

SECTION I – SUMMARY OF QUESTIONNAIRES

STIKINE COUNTRY PROTECTED AREA’S PLANNING PROCESS

The questionnaire results are first presented as an overall response summary table (Table 1), showing the breakdown of the responses to the 66 returned questionnaires. The responses are then shown by question, with representative remarks made by respondents to that question. The remarks that are included below the question are meant to reflect the range of opinion and the types of responses received for that question. The last part of the questionnaire section is a compilation of the range of statements made in the vision statement portion of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire is available on the BC Parks website at www.elp.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/

Overall Response Summary Table 1

Summary of the results of the Stikine Country Protected Areas management planning questionnaire. The number of positive responses for each category for each question are shown.					
Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	35	26	1	1	2
2	22	18	3	13	6
3	20	25	4	6	6
4	26	17	6	10	3
6	11	25	7	10	8
7	20	27	5	9	1
8	32	25	3	0	1
9	13	15	15	17	3
10	29	25	2	2	2
11	29	16	6	10	2
12	30	20	6	4	1
13a	10	29	12	7	3
13b	6	31	11	9	5
14	25	20	6	7	6
15	28	21	7	8	2
16	8	29	8	13	4
17	29	27	2	1	4
18	31	8	10	10	5
19	32	19	3	7	3
20	2	27	12	14	3
21	6	31	13	3	2
22	21	25	6	6	0

A. Ecosystem Health

1. Do you agree that the primary management goal is to maintain viable natural ecosystems and features including plants, animals, other organisms and the natural processes that affect them?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
35	26	1	1	2

Please comment if you disagree or feel there are specific areas, or parts thereof, where this should not apply:

“The driving force in management for this system of protected areas should be ecosystem health, including natural processes”

“An integral component of this must be that public use, and enjoyment of our wilderness is facilitated, not unduly restricted”

2. Do you agree that direct management of vegetation and wildlife populations should be considered only in exceptional circumstances? (i.e. population or species at risk; risk to important values)?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
22	18	3	13	6

“I think we should be doing management strategies before problems start”

“I don’t think we only have to have exceptional circumstances to undertake direct management”

“I would not support the use of chemicals to control noxious weeds”

“Fish and wildlife inventories should be maintained, and enhanced by direct management methods...”

“Nature will sort things out over time. If these protected areas are to be used for research studies, more reason to leave things alone and see if they need managing”

“All management decisions should be based on scientific information...”

3. Do you agree that indirect management should be used as the main management method in this protected area system?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
20	25	5	6	6

“Inventory of fish and game is important as you want to know what the populations are...you should not have to close an area to rehabilitate vegetation”

“My preferred approach is to let nature take its course”

“Monitoring of fish, wildlife and plants is key before undertaking direct management procedures”

“Indirect management should be used to assist management in protected areas, along with other direct management methods”

4. Do you agree that obtaining natural and cultural heritage inventories and research is a high priority?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
26	17	6	10	3

5. Please indicate which areas of inventory and research are of highest priority to you by numbering the following (rank 1 – 7).

Area of inventory and research	Average rank given	Standing
Harvested fish and wildlife	2.55	1 st
Vegetation including rare and endangered flora	3.30	2 nd (tie)
Non-harvested fish and wildlife	3.30	2 nd (tie)
Terrestrial ecosystem inventories	3.37	4 th
Backcountry recreation use and activity-specific goals	4.02	5 th
Cultural heritage	4.85	6 th
Other (specify)	Rank Given	
Human effects	1	
Rare ecosystems	2	
Mineral potential	5 & 7	
Methods of stopping motorized access	5	
Research plots for environmental change monitoring	6 & 7	
Access issues	7 & 7	
Pollution	7	
Soil conditions	7	
Government Motorized access	7	

6. Do you agree that the following cultural heritage goals should be the primary ones?
 a) to facilitate traditional uses by First Nations as an integral component of the ecosystem and
 b) to protect cultural heritage values such as sites, trails, etc.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11	25	7	10	8

“First Nations have played an important role for generations, and should continue to do so. The protection of cultural heritage is in my opinion important”

“Traditional uses by First Nations should only be facilitated at traditional levels using traditional methods.”

“Traditional use by First peoples in the Stikine is vital to their economy and spirituality”

“First Nations have always been able to fish and hunt for survival and they should be allowed to continue, but non-natives should have the right to hunt and fish as well. Conservation should always be the first goal.”

“Suggest having ‘tribal’ police to enforce native activity and monitor use, as they are currently doing with fish resources”

B. Recreation Use

7. Do you agree that the primary backcountry goal is to provide high quality wilderness recreation opportunities?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
20	27	5	9	1

“It is assumed ‘high quality’ means compatible with the attributes of wilderness”

“Creating a park will increase some types of activity and this will have some impact. Unless the impact is harmful to the large ecosystem, then it is part of the normal use of parks.”

“Wherever you have protected areas and human use, the latter has to be extremely well controlled or the humans very few, otherwise the wilderness experience will eventually be no better than a jaunt down Granville Street.”

“There will come a time when wilderness space, beauty and solitude will be exceptionally special values. They should be protected and used carefully.”

“Commercial tourism should be kept to a minimum.”

- 8.** Do you agree that recreation use must be compatible with and not damage conservation, and cultural heritage values?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
32	25	3	0	1

Generally what type of activities do you think are appropriate in backcountry areas of the Stikine Country protected area system?

Category	Number of approvals (63 responses)	Percent approval rate
Hiking	60	95%
Nature appreciation	58	92%
Canoeing	58	92%
Photography	57	90%
Kayaking	53	84%
Research	53	84%
Mountaineering	52	83%
Ski touring	51	81%
Rafting	49	78%
Horseback riding	46	73%
Fishing	46	73%
Angling	44	70%
Aircraft access	40	63%
Hunting	34	54%
Trapping	30	48%
Jetboating/motorboating	27	43%
Snowmobiling	25	40%
Other	Number of mentions	
Limited air access	9	
No motorized	8	
No heli-skiing	3	
No ATV's	3	
No or limited heli-hiking	3	
Limited horses	2	
No Llamas	2	
No motorized in some areas	2	
Limited snowmobiling	2	
Motorized access	2	
No helicopter access	1	
Limited research	1	
Park Warden huts	1	
Limited jet and motor boats	1	

“These areas are big enough that multiple use can be attained.”

