

PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

ORDER OF THE MINISTER OF WATER, LAND AND RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP

Land Act

I, Matthew LeRoy, Executive Director, Land Use Planning and Cumulative Effects, Coast Area, as delegate of the Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship, order that the attached Land Act s. 93.4 Order in the Gwa'ni area is made.

January 6, 2026

Date



*Minister of Water, Land and Resource
Stewardship
(or authorized signatory)*

Matt LeRoy, Executive Director, Coast Area

Printed Name and Title (if authorized signatory)

(This part is for administrative purposes only and is not part of the Order.)

Authority under which Order is made:

Act and section: Land Act section 93.4

Other: Land Use Objective Regulation

Preamble

The preamble provides background and context but does not form part of the legal order.

The Gwa'ni Land Use Objectives Order establishes legal objectives for land use intensity to support a modernized approach to integrated resource management in the Nimpkish Valley. This order's land use objectives were developed collaboratively with 'Namgis First Nation and seek to balance environmental, social, and economic values while providing greater operational clarity in the order area.

This order—and its supporting guidance—replace the *Vancouver Island Land Use Plan Higher Level Plan Order* (VILUP HLPO) and Vancouver Island Summary Land Use Plan within the order area. It sets land use objectives for the purposes of the *Forest and Range Practices Act*, including zonation, while deferring to Forest Landscape Plans and Forest Stewardship Plans for outcomes, guidelines, and strategies to meet the objectives contained herein. Integrated levels of planning support the application of adaptive management, providing the temporal and operational flexibility required to respond to changing conditions and climates. In conjunction with this order, applicable portions of the VILUP HLPO Resource Management Zones and Special Management Zones are repealed.

A community-based, strategic-level land use planning process, the Gwa'ni Project, led by the 'Namgis First Nation and the Province of British Columbia (the "Parties") was initiated after signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in January, 2021. The MOU Parties made a commitment to cooperatively modernize land use planning and develop management options that would be guided by the principles of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. In 2021, work began to determine needs, assess conditions, identify values, and develop planning objectives and recommendations for implementation. Through a collaborative government-to-government planning process, the Province sought to advance actions described in the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* Action Plan.

In the spirit of *maya'xə la¹*, working collaboratively with First Nations is necessary in achieving the benefits and outcomes this order aims to enable. Respect for Indigenous peoples' intrinsic connections to, and reliance on the land underpins the Gwa'ni Project's approach to connected planning and integrated resource management.

This order is established by the Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship under section 93.4 of the *Land Act* and does not change or affect the positions that First Nations or the Province have regarding their respective jurisdictions, responsibilities and/or decision-making authorities.

The *malik* and *dza'wan* Special Management Zones (SMZ) share a common legal target to be averaged across their combined areas, however they reflect unique biophysical attributes and may require distinct objectives in the future. Hence, they are represented as separate SMZs in this order, which will support future needs and respective strategies in subordinate plans. The SMZ objectives seek to restore the proportion of late seral forests adjacent to the Nimpkish Valley's primary salmon-bearing waterways.

Compliance to and effectiveness of objectives shall be monitored and, if monitoring indicates that environmental, cultural or socio-economic needs are not being met, this order may be reviewed and amended. It is expected that Forest Landscape Plan reporting and monitoring, as well as Indigenous-led watershed and stewardship monitoring will support the assessment of land use objectives contained herein.

¹maya'xə la is a Kwakwaka'wakw word for respect of people, property, and self

Gwa'ni Land Use Objectives Order

Part 1 – Interpretation

1. Relationship with Forest and Range Practices Act

- (1) Pursuant to section 93.4 of the *Land Act*, the objectives set out in this Order are established as land use objectives for the purposes of the *Forest and Range Practices Act*, and apply to the area shown on the map attached as Map 1.
- (2) This Order establishes land use objectives in accordance with section 93.4 of the *Land Act*, and does not define, amend, recognize, affirm, deny or limit the Aboriginal rights, Aboriginal title, or treaty rights of affected First Nations and does not relