

Kootenay District

**MANAGEMENT DIRECTION
STATEMENT**

May, 1999

**for Purcell Wilderness Conservancy
Provincial Park - West Addition**



**BRITISH
COLUMBIA**

**Ministry of Environment
Lands and Parks
BC Parks Division**

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Purpose of Management Direction Statements

Management Direction Statements provide strategic management direction for all protected areas which do not have a full management plan. MDS do not negate the need for future, more detailed management plans. Management Direction Statements also describe protected area values management issues and concerns; management strategy focused on immediate priority objectives and strategies; and, directional statements from other planning processes

PURCELL WILDERNESS CONSERVANCY - WEST ADDITION

MANAGEMENT DIRECTION STATEMENT

I. Introduction

A. Setting and Context (Figure 1)

The Purcell Wilderness Conservancy (PWC) is located in the Purcell Mountains of southeastern British Columbia between the communities of Invermere and Cranbrook and northeast of the City of Nelson. It is one of the largest of a number of protected areas in the Kootenay region. Other protected areas close by include Goat Range Park in the west, Kokanee Glacier Park and West Arm Park to the south and St. Mary's Alpine Park along its southerly boundary.

The west addition to the PWC extends 32,662 hectares from Kootenay Lake in the west to the original PWC boundary in the east, and extends from Carney Creek in the south to Hamill Creek in the north (Figure 2). It is located immediately southeast of Argenta at the north end of Kootenay Lake and includes the former Fry Creek Canyon Provincial Recreation Area. It is a diverse area, ranging from low elevation shoreline along Kootenay Lake to rugged canyons in Carney and Hamill Creeks, to forested slopes in the mid and high elevation, extensive alpine meadows, small lakes and rugged glaciated peaks.

With the addition to the east side of the park, the total size of the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy Park is 198,183 hectares. Supported by the Commission on Resources and Environment and identified in the West Kootenay Boundary Land Use Plan, this area received Class A provincial park status on July 12, 1995 under the *Park Amendment Act, 1995*.

II. Protected Area Attributes (Figure 2)

A. Conservation

- enhances representation within the Central Columbia Mountain (CCM) Ecosection, particularly the low and mid elevation biogeoclimatic subzone: Dry Warm Interior Cedar - Hemlock Subzone (ICHdw) and Columbia - Shuswap Moist Warm Interior Cedar - Hemlock (ICHmw2) Subzone which are not well represented in existing protected areas
- creates a connection to the east side of Kootenay Lake
- is largely undisturbed and contains one very rough semi-primitive road
- the area contains high biological diversity and productivity
- contains old-growth cedar/hemlock forest
- provides high quality habitat for grizzly bear and wolverine
- is an important linkage for caribou between the Selkirk Mountains and Southern Purcells
- includes elk winter range

Figure 1 - Regional Context Map

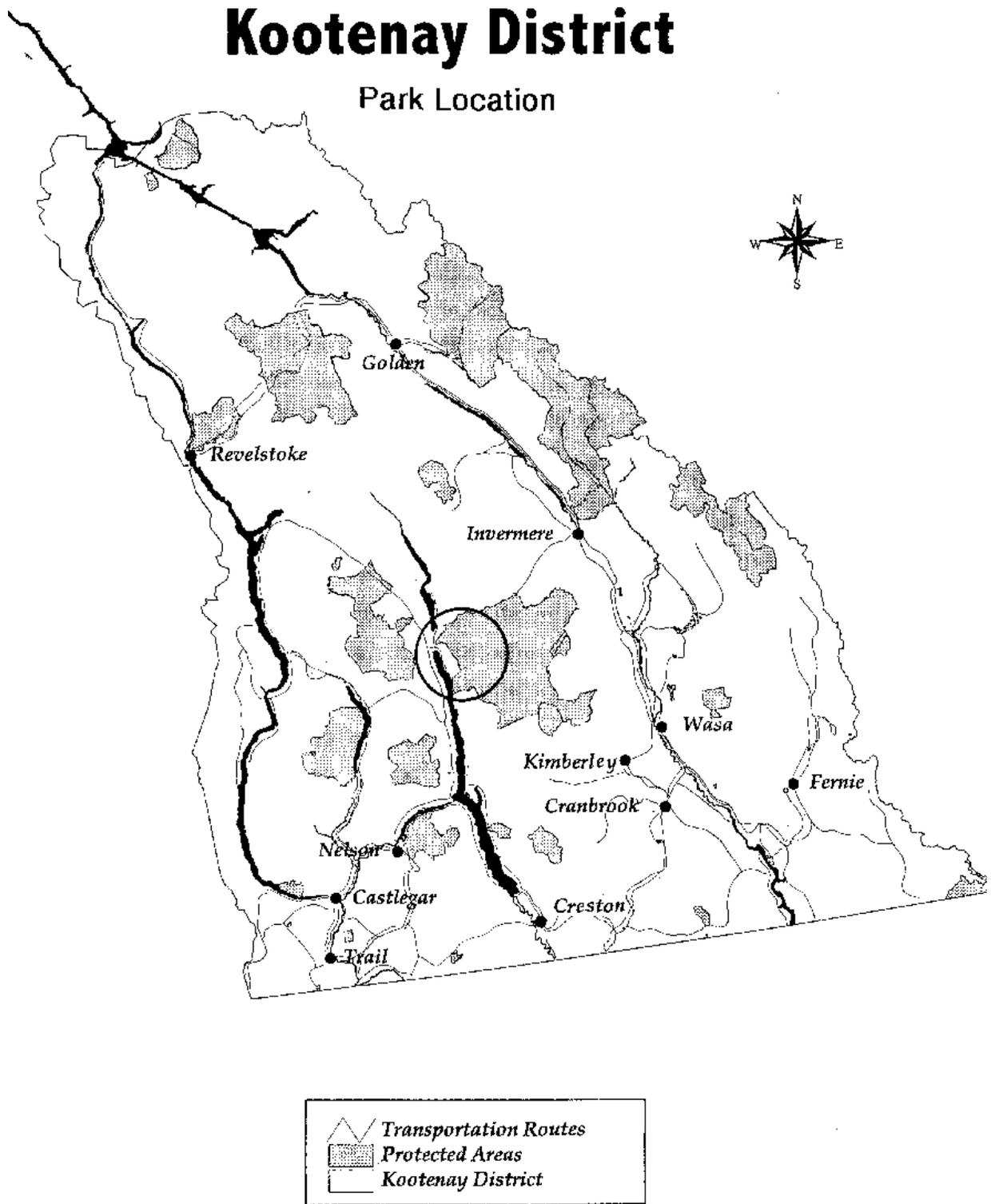
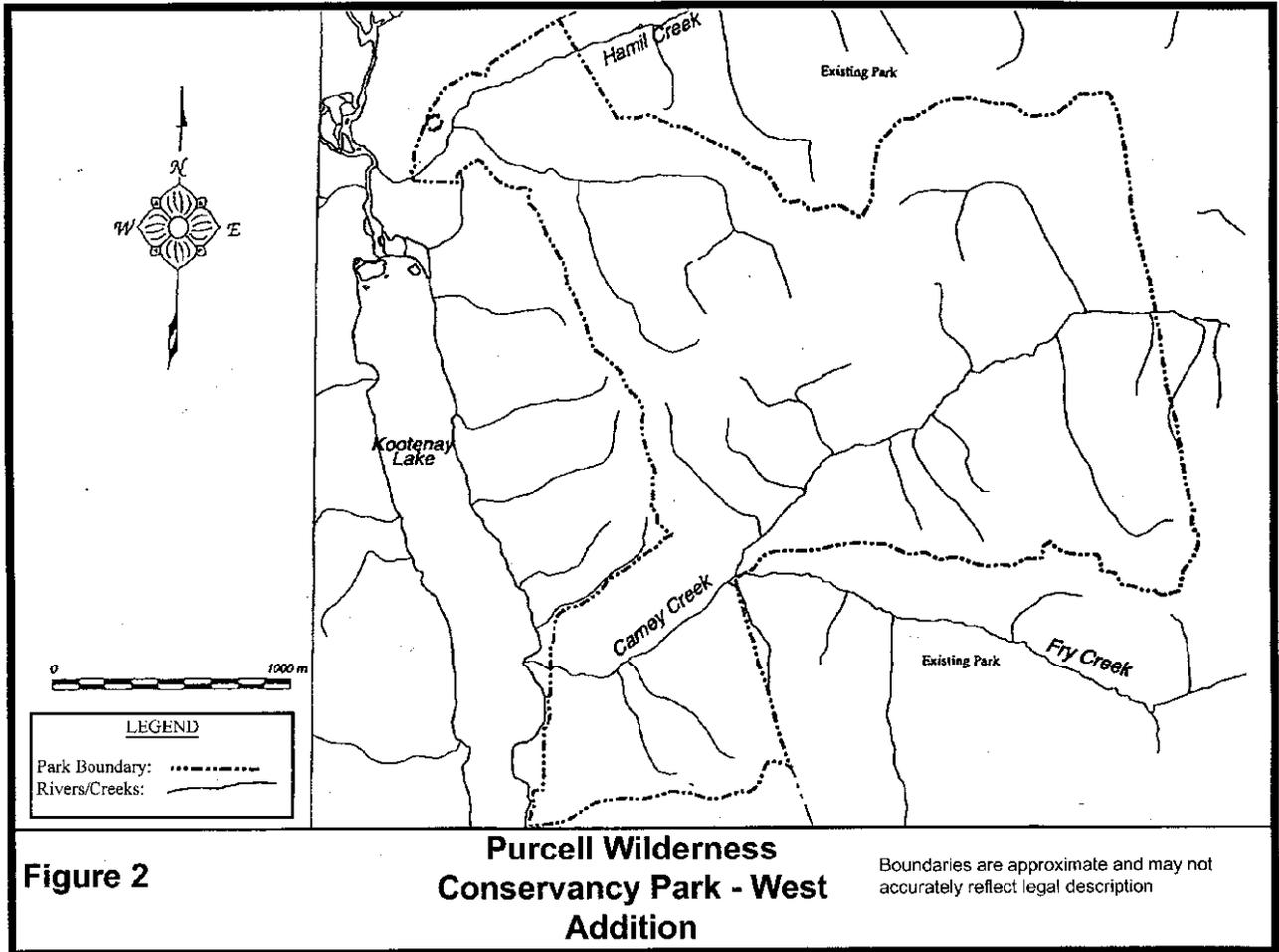


