



Executive Committee Agenda

Date: Wednesday, March 22, 2023
Time: 9:00 am
Location: Islands Trust Victoria Boardroom
200-1627 Fort Street, Victoria, BC

	Pages
1. CALL TO ORDER	
2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA	
2.1 Introduction of New Items	
2.2 Approval of Agenda	
2.2.1 Agenda Context Notes	4 - 4
3. RISE AND REPORT DECISIONS FROM PREVIOUSLY CLOSED MEETING	
None	
4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES	
4.1 March 7, 2023 Executive Committee draft minutes	5 - 7
5. FOLLOW UP ACTION LIST AND UPDATES	
5.1 Follow Up Action List/Director/CAO Updates	8 - 11
5.2 Local Trust Committee Chair Updates	
5.3 Islands Trust Conservancy Liaison Update	
6. BYLAWS FOR APPROVAL CONSIDERATION	
6.1 Bowen Island Municipality LUB Amendment Bylaw No. 598 - RFD	12 - 24
THAT the Executive Committee advise Bowen Island Municipality that Bylaw No. 598 cited as “Bowen Island Municipality Land Use Bylaw No. 57, 2002, Amendment Bylaw No. 598, 2023” is not contrary to or at variance with the Islands Trust Policy Statement.	
7. TRUST COUNCIL MEETING PREPARATION	
7.1 Executive	
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7.4	Trust Area Services	
8.	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE PROJECTS	
8.1	Trust Council Initiated	
8.1.1	Executive	
8.1.2	Trust Area Services	
8.1.3	Planning Services	
8.1.4	Administrative Services	
8.2	Executive Committee Initiated	
8.2.1	Executive	
8.2.1.1	Attendance at AVICC April Convention - Discussion	
	See item 2.2.1 Agenda Context Notes	
8.2.2	Trust Area Services	
8.2.2.1	Opportunity to Comment on Provincial Intention Papers for Coastal and Marine Strategy and Watershed Security Strategy and Fund - RFD	36 - 136
	1. That Executive Committee request staff to support the Chair in preparing a submission to the provincial engagement on the Coastal Marine Strategy Intentions Paper for submission by April 14, 2023.	
	2. That Executive Committee request staff to support the Chair in preparing a submission to the provincial engagement on the Watershed Security Strategy Intentions Paper for submission by April 17, 2023.	
8.2.2.2	Trust Council Decisions Related to Conservation from Islands Trust Conservancy - Briefing	137 - 137
8.2.2.3	Draft Islands Trust Tax Notice Insert for 2023/23 - Briefing	138 - 140
8.2.3	Planning Services	
8.2.4	Administrative Services	
9.	NEW BUSINESS	
9.1	Executive/Trust Council	
9.2	Trust Area Services	
9.2.1	LTC Chairs Report on Local Advocacy Topics	
9.3	Planning Services	
9.4	Administrative Services	
10.	CORRESPONDENCE (for information unless raised for action)	
10.1	T. Law letter dated March 9, 2023 re: Temporary Use Permits for housing advocacy	141 - 149

10.2	Response from Ministers of Transport and DFO Canada letter dated June 17, 2022 re: joint request (hyperlink below)	150 - 151
	<u>San Juan County and Islands Trust Joint Request for an Emergency Towing Vessel in Sidney letter dated January 26, 2022</u>	
10.3	M. Green response re: Emergency Towing Vessel and Canada's Feb 2023 Presentation Slides email dated March 15, 2023	152 - 152
10.3.1	OPP Emergency Towing - Marine Navigation Risk Assessment	153 - 159
11.	WORK PROGRAM	
11.1	Review and amendment of current work program	160 - 163
12.	NEXT MEETING	
	The next Executive Committee meeting will be held electronically on April 12, 2023, beginning at 9:00 a.m.	
13.	CLOSED MEETING (scheduled)	
	That the meeting be closed to the public subject to Sections 90(1)(c) of the Community Charter in order to consider matters related to employee relations and that staff attends the meeting.	
14.	ADJOURNMENT	

Agenda No.	From	Context Notes
7.1.2	DAS	March Trust Council Business Decision Highlights The Financial Planning Committee passed the following motion at its last business meeting: That Financial Planning Committee request that the Executive Committee authorize the inclusion of the quarterly financial results in the Trust Council highlights news release on an on-going basis.
8.2.1.1	Executive Coordinator	Attendance at AVICC April Convention - Discussion March 22, 2023 is the early-bird deadline to register for attendance at the Association of Vancouver Island Coastal Communities (AVICC) annual convention being held April 14-16 in-person in Nanaimo. Executive Committee may wish to discuss its attendance at the convention.



Executive Committee Minutes of Regular Meeting

Date: March 7, 2023
Location: Coast Bastion Hotel
Quadra Room, 2nd Floor
11 Bastion Street, Nanaimo BC

Members Present: Peter Luckham, Chair, Thetis Trustee
Tobi Elliott, Vice-Chair, Gabriola Trustee
David Maude, Vice-Chair, Mayne Trustee
Timothy Peterson, Vice-Chair, Lasqueti Trustee

Staff Present Russ Hotsenpiller, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
David Marlor, Director, Legislative Services (DLS)
Clare Frater, Director, Trust Area Services (DTAS)
Stefan Cermak, Director, Planning Services (DPS)
Lori Foster, Executive Coordinator/Recorder

Others Present: None

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 am. Chair Luckham gave a territorial acknowledgement and humbly stated gratitude to live and work on Coast Salish First Nations traditional and treaty territory.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

2.1 Introduction of New Items

Chair Luckham acknowledged receipt of late item correspondence circulated to Executive Committee for forwarding to Trust Council.

2.2 Approval of Agenda

By general consent, the agenda was approved as presented.

3. RISE AND REPORT DECISIONS FROM PREVIOUSLY CLOSED MEETING - None

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 February 13th Executive Committee draft minutes

By general consent, the February 13th Executive Committee draft minutes were adopted as presented.

4.2 February 22nd Executive Committee draft minutes

By general consent, the February 22nd Executive Committee draft minutes were adopted as presented.

5. FOLLOW UP ACTION LIST AND UPDATES

5.1 Follow Up Action List/Director/CAO Updates

Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Hotsenpiller and directors gave status updates on FUAL items and spoke to the following:

- Strategic Plan process updates and a corporate plan proposal under review by the Governance Committee and a Financial Planning Committee working group,
- A full day of training for chairs of committees with Lisa Zwarn in progress,
- Annual report work in progress,
- Staffing updates, vacancies and turnover.

5.2 Local Trust Committee Chair Updates – None

5.3 Islands Trust Conservancy Liaison Update - None

6. BYLAWS FOR APPROVAL CONSIDERATION - None

7. TRUST COUNCIL MEETING PREPARATION - None

7.1 Executive - None

7.2 Planning Services - None

7.3 Administrative Services - None

7.4 Trust Area Services - None

7.5 Trustee Updates - None

8. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE PROJECTS - None

8.1 Trust Council Initiated - None

8.1.1 Executive - None

8.1.2 Trust Area Services - None

8.1.3 Planning Services - None

8.1.4 Administrative Services - None

8.2 Executive Committee Initiated - None

8.2.1 Executive - None

8.2.2 Trust Area Services - None

8.2.3 Planning Services - None

8.2.4 Administrative Services - None

9. NEW BUSINESS - None

9.1 Executive/Trust Council - None

9.2 Trust Area Services - None

9.2.1 LTC Chairs Report on Local Advocacy Topics - None

9.3 Planning Services - None

9.4 Administrative Services - None

10. CORRESPONDENCE (for information unless raised for action)

By general consent, forward items 10.2 to 10.9 to Trust Council.

10.1 M. Gang re: in camera meeting with the Minister of Municipal Affairs letter dated February 17, 2023

It was noted the province did respond to M. Gang's correspondence informing the writer on meetings processes.

By general consent, Director of Legislative Services (DLS) Marlor will respond to M. Gang.

10.2 Xwe-etay/Lasqueti Archaeology Project Report to Trust Council March 2023

10.3 Salt Spring Island Water Preservation Society letter dated February 17, 2023

10.4 D. Rapport email dated February 21, 2023 re: Funding for SSIWPA

10.5 J. Margison re: updated report on trucking of freshwater to the Gulf Islands February 2023

10.6 R. Schuster re: Report "Carbon and Biodiversity Mapping and Assessment for the Islands Trust Area" from 2014 letter dated February 28, 2023

10.7 D. Rogers re: Correspondence to Trustees letter dated March 6, 2023

10.8 McKechnie & Elkington re: NAV CAN Flight Path letter dated March 6 2023

10.9 E. Dishoeck re: Flight path changes proposed by NAV CAN letter dated March 6, 2023

11. WORK PROGRAM

11.1 Review and amendment of current work program - None

12. NEXT MEETING

The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled to be held electronically on March 22, 2023, from the Victoria office boardroom, 1627 Fort Street.

13. CLOSED MEETING - None

14. ADJOURNMENT

By general consent, the meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

Peter Luckham, Chair

Certified Correct

Lori Foster, Executive Coordinator

Follow Up Action Report

Executive Committee

Chief Administrative Officer

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
1 EC and staff do not pursue conversations with the Province around tree cutting until after the March 2023 meeting as directed by Trust Council resolution.	Russ Hotsenpiller	Meeting: 06-Dec-2022 Target: 09-Mar-2023	In Progress
2 That the remaining Trust Council orientation sessions be delivered online between now and March and that reconsideration be made for future training once orientation is concluded.	Russ Hotsenpiller	Meeting: 14-Dec-2022 Target: 07-Mar-2023	In Progress
3 Staff provide recommendations with respect to Executive Committee and council committee training sessions.	Russ Hotsenpiller	Meeting: 14-Dec-2022 Target: 22-Feb-2023	In Progress
4 Prioritize and provide report on requesting further provincial funding <u>see Trust Council CAO FUAL item 1, page 29/33 of March TC agenda.</u>	Russ Hotsenpiller	Meeting: 22-Feb-2023 Target: 22-Mar-2023	In Progress
5 That Trust Council direct Executive Committee to work with staff on a coordinated strategy and prepare a request that the Province revisit the provincial grant funding formula to the Islands Trust.	Russ Hotsenpiller	Meeting: 07-Mar-2023 Target: 27-Jun-2023	In Progress

Director Legislative Services

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
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Follow Up Action Report

Executive Committee

Director Legislative Services

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
1 Staff to draft amendments for replacement of those Trust Council policies deemed as top priority for updating, based on policy review analysis, for consideration of approval by Trust Council. As of March 2022, amendments to 11 out of 17 policies deemed out of date have been adopted.	David Marlor	Meeting: 03-Feb-2021 Target: 13-Jun-2023	In Progress
2 Staff review the Executive Committee sponsorship policy and report back recommendations on local trust committee approvals, communications, and funding mechanisms.	David Marlor	Meeting: 14-Apr-2021 Target: 13-Sep-2023	In Progress
3 Respond to M. Gang re: in camera meeting with the Minister of Municipal Affairs letter dated February 17, 2023	David Marlor	Meeting: 07-Mar-2023 Target: 22-Mar-2023	In Progress

Director, Administrative Services

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
1 Review Islands Trust Policy 6.5.2 as a whole and specifically make recommendations to amend the policy to ensure the policy is clear in regards to the process and decision making authority related to proposed 'overspends' for any particular budget item.	Julia Mobbs	Meeting: 21-Oct-2020 Target: 20-Sep-2023	In Progress

Follow Up Action Report

Executive Committee

Director, Trust Area Services

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
1 Investigate options for local trust committees with respect to being notified of aquaculture and mariculture license changes including changes in species in its negotiation of protocol agreements with the province.	Clare Frater	Meeting: 30-Jan-2019 Target: 07-Mar-2023	In Progress
2 Legislative Monitoring Chart (bi-annually to Trust Council) Staff to produce the Legislative Monitoring briefing every 6 months with the next one being September 2023.	Clare Frater	Meeting: 23-Feb-2022 Target: 01-Mar-2023	In Progress
3 Staff to work with trustees to organize two film screenings of the movie Dust n Bones and reconciliation discussions subject to support of affected local trust committees. (A grant in aid of 4,500 (from History and Heritage Grants in Aid program was provided in 2020 to host screenings on three islands but due to Covid-19 restrictions only one screening occurred.) EC previously indicated interest from Gabriola and Salt Spring Islands.	Clare Frater	Meeting: 26-Feb-2020 Target: 07-Mar-2023	In Progress
4 That Trust Council request that the Executive Committee support Bowen Island Municipality in its efforts to oppose recreational use of motorized vehicles on Mount Gardner Crown land, subject to consultation with First Nations.	Clare Frater	Meeting: 17-Jun-2020 Target: 07-Mar-2023	In Progress

Follow Up Action Report

Executive Committee

Director, Trust Area Services

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
5 Ask staff to investigate options for policies or policy updates for formal opportunities for First Nations presentations and engagement at Trust Council meetings.	Clare Frater	Meeting: 07-Oct-2021 Target: 06-Sep-2023	In Progress
6 Staff to develop policy regarding s. 8 (2) (h.1) (iii) and (iv) of the Islands Trust Act.	Clare Frater	Meeting: 12-Apr-2022 Target: 20-Sep-2023	In Progress
7 Continue to work with K'ómoks First Nation and Gabriola Historical Society in terms of its funding request and Executive Committee consider ways to allocate funds for such requests.	Clare Frater	Meeting: 04-May-2022 Target: 20-Sep-2023	Completed
8 Initiate rekindling of the San Juan County/Islands Trust relationship, work with Chair for June.	Clare Frater	Meeting: 11-Jan-2023 Target: 27-Jun-2023	In Progress
9 Staff advance the question of responding to delegates with thank you letters, for June Trust Council, and that staff prepare a briefing on practices in other local governments.	Clare Frater	Meeting: 11-Jan-2023 Target: 27-Jun-2023	In Progress
10 Executive Committee request staff to cooperate with Snaw-Naw-As First Nation to develop a protocol agreement for Trust Council's consideration.	Clare Frater	Meeting: 13-Feb-2023 Target: 27-Jun-2023	In Progress
11 Hold 5 spots to get the registration for the UBCM Housing Forum and poll trustees for interest.	Clare Frater	Meeting: 22-Feb-2023 Target: 07-Mar-2023	Completed

REQUEST FOR DECISION

ISLAND MUNICIPALITY BYLAW SUBMISSION

File No.: 08-3020-20-01 BIM_BL_598

DATE OF MEETING: March 22, 2023
TO: Islands Trust Executive Committee
FROM: Stefan Cermak
Director, Planning Services
SUBJECT: Bowen Island Municipality – LUB Amendment Bylaw No. 598

RECOMMENDATION

1. **THAT the Executive Committee advise Bowen Island Municipality that Bylaw No. 598 cited as “Bowen Island Municipality Land Use Bylaw No. 57, 2002, Amendment Bylaw No. 598, 2023” is not contrary to or at variance with the Islands Trust Policy Statement.**

IMPLICATIONS OF RECOMMENDATION

Organizational - None

Financial - None

Policy - None

Implementation/Communications - Communication to Bowen Island Municipality regarding the Executive Committee decision.

Other - None

PURPOSE

Bowen Island Municipality Bylaw No. 598 (Addendum 1) is an amendment to the Bowen Island Municipality Land Use Bylaw (LUB) No. 57, 2002 in order to provide regulations for the subdivision and comprehensive development of approximately 7.5 hectares of land as three separate areas. Area 1 will provide for parkland consisting of a combination of natural areas and trails. Area 2 permits a single large residential lot with protected pastureland. Area 3 permits up to 6 lots for detached residential dwellings, each with an accessory residential use permitted.

BACKGROUND

Proposed Bylaw No. 598 received First Reading on February 27th, 2023. Additional background is available in the [Staff Report to Bowen Council dated February 13, 2023](#).

Bowen Island Municipality staff reviewed the Islands Trust Policy Statement (ITPS) Directive Policies (included with Addendum 1) and have identified the following ITPS Directive policy as relevant:

Policy No.	Directive Policy
3.1.4	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the planning, establishment, and maintenance of a network of protected areas that preserve the representative ecosystems of their planning area and maintain their ecological integrity.
3..4.4	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the protection of sensitive coastal areas.
4.1.4	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the identification and preservation of agricultural land for current and future use.
4.5.10	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the location of buildings and structures so as to protect public access to, from and along the marine shoreline and minimize impacts on sensitive coastal environments.
5.2.5	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address means for achieving efficient use of the land base without exceeding any density limits defined in their official community plans.

In review of the staff reports and bylaw, staff concurs with Bowen Island Municipality staff that the remaining ITPS policies do not apply, and that the proposal is not contrary to or at variance with the Island Trust Policy Statement Directive Policies.

Issues Relating To First Nation Interest

The Bowen island staff report does not indicate that any First Nations engagement occurred. The Islands Trust Policy Statement does not contain directive policies about First Nations.

Public Comments

As of the date of this Request for Decision (RFD), Islands Trust Staff have not received any public comments. However, Bowen Island staff have received numerous comments via its referral to Bowen island Commissions and Committees and the applicant hosting information meetings.

Staff Comments

The purpose of the staff report is to advise if the proposed bylaws are or are not contrary to or at variance with the Islands Trust Policy Statement (ITPS). Bowen Island Municipality has considered the Islands Trust Policy

Statement Directives Policies Checklist and has indicated the Municipality has addressed relevant policies (Addendum 2).

Based on a review of the proposed Bylaw No. 598, the Bowen Island staff reports, and the ITPS Checklist, Islands Trust staff concludes that the Bylaw No. 598 is not contrary to or at variance with the Islands Trust Policy Statement.

KEY ISSUES/CONCEPTS

- Referral of Land Use Bylaw No. 598 under s.15 of the Letters Patent
- Written response to Bowen Island Municipality required by April 21, 2023 (45 days after date of receipt of the referral on March 7, 2023).
- Comments from Executive Committee limited to whether or not Bylaw No. 598 is contrary to or at variance with the Islands Trust Policy Statement.
- Staff considers that Bylaw No. 598 is not contrary to or at variance with the Islands Trust Policy Statement.

RELEVANT POLICY

- Islands Trust Policy Statement Directive Policies
- [Islands Trust Policy 1.3.1](#) [Policy Statement Implementation]
- [Bowen Island Municipality Letters Patent](#)

ADDENDUM

1. BIM Proposed Bylaw No. 598
2. Policy Statement Checklist

ALTERNATIVE

3. Determine that the bylaw(s) is/are contrary to the Islands Trust Policy Statement:

THAT the Executive Committee request that staff advise Bowen Island Municipality in writing that the Executive Committee considers that Bylaw No. 598 cited as “Bowen Island Municipality Land Use Bylaw No. 57, 2002, Amendment Bylaw No. 598, 2022” is contrary to or at variance with the Islands Trust Policy Statement for [INSERT REASONS], triggering notification of the Minister.

Submitted By:	Stefan Cermak, Director, Planning Services	March 15, 2023
Concurrence:		

Bowen Island Municipality
Bylaw No.598 2023

A Bylaw to amend Land Use Bylaw No. 57, 2002

WHEREAS, “Bowen Island Land Use Bylaw No. 57, 2002” establishes zoning classifications and regulations for land within the municipality, and

AND WHEREAS, Council wishes to amend “Bowen Island Land Use Bylaw No. 57, 2002” to enable additional uses and amend existing regulations on the property legally described as:

LOT 1 BLOCK B DISTRICT LOT 1412 GROUP 1 NEW WESTMINSTER DISTRICT PLAN BCP39854 (SEE PLAN AS TO LIMITED ACCESS)

THEREFORE, the Council of Bowen Island Municipality, in open meeting assembled, enacts as follows:

1. Citation

- 1.1 This bylaw may be cited for all purposes as “Bowen Island Municipality Land Use Bylaw No. 57, 2002, Amendment Bylaw No. 598, 2023”.

2. Amendments

- 2.1 “Bowen Island Municipality No. 57, 2002,” is amended by inserting Section 4.35 to read as follows:

4.35 COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT 22 (CD 18) ZONE (ECHO BAY)

***Information Note:** The purpose of the CD 22 Zone is to provide regulations for the subdivision and comprehensive development of approximately 7 hectares of land as three separate areas. Area 1 will provide for parkland consisting of a combination of natural areas and trails. Area 2 permits a single large residential lot with protected pastureland. Area 3 permits up to 6 lots for detached residential dwellings, each with an accessory residential use permitted.*

The regulations in the tables in this Section apply to land in the *CD 22 Zone*, as indicated by the column headings. For the purposes of this zone, different regulations apply in Area 1, 2, and 3. The Area boundaries are identified on the map attached as Schedule A to this Bylaw. Minor adjustments to the establishment of the area boundaries will be permitted based upon more detailed site investigations that will be undertaken at the subdivision approval stage.

4.35.1 Permitted Uses of Land, Buildings and Structures

- (1) In addition to the uses permitted in Section 3.2 of this Bylaw, the following uses, buildings and structures and no others are permitted in the CD 22 Zone:

Principal Uses of Land, Buildings and Structures	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3
<i>Dwelling, Detached</i>		◆	◆
Open Space	◆	◆	◆
Nature Protection	◆	◆	◆
Accessory Uses of Land, Buildings and Structures			
<i>Uses accessory to principal uses</i>	◆	◆	◆
<i>Domestic Agriculture</i>		◆	◆
<i>Agriculture</i>		◆	
<i>Stable</i>		◆	
<i>Home Occupation use subject to Part 3</i>		◆	◆
<i>Accessory residential use</i>		◆	◆
Permitted Buildings and Structures			
<i>Dwelling, Detached</i>		◆	◆
<i>Buildings and Structures accessory to permitted uses</i>		◆	◆

4.35.2 Size, Siting and Density of Permitted Uses, Buildings and Structures

- (1) Subject to Part 3, uses, buildings and structures in the CD 22 Zone must comply with the following regulations regarding size, siting and density:

Lot Coverage and Maximum Floor Area	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3
Maximum combined <i>lot coverage</i> of all <i>buildings</i> and <i>structures</i> (m ²)	1%	100 m ² plus 10 % of lot area to a maximum of 500 m ²	100 m ² plus 10 % of lot area to a maximum of 500 m ²

Maximum floor area of all buildings on a lot, excluding garages and accessory buildings (m ²)		375	375
Additional <i>floor area</i> permitted on a <i>lot</i> containing an <i>accessory residential use</i> (m ²)		50	50
Number of Units and Site Areas			
<i>Maximum number of dwellings</i>	0	1	6
Maximum number of detached dwellings on any lot		1	1
Maximum number of accessory <i>buildings</i> on any <i>lot</i> for each 0.2 <i>ha</i> of <i>lot</i> area or portion thereof, plus one, subject to Part 3		1	1
Height			
Maximum height of a building or structure (metres)	9	9	9
Setbacks			
Minimum setback from side lot lines (metres)	3	3	3
Minimum setback from front lot lines (metres)	3	4.6	4.6
Minimum setback for a building from any lot line that abuts a highway (metres)		4.6	4.6
Minimum setback from rear lot lines (metres)	3	4.6	4.6

4.35.3 Subdivision and Servicing Requirements

(1) The regulations in this Subsection apply to the subdivision of land under the Land Title Act or Strata Property Act for the CD 22 Zone:

Lot Areas for the Creation of New Lots through Subdivision	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3
Maximum number of lots to be created by subdivision	5	1	6
Minimum lot area (hectares)	N/A	1	0.23

2.2 “Bowen Island Municipality Land Use Bylaw No. 57, 2002” is amended by changing the zoning classification for the lands shown outlined a solid black line on Schedule A of this Bylaw from Rural

Residential 1 (RR1) to the **Comprehensive Development 22 (Echo Bay) Zone** boundaries for lands shown in Schedule A of this Bylaw and by making such deletions, adjustments, and consequential annotations to Schedule “B” to Bylaw No. 57, 2002 as are required to give effect to this amendment.

READ A FIRST TIME this 27th day of February, 2023;

READ A SECOND TIME this ____ day of _____, _____;

READ A THIRD TIME this ____ day of _____, _____;

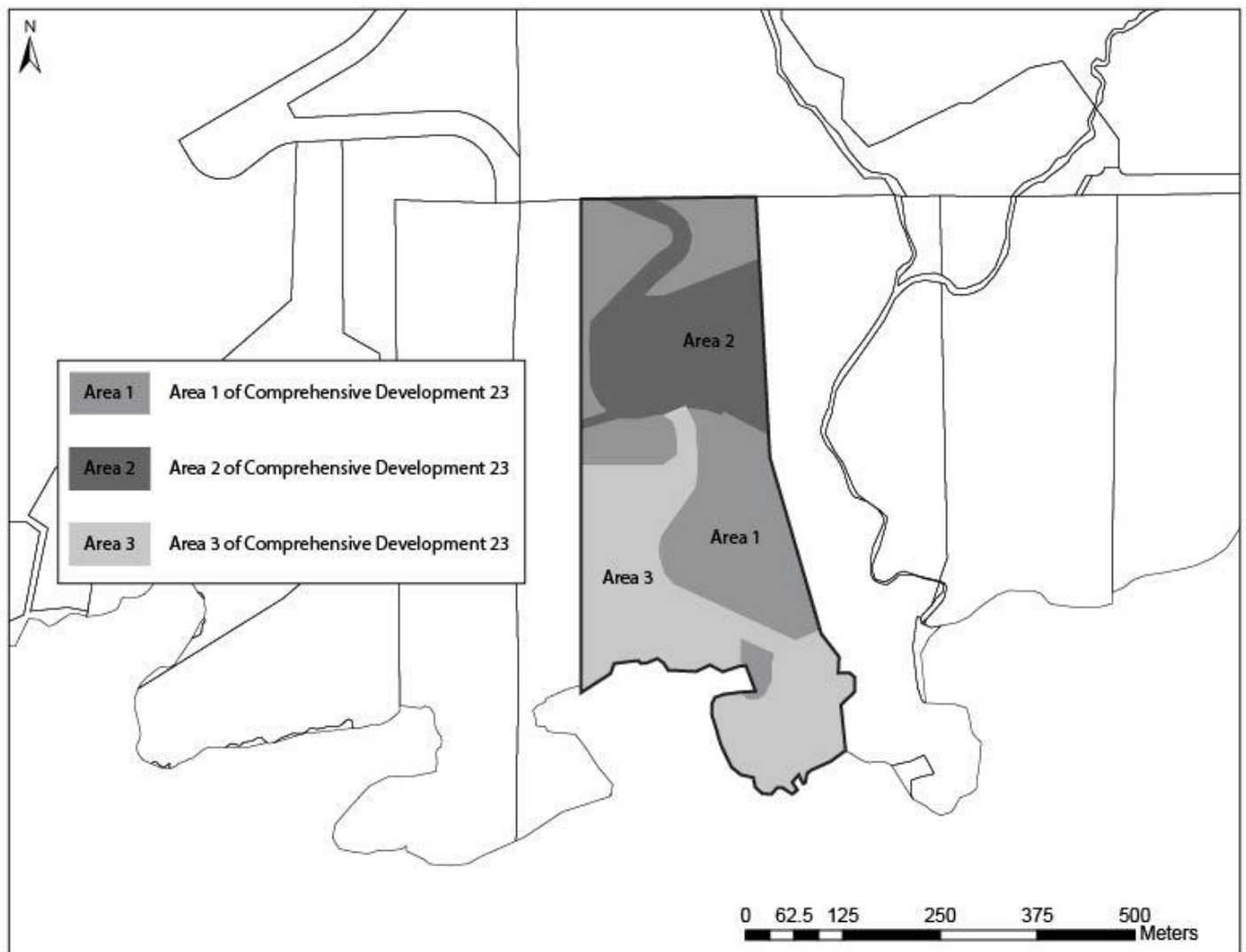
FINALLY ADOPTED this ____ day of _____, _____;

Andrew Leonard
Mayor

Sophie Idsinga
Interim Corporate Officer

Bowen island Municipality Land Use Bylaw No. 57, 2002

Amendment Bylaw No. 598, 2023 - Schedule A





Islands Trust

POLICY STATEMENT DIRECTIVES ONLY CHECK LIST

Bylaw No. 598, 2023 – File: Arbutus Bay Road (8) Cummings RZ-03-2021

PURPOSE

To provide staff with the Directives Only Checklist to highlight issues addressed in staff reports and as a means to ensure Local Trust Committee address certain matters in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws and Island Municipalities address certain matters in their official community plans and to reference any relevant sections of the Policy Statement.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Policy Statement is comprised of several parts. Parts I and II outline the purpose, the Islands Trust object, and Council's guiding principles. Parts III, IV and V contain the goals and policies relevant to ecosystem preservation and protection, stewardship of resources and sustainable communities.

There are three different kinds of policies within the Policy Statement as follows:

- Commitments of Trust Council which are statements about Council's position or philosophy on various matters;
- Recommendations of Council to other government agencies, non-government organizations, property owners, residents and visitors; and
- Directive Policies which direct Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities to address certain matters.

DIRECTIVES ONLY CHECK LIST

The Policy Statement Directives Only Checklist is based on the directive policies from the Policy Statement (Consolidated April 2003) which require Local Trust Committees to address certain matters in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws and Island Municipalities to address certain a matters in their official community plans in a way that implements the policy of Trust Council.

Staff will use the Policy Statement Checklist (Directives Only) to review Local Trust Committee and Island Municipality bylaw amendment applications and proposals to ensure consistency with the Policy Statement. Staff will add the appropriate symbol to the table as follows:

- ✓ if the bylaw is **consistent** with the policy from the Policy Statement, or
- ✗ if the bylaw is **inconsistent (contrary or at variance)** with a policy from the Policy Statement, or
- N/A if the policy is not applicable.

Part III Policies for Ecosystem Preservation and Protection

CONSISTENT	NO.	DIRECTIVE POLICY
	3.1	Ecosystems
N/A	3.1.3	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the identification and protection of the environmentally sensitive areas and significant natural sites, features and landforms in their planning area.
✓	3.1.4	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the planning, establishment, and maintenance of a network of protected areas that preserve the representative ecosystems of their planning area and maintain their ecological integrity.
N/A	3.1.5	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the regulation of land use and development to restrict emissions to land, air and water to levels not harmful to humans or other species.
	3.2	Forest Ecosystems
N/A	3.2.2	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the protection of unfragmented forest ecosystems within their local planning areas from potentially adverse impacts of growth, development, and land-use.
	3.3	Freshwater and Wetland Ecosystems and Riparian Zones
N/A	3.3.2	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address means to prevent further loss or degradation of freshwater bodies or watercourses, wetlands and riparian zones and to protect aquatic wildlife.
	3.4	Coastal and Marine Ecosystems
✓	3.4.4	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the protection of sensitive coastal areas.
N/A	3.4.5	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the planning for and regulation of development in coastal regions to protect natural coastal processes.

PART IV: Policies for the Stewardship of Resources

CONSISTENT	NO.	DIRECTIVE POLICY
	4.1	Agricultural Land
✓	4.1.4	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the identification and preservation of agricultural land for current and future use.
N/A	4.1.5	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the preservation, protection, and encouragement of farming, the sustainability of farming, and the relationship of farming to other land uses.
N/A	4.1.6	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the use of adjacent properties to minimize any adverse affects on agricultural land.

