

Agassiz - Woodside
Hang Gliding and Paragliding Site
Management Plan
Revision 1

West Coast Soaring Club

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

General Overview of the Enterprise:

The West Coast Soaring Club, a registered non-profit society in the Province of British Columbia, incorporated since 1985, presently holds Licences of Occupation at four locations in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. The Club has also developed a set of safety standards which are part of the management plans for the above mentioned sites, to govern the safe use of the sites.

The club is interested in replacing our tenure for our launch site at Mount Woodside in the Agassiz area. This Management Plan is intended to describe the construction, operation and maintenance of the site.

Hang glider and paraglider pilots have been using the Agassiz area for recreational foot-launched flight for many years. In recent years there has been an increase in the number of pilots using the site as well as increasing land use pressures emerging in this desirable part of southwestern British Columbia. This has resulted in increasing values being assessed for the land that we have the right to occupy under the existing tenure agreement. The West Coast Soaring Club is interested in maintaining access to the existing site, but only to the lands that are required for our use and enjoyment.

The area of interest for this management plan is located approximately 5 kilometers west of the town of Agassiz.

Key Areas of Concern:

- **Revision of Boundaries:** We would like to decrease the overall area of the tenured area significantly. This will require a somewhat more complex boundary line to be determined. We are providing greatly improved mapping as part of this management plan.
- **New Management Plan:** Originally when we were granted this tenure, we had only a set of Site Safety Standards filed as a management plan. This new Management Plan is intended to take the place of the old Site Safety Standards. Since this tenure was issued we have written several Management Plans for other tenures, so we do not expect any great challenges with this Management Plan. However there are some revisions to the Safety Standards section.
- **Accurate assessment of usage levels:** The West Coast Soaring Club is providing the best estimate, based on past usage patterns.

Maps and Site Photographs:

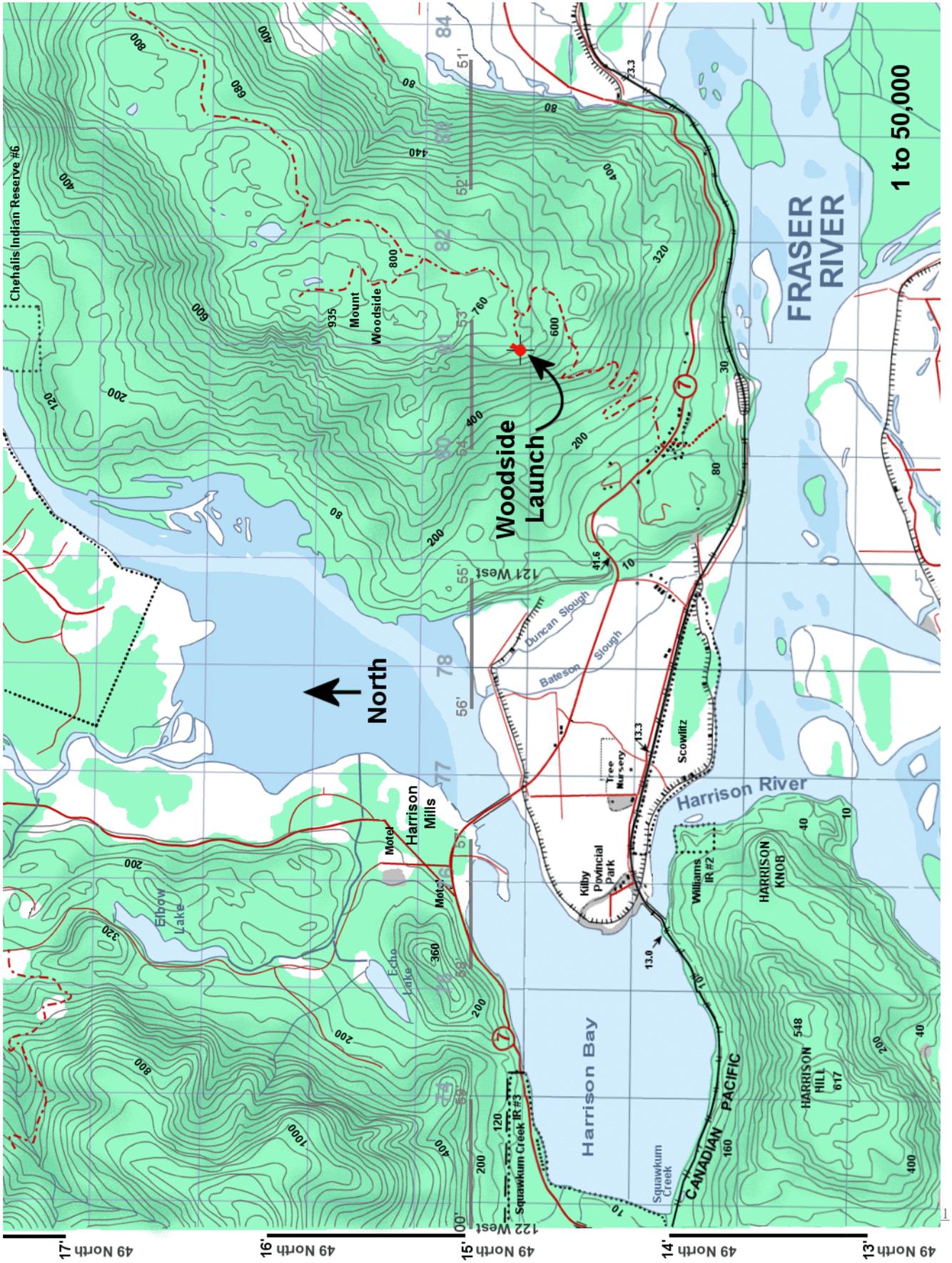
Maps of the site are shown on the following three pages. The descriptions of each of the maps are below.

General Location Map: This is a map of the overall area showing the location of the site relative to nearby communities and the road network. The scale is 1:50,000. North is to the left side of the page.

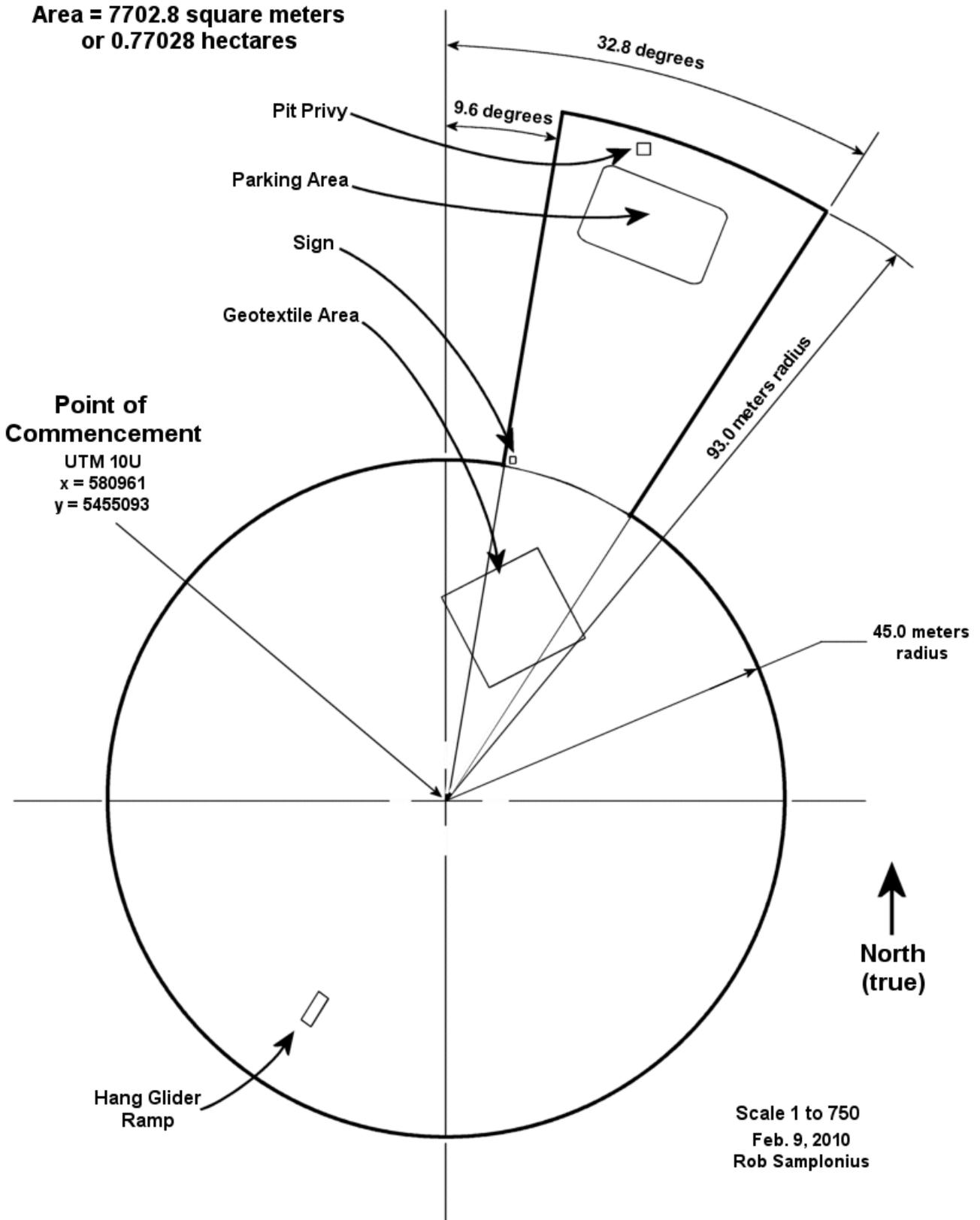
Use Area Map: The map above shows the use area relative to nearby geographic features. The scale is approximately 1:10,000.

