

## **ESQUIMALT LAGOON STEWARDSHIP PLAN**

ELSI has developed the Esquimalt Lagoon Stewardship Plan (ELSP) which outlines specific actions designed to achieve ELSI's goals and provides a framework for a coordinated approach to environmental management in Esquimalt Lagoon. The ELSP is divided into three interrelated components:

1. Jurisdiction, Land Use and Development
2. Recreational Use
3. Education and Outreach

Within each component of the ELSP, the guiding principles, detailed action plan and parallel processes are identified. Parallel processes are scheduled or ongoing work conducted outside of ELSI by individual agencies. ELSI will attempt to coordinate with other agencies when appropriate.

It is expected that the ELSP will evolve and be revised as implementation progresses and as new issues, concerns and partnerships are identified. ELSI intends to work in consultation with appropriate agencies, First Nations landowners and the community throughout the implementation of the plan to achieve a coordinated approach to the environmental management of Esquimalt Lagoon.

### **Component 1: Jurisdiction, Land Use and Development Action Plan**

- 1.1. Identify and clarify agency jurisdiction and associated responsibilities:
  - a) Identify agency mandate and outline specific responsibility with respect to Esquimalt Lagoon
  - b) compile applicable regulations, guidelines and bylaws
  - c) create maps that depict jurisdiction and ownership (land owners, Migratory Bird Sanctuary boundaries, current and historic land use, etc)
  - d) investigate a process for agency coordination for land and water use/development issues
  - e) develop a coordinated, long-term management solution for Esquimalt Lagoon in consultation with appropriate agencies and landowners
  - f) coordinate outreach and education requirements with Outreach subcommittee
- 1.2. Determine significant sources of contaminant inputs and investigate reduction solutions
  - a) Review previous contaminant sampling studies and compile sources of information
  - b) Identify information gaps and obtain additional information as required
  - c) Assess sampling data to determine potential sources of contamination
  - d) Investigates remediation and source control options for contaminants of concern
  - e) Coordinate outreach and education requirements with Outreach subcommittee
- 1.3. Identify, compile and map existing wildlife and habitat inventory data
  - a) Identify and compile existing information
  - b) Create maps that include the following:
    - i) Harbours Ecological Inventory information
    - ii) Natural Areas Atlas information
    - iii) Sensitive Ecosystem Initiative
    - iv) Forestry info (DND and VNHS)
    - v) Fisheries info
    - vi) VEHEAP bird survey data

- c) Identify gaps in the ecological information and determine methods of obtaining additional information if required
- 1.4. In consultation with landowners and managers, develop and encourage the adoption of land use guidelines and policies by appropriate agencies
- a) Identify existing regulations, bylaws and policies from all appropriate agencies
  - b) Determine gaps between agencies
  - c) Identify Best Management Practices (BMPs), guidelines and stewardship materials for land and water development, maintenance and use
  - d) Conduct consultation with additional agencies and public as required
  - e) Develop common policies and guidelines for land development, use and maintenance
  - f) Encourage the adoption and implementation by the appropriate agency (s)
- 1.5. Using available inventory and wildlife information, and in consultation with appropriate agencies, identify sensitive habitat and wildlife areas in and around Esquimalt Lagoon
- a) From available inventory and species information, determine sensitive areas that may benefit from spatial or temporal restricted access/use
  - b) Create maps of the sensitive wildlife and habitat areas that depict recommended spatial and temporal restrictions
  - c) Consult with appropriate agencies and public to determine possible ways to minimize human impact in these area
  - d) If deemed appropriate, recommend area of restriction/designation to appropriate agencies
  - e) Encourage adoption and enforcement by appropriate agencies
  - f) Coordinate outreach and education requirements with Outreach subcommittee
- 1.6. Conduct a groundwater study that deals with the quality and quantity of freshwater surface and groundwater inputs to Esquimalt lagoon
- a) examine current groundwater monitoring program, identify gaps and make recommendations for future groundwater monitoring
  - b) gather baseline information on annual flows from Colwood, Selleck and Bee creeks
  - c) determine quality of freshwater inputs to the lagoon
  - d) investigate potential impacts of future developments on quality and quantity of groundwater flows and the associated impacts on Esquimalt Lagoon

