

Stikine Country Protected Areas

~ Newsletter Number 3 ~

Draft Management Direction

Volume 3

February 2002



Park Planning Process Continues with Workshops & Open Houses

~ MARCH 12 – 19, 2002 ~

Management Planning is continuing for Stikine Country Protected Areas. You are urged to become involved and provide your knowledge, values and advice. This Newsletter incorporates and builds upon the feedback, suggestions and ideas that we received from our 2nd Newsletter (February 2001) and 1st set of open houses & workshops (March 2001). This Draft Management Direction will be revised as necessary following the Open Houses & Workshops and incorporated into a draft Management Plan. This draft Management Plan will consider all comments received and will also be available for public review and comment.

Thank you in advance for your time and efforts in assisting BC Parks to ensure that the resulting Management Plan effectively addresses all issues, challenges and opportunities within this magnificent collection of natural habitats.

You are encouraged to complete the attached Public Comment Booklet and return it to the BC Parks Office at Bag 5000, Smithers, BC V0J 2N0 before April 15, 2002.



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Protected Areas to be Covered in the Stikine Country Management Plan

- Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Park
- Mt. Edziza Provincial Park
- Mt. Edziza Protected Area
- Stikine River Provincial Park
- Gladys Lake Ecological Reserve
- Pitman River Protected Area
- Chukachida Protected Area
- Tatlatui Provincial Park



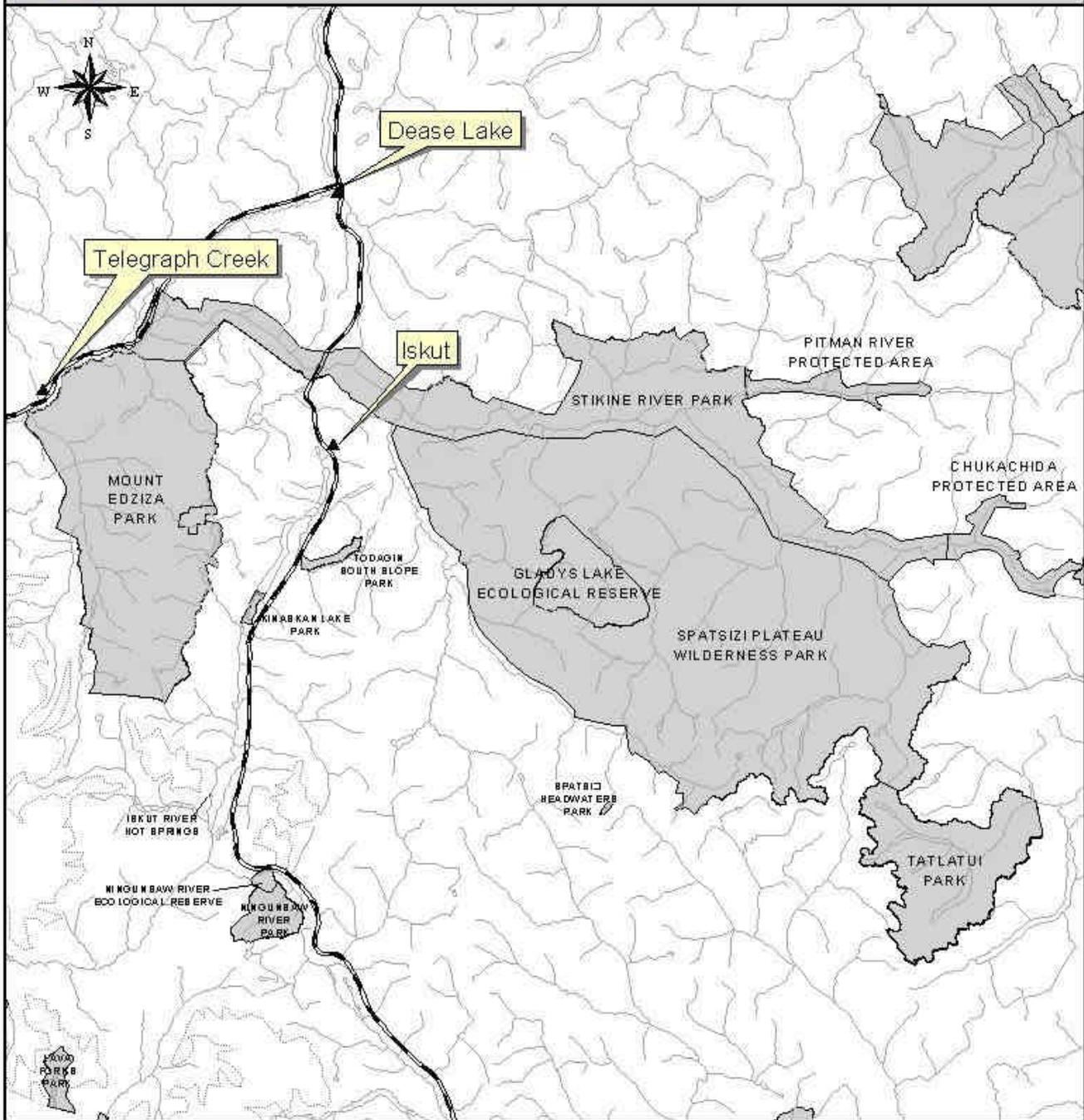
Public Open Houses & Workshops – Round 2, March 2002

Public Open Houses and Workshops are scheduled to occur at the times and locations noted below. Workshops are intended for those who can participate for a full day, while Open Houses provide an opportunity for those people who can participate only for an hour or so. There will be opportunity provided to all participants who may want to discuss specific topics with BC Parks staff.

DATE	TYPE	TOWN	LOCATION	TIME
March 12 th , 2002	Workshop	Dease Lake	Community Hall	8:30 am – 3 pm
March 12 th , 2002	Open House	Dease Lake	Community Hall	4:00 pm – 9 pm
March 14 th , 2002	Workshop	Terrace	Best Western Terrace Inn	8:30 am – 3 pm
March 14 th , 2002	Open House	Terrace	Best Western Terrace Inn	4:00 pm – 9 pm
March 15 th , 2002	Workshop	Smithers	Hudson Bay Lodge	8:30 am – 3 pm
March 15 th , 2002	Open House	Smithers	Hudson Bay Lodge	4:00 pm – 9 pm
March 19 th , 2002	Workshop	Vancouver	Best Western Richmond Inn	8:30 am – 3 pm
March 19 th , 2002	Open House	Vancouver	Best Western Richmond Inn	4:00 pm – 9 pm



Stikine Country Protected Areas



	Towns	20	0	20	Kilometers
	Road				
	Water				
	Ice Field	1:1300000			
	Protected Areas	1 centimeter = 13 kilometers			

266,000 ha	Mount Edziza Park
257,000 ha	Stikine River Park
696,000 ha	Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Park
44,000 ha	Gladys Lake Ecological Reserve
16,000 ha	Pitman River Protected Area
20,000 ha	Chukachida Protected Area
106,000 ha	Tatlatui Park

Introduction

A park management planning process is currently underway for the Stikine Country's protected area system. General Management Direction, objectives and actions as well as park specific management direction will be established for conservation, recreation and cultural heritage management. These policies will guide BC Parks' strategic and operational level management. The plan is intended to create an appropriate management regime, that ensures the long-term preservation of these special places.

In preparation of a park management plan for the Stikine Country Protected Areas, a number of planning activities have been completed and additional planning steps are scheduled:

Planning Steps	Timeframe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Background research ✓ Identify issues and define broad management directions ✓ 1st round of open houses & workshops ✓ Draft management directions for the protected area system ❖ 2nd round of open houses & workshops ❖ Prepare draft management plan ❖ Opportunity for public comment on draft management plan ❖ Approve protected area management plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background information summary completed July 2000 • Draft completed February 2001 • Completed March 2001 – summaries distributed July 2001 • Draft materials prepared February 2002 • March 2002 • June 2002 – August 2002 • October 2002 • November 2002 – December 2002

Cassiar Iskut-Stikine LRMP

In October 2000, the Provincial Government approved several new Protected Areas recommended by the LRMP. While a number of smaller Protected Areas were established, a major focus of the LRMP was to increase the ecological integrity of two core wilderness systems – Mt. Edziza and Spatsizi parks – by adding important low elevation forest habitat. The Stikine River Recreation Area, with an amended boundary, has also been upgraded to full protection status as a Class A Park.

The Cassiar Iskut-Stikine Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) provides management direction for new Protected Areas resulting from the Cassiar-Iskut-Stikine LRMP process and for the new Stikine River Park. Management direction from the LRMP includes both general direction for all new Protected Areas in the LRMP area, and specific direction for each new Protected Area.

On completion of the LRMP, a formal cooperative agreement was signed between Tahltan Joint Councils and BC Parks and a joint Protected Areas committee established.

Planning For Smaller Protected Areas

Draft Management Direction Statements (MDS) have been prepared for the following Protected Areas and are posted on the web in *.pdf format for review and comment. These management direction statements will not form part of the Stikine Country management plan itself, but will – together with the Stikine Country management plan – provide direction for all Protected Areas in the broader protected area system.

✓ Border Lake Provincial Park	✓ Iskut River Hot Springs Provincial Park
✓ Boya Lake Provincial Park	✓ Lava Forks Provincial Park
✓ Choquette Hot Springs Provincial Park	✓ Meziadin Lake Provincial Park
✓ Craig Headwaters Protected Area	✓ Ningunsaw Ecological Reserve & Provincial Park
✓ Great Glacier Provincial Park	✓ Tuya Mountains Provincial Park

Please go to: <http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/planning/mgmtplns/stikine/stikine.htm> to view the draft MDS documents.

Draft Management Direction Statements for Kinaskan Provincial Park, Todagin South Slope Provincial Park and Spatsizi Headwaters Provincial Park are presently in development and will be posted to the above web page shortly.

Draft Vision for Stikine Country Protected Areas

A vision statement establishes, what we, as a society want to see for a protected area over decades and even centuries. Providing focus and clarity of language, being clear about the long-term Vision helps to guide what should be done in the short-term. The Vision Statement is an important guide when considering the needs and interests of society and incorporating new approaches to managing conservation, cultural heritage and recreational values. It is also a necessary framework in responding to changing demands for recreation. A draft vision for the Stikine Country Protected Areas follows on the next page.



Lava Forks

Draft Vision for the Future State of Stikine Country Protected Areas

- Stikine Country Protected Areas are one of the most remarkable and unique wilderness areas on earth where nature prevails. A place that provides the people who enter the spectacular surroundings and abundant ecosystems with a continuous gift, a treasure to carry with them forever.
- Ecosystems, comprised of the natural diversity of plants, animals and dynamic process that support them, evolve within a natural range of variability. Intact predator/prey systems of large mammals centred in the Spatsizi and Mt Edziza landscapes embody the significance of this wilderness area in a global context.
- The landscapes, as they have during the millennia for First Nations, support cultural, spiritual, recreational and economic activities for all British Columbians in harmony with wilderness values.
- Stikine Country Protected Areas form the heartland of the Tahltan people and the centre of their cultural and spiritual lives.
- These Protected Areas span a landbase where First Nations freely exercise their aboriginal and treaty rights. First Nations have a strong sense of reconnection to their Traditional Territories within Protected Areas and carry out traditional uses, spiritual activities and cultural programs for the benefit of First Nation Communities, family groups and future leadership. Traditional use sites and trails and archaeological sites are protected from adverse impacts.
- Visitors to Stikine Country Protected Areas experience world-class wilderness recreation opportunities, both guided and non-guided. Full ranges of recreational opportunities are provided, from serviced frontcountry camping to low impact activities in wilderness areas where solitude and quiet prevail.
- Management of the Stikine Country Protected Areas fully involves First Nations, local communities and other British Columbians. The current Tahltan/BC Parks committee has evolved into a strong partnership.
- First Nations and local communities are key beneficiaries of employment and economic opportunities provided by the Protected Areas. While serving as gateway communities for international, national and regional visitors, local communities actively participate in balancing economic benefits with the need to maintain ecological integrity for the long term.
- Ongoing information exchanges, research and education programs maintain a high level of public understanding and support for the Protected Areas and create knowledge and appreciation of the rich cultural & natural heritage of the area.
- Activities, facilities, use levels and access are carefully managed to ensure that ecosystems remain intact and that exceptional wilderness experiences for visitors are maintained.
- Management is supported by comprehensive inventory and research and relies on both First Nations traditional knowledge, long term monitoring and timely scientific projects.
- Managers are proactive in responding to potential adverse impacts and pressures on the protected area system and utilize adaptive management and precautionary principles.
- Management of the protected area system respects and is coordinated with management regimes outside the system. Coordination focuses on adjacent areas that provide wildlife habitats for populations resident in the protected area system, landscape connectivity and access.

Draft Management Direction

1 Managing the System of Protected Areas

Individually, each protected area in the Stikine Country Protected Areas system contains unique wildlife, vegetation, geologic, cultural, historic and recreational values. As a system, they protect a broad range of values and provide a unique opportunity to manage large-scale ecosystem dynamics in a relatively natural setting. For example, a large fire may affect a major portion of Pitman River Protected Area but will have a much smaller effect on the entire Stikine Country Protected Areas system. Please note: In this context, the Stikine Country Protected Area System includes all Protected Areas within the Cassiar, Iskut-Stikine LRMP area.

As a system, the Stikine Country Protected Areas can offer a wide range of recreational opportunities in portions of the system, while focussing more on protecting natural and cultural values in other areas of the system. This allows BC Parks to meet both components of their mandate – conservation and recreation – within the Stikine Country Protected Areas system rather than within each protected area individually.

General Management Direction

Combined, the Stikine Country Protected Areas offer a wide range of natural, cultural and recreational features that are representative of northern boreal landscapes. The Stikine Country Protected Areas will be managed as a system of Protected Areas rather than as individual Protected Areas. The conservation and recreation mandates of BC Parks will be applied to the system as a whole, focusing conservation management where appropriate and focusing recreational activities and facilities where appropriate within the system.

Objectives and Actions:

To conserve natural and cultural values in the Stikine Country Protected Area System while allowing appropriate recreational activities to occur.

- Identify, map and inventory important natural and cultural values and focus conservation management in areas where those values occur.
- Identify appropriate recreational activities and focus those activities in areas where they do not adversely impact natural and cultural heritage values.

2 Managing Ecosystems

An ecosystem can be defined as all living and non-living components of a system and the processes that link them in time and space.

Ecosystem management in the Stikine Country Protected Areas will focus on maintaining natural ecosystem structure (living and non-living components) and function (processes linking components) in time and space. Because ecosystems include the processes that link ecosystem components, they are inherently dynamic; ecosystem structure will change as processes act upon them or interact with them. Management strategies will consider natural changes including climate change and its effects on natural disturbance processes and distribution and abundance of ecosystem components. Humans are considered an important component of the larger regional ecosystem.

For the Stikine Country Protected Areas, two large-scale ecosystems are defined for management purposes:

- the Spatsizi Ecosystem; and
- the Mt. Edziza Ecosystem.

The ecosystems are based primarily on the distribution and range of the two woodland caribou populations in the area (the Spatsizi caribou population and the Mt. Edziza caribou population). The Spatsizi and Mt. Edziza ecosystems are in turn part of the larger ecosystems that support habitat for woodland caribou and other species.

General Management Direction

The Spatsizi Ecosystem and the Mt. Edziza Ecosystem provide a framework for ecological management within the Stikine Country Protected Areas. Ecological issues in Protected Areas and portions of Protected Areas west of Highway 37 will be managed as one unit within the context of the Mt. Edziza Ecosystem. Ecological issues in Protected Areas and portions of Protected Areas east of Highway 37 will be managed as one unit within the context of the Spatsizi Ecosystem.



