

TURNING POINT

COASTAL FIRST NATIONS

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Landmark Forestry Agreements negotiated with Province

Coastal First Nations have successfully negotiated a number of landmark forest agreements with the Province.

Agreements have been reached with the Haisla, Wuikinuxv Nation, Heiltsuk and Kitasoo/Xaixais and Gitga'at.

These forestry agreements will provide them with revenue sharing and access to timber over a period of five years.

The agreements bring the Coastal First Nations a step closer to economic self-sufficiency, says Alex Chartrand. "They will increase the CFN participation in the forest sector."

Chartrand, vice-president of the CFN, says our communities have been waiting a long time for an opportunity to become a player in the provincial economy. "This will allow us to create employment for our band members, as well as to continue developing partnerships with forestry companies that are win-win."

The agreements are based on Aboriginal Rights and Title and did not require communities to abandon any of their Aboriginal interests, he said. "What the province has done is meet its economic accommodation in relation to forest development in the traditional territories of CFN."

The agreements will also address consultation requirements of the province, Chartrand said. "As well the CFN will fully participate in a timely manner in the review of all Operational Plans within their Traditional Territories provided to them by the province, and by the licensee."

Chartrand commended Forestry Minister Michael de Jong for doing the right thing with respect to the forestry agreement. "It was an extremely difficult agreement to conclude and all the parties had to make compromises. The primary significance of the agreements is the fact that the province is revenue sharing with our communities. That's never been done by any government in recognition of Aboriginal Rights and Title."

The agreements can provide an important piece of groundwork for all First Nations in B.C., Chartrand said. "These forestry agreements could go a long ways in creating stability on the coast."

Turning Point Initiative president Steve Wilson agreed. "The chiefs of the Coastal First Nations recognize that the forestry agreements are an important first step by the province to meet its commitment to our communities," said Wilson.

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Photo by: Bess Brown



Wuikinuxv Nation Completes Land and Marine Use Plan

“The plan will inform both Wuikinuxv and non-Wuikinuxv people what they can and cannot do in our territory.”

- Chief Alex Chartrand

The Wuikinuxv Land and Marine Use Plan is based on its priorities to protect their cultural values, sacred places, natural places, animals, birds, plants and fish.

The recently released Wuikinuxv Land and Marine Use Plan will define how Wuikinuxv manages its land and resources, says Chief Alex Chartrand. "The plan will inform both Wuikinuxv and non-Wuikinuxv people what they can and cannot do in our territory."

In developing the plan the Wuikinuxv balanced their social, ecological and economical values. "It provides detailed measures to ensure our cultural interests are protected, that the plants and animals of Wuikinuxv territory are protected and that our community and community members receive economic benefits from resource use in our territory."

The foundation of the plan is the traditional use by the Wuikinuxv of its territory, Chartrand said. "We completed a traditional use study in 1997. The project identified almost 700 areas of significant traditional use and illustrates a cultural landscape that is unique to the Wuikinuxv."

The traditional use study database shows only the existing known information, he said. "We anticipate it will be continually added to as new information becomes available."

The land use plan is also consistent with the General Protocol Agreement signed by the Turning Point Initiative and British Columbia in April 2001, he said. "Another important feature of the plan is that it is consistent with ecosystem-based management (EBM) principles. EBM is not new to the Wuikinuxv, we have practiced it for thousands of years."

The Wuikinuxv have divided its traditional

territory into different zones depending on how they will be used, Chartrand said. "For example, important cultural areas need to be protected from potential damage by industrial activity. Salmon spawning areas and other important places for animals and plants also need to be protected."

An important strategy in the plan is developing and implementing protocol agreements with third parties operating in our traditional territory, he said. "These agreements will define the relationship between the Wuikinuxv and logging companies, fishing resorts, environmental organizations, researchers and governmental agencies. They will also define arrangements for revenue sharing and information sharing."

All Wuikinuxv activities must be consistent with the plan, Chartrand said. "As well, all activities undertaken by non-Wuikinuxv must agree to abide by the plan. That's why the general protocols arrangements with third parties we are

proposing are important."

