

HAIDA GWAII MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ALLOWABLE ANNUAL CUT (AAC) DETERMINED BY CONSENSUS FOR HAIDA GWAII

HAIDA GWAII – The Haida Gwaii Management Council (HGMC) has determined an Allowable Annual Cut (AAC) of 804,000 cubic metres for the Haida Gwaii Management Area. This determination was arrived at through a consensus decision by the HGMC following over three years of data gathering and detailed analysis of the forest inventory and values that affect timber supply on Haida Gwaii.

“The Haida Gwaii Management Council was formed in 2011 and includes representatives of the Province and the Council of the Haida Nation. The HGMC has authority to make joint decisions on a set of resource management issues, including the determination of the AAC for Haida Gwaii. The HGMC’s first AAC determination in 2012 reflected the progressive social, cultural and economic realities at the time. The determination today is also reflective of current forestry and environmental needs and expectations, and incorporates a deep understanding of the need for sustaining resources and community stability well into the future. With that in mind, the ability for two governments to find consensus on difficult issues like managing the supply of cedar and Northern Goshawk habitat while maintaining a viable forest industry sector for Haida Gwaii, is a milestone in working together,” said Warren Mitchell, Chair of the Haida Gwaii Management Council during the AAC determination process.

The 70-page AAC determination rationale document is based on a new timber supply review that was undertaken from 2014 through 2019. The comprehensive review included updating a great deal of forestry information including the forest inventory, site productivity estimates, and growth and yield tables. A more accurate and informative methodology (LiDAR) was also used to map terrain and fluvial features. This improved operational data provided a more accurate way to assess the timber harvesting land base for which the AAC is determined and the result reflects current forest practices based on implementation of land use objective orders. Those orders – first issued in 2011, and then amended in 2014 and 2017 were established to provide for improved ecosystem integrity and Haida cultural objectives.

The timber supply review was initiated as a result of concerns over the rate of harvest of western red cedar and the status of the forest inventory on Haida Gwaii. The HGMC recognizes that a long-term growing supply of cedar and especially monumental cedar is critical to Haida cultural practices. To that effect, the HGMC carefully considered the long-term viability of cedar while recognizing that the harvesting of cedar is important to the economic viability for some businesses. The HGMC does not have the authority to specify which portions of the AAC are attributable to different types of timber. That authority rests with the Chief Forester but the HGMC has recommended placing limits on harvesting cedar for the next ten years.

“The HGMC and the government’s technical teams worked hard to ensure that the new AAC reflects today’s operational practices. The day-to-day practices on the ground have been based on the land use orders. I believe the new AAC will maintain ecological integrity on Haida Gwaii *and* provide a measure of stability for our communities,” said Haida Nation representative, Kung Xyaalas Tyler Bellis.

As part of the timber supply review process, a public review and comment process was undertaken. The HGMC received over 40 comments from the public, industry, municipalities and other agencies. These often detailed comments were considered throughout all aspects of the HGMC's analysis and addressed, among other subjects, the difference in cedar volumes from ground plots to the protection of rare ecosystems. The comments have been integrated into the text of the determination and reflect the public's long involvement in, and concerns about, forestry on Haida Gwaii. Within its analysis, the HGMC also considered monumental cedar, riparian areas for fish and non-fish bearing streams, bear denning, recreation sites, and socio-economic information, which included risk to employment and the high cost of harvesting on the Islands. The HGMC also received public comments that were outside the scope of the timber supply review and AAC determination that could not be addressed through this process. The HGMC wishes to thank those who took the time to provide the valuable and thoughtful input through the review process.

"Decisions like this are not easy, and require a balancing of the social, economic, cultural and environmental considerations. But I can say with confidence that the process of getting here was a genuinely collaborative joint effort and it took into account the views of all members at the table," said Sharon Hadway, Province of British Columbia representative.

The AAC applies to Timber Harvesting Land Base which covers 147,746 hectares and makes up 15% of Haida Gwaii. Haida Gwaii is unique in that a very large portion (48%) of the area is protected within 19 Protected Areas. While prohibiting commercial harvesting, these protected areas ensure the long-term maintenance of important ecological, environmental and cultural values, including providing for current and future access to cultural cedar by the Haida Nation.

Following the AAC determination, the Chief Forester of British Columbia will determine the AAC for the two Tree Farm Licenses and the timber supply area within the Haida Gwaii Management Area. The AACs for these units must not exceed the AAC determined by the HGMC for the Management Area.

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Supporting documents are available at: <haidagwaiimanagementcouncil.ca>

- Haida Gwaii Timber Supply Review
- Haida Gwaii AAC Rationale
- Haida Gwaii Socio-Economic Analysis

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