3 Managing with the Community

First Nations

The Stikine Country Protected Areas lie within the Traditional Territories of several First Nations groups, with some overlap between territories. The Tahltan First Nation and the Iskut First Nation, as the Tahltan Joint Councils Traditional Territory covers all of the Stikine Country Protected Areas. The land claim of the Kaska Dena Council covers Tatlatui Park, a portion of the eastern part of Spatsizi Park in the Chapea Creek and Metsantan Creek area and all of the Chukachida Protected area, where it overlaps with the Tahltan Traditional Territory.

General Management Direction

BC Parks will work with First Nations to ensure that aboriginal and treaty rights are accommodated and that First Nations' goals, values and interests are fully considered in management of the Stikine Country Protected Areas System.

Objectives and Actions:

To ensure that ministry and government policy on consultation with First Nations is implemented.

- Consult with Tahltan, Kaska-Dene, and Carrier-Sekani First Nations on any activities that have potential to infringe on aboriginal or treaty rights.
- Work with First Nations in responding to their interests and concerns in park management, and employment and economic opportunities in the protected area system.
- Continue to support and implement the Tahltan/BC Parks Agreement that provides for a joint Park Management Advisory Committee. This Committee will provide advice to BC Parks on a wide range of issues related to planning, management and activities within areas of mutual interest.

Local Communities, Stakeholders and the Public

Local communities, stakeholders and the public have a strong desire to be involved in management of the protected area system. Local communities of Dease Lake, Telegraph Creek and Iskut are seeking a greater say in the management of Protected Areas and in access to employment, economic development and recreational opportunities.

General Management Direction

BC Parks will work with local communities, stakeholders and the public to ensure that there are ongoing opportunities to provide advice on park management and to receive updates on park related information.

Objectives and Actions:

To foster communication between BC Parks and local communities, stakeholders and the public on management and opportunities in the Stikine Country Protected Areas system.

- Host periodic open houses/meetings and information sessions in local communities that increase knowledge and communication while providing an opportunity to resolve issues that arise.
- Ensure that local use and quality recreation opportunities continue to be available for residents.
- Provide information to local communities on upcoming opportunities for employment and economic development and work with entrepreneurs to ensure that:
 - procedures and rules for accessing opportunities are readily available; and,
 - timing and scope of opportunities, to the extent practical, are consistent with local capacity.
- Meet periodically with commercial operators to review operations and issues related to those operations.
- Maintain a full time and seasonal staff presence in Dease Lake subject to available funding.

Managing Cultural Heritage Values

The Stikine Country Protected Areas have a rich legacy of First Nations and non-aboriginal history and cultural values. For many generations over hundreds and perhaps thousands of years, First Nations people fashioned out of the natural surroundings within the Stikine area, a cultural landscape of traditional activities that reflected their interactions with nature. First Nations continue to harvest fish, vegetation and wildlife of the area according to long held beliefs and value systems.

Historically, obsidian from Mt. Edziza Park was an important commodity for survival and for trade for the Tahltan Nation. First Nations' village sites (Caribou Hide and Metsantan), hunting and fishing camps (aboriginal camp preceding the current Coldfish camp), trapline trails (aboriginal trail preceding the Hyland Post trail), burial sites, and lithic related/archaeological sites are widespread throughout the protected area system.

Non-aboriginal history began in 1824 with the fur trade, which was followed by gold discoveries, guided hunting and telegraph lines. Important sites from this era include Coldfish camp, the Telegraph trail through Mt. Edziza Park, the Hyland Post trail in Spatsizi Park, and other cabins, camps and trails.

General Management Direction

Protecting Cultural Heritage values is an important priority in the Stikine Country Protected Areas system.

Objectives and Actions:

To manage and conserve cultural/ heritage values.

- Protect archaeological sites and other significant cultural/heritage or traditional use sites in their natural state and condition.
- Work with First Nations to develop and share cultural/heritage inventories and assess the significance of cultural heritage sites and potential for adverse impacts from public and commercial recreation.
- Develop protocol arrangements with First Nations on the sharing of cultural inventories and other cultural information.
- Develop and implement strategies to reduce or eliminate adverse impacts to cultural/heritage sites in conjunction with First Nations and user groups.
- Establish management protocols/strategies for important First Nations and historic sites and trails (e.g. Caribou Hide village sites, Metsantan Village site, Coldfish Camp, Hyland Post Trail, etc.).

To facilitate the exercise of aboriginal rights and reconnection of First Nations to the Stikine Country Protected Areas system.

- Work with First Nations to facilitate the exercise of aboriginal rights and development of programs/initiatives to introduce First Nations youth to the Stikine Country Protected Areas system.

To increase public and visitor awareness of the rich cultural heritage of the Stikine Country Protected Areas system.

- In conjunction with First Nations and others, develop education and information materials to share with the public and park users on the nature, value and fragility of cultural/heritage values.

4 Land & Geology

The rich volcanic history of the Mt. Edziza area has resulted in numerous significant geologic and landform features in the area. The Mt. Edziza area is rich in obsidian, which is produced by the rapid cooling of molten lava or some liquid fraction of molten lava; most of the obsidian occurs at relatively high elevations at about 1800 to 1900 meters. Mt. Edziza was an important source of obsidian for First Nations people. Two exposed columnar basalt formations are found in the Mt. Edziza area: the Tahltan Eagle at the confluence of the Tahltan and Stikine rivers, and the Pipe Organ Mountain along the boundary between Mt. Edziza Park and Mt. Edziza Zone. Both formations display radiating columns of basalt. The Tahltan Eagle has significant spiritual and cultural value to the Tahltan First people. The appropriate name and cultural significance of Pipe Organ Mountain to the Tahltan people is unknown.

Four hot springs have been identified in the Mt. Edziza area at Elwyn Creek, Taweh Creek, Mess Lake and Mess Creek. Three of the springs (Elwyn, Taweh, Mess Lake) are the only hot springs known in Canada that appear to be related to recent volcanic activity. These locations were also of high value to First Nations.

General Management Direction

The landforms and geologic features of the Stikine Country Protected Areas provide the structural definition that shapes the Spatsizi and Mt. Edziza greater ecosystems. Conservation of significant geologic features will focus on interpretation and protection from physical disturbance by humans.

Objectives and Actions:

To protect the structural and functional integrity of significant geologic features.

- Provide recreational users and commercial operators with information on the significance of geologic features and appropriate activities adjacent to and within these areas.
- Monitor the effects of recreational use on significant geologic features and designate routes, or prohibit activities on those features if necessary.

Park Specific Management Direction

Mt. Edziza Provincial Park

To protect cinder cones and calcite deposits in Mt. Edziza Park.

- Manage access on volcanic cones and, if necessary, restrict access to designated trails or prohibit all recreational activities on cones.
- Provide information on the sensitivity of volcanic cones to park visitors and clear direction on avoidance of impacts.
- For Eve Cone, restrict access on the cone to the designated trail.
- Assess the Mess Creek hotsprings for location and extent of rare plants and plant communities.
- Manage access at the Mess Creek hotsprings to allow for some access while avoiding disturbance to the calcite deposits.
- Provide information on the sensitivity of calcite deposits at Mess Creek hotsprings to park visitors and establish clearly marked trails that avoid damage to sensitive areas.
- Maintain the ban on helicopter landings on the cinder cones and implement a ban on landings at any of the hotsprings.

To communicate the significance of the Tahltan Eagle for travellers along the Telegraph Creek Road.

- Work with the Tahltan Joint Councils and Land Use Office and the Ministry of Transportation and Highways to assess a possible pullout for viewing the Tahltan Eagle.
- Work with the Tahltan First Nations to develop an interpretive package for the Tahltan Eagle.

To protect Pipe Organ Mountain.

- Work with the Tahltan First Joint Councils and Tahltan Land Use Office Nations, the Ministry of Energy and Mines, and with the mining industry to maintain the structural and functional integrity of Pipe Organ Mountain.

5 Water

The hydrology of the Stikine Country Protected Areas is dominated by the Stikine River and its tributary systems that flow in a generally westward direction to the Pacific Ocean. The Stikine River forms the main part of the Stikine River Park, which includes the lower elevation areas surrounding the Pitman and Chukachida tributaries. The headwaters of the Stikine River are situated in Spatsizi Park, and the river drains most of the larger lakes in the park (Happy, Tuaton, Laslui, Hotlesklwa, Chapea). Buckingham and Klahowya lakes drain into the Spatsizi River, which converges with the Stikine River just north of Hyland Post. Gladys, Cold Fish, Blackfox and Bug Lakes drain into Mink Creek, which empties into the Spatsizi River.

On the eastern side of Mt. Edziza Park, Mowdade, Mowchilla, Kakiddi and Nuttlude lakes form a chain of lakes that are emptied by Kakiddi Creek, which flows into the Iskut River. The waters of Buckley Lake on the north slope of the Edziza Plateau drain into the Klastline River, which flows northwest and joins the Stikine River. Mess Lake on the west side of Mt. Edziza drains into the Stikine River via Mess Creek.

The waters of Tatlatui Park are the only waters in the Stikine Country Protected Areas that are not part of the Stikine River system. All the major lakes in Tatlatui Park (Tatlatui, Hoy, Trygve, Kitchener, Stalk) feed into the Firesteel River, which eventually flows through the Finlay River into the Peace River and the Arctic Ocean.

General Management Direction

Water quality, quantity and flow will continue to be regulated by natural events. Recreational and commercial use in the protected area system will be managed to ensure impacts to natural water quality are negligible.

Objectives and Actions:

To protect and maintain the natural quality, quantity and flow of rivers, creeks and lakes in the Stikine Country Protected Areas within their natural range of variability.

- Monitor water quality in the most heavily used areas (Coldfish Lake, Stikine River at the bridge, Tuaton Lake, Fountain Rapids, Buckley Lake) and at permanent facilities, and implement strategies to remediate or eliminate impacts from recreational or commercial activities if necessary.
- Assess and manage commercial and public use to ensure proper disposal of human waste and handling of fuel, batteries and other potentially hazardous waste products that are capable of harming the environment and aquatic systems.
- Ensure commercial and public users employ best practices for management and storage of human generated waste, fuel and other hazardous products that are capable of harming the environment.
- Ensure sanitary facilities are properly designed and located.
- Develop a water quality monitoring strategy for other water bodies that considers recreational and commercial use levels.
- Work with other agencies to ensure that commercial activities adjacent to protected have minimal effect on natural water quality, quantity and flow of waters within the Protected Areas.
- Work with other agencies to follow Cassiar-Iskut-Stikine LRMP management direction for water quality.

Park Specific Management Direction

Mt. Edziza Provincial Park & Protected Area

To maintain natural water quality, quantity and flow in the Kakiddi Lake chain.

- Monitor water quality in the Kakiddi Lake chain prior to and after development of the possible mining road access to Mt. Edziza Zone.
- Work with the Ministry of Energy and Mines and with the mining industry to ensure water quality, quantity and flow are not affected by the possible mining road or other mining activities.

Pitman River Protected Area – Objectives

To maintain natural water quality, quantity and flow in the Pitman River within Pitman River Protected Area.

- Monitor water quality in the Pitman River prior to and after development of the proposed bridge/road across the Pitman River.
- Work with the Ministry of Energy and Mines and with the mining industry to ensure water quality, quantity and flow are not affected by the possible bridge/road crossing or other mining activities.

Chukachida Protected Area – Objectives

To maintain natural water quality, quantity and flow in the Chukachida River within Chukachida Protected Area.

- Monitor water quality in the Chukachida River prior to and after development of the possible bridge/road crossing.
- Work with the Ministry of Energy and Mines and with the mining industry to ensure water quality, quantity and flow are not affected by the possible bridge/road crossing or other mining activities on water quality, quantity and flow within the protected area.

Stikine River Park – Objectives

To maintain natural water quality, quantity and flow in the Stikine River and its tributaries within Stikine River Park.

- Monitor water quality in the Stikine River and affected tributaries prior to and after possible forest harvesting development north of the park.
- Work with the Ministry of Forests to minimize and mitigate impacts on water quality, quantity and flow by forest harvesting practices and associated road building.

6 Vegetation

The Stikine Country Protected Areas consist primarily of boreal, subalpine and alpine vegetation. Vegetation features are diverse ranging from dry grassland slopes at 300 meters in Stikine River Park to lichens and hardy alpine plants at elevations over 2000 meters in Mt. Edziza, Spatsizi and Tatlatui parks and Gladys Lake Ecological Reserve. Forests of spruce and pine carpet lower elevations, with subalpine fir dominating at higher elevations. Cold winters, short growing seasons and poorly developed soils affect the distribution and composition of vegetation communities within the Protected Areas. With the exception of low elevation coastal influenced vegetation ecosystems along the Stikine and Iskut rivers in the west, vegetation features in the Stikine Country Protected Areas are representative of vegetation features in the larger Cassiar-Iskut-Stikine region.

Fire is the most significant natural disturbance factor that has shaped the recent vegetation mosaic of the Stikine Country Protected Areas. Many of the forest stands are of fire origin and still have not reached the climax stage of succession due to the frequency of fire events.

Twenty-two blue-listed and 3 red-listed vascular plant species are known to occur within the Stikine Country Protected Areas. An additional 25 plant species of taxonomic or distributional interest have been recorded in the Gladys Lake Ecological Reserve and 11 rare plant communities are known to occur within the Stikine Country Protected Areas.

Historically, First Nations inhabited the Stikine Country Protected Areas system. However, during the last 50-100 years, much human use of the area has been from recreational users, or from commercial operators who provide recreational guiding services, primarily guided hunting and angling. Human influence on the vegetation landscape includes: direct disturbance to plants and plant communities at heavily used and/or sensitive sites; introduction of non-native plants; and accidental or deliberate human-caused fires, horse use and grazing.

General Management Direction

Natural disturbances such as fire, forest insects, wind and forest diseases are considered essential ecosystem components contributing to the vegetation landscape and natural ecosystem functioning. The Stikine Country Protected Areas system is large enough to accommodate natural disturbance events within the system. Vegetation management will focus on maintaining natural disturbance events and minimizing impacts of human activities.

Objectives and Actions:

To maintain and monitor naturally occurring vegetation patterns and natural disturbance events.

- Allow natural disturbance events to continue driving the dynamics of the vegetation landscape.
- Assess long-term climatic conditions to determine potential changes in disturbance patterns.
- Conduct periodic monitoring for forest insect disturbances.
- Develop a Vegetation Management Plan that addresses current vegetation patterns, natural disturbance management and climate change.

- Assess the current state of knowledge of vegetation features in the Stikine Country Protected Areas and determine further information needs.
- Revise fire management plans to include additions and changes to Protected Areas, and to update and standardize fire management strategies to reflect vegetation management direction in this plan.
- Consider habitat manipulation for wildlife populations or portions of populations that are significantly declining due to deteriorating habitat conditions resulting from human disturbance or intervention, or for rare or sensitive species if populations are threatened or where local populations are at risk of becoming extirpated. Habitat manipulation will not be considered to maintain or enhance wildlife populations for hunting purposes. Habitat manipulation will be conducted using only tools based on natural disturbances (i.e. fire, avalanche, etc.).

To manage vegetation features and disturbances within a larger regional context.

