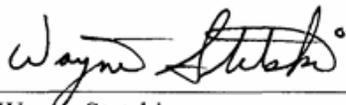


PREMIER LAKE PROVINCIAL PARK

PURPOSE STATEMENT AND ZONING PLAN

February 2003

Approved by:



Wayne Stetski
Regional Manager
Environmental Stewardship Division

Date: 13-02-03



Nancy Wilkin
Assistant Deputy Minister
Environmental Stewardship Division

Date: 25-02-03

PREMIER LAKE PROVINCIAL PARK Purpose Statement and Zoning Plan

Primary Role

The **primary role** of Premier Lake Park is to protect representative forest, lake and remnant ecosystems of the Rocky Mountain Trench.

Most of the Kootenay River valley bottom is on private land and/or used for consumptive uses such as grazing and forestry. Representation of the East Kootenay Trench Ecosection in the protected areas system is distributed over fifteen provincial parks. Premier Lake Park provides the greatest extent of representation. The East Kootenay Trench is one of the most important wildlife areas in Canada for big game species.

Given the size and diversity of ecosystem values, Premier Lake Park is one of the best opportunities to conserve natural values in the ecosection. The park also protects a small remnant of an under-represented ecosystem (i.e. MSdk) in the East Kootenay Trench. The amount occurring in the park is virtually all that is protected in the ecosection.

Secondary Role

The **secondary role** is to maintain holiday destination, tourism travel route, day use backcountry and local community outdoor recreation opportunities in a mountain lake setting. Located just a short ten-minute drive from Highway 93/95, the park is the only one in the East Kootenays that serves all the protected area recreation goals of the Environmental Stewardship Division.

Premier Lake is one of a few easily accessible good fishing lakes in the East Kootenays. Although there are a variety of recreational pursuits available including camping, hiking and swimming, the renowned angling opportunities are the main attraction for visitors and one of the main reasons for its park designation.

Tertiary Role

The **tertiary role** of the park is to provide an opportunity for grassland/open forest ecosystem restoration as well as associated research. Given the interest by NGO's and other agencies, this park is ideally located to allow for jointly funded ecological-based projects.

Known Management Issues	Response
Forest in-growth and the absence of fire over the landscape are threatening the grassland/open forest ecosystem.	Baseline ecological mapping (TEM) has been conducted. Recommendations from mapping analysis will drive priority for ecosystem restoration. Work with adjacent land managers on restoration plans.
Suppression of fires, insect attack and wind throw have created an extreme fire hazard in areas of the park.	Priority areas need to be determined from restoration plan and treated as soon as funds and resources are available.
Lack of ecological baseline data for species at risk (SAR).	Carry out SAR probability and presence and develop management strategies. Implement as required.
Forest health in the park threatening forest values outside the park.	Work with the BCFS to secure outside funding to carry out an impact assessment and management options strategy.

Zoning

Intensive Recreation (approximately 27 ha or 3% of the park)

Objective: To provide for a variety of readily accessible, facility-oriented outdoor recreation opportunities.

Natural Environment (approximately 811 ha or 97% of the park)

Objectives: To protect scenic values and to provide for recreation opportunities in a largely undisturbed natural environment.

Conservation

Representation - ecosection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The East Kootenay Trench Ecosection is very poorly represented (0.68%) in the PA system. Premier Lake Park provides the best representation (27%) of the province-wide PA representation. Other significant contributors include Kikomun Creek (24%), Burges James Gadsden (13%) and Columbia Lake (8%).
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Contributes significantly to representation of the IDF dm2 subzone/variant that is very poorly represented (0.93%) in the PA system; Premier Lake provides 28% of the overall representation of the IDF dm2, ranking first. Contributes minimally to the MS dk.
Special Feature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Remnant ecosystem: virtually the only example of MS dk that is protected in the EKT Ecosection (99%).
Rare/Endangered Values	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Park contains listed species such as bighorn sheep (b) bull trout (b) and painted turtles (b). Assessment of other rare values not yet done.
Scientific/Research Opportunities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Potential for grassland ecosystem restoration research.

Recreation

Representation backcountry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The Yankee Canuck trail provides hiking opportunities as well as leads to a longer trail system heading into the Diorite Creek area.
destination	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Vehicle camping (55 sites), fishing, boating, major destination for Albertans and local fishers.
travel corridor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Highway 93/95 (major travel route to U.S.A).

local recreation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Day use (45 vehicles), one of a six community beach/lake day use areas. Boat launch and children's playground.
Special Opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable
Education/Interpretation Opportunities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Spawning channel for trout with interpretive signs and viewing platform. Used by public and for school fieldtrips.

Cultural Heritage

Representation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Regional representation of pre-contact economic activity.
Special Feature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Contains nationally significant lithic scatters with subsurface deposits.

