

Environmental
Stewardship
Initiative
Investing in the Future

June 2018

Prepared by Four Directions Management Services

Acknowledgements

This report was prepared by Dan George and Kelly Mortimer of Four Directions Management Services (FDMS) in June 2018 on behalf of the ESI Governance Working Group Executive (GWGE). FDMS would like to acknowledge the work of the GWGE for their invaluable feedback in identifying key lessons learned and in the development of recommendations to move the work of ESI forward.



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Executive Summary

The Environmental Stewardship Initiative (“ESI”) is a true collaboration between the Province and First Nations in the northern areas of the Province. The collaborative approach that has been developed through ESI incorporates western science and Indigenous knowledge and is working towards shared principles in land management. This paper provides a background on the work of the Environment Stewardship Initiative, outlines key learnings gained from the ESI since its establishment, and offers suggestions for a path forward.

The goals of ESI are to develop a new, collaborative approach to establishing environmental legacies related to generating high quality, accessible and trusted environmental information. The scope of ESI includes four key areas:

- ecosystem assessment and monitoring
- ecosystem restoration and enhancement
- ecosystem research and knowledge exchange
- stewardship education and training

Since the launch of ESI, the Province has been working with First Nations and four regions to develop and implement this initiative. The four Regional Stewardship Forums (“RSF”) have been established in Skeena, Omineca, the North East, and North Coast to identify and develop projects according to priorities in each area. A fifth working group – the Governance Working Group (“GWG”) – has been developing the ESI governance principles, decision-making, and a long-term operating structure.

ESI is distinct in that it has created meaningful space for traditional ecological knowledge alongside western science. Through ESI, First Nations and the Province have been creating opportunities for developing new environmental stewardship projects associated with natural resource development. Key features of ESI that make it distinct include:

- A collaborative foundation that has been jointly developed with First Nations;
- The presence of First Nation hereditary and elected leadership working together;
- Transparency in process is evident through shared decision-making and accountability;
- The establishment of trust in relationships is leading to the development of trusted data; and,
- Shared understanding of one another’s perspectives and concerns about cumulative effects on the land base has set the stage for constructive resolution of disagreements and co-development of projects.

The success of ESI to date has been aided by a number of critical factors. Firstly, the governance arrangements respect First Nations values and differences across the four sub-regions and allow each sub-region to operate within a framework that works for those respective First Nations. The governance arrangements also tie the four sub-regions together so that common stewardship

objectives, goals, and results are being accomplished across northern BC. Secondly, ESI is actively building relationships at the staff level which creates an environment that supports issue resolution and the transformation of conflict into a unifying force. Thirdly, the regional approach to working with multiple First Nations and letting each sub-region develop the working relationships to gain efficiencies and collaborative benefits such as joint project work, joint training, and information and data sharing, has proven to be useful for both First Nations and the Province. Lastly, the co-developed demonstration projects are examples of regional shared decision-making (specifically relating to project design, budgeting, and execution on shared issues of concern).

The Province has committed \$30 million to support the ESI initiative. To date, \$11 million of this funding has been spent and regional contribution agreements have been extended to support the continuation of this work moving into the fiscal year 2020/2021. Based on the projected spend pattern however, the initial funding allocation of \$30 million will be largely expended by 2020 and decisions will need to be made as to its future.

To further the development of ESI and support the Initiative's future potential, the following next steps are presented for further consideration by participating First Nations and provincial agencies:

- that the Province continue to fund and support the four current ESI Projects and that the four regions have the opportunity to come together annually to share best practices with one another, learn from Indigenous and Western science experts, and further develop relationships cross-regionally.
- that the Province investigate options to extend the funding commitment for ESI (for instance, through complimentary project-specific funding support) and that the First Nations and the Province investigate other additional sources of funding to support ESI which will be inclusive, as well as, investigating options where the Province and participating Nations seek matching Federal and Industry funding commitments;
- that the GWG Executive facilitate, with input from the broader GWG, the development of recommendations for ESI governance structures for First Nation and Provincial leadership to review;
- that the GWG Executive consult with the regional demonstration project teams on a longer-term, strategic, and forward-looking ESI work plan to inform GWG governance recommendations; and,
- that the First Nation and provincial representatives investigate ESI's mandate being expanded to include a broader scope of stewardship activities and include other relevant Ministries that can advance the enhanced vision and mandate of ESI.

The ESI is working to go far beyond the collaborative assessment, monitoring and management responses that are being developed in the regional projects. ESI supports and facilitates the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples ("UNDRIP") and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action ("TRC") and provides a cornerstone in renewed reconciliation efforts between the Province and First Nations. Investing in ESI is an investment in the land and in the reconciliatory relationship between Indigenous Nations in BC and the Provincial Government.

What is ESI?

The ESI is a \$30 million collaboration between 30 First Nations in northern BC and the Province of BC. The funding for ESI started in 2015 but was committed by BC in May 2014 as part of the Province's First Nations' Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) Benefits Framework; however, support for LNG was not an eligibility requirement.

ESI is intended to facilitate collaboration and trust between the parties in an effort to enhance environmental sustainability, and to address First Nation's long-standing concerns with stewardship of the land and cumulative impacts in their traditional territories. The goals of the ESI are to collaboratively establish positive environmental legacies across the north by investing in four key areas:

- Ecosystem monitoring and assessment;
- Ecosystem restoration and enhancement;
- Ecosystem research and knowledge exchange;
- Stewardship education and training.

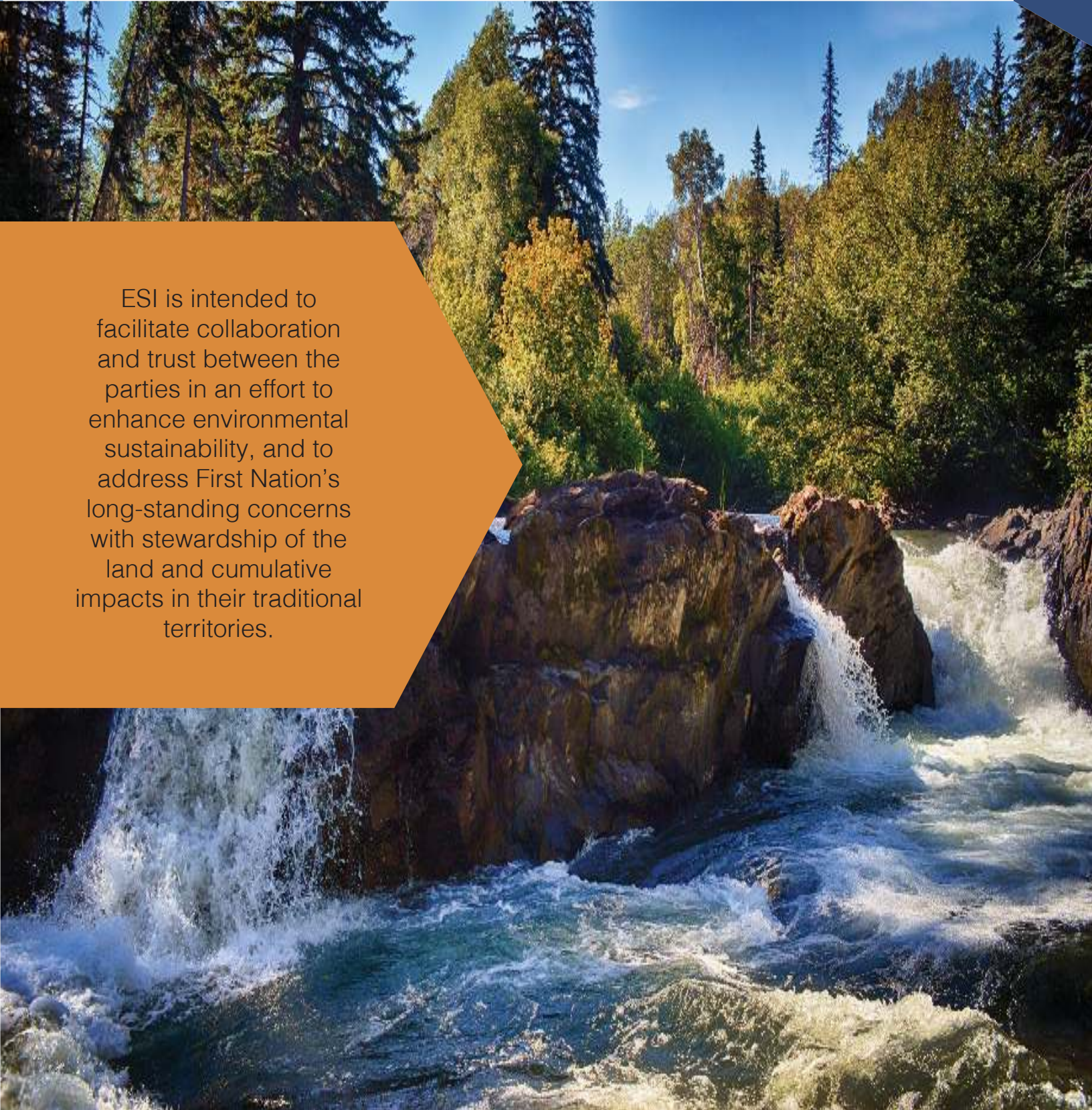
The ESI supports the collaborative development of information on environmental and indigenous values and recommended land use options and other strategic management options. Consensus between First Nations and the Province on project outputs and recommended new directions, together with ongoing collaborative monitoring and new analyses that target different values or issues, could provide new information foundations and frameworks for collaborative management and strategic planning. ESI project outputs could also assist the Province and First Nations in modernizing