Site Plan: This sketch shows the locations of improvements in the application area. The scale is 1:750 and North is as shown.

General Location Map:



Mount Woodside Hang Glider & Paraglider Launch Site Plan





Photograph #1: This photograph taken February 9, 2010 shows the present condition of the launch site.



Photograph #2: This photograph taken February 14, 2010 shows part of the northwest quadrant of the launch site.



Photograph #3: This photograph taken February 14, 2010 shows the location of the hang glider ramp and the appearance of the launch from the top of the launch facing west-south-west.



Photograph #4: This photograph taken February 14, 2010 shows the hang glider ramp.



Photograph #5: This photograph taken February 14, 2010 shows the parking area and authorized pit privy. This area is the northeast 'tab' off the launch area.



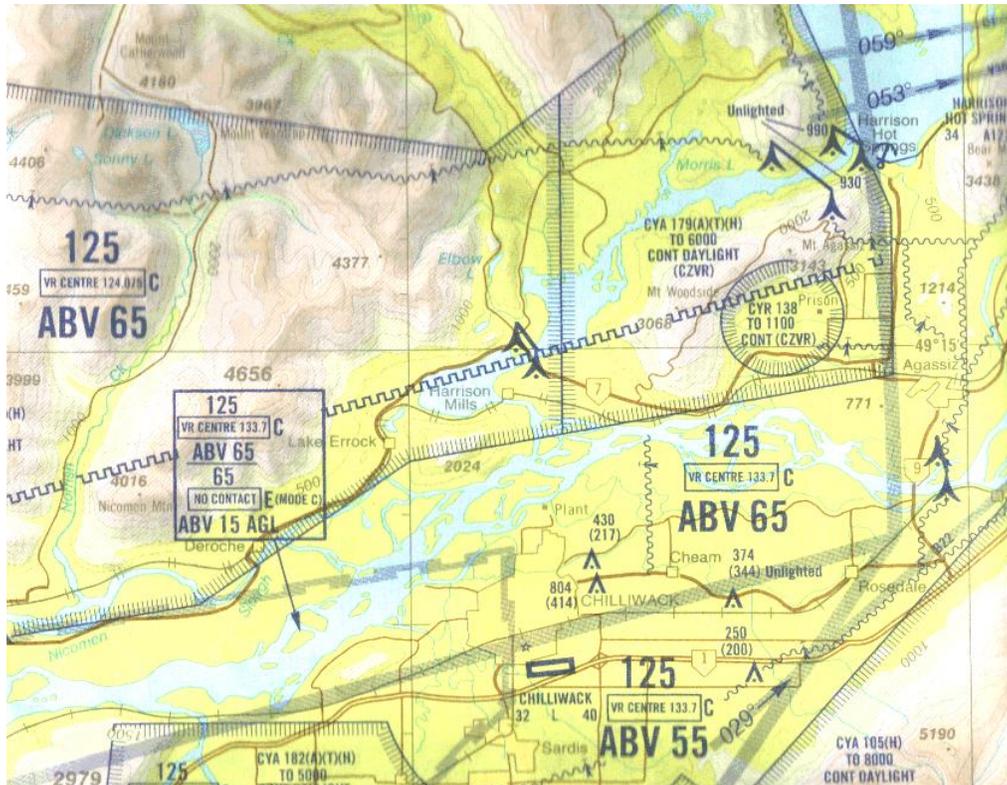
Photograph #6: This photograph taken February 14, 2010 shows the proper launch area covered with geotextile.



