



HUL'QUMI'NUM TREATY GROUP PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WWW.HULQUMINUM.BC.CA

JUNE 2005

This newsletter is to inform the member First Nations of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group about the Interim Management Guidelines being proposed for the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve.

This summer, Parks Canada will be consulting with the HTG leadership and communities.

We hope that community members consider the issues and provide feedback on their views.

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HTG COOPERATIVE PARK MANAGEMENT

The leaders and Elders of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group have firmly asserted that there are aboriginal title and rights in the lands in the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve. This gives rise to a duty for substantive Government-to-Government relationships of cooperative management decision-making about these ancestral lands.

The HTG Gulf Islands National Park Reserve Advisory Committee (HTG Parks Committee) was established on 20 January 2004 to provide an avenue for representatives of the six member Bands of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group to cooperatively manage with Parks Canada the new Gulf Islands National Park Reserve.

The Chiefs of each HTG member First Nations have appointed representatives to the Committee.

Relationships with other Coast Salish neighbours is important in cooperative management of this park. The members of the HTG Park Committee recognize and respect the shared aboriginal rights, title, views and interests of the Saanich First Nations



Ancient heritage site protected on Prevost Island now cooperatively managed by HTG and the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve.

neighbours with respect to the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve.

Through these relationships, we are optimistic that cooperative management will benefit Hul'qumi'num people and the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES DIRECT PARK FUTURE

Over the past year, the HTG Park Committee members have worked to give Parks Canada recommendations on draft Interim Management Guidelines (IMGs) that will guide the development and management of the park over the next five years.

Interim Management Guidelines are required by the *Parks Act* in order to protect ecological integrity and provide guidance for visitor use and communica-

tions. In the case of the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve, there is significant First Nations cultural heritage that requires special management attention and direction.

The HTG Park Committee is hopeful that the final IMGs will take into account the interests, objectives, and rights of the Hul'qumi'num people in the area of the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve.

The draft IMGs are at: http://www.natureconservancy.ca/pdf/gulf_is_guidelines_eng_may05.pdf

HTG Park Committee recommendations are online at: <http://www.hulquminum.bc.ca/parks>

“It’s not just a playground for our people. It’s a very important part of our economy, and our cultural practices. It’s all related to the way our people live.”

First Nations Traditional Uses

The lands and waters in the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve continue to be valued by Hul’qumi’num people for harvesting traditional foods and other culturally-significant natural resources.

Many hunters, fishers, beach food harvesters, plant collectors and other *hwulhumh mustimuhw* continue to use the Gulf Islands areas for the harvesting of natural resources for food, social, ceremonial use, as well as commercial purposes.

There have been serious concerns expressed by Hul’qumi’num people about the continuation of traditional livelihoods and ways of life in the Gulf Islands. Some Hul’qumi’num people fear that the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve will fur-

ther limit access to their cultural resources and their traditional way of life.

Parks Canada has committed to fully consulting Hul’qumi’num, Saanich and other Coast Salish communities over park planning and management activities. Through the Interim Management Guidelines, Parks Canada has set out mechanisms to try to recognize and affirm the ability of Hul’qumi’num people to exercise harvesting rights in the Park Reserve.

A key goal of Parks Canada is “to respect Coast Salish unique history and current use, and to ensure that activities that they may carry out in the national park reserve are managed in a co-operative fashion”.



Cultural Program Coordinator Hélène Chabot and Lyackson Elder Veronica Kauwell discuss cultural site management issues.

Archaeological site at Ella Bay, North Pender Island



Cultural Sites Management

There are over 40 documented cultural sites within the boundaries of the GINPR, many of which are located in areas of high visitor use.

This number of sites, and their location in areas popular with visitors presents a major challenge for Parks Canada.

Work of the HTG Park Committee regarding cultural sites management has included several brief field visits to key cultural sites, detailed exchange of background information on recorded sites, and discussions about the management actions proposed in the Interim Manage-

ment Guidelines.

As a result, the draft Interim Management Guidelines establish a priority order to resolve land use conflicts where ecological integrity trumps cultural site protection, while both of these trump visitor use. This management scheme should help protect cultural sites.

The draft Interim Management Guidelines direct Parks Canada to work towards protection of heritage values and increasing public understanding about the cultural heritage of the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve area.

Management of Ancestral Remains

The HTG Elders Advisory Board have given strong and clear co-management recommendations in a letter to Parks Canada that pre-dates the formation of the HTG Parks Committee.

They instructed Parks Canada to ensure that park facility developments avoid marked and unmarked First Nation burial locations, and directed that plans for camping grounds, toilets, picnic tables, buildings, roads, trails and any other public use facilities that may directly or indirectly impact burial sites be redesigned.

