

**Field Trip Report**  
**July 3, 2002**  
**Williams Creek Ecological Reserve**



**Report Prepared by: Tracy Ronmark**  
**Date: July 25, 2002**

Report Prepared By: Tracy Ronmark  
Date of Trip: July 3, 2002 (09:30h – 16:00h)

**In Attendance:**

Rosamund Pojar – Instructor, Naturalist, Smithers BC  
Jim Pojar – Research Ecologist, Prince Rupert Forest Region  
Karen McKeown – Research Technician – Prince Rupert Forest Region  
Dennis Horwood – Ecological Reserve Warden, Kitimat, BC  
Ben Sabal – Lakelse Area Supervisor, Skeena Region - Protected Areas Section  
Tracy Ronmark, Lakelse Area Ranger, Skeena Region - Protected Areas Section

**Map and Air Photo References**

NTS Map103-I/8 Chist Creek (1974) 1:50,000  
BC Forest Cover Map Series 1031.039 (1998) 1:20,000  
SCI Forest Development Plan 2001-2007 FL A16835 (2 map sheets) 1:20,000  
Air photos –  
30BCC 94075 No. 252 – 260  
30BCC 94075 No. 179 - 183

**Background**

**Access**

Access to Williams Creek Ecological Reserve is achieved by travelling south from Terrace on Old Lakelse Lake Road. Turn east on the Williams Creek Forest Service Road just north of the Williams Creek Bridge. Follow the road 15.5 kilometres to a fork (Br #700). Turn right (south); this road follows the western boundary of the reserve. There is a new forest service road (i.e. not on any development maps) about 1 kilometre down the Br#700 road. Turning left onto this new road will take you to the creek that is the northwest corner boundary of the ER. There are no formal trails or creek crossings into the ER.

**Location travelled in ER**

Crossed creek that is the west boundary of reserve. Travelled down slope (east) through forest to the southern end of the terraced wetlands in northwest corner of Ecological Reserve. (See air photo 30BCC 94075 No. 260) Travelled north through the wetland complexes and exited ER at the northwest corner boundary.

**List of Species**

*Flora – Communities and species*

- 1) *Salix sitchensis* – *Alnus sinuata*; riparian thickets along creek that forms west boundary of reserve
  - *Salix sitchensis* - Sitka willow
  - *Alnus sinuate* - Sitka alder
  - young *Picea sitchensis* – Sitka spruce

- *Epilobium latifolium* – broad-leaved willowherb
  - *Saxifraga nelsoniana* – heart-leaved saxifrage
  - *Romanzoffia sitchensis* – Sitka mistmaiden
  - *Calamagrostis canadensis* – bluejoint grass
  - *Equisetum arvense* – common horsetail
  - *Racomitrium canescens* – roadside rock moss
- 2) **Hw – Ba – *Vaccinium alaskaense* – *Rhytidiadelphus loreus***; fluvial terrace along creek; “high bench”
- *Tsuga heterophylla*, - western hemlock
  - *Abies amabilis* – amabilis (silver) fir
  - *Vaccinium alaskaense*, - Alaska blueberry
  - *V. ovalifolium* – oval-leaved blueberry
  - *Menziesia ferruginea* – false azalea
  - *Rubus pedatus* – five-leaved bramble
  - *Cornus Canadensis* - bunchberry
  - *Rhytidiadelphus loreus* – lanky moss
  - *Sphagnum girgensohnii* (lots in low spots) – white-toothed peat moss
- 3) **Ss – Hw – *Lysichiton***; skunk cabbage sites along drainage channels and on toe slopes
- *Picea sitchensis* – Sitka spruce
  - *Tsuga heterophylla* – Western hemlock
  - *Lysichiton americanum* – skunk cabbage
  - *Athyrium filix-femina* – Lady fern
  - *Mnium spp.* – Mnium mosses
  - *Sphagnum girgensohnii* - white-toothed peat moss
- 4) ***Carex limosa* – *Eriophorum angustifolium* – *Lysichiton americanum* - *Sphagnum***; slightly sloping poor fen, the first of several along this lower slope ending at Williams Creek
- *Kalmia occidentalis* – Western bog-laurel
  - *Ledum groenlandicum* - Labrador tea
  - *Vaccinium uliginosum* – bog blueberry
  - *Oxycoccus oxycoccos* – bog cranberry
  - some stunted *Tsuga mertensiana* – mountain hemlock
  - *Menyanthes trifoliata* (7) - buckbean
  - *Lysichiton americanum* (15) – skunk cabbage
  - *Tofieldia glutinosa* – sticky false asphodel
  - *Pedicularis parviflora* – small-flowered lousewort
  - *Coptis trifolia* – three-leaved goldthread
  - *C. asplenifolia* – fern-leaved goldthread
  - *Trientalis arctica* – Northern starflower
  - *Drosera anglica* – great sundew
  - *D. rotundifolia* – round-leaved sundew

- *Platanthera "hyperborea"* – green-flowered bog orchid
- *Leptarrhena pyrolifolia* – leatherleaf saxifrage
- *Carex limosa* (20) – shore sedge
- *C. livida* (3) – pale sedge
- *C. anthoxanthea* – yellow-flowered sedge
- *C. pauciflora* – few-flowered sedge
- *Eriophorum angustifolium* – narrow-leaved cotton-grass
- *Trichophorum cespitosum* – tufted clubrush
- *Sphagnum spp.* (60) – peat mosses

5) **Hw – Ba – *Vaccinium alaskaense* – *Rhytidiadelphus loreus* – *Hylocomium splendens***; zonal forest for CWHws2; Orthic Humo Ferric Podzol on morainal blanket

