



WELLS GRAY PROVINCIAL PARK MASTER PLAN



Province of
British Columbia

Ministry of Lands,
Parks and Housing

March 1986

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WELLS GRAY PARK

MASTER PLAN

February, 1986

Ministry of Lands Parks & Housing
Parks & Outdoor Recreation Div.



Province of
British Columbia
OFFICE OF THE
GOVERNOR

Ministry of Lands
Parks and Housing

Parliament Buildings
Victoria
British Columbia
V8V 1S4

Ladies and Gentlemen:

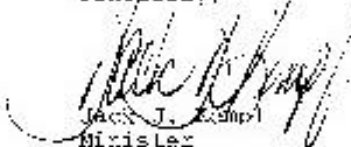
I take pleasure in releasing the Master Plan for Wells Gray Park. This document is the culmination of a process which has involved considerable public discussion and agency study. Production of a comprehensive plan for a park as large and diverse as Wells Gray, is a notable achievement for the Parks Division and will, I believe, stand the test of time.

Wells Gray is and will continue to be a magnificent wilderness area. The plan ensures that wilderness is protected with public recreation access subject to defined objectives. The management of this park's natural resources presents a challenge for our management during the rest of this century. I am pleased that we now have a plan to face that challenge and I am committed to continuing the process of a comprehensive resource inventory and analysis. As a result, this Ministry can deal with such complex and inter-related problems as fire management and caribou habitat protection. This is both an exciting and a daunting prospect that is critical to the future of our park system.

The public have an important role to play in the process of implementing the Master Plan and I wish to repeat the commitment that no changes will be made in the park zoning without full public review and discussion. I also encourage those of you who have a continuing interest in this park to form a "Friends of Wells Gray" association. Should you meet this challenge I can assure you that you would be of assistance to my staff as they implement the Master Plan.

I wish to thank those members of the public who have given us the benefit of their thoughts and ideas in formulating this plan. I look forward to your continued support.

Sincerely,



Jack J. Campbell
Minister

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PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

- Wells Gray Park, consisting of over 5200 sq. km, is a richly endowed park representing three of British Columbia's major park landscapes, and contains numerous biotic, geological, hydrological and historical features and themes of provincial recreational and scientific significance.
- The dominant theme that Wells Gray Park conveys to visitors is "wilderness"; the park offers a wealth of recreational opportunities in settings dominated by wild nature. Under this plan 85% of the park is zoned for wilderness management.
- The park boundaries are largely defined by watersheds. As such the park does an excellent job of protecting the recreation features and landscapes typical of this part of the province. Minor boundary amendments would add to the value of the park and should be considered separately.
- The dual challenge to wilderness management is to protect the high natural quality of the park while encouraging increased compatible recreational visitation.
- Natural features of provincial significance include critical wildlife habitats for caribou, grizzly and wolves. Other special natural values are the wide variety of hydrologic features, especially the waterfalls, and the examples of relatively recent volcanic activity. Human heritage items, although not provincially significant, have recreation and interpretation value.
- The park offers the following visitor programs: auto-access sightseeing and touring, auto-access destination, interpretation of natural and human history, winter recreation, wild river recreation, motor boat touring, fishing, hunting, hiking, canoeing, horseback riding, alpine appreciation, and research. Emphasis within these programs varies widely throughout the park.
- Improved information both within and beyond the park, and increasing accessibility, by mechanized and non-mechanized means, to a very few locations in the park are the major requirements for achievement of greater public appreciation and use of the park.
- There is a role defined for improved recreation services such as recreational guiding, boat charter and rental, and other services to the public, within the paramount context of protecting a wild area.
- The keystone new opportunities and services which are proposed are:
 - (a) Within the Clearwater Road Corridor
 - As a high priority:-
 - provide an information centre on the Yellowhead Highway in Clearwater

- improve and pave the road
- provide new short trails and information at Helmcken Falls, Dawson Falls, Ray Farm, Green Mountain, Bailey's Chute
- provide a water taxi and boat rentals service at Clearwater Lake
- As a lower priority:-
 - pave the road to Clearwater Lake
 - bridge the Clearwater River at Bailey's Chute
 - develop a new vehicle campground on the Murtle River
 - improve trails to Whitehorse Bluffs, Clearwater River
 - study the feasibility and impact of a low elevation road to a trailhead in the Ray Lake area and trail routes to beyond

(b) In more remote parts of the Park

- As a high priority:-
 - provide improved hiking and horse trails access and a year-round overnight camp or primitive lodge on Battle Mountain
 - provide a fly-in fish camp at McDougall Lake
 - continue the existing primitive lodge and trails at the north end of Hobson Lake
 - provide improved trails access and a temporary camp at Stevens Lake
- As a lower priority:-
 - provide trails on the west side of the Clearwater River and improve access and trails in the Ray Peaks area
 - provide an opportunity for a destination trail and boat access, camp on Clearwater Lake
 - provide a summer fly-in access to upper Hobson Creek
 - provide guide-outfitting opportunities west of Clearwater Lake

PLAN ORGANIZATION

The material presented in this document is organized in a manner which is intended to give priority to presentation of proposed long term plans for the park. For this reason purely technical information on the resources present, present recreation use, planning issues, etc. will be available in Appendices and do not appear in this text.

The plan is structured as a progression from the general and long term, ie. SECTION 1 THE ROLE OF WELLS GRAY PARK through to the specific and short term ie. SECTION 3 ZONE PLANS.

Between these extremes is the section which provides key statements of policy and objectives for all RESOURCE and VISITOR SERVICE management concerns in the park. This section provides interpretation of the Role Statement, establishes the relative order of priority for each management concern, and gives the direction from which the PLANS are taken.

Wells Gray is a complicated park. The intent of this plan is to provide a relatively simple framework which, over the long term, will guide and permit further detailed planning and decision making.

There are four broad inter-related issues that are central to understanding and planning for Wells Gray Park. These are:

1. What is Wells Gray Park's role and potential in the park system? What are its chief assets and how might these be best managed and shared with visitors?
2. What land management policies are appropriate, particularly in consideration of the Nature Conservancy, possible additions to the park, and private inholdings where non-conforming land uses may occur?
3. What forest, fish and wildlife resources management policies are appropriate, particularly in consideration of forest health (fuels, fire, disease), fishery capabilities, wildlife populations and habitats (especially caribou, grizzly, and moose), habitat enhancement and recreational pressures (fishing, hunting, non-consumptive uses)?
4. How should the park be made useful and accessible to recreationalists, while protecting its prime values? The size of Wells Gray is a formidable barrier to recreational use and appreciation; therefore it is necessary to evaluate travel modes (roads, horses, helicopters, etc.) that could overcome present access difficulties.

This plan is the product of considerable study and discussion on the part of numerous staff and over three hundred representatives of the public. Over the period of one year a number of meetings and field discussions were held. While there was not consensus on all key issues this document does reflect the efforts of all involved to chart a future course for one of the province's most important wilderness areas.

SECTION 1 - PARK ROLE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Wells Gray Park was established in 1939 and was named for the Honourable Wellesley Gray, Minister of Lands for British Columbia. Consisting of 527,305 hectares, it is the third largest provincial park in British Columbia. Located centrally in the province, 410 air kilometres northeast of Vancouver and 137 air kilometres north of Kamloops, Wells Gray Park is accessible by road and by air.

The climate of Wells Gray park is typical of mountainous areas in northern temperate latitudes. Winters are long and moderately cold; mean temperatures are below freezing and there is heavy snow accumulation. Summers are mild in temperature, and relatively dry from mid-July to mid-September. However summer storms of short duration, often accompanied by lightning, are also fairly common. As in any mountainous area, moisture and temperature vary strongly with elevation, aspect, and windward/leeward effect.

The park straddles a series of three distinct landscapes.¹ There is a general transition from southwest to northwest of increasing ruggedness, wetness of climate, and resulting vegetation pattern. Southern and southwest areas are generally of rolling or hilly terrain, with some broad flat areas (lava flows) and some dome-like mountains of modest elevation. Approximately 70% of the southern region of the park is below the alpine treeline. Northwards, the terrain becomes extremely rugged, with very prominent peaks (2400 to 3000 metres) poised above deep, linear valleys, and the forest cover is increasingly confined to the lower slopes, such that only about 30 percent of the total area is below treeline. Water has a very significant presence throughout the park. There are five large natural lakes occupying a total of 220 square kilometres, a number of mid-sized lakes, and many small lakes at all elevations. The park contains most of the drainage basin of the Clearwater River, including 100 percent of the drainage of its major tributary, the Murtle River. In the high mountains, glaciers and icefields add to the ruggedness and formidability of the landscape.

When the park was established, the Forest Branch was the administering agency. The decision to set aside this vast area was based upon considerations of tourism, hunting, fishing, and waterfalls and other scenery. The following excerpt from a 1939 letter from the local Forest Ranger outlines his rationale for recommending a park:

"I am herewith suggesting that a considerable area of the Clearwater Valley be set aside as a Park... I believe this area would benefit by being so administered, as with its natural attractions for Tourists it is sure to be well peopled during the dry weather, and... in a park people are naturally more careful with fire."

1 Natural Regions and Regional Landscapes for British Columbia's Provincial Park System - Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing, 1982.

"The agricultural area of the valley which all lies to the south of the Murtle River, is mostly all old burn, but north of this point it is still mostly all green timber, the area is already famous for its swift water and lake fishing of the well known Kamloops Trout."

"The area I would recommend would include the whole of the watershed of the Clearwater River north of the Murtle River, and include Murtle Lake, Mahood Lake, Clearwater Lake, Blue Lake, and Hobson Lake, besides numerous smaller lakes, and of the five mentioned above, all of which are good sized bodies of water, four of the five will provide the best of fishing and swimming, and are reached by saddle horse trails from the end of the present highway, (25 miles up the Clearwater), the Murtle Lake, which was only stocked a few years ago, is now teeming with Kamloops Trout, and is reached either by a trail from the southwest, along the Murtle River, or from a trail commencing at the town of Blue River on the C.N.R., thence west up the Blue River on a splendid trail of easy grade. "

"All of the above five large lakes, as well as many smaller ones, draining into the main Clearwater River, which has been famous for its "Rainbow" ever since pioneer days, and now the Murtle river, a tributary, is also producing Kamloops Trout in abundance, which are coming down stream from the heavily stocked Murtle Lake."

"The scenic attractions of the Dawson falls and Helmcken falls on the Murtle River, are amongst the finest in the interior of B.C. There are also many other beautiful waterfalls in this area as well as Glaciers and snow peaks all summer, also fine soda springs available on the present trails -- so that the Tourist or fisherman has only to bring along with him the "necessary" that goes with good strong soda mineral water."

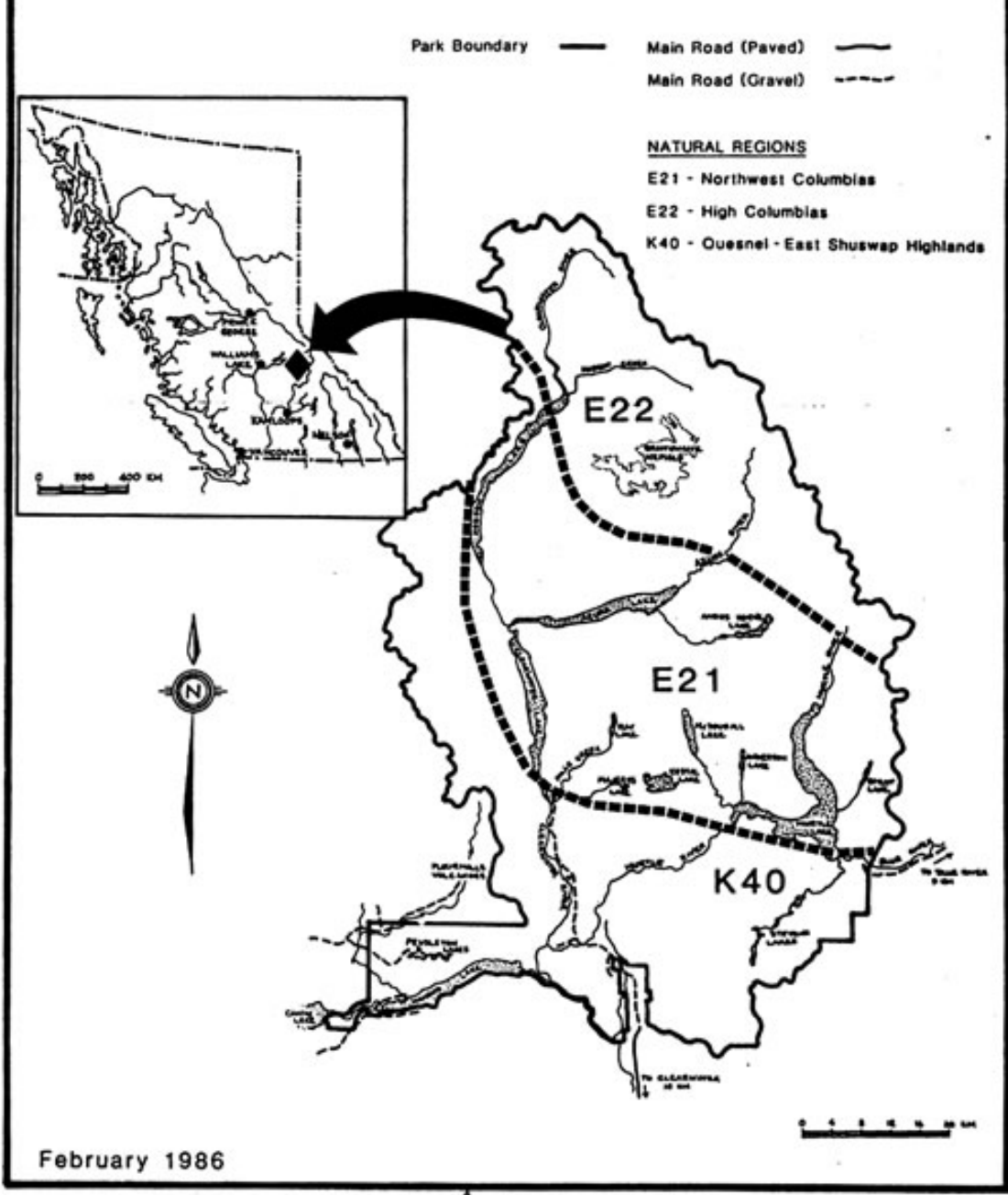
The park has long been famous for its waterfalls, lakes, mountains, volcanic features, fish, and wildlife, although the number of visitors has remained light, relative to its great capacity for wilderness use. The natural features of Wells Gray Park are too numerous to list. There are extensive areas of rugged mountain terrain, largely unaffected and unvisited by man; major lakes, rivers, and watersheds in a completely natural state; numerous major and minor waterfalls and cataracts; a wide variety of vegetative species; significant fish and wildlife resources; entire ecosystems, unaffected by modern society; a complex and fascinating geological history; and outstanding volcanic, glacial, and other geologic features. Rugged terrain, the size of the park and the limited road access have ensured that Wells Gray Park remains in a substantially wilderness state.

