

## **APPENDIX X**

# **RECREATION ANALYSIS REPORT**

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## TFL #43

Prepared for:  
Scott Paper Ltd.,  
New Westminster, B.C.

March, 1994



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Recreation Analysis Report identifies recreation, landscape and wilderness issues in the tree farm licence and provides guidelines and information for the preparation of TFL Management and Working Plans. It provides management guidelines and/or options to ensure that recreation management objectives are met.

TFL #43, managed by Scott Paper Ltd., covers 10,132 hectares distributed over three separate blocks in the Fraser Valley and in the lower Homathko and Kingcome Rivers on south coastal British Columbia. The TFL is primarily devoted to the production of cottonwood and poplar hybrids on alluvial plains adjacent to major rivers. Forest management is relatively intense, rotations are short and post-harvesting greenup very rapid.

There are no formal parks, recreation sites or trails within TFL #43 and recreation use levels are generally either very dispersed or confined to small, site-specific areas.

The major recreation features of the Fraser Block are bar fishing opportunities along the more accessible river bars and beaches of the Fraser River and tributary channels and sloughs. Fishing is a near year-round activity with different species being sought in different seasons. Cutthroat and steelhead trout are taken in winter months while coho and chinook salmon are sought in late summer and fall. Sturgeon are fished for in most months of the year. The fishing takes place at the peripheries of the islands and there is very little interaction between recreation and commercial forestry activities. Secondary, dispersed recreation activities with low use levels include hunting, 4-wheel driving, motor biking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing and nature study. Generally, better quality opportunities for these activities are found elsewhere in the Fraser Valley.

The Homathko and Kingcome Blocks are relatively isolated and recreation use levels are low. The main activity is guided fishing, usually in the form of heli-fishing for cutthroat trout, Dolly Varden char and some steelhead and coho salmon. The fishing takes place from spring through to the fall.

Recreation use levels and the supply of recreation opportunities in TFL #43 appears to be generally unaffected by forestry operations. Commercial forestry activities appear to have little, if any, impact upon fish stocks or their habitat. Rather, over-harvesting of fish is the main threat to sport fishing opportunities and most fishing effort is on a catch-and-release basis. Users in the Homathko and Kingcome Blocks probably prefer to fish in a natural appearing setting. For this reason attention is required to maintain buffer strips whenever possible for aesthetic reasons along and around the main fishing areas. These include the Homathko River and its tributaries Brew Creek and the Teaquahan and Heakamie Rivers and the Kingcome River and its tributaries the Atlatzi and Clear Rivers.

Since forestry operations have minimal impact upon recreation values within TFL #43 there is no need presently to change forest management practices. The main, general recommendation is that recreation and landscape resources be managed under the principal of integrated resource management and under the direction of Ministry of Forests' policies and guidelines.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Tree farm licencees are required by the Ministry of Forests to prepare a Recreation Analysis Report. The Recreation Analysis Report identifies recreation, landscape and wilderness issues in the TFL and provides guidelines and information for the preparation of TFL Management and Working Plans. The analysis provides management options if required to ensure the meeting of recreation management objectives within the TFL. General guidelines for the preparation of Recreation Analysis Reports are found in Chapters 7 and 8 of the MoF Recreation Manual. Specific guidelines, which are followed in the following report, are found in the Interim Guide for Tree Farm Licences prepared by the Vancouver Forest Region, January 11th, 1993.

### 1.1 PURPOSE

This Recreation Analysis Report identifies the supply of the main recreation opportunities within TFL #43 and indicates how this supply of opportunities meets existing and anticipated recreation use and demand for public and commercial recreation. Management options are considered for the maintenance and enhancement of recreation opportunities.

### 1.2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

TFL 43 is comprised of 10,132 hectares distributed over three separate blocks:

- (1) islands and floodplains along 38 kilometers of the lower Fraser River between Chilliwack and Laidlaw, an area of 3,551 hectares, the Lower Fraser Block,
- (2) floodplains along 32 kilometers of the lower Homathko River from the head of Bute Inlet north to the vicinity of Whitemantle Creek, an area of 5,618 hectares, the Homathko Block,
- (3) floodplains along 12 kilometers of the lower Kingcome River between the Atlatzi River and a point about five kilometers north of the Clear River, an area of 963 hectares, the Kingcome Block.

TFL #43 is primarily devoted to the production of cottonwood and poplar hybrids and species. The logs are taken to Scott Paper's mill at New Westminster for processing into paper products. Forest management is relatively intense which includes considerable attention to genetic selection of stock, reforestation and spacing. Harvesting does not entail the use of heavy machinery which is normally associated with forestry practices in southwestern British Columbia. Rotations are relatively short, averaging about 30 years in length and visually effective green-up times seldom exceed a year or so. These factors contribute to relatively low impact of forestry operations upon aesthetics and outdoor recreation opportunities.

#### 1.2.1 FRASER BLOCK

The Lower Fraser Block of TFL #43 is comprised of numerous, low lying islands spread along about 35 kilometers of the Fraser River between Chilliwack and Laidlaw. The total area of this block is 3,551 hectares. The individual islands vary in size from less than one hectare to over 500 hectares. The focus for forest management on the islands are those portions where deciduous forests can be maintained. Significant areas of the Lower Fraser Block are open water, bare sand or gravel or areas of sparse scrub cover.

The Lower Fraser Block is entirely comprised of alluvial deposits of the Fraser River. Coarse textured sands and gravel deposits predominate and the flat to gently rolling topography rarely exceeds one or a few meters in relief. The area lies within the Wetter Coastal Douglas-fir Subzone of the Fraser Lowland Ecoregion. Natural vegetation has almost been eliminated in the surrounding region. Urban and industrial lands dominate the areas surrounding the TFL while areas within the TFL are largely cottonwood forest plantations. However, riparian areas at the edges of many of the islands form highly significant habitats for a wide range of wildlife species, especially for water-birds, waterfowl, birds of prey, passerine birds, small mammals and fur bearers. The islands also support black-tailed deer.

Fishery values are relatively high throughout the Lower Fraser Block. Side-channels are important habitats for both spawning and rearing anadromous salmon while all waters support resident fish. Species of major recreational significance include chinook and coho salmon, steelhead and cutthroat trout, Dolly Varden char and white sturgeon.

The general region of the Lower Fraser Block has a rich history and importance for aboriginal peoples. However, no recognized archaeological sites are found within the TFL boundary although several occur at its periphery. The continual shifting of the floodplain deposits probably obscures prehistoric features. Indian activities would have been intense along the Fraser River with its rich natural resources. Similarly, the area is important for



its early settlement and exploration by Europeans. However, all recognized historic sites and features are outside the boundaries of the TFL.

Forest management and gravel extraction are presently the major industrial activities on the islands. The islands also support significant outdoor recreation opportunities but the main areas of concentrated use are generally just outside the TFL boundaries. There are no formal parks or recreation sites within the Lower Fraser Block.

The Fraser Block is located in the mild climate of the Lower Mainland. This provides for a wide variety of recreation opportunities throughout all seasons of the year. The main recreation opportunities within the Fraser Block are bar fishing for a variety of fish species in almost all months of the year and deer and grouse hunting during the fall months. Secondary opportunities include wildlife viewing, nature study, 4-wheel driving, trail bike use and horseback riding.

Four parks are located at nearby locations along the Fraser River:

- Island 22 Municipal Park near Chilliwack,
- Kilby Provincial Historic Park near the mouth of the Harrison River,
- Ferry Island Provincial Park adjacent to TFL 43 lands near the south end of the Rosedale-Agassiz Bridge
- F.H. Barber Provincial Park near Laidlaw

Several agencies play a role in the administration and management of parks and recreation in the region. Within the TFL the Chilliwack Forest District and the Regional and District offices of the Ministry of Environment are the key agencies interested in outdoor recreation. The Provincial Parks Branch and Chilliwack District Municipality administer park lands which are in close association with the Lower Fraser Block. The Regional Districts of Fraser-Cheam (Chilliwack) and Dewdney-Alouette (Mission) also have a parks and recreation function within the region.

The Lower Fraser Block is bounded by well developed lands for agriculture and transportation including the communities of Chilliwack and Agassiz. Major highways, secondary roads and railroads parallel the river on both its sides. However, many of the islands are only accessible by boat and most of those islands that are served by roads across river side-channels can be isolated at any time by high water levels, especially during the early summer months.

### 1.2.2 HOMATHKO BLOCK

The Homathko Block is comprised of 5,618 hectares along the lower 30 kilometers of the Homathko River at the head of Bute Inlet. The area is in a relatively remote setting approximately 100 kilometers by air north of Campbell River. There is no direct road access. Most visitors enter the area by small aircraft using strips near the camp at the south end of the block or to the north near Scar Creek. The block has several all-weather industrial roads. One road follows the entire west side of the lower valley while another road parallels the lower 12 kilometers along the east because the bridge is out at the Heakamie River.

There are no parks or recreation facilities either within or adjacent to the Homathko Block. The main recreation opportunities within the Homathko Block are related to river fishing. Access is poor, consequently fishing use is mainly confined to guided helicopter angling for cutthroat trout and Dolly Varden char.

The Homathko Block lies within the Drier Sub-maritime Coastal Western Hemlock Subzone of the North Pacific Ranges Ecoregion. The TFL lands occupy flat alluvial terraces and plains up to four kilometers wide which are enclosed by very steep mountainous terrain where summit elevations exceed 2,000 meters. The alluvial flats are comprised of coarse textured sandy soils but there are also extensive areas of organic deposits, especially along Cumsack Creek.

Presently, the floodplain lands are dominated by deciduous tree species such as cottonwood and alder. Interesting open riparian habitats are associated with the frequent back channels and tributaries adjacent to the Homathko River. Bog and marsh vegetation is scattered throughout the Homathko Block and there is an extensive variety of wetlands along upper Cumsack Creek. These wetter sites provide good opportunities for nature study and wildlife viewing. The floodplains also provide good habitats for grizzly and black bears, waterfowl, passerine birds and fur bearing animals. The air photos show evidence of considerable beaver activity in the wetter portions of the valley. Mountain goats may occasionally be sighted from the valley on the nearby mountains. Other species include bald eagles and black-tailed deer.

The Homathko River and its tributaries are important for anadromous and resident fish. Recreational species include coho and chinook salmon, Dolly Varden char, cutthroat and steelhead trout. With the exception of Smith Creek, streams in the Homathko Block tend to be turbid which tends to limit the area's attractiveness for sport fishing.

The lower Homathko valley lies within the territory of the Homalco Tribe of the Coast Salish Indian group. According to Archaeological Branch files there are no recognized archaeological sites within the Homathko Block

The Homathko Valley has an interesting historical background. Between 1862 and 1864 Alfred Waddington laid out and started construction of a wagon road north from the head of Bute Inlet up the Homathko River leading to the Interior gold fields. Within the TFL the road followed the eastern side of the river. Canyons on the upper Homathko posed major obstacles to road construction. Then, in 1864, 14 members of the construction crew were killed by Chilcotin Indians. Consequently, the wagon road was never completed. In the 1870's the valley was investigated as a possible rail route to the Pacific Coast and in the 1920's investigations started to be made regarding the Homathko River's hydro-electric potential. A thriving settlement of about 60 people in 1895 has been described. The settlement's location may have been at Lot 1047 near the mouth of the river. However, little, if any, evidence remains of these early activities.

Logging has been a major activity in the Homathko Block for decades. The TFL #43 Block was established in 1985 and is operated mainly as a cottonwood tree farm by Scott Paper Ltd. There are no parks or formal recreation sites along the Homathko River. The Forest Service and Parks Branch have expressed no interest in the establishment of parks or recreation facilities. A wilderness area has been proposed for the nearby Southgate River.

The Ministry of Forests and Ministry of Environment are the main agencies concerned with the management of recreation and aesthetic resources in the Homathko Valley. The main contacts in this regard are the Forest District Office at Powell River and Regional Environment office at Surrey.

### 1.2.3 KINGCOME BLOCK

The Kingcome Block encompasses 963 hectares along the lower Kingcome River between the Atlatzi River in the south to about five kilometers north of the Clear River in the north. Kingcome Indian village with about 100 residents is located just south of the TFL Block. The area is in a relatively remote setting approximately 100 kilometers northeast of Alert and Port McNeill on Vancouver Island. Access to Kingcome Inlet is restricted to small float planes or helicopter from Campbell River and Port Hardy or by boat. The TFL Block is served by an all-weather industrial road but the general public has little prospect of using the isolated road system.

The Kingcome Block presently experiences very low recreation use levels because of its relative remoteness. Most activity is associated with local natives who engage in fishing, hunting and gathering berries. One registered angling guide brings parties into the area by helicopter for cutthroat, Dolly Varden, steelhead and salmon fishing in the Clear and Atlatzi rivers.

The Kingcome Block lies within the Wetter Coastal Western Hemlock Subzone of the North Pacific Ranges Ecosection. Adjacent terrain is comprised of very steep mountainous slopes with frequent bedrock outcrops and numerous cascades and waterfalls several hundred meters in height. The TFL lands are mainly confined to flat alluvial terraces enclosed by the nearby steep slopes. The alluvial flats are comprised of sandy, coarse textured soils. Vigorous stands of cottonwood and alder are characteristic on the floodplains accompanied by a relatively dense understory of shrubs and herbs.

The presence of the Kingcome River and tributaries such as the Atlatzi and Clear rivers are a major feature. These are anadromous fish bearing streams with runs of pink, chum and coho salmon along with a few chinook and sockeye salmon. The Kingcome system also supports steelhead trout (winter and summer runs), coastal cutthroat trout and resident Dolly Varden char.

Major wildlife species include grizzly bear, black bear, black-tailed deer, bald eagle, wolf and a few moose. Mountain goat are sometimes visible from the river valley on the adjacent mountain ridges.

The Kingcome Block is within the area of the Kwakiutlan aboriginal group of Indians. According the Archaeologic Branch files there are no recognized archaeological sites within the TFL.

A permanent native settlement of about 100 individuals is located on the east bank of the Kingcome River about three kilometers upstream from the head of Kingcome Inlet. Fishing and logging are the main local activities.

The lower valley and estuary area was developed for agriculture about 100 years ago. The majority of these properties and the estuary area are now owned by The Nature Trust of B.C. which manages these lands for the conservation of wildlife habitats and natural features.

The valley has a long history of logging activities because of its proximity to tidewater. Tributary valleys and areas to the north are operated by Interfor Ltd. The relatively small TFL #43 holdings of Scott Paper Ltd. were established in 1985.

There are no parks or formal recreation sites in or near the Kingcome Block. An Ecological Reserve (# 40) occupies 414 hectares in two blocks along the east side of the valley adjacent to TFL #43.

The Ministry of Forests and the Ministry of Environment are the main agencies concerned with the management of recreation and aesthetic resources in the Kingcome Valley. The main contacts in this regard are the Forest District office at Port McNeill and the Ministry of Environment offices for the Region at Nanaimo and the District at Campbell River.

## 2.0 METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

The data for the Recreation Analysis relies heavily upon a recreation inventory recently completed for Scott Paper in January, 1992. This information has been augmented by review of more recent available reports and contact with appropriate agencies such as the Ministry of Forests, Provincial Fish and Wildlife Branches, Greater Vancouver Regional District and B.C. Parks. In addition to the recreation inventory, a landscape inventory was completed at the same time for the Lower Fraser Block. The main sources of information for the inventory were:

- air photo interpretation using colour air photographs supplied by Scott Paper Ltd. (scales: 1:12,000 to 1:22,000; dates: 1983 to 1988),
- on-the-ground field checks
- fixed-wing and helicopter reconnaissance
- review of existing reports and inventories,
- contact with pertinent agencies, user groups and knowledgeable individuals.

## 3.0 DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING RECREATION RESOURCE VALUES

### 3.1 KEY FEATURES

#### 3.1.1 FRASER BLOCK

The key recreation features of the Lower Fraser Block are bar fishing opportunities along the more accessible river bars and beaches of the Fraser River. Some hunting, 4-wheel driving, trail biking and horseback riding takes place on a dispersed basis.

#### 3.1.2 HOMATHKO BLOCK

The key recreation values of the Homathko Block are related to high quality fresh water fishing. Several guides use the area for trout, char and steelhead fishing by bringing customers into the area by helicopter. The lower Homathko has some importance as a pass-through corridor for mountaineering, ski touring and back-packing activities in the Mount Waddington area.

#### 3.1.3 KINGCOME BLOCK

The key recreation feature of the Kingcome Block is the importance of the Kingcome River and its larger tributaries for their recreational fishing. Existing use levels are low.

### 3.2 RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES SPECTRUM

Six classes of Recreation Opportunities Spectrum (ROS) are defined by the MoF recreation inventory. In TFL #43 the following two ROS classes apply:

#### Class 3 - Semi-primitive, Motorized

This ROS class is applied to areas in the Lower Fraser Block that include the more isolated islands where there is no road access (but where there is boat access) and north of Greyell Slough where motor access is restricted to small portions of the landscape; this ROS class is also applied to upper sections east of the Homathko River where road access has been restricted by the loss of bridges.

Class 4 - Roaded Resource Land

This ROS class is assigned to most portions of the Homathko and Kingcome blocks where the main valleys are served by the existing industrial roads; it is also applied to islands in the Lower Fraser Block which feature good road access for the general public.

### 3.2.1 FRASER BLOCK

Two levels of ROS (Recreation Opportunities Spectrum) Class are identified within the Lower Fraser Block:

Class 3 - Semi-primitive, Motorized - 3,424 hectares of Islands with dirt road access during periods of low water or with boat access only,

Class 4 - Roaded Resource Land - 127 hectares of Islands with good road access.

### 3.2.2 HOMATHKO BLOCK

Two levels of ROS (Recreation Opportunities Spectrum) Class are identified within the Homathko Block:

Class 3 - Semi-Primitive, Motorized - 836 hectares

Class 4 - Roaded Resource Land - 4,782 hectares

### 3.2.3 KINGCOME BLOCK

The entire 963 hectares of the Kingcome Block is considered to be ROS Class 4 land, Roaded Resource Land.



### 3.3 EXISTING AND POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES

#### 3.3.1 FRASER BLOCK

Recreation use levels vary from quite high along the periphery of the Lower Fraser Block to low and dispersed for most of the islands within the TFL. The most concentrated use is bar fishing at several locations along the main-stem of the Fraser River.

Fishing is a year-round activity. Cutthroat trout are taken throughout the winter months (October to April), steelhead from December to March, salmon (coho and chinook) in the late summer and early fall and sturgeon in most months of the year. Other species sought include Dolly Varden char, whitefish and carp. Up to 100 fishermen may use any one of the more popular bar fishing areas at one time. Most fishermen are residents of the Lower Mainland on one or two-day trips. A high number of anglers use boats to gain access to bars throughout the region. Side channels and creek mouths are also popular sites for trout fishing. Some guided fishing activity probably takes place in the area as well.

A number of other recreation activities take place within the Lower Fraser Block. These include hunting, 4-wheel driving, motor biking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing and nature study. Unlike bar fishing, these pursuits are relatively dispersed and may take place at almost any location. Most recreation use is normally not within the forested areas because of the dense blackberry and underbrush growth which severely limits foot travel. Some rock hounding occurs along the river bars as well.

Deer and grouse hunting appear to occur mostly on the larger accessible islands such as Herrling Island and the island complex north of Greyell Slough. Duck hunting takes place along the more remote islands which are normally accessed by boat.

Motor biking and 4-wheel driving originates and fans out from the more popular access points such as at Peg Leg Bar, Greyell Slough, Gill Road and Morrow's Bar just east of the Rosedale-Agassiz Bridge. Evidence of camping and picnicking is found throughout the Lower Fraser Block but it normally takes place outside the TFL and the forested areas.

### 3.3.2 HOMATHKO BLOCK

Recreation use levels in the Homathko Valley are relatively low due to the area's relative isolation and poor access. There is some limited use of the area by Natives for fishing and hunting.

A growing recreational activity is guided fishing, mainly in the form of heli-fishing for trout by four angling guides who use the Homathko River.

The Homathko Valley is also used as a corridor for mountaineering, ski touring and back-packing activities in the Mount Waddington area. Parties fly into the Waddington area or boat up the Homathko River to Scar Creek which is the main jump-off point to the Waddington Range.

There are some reports of river rafting on the Southgate River and possibly on the Homathko but the Parks Branch reports that no approved commercial river rafting operations are presently registered for these rivers.

The Homathko Block lies within the big game guide territory of John Innes of Campbell River. It is assumed that his hunting activities are concentrated in the more remote mountainous locations and that TFL #43 lands are not of direct importance to his operations.

### 3.3.3 KINGCOME BLOCK

Recreation use levels in the Kingcome Valley are low due to the area's relative isolation and poor access. Local residents use the area on a dispersed basis for fishing, hunting and berry picking. Non-local use is mainly in the form of guided fishing trips.

The Kingcome River is considered a Class 2 river by the Ministry of Environment. This designation is related to special licensing requirements for non-resident angling and the management of guided fishing activities. Currently, the Kingcome River is closed to chinook salmon fishing and the daily quota for coho is a single fish.

Presently, the local rivers offer fairly high quality fishing opportunities for a limited number of people. However, the long-term productivity of these streams is limited and they are very sensitive to any high levels of fishing pressure (Rimmer & Axford, 1990).

The Kingcome Block lies within the big game guide territory of Scott Farr of Campbell River. It is believed that the guide carries out little if any hunting activities within or near the TFL #43 lands.

The lower Kingcome River is navigable for small boats and canoes. Excellent landscape views are available from along the river corridor. However, these opportunities have poor potential for the general public due to the area's remote location and the existence of more challenging opportunities elsewhere.

### 3.4 RECREATION ISSUES

#### 3.4.1 FRASER BLOCK

Potential for resource conflicts appears to be minimal in the Lower Fraser Block. The most concentrated recreation uses are away from the managed forests or outside the TFL boundary. Protection of fish and wildlife habitats and stocks appears to be the main concern of most recreation users and agencies.

A secondary concern is related to potential visual impacts. For the most part, the islands of the Lower Fraser Block are not readily viewed by significant numbers of people or the general public. However, there is one area of High Landscape Sensitivity on the eastern portion of the small island within the TFL adjacent to Ferry Island Provincial Park.

#### 3.4.2 HOMATHKO BLOCK

Guided fishing parties and pass-through mountaineering groups are the main recreational users in the lower Homathko Valley. This growing use suggests that there might be future consideration for maintaining natural appearing conditions along the main streams. Guided fishermen have an expectation of experiencing relatively primitive conditions. Combined with the need for protecting fishery values some care may be required to maintain adequate vegetative buffers for aesthetic reasons along the main stream corridors and high use areas.

Cold water temperatures and high siltation levels limit overall fish productivity. Existing angling is of moderate quality and limited quantity. The fishing quality is due more to a history of low use than to high productivity. Protection of fish stocks from over-harvest and degradation of fish habitats are the main concerns in protecting existing recreational values.

### 3.4.3 KINGCOME BLOCK

The major recreation opportunities in the Kingcome Block are related to the fishing resources. If fish stocks and habitats are adequately protected then recreation opportunities will be protected. A major concern is the potential for over-fishing of both resident and anadromous species. The guided fishing is closely monitored by the Ministry of Environment but this is not true for angling by residents and by logging crews.

A secondary concern is the maintenance of forest cover for visual purposes. Most recreation users in this valley, especially the guided clients, have a fairly high expectation of experiencing relatively primitive conditions. Special care should be taken to maintain adequate vegetation buffers along the most significant fishing areas, especially at the Clear and Atlatzi rivers.

## 3.5 RECREATION SITES AND TRAILS

### 3.5.1 FRASER BLOCK

There are no formal recreation sites or trails within the Fraser River Block. However, there are a number of informal recreation use areas adjacent to the TFL lands of the Lower Fraser Block. Most, about 15 in number, are along the south side of the Fraser River while there are about five such areas along the north side. These areas act as access points to the river and most are used for concentrated bar fishing, picnicking and unorganized camping. They also act as loci for motor-biking, 4-wheel driving and horseback riding. The greatest concentration of these access points is in the vicinity of Chilliwack of which Peg Leg Bar (off Ballam Road), Jespersen Road and Gill Road are the most heavily used.

### 3.5.2 HOMATHKO BLOCK

There are no formal or informal recreation sites or trails within the Homathko Block.

### 3.5.3 KINGCOME BLOCK

There are no formal or informal recreation sites or trails within the Kingcome Block.

## 3.6 VISUAL QUALITY AND SCENIC RESOURCES

### 3.6.1 FRASER BLOCK

For the most part, the islands in the Lower Fraser Block are not readily viewed by large numbers of people. The islands are flat and are, with few exceptions, mainly viewed from flat terrain at the same elevation across the Fraser River or across its side channels. Frequently, therefore, only the fringes of certain islands are visible and large sections of the interior of the islands are only viewed by the few individuals who may hunt or explore these areas. Consequently, most of the TFL lands have a Low Landscape Sensitivity Rating.

One small area of High Landscape Sensitivity and several small areas of Medium Landscape Sensitivity occur. The area of High Landscape Sensitivity is the eastern portion of the small island adjacent to Ferry Island Provincial Park. This area is in close proximity and direct view of park users where there are concentrated numbers of people engaged in swimming, fishing and picnicking. The areas of Medium Landscape Sensitivity are mainly confined to narrow, small zones at the fringes of islands which are in view from nearby public use areas. These areas are described in more detail in the "TFL #43 Recreation Inventory".

Two major highways parallel the Lower Fraser Block: Highway 7 to the north and Highway 401 to the south. For the most part, the TFL lands are isolated from the main highways. However, views and glimpses of the TFL are afforded from limited locations along the highway. The most important areas in this regard are:

- Rosedale-Agassiz Bridge,
- in the vicinity of Johnson's Slough (Highway 7)
- Highway 7 viewpoint at Mount Woodside west of Agassiz,
- several small vantage points along Highway 401 between Popkum and Laidlaw.

### 3.6.2 HOMATHKO BLOCK

Visual quality is moderately high on steep mountainous slopes adjacent to the Homathko Block. However, within the TFL, lands along the floodplain have relatively Low Landscape Sensitivity and High Visual Absorption Capability.

### 3.6.3 KINGCOME BLOCK

Similar to the Homathko Block visual quality is moderately high on steep mountainous slopes adjacent to the Kingcome Block. However, within the TFL, lands along the floodplain have relatively Low Landscape Sensitivity and High Visual Absorption Capability.

## 3.7 WILDERNESS

Lands throughout TFL #43 are entirely Roded Resource Land or Semi-primitive Motorized and are not suited for consideration as wilderness area.

