

Skeena Region

**MANAGEMENT DIRECTION
STATEMENT**

November 2003

**for Wistaria Provincial Park and
Little Andrews Bay Marine
Provincial Park**



**BRITISH
COLUMBIA**

Ministry of Water, Land and
Air Protection
Environmental Stewardship
Division

Wistaria Provincial Park and Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park

Approvals Page

Forward

This management direction statement for Wistaria Provincial Park and Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park provides management direction until Environmental Stewardship Division revises the plan. Ongoing consultation between Environmental Stewardship Division and First Nations may require changes to this management direction statement. Aboriginal traditional activities and uses are honoured and respected within the provincial parks.

Implementation of strategies identified in the management direction statement (MDS) will be dependent on available funding and Environmental Stewardship Division priorities.

Approvals:



Regional Manager
Skeena Region
Environmental Stewardship Division



Assistant Deputy Minister
Environmental Stewardship Division

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Wistaria Provincial Park and Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park Management Direction Statement

Introduction

Purpose of the Management Direction Statement

Management direction statements (MDS) provide strategic management direction for protected areas that do not have an approved management plan. Management direction statements describe protected area values, management issues and concerns, a management strategy focused on immediate priority objectives and strategies, and direction from other planning processes. While the MDS identifies strategies, the completion of all these strategies is dependent on funding and funding procedures. All development associated with these strategies is subject to the BC Parks and Protected Areas Impact Assessment Process.

Context

The provincial government established Wistaria Provincial Park as a Class A provincial park on October 22, 1981 by Order in Council #2175/1981 under the authority of the *Park Act*. The park is approximately 40 hectares in size and is currently named and described in Schedule C of the *Protected Areas of British Columbia Act*. The provincial government established Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park as a Class A provincial park on June 28, 1999 by the *Park Amendment Act 1999* and is 102.1 hectares in size. The park is currently named and described in Schedule C of the *Protected Areas of British Columbia Act*. The Wet'suwet'en First Nation and the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council identified Wistaria Provincial Park and Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park as part of their traditional territory. Provincial Park designation does not affect in any way existing aboriginal treaty rights guaranteed under Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution.

Wistaria Provincial Park and Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park are located about 30 kilometres apart along the northern shore of the Nechako Reservoir (Ootsa Lake), south of the towns of Burns Lake and Houston. These parks provide access to Ootsa Lake and the boat launches assist boat access to Eutsuk Lake and other points in Tweedsmuir Provincial Park to the south. The Nechako Reservoir presents challenges to boat launch construction because of the reservoir's highly fluctuating water levels. Alcan Inc., which manages the reservoir, provided funds for an extensive upgrade, in 2002, of the boat launch facilities at both of these parks, especially at Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park

Wistaria Provincial Park and Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park are located north of Tweedsmuir Provincial Park, which is on the southern shore of Ootsa Lake. Tweedsmuir Provincial

Park is the largest park in British Columbia and provides internationally significant conservation values for vegetation, wildlife and wilderness as well as provincially significant backcountry boating, hiking, camping, fishing, hunting and wildlife viewing outdoor recreation opportunities.

Entiako Provincial Park and Protected Area is located to the east adjacent to Tweedsmuir Provincial Park and provides protection for important wildlife and vegetation natural values. To the northeast, the new protected areas of Uncha Mountain Red Hills Provincial Park and François Lake Provincial Park and Protected Area protects significant grasslands and Douglas-fir forest ecosystems along the east end of François Lake. Pendleton Bay, Ethel F. Wilson Memorial, Red Bluff and Topley provincial parks to the north are located near or on Babine Lake; these small parks focus on providing boating and camping outdoor recreation opportunities. Tyhee Lake Provincial Park at Telkwa and Beaumont Provincial Park near Fort Fraser provide full-service camping and day-use opportunities, and Babine Mountains Provincial Park near Smithers protects significant cultural heritage, vegetation ecosystems and mountain goat habitat as well as important backcountry hiking, camping and wildlife viewing opportunities.

Protected Area Attributes

Conservation

- Wistaria Provincial Park protects a very small area (approximately 30 hectares) in the poorly represented Bulkley Basin Ecoregion, and is within the SBSdk subzone (Sub-Boreal Spruce zone, Dry Cool subzone). The small size of the park severely limits its contribution to meeting ecosystem representation objectives.
- Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park protects 102 hectares in the very well represented Nechako Upland Ecoregion, and is within the SBSmc2 subzone (Sub-Boreal Spruce zone, Moist Cold subzone, Babine variant). The small size of the park severely limits its contribution to meeting ecosystem representation objectives.
- Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park protects a portion of Andrews Creek, which contains kokanee, rainbow trout, sculpin, longnose dace, large scale sucker, and lake chub, including some high quality spawning and rearing habitat for rainbow trout.
- Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park contains some good ungulate habitat on south-facing slopes.