“Prefer commercial guiding to shift increasingly to nature observation and photography rather than hunting.”

“Motorized transport should be kept apart from sensitive wildlife populations and groups of non-motorized people.”

“Public access and use should be facilitated, not restricted, particularly in that current use is low and will likely remain so with only airplane access.”

“Aircraft access should be closely monitored and regulated.”

9. Do you agree that there are opportunities to increase use in the protected area system and provide economic and employment benefits without compromising conservation and cultural heritage values or existing recreation uses?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13	15	15	17	3

Please note the types of activities and locations where these opportunities may exist:

“More cabins maintained by parks and available for public use on reservation basis.”

“Increased use should concentrate more along the highway corridor and activities should be non-motorized and educational.”

“It’s impossible to expect to maintain a sense of conservation while increasing human activities. Protecting an area should not be combined with expecting to exploit an area for monetary gain.”

“There is a large potential for economic benefit by facilitating packer activities to provide practical and affordable access to BC residents...”

“Guiding of hunters and fishermen are important as they both are part of the tourism picture.”

“The point here is that making money and conservation are always, eventually, at odds. Economic benefits must come second in the priority structure to conservation.”

“Keep built facilities outside parks, Dease Lake has potential as a gateway community.”

10. Do you agree that if unacceptable population impacts occur, management strategies should be employed to lessen the impact?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
29	25	2	2	2

Please note any species or locations where you felt management strategies should be considered:

“If this decision is based on scientific information from biologists and management...”

“Are large numbers of wolves eating Stone sheep unacceptable? Not to me.”

“Predator control must be a management strategy that will be used in this area.”

“If wildlife populations are declining, close harvesting before doing any other management activities.”

“There should be no hunting and trapping in parks and protected areas; these uses are given about 90% of BC at present...”

“Hunting, fishing and trapping are a very important recreation to the people that enjoy these activities. Their recreational opportunities should not be compromised by other users.”

11. Do you agree that the targets for levels of use should be established to maintain a high quality wilderness experience if levels of use in certain locations (i.e. popular fishing sites) result in a diminished wilderness experience?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
29	16	6	10	2

Please note any areas/activities where you feel target levels should be considered now or in the foreseeable future:

“These areas are for everyone, and only biological problems should dictate use.”

“Angling pressure in areas of Tatlatui, such as the Firesteel River, need to be closely monitored.”

“Mt. Edziza should have very low numbers of people.”

“Targets for various indicators and wilderness quality attributes need to be determined and monitored.”

“If by ‘target levels’ you mean limits on use, I’d say jet-boating on the Stikine River is the first thing to shut down.”

“It’s not warranted at this time. The type of people that use this area, and its geographical location, impose their own restrictions.”

“I believe that bag limits, as they are now, will keep the area in prime condition for years to come.”

- 12.** Do you agree that the recreation-based impacts on conservation and/or cultural heritage values should be monitored closely and where unacceptable impacts occur, management strategies should be employed (i.e. limit use levels, types of access, harden campsites, etc.) to lessen impacts?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
30	20	6	4	1

In your opinion are there any uses or areas where unacceptable impacts are occurring or are likely to occur?

“The campsites for persons using the trails, lakes and rivers should be designated and established.”

“I work on Spatsizi and very, very little impact occurs.”

“Mt. Edziza is already showing signs of degradation on the cones.”

“Buckley Lake is being exploited by charter air companies flying trophy fishing clients in, and the Stikine River corridor is being harmed by a proliferation of jet boats during the fall hunt.”

“Spatsizi Park may be particularly vulnerable because the attraction of Coldfish Lake camp and the international renown of the park.”

“At present guide-outfitters and angling guides do not have use limits set on them besides harvest quotas, this allows them unlimited recreational tourism while others are limited. This situation must be brought under control and separated from their hunting guiding.”

“Obsidian sites”

“Snowmobiling, ATV and jet-boat use are unacceptable anywhere, anytime except as tools for rescue.”

“Hunters are controlled by LEH, hikers and campers can travel an area in large numbers and there is no control on numbers...”

13. Given broader conservation, cultural heritage and recreation goals,

a) Do you agree that the current level and condition of public infrastructure in generally appropriate?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10	29	12	7	3

Please note the type and location of public infrastructure you feel should be either removed or improved.

“Improve Eaglesnest Pass access trail to encourage people to hike into Coldfish Lake rather than flying in.”

“Parks should provide cabins on each lake for public use by reservation.”

“Coldfish Lake is a fine example of how public infrastructure should look.”

“Improving infrastructure leads to more demand for improving infrastructure.”

“All of this infrastructure should be removed and if these parks are truly wilderness parks do not build any public infrastructure other than some trails and a few bridges at key crossings of major rivers.”

“Fix what is there to be environmentally and aesthetically sound, but do not allow expansion.”

“Should not be increased in Spatsizi, but additional infrastructure may be desirable elsewhere since many of these parks are new and do not have any.”

b) Do you agree that the current level and condition of commercial infrastructure in generally appropriate?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6	31	11	9	5

Please note the type and location of commercial infrastructure you feel should be either removed or improved.

“Spatsizi should not have an increase. On the other hand, Tahltan First Nation plans for tourism cabins in Klastline may be appropriate.”

“Each area of commercial infrastructure should be separately assessed as to whether it benefits conservation, cultural heritage and recreation goals.”

“There should be allowance for maintenance and upgrading of current structures.”

