

Stikine Country Protected Areas

~ Draft Management Direction ~

Public Comment Booklet

February 2002



To Complete this Public Comment Booklet, Please Refer to the:
STIKINE COUNTRY PROTECTED AREAS – NEWSLETTER NUMBER 3
~ DRAFT MANAGEMENT DIRECTION ~
March 2002

You are encouraged to complete this public comment booklet and return it directly to the BC Parks Office in Smithers by April 15, 2002



BC Parks – Skeena District
Bag 5000
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INTRODUCTION & INSTRUCTIONS

Introduction

This *Public Comment Booklet* provides the reader with an opportunity to provide comments, ideas and suggestions about BC Parks Draft of Management Direction for the Stikine Country Protected Areas – which is available along with this public comment booklet. While this booklet highlights the general management direction and objectives for each section of the draft report, the reader is encouraged to complete this questionnaire while reviewing the larger, and more detailed Draft Management Direction document.

Once you have reviewed Newsletter No. 3 and acquainted yourself with the Draft Management Direction for Stikine Country Protected Areas document, this comment booklet should take you about 30 – 45 minutes to complete.

Please note the accompanying Draft Management Direction, is a working paper and is provided for discussion purposes. This draft document will be adjusted to reflect the feedback we receive during our March 2002 Open Houses and Workshops as well as written submissions generated by this public comment booklet.

We would like to emphasise that your input, ideas and suggestions are most important to this planning process and that BC Parks is committed ensuring that every idea and suggestion receives serious review and recognition.

Instructions for Completing the Public Comment Booklet

To follow in this public comment booklet are a series of questions. Each question is prefaced by a brief review of a *General Management Direction* for each of the topic areas. You are then asked if you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions. Please circle one of the four options provided – for example:

STRONGLY AGREE

AGREE

DISAGREE

STRONGLY DISAGREE

Please use the following definitions when deciding your answers:

- **STRONGLY AGREE** – Very High Priority, Very Important Element
- **AGREE** – Good Level of Priority, Somewhat Important
- **DISAGREE** – Low Level of Priority, Not Very Important
- **STRONGLY DISAGREE** – No Priority at all, of No Importance

You are then encouraged to provide any further comments, ideas and suggestions in the space provided for each question. For additional details, please refer back to the corresponding section in Newsletter No. 3 & the *Draft Management Direction* document.

Thank you in advance for you suggestions and ideas. Only by working together can we ensure that our precious system of protected areas are managed for the long term – while providing benefits to the current generation of British Columbians.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT DIRECTION QUESTIONS

1 Managing the System of Protected Areas

General Management Direction

Combined, the Stikine Country Protected Areas offer a wide range of natural, cultural and recreational features that are representative of northern boreal landscapes. The Stikine Country Protected Areas will be managed as a system of protected areas rather than as individual protected areas. The conservation and recreation mandates of BC Parks will be applied to the system as a whole, focusing conservation management where appropriate and focusing recreational activities where appropriate within the system.

Objective:

- ❖ *To conserve natural and cultural values in the Stikine Country Protected Area System while allowing appropriate recreational activities to occur.*

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

2 Managing Ecosystems

An ecosystem can be defined as:

- ❖ *All living and non-living components of a system and the processes that link them in time and space.*

General Management Direction

The Spatsizi Ecosystem and the Mt. Edziza Ecosystem provide a framework for ecological management within the Stikine Country Protected Areas. Ecological issues in protected areas and portions of protected areas west of Highway 37 will be managed as one unit within the context of the Mt. Edziza Ecosystem. Ecological issues in protected areas and portions of protected areas east of Highway 37 will be managed as one unit within the context of the Spatsizi Ecosystem.

Do you agree with the general management direction?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

3 Managing with the Community

First Nations

General Management Direction

BC Parks will work with First Nations to ensure that aboriginal and treaty rights are accommodated and that First Nations' interests are fully considered in management of the Stikine Country Protected Areas System.

Objective:

- ❖ To ensure that ministry and government policy on consultation with First Nations is implemented.

