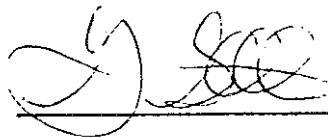


INTERIM
BABINE RIVER
COORDINATED ACCESS
MANAGEMENT PLAN
BULKLEY PORTION

APPROVED BY _____

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G.Stahl

District Manager

Bulkley Forest District

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Allan Edie', written over a horizontal line.

Allan Edie

Regional Manager Fish and Wildlife

B.C. Environment

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INTERIM

Draft

Babine River Co-ordinated Access Management Plan

Bulkley Portion

INTRODUCTION:

Competing land use interests in the Babine River Drainage created pressures that required an overall land use plan be formulated. This process began in 1988 jointly co-ordinated by the Forest Service and B.C.Environment. A Technical Advisory Committee (T.A.C.) was established to identify and resolve conflicting issues and develop options for this land base.

The overall management objective selected for the Babine Planning Unit #2 was the retention of the wilderness qualities along the river, while allowing access to the planning area for timber harvesting. This option would not prevent access to the river but would maintain the challenging aspects of access to the river. A number of recommendations accompanied the endorsement of option 2. These recommendations are outlined in the Ministry of Forests briefing note from May 15 1992.

The Options Report (appendix G) outlined objectives and methods for managing the fisheries, timber and wildlife values in the area. #14, develop and harvest timber in a manner which recognizes and limits the impact on non-timber resources, by implementing a co-ordinated access management plan. #10: manage access to the river corridor so wilderness values are maintained by implementing a co-ordinated access plan.

The Babine LRUP calls for a co-ordinated access management plan in order to manage access to the entire watershed. The impact on grizzly bear and recreational use is of particular concern. This CAMP is NOT mandated to deal with access within the Wilderness Zone identified in the Babine Local Resource Use Plan. Access within the wilderness zone will be addressed by a wilderness management plan.

**SUMMARY OF ACCESS CONTROL AS PER THE BABINE RIVER
L.R.U.P.**

Treatment Unit

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| 1. Riparian | No permanent roads within 150 m of treatment unit boundary |
| 2. F.E.N. | No new roads. Crossing is acceptable if no other option but reduce right of way width. |
| 2a Wilderness lakes | No new roads within 200 m of lake. |
| 3. LINKS | Crossing acceptable if no other option. <20m right of way. |
| 4. High Grizzly | No roads within 150 meters of treatment unit boundary. |
| 4a. High Grizzly | Minimize density of roads and restrict access in spring. |
| 5. Moderate Grizzly | Minimize road density |
| 6. I.R.M. | This is the best location for roads |

Management Units

Unit 1 Boucher Creek Wetlands

Two pass system of harvesting with 50 years between harvests

Remove road access when 1st pass harvesting and planting is complete.

Closure of main roads to public from May to November 15 each year.

Avoid high grizzly habitat or remove access.

Limit access to 20m R/W through high grizzly habitat

Prefer winter logging.

Unit 2 South of Nichyeskwa Creek

Vehicle Access Control Restrictions

100 meters of visual screening on main haul roads

Restrict access to high habitats by removing access May through July

Unit 3 North of Nichyeskwa Creek

Vehicle Access Control Restrictions

Closure of main roads to public from March to November.

Allow silviculture treatments and road construction but close public access.

Visual screening cover adjacent to roads in Aspen Maple units.

Winter logging only.

Special Management Area adjacent to the Babine River.

Vehicle Access Control Restrictions

Winter Logging Only

No permanent roads

Temporary access 300 meters back from wilderness zone boundary

Sight distances along roads limited to 300m.

ACCESS ISSUES

1. Public access.

ISSUE It is generally accepted that the most active users of the Babine area are local. They want access wherever possible, provided the resource is being protected. They will accept specific access restrictions to various habitats, but not general access control to large areas.

STRATEGY 1.1 Close vehicle access to high grizzly habitat areas and the Special Management Zone, using a variety of techniques as described in 4.0 Access Closure. Prevent any new access to the Wilderness Zone and close existing access to the Wilderness Zone except at the Babine River Bridge.

1.2 Close vehicle access to Management Unit 1 (Boucher Creek) 465 ROAD. (1.6 KM)

A. Activities such as road building or harvesting will be permitted on the 465 road during 1994. During that time a locked gate would be in place during inactive periods, at nights and on weekends. Normal harvesting and road building activities will not be permitted after Mar 31 1995. A road closure sign would also be required.