- Work with other agencies and First Nations in vegetation management planning exercises on adjacent lands (i.e. landscape unit planning) to promote compatibility of vegetation management objectives with those for the Stikine Country Protected Areas, while respecting management regimes outside the protected area system.
- Consider management objectives on adjacent lands in vegetation management activities within the Stikine Country Protected Areas.
- Continue to work with the Ministry of Forests Protection Branch to ensure protected area fire management objectives are met.
- Manage for natural disturbances within the Stikine Country Protected Areas system rather than in individual Protected Areas.

To protect rare and sensitive plants and plant communities.

- Identify and map known localities of rare and sensitive plants and plant communities.
- Protect known localities of rare and sensitive plants and plant communities from public use and commercial disturbance. Develop and implement a strategy to prevent disturbance if necessary.
- Assess the additions to the protected area system (Mess, Klastline, Metsantan, Stikine River, Pitman, and Chukachida) for rare and sensitive plants and plant communities.
- Use air photos to identify potential additional localities of rare plant communities and assess all Protected Areas within the Stikine Country Protected Areas for rare and sensitive plants and plant communities.

To minimize human use disturbance to native plants and plant communities.

- Conduct vegetation assessments prior to planning and development of any new facilities or trails.
- Inventory and assess already established facilities and trails for impacts on native plants and plant communities.

- Monitor impacts of existing grazing permits and horse grazing on native plants and plant communities. Implement a strategy to reduce those impacts if necessary.
- Assess the distribution and extent of non-native plants within the Stikine Country Protected Areas and determine their impacts on natural vegetation features.
- If necessary, develop guidelines to reduce the current distribution and extent of non-native plant species, and/or to reduce potential future introductions.
- Identify and eliminate “noxious weeds”.
- Develop a firewood management strategy that includes an assessment of supply and demand and strict guidelines on the removal of vegetation for the purpose of supplying firewood.
- Monitor the demand for and use of firewood/heating fuel and restrict consumption if necessary.

Park Specific Management Direction

Although a number of the park specific management objectives focus on protecting specific rare plant communities, other rare plant communities occur in other Protected Areas and are addressed under general management direction for the system.

Mt. Edziza

To protect terrestrial lichen and rare plant communities on volcanic cones.

- Manage access on volcanic cones and, if necessary, restrict access to designated trails or prohibit recreational activities on cones.
- Provide information on the sensitivity of lichen and plant communities on volcanic cones to park visitors.
- For Eve Cone, restrict access on the cone to the designated trail.

To protect plant communities at the Mess Creek hotspots.

- Assess the Mess Creek hotspots for location and extent of rare plants and plant communities.
- Manage access at the Mess Creek hotspots by providing designated trails while avoiding disturbance to rare plants and sensitive sites. The Cassiar-Iskut-Stikine LRMP provides the following direction for the Mess Creek Hotspots area: “Provide designated trails to minimize impacts to calcite deposits”.
- Provide information on the sensitivity of plants and plant communities at Mess Creek hotspots to park visitors.

Stikine River

To protect rare dry steppe plant communities along the Stikine River.

- Identify and map known localities of rare plants and dry steppe plant communities along the Stikine River.
- Protect the known localities of dry steppe plant communities from human disturbance.

Tatlatui

To assess potential northern migration of forest insects into the Stikine Country Protected Area system.

- Assess and verify reports of mountain pine beetle attack near Tatlatui Lake.
- Develop a strategy for managing any mountain pine beetle attacked sites.

Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness and Stikine River

To monitor and rehabilitate heavily impacted campsites and trails along the Stikine River.

- Rehabilitate heavily used campsites along the Stikine River canoe route (i.e. Fountain Rapids) and designate camping areas, if needed, to prevent further impacts.
- Discourage firewood collection at Fountain Rapids. Provide visitors with information (in the brochure; at the information shelter at Tuaton Lake; as part of an information package to be distributed by aircraft charter companies) to collect firewood prior to arriving at Fountain Rapids.
- Rehabilitate and improve the portage trail at Fountain Rapids to avoid impacts in wet areas.
- Continue to monitor impacts of use on campsites and trails and implement strategies to remediate or avoid impacts.
- Assess the extent and impacts of informal campsites along the Stikine River downstream from the mouth of the Spatsizi River. Remove sites as necessary and designate camping areas.
- Assess horse use impacts at guide outfitter's camps and develop strategies to reduce impacts in consultation with guide outfitters.

7 Wildlife

The Stikine Country Protected Areas system is well known for its variety and abundance of wildlife, especially large mammals. Caribou, Stone's sheep, mountain goats, moose, grizzly bears, wolves and black bears all inhabit the area. Although the Stikine Country Protected Areas system is large enough to accommodate most habitat and life cycle requirements for most of those species, animals frequently move beyond protected area boundaries and some require large areas to maintain minimum viable populations. Numerous smaller wildlife species are also present. For those species the Stikine Country Protected Areas system provides all necessary life cycle requirements and is large enough to maintain viable populations.

One of the most outstanding biological features of the Stikine Country Protected Areas is the diverse large mammal predator/prey ecosystem that exists in a relatively undisturbed natural setting. The Stikine Country Protected Areas system is the largest contiguous protected area system supporting the diverse caribou/moose/mountain sheep/mountain goat/wolf/grizzly bear/black bear predator-prey system in British Columbia. These landscapes are globally significant, providing representation of a large mammal predator-prey system in the British Columbia protected area system that ranks as unique in the world.

General Management Direction

The priority of wildlife management in the Stikine Country Protected Areas is to maintain representative large-mammal predator-prey systems in a healthy and viable state, allowing for natural fluctuations in wildlife populations. Two large mammal predator-prey systems are recognized within the Stikine Country Protected Areas: one centred in the Spatsizi Ecosystem; and one centred in the Mt. Edziza Ecosystem.

Objectives and Actions:

To maintain naturally occurring, viable large mammal predator-prey systems in the Stikine Country Protected Areas in a mostly natural state.

- Manage the caribou/mountain sheep/mountain goat/moose/wolf/grizzly bear/black bear populations centred in the Mt. Edziza Ecosystem (Mt. Edziza Park, Mt. Edziza Protected Area {proposed} and Stikine River Park – West) as the Mt. Edziza predator-prey system recognizing the connectivity and eco-linkage between these areas.
- Manage the caribou/mountain sheep/mountain goat/moose/wolf/grizzly bear/black bear populations in Protected Areas within the the Spatsizi Ecosystem (Spatsizi Wilderness Park, Gladys Lake Ecological Reserve, Stikine River Park – East, Chukachida Protected Area, Pitman River Protected Area, and Tatlatui Park) as the Spatsizi predator-prey system.
- Work with First Nations, other agencies, and the public to minimize impacts of activity outside Protected Areas on the Mt. Edziza and Spatsizi ecosystems.
- Allow natural fluctuations in large mammal populations to occur as part of a healthy and dynamic predator-prey system.
- Develop and provide information on the significance and functioning of the two Stikine Country Protected Areas' predator-prey systems to visitors.

8 Habitat Management

Although habitat and food do not normally regulate prey populations where predators exist, they are basic requirements and must be available in sufficient quantity. Habitat requirements for each prey species are a function of food preferences, environmental conditions and predator avoidance tactics. Both mountain goats and mountain sheep avoid predators by escaping into precipitous terrain (cliffs, rocky slopes) where they are far more agile than the predators. Their foraging areas are therefore restricted to areas adjacent to escape terrain. Moose and caribou avoid predators by running and to a lesser degree by defending themselves. Moose and caribou therefore select habitats based more on food preferences and environmental conditions.

Detailed information on wildlife habitat is lacking for the Stikine Country Protected Areas. Currently, habitat capability maps are available only at a 1:250 000 scale and general areas of aggregation are known from surveys and studies of radio-collared animals.

General Management Direction

Vegetation in the Stikine Country Protected Areas system is in a largely natural state; therefore, natural disturbances will be the main processes driving wildlife habitat dynamics. Habitat management for individual species will be secondary to management of an overall natural wildlife habitat mosaic. Acquiring more information on distribution and quality of wildlife habitat throughout the system is a high priority.

Objectives and Actions:

To manage wildlife habitat as part of a natural vegetation mosaic driven by natural disturbances.

- Allow natural disturbance processes to be the primary driver of wildlife habitat dynamics.
- Consider habitat manipulation for wildlife populations or portions of populations that are significantly declining due to deteriorating habitat conditions resulting from human disturbance or intervention, or where location populations are at risk of becoming extirpated. Habitat manipulation will not be considered to maintain or enhance wildlife populations for hunting purposes. Habitat manipulation will be conducted using only tools based on natural disturbances (i.e. fire, avalanche, etc.).
- Consider habitat manipulation for rare or sensitive species if populations are threatened.
- Monitor effectiveness of any habitat manipulation activities.
- Monitor natural disturbances and evaluate recent disturbances for wildlife habitat value and use.

To identify significant wildlife habitat.

- Delineate known ungulate winter and summer ranges based on research conducted by the Spatsizi Association of Biological Research on radio-collared animals, and on inventories.
- Conduct wildlife habitat capability and suitability mapping at 1:50 000 or 1:100 000 scale for the Stikine Country Protected Areas system for caribou, Stone's sheep, mountain goats, moose, grizzly bears and rare species.
- Use the wildlife habitat map to determine overall wildlife habitat condition and to identify critical or sensitive habitat.
- Identify known areas of important habitat outside protected area boundaries.

To protect critical or sensitive habitat from human disturbance.

- Encourage visitors and commercial operators to avoid areas of known critical or sensitive habitat.
- Provide visitors and commercial operators with information on the significance of critical or sensitive habitat and impacts due to human disturbance.

To protect rare/sensitive species habitats from human disturbance.

- Encourage visitors and commercial operators to avoid areas of known rare/sensitive species habitat. If necessary, limit access to those areas.
- Provide visitors and commercial operators with information on the significance of rare/sensitive species and their habitat and impacts due to human disturbance.

To maintain important caribou ranges to contribute to conservation of caribou in British Columbia.

- Delineate known caribou winter range and identify winter range characteristics based on existing information.
- Establish and monitor long-term monitoring plots to investigate terrestrial lichen availability and dynamics in the caribou winter range along the Stikine River.
- Monitor impacts of natural disturbances on caribou winter habitat.
- Identify known summering areas of the Mt. Edziza caribou population based on existing information.
- Conduct a study using radio-collars for caribou in Mt. Edziza Park to determine winter habitat use and important wintering areas.

To incorporate First Nations traditional knowledge in wildlife habitat management.

- Work with First Nations to identify historical and currently used important habitats and migration routes.
- Identify and assess traditional habitat management activities.

Park Specific Management Direction

Spatsizi Wilderness Park

To monitor the Hyland Post burn.

- Establish long-term vegetation monitoring plots at the recent Hyland Post burn to monitor wildlife habitat quality.
- Conduct surveys of Stone's sheep in the Marion Zone to determine effects of the burn on lamb recruitment and population numbers.

9 Population Management

For the Stikine Country Protected Areas, large mammal inventories have been conducted irregularly during the last 20 years. Due to the size of the area and difficulty in censusing some species, few recent reliable population estimates are available. The most recent counts include a goat and sheep survey in Mt. Edziza in 1996, and sheep and caribou surveys in the Spatsizi area in 1993 and 1994. For most species, population estimates are over 10 years old.

In Spatsizi, Tatlatui and Mt. Edziza parks, the parks are divided into Wildlife Zones for inventory and management purposes. Some species inhabit only portions of those parks during different seasons.

Therefore, wildlife zones are useful in reporting general distribution patterns and changes in population numbers at a more geographically specific level than at the whole park level. Some zones include areas outside of the parks to incorporate biologically based boundaries.

Inventory information for species other than caribou, Stone's sheep, mountain goats and moose is lacking. One of the most significant inventory information gaps is wolf numbers and distribution. Other than information collected by the Spatsizi Association for Biological Research in the early 1990's on 2-3 radio-collared wolf packs, most observations are anecdotal and are insufficient to for drawing conclusions on wolf packs, numbers and dynamics.

Hunting

Resident and non-resident hunting is not permitted in Gladys Lake Ecological Reserve because of its ecological reserve status; otherwise, hunting occurs in all other Protected Areas in the Stikine Country Protected Areas system. Some Protected Areas or portions of some Protected Areas are closed for certain species. Mule deer hunting is not permitted in the Stikine Country Protected Areas region. Mt. Edziza Park and Zone are closed to caribou hunting and Tatlatui Park is closed to Stone's sheep hunting due to low population numbers in both areas. A portion of Spatsizi Park is also closed to mountain goat hunting due to the low number of mountain goats in that area.

New Protected Areas and additions including Mess Creek and Klastline additions to Mt. Edziza Park; northern additions to Stikine River Recreation Area East; Metsantan addition to Spatsizi Park; and Pitman River and Chukachida River Protected Areas are currently not included in park zones within Wildlife Management Units. Mess Creek and Klastline both fall within MU6-21 and each falls entirely within 1 guide territory. Pitman River Protected Area falls entirely within MU6-19 and 1 guide territory and Metsantan falls entirely within MU6-20 and 1 guide territory. Chukachida River Protected Area lies entirely within 1 guide territory but within two MU's (6-19, 6-20). The northern addition to the Stikine River Recreation Area lies within MU6-19 and 1 guide territory. Currently the general hunting regulations for those Management Units and territory wide guide quotas apply to those new Protected Areas.

General Management Direction

The priority of wildlife population management in the Stikine Country Protected Areas system is to maintain viable populations of all large mammal species while allowing for natural population fluctuations. Accurate monitoring of wildlife population numbers is a priority for ensuring viability of populations. First Nations traditional activities such as hunting and trapping are an important component of the wildlife system. Non-First Nations recreational hunting and guided hunting will continue to be managed more conservatively than in adjacent areas.

Objectives and Actions:

To monitor population status of the main large mammal species (caribou, mountain sheep, mountain goats, moose, grizzly bear) in the Stikine Country Protected Areas system.

- Update all large mammal population estimates within 5 years.
- Conduct surveys on hunted populations of caribou, Stone's sheep, moose and mountain goats. Suggested time interval: every 4-6 years.

- Conduct surveys on un hunted populations of caribou, Stone's sheep, moose and mountain goats. Suggested time interval: every 6-8 years.
- Develop a population monitoring strategy for wolves.
- Work with Wildlife staff to co-ordinate wildlife population surveys for populations in and adjacent to the Stikine Country Protected Areas system.
- Continue to use existing Wildlife Zones as the basis for population surveys.
- Delineate Wildlife Zones for Stikine River Park, Chukachida Protected Area, Pitman River Protected Area and additions to Mt. Edziza and Spatsizi parks.
- Monitor current literature for new techniques for determining population status.
- Continue to review new developments in estimating grizzly bear numbers.

To manage small and moderate-sized wildlife species as intact viable populations.

- Allow natural fluctuations of small and moderate-sized wildlife species to continue.
- Monitor populations when conservation concerns arise.

To continue to improve the level of understanding of wildlife population dynamics in the Stikine Country Protected Areas system.

- Encourage universities and other credible research organizations to conduct research on wildlife and wildlife population dynamics in the Stikine Country Protected Areas system.
- Investigate new sources of funding for wildlife management activities.

To maintain First Nations traditional hunting and trapping activities that are consistent with conservation and public safety objectives.

- Work with First Nations to implement a harvest-monitoring program to evaluate current First Nations harvest levels in the Stikine Country Protected Areas system.
- Work with First Nations to develop a First Nations harvest management strategy.

To provide high quality wilderness-based hunting opportunities for resident and non-resident hunters that are consistent with conservation objectives.

