COOPERATIVE MANAGEMENT AT GWAIIL HAANAS: A LOOK BEHIND THE SCENES

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Gwaii Haanas overview

1500 km² land, 3500 km² sea

Cooperatively managed by the Haida Nation and Government of Canada

Diverse and abundant ecological communities; 42 Species at Risk

Livelihoods earned through tourism and commercial fishing

Living Haida culture continues through traditional use and the Watchmen Program

More than 700 recorded archaeological sites
Designations

• Haida Heritage Site
• National Park Reserve
• National Marine Conservation Area Reserve
• UNESCO World Heritage Site (SGang Gwaay)
• National Historic Sites (SGang Gwaay, T’aanuu Llnagaay, K’uuna Llnagaay)
Timeline

1985
Stand at Athlii Gwaii (Lyell Island)
Haida Nation designates Gwaii Haanas a Haida Heritage Site (land and sea)

1988
Federal/Provincial (BC) South Moresby Agreement

1993
Canada-Haida Gwaii Haanas Agreement

2010
Canada-Haida Gwaii Haanas Marine Agreement
National Marine Conservation Area Reserve established

2013
Legacy Pole raising, celebrating 20 years of cooperative management

2018
Gwaii Haanas Land-Sea-People Management Plan approved
Archipelago Management Board

Intent

Desire and willingness to work together in the spirit of cooperation. Nothing fetters or limits existing authorities, rights, or jurisdictions.

Board Structure

Equal representation of Haida Nation (3) & Government of Canada (2 PC, 1DFO).

Function

Decisions made by consensus.
Consensus decisions are deemed recommendations to appropriate authorities. Senior representatives may agree to put actions into abeyance.
Legacy Pole

- Raised in 2013 to celebrate 20 years of Haida – Canada cooperative management
- First pole raised in Gwaii Haanas in more than 130 years
- Has led to sustained increase in visitation to Hlk'yah GawGa Windy Bay
Tourism snapshot

• ~3200 visitors per year
• 80% travel with a licensed tour operator
• 22 licensed tour operators
  • Kayak (multi-day)
  • Powerboat (daytrip and multi-day)
  • Sailboat (multi-day)
  • Fixed wing (daytrip)
Haida involvement in tourism sector

• Allocation (tourism quota) is split equally between Haida and other tour operators
• ~30% of Haida allocation is currently in use
• Other operators often hire Haida guides
Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program

- Began in 1981 as a volunteer guardian program
- Now run as a contract with Parks Canada
- Visitors consistently report meeting Watchmen as a highlight of their trip
Guiding principles

Yahguudang—Respect.

Gina ’waadluxan gud ad kwaagid—Interconnectedness.

‘Laa guu ga kahllns—Responsibility.

Giid tlljuus—Balance.

Isda ad dii gii isda—Giving and Receiving.

Gina k’aadang.nga gii uu tll k’anguudang—Seeking Wise Counsel.
Land-Sea-People plan

- New, integrated management plan for Gwaii Haanas approved in 2018
- Worked closely with an advisory committee, Haida communities and stakeholder groups
- Includes a new zoning plan, with 40% (>1400 km²) of the marine area in strict protection, negotiated with the fishing industry
Engagement strategy

• Engage together as a Haida-Canada partnership
• Use existing relationships to facilitate and coordinate engagement
• Bring people in as early as possible
Lesson 1: Culture first

“What would our ancestors think?”
- kil tlaats ’gaa (Peter Lantin), former Haida Nation President

• Consider protected areas as Indigenous homelands/territories
• Protect cultural values
• Use traditional knowledge as a starting point
• Incorporate Indigenous language and place names
Lesson 2: Cooperative governance is an opportunity, not a burden

Haay.yad tl’aaw gam taajuuwaay sihlgyang dii giijiigid gang. (Today there is no wind to hold me back.)

- Recognize and respect each party’s authority
- Empower decision-makers to work cooperatively
- Use each organization’s strengths
- Get to know the tools in each other’s toolboxes
Lesson 3: Find common ground

“It is important that we honour each of our identities and that which makes us different, but we are strongest when we focus on what we have in common.”

- Ernie Gladstone, Gwaii Haanas Superintendent

• Focus on areas of agreement
• Don’t sweat the small stuff
• Avoid conflict that can undermine trust and set planning back
Lesson 4: Build trust

“It’s the relationships we build that move things forward.”

- Cindy Boyko, AMB co-chair

- Make time to build relationships on a professional and personal level
- Speak frankly and honestly
- Live or spend time in the community
- Find people who have a genuine desire to make it work
Haawa!

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