



Office of the Premier
Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks
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For Immediate Release
November 23, 1995

ENTIRE STEIN VALLEY PROTECTED

– Premier Announces Crowning Achievement of Nature Legacy –

VANCOUVER – The entire 107,000 hectares of the Stein Valley will be permanently protected as a Class A provincial park, and will be managed co-operatively by the province and the Lytton First Nation.

The announcement of the latest addition to the Nature Legacy of British Columbia was made today at events in Lytton and Vancouver by Premier Mike Harcourt, Environment, Lands and Parks Minister Moe Sihota, Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Cashore, Lytton Chief Byron Spinks and Chief Emeritus Ruby Dunstan.

The Stein decision was made in conjunction with the announcement of a locally developed land and resource management plan that will proceed within the Lillooet forest district. The LRMP will result in a plan that meets local needs while ensuring both the economy and the environment are sustained over the long term.

The Stein Valley, known worldwide for the Stein festivals, is one of the last remaining untouched watersheds in the southwestern part of the province. The new provincial park will be known as the Stein Valley Nlaka'pamux Heritage Park, in recognition of the historical, cultural and spiritual significance of the area to the Lytton First Nation.

“The protection of the Stein Valley is a crowning achievement of the nature legacy of British Columbia,” Harcourt said. “Many, many people have worked for a very long time to see the Stein protected, and I am proud that my government has been able to take the final steps to turn this dream into a reality.

“I would like to thank all those who have been involved, especially members of the Lytton First Nation, who have been unwavering in their determination to preserve this valley – the spiritual heart of their traditional territory,” the premier said.

“There can be no greater legacy to leave our children than a healthy, natural environment,” Sihota said. “For all the people of British Columbia and, indeed, the whole world, the Stein Valley speaks to our desire for untouched wilderness where our own spirits can be rejuvenated. And that is no small gift.”

“In 1987, the Lytton and Mt. Currie bands declared their intention to do everything within their powers to protect the Stein Valley for all peoples, for all time,” Cashore said. “It is with great satisfaction that we, in government, can honor and fulfill that commitment.”

BACKGROUND

STEIN VALLEY NLAKA'PAMUX HERITAGE PARK

The Stein Valley, located only three hours from Vancouver and within the Lytton and Mt. Currie First Nations' traditional territories, is well known as the largest undeveloped watershed left in southwestern British Columbia. From the headwaters at Tundra Lake to the confluence of the Stein River with the Fraser River, the valley is a richly varied and vast wilderness.

Surrounded on all sides by high mountain ridges, the valley encompasses lakes, alpine meadows, tributaries, old growth forests, glaciers, steep canyons and wide floodplains. It supports healthy and significant populations of mountain goats, grizzlies, cougars, black bears, mule deer, wolverines, lynx, hoary marmots, blue grouse, horned larks, several species of bats, as well as steelhead trout, coho and chinook salmon, rainbow trout, Dolly Varden char and many other wildlife species.

The valley is of important historical, cultural and spiritual significance to the First Nations of the area. The history of aboriginal people in the Stein is apparent in the many fascinating pictographs and archeological sites found there. Having inhabited and been sustained by the land for thousands of years, the Lytton and Mt. Currie bands honor the Stein Valley and accept the obligation and responsibility to preserve it for the benefit of all peoples. In 1987, the two bands made known their commitment to protecting the valley with a Stein Declaration, which stated their determination to maintain the Stein as wilderness, for all time.

Over the last several years, the recreational values the Stein has to offer have made it a popular destination for hardy hikers, campers, mountaineers, kayakers and naturalists. It presents challenges to all levels of outdoor enthusiasts seeking a true wilderness experience. The valley has also been the site of the popular annual Stein Voices for the Wilderness festival which has attracted international attention to the efforts to preserve the valley in its entirety.

In 1987, approximately 42,000 hectares of the upper and lower Stein Valley were designated as wilderness areas to provide interim protection. Shortly thereafter, the mid-Stein was approved as a Protected Areas Strategy study area, and a team undertook an extensive study of the middle valley to weigh the different values, and to make a recommendation.

The protected areas study team concluded that the Stein Valley was an exceptional area, with very high conservation, recreation, cultural and heritage values that should be fully protected.

Now, the entire Stein Valley has been designated as a Class A provincial park, and an agreement has been signed with the Lytton First Nation to develop a plan for co-operative management of the new park. The park will be named the Stein Valley Nlaka'pamux Heritage Park, and will be protected for all time, for all people.