B. During silviculture and planting activities the gate will be locked. During inactive periods a rock barricade would be in place and the gate would be locked.

C. Remove the bridge at 1.6 on the Boucher creek road. when planting is complete, if deemed necessary. The bridge would only normally be put back in place, for protection activities.

459 ROAD Boucher Main

Construct only temporary roads into the Management Unit 1 from the Boucher Main. Remove access after harvesting by constructing tank traps or removing culverts at all of these access points. The Boucher main road will remain open.

1.3 Close vehicle access on all secondary roads into Management Unit 2. by placing tank traps or removing culverts into this unit. Temporary roads in high habitat areas will be deactivated permanently. The main access road through this area would be open.

1.4 Close vehicle access to Management Unit 3 (area north of Nichyeskwa Creek). Limit access to industrial access for harvesting, road construction, protection, research and silviculture activities from May 1 to November 1. A locked gate would be in place from May 1 to November 1 when the bridge span or deck is not removed. The locked gate must be monitored weekly to ensure it is working properly and fixed if not. Remove the bridge span during non active summer seasons. A road closure sign will also be required.

1.5 Limit construction of access to "Through" Riparian areas, FENS, High Grizzly Habitat (see 3.0) and Links (see Babine LRUP)

1.6 Where possible do not construct access in Treatment Unit 2a (wilderness lakes).

1.7 Licensees, contractors and subcontractors may hunt in Management Units 1,2,and 3, BUT are expected to do so only if they have, in a manner expected of the general public, gained access without using motorized vehicles.

1.8 Require that all logging, road building and silviculture contractors and subcontractors to locate camps outside the Management Units or use existing permanent camp facilities.

FUNDING Closing access to vehicles would be a Licensee responsibility paid for through the stumpage appraisal.

Authority for road closure would be made under Section 10 of the Forest Road and Trail Regulation.

Funding and re-establishment of access would be the responsibility of the party needing the access restored.

Gates must be monitored weekly and fixed by the party that installed the gate. If gates do not work effectively the Babine Monitoring Committee must chose other options that will effectively close the roads

2. Information Package and Gate.

ISSUE Users must be adequately informed why and where their vehicle access is restricted in order to make an access plan work effectively.

STRATEGY

INFORMATION PACKAGE Prepare a detailed information package that completely outlines the hunting and fishing regulations, and forest management strategies.

INFORMATION GATE Inform the users during the most sensitive times of year at an information gate. The gate person would, hand out literature, interview users, collect information, such as numbers, purpose in the area, licence plate numbers and entry and exit times. The information would be used to help improve management of the area and perhaps lead to conviction of violations of the Hunting and Fishing regulations. The information would be reported directly to the Conservation Office if necessary.

The gate would be manned on an irregular basis from May 1 to November 15, (approximately 50 hours per week). Hours would be concentrated in the higher use period from Aug. 15 to Oct. 15. The gate would not be locked. An unmanned information kiosk and parking space would be in place during the other times of the year with survey forms and information available. The gate would be located at 54 KM on the Nilkitkwa F.S.R.

FUNDING

The information gate, kiosk, shack, outhouse, and parking space would be constructed by the Forest Service. A radio and first aid kit would also be provided by the Forest Service.

The Licensees would be responsible for manning the gate and contract costs would be included in appraisals or as part of the roads users charge.

The information package would be jointly funded by the Forest Service and B.C.Environment. B.C. Environment would put together the package and the Forest Service would fund the printing. B.C. Environment would also put up the display in the Kiosk.

VEHICLE ACCESS CLOSURE ISSUES

3. Vehicle access closure to high grizzly habitat areas.

ISSUE Grizzly bears are sensitive to access to their habitat. They like to be left alone. Any contact with people increases the risk of a confrontation, which the bear inevitably loses.

STRATEGY 3.1 Establish access control points to areas designated for closing in advance.

3.2 Build good quality access roads to prevent soil erosion or as an acceptable alternative build roads on snow, without stump removal. Access must have narrow right of ways less than 20 meters.

3.3 Post road signs to advise users when they will be closed. Close roads after planting is complete, usually 1-2 years after harvest completion.

4. Vehicle access closure methods

ISSUE Can roads be closed effectively.

STRATEGY Method of closure would be determined based on the licensee's recommendation in the five year development plan which will require approval by the District Manager. The following options for physical barriers and signing are available.

PHYSICAL BARRIERS.

- 4A** Bridges sites are a preferred location for road access removal. A turn around should also be placed nearby and it should be well signed.

Cost of deck or span removal and replacement approximately \$1000.00

Cost of design and construction for removable span bridges is approximately 110% of the cost of single span bridges.

