



Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa’/Cape Caution Conservancy  
Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa’/Cape Caution - Blunden Bay Conservancy  
Allison Harbour Marine Park  
Management Plan

March 2013



Gwa'sala-  
'Nakwaxda'xw  
Nation



BRITISH  
COLUMBIA

BC Parks



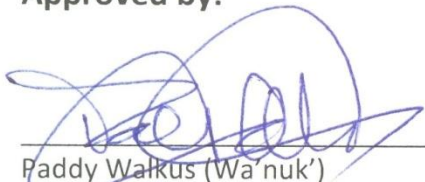
Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy

Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution - Blunden Bay Conservancy

Allison Harbour Marine Park

## Management Plan

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These protected areas are located within the traditional territory of the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation. The Gwa'sala and 'Nakwaxda'xw were two separate First Nations who were amalgamated and relocated from the mainland coast to the Tsulquate Indian Reserve on northern Vancouver Island in the 1960s.

The marine areas surrounding these protected areas represent an important part of the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw "sea gardens". The conservancies and marine park protect important First Nations cultural values and are in close proximity to Indian Reserve No. 3 Nathlegalis and Indian Reserve No. 6 Saagoombahlah, which are significant historic village sites for the Gwa'sala and 'Nakwaxda'xw, respectively.



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# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Management Plan Purpose

This management plan sets out the long-term, strategic direction for Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy, Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution - Blunden Bay Conservancy<sup>1</sup> and Allison Harbour Marine Park. The management plan provides guidance for how these protected areas will be managed into the future. In this management plan, the two conservancies and the park are collectively referred to as the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas.

In 2006, the provincial government and First Nations across the province initiated a new relationship. On the central coast, a collaborative approach has been taken with regards to management planning and operation of protected areas. This management plan is the result of a collaborative planning process between the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation and BC Parks.

This management plan describes the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas' important cultural heritage, natural, and recreational values and presents a vision for their future. In addition, the management plan:

- addresses current issues affecting the long-term vision for the conservancies and park;
- guides day-to-day management for the protection of cultural heritage and natural values;
- identifies appropriate types of recreational activities;
- identifies zones; and,
- provides management direction related to appropriate uses of natural resources.

## 1.2 Planning Area

The Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas protect a narrow strip of coastline on British Columbia's southern central coast (Figure 2). The Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas border Queen Charlotte Strait, and are located approximately 40 kilometres northeast of Port Hardy, 200 kilometres northwest of Campbell River and 400 kilometres northwest of Vancouver (Figure 3).

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<sup>1</sup> The legislated names for these protected areas are Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy and Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution - Blunden Bay Conservancy. The spelling used in this document (Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa') reflects the spelling that is preferred by the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation.

The Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas extend approximately sixty kilometres along the outer coast, from Takush Harbour in the north to Allison Harbour in the south. Together, these protected areas and their adjacent marine environment provide exceptional beaches, scenic landscapes, large islands, small islets, rocky reefs, narrow passages, natural harbours and protect one of the world's fastest tidal rapids.

The Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas cover a total of 10,567 hectares of land and 43 hectares of foreshore. Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy is comprised of 10,241 hectares of land; Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution - Blunden Bay Conservancy covers 237 hectares of land, and; Allison Harbour Marine Park includes 89 hectares of land and 43 hectares of foreshore. This management plan also recommends a marine addition to the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution conservancies (see section 3.2), which would add a total of approximately 15,500 hectares of marine foreshore.

The asserted traditional territory of the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation overlaps with these protected areas. This area, and especially the marine areas surrounding the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas, represents an important part of the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw sea gardens. The Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation is currently involved in comprehensive treaty negotiations with Canada and British Columbia. British Columbia recognizes that protected area status does not prevent a First Nation from identifying these lands as areas of interest in the treaty process.

Cape Caution is marked by a granite cliff and is a significant landform on the coast. The Cape was named by Captain Vancouver, reflecting the rough weather he experienced at this location. The First Nation's name for this location, Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa', means "the first place that is hit by a storm", which also reflects the realities of the rough seas on this part of the coast.

Blunden Bay and the adjacent upland make up the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution - Blunden Bay Conservancy (Figure 1). This conservancy is a small, semi-protected bay that includes two crescent sandy beaches, tidal flats, seaside rock platforms, rugged points and rocky headlands. The upland area of Blunden Bay is generally flat and low lying and has characteristic features of a coastal bog forest with small streams, ponds and swamps. Kelp beds, Grey Whale feeding grounds and foraging areas of Marbled Murrelet are found within the recommended marine addition.



**Figure 1: Blunden Bay within the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution - Blunden Bay Conservancy**

Allison Harbour is a protected, short inlet comprised of small coves with tidal flats at the head. This is a protected transitional stop for boaters and is used as a safe anchorage from frequent southeasterly winds. Allison Harbour was an important centre for commerce and communication north of Port Hardy in the early to mid-1900s. A small float community was situated in the harbour from the 1920s - 1960s, mostly servicing hand loggers. Remnants of structures related to a cannery, store and post office remain in the area.

Allison Harbour Marine Park is located mid-way along the southern shore of Allison Harbour, with three pocket beaches and two creeks running through the park. The park protects important habitat for resident Grey Whales during the summer and second growth forest on the upland. The harbour is the last all-weather anchorage for boaters travelling north around Cape Caution; thus, it is an important addition to the network of boat havens along the British Columbia coast.

The Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas lie within the Mt. Waddington and Central Coast Regional Districts. Access to the conservancies is by relatively long distance boat trips or aircraft. The park is only accessible by boat or float plane.