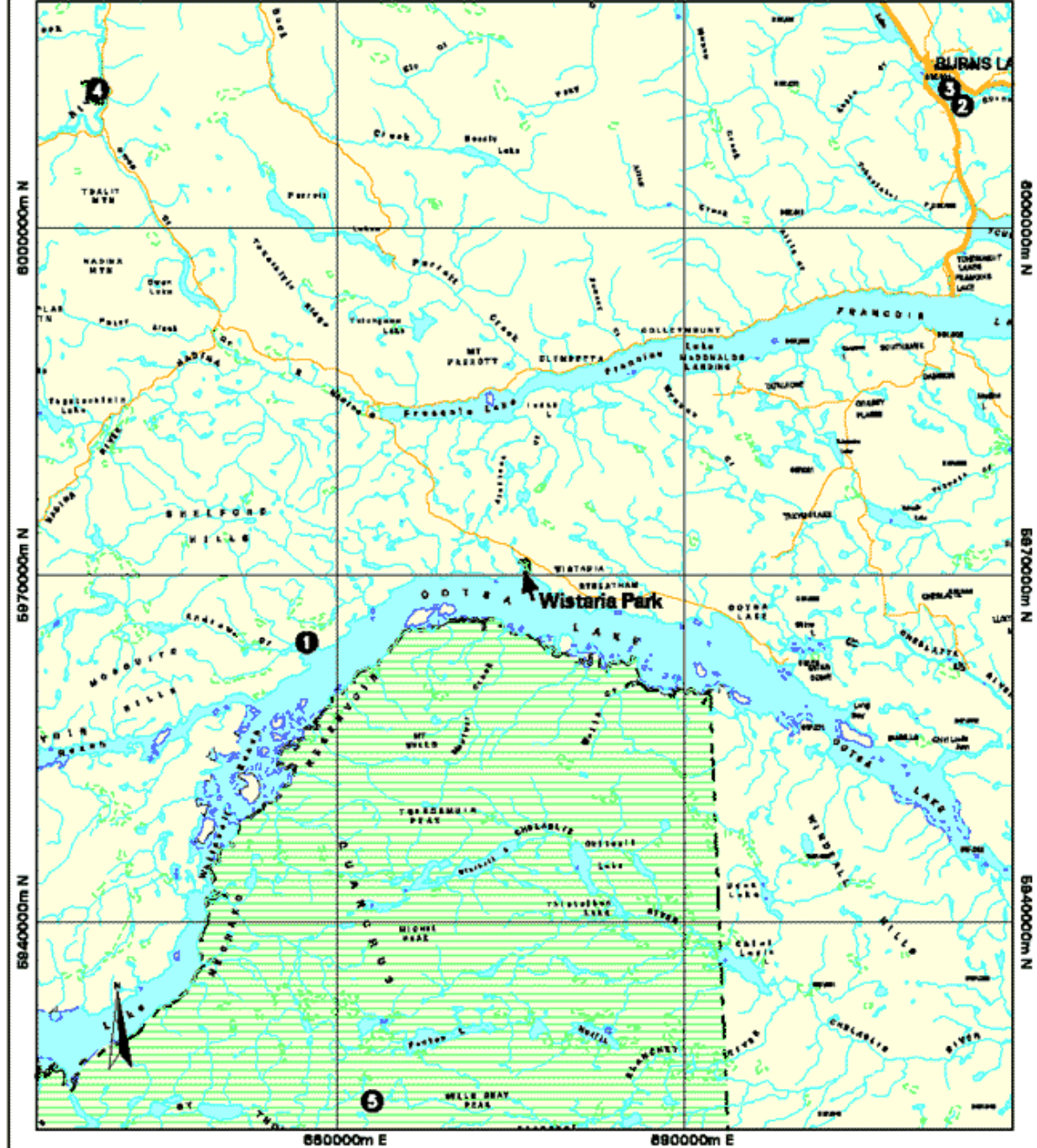
Recreation and Tourism

- Wistaria Provincial Park and Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park provide access to the Nechako Reservoir (i.e., Ootsa and Whitesail lakes) for boating and fishing. Local residents primarily use Wistaria Provincial Park to gain access to Ootsa Lake, while boaters use Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park for gaining access to Eutsuk Lake within Tweedsmuir Provincial Park, and Whitesail Lake.
- These parks also provide waterfront day-use opportunities with each park containing a boat launch, toilets, and picnic area. Little Andrews Bay Provincial Park also provides rustic campsites, an information shelter, a wharf and picnic tables.

- Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park is open to hunting while Wistaria Provincial Park is closed to hunting.

Figure 1: Context

Wistaria Park



Projection: UTM Zone 8
Datum: NAD83

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Produced in Jan 2003 for Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection

	Subject Area
	Other Protected Area
	Highway
	Road

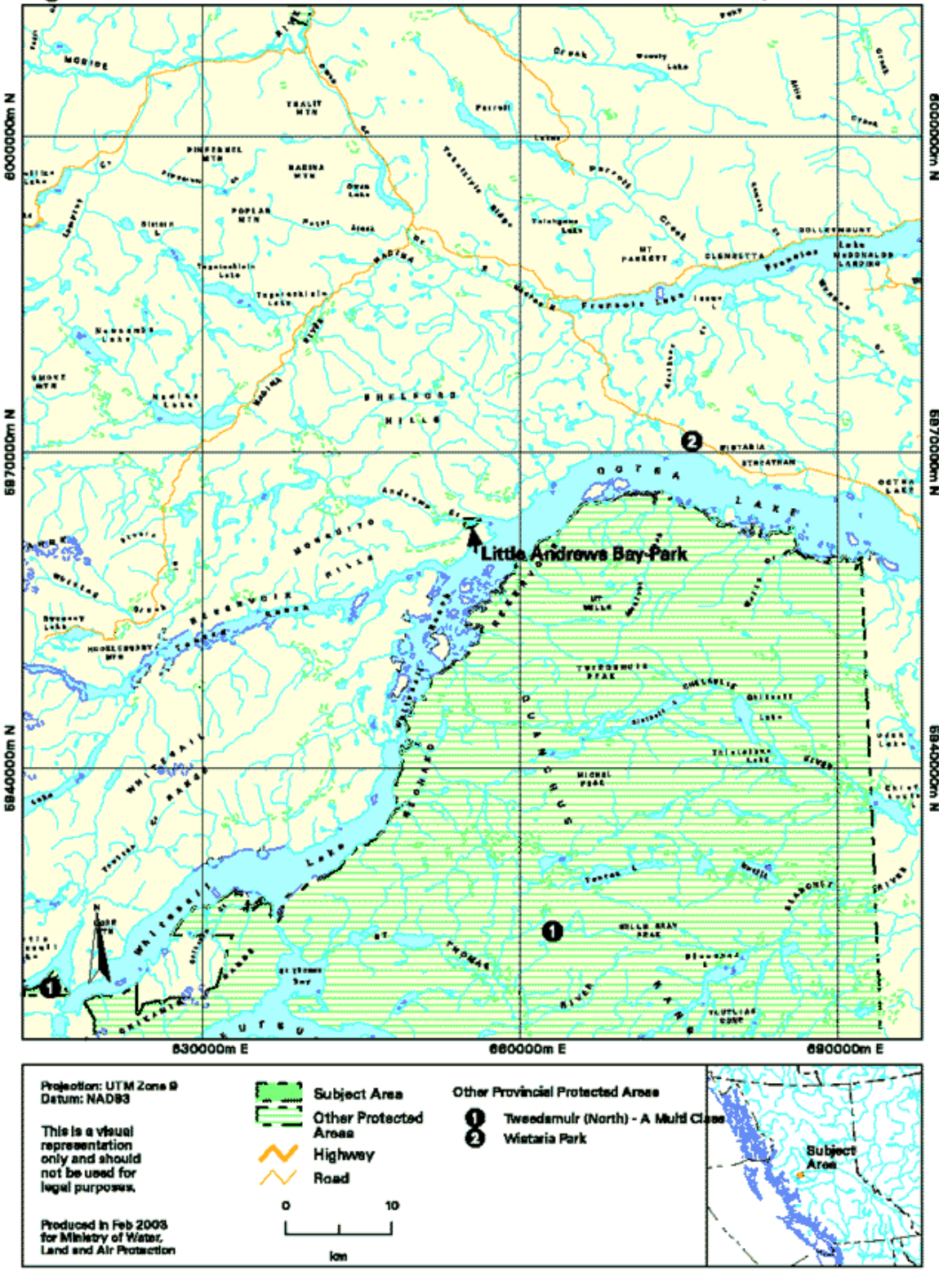
0 10
km

- Other Provincial Protected Areas**
- ① Little Andrews Bay Marine
 - ② Burns Lake
 - ③ Deadman's Island
 - ④ Morice River - (ER)
 - ⑤ Tweedsmuir North



Figure 2: Context

Little Andrews Bay Marine Park



Commercial Business Opportunities

- Provides low commercial business opportunities for guided interpretation and education tour groups based on the special features and outdoor recreation opportunities of Wistaria Provincial Park and Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park. Likely the best approach for this type of business opportunity is to develop it as part of a systems approach where several provincial parks, protected areas and Crown land areas in the Lakes District are included in the tour to give clients a broad and interesting program.

Cultural Heritage

- The Archaeological Inventory Data Centre has no records of archaeological sites within the boundaries of these parks. A culturally modified tree sits just outside the boundary of Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park.

Significance in the Protected Areas System

- These parks are important to the protected area system as they provide access to the vast Nechako Reservoir and the provincially significant river and lake systems within Tweedsmuir Provincial Park. Visitors to this region often make Eutsuk Lake in Tweedsmuir Provincial Park their destination.

Land Uses, Tenures and Interests

Access

Wistaria Provincial Park is located approximately 60 kilometres southwest of Burns Lake and 80 kilometres southeast of Houston along mostly gravel roads. From Burns Lake, follow Highway 35 south and take the ferry across Francois Lake. Travel southwest on Keefe Road to Ootsa-Nadina Road then follow Wistaria Main Road to the park. From Houston, follow the Morice River Road south to the Morice-Owen Road, then the Ootsa-Nadina Road, and then drive along Wistaria Main Forest Service Road to the park.