Figure 1

N T S

Figure 2 - Park Reference Map



B. Recreation

- has high backcountry recreation values and a high demand for protection
- provides opportunity for four-season use for expert hiking, mountaineering, fishing, hunting, camping, caving, wildlife viewing, boating, watersports, and ski touring
- contains key recreation features including the Earl Grey Pass Trail (Hamill Creek)
- Kootenay Joe Ridge Road, and the Fry Creek Canyon area
- contains boat access and sandy beach, south of Birchdale
- has scenic viewscapes, approximately 25,000 hectares that are visible from Kootenay Lake and Highway 31 between Kaslo and Lardeau. Spectacular canyon and ridge views at Earl Grey Pass Trail and Kootenay Joe Ridge

C. Cultural Heritage

- has provincially and regionally significant cultural values including Fry Creek and Earl Grey Pass Trails, Hamill Creek mine, and pictographs

D. Significance in the Protected Area System

- nationally significant conservation values - representation of the CCM Ecoregion; high diversity and productivity; valued habitat for grizzly bear, wolverine and elk; wildlife values among most significant in western Canada; adds to the overall Purcell Nature Conservancy several rugged canyons, extensive alpine meadows and glaciated peaks; provides linkage between Selkirk and Purcell mountains and from Kootenay Lake to the Conservancy
- high year-round recreation values comparable to Kokanee Creek Provincial Park
- high cultural values similar to Mt. Assiniboine and Height of the Rockies provincial parks

III. Land Use, Tenures and Interests

A. Access

- gravel road access from Argenta follows east shoreline of Kootenay Lake south to Johnsons Landing. From here, the unmaintained Kootenay Joe Ridge Road (steep, very rough 4 wd) leads eastward to Kootenay Joe Ridge into Carney Creek
- boat access northeast, across Kootenay Lake
- Earl Grey Pass Trail - a historic 61 km five day hike from Argenta through to the East Kootenays. The first five km is a self guided interpretive trail through spectacular canyon landscape. Old trail up the canyon is very rough and arduous
- Fry Creek east from Kootenay Lake (through Canyon at lower reaches) to the confluence with Carney Creek

B. Existing Tenures

- water licenses to adjacent farms.
- trapping License No. RT18069 Territory No. 0419T002
License No. RT18984 Territory No. 0419T005
License No. RT17997 Territory No. 0419T006
License No. RT18709 Territory No. 0419T007
- guide outfitting G0108097 Territory No. 0407G001
- Crown granted mineral claim

C. Existing Land Use, Activities and Facilities

- walk-in campsites on Hamill Creek
- trapline cabin in Clint Creek drainage
- trespass cabin south of Hamill Creek access road
- cable crossings on Hamill Creek and Carney Creek
- stream gauging on Carney Creek
- horse and ATV use on road up Carney Creek

D. Adjacent Patterns of Land Use

- logging along western boundary
- farms

E. First Nations Interests

- Ktunaxa/Kinbasket and Shuswap tribal councils have included the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy Park within their asserted traditional territory
- while direct consultation with tribal council representatives on this management direction statement was requested, limitations of time and resources have prevented First Nations from directly participating in the planning process
- this management direction statement provides a foundation upon which continued relationships between BC Parks and the Tribal Councils are based

F. Other Agency Interests

- BC Environment (BCE) - biodiversity objectives; health of wildlife populations; administration of traplines and guide outfitting tenures
- Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture (STC)- opportunities for viable commercial tourism
- Ministry of Forests (MOF) - adjacent recreational activities; grazing; adjacency issues such as access, landscape visual quality, connectivity

