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News from the First Nations Program, Pacific Rim National Park Reserve Winter– 2015/2016

West Coast Trail Guardian Program Celebrates 20 Years of Partnership

On June 19th 2015, Parks Canada, the Huu-ay-aht, Ditidaht and Pacheedaht First Nations celebrated 20 years of the West Coast Trail Guardian program with a gathering in Port Alberni.

At the celebration, dignitaries including Huu-ay-aht Tyee Ha'wilth Derek Peters, Ditidaht elected Chief Jack Thompson and Pacheedaht Councillor Jeff Jones were seated on the stage with Parks Canada Chief Executive Officer Alan Latourelle.

The CEO recognized each Nation with the CEO Award of Excellence for their Nations' contributions to the West Coast Trail Guardian Program. Each Guardian's name was read and they received a commemorative ball cap with the Quu'as logo.

Parks Canada dished up some lunch and we shared a meal with all those in attendance. After lunch, everyone joined in for some culture with songs and dances. It was a truly celebratory afternoon filled with many memories and stories from the trail and the Guardian program.

ƛ'ee koo ƛ'ee koo to all of those who attended and congratulations to the Guardian men and women. Here's to the next 20 years!

"Today we work side by side and we rely on one another; and the guardian program is an excellent example of First Nations sharing their knowledge."

- Jim Morgan, (retired) Pacific Rim National Park Reserve Superintendent.



Ditidaht Culture Group share a song at the WCT Guardian Celebration. Photo: Melody Charlie

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Plus so much more...



**Participants working on new stairs for the Halfmoon Bay Trail.
Photo: Matthew Payne**

Trail Structures Course: Building on Success

Pacific Rim National Park Reserve (Pac Rim NPR) hosts a training program called the Guardian Training Program. In 2014, this program provided Wilderness First Aid training and an Alternative Trail Building course.

In January 2015, 20 participants from Tla-o-quiaht, Yuułuʔiłʔatḥ, Toquaht, Uchucklesaht, Huu-ay-aht, Ditidaht and Pacheedaht took part in a three week field course in Ucluelet, designed to complement the Alternative Trail Building course offered in 2014.

This training opportunity provided hands-on building experience for trail structures (boardwalk and stairs). It also provided the opportunity to learn some basics for mapping trails and evaluating risks, opportunities for highlighting cultural resources; and techniques for how to protect cultural resources with a trail system.

The participants braved colder-than-average temperatures and some torrential rainy days to accomplish new stairs that improved safety and access to Halfmoon Bay. The new structures totalled approximately 80 metres of boardwalk and 7 flights of stairs.

“...with many job opportunities within Parks Canada, this kind of workshop helps First Nations members pursue job opportunities and develop their own economic opportunities through tourism,” said Laura Judson, public relations and communications officer .

- Contributed by: Jenny Touchie, Aboriginal Liaison

haahuupču

Learned teachings

Coastal Field Archaeology School in the BGI

The Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre’s Coastal Field Archaeolgy School, with the support of Tseshaht First Nation and Pac Rim NPR, did a site excavation on Jacques Island in the BGI over two weeks in July/August of 2015.

This excavation provided information, including faunal analysis and carbon dating, on a Tseshaht First Nation chosen village site known to have been inhabited for thousands of years.

Archaeology projects in Pac Rim NPR are exciting ways in which we can work with external partners and our First Nations partners in piecing together the cultural resources within the park reserve. Projects that include Traditional Knowledge and Western Science can provide some fascinating data!

- Contributed by: Jenny Touchie, Aboriginal Liaison



**Hank Gus, Tseshaht Beachkeeper, works with Bamfield Marine Science Student on an excavation.
Photo: Arlene Armstrong**

Nuu-chah-nulth Speaker Series: An opportunity to showcase your art & culture!

Do you have an idea for an event to be included in the Speaker Series? Can you offer an activity, workshop or presentation that shares aspects of Nuu-chah-nulth culture to a variety of local, national and international visitors?

If you answered yes, we'd like to speak with you!

The Speaker Series is funded by the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust. Events and projects must be locally-based, respect local protocols and support the spirit and intent of the Biosphere Reserve designation.

You must also be Nuu-chah-nulth living in the following regions: Ahousaht, Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District, District of Tofino, District of Ucluelet, Hesquiaht First Nation, Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations, Toquaht Nation and Yuułuʔiłʔatḥ.

Please contact Jenny Touchie for more info.



