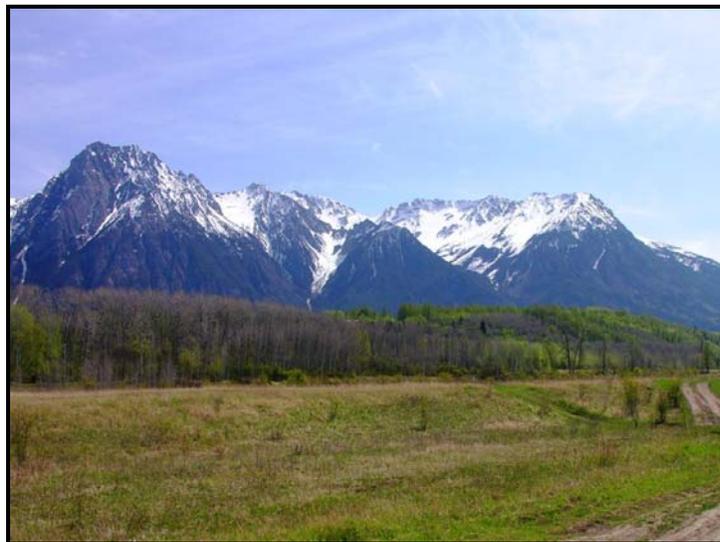


# MANAGEMENT DIRECTION STATEMENT

July, 2007



for Anderson Flats  
Provincial Park



Anderson Flats  
Provincial Park

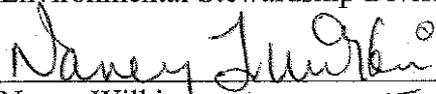
Management Direction  
Statement

Approved by:



Hugh Markides  
Regional Manager, Skeena Region  
Environmental Stewardship Division

Date: July 12/07



Nancy Wilkin  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Environmental Stewardship Division

Date: May 28/08

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# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of the Management Direction Statement

Management direction statements (MDS) provide strategic management direction for protected areas that do not have a full management plan. MDS do not necessarily negate the need for future more detailed management plans. Management direction statements describe protected area values and management issues and set out a management strategy focused on priority objectives that take into account any commitments from other planning processes.

While strategies may be identified in the MDS, the completion of all these strategies is subject to available funding. In addition, all development associated with these strategies within the park is subject to BC Parks' Design Guidelines and the Environmental Stewardship Division's Impact Assessment Policy.

## 1.2 Setting and Context

Anderson Flats Provincial Park is located on the southeast bank of the junction of the Skeena and Bulkley Rivers, between South Hazelton and the Village of Hazelton. The 99 hectare Class A Park was established under the *Protected Areas of British Columbia Act*, Bill 24-2007, in May 2007. The park includes 1300 meters of river frontage on the Bulkley and Skeena Rivers, 17 hectares of floodplain, and forested terraces comprise the remaining upland area. The site offers scenic and recreational values, as well as regionally and provincially significant fishery values.

The property was originally Crown Granted to Thomas Crosby, a Methodist missionary whom settled in the area, in 1897. The land, now locally known as Anderson Flats, was purchased by the Ministry of Environment from a private owner in March 2006. Other informal names for the area include Mission Point and "The Forks". Acquisition of the property and establishment of the park occurred in response to the opportunity to preserve public access to this regionally significant recreational fishing destination, on a stretch of shoreline where such access to the riverfront is limited and declining.

Anderson Flats Provincial Park is located directly across the Skeena River from Bulkley Junction Provincial Park. This contiguity with Bulkley Junction Provincial Park secures public access to river frontage and provides protection for the riparian areas on both shores of the Skeena River, while also preserving scenic values for both parks. Other provincial parks nearby include Seeley Lake and Ross Lake. Located 6 kilometers west on Highway 16, Seeley Lake Park provides overnight camping facilities and opportunities for highway travelers. Ross Lake Park, located 8 kilometers east of Hazelton, offers day-use facilities and opportunities for picnicking, swimming and non-motorized boating.

