



# 2018 TRIBAL PARKS REPORT

Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation





## INTRODUCTION

The Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation has always been a leading voice for environmental stewardship. Tribal Parks are a result of our dedication to incorporating traditional teachings into the modern context and developing sustainable and ecologically respectful economies.

This report walks through the history of Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks and gives insight into the environmental protection, enhancement and sustainable development activities that are taking place across the unceded territory of the Tla-o-qui-aht Nation. This document also touches on the current focus and future vision of Tribal Parks as we continue to protect the well-being of our shared natural environment.

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## HIGHLIGHTS

Since the Tribal Parks Guardian Program was launched in 2008, our biggest achievements have included:

- » Providing green energy to over 4,000 homes along the West Coast of Vancouver Island;
- » Restoring key fish habitat along many kilometers of streams in the Tranquil Creek, Kennedy Lake, Leary Lake, Conference Creek and English Cove watersheds.;
- » Trail building and environmental monitoring; and
- » The launch of our Tribal Parks Allies Certification (TPAC) Standard in November of 2018.





*Saya Masso, Manager of Lands and Resources, Tla-o-qui-aht Nation*

## **Message FROM Tla-o-qui-aht Manager of Lands and Resources**

The beginning of 2019 marks an important time for Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks. Since time immemorial, our people have stewarded this territory, supporting a rich culture and a vibrant population that astonished early European visitors. Despite severe cultural and ecological disruption during the colonial period, we uphold the teachings of our predecessors. Since the 2008 Haa'uukmin Tribal Parks declaration, the Guardian Program has played a significant role in fulfilling our stewardship responsibilities in the Haahuulthii (~traditional territory, lands, resources, rivers, mountains, medicinal plants, regalia, names, songs...) of the Tla-o-qui-aht Ha'wiih (~Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation Hereditary Chiefs).

In 2018 we celebrated some monumental achievements for our First Nation. The Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation became a registered charity, we earned a significant grant for advancing our Guardians Program, and we launched the Tribal Parks Allies Certification (TPAC) Standard to engage our non-Indigenous residents and visitors in the stewardship and celebration of our Haahuulthii. It is with a sense of optimism that we share our first of many annual reports, to showcase the achievements of Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks as we strive towards our vision of culturally and ecologically rich rivers, seas, beaches mountains, and communities.

Thanks for reading, Chuul!

## The Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation

The Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation is a member of the Nuuchah-nulth Tribal Council. The Tla-o-qui-aht people historically lived around the Haa'uukimun lake system, commonly known as Kennedy Lake. The phrase Tla-o-qui-aht means people of Tla-o-qui, a location on Haa'uukmin/Kennedy Lake, which is considered the point of origin for the people. The Tla-o-qui-aht Haahuulthii (~chiefly or 'traditional' territories) extends well beyond the Haa'uukmin into Tofino, Meares Island, Long Beach and to Sutton Pass (Highway 4 west of Port Alberni).

Nuuchah-nulth people have always maintained respectful relationships with ancestral lands and waters. *Hishuk-ish-tsa'walk*, or 'everything is one,' is a term frequently used among the Tla-o-qui-aht to describe the sustainability and interconnectedness of human and non-human elements.



*Totem pole carved in 2018 by Tla-o-qui-aht member, Joe David. The 15-foot totem was raised on 3rd street to share the history of Tla-o-qui-aht with tourists visiting Tofino.*

The Hereditary Chiefs are known collectively as Ha'wiih and each Ha'wiih has complete title and rights within their Haahuulthii. Tribal Parks are areas within the Tla-o-qui-aht territory and are overseen and managed by the Ha'wiih, their advisors and the Tribal Park Guardians.

Each of the four (4) Tribal Parks has its own resource management plan that is guided by the traditional knowledge of the Ha'wiih and the Tla-o-qui-aht peoples. This resource management plan is embedded within the Tribal Park Declaration to deliver a healthy ecosystem for the unborn generations to come.

### WHAT IS A TRIBAL PARK?

A Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Park is a physical space within our territory with a comprehensive management plan that was developed according to traditional teachings while integrating scientific methods. Although outside of the treaty process, Tribal Parks designations are a projection of sovereignty and an assertion of Tla-o-qui-aht rights and title.

The term "Park" within Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks is different from the way the term is commonly used and although our Tribal Parks are within the traditional territory of our people, Tribal Parks are overlain with a patchwork of Crown (government owned) land, British Columbia Provincial Parks, forest tenures, private lands and portions of Pacific Rim National Park Reserve.

Our Tribal Parks also include human activities that are carefully managed to ensure ecosystem sustainability. Tribal Parks are designed to support economic development within the Tla-o-qui-aht Nation and keep economic benefits within First



Nations and local communities – a critical step in achieving sustainability on the West Coast.

## **The First Tribal Park**

The genesis of a Tribal Park, in modern terms, was in the making since 1914 when The Royal Commission on Indian Affairs for the Province of British Columbia recorded then Chief Jimmy strongly asserting, “ We are holding the wood for the people who come after us.”

The designation of the first Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Park came from the involvement of the Tla-o-qui-aht people, other Tofino residents and BC citizens in the 1980s protest that blocked logging operations on Meares Island. The Tla-o-qui-aht Nation was not consulted about plans to log within our traditional territories and became determined to uphold ancestral values and teachings of care to defend our cedar forests.



*The Weeping Cedar Woman carved by Godfrey Stephens in response to the proposed logging of Meares Island in the 1980s. The Weeping Cedar Woman came home to the Ha’hulthii in 2016 and can be found on display in the Tofino Village Green on Campbell St.*

An injunction from the court was sought, which eventually worked its way to the B.C. Court of Appeal. The court recognized the logging plans’ interference with Aboriginal rights and title and placed an injunction on Meares Island that would halt the logging until land-claim issues were resolved between Canada and the Tla-o-qui-aht Nation.

