

8.3 Access Indicator 2. Recreational Access, Focusing on Backcountry or Wilderness Experiences

8.3.1 Measure:

The changing proportion of total TSA area classed as “Primitive”, “Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized” and “Semi-Primitive Motorized” through Recreation Opportunity Spectrum mapping.

[Future measure – status of “budget” of more primitive ROS categories]

8.3.2 Results and Discussion:

The BC Ministry of Forests uses the Recreation Opportunities Spectrum (ROS) classification system to measure how recreation experiences in a given area may vary depending on its remoteness, naturalness and potential for human contact.

ROS classes include:

- **Primitive (P):** more than 8 km from a road, more than 5000 ha in area, no motorized use, very high naturalness.
- **Semi-Primitive non-motorized (SPNM):** more than 1km from a road, more than 1000ha, very little motorized use, few human encounters.
- **Semi-Primitive motorized (SPM):** more than 1km from road, more than 1000ha, low motorized use, few human encounters.
- **Roaded Natural:** up to 1km from road, moderate motorized use, moderate chance of meeting others.
- **Roaded Modified:** high level motorized use, low degree naturalness, high chance of meeting others.
- **Rural:** farmland, settlement patterns.

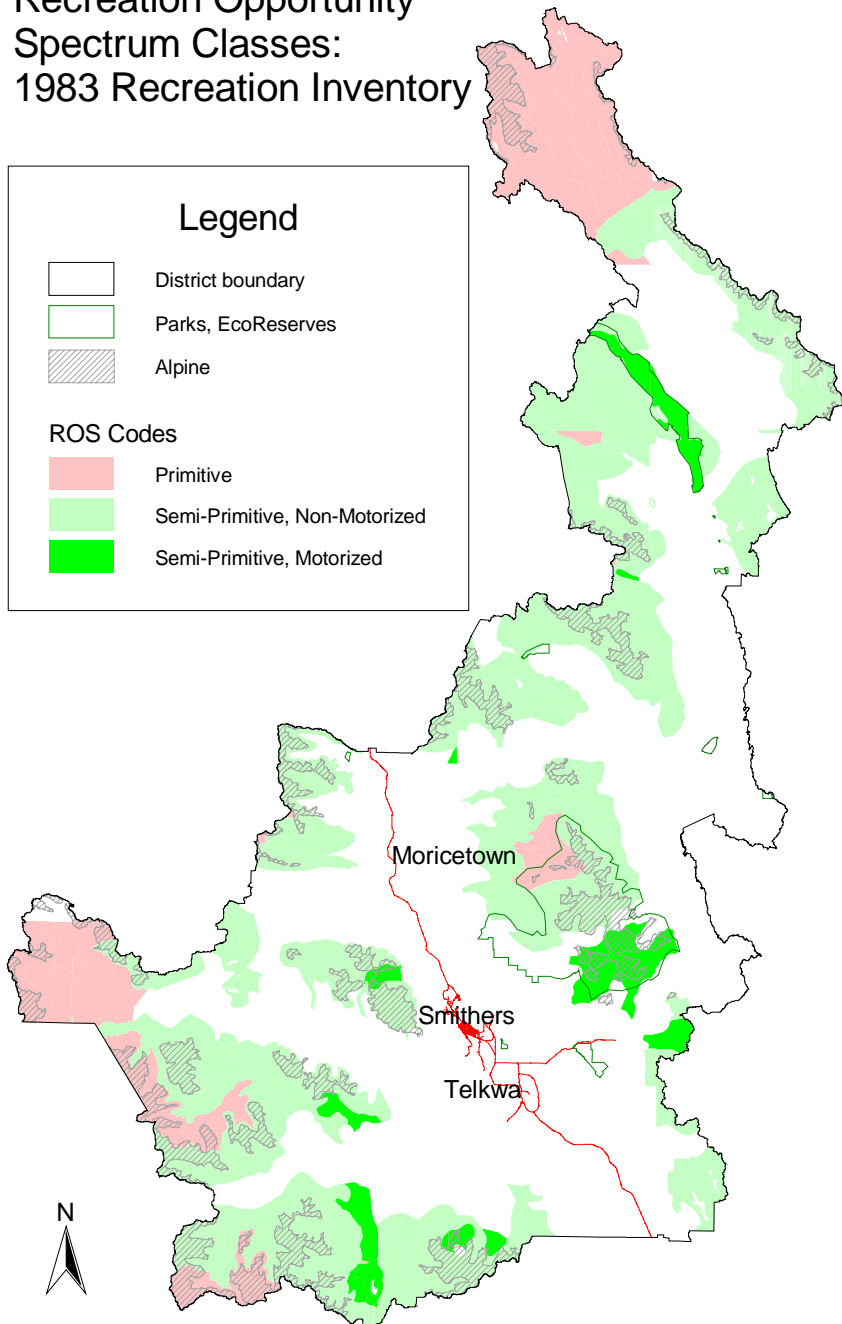
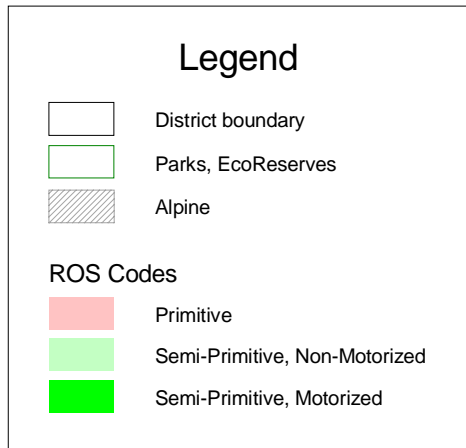
Because this indicator stresses backcountry or wilderness experiences, focus is placed on the changing proportion of the TSA in the first three ROS classes (i.e. P, SPNM and SPM). Table 15 and Figure 39 below show the results of a comparison between 1983 ROS mapping and a 2002 ROS modelling exercise.