Of potential interest, however, are two wilderness proposals - the Coast Mountains-Mount Waddington and Mount Waddington-Klinaklini River areas. These two areas are identified as Category 3 Protected Areas for which a decision regarding protected status is scheduled by 1995. These two areas lie north of the Kingcome and Homathko blocks and there are no direct implications for TFL #43. However, if these areas are designated as parks or wilderness areas then the two river valleys - Homathko and Kingcome - would become logical corridors for public access to the protected areas at some future date.

## 3.8 PARKS, COMMERCIAL AND PRIVATE RECREATION FACILITIES

### 3.8.1 FRASER BLOCK

No parks, commercial or private recreation facilities are located within the Lower Fraser Block. However, four parks are found near the Lower Fraser Block which provide modest interaction with the TFL.

#### Island 22 Park

This park of about 20 hectares area is managed by the District of Chilliwack. It is located at the end of Cartmell Road west of Chilliwack very near the west end of the Lower Fraser Block. Major features and facilities at the park include: boat launching (especially for fishermen using islands within the TFL), bar fishing, a 65-unit campground, picnicking and equestrian facilities.

#### Kilby Provincial Historic Park

This is a three hectare Class A Provincial park on the Harrison River about two kilometers northwest of the TFL islands at the mouth of the Harrison River. It features boat launching, a 200-meter developed beach, 38-unit campground and day-use facilities. The boat launch provides access from the north side of the Fraser River for fishermen using the TFL islands.

#### Ferry Island Provincial Park

Ferry Island Park is a 29 hectare Class C Provincial park adjacent to TFL lands just west of the Rosedale-Agassiz bridge. (The park takes its name from a ferry connection at this point in the past). The park has no facilities other than good road access to the edge of the Fraser River. The beach area on the northwest edge of the park is very popular for bar fishing, swimming and picnicking. As a Class C park it is administered by a local parks board, the Ferry Island Parks Board, in association with the District Parks office at Cultus Lake. Users of this park have direct and close views to a small portion of TFL lands just west of Ferry Island.

#### F.H. Barber Provincial Park

This is a nine hectare Class A Provincial park along the shores of the Fraser River near Laidlaw. The park is undeveloped and presently exists as a forested strip of land between the river and Highway 401. Access is almost non-existent off the busy freeway and public use appears to be very low. F.H. Barber Park is directly across from the island areas within the TFL at the mouth of Johnson's Slough.

### 3.8.2 HOMATHKO BLOCK

There are no parks, commercial or private recreation facilities within or near the Homathko Block. The B.C. Ministry of Environment have expressed some interest in the Cumsack Creek area and adjacent wetlands as an "Area of Interest" under the Protected Areas Strategy.

### 3.8.3 KINGCOME BLOCK

There are no parks, commercial or private recreation facilities within or near the Kingcome Block. There are however, certain sites of importance to Natives at Kingcome Village such as a smokehouse site on the west side of the Kingcome River.

Ecological Reserve No. 40 occupies 414 hectares in two parcels along the east side of the Kingcome Valley adjacent to TFL lands. This reserve was established in 1972 to protect a coastal lodgepole pine forest. In the past two years (1992-1993) there have been proposals to slightly alter the boundaries of the two reserve parcels. The proposed changes appear to have little, if any, impact upon TFL #43 lands. There have been some difficulties in resolving the boundary changes and it is not known when such changes might be made.



## 4.0 DESCRIPTION OF USE, VALUE AND DEMAND

### 4.1 CURRENT DEMAND

#### 4.1.1 FRASER BLOCK

The only significant demand for recreation in the Lower Fraser Block is related to river bar fishing. Other uses such as hunting and ATV use are highly dispersed and demand is spread over a very large area throughout the Lower Mainland. The main limits to the demand for bar fishing appear to be the availability of bar fishing areas (depending upon land tenure and convenience of access to the bars) and the health and status of fish stocks. Forest management activities within TFL #43 appear to be a positive factor in meeting this demand because forest management provides and maintains access to certain bar fishing areas and does not preclude access to any areas. At the same time, commercial forestry activities associated with TFL #43 have no negative impacts upon fish stocks.

#### 4.1.2 HOMATHKO AND KINGCOME BLOCKS

The demand for recreation within the Homathko and Kingcome blocks are similar to each other: utilization of the rivers and streams for high quality guided fishing experiences. The main limitations to this demand is the supply of quality fish stocks in a relatively natural setting. A major factor limiting this supply is the potential for over-harvest of the fish stocks. Forest management activities, as carried out with care in TFL #43, have minimal impact upon the fish stocks. However, the commercial forest activities are perceived by commercial sport fishing guides as being deleterious from an aesthetic and "wilderness experience" point of view.

### 4.2 FORECASTING DEMAND AND PROJECTING TRENDS

There is limited specific data and research available that identifies trends or future demand in recreation as they might apply to TFL #43. Two documents - Osborn, 1991 and Praxis, 1993 - provide general information about recreation use and demand at the regional level in the Fraser Valley and Greater Vancouver areas. A third document, the Outdoor Recreation Survey by the Ministry of Forests, 1991, provides information mainly at the provincial level. These studies identify the following use levels and trends in

recreation which have broad application to TFL #43 lands in the Fraser Block. There is no data pertinent to the Homathko or Kingcome Blocks.

The following information is reported by Osborn, 1991:

- The number of day-visitors (lower mainland) to both regional and provincial parks has risen over 40 percent during the 1980's (Page 1, Summary),
- The G.V.R.D. predicts that use of its regional parks will double during the last decade of the century (Page 1, Summary),
- Participation in outdoor recreation activity by G.V.R.D. adults for fishing was ranked 5th and for hunting ranked 12th out of 14 activity categories (Page 6, Figure 2),
- B.C. Parks surveys of 1983 and 1989 indicate no change in fishing participation for lower mainland adults between the two periods (Page 12, Section 3.1),
- B.C. Ministry of Environment records of licensed freshwater anglers in British Columbia show a steady increase until 1982 then a significant decline to 1986 followed by a modest increase for the last year of reported data in 1987 (Page 13, Section 3.1),
- Ministry of Forests recreation site use in the Chilliwack Forest District more than doubled between 1980 and 1989; there was a strong increase from about 60,000 user days in 1980 to about 150,000 user days in 1988 followed by a decline to about 135,000 user days in 1989 (Pages 20 and 21, Figure 13)

Praxis, 1993 reports somewhat higher participation rates for fishing and hunting in the Valley (Central Fraser Valley, Dewdney-Alouette and Fraser Cheam Regional Districts) as compared to the G.V.R.D. (Page 35, Table 2F).

The above recreation use information suggest an appreciable growth in, and demand for, outdoor recreation in recent years and extending into the near future. However, demand for fishing, the principal existing activity in the Fraser Block does not appear to be as great when compared to all forms of recreation activity. The secondary activity in the Fraser Block, hunting, appears to have a relatively low participation rate as compared to most other forms of outdoor recreation.

In the Homathko and Kingcome Blocks heli-fishing is the main recreation pursuit. This form of fishing is considered a high quality activity where natural surroundings are an important attribute. This activity appears to have grown rapidly in recent years. The demand for high quality fishing opportunities may experience significant growth and pressure in the near future because the opportunities for such activity are limited in extent.

#### 4.3 ESTIMATE OF NON-USE RECREATION VALUES

All three blocks within TFL #43 are fully developed, managed areas with good road networks and intensive forest management activities. Although the Homathko and Kingcome Blocks are relatively remote and lie adjacent to high quality wilderness areas such as Mount Waddington, wilderness and non-user recreation values are of low importance within the TFL lands.

#### 4.4 GAPS IN MEETING OUTDOOR RECREATION NEEDS

There appear to be no significant gaps in meeting outdoor recreation needs within TFL #43. The main threat to maintaining high quality fishing in the TFL is minimizing and controlling the harvest of fish stocks, protecting them from over-exploitation by recreation users and maintaining healthy habitats for the fish. Existing forestry activities within the TFL have minimal impact upon the quality and quantity of fish stocks. The main implication for TFL management is to provide small areas of vegetative buffers for aesthetic purposes along the main river corridors where fishing use and potential is highest.

#### 4.5 COMMERCIAL RECREATION

Commercial recreation within TFL #43 is confined to guided fishing in the Homathko and Kingcome blocks. In the Homathko Block this is mainly in the form of heli-fishing for cutthroat trout and Dolly Varden char (and possibly for some steelhead). The Homathko River is currently closed to chinook fishing. Four angling guides are registered to operate in the Homathko area:

Craig Houston, Canadian Helicopters, Campbell River  
Mike Gallant, Sonora Island Lodge, Campbell River  
Clint Cameron, Dolphins Resort, Campbell River  
Brian Baldwin, Silvertip Adventures, Powell River

One registered fish guide (Craig Murray, Nimmo Bay Resort Ltd.) operates in the Kingcome system. Helicopters are the main way fishing parties access the area. The Kingcome, Atlatzi and Clear rivers are fished largely on a catch-and-release basis. Cutthroat trout, Dolly Varden char, steelhead and the salmon species, especially coho, are sought from the spring months through to the fall. The Kingcome system has a modest reputation for its spring-summer steelhead fishing opportunities.

## 5.0 RECREATION MANAGEMENT OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 RECREATION ANALYSIS

The supply of recreation opportunities in TFL #43 appears to be generally unaffected by commercial forestry operations. Bar fishing opportunities in the Fraser Block are mainly separated on an areal basis from forestry activity. The main factors would appear to be somewhat easier access being provided to the bar fishing areas for the public by routes and road accesses developed for forestry purposes.

Guided fishing is the main existing and projected use in the Homathko and Kingcome Blocks. The main factors affecting the supply of quality fishing opportunities are the potential for over-harvest of fish stocks and the potential for fish habitat degradation from forestry activities outside TFL #43 in adjacent mountainous areas. The expectations of the users, both guides and clients, are to experience a relatively undisturbed setting while engaged in fishing. For this reason there are aesthetic considerations at site-specific locations such as Brew Creek and the Teaquahan and Heakamie Rivers in the Homathko Block and at the Atlatzi and Clear Rivers in the Kingcome Block. Similar expectations are found immediately adjacent to the main stems of the Homathko and Kingcome Rivers.

In the Homathko Block, Cumsack Creek and adjacent wetlands hold modest potential for wildlife viewing and nature study. Generally, this area has relatively low commercial forestry value, existing use levels are virtually non-existent and public access will remain very restricted for at least the near future. Consequently, there appear to be no issues to resolve with the Cumsack Creek area for the time being from a recreation or landscape perspective.

All lands within TFL #43 are either Semi-primitive, Motorized or Roaded Resource Land and do not lend themselves for consideration as wilderness areas.

### 5.2 RECREATION MANAGEMENT DIRECTION SCENARIOS

There appear to be no significant interactions between commercial forestry operations and recreation use and potential within TFL #43 at the present time. Generally, recreation use levels in the Fraser Block are dispersed or concentrated at the peripheries of forestry operations. Recreation use levels, both existing and anticipated, are relatively low in the Homathko and Kingcome Blocks.

It is important that forestry activities not preclude or seriously impact upon recreation opportunities or resources and that important recreation use areas and potential areas be protected. These areas include the main bar fishing areas in the Fraser Block, the main stem of the Homathko River, Brew Creek and the Teaquahan and Heakamie Rivers in the Homathko Block and the Atlatzi and Clear Rivers and main stem of the Kingcome River in the Kingcome Block. These areas have mainly been protected by existing forestry activities or experienced only modest temporal impacts because of the rapid green-up times within TFL #43.

There appears to be no need to propose alternative management scenarios to protect or enhance recreation opportunities, use or potential in TFL #43. Any changes in forestry management scenarios - from abandoning all activity to increased levels of harvesting would have only modest, if any effect, upon recreation. Consequently, the only management option being considered for the Recreation Analysis Report is to maintain the status quo.

### 5.3 EVALUATION OF OPTIONS

No alternative management options are being proposed to evaluate or compare.

## 6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The main, general recommendation is that recreation and landscape resources be managed under the principal of integrated resource management and under the direction of Ministry of Forests' policies and guidelines.

## 7.0 APPENDICES

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Greg George, Ministry of Environment, Surrey  
Neil Granger, Chilliwack Outdoor Club, Chilliwack  
Doug Herchmer, Ministry of Forests, Burnaby  
Craig Houston, Canadian Helicopters, Campbell River  
Randy Kelloran, Steelhead Society of B.C., Campbell River  
Ed Kelly, Ministry of Parks, Cultus Lake  
Bruce Lane, B.C. Federation of Fly Fishers, Delta  
Rick McDermid, Fraser-Cheam Regional District, Chilliwack  
Craig Murray, Nemmo Bay Resort, Kingcome Fish Guide, Port McNeill  
Craig Orr, Steelhead Society of B.C., Coquitlam  
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"Table 1" - Recreation Inventory Summary

<u>Resource Emphasis Area</u>	<u>Management Classes 0 &amp; 1 ROS Class - Ha</u>		<u>Management Class 2 ROS Class - Ha</u>		<u>Key Features</u>	<u>Key Activities</u>	<u>Comments, Resource Implications</u>
Fraser River	3 4	2086.70 54.56	3 4	1337.44 72.24	bar fishing; boating; nature study; floodplain forests; the Fraser River	a, b, n, p, j	high use at selected locations; otherwise highly dispersed recreation use
Homathko River	3 4	76.64 1855.68	3 4	759.72 2926.28	Fish runs; angling; wildlife; floodplain forests; riparian habitats; extensive wetlands	a, n, p, q	guided fishing at selected locations
Kingcome River	4	184.68	4	777.84	Fish runs; angling; wildlife; floodplain forests; riparian habitats	a, n, p, q	guided fishing at selected locations

"Table 2" - Existing Recreation Sites and Trails (MoF)

Resource Emphasis <u>Area</u>	<u>Sites</u>	<u>Trails</u>
Fraser River	none	none
Homathko River	none	none
Kingcome River	none	none

"Table 3" - Existing Recreation Sites and Trails (Other)

Resource Emphasis <u>Area</u>	<u>Sites</u>	<u>Trails</u>
Fraser River	none	none
Homathko River	none	none
Kingcome River	none	none

"Table 4" - Recreation Resource Evaluation

<u>Resource Emphasis Area</u>	<u>Analysis Scenario</u>	<u>ROS Class</u>	<u>Recreation Resource Management Objectives</u>	<u>Rationale, Comments, Implications</u>
Fraser River	Status- quo	3 4	maintain present and accomodate future recrea- tion use levels;	There is no need to institute special management; there is need to maintain the principles of integrated resource management and to follow Ministry of Forests policies and guidelines.
Homathko River	"	3 4	protect recreation resource	
Kingcome River	"	4	potentials and opportunities for future use.	

"Table 5" - Recreation Inventory Projection

<u>Resource Emphasis Area</u>	<u>Management Classes 0 &amp; 1 ROS Class - Ha</u>		<u>Management Class 2 ROS Class - Ha</u>		<u>Key Features</u>	<u>Key Activities</u>	<u>Comments, Resource Implications</u>
Fraser River	3	2086.70	3	1337.44	bar fishing; boating; nature study; floodplain forests; the Fraser River	a, b, n, p, j	high use at selected locations; otherwise highly dispersed recreation use
	4	54.56	4	72.24			
Homathko River	3	76.64	3	759.72	Fish runs; angling; wildlife; floodplain forests; riparian habitats; extensive wetlands	a, n, p, q	guided fishing at selected locations
	4	1855.68	4	2926.28			
Kingcome River	4	184.68	4	777.84	Fish runs; angling; wildlife; floodplain forests; riparian habitats	a, n, p, q	guided fishing at selected locations

"Table 6" - Projected Recreation Sites and Trails (MoF)

Resource Emphasis <u>Area</u>	<u>Sites</u>	<u>Trails</u>
Fraser River	none	none
Homathko River	none	none
Kingcome River	none	none

"Table 7" - Projected Recreation Sites and Trails (Other)

Resource Emphasis <u>Area</u>	<u>Sites</u>	<u>Trails</u>
Fraser River	none	none
Homathko River	none	none
Kingcome River	none	none

# **TFL #43 RECREATION INVENTORY**

(Includes Lower Fraser, Homathko and Kingcome Blocks)

Prepared for:

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New Westminster, B.C.

By:

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Victoria, B.C.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 BACKGROUND

This recreation inventory was carried out in the winter of 1991-92 covering Scott Paper Ltd.'s TFL #43 lands within the Vancouver Forest Region. TFL #43 encompasses approximately 10,000 hectares at three locations:

- (1) islands and floodplains along 38 kilometers of the lower Fraser River between Chilliwack and Laidlaw, an area of 3,294 hectares,
- (2) floodplains along 32 kilometers of the lower Homathko River from the head of Bute Inlet north to the vicinity of Whitemantle Creek, an area of 5,554 hectares,
- (3) floodplains along 12 kilometers of the lower Kingcome River between the Atlatzi River and a point about five kilometers north of the Clear River, an area of 975 hectares.

TFL #43 is primarily devoted to the production of cottonwood and poplar hybrids and species. The logs are taken to Scott Paper's mill at New Westminster for processing into paper products. Forest management is relatively intense which includes considerable attention to genetic selection of stock, reforestation and spacing. Harvesting does not entail the use of heavy machinery which is normally associated with forestry practices in southwestern British Columbia. Rotations are relatively short, averaging about 30 years in length and visually effective green-up times seldom exceed a year or so. These factors contribute to relatively low impact of forestry operations upon aesthetics and outdoor recreation opportunities.

In addition to a recreation inventory for the entire TFL a landscape inventory was completed for the Lower Fraser Block. The recreation inventory of TFL #43 follows standards laid out by the Ministry of Forests. These standards are described in the Ministry of Forests' Recreation Manual. Chapter 6 of this manual was referred to for the recreation inventory while Chapter 11 was the main source for methods of landscape inventory.

The main sources of information for the inventory were:

- air photo interpretation using colour air photographs supplied by Scott Paper Ltd. (scales: 1:12,000 to 1:22,000; dates: 1983 to 1988),
- on-the-ground and air field checks
- review of existing reports and inventories,
- contact with pertinent agencies, user groups and knowledgeable individuals.

Starting with recommended contacts supplied by Scott Paper Ltd. and the three relevant Forest District Recreation Officers, contact was made with a number of agencies and individuals. These contacts are listed in the appendices. In addition, an ad was placed in the Vancouver Sun requesting public input to the project on two consecutive weekends in late November, 1991. Considerable information was gathered from telephone interviews. A form letter and maps were sent to prospective individuals who expressed interest in supplying information.

The main study products include:

- eight 1:20,000 recreation inventory maps covering the entire TFL #43 area,
- three 1:20,000 landscape inventory maps for the Lower Fraser Block,
- a photo album of field photographs,
- Recreation Overlay Attribute Lists (used by the Ministry of Forests to facilitate computer entry of map data),
- this report which includes summary descriptions of the study blocks, map narratives and tabular summaries
- correspondence and map information submitted by contacts

For reasons of mapping efficiency and convenience the eight 1:20,000 base maps used by Scott Paper Ltd. differ from the British Columbia Geographic System (BCGS) which entails twelve 1:20,000 map areas in its coverage of TFL #43. This distinction is important because MoF inventory data, tabular summaries and polygon codes must conform to the BCGS system. The following table compares the BCGS system with Scott Paper Ltd.'s base mapping:

<u>BCGS MAP</u>	<u>TFL #43 MAP SHEET</u>
92-H-011	Lower Fraser 1, South Half
92-H-012	Lower Fraser 2, South Half
92-H-021	Lower Fraser 1, North Half
92-H-022	Lower Fraser 2, North Half & Lower Fraser 3 South Half
92-H-032	Lower Fraser 3, North Half
92-K-096	Homathko 1
92-M-010	Kingcome 1
92-M-020	Kingcome 2
92-N-005	Homathko 2, West Half
92-N-066	Homathko 2, East Half
92-N-015	Homathko 3, West Half
92-N-016	Homathko 3, East Half

## 1.2 RECREATION INVENTORY

Recreation inventory maps prepared to MoF standards portray the following elements for each map polygon (map unit):

- land unit annotation (polygon reference number by BCGS map sheet area),
- biophysical features and sub-features (e.g., description of vegetation, beaches, landforms, wildlife, etc.),
- recreation activities (e.g., potentials for angling, hiking or camping, etc.),
- feature significance (an indication of the relative importance of the unit),
- management class (suggested degree of protection the unit warrants),
- Recreation Opportunities Spectrum Class (an indication of present access and development).

For each BCGS map area a map narrative and summary table has been prepared which are presented in respective sections of the report for each of the three blocks within TFL #43.

### 1.3 MAP INTERPRETATIONS

#### 1.3.1 Significance and Management Classes

Four categories of Recreation Significance are used with the MoF recreation methodology:

- A - Very High Significance
- B - High Significance
- C - Moderate Significance
- D - Low Significance

No areas of Very High Significance or Low Significance were assigned in TFL #43. Most lands are considered to have Moderate Significance accompanied by a few small areas of High Significance.

Three categories of Management Class are used by the MoF recreation inventory:

- Class 0 - areas to be maintained exclusively for recreation
- Class 1 - areas requiring special management considerations
- Class 2 - areas where normal forestry practices are appropriate

Most of the lands within TFL #43 are closely associated with good opportunities for angling, hunting, nature appreciation and wildlife viewing. The designation of Management Classes 1 and 2 should have little impact upon current forest management practices. The use of Management Class 1 flags areas of relative importance for the floodplain lands for a variety of mainly extensive type recreation pursuits (angling, hunting, nature appreciation) which are of moderate to high quality.

In the Kingcome and Homathko blocks most recreation users such as guided fishermen, expect a more or less natural environment in which to recreate. Even though the number of users is presently small these considerations should be kept in mind during the planning of commercial forestry activities as expressed in the use of Management Class 1 areas along the main streams.

The interior of most islands in the Lower Fraser Block, and floodplain areas away from the main streams in the Homathko and Kingcome blocks, have been assigned a Management Class of 2. Such areas are relatively common in their respective regions and on these lands recreation user's expectations of an undisturbed landscape are not high. The most significant recreation opportunities are confined to the immediate edges of streams and rivers which are assigned Management Class 1.

# ABBREVIATED MAP LEGEND

Refer to MoF Recreation Manual Draft, Chapter 8 of March, 1990 for Detailed Description of Recreation Inventory Methodology

## FEATURES AND SUB-FEATURES

### AQUATIC

- A1 Sport Fish
- A2 Aquatic Habitat
- A3 Fish Run/Observation
- A4 Edible Aquatic Foods

### BEACHES

- B1 Fine Textured
- B2 Sand Beach
- B3 Pebble Beach
- B4 Cobble Beach
- B5 Rubble Beach
- B6 Unknown Texture

### CULTURAL

- C1 Cultural Site
- C2 Pastoral Landscape
- C3 Urban Land
- C4 Man-made Feature

### HYDROLOGIC

- D Hydrologic

### VEGETATION

- E1 Alpine/Sub-alpine
- E2 Transitional
- E3 Coniferous
- E4 Deciduous
- E5 Mixed Forest
- E6 Parkland
- E7 Non-forested
- E8 Wetland Vegetation
- E9 Managed Forest

### FALLS/RAPIDS

- F1 Site-specific Falls
- F2 Falls Landscape
- F3 Rapids/Chutes

### GLACIERS

- G1 Glacier
- G2 Snow/Ice Field

### HISTORIC

- H1 Historic Site
- H2 Monument
- H3 Historic Route
- H4 Native Legend Site

### COASTAL

- J1 Estuary
- J2 Tidal Marsh
- J3 Lagoon
- J4 Tidal Flat
- J5 Rock Ledge
- J6 Spits/Hooks
- J7 Points
- J8 Tombolo
- J9 Pocket Beaches

### LANDFORM

- L1 Ice Melting
- L2 Ice Movement
- L3 Periglacial
- L4 Moraine/Cirque
- L5 Karst
- L6 Avalanche/Talus
- L7 Landslides
- L8 Canyons/Hoodoos
- L9 Fluvial

### WATER BODIES

- M1 Frequent Small
- M2 Small Surface
- M3 Large Surface

### PREHISTORIC

- P1 Habitation Site
- P2 Rock Art
- P3 Trail
- P4 Resource Utilization

### TOPOGRAPHIC

- Q1 Regional Pattern
- Q2 Local Pattern
- Q3 Shoreland

### ROCK FORMATIONS

- R1 Exposed Bedrock
- R2 Internal Structure
- R3 Mineral Deposit
- R4 Fossils
- R5 Volcanic

### SPRINGS

- S1 Thermal
- S2 Freshwater
- S3 Mineral

### HARBOUR

- U Harbour

### VISUAL

- V0 Visual Value
- V1 High Sensitivity
- V2 Medium Sensitivity

### WILDLIFE

- W1 Birds
- W2 Small Mammals
- W3 Large Mammals
- W4 Marine Mammals
- W5 Wildlife Diversity

### MISCELLANEOUS

- X1 \_\_\_\_\_
- X2 \_\_\_\_\_

## FEATURE RELATED ACTIVITIES

- a - angling
- b - boating
- c - canoeing
- d - kayaking
- e - diving
- f - water ski
- g - swimming
- h - beach activity
- i - camping/picnic
- j - hunting
- k - caving
- l - hiking
- m - mountaineering
- n - nature study
- o - orienteering
- p - viewing
- q - view wildlife
- r - gather/collect
- s - equestrian
- t - trail biking
- u - 4-wheel
- v - snowmobiling
- w - snowshoeing
- x - skiing
- y - ice fishing
- z - other

## FEATURE SIGNIFICANCE

- A - VERY HIGH
- B - HIGH
- C - MODERATE
- D - LOW

## MANAGEMENT CLASS

- Recommendations for:
- 0 - exclusively recreation
  - 1 - special management
  - 2 - normal forest practices

## R.O.S. CLASSES RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES SPECTRUM

- 1 Primitive
- 2 Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized
- 3 Semi-Primitive Motorized
- 4 Roaded Resource Land
- 5 Rural
- 6 Urban

## EXAMPLE MAP SYMBOL

13025  
Q1E3R1  
p C1  
2

where:

- 13025 = Polygon Number
- Q1E3R1 = Features/Sub-Features
- p = Activity Symbol
- C = Significance Class
- 1 = Management Class
- 2 = ROS Class



Parks/Facilities - (M) Municipal;  
(P) Provincial; (Hwy) Highway



Potential Site



River Access Points



Fishing-Use Areas

RECREATION INVENTORY - JANUARY, 1992

SCOTT PAPER LTD., TFL #43

Prepared by: Juan de Fuca Environmental Consultants

Figure 1. Abbreviated Recreation Inventory Map Legend



### 1.3.2 Feature Definitions

Approximately 80 feature and sub-feature categories are defined by the MoF recreation inventory. Most of these are used in a relatively straight-forward manner where A1 refers to Sport Fish and E4 refers to deciduous forest, etc.