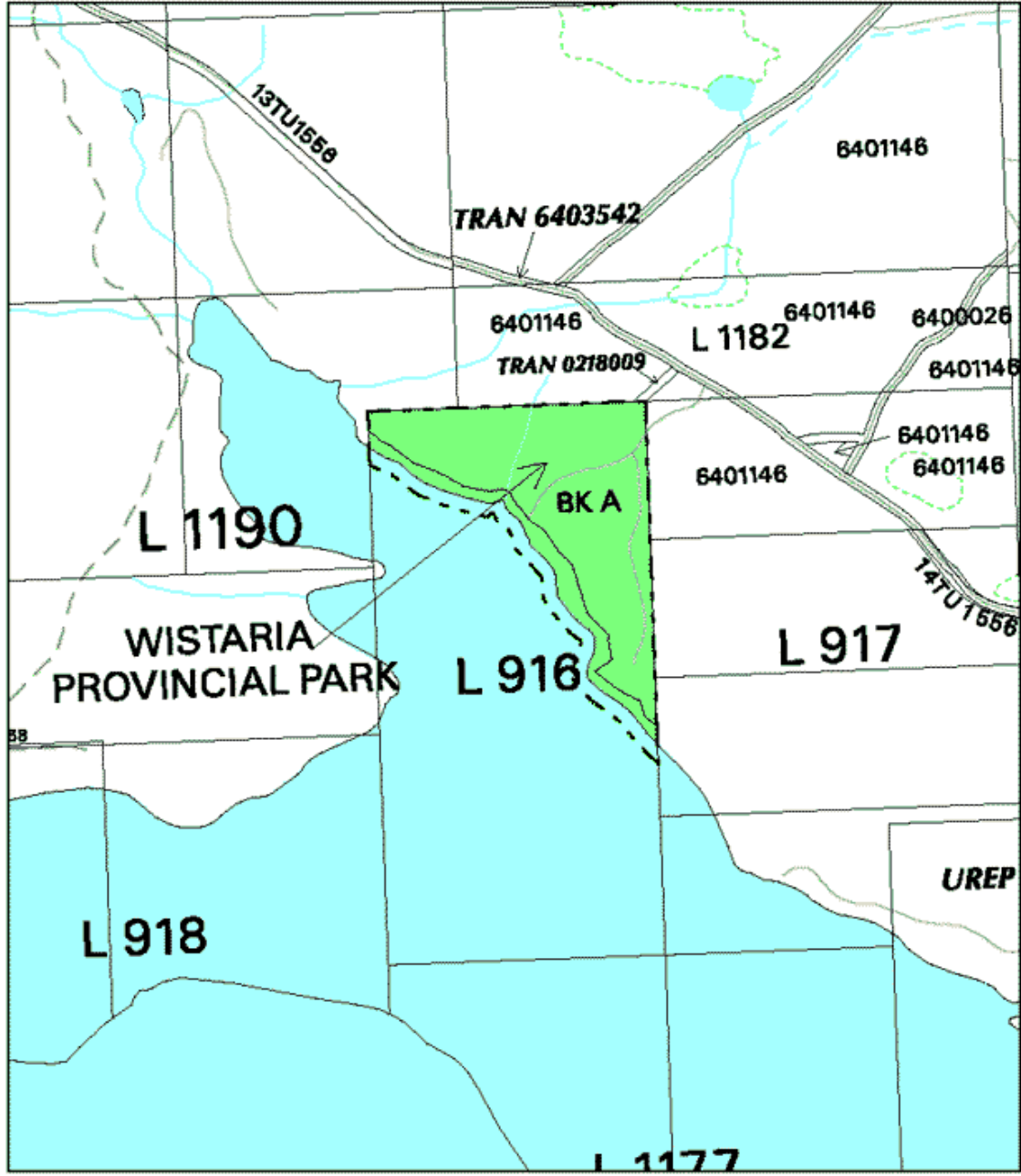
Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park is located approximately 90 kilometres south of Burns Lake and 95 kilometres south of Houston. From Burns Lake, follow the directions for Wistaria Provincial Park. Little Andrews Bay Provincial Park is 30 kilometres past Wistaria Provincial Park on the Wistaria Main Forest Service Road. From Houston, follow the Morice River Road south to the Morice-Owen Road, then the Ootsa-Nadina Road, and then follow Wistaria Main Forest Service Road to the park.

Existing Tenures, Alienations and Encumbrances

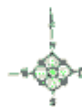
- Wistaria Provincial Park is within trapline 604T036. No park use permit exists authorizing the trapline within the park. No guide-outfitting territory covers the park.
- Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park is within trapline 604T042 and guide outfitting territory 604G008. No park use permits exist authorizing these commercial activities in the park.
- Park use permit SK9710019 authorises Alcan Inc. to carry out underwater tree cutting of drowned trees at Little Andrews Bay Provincial Park until 2005.