Unlike such parks as Jasper, Banff, Yoho, Glacier, Kootenay and Mt. Robson, Wells Gray Park is not bisected by a transportation corridor. By road, the park can be approached from the southwest to Mahood Lake or from the southeast to the park boundary near Murtle Lake and from directly south along the Clearwater River to the southern end of Clearwater Lake, some 35 km inside the park. This southern route is by far the major access corridor.

There are other routes to Wells Gray Park, but they are only lightly used. For example, one may travel eastward from Williams Lake to Quesnel Lake, then journey the length of this enormous lake, and finally using an abandoned mining route, cross a low elevation pass from Quesnel Lake to Hobson Lake inside the park. In the south, a logging road follows the Raft River from near Clearwater terminating south of the Stevens Lakes. With a float plane it is now legal to land on Clearwater, Mahood, and Hobson Lakes. During the winter, helicopters take skiers to some slopes along the eastern boundary.

Figure 1

LOCATION OF WELLS GRAY PARK



1.2 THE ROLE OF WELLS GRAY PARK

1.2.1 Regional and Provincial Context

Within the provincial park system, Wells Gray has two interdependent purposes: (1) conservation and presentation of exceptional, undisturbed natural resources; and (2) providing the public with a range of opportunities to experience and appreciate nature and a sense of wilderness.

Wells Gray is a large area of over 5200 sq. km where the processes, cycles, and creatures of the natural world are substantially undisturbed by modern society.

It is a special area in the park system because of the variety and quality of its untamed nature. The natural features and cultural features highlight this theme. The sense of wilderness -- a realm of the unknown, where nature dominates and invites people to "discover its beauty and mystery" -- pervades the many distinctive recreation environments, and dominates visitors' recreation experiences regardless of their travel modes or primary activities.

Wells Gray Park today is a destination for people who wish to experience the diminishing wilderness of our North American heritage. The area offers a combination of outstanding resources and opportunities for wildland experiences. Several distinct recreational environments comprise this park; each is dominated by untamed nature but offers varied recreation attractions and different degrees of accessibility. For instance, the Murtle Lake area is motorless, ideal for canoeing and hiking, and can be reached over a short portage from a secondary road west of Blue River; the Clearwater - Azure Lake chain offers, in contrast, a route of over 50 km in length to the heart of the park and is accessible by secondary road from a boat launch, north of Clearwater; alpine areas throughout the park remain largely remote except the rolling terrain of Battle Mountain in the south which may be reached by horse or foot. The rugged landscape of the northern half of the park remains accessible only to experienced persons. There are many dimensions to Wells Gray Park, a magnitude and vastness which is difficult to comprehend. The common "thread" is the theme of wilderness.

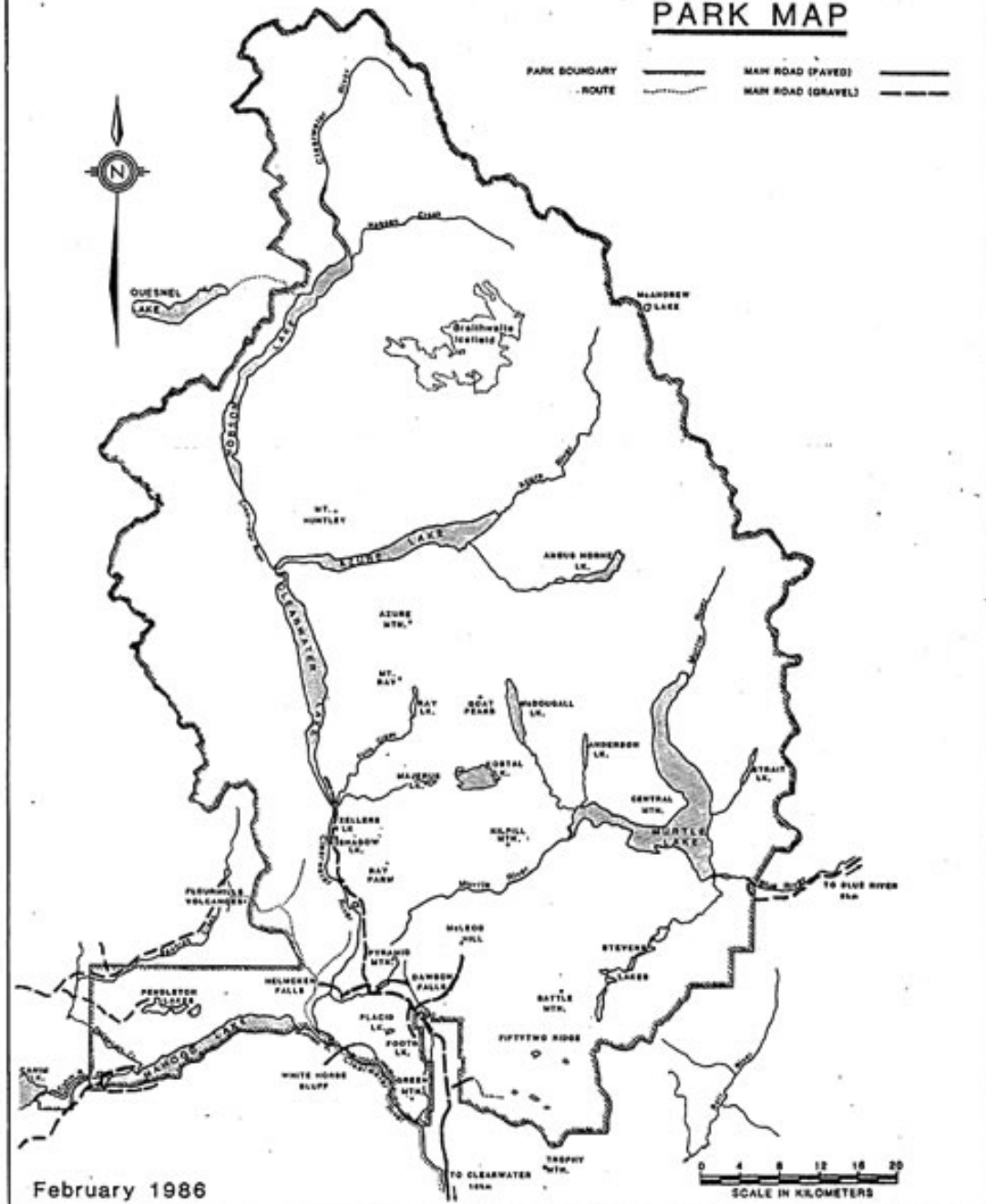
1.2.2 Conservation Role

Wells Gray makes a major contribution to both of the Division's Conservation Goals for the park system and it will be managed in a manner appropriate to guarantee the perpetuation of these values:

- (a) **Wells Gray Park protects and presents excellent representation of the "High Columbias" landscape, the "Northwest Columbias" landscape, and the "Quesnel-East Shuswap Highlands" landscape.**
- (b) **Wells Gray Park protects and presents an exceptional array of outstanding outdoor recreation and scientific resources as well as a significant reserve of wilderness.**

WELLS GRAY PARK

Figure 2
PARK MAP



February 1986

The park displays a complex geological history and features rugged mountain scenery, spectacular volcanic landforms (various cones, flows, tuyas, etc.), and extensive bluffs and canyons. The impressive hydrological resources include glaciers and icefields, major wild rivers, (with numerous falls and cataracts) major undisturbed watersheds, one of Canada's largest waterfalls (Helmcken), five very large lakes and numerous smaller waterbodies, and a very high water quality. Diverse ecosystems and floral communities of four biogeoclimatic zones (Interior Douglas Fir, Interior Cedar-Hemlock, Engelmann Spruce-Subalpine Fir, Alpine Tundra) are contained in the park. Outstanding faunal resources include caribou, moose, grizzly bear, mountain goat (and habitat), salmon migratory and spawning waters, excellent sport fish populations and potential new habitat, and plentiful species of birds and small mammals. The variety of archaeological and historical features – archaeological sites, artifacts of early resource industries, recreation and homesteading - add human interest to the land.

1.2.3 Recreation Role

Wells Gray Park offers a wealth of outstanding destination opportunities for outdoor recreation in association with its wilderness atmosphere and many natural and historic features. The park's location and attractions invite visitors from the immediate region as well as from across North America and the world to appreciate wilderness either directly or indirectly. The primary recreation management objective is to provide a wide range of outdoor opportunities in each of the park's distinctive wildland settings. This will be achieved employing different access modes, and degree of accessibility, while minimizing recreational conflicts and protecting the wilderness and environmental values of the park. In this way public access to the full range of environments represented by the park will be optimized.

Wells Gray contains three types of recreation settings (or opportunity settings), which coincide with the management zones applied to the park. These are distinguished on the basis of levels of access, development, and intensity of use existing and potential.

The "Intensive Recreation" setting is associated with direct road access, and therefore includes all the major developments and the greatest concentrations of visitors.

The "Natural Environment" type of setting is unroaded but highly accessible from nearby roaded areas; use is somewhat dispersed but there are no formidable barriers to visitation involving means other than direct road access. Natural conditions prevail but the environment could not be considered to be wilderness.

"Wilderness" settings are roadless and visitors must extend a measure of special effort to gain access. Undisturbed nature dominates and visitors should be reasonably well-prepared; however conditions range from extremely primitive or remote and rudimentary to those where backcountry facilities and management are provided. These areas are unroaded and access is usually by unmechanized means.

Visitor opportunities are the composites of activities, settings, and forms of access that motivate people to visit a park. Because people are differently motivated, it is difficult to describe the range of opportunities offered by a complex park such as Wells Gray. For instance, some people are motivated by the opportunity to fish in a pristine environment, and for them other activities (camping, appreciation of scenery, hiking, boating, etc.) are ancillary to their main pursuit. Other people are motivated by the canoeing, boating, alpine flower appreciation, hunting or other opportunities, although they enjoy a variety of activities while in the park.

Thirteen such broad categories of opportunities are offered by Wells Gray Park: **auto-access sightseeing and touring, auto-access destination, interpretation of natural and human history, winter recreation, wild river recreation, motorboat touring, angling, hunting, hiking, canoeing, horse-back riding, alpine appreciation, and research** (a non-recreational visitor opportunity). These general opportunities, in the context of the four opportunity settings and the specific recreation resources in Wells Gray Park, present an array of particular opportunities for many different types of people to sense and appreciate wilderness.

1.3 ZONING

The complexity and size of Wells Gray constitutes a major challenge to planning and management. Zoning is a recreation management tool applied within the park to differentiate levels of development and recreational use; zones are coincident with recreational opportunity settings. As such the zones will affect but do not dictate the natural resource management practices throughout the park.

Intensive Recreation Zones and Subzones

These are the areas that are directly accessible by all-weather, public roads, and are the most heavily visited, developed, and managed parts of the park. Subzones are identified to give a special management emphasis where appropriate: "Development" where major facilities are concentrated; "Parkway", to emphasize scenic values along key access corridors; and "Heritage" to protect special natural or historical values from inappropriate development and use.

Natural Environment Zones

These zones are transitional in development and visitation levels between "Intensive Recreation" and "Wilderness". Most natural environment zones absorb relatively heavy use from nearby road-access areas. Although development levels are normally fairly low key, convenient access via easily hiked trails, popular boating routes, and so on result in high popularity.

Wilderness Zones

These are roadless areas retained in natural condition for the provision of wilderness experiences involving, by definition, large areas, substantially unmodified by human activity and

TABLE 1 DETAILED ZONE DESCRIPTIONS

ZONE	INTENSIVE RECREATION	NATURAL ENVIRONMENT	WILDERNESS
OBJECTIVE	to provide for a variety of auto accessible facility-oriented outdoor recreation facilities	to provide for a variety of easily accessible off-road outdoor recreation activities in a largely undisturbed natural environment	to provide for backcountry recreation opportunities in a remote natural environment and to protect a remote undisturbed natural landscape
USE LEVEL	high density and relatively long duration types of use	Relatively low use but high enough to preclude any sense of wilderness isolation	Low to very low use, compatible with emphasis on obtaining solitary experiences and a wilderness atmosphere; levels of use may be controlled to maintain low densities
MEANS OF ACCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> all-weather public roads, or other types of access where use level is exceptionally high (See "impacts" below) 	off-road non-mechanized – powerboats,	½ off-road non-mechanized – foot, horse, canoe, bicycle, etc. non-mechanized (airplane access to drop-off and pickup points may be permitted) – foot, horse, canoe
LOCATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> contiguous with all-weather roads and covering immediate areas, or other high-use areas 	removed from all-weather roads but easily accessible on a day use basis	remote – not easily visited on a day use basis
SIZE OF ZONE	small – usually less than 2,000 hectares	can range from small to large.	large – larger than 2,000 hectares
BOUNDARY DEFINITION	includes areas of high facility development in limited park areas	boundaries should consider ecosystem limits and geographical features	defined by ecosystem limits and geographical features
RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES	camping, picnicking, beach activities, power-boating, canoeing, kayaking, strolling, historic and nature appreciation, fishing, snowplay, downhill and cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, specialized activities.	walk-in/boat-in camping, power-boating, canoeing, kayaking, backpacking, historic and nature appreciation, fishing, cross-country skiing, river rafting, horseback riding, hunting and specialized activities	backpacking, canoeing, kayaking, river rafting, nature and historic appreciation, fishing, hunting, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding, specialized activities
FACILITIES	may be intensively developed for user convenience – campgrounds, landscaped picnic/play areas, trails, accommodation or interpretive buildings, boat launches, administrative facilities	moderate development for user convenience – trails, walk-in/boat-in campsites, shelters, (accommodation buildings may be permitted)	limited development for user convenience and protection of the environment – trails, primitive campsites, shelters (accommodation buildings may be permitted)
IMPACTS ON NATURAL ENVIRONMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes natural features in a primarily natural state but man's presence may be visible through recreation facilities and people using the zone. includes facility development with major impact on small areas and 	area where man's presence on the land is not normally visible, facility development limited to small areas – facilities are visually compatible with natural setting	natural area where evidence of man's presence is confined to specific facility sites – facilities are visually compatible with natural setting
MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES	oriented toward maintaining a high quality recreation experience – may require intensive management presence to control visitor activities	oriented toward maintaining natural environment and providing a high quality recreation experience – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> visitor access may be restricted to preserve the recreational experience or to limit impact on the area designation of transportation modes may be necessary to avoid potential conflicts (e.g. horse trails, cycle paths, hiking trails) 	except primitive wilderness which is oriented to maintaining natural environment – management presence is not or barely evidenced <ul style="list-style-type: none"> hunting is excluded where Nature Conservancy status exists levels of use may be controlled