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

Local Communities, Stakeholders and the Public

General Management Direction

BC Parks will work with local communities, stakeholders and the public to ensure that there are ongoing opportunities to provide advice on park management and to receive updates on park related information.

Objective:

- ❖ *To foster communication between BC Parks and local communities, stakeholders and the public on management and opportunities in the Stikine Country Protected Areas system.*

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

Managing Cultural Heritage Values

General Management Direction

Protecting cultural heritage values is an important priority in the Stikine Country Protected Areas system.

Objectives:

- ❖ *To manage and conserve cultural/ heritage values.*
- ❖ *To facilitate the exercise of aboriginal rights and reconnection of First Nations to the Stikine Country Protected Areas system.*
- ❖ *To increase public and visitor awareness of the rich cultural heritage of the Stikine Country Protected Areas system.*

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

4 Land & Geology

General Management Direction

The landforms and geologic features of the Stikine Country protected areas provide the structural definition that shapes the Spatsizi and Mt. Edziza greater ecosystems. Conservation of significant geologic features will focus on interpretation and protection from physical disturbance by humans.

Objective:

- ❖ *To protect the structural and functional integrity of significant geologic features.*

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

5 Water

General Management Direction

Water quality, quantity and flow will continue to be regulated by natural events. Recreational and commercial use in the protected area system will be managed to ensure impacts to natural water quality are negligible.

Objective:

- ❖ *To protect and maintain the natural quality, quantity and flow of rivers, creeks and lakes in the Stikine Country Protected Areas within their natural range of variability.*

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

6 Vegetation

General Management Direction

Natural disturbances such as fire, forest insects, wind and forest diseases are considered essential ecosystem components contributing to the vegetation landscape and natural ecosystem functioning. The Stikine Country Protected Areas system is large enough to accommodate natural disturbance events within the system. Vegetation management will focus on maintaining natural disturbance events and minimizing impacts of human activities.

Objectives:

- ❖ *To maintain and monitor naturally occurring vegetation patterns and natural disturbance events.*
- ❖ *To manage vegetation features and disturbances within a larger regional context.*
- ❖ *To protect rare and sensitive plants and plant communities.*
- ❖ *To minimize human disturbance to native plants and plant communities.*

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

7 Wildlife

General Management Direction

The priority of wildlife management in the Stikine Country Protected Areas is to maintain representative large-mammal predator-prey systems in a healthy and viable state, allowing for natural fluctuations in wildlife populations. Two large mammal predator-prey systems are recognized within the Stikine Country Protected Areas: one centred in the Spatsizi Ecosystem; and one centred in the Mt. Edziza Ecosystem.

Objective:

- ❖ *To maintain naturally occurring, viable large mammal predator-prey systems in the Stikine Country Protected Areas in a mostly natural state.*

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

8 Habitat Management

General Management Direction

Vegetation in the Stikine Country Protected Areas system is in a largely natural state; therefore, natural disturbances will be the main processes driving wildlife habitat dynamics. Habitat management for individual species will be secondary to management of an overall natural wildlife habitat mosaic. Acquiring more information on distribution and quality of wildlife habitat throughout the system is a high priority.

Objectives:

- ❖ *To manage wildlife habitat as part of a natural vegetation mosaic driven by natural disturbances.*
- ❖ *To identify significant wildlife habitat.*
- ❖ *To protect critical or sensitive habitat from human disturbance.*
- ❖ *To protect rare/sensitive species habitats from human disturbance.*
- ❖ *To maintain important caribou ranges to contribute to conservation of caribou in British Columbia.*
- ❖ *To incorporate First Nations traditional knowledge in wildlife habitat management.*

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

9 Population Management

General Management Direction

The priority of wildlife population management in the Stikine Country Protected Areas system is to maintain viable populations of all large mammal species while allowing for natural population fluctuations. Accurate monitoring of wildlife population numbers is a priority for ensuring viability of populations. First Nations traditional activities such as hunting and trapping are an important component of the wildlife system. Non-First Nations recreational hunting and guided hunting will continue to be managed more conservatively than in adjacent areas.

