

»»» LAND USE PLANNING ON BRITISH COLUMBIA'S PACIFIC COAST

The British Columbia government is working with First Nations, conservation groups, local communities, forest companies and other groups as part of an innovative approach to community-based resource management along B.C.'s Pacific Coast from the northern tip of Vancouver Island north to the Alaska border. The process is designed to reduce land use conflicts and develop plans that promote the best use of local resources.



Currently 3 separate community-based planning processes constitute the comprehensive Coast Sustainability Strategy – a strategy to define and implement ecosystem-based forest management. Ecosystem-based management is a strategic approach to managing human activities in sensitive areas that seeks to ensure the co-existence of healthy ecosystems and healthy human communities that are balanced and sustainable.

The 3 planning processes represent government's ongoing commitment to manage resources on the basis of sound science and in a co-operative manner with First Nations and other interests.

The process is designed to reduce land use conflicts.



QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS/HAIDA GWAII LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The B.C. government and Haida Nation have developed a framework agreement that will lead to a cooperative land use planning process for the Queen Charlotte Islands/Haida Gwaii that balances cultural, social and economic interests.

The goal is to develop an ecosystem-based plan that protects the environment, maintains spiritual and cultural values, enhances sustainable economic opportunities and fosters community stability.

A community planning forum, co-chaired by the Haida Nation and the B.C. government, will develop land use recommendations, which will provide management direction for a wide range of resource values including timber harvesting.

The Duu Guusd area, which is of special significance to the Haida Nation, has been protected from logging during the land use planning talks, which are expected to continue until the middle of 2004.



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»»» CENTRAL COAST LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Planning on the Central Coast (also known as the Great Bear Rainforest) is continuing with the involvement of First Nations, government, forest companies and other resource sectors, conservation groups and community representatives and other groups.

An independent, multi-disciplinary Coast Information Team is bringing together the best available scientific, traditional and local knowledge, environmental expertise and community information to develop ecosystem-based management. It is currently assessing ecological, social and economic values, and examining new systems for managing coastal streams, including salmon streams.

The Kitasoo and Gitga'at First Nations are directly involved in operation trials to test ecosystem-based management on the ground.

The completion date was recently extended to the end of 2003 after planning table members unanimously recommended that government extend it. This will allow the Coast Information Team enough time to gather science-based information that will be used in making final land use recommendations. In the meantime, discussions are continuing to finalize protection areas along the Central Coast.

Participants are taking an ecosystem-based management approach

NORTH COAST LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The North Coast planning process, which is being co-chaired by a First Nations representative and a local community leader, involves the area between Princess Royal Island and the town of Stewart. Marine and coastal zone issues, including offshore oil and gas and marine areas protected under federal jurisdiction, are subject to separate federal and provincial planning processes that are currently underway.

The North Coast plan will support sustainable economic development by contributing to the economic well-being of First Nations and coastal communities and protecting the environmental values unique to the region. The province is also providing resources to support the development of First Nations economic opportunities.



Participants are taking an ecosystem-based management approach that includes using Environmental Risk Assessment and other innovative modelling and analysis tools to develop land use options. Final land use recommendations are expected by the end of 2003.



For more information:

Market Outreach Network delivers facts about B.C.'s sustainable forest management on behalf of B.C.'s government, industry and communities.

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