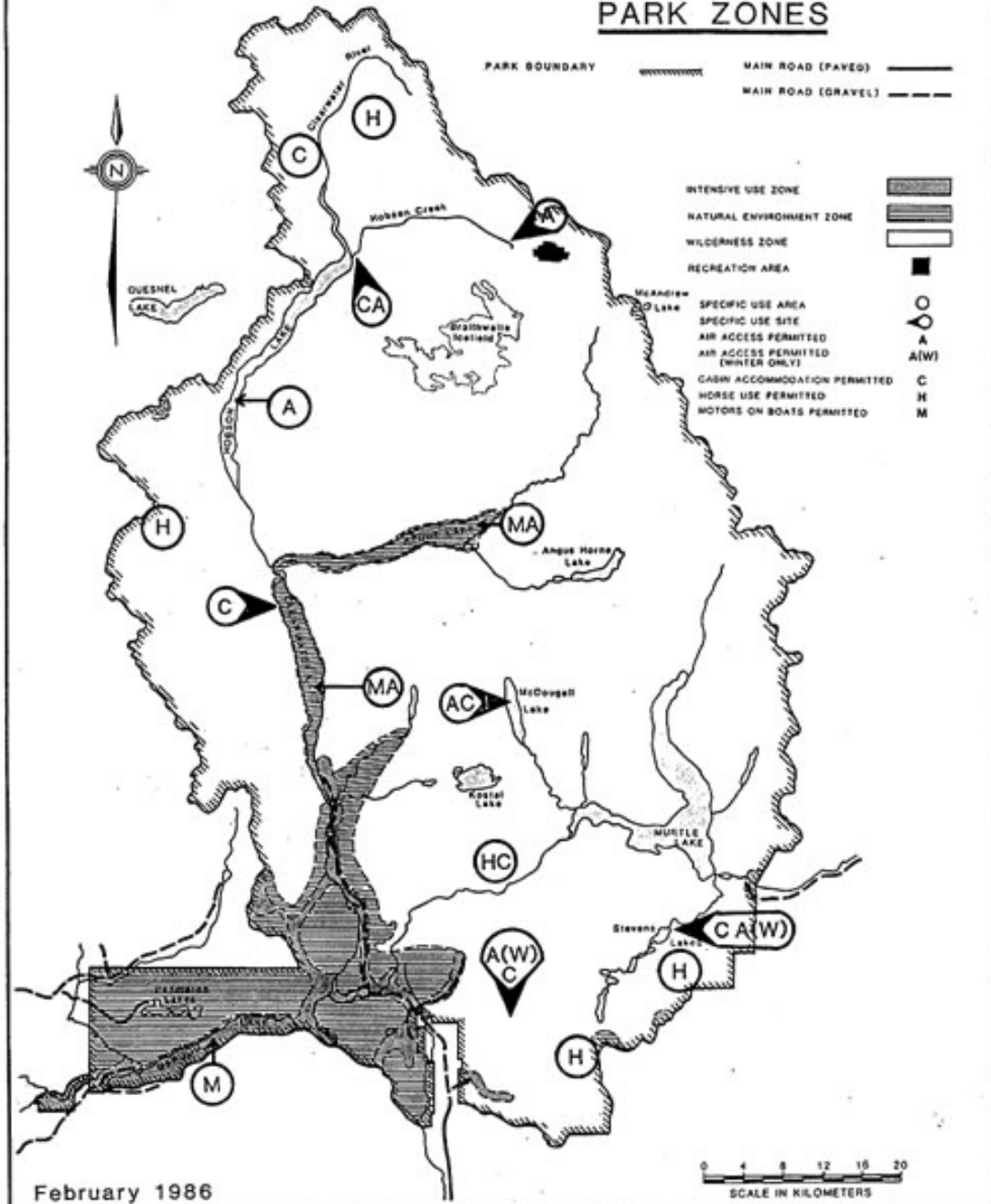
emphasizing opportunities for isolation and solitude. Wilderness facilities may be provided and include trails, campsites or shelters in order to offer access to wilderness experiences. Permitted access methods may be varied, but do not usually include mechanized access (this must be specified in zone management statements). Use levels and densities and on-site management are both at moderate to low levels.

Within the wilderness zone are areas retained in a natural condition for the preservation of their ecological environments and scenic features and maybe designated as Nature Conservancies under the *Park Act*. While they can offer the same quality of recreational experience as the remainder of the wilderness, protection of specific biological or scenic resource values takes precedence over human uses and is the basis for designation. Nature conservancies are generally subject to the same use guidelines as other wilderness zones but are closed to mechanized access and hunting is not permitted.

Management plans for each zone are presented in Section 3 and specific mechanized access points and cabin or lodge development sites are shown there and illustrated in Figure 3.

WELLS GRAY PARK

Figure 3
PARK ZONES



SECTION 2 - PARK MANAGEMENT

2.1 NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

The following management policies are based upon the *Park Act*, associated regulations, and appropriate Ministry and Division policies. Park management policies are specific adaptations or interpretations of these broader policies regulations, and legislation, all of which apply in this park, whether or not specially noted in this plan.

General Principle

The natural resources of Wells Gray Park will be managed to protect and enhance high quality natural, wilderness environments representative of the three regional landscapes which the park encompasses.

In achieving this objective management will place particular emphasis on ensuring continuation of existing wildlife species diversity. Wilderness protection activity will not be allowed to threaten the management of natural resources surrounding the park or essential high use recreation areas in the park.

2.1.1 LAND AND TENURES

a) Park Boundaries

(i) General Adequacy

Wells Gray is a very extensive park and its boundaries are largely defined by watersheds. As such the park does an excellent job of protecting existing park resources and the regional landscapes and significant recreational features typical of this part of the province.

(ii) Possible Additions

There are a variety of areas potentially worthy of consideration for addition to the park. Each of these would be considered further through separate documents. Inclusion of any area in the park can only be warranted for either or both of two reasons:

1) It exhibits natural features not now present, or only poorly or partially represented in the park.

2) It affords recreation opportunities which are complementary to the park role but which cannot be obtained in the park.

- a) **The Flourmill Volcanic Area**, situated southwest of Clearwater Lake at the headwaters of Flourmill and Spanish Creeks. The volcanic features are among the most significant in southern British Columbia and already have a tradition of

high public interest. The area exhibits elements of volcanism not presently contained or represented in Wells Gray Park. It is also an area which has been identified as one of a limited number of key recreation opportunities in the west side of the Clearwater River.

- b) **The Trophy Mountain Area**, situated south of the park and east of the Clearwater River, is a popular alpine area. Its features include caribou habitat, numerous small alpine lakes, biotic and geologic features apparently not presently found in the park, excellent hiking terrain, and easy accessibility.
- c) **McAndrew Lake**, a small area near the headwaters of the North Thompson River, on the northeastern periphery of the park. It is an attractive location in the only low elevation pass that offers feasible recreational access to this northern region of the park. Should the industrial road along the North Thompson River be extended, McAndrew lake would be a good staging area for recreationists venturing into this rugged part of Wells Gray.
- d) **Clearwater River** it is an important natural and historic feature as well as an excellent recreational corridor. It is desirable to study the possible addition to the park of all Crown lands along a strip of land along the Clearwater River, the Mahood River and the southeast shore of Mahood Lake.

(iii) Possible Reductions

Reduction of the area of Wells Gray Park is not necessary nor is it advocated. However, there are two areas contained by the present boundary which may not be essential to protection of the three landscapes, seem to add little to the overall value of Wells Gray Park and might be managed more effectively if they were not included within Wells Gray Park. Consideration of these will be pursued through separate document when and if desirable.

- **The Pendleton Lakes area lacks significant recreational value and has been subjected to widespread forestry operations in previous decades. Its boundaries are of the "straight line" type, and therefore cross watersheds. Forest access roads cut through the area.**
- **The Mahood Lake Area, contains a mixture of park values, private landholdings and Provincial Forest. It will be necessary to evaluate fully the recreational values of the entire lake and make recommendations as to the best land designation.**

b) Inholdings and Other Tenures

Wells Gray Park contains only a few privately held lands or land use rights. It is desirable that none of these be developed or used in a manner that would detract from or impair park values or the experiences of park visitors.

Resource extraction for commerce or industry is incompatible with the purposes of Wells Gray Park. Except when a pre-existing legal tenure may include a legitimate right to extract or develop, no such extraction will be permitted. This includes mining, forestry, trapping, hydro-electric development, and all other such activities.

(i) Deception Point property, Mahood Lake:

This private land on the north shore of Mahood contains good potential for public recreational development. Private recreational development would not necessarily impair park values. Acquisition is not a provincial priority.

(ii) Crown-granted and other mineral claims:

See section 2.1.8 Mineral Resources

(iii) Rights-of Way:

The minor existing rights-of-way for roads and utilities will be deleted from the park. These do not cause any problems but their deletion from the park simplifies management. No additional rights-of-way will be alienated within park boundaries, unless necessary for park management purposes.

(iv) Flooding Reserve (B.C. Hydro and Power Authority):

While the legal status of the reservoir flooding reserve over Hobson Lake, Clearwater Lake, Azure Lake, Hemp Creek, and the Clearwater River remains uncertain, it is a high priority to have this reserve officially cancelled.

(v) Traplines:

Existing traplines will be phased out consistent with Division policy.

(vi) Guide Territories:

Guide territories in this park have been phased out over the recent time. The only new tenures to be issued for hunting guides will be in the area west of Clearwater Lake.

c) Trespasses

Trespasses and other illegal uses of park resources will be identified and appropriate actions will be taken to eliminate or legitimize such activities.

2.1.2 Water

a) General Principle

One of the major assets of Wells Gray Park - one which gives the park international significance and enhances the quality of many other park resources - is the conservation of an enormous, undisturbed watershed area and protection of significant wild, free flowing rivers. For aesthetic, ecological, and health considerations it is important that the high quality of rivers, streams, and lakes within the park be maintained. It is essential that park facilities are not of a scale, size, or design that could impair surface or ground water quality or quantity.

b) Impoundment, Diversion, and other Water control Measures

It is incompatible with park values and the *Park Act* to impound, divert or otherwise utilize the water resources of Wells Gray Park for hydro-electric generation, downstream flood control, or any other similar purpose.

2.1.3 Vegetation

a) General Principle

The vegetation of the park will be managed to protect wilderness values and, more particularly: to enhance visual values; ensure continuation of viable wildlife habitat; and protect any special flora or plant associations which may occur in the park.

The wild, natural state of the vegetation of Wells Gray Park is an important park attribute. In general, the park will be managed with sensitivity to protecting and/or restoring this condition, while providing for recreation and managing the other valued park resources.

It is important to monitor and manage for long term forest health. This will include an inventory of the resource, and will consider the utilization and management of fire, the habitat needs of wildlife, the presence and control of forest disease, special flora, gene pool factors, reforestation, relationships to adjacent commercial forest areas, and the expectations of park visitors. Co-operation and consultation with other key government agencies are implicit in the Division's responsibilities and forest management capabilities.

b) Current Specific Policies:

(i) Fire and Disease

Fire and disease are recognized as natural and valuable forces in the wilderness ecosystems of Wells Gray Park. In some instances, wildfire and disease can threaten

important recreation values and facilities as well as the commercial forest values of adjacent lands.

Fire and disease will be suppressed where warranted in all forest stands which represent significant wildlife habitat, and when in the vicinity of park facilities, high use areas, and adjacent populated or commercial forest areas. Natural means are favoured in the control of disease.

Chemical spraying will not be employed in a manner or of a kind that could affect wildlife, potable water supplies, park visitors, or water quality in general. The Division will be governed by the *Pesticide Control Act* in such matters.

Fire is an acceptable management tool with regard to management and improvement of certain wildlife habitat (moose, in particular) and long-term forest health. Non-suppression of wild fire and prescribed fire techniques will be addressed.

Forest cover manipulation (employing prescribed fire) to maintain winter range essential to the parks' moose population is important in the general area of the south-central part of the park roughly bounded by the Clearwater River, the lower west slopes of Battle Mountain area, Kilpill Mountain, and Lone Spoon Creek.

(ii) Commercial Forest Utilization

Exploitation of the forest for commercial values is contrary to park objectives and the *Park Act* and as such will not be permitted. Cone harvesting will be permitted on a limited scale, insofar as it does not impair park values or visitor experiences, in recognition of the gene pool value of Wells Gray Park to Society.

2.1.4 Wildlife

a) General Principle

Management to maintain the present range of wildlife species in numbers consistent with natural population cycles will have a high priority in Wells Gray Park.

However, whenever wildlife numbers of a species recognized as threatened or uncommon are in significant declines, special management to protect and or restore those populations may be undertaken. Wells Gray Park contains a range of wildlife species representative of the landscape types and ecosystems which the park contains. These animals provide a wide range of recreational opportunities and are integral to the atmosphere park visitors anticipate when visiting a wilderness area.

The park will be managed to (a) protect critical wildlife habitat (b) maintain existing species diversity (c) present opportunities for viewing, photography, study and hunting. Whenever these objectives conflict management will minimize conflict through zoning of useractivity to separate uses in both time and space. Conflicts involving threatened or uncommon species will be resolved in favour of that species.

