

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS, AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS  
DECISION NOTE**

Date: August 19, 2016  
CLIFF/tracking #: 221813

**PREPARED FOR:** Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

**ISSUE:** Direction required for addressing old growth forest issues on Vancouver Island

**BACKGROUND:**

Old growth forest<sup>1</sup> management is an important and increasingly sensitive issue on Vancouver Island. Old growth forests are valued for their ecological importance, their social, spiritual and cultural significance, and are an important source of high quality timber.

Recently, environmental groups have organized a campaign to protect old growth forests in the Walbran Valley adjacent to the Carmanah-Walbran Park and have launched a “stop old growth logging on Vancouver Island” campaign. East Creek, on the northwest side of Vancouver Island near Brooks Peninsula, is another area of increasing conflict between industry and Environmental Non-Government Organizations (ENGOS). A current publication from the Sierra Club and the Wilderness Committee (“Vancouver Island’s Last Stand”) highlights 16 areas that they suggest should be considered for “protection and restoration” (see Appendix 1).

ENGOS are concerned that old growth protection is inadequate and that the transition to second growth logging is too slow. The rise of “big tree” tourism is seen as an economic opportunity for communities. The public in general enjoy being around “big trees” regardless of age and this has generated some tourism interest particularly in the area of Port Renfrew where Avatar Grove was protected a few years ago in an Old Growth Management Area (OGMA). Some communities have requested that the province protect areas with big trees.

Vancouver Island has an area of approximately 3.3 million hectares; of which 2.4 million hectares is Crown land. The forested Crown land area is 1.9 million hectares, of which 40 percent is old growth forest. More than one third of these old growth forests are protected or reserved although it is not evenly distributed across the island or across ecosystems. The majority of old growth forest is found in the western and northern parts of Vancouver Island, across a range of productivity classes. The least old growth forest is found on the highly productive east side of Vancouver Island, most of which is private land in close proximity to the island’s main urban centres. The Crown areas of east Vancouver Island were logged first and are now largely second growth.

Current old growth forest management on Vancouver Island reflects an early harvest history and implementation of the Vancouver Island Land Use Plan (VILUP). The Vancouver Island Land Use Decision was made in 1994 and the objectives were made legal through the Vancouver Island Higher Level Order in 2000. During VILUP discussions, limited consultation with First Nations occurred, stakeholder consensus was limited and protection was capped at 13 percent.

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<sup>1</sup> The definition of “old growth forest” is a topic of debate. For this initiative, it means a forest stand with a measured inventory age greater than 250 years.

Today, old growth forest management mechanisms used on Vancouver Island include: VILUP, the provincial Non-Spatial Old Growth Order, spatially designated OGMAs in some areas, the Clayoquot Sound Land Use Objectives Order with associated watershed plans and the Coastal Douglas Fir Land Use Order. Old growth forest is also reserved or protected in wildlife habitat areas, ungulate winter ranges, parks, ecological reserves, and wildlife management areas. Old growth forest planning under these mechanisms is largely complete however there are some areas where additional spatialization of OGMAs is possible. In addition, there is ongoing work to develop an implementation plan to address the critical habitat needs for Northern Goshawk (NOGO) and Marbled Murrelet (MAMU), which will involve the establishment of additional wildlife habitat areas.

The province faces several challenges in managing old growth forests on Vancouver Island. Competing interests for a limited resource results in conflict between industry and ENGOs. First Nations also have strong interests in land and resource on Vancouver Island. Given the increased focus by ENGOs on Vancouver Island, as well as questions being raised by communities and First Nations, it is important that the province develop and communicate a strategy regarding old growth forests. The purpose of this briefing note is to seek the minister's direction on the scope of the strategy and request a briefing meeting to discuss the options with the minister.

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**DECISION & SIGNATURE**  
Steve Thomson  
Minister

