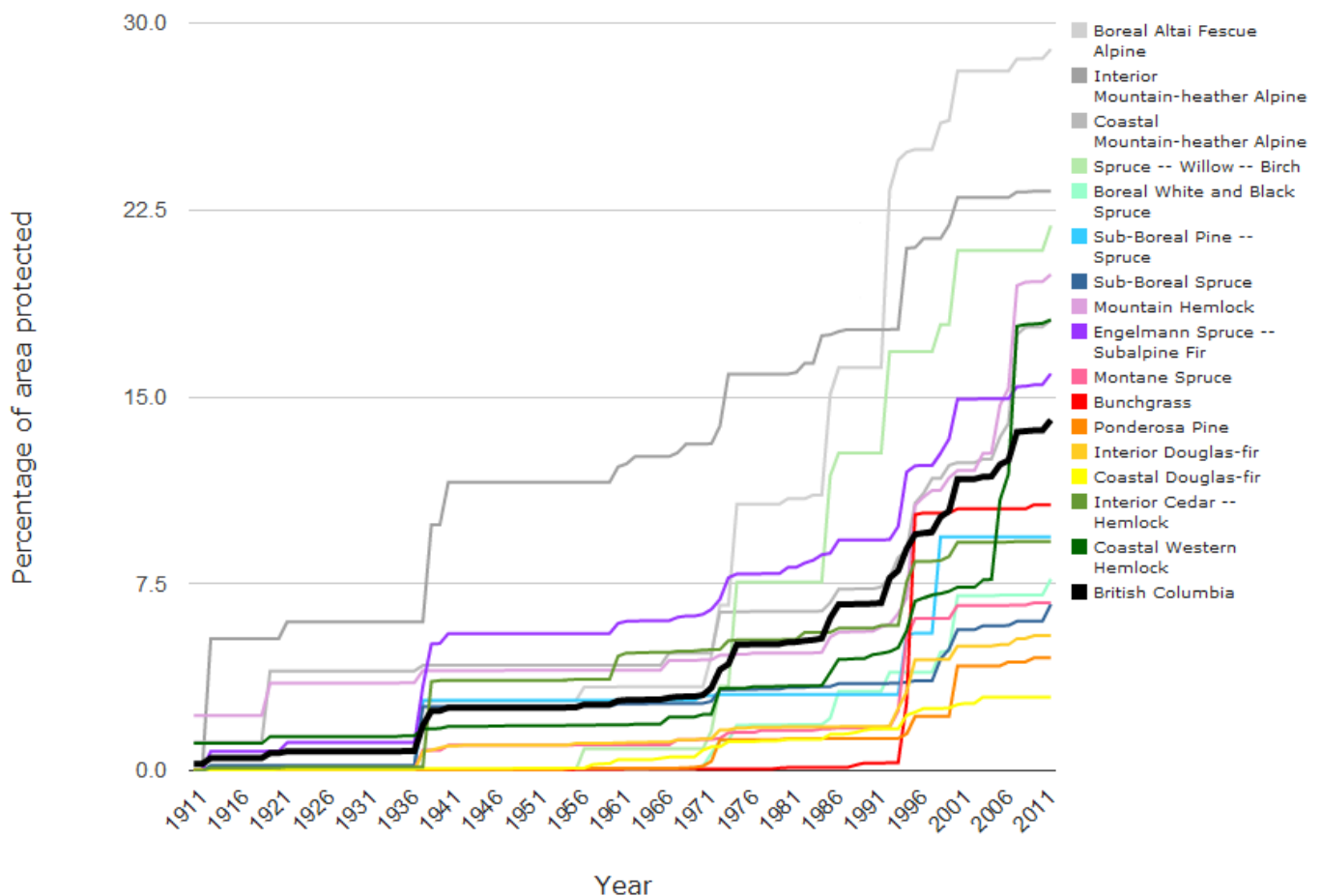




## Trends in Ecosystem Protection through Establishment of B.C. Parks and Protected Areas (1911-2011)

- Since [Strathcona Provincial Park](#) was created as B.C.'s first park, more than 14% of British Columbia's land base has been protected in over 1000 B.C. parks and protected areas.
- The amount of protected area in B.C. has more than doubled since the early 1990s.
- People make approximately 20 million visits to B.C.'s parks and protected areas each year, and 60% of B.C. residents use a park every year<sup>1</sup>.
- In 2009, spending and economic activity related to B.C.'s parks and protected areas contributed \$392 million to B.C.'s GDP, and provided over 5,200 full-time jobs<sup>2</sup>.



\*Please note that due to a lack of historical spatial data, some historical fluctuations in the amount of protected area are not shown.

- Protection of biogeoclimatic zones is not even across the province:
  - High elevation and mountainous zones such as the three alpine and subalpine zones have more than the provincial average protected.
  - Low elevation, warm, valley bottom zones tend to be underrepresented in the protected areas system (for example, CDF, PP, IDF).
- Some of this discrepancy in representation has improved over time; for example the establishment of [Churn Creek Protected Area](#) and [Edge Hills Provincial Park](#) in the Cariboo region, and [Lac-du-Bois Grasslands Protected Area](#) in the Thompson in the 1990s increased the amount of the Bunchgrass zone protected by over 10 times.
- In some zones, the amount of protection is achieved through many smaller parks (e.g., the Coastal Western Hemlock zone) or fewer, large parks (e.g., the Spruce-Willow-Birch zone).
- Protected areas included in the analysis were: Provincial Parks, Protected Areas, Ecological Reserves, Conservancies, and Recreation Areas (see [http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/aboutBCParks/prk\\_desig.html](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/aboutBCParks/prk_desig.html) for more information).

