



# ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

## NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 4

### VISION

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*“We, the Musqueam, will work together to take care of our territory so the following generations will know how to be self-reliant. We will remember our own history and as well, use our traditional teachings to take care of everyone and everything on this earth”.*

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## FROM THE EDITOR

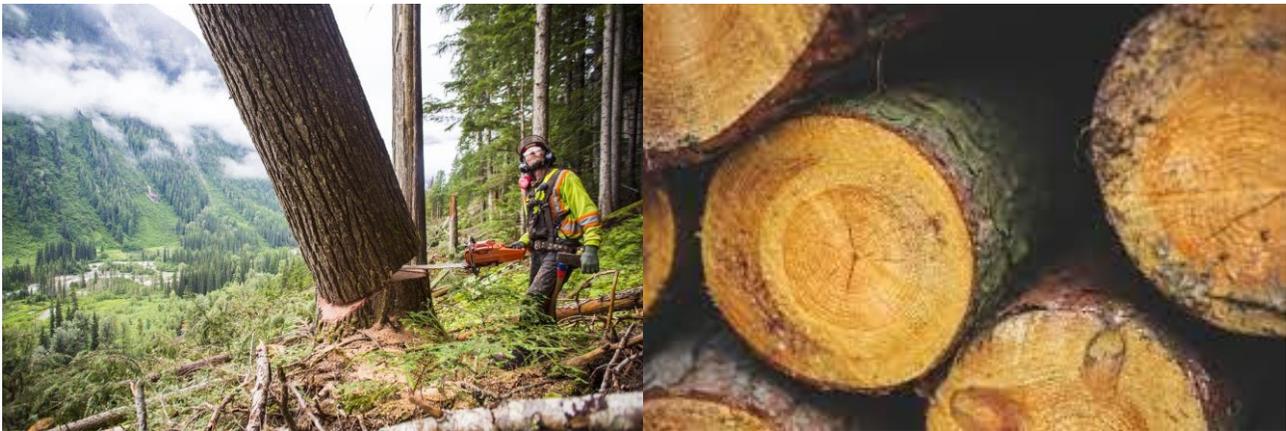
On behalf of the entire Environmental Stewardship Department, I would like to wish everyone a happy June and terrific summer. Summer is a great time of year to enjoy nature and take advantage of the wide range of outdoor activities our region has to offer.

We look forward to continuing to represent Musqueam's environmental interests and advocating on behalf of the community. As our department continues to grow and our department expands our work, we welcome feedback and suggestions on how we can best represent the community and undertake projects that will benefit the community.

Sincerely,

Yeganeh Asadian, M.Sc., P.Ag., Environmental Stewardship Manager

## FIRST NATIONS GET A BOOST IN REVENUE FROM FORESTRY



The provincial government recently announced major changes to the funding First Nations receive from forestry activities occurring on their traditional territories. Nations benefit financially from forestry through Forest Consultation and Revenue Sharing Agreements (FCRSA). In BC, 126 of the 184 Nations that are eligible for these agreements have one signed. For various reasons, some Nations choose not to enter into these agreements. While the first FCRSA was signed in 2013, the majority of these agreements have been signed in the past 5 years.

During the last fiscal year of 2021-2022, FCRSAs provided a total of \$58.8 million dollars to participating Nations, an average of \$466,667 per Nation. This may seem like a substantial amount, especially for smaller Nations in remote areas with fewer economic opportunities. However, FCRSA rates provided to Nations for forestry activity occurring on their traditional territory currently only amounts to 3-5% of the profits the province receives from stumpage fees and timber sales. First Nations have made it clear they do not feel as though this current funding is sufficient. Feedback heard from Nations during consultation

and engagement in initiatives like the BC First Nations Forest Strategy and the Forestry Modernization Intentions Paper have prompted the government to increase the benefits to Nations.

The province also enacted the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* in 2019. The act was introduced to align provincial law with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP). To meet the commitments of the newly introduced act and UNDRIP, the province drafted the Declaration Act Action Plan 2022-2027. Creating and improving revenue sharing agreements were among the action plan's 89 goals. New revenue sharing in forestry directly helps the province achieve goals 1.4 and 1.5 of the action plan.

The new changes to revenue sharing in forestry are two-fold. Firstly, the province will increase the FCRSA rates by 5%, effective immediately. Currently FCRSA rates range from 3-5% depending on the details of the FCRSA signed between an individual Nation and the government. There will also be an increase of 3% to Nations on revenue generated by BC Timber Sales, a provincial government agency responsible for auctioning 20% of the province's annual allowable cut. Therefore, the revenue increases represent a more than doubling of revenue provided to Nations, an increase of \$63 million to the \$58.8 million provided last fiscal year. If all eligible First Nations entered into FCRSAs, the total amount given to First Nations under the new revenue sharing would amount to \$130.8 million a year. As mentioned, not all Nations choose to enter into the agreements and 58 Nations in the province have not signed FCRSAs. In addition to the increased rates of FCRSAs, the language and wording of the agreements will be updated to better reflect UNDRIP. The second major change is a new permanent revenue-sharing model that will be created in consultation with First Nations to replace the current short-term transactional approach. It's estimated that the new revenue-sharing model will take around 2 years to introduce. The new revenue sharing announce by the province will last until this new revenue-sharing model is formally introduced.

While more work is needed, the changes are a step in the right direction to improve the economic well-being of Nations, respect title and rights, and meet the commitments of UNDRIP. Forests Minister Katrine Conroy stated the province's vision:

is for First Nations to be full partners in sustainable forest management and to receive meaningful benefits from forestry taking place on their territory.

The new changes have been generally well received by Indigenous Groups. Chief Murphy Abraham of Lake Babine Nation supports the changes and remarks that:

Improved forestry revenue is a milestone in our Foundation Agreement. It is a real step towards implementing our title and rights. Our nation looks forward to contributing to the development of the new sharing revenue policy.

Others believe that while it is a step in the right direction, more needs to be done. Chief Nicole Rempel of K'omoks First Nation noted that:

While the increase is not what some may say is sufficient, it does help close the socio-economic gap and demonstrates the provincial government's commitment to reconciliation and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

## PROTECTION OF B.C.'S SOUTHERN RESIDENT KILLER WHALES



Since 2019, the Federal government has brought forward a list of seasonal mitigation measures each summer for the protection of the endangered southern resident killer whales. The whales were designated as endangered under the federal *Species at Risk Act* in 2001 after their population dwindled to just over 70. The loss of chinook salmon, the orca's main source of food, is one contributing factor but underwater noise pollution is also considered a factor.

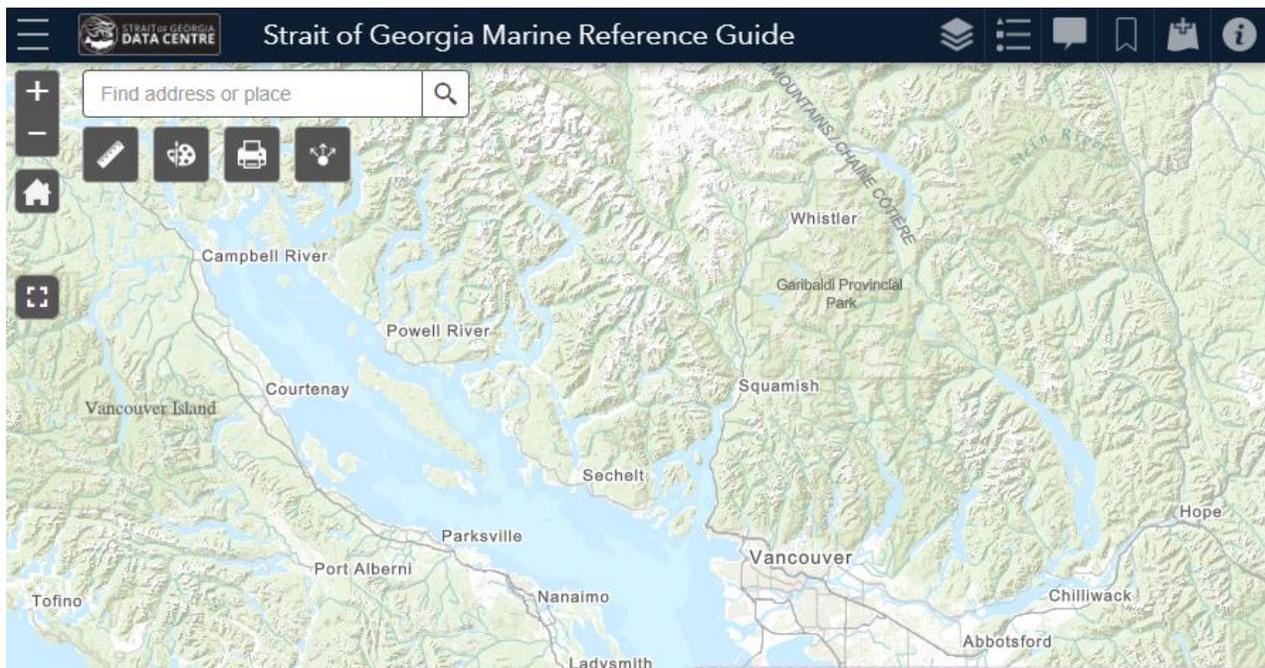
The mitigation measures implemented during the summer include slowdown areas, sanctuary zones, exclusion zones, and commercial and recreational fishing closures. This year, two new slowdown areas and an additional fishery closure have been added. The two new slowdown areas are near Swiftsure Bank and Port Renfrew, within the Salish Sea. The slowdown areas were developed in consultation with the local Pacheedaht First Nation. Vessels will be required to slow down to a speed of 10 knots in all slowdown areas, reducing the underwater noise pollution they produce. Sanctuary zones, which prohibit vessels from entering the area between June 1st and November 30<sup>th</sup>, will once again be introduced this summer and include areas along the southwest coast of Pender Island and the southeast end of Saturna Island. The exceptions for this are emergency situations and Indigenous food, social, and ceremonial fisheries. Exclusion zones are also part of the measures to protect the whales and require all vessels in waters south of Campbell River and around the southern tip of Vancouver Island just past Ucluelet to remain at least 400 meters away from all orcas. A new commercial and recreational salmon fisheries closure will be added at the mouth of the Fraser River in addition to the existing closures in the Swiftsure Bank area, as well as sections of the Southern Gulf Islands and Strait of Juan de Fuca.

The continuation of these mitigation measures is especially crucial for the K-Pod of southern resident killer whales. Days after the government expanded the protection measures, the pod welcomed its first calf in more than a decade. K-Pod is the smallest of the three southern resident killer whale pods with 16 confirmed individuals (+1 when the calf is confirmed). Biologists will be watching the pod further to monitor the calf's behaviour, health, identifiable markings, and determine the mother.

Although there is hope for these measures to help the endangered species, some suggest it is not enough. Christianne Wilhelmson, executive director of the environmental group 'The Georgia Strait

Alliance' said the annual approach to protecting southern resident killer whales fails to fully appreciate that the species is in crisis and needs bolder action like year-round measures and no-go zones.

## STRAIT OF GEORGIA DATA CENTER



For Earth Day, the Strait of Georgia Data Centre released a substantive, interactive map called the 'Strait of Georgia Marine Reference Guide'. The Strait of Georgia Data Centre is a collaborative program between the Pacific Salmon Foundation and the University of British Columbia Institute for the Oceans and Fisheries. Its goal is to build a secure data archive for marine ecosystem information. This newly released guide contains a wealth of information that is publicly available and easy to use. The objective of this project was to create a secure archive for data on different marine topics and create a web-based, open-access system to make the data available to everyone.

### Data sources:

The Strait of Georgia Data Centre has compiled data from a wide range of sources. Data from researchers, government, NGOs, and municipalities is available. The team at the Strait of Georgia Data Centre check the quality of data to ensure accurate maps are being produced. This tool is ever-changing since people are able to submit data to be included on the map.

### How to use:

Anyone can access the Marine Reference Guide by going to <https://sogdatacentre.ca/sogmrg/> on your laptop or desktop computer, scrolling down to the blue box welcoming you to the Strait of Georgia Marine Reference Guide, and selecting 'ok'. It does not require any specific programs on your computer or specialized skills. There is even a side panel that explains how to get started using the map.

### Why is this important?

A picture is worth a thousand words. There are countless different groups, stakeholders, researchers and other people looking into various marine topics in the Salish Sea area. The Marine Reference Guide provides an opportunity to visualize these findings in one place. Since the map is interactive, the user can choose what is of interest to them, what location, and see up-to-date maps.

The Marine Reference Guide has over 400 layers and topics to choose from, such as ecology (birds, plankton, fish health, invasive species), human use (aquaculture, marine infrastructure, recreational fisheries), and restoration (native plant nurseries, marine riparian restoration sites), among others. All these layers allow the user to create a map using the best available data, targeted specifically to their needs. For example, if one was interested in marine plants and algae, they could go to the 'ecology' section and choose the 'marine plants and algae'. In order to answer a question such as 'how has the distribution of eelgrass changed in recent decades?', you have the option to include layers such as 'distribution of eelgrass, pre-2010 (BC)', 'priority eelgrass habitat, pre-2010', and 'distribution of eelgrass, 2012-2014'. By having layers for different periods of time, changes over time can be more visibly apparent.

Alternatively, if you were interested in the predicted impacts of climate change, you could go to the 'climate change' section, and select 'predicted shorelines sensitivity to sea level rise' and 'aquifer vulnerability to saltwater intrusion'. This map highlights areas that are sensitive to sea-level rise with the different colours corresponding to the level of sensitivity (red-very high, orange-high, yellow-moderate, green-low). This map provides important information that can be useful for selecting restoration sites, planning community development, and many other land planning activities.

In addition to the Marine Reference Guide, there are also story maps that teach about the Strait of Georgia's marine environment. These story maps combine engaging text with beautiful images and maps. These can be used to learn more about a topic, without having to create the map yourself. For example, there are stories on Forage Fish in the Salish Sea, Invasive European Green Crab in BC, and The Citizen Science Oceanography Program, among others. You can access these educational map stories here: <https://maps.sogdatacentre.ca/pages/storytelling>. These story maps are made by either staff at the Strait of Georgia Data Centre, or by people working at partner organizations (i.e. Pacific Salmon Foundation) using data verified by the Strait of Georgia Data Centre.

Utilizing maps can be a powerful way to learn and understand more about a topic or issue. Maps allow you to see the visual extent or severity of something, as well as provide a lens through which innovative solutions can be imagined. Maps tell stories about people, the environment, and a range of topics. Viewing topics through maps allows you to interpret data collected by someone else and understand it for yourself. Maps are only as good as the data entered into them, but through the use of the Strait of Georgia Data Centre, the general public has access to quality data and the ability to see what work is being conducted in the Strait of Georgia. The Strait of Georgia Marine Reference Guide is newly launched, so there will be ongoing updates and additions of new data.

## SUMMER EVENTS AROUND VANCOUVER

\* Please note that all events are in accordance with BC Health & Safety Guidelines regarding COVID-19\*

- ❖ **2022 Concord Pacific Dragon Boat Festival, June 24 – June 26**  
Come to the shores of False Creek from June 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> to watch this year's Dragon Boat Festival, one of the largest in North America. In addition to the exciting races, there are tons of other things to do for people of all ages including exhibits, performances, cultural pavilions, live music, food trucks, and vendors. For more information visit <https://concorddragonboatfestival.ca/championshipweekend/exhibitors/>.
- ❖ **TD Vancouver International Jazz Festival, June 24 – July 3**  
The Coastal Jazz & Blues Society presents the 36<sup>th</sup> TD Vancouver International Jazz Festival. The festival takes place at venues throughout Metro Vancouver. This year's festival will showcase over 1800 artists in over 300 different performances. In addition to world-class artists, there are over 150 free shows. Whether you're new to the genre or a long-time fan, you'll want to check out one of these shows. For more information visit <https://www.coastaljazz.ca/>.
- ❖ **Bill Reid Gallery of Northwest Coast Art presents Beaded Nostalgia, May 18 – October 23**  
Free for Indigenous Peoples, this exhibition at the Bill Reid Gallery downtown will showcase contemporary beadwork from several local artists. Beaded Nostalgia will celebrate the revival of this art form and Indigenous culture. For more information visit <https://www.destinationvancouver.com/event/bill-reid-gallery-of-northwest-coast-art-presents-beaded-nostalgia/22725/>.
- ❖ **Science World Presents T. rex: The Ultimate Predator, February 26, 2022 – January 22, 2023**  
Measuring over 40 feet long, T-Rex was one of the largest and most fearsome carnivores in history. Learn more about this notorious predator at Science World's *Trex: The Ultimate Predator* exhibit. The exhibit features fun interactive activities to teach about how the species hunted and thrived for millions of years. For more information visit <https://www.scienceworld.ca/exhibition/t-rex-the-ultimate-predator/>
- ❖ **Vancouver Rose Show, June 12**  
The 66<sup>th</sup> Biennial Rose Show will be held at VanDusen Botanical Garden on June 12<sup>th</sup>. This judged Rose Show features hundreds of blooms freshly cut from the gardens of members of the Vancouver Rose Society. Awards will be handed out for different categories including colour and fragrance. Cut flowers, bouquets, and live plants are also available for sale. For more information visit <https://www.vancouverrosesociety.org/events.html>.
- ❖ **Honda Celebration of Light 2022, July 23, 27, and 30**  
Vancouver's famous Celebration of Light fireworks show is back featuring the world's largest offshore fireworks competition. The year's events will feature teams from Japan, Canada, and Spain on July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>, and 30<sup>th</sup> respectively. While known for the fireworks, the Celebration of Light also features food trucks and live music from BC-based musicians. The fireworks can be

seen from around English Bay but tickets can be purchased for the best viewing locations. For more information visit <https://hondacelebrationoflight.com/>.

For many more events taking place in Metro Vancouver this summer, visit Destination Vancouver's website at <https://www.destinationvancouver.com/events/calendar-of-events/>.

## CONTACT US

For further inquiries regarding the newsletter and our green initiatives, please contact:

**Yeganeh Asadian, M.Sc., P.Ag.**

Environmental Stewardship Manager

[yasadian@musqueam.bc.ca](mailto:yasadian@musqueam.bc.ca)

**Ryan Kadoranian**

Environmental Stewardship Major Projects Coordinator

[rkadoranian@musqueam.bc.ca](mailto:rkadoranian@musqueam.bc.ca)

**Marc-Andre Hervieux**

Environmental Stewardship Analyst

[mhervieux@musqueam.bc.ca](mailto:mhervieux@musqueam.bc.ca)

Office: 604.263.3261

Website: <https://www.musqueam.bc.ca/departments/iga/environment/>

Instagram: @envirostew

Facebook: Enviro Stewardship