CONSISTENT	NO.	DIRECTIVE POLICY
N/A	4.1.7	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the design of road systems and servicing corridors to avoid agricultural lands unless the need for roads outweighs agricultural considerations, in which case appropriate mitigation measures shall be required to derive a net benefit to agriculture
N/A	4.1.8	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address land uses and activities that support the economic viability of farms without compromising the agriculture capability of agricultural land.
N/A	4.1.9	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the use of Crown lands for agricultural leases.
	4.2	Forests
N/A	4.2.6	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the need to protect the ecological integrity on a scale of forest stands and landscapes.
N/A	4.2.7	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the retention of large land holdings and parcel sizes for sustainable forestry use, and the location and construction of roads, and utility and communication corridors to minimize the fragmentation of forests.
N/A	4.2.8	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the designation of forest ecosystem reserves where no extraction will take place to ensure the preservation of native biological diversity.
	4.3	Wildlife and Vegetation
	4.4	Freshwater Resources
N/A	4.4.2	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address measures that ensure neither the density nor intensity of land use is increased in areas which are known to have a problem with the quality or quantity of the supply of freshwater, water quality is maintained, and existing, anticipated and seasonal demands for water are considered and allowed for.
N/A	4.4.3	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address measures that ensure water use is not to the detriment of in-stream uses
	4.5	Coastal Areas and Marine Shorelands
N/A	4.5.8	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the needs and locations for marine dependent land uses.
N/A	4.5.9	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the compatibility of the location, size and nature of marinas with the ecosystems and character of their local planning areas.
✓	4.5.10	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the location of buildings and structures so as to protect public access to, from and along the marine shoreline and minimize impacts on sensitive coastal environments.
N/A	4.5.11	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address opportunities for the sharing of facilities such as docks, wharves, floats, jetties, boat houses, board walks and causeways.
	4.6	Soils and Other Resources
N/A	4.6.3	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the

		protection of productive soils.
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PART V: Policies for Sustainable Communities

CONSISTENT	NO.	DIRECTIVE POLICY
	5.1	Aesthetic Qualities
N/A	5.1.3	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the protection of views, scenic areas and distinctive features contributing to the overall visual quality and scenic value of the Trust Area.
	5.2	Growth and Development
N/A	5.2.3	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address policies related to the aesthetic, environmental and social impacts of development.
N/A	5.2.4	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address any potential growth rate and strategies for growth management that ensure that land use is compatible with preservation and protection of the environment, natural amenities, resources and community character.
✓	5.2.5	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address means for achieving efficient use of the land base without exceeding any density limits defined in their official community plans.
N/A	5.2.6	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the identification of areas hazardous to development, including areas subject to flooding, erosion or slope instability, and strategies to direct development away from such hazards.
	5.3	Transportation and Utilities
N/A	5.3.4	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the development of a classification system of rural roadways, including scenic or heritage road designations, in recognition of the object of the Islands Trust.
N/A	5.3.5	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the impacts of road location, design, construction and systems.
N/A	5.3.6	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the designation of areas for the landing of emergency helicopters.
N/A	5.3.7	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the development of land use patterns that encourage establishment of bicycle paths and other local and inter-community transportation systems that reduce dependency on private automobile use.
	5.4	Disposal of Waste
N/A	5.4.4	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the identification of acceptable locations for the disposal of solid waste.

CONSISTENT	NO.	DIRECTIVE POLICY
	5.5	Recreation

N/A	5.5.3	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the prohibition of destination gaming facilities such as casinos and commercial bingo halls.
N/A	5.5.4	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the location and type of recreational facilities so as not to degrade environmentally sensitive areas, and the designation of locations for marinas, boat launches, docks and anchorages so as not to degrade sensitive marine or coastal areas.
N/A	5.5.5	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the identification of sites providing safe public access to beaches, the identification and designation of areas of recreational significance, and the designation of locations for community and public boat launches, docks and anchorages.
N/A	5.5.6	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the identification and designation of areas for low impact recreational activities and discourage facilities and opportunities for high impact recreational activities.
N/A	5.5.7	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the planning for bicycle, pedestrian and equestrian trail systems.
	5.6	Cultural and Natural Heritage
N/A	5.6.2	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the identification, protection, preservation and enhancement of local heritage.
N/A	5.6.3	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the preservation and protection of the heritage value and character of historic coastal settlement patterns and remains.
	5.7	Economic Opportunities
N/A	5.7.2	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address economic opportunities that are compatible with conservation of resources and protection of community character.
	5.8	Health and Well-being
N/A	5.8.6	Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address their community's current and projected housing requirements and the long-term needs for educational, institutional, community and health-related facilities and services, as well as the cultural and recreational facilities and services.

POLICY STATEMENT COMPLIANCE	
✓	COMPLIANCE WITH TRUST POLICY
	NOT IN COMPLIANCE WITH TRUST POLICY for the following reasons:

Islands Trust Council Highlights March 7 – 9, 2023

The following is a list of [agenda](#) highlights of Trust Council's activities and decisions from its March 7-9, 2023, quarterly meeting. These highlights are not the official minutes; Trust Council will adopt those at its June 27-29, 2023, meeting being held in-person on Gabriola Island at The Haven. [Visit the March 2023 Trust Council meeting site to view the recordings.](#)

Adopted Budget 2023/24

This [news release](#) summarizes highlights of the \$9.7 million budget Trust Council approved to continue operations and undertake select projects.

Third Quarter Financial Results

Received and approved by Trust Council, the third quarter financial results show Islands Trust has spent 70% of its approved budget as at December 31, 2022, slightly less than planned. The primary drivers of the underspending against plan are staff vacancies and project delays.

Tree Cutting Advocacy Rescinded

Trust Council rescinded its September 2020 request to the Province to enhance the Trust's jurisdiction over tree cutting under section 8 of the Community Charter and removed the task from its work program.

Office of the Ombudsperson Review

Trust Council has initiated a comprehensive review of Islands Trust enforcement related policies and practices requesting recommended improvements in keeping with best practices for local governments.

Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee Special Property Tax Requisition

Trust Council passed a request to include a special property tax requisition for the Salt Spring Island Trust Area in the amount of \$43,000 to preserve and protect the quality and quantity of water resources within the local trust area.

Policy Statement Amendment Project

Trust Council adopted a plan to advance the Policy Statement Project.

Committee/Learning Group Updates

- Trust Council requested interested trustees work with Director of Legislative Services Marlor to provide input and revision to the draft Accessibility Committee terms of reference and bring it back to June Trust Council.
- Trust Council tasked the Governance Committee with a review of the current method of appointment and membership of its standing committees.
- A Reconciliation Learning Group will be initiated to develop a reconciliation learning plan through virtual monthly meetings.
- Trustee Mikaila Lironi was appointed to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans [Shellfish Aquaculture Management Advisory Committee](#) with Trustee David Graham as alternate.

Revisit Provincial Funding Grant Formula

Trust Council has asked Executive Committee work with staff on a coordinated strategy and prepare a request that the Province revisit its grant funding formula for Islands Trust.

2023/24 Trust Council Meeting Locations

These locations will host the next in-person Trust Council quarterly meetings: June 27-29 on Gabriola; September 26-28 on North and South Pender; December in Victoria and March 2024 on Salt Spring.



Follow Up Action Report

Trust Council

Chief Administrative Officer

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
1 That Trust Council consider approaching the Province of British Columbia to request additional funding for the Islands Trust annual budget, ensuring any request that goes forward is appropriately strategized in line with other requests currently being asked of the Province; and that Trust Council direct staff to work with Executive Committee and the Islands Trust Conservancy Board to strategize an approach for requesting additional funding from the Province.	Clare Frater Kate Emmings Russ Hotsenpiller	Meeting: 17-Sep-2019 Target: 06-Dec-2023	In Progress
2 That Trust Council prioritize public engagement tools and approaches as a priority topic for future learning opportunities.	Russ Hotsenpiller	Meeting: 21-Sep-2021 Target: 06-Dec-2022	In Progress
3 Coordinate the provision of expert advice and training to the incoming Trust Council, early in the new term, on the theme of public engagement and consultation, building on lessons learned from the first three phases of Islands 2050 public engagement from 2019 - 2022.	Clare Frater Russ Hotsenpiller	Meeting: 21-Sep-2022 Target: 27-Jun-2023	In Progress
4 In cooperation with Executive Committee, provide a list of needed resources in priority order to advance the Trust's reconciliation activity with First Nations in British Columbia that Council may debate and endorse for advocacy to British Columbia.	Clare Frater Russ Hotsenpiller	Meeting: 22-Sep-2022 Target: 27-Jun-2023	In Progress
5 Trust Council host a panel session about housing challenges and solutions in the Islands Trust Area as part of trustee education.	Russ Hotsenpiller Stefan Cermak	Meeting: 22-Sep-2022 Target: 14-Mar-2023	In Progress

Follow Up Action Report

Trust Council

Chief Administrative Officer

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
6 That Trust Council coordinate a round table on housing, to include BC Housing, key ministers, housing leaders from island communities, and others, within the first six months of the new term.	Russ Hotsenpiller Stefan Cermak	Meeting: 22-Sep-2022 Target: 23-Mar-2023	In Progress
7 Trust Council ask the Governance Committee to review the current method of appointment and the make-up of membership for Trust Council standing committees. (added to GC FUAL)	Russ Hotsenpiller	Meeting: 07-Mar-2023 Target: 27-Jun-2023	In Progress
8 That Trust Council direct Executive Committee to work with staff on a coordinated strategy and prepare a request that the Province revisit the provincial grant funding formula to the Islands Trust.	Russ Hotsenpiller	Meeting: 07-Mar-2023 Target: 27-Jun-2023	In Progress
9 Trust Council respond to Minister Kang to the effect that Trust Council will revisit the request for a review of Islands Trust mandate, governance and structure, at September Trust Council and provide the minister with an update.	Russ Hotsenpiller	Meeting: 07-Mar-2023 Target: 26-Sep-2023	In Progress
10 THAT a reconciliation learning group be initiated comprised of trustees who indicate interest; and that a learning plan be developed and implemented through monthly, virtual meetings.	Russ Hotsenpiller	Meeting: 07-Mar-2023 Target: 26-Mar-2024	In Progress

Follow Up Action Report

Trust Council

Chief Administrative Officer

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
11 That the 2023/24 Trust Council meetings be held in-person at the following locations: ·June: Gabriola ·September: 1. The Penders 2.Keats/Barnabas ·December: Victoria ·March: Salt Spring	Russ Hotsenpiller	Meeting: 08-Mar-2023 Target: 27-Jun-2023	In Progress

Director Legislative Services

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
1 Trust Council requested Executive Committee follow up with the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD) around forest management.	Clare Frater David Marlor	Meeting: 12-Mar-2020 Target: 06-Dec-2023	In Progress
2 Staff to work with the Regional Planning Committee to review policies and fees related to the Agricultural Land Commission Exclusion Regulation which comes into effect October 1, 2020.	David Marlor Stefan Cermak	Meeting: 15-Sep-2020 Target: 06-Dec-2022	In Progress
3 That Trust Council request staff to recommend amendments to Trust Council Policy 6.3.2 to address the use of unspent special property tax requisition funds on new programs or initiatives when the original program or initiative remains ongoing.	David Marlor Julia Mobbs	Meeting: 15-Sep-2020 Target: 28-Jun-2023	In Progress

Follow Up Action Report

Trust Council

Director Legislative Services

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
4 Trust Council asked staff to provide recommendations about how to broaden engagement and capacity building within local communities, particularly with respect to involving First Nations, in the work of the Islands Trust Area.	Clare Frater David Marlor	Meeting: 10-Mar-2021 Target: 27-Jun-2023	In Progress
5 That Trust Council adopt the revised Trust Council Policy 2.3.1 [Council Committee System and Terms of References] dated March 7, 2023 that adds Governance Committee membership to the Financial Planning Committee, includes the terms of reference for all council committees and removes reference to the Executive Committee; and further That Trust Council rescind policies 2.3.2 [Regional Planning Committee Terms of Reference], 2.3.3 [Financial Planning Committee Terms of Reference], 2.3.4 [Trust Programs Committee Terms of Reference], and 2.3.5 Governance Committee Terms of Reference].	David Marlor	Meeting: 07-Mar-2023 Target: 27-Jun-2023	In Progress
6 That Trust Council request interested trustees to work with Director of Legislative Services Marlor to provide input and revision to the draft Accessibility Committee terms of reference and bring it back to the June Trust Council.	David Marlor	Meeting: 07-Mar-2023 Target: 27-Jun-2023	In Progress

Director of Planning Services

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
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Follow Up Action Report

Trust Council

Director of Planning Services

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
1 Staff to work with the Regional Planning Committee to review policies and fees related to the Agricultural Land Commission Exclusion Regulation which comes into effect October 1, 2020.	David Marlor Stefan Cermak	Meeting: 15-Sep-2020 Target: 06-Dec-2022	In Progress
2 Executive Committee to develop a communications strategy and materials to support awareness of the housing affordability advocacy request and rationale.	Clare Frater Stefan Cermak	Meeting: 22-Sep-2022 Target: 14-Mar-2023	In Progress
3 Trust Council host a panel session about housing challenges and solutions in the Islands Trust Area as part of trustee education.	Russ Hotsenpiller Stefan Cermak	Meeting: 22-Sep-2022 Target: 14-Mar-2023	In Progress
4 That Trust Council coordinate a round table on housing, to include BC Housing, key ministers, housing leaders from island communities, and others, within the first six months of the new term.	Russ Hotsenpiller Stefan Cermak	Meeting: 22-Sep-2022 Target: 23-Mar-2023	In Progress
5 Trust Council request Staff to seek a legal opinion regarding the Islands Trust's obligations to uphold collective and individual rights to housing.	Stefan Cermak	Meeting: 08-Mar-2023 Target: 27-Jun-2023	In Progress
6 Director of Planning Services request the Office of the Ombudsperson to undertake a comprehensive review of the enforcement related policies and practices of the Islands Trust, and recommend such improvements and changes to them as may be required to bring the policies and practices into conformity with best practices for local government by law enforcement.	Stefan Cermak	Meeting: 08-Mar-2023 Target: 26-Sep-2023	In Progress

Follow Up Action Report

Trust Council

Director, Administrative Services

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
1 That Trust Council request staff to recommend amendments to Trust Council Policy 6.3.2 to address the use of unspent special property tax requisition funds on new programs or initiatives when the original program or initiative remains ongoing.	David Marlor Julia Mobbs	Meeting: 15-Sep-2020 Target: 28-Jun-2023	In Progress
2 Trust Council direct staff to specify that the Legislative Services, Meeting Administrator position be named as temporary for one year.	Julia Mobbs	Meeting: 07-Mar-2023 Target: 01-Apr-2024	In Progress

Director, Trust Area Services

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
1 That Trust Council consider approaching the Province of British Columbia to request additional funding for the Islands Trust annual budget, ensuring any request that goes forward is appropriately strategized in line with other requests currently being asked of the Province; and that Trust Council direct staff to work with Executive Committee and the Islands Trust Conservancy Board to strategize an approach for requesting additional funding from the Province.	Clare Frater Kate Emmings Russ Hotsenpiller	Meeting: 17-Sep-2019 Target: 06-Dec-2023	In Progress
2 Trust Council requested Executive Committee follow up with the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD) around forest management.	Clare Frater David Marlor	Meeting: 12-Mar-2020 Target: 06-Dec-2023	In Progress

Follow Up Action Report

Trust Council

Director, Trust Area Services

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
3 That Trust Council request that the Executive Committee support Bowen Island Municipality in its efforts to oppose recreational use of motorized vehicles on Mount Gardner Crown land, subject to Bowen Island's Municipality First Nations consultation.	Clare Frater	Meeting: 17-Jun-2020 Target: 06-Dec-2022	In Progress
4 Cooperate and work with Dr. Tara Martin's delegation re data sharing of Coastal Douglas-fir.	Clare Frater	Meeting: 17-Jun-2020 Target: 06-Dec-2022	In Progress
5 That Trust Council issue a NAPTEP certificate for the R. Leader property (Parcel Identifier 000-395-081) subject to registration of a conservation covenant and completion of a baseline inventory report consistent with the standards developed for NAPTEP.	Clare Frater Kate Emmings Kathryn Martell	Meeting: 03-Dec-2020 Target: 06-Dec-2023	In Progress
6 Trust Council asked staff to provide recommendations about how to broaden engagement and capacity building within local communities, particularly with respect to involving First Nations, in the work of the Islands Trust Area.	Clare Frater David Marlor	Meeting: 10-Mar-2021 Target: 27-Jun-2023	In Progress
7 That Trust Council request staff to provide a report outlining potential options for how the Trust and local trust committees can engage and assist with the Coast Guard Oil Spill response planning process.	Clare Frater	Meeting: 22-Sep-2021 Target: 06-Dec-2022	In Progress

Follow Up Action Report

Trust Council

Director, Trust Area Services

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
8 Proclaim June 8, 2022, to June 7, 2023 "Year of the Salish Sea", to raise public awareness about a healthy Salish Sea and learn from Indigenous Nations on how to improve its health and management for the benefit of future generations.	Clare Frater	Meeting: 08-Mar-2022 Target: 07-Jun-2023	In Progress
9 Trust Council approved issuance of an increased Natural Area Exemption Certification for the application to expand of the Nighthawk Hill NAPTEP area subject to registration of an appropriate expanded conservation covenant with the Islands Trust Conservancy.	Clare Frater Kate Emmings Kathryn Martell	Meeting: 02-Dec-2021 Target: 28-Feb-2023	In Progress
10 Policy Statement Amendment Project - Amend draft Bylaw No. 183 as directed by adopted resolutions.	Clare Frater	Meeting: 21-Sep-2022 Target: 07-Sep-2026	In Progress
11 Continue to build staff-to-staff relationships with First Nations who provided input to the Policy Statement Amendment Project in Phases 1 and 2 of early and meaningful engagement, and provide additional capacity funding to support continued First Nations engagement on this project.	Clare Frater	Meeting: 21-Sep-2022 Target: 14-Mar-2023	In Progress
12 Coordinate the provision of expert advice and training to the incoming Trust Council, early in the new term, on the theme of public engagement and consultation, building on lessons learned from the first three phases of Islands 2050 public engagement from 2019 - 2022.	Clare Frater Russ Hotsenpiller	Meeting: 21-Sep-2022 Target: 27-Jun-2023	In Progress

Follow Up Action Report

Trust Council

Director, Trust Area Services

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
13 In cooperation with Executive Committee, provide a list of needed resources in priority order to advance the Trust's reconciliation activity with First Nations in British Columbia that Council may debate and endorse for advocacy to British Columbia.	Clare Frater Russ Hotsenpiller	Meeting: 22-Sep-2022 Target: 27-Jun-2023	In Progress
14 Executive Committee to develop a communications strategy and materials to support awareness of the housing affordability advocacy request and rationale.	Clare Frater Stefan Cermak	Meeting: 22-Sep-2022 Target: 14-Mar-2023	In Progress
15 Extend the timeline for issuing the Natural Area Exemption Certificate for Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program application SS-NAP-2020.3 (Salt Spring Island) until December 2024.	Clare Frater Kate Emmings	Meeting: 06-Dec-2022 Target: 31-Dec-2024	In Progress
16 Staff to write a letter of support under the Chair's signature stating that the Islands Trust Council supports the Sunshine Coast Regional District applying for, receiving, and managing the 2022 Community Emergency Preparedness - Disaster Risk Reduction-Climate Adaption Grant.	Clare Frater	Meeting: 07-Mar-2023 Target: 22-Mar-2023	Completed
17 Trust Council request staff to review language on the website and other publications regarding the Coastal Douglas-fir zone and associated ecosystems and amend as appropriate, with advice from qualified provincial forest ecologists, including Will Mackenzie provincial custodian of the BEC system.	Clare Frater	Meeting: 07-Mar-2023 Target: 27-Jun-2023	In Progress

Follow Up Action Report

Trust Council

Director, Trust Area Services

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
18 Trust Council refer the educational opportunity around CDF and forest discussion to Trust Programs Committee .	Clare Frater	Meeting: 08-Mar-2023 Target: 26-Sep-2023	In Progress
19 Trust Council reduce the proposed Policy Statement Amendment Project budget from \$50k to \$30k in recognition of the fact that Executive Committee has proposed a project charter that has shifted public engagement to the 2024/25 fiscal year.	Clare Frater	Meeting: 07-Mar-2023 Target: 19-Mar-2024	In Progress
20 That Trust Council recommend to Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) that Trustee Lironi be appointed as Trust Council's representative to the DFO Shellfish Aquaculture Management Advisory Committee and that Trustee Graham (to be determined by Trust Council) be identified as an alternate attendee.	Clare Frater	Meeting: 08-Mar-2023 Target: 27-Jun-2023	In Progress



REQUEST FOR DECISION

To: Executive Committee **For the Meeting of:** March 22, 2023
From: Trust Area Services **Date Prepared:** March 15, 2023
SUBJECT: Opportunity to comment on provincial intention papers for Coastal and Marine Strategy and Watershed Security Strategy and Fund

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That Executive Committee request staff to support the Chair in preparing a submission to the provincial engagement on the Coastal Marine Strategy Intentions Paper for submission by April 14, 2023.
2. That Executive Committee request staff to support the Chair in preparing a submission to the provincial engagement on the Watershed Security Strategy Intentions Paper for submission by April 17, 2023.

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER COMMENTS: This provides a good opportunity for the Islands Trust to comment on substantive provincial policy development that may impact the Islands Trust.

1 PURPOSE: To provide Executive Committee with the opportunity to request staff to support the Chair in responding to provincial engagements on intention papers relevant to the Islands Trust's jurisdiction.

2 BACKGROUND:

The Province is gathering feedback through an [Intentions Paper](#) on a Coastal Marine Strategy. The Province is in the early stages of developing British Columbia's first province-wide coastal marine policy with First Nations. This strategy will outline actions for healthy, resilient coastal marine ecosystems, community well-being and a sustainable ocean economy. The deadline to comment is April 14, 2023. Staff have arranged a presentation by provincial staff on the proposed Coastal Marine Strategy for trustees and interested staff on March 23, 2023. Information about the engagement opportunity was provided to Trust Council in the legislative monitoring report but Trust Council did not direct any action.

The Province is also inviting input on a Watershed Security Strategy [Intentions Paper](#). The Intentions Paper sets out how the government wants to take action on water and watersheds in B.C. It presents five policy intentions with several themes and example actions that could be taken to better care for our watersheds, including the plants, animals, and people in them. The deadline to comment is April 17, 2023. On March 6, 2023, the Province announced its plans to develop a permanent Watershed Security Fund and announced an unprecedented \$100-million investment in the fund.

On March 14, 2023, the Conservancy Board heard from Conservancy Chair Risa Smith regarding an information session she attended regarding the Province's proposed Coastal and Marine Strategy. She advised it would be wise for Islands Trust to provide input. She also advised that the Islands Trust may wish to comments on the Watershed Security Strategy Intentions Paper and that the newly announced \$100 million Watershed Security Fund may be available to Islands Trust bodies. Following a discussion, the Board passed the following motion:

ITC-2023-013

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Islands Trust Conservancy Board request that the Executive Committee request a briefing regarding the Watershed Security Strategy and Fund and provide input on the Water Security Strategy by April 17, 2023 and the Coastal Marine Strategy by April 14, 2023.

3 IMPLICATIONS OF RECOMMENDATION

ORGANIZATIONAL: The two submissions could require up to 10 hours each of Trust Area Services staff time, depending on the content of the intention papers (staff has not had time to review at time of writing).

FINANCIAL: None.

POLICY: None.

IMPLEMENTATION/COMMUNICATIONS:

The letter with the submissions would be cc'd to Trust Area First Nations, MLAs, Bowen Island Municipality, and Islands Trust Council. The submissions would be posted to the Islands Trust website.

FIRST NATIONS: The submissions should be consistent with Trust Council's Reconciliation Declaration.

OTHER: N/A

4 RELEVANT POLICY(S): Advocacy Policy 6.10.iii

5 ATTACHMENT(S):

1. Coastal and Marine Strategy Intentions Paper
2. Watershed Security Strategy Intentions Paper

RESPONSE OPTIONS

Recommendations:

1. That Executive Committee request staff to support the Chair in preparing a submission to the provincial engagement on the Coastal Marine Strategy Intentions Paper for submission by April 14, 2023.

2. That Executive Committee request staff to support the Chair in preparing a submission to the provincial engagement on the Watershed Security Strategy Intentions Paper for submission by April 17, 2023.

Alternative:

1. That Executive Committee request staff to circulate the engagement opportunities to trustees to encourage them to respond as individuals.
2. No action.

Prepared By: Clare Frater, Director, Trust Area Services

Reviewed By/Date: Russ Hotsenpiller, CAO/March 16, 2023

ATTACHMENT 1:

Potential content for Islands Trust Chair letter to the Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing and the Minister of Municipal Affairs regarding provincial support for housing affordability actions

Request

- Request that the Province of British Columbia explore what can be done to create a housing solution specific to the rural islands in the Trust Area, including a way to provide stable, secure ongoing funding
- Invite further dialogue on this topic

Background

- The Islands Trust has the mandate from the Province of BC to preserve and protect the Islands Trust Area in cooperation with others.
- In December 2021, the Islands Trust Council declared that a Housing Equity and Workforce Shortage Crisis exists in many of the islands within the Islands Trust Area.
- In March 2021, the Islands Trust Council voted to affirm its understanding that the object (and thus the mandate) of the Trust contained in s. 3 of the Islands Trust Act includes the concept of and protection of healthy and inclusive communities including (but not limited to) housing and transportation.
- In July 2021 the Islands Trust Council voted to affirm its understanding that preservation and protection of the natural terrestrial and marine environment is central to the mandate of the Islands Trust and that this responsibility must be given special and profound consideration in all our decisions and in all we do.
- Housing needs assessments have been completed for the Islands Trust Area. All demonstrate that more affordable housing is desperately needed on the islands, and there is a lack of rental housing stock.
- The Islands Trust Area is facing an acute shortage of affordable housing options needed to support the long-term sustainability and resilience of local communities.

Context

- Household incomes in the Islands Trust Area are generally well below the provincial median household income, and poverty rates and child vulnerability rates are high in many of the islands.
- Many islands have homelessness rates above the provincial average and many islanders are perilously close to homelessness
- The islands are particularly lacking in purpose-built rental housing, and a diverse housing stock;
- The islands have a strong market for vacation rentals.
- Most affordable housing projects are initiated by non-profit community volunteers with limited experience navigating re-zoning, finance and BC Housing requirements. These volunteers need more resources to get projects to the point of being “shovel-ready” so that they are able to access the bulk of affordable housing funding intended for construction.

- Businesses needing staff generally need staff to live on island as few will travel by ferry to an island to work. Essential services such as firefighting and health care provision as well as key community functions such as cultural production, community education, and conservation and environmental initiatives have traditionally been provided by volunteers and/or people working for low wages.

Conclusion

- Trust Council appreciates that the Province of BC has undertaken measures to address the affordability crisis, including rent increase freezes, a 10-year Homes for BC housing plan, homelessness strategy, enacting legislation giving local trust committees and island municipalities rental tenure zoning authority, supporting Housing Hub partnerships, and other measures. However, many of these initiatives largely cater to high-density urban areas that have good access to the companion resources and support services.
- It is vital that the Province also provide capacity building support to rural communities in British Columbia to address their unique housing affordability challenges.
- Trust Council does not know the best solution but that we have discussed ideas such as a discrete program within BC Housing, a separate housing-authority-type entity, a “navigator” service to help non-profit housing organizations in the Gulf Island achieve their goals, and the necessity of stable, long-term, sufficient funding.
- Any solution in the Trust Area needs to foster preservation and protection of at-risk ecosystems, cultural heritage sites, and large tracts of forests and farmland; support a socially and economically diverse population and healthy communities across the Islands Trust Area; and recognize the value of island specific solutions, traditions and approaches to providing housing options.

The letter could also include quotes such as the following:

From the CRD “SGI Updated Housing Market Analysis Report” Feb 2022:

“The 2018 Housing Needs Assessment showed that incomes and costs of housing were misaligned. This gap appears to have widened in the last 4 years.

The rental situation on the islands is desperate and is adversely impacting the local economy and the ability to deliver services.

Primary market rental stock is limited. The majority of rental units are through the secondary market which leads to insecurity for the renter. Renters are often precariously housed with a lack of proper renter protections. Rental pressures across the region are high, and this pressure is heightened across the SGI due to a lack of primary rental stock.

Hidden homelessness is being experienced by individuals across all islands. This continues to be an issue with individuals couch surfing, living out of cars and boats, and camping.

Housing supply is limited and lacks diversity, with development lagging, this has resulted in a persistent challenge for owners and renters trying to source affordable, adequate, and suitable housing.”

From CRD “SGI Housing Feasibility Analysis” May 2022:

“Characterized by rural landscapes and relative remoteness, these islands are only accessible by water transportation. They have experienced unprecedented population growth over the last few years, yet minimal increase in the number and diversity of housing units. These and other factors have exacerbated existing affordability issues on the SGIs, leading to increased home purchase and rental prices. Recent reports have found that high housing costs are disproportionately affecting vulnerable populations, including seniors and people with disabilities. In addition, the SGIs are struggling to retain workers and families, who are discouraged by the low availability and high cost of rentals.”

From CRD “Southern Gulf Island Housing Strategy” 2022:

“The predominant land use on the islands is residential and the majority of the land is privately owned. Housing in the islands exists within the context of a rural settlement pattern of large lots, single family homes, cottages, and secondary suites.

Household incomes lag behind CRD and provincial averages, and the most substantial difference is in income for families with children, where the SGI median incomes are much lower than the CRD and BC averages.

Housing challenges on the islands impact other aspects of community life such as school enrollment, volunteerism, stability for employees, and year-round viability for business.”

From 2021 Census Profile for Salt Spring Island:

Salt Spring Island's rate of household inequality, as measured by the Gini coefficient, is the highest of any rural area on Vancouver Island and one of the highest in the province.

From the SGI Tourism Partnership Society and SGI Housing Coalition: “CMHC Housing Supply Challenge” 2022

“Feedback highlighted the challenges of building new multi-unit development on the SGIs. The regulatory framework is generally not permissive of this form of development and site constraints related to water limit the extent to which larger housing projects can proceed. It was shared that a smaller project on the SGIs may cost similar to a mid-size project on Vancouver Island or the mainland. This makes it difficult to access funding, given the SGIs are competing for funding from BC Housing and CMHC with urban projects with lower per-unit costs.

Feedback focused on the feasibility challenges associated with housing development in an island setting. Given materials and professional services are often sourced from the mainland or Vancouver Island, there are additional costs that come with building on-island. These additional costs can make project viability and fundraising challenging, especially when island non-profits are competing with Vancouver Island or mainland housing projects where the cost of construction is lower.

Participants outlined the challenges that arise in exploring innovative housing solutions (e.g., ecovillage, higher step code housing models), as these approaches are portrayed as conflicting with the Islands Trust mandate while proponents actually favour these approaches because of their reduced environmental impact. Many participants expressed frustration that large, detached homes with higher environmental impacts allowed outright by the Islands Trust do not meet the same amount of political and NIMBY opposition.”

From RDN / Gabriola Local Trust Committee Social Needs Assessment report:

"Housing, childcare, income supports, employment opportunities, access to mental health care, and access to child and youth developmental supports were highlighted throughout the data gathering as areas of critical need in the region. Gabriola Island... in particular identified child and youth care programs, supportive housing, and health care as unavailable, limited, or unaffordable for those who need it."

From individual (permission to be sought to publish name)

"I live and work on Gabriola. I work with Island Health as a social worker; I see firsthand how housing instability affects residents. Affordable housing is almost non-existent on Gabriola. Housing instability has a negative effect on families and children, and increases risk of interpersonal violence. Gabriola Island already has 39% of its children living in poverty and the high price of housing and lack of purpose built rental housing makes that worse. Housing instability causes stress, limited ability to access basic needs of daily living, and increased exposure to violence. People living in violence have limited options to leave the violence because there is no affordable rental housing on Gabriola; it's often difficult to find even expensive rental housing. Gabriola is in desperate need of affordable rental housing."

A Coastal Marine Strategy for British Columbia



**Policy Intentions Paper
December 2022**

Acknowledgment

The government of British Columbia acknowledges that our work spans many First Nation territories and Treaty areas, and we are grateful for the knowledge, teachings, and holistic worldviews contained within. These holistic worldviews were, and are, foundational to how First Nations Peoples steward the lands, water, seabed, air, and resources that sustain them, and to which we all now turn to likewise be sustained, thrive, and develop. Through strength and resiliency, the relationship between the ocean and coastal First Nations peoples remains unassailable. First Nations peoples know the coastal marine environment like no others, and they have much to share for the betterment of us all and future generations. The Coastal Marine Strategy Intentions Paper could not have been written without the participation of First Nations people, and the government of British Columbia looks forward to continuing collaboration and furtherance of government-to-government relationships through co-development of the Coastal Marine Strategy. Appreciation is expressed to all contributing authors, reviewers and those who supported the development of this Paper.

Summary

The Province is developing a Coastal Marine Strategy with First Nations that will lay out a plan for addressing priorities for coastal-marine ecosystem health and community well-being. The Coastal Marine Strategy will focus on areas closer to shore, where estuaries, kelp beds, eelgrass meadows, rocky shorelines, and sandy beaches support an abundance and diversity of marine life. These areas are also popular places for people to live, work, collect food, and connect with nature.

Indigenous ethics will provide a foundation for what we do. These ethics, shared with permission from the Nuu-chah-nulth, Haida, and Tsimshian speaking Nations, remind us of the connections between land, water and people, and our collective obligation and responsibility to care for and protect the ocean, and each other.

This Intentions Paper is the first step along the path towards a Coastal Marine Strategy. It presents a vision for protecting the ecological, cultural, and economic benefits provided by the coastal marine environment. The Intentions Paper was informed by First Nations knowledge, western science, existing planning and technical documents, and discussions with provincial staff across government. At a glance, the **6 outcomes** and **30 policy intentions** under consideration are listed below.