land use plans in various ways depending on the land use history between the Province and First Nations in a given region.

ESI project outcomes will have implications for resource management in each of the project regions. The collaborative process of ESI allows for considerable flexibility for the First Nations and the Province to work together on environmental stewardship. To date, both the Province and First Nations agree that there has been considerable success regarding what ESI has achieved since its inception.

Activities that comply with collaboratively built environmental and resource management practices, and that fit within broader strategic plans designed by both First Nations and provincial agencies, are more likely to achieve the consent required by the UNDRIP and TRC commitments of the Provincial Government. First Nations have noted that ESI represents a significant shift in the way the Province works with First Nations and is directly contributing to improved working relationships.



ESI is intended to facilitate collaboration and trust between the parties in an effort to enhance environmental sustainability, and to address First Nation's long-standing concerns with stewardship of the land and cumulative impacts in their traditional territories.

How was ESI Established?

Originally announced as the “LNG ESI” in May 2014 at the International LNG in B.C. Conference, ESI was a response to First Nations seeking a government commitment to more collaborative forms of environmental management.¹ As such, the ESI was created to address concerns that broader environmental issues were not being addressed in LNG regulatory processes and government-to-government pipeline benefit negotiations. Since its establishment, ESI has expanded to be inclusive of environmental issues more broadly and not just those limited to LNG and is now simply referred to as “ESI”.

ESI is one of the first collaboratively developed initiatives between First Nations and the Province and is unprecedented in terms of its scale. First Nations and the Province agreed to develop the ESI through a series of demonstration projects in four regions across the north (North Coast, Skeena, Omineca, and North East). The Projects are founded on enabling agreements signed by participating First Nations and the Provincial Ministers responsible for ESI. Projects are underway and already delivering results.

The announced \$30 million was originally allocated to be spent over three years (2015-2018) to support environmental stewardship projects co-designed with First Nation communities. However, in April 2018, the participating First Nations leadership and Provincial Ministers endorsed an extension to March 2021.

The following principles guide the collaborative development of the ESI:

- 1. Collaboration** – Must be the foundation of both the process and the structure.
- 2. Trust and Accountability** – The cornerstones of good governance and relationship building.
- 3. Respect and Reconciliation** – Respect for differing worldviews and knowledge systems, with the goal of reconciling all participants’ interests.
- 4. Quality and Excellence** – High quality environmental stewardship research, processes and outcomes that are evidence-based.
- 5. Effectiveness and Efficiency** – Solutions that are complementary (not duplicative) to existing legislation, regulation, and policy.



Who is Involved?

First Nations

Indigenous Nations in BC have repeatedly called for the recognition of their Aboriginal Title and Rights and pushed to achieve honourable reconciliation with Crown governments. As stewards of the land, Indigenous Nations have continuously asserted their right to free, prior, and informed consent on any proposed activity which may have an impact on their traditional territory and to be decision-makers on their lands.

The ESI offers the opportunity for Indigenous Nations to participate on an equal footing with the Province to work towards the shared goals of collaborative land and resource management. 30 of the 35 Nations that were affected by potential LNG development in the North are participating in ESI. In the establishment of project team, each region is unique and the Province was adaptive and supportive in this, allowing each region to express itself in a manner that works for them.

North Coast

1. Gitxaala First Nation
2. Gitga'at First Nation
3. Kitselas First Nation
4. Kitsumkalum Indian Band
5. Metlakatla First Nation
6. Haisla First Nation

Omineca

7. Nadleh Whut'en
8. Nak'azdli
9. Saik'uz First Nation
10. Stellat'en First Nation
11. Takla Lake First Nation
12. Tl'azt'en Nation
13. Ts'il Kaz Koh First Nation (Burns Lake Indian Band)
14. Carrier Sekani Tribal Council

North East

15. Blueberry River First Nations
16. Doig River First Nation
17. Halfway River First Nation
18. Prophet River First Nation
19. West Moberly First Nations
20. Saulteau First Nations
21. McLeod Lake Indian Band

Skeena

22. Gitanyow Nation
23. Gitxsan Nation
24. Lake Babine Nation
25. Skin Tye Nation
26. Nee-Tahi-Buhn Band
27. Moricetown Band
28. Wet'suwet'en First Nation
29. Office of the Wet'suwet'en
(representing Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs)
30. Hagwilget

¹ <https://news.gov.bc.ca/stories/bc-to-engage-with-first-nations-industry-on-eco-stewardship>



Who is Involved? Cont'd

Provincial Government

The Province has committed to transform its relationship with Indigenous peoples by adopting and implementing the UNDRIP, the TRC, and relevant case law, including the Supreme Court of Canada decision in *Tsilhqot'in*. ESI is one of the Province's initiatives that underpin a strategic shift in the province's approach to resource stewardship that will support greater involvement of First Nations in decisions that affect them.

The ESI mandate was recently renewed, and enabling agreements are now in effect through March 2021. The continued implementation of projects and the development of joint management recommendations will be the focus of corporate work on ESI through the current phase of the project lifecycles. ESI is supported by a cross-government team that includes the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, the Ministry of Energy, Mines & Petroleum Resources, the Ministry of Forests, Lands & Natural Resources Operations, and the Oil and Gas Commission.

The Provincial government has deployed resources that contribute expertise across the spectrum of project needs, including administrative, financial and contract support, project management and coordination, technical scientific expertise, policy and program development, data management, governance, and strategic leadership. The staff across ministries are supported by a dedicated corporate management team within the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources that is responsible for the ongoing delivery of ESI.



Neutral Facilitators

Since the launch of ESI, the use of neutral, third-party facilitation has aided in developing relationships between the Province and First Nations at all levels. Relationships have changed since the work began as the utilization of neutral facilitators helped create the time and space required to explore different perspectives and formulate trust outside of an adversarial context such as referrals.

Independent facilitation that bridges the relationship between First Nations and the Province works to maintain a structure of equality. By virtue of this structure, the inherent power imbalances that underscore the relationships between government and Indigenous Nations has steadily been equalized. The role of the neutral facilitators in this work has been to maintain this balance, provide expert strategic advice in advancing the relationship, and help push the work forward over time.