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**DATE SIGNED**

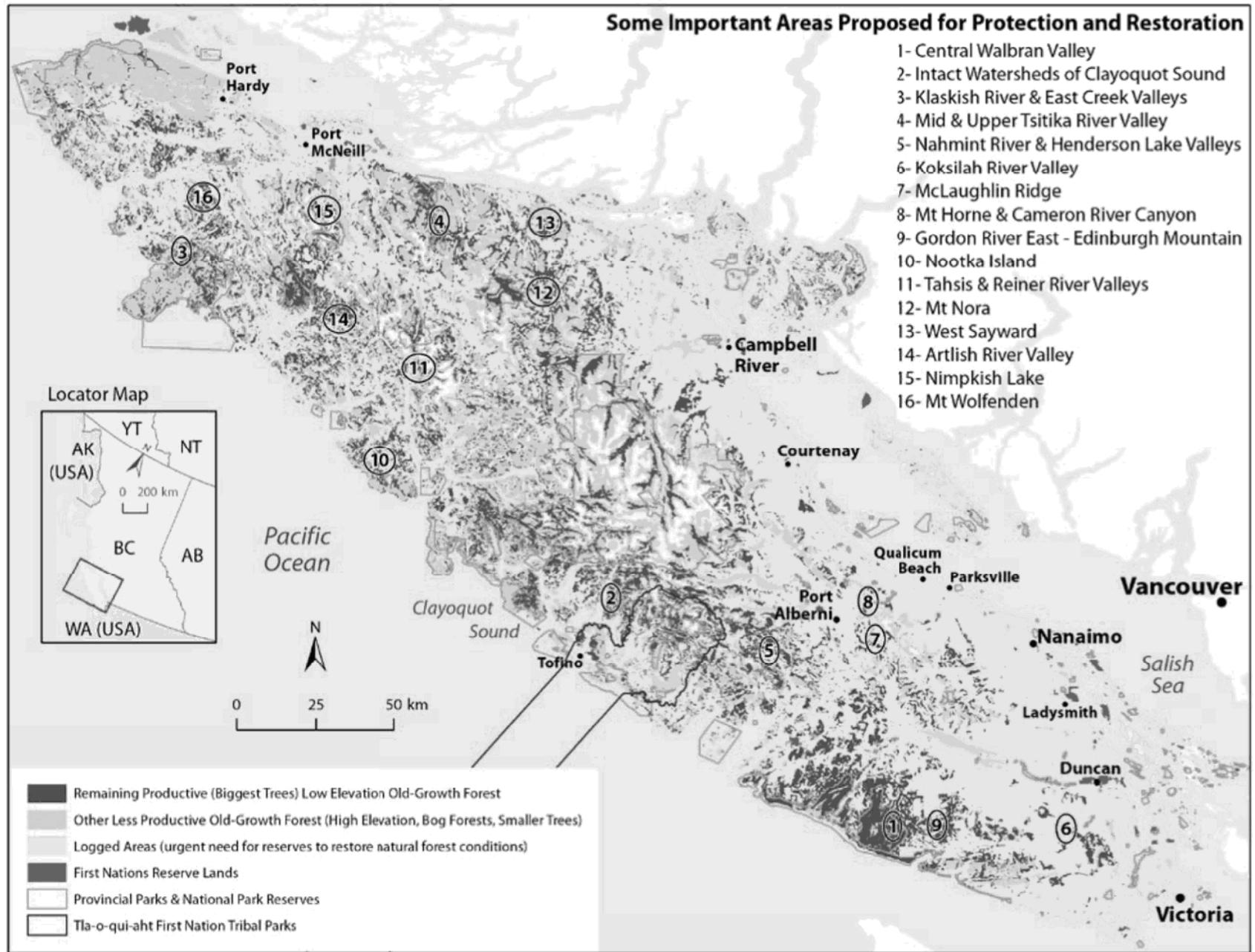
Attachment 1: Sierra Club Hot Spots on Vancouver Island

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DM	JF	Aug 22/16
DMO		
ADM	CS	Aug 22/16
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Author	DJ	Aug 15/16



**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS  
DECISION NOTE**

Date: February 3, 2017

CLIFF: 225937

x-ref: 221813

**PREPARED FOR: Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations**

**ISSUE:** Approval of work plan for the Vancouver Island Old Growth Forest Initiative

**BACKGROUND:**

Old growth forest management is an important and increasingly sensitive issue on Vancouver Island. Old growth forests are valued for their ecological importance, their social, spiritual and cultural significance, and are an important source of high quality timber.

Recently, environmental groups have organized a campaign to protect old growth forests in the Walbran Valley adjacent to the Carmanah-Walbran Park and have launched a “stop old growth logging on Vancouver Island” campaign. East Creek, on the northwest side of Vancouver Island near Brooks Peninsula, is another area of increasing conflict between industry and Environmental Non-Government Organizations (ENGOS). ENGOS are concerned that old growth protection is inadequate and that the transition to second growth logging is too slow. A current publication from the Sierra Club and the Wilderness Committee (“Vancouver Island’s Last Stand”) highlights 16 areas that they suggest should be considered for “protection and restoration”.