- *Tsuga heterophylla* – Western Hemlock
- *Abies amabilis* - Amabilis Fir
- Lots of advance regeneration of Hw & especially Ba; medium size Ba was ca 200 years old;
- rare big *Picea sitchensis* [Sitka spruce] in seepage draws dissecting the slope,
- *Vaccinium alaskaense* – Alaska blueberry
- *V. ovalifolium* - Oval-leaved blueberry
- *Menziesia ferruginea* – False azalea
- (*Oplopanax horridus*)- Devil's Club
- *Cornus Canadensis* - bunchberry
- *Rubus pedatus* – Five-leaved bramble
- *Gymnocarpium dryopteris* – oak fern
- *Rhytidiadelphus loreus* – lanky moss
- *Hylocomium splendens* – step moss
- *Rhizomnium glabrescens* – fan moss

6) ***Carex (limosa, sitchensis)* – *Eriophorum angustifolium* - *Sphagnum ?austinii***; sloping, terraced fens, rice paddy-like

- *Tsuga mertensiana* – Mountain hemlock
- *T. heterophylla* – Western hemlock
- (*Thuja plicata*) – Western red cedar
- ((*Pinus contorta contorta*) ) - Shore pine
- *Ledum groenlandicum* – Labrador tea
- *Andromeda polifolia* – bog rosemary
- *Kalmia occidentalis* – Western bog laurel
- *Vaccinium uliginosum* – bog blueberry
- *V. caespitosum* – dwarf blueberry
- *Oxycoccus oxycoccos* – bog cranberry
- ((*Malus fusca*)) [Pacific crab-apple]– edge of wetland
- *Pedicularis parviflora* – small-flowered lousewort
- *Tofieldia glutinosa* – sticky false asphodel

- *Trientalis arctica* – Northern starflower
- *Coptis trifolia* – three-leaved goldthread
- *C. asplenifolia* – fern-leaved goldthread
- *Lycopodiella inundata* – bog clubmoss
- *Fritillaria camschatcensis* – Northern rice root
- *Geum calthifolium* – Caltha-leaved avens
- *Platanthera dilatata* – White bog orchid
- *Sanguisorba sitchensis* – Sitka Burnet
- *Carex limosa*, Common Bog-sedge
- *C. sitchensis* - Sitka sedge
- *C. pauciflora*, - Few-flowered sedge
- *C. livida*, - Pale sedge
- *Eriophorum angustifolium*, Tall cottongrass
- *Rhynchospora alba* (much more in lower fen) - White beakrush
- *Trichophorum cespitosum* - Deergrass
- *Agrostis aequivallis* – Northern bentgrass
- *Sphagnum austinii* (*Sphagnum imbricatum*)
- *S. capillaceum* - small red peat moss
- *S. angustifolium* - common green peat moss
- *S. fuscum* - Rusty peat moss
- *Rhacomitrium lanuginosum* - hoary rock moss
- *Pleurozium schreberi* - red-stemmed feathermoss
- *Cladina portentosa* - coastal reindeer
- *C. rangiferinaiu* - reindeer lichen

\*Note: rare lichen *Acroscyphus sphaerophoroides* (bloodshot crab's-eye) occurs in this wetland; six or seven occurrences, on tips of snags of stunted hemlock, 3-5 m high.

7) ***Menyanthes trifoliata* – *Scheuchzeria palustris***; aquatic communities in shallow pools dammed by #6

*Menyanthes trifoliata* - buckbean

*Scheuchzeria palustris* - Scheuchzeria

*Comarum palustre* (*Potentilla palustris*) - marsh cinquefoil

*Nuphar polysepalum* - yellow pond-lily

*Eriophorum angustifolium* - tall cottongrass

*Rhynchospora alba* - white beakrush

*Carex utriculata* - yellow lake sedge

*Sphagnum lindbergii*

**Fauna**

Moose (tracks) *Alces alces*

Porcupine (feeding signs) *Erethizon dorsatum*

Black bear *Ursus americana*

Spotted frog *Rana pretiosa*

**Soil Type:**

Soil pit dug in forest uphill of wetlands:

Orthic humo ferric podzol – soils typical of mid elevation wet forest with thick (20-30cm) Ah, distinct grey (leached) layer over reddish-brown soils.

Soils were bouldery (morainal blanket), site was water shedding on a ~15% slope

**Surrounding Land Uses**

The area surrounding the Ecological Reserve is being harvested by Skeena Cellulose Inc. According to the Forest Development Plan (2001 – 2007):

**North Boundary**

- Cut blocks to the North of Williams Creek (P67083, P67085, P67086, P67093, and P67095) are less than 3m in green-up. These blocks are all visible from roads and from within the Ecological Reserve.
- There are a number of proposed and approved cut blocks to the north (uphill) of these aforementioned blocks on the north side of Williams Creek.

**East Boundary**

- Along the west side of the Reserve (opposite the unnamed creek that is the western boundary of the ER) are a few smaller cut blocks (P69721, P69726) at less than 3m green-up.
- There are a number of blocks approved to be harvested along this west boundary as well. Wildlife Tree Patches are interspersed among the proposed blocks.
- These blocks are visible from the road and from within the ER as well.

**South and East of the ER**

- The south east corner of the ER is high elevation alpine and glaciated area. A ridgeline travelling from this high alpine area runs diagonally towards the northwest corner of the ER separating the watersheds that drain Williams Creek to the North and to the unnamed creek to the west. There are no known anthropocentric uses of the land in this area.

**Photos**

1. Rosamund and Jim Pojar, Tracy Ronmark, Karen McKeown, Dennis Horwood at ER wetlands
2. Terraced Fens of Williams Creek Ecological Reserve
3. Terraced Fens of Williams Creek Ecological Reserve
4. Williams Creek Wetlands
5. Dennis Horwood, Ecological Reserve Warden

Photo Credits: Ben Sabal