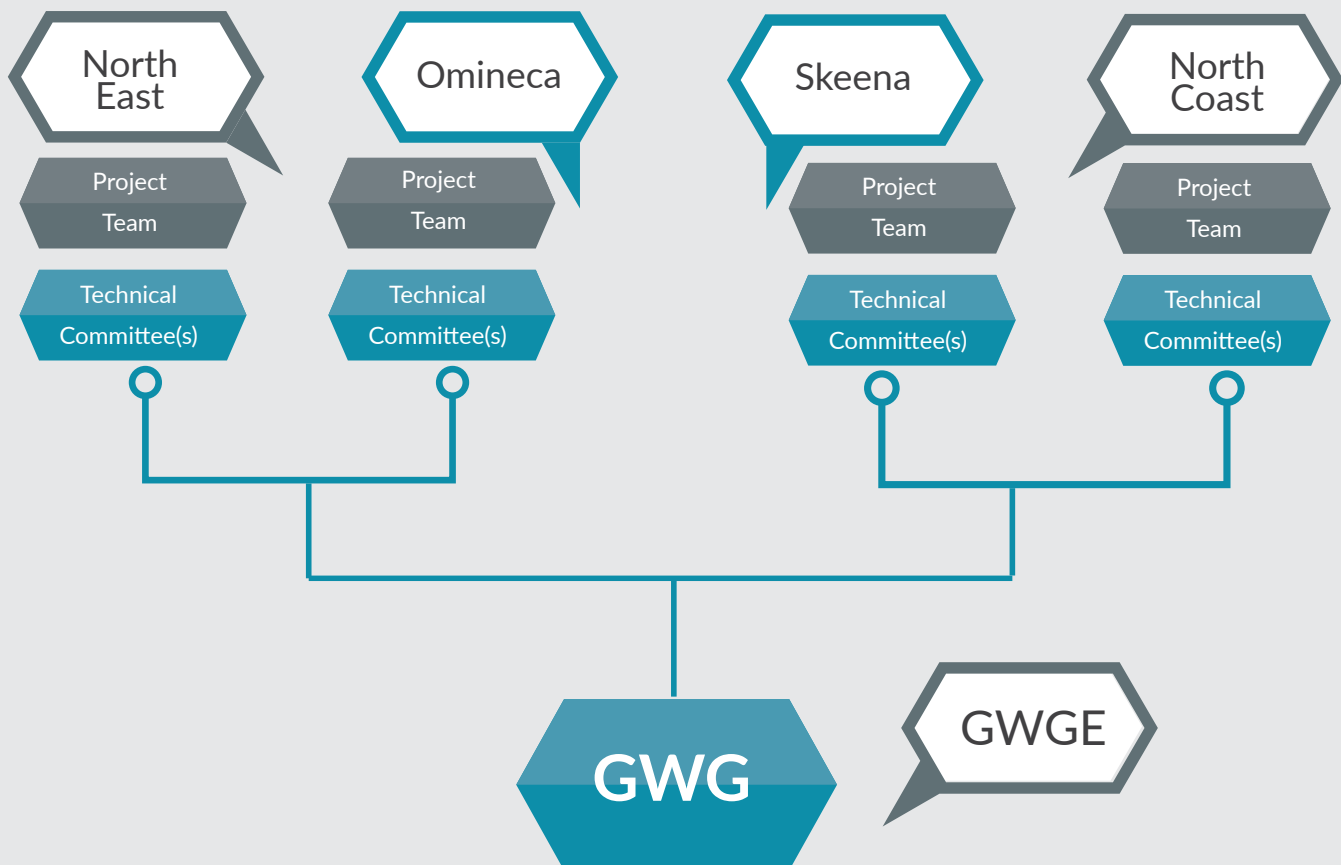
ESI has been served by the following facilitators:

- Dan George, Four Directions Management Services Ltd.
 - North Coast
 - Skeena
 - Governance Working Group (including the GWG Executive)
- Alex Grzybowski
 - North East
 - Omineca

How is it Organized?

ESI is organized in a regionally-based model and is steered by a Governance Working Group. Some key principles of this model include:

- ESI governance largely occurs at the regional level;
- RSFs set project priorities, endorse agreements, work plans and budgets;
- Decisions will be made by consensus.



Regional Stewardship Forums

North East

For the North East, a Regional Strategic Environmental Assessment (RSEA) in Treaty 8 involves seven Treaty 8 Nations, Provincial agencies and industry representatives focuses on old forest, moose, water, peaceful enjoyment, and traditional food gathering (environmental livelihoods); Dunne-za Kúúhdaze; caribou may also be incorporated in the near future. The Project Team is expected to deliver [statute, regulation, policy, and] management response recommendations that optimize the meaningful exercise of Treaty rights with the development interests of the Parties in 2019.

In September 2015, the Province signed an agreement with the Doig River, Halfway, Prophet River, Saulteau and West Moberly First Nations to pursue a Regional Strategic Environmental Assessment (RSEA). Blueberry River First Nation and the McLeod Lake Indian Band became signatories to the RSEA project in 2016. The RSEA will generate information which will be used to generate options to optimize the development interests (EG the Natural Gas Industry) of the parties, and to optimize the exercise of treaty rights by Treaty 8 First Nations members.

The project is being managed by a project team made up of representatives of the signatory First Nations, FLNRO, the Ministry of Energy, Mines, and Petroleum Resources (EMPR) and industry.

Omineca

The Province, the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, and Carrier Sekani First Nations have entered into an agreement pursuing a Cumulative Effects Assessment (CEA) demonstration project to assess the impacts of natural resource development activities values linked to asserted Carrier Sekani rights and title.

A project team has been established and is comprised of representative from the Carrier Sekani First Nations and FLNRO. The CEA in the Omineca Region involves seven Carrier Sekani Nations and Provincial agencies that is focused on biodiversity, moose, and freshwater and anadromous fish. The Project Team is preparing options for the establishment of biodiversity conservation and recovery areas for consideration in 2017, as well as implementing collaborative moose and fish research and data collection projects to better understand population, status and trends.



Skeena

The Skeena Sustainability Assessment Forum (SSAF) involves nine Skeena Nations and Provincial agencies focused on creating shared and trusted data through the collaborative design and implementation of environmental monitoring of selected values including medicinal plants, grizzly bear, fish and fish habitat, moose, and wetlands. The key elements of the SSAF include to incorporate Indigenous perspectives, knowledge and science; monitor the condition, status, and trends of shared resource values either directly or through indicators in a manner consistent with agreed upon protocols; analyze data to assess the current condition and historic trend of the resource values including the development of targets and thresholds; and where appropriate, develop management response recommendations.

In 2016, the Gitksan Nation, Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs, Office of the Wet'suwet'en, Wet'suwet'en First Nation and Lake Babine First Nation reached an agreement with the Provincial government to establish and endorse the Skeena Sustainability Assessment Forum and Indigenous Stewardship Projects Framework Agreement (SSAF). Since that time, Skin Tyee, Nee-Tahi-Buhn, Witset First Nation (formerly Moricetown Band), and Hagwilget Village also endorsed the Framework.

In alignment with the SSAF objectives, a number of Nation-specific Indigenous Stewardship Projects (ISPs) have also been undertaken with a focus on environmental assessment and monitoring projects that will further the objectives of the SSAF related to the five values. The ISPs are helping to build knowledge, expertise and capacity by the Indigenous governments and communities that can then be directly shared with and adopted by the other participating Nations in the SSAF. In the next year, the SSAF Project Team aims to produce a report that will present the current understanding, based on GIS analysis, of the condition of the values that can be used to help inform management decisions and to focus future SSAF monitoring and assessment efforts.

Other work undertaken collaboratively under the SSAF includes developing and implementing community engagement to ensure that community members and leadership are involved and informed and to capture valuable traditional knowledge and guidance from Indigenous knowledge holders to consider in the design of data collection and assessment. The SSAF also invests in a range of training opportunities to help support capacity development for Indigenous community members and technicians to safely and expertly carry out the monitoring work on the territories. The SSAF vision is that over time this expertise will be shared with other communities.