A detailed implementation strategy will be developed to ensure the Wuikinuxv land and marine use plan succeeds, he said.

"Currently, EBM is being developed as an overarching framework to govern all activities in Wuikinuxv territory that is consistent with Wuikinuxv visions, goals and aspirations."

The land and marine use plan couldn't have been completed without the support of the community, Chartrand said. "The plan is the result of a lot of hard work by our community members on the Wuikinuxv Land Use Steering Committee. It is also a reflection of the commitment to planning for our future by our elders, Chief and Council and community members."



Wuikinuxv Chief Alex Chartrand with David Suzuki Foundation President Dr. Tara Cullis

Working Together to Build a Shellfish Industry



Coastal First Nations must be strategic if they are to be successful in building a shellfish aquaculture industry.

"We must be strategic in our approach as we move this project forward," said Larry Greba.



Photo courtesy of Tammy Norgard

Greba, the Turning Point Initiative shellfish aquaculture coordinator, said the soon to be completed regional business plan is another step in the development of a shellfish aquaculture industry on the North and central Coast. "The plan will look at such issues as marketing, processing, funding, and capacity building."

The regional business plan is meant to accomplish three objectives:

- Lever money from government and private sources;
- Give communities a foundation to develop their own business plans; and
- Provide a basis for ongoing collaboration between First Nations on the North and Central Coast and Haida Gwaii.

Another objective of the regional plan, which will be completed in January 2004, is to identify the best mix and volume of species that shellfish farms should grow in the region according to market demand, as well as review issues around processing infrastructure, training and business structures.

Greba said we want to ensure that

communities are aware of what it will take to get a shellfish business started. "The industry offers a lot of opportunities to the Coastal First Nations but there is still a lot of work to be completed. We hope that people will continue to be excited about the industry as it will not happen overnight."

Community support is integral to the success of the project, he said. "One of the most important aspects of the project is keeping community members up-to-date on what's happening with the pilot project. In order to achieve this members of our technical team will be offering one-day workshops in each of the participating communities in February or March."

Another key to success is for communities to work together in building a shellfish industry, Greba said. "It will be difficult for individual communities to compete at a regional, national or global level. You must think big and global for long term success, this includes considering partnerships with the private sector who can complement the First Nation's vision. Most successful aquaculture developments around the world were paved with the corpses of small, inward looking companies who failed due to undercapitalization or the lack of strategic thinking."

Greba said next steps for the project include: developing local business plans; developing tenures/memorandum of understandings; expanding or moving stage one farms; hosting biannual shellfish workshops; and developing a corporate structure for a shellfish business.

The Turning Point Initiative and the Tsimshian Stewardship Committee have been working together on developing a coastal shellfish aquaculture industry since April, 2003. "The technical teams of the two groups were directed by representatives of the First Nations communities to work together to develop a collaborative business plan for a successful shellfish industry for all. We were also asked to coordinate activities related to the stage one farms of the shellfish pilot project."

"We must be strategic in our approach as we move this project forward."

- Larry Greba

Photo Courtesy of Tammy Norgard





Coastal First Nations of the Turning Point Initiative Celebrates Independence

**“It was always
our intention
to become
independent.”**

— Art Sterritt



Photo by: Bess Brown

Members of the Skidegate Repatriation Committee share culture at Turning Point meeting.

The Coastal First Nations of the Turning Point Initiative celebrated its independence at a feast held in Skidegate.

After several years of working closely with the David Suzuki Foundation (DSF) the Turning Point Initiative is entering another phase of its evolution, says Turning Point Initiative executive director Art Sterritt. "It was always our intention to become independent."

During a time of continuing change and rapid development on the coast, the DSF assisted in bringing First Nations communities together to discuss common problems and common solutions. "Communities were concerned that the changes, although some of them were welcome, were unplanned and having a damaging impact on First Nations and our territories," Sterritt said.

