

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

Date: August 22, 2017
File: 280/20 BN
XRef: 230191
CLIFF: 230565

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

ISSUE: BC Government Employees' Union (BCGEU) support for elimination of the proposal to create a stand-alone wildlife management agency funded by hunting license revenues, and instead strengthening existing public agencies to protect and restore health, functioning ecosystems in B.C.

BULLETS:

- Government has committed to improve wildlife management and habitat conservation, and collaborate with stakeholders to develop short and long term strategies to manage B.C.'s wildlife resources.
- Adequate and sustainable funding, effective policies and clear objectives are critical for improving management of British Columbia's biodiversity, fish and wildlife populations and the habitat upon which they depend.
- Collaboration and consultation with First Nations and stakeholders will be foundational to finalizing B.C.'s goals, and priority activities to improve wildlife management.
- Election platform commitments included putting all funds from hunting licences and permits into a dedicated fund for wildlife and habitat conservation. This funding could exist within or external to government, but stakeholders are concerned that a within government dedicated fund could be influenced by changing government priorities.
- Past discussions with some stakeholders identified the dedication of funding from hunting licence and permit revenue back into wildlife management activities as a starting point for increased stabilized funding.
- In response to this approach, non-consumptive stakeholders have responded to government with concerns that resulting management activities would be overly biased toward consumptive stakeholder user groups and not meet the expectations of the public of British Columbia.

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- The BCGEU has indicated it does not support a stand-alone agency and would prefer that in-government systems be strengthened to undertake these wildlife management activities.
- Scope of topics for this engagement process could include wildlife harvest and resident fairness, biodiversity and habitat, and determining funding model and governance.
- Pending confirmation on how to proceed with the engagement process, a new improved wildlife management strategy, including wildlife funding model and governance model is expected to be in place by March 2018.
- The governance model, and whether it will be stand-alone or within government, has not yet been determined and plans for and engagement process are being formulated to assist in this work.
- Options include:
 - a. Phased starting with Minister's Advisory Council and then public engagement; or,
 - b. Minister's Advisory Council and public engagement in parallel; or,
 - c. Public engagement process
 - d. Additionally, a decision note is being crafted to determine if the consultation on the grizzly bear trophy hunt will be undertaken concurrently with the wildlife management consultation, or as a separate process and to determine timelines for both processes.
- Other government programs currently underway in the area of wildlife management include: recover moose and caribou populations; develop a provincial strategy for inventory and monitoring big game species; ending the grizzly bear trophy hunt; develop provincial management plans for grizzly bear, thimblehorn sheep and rocky mountain elk; centralize and standardize harvest allocation for allocated big game species and, to continue modernizing permit and licensing services to an online system.

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

Date: September 6, 2017
File: 280-20
CLIFF: 230511

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

ISSUE: Preparation for introductory meeting with Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC

BACKGROUND:

The Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC (FFSBC) is a private non-profit organization that was established by Cabinet in 2003. Government transferred the five provincial trout hatcheries, 65 staff and responsibility for fish culture and a range of other related services from the Ministry of Environment to the new independent non-profit society. At that time a 30-year contract was written for their services. The province retains responsibility for issuing licences and development of angling regulations. The FFSBC is still under contract with the Province and in April 2015, Minister Steve Thompson announced a change to the funding model so that the FFSBC now receives and manages 100% of angling licence sales revenue.

The mandate of the FFSBC is to enhance and conserve BC's freshwater fisheries for public benefit and works in partnership with government, industry and anglers to achieve this goal.

The FFSBC is governed by a "business board" comprised of two directors appointed by the Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development and four independent directors. The Board is comprised of the following:

- Jonathan Pew – Chair
- Gord Argue – Vice-Chair
- Bill Camden – Treasurer
- George Iwama
- James Gordon
- Tom Ethier – Minister Appointment
- Scott Barrett – Minister Appointment

The FFSBC owns and operates six major fish hatcheries that are located in Duncan, Abbotsford, Summerland, Clearwater, Fort Steele and Vanderhoof (new sturgeon hatchery). About 50% of all angling activity in BC takes place on over 800 lakes and streams that the FFSBC stocks with over eight million fish annually. The FFSBC also plays a key role in delivering a wide range of conservation services needed to protect and in some cases restore wild fish populations that include endangered Nechako and Columbia white sturgeon.

A Science Division supports the Province with specialists in the fields of fish culture, fish health, genetics, fish biology and sport fisheries management.

DISCUSSION:

Freshwater sport fishing is an important cultural, recreational and economic contributor to the province. Each year, more than 300,000 licences anglers spend about \$500 million in BC, with much of the economic activity taking place in rural areas. The FFSBC is a very important partner in delivery of freshwater fishing in BC.

The FFSBC governance model is unique in North America but widely recognized as a very successful delivery model noted for innovation and partnerships.

MINISTRY RESPONSE:

In the upcoming meeting with the FFSBC President, Andrew Wilson, the ministry recognizes the importance and value of recreational fishing to the province and the significant contribution of the FFSBC in realizing that value; in particular the economic input supporting the rural economy.

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

Date: October 12, 2017

File: 280-20

CLIFF: 230011

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

ISSUE: Meeting with BC Wildlife Federation

BULLETS:

BC Wildlife Federation (BCWF) considers itself BC's largest and oldest conservation organization. BCWF has 50,000 members that "are passionately committed to protecting, enhancing and promoting the wise use of the environment for the benefit of present and future generations".

Current state of Endangered Species

- BC is signatory to the Canada – BC Agreement on Species at Risk within which federal and provincial agencies work to ensure a coordinated and focused approach to the delivery of species at risk protection and recovery.
- The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (ENV) leads development of recovery plans for species at risk. They are currently charged with developing an *Endangered Species Act* for BC.
- The Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNR) is responsible for the implementation of recovery or management plans for species at risk.
- Currently, FLNR is implementing plans for many species including: Mountain Caribou; Boreal Caribou, Northern Caribou in the Peace region; Vancouver Island Marmot; and Spotted Owl.
- FLNR is leading development of implementation plans for coastal Northern Goshawk and Marbled Murrelet.
- FLNR is working closely with ENV and Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) to manage implementation of the federal recovery strategy for southern mountain caribou.
- ECCC has initiated an assessment of BC's measures to protect critical habitat for caribou with the results pending soon.
- As a result of the dire condition of caribou in BC and the recent attention from ECCC, BC has initiated a provincial caribou management program to protect caribou.

