



Thaidene Nënë

Proposed National Park Reserve

Ecological Values Summary

If established, the proposed Thaidene Nënë national park reserve would uniquely contribute to the Government of Canada's goal of representing each of the 39 distinct, terrestrial natural regions within Parks Canada's National Parks System. The Northwestern Boreal Uplands Natural Region, which stretches from Great Bear Lake in the northwest to the shores of Hudson Bay in the southeast, is one of the regions currently unrepresented in Canada's National Parks System. The study area for the proposed Thaidene Nënë national park reserve is an outstanding example of this natural region, with its dramatic transition from the boreal forest of the Taiga Shield to the above tree-line in the southern Arctic Tundra.

The Thaidene Nënë study area is characterized by: numerous lakes, rivers and waterfalls, a striking archipelago of islands, peninsulas, landscape

formations shaped by ancient ice sheets, dramatic cliffs, and a variety of climates and soils. Features created during the last glaciation, such as eskers, provide unique and important wildlife habitat. Ecosystem processes such as fire are important in the Taiga Shield region of the Thaidene Nënë area, influencing forest regeneration as well as helping to control diseases and insects.

Great Slave Lake is the deepest lake in Canada reaching approximately 615 metres. The majority of the water in the Thaidene Nënë study area drains into Great Slave Lake, which in turn flows into the Mackenzie River and on to the Arctic Ocean. Part of the study area also drains into the Thelon River and ultimately into Hudson Bay.



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The diversity of vegetation in the Thaidene Nënë area occurs in part because of the transition from boreal forest, to tree-line, to tundra. This variety of habitats supports diverse species of mammals, birds, fish and amphibians. Some species occurring in the Thaidene Nënë area have been listed as 'at risk', 'maybe at risk' or 'sensitive'. Wildlife species projected to occur in the proposed Thaidene Nënë national park reserve study area include 42 mammals, 171 birds, 28 fish and 1 amphibian.

Mammal species of particular note include: barren-ground caribou, moose, muskox, grey wolf, black and grizzly bear, red and Arctic fox, lynx, wolverine, otter, beaver, muskrat, and snowshoe and Arctic hare. The proposed Thaidene Nënë national park reserve could protect parts of the annual ranges of all three barren-ground caribou herds in the area. Ten species of hawks and falcons, two eagle species, osprey and six owl species occur in the Thaidene Nënë study area. Islands and cliffs in the area are known to be important nesting habitat for breeding birds and many rocky islands host colonies of gulls and terns.

The waters of the study area provide habitat for 28 species of fish which are projected to occur, some of which are listed as 'at risk' or 'sensitive', and two species of freshwater mussels.

Over the years, ecological studies have been conducted in the Thaidene Nënë area. Ecological reports of note specific to the national park proposal include: *Preliminary Area of Interest for a National Park in the East Arm of Great Slave Lake* (Claude Mondor, 2006); *Thaidene Nënë State of Knowledge Report* (SENES Consultants Ltd. and Ray Griffith, 2006); and *Migratory Tundra Caribou Seasonal and Annual Distribution Relative to Thaidene Nënë* (Anne Gunn, Kim Poole, and J. Wierzchowski, 2011). Many other ecological studies pertain to the Thaidene Nënë area but are not necessarily specific to the national park proposal. In 2014, Parks Canada retained Golder Associates Ltd. to develop an Ecological Values Literature Review and Annotated Bibliography report to assist in further understanding the available ecological studies relevant to the Thaidene Nënë area.



For more information:

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