

Choosing Protected Areas

Protected areas identification usually includes two main elements from a conservation perspective:

- A “**gap map**” - this evaluates where new protected areas are needed in terms of how well the range of habitats across the province have been represented in the existing protected areas network, and
- **Identification of conservation values** - this can include sensitive sites, culturally significant areas, special habitats, tourism areas, or other values that are not compatible with industrial development. Areas where there is the most overlap are usually considered the highest priority for conservation. These areas are then compared with economic and other interests to determine which candidates are “best bets” - or areas with highest conservation value and lowest economic impacts.