- 4B** For road side logging, piling debris back onto roads to deactivate spurs. Piles could be burnt if slash loads were excessive.

Cost approximately \$750.00/ha of road.

- 4C** Tank traps or culvert removal. A turnaround is required. Material from the trap should be placed on the near side of the trap from traffic as a safety measure. The excavation should be from right of way edge to right of way edge. Warning signs must be put up to warn vehicles of the danger.

Cost approximately \$300 for the trap and \$200 for a sign if required.

- 4D** Permanent deactivation or re contouring will only be required under special circumstances. These special circumstances would include repeated attempts to fill in tanks traps or where vegetation is required to stabilize the road.

Cost approximately \$10,000/km

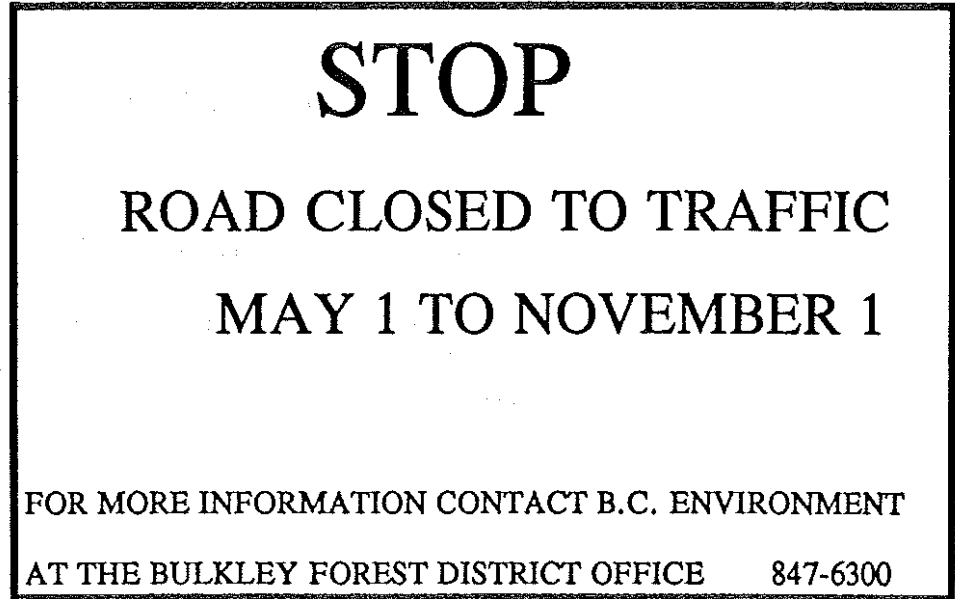
- 4E** Gating -Is an effective way to prevent access over the short term, if closely monitored.

Installation and purchase approximately \$3500.00/gate

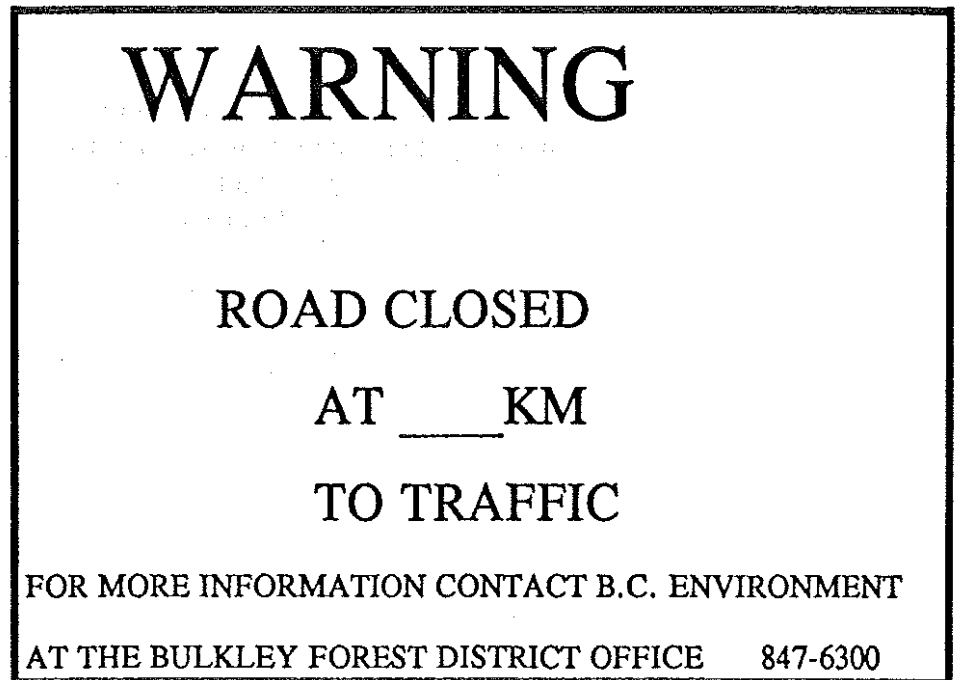
- 4F** Rock Barricade This an effective way to close roads to four wheel drive vehicle provided the rocks are positioned so that vehicle cannot drive around them and they are checked periodically to ensure they continue to be effective.