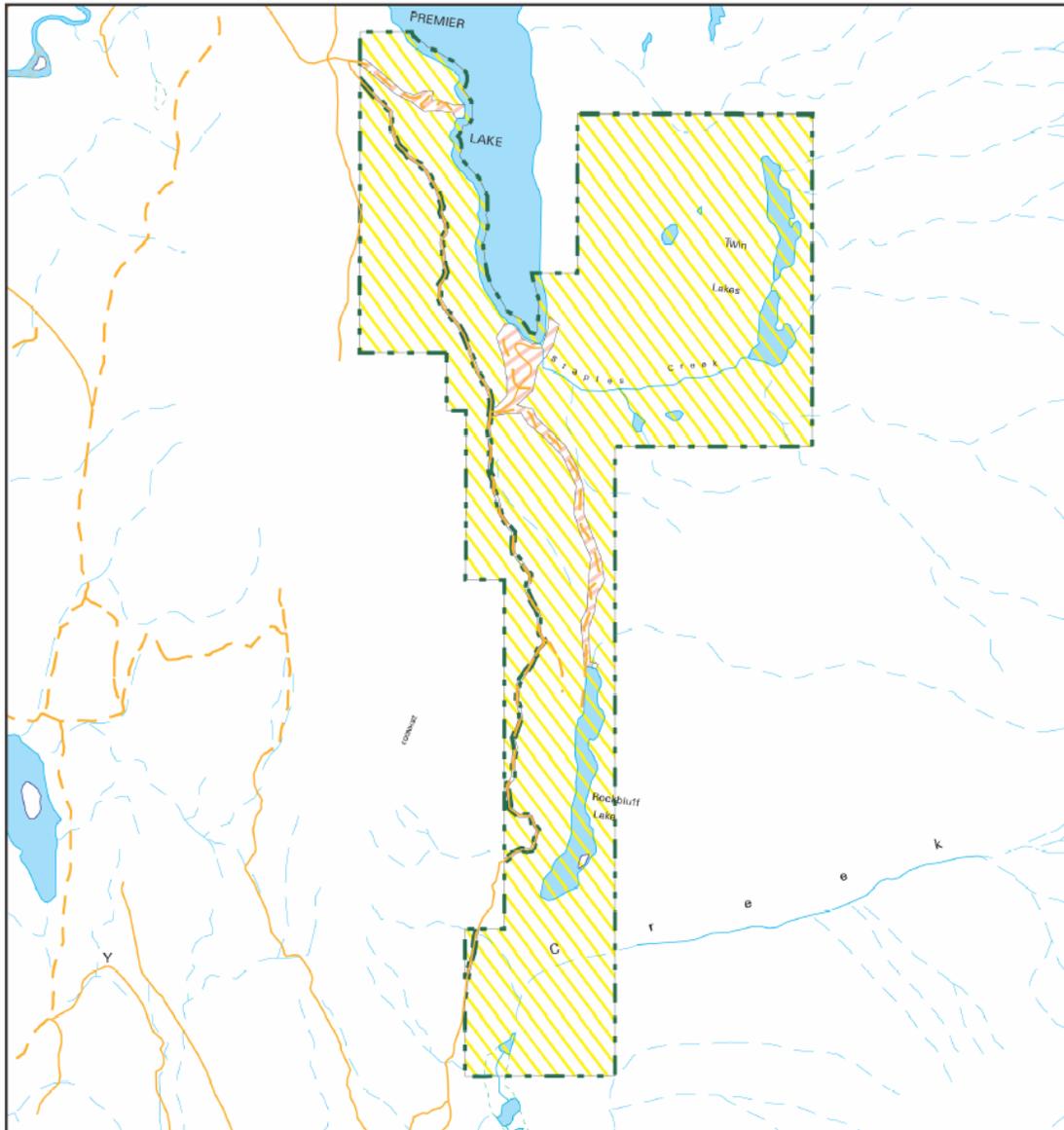
Other Management Considerations

Other Designations	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable
Relationship to other PAs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Provides alternate destination to Wasa Lake and Whiteswan Lake.
Co-operative Management Arrangements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Trout egg retrieval with Kootenay Trout Hatchery (FWSA)
Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable
Vulnerability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	High risk given the lack of fire, unnatural fuel build up, fir bark beetle mortality and no restoration plan for park. Cultural heritage values vulnerable to vandalism.
Relationship to other Strategies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Need to tie into ecosystem restoration planning/work being done on adjacent lands.

Area: 837 hectares

Date of establishment: April 25, 1940

Zoning Map - Premier Lake Provincial Park



Projection: Albers Equal Areas
Datum: NAD83



-  Intensive Recreation
-  Natural Environment
-  Protected Area Boundary



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