

GBS Planning Part2 12:50 min

ART STERRITT Executive Director, Coastal First Nations

My name is Art Sterritt and I'm the Executive Director for the Coastal First Nations.

Our territories extend from out the mainland around the top end of Vancouver Island all the way to the BC-Alaska border. So it's about two-thirds of the coast of BC.

And we're an organization that plans for the future. That's really what it's all about. Everything that we do has to be based on a plan. So we began together, working together on a plan to breathe life into the rights and title that we have in this region. We do that by land use planning. We do that by marine use planning. And so we began with a massive land use plan that became known as the Great Bear Rainforest.

Narrator

In the mid-1990s, an epic battle over the clearcutting of ancient rainforests – a battle which came to be known as the War in the Woods - raged along the BC coast.

Lasting a decade - this conflict was finally resolved when the opposing parties arrived at a joint vision that created the land use plan for the Great Bear and protected 50% of the Great Bear rain forest.

Excerpts from film "The Great Bear Rainforest Story"

Merran Smith

When we started this campaign, the area was known as the Mid-Coast Timber Supply Area and every valley almost was slated to be roaded and logged.

Spokeswoman

Logging companies were allowed to go in and clearcut the remaining intact valleys in the rainforest even though the First Nations had never ceded their rights to territories or signed treaties with the government. So we went there along with a few other environmental groups to try to stop the clearcutting.

There were a large number of logging industry workers concerned that our efforts to stop the clearcutting would mean that the companies that employed them would stop making profits and that they would lose their jobs.

Merran Smith

And we needed to find a way to move forward and that's when the negotiations started. We started out as enemies, hardly able to speak to each other.

Greenpeace Spokeswoman

There was a point in time that we realized that there is actually a need to create a joint vision if we wanted to be heard at a higher level in government. It was remarkable that all of these parties came together. You had the mining industry, the logging industry, communities, the labor unions, as well as

Greenpeace and the environmentalists come together and articulate a shared vision for what needs to happen in the Great Bear Rainforest.

Art Sterritt – Executive Director, Coastal First Nation

there is a tremendous amount of intelligence brought to the table about how to do things and you combine that intelligence and you combine it with First Nations traditional knowledge about their territories and how to do things. You put all these things together and at the end of the day you got something people have a very, very difficult time pushing aside because it has been well thought off and it has all the right pieces.

Gordon Campbell – Premier of British Columbia

Already we're hearing international voices praising those who are at the table, who worked so hard to bring us to this day. The front page of the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, the Washington Post are congratulating the participants and saying you put the long term interest of your province and communities first. It is an important step in collaborative planning. This will forever preserve some of the largest intact temperate rainforest in the world.

Narrator

The strategy to resolve conflicts over natural resources by collaborative planning is now being put into action in the waters of the Great Bear Sea – where our demands on the ocean are stressing both the marine environment and local communities - to the limit.

WARREN WARTTIG Biologist, Interfor

And so planning, whether it's terrestrial or marine, is no different. Looking now, it seems like it was obvious we should have done this a long time ago. Forest companies started to realize pretty early on, particularly with the Great Bear Rainforest, that you couldn't just fight it, it had to be a joint exercise.

A lot of the things I do outside of the planning is restoration, and I learned quite early on that talking with First Nations, and particularly the elders, on what was there before was incredibly valuable information, and it steered a lot of my decision-making.

The relationships with First Nations now that we have in the Great Bear Rainforest are by and large quite good.

ART STERRITT Executive Director, Coastal First Nations

We have taken that blueprint for success on the terrestrial side and moved that over into the marine side. And that's where we always want industry to be with us, whether it's the BC Seafood Alliance, which represents the majority of commercial licenses in the province, or some small sector. We want them all in the room. We want everybody in the room. We're pretty pragmatic. We recognize that people have needs. They have privileges they've been granted by various governments, and we recognize those was well, but they also have to recognize that we have rights that we're not going to allow to be undercut.

DOUGLAS NEASLOSS Kitasoo Band Council & Kitasoo/Xai'Xais Integrated Resource Authority Stewardship Director

We've never really looked at land and marine use planning as very different, but shortly after the land use planning process and was signed off – I think it was 2007 it was signed off – and we started working

on the marine use planning, you know, shortly after. So you know, that's really important, especially for the community because we're such an aquatic-based people. We're very dependent on the, on the ocean for food.

Narrator

In 2008 the Canadian Government signed a memorandum of understanding with First Nations and the Province of British Columbia to develop integrated marine plans. This initiative is known as The Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area or PNCIMA.