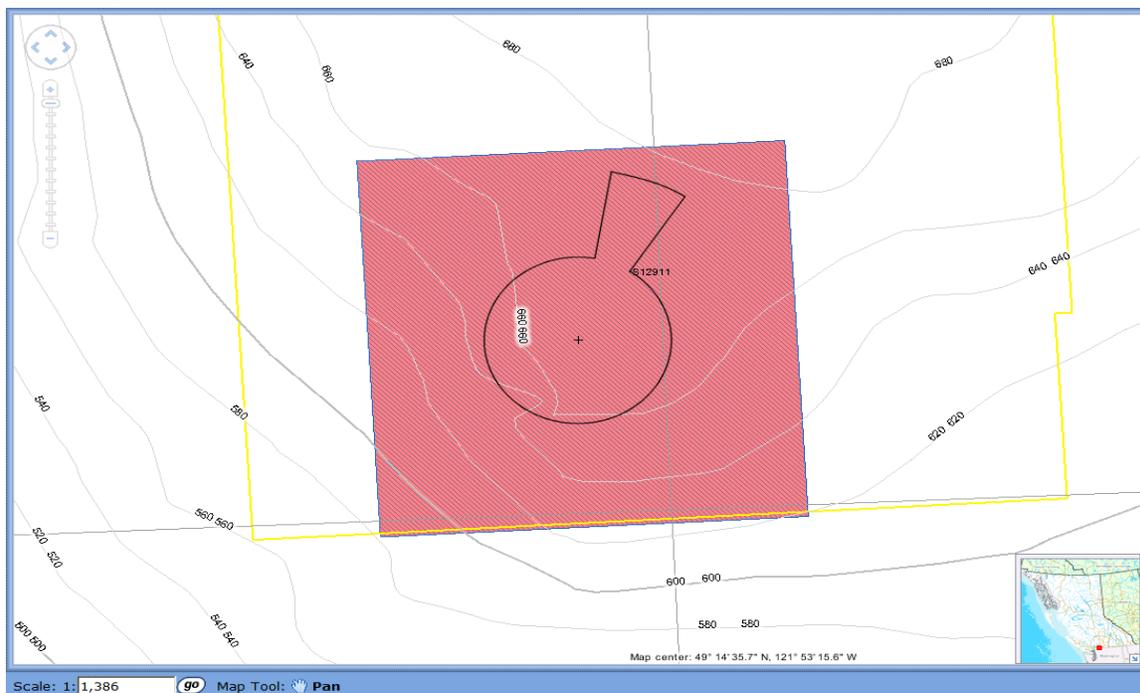
Photograph #7: This photograph taken August 2004 shows the way the launch area looked prior to logging the south slope. Since this photo was taken a cut-block was taken out of the background forest.



Photograph #8: This photo taken in October of 2004 shows the logging of the south slope of the launch. After this photo was taken some timber was blown down to the east of the launch area during winter storms.



Airspace Use Area: This aeronautical chart shows the advisory area (CYA 179 (H)) in the dark blue hatched area, used for hang gliding and paragliding in the Agassiz area. The launch is to the top right of the center of this image.



iMapBC Screen: This screen shot shows old tenure and proposed new tenure boundaries. This map shows an expired SUP area held by the WCSC and shows that there is no overlap with other uses or values. This image was recorded February 17, 2010.

SECTION 1: DESCRIPTION OF OPERATION AND ACTIVITIES OFFERED

1.1 GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE OPERATIONS

The West Coast Soaring Club is a non-profit society that represents the interests of hang gliding and paragliding enthusiasts in the Lower Mainland region of the province of British Columbia. The West Coast Soaring Club has been incorporated since 1985. Our organization has managed a recreational hang gliding and paragliding site at Mount Woodside in the District of Kent since 1985 and has held a Licence of Occupation there since 2002.

Our club has managed a Licence of Occupation on the hang gliding and paragliding site in the Pemberton area known as Mackenzie since 2005.

In 2009 the Licence of Occupation for our flying area in the vicinity of Bridal Falls was successfully replaced after the initial term was completed. This flying site consists of three parcels of land, the first of which was initially tenured in 1995.

The area of interest for this Licence of Occupation is located approximately 5 kilometers west of Agassiz. Maintenance of this launch site reflects our commitment to the growth of our sport in the Agassiz area. This tenure is important to us given competing land use interests in the area.

We believe that we, as an organization representing individual pilots, are best suited to manage the site. Our experience and good record demonstrate that we can manage the site, in compliance with mandated land use policies and our own safety standards. We would like to continue a Commercial tenure arrangement, where commercial operators (tandem pilots and instructors) who are members of the West Coast Soaring Club, are covered by our tenure agreement.

The area that we are interested in will be referred to in this document as Woodside.

We expect the site to continue to be heavily used. The existing site at Woodside has been heavily used on many weekends and there are pilots flying on almost every flyable day at the site between the months of March and November. Our members are most active during the summer months, when they will commute from the Vancouver area to enjoy a few hours of soaring at a time.

1.1.1 General Area

Woodside is approximately 5 kilometers west of Agassiz. Woodside launch is at the end of a approximately 4 kilometers of Forest Service Road and is 1.5 kilometers south of the communications towers at the summit of Mount Woodside. The prominent geographical features in the surrounding area include the Mount Cheam, Harrison Lake, the Harrison River and the Fraser River. Woodside launch offers excellent views of the Fraser Valley and surrounding mountains.

1.1.2 Terrain Description

This principle feature of the land is a rocky outcrop. The south facing slope of this outcrop was logged in the fall of 2004 with limited regeneration of the forest having taken place since then. The included photos show the landscape prior as it now appears as well as it did prior to the logging in 2004. The top of the prominence provides a level area for setting up gliders and possible top landing.

