

Skeena Region

**MANAGEMENT DIRECTION
STATEMENT - DRAFT**
April, 2002

**for Boulder Creek
Provincial Park**



**BRITISH
COLUMBIA**

**Ministry of Water, Land
and Air Protection
Protected Areas Section**

draft dated April 4, 2002

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Forward

This management direction statement for Boulder Creek Provincial Park provides management direction until such time as the plan is revised or a more detailed management plan is prepared. Ongoing consultation with First Nations may require changes to this Management Direction Statement.

Approvals:

District Manager
Skeena District

Assistant Deputy Minister
Parks Division

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Boulder Creek Provincial Park

Management Direction Statement

Introduction

Purpose of the MDS

Management direction statements (MDS) provide strategic management direction for all protected areas that do not have an approved management plan. Management direction statements also describe protected area values, management issues and concerns; management strategy focused on immediate priority objectives and strategies; and, direction statements from other planning processes. While strategies may be identified in the MDS, the completion of all these strategies is subject to funding and funding procedures. In addition, all development associated with these strategies within the protected area is subject to the BC Parks Impact Assessment Policy.

Context

Boulder Creek Park was established as a Class A Provincial Park through the *Park Amendment Act* on June 28th, 1999 (Figure 1 & 2). The park is currently designated through the *Protected Areas of British Columbia Act*, 2000. The park is in the Roche Deboule Range, 20 km southwest of Hazelton and is within the asserted traditional territory of the Wet'suwet'en First Nation ((Figure 3, as provided by the Wet'suwet'en).

Boulder Creek protects 53 ha of old growth western hemlock forest that is representative of the ICHmc1a biogeoclimatic subzone. Originally proposed as an ecological reserve, the landscape is a typical rugged, glaciated valley in the Hazelton Mountains. It is located in the transition area between coastal and continental ecosystems and thus has representative biota from both areas; this includes *Abies amabilis*, which is not common in this area.

There are several large parks in the region protecting backcountry values, including Babine Mountains, Swan Lake Kispiox River and Seven Sisters parks. Additionally, there are several smaller parks providing day-use or camping opportunities. Nearby day use opportunities include Driftwood Canyon, Call Lake, Seeley Lake and Ross Lake Parks. In combination, these protected areas provide a variety of recreational opportunities.

Protected Area Attributes

Conservation

- Within the Nass Basin ecosection and the ICHmc1a (Interior Cedar Hemlock, moist cold Subzone, Nass variant, amabilis fir phase) biogeoclimatic zone
- Protects a parcel of old growth western hemlock forest representative of the coast – interior transitional area.
- Contains some coastal features but is in an interior, continental area; these features include amabilis fir, and spruce hybrids.

Recreation and Tourism

- Recreation activities include ATV use (along the excepted road), hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding and hunting.
- There are no developed recreational facilities

Cultural Heritage

- The Wet'suwet'en have identified the park as being in Laksilyu or small frog clan territory. Wah-tah-g'eght or Henry Alfred is the head chief of this clan. The Wet'suwet'en have also indicated that the Tsee K'alk'e yex or House on a flat rock is the house group within the clan whose territory encompasses the park (Figure 3).
- Information from the Wet'suwet'en details a historical trading trail running through the park (Bolder Creek trail). This trail runs parallel to Boulder Creek north to Moricetown Village and south to where it joins with the trading trail from MacDonell Lake through to Kitseguekla Village to the West. This trail was used by the Wet'suwet'en and specifically Laksilyu for trading purposes at MacDonell Lake. Boulder Creek trail also links into other systems of trails including the 24 Mile trail south of the park and north of the highway and to other traditional trails including the Copper River trail.

Significance in the Protected Areas System

- A special natural feature that is representative of ICH in a transition area between coastal and interior ecosystems, that also contains rare species
- Helps protect a small portion of an important Wet'suwet'en trail.

Land Uses, Tenures and Interests

Access

Access to the park is via the Boulder Creek Forest Service Road; this road is only passable by all terrain vehicles. The park boundary is 5.5 km from highway #16. There are no facilities within the park.