Great Bear Rainforest Land Use Planning Model

- The Great Bear Rainforest (GBR) covers 6.4 million hectares on British Columbia's north and central coast – equivalent in size to Ireland. This area is home to 26 First Nations and represents one quarter of remaining global coastal temperate rainforest.
- For over twenty years, the provincial government, forest sector, environmental groups and First Nations worked to create a set of agreements that would ensure long-term ecological integrity

of the rainforest while maintaining economic viability for industry and socio-economic wellbeing for local First Nation communities.

- This multi-party engagement led to the enactment of the *Great Bear Rainforest (Forest Management) Act* (2017), the Great Bear Rainforest Land Use Orders (2016) and First Nations socio-economic agreements (2010-2017);
- Adjacent to the GBR, four ecosystem-based marine plans were completed under the Marine Plan Partnership (MaPP) in 2015. MaPP is a collaborative partnership between the Province of British Columbia and 17 First Nations, many of which are party to the GBR related agreements. Implementation of the MaPP marine plans is currently underway. The marine area adjacent to the GBR is often referred to as the “Great Bear Sea”.

Timeline Specifics:

- In 1996, the Province initiated the Coastal Land and Resource Management Planning process in an effort to build a consensus solution amongst stakeholders regarding the future of the North and Central Coast
- By 2000, coastal forest companies and environmental groups were collaborating and formed the Joint Solutions Project (JSP) to support the process. Their discussions led to JSP consensus recommendations on the implementation of Ecosystem-Based Management throughout the GBR.
- In 2006, following government-to-government discussions, the Province and First Nations announced their support for the JSP recommendations.
- In 2016, the Province enacted the revised Great Bear Rainforest Land Use Order that increased old growth protection. The following year, the *Great Bear Rainforest (Forest Management) Act* created the new forest administrative regime. Together, they established the legal framework for Ecosystem-Based Management within the GBR

Unfair Hunting Vehicle Restrictions in the Cariboo

- Access restrictions for motor vehicles were established on September 29 and will be in place between September 1 to December 10 until vegetation has sufficiently recovered (likely +/-10 years).
- BCWF reacted strongly against the announcements based on the lack of application to First Nations and limited benefits of access restrictions to improving wildlife populations given more significant issues (e.g., habitat loss, predators and invasive species).
- The hunting restriction is just one management action being taken. Mid- and long-term actions for wildlife are being assessed and planned as part of moose enhancement and wildfire recovery initiatives (see below).

Current moose hunting closures (including hunting closures in the Cariboo/Chilcotin)

- The October 15 to 31 and November 1 to 15 Moose Limited Entry Hunting (LEH) in Zones A and C of MU 5-13 were closed on October 6, 2017.
- This closure is a result of a combination of factors, such as mountain pine beetle salvage logging, unprecedented wildfires, and associated access, within the area that have the potential to negatively impact a population of moose that has been decreasing since 2010.
- 209 of the 218 hunters with LEH authorizations for these hunts were contacted by phone or email to notify them of the closures. Contact information for the remaining nine hunters is not

available. The Conservation Officer Service has been provided with their names and will enforce the closure.

- A reassessment of the impact of wildfire to moose habitat and populations will occur over the winter and will inform future decisions regarding sustainable hunting opportunities and habitat restoration or enhancement.
- BCWF had indicated support of the closures if, based on conservation needs, they also applied to First Nations. The BCWF reacted strongly to the hunt closures because the limited entry bull only harvest does not have a significant impact on the moose population and it was not indicated if the closures would also apply to First Nations.
- The BCWF has been working with members of the Tsilhqot'in Wildlife Panel to gain buy in for closures that applies to Tsilhqot'in National Government (TNG) members. The current status is uncertain.

Planned wildfire rebuild regarding habitat, fish and wildlife populations

- Post wildfire recovery activities are being coordinated across the natural resource sector to ensure that all values are taken into consideration.
- South Area is leading a wildfire recovery initiative that will include multiple values, including wildlife and wildlife habitat.
- Pending further consultation and assessment of wildfire impacts, future *Wildlife Act* amendments may be required to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of the provinces wildlife resources.
- Road deactivation and access management are both priorities included in ongoing moose enhancement projects focused on habitat and may be expanded in alignment with wildfire recovery work.

Current State of Grizzly Bear Management

- The best available science suggests that, with a high degree of confidence, the current harvest management system in the province is sustainable.
- The social license for trophy hunting is low; government is developing policy and regulations to align grizzly bear hunting with the sustenance hunt of other species. Staff met with the BCWF (and other wildlife and environmental stakeholders) on October 12 and 13 to discuss policy intent documents. BCWF was critical of the single species, politically driven policy decision to ban the trophy hunt.
- The Office of the Auditor General will soon be releasing their audit of the Provinces management of grizzly bears. The audit results will be considered both for grizzly bear management in the province as well as for improving wildlife management in general.
- The BCWF is also interested in actively participating in the conversation of improved wildlife management and habitat conservation.
- From the perspective of hunting, it is possible that changes will be made to the Grizzly Bear Harvest Management Procedure to account for uncertainty in population estimates.
- Additional changes to the procedure may arise from the 2016 independent scientific review of the harvest management procedure.
- Information from the grizzly bear regulation change consultation will be used to inform final decision expected in November.

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

Date: January 30, 2018
File: 280-20
CLIFF: 236045

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

ISSUE: Public interest in a proposal to lengthen wolf trapping seasons on Vancouver Island.

BACKGROUND:

There is a regulatory proposal to lengthen the wolf trapping season on Vancouver Island by 51 days this year. The current season runs from November 1 to June 30. The proposal suggests moving the season's start date to September 10 and this has recently garnered media and public attention.

This proposal is part of a regular two-year review of hunting and trapping regulations. They are typically submitted following consultation with local stakeholders and First Nations. Fish and Wildlife staff also consider input received from the public through a hunting and trapping engagement site before finalizing a regulation proposal and making a recommendation to the Minister.

On Vancouver Island, 65% of commercial traplines are registered to First Nations. When trapping for food, social, and ceremonial purposes, First Nations would not require a licence or change to the season. However, if First Nations desire to sell any furs harvested on a registered trapline a licence is needed and season dates must be followed. Licenced and First Nation trappers may also gain permission from landowners to trap on private property; in these cases no registered trapline is needed.

The ministry estimates there are about 250 wolves on Vancouver Island at this time and the population is increasing. Trapping will occur by licensed trappers or by First Nations. Most trapping occurs on central or northern Vancouver Island.

There is no conservation concern with wolf populations on Vancouver Island.

DISCUSSION:

Vancouver Island First Nations have expressed concern to Fish and Wildlife staff that increased wolf populations are impacting Roosevelt elk and black-tailed deer.

First Nations have also been making arrangements for licenced trappers to come into First Nations' territories (with permission of trapline holders); however, late start dates have hampered some requests for fall trapping due to weather generated freeze/thaw events that affect trap efficacy.

Licensed hunters (both residents and guide outfitters) are anticipated to support the regulation as any reduction in wolf populations is likely to have a positive impact on deer and elk populations.

Several groups and individuals have indicated opposition to the increased trapping season and the practice of trapping generally.

Efforts have been taken to ensure the proposed extension is consistent, humane and measured:

- The proposal mirrors start dates on the South Coast but is more conservative than most other regions. Some other regions have areas with no closed season or no bag limits.
- On Vancouver Island, the primary trap utilized for wolves are modified leg-hold traps. These traps are humane, and are the same design used in collaring studies throughout the province enabling wolves, and any non-target species to be released without injury.
- No wolves were trapped in 2016/17. Conditions in the previous five years were milder, and the yearly average has been seven wolves total for the entire Vancouver Island. We do not expect there to be a significant difference in the number of wolves trapped annually but the change would allow trappers to better work around environmental conditions (freeze/thaw events).

In recent years, environmental organizations have claimed that coastal wolves are genetically unique and should be designated as such. In Canada, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) is able to apply a Designatable Unit (DU) status where there is sufficient information and need to warrant assessing at a sub-species level. At this time, COSEWIC has not considered the available information adequate to identify coastal wolf populations as a separate DU.

There have also been claims suggesting increasing hunting pressure on wolves can cause stress levels to rise, triggering increased breeding. This research is relatively new and many unknowns remain. Modest increases to trapping seasons are not expected to have a significant impact, but regulations are periodically reviewed and can be adjusted if new information warrants.

A Roosevelt elk management plan sets target population objectives for each elk population unit. First Nations, the Province of BC, and user groups on Vancouver Island all work together in an advanced, unique, and collaborative approach which includes sharing of elk, sharing of harvest information, and joint revitalization projects. Elk translocation is a tool used to move elk from areas of high abundance to areas of low abundance to augment recovery efforts. Failure to take some action with respect to wolves could impact First Nations support for these innovative programs.

First Nations who have an abundance of elk in their territories are only interested in allowing elk to be translocated to areas where there are no concerns with local predator populations. In some areas on the north of Vancouver Island, hunting seasons are closing in response to declining deer and elk populations. In others, populations are not growing and so hunts cannot be created. Predation is often a major factor in recovery of these populations.

Spring transect surveys and summer classification surveys are used to monitor deer populations on Vancouver Island and there is a 60 year data set established for much of the island. Management Unit (MU) 1-11 (south of Port McNeill) is illustrative of wolf-deer population interactions (Appendix 1). Wolf numbers in MU 1-11 increased dramatically across the region in 1976-77. Wolf reduction occurred in the 1980s and early 2000s in MU 1-11 resulting in a rebound of deer numbers in subsequent years.

SUMMARY:

- As part of the 2018-2020 update to the Hunting and Trapping Regulation Synopsis, the ministry is considering about 80 proposed regulation changes. The public review and comment period closed January 19, 2018.
- The ministry is proposing to lengthen the current wolf trapping season by 51 days to provide sustainable trapping opportunities and help elk conservation efforts on north Vancouver Island.

- First Nations, who are key partners in these conservation efforts, have expressed concern with wolf predation, at the same time other recovery efforts are underway for Roosevelt Elk.
- Hunters and trappers are required to report their harvest so the province can closely monitor harvest levels.
- The proposed trapping approach is considered humane.

Attachment: Appendix 1: Deer population survey data from 1968-2017 (MU 1-11)

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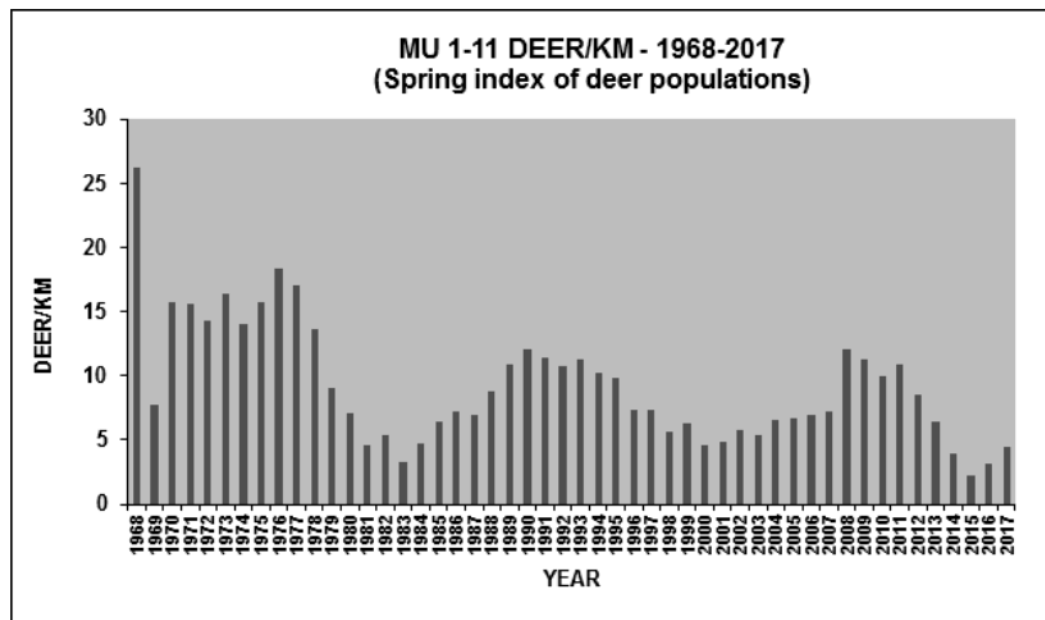
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Appendix 1. Deer population survey data from 1968-2017 (MU 1-11)



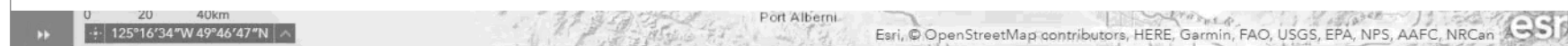
Discovery Islands Tourism – Forestry Working Group Members

Members	Affiliations
Ralph Keller	<u>Tourism Sector co-Chair</u> , Coast Mountain Expeditions, Discovery Islands Marine Tourism Group
Adam Hockin	<u>Forestry Co-Chair</u> , BC Timber Sales
Laird Miller Sean Ross	Sonora Resort
Breanne Quesnel	Spirit of the West Adventures, Wilderness Tourism Association
Ross Campbell	Mothership Adventures
Jack Springer	Campbell River Whale Watching & Adventure Tours
Gary Lawson Wes Fietz	TimberWest
Joe LeBlanc	Interfor
Maxime Lepine	Homalco First Nation
Coleen Marlow	North Island Woodlot Association
Lindley Little	BC Timber Sales
Dave Marquis	A&A Trading

Observers/ Visitors	Affiliations
David Elstone	Truck Loggers Association. David does not attend meetings, but receives meeting minutes and checks in periodically with the forestry co-chair and facilitator.
Kristen Mucha	Wild Coast Adventures, Wilderness Tourism Association. Kristen is a recent visitor to meetings who may wish to become a member.

CLIFF 236228 - Attachment 2 - Area of Interest

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CLIFF 236228 - Attachment 3 - Planned Cut Blocks and Focus Areas



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A visitor's guide to
sustainable forest
management



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

Date: March 7, 2018
File: 17000-20/DIWG
CLIFF: 236228

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

ISSUE: Meeting with Discovery Islands Tourism and Forestry Working Group

BACKGROUND:

The Discovery Islands Tourism and Forestry Working Group was formed in 2014 after concerns were raised by marine tourism operators about the visual impact of logging on the tourism industry in the Discovery Islands, and meetings were held with both sectors to discuss their respective interests. Jointly supported by the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD), and the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, the working group was asked to develop joint actions and recommendations to support the continued success of both industries in the region.

Working group members include marine eco-tourism operators, a luxury resort, major forest licence holders, woodlot licence holders, the Discovery Islands Chamber of Commerce, and the Homalco First Nation, which operates both tourism and forestry businesses. The working group is led by two co-chairs, one from each sector, facilitated by FLNRORD staff, and attended by staff from Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture. A current list of members is included in Attachment 1.

Located between Campbell River and the mainland, the Discovery Islands (Attachment 2) encompass Quadra, Cortes, Maurelle, Read, Sonora, Stuart, East and West Thurlow, East and West Redonda, Raza and Rendezvous Islands. The area supports a significant level of public recreation and commercial tourism, as well as a large forest industry base. The Discovery Islands area spans the Campbell River and Sunshine Coast Natural Resource Districts and includes portions of the traditional territories of eight First Nations: We Wai Kai (Cape Mudge), We Wai Kum (Campbell River), Homalco/Xwemahlkwu, Klahoose, Tla'amin, K'omoks and Kwiakah.

The area has legal visual quality objectives (VQOs) describing the allowable range of visual alteration from forest harvesting. The current VQOs were set in 1997 for the Sunshine Coast Natural Resource District and in 2005 for the Campbell River Natural Resource District. A review of VQOs has been initiated in the Sunshine Coast Natural Resource District (eastern portion of the Discovery Islands) with public consultation on any proposed changes anticipated to occur in spring 2018. An update to the visual landscape inventory in the Campbell River Natural Resource District is anticipated to commence in 2-3 years.

In 2014, a VQO monitoring project found an overall high level of conformance (92.7 percent) of forest harvesting with established VQOs in the Discovery Islands, but noted that forest harvesting in a portion of these cut blocks (18.7 percent) tended towards the upper limits of allowed alteration for the VQO class. In addition, there have been three findings of non-compliance with established VQOs in the Discovery Islands area for cut blocks in Pryce Channel (2009), Stuart Island (2015), and

Homfray Channel (2017), each of which has prompted significant concern from marine tourism operators.

DISCUSSION:

The most successful outcome of the working group to date has been the development of an information-sharing process and accompanying online map, identifying focus areas for motorized and non-motorized marine tourism, and displaying planned cut blocks for the next five years in the Discovery Islands (Attachment 3). The map enables forestry and tourism operators to exchange information early in the forestry operational planning cycle to inform cut block planning and design. There is consensus among members on the value of this information-sharing, and the group seeks the continued support of FLNRORD (and TAC) for this process, including mapping and analytical support, the provision of a facilitator, and the attendance and input of district managerial staff.

Members of the working group hold diverse perspectives on visual quality management in the marine corridors within the Discovery Islands. The tourism co-chair and marine eco-tourism operators wish to see a legislated shift to VQOs that prescribe less visual alteration in focus areas for marine tourism (i.e., from the 'Partial Retention' to the 'Retention' VQO class). Another tourism business, Sonora Resort, has taken an alternative approach and formed a partnership with TimberWest, promoting a collaborative approach to visual quality management (Attachment 4). The Homalco First Nation integrates forestry and tourism by demonstrating the operations of Homalco Forestry Ltd. Partnership to visitors as part of the cultural tours offered by Homalco Wildlife Tours.

The major forest licensees (Interfor, TimberWest, BC Timber Sales) have verbally offered to design cut blocks, where possible, to the lower end of the allowable range of visual alteration in the focus area for non-motorized and motorized tourism (Attachment 3). These licensees are not supportive of major changes to the legal VQOs as this may significantly impact the allowable annual cut (AAC). Recent AAC reductions have occurred in these same forest licensees' operating areas on the BC coast due to the implementation of Ecosystem Based Management in the Great Bear Rainforest. Woodlot operators in the Discovery Islands have limited flexibility due to the small scale of their operations and are similarly unsupportive of major changes to the established VQOs.

First Nations in the Discovery Islands have business interests in both the forestry and tourism sectors. Informal discussions with these First Nations in recent years suggest they would not be supportive of major changes to land use direction, such as the legally established VQOs, that may constrain future uses of Crown land before treaty negotiations have concluded. Of the eight First Nations in the Discovery Islands area, only the Tla'amin, in Powell River, has concluded a treaty.

Working group attendees include representatives from the Wilderness Tourism Association, which has initiated dialogue with BC Timber Sales regarding the Schmidt Creek Timber Sale Licence A92463, located in Johnstone Strait north of the Discovery Islands. The Schmidt Creek Timber Sale Licence is also the subject of a recent request by Sierra Club BC, Wilderness Committee and Ancient Forest Alliance to hold off on logging and road building plans due to concerns regarding old-growth protection.

MINISTRY RESPONSE:

- This government recognizes the important roles of the tourism and forestry industries as job creators in BC and supports strategies that enable their continued growth.
- This government is committed to working collaboratively with Indigenous peoples to achieve lasting and meaningful reconciliation. Any path forward affecting land use direction in the Discovery Islands will require collaboration with local First Nations.
- The ministry congratulates the members of the Discovery Islands Tourism and Forestry Working Group on their successful information-sharing process, and encourages continued information-sharing to help resolve visual management concerns prior to harvest.
- The ministry will continue to support the working group through staff assistance for meeting facilitation, GIS support to maintain the online Discovery Islands Tourism and Forestry Map, and the participation of district management staff.
- The ministry supports consensus-based solutions and the approach discussed by working group members, whereby forest operations strive for the more restrictive (aesthetic) end of the partial retention VQO class in marine corridors with highly sensitive viewscapes.
- An upcoming review of VQOs in the Sunshine Coast Natural Resource District will provide an opportunity to comment on proposed changes to VQOs in this area. The VQOs in the Campbell River Natural Resource District were established more recently, with the next update to the visual landscape inventory anticipated to begin in 2-3 years.

Attachments:

1. Discovery Island Tourism and Forestry Working Group Members
2. Area of Interest Map
3. Planned Cut Blocks and Focus Areas Map
4. Sonora Resort and TimberWest Partnership Brochure

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

Date: March 9, 2018

CLIFF: 235870

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

ISSUE: Meeting with the BC Shellfish Growers Association

BACKGROUND:

The BC Shellfish Growers Association (BCSGA) represents approximately 70 percent of shellfish farmers in British Columbia (BC) as well as processors, industry suppliers and service providers related to the industry. In 2016, the wholesale value of BC shellfish aquaculture production was \$53.3 million. Oysters are the dominant species grown with a value of \$30.0 million (56 percent). In terms of tonnage, 74 percent of BC's farmed oysters are grown in Baynes Sound.

The BCSGA has provided background on the topics they wish to discuss including:

1. Aquaculture land tenures and concerns with timelines and a request to include shellfish farms within Agriculture Land Reserve (ALR);
2. Fisheries & Aquaculture Clean Technology Adoption Program (FACTAP) access to funding support from BC; and
3. Water quality and impacts on the shellfish industry.

DISCUSSION:

1. Aquaculture land tenures and concerns with timelines and a request to include shellfish farms within ALR.

The BCSGA has raised concerns that current circumstances are creating instability for the industry and that this instability is impacting the ability of the industry to grow. Shellfish is a high value product and shellfish growers in BC are not able to meet the existing demand.

Specifically, the BCSGA has raised concerns with current timelines for application processing including impacts of protracted consultation processes; uncertainty over how the situation with finfish aquaculture in the Broughton will impact other sectors; and that challenging interactions with other land users (e.g. upland owners, recreation groups) is undermining the industry stability. The situation in Baynes Sound is contributing to this uncertainty where there are 22 shellfish aquaculture tenure applications held up in protracted consultation with K'ómoks First Nation. Baynes Sound has the majority of the shellfish tenures in the Province. Staff have identified impacts to Aboriginal interests including cumulative impacts, and are currently working to finalize an accommodation package for K'ómoks First Nation, including proposed measures regarding which discussion with the Ministry of Agriculture is scheduled.

Tenure decision timelines in other areas are impacted primarily by resourcing challenges as a significant backlog of replacement applications exists. The Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD) has recently hired three short term

temporary staff to work on tenure replacements including shellfish aquaculture tenure replacements. First Nations consultation and accommodation processes are complex and take a significant amount of time and effort.

The BCSGA has proposed expanding the ALR to include aquaculture. Amending existing ALR boundaries would require a legal review given the complex jurisdictional nature of coastal waters as well as a comprehensive policy review in order to provide direction to the Agriculture Land Commission (ALC). A comprehensive consultation process with all affected user groups, and First Nations would also be required. Even if such an exercise was undertaken, applications for Crown land tenures can still be made to the ALC for non-conforming uses. Given the complex nature of this request, further discussion with the ALC would be required.

2. FACTAP access to funding support from BC.

FACTAP is a federal program which encourages Canadian fisheries, aquaculture and processing industries to reduce the potential environmental impacts of their activities by implementing clean technologies and measures. FACTAP has \$20 million available nationally over 5 years (2017-2021).

A requirement of the program is that the Province matches 10 percent of the funding request in cash or in-kind. The Sector Development Branch of the Ministry of Agriculture has secured \$30,000 in funds to support the current call for proposals, under the assumption that BC would win 50 percent of the allocated funds. Staff are currently working with the fisheries, shellfish and finfish aquaculture producers sector on 6 projects that have received provincial and federal approval (3 shellfish, 1 finfish, 2 fisheries).

3. Water quality and impacts on the shellfish industry.

The shellfish aquaculture industry is particularly vulnerable to water quality issues. Harvest of shellfish is regulated in part by the Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program, a federal food safety program jointly administered by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Environment Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada. The goal of the program is to protect Canadians from the health risks associated with the consumption of contaminated bivalve molluscan shellfish (for example, mussels, oysters and clams) in part by monitoring water quality for pollution and biotoxins that may impact food safety.

Last year saw an unexpected outbreak of Norovirus that resulted in several farm closures. Despite extensive work carried out by the BC Centre for Disease Control, the source of the outbreak could not be identified. A possible source of Norovirus is municipal sewage and/or storm water run-off from urban areas. Sewage treatment, discharge and permitting are the responsibility of municipal and regional governments and districts and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (ENV).

The BCSGA is requesting that the current waste water discharge audit being undertaken by ENV be expanded to include sewage discharge from municipalities. Such an undertaking would be more complex than the current scope of the review, which deals with seafood processing facilities and would therefore require further discussion with colleagues at the ENV.

For its part, Ministry of Agriculture has worked closely with the BCSGA and partners (that including the BC Centre for Aquatic Health Sciences, National Science and Engineering Research

Council) contributing \$4,000 to a \$21,000 project to develop a rapid diagnostic test for Norovirus testing. Further, the Ministry of Agriculture has provided a \$75,000 grant to the BCSGA to undertake a detailed financial impact study on the most recent Norovirus outbreak and to develop options for a business risk management program (essentially crop insurance). The goals are to provide future relief to BC shellfish farmers against future business impacts directly related to unpredictable food-borne illness outbreaks from the consumption of shellfish. The Ministry of Agriculture is expecting the results of the work to be completed by the end of the current fiscal year.

MINISTRY RESPONSE:

1. Aquaculture land tenures and concerns with timelines and a request to include shellfish farms within ALR.
 - FLNRORD recognizes the frustration the shellfish aquaculture industry feels regarding the time it takes to review tenure applications and proceed through the consultation process.
 - The role of FLNRORD is to ensure that the legal duty to consult is met, in order that decisions are robust. In the case of Baynes Sound, staff are working on a solution that is focused on the long term stability in this area.
 - FLNRORD encourages shellfish growers to work with local First Nations to build relationships.
 - Recently completed marine plans under the Marine Plan Partnership also include a number of spatial zones and strategies that support the growth of the shellfish aquaculture industry – as a partnership between First Nations and the Province. This should provide the industry with additional resources and partnership opportunities to advance shared interests within the areas of the plans (North Vancouver Island, Central Coast, North Coast and Haida Gwaii).
 - Incorporating aquaculture tenures into the ALR is an interesting concept. Complexities with issues in the marine environment such as the multi-jurisdiction environment and the need to consult with First Nations and other user groups on policy changes such as this make it a challenging concept to implement.
 - FLNRORD recognizes present circumstances erode confidence necessary for long term financial investment. FLNRORD is working to improve certainty for tenure holders.
2. FACTAP access to funding support from BC
 - The Ministry of Agriculture has the seafood sector development portfolio within government.
 - Funding is in place from the Ministry of Agriculture to support the current call for proposals and the Ministry of Agriculture is considering options to provide capacity to support the program for subsequent call for proposals.
 - The Province appreciates the work of the BCSGA to work with members to develop meaningful proposals in support of adopting clean energy practices for the sector.
3. Water quality and impacts on the shellfish industry
 - The Province shares your concern for water quality and water quality testing.
 - We will monitor the progress and results of the current audit of seafood processing plants; however, the scope of the audit does not include municipal waste water treatment facilities.
 - We encourage you to follow up with the ENV as well as municipal governments/regional districts regarding this issue.
 - We encourage the BCSGA to urge the federal partners to move forward with the modernization of the Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program and to expand water quality monitoring in pacific waters. The Province will continue to do the same.

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DMO		
ADM	CS	March 9, 2018
RED	SH	March 9, 2018
Director	GG	March 8, 2018
Section Head	LF	March 8, 2018

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

Date: March 9, 2018
Date of previous note: January 15, 2018
XRef: Cliff: 235697
CLIFF: 237194

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

ISSUE: Framework for the development of comprehensive policy to manage the respectful treatment of ancestral remains.

BACKGROUND:

In 2015, in response to growing tensions where land development on private property intersects with First Nations' burial areas, FLNR reviewed the burial policy under the *Heritage Conservation Act* (HCA). The review was focused on internal processes and was narrow in scope. The opportunity remains to undertake a more comprehensive policy review to address broader policy concerns.

In January 2018, Minister Doug Donaldson approved, in principle, a policy framework to guide the work of Archaeology Branch over the next 24 months. The framework focuses on the HCA and related administrative, jurisdictional and public policy concerns. A key deliverable of the framework is a comprehensive policy to manage the respectful treatment of ancestral remains, which includes exploring the option of developing a fund to support the cost of reburials on crown and private land. This work will expand on the work previously done under the burial policy review.

DISCUSSION:

A comprehensive policy to manage the respectful treatment of ancestral remains should provide a full-spectrum of processes, tools and policies to guide Archaeology Branch in working with these sacred cultural remains. Furthermore, the policy needs to be developed in partnership with First Nations and be supported by ongoing engagement with First Nations and stakeholders.¹

As such, the development of comprehensive policy to manage the respectful treatment of ancestral remains will comprise three closely linked components:

1. Archaeology Branch will develop, in partnership with First Nations, a comprehensive policy covering all aspects of the respectful treatment of ancestral remains.
2. The branch will work to secure an annual funding source to assist with the cost of archaeological work related to burials on both private and crown land.
3. The branch will develop an ongoing stakeholder engagement and outreach strategy to ensure that all stakeholders are informed of policies, procedures, roles and responsibilities related to the respectful treatment of ancestral remains.

¹ It is anticipated that First Nations and stakeholders will raise additional issues related to culture and heritage and the Heritage Conservation Act throughout the engagement on respectful treatment of ancestral remains. The branch will use this feedback to identify possible opportunities for further policy and/or legislative changes.

An action plan to support the work of these three components is attached as an appendix.

OPTIONS:

Option 1: Approve the approach to policy development and engagement described above.

Implications:

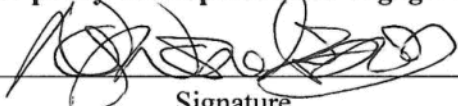
- Engages First Nations at outset, allowing for meaningful contribution to the development of policies.
- Shows government is taking serious steps to enhance the role of First Nations in the management of cultural heritage.
- First Nations may think this approach does not go far enough (some may continue to push for a review of the Heritage Conservation Act). Or conversely, this approach may raise expectations.
- Not all stakeholder groups will be contributors to policy content; homeowners and others will only be informed of policies once they have been developed.
- Potentially requires additional funding and introduction of fees.
- Allows government to be proactive and deliberate in approaching potential need for acquisition of private property containing ancestral remains.

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RECOMMENDATION:

Option 1: Approve the approach to policy development and engagement described above.

Approved / Not Approved


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

March 22/18
Date

Attachment(s): Respectful Treatment of Ancestral Remains Action Plan

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Associate DM	JF	Mar 13
DMO	ODG	Mar 12
ADM	AC	March 9
PRGM Dir./Mgr.	JR	March 9

Appendix: Respectful Treatment of Ancestral Remains Action Plan

This action plan has been developed to support the significant work required to deliver on the respectful treatment of ancestral remains project. The action plan is comprised of three sections:

1. Summary of key project components
2. Engagement approach
3. Key deliverables timeline

Key Project Components

1. Develop a comprehensive policy to manage the respectful treatment of ancestral remains

Archaeology Branch will work in partnership with First Nations and subject matter experts to review policies and procedures related to protection and management of ancestral remains.

Some policy areas that are anticipated to be in scope for this project include:

- Procedure for managing ancestral remains (on crown and private land), including chance finds.
- Permits related to ancestral remains, including when to grant them and with what conditions.
- Procedures related to contraventions to the HCA in relation to burial sites and ancestral remains.
- Scenarios under which branch staff would recommend acquisition of land by the provincial government and land management options post-acquisition.
- Roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders and partners (e.g. homeowners, BC Coroner Service, local governments, Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, etc.).
- A review of the gaps between the Cremation Internment and Funeral Services Act and the HCA for managing ancestral remains.
- Ancestral remains archaeological site boundaries.
- Review of repositories for ancestral remains.

First Nations will be asked to help define what policies should be included in this review (limited to the scope of management and treatment of ancestral remains), therefore, this list is likely to be refined following initial engagement.

2. Secure an annual funding source to assist with the cost of archaeological work related to burials on private and crown land.

Archaeology Branch will work to establish a revenue stream and make a formal submission to Treasury Board for dedicated funds for archaeological work involving burials. This will include:

- Establishing criteria to access the fund in collaboration with First Nations.
- Aligning with practice in most other FNLRO business areas and begin charging fees for permits and select data requests and submitting a request to Treasury Board to retain this revenue stream rather than it going to general revenue.
- If appropriate, submitting a request to Treasury Board for an additional source of funds to support costs associated with burial related archaeology work.

3. Engage and educate key stakeholder groups on roles and responsibilities, policies and procedures related to the respectful treatment of ancestral remains.

Once a comprehensive policy has been established, Archaeology Branch will undertake ongoing outreach and education initiatives to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are aware of their roles and responsibilities. This will include:

Appendix: Respectful Treatment of Ancestral Remains Action Plan

- A detailed stakeholder engagement plan to inform stakeholders of ancestral remains policy.
- Clarification of roles and responsibilities of all parties, including provincial government, local governments, homeowners, real estate agents, lawyers, notaries.
- Ongoing updates to the Archaeology Branch website.

Appendix: Respectful Treatment of Ancestral Remains Action Plan

Engagement Approach

- Engage with First Nations early to ensure that scope and content of the policy, including the fund to support archaeological work related to found ancestral remains, is jointly developed.
- Provide guidance in the form of focussed and open-ended question for discussions with First Nations and archaeologists to inform policy development.
- After policy has been developed, provide clear explanation of roles, responsibilities, policies and procedures to all stakeholders.

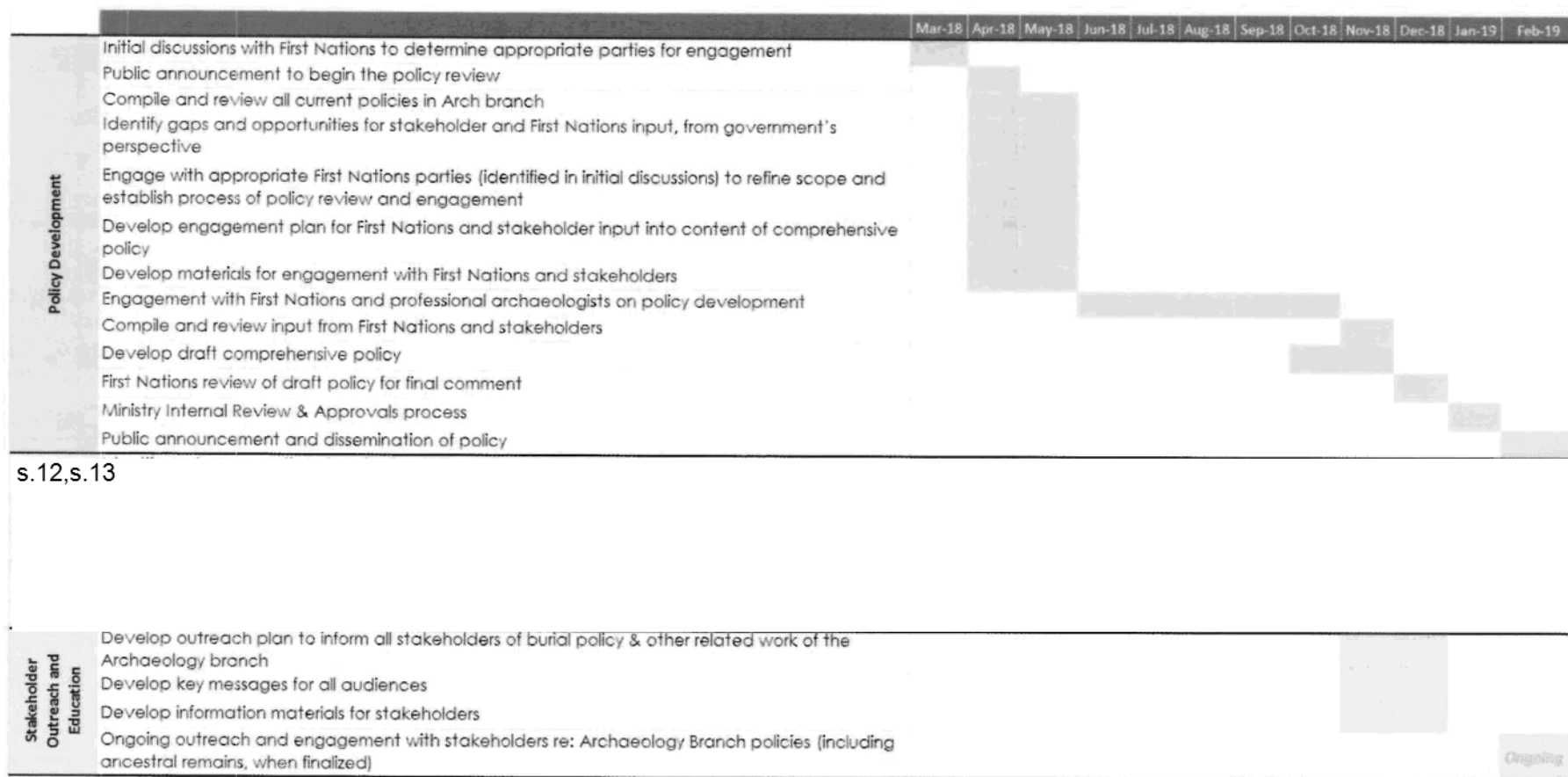
Partner	Purpose of Engagement	Planned Steps	Timing
First Nations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jointly establish scope of policy review - Obtain input into policies and procedures related to ancestral remains - Obtain input into continuous outreach approach for stakeholders - Present recommendations & draft policy for feedback and final comment - Inform of finalized policies/procedures 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine appropriate parties for initial engagement (e.g., First Nations Leadership Council, Joint Working Group) 2. Collaborate with appropriate parties to identify scope of ancestral remains policy review 3. Engage with appropriate parties to develop content of policies 4. Engage with appropriate parties to develop administrative aspects (e.g. criteria for accessing funding, process of applications, etc.) of burial fund 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initial engagement in Mar 2018 - Joint policy development Jun-Oct 2018 - Inform of finalized policy in Dec 2018
Stakeholders	Purpose of Engagement	Planned Steps	Timing
Archaeologists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Obtain input on technical aspects of the policy related to the respectful treatment of ancestral remains. - Provide clear policies to aid permitted archaeological work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaboration with professional archaeologists to develop content of policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Input into policy development June-Sept 2018 - Inform of finalized policies in Feb 2019

Appendix: Respectful Treatment of Ancestral Remains Action Plan

Stakeholders	Purpose of Engagement	Planned Steps	Timing
Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keep Minister Scott Fraser and MIRR staff informed about the status of policy development and engagement - Define roles and responsibilities for MIRR regarding respectful treatment of ancestral remains - Obtain input on engagement opportunities with First Nations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ongoing communication throughout policy development and engagement processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ongoing
Homeowners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inform about their roles & responsibilities regarding respectful treatment of ancestral remains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Steps related to engagement will be formalized in stakeholder engagement strategy, to be informed by initial engagement with First Nations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inform of finalized policies in Feb 2019
Local Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inform about their roles & responsibilities regarding respectful treatment of ancestral remains, including how to provide information to those obtaining building/development permits - Facilitate an understanding of branch policies/procedures and of local government's roles/responsibilities in site conservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Steps related to engagement will be formalized in stakeholder engagement strategy, to be informed by initial engagement with First Nations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inform of finalized policies in Feb 2019
BC Real Estate Association and Boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate an understanding of the role realtors play in supporting the respectful treatment of ancestral remains, including informing homebuyers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Steps related to engagement will be formalized in stakeholder engagement strategy, to be informed by initial engagement with First Nations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inform of finalized policies in Feb 2019
Lawyers and Notaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inform them about their roles & responsibilities re: respectful treatment of ancestral remains, including how to provide information to those purchasing homes - Facilitate an understanding of the role of lawyers and notaries in informing and advising homebuyers of potential legal issues and liabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Steps related to engagement will be formalized in stakeholder engagement strategy, to be informed by initial engagement with First Nations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inform of finalized policies in Feb 2019

Appendix: Respectful Treatment of Ancestral Remains Action Plan

Key Components Timeline



Note: Scope and content of engagement may change based on initial conversations with First Nations, as this process will be conducted in partnership.