DARKE (FISH) LAKE PARK
and
Eneas LAKE'S PARK
C.P. LYONS
1944 - 1953
Reconnaissance
and
Preliminary Recreation Plan

Darke (Fish) Lake Park
and
Eneas Lakes Park

by
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Parks Section,
Forest Economics Division
B.C. Forest Service.
1944

Accompanying this report and filed in map cabinet, Forest Economics Division.
1 map of Darke (Fish) Lake showing surveys, park use permits, timber sales, and forest cover types. Scale 800 ft. = 1 inch.
1 map of Eneas Lakes showing boundaries, park use permits, cover types and trails. Scale 800 ft. = 1 inch.
Detail maps of park use permit areas and proposed improvements 100 ft. = 1 inch.

Reference No. P. 50
General File: 043136.
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DARKE LAKE PARK

(Fish Lake Park and Eneas Lakes Park)

I. LOCATION: Located in the Okanagan Valley, approximately 16 miles by road from West Summerland.

   The lower park area of 3,840 acres centering at Fish Lake is bounded by lines approximately 1 mile from the shore of the lake.

   Another area of 2,560 acres centering around four lakes generally known as Eneas Lakes is situated on an upland plateau some five miles northwest of Fish Lake.

II. PARK NAME: The originally proposed park area was to be known as Mt. Beldy Park because this mountain would have been the central outstanding topographical feature. The sudden establishment of two separate park areas left no time to consider suitable local names so the park was officially gazetted as Darke Lake Park from the name shown on standard maps.

   As in many cases the official name of the lake was entirely unknown to surrounding residents and local opinion stressed the unsuitability of the gazetted name. It was proposed that the upper group of lakes be known after their old Indian name of Eneas Lakes and the lower park called Orchard Park. The latter name is being held in abeyance pending consolidation of public opinion for the most favourable title.

   For the purpose of clarity, the local name, Fish Lake, has been used throughout the report rather than the little known name of Darke Lake.

III. BOUNDARIES: The order-in-council establishing the park gives no metes and bounds description but describes them as areas outlined on a map.

   The lower one centering around Fish Lake can be accurately enough described to meet general requirements since it coincides in places with surveyed lots. Its description is as follows:

   Commencing at the southeast corner of Lot 3761, thence west for 39.98 chains to the southwest corner of said Lot, thence westerly for 63.56 chains, thence northerly for 240 chains, thence easterly 40 chains to the north west corner of Lot 1378, thence easterly for 40 chains to the north east corner of said lot, thence
easterly for 80 chains to a point on the east boundary of Lot 1379 being 40 chains north of the south east corner of said Lot, thence southerly for 40 chains to southeast corner of said Lot, 1379, thence southerly along the east boundaries of Lots 3923 and 3924 for 78.54 chains to the southeast corner of aforementioned Lot 3924 then southerly for 121.46 chains, thence westerly for 56.66 chains to the southeast corner Lot 3761, being the point of commencement.

One wooden post and one squared tree were marked at key points, their locations being determined by compass line only. One was placed at the southeast corner of Lot 3761, which was approximately 10 feet off the road and marked "Park Boundary". The other was placed 40 chains north of the south east corner of Lot 1377 to mark the northern boundary of the park and as a guide to any surveying of the overlapping timber sale.

The boundaries for the Eneas Lake Park were to be in the form of a square with sides two miles in length. After an examination to determine the most favourable way to set the boundaries relative to the lakes, they were placed as shown on the maps. No boundaries were run because of the difficulty of making an accurate tie. The boundary may be described as follows:

Commencing at a point 166 chains due west of the northwest corner of Lot 1378, thence westerly for 160 chains, thence northerly for 160 chains, thence easterly for 160 chains, thence southerly for 160 chains to the point of commencement.

IV HISTORY: Around 1900, several lots near the south end of Fish Lakes were pre-empted by Mr. Darke but Lot 4240 on which recreational interest has centered was abandoned.

A pre-emption application in 1922 for this lot was disallowed by the Forest Branch and the past and present recreational use by fishermen, hunters and campers, stressed in the report. This would indicate that the lake was functioned as a recreational center for at least 30 years.

In 1928, Ernest Harris of Penticton, filed application for a campsites lease on Lot 4240. Immediately a petition was made by citizens of Summerland to have the application cancelled and the area kept for the public.

During 1929 and 1930 Mr. Harris started several buildings to serve as living quarters and to offer accommodation. In 1936 all rights were transferred to the Penticton and District Fish and Game Protective Association.
George Haddrell of Summerland made application in 1939 to purchase timber on 208 acres comprising Lots 5918, 4245, and that portion of Lot 5919 west of Darke Lake. Protests were made but after an examination an area was eliminated from the sale to protect recreational values.

During 1942 negotiations were carried on between interested parties and the Forest Branch for the establishment of a park area comprising approximately 13,000 acres and to be known as Mt. Baldy Park.

Meanwhile another timber sale was applied for, the southern portion of which was in the Piggeries, an area at the north end of the lake. Strong protests were made and the sale was withdrawn.

Arrangements were finally completed for an examination of the area by all interested persons. After an inspection an agreement was reached whereby the timber sale could be continued although partly in the proposed park.

The Order-in-Council establishing the Park was approved on June 29, 1943.

V CHARACTER OF THE AREA

(a) Topography: Fish Lake is a typical low altitude (2950') Interior Lake and lies in a narrow valley parallel to Okanagan Lake. The valley broadens into an undulating plateau northwards from the head of the lake but retains its narrowness for 3½ miles south of the lake gradually widening out into a ½ mile wide strip of meadows and farm land.

There is no definite creek drainage into the northern end of the lake but a small meandering stream, with its characteristic bordering strip of willow and cottonwood, flows from the south end and roughly parallels the road for 4½ miles.

The upper group of lakes lie at an elevation of 4700 feet on an upland plateau of approximately 2,000 acres with boundaries dropping steeply to encircling creek bottoms. Numerous low hills and valleys serve to give each lake a distinctive setting and drainage system.
View of lower park and south Okanagan as seen from Mt. Baldy

(b) **Climate:** Rainfall conditions are similar to the Okanagan Valley and the average annual rainfall of 17 inches is no deterrent from a recreational standpoint. Snow during November and December rarely gets deep enough to close off the Fish Lake areas from hunters. Snow on the higher elevations may obstruct travel to the upper lakes until June 15th.

(c) **Forest Cover and Vegetation:** Four broad forest types are characteristic of the region.

1. **Yellow Pine:** Typical open stands of mature yellow pine are found near the southern boundary and in the Piggeries of Fish Lake Park. Any stand of untouched pine has a very desirable scenic aspect because of the characteristic glade effect. Unfortunately most pure stands are overmature and have spike tops and bark beetles soon destroy the weakest of those old trees.

2. **Fir-Yellow Pine:** This type designation includes all the varying proportions of density of these two trees and applies to most of the forest cover of the main park. It ranges from scattered seed trees in groves of heavy reproduction, to fairly uniform stands of crooked limby fir with occasional mature pine on the more open benches.
3. **Bottomland, Cottonwood, Spruce, Aspen and Brush:** The road to Fish Lake passes through or skirts this type for the last ten miles. Aspen 10 feet to 20 feet high grows on the dry flats adjacent to the creek with scattered large cottonwood and spruce making a ragged fence conforming in design to the narrow wet patches of bottomland by the creek.

Under these large trees and also closely bordering the stream or any meadows are numerous bushes which sometimes form an almost impenetrable thicket. Where large spruce make the dominate top cover, as in areas about one-half mile from the lake, devils club and vine maple are the main vegetation. Along streams, vine maple, willow and red osier dogwood grow in profusion and are generally referred to as brush.

View west from north end of Acland Mountain.

Photo: Photo-topog.
4. Lodgepole Pine and Spruce: Scattered patches of lodgepole pine are encountered along the trail between the two lakes, but once the summit is reached, coinciding with the southern boundary of Henas Lakes Park, a heavy stand of lodgepole pine about 40 to 60 feet high stretches over most of the upper plateau.

Around portions of the lakes and in connecting stream bottoms spruce is intermixed with the lodgepole pine but 20 chains east of the lakes there is a 600 acre stand of pure spruce. It is very limby, but has a possible commercial value.

Park boundaries were set to eliminate as much of this spruce from the park as possible while still protecting scenic values.

Vegetation is extremely varied on the height of land between lakes with many sub-alpine flowers present. Around the main lake and adjacent slopes several plants are important from the game food standpoint. Patches of buckbrush "Ceanothus" plentiful in the open stands of yellow pine are the main source of winter food for the large numbers of mule deer in the vicinity. Lupine and "Kinnikinnick" or bear berry are important food for grouse. A heavy growth of pine grass carpets most of the slopes and provides grazing for livestock.

VI ACCESS TO PARK: From West Summerland a wide gravel road runs westerly for 8 miles to Prairie Valley and then narrows down to a fair dirt road which winds through a narrow valley bottom for the remaining 13 miles to Fish Lake.

Access to the top group of lakes is by a fair horse trail of 7 miles starting at the south end of Fish Lake. A secondary route is by trail from the Creta Creek road but this is indistinct and covered with windfalls at present.

VII USE BY THE PUBLIC: The opening of lake fishing on May 1 has consistently started the visitors use of the area for the past 50 years. Large crowds of local people from Summerland, Peachland, and Penticton, patronize the lake for the first two or three weekends in May and from then on until the hot weather starts in July, approximately 15 cars come to the park each weekend.

During July, August and September of the past few years, parties have an average 10 per month with from 3 to 9 in a group and are mostly Americans.
The season for the top group of lakes is June 15 to September 15. This area is extremely popular on weekends and its patronization appears to be limited by the number of riding horses at Fish Lake and the accommodation at the top lakes.

The opening of hunting season for deer and grouse on September 15 has led to an influx of hunters starting around 1930 and steadily increasing in numbers until 1940. Some hunters are from the United States and Coast cities but the majority are Okanagan Valley residents.

Use of cabins under permit and the concession at Fish Lake are discussed under "Concessions and Park Use Permits".

VIII IMPROVEMENTS, EXISTING AND PROPOSED:

(a) Roads: A considerable network of roads, other than the main road to the lake, have been built up from logging operations. The ones on the east side of the lake are now unserviceable and of no value. The main logging road paralleling the lake to the west and two miles in length can only be considered valuable as an access road to hunters and cabin owners on Findley Creek and for fire protection purposes. It will likely fall into disrepair soon after logging operations are completed and the advisability of maintenance work on it is doubtful.

No further road construction is needed within the park.

(b) Trails: The most important trail is from Fish Lake to Kneas Lakes. It is easily kept open, well blazed and 7 miles long. For the first 3 miles it follows a bench on the northerly side of Darke Creek, passing through park like stands of fir and yellow pine and patches of immature fir and lodgepole pine.

For the next two miles until the summit is reached the trail has a high scenic value affording a view of the southern part of Okanagan Valley and surrounding mountains topped by Snow Mountain and Little White Mountain, both over 7,000 feet in elevation. Mt. Baldy is skirted as the trail passes through the lower edge of open slopes allowing near views of high altitude open range.
The remaining two miles from the summit at an elevation of 5,300 feet to the lakes are on a gentle down grade for the first mile and then quite steep for the remaining mile. The change in cover to a thick stand of lodgepole pine and spruce is a novelty to many visitors although the visibility is limited.

View of the southern Okanagen from near the summit between lakes.

The four upper lakes are well connected by trails in various degrees of disrepair although the most used trails between Deer, Little Eneas and Island Lake are passable with horses. Windfalls are numerous between Little Eneas, and Big Eneas Lakes. A trail about 3 miles long and starting at Greata Creek was popular around 1938-39 but has since become impassible from windfall.
It provides a much shorter route to Eneas Lakes than the Fish Lake trail and should be opened up again when possible.

Trails around Fish Lake are of little consequence because most travel is by boat. An indistinct trail follows about half way up the western shore of the lake and a similar trail runs along the east shore of the lake.

Neither have enough present public use to warrant any new construction although greatly increased future use of the shores of the lake by cabin owners may later justify this expense.

A network of seldom used trails is found on the plateau north of the lake with the main one running from the cabins on Finlay Creek south towards the lake. Several different routes of access to these cabins minimize the value of any improvement work that might be done on this area.

(c) Campsites:

(1) Fish Lake: A campsite at the south end of the lake was used by the public as far back as 1920 and even then considerable importance was attached to it by local residents. There was no planned development until 1938 when personnel from the Youth's Forestry Training Program cleared an area 350 feet by 50 feet and built 5 rock fireplaces.

Unplanned public use during the past 10 years has destroyed much of the former beauty of the area. The five original fireplaces have disappeared and uncontrolled parking together with the thoughtless pasturing of horses have destroyed all small plant growth.

A new dam built in 1938, adjacent to the picnic grounds, caused a further clearing of trees and left a gravel pit and fill as scars on the landscape. The resulting raise in water level killed a rim of deciduous trees near the dam and leaves mud areas when the water recedes during summer months.

Improvements at present consist of one makeshift fireplace and five frame tables 8 feet long with advertising on the tops. A women's toilet is situated some 30 feet from one of the tables.

If this campsite is to regain some part of its former attractiveness and render a service to the public with a minimum of maintenance, then a completely new arrangement is needed.
It is believed that the following main improvements would provide a complete unit which would meet all requirements for many years.

(a) **Parking areas.**
As a general rule at least 50% of the damage to picnic and camping grounds can be traced to uncontrolled parking and this campsite is no exception.

One well delineated area capable of holding 15 to 20 cars is needed for the one day visitor and a further 3 or 4 individual car parking grounds are required in conjunction with small picnic or camping units. All parking grounds should be bordered by large partly buried rocks.

(b) **Fireplaces.**
Two fireplaces are needed for the large picnic ground and one or two for the campsite units.

(c) **Tables.**
Unless the tables are built by a workman experienced in the use of native material it would pay to use heavy planking for the 6 tables required at the main picnic ground and the remaining 3 or 4 for use at the campsite units.

(d) **Toilets.**
At least two new toilets are required with the construction of an additional two depending on the scale of the improvements attempted.

(e) **Garbage Cans and Pits.**
Four garbage cans and one covered garbage pit are a necessity.

(f) **Clearing and Planting.**
Any improvements will be nullified unless care is taken to build up the natural setting. This should take the form of removal of dead brush and trees and the planting of screenings to hide the dam and gravel pit. Further plantings of groups of deciduous trees and shrubs are needed as a screen for the parking grounds and to give more privacy to picnic groups.

(g) **Signs.**
A simple sign system directing visitors to attractions and public facilities would be appropriate.
(2) **Eneas Lakes:** No definitely located public campsites are recognized at any of the four lakes. Since 1930 the lakes have been very popular with fishermen and during the intervening period the most easily accessible and attractive place on each lake has received the heaviest public use. Probably the greatest numbers made Deer Lake their headquarters because of an old cabin that could be used and also from the fact that it was the first lake encountered by trail.

The three favoured sites on Deer Island and Little Eneas Lake now have private cabins on them with resultant damage to the surroundings from ill-planned tree cutting and the random scattering of debris and garbage.

The need of developing camp grounds is not warranted under existing circumstances because most visitors make arrangements at Fish Lake to hire one of the cabins. Future checks on the number of people using these lakes will determine the proper time for improvement work. A small fireplace, table and garbage pit at each of the 3 most popular lakes would fill most requirements.

**IX SPECIAL USE PERMITS:**

Two special use permits for concessions and 4 for private hunting and fishing cabins were in effect when the park was established.

They are grouped as follows:

(a) **Concessions**

1. Fish Lake—$25.00 annual fee — Penticton and District, Fish, Game and Forestry Protective Association.

2. Deer Lake—$25.00 — As above.

The two concessions have been haphazardly established over a period of years and although the lack of proper planning is evident it has not progressed so far that corrective measures cannot be taken.
The three guest cabins and headquarters building at Fish Lake are fairly well grouped and constructed and the two pit toilets are adequate for the present number of guests. The most needed lack of service is water and garbage disposal. At present tin cans and garbage are thrown into the brush behind the cabins and domestic water is procured from a creek some 400 feet away after climbing over numerous obstacles. Cardboard boxes and tin cans have also been left in piles behind the main building.

The maximum desirable expansion of this concession would take the form of 3 or 4 added guest cabins, the remodelling of the headquarters building to provide eating accommodation and the enlargement of stables to care for 10 horses instead of the present four. Two new toilets would be needed in conjunction with the new cabins.

Until such time as this work is undertaken certain improvements must be made. Each cabin needs an outside garbage container which must be emptied at regular intervals into a covered garbage pit. Piping water to a central location would render a much needed service, although its present installation is not a necessity.

Thirteen boats in good repair are available for hire at Fish Lake. The upper lakes are all supplied with boats with five on Deer Lake and one or two on each of the other lakes.

Cabin at Deer Lake
Construction is such that all walls are buckling.
The concession at the upper lakes although described as centering on one area at Deer Lake actually uses three separate cabins, each one located on a different lake. A cabin at Deer Lake and another at Island Lake were purchased by the present caretaker and an agreement made with a trapper to use another cabin at Little Mears Lake. In all cases these cabins command the most favourable site, especially so in the case of the trappers cabin.

All the cabins have been built and maintained without regard for natural surroundings. Logs and firewood have come from trees adjacent to the building leaving a field of stumps and brush around the cabin. The construction is extremely poor and garbage and toilet facilities are non-existent. The general appearance is that of trappers' cabins rather than guest cabins.
Tentative plans have been proposed and appear financially feasible for the proper construction of a fisherman's resort at the upper lakes to be used in conjunction with the main concession at Fish Lake. However, the present buildings have no place in the planning of the ultimate arrangement.

Rather than have scattered cabins at three lakes, each requiring definite facilities, the concession should be concentrated in a complete unit and located at the most favourable point.

Deer Lake and Little Eneas Lake have possibilities. The large size and psychological placement of Deer Lake are factors in its favour but the border line of dead trees, poor view and possibility of mud flats from the lowering of the lake perhaps more than counter the advantages. A great number of trees has been cut and others blown down or fire killed around the building site at Deer Lake, making it nearly impossible to utilize natural cover in landscaping.

In contrast to this is the sheltered and gently sloping bench on the westerly side of Little Eneas Lake that affords a good view, catches the early morning and late afternoon sun, and has suffered only minor damage from cutting. A hastily erected trapper's cabin intrudes in this setting that could provide a scenic background for 3 or 4 cabins. Anyone of the lakes may be reached from here in 10 minutes' walk and there is no possibility that the shore line will be spoiled by raising or lowering the lake for water storage purposes.

A hastily erected trapper's cabin intrudes in this setting.
Therefore, it is recommended that if reasonable assurance can be given by a responsible party as to his intention of establishing a commercial resort, the site at Little Eneas Lake be used for this purpose. The type of construction and placement for each building must be approved.