Joe Martin, Tla-o-qui-aht, cutting whale blubber in preparation for rendering. Photo: Taisho Ito

Nuu-chah-nulth Speaker Series Hosts Unique Event

This spring a deceased young grey whale washed up on the iconic shores of Wickaninnish beach near the "border" between the ha'houlthees of the Yuułuʔiłʔatḥ and Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations.

In times past the Nuu-chah-nulth Nations would not have let such a boon from the sea go unused – and this year was no different! During the removal of the whale carcass Nuu-chah-nulth Nation members were able to legally harvest some of the whale blubber for traditional uses.

This August, Tla-oh-qui-aht member Joe Martin joined Parks Canada staff to render the blubber at Pacific Rim National Park Reserve and teach the public about traditional whaling and processing methods used by the Nuu-chah-nulth.

The event attracted well over a hundred visitors to the visitor centre and the beach for a rendering demonstration and interpretive program. The event was a great success for all, with Parks Canada connecting and working with our First Nations partners to bring a unique experience to our visitors.

Pacific Rim National Park Reserve hopes to host this event again in Spring 2016.

-Contributed by: Bram Dams, Interpretation Coordinator



Are you ready to talk business?
Photo: Helder Silva

Parks Canada Hosts Forum on Doing Business

May 2015, Parks Canada teamed with federal departments Public Works/ Office of Small and Medium Business and Indigenous Affairs Northern Development Canada to host a half-day pilot forum providing Aboriginal businesses with information on government purchasing, especially at Pacific Rim National Park Reserve (Pac Rim NPR).

The forum offered opportunities for Aboriginal businesses to network, share best practices, and build mutually beneficial relationships. For the federal departments, it was a means to gauge the level of regional business capacity. Forum interest and attendance was strong, and resulted in new Aboriginal business registries in the *Procurement Strategy for Aboriginal Businesses (PSAB)*.

The Ha-Shilth-Sa also released a positive media story. A new relationship is being built by Pac Rim NPR and local Aboriginal businesses, and both are expecting positive spin-offs from this first forum.

- Contributed by: Carley Duckmanton, Engagement Officer, Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat

Do you have a business? Learn more about your opportunities!

Do you have a business? Increase your opportunities to do more contracting with the Government of Canada by registering in the PSAB's Aboriginal Business Directory.

Learn more and Register today! www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca

Some New Resources

"Promising Pathways" was created to assist in further strengthening the commitment of Parks Canada team members to Aboriginal peoples to encourage and develop positive, respectful relationships.

"The Land is Our Teacher" is a publication that celebrates the many relationships Parks Canada has with Aboriginal Knowledge holders across the Parks Canada system.

We're moving to a principle based approach in our relationships!

Partnership: Working collaboratively in heritage place planning, management, and operations

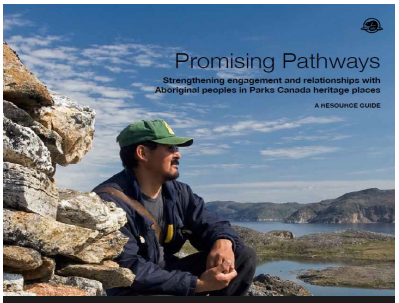
Accessible: Encouraging access to traditional lands and traditional activities

Respectful: Building mutual respect, trust and understanding

Knowledge-based: Honouring and incorporating traditional knowledge

Supportive: Supporting Aboriginal partners' community

- Contributed by: Nathalie Gagnon, Senior Advisor, Engagement Lead Specialist, Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat



Contact Jenny Touchie for a copy!

Contracting Success in 2015!

Speaking of opportunities…

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Employment opportunities were generated through