We want to hear from you. Your perspectives can help highlight shared concerns and priorities that will inform development of specific objectives, targets, and actions for the Coastal Marine Strategy. We thank you for taking the time to share your ideas.



hišuk ma cáwak^a (everything is one): Everything is connected, everything is one, everything depends on everything else. The well-being of communities is intricately tied to the well-being of the land and sea.

ʔiisaak^a (utmost respect): Respect for mother earth, for people, living things, the ocean. We take only what we need, we give thanks. Everything has a purpose, and that purpose must be respected.

ʔLaa guu ga kanhlins^b (responsibility): We accept the responsibility passed on by our ancestors to manage and care for our sea and land. We will ensure that our heritage is passed on to future generations.

ʔuuʔaʔuk^a (taking care of): Looking after, caring for the sea, the seabed, marine life, the land, our communities, and our people.



Giid tll'juus^b (balance): Balance is needed in our interactions with the natural world. If we aren't careful in everything we do, we can easily reach a point of no return. Our practices and those of others must be sustainable.

Isda ad diigii isda^b (giving and receiving): Reciprocity is essential in our interactions with each other and the natural world. We continually give thanks to the natural world for the gifts received.

syt güülm goot^c (being of one heart): Community-based sharing and distribution of resources from different areas of the territory, between families and lineages, ensures survival and nutritional balance, and sustainable harvest.



A - A HEALTHY AND PRODUCTIVE COAST

A healthy and productive coast that sustains ecosystems with abundant fisheries and marine wildlife is the foundation from which all our other aspirations for the coast evolve. We intend to:

- A-1 Boost efforts to recover wild salmon
- A-2 Monitor coastal ecosystem health
- A-3 Prevent and clean up marine pollution
- A-4 Protect and restore nearshore habitat
- A-5 Help recover southern resident killer whales and other marine species at risk

B - RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Sea-level rise, coastal erosion, ocean acidification, warming seas, changing ocean currents, extreme weather events and shifting species distributions are impacting ecosystems and communities. We must work together to build resiliency to climate change. We intend to:

- B-1 Keep communities safe from harmful climate risks
- B-2 Support seafood harvesters, producers, and innovators
- B-3 Shift to nature-based solutions for coastal protection
- B-4 Develop an ocean acidification & hypoxia action plan
- B-5 Protect and restore kelp beds, eelgrass meadows, and other blue carbon sinks

C - TRUSTING, RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS

Responsible governance starts with respect: for the natural environment, for the connections between people and place, and for the management and stewardship responsibilities of all parties who share a role in taking care of the ocean. We intend to:

- C-1 Respect and uphold First Nations rights
- C-2 Engage British Columbians in coastal marine management
- C-3 Advance collaborative stewardship
- C-4 Evaluate the need for comprehensive coastal zone legislation

D - HOLISTIC LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

We all share goals for stewardship of coastal marine values. These goals can only be achieved when we co-create and share all forms of knowledge in a respectful way to make decisions. We intend to work in partnership with others to:

- D-1 Weave traditional knowledge with western science
- D-2 Assess the value of the ocean
- D-3 Enhance marine spatial data
- D-4 Improve availability of marine and coastal information

E - COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

The ocean underpins the cultural, social and economic fabric of coastal communities up and down the coast of B.C. These communities are undergoing continuous change, and how well they thrive will depend in part on employment opportunities, adequate coastal infrastructure, access to resources, and good planning. We intend to:

- E-1 Create jobs and support steady, rewarding employment
- E-2 Build a diverse coastal workforce
- E-3 Support First Nations' cultural revitalization and resilience
- E-4 Improve capacity of communities to respond to change
- E-5 Develop and implement marine use plans
- E-6 Improve access to nature, in a respectful way

F - A SUSTAINABLE, THRIVING OCEAN ECONOMY

B.C.'s ocean economy represents about 8% of provincial GDP, with the transportation, tourism and recreation, coastal forestry, and seafood sectors contributing more than \$17B. Emerging sectors, like the conservation-based economy, hold great promise. Realizing the full potential of the ocean demands responsible, sustainable approaches. We intend to:

- F-1 Invest in a diverse coastal and marine economy
- F-2 Co-develop enduring fiscal relations with First Nations governments
- F-3 Support the marine fisheries economy
- F-4 Advance sustainable aquaculture
- F-5 Support regenerative marine tourism
- F-6 Manage cumulative effects

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Minister's Message

British Columbia's western border meets the Pacific Ocean – and at this nexus are the islands, bays, inlets, fiords and estuaries central to our coastal landscape and our cultural fabric. Half of First Nations in B.C. and nearly three-quarters of people in this province live close to the coast. But for all of us, including those who live in the interior like myself, the ocean is integral to our health and well-being. It produces most of the oxygen we breathe, absorbs carbon dioxide, and helps regulate our climate and weather. The ocean takes us places, and the goods we buy and sell are transported on its waters. The ocean provides jobs in both rural and urban centres, offers food for our tables and is a place to recreate, relax and recharge. Our coastal marine environment is a unique home to thousands of plant and animal species, and attracts visitors from all over the world.

British Columbia is one of the few maritime jurisdictions in North America without a comprehensive coastal marine strategy. As we face increasing challenges from climate change, including warming and rising seas, it's incumbent on us to develop a way forward that builds ecosystem and community resilience. We are committed to developing B.C.'s first ever Coastal Marine Strategy to set priority actions to improve the health and stewardship of coastal marine environments, adapt to climate change, nurture a sustainable economy, and advance reconciliation with First Nations. Co-developed with coastal First Nations, this Intentions Paper sets out a vision for what that strategy should focus on and why.

The Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship was formed in February 2022 to take a holistic approach to stewarding natural resources, building sustainable economies, and advancing reconciliation with First Nations. With a renewed mandate from Premier David Eby, we'll continue to transform the stewardship of B.C. waters, lands and resources in partnership with First Nations, including work on wild salmon recovery, healthy watersheds, and co-development of the Coastal Marine Strategy.

A Coastal Marine Strategy will guide us for the next two decades – it needs to reflect the priorities and values of British Columbians.

I encourage you to read this Intentions Paper, to reflect on what you want to see in a Coastal Marine Strategy, and to provide your feedback to us [GovTogetherBC](https://www.govtogetherbc.ca).

NATHAN CULLEN
Minister of Water, Land and Resource
Stewardship



Introduction

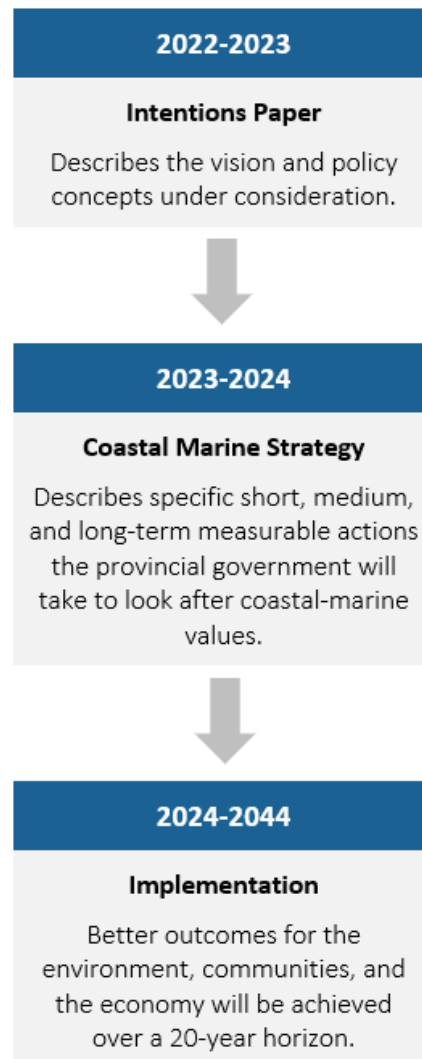
The marine waters surrounding British Columbia are home to an impressive diversity of animals and plants, many of which are found only here. The Province's islands, bays, inlets and estuaries are central to our coastal landscape and cultural fabric. The coastal marine environment is vital to our health and well-being, and we must make sure it is cared for so that future generations can enjoy the enormous benefits it provides.

The Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (the Ministry) is developing a Coastal Marine Strategy with First Nations whose identified territories include the marine environment. Together, we will set out a shared vision for healthy coastal marine ecosystems, community well-being, and a sustainable ocean economy.

The Coastal Marine Strategy will concentrate on activities, uses, and values that the Province of British Columbia is accountable for, while recognizing that we need strong collaboration and cooperation with other orders of government who share responsibility. The actions proposed in the Coastal Marine Strategy will expand on existing programs and initiatives and present new ideas and concepts. It will span a 20-year horizon, reflecting on where we are today, and address future needs, priorities and emerging trends. In developing the Coastal Marine Strategy, we will draw together expertise from within and outside governments.

We are in the early stages of policy development that begins with release of this Intentions Paper - a critical phase in developing British Columbia's first Province-wide coastal marine strategy and the beginning of our formal engagement with you.

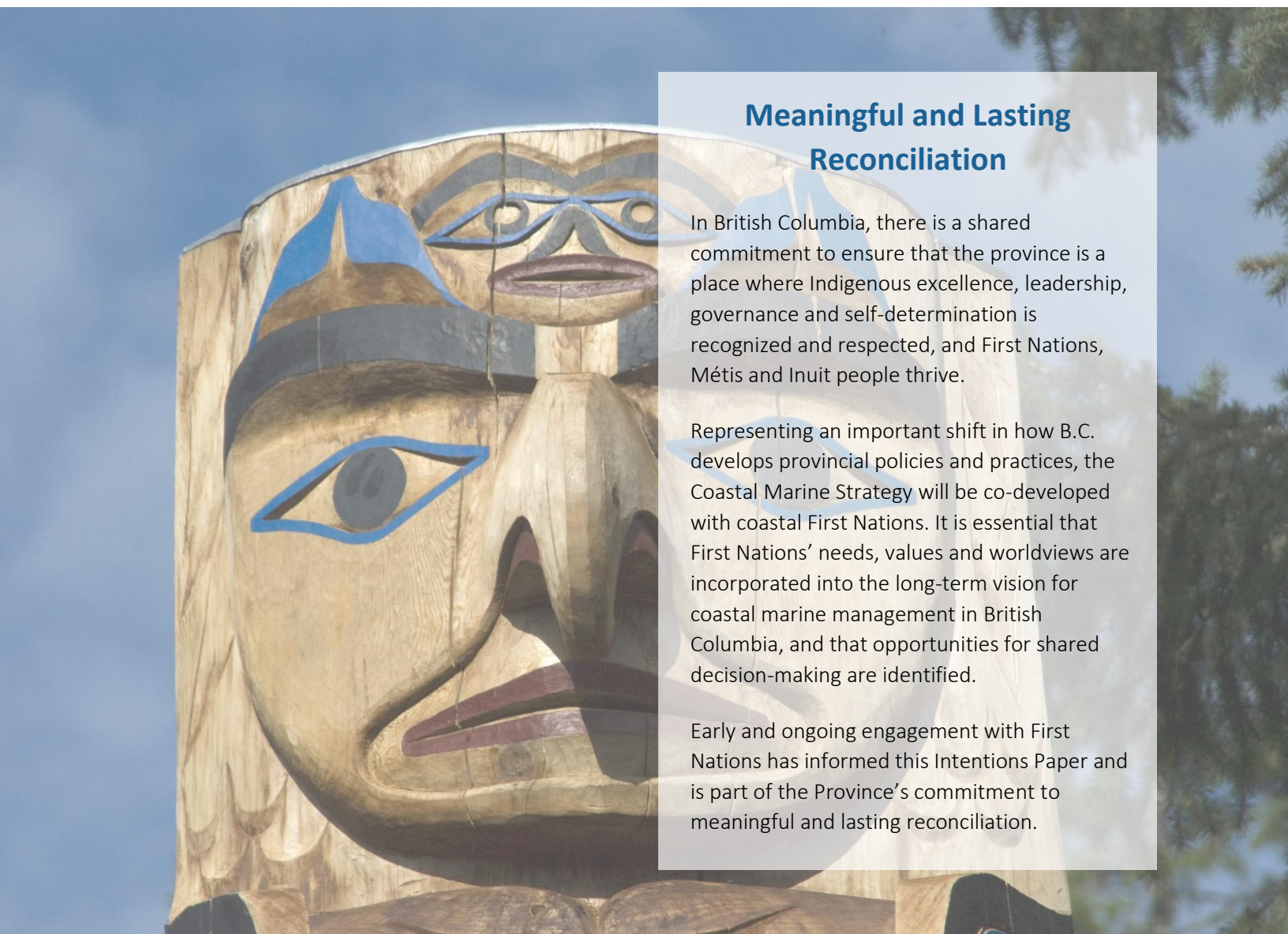
The Intentions Paper outlines what we want to do and why. It describes the collaborative process adopted to engage coastal First Nations in identifying key strategic issues that should be addressed in the Coastal Marine Strategy. First Nations ethics and values, which are fundamental to their image of the world, serve as guiding principles. They help remind us of the connections between land, water and people, and our collective obligation and responsibilities around stewardship.



As you read and consider this Intentions Paper, you will note that it does not attempt to identify specific projects, programs, or prescribed approaches to implementation of the Coastal Marine Strategy. These will take shape as the Coastal Marine Strategy is developed. There will be additional opportunities to comment on the Coastal Marine Strategy, particularly when a draft is completed around in 2024. In the meantime, we urge you to read this Intentions Paper and contribute your knowledge, insights

and observations. Visit [GovTogetherBC](#) for ways to provide feedback. We are particularly keen to receive feedback on areas of strategic focus including:

- The vision and outcome statements that will define the framework of the Coastal Marine Strategy;
- The priority opportunities and challenges the Coastal Marine Strategy should address.



Meaningful and Lasting Reconciliation

In British Columbia, there is a shared commitment to ensure that the province is a place where Indigenous excellence, leadership, governance and self-determination is recognized and respected, and First Nations, Métis and Inuit people thrive.

Representing an important shift in how B.C. develops provincial policies and practices, the Coastal Marine Strategy will be co-developed with coastal First Nations. It is essential that First Nations' needs, values and worldviews are incorporated into the long-term vision for coastal marine management in British Columbia, and that opportunities for shared decision-making are identified.

Early and ongoing engagement with First Nations has informed this Intentions Paper and is part of the Province's commitment to meaningful and lasting reconciliation.

What is the Coastal Marine Environment?

British Columbia has an extensive 26,000-kilometre coastline that supports a diversity of ecosystems ranging from lush kelp forests and seagrass meadows to rocky intertidal shores. These ecosystems are home to many plants and animals, including seaweeds, invertebrates, fishes, migratory birds, and marine mammals. The species that live here, like wild Pacific salmon and killer whales, form part of our collective identity. They are woven into the culture, histories and economies of communities throughout British Columbia.

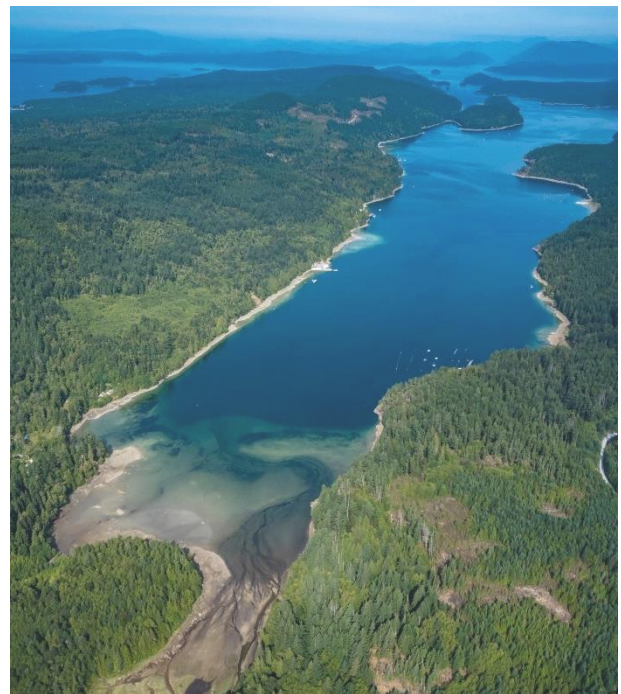
The coastal marine environment is arguably one of the most complex environments because terrestrial, marine, and atmospheric processes all interact in shaping it.¹ The physical shorelines in British Columbia are extremely diverse, and include sandy beaches, rocky headlands and reefs, and river deltas. The connections between life on land and life in the ocean are strong. The

Fraser, Skeena, and the Nass river watersheds bring fresh water and minerals into the Pacific Ocean, together with hundreds of other rivers in the Province. Animals that rely on both terrestrial and marine habitats for feeding, breeding, rearing, resting, or migrating include five species of wild salmon, grizzly bears, wolves, marbled murrelets, and puffins.

The Coastal Marine Strategy for British Columbia will focus on the coastal waters from the Alaskan border south to the Washington State border (see Figure 1; the dark blue area illustrates the coastal environment for the purposes of the Strategy). When we refer to the coastal marine environment, we are talking about the transition area that connects the open ocean with the coastline and terrestrial watersheds – the intertidal zone, tidal wetlands, estuaries, bays, inlets, fjords, straits, channels, island archipelagos, shallow near-shore waters, pocket coves, and near-shore reef systems.



Figure 1: Map of the coastal marine waters of British Columbia



Our Shared Challenges and Opportunities

The Pacific Ocean is essential to the culture, economy, and identity of British Columbians. Three-quarters of the population live in the coastal zone. The ocean moderates the weather and provides important transportation, economic, and recreational opportunities. The ocean-based economy is over \$21 billion (about 8% of the province's gross domestic product) and directly employs 131,000 people full-time². The marine-based tourism and recreation industry alone generates over \$5 billion every year. Commercial fishing, coastal forestry, and marine transportation are other key marine industries driving economic prosperity in the Province.

First Nations have a deep-rooted relationship with the ocean that has existed since time immemorial. More than half of First Nations in B.C. have identified territories that include a marine component. At their core, they are water people.

Coastal First Nations govern according to their rights, traditional laws, ethics, values, and teachings (Appendix 1). Marine animals, plants, and ecosystems are vital to First Nations identities, cultures, languages, communities, economies, and knowledge systems³. For coastal First Nations, the ocean is the primary source of healthy food for community members and is the highway that keeps people in touch with relatives and neighbours.

The future of British Columbia is interwoven with the health of the ocean. Rising ocean

temperatures, acidic waters, pollution, habitat loss, shifts in species distribution, and declining fish and wildlife populations are all signals that we need to do more to ensure that future generations can enjoy the benefits we enjoy today. We need to reduce the pressures that threaten marine life, community well-being, and economic stability.

Coastal marine management currently relies on a patchwork of regulations and laws overseen by different orders of government (Table 3). For example, the Province is responsible for managing and authorizing activities and uses that require access to the seabed and/or the coastline, such as aquaculture, clean energy, docks and wharves, log handling sites, and underwater utilities.

The B.C. government is also accountable for land use planning and management (e.g., parks and protected areas), environmental assessments for large projects, seafood development, and aquatic plant harvesting. Habitat conservation and restoration, monitoring, and emergency management are some of the ways B.C. takes care of the coastal marine environment. Federal departments manage fisheries, transportation, species at risk, and maritime safety. First Nations apply traditional knowledge, ethics, values, and systems of governance to guide how communities interact with the environment. Appendix 2 provides a more fulsome description of how governments, stakeholders, research institutions, and academia contribute to stewardship of the marine environment in B.C.

Table 1: Stewardship Responsibilities

Federal Government	Provincial Government	Indigenous Governments	Local Government
• Fishing • Shipping • Navigation • Oil spills • Search & rescue • Migratory birds • Environmental assessments • Protected areas	• Tenures over seabed • Tourism and recreation licensing • Seafood safety • Marine spatial plans • Protected areas • Aquatic plants • Flood management • Heritage conservation • Protected areas	Exercise systems of governance, and stewardship practices through: • Indigenous law • Treaties • Constitution Act Section 35 • Ethics and values	• Zoning (e.g., regulating shoreline development) • Permits

British Columbia is one of a few coastal jurisdictions in North America *without* a comprehensive coastal and marine strategy.⁴ Over the past decade, there has been significant interest by the Province, First Nations, local governments, stakeholders, and the public in the development of a cohesive and comprehensive provincial strategy to better govern and protect coastal and marine values. There are regional-specific plans and policies that provide guidance for coastal marine management. For example, on the north coast of British Columbia the implementation of the Regional Action Framework and sub-regional marine plans developed under the Marine Plan Partnership for the North Pacific Coast (MaPP)⁵

support better outcomes for ecosystems, communities, and the economy. However, there is no overarching, made-in-B.C. policy that sets out a coast-wide vision for the future.

In 2020, the B.C. government committed to developing a Coastal Marine Strategy that articulates priorities and lays out actions to improve the health and stewardship of coastal marine environments, mitigate and adapt to climate change, nurture a sustainable “blue economy,” foster resilience in coastal communities, and create opportunities to advance reconciliation with First Nations. This Intentions Paper is a first step towards fulfilling this promise.



How We Got Here

As part of its commitment to co-develop a Coastal Marine Strategy with First Nations, the B.C. government recognizes that *co-development* means that the process is as important as the product, and that collaboration is needed from conception through to implementation. The relationships we build together will set the foundation for developing and implementing the Coastal Marine Strategy.

The Province has worked with some First Nations leadership and technical staff to frame the process and to draft this Intentions Paper. In December 2021, the B.C. government invited 95 coastal First Nations to a series of meetings to discuss the future of ocean management in B.C. and to present the opportunity for co-development. The conversation started with the distribution of an online survey and a series of dialogue sessions with elected and hereditary leadership.

These early discussions were built upon in a series of technical sessions with First Nations staff in various stewardship roles. Participation by Nations varied depending on the nature of existing relationships and governance arrangements. For example, First Nations involved in MaPP worked through their governance structures to identify shared interests and recommendations for ocean management. The Province met with eight modern treaty Nations separately, and the First Nations Fisheries Council of B.C. facilitated discussions with Nations that reside primarily on Vancouver Island and the southern mainland. A “What We Heard” report was developed from these sessions that outlines the key points of discussion under specific themes, as well as recommendations developed on how First

Nations and the Province may collaboratively move forward.

Following early engagement, a team of First Nations and Ministry staff was established to co-write the Intentions Paper. Co-writing this paper helps to ensure that knowledge brought forward is articulated in an authentic way, with the Province and First Nations sharing control over its narrative and content. This collaborative approach is guided by commitments made through the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)⁶ and the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action⁷, and is part of a broader shift away from status-quo practices that have limited the inclusion of Aboriginal rights-holder perspectives in policy development and played a significant role in reinforcing colonial power dynamics. It helps recognize the thousands of years of First Nations economic activity, knowledge (modern and traditional), traditions, and culture that have evolved with the ocean. It also provides an opportunity to develop partnerships that establish holistic, equitable, and sustainable governance structures and processes for bringing healing and achieving the overarching goals of fostering resilient ecosystems and communities.

Preparation of this Intentions Paper also involved a review of relevant First Nations, provincial government, federal government, stakeholder, and local government policies, plans, and positions (Appendix 3). Reviews of consultation reports prepared for other initiatives were also helpful and provided a way to honour the knowledge and perspectives that have already been shared.

Vision For The Future

As stewards of coastal ecosystems on behalf of current and future generations, we aim to nurture healthy and productive ecosystems. We will manage them together in a good way to support sustainable prosperity and human health and well-being, while investing back into the ecosystems that sustain us all.

The key elements of this vision, which was jointly created by the Ministry and coastal First Nations, are ecosystem health, good management, and prosperity (Figure 2). They offer an overarching framework for the Coastal Marine Strategy. The next section describes these outcomes and proposed policy intentions in some detail.

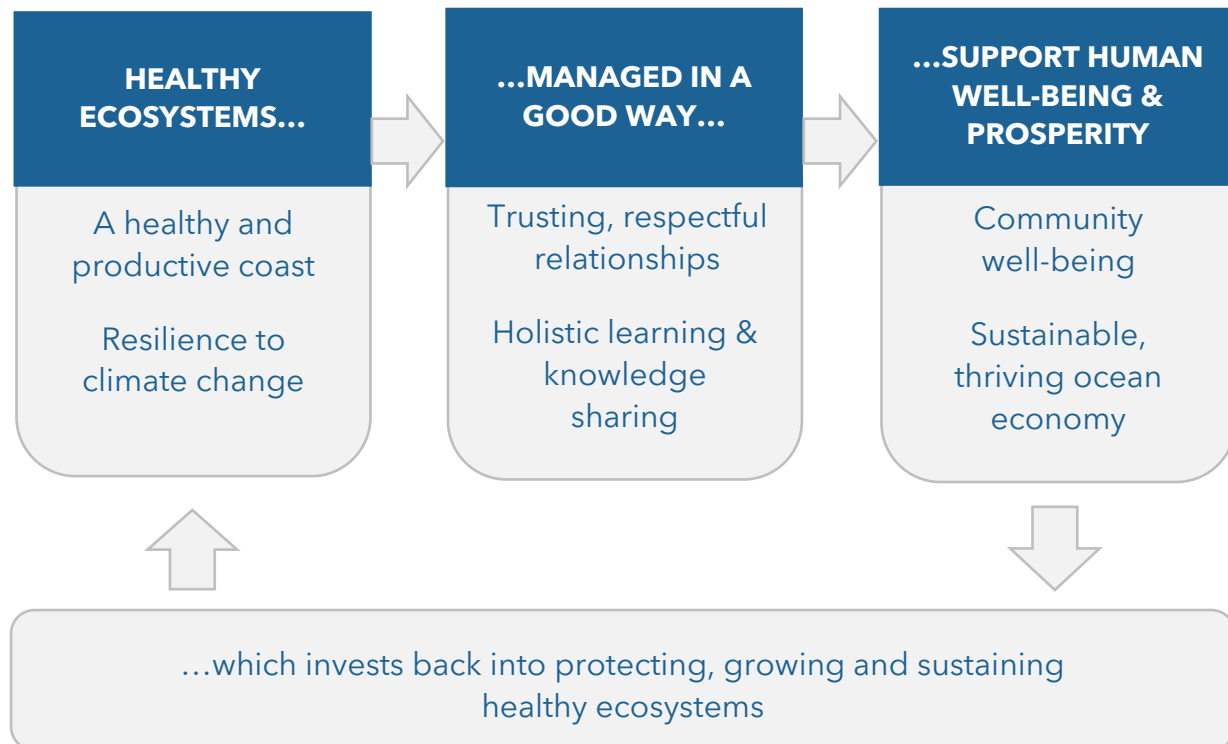


Figure 2: Elements of a Coastal Marine Strategy Vision

A. A HEALTHY AND PRODUCTIVE COAST

A healthy and productive coast that sustains abundant fisheries and marine wildlife is the foundation from which all our other aspirations for the coast evolve. Healthy and biodiverse coastal marine ecosystems are stable, vibrant, and full of life, predictably deliver a range of benefits to people, and are resilient to change⁸. Ecosystems and species send signals when things aren't functioning "normally," and these signals help us understand when we need to take corrective action. Examples of serious warning signs include low ocean oxygen levels or "dead zones," sudden die-offs of animals, seafood harvesting closures, barren kelp forests, high toxin loads in killer whales, smaller and smaller fish, and plastic patches riding ocean currents. In British Columbia, where population density and development pressures are lower compared to other coastal jurisdictions around the world, the general state of B.C.'s marine waters are relatively healthy; however, there are several areas of concern along with significant opportunities for improvement.⁹ In collaboration with First Nations, the federal government, stewardship organizations, and stakeholders, the Province will take stronger action to keep the coast abundant and productive.

POLICY INTENTIONS

A-1: Boost efforts to recover wild salmon: The overall abundance of wild Pacific salmon and steelhead has declined since the 1950s.¹⁰ Wild salmon have shown average declines of 20–45% on the north and central coasts, while sockeye has declined by 43% and chum by 14% in southern B.C.¹¹ Wild salmon declines have been attributed to a variety of factors, including poor marine survival rates, changing ocean conditions from climate change, water

quality/quantity, harvesting, predation, aquaculture, industrial use in nearshore environments, and land use decisions that have impacted salmon-spawning watersheds (e.g., riparian areas).

Wild salmon are a foundation species, and their declines have cascading effects for animals and people across the coast. For many First Nations, wild salmon are irreplaceable and core to their identities and ways of life. They are integral to family structures, community cohesion, gatherings and ceremonies, and practices of giving, trading, and sharing. Wild salmon are needed for food and economic security, for sustaining human and ecosystem health, and for teaching traditions and cultural practices.¹²

Recommendations from the Wild Salmon Advisory Council (WSAC) led to the launch of the [B.C. Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund](#) (BCSRIF), in partnership with the federal government. Since its inception in 2019, Phase 1 of BCSRIF funded 97 projects totalling over \$126 million. Projects include restoration of freshwater and marine habitats, kelp production, modernizing catch monitoring and reporting, invasive green crab control, forage fish assessments, climate action planning, and cumulative effects modeling. BCSRIF also funded an Indigenous Monitoring and Inspection Program that monitors and oversees operations at salmon farms in the Broughton Archipelago. In August 2022, B.C. and Canada announced a doubling of BCSRIF and an extension of the program to 2026, bringing the total amount committed to \$285.7 million. Also stemming from WSAC recommendations include updates to the *Riparian Areas Protection Regulation*. The Province will continue to implement WSAC recommendations and develop and implement new strategies with First Nations, the federal



government, and stakeholders to protect and revitalize wild salmon populations.

A-2: Monitor coastal ecosystem health: Kelp forests, eelgrass meadows, rocky shores and other critical nearshore habitats are hotspots for biodiversity. They are also popular places for people to collect food, work, and connect with nature. Monitoring these sensitive nearshore environments is essential. Investments in monitoring allow us to acquire baseline information, which in turn allows us to document changes and understand what's driving them. In several parts of British Columbia, inventory projects led by First Nations, stewardship organizations, academic institutions, and/or the B.C. government, have greatly improved our understanding of the

abundance and distribution of these habitats and their resilience to climate change, stress and disturbance.

To help keep coastal communities, economies, and ecosystems healthy, we must keep track of how coastal areas are changing. From tracking contaminants in the water and the spread of alien invasive species, to monitoring sea-level rise and surveying the coastline, observations help us all make the best decisions for coastal communities and for the environment. Careful and consistent observation, along with conservation targets and indicators of ecosystem health, is critical for responsible stewardship of the coastal marine environment.

In many parts of the coast, First Nations are the eyes and ears on the water. Through First

Nations-led programs such as Guardians, Watchmen, and stewardship officers, First Nations engage at a local level with communities in conversations about conservation and responsible use, and work to engage with the provincial, federal and local governments to improve management decisions. They observe and record changes in the health of habitats and the coastal species that rely on them, such as whales, grizzly bears, herring, and wild salmon.

First Nations-led monitoring systems have a strong record of success in British Columbia. Given the chance, they can do more. Additional training programs co-developed with First Nations are needed, and stable, predictable funding is required to build and maintain program capacity. To empower First Nations stewardship, the Province will explore delegating ecosystem monitoring roles and responsibilities to interested coastal First Nations, and seek to establish longer term funding support mechanisms, such as community-benefit sharing agreements. We will partner with First Nations to weave Indigenous knowledge and western science together to paint a picture of historical conditions against which we can establish trends that inform management decisions.

The B.C. government will look for opportunities to shore up provincial monitoring of habitats critical for maintaining biodiversity. B.C. will continue to work with the federal government, First Nations, and stakeholders to develop and implement a robust program to monitor the ecological and socio-economic benefits of protected areas in the marine environment. We will continue to work with non-governmental stewardship organizations to monitor the effects of climate change in nearshore ecosystems, trace the spread of nearshore alien invasive species (e.g., *Spartina*), and strengthen our efforts to observe and understand ocean acidification.

A-3: Prevent and clean up marine pollution:

Marine and coastal pollution is a growing problem with negative impacts on marine life and human health and safety. Common forms of pollution include polystyrene foam (like Styrofoam), fishing gear, industrial waste, derelict infrastructure, runoff from agricultural land, sewage, chronic “mystery” spills, log-handling debris, underwater noise, abandoned boats, and single-use plastics. Microplastic pollution continues to attract public attention. Microplastics are now pervasive in the ocean system, posing threats to people and wildlife. Once in the environment, they are consumed by marine animals and passed from prey to predator and, eventually, humans. They have been found in salmon, tuna, halibut and oysters.