Before this area is made available it will be necessary for the operator to have made arrangements to have the trapper's cabin removed.

(b) Special Use Permits.

1. Fish Lake — W.A. Stewart, West Summerland, B.C.
   - Private Cabin.
2. Fish Lake — Edgar Gould, West Summerland, B.C.
   - Private Cabin.
3. Findley Creek — William Hack — West Summerland, B.C.
   - Private Cabin.
4. Findley Creek — Gordon Beggs — West Summerland, B.C.
   - Private Cabin.

In all approximately $250.00 have been paid in fees up to January 1, 1944.
During 1943 most permit areas were checked with the intention of adapting them to Park Use Permits. Boundaries were blazed and corner posts established. No detailed description of each private cabin area is given because the main details are shown on the maps and special use conditions outlined on the Park Use Permits. Indistinctness of boundary lines near Findley Creek made it impossible to remark the two permit areas but this matter may now be done by the Assistant Ranger.

[Image of a well-built hunting and fishing cabin on the east side of Fish Lake.]

X FISH AND GAME

(a) Fish Lake is usually stocked every year with 25,000 fry made up of eastern brook and Kamloops trout. The upper group of lakes is occasionally stocked although Deer Lake is the only one that requires continued attention. The other three lakes have running streams connecting them through which the fish can pass and spawn. The largest fish weighing up to six pounds are found in Deer Lake.

The protection of this resource is being well cared for by the Penticton and District Fish, Game and Forestry Protective Association, who maintain their own fish hatchery at Summerland, B.C.
(b) **Game:** Blue and willow grouse are the only game birds in the vicinity. The blue grouse is the most popular bird because of its abundant numbers and regular hunting season.

The west-slope of Acland Mountain and the open country on Mt. Baldy are the favourite hunting grounds.

Deer hunting starts September 15th and continues to December 15th. The mule deer, as a rule, are large and in fine condition. They are hunted on Acland Mountain, Mt. Baldy and in the plateau area north of Fish Lake known locally as The Piggeries. The operator of the concession at Fish Lake packed out 84 deer during the 1948 season which were estimated at being approximately 1/3 of the total number shot in the Fish Lake area.

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**Hunting cabin on Findley Creek.**
Both end walls are covered with antlers.

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**XI TRAPPING**

There is one registered trapline held by Mr. William Forest of West Summerland giving trapping rights over the park areas. The line is not intensively trapped. Mink, marten, bob-cat, coyotes and cougar are the main fur bearers.
XII LOGGING

All the former controversy between the public and Forest Branch was based on the advisability of logging certain areas in the vicinity of Fish Lake. The public view was largely formed by the destruction of an area bordering the entrance road about 3 miles from the lake. Here a strip of brush and deciduous trees had been killed by a poorly controlled slash fire and this was generally accepted as a sample of logging destruction.

An examination has led to the belief that recreational values will not be appreciable lessened by the logging now taking place in the park. In fact, it may have been in the public interest to have extended the present logging boundaries to include certain areas of overmature dead top yellow pine that will be beetle-killed or windthrown before many years.

XIII WATERSHED AND RESERVOIR VALUES

A reference to water storage rights at Fish Lake dates back to 1898. However, the first definite application was made in 1911 by S. Darke who intended to lower the level of the lake 5 feet and thus irrigate his farm. Around 1917 a small dam and gate was put in and served until 1938 when a 6-foot earth fill was made. The resulting damage to the lake shore would appear more damaging from a scenic standpoint than the logging.

The Corporation of the District of Summerland applied in 1928 to build a dam at Deer Lake. It was completed in 1929 and stored 280 acre feet by a dam 10 feet high and 100 feet long. This resulted in a strip of dead lodgepole pine circling the lake, but no noticeable damage was done to the fishing possibilities.

Storage rights on Big Enens were applied for in 1913 by the Municipality of Summerland but the dam was not built until 1932. It is 200 feet long, 12 feet wide and 6 feet 6 inches high. It has never been used to more than one-half its capacity so the damage to the shoreline has not been as bad as Deer Lake.
Big Eneas Lake has a narrow strip
of water killed trees around its shoreline.

XIV FIRE PROTECTION

No recommendations are made for essential new
protection. Public use of the lower area is concentrated
on picnic ground and lake. The trail to Eneas Lakes is
through an area of tree and ground growth of relatively low
hazard and once the upper plateau is reached a carpet of
green grass gives further protection. Both sites are under
observation from Brent (Snow) Mountain and Little White mountain.

XV ALTERNATIONS

Lot 3761 was Crown-granted in 1921 and the assessed
owner is S. Darke of Summerland. The taxes are two years in
arrears and it may be the owner's intention to let this lot
revert if it comes up for tax sale after the war. It should
become a part of the park.
XVI RECOMMENDATIONS

(a) Administration: All Park Use Permits will contain special conditions with reference to sanitation and garbage disposal. The Assistant Ranger at West Summerland should attempt to make a yearly inspection of private cabins under permit and have a strict semi-yearly check-up on the concession at Fish Lake.