North Coast

The North Coast Region has developed two projects through the Regional Stewardship Forum (RSF). The projects support both on the ground ecosystem restoration and longer-term environmental monitoring and assessment within the traditional territories of participating North Coast Nations:

- North Coast Cumulative Effects Project with the Kitselas, Kitsumkalum, Gitga'at, Gitxaala, Metlakatla First Nations, and the Province; and,
- North Coast Ecosystem Restoration Project with the Kitselas Kitsumkalum, Gitga'at, Gitxaala, Haisla, Metlakatla First Nations and the Province.

The North Coast Cumulative Effects Project will be conducted in the traditional territories of participating First Nations - values identified to address in the short term include salmon, access to resources, and aquatic habitat – estuary. There are over 30 other regional values that First Nation have identified that need to be included in a North Coast Cumulative Effects Assessment. This project is also connecting to other Provincial initiatives and has potential for Federal government participation in the future.

The North Coast Ecosystem Restoration Project will identify and undertake restoration enhancement opportunities through Nation-specific Indigenous Stewardship projects within the traditional territories of the participating coastal First Nations. This allows the individual First Nations to work on priority issues within their respective territory and, at the same time, promotes collaborative information and data exchange and provides space for collaborative training and other discussions.

It should be mentioned that First Nations on the North Coast have been involved in various stewardship and strategic planning initiatives with different governments over the last two decades and are still involved in the implementation of some of these initiatives. Important data collection, frameworks for joint decision making, and co-governance models developed under ESI will influence other important projects that the First Nations are involved with, in addition to the direct benefits of the two projects.

GWG/GWGE

Broad policy and operational guidance for the ESI is supported by an ESI Governance Working Group (GWG), which includes membership from the participating First Nations and the Province. The GWG members from First Nations and the Province collaboratively make decisions regarding the allocation of available ESI funding to support demonstration projects. The GWG is an interim group that operates until a final governance structure has been collaboratively developed.

The GWG provides an advisory role during the development phase of the LNG ESI, and will consider the recommendations set out in this report as they relate to the principals in areas such as project funding criteria, financial models, principles and codes of conduct, and any other components necessary for full governance and accountability. This group also informs the development of a long-term governance model for ESI.

In January 2017, the GWG made the decision to establish the GWG Executive (GWGE) to further the collaborative work of First Nations and the Province. The role of the GWGE is to conduct the work on behalf the GWG as per their Terms of Reference.

New Agreements

In April 2018, the participating First Nations leadership and Provincial Ministers endorsed the extension to March 2021 of four agreements enabling the Environmental Stewardship Initiative (ESI) implementation in the North Coast, Skeena and the North East regions.

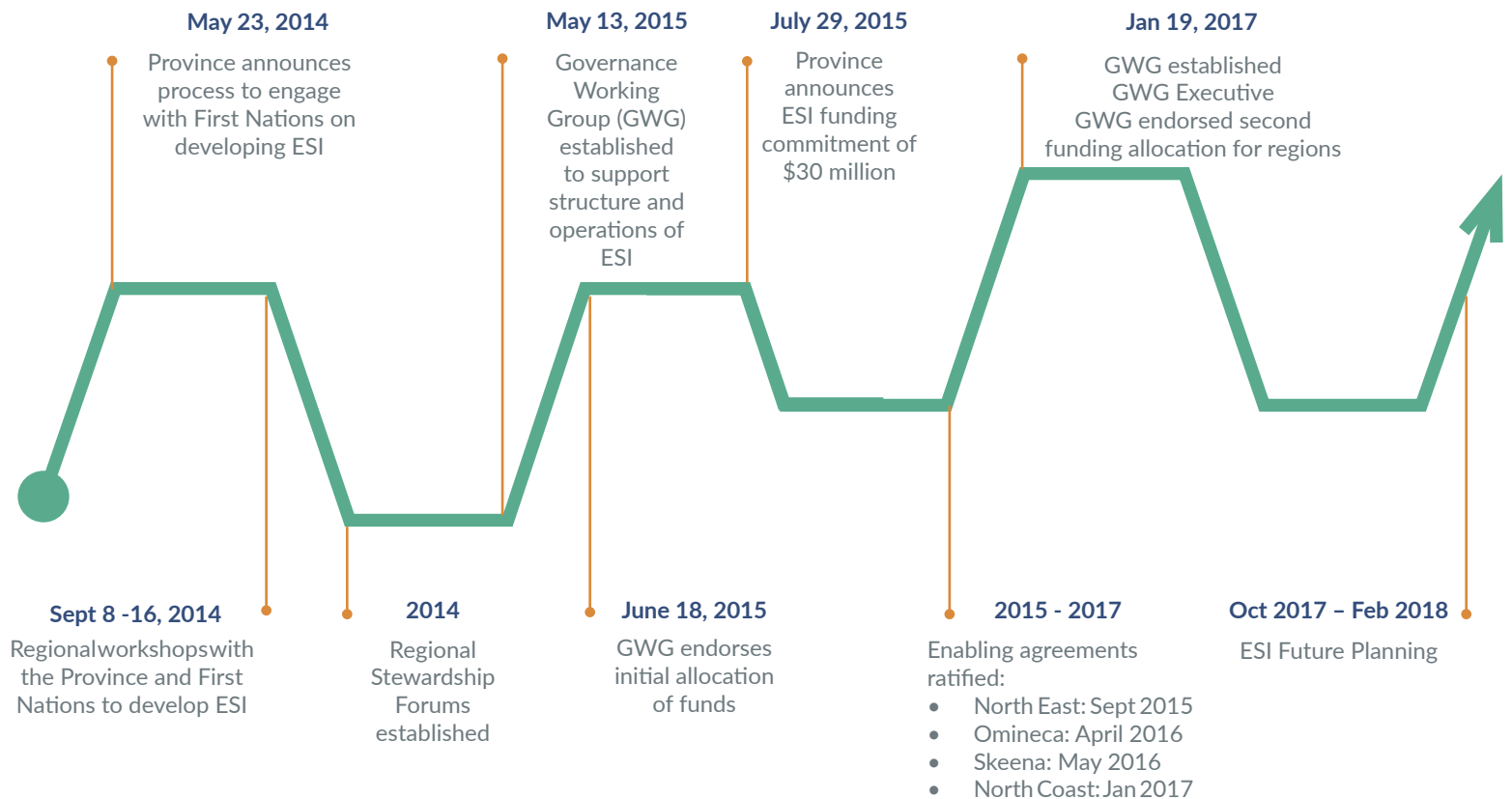
The enabling agreements are each unique and set out the purpose and objectives, the scope of the ESI projects and how the parties will work together in a shared decision-making model.


The completed agreements are:

- North East Regional Strategic Environmental Assessment Renewal Agreement;
- North Coast Cumulative Effects Project Modification Agreement;
- North Coast Ecosystem Restoration Project Agreement; and
- Skeena Sustainability Assessment Forum and Indigenous Stewardship Projects Framework.

The Carrier Sekani First Nations Omineca Agreement is expected to be completed and endorsed soon.

Timeline



A black bear is standing in a lush green field with yellow flowers. The bear is looking towards the camera. The background is a dense forest of green trees and bushes.

The enabling agreements are each unique and set out the purpose and objectives, the scope of the ESI projects and how the parties will work together in a shared decision-making model.

Observations & Recommendations

The themes outlined below were identified by reviewing historical ESI documents, assessing the feedback gained during engagement sessions with each of the regions, and through the feedback/suggestions made during one-on-one conversations. Please refer to “Appendix B: Process Map” for an account of the process and methodology that was undertaken to gather information and produce this report.

The following themes have been organized according to the principles which guide the collaborative development of the ESI:

- **Collaboration** – Must be the foundation of both the process and the structure.
- **Trust and Accountability** – The cornerstones of good governance and relationship building.
- **Respect and Reconciliation** – Respect for differing worldviews and knowledge systems, with the goal of reconciling all participants’ interests.
- **Quality and Excellence** – High quality environmental stewardship research, processes and outcomes that are evidence-based.
- **Effectiveness and Efficiency** – Solutions that are complementary (not duplicative) to existing legislation, regulation, and policy.