In 1984, the Tla-o-qui-aht Nation declared Meares Island (Wah-nuh-jus – Hilt-hoo-is) a Tribal Park to protect the forests of our ancestral home and ensure that the sacred relationships with life-giving resources continues. The declaration of the first Tribal Park in Canada set in motion the assertion of Tla-o-qui-aht management plans across our territories and inspired the establishment of other First Nations’ protected areas in Canada and across the world.

*“We are holding the wood for the people who come after us.”*

— Chief Jimmy, 1914

## **Tribal Parks Today**

The 1984 Wah-nuh-jus – Hilt-hoo-is (Meares Island) Tribal Park Declaration envisioned how traditional resource management could be implemented in a modern context.

In the years after the first Tribal Park designation, our Nation continued to face threats to the territory from resource developers. In 2008, Ha’uukmin, commonly known as Kennedy Lake Watershed, was declared a Tribal Park to protect sensitive ecosystems and resources. In the following years, the District of Tofino, the

Tla-o-qui-aht Nation and various environmental groups worked together to block mining exploration within the Tranquil Creek watershed. When still faced with the potential development of a gold mine in 2014, Barney Williams, the traditional Tla-o-qui-aht Beach Keeper, declared the entire 103,000-hectare territory, including Tranquil, a series of Tribal Parks. Tranquil and Esowista were officially declared Tribal Parks on the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Meares Island Tribal Park designation.

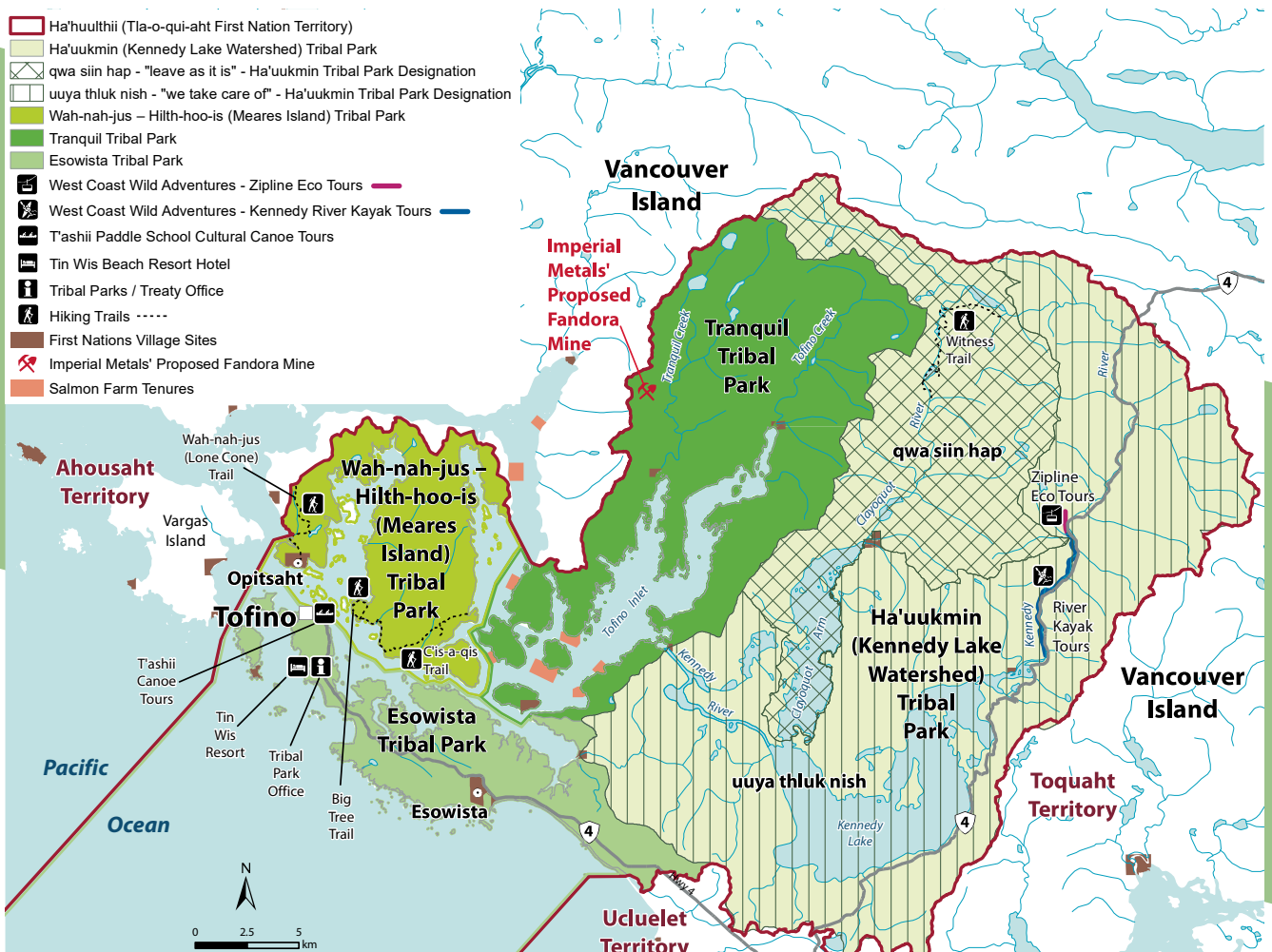
The four (4) Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks include:

- » **Wah-nuh-jus – Hilth-hoo-is**, Meares Island Tribal Park, declared in 1984

- » **Haa'uukmin**, Kennedy Lake Tribal Park, declared in 2008
- » **Tranquil** Tribal Park, declared in 2014
- » **Esowista** Tribal Park, declared in 2014

Tribal Parks have been at the front line protecting the Clayoquot Sound region for the past 35 years. We are focused on the development of a conservation economy that respects both traditional and future uses of the land. This balance between stewardship and economic development within the Tribal Parks is guided by high-level land-use principles, zoning schemes and funding systems outlined within the Tribal Park Declaration.