“The present level of commercial infrastructure supports the hunting and fishing activities for the most part. Additional structures would be for commercial recreational activities which should be self-supporting.”

“Definitely don’t want any more, there is enough out there now.”

“Enough infrastructure should be allowed to provide a fair return to the operator without compromising wilderness values.”

14. Historically, a number of unauthorized temporary structures have been placed in certain protected areas and refuse has accumulated near a few camps (unauthorized structures do not include those structures required for First Nations to exercise aboriginal rights). Do you agree that a priority should be placed on removing unauthorized structures and the clean up of refuse where this exists?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
25	20	6	7	6

Can you identify any sites that need clean up or removal of structures?

“Some people have used areas prior to parks arrival, these are their heritage, leave them alone.”

“Priority should be assigned to restoration of wild salmon stocks and wildlife populations...”

“I agree refuse should be cleaned up... Structures may be ones saving grace if you are in the wilderness and experience a problem one has not anticipated.”

“Mt Edziza campsite near the headwaters of Chakima Creek”

“Clean up garbage pit at bates camp in Gladys Lake Ecological Reserve.”

“Certain areas along the Stikine and Pitman should be cleaned up.”

15. Do you agree that, in addition to ecological reserves, recreation use should be discouraged in sensitive and certain special areas (e.g. critical habitat for species at risk and other native flora and fauna, or cultural sites)?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
28	21	7	8	2

“Depending on ‘what’ recreation and ‘how’ sensitive.”

“Conservation is the top priority, for it’s own sake and to maintain baseline study areas.”

“Only if this approach is balanced, large area total access ban due to the risk to some obscure plant in not what the public deserves.”

“Parks are for the people to use. There are already ecological reserves in place.”

“During certain times of year, certain habitat should be avoided out of respect for breeding animals...”

“We need to establish the precedent that recreation comes second to conservation.”

C. Access and Adjacent Land Use

16. Do you agree that the current level of access to the Stikine Country’s protected areas is generally appropriate?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8	29	8	13	4

If not, please identify the type and location of access you feel should be enhanced or restricted.

“It should be improved, more access”

“Locals, particularly First Nations, are limited in their means of access. If they can’t fly in they’re going to 4-wheel or snowmobile in...”

“Restrict motorized access to a limited number of specific destinations, and eliminate one day fly-in/fly-out events, sufficient opportunities exist at front-country for day-trippers.”

“Because it is very expensive to fly or boat into the parks, it regulates itself.”

“Need to restrict access from the east near Tatlatui.”

“...air and boat access should be restricted, but I also realize that there are inhabitants in there and emergencies occur.”

“Some areas should be off-limits to motorized access... e.g. aircraft flights down the Grand Canyon of the Stikine.”

17. Do you agree that strategic planning should be coordinated between protected areas and the adjacent land base across the entire Stikine Country protected areas system? (i.e. logging, mineral exploration and development, access, insect management, fire control, etc.)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
29	27	2	1	4

“Should be buffer zones with more control over what is allowed in the areas adjacent to parks, animals do not respect park boundaries...”

“There are areas where this is difficult e.g. Schaft Creek near Edziza because of mineral tenure, but efforts should be made wherever possible.”

“Strategic planning should not seriously impact economic development outside protected areas.”

“If co-management across jurisdictional boundaries is implemented relationships through management will operate co-operatively.”

“We need development in BC. Parks have boundaries and should not have any jurisdiction beyond their boundaries...”

“Needs to dovetail closely with LRMP process.”

18. Do you agree that motorized access, including aircraft, should be managed carefully and restricted in necessary to protect park values and wilderness experience?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
31	8	10	10	5

Please comment with any specific activity type or location of specific interest or concern:

“This has to be done on a per site basis... To get around this area you have to use motorized equipment but you don’t have to take to anyplace it will go.”

“I don’t think there is anywhere near enough traffic by whatever means to even consider this...”

“I am concerned about jet boats, snowmobiles and ATV’s”

“Look out for private planes landing on closed airstrips i.e. Coldfish.”

“Wheeled motorized access should be banned, most visitors access the park by floatplane.”

“Floatplane/airplane access has virtually no impact and should not be restricted but maintained as the general unlimited mode of access.”

“I’d like to see restrictions on the number of flights per day going into Coldfish Lake, Mowdade...”

“In some ways air access ensures wilderness, i.e. no roads, but airplanes may distress some wildlife populations. Pilots must also be educated to ensure animals are not harassed.”

19. Given this, do you agree that BC Parks should work with other relevant Provincial Agencies to manage road access?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
32	19	3	7	3

Please comment about any specific access road or other detail:

“I think roads should be closed/deactivates as soon as development/resource extraction is completed.”

“Parks should worry about the parks only. What happen outside it’s boundaries is none of its business.”

“These access roads may have direct impacts on wildlife populations and overall wilderness experiences.”

“...the general public should have freedom of access to these roads.”

“Road access is the number one degrader of wilderness. Any opportunity to set the precedent of closing and destroying an active road should be taken.”

“ Control and restrict access to Dease Lake Railway Grade.”

D. Front-country Parks

20. Do you agree that front-country facilities are generally adequate in the Stikine Country protected area system?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2	27	12	14	3

Please note the type and location of any front-country facility you feel should be enhanced or removed:

“Boat launch on the Stikine.”

“BC Parks should consider creating full access to Cascade Falls...” (in Kinaskan)

“Could use a campsite on the Stikine by the bridge and some day trails.”

“There could be some enhancement in the form of nature interpretation and trails along the highway corridor. This might also take some of the pressure to the backcountry...”

“More campsites will be needed soon, as the highway improves and tourism increases.”

“Possible goat viewing location in the Stikine Canyon.”

21. Do you agree that there may be opportunities to improve visitor quality experience in front-country parks?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6	31	13	3	2

Please note examples of things you think can be done to improve the visitor quality experience (e.g. promote day hikes, encourage other activities).