The protection of unique trees is one way that British Columbia (BC) can address public desire to conserve iconic forest features. Unique trees are a living biological record of forest growth and are significantly different from representative trees in the surrounding mature stand. Public interest in the protection of these trees has been strong and steady since the protection of a unique tree stand, Avatar Grove, in 2010. “Tree tourism” is viewed as an economic opportunity for Vancouver Island communities and by Tourism BC. Both Western Forest Products Inc. and BC Timber Sales have recognized the need to protect such trees and have created internal policies to reserve these unique forest features from harvesting on their tenures.

Managing old growth forests on Vancouver Island is complex given the polarized interests on this issue; however, there is an opportunity to further actions without re-opening the Vancouver Island Land Use Plan at this time. In September 2016, the minister discussed a mandate for the Vancouver Island Old Growth Forest Initiative (VIOGFI) and requested that a work plan be developed. The purpose of this briefing note is to seek the minister’s approval of the attached project work plan (Attachment 1).

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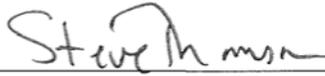
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Approved / Not Approved



April 4/2017

Signature

Date

Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of  
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Attachment: VIOGFI project work plan

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**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS  
DECISION NOTE**

Date: February 3, 2017  
CLIFF: 227135

**PREPARED FOR: Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations**

**ISSUE:** Clarifying level of protection needed to bolster protection of the Coastal Douglas-Fir ecosystem in the South Island Natural Resource District as part of the Vancouver Island Old Growth Forest Initiative.

**BACKGROUND:**

There is increasing social pressure to improve protection and conservation of old growth and rare ecosystems, particularly on Vancouver Island. In September 2016, a decision note (CLIFF 221813) regarding old growth forest issues on Vancouver Island (Vancouver Island Old Growth Forest Initiative) was discussed with the Minister and he was supportive but requested a work plan and project charter be brought back for approval. A separate decision note (CLIFF 225937) for the Minister has been forwarded with the details of the Vancouver Island Old Growth Forest Initiative.

One element of the initiative is to bolster existing Coastal Douglas-Fir (CDF) protection to the extent possible with minimal timber harvesting land base (THLB) impacts. The global range of the CDF biogeoclimatic zone lies almost entirely in BC. This biogeoclimatic zone has the greatest number of species and ecosystems at risk in BC<sup>1</sup>. The CDF zone is highly threatened with only 8% of the zone protected<sup>2</sup>, <1% of old growth forests remaining<sup>3</sup>, and approximately half of the zone permanently converted due to development (e.g., agriculture and residential)<sup>4</sup>. Land ownership in the CDF zone presents a challenge for achieving biodiversity conservation objectives, as only 9% of the CDF is on Crown land and 80% is privately owned.

In 2008, in response to the Forest Practices Board and public pressure, the Province released a CDF Conservation Strategy, which included the following components:

- (1) to establish a Land Use Order (LUO) to protect 1,600 hectares of Crown land in the CDF;
- (2) complete Terrestrial Ecosystem Mapping of the CDF zone;
- (3) implement a moratorium on new tenures in the CDF until the LUO was in place; and
- (4) raise public awareness of CDF conservation issues, with a focus on non-Crown land, and promote CDF stewardship for those working in the CDF.

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<sup>1</sup> BC Species and Ecosystems Explorer (December 14, 2016)

<sup>2</sup> Cook, J. 2011. Coastal Douglas Fir (CDF) Zone Protected Areas Ecosystem Representation Analysis. Deliverables Report. Ministry of Forests, Lands, & Natural Resource Operations. Nanaimo, BC.

<sup>3</sup> Madrone Environmental Services Ltd. 2008. Terrestrial Ecosystem Mapping of the Coastal Douglas-Fir Biogeoclimatic Zone. Duncan, BC.

<sup>4</sup> Hectares BC (2010 query)

Implementation of the CDF Conservation Strategy has resulted in:

- 1,600 hectares of CDF protected under a Land Use Objective Regulation (LUOR) Order under the *Land Act* in 2010.
- 428 hectares of Old Growth Management Areas established in 2011 in the CDF.
- The CDF Conservation Partnership was established in 2013 ([www.cdfcp.ca](http://www.cdfcp.ca)) and represents a collaborative approach to CDF conservation between environmental organizations, private land owners, local governments, and the Province.

In 2011, a decision note, signed by Assistant Deputy Ministers of the Ministry of Environment (MOE) and the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (FLNRO), provided a mandate to explore opportunities for additional conservation measures on Crown land in the CDF and directed staff to work collaboratively with agency colleagues and stakeholders while being mindful of existing government commitments (CLIFF 177890).

The purpose of this decision note is to seek specific direction from the Minister on the scope of additional protection for CDF that also supports the Vancouver Island Old Growth Forest Initiative.