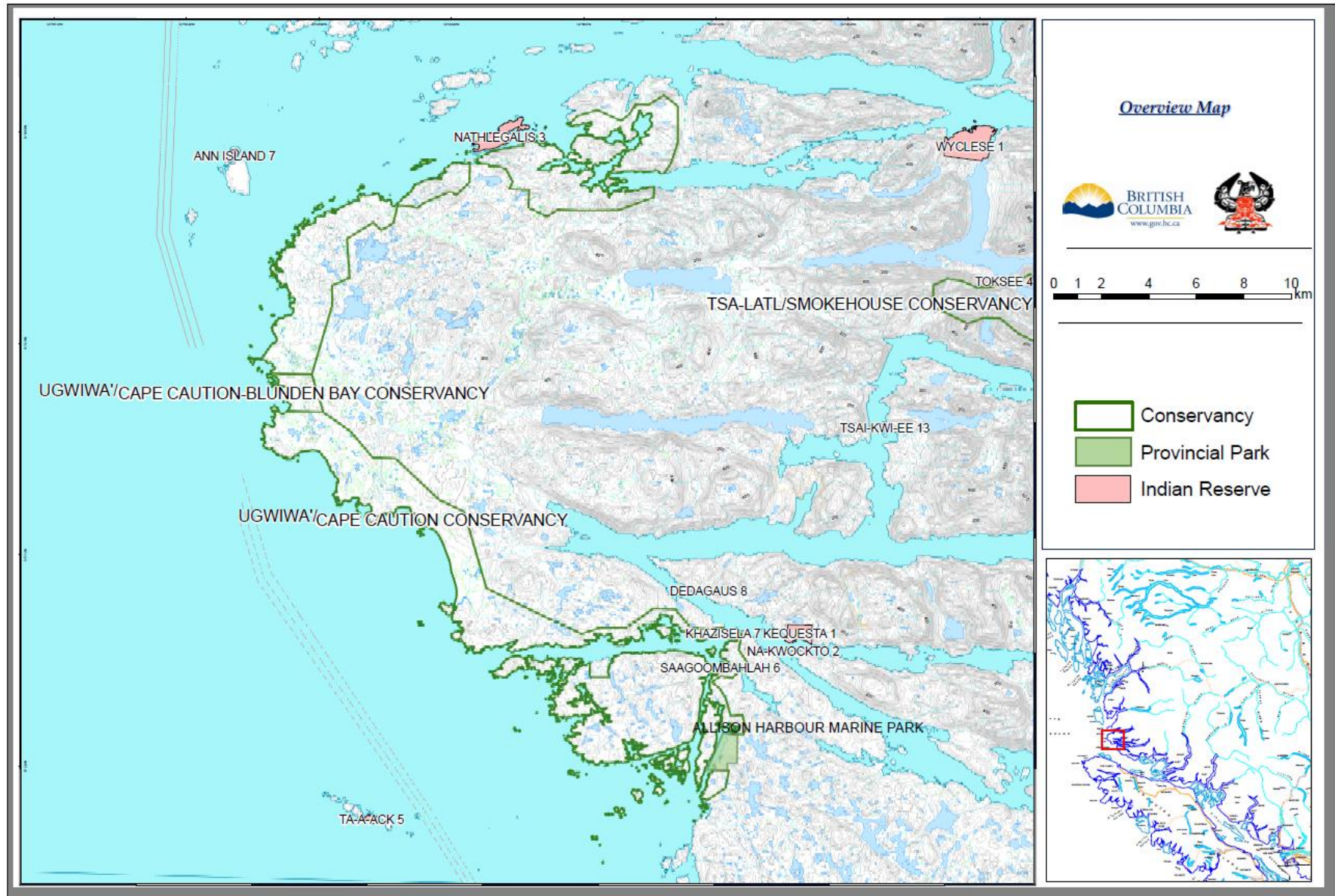


Figure 2: Overview Map of the Ugwiwa'/Cape Caution Protected Areas

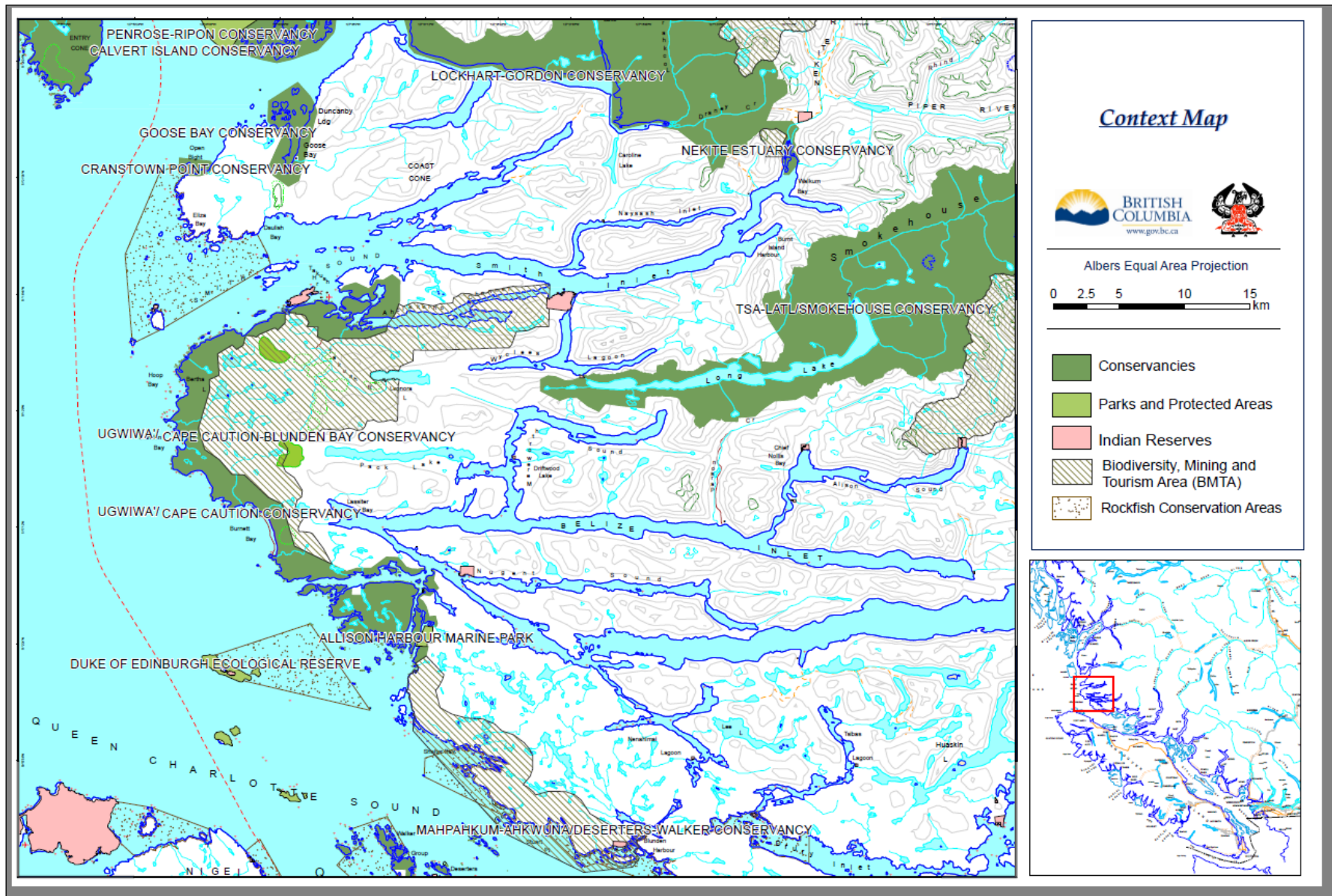


Figure 3: Ugw'iwā'/Cape Caution Protected Areas Context Map.

## 1.3 Provincial Legislative Framework

BC Parks and the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation will collaboratively manage the Ug<sup>wi</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas using the province's legislative framework.

Ug<sup>wi</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution and Ug<sup>wi</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution - Blunden Bay conservancies were established on May 31, 2007 pursuant to the *Parks and Protected Areas Statutes Amendment Act, 2007*. The *Protected Areas of British Columbia (Conservancies and Parks) Amendment Act, 2008* included an amendment to Ug<sup>wi</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy's boundary, increasing its size by 18 hectares. Ug<sup>wi</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy is named and described in Schedule E of the *Protected Areas of British Columbia Act*, while Ug<sup>wi</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution - Blunden Bay Conservancy is named and described in Schedule F.<sup>2</sup>

The establishment of Allison Harbour Marine Park was the result of a partnership acquisition with the Land Conservancy of British Columbia, the British Columbia Marine Parks Forever Society and the province. It was established as a Class A Park on May 29, 2008, pursuant to the *Protected Areas of British Columbia (Conservancies and Parks) Act, 2008*.

Both the conservancies and the park are administered under the *Park Act*.

Conservancies are set aside for four main reasons:

- a) The protection and maintenance of their biological diversity and natural environments;
- b) The preservation and maintenance of social, ceremonial and cultural uses of First Nations;
- c) The protection and maintenance of their recreational values; and,
- d) To ensure that development or use of natural resources occurs in a sustainable manner consistent with the purposes of paragraphs (a), (b) and (c).

Class A parks are dedicated to the preservation of their natural environments for the inspiration, use and enjoyment of the public.

## 1.4 Management Commitments

### ***Collaborative Management***

A collaborative management agreement between the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation and BC Parks outlines the relationship that the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw and the province have in the planning and management of the protected areas within Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation traditional territory. The collaborative management agreement commits the parties to plan, manage and use these protected areas in a manner that:

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<sup>2</sup> Schedule F conservancies allow for the issuance of permits for the construction, use or maintenance of a road to access natural resources lying beyond the conservancy.

- recognizes and affirms aboriginal rights and provides the First Nation with continued access to land and resources necessary to exercise these rights, subject to measures necessary for conservation and public safety;
- protects natural, cultural and recreational values for future generations;
- provides the First Nation with enhanced access to economic opportunities in the protected areas that are compatible with the protection of natural, cultural and recreational values;
- integrates ecosystem-based science and traditional ecological knowledge;
- builds capacity for the parties and provides opportunities for the First Nation to be involved in the planning, management and use of the protected areas;
- promotes communication between BC Parks and the First Nation; and,
- makes the protected areas available for the use, recreation and enjoyment of all British Columbians.

### ***Land Use Planning***

In the Land Use Planning Agreement-In-Principle between the province and the First Nations of the southern central coast, the parties agreed on the primary roles for the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution conservancies: 1) cultural heritage use, and; 2) habitat conservation/protection. Ecosystem representation was listed as a secondary role. The agreement-in-principle recognized that there are some recreational opportunities in the conservancies, but that these opportunities are limited by the primary roles.

Previously, the Central Coast Land and Resource Management Plan had identified this area for protection and recommended that the principles of ecosystem based management be applied to land management throughout the central coast, including conservancies. The two overarching goals of ecosystem based management are to: 1) maintain the ecological integrity of terrestrial, marine and freshwater ecosystems, and 2) achieve high levels of human well being. The Central Coast Land and Resource Management Plan identified recreation and habitat conservation/protection as primary roles for the conservancies. Ecosystem representation was identified as a secondary role.

A portion of the marine area adjacent to these protected areas was also included as a planning unit within the North Island Straits Coastal Plan (2002)<sup>3</sup>. The North Island Straits Coastal Plan presented recreation as the management emphasis for the area, and noted that marine-based uses should be compatible with management of the adjacent upland area. The plan also indicated that the marine area should be further assessed as a marine protection candidate.

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<sup>3</sup> The Cape Caution planning unit within the North Island Straits Coastal Plan included the marine areas within Allison Harbour Marine Park and adjacent to the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancies south of Cape Caution.

In this management plan, the roles for the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancies have been adopted from the more recent agreement-in-principle, as this direction reflects the outcome of government-to-government discussions between First Nations and the province. Thorough consideration has also been given to the recommendations in the Central Coast Land and Resource Management Plan and North Island Straits Coastal Management Plan in order to respect the outcomes of these land use and marine planning processes.

At the time that the central coast conservancies were announced, the Minister of Environment also made a commitment that existing, tenured uses within the area that was established as conservancy would continue.

## 1.5 Adjacent Land Uses and Marine Activities

Three Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Indian Reserves (IRs) border the protected areas. These include:

- Nathlegalis IR No. 3, located on Indian Island at the northern end of the conservancies;
- Saagoombahlah IR No. 6, located on Goose Point at the head of Schooner Channel; and;
- Khazisela IR No. 7, located near the Nakwakto Rapids.

Four additional Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Indian Reserves, Kequesta IR No. 1, Na-kwackto IR No. 2 (both near Nugent Sound), Ann Island No. 7 (near Table Island) and T-a-a-ck IR No. 5 (adjacent to the Duke of Edinburgh Ecological Reserve), are also situated nearby (Figure 2).

The Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution conservancies are bordered by two Biodiversity, Mining and Tourism Areas (BMTAs)<sup>4</sup>. The Inland Cape Caution BMTA extends to the east of the conservancies north of Slingsby Channel to Ahclakerho Channel/Greaves Island. Shelter Bay BMTA extends along the coast to the south of Allison Harbour. A number of other protected areas are also located nearby: the Duke of Edinburgh Ecological Reserve, NeḡiḶ/Nekite Conservancy, Tsa-Latl'/Smokehouse Conservancy, Mahpahkum-Ahkwuna/Deserters-Walker Conservancy, Cranstown Point Conservancy and Goose Bay Conservancy. There are also two federal Rockfish Conservation Areas<sup>5</sup> (RCAs) located off Bramham Island and at the entrance to Smith Sound (Figure 3).

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<sup>4</sup> Biodiversity, Tourism and Mining Areas (BMTAs) are one of the three types of land use zones established under the North and Central Coast Land Use Decision (2006). They are situated next to other types of protected areas to contribute to conservation of species and ecosystems. Commercial timber harvesting and hydro electric development are prohibited in BMTAs.

<sup>5</sup> Rockfish Conservation Areas (RCA) prohibit recreational and commercial rockfish harvesting to support the recovery of populations of inshore rockfish found within British Columbia's marine waters. Other fishing restrictions apply. Information on RCAs is available on the Fisheries and Oceans Canada RCA web page.



In addition to the Indian Reserves mentioned above, a number of land parcels are surrounded by, but excepted from the conservancies: 1) District Lot 1216 on the north shore of Brahman Island, a private land parcel utilized in the past for commercial recreation purposes, and; 2) District Lots 1107, 1366, and 1636 on the shores of Smith Inlet, which are included within the Inland Cape Caution BMTA. There are ongoing timber harvesting activities in Seymour and Belize inlets, which include logging camps and log hauling/storage facilities.

Commercial and sport fishing occurs in the waters off the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas, as does recreational and commercial boating. A salmon aquaculture site is located south of the conservancy in Shelter Bay.

As well, the waters off Cape Caution are included as part of the Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area. This planning initiative is intended to establish integrated oceans management that balances ecological, economic, social and cultural interests.

## 2.0 First Nations History and Culture, and the Roles and Values of the Conservancy

This section describes the key cultural heritage, natural, recreational and resource values found in Allison Harbour Marine Park and the existing terrestrial component of the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution conservancies; the intertidal and marine values in the recommended marine addition; as well as the significance of the protected areas in the provincial protected areas system.

The primary roles for the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution conservancies are cultural heritage use and habitat conservation/protection. Ecosystem representation is a secondary role and there are some recreational opportunities in the conservancies, but these opportunities are limited by the primary roles. Cultural heritage use, habitat conservation/protection and recreation are all priority roles for Allison Harbour Marine Park.

### 2.1 First Nations History and Cultural Heritage

The Gwa'sala and 'Nakwaxda'xw were two separate First Nations who were amalgamated and relocated from the mainland coast to the Tsulquate Indian Reserve on northern Vancouver Island in the 1960s.

The Gwa'sala First Nation is from the area around Smith Inlet on the central coast. One of the First Nation's main village sites was located at Takush (Nathlegalis IR No. 3), which is adjacent to the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy. The northern portion of the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas, from Takush Harbour (Nathlegalis IR No. 3) to Cape Caution, is in the traditional territory of the Gwa'sala people.