Figure 3: Tenure

Wistaria Park



Projection: UTM Zone 9
Datum: NAD83



 Subject Area
 Cadastral Boundary (from CDMS)

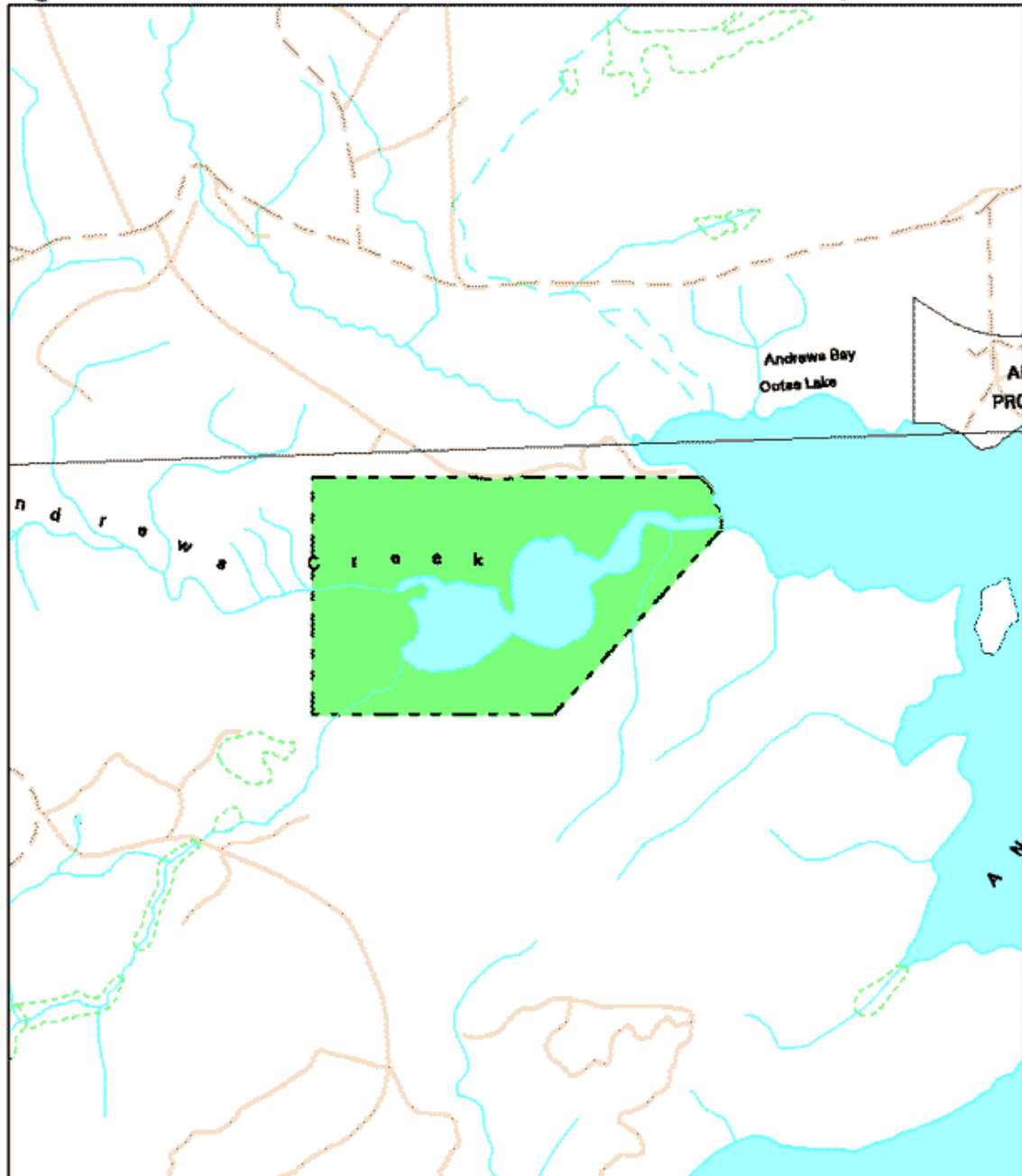
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Figure 4: Tenure

Little Andrews Bay Marine Park



Projection: UTM Zone 9
Datum: NAD83



 Subject Area
 Cadastral Boundary
(from CDMS)

0 500
m

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Existing Land Use Activities and Facilities

- Wistaria Provincial Park contains a boat launch, toilets, and a picnic area. The park's land use includes outdoor recreation activities such as angling, motorboating, canoeing, picnicking and walking.
- Little Andrews Bay Provincial Park provides a rustic campground (eight campsites), an information shelter, a wharf, picnic tables, a boat launch and toilets. Outdoor recreation activities comprise the land use in the park and include hunting, camping, angling, walking, wildlife viewing, swimming, motorboating, canoeing and picnicking.

Adjacent Patterns of Land Use

- Forest harvesting and cattle grazing occur extensively within areas next to the parks.
- The Nechako Reservoir (includes Ootsa Lake and Whitesail Lake) is a vast reservoir managed by Alcan Inc. The reservoir is subject to fluctuating water levels and large amounts of woody debris which affects the reservoir's shoreline through erosion and boat launches through obstruction by woody debris.

First Nations Interests

- The Carrier-Sekani Tribal Council and the Wet'suwet'en First Nation claim Wistaria Provincial Park and Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park because the parks lie within their traditional territory.