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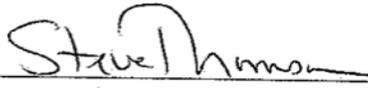
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**RECOMMENDATION:**

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Signature  
Honourable Steve Thomson  
Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural  
Resource Operations

Feb 22 / 2017  
Date

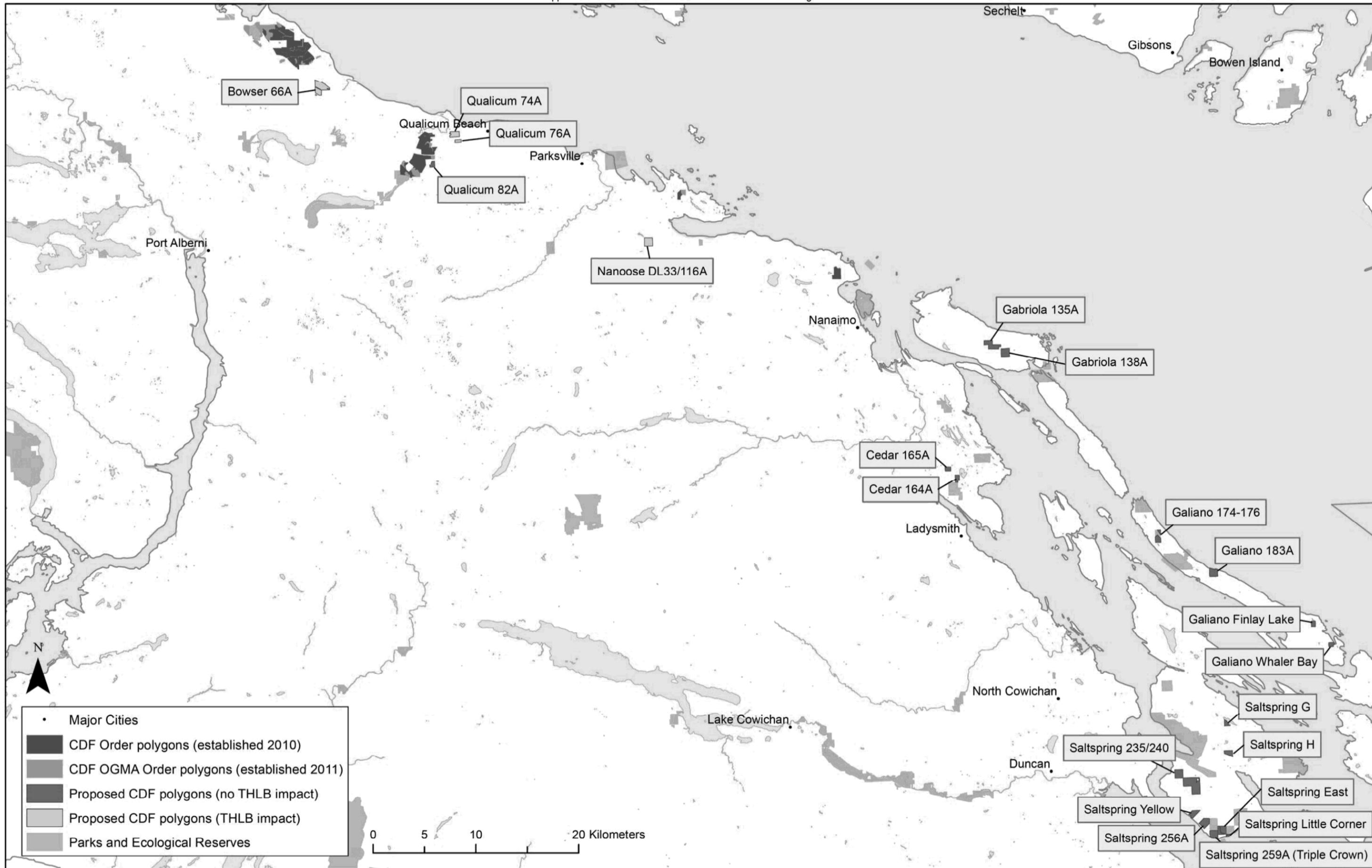
**Attachment:** Appendix 1 - Map showing overall CDF protection (existing and proposed new protections)

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ADM - Coast Area	CS	Feb 7/17
RED	SH	Feb 3/17
Author	RM	Jan 20/17



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**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS  
AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
DECISION NOTE**

Date: August 24, 2017  
CLIFF: 230365

**PREPARED FOR: Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development**

**ISSUE:** Seeking direction regarding old growth forest issues on Vancouver Island

**BACKGROUND:**

Old growth forest<sup>1</sup> management is an important and increasingly sensitive issue on Vancouver Island. Old growth forests are valued for their ecological importance, their social, spiritual and cultural significance, and are an important source of high quality timber.