- Ha'hulthii (Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation Territory)
- Ha'uukmin (Kennedy Lake Watershed) Tribal Park
- qwa siin hap - "leave as it is" - Ha'uukmin Tribal Park Designation
- uuya thluk nish - "we take care of" - Ha'uukmin Tribal Park Designation
- Wah-nah-jus – Hilth-hoo-is (Meares Island) Tribal Park
- Tranquil Tribal Park
- Esowista Tribal Park
- West Coast Wild Adventures - Zipline Eco Tours
- West Coast Wild Adventures - Kennedy River Kayak Tours
- Tashii Paddle School Cultural Canoe Tours
- Tin Wis Beach Resort Hotel
- Tribal Parks / Treaty Office
- Hiking Trails
- First Nations Village Sites
- Imperial Metals' Proposed Pandora Mine
- Salmon Farm Tenures



Map of Tla-o-qui-aht Territory showing the 4 Tribal Parks, key place names and land-use designations.

## TRIBAL PARK DECLARATION

Cooperative traditional harvesting practices and land-use principles are outlined in the Tribal Park Declaration. This document has allowed us to develop, protect and share our land.

Saya Masso, Manager of Lands and Resources for the Tla-o-qui-aht Nation, envisions a land use plan that delivers abundance and not only maintains but enhances the livelihoods of the Tla-o-qui-aht people. This type of resource management steers away from the traditional “boom-bust” economic model (old growth logging) that often comes with negative impacts to our homeland, culture and long-term interests.

Land use and zoning within the Tribal Parks is grounded in the principles of Qwa’siin’hap, meaning leaving it the way it used to be and *Uuy’athluknish*, meaning we take care.

The complete Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Park Declaration can be found on page 24.

## TRIBAL PARKS GUARDIAN PROGRAM

The Tribal Parks Guardian Program was established in 2008 to help implement the resource management plans laid out in the Tribal Park Declaration throughout the Haahuulthii. Guardians monitor and protect the lands and waters in Tribal Parks to ensure a vibrant future for generations to come. **Terry Dorward, Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks Manager** explained that these men and women carry forward the work of our ancestors to manage and respect natural and cultural resources through traditional laws



*Terry Dorward, Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks Manager*

The Guardians monitor the health of important food, social and ceremonial resources and the impacts of various human uses in the Haahuulthii of the Tla-o-qui-aht Ha’wiih. They work in forestry, fisheries, and parks and contribute to the successful implementation of land and marine use plans and initiatives within the four Tribal Parks.

Tribal Park Guardians work as resource technicians, fisheries guardians, park rangers, and stream keepers. Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks works with partners to organize the following trainings and courses to ensure Guardians are qualified and prepared to fulfil their stewardship roles.

- » Erosion and Sediment Control Training;
- » Wilderness First Aid;
- » Chainsaw Operation;
- » Trail building (basic carpentry);
- » Small Vessel Operator Certificate (SVOP);
- » Radio Operation Certification (ROCM);
- » Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Training;
- » Fish Identification/Technician Course;
- » Workplace Hazardous Material Information System (WHMIS);



- » Swift Water Rescue/Awareness Training;
- » Fish Electro-Shocking Training;
- » Stream Keeper Course; and
- » Spill Response Training.

The number of Tribal Parks Guardians fluctuates between 2 and 6, depending on the season and available funding. Many Tla-o-qui-aht youth participate in the program, which allows traditional knowledge and laws surrounding resource management to be passed down to younger generations. Youth engagement within the Tribal Parks Guardian Program also supports community participation and succession planning within Tribal Parks management.

## TRIBAL PARKS GUARDIANS IN ACTION

How can we meet our economic needs and reduce our impact on our shared environment? How can rare ecosystems be preserved in a just and sustainable way? How can we engage in responsible resource management that benefits local communities and doesn't detract from the long-term natural capital?

These are pressing questions and we believe Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks will be part of the answer. Our Tribal Parks Guardians, along with Tla-o-qui-aht staff members are currently working on projects and partnerships that prioritize environmental protection, enhancement and sustainable development.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

### Sand Dune Grass Remediation Project

Nestled behind the vast beaches within the Tla-o-qui-aht territory is one of Canada's rarest ecosystems – the sand dunes. Less than 1% of British Columbia is covered in these dunes and this rare ecosystem has shrunk by 56% across coastal BC<sup>1</sup>.

Invasive species of beachgrass are currently outcompeting native plants, causing walls of grass which prevents sand movement. Plants that live in this ecosystem depend on dynamic sand movement as a means of preventing forest expansion.

Sand dunes are fragile environments and the Tla-o-qui-aht Nation and Parks Canada are working hard to ensure their long-term survival. Efforts are being made to remove invasive beachgrass species as a means of protecting native plants and maintaining feeding grounds for bears, wolves and cougars who find it easier to travel across open dunes than through thick rainforest.



<sup>1</sup> Parks Canada, "Sand Dune Restoration." Retrieved from: <https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/pn-np/bc/pacificrim/nature/restoration-restoration/dunes>. Accessed on December 10, 2018

In 2010 alone, over 1 hectare of beachgrass (equivalent to the area of five hockey rinks) was successfully removed<sup>1</sup>.

## Beach Clean-Ups

The Tla-o-qui-aht Nation participates in annual and incident specific beach cleaning efforts which helps to protect habitats throughout the Haahuulthii. We have performed clean ups in Opitsaht, Esowista, Wickaninnish and Long Beach. The Surfrider Pacific Rim Chapter has been a key partner in the organization and community engagement of the following events:

**November 16, 2018 Opitsaht Beach Cleanup** - Together we collected and removed 835 lbs of debris, 356 pieces of plastic, 4 full burlap sacs of foam, 30 lbs of rope, and 2 oyster crates.

**November 18, 2017 Esowista Beach Cleanup** - A total of 273 lbs of debris, 23 lbs of foam, 6 lighters, 10 lbs of rope and 20 lbs of cans and bottles were collected.

**August 7, 2017 Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation Days Cleanup** - The group was able to collect 48 kg of debris from the beach. This clean also collected around 4 lbs of microplastics.