SIGNS.

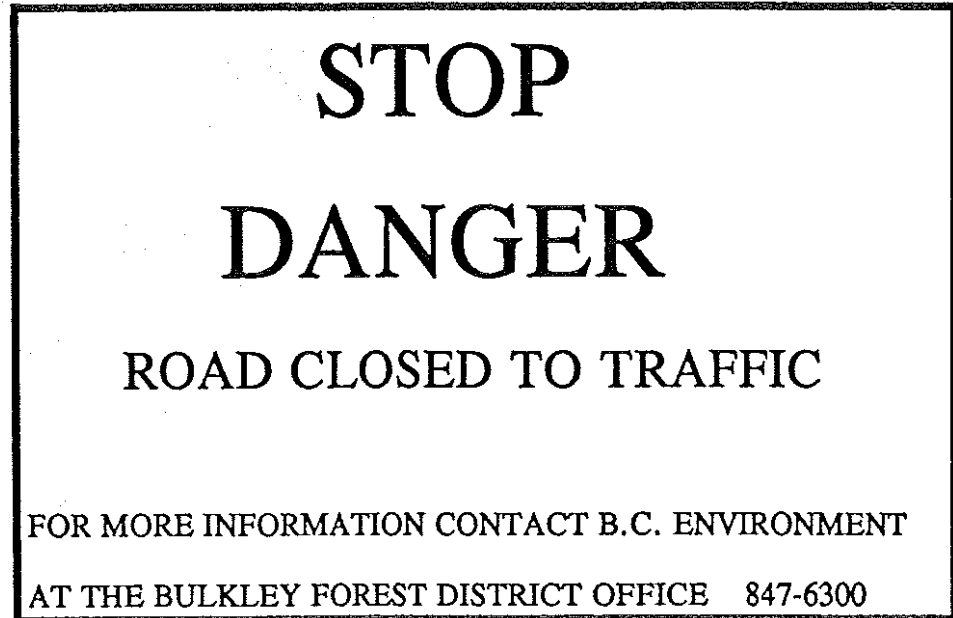
A. Vehicle Access Closures. i.e. Management Unit 3 Nichyeskwa North



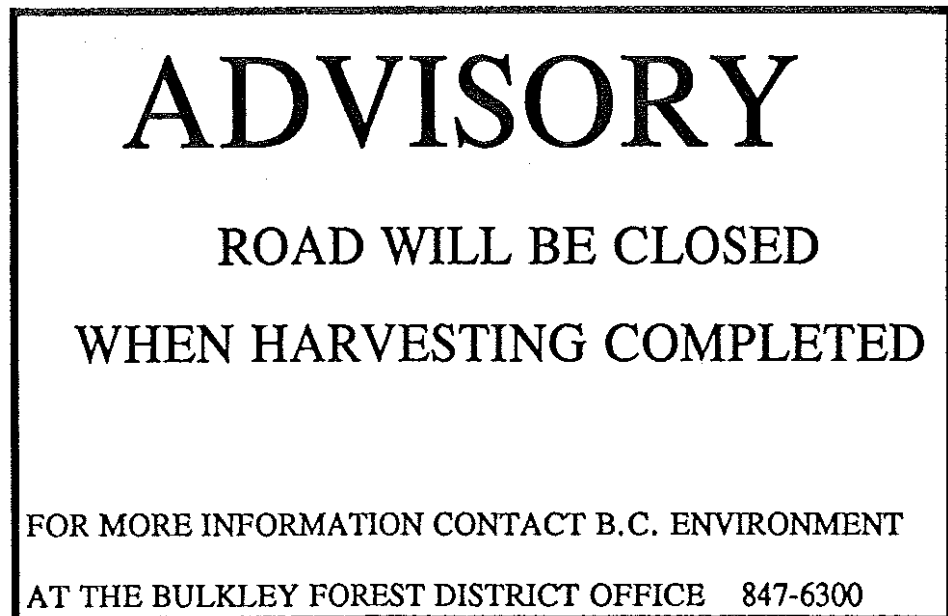
B. Warning sign for roads closed into high habitat areas.