1.1.3 Exact Location Description

Map Datum:	<i>NAD83/WGS84</i>	
Degrees, Minutes, Seconds	Latitude:	49° 14' 35.707" N
	Longitude:	121° 53' 15.609" W
Degrees Decimal	Latitude:	49.2432520104888
	Longitude:	-121.88766914307
Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM):	Zone:	10 U
	Easting:	580961
	Northing:	5455093
Elevation:	675 meters ASL	665 meters above valley floor (Landing Fields)

1.1.4 Base Operation

The base operation is located at Woodside launch. Participants initially meet and park at or near the Landing Field and then either carpool to the launch or hike to the launch.

Woodside launch is the staging area for most activities. Participants spend most of their time at this site preparing for and waiting to fly. Preparation includes inspection of equipment, final assessment of weather conditions, and donning of gear. When conditions are ideal participants launch into the sky.

These activities are undertaken by all participants whether they are individual recreational pilots, tandem pilots and passengers, or student pilots. Instructors and tandem pilots, while involved in commercial operations, may maintain home offices and therefore are indistinguishable from other pilots in terms of the activity they engage in at the launch.

1.1.5 Improvements to Use Areas

The main improvements to the site consist of clearing and sloping work. Minor improvements include a pit privy, a wind sock mounted on a pole and a sign. For more detailed information regarding improvements please refer to section 1.2.4.

1.1.6 Access

All participants travel to a Landing Field by vehicle. One of the main Landing Fields is at the side of the Fraser River, is known as Riverside, and is accessed via a driveway from the Loughheed Highway. There are also other landing fields located further to the east and to the west of the launch.

The West Coast Soaring Club has negotiated a formal usage agreement for the Riverside field and has obtained consent for use of other private land in the area as landing fields.

Access to Woodside launch is primarily via the Mount Woodside Forest Service Road. This is a single lane gravel surface road suitable for four wheel drive equipped vehicles only.

The West Coast Soaring Club is aware that the road access to the launch sites is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Forests and that use of it is subject the authority of the District Manager.

1.1.7 Staff

The West Coast Soaring Club retains no staff. It is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors made up of member pilots.

1.2 COMMERCIAL & RECREATION ACTIVITIES ON CROWN LAND

1.2.1 Description of Experience Offered

A single experience is offered, whether it is to individual recreational pilots, tandem pilots and their passengers, or to student pilots under instruction. The vast majority of the participants are individual recreational pilots.

Pilots typically meet at a Landing Field at the base of the mountain. Car pools are then organized and pilots will proceed by vehicle to Woodside launch. Alternatively pilots may choose to hike to launch. At the launch, pilots will assess weather conditions. If weather conditions are suitable, pilots will set-up and check their equipment, and then launch when conditions are optimum.

During flight, which can vary in duration from 10 minutes to several hours, pilots may ascend to higher altitudes, fly tens of kilometers across country and eventually make a controlled landing in the Landing Field. During their flights pilots may communicate with each other and people on the ground by two-way radio, pilots may take photographs while aloft, or pilots may just enjoy the fresh air.

Pilots may choose to land in the primary designated Landing Field or at one of several other alternative landing fields. We expect that a small number of pilots may also choose to land, or as this is referred to, top-land at the launch site. This has advantages, because it minimizes the amount of vehicle traffic on the roads, because a second trip is not required to retrieve vehicles left at the launches.

After landing, pilots pack up their equipment, discuss their flights, and otherwise socialize for a few minutes before continuing home or to a local restaurant for dinner.

1.2.2 Levels of Use

The following table outlines the levels of use for the experiences described above. Please note that we can only provide a crude estimate of the maximum capacity of the area.

The time frame to reach maximum capacity is impossible to predict. At the present rate of expansion of use, we do not expect the maximum capacity to be reached within the next decade.

Levels of Use by Activity

Experience Offered	Forecast User Days 2010	Forecast User Days 2011	Forecast User Days 2012	Maximum Capacity
Paraglider and Hang glider flights	250	250	250	2500(?)

1.2.3 Areas of Use

There is only one area of use of for this Management Plan, which is Woodside Launch.

Approximate Area Used	Activities	Year Use Commenced	Season of Use
0.77028 hectares	Launches and Landings (flights)	1970	All Year

The INTENDED USE of Woodside is as a staging area and launching point for paragliding and hang gliding activities. For skilled pilots it may also be possible to land at the launch at the end of their flights.

IMPROVEMENTS on Woodside are:

- Clearing and slope modification
- A windsock
- A parking area
- An approved public outhouse
- Signage stating site rules
- A 13 meter by 13 meter area covered with geotextile
- A steel frame and deck hang glider launch ramp.