“Develop interpretive day-hiking trails, First Nations cultural centre, offer guided hikes and canoeing”

“Establish an interpretive program that is centralized in the three front-country parks. This could lead to the creation of a ...Stikine Country Centre.”

“No, don’t spend money on fancy photo stands and parking lots.”

“Promote self-propelled limited stay activities that would have minimal impact on the environment and wildlife.”

“A trail from Stikine River Bridge to the start of the canyon would be a nice amenity.”

“The old Telegraph Creek Road if upgraded and maintained could allow visitor access to the Grand Canyon in an appropriate way if not allowed to abuse the area and wildlife.”

22. Do you agree that recreational use in front-country parks should be monitored to avoid unintended negative impacts on conservation, recreation and cultural heritage values?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
21	25	6	6	0

Are you aware of any areas where negative impacts are currently occurring or are likely to occur?

“Possible damage to rare ecosystems at Boya Lake (the patches of grassland and the marl lakes).”

“Need to be careful of Todagin Mountain that it doesn’t get too much use due to its importance for sheep.”

“Adequate level of park staffing is important.”

E. Developing a Long-term Vision

Vision Elements – these comments are taken from the questionnaire and reflect the range of comments received in this section. The comments are not in order of priority.

Ecological Processes

- Predator-prey systems with all components are intact
- No overt management intervention
- Nature will change due to various forces, so don't try to retain elements that are beyond our capacity to keep
- Maintain interconnected habitats
- The Stikine region will remain virtually untouched by logging, mining or recreational activities. Human impact will be virtually non-existent
- A free running Stikine River is vital to a healthy watershed, the animals that live in it and the indigenous people
- Recognizing the unique opportunity to preserve for all time, one of North America's largest and last predator-prey ecosystems, we pledge that our decisions will be guided by sound conservation principles that recognize as paramount the areas wilderness characteristics
- Hunting is no longer accepted in parks
- Manage the people not the wildlife
- Indirect management has provided an area of natural healthy ecological diversity

Protecting Natural Values

- Continued smart game and land management
- Parks are not looked to for providing economic growth
- Protected areas are a safe haven for wildlife and wilderness values
- Primary goal is the conservation of plants, animals and First Nations cultural sites
- Protection of rare and endangered species
- Identify sensitive areas and close them to the public
- Integration of humans into biodiversity, staying under the carrying capacity of the planet

Fish and Wildlife

- Maintain and enhance fish and wildlife populations
- Everything is done to promote and increase fish and game species
- Predators are controlled
- No trophy hunting
- Parks should be areas where nothing is killed destroyed or developed
- Hunting and fishing should be permitted unless it is shown the species need be protected for conservation reasons
- Identify critical fish and wildlife habitat
- Regular ecosystem monitoring to identify impacts and ecosystem health
- Fish and wildlife inventories are updated regularly, using new techniques as they become available

First Nations

- Need to be primary people making a living from the land
- BC Parks relationships with First Nations should improve as their tie to the land is vital to their survival
- First Nations traditional activities are traditional
- First Nations are involved in managing the parks and use them in a responsible manner
- First Nation peoples use of the land increases to an appropriate level to habitat and wildlife values

Wilderness Recreation

- High quality, low impact
- Do not bring all the comforts of home to the wilderness

- Be able to go on long horseback or hiking trips for hunting, fishing or photography with minimal restrictions
- A plan for limiting visitation if use exceeds capacity is in place
- Backcountry areas are maintained in as natural state as possible with minimal human development and intervention
- If wilderness values are diminishing a reservation or limited access lottery may have to be implemented with BC residents having priority
- Backcountry camping in designated areas only with a no-trace ethic
- Careful monitoring of carrying capacity regarding tourism and air access
- Maintain wilderness values
- Activities in the backcountry should not be permitted to harm the health of the wilderness
- Recreation will be encouraged that is consistent with a wilderness area

Commercial Activities

- Allow commercial operations to continue provided they don't adversely impact wilderness and ecosystems
- The use of BC Parks by commercial operators should be curtailed
- Camps in the area should be allowed to expand a bit if they need to without interference from BC Parks
- Resident hunters should get more animals than the guide-outfitters
- Stability for stakeholders, considering their long-term interests, and allow them a greater management role
- There should be no further development of facilities and future use must be closely monitored to ensure they remain wilderness
- Commercial operators co-exist as they do today with small groups and low impact
- Commercial operations and facilities have been kept to an absolute minimum

Park Management

- Model for re-establishment of wilderness ecosystems for elsewhere in the world
- Increase the amount of staffing and require more First Nations staff
- Have a closer working relationship with other land management agencies so that park values are not compromised
- Restrictions, if needed, are applied equally to all users
- The stewardship of lands set aside for BC Parks shall be administered to assure equal access and opportunities for all user groups now and in perpetuity
- All components of the park are inventoried so managers can make informed decisions
- Park managers take into account public input from local, provincial, national and international perspectives
- Prevention of the erosion of the pristine character of the Stikine Area by careful management
- Maintain the area's natural values in the face of increasing pressure due to increasing population size
- The current rules and regulations are sufficient to protect this area, they just need more enforcement
- Any park restrictions should ensure that local residents continue to have access to the area
- Encourage dialogue with current users so that an effective cooperative stewardship program can work
- Set an example for all of North America how nature can be preserved, make it a lasting legacy of ecology over economy
- Resource management by BC Parks, not lifestyle management

Local Communities

- Gateways
- Maintain a healthy productive and sustainable wilderness environment which contributes to a thriving and diverse economy and strong communities supporting a wide range of local business and employment opportunities as well as providing world class recreational opportunities
- First Nations economic benefits

- Local control of natural resources
- Proactive tourism industry stimulates the local economy
- Work in the parks should go to local people
- The ecology of the parks takes priority over economic development concerns
- Provide employment and tourism opportunities while enhancing biodiversity and cultural heritage values