This issue was raised to the previous Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations in September 2016. The key question before the Minister was whether to open up the Vancouver Island Land Use Plan to rebalance old growth targets. Given the potential complexities and implications of reopening the land use plan, a decision was made at that time to move forward with the following tasks referred to as the Vancouver Island Old Growth Forest Initiative (see Attachment 1 Decision Note 221813 and map):

- Acquire and integrate old growth forest data, including accessing tree farm licence data;
- Investigate strategies to improve the forest inventory on Vancouver Island;
- Develop/decide on an old growth forest definition;
- Use cumulative effects assessments to understand current conditions and trends;
- Implement some new wildlife habitat areas for species at risk, specifically Northern Goshawk (NOGO) and Marbled Murrelet (MAMU);
- Review and discuss the second growth transition strategy with the forestry sector;
- Bolster existing Coastal Douglas Fir protection to the extent possible;
- Examine opportunities for legally establishing existing draft old growth management areas;
- Develop and implement a policy to protect iconic big trees; and
- Develop a communication plan including a focussed stakeholder and First Nation engagement strategy.

In February 2017, a work plan for these tasks was submitted and approved (see Attachment 2 Decision Note 225937 and updated work plan).

Also in February 2017, a decision note clarifying the task to “bolster existing Coastal Douglas Fir protection to the extent possible” was submitted and approved (see Attachment 3 Decision Note 227135 and map).

Some limited stakeholder communication has already occurred related to the general approach, including engagement with the coast forest industry, the Association of Vancouver Island, Coastal Communities, and select environmental organizations (Sierra Club and Ancient Forest

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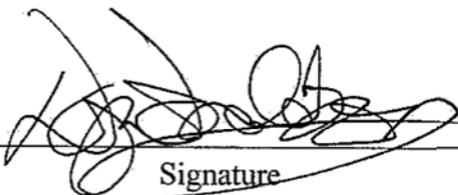
<sup>1</sup> The definition of “old growth forest” is a topic of debate. For this initiative, it means a forest stand with a measured inventory age greater than 250 years.

Alliance). There was some progress made on these tasks but all external communication and engagement ceased during the interregnum period.

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**DECISION:**

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 Signature

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 Date

Sept. 19/17

Honourable Doug Donaldson  
 Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource  
 Operations and Rural Development

- Attachments (3):
1. Decision Note 221813 and map
  2. Decision Note 225937 and updated work plan
  3. Decision Note 227135 and map

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**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS AND  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
INFORMATION NOTE**

Date: September 8, 2017  
CLIFF: 230890  
X-ref: 230862

**PREPARED FOR: Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development**

**ISSUE:** Implementation of reconciliation agreement with Snuneymuxw First Nation and Mid-Island Regional Forestry Initiative

**BACKGROUND:**

The Snuneymuxw First Nation (SFN) is a Douglas Treaty First Nation whose traditional territory is located in the Nanaimo and Gabriola Island area. This area includes the Port of Nanaimo, Vancouver Island's largest commercial port, and the Nanaimo River Estuary. These are key economic areas for SFN, the Province, and industry.

The Province and SFN signed a reconciliation agreement on March 27, 2013. The Province, led by the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (IRR), is currently engaged with SFN on the implementation of the 2013 reconciliation agreement.

To date, implementation of the reconciliation agreement has included the transfer of 877.5 hectares of fee simple lands to SFN on Mount Benson (a BC Timber Sales operating area) and in Departure Bay, the continued abeyance of litigation by SFN, and a long term extension of SFN's park operations permit (BC Parks) on Newcastle (*Saysutshun*) Island. The parties are continuing to discuss interests in the Nanaimo River Estuary, an engagement process for land and resource use in SFN's traditional territory, and potential additional land transfers.

**DISCUSSION:**

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DMO		
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Director	JC	Sep 8, 2017
Author	JP	Sep 7, 2017

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**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS AND  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
DECISION NOTE**

Date: October 20, 2017  
File: 280-20  
CLIFF: 231818

**PREPARED FOR: Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development**

**ISSUE:** Removal of Grizzly Bear Parts versus requirements to leave parts in the woods

**BACKGROUND:**

Government has announced that effective November 30, 2017 grizzly bear trophy hunting will stop throughout the Province. The announcement further stated “*While the trophy hunt will end, hunting for meat will be allowed to continue.*” Recent engagement with stakeholders, First Nations and the public has resulted in divergent views on this policy change. Predictably, those who oppose grizzly bear hunting would like to see a complete ban on grizzly bear hunting, and those who support continuation of the hunt, agree with the requirement to remove edible portions but want to retain all parts of the bear as well.