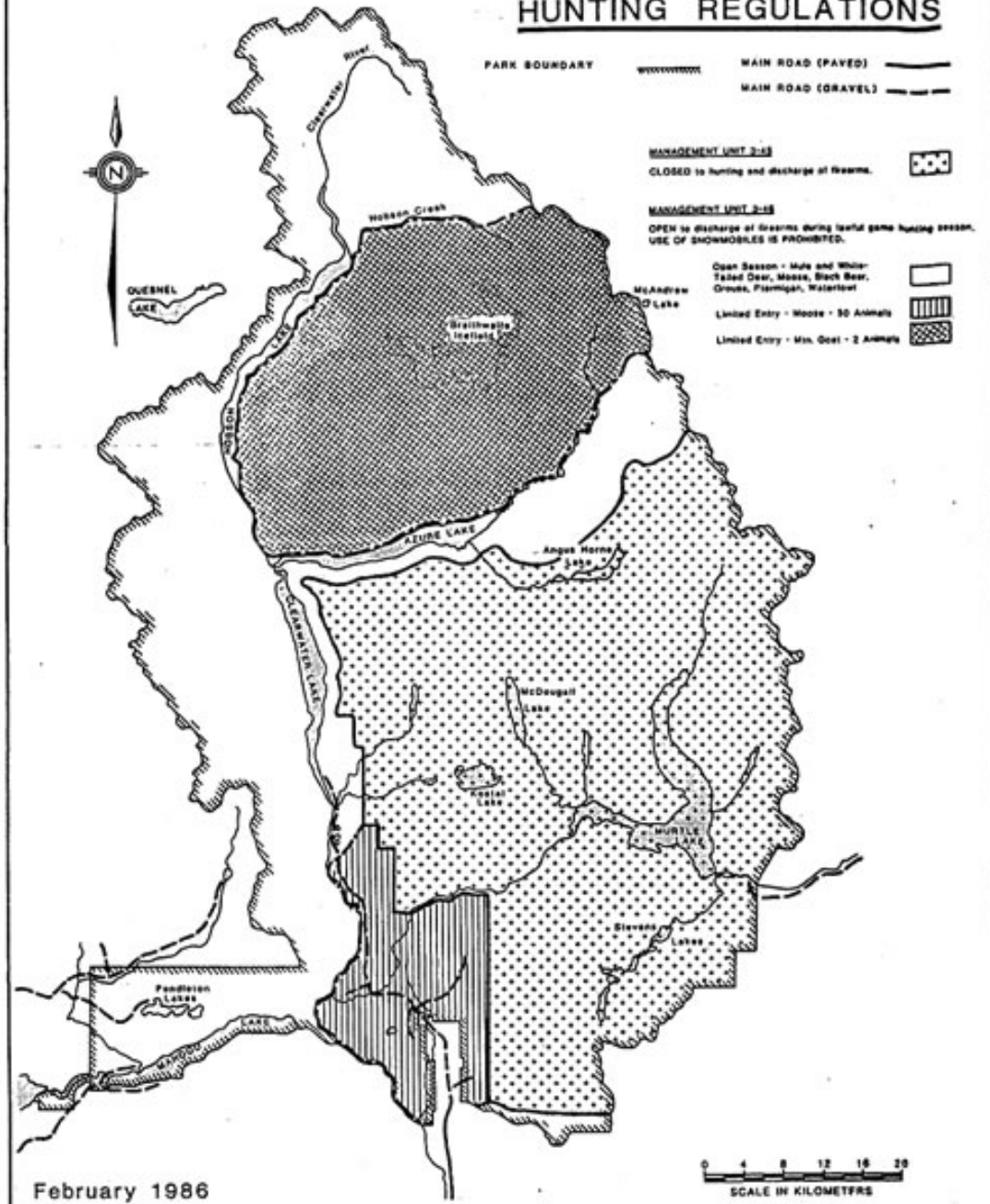
The management of park wildlife will be based upon sound, recognized wildlife management principles. This will require constant monitoring of populations, study of specific problems and cooperation and consultation with other ministries, educational institutions, knowledgeable organizations and individuals.

b) Current Specific Policies

- (i) Recognizing Wells Gray Park as a large reservoir of wildland, able to independently sustain viable populations of animals, the park will provide sanctuary for uncommon species native to the park. Caribou, wolves and grizzly bear are known examples of uncommon species. The preservation of the habitat and the maintenance of their numbers will receive high priority. Other animal species, particularly moose, goat and deer will be maintained at levels consistent with the natural carrying capacity of the park irrespective of demand for these animals in other areas.
- (ii) As a general principle, it is desirable to maintain the present complement of species within the park without introducing non-native species, Wildlife habitat characteristics necessary to ensure continuation of traditional species complements and populations will be maintained to the extent practical.
- (iii) Predator control measures are not socially acceptable nor deemed necessary except when required to protect an endangered population.
- (iv) Park developments will be situated and designed such that there are no significant, identifiable impacts to wildlife or critical habitats.
- (v) Trapping of fur bearing animals is not compatible with the wildlife management philosophy and existing traplines will be phased out.
- (vi) Projects designed to maintain present habitats (which are changing through vegetative succession over time and not being replaced because of wildfire suppression) may be undertaken.

WELLS GRAY PARK

Figure 6
HUNTING REGULATIONS



- (vii) Whenever recreational harvest of wildlife is appropriate, the conflict between consumptive and non-consumptive uses will be minimized. A system of zones may be established which separate in time and or space, those conflicting uses. The object in the creation of those zones will be to provide easily observable animals (particularly moose) at specific locations and times of the year.
- (viii) The capture of individual animals from populations able to withstand harvesting may be considered for the purposes of reintroduction to areas outside the park if suitable stocks are not reasonably available from other sources.
- (ix) Where commercial forest or other land use operations may affect wildlife that migrates in and out of the park, discussion will occur with the appropriate agencies to reach agreement on how to minimize this impact. Of specific concern at this time are areas above 5500 ft. on Trophy Mtn. and the Raft River drainage, as well as the mature forest in the upper Blue River area, where caribou habitat is affected.

2.1.5 Fish

a) General Principle

- (i) A high quality natural fish population is an integral element of Wells Gray Park. The park is important to fish resources provincially, due to the extensive, high quality watershed and numerous water bodies conserved within its boundaries. There are significant populations of trout and a significant salmon migration.

While there are no known unique fish populations in Wells Gray, the park serves an invaluable conservation role in regard to natural ("wild") stocks and their undisturbed habitats and will be managed to protect these values.

- (ii) Management will incorporate research, inventory, conservation enhancement, and recreational utilization. Cooperation and consultation with other key government agencies is implicit in sound management.

b) Current Specific Policies

- (i) The natural (native) species complement, including sport and non-sport species, will be maintained.
- (ii) Species not presently found in the park will not be introduced into the waters where they could affect native species. New habitat will be populated only with species native to British Columbia and the Fraser River system.
- (iii) Park developments will not impair fish habitat.

- (iv) Fishery enhancement is acceptable and compatible in principle.
- (v) Salmonid Enhancement projects are, in principle, acceptable along the Clearwater River below Clearwater Lake, subject to Division agreement on specific project conditions.
- (vi) No population control measures, such as poisoning, are appropriate at this time.
- (vii) Angling is an appropriate use of the resource, subject to regulations. The resource will be managed to provide three levels of angling experience: intensive angling where easily accessible by road; dispersed angling where accessible by short trail, power boat, or aircraft; and wilderness angling. The subject of angling is further treated in the Visitor Services section of this plan.

2.1.6 Cultural Heritage

a) General Principle

The park contains a variety of cultural, heritage sites. No sites of provincial importance have been documented. A heritage features inventory will be kept and documented sites will be managed within the overall park objectives for wilderness protection and presentation.

In the main, the cultural features of Wells Gray have value in relation to park visitors experiencing the wilderness flavour. Decaying farm buildings, neglected farm clearings, the presence of archaeological sites, and the scattered evidence of previous enterprises (logging, mining, etc.) give people a clear message that here nature dominates and mankind is but a visitor.

b) Current Specific Policies

- (i) Current archaeological data is dated and will be updated, especially where any development is planned. All archaeological sites are protected by the *Heritage Conservation Act*. These sites will be protected as necessary to preserve their integrity. Resource management guidelines or practices will involve consultation with the Heritage Conservation Branch.
- (ii) Heritage resources will be assessed for their interpretive and recreational value and managed appropriately.
- (iii) Movable artifacts of early settlement, industrial, or recreational use may be relocated to a site or sites more accessible to park visitors and conducive to interpretation.
- (iv) The Ray Farm and the Majerus Farm will be presented to the public as symbolic of frontier pioneering lifestyles. The Majerus Farm will be allowed to follow the natural process of deterioration. The Ray Farm buildings will be stabilized and documented to

aid interpretation. The clearing for the Ray Farm will be maintained in a meadow-like state to enable visitors to appreciate the historic use of the area and to observe wildlife. To aid historical interpretation, photo-monitoring will be instituted to document the condition of the clearing and the deterioration of the farm buildings over time.

2.1.7 Visual Resources

a) General Principle

Many of the resources that contribute to Wells Gray Park's fame have strong visual components. The quality of the visual resource can too easily suffer when it is not recognized in advance of development. In general therefore two principles will guide management sensitivity to visual resources:

- (i) Wherever possible visitors will be presented with a variety of focal vistas and panoramic views of the natural environment of Wells Gray Park.**
- (ii) Whenever new development is proposed, care will be taken to locate and design this development (roads, campgrounds, etc.) in an unobtrusive manner.**

b) Current Specific Policies

- (i) Along the Clearwater corridor between the park entrance and Clearwater Lake enhancement of the visual variety of the route will be undertaken.
- (ii) Dialogue will be established with the Ministry of Forests to reduce the visual impact of forestry in the following areas adjacent to the park's boundaries :
 - areas visible from Murtle Lake
 - Blue River, east of park
 - upper Raft River
 - west of Flourmill Volcanoes
 - south of Mahood Lake and River
 - west side of Clearwater River
 - west slopes of Trophy Mountain area
- (iii) The park lacks significant high elevation viewpoints. Developed viewpoints are appropriate, for example at Green Mountain, to provide the public with a vista of the park.
- (iv) The Ray Farm clearing will be maintained around the farm buildings.

2.1.8 Mineral Resources

a) General Principle

Mineral extraction is incompatible with the purposes of Wells Gray Park and contrary to the *Park Act* in Class "A" Parks. However, a limited number of tenures either pre-exist the designation of a park or were granted before Class "A" status was established in 1973. The Supreme Court of Canada has obliged the government to permit the holders to follow normal resource exploration and extraction practice and procedure, or to compensate the tenure holder.

No new mineral claims can be staked or otherwise acquired in the park. Existing tenure holders will be offered an opportunity to surrender their claims by a negotiated settlement. If an equitable settlement, cannot be reached, only then will the claim areas be reclassified to Recreation Area and the owners given an opportunity to proceed with exploration. All existing Exploration Guidelines and Mine Review procedures established by the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, will be followed. No activity can occur before a Resource Use Permit has been issued by the Parks Division.

2.2 VISITOR SERVICES OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

2.2.1 Introduction

a) General Concept

The overall objective of park management will be to provide for a broad range of public access to various types of wilderness opportunity. This will include establishing large areas as primitive wildernesses where no facilities or access improvements will be provided. At the other range of the spectrum will be limited areas which will serve as relatively intensive destination foci where visitors will be able to enjoy recreation services in a wild and remote setting. Between these two extremes lie large wilderness areas where various recreation opportunities, a range of access modes and a range of compatible facilities, will be available.

Wells Gray Park offers an unrivaled array of outdoor recreation opportunities. Whether directly or indirectly these all centre upon the theme of "wilderness". In protecting a vast area of largely undisturbed nature, Wells Gray has both real and symbolic value in offering people opportunities to appreciate wilderness. For the purpose of this plan, wilderness is not considered as a physical resource but rather as a perception of the dominance of nature and natural processes. Of course, this perception is applied to real places. People vary widely in their desire to experience absolute wilderness - but Wells Gray Park offers a considerable range of degrees of wilderness experience. Along the road corridor, visitors perceive that wilderness lies just beyond their campsite; alternatively visitors may venture further into the park by foot, horse, boat, canoe, or aircraft to experience closer contact with undisturbed nature. Wilderness is an

important symbol and resource in modern North American society and Wells Gray gives people the substance to appreciate it in the context of a variety of recreational pursuits.

b) Access Strategy

The level of year round accessibility and variety of forms of access will be increased in selected parts of the park, while preserving the wilderness atmosphere of the entire park and avoiding incompatible recreational uses. The size and diversity of Wells Gray constitutes an opportunity to provide a wide range of recreational experiences often linked to the modes of travel - whether by road, ski, air, horse, foot, canoe, or motorboat.

Wells Gray Park has had a history of declining recreational use. The present accesses bring visitors close to only a very few of the park's most outstanding recreational assets. The park's vastness has meant that a visitor is required to commit major effort and time into the task of reaching most of the key destinations. As a result the importance of the park is not well understood and even the developed recreation facilities are only lightly used.

c) Information & Interpretation Strategy

Information and interpretation of the park will emphasize the wilderness character and management problems of the area and the special natural features which it represents.

An information centre in Clearwater will be the centre-point in both programs. Within the park personnel service naturalist programs and integrated, enhanced interpretation and information signing, will complement the external efforts.

2.2.2 Visitor Opportunities

a) Auto-access Sightseeing and Touring

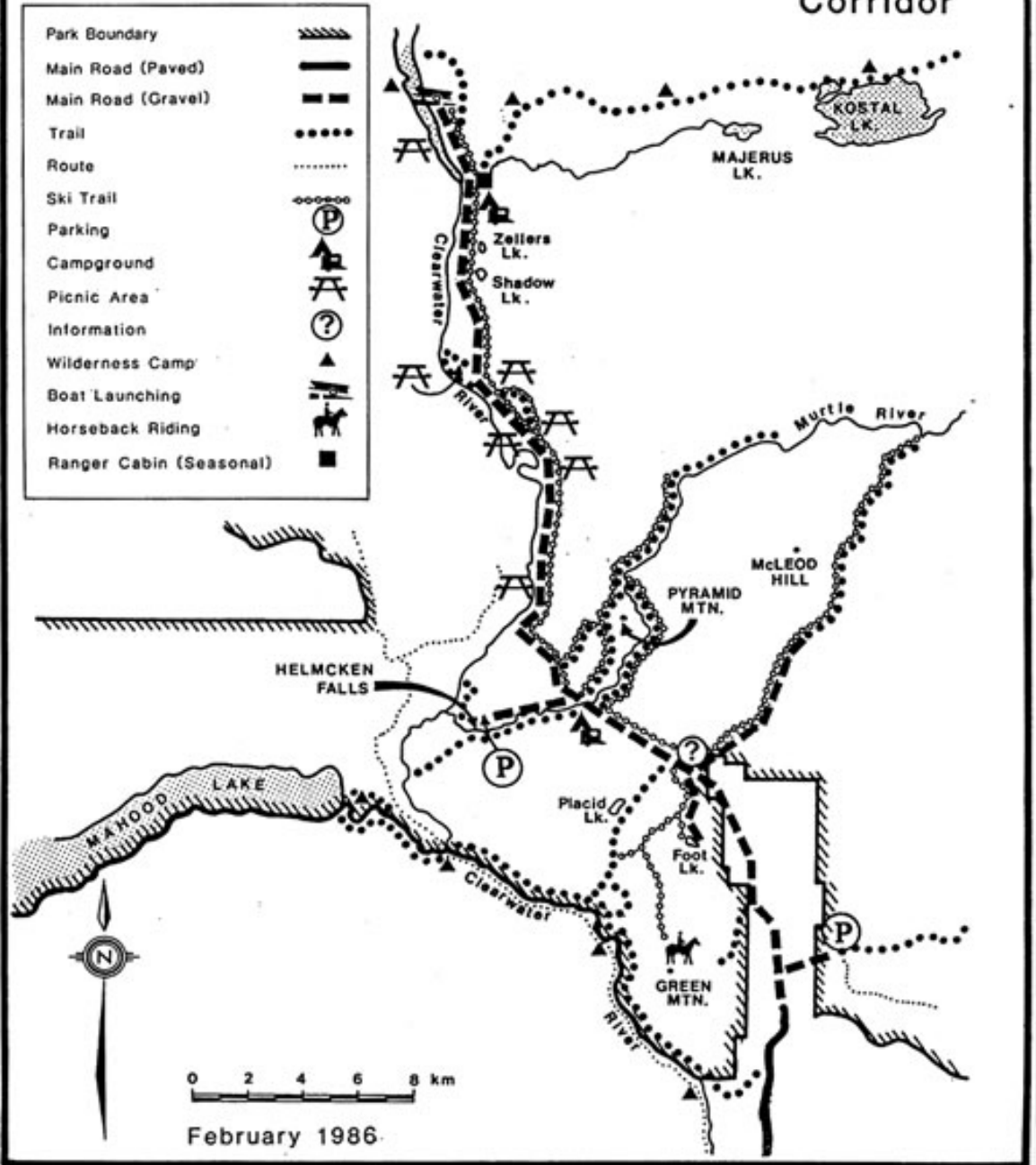
It will be the objective to attract increased numbers of sightseeing visits and to encourage users to stay longer in the park by increasing and improving opportunities at particular locations, implementing visual management guidelines in the main corridor and improving the quality of opportunities provided at the various facilities.