Education

- Work with schools to teach children about BC Parks
- A culture of non-motorized enjoyment of the parks, and responsibility for one's own safety is taught
- Conservation starts with education

Access

- Leave it remote for future generations
- Allow human access and only restrict where ecosystems are endangered
- Level of access is the key to protecting an area, more difficult and/or expensive access means limited numbers of visitors
- All protected areas are designated non-motorized access only, especially jetboats, ATV's and motorbikes
- Commercial air services should be allowed to take visitors to areas in the park
- Do not restrict airplane access – it has minimal impact
- Many fragile ecosystems elsewhere in the world have excellent infrastructure and access and are enjoyed by many more people than envisioned for the Stikine in the foreseeable future
- Need to recognize that Hwy 37 will be a paved 1st class highway, and Spatsizi, Edziza and the lower Stikine will be easy access
- Provide areas where access is only by non-motorized means
- Forestry development does not open up access to park areas
- Maintain trail systems

Front-Country

- Need more accessible tourist camping facilities (esp. between Dease lake and Telegraph Creek)
- Interpretation centre for the Stikine area in a front-country park
- Upgrade front-country areas on a regular basis
- Numerous small campgrounds near existing attractions
- Encourage limited development along highway corridor with hiking and interpretive trails

Summary of Dease Lake Workshop

The Dease Lake Workshop was held on March 6, 2001 and was attended by 18 people.

Vision Statement

The Stikine Country Protected Area system encompasses a spectacular range of ecological, recreational and cultural features. The protected area system is managed (reference Tahltan involvement) to sustain: ecological health, (natural disturbance, variation and human use); wilderness values and features; First Nation cultural values and traditional uses (reintroduced consistent with historic use – linked to economic benefits); access for a range of recreation uses from remote backcountry to more intense front-country; local benefits (environmental, recreational and economic); and public understanding about the management and use of the system to preserve its unique range of values.

Vision Elements

First Nations

- First Nations have an active role in management, with the establishment of a strong economic position and cultural values
- Good management; involved management by Tahltan and access for traditional uses
- Tahltan involvement in park management strengthens connections to parks
- Opportunity to make money from these places for Tahltan
- Tahltan cultural/adventure ecotourism opportunities
- Clarify Tahltan rights within parks and reintroduce Tahltan people back into their parks
- Conservation in its broadest, most holistic terms – First Nations and recreation aspects
- Edziza an Spatsizi represent heartland for Tahltan territory
- Reintroducing Tahltan people back into the parks and all the uses they used to have before
- More enforcement regarding removal of Tahltan archaeological artefacts within park system
- Long-term vision of healthy native species with Tahltan at top of food chain
- Re-establish Tahltan cultural ties in the park
- More Tahltan park rangers

Fish and Wildlife

- Strong ungulate populations with protected areas
- Biodiversity and ecosystem support wildlife
- Return wildlife populations to past levels
- Biodiversity and natural disturbance are foundation for wildlife

Ecological Processes

- Recognize natural disturbance and visibility as qualities of ecosystem
- Ecosystem representation within Stikine Country protected areas – needs to provide representation for whole area- complete the system
- Maintain present qualities, flora, fauna, ecosystem functions
- Viable function over the long-term
- Sustaining the landscape and ecosystem as it is today
- Preserve the ecosystem

Wilderness Recreation

- Wilderness value retained
- A range of activities provided from none-to front-country along the Stikine highway, and limited in the backcountry
- Gentle use of vast landscape, ‘low impact’

Park Management

- Recognize existing stakeholders within protected areas
- Local aspect to park management
- Building code for structures to ensure it blends in with the surroundings
- Concentrate on human impacts on trails etc.
- Concern over introduction of user fees where there is established historic use (prior to development of the park)
- Protection of traditional and historic uses
- Infrastructure should be conducive with a wilderness (primitive) experience
- User pay approach

Local Communities

- Local benefits including recreation and economic
- Local communities serve as gateway communities to enhance community economic development
- Sustainable tourism-based communities
- More culture camps and walkabouts using heritage system of trails
- Local benefits
- Economically self-sustaining
- Screen and have reputable specialists in place for commercial operators, 'set an example'
- Communal benefits for the nation: environmental, economic, reintroduction of cultural heritage and traditional use within parks
- Understanding and appreciation of protected area system

Access

- Access for challenged people
- Use traditional trails and upgrade as needed
- No roads – retain pristine quality

Education

- Education is important
- Educate public on 'low impact' use
- Strong education focus e.g. flora, fauna, First Nations history, natural history
- Stikine Country Parks Interpretation centre

Issues

Access

General

- Scientific data and traditional knowledge to back-up levels of use and to guide objectives for management
- Need to define acceptable levels of use
- Define attributes for protection (environmental and cultural); biophysical, social and cultural
- Define what is an impact; environmental and use (quality of experience)
- Access impacts

Roaded

- Maintain local access to protected areas
- Roaded access within protected areas where appropriate (i.e. no impacts to other values)
- Preserve ecosystem health
- Preserve large core ecosystem as unroaded
- Need to manage access outside protected areas to protect protected area values, while recognizing different values outside protected areas

Jetboats

- Is there a problem?
- Need guidelines for jetboat use
- Baseline inventories
- Need for guidelines to define an acceptable use of rivercraft
- Impacts need to be identified, e.g. wildlife harvest
- Acceptable levels of use
- Reconcile jetboat use with open-ended harvest for wildlife

Fixed Wing Aircraft

- Recognize responsible air access as a historic form of access

- Establish flight paths to minimize impacts on wildlife and backcountry users
- Use levels to limit impacts
- Designated areas for landing where appropriate
- Seasonal constraints
- Opportunities for sight-seeing (e.g. Tuya) managing for impacts
- Distribute recreation use more widely across the system

Helicopter

- Impacts on Stikine Canyon, Tanzilla and Tuya
- Consider guidelines to designate use to specified areas (spatial and temporal)
- Proactively avoid damage and determine impacts in sensitive areas and manage accordingly
- Opportunities for heli-based activities