Wildlife values are moderate to high throughout the TFL blocks but the wildlife feature symbols (W1, W2, W3, etc.) have been used sparingly, especially the W3 symbol for large mammals. The areas of distribution and concentration of deer, black and grizzly bears are difficult to ascertain accurately from existing sources.

### 1.3.3 Recreation Activities

Twenty six Feature Related Recreation Activities are defined by the MoF recreation inventory. These items are partially redundant with the Feature categories but are designed to indicate both the presence and potential for specific recreation activities

### 1.3.4 Recreation Opportunities Spectrum (ROS)

Six classes of Recreation Opportunities Spectrum (ROS) are defined by the MoF recreation inventory. The ROS class is indicated by the last numeral (1 to 6) of each polygon descriptor. The MoF definitions of ROS class do not specifically include appropriate classifications for roaded areas such as in the Homathko and Kingcome blocks where the general public has no practical means of using the roads. Also, no guidelines are provided for river environments like those in the Lower Fraser Block where boating is a major form of public access.

In TFL #43 the following ROS classes were used:

**Class 3 - Semi-primitive, Motorized**

This ROS class is applied to areas in the Lower Fraser Block that include the more isolated islands where there is no road access (but there is boat access) and north of Greyell Slough where motor access is restricted to small portions of the landscape; this ROS class is also applied to upper sections east of the Homathko River where roads access has been restricted by the loss of bridges.

**Class 4 - Roaded Resource Land**

This ROS class is assigned to most portions of the Homathko and Kingcome blocks where the main valleys are served by the existing industrial roads; it is also applied to islands in the Lower Fraser Block which feature good road access for the general public.

## 2. LOWER FRASER BLOCK RECREATION INVENTORY

### 2.1 LOCATION AND ACCESS

The Lower Fraser Block of TFL #43 is comprised of numerous, low lying islands spread along about 35 kilometers of the Fraser River between Chilliwack and Laidlaw. The total area of the block is 3,294 hectares. The individual islands vary in size from less than one hectare to over 500 hectares. The focus for forest management on the islands are those portions where deciduous forests can be maintained. Significant areas of the Lower Fraser Block are open water, bare sand or gravel or areas of sparse scrub cover.

The Lower Fraser Block is bounded by well developed lands for agriculture and transportation including the communities of Chilliwack and Agassiz. Major highways, secondary roads and railroads parallel the river on both its sides. However, many of the islands are only accessible by boat and most of those islands that are served by roads across river side-channels can be isolated at any time by high water levels, especially during the early summer months.

### 2.2 ROS AREAS

Two levels of ROS (Recreation Opportunities Spectrum) Class are identified within the Lower Fraser Block:

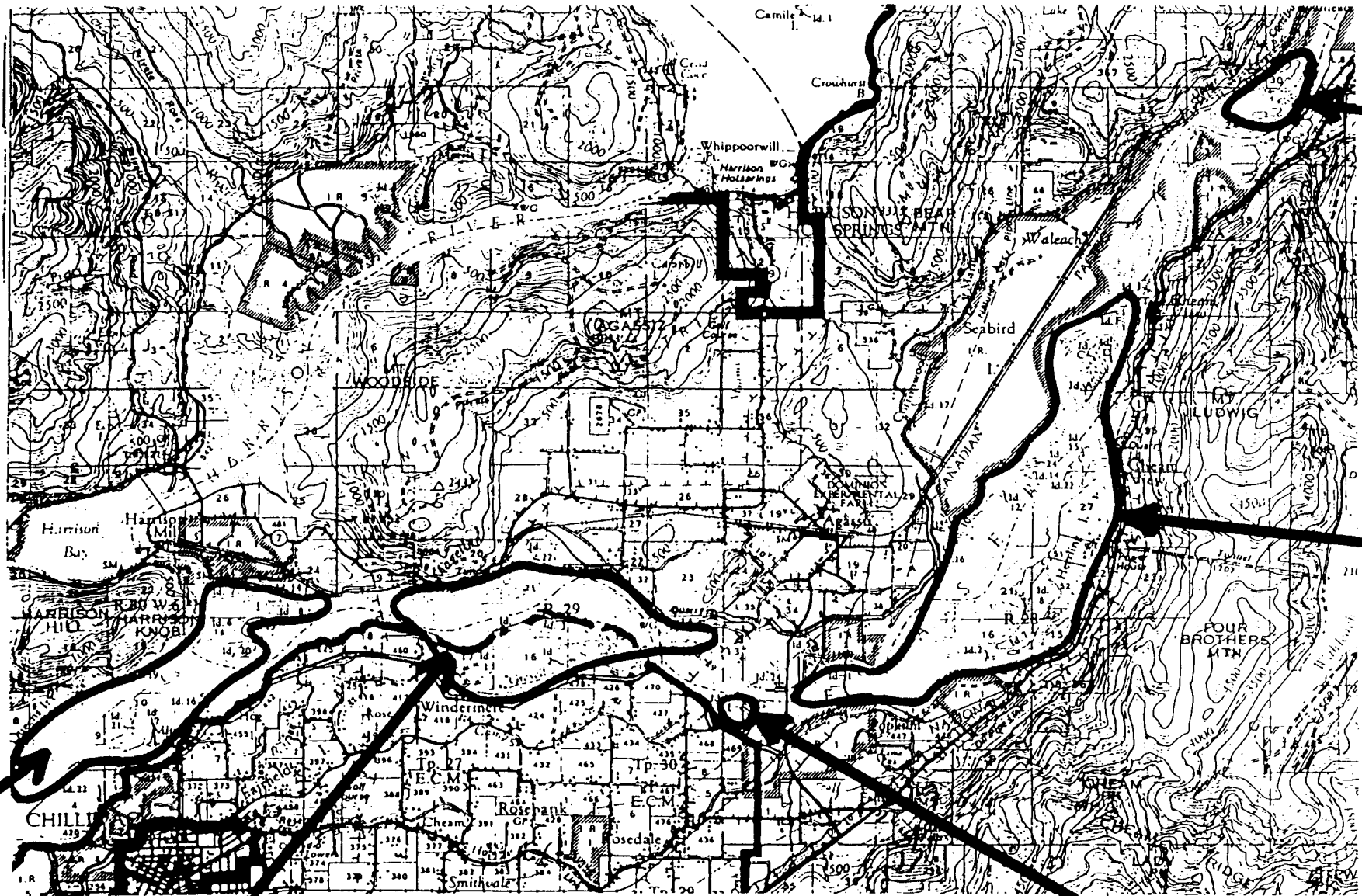
Class 3 - Semi-primitive, Motorized - 3,170 hectares

Islands with dirt road access during periods of low water  
or with boat access only,

Class 4 - Roaded Resource Land - 124 hectares

Islands with good road access.

Figure 2. Lower Fraser Block Map



Fraser Portions  
of TFL #43  
1:125,000

### 2.3 BIOPHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The Lower Fraser Block is entirely comprised of alluvial deposits of the Fraser River. Coarse textured sands and gravel deposits predominate and the flat to gently rolling topography rarely exceeds one or a few meters in relief.

The area lies within the Wetter Coastal Douglas-fir Subzone of the Fraser Lowland Ecoregion. Natural vegetation has almost been eliminated in the general region. Urban and industrial lands dominate the areas surrounding the TFL while areas within the TFL are largely cottonwood forest plantations. However, riparian areas at the edges of many of the islands form highly significant habitats for a wide range of wildlife species, especially for water-birds, waterfowl, birds of prey, passerine birds, small mammals and fur bearers. The islands also support black-tailed deer.

Fishery values are relatively high throughout the Lower Fraser Block. Side-channels are important habitats for both spawning and rearing anadromous salmon while all waters support resident fish. Species of major recreational significance include chinook and coho salmon, steelhead and cutthroat trout, Dolly Varden char and white sturgeon.

### 2.4 CULTURAL FEATURES

The general region of the Lower Fraser Block has a rich history and importance for aboriginal peoples. No recognized archaeological sites are found within the TFL boundary although several occur at its periphery. The continual shifting of the floodplain deposits probably obscures prehistoric features. Indian activities would have been intense along the Fraser River with its rich natural resources. Similarly, the area is important for its early settlement and exploration by Europeans. However, all recognized historic sites and features are outside the boundaries of the TFL.

Forest management and gravel extraction are presently the major industrial activities on the islands. The islands also support significant outdoor recreation opportunities but the main areas of concentrated use are generally just outside the TFL boundaries. There are no formal parks or recreation sites within the Lower Fraser Block.

Several agencies play a role in the administration and management of parks and recreation in the region. Within the TFL the Chilliwack Forest District and the Regional and District offices of the Ministry of Environment are the key agencies interested in outdoor recreation. The Provincial Parks Branch and Chilliwack District Municipality administer park lands which are in close association with the Lower Fraser Block. The Regional Districts of Fraser-Cheam (Chilliwack) and Dewdney-Alouette (Mission) also have a parks and recreation function within the region.

## 2.5 PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Four parks are found near the Lower Fraser Block which provide interaction with the TFL:

### Island 22 Park

This park of about 20 hectares area is managed by the District of Chilliwack. It is located at the end of Cartmell Road west of Chilliwack very near the west end of the Lower Fraser Block. Major features and facilities at the park include: boat launching (especially for fishermen using islands within the TFL), bar fishing, a 65-unit campground, picnicking and equestrian facilities.

### Kilby Provincial Historic Park

This is a three hectare Class A Provincial park on the Harrison River about two kilometers northwest of the TFL islands at the mouth of the Harrison River. It features boat launching, a 200-meter developed beach, 38-unit campground and day-use facilities. The boat launch provides access from the north side of the Fraser River for fishermen using the TFL islands.

### Ferry Island Provincial Park

Ferry Island Park is a 29 hectare Class C Provincial park adjacent to TFL lands just west of the Rosedale-Agassiz bridge. (The park takes its name from a ferry connection at this point in the past). The park has no facilities other than good road access to the edge of the Fraser River. The beach area on the northwest edge of the park is very popular for bar fishing, swimming and picnicking. As a Class C park it is administered by a local parks board, the Ferry Island Parks Board, in association with the District Parks office at Cultus Lake.

### F.H. Barber Provincial Park

This is a nine hectare Class A Provincial park along the shores of the Fraser River near Laidlaw. The park is undeveloped and presently exists as a forested strip of land between the river and Highway 401. Access is almost non-existent off the busy freeway and public use appears to be very low. F.H. Barber Park is directly across from the island areas within the TFL at the mouth of Johnson's Slough.

In addition to formal park lands there are a number of informal recreation use areas adjacent to the Lower Fraser Block. Most, about 15 in number, are along the south side of the Fraser River while there are about five such areas along the north side. These areas act as access points to the river and most are used for concentrated bar fishing, picnicking and unorganized camping. They also act as loci for motor-biking, 4-wheel driving and horseback riding. The greatest concentration of these access points is in the vicinity of Chilliwack of which Peg Leg Bar (off Ballam Road), Jespersen Road and Gill Road are the most heavily used. The access point/use areas are identified on the 1:20,000 recreation inventory maps.

Two major highways parallel the Lower Fraser Block: Highway 7 to the north and Highway 401 to the south. For the most part, the TFL lands are isolated from the main highways. However, views and glimpses of the TFL are afforded from limited locations along the highway. The most important areas in this regard are:

- Rosedale-Agassiz Bridge,
- in the vicinity of Johnson's Slough (Highway 7)
- Highway 7 viewpoint at Mount Woodside west of Agassiz,
- several small vantage points along Highway 401 between Popkum and Laidlaw.

## 2.6 RECREATION USE

Recreation use levels vary from quite high along the periphery of the Lower Fraser Block to low and dispersed for most of the islands within the TFL. Use figures do not appear to be available except for the Provincial parks.

The most concentrated use is bar fishing at several locations along the main-stem of the Fraser River. These areas are indicated on the 1:20,000 recreation inventory maps.

Fishing is a year-round activity. Cutthroat trout are taken throughout the winter months (October to April), steelhead from December to March, salmon (coho and chinook) in the late summer and early fall and sturgeon in most months of the year. Other species sought include Dolly Varden char, whitefish and carp. Up to 100 fishermen may use any one of the more popular bar fishing areas at one time. Most fishermen are residents of the Lower Mainland on one or two-day trips. A high number of anglers use boats to gain access to bars throughout the region. Side channels and creek mouths are also popular sites for trout fishing. Some guided fishing activity probably takes place in the area as well.

A number of other recreation activities take place within the Lower Fraser Block. These include hunting, 4-wheel driving, motor biking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing and nature study. Unlike bar fishing, these pursuits are relatively dispersed and may take place at almost any location. Most recreation use is normally not within the forested areas because of the dense blackberry and underbrush growth which severely limits foot travel. Some rock hounding occurs along the river bars as well.

Deer and grouse hunting appear to occur mostly on the larger accessible islands such as Herrling Island and the island complex north of Greyell Slough. Duck hunting takes place along the more remote islands which are normally accessed by boat.

Motor biking and 4-wheel driving originates and fans out from the more popular access points such as at Peg Leg Bar, Greyell Slough, Gill Road and Morrow's Bar just east of the Rosedale-Agassiz Bridge. Evidence of camping and picnicking is found throughout the Lower Fraser Block but normally outside the TFL and forested areas.



## 2.7 RESOURCE CONFLICTS

Potential for resource conflicts appears to be minimal in the Lower Fraser Block. The most concentrated recreation uses are away from the managed forests or outside the TFL boundary. Protection of fish and wildlife habitats and stocks appears to be the main concern of most recreation users and agencies.