This opportunity is closely linked with the Auto Access Destination opportunity. The focal area is and will continue to be the Clearwater access route with Helmcken Falls/Murtle River being the major destination. A bridge across the Clearwater would offer a circle trip - past the Flourmill Volcano and alpine access to the north, then westward to 100 Mile House and the Cariboo. Viewing of the Canim River and Falls is the chief sightseeing attraction at the Mahood Lake access.

WELLS GRAY PARK

Figure 8

EXISTING RECREATION FACILITIES - Clearwater Corridor



At present sightseeing opportunities are limited because of road conditions, insufficient attractive viewpoints and insufficient services (information, interpretation, short trails, etc.) at destination points.

Provision of new opportunities associated with this program and within the existing road system, will be among the highest priorities in the short-term future. Emphasis will be given to actions which will make improvements to existing opportunities where there are impediments to their present effectiveness.

b) Auto-access Destination

It will be the objective to increase use by the development and enlargement of a select number of existing destination areas and associated accommodation facilities and as new road termini are established.

This frontcountry program will continue to be most concentrated in the Clearwater corridor. A bridge over the Clearwater River will offer new destinations at the Flourmills Volcanoes, Mahood River and Clearwater River. At Mahood Lake additional opportunities, depending upon demand, are available at Deception Point (now private) and at Canim Lake.

A trailhead accessible by road will be investigated at an elevation of less than 1500 meters (well below alpine) in the Ray Lake area. Such an access route must have minimum impact on wildlife, be low profile visually, and access a variety of features not presently available to hikers prepared to make overnight or longer excursions.

At present use is limited by: lack of opportunities at existing destinations; poor campground location to serve the southern section of the park access corridor; lack of information.

It will be the highest priority program for Visitor Services in the Clearwater Corridor to remove impediments to use of existing opportunities.

c) Visitor Information Programs

In order to permit safe and effective visits to Wells Gray park, information services will be designed to serve the visitor's needs during three basic phases of his visit:

- i. pre-arrival, advance planning
- ii. enroute orientation
- iii. in-park orientation

Media will provide information essential for pre-planning, for orientation to opportunities and facilities, for access to the park, for safe recreation while in the park and for knowledgeable use of the park with respect to park regulations and resource protection. The following general strategies will be subject to more detailed refinement and expansion during the implementation stages.

i. Pre-arrival, Advance Planning

Strategies will, to a large degree, rely upon promotional initiatives to create initial awareness of the park (see Promotion's strategies sec. 2.2.5). Subsequent informational materials will consist of attractive brochures, flyers or other printed materials available for mass distribution and on a request basis. Distribution strategies will be developed. Within 160 km of the park, informational maps and signs will be provided at tourist information centres and other strategic locations. Magazine and newspaper articles will be utilized where appropriate and will provide the type of detailed information necessary for trip planning to Wells Gray specifically.

ii. Enroute Orientation

Basic information using signs and brochures will be provided in key tourist information centres throughout the province. A visitor information centre at Clearwater will be developed as a major orientation facility for those travellers nearing the park and will serve as the key information focus for the entire area. This centre is a critical vehicle to confirm in the minds of visitors the wisdom of their decision as they near the threshold of the park. Additionally, it will serve to attract many travellers on Highway 5 who were not initially destined for Wells Gray, but may alter their current itinerary or return at a later date once exposed to the potential of the park through the services provided in the centre. For those who do not visit the park, the vicarious experience in the centre will create a lasting, positive image of the park as a special element in the provincial system - an image which is currently unavailable unless one visits the park. Standard highway signing will be used on all routes leading to the park following guidelines defined in the protocol agreement with the Ministry of Highways under the Visual Identity Program. Strategic businesses in the tourist industry will be provided with brochures and other information about the park. Orientation training for staff in key visitor centres and the tourist industry will be provided.

iii. In-Park Orientation

Upon arrival, visitors will be provided with easy access to information essential for orientation, safety, resource protection and regulatory purposes. In general, approaches will consist of information shelters and appropriate literature located at strategic sites along access corridors and at staging areas such as the park entrances, trail heads, campgrounds and parking lots. Except as required for basic orientation, safety and resource protection, information facilities in the wilderness will be used conservatively or not at all. Information facilities will not be provided in primitive wilderness or nature conservancy areas, but brochures may be provided as required at staging areas.

All personnel in the park are viewed as being essential and the most effective sources of information. Training and orientation programs will ensure that all personnel are able to serve the public's needs in this park. Particular emphasis will be given to back-country rangers in terms of their ability to provide information and safety services, but this does not diminish the importance of these same services in the intensive recreation zones in a park as remote as Wells Gray.

Interpretation Services

Educational programs and services designed to increase the visitors' knowledge of park resources will be provided inside the park. Such services are important elements within an overall strategy to increase visitation and the length and quality of stay for park visitors.

Due to the wild and often intimidating nature of the park, it is essential that highly-trained interpreters who have an extensive knowledge of the park become the standard of services. In addition, media to permit visitors to enhance their knowledge at their own pace will be provided. These will include strategically - located exhibits, signs, viewing facilities, special interpretive trails and high-quality publications. Concessionaires and other staff will be given opportunities to participate as integral elements of the program. The vastness of the park resources and the difficulty of visiting much of the park and appreciating its importance to the province make the ultimate establishment of a visitor information and interpretive complex in the park an essential goal. Such facilities will not only set the stage for further park exploration, but will serve to provide a high-quality vicarious experience for those unable to reap the rewards of further wilderness travel. They will be largely located within the Clearwater access corridor.

Interpretive facilities will be restricted to the intensive use zone and limited sites within the natural zone. Publications and key personnel will perform any interpretive functions required for wilderness zones. Where facilities are constructed, design and landscaping will reflect the wilderness character of the park.

Interpretive themes for Wells Gray will be interpreted so as to distinguish this park from others in the system. Themes will include but may not be limited to:

	Sample Development Sites
- landscape conservation role	
- unique geology including volcanism	Green Mountain
- landscape sculpturing due to water and ice	Helmcken and Dawson Falls
- unique and representative flora and fauna	
- fire and moose interaction	Green Mountain
- caribou and old growth forests	
- special plant communities	
- man's use of the park (trapping, wilderness farming, early Indians)	Ray Farm
- recreation opportunities	
- park management functions	

Research in the park will be encouraged so that interpretive strategies will be based upon more complete knowledge of a park which is becoming increasingly significant as awareness of its resources increases.

Beyond the park boundaries, the public will be further exposed to the significance of the park resources through extension services in surrounding communities, television and radio features, special audio visual presentations and attractive publications.

Further interpretive strategies will be devised to provide detailed guidance during the implementation phase of this plan, but in general, it is envisioned that the program should consist of:

- highly-trained knowledgeable personnel centered at Clearwater and Mahood Lakes with some capacity for similar services in backcountry locations
- knowledgeable concessionaires
- non-personal media and facilities at major feature locations within the intensive use zones
- a range of park-specific publications
- a visitor information/interpretation centre in the Clearwater Corridor
- extension services

d) Winter Recreation

It will be the objective to offer a wide diversity of dispersed winter recreation opportunities in both frontcountry and backcountry settings.

The southern part of the park will be the focus of winter activities. The Clearwater road will be kept open at least as far as Helmcken Falls, when feasible. Cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and Nordic skiing will be encouraged. In the Battle Mountain area there is potential for ski touring; such extended trips would be encouraged by the availability of accommodation and mechanized transportation. In northern areas of Wells Gray, helicopter-access skiing will be encouraged by prescription in the Semi-primitive Wilderness Zones. No public snowmobile use will be permitted throughout the park. Commercial operators may, where appropriate to their activity, be permitted to use over-the-snow vehicles to take visitors to and from winter accommodation in the Battle Mountain area.

At present winter use is limited by a number of factors including lack of access and services in and close to the park.

e) Wild River Recreation

It will be the objective to provide access and opportunities for visitor use of the high quality Clearwater River for water-based activities associated with fishing, hiking and nature study.

Despite the varied wild rivers in Wells Gray, the Clearwater is the only one offering significant boating opportunities. Between Clearwater and Azure Lakes, the river presents an excellent, reasonably safe power boating opportunity to enjoy the thrill of travel on an uncontrolled river. The river offers pleasant non-powered floating in the vicinity of the Horseshoe but downstream hazards prevent lengthy trips. Further down

river, commencing near the confluence with the Mahood River, rafting trips are offered. The entire river has potential for a trail with access points at various locations.

The river is a key natural feature of the park and there is potential for increased utilization of this natural resource. Integrating the various, often incompatible, recreation demands now focusing on the Clearwater River will be among the most complex tasks in implementing this plan.

f) Motorboat Touring

It will be the objective to encourage increased access to selected remote lake destinations by providing suitable access to the lakes for motorized craft and associated facilities at key destination points around the lake.

Frontcountry motorboating opportunities exist on Clearwater Lake and Mahood Lake and more remote motor boating opportunities are offered on Azure Lake. Boat launches are available on the accessible lakes. There are rental facilities on Mahood Lake. On Clearwater Lake it is intended to offer both rental and water taxi services to destinations on Clearwater and Azure Lakes which are insufficiently developed at the present time. Motorboat touring will not be permitted on any other park lakes (Murtle, Kostal, Stevens, etc.).

This is an important program in the park and supplements the destination appeal of the area as well as providing an important means of access to some of the remote areas of the park.

g) Angling

It will be the objective to protect the resource and to provide a range of high quality, angling opportunities in association with other recreational pursuits and a variety of forms of access.

The park offers three levels of angling experience: intensive (directly accessible by road), dispersed (short trail, power boat or aircraft), and wilderness. Improvement of access and guiding of anglers is generally acceptable, except where the natural resource and the range of quality recreational experiences may be significantly impinged upon.

Fishing has been one of the historic attractions of Wells Gray and retention of a quality fishery will be essential to the park. Provision of new remote fishing opportunities and associated accommodation, where feasible, will also be undertaken.

h) Hunting

Hunting is currently occurring, subject to specific regulations, in all areas of the park except the Nature Conservancy. The most significant opportunities exist in the vicinity of the Clearwater road, the vicinity of Clearwater and Azure Lakes and west of the Clearwater. The principal species are deer, black bear, moose and grouse. There will be no changes in the boundary of the area closed to hunting. Regulations will continue to be accessed annually and amended in discussion with Ministry of Environment staff.

i) Hiking

It will be the objective to encourage both single day and extended hiking trips as a means of landscape and feature appreciation and, access to wilderness.

Hiking opportunities are available in all parts of the park. In frontcountry areas, hiking trails are normally of a single day length, are oriented to specific features, and will be maintained at a type II or III level. In all backcountry areas, except the "primitive" zones, hiking is encouraged through a mix of type IV trails and marked routes. In "primitive" zones, hikers are encouraged to discover their own routes.

There are major limitations to present hiking opportunities in the park largely because many trails are not well designed and do not access some of the most interesting park features. Most trails are long and there is a lack of both short and medium length circle routes.

Provision and maintenance of new and improved hiking opportunities is an important adjunct to the high priority destination areas and is key to improving access to important natural features and wilderness opportunities. Any provision of new facilities will place a priority on properly integrating trails into the planned development.

j) Canoeing

It will be the objective to protect in Wells Gray a range of significant wilderness lake canoeing and kayaking areas and to facilitate such use in the park.

While opportunities for canoeing exist on the Clearwater River, Clearwater Lake, Azure Lake, Mahood Lake, Hobson Lake, and a variety of small and mid-sized water bodies throughout the park, all are of relatively low significance in comparison to Murtle Lake. Murtle Lake will remain free of recreational motor boats. Canoeing will be facilitated through minor improvement of the existing trail access to Murtle Lagoon, guiding, provision of emergency shelters, improvement of hiking opportunities, and other measures. Rental of canoes at the parking lot is appropriate. Optimum use levels will be determined and in the future regulations may be required to limit use or party sizes as demand approaches the lake's capacity.

Murtle Lake is one of the key features of Wells Gray Park. Its protection as a wilderness but with increased recreation use will be of the highest priority for the park. Other lakes provide for a range of canoeing opportunities and on the rivers, select sections provide some canoeing and kayaking potential.

k) Horseback Riding

It will be the objective to encourage travel by horseback where appropriate in consideration of terrain and other recreationists.

Frontcountry opportunities will be limited principally to designated routes. In designated backcountry areas, horseback riding is appropriate but trails will be defined and will be subject to closure if found to be too sensitive to impact or if damaged by overuse. A livery service is not appropriate or necessary within the park, although the guiding of horseback trips is acceptable. Limitations to horse use include; the lack of suitable terrain in some areas; environmental sensitivity (mudding, trampling, etc.). Separate horse and hiking trails will be required in the most popular areas.

Provision of horseback opportunities in selected areas will be an essential part of the overall priority to enhance destination opportunities. Destination areas will be defined and both temporary and longer term camps established.

l) Alpine Appreciation

It will be the objective to encourage the appreciation of the many distinct, outstanding alpine areas of Wells Gray Park, employing a variety of access means, establishing capacities and defining use areas.

