

WINDERMERE LAKE PROVINCIAL PARK

PURPOSE STATEMENT AND ZONING PLAN

February 2003

Approved by:


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Date: Mar. 31/03

WINDERMERE LAKE PROVINCIAL PARK Purpose Statement and Zoning Plan

Primary Role

The **primary** role of Windermere Lake Provincial Park is to protect one of the last remaining tracts of native grassland and riparian habitats along the western shores of Windermere Lake.

As a whole, Windermere Lake has undergone extensive residential and commercial development in recent years fragmenting the shoreline and upper bench lands. In addition, the CPR mainline runs parallel along and through the foreshore area of the park. Despite these man-made intrusions, large populations of ungulates (white-tail deer, mule deer and elk) utilize the area for winter range and although unconfirmed, there is potential for several species at risk.

Secondary Role

The **secondary** role is to provide easily accessible day use opportunities in an undeveloped setting for residents and visitors of the area.

The expansion of residential and private landholdings has reduced public access corridors to two other locations along Windermere Lake; James Chabot Provincial Park and Kinsmen Beach (District of Invermere). These alternative locations have a high level of facility infrastructure and lack the undisturbed natural shoreline/upland characteristics evident at Windermere Lake Provincial Park. However, the park has been identified as having a high potential for campground, day use and boat launch development.

Currently, “frontcountry” parks, such as Windermere Lake Provincial Park, represent less than 1% of the land area in the Columbia Valley.

Known Management Issues	Response
Vandalism/unauthorized use. Park's history included unauthorized camping, large parties, cattle grazing and motorized vehicle access.	Fence and boundary posts installed within last ten years. Patrolled by parks staff.
Forest encroachment (in-growth). The entire Columbia Valley has witnessed reduced native grassland coverage within the last fifty years.	Monitoring and potential future actions to reintroduce recurrent low intensity fires by thinning forest stand followed by prescribed burning.
Minimal public boat launch facilities on Windermere Lake. Proponents suggest the park as a viable option.	Ongoing liaison with the District of Invermere. James Chabot Provincial Park has been recommended as a better, more logical, alternative.

Known Management Issues	Response
Trespass logging along western portion of the park above the secondary highway.	Violator ordered to clean up and restore area in 2002. Boundary fencing is required.

Zoning

The entire park is Natural Environment (205 ha).

Conservation

Representation -ecosection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	East Kootenay Trench (EKT). This ecosection is very under-represented (0.68%) in the PA system. Windermere Lake is one of 15 small (none exceed 1,000 ha) protected areas in this ecosection. The park provides 6.6% of the province wide PA representation of this ecosection. PAs with the highest level of representation in the ecosection are Kikomun Creek (24%) and Premier Lake (27%).
-biogeoclimatic subzone/variant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1 of 5 PAs in the system contributing to the representation of the well represented IDFun (13.67%), 4 of which are found in the Kootenay Region (28% of total PA system). Windermere Lake contributes 5.24% of the overall protected area representation of this subzone/variant and is the primary contributor of IDFun in the EKT ecosection (98.9%). Other contributors of IDFun in the EKT ecosection are Dry Gulch (0.12%) and (0.97%).
Special Feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	None identified.
Rare and Endangered Values	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The whole park has not been inventoried. High potential for species such as badger (r), great blue heron (b).
Scientific/Research Opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	None identified.

Recreation

Representation -backcountry	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable.
-destination	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable.
-travel corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable.
-local recreation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	High use on Windermere Lake during summer months.

Special Opportunities None identified.

Education/Interpretation Opportunities None identified.

Cultural Heritage

Representation Not yet assessed.

Special Feature Old farm building foundations associated with the Sunshine Ranch.

Other Management Considerations

Other Designations None identified.

Relationship to other PAs James Chabot Provincial Park (north end of Windermere Lake) offers high level of day use facilities and access to lake.

Co-operative Management Arrangements None identified.

Vulnerability Noxious weeds may spread proportionally to recreation use (i.e. seed dispersal, disturbed soil layers). Deterioration of natural ecosystem by unauthorized motor vehicle access.

Cattle grazing from adjacent properties (trespass issue).