Other Agency Interests

- The Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management, British Columbia Conservation Data Centre (CDC) has an interest in any species at risk in these parks.
- The Ministry of Forests has an interest in forest health issues in these parks, including a recent mountain pine beetle outbreak in Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park.
- The Ministry of Water, Air and Land Protection, Skeena Region Fish and Wildlife Science and Allocation Section, has an interest in the fish species that use Andrews Creek in Little Andrews Bay Provincial Park, and in the wildlife species that live in these parks.
 - Wistaria Provincial Park and Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park lie within Wildlife Management Unit 6.4.

Private and Public Stakeholder Interests

- The Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako is interested in these provincial parks because of their contribution to the local tourism economy.
- Local residents and residents of Burns Lake, Houston, Smithers, Telkwa and Southside are interested in these parks because of the outdoor recreation opportunities these parks provide and their function as access locations to the Nechako Reservoir.
- The Northern British Columbia Tourism Association has an interest in these parks because of their contribution to the Lakes District tourism infrastructure.
- The British Columbia Wildlife Federation is interested in the wildlife species protected by the parks and the hunting and angling recreation opportunities.

- Tenure holders: guide-outfitters, trapline holders have an interest in the parks because the parks require the application of the *Park Act* and Park and Recreation Area Regulation governing the operation of such businesses.
- Alcan Inc. is interested in the parks because the company manages the Nechako Reservoir which many park visitors use as an outdoor recreation destination.

Wistaria and Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Parks Role Statement

The primary role of Wistaria Provincial Park is to provide access to the Nechako Reservoir (Ootsa Lake part) for local residents and visitors and to provide camping and day-use outdoor recreation opportunities. The park also plays a secondary conservation role in protecting an area of forest along the shore of the Nechako Reservoir.

The primary role of Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park is to provide a launching point for boat access to North Tweedsmuir Provincial Park, including the provincially significant Eutsuk Lake. In addition, the park provides access to the Nechako Reservoir (Ootsa Lake) for local residents and visitors and presents camping, picnicking and boating outdoor recreation opportunities in a forested setting. The park also performs a secondary conservation role in conserving a small protected bay (an extremely rare feature on the Nechako Reservoir) and an area of forest that contains a fish-bearing stream.

Management Commitments and Issues

Management Direction from Previous Planning

Both parks have fire management plans in place, and are in fire control zones where all fires receive initial attack.

Management Issues

Theme	Issue
Protecting ecological values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Nechako Reservoir may affect Andrews Creek and the fish that use this waterway and its shoreline may undergo erosion because of fluctuating water levels caused by water drawdowns. • The parks' flora, fauna, and important habitats may be at risk because inventory of these values is incomplete.
Protecting outdoor recreation opportunities and features.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parks' boat launches cannot be used or are often damaged because of the collection of wood debris from the Nechako Reservoir. • Access to the parks' boat launches may be difficult or impossible because reservoir drawdowns create extreme low water conditions, especially if the Tahtsa Narrows dredging project proceeds.
Protecting cultural heritage values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parks' cultural heritage values, including archaeological and historic sites, may be at risk because no inventory exists of these values.
First Nations values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of First Nations values is unknown because an inventory of these values does not exist.
Visitor safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bear and human conflicts may occur because these parks contain bear habitat.

Theme	Issue
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Nechako Reservoir presents unsafe conditions for boaters due to frequent and sudden wind storms and its vast size. • The Nechako Reservoir presents significant boating hazards because of floating debris and the many standing dead trees remaining in the reservoir just below the water surface.

Management Direction

Priority Management Objectives and Strategies

Objective	Strategy
To protect the parks' ecological values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with Alcan Inc. to ensure that when drawdowns occur, steps are taken to reduce potential harm to the parks' ecological values. • Complete an inventory of the parks' flora, fauna, and important habitats with priority given to species-at-risk, rare plant species and plant communities.
To protect the parks' recreational values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperate with Alcan Inc. to remove all woody debris from the boat launches, as necessary. • Cooperate with Alcan Inc. to maintain and protect the parks' outdoor recreation features and opportunities when reservoir drawdowns occur.
To protect the parks' cultural values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate and collect information on cultural heritage values within the parks.
To protect First Nations values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work cooperatively with First Nations to build positive working relationships, to help protect cultural heritage values and to promote effective management of the parks. • Aboriginal traditional activities and uses may be exercised in the parks subject to meeting conservation and safety concerns.
To bring existing commercial business tenures under valid permits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact trapline owners to place their trapping operations affecting the parks under valid park use permits. • Contact guide-outfitter operators (includes hunting, fishing and tour guiding) using the parks to place their operations under valid park use permits.
To promote visitor safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure bear awareness information is available at the parks and that garbage facilities are bear proof. • Provide safe boating route information to park visitors, especially for the safe route to Chikamin Bay. Make this information available at the parks and on the official Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection web site.
To provide park visitor information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide accurate and current information about Wistaria Provincial Park and Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park on the official Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection web site. • Provide information about the hazards of the Nechako Reservoir, especially for the boating public using Wistaria Provincial Park and Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park as a starting point to gain access to Tweedsmuir Provincial Park.

Consultation and Future Planning

Environmental Stewardship Division will continue to consult with all interested First Nations and other stakeholders regarding management of these parks. Environmental Stewardship Division ranks these parks as low priority for the development of a management plan with full public involvement.