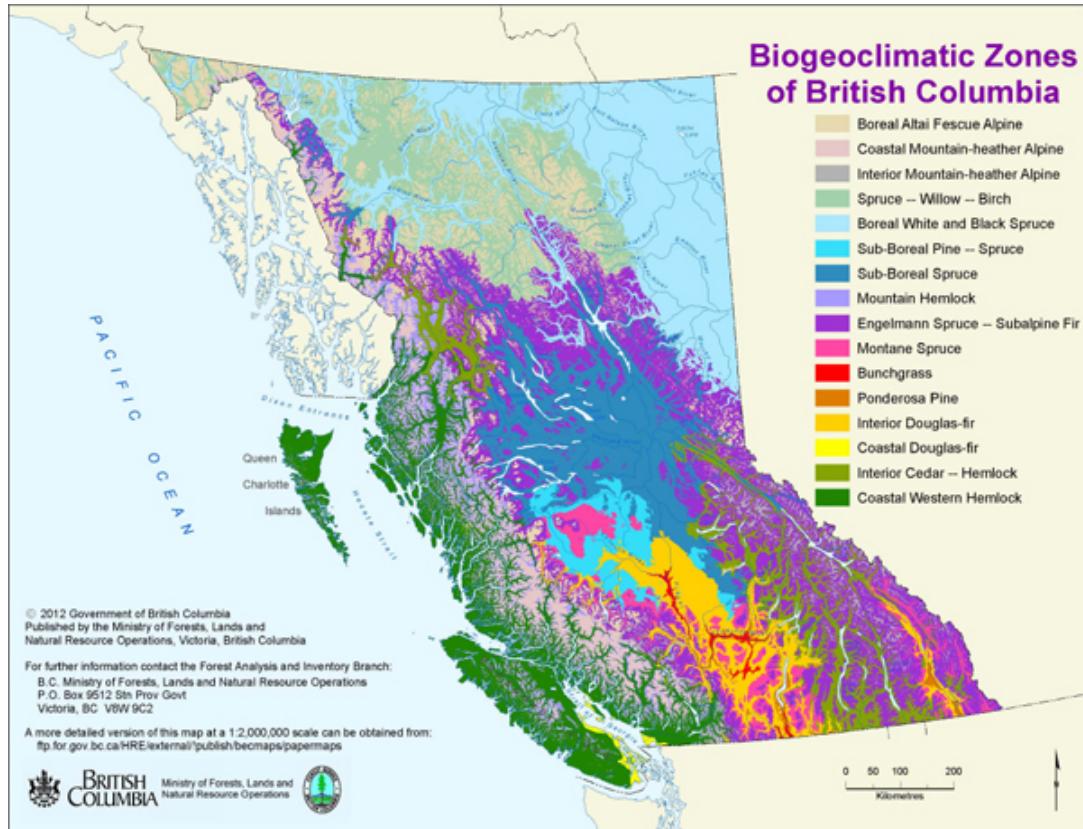
### 2011 Status of Ecosystem Protection through Establishment of B.C. Parks & Protected Areas.

Biogeoclimatic Zone	Area Protected (ha)	Number of Parks	Percent Protected (%)
Boreal Altai Fescue Alpine	1819822	71	29
Boreal White and Black Spruce	1261266	92	8
Bunchgrass	27423	33	11
Coastal Douglas-fir	7425	65	3
Coastal Mountain-heather Alpine	645886	96	18
Coastal Western Hemlock	1950736	429	18
Engelmann Spruce -- Subalpine Fir	2766058	171	16
Interior Cedar -- Hemlock	512425	142	9
Interior Douglas-fir	242639	141	5
Interior Mountain-heather Alpine	294539	56	23
Montane Spruce	190353	59	7
Mountain Hemlock	808176	134	20
Ponderosa Pine	17833	36	5
Spruce -- Willow -- Birch	1892876	41	22
Sub-Boreal Pine -- Spruce	212407	12	9
Sub-Boreal Spruce	690194	125	7
British Columbia	13340062	1007	14

### What is the Biogeoclimatic Ecosystem Classification (BEC) System?

BEC is an ecosystem classification system that defines ecosystems based on climate, soils and vegetation. This classification is widely used throughout British Columbia as a framework for resource management and scientific research, and is used from the provincial scale down to the site level.

Map of B.C.'s Biogeoclimatic (BGC) zones:



References and other useful links

<sup>1</sup>[BC Parks and Protected Areas Facts and Figures: http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/aboutBCParks/fact\\_fig.html](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/aboutBCParks/fact_fig.html)

BC Parks and Protected Areas Reports and Surveys: <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/research/research.html>

<sup>2</sup>Canada Parks Council. 2011. Economic Impact of Canada's National Provincial and Territorial Parks in 2009. A Technical Report prepared by The Outspan Group Inc. Amherst Island, Stella, Ontario. Available online at: <http://www.parks-parcs.ca/english/cpc/economic.php>

For more information about B.C.'s Biogeoclimatic Ecosystem Classification (BEC) system, visit <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hre/becweb/>

## Data

\*By accessing these datasets, you agree to the license associated with each file, as indicated in parentheses below.

[Chart data: Trends in Protection of B.C.'s Biogeoclimatic Zones](#) (License: [BC OGL](#))

[Protected Areas and their date of establishment](#) (License: [BC OGL](#))

[Spatial data for Parks and Protected Areas used in this analysis](#) (License: [BC OGL](#))

[Spatial data for the Biogeoclimatic Ecosystem Classification](#) (License: [BC OGL](#))

Published and Available On-Line at Environmental Reporting BC (November 2012):

<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/soe/indicators/land/trends-bcparks.html>

