

MEGIN RIVER ECOLOGICAL RESERVE

PURPOSE STATEMENT

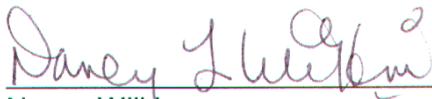
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Approved by:



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Date: August 8/03



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Date: Jan. 21/04

MEGIN RIVER ECOLOGICAL RESERVE Purpose Statement

Ecological reserves are areas selected to preserve representative and special natural ecosystems, plant and animal species, features and phenomena. The key goal of ecological reserves is to contribute to the maintenance of biological diversity and the protection of genetic materials. All consumptive resource uses and the use of motorized vehicles are prohibited. Research and educational activities may be carried out but only under permit.

Primary Role

The **primary** role of Megin River Ecological Reserve is to preserve a rich alluvial site that supports an old growth Sitka spruce and western redcedar forest. The ecological reserve occupies the lower kilometre of the Megin River valley, and consists mostly of level floodplain lands with alluvial surficial materials. These alluvial lands support old growth Sitka spruce trees reaching 1.5 metres in diameter and 60 metres in height, and western redcedars of up to 2 metres in diameter and 50 metres tall.

The ecological reserve protects riparian vegetation and old growth forests which provide shaded habitat for significant spawning runs of sockeye, chinook, coho, pink, and chum salmon found in the Megin River system. Chum salmon, and perhaps other species, spawn within the reserve itself. The ecological reserve is encompassed completely in Strathcona Park, thus the entire Megin River watershed and the Megin estuary are protected, providing pristine habitat for wildlife, seabirds and marine invertebrates such as crabs and clams. The Megin River watershed is one of several watersheds on the west coast of Vancouver Island that serves as high quality habitat for the nationally threatened and provincially red-listed marbled murrelet.

Management Issues

Known Management Issue	Response
Impacts of recreational use (access, hunting, fishing) in the ecological reserve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recruit a Volunteer Warden and conservation stewardship group and implement a formal monitoring system. ➤ Increase awareness of the ecological reserve and acceptable uses through BC Parks website and through discussions with guide outfitters and recreational user groups.
Access to the Megin river corridor from Shelter Inlet is through the ecological reserve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Investigate the options to continued access up the river while maintaining the ecological reserve designation.

Conservation

- Representation
- ecosection
- Megin River Ecological Reserve itself is too small to be representative; however, it is now contained entirely within the Megin/Talbot addition to Strathcona Park, thus it is part of a larger protected area that contributes significantly to ecosystem representation. Strathcona Park is the largest contributor (with around 38%) to the representation of the Windward Island Mountains Ecosection (WIM), which is well represented in the protected areas system at 17.4%.
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant
- Likewise, the ecological reserve itself is too small to be representative, but when taken as part of Strathcona Park, this large protected area is the largest contributor (with around 25%) to the representation of CWHvm1, which is an under-represented variant with only 7% of its area protected.
- Special Features
- Old growth Sitka spruce and western redcedar, river and riparian habitat for spawning salmon, estuary, wildlife values
- Rare/Endangered Values
- Important breeding habitat for the provincially *red-listed* and nationally threatened marbled murrelet. *Blue listed* - cutthroat trout. *Yellow-listed* (species of conservation concern S4) - chinook and coho salmon. Potential habitat for Olympia oyster (listed as Special Concern by COSEWIC).
- Scientific/Research Opportunities
- Old growth foodplain forest biology; salmon spawning

Recreation

- Representation
- backcountry Not Applicable
- destination Not Applicable
- travel corridor Not Applicable
- local recreation Not Applicable
- Special Opportunities
- Not Applicable
- Education/Interpretation Opportunities
- Offsite interpretation of large trees; recreation users on the river.

Cultural Heritage

- Representation Values unknown
- Special Feature None known at this time, but village site nearby.

Other Management Considerations

- Other Designations The Megin River watershed is included in a larger Important Bird Area (IBA) for breeding marbled murrelets. The IBA program is an international program that identifies and supports the protection of lands having special bird habitats.
- Relationship to other PAs Part of a system of ecological reserves on Vancouver Island and part of the Megin/Talbot addition to Strathcona Park. The estuary values are complemented by nearby Sulphur Passage Park.
- Co-operative Management Arrangements Not Applicable
- Partnerships Not Applicable Need to recruit ecological reserve warden.
- Vulnerability Natural values are vulnerable to recreation use (hunting/fishing), and it is the boat access point into Megin River
- Relationship to other Strategies Not Applicable

Area: 50 hectares

Date of establishment: July 09, 1981