The 'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation were located in and around Seymour Inlet. Tig'wisti (Kequesta IR No. 1), located inland from the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy on Nugent Sound, was a key village site for the 'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation. The traditional territory of the 'Nakwaxda'xw people includes the southern portion of the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas, from Burnett Bay to Allison Harbour.

Both First Nations are part of the Kwakwa ka'wakw linguistic group, which ethnographers have referred to as Southern Kwakiutl. Like other First Nations of the region, the Gwa'sala and 'Nakwaxda'xw lived by harvesting sea and land resources and were part of an active trade network in the region. The central portion of the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas, between Cape Caution and Burnett Bay, was a key meeting place between these two First Nations.

## Values

### ***Seasonal Activities***

This section of the coast is exposed to strong winds, currents and tides, which provide nutrient rich and very productive waters. The Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw refer to these productive marine areas as their sea gardens. The sea gardens were once part of an intricate food harvesting cycle and trading network along the coast. Today, these rich marine areas and the resources they provide remain an integral part of the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation's food harvesting and cultural activities.

Each season provided unique opportunities from North, Central and South Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution. The winter on the coast is associated with storms, slow growth, hibernation and death. During this seemingly unproductive season, the Gwa'sala and 'Nakwaxda'xw First Nations spent time pursuing cultural activities. The two First Nations would meet in the central area of Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution to participate in winter rituals and ceremonies. Just as food caches were running low, spring arrived, bringing new growth and food harvesting opportunities. The calmer weather of summer allowed access to more distant marine resources in the sea gardens, and fall brought the return of the salmon throughout the traditional territories. It is this abundance of natural resources that helped sustain the Gwa'sala and 'Nakwaxda'xw people for generations.

### ***North Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution (Takush to Cape Caution)***

Two key village sites for the Gwa'sala people, Takush Harbour (Nathlegalis IR No. 3) and Table Island (reflected as Ann Island IR No. 7), are located adjacent to the northern portion of the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas. There were overland trails and caves that connected villages in these northern areas, but the main travel corridor was the ocean.

Near Takush, at the mouth of Smith Inlet, Gwa'sala people harvested Chum Salmon, seaweed, a variety of bird species, and shellfish. Further out from the mouth of the inlet are the waters around Ann, Table and Egg islands which remain very important to the Gwa'sala people. The protection of the marine component around these islands is important for protection of the sea gardens and for future generations to better understand who the Gwa'sala people are and where they come from.

Specific Gwa'sala families had harvesting rights at different locations throughout North Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution. The sea gardens provided food for the community, including shellfish, marine plants, ground and rockfish. Cod eggs were gathered by youngsters among the rocks. This was challenging for the youth as the large codfish protecting the eggs lay just below the surface of the water ready to bite anyone who endangered their offspring. The

herring roe were collected on hemlock bows, but not all the roe would be taken to ensure the resource was sustained.

Indian Cove was also an important harvesting location, as the Gwa'sala people caught the first salmon of the season at this location. Fishing, trapping and hunting were the mainstay for families who had rights in this area from Cape Caution to Takush. The terrestrial portion of northern Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution supported hunting for deer, mink, martin, otter, seal and ducks, which were all important food and trade items. Indian Cove was also the stopping place to wait out storms and ensure safe passage around Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'. Many ceremonies were performed at Indian Cove for those who did not survive the trip around Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'.

### ***Central Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution (Cape Caution to Burnett Bay)***

Central Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa' was the meeting place between the Gwa'sala and 'Nakwaxda'xw First Nations. The Gwa'sala would travel from Smith Inlet and the Ninogad (Elders) would know when to travel the dangerous waters around Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'.

There are legends of the Gwa'sala people travelling in their large ocean-going cedar canoes when no others would dare travel in these open waters. Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa' and the waters around the cape are associated with a legend of a sea monster. A long time Gwa'sala fisherman thought the elders were bringing up the sea monster as some sort of lesson. "Don't upset the sea monster or the sea monster will bring up the wind and seas". This fisherman said he has experienced the sea monster first hand during his years of travel on this part of the coast.

Gwatlgwalaleese or Kwut'kwatalis (Silvester Bay) is a crescent shaped, sandy beach where the Gwa'sala would harvest an early run of small sized Sockeye Salmon. The sand at Silvester Bay produces a strange noise when one walks on the beach. Legend from this area says the "beach screams".

The next beach to the south, Yaxwha'isdum' (Burnett Bay), is a long (approximately four kilometers) stretch of reddish sand that is marked by polished granite headlands at either end. This bay was the meeting place for ceremonies and cultural gatherings between the Gwa'sala and 'Nakwaxda'xw First Nations. At Yaxwha'isdum' the two First Nations would hold events to challenge each other in tests of strength and endurance. Marriages and naming ceremonies were held at this location, as were potlatches, where the abundance of the past season's harvest would be distributed. There were specific Gwa'sala and 'Nakwaxda'xw families that had hunting and trapping rights in and around Burnett Bay. Wolf fur would come from Yaxwha'isdum' and was important for use in regalia for certain ceremonies in the Big House.

### ***South Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution (Burnett Bay to Allison Harbour)***

A key winter village site for the 'Nakwaxda'xw people, Tigwaste (Kequesta IR No. 1), is located just beyond the southern portion of the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy. To access Tigwaste, the First Nation's members would have to travel by canoe through K'wunx'als'gum (Nakwakto Rapids), as this is the only entrance into Seymour Inlet. At K'wunx'als'gum there was a strategic lookout on Thunder Rock (Trembling Island), where the 'Nakwaxda'xw could watch for other First Nations' raiding parties. The rapids are associated with many legends of bravery and daring adventure.

Bramham Island and the terrestrial areas of the conservancy around Schooner and Slingsby channels are also extremely important cultural locations. Specific families lived seasonally at Goose Point, Skull Cove, Oot'stolis' (Miles Inlet), and Treadwell Bay, and were given harvesting rights to the rich marine resources in the area. The members would travel throughout the area in small dugout canoes collecting seafood provided by the creator. These seasonal harvests would be preserved and stored for winter consumption or traded with other First Nations whose supplies were not so readily available. An elder recalls that as a youth, he was sent to this area to collect clams, cockles, abalone, crabs, eelgrass, ground fish, seal, sea lion, ducks and many other marine animals and plants. Lingcod eggs, sea urchins, seaweed and seagull eggs were also harvested in these areas.



**Figure 4: Skull Cove on Bramham Island, Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy**

This abundance of marine life sustained a large 'Nakwaxda'xw population, and meant that limited harvesting activity was required during the winter months. As such, during the winter, the First Nations artists and carvers were able to fine-tune their skills, resulting in artwork that is still recognized and appreciated both locally and internationally. There are numerous canoes, totems, masks, dances and legends that have come from this area.

Like the rest of the marine gardens in the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas, the area in and around Allison Harbour Marine Park was also utilized for hunting, trapping and gathering of eelgrass and seafood such as abalone, groundfish, clams, mussels, crab and urchin. In the 1950s and early 1960s, Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw members traded furs for dry goods and fuel at the floating trading post at the head of the harbour. Allison Cone, located outside the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas, but visible from Allison Harbour, marks the southern extent of 'Nakwaxda'xw traditional territory.



**Figure 5: View of Allison Cone from the northern arm of Allison Harbour in the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy**

## **Role**

The Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas play an important role in the protection of culturally significant sites and traditional uses of the historically separate Gwa'sala and

'Nakwaxda'xw First Nations. They also provide opportunities for the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation to carry out their social, ceremonial and cultural practices, and to once again benefit from the rich marine resources that sustained their ancestors. These protected areas are also expected to play a role in educating future generations of Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw and the public about traditional ecological knowledge, First Nations culture and traditional practices from this part of the coast.

## 2.2 Biological Diversity and Natural Environment

### Values

#### ***Landscape Features***

The Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution conservancies protect large, remote sandy beaches, dramatic rock formations, tombolos (a sand bar that extends from shore to connect with an island), estuaries and tidal flats. They also protect largely undisturbed, old-growth scrubby forest and coastal plains that include numerous wetlands and small lakes. These diverse coastal features and ecosystems provide important habitat for a variety of terrestrial and marine species.

The southern portion of the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas is marked by a number of special landscape features, including Bramham Island and numerous islands and islets. Bramham Island is a low lying landmass with special vegetation patterns of scrubby forest and moss dominated understory, broken by several inlets and bays. Miles Inlet and Skull Cove are the most prominent of these. Several lakes and wetland complexes are found in the upland areas of Bramham Island, and Miles Inlet on Bramham Island hosts an impressive high-tide lagoon. Other islands and islets in the southern portion include the Murray, Labyrinth and Deloraine islands and Fox Islands, which are located within the rich marine environment at the mouths of Slingsby and Schooner channels. These island environments provide important habitat for birds and marine wildlife.

The recommended marine additions to the conservancies include the Nakwakto tidal rapids at the entrance to Seymour and Belize inlets, as well as an expansive stretch of foreshore with strong currents and rich marine ecological values. Allison Harbour Marine Park contains old-growth coastal western hemlock forest and includes three pocket beaches and marine habitat values. The park abuts the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy boundary, providing contiguous protection along the eastern side of Allison Harbour.

#### ***Wetlands***

The upland area of the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution conservancies, including Bramham Island, hosts an impressive network of creeks and wetlands, including estuary meadows, bogs, fens, marshes, swamps and ponds. Wetlands serve an important ecological role in the hydrologic

cycle and are extremely sensitive ecosystems. Both aquatic and terrestrial species that inhabit the conservancies rely on the integrity of these wetland ecosystems.



**Figure 6: Coastal wetlands lying behind Burnett Bay, Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa’/Cape Caution Conservancy**

### ***Fish***

The Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa’/Cape Caution conservancies protect a considerable area of high value fish habitat in their numerous creeks, rivers and wetlands, as well as two estuaries, one at the south end of Burnett Bay and one at the mouth of the Takush River.

The Takush River, in particular, provides important spawning habitat for Chum and Coho salmon. Pink Salmon are also present in very small numbers. As well, the large sand flats and extensive, shallow intertidal shoal in the Takush River Estuary provide productive salmon rearing habitat. Cutthroat Trout, Dolly Varden Char and Steelhead are also present in the Takush River.

### ***Birds***

The forests, shoreline and numerous islands and islets in the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa’/Cape Caution protected areas are important for the protection of marine bird colonies and foraging areas, migration stopovers and forest nesting habitat. Nesting seabirds documented in the



conservancies include: Black Oystercatcher, Pigeon Guillemot, Glaucus-Winged Gull, Pelagic Cormorant, Rhinoceros Auklet and Cassin's Auklet.<sup>6</sup> These species nest in exposed offshore islets that are free of predators. Cassin's Auklet is a blue-listed species<sup>7</sup> in British Columbia and has special significance, as British Columbia has over 70% of the world's population of this species. All seabirds are vulnerable to disturbance at nest sites.