Objectives:

- ❖ *To monitor population status of the main large mammal species (caribou, mountain sheep, mountain goats, moose, grizzly bear) in the Stikine Country Protected Areas system.*
- ❖ *To manage small and moderate-sized wildlife species as intact viable populations.*
- ❖ *To continue to improve the level of understanding of wildlife population dynamics in the Stikine Country Protected Areas system.*
- ❖ *To maintain First Nations traditional hunting and trapping activities that are consistent with conservation and public safety objectives.*
- ❖ *To provide high quality wilderness-based hunting opportunities for resident and non-resident hunters that are consistent with conservation objectives.*
- ❖ *To maintain trapping opportunities that are consistent with conservation objectives.*

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

10 Rare and Sensitive Species

General Management Direction

For rare and sensitive wildlife species, the role of the Stikine Country Protected Area system is to provide a large core area of habitat that is for the most part undisturbed by humans. The focus is on understanding, monitoring and maintaining habitat and dynamics of rare species.

Objectives:

- ❖ *To protect known rare and sensitive species and their habitat.*
- ❖ *To increase the information base on rare and sensitive species.*
- ❖ *To monitor population status of grizzly bears, wolverines and fisher.*
- ❖ *To establish a baseline monitoring program for amphibians in an ecosystem relatively undisturbed by humans.*

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

11 Wildlife Movements

General Management Direction

The Stikine Country Protected Areas system is a core protected area for large mammal species in the region. BC Parks will work with other agencies to coordinate management of known areas of use outside of protected area boundaries and to maintain wildlife movement corridors along the Pitman and Chukachida rivers.

Objective:

- ❖ *To coordinate with other agencies and First Nations to minimize impacts on Stikine Country Protected Areas' wildlife moving beyond protected area boundaries.*

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

Wildlife/Human Interactions

Objectives:

- ❖ *To protect wildlife populations during sensitive seasons such as winter and the spring birthing season.*
- ❖ *To minimize habitat disturbance.*
- ❖ *To minimize human/bear interactions.*

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions for wildlife movements and wildlife/human interactions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

12 Aquatics

General Management Direction

The management priority for fish is to conserve natural fish population diversity, distribution and dynamics throughout the Stikine Country Protected Areas waters. Fish stocking will not be considered unless populations are declining severely and population viability is threatened due to human-caused disturbances. Stocking will not be considered to enhance angling opportunities. Determining the status and maintaining a viable population of bull trout is a priority.

Objectives:

- ❖ *To ensure the natural functioning of fish populations.*
- ❖ *To provide a range of recreational angling opportunities that have low impacts on fish populations.*
- ❖ *To quantify non-guided angling activity and harvest.*
- ❖ *To manage angling and angling-guide activities.*
- ❖ *To minimize and mitigate impacts of increased angling pressure on protected area fish populations due to potential improved road access.*
- ❖ *To safeguard the opportunity of First Nations to take fish for ceremonial or sustenance purposes.*

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

13 Scientific Research and Education

General Management Direction

Promote scientific research and education initiatives that are consistent with priorities established for the Stikine Country Protected Area system.

Objective:

- ❖ *To collect information on the natural and cultural features of the Stikine Country Protected Areas.*

Do you agree with the objectives and associated strategies?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

14 Access

Floatplanes

General Management Direction

Floatplanes are recognized as an historic and important mode of access to the Stikine Country Protected Areas. Air access to the protected areas will continue to be primarily by floatplane with small numbers of helicopter drop-offs and pick-ups. New modes of air access will not be allowed, and air access will be carefully managed to maintain natural, cultural heritage and wilderness values.

