

Skeena Region

MANAGEMENT DIRECTION STATEMENT - DRAFT

June 2002

for Babine Lake Marine Park Sites



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

Ministry of Water, Land
and Air Protection
Environmental Stewardsh
Planning Section

Babine Lake Marine Park

Approvals Page

Forward

The Provincial Government protected five sites of the Babine Lake Marine Park under the Protected Areas of BC Act in May 1993. Babine Lake Marine Park Sites have been identified as Goal 2, special feature, protected areas in recognition of their recreation and cultural heritage values. Designation followed the recommendations of the Lakes LRMP.

Implementation of strategies identified in the MDS will be dependent on available funding and agency priorities.

Approvals

Regional Manager
Skeena Region

Assistant Deputy Minister
Environmental Stewardship

This management direction statement was developed through direction received from the Lakes Land and Resource Management Plan.

Table of Contents

Babine Lake Marine Park

Approvals Page	i
Forward.....	i
Regional Location Map.....	iv
Protected Area Map	v
Introduction	1
Setting and Context	1
Protected Area Attributes	1
Conservation.....	1
Recreation and Tourism.....	1
Cultural Heritage.....	2
Significance in the Protected Areas System	2
Land Uses, Tenures and Interests	2
Access	2
Existing Tenures	2
Existing Land Use Activities and Facilities.....	2
Adjacent Patterns of Land Use.....	2
First Nations Interests	2
Other Agency Interests.....	3
Private and Public Stakeholder Interests.....	3
Management Commitments and Issues	3
Direction from Previous Planning	4
Management Issues	4
Management Strategy	5
Consultation and Future Planning	5
Preliminary Zoning	5
Figure 1 – Table of Land and Resource Use Commitments	6

Introduction

Purpose

This management direction statement (MDS) provides strategic management direction for four sites within Babine Lake Marine Park. Management direction statements do not negate the need for future more detailed plans. This MDS describes protected area values, presents direction from other planning processes, identifies management issues and offers priority management strategies. Strategies will be ranked according to priority and completed as funding permits. All development associated with these strategies is subject to BC Parks' Impact Assessment Policy.

Setting and Context

This MDS includes four sites (Sandpoint, Pierre Creek, Hook Bay, and Pinkut Creek East) within Babine Lake Marine Park totalling ~ 256 ha along the shoreline of Babine Lake, about 30 km north of the community of Burns Lake (area population ~ 4,000). Most sites will be reached by boat access from Babine Lake. Pinkut Creek can be reached by logging road.

The small marine sites lie within the asserted traditional territory of the Nad'u'ten Nation, Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, and the Yekooche First Nation.

The sites provide anchorage, scenic lakeshore views, beaches and fish-bearing creeks and provide access to internationally-significant fishing opportunities along 200 km of waterways on the largest natural lake entirely within BC. These four sites are part of the Babine Lake Marine Park system. Other parks along Babine Lake and adjacent Nilkitkwa Lake include Sutherland River Park, Pendelton Bay, Topley Landing, Smithers Landing, Red Bluff, Rainbow Alley, Nilkitkwa Lake sites and Babine River Park. Sutherland River Park and Protected Area and Babine River Park protect the ecological and recreational values of narrow corridors along these rivers; the remaining parks protect small sites along lakes. Pendelton Bay offers camping opportunities. Ethel F Wilson Memorial Park offers rustic camping and angling on Pinkut Lake, 10 km to the south.

Protected Area Attributes

Conservation

- remnant Babine Upland Ecosection; SBSmc2 (moist, cold sub-boreal spruce subzone, Babine variant)

Recreation and Tourism

- access to internationally-significant angling opportunities (rainbow and lake trout) along 200 km of waterways
- Pinkut Creek site borders the Pinkut Creek fish hatchery

Cultural Heritage

- Babine Lake, as an important salmon migration route, had highly concentrated prehistoric occupation
- many (more than 200) archaeological sites exist along the lake

Significance in the Protected Areas System

- protects remnant ecosystem within the Babine Upland Ecosection (high priority, underrepresented ecosection); conservation values ranked as low (individual sites ranked from 51 to 72 out of 84 parks in Skeena District; Conservation Risk Assessment); no sites have rare or highly diverse cultural features
- provides access to internationally significant lake recreation opportunities including boating and angling for local residents and destination travellers

Land Uses, Tenures and Interests

Access

All sites are accessible from Babine Lake. Pendelton Bay provides the only public boat launch on Babine Lake. Pinkut Creek site on the southwest shore of Babine Lake can be reached by gravel logging road north of Burns Lake. Hook Bay site is more than 1 km from a road, but can be reached by ATV along a trapping trail.