Collaboration

JOINT DECISION MAKING

One of ESI’s core principles is collaboration, which when applied, leads to joint decision making. It is suggested that there are four key themes to joint decision making based upon a collaborative relationship: respect, recognition, reconciliation, and relationship. Co-developed demonstration projects are examples of regional joint decision-making (e.g., project design, budgeting and execution on shared issues of concern).

Moving forward, ESI is cutting the path towards building a process for “collaborative consent”. Through ESI, the parties have learned how to do collaborative/consensus-based decision-making. This model and the shared principles can inform the way that the land is managed based on

agreement between the Province and First Nations which may include, but not limited to:

- Collaborative Environmental Management
- Collaborative Assessment of Values, Monitoring and Environmental Guardianship
- Collaborative Land Use Planning

RECOMMENDATION: Develop and implement processes to engage the GWG and Project Teams in discussions about what consent-based decision-making means in the context of stewardship. Shared- or Consent-based decision making is a goal state related to stewardship but something that needs to be defined to understand how ESI can support First Nations’ goals of jurisdiction.



CAPACITY BUILDING

ESI is unique in each region and each region undertakes project selection and management for ecosystem-level or larger projects, which cross First Nations' territorial boundaries. First Nations have a vision for the stewardship of lands and resources in their territories and ESI capacity opportunities can support their vision and structures. It is important to increase First Nations capacity to support this vision by providing more opportunities for their members' participation in ESI initiatives.

Longer-term funding will support capacity building as short-term funding cycles don't necessarily allow for capacity planning and implementation to occur. Capacity building should include involvement from community members as those members on the land have valuable information about the state of values which could feed into ESI.

RECOMMENDATION: Develop a Training and Development plan which can investigate the opportunities and formulate a strategy moving forward. Additionally, host an Annual Conference for the regions to gather and share best practices with one another, learn from Indigenous and Western science experts, and further develop relationships cross-regionally.

PARTNERSHIPS

At the inception of ESI, the original intent with the \$30M provincial investment was that the federal government and industry would also contribute seed money. In a desired further state for ESI, investment would be matched to enable a continuation and expansion of ESI. Currently, there is participation from the federal government and industry representatives at some of the project team tables. This desired future state may require increased inclusion of Federal government and industry representatives in ESI, if/when deemed appropriate by each of the regions.

There could be opportunities to improve existing relationships with industry, stakeholders, communities and NGO's including identifying shared interests, greater communication, education of Indigenous views, protocols and the importance of UNDRIP. This may result in new opportunities for communities outside ESI as it relates to skills, training, and economic development. Additionally, engagement that is outside of "consultation" allows for relationships to develop in meaningful ways.

RECOMMENDATION: GWGE should reach out to appropriate Federal and Industry representatives to inform them of the ESI and engage in dialogue of what their presence within the work could potentially look like moving forward.

Trust and Accountability

DATA MANAGEMENT

Regions have been focused on collecting data and conducting research for baseline data gathering, ecosystem monitoring, assessment, restoration and enhancement. Shared data and data management is one of the key foundations for creating trust between and amongst First Nations in a region and the Province, and the proper management of that is key to ensuring ESI's success.

Secured trusted data that is utilized to inform decision making by both parties is a shared priority. In developing a data management strategy, it is recommended to consider an approach that is results focused. Rather than focus on holding the data, it should be determined: what the data is needed for, who will be using it, and how best to present it. This will inform how the data collected should be stored, organized, governed, and utilized.

RECOMMENDATION: Develop a Data Management Strategy that takes into account the work currently being undertaken across all regions and the Province. To move this work forward, critical conversations are needed to further explore options for determining the most useful manner in which to store and organize data in a secure way that will also be congruent to systems currently being utilized by First Nations and government.

COMMUNICATIONS

It was strongly expressed that ESI needs to be communicating outward to share its success and inward to continuously engage its key stakeholders within the members of First Nations and the Provincial government. It's important to ensure that information on the ESI is communicated to RSFs, First Nations, industry organizations, and government partners including: information on ESI participation; updates on ESI progress and activities; and, results of ESI projects. ESI should consider increasing engagement, promotion, and involvement of communities, clans, and house groups (Tier 1 meetings), and the inclusion of other nations not currently engaged.

It was additionally suggested that ESI would benefit from having a physical presence in the communities (e.g., hub locations or offices). The suggested idea was to have an office in a location near the project teams where people can come and get information/support and interact with ESI via a direct link to staff in a day-to-day/face-to-face operational way.

RECOMMENDATION: ESI needs to develop Communications Strategy that outlines tools, tactics, key messages, and audiences. In support of the Communications Strategy, each RSF and appropriate Ministries could then develop their own Regional Communications & Engagement Plan in support of the strategy that identify specific actions at multiple communication levels with on ramps for community members and levels of government to engage with ESI.

Respect and Reconciliation

RECONCILIATION

ESI is not a program in the conventional sense – it is an example of a government to government relationship that is about reconciliation at its core. The future of ESI needs to be thought about as a government to government relationship and in being part of reconciliation in the larger provincial scope that includes both stewardship and economic development. Reconciliation will come from a regional level as that's where relationships, information, and tools are being developed. Its critical to ESI's success to continue to support the movement being made at the regional levels.

Successful reconciliation requires all parties to come together in good faith and pave a new path forward in collaboration. In order for ESI to be a successful forum for reconciliation, First Nations must also demonstrate their commitment to making ESI work in the long term through active participation, engagement, and support. Capacity issues are real and it is hard to build lasting relationships. As a forum for reconciliation, ESI is not just a funding opportunity. What makes ESI's process stand out is in the relationships it is building in which regular, consistent representation from both First Nations and the Province is key.

RECOMMENDATION: The Province should commit to funding and supporting ESI beyond the 5-year mark (2021) to ensure that the work being accomplished now continues into the future and the relations developed between the Province and First Nations continue to evolve.



RELATIONSHIP TO UNDRIP

While the Nations and the Province are committed to realizing the spirit and intent of UNDRIP and the TRC Calls to Action, the implementation of doing so is undefined and unclear. Presently, discussion on UNDRIP as an aspirational/visionary document is occurring within ESI. In support of this, decisions about all aspects of the ESI projects, including project scope, funding, and communications is made by consensus.

The goal is for the implementation of UNDRIP to be reflected in the policies and daily work of ESI. Implementing Article 32 of the UNDRIP is particularly relevant for the work being undertaken with ESI; this article states:

Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources.

States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources.

States shall provide effective mechanisms for just and fair redress for any such activities, and appropriate measures shall be taken to mitigate adverse environmental, economic, social, cultural or spiritual impact.



RECOMMENDATION: Building a common understanding is valuable. Education on UNDRIP is needed to lead to the creation of an action plan on suggested ways in which UNDRIP could be implemented through procedures, policies, and the management of ESI. It is suggested that ESI undergo a review of UNDRIP and TRC principles in order to identify the relevant articles, identify what ESI is doing well now, and to identify areas where ESI procedures and policies could be updated or modified to move further towards implementing the principles of UNDRIP. From a provincial perspective, it important to ensure that ESI is aligning with the government's broader commitments and mandates in relation to UNDRIP and TRC.

Quality and Excellence

ESI EXPANSION

The overall feedback regarding ESI has been that this “pilot project” is a success and one in which participating members would like to see take on permanent status and are generally supportive of the notion of expanding ESI’s current reach. Discussions regarding expansion included suggestions of potentially increasing the current ESI stewardship mandate, developing ESI across BC in other regions where it may work as an engagement model for other First Nations and the Province, and strengthening relationships amongst the four RSF’s.