By organizing the initial Turning Point meetings the DSF made it possible for us to share our experiences, he said. "The communities discovered that there was much common ground and shared frustration at our inability to have a meaningful say in what was happening in our traditional territories. Above

all, the Coastal First Nations became concerned that we weren't communicating with one another. We rarely had the time to talk to one another."

Sterritt said the sharing of information among First Nations is not a luxury. "It is absolutely necessary if we are to manage the rapid change we face on a daily basis. There are heavy penalties to pay for not having information – wrong decisions, missed opportunities, wasted time and money. The irony is that information often exists, somewhere, but does not get to the people who need it in a form which enables them to act on it."

The Lannan Foundation, located in Santa Fe, New Mexico, also announced that they would continue funding the Turning Point Initiative for another four years. "We were thrilled by Lannan's decision to continue supporting the work we're doing. Without the support of foundations such as Lannan the work that needs to be done on the coast likely wouldn't happen. It means we can continue with the important work of developing a sustainable coastal economy," said Sterritt.

Photo by: Bess Brown





Lannan Foundation is a family foundation dedicated to cultural freedom, diversity and creativity through projects that support exceptional contemporary artists and writers, as well as inspired Native activists in rural indigenous communities.

In many ways the relationships the Coastal First Nations has with foundations, government and environmental groups is ground-breaking, Sterritt said. "It's always a good idea to collaborate with other groups but developing a positive working relationship is difficult to achieve. We have been successful because of the level of commitment from the groups we work with."

Sterritt added there has never been a better moment for forging the relationship with foundations, industry, government and environmental groups. "We all want to promote the sustainable development of BC's coast."

Any group that Coastal First Nations works with must recognize that they must move away from a culture of knowing what's best for First Nations and work in partnership with us, he said. "The role of the environmental

Wuikinuxv Nation Chief Alex Chartrand and former Assembly of First Nations National Chief Ovid Mercredi at Turning Point feast in Skidegate.



Hereditary Chief Reynold Russ and Haida artist Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas

groups should be that of an ally – this means developing new ways working and developing new skills that enable them to support our initiatives."

If Coastal First Nations and environmental groups are to be successful in working together there must be clarity and agreement on common objectives, he said. "For instance, one area we all want to focus on is creating employment, one clear indicator is the number of people who get jobs. This is obviously an important measure of success when evaluating such a project, but it should also be only one of a number of desirable outcomes."

The relationship between the Coastal First Nations and industry, government and environmental groups has made a real difference to First Nation communities on British Columbia's coast, he said.

"We have been successful because of the level of commitment from the groups we work with."
- Art Sterritt

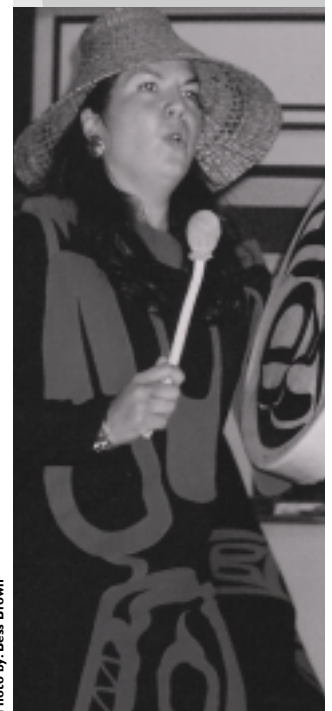


Photo by: Bess Brown



Shellfish Pilot Project Shows Promise

“Ongoing observations, assessment, training and discussions among project participants will be essential to industry development.”
- Brian Kingzett

Although it's still early the results of shellfish pilot projects being carried out by 10 coastal communities are showing considerable potential.

"Most shellfish have doubled in size at all locations since they were seeded in early July," said Tammy Norgard Turning Point Shellfish Aquaculture Coordinator.

"The current success of this project has thrilled all participating communities," says Brian Kingzett Tsimshian Stewardship Committee Project sub-contractor.

"Community members are excited and optimistic about the potential of shellfish aquaculture for their communities."

"The results are comparable to the growth rates that occur in southern British Columbia," Kingzett says.