BACKGROUND

Forest Renewal BC Projects in Lillooet Forest District



Current Approved Proposals 1995:

Location:	Agency:	Project Value:	Activity:
Hurley/ Cadwallader Creeks	Ministry of Environment Lands and Parks	\$41,750	To conduct fisheries assessments and hotspot inventory.
Kwoiek Creek	Ministry of Environment Lands and Parks	\$41,625	Creek hotspot inventory
Mowhokum Creek	Nlaka'pamux Nation Tribal Council	\$74,269	Mule deer and fisheries habitat, use study
Lytton	Nlaka'pamux Nation Tribal Council	\$71,700	For a Forest Renewal Coordinator
Bridge River	Bridge River Indian Band	\$164,500	For Heli-logging training and Forest Health project

Previous Approved Proposals 1995:

Location:	Agency:	Project Value:	Activity:
LaRochelle Creek	Ainsworth Lumber Co.	\$109,658	Watershed Restoration Project
Fraser & Bridge Rivers	Bridge River Indian Band	\$50,000	For Enhanced Forestry
Lillooet	Applespring West Contracting	\$48,000	Juvenile Spacing and Pruning
Gold Bridge/ Bralorne	Cambium Contracting	\$48,000	Juvenile Spacing and Pruning
Lillooet	Fountain Indian Band	\$5000	Traditional Territory forest management

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Forest Renewal BC's total investment in the Lillooet District for 1995 totals: \$703,664 to date, with more to come.



November 23, 1995

For Immediate Release

HARCOURT CONFIRMS LILLOOET LAND-USE PLANNING PROCESS

VANCOUVER — Lillooet-area residents will have an opportunity to participate in a comprehensive land and resource management planning process announced today by Premier Mike Harcourt, along with Forests Minister Andrew Petter and Yale-Lillooet MLA Harry Lali.

"Local residents have asked for meaningful participation in land-use decisions that affect their future and we are responding," Harcourt said.

"A locally developed land-use plan for the Lillooet area is in keeping with my government's plan for B.C. to renew our natural resources and secure our future. The Lillooet LRMP process will result in a plan which meets local needs while ensuring both the economy and the environment are sustained over the long term."

Confirmation of the Lillooet LRMP was announced in conjunction with the establishment of the entire Stein Valley watershed as a provincial park, and an agreement between the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks and the Lytton Indian Band on cooperation in management of the new park.

The Lillooet LRMP will cover the Lillooet forest district which encompasses approximately 1.1 million hectares, including just over 107,000 ha now permanently protected in the Stein Valley.

To offset forest-industry impacts of the Stein decision, Forests Minister Andrew Petter announced that restrictions on resource development will be removed immediately on approx. 80,000 ha in the LRMP area which have been under consideration for permanent protection through the Protected Areas Strategy.

"The decision to permanently protect the Stein ends more than 25 years of public debate about the area but will also reduce the available timber supply," Petter said. "Reducing PAS study areas will offset that impact and ensure a stable fibre source for the forest industry and economic certainty for workers and their communities while the LRMP deliberations are underway."

Premier Harcourt said the LRMP will build on the efforts of area residents who recently formed the Lillooet and District Community Resource Board.

"The board provides a solid foundation for building an LRMP table representing a full range of public interests and will play a key role in working with government staff to prepare a plan which has the support of the people in the region," Harcourt said.

"Government has gained a good deal of experience and knowledge over the past three years through land-use planning in other parts of the province. We will work directly with the board and others to design a process which provides ample opportunity for effective participation by all interests, including the general public."

The government is committing funds and staff to the LRMP process and is also providing financial support for the community resources board.

The LRMP planning team will recommend to government how all crown lands in the area will be used, including resource development zones and protected areas, and will specify resource management objectives and strategies to guide resource conservation and development over the next decade.

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The team will also consider the social and economic implications of land-use designations and submit an economic transition strategy as part of its recommended plan to government. Based on experience with other land-use plans across the province, the economic strategy could include establishing community skills centres under the Skills Now initiative, a grazing enhancement fund and further Forest Renewal BC investment.

Forest Renewal BC is already providing jobs in the Lytton-Lillooet area, with more than \$700,000 approved so far this year in projects such as watershed restoration and enhanced forestry.

The Lillooet LRMP is expected to formally begin by April, 1996 and take two years to complete. The next four months will be dedicated to preparation work which includes assembling necessary information, confirming appropriate participants at the planning table, establishing the government support team and finalizing the design of the process to meet local and provincial needs.

MLA Harry Lali pointed to the recent success of the Kamloops LRMP, which also covers a portion of his Yale-Lillooet constituency.