Cementing ESI as a permanent feature of the provincial government was raised so as to ensure a long-term, permanent place within the framework of the province and move beyond being a program requiring renewal every new planning cycle. In regard to expanding the existing mandate, it was suggested to potentially include “Governance and Decision-Making” in addition to its current four key areas:

- Ecosystem monitoring and assessment;
- Ecosystem restoration and enhancement;
- Ecosystem research and knowledge exchange;
- Stewardship education and training

RECOMMENDATION: The GWGE should put forward a recommendation, with input from the broader GWG and Project Teams, regarding the exploration and potential options around extending the existing mandate to include “Governance and Decision-Making”. As well, identify evaluation measures/metrics to describe and articulate the success of ESI. Such indicators could be paired with anecdotal feedback and be used to support any resource expansion request to government.

CO-JURISDICTION AND CO-MANAGEMENT

The process of consultation, especially with respect to provincial referrals, has been a historically challenging process for all parties. The referrals process, as it currently stands, creates conflicts between First Nations, provincial staff and proponents, largely due to the current decision making process and the lack of clarity of First Nations roles and responsibilities. Improving this process will remain difficult, until both the province and First Nations achieve the certainty and recognition required of a process that meaningfully recognizes and respects Aboriginal title and rights.

Through ESI, there is an opportunity to build such an approach. One that is reflective of co-jurisdiction and co-management and developed collaboratively in consideration of both governments’ (BC & First Nations) roles and responsibilities, allowing each decision-maker to exercise their authority more effectively. ESI can elevate the consultative relationship by introducing a new structure that is co-developed and that has been co-conceptualized. Ultimately, the establishment and implementation of consent-based decision-making policies and collaborative land-use planning, if done correctly, could produce a more timely and efficient referral process, one that satisfies all parties requirements for consultation and accommodation.

RECOMMENDATION: Collaboratively develop processes for shared decision-making policies and land-use planning that are based on co-jurisdiction and co-management and which are equally informed by principles of Indigenous Law and Provincial Law.

Effectiveness and Efficiency

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

ESI is currently organized with 4 regions, a Governance Working Group (GWG) and the Governance Working Group Executive (GWGE). Each of these tables are structured and supported by neutral third-party facilitation which enables both First Nations and the Province to participate as collaborators with neither leading the meetings or steering the group's direction which is jointly set. Moving forward, ESI is a collaborative process that can be co-developed into a co-management process which could involve developing an independent entity (e.g., a Trust), with dedicated staff (both First Nations and Provincial) to oversee the management of ESI.

It was suggested to investigate the pros and cons of creating a formal ESI governing structure that would include an administrative body to handle the management and distribution of ESI funds over the long-term. Such an investigation will need to consider establishing processes and procedures that will ensure consistency across regions; developing broad principles on ESI project eligibility; and ensuring lines of communication amongst RSF, First Nations, and the Province are in place. Specifically, it is important to identify: (1) a process for establishing governance structure; (2) policy guidance and project management; and (3) the distinctions within the governing structure for regional projects as its important to be clear on which group is accountable for what.

RECOMMENDATION: GWGE to develop an options paper and analysis that offers a clear and specific recommended process to develop a governance structure for review and discussion by the GWG and project teams. The GWGE should consider guiding principles and policies to support all of the project teams and investigate options for high-level guidance and administration while acknowledging that the ownership of the ESI projects needs to be held at the region level.





FINANCIAL SPEND PATTERN

\$30 million was originally allocated for ESI. These funds have been distributed “relatively equally” amongst the ESI demonstration projects with each region being allocated approximately \$7 million and with \$2 million being used for governance related expenditures. Based on this distribution and the projected spend rate, money will run out for ESI in years 5 or 6. As such it is recommended that permanent, long-term funding be established to support ESI moving beyond 2020/21.

RECOMMENDATION: GWG make recommendations on a permanent governance structure (as suggested above) including a funding model for ESI. Recommendations should take into account that regions want to be in control of their own funds (not having it be controlled by the GWG or influenced by other regions) and that funding should be long-term (possibly permanent).

OPPORTUNITIES TO LEVERAGE

There are opportunities to connect ESI with other initiatives taking place within Indigenous nations, provincially, federally, and with industry. One such opportunity includes exploring the relationship between ESI and the proposed “Collaborative Stewardship Framework”. There are other examples of projects undertaken by ESI that have spanned First Nation, federal, and provincial jurisdiction and where funding arrangements, objectives, goals, and results have been worked out by multiple parties to the project.

RECOMMENDATION: Next steps in this work would be to further investigate ways to integrate this work to other provincial initiatives (e.g., wildlife, conservation, environmental assessments, etc.). As well, it was recognized that the province could be coordinating their efforts better internally with the different ministries and departments involved, in addition to opportunities to link with the Federal government on key initiatives.

Key Learnings

Right out of the gates, the ESI development team was endeavoring to do something different, something that would begin to address First Nation concerns regarding cumulative impacts that were occurring on the land base from past, current and proposed major resource projects. First Nations consistently raised the matter of cumulative effects at government-to-government tables, as well as through the regulatory process. Issues of mistrust were prevalent, complicating, and confusing relationships between Provincial officials and First Nations leadership and their technicians. Mistrust also inhibited creative solutions on the land base between the parties that would serve to advance shared goals and aspirations. Change was needed.

Key features of ESI that need to be maintained and enhanced include:

- **Collaborative Foundation**
 - ESI was jointly developed with First Nations in regard to project selection and management. This collaborative foundation has also enabled First Nation hereditary and elected leadership to work together. ESI has also created linkages with industry officials and the Federal Crown.
- **Transparency**
 - Shared decision-making and shared accountability as ESI works towards the development of trusted data.
- **Regional**
 - Regional project selection and management
 - Ecosystem-level or larger projects
 - Spans First Nation territorial boundaries
- **Interest based**
 - Focus on developing shared environmental interests
- **Trust**
 - In the past when trust was low, people automatically attributed bad motives. Now that trust is present and growing, parties are reluctant to believe that bad motives are at play. Mutual disclosure has built trust.
- **Active Listening**
 - Through active listening, the parties have discovered one another's perspectives and concerns about cumulative effects on the land base that has set the stage for constructive resolution of disagreements and co-development of projects.
- **Honesty**
 - The parties have set aside assumptions about one another, being open and transparent about intent, goals, and concerns.



This new model of collaboration has some additional features including:

- Independent facilitation that has created a stable venue for environmental collaboration that is collegial and not adversarial;
- Building relationships at the staff level creates an environment that supports issue resolution and the transformation of conflict into a unifying force;
- Regional approach to working with aggregates of First Nations is more efficient for First Nations and the Province; and,
- Co-developed demonstration projects are examples of regional shared decision-making (project design, budgeting and execution on shared issues of concern).

The key to change that has been kept at the forefront of the work was that successful change does not come from speed or fear. It comes from helping Provincial and First Nation officials understand that change would make their lives and their work experience better, not worse. It comes from building optimism and belief in the change process. In short, it comes from building competence alongside of mutually beneficial relationships.

ESI is a tremendous opportunity to foster understanding and build trust on the land base. ESI is uniquely positioned to advance aspirations that the Province has communicated relating to the expression and advancement of UNDRIP, the TRC's Call to Action, and the spirit and intent of the Tsilhqot'in Supreme Court of Canada Decision.