Existing Tenures

- trapping and guide-outfitting tenures include the sites, but the sites are not used extensively (Hook Bay has been actively trapped in the past)

Existing Land Use Activities and Facilities

- Sandpoint, once a logging landing site, has two fire rings and one picnic table; anchorage is somewhat sheltered
- Hook Bay has a sheltered bay with good anchorage and a beach; there are no facilities; people use the site to hunt and picnic; Nad'u'ten people used to use the site for a garden

Adjacent Patterns of Land Use

- The northeast shore of Babine Lake (Hook Bay, Sandpoint sites) is designated as a moose winter habitat Special Resource Management Zone within the Lakes District
- Pinkut Creek site lies within a recreation emphasis Special Resource Management Zone
- Pierre Creek Site lies within a General Resource Management Zone

First Nations Interests

- asserted traditional territory of the Nad'u'ten First Nation, Carrier Sekani Tribal Council and Yekooche First Nation

- Aboriginal Rights will be honoured and protected subject to conservation and safety concerns
- all First Nations have an interest in maintaining traditional trapping, hunting, fishing and gathering activities
- all First Nations have an interest in protecting cultural and archaeological sites; they do not want archaeological sites publicised due to concerns about vandalism
- Nad'u'ten Nation would like BC Parks to follow their "Interim Protocol of Communication" (see Appendix), including hand-delivering documents and holding meetings on the land
- Nad'u'ten elders have an interest in re-establishing their gardens in Hook Bay (also called "Garden Bay")

Other Agency Interests

- Department of Fisheries and Oceans has an interest in maintaining the fisheries values of Babine Lake and the Pinkut Creek fish hatchery
- WLAP Wildlife Section has an interest in wildlife, particularly grizzly bears

Private and Public Stakeholder Interests

- recreational users: boaters, anglers, picnickers, swimmers
- local residents: Burns Lake, Topley, Houston, and small communities along Babine Lake
- trappers
- hunters would like to use ATVs to access Hook Bay

Role of Babine Lake Sites Provincial Park

The four sites play primarily a recreation role, providing angling and boating opportunities for local residents and destination travellers as part of the Babine Lake Marine Park system. The sites protect remnant shoreline ecosystems within the Babine Upland Ecoregion (high priority, underrepresented ecoregion), but are too small to offer significant conservation values. The sites have traditionally been used by First Nations.

Management Commitments and Issues

Direction from Previous Planning

The Lakes LRMP recommended Babine Lake Sites for protection due to their recreation and cultural heritage values in 2000. The LRMP does not provide specific management direction for the Babine Lake sites, but does provide general direction for all protected areas (Appendix A).

Management Issues

The following management issues require attention:

Theme	Issue
Protecting ecological values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inventory of natural features is incomplete • human-bear conflicts could be exacerbated by garbage; bears are common in the area • Pinkut Creek is used for camping; issues include cutting wood for campfires and attracting bears • impacts of angling on fish populations in Babine Lake are unknown; Fisheries Section has concerns about the impact of fishing pressure, particularly on lake trout • hunters use ATVs to access and travel within Hook Bay
Protecting cultural values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significance of cultural features is unknown
First Nations' values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Nations would like full consultation • First Nations would like to maintain trapping, hunting, fishing and gathering activities • First Nations would like to protect cultural and archaeological sites • Nad'u'ten elders would like to re-establish gardens at Hook ("Garden") Bay

Management Strategy

The following table describes management strategies to deal with outstanding issues raised. In addition, figure 1 contains a list of acceptable land and resource uses for this ecological reserve.

Priority Management Objectives	Priority Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding new site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconsider designating Twin Creek or alternative as a site within the Babine Lake Marine Park system
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the park's natural values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory fauna and flora; prepare Ecology Information Summary • Work with Fisheries Section to inventory fish and manage angling as necessary • Work with Wildlife Section to inventory grizzly bears as necessary • Follow bear-people conflict prevention plan, including education program • Develop signage for Pinkut Creek; include bear-people information and prohibition on wood cutting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the park's cultural heritage values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate and collate existing information on cultural heritage values; prepare Cultural Features Information Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect First Nations values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal Rights may be exercised subject to safety and conservation concerns • At minimum, follow Ministry guidelines on consultation; where possible, consider specific First Nation consulting protocols • Do not advertise archaeological sites; work with First Nations communities to protect sites if damage occurs • Work with Nad'u'ten in traditional uses to ensure that park values are not compromised
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information to the public about the park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider developing brochure for entire Babine Lake system of parks; include information on angling regulations, bear-people conflict prevention and water safety
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protected area operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No development is planned

Consultation and Future Planning

Management of these sites should be straight forward. BC Parks will consult with appropriate First Nations representatives, local stakeholders and resource users as issues arise.

Preliminary Zoning

The Babine Lake Marine Park sites will be designated Natural Environment to provide for a variety of recreational activities in a natural environment.

Figure 1. Babine Lake Sites Provincial Park Summary Table of Land and Resource Use Commitments

Activity/Use/Facility	Acceptable Uses
Aboriginal Rights	Y
Hunting	Y
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)	Y
Backcountry huts	N
Water control structures	N
Fish stocking and enhancement	N
Road access	Y (to Pinkut Creek)
Off-road access (snowmobiling)	N
Off-road access (motorised)	N
Off-road access (mechanical activities)	N
Motorised water access	Y
Aircraft access	N
Fire management (suppression)	Y
Fire management (prescribed fire management)	N
Fire management (prevention)	N
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