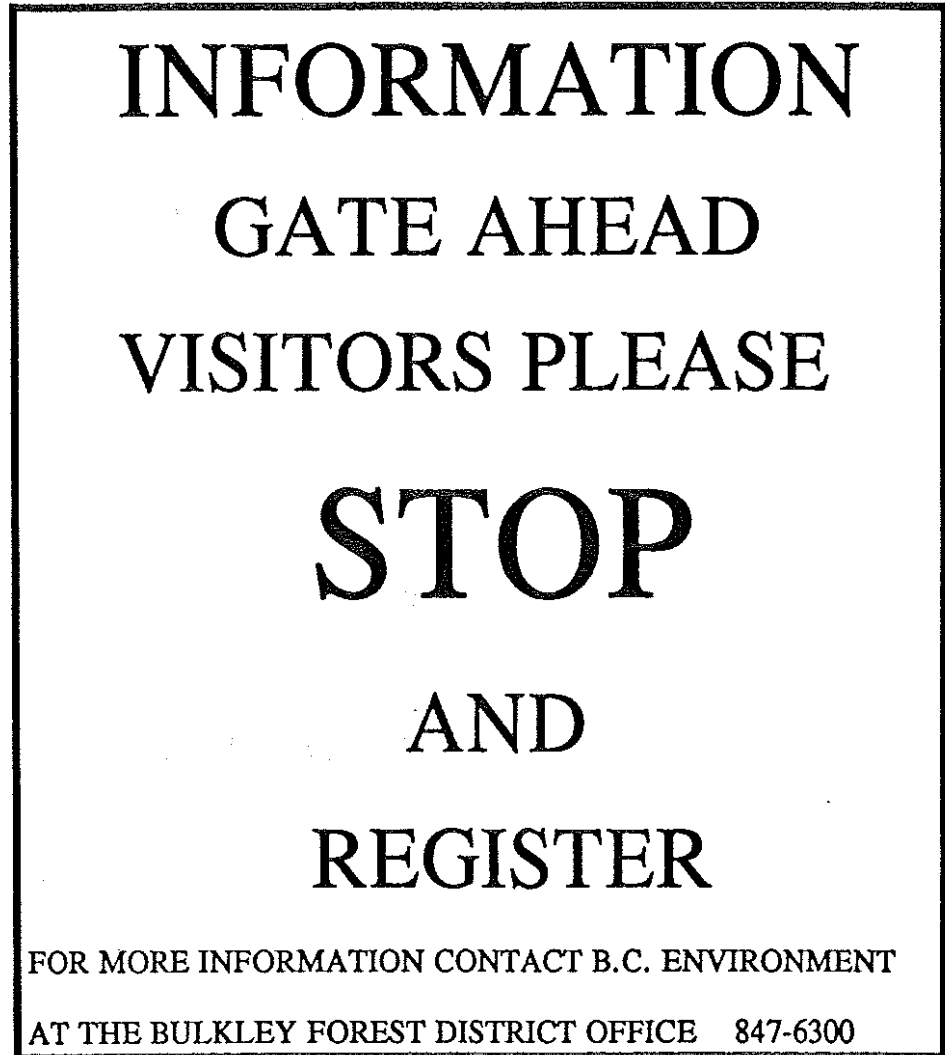
C. Stop sign used at road closures into high habitat areas.



D. Signing required when road closures are planned.



E. Sign advising that the information gate is ahead.



5. Bridge removal

ISSUE Bridge removal is expensive. Is bridge removal an effective way to restrict access?

STRATEGY Due to the cost of this method it is not the preferred method at this time. It may be required if other methods being tried are not successful.

6. Roadside logging

ISSUE Roadside logging is being proposed on many of the cut blocks in the development plans which causes more roads to be built than would normally be the case.

STRATEGY Pile the roadside debris back on the road surface for disposal by burning where it is important to reduce access.

7. High costs of access management.

ISSUE Concerns have been raised over the cost of removing access in this area. It is important that access be managed as inexpensively as possible.

STRATEGY 7.1 Do not remove major bridge structures unless it is determined that this is the most cost effective method of access control.

7.2 Limit access removal to areas required by CAMP.

8. Maintaining Road Closures

ISSUE Roads are closed initially but they don't stay closed.

