

Johnstone Strait Project Backgrounder:

Improving the Sea Kayaking and Camping Experience in the Johnstone Strait Area

As participation in recreational activities in BC increases, there is the growing challenge of facilitating and encouraging public and commercial recreation opportunities, while maintaining the social and environmental assets upon which they are based.

At the same time, recreation activities must be balanced and integrated with other land and resource uses.

To help respond to this challenge, the Integrated Land Management Bureau and the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts have jointly initiated two pilot projects in BC to examine the use of a recreation management approach known as the *Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC)* process.

The two project areas are:

- **Johnstone Strait** – a coastal area valued for its spectacular kayaking and whale watching opportunities, and associated camping.
- **Golden (Windy Creek area)** – a land-based area that is popular for commercial and recreational backcountry skiing.

Johnstone Strait Project Objectives

1. To develop management recommendations aimed at fostering the sustainability of environmental and social conditions desired for sea kayaking and associated whale watching and camping activities in the Johnstone Strait area.
2. To test the utility of the *Limits of Acceptable Change* process in an area that is highly valued for its tourism and recreation opportunities, and where there is relatively little guidance for management of these activities in existing plans;
3. To provide an assessment of the utility of using this process to create management strategies for recreation and tourism in other areas of the province.

What is the “Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) Process”?

The LAC process has been successfully applied in various jurisdictions around the world as a means to address recreation user conflicts and environmental impacts.

It is an approach that recognizes that recreational activities will inevitably incur some level of impact or change. Instead of trying to prevent change, the LAC process focuses on identifying acceptable levels and rates of change.

Participants in the process identify desired social and environmental conditions for an area, and the management actions that are required to achieve those conditions.

Instead of asking, “How many visitors are too many?” LAC focuses on “What behaviours or standards are needed to protect the conditions we desire?”

This shift from traditional approaches presents a different perspective on exploring limits and managing recreation and tourism as sustainable experiential and economic activities.

Diversity in resource and social conditions is promoted through the recognition of a variety of “opportunity classes” or descriptions of the acceptable and appropriate conditions for the environment and visitors’ experience and activities.

Who is Involved in the Johnstone Strait Project?

Involvement by interested public and commercial recreation stakeholders, First Nations, local government and others is integral to the *LAC* approach.

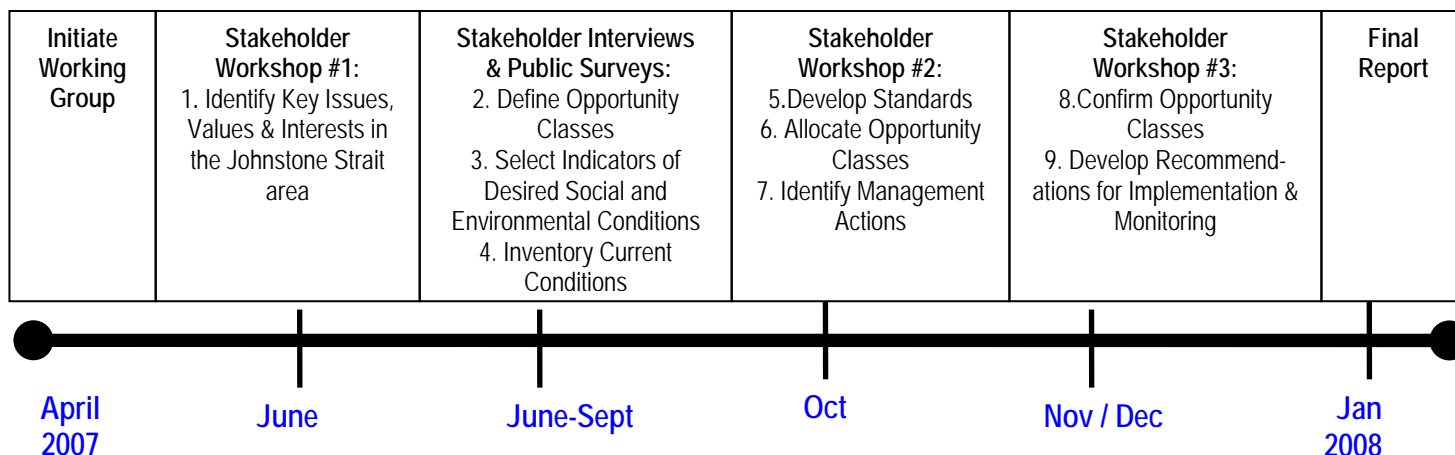
The **Working Group** that is overseeing this project includes representatives from:

- Commercial Kayak Operators
- Outdoor Recreation Council
- Mount Waddington Regional District
- Nanwakolas First Nations Council
- BC Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts
- BC Parks
- BC Integrated Land Management Bureau
- BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- Simon Fraser University



Stakeholders and public recreation interests are invited to participate directly throughout the project, as outlined below.

Project Timelines and Key Steps in the *LAC* Process



For More Information Contact:

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