- Continue to follow BC Parks' hunter harvest management policies to manage resident and nonresident hunting opportunities and annual allowable harvests.
- Develop a strategy for managing recreational wildlife hunting that considers issues such as hunting zones, levels of harvest and consistency of regulations. This strategy will be developed in consultation with government wildlife biologists, the First Nations, local hunters, the BC Wildlife Federation, Park managers, guide-outfitters and other stakeholders.
- Work with First Nations on any proposed revisions to hunting regulations.

- Where necessary, revise hunting regulations – conducted in consultation with government wildlife biologists, First Nations, local hunters, the BC Wildlife Federation, Park managers, guide-outfitters and other local stakeholders – to provide clear boundary definitions and to facilitate enforcement activities.

To maintain trapping opportunities that are consistent with conservation objectives.

- Manage traplines and portions of traplines that lie within the Stikine Country Protected.
- Monitor trapping harvests specific to the Stikine Country Protected Areas.

Park Specific Management Direction

Mt. Edziza Park & Protected Area

To protect wildlife populations of known conservation concern.

- Continue the closed season for caribou in Mt. Edziza Park given the lack of current inventory information and low numbers counted during the most recent inventory.
- Conduct a caribou inventory during the fall rut to determine a population estimate.

Tatlatui Park

To protect wildlife populations of known conservation concern.

- Continue the closed season for Stone's sheep in Tatlatui Park given the lack of current inventory information and low numbers counted during the most recent inventory.

10 Rare and Sensitive Species

Three blue-listed mammal species (grizzly bear, wolverine, fisher) occur within the Stikine Country Protected Areas. All three species require large relatively undisturbed home ranges. For fisher and wolverine the combined size of the contiguous Stikine Country Protected Areas is likely sufficient to maintain viable populations, especially for the Protected Areas east of Highway 37. For grizzly bears the Stikine Country Protected Areas provide a large core of protected range, however, it is still not large enough for maintaining a viable population.

Eleven red, blue and yellow listed bird species have been recorded in the Stikine Country Protected Areas. Oldsquaw and Upland Sandpipers are recorded as migrants whereas all other species are either known or suspected to breed within the Protected Areas.

General Management Direction

For rare and sensitive wildlife species, the role of the Stikine Country Protected Area system is to provide a large core area of habitat that is for the most part undisturbed by humans. The focus is on understanding, monitoring and maintaining habitat and dynamics of rare species.

Objectives and Actions:

To protect known rare and sensitive species and their habitat.

- Compile known locations of rare and sensitive wildlife species in the Stikine Country Protected Areas system.
- Determine habitat and life cycle requirements of rare and sensitive species known to occur in the Stikine Country Protected Areas.
- Develop guidelines for minimizing disturbance to rare and sensitive species and their habitat. Restrict or eliminate use if impacts can not be managed to an acceptable level.

To increase the information base on rare and sensitive species.

- Work with the BC Conservation Data Centre to determine potential rare and sensitive species present in the Stikine Country Protected Areas.
- Conduct surveys for potential rare and sensitive species.

To monitor population status of grizzly bears, wolverines and fisher.

- Develop a monitoring strategy for wolverine and fisher for the Stikine Country Protected Areas and monitor population status of those species.
- Monitor hunter harvests for grizzly bears and trapping harvests for wolverine and fisher and revise or establish quotas if necessary.
- Consider purchase and retirement of traplines if they are voluntarily offered for sale.

To establish a baseline monitoring program for amphibians in an ecosystem relatively undisturbed by humans.

- Undertake basic amphibian inventories in the Stikine Country Protected Areas system.
- Develop a baseline monitoring program for amphibians that are found to occur in the Stikine Country Protected Areas.

Park Specific Management Direction

Tatlatui Park

To conserve pikas and melanistic chipmunks.

- Confirm sightings of pikas and melanistic chipmunks.
- Conduct ground investigations to determine extent and range of those species.
- Develop guidelines to minimize disturbance to habitat and colonies.

11 Wildlife Movements

Although the Stikine Country Protected Areas protect over 1.4 million contiguous hectares of land, animals will continue to move beyond park boundaries and be influenced by management activities outside of the Protected Areas. Populations of large mammals such as grizzly bears, black bears, wolves, wolverines, caribou, moose, Stone's sheep and mountain goats are likely to move beyond park boundaries for habitat or life cycle requirements. Smaller animals moving beyond protected area boundaries are likely dispersers or animals with home ranges near boundaries. The Stikine Country Protected Areas encompass a large enough area to maintain self-sustaining populations of those smaller species. The Stikine Country Protected Areas system also provides low elevation wildlife corridors along the Pitman and Chukachida rivers to high value wildlife habitat and Protected Areas to the east.

General Management Direction

The Stikine Country Protected Areas system is a core protected area for large mammal species in the region. BC Parks will work with other agencies to coordinate management of known areas of use outside of protected area boundaries and to maintain wildlife movement corridors along the Pitman and Chukachida rivers.

Objectives and Actions:

To coordinate with other agencies and First Nations to minimize impacts on Stikine Country Protected Areas' wildlife moving beyond protected area boundaries.

- Work with BC Environment to coordinate hunting and trapping regulations in areas adjacent to the Stikine Country Protected Areas system in areas known to be used by protected area wildlife.
- Work with BC Ministry of Forests and BC Environment to establish habitat management objectives for areas adjacent to the Protected Areas that are known to be used by protected area wildlife.
- Work with the Ministry of Energy and Mines during planning and development activities to minimize disturbance to protected area wildlife populations.
- Work with the Ministry of Energy and Mines and the mining industry to minimize and mitigate impacts on the Pitman River and Chukachida River wildlife movement corridors.
- Work with other agencies and First Nations and the resource industry to maintain regional connectivity for wide ranging large mammal species.

Wildlife/Human Interactions

Wildlife and human interactions may be neutral, positive or negative. Impacts of humans on wildlife include displacement from high quality habitats, disturbance to habitat, human-caused mortalities and disruption of social bonds and behaviour. Although most human disturbance is often unintentional, the effects of disturbance are often negative regardless of the intent. Bear/human interactions are the most significant impacts of wildlife on humans. Bear/human interactions can result in injury or death to humans, and subsequent mortality of the responsible bear(s). Therefore, for visitor safety, avoidance of bear/human interactions is preferable.

Objectives and Actions:

To protect wildlife populations during sensitive seasons such as winter and the spring birthing season.

- Monitor recreational and commercial activities and their impacts on wildlife during sensitive seasons and implement strategies to minimize disturbance if necessary.
- Encourage visitors and commercial operators to avoid known high value winter habitat and birthing areas during those seasons.

To minimize habitat disturbance.

- Identify important wildlife habitat and characteristics.
- Provide visitors and commercial operators with information on the significance of wildlife habitat and impacts from disturbance, especially those habitats highly sensitive to disturbance.
- Encourage visitors and commercial operators to avoid using known high value sensitive habitat.

To minimize human/bear interactions.

- Provide visitors and commercial operators with information on how to avoid human/bear interactions.
- Enforce garbage handling and disposal guidelines for commercial operators in the Stikine Country Protected Areas.
- Implement the BC Parks Skeena District Bear/Human Interaction Plan.

12 Aquatics

Watersheds in the Stikine Country Protected Areas drain into both Pacific and Arctic Oceans. In Tatlatui Park all water is channelled through the Firesteel River to the Finlay and Peace River systems and into the Arctic Ocean. Waters in all the other parks empty into the Pacific Ocean via the Stikine and Iskut rivers. Aquatic ecosystems in the Stikine Country Protected Areas are diverse, ranging from high mountain lakes to low elevation lakes and wetlands.

Fish Species & Distribution

Fish species present in the Stikine Country Protected Areas are representative of northern interior and Pacific systems. All Protected Areas encompass portions of, or complete watersheds and lake systems. Rainbow trout are the most widely distributed species and have been recorded in all waters surveyed in the Stikine Country Protected Areas except Happy Lake and Kliweguh Creek in Spatsizi Park. Bull trout are known to occur in the Stikine River drainage although most char have been identified as Dolly Varden in Stikine River and Spatsizi parks.

Rare & Endangered Fish

Bull trout is a blue-listed species that occurs in waters within Spatsizi and Stikine River parks. Both Dolly Varden and bull trout are reported in the area however it is still unclear if the two species coexist due to the difficulty in distinguishing between the two species. Large resident char (up to 8 kg) are more likely to be bull

trout as non-anadromous Dolly Varden do not usually attain such size. Spatsizi Wilderness and Stikine River Parks along with the Chukachida and Pitman River Protected Areas constitute the only fully Protected Areas in British Columbia enclosing contiguous streams, large rivers and lakes believed to support this species in the full diversity of its life histories (except anadromy).

Angling

Angling regulations for the Stikine Country Protected Areas generally follow BC Environment region-wide regulations. Tatlatui Park lies within BC Environment Region 7 and all other parks lie within Region 6.

For steelhead in the Stikine River system in Region 6 there is a monthly quota of 2 and an annual quota of 10. Also, when an angler has caught and retained the daily quota of steelhead they must stop fishing that water for the remainder of that day

Few regulations specific to Stikine Country Protected Areas waters exist. Specific regulations for Buckingham and Klahowya Lakes in Spatsizi Park were implemented to maintain the small population of large sized rainbow trout. A bait ban was instituted for Stalk Lakes in Tatlatui Park and a daily catch quota of 2 rainbow trout was established for Tatlatui Lake.

General Management Direction

The management priority for fish is to conserve natural fish population diversity, distribution and dynamics throughout the Stikine Country Protected Areas waters. Fish stocking will not be considered unless populations are declining severely and population viability is threatened due to human-caused disturbances. Stocking will not be considered to enhance angling opportunities. Determining the status and maintaining a viable population of bull trout is a priority.

Objectives and Actions:

To ensure the natural functioning of fish populations.

- Identify waters that can be used as benchmarks for the study of native fish species and that are unaffected by human disturbance, including angling.
- Investigate and implement angling regulations that conserve large sized bull trout in the Stikine River system.
- Identify aquatic habitats that are sensitive to jetboat use and implement restrictions if necessary.
- Monitor the rainbow trout only aquatic systems of the Stikine Country Protected Areas.

To provide a range of recreational angling opportunities that have low impacts on fish populations.

- Establish a system of waters that includes a variety of recreational angling opportunities, including limited daily catch quotas and catch and release only angling in consultation with angling guides, anglers and First Nations.
- Develop a system for monitoring angling pressure by non-guided anglers.

- Encourage angler compliance with angling regulations through maintaining postings of provincial sport angling at access points to the Protected Areas where angler reports are distributed and collected (especially Highway 37).

To quantify non-guided angling activity and harvest.

- Continue voluntary creel censuses with distribution and drop points at all registration and access locations. Cards should be coded prior to distribution to identify angler data by point of origin.
- Investigate and implement means of inspiring higher participation rates for creel surveys.
- Implement a simple reporting program by angling guides of observed non-guided angling activities.

To manage angling and angling-guide activities.

- Monitor angling guide activity through annual reporting of client angling activity, catch and harvest on each waterbody, for each guide and compile information annually.
- Consult with BC Environment to determine existing angling guides and angler day allocations within recently established Protected Areas and additions and accommodate existing tenures.
- Develop a system for managing angling and angling guiding that defines an angling zone for each water body, classifies waterbodies (or angling zones) into angling experience categories, and assigns rod-days by angling category by protected area. The system will be developed in consultation with angling guides, anglers and First Nations.

To minimize and mitigate impacts of increased angling pressure on protected area fish populations due to potential improved road access.

- Monitor angling pressure prior to and after development of improved access and revise angling regulations if necessary.

To safeguard the opportunity of First Nations to take fish for ceremonial or sustenance purposes.

Park Specific Management Direction

Mt. Edziza Park and Protected Area

To ensure that the possible mining road to access mining activities in the Mt. Edziza Zone has minimal impacts on fish populations on the Kakiddi Lake chain.

- Monitor angling pressure on the Kakiddi Lake chain prior to and after development of the proposed mining access road and revise angling regulations if necessary.

To monitor the illegally stocked trout populations in Buckley Lake.

- Determine the effects of introduced trout populations in Buckley Lake on other aquatic values.
- Verify reports that those populations are now reproducing.
- Monitor harvest levels and changes in population structure.

- Ensure that no further stocking of Buckley Lake occurs.

Chukachida and Pitman River Protected Areas

To ensure possible bridge/road crossings across the Pitman and Chukachida rivers do not result in increased impact on fish populations in those rivers through increased fishing pressure.

- Conduct stream inventories for the Chukachida River and Pitman River to identify important bull trout habitat and to collect basic aquatic information.
- Work with other agencies and First Nations to ensure that any possible bridges across the Pitman River or Chukachida River avoid crossing those rivers near important bull trout habitat.
- Work with other agencies and First Nations on access management for the Chukachida and Pitman rivers for roads crossing those rivers.
- Monitor angling pressure on the Pitman River prior to and after development of the possible bridge/road crossing and revise angling regulations if necessary.
- Monitor angling pressure on the Chukachida River prior to and after development of the possible bridge/road crossing and revise angling regulations if necessary.

Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Park and Stikine River Park

To quantify angling activity and harvest.

- Conduct a “Voluntary Angler Report” program for waters in the Stikine River drainage east of Highway 37, which includes distribution /drop boxes at Cold Fish Lake, Didene Portage, Tuaton or Laslui Lake, and the Highway 37 access point.

To manage guided angling activity to maintain a quality wilderness angling experience for both guided and unguided anglers.

- Maintain the number of angling guides currently operating.

Tatlatui Wilderness Park

To manage guided angling activity to maintain a quality wilderness angling experience for both guided and unguided anglers.

- Maintain the number of guides currently operating.
- Maintain Trygve Lake as a “no-guided” water.
- Monitor all angling guide activity, including that occurring in months other than July and August, through annual reporting of client angling activity, catch and harvest.

13 Scientific Research and Education

Detailed information about the natural and cultural values in Protected Areas is critical for proper management of them. To obtain this information scientific research, projects within the Stikine Country Protected Areas will be fostered and encouraged by BC Parks. The northern focus of the University of Northern British Columbia makes this institution a logical partner in research projects.

General Management Direction

The management priority for scientific research and education is to promote initiatives that are consistent with priorities established for the Stikine Country Protected Area System.

Objectives and Actions:

To collect information on the natural and cultural features of the Stikine Country Protected Areas.

- Encourage the study of all aspects of natural history of the Protected Areas by academic and scientific organizations, with special attention to the following priorities:
 - harvested fish and wildlife;
 - vegetation including rare and endangered flora;
 - non-harvested fish and wildlife;
 - terrestrial ecosystem inventories;
 - backcountry recreation use and activity-specific goals; and,
 - cultural heritage.
- Encourage the study of cultural heritage and history of the Protected Areas that respects First Nations' concerns.
- Ensure that appropriate access is provided for end users and the public to collected information.

A Place for People to Enjoy Managing Recreation Opportunities, Facilities and Access

The Stikine Country Protected Areas contains a diverse range of natural features that support a wide range of recreational activities and users. These parks are internationally renowned for their outstanding wilderness and wildlife. Recreational activities include extended backcountry hiking and horse trips, wilderness canoeing and rafting, and resident and commercial hunting and fishing. All of these activities are supported in a pristine wilderness setting with difficult access, except by aerial means. Although Highway 37 and the Telegraph Creek Road pass through Stikine River Park, there are few frontcountry facilities within the area. The spectacular landscapes of the Stikine Country Protected Areas, especially the volcanic deposits and the Grand Canyon of the Stikine, are not widely found outside the Protected Areas; these features are a focus for residents and visitors of the Cassiar District.

