

A Component of British Columbia's
Land Use Strategy

Bulkley Land and Resource Management Plan

SUMMARY

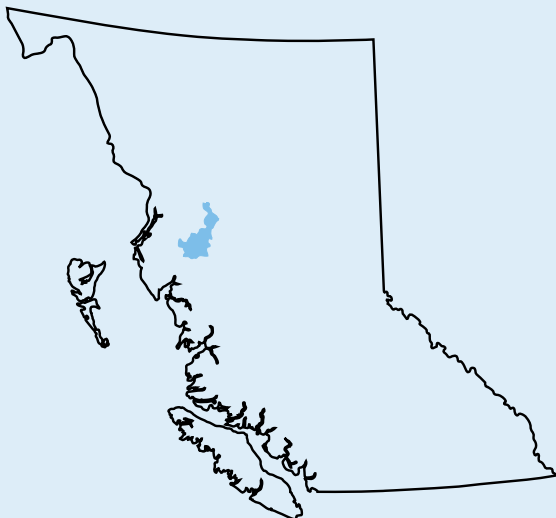
March, 1998

Introduction

In March 1998, the government of British Columbia took another step towards land-use certainty and economic stability. The Ministers of Environment, Lands and Parks; Employment and Investment; and Forests gave final approval to the Bulkley Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP). Their endorsement was based upon an approval-in-principle in June 1997 of the Consensus Management Direction report developed by the local Community Resources Board. The final plan, which is the fourth LRMP completed in the province, provides broad direction for sustainable use of Crown land and resources. It creates new protected areas and guides a wide variety of resource management programs and activities. These include forest development planning under the Forest Practices Code.

Plan Area

The Bulkley Plan Area covers 760,000 hectares. It operates within the Bulkley portion of the Bulkley/Cassiar Forest District in west-central BC. About 11,500 people live in the communities of Smithers, Telkwa and Moricetown within the Plan Area. Forestry, mining, tourism, agriculture and the public sector form the economic base in the area. Forestry is the most dominant industry, accounting for 23 per cent of the area's employment.



Planning Table

The Bulkley LRMP is the direct result of six years of hard work and dedication from the Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board. The board is made up of twelve local residents, each with a unique perspective, who developed a common vision of future land use for the area:

Harry Kruisselbrink, *semi-retired*
Mary Ellen Graham, *businesswoman*
Sybille Haeussler, *forest ecologist*
Daryl Hanson, *geologist*
Gary Hanson, *forester, woodlot owner*
Tim Toman, *sheep farmer, retired dentist*
Marion Knoerr, *beef producer*
Wes Giesbrecht, *teacher, log house builder*
Harold Reedy, *forest technology instructor*
Dave Hatler, *biologist, hunter, trapper*
Dave Hooper, *guide outfitter*
Shelley Becker, *owner of Alpine Cedar Products*

The board was assisted by local government agencies and the community. Respect and recognition of different viewpoints were key operating principles at the planning table. This co-operative approach will extend to an open, annual review that will monitor and report on plan implementation.

Plan Highlights

The Bulkley LRMP provides general management direction on 11 sets of resource values or activities. These are: biodiversity; access; timber; water quality; fish and wildlife habitat; visual quality; range; subsurface resources; outdoor recreation and tourism; cultural heritage resources; and future planning processes.

Six categories of Resource Management Zones (RMZ) in the Bulkley Plan Area have been allocated:

- Protected
- Special Management 1
- Special Management 2
- Integrated Resource Management
- Agriculture/Wildlife
- Settlement

Each RMZ contains specific resource values and management objectives that set out the types of activities and level of intensity permitted. There are also about 52,000 hectares of private land and Indian Reserves within the Plan Area that the LRMP does not affect.

Protected

(43,433 hectares or 5.71% of Plan Area)

Eight new protected areas have been created, increasing the total amount in the Plan Area by 1.44%.

Goal 1 sites protect viable, representative examples of the natural diversity of the province. They include:

The Babine Mountain Park and Driftwood Extension.

- The **Babine Mountain Park** portion has a history of mining activity, a trail network and is a popular area for local residents. The subalpine/alpine settings support a variety of summer and winter activities, and opportunities for wildlife viewing on 30,087 hectares. Mountain goat habitat is excellent.
- The **Driftwood Extension** portion is a popular wilderness recreation area, covering about 6,424 hectares.

The **Babine River Corridor** covers approximately 5,723 hectares. It contains important grizzly bear habitat and complements an adjoining protected area in the Kispiox LRMP Plan Area. Guidelines outlined in the *Babine River Interim Local Resource Use Plan* will be followed for the corridor and the surrounding Special Management Zone 2 buffer.