Most areas of Wells Gray contain highly scenic alpine country. However, this opportunity can only be enjoyed at present as either a scenic vista or after considerable physical effort by hikers. It is intended to provide a variety of access to alpine areas including an easy access destination which will be a trail head for day use access to the alpine.

Provision of a new access to the edge of the alpine is an essential part of improving the destination opportunities within Wells Gray Park. It is essential that this be part of a system of alpine access opportunities ranging in type from primitive wilderness through to more intensively used areas.

m) Research

It will be the objective to encourage the pursuit of scholarly research regarding geology, biology, botany, hydrology, archaeology, and other such scientific fields pertinent to the resources of Wells Gray Park.

Throughout the park are resources of considerable interest to the various sciences. The park contains large areas that have barely been explored and these present intriguing challenges to researchers. The location of the park relative to transportation routes makes it reasonably accessible.

While it is unlikely that in numbers researchers will ever comprise a significant percentage of park visitation, they are responsible for generating information that raises the international reputation of the park which, in turn, stimulates visitation. Ideally, the park would contain some sort of basic facility to accommodate researchers during their extended stays. Without incurring direct costs, the Division may provide a suitable site (or a presently unused building) - possibly associated with the main service area - and encourage universities to establish such a facility.

2.2.3 Recreation Services

a) General Principle

It is expected that new and improved recreation services will be an important element in achieving many of the visitor program objectives for the park. This will be achieved within the primary park management objective which is to ensure that Wells Gray Park is conserved in its present natural state for posterity and presented for public enjoyment as a widely diversified wilderness. A range of visitor opportunities will be provided in association with the key objectives of providing for increased destination opportunities along the Clearwater Corridor, in the lakes of that corridor and in the diverse alpine environments.

b) Recreational Guiding and Charter Services

Such non consumptive services are fully compatible with Wells Gray Park and may be permitted anywhere in the park where trails and routes allow. Their operation will be managed within defined Park Use Permits. The number of permits issued for any given area or trail may be restricted due to environmental considerations or a requirement for opportunities for free public use. Current specific policies for this park are as follows:

- i) Guiding of anglers is acceptable throughout the park except where angling pressures force closures or special management practices.
- ii) Motorboat touring and taxiing is acceptable on Clearwater, Azure, and Mahood Lakes, although the number of permits may be limited.
- iii) Guiding for hiking and related trail use is generally acceptable throughout the park provided that it does not interfere with public use.
- iv) Canoe touring is encouraged on Hobson and Murtle Lakes.

- v) Under permit, seasonal camps or caches (eg. hay) without permanent structures may be located at approved locations outside primitive wilderness.
- vi) Guiding of horse parties is permissible in designated areas of the park.
- vii) Guide outfitting will be permitted in the area west of Clearwater and Hobson Lakes.

c) Boat Rentals

The rental of small power boats and canoes is desirable at Clearwater Lake and Mahood Lake. Similar services relative to Murtle Lake and Hobson Lake are also appropriate for canoes only.

d) Livery

Use levels and the location of current horseback riding areas do not warrant the existence of livery services within park boundaries at the present time. In future, it may be appropriate that such a service be provided west of Clearwater River when road access over the Clearwater River has been established.

e) Transportation

Mechanized access beyond the established road system is covered by a number of specific policies.

- 1) The primitive wilderness (nature conservancy) is closed to any form of mechanized access.
- 2) The entire wilderness zone is closed to any form of mechanized access except as defined in a zone plan (Section 3, of this plan), for drop-off or pick up at specific locations. In such instances access corridors will also be defined.
- 3) Float equipped aircraft landings, without restriction, will be confined to Clearwater Lake and Mahood Lake. Landings on Azure Lake, Hobson Lake and McDougall Lake will require prior permission. All other lakes in the park are closed to aircraft landings.

f) Lodging

Fixed accommodation may be categorized into two classes:

- i. Intensive, auto access - No areas have been identified where such use would be acceptable. The existence of already established facilities outside the park precludes the use of the park for this purpose.
- ii. Backcountry - In selected natural environment areas or in certain Wilderness Zones, a system of huts or small lodges may be desirable and viable. These would probably complement existing commercial tourist enterprises to access certain park recreational opportunities, and will be defined in the specific zone plan.

2.2.4 Management Services

a) Headquarters and Service Yards

The main park headquarters and service yard will continue to be located at the Clearwater entrance. Secondary depots exist and are necessary at the south end of Clearwater Lake, at the east end of Mahood Lake, and at Murtle Lake. Park staff may be based seasonally at these secondary locations.

b) Visitor Centre

Such a facility may be appropriate in the long-term. The objectives and location for such a facility have yet to be established.

c) Backcountry Management

i) Rangers:

The Ranger Program based at Clearwater Lake will continue to cover the Clearwater-Azure corridor.

It is desirable that a "backcountry ranger" program in some form be operative in the summer months for Murtle Lake. In the future this program should be extended to the Battle Mountain area and, as use increases, to other parts of the park.

ii) Visitor Survey and Information Boards:

In order to obtain basic data regarding park use in remote areas, visitors intending to enter the backcountry may be requested to record their trip. Survey and information display boards will be located at all normal points of entry into the backcountry.

d) Site and Facility Design Standards

All sites and facilities developed for public use within the park will meet the design standards of the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division. Attention will be paid to consideration of safety, visual values, and operational efficiency while providing rustic, durable and cost efficient products.

e) Safety and Health

The safety and health of park visitors and management personnel are paramount concerns. Natural hazards easily accessible to the public will be appropriately posted, removed (as in the case of hazardous trees), or minimized (eg. by fencing). Potable water supplies in high use areas will be designated, and periodically tested. Toilet systems will meet Health Ministry guidelines wherever feasible. There will be periodic safety inspections of all high use areas. All normal precautions will be taken regarding safety and health.

Parks Division has no internal Search and Rescue capability, but will put its resources at the disposal of R.C.M.P. and P.E.P. in the event of any Search and Rescue emergency in the Park.

2.2.5 Marketing and Promotion Strategy

a) General Principle

The overall strategy for Wells Gray will be to optimize participation in the thirteen broad categories of recreational opportunities identified in section 2.2.2. Individual opportunities will be grouped into "recreational packages" which will be defined according to the types of activity, user density, access method, accommodation type, service level and locality. These packages will be matched to specific client groups and promoted using a range of suitable media. For example, a recreational package might be a "weekend explorer" to encourage an overnight camping visit to the Clearwater Valley with complementary visits to features accessible by car or short trail. Promotion might be through local newspapers to residents within 3 hours drive of the park.

The North Thompson Valley and the Mahood/100 Mile House areas offer recreational opportunities and tourist services which are highly complementary to Wells Gray Park. In order to optimize both park use and benefits to local communities, marketing, promotion and visitor information services will be closely coordinated with local government and private sector tourist interests. Wells Gray will be viewed as an essential element in the expansion of regional tourism initiatives.

Annual promotional and marketing strategies will be devised in order to reflect such variables as funding allotments, optimization of use, changing visitor patterns, new capital developments and public needs.

Communications will be planned to address visitor needs at four basic levels:

1. trip planning
2. enroute
3. on-site
4. vicarious experiences

Basic information for the purposes of orientation, utilization and interpretation of the park resource will be provided by the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division. The private sector will be encouraged to produce more advanced or special interest items.

Recreational opportunities will not be promoted where increased use would adversely affect resources such as wildlife, special plant communities, heritage features, or potable water supplies. Facilities or management capability must be adequate to sustain anticipated visitor traffic. User conflicts will be minimized.

b) Products

The Wells Gray product in a general marketing sense will be a wilderness environment with a range of access modes stressing compatible recreation dependent upon an extensive, natural, scenic resource base. A fairly broad spectrum of recreation opportunities will be offered while maintaining in-park accommodation at modest levels designed to facilitate access as opposed to destination resort opportunities. The product focuses upon but is not limited to wilderness lake experiences, alpine exploration and lower elevation forested recreation linked to road and river corridors. The product is reflected in the recreational role statement as outlined in section 1.2.3. The opportunity to explore and experience the three major landscape types conserved in the park is unavailable to the same degree and combination elsewhere and therefore becomes a special product.

c) Markets

With the diversity of recreational opportunities available, Wells Gray appeals to not only local residents, but other provincial residents (particularly the Okanagan and lower Mainland), northwestern U.S. residents, European and travellers along Highway #5 from various origins and in particular Alberta. There is potential to attract more bus tours originating in Vancouver and points east of B.C. as access improves along the Clearwater Valley. Generally, the broad market groups have specific recreational interests which reflect the socio-cultural differences in their points of origin.

It is intended to further define the market segment for Wells Gray, but at present, potential growth areas are envisioned for the local, U.S.A. and Highway #5 markets. European visitation is increasing due largely to promotional efforts by local private entrepreneurs and it is anticipated that cooperation with these initiatives will continue.

Research related to further clarifying visitor use patterns, visitor perceptions of the park, demographics, visitor preferences and related topics will be encouraged where they do not create unacceptable impairment of the visitor experience. Trail registers, counters and other sampling techniques will be utilized by the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division to monitor trends and use patterns of importance to future marketing efforts.

SECTION 3 - ZONE PLANS

This section documents the principle concepts and constraints which will guide provision of visitor services in each zone of the park. Because of the complexity and variety of issues some zones have been further broken down into sub-zones which define more specifically the acceptable activities and management actions within that limited area.

While the zones have fundamental effects on resource management practices those practices will not necessarily be confined to or determined by the recreational objectives of the zone. The zones are not intended to be based on ecosystem boundaries. All resource management objectives apply throughout the park except where specified in the Natural Resource Management Objectives and Policies section of this plan or in the zone management plans, below.

The size of Wells Gray Park and the wide diversity of park programs do not allow easy discussion of the whole park or even of individual zones. Therefore, for ease of description ONLY the park has been split into thirteen separate units (Figure 10).

3.1 CLEARWATER RIVER CORRIDOR UNIT (Figure 10)

This includes all of the Intensive Use Zone and the Natural Environment Zone stretching from the park boundary to the southern end of Clearwater Lake. The facilities and services here are intended to provide tourist, recreation destinations of provincial significance in a wildland setting. They will also provide the trail head for much year-round wilderness use.

Intensive Use Zone -

This zone is not presently developed or used to capacity. Present facilities are under-utilized and require upgrading to function for destination recreation and automobile sightseeing. A number of significant natural features are either not accessed or access and information about features and opportunities is not well known. It is the highest priority to improve facilities and services in this zone. No fixed public accommodation will be developed in this zone.

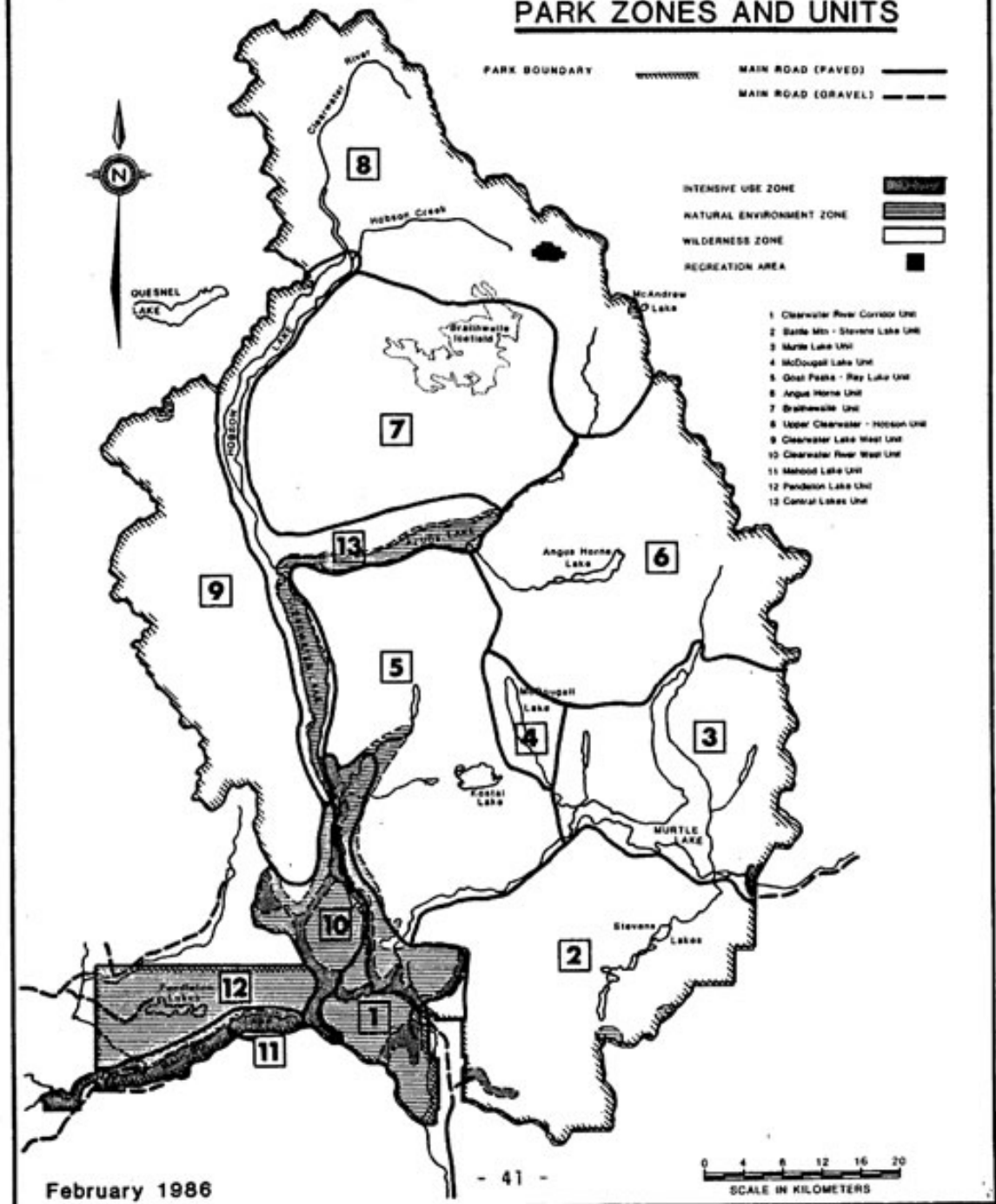
Parkway Sub-Zone - This is intended to be developed as a high quality road corridor for year round access at least as far as Helmcken Falls.