In order to ensure the objective and commitment made by government are met through an updated regulatory regime, a decision is required on a key policy implication related to whether grizzly bear “trophy” parts will be left at the kill site or removed from the kill site by the hunter.

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Approved / Not Approved

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Signature  
 Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of  
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**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS AND  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
DECISION NOTE**

Date: October 20, 2017

File: 280-20

**CLIFF: 231818**

**PREPARED FOR: Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development**

**ISSUE:** Import and Export of Grizzly Bear Parts to and from British Columbia

**BACKGROUND:**

Government has announced that effective November 30, 2017, grizzly bear trophy hunting will stop throughout the Province and all hunting of grizzly bear will cease in the Great Bear Rainforest.

The trophy hunting of grizzly bears will be ended by a regulatory amendment. For all grizzly bears harvested post November 30, 2017, the hunter will be required to remove the edible portions from the grizzly bear and be prohibited from possessing all other parts of the grizzly bear.

Regulatory amendments will be required to ban the trafficking (i.e., sale) of grizzly bear parts in British Columbia. This note seeks direction on the import and export of grizzly bear parts. There will be a one year grace period from the date this regulation takes effect to allow businesses such as taxidermists that possess grizzly bear parts (e.g., claws) to sell their inventory.

Additional regulatory amendments will be required regarding the import and export of grizzly bear parts to and from British Columbia. The existing regulatory framework allows for the exportation of grizzly bear parts and for a person to legally possess grizzly bear parts that have been lawfully harvested in another jurisdiction or previously in British Columbia. This note presents options for amending the regulation.

**DISCUSSION:**

From our consultations, there are varying opinions regarding the ban on the possession of prohibited parts from a bear harvested post November 30, 2017 and the ability to import the same parts of a grizzly bear legally harvested in another jurisdiction into British Columbia (e.g., Alaska or Yukon). For example, the B.C. Wildlife Federation has characterized this position as inequitable, while the taxidermists have expressed support.

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There is also tension between the prohibition on the trafficking (i.e., sale) of grizzly bear parts and the ability to export grizzly bear parts to another jurisdiction. Once a grizzly bear part has left British Columbia, the trafficking prohibition no longer applies to it. This could be viewed as a gap in the

trafficking prohibition; however, the grizzly bear part cannot leave the province without a provincial permit if shipped within Canada or federal export permit if shipped outside of Canada. The permitting requirement should limit the likelihood of a part being exported solely for the purposes of trafficking it. Without an amendment to the *Wildlife Act*, the Province cannot prevent the exportation of a grizzly bear part when a Federal Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora permit has been obtained.

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Approved / Not Approved

Signature  
 Honourable Doug Donaldson,  
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Date

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Author	CW	Oct.19/17

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS AND  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
DECISION NOTE**

Date: October 20, 2017

File: 280-20

**CLIFF: 231818**

**PREPARED FOR: Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural  
Resource Operations and Rural Development**

**ISSUE:** Concerns raised by the Nisga'a Nation regarding the proposed grizzly bear regulations

**BACKGROUND:**

Government announced that effective November 30, 2017, grizzly bear trophy hunting will stop throughout the province and all hunting of grizzly bear will cease in the Great Bear Rainforest (GBR). The proposed regulatory change to implement the Government's announcement will not apply to First Nations who harvest grizzly bears under a treaty right or pursuant to Aboriginal rights for food, social or ceremonial purposes. The proposed regulatory changes are anticipated to impact guide outfitters and guiding territory certificate holders. A Guiding Territory Certificate (GTC) holder is granted exclusive control over guiding privileges in an area. A guide outfitter must be hired by a non-resident to hunt grizzly bear in BC.