A secondary concern is related to visual impacts which are presented in Section 3.

## 2.8 DESCRIPTION OF MANAGEMENT CLASS 0 and 1 UNITS

### 92-H-011

13001 M2B4 n (C1)3

Back-channel areas and riparian zones with opportunities for nature study.

13002 A1B4 apn (C1)3

Bar fishing area along the Fraser River; good angling, viewing and nature appreciation opportunities.

13003 M3 pba (C1)3

Mainstem of Fraser River; viewing, boating and angling opportunities.

13004 B4A1 apn(C1)3

Fraser River beach and bar; secondary angling opportunities.

13006 M2B4 n (C1)3

Back-channel areas and riparian zones with opportunities for nature study.

92-H-021

13002 M2B4 n (C1)3

Back-channel areas and riparian zones with opportunities for nature study.

13003 A1B4 apn (C1)3

Bar fishing area along the Fraser River; good angling, viewing and nature appreciation opportunities.

13004 M3 pba (C1)3

Mainstem of Fraser River; viewing, boating and angling opportunities.

13005 B4A1 apn(C1)3

Fraser River beach and bar; secondary angling opportunities.

13008 M3 pba (C1)3

Mainstem of Fraser River; viewing, boating and angling opportunities.

13010 M2B4 n (C1)3

Back-channel areas and riparian zones with opportunities for nature study.

13011 M3 pba (C1)3

Mainstem of Fraser River; viewing, boating and angling opportunities.

13012 B4A1 apn(C1)3

Fraser River beach and bar; secondary angling opportunities.

13014 M2B4 n (C1)3

Back-channel areas and riparian zones with opportunities for nature study.

13015 W1 nq (B1)3

Eagle nest; wildlife viewing.

13017 M2B4 n (C1)3

Back-channel areas and riparian zones with opportunities for nature study.

13018 M3 pba (C1)3

Mainstem of Fraser River; viewing, boating and angling opportunities.

13020 M2B4 n (C1)3

Back-channel areas and riparian zones with opportunities for nature study.

13022 B4A1 apn(C1)3

Fraser River beach and bar; secondary angling opportunities.

- 13024 M2B4 n (C1)3  
Back-channel areas and riparian zones with opportunities for nature study.
- 13025 W1 nq (B1)3  
Eagle roost; wildlife viewing.
- 13027 E8W5M2 nqp(C1)3  
Side-channel/slough with good opportunities for nature study, wildlife observation and landscape viewing.
- 13028 B4A1 apn(C1)3  
Fraser River beach and bar; secondary angling opportunities.
- 13031 A1B4 apn (C1)3  
Bar fishing area along the Fraser River; good angling, viewing and nature appreciation opportunities.
- 13032 B4A1 apn(C1)3  
Fraser River beach and bar; secondary angling opportunities.
- 13034 A1B4 apn (C1)3  
Bar fishing area along the Fraser River; good angling, viewing and nature appreciation opportunities.
- 13037 M2B4 n (C1)3  
Back-channel areas and riparian zones with opportunities for nature study.
- 13039 M3 pba (C1)3  
Mainstem of Fraser River; viewing, boating and angling opportunities.
- 13040 A1B4 apn (C1)3  
Bar fishing area along the Fraser River; good angling, viewing and nature appreciation opportunities.

- 13001 A1B4 apn (C1)3  
Bar fishing area along the Fraser River; good angling, viewing and nature appreciation opportunities.
- 13002 M2B4 n (C1) 4  
Back-channel areas and riparian zones with opportunities for nature study.
- 13004 M2B4 n (C1) 4  
Back-channel areas and riparian zones with opportunities for nature study.
- 13006 B2A1 aph (C1)4  
Sandy river bar; fishing, viewing and beach activities.
- 13007 A1B4 apn (C1)4  
Bar fishing area along the Fraser River; good angling, viewing and nature appreciation opportunities.
- 13008 M3 pba (C1)3  
Mainstem of Fraser River; viewing, boating and angling opportunities.
- 13009 M2B4 n (C1)3  
Back-channel areas and riparian zones with opportunities for nature study.
- 13010 B4A1 apn(C1)3  
Fraser River beach and bar; secondary angling opportunities.
- 13011 B4A1 apn(C1)3  
Fraser River beach and bar; secondary angling opportunities.
- 13013 E8W5M2 nqp(C1)3  
Side-channel/slough with good opportunities for nature study, wildlife observation and landscape viewing.
- 13018 E8W5M2 nqp(C1)3  
Side-channel/slough with good opportunities for nature study, wildlife observation and landscape viewing.
- 13019 W1 nq (B1)3  
Eagle nest; wildlife viewing.
- 13020 A1B4 apn (C1)3  
Bar fishing area along the Fraser River; good angling, viewing and nature appreciation opportunities.

- 13022 M2B4 n (C1)3  
Back-channel areas and riparian zones with opportunities for nature study.
- 13024 B4A1 apn(C1)3  
Fraser River beach and bar; secondary angling opportunities.
- 13026 E8W5M2 nqp(C1)3  
Side-channel/slough with good opportunities for nature study, wildlife observation and landscape viewing.
- 13029 M3 pba (C1)3  
Mainstem of Fraser River; viewing, boating and angling opportunities.
- 13030 E8W5M2 nqp(C1)3  
Side-channel/slough with good opportunities for nature study, wildlife observation and landscape viewing.
- 13032 E8W5M2 nqp(C1)3  
Side-channel/slough with good opportunities for nature study, wildlife observation and landscape viewing.
- 13035 B4A1 apn(C1)3  
Fraser River beach and bar; secondary angling opportunities.
- 13036 W1 nq (B1)3  
Eagle roost; wildlife viewing.
- 13037 B4A1 apn(C1)3  
Fraser River beach and bar; secondary angling opportunities.
- 13038 B4A1 apn(C1)3  
Fraser River beach and bar; secondary angling opportunities.

3-1



3-1 View north from informal boat launch on Cartmell Road adjacent to gravel pit area about 1 km east of Island 22 Park.

3-4



3-4 View northeast from Island 22 Park campsite looking towards Island 21.

3-16



3 16 Bar fishermen at public access area north of Nelson Slough.

3 17 View northeast from public access area north of Nelson Slough: Mount Woodside seen in distance.

3-17





92-H-032

13001 B4A1 apn(C1)3

Fraser River beach and bar; secondary angling opportunities.

13004 R3B4A1 rap(C1)3

Fraser River beach and bar; rock hounding and secondary angling opportunities.

13007 B4A1 apn(C1)3

Fraser River beach and bar; secondary angling opportunities.

### 3. LOWER FRASER BLOCK LANDSCAPE INVENTORY

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The landscape inventory follows guidelines established by the B.C. Ministry of Forests as outlined in three documents:

- (1) Forest Landscape Handbook, 1981
- (2) Recreation Manual Draft, Chapter 11, 1990
- (3) Vancouver Forest Region Interim FLM Guidelines, 1990.

The landscape inventory represents Phase 1 in the Forest Landscape Management Process. Subsequent phases include adoption of Approved Visual Quality Objectives, Landscape Design and Monitoring.

The main components of the landscape inventory are:

- identification of landscape features - the major natural and cultural features of visual significance,
- mapping the visible landscape - identifying what is seen from travel corridors, public use areas and communities,
- determination of **Landscape Sensitivity Rating (LSR)** - how factors of slope, location and relation to viewers affect the degree to which an area is perceived by people,
- determination of **Visual Absorption Capability (VAC)** - how factors such as topography, natural vegetative patterns, forest productivity and green-up time affect an area's ability to absorb changes from a visual point of view,
- documentation of **Existing Visual Conditions (EVC)** - the use of VQO terminology to describe existing forest succession and appearance,
- establishment of **Recommended Visual Quality Objectives**.

# LANDSCAPE INVENTORY

## TFL #43 - LOWER FRASER BLOCK

### SCOTT PAPER LTD.

Prepared by  
Juan de Fuca Environmental Consultants  
January, 1992

MAP: \_\_\_\_\_

This inventory identifies Landscape Sensitivity (LSR), Visual Absorption Capability (VAC), Existing Visual Conditions (EVC) and **Recommended** Visual Quality Objectives (VQO) based upon Ministry of Forests guidelines for landscape inventory. Concurrently, a Recreation Inventory has been prepared for the Lower Fraser Block. The Recreation Inventory maps and report should be referred along with the Landscape Inventory, especially to identify major recreation use areas and access points along the Fraser River. A number of colour photographs in a separate photo album also accompany the inventory; the View Points on the Landscape Inventory maps are illustrated by these photographs.