The Province, in collaboration with First Nations and the federal government are taking action to prevent, clean up, and monitor pollution. Some highlights include:

- The Clean Coast, Clean Waters Initiative has funded the removal of over 100 derelict vessels and over 1,000 tonnes of marine debris and plastics from the B.C. coastline since 2020.
- The Clean B.C. Plastics Action Plan is working to reduce and/or eliminate certain single-use and plastic items from waste streams and to create a new regulation that would further reduce single-use plastics pollution. Through the CleanBC Plastics Action Fund, the Province is dedicating funds to projects that will reduce the use of new plastic, expand reuse of plastics, and increase the use of post-consumer recycled plastic.
- B.C. has partnered with the federal [Fisheries and Aquaculture Clean Technology Adaptation Program](#) to work with private companies and non-profits to replace expanded polystyrene marine floats

with environmentally friendly alternatives such as air-filled or pouch systems.

- The Tsleil-Waututh Nation and Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (Ministry of ENV) approved a set of water quality objectives in 2021, for the marine waters of Burrard Inlet. Benchmarks inform the management of water quality for protecting human consumption of shellfish, human consumption of finfish, aquatic life, wildlife, cultural practices, recreational uses, and institutional uses.
- The Ministry of ENV oversees an Environmental Emergency Program to prepare for, and respond to, spills of hazardous materials and substances. As part of that program, the Province has developed a [B.C. Marine Oil Spill Response Plan](#) for coastal marine and estuarine waters. B.C. takes an active leadership and participatory role in coastal resource identification and protection and cleanup

of the inter-tidal shoreline and the seabed in the event of an oil spill.

- The Ministry of ENV is developing a [Public Interest Bonding Strategy](#) aimed at ensuring that owners of industrial projects pay the full cost of environmental clean-up and reclamation - even if their projects are abandoned.
- Clean up of hazardous waste from an abandoned cannery and fish processing facility at Namu near Bella Bella in the Central Coast has begun. Restoration of this site – which is culturally important to the Heiltsuk Nation, was identified as a priority in the MaPP Central Coast Marine Plan. Full restoration of Namu will require further investments¹³.
- Under the [Fisheries and Aquaculture Clean Technology Adoption Program](#), the Ministry of ENV is partnering with the B.C. Shellfish Growers Association to set up a foam billet replacement project to address old foam



docks, a common source of plastic pollution in the marine environment.

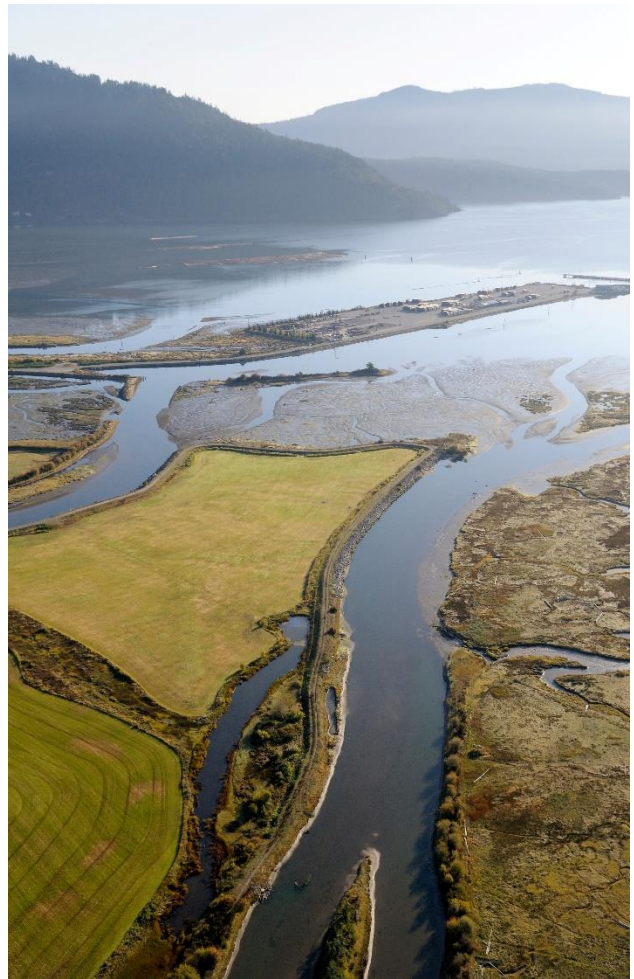
- Agricultural runoff is a significant ecological problem for many coastal zones around the world, where the increase in nutrients creates harmful algal blooms, zones of hypoxia or anoxia, and loss of biodiversity.¹⁴ To reduce the risk of environmental impacts from agricultural operations, in February 2019, the Province amended the [Code of Practice for Agricultural Environmental Management](#). Changes include minimum setbacks from watercourses; proper storage and use of manure and other nutrient sources; the prevention of water quality impacts from contaminated run-off; the prohibition of direct discharges to water, and; nutrient management planning.
- In 2021, the Ministry of ENV released updated [water quality guidelines](#) for aquatic life, wildlife and agriculture. The guidelines use the best available science to aid in the management of water resources. Clean water from streams and rivers that flow into estuaries is essential for maintaining healthy coastal ecosystems.

The Province will continue to collaborate with First Nations, local government, the federal government, industry, non-governmental organizations, and scientists to prevent and clean up marine pollution. We intend to work with others to raise awareness and change consumption behaviours, address local concerns around outflow and contaminants from historical industrial uses (e.g., mines, forestry operations), support development of better dock materials and construction practices, and accelerate technology and innovation to reduce and clean up plastic pollution. Additional coastal cleanups of plastics and other debris, as well as further action to address derelict and abandoned boats in the intertidal zone, are

other actions the Province can take in partnership with others. We will also explore the need for better infrastructure along the coast to provide a place for boats to take marine debris for safe disposal and recycling on land.

A-4: Protect and restore nearshore habitat:

Biologically rich and highly productive coastal habitats, such as kelp forests, estuaries, and seagrass meadows, are critical. They are migrating, feeding, breeding, and sheltering grounds for hundreds of unique species. They cycle nutrients, offer protection from erosion and storms, store carbon dioxide, and offer opportunities to appreciate and understand nature. These important habitats are at risk from climate change and the cumulative effects of human use, but fortunately, they can respond



well to management intervention. Through partnerships and collaboration with First Nations, federal and local governments, stewardship organizations, and stakeholders, the B.C. government intends to:

- A-4-1 Characterize the status of estuaries, seagrass meadows, salt marshes, kelp forests and their associated ecosystem values.
- A-4-2 Prioritize protection and/or restoration of habitats identified as having high ecological and cultural value (e.g., habitats important for Pacific wild salmon).
- A-4-3 Boost support for stewardship initiatives aimed at protecting, restoring, or monitoring nearshore habitats (e.g., projects funded through [BCSRIF](#), [MaPP's regional kelp monitoring](#) initiative, B.C. Parks seagrass and kelp monitoring and restoration projects, North Island University's research on [kelp habitat banks](#)).

A-4-4 Improve alignment of nearshore habitat restoration and protection with watershed restoration plans and the [Watershed Security Strategy and Fund](#).

A-4-5 Prevent further loss of habitat from shoreline armouring by incentivizing the use of natural marine shoreline design guidelines (e.g., [Green Shores](#)).

A-4-6 Complete and implement the first ever marine protected area (MPA) network in Canada with 17 partner First Nations and the federal government.

A-4-7 Plan, establish, and manage MPAs in a way that delivers local benefits and that advances implementation of the UNDRIP.

A-4-8 Explore innovative protected-area models including the designation of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas, in collaboration with interested First Nations and the federal government.



A-5: Help recover resident killer whales and other marine species at risk:

The Province works with the federal government to coordinate recovery of species listed under the federal *Species At Risk Act (SARA)*. There are a number of marine species found on the coast of British Columbia that are endangered, threatened, or of special concern including Northern abalone, Olympia oysters, eulachon, several rockfish species¹⁵, and northern and southern resident killer whales.

Northern and southern resident killer whales are emblematic of B.C. and the people who live here, but they are in trouble. From a population of around 200 whales in the 1940s and 100 whales in the mid-1990s, the southern resident killer whale population now stands at just 75.¹⁶ As they travel the waters of the Salish Sea, they struggle to find enough salmon to eat and are vulnerable to contaminants, boat disturbance, and noise pollution.

Northern and southern resident killer whales were SARA listed in 2003, as threatened and

endangered, respectively. Canada approved an action plan in 2017 and an amended recovery strategy for these whales in 2018.¹⁷ Since then, the federal government has acted to restore chinook salmon (these whales' preferred prey), reduce noise and vessel speed in areas designated as critical habitat, reduce the threat of contaminants, monitor whale presence and activity, and educate people about how they can help protect the whales. As partners in the Killer Whale Task Force and participants in the federal government-led whale technical working groups that include First Nations, other federal departments, and the state of Washington, the Province remains committed to doing its part to recover these charismatic top predators. We will continue to provide sound information and appropriate measures for the conservation and protection of other marine species at risk, consistent with our commitments in the *Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk*.¹⁸ Working together at federal, provincial, and local levels is essential to protect at-risk species, their habitats and biodiversity overall.



B. RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

The climate is changing. Sea levels are fluctuating, and sea surface temperatures are rising. Ocean waters are becoming more acidic while carrying less oxygen. Wind and precipitation patterns are more variable, and droughts, floods, and other extreme weather events are occurring more frequently. These shifts in climate are impacting marine life and people.

Communities and businesses across B.C. will experience the effects of climate change differently. First Nations and coastal communities are disproportionately affected since their cultures, livelihoods, and food security are intertwined with the ocean. Damage to, disappearance of, or loss of access to sacred and cultural sites, food gathering areas, and coastal access routes due to extreme weather events and rising sea levels are matters of deep concern to coastal First Nations, as are changes in quantity, quality, and timing of harvested foods.

As climate changes, marine species and habitats respond differently. There is also variability in how the *same* species and habitats respond in different parts of the coast. Underwater kelp forests, for instance, are one of the main habitats threatened by warming sea temperatures, as kelp thrives in cooler waters. Kelp in inner coastal waters suffered more from recent heat events than kelp in cooler, deeper outer waters farther from shore.¹⁹

Work is underway to prepare for climate change. In May 2022, the Province released the *CleanBC Roadmap to 2030* and the *Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy*.²⁰ Together, these documents lay out a clear plan to achieve 100% of provincial emissions targets and help address sources of climate change

while preparing us for its impacts. The *Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy* outlines actions to take place from 2022-25 and is supported by more than \$500 million. It is part of a broader suite of investments from Budget 2022 totalling more than \$2.1 billion allocated to support people and communities recover from recent disasters and prepare for future climate impacts.

In November 2022, the federal government released Canada's first national Adaptation Action Plan that outlines federal adaptation objectives and targets to address immediate and future climate risks to Canada.²¹ Federal funding totalling \$8 billion will be spent on five priority areas of [Canada's National Adaptation Strategy](#):

1. Improving health and well-being
2. Building and maintaining resilient public infrastructure
3. Protecting and restoring nature and biodiversity
4. Supporting the economy and workers
5. Reducing the impacts of climate-related disasters

The B.C. First Nations Leadership Council developed a *Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan* that sets priorities for First Nations' climate action and resilience.²² Additionally, many municipalities, regional districts, and First Nations have climate action strategies that align with federal and provincial initiatives and policy directives. Yet, we need to do more, because the impacts of climate change are expected to become more severe over the coming decades. We must work together to protect sensitive marine ecosystems and coastal communities exposed to climate change impacts in an inclusive, equitable, and holistic way.

POLICY INTENTIONS

B-1: Keep communities safe from harmful climate change impacts: Communities are the first line of response to severe weather events and disasters and play a critical role in applying policies and strategies to help prevent and manage climate risks. While some impacts of climate change will affect all communities, other changes pose different levels of risk based on where we live. At the same time, the needs and capacities of rural, remote, and coastal communities are different from those of urban centres.

In 2019, MaPP released an assessment of projected climate changes, sectoral impacts, and recommendations for adaptation strategies across the North Pacific Coast.²³ The report emphasized the uncertainty surrounding global climate change projections for coastal regions, and the associated vulnerabilities and risks. This uncertainty is attributed to limited access to reliable and continuous data sources and the unpredictability of humans and their actions. According to the authors, improved climate projections and finer scale vulnerability and risk assessments would improve integrated coastal decision making and planning, in turn supporting healthy coastal communities and economies.²⁴

The Province, in partnership with First Nations, and federal and local governments will continue to expand a collective understanding of climate risks to coastal communities, ecosystems, and economies with ongoing investments in research, modeling, and monitoring. We will help provide the information needed to develop and update regional climate action plans in response to monitoring data and scientific advice. Climate action plans can help incorporate climate change vulnerability and adaptation considerations into marine spatial

plans, economic development plans, official community plans, and zoning bylaws that can help keep many forms of development out of at-risk shorelines. We will also work with the federal government to support the development of better short-range and long-range forecasting and early warning systems for climate change stressors such as extreme weather events and storm surges.

B-2: Support seafood harvesters, producers, and innovators: Food and climate change are closely linked. Climate change can affect food availability, access and use, leading to food insecurity. We are already experiencing these challenges in British Columbia. Record temperatures during 2021's dangerous heatwave caused a mass die-off of marine animals such as sea snails, sea stars, clams, and mussels – possibly as many as a billion animals.²⁵ The average sea surface temperature has risen by 0.7°C, and this persistent, higher than normal ocean temperature stresses species that depend on colder water, such as kelp and salmon.²⁶ Higher ocean temperatures combined with low, unusually warm rivers pose a dual threat to wild salmon.

Ongoing ocean acidification is having “osteoporosis-like” effects on shellfish, making it hard for them to build and maintain shells. Falling oxygen levels (deoxygenation) are affecting commercial fish species by reducing high quality fish habitat – most fish prefer oxygen-rich waters. Oxygen levels in the waters of the North Pacific have declined by 15% over the last 60 years.²⁷ A period of severe hypoxia (unusually low levels of oxygen in the water) in the Saanich Inlet from 2015 to 2017, led to the absence of spot prawn and other commercial shrimp species.²⁸ Aquaculture operations for vulnerable species, such as Dungeness crab and spot prawns, are also affected by deoxygenation.



Sometimes marine life shifts in response to changing ocean conditions, perhaps to deeper waters or towards other shores, changing where seafood can be harvested. Some hypoxia tolerant species (e.g., some squid, jellyfish) may increase in abundance and/or distribution, potentially outcompeting less tolerant species (e.g., finfish).²⁹ These shifts can create new opportunities for seafood development. For example, Humboldt squid are now a common sighting in the waters surrounding Vancouver Island, but 20 years ago, these giant squid were unheard of in Canadian waters.³⁰

Ocean food collection and production must adapt to a changing climate to meet local, provincial, and national needs for nutrition, food security, and jobs. Seafood harvesters and producers need more support to better anticipate and adapt to the impacts of ocean acidification, ocean warming, deoxygenation, and heatwaves. We intend to work with First Nations, the federal government, research institutions, and industry to enhance our understanding of when, where, and how marine resources are changing. Harvesters and

producers can then take advantage of future opportunities, and we can increase the resilience of fishing and seafood farming communities. The Province can support a transition away from severely impacted fisheries and aquaculture species to more resilient species. We can also work with the federal government and industry to support the use of technology and technological innovation to improve productivity and profitability.

B-3: Develop an ocean acidification and hypoxia plan:

Ocean acidification is a global problem with local impacts that threaten industries such as crab fisheries and shellfish aquaculture. We need to assess risks to species, communities, archaeological sites, and economies, and work together to adapt. The Province is developing an ocean acidification and hypoxia plan to determine the state of knowledge related to ocean acidification and hypoxia in coastal waters. The plan will include addressing knowledge gaps and developing adaptation and mitigation strategies to support the fisheries and aquaculture sectors, including food-fish harvesters.

As a member of the International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification,³¹ the B.C. government will continue, in partnership with the other governments and academia, to address ocean acidification and hypoxia and to strengthen nearshore monitoring to better understand and predict conditions and seek adaptive measures.

B-4: Shift to nature-based solutions to coastal protection:

Extreme storms and shifting wave patterns combined with sea-level rise increase coastal erosion and pose risks to coastal infrastructure. Property owners often attempt to stabilize coastal land and protect residential and commercial infrastructure along the coast by building seawalls, breakwaters, riprap, and other armoring structures to hold back the sea and prevent the loss of sediment. These structures are costly to build and maintain, they degrade over time, and disrupt natural shoreline processes.

Many shoreline protection systems in place today were not designed with the thought of protecting infrastructure and communities from climate change risks.³² Nature-based solutions that rely on existing or enhanced coastal landscapes can help improve climate change resiliency by reducing impacts from hazards such as rising sea levels, storm surge, and “nuisance” flooding (such as high tide or windblown flooding). Nature-based solutions are cost effective, prevent pollution, attract and sustain marine life, add recreational benefits, and increase property values.³³ Examples of nature-based solutions include living shorelines (e.g., native beach grass and sedges), wetland and estuary restoration, and green infrastructure for stormwater management.

Local governments across coastal B.C. are increasingly exploring the use of nature-based solutions. For example, Cowichan Valley’s



official community plan outlines the use of soft shoreline protection tools for enhancing shellfish harvesting and protecting properties from climate change impacts, while the city of Campbell River is actively replacing hard armouring with soft alternatives.³⁴ The B.C. government can work with First Nations, local governments, business, and stewardship organizations to help make the shift towards relying on nature-based solutions to improve climate change preparedness and adaptation. We intend to help raise awareness, support development of shoreline management plans, and continue to replace armoured shorelines in provincial marine parks and protected areas with soft, natural ones.

B-5: Protect and restore kelp, eelgrass meadows, and other blue carbon sinks:

Nearshore ecosystems such as eelgrass meadows, kelp beds, and salt marshes play a

valuable role in climate change mitigation. They can absorb significant carbon from the atmosphere and can protect the coastline from erosion, storms, and flooding.³⁵ Prioritizing protection and restoration of these nearshore ecosystems can help build resilience to climate change.

We intend to expand on recent work that has identified localized climate refugia in marine and coastal systems, and incorporate these areas into marine spatial planning, protection, and conservation strategies (e.g., MPA network planning, MaPP plans, marine spatial planning in the south coast). We will also review provincial policies to identify where improvements can be made to address protection and management of blue carbon habitats in addition to working with federal partners to address blue carbon policy gaps.



C. TRUSTING, RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS

How we govern and interact with the environment influences how we generate benefits for society and how we can sustain these benefits. Good management begins with respect: for the natural environment, for the connections between people and place, and for responsible stewardship by all parties. These respectful relationships, in turn, underpin effective integrated management and help build trust among governments, stakeholders, and citizens.

Managing coastal and marine ecosystems along the B.C. coast is complex, with many actors having a role in different ocean activities and values (Appendix 2). Inevitably, such a system creates management silos and gives rise to jurisdictional gaps, overlaps, and uncertainties. With the recent creation of the Ministry, the Province has taken a big step towards dismantling internal silos and bridging gaps between processes and structures to support more holistic, integrated, and effective ocean governance.³⁶ However, successful governance requires more.

The historic displacement of Indigenous governance authorities and stewardship responsibilities created a gap in the management and stewardship of coastal and marine resources. As a key element in our commitment to good management, the Province and First Nations will work together to re-establish integrated land-sea management grounded in deep ecological and traditional knowledge, and the best available science. We will also rebuild trusting and respectful relationships as partners in governance and stewardship and commit to improving collaboration and cooperation.

POLICY INTENTIONS

C-1: Respect and uphold Indigenous rights:

First Nations were once the sole stewards of their territories and resources. They governed, made, and enforced laws and managed lands, resources, and institutions. Colonial policies eroded their authorities and their capacity to practise those authorities and to exercise stewardship responsibilities. Building government-to-government relationships with First Nations based on recognition of rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership is key to reconciliation. Building these relationships is part of recognizing and implementing treaty rights, First Nations' distinct laws, policies, and stewardship responsibilities, First Nations' management systems for marine and coastal habitats, and implementing UNDRIP.

First Nations want to be empowered to establish and enforce rules in their traditional territories. In June 2022, B.C. Parks and the Kitasoo-Xai'xais and Nuxalk First Nations entered a Shared Compliance and Enforcement Pilot Project that is the first of its kind. The project could lead to shared compliance and enforcement responsibilities between First Nations guardians and B.C. Parks rangers. The Province will continue to explore initiatives that empower First Nations to monitor and enforce Provincial legislation, regulations, and management plans associated with the coastal and marine environment, recognizing that longer term funding will be needed.

We will also work with First Nations and other governing authorities to advance joint and consent-based management and decision-making with Indigenous rights holders on a government-to-government basis with individual First Nations or among multiple Nations. We will need to co-identify measures to

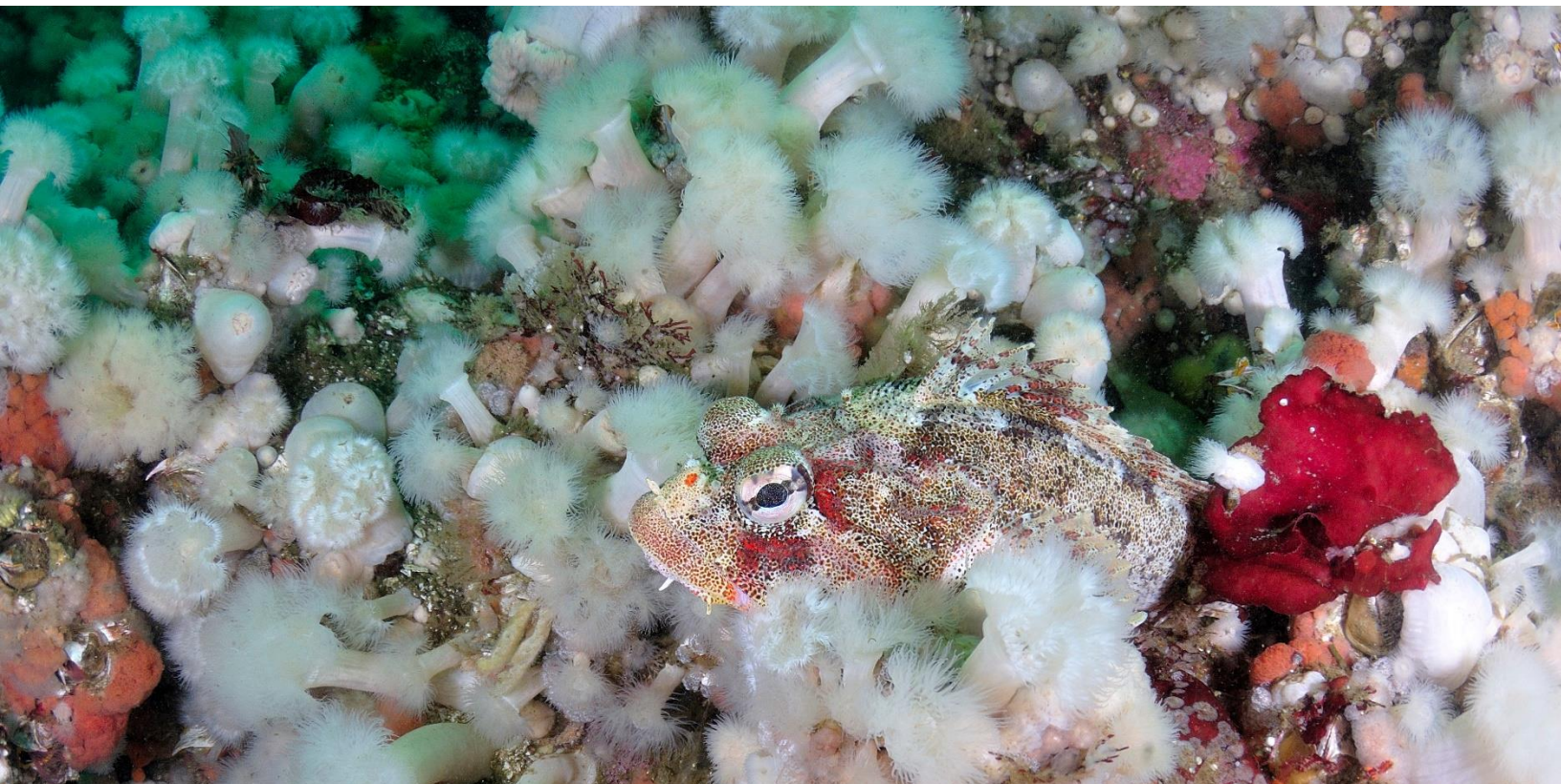
fully recognize and support treaties through engagement with treaty Nations. This will strengthen collaborative coastal management and decision-making consistent with treaty rights and provisions.

Consistent with UNDRIP, provincial laws, policies and practices will be updated and aligned over time to recognize and respect the distinctions-based rights of Indigenous Peoples. As part of the Coastal Marine Strategy, the B.C. government intends to identify strategies to address institutional and systemic racism and build awareness of Indigenous rights, management authorities, and jurisdictions, particularly as they relate to managing marine values.

C-2: Engage British Columbians in coastal marine management: Local communities and stakeholders need more opportunities to contribute meaningfully to coastal marine management. Their participation can unlock

additional knowledge that improves the quality and credibility of decisions, enhance compliance with rules, and reduce conflict.³⁷ Understanding the underlying values held by different stakeholder groups is important for building trust and informed decision making. When marine planning processes consider local interests and concerns at an early stage, there is a greater chance of meeting local needs and priorities.

The B.C. government will continue to offer and invest in participatory structures that bring a diversity of voices and interests into marine management and stewardship discussions. To build a foundation for effective public engagement, we will continue to promote education and communication about coastal marine values, benefits, issues, and potential solutions. We will strive to reduce engagement fatigue and the strain placed on participants responding to engagement requests, and will





consider how the Province can better support locally driven initiatives.

C-3: Advance collaborative stewardship: The provincial and federal governments, First Nations, local governments, and stakeholders all have a role to play in nurturing healthy marine ecosystems and coastal economies. The authority to make decisions is shared between governments (Appendix 2), and sometimes this division of responsibility creates barriers to achieving good outcomes for people and the marine environment. Everyone has a strong interest in decisions and how they are made. For example, marine shipping is managed by Transport Canada and international regulations, but everyone who lives along the coast of B.C. can appreciate the importance of shipping and shares concern for the potential risks that

activity can pose (e.g., spills, noise pollution, vessel strikes on marine mammals).

Collaborative stewardship is a collective process involving multiple and diverse groups who act together to take care of natural resources by sharing knowledge, risks, capacity, and accountability. The new Ministry reflects the Province's commitment to improving collaborative stewardship of the coastal marine environment by bringing together staff responsible for creating policies and plans related to managing the coastal marine environment, watersheds, and marine fisheries. The Ministry has a mandate to strengthen partnerships, advance engagement with First Nations in the stewardship of natural resource values, and increase the number of co-governance and shared decision-making models that support integrated resource management.

There are several models of collaboration to build from, including:

- Reconciliation Framework Agreements on Bioregional Ocean Management and Protection: These agreements, signed by several First Nations and Canada, advance collaborative ocean governance in the Northern Shelf Bioregion.³⁸
- MaPP: In 2011, the Province and 17 coastal First Nations joined together to create integrated marine plans that guide collaborative stewardship of marine values in the Northern Shelf Bioregion. Stakeholders and local governments lend their voices through advisory committees established to support marine plan implementation.
- The Environmental Stewardship Initiative (ESI): In 2014, the ESI was established as a partnership between the Province and First Nations focused on ecosystem assessment and monitoring, ecosystem restoration and enhancement, ecosystem research and knowledge exchange, and stewardship education and training.
- The Collaborative Stewardship Framework (CSF): In 2018, the CSF was initiated as a pilot to test how information reflecting western science and First Nations knowledge can enhance natural resource decision-making through a collaborative land stewardship approach between the Province and more than 30 First Nations.
- shíshálh / British Columbia Foundation Agreement: In 2018, shíshálh Nation and the Province signed an agreement committing the parties to shared decision-making for land and resource authorizations throughout the swiya (lands, birthplace, world, "Territory" of the shíshálh Nation). shíshálh and B.C. are currently implementing the Agreement, beginning with applications for all moorage

types within the swiya. Eventually, all Provincial authorization decisions related to land and resources within the shíshálh swiya will be incorporated into the shared decision-making process.

The B.C. government, in collaboration with First Nations, will continue to look for opportunities to enhance existing and develop new innovative structures, agreements, and tools to facilitate collaborative stewardship of coastal marine values in a manner that implements UNDRIP and ensures provincial decision-making aligns with the Declaration Act. We will pay close attention to the implementation of existing agreements and structures to ensure progress is on track.

We will look for opportunities to improve collaboration with the federal government, particularly where harmonized approaches to stewardship are required for effective management (e.g., aquaculture). We may also look to improve coordination and alignment with neighbouring jurisdictions such as Washington State and California to support cross-border collaboration in managing migratory fish and wildlife, monitoring water quality, reducing flood risks, and planning for climate change impacts. We will also continue to look for innovative ways to partner with non-governmental organizations eager to share their expertise and capacity.

C-4: Evaluate the need for comprehensive coastal zone legislation: A key challenge to coastal management is the absence of a legal framework specifically designed to govern and manage coastal marine areas in British Columbia. Such a framework, developed in partnership with First Nations, could establish clear and consistent guidance for developing, implementing, and enforcing integrated coastal zone plans, and would help to define and track progress towards environmental and socio-

economic objectives. Specifically, new legislation could:

- C-4-1 Protect vital foreshore and nearshore habitats from shoreline modification.
- C-4-2 Ensure critical coastal marine habitats are regularly monitored.
- C-4-3 Bring integrated marine use plans into law, to increase clarity and certainty.
- C-4-4 Strengthen coordination with coastal flood management activities.
- C-4-5 Provide a framework for local governments to work together to address shared coastal infrastructure needs.
- C-4-6 Update building standards to ensure new developments are safe from sea-level rise and extreme weather events.
- C-4-7 Include incentive systems to drive and encourage investments that protect and conserve ecosystems, build natural capital, and support healthy communities and resilient coastal economies.
- C-4-8 Provide a framework to guide decisions about emerging industries, such as

seabed mining and ocean-based renewable energy.

- C-4-9 Support a tenure system that advances the authority of First Nations to steward their territories, considers cumulative effects, and acknowledges the qualities that distinguish marine ecosystems from terrestrial ones.
- C-4-10 Recognize the role of First Nations in marine stewardship and outline co-governance and shared decision-making accountabilities.
- C-4-11 Better address concerns related to siting and management of marine-based industrial use, such as log handling and storage and aquaculture.

In addition to exploring the development of new legislative tools, we are committed to evaluating the legal instruments and designations currently available (e.g., *Water Sustainability Act*, *Land Act*, *Environmental Management Act*, *Riparian Areas Protection Act*, and *Wildlife Act*) to support implementation of marine plans (e.g., MaPP), policy and land use decisions.



D. HOLISTIC LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

How can we revitalize wild salmon populations? How can we best address the individual and combined effects of multiple stressors on marine ecosystems and communities? How should we respond to ocean acidification and climate change? To answer these kinds of questions, we need to co-create and share knowledge.

There is a wealth of knowledge and experience held by First Nations, multi-generational coastal families, and marine stakeholders such as commercial fishers, shellfish growers, wildlife tourism operators, environmental groups, and research institutions. Their insights should inform research and policy formation.

When we gather and mobilize different sources and forms of information about the environmental status of the ocean, how it is or could be used, and how it can be sustainably managed, we make better decisions. When we integrate ocean science with First Nations traditional knowledge, our understanding of ecosystems and other cultures is enriched. Better stewardship of all coastal marine values can only be achieved when everyone brings knowledge and information to the table as equals working together in an atmosphere of trust and respect.³⁹ The Province is committed to working in partnership with others to improve our knowledge and understanding of the coastal marine space while recognizing and valuing Indigenous knowledge.

POLICY INTENTIONS

D-1: Weave traditional knowledge with western science: Indigenous knowledge holders have in-depth understanding of coastal environmental and socio-economic systems, contribute valuable information about historical conditions, and share vital observations about

current conditions observed first-hand.⁴⁰ Marine life is featured in First Nation traditions, knowledge, ceremonies, stories, and songs passed through generations. The relationships formed with the sea from generation to generation have gifted First Nations with a deep understanding of marine life and habitats and their interrelationships within their territories. This deep understanding is a balance of traditional and modern knowledge.

The B.C. government is committed to pairing Indigenous knowledge systems with western scientific and local community insights to inform decision-makers about resource use in a respectful way. There are successful change models to build on, including MaPP, the Great Bear Rainforest Agreement, and the West Coast Aquatic⁴¹ experiences. These initiatives paired knowledge systems in ways that were consistent with First Nations' distinct protocols, laws, processes, and protections. We will continue to build public understanding of the value and importance of including First Nations' traditional and informed knowledge and experience when developing and implementing marine policy.