The FREQUENCY AND PERIOD OF USE for Woodside will be between 1 and 7 days a week during the summer months and 1 to 7 days a month during the winter.

The nearest ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREA to Woodside are wetlands adjacent to the Harrison River approximately 4 kilometers to the northeast.

It is not likely that an environmental and/or archeological assessment will be required as any excavation will be done on the site in an area which was previously disturbed and there are no plans to make significant new improvements at this time.

Approval from the Chilliwack Forest District will be obtained prior to removal of any trees.

1.2.4 Improvements

The main improvement to the use area consist of clearing and vegetation control. In the fall of 2004 the WCSC obtained an Occupant Licence to Cut from the Chilliwack Forest District to cut a small amount of timber on the south slope of the launch. This work was done at the same time as a number of cut-blocks were approved on Mount Woodside.

When required, grass and brush is cut at Woodside. Branches encroaching on the access road to Woodside are trimmed back as needed once a year. In the fall, cross-ditches on the access road are cleared as needed. Routine maintenance activities such as removal of brush are required because it would otherwise create hazards to the users of the site.

A section of gravel on the launch area is covered with a 13 meter by 13 meter section of geotextile fabric. The area covered with geotextile is heavily used and has not been able to support any grass or other natural vegetation as a result; the geotextile has been laid over this area to prevent erosion, and offer users a smooth safe clean surface.

The West Coast Soaring Club provides an approved public outhouse facility (pit privy). There is a parking area for several vehicles located adjacent to the launch. Other improvements at Woodside include a wind sock and a sign posting site information.

For a great number of years there has been a steel frame and deck hang glider launch ramp at the site. This ramp is used by hang glider pilots to more safely launch in light winds.

Improvements from time to time will be replaced or repaired in order to keep them safe and usable.

No new improvements are planned at this time.

Though unexpected, any future improvement work will be done with the preservation of environmental and cultural values as a priority. Prior to any improvement works, the Integrated Land Management Bureau will be informed of the plan and permission will be sought.

No soil or fill material will be removed from the site or brought to the site as part of any future improvement. If any excavation is done to the site, it will be of low impact, shallow excavations that are not likely to disturb any soil that has not been disturbed as part of the previous operations in the area. After any clearing or excavation, suitable ground cover vegetation will be planted to eliminate the risk of substantial erosion and riparian zone damage. If any material of possible archeological interest is found on the site, excavation work will be halted and it will be dealt with properly as per the BC Statute. If plans are to excavate in an area which has not been disturbed industrially, an archaeological assessment will be done and the IMLB will be informed

Any future removal of trees and brush will be done with consent of the Ministry of Forests and Range, Chilliwack Forest District.

We feel that for our purposes, it is best to avoid the placement of permanent high value structures on the site for fear of vandalism and winter weather damage, both resulting in expected unsustainable maintenance demands. Therefore, we only intend to maintain the existing pit privy and hang gliding ramp.

SECTION 2: OVERLAPPING ENVIRONMENTAL AND CULTURAL VALUES

We do not expect there to be significant negative overlap with other values or users as evidenced by the uninterrupted and uncontested use of the Woodside launch for a number of years, and because foot launched flight is a low impact activity both environmentally and culturally. The following is our assessment of the site:

1) FISHERIES VALUES

There are no streams or other bodies of water on or within 200 meters of Woodside launch. The site is on a bluff overlooking the Fraser valley, meaning that it is not subject to significant run-off from slopes above it. We will continue making every effort to maintain as much vegetation cover as possible, which we think will eliminate any soil erosion danger. Surface run-off should not be a concern.

2) WILDLIFE VALUES

There are no known environmentally sensitive areas overlapping the tenure application area upon review of the iMapBC web site (February 17, 2010). As well during the history of our use of the site up to the current date, no concerns regarding wildlife values have been raised. The general area does support deer and black bear as well as a variety of small animal and bird species. Scat and tracks have also been observed.

Participants are warned that there is wild life, including black bears in the area. Participants are advised not to harass any wildlife that they observe.

Other than chance sightings of wildlife, our use of the site should have no effect on the surrounding wildlife. Our activities are generally quiet, very localized when on the ground, for a few hours at a time during days, and on a seasonal basis.

If there are changes to the West Coast Soaring Club's operations in the launch site area, which could affect wildlife including deer and falcons, the West Coast Soaring Club will retain a qualified environmental professional to evaluate the impact.

The West Coast Soaring Club will continue to make every reasonable effort to maintain the site free of garbage that could attract wildlife to negative effect. Members are advised that they should never leave anything that they bring to the site behind, should always leave the site cleaner than when they arrived, and that overnight camping is not the intended use of the site. These directions will also be included on signage at the site.