The conservancies overlap with three Marine Bird Areas of Interest (MBAOIs) identified by the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS).<sup>8</sup> The MBAOI at Nakwakto Rapids is associated with observations of foraging Rhinoceros Auklets and Marbled Murrelets. From Cape Caution northward to Protection Cove, there is a MBAOI associated with observations of Black Oystercatchers. The MBAOI at Bramham Island is associated with observations of surfbirds.

Two of the estuaries in Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy were identified and mapped through the Pacific Estuary Conservation Program, which ranked the biological importance of 442 of British Columbia's coastal estuaries using estuary size, habitat rarity, herring spawn occurrence, waterbird use, and intertidal species rarity.<sup>9</sup> The Takush River Estuary and the estuary at Burnett Bay, which includes Evader Creek and several smaller creeks, both received moderate scores of three on a scale of one to five in this ranking exercise, with one being the highest. Burnett Bay is used as a migratory stopover for gulls and sandpipers. Estuaries are also generally important to wintering waterbirds such as Trumpeter Swans, ducks and geese.

The Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy also protects forest nesting habitat for Marbled Murrelet and Northern Goshawk, which are focal species for ecosystem based management on the central coast. Marbled Murrelet is a provincially blue-listed species and Northern Goshawk is a provincially red-listed species. In the northernmost extent of Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy, there are patches of moderate, high and very high value habitat for Marbled Murrelet adjacent to the Takush River, Takush Harbour, and Fly Basin, as well as on

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<sup>6</sup> Canadian Wildlife Service. British Columbia Marine Bird Areas of Interest Database. May 2007.

<sup>7</sup> Species and ecological communities are assigned to the red or blue list on the basis of the provincial Conservation Status Rank (SRANK) assigned by the B.C. Conservation Data Centre. The red list includes species/ecological communities that are extirpated, endangered or threatened. The blue list contains species/ecological communities that are considered to be of special concern.

<sup>8</sup> Canadian Wildlife Service. British Columbia Marine Bird Areas of Interest Database. May 2007. Note: a "Marine Bird Area of Interest" is an area identified as requiring special attention during marine planning processes because of its ecological value for marine birds. Marine bird observations from various surveys are documented in the BC MBAOI database.

<sup>9</sup> Ryder, J.L., J.K. Kenyon, D. Buffett, K. Moore, M. Ceh, and K. Stipek. 2007. An integrated biophysical assessment of estuarine habitats in British Columbia to assist regional conservation planning. Technical Report Series No. 476. Canadian Wildlife Service, Pacific and Yukon Region, British Columbia.

Greaves Island.<sup>10</sup> There are also patches of suitable Northern Goshawk nesting habitat on Greaves Island and adjacent to the Takush River.<sup>11</sup>

### ***Intertidal and Marine Values***

The foreshore component of Allison Harbour Marine Park and the recommended foreshore additions to the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution conservancies protect important marine and intertidal values, including kelp beds, clam beds, herring spawning and holding areas, as well as habitat for invertebrates, rockfish, and a number of marine mammal species.

### ***Kelp Beds***

There are numerous (approximately 18) kelp beds in the recommended marine foreshore addition to Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution and Cape Caution - Blunden Bay conservancies. The largest of these (approx. 102 hectares) is a kelp bed at the northern end of Burnett Bay. There are also relatively large kelp beds in Blunden Bay (18 hectares) and Indian Cove (31 hectares), at the north end of Silvester Bay (42 hectares), at Neck Ness Point (36 hectares), Macricol Point (24 hectares), and adjacent to the west side of Table Island (37 hectares). As globally significant, productive and diverse ecosystems, kelp beds serve as nursery areas for juvenile fish and support complex food webs, involving a diversity of invertebrates, fish, birds, and mammals.

### ***Clam Beds***

The marine portion of Allison Harbour Marine Park protects a large intertidal clam bed (29 hectares) that extends into the recommended foreshore addition of Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy. Takush Estuary also provides productive habitat for invertebrates.

### ***Herring Spawning and Holding Areas***

There is an extensive herring spawning area on the northernmost shoreline of Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy, including the entire shoreline of IR No. 3 Nathlegalis, as well as Takush Harbour, Fly Basin and Broad Bay. At the southern end of the conservancy, there is another small herring spawning area on a point of land at the entrance to Schooner Channel and Allison Harbour. In addition, there are herring holding areas in Slingsby Channel and near the Emily Group of islands within the recommended marine addition.

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<sup>10</sup> Very high = key habitat features present in abundance; includes the best habitat in the specified geographic area. High = key habitat features common and widespread. Moderate = key habitat features present but patchy. Habitat ranking scheme based on air photo interpreted attributes.

<sup>11</sup> Suitable goshawk nesting areas have mature, old-growth stand structure, high canopy closure and an open understory (sub-canopy flyways). Suitable habitat was identified using a habitat suitability model, following methods outlined in: Mahon, T. McClaren, E., and F. Doyle. 2008. Parameterization of the Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis laingi*) Habitat Model for Coastal British Columbia. Nesting and Foraging Habitat Suitability Models and Territory Analysis Model.

## **Marine Mammals**

Allison Harbour Marine Park and the recommended marine addition to Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution and Cape Caution - Blunden Bay conservancies are important for marine mammal species, including the Grey Whale, Killer Whale, Humpback Whale, Pacific White-sided Dolphin, and Harbour Porpoise. Grey Whales are found in their feeding habitat offshore. They are present primarily from March through November, but have been sighted year-round. Grey Whale, Humpback Whale and Harbour Porpoise are provincially blue-listed species. The marine area surrounding the conservancy is also frequented by two globally significant Killer Whale populations: the blue-listed Northern Resident and the red-listed West Coast Transient.

Sea Otters have also been observed in the recommended marine addition, particularly in the southern areas around Bramham Island and the entrance to Allison Harbour. Sea Otter is a provincially blue-listed species and is protected under the BC *Wildlife Act*.

## **Species at Risk**

In addition to those red and blue-listed species mentioned above, several other species at risk have been documented in the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution conservancies and recommended marine component. These include Gemlin's sedge, a blue-listed species present in Cape Caution, Seymour Inlet and Queen Charlotte Strait, as well as the rare Arctic Cookie Star, a species of marine sea star present in the Outer Narrows of Slingsby Channel. Northern Abalone, a red-listed species, is also likely present in the marine addition. As well, Northern Sea Lion haul-outs (red-listed species) and overwintering Trumpeter Swans have also been documented in the vicinity of Cape Caution.

## **Ecosystem Representation**

The Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas play a critical role in the protection of coastal bog forest within the Hecate Lowland (HEL) Ecosession. These protected areas are entirely within the Coastal Western Hemlock southern very wet hypermaritime (CWHvh1) biogeoclimatic variant<sup>12</sup>.

The Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas protect almost 100 percent of the Coastal Western Hemlock southern very wet hypermaritime (CWH vh1) biogeoclimatic variant within the Hecate Lowland (HEL) Ecosession that is represented within the provincial protected areas system (Table 1). Together, the conservancies and park protect approximately eight percent of this ecosession/biogeoclimatic variant combination in the province.

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<sup>12</sup> B.C.'s biogeoclimatic ecosystem classification (BEC) system divides the province's terrestrial ecosystems into zones (called biogeoclimatic variants) where specific types of soils, plant and animal communities develop.

The Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa’/Cape Caution protected areas are typical of the HEL Ecosection, which is characterized by low relief, with rocky uplands and boggy lowlands. In particular, these protected areas contribute to the protection of coastal bogs and fens (muskeg) and scrubby old-growth forest.

The numerous islands and islets of the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa’/Cape Caution conservancies represent the CWH vh1 biogeoclimatic variant within the Queen Charlotte Strait, Queen Charlotte Sound and North Coast Fjords terrestrial ecosections. The conservancies protect the only examples of Queen Charlotte Sound and North Coast Fjords CWH vh1 biogeoclimatic variant in the protected areas system. Table 1 summarizes the contribution of the conservancies and park to terrestrial ecosystem representation.

**Table 1. Terrestrial Ecosection/Biogeoclimatic Zone Representation**

<b>Ecosection/ Biogeoclimatic (BEC) Variant Combination</b>	<b>Total Area of Ecosection/ BEC Variant Combination in B.C. (ha)</b>	<b>Total Area of Ecosection/ BEC Variant in Protected Areas (ha)</b>	<b>Percent of Ecosection/ BEC Variant Combination in the Province that is Protected</b>	<b>Total Area of Ecosection/ BEC Variant Combination in the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa’/Cape Caution Protected Areas (ha)</b>	<b>Percent of Province-wide Protection of Ecosection/ BEC Variant Combination in the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa’/Cape Caution Protected Areas</b>
Hecate Lowland/CWHvh1	121 814	9 818	8.1	9 778	99.6
Queen Charlotte Strait/CWHvh1	13 006	1 374	11	117	8.5
Queen Charlotte Sound/CWHvh1	190	14	7.3	14	100
North Coast Fjords/CWHvh1	354	1.8	0.5	1.8	100

The existing marine portion of Allison Harbour and the recommended foreshore addition to the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa’/Cape Caution conservancies also fill gaps in the representation of fjord inlets, marine feeding areas and marine passages in the Queen Charlotte Strait, Queen Charlotte Sound and North Coast Fjords marine ecosections. In particular, the existing foreshore in Allison Harbour Marine Park and the recommended marine addition account for approximately 35 percent of the Queen Charlotte Strait Marine Ecosection that is represented within the provincial protected areas system.

Table 2 summarizes the contribution of the park and the conservancies’ recommended marine addition to marine ecosystem representation.

**Table 2. Marine Ecoregion Representation**

Marine Ecoregion	Total Area of Marine Ecoregion in B.C. (ha)	Total Area of Marine Ecoregion in Protected Areas (ha)	Percent of Marine Ecoregion in the Province that is Protected	Total Area of Marine Ecoregion in the Ug <sup>w</sup> iwa'/Cape Caution Protected Areas (ha)	Percent of Province-wide Protection of Ecoregion/ BEC Variant Combination in the Ug <sup>w</sup> iwa'/Cape Caution Protected Areas
Queen Charlotte Strait*	219 699	12 228	5.6	4 229	34.6
North Coast Fjords**	977 248	66 411	6.8	1 702	2.6
Queen Charlotte Sound**	3 640 182	137 043	3.8	9 431	6.9

\* The Queen Charlotte Strait Marine Ecoregion is represented within the existing Allison Harbour Marine Park (47 ha) and the recommended marine addition (4 182 hectares).

\*\* The North Coast Fjords and Queen Charlotte Sound marine ecoregions are only represented within the recommended marine addition.

## Climate Change and Sea Level Rise

Climate change is expected to result in changes to species composition and ecosystem functioning across the terrestrial landscape and marine environment. Anticipated changes include increased frequency and severity of extreme weather events, ocean acidification, as well as sea level rise resulting from melting ice and thermal expansion of warming ocean waters.