Graphic: The Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area (PNCIMA)

BRUCE WATKINSON Marine Program Coordinator, Gitxaala Environmental Monitoring

We were able to convince the federal government, to enter into a marine planning process, subsequently known as PNCIMA. And it made perfect sense for the First Nations, especially coastal First Nations where the meat and potato issues are fisheries and habitat. We are coastal people. We've always relied on a coastal economy, and so it made perfect sense at that time.

Through the different politics that Canada went through, through the emergence of certain projects and issues that became more relevant to the Canadian government, they essentially gutted the PNCIMA process.

ART STERRITT Executive Director, Coastal First Nations

We ended up with an industry that came into the room, that was as big an industry as you'll find on planet Earth - and that's the oil industry. And the oil industry, whether they're coming by way of pipelines, or whether they have ships that are trying to take products across into Asia or into the US. These people saw us as a real threat, and they began to come in and undercut the processes that we were involved in.

DALLAS SMITH President, Nanwakolas Council

So they walked away from the planning process. But we agreed that the issue was too important to wait for the feds to get comfortable, so the Province and First Nations, along with the stakeholders on the coast, built a work plan amongst ourselves.

Narrator

18 First Nations, the Province British Columbia and partners on the coast forged ahead and what began as a "work plan" became the Marine Planning Partnership or MaPP.

Graphic: Marine Planning Partnership - MaPP

After years of collaboration – on April 27 - 2015 - First Nations and the Province of British Columbia announced the partnership's marine plans.

MINISTER STEVE THOMSOM

Today we are celebrating not one but four marine plans and not one but 18 First Nations that are a part of the MaPP process. It's an impressive achievement that was made possible only by compromise by every partner involved and a willingness to work together in a spirit of mutual respect and collaboration.

Each of these regions have their own unique opportunities and their own unique challenges, and together they mark a milestone for sustainable economic development and stewardship of British

Columbia's coastal environment. They provide the province and First Nations a shared vision for future marine planning decisions including planning for critical ecosystems as well as sustainable economic opportunities.

PETER LANTIN

This is an important day for the Haida Nation, for the Province of BC and for all of our partner First Nations. The marine plans are a significant step forward in protecting the oceans around us for future generations and ensuring its sustainable use. It outlines a path forward that prioritizes culture, healthy intact ecosystems, and sustainable communities.

DON ROBERTS

We at the North Coast Skeena First Nations Stewardship Society look forward to working with all levels of government to implement our plan priorities during the next phase of the Marine Planning Partnership.

MINISTER RUSTED

I think is an important step in terms of how we work together with First Nations in partnership and how we think about building a prosperous future, that is a healthy future that is respectful of both the environment and the economy and all the things that are important that we value.

DALLAS SMITH

We do wish that the feds were able to engage us at this table but our message is pretty clear: That we're going to decide what's best in our territories and we are prepared to share that dialog with whatever levels of government are prepared to meet us at a level of respect and transparency.

DOUG NEASLOSS

For our Nations, the implementation of the MaPP plans is a beacon of hope of how governments can work together to protect and sustain our natural resources. We are proud of the work that we accomplished with the Province over the last 2 ½ years and we are excited for the work ahead as we turn these plans into action. Thank you.

MINISTER STEVE THOMSOM

The plans are focused on matters that both the Province and First Nations can implement within their own respective authorities and do not directly affect federally regulated activities. Now that the plans are complete, we must turn our attention to building the implementation plans necessary to put all of this hard work that's gone into the planning process of these four plans today, put all of that into practice.

Narrator

Among the growing number of countries who are advancing marine planning for the oceans, British Columbia's Great Bear Sea represents one of the largest marine planning areas in the world. The MaPP marine plans designated four sub regions within the Great Bear Sea. Haida Gwaii, North Coast, North Vancouver Island and the Central Coast.

The marine plans are tailored to the specific characteristics of each sub-region and are based on three management zones that will benefit human well being, economic opportunities and ocean conservation.

General Management Zones

Areas that allocate space for a wide range of public, private and community marine uses and are managed using ecosystem based management approach

Special Management Zones

Areas that allocate space for high priority or high potential marine uses.

Protection Management Zones

Areas that allocate space primarily for conservation purposes.

KIM SANDER WRIGHT Former Marine Planning Director, Living Oceans Society

We want to look at the big picture and look how our economies and our ecosystems are tied together and how they impact one another. We have to do it collectively. You can't just do that one government ministry at a time. It needs to be done in collaboration with each other. It needs to be all levels of government, all different business and industry sectors, coastal communities and local governments, First Nations, environmental conservation, science – all sitting at the same table, all looking at the same maps with the same data sets.

So everyone is contributing something to the solution.

DAN EDWARDS BC Commercial Fishing Caucus

Rolling out a plan like this is not the end of something, it's pretty much the beginning of it.

There isn't a transcript for the Great Bear Land Use Plan video.