



Province of
British Columbia

Ministry of
Lands and Parks
VICTORIA, B.C.

ME

Klaskish River

Ref. No:

423

ECOLOGICAL RESERVES COLLECTION
GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
VICTORIA, B.C.
V8V 1X4

Mr. Mel Turner
Manager
Planning and Conservation
South Coast Region

Date: 91 06 -22
File: ~~6-6-3-558~~
3-10-43-7

Re: Proposed Expansion of Klaskish River Ecological Reserve

Further to what we discussed following our field inspection of this area, I would like to summarize my observations and recommendations.

The Minister of Forest's news release on old-growth forest deferrals (May 10, 1991) states under the heading of "Klaskish/East Creek" that B.C. Parks will assess the feasibility of expanding the existing Klaskish Ecological Reserve to include old growth alluvial forests.

Our field assessment confirmed the conclusion that can also be drawn from forest cover map and air photo information, namely that typical alluvial forests are absent from the lower part of the Klaskish drainage. This is not only borne out by the preponderance of western hemlock and the low density and poor quality of Sitka spruce, but also by the absence of characteristic floodplain undergrowth species such as the following, especially in the potential expansion area in the two kilometers upstream from the existing reserve:

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| stink currant | <u>Ribes bracteosum</u> |
| lady fern | <u>Athyrium filix-femina</u> |
| youth-on-age | <u>Tolmiea menziesii</u> |
| stream violet | <u>Viola glabella</u> |
| Siberian miner's lettuce | <u>Montia sibirica</u> |
| false bugbane | <u>Trautvetteria caroliniensis</u> |
| enchanter's nightshade | <u>Circaea alpina</u> |
| Cooley's hedge nettle | <u>Stachys cooleyae</u> |
| three-flowered bedstraw | <u>Galium triflorum</u> |
| nodding trisetum | <u>Trisetum cernuum</u> |
| bearded fescue | <u>Festuca subulata</u> |
| maidenhair fern | <u>Adiantum pedatum</u> |
| oak fern | <u>Gymnocarpium dryopteris</u> |
| and bryophytes, such as | <u>Conocephalum conicum</u> |
| | <u>Pellia neesiana</u> |
| | <u>Plagiochila asplenioides</u> |
| | <u>Mnium insigne</u> |
| | <u>Stokesiella praelonga</u> |

The forests that are found in the existing reserve are closer to an alluvial species combination and of a higher species

RdskC

diversity than those examined north of the present boundary. The north boundary is therefore well chosen.

Restricted Sitka spruce stands that may be more typical alluvial forests are shown on forest cover maps and air photographs about 2.25 and 4.5 kilometers upstream from the north boundary of the existing reserve where tributaries enter the Klaskish River.

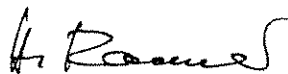
An expansion of the reserve to increase the representation of alluvial old growth forest would therefore have to be very substantial, with the area of actual alluvial forest being very small as compared to the total expansion area. Alternatively, two separate "satellite" reserves could be added. But these would almost certainly be subject to blowdown upon being exposed by surrounding logging.

The main focus of the reserve at this point is the estuary. The forested portion functions primarily as a buffer between the estuary and future harvested and roaded areas. This buffer would not prevent hydrological changes, including sedimentation and erosion caused by up-stream development, even if it was quadrupled in area. In fact, the hydrological buffer function of the forested part is not likely to be improved by enlargement of the reserve, short of including the majority of the entire drainage.

In addition to being a poor example of alluvial forest, a large ecological reserve in the Klaskish drainage would quite likely decrease the chances of protecting more significant forest values elsewhere in the vicinity.

In this situation, I would recommend that other still intact watersheds, including Nasparti and Power Rivers, be examined for alluvial forest values before a course of action is pursued on the Klaskish.

From maps, air photos, and our brief visit on August 21 it appears that forests in the East Creek drainage are not much different from those in the Klaskish. Even so, it would probably be preferable from an integrated system point of view to protect part or all of the East Creek drainage, rather than the Klaskish, because the former is more contiguous with the Brooks Peninsula Recreation Area.



H. Roemer
A/Ecological Reserve Planner

cc: Mr. Derek Thompson

RdskC