Just under forty percent of Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas' shoreline has either a high or very high level of sensitivity to sea level rise. These areas are typically associated with estuaries, mudflats, wide sand flats, sand and gravel beaches, and backshore values that include the Coastal Western Hemlock – Western Redcedar and Yellow Cedar Bog forest ecosystems with low slope. Notable areas of particular sensitivity to the effects of sea level rise include portions of Takush Harbour, sections of the coast north of the Cape, Silvester Bay, Burnett Bay, small sections along the northern shore of Slingsby Channel and some of the islands, islets and bays around Bramham Island. It is expected that intertidal habitats will be substantially rearranged as sea level and the frequency of storm events rise. It is also anticipated that inland incursions of salt water will occur, resulting in tree loss.

In addition to being vulnerable to the effects of climate change, protected areas also have a role in mitigating the impacts of climate change by naturally storing carbon, and providing refuge for species that migrate when conditions become unfavourable in their existing habitats. The Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas play a role in adaptation, since they include such a long segment of coastline, especially in combination with adjacent

Biodiversity, Mining and Tourism Areas (BMTAs), thus facilitating species migration and adaptation. The adjacent Inland Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution BMTA strengthens the conservancies' role in climate change adaptation by allowing for species and habitat migration inland as well.

## **Role**

Habitat conservation/protection is a primary role of the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas. More specifically, the protected areas have a role in conserving: high value fish habitat, including spawning and rearing habitat for Pacific salmon; coastal wetlands and estuaries; marine bird habitat and breeding colonies; intertidal and marine values, such as kelp beds, clam beds, herring spawning and holding areas, and habitat for marine mammals; as well as habitat important for species at risk.

Ecosystem representation is an important secondary role of the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas. These protected areas represent approximately eight percent of the HEL CWH vh1 ecosection/ biogeoclimatic variant combination in the province, which accounts for almost 100 percent of this combination in the provincial protected areas system. The existing marine park and recommended marine boundary also make an important contribution to the protection of the Queen Charlotte Strait Marine Ecosection.

## **2.3 Recreation**

### **Values**

In addition to boasting spectacular coastal scenery, the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas are associated with a number of special features that attract recreational interests. These attractions include: the Nakwakto Rapids and Trembling Rock; unique, wind-swept, stunted vegetation sometimes referred to as "bonsai evergreens"; long, sandy beaches; marine wildlife; and bays suitable as safe anchorages and boat havens.

### ***Boating, Kayaking and Camping***

The waters off the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas are an important travel corridor associated with the Inside Passage Cruising Route. Pleasure boaters also enjoy the secondary cruising route through Slingsby and Schooner channels to access Seymour Inlet.

There are numerous anchorages located within the recommended marine addition, and within Allison Harbour Marine Park, that offer protection from the exposed waters on the outer coast. The anchorage in Allison Harbour Marine Park is particularly important as it protects an identified safe boat haven that is the last all-weather anchorage for boaters travelling north around Cape Caution. The Marine Parks Forever Society, an organization founded by the Council of British Columbia Yacht Clubs, contributed to the purchase of what

was formerly private property for inclusion in the park to secure the boat haven at this location. The Land Conservancy of British Columbia also contributed to this acquisition.

Kayakers utilize the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas as both a destination and transitory/exploration route. Kayakers travelling north tend to launch from Port Hardy on northern Vancouver Island and cross Queen Charlotte Strait via God's Pocket Marine Park and Mahpahkum-Ahkwuna/Deserters-Walker Conservancy. The waters off the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution conservancies are exposed to strong tides, ocean currents and high winds. Paddling and landing in this area is challenging and only suitable for advanced paddlers.

There are currently three commercial recreation park use permits within the conservancies for kayaking and boat tours, as well as education and training, wildlife viewing and nature discovery and hiking.

### ***Existing Cabins and Skull Cove Camp***

There are three isolated cabins at dispersed locations in the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas, two in Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy and one in Allison Harbour Marine Park. One of these cabins is a small, user-constructed building in relatively good condition, located near the north end of Burnett Bay in Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy. This cabin is user-maintained, open for public use, and has a basic pit toilet.

A second, small cabin located on the lagoon behind the southern end of Burnett Bay in Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy is in extremely poor condition, and is not suitable for public use.

A third, larger cabin with an open main floor and sleeping loft is located just inside the southern boundary of Allison Harbour Marine Park and is in good condition. There is a basic pit toilet at this location as well. Frequented by kayakers, this cabin is also user maintained and open for public, recreational use.

In addition to the three abovementioned cabins, there is also a camp facility located at the western entrance to Skull Cove on Brahmam Island in Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy. This site includes a small trail network, tenting areas, approximately ten small cabins with bunks, and a cook shelter overlooking Queen Charlotte Strait. The camp has been used periodically by a marine mammal research organization. The facility is in good condition and may support an expanded range of future uses, including research activities, cultural interpretation/education activities, commercial recreation, and/or activities associated with a Guardian Watchman program.

In addition to the Skull Cove camp facility and three dispersed cabins noted above, there are also some rudimentary, undeveloped camping sites within the conservancies, but overall camping sites and opportunities are currently limited.

### ***Shellfish Harvesting and Fishing***

There is currently one commercial recreation permit for guided freshwater angling in both Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution and Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution - Blunden Bay conservancies.

The foreshore component of Allison Harbour, and the areas within the recommended marine addition are also utilized for sport fishing and shellfish harvesting. Finfish, groundfish, prawns and clams are all part of the recreational fishery in this area.<sup>13</sup>

### ***Hunting and Trapping***

In season, the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas are currently open to hunting of Black Bear, Grey Wolf, Cougar, Black-tailed Deer, as well as various species of small game, waterfowl and upland birds. There are no Limited Entry Hunts for any species at this location.<sup>14</sup> There are two guide outfitter certificates that intersect with the conservancies, as well as active and inactive traplines within the conservancies.

### ***Nature Viewing/Appreciation Activities***

The rich marine environment provides substantial opportunities for nature viewing. Marine mammals, including Grey Whale, Killer Whale, Humpback Whale, Pacific White-sided Dolphin and Harbour Porpoise, are common in the waters along this part of the coast. In addition to the park use permits mentioned above, there is currently one application for a park use permit within the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy to access Burnett Bay via helicopter for beach-based hiking.

Scuba diving also occurs in the waters adjacent to the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy. In particular, the rich marine life associated with the Delorane Islands and the Nakwakto Rapids are popular with scuba divers. The Nakwakto tidal rapids span the narrow entrance and approach channels to one of the coast's largest inlet fjord systems, Seymour and Belize inlets (Figure 7). They have a maximum ebb of 14.5 knots, and are among the fastest in the world.

There are also scenic flights out of Port Hardy that include the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas, and there are reports of planes landing on the conservancies' longer beaches.

There are several user-created trails and hiking routes in the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy and Allison Harbour Marine Park (e.g., a short, rough trail leading overland between Indian Cove and Blunden Bay and a longer route along the outer coast of Bramham Island originating near Skull Cove). However, no developed trails currently exist in the

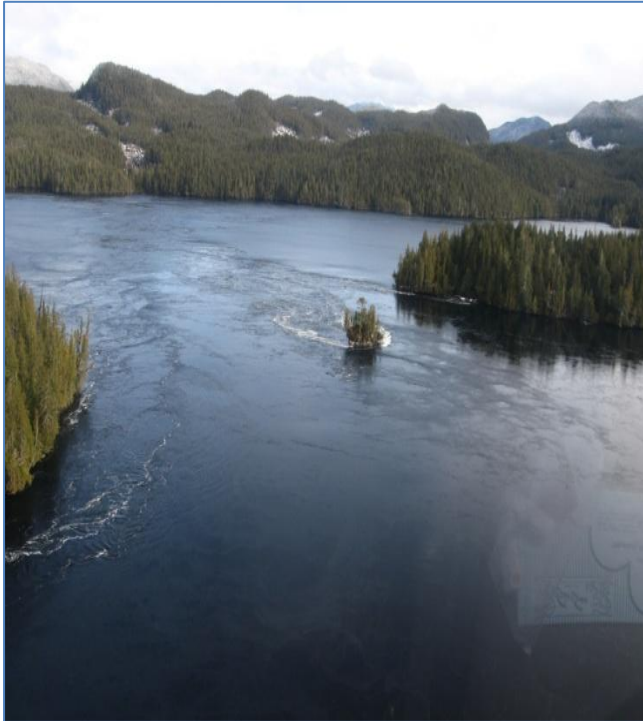
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<sup>13</sup> Sport and commercial fisheries are administered by Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

<sup>14</sup> For updated information, refer to the current BC Hunting and Trapping Synopsis.



Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas. There may be opportunities for future development of hiking trails, and associated small scale, backcountry facilities that are developed in a culturally and ecologically sensitive manner.



**Figure 7: Nakwakto Rapids in Recommended Marine Addition**

### **Role**

The Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas have a role in providing both destination and transitory recreational opportunities that are associated with their backcountry, remote shoreline characteristics. The Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas offer opportunities for kayaking and boating, camping, hunting, fishing, diving, and nature viewing. In the future, the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas may provide opportunities for cultural tourism, long distance hiking and other recreational activities. Allison Harbour Marine Park has a specific role in providing a safe boat haven and supporting recreational boating opportunities within the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas. Recreational opportunities in the conservancies must be particularly sensitive to the cultural and ecological values in these protected areas.

## 2.4 Resource Use

### Values

The Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas currently provide opportunities for First Nations cultural, social and ceremonial uses of marine and terrestrial resources. Recreational resource uses, specifically hunting, trapping, shellfish harvesting and fishing (finfish, ground fish and prawn), are also conducted within these protected areas and the recommended marine addition.

The recommended marine addition incorporates important marine transportation routes for both recreational and commercial vessels. There is a reserve for the use of towboats and their tows during stress of weather or adverse tides within Allison Harbour, and both Slingsby Channel and Schooner Pass are important log transportation routes. Commercial fisheries also operate within the recommended marine addition.

### Role

Conservancies can play a role in the sustainable use or development of natural resources, provided that this activity is consistent with the protection of the purposes for which the conservancy was established. In addition to the recreational and cultural resource uses described above, the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution conservancies may play a role in providing opportunities for low-impact, sustainable resource uses that are compatible with the conservancies' roles in the protection of cultural heritage, natural and recreational values.

Examples of resource use opportunities that may be appropriate in the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution conservancies include: harvesting of seaweed, harvesting of non-timber forest products (e.g., salal, mushrooms, berries), shellfish aquaculture and local clean energy power generation with associated infrastructure (including a utility corridor, if necessary) that may be utilized to support cultural activities and tourism opportunities within the conservancies.

As a Schedule F conservancy, the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution - Blunden Bay Conservancy allows for future road access to natural resources lying beyond the conservancy.