#### LEGEND

- Visible Landscape Boundary
- \*——> Major View Point
- > View Point
- — —> Minor View Points ("Glimpses")
- ||||| Permanent Visual Screening
- ~~~~~ Vegetative Visual Screening

#### UNIT LABELS

LSR	VAC
EVC	VQO

#### LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY RATING (LSR)

- H - HIGH - close, dominant, high quality landscape seen frequently
- M - MEDIUM - moderately close, medium quality landscape seen by some
- L - LOW - distant or low quality landscape seen by a few

#### VISUAL ABSORPTION CAPABILITY (VAC)

- H - HIGH - gentle topography, rapid green-up
- M - MEDIUM - gentle topography, moderate green-up time
- L - LOW - does not apply to Lower Fraser Block

#### EXISTING VISUAL CONDITION (EVC)

- PR - PARTIAL RETENTION - low evidence of man-made activities
  - M - MODIFIED - areas with evidence of harvesting or other alterations
- Areas of Preservation, Retention or Maximum Modification are not currently evident in the Lower Fraser Block

#### VISUAL QUALITY OBJECTIVES (VQO)

- PR- PARTIAL RETENTION - identifies visually sensitive areas where care should be taken to avoid creating contrasting visual elements such as regularly shaped cut-blocks
  - MM- MAXIMUM MODIFICATION - identifies areas of low Visual Sensitivity and high Visual Absorption Capability where normal forestry practices have minimal visual impact
- VQO's of Preservation and Retention are not appropriate to the Lower Fraser Block because of the generally low Visual Sensitivity and very high Visual Absorption Capability for most of the area.

Figure 3. Landscape Inventory Map Legend

The landscape inventory is presented on three 1:20,000 maps covering the Lower Fraser Block of TFL #43. These maps should be used in close conjunction with the three recreation inventory maps which portray the main public use areas, parks and access points which have a strong bearing on the Landscape Sensitivity Ratings and level of Visual Quality Objectives.

Certain portions of the Lower Fraser Block were not mapped as part of the landscape inventory. These areas include the open waters of the Fraser River, the extensive bare sand and gravel bars and areas of open scrub. The bars and scrub lands are not part of the operating forest.

The landscape inventory maps were prepared mainly on the basis of direct field observations. All the highways and secondary roads were travelled and visits were made to nearby park and recreation use areas. The field work was carried out in early December under fairly cloudy conditions but visibility was adequate to assess landscape features.

Photographs, submitted in a separate album, document the views from major public use areas, parks, viewpoints and travel corridors.

### 3.2 LANDSCAPE MAPPING

#### 3.2.1 Visible Landscape and Landscape Sensitivity Rating (LSR)

For the most part, the islands in the Lower Fraser Block are not readily viewed by large numbers of people. The islands are flat and are, with few exceptions, mainly viewed from flat terrain at the same elevation across the Fraser River or across its side channels. Frequently, therefore, only the fringes of certain islands are visible and large sections of the interior of the islands are only viewed by the few individuals who may hunt or explore these areas. Consequently, most of the TFL lands have a Low LSR.

One small area of High LSR and several small areas of Medium LSR occur. The area of High LSR is the eastern portion of the small island adjacent to Ferry Island Provincial Park. This area is in close proximity and direct view of park users where there are concentrated numbers of people engaged in swimming, fishing and picnicking.

The areas of Medium LSR include the following:

- south-facing portions of islands adjacent to Island 22 Park, Cartmell Road, Minto Landing and western sections of Ballam Road at the west end of the Lower Fraser Block,
- the two islands south of the Highway 7 viewpoint on Mount Woodside which are visible from this elevated vantage point,
- a small unit at the west end of Greyell Slough near the end of Jespersen Road,
- the small island northeast of the Gill Road access points and recreation use area (near the east end of Greyell Slough),
- the small island immediately east of, and visible from, the Rosedale-Agassiz Bridge,
- a small island west of the Herrling Island group visible from residences on an overlooking bluff along McGregor Road, (west of Popkum),
- small units at the north tip of Herrling Island which are readily viewed by travellers on Highway 401 near Cheam View,
- the eastern margin of the island east of Sea Bird Island which is visible at small intervals for travellers on Highway 401 between Cheam View and Cheam View Siding,
- the two islands at the north edge of the Lower Fraser Block near Johnson's Slough; these islands are visible from Highway 401 at Laidlaw and from Highway 7 near Johnson's Slough.

### 3.2.2 Visual Absorption Capability (VAC)

Generally, VAC throughout the Lower Fraser Block is very high. The islands are set amongst a diverse and large scale landscape composed of large surface waters (Fraser River), complex land-use patterns (agricultural, residential, managed forest and utility corridors) and is surrounded by high mountainous terrain where local relief frequently exceeds 1,000 meters. With very few exceptions, forest productivity is high and visually effective green-up times are very short. VAC ratings are High throughout the Lower Fraser Block except for a small unit of Medium VAC on the northwest edge of Herrling Island where site productivity is low.

### 3.2.3 Existing Visual Conditions (EVC)

Most, if not all of the Lower Fraser Block has been harvested several times. However, to the uncritical eye the vigorous cottonwood plantations appear to be natural forests except in areas of the most recent logging or where there are obvious differences in adjacent age classes. Most of the TFL lands have been assigned Partial Retention ratings for EVC. Areas of recent logging, especially where they are adjacent to well established forests were given an EVC rating of Modified.

### 3.3 VISUAL QUALITY OBJECTIVES

The predominate Recommended VQO rating in the Lower Fraser Block is Maximum Modification. This rating is accompanied by small areas of Partial Retention. Maximum Modification is applied in the areas of Low Landscape Sensitivity Rating while Partial Retention VQO is used in areas of Medium and High Landscape Sensitivity Rating.

The Ministry of Forests definition of these two VQO classes and the intervening Modification rating are summarized below (after Chapter 11, Recreation Manual Draft):

#### Partial Retention

- alterations remain visually subordinate to the natural-appearing landscape
- repetition of line, form, colour and texture is important
- applied to areas of moderate to high aesthetic importance in the managed forest
- management activities do not cause obvious intrusions

#### Modification

- alterations may dominate the landscape but must borrow from natural line and form
- applied to areas where altered landscapes are more common in the managed forest

#### Maximum Modification

- permits dominant change in the landscape; alterations may be out of scale
- applies to areas where altered landscapes are common and where where resource use activities dominate the landscape

Compared to most other forest landscapes in British Columbia, the Lower Fraser Block is relatively unique in its ability to absorb visual change. This allows for the extensive use of Maximum Modification VQO's. A case might be made to change all or some of the Recommended Partial Retention VQO's to Modification upon further review. Special factors to consider in the future adoption of Approved VQO's are:

- very fast Visually Effective Green-up times, often less than one year in duration,
- generally very high Visual Absorption Capability,
- the TFL's setting in a highly modified landscape,
- a low contrast in landscape elements on the islands,
- few prominent or permanent views into or over the TFL lands,
- the relatively small role the islands play in the larger surrounding landscapes,
- a homogenous deciduous forest cover on flat terrain with easy opportunities to create visual buffers,
- relatively small cut and visual disturbances of present forestry operations.

#### 4. HOMATHKO BLOCK RECREATION INVENTORY

##### 4.1 LOCATION AND ACCESS

The Homathko Block is comprised of 5,554 hectares along the lower 30 kilometers of the Homathko River at the head of Bute Inlet. The area is in a relatively remote setting approximately 100 kilometers by air north of Campbell River. There is no direct road access. Most visitors enter the area by small aircraft using strips near the camp at the south end of the block or to the north near Scar Creek. The block has several all-weather industrial roads. One follows the entire west side of the lower valley while another road parallels the lower 12 kilometers along the east because the bridge is out at the Heakamie River.

##### 4.2 ROS AREAS

Approximately 880 hectares (or 16%) of the Homathko Block is considered to lie within ROS Class 3 (Semi-primitive, Motorized) while the remaining 4,674 hectares (about 84%) is ROS Class 4 (Roaded Resource Land).

##### 4.3 BIOPHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The Homathko Block lies within the Drier Sub-maritime Coastal Western Hemlock Subzone of the North Pacific Ranges Ecosection. The TFL lands occupy flat alluvial terraces and plains up to four kilometers wide which are enclosed by very steep mountainous terrain where summit elevations exceed 2,000 meters. The alluvial flats are comprised of coarse textured sandy soils but there are also extensive areas of organic deposits, especially along Cumsack Creek.

Presently, the floodplain lands are dominated by deciduous tree species such as cottonwood and alder. Interesting open riparian habitats are associated with the frequent back channels and tributaries adjacent to the Homathko River. Bog and marsh vegetation is scattered throughout the Homathko Block and there is an extensive variety of wetlands along upper Cumsack Creek. These wetter sites provide good opportunities for nature study and wildlife viewing. The floodplains also provide good habitats for grizzly and black bears, waterfowl, passerine birds and fur bearing animals. The air photos show evidence of considerable beaver activity in the wetter portions of the valley. Mountain goats may occasionally be sighted from the valley on the nearby mountains. Other species include bald eagles and black-tailed deer.



The Homathko River and its tributaries are important for anadromous and resident fish. Recreational species include coho and chinook salmon, Dolly Varden char, cutthroat and steelhead trout. With the exception of Smith Creek, streams in the Homathko Block tend to be turbid which tends to limit the area's attractiveness for sport fishing.

#### 4.4 CULTURAL FEATURES

The lower Homathko valley lies within the territory of the Homalco Tribe of the Coast Salish Indian group. According to Archaeological Branch files there are no recognized archaeological sites within the Homathko Block

The Homathko Valley has an interesting historical background. Between 1862 and 1864 Alfred Waddington laid out and started construction of a wagon road north from the head of Bute Inlet up the Homathko River leading to the Interior gold fields. Within the TFL the road followed the eastern side of the river. Canyons on the upper Homathko posed major obstacles to road construction. Then, in 1864, 14 members of the construction crew were killed by Chilcotin Indians. Consequently, the wagon road was never completed. In the 1870's the valley was investigated as a possible rail route to the Pacific Coast and in the 1920's investigations started to be made regarding the Homathko River's hydro-electric potential. A thriving settlement of about 60 people in 1895 has been described. The settlement's location may have been at Lot 1047 near the mouth of the river. However, little, if any, evidence remains of these early activities.

Logging has been a major activity in the Homathko Block for decades. The TFL #43 Block was established in 1985 and is operated mainly as a cottonwood tree farm by Scott Paper Ltd. There are no parks or formal recreation sites along the Homathko River. The Forest Service and Parks Branch have expressed no interest in the establishment of parks or recreation facilities. A wilderness area has been proposed for the nearby Southgate River.

The Ministry of Forests and Ministry of Environment are the main agencies concerned with the management of recreation and aesthetic resources in the Homathko Valley. The main contacts in this regard are the Forest District Office at Powell River and Regional Environment office at Surrey.

#### 4.5 RECREATION USE

Recreation use levels in the Homathko Valley are relatively low due to the area's relative isolation and poor access. There is limited use of the area by Natives for fishing and hunting.

A growing recreational activity appears to be guided fishing. This is mainly in the form of heli-fishing for cutthroat trout and Dolly Varden char (and possibly for some steelhead). The Homathko River is currently closed to chinook fishing. Four angling guides are registered to operate in the area:

Craig Houston, Canadian Helicopters, Campbell River  
Mike Gallant, Sonora Island Lodge, Campbell River  
Clint Cameron, Dolphins Resort, Campbell River  
Brian Baldwin, Silvertip Adventures, Powell River

The Homathko Valley is also used as a corridor for mountaineering, ski touring and back-packing activities in the Mount Waddington area. Parties fly into or boat up the river to Scar Creek which is the main jump-off point to the Waddington Range.

There are some reports of river rafting on the Southgate River and possibly on the Homathko but the Parks Branch reports that no approved commercial river rafting operations are presently registered for these rivers.

The Homathko Block lies within the big game guide territory of John Innes of Campbell River. It is assumed that his hunting activities are concentrated in the more remote mountainous locations and that TFL #43 lands are not of direct importance to his operations.

#### 4.6 RESOURCE CONFLICTS

Guided fishing parties and pass-through mountaineering groups appear to be the main recreational users in the lower Homathko Valley. This growing use suggests that there might be future consideration for maintaining natural appearing conditions along the main streams. Guided fishermen have an expectation of experiencing relatively primitive conditions. Combined with the need for protecting fishery values some care may be required to maintain adequate vegetative buffers for aesthetic reasons along the main stream corridors and high use areas.

Cold water temperatures and high siltation levels limit overall fish productivity. Existing angling is of moderate quality and limited quantity. This is due more to a history of low use than to high productivity. Protection of fish stocks from over-harvest and degradation of fish habitats are the main concerns in protecting existing recreational values.

