

Forest Companies and Environmental Groups Deliver Joint Recommendations for the Great Bear Rainforest

VANCOUVER, B.C. —Joint recommendations to achieve final implementation of ecosystem-based management (EBM) in the Great Bear Rainforest have been reached among five forest product businesses and three leading environmental groups who together form the Joint Solutions Project (JSP).

The recommendations include the scope of future logging along B.C.'s central and north coasts and conservation measures to support ecological low risk. The recommendations have been provided to the Province and First Nations at their request.

The joint recommendations are the culmination of years of intensive collaborative work and technical analysis. They represent the major input for the final step in the landmark Great Bear Rainforest Agreement, which was announced in 2006, and endorsed by the provincial government, First Nations, environmental groups and forest companies.

The recommendations have been delivered to the Province and First Nations who are the decision-makers regarding implementation of the Great Bear Rainforest Agreements which will protect the rainforest while at the same time improving social, cultural and economic well-being. The recommendations will also support the 2014 review of the current legal objectives for the region.

“Collaboration has been the cornerstone in this significant achievement. We are committed to supporting the Province and First Nations as they begin the complex analysis and detailed discussions needed to complete the final chapter of this historic agreement,” said Ric Slaco, chair of the Coast Forest Conservation Initiative and Interfor’s vice president and chief forester. “Once completed, this agreement will provide greater economic certainty for our communities, marketplace recognition for our products, and support additional investment in the region in the years ahead.”

“It’s not every day that environmental groups and big forestry businesses put forward joint recommendations that are good for the forests and fair to the forest sector in the region,” said Valerie Langer, ForestEthics Solutions on behalf of Greenpeace and Sierra Club BC. “There is a lot of anticipation from around the world to see this model succeed. Our focus now will be working with the Province and First Nations to make sure we come through the final process with a win we can all celebrate. “

JSP was established in 2000 by a group of B.C. coastal forest companies and environmental organizations. In the years since, it has participated in land use planning and technical analysis to inform decision-making aimed at reducing conflict over logging and creating a world-class conservation plan for the 64,000 square kilometre Great Bear Rainforest.

JSP members include ForestEthics Solutions, Greenpeace, Sierra Club BC, BC Timber Sales, Catalyst Paper Corporation, Howe Sound Pulp & Paper, Interfor and Western Forest Products.

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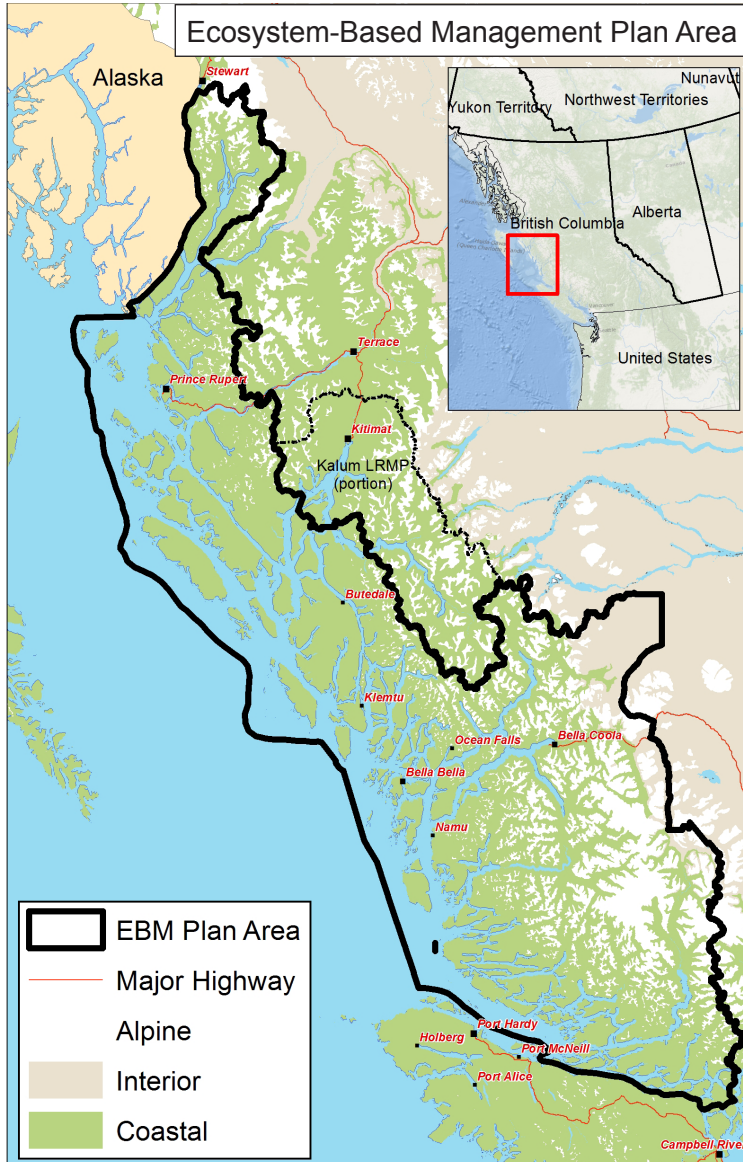
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Joint Recommendations for the Great Bear Rainforest



The Great Bear Rainforest represents one of the largest tracts of intact temperate rainforest in the world. It is the traditional territory of 27 First Nations and home to the Spirit Bear also known as the Kermode bear.

In 2006, the provincial government, First Nations, three major environmental groups and five forest product businesses announced the Great Bear Rainforest Agreements with the goal to achieve ecological integrity and a high quality of life in the region. Key components included:

- One third of the region in protected areas (2.1 million hectares/5 million acres);
- \$120 million funding for First Nation communities to kick-start a conservation economy;
- New rules for logging based on ecosystem-based management; and
- A new Government-to-Government relationship between the Province and First Nations.

The primary objective for the work that led to today's recommendations was to develop a plan to manage the Great Bear Rainforest at low ecological risk while ensuring a viable forest economy that would support a meaningful contribution to the social and economic well-being of people and their communities.

Ecosystem-based management is an adaptive, systematic approach to managing human activities that seeks to ensure the co-existence of healthy, fully functioning ecosystems and human communities. By definition, it is an adaptive process that evolves to reflect new understanding and knowledge.

Key Elements of the Joint Recommendations:

- An additional 500,000 ha set aside to support the conservation goal;
- A resulting harvest level that can maintain a viable forestry industry;
- A new approach to landscape planning that better accounts for old growth, cultural values, key wildlife habitat and riparian zones; and
- A legal framework and policy to support on-the-ground implementation of the recommendations.



For further information visit:

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