

ORIGINAL PURPOSE To maintain representative stands of ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir in the Interior Douglas-Fir Zone

OVERVIEW

Date established:	29 July 1971	Location:	10 km SSW of Princeton
ORC #:	3027	Latitude:	49°22'N
Map number:	92 H/7	Longitude:	120°35'W

Total Area:	32 ha	Elevation:	930-990 m
Land:	32 ha		

Access: Access by 1.5 km walk from Highway 3 at Whipsaw Creek bridge.

Biogeoclimatic Zones:	Interior Douglas-Fir (IDF)
Biogeoclimatic Variant:	IDFdk2 Cascade Dry Cool; IDFxh1 Okanogan Very Dry Hot
Ecosection:	Hozameen Range
Region:	Okanagan
Management Area:	West Okanagan

COMPOSITION

Physical: The reserve is located near the dissected southwestern edge of the Thompson Plateau in the Similkameen River watershed. Regional soils are predominantly developed on glacial drift. The reserve straddles a low east-west oriented ridge and so has both southerly and northerly exposed slopes. Mean annual precipitation has been only slightly higher than that recorded at Princeton. This results in a moderately severe soil moisture deficit in summer.

Biological: Variations in aspect and soil texture result in communities ranging from open grassland to fairly dense forest. Patches of grassland on the lower south slope have been heavily grazed and are dominated by big sage and seral grasses such as Sandberg's bluegrass which have replaced the normal climax dominant, bluebunch wheatgrass. Typical forbs in this type are sagebrush buttercup, western springbeauty, sticky cinquefoil, western groundsel, and rosy pussytoes. The upper south-facing slope supports well-spaced stands of ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir in which big sage is the dominant shrub and bluebunch wheatgrass the characteristic grass. Rocky Mountain and common juniper, junegrass, arrow-leaved balsam-root, diffuse knapweed, and kinnikinnick also occur on these slopes. The crest of the ridge supports vegetation transitional between the south and north slopes. Predominant species are ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, and pinegrass; other plants include Saskatoon, prickly rose, balsam-root, and lomatium. On the north slope of the ridge the forest is made up almost entirely of a dense stand of Douglas-fir, and pinegrass dominates the understory.

Elk and mule deer are common in the area, particularly in winter and spring. Typical birds noted here are the Mountain Bluebird, Townsend's Solitaire, Mountain Chickadee, Pygmy Nuthatch, American Kestrel, Magpie, Northern Flicker, Williamson's Sapsucker, Clark's Nutcracker, and Blue Grouse.

MANAGEMENT CONCERNS

SIGNIFICANT SPECIES	BC LIST STATUS	COSEWIC STATUS	CF PRIORITY
Williamson's Sapsucker, <i>ssp. thyroideus</i>	Red listed	Endangered (2005)	2

THREATS

Climate Change:	As the temperatures continue to warm, the moisture deficit which is already a feature of this area may increase in severity resulting in severe drought. The health of the protected forests may decline while the grass and weed communities expand. The IPCC has projected a general proliferation of aggressive invasive plant species, in particular.
Agriculture:	The reserve is half fenced to protect from cattle grazing. Where cattle still have access they are spreading weeds and other invasive species.
Non-native species:	Knapweed, Hound's-tongue and Dalmatian toadflax are invasive species spreading in the reserve.
Forest	A variety of insects (e.g. mountain pine beetle, spruce bud worm, tussock moth) are converting the forest to dead trees. A hot fire is likely to convert the ecosystem from forest to grassland.

SCIENTIFIC NAMES OF SPECIES MENTIONED IN THE WHIPSAW CREEK ER ACCOUNT

Flora

balsamroot, arrowleaf (*Balsamorhiza sagittata*)
bluegrass, Sandberg's (*Poa secunda* ssp. *sandbergii*)
buttercup, sagebrush (*Ranunculus glaberrimus*)
cinquefoil, sticky (*Potentilla glandulosa*)
Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*)
groundsel, western (*Senecio integerrimus* var. *exaltatus*)
junegrass (*Koeleria macrantha*)
juniper, common (*Juniperus communis*)
juniper, Rocky Mountain (*Juniperus scopulorum*)
kinnikinnick (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*)
knapweed, diffuse (*Centaurea diffusa*)
lomatium (*Lomatium* spp.)
pine, ponderosa (*Pinus ponderosa*)
pinegrass (*Calamagrostis rubescens*)
pussytoes, rosy (*Antennaria rosea*)
rose, prickly (*Rosa acicularis* spp. *sayi*)
sagebrush, big (*Artemisia tridentata*)
Saskatoon (*Amelanchier alnifolia*)
springbeauty, western (*Claytonia lanceolata*)
wheatgrass, bluebunch (*Pseudoroegneria spicata*)

Fauna

Bluebird, Mountain (*Sialia currucoides*)

Chickadee, Mountain (*Poecilie gambeli*)

Deer, Mule (*Odocoileus hemionus*)

Elk (*Cervus Canadensis*)

Flicker, Northern (*Colaptes auratus*)

Grouse, Dusky (aka Blue Grouse) (*Dendragapus fuliginosus*)

Kestrel, American (*Falco sparverius*)

Magpie, Black-billed (*Pica hudsonia*)

Nutcracker, Clark's (*Nucifraga columbiana*)

Nuthatch, Pygmy (*Sitta pygmaea*)

Sapsucker, Williamson's (*Sphyrapicus thyroideus* ssp. *thyroideus*)

Solitaire, Townsend's (*Myadestes townsendi*)