STRATEGY The licensees will maintain roads closures that they are responsible for. Monitoring will be required on a weekly basis for gates and monthly basis for other closure methods. Closure must be reestablished within one week of discovery provided environmental damage will not result.

Users who reestablish use of a closed road are responsible to close the road after use within one week.

FUNDING Licensees for closures within or accessing their respective chart areas. Costs will be part of appraisal road maintenance allowance.

9. Circle routes

ISSUE Circle routes may offer a convenient way by which to tour an area however, this type of road development typically results in increased hunting pressure on local wildlife populations and difficulty of enforcement by Conservation Officers.

STRATEGY Circle routes are not part of the Babine Options Report or a part of the Babine Local Resource Use Plan and are therefore not part of this CAMP.

NATIVE INVOLVEMENT ISSUES

10. Native involvement in plan.

ISSUE There must be active participation by the Fort Babine native community in the preparation and implementation of this access plan.

STRATEGY Actively pursue involvement by the Fort Babine native community in this process which will ensure they are part of the access solution in the Babine.

This includes contracting them to man the information gate, presenting the plan to them, carrying on discussions with hereditary chiefs and seeking their input. Reviewing the plan with them as it progresses. Including them on the monitoring committee.

NOTE: Nothing in the Babine River Coordinated Access Management Plan shall prejudice any aboriginal rights, title or interest.

HUNTING AND FISHING ISSUES

11. Regulation enforcement.

ISSUE Will fishing and hunting regulations be adequately enforced in the Babine?

STRATEGY 11.1 The information gate will be used to monitor traffic, obtain, give out information and report possible violations of Hunting and Fishing regulations to conservation officers. Conservation Officers response to calls from the information kiosk will depend on the availability of staff. The conservation officers may want to use the information collected to help with enforcement. They may also want to man the station periodically to carry out their duties. It remains B.C. Environment's mandate to enforce the regulations.

11.2 There will be a monitoring committee to monitor the effectiveness of the Babine L.R.U.P. Part of its mandate will be to monitor the effectiveness of this access plan.

11.3 Put in signs for the NO Shooting Zone on both sides of the Babine River.

11.4 Require all loggers and tree planters to report Grizzly Bear kills immediately.

FUNDING Funding for conservation officers is a B.C. Environment responsibility. Considering the importance of the area it is recommended that enforcement be increased.

12. Grizzly Bear Poaching

ISSUE Grizzly bear poaching is not currently a major concern but the potential is there with increased access. It has been documented that four grizzly bears were poached in the area in 1989.

STRATEGY 12.1 B.C. Environment will carry out a Provincial Grizzly Bear review within two years and complete by 1997 hunting season.

12.2 Monitor the Grizzly Bear kill and bring in required regulations or closures immediately if kill exceeds acceptable harvest.

12.3 Gate person will report possible violations of the Hunting and Fishing regulations.

FUNDING Funding for regulation amendment is by B.C. Environment.

13. Fish Poaching

ISSUE The poaching of fish is currently a major problem because of the easy access to the river.

STRATEGY 13.1 Provide no future access to the wilderness area.

13.2 Provide temporary access in the Special Management Area only and permanently remove this access.

13.3 Prior to construction of any access in Special Management Areas sign the road advising the users that the road will be closed after harvesting is complete

13.4 Remove the culvert at about 93 km on the Nilkitkwa F.S.R

13.5 Gate person will report possible violations of the Hunting and Fishing regulations.

FUNDING. Licensees in their respective charts. Costs to be included in stumpage appraisals.

14. Hunting Regulation Changes.

ISSUE Access is currently being constructed on the east side of the Nilkitkwa river into the Omineca Region 7-27, where the hunting regulations are different than in 6.7. Specifically, the bear season is different.

STRATEGY B.C. Environment will review the Hunting regulations for Grizzly bears by 1997.

ISSUE Zone 6-7 allows hunting with snow machines, while this is not allowed in zone 6-8.

STRATEGY B.C. Environment will review the hunting regulations and make adjustments if this becomes a problem.

15. Fishing Regulations Changes.

ISSUE Consider limited entry fishing in the Babine because current fishing regulations were thought to be inadequate.

STRATEGY If further pressure on fishing (i.e. more than 3500 rods days, guided + non guided, below the weir), then limited entry fishing will be considered. The current number of rod days for the Babine River below the weir is 2500 (guided + nonguided).

BEAR HUMAN INTERFACE ISSUES

16. Limiting human bear interface.

ISSUE Human/bear interactions are the major cause of concern. This interaction can cause the bears to relocate to other areas, be moved to other areas, be killed because they become bothersome or worst of all cause human death or injury. The options report emphasized the importance of maintaining the Grizzly Bear population. A well informed public will be the best remedy for limiting contact with bears.