The spring and summer of 2003 saw the implementation, development, and monitoring of the first stage of shellfish aquaculture on the northern coast of British Columbia. Through the Turning Point Initiative and the Tsimshian Stewardship Committee Shellfish Aquaculture projects, 10 coastal First Nations are involved in the development of a shellfish aquaculture industry.

By working together Turning Point and the Tsimshian Stewardship Committee were able to pool resources. "It saved money on logistics and volume," he said.

"Each of the communities (Wuikinuxv, Heiltsuk, Kitasoo, Haisla, Skidegate, Old Massett, Lax Kw'alaams, Metlakatla, Kitkatla and Gitga'at) are closely monitoring the growth of shellfish at prime locations in each of their territories," Norgard said. "Each site

has oysters, scallops, and two species of mussels seeded in a variety of culture containers attached to rafts or hung from 50 foot lines suspended horizontally below the surface of the ocean."

The communities each selected three prime locations for setting up stage one farms within their traditional territories. "The sites are intended to investigate site selection, culture methods for a variety of shellfish species and provide community training and demonstration opportunities," Norgard said.

Aboard the Royal Pacific seine boat, Captain Arnold Clifton and the crew Ralph Chamberlain, Edward Clifton, A. J. Clifton, shellfish technician Stephanie Richards, Brian Kingzett and Tammy Norgard used their collective expertise to establish longline and raft sites, deliver materials, seed, and training to participating communities.

"Monitoring shellfish growth and production potential and implementing good environmental practices are of prime importance during the first stage of the Shellfish Aquaculture Initiative", Kingzett added. "Ongoing observations, assessment, training and discussions among project participants will be essential to industry development."



Photo Courtesy of Tammy Norgard

The sites will continue to be monitored until June 2004. "Communities will have to make decisions about the sites – whether they want to expand the sites, discuss another pilot project, add to or increase seeding of sites or continue monitoring the sites."

Norgard said whatever decisions are made communities will move cautiously. "We want to learn from the mistakes made in the South. Making similar mistakes in the North could be very expensive."

Photo Courtesy of Tammy Norgard



Offshore Oil and Gas Moratorium Being Reviewed



Both Canada and British Columbia are engaged in review processes to determine whether a moratorium on offshore oil and gas should be lifted.

Canada has prohibited crude oil tanker traffic through Dixon Entrance, Hecate Strait and Queen Charlotte Sound since 1972 because of environmental concerns. The federal moratorium was extended to include offshore oil and gas activities.

This was followed by a similar moratorium by British Columbia.

Coastal First Nations of the Turning Point Initiative

The Coastal First Nations of the Turning Point Initiative are in the early stages of gathering information to inform our communities on activities by the various parties, including the federal and provincial government, industry and environmental groups, related to offshore oil and gas on B.C.'s coast.

British Columbia's perspective on offshore oil and gas development

In 2001 British Columbia appointed an independent scientific panel to examine whether offshore oil and gas can be extracted in a scientifically sound and environmentally responsible manner. The Offshore Oil and Gas Task visited nine northern coastal communities to listen to the views of communities, local residents and First Nations.

The task force released its report in January 2002. It concluded that "there is no inherent or fundamental inadequacy of the science and technology, properly applied in an appropriate regulatory framework, to justify a blanket moratorium" on offshore oil and gas activities.

One of the findings was that Northern communities, including First Nations want to have a strong voice in determining if the moratorium should be lifted.

The report also outlined a number of recommendations of further work that needs to be done before any activity begins. In response, the province enlisted the University of Northern British Columbia to carry out scientific and technical research and develop a

work plan that responds to these recommendations.

In its February 2003 Throne Speech the province stated, "no sector of our economy offers more promise for job and wealth creation throughout British Columbia than our energy industry. The new Energy Policy will open up new investments in independent power production and clean, renewable alternative energy throughout B.C."

It further stated that offshore oil and gas exploration holds tremendous promise for communities in the Northwest and on northern Vancouver Island. By 2010, British Columbia wants to have an offshore oil and gas industry that is up and running, environmentally sound, and booming with job creation.