"We need to look no further than Kamloops to see how positive and beneficial a locally developed land-use plan can be for everyone involved," he said. "The energy and commitment of local people at the LRMP table resulted in almost unanimous agreement on a plan that protects both jobs and the environment."

In July, the government gave final approval to all recommendations of the Kamloops LRMP table.

Strategic land-use planning processes are now completed, underway or in the process-design stage for more than half the province.

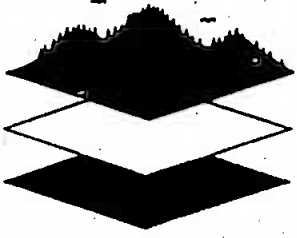
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Editors Note - Backgrounders and maps available

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BACKGROUND

Lillooet Land and Resource Management Plan Designing the Process

A Component of British Columbia's
Land Use Strategy

What are LRMPs?

Land and resource management planning is a process of integrated resource planning at the community level. The goal is to provide a consistent, fair opportunity for all interest groups, local government and First Nations to participate with provincial government ministries in decisions on how crown land will be managed. LRMPs recommend potential uses ranging from full protection to a mix of industrial and recreational uses within a planning area which usually covers one or more forest districts.

To ensure that land-use and resource-management decisions are based on a comprehensive assessment of all resource values and socio-economic implications, LRMP requires public participation, interagency co-ordination and consensus-based land and resource management decisions.

LRMP is a dynamic process that gets all interest groups together at one table to strive for consensus on recommendations for land use in their areas. People who live and work in the area are in the best position to appreciate the social and economic implications of their recommendations.

Who participates in land and resource management planning?

Under general provincial policy, all parties with a key interest or stake in the plan are given an opportunity and encouragement to participate. The major groups of participants usually include industry, environmental groups, labour, local/regional government, First Nations and government agencies. Their

participation, cooperation and commitment to resolve land-use issues are essential for the planning process to work.

Participating groups usually appoint a person or persons to represent them in negotiations and consensus building. Representatives must be selected to reflect the full range of land-use and resource interests for an area. Periodic consultation with the general public is also required to provide information on how the LRMP is progressing and ensure opportunities for public feedback.

To improve the process, the government has made a commitment to working with both local governments and First Nations to design a process which provides ample opportunity for effective participation by these groups and all other interests, including the general public.

Land-use decisions resulting from LRMP processes are without prejudice to the rights and interests of First Nations or treaty negotiations.

The Lillooet Community Resource Board

Lillooet is in an unusual situation since a number of community representatives within the Lillooet Timber Supply Area have already been working together for more than a year to prepare for participation in a strategic land-use planning process. The recently formed Lillooet and District Community Resource Board has shown initiative in defining the need to undertake this work, developing a broad-based public group to address the issues and building

working relationships and understandings among the various interests. The board has prepared a draft terms of reference for consideration by government and discussions are already underway to refine these.

Government recognizes the work of the community resource board and will provide financial support and involve its members in the planning process. The community resource board provides a solid foundation for building an LRMP planning table which will ensure the broadest possible range of public interests and has broad support from all key stakeholders.

The province is also committed to providing funding and information support to the work of the LRMP table and government staff have now been assigned to begin work with the community resource board.

The Lillooet LRMP Participants

The Lillooet and District Community Resource Board, along with government staff, will form the nucleus of the LRMP table.

Further consultations will take place with the community resource board, First Nations, local government and others to confirm the LRMP table participants.

LRMP Terms of Reference

To provide guidance to the LRMP planning table, government staff will work with the community resource board to ensure that a terms of reference is in place before the plan starts. The terms of reference will include mutually agreeable statements of broad goals for recommended protected areas, and all other resource management zones.

To provide certainty for the forest industry, the terms of reference will include a specific objective stipulating that downward impacts on timber access resulting from "special

management" land-use designations will be offset by corresponding increases in timber access in "enhanced resource management" land-use designations. In addition, the terms of reference will also stipulate that an economic strategy which considers social and economic conditions be prepared as part of the recommended plan to government. A primary objective of the economic strategy will be to recommend programs and projects to achieve "no net job loss" as a consequence of the land-use plan.

Lillooet LRMP Timeframe

The government anticipates the preparation work will be completed in early 1996 and the Lillooet LRMP planning table will be operating by April, 1996. The work of the LRMP table could take from 18 - 24 months to complete. The LRMP table's recommended plan could be presented to government for endorsement by December, 1997.