Objectives:

- ❖ *To provide a level of floatplane and skiplane access that allows visitors to enjoy the Stikine Country Protected Areas without unacceptable impacts on fish and wildlife populations or the wilderness experience of other users.*
- ❖ *To provide low levels of helicopter access for limited purposes.*

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

Roads

General Management Direction

New roads will not be allowed within the protected areas, except for in Mt. Edziza, Pitman River and Chukachida protected areas as directed by the Cassiar-Iskut-Stikine LRMP, to accommodate mineral access, or near the Highway 37 bridge to accommodate frontcountry type developments. Additional road access into the Stikine Country Protected Areas will be discouraged except where such access is compatible with protected area management objectives. Where new roads or improvements to existing roads are proposed adjacent to protected areas, BC Parks will work co-operatively with other agencies and First Nations to minimize and mitigate impacts on natural, cultural heritage and recreation values in protected areas. Where increased access is compatible with protected area objectives, BC Parks will seek to optimize benefits while minimizing negative impacts.

Objective:

- ❖ *To coordinate management of land-based access to the Stikine Country Protected Areas with other agencies and First Nations to ensure that access does not impair the natural or cultural values of the protected areas.*

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

Snowmobiles

General Management Direction

Access to the Stikine Country Protected Areas by snow machines will generally be restricted and require specific authorization. Limited snowmobile access for First Nations traditional uses, for access along the Klastline Trail, for traplines holders, and for guide-outfitters for camp maintenance will continue.

Objective:

❖ *To provide for limited snowmachine access while avoiding unacceptable impacts to wildlife populations and other protected area values.*

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

15 Facilities

Structures

General Management Direction

Structures will be carefully managed and controlled. Shelters, including cabins and tent frames or other structures, will be considered only where consistent with zone and management area objectives. Generally, physical commercial infrastructure (e.g.: roads, lodgings, staging areas, etc.) will be directed outside of protected area boundaries when feasible in order to minimize impacts within Protected Areas. Present structures can be maintained, provided they are still required.

Objective:

- ❖ To keep infrastructure development to a minimum level appropriate for wilderness protected areas.

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

Trails, Routes and Campsites

General Management Direction

BC Parks will ensure maintenance of main trails within the protected area system. Secondary trails and new trails, routes and campsites will only be established or maintained to meet specific recreational goals. All new trails will have to undergo the BC Parks impact assessment process. Development, maintenance and use of all trails, routes and campsites will be consistent with zoning and conservation goals of the protected areas. BC Parks will seek to work with other organizations and the private sector to maintain or upgrade trails.

Objective:

To maintain trails, routes and campsites at a minimum wilderness standard. If use levels have unacceptable impacts consider improving, relocating or upgrading trails, or alternatively, closing them.

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

16 Recreation

General Management Direction

Recreation management will focus on providing a range of recreation experiences in a wilderness setting. Experiences will range from facility-based recreation near Highway 37 to recreation experiences where quiet and solitude prevail. Recreational use must not compromise the ecological values of the protected areas, and must respect cultural heritage values. Appropriate recreational activities include hiking, canoeing, mountaineering, rafting, horse travel, hunting, fishing, skiing, snowshoeing and motor/jet boating; some of these activities will be restricted to certain areas. Limited snowmobiling use will continue in support of First Nations traditional use, trapping and camp maintenance for guide-outfitters. Competitive recreational events are not considered appropriate for these protected areas. Authorizations for other recreational activities will be guided by general management direction and vision for the protected area system.

Objectives:

- ❖ *To provide high quality wilderness recreation opportunities to experienced backcountry visitors.*
- ❖ *To ensure that recreational activities do not have unacceptable impacts on the fish and wildlife populations, cultural heritage values, rare and endangered plant species and plant communities, and physical features in the Stikine Country Protected Areas system.*
- ❖ *To enhance the backcountry visitors' awareness of First Nations and pioneer cultural heritage, natural history, wildlife etiquette, and bear encounter avoidance techniques.*

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

Backcountry Hiking and Mountaineering

General Management Direction

Backcountry hiking and mountaineering will continue while minimizing impacts on natural, cultural heritage and recreation values. Emphasis will be placed on providing high quality wilderness experiences to visitors.