Summary of Recommendations

- 1. Joint Decision-Making:** Develop and implement processes to engage the GWG and Project Teams in discussions about what consent-based decision-making means in the context of stewardship. Shared- or Consent-based decision making is a goal state related to stewardship but something that needs to be defined to understand how ESI can support First Nations' goals of jurisdiction.
- 2. Capacity Building:** Develop a Training and Development plan which can investigate the opportunities and formulate a strategy moving forward. Additionally, host an Annual Conference for the regions to gather and share best practices with one another, learn from Indigenous and Western science experts, and further develop relationships cross-regionally.
- 3. Partnerships:** GWGE should reach out to appropriate Federal and Industry representatives to inform them of the ESI and engage in dialogue of what their presence within the work could potentially look like moving forward.
- 4. Data Management:** Develop a Data Management Strategy that takes into account the work currently being undertaken across all regions and the Province. To move this work forward, critical conversations are needed to further explore options for determining the most useful manner in which to store and organize data in a secure way that will also be congruent to systems currently being utilized by First Nations and government.
- 5. Communications:** ESI needs to develop Communications Strategy that outlines tools, tactics, key messages, and audiences. In support of the Communications Strategy, each RSF and appropriate Ministries could then develop their own Regional Communications & Engagement Plan in support of the strategy that identify specific actions at multiple communication levels with on ramps for community members and levels of government to engage with ESI.
- 6. Reconciliation:** The Province should commit to funding and supporting ESI beyond the 5-year mark (2021) to ensure that the work being accomplished now continues into the future and the relations developed between the Province and First Nations continue to evolve.
- 7. Relationship to UNDRIP:** Building a common understanding is valuable. Education on UNDRIP is needed to lead to the creation of an action plan on suggested ways in which UNDRIP could be implemented through procedures, policies, and the management of ESI. It is suggested that ESI undergo a review of UNDRIP and TRC principles in order to identify the relevant articles, identify what ESI is doing well now, and to identify areas where ESI procedures and policies could be updated or modified to move further towards implementing the principles of UNDRIP. From a provincial perspective, it important to ensure that ESI is aligning with the government's broader commitments and mandates in relation to UNDRIP and TRC.



8. ESI Expansion: The GWGE should put forward a recommendation, with input from the broader GWG and Project Teams, regarding the exploration and potential options around extending the existing mandate to include “Governance and Decision-Making”. As well, identify evaluation measures/metrics to describe and articulate the success of ESI. Such indicators could be paired with anecdotal feedback and be used to support any resource expansion request to government.

9. Co-Jurisdiction & Co-Management: Collaboratively develop processes for shared decision-making policies and land-use planning that are based on co-jurisdiction and co-management and which are equally informed by principles of Indigenous Law and Provincial Law.

10. Project Management: GWGE to develop an options paper and analysis that offers a clear and specific recommended process to develop a governance structure for review and discussion by the GWG and project teams. The

GWGE should consider guiding principles and policies to support all of the project teams and investigate options for high-level guidance and administration while acknowledging that the ownership of the ESI projects needs to be held at the region level.

11. Financial Spend Pattern: GWG make recommendations on a permanent governance structure (as suggested above) including a funding model for ESI. Recommendations should take into account that regions want to be in control of their own funds (not having it be controlled by the GWG or influenced by other regions) and that funding should be long-term (possibly permanent).

12. Opportunities to Leverage: Next steps in this work would be to further investigate ways to integrate this work to other provincial initiatives (e.g., wildlife, conservation, environmental assessments, etc.). As well, it was recognized that the province could be coordinating their efforts better internally with the different ministries and departments involved, in addition to opportunities to link with the Federal government on key initiatives.

Moving Forward

The ESI is a true collaboration between the Province and First Nations in the northern areas of the Province. It has focused on generating trusted data through collaborative design of cumulative effects assessment and monitoring of key values. The methods being developed and the resulting information incorporates western science, Indigenous perspectives, and traditional knowledge.

Under ESI, every decision made around project design, governance, budget, results, and management recommendations is made jointly by a Project Team consisting of the participating First Nations and the Province. ESI provides capacity and support for Indigenous communities to be involved as partners in the stewardship of their territories.

To further the development of ESI and support the Initiative's future potential, the following next steps are presented for further consideration by participating First Nations and provincial agencies:

- that the Province continue to fund and support the four current ESI Projects and that the four regions have the opportunity to come together annually to share best practices with one another, learn from Indigenous and Western science experts, and further develop relationships cross-regionally.
- that the Province investigate options to extend the funding commitment for ESI (for instance, through complimentary project-specific funding support) and that the First Nations and the Province investigate other additional sources of funding to support ESI which will be inclusive, as well as, investigating options where the Province and participating Nations seek matching Federal and Industry funding commitments;
- that the GWG Executive facilitate, with input from the broader GWG, the development of recommendations for ESI governance structures for First Nation and Provincial leadership to review;
- that the GWG Executive consult with the regional demonstration project teams on a longer term, strategic and forward-looking ESI work plan to inform GWG governance recommendations; and,
- that the First Nation and provincial representatives investigate ESI's mandate being expanded to include a broader scope of stewardship activities and include other relevant Ministries that can advance the enhanced vision and mandate of ESI.

ESI holds great promise for the Province and First Nations. It is a vehicle for change that aligns with UNDRIP's call for Free, Prior and Informed Consent as it relates to land based decision-making. Together, the parties have found ways and means to leverage opportunities and dampen challenges. At the core of ESI has been the cultivation and maintenance of relationships understanding that meaningful relationships matter in building sustainability on the land.



Appendix A

REGIONAL STEWARDSHIP FORUM & GWG CURRENT STATUS SUMMARY TABLE

Project Teams	Participants	Key Activities
North Coast	<p>First Nations:</p> <p>Participants in the Cumulative Effects Project Agreement are Gitxaala First Nation, Gitga'at First Nation, Kitselas First Nation, Kitsumkalum Indian Band, and Metlakatla First Nation.</p> <p>Participants in the Ecosystem Restoration Project are Gitxaala First Nation, Gitga'at First Nation, Kitselas First Nation, Kitsumkalum Indian Band, Haisla First Nation, Metlakatla First Nation, and the Province.</p> <p>Provincial Contacts:</p> <p>Sarah Duggan, EMPR Sarah.Duggan@gov.bc.ca</p> <p>Emmy Humber, EMPR Emmy.Humber@gov.bc.ca</p> <p>Facilitator:</p> <p>Dan George, FDMS</p>	<p>North Coast Cumulative Effects Project and the North Coast Ecosystem Restoration Project - ESI North Coast Regional Stewardship Forum (RSF) has developed two projects that support both on the ground ecosystem restoration projects and longer-term environmental monitoring and assessment within traditional territories of participating North Coast Nations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field work on the aquatic habitat - estuary value was initiated in the Summer of 2017 and planning is underway for Summer 2018. The CE Project Team has started work on the First Nations Access to Resources value and is working towards a draft conceptual model and indicator selection. Work on the salmon value has also been started and a broad objective has been endorsed. RSF long-term 5-year planning discussions occurred in January 2018. The Ecosystem Restoration projects may undertake activities such as watershed assessments and prescriptions, fish habitat restoration projects, and collecting baseline cultural and environmental data in the traditional territories of the participating First Nations.

Project Teams	Participants	Key Activities
<p>North East</p>	<p>First Nations:</p> <p>Blueberry River First Nations, Doig River First Nation, Halfway River First Nation, Prophet River First Nation, West Moberly First Nations, Saulteau First Nations, and McLeod Lake Indian Band and 5 natural gas / pipeline proponents. Fort Nelson First Nation has participated as an observer, but recently indicated the Nation is not interested in formally joining the project.</p> <p>Provincial Contacts:</p> <p>Gary Reay, FLNRO Reay.Gary@gov.bc.ca</p> <p>Chris Pazstor, EMPR Pazstor.Chris@gov.bc.ca</p> <p>Facilitator:</p> <p>Alex Grzybowski</p>	<p>Regional Strategic Environmental Assessment (RSEA) - A collaborative cumulative effects assessment to valued components associated with the practice of Treaty 8 rights from natural resource development and developing joint management recommendations that optimize the practice of Treaty 8 rights with the development interests of the Parties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values and associated indicators under development through Provincial – First Nations working groups include: old forest /forest biodiversity, water, moose, peaceful enjoyment and environmental livelihoods. • There is a short-term process for Interim Measures for those First Nations that have expressed that they have no other agreements or resources to collaborate with BC Government to address immediate concerns. • There is a mid-term RSEA methods pilot to learn how to undertake scenario analysis work for the project. Pilot area is proposed to include the Fort St John Timber Supply Area and focus on the forest biodiversity and cultural values and development interests related to natural gas and forestry. • Preliminary assessment of the condition of old forest within the study area has been completed and presented at the RSEA table. • Revised Recreational Opportunities Spectrum (ROS) map has been completed that incorporates old seismic and other development footprints as a coarse indicator for the RSEA's valued component "peaceful enjoyment". • A data management plan has been finalized. A disturbance protocol is under development for sharing and housing the common information base to support assessments of all value components and to finally develop management recommendations. • Work is underway to provide templates and assist the Nations to complete reporting requirements under the existing agreements. • Supreme Court of B.C. has recently rule in favour of Treaty 8 First Nations' interpretation of the western extent of Treaty 8's boundary. This will not impact the RSEA project as the study area boundary already extends into portions of the new boundary area.