In the event of a public campsite being developed it would be advantageous to have the concessionaire maintain it during summer months in return for a small fee.

Some clarification of the arrangement between permittee and commercial operator is necessary. At present the caretaker has no written contract with the Penticton and District Fish, Game and Forestry Protective Association. He pays the annual fees and lets members of the above association have special rates on boat hire with the profits above these costs making up his income.

The insecurity of tenure limits initiative and makes it difficult to deal with a man needing guidance in such future developments as he proposes whose actual contact with the Association is very slight.

The Association must be made to feel that it is directly responsible for this concession and also have suggested to them that some contract be instituted between them and the operator.

Applications for building sites will be checked for proper location, building construction and log supply, and in no case must a private cabin be built with the intention of using it in a commercial sense.

(b) Fees: The primary concession at Fish Lake should remain at an annual fee of $25.00 but the secondary concession at the upper lakes where only a minimum of overnight accommodation is provided should be reduced to $10.00 since it is run in conjunction with the concession at Fish Lake.

The fees for private cabins should remain at $6.00 per year as under Special Use Permits.
(c) Development Programme: It is recommended that, if conditions become suitable, the public campsite at Fish Lake be improved. This work seems justifiable because of continued public use since 1920 and the fact that the park is in a class "A" category. The revenue accruing from this park is also relatively high when compared to others.

A crew of 5-6 men would be suitable with a camp located on the far side of the dam from the concession. It is estimated that 360 man-days of work would be needed.

It is imperative that these improvements be staked on the ground before any work is started and that the design of fireplaces, tables and toilets be issued from head office.

(d) Survey of Boundaries: No transit surveys of the boundaries are needed unless adjacent land comes up for sale or there is a dispute about timber sale boundaries.

(e) Trappers: The holder of the registered trapline, Mr. William Forest of West Summerland should be immediately brought under permit.

Approved:

C.P. Lyons,
Assistant Forester.

March 20, 1944.

Forester.
DARKE LAKE PARK 5,472 acres. Class A.

Darke Lake Park is located in the forested, rolling plateau country west of the big bend in Okanagan Lake. The park is really two separate areas within the Okanagan Forest. The four small Eneas Lakes which lie at an altitude of 4700 feet are in one area and Darke Lake at a lower level is in the other. It is 16 miles by side road from West Summerland to Darke Lake. From its south end a jeep road gives access to the Eneas Lakes.

Fishing and some hunting are practically the only attractions of the park. Facilities are provided by the concessionaire who operates a base camp at Darke Lake and cabins at the upper lake. Munro Lake outside the park but within the forest is used also by his customers.

The park and surrounding country offers good deer and grouse hunting in season, a use, it should be noted, which is not related to the existence of the park. A few hunting and fishing cabins are held by park-use-permit.

Darke Lake is an unattractive body of water which functions as an irrigation reservoir. The difference between high and low water is 16 feet and there are no beaches. Two of the Eneas Lakes have been flooded also. Fishing is excellent in Darke Lake during May and June, but falls off completely in midsummer. However at this period the higher level lakes offer excellent fly fishing. Springtime use is mainly by local people and in summer, use is chiefly by tourists.

There is an old campsite at the south end of Darke Lake but it is in a state of disrepair and there are no developed public campgrounds in the park.
The establishment of Darke Lake Park has little meaning recreationally. Before the park was withdrawn from the forest, hunting and fishing cabins and a commercial fishing camp were controlled by S.U.P.'s whereas now without significant difference they are controlled by P.U.P.'s. To protect the setting of these lakes logging could have been excluded within a topographic boundary around them or possibly a 10 chain strip reserve would have been sufficient. The existing straight-line park boundaries cut across the hillsides and as a result much of country beyond, although fully visible from the lakes, is open to logging.

Recreational values are not necessarily park values and it is believed that Darke Lake Park is a case of mistaken identity. These little fishing lakes have no great destiny within the park system. They are approximately equivalent to numerous others located within forest reserves. Their recreational role would be sufficiently safeguarded if they were a part of the Okanagan Forest with logging excluded from designated areas.
report:

THAT the Okanagan Forest Reserve was established by proclamation in the British Columbia Gazette on the 13th. day of July, 1922.

THAT it is now considered advisable to dedicate certain of these lands as outlined on the attached plan for public park purposes, outline in red.

AND TO RECOMMEND THAT under the authority of Section 30, Subsection 3 of the "Forest Act," being Chapter 102 of the revised Statutes of British Columbia 1936, the above lands be released from the Okanagan Forest Reserve.