Goal 2 sites protect outstanding natural, recreational and cultural features. They include:

- Burnt Cabin Bog (646 ha)
- Boulder Creek (48 ha)
- Netalzul Meadow and Waterfall (339 ha)
- Nilkitkwa Lake Sites (8 ha)
- Rainbow Alley (96 ha)
- Call Lake (62 ha)

Special Management 1

(60,000 ha or 8% of Plan Area)

Manages for the conservation of one or more resource values such as habitat, scenery and recreation. Removal of trees is permitted only where required for approved mining exploration and development purposes, including access. It is also permitted for other activities consistent with objectives and specific direction for management stated in each of the planning units and sub-units.

Special Management 2

(97,000 ha or 13% of Plan Area)

Manages for the conservation of one or more resource values such as habitat, scenery and recreation. It enables industrial activity to occur where impacts on resource values are minimized.

Integrated Resource Management

(500,000 ha or 66% of Plan Area)

Manages to integrate a wide array of resource values and activities with equal consideration. Examples include: timber harvesting; mining; grazing; tourism; wildlife; and recreation.

Settlement

(8,000 ha or 1% of Plan Area)

Manages Crown land surrounding the communities of Smithers and Telkwa for residential, commercial and industrial development. It is primarily planned and managed by local governments under the *Municipal Act*.

Agriculture/Wildlife

(13,000 ha or 2% of Plan Area)

Manages for agricultural and wildlife values on Crown land. It will ensure that land with agricultural potential is retained for the future, subject to wildlife considerations. Land near the IRM boundary that has marginal agricultural potential, but good wildlife forage capability, is excluded.

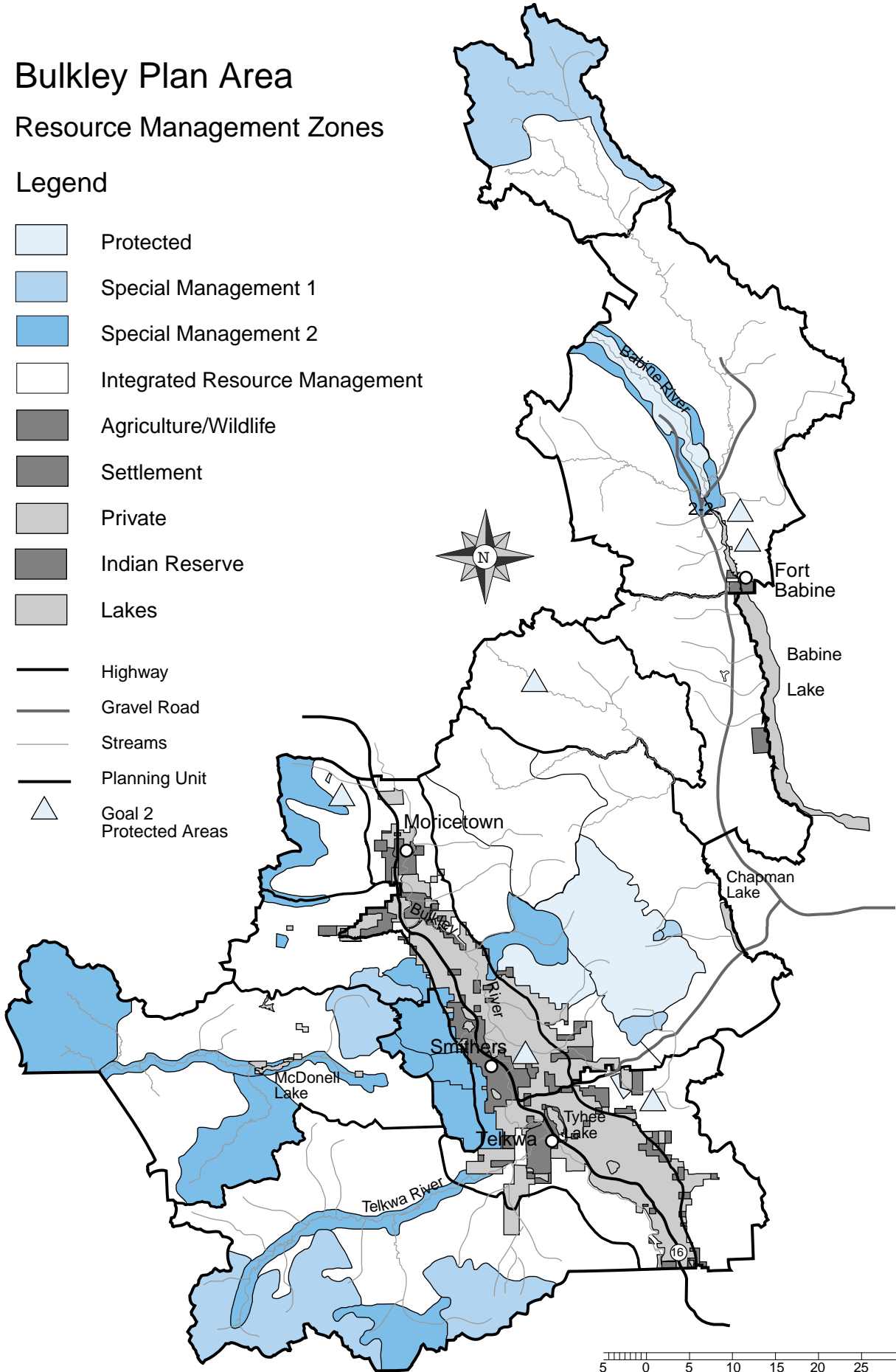
The above broad land use categories have been further divided where specific management objectives and strategies apply.