**March 11, 2017 Wickaninnish Beach Clean** - Over 61 kgs of microplastics were collected by 18 people over two hours.

**December 2, 2016 Tofino Harbour** - The group of volunteers collected over 750 kgs of debris, which included, various types of metal, chains, tires, pylons, a boat window, plastic fencing and a garden hose.





November 19, 2016 Schooner Cove, Long Beach and Esowista Emergency Cleanup - This beach cleanup was necessary because of debris released by 35 shipping containers that were lost along the Pacific Coast. A group of 55 volunteers cleaned for 4 hours and collected 950 kgs of plastic. The top 5 trash trends were shipping container items, Styrofoam, small plastics, fishing gear and metals.

June 21, 2016/17/18 Opitsaht Beach – Summer beach cleanups are organized in Opitsaht each year, but data from these cleans are not collected.



The marine debris collected with Surfrider Pacific rim is sorted and sent to The Ocean Legacy Foundation. They recycle the remains into resources for companies including Lush Cosmetics North America. Diverting material from landfills into renewables is key to the creation of a circular economy and the health of our planet.

### Kennedy Flats Clean-Up

Since 2012, Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks has participated in annual clean-ups of the backroads in the Kennedy Flats within the Haa'uukmin Tribal Park. These clean-ups have been organized by Central Westcoast Forestry Society (CWFS), with volunteers from surrounding communities joining to collect illegally dumped garbage.

In 6 years, we have helped remove 21,930 kg of illegally dumped garbage from the Kennedy Flats Watershed.



*Terry Dorward, Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks Manager looking out onto Kennedy Flats.*



## Monitoring

Tribal Park Guardians have been engaged in environmental monitoring activities within the Kennedy Hill construction project. In partnership with Central Westcoast Forestry Society (CWFS), Guardians are working to develop and implement strategies for erosion and sediment control within the construction footprint. Silt fencing has been installed and straw mulch applied to slopes to protect fish habitats. Turbidity is also being measured within Kennedy Lake outflows. Re-seeding and native plant reclamation within disturbed sites will be a priority upon project completion.



## Salmon Enhancement and Restoration

Logging across the West Coast from 1950 to 1990 generally involved cross-stream yarding and a complex network of non-fish-friendly roads, even though affected areas were known as salmon bearing. Early forestry also used creeks for waste wood disposal or mined stream gravel for road materials. The old harvesting practices left significant amounts of blow down and decaying logging roads with collapsed culverts and bridges, but the most devastating long-term impact of these practices has been landslides. Together these practices impact fish passage and can decimate salmonid productivity.

Fish habitats throughout the Tla-o-qui-aht Haahuulthii were not spared from these impacts. The water quality and hydrology of streams and rivers were altered and some were plugged with woody debris or soil and rock preventing fish passage. These harvesting practices, paired with other environmental pressures, have led to historically low wild salmon returns in Clayoquot Sound and throughout the Haahuulthii. We are engaged in ongoing enhancement and restoration work to rebuild these wild stocks for the benefit of future generations. The hatchery work and restoration projects are discussed further in the following paragraphs.

### Ilthpaya Chinook Hatchery

The largest Chinook returns in the Tla-o-qui-aht territory are within Tranquil and Kennedy Lake Tribal Parks. Unfortunately, these areas were heavily impacted by the unsustainable forestry practices mentioned above. As a result, the Ilthpaya Hatchery was built in the 1970s at the



Lower Kennedy River to monitor and enhance Chinook salmon populations in the watershed.

Enhancement efforts will continue until the productivity of our rivers reach a point where they are thriving without our intervention. Our vision is to have enough fish in the rivers throughout our Haahuulthii to feed our Nation and support modest economic development opportunities.



*Ithpaya Hatchery through the ages  
1970s images*



*Joe Curley Jr., Fisheries Manager*

Tribal Parks Guardians perform annual egg takes, otolith sampling and ongoing monitoring and maintenance within the facility. However, the hatchery is currently running off a generator, with aging technology and infrastructure. We are planning to move the facility to Canoe Creek to improve accessibility and upgrade hatchery equipment to increase returns and develop multi-species enhancement efforts.

### Salmon Habitat Restoration

In partnership with the Central Westcoast Forestry Society (CWFS), we have combined traditional teachings and science to help restore streams and fish habitat. Restoration efforts will continue on all of the rivers that are below historical production levels within our Haahuulthii.



*Egg take at Ithpaya Hatchery*



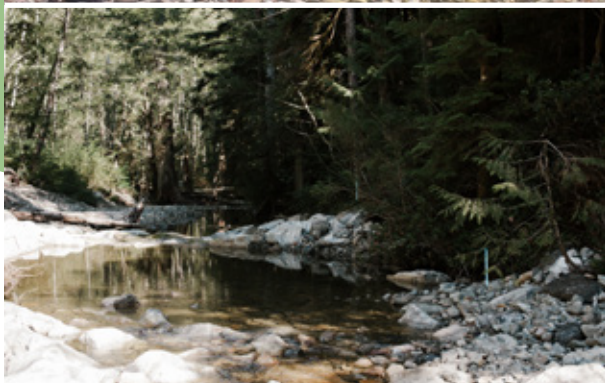
*Ithpaya Hatchery, 2018*



## Hydro Hill Watershed (~Leary Lake)

The Hydro Hill watershed was heavily impacted by the industrial scale logging of the past, altering the area to a point where it is no longer viable fish habitat.

Tla-o-qui-aht Guardians, in partnership with CWFS, started restoration work in the Hydro Hill Watershed in 2017. This project focuses on wild Coho populations by developing a restoration plan that identifies conditions responsible for their decline and by restoring critical Coho habitat. During the 2017 in-stream works window, restoration efforts were focused on the lower reaches of Hydro Hill creek, between Kennedy Lake and where the creek crosses Highway 4.



*(Top) Before: Dry creek bed within Hydro Hill Watershed*

*(Bottom) After: Historical flow restored to creek within Hydro Hill Watershed*

When speaking about the restored creek within Hydro Hill with Saya Masso, he explained that “if we didn’t truck all those boulders out, it would have taken hundreds of years for the channel to get back to fish habitat.” The restored creek system is visible from Highway 4 and it is located within the Haa’uukmin, Kennedy Lake Tribal Park.