Trails (front- and back-country use)

- Recognize trails as key form of access
- Establish/re-establish an appropriate system of trails
- Determine appropriate forms of use for trails – non-motorized
- Locate trailheads at strategic locations
- Concentrate use on trails
- Identify funding mechanisms to develop and maintain trails
- Develop trails to provide front-country access

Motorized use

- Avoid impacts of motorized use in protected areas system
- Limit use to current levels (trapping, wood gathering, snowmobiling along the Klastline, and First Nations use on Telegraph Trail between Iskut and Telegraph Creek)

Recreation Inventory and Research

- What is the split between commercial and non-commercial recreation users?
- What is the carrying capacity?
- Illegal guiding – improve enforcement

Ecosystem Management

- Preserve ecosystem health: inventories, population and behavioural research need to be done
- Active management within Protected Areas
- Research on natural disturbance patterns
- Inventory of values
- Funding to support research and management
- Integrate wildlife management inside and outside of protected areas
- Traditional trapping for predator control
- Need to maintain natural predator/prey relationships and gain further knowledge of these relationships
- Monitoring, research and indicators

Management Process

- Need to engage First Nations and the public in determining acceptable levels of use, harvest etc.

Cultural Heritage

- Need to protect sensitive archaeological and cultural sites
- Inventory and knowledge of sensitive sites and managing for potential impacts (Recreational and access management)
- Opportunity for Tahltan to reconnect with traditional use areas
- Need for restoration of damaged sites

- Place signs at sensitive sites: Metsantan, Buckley Lake
- Cultural interpretation of Tahltan use of sites by the Tahltan
- Find ways for Tahltan members, esp. youth, to get back in touch with traditional areas

Infrastructure

Commercial

- The Tahltan expect to get back onto the land and is associated with trapping cabins, however the priority is conserving the integrity of the parks
- Tahltan are concerned about large numbers of overlapping tenures and the potential impacts on parks
- Compensation for Tahltan for infrastructure removed by BC Parks
- Commercial infrastructure is acceptable in protected areas subject to not impacting other values
- Need to develop guidelines on level of infrastructure, type and location
- Develop zones where infrastructure is acceptable, including criteria re: building codes

Public

- Need for appropriate infrastructure in areas of concentrated use to minimize impacts
- Determine areas where public infrastructure is required
- Disperse public use
- Develop facilities in key areas

Summary of Smithers Workshop

The Smithers workshop was held on March 8 and was attended by 32 people.

Vision Statement

The Stikine Country Protected Area system provides globally significant ecosystem wilderness, cultural heritage and recreation values. Management of the system respects Tahltan rights and interests, and ensures ecological integrity while providing for a balance of cultural, recreational and local interests.

Ecosystem conservation maintains ecosystem structures and processes, including intact, naturally functioning large mammal predator-prey systems, and is integrates with management activities outside protected areas.

Tahltan traditional uses are conserved and respected, and Tahltan people have a connection with the land and resources consistent with traditional use. Wilderness values are preserved with opportunities for low impact recreation, and there is a balance of commercial and public infrastructure and use.

Front-country facilities and infrastructure provide access to significant features and recreation experiences, and provide for interpretation of ecosystem values, cultural and natural history, and significant features, and instil an ethic of cultural respect, low impact use and ecological integrity.

A range of local and Tahltan benefits are provided, including economic benefits associated with parks, recreational opportunities, environmental benefits and recognition of existing tenure. Protected area management respects government-to-government relations with the Tahltan First Nation, and is built upon long-term trust and input from First nations, local communities and park users, and is based upon a principle of stewardship and sharing the landbase respectfully among all users.

Vision Elements

First Nations

- Appropriate education programs in the front-country with the local community and First Nations
- Understand unique cultural values, understand and respect historic land use and cultural values as a basis for setting future direction
- The Tahltan Nation should set the vision for their traditional territory as they see it
- Tahltan involvement in future management

Ecosystem Processes

- Self-sustaining, both ecological and recreational
- Be aware of climate change
- Enhancement may need to balance off against ecological pressures
- 50 years from now the same landscape and ecosystem as it is today
- Conservation of the ecosystem, and balance between conservation, recreation and First Nations
- Core area of naturally functioning ecosystems

Fish and Wildlife

- Maintain viable plant, wildlife and fish populations (esp. caribou winter habitat and movement corridors) and a balance between tourism, recreation and conservation to ensure access while preserving ecosystems
- Same sense of diversity as today; wildlife first, people second
- Preserve large mammal populations and ecosystems of which they are a part, through careful management integrated within and outside parks
- Maintain intact, naturally functioning large mammal predator/prey ecosystem since this is a globally significant feature

Wilderness Recreation

- Preserve pristine wilderness through maintaining ecological processes and natural landscapes
- Can sustain higher recreational use to a point where others are not impacted
- Define limits of acceptable use
- Recreation opportunities should be available with each park's ecosystem and cultural heritage objectives, preserve outstanding geological features
- All human use respectful of natural environment, encourage broad-based holistic/spiritual experience

Commercial Activities

- Maintain current level of commercial and public infrastructure
- Limited development and access, and maintain wilderness experiences
- Long-term trust for all parties to continue economic prosperity unencumbered by over-management, 'keep it practical', regionally driven management concerns
- Ongoing economic opportunities for local benefit and not give in to outside interests

Access

- Manage access to protected areas, access can be a key limiting factor to level-of-use
- No new roads
- Resist human encroachment as much as possible
- Manage access to minimize impacts, share landbase respectfully among all users, preserve economic benefits
- Pressures for change exist as well as access and climate change
- Limited access to the backcountry
- Like to see it remain as it is today; minimal sign of human presence

Park Management

- Create a contingency of support for management actions required to sustain wilderness
- Distinction between parks and areas outside
- Continued shared use of the land by all parties to allow future generations to enjoy recreating in these areas
- Enhancement and protection of the area from human disturbance, park staff presence to monitor and enforce
- Keep track of people visiting the back-country