# Anderson Flats Provincial Park Locator Map

## Legend

- Highways
- Rivers/Lakes
- Coastline
- Anderson Flats Provincial Park
- Skeena Region



0 100 200 300 Kilometers



Scale 1:6,000,000



Figure 1. Context Map



Figure 2. Anderson Flats Provincial Park Map

## 2.0 Protected Area Attributes

### 2.1 Conservation

- Anderson Flats Park protects 82 hectares of the Cranberry Upland (CRU) ecosection. Currently < 0.5 % of this ecosection is protected provincially.
- The park is located within the Interior Cedar – Hemlock, Hazelton Moist Cold (ICH mc2) biogeoclimatic zone variant. Only 4% of this BEC variant is protected provincially.
- The site contains a narrow strip of riparian cottonwood-red-osier dogwood site series, which is blue-listed (i.e. of special concern in British Columbia) by the BC Conservation Data Centre.
- The Skeena and Bulkley rivers provide provincially significant spawning and rearing habitat for steelhead, chinook, pink, coho, sockeye and chum salmon. All these species migrate past this park.
- Deeper pools adjacent to park provides rearing and over-wintering fish habitat for steelhead, rainbow, bulltrout and cutthroat trout.
- The park includes a section of the Bulkley River floodplain, which is not represented elsewhere in the park system.
- Wildlife observed in the park include black bear, grizzly bear, moose, coyotes, wolves, marten, otter, beaver and bald eagles.

### 2.2 Cultural Heritage

- Although no archaeological sites are formally registered with the provincial Archaeological Branch, Anderson Flats Park is believed to be historically significant as an important First Nations gathering and trading site.
- The park is within the asserted traditional territory of the Gitksan First Nation and is identified as Lax Lit Hetwit House territory.
- It is located across the Bulkley River from Gitanmaax IR1 and the cultural interpretation/museum/campground facility of 'Ksan.
- The site was known to be formerly a Gitksan harvesting site for blueberries, huckleberries and soapberries. Prescribed burning was carried out every ten years or so to promote growth and abundance of berry bushes.
- Several traditional Gitksan net fishing sites are located upstream of Anderson Flats on the Bulkley River as well as the Wet'suwet'en village of Tse-kyá at Hagwilget Canyon.

- In the 1920's the open meadows were used for landing airplanes and in 1922 the site was the first registered airfield in BC.
- The park is directly adjacent to the site of a former bridge across the Bulkley River that connected South Hazelton and the Village of Hazelton.

## 2.3 Tourism and Outdoor Recreation

- The Skeena and Bulkley Rivers are both Class II waters. This provincial designation is indicative of highly productive streams that are carefully managed to preserve unique fishing opportunities. Both rivers contribute significantly to the province's reputation as a world class fishing destination.
- Anderson Flats provides 2 wheel drive road and public access to the riverfront on both the Bulkley and Skeena Rivers and provides excellent recreational fishing and camping opportunities from June through September.
- The park offers a highly accessible angling opportunity, particularly for children, seniors and individuals with limited mobility.
- Scenic values are exceptional and include views of the Rocher deBoule Range with the majestic Hagwilget Peak to the south.
- An old boat launch adjacent to the northeast corner of the park provides a take-out for recreational and commercial rafters, canoeists and kayakers after they have floated the Bulkley canyon, and may be used for launching small power boats during favourable river conditions.



**Figure 3. Aerial view of Anderson Flats Provincial Park and adjacent lands.**

## 2.4 Economic Contribution

- Local business owners sell fishing gear, tackle, food and gas to recreational fishers destined for Anderson Flats.

- Park visitors may patronize local attractions such as ‘Ksan, the Gitksan cultural tourism and museum located across the Skeena River, and other businesses, including commercial campgrounds and motels/hotels in the area.
- Recreational fishers at Anderson Flats purchase provincial and angling licenses.

## 2.5 Existing Land Uses and Encumbrances

### Access

Access to the property is by way of Hazelton Station Road, which branches off of Broadway Way in South Hazelton. This road crosses within the southeast corner of the park and then runs directly adjacent to the park’s eastern and northern boundaries, terminating at an old boat launch and former bridge location on the Bulkley River.

### Existing Tenures and Uses

- The Legal description is: DL 9 Cassiar District, except Plans 1159, PRP42046, PRP42047, & PRP46303.

The CN Rail Right of Way crosses within the southeast corner of park and is exempted from the property (Plan 1159).

Hazelton Station Road (#112) crosses within the southeast corner of the park and is exempted from the property (PRP 42047).

PRP42046 & PRP46303 are municipal lands located to the northeast of the park.

- The land was zoned for agricultural use (AG1) by the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine and is designated as provincial Agricultural Land Reserve, but this designation is now superseded by Provincial Park establishment.
- Despite previously being private property, there is a tradition of use by local residents and occasional visitors for recreational fishing and camping from June through September.
- Several old trails and one old road can still be discerned through forested portion of park and several dirt roads traverse the open meadow/floodplain area.
- One of the ways the private property adjacent to the southwest corner of the park has been accessed is by walking via a rough track from Anderson Flats.
- Angling guides are active on the Skeena and Bulkley Rivers and may routinely traverse Anderson Flats with their clients enroute to fishing locations.