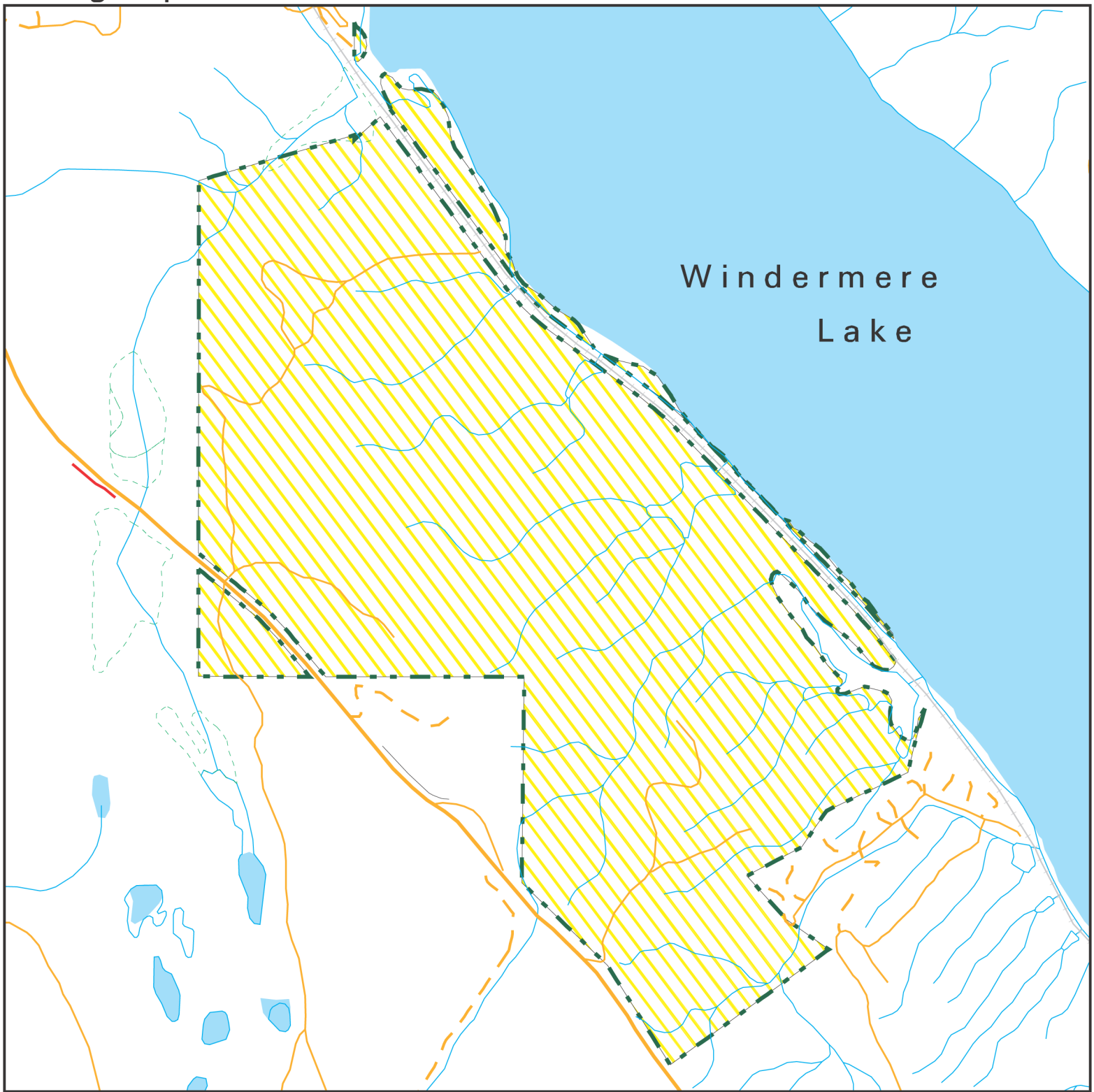
Forest in-growth reducing native grassland species.

Relationship to other Strategies None identified.

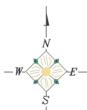
Area: 205 hectares


Date of Establishment: Originally purchased in 1961 (formerly known as Sunshine Ranch). The area was formally established as a Class A park on June 29, 1999.

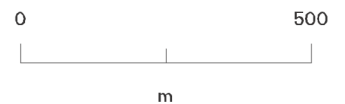
Zoning Map - Windermere Lake Provincial Park



Projection: Albers Equal Areas
Datum: NAD83



 Natural Environment
 Protected Area Boundary



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