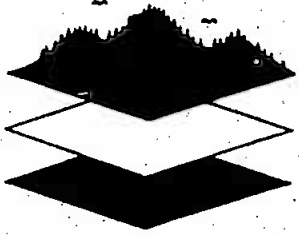
Status of other LRMPs

With the Lillooet LRMP, there are now 14 LRMPs completed, underway or in the process-design stage across the province (see map attached). That includes Kamloops, 11 LRMPs located in northern B.C. and the Okanagan-Shuswap LRMP which is in the process design stage.

In July, the province gave final approval to the Kamloops Land and Resource Management Plan. As well, the Kispiox LRMP in the Hazelton area has been endorsed by government and a final report is being prepared for government approval.



Province of British Columbia



A Component of British Columbia's
Land Use Strategy

BACKGROUNDER

Completing Protected Areas in the Lillooet Forest District

Under B.C.'s Protected Areas Strategy, existing and new protected areas cover just over nine per cent of the province — more than halfway towards the broad provincial goal of doubling protected areas to 12 per cent. Since 1991, more than 125 new protected areas encompassing over 2.7 million hectares have been established.

Long-Term Recommendations on Protected Areas Designations LRMP Responsibility

When the Lillooet LRMP is finished, it will include recommendations on which areas would be designated to complete the Protected Areas Strategy within the LRMP boundaries.

To guide the work of the LRMP, the terms of reference to be developed for the planning table by April, 1996 will establish a percentage target to be used for existing and recommended protected areas. This target will be established following further consultation with the Lillooet and District Community Resource Board, local governments, First Nations and others. The terms of reference will also require that broad management objectives accompany each recommended protected area.

One task of the Lillooet LRMP table will be to review the roughly eight per cent of the area still subject to study-area development restrictions, plus any other areas, and make recommendations to complete protected areas in the planning area. Study areas which do not receive permanent protection will be eligible for other resource management designations recommended by the LRMP table.

Completing protected areas as one element of a locally developed, comprehensive land-use plan in the Lillooet area will ensure that all values — including environmental, social and economic — receive careful consideration in LRMP recommendations and final government decisions.

At present, existing and new parks and protected areas cover approx. 110,000 ha or just under 10 per cent of the planning area. That includes approx. 3,000 ha in previously established provincial parks or ecological reserves at Duffey Lake, Marble Canyon, Skwaha Lake and Soap Lake, plus the new 107,000 ha park in the Stein watershed.

Short-Term Management

Protecting Options, Ensuring Industry Certainty

Under the Protected Areas Strategy, study areas and areas of interest were established to identify areas under consideration for permanent protection. Restrictions were placed on resource development in these areas to ensure they remained intact until final decisions were made. Including the Stein, more than 25 per cent of the planning area was under consideration for protection and therefore subject to these development restrictions.

Today's Lillooet LRMP announcement also includes a significant reduction in study areas and areas of interest. This reduces development restrictions to approx. 18 per cent of the planning area, including the 10 per cent in existing and new protected areas. This will reduce economic uncertainty in local communities and ensure a stable fibre supply for the forestry industry while the LRMP deliberations are underway. The reduction of study areas and areas of interest makes more than 80,000 ha of land available for resource use, subject to existing regulations and planning requirements.