Bulkley Plan Area

Resource Management Zones

Legend

- Protected
- Special Management 1
- Special Management 2
- Integrated Resource Management
- Agriculture/Wildlife
- Settlement
- Private
- Indian Reserve
- Lakes
- Highway
- Gravel Road
- Streams
- Planning Unit
- Goal 2 Protected Areas



First Nations

Local First Nations expressed interest in the process, but chose not to participate. This was due in part to concerns that participation may compromise land claims and treaty negotiations. It was also due to staffing and resource constraints. Although First Nations were not formally represented at the planning table, aboriginal archaeological, cultural and heritage values were endorsed by all of the LRMP participants. First Nations were also kept aware of the LRMP's progress through personal contact, formal communications and LRMP updates.

Specific Strategies

Ecosystem Network

The Ecosystem Network extends throughout the Bulkley Plan Area. It maintains Core Ecosystems and links them to important wildlife and sensitive streamside areas (Landscape Corridors). Management strategies range from no timber extraction to modified harvesting techniques. The network does not have a legislated boundary. Its borders are deliberately flexible to allow adjustment by the Forest District Manager and the designated Environment official as needed.

Core Ecosystems provide a representative cross-section of ecosystems, retain representative samples of old growth forest, and provide interior forest conditions. Commercial harvesting will only occur where needed to protect the integrity and function of the ecosystem. Mineral exploration and development are acceptable.

Landscape Corridors maintain connectivity within the landscape, reduce habitat fragmentation, permit movement and dispersal of plant and animal species, and maintain forests dominated by mature tree cover. Only modified commercial harvesting practices that retain a high degree of forest cover are permitted.

Enhanced Timber Development Areas

Within the Integrated Resource Management Zone are some highly productive sites on gentle slopes which have low conflict with other values or uses. These Enhanced Timber Development Areas will be managed to increase timber yields and improve wood quality through intensive silviculture practices, while providing ongoing employment for forest workers.

Resource Impacts

Timber Supply: Requirements of the Forest Practices Code will lead to a reduction in the timber supply over the next two decades. Implementing the Bulkley LRMP will have no immediate impact, but will cause an additional reduction in timber supply of up to 9.6 per cent over the long term. The use of partial cutting within Landscape Corridors could reduce this impact to 5.3 per cent in the long term.

Mining: A key feature of the LRMP is the certainty it provides to land use for exploration and mining.

Economy: The Bulkley LRMP is expected to have a small negative impact on the forest and mining industries over the long term. Agriculture, tourism, fisheries and trapping will benefit from LRMP implementation.

Next Steps

The final plan will be implemented and monitored with assistance from the Community Resources Board and the public. More detailed land use planning will occur through the Landscape Unit planning process.

The IAMC (Inter-Agency Management Committee) may re-draft the LRMP if there have been enough major amendments made, and new issues have emerged by the eighth year of the LRMP. The IAMC would then establish the Terms of Reference for this public involvement process.



Copies of the Bulkley LRMP are available at:

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3333 Tatlow Road
Bag 6000
Smithers, BC V0J 2N0
Phone: (250) 847-6300
Fax: (250) 847-6353

E-mail: <http://www.luco.gov.bc.ca/slupinbc/bulkley/home.htm>