We are aware of the Wildlife Guideline for Back-country Tourism/Commercial Recreation in British Columbia, presented by the Ministry of Environment in May of 2006. The Wildlife Guidelines, as amended from time to time, will be followed / adhered to when carrying out activities authorized by the Crown land tenure for the normal use and maintenance of the sites.

We do not intentionally seek to have less than the default 500 meter line of sight separation with wildlife. However, in flight with various species of soaring birds it may not be practically possible to maintain separation as paragliders and hang gliders fly very slowly relative to birds in flight. Birds in flight generally ignore gliders, and few if any alarm or habituated responses have been observed.

3) WATER VALUES

Water resources will not be utilized as part of this management plan.

There are no streams or other bodies of water within 200 meters of Woodside launch. There is a community watershed that has an upper boundary over 100 meters from the nearest boundary with the site, however the point of diversion is over a 1000 meters away. The nearest residences are approximately 1500 meters away from the site by straight line distance.

4) FIRST NATIONS

There has been limited formal contact with the Stolo First Nation and the various local Bands. We have had good informal relations with individual members of their community and look forward to working with the local Bands on any concerns they may have with our continued use of the site, or with any other activities in the area.

A review of iMapBC on February 17, 2010 shows no overlapping First Nations Treaty Lands or Land Claim Settlement areas. We do acknowledge that local First Nations may hold additional rights with respect to this area and that we may be required to revise our activities and use of the land accordingly in consultation with the First Nations.

SECTION 3: OVERLAPPING EXISTING USERS

1) MINERAL TENURES

There are no mineral tenures on the area of interest as of February 17, 2010, upon review of the iMapBC web site. As well during the history of our use of the site up to the current date, no concerns regarding mineral tenures have been raised.

We acknowledge that mineral tenures may be located in our area of use in the future and that we may be required to coordinate access and activities with the tenure holders.

2) GEOTHERMAL, PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS TENURES

There are no geothermal, petroleum or natural gas tenures on the area of interest as of February 17, 2010, upon review of the iMapBC web site. As well during the history of our use of the site up to the current date, no concerns regarding geothermal, petroleum or natural gas tenures have been raised.

We acknowledge that geothermal, petroleum or natural gas tenures may be located in our area of use in the future and that we may be required to coordinate access and activities with the tenure holders.

3) TIMBER TENURES AND FOREST USE

We have been in communication with Mike Peters (MOTSA) the Recreation Officer for the Chilliwack Forest District. He expressed that the Chilliwack Forest District is generally supportive of our application for a Licence of Occupation on the site. We are also in communication with BCTS regarding their plans to offer timber sales in the area and we have been able to work our arrangements so that logging activities on Mount Woodside and our activities don't interfere with each other.

It is noted that though the Mount Woodside FSR is currently in good repair, it will be deactivated seasonally, and that maintenance is the responsibility of road users. We anticipate that we will be able to continue to cooperate with the Chilliwack Forest District to maintain access and use of the site.

4) LAND USE PLANNING, LOCAL AND REGIONAL ZONING REQUIREMENTS

The District of Kent has jurisdiction over land use planning for the entire area of interest. It is expected that the current zoning by-laws will continue to allow club and non-profit society uses of the land.

The West Coast Soaring Club has made contact with Transport Canada to coordinate our use of the airspace in the vicinity of the Woodside site. An official advisory area (CYA) has been created within the airspace to alert other users of the airspace of our presence. We will continue to ensure that our members are aware of safety protocols associated with the use of airspace.

5) COMMERCIAL RECREATION TENURE AND GUIDE OUTFITTER TERRITORIES

We do not expect any conflict with any other recreational user groups, commercial recreation operators, or guide outfitters. There are no overlapping recreation tenures at this time.

We acknowledge that our areas of use may overlap with a commercial recreation tenure holder and/or guide outfitting territory. We understand that we are required to contact these tenure holders and ask them to complete an Operator Input Form. This information will be received from the regional Front Counter BC office.

APPENDIX 1:

The following Operation and Safety Standards are presented in this Management Plan solely as proof of an existing set of best practices for use and operation of the site. The West Coast Soaring Club has limited ability to enforce the following standards and reserves the right to revise the following standards without informing Front Counter BC.

OPERATION AND SAFETY STANDARDS

INTRODUCTION

The West Coast Soaring Club has as its priority the preservation of the site and the long term recreational accessibility to its members and the general public. The following site safety standards are intended to promote the safe and courteous use of the site by all users, including but not limited to rated individual hang glider and paraglider pilots, training schools, students, and tandem operators. The term “standards” implies no regulatory authority, but should be adhered to out of courtesy to the West Coast Soaring Club and its members. The West Coast Soaring Club thanks all users for their cooperation.