Environmental Stewardship Division will review this management direction statement and revise it, if necessary, in five to seven years.

Zoning Plan

Wistaria Provincial Park is zoned mostly Natural Environment with a small amount of Intensive Recreation. Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park is zoned Intensive Recreation for the campground loop, boat launch and access road and Natural Environment, elsewhere.

Two of Environmental Stewardship Division management planning zones apply to Wistaria Provincial Park and Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park as described below.

Intensive Recreation Zone

Objective: To provide for a variety of readily accessible, facility-oriented outdoor recreation opportunities.

Description: Applies to approximately 4 hectares within Wistaria Provincial Park and covers the campground, picnic grounds, boat launch and access roads in the park. Similarly, this zone contains approximately 4 hectares of Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park and includes all campground, picnic, boat launch and access road facilities.

Management Guidelines: Oriented toward maintaining a high quality recreation experience. Intensive management of resource and/or control of visitor activities. Operational facilities designed for efficient operation while remaining unobtrusive to the park visitor.

Natural Environment Zone

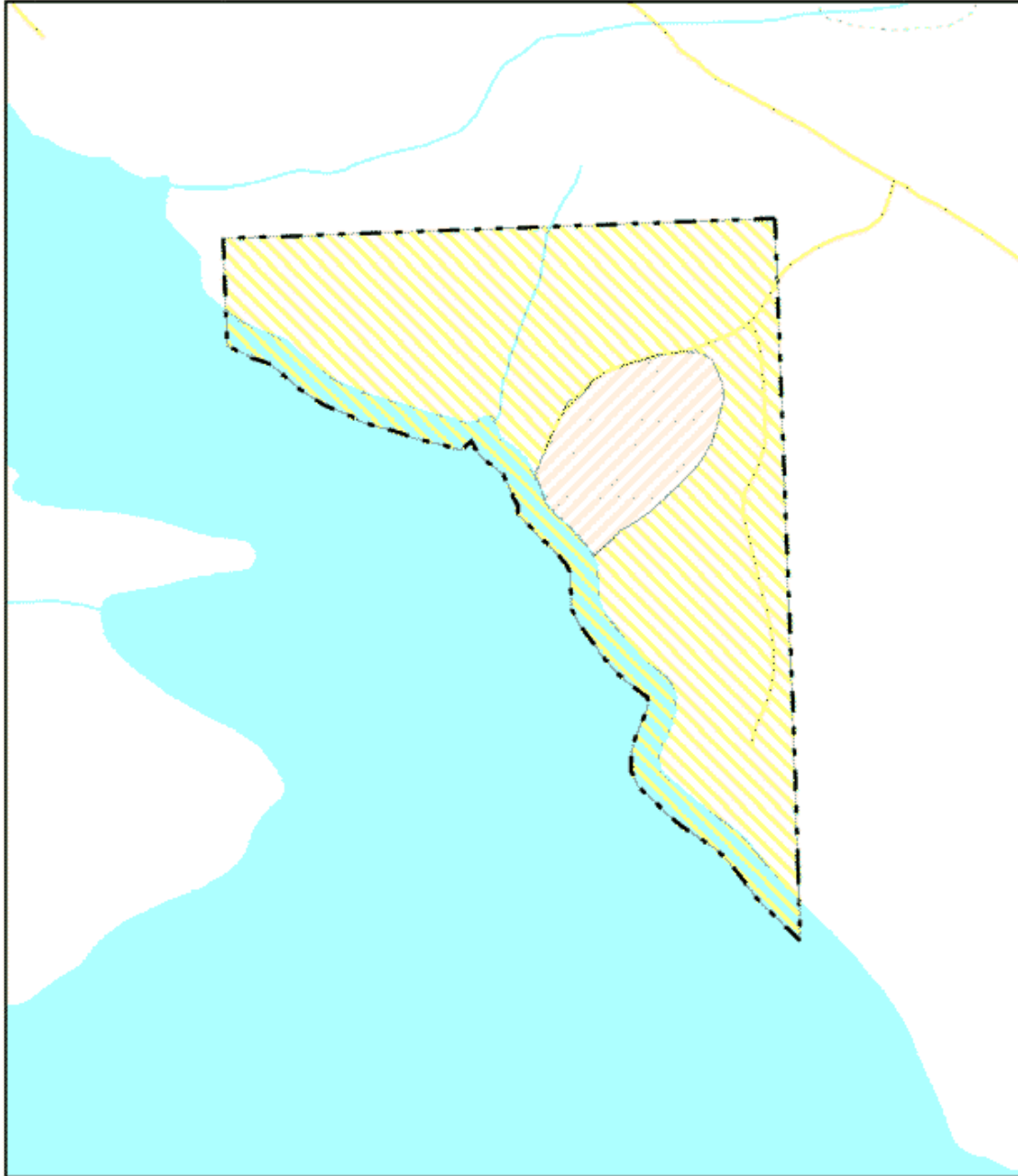
Objective: To protect scenic values and to provide for backcountry recreation opportunities in a largely undisturbed natural environment.