D-2: Assess the value of the ocean: Over the last two decades, the provincial and federal governments have twice assessed the value of British Columbia's ocean-based economy (2006, 2020) using "traditional" indicators such as contribution to provincial gross domestic product and employment. These indicators are essential for understanding monetary trends in the ocean sector and sub-sectors (fisheries, tourism, shipping, transportation, etc.), but they do not account for the value of our natural or social capital to support socio-economic health and well-being. GDP-based valuations ignore many of the concepts of well-being that are important to Indigenous people.⁴²



To measure progress towards sustainability of the provincial ocean economy, we must account for the status of the natural wealth of the ocean and for the status of coastal communities including social, cultural, mental, and physical health. This will ensure that decisions are based on a holistic understanding of the value of, and impacts on, marine economic sectors and the ocean's natural and cultural capital. Future assessments of the value of the ocean economy will push beyond the traditional metrics and include holistic evaluations of worth that incorporate Indigenous values.

D-3: Enhance marine spatial data: The ocean is a busy place, and it is getting busier. Increased activity comes with potential economic benefits, but also with risks to public safety and the health of potentially vulnerable marine life, such as humpback and killer whales. As these mammals move through the water column and along the coastal shelf, there is a high risk of interacting with vessels of all sizes and speeds.⁴³ Ship strikes are a leading cause of mortality for some whales, putting their recovery at risk.

We can't protect whales and other sensitive animals, important resources, sensitive marine habitat – or ourselves – without knowledge of what's out there. Spatial data is a key component of integrated planning and is very important when it comes to making sound decisions about using the marine environment.

Maps of ecological and human use values can help decision-makers avoid potential conflicts (e.g., shipping lanes and marine mammal feeding grounds) and harmonize different activities (e.g., herring runs and wildlife tourism). Maps are also important visualization and communications tools for involving members of the public in planning processes. In recent years, the federal and provincial governments, First Nations and academic and research institutions have been working together to make information available in spatial formats. For example, through planning and stewardship initiatives on the north coast,⁴⁴ regional characteristics of marine life and habitat, as well as patterns of human use, have been mapped spatially. Similarly, the federal government is leading the development of a



province-wide marine atlas that will support ocean planners, managers, and users.

The Province intends to work in partnership with others to keep spatial data current and fill key gaps. For example, we will continue to work with research institutes and First Nations to map the location and extent of kelp forest beds, linking to work already underway by B.C. Parks, Hakai Institute, and MaPP. We will also devote more attention to the different domains of coastal community health (e.g., ocean use patterns, features of well-being) and mapping approaches that can create multiple ways of knowing places.

D-4: Improve availability of marine and coastal information: Too often, data can be challenging to find or inaccessible to certain groups. When information is shared broadly, others are empowered to make better decisions. We need to support open access to current data and encourage other levels of government to do the same, while respecting the rights of knowledge holders. Some First Nations are advocating principles of ownership, control, access and possession of their own data.⁴⁵ Hand-in-hand

with creating trust to share data is building trust in the decisions being made and ensuring that First Nations are part of that decision-making process. It is critical to respect and protect Indigenous traditional knowledge, as some information is culturally and community sensitive.

Provincial datasets for marine values need to be updated, starting with data already compiled and validated (e.g., the British Columbia Marine Conservation Analysis⁴⁶). Many organizations are also collecting and compiling data for various uses. Strengthening collaborations across organizations that collect data will also strengthen our collective depth and breadth of information that can be used to support decisions. We may also need to update Provincial platforms or tools for gathering and sharing knowledge to support collaborative decision-making, with privacy protection measures in place, as needed. These platforms need to be easy to use, accessible by everyone, and kept relevant with current social, economic, and ecological information.

E. COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

Many of the 150-plus communities that dot the coastline of British Columbia are dependent on the ocean and its resources for their survival and well-being. Thriving, healthy coastal communities can strengthen rural economies and rural-urban dynamics, support robust food systems and economies, and maintain an active presence on the coast.⁴⁷ However, change is constant for these communities. They face many challenges that affect their well-being, including increasing competition over marine space, climate change, pollution, the decline of traditional resource-based industries, and disconnection from decision-making processes.⁴⁸ The impacts of these pressures include loss of livelihood, declining economies, out-migration of youth, food insecurity, and health problems.

Fishing, marine tourism and recreation, aquaculture, water transportation, coastal forestry operations, research and monitoring, and boatbuilding and repair provide a way of life and a sense of place for rural communities.

Coastal economies rely heavily on the movement of goods via cargo ships, barges, ports and harbours to support the export of products and ensure reliable and cost-effective delivery of critical inputs. The health and well-being of coastal communities depends on their capacity to proactively respond to external change and challenges. Access to education and employment opportunities, a stable economy, communications, transportation, safety, and community engagement are signs that a community is thriving. The Province will work with partners to ensure that First Nations and coastal communities can be resilient to change and position themselves to take advantage of established and emerging ocean industries.

POLICY INTENTIONS

E-1: Create jobs and support steady, rewarding employment: A healthy ocean has the potential to deliver sustainable growth and new jobs. Jobs related to the sustainable use of ocean resources have wide-ranging educational requirements from fish biology, water quality



testing, mechanics, and marine vessel operation to diver training, systems engineering, and data analysis. Advances in aquaculture, ocean technology, offshore resources, shipping, and marine resources are expected to contribute to the growth of Canada's blue economy. To ensure that B.C. remains globally competitive and achieves the full potential of ocean-related industries, it is vital to prepare the workforce. The Province will work with First Nations, the federal government, industry, stakeholders, and academia to:

- E-1-1 Support workforce planning
- E-1-2 Support capacity building, training, and innovation in new and existing industries
- E-1-3 Facilitate the transition of workers to emerging jobs and growth areas
- E-1-4 Help to create a positive perception of the ocean sector and the opportunities it presents to youth and those seeking opportunities to "upskill"
- E-1-5 Identify and reduce skills gaps between education on offer and labour market needs now and into the future

Our next steps are to share the results of labour market needs assessments, continue to build partnerships with organizations interested in supporting rewarding employment in the ocean sector (e.g., communities, NGOs, governments, universities), and seek additional funding to further develop and implement projects that create jobs. Through our efforts, we hope to continue to support coastal communities in their efforts to promote local well-being and thrive amidst change.

E-2: Build a diverse coastal workforce: The ocean is important for everyone, yet access to ocean resources and sectors is not equitably distributed. For example, there are visible gender gaps in ocean science and technology⁴⁹

and in traditionally male-dominated industries such as commercial fishing, coastal forestry, and marine shipping. Similarly, First Nations are under-represented in some ocean-based industries (e.g., ocean high-tech) and the public sector – particularly in decision-making positions.

Individuals of all genders, races, backgrounds, and experiences bring different perspectives that lead to innovative solutions and new discoveries. Without their voices, management decisions cannot consider all knowledge of, and effects on, marine ecosystems and people. Equity is central to achieving sustainable economies and attracting the brightest and best people. The Province will look at ways to increase and diversify participation in B.C.'s ocean economy, starting with a gender-based analysis plus (GBA+) to help determine what actions are needed to make space for everyone.

E-3: Support First Nations cultural revitalization and resilience: Many First Nations have been vocal about the challenges they experience in preserving and revitalizing their cultural heritage and strong connection to place. These challenges include food insecurity; access to areas and resources important for harvesting, teaching, and healing; language revitalization; loss of Indigenous place names; use of traditional resource management and harvesting methods (e.g., harvest wheels, fish traps and weirs, estuarine root gardens); and transfer of critical cultural knowledge and practices to younger generations.

There are opportunities to support First Nations cultural revitalization and resilience. For example, the Province is embarking on a *Heritage Conservation Act Transformation* project to reform the Act to align with UNDRIP, with the goal of improving protection of Indigenous cultural and spiritual heritage sites



and objects. This work, in addition to collaborative enforcement and climate risk assessment inventories, will better protect coastal First Nations' sites such as burial caves, petroglyphs, and middens.

In the Northern Shelf Bioregion, there are several community-led initiatives that support cultural resurgence and resilience. For example, First Nations community members identified areas critically important for First Nations' cultural use and management recommendations were put in place to protect them.⁵⁰ The *Supporting Emerging Aboriginal Stewards* program helps build Indigenous leadership through "on the water learning" that cultivates a deeper understanding of traditional cultural beliefs and marine values.⁵¹ Over thousands of years, First Nations constructed and nurtured clam gardens to enhance shellfish production and feed people, and some First Nations are reclaiming these traditional mariculture practices as a means to enhance food security and reconnect with and revive ancestral practices.⁵² Access to the shoreline is required

to support clam gardens and other traditional food gathering and cultivating practices.

The Province will work closely with coastal First Nations to identify a suite of practical actions we can take together to revive traditional stewardship and support opportunities for knowledge to be shared across generations.

E-4: Improve capacity of communities to respond to change:

In 2019, a team of collaborators and coastal partners gathered to discuss the current status of community well-being.⁵³ Across several domains of well-being, including social, health, food, cultural, governance, infrastructure, and economic development, the trends indicate change – for better and for worse. For example:

- ↓ Food security
- ↑ Local stewardship effort
- ↑ Research on the coast
- ↓ Connection to place



- ↓ Connection to central decision-making processes and decision-makers
- ↑ Climate change impacts
- ↑ Unemployment and very seasonal employment
- ↓ Recruitment – human resource surplus, availability of skilled workers
- ↓ Community infrastructure for fisheries (e.g., wharves)
- ↑ Communications infrastructure

Coastal communities are preparing for change – but they need more help from the B.C. government to take advantage of emerging opportunities and reduce threats to well-being. We can better work with First Nations, academia, local governments, and non-governmental organizations to identify bridges and barriers to improving the well-being of coastal communities, fill gaps in our understanding of the impacts of change on well-

being, and to identify specific actions that will help coastal communities thrive. The Province will also support efforts to narrow gaps in our understanding of how coastal community well-being is changing across space and time.

E-5: Develop and implement marine use plans:

Multi-use or “integrated” planning is a key part of the Province’s approach to strengthening the economy, improving collaborative stewardship of land and water, and supporting well-being of coastal communities. The development and implementation of marine plans can: deliver important social, environmental, and economic benefits; streamline approval processes; reduce conflicts among ocean users, and; increase certainty for users and investors. Marine plans can also help governments and industry take advantage of new opportunities and respond to rapidly changing environmental conditions.

The benefits of integrated planning have been demonstrated here in B.C. with the implementation of marine plans developed under MaPP. These plans, developed in partnership with 17 coastal First Nations and in

collaboration with stakeholders, cover 102,000 km² of marine waters from northern Vancouver Island to the B.C.–Alaska border.⁵⁴ The plans provide management direction for a range of values, uses, and activities, including governance, monitoring and enforcement, economy and communities, tourism and recreation, coastal forestry and the marine fisheries economy. The plans also include zones that provide recommendations to decision makers for uses and activities in spaces allocated for general use, high-priority and/or high-potential marine uses and activities, and protection of local conservation values.

The Province intends to partner with First Nations and collaborate with stakeholders and others to advance planning in areas of the coast where it is needed most, and where there is shared interest. We will also boost support for implementation of existing marine use plans and work hard to address challenges (e.g., long-term durable funding, sector-based policies and procedures) that have made it difficult to

achieve some key ecosystem-based management⁵⁵ objectives. The strong connections between watersheds and coastal ecosystems require more holistic approaches to planning, and we will look for opportunities to incorporate adjacent land use plans into marine planning initiatives (e.g., Great Bear Rainforest land use orders, MaPP plans).

As partners in the federally led marine spatial planning initiative in the Salish Sea, we remain committed to sharing our perspectives and expertise in the best interest of First Nations and British Columbians and building relationships with all partners and participants.

E-6: Improve access to nature, in a respectful way:

The marine and coastal environment in B.C. provides natural, cultural, spiritual, recreational, and economic values and opportunities. To maintain these values, we need to ensure coastal use and development is sustainable and fosters respect for nature, people, and archaeological and historical sites. Access to the coast allows us to enjoy activities





like swimming, paddle sports, boating, diving, nature viewing, learning and exploring.

As B.C.'s population grows, more people are choosing to visit, live and work along the coast. For example, Desolation Sound Marine Provincial Park is a very popular kayak and boating destination with high visitor use. The popularity of the park brings with it impacts to water quality, ecological values, and archaeological sites. In other parts of the coast, access to shorelines can be limited by docks, floating structures, shoreline armouring, and development, which can negatively impact ecological, social, and cultural values and create conflict between users. Unlike other coastal jurisdictions, B.C. does not have a comprehensive strategy to manage coastline development and access issues.

B.C. Parks recently completed a Marine Recreation Action Plan to ensure that high quality and sustainable recreational

opportunities are available in protected areas up and down the coast. This plan provides guidance on managing marine recreation and includes actions such as monitoring visitor use and impacts on marine habitats, strengthening shared stewardship with First Nations, implementing visitor use management strategies (e.g., camping reservations/area closures), and developing opportunities for expanding marine recreation where feasible.

Expanding on this work, the Province intends to partner with First Nations and local governments to explore a comprehensive framework for authorizing responsible and sustainable foreshore and shoreline development. A key focus of this intention is ensuring that marine and coastal Crown land is accessible and allows for a range of recreation and tourism experiences, while protecting environmental and cultural values now and into the future.

F. A SUSTAINABLE, THRIVING OCEAN ECONOMY

The ocean-based economy holds great promise for helping rebuild British Columbia's post-pandemic economy. Building a sustainable ocean economy is an important task. A sustainable economy is more than jobs and gross domestic product (GDP); it means that benefits from resource development are invested in local communities in ways that support equity and human well-being, including physical, mental, and family health. A sustainable economy also grows natural and human capital for the future. Natural capital is grown through incentives and regulatory measures that ensure ongoing investment back into healthy, abundant ecosystems, while human capital is grown by encouraging education, innovation, creativity, entrepreneurship, and strong governance and administration.

A sustainable economy must also be resilient in the face of unpredictability. The last two years have shown that unforeseen events can cause challenging situations for ocean-based sectors, including supply chain challenges, shifts in consumer behaviour, poor market conditions, and declines in employment levels. The tourism industry was disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Pre-pandemic, the industry contributed over \$20 billion to the provincial economy, and about one-quarter of annual revenues came directly from marine-based tourism.⁵⁶ Post-pandemic, revenues dropped by an estimated 50–70%. Some tourism businesses adapted, while others closed or faced the prospect of closure. The B.C. government will explore ways to recover from these, and other losses while building for the future.

A more sustainable future for B.C.'s ocean economy will require: regulatory and policy reform; good governance; strategic investments

in emerging and existing sectors; marine spatial planning, respect for Indigenous knowledge, wisdom and practice, and; alignment with the federal government's vision for Canada's three oceans.⁵⁷ It will also be critical to engage fully with First Nations and include all British Columbians (e.g., women, minorities, members of the LGBTQ+ community). Through the Coastal Marine Strategy, the Province will take steps to nurture an ocean economy that is more equitable, resilient, and balanced. We will invest in people, communities, and businesses, better manage cumulative effects, and do the work needed to share with coastal First Nations the wealth that's generated through the ocean economy.

POLICY INTENTIONS

F-1: Invest in a diverse coastal and marine economy: The world is seeing a major shift in investment, research, and development towards a "blue economy" - socially equitable, environmentally sustainable and economically viable ocean industries.⁵⁸ B.C. is well positioned to lead and benefit from this transition. In many coastal communities the Indigenous population is growing and represents a significant future labour force pool. At the same time, some coastal communities face challenges with rural to urban migration, securing new capital, accessing infrastructure and services, and reaching markets in Canada and around the world.

The Province intends to expand investment in sustainable marine sectors, including renewable energy, blue carbon, aquaculture, value-added processing, regenerative tourism, and governance and administration, along with the coastal infrastructure and services needed to support new businesses. Sectors will need to be prioritized carefully to ensure that the blue

economy delivers. Pathways of sustainable development will need to be mindful of local social objectives and preferences in the pursuit of an appropriate economic mix.

We can build on lessons from the “conservation economy” that is emerging in the Great Bear Rainforest and Haida Gwaii. In these regions, First Nations have worked with provincial and federal governments, industry, and private funders to create new opportunities in industries such as ecotourism, fisheries, manufacturing and processing, forestry, and transportation that diversify local economies while protecting the environment. The benefits for communities and ecosystems are significant – job creation, economic prosperity, social empowerment, cultural vitality, and conservation of important habitats and species are just some of the documented outcomes. Building on the success of this initiative, the B.C. government intends to partner with First Nations and work with industry, investors, and communities to develop ways to grow the conservation economy in coastal B.C.

F-2: Co-develop enduring fiscal relations with

First Nations governments: Indigenous rights and economic systems are a fundamental component of self-determination and critical to the well being of a Nation.⁵⁹ Since time immemorial, Indigenous people in B.C. had well-established trade networks based on cultural, social, and economic ties. Participation in the economic landscape of British Columbia as equal partners and leaders is a central part of reconciliation between the Province and First Nations.

Tools currently used by B.C. to reconcile First Nation interests and provide certainty for investors, industry, and Indigenous communities include: treaties, incremental treaty agreements, revenue-sharing agreements, land base decision-making and consultation

agreements, forestry agreements, and clean-energy project development funding. Revenue sharing provides a percentage of what the Province receives from resource development on First Nations’ traditional territories directly back into the communities. It can stimulate investment, create jobs, and narrow the socio-economic gap between Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous British Columbians. Revenue and benefit sharing by the provincial government has increased over time, but these arrangements are largely based on provincial principles and objectives. New revenue streams that support self-government and self-determination, strong healthy Indigenous communities and services that make life better for Indigenous families, are needed.⁶⁰

We will honour our commitments and obligations to reconciliation by continuing to co-develop and co-implement policy frameworks to strengthen First Nations resource-based decision making and explore new tools that can help transform the status quo of fiscal relations between the Province and First Nations. We will explore a variety of revenue streams to support First Nations’ governments and the delivery of services to their citizens.⁶¹ Recognizing that there are different solutions for different priorities, First Nations must be able choose what is right for them, and we will work with First Nations on a government-to-government basis to understand distinct needs and aspirations.

We intend to partner with coastal First Nations to lead the development of an ocean-based economy, workforce, and business climate that supports greater leadership, inclusion and participation of First Nations. And we will continue support for First Nations-owned ocean-based companies to start up and thrive through programs, training, and funding.



F-3: Support the marine fisheries economy:

The fish, shellfish, and marine plants harvested in the waters of B.C. are an important source of jobs, community benefits, and food. Many fisheries – such as wild salmon, herring, eulachon, crab, and kelp – are at the centre of coastal First Nations’ diets, language, ceremony, and song. Food security, economic security, empowerment, human health and well-being, knowledge transfer, and capacity building are some of the individual and societal benefits tied to the marine fisheries economy.

Getting seafood products from a boat or farm to the plate involves the hard work of about 11,000 directly employed people.⁶² This industry value chain includes harvesters, aquaculture producers, seafood processors, marketers, and distributors. Aside from wild marine plants and algae (kelp, seaweed, etc.), the harvest and production of fish and other aquatic animals are managed by the federal government, and the Province provides advice and support. The

provincial government is accountable for supporting, and in some cases regulating, the processing, marketing, and distribution of seafood, and for ensuring seafood safety and quality through legislation and regulations.

Many commercial fisheries in B.C. face challenges that threaten the viability of fleets and individual fishers. First Nations experience multiple barriers to participation in all aspects of the value chain, such as cost of licenses, access to investment capital, insufficient labour and experience, depressed stocks and impacts from climate change. In support of a sustainable, equitable, and diverse marine fisheries economy, the Province intends to:

- F-3-1** Amplify participation with the federal government in managing and conserving fisheries.
- F-3-2** Advocate for First Nations’ and industry interests to federal agencies and support

the realization of economic development objectives.

- F-3-3 Secure fair domestic allocations of stocks managed under international treaty, such as wild salmon, halibut, hake, and tuna, in collaboration with the federal government, First Nations, and industry.
- F-3-4 Help to address barriers to First Nations' equitable participation in the fisheries economy.
- F-3-5 Provide support to fishers to adapt to regulatory changes.
- F-3-6 Address fish species declines, such as forage fish and wild salmon, with a combination of programs and tools, including restoration of terrestrial, riparian, and coastal habitats; protection of key fish spawning and rearing habitat; and management of cumulative effects.

F-3-7 Boost processing and marketing of high-value seafood products for increased profit margins and ensure equitable eligibility and share of federal programs.

F-3-8 Assess fisheries-related infrastructure needs. Explore the expansion of infrastructure to allow domestic processing of locally harvested species.

F-3-9 Facilitate harmonization of labeling/traceability requirements across federal and provincial governments.

F-3-10 Develop a regionally relevant ocean acidification and hypoxia action plan to develop sector-specific climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies.

F-4: Advance sustainable aquaculture: Marine aquaculture – the growing of finfish, shellfish, and marine plants in the ocean – makes important contributions to B.C.'s economy as



well as to food and nutrition security. Aquaculture also provides year-round employment in rural communities up and down the coast of British Columbia.

Fish and shellfish are an important part of a healthy diet for many people. Some communities do not have access to enough safe and nutritious food. Food insecurity is a serious public health issue, with an estimated one in every ten households experiencing hunger.⁶³ The B.C. Ministry of Health considers a safe, nutritious, culturally acceptable diet obtained through a just and sustainable food system to be the foundation of healthy eating.

First Nations' interests and concerns related to aquaculture are diverse. Many First Nations in B.C. own/operate aquaculture operations, including freshwater enhancement, shellfish farms, open and closed-containment farms, finfish operations, and marine plant-based farms. These operations directly support Indigenous food security and economic opportunities. Meanwhile, other First Nations opposed to finfish aquaculture are engaged in processes with Fisheries and Oceans Canada and industry to address the impacts of open net-pen farms on wild Pacific salmon stocks.⁶⁴

The Province intends to work with the aquaculture industry, First Nations, and the federal government to develop and implement a growth and diversification strategy for finfish, shellfish, and marine plant aquaculture. Bivalve shellfish and marine plants have a particularly high development potential,⁶⁵ and key species of promise include native cockles, scallops, and kelp.⁶⁶

The Province will promote healthy and resilient mixes of food sources, take action to create the conditions needed to attract investors, and build skills in aquatic farming. We will continue to work with First Nations, the federal government and industry to advance and use innovative

solutions to ensure environmental sustainability and address the challenges of growing seafood under changing ocean conditions due to climate change. We will strive to reduce barriers to investment and business planning by providing responsive, open, and effective tenuring processes for new and modified applications. We will continue to inform transition plans for open net-pen fish farms, participate in the federal government's piloted approach to advance area-based aquaculture management, and advocate for First Nations' and coastal community interests and involvement.

F-5: Support regenerative marine tourism:

British Columbia has a well-deserved reputation as a world-class destination for tourists. Tourism plays an important role in improving the quality of life of the people and communities in B.C. and increasing the support and celebration of First Nations cultures. Tourism can also have undesirable effects on people and ecosystems. The COVID-19 pandemic prompted a number of industry leaders around the world to question the status quo, calling for transformative change in the relationship of tourism with nature, the climate, people, and the economy.⁶⁷

"Regenerative tourism" represents a sustainable way of travelling and discovering new places. Its main goal is for visitors to have a positive impact on their destination, leaving it in a better condition than how they found it. Regenerative tourism is a concept that goes beyond "not damaging" the environment to looking at how tourists can actively revitalize and regenerate it, resulting in positive impacts for local communities and economies. The [B.C. Marine Trails Network](#) (BCMT) is one example of regenerative tourism in action. The BCMT, in partnership with First Nations, builds coastal trails for paddling the coastline. This non-profit organization created numerous projects to take care of the coast, including site maintenance,



shoreline clean-ups, codes of conduct, invasive species removal, and public education.

The Province intends to work with First Nations and industry to develop, and gradually implement, strategies and standards of practice that can define and nurture a regenerative marine tourism industry.

F-6: Manage cumulative effects: Finding a healthy balance between conservation and sustainable economic development requires an understanding of the cumulative effects of large and small activities on the values we care about. Once the effects are understood, we can develop appropriate management responses.

Over the past five years, the Province and partner First Nations have worked together to address cumulative effects through the North Coast Cumulative Effects Program, guided by the collaboratively developed MaPP Cumulative Effects Framework.⁶⁸ The program weaves together western science and Indigenous

knowledge to create a holistic understanding of the current condition and cumulative effects on an initial suite of four core values: estuaries, food security, access to resources, and wild salmon. The goal of this work is to effectively monitor, assess, and manage the combined effects of past, present, and potential future human activities. It is complex and important work that will inform the broader efforts to collaborate with coastal First Nations on building a co-managed stewardship regime that can effectively address cumulative effects.

In 2016, the provincial government released a Cumulative Effects Framework Interim Policy, which includes policy, procedures and decision-support tools that complement current land management achieved through B.C.'s legislative framework, land use plans and various best practices and processes. Some values (e.g., old growth forests, aquatic ecosystems, forest biodiversity) are assessed across the province, while others are assessed on a regional basis



due to importance in certain parts of the Province (e.g., marbled murrelet, fish and fish habitat). The Province intends to work in partnership with First Nations and in collaboration with stakeholders to select coastal marine values at provincial and regional scales for assessment of current condition using a

standard approach. Results of assessments will be used to support development of new marine plans and implementation of existing ones, aid in the environmental assessment of major projects, and inform permits, licenses and tenures in the marine environment.

First Nations' Relationships To The Sea

The Pacific coast gave rise to many different Indigenous cultures. There is not one story – there are hundreds that must be heard to begin to understand and appreciate the relationship between First Nations and the sea, and First Nations' invaluable contribution to coastal marine management. You can read about some of those stories [here](#). Notice how the sea unites them all.

Coast Salish ^{69 70}

The Coast Salish culture is dynamic and diverse but bounded through shared values and the recognition of the interconnectedness and spirit within all things. The Coast Salish culture is expressed through the importance of, amongst other things, their fisheries. The Coast Salish continue to honour the legacy for their ancestors as stewards for the protection and enhancement of the Salish Sea ecosystem and lands for innumerable generations.

Ditidaht ⁷¹

The Ditidaht take pride and comfort between the traditional and modern worlds. The land, the waters, and their resources have always been a source of life, culture, and spirituality for the Ditidaht. The Ditidaht understand that everything is one (dubayaax a ts'awalk); a teaching that has guided the Ditidaht for thousands of years, as the Ditidaht have cared for and been nurtured by the rich natural and spiritual worlds of the land and sea.

Kwakwaka'wakw ⁷²

For the Kwakwaka'wakw, the “good life” is about the way one expresses their connection to living things, and their appreciation of those things that sustain them physically and spiritually. The Kwakwaka'wakw believe the animals, rivers, and trees are powerful beings and through coexistence the Kwakwaka'wakw came to be related to animal spirits such as salmon. This connection to the spirit beings—the sea life, particularly the salmon— is reflected within their culture.

Gitxaala ⁷³

“Respect for the environment and respect for the resources has been the foundation of the ecologically sustainable approach to resource management that we have always practiced. We are part of the land, part of the ecosystem and therefore our survival as a Nation depends on balancing the complex interactions between conservation, utilization, enhancement, and protection of resources. Our land defines who we are as a Nation. The names our Chiefs bear come from our land.”

Haida ⁷⁴

As coastal people, the connection to the land and sea defines the culture and identity of the Haida. The Haida culture is rooted on respect (Yahguudang) for each other and all living things and their interconnectedness (Gina 'waadluzan gud ad kwaagiida). The Haida understand balance is needed to preserve the coastal waters that support livelihood of the Haida, and reciprocity (Isa ad diigii isda) is essential in their interactions with each other and the natural world.

Haisla ⁷⁵

“The First Salmon Ceremony celebrates the return of the first salmon to a territory each spring. After the salmon are eaten, the bones and remains are returned to the river to show respect. The Haisla believe that “if all is done properly, the spirit of the salmon will tell the rest of the salmon people that they were well treated, so that more salmon will come upriver the same and future years.”

Nisga’a ⁷⁶

The Nisga’a, “people of the Nass River”, believe everything is alive and wishes to communicate. The Nisga’a talk to the salmon and listen to the salmon talking in a language of their own as the animals are the helpers and messengers of the Creator. Through this understanding the Nisga’a continue to live with an understanding that everything has a rightful and meaningful place, deserving of respect, and we are all interdependent. For the Nisga’a it is the connection between the Nass River—the lifeblood of the Nisga’a—and the sea.

Nuu-chah-nulth ⁷⁷

The Nuu-chah-nulth, “All along the Mountains and the Sea,” Nations are many. The Nuu-chah-nulth way of life was crafted through thousands of years of connecting with the ocean—they are people of the ocean—it is the ocean that has guided and will continue to guide their way of life. With care and gentleness, Nuu-chah-nulth carry forth their obligation to add to the wisdom and strength of their ancestral teachings along with their role as stewards over their lands and waters so future generations can thrive.

Tsimshian ^{78 79}

Tsimshian, “inside the Skeena River”, continue to be dependent on the health of the marine environment to survive and flourish. Their relationship with the salmon that the sea brings to them cannot be overstated. The strength of the Tsimshian comes from their culture, ancestors, and history which has shaped their traditional resource management practices for the spiritual and cultural values of the salmon and to support consumption of traditionally harvested marine foods.

Tlingit ^{80 81}

In the Tlingit “People of the Tides” worldview, everything is alive—the animals, the land, the sky—and connected. This worldview guides and shapes the Tlingit ways of being. The Tlingit recognize the value of and retain reverence and respect for all life of the land and sea that they harvest for strength and sustenance. The Tlingit demonstrate this respect by returning the bones of the salmon to the ocean so they can come back to life as more Salmon people.

Have Your Say

We invite your feedback and suggestions on this Intentions Paper and the potential solutions and policies the Province can implement to achieve better outcomes for marine life and people. To complete a survey and/or share your comments visit [GovTogetherBC](https://govtogetherbc.ca).

Once engagement on this Intentions Paper is complete, all feedback will be compiled and released in a What We Heard report. The Province and First Nations will convene over the

next six months to carefully consider feedback received on the Intentions Paper as we work together to draft specific actions for the Coastal Marine Strategy. Federal and local governments, industry, environmental non-governmental organizations, research institutes, and other interest groups will help shape and inform the development of the Coastal Marine Strategy through consultation. There will be opportunities for the public to comment on the Coastal Marine Strategy when a draft is completed in 2024.



Appendix 1: Reconciliation And The Rights of Indigenous Peoples

A key element of the path ahead is the Province's commitment to advance true and lasting reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples in B.C., founded on the respect of Aboriginal rights.

Indigenous Peoples govern in accordance with their traditional knowledge, laws, culture, and oral traditions. The right to govern grows from Indigenous People's inherent rights – rights that existed long before colonization and are distinct and separate from the rights of non-Indigenous people. There is no specific definition for inherent rights as each Indigenous Nation has a unique cultural identity. Inherent rights can include the right to self-government, the right to the land, and the right for Indigenous people to practise their culture and associated customs.

The rights of Indigenous Peoples are recognized and affirmed under *Section 35* of the *Constitution Act, 1982* (the Constitution). The Constitution does not define Indigenous rights under section 35, but these rights can include:

- Aboriginal title (ownership rights to land)
- rights to occupy and use lands and resources, such as hunting and fishing rights
- self-government rights
- cultural and social rights

Indigenous rights under section 35 vary from Indigenous group to Indigenous group depending on the customs, practices and traditions that have formed part of their distinctive cultures. Section 35 of the Constitution also recognizes and affirms Treaty rights. Treaties define specific rights, benefits and obligations for the signatories that vary from treaty to treaty. Treaties with Indigenous peoples include both historic treaties and modern treaties.

Historic Treaties ⁸²

Between 1850 and 1854, Sir James Douglas concluded 14 treaties with coastal First Nations living on Vancouver Island. Altogether, the treaties cover approximately 22,000 hectares of land on Vancouver Island, including the area surrounding Victoria. These treaties are constitutionally protected and are focussed on land, fishing, hunting and harvesting rights. Under these historic treaties, First Nations have retained the right to carry on fisheries as formerly and to hunt over unoccupied lands,

Modern Treaties

Modern treaty nations possess a unique space within the constitutional fabric of this country for the recognition and expressions of Indigenous rights protected and affirmed by the Constitution. Modern treaties provide one way for Indigenous Peoples an opportunity to bring clarity and precision to their Section 35 rights in a way that provides meaningful and practical benefits for their traditional, cultural, governance, social and economic needs. Some of the Modern treaty Nations, such as the Maa-nulth, have specific law-making authorities over foreshore areas fronting treaty settlement lands. These authorities are similar to that of a local government and can include land use, planning, zoning, and development. Modern treaties are comprehensive in scope and cover a wide variety of subjects from land ownership and rights to governance and fiscal relationships with the federal and provincial governments. Eight First Nations in British Columbia have modern treaties:

- Huu-ay-aht First Nations
- Ka:'yu:'k't'h'/Che:k'tles7et'h' First Nations
- Nisga'a Nation

- Tla’amin Nation
- Toquaht Nation
- Tsawwassen First Nation
- Uchucklesaht Tribe
- Yuufu?if?ath Government (Ucluelet First Nation)

Together, the above Indigenous governments have formed the Alliance of B.C. Modern Treaty Nations, also referred to as the “Alliance”.