Education

- Establish a recreation code of conduct
- Interpretive centres in the front-country

Front-Country

- Front-country parks are windows on backcountry wilderness, and can be used to educate folks who otherwise may not be able to reach it
- Support more intensive use of front-country, limit use in backcountry

Issues

Access

Roaded

- Minimize impacts to wilderness areas and sensitive ecosystems
- BC Parks to avoid building access to wilderness areas within protected areas
- Restrict roaded access within areas
- Provide input into access management decisions outside protected areas to address potential impacts
- Need to provide access for front-country opportunities within protected areas

Trails

- Need network of trails to concentrate use and provide access
- Appropriate trail development
- Damage to some trail due to heavy usage by horses
- Structures respect natural character and uses
- Interpretive trail in the front-country
- Maintain and provide interpretation for heritage and historic trails
- Gladys Lake Ecological Reserve – provide for continued access to Coldfish Lake on Eaglesnest Trail and discourage other forms of recreational use – what to do about the cabin on Gladys Lake?

Education

- Need to use parks as a laboratory to increase understanding and knowledge of ecosystem function, including effects of climate change

Ecosystem Management Issues

Fish and Wildlife

- Concern about population declines

Fish

- Diversity of fishing effort across system, from ‘open’ to ‘no fishing’ (refuge areas for scientific research)
- Catch and release as a means of managing fishing effort
- Baseline inventory of fish populations
- Monitoring population trends against effort as required

- Encourage 'light on the resource' ethic as part of experience

Wildlife

- Concern over micromanagement control over single species – not consistent with natural disturbance patterns
- Manage for macro ecosystem processes
- Hands off management except for occasional tweaking
- Allow natural disturbance processes to occur, but if system gets out of whack manage to mimic natural disturbance patterns
- Research to understand natural disturbance patterns
- Management intervention consistent with traditional Tahltan approaches and recognize as part of ecosystem (e.g. predator management)
- Need to determine conditions that trigger intervention
- Consider LEH as a toll for managing population trends in new protected areas
- Qualified management intervention – needs to be defined, including conditions when it is appropriate

Ecosystem

- Need to manage for ecosystem process rather than a vision of what landscape looks like
- Inventory of natural features for baseline
- Manage to retain natural plant and animal communities recognizing natural variation
- Recognize changes to natural environment resulting from climatic change
- Accept large scale natural disturbances as part of ecosystem functioning

Recreational

Helicopters

- heli-hiking and heli-skiing are inappropriate activities
- Grand Canyon of the Stikine – carefully managed and discouraged to minimize disturbance to mountain goats

Floatplanes

- Sightseeing – managed as to amount and location of drop-off/pick-up points

Jetboat Use

- Continued use in consultation with user groups

Canoeing and Rafting

- Are okay

Types of use

- Historic uses
- Encourage all uses to be low impact on environment

Other Motorized

- Use levels to be established and managed
- Public/private vs commercial, numbers of users/trips to be shared
- Opportunity to increase target levels and capacity

Summary of Vancouver Workshop

The Vancouver workshop was held on March 6 and was attended by 19 people.

Vision Statement

The Stikine Country Protected areas are special places with large intact ecosystems, traditional cultural use and outstanding recreational, natural and cultural features that support a wide range of uses.

The relationship of the Tahltan people is recognized, and Tahltan people have the opportunity to connect with traditional uses, and to engage in economic and cultural practices related to resources in the protected areas.

The ecological features and processes, including fish, wildlife, plant communities and large, intact predator-prey systems, are preserved within natural ranges of variation.

Natural wilderness areas have been defined and are managed to conserve ecological integrity and quality recreational experiences for public and commercial users, including appropriate facilities and infrastructure to support these uses.

Front-country areas provide opportunities for local economic benefit, and interpretation of the ecology, natural history and cultural history of the area.

Management of the protected area system is carried out in cooperation between BC Parks and the Tahltan First Nation with advice from local people and park users. Management respects traditional uses and aims to conserve ecological integrity, while sustaining cultural, social and economic values. Proactive management will predict and respond to pressures on the system, and adaptive management provide for change (i.e. amendments) based on ongoing research and monitoring. Management will also encourage a 'light on the land' outdoor recreation ethic.

Vision Elements

Ecological Processes

- Research to fully understand ecosystem process
- Establish ecological baselines
- Ecosystem viability – active management approach that includes traditional knowledge
- Ecological integrity takes precedence over all other use
- Establish Stikine River as standard by which we measure other rivers – benchmark of natural
- Protect from development that disturbs natural features and processes

Fish, Wildlife and Plants

- Maintain wildlife populations and protect biodiversity
- Ecological integrity and viable wildlife, fish and plant populations
- Maintain ecological integrity of ecosystem – predator/prey intact and large roadless wilderness areas

First Nations

- Reconnection of Tahltan people to the Stikine Country Parks
- Preservation of Tahltan cultural heritage – inventory
- Imprint of Tahltan people is integral
- Recognize advice from First Nations, local residents and park users

- Ecologically sustainable and culturally sustainable recognizing Tahltan presence, socially and culturally sustainable
- Tahltan people are fully engaged in planning process
- Potential relocation of recreation facilities that are in sensitive cultural sites

Wilderness Recreation

- Maintain wilderness experience
- Allow human use while maintain ecological and cultural heritage
- Recognize human interaction as part of ecosystem integrity
- High quality wilderness experiences for all users, and facilities and structures that support those users are compatible with ecological objectives
- Upgrade existing recreation facilities to avoid pressure on sensitive ecosystems

Commercial Activities

- Recognize the benefits of commercial use to local economy
- Spread concentration of human use into areas outside protected areas as well
- Provide opportunity for managed human use