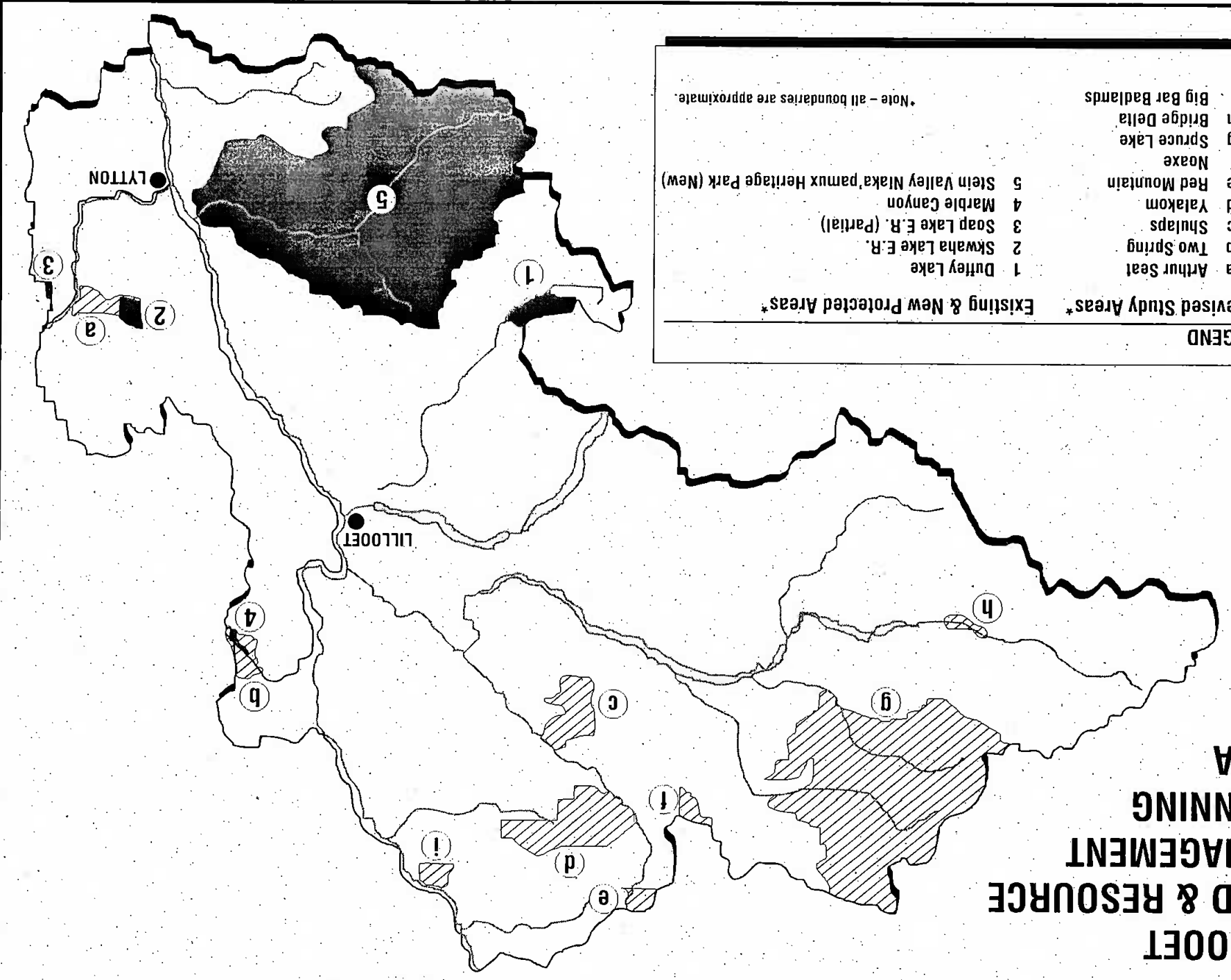
Completing Protected Areas in the Lillooet LRMP Area

Existing and New Protected Areas	Approx Area (ha)	Approx. %
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duffey Lake Park • Marble Canyon Park • Skwaha Lake Ecological Reserve • Soap Lake Ecological Reserve • Stein Valley Nlaka'pamux Heritage Park (new) 		
Total Existing Protected Areas	110,000	10
Revised Approved Study Areas (subject to development restrictions)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arthur Seat • Big Bar Badlands • Bridge-Delta • Noaxe • Red Mountain • Shulaps • Spruce Lake • Two Spring • Yalakom 		
Total Revised Study Areas	90,000	8
Deleted Study Areas/Areas of Interest (development restrictions removed)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antoine • Blustry • Bonanza • Cayoosh • Edge-Moran • French Bar • Shakan-Platt • Skoonka • Soap Lake Extension • Spruce Lake (reductions) • Yalokom-Big Dog (reduction) 		
Total Deleted Study Areas/Areas of Interest	80,000	7



Province of British Columbia

LILLOOET LAND & RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLANNING AREA



LEGEND

Revised Study Areas*
 1 Arthur Seal
 2 Two Spring
 3 Shulaps
 4 Yalakom
 5 Red Mountain
 f Noaxe
 g Spruce Lake
 h Bridge Delta
 i Big Bar Badlands

Existing & New Protected Areas*
 1 Duffey Lake
 2 Skwaha Lake E.R.
 3 Soap Lake E.R. (Partial)
 4 Marble Canyon
 5 Stein Valley Nika'pamux Heritage Park (New)

*Note - all boundaries are approximate.

Strategic Land-Use Plans in British Columbia

(Completed or in Progress)

Regional Plans

- A Vancouver Island
- B Cariboo/Chilcotin
- C West Kootenay-Boundary
- D East Kootenay

Land and Resource Management Plans

- 1 Fort Nelson
- 2 Fort St. John
- 3 Dawson Creek
- 4 Prince George
- 5 Fort St. James
- 6 Vanderhoof
- 7 Bulkley
- 8 South Kalam
- 9 Kispiox
- 10 Robson Valley
- 11 Kamloops
- 12 Lakes
- 13 Okanagan-Shuswap
- 14 Lillooet

