
Cowichan Lake Research Station

Location: 7060 Forestry Road, Mesachie Lake BC

Other Names: Cowichan Lake Forest Research Station, Cowichan Lake Experimental Station

Construction Dates: 1929-1936, 1950-1958



*Cookhouse and main Conference Centre area
the main office*



Original Manager's House, now

Statement of Significance for Cowichan Lake Research Station

Description of Historic Place

The Cowichan Lake Research Station is a large government forestry research facility consisting of several bunkhouses, offices, and other amenities. The station also has large greenhouses and tracts of forest-research specific land. Located at 7060 Forestry Road in Mesachie Lake, British Columbia, this historic place encompasses the entire property.

Heritage Values

The Cowichan Lake Research Station illustrates a significant achievement in planning and educational programs. The station represents a significant stage in the community development, both socially and economically. Heritage value can also be found in the scientific importance of the continuous forestry research at the station. There is also scientific importance in the Cowichan Lake Research Station's

historic and current land use patterns. Heritage value is also visible in the historical context of the property, specifically focused on the original buildings.

The Cowichan Lake Research Station was established in 1929, and has since continued unique research projects on local forestry and forest ecosystems. With a focus on Douglas fir, the station has contributed great scientific research on coastal forests which has been significantly important to local communities. The land use patterns of the Cowichan Lake Research Station hold significant heritage value as well. The variety of research plots, such as Douglas fir inter-breeding, has created a historically diverse landscape that is unique to this community.

Heritage value can be found in how the Cowichan Lake Research Station illustrates a significant achievement in both planning and educational programs. During the depression, the station was used multiple times to provide relief programs to young men. As the camp was previously underfunded and underutilized, this relief program was a fine example of planning that both provided employment and improved the development of the camp. The relief program also started an educational aspect that taught young men skills for future employment opportunities. The Cowichan Lake Research Station has continued this educational program with future forestry students, which of great value to the local economy and social community.

The station represents significant development in the Cowichan Lake communities. The relief programs operated at the station aided the economic development of the local area and an increase in funding also benefited local infrastructure, with the development of road networks.

Heritage value can also be found in the historic buildings on site. The Cowichan Lake Research Station underwent two major construction periods, and the remaining buildings illustrate these two stages well. Several buildings, including the original manager's house, were built during 1929-1936 and provide a distinct representation of the earliest forestry research stations. There are also buildings, including the kitchen facilities, that were built during the 1950s and represent the increased attention and funding placed on forestry research.

Character Defining Elements

The key elements that define the heritage character of the Cowichan Lake Research Station include:

- The original buildings from different periods of the station's development
- The old growth trees in the natural forest of the station
- The historic and current land use patterns for forest research purposes
- The long-term provision of educational programs