As a Class A park, Allison Harbour Marine Park does not have any role in the non-recreational or non-cultural use of natural resources.

## 2.5 Significance in the Parks and Protected Areas System

The Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas (and the recommended marine addition) are significant in the parks and protected areas system because they:

- are associated with key village sites, harvesting areas and cultural/ceremonial locations that are important to the Gwa'sala -'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation, including the area of the coast that served as the meeting place for these two First Nations;

- protect approximately 60 kilometres of coastline (approximately 110 in combination with the adjacent BMTAs), as well as a number of special features that are important for ecological processes and recreational interest. Examples include long sandy beaches, globally significant tidal rapids, old-growth coastal forest, wetlands, and marine feeding areas;
- contribute to ecosystem representation by:
  - protecting coastal bog forest and approximately eight percent of the Hecate Lowland Ecoregion, Coastal Western Hemlock very wet hypermaritime (CWH vh1) biogeoclimatic variant combination (almost 100% of this EC/BEC combination in the protected areas system); and,
  - making an important contribution (approximately 35 percent) to the amount of the Queen Charlotte Strait Marine Ecoregion protected within the provincial marine protected areas system.
- act as both a backcountry recreational destination, as well as an important recreational travel corridor and safe anchorage along the Inside Passage.

## 3.0 Management Direction

### 3.1 Vision

The cultural sites and features of the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas are preserved. The varied coastal ecosystems, and the biodiversity they support, are intact and in good health. Estuarine and marine habitat is preserved, allowing for an abundance of marine wildlife. The conservancy is contributing to marine species and habitat conservation as part of a network of coastal marine protected areas.

Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw members are reconnecting with their homelands and the First Nation is participating in economic opportunities that enhance cultural, ecological and recreational values. Visitors to the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas are enjoying a variety of marine-oriented, backcountry recreation activities and are gaining an appreciation of Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw cultural heritage.

The collaborative relationship between the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation and BC Parks is strong, with the First Nation participating in the management and protection of the three protected areas. Both traditional ecological knowledge and scientific knowledge are utilized when making management decisions. BC Parks and the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation work together to ensure the protected areas are managed into the future for the enjoyment of all visitors.

### 3.2 Recommended Marine Boundary

Protected area recommendations from the central coast land use decision that led to the establishment of the conservancy did not address the marine environment. The Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation and other coastal First Nations requested that the marine areas adjacent to the new central coast protected areas be considered for protected area status. The collaborative management agreement between the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw and the province provides that individual management plans make recommendations respecting the extension of the conservancies in Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw territory into the marine environment. The Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation considers the marine area surrounding the conservancies to be part of their sea garden. The First Nation's marine-oriented culture and strong interconnections between land and sea lend further support for the creation of this marine boundary.

This management plan recommends expansion of the original Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution conservancies to include the foreshore component illustrated in Figure 8. This recommended boundary adds approximately 15,500 hectares of foreshore to the conservancies. As described in section 2.2, the proposed marine addition makes a significant contribution to the representation

of the Queen Charlotte Strait Marine Ecoregion. It also protects inter-tidal and marine areas with high ecological values, including kelp beds, a number of inter-tidal flats, high tide lagoons, globally significant tidal rapids, marine mammal habitat and seabird colonies. The proposed area also overlaps with portions of two federal Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA) administered by Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

### 3.3 Management Objectives, Issues and Strategies

Five broad management objectives have been identified for the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas. The following tables list key management issues related to each objective, as well as strategies for addressing these issues.

<b>Objective 1: Respect and protect First Nations social and cultural heritage values.</b>	
<b>Issues</b>	<b>Strategies</b>
<p>Visitors may be inadvertently impacting Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw cultural heritage sites. Lack of visitor awareness of the significance of these protected areas to the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw may contribute to these inadvertent impacts.</p>	<p>Develop signage/communication materials to educate the public and tourism operators about the cultural heritage values in the protected areas.</p> <p>Encourage users to contact the Hereditary Chief of the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation to learn about cultural protocol and cultural heritage values in the protected areas. Provide contact information for the First Nation on the BC Parks' website.</p>
<p>Vandalism has been a problem at archaeological and cultural heritage sites throughout the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw traditional territory. There is potential for vandalism to occur in the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas.</p>	<p>Support increased Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw presence in the protected areas to monitor cultural heritage sites.</p> <p>Develop a collaborative approach to monitoring, compliance and enforcement activities in the protected areas between Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Guardian Watchmen, BC Parks' Rangers, and other provincial and federal authorities.</p> <p>Develop collaborative procedures for reporting potential incidents involving disturbance of First Nations cultural heritage and archaeological sites to the appropriate authorities.</p>
<p>Increased harvesting of marine resources has made it difficult for the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw to successfully harvest traditional resources from the sea gardens.</p>	<p>Manage recreational activities and resource uses in the foreshore to minimize risks to marine ecological values and foster Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw stewardship of the sea gardens.</p> <p>Work with Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) to monitor the recreational and commercial harvest of salmon, clams, crabs, sea urchin, etc., and, if necessary, request DFO limit harvest levels.</p>

**Objective 1: Respect and protect First Nations social and cultural heritage values.**

Issues	Strategies
Recreational use of the anchorage in Skull Cove may impact Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw cultural use of this area.	<p>Monitor impacts on cultural use opportunities and take management action as necessary.</p> <p>Develop and implement a communication strategy to discourage recreational boat anchorage at Skull Cove, and encourage anchorage at Miles Inlet and other anchorages in the area.</p>
Due to the planned focus on cultural and traditional uses in the First Nations Cultural Heritage Zones (e.g., marine resource harvesting in the sea gardens, ceremonial events, inter-generational education), hunting may conflict with and impact the quality of cultural activities in these zones.	Recommend regulatory changes to prohibit hunting in the three First Nations Cultural Heritage Zones.
Potential damage to cultural sites from the effects of climate change and sea level rise.	Develop a sea level rise risk assessment for archaeological and cultural heritage sites in the protected areas. Work with the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw to develop appropriate response strategies.

**Objective 2: Protect and maintain biological diversity and the natural environment.**

Issues	Strategies
Lack of inventory on species at risk and focal species in ecosystem based management prevents development of detailed management strategies and may result in unintended impacts on the conservancies' ecological values.	Encourage inventories and research of terrestrial and marine ecosystems and species to monitor and better understand species and plant communities at risk, and focal species in ecosystem based management. Implement management strategies as required.
The conservancies' wetlands have not been surveyed and these ecosystems are very sensitive to human impacts.	<p>Encourage partnerships to enable a survey of the conservancies' wetlands.</p> <p>Avoid facility development/trails and resource use activities in sensitive wetland areas.</p>
The lack of a marine component to the conservancies leaves marine values unprotected and presents challenges for managing the conservancies' terrestrial values.	Recommend the addition of the foreshore to the legal boundaries of the conservancies.

**Objective 2: Protect and maintain biological diversity and the natural environment.**

Issues	Strategies
The lack of detailed management direction for conservation of marine species and habitats in the recommended marine addition may result in impacts to marine values.	At such time as the marine component is added to the conservancies, work with relevant federal and provincial agencies to develop a marine conservation plan for the conservancy to address marine species/habitat conservation and marine resource uses (e.g., sustaining aboriginal traditional use, establishing appropriate recreational and commercial harvest levels, establishing conservation zones, etc.).
The Ug <sup>w</sup> iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy is not protected in its entirety due to a private inholding on Bramham Island.	If the private parcel on Bramham Island becomes available, consider acquisition of this parcel to complete the island's protection.
Bird nesting and foraging habitats are vulnerable to human activity in the Ug <sup>w</sup> iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas.	When adjudicating park use permit applications, ensure effects on bird populations and habitats, including nesting sites, are fully considered, and adverse effects are avoided or mitigated.
Unauthorized sewage disposal associated with boat anchorages may impact marine ecological values.	Monitor anchorages for impacts to natural and cultural marine values.  Inform visitors of the federal regulations prohibiting untreated sewage discharge in nearshore waters in communication materials associated with the protected areas. <sup>15</sup>
The Ug <sup>w</sup> iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas' shoreline, intertidal and marine areas are vulnerable to environmental emergencies (e.g., oil spills) and impacts from other marine-based activities.	Ensure Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw and BC Parks are aware of responsibilities under the British Columbia Marine Oil Spill Response Plan.  Engage with the appropriate federal and provincial agencies to understand environmental emergency procedures and facilitate communication and engagement between the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw and these agencies.
Portions of the Ug <sup>w</sup> iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy and all of Allison Harbour Marine Park are potentially vulnerable to impacts from adjacent land uses as they are not buffered by the Ug <sup>w</sup> iwa'/Inland Cape Caution Biodiversity, Mining and Tourism Area (e.g. Greaves Island, Slingsby and Schooner channels and Allison Harbour).	Build relationships with tenure holders adjacent to the conservancy and park, and monitor activities for potential impacts to protected area values.

<sup>15</sup> For complete information refer to the *Regulation for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships and Dangerous Chemicals*. Available at <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/PDF/SOR-2007-86.pdf>

**Objective 2: Protect and maintain biological diversity and the natural environment.**

Issues	Strategies
The foreshore recommended for inclusion in the conservancy supports lingcod and rockfish species, which have experienced population declines throughout B.C.'s coastal waters.	Engage with Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) to ensure that the Rockfish Conservation Areas (RCAs) are maintained and build a cooperative relationship to support the RCAs.
The legislated names for these protected areas are Ug <sup>w</sup> iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy and Ug <sup>w</sup> iwa'/Cape Caution - Blunden Bay Conservancy. The spelling used in this document reflects the spelling that is preferred by the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation.	Recommend a change to the legal name of the conservancy to reflect the preferred Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw name.

**Objective 3: Provide marine-based backcountry tourism and recreation opportunities that are consistent with the protection of cultural and ecological values.**

Issues	Strategies
Existing recreational use levels are believed to be low but there is limited information regarding recreational use levels and patterns.	Monitor recreational use and implement strategies to protect the conservancies' cultural heritage and biodiversity values if use levels increase.
The safe boat haven is a key recreational feature supporting boating opportunities in Allison Harbour Marine Park.	Encourage recreational boating and use of the boat haven in Allison Harbour Marine Park.  Provide information to the public on this recreational boating destination (e.g., via the BC Parks website).
Lack of inventory and assessment of user-created hiking routes in the conservancy impedes development of detailed management strategies for these recreational features.	Inventory and assess the condition of existing routes and develop appropriate management strategies as necessary.