Honouring Indigenous Rights

The provincial government has committed to implementing UNDRIP and adopted the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s Calls to Action. The Ministry is demonstrating this

commitment by collaborating on the development of the Coastal Marine Strategy with coastal First Nations. To date, this ministry has conducted engagement on a variety of levels and worked with First Nations leadership and technical staff to frame the process and draft this Intentions Paper.

Part of the B.C. government’s work towards reconciliation will focus on enabling the opportunity for shared decision-making. The intentions outlined in this paper reflect the steps needed to ensure Indigenous Peoples have meaningful opportunities to partner in co-governance and co-management of the marine environment and to participate in the ocean-based economy.



Appendix 2: Stewards of the Coastal Marine Environment In B.C.

First Nations

First Nations exercise their own laws and traditions, systems of governance, and stewardship practices that uphold their inherent responsibilities to the land and water, including the sea and seabed, rivers, lakes, streams, estuaries, marine areas, watersheds, and the

wild salmon, plant, and animal life these aquatic systems sustain. For many First Nations, managing the lands and waters of the ancestors is a responsibility, a duty not to be taken lightly, all in service of sustaining a way of life for future generations to come.

Federal Government

Federal authorities with primary responsibility for ocean management include Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Transport Canada, the Canadian Coast Guard, and Environment and Climate Change Canada. Through legislation, regulation, policy, and program development, these departments and agencies are accountable for:

- Fisheries and aquaculture
- Habitat protection
- Ocean science and technology
- Ports, harbours, anchorages
- Prevention, mitigation or elimination of the risks caused by wrecked, abandoned, or hazardous vessels
- Preventing and responding to environmental emergencies, including ship source oil spills
- Overseeing safe navigation and maritime search and rescue
- Pollution and waste management
- Recovering species at risk (e.g., resident killer whales)
- Shellfish and water quality
- Disposal of waste into the ocean
- Vessel design, construction, and maintenance
- Preventing, detecting, monitoring, and managing aquatic invasive species

- Protecting and managing migratory birds
- Monitoring and enforcement
- Maritime sovereignty and security
- Climate change (mitigation & adaptation)
- Negotiating and implementing international agreements and commitments (e.g., United Nations)

Other federal departments, such as Natural Resources Canada, the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, and Agriculture and AgriFood Canada, are responsible for regulating energy production and distribution, undertaking environmental assessments for major projects, and ensuring safe seafood for domestic and international markets, respectively. Parks Canada Agency, in fulfillment of their mandate to ‘protect nationally significant examples of Canada’s natural and cultural heritage and foster public education and enjoyment of these areas’, establishes and manages *National Marine Conservation Areas* in partnership with Indigenous governments. Pacific Economic Development Canada supports the growth and diversification of B.C.’s economy through programs and initiatives that assist communities (e.g., infrastructure development) and sectors (e.g., seafood producers).

Provincial Government

The B.C. government holds considerable authority over the marine and coastal zone. The Province also manages activities on the land base that can impact the health of coastal habitats and species, like estuaries and wild salmon.

The ministries of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship, Forests, Environment and Climate Change Strategy, Transportation and Infrastructure, Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation, and Agriculture and Food have regulatory and non-regulatory accountabilities that include:

- Marine spatial planning
- Managing Crown-administered land tenures for activities on the seabed (e.g., aquaculture, float homes, fishing lodges, marinas, private moorage, telecommunications infrastructure, wind power, ocean energy)
- Licensing tourism and recreation operators
- Managing kelp, seaweed, and other aquatic plants
- Marine-based log handling and storage
- Protected area establishment and management
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation (including ocean acidification and sea-level rise)
- Waste prevention and waste management
- Seafood safety and seafood licensing
- Water quality and water quantity
- Watershed protection
- Coastal ferry service delivery
- Infrastructure development and maintenance (e.g., marine vehicle and passenger terminal facilities)
- Habitat restoration
- Flood risk management
- Forestry
- Riparian area management
- Alternative energy
- Mineral exploration and mine permitting
- Sector and market development (e.g., seafood, vessel construction, energy)

Local Government

Local governments in coastal B.C. include 74 municipalities, 16 regional districts, and the Islands Trust, a special purpose government covering 13 major islands and 450 islets in the Salish Sea. Wherever settlement and development exist, local governments are key players in coastal zone management. Many regional districts have estuaries, wetlands, and other types of sensitive shorelines that are under continued pressure from climate change and industrial, urban, and agricultural use. While the federal and provincial governments have more comprehensive powers to regulate coastal and marine areas, local government's responsibilities can include:

- Exercising coastal and ocean protection authority over land use
- Regulating development along the shoreline
- Enacting zoning over the surface of the water and the foreshore as long as they do not interfere with provincial and federal jurisdiction⁸³
- Restricting moorage
- Managing private dock construction
- Managing the use of beaches

Local government is also responsible for other stewardship roles⁸⁴ such as climate change mitigation and adaptation via:

- Land use planning and management
- Financing
- Infrastructure and asset management
- Recreation
- Health and safety
- Emergency management
- Protection from hazards

Each local government may have official community plans that outline a vision and

objectives, and how it conducts its stewardship responsibilities. These plans are not mandatory, but once a local government assumes an official community plan, all bylaws must then adhere to that plan.⁸⁵ However, local governments are not bound to projects under the plan, and the plan may be influenced by federal and provincial policies.

Stakeholders, Research Institutions, Academia

Stakeholders, research institutions, and academics who have an interest in coastal stewardship are diverse and manifold. These are groups of citizens who are often affiliated by geographic proximity, interests, or sector/industry to address issues affecting their well-being, values, and interests and include groups such as aquaculture, commercial fishing, marine transportation and shipping, forestry, seafood processing, and tourism. Although these groups hold no legislative authority, they play an integral role in supporting policymakers. Their roles include but are not limited to:

- Contributing to the ocean-based economy
- Conserving and restoring marine habitats and species
- Collecting, sharing, and validating data and information
- Informing policy and program development through independent research
- Participating in planning processes and advisory tables
- Lobbying for change
- Educating the public
- Investing in coastal infrastructure
- Driving innovation and research



Appendix 3: Other Initiatives

Preparation of this Intentions Paper involved a review of relevant policies, plans and agreements. Some examples are provided here.

The [Declaration On The Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan](#), which outlines significant actions the B.C. government will undertake in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples over 2022-2027 to achieve objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

The [Shared Priorities Framework](#), which renews a commitment to timely, effective and appropriately resourced implementation of modern treaties.

The [Marine Plan Partnership](#), which defined regional spatial plans and strategies that address the unique needs of Haida Gwaii, North Vancouver Island, the Central Coast, and North Coast sub-regions. The marine plans and Regional Action Framework are a model for sound coastal planning.

[What We Heard on Marine Debris](#), from coastal crown governments, First Nations, industry, and environmental organizations.

The [Watershed Security Strategy and Fund Discussion Paper](#). The Province is developing a Watershed Security Strategy to ensure B.C. water and watersheds are healthier and more resilient.

[B.C.'s Economic Plan: A plan for today, a vision for tomorrow](#), is focused on inclusive and clean growth as the overarching goals. The Plan commits to developing a Goods Movement Strategy, led by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. This strategy will have three strategic pillars: strengthen the B.C.

transportation and logistics sector; support B.C. exporters; and accelerate the adoption of B.C. innovation and advance climate objectives.

The [Wild Salmon Advisory Council's](#) recommendations for a made-in-B.C. wild salmon strategy.

The [Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy](#), which details potential actions that could be implemented over 2022-2025 to better prepare for climate change.

The [CleanBC Roadmap to 2030](#) which contains measures to reach greenhouse gas emissions targets by 2030. CleanBC commits to fully electrifying B.C.'s inland ferry fleet by 2040.

[The Environmental Stewardship Initiative](#), which was developed in 2014 as an innovative form of collaboration and partnership between B.C. and First Nations, designed to produce high-quality, accessible, and trusted environmental information.

The draft [B.C. Flood Strategy](#), which is intended to outline the strategic vision, principles, and outcomes for flood management in the Province in alignment with the United Nation's Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. Core themes of the engagement toward a B.C. Flood Strategy are focused on: understanding flood risk, strengthening flood risk governance, enhancing flood preparedness, response and recovery, and investing in flood resilience.

[B.C.'s Cumulative Effects Framework](#), which includes policy, procedures and decision-support tools that complement current land management achieved through B.C.'s legislative framework, land use plans and various best practices and processes.

The CleanBC Plastics Action Plan has a goal of reducing plastic pollution through reuse and the use of recycled plastic. This includes the Ministry of ENV's proposal to develop a [new waste prevention regulation](#) to reduce the impacts of single-use and plastic waste on the environment. The [Extended Producer Responsibility Five-Year Action Plan](#) and the [Summary of Feedback Report](#) on regulating more products for recovery and ensuring Province-wide recycling systems.

The [Clean Coast, Clean Waters Initiative](#), which is helping create jobs and support coastal communities as they recover from the COVID-19 economic downturn and loss of tourism.

The Ministry of ENV's proposal to develop a [new waste prevention regulation](#) to reduce the impacts of single-use and plastic waste on the environment.

The [Future of B.C.'s Food System](#), Findings and Recommendations from the B.C. Food Security Task Force.

The [Strategic Framework for Tourism 2022–2024](#): A Plan for Recovery and Resiliency. This is a roadmap for rebuilding tourism in the Province and an integral part of our B.C. government's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

A draft ocean acidification and hypoxia action plan, that includes strategies for strengthening nearshore monitoring, investing in adaptive measures in partnership with industry or seafood dependent communities, and advancing information sharing strategies that help policy makers respond.

The North Coast Cumulative Effects Program, which is working towards the monitoring,

assessment, and management of cumulative effects on core coastal and marine values, with an initial focus on aquatic habitats (estuaries), food security, access to resources, and wild salmon.

[Modernized BC Emergency Management Legislation](#) with stronger connections to climate change, the Sendai Framework, disaster risk management and disaster risk reduction.

Stewardship initiatives, such as the [Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound Marine Stewardship Initiative](#) and the [Coastal Restoration Society](#).

Assessments developed by First Nations, for example Tsleil-Waututh Nation Assessment of the Trans Mountain Pipeline and Tanker Expansion Proposal.

[Engaging on Canada's Blue Economy Strategy: What We Heard](#), the Government of Canada's summary of feedback from Indigenous peoples and Canadians on how best to shape a national Blue Economy Strategy.

Policy and legislative initiatives, including updates to the Agricultural Environmental Management Code of Practice, [Agricultural Environmental Management - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#).

The [Canada-BC Marine Protected Area Network Strategy](#), a coast-wide strategy outlining governments' approach to protecting the full suite of marine biodiversity through the establishment and management of MPAs.

The Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) [Strategy on Zero Plastic Waste](#). The Strategy, approved in principle in 2018, is focused on preventing plastic waste, collecting all plastics (including through clean-up), and recovering value from plastics. In [Phase](#)

2 of this initiative, CCME is supporting national work to evaluate best policy options to increase collection and end-of-life management of fishing and aquaculture gear.

The [Pacific Coast Collaborative Statement of Cooperation on Leading the Transition to an Equitable and Prosperous Low-Carbon Resilient Future](#) was signed by the governments of B.C., Washington, California, and Oregon to support an equitable and just transition to a low carbon and climate resilient future, investments in climate infrastructure, such as green ports, and a clean and reliable; and to protect communities and natural and working lands from wildfire, drought, heat waves, ocean acidification and flooding.

MaPP North Vancouver Island Fisheries Economy Workshop Report and Recommendations. The workshop, held in March 2022 focused on identifying issues, stressors, trends, and opportunities in the marine fisheries economy. The report includes a suite of recommendations from industry, First Nations, stakeholder, local and regional government, and B.C. government participants.

B.C. Parks' Green Plan, which lays out objectives for Parks infrastructure and operations to mitigate emissions and maximize resilience to climate change effects. The Green Plan has a public education component that includes partnerships with the private sector, NGOs, and community groups on climate change-related projects.

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Watershed Security Strategy and Fund Intentions Paper



Message from the Minister



Healthy watersheds are not only essential for our individual health and wellbeing, but they also ensure that ecosystems, economies, and communities throughout B.C. can flourish. Healthy watersheds are vital for climate change resiliency and reducing the impacts and costs related to floods, droughts and wildfires brought on by changing climate and extreme weather events.

For many Indigenous communities, water is woven into the fabric of many cultural and spiritual teachings that have been passed down for millennia.

In early 2022, we asked British Columbians for their thoughts on the planned Watershed Security Strategy and Fund. I would like to thank all of you who provided your feedback as we work towards the protection and revitalization of our watersheds. This feedback was published in the “What We Heard” report in November 2022 and is reflected in this Intentions Paper.

Protecting B.C.’s water and watersheds is a top priority for our government. As part of my mandate as Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship, and our commitment to the Declaration Act Action Plan, we are collaborating on a Watershed Security Strategy with Indigenous Peoples, including co-development of the actions detailed in the Intentions Paper, through the first-ever B.C.–First Nations Water Table.

The Watershed Security Strategy and Fund will build on and complement the work currently taking place across government and in communities throughout the Province to support healthy watersheds in B.C.

We are working with local governments, interest groups and industry to take a holistic approach to stewarding B.C.’s watersheds and ensuring that they are healthy and resilient for the long term.

Your input is invaluable and continues to help guide our work. Everything we’ve learned so far has informed this Intentions Paper. I once again invite all British Columbians to share their comments and perspectives with us to inform our final Watershed Security Strategy, which we intend to release in winter 2023–24.

We all share a responsibility to protect and care for every lake, river, creek, stream, and ocean to ensure watershed security for future generations of British Columbians.

Sincerely,

Nathan Cullen

Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

Message from the B.C.-First Nations Water Table

We all rely on water for sustenance and life. Healthy watersheds can help protect our communities against the impacts of floods and droughts from a changing climate. In the face of these and growing pressures, we must do everything we can to support and restore resilient, adaptable watersheds.

Water crosses watersheds, territories, jurisdictions and borders: First Nations and the Province need to work collaboratively to achieve watershed security for all. First Nations in British Columbia and the provincial government of B.C. each have goals related to water and watershed security that provide for the current generation, while also protecting for future generations.

The B.C.-First Nations Water Table is a new collaborative structure that supports the Province of B.C. and First Nations to identify, discuss and make consensus-based, co-developed recommendations to provincial and First Nations' decision-makers about matters of mutual interest. The Water Table will uphold the *Declaration Act on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (Declaration Act) reconciliation objectives and apply the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) as the framework for reconciliation in B.C. through all its activities.

First Nations in B.C. have the inherent right of self-determination, which includes an inextricable link to the lands, territories and resources traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired by First Nations. First Nations also have responsibilities under their laws to care for water and uphold the rights of water and those that cannot speak for themselves.

The Province of B.C. has responsibilities to develop and implement legislation, policies and strategies in support of the Declaration Act Action Plan. It also has scientific, ecological, social, health and well-being, and economic interests in water and watershed security and in alignment with a whole-of-government approach to implement the Declaration Act.

This Intentions Paper is a stepping stone towards a co-developed Watershed Security Strategy for British Columbia. It marks a new path for First Nations in B.C. and the provincial government, it has the potential to set a new standard for reconciliation going forward.

As water issues and disasters become more prominent, it will be increasingly important for First Nations and the Province to collaborate and focus on solutions. The Water Table and this Intentions Paper are the beginning of a new collaborative process that will help pave the way for healthy watersheds for all and a strong and resilient future for B.C.

We are stronger when we work together.

Chief Lydia Hwitsum
Water Table Co-Chair

Assistant Deputy Minister James Mack
Water Table Co-Chair

Policy intentions at a glance

Policy intention 1: Enable new approaches to watershed governance through inclusion, capacity building and collaboration.

- ▶ Enhance local watershed governance
- ▶ Support the development of governance structures founded upon principles of mutual recognition, respect, sharing, flexibility, accountability and responsibility with Indigenous Peoples
- ▶ Enhance coordination, leadership and accountability across different levels of government to align decision-making for watersheds

Policy intention 2: Pursue legislative change, policy development and alignment of laws and policy to be consistent with the UN Declaration.

- ▶ Align the *Watershed Sustainability Act* and new and related policies with the UN Declaration
- ▶ Identify opportunities to collaborate with Indigenous Peoples and co-develop policies and procedures about the use of Indigenous knowledge
- ▶ Consider legislative change and policy development to improve outcomes for watersheds

Policy intention 3: Build a strong foundation of watershed science and knowledge that is accessible for use by Indigenous Peoples, local governments and communities.

- ▶ Strengthen existing water data and information tools and address gaps in current systems
- ▶ Improve understanding of water and watershed use, ecosystem needs and related cumulative effects
- ▶ Enhance monitoring and assessment of watershed health to support watershed governance arrangements

Policy intention 4: Apply holistic approaches to watershed management and ecosystem protection.

- ▶ Increase the leadership role of Indigenous Peoples in watershed stewardship and restoration
- ▶ Strengthen regulations, standards and policy to protect and prioritize water values in decision-making
- ▶ Enhance communication, education and outreach to cultivate a shared understanding of the values and issues that exist within watersheds
- ▶ Adopt wild salmon recovery as a key value in watershed planning

Policy intention 5: Balance water supply and demand (quality and quantity) at the watershed scale to address the needs of people, the environment and the economy.

- ▶ Proactively consider and address existing and/or emerging regional pressures and risks
- ▶ Develop policy and guidance to promote incentives for water conservation and reallocation
- ▶ Develop approaches to meet existing and future demands for humans and requirements for ecosystem health

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Introduction

In early 2022, the Province embarked on an engagement process following the publication of the Watershed Security Strategy and Fund (“Strategy” and “Fund”) [discussion paper](#). The Province heard from respondents that water and watersheds are central to the social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being of society. However, unsustainable water and land use, cumulative impacts of developments, invasive species and population growth are threatening these values. Climate change is intensifying threats to our watersheds, making ecosystems and communities more vulnerable to disasters like flood and drought.

As we move towards an increasingly uncertain future, managing water and watersheds must be done differently. Partnering with local people – including members of local governments, Indigenous Peoples, farmers, business owners and members of environmental groups – will be central to this effort. Collectively, we must embrace:

- ▶ Modernizing and strengthening standards and regulations that impact aquatic values
- ▶ Initiating opportunities for collaborative watershed governance
- ▶ Adopting new water and watershed management approaches
- ▶ Improving the way we develop, share and communicate data and knowledge
- ▶ Seeking opportunities for new, innovative, low-carbon economic growth
- ▶ Managing climate change risks from increasing frequency of drought and flood

These actions will contribute to a future for B.C. where watersheds are resilient, fish and wildlife have healthy habitats, and water is safe for drinking and spiritual uses. They will also support sustainable, affordable housing development, food security, community health and economic prosperity for all. Each watershed is different, and collaboration, good science and knowledge, and effective resourcing will be critical to the Strategy’s success.

Watersheds

Watersheds are areas of land where rain, snow and glacier runoff flow into rivers, lakes, streams or aquifers. They are homes to an incredible number of species, including wild salmon, provide water for drinking and growing our food, support jobs and work for people, and have important cultural and spiritual value for local communities.

Wild salmon

Wild salmon are central to many Indigenous cultures and are critical to many of British Columbia’s ecosystems. Wild salmon populations are increasingly impacted by changes within both marine and freshwater environments. Changes to the land within watersheds have magnified the impacts of climate change on salmon. Any improvements to watershed management will support B.C.’s work to restore wild salmon populations.

While the Watershed Security Strategy will be a comprehensive approach that addresses a wide range of watershed security issues, it must act in concert with the broad range of work ongoing across government and with Indigenous Peoples. The figure below shows the relationship between the water-related provincial strategies currently under way and planned. More information on this work can be found below.



About this paper

This Intentions Paper is the midway point in the development of the Strategy and Fund. We have taken what we heard during our first period of engagement in early 2022 on the discussion paper and refined the scope and actions to be considered.

The Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship invites you to contribute your knowledge and ideas to the development of the Strategy and Fund.

All the information you need on how to respond to this Intentions Paper can be found at: www.gov.bc.ca/water. Submissions received by April 17, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. will be included in the next What We Heard report. We welcome submissions after this deadline, but please note that they may not be reflected in the What We Heard report.



How we got here

Between January 25, 2022, and March 18, 2022, the Province undertook engagement on a [discussion paper](http://www.gov.bc.ca/water). A range of approaches was used to support broad discussion about the discussion paper, and the public, stakeholders and Indigenous Peoples shared their feedback with us. The What We Heard reports can be found here: www.gov.bc.ca/water.

Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples

The Declaration Act establishes the UN Declaration as the Province's framework for reconciliation. Implementing this framework involves taking a distinctions-based approach that acknowledges the specific rights, interests, priorities and concerns of First Nations, Métis and Inuit as Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Accordingly, early engagement with Indigenous Peoples has informed this Intentions Paper and their voices are respected and incorporated throughout the document.

Shaping the process and scope of Strategy development are actions 2.6, 2.7 and 2.9 in the Declaration Act Action Plan.

Action 2.6

Co-develop strategic-level policies, programs and initiatives to advance collaborative stewardship of the environment, land and resources, that address cumulative effects and respect Indigenous knowledge. This will be achieved through collaborative stewardship forums, Guardian programs, land use planning initiatives, and other innovative and evolving partnerships that support integrated land and resource management.

Action 2.6 addresses many of the priority themes being explored as part of achieving watershed security, including Indigenous knowledge systems, cumulative effects and stewardship activities, and an integrated approach to land and water management and planning. Action 2.6 further emphasizes the need for collaborative and innovative partnerships around land and resources.

Action 2.7

Collaborate with First Nations to develop and implement strategies, plans and initiatives for sustainable water management, and to identify policy or legislative reforms supporting Indigenous water stewardship, including shared decision-making. Co-develop the Watershed Security Strategy with First Nations and initiate implementation of the Strategy at a local watershed scale.

Action 2.7 explicitly addresses the Watershed Security Strategy and commits the Province to supporting Indigenous water stewardship, co-developing the Watershed Security Strategy with First Nations and locally implementing the Watershed Security Strategy. Action 2.7 also opens the possibility of policy and legislative reform to enable support for Indigenous water stewardship and shared decision-making with First Nations.

Action 2.9

Develop new strategies to protect and revitalize wild salmon populations in B.C. with First Nations and the federal government, including the development and implementation of a cohesive B.C. Wild Pacific Salmon Strategy.

Action 2.9 addresses the provincial Wild Salmon Strategy work that has been ongoing since 2019. A key action to implement the Wild Salmon Strategy is ensuring that wild salmon recovery is incorporated in the Watershed Security Strategy (see strategic theme 4.4 below).

As part of these commitments, the Province recognizes that the process is as important as the product. The relationships we build together now will set the foundation for developing and implementing the Watershed Security Strategy and Wild Salmon Strategy into the future.

First Nations

Water is integral to First Nations' hearts, spirits, bodies and minds, and healthy watersheds and ecological integrity are central to this relationship. As such, First Nations have responsibilities to care for water and uphold the rights of water and those that cannot speak for themselves.

First Nations in B.C. each have unique perspectives grounded in their respective laws and legal systems about their title and rights in and to the waters, lands, territories and resources that they have traditionally owned, occupied, or otherwise used or acquired. They have the inherent right of self-determination, which includes the ability to form their own governments, laws and stewardship practices. Recognizing First Nations' inherent right of self-determination is the starting point to achieving coexisting federal, provincial and First Nations jurisdictions, laws and legal systems.

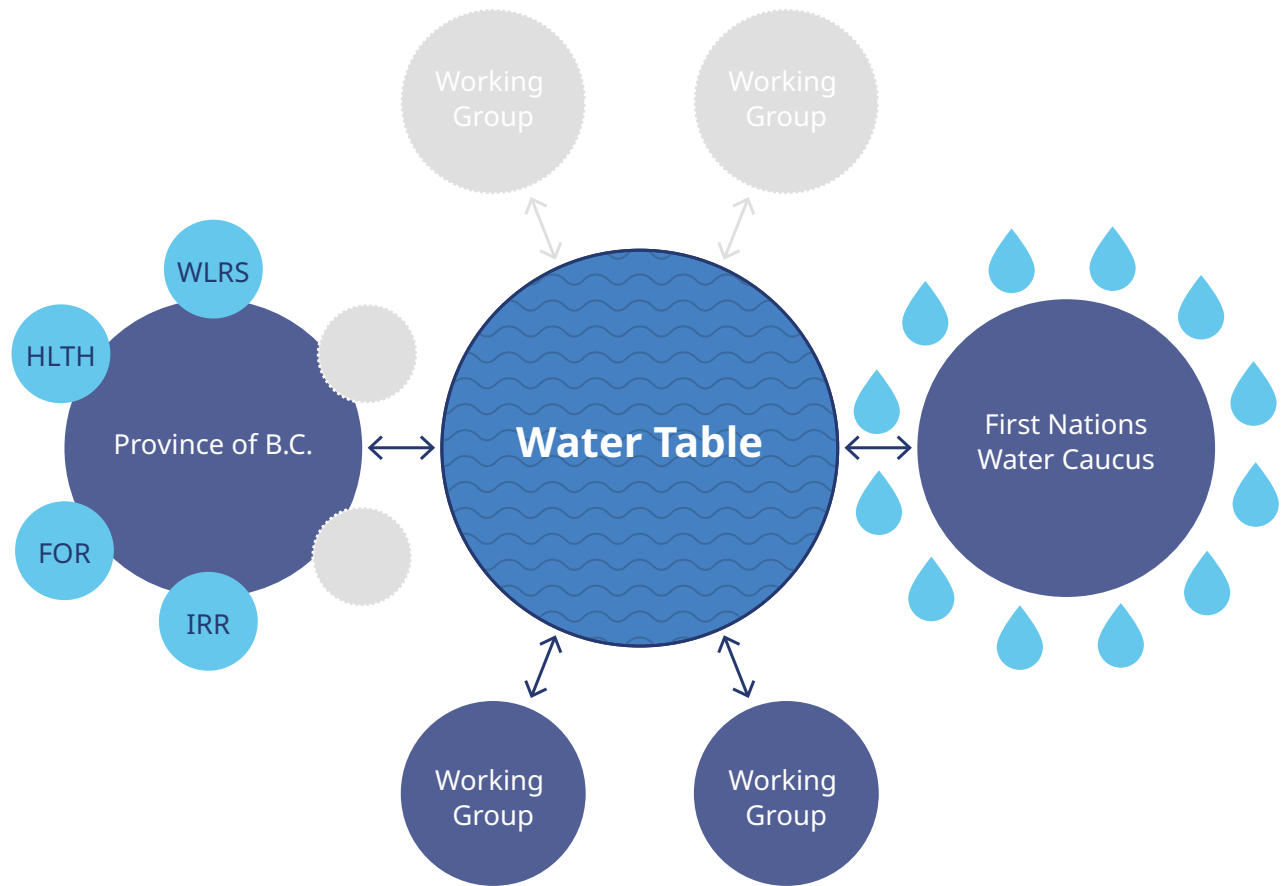
As the original occupants of the land, First Nations have certain legal rights (Aboriginal, treaty, inherent) that other British Columbians do not have. Because of this, First Nations and the Province have unique government-to-government relationships that recognize First Nations as rightsholders, not stakeholders.

The Watershed Security Strategy is an opportunity to work together with First Nations to improve outcomes for watersheds and watershed security. First Nations in B.C. and the Province each have goals related to water and watershed security that provide for the current generation while protecting watersheds for future generations. Achieving these goals will be most effective when the work of watershed security crosses Nations, ministries, government jurisdictions, territories and watersheds.

The Province will continue engaging First Nations across B.C. to develop the Strategy while building enduring forums for collaboration and co-development through the B.C.-First Nations Water Table and through approaches to be co-developed with Modern Treaty Nations.

The B.C.-First Nations Water Table: A new way forward together

The B.C.-First Nations Water Table is a new collaborative and enduring structure that was convened in June 2022. The Water Table addresses water and watershed security issues of concern between First Nations in B.C. and the Province through co-development and consensus. It is made up of representatives from the Province (including the ministries of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship; Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation; Forests; and Health) and delegates from First Nations across B.C. (these First Nations delegates form a Water Caucus). The structure of the Water Table is illustrated in the following figure.



The Water Table seeks to:

- ▶ Uphold the UN Declaration and Declaration Act reconciliation objectives
- ▶ Support the free, prior and informed consent of First Nations in B.C. as a foundation for First Nations water and watershed security, including through informing reforms to legislation and regulations; land, water and watershed planning; and policies, programs, practices and strategies that facilitate shared decision-making and support self-determination and water governance
- ▶ Ensure that the foundation of watershed security is delivered within the context of implementing the Declaration Act, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, and the [Draft Principles that Guide the Province of British Columbia's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples](#)

Modern Treaty Nations

Early in 2022, the Province heard from Modern Treaty Nations about how their relationships with the Province around water are distinct and need to reflect their established rights and responsibilities as treaty partners. Modern Treaty Nations also emphasized the importance of collaboration between provincial ministries with responsibilities related to water and in implementing treaties. In keeping with the [Shared Priorities](#) Framework, the Province will work with Modern Treaty Nations to establish a co-development approach for the Strategy.

Métis Nation British Columbia

In early 2022, the Province heard from Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC) about their desire to strengthen relations with the Province, in part because of the knowledge Métis citizens hold through their connections with lands and waters. These conversations need to continue through a collaborative approach to preparing the Strategy between MNBC and the Province. This collaboration will respect Métis self-determination as described in the [October 27, 2021, Letter of Intent](#) between MNBC and the Province.

A framework for achieving watershed security

A vision and set of principles will be co-developed with the Water Table and informed by engagement to offer an overarching framework for the Strategy.

Policy intentions for a Watershed Security Strategy

Five key policy intentions will guide the development of the final Strategy. Each policy intention is listed in this section, along with a series of strategic themes and key actions being considered for the final Strategy.

The strategic themes are priority areas that government must address to achieve the policy intention and, by extension, the vision of the Strategy. The final Strategy will provide a comprehensive list of actions under each policy intention and strategic theme. An implementation plan will support the final Strategy and provide further detail.

What is a policy intention?

A policy intention is a statement that expresses what government intends to do through its policies (or in this case, strategy). The statement sets out an intended outcome or set of outcomes the policy (or strategy) was designed for.

Policy intention 1: Enable new approaches to watershed governance through inclusion, capacity building and collaboration.

For watershed governance to be effective, all levels of government and partners with communities and watershed interests (such as local agricultural, business and industrial sectors) must work together in a meaningful way. The final Strategy will build a watershed governance framework that provides both consistency and flexibility, identifies opportunities for capacity building and shared decision-making with First Nations, ensures transparency and accountability, and suggests roles and responsibilities for partners. The table below shows examples of the current roles and responsibilities across all levels of government.

Examples of roles and responsibilities related to watershed governance in B.C.

Indigenous governments	Federal government	Local government	Provincial government
Exercise systems of governance and stewardship practices on traditional, treaty and inherited lands and waters, including through: ▶ Indigenous law ▶ Indigenous knowledge ▶ Treaties ▶ <i>Constitution Act</i>, Section 35 ▶ Transboundary watershed management ▶ Ethics and values ▶ Science, research and monitoring	▶ Oversees water on federal lands, including First Nations reserves ▶ Transboundary water management, including the International Joint Commission ▶ Federal legislation (e.g., <i>Canada Water Act</i>, <i>Fisheries Act</i>, <i>Species at Risk Act</i>) ▶ Marine and intertidal fishing (including salmon harvesting) ▶ Fishing ▶ Shipping and navigation ▶ Environmental assessment ▶ Science, research and monitoring	▶ Purveys water to residents (e.g., for drinking, irrigation) ▶ Sanitary and wastewater services ▶ Planning (e.g., official community plans, regional growth strategies) ▶ Zoning and bylaws ▶ Development permit areas ▶ Stormwater management	▶ Sustainable use and quality of water in B.C. ▶ Provincial legislation (e.g., <i>Water Sustainability Act</i>, <i>Water Protection Act</i>, <i>Fish and Seafood Act</i>, <i>Environmental Management Act</i>) ▶ Authorizing and permitting (e.g., water licensing, changes to instream habitat) ▶ Flood management ▶ Environmental assessments ▶ Protected areas ▶ Science, research and monitoring ▶ Water and land use planning ▶ Managing freshwater habitat (including for wild salmon) ▶ Addressing sources of pollution in the environment

To make progress on reconciliation, it is essential to maintain a distinctions-based approach when affirming and developing relationships with Indigenous Peoples and organizations (e.g., Indigenous governing bodies). Watershed governance processes need to enable Indigenous Peoples to be fully involved partners with recognition of their rights, needs, values and worldviews

in watershed governance arrangements, including through shared decision-making. Relationships with First Nations must be based on free, prior and informed consent, trust and respect for self-determination.