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Signature

Date

Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of  
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**Attachments: A - Nisga'a GTC Overlap with GBR**

**B - Territories of the GBR**

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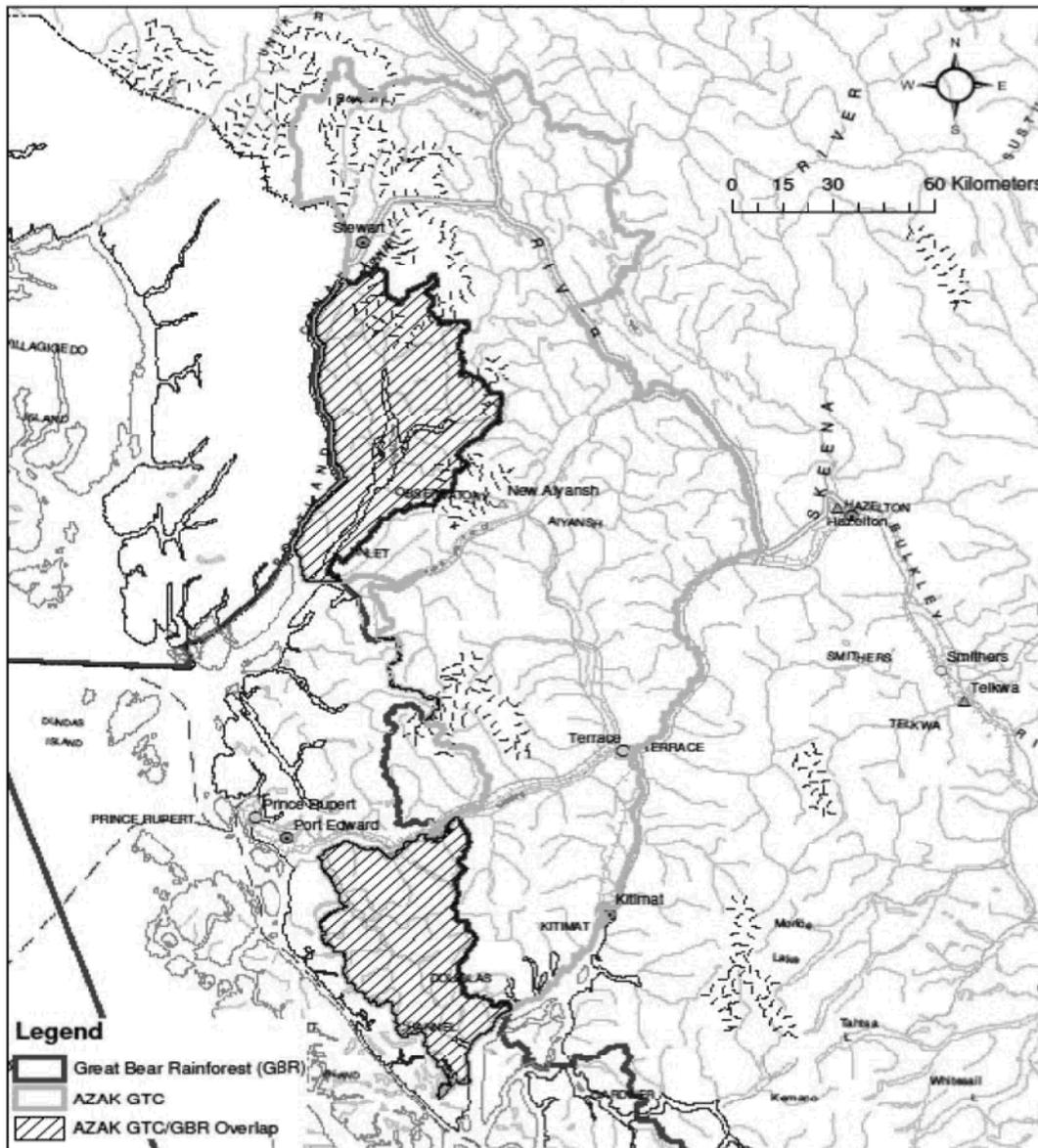
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### Nisga'a/Azak GTC Overlap with the GBR



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<b>Territories and the Great Bear Rainforest</b>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Appendix K GOT</li><li>Nisga'a Guiding Territory</li><li>Great Bear Rainforest</li><li>Nisga'a Lands</li><li>Nisga Wildlife Area</li><li>Nisga Area</li></ul>	1:4,000,000 Nisga'a Litigms Government Directorate of Lands and Resources NAD 83 UTM Zone 9N October 13, 2017	
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**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS AND  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
INFORMATION NOTE**

Date: January 17, 2018  
File: 280-20 BN  
CLIFF: 235405

**PREPARED FOR: Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development**

**ISSUE:** In preparation for meeting with Jamie Hahn related to commercial grizzly bear viewing guidelines and permits

**BACKGROUND:**

Jamie Hahn has been operating a commercial grizzly bear viewing operation in the Khutzeymateen Provincial Park (the Park) for approximately three and a half years. Mr. Hahn is a previous Parks employee.

Mr. Hahn operates a floating lodge and commercial bear viewing operation that is authorized through a Park Use permit under the *Parks Act*.