STRATEGY see information gate

17. Garbage control- "Keep it Clean"

ISSUE In order to limit Bear interaction with man garbage controls are a necessity.

STRATEGY 17.1 A recreation site at the Babine bridge will be designated a Forest Service site and user maintained. The site will be monitored by the Forest Service, Licensees and Monitoring Committee to ensure that user maintenance is working.

17.2 All established recreation sites will be user maintained. If maintenance becomes a problem then sites may be closed and facilities removed.

17.3 Permanent or temporary logging or silviculture camps will be required by way of their contracts with the Ministry of Forests to dispose of their garbage on a regular basis by incinerating or removing it from the area.

17.4 "Pack It Out" Information gate packages would advise users to remove garbage from the area.

FUNDING Establishment and maintenance of Forest Service Recreation Sites would be shared by the Forest Service and Licensees.

18. Logging Camp Locations.

ISSUE The current permanent camp locations are sufficient. Of more concern are temporary camp locations often used by loggers and tree planters. The tree planters use camps especially in April 15 to June 15 time frame. These camps have been situated in or adjacent to high Grizzly Bear habitat areas and movement corridors.

STRATEGY 18.1 Logging, road building, silviculture contractors and subcontractors will be required to use existing logging camps or camps outside important high grizzly bear habitat and outside Management Units 1, 2, and 3

18.2 Garbage Control Keep it clean. see 17

19. Managing recreational sites

- ISSUE** Recreation sites that are not WELL maintained are a traditional problem area for human/bear interaction.
- STRATEGY** 19.1 Sites will not be established near high or moderate bear habitat or corridors and avoid Native Archeological sites.
- 19.2 A safe site will be establish at or near the Babine River Bridge/Weir and the site will need to be properly cared for including bear proof garbage containers and regular servicing .
- 19.3 Recreation Sites will not be set up at the lakes designated as wilderness.
- 19.4 Monitor use to determine if further sites are required.
- 19.5 Provide information at the gate outlining where the recreation opportunities are.
- FUNDING** Joint Forest Service Recreation and Licensee budgets based on agreements be between the two parties.

20. Road Density

- ISSUE** Road Density should be minimized to reduce human/wildlife interface. (see draft road wildlife interface guidelines).
- STRATEGY** 20.1 Minimize the road densities through careful planning.
- 20.2 Deactivate roads when they are no longer needed for harvesting
- 20.3 Build temporary roads where possible.

Note: Guidelines for active primary road densities are 25 km of road per 100 km².
Guidelines for active secondary road densities are 50 km of road per 100 km².
Roads are not active when access is no longer possible with a four wheel drive pickup.

OTHER IMPORTANT ISSUES

21. Vandalism

ISSUE Loggers are concerned that their equipment will be vandalized if the loggers are perceived as the ones responsible for removing the access to an area.

Natives are also concerned with vandalizing of Archeological Sites

STRATEGY 21.1 Ensure public are informed why and by what authority access has been removed by signing road closures.

21.2 Let the public know of the closure through information distributed at the information gate or kiosk

22. Grizzly Bear Travel Habits.

ISSUE The cost for construction and for deactivation of access in the Babine is high but knowledge of where and when the Bears actually move is generally accurate but needs more detailed mapping and ground truthing. This is a concern because it is expensive to carry out an effective forest management strategy and CAMP to protect the bears without knowing their travel habits.

STRATEGY To recommend that a bear home study be carried out by the Forest Service and B.C. Environment to determine the travel habits of the Bears. This study would also provide more detailed maps (1:20,000) of Grizzly Bear habitats.

FUNDING If this area is chosen for a study then funding would come from a variety of provincial sources.

23. Pest Management

ISSUE Managing the current Mountain Pine Beetle population within planning unit 2, the Babine, has been a costly venture to date. This is mainly due to the lack of road access, requiring a significant amount of helicopter time.

STRATEGY Construct and maintain well planned road access to allow for more ground access in managing the problem. This will release additional funds for treatment as a result of less helicopter expenditures.

Pest management activity is centred around August through to the end of March each year. The activity includes probing, phermoning, layout, cruising, removal of trees and individual tree treatment. In some areas roads will be closed and access will need to be reestablished and later closed in order to carry out activities.

FUNDING Forest Service and Licensee responsibility.