AND TO FURTHER RECOMMEND THAT under Section 127 of the "Forest Act," these lands be constituted a Provincial Park, Class "A", to be known as the Darke Lake Park.

DATED this 29 day of June A.D.1943

Sgd:  "A. Wells Gray"
Minister of Lands.

APPROVED this 29 day of June A.D. 1943

Sgd:  "John Hart"
Presiding Member of the Executive Council.

Files: 0132480, 040199
0104154, 045136
DARKE LAKE PARK

History:

In 1922 David Munroe made a pre-emption application for L. 4240, 160 ac. at the south end of Fish Lake. It had been formerly held under two pre-emptions, both of which had been abandoned.

The Forest Branch examination in 1922 stresses the recreational use the area was receiving from fishermen, hunters and campers and recommended against the pre-emption.

In February, 1928, Ernest Harris of Penticton filed application for a campsite lease on L. 4240. Immediately a petition was made by citizens of Summerland to have the application cancelled and the area kept for the public.

Mr. Harris constructed an "Inn", bunkhouse and stable during 1929 and 1930 without authority but started negotiations for a lease of two acres to cover his holdings. After his death Mrs. E. Harris made application for the area and, on payment of back dues from 1930, was issued a Special Use Permit at $10.00 a year until May, 1936, when all rights were transferred to the Penticton and District Fish and Game Protective Association.

Until 1940 the above have paid $10.00 a year for the S.U.P. but then the fee increased to $25.00 a year.

George Haddrell of Summerland made application in 1939 to purchase timber on 208 acres comprising Lots 3918, 4345, and that portion of Lot 3919 west of Darke Lake. The sale X25561 was made in 1941 and included 270 acres. The ranger eliminated the southern part, Lot 3919, from the original description to protect recreational values.

The Penticton and District Fish, Game and Forestry Protective Association immediately made protest against granting the sale until an examination had been made. Letters of protest were also received from the Penticton Council.

During 1942 negotiations were carried on between interested parties and the Forest Branch for the establishment of a Park area comprising approximately 13,000 acres and known as Mt. Baldy Park.

Meanwhile T.S. X31415, the southern portion being in the Piggeries, was applied for by S. M. Simpson Ltd. who gave many financial and patriotic reasons why the sale should be immediately made. Tenders were called and the Summerland Box Company outbid Simpson.
Immediately strong protests were made about the sale and it was withdrawn at the last moment.

Arrangements were finally made for an examination of the area by all interested persons. Evidently very few of the persons were familiar with the area and after inspection an agreement was reached suitable to all. The operation of T.S. X31415 can be continued without interference with the established Park which is made up of two units. The first bounds Fish Lake on the east, south, west by lines placed one mile from the lake and on the north by a line located approximately a quarter of a mile north of Lapsely or Finlay Creeks, whichever creek is first encountered north of Fish Lake.

Another area of one square mile protects another group of lakes lying 7 miles northwesterly from Darke Lake.

The Order-in-Council establishing the Park was approved on June 29, 1943.

**Occupation within the Park**

S.U.P. # 18 - File 045136 - Penticton & District, Fish, Game & Forestry Protective Association.

S.U.P. #138 - File 0112549 - W. A. Stewart - West Summerland, B. C.

S.U.P. #293 - File 0113514 - Gordon Beggs - West Summerland, B. C.

S.U.P. #135 - File 0113514 - William Hack - West Summerland, B. C.


S.U.P. #239 - File 012382 - Edgar Gould - West Summerland, B. C.

S.U.P. #411 - File 0132774 - Penticton & District, Fish & Game Association.

R.S. #237 - File 0154427 - Forest Branch.

**Improvement Work (Y.F.T.P. in 1939)**

1. 5 rock fireplaces built.

2. An area approximately 350' by 50' has been cleared.
Work Program

1. Locate southern and northern boundaries.

2. Make a 100\"-1\" plan of the area at the south end of the lake and any other key areas around the lake.

3. Examine all S.U.P.'s, defining their individual areas on the ground. Also note any special conditions that should be incorporated on their P.U.P.'s next year. Check firewood and cabin log supply.

4. Examine the upper string of lakes marking out cabin sites and log supply. S.U.P. #411 should be defined on the ground.
In September 1953, Darke and Eneas Lake Parks were reconnoitred both by way of a periodic inspection and to gain further ideas in the assessment of the place of these areas in the Provincial Park system.

Darke and Eneas Lake Parks were established June 20th 1943 following strong interest and agitation on the part of local population for such reservation of a favoured fishing and hunting area. They were removed from the Okanagan Forest Reserve and given Class A Park status; that is, the firmest reservation for which there is provision and one which it is intended be accorded those places in the Province of exceptional beauty and highest potential for recreational uses. Evidently, fear on the part of locals that poor logging practices would be carried on around the lakes was responsible for this step.