*Restored creek within Hydro Hill Watershed*

## Tranquil Creek Watershed

The Tranquil Creek watershed is located approximately 20 km east of Tofino, within the Tranquil Tribal Park. Tranquil Creek once supported healthy populations of Chinook, Coho, Sockeye, Chum and Steelhead, along with Rainbow and Coastal Cutthroat Trout. Although logging operations have improved since the 1950’s, many of the creeks within the watershed have not recovered.

Restoration planning for Tranquil Creek started in 2017 in partnership with CWFS. Tla-o-qui-aht Guardians and crew members were on the ground in 2018 to start stability and sediment assessments, along with other qualitative evaluations (landslides, water transport and debris flow initiation). The 2018 assessments and evaluations are being used to develop 2019/2020 restoration plans, while preliminary restoration work is conducted on side channels within the watershed.





*(Left) Aerial views of Tranquil Creek Watershed*

*(Middle) Tranquil Creek side channel before and after*

*(Right Top) New Conference Creek stream channel footprint, on an old logging road, prior to construction*

*(Right Bottom) Stream channel successfully constructed in Conference Creek watershed, converting this area into winter habitat for juvenile salmon*

The Tla-o-qui-aht Nation wants to see the restoration efforts within Tranquil watershed support future generations with abundant fish returns. The Tranquil Creek project has provided training and employment for the Tla-o-qui-aht Nation, which helps to foster stewardship at the local level.

### **Conference Creek Watershed**

The Conference Creek Watershed Restoration Program was initiated in 2013 in partnership with CWFS to restore ecological integrity and habitat connectivity, improve wildlife habitat and help rebuild wild salmon and trout populations within the Haa'uukmin Tribal Park.

Since the program commenced, Tla-o-qui-aht Guardians have support extensive restoration work within the watershed. A series of four spawning platforms (eight weirs) were constructed at Secret Beach Creek during August 2014. The spawning platforms were designed to raise the level of the stream bed while maintaining a shallow gradient and ultimately to allow fish access through the Highway 4 culvert. Spawning platform positions were selected based on field surveys and computer modeling with the help of senior Biologists from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.

Additionally, in 2015, two new stream channels were created upstream of the highway on

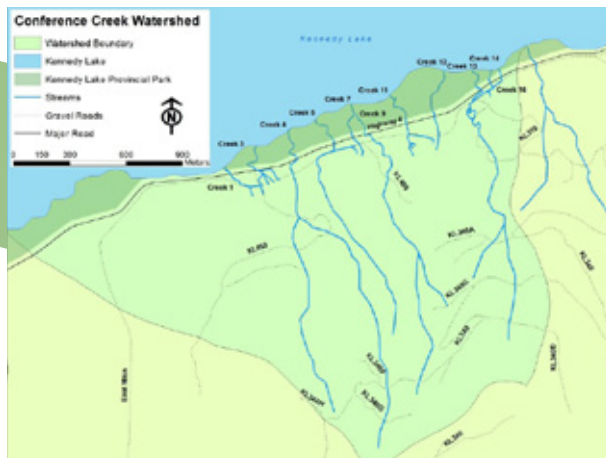
Chiims-Nit Creek and downstream of Highway 4 on Apuktus Creek.

## The Stream Keeper Program

Tribal Parks Guardians have completed Stream Keeper Training through Central Westcoast Forestry Society (CWFS) to replace collapsed and undersized culverts. In partnership with CWFS, Stream Keeper Guardians have helped replace a total of 6 culverts throughout our Haahuulthii to restore fish habitat and help increase fish stocks.

## Conference Creek Watershed Restoration Program

Within the CWFS Conference Creek Watershed Restoration Program initiated in 2013, two culvert replacements were completed during the 2015 fish window.



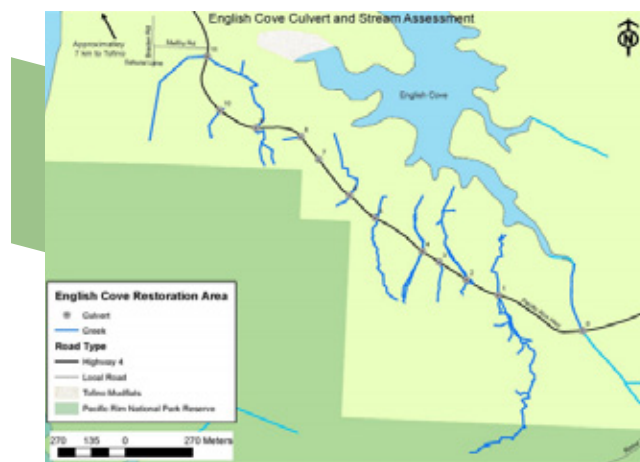
*Conference Creek Watershed*

Chiims-Nit Creek (Creek 9) and Apuktus Creek (Creek 13) were chosen for this project based on the upstream fish habitat values and cost effectiveness. On Chiims-Nit Creek, two undersized and hung culverts were replaced with one concrete box culvert measuring 2.4 m by 2.4 m. On Apuktus Creek an undersized (500 mm) hung culvert

was replaced with a 2.4 m by 2.7 m concrete box culvert. These culverts were embedded 0.4 m, according to Ministry standards, creating a continuous stream channel composed of natural gravels throughout the length of the culverts.

## English Cove Watershed Restoration Program

Since 2014, we have partnered with CWFS on the English Cove Watershed Restoration Program. The English Cove Watershed contains many small streams with high quality fish habitat; however, due to collapsed culverts, much of the upstream habitat is not accessible to most fish species. A total of 13 culverts were identified within the study; many of which were hung, collapsed, lacking embedment and non-fish passable overall.