## Adjacent Patterns of Land Use

- An unmaintained concrete boat launch and ramp is outside the park but adjacent to the northwest corner of the property. The utility of this boat launch is limited due to water level fluctuations on the river. It is used as a takeout for occasional river (rafting, kayaking, canoeing) groups after trips originating upstream, and may also be used occasionally as a launch point for the Provincial Emergency Program (PEP) jetboat, and potentially other small power boats when conditions allow.
- Power lines run adjacent to the northern boundary of the park along Hazelton Station Road and cross the Bulkley River at the location of the boat launch.
- The property adjacent to northeast boundary of the park (approximately 100 ha) is owned by the Village of Hazelton. A portion of the land is used for the Village's sewage settling ponds.
- Forested provincial crown land borders the eastern boundary of the park.
- A private property and residence is located on Hazelton Station Road adjacent to the northeast corner of the property which was previously owned by the Anderson family.
- A second private property borders the park's southern boundary, with a seasonal residence situated at the southeast corner of the park adjacent to the Skeena River.
- Bulkley Junction Provincial Park (133 ha) is located directly to the west, across the Skeena River.
- 'Ksan historical village, museum and campground are located on the northern shore of the confluence of the Bulkley and Skeena Rivers.

## Management Commitments

Anderson Flats has an established history of use by Bulkley, Skeena, and Kispiox River Valley residents and visitors to the area. The undeveloped property has been a recreational fishing and camping destination for many years. Purchase of the property and establishment of the park occurred in response to the opportunity to preserve public access to this recreational fishing site, on a stretch of shoreline where such riverfront access is in short supply.

## Other Agency Interests

- The BC Ministry of Forests and Range – Fire Protection Branch has an interest in fire management in the site.
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the BC Ministry of Environment manage the Skeena and Bulkley fisheries resources.

- The Regional District of Kitimat Stikine zoning for the park and surrounding rural area is for agricultural use (AG1).
- The BC Ministry of Environment has an interest in floodplain management of the area, wildlife habitat, and ecosystems and/or potential species at risk in the park.
- The park is within the Gitxsan Treaty Office’s Statement of Intent area. Treaty negotiations are ongoing.

## Other Stakeholder Interests

- Local residents of the Hazelton and Kispiox Valleys, recreational users, and organizations such as the BC Wildlife Federation, Upper Skeena Sports Fishery Advisory Board, Smithers Rod and Gun Club, and Steelhead Society have an interest in maintaining public access to the river front for angling, camping and recreational use.
- Private campground and motel operators in the vicinity of park have an interest in maintaining their clientele.
- Local businesses that sell fishing gear, tackle and other supplies have an interest in maintaining local recreational fishing and camping opportunities for their customers.

## Relationship with Local Governments

- District of New Hazelton and Village of Hazelton officials have expressed support for the park, subject to maintaining public access to the riverfront and keeping the primary uses of the park as fishing and local recreation.

## Relationship with First Nations

- Discussions with representatives from the Gitxsan First Nation and Gitanmaax Band are ongoing.
- The Lax Lix Hetwit House Hereditary Chief Nikat’een and wing chiefs are interested in the management of the site and have expressed support and interest in creating signage to document Gitxsan place names and cultural values associated with the park.

## 2.6 Management Issues

The following management issues require attention:

Theme	Issue
<b>Protecting natural values</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inventory of natural features &amp; wildlife values is incomplete</li> <li>• Vegetation is susceptible to natural and human induced fire</li> </ul>