Project Teams	Participants	Key Activities
<p>Omineca</p>	<p>First Nations:</p> <p>Carrier Sekani First Nations (CSFN) (Nadleh Whut'en, Nak'azdli, Saik'uz First Nation, Stelat'en First Nation, Takla Lake First Nation, Tl'azt'en Nation, Ts'il Kaz Koh First Nation (Burns Lake Indian Band)) and the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council. Yekooche has not yet formally joined the project.</p> <p>Provincial Contacts:</p> <p>Justin Calof, FLNRORD Justin.Calof@gov.bc.ca</p> <p>Leanne Elliott, FLNRORD Leanne.Elliott@gov.bc.ca</p> <p>Facilitator:</p> <p>Alex Grzybowski</p>	<p>Omineca ESI Demonstration Project - developing a cumulative effects assessment, management and monitoring framework with a focus on of moose, freshwater & anadromous fishes, & forest biodiversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Agreement is integral to the ongoing negotiations with the CSFNs Assessments of the VEC have been developed with the inclusion of community and traditional information related to Carrier Sekani Aboriginal title and rights. Assessment results were completed for Moose and Forest Biodiversity and have been used to inform further data requirements and analysis towards management responses. Options are being developed that include: old forest, riparian (spatial), young natural seral (spatial), moose UWR, moose specified area (aspatial prescriptions), and enhanced riparian management (aspatial, small stream focus in high value/high impact watersheds) Options and analysis of their implications will be submitted to a negotiations table for next steps Two sets of community engagement have taken place since September to introduce 4-5 members from each CSFN to ESI, provide preliminary feedback and allow the Project Team to circle back on what was done with the input (i.e. digitized input, adding new options considerations), as well as the currently planned negotiations and detailed spatialization processes. It is anticipated another set of engagement will take place before end of fiscal. An extra moose survey was prioritized for the Central Omineca/Takla area and CSFN participated in the population surveys that combined covered over 80% of the study area. A Fish Action Plan has been completed and identifies CSFN and BC priorities for research and management of Omineca freshwater and anadromous fish populations. CSTC and BC engaged a contractor to complete a Hydroacoustic and Trawl Survey on Stuart and Trembleur Lakes this fall; CSTC was involved in the project. Industry engagement has begun with subset of licensees to outline ESI status and anticipated process. Two field projects were started this summer to fill data gaps related to moose nutrition concerns. Field projects will be led by Carrier Sekani First Nations with the support of third-party contractors. Ongoing work to complete moose population assessment model (incorporating SRB data) and moose habitat effectiveness model. A project is initiating to develop templates to facilitate the integration of ESI results with the provincial CEF. A project to collaboratively develop an ArcOnline platform for sharing ESI information between BC and CSFN is in development.

Project Teams	Participants	Key Activities
<p>Skeena</p>	<p>First Nations:</p> <p>Gitanyow Nation, Gitksan Nation, Lake Babine Nation, Skin Tye Nation, Nee-Tahi-Buhn Band, Moricetown Band, Wet'suwet'en First Nation, and the Office of the Wet'suwet'en (representing Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs) and Hagwilget.</p> <p>Provincial Contacts:</p> <p>Lisa Helmer, FLNRORD Lisa.Helmer@gov.bc.ca</p> <p>Shawn Reed, FLNRORD Shawn.Reed@gov.bc.ca</p> <p>Alanya Smith, MIRR Alanya.Smith@gov.bc.ca</p> <p>Facilitator:</p> <p>Dan George, FDMS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skeena Sustainability Assessment Forum (SSAF) and Indigenous Stewardship Projects (ISP) - focused on creating shared and trusted data through the collaborative design and implementation of environmental monitoring of selected values including medicinal plants, grizzly bear, fish and fish habitat, moose, and wetlands. • 6 of the participating Nations are also engaging in their own Indigenous Stewardship Project (ISP) focused on the environmental value(s) selected by that Nation to inform the broader SSAF. • Participating Nations are sending members to training funded by the SSAF in order to provide them with the skills to conduct monitoring and fieldwork safely. • The Project team held a series of Community Engagement Sessions in 5 communities: Lake Babine Nation (July 4), Gitksan Nation (July 11), Skin Tye & Nee-Tahi-Buhn (July 12), OW/ Moricetown (July 13) and Wet'suweten First Nation (July 14). The purpose of the sessions was to engage community members about local / traditional knowledge related to the SSAF values and to ensure the SSAF is reflective of the interests, needs, values and opinions of community members from each of the participating Bands/Nations. • A conference for all the Skeena Nations took place August 30 in Smithers. • Long term 5-year planning discussion began on Oct. 31st and Nov 21st to plan future ESI work, and to weigh possible options around management and implementation of ESI results. Discussion also focussed on linkages to shared decision making, collaborative land use planning, and alignment with UNDRIP. • Nations held a Tier one meeting (Nations only) on December 12. • Expert workshops were held Nov. 28 – Dec. 7 to identify the indicators and protocols for the 5 values selected for the SSAF (Moose, Wetlands, Medicinal Plans, Grizzly Bear and Fish/Fish Habitat). The completion of the expert workshops represents the achievement of a significant milestone within Phase 2 (Protocol Development Phase) of the Skeena ESI work plan.

Project Teams	Participants	Key Activities
<p>Governance Working Group</p>	<p>First Nations Members:</p> <p>Bruce Watkinson - Gitxaala First Nation for the North Coast Region Chris Apps - Kitselas First Nation for the North Coast Region David de Wit - Office of the Wet'suwet'en First Nation for the Skeena Regions Chief Glen Williams - Gitanyow First Nation for the Skeena Region Chief Jackie Thomas - Saikuz First Nation for the Omineca Region Norma Pyle - Blueberry First Nation for the North East Region Rosemarie Sam - Nakazadli First Nation for the Omineca Region Jim Webb - West Moberly for the North East Region</p> <p>Provincial Contacts:</p> <p>Emmy Humber, EMPR Emmy.Humber@gov.bc.ca</p> <p>Rachel Shaw, MIRR Rachel.Shaw@gov.bc.ca</p> <p>Facilitator:</p> <p>Dan George, FDMS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of the Governance Working Group (GWG) is to advise on cross-cutting issues for ESI including a governance, structure and funding. A GWG meeting took place January 19th in Prince George; one outcome of the meeting was endorsement on the second budget allocation for each of the regions: North Coast 2 million, Omineca 2 million, Skeena: 2.9 million, Northeast: 5.3 million • A GWG Executive Committee has been formed so that a smaller group can move items forward and bring drafts and recommendations back to the broader GWG. • Each Regional project team identified up to two First Nations reps to participate in the GWG Executive. In addition to planning for the remaining ESI funds, the group will focus on development of a long-term ESI strategy. • The GWG Executive met for the first time on July 19 to discuss the terms of reference for the group and start to work plan necessary steps to draft a long-term ESI strategy. • The GWG Executive developed a joint discussion paper regarding the current state of ESI demonstration projects and emerging ideas about the future of the ESI. This note has been reviewed by ESI Project teams and a final is expected in October. • Next steps will be to support facilitated discussions in each region to develop 5-year plans and collect feedback on ESI governance topics in October to December. The GWG Executive will then review each of the 5 year plans and roll up the governance feedback into a report with recommendations to discuss at the GWG in February. • A new ESI Newsletter will be prepared for spring 2018. • All regional project teams are working to draft and endorse renewals of their enabling agreements to extend ESI for 3 years to March 2021.

Appendix B

ESI Governance Process Map