*English Cove Watershed*

During the 2015 in-stream works window, the collapsing wood box culvert on Maltby Creek (Creek 11) was replaced with a 2700mm aluminized round culvert. During the 2016 in-stream works window, the collapsing and undersized culverts on Tsa-aktlis Creek (Creek 4) and Tsa-ahtas Creek (Creek 6) were replaced with 1500mm Duromaxx reinforced polyethylene pipes. In 2017, habitat restoration was focused



on replacing a wood stave and concrete culvert on Muthmumc Creek (Creek 1) with a fish friendly 2700mm diameter aluminized culvert structure (33.5 m long).



*(Top) Inlet of concrete culvert in Muthmumc Creek (Creek 1) prior to replacement*

*(Bottom) Aluminized culvert installed in Muthmumc Creek (Creek 1) in 2017*

Culvert replacement, stream connectivity improvements, riparian restoration and in-stream restoration efforts continue to take place within the English Cover Watershed Restoration Program, with additional details available through CWFS.

## Stock Assessments

In partnership with Tofino Enhancement Society, Tribal Parks Guardians perform regular river swims and fish counts to monitor fish stocks throughout the year.

In 2018, Guardians conducted 41 snorkel surveys and 17 stream walks on the Clayoquot rivers. This past year was challenging, with especially low Chinook returns.

## Sustainable Development

The resource management vision for the Tla-o-qui-aht Nation aspires for stasis and managing for abundance. All our development initiatives are working towards this goal – which include our green energy projects and low-impact tourism.

Engaging in sustainable development activities is a key factor in achieving economic independence and it also creates diverse and long-term livelihood opportunities that are consistent with our land use vision. Green Energy and low-Impact Tourism are the two main sustainable development initiatives that are practiced by TFN and are discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs.

## Green Energy

We currently own three run-of-river hydro facilities that are located within sub-watershed, Uuy'athluknish zones, in the Haa'uukmin Tribal Park (Kennedy Lake). These projects produce green energy, while being mindful of fish habitat. Together, our three facilities provide renewable energy and annual power to over 4,000 homes along the West Coast of Vancouver Island (calculated using BC's annual average energy consumption per home – 11MWh).





Run-of-river systems divert portions of streams to create energy that matches BC Hydro’s electrical grid. Water entering the intake flows into a pipe and runs downhill to the powerhouse. The pressure created by the elevation difference spins a turbine and generates electricity. After passing through the powerhouse the water is returned to the creek and the quality of the water is in no way diminished. There is no water storage dam, and there are no fish present in the diversion reach of the stream.

Between these three projects, 3 permanent jobs (2 full-time and 1 part-time) were created for members of the Tla-o-qui-aht Nation. Brendan Tom, Canoe Creek’s Run-of-River Operations Manager, said when it comes to monitoring the facility, there’s no ‘average’ day.

“We up-keep the roads, access points, control the security gates, make sure we don’t have any oil spills or leaks in the generating systems and that they’re all closed-contained,” he said. “These facilities are a great economic engine for the Nation. They help out with our long-term goals for community building.”

### Canoe Creek Hydro Project

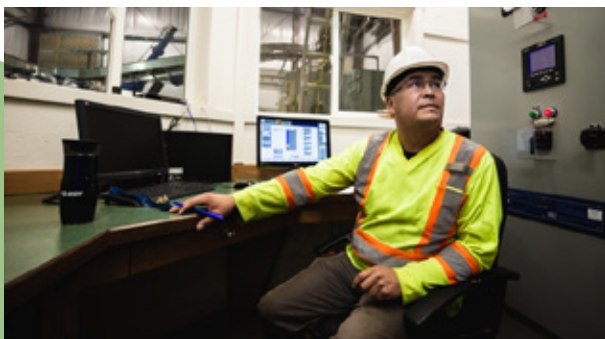
Our first run-of-river project, Canoe Creek, was built using pipes from other failed or outdated pipeline projects. Established in 2010, the hydropower facility took 10 months and 15 employees to build. Canoe Creek is majority owned by the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation, with minority partner Swiftwater Power Corp and Barkley Project Group managing the facility.

Canoe Creek takes water from 1.8 kilometers up the road, upstream from fish-bearing habitat, runs it through the facility and returns the water to the creek. Canoe Creek is a 6.0-megawatt hydropower facility that produces enough electricity to supply annual energy to 1,500 homes.

### Haa-ak-suuk Creek Hydro Project

Our second run-of-river project, Haa-ak-suuk Creek opened in 2014 and took 12 months and 15 employees to build. The facility is owned by the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation and Kennedy Power Corp and managed by Barkley Project Group.

Haa-ak-suuk Creek is a 6.0-megawatt hydropower facility, providing around 1,820 homes with annual energy.



*(Top) Canoe Creek’s Run-of-River Operations Manager*

*(Bottom) Canoe Creek Facility*

## Winchie Hydro Project

Winchie is our third and most recent run-of-river project. The facility took 15 months and 10 employees to construct and was established in 2018. The project is 100 percent owned by Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation.

Winchie is a 4.0-megawatt hydropower facility, which has the capacity to provide annual energy for around 1,050 homes.



## Low-Impact Tourism

One of the priorities for economic activity within Tribal Parks is sustainable, low-impact tourism.

The Tla-o-qui-aht Nation hopes to develop this into a vibrant economic sector. It is a point of pride for our people, and a way for others to experience the power of the territory. Currently we are involved in the following tourism projects.

## Wah-nuh-jus – Hilth-hoo-is Big Tree Trail (Meares Island)

The legendary old growth rainforest of Wah-nuh-jus – Hilth-hoo-is, Meares Island Tribal Park is to be cared for and protected for all time. A short ferry ride from Tofino brings tourists to the Big Tree Trail for a leisurely one-hour walk through the first



*(Top) Culturally Modified Tree (CMT) showcasing traditional harvesting practices*

*(Middle) Cedar Tree of Life*

*(Bottom) As part of youth cultural education within the Tribal Parks Guardian Program, Cypress Che Sitcher helped replace the Big Tree Trail boardwalk.*



Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal park.