Local governments also play an essential role in watershed governance and have identified they may need to build their capacity for actions, such as implementing the UN Declaration, to ensure Indigenous worldviews and principles are respected. The final Strategy will not download governance and management responsibilities without providing support or understanding existing local initiatives.

To be successful, all governance structures and partnerships will need to collaborate across sectors and recognize each other's interests, as well as the interests of Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, and share knowledge and resources to achieve the best outcomes for watersheds.

Strategic theme 1.1: Enhance local watershed governance by:

- ▶ Establishing collaborative processes that involve Indigenous Peoples, local governments, quasi-government entities (e.g., Crown corporations), other interested parties and the Province
- ▶ Accelerating a watershed-level program that supports the use of governance tools for watershed security (e.g., water sustainability plans, *Water Sustainability Act* (WSA) objectives and local advisory boards)
- ▶ Considering agricultural water needs, particularly on agricultural land reserve lands where a corresponding reserve of water has not been identified
- ▶ Building and strengthening partnerships and leadership within and across sectors to promote watershed security
- ▶ Exploring dispute resolution mechanisms for watershed governance arrangements

Strategic theme 1.2: Support the development of governance structures founded upon principles of mutual recognition, respect, sharing, flexibility, accountability and responsibility with Indigenous Peoples by:

- ▶ Incorporating specific roles in watershed co-governance and management for Indigenous Peoples and organizations, communities and organizations, and including Indigenous governing bodies as described under sections 6 and 7 of the Declaration Act
- ▶ Incorporating, empowering and enhancing First Nations decision-making in provincial or joint processes through mechanisms based on free, prior and informed consent
- ▶ Integrating provincial governance structures (e.g., Collaborative Stewardship Framework, Environmental Stewardship Initiative) with existing and emerging Indigenous governance structures focused on water
- ▶ Supporting the implementation of area-based governance approaches using watershed assessments informed by science and Indigenous knowledge systems
- ▶ Supporting intergenerational knowledge transmission by engaging Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth in water-related engagements and decision-making

Strategic theme 1.3: Enhance coordination, leadership and accountability across different levels of government to align decision-making for watersheds by:

- ▶ Establishing roles and responsibilities for different types of governance structures
- ▶ Building on provincial, local government and existing and emerging Indigenous planning tools to develop an integrated land and water planning framework
- ▶ Promoting integrated decision-making and bringing land and resource development into balance with available water quality and quantity through planning
- ▶ Supporting federal initiatives related to watersheds and aquatic habitat, such as the Pacific Salmon Strategy Initiative's Integrated Planning for Salmon Ecosystems being led by Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- ▶ Building on the current work of governments to better manage transboundary water and watersheds

Policy intention 2: Pursue legislative change, policy development and alignment of laws and policy to be consistent with the UN Declaration.

Following the Declaration Act, the Province is committed to ensuring all provincial laws are consistent with the UN Declaration. The development and implementation of the Strategy will honour the spirit and intent of the UN Declaration in whole, and specific articles that are particularly relevant to this work are identified in Appendix A.

The Strategy will explore legislative changes to the WSA and other water-related legislation, policy and programs. In addition to undertaking the alignment work needed to achieve consistency with the UN Declaration and the Declaration Act, the intent of these changes is to improve stewardship and outcomes for watersheds, support Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination, and enhance community health and prosperity. New policy, training, outreach and extension materials may be developed to support learning and provide guidance and best management practices in areas where none yet exists.

Strategic theme 2.1: Align the WSA and new and related policies with the UN Declaration by:

- ▶ Reviewing provincial statutes in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples, starting with the WSA, to ensure consistency with the UN Declaration and the Declaration Act (Section 3)
- ▶ Recognizing First Nations as first water users and affirming Aboriginal and treaty rights to water as priority rights
- ▶ Ensuring First Nations have meaningful roles in water governance and management by advancing policy and legislative proposals, in line with the [Interim Approach to Implementing the Requirements of Section 3 of the Declaration Act](#)
- ▶ Identifying options and expectations for joint and/or consent-based decision-making in statutory decisions, following Declaration Act section 7

- ▶ Requiring free, prior and informed consent or joint decision-making where agreed to and appropriate in WSA decisions that impact on territory and rights
- ▶ Recognizing First Nations legal orders, institutions, laws, land codes, plans, strategies and decisions in decision-making contexts
- ▶ With First Nations, co-designing models and approaches for bringing Indigenous laws and provincial laws together in water-related policy and decision-making
- ▶ Including Indigenous knowledge in decision-making and empowering its inclusion by decision-makers at all levels of government
- ▶ Continuing to implement the [Commitment Document](#) in the context of watershed security

Strategic theme 2.2: Identify opportunities to collaborate with Indigenous Peoples and co-develop policies and procedures about the use of Indigenous knowledge by:

- ▶ Co-developing a framework and scope of a provincial environmental flows regulation that includes social and cultural values for ecological health and protection of core rights, such as fishing, hunting and ceremonial water uses
- ▶ Co-developing models and approaches for how Indigenous Peoples and the Province share water-related information, data and knowledge in support of engagements and decision-making under the WSA
- ▶ Exploring the application of the 2019 *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* amendments to decision-making and engagement under the WSA and the potential need for creating stand-alone Indigenous knowledge protection legislation to be applied across natural resource sectors

Strategic theme 2.3: Consider legislative change and policy development to improve outcomes for watersheds by:

- ▶ Addressing statutory gaps and inconsistencies related to water quality and quantity by reviewing the WSA, *Drinking Water Protection Act*, *Environmental Management Act* and *Forest and Range Practices Act*, as well as other statutes and associated regulations
- ▶ Strengthening groundwater protections by developing regulatory options under the WSA, including by expanding well classes requiring submission under the Groundwater Protection Regulation
- ▶ Strengthening surface water protections by reviewing and leveraging existing and emerging science to inform allocation and decision-making processes
- ▶ Improving application of open data principles and transparency by reviewing current monitoring programs and assessments required under the *Forest and Range Practices Act*, *Private Managed Forest Land Act* and other statutes
- ▶ Mapping and communicating the alignment of policies, legislation and programs that affect aquatic ecosystems, watersheds and watershed security

Policy intention 3: Build a strong foundation of watershed science and knowledge that is accessible for use by Indigenous Peoples, local governments and communities.

Provincial leadership is needed to support collecting watershed data and mapping across B.C. and improving provincial water databases. Expanding these information sources could inform the development and coordination of watershed assessments and support the adaptive management of watersheds.

Indigenous Peoples also hold a tremendous amount of wisdom and knowledge. The First Nations principles of Ownership, Control, Access and Possession ([OCAP®](#)) assert that First Nations have control over data collection processes, and that they control how this information can be used. Therefore, while Indigenous knowledge systems and Indigenous-owned data and information cannot be used without permission, the Province may support First Nations to build their data collection, knowledge systems and policies in line with OCAP® principles. Indigenous knowledge systems, together with Indigenous and non-Indigenous science and data, can be interpreted and applied to inform decision-making within watersheds.

Strategic theme 3.1: Strengthen existing water data and information tools and address gaps in current systems by:

- ▶ Investing in updates and enhancements to provincial mapping of streams, wetlands, landforms and aquifers
- ▶ Facilitating open, full and timely public access to and clear communication of provincial water quality and quantity data and analysis information by investing in digital service delivery systems and tools
- ▶ Continuing to improve [GWELLS](#) to manage additional data and support implementation activities related to the WSA Groundwater Protection Regulation
- ▶ Improving resourcing to support Indigenous communities and local stakeholders to access and understand water information
- ▶ Improving linkages between knowledge sharing and decision-making to support more informed decisions on water and watershed management
- ▶ Developing baseline water data sets in areas where future resource development is contemplated or increased risks to water values are anticipated
- ▶ Improving understanding of water quantity and quality guidelines and the benchmarks needed to support resilient ecosystems and cultural values

Strategic theme 3.2: Improve understanding of water and watershed use, ecosystem needs and related cumulative effects by:

- ▶ Developing a water use measuring and reporting regulation
- ▶ Developing guidance and information resources to help water users measure their water use
- ▶ Creating an online reporting tool that enables water licence holders to report water use and monitoring information required under the terms of their licence and by regulation

- ▶ Supporting First Nations to use the results of the online reporting tool, as well as their own data collection, to inform decision-making and water management in their territories
- ▶ Expediting mitigation activities to address the effects of past and present development and climate change influences on watersheds
- ▶ Developing methods to estimate the hydrological changes within watersheds due to changes in land use such as development, forestry and agriculture
- ▶ Linking water and watershed use data with ecosystem needs and function to inform decision-making
- ▶ Understanding changes in watersheds over time by analyzing provincial monitoring information on streamflow, groundwater, overland flow and aquatic ecosystem health
- ▶ Conducting assessments of connectivity and potential barriers to fish and wildlife passage (e.g., wild salmon migration) within watersheds

Strategic theme 3.3: Enhance monitoring and assessment of watershed health to support watershed governance arrangements by:

- ▶ Developing guidance for water and watershed risk characterization and assessment
- ▶ Supporting governance arrangements in priority areas using risk characterization and assessments
- ▶ Working with communities to monitor and assess the quality of drinking water sources to support watershed stewardship and communication about issues
- ▶ Understanding relative risks to water and watersheds by integrating social, human health and environmental values in thresholds and indexes
- ▶ Creating clear roles and responsibilities for community watershed groups to undertake restoration work
- ▶ Developing and maintaining an inventory of localized watershed and aquatic restoration projects (e.g., Healthy Watersheds Initiative, British Columbia Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund, Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation) to inform decision-making

Policy intention 4: Apply holistic approaches to watershed management and ecosystem protection.

Integrating the full range of cultural, spiritual, economic, environmental, political and social values that relate to water and watershed health is required to steward watersheds in a holistic way. Current data and knowledge show that past and present human activities – including forestry, industrial and urban development, nutrient application and population growth – are negatively impacting water quality and quantity. Climate change is both compounding these impacts and intensifying natural hazards such as flood and drought.

Using ecosystem-based approaches that focus on the interconnectedness of water and land and learning from Indigenous Peoples about watershed stewardship is key. As we move forward, land use planning, restoration planning and water management must be informed by local and

Indigenous priorities, knowledge, values and wisdom. The Strategy will leverage existing data and knowledge to identify ways to improve watershed stewardship together. Where needed, restoring and rehabilitating watersheds and considering economic trade-offs are within the scope of the Strategy.

Strategic theme 4.1: Increase the leadership role of Indigenous Peoples in watershed stewardship and restoration by:

- ▶ Empowering Indigenous Peoples to lead watershed and restoration planning and initiatives
- ▶ Empowering Indigenous Peoples to trigger relevant water and watershed management tools, such as fish population protection orders under the WSA
- ▶ Creating a more integrated approach to the application of Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous laws across the natural resource sector
- ▶ Addressing the effects of legacy natural resource activities to advance reconciliation and provide economic opportunities for Indigenous communities in watershed restoration, including economic benefits related to the lands and resources in Indigenous territories
- ▶ Including biocultural restoration approaches in watershed restoration
- ▶ Supporting intergenerational knowledge transmission and youth involvement in Indigenous Guardians and stewardship functions through strategy co-development and co-implementation
- ▶ Co-developing, with Indigenous Peoples, an integrated province-wide approach to Indigenous Guardians and stewardship functions and training

Strategic theme 4.2: Strengthen regulations, standards and policy to protect and prioritize water values in decision-making by:

- ▶ Modernizing the standards and regulations that affect aquatic values throughout watersheds informed by existing and emerging data and knowledge
- ▶ Identifying and evaluating the trade-offs inherent in past and ongoing water and land use decisions to support future decision-making
- ▶ Developing guidance for decision makers about managing cumulative effects in watersheds and complementary knowledge and information for other users
- ▶ Addressing legacy impacts to drinking water sources in land- and water-based decisions through restoration
- ▶ Strengthening rural sanitary and water services
- ▶ Improving stormwater management (water quality and quantity) and related watershed, land use, infrastructure and land use planning in partnership with local governments and Indigenous Peoples
- ▶ Evaluating attainment of local stream flow, fish habitat and water quality objectives through monitoring and reporting

- ▶ Supporting the Provincial Wetlands Project, which aims to improve the province's wetland inventory and data, establish wetland policy and objectives, and deliver education and outreach to improve wetland stewardship, management and carbon sequestration

Strategic theme 4.3: Enhance communication, education and outreach to cultivate a shared understanding of the values and issues that exist within watersheds by:

- ▶ Developing guidance on how watershed information, including Indigenous knowledge systems, can inform policy actions and decision-making
- ▶ Educating local governments, First Nations and communities about what tools exist under the WSA to support watershed security
- ▶ Using community monitoring and Indigenous knowledge systems to engage with communities about evidence-based decision-making and, where appropriate, traditional knowledge
- ▶ Ensuring contractors are aware of potential impacts and current best management practices when working in and around aquatic environments
- ▶ Providing guidance and support to First Nations and local governments seeking to identify, protect and restore natural assets that help mitigate extreme events and secure drinking water sources

Strategic theme 4.4: Adopt wild salmon recovery as a key value in watershed planning by:

- ▶ Ensuring watershed and water use decisions are made in consideration of First Nation's inherent and legal rights to and reliance on healthy wild salmon stocks for economic, food, social and ceremonial purposes
- ▶ Ensuring a "wild salmon lens" is applied when considering watershed management and water use allocations
- ▶ Considering the long-term impacts to – and goals for – wild salmon recovery through watershed security initiatives
- ▶ Taking a lead role in the federal Integrated Planning for Salmon Ecosystems pillar of the Pacific Salmon Strategy Initiative from Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Policy intention 5: Balance water supply and demand (quality and quantity) at the watershed scale to address the needs of people, the environment and the economy.

Water availability varies across the province. In some watersheds, water supply is insufficient to meet existing and new instream and out of stream demands. In other watersheds, water quality concerns are limiting what that water can be used for. Climate change is expected to reduce rainfall and increase temperatures during summer months, which in turn is expected to make these supply and demand imbalances more acute. Reduced supply due to water quality or quantity issues will impact the survival of keystone species like wild salmon, hinder food security, degrade drinking water sources, and worsen existing social justice and equity issues.

Water allocation must respond to changing climatic, demographic and economic conditions by ensuring that water is available to sustain communities, ecosystems, wild and farmed food, and

the economy. Water allocation must promote resiliency and watershed health as well as adaptation and mitigation actions. The WSA enables several tools to help balance water supply and demand and improve climate resilience. Using the full suite of WSA tools – including water sustainability plans, WSA objectives, water reservations and water transfers – may provide additional incentives for water conservation and reallocation to existing and new uses where supply is constrained. These may be complemented by compliance, enforcement, new conservation and economic tools, and other planning processes such as Drinking Water Protection Plans, Forest Landscape Plans and Land Use Plans. To be successful, the use of any of these tools must be accompanied by working closely with local governments, Indigenous Peoples and partners who have an interest in watersheds.

Strategic theme 5.1: Proactively consider and address existing and/or emerging regional pressures and risks by:

- ▶ Addressing risks to aquatic habitat and drinking water sources
- ▶ Providing a foundation for and developing a Source to Tap Strategy
- ▶ Supporting all levels of government and their programs to prevent, detect, monitor and manage aquatic invasive species
- ▶ Developing water sustainability plans and WSA objectives that address existing and emerging regional pressures and risks (e.g., food security and the need for dedicated agricultural water, water for wild salmon during freshwater life stages)
- ▶ Including flexibility in water licence terms and conditions to make them more adaptable to changing conditions and uses
- ▶ Exploring opportunities to apply circular economy principles as they relate to water, including advancing innovation and initiatives across sectors (e.g., designing out water pollutants and recovering water and energy from waste)
- ▶ Evaluating new information on pollutants and their impact on watersheds
- ▶ Providing guidance and support at a watershed scale for local Indigenous Peoples, local governments and community groups to identify, protect and restore natural assets that help mitigate extreme events and secure drinking water sources
- ▶ Reducing the impacts of stormwater discharge on drinking water and ecosystems through local government planning
- ▶ Incentivising green infrastructure and low impact development to manage stormwater volumes and treat stormwater quality

Strategic theme 5.2: Develop policy and guidance to promote incentives for water conservation and reallocation by:

- ▶ Implementing adaptive water use practices in urban and agricultural sectors such as infrastructure improvements, capture and storage options, technological innovations and measuring and metering
- ▶ Encouraging conservation through water metering and other practices

- ▶ Reducing runoff and evaporative loss in the municipal and agricultural sectors using natural assets, green infrastructure, capture and storage options, and technological innovations
- ▶ Developing guidance for land use that reduces the impact on the hydrologic flow of water into streams
- ▶ Facilitating the voluntary transfer of water licences to adapt to changing conditions and meet new demands (e.g., for housing, food security) while protecting the environment and public interest
- ▶ Reallocating water to conservation and ecosystem function/health, such as through water sustainability plans
- ▶ Developing mechanisms to restore water to conservation through voluntary transfers, licence buy-back programs or other regulatory approaches
- ▶ Using economic tools for watershed security, including, but not limited to, water use and water reallocation, and placing economic values on ecosystem function
- ▶ Working with local governments and other water suppliers to develop guidance for drought management and conservation (e.g., water metering and pricing that incents conservation while ensuring equitable access to water)

Strategic theme 5.3: Develop approaches to meet existing and future demands for humans and requirements for ecosystem health by:

- ▶ Developing provincial water budget assessment guidance with changing climate and population scenarios that incorporate water use projection tools (e.g., Agriculture Water Demand Model) to inform decision-making
- ▶ Working with ministry partners and local governments to identify areas of greatest water stress and areas where water is available to support strategic housing development decisions
- ▶ Increasing awareness and conversations among ministry partners of the urgent water scarcity challenges and the need to make trade-offs in stressed watersheds
- ▶ Establishing environmental flow objectives that sustain water availability and aquatic ecosystems throughout the year and that consider the needs of wildlife and aquatic species (e.g., wild salmon) at different life stages
- ▶ Redefining beneficial use in the WSA to reflect current values and needs, including ecosystem function, wildlife and fish
- ▶ Addressing the impacts of stormwater by reviewing/updating regulations and other tools (e.g., building codes, health regulations)
- ▶ Incorporating adaptive management of stormwater into policy and guidelines so that mitigation measures and actions are effective over time and are implemented where needed most
- ▶ Exploring reclaimed water, water reuse or other innovative non-potable reuse to secure other sources of water for particular uses

Watershed Security Fund

The Province recognizes the importance of investing in B.C.'s watersheds for the long term. On March 6, 2023, the Province announced its plans to develop a permanent Watershed Security Fund.

The recipient of the funding will facilitate the co-development of a Watershed Security Fund with First Nations and the Province, and in collaboration with a range of watershed interests. The work ahead includes establishing an enduring co-governance body to oversee and manage the Fund. The Water Caucus (as noted, a partner in the Water Table) will be a key part of both the initial process to co-develop the Fund and the longer-term Fund co-governance.

Key outcomes the Fund will seek to achieve include:

- ▶ Restoring and maintaining ecosystem services and watershed health
- ▶ Supporting climate resiliency
- ▶ Supporting watershed governance and helping local organizations meet their mandates
- ▶ Providing economic stimulus through direct and indirect job creation
- ▶ Supporting reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and advancing the UN Declaration

The Province recognizes that investing in watershed health and nature-based solutions, and restoring natural assets, will result in economic development opportunities, help reduce costs incurred by the long-term impacts of climate change, and provide essential services at a far lower cost than engineered solutions and emergency response.

Since 2020, the provincial government has invested \$57 million in watershed security projects along with \$85.7 million in the British Columbia Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund to restore wild salmon. The momentum gained from this funding provides a foundation for taking a long-term view, enabling transformative change and securing the resiliency of watersheds and the longevity of Indigenous and non-Indigenous water values into the future.

Implementation and evaluation

The Watershed Security Strategy and its implementation are key to advancing the Province's priorities for water, in collaboration with Indigenous Peoples. Initial planning to put the Watershed Security Strategy into action will result in a 20-year Implementation Plan with short-, medium- and long-term actions that will be phased in over this period. A key focus will be the first five years of implementation.

The Implementation Plan will accompany the Strategy and operationalize the actions to achieve the vision of the Watershed Security Strategy, including:

- ▶ Identifying key actions needed, including the development of partnerships and the need for further engagement
- ▶ Identifying necessary resources
- ▶ Monitoring
- ▶ Evaluation
- ▶ Reporting activities

These actions will shape the future of water and watershed outcomes in B.C. and will continue to reaffirm the Province's leadership in watershed stewardship. Collaboration with Indigenous Peoples, local governments and across sectors through the Strategy is critically needed for ensuring freshwater is valued and respected within B.C.

Indigenous Peoples will be collaboratively involved in developing and implementing the Strategy according to a distinctions-based approach that respects their self-determination. Discussions with the Water Table, First Nations, Modern Treaty Nations and Métis Nation British Columbia will identify how they want to be meaningfully involved in these steps.

All levels of government, along with communities and stakeholders, will need to work together to achieve the strategic outcomes of the Watershed Security Strategy.

Active monitoring, evaluation and reporting will help the Province and its partners leverage the learnings emerging through implementation and adaptive management. Overarching commitments on the timing, frequency and indicators will be included in the Implementation Plan. Watershed Security Strategy actions may need to be sequenced to accommodate any dependencies between them, and the time needed to implement each action may vary.

Planning is under way to establish an approach to cross-sectoral collaboration involving other levels of governments, and interest and rightsholders.

Integration across government initiatives

While the Watershed Security Strategy will be a comprehensive strategy addressing a wide range of watershed security issues, it must act in concert with the broad range of work, both ongoing and planned, across a number of ministries. Several initiatives being led by the Province will strongly inform development of the Watershed Security Strategy, including, but not limited to:

- ▶ The [Coastal Marine Strategy](#)
- ▶ The [Wild Salmon Strategy](#)
- ▶ The [Flood Strategy](#)
- ▶ The Source to Tap Strategy

Additional provincial initiatives that will be considered include, but are not limited to:

- ▶ [Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy](#)
- ▶ [Together for Wildlife Strategy](#)
- ▶ Old Growth Strategic Review
- ▶ Provincial Wetlands Project
- ▶ Stewarding Agricultural Watercourses
- ▶ Public Interest Bonding Strategy

As healthy watersheds are also critical to a healthy provincial economy, the Watershed Security Strategy is anchored in the StrongerBC Economic Plan under “fostering innovation across our economy.” The Strategy will help enable economic innovation and growth by ensuring water is clean and available to sustain B.C.’s collective needs and values in perpetuity. It will support the goals of StrongerBC and CleanBC by promoting restoration and circular economies.

Actions within these strategies and other provincial initiatives will be aligned to work better together to improve overall watershed health and strengthen:

- ▶ Reconciliation, collaborative governance and shared decision-making
- ▶ Climate change resilience and mitigation
- ▶ Clean, safe and reliable drinking water
- ▶ Affordable housing with secure access to drinking water
- ▶ Sufficient quantity and quality of water for resilient ecosystems
- ▶ Recovery of wild salmon
- ▶ Wild and farmed food security
- ▶ Better data, information and knowledge sharing, including through Indigenous Guardians activities or functions
- ▶ The changing structure and needs of B.C.’s economy
- ▶ Putting people first and supporting diversity, equity and anti-racism

Conclusion and next steps

The Watershed Security Strategy will be co-developed with First Nations under a shared vision. A series of goals and actions to help meet provincial objectives will focus on localizing watershed governance and prioritizing watershed values.

Once engagement on the Intentions Paper has drawn to a close, all feedback will be analyzed and shared with Indigenous partners and other levels of government. This will be used to inform the development a draft Watershed Security Strategy, which will be recommended to the B.C. Government for approval.

The eventual Watershed Security Strategy will strengthen the Province's leadership in watershed stewardship alongside Indigenous Peoples, local governments, stakeholder sectors and all British Columbians.

The final strategy is expected in the winter of 2023/24.

Thank you.

Appendix A: The Watershed Security Strategy and UN Declaration

The development and implementation of the Strategy will honour the spirit and intent of the UN Declaration in whole, and specific articles that are particularly relevant to this work are listed below:

Article	Description
18	Indigenous Peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own indigenous decision-making institutions.
19	States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the Indigenous Peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them.
23	Indigenous Peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development. In particular, Indigenous Peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining health, housing and other economic and social programmes affecting them and, as far as possible, to administer such programmes through their own institutions.
24-1	Indigenous Peoples have the right to their traditional medicines and to maintain their health practices, including the conservation of their vital medicinal plants, animals and minerals. Indigenous individuals also have the right to access, without any discrimination, to all social and health services.
25	Indigenous Peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.
26	Indigenous Peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired.
28	Indigenous Peoples have the right to redress, by means that can include restitution or, when that is not possible, just, fair and equitable compensation, for the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used, and which have been confiscated, taken, occupied, used or damaged without their free, prior and informed consent.
29-1	Indigenous Peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources. States shall establish and implement assistance programmes for Indigenous Peoples for such conservation and protection, without discrimination.

Article	Description
32-1	Indigenous Peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources.
36	Indigenous Peoples, in particular those divided by international borders, have the right to maintain and develop contacts, relations, and cooperation, including activities for spiritual, cultural, political, economic and social purposes, with their own members as well as other peoples across borders.
39	Indigenous Peoples have the right to have access to financial and technical assistance from States and through international cooperation, for the enjoyment of the rights contained in this Declaration.

Appendix B: Glossary

Adaptive management – A systematic process for continually improving management policies and practices by learning from the outcomes of operational programs.

Aquifer – An underground layer of broken rock, gravel, sand or silt that contains groundwater that can be brought to the surface through a water well. Aquifers exist throughout British Columbia wherever saturated rock or sediment in which groundwater can move readily is present.

Best management practices – Guidelines that help development projects meet necessary legislation, regulations and policies.

Biodiversity – The variety of life. Biodiversity includes all forms of life such as bacteria, fungi, grasses, shrubs, trees, agricultural crops, insects, amphibians, reptiles, wild and domestic animals and humans. Biodiversity can be divided into three levels of organization: genetic diversity, species diversity and ecosystem diversity.

Circular economy – A framework and approach to design out waste and pollution, keep products and materials in use, and regenerate natural systems.

Climate adaptation – Proactively understanding and preparing for the changing climate and reducing climate-related risks.

Climate change – Shifts in temperature and weather patterns over an extended period of time. These shifts may be natural or human caused.

Climate mitigation – A human intervention to reduce or prevent greenhouse gas emissions.

Climate resilience – The capacity of an ecosystem to recover from a hazardous event in a way that its essential function is maintained.

Cumulative effects – Changes to environmental, social and economic values caused by the combined effect of past, present and potential future human activities and natural processes.

Groundwater – Water found underground in soil, sediment and rocks. When rain or snow falls on the ground it can seep into soils down to underground aquifers that can store the water or transport the water to surface water bodies.

GWELLS – Groundwater Wells and Aquifers map.

Environmental flow needs – Defined in the *Water Sustainability Act* as the volume and timing of water flow required for the proper functioning of the aquatic ecosystem of a stream.

Indigenous knowledge systems – The understandings, skills and philosophies developed by Indigenous Nations with long histories of interaction with their natural surroundings. This local knowledge informs decision-making about fundamental aspects of day-to-day life. This knowledge is integral to a cultural complex that also encompasses language, systems of classification, resource use practices, social interactions, ritual and spirituality. These unique

ways of knowing are important facets of the world's cultural diversity and provide a foundation for locally appropriate sustainable development.

Invasive species – Plants or animals that are not native to the province, or are outside of their natural distribution. Invasive species negatively impact British Columbia's environment, people and/or economy.

Living Water Smart – Established in 2008, Living Water Smart set a vision for sustainable water stewardship in B.C. and a direction for change to water management and use. While Living Water Smart is still relevant today, it will be replaced by the Watershed Security Strategy and Fund. The Strategy and Fund will build on work that began under Living Water Smart that was focused on water to advance stewardship of both water and watersheds into the future.

Natural assets – Ecosystem features (such as a lake, wetland, or forest) that provide or could be restored to provide a benefit or service to add value to support human or ecological systems.

Salmon – Refers to Pacific salmon species in B.C. including coho (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*), chinook (*O. tshawytscha*), chum (*O. keta*), pink (*O. gorbuscha*), sockeye (*O. nerka*) and steelhead (*O. mykiss*).

Sector – Includes not only water users but other groups that benefit from healthy water (e.g., tourism, fisheries).

Stormwater – Rainwater, snowmelt and water from other sources that runs off impervious surfaces such as pavement and rooftops. Stormwater has implications for urban and rural planning, as it cannot infiltrate the ground and is typically channeled into storm sewers and watercourses.

Surface water – Water found in ponds, lakes, inland seas, streams, springs and rivers. Surface water can come from rain or snow, water flow over the land or groundwater flow.

Watershed – Watersheds are areas of land where rain, snow and glacier runoff flow into common rivers, lakes, streams or aquifers. They are homes to species, like wild salmon, give water for drinking and growing our food, support jobs and work for people, and have significant cultural and spiritual value for local communities.

Water budget – A tool (computer model) used to quantify the flow of water in and out of a defined area. It is an accounting of all the water stored and exchanged on the land surface (rivers, lakes), subsurface (groundwater) and atmosphere (precipitation, evaporation). By applying climate change and population growth scenarios to the model, a water budget can be used to assess the risk of increasing water demand both now and in the future.

Water conservation – Preservation of water supplies by employing methods, policies and technologies that reduce water consumption.

Water (use) efficiency – The practice of using water in a manner that achieves its maximum productivity with minimum wastage or overuse.

Water governance – Refers to the institutions (rules, practices, processes, decision-making bodies) through which water management decisions are made.

Water management – The process of applying rules, practices and processes in making water-related decisions and activities (e.g., monitoring, modelling, assessment, operation and maintenance, and evaluation).

Water monitoring – Work that we do to understand how watersheds function and how healthy they are. Monitoring activities could include taking water samples to understand how healthy the water is or conducting measurements to understand how water flows and much water is available. If these activities are carried out over time, we can understand how watersheds are changing and take action if the health of the watershed may be at risk.

Water quality – Measuring water quality helps us to understand if water is healthy for us to drink and use to grow food or for use by plants and animals. When we measure water quality, we look at the physical, chemical and biological properties of the water to understand how suitable it is for what we want to use it for. Not all water is naturally safe to drink. Water from many surface and groundwater sources requires treatment before it can be safely consumed. Contaminants can also be introduced to water sources from land development.

Water scarcity – The lack of freshwater resources to meet human and ecosystem needs.

Water stewardship – The practice of caretaking shared waters and watersheds through responsible actions with many interests and values.

Water reuse – Reclaiming water from a variety of sources and then treating and reusing it for beneficial purposes such as agriculture and irrigation, potable water supplies, groundwater replenishment, industrial processes and environmental restoration. Water reuse can provide alternatives to existing water supplies and be used to enhance water security, sustainability and resilience.

Watershed assessment – Bringing together water data like maps and water monitoring information, and talking to people in the area to understand the watershed. An assessment will bring together information to build a picture of how the watershed works and may identify the problems in the watershed that need to be solved. Assessments can also help us understand what we can do to help watersheds. Assessments can happen for many different reasons and at different scales depending on what our questions are and what we want to achieve. To fully address the problems that we have, we might need to do several different types of watershed assessments in an area.

Wetland – Lands saturated by water, permanently or intermittently, for a long enough time that the excess water and resulting low oxygen levels produce conditions where aquatic plants grow and other biological activity adapted to a wet environment occurs.

Wild salmon – Salmon are considered to be wild if they have spent their entire life cycle in the wild and originate from parents that were also produced by natural spawning and continuously lived in the wild, as defined in [Canada's Policy for Conservation of Wild Pacific Salmon \(2005\)](#).



BRIEFING

To: Executive Committee **For the Meeting of:** March 22, 2023
From: Islands Trust Conservancy Board **Date Prepared:** March 15, 2023
SUBJECT: Trust Council decisions related to conservation

PURPOSE: To relay to Executive Committee a request from the Islands Trust Conservancy Board that the ITC Board be provided with an opportunity to comment when Trust Council decisions on conservation have an effect on ITC work.