The following initiatives are proposed:-

- Improve road access by paving the existing road to Helmcken Falls and Green Mountain; and later, to Clearwater Lake and Battle Mountain trail head.
- Provide a trail system along the length of the Clearwater River by improving the existing trails and providing new sections which include loops to serve short duration, half day and less, users e.g. Bailey's Chute trail extension, Horseshoe trail improvements; Zellers and Shadow Lake access trail.

WELLS GRAY PARK

Figure 9
PARK ZONES AND UNITS



- Provide improved information and limited interpretation at trail heads and features along trails.
- Establish a detailed plan for recreation management of the entire Clearwater River which sets use capacities and ensures areas for commercial rafters which are separate to sections which are more inaccessible and nonmotorized, as well as those which adjoin the road.
- Develop a bridge at Bailey's Chute to provide access to significant natural recreation features at Mahood River and Flourmills Volcanoes.
- Provide scenic vistas along the road corridor.
- Study the feasibility of a road terminating at 1500 meters in the Ray Lake area of the Cariboo Mountains.

Development Sub-Zone - These are the key locations where parking and accommodation and information services will be provided. They are either exceptional natural features or are strategically located for recreation development.

Green Mountain - day use area, will be developed to provide a scenic and interpretive overview of the southern section of the park. This will also serve as a trail head for year round trails to Foot Lake, Whitehorse Bluffs and Green Mountain.

Dawson Falls - An improved day use area will be developed with trail upgrading, viewing areas and interpretive facilities. Trails on the north and south side of the Murtle River will connect this site to both Majerus Farm and the Mush bowl.

Murtle River - This is an area lying between the Majerus Farm and Helmcken Falls. Over time this will become the focus for recreation facilities in the southern part of the park.

The following are proposed:-

Improve parking and interpretation at the Helmcken Falls viewpoint.

Provide safe trails into Helmcken Canyon.

A new parking area, picnic facility and interpretive exhibit will be developed at the Mushbowl. This will function as the trail head for year round access on the north side of the Murtle River.

A new campground (100 units) will be developed opposite Majerus Farm, to replace the present Dawson Falls facility.

This will be considered for an interpretation focus and for a new service facility in the future.

Clearwater Lake - This is presently the primary vehicle destination in the park and will remain a focus for destination, lake users in future. The campgrounds will remain and will not be enlarged. A sani-dumping station will be provided for recreation vehicles.

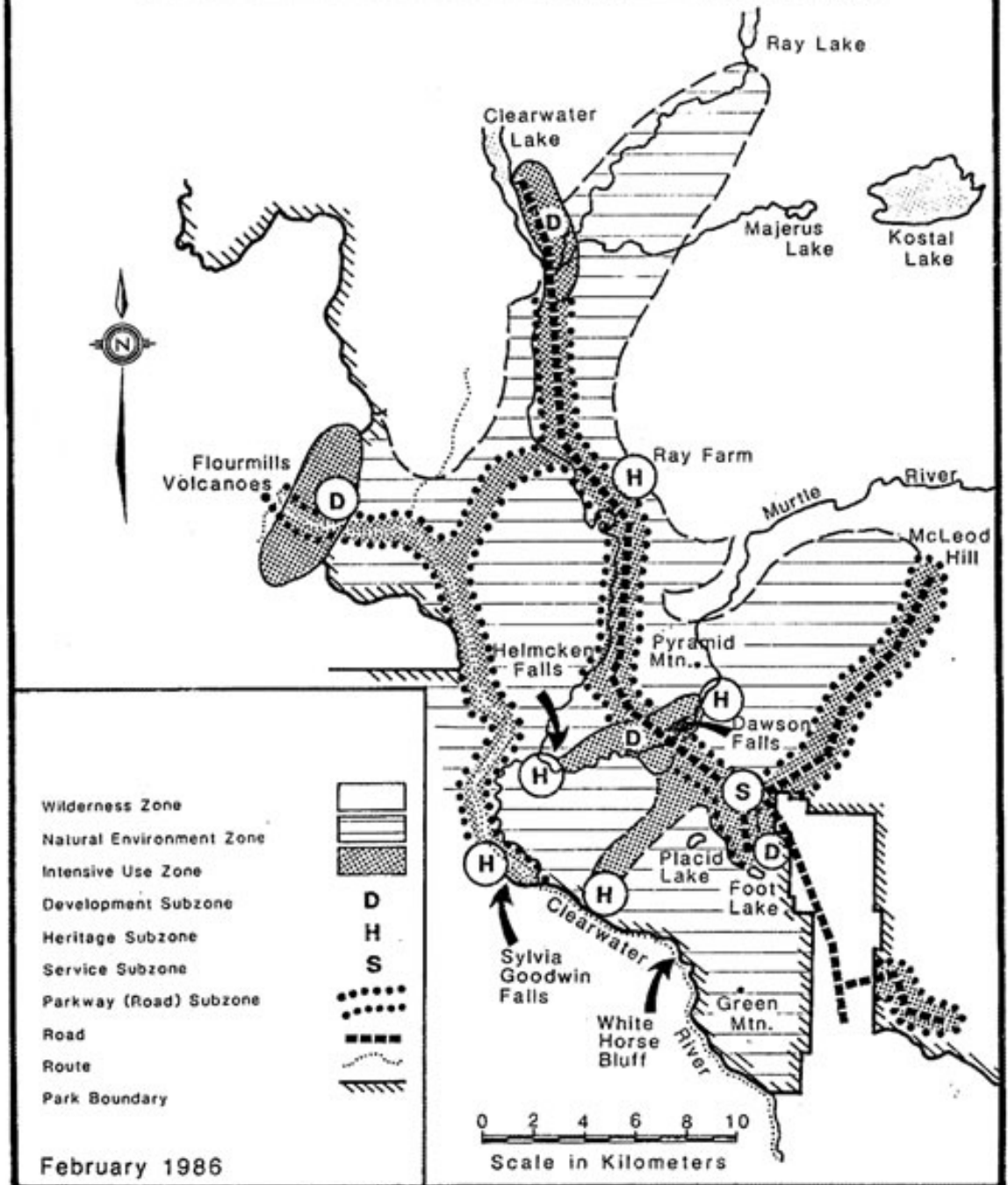
The following are proposed:-

- Short trails will be provided:- along the lakeshore; across the river; above the lake.

WELLS GRAY PARK

Figure 10

DETAILED ZONING- Clearwater Corridor



- A water taxi and small boat and canoe rental service will be established for Clearwater, Azure lakes and Hobson Lake (canoe rental only).
- The heliport will be relocated north of the campground.
- An area will be established for float plane services.
- The small Parks Division service area will expand, away from the lakeshore, to provide a separate maintenance facility for boat touring and rental operations.
- A trail head for hiking the higher elevations.

Heritage Sub-Zone - These contain natural or human heritage features of high recreation appeal. Provision of improved recreation access will ensure protection and management of that features' special character.

Helmcken Falls - The falls and the canyon will be managed to protect the visual integrity of the feature as seen from the rim. New safe trails will be developed to viewpoints set some way back from the falls themselves. No new vehicle access will be permitted. Interpretive facilities will include information signs and displays.

Ray Farm - The buildings will be stabilized and the surrounding field will be managed to provide improved public trails and new interpretation opportunities. No vehicle access will be developed.

Park Service Sub-Zone - This sub-zone contains the primary public and commercial service centre. A new entrance portal and information signing will be developed here.

Natural Environment Zone

Within the Clearwater Corridor are a number of important natural environment zones, particularly to the south of the Murtle River.

Use in this particular zone is presently lower than the potential optimum capacity for moderate to high levels of trail based use. The system of year-round trails here has been continuously maintained but new and improved routes are required and, in time, separate horse trails will be needed in the vicinity of Green Mountain and the Clearwater River. As part of the objective for the park, to provide improved short distance and loop trails, new and improved trails to Pyramid Mountain, Majerus Farm, Helmcken Falls (south side), Clearwater River, Helmcken Canyon, will be provided in this zone.

Horse use will be permitted generally south of the Murtle River and along a designated route immediately north of the river. Further north, however, there will be no horse use.

A new trail head and significantly improved route will be provided for access to the Ray Lake - Goat Peaks semi-primitive wilderness. This may include a road extension to a low elevation trail head at 1500 meters.

3.2. BATTLE MOUNTAIN - STEVENS LAKE UNIT (2) (Figure 9)

This includes all of the wilderness lying south west of Murtle Lake and South of Murtle River.

Within this unit are situated the currently most popular and easily accessed alpine wilderness features of the park. The facilities and services provided here are intended to provide opportunities for a variety of wilderness recreation use within the limited carrying capacity as defined by both social and physical criteria.

Natural Environment Zone

These small zones, situated on the park boundary recognize the development of roads outside and immediately adjacent to the park. It is not intended that any of these will be developed as significant or key public access to the park since capacity in these zones are determined by the wilderness. However, trail use will increase and it will be necessary to adequately sign the routes, and improve trail conditions to prevent environmental damage. Separate facilities for horses will also be required.

Wilderness Zone

Summer use in this zone has moderate potential for expansion without increases in unacceptable impacts. Winter ski touring and snowshoe use has significant potential for expansion. Summer use by horse parties has recently increased by both commercial and public parties. The area has two parts:

- 1) Battle Mountain - attractive for alpine wilderness appreciation.
 - 2) Stevens Lake - attractive for wilderness fishing.
- i) Battle Mountain and, particularly, the Fight Lake area is the primary destination. This area will continue to be the primary alpine wilderness destination in the "Highlands Landscape" of the park. Facilities and Services for year-round wilderness recreational access will be provided and a single designated overnight camp area will be defined for each of the general public and any commercial interests.

Separate horse and hiking trails will be provided and horses will increasingly be confined to established trails and specified camp areas only.

No helicopter access will be permitted in the area, except as an option in the winter for access (for ski touring) to the camp area only. An alternative winter form of access to the camp area is over-the-snow vehicle (for ski touring) on a designated route. Camp facilities will be confined to temporary tent camps or, in time, a rustic wilderness cabin or lodge, of no more than either, two thousand square feet in floor area or a capacity of twenty. The camps will be located away from lake margins, primary access trails or sensitive alpine areas. They must be situated so as not to be visible from the primary alpine destinations (Battle Mountain, Fifty Two Ridge).

- ii) Stevens Lake; This area is already used as a wilderness destination for lake fishing. The lakes are highly productive and their capacity is determined only considerations of wilderness atmosphere. There is potential for increased summer use.

Facilities and services for trail access to each of a single separate designated public and commercial campsite will be provided in a lakeshore wilderness setting. Temporary tent camps will be permitted and may be improved to a small seasonal lodge or cabins. Any structures must be set back sufficiently from the lakeshore so as not to impose on the wilderness atmosphere.

Seasonal mechanized access for winter use of the camp may be permitted.

Within this zone a part of the Highlands landscape will be defined as Nature Conservancy and protected from any facility provision. No horse use will be permitted. Public use may be restricted by environmental considerations.

3.3 MURTLE LAKE UNIT (3) (Figure 9)

This includes all of the wilderness immediately surrounding Murtle Lake, Anderson Lake, the Wavy Range to the east and the access from Blue River.

Within this unit is situated the most popular wilderness lake destination in the park. The facilities and services provided here are related exclusively to presenting Murtle Lake as a totally non-mechanized, and provincially significant, wilderness destination with no development of fixed accommodation.

Use in this unit has grown continuously. In summer use at certain lakeshore locations has surpassed natural carrying capacities and basic facilities have been provided. In future it will be necessary to take management action to focus use at new locations and shoulder seasons. In time demand may dictate that use restrictions should be placed on the lake to retain the wilderness atmosphere.

Intensive Use Zone

This is the road access to the park. Almost all users of this unit enter and leave at this point. A parking area will be developed to normal parks standards and sanitary and picnic facilities provided so that the facility can function as an overnight parking area for late arrivals. Adequate information facilities and a basic service facility for agency and commercial use, will be established. No public mechanized access will occur beyond this point.

Wilderness Zone

Use levels dictate that the single access trail to Murtle Lake must be widened and the tread improved beyond normal wilderness standards to provide for safe and easy canoe portage and launching. A trail of slightly lower standard will be maintained from the canoe launch through to the east shore of Murtle Lake. Canoes may be stored for limited periods during the summer at a location on the Murtle lagoon which is away from the public trail.

Murtle Lake provides a large lake canoe experience which is dependant on a wilderness atmosphere. While the lake is large the available beaches and campsites are relatively small and will dictate the ultimate lake capacity. Campsites will be the focus of development of toilets and fireplaces for environmental protection and a limited number of wilderness shelters for public safety. Public use will not be displaced by commercial guided parties which must be accommodated in separate sites when public use is high at existing sites. Only temporary camps will be allowed and no party will be able to leave its camping equipment on exiting the unit.

Trails to Central Mountain, the Wavy Range, Anderson Lake, McDougall Lake and the Murtle River will be upgraded to acceptable standards.

The existing warden facility will be replaced insitu. Use of mechanized transport for park management will be monitored to minimize any disturbance of the wilderness atmosphere.

3.4 McDOUGALL LAKE UNIT (4) (Figure 9)

This is limited to all of the immediate surroundings of the lake and lies totally within wilderness.

This zone presently receives very light wilderness use. In future, this will be one of the two remote wilderness lakes where float plane access is possible (the other is Hobson lake). The lake will be developed to provide a single fly-in fish camp and at least one public camp. The capacity of the lake will be determined by the fishery and the objective of protecting a wilderness atmosphere.

Flights into the lake will be limited as to time of week and the access corridor will be confined to the Clearwater River and Kostal Lake.

Development of a primitive lodge will be considered at the fish camp site. Trails from Murtle Lake and from Kostal Lake will be maintained and new trails from the lake to Goat Peaks will be located.

3.5 GOAT PEAKS - RAY LAKE UNIT (5) (Figure 9)

This includes all of the wilderness areas bounded by Murtle River to the south, Clearwater River and Lake to the west and Azure Lake to the North.

Within this area are located a variety of river bottom and mountain top areas and features typical of the transition from the Highlands landscape into the heart of the Northwest Columbias Landscape. Use trails to Kostal Lake and routes along the Murtle River. The entire unit will be managed for wilderness access and use by public and commercial users. There are two parts to the unit :

- i) The Murtle River, is a wilderness providing trail access to a wild river experience and fishing opportunities. This use has been growing but is still well below the acceptable capacity. There is potential for a canoe and portage route to be provided. In the winter the river corridor provides a long distance low elevation ski and snowshoe route to Murtle Lake, which is lightly used at present.

Improved horse trails will be provided and camp locations designated in association with fishing opportunities. Those will be situated so as not to pre-empt public access to fishing or intrude on the wilderness atmosphere. No mechanized access will be permitted in this zone.