Table 15 – TSA Area by ROS Class; 1983 and 2002 ROS Mapping

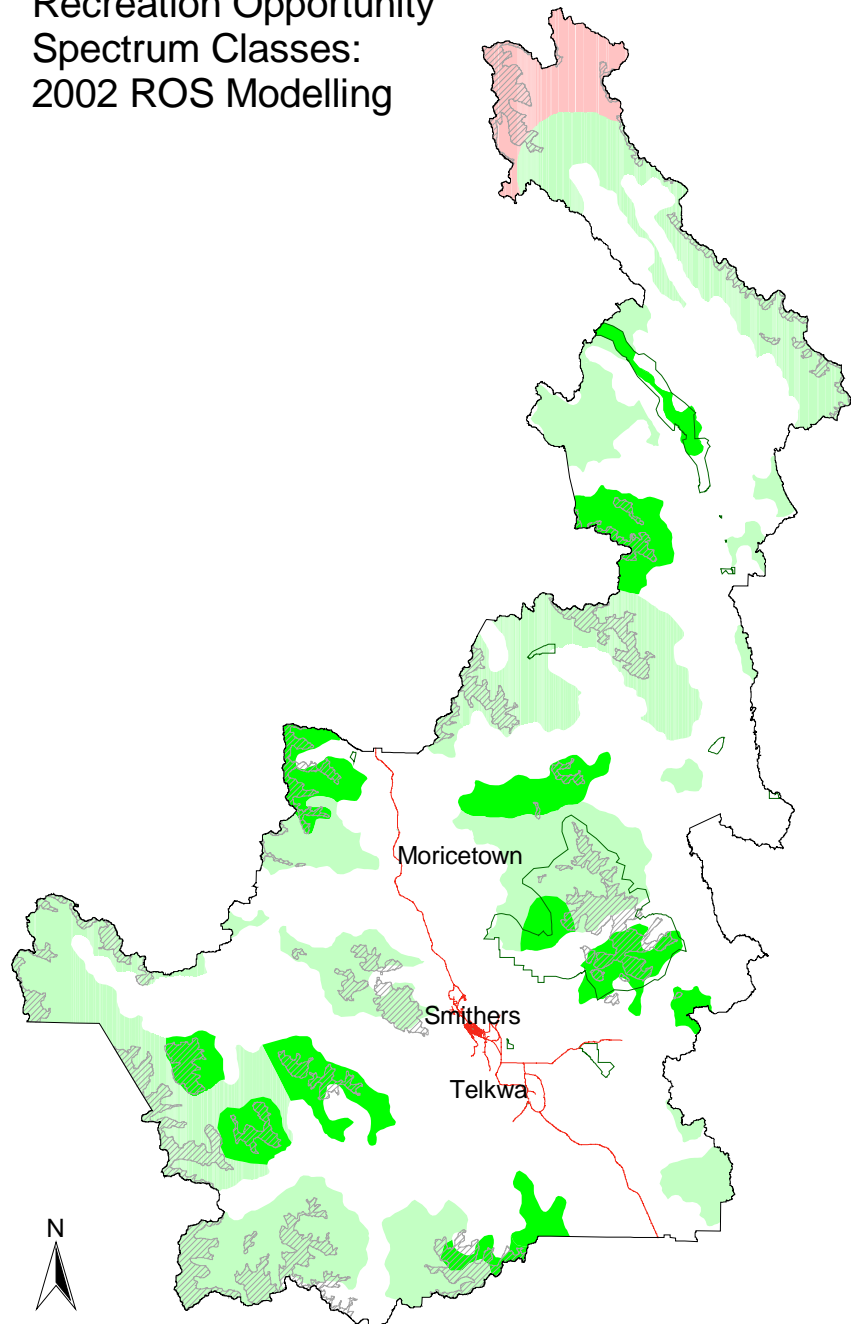
Year	ROS Class	Area	% of Total TSA area	Sum of %, P, SPNM and SPM
1983	Primitive	82,867	11	48
	Semi-Primitive, Non-Motorized	260,332	34	
	Semi-Primitive, Motorized	25,818	3	
2002	Primitive	20,427	3	44
	Semi-Primitive, Non-Motorized	238,351	31	
	Semi-Primitive, Motorized	74,025	10	

Figure 39 – ROS Comparison: 1983 versus 2002

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Classes: 1983 Recreation Inventory



Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Classes: 2002 ROS Modelling



The table and figure highlight a loss in Primitive ROS, and a trend towards loss of area in the first three, most primitive ROS classes. Thus the potential to experience a wilderness or backcountry setting has gradually decreased over time as a result of increased access development.

The LRMP did not target a proportion of the TSA it is desirable to keep in a wilderness or backcountry setting. It is clear that road development is required to access timber, mineral and range resources, and recreational destinations, and a loss of primitive settings is inherent with development. Recreational resource users concerned with loss of the more primitive ROS categories are offset by others that appreciate increased access to recreational destinations.

However, the MOF recognizes that wilderness areas have a value in themselves regardless of the interests of user groups. Proposed actions to maintain a cross-section of lakes in a primitive or semi-primitive setting (see Indicator 3 – Wilderness Lakes) partly address this issue.

8.3.3 Recommendations

MSRM to develop a target for maintaining primitive and semi-primitive ROS, which would include ROS “budget” options (e.g. allowing ROS buy-back to a more primitive state through road rehabilitation).

8.3.4 Data Sources:

- ROS from 1983 Recreation Inventory (carried on the 1997 FC1 “f_rec” layer - (Northwest Data Centre, Bulkley District dataset)
- 1999 update FC1 road network, supplemented with Bulkley BCTS Road ledger (2002 update) GPS’d roads and additional new roads identified in PIR’s 2000-2009 Forest Development Plan.
- RAMP trails (trail designations were considered in ROS selection for given areas)
- New Parks coverage
- Alpine BEC zone (using TBEC)