**Objective 3: Provide marine-based backcountry tourism and recreation opportunities that are consistent with the protection of cultural and ecological values.**

Issues	Strategies
<p>There is very limited infrastructure to accommodate recreational uses in the protected areas, which presents safety concerns and limits recreational opportunities in the area.</p>	<p>Allow the development of small-scale, low impact recreational facilities that protect natural and cultural values (e.g., not in culturally and ecologically sensitive areas), and ensure a quality recreational experience.</p> <p>Maintain public use of the northern cabin at Burnett Bay and the Allison Harbour cabin as user-maintained cabins.</p> <p>Remove dilapidated cabin at the southern end of Burnett Bay.</p> <p>At such time as the Skull Cove camp is no longer in use solely for research activities, consider additional or alternate cultural and recreational uses of this site, such as: research activities, cultural interpretation/education activities, commercial recreation and/or activities associated with a guardian watchman program.</p>
<p>The lack of identified/developed campsites presents challenges for visitors and may lead to ad hoc campsite creation, with subsequent impacts on natural and cultural values.</p>	<p>Identify, document and communicate culturally and ecologically suitable campsite locations.</p> <p>Monitor camping/recreational use, apply BC Parks' Backcountry Recreation Impact Monitoring standards, and manage accordingly.</p>
<p>The lack of guided cultural tourism and marine-oriented wildlife viewing opportunities limits public access to learn more about the cultural and natural values in the protected areas.</p>	<p>Allow for a low level of cultural and/or marine-oriented wildlife viewing tourism.</p>
<p>If frequency increases, aircraft landings on Burnett Bay may detract from the recreational experience and/or cultural use of this area.</p>	<p>Monitor frequency and impacts of plane landings and take appropriate management action as necessary.</p>
<p>There is limited information regarding the potential for human-wildlife conflict in the protected areas, but bears, cougars and wolves have been observed in the general vicinity.</p> <p>There are also safety concerns for recreational boaters, divers and kayakers given the challenging marine environment.</p>	<p>Include safety messaging around human-wildlife interactions and boating/diving/kayaking challenges in all communication products for the protected areas.</p>

**Objective 3: Provide marine-based backcountry tourism and recreation opportunities that are consistent with the protection of cultural and ecological values.**

Issues	Strategies
<p>The Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas are vulnerable to the effects of climate change and sea level rise.</p>	<p>Consider site-specific values and verify sea level rise modelling outcomes with ground work to determine local stressors and constraints.</p> <p>Avoid siting facilities in areas that have a high/very high sensitivity to the effects of climate change to ensure facility investments are sustainable.</p> <p>Protect areas that are more resistant to the effects of sea level rise (i.e., are not expected to change as quickly, as represented by areas of very low/low/medium sensitivity). These areas can facilitate species adaptation by acting as refugia.</p>

**Objective 4: Ensure the economic opportunities in the conservancies contribute to broader goals of human well-being on the central coast.<sup>16</sup>**

Issues	Strategies
<p>The Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation does not participate in an equitable portion of the economic opportunities that exist in the protected areas within their traditional territory.</p>	<p>Implement collaborative management agreement commitments to provide the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation with enhanced access to economic opportunities in the protected areas within their traditional territory.</p>
<p>Recreation and tourism opportunities are important for economic diversification in local communities on northern Vancouver Island and the mainland coast.</p>	<p>Encourage recreational users to use local transportation, tourism and guiding services.</p> <p>Identify and allocate commercial recreation opportunities to support local economic diversification.</p>

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<sup>16</sup> Adapted from the Ecosystem Based Management Goal to achieve high levels of human well-being in the central coast. See 2004 Central Coast Land and Resource Management Plan Completion Table Recommendations (p.17) at [http://archive.ilmb.gov.bc.ca/slrp/lrmp/nanaimo/cencoast/docs/table\\_rec/final\\_report\\_may20\\_04.pdf](http://archive.ilmb.gov.bc.ca/slrp/lrmp/nanaimo/cencoast/docs/table_rec/final_report_may20_04.pdf)

<b>Objective 5: Ensure the sustainable use of natural resources is consistent with the protection of the conservancies' values</b>	
Issues	Strategies
Resource use or development activities can occur if they do not impact identified values/roles and/or conflict with other management objectives of the conservancies.	Consider specific proposals for further evaluation.
Access development and associated infrastructure may pose a threat to natural, cultural or recreational values at Blunden Bay.	<p>Ensure any proposed access/infrastructure development in Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution - Blunden Bay Conservancy is designed to minimize disturbance to cultural sites, focal species and their habitats, and recreational values.</p> <p>Plans to develop an access corridor in the conservancy should include consideration of alternatives, such as accessing resources from Smith or Seymour/Belize inlets.</p>

### 3.4 Zoning

#### Introduction

Zoning assists in the planning and management of protected areas. In general terms, zoning divides an area into logical units to apply consistent management objectives. The zones reflect the intended land use, existing patterns of use, the degree of human use desired, and the acceptable level of management and development.

Three zoning designations have been applied to the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas and the recommended marine addition: First Nations Cultural Heritage Zone, Nature Recreation Zone and Wilderness Recreation Zone (Figure 8).

#### Sea Gardens First Nations Cultural Heritage Zone

##### *Description*

The Sea Gardens First Nations Cultural Heritage Zone is comprised of approximately 1,115 hectares (4.3%) of the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas and the recommended marine addition. The northern portion of this zone includes the marine area around Indian Island (Nathlegalis Indian Reserve No. 3) as well as the marine areas around Ann Island, Table Island and Egg Island as defined by a rationalized, straight line 200 metre buffer offshore. The southern portion of this zone includes the terrestrial and marine area around Skull Cove, Miles Inlet and the Fox Islands.

### ***Management Objective and Intent***

In the northern portion, this zone aims to protect values associated with traditional uses and harvesting around Table and Egg islands and the former Gwa'sala village site on Indian Island. In the southern portion, the zone aims to protect values associated with the historical seasonal camps and harvesting areas of 'Nakwaxda'xw families. Areas of particular spiritual and cultural significance are also protected within the northern and southern portions of this zone.

Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw use and protection of these cultural, spiritual and natural values will be the primary purpose of this zone.

A low level of marine-oriented recreational activities such as nature viewing and kayaking is appropriate in this zone. Some basic facilities for cultural use (e.g., small shelter), or to provide access to adjacent Indian Reserves or upland in the Wilderness Recreation Zone (e.g., dock) may be permitted in this zone. All activities and users are expected to be sensitive to the cultural importance of these areas.

The types of activities considered appropriate in this zone are further described in Appendix 1: Appropriate Uses Table.

## **Ceremonial First Nations Cultural Heritage Zone**

### ***Description***

The Ceremonial First Nations Cultural Heritage Zone is comprised of approximately 1,540 hectares (5.9 %) of the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas and the recommended marine addition. The zone includes a 300 metre buffer of upland area and the proposed marine area at Silvester Bay (Gwatlgwalaleese or Kwutl'kwatalis) and Burnett Bay (Yaxwha'isdum'). In the southern end of Burnett Bay, the terrestrial portion of the zone is extended to follow Evader Creek and its northern tributary. The marine area at Indian Cove and the bay to the north of Indian Cove are also included in this zone.

### ***Management Objective and Intent***

This zone aims to protect culturally significant values associated with First Nation legends, ceremonies, and the meeting place of the Gwa'sala and 'Nakwaxda'xw First Nations. The zone will provide opportunities for traditional use activities, as well as cultural education/interpretation and cultural tourism. The natural values, particularly the intertidal/marine, wetland, estuary and lagoon environments, are to be preserved within this zone.

Backcountry recreation activities are permitted in this zone, but these activities must be compatible with, and respectful of, the cultural and natural values in this zone. Activities such as beach exploration, nature viewing/appreciation, hiking, and kayak landing/overnight

camping at designated sites, are also appropriate in this zone. Development of trails and small facilities (e.g., mini big house) will be considered as possible, future uses in this zone to support cultural tourism, education and interpretation activities.

The types of activities considered appropriate in this zone are further described in Appendix 1: Appropriate Uses Table.

## **K'wunx'als'gum/Nakwakto Rapids First Nations Cultural Heritage Zone**

### ***Description***

The K'wunx'als'gum/Nakwakto Rapids Cultural Heritage Zone is comprised of approximately 940 hectares (3.6 %) of the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas and the recommended marine addition. The zone includes the islands and upland areas around Schooner and Slingsby channels surrounding the northeastern end of Bramham Island at the entrance to Seymour and Belize inlets.

### ***Management Objective and Intent***

The K'wunx'als'gum/Nakwakto Rapids Cultural Heritage Zone aims to reflect the cultural importance of this area as a key 'Nakwaxda'xw harvesting area and former defensive site.

The zone also protects and highlights the globally significant hydrologic feature of the Nakwakto Rapids, presenting the rapids for the enjoyment of visitors. These waters are utilized by boaters accessing Seymour and Belize inlets. Recreational activities, such as sightseeing, nature appreciation, diving, kayaking and boating, are appropriate in this zone.

The types of activities considered appropriate in this zone are further described in Appendix 1: Appropriate Uses Table.

## **Nature Recreation Zone**

### ***Description***

The Nature Recreation Zone is comprised of approximately 13,270 hectares (50.8 %) of the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas and the recommended marine addition. The zone includes the majority of the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution – Blunden Bay Conservancy (Indian Cove is included in the Ceremonial First Nations Cultural Heritage Zone). It also includes the marine portion of Allison Harbour Marine Park and the recommended marine addition that is not captured within the First Nations Cultural Heritage zones.

### ***Management Objective and Intent***

The Nature Recreation Zone aims to protect the scenic values of Blunden Bay and provide marine-based recreation opportunities. Small-scale, backcountry-oriented facilities may be

appropriate in this zone to accommodate recreational activities such as boating, marine wildlife viewing, cultural tourism, diving and camping.

A secondary purpose of this zone is to facilitate access through the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution – Blunden Bay Conservancy to natural resources lying beyond the conservancy. An access road and facilities to accommodate access may be appropriate in this zone, but efforts must be taken to minimize impacts on cultural and natural values and to protect the quality of the recreational experience at this location.

The types of activities considered appropriate in this zone are further described in Appendix 1: Appropriate Uses Table.

## **Wilderness Recreation Zone**

### ***Description***

The Wilderness Recreation Zone is comprised of approximately 9,370 hectares (35.9 %) of the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas and the recommended marine addition. This zone includes the remainder of the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Conservancy and the upland portion of Allison Harbour Marine Park.

### ***Management Objective and Intent***

The Wilderness Recreation Zone protects a remote, undisturbed natural landscape. Protection of cultural values and conservation of natural habitat values are the primary purposes of this zone. The heritage values associated with Allison Harbour's history as a float community are also protected and highlighted within this zone.

A secondary purpose of this zone is to provide marine-based backcountry recreation opportunities at low use levels. Recreational activities are to be largely oriented to the marine environment, with minimal disturbance of upland areas. Some basic facility development may be appropriate in this zone to improve, or minimize the impacts of, a backcountry recreational experience. A utility corridor, for power generated within the conservancy and for use within the conservancy to support cultural and/or tourism activities may also be appropriate in this zone.

The types of activities considered appropriate in this zone are further described in Appendix 1: Appropriate Uses Table.