These standards are to be continuously reviewed and revised with the goal of enhancing safety and practicality. All users of the site are encouraged to make recommendations for changes to the standards that will enhance our safety and enjoyment of the site.

1 DEFINITIONS:

HPAC/ACVL: The Hang gliding and Paragliding Association of Canada. A non-profit society representing the interests of pilots, that liaises with Transport Canada, regulates instruction and obtains third party insurance for its membership.

New Pilot Identification: a bright easily visible ribbon approximately one metre in length tied to a glider to indicate a pilot with less than 10 hours of total airtime.

Site: In this document refers to the whole flying activity area, including launch and landing areas.

WCSC: The West Coast Soaring Club, which is a non-profit society representing hang glider and paraglider pilots. The WCSC takes responsibility for securing access to land for recreational hang gliding and paragliding.

2 PILOT REQUIREMENTS:

Ratings: Pilots are required to have a HPAC/ACVL novice rating or equivalent for unsupervised flights.

Insurance: All pilots must carry HPAC/ACVL third party liability insurance.

Visiting Pilots: The WSCS will maintain signage informing and encouraging visiting pilots to conform to site requirements.

Membership: All regular users are encouraged to become members of the WCSC.

Equipment: All users are expected to operate airworthy equipment, have a reserve parachute and wear a suitable helmet.

Experience: All pilots with less than 10 hours of experience are expected to fly with new pilot identification.

Site Briefing: Prior to their first flights at this site, pilots will receive a briefing from an experienced pilot.

Associations and Agencies: Pilots are expected to obey Transport Canada and HPAC/ACVL policies and requirements not addressed in this document.

3 INSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS:

School Registration: All Instructors or schools operating as a commercial enterprise from the site must register their intentions with the WCSC.

Instructor Certifications: Instructors hired to teach students by supervising solo flights from the site or through tandem instruction must possess valid HPAC instructor certification and first aid certification.

Minimum Instructor Supervision: Schools must ensure that a suitably experienced instructor is required to supervise both the student's launch from the launch site and landing from the landing field during instructional solo flight.

Record Keeping and Reporting: Instructors or schools operating as a commercial enterprise are to keep records of site use and to file an annual report with the WCSC detailing the number of students, flights, training days, and a summary of any incidents and accidents.

Responsibility for Operating Conditions: Instructors are responsible for choosing forgiving conditions for inexperienced students.

First Flight: Instructors must insure that students are suitably prepared, prior to them undertaking their first solo flight from the site.

Advanced Manoeuvres: Advanced manoeuvres must not be instructed at or near the site.

Communication: Students must be in reliable radio communication with their instructors during flights.

Tandem Top-landings: Pilots conducting tandems for instructional purposes must not attempt top-landings.

4 LAUNCH PROTOCOL:

Keep Launch Area Clear: Pilots will not move into launch position until they are prepared to fly when the launch is congested.

Launch Attempts: If a pilot spends a significant amount of time attempting to launch without success, they will move to the end of the launch queue when the site is congested.

By-stander Assistance: Trained by-standers are encouraged to render assistance to launching pilots.

Top-landings: Top-landings may only be attempted when there are no pilots attempting to launch and by-standers are safely clear.

5 AIRMANSHIP:

Keep clear of launch area: Pilots will clear the air in front of the take off if others are attempting to launch.

Follow standard right of way rules: All pilots must be familiar with and follow right of way rules for both thermal and ridge flying.

Aerobatic flight: Aerobatic flight is to be avoided in areas of high traffic or over crowded areas

6 LANDING PROTOCOL:

Respect Landing Areas: Be aware of the locations of active landing fields and specific requirements for the use of these landing fields. Make reasonable flight plans to be able to land on an appropriate landing field.

Respect for Private Property and Out of Bounds Areas: Make every effort to avoid harming private or public property.

Out-landing Courtesy: If an out-landing is unavoidable, be courteous and polite to the landowners, avoid damaging property, and leave promptly.

7 SITE MANAGEMENT:

Parking: Park only in designated areas and avoid parking in any area that may be used by emergency vehicles.

Litter: Do not litter on the site. If litter is found, pick it up, and dispose of it properly.

Sanitation: Use portable toilet facilities and public washrooms whenever possible.

Wildlife: Be aware of native wildlife. Do not harass wildlife.

Spectators: Spectators should be directed to safe vantage points. Participants will hold the safety of the general public as the highest priority.

Smoking: Do not smoke on site. Discourage spectators from smoking. Smoking has the potential to damage paragliding and hang gliding equipment as well as to start forest fires.

Camp Fires: Camp fires are discouraged at the sites. If campfires spots are found make sure they are completely out and then clear away and bury any ash and charcoal remaining.

Vegetation: Do not introduce invasive weeds to the sites. Do not destroy ground cover vegetation. Do not cut trees or brush without appropriate authorization.