Access to Darke Lake Park is as it was in 1944 when the Park Section report was written. Taking 0 miles at West Summerland – Garnet Valley turn-off from the Okanagan Highway.

3 miles marks the end of pavement and the Prairie Valley – Darke Lake turn-off.

6.3 miles brings one to Faulder Rail Station.

7.0 miles is the Darke Lake road break from the miniature road.

11.1 miles is the distance to Summerland Ski Hill road turn-off.

16.8 miles is the distance from West Summerland to Darke Lake via Garnet Valley.
The logging road, which continues along the west side of Darke Lake across Findley and Aneas Creeks, is still possible for most vehicles, although traffic usually stops at the south end of Darke Lake.

The concession here is operated by Howard Clark of West Summerland who has six camps on Monroe and Deer Lakes and probably sends fishing parties to Island, Little Eneas and Big Eneas Lakes as well. Local population from the Okanagan Valley avail themselves of the boat rental Mr. Clark maintains on the lakes, and cabins are available for hunting or fishing parties from outside. The cabins at Darke Lake are depressing, ill-kept little structures hardly a credit to a Class A Park. The side camp cabins appear better kept, but the surroundings looked what they were — a well scattered garbage dump. The writer, in fact, has difficulty recalling a comparable instance where sporting people have shown such callous disregard for everything except the fishing, which might be had. In face of these developments on lakes having flood-killed timber in dingy, draw-down belts, Class A Park status for this land is ludicrous. Until a few years ago, horses were kept at Darke Lake and parties were packed into the Eneas Lake Group, over Baldy Mountain. Now Mr. Clark takes in parties by jeep road, whose negotiation taxes to the full, a four-wheel-drive vehicle in compound-low gear. From a turnout part way up the west side of Darke Lake, the jeep road climbs steeply up the north side of a draw carrying the water course joining Monroe Lake and Darke Creek. Due north of Monroe Lake where, following the steep ascent from Darke Lake to the Trepanage Plateau, the jeep road
levels off. One branch leads south about half a mile to Monroe Lake and the other northwesterly, moderately steeply, to the cabin at the northeast corner of Deer Lake. Trails to Little Eneas and Island Lake are in good repair.

Of the six lakes under discussion, the four largest are reservoirs for storing irrigation water, which is their principal public value. The practice of flooding uncleared shorelines has reduced their scenic value, but apart from this, the writer is of the opinion that the area under reserve does not warrant park status. Little Eneas Lakes and Island Lake are attractive, tranquil forest retreats, but they are very small lakes and, being set in minor depressions of the plateau, could have their present pleasing aspect adequately protected by small encircling timber reserves. It is felt that the main public interest in the four reservoir lakes, perhaps the sole interest, is in the sport fishing they provide. Such public use can be allowed for through lake access reserves offering camping as well, and need not entail establishment of a park.

Before Darke Lake and Eneas Lakes Parks were created, the land enjoyed Okanagan Forest Reserve status which, it is felt, would now be the classification from a good land management viewpoint. Fortunately, mature and overmature or otherwise deteriorating timber was not tied up. Two timber sales in the park which pre-dated actual park establishment, removed considerable of the pine and fir.

Northwest from Eneas Lakes Park, a similar group of lakes referred to as the Peachland Reservoirs meet a certain public recreational use and have supported a successful commercial fishing camp. On examining these lakes it was considered a sufficient safeguard of
recreational values to provide small public campsites on each of the lakes and depend on good forest management practices to ensure that these sites will always be valuable for whatever recreation they provide. The same treatment has been accorded a group of lakes in the Kettle River Forest, having a very apparent attraction for various recreational uses. Any forest reserve lake area which has recreational values associated with, but not out-weighting the value of utilizing primary natural resources, should be dealt with in this way.

The foregoing assessment of Darke and Eneas Lake Parks may be summarized as follows:

(1) Park values are not sufficiently high in Darke and Eneas Lake Parks to warrant park status, most especially not Class A status.

(2) Present development and their condition reflect badly on what are being considered and advertised as Class A parks of the Province.

(3) The original forest reserve status for this area is much sounder for land management than is the present park status, and the objectives of recreational uses could be met by consideration of recreational values in management of the Forest.

(4) It seems most logical to delete the parks and return the land to the Okanagan Forest Reserve, at the same time designating on Departmental maps, plans and registers, public recreational reserves as indicated on the accompanying sketch.

R. H. Ahrens
Reconnaissance and Inventory Section.

September 19, 1953.
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   status.

2. Present development and their condition reflect badly on what
   are being considered and advertised as Class A parks of the
   Province.

3. The original forest reserve status for this area is much sounder
   for land management than is the present park status, and the
   objectives of recreational uses could be met by consideration of
   recreational values in management of the Forest.

4. It seems most logical to delete the parks and return the land
   to the Okanagan Forest Reserve, at the same time designating on
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