

LASQUETI ISLAND ECOLOGICAL RESERVE

PURPOSE STATEMENT

March 2003

Approved by:



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Environmental Stewardship Division

Date: March 25/03



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Date: Mar. 31/03

LASQUETI ISLAND 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 role 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 Lasqueti Island Ecological Reserve is to protect a shoreline forest of some of the largest Rocky Mountain junipers in British Columbia, two rare plant communities, and two blue-listed rare plants. At least 15 plants considered rare in the province occur in the ecological reserve. Most of these species are limited in their range to the Coastal Douglas-fir zone, but are fairly common within the zone with good population sizes. In addition, numerous fauna species have been recorded with some of the most notable being the turkey vulture, bald eagle, osprey, great horned owl, pygmy owl, Townsend's vole, river otter, Pacific tree frog, and northwestern garter snake.

Secondary Role

The **secondary** role is to protect the natural environment representative of the dry southern coastal forest. Due to its southerly exposure, sea level location and thin soils, the vegetation of Lasqueti Island Ecological Reserve is representative of the very driest habitats within the dry subzone of Coastal Douglas-fir forest. The ecological reserve has significant remnant value as it contributes to the representation of the CDFmm biogeoclimatic subzone which has less than 2.5% of its area protected provincially. The Coastal Douglas Fir zone has a limited range and is one of the most highly fragmented and impacted ecosystems in Canada as it is encompassed entirely in an intensive urban and agricultural development area of the province.

Management Issues

Known Management Issue	Response
Lack of knowledge of rare plants and cultural values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Enhance knowledge of rare elements by conducting an ecological inventory. ➤ Undertake cultural inventory and traditional use study in conjunction with First Nations.
Impact of feral species such as sheep and goats on the native ecosystem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work with local residents of Lasqueti Island to maintain the fence to exclude sheep and goats and to increase awareness of the special natural values of the reserve.
Impact of recreational use on the ecological reserve (kayakers camping with fires, removal of botanical products)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Monitor recreational use and enforce <i>Ecological Reserve Act</i>. ➤ Ensure the ecological reserve boundaries are signed. ➤ Enhance relationship with Volunteer Warden and encourage a formal monitoring system.
Impact of fire on the ecosystem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop a fire management plan.

Conservation

Representation - ecosection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Contributes 5.4% to the overall protected areas representation of the under-represented Strait of Georgia <i>Terrestrial</i> Ecosection, which has only 5.35% protected provincially.
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lasqueti Island Ecological Reserve is the eighth largest contributor (3.1%) out of 73 small protected areas that contribute to the representation of CDFmm. CDFmm has less than 2.5% protected in the province and is the smallest forest subzone in BC with intensive urban and agricultural pressures. The contribution of Lasqueti Island Ecological Reserve to CDFmm is important given the fragmented nature of this ecosystem and the limited opportunities available for its protection.
Special Features	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Outstanding specimens of Rocky Mountain junipers, plant communities, rare plants
Rare/Endangered Values	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Red-listed</i> plant community Douglas Fir -- salal and <i>blue-listed</i> plant community Douglas Fir -- lodgepole pine -- arbutus. <i>Blue-listed</i> plants: poison oak and giant chain fern which are rare in BC and restricted to the lowland zone. <i>Yellow-listed species of conservation concern (S3-S4):</i> great horned owl, pygmy owl, turkey vulture, bald eagle, osprey, Townsend's vole, and northwester garter snake.
Scientific/Research Opportunities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rare plants, plant communities

Recreation

Representation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Applicable
backcountry	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Applicable
destination	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Applicable
travel corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Applicable
local recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Applicable
Special Opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Applicable
Education/Interpretation Opportunities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Special natural values -- offsite

Cultural Heritage

Representation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Values unknown
Special Feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	None known at this time

Other Management Considerations

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| Other Designations | <input type="checkbox"/> | Not Applicable |
| Relationship to other PAs | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Part of a system of ecological reserves in the Gulf Islands |
| Co-operative Management Arrangements | <input type="checkbox"/> | Not Applicable |
| Partnerships | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Volunteer ecological reserve warden |
| Vulnerability | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Remnant sensitive ecosystem that is vulnerable to feral animals, fire and recreational use |
| Relationship to other Strategies | <input type="checkbox"/> | Not Applicable |

Area: 201 hectares

Date of establishment: May 4, 1971