Theme	Issue
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrity of the cottonwood red osier dogwood site series may be compromised by ongoing visitor use of the riparian area</li> <li>• Invasive plants may impact ecological values</li> <li>• Some unauthorized dumping of debris and old vehicle bodies occurred in the past along a portion of the access roadway in the southeast corner of the park which impacts adjacent forest or ecological values and aesthetics of area.</li> <li>• Vehicle use on gravel bars, if conducted in an inappropriate manner, may impact fish habitat, park foreshore and river shoreline</li> </ul>
<b>Protecting recreational values</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential damage to the park and private vehicles because several rough un-maintained roads exist throughout the property and no formal parking area is delineated at the end of the main access road</li> <li>• High grass in the floodplain inhibits some use in summer season</li> <li>• The narrow arched opening in the existing fence impedes entry of larger trailer units into the park</li> <li>• There is a lack of any sanitary facilities such as toilets, or any signs or information kiosks to provide guidance to park visitors</li> <li>• Some public interest expressed over possible establishment of a new boat launch within the park on the east side of the Skeena River, but the large variations in water levels and strong currents in the river may preclude this possibility</li> <li>• Strong public desire to maintain opportunities for random camping and vehicle use along river side for recreational activities</li> <li>• Strong desire amongst public, local governments, and First Nations to maintain the current undeveloped character and pattern of low level and informal use</li> </ul>
<b>Protecting cultural heritage values</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inventory or description of traditional use of site and presence of any cultural features is incomplete</li> <li>• Public interest expressed in recognition of historical significance of Anderson Flats</li> </ul>
<b>Public safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public safety concerns may exist along the upper section of Hazelton Station Road due to steep banks, sharp corners and potentially restricted visibility</li> <li>• Overgrown trails and existing roads are not at BC Parks standards</li> <li>• Human induced wildfire in the floodplain/meadow grass may present a risk to park visitors</li> <li>• Other hazards and risks may be un-identified until a formal Recreation Risk Assessment has been completed</li> </ul>

# 3.0 Management Direction

## 3.1 Park Role

Anderson Flats will fulfill roles in both recreation and conservation. The park’s primary recreational role will be to preserve public access to a unique, recreational angling opportunity at the junction of the Skeena and Bulkley rivers, in a region where such access to the shoreline is limited. The park’s role in conservation will be to contribute to the preservation of provincially and regionally significant fish values associated with the Skeena and Bulkley Rivers. The park also provides protection for a remnant portion of underrepresented Interior Cedar – Hemlock, Hazelton Moist Cold (ICH mc2) biogeoclimatic variant in the Cranberry Upland Ecosection, including an area of river valley floodplain and the blue-listed riparian cottonwood red-osier dogwood site series.

## 3.2 Priority Management Objectives and Strategies

The following table describes management strategies to address management objectives and issues raised.

Objective	Strategy
<b>Protect the park’s natural values</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inventory wildlife and vegetation features and identify any sensitive ecosystems and/or red or blue listed species on site</li> <li>• Develop an ecosystem management plan for the area which will: identify opportunities for ecological restoration; develop protection measures for the cottonwood red-osier dogwood site series on site and plan for the succession of the mature cottonwood trees through a regeneration program; provide for re-establishment of any native food plants and berry patches traditionally utilized by First Nations; develop appropriate strategies to manage invasive plants in the park; ensure long term maintenance of scenic viewscales; and assess alternatives and utilize best strategy available to control high grass in summer season</li> <li>• Implement Best Management Practices for vehicle use of the foreshore to minimize potential impacts; monitor effectiveness and consider application of management controls to protect ecological values, if necessary</li> <li>• Remove old vehicle bodies and other waste debris from along access roadway in southeast corner of park</li> </ul>
<b>Protect the park’s recreational values</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In response to clear interests expressed by the community, local government and First Nations, minimize promotion of park to maintain existing levels and patterns of use by local and regional visitors .</li> <li>• Maintain public access to the gravel bars and riverfront for recreational fishing and day-use.</li> <li>• Informal, random overnight camping opportunities to be maintained in open meadow/grass area</li> <li>• Survey intensive use area and prepare a Site Plan to identify appropriate locations for minor park facility development, including pit toilet(s), informational signage and designation of parking and camping areas</li> </ul>

Objective	Strategy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a series of educational/interpretive signs that is suitable for audiences such as school outings or family picnics that focuses on local ecological and floodplain processes, habitat and birds/wildlife of area, etc.</li> <li>• Consider the possibility of establishing a boat launch on the Skeena River but only if a feasible, suitable, and safe site is identified which also doesn't impact shoreline anglers</li> </ul>
<b>Ensure that the park is safe for public use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a Recreation Risk Assessment to identify and address potential public safety issues</li> <li>• Prepare a wildfire response plan in collaboration with the BC Ministry of Forests and Range - Fire Protection Branch</li> <li>• Select one of the multiple access roads within floodplain portion of the property and upgrade it to meet BC Parks standards; restore or deactivate other dirt roads no longer needed</li> <li>• Develop a loop trail along forested upper benches suitable for low impact activities such as hiking, biking, and cross-country skiing</li> <li>• Address long term maintenance/upgrading of Hazelton Station Road in collaboration with the Ministry of Transportation to maintain appropriate access to park</li> </ul>
<b>Protect the park's cultural heritage values</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct an archaeological overview assessment to assess level of cultural significance and archaeological resource potential or sensitivity within the park area</li> <li>• Maintain an ongoing program to collect and compile information on historical and traditional use and cultural features</li> <li>• Develop appropriate signage with content and style documenting First Nation traditional use and cultural values related to the park, and consider utilizing Gitxsan names for the park and important local features</li> <li>• Develop signage documenting other historical features; consider moving the "Hands of History" historical signage for Anderson Flats to the park</li> </ul>
<b>Respect First Nation interests and values</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue discussions and establish collaborative working relationships with First Nations, especially the Gitxsan Lax Lix Hetwit House Chief Nikat'een and wing Chiefs</li> </ul>

