

ORIGINAL PURPOSE To preserve extensive and diverse alpine-subalpine ecosystems in an isolated massif of volcanic origin

OVERVIEW

Date established:	12 June 1975	Location:	35 km N of Anahim Lake,
ORC #:	3064		Chilcotin district
Map number :	93 C/14	Latitude:	52°47'N
		Longitude:	125°17'W

Total Area:	2,746 ha	Elevation:	1,630-2,408 m
Land:	2,743 ha		
Lake:	3 ha		

Access: Access by foot or horseback

Biogeoclimatic Zones: Engelmann-Spruce – Subalpine Fir (ESSF); Boreal-Altai Fescue Alpine (BAFA)
Biogeoclimatic Variants: ESSFxv1 West Chilcotin Very Dry Very Cold; BAFAunp Undifferentiated Parkland
Ecosection: Western Chilcotin Upland
Region: Cariboo
Management Area: North Chilcotin

COMPOSITION

Physical: The Ilgachuz Range is one of three distinct mountain masses which lie within the confines of the Fraser Plateau in the Anahim Lake area. All were formed by shield volcanoes of Miocene age which built up dome-like piles of lava and fragmented rock. Volcanic peaks, rugged scarps and extensive talus slopes characterize the southwestern half of the reserve, while gently sloping lava flows underlie much of its northeastern area. Although these mountains have been dissected by stream erosion and molded by glaciers, their original shape has been largely preserved. Alpine features such as patterned ground, boulder stripes and solifluction lobes are present.

Biological: About two-thirds of the reserve is in the alpine zone, which consists of both vegetated areas and bare rock. Forested land, dominated by Subalpine fir, is largely restricted to the lower valley slopes. A great variety of herbaceous communities is present in this topographically diverse area. Well-drained alluvial sites at low elevation support Altai fescue-mountain-avens or willow-fescue associations. In wet areas along Blue Canyon Creek one finds cotton-grass-sedge bog, sedge-bluejoint meadow and scrub birch-sedge shrubland. Seepage slopes and wet meadows near timberline have lush wildflower communities dominated by arrowleaved groundsel and containing red paintbrush, Indian hellebore, subalpine daisy and Sitka valerian. Black alpine sedge stands occur in late snowmelt sites. At timberline a community dominated by Altai fescue and mountain sage occurs on fairly level, dry sites, while white and pink mountain-heather occupy slopes between patches of stunted subalpine fir. The most extensive alpine community, common on the rather arid gentle northeast slope of Tundra Mountain, is dominated by Altai fescue, white mountain-avens, netted

willow and lichens.

The fauna has not been surveyed, but the Ilgachuz Range has high capability habitat for caribou, moose and mountain goats.

MANAGEMENT CONCERNS

SIGNIFICANT SPECIES	BC LIST STATUS	COSEWIC STATUS	CF PRIORITY
Caribou (boreal pop. 14)	Red listed	Threatened (2002)	1
Iceland koenigia			4
milky draba	Blue listed		3
Payson's draba			4

THREATS

Climate Change: Alpine and subalpine areas are projected to shift higher in elevation as temperatures continue to warm. Their distribution may be reduced as they are displaced by forested systems, resulting in habitat loss and the loss of some populations of alpine species. Species that occur in this reserve reaching their northernmost distribution may continue to migrate further north as conditions change, whereas those that reach their southernmost distribution may cease to occupy this reserve area.

RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

The reserve is an area of biogeographic interest since many plants and some animals reach their northernmost or southernmost limits here. This would be a good area to characterize now with a baseline survey and repeat at intervals to record the impacts of climate change.

SCIENTIFIC NAMES OF SPECIES MENTIONED IN THE ILGACHUZ RANGE ER ACCOUNT

Flora

- birch, scrub (*Betula nana*)
- cotton-grass, narrow leaved, (*Eriophorum angustifolium*)
- daisy, subalpine (*Erigeron peregrinus*)
- draba, milky (*Draba lacteal*)
- draba, Payson's (*Draba paysonii*)
- fescue, Altai (*Festuca altaica*)
- fir, subalpine (*Abies lasiocarpa* var. *lasiocarpa*)
- groundsel, arrow-leaved (*Senecio triangularis*)
- hellebore, Indian (*Veratrum viride*)
- koenigia, Iceland (*Koenigia islandica*)
- mountain-avens, white (*Dryas octopetala*)
- mountain-heather, pink (*Phyllodoce empetriformis*)
- mountain-heather, white (*Cassiope mertensiana* var. *mertensiana*)
- paintbrush, scarlet (*Castilleja miniata*)
- reedgrass, bluejoint (*Calamagrostis canadensis*)
- sagewort, mountain (*Artemisia norvegica* ssp. *saxatilis*)
- sedge, black alpine (*Carex nigricans*)

valerian, Sitka (*Valeriana sitchensis*)
willow, net-veined (*Salix reticulata*)

Fauna

Caribou (boreal population) (*Rangifer tarandus* pop. 14)
Goat, Mountain (*Oreamnos americanus*)
Moose (*Alces americanus*)