As a result of the 1980 logging protest, the Big Tree Trail on Meares Island has some of the largest Red Cedar trees in the world. Tribal Parks Guardians are available to provide insight into the cultural significance of the plants, animals and medicines that make up this rich forest.

More than 40,000 people visit the Meares Island Big Tree Trail annually. Over the years, Tribal Parks Guardians have replaced the 25-year-old boardwalk (1.5 km loop) to mitigate environmental impacts and increase accessibility and safety for visitors. In 2018 a new \$25,000 wharf was also installed to create a safe landing access point for visitors.



*Tla-o-qui-aht member, Cory Charlie, looking out over the Haahuulthii from Lone Cone Peak. His grandfather, Gilbert Charlie built the Lone Cone Trail years ago. Cory continued in his grandfather's footsteps and was on a recent work-program that completed trail upgrades.*

### **Tonquin Connector Trail**

We have approved the land-use plan to develop the Tonquin Connector Trail. Land has been set aside in Esowista Tribal Park for a trail that will connect Tofino and Ucluelet. In the future the Tonquin, Upschiik Tashii, Big Tree and Ucluelet Wilderness Trails will join to form one network linking Tofino and Ucluelet with a multi-use trail system.



### **Upschiik Tashii, Lone Cone Peak Trail (Meares Island)**

Also located on Wah-nuh-jus – Hilth-hoo-is, Meares Island, tourists can embark on a more difficult hike up the Lone Cone Peak Trail. The trail has an 800m elevation gain and generally takes 2 hours to reach the peak and 1 hour to descend. Our 10-year vision for this trail is to build stairs for increased accessibility and to control erosion.

## Partnerships

The vision and success of Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks was achieved through a collaborative working approach. The Tla-o-qui-aht Nation is proud of the partnerships that have been established and strengthened since the first Tribal Park Declaration in 1984.

Without the following partners, the restoration and clean-up projects that we set out to achieve would not be possible. A special thank you to:

- » Central Westcoast Forestry Society;
- » Tofino Enhancement Society;
- » Thornton Creek Hatchery;
- » Sierra Club BC;
- » Friends of Clayoquot Sound;
- » Western Canada Wilderness Committee;
- » Greenpeace;
- » Clayoquot Cleanup; and
- » Surfrider Pacific Rim Chapter.

The recent launch of our Tribal Parks Alliance Certification (TPAC) is built off our early partnerships and will allow Tribal Parks to grow and sustain our environmental protection, enhancement and sustainable development activities.

## Tribal Parks Alliance Certification

On November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018, Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks launched our Allies Certification standard. The Tribal Parks Allies Certification (TPAC) standard lists a set of ten criteria that business owners operating within Tla-o-qui-aht Haahuulthii can meet to be eligible for the title of Ally to the First Nation. The certification also allows Allies to use the TPAC logo and offers a commitment to seek ways to deepen relationships between the communities of Tofino and Tla-o-qui-aht.



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TPAC was launched to:

1. Engage the non-Indigenous and business communities to restore and protect the ecological abundance of Tla-o-qui-aht traditional territory;
2. Promote and acknowledge the historic and ongoing stewardship, rights, and title of the Tla-o-qui-aht people; and
3. Invite the broader community to share our ancient Nuu-chah-nulth teachings and transform our relationship to the homeland: *Hishuk-ish-tsa'walk* (~everything is one and all are interconnected).

The TPAC certification criteria includes an annual **Ecosystem Stewardship Fee (ESF)**, with various amounts currently being contributed voluntarily. The fees support our vision of restoring historical levels of ecological abundance and cultural resilience, and reciprocate the historic, ongoing, and growing stewardship roles the Tla-o-qui-aht



have provided in the interest of all living beings since time immemorial.

All fees collected by the TPAC program will be reported in an annual publication by the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation. These documents will be digitally available on the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation and TPAC websites and certified businesses can receive a physical copy in the mail upon request.

### 1st Annual Tribal Parks Allies Tourism Summit

The Tribal Parks certification was launched at the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Tribal Parks Allies Tourism Summit in November of 2018. Participants heard from Tla-o-qui-aht elders, chiefs, and leaders (including Chief Councillor Moses Martin) about the historic stewardship roles embedded in Tla-o-qui-aht culture and language. Speakers also talked about the many ways in which the colonial period disrupted Tla-o-qui-aht cultural agency, the Nation's vision to restore historic levels of ecological abundance and many of the projects that have been identified to achieve that vision.

Speakers explained the complex links between Indigenous cultures and earth's most biodiverse regions, and we heard from academic professionals how payment for ecosystem services initiatives around the world have empowered local communities to restore and protect remaining biodiversity hotspots like Clayoquot Sound.

Finally, we heard statements of support in principle from local leadership: Mayor Josie Osborne, Chamber of Commerce Director Jen Dart, and Tyson Atleo of the Ahousaht First Nation. The Tin-Wis Best Western Hotel announced an initial Ecosystem Service Fee contribution of \$25,000, the first


business in the region to financially commit to the TPAC. We also heard a commitment from Long Beach Nature Tours to participate in our program.



*Saya Masso, Manager of Lands and Resources, Tla-o-qui-aht and Josie Osborne, Mayor, Tofino at the 1st Annual Tribal Parks Allies Tourism Summit*

### 2019 TPAC Objectives

Our inaugural year of TPAC will be focused on data collection, research and standardization. In 2019, we will collect a voluntary Environmental Stewardship Fee (ESF) from businesses who opt into the TPAC standard. TPAC businesses can contribute what they think is appropriate and will be required to submit a rationale for why and how their contributions were calculated. This information, along with the following deliverables, will help us determine a fair and fixed ESF pricing structure to be implemented in 2020 and beyond.



Community Partner and Owner of Allied Certification, Julian Hockin-Grant, will be steering TPAC throughout its first year. His primary role will be supporting our Allies as they transition into compliance with TPAC standards. For questions, concerns, or feedback, please contact [alliedcertifications@pm.me](mailto:alliedcertifications@pm.me), call him at 250-228-8526, or visit the TPAC website at <http://tribalparkalliance.com/>.