#### 4.7 DESCRIPTION OF MANAGEMENT CLASS 0 AND 1 UNITS

##### Homathko Block92-K-096

13001 M2E8W5 qn(C1)4

Highly attractive area of small lakes, wetlands and fens at the head of Cumsack Creek; good potential for wildlife viewing and nature appreciation.

13002 E8W2M2 nq(C1)4

Extensively distributed wetlands adjacent to Cumsack Creek; strong evidence of beaver activity; good potential for wildlife viewing and nature appreciation.

13003 M2A3E5 nqa(C1)4

Cumsack Creek with riparian habitats, wetlands and anadromous fish runs; good nature appreciation, wildlife and fish viewing; some angling opportunities

13004 E8W2M2 nq(C1)4

Extensively distributed wetlands adjacent to Cumsack Creek; strong evidence of beaver activity; good potential for wildlife viewing and nature appreciation.

13006 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar areas providing access for angling along the Homathko River.

13007 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar areas providing access for angling along the Homathko River.

13008 M3A1A3 anb(B1)4

Homathko River provides boating corridor with angling, nature appreciation and landscape viewing opportunities.

13010 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar areas providing access for angling along the Homathko River.

13011 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar areas providing access for angling along the Homathko River.

13012 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar areas providing access for angling along the Homathko River.

13016 M2A1 na(C1)4

Tributary streams adjacent to Homathko River with modest nature study and angling opportunities.

13018 M2 ipn(C1)4

Attractive unit suitable for camping or picnic site adjacent to waterfalls just east of TFL boundary.

13020 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar areas providing access for angling along the Homathko River.

13022 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar areas providing access for angling along the Homathko River.

13024 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar areas providing access for angling along the Homathko River.

13027 J1E8W5 qnp(B1)4

Estuary of Homathko River with important habitats for migrating birds, intertidal vegetative communities, wildlife viewing, nature appreciation and landscape viewing.

13028 A3M2 nqa(C1)4

Lower Teaquahan River; anadromous fishery, nature appreciation, wildlife viewing and angling opportunities.

92-N-005

13002 M2A3 na(C1)4

Brew Creek with anadromous fish runs; opportunities for nature study and angling.

13005 M3A1A3 anc(B1)4

Homathko River provides boating corridor with angling, nature appreciation and landscape viewing opportunities.

13002 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar areas providing access for angling along the Homathko River.

13005 M3A1A3 anb(B1)4

Homathko River provides boating corridor with angling, nature appreciation and landscape viewing opportunities.

13010 Q2E6V2 np(C1)4

Small area of mountain slopes at edge of valley floor with partially open coniferous forest; area provides views overlooking the valley as well as posing low landscape sensitivity on the slopes as viewed from the valley.

13014 L9M2B2 np(C1)3

Very extensive braided channels along lower Jewakwa River providing modest opportunities to view interesting alluvial landform feature.

13016 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar areas providing access for angling along the Homathko River.

13018 M3A1A3 anb(B1)4

Homathko River provides boating corridor with angling, nature appreciation and landscape viewing opportunities.

13019 Q2E6R1 p(C1)4

Small knoll of open rocky terrain provides views overlooking Homathko Valley.

13020 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar areas providing access for angling along the Homathko River.

13023 M2A3 na(C1)4

Heakamie River with anadromous fish runs; opportunities for nature study and angling.

13024 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar areas providing access for angling along the Homathko River.

13028 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar areas providing access for angling along the Homathko River.

13029 M3A1A3 anb(B1)4

Homathko River provides boating corridor with angling, nature appreciation and landscape viewing opportunities.

13030 A3E3M2 anb (B1)5

Smith Creek; small, clear stream with anadromous fish; opportunities for angling, nature study and camping; a few remnant Sitka spruce trees remain.

13032 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar areas providing access for angling along the Homathko River.





5-5 View north, lower Homathko Valley

5-6 View north, lower Homathko Valley



92-N-015

13001 B2A1A3 anp(C1)3

River bar areas providing access for angling along the Homathko River.

13004 M3A1A3 anb(B1)4

Homathko River provides boating corridor with angling, nature appreciation and landscape viewing opportunities.

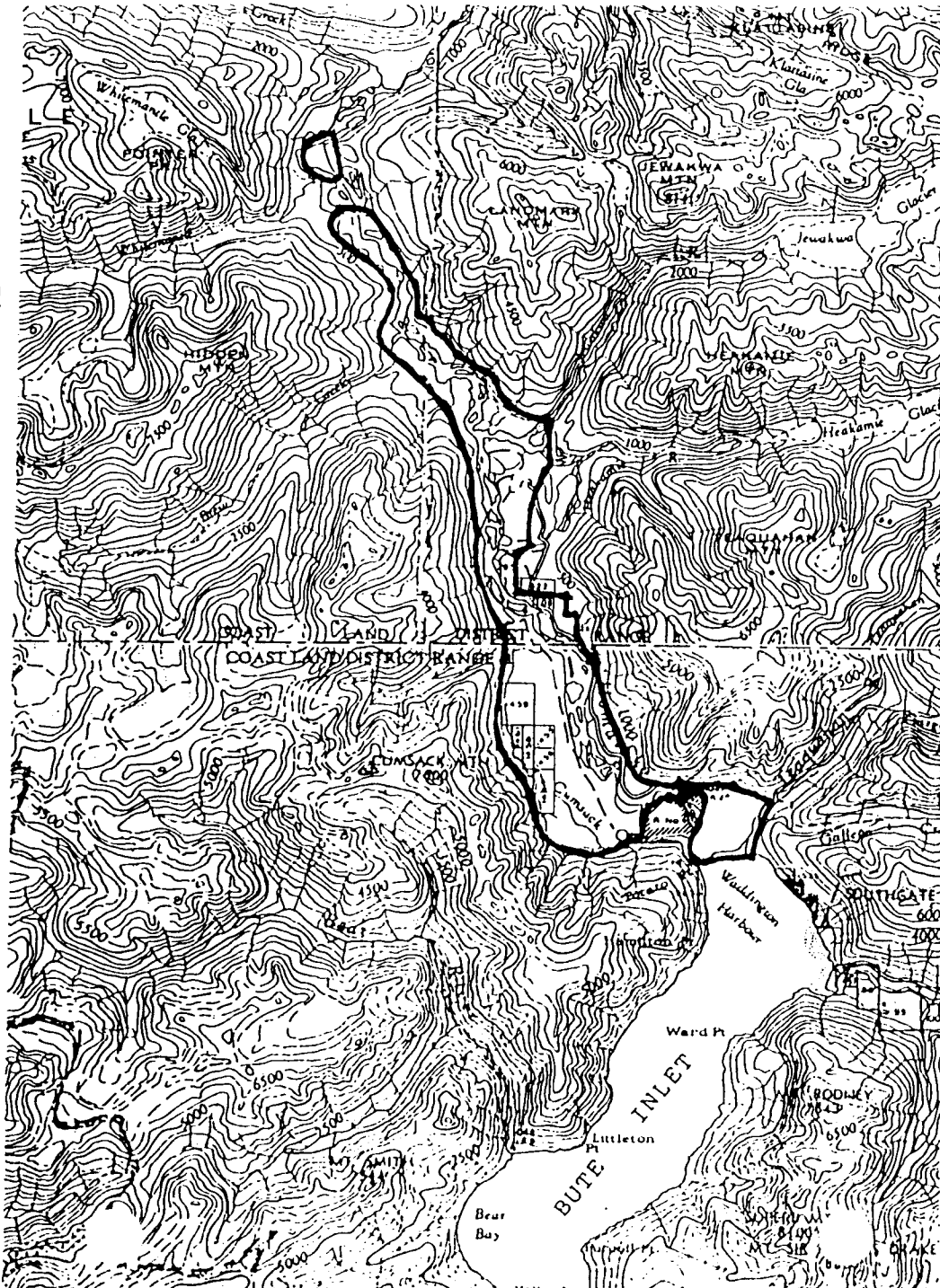
13006 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar areas providing access for angling along the Homathko River.

92-N-016

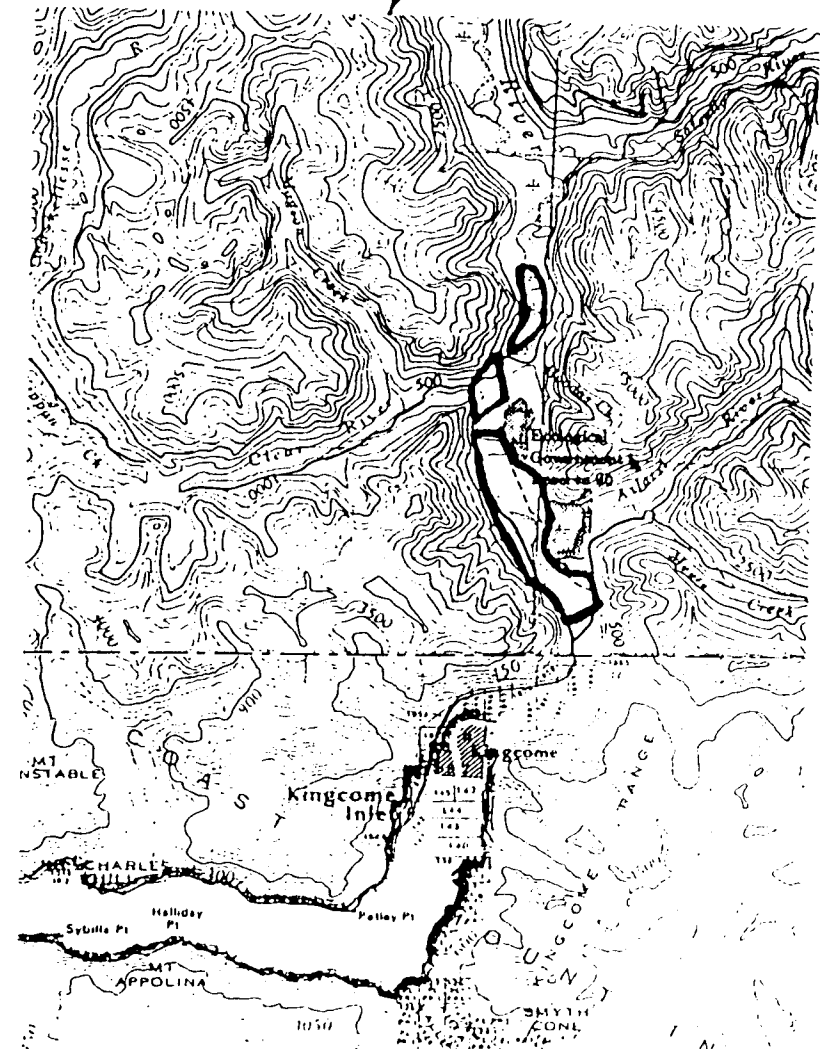
No Management Class 0 or 1 units.

Figure 4. Homathko and Kingcome Block Maps



Homathko Portion  
of TFL #43  
1:250,000

Kingcome Portion  
of TFL #43  
1:250,000



## 5. KINGCOME BLOCK RECREATION INVENTORY

### 5.1 LOCATION AND ACCESS

The Kingcome Block encompasses 975 hectares along the lower Kingcome River between the Atlatzi River in the south to about five kilometers north of the Clear River in the north. Kingcome Indian village with about 100 residents is located just south of the TFL Block. The area is in a relatively remote setting approximately 100 kilometers northeast of Alert and Port McNeill on Vancouver Island. Access to Kingcome Inlet is restricted to small float planes or helicopter from Campbell River and Port Hardy or by boat. The TFL Block is served by an all-weather industrial road but the general public has little prospect of using the isolated road system.

### 5.2 ROS AREAS

The entire 975 hectares is considered to be ROS Class 4 land (Roaded Resource).

### 5.3 BIOPHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The Kingcome Block lies within the Wetter Coastal Western Hemlock Subzone of the North Pacific Ranges Ecosession. Adjacent terrain is comprised of very steep mountainous slopes with frequent bedrock outcrops and numerous cascades and waterfalls several hundred meters in height. The TFL lands are mainly confined to flat alluvial terraces enclosed by the nearby steep slopes. The alluvial flats are comprised of sandy, coarse textured soils. Vigorous stands of cottonwood and alder are characteristic on the floodplains accompanied by a relatively dense understory of shrubs and herbs.

The presence of the Kingcome River and tributaries such as the Atlatzi and Clear rivers are a major feature. These are anadromous fish bearing streams with runs of pink, chum and coho salmon along with a few chinook and sockeye salmon. The Kingcome system also supports steelhead trout (winter and summer runs), coastal cutthroat trout and resident Dolly Varden char.

Major wildlife species include grizzly bear, black bear, black-tailed deer, bald eagle, wolf and a few moose. Mountain goat are sometimes visible from the river valley on the adjacent mountain ridges.

#### 5.4 CULTURAL FEATURES

The Kingcome Block is within the area of the Kwakiutlan aboriginal group of Indians. According the Archaeologic Branch files there are no recognized archaeological sites within the TFL.

A permanent native settlement of about 100 individuals is located on the east bank of the Kingcome River about three kilometers upstream from the head of Kingcome Inlet. Fishing and logging appear to be the main local activities.

The lower valley and estuary area was developed for agriculture about 100 years ago. The majority of these properties and the estuary area are now owned by The Nature Trust of B.C. which manages these lands for the conservation of wildlife habitats and natural features.

The valley has a long history of logging activities because of its proximity to tidewater. Tributary valleys and areas to the north are operated by Interfor Ltd. The relatively small TFL #43 holdings of Scott Paper Ltd. were established in 1985.

There are no parks or formal recreation sites in or near the Kingcome Block. An Ecological Reserve (# 40) occupies 414 hectares in two blocks along the east side of the valley adjacent to TFL #43. This reserve was established in 1972 to protect a coastal lodgepole pine forest. Presently, the Ministry of Parks is reviewing the boundaries of the reserve.

The Ministry of Forests and the Ministry of Environment are the main agencies concerned with the management of recreation and aesthetic resources in the Homathko Valley. The main contacts in this regard are the Forest District office at Port McNeill and the Ministry of Environment offices for the Region at Nanaimo and the District at Campbell River.

## 5.5 RECREATION USE

Recreation use levels in the Kingcome Valley are low due to the area's relative isolation and poor access. Local residents use the area on an dispersed basis for fishing, hunting and berry picking. Non-local use is mainly in the form of guided fishing trips.

The Kingcome River is considered a Class 2 river by the Ministry of Environment. This designation is related to special licensing requirements for non-resident angling and the management of guided fishing activities. Currently, the Kingcome River is closed to chinook salmon fishing and the daily quota for coho is a single fish.

One registered fish guide (Craig Murray, Nimmo Bay Resort Ltd.) operates in the Kingcome system. Helicopters are the main way fishing parties access the area. The Kingcome, Atlatzi and Clear rivers are fished largely on a catch-and-release basis. Cutthroat trout, Dolly Varden char, steelhead and the salmon species, especially coho, are sought from the spring months through to the fall. The Kingcome system has a modest reputation for its spring-summer steelhead fishing opportunities.

Presently, the local rivers offer fairly high quality fishing opportunities for a limited number of people. However, the long-term productivity of these streams is limited and they are very sensitive to any high levels of fishing pressure (Rimmer & Axford, 1990).

The Kingcome Block lies within the big game guide territory of Scott Farr of Campbell River. It is believed that the guide carries out little if any hunting activities within or near the TFL #43 lands.

The lower Kingcome River is navigable for small boats and canoes. Excellent landscape views are available from along the river corridor. However, these opportunities have poor potential for the general public due to the area's remote location and more challenging opportunities elsewhere.

## 5.6 RESOURCE CONFLICTS

The major recreation opportunities in the Kingcome Block are related to the fishing resources. If fish stocks and habitats are adequately protected then recreation opportunities will be protected. A major concern is the potential for over-fishing both resident and anadromous species. The guided fishing is relatively closely monitored by the Ministry of Environment but this is not true for angling by residents and logging crews.

A secondary concern is the maintenance of forest cover for visual purposes. Most recreation users in this valley, especially the guided clients, have a fairly high expectation of experiencing relatively primitive conditions. Special care should be taken to maintain adequate vegetation buffers along the most significant fishing areas, especially at the Clear and Atlatzi rivers.

## 5.7 DESCRIPTION OF MANAGEMENT CLASS 0 AND 1 UNITS

### 92-M-010

13002 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar area providing access for angling along the Kingcome River.

13004 A1A3M2 anq(B1)4

Clear River offers superior angling for coho, chinook, steelhead, coastal cutthroat trout and Dolly Varden char; secondary opportunities include nature appreciation and wildlife viewing.

13006 M2L9 n(C1)4

Backwater and side channel areas along Kingcome River with opportunities for nature appreciation along the varied riparian habitats.

13009 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar area providing access for angling along the Kingcome River.

13010 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar area providing access for angling along the Kingcome River.

13011 M2L9 n(C1)4

Backwater and side channel areas along Kingcome River with opportunities for nature appreciation along the varied riparian habitats.

13012 A1A3M3 anc(B1)4

Mainstem of Kingcome River with opportunities for angling; modest boating and canoeing opportunities along with nature appreciation and landscape viewing.

13013 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar area providing access for angling along the Kingcome River.

13014 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar area providing access for angling along the Kingcome River.

13015 M2L9 n(C1)4

Backwater and side channel areas along Kingcome River with opportunities for nature appreciation along the varied riparian habitats.

13016 C1L9 n(C1)4

Native smokehouse at this site.



13020 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar area providing access for angling along the Kingcome River.

13021 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar area providing access for angling along the Kingcome River.

13024 M2L9 n(C1)4

Backwater and side channel areas along Kingcome River with opportunities for nature appreciation along the varied riparian habitats.

13025 A1A3M2 anq(B1)4

Atlatzi River offers superior angling for coho, chinook, steelhead, coastal cutthroat trout and Dolly Varden char; secondary opportunities include nature appreciation and wildlife viewing.

13001 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar area providing access for angling along the Kingcome River.

13002 A1A3M3 anc(B1)4

Mainstem of Kingcome River with opportunities for angling; modest boating and canoeing opportunities along with nature appreciation and landscape viewing.

13007 B2A1A3 anp(C1)4

River bar area providing access for angling along the Kingcome River.

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## CONTACTS

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Christopher Symes, District of Kent, Agassiz

## RECREATION INVENTORY SUMMARY - ("Table 1")

Resource Emphasis Area	Management Class (0, 1)		Management Class (2)		Key Features	Key Activities	Comments
	ROS Class	Ha	ROS Class	Ha			
Fraser Block	3	1893	3	1277	bar fishing; boating; nature study; floodplain forests; Fraser River	a, b, n, p, j	High concentrations of use at selected locations; otherwise, highly dispersed recreation use
	4	66	4	58			
Homathko Block	3	70	3	810	Fish runs; angling opportunities; wildlife; floodplain forests; riparian habitats; extensive wetlands	a, n, p, q	Guided fishing activities at selected locations
	4	1580	4	3094			
Kingcome Block	4	155	4	820	Fish runs; angling opportunities; wildlife floodplain forests; riparian habitats	a, n, p, q	Guided fishing activities at selected locations