### 3.3 Protected Areas Zoning

BC Parks uses zoning to assist in the planning and management of provincial parks and protected areas. In general terms, zoning divides an area into logical units to apply consistent management objectives for conservation and recreational values. The zones reflect the intended land use, existing patterns of use, the degree of human use desired, and the level of management and development required.

#### Zoning Plan

The river frontage and floodplain are zoned Intensive Recreation to allow for recreational fishing, day use and random/informal camping. The remainder of the park is forested and zoned as Nature Recreation.



**Figure 4: Zoning Plan for Anderson Flats Provincial Park**

# Appropriate Uses

**Figure 5: Appropriate Activities and Facilities Matrix**

Activity/Facility	Appropriate in Intensive Recreation Zone	Comments	Appropriate in Nature Recreation Zone	Comments
Activity				
Aircraft Access	N		N	
Angle Guiding	Y		Y	
Beach Activities (e.g., swimming)	Y		Y	
Boating (power)	Y		Y	
Boating (non-power)	Y		Y	
Camping – backcountry	N/A		N/A	
Camping – auto or boat accessible	Y		N	
Commercial Recreation (facility-based)	N		N	
Commercial Recreation (no facilities)	Y		Y	
Exotic Insect/Disease Control	Y		M	
Exotic Pack Animal Use	N		N	
Filming (commercial)	M		M	
Fire Management (prescribed fire management)	Y		M	
Fire Management (prevention)	Y		Y	
Fire Management (suppression)	Y		Y	
Fishing	Y		Y	
Fish Stocking and Enhancement	M		M	
Forest Insect/Disease Control	Y		M	
Grazing (domestic livestock)	N		N	
Guide Outfitting	N		N	
Heli-hiking	N		N	
Hiking/Backpacking/Walking	Y		Y	
Horse/Non-Exotic Pack Animal Use	N		N	
Hunting	N		N	
Mechanized Off-road Access (non-motorized – i.e., mountain biking)	Y		Y	
Motorized Off-road Access (not snowmobiles – i.e., 4x4, motorcycles)	N		N	
Noxious Weed Control	Y		Y	
Off-road Access (non-mechanical – dog sleds, horse sleds)	Y		Y	

<b>Activity/Facility</b>	<b>Appropriate in Intensive Recreation Zone</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Appropriate in Nature Recreation Zone</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Recreational Gold Panning/Rock Hounding	N		N	
Scientific Research (manipulative activities)	M		M	
Scientific Research (specimen collection)	M		M	
Skiing (downhill & cross-country – groomed runs or trails)	N		N	
Skiing (self propelled, not groomed)	Y		Y	
Snowmobiling	N		N	
Trapping	N		N	
<b>Facility</b>				
Administrative Buildings and Compounds	N		N	
Boat Launches	M		N	
Campgrounds and Picnic Areas (vehicle access)	Y		N	
Camp sites (other)	Y		N	
Communication Sites	N		N	
Fixed Roof Accommodation	N		N	
Interpretation and Information Buildings	Y		N	
Roads and Parking Lots	Y		N	
Trails (hiking, cross-country skiing, mountain biking)	Y		Y	
Utility Corridors (power/transmission lines and other rights-of-way)	N		N	
Water Control Structures	N		N	

**Legend for the Matrix of Appropriate Activities and Facilities**

<b>Y</b>	Appropriate
<b>N</b>	Not appropriate
<b>M</b>	May be appropriate
<b>N/A</b>	Not applicable

## **4.0 Consultation and Future Planning**

Maintaining good relationships with local communities is important to the long term management of the park. BC Parks may conduct further consultation with local community members and organizations if and when new management considerations emerge. BC Parks will also maintain an ongoing dialogue with the Gitksan First Nation. Preparation of a management plan for Anderson Flats is a low priority at present, but may be considered in the future should the need arise for more detailed management planning.