Park Management

- Local communities and residents of BC actively embrace and support plan – sense of ownership and shared vision
- Respect among different interests
- Recognize direction of LRMP
- Define how we got to where we are and how to get to where we are going
- Recognize drivers for change – predict risk factors, identify potential risks, proactively avoid adverse impacts
- Management plan to address existing concerns and attributes, and provides tools to do this, e.g. how much is too much
- Remain the same as now
- Enforcement to address violations
- Enhance linkage between front- and back-country

Access

- Preserve remote wilderness experience – conflict with commercial mechanized use – helicopters
- Set aside smaller areas deemed ‘wilderness’ for no access, not even by BC Parks
- Minimize disturbance of fragile wildlife and vegetation, e.g. sheep and goats, by mechanized use – helicopters
- Protecting wilderness through access limitations

Education

- Spiritual connection with the land ‘Stikine as temple’
- Instil conservation ethic among users and commercial operators not to over use the land
- Instil outdoor ethic of “light on the land”
- Parks are for future generations as well as the present, it is a heritage that we pass on

Issues

Access

Motorized

- air – commercial helicopter
- Jet boat/jetski – noise and numbers
- Motorboat use creating impacts on wildlife and other river users, and perhaps being used by poachers
- Private use of airplanes in the park
- Use of snowmobiles in the protected areas
- The location and type of roads to provide access to protected areas, but this access creates impacts on protected area values
- Roads outside and next to the protected areas raises potential environmental impacts
- Snowmobile access to the protected areas creating impacts on wildlife

Trails

- Location, type and quality of trail causing unforeseen levels of use and damage to the environment and cultural heritage values

Commercial and Public Recreation

- BC Parks does not understand the best level for commercial use
- Too many commercial structures in the protected areas that are incompatible with their surroundings
- Should new commercial recreational facilities be allowed to be built inside the park, or should commercial operators be allowed to build small high quality facilities within the protected areas
- What is an appropriate level of infrastructure in parks and how do applications for new structures get dealt with?
- Tahltan Nation wants to get back to an association with the Stikine Country Protected Areas and trapping cabins are part of this return
- Enforcement is a problem for these protected areas because of not enough staff and funding

Education

- Damage to habitats and disturbance of protected area values caused by uninformed park visitors
- Need a light on the ground ethic
- Commercial operators need to orient their clients in proper conduct

SECTION III – SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

STIKINE COUNTRY PROTECTED AREA’S PLANNING PROCESS

The issues presented below have been distilled from the public comments that have been presented in the above sections. These are issues that will need to be dealt with as the planning process progresses. For more detail on what the range of opinion was on these issues, see the results of the questionnaire and the issues section for each workshop.

Ecosystem Management

What policies should be in place to ensure the ecological integrity and the ecological processes, such as the predator/prey systems, of the protected areas are maintained?

What should the policy be with respect to natural disturbances, such as fire and windthrow, and ecosystem management?

What forms of direct management action, if any, are appropriate to use within the protected areas?

How will it be determined when it is appropriate to take these direct management actions?

What forms of indirect management, such as closures to consumptive or recreational use of a resource, are appropriate, and where?

Fish, Wildlife and Plants

What methods should be used to manage the harvesting of fish and wildlife?

What should the policy be with respect to using traditional knowledge in the management of fish, wildlife and plants?

Access

General

Is there a need to set acceptable levels of impact or levels of use; if so how are these determined?

What should the approach be regarding potential future access issues that are not presently developed, i.e. rail development, new mining or forestry roads etc.?

How should BC Parks plan for potential increases in visitor use of the protected areas?

Air

What should the policy be with respect to floatplane, wheeled plane and helicopter use and access, including commercial use and access, in protected areas be?

What should the policy be with respect to heli-hiking and heli-skiing?

What should the policy be regarding the landing of aircraft on land areas and lakes, and sightseeing tours that may impact park values?

Water

What should the policy be with respect to jetboat, jetski, canoe, kayak and raft use and access, including commercial use and access, of lakes and rivers in protected areas be?

Snowmobiles

What should the policy be with respect to snowmobile use and access?

Is snowmobile use, including commercial use, acceptable in the protected areas; if so, where and at what level of use?

Road

Is the current level of road access adequate?

What should the policy of BC Parks be when consulting with other agencies regarding potential future roads, if they are being built outside the protected areas for other purposes?

Trails

What should the policy be with respect to trail use and access?

What should the policy be regarding types of use on trails?

What should the policy be regarding new trails and the maintenance of existing trails?

Recreation

What should the policy be with respect to recreational activities and levels of use in the protected areas?

Should there be any restrictions on the type of recreational activities; if so on which activities?

What policies should be in place to ensure the maintenance of high quality wilderness recreation experiences?

Commercial Recreation

What should the policy be with respect to the types of commercial activities permitted in the protected areas?

What should the policy be with respect to the level of commercial activity in the protected areas?

Infrastructure

What should the policy be regarding infrastructure (i.e. buildings, trails, wharfs etc.), either public or commercial, that exists or is proposed in the future for construction within the protected areas?

Local Communities

How should BC Parks ensure the local communities are a part of the park management process and benefit, socially and economically, from having the protected areas in the region?

Cultural Heritage

How should cultural values, such as artifacts and buildings, be managed to protect them from removal and damage?

Should heritage trails such as the Telegraph Trail and the Hyland Post Trail be maintained for their historic value?

Protected Area Management

How should the protected areas be zoned within the BC Parks zoning framework, to best manage for park values?

What should the policy be regarding Gladys Lake Ecological Reserve and the trails and cabin within this reserve?

Research and Inventory

What should the policy be with respect to research and inventory priorities in the protected areas?

Education

What should the policy be with respect to providing education about natural and cultural history, backcountry ethics, to visitors in the front- and back-country protected areas?

Should BC Parks be involved in education programs outside of the protected areas, i.e. schools, interpretation centres?

Front-Country Protected Areas

What should the policy be regarding the development of new infrastructure in front-country parks?