

ORIGINAL PURPOSE To preserve a mosaic of aspen parkland vegetation types at the northern extremity of the Interior Douglas-Fir Zone

CURRENT PURPOSE To protect a moist, spruce dominated ecosystem of forest and grasslands which is rare in the Interior Douglas-Fir, Very Dry Mild subzone. The area is also a valuable wetland for a wide variety of waterfowl and songbird species.

OVERVIEW

Date established:	6 April 1972	Location:	15 km S of Williams Lake
Date amended (deletion of road allowance):	19 Dec. 1984		
ORC #:	3035	Latitude:	49°45'N
Map number:	22 O/16	Longitude:	118°55'W
Total Area:	39 ha	Elevation:	915-930 m
Land:	26 ha		
Foreshore:	13 ha		

Access: Access by road

Biogeoclimatic Zones:	Interior Douglas-Fir (IDF)
Biogeoclimatic Variant:	IDF xm IDF Very Dry Mild
Ecosection:	Cariboo Basin
Region:	Cariboo
Management Area:	South Cariboo

COMPOSITION

Physical: The reserve has uplands on both sides of Westwick Lake, a shallow, slightly saline, elongated lake lying in a shallow northwest-southeast trending valley on the Fraser Plateau. Regional bedrock is predominantly lava. Regional soils are mostly Luvisols, although pockets of Chernozems occur. Lands in the reserve slope gently toward the lake, which has a boulder-strewn, muddy shoreline.

Biological: The reserve is about one-third grassland and two-thirds forest. Continuous grassland tracts occur in the block north of the lake and in the southeast corner between the road and lake. Typical moderately grazed grasslands are dominated by needle-and-thread grass, bluebunch wheatgrass and northern bedstraw; heavily grazed sites which include pussytoes and bluegrasses. Saline areas near the lake support an alkaligrass-foxtail barley association.

A Douglas-fir-pinegrass-kinnikinnick association covers much of the upland, but smaller areas of aspen-lodgepole pine and white spruce forest are present. Pinegrass and kinnikinnick also dominate the understory in the latter types. Common plants in grassy forest openings include sticky geranium, death-camas, field chickweed, small-flowered penstemon and lemonweed.

A wide variety of waterfowl utilize Westwick Lake, some of which undoubtedly depend upon upland sites in the reserve for nesting such as dense shrub-herb cover (dabbling ducks) or holes in trees (bufflehead; goldeneye). Several species of shorebirds are present seasonally. A diversity of terrestrial birds has been noted, including hole-nesting species like swallows, woodpeckers, kestrels, nuthatches and chickadees.

MANAGEMENT CONCERNS

SIGNIFICANT SPECIES	BC LIST STATUS	COSEWIC STATUS	CF PRIORITY
Geyer's onion	Blue listed		3

THREATS

Climate Change: Depending on the changes in hydrology and exposure, the unique, moist, spruce-dominated ecosystem may be subject to change should the area dry up as a result of future climate changes.

Agriculture: Grazing by cattle in the reserve degrades the habitat. Notify area supervisor if grazing activity is observed in this ER. NOTE: grazing is prohibited in ecological reserves

RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

The lake has been the site of much entomological and limnological research by University of British Columbia staff and graduate students.

ER WARDEN ACTIVITIES

- Monitor grazing activity and report to Area supervisor if activity is observed → Grazing is prohibited in Ecological Reserves
- Continue to survey both flora and fauna
- Monitor for invasive plants

SCIENTIFIC NAMES OF SPECIES MENTIONED IN THE WESTWICK LAKE ER ACCOUNT

Flora

alkaligrass (*Puccinellia* spp.)
 aspen (*Populus* spp.)
 barley, foxtail (*Hordeum jubatum* ssp. *intermedium* and ssp. *jubatum*)
 bedstraw, northern (*Galium boreale*)
 bluegrass (*Poa* spp.)
 death-camas (*Zigadenus* spp.)
 Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*)
 chickweed, field (*Cerastium arvense*)
 geranium, sticky (*Geranium viscosissimum*)
 grass, needle-and-thread (*Hesperostipa comata* ssp. *comata* and ssp. *intermedia*)
 kinnikinnick (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*)

lemonweed (*Lithospermum ruderale*)
penstemon, small-flowered (*Penstemon procerus* var. *procerus* and var. *tolmiei*)
pine, lodgepole (*Pinus contorta* var. *latifolia*)
pinegrass (*Calamagrostis rubescens*)
pussytoes (*Antennaria* spp.)
spruce, white (*Picea glauca*)
wheatgrass, bluebunch (*Pseudoroegneria spicata* ssp.)

Fauna

Bufflehead (*Bucephala albeola*)
Chickadee (*Poecile* spp.)
Goldeneye (*Bucephala* spp.)