Existing Tenures, Alienations and Encumbrances

- Trapline 609T039; not currently under Park-Use-Permit
- This area is not within a guide-outfitter territory

Adjacent Patterns of Land Use

- Boulder Creek Road is excepted from the park
- Ministry of Forests manages to surrounding forests, some of which have been harvested

First Nations Interests

Boulder Creek Provincial Park is within the asserted traditional territory of the Wet'suwet'en First Nation. More specifically it is indicated to be Laksilyu (small frog clan) territory and part of the Tsee K'alk'e yex ((house on top of a flat rock) Figure 3).

Other Agency Interests

- Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection habitat and wildlife sections has an interest in the wildlife and habitat values in the park
- Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection wildlife section management unit 6-9
- Ministry of Forests, Research Branch has an interest in the forest ecosystem
- Ministry of Forests has an interest in the access road through the park

Private and Public Stakeholder Interests

- Local forest research institutes
- Bulkley Valley Naturalists
- Bulkley Valley Backpackers
- Residents of Moricetown and Smithers

Park Role Statement

Boulder Creek Provincial Park mainly serves a conservation role within British Columbia's protected area system. It protects a representative portion of the ICHmc1a biogeoclimatic zone in the transition area between coastal and continental areas. The park has some recreational value but this is limited due to the parks small size and its location.

Management Commitments and Issues

Management Direction from Previous Planning

The Bulkley Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) recommended Boulder Creek as a protected area and indicated that:

- *industrial exploration or extraction is not permitted.*
- *an access corridor is to be maintained through the park.*
- *other activities will be guided by Cabinet-approved policy.*

Management Issues

Theme	Issue
Protecting natural values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The park's flora and fauna are relatively unknown because inventory of these values is incomplete • The access corridor through the park may impact ecological values if the road is not properly maintained • Land use activities, such as forest harvesting, on lands next to the park may pose a risk to the park's ecological integrity because of adjacency impacts, and because the park's boundary remains undefined on the ground • Impacts to the park's values may occur because management agencies may not be coordinated in their resource management activities

Theme	Issue
Protecting recreational values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LRMP direction indicates that the access corridor through the park must not be restricted. The Boulder Creek Road is save and excepted from the park.
Protecting cultural values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boulder Creek trail that accesses other Wet'suwet'en trading trails has not been inventoried through the park and has not been maintained in recent years. Significance of cultural values is not quantified due to lack of cultural and historical inventories completed to date. Although the Wet'suwet'en indicate the trail is culturally significant and other values may also be present.
Park Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The public often does not know the park exists because the park boundary is not surveyed and no boundary markers have been deployed

Management Direction

Priority Management Objectives and Strategies

Objective	Strategy
To protect the park's natural values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete an inventory of flora and fauna Ensure that park boundary is defined on the ground Work with the Ministry of Forests to ensure road does not impact on forest values Work with other agencies such as Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management, Ministry of Forests and the Wildlife and Management section to ensure co-ordination between management agencies and to ensure management activities do not impact the ecological integrity of the park
To protect the park's recreational values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The access corridor for Boulder Creek Road is excepted from the park. Use of this road including by ATV's will be regulated by Ministry of Forests. ATV use is not permitted off of Boulder Creek Road.
To protect the park's cultural heritage values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the Wet'suwet'en to inventory trail and upgrade as required or as appropriate. The Wet'suwet'en should be a lead partner in any plans involving the trail. Investigate and collect information on cultural heritage
To provide information to park visitors To protect First Nations values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform park visitors of the area's park status by placing appropriate signage in the park Work with the Wet'suwet'en to protect the park's cultural heritage values as defined above. Meet with the Wet'suwet'en First Nation as issues require

Consultation and Future Planning

BC Parks will consult with the Wet'suwet'en First Nation, local stakeholders and resource users regarding issues as they arise. This priority for preparing a management plan for Boulder Creek is ranked as low.

Zoning Plan

The entire park is zoned Special Feature to protect the forest values that have resulted in ecological reserve designation applications and to reflect the importance of the Wet'suwet'en trail within the park.

**Appendix 1. Boulder Creek Provincial Park
Table of acceptable uses, activities and facilities.**

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

Y= allowed subject to conditions identified in the management direction statement or management plan
M= may be permitted if compatible with protected area objectives

N= not allowed
N1= allowed for expressed management purposes only
N2= present and allowed to continue but not normally allowed