The Park is on the north coast of BC within the traditional territory of the Coast Tsimshian First Nations. The Park is co-managed with local First Nations pursuant to an approved Management Plan.

Mr. Hahn has provided the following discussion topics for the requested meeting taking place on January 26, 2018; Bear viewing tenure security to reflect level of investment in business; and, options for legislation or regulation similar to guide outfitters in *Wildlife Act*. Mr. Hahn may also discuss whether province-wide attention is being given to ensuring commercial viewing does not over exploit grizzly bear.

Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy's (ENV) Skeena Parks staff advised that Mr. Hahn applied for a permit to continue a grizzly bear viewing operation that had existed previously and was sold to him. The prior business had a low impact on the landscape and the operator understood the permit was a privilege that could disappear and invested accordingly. Following Mr. Hahn's permit approval for continued use, Mr. Hahn turned the building used for lodging into a much bigger structure without prior permission from Parks and began to build a two storey dock and staffing quarters.

The new structures have caused concern from the local First Nations.

**DISCUSSION:**

Mr. Hahn has approached his business with a relatively high level of investment compared to the previous permit holder (e.g., boats, planes, expanded structures, etc.).

Mr. Hahn would like increased business certainty for his viewing operation through longer term government commitments authorizing his commercial viewing operation, similar to guiding territory certificates that grant the exclusive privilege to guiding in an area for up to 25 years. This increased

certainty would convey certainty such that a market value, similar to guiding territory certificate, could be attributed to the authorization.

#### Bear viewing tenure security to reflect level of investment in business (under the *Parks Act*)

BC Parks (Parks) has a standard term of 10 years for Park Use permits for commercial recreational activities, which includes guided bear viewing, as well as guide outfitting. A statutory decision maker can issue permits for longer, but this is unlikely to occur in the Park due to the direction in the current Management Plan and First Nation concerns. Further, in order to protect the resource, the number of grizzly bear viewing operators within the Khutzeymateen Inlet is limited and awarded through a competitive process. Renewal of an existing tenure is not guaranteed.

For Mr. Hahn's viewing operation to not be subject to the *Park Act*, he would need to relocate outside of a Park, or a legislative amendment to the *Parks Act* would be required. A legislative amendment is not being considered at this time by ENV.

#### Options for legislation or regulation similar to guide outfitters in *Wildlife Act*

Commercial grizzly bear viewing occurs across BC and is not currently regulated by the *Wildlife Act*. Should regulations be introduced (see below), operating within the Park would still require a Park Use permit.

#### Ensuring commercial viewing does not over exploit grizzly bear

Public and commercial bear viewing can have an adverse impact on grizzly bears. Disturbing bears can interrupt mating, feeding, resting and other important functions. Best practices and/or legal requirements for commercial bear viewing could address a number of factors:

- Limits on the number of operators and viewers;
- Limits on the dates, times and locations in which viewing can occur;
- First Nations relationship with the land and legal authority in area; and
- Revenue opportunities by charging fees for operators and viewers to participate in commercial viewing.

The Commercial Bear Viewing Association has published Best Practices; however, there is no enforcement mechanism for these guidelines.

The Independent Audit of Grizzly Bear Management Report (Report) completed by the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) states grizzly bear viewing is on the rise (over 45 viewing operators currently) and expressed concern over potential negative impacts of the industry. The Report recommends FLNR and ENV develop clear policies and procedures for bear viewing. Government responded to this recommendation by committing to formalizing a collaborative process with First Nations, industry and stakeholders to develop clear policies and procedures for wildlife viewing in the interest of bear conservation and viability of bear viewing businesses.

Prior to any introduction of legislation or regulation impacting commercial grizzly bear viewing, cross-ministry consultation needs to occur between FLNR (Fish and Wildlife Branch), ENV (Parks, Lands, Conservation Officer Service), Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (TAC) and Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation. Public engagement and engagement with First Nations and treaty partners should occur, with consideration given to commitments under United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

A working group, with representatives from FLNR, ENV, TAC and Commercial Bear Viewing Association and other stakeholders, began meeting in 2016 to discuss concerns and opportunities with the bear viewing industry. It is expected that this working group will expand to address the commitment made by government to the OAG.

**MINISTRY RESPONSE:**

- If viewing operations were regulated similarly to guide outfitters under the *Wildlife Act*, Park Use permits (standard term of 10 years) would still be required.
- The ministry will work collaboratively with other agencies, First Nations and stakeholders to develop clear policies and procedures (and if necessary regulations) for bear viewing.

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