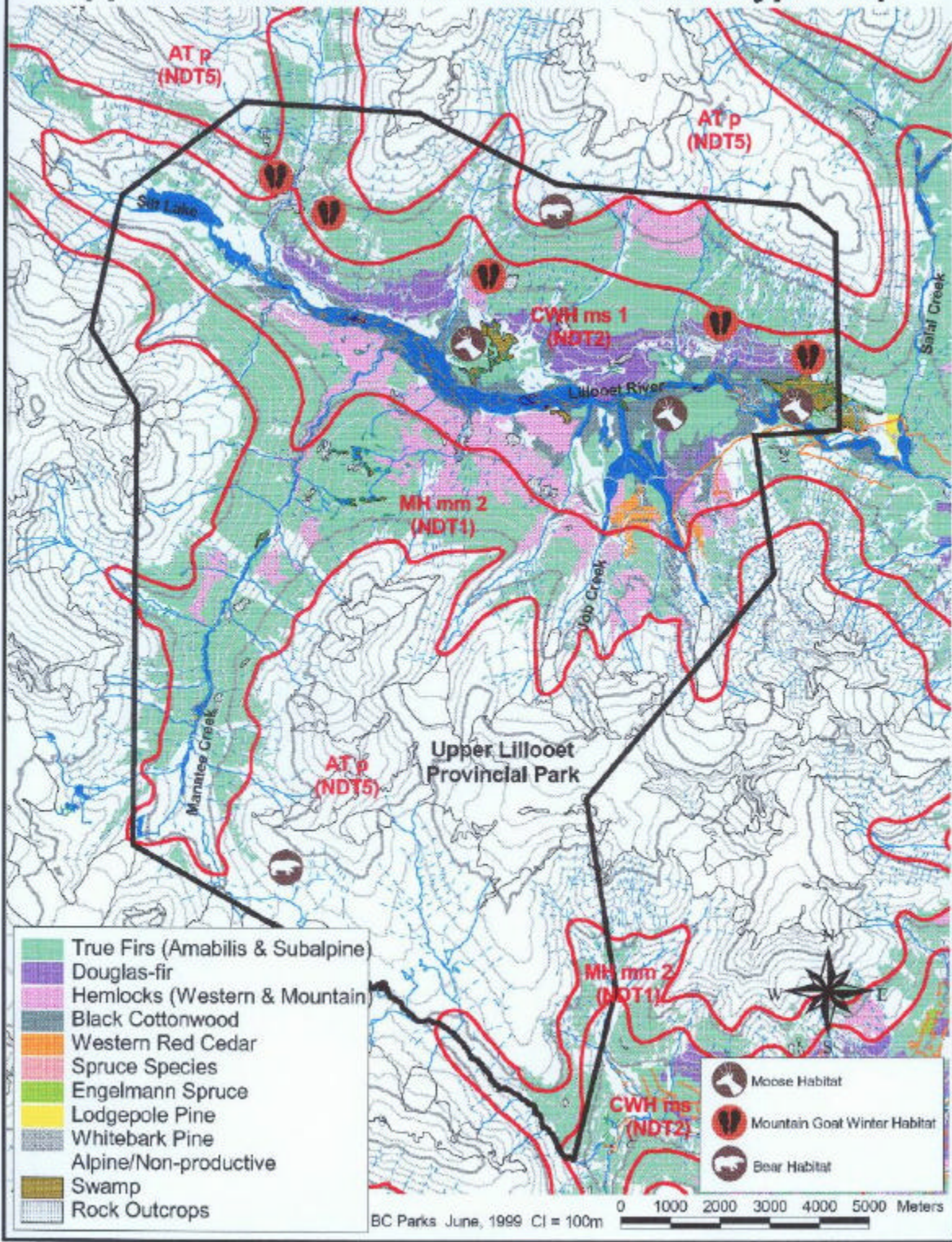
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Appendix 2: Additional Maps

The following maps have been included for reference:

- Upper Lillooet Provincial Park Forest Type Map
- Upper Lillooet Provincial Park Forest Stand Age Map

Upper Lillooet Provincial Park - Forest Type Map



Upper Lillooet Provincial Park - Forest Stand Age Map