The remote wilderness quality of much of the Stikine Country Protected Areas is one of the most significant features of the protected area system. Extensive areas of unroaded wilderness are becoming rare as industrial

development continues into previously inaccessible areas. The Stikine Country Protected Areas system provides a significant contribution to the protection of wilderness provincially, nationally, and internationally.

The goal for visitor management in the Stikine Country Protected Areas is to provide opportunities for visitors to have a safe and enjoyable visit without compromising cultural and ecological values or visitor wilderness experience. Therefore, two primary factors that have to be investigated to assess whether this goal is currently being achieved:

1. visitor impacts on natural and cultural heritage; and
2. visitor impacts on other visitors.

14 Access

Access to the Stikine Country Protected Areas is primarily by floatplane to the lakes of the Protected Areas; by foot or horse from various road access points; by floatcraft (i.e.: raft, canoe or kayak) down the Stikine and Spatsizi rivers, and by motorboat up the Stikine River. Others means of access include helicopter access, and some snowmobile access on the Klastline Trail to the Klastline Area.

Air

Floatplanes are commonly used by private groups and commercial operators to access the Stikine Country Protected Areas. Floatplane landings take place on many lakes within the Protected Areas including, Buckingham, Cartmel, Coldfish, Laslui and Tuaton lakes in Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Park; Buckley, Mowdade and Little Ball lakes in Mt. Edziza Park; Kitchener, Stalk, Tatlatui and Trygve lakes in Tatlatui Park; Chukachida Lake in Chukachida Protected Area; Frog and Pitman lakes in Pitman River Protected Area; and the Stikine River in Stikine River Park. The airstrip at Coldfish Lake is no longer maintained and is marked as being closed, but it is still used by a small number of private planes each year. Skiplanes are used in the winter to access some areas. A landing strip exists at the privately held in-holding at Hyland Post, which the owners use to bring clients into their guide-outfitting area. Air traffic can disturb wildlife and be detrimental to visitor experiences by disturbing them and by increasing the number of people in the backcountry.

General Management Direction

Floatplanes are recognized as an historic and important mode of access to the Stikine Country Protected Areas. Air access to the Protected Areas will continue to be primarily by floatplane with small numbers of helicopter drop-offs and pick-ups. New modes of air access will not be allowed, and air access will be carefully managed to maintain natural, cultural heritage and wilderness values.

Objectives and Actions:

To provide a level of floatplane and skiplane access that allows visitors to enjoy the Stikine Country Protected Areas without unacceptable impacts on fish and wildlife populations or the wilderness experience of other users.

- Monitor the number of flights and visitor experience quality to determine if limits are needed.
- Establish flight paths and height minimums in sensitive areas, if needed, to prevent wildlife disturbance and unacceptable impacts to other users.

- Monitor fish & wildlife populations to determine if aerial access to lakes needs to be restricted for conservation purposes.
- Prohibit floatplanes from being based within the Protected Areas for use in areas outside the Protected Areas (i.e.: staging). Commercial operations existing when individual Protected Areas were established will be grandfathered with respect to this provision as long as the majority of their operations continue within the protected area system.
- Prohibit low flights during ungulate birthing season, May 15 – July 15.
- In consultation with the BC Floatplane Association and other users, investigate options to manage floatplane access including the application of existing regulations that require floatplanes to have prior authorization to land in the Stikine Country Protected Areas, or other approaches that meet park management objectives.
- Limit helicopter access in the future with few single day trips or trips involving multiple takeoffs and landings. Some areas will be closed to helicopter access, and in other areas landing locations will be designated.
- Consider developing a lake classification system for floatplane access that includes a range of floatplane landing opportunities from lakes where access is available without prior authorizations, to lakes where floatplane access is not permitted.

To provide low levels of helicopter access for limited purposes.

- Allow helicopter landings for management purposes.
- Prohibit recreational day-use of helicopters involving multiple take-offs and landings, i.e.: heli-hiking, heli-skiing and heli-fishing.
- Designate helicopter landing sites for recreational purposes and require prior approval to land within the protected area system.

Park Specific Management Direction

Mt. Edziza

To maintain the present pattern of floatplane landings in the park with a greater number of landings on lakes in the Buckley Lake and Kakiddi Lakes areas than in the Spectrum Area.

- Monitor use levels and visitor satisfaction to determine whether use limits need to be implemented.

To protect sensitive plateau areas from disturbances.

- Prohibit wheeled aircraft landings

To ensure that helicopter access does not result in unacceptable impacts on cinder cones, and on hotspots and their calcite deposits.

- Maintain the ban on helicopter landings on the cinder cones and implement a ban on helicopter landings at any hotspots.

Mt. Edziza, Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness, Stikine River

To protect the wilderness character of the Stikine Country Protected Areas.

- Close the Big Raven, Spectrum, Grand Canyon, Ross River and Metsantan management areas to helicopter access, except for management purposes.

Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness

To maintain floatplane access as the main air access method.

- Maintain the deactivated status of the Coldfish Lake airstrip.

To protect the cultural value of Metsantan village.

- Manage aircraft access to Metsantan Lake to protect cultural values.

Gladys Lake

To minimize use of Gladys Lake Ecological Reserve.

- Close Gladys Lake to aircraft landings, except for management purposes.

Stikine River

To prevent unacceptable impacts of aircraft activity on mountain goats from occurring within the Grand Canyon of the Stikine.

- Maintain the no flying zone below the rim of the Grand Canyon of the Stikine from May 15 to July 15, and monitor the effects of aircraft on the goats at other times for possible impacts and to implement necessary management actions.

Tatlatui

To manage aircraft access levels and patterns to maintain the wilderness experience of users, and pilot safety.

- Assess users quality of experience of on the Firesteel River and, if needed, implement aircraft access controls, including the frequency of flights.
- Discourage landings on the Firesteel River by inexperienced pilots due to hazardous conditions.

Roads

Land access into the Stikine Country Protected Areas is limited because of the few roads in the region; the only two all weather roads are Highway 37 and the Telegraph Creek Road. Highway 37 provides access to a small part of Stikine River Park including the boat launch at the Highway 37 Bridge. The Telegraph Creek Road gives access to the westernmost parts of Stikine River Park.

The British Columbia Rail (BCR) rail grade is used to access southern and western parts of Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Park; however, this route is subject to washouts. Although the rail grade does not enter Spatsizi

Plateau Wilderness Park, it has a major influence on access to the park, as it is drivable with four-wheel drive vehicles.

General Management Direction

New roads will not be allowed within the Protected Areas, except for in Mt. Edziza, Pitman River and Chukachida Protected Areas as directed by the Cassiar-Iskut-Stikine LRMP, to accommodate mineral access, or near the Highway 37 bridge to accommodate frontcountry type developments. Additional road access into the Stikine Country Protected Areas will be discouraged except where such access is compatible with protected area management objectives. Where new roads or improvements to existing roads are proposed adjacent to Protected Areas, BC Parks will work co-operatively with other agencies and First Nations to minimize and mitigate impacts on natural, cultural heritage and recreation values in Protected Areas. Where increased access is compatible with protected area objectives, BC Parks will seek to optimize benefits while minimizing negative impacts.

Objectives and Actions:

To coordinate management of land-based access to the Stikine Country Protected Areas with other agencies and First Nations to ensure that access does not impair the natural or cultural values of the Protected Areas.

- Work with other agencies and First Nations to ensure that BC Parks is fully involved with any decisions regarding road building that may impact the Stikine Country Protected Areas.

Park Specific Management Direction

Mt. Edziza Protected Area and Park

To ensure that Cassiar-Iskut-Stikine LRMP guidelines are followed and impacts on the park and protected area values are minimized and mitigated if a road is required through the protected area to Mt. Edziza Resource Management Zone.

- Ensure that Cassiar-Iskut-Stikine LRMP guidelines are followed if road development in these Protected Areas is required through Mt. Edziza Protected Area. These guidelines are:
 - Manage public use of any new access cooperatively between BC Parks and the responsible agencies in consideration of the park management plan for Mt. Edziza Provincial park”
 - Recommend that a road be permitted through Mount Edziza Provincial Park in the event of mine development being approved in the Mt. Edziza Resource Management Zone. For advanced mineral exploration e.g.: bulk sampling, consider allowing roaded access through Mt. Edziza Park where reasonable review determines that no practicable alternative exists. Any decision to put a road through the park should be accompanied by an appropriate public review process.
 - Locate roads and mine infrastructure to minimize disruption of wildlife, in particular mountain goats during kidding season and the use of spring and summer range by mountain ungulates.
 - If road access is required, plan road layout to minimize visual impacts from Nuttlude Lake (e.g.: using forest screening)

- Avoid disturbance of red- and blue-listed plants and plant communities when locating roads and mine infrastructure
- Avoid disruption of the mineral lick along Tennaya Creek. (CIS LRMP 2000)
- Work with the mining company and other land management agencies to minimize impacts to Mt. Edziza Park and Protected Area and their values from access, mining exploration and mining activities.
- Require any road to the Mt. Edziza Protected Area to be gated, and be deactivated after use is finished.

Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness

To encourage maintenance of park access along the BCR rail grade.

- Work with the Tahltan First Nations and other agencies in managing access along the BCR rail grade.

To ensure that Cassiar-Iskut-Stikine LRMP guidelines are followed regarding potential access into the Metsantan area.

- Work with other agencies and First Nations to manage access into mineral tenures adjacent to the Metsantan area to minimize destruction of seasonal migration of caribou.

Stikine River

To provide access from Highway 37 at the Stikine River.

- Work with Ministry of Transportation and Highways to ensure access is maintained to the Stikine River at the Highway 37 Bridge.
- Consider road access to front-country type developments at the Highway 37 bridge while avoiding unacceptable impacts to park values.
- Provide a pullout on Telegraph Creek Road for trail access to the Grand Canyon area.
- The historical access of the owner of District Lot #371 (Willie Williams) along the existing road from Highway 37 (near the Stikine River bridge) is recognized and will continue.

To ensure that the area around and including the BCR railbridge is safe.

- Work with BC Rail to determine the safety conditions at the BCR railbridge and implement any required measures.

Tatlatui and Metsantan

To minimize and mitigate impacts of access from the Omineca Mine road on protected area values.

- Work with other agencies and First Nations to manage access on the Omineca mine road.

Pitman River and Chukachida

To minimize and mitigate impacts to Protected Areas values if a road to access mineral claims is required.

- Ensure that Cassiar-Iskut-Stikine LRMP guidelines are followed if road development is required in the Pitman River and Chukachida Protected Areas. These guidelines are:
 - In the event that a request is made for access and where reasonable review determines that no practicable alternative exists outside of the protected area, then a decision regarding the most appropriate access will be made by government authorities. The decision will be made in full consideration of the functional integrity of the protected area and the need for access for mineral activities, in accordance with applicable review and approval processes.
 - If a road is required, locate it to minimize environmental and wildlife impacts, including providing access controls if required. Fully deactivate road upon completion of operations.
 - Do not create a circle route as a result of providing access across this protected area.
 - The Pitman River has highly unstable terrain. If a road is required, recommend full bonding for road construction in recognition of the higher environmental risk.
- Work with First Nations, mining companies and other agencies to minimize and mitigate impacts on protected area values from access, mining exploration and mining activities.

Snowmobiles

The use of snowmobiles is generally not allowed in Protected Areas under the Park and Recreation Area Regulations except under specific authorization. In the Stikine Country Protected Areas, trapline holders are allowed to use snowmobiles, and some guide-outfitters have had permission to use snowmobiles for camp maintenance. The Cassiar-Iskut-Stikine LRMP recommended snowmobile use continue along the Klastline Trail. No other snowmobile access authorizations exist within the Stikine Country Protected Areas.

General Management Direction

Access to the Stikine Country Protected Areas by snow machines will generally be restricted and require specific authorization. Limited snowmobile access for First Nations traditional uses, for access along the Klastline Trail, for traplines holders, and for guide-outfitters for camp maintenance will continue.

Objective and Action:

To provide for limited snowmachine access while avoiding unacceptable impacts to wildlife populations and other protected area values.

- Work with First Nations, trapline holders and guide-outfitters to minimize the impacts of continued limited snowmachine access on natural and cultural heritage values.

Park Specific Management Direction

Mt Edziza

To recognize snowmobile use along the Klastline Trail in the Klastline Management Area.

- Work with the Tahltan First Nation to develop snowmobile use guidelines along the Klastline Trail in the Klastline Management Area.

15 Facilities

Various types of facilities exist in the Stikine Country Protected Areas, including guide-outfitter camps, bridges, wharves, trails, campsites and toilets. Facility management, including improvements and development, is important in managing the overall level of development in these wilderness-Protected Areas. Facility management has two components: structures, and trails & campsites.

In general, the management objective is to have the absolute minimum number of facilities required to support public, First Nations, and commercial use of the protected area system. This is consistent with maintaining the ongoing wilderness quality of the system. Commercial structures will be directed outside Protected Areas where feasible and public facilities will be consistent with maintaining a wilderness experience. Facilities that are no longer used or required, or are in an unsafe condition and not of significant historic or cultural values, will be removed.

Structures

Structures have been built in the Stikine Country Protected Areas for many reasons. The greatest numbers of structures are in place to support guide-outfitting, angling guiding and trapping. BC Parks also maintains a number of structures such as those at Coldfish Lake camp; traditional structures such as those at Metsantan Lake are also present.

General Management Direction

Structures will be carefully managed and controlled. Shelters, including cabins and tentframes or other structures, will be considered only where consistent with zone and management area objectives. Generally, physical commercial infrastructure (e.g.: roads, lodgings, staging areas, etc.) will be directed outside of protected area boundaries where feasible in order to minimize impacts within Protected Areas. Present structures can be maintained, provided they are still required.

Objectives and Actions:

To keep infrastructure development to a minimum level appropriate for wilderness Protected Areas.

- Allow existing commercial structures to be maintained, provided bed capacity remains the same.
- Consider construction of structures in new locations only if consistent with zone and management area objectives and subject to the BC Parks Impact Assessment Process for the following management areas Buckley, Chukachida, Stikine Grand Canyon (Wilderness Recreation Zone only), Kakiddi Lakes, Klastline, Metsantan (for First Nations cultural and interpretive purposes only), Middle Stikine, Mt. Edziza Protected Area, Pitman River, and Stikine Headwaters.

- Establish standards for cabins and other facilities as necessary that are consistent with facility management policies of BC Parks.
- Work to remove structures that are inappropriate for wilderness Protected Areas or that are no longer used or required.

Park Specific Management Direction

Chukachida and Pitman River Protected Areas, and Upper Stikine and Metsantan Management Areas

To maintain the wilderness character of the Protected Areas while allowing some recreational development.

- “Allow opportunities for construction of backcountry cabins, as required, to support recreational use, compatible with protected area values.” (CIS LRMP 2000)

Gladys Lake Ecological Reserve

To facilitate research within the ecological reserve while discouraging recreational use.

- Review the need for maintenance of the Gladys Lake cabin for research purposes, and remove the cabin if no longer required.
- Remove mention of Gladys Lake cabin from all protected area brochures to discourage recreational use.

Klastline Management Area

To maintain the wilderness character of the Protected Areas while allowing some recreational development.

- “Maintain opportunities for construction of cabins, as required, to support recreational use along the Klastline trail.” (CIS LRMP 2000)

Mt Edziza

To provide access over the Klastline River.