Description: Contains approximately 36 hectares of Wistaria Provincial Park and approximately 98 hectares of Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park. This zone applies to all lands and waters outside the Intensive Recreation Zone in each park.

Management Guidelines: Oriented to maintaining a natural environment and a high quality recreation experience. Visitor access may be restricted to preserve the recreation experience or to limit impacts. Separation of less compatible recreational activities and transportation modes. Designation of transportation may be necessary to avoid potential conflicts (e.g., horse trails, cycle paths, hiking trails.)




Figure 5: Zoning

Wistaria Park



Projection: UTM Zone 9
Datum: NAD83



-  Intensive Recreation
-  Natural Environment
-  Protected Area Boundary

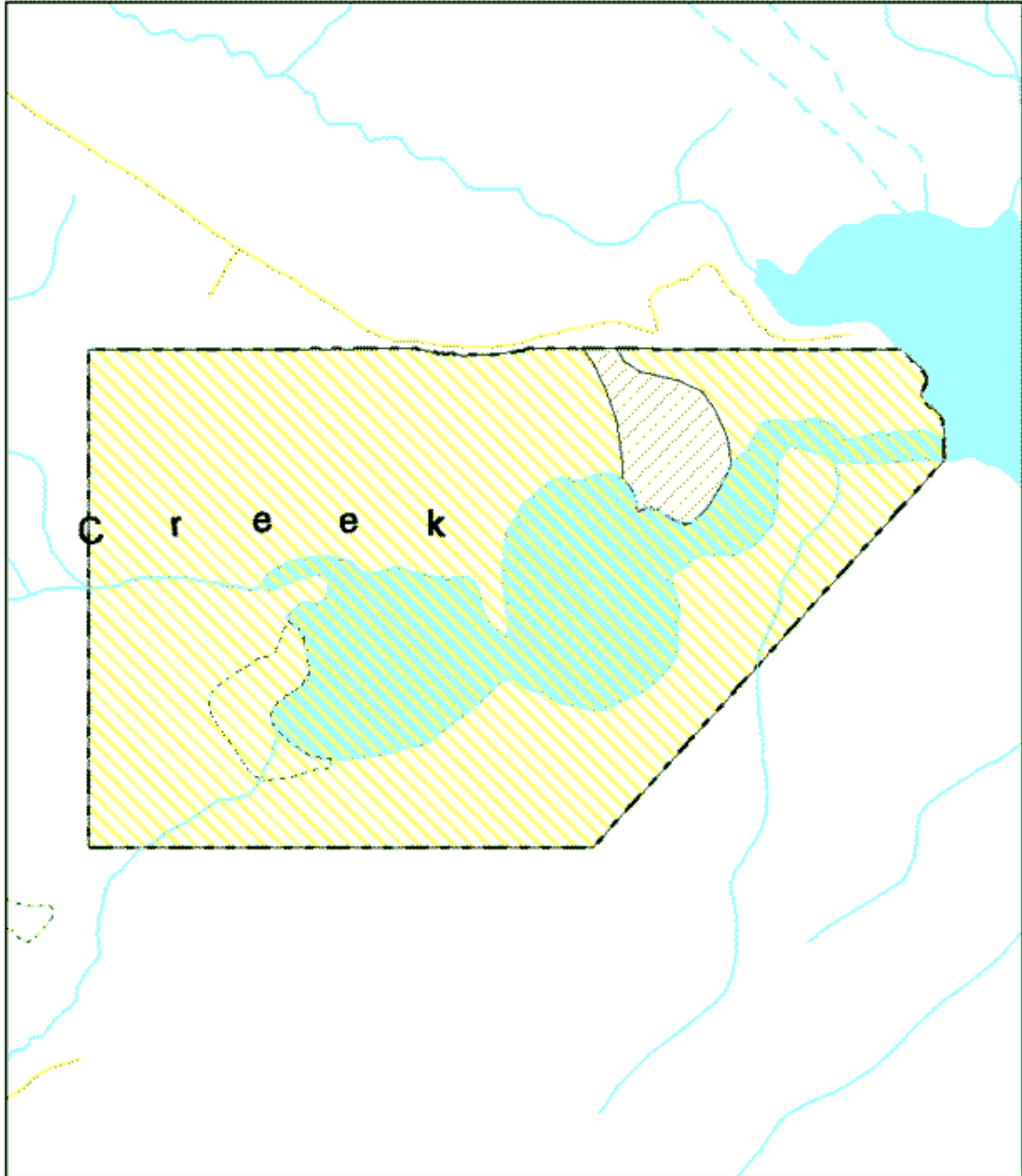


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Figure 6: Zoning

Little Andrews Bay Marine Park



Projection: UTM Zone 9
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-  Intensive Recreation
-  Natural Environment
-  Protected Area Boundary



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Appendix 1.
Wistaria Provincial Park and Little Andrews Bay Marine Provincial Park
Table of Acceptable Activities, Uses and Facilities.

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

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

M= may be permitted if compatible with protected area objectives

N= not allowed

N1= allowed for expressed management purposes only

N2= present and allowed to continue but not normally allowed