

# CANOE ISLETS ECOLOGICAL RESERVE

## PURPOSE STATEMENT

September 2003

Approved by:



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Date: Sept. 6/03



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Date: Jan. 15/04

## CANOE ISLETS ECOLOGICAL RESERVE Purpose Statement

Ecological reserves are areas selected to preserve representative and special natural ecosystems, plant and animal species, features and phenomena. The key goal of ecological reserves is to contribute to the maintenance of biological diversity and the protection of genetic materials. All consumptive resource uses and the use of motorized vehicles are prohibited.

**Canoe Islets Ecological Reserve is closed to the public by Order in Council. A permit is required for access to the ecological reserve to protect the nesting seabirds and sea lion haul-outs.** Research and educational activities may be carried out but only under permit.

### Primary Role

The **primary** role of Canoe Islets Ecological Reserve is to protect nesting cormorants and gulls. Established in 1971, Canoe Islets Ecological Reserve protects 0.6 hectares of rocky islets in the Strait of Georgia near Galiano and Valdes islands. These isolated islets provide important habitat for marine mammals and seabirds. These islets formed a historic double-crested cormorant nesting site, which were last seen nesting here in 1974. Listed as a vulnerable species on the provincial blue list, it is hoped that by preserving this habitat, they will nest here once again. The Canoe Islets remain an important nesting habitat for glaucous-winged gulls and other seabirds. California and northern sea lions as well as harbour seals haul out on the rocks here in the winter to rest and sunbathe. The turbulent waters surrounding the islets, although not protected in the ecological reserve, contain a wide range of marine invertebrates and fish that provide rich feeding grounds for seabirds and marine mammals.

### Management Issues

Known Management Issue	Response
Lack of knowledge of visitation levels. Unknown effects of visitation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Continue the ecological reserve warden's monitoring program.</li> <li>➤ Work with the ecological reserve warden to increase the frequency of monitoring to develop a better understanding of visitation and associated impacts.</li> <li>➤ Liaise with kayak groups to increase awareness and ensure compliance with the closed status of the ecological reserve.</li> <li>➤ Install signs on the islets to indicate its status and the rationale for the closure.</li> </ul>
Lack of protection of foreshore.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Add foreshore to the ecological reserve to enhance protection of upland values and the marine environment. Consult with First Nations.</li> </ul>

### Conservation

- Representation  
- ecosection  Upland area too small to be representative
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant  Upland area too small to be representative
- Special Features  None known at this time
- Rare/Endangered Values  *Red-listed:* northern sea lion  
*Blue-listed:* historic nesting site of double-crested Cormorant (last observed in 1974)
- Scientific/Research Opportunities  Seabird research opportunities

### Recreation

- Representation  
backcountry  Not Applicable  
destination  Not Applicable  
travel corridor  Not Applicable  
local recreation  Ecological reserves are not meant for outdoor recreation; however, some kayaking, boating and wildlife viewing occurs. Management will work with groups to address potential impacts.
- Special Opportunities  None known at this time
- Education/Interpretation Opportunities  Offsite education potential

### Cultural Heritage

- Representation  No archaeological sites have been identified at this reserve, but traditional uses included harvesting by First Nations of marine life such as fish, seaweed and shellfish.
- Special Feature  None known at this time

### Other Management Considerations

- Other Designations  Not Applicable
- Relationship to other PAs  Part of a system of protected areas focused on bird breeding areas in coastal BC. One of 152 ecological reserves in the province. Close to Dionisio Provincial Park and Rose Islets Ecological Reserve.
- Co-operative Management Arrangements  Not Applicable
- Partnerships  Ecological reserve warden

Vulnerability



Nesting seabirds are extremely vulnerable to disturbance at this location. Unauthorized visitation, marine contamination.

Relationship to other Strategies



Not Applicable

**Area:** 0.6 hectares

**Date of establishment:** May 04, 1971