- Review bridge placement options over the Klastline River in consultation with the Tahltan First Nation and construct a bridge if funding is available.

Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness

To manage facilities at the Metsantan village site.

- Work with the Tahltan First Nation to develop a policy for the Metsantan Site with respect to protection and possible rehabilitation of the historic village site.
- Consider new structures for cultural and interpretive purposes, subject to conducting an impact assessment following BC Parks’ Impact Assessment Process.
- Consider private sector proposals for the Coldfish camp which will retain traditional and historic values and provide for an acceptable level of continued public use. Any proposals would be considered in conjunction with Nature Trust and Tahltan First Nations.

Stikine River

To provide front-country recreational opportunities near the Stikine River Bridge.

- “Allow opportunities for front-country tourism development in the vicinity of the Stikine Bridge on Highway 37.” (CIS LRMP 2000)

Trails, Routes and Campsites

Trails and routes can be classified into two categories: those used to access Protected Areas, and those within Protected Areas. Trails are often used by both foot and horse traffic. Both access trails to Protected Areas are to Mt. Edziza Park; they are the Klastline Trail from Iskut, and the Mowdade Trail from Kinaskan Lake. These trails are not maintained by BC Parks.

Within the Stikine Country Protected Areas there are several maintained trails (mostly rustic) and numerous routes. The maintained trails include: Eaglenest Creek, McEwan Creek, Black Fox Creek, Coldfish Lake, Danihue Pass, Spatsizi Plateau trails; and portage trails at Didene Creek, Fountain Rapids, Chapea Rapids, and Beggerlay Rapids in Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Park; and the Mt Edziza Trail between Buckley and Mowdade Lakes, and the Buckley Lake Trail from Telegraph Creek to Buckley Lake in Mt. Edziza Park. Established routes/trails in Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Park include: Airplane Valley, Cartmel Lake, Gladys Lake, Hotlesklwa Lake, Hyland Post, Icebox Canyon, Mink Creek, Ram Creek, Tahltan, and Tuaton Lake trails. The Spectrum Route from Little Ball Lake or Arctic Lake to the Mt. Edziza Trail is the only established route that exists in Mt Edziza Park.

All trails in the Stikine Country Protected Areas are Class IV trails and all routes are Class V trails with respect to the BC Parks' Facility Standards. Class IV trails are intended in Wilderness Zones as lightly used wilderness hiking trails (overnight or multi-day duration), which do not normally have support facilities such as developed campsites; designated camping areas and/or backcountry toilets may be provided as required. Class V trails are intended in Wilderness Zones as wilderness hiking routes (overnight or multi-day duration). Trail development and signs are avoided for Class V trails and camping locations may be restricted as required.

Campsites have been developed in a number of locations throughout the Stikine Country Protected Areas by many different user groups. Some campsites have seen heavy use with deterioration of site quality. A number of these sites are on the Stikine River used by various river user groups. The Cassiar-Iskut-Stikine LRMP provided direction regarding trails in some new Protected Areas.

General Management Direction

BC Parks will ensure maintenance of main trails within the protected area system. Secondary trails and new trails, routes and campsites will only be established or maintained to meet specific recreational goals. All new trails will have to undergo the BC Parks impact assessment process. Development, maintenance and use of all trails, routes and campsites will be consistent with zoning and conservation goals of the Protected Areas. BC Parks will seek to work with other organizations and the private sector to maintain or upgrade trails.

Objectives and Actions:

To maintain trails, routes and campsites at a minimum wilderness standard. If use levels have unacceptable impacts consider improving, relocating or upgrading trails, or alternatively, closing them.

- Conduct periodic impact assessments of trails and campsites.
- Maintain existing trails and campsites within the Protected Areas at current levels while allowing for rerouting or closures for specific reasons such as protecting natural or cultural heritage values.
- Pursue partnerships with other organizations and the private sector to assist with trail maintenance.

Park Specific Management Direction

Mt Edziza

To protect the plant communities and physical features of the cinder cones and calcite deposits in Mt. Edziza.

- Mark the established routes up the cinder cones and provide information on the sensitivity of the lichen crust communities and the cinder deposits.
- Monitor the effects of hiking use on the cinder cones and restrict or prohibit hiking on them, if needed, to protect natural values.
- “Provide designated trails to minimize impacts to calcite deposits.” (CIS LRMP 2000).
- Provide information on the sensitivity of the Mess Creek hotsprings calcite deposits to the public.

Gladys Lake Ecological Reserve

To protect the values of the Ecological Reserve while facilitating specific access to Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Park.

- Allow recreational and commercial travel, including hiking and horses, on and maintenance of Danihue Pass, Icebox Canyon and Eaglenest Creek trails.
- Discontinue maintenance of the Gladys Lake trail and remove mention of that trail from all protected area brochures to discourage recreational use.
- Allow the Airplane Creek trail to remain open to recreational use pending ongoing assessments of impacts on or conflicts with ecological reserve values.
- Allow camping within the ecological reserve only within 100m of the Danihue Pass and Eaglenest Creek trail.
- Allow commercial travel, including hiking and horses, only on Danihue Pass, Icebox Canyon and Eaglenest Creek trails. Other commercial use will not be permitted.

Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness and Stikine River Parks

To monitor heavily impacted campsites and trails along the Stikine River.

- Continue to monitor impacts of use on campsites and trails.
- Make a site plan to assess and manage heavily used trails and campsites (e.g.: Fountain Rapids).

- Assess the impacts of unauthorized camps along the Stikine River downstream from the mouth of the Spatsizi River, and make site plans as needed. Site plans could include maintenance standards, cleanup requirements, etc.
- Work with boaters to educate them on no-trace camping techniques and enforce compliance as needed.

To establish viewing opportunities over the Grand Canyon of the Stikine as recommended by the Cassiar-Iskut-Stikine LRMP.

- “Allow a range of front-country to backcountry viewing opportunities along the Grand Canyon of the Stikine” (CIS LRMP 2000).
- “Locate trails to viewing areas to minimize potential for disturbance of mountain goats” (CIS LRMP 2000).
- Develop a trail or route to the Grand Canyon of the Stikine, subject to an impact assessment following BC Parks’ Impact Assessment Process to avoid unacceptable impacts viewing activities and trails on mountain goat populations, or rare or sensitive plant or communities.

16 Recreation

Recreational use is an important component of management of the Stikine Country Protected Areas. Visitors to the Protected Areas expect a high quality wilderness experience with few encounters with other users. Knowledge of the levels of use of the Stikine Country Protected Areas is low at present, which is partly due to self-registration at remote access points. Better user information would assist park managers in detecting changes in use patterns and in determining appropriate use levels.

Currently, issues of overcrowding or unacceptable impacts to natural or cultural heritage values due to recreational use are few. However, as in most major park systems, use levels are expected to increase over time and impacts to natural, cultural heritage, or recreational values may increase. In the Stikine Country Protected Areas, use levels of all recreational activities will be monitored and management actions (eg. limits to use levels, timing and locations of activities) may be taken to mitigate negative impacts.

General Management Direction

Recreation management will focus on providing a range of recreation experiences in a wilderness setting. Experiences will range from facility-based recreation near Highway 37 to recreation experiences where quiet and solitude prevail. Recreational use must not compromise the ecological values of the Protected Areas, and must respect cultural heritage values. Appropriate recreational activities include hiking, canoeing, mountaineering, rafting, horse travel, hunting, fishing, skiing, snowshoeing and motor/jet boating; some of these activities will be restricted to certain areas. Limited snowmobiling use will continue in support of First Nations traditional use, trapping and camp maintenance for guide-outfitters. Competitive recreational events are not considered appropriate for these Protected Areas. Authorizations for other recreational activities will be guided by protected area values detailed in this plan.

Objectives and Actions:

To provide high quality wilderness recreation opportunities to experienced backcountry visitors.

- Monitor levels of use and visitor satisfaction to determine if use limits or other controls need to be implemented.
- Collect more detailed information on use levels and patterns.

To ensure that recreational activities do not have unacceptable impacts on the fish and wildlife populations, cultural heritage values, rare and endangered plant species and plant communities, and physical features in the Stikine Country Protected Areas system.

- Monitor impacts of recreational activities and facilities on natural and cultural heritage values and implement measures to reduce unacceptable impacts if necessary.
- Conduct site assessments to determine if campsites are located on cultural heritage sites.
- Designate campsites, if needed, in certain sensitive sites.
- Work to educate all park visitors on minimal impact/no trace camping techniques. Implement regulations / guidelines as appropriate.
- Set guidelines for maximum group size and client to guide ratios for commercial trips.
- If recreational use impacts First Nations traditional use or cultural heritage sites, work with First Nations and users to develop strategies to minimize or eliminate impacts.

To enhance the backcountry visitors' awareness of First Nations and pioneer cultural heritage, natural history, wildlife etiquette, and bear encounter avoidance techniques.

- Set-up educational programs to increase visitor awareness of natural and cultural history, and bear avoidance.

Backcountry Hiking and Mountaineering

The gentle relief of the plateaus in Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness and Mt. Edziza parks provides opportunities for wilderness backcountry hiking within the Stikine Country Protected Areas for hikers and horse packers, while the more rugged terrain of the Eaglenest and Spectrum ranges and the Mount Edziza massif are better suited to more adventurous hikers and mountaineers. The difficult access to the Protected Areas means that most hiking parties that enter the Protected Areas do so for multi-day trips. The remoteness of the Protected Areas from population centres and local highways restricts the number of users.

A number of routes and trails are commonly used within the Stikine Country Protected Areas. These routes and trails are not well developed or marked, so good map reading and navigation skills are essential. The hiking season can be quite short in the area due to the persistence of snow accumulations into the summer and the arrival of new snow in early autumn. Storms can bring significant snowfalls at any time of year so visitors need to be prepared for all conditions.

General Management Direction

Backcountry hiking and mountaineering will continue while minimizing impacts on natural, cultural heritage and recreation values. Emphasis will be placed on providing high quality wilderness experiences to visitors.

Objectives and Actions:

To provide high quality wilderness backcountry hiking and mountaineering opportunities.

- Maintain levels of hiking and mountaineering use that are appropriate for wilderness areas through monitoring of visitor satisfaction levels, and, if needed, implement use controls.
- Limit activity where necessary to protect natural, cultural heritage & recreational values.

Motorboating

Motorboating includes jet and propeller driven boats.

General Management Direction

Motorboating is recognized as an ongoing use on many rivers and lakes within the Stikine Country Protected Areas. Since maintaining a wilderness experience is a priority, motorboating use will be carefully managed to ensure that impacts on natural, cultural heritage and wilderness values are avoided and conflicts with other users are minimized. Other types of motorboating such as jet-skis, hovercraft and air propelled watercraft will not be allowed.

Motorboating on Rivers

Motorboating on the Stikine River and its tributaries (the Pitman, Spatsizi, Klappan, and Chukachida rivers) occurs primarily in the autumn by hunters accessing moose hunting areas. This recreational activity is an historic use of the river and provides water-based hunting access that is uncommon in the province. The Spatsizi River is closed to motorboat traffic between June 1st and September 1st of each year, except for the guide-outfitter who is allowed to use motorboats to access his territory. Potential interactions between motorized and non-motorized users on the river may be minimized through monitoring and, perhaps, trip scheduling management. Motorboating also occurs on portions of the Firesteel River in Tatlatui Park in support of guided angling activities.

The Cassiar-Iskut-Stikine LRMP gives the management direction that BC Parks “*Continue to allow motorized boat use for recreation and hunting along the Stikine, Chukachida and Pitman rivers, consistent with acceptable types and levels of use*”.

The potential exists for commercial motorboat activities on the Stikine River between Beggerlay Canyon and Highway 37 bridge that would have minimal impacts on non-motorized users. These activities could be combined with natural and cultural interpretation experiences.

Objectives and Actions:

To provide motorboating opportunities to continue consistent with acceptable types and levels of use.

- Maintain an appropriate balance between motorized and non motorized uses, and minimize impacts on natural and cultural heritage values.
- Consider commercial day-use of motorboats downstream of Beggerlay Canyon.
- Consider commercial motorboat use above Beggerlay Canyon for drop-off and pick-up purposes of multi-day trips, and guide-outfitter support only.

- Consider applying limits on motorboat use above Beggerlay Canyon before the hunting season opens to maintain an appropriate balance between motorized and non-motorized uses, if necessary.
- Allow motorboat use on the Stikine River upstream of the boat launch at Highway 37 and on the Klappan, Pitman, Spatsizi, Chukachida and Firesteel rivers.
- Use of electric motors and four stroke motors will be encouraged and may be required in situations where they are feasible.
- Consider developing river classifications for motorboat access that include a range of motorboat access, from rivers or portions of rivers with few restrictions to rivers or portions of rivers where motorboats are not permitted, in consultation with DFO, First Nations and users.

To provide high quality wilderness motorboating opportunities to experienced boaters.

- Monitor user experience and site impacts, and establish controls, if needed, to maintain visitor satisfaction. Possible controls include numbers of groups, group size and trip timing.

Motorboating on Lakes

Motorboating occurs on a number of lakes in the Stikine Country Protected Areas, primarily by commercial operators for hunter transport or angling purposes. BC Parks also has a motorboat on Coldfish Lake for use by the park host. Lakes that presently have motorboat use are: Buckinghorse, Buckley, Chapea, Chukachida, Coldfish, Ella, Hotlesklwa, Kitchener, Laslui, Pitman, Stalk, Tatlatui and Tuaton lakes. There are boats on Bug and Klahowya lakes, but they are not motorized. The boats used are generally small runabouts with small outboard engines, and are based on the lakes where they are run. Presently no lakes in the Stikine Country Protected Areas are road accessible, preventing easy access to lakes for motorboating purposes.

Objectives and Actions:

To provide motorboating opportunities to continue consistent with the acceptable types and levels of use.

- Maintain an appropriate balance between motorized and non motorized uses, and minimize impacts on natural and cultural heritage values.
- Consider eliminating use of the BC Parks motorboat by Park Hosts at Coldfish Lake in order to reduce motorized use on the lake.
- Work with commercial operators to minimize the use of motorboats on lakes in the Stikine Country Protected Areas.
- Consider developing lake classifications for motorboat access that include a range of motorboat access, from lakes with few restrictions to lakes where motorboats are not permitted, in consultation with DFO, First Nations and users.

Floatcraft

The Stikine River and its tributaries provide high quality white-water canoeing, kayaking and rafting opportunities.

These trips start at either the headwaters of the Stikine River on Laslui Lake or Tuaton Lake, or at Didene Creek on the Spatsizi River, and require the paddlers to be self-reliant and skilled. Use levels on these rivers are relatively low at this time; however, there is some concern about impacts to high use areas such as the portage trails and campsites at portages. These areas may require management action to prevent unacceptable impacts from occurring.

Canoeing trips on the Kakiddi Lake chain have recently been started, but use is low. Little information about this trip, and the need for portage trails and campsites is presently available. The Kakiddi Lake trip is less technical than the river trips.

There is likely opportunity to increase use, including commercial use, of the rivers in the Stikine Country Protected Areas for trips by floatcraft, without adversely impacting natural, cultural heritage and wilderness values. There are a number of possible trips including day trips from Klappan Bridge to Highway 37 bridge, and multi-day trips down the Stikine and Spatsizi rivers, and on the Kakiddi lake chain.

General Management Direction

Canoeing and rafting will continue as self-supported wilderness activities. Impact monitoring will continue to assess the impacts of use at popular sites.