G. Private and Public Stakeholder Interests

- horse users
- hikers
- mountain bikers
- trappers
- guide outfitters
- hunters
- mineral claim holder
- environmental groups concerned about protected area management

IV. Management Commitments and Issues

A. Management Direction from Previous Planning

- although a management plan for the Purcell Wilderness Area (Purcell Wilderness Conservancy Master Plan) was developed in 1991 prior to the designation of the western addition, it can provide some direction in the management of the addition area
- existing tenures for guide-outfitting and trapping will continue under Park Use Permits

- objectives and strategies of the Kootenay and Boundary Land Use Plan Implementation Strategy (KBLUP-IS) Chpt 4
- natural occurrences such as fires, insects and forest diseases will be managed as in other parks through consultation and joint action by BC Parks and Ministry of Forests at the District level

B. Management Issues

- management of existing cabins
- implications of Jumbo Glacier ski development on wildlife values, access and use
- continued access to Hamill Creek trail

V. Management Strategy

While key strategies or actions are identified, the completion of all these strategies is subject to funding and funding procedures. As such, strategies are ranked according to priority and completed as funding permits. As well, all development within provincial parks is subject to the BC Parks Impact Assessment Policy.

A. Priority Management Objectives and Actions

Objectives

- maintain ecosystem representation of Central Columbia Mountains Ecosection
- ensure protection of old growth
- ensure protection of key wildlife species including grizzly bear, wolverine, elk and caribou populations and habitat
- maintain backcountry /wilderness recreation values
- manage the area to protect cultural heritage values
- honor commitments in Kootenay and Boundary Land Use Plan for existing uses
- protect rare and endangered species
- manage addition consistently with the existing Purcell Wilderness Conservancy Master Plan 1991
- develop relationship with First Nations to enhance understanding and management of park values

Actions

- undertake assessment of known cultural values to gain a better understanding of values that may be at risk
- work with BCE and MOF to develop a fire management plan and to address other natural occurrences (i.e.: insect and forest diseases)
- work with other agencies to ensure connectivity of wildlife to the park and maintaining linkage between the Selkirk Mountains and Southern Purcells for caribou
- work with BCE to coordinate management for key wildlife populations and habitat as well as to inventory and protect indigenous fish
- work with MOF to address access to the park and visual concerns
- address existing vehicle access by working with recreation user groups
- work with local First Nations to identify traditional use and cultural values to determine management needs
- issue permits to existing trappers, water licensees and guide outfitter

B. Consultation and Future Planning

A master plan for the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy was prepared in 1991. The Purcell west addition will be managed in the interim consistently with the direction developed in the master plan with exceptions noted in this management direction statement. Future planning based on public, First Nations and agency input will help to define the long term management direction for the entire park when the master plan is reviewed. This is a high priority for the Kootenay District.

C. Zoning Plan

There is insufficient knowledge and understanding about this extension area to apply the BC Park Zoning Policy. The zoning policy defines in general terms the management direction for a given area of a park, including the type of uses and overall level of use and facilities in relationship to varying degrees of acceptable impacts on park values.

Appendix A

Summary Table of Land and Resource Use Commitments

The following table provides a summary of commitments made through land use processes with regard to acceptable uses, activities, and facilities within this protected area.

Activity/Use/Facility	Acceptable Uses
Hunting	Y
Fishing	Y
Trapping	N ²
Grazing	N
Rec. Gold Panning/Rock Hounding	N
Utility Corridors	N
Communication Sites	N
Horse Use/Packing	N
Guide Outfitting	N
Hunting:	
Fishing	M
Nature Tour	M
River Raft	N
Mountain Bike	N
Cat-Assisted Skiing	N
Ski Hills	N
Heli Skiing	N
Heli Hiking	N
Camping (Wilderness)	Y
Camping (Serviced)	N
Tourist Resorts	N
Commercial Recreation (facility based)	N
Back Country Huts/Guest Ranch	N
Water Control Structure	N ²
Fish Stock/Enhance	M
Road Access	M
Off Road Snowmobile	N
Off Road Motorized	N
Off Road Mechanical	N
Motorized Water Access	Y
Aircraft Access (Fixed wing)	N
Aircraft Access (helicopter)	N ¹
Fire Management:	
Prevention	Y
Prescribed Fire	M
Suppression	Y
Forest Insect/Disease Control	M
Noxious Weed Control	M
Exotic Insect/Disease Control	M
Scientific Research (Specimens)	M
Scientific Research (Manipulations)	M

Y = allowed subject to management conditions identified in the management direction statement or management plan

M = may be permitted if compatible with protected area objectives

N = not allowed

N¹ = allowed for expressed management purposes only

N² = present and allowed to continue but not normally allowed