BACKGROUND:

The Islands Trust Conservancy (ITC) Board met on March 14, 2023 and received an update regarding the March 7-9 Trust Council meeting.

ITC trustees who sit on Trust Council noted that that Trust Council directed staff time towards review and amendment of website language and publications on Coastal Douglas-fir and associated ecosystems, with advice from qualified provincial forest ecologists. The ITC Board also noted that the "Donate to Conservancy" button on the footer of Islands Trust website pages has been removed.

After the discussion, the ITC Board passed the following resolution:

ITC-2023-014

**It was MOVED and SECONDED,
that Islands Trust Conservancy (ITC) Board raise concerns to Executive Committee regarding
Trust Council decisions on conservation that have an effect on ITC work about which ITC Board
has not had an opportunity to comment.**

Note: Trust Council also requested the Executive Committee to arrange a presentation by qualified provincial forest ecologists to provide background on forest classifications, forest health, and the significance of forests in the Islands Trust Area as soon as convenient, with the topic to be referred to the Trust Programs Committee.

ATTACHMENT(S): None.

FOLLOW-UP: Staff and the Islands Trust Conservancy/Executive Committee Liaison (Vice Chair Elliott) will relay information from the Executive Committee to the Islands Trust Conservancy Board. The Trust Council Chair and the Islands Trust Conservancy Board Chair may also wish to speak as section 2 of [Trust Council Bylaw No. 86](#), sets out that communication between Trust Council and the Board will be facilitated by the Council Chairperson and the Board Chairperson.

Prepared By: Kate Emmings, Islands Trust Conservancy Manager
Reviewed By/Date: Clare Frater, Director, Trust Area Services / March 16, 2023
Russ Hotsenpiller, Islands Trust CAO / March 16, 2023

BRIEFING

To:	Executive Committee	For the Meeting of:	March 22, 2023
From:	Trust Area Services	Date Prepared:	March 1, 2022
SUBJECT:	DRAFT ISLANDS TRUST TAX NOTICE INSERT FOR 2023/24		

PURPOSE: To seek feedback on a draft revised Islands Trust tax notice insert for 2023/24.

BACKGROUND:

In August 2019, Islands Trust learned that Islands Trust was eligible to include a Rural Tax Notice Insert in the mailing of Rural Property Tax Notices by the Ministry of Finance, with the mailing costs paid by the Ministry of Finance. The Islands Trust sent its first Rural Tax Notice Insert to local trust areas in 2021, and continues to do so on an annual basis.

A finalized tax notice insert must be submitted to the Province by April 1st each year. The notice will be printed on white legal sized paper in greyscale.

Staff have prepared a draft insert for inclusion in the next tax notice. The notice provides general information about the Islands Trust and basic budget information.

Staff provided the 2022/23 and 2022/21 property tax insert notices to Financial Planning Committee for feedback with suggestions for updates and have incorporated the requests received at that meeting into the attached revised draft along with updated budget information.

The tax notice is for local trust areas only. Due to capacity constraints staff have not done any work towards a tax insert for Bowen Island.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. DRAFT revised tax notice insert for 2023/24

FOLLOW-UP: The project is already underway. Staff will integrate feedback received and send to the graphic designer for revisions. Staff will then send to provincial staff before the April 1 deadline.

Prepared By: Clare Frater, Director, Trust Area Services, March 10, 2023

Reviewed By/Date: Russ Hotsenpiller, CAO/March 16, 2022

The Islands Trust is located within the treaty and territorial lands and waters of the BOKÉĆEN, K'ómoks, Lək'wəŋən, Lyackson, MÁLEXEŁ, Qualicum, Quw'utsun Tribes, scəwəθən məsteyəxʷ, Scia'new, səlilwətaʔt, SEMYOME, shishálh, Skw̓xwú7mesh, Snaw-naw-as, Snuneymuxw, Spune'luxutth, STÁUTW, Stz'uminus, ɬaʔəmen, toq qaymɪxʷ, Ts'uubaa-asatx, Wei Wai Kum, We Wai Kai, WJOŁŁŁP, WSIKEM, Xeláltxw, Xwémalhkwu/ʔop qaymɪxʷ, and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm.

Islands Trust

The Islands Trust is a special-purpose government mandated to **preserve and protect** over 450 islands and surrounding waters in the Salish Sea.



Islands Trust

Implementing the Preserve and Protect Mandate

The Islands Trust works to preserve and protect the Islands Trust Area through land use planning, land conservation, and programs in cooperation with municipalities, regional districts, improvement districts, First Nations, other persons, organizations, the government of British Columbia, and you.

Land Use Planning

Land use planning contributes to preserving and protecting the environment, cultural heritage, and communities through the maintenance of 20 unique official community plans, hosting community information meetings to help islanders understand land use planning, rezoning, and application processing. Islands Trust also develops and delivers longer-term projects to support strategic goals.

Islands Trust Conservancy

Islands Trust Conservancy is governed by a board made up of provincial appointees and Islands Trust trustees. Its mission is to protect the special places in the Islands Trust Area by encouraging and assisting voluntary conservation initiatives. To date, 1,375+ ha of land across 113 conservation properties have been protected, including 79 conservation covenants and 34 nature reserves.

Programs

The Islands Trust Council supports the preserve and protect mandate through region-wide programs such as public education sessions on topics such as wells and ground-water; an information mailing to new residents, advocacy to others about decisions and initiatives that affect the islands; ecosystem mapping, and cooperating with others governments, including First Nations, to benefit the Trust Area.

The Trust Area

The Trust Area, located in Coast Salish territory, is the homeland of many Coast Salish Peoples who have called this Area home since time immemorial. Covering 5,200 square kilometres of land and water in the Salish Sea, the Trust Area has over 30,000 residents and 10,000 non-resident property owners. The region features spectacular beauty, extensive archaeological and culturally significant sites, and habitats for an exceptional variety of species.

Governance

There are 13 island groups called local trust areas and each has a local trust committee. These local trust committees are made up of an appointed chair and two locally elected trustees. Elections take place every four years. Local trust committees are responsible for land use decisions within their local trust area. Bowen Island is the only island municipality in the Islands Trust Area.

In total there are 26 trustees, including two municipal trustees from Bowen Island Municipality. Together, they form the Islands Trust Council, which makes decisions that impact the whole Trust Area. Trust Council meets four times a year.

Generally, Trust meetings are open to the public and community members are encouraged to attend. Dates and times are posted on the Islands Trust website islandstrust.bc.ca.



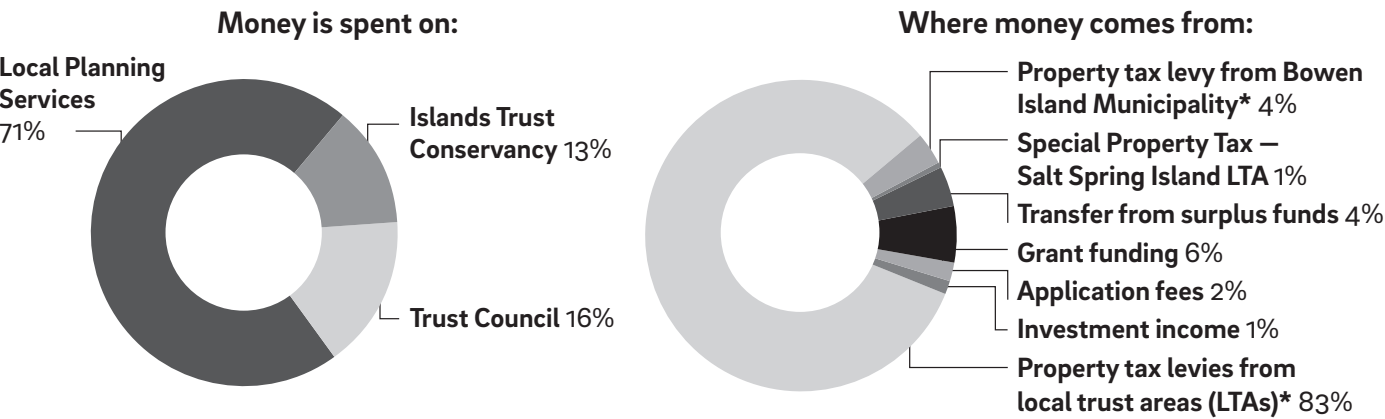
Islands Trust Budget 2023/24

Following a public consultation process, Islands Trust Council adopted its 2023/24 budget in March 2023.

The budget features a total approved budget of \$9.7M, with \$8.6M directed to operations, \$651,296 directed to special projects, and \$134,300 directed to the purchase of new capital assets.

The budget is funded by:

- \$8.04M – local trust area property taxes (excludes Bowen Island)
 - \$43, 500 – Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area special property tax for Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance
- \$345,989 – Bowen Island Municipal tax requisition
- 6.44% increase in total planned spending for operations, projects, and capital purchases
- \$569,795 – external grant funds
- \$414,900 – transfers from Island Trust surplus funds reserve funds
- \$192,000 – application fees and sales
- \$133,001 – investment and other income



Actual tax changes by individual LTA may vary based on distribution of property values within the Trust Area
*Includes tax revenue from new construction

Property Tax Changes – Ten Year History

Fiscal Year	Property Tax Change *
2023/24	2.06%
2022/23	2%
2021/22	3.26%
2020/21	0%
2019/20	2%
2018/19	2%
2017/18	0%
2016/17	0%
2015/16	0%
2014/15	0%

*Excludes tax revenue from new development

Trustees want to hear from you!

Trust Area residents are encouraged to participate in Trust meetings online, by phone, or in-person when possible.

Receive Islands Trust updates including local trust committee meeting notices, news releases, event announcements, and the Islands Trust Conservancy newsletter by subscribing on the Islands Trust website: islandstrust.bc.ca/subscribe

   @IslandsTrust



SCAN FOR
SIGN-UP PAGE

NOTE: The Provincial Surveyor of Taxes issues your Rural Property Tax Notice, and the BC Provincial Government receives your tax payment. Please refer to your Rural Property Tax Notice for payment options. Questions about your property tax notice should be directed to: 1-888-355-2700 (toll-free)

Tony Law

[REDACTED], Hornby Island, BC V0R1Z0
[REDACTED]

To: **Islands Trust Council**
and **Hornby Island Local Trust Committee**

09 March 2023

re: Temporary Use Permits for Housing and for Short Term Rentals
- advocacy for changes to the *Local Government Act*

Temporary use permits (TUPs) are a potentially valuable tool for local trust committees, Bowen Island Municipality, and other local governments, to address non-permanent housing solutions and the use of dwellings for short term rentals.

However, provincial regulations governing the use of temporary use permits - *Part 14, Division 8, of the Local Government Act* - specify requirements originally put in place for commercial and industrial uses. These requirements create challenges in using TUPs for housing and short term rentals.

I encourage the Islands Trust to approach the Ministry of Municipal Affairs - and to work with other local government (such as through AVICC and UBCM) - to advocate for amendments to the *Local Government Act* to make TUPs a more useful tool for local governments to address the important issues of housing and short term rentals.

At the end of this letter are suggested amendments to the *LGA*.

First, here is some background and rationale.

- Housing and TUPs

Most LTA's and many other communities are facing housing challenges. Permanent solutions are hard to achieve.

In the meantime, desperate residents are seeking at least a short term option. There are owners of larger lots who are willing to provide an option by allowing a housing-challenged resident to temporarily place a removable dwelling unit (tiny home, mobile unit, caravan, recreational vehicle, etc) on their land as interim measure. Alternatively, an existing accessory building could be temporarily adapted for residential use.

In many cases, situations are so desperate, and landowners keen to help, that such solutions are being put in place despite not conforming with land use regulations. But non-permitted uses don't provide a secure situation. In other cases, landowners are holding off because the use is not permitted.

Generally, additional residential density on a property is considered through a rezoning application. But this is an onerous and expensive process for the applicant and the local government. A public hearing would likely reveal concerns about the inappropriateness of adding permanent density to a property in order to address a non-permanent arrangement between a current landowner and resident.

TUPs are a more appropriate permitting tool for this purpose. In fact, this option has been used by some local governments elsewhere. It is available in the Hornby Island and Denman Island LTAs, but there have been few, if any applications in these LTAs.

These seem to be the barriers:

- the requirement for a public hearing;
- the limited term of TUPs (3 years + renewal for 3 years);
- the assumption that a subsequent TUP cannot be applied for.

- Short term rentals and TUPs

Local governments in the Trust Area and throughout BC are faced with the challenge of whether to permit the burgeoning activity of short term rentals and if so how. Some communities are deciding to not permit the use at all. Others are trying to find ways to manage it.

Many municipalities are using business licences enabled under the community charter. These are not available to regional districts or local trust committees. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs has made it clear that the Islands Trust's "authorities in legislation are in relation to land use and planning" (business licenses are not a land use planning authority) and that if a regional district were to request business license authority, the Ministry and the regional district would need "to come to a common understanding of matters such as costs, impacts and enforcement implications of business licensing in a more rural context before pursuing a more general authority."

As it is, there is a limit to what can be regulated by business licenses authority compared to what can be addressed through land use authority.

With respect to using land use authority to allow and manage short term rentals, there are two options:

- a) to allow the use through zoning regulations;
a local government would have limited capacity to manage the vacation rentals because any tightening up of regulations or discontinuation of the permitted use would result in existing uses being lawfully non-conforming.
- b) to allow the use on a site-specific basis through temporary use permits;
a local government would be able to manage the use through having the ability to decide when, where and how to issue permits that would eventually expire.

Some local governments are already using TUPs to manage vacation rentals, including:

The Town of Gibsons
Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District
Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen
Thompson- Nicola Regional District
Columbia Shuswap Regional District
Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee
Galiano Island Local Trust Committee
North Pender Island Local Trust Committee

However, as with housing, there are issues that make them a much less-than-perfect fit for this use:

- the requirement for a hearing;
- the limited term of TUPs (3 years + renewal for 3 years);
- the assumption that a subsequent TUP cannot be applied for.

- Temporary Use Permits - background

In 1985, the *Municipal Amendment Act* added s.975 to the *Municipal Act* to enable local governments to issue “temporary commercial and industrial permits”. These provided a way to consider allowing commercial and industrial uses that were not permitted in a zoning bylaw.

The legislation requires:

- a) a hearing – on the basis that a proposed use would not have been subject to a public hearing in conjunction with establishing the OCP and zoning regulations;
- b) a term limitation of 2 years for a permit – and a further two years for its renewal - on the basis that a particular use being proposed was expected to be of short duration or subject to potential rezoning if an applicant wished to continue it permanently after a test period.

In 1998, the legislated provision for temporary commercial and industrial permits was continued in the new *Local Government Act*.

In, 2010 , the *Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act* , made a number of amendments to the *Local Government Act*. Temporary permit powers were amended to eliminate all references to commercial and industrial uses. What is now referred to as a temporary use permit (TUP) can allow any use that is not permitted by a zoning bylaw, including for example residential, agricultural and institutional uses. The maximum period for a TUP and a renewal were both increased from 2 to 3 years. All other regulations relating to TUPs remained the same.

- The changed context for Temporary Use Permits

The context for Temporary Use Permits has changed.

There are two meanings for the word “temporary”:

- “lasting for only a limited period of time”;
- “not permanent”.

When temporary commercial and industrial permits were first introduced, it was with the expectation that they would be applied to uses lasting for only a limited period of time.

Now, a number of local governments are utilizing TUPS to permit housing and vacation rentals as a valued alternative to permanently entrenching the use in zoning regulations.

TUPs are the only available land use planning tool for managing non-permanent uses.

- Suggested changes to Part 14, Division 8, Temporary Use Permits

In order to enable temporary use permits to be more useful for permitting non-permanent housing and short term rentals, here are three suggested additions to the legislation.

These would not impact how the regulations would be applied to other uses.

- Suggested addition to address requirements for a hearing:

(6) Section 494 (1), (2), (3), (4), and (5) with respect to public notice and hearing requirements do not apply if a local government proposes to pass a resolution under section 493 (1) (a) with respect to issuing a temporary use permit that would:

a) permit the short-term rental use of an existing permitted residential dwelling unit, provided the official community plan or zoning bylaw has designated areas where a temporary use permit may be issued for this particular purpose and has specified general conditions regarding the issue of permits for this use.

b) permit one temporary dwelling unit to be used for residential purposes, provided the official community plan or zoning bylaw has designated areas where a temporary use permit may be issued for this particular purpose and has specified general conditions regarding the issue of permits for this use.

Section 494 was put in place to provide an opportunity for a hearing about proposed commercial and industrial uses that had not been subject to a hearing when an OCP and zoning regulations were established. Although an additional dwelling unit or the use of an existing unit for paying guest accommodation are not as significant uses as commercial and industrial activities, there is still a case to be made for an opportunity for public input on whether and how such uses should be permitted.

This public input can be considered at a public hearing for an OCP/LUB amendment to establish policies to specify where temporary use permits for non-permanent housing and short term rentals may be considered and guidelines for permit conditions in advance of any permits being considered.

For example,

- policies could make statements like:

“Temporary use permits for non-permanent dwelling units shall only be considered on...lots larger than 2ha....or....on lots in the R2 zone....or.....on lots outside of areas known to have problems with the quantity and quality of water supply....or....?”

“Temporary use permits for short term rental of dwelling units shall only be considered on...lots zoned for residential use.....or....on lots in the R2 and Agricultural zones....or....?”

- guidelines for non-permanent dwellings could include requirements such as

...the dwelling must be removable or an existing accessory building that can be reconverted for non-residential use...

....the dwelling must be no larger than xxx square metres....

....the dwelling must be set back at least xx metres from any lot line...

- guidelines for short term rentals could include requirements such as:

...the short term rental use should not involve more than x bedrooms...

...the short term rental should not operate for more than x months in a year...

Having such policies and guidelines in the OCP, subject to a public hearing, will eliminate the need for a public hearing for each individual application because there will have been public input into establishing where and how the use would be conducted (as would have been the case in establishing zoning regulations).

- **Suggested addition to address the term of a permit:**

(2.1) Despite 497(2), a temporary use permit may be renewed up to 3 times if the permit permits either:

a) the short-term rental use of an existing permitted residential dwelling unit;

b) one temporary dwelling unit to be used for residential purposes.

Allowing a local government discretion to renew such a permit three times, rather than once, would provide an applicant with a sense that, while the use is not being permitted permanently there is an opportunity for it to be extended. This would also allow local governments to review the appropriateness of the permit on a regular basis, including consideration of evidence of non-compliance with permit conditions.

- **Suggested addition address to possible subsequent permits:**

(2.2) Following the expiration of a permit, the person to whom the temporary use permit has been issued may apply for a new permit to be considered for the same use.

A frequently stated reason for apprehension about the use of temporary use permits for non-permanent housing or for short term rentals is the assumption that when the permit expires, that's it – the use can not be subsequently re-permitted on the lot.

As I read it, the *Local Government Act* is silent on this matter. which suggests that there is no prohibition of a subsequent application. But this would be usefully clarified by a definitive statement.

- Local Government Act, Part 14, Division 8,

Here is the text of this division.

Suggested additions are inserted in ***bold italic***.

Temporary Use Permits

Designation of temporary use permit areas

492

For the purposes of section 493, an official community plan or a zoning bylaw may

- (a) designate areas where temporary uses may be allowed, and
- (b) specify general conditions regarding the issue of temporary use permits in those areas.

Temporary use permits for designated areas and other areas

493

(1) On application by an owner of land, a local government may issue a temporary use permit as follows:

- (a) by resolution, in relation to land within an area designated under section 492;
- (b) by bylaw, in relation to land within an area outside a municipality, if there is no official community plan in effect for the area.

(2) A temporary use permit may do one or more of the following:

- (a) allow a use not permitted by a zoning bylaw;
- (b) specify conditions under which the temporary use may be carried on;
- (c) allow and regulate the construction of buildings or structures in respect of the use for which the permit is issued.

(3) If a local government delegates the power to issue a temporary use permit under this section, the owner of land that is subject to the decision of the delegate is entitled to have the local government reconsider the matter.

Public notice and hearing requirements

494

- (1)** If a local government proposes to pass a resolution under section 493 (1) (a), it must give notice in accordance with subsections (2) to (4) of this section.
- (2)** The notice must state
- (a)** in general terms, the purpose of the proposed permit,
 - (b)** the land or lands that are the subject of the proposed permit,
 - (c)** the place where and the times and dates when copies of the proposed permit may be inspected,
 - (d)** the time and date when and, if applicable, the place where the resolution will be considered, and
 - (e)** if the meeting at which the resolution will be considered is conducted by means of electronic or other communication facilities, the way in which the meeting is to be conducted by those means.
- (3)** The notice must be published in accordance with section 94 [requirements for public notice] of the Community Charter at least 3 days and not more than 14 days before the adoption of the resolution to issue the permit.
- (3.1)** If the local government has adopted a bylaw under section 94.2 [bylaw to provide for alternative means of publication] of the Community Charter, the notice must be published by at least one of the means of publication specified in the bylaw not less than 3 days and not more than 14 days before the adoption of the resolution to issue the permit.
- (3.2)** If the local government has not adopted a bylaw under section 94.2 of the Community Charter, the last publication of the notice must be not less than 3 days and not more than 14 days before the adoption of the resolution to issue the permit.
- (4)** Section 466 (4) to (8) [specific requirements in relation to notice of public hearing] applies to the notice as if the resolution were a bylaw.
- (5)** If a local government proposes to adopt a bylaw under section 493 (1) (b), the following sections apply:
- (a)** section 464 [requirement for public hearing];
 - (b)** section 465 [public hearing procedures];
 - (c)** section 466 [notice of public hearing];
 - (d)** section 469 [delegating the holding of public hearings];
 - (e)** section 470 [procedure after public hearing].

(6) Section 494 (1), (2), (3), (4), and (5) with respect to public notice and hearing requirements do not apply if a local government proposes to pass a resolution under section 493 (1) (a) with respect to issuing a temporary use permit that would:

a) permit the short-term rental use of an existing permitted residential dwelling unit, provided the official community plan or zoning bylaw has designated areas where a temporary use permit may be issued for this particular purpose and has specified general conditions regarding the issue of permits for this use.

b) permit one temporary dwelling unit to be used for residential purposes, provided the official community plan or zoning bylaw has designated areas where a temporary use permit may be issued for this particular purpose and has specified general conditions regarding the issue of permits for this use.

Permit conditions: undertakings respecting land

495

(1) As a condition of issuing a temporary use permit, a local government may require the owner of the land to give an undertaking to

(a) demolish or remove a building or other structure, and

(b) restore land described in the permit to a condition specified in the permit by a date specified in the permit.

(2) An undertaking under subsection (1) must be attached to and forms part of the permit.

(3) If the owner of the land fails to comply with all of the undertakings given under subsection (1), the local government may enter on the land and carry out the demolition, removal or restoration at the expense of the owner.

Permit conditions: additional security requirements

496

(1) In addition to any security required under section 502, a local government may require, as a condition of issuing a temporary use permit, that the owner of the land give to the local government security to guarantee the performance of the terms of the permit.

(2) If there is a requirement for security under subsection (1), the permit may provide for

(a) the form of the security, and

(b) the means for determining

(i) when there is default under the permit, and

(ii) the amount of the security that forfeits to the local government in the event of default.

Term of permit and renewal of permit

497

(1) The owner of land in respect of which a temporary use permit has been issued has the right to put the land to the use described in the permit until the earlier of the following:

- (a) the date that the permit expires;
- (b) 3 years after the permit was issued.

(2) A person to whom a temporary use permit has been issued may apply to have the permit renewed, subject to the restriction that a temporary use permit may be renewed only once.

(2.1) Despite 497(2), a temporary use permit may be renewed up to 3 times if the permit permits either:

- a) the short-term rental use of an existing permitted residential dwelling unit;***
- b) one temporary dwelling unit to be used for residential purposes.***

(2.2) Following the expiration of a permit, the person to whom the temporary use permit has been issued may apply for a new permit to be considered for the same use.

(3) Subsection (1) and sections 495 [permit conditions: undertaking respecting land] and 496 [permit conditions: additional security requirements] apply in relation to a renewal under subsection (2).

.....

Thank you for considering this.

I hope it is helpful.

Sincerely,

Tony Law

Formerly:

- Hornby Island Local Trustee (1996-2018)
- Chair, Islands Trust Council's Task Force on Community Housing
- President, Islanders Secure Land Association (a Community Land Trust)
- Executive Director, Hornby Island Community Economic Enhancement Corporation
- Appointee, Comox Valley Regional District Select Committee on Homelessness and Housing



June 17, 2022

Christine Minney
Cindy Wolf
Jamie Stephens
San Juan County Council

Peter Luckham,
Chair
Islands Trust Council

c/o Ingrid R. Gabriel
councilvm@sanjuanco.com

Good day:

Thank you for your letter on January 26, 2022, regarding your request for an Emergency Towing Vessel in Sidney, British Columbia. We apologize for the delay in replying.

The Government of Canada is working to enhance marine safety through the Oceans Protection Plan. As you noted in your letter, this includes developing a National Strategy on Emergency Towing (NSET). One of the objectives of the NSET is to determine what emergency tow capacity is required both regionally and nationally. The strategy will consider regional needs, the perspectives of Indigenous peoples, partners and stakeholders, and lessons learned from the Atlantic Eagle and Atlantic Raven. Additionally, the strategy will be informed by a marine navigational risk assessment, among other inputs.

The Canadian Coast Guard is the lead federal agency for marine pollution incidents that fall within its mandate and works with stakeholders from federal and provincial agencies, Indigenous communities, and municipalities to respond to marine pollution incidents. To carry out its mandate effectively, the Coast Guard has trained personnel and equipment strategically located across Canada, including the Salish Sea, to assess, activate, and execute an effective response to a marine pollution incident.

We appreciate your interest in enhancing marine safety in Canada, as well as your time and efforts to collect the information and studies listed in your letter. The Government of Canada is aware of this work and these studies will be considered throughout the development of the NSET.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Omar Alghabra'.

The Honourable Omar Alghabra, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Transport

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Joyce Murray'.

The Honourable Joyce Murray, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the
Canadian Coast Guard

c.c. The Honourable George Heyman, M.L.A.
British Columbia's Minister of Environment and Climate Change

From: Marta Green <martag@sanjuanico.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2023 4:00 PM
To: Clare Frater <cfrater@islandstrust.bc.ca>
Cc: Lori Foster <lfoster@islandstrust.bc.ca>
Subject: FW: Response re: Emergency Towing Vessel AND Canada's Feb 2023 Presentation Slides

Clare and Lori,

We found the June 2022 response letter from Canada in an Outlook account set up for voicemail. Please share with Peter and members as appropriate.

During the Feb 22nd-23rd Winter 2023 Oceans Protection Plan (OPP) Dialogue Forum, Transport Canada shared the attached presentation also referencing the **Marine Navigation Risk Assessment**, which the Ministers refer to in their June letter response. Slide 3 of this presentation, attached, states **that Preliminary Output are Now Available**. We'll be requesting those preliminary results. Also WA Dept of Ecology is presenting their preliminary ETV modeling results on April 4th, 9-11am PDT.

Regards,
Marta

Emergency Towing – Marine Navigation Risk Assessment



Emergency Towing In Canada

Oceans Protection Plan 2016: Increasing emergency towing capacity

Moving toward the National Strategy on Emergency Towing

Current investments:

- 2 leased emergency towing vessels on the West Coast
- Towing kits added to major CCG vessels nationally

Policy Research & Analysis

Streams of engagement, research and analysis underway include:

- Perspectives of Indigenous Peoples, partners, and stakeholders
- International comparisons
- Lessons learned from the two leased emergency towing vessels
- **Marine Navigation Risk Assessment (MNRA)**

Marine Navigation Risk Assessment

- Seeks to understand shipping risk in Canada, with a focus on the types of accidents that could benefit from emergency towing response
- The MNRA was developed over 2 years of collaborative work
- Launched in summer 2022 - **preliminary outputs are now available**

Marine Navigation Risk Assessment

Activity	Timeframe	Status
Engage on Draft Methodology	2020-2022	✓
Conduct Independent Peer Review	May – Sept 2022	✓
Update Methodology Documents	Summer 2022	✓
Risk Assessment Stage 1: Descriptive Background of Marine Navigation Patterns	Summer 2022	✓
Risk Assessment Stage 2: Determine National Baseline Risk	Summer – fall 2022	✓
Risk Assessment Stage 3: Determine Scenario-Based Risk	Fall 2022 – spring 2023	In progress
National engagement on risk assessment results and scenario development	Fall 2022 – summer 2023	In progress
Final Risk Assessment Report	Fall 2023	Not yet started

National Baseline Risk Outputs

Interactive Maps Demonstration

The Next Phase

We invite Indigenous nations, stakeholders, and all interested parties to join in the discussion

Based on suggestions received, we will develop scenarios that look at how specific factors could affect levels of risk

- For example, creating scenarios with increased vessel traffic or extreme weather

Please contact:

Jacqueline.Lemieux@tc.gc.ca

Adrian.Nicoll@tc.gc.ca



Active Projects Report

Executive Committee

1. *Update Islands Trust Policy Statement*

With involvement from Trust Programs Committee as appropriate, co-ordinate a review of the Policy Statement including a First Nations and public engagement process. Project charter approved February 26, 2020. (Strategic Plan 3.1, 4.4 , 5.6, 5.7)

Responsible

Clare Frater

Dates

Rec'd: 26-Feb-2020
Target: 26-Sep-2023

2. *Climate Change Emergency*

Matters pertaining to Islands Trust mitigation and adaptation to climate change impacts. (Strategic Plan 3.1)

Responsible

Russ Hotsenpiller

Dates

Rec'd: 05-Jun-2019

3. *First Nations Reconciliation*

Implementation of the Reconciliation Action Plan. (Strategic Plan Items 4.5 & 4.6)

Responsible

Russ Hotsenpiller

Dates

Rec'd: 02-Sep-2020

4. *Preserve and protect marine ecosystems*

Continue advocacy re: Freighter Anchorages, Trust Council added freighter anchorages to the list of Executive Committee list of top priorities. (Strategic Plan Item 2.1)

Responsible

Clare Frater

Dates

Rec'd: 11-Mar-2021



Future Projects Report

Executive Committee

1. *Development of an Islands Trust Communications Strategy*

Responsible

Date Received

Including development of a new website. (Strategic Plan Item 4.2)

30-Aug-2017

2. *Marine Advocacy*

Responsible

Date Received

Associated with i.) impact of commercial activities on Southern Resident Killer Whales SRKW (Strat Plan Item 2.1), ii.) oil spills and iii.) anchorages.

02-Sep-2020

3. *Broadcast Public Meetings*

Responsible

Date Received

Develop the capacity to broadcast public meetings of Local Trust Committees, Council Committees and Trust Council. (Strategic Plan Item 4.1)

02-Sep-2020

4. *Improve Communications about the Islands Trust*

Responsible

Date Received

Related to Strategic Plan Items 4.1 & 4.2

30-Aug-2017

5. *NAPTEP regulation changes to increase the percentage of tax exemption*

Responsible

Date Received

Strategic Plan Item 1.3

02-Sep-2020



Future Projects Report

Executive Committee

6. *Advocate to reduce negative impacts of shellfish aquaculture practices*

Responsible

Date Received

Develop project charter and budget requests to build organizational capacity (knowledge and time) related to shellfish aquaculture advocacy.

16-Aug-2017

7. *Strengthen relations with First Nations*

Responsible

Date Received

MMIWG Calls for Justice Resolutions (Strategic Plan Item 4.6)

21-Oct-2020

1. All staff required to take training related to cultural safety in keeping with the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice.

2. That staff plan education on the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice for trustees and senior staff.

4. Staff to include information about the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice and cultural safety in staff and trustee orientation materials.

5. Draft amendments to the Communications Policy and the Advocacy Policy to address the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice.

8. *Strengthen relations with First Nations*

Responsible

Date Received

Develop a policy regarding referral responses where there is a known archeological site. (Strategic Plan Item 4.7)

26-May-2021

Future Projects Report

Executive Committee

9. Governance

Responsible

Date Received

Related to Section 5 of the Strategic Plan

21-Jul-2021

The possibility of utilizing Section 8(2)(e) of the Islands Trust Act. Responsibilities of trust council: 8(2)For the purpose of carrying out the object of the trust, the trust council may (e) make recommendations to the Lieutenant Governor in Council respecting the determination, implementation and carrying out of policies for the preservation and protection of the trust area and its unique amenities and environment -

10. MOTI MOU's

Responsible

Date Received

Investigate options for a joint review with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) of road standards, incorporating the Climate Change Declaration and the Reconciliation Declaration.

07-Sep-2022