The HTG Park Committee and Parks Canada are responding to this letter. There has been urgent and immediate action taken to move old BC Parks outhouses off burial sites and to re-bury uncovered ancestral remains.

There are also plans to establish a protocol for dealing with human remains uncovered in the Park Reserve.

This year, Parks Canada and HTG plan to begin survey work that will help better identify these sites so that future conflicts are avoided.

Ecosystems Management & Ecological Integrity



Ben Norris and Robert Sam observing land and marine ecosystems on Saturna Island.

Managing the lands and waters in the Park Reserve as an ecosystem and maintaining and re-building ecological integrity are set out in the Interim Management Guidelines as the leading management concerns over the next five years.

Hul'qumi'num people are working towards partnerships as managers of these ecosystems. Of key importance is managing to protect ecological integrity while ensuring that activities that are central to the distinctive culture of the Hul'qumi'num *mustimuhw* are still allowed to continue.

Parks Canada and the HTG Park Committee are committed to working toward facilitating exercising aboriginal rights to harvest within the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve, while protecting fragile environments.

“Our First Nations history, knowledge, sacred sites... maybe they’ll respect it more.”

Public Awareness & Understanding

There are substantial opportunities in the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve to build greater understandings of Hul'qumi'num history, culture, language and relationships to the land and natural resources.

Collaborative work between HTG and Parks Canada can help important Hul'qumi'num stories, histories, worldviews and experiences reach a broader public, while strengthening the presence of these traditions within the Hul'qumi'num community itself.

The HTG Park Committee has proposed developing local Coast Salish 'themes' for park interpretive material. These 'themes' would promote cross-cultural

understanding which can bring down social barriers in other areas of life, as well as to educate the Hul'qumi'num young people.

This spring, HTG and Parks Canada worked on place names and cultural story projects for the 2005 visitor guide. Penelakut students were also provided opportunities to visit the park.

While these were successful endeavours, the HTG Park Committee has requested greater future involvement in reviewing draft materials (text and images) which concern Hul'qumi'num culture, language and history before they are made public.

Visitor Activities Management

The draft Interim Management Guidelines seek to “ensure that visitor experiences and activities are provided in ways that are appropriate and compatible with maintaining ecological integrity” and “managing cultural heritage areas”.

Visitors to the park will have access in certain areas to camping, trails, boating, and scuba diving. To manage these activities, issues around the impacts of parking, garbage, water, and visitor facilities on cultural sites and traditional activities are being considered.

Major challenges exist around how to manage existing

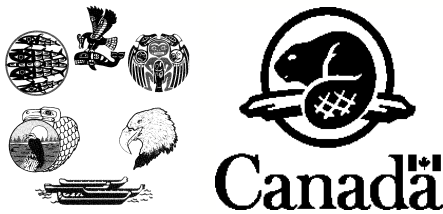
campsite and trail networks and where to develop new ones.

Many of these are located in areas where ancient Coast Salish heritage sites are sensitive to impact, or are in places that have long been used for harvesting food, medicines or materials.

Hul'qumi'num Elders have directed Parks Canada not to develop visitor facilities in areas where there may be conflicts.



Park Staff Jim Morgan and HTG Elder Angus Smith discuss heritage sites on South Pender Island where challenges exist managing visitors near burial sites.



**Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group
National Park Advisory
Committee**

Provide your feedback on the Plan
Contact an HTG Park Committee member
by July 30, 2005

- Warren Johnny**, Chemainus First Nation
- Norbert Sylvester**, Cowichan Tribes
- Ben Norris**, Halalt First Nation
- Veronica Kauwell**, Lyackson First Nation
- Cyril Livingston**, Lake Cowichan FN
- Robert Sam**, Penelakut Tribe
- Clinton Charlie**, HTG
- Carolyn Stewart**, Parks Canada

Consultation & Accommodation

Over the past year, Parks Canada has worked with the HTG Park Committee on draft Interim Management Guidelines being established for the new Gulf Islands National Park. These will guide the management of the park over the next five years. The Committee have worked with Elders, shared an overview traditional use study and have provided detailed recommendations to Parks Canada.

This summer, Parks Canada is formally consulting First Nations Chiefs and Councils on the Guidelines and are working to accommodate the exercise of Aboriginal rights in the Park.

The HTG Park Committee is hopeful that the interests, vision, and rights of the Hul'qumi'num people will be accommodated in the final Interim Management Guidelines. Your feedback is key. Please let your Chief and Council or members of the HTG Park Committee know about feedback or concerns you may have by July 30th, 2005.