Objectives and Actions:

To provide high quality private and commercial wilderness rafting and canoeing opportunities to experienced boaters.

- Consider commercial floatcraft opportunities.
- Monitor user experiences and site impacts, and establish controls if needed to maintain visitor satisfaction and ecological values. Possible controls include numbers of groups, group size and trip timing.

Park Specific Management Direction

Mt. Edziza

To provide wilderness canoeing opportunities on the Kakiddi lake chain.

- Investigate the potential of the Kakiddi lake chain as a canoe route.
- Conduct impact monitoring along the lake chain at the initial stages of canoe use of this route.

Stikine River and Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness

To provide non-motorized user groups with wilderness experiences with few negative interactions with motorized users.

- Encourage non-motorized users to travel at times when the chance of interactions with motorboats will be minimal by providing information about motorized users to non-motorized users.

Winter Recreation

Opportunities for backcountry ski touring exist in the Stikine Country Protected Areas but current use is low due the remoteness of the area. Commercial trips are offered at Hyland Post, Laslui Lake and Tatlatui Lake, and there is some private fly-in use of Coldfish Camp. Opportunities exist to increase non-motorized winter recreation in the Stikine Country Protected Areas, especially in Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness and Tatlatui parks,

where support facilities exist. Snowmobile use is currently restricted to limited First Nations traditional use, trapline use, camp maintenance, and recreational use on the Klastline Trail.

General Management Direction

Winter recreation will be non-motorized except for special situations. Winter recreational use, that does not have unacceptable impacts on wildlife, will be encouraged within Stikine River, Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness and Tatlatui Parks. Habitat mapping will be used to direct winter use to suitable areas away from important winter ranges, and the impacts of winter recreation on wildlife will be monitored. Snowmobile use will continue to be restricted to limited First Nations traditional use, trapline use, camp maintenance and recreational use on the Klastline Trail in the Klastline Area.

Objectives and Actions:

To provide safe non-motorized winter recreation opportunities that do not have unacceptable impacts on wildlife or their critical winter range.

- Map winter range areas and restrict access in these areas.
- Monitor the impacts of winter recreation on wildlife.

Park Specific Management Direction

Stikine River, Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness and Tatlatui

To facilitate non-motorized winter recreational activities.

- Consider new commercial non-motorized winter recreation opportunities.

Horse Use and Pack Animals

Horses have historically been used for transportation and as pack animals within the Stikine Country Protected Areas by guide-outfitters for hunting and tourist trips, and by private groups for hunting and vacation trips. Other species of pack animals have not been present in these Protected Areas, and there is concern about possible disease transmission to wildlife from other species such as llamas. Concern exists about the impact of horses on some of the trails in the Protected Areas. As per existing regulations, horse users are required to have authorization from BC Parks before travelling in the Stikine Country Protected Areas.

General Management Direction

Horses are recognized as an acceptable means of travel within the Stikine Country Protected Areas. Other species of pack animals will continue to be prohibited in recognition of the risk to wildlife species. Use levels will need to be monitored for impacts to trails and vegetation and controls implemented if necessary.

Objectives and Actions:

To minimize the risk of disease transmission from pack animals to wildlife.

- Allow the use of horses (Equines) and as pack animals.

To prevent unacceptable impacts from occurring due to horse use in the Stikine Country Protected Areas.

- Continue horse use on designated trails subject to prior authorization.
- Allow concentrated feed pellets to be the only feed to be brought into the Stikine Country Protected Areas.
- Apply seasonal limitations on horse use, if needed, to prevent trail damage.
- Survey Protected Areas for introduced plant species.
- Complete trail impact surveys and monitor rare and endangered plant and plant communities near trails.

Park Specific Management Direction

Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness

To determine effects of horse use on natural values.

- Assess areas of concentrated horse use (e.g. guide-outfitter camps) and develop strategies to minimize impacts of horse use if required.

Other Recreational Uses

Other recreational activities, such as mountain biking, may be proposed for Stikine Country Protected Areas in the future. It is difficult to plan for all future recreational possibilities and the precautionary principle will be applied where there is potential risk to natural, cultural heritage and recreational values.

General Management Direction

Mechanized and motorized ground travel of any nature, except those provided for in this plan, are generally considered to be incompatible with the wilderness values of the Stikine Country Protected Areas. Commercial or competitive sporting events and aerial sports, such as but not limited to hang-gliding and para-penting, are considered inappropriate with the wilderness and conservation values of the Stikine Country Protected Areas.

Objectives and Actions:

To prohibit mechanized or motorized uses other than motorboats and floatplanes.

- Consider very limited opportunities for uses such as mountain bikes adjacent to Highway 37 subject to a full impact assessment.

17 Commercial Recreational Opportunity and Tenure Management

Many commercial tenures and recreational opportunities exist within the Stikine Country Protected Areas. Two broad categories of commercial tenures and/or permits exist within Protected Areas:

- 1) uses that were tenured by other agencies prior to establishment of the Protected Areas, e.g.: guide-outfitter and trapline licences; and,
- 2) uses that were tenured by BC Parks to operate within Protected Areas.

BC Parks will work to ensure that all holders of tenures granted by other agencies are under Park-Use-Permit. Existing tenure holders expect to be treated in a fair and open manner that provides security to the tenure holder.

New commercial recreational opportunities exist in the Stikine Country Protected Areas. Providing tenure for these opportunities can be handled by two methods: first-come/first-serve, and Request For Proposals (RFP). In general, non-exclusive opportunities will be handled on a first-come/first-serve basis, and exclusive opportunities will be handled by the RFP method. Each application will be assessed on its own merits with a vision to minimize user conflicts, social and environmental impacts while maximizing opportunities for visitor enjoyment in a wilderness park setting. Providing tenure must also be done in a manner that recognizes the local community, while not excluding outside interests. Tenure length must be sufficient to provide viable business opportunities. BC Parks will pursue partnerships with commercial operators to assist with maintaining park facilities.

BC Parks will actively monitor recreational activities for environmental impacts and user conflicts and, when appropriate, will take management action to restrict, limit and/or increase special provision operating procedures within the Park Use Permit. BC Parks will consult with commercial operators before any changes are implemented.

Following direction from the Cassiar-Iskut-Stikine LRMP, protected area management will:

- *Include consultation with tourism industry representatives during management planning processes in order to examine potential commercial opportunities within provincial parks, subject to the primary goal of protecting conservation, recreation and cultural heritage values within Protected Areas.*
- *Assess commercial opportunities with regard to their compatibility with protected area management plans and, where appropriate, their contribution to the local economy and local employment.*
- *Include local employment and business creation as criteria for awarding commercial park use permits*
- *Work with local tourism operators and communities to ensure that information on recreation opportunities in Protected Areas is available and accurately described consistent with values in Protected Areas.*
- *Provide information to local communities on potential economic and employment opportunities associated with Protected Areas.*

It is important to balance public and commercial recreation use both to ensure fairness of access to the park, and to protect the natural and cultural heritage values that contribute to the recreation experience. Commercial use must not displace or limit potential for public or non-commercial recreational use.

General Management Direction

Commercial opportunities will be made available using a fair and open process. Exclusive opportunities will normally be awarded following a competitive process. Exceptions are for activities authorized under the Wildlife Act for existing guide outfitters, fish guides and trappers. BC Parks will work with First Nations and local communities to ensure that, to the extent practical, new competitive opportunities are in line with the capacity and readiness of local entrepreneurs. In general, commercial and public opportunities will be in balance where use levels are limited. Levels of public and commercial use in areas of hunting, fishing & trapping are regulated pursuant to the Wildlife Act.

Potential Commercial Recreation Opportunities

Below is a preliminary list of potential commercial recreation opportunities for the Stikine Country Protected Areas. These activities may require specific impact assessments. Other commercial activities may be considered provided they are consistent with the general management direction and management objectives.

- Increased non-motorized winter recreation using existing facilities in Stikine, Spatsizi and Tatlatui.
- Day floatcraft trips from the Klappan River Bridge to the Stikine River Bridge, and multi-day floatcraft trips on the Stikine and Spatsizi rivers.
- Day jet-boat trips up to Beggerlay Canyon, including cultural interpretation, perhaps at the canyon.
- Commercial mortarboat use above Beggerlay Canyon on the Stikine River for drop off and pick up purposes for multi-day trips and guide-outfitter support.
- Single day horse trips to the Stikine Canyon from the Telegraph Creek road, and multi-day horse trips into backcountry areas.
- Canoe trips on the Kakiddi Lake chain.
- Single or multi-day hiking, nature study or mountaineering trips.
- Public/private partnership for Coldfish Lake camp.
- Hut-to-Hut trips of various sorts, i.e.: skiing, hiking and canoeing.
- Angling guiding on Buckley Lake.
- Cultural camps/interpretive centres run by First Nations.

18 Zoning and Management Areas

Zoning

The Stikine Country Protected Areas have been zoned using the BC Parks zoning framework. Zoning is used to assist the planning and management of provincial parks. The zones are intended to reflect the intended land use, degree of human use, and the level of management and development desired. The following sections summarize detailed descriptions of each zone designation. A summary of legislation and policies for Ecological Reserves is also provided. The zone designations provide the framework for which activities are allowed within management areas (see below), with special considerations for local conditions. Zones are graphically shown in the map on the following page.

ZONE	INTENT
<i>Wilderness Recreation Zone</i>	The intent of the Wilderness Recreation Zone is to protect a remote undisturbed natural landscape, and to provide backcountry recreation opportunities dependent on a pristine environment. The primary direction is to allow natural ecological processes to continue without human interference. Facility development is minimal and generally limited to the current locations, and new trails are not developed. The evidence of human presence will be limited to the trails and facility sites. The Wilderness Recreation designation covers most of the area covered by this plan, including all of Tatlatui Park, and Pitman River and Chukachida Protected Areas, most of Mt. Edziza, Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness and Stikine River parks.
<i>Natural Environment Zone</i>	The intent of the Natural Environment Zone is to protect scenic values and to provide backcountry recreation opportunities in a largely undisturbed natural environment. This designation allows for mechanized access and some facility development. The Natural Environment designation will apply to mining access road corridors through the Pitman River, Chukachida and Mt. Edziza Protected Areas when the roads are developed.
<i>Special Feature Zone</i>	The intent of the Special Feature Zone is to protect significant natural or cultural heritage resources, features or processes because of their fragility, special character heritage values. The Special Feature Zone is applied to four areas in the Stikine Country Protected Areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The cinder cones and the nearby pumice fields in Mount Edziza Park; ▪ The Mess Creek Hotsprings and tufa deposits; ▪ The Grand Canyon of the Stikine; and ▪ The Metsantan Area, which includes the Metsantan and Caribou Hide village sites.
<i>Intensive Recreation Zone</i>	The Intensive Recreation Zone is intended to provide readily accessible, facility-oriented recreation opportunities. These areas are usually small, and are accessed by all-weather public roads. Facilities in areas with this designation may include campgrounds, boat launches, trails, parking lots and other similar facilities. This zone applies to the area around the Stikine River bridge in Stikine River Park. The Stikine River bridge area in Stikine River Park will be zoned as Intensive Recreation. This area is used as a staging area for all motorized trips going up the Stikine River, and as the take-out point for rafting and canoeing trips. To facilitate this use toilets and a crude boat launch are present here, with some camping also occurring. This zoning designation also “allows opportunities for front-country tourism development in the vicinity of the Stikine Bridge on Highway 37” as directed by Cassiar-Iskut-Stikine LRMP.
<i>Ecological Reserves</i>	The intent of Ecological Reserves is to preserve representative and special natural ecosystems, plant and animal species, features and phenomena. The Gladys Lake Ecological Reserve covers 48,560 ha and is surrounded by Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Park. Ecological Reserves are closed to all consumptive uses, with scientific research and education being their main uses. They are not intended for promotion of outdoor recreation use. The zoning matrix does not apply to ecological reserves.

Management Areas

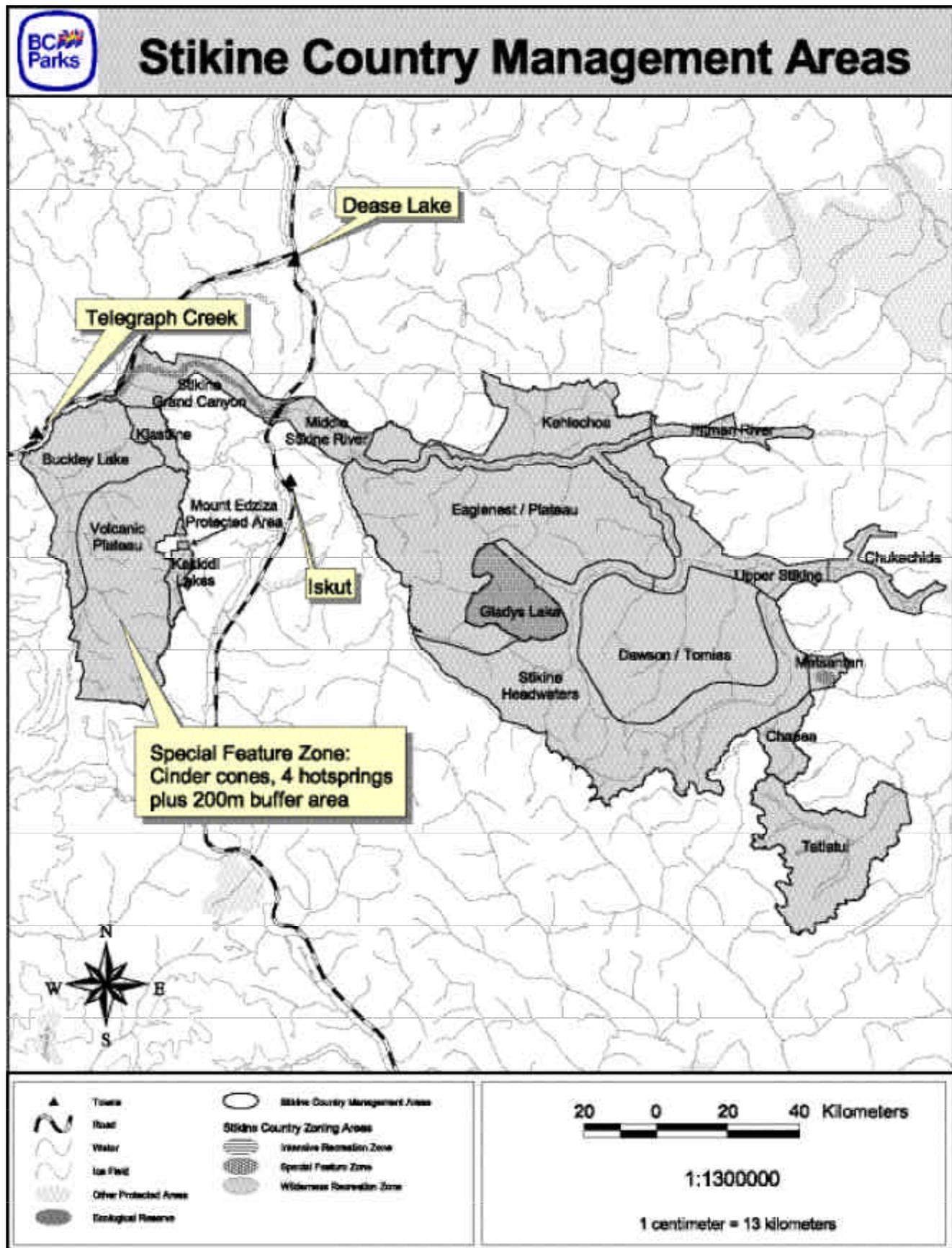
Due to the large size of the wilderness recreation zone, it is proposed that management areas be established to better define recreation, cultural heritage and conservation management in specific areas. Information on both ecosystems and recreation use patterns has been used to prepare a draft management area map.