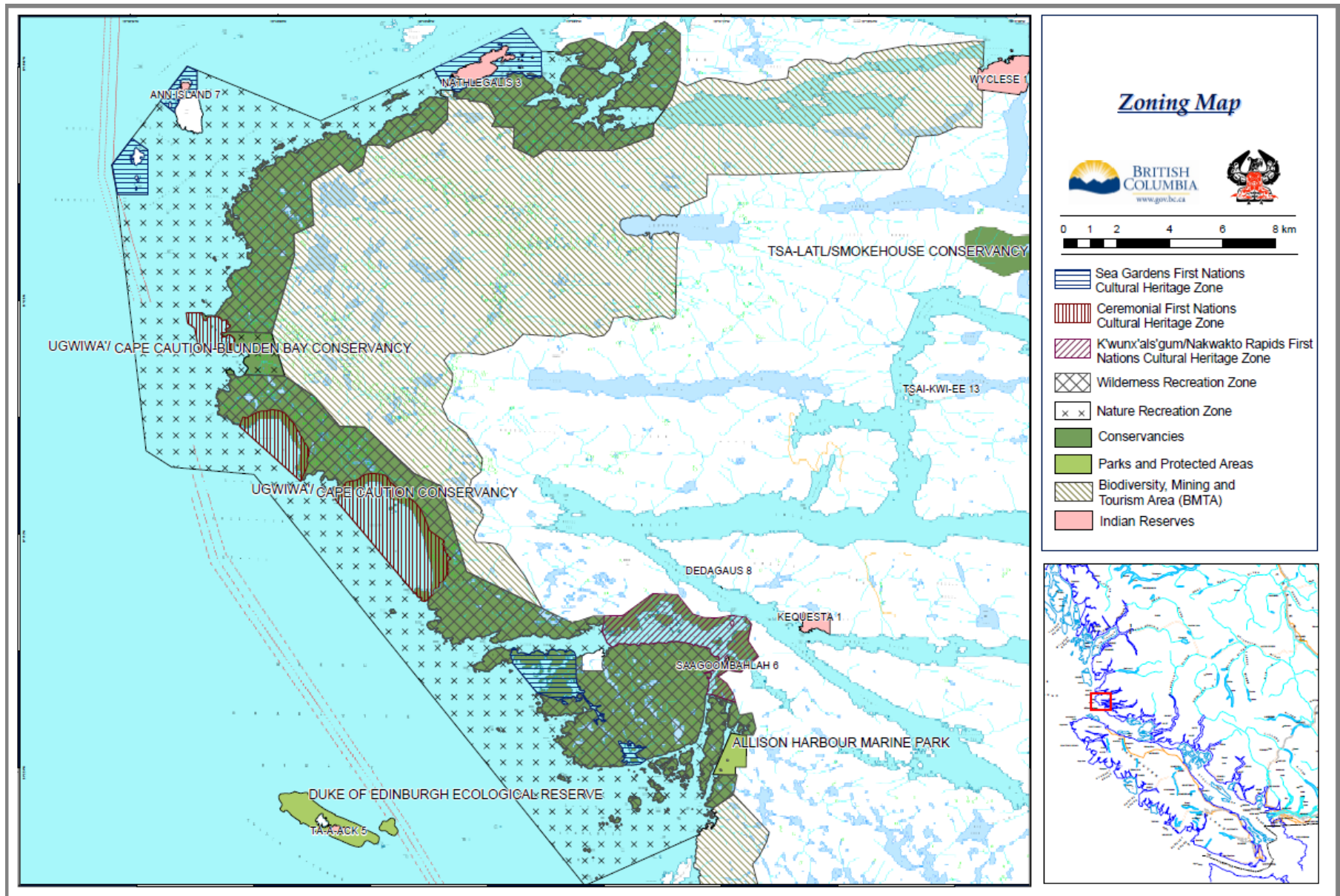


Figure 8: Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution Protected Areas Zoning Map

## 4.0 Plan Implementation

### 4.1 Context

In addition to any legislation or policies highlighted in the management plan, there are numerous other provincial/regional policies and guidelines which will be considered during management plan implementation. This includes items such as: BC Parks' policies on permitting, conservation, commercial recreation/tourism guidelines, BC Parks' bear-people conflict prevention plan, and impact assessment processes. Government commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the ecosystem-based management commitments for the central coast will also influence management plan implementation.

The BC Parks' Impact Assessment Policy will be applied in the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas. All reviewable actions will be subject to an assessment of potential impacts, including consideration of the cumulative impacts of proposed actions on conservancy values. An action is defined as any proposed project, activity or management decision that has the potential to cause an impact on the natural, cultural heritage and/or recreational environment. Actions include, but are not limited to the following:

- new activities, including projects entirely or partly funded, assisted, conducted, regulated or approved by BC Parks (e.g., approval of a new recreational activity or research project, issuance of a commercial guide permit);
- substantial changes in continuing actions, such as considerable changes in operations, areas of use, or in methodology or equipment (e.g., changes to zoning, use of new equipment for routine maintenance); and,
- specific projects such as construction or management activities (e.g., public/private venture projects, expansion or development of facilities, road construction projects, conservation management projects, special projects and locally funded projects).

### 4.2 Implementation

BC Parks and the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation will work collaboratively to manage the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas for the benefit of all British Columbians. Many of the initiatives recommended by the management plan are not funded as part of core BC Parks' activities. As such, the parties will seek project-specific funding and partners to implement high priority strategies and to monitor key performance measures. Specific projects will be evaluated for priority in relation to the overall protected areas system.



### 4.3 High Priority Strategies

High priority strategies for implementation include:

- Developing a collaborative approach to monitoring, compliance and enforcement activities in the protected areas between Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Guardian Watchmen, BC Parks' Rangers, and other provincial and federal authorities;
- Recommending the addition of the foreshore to the legal boundaries of the conservancies;
- Monitoring anchorages for impacts to natural and cultural marine values. Informing visitors of federal sewage regulations prohibiting discharge in nearshore waters in communication materials associated with the protected areas;
- Identifying, documenting and communicating culturally and ecologically suitable campsite locations;
- Monitoring and evaluating the impacts among recreational activities. Where necessary, recommending restrictions on location, scale and timing of recreation uses;
- Including safety messaging around human-animal interactions and boating/diving/kayaking challenges in all communication products for the protected areas; and
- Implementing collaborative management agreement commitments to provide the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation with enhanced access to economic opportunities in the protected areas within their traditional territory.

### 4.4 Adaptive Management

An adaptive management approach will be applied to the Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa'/Cape Caution protected areas to ensure their management remains relevant and effective. Adaptive management involves a five-step process of planning, action, monitoring, evaluation and revision of the management plan to reflect lessons learned, changing circumstances and/or objectives achieved. Adaptive management is flexible, collaborative, and responsive to public input.

As part of this adaptive process, the management plan will be reviewed as required by the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation and BC Parks. A review of the management plan would generally be triggered by the complexities of the management issues in the protected areas and/or a significant change in circumstances (e.g., a natural disaster, major environmental change or discovery of a major new archaeological site, etc.), rather than a specific time period.

A management plan review will consider any necessary updates to the management plan that: 1) are required to keep management direction current and relevant; 2) correct the intent of a policy statement; 3) address some error or omission; or, 4) address a new proposal that has the potential to significantly affect existing management direction. Any

updates or changes to the content of the management plan will be addressed through a formal management plan amendment process. The amendment process will include an opportunity for public input.

## Appendix A – Appropriate Uses Table

The following table lists existing and potential future uses in Ug<sup>w</sup>iwa’/Cape Caution protected areas. This is not an exhaustive list of uses that may be considered in these protected areas.

The table is provided to summarize the uses which the management planning process has confirmed are not appropriate in the Conservancy. The table also gives a general indication of the management direction for other uses. When determining the appropriateness of a given activity, the table must be reviewed in conjunction with the other sections of the management plan, including the role descriptions, vision, objectives and strategies.

Activities	Sea Gardens FNCH Zone	Ceremonial FNCH Zone	Nakwakto Rapids FNCH Zone	Nature Recreation Zone	Wilderness Recreation Zone
Nature Viewing	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Camping	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Boating (motorized)	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A
Boating (non-motorized)	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A
Mechanized Off-Road Activity (e.g., mountain biking)	N	N	N	N	N
Motorized Off-Road Activity (e.g., quads, 4x4s, dirt bikes- not including aircraft)	N	N	N	N	N
Aircraft Access	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Hunting <sup>17</sup>	N	N	N	Y	Y
Recreational Fishing	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Commercial Botanical Forest Product Harvest	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Marine Plant Harvest	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A
Shellfish Aquaculture	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A

<sup>17</sup> The management of hunting in the Nature Recreation and Wilderness Recreation Zones will be consistent with the outcomes of negotiations between the Gwa’sala-’Nakwaxda’xw First Nation and the Province of B.C. If required, changes will be reflected in amendments to this management plan.

Facilities/Infrastructure	Sea Gardens FNCH Zone	Ceremonial FNCH Zone	Nakwakto Rapids FNCH Zone	Nature Recreation	Wilderness Recreation
Campsites (boat accessed)	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Lodges	N	N	N	N	N
Cabins/Yurts/Huts	N	Y	N	N	Y
Small buildings/facilities for Cultural Interpretation/ Education/Guardian Watchmen	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Boat Launches	N	N	N	N	N
Boat Docks/Wharves	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Mooring Buoys	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A
Interpretive Signage	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Roads	N	N	N	Y	N
Hiking Trails	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Utility Corridors (non-intrusive power/transmission lines for power generated for use in conservancy)	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Small Scale, local run-of river hydro electric or tidal/wind infrastructure (for use in conservancy)	N	Y	Y	Y	Y

Legend		
N	Not an appropriate use in this zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It has been confirmed during the management planning process that this use is not appropriate in this zone.</li> <li>This may be an existing use which the management planning process has determined is no longer an appropriate use in this zone. The management plan details strategies for addressing this inappropriate use (e.g., phasing out, closing).</li> </ul>
Y	May be an appropriate use in this zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This indicates that some degree or scale of this use may be appropriate.</li> <li>For existing uses, the management plan will provide guidance on the appropriate level or scale of this use (e.g., direction to reduce, restrict or increase the current level of this activity) and may address specific restrictions or enhancements (e.g., capacity, appropriate sites, designated trails, purposes, party size, time of year, etc.).</li> <li>For new or expanded uses, this does not constitute approval. This indicates that the use <u>may be considered</u> for further evaluation and possible approval (e.g., park use permit adjudication, completion of a review as part of the BC Parks' Impact Assessment Process). In some cases the appropriateness may not be confirmed until further assessments are completed.</li> </ul>
N/A	Not an applicable use in this zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is applied where it is not feasible for the use to take place in this zone (e.g., mooring buoys in a terrestrial zone).</li> </ul>