

ORIGINAL PURPOSE To establish a research area containing a variety of communities in the Boreal White and Black Spruce Zone.

OVERVIEW

Date established:	6 Feb. 1975	Location:	32 km W of Lower Post; 2.5 km W of Highway 37
ORC #:	3058	Latitude:	59°52'N
Map number:	104 p (1:250,000)	Longitude:	129°14'W

Total Area:	965 ha	Elevation:	855-975 m
Land:	917 ha		
Lake:	48		

Access: Access via dirt road west from Highway 37 about 12.5 km south of the Yukon border.

Biogeodimatic Zone: Boreal White and Black Spruce (BWBS)
Biogeodimatic Variant: BWBSdk2 Liard Dry Cool
Ecosection: Liard Plain
Region: Skeena
Management Area: Stikine

COMPOSITION

Physical: The reserve lies on a plain of low relief in the Liard River drainage. Micro-relief is provided by many glacial features, oriented in an east-west direction, including eskers, drumlins and morainal landforms. These show prominently on air photos. The present surface is largely the product of glacial processes, and post-glacial erosion is seen only in a few meters of down-cutting by small streams. Two lakes and several wetlands are present.

Biological: A 30,500 ha fire (R90093) burned the eastern 65% of the reserve in August 2010.

Despite having little elevational relief, the reserve displays a variety of habitats. This is attributable to various slope exposures on landforms such as eskers, an array of moisture conditions from lakeshores to gravely drumlins, and the historical occurrence of wildfire.

Treeless wetlands include sedge-dominated marshes and fens, as well as seepage areas dominated by northern golden-saxifrage, far-northern buttercup, and aquatic mosses. Two tamarack-scrub birch-willow types are present, one in fen situations associated with water sedge, the other in less saturated environments having ground cover of red bearberry and moss. Black spruce bog forest, characterized by Labrador tea, cloudberry, red bearberry, and moss is also present.

Upland forest communities occur in a complex mosaic. Typical white spruce stands have ground cover dominated by lingonberry and moss while wetter sites have those species plus some black spruce, scrub birch, and Labrador tea. Lodgepole pine woods occur on well-drained eskers and drumlins. In the driest sites the typical association is one of pine, Bebb's willow, arctic lupine, and Altai fescue; in other

sites the pine is mixed with white spruce and understory representatives are arctic lupine and mosses.

Mammals or their sign noted here include Moose, Wolf, Black Bear, American Marten, Snowshoe Hare, and Red Squirrel. Willows have been heavily browsed by Moose. Among birds, Spruce Grouse, Gray Jay, Three-toed Woodpecker, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Dark-eyed Junco, and Pine Siskin have been recorded.

MANAGEMENT CONCERNS

SIGNIFICANT SPECIES None listed

THREATS

Climate Change: The changing climatic conditions, including water and surface temperatures, precipitation, and disturbance regimes may reduce the diversity for which this reserve was designated. Novel conditions may favour some species over others, altering the community composition depending on adaptive responses of various organisms. This diversity, though, is an advantage in the face of climate change, as it makes the entire ecosystem more resilient and contributes to its viability.

Harvest: Local firewood collection and cutting occurs in the reserve.

Transportation corridor: Industrial road cuts through the reserve. Traffic disrupts wildlife.

SCIENTIFIC NAMES OF SPECIES MENTIONED IN THE BLUE/DEASE RIVERS ER ACCOUNT

Flora

bearberry, red fruit (*Arctostaphylos rubra*)
birch, scrub (*Betula nana*)
buttercup, far-northern (*Ranunculus hyperboreus*)
cloudberry (*Rubus chamaemorus*)
fescue, Altai (*Festuca altaica*)
Labrador tea (*Ledum groenlandicum*)
lingonberry (*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*)
lupine, arctic (*Lupinus arcticus*)
pine, lodgepole (*Pinus contorta*)
saxifrage, northern golden (*Chrysosplenium tetrandrum*)
sedges, (*Carex sp.*)
sedge, water (*Carex aquatilis*)
spruce, black (*Picea mariana*)
spruce, white (*Picea glauca*)
tamarack (*Latix laricina*)
willow (*Salix sp.*)
willow, Bebb's (*Salix bebbiana*)

Fauna

Bear, American Black (*Ursus americanus*)
Grouse, Spruce (*Falci pennis canadensis*)

Hare, Snowshoe (*Lepus americanus*)
Jay, Gray (*Perisoreus canadensis*)
Junco, Dark-eyed (*Junco hyemalis*)
Siskin, Pine (*Carduelis pinus*)
Marten (*Martes americana*)
Moose (*Alces americanus*)
Squirrel, Red (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*)
Warbler, Yellow-rumped (*Dendroica coronata*)
Wolf, Grey (*Canis lupus*)
Woodpecker (*Picoides dorsalis*)