

ORIGINAL PURPOSE To protect representative north-coastal forest stands and bog vegetation for research on tree species and ecosystem classification

OVERVIEW

Date established:	28 March 1991	Location:	23 km SE of Prince Rupert
ORC #:	3133	Latitude:	54°12'N
Map number:	103 J/1	Longitude:	130°10'W

Total Area:	969 ha	Elevation:	15-900 m
Land:	960 ha		
Lake:	9 ha		

Access: The eastern edge of the reserve is accessible from Highway 16 at the McNeil River bridge.

Biogeoclimatic Zone: Coastal Western Hemlock (CWH); Mountain Hemlock (MH)
Biogeoclimatic Variant: CWHvh2 Central Very Wet Hypermaritime; MHwh1 Windward Wet Hypermaritime; MHwhp Wet Hypermaritime Parkland
Ecosection: Hecate Lowland
Region: Skeena
Management Area: Skeena Nass

COMPOSITION

Physical: The reserve is at the western edge of the granitic Kitimat Ranges, and contains rounded mountains which were over-topped by Pleistocene glaciers moving westward to the sea. Mountain slopes facing all compass directions are present. Three small subalpine lakes and several tarns (small alpine lakes) occur. Unnamed creeks drain reserve lands west into Rainbow Lake and north to Gamble Creek. Precipitation here is very high. Much snow accumulates above the 500 m level and persists into late spring or early summer on north-facing slopes.

Biological: Low elevation forests represent the very wet hypermaritime subzone of the Coastal Western Hemlock Zone. Stands dominated by western hemlock, a mixture of western hemlock and lodgepole pine, and western redcedar are present. Typical understory species include Alaskan blueberry, oval-leaved blueberry, salal, false azalea, deer fern and mosses. Specimens of amabilis fir over 300 years old grow here near the northern limit of the species range.

Extensive subalpine forests cover all high-elevation terrain and extend down to the 270 m level on north-facing slopes where snow persists until early summer. These stands tend to be scrubby and contain much bog. They belong to the hypermaritime forested and parkland subzone of the Mountain Hemlock Zone. Subalpine forest stands are typically dominated by mountain hemlock and yellow-cedar and also contain lodgepole pine. Understory plants include Labrador tea, cranberry, lingonberry, mountain heathers, cloudberry, fern-leaved goldthread, rosy twistedstalk and sphagnum moss. Common plants of the more open bogs are tufted deer-grass (muhly), beak-rush, deer-cabbage, sundew,

swamp gentian, white marsh-marigold and sphagnum moss. More detailed floral inventory and community descriptions are needed.

There is potential for wolverine to use the reserve, but the vertebrate fauna has not been surveyed.

Cultural: The ecological reserve is within the asserted territory of the Tsimshian First Nations.

MANAGEMENT CONCERNS

SIGNIFICANT SPECIES	BC LIST STATUS	COSEWIC STATUS	CF PRIORITY
Grizzly Bear	Blue listed	Special Concern (2002)	2
Menzie's burnet	Blue listed		3

THREATS

Climate Change: The bog area in this reserve may dry up or change as a result of altered hydrology and warmer temperatures.

The forest composition, which at this time is considered representative of north-coastal forest stands, may also change as forest systems that are adapted to warmer drier habitats migrate north.

Recreation: An all terrain vehicle trail on the east side of reserve may disturb wildlife.

Recreation: Potential access in the northern part of the reserve adjacent to Rainbow Ski Hill may lead to disruption of wildlife behaviour.

RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES Research and education opportunities focused on forest/wetland complexes on the hypermaritime north coast.

ER WARDEN ACTIVITIES

- Monitor/report illegal activities where observed
- Survey flora and fauna present in ER
- Monitor for invasive plants (control or eradicate where possible)

SCIENTIFIC NAMES OF SPECIES MENTIONED IN THE GAMBLE CREEK ER ACCOUNT

Flora

azalea, false (*Menziesia ferruginea* ssp. *ferruginea*)

beak-rush, white (*Rhynchospora alba*)

blueberry, Alaskan (*Vaccinium alaskaense*)

blueberry, oval-leaved (*Vaccinium ovalifolium*)

burnet, Menzies' (*Sanguisorba menziesii*)

cloudberry (*Rubus chamaemorus*)

cranberry, bog (*Oxycoccus oxycoccus*)

deer-cabbage (*Fauria crista-galli*)

fern, deer (*Blechnum spicant*)
fir, amabilis (*Abies amabilis*)
gentian, swamp (*Gentiana douglasiana*)
goldthread, (*Coptis sp.*)
hemlock, mountain (*Tsuga mertensiana*)
hemlock, western (*Tsuga heterophylla*)
Labrador tea (*Ledum groenlandicum*)
lingonberry (*Vaccinium vitis-idaea* ssp. *minus*)
marsh-marigold, white (*Caltha leptosepala*)
moss, sphagnum (*Sphagnum sp.*)
mountain-heather, (*Cassiope sp.*)
mountain-heather, (*Phyllodoce sp.*)
muhly (aka. tufted deer-grass) (*Muhlenbergia sp.*)
pine, lodgepole (*Pinus contorta* var. *latifolia*)
redcedar, western (*Thuja plicata*)
salal (*Gaultheria shallon*)
sundew, (*Drosera sp.*)
twistedstalk, rosy (*Streptopus lanceolatus* var. *curvipes*)
yellow-cedar (*Chamaecyparis nootkatensis*)

Fauna

Bear, Grizzly (*Ursus arctos*)
Wolverine (*Gulo gulo*)