All proceeds generated through the Tribal Parks Allies Certification standard in 2019 will be dedicated to (1) expanding the Tribal Parks Guardians program by hiring and training up to eight guardians from our communities and investing in operational infrastructure, and (2) initiating a design phase for the construction of a Long House/Community Center for showcasing and housing Tla-o-qui-aht people and culture. A detailed budget for 2019 is available on the Tribal Parks Allies website: <http://tribalparkalliance.com/>.

## LOOKING FORWARD

By learning from the Tla-o-qui-aht Elders about how they upheld traditional values and teachings with the Tribal Parks Declaration, we hope to continue to advocate for the well-being of our natural environment and our people. Looking forward, our vision is to see clean drinking water, abundant fish stocks and the survival of our culture through protected old-growth forests.

**WITH INCREASING PRESSURES ON COASTAL RESOURCES THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A MORE IMPORTANT TIME TO STRENGTHEN THE TLA-O-QUI-AHT TRIBAL PARKS INITIATIVE. THE WORK OF THE TLA-O-QUI-AHT TRIBAL PARKS PROGRAM BENEFITS THE ENTIRE ALBERNI-CLAYOQUOT REGION.**

In 2019 we will discuss our land vision and goals with partners in the region, which will reaffirm our Tribal Park land use plans. Our future goals and projects will be influenced by the success of the TPAC Environmental Stewardship Fee (ESF).

The following five categories will be used to identify and select priority projects as funding is received.

1. Cultural Resurgence
2. Haahuulthii Salmon Habitat Stewardship and Tribal Parks Guardian Program
3. Community Capital and Services Projects
4. Education and Training
5. Allies' Recommended Projects and Events

Examples of future priority projects from the above categories include:

- » Funding for 10-12 Full-Time Tribal Parks Guardians;
- » Gravel road grading to increase tourist access to Haa'uukmin (Kennedy Lake);
- » Upgrades to the Ilthpaya Hatchery;
- » Sand River Creek restoration work;
- » Wild-Fire Ban Enforcement by Tribal Parks Guardians;
- » Fuel Spill response training for Tribal Parks Guardians; and
- » Chuu'is (Rainbow Bridge) Campground revitalization.





## TRIBAL PARK DECLARATION

The purpose of designating Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks is to preserve and manage the watersheds of the Haahuulthii of the Tla-o-qui-aht Ha'wiih and to implement watershed management. These resources are managed according to the Tla-o-qui-aht Principles of *Hishuk-ish-tsa'walk* (everything is one) and Hawilthmis (Governance Chief's Laws and Responsibilities) below.

### **Preservation of the Haahuulthii as an economic and life sustaining base for the people that reside within the Tla-o-qui-aht Haahuulthii, and to ensure that the Haahuulthii continues to provide for the healthy living and sustenance for all Qu'actup (human beings) – including:**

- » Salmon and other lake and river foods that depend upon a healthy eco-system;
- » Protection of all sacred, heritage and burial sites in the Haahuulthii;
- » Protection and management of iihmis (~i. very precious, ~ii. old growth, ancient forests) trees as intact forest floor and canopy and as wildlife corridors;
- » Flora and Fauna that thrives in a healthy eco-system;
- » Timber and non-timber forest products essential for Qu'actup living;
- » Ecological reserve for access to ecosystem research and education; and
- » Ecosystem filtration of air and water for Qu'actup living.

Preservation and enhancement of the inherent Tla-o-qui-aht rights – including:

- » Tla-o-qui-aht traditional hunting and fishing grounds and rights to hunt deer, waterfowl, fish etc.;
- » The right of Tla-o-qui-aht Ha'wiih, Elders and maastchim (~citizens) to continue the gathering of medicinal plants, herbs, and salves;
- » The right of the Tla-o-qui-aht society to continue to use the forests for sacred and traditional practices;
- » The right of Tla-o-qui-aht society to continue the gathering and usage of all trees and plants, cedar bark, cedar for canoes, yew wood, etc. for everyday provision and living needs and harvested according to the principles of *Hishuk-ish-tsa'walk*; and
- » The inherent right of Tla-o-qui-aht society to manage the Ha'wiih Haahuulthii, and to establish tools for co-existence and co-governance.

### **To achieve the principles and objectives described above, the Tribal Parks will hereby endorse the zoning strategies of Qwa'siin'hap and Uuy'athlunish.**

1. *Qwa'siin'hap* Management Areas (Tla-o-qui-aht word meaning: ~leaving it the way it used to be). These areas are designated as Qwa'siin'hap to protect and preserve certain areas, such as Clayoquot River Valley, or other Cultural Management Zones. This land use designation will keep the areas preserved for access to traditional medicines that are found in bio-diverse forests. It is possible for other areas that are not currently identified on the

map, to be designated as Qwa'siin'hap areas to ensure that sacred areas are protected from development and over access.

2. *Uuy'athluknish* Management Areas (Tla-o-quiaht word meaning: ~we take care). The purpose of this land use designation is to ensure that we can return the Haahuulthii to a healthy ecosystem, while allowing access for traditional activities and utilizing the land for sustainable livelihoods. In *Uuy'athluknish* Management Areas, many uses must exist together and at the same time must not negatively impact the objective of delivering healthy drinking water, and healthy salmon runs from the watersheds. By designating the *Uuy'athluknish* Management Areas, we seek to ensure that any future development respects the many other needs and benefits that are derived from the forest.

These zones do not preclude uses and activities that are determined to be compatible with preserving and enhancing old growth forests.

### **Haa'uukmin Tribal Park Tools:**

To ensure compatibility of zoning and uses, the entire Haahuulthii will be monitored by the Tribal Park Guardian and Streamkeepers.

The Tribal Park Stewardship Fund will be established as a means of delivering Tribal Park operations and objectives. The fund will consist of fee systems, and structures that are in development and may include, carbon credits; stewardship programs; license, trail and range fees, donations, and others not listed.







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