Objective:

- ❖ *To provide high quality wilderness backcountry hiking and mountaineering opportunities.*

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

Motorboating

Motorboating includes jet and propeller driven boats.

General Management Direction

Motorboating is recognized as an ongoing use on many rivers and lakes within the Stikine Country Protected Areas. Since maintaining a wilderness experience is a priority, motorboating use will be carefully managed to ensure that impacts on natural, cultural heritage and wilderness values are avoided and conflicts with other users are minimized. Other types of motorboating such as jet-skis, hovercraft and air propelled watercraft will not be allowed.

Objectives – Rivers:

- ❖ *To provide motorboating opportunities to continue consistent with acceptable types and levels of use.*
- ❖ *To provide high quality wilderness motorboating opportunities to experienced boaters.*

Objective – Lakes

- ❖ *To provide motorboating opportunities to continue consistent with the acceptable types and levels of use.*

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

Floatcraft

General Management Direction

Canoeing and rafting will continue as self-supported wilderness activities. Impact monitoring will continue to assess the impacts of use at popular sites.

Objective:

❖ *To provide high quality private and commercial wilderness rafting and canoeing opportunities to experienced boaters.*

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

Winter Recreation

General Management Direction

Winter recreation will be non-motorized except for special situations. Winter recreational use, that does not have unacceptable impacts on wildlife, will be encouraged within Stikine River, Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness and Tatlatui Parks. Habitat mapping will be used to direct winter use to suitable areas away from important winter ranges, and the impacts of winter recreation on wildlife will be monitored. Snowmobile use will continue to be restricted to limited First Nations traditional use, trapline use, camp maintenance and recreational use on the Klastline Trail in the Klastline Area.

Objective:

- ❖ *To provide safe non-motorized winter recreation opportunities that do not have unacceptable impacts on wildlife or their critical winter range.*

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

Horse Use and Pack Animals

General Management Direction

Horses are recognized as an acceptable means of travel within the Stikine Country Protected Areas. Other species of pack animals will continue to be prohibited in recognition of the risk to wildlife species. Use levels will need to be monitored for impacts to trails and vegetation and controls implemented if necessary.

Objectives:

- ❖ *To minimize the risk of disease transmission from pack animals to wildlife.*
- ❖ *To prevent unacceptable impacts from occurring due to horse use in the Stikine Country Protected Areas.*

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

Other Recreational Uses

General Management Direction

Mechanized and motorized ground travel of any nature, except those provided for in this plan, are generally considered to be incompatible with the wilderness values of the Stikine Country Protected Areas. Commercial or competitive sporting events and aerial sports, such as but not limited to hang-gliding and para-penting, are considered inappropriate with the wilderness and conservation values of the Stikine Country Protected Areas.

Objective:

❖ *To prohibit mechanized or motorized uses other than motorboats and floatplanes.*

Do you agree with the general management direction, objectives and associated actions?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

17 Commercial Recreational Opportunity and Tenure Management

General Management Direction

Commercial opportunities will be made available using a fair and open process. Exclusive opportunities will normally be awarded following a competitive process. Exceptions are for activities authorized under the Wildlife Act for guide outfitters, fish guides and trappers. BC Parks will work with First Nations and local communities to ensure that, to the extent practical, new competitive opportunities are in line with the capacity and readiness of local entrepreneurs. In general, commercial and public opportunities will be in balance where use levels are limited. Levels of public and commercial use in areas of hunting, fishing & trapping are regulated pursuant to the Wildlife Act.

Do you agree with the general management direction?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

Do you agree with the list of potential commercial opportunities?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

Are there other opportunities you think should be considered?

Comments: _____

Thank you very much for your ideas and recommendations – it is greatly appreciated. If you have any other suggestions, please do not hesitate to send them directly to the BC Parks office in Smithers and/or phone Peter Levy at (250) 847-7320

The results of this public comment information gathering exercise will be available for viewing and/or downloading at the following website:

<http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/planning/mgmtplns/stikine/stikine.htm>

Other Ideas, Suggestions & Comments:
