



Baynes Sound / Lambert Channel
Ecosystem Forum | November 2020

Summary Report

Prepared by Gillian Nicol for Islands Trust and Steering Committee members



Islands Trust

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Overview

On Nov 26, 2020 a Baynes Sound / Lambert Channel Ecosystem Forum was hosted by Islands Trust online as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. More than fifteen participants attended, representing federal, provincial, and local governments as well as conservation groups, industry representatives, and others with an interest in the Baynes Sound / Lambert Channel area. A list of participants can be found in Appendix A.

Building on previous events, including the Spring 2018, Spring 2019, Autumn 2019, Spring 2020 Baynes Sound / Lambert Channel Ecosystem Forum, objectives for the Fall 2020 Forum were to:

- Create an opportunity for collaborative dialogue amongst the diverse interests in the Baynes Sound / Lambert Channel ecosystem
- Share knowledge and experience that can inform solutions, and
- Identify next steps for ongoing collaborative actions and processes to support the health of the Baynes Sound / Lambert Channel ecosystem

Participants provided answers to three questions during a round table:

- Who are you?
- Where are you?
- What are you thankful for today?

Afterwards, working groups from the alternative practices for shellfish aquaculture and governance reported on their progress or provided updates. The rest of the Forum focused on finalizing the terms of reference, electing a steering committee and discussed potential sources of financial and administrative support for the Forum.

At the end of this report the section on Next Steps describes how the steering committee plans to meet a few times before the next Forum, spend the remaining funding during the fiscal year, and plan for the spring Forum.

Please contact Gillian Nicol (gnicol@islandstrust.ca) if you have questions or comments about this report.

Introduction

Acknowledgement

Islands Trust acknowledges that the participants from the Baynes Sound Lambert Channel Ecosystem Forum gathered digitally from many places in Coast Salish territory, as well as Indigenous, Métis, and Inuit communities across BC and Canada. We expressly thank the host communities of Kómoks, Qualicum, Snaw-naw-as and Tlaamin.

Along with our participants gathering from the treaty and traditional territories of BOŶÉĆEN (Pauquachin), Cowichan, Halalt, Homalco, Kómoks, Klahoose, Ts'uubaa-asatx (Lake Cowichan), Lək'wəŋən (SXIMEŁŁŁŁ (Esquimalt), Songhees, TSou-ke), Lyackson, MÁLEXEL (Malahat), Penelakut, Qualicum, Scianew (Beecher Bay), səlılwətaʔt/seł'ílwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh), SEMYOME (Semiahmoo), Shíshálh (Sechelt), Snaw-naw-as (Nanoose), Snuneymuxw (Nanaimo), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), SŦÁUTW (Tsawout), Stzuminus (Chemainus), Tlaamin, Tsawwassen, We Wai Kai (Cape Mudge), Wei Wai Kum (Campbell River), WJOŁŁŁP (Tsartlip), WSIKEM (Tseycum), and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam).

Purpose

This report is intended to provide background information and a summary of discussion from the Baynes Sound / Lambert Channel (BS/LC) Ecosystem Forum held on November 26, 2020. Please note that this is a summary of the discussions and that formal consensus was not sought for each point, though there was general agreement within discussions.

The objectives for the Forum were to:

- Create an opportunity for collaborative dialogue amongst the diverse interests in the BS/LC ecosystem
- Share knowledge and experience that can inform solutions
- Identify next steps for ongoing collaborative actions and processes to support the health of the BS/LC ecosystem. Working groups formed in previous events were also tasked with reporting on their progress

Importance of the Baynes Sound / Lambert Channel Ecosystem

Baynes Sound and Lambert Channel lands and waters have been the homeland of Indigenous Peoples since time immemorial. Their cultural heritage, knowledge, and

stewardship of this area for thousands of years highlights the importance of this place as a unique coastal homeland.

Baynes Sound and Lambert Channel—a thermally stratified inland sea, internationally recognized Important Bird Area and nationally designated Ecologically and Biologically Significant Area—is a highly productive ecosystem, home to a regionally unique combination of diverse marine and coastal habitats.

Baynes Sound / Lambert Channel is the highest ranked cumulative spawning and rearing area for herring in Strait of Georgia ecoregion. Thirty-eight percent of all herring spawning that has ever occurred in BC (based on >30,000 records) has occurred in this area¹ positioning this area as a critical linchpin in terms of the ecosystem health of the Coast. Seabirds, juvenile salmon, mollusks and other forage fish find shelter in the ecologically-distinct elements of BS/LC. The Sound and channel are a summer moulting areas for sea ducks, with significant aggregations of waterfowl, shorebird and gull species during herring spawn. Several at-risk bird species use Baynes Sound for feeding or stop-overs.

Baynes Sound / Lambert Channel contains important foraging and haul out sites for Pacific harbour seals, Steller and California sea lions. The Bayne Sound and Lambert Channel have been consistently used as spawning and rearing grounds for the last commercially harvested stock of Pacific herring. The estuaries and riparian areas of the Sound provide spawning and rearing habitat for Coho, chum, coastal cutthroat trout and likely some steelhead. More than fifteen salmon bearing streams drain into BS/LC. Intertidal eelgrass beds act as nurseries and provide protection and valuable food sources for these salmon. Significant quantities of both wild and cultured shellfish are produced within the waters of the Sound.²

Summary of Discussion

Opening

The Fall 2020 Baynes Sound / Lambert Channel Ecosystem Forum took place entirely online, via Zoom videoconference, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and prohibitions against in-person gatherings. The event began with an introduction and acknowledgement of the territories by facilitator Jessie Hemphill (Alderhill Planning).

¹ Dr Doug Hay, retired. herring scientist, DFO in his Nov.2013 letter to FLNRO Deputy Minister Tim Sheldan

²Subsections titled “Purpose” and “Importance of the Baynes Sound / Lambert Channel Ecosystem” are based on the 2018 Baynes Sound/ Lambert Channel Ecosystem Forum 2018 Summary Report by Dr. Karen Hurley and Kim Dunn.

After brief welcoming, context-setting and housekeeping comments, the meeting began with updates from the participants answering the questions:

- Who are you?
- Where are you?
- What are you thankful for today?

Working Group Reports

Two working groups, formed at the March 2019 Learning Exchange, provided brief updates:

Aquaculture Research Project & Demonstration Site

Chaired by Barb Mills, this group formed in the fall of 2018. It developed out of a common concern for the declining health of the Baynes Sound and Lambert Channel Ecosystem. The intent of the committee is to explore, research and examine creative alternate aquaculture practices and gear that could assist in preventing further degradation of this vital habitat. As a multi-disciplinary committee, it is agreed that such endeavours would need to fit dual criteria of being manageable and realistic for growers while being compatible with sustaining, protecting and/ or restoring marine habitat. This mandate was again re-stated at the fall 2019 Eco Forum.

This committee has kept focused and active despite the pandemic. In many ways it represents a fulfillment of the reason for convening the Eco Forum. We have committed and active representation of members from government, industry, the community and environmental advocates. Over the years, we have left differences behind and found common ground to support the needs of the environment and industry.

In the last six months the committee focused on two important projects; a) Creating a formal submission of suggestions to the Shellfish Aquaculture Conditions of License process; and b) The development and submission of a research proposal on alternatives to the traditional use of clam netting in the intertidal.

The submission regarding changes in Conditions of License focused on:

- Clearer environmental guidelines for protection of fish and fish habitat;
- Suggestions for integrating the parameters of the management plan with, practical checklists for the grower, being consistent with DFO's task of monitoring and regulating aquaculture practices.
- Practical guidelines for reducing, re-using, recycling, and refusing harmful plastics.

- A need for clearer guidelines and consequences related to alteration, disturbance and destruction of fish and fish habitat was emphasized.

This submission was based on a) research into best management practices and guidelines of other countries; b) observations of growers and community members on the ground; and c) the documented vision and policy statements of DFO and Fisheries Act.

The purpose of our research proposal was to test the impact of traditional use and impact of full time plastic clam netting as compared to netting used over shorter specified periods of time. The goal was to compare the impact of each length of covering on the a) marine biodiversity and benthic habitat; as well as b) the cost to the grower in labour and materials. Unfortunately this funding was not approved.

Our intention is, until the pandemic is over, to research and trial practical demonstration projects instead.

Governance Group

Chaired by Dorrie Woodward, this group met several times over the course of the break between Forums to draft and finalize the Terms of Reference. Kim Dunn of World Wildlife Fund and David Critchley of Denman Island Local Trust Committee were principle participants, though Jim Russel of BC Shellfish Growers Association, Daniel Arbour of Comox Valley Regional District, Carl Butterworth of Deep Bay Marine Station and various representatives of Department of Fisheries and Oceans also took part. Gillian Nicol, staff for Islands Trust also assisted in drafting the Terms of Reference.

Gillian provided an update to the Plan H funding grant. While the group was not chosen to receive the grant, we were encouraged to apply to other grants, as we have now collected letters and other materials to support other proposals.

The group said goodbye to Kim Dunn, who was critical for making the Forums happen, but also who spearheading the Terms of Reference. Thank you Kim Dunn for your support. :D

Review of Terms of Reference Draft and Approval Process:

After briefly reviewing the terms of reference to date, Jessie first asked participants to provide feedback on two points: communication externally and voting processes.

Participants raised some comments and concerns about parts of the terms of reference.

Voting processes:

- 1) Scenario one, one vote per person
- 2) Scenario two, one vote per organization

There was a short debate about the voting processes and adoptions took place with amended versions.

- 1) Scenario one, one vote per person (anyone present at the time of voting) with time allocated for organizations to seek internal consensus before voting
- 2) Scenario two, one vote per organization, community, or First Nation (where the Steering committee determines who get these votes)

A short vote using mentimeter provided 5 votes for Scenario one and 4 votes for Scenario two. Scenario one has been advanced.

Some details the Steering Committee is encouraged to review:

- Does one vote per person mean any person? Or, do they have to be connected to an organization, however individuals on their own may observe and participate but not vote?
- Government reps should be consulting within their organizations to come up with one view point.
- Try to avoid voting on the spot and try to build consensus
- What defines an organization?
- Encourages engagement in the process. We need to provide supportive options for consensus based voting.
- This is a work in progress and we can amend at any time and see how it goes.
- Does an independent person have a vote when they just turn up? This style leaves us vulnerable to stacking votes. Come first as observers; voice but not vote. That's how she would resolve the newcomer.

Nominations and Voting:

The Steering Committee needed a minimum of 3 people on the committee, but would be best to have 6-8 people. Voting took place and the Steering Committee members are:

1. Daniel Arbour
2. Dorrie Woodward
3. Jim Russell
4. Carl Butterworth
5. David Critchley
6. Chris Pearce

Updates & Next Steps

Energizer

Jessie led the group through an energizer to move the body after sitting in chairs for a couple of hours. Participants appreciate the efforts.

Presentations

Aroha Miller, Ocean Wise Conservation Association:

Presented on research and report writing services. Reports are written in non-technical writing with a lot of graphics where all ages can use them. The research methodology provides a holistic overview with no biased data that provides the overall health of the area.

Questions:

- 1) How can we take a step forward to working with your organization to get one or several of these reports?
A: First steps is to discuss amongst yourselves if interested. She will discuss with her managers, and apply for funding. She would help write funding requests and involve the Forum at every step of the way. Involvement in the community is key for feeling ownership of the project.

Kim Dunn, World Wildlife Fund:

Presented on her report called Towards Integrated Management in Baynes Sound (see appendix for presentation and full report). World Wildlife Fund is most interested in an integrated ecosystem-based management approach for the area. The purpose of the report was to review all 29 management plans and reports for the area and to assess their current degree of integration. All 29 plans are spatially relevant and were analyzed based on key principles of ecosystem-based management and later examined to identify opportunities and challenges for further integration of management in the future. There is a wide range of plans from many levels of government. Kim discussed how best to read the report and where to look when wanting to read specific information.

Questions:

- 1) Are there any local examples of integrated management plans at this scale? And, can you help us find these examples?
A: Lots of efforts but very rare that is fully integrated and operationalized. Some references are in the report.

- 2) Do you have any strategies to get government especially federal government involved?
A: The Forum is the best way forward as multiple governments are represented. The power is Baynes Sound will need to be sold as a pilot or smaller piece of the bigger pie (part of the Salish Sea). The power here is in the groups working together and on board. Figure out how to facilitate similar project to the Howe Sound report would be beneficial.
- 3) Any tips moving forward?
A: If any research takes place, make sure DFO leads the process to make sure they are involved in the data collection as some work may not be accepted.

Group Discussion:

The group discussion range from talking about operationalizing the Terms of Reference by focusing on funding, communication and membership.

Funding highlights:

- Program Coordinator role is in-kind support and will be provided until March 31st, 2021 from Islands Trust
- Gillian (Program Coordinator) recommends writing a letter for additional funding and in-kind administration support for the 2021-22 fiscal year; due end of March
- Becoming a society would make it easier to apply for funding
- How much does the Forum need annually? What would the Forum do with more funding?
- Minimum costs: Facilitation for the Forums
- The Steering Committee should develop a budget/plan to help support funding applications.
- Daniel will look into CVRD for potential funding.
- Additional potential costs: website/communications, additional projects, research, and coordination support
- Connect with Gord John and Josie Osborne and request for some assistance in identifying other sources of funding
- Comox Valley Conservation Partnership has funders – maybe they could help us find funders
- Islands Trust recently adopted a secretariat function that can provide limited support and funding (deadline to re-apply is April 1st)
- We could ask Islands Trust to help us find potential funding sources
- Islands Trust could hold the funding for the Forum

Communication highlights:

- A website will help support funding applications and show we exist as a Forum
- Microsoft 365 or another platform might give us meeting tools and a website
- Need to consider administration
- A one pager flyer about the Forum would be helpful tool

Membership highlights:

- Should we reach out to municipalities?
- Broad membership helps us build the case for funding

Next Steps

1. Two sets of letters of support should be written:
 - Please write letters of support for the letter of intent to BCSRF. Chris to send specific details to Gillian.
 - Send individual emails/letters of support to shellfish.aquiculture.ca (need email address from Gillian) – Chris to send email details to Gillian.
2. Steering Committee to select date to get together and discuss the following:
 - Assign President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary Roles.
 - Possibility of working with Ocean Watch and creating a report
 - External communications; one pager, flyer, and website. Possibly draft communications materials and bring back to the group for approval at the next Forum.
 - Annual budget. Need information from Gillian on Ocean Watch report pricing, monies left over to date from Islands Trust, facilitator costs, Forum costs and any other general operating costs.
 - Meet as a Steering Committee before Christmas
 - Daniel to reach out to Josie Osborne (MLA), Gord Johns (MP), and Stuart Mclean (Area K Regional District Officer)
 - Carl to connect with Qualicum First Nation Chief Recalma
 - Dorrie to connect with K'omoks First Nations staff Tiffany Gee and Cory Frank
3. Steps to organize the next Forum:
 - Barb & Dorrie - need to re-apply to TPC committee for Islands Trust funds by March or April 1, 2021. A letter will need to be written and a presentation conducted. Gillian to inform Barb and Dorrie about when the TPC meeting is and when the deadline for the letter is.

Gillian to start to organize the next Forum for Spring 2021 and supporting Barb & Dorrie by supporting the letter and determining in-kind support

- Gillian to reach out to Kim and Aroha for presentations and follow up with Aroha about more information on research opportunities
- Members are encourage to research funding options and bring them forward for consideration

Appendix A: List of Participants

Name	Organization	Role
David Critchley	Islands Trust	Denman Island Local Trustee
Chris Pearce	Department of Fisheries and Oceans	Research Scientist
Carl Butterworth	Vancouver Island University	Manager - Science and Technology Research Centres
Bill Heath	Project Watershed	Director, Mapping Services and Kelp Restoration
Barbara Mills	Association for Denman Island Marine Stewards	Director
Daniel Arbour	Comox Valley Regional District	Director, Baynes Sound, Hornby/Denman
Dorrance Woodward	Association for Denman Island Marine Stewards	Chair
Peter Johnston	Islands Trust	Lasqueti Island Local Trustee
Laura Busheikin	Islands Trust	Denman Island Local Trustee
Jim Russell	BCSGA	Executive Director
Marnie Eggen	Islands Trust	Island Planner
Aroha Miller	Ocean Wise	Presenter
Alex Trifonidis	Islands Trust	Note taker
Kim Dunn	WWF-Canada	Senior Specialist, Ocean Conservation
Gillian Nicol	Islands Trust	Program Coordinator
Jessie Hemphill	Alderhill Planning Co	Facilitator

Appendix B: Agenda

Baynes Sound/Lambert Channel Ecosystem Forum

Thursday, November. 26th, 2020

Virtual Gathering via Zoom

Islands Trust is pleased to invite you to a meeting of the Baynes Sound/Lambert Channel Ecosystem Forum, taking place Nov 26th, 2020. Due to the COVID19 pandemic, this fall's meeting will be held online and will be shorter in duration than past meetings.

Building from the 2018, 2019, and May 2020 Baynes Sound/Lambert Channel Ecosystem Forum meetings, this gathering will bring together local, regional, provincial, federal and First Nations governments, as well as private sector and conservation group representatives to participate in focused solutions-oriented discussion regarding the challenges facing Baynes Sound/Lambert Channel. The Ecosystem Forum meeting will be professionally facilitated, and a final report will be produced and provided to each participant.

This meeting of the Baynes Sound/Lambert Channel Ecosystem Forum has the following aims:

- Create an opportunity for collaborative dialogue amongst the diverse interests in the Baynes Sound/Lambert Channel ecosystem
- Share knowledge and experience that can inform solutions
- Identify next steps for ongoing collaborative actions and processes to support the health of the Baynes Sound/Lambert Channel ecosystem

Thursday, November. 26th, 2020

*Agenda

9:45 – 10:00	Log on, test your system, and get cozy
10:00 – 10:30	Opening, Check In
10:30 – 10:50	Alternative Practices Committee - Update
10:50 – 11:30	Review of Terms of Reference Draft and Approval Process
11:30 – 12:00	Nominations and Voting
12:00 – 12:30	How to operationalize the terms of reference
12:30 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00 – 1:10	Energizer
1:10 – 1:50	Planning for the future (with guests)
1:50 – 2:30	Break out groups
2:30 – 2:45	Report back and Goodbye!

*Agenda is subject to change. Depending on the day, we will try to end earlier.

Contact Gillian Nicol (gnicol@islandstrust.bc.ca; 250-405-5195) if you have any questions or concerns.

Appendix C: Presentations

The following pages contain two Power Point presentations and a report.