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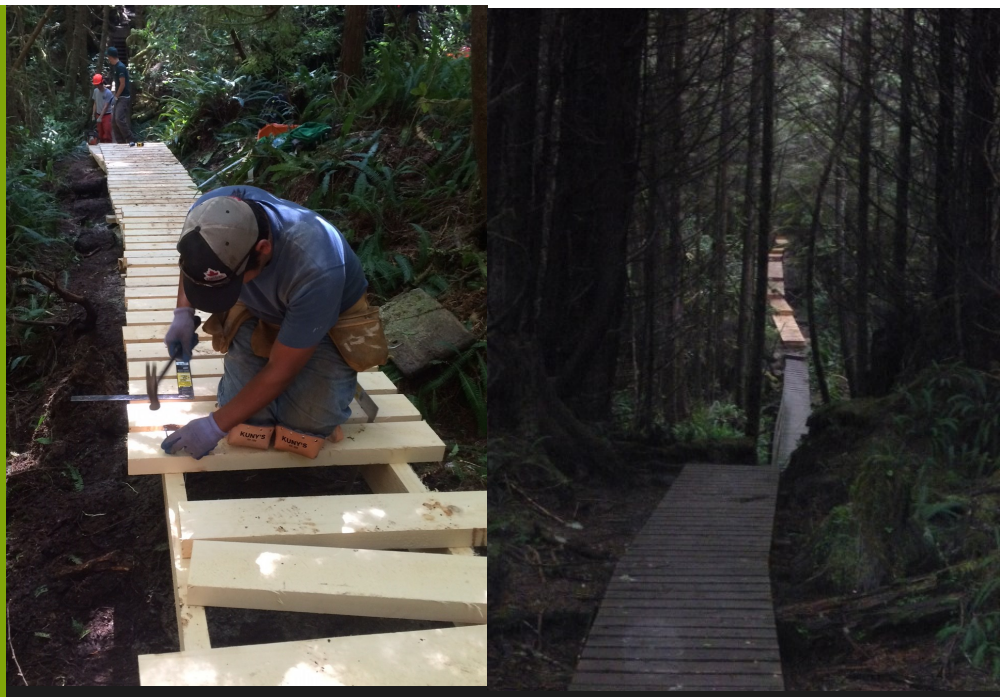
independent contracts with our partners for

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types of goods & services: cultural interpretation, construction, raw materials and transportation.

To learn more about what opportunities exist and how to capitalize on these opportunities, see 'Parks Canada Hosts Forum on Doing Business' on page 4 and register your business on the Aboriginal Business Directory.

2015 has been a busy and prosperous year. We look forward to working with you in 2016.



New boardwalk being laid. The cedar gleams, awaiting its first hikers.
Photo: Dennis Morgan

Federal Infrastructure Investment keeps WCT Nations Busy in 2015

The Federal Infrastructure Investment (FII) allowed for major upgrades to sections of infrastructure on the West Coast Trail (WCT) in 2015. Thanks to a new Guardian contract with the Huu-ay-aht, Ditidaht and Pacheedaht First Nations and some recently acquired training in January 2015, a 10 week economic opportunity, in addition to the West Coast Trail Guardian Program, became a reality. This created additional employment opportunities on the WCT.

A flurry of activity in late July allowed Pac Rim NPR to establish a remote base camp that would house 12 crew members, four from each Nation. Two crews of six worked 10 hour days, seven days on and seven days off, rotating through 10 weeks from August to mid-October, their sole task: to replace and repair boardwalk along a central stretch of trail between the Nitinat Narrows and the Cheewhat River. The group managed to upgrade 5km of boardwalk in some of the most challenging terrain.

Pac Rim NPR hopes to continue this contract with the Huu-ay-aht, Ditidaht and Pacheedaht in the 2016 season. A longer time frame will result in more infrastructure being upgraded for Parks Canada and the hikers but will also result in more economic opportunities for our partner Nations.

In the spirit of collaboration, Pac Rim NPR, the Huu-ay-aht, Ditidaht and Pacheedaht aim to expand employment opportunities in the Park and continue to look for ways in which we can work together in partnership.

- Contributed by: Matthew Payne, First Nations Program Manager



Special Delivery:

Pac Rim NPR delivers a cedar screen to Ditidaht First Nation.

This screen, by Art Thompson, was commissioned by Canada in 1970. It has been housed by PRNPR since being removed from display at the Green Point Theatre.

The screen is on a 99 year loan agreement between Parks Canada and the Ditidaht First Nation.

Photo: Tyson Atleo

Pac Rim NPR Staffing Updates

There's a new Superintendent in town, and she's a superstar of Huu-ay-aht First Nations. Karen Haugen who is currently working for her nation as the Acting Executive Director, will be re-joining the PRNPR Management team in June 2016 as the new Park Superintendent. Karen is the first Nuu-chah-nulth Superintendent for the Coastal BC Field Unit. Please welcome Karen back in 2016.

Morag Hutcheson will be the Acting Superintendent until June 2016. Morag is on assignment from National Office where she's the manager of the New Media Strategies team in Gatineau, Quebec. Prior to assuming this Superintendent role, Morag was the acting Visitor Experience Manager .

Lorri Touchie of Yuułuʔiłʔatḥ First Nation joins the First Nations Program team as the First Nations Program Administrative Assistant. Lorri will be working on some exciting projects for the program and will be assisting with program delivery in various ways. Don't be shy, call and say 'hi!'

We want to hear from you...

If you have questions or comments regarding any of the articles in this edition, or any general inquiries into the programs we deliver, we'd like to hear from you! Please feel free to contact us at the information below. We'd love to know what you're interested in seeing more of.

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