British Columbia established a team to enable offshore oil and gas development to occur in BC in a scientifically sound and environmentally responsible manner.

The team is guided by ten principles, including:

- The provincial government must meet its obligations regarding First Nations' rights and interests
- The provincial government must consider the views of coastal residents in determining how to develop offshore oil and gas
- British Columbians must have access to accurate and understandable information about the potential benefits and risks associated with offshore oil and gas development
- Offshore oil and gas development must co-exist with fishing, tourism and other marine industries

Four goals of the oil and gas team are to:

- Provide the province with information needed to make sound decisions on developing West Coast offshore oil and gas; and
 - Create a regulatory framework under which offshore oil and gas development may occur in BC.
- (cont'd on page 8)

No sector of our economy offers more promise for job and wealth creation throughout BC than our energy industry.





Offshore Oil and Gas Moratorium Being Reviewed

Canada announced it would proceed with a process to identify science gaps relating to possible offshore oil and gas development.

(cont'd from page 7)

Canada's perspective on offshore oil and gas development

On March 28 Canada announced that it would proceed with a process to identify science gaps relating to possible offshore oil and gas development in B.C., as well as to hear the views of the public regarding whether or not the federal moratorium should be lifted for selected areas.

In a press release federal Natural Resources Canada Minister Herb Dhaliwal stated the process is not a decision on whether to lift the moratoria, but rather a means to fully explore the issues and

views of British Columbians.

The process is to have two phases the first phase is a science review panel that will identify gaps in scientific knowledge. The review panel was to complete its work by the end of October. The review panel is to release a report prior to the public and First Nations consultations in phase two.

Canada recognizes that offshore oil and gas activities have the potential to contribute to the long-term economic development of the province. At the same time, there will be a variety of public views and concerns that need to be taken into account by the Government of Canada before any decision is made regarding the moratorium.

Chronology of Offshore Oil and Gas Activities in British Columbia

- 1949 - Drilling for oil in the Queen Charlotte Island Region
- 1959 - BC declares a Crown reserve over oil and gas resources in the area east of a line running north-south three miles seaward of Queen Charlotte Islands and Vancouver Island.
- 1967 - The Supreme Court of Canada rules that the Territorial Sea off British Columbia, outside of bays, harbours and inland waters, belongs to Canada
- 1967 - Shell Canada begins a drilling program off Barkley Sound, Vancouver Island. Over the next two years, 14 wells are drilled in the offshore region from Barkley Sound north through Queen Charlotte Sound and Hecate Strait
- 1970 - Canada declares that no drilling or exploration will occur in the Strait of Georgia.
- 1971 - The BC Legislature passes a resolution opposing tanker traffic off the west coast
- 1972 - Canada places moratorium on offshore oil and gas
- 1976 - British Columbia Court of Appeal rules the Strait of Georgia is owned by the Province
- 1984 - Supreme Court of Canada rules Strait of Georgia is owned by the Province
- 1984-86 - Independent Federal-Provincial Environmental Review Panel established to assess potential environmental and socio-economic effects of offshore oil and gas exploration
- 1986-89 - BC and Canada negotiate management and jurisdiction over offshore oil and gas exploration and development
- 1989 - BC announces that there will be no drilling offshore for a least five years
- 2001 - BC appoints independent scientific panel to examine whether offshore oil and gas can be extracted in a scientifically and environmentally sound manner. An offshore Oil and Gas Task Force visits nine northern coastal communities to listen to the views of community members, local residents and First Nations
- 2002 - BC accepted the report of the scientific panel that "there is no inherent or fundamental inadequacy of the science or technology, properly applied in an appropriate regulatory framework, to justify a blanket moratorium on offshore oil and gas activities." The Task Force concluded that northern communities, including First Nations, want to have a strong voice in the contemplation of offshore oil and gas.
- 2003 - Canada creates two panels to explore the issues and views of British Columbians on offshore oil and gas. The goal of the review is to provide decision makers with an understanding of the possible impacts of oil and gas activities in selected BC offshore areas

The opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the First Nations of Turning Point.

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