- ii) Ray Lake - Kostal Lake and surrounding, is an expansive area which includes a primitive wilderness sub-zone.

This area will become the primary destination for increased wilderness recreation use in this landscape type. The particular attraction here is alpine scenery and geological interpretation. Facilities and services will be improved to provide new trails and overnight camps at a variety of destination locations in lakeshore and high alpine environments. A limited system of wilderness huts or shelters will be provided for public use depending on route selection studies of environmental conditions and wildlife habitats. Conditional on the outcome of this work, access improvement to a single non-alpine location near Ray Lake, will be considered for mechanized use. No other mechanized or any horse use will be considered in this zone.

A part of this unit as well as the Kilpill ridge to the south will be designated as Nature Conservancy.

This will be managed for very low levels of use and no development of trails or other facilities.

3.6 ANGUS HORNE UNIT (6) (Figure 9)

This includes all of the park lands extending between the Azure River and the Murtle Lake unit.

This unit will be entirely zoned as Nature Conservancy and contains the majority of those conditions which represent the Northwest Columbias landscape. It contains, in particular, one of the park's most significant undisturbed habitat areas for grizzly and moose. Use in this area is light but by Nature Conservancy standards, already quite substantial. As a Nature Conservancy this area will afford no mechanized access, no

facility construction and no information services. Hunting will not be permitted. Use may be limited if demand grows to a point where facility construction has to be considered to protect the environment.

3.7 BRAITHWAITE(7) (Figure 9)

This includes approximately half of the park lands north of Azure Lake and east of Hobson Lake. This unit is entirely wilderness and contains those conditions representative of the most rugged portions of the Northwest Columbias and almost all of that which is representative of the High Columbias including the extensive icefields. It will be zoned as a Nature Conservancy.

Use in this area is very light and unlikely to pose management problems in the foreseeable future. As a Nature Conservancy this area will afford no mechanized access, no facility construction and no information services. Resident hunting will not be prevented at this time but will be phased out. Use may be limited if demand grows to a point where facility construction has to be considered to protect the environment.

3.8 UPPER CLEARWATER – HOBSON UNIT (8) (Figure 9)

This includes all of the northern-most extension of the park and, in particular, the entire extent of the Clearwater drainage as well as the upper reaches of the Azure River.

This area is entirely wilderness and lies totally within the High Columbias and includes a full topographic and biologic representation of that landscape as it occurs in the park. Use in this area has been increasing with access improvement to the west. However the unit has considerable capacity for increased wilderness use. This unit will be managed to provide improved recreational access for wilderness trail users. Horse and hiking trails will be established and a system of wilderness camps and shelters considered. The primary base camp for visitation to the upper Clearwater River is expected to be situated on the shore of Hobson Lake immediately outside this unit. Seasonal camps will be considered in the alpine on the western boundary of the park. Helicopter access will be authorized (with access from McAndrew Lake) to the head of Hobson Creek where a temporary seasonal camp may be established for summer hikes into the remainder of the unit. In the longer term fixed accommodation may be authorized as part of this activity.

Winter heli-ski operations will continue on the eastern boundary. There will be no expansion of the existing tenure due to the potential for serious impact on wintering caribou. Operations within the present permit will be monitored for wildlife impact and appropriate action taken when the existing tenure is reviewed.

3.9 CLEARWATER LAKE WEST UNIT (9) (Figure 9)

This includes all of the lands lying between Clearwater and Hobson Lakes and the western boundary.

This wilderness is representative of a transition from lakeshore to low alpine ridge and lies entirely within the Highlands Landscape. The area will be managed to provide improved wilderness trail access and limited resident hunting opportunities.

Natural Environment Zone

This small zone on the boundary recognizes the development of roads outside and immediately adjacent to the park. This will not be a significant public access. However, trailhead parking and signing will be necessary.

Wilderness Zone

This zone includes the alpine ridge which is the park boundary. No fixed accommodation will be developed here since the most attractive and suitable locations are found beyond park boundaries. Although the ridge presents an almost continuous wilderness route it is most likely that it will be used as a series of three or four focus areas with little trail use between. Access to Clearwater Lake may, however, be important and so a corridor for trail improvement has been established. No mechanized access will be permitted within the park. Horse use will be encouraged.

There has been a history of use in this zone by hunters and horsemen. Use today is probably lighter than in the past but is likely to increase as access improves to the west. The area has a restricted capacity which may require management action in the near future to protect sensitive alpine areas. It is part of the representation of the Highlands Landscape and will remain largely undeveloped wilderness.

3.10 CLEARWATER RIVER WEST UNIT (10) (Figure 9)

This includes all of the land lying between the Clearwater River and the western park boundary.

This unit will play an increasingly important role as part of the destination for vehicle access users and as a trail head for other use. At present it is isolated from the primary road access in the Clearwater Corridor Unit (1) but with construction of a bridge at Bailey's Chute the unit will provide access to recreation features and development areas which complement those already accessed by road.

Intensive Use Zone

This zone will be developed to provide improved vehicle access destinations and sightseeing opportunities. The zone is presently used by a limited number of mechanized and non-mechanized users but has the potential and the capacity to provide for more extensive and provincially significant opportunities.

Parkway Sub-zone - This is intended to be developed as a high quality road corridor. The following initiatives are proposed:-

- Develop a bridge and road linking the Flourmill Volcanoes and Mahood River to the Clearwater River road (paving the road is a longer term objective).
- As part of the overall plan for recreation use of the Clearwater River provide improved access for public and commercial users and a river side trail.
- Develop scenic vistas along the road.
- Develop trail head parking for access to the western boundary.

Development Sub-zone - These are the key locations where parking and accommodation and information services will be provided. They are exceptional natural features strategically located for recreational development.

Mahood River - will be developed for trail head parking and access to view Sylvia and Goodwin Falls. A public campground will be considered for this area in the future.

Flourmills (portion within park boundary) - A trail head parking and information facility will be established at the base of the cone and the flow (which are contained in the heritage sub-zone). Interpretive exhibits will be developed and short, day use trails provided to access the feature. A long distance trail will be developed for foot and horse use along the alpine ridge north of the volcanoes.

Heritage Sub-Zone

The Flourmills are the only feature zoned as a heritage sub-zone in this unit. The volcanoes and the lava flow will be specially managed as a provincially significant geological feature. Trails will be defined and barriers to off road vehicle travel developed.

Natural Environment Zone

On the west side of the Clearwater River this includes the trail corridor along the river and the areas adjoining the intensive use zone.

This zone is very lightly used at present and is unlikely to receive very much of an increase in the immediate future.

3.11 MAHOOD LAKE UNIT (11) (Figure 9)

This includes all of the Mahood Lake and its shoreline, the backshore at the west end of the lake, Canim River and Canim Lake.

This unit is an established use area which provides a very different set of opportunities to those found elsewhere in the park. Mahood Lake is a warm water outdoor recreation destination. It offers opportunities for intensive use water sports, private resorts, sandy beaches and good fishing. In the future the park will continue to emphasize that destination function and to complement the more sophisticated services offered by adjacent private operations. Canim Lake has potential for development of a new destination on a very significant recreational waterbody.

Intensive Use Zone

This zone is presently developed to provide camping and day use opportunities on Mahood Lake. Those facilities are not yet used to capacity. There are other camping facilities and services which can be provided elsewhere in the zone and which will further enhance the area as a recreation destination but this will not be done until use grows. Mahood Lake itself will be managed as an intensive use lake.

Parkway Sub-Zone - This is intended to be developed as a high quality road corridor. Paving the road is a low priority. At Canim Falls a trail head parking area will be established and an improved trail and viewpoint developed.

Development Sub-Zone - On Mahood Lake the existing campground and day use area will be maintained as a destination with up-grading of the facilities and improvement of the existing site. In the future expansion of opportunities may be justified by increased demand.

On Canim Lake site investigations will determine the long term suitability for future development of a campground and day use area.

3.12 PENDLETON LAKE UNIT (12) (Figure 9)

This includes the entire area north of Mahood Lake and west of Unit 10.

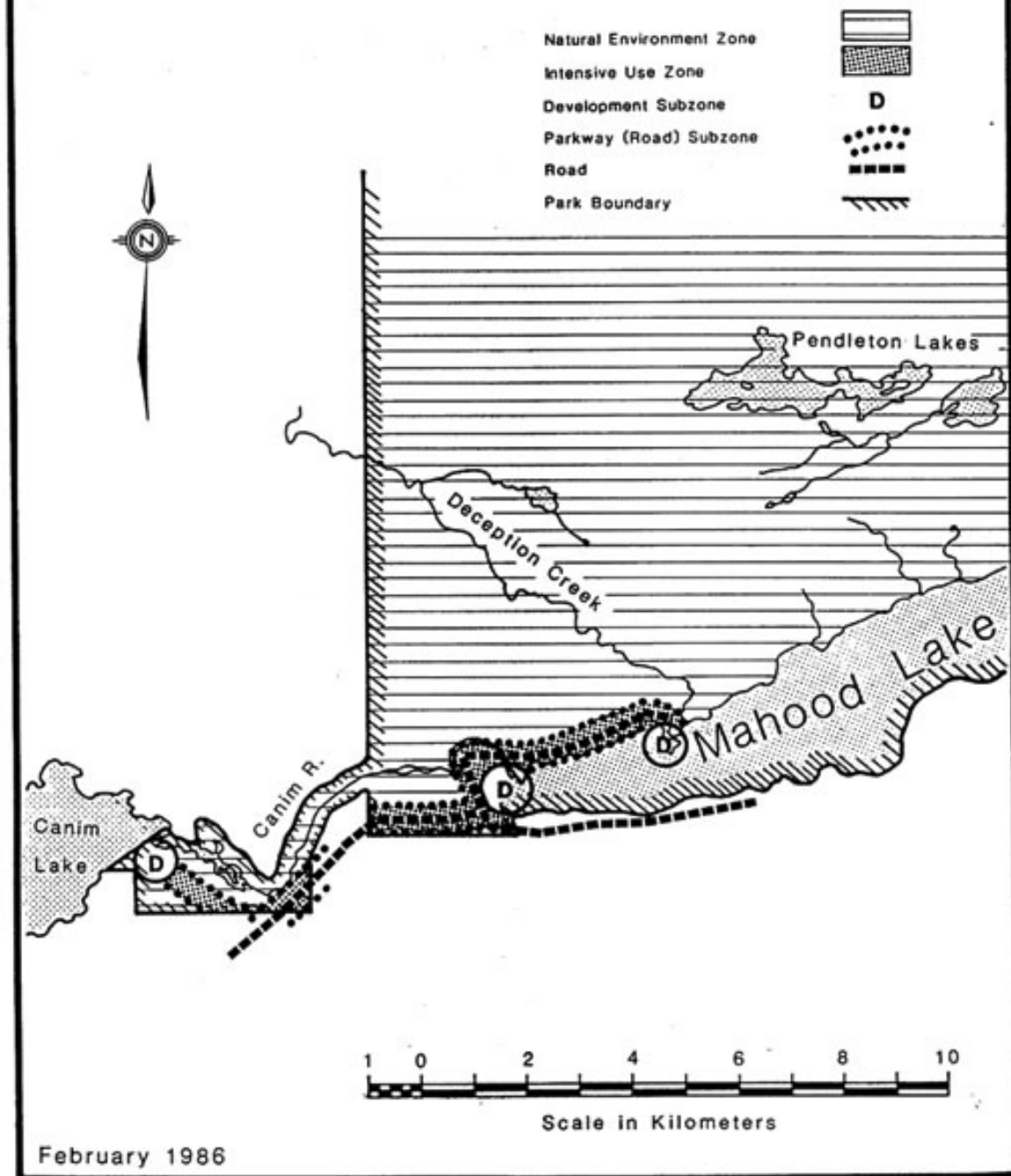
This unit is a natural environment zone. The area presently receives light use and no facility development or new service provisions are planned for the area.

3.13 CENTRAL LAKES UNIT (13) (Figure 9)

This includes all of Clearwater Lake, Azure Lake and Hobson Lake, the area immediately behind the shorelines; and, on the north side of Azure Lake, the height of land above the lake.

WELLS GRAY PARK

Figure 11
DETAILED ZONING - Mahood Lake



These lakes are zoned and managed for a variety and range in intensity, of recreation opportunities. In addition they provide a water access corridor for park users entering the central and northern park wilderness areas.

Natural Environment Zone

Clearwater Lake will continue to provide a range of power boat and canoe opportunities. The existing public campsites on the lakeshore will continue to offer the basic facilities necessary to maintaining safe and sanitary recreation services. New or expanded sites will be developed as demand dictates. Existing use in the summer is high with little unused capacity. Potential exists to increase shoulder season use and to provide increased facility capacity as use continues to grow. The taxi service (described in the Clearwater Corridor) will be permitted to establish a separate destination facility on the lake for both day and overnight use. This will include provision for a small lodge set back from the lakeshore in natural surroundings. In addition public pick-up and drop-off will be provided around the lake.

At the north end of Hobson Lake a trailhead will be constructed for access into the park from the road system which is developing outside the park to the west.

Azure Lake will also be zoned as Natural Environment for moderate use levels including power boat use as well as aircraft landings by prior authority. The Rainbow Falls area including the beach will be developed for public use with improvements to access trails and viewing structures.

Use of Azure Lake is moderate at present with limited potential for increased overnight use dependant on the restricted developable beaches. The alpine ridge beyond the lake does, however, have significant potential to accommodate increased wilderness use without negative impacts.

Wilderness Zone

The shore of Clearwater Lake and Azure Lake will be zoned to ensure protection of a high quality wilderness. On the ridge north of Azure Lake a system of trails will be provided from staging points on the lakeshore. These alpine hiking accesses will include temporary wilderness camps with no mechanized access. Use in this area has been very light in the past but has potential for significant increase once trail access is improved and the water taxi services are available.

Hobson Lake and shoreline will also be zoned as wilderness. Canoe rentals, based on Clearwater Lake, will be available on the lake and will be accessed by trail from Clearwater Lake in the south. A separate trail will be developed from Quesnel Lake to the west. The lake will also be entered by float plane with prior authority only. Flying may be restricted to certain days of the week. At the north end of the lake commercial and public facilities will be provided at separate locations as overnight camps and

staging areas for wilderness travel. Public wilderness shelters and campsites will be situated along the lakeshore.

Hobson Lake is very lightly used. The number of highly attractive beaches and extensive shoreline indicate that the lake has a great capacity to accommodate wilderness recreation but the apparent lack of a productive fishery may keep use lower than predicted. This remote wilderness area will be increasingly important as part of the system of lake recreation opportunities available from the Clearwater River destination facility.