## **Component 2: Recreational Uses Action Plan**

- 2.1. Gather data on human use and impacts through surveys of lagoon visitors and residents
- a) Survey visitors to the lagoon and residents living near the lagoon to determine current and historical uses, gauge community perception of problems facing the lagoon and the values of the lagoon and to obtain community input about what should occur at Esquimalt Lagoon
  - b) Obtain other available information on human uses and perceived problems (i.e. fire permits, number and nature of complaints to City Hall)
  - c) Assess the impact of human uses on the spit and the lagoon
  - d) Develop a recreation plan for the lagoon, in consultation with stakeholders, and recommend adoption and implementation by appropriate agencies
  - e) Coordinate outreach and education requirements with outreach subcommittee
- 2.2. Work with appropriate agencies and shoreline landowners to restore degraded areas

- a) Identify the nature and extent of degraded area
  - b) Develop recommendations for restoration program (priorities, timelines and costs)
  - c) Conduct restoration activities in cooperation with appropriate agencies
- 2.3. Work cooperatively with the City of Colwood and other agencies to provide for appropriate human uses of the Coburg Peninsula
- a) Develop a parking, pedestrian and traffic plan for Coburg Peninsula that limits parking to designated areas and controls the speed and volume of traffic in the area
  - b) Ensure the traffic plan includes a bike and pedestrian pathway which is safe and accessible by all population sectors (families, seniors, disabled)
  - c) Work to ensure plan includes the provision of adequate washrooms, garbage containers and doggie stations
- 2.4. Determine in consultation with appropriate agencies and stakeholders appropriate recreational land and water uses that will minimize conflict between recreational, wildlife and habitat values.
- 2.5. Develop policies or recommended guidelines governing human activities in and around the lagoon and encourage adoption by appropriate stakeholders

### **Component 3: Outreach and Education Action Plan**

- 3.1. Develop a network of interpretive signs at Esquimalt Lagoon to educate visitors to the area about the historical and ecological values of the area and ways to minimize impact to those values
- a) Examine requirements for access, wildlife viewing platforms, etc.
  - b) Work with First nations to develop specific components of interpretive stations to educate visitor about First Nations history, traditions and uses in Esquimalt lagoon area
  - c) Explore the role of volunteers and interpreters at the lagoon
  - d) Topics may include: natural history info, fisheries and wildlife habitat values, fragility and sensitivity and importance of lagoon ecosystems, Migratory bird sanctuary, First Nations values in the area
- 3.2. Conduct community outreach
- a) Develop outreach materials for use at outreach events
  - b) Promote ELSI and the ongoing projects at appropriate outreach events and displays
  - c) Organize volunteers
  - d) conduct outreach and education as required by the other subcommittees
- 3.3. Develop and maintain ELSI web site
- a) Provide ecological information about the lagoon and information about ELSI, jurisdiction, etc.
  - b) Provide links to ELSI member agencies
  - c) promote ELSI activities and events as required

- 3.4. Establish and provide ongoing monitoring of a Shorekeepers site in Esquimalt Lagoon
  - a) Establish a site
  - b) Conduct training for volunteers interested in assisting with the monitoring
  - c) Coordinate with RRU EMAN monitoring station
  - d) conduct annual monitoring of the site
- 3.5. Develop and implement a community driven contaminant monitoring program
  - a) Train community members to conduct sampling and record monitoring data
  - b) Obtain long-term data
  - c) Determine trends in data , try to determine solutions to reduce contaminant inputs
- 3.6. Coordinate annual shoreline cleanup in conjunction with the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup and Pitch-in Canada
- 3.7. Conduct watershed education using the interactive Esquimalt Lagoon Watershed model
  - a) Demonstrate the watershed model at outreach events and display
  - b) Demonstrate the model in the schools too
  - c) Explore feasibility of sponsorship program with local businesses in the community
  - d) Implement Opening Minds With Water program at schools within the Esquimalt Lagoon watershed