24. Fire Protection

ISSUE Planning unit 2, the Babine, receives the highest incidents of lightning fires within the Bulkley Timber Supply Area. Historical data also indicates that the largest fires which have occurred in the Timber Supply Area have been located within this planning unit. Mainline road access is an essential component of any expanded fire attack plan, during the summer months.

STRATEGY 24.1 Side roads and bridges required to gain access to a fire, should be deactivated upon completion of the fire, as a part of the fire rehabilitation plan.

24.2 Roads constructed for fire access should follow total chance plan locations where possible.

24.3 Establish fuel management corridors to limit the spread of wild fire in the unit.

24.4 Ensure that Fire control plans identify what access points are not in place and which are ones that need to be re-established in the event of fire.

FUNDING Forest Service protection budget.

25. Safety:

ISSUE Do road closures have a proper safety program.

STRATEGY 25.1. Require proper signing, good marking, even at night, and an information package to warn motorists of road closures and the reason for the closure.

25.2. Ensure areas are well checked for motorists who maybe trapped on the opposite side of the closure before removing access.

25.3. Post updated road closure information at the information gate or kiosk.

26. Road construction quality and standard.

ISSUE Mainline roads are not constructed and maintained to a quality that is safe for all users.

Strategies 26.1 Construct and maintain mainline roads to a quality that is safe for all users. Logging roads are generally only one lane with pullouts and are not built for normal highway use.

26.2 Spurs must be constructed to a standard that maintains water quality.

26.3 Construct all roads two years in advance of logging.

26.4 Enforce Forest Road and Logging Trail Engineering Practices published by the Ministry of Forests.

26.5 Enforce the Bulkley District Sediment Control.

27. Noise of equipment and truck speeds near Babine River.

ISSUE Noise of equipment working near the Babine River and jet boat use of the river is affecting the quality of wilderness experience by wilderness users.

ISSUE Fast truck speeds near the Babine bridge are causing a safety hazard for pedestrians using the bridge.

STRATEGY There is no legal authority to restrict vehicle noise in the provincial forest. In consideration of others who use the river for a wilderness experience the following options for equipment operating in the Special Management or Wilderness Zones should be considered by operators.

27.1. Where possible limit low flying helicopter flights over the wilderness zone. Recommend that this be included in the Wilderness Management Plan

27.2 Where possible limit logging start up to after 7 AM in Special Management Area during September and October.

27.3A Limit truck speeds to 30 km/hour within 500m of the Babine River Bridge from May 1 until November 1.

27.3B Post a warning sign that cautions traffic to slow down at bridge due to pedestrian traffic.

27.4 Angling Guides have agreed to limit jet boat use on the river during September and October to after 7 a.m. Motorized river use within the wilderness corridor will be addressed during the development of the Babine River Wilderness Plan after status designation, i.e. PAS or MOF Wilderness Area.

FUNDING Reduce hauling speeds in the stumpage appraisal calculation if necessary. Road users committee to pay for speed and caution signs at bridge.

28. Vehicle access to the Babine River.

ISSUE Will vehicle access be provided to the Babine River for public use.

STRATEGY This CAMP will not provide new access to the Babine River. A future wilderness plan will outline a strategy for access development and management in the wilderness Zone.

29. Silviculture and Mining Access

ISSUE Will silviculture and mining activities be affected by the Babine CAMP

STRATEGY 29.1 The general guideline for access required for these activities is to use existing access where possible and leave the access or lack of access the way it was when the activity started. New roads required for these activities such as silviculture in the Van Fire, should be built in locations identified in total chance plans to reduce duplication and the number of roads. These roads will need to be permanently deactivated when the activity is complete.

29.2 Construction of roads or trails only for exploration of minerals will be considered if plans for construction and deactivation are provided that meet with the intent of the Babine CAMP. Other methods of exploration should be considered if exploration is planned in areas where road construction would negatively impact other high value resources.

FUNDING Forest Service Silviculture Budget and/or Mining Exploration Companies

MONITORING

This Coordinated Access Plan will be monitored by the Monitoring Committee set up as part of the Babine L.R.U.P. The monitoring committee is responsible for recommending changes to the Babine L.R.U.P and the Babine C.A.M.P. The District Manager of Forests and the Regional Manager of Fish and Wildlife B.C.Environment must approve changes.

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**COORDINATED ACCESS
MANAGEMENT PLAN**
PLANNING UNIT 2
BABINE RIVER
BULKLEY TSA

Scale: 1:50 000

- Special Management Zone
- Wilderness Zone
- Management Units
- Existing Roads
- Planned Roads
- Road Number 469