A summary of preliminary direction for management areas is shown in the table starting on the following page.

In an effort to ensure that BC Parks receives everyone's ideas, suggestions and comments, we encourage you to complete the accompanying Public Comment Booklet and return directly to the Skeena District Office of BC Parks.

Many thanks in advance.

**BC PARKS
BAG 5000
SMITHERS, BC
V0J 2N0**



Key Values and Management Direction for Management Areas in the Stikine Country Protected Areas

Natural and Cultural Heritage Values	Existing Facilities and Recreational Values	Zone	Existing Motorized Use		Management Direction	
			Motorboat ¹	Floatplane	New Facilities	Other Direction
<i>VOLCANIC PLATEAU</i>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mt. Edziza volcano Spectrum Range cinder cones hotsprings calcite deposits obsidian deposits Pipe Organ Mountain rare plants (alpine and hotsprings) most of the Stone's sheep and mountain goat range in Mt. Edziza Park most of the Mt. Edziza caribou herd's summer range 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dominion Telegraph Trail Mt. Edziza Trail trapline cabin on Mess Lake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wilderness Recreation Special Feature around cinder cones and hotsprings/ calcite deposits 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ball Lake Little Ball Lake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures: No Trails/Routes: No 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no helicopter landings on cinder cones or on calcite deposits at hotsprings access up Eve Cone will be restricted to the marked trail designated trails will be built at Mess Creek hotsprings if necessary wheeled aircraft landings will not be allowed information on the cultural importance of obsidian deposits to the Tahltan First Nations, the fragile nature of lichen crust communities on cones and rare vegetation at hotsprings and in the alpine, will be developed and provided to visitors
<i>BUCKLEY LAKE</i>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tahltan Eagle canyon features along Stikine River and Mess Creek including rare dry steppe plant communities Mt. Edziza caribou herd's winter range mule deer habitat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mt. Edziza Trail Klastline/ Telegraph Creek Trail rustic campsite and guide-outfitter camp at Buckley Lake 2 trapline cabins on Mess Creek old village site near Telegraph Creek some old cabins in the Buckley Lake area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wilderness Recreation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buckley Lake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buckley Lake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures: subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process² Trails/Routes: subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> radio-collars will be used to study winter range use of caribou rare plants and dry steppe communities along the Stikine River, Klastline River and Mess Creek will be mapped and protected from human disturbance the effects of the unauthorized stocking of trout in Buckley Lake and current angling levels will be monitored further stocking of Buckley Lake will not be allowed
<i>KLASTLINE</i>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mule deer habitat some caribou winter range canyon features along the Klastline River 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Klastline/ Telegraph Creek Trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wilderness Recreation 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures: subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process² Trails/Routes: subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> follow Cassiar-Iskut-Stikine LRMP guidelines regarding snowmobile use, motorized use and cabin construction map mule deer winter range develop snowmobile use guidelines along Klastline Trail with Tahltan First Nations review bridge placement options over Klastline River with Tahltan First Nations

Natural and Cultural Heritage Values	Existing Facilities and Recreational Values	Zone	Existing Motorized Use		Management Direction	
			Motorboat ¹	Floatplane	New Facilities	Other Direction
<i>KAKIDDI LAKES</i>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rainbow trout only fish system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mt. Edziza Trail Mowdade Lake campsite 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wilderness Recreation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nuttlude Lake Mowchilla Lake Mowdade Lake Kakiddi Lake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures: subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process² Trails/Routes: subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with other agencies, the Tahltan First Nations and the mining industry to monitor, minimize and mitigate impacts of potential access road and mining activities on water quality, quantity and flow and other park values monitor angling pressure and water quality of the Kakiddi Lake chain before and after potential road development investigate the potential of the Kakiddi Lake chain as a canoe route
<i>MT. EDZIZA PROTECTED AREA</i>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rainbow trout only fish system 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wilderness Recreation Natural Environment around potential mining road when developed 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures: subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process² Trails/Routes: subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with other agencies, the Tahltan First Nations and the mining industry to monitor, minimize and mitigate impacts of potential access road and mining activities on water quality, quantity and flow and other park values, and to follow LRMP recommendations for road development in the protected area monitor angling pressure on Kakiddi Lake chain before and after potential road development gate any road through the protected area and deactivate once use is finished consider developing a portage trail to supply access to Nuttlude Lake if road construction occurs
<i>STIKINE GRAND CANYON</i>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grand Canyon of the Stikine River Stikine Canyon mountain goat population rare steppe plant communities 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wilderness Recreation Special Feature around the Grand Canyon of the Stikine River itself 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wilderness Recreation Zone Only Structures: subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process² Trails/Routes: subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> continue no flying zone below the rim of the Grand Canyon from May 15 to July 15 effects of sightseeing flights on mountain goats will be closely monitored a trail or route to the canyon, and a pull out for the trail on the Telegraph Creek road will be developed follow Cassiar-Iskut-Stikine LRMP direction map and protect dry steppe plant communities

Natural and Cultural Heritage Values	Existing Facilities and Recreational Values	Zone	Existing Motorized Use		Management Direction	
			Motorboat ¹	Floatplane	New Facilities	Other Direction
MIDDLE STIKINE RIVER						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> caribou winter range from Beggerlay Creek upstream moose habitat portion of the only fully protected area in B.C. enclosing contiguous streams, large rivers and lakes believed to support blue listed bull trout in the full diversity of its life histories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> trapline cabin near the McBride River BC Parks cabin near the confluence of the Stikine and Spatsizi rivers BCR railgrade bridge over the Stikine River footbridge over Beggerlay Creek lower portion of the Stikine River and Spatsizi River canoe routes the area is commonly used by floatcraft and motorboats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wilderness Recreation Intensive Recreation around Highway 37 bridge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stikine River Pitman River 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures: subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process² Trails/Routes: subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> follow Cassiar-Iskut-Stikine LRMP direction limits on motorboat use above Beggerlay Creek before the hunting season opens may be considered to maintain an appropriate balance between motorized and non-motorized users, if necessary user experiences and site impacts will be monitored and strategies implemented if necessary work with other agencies and First Nations to minimize and mitigate impacts from industrial activities and road access in adjacent areas on water quality and other park values maintain access opportunities at Highway 37 bridge
KEHLECHOA						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> high value low elevation caribou winter range high value moose habitat high elevation Stone's sheep habitat high elevation mountain goat habitat portion of the only fully protected area in B.C. enclosing contiguous streams, large rivers and lakes believed to support blue listed bull trout in the full diversity of its life histories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> guide-outfitter camp on Frog Lake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wilderness Recreation 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures: No Exception: to support existing tenures (subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process) Trails/Routes: subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> focus on maintaining caribou and caribou winter habitat work with other agencies and First Nations to minimize and mitigate impact from industrial activities and road access in adjacent areas on park values
UPPER STIKINE						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> high value low elevation caribou habitat high value low elevation moose habitat portion of the only fully protected area in B.C. enclosing contiguous streams, large rivers and lakes believed to support blue listed bull trout in the full diversity of its life histories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> guide-outfitter camp at Hyland Post on private property guide-outfitter camp near the confluence of the Stikine and Chukachida rivers portion of the Stikine River and Spatsizi River canoe routes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wilderness Recreation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stikine River Pitman River Chukachida River 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures: No Trails/Routes: subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> limits on motorboat use above Beggerlay Creek before the hunting season opens may be considered to maintain an appropriate balance between motorized and non-motorized users, if necessary user experiences and site impacts will be monitored and strategies implemented if necessary work with other agencies and First Nations to minimize and mitigate impacts from industrial activities and road access in adjacent areas on water quality and other park values
PITMAN RIVER						

Natural and Cultural Heritage Values	Existing Facilities and Recreational Values	Zone	Existing Motorized Use		Management Direction	
			Motorboat ¹	Floatplane	New Facilities	Other Direction
CHUKACHIDA RIVER						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> high value low elevation moose habitat portion of the only fully protected area in B.C. enclosing contiguous streams, large rivers and lakes believed to support blue listed bull trout in the full diversity of its life histories wildlife movement corridor to wildlife habitat to the east 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> trapline cabin at Chukachida Lake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wilderness Recreation Natural Environment around potential mining road when developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chukachida River 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chukachida River 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures: subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process² Trails/Routes: subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> follow Cassiar-Iskut-Stikine LRMP direction conduct stream inventories to identify important bull trout information limits on motorboat use above Beggerlay Creek before the hunting season opens may be considered work with other agencies and First Nations to minimize and mitigate impacts from potential road access through the protected area and industrial activities in adjacent areas on water quality and other protected area values
GLADYS LAKE						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> high value Stone's sheep, caribou, mountain goat and grizzly bear habitat rare plants and plant communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eaglenest Creek Trail Icebox Canyon Trail research cabin at Gladys Lake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ecological Reserve (zoning not applicable) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> public recreational use will be discouraged and commercial use will not be permitted recreation travel (hiking and horseback riding) on and maintenance of Eaglenest Creek and Icebox Canyon trails will be allowed camping allowed only within 100 m of Eaglenest Creek and Icebox Canyon trails maintenance of Gladys Lake trail will be discontinued and mention removed from brochures Airplane Creek trail will remain open pending ongoing assessments of impacts Gladys Lake will be closed to aircraft access except for research and management Gladys Lake cabin will be used only for research and management; following a review, if no longer required, the cabin will be removed
EAGLENEST/PLATEAU						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> most of the Stone's sheep range in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eaglenest Creek Trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wilderness 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cartmel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures: No 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conduct Stone's sheep surveys and long-term

Natural and Cultural Heritage Values	Existing Facilities and Recreational Values	Zone	Existing Motorized Use		Management Direction	
			Motorboat ¹	Floatplane	New Facilities	Other Direction
<p>Spatsizi Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> high value caribou, mountain goat and grizzly bear habitat mule deer habitat at Hyland Post rare plants and plant communities portion of the only fully protected area in B.C. enclosing contiguous streams, large rivers and lakes believed to support blue listed bull trout in the full diversity of its life histories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> McEwan Creek Trail other popular trails several non-permanent guide-outfitter camps most of the land based and self-supported recreational use of Spatsizi Park occurs in this area 	Recreation		Lake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trails/Routes: subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> vegetation monitoring to monitor the effects of the recent Hyland Post burn assess areas of concentrated horse use and implement strategies to minimize impacts of horse use, if necessary work with the Tahltan First Nations and other agencies in managing access along the BCR railgrade work with other agencies and the Tahltan First Nations to minimize and mitigate impacts of potential industrial activity and access in the Klappan drainage on park values
DAWSON/TOMIAS						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> high value caribou calving, summer, rutting and high elevation winter habitat mountain goat, moose and grizzly bear habitat limited Stone's sheep habitat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> several non-permanent guide-outfitter camps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wilderness Recreation 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures: No Trails/Routes: subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> assess areas of concentrated horse use and implement strategies to minimize impacts of horse use, if necessary
STIKINE HEADWATERS						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mostly summer habitat for caribou, mountain goats, moose and grizzly bears significant caribou and moose winter habitat at the lower reaches of the Stikine and Spatsizi rivers within the area limited Stone's sheep habitat portion of the only fully protected area in B.C. enclosing contiguous streams, large rivers and lakes believed to support blue listed bull trout in the full diversity of its life histories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coldfish Lake Camp (BC Parks/Nature Trust) several guide-outfitter camps including Bug Lake, Laslui Lake and Buckinghorse Lake most of the facilities within Spatsizi Park are located in this area contains the most scenic portions of the Stikine River and Spatsizi River canoe routes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wilderness Recreation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buckinghorse Lake Coldfish Lake Ella Lake Hotlesklwa Lake Laslui Lake Tuaton Lake Klahowya Lake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bucking horse Lake Coldfish Lake Ella Lake Hotlesklwa Lake Laslui Lake Tuaton Lake Klahowya Lake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures: subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process² Trails/Routes: subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> assess areas of concentrated horse use and implement strategies to minimize impacts of horse use, if necessary maintain Coldfish Lake camp for historical value and public use designate some lakes to remain free from any facility development to maintain their pristine wilderness eliminate use of BC Parks motorboat by Park Hosts at Coldfish Lake camp continue deactivated status of Coldfish Lake airstrip rehabilitate Fountain Rapids campsite and portage trail, and designate camping areas if necessary to prevent further impacts discourage firewood collection at Fountain Rapids work with other agencies and the Tahltan First Nations to minimize and mitigate impacts of potential industrial activity and access adjacent to the management area on park values and to manage access along the BCR railgrade
METSANTAN						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caribou Hide and Metsantan village sites 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wilderness Recreation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Metsantan Lake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> for cultural and interpretive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with other agencies and the Tahltan First Nations to minimize and mitigate

Natural and Cultural Heritage Values	Existing Facilities and Recreational Values	Zone	Existing Motorized Use		Management Direction	
			Motorboat ¹	Floatplane (limited trips)	New Facilities	Other Direction
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special Feature around Caribou Hide and Metsantan village sites 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures: subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process² Trails/Routes: subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> impacts of potential industrial activity and access adjacent to the Metsantan area on park values work with other agencies and the Tahltan First Nations on planning and management of the Omineca Mining Road to minimize and mitigate potential impacts on park values
CHAPEA						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> high value caribou summer and rutting habitat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wilderness Recreation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapea Lake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures: No Trails/Routes: subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with other agencies and the Tahltan First Nations to minimize and mitigate impacts of potential industrial activity and access in the area adjacent to the east on park values
TATLATUI						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mostly spring, summer and fall habitat for caribou, moose, mountain goats and grizzly bear limited Stone's sheep range Rainbow trout only fish system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> guide-outfitter camps on the Firesteel River (2), Kitchener Lake, Stalk Lake, and Tatlatui Lake public use cabin on Kitchener Lake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wilderness Recreation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tatlatui Lake Kitchener Lake Stalk Lake Portions of the Firesteel River 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tatlatui Lake Kitchener Lake Stalk Lake Trygve Lake Portions of the Firesteel River 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures: No Trails/Routes: Subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with other agencies and the Tahltan First Nations to minimize and mitigate impacts of potential industrial activity and access adjacent to Tatlatui Park on park values work with other agencies and the Tahltan First Nations on planning and management of the Omineca Mining Road to minimize and mitigate potential impacts on park values flight controls, including flight paths, height minimums in sensitive areas and frequency of flight will be implemented if necessary the current number of angling guides (3) will be maintained and no new angling guides will be allowed develop a system for managing angling and angling guiding that defines angling zones for waterbodies, classifies waterbodies into angling experience categories, and assigns rod-days by angling category, in consultation with angling guides, anglers and First Nations assess reported mountain pine beetle attack and develop a management strategy if necessary confirm sightings of pikas and melanistic chipmunks focus recreational activities in the eastern portion of the park, where grizzly habitat values are lower, to minimize interactions

Natural and Cultural Heritage Values	Existing Facilities and Recreational Values	Zone	Existing Motorized Use		Management Direction	
			Motorboat ¹	Floatplane	New Facilities	Other Direction

¹ Motorboat use on these lakes and rivers will continue with historic levels and types of use

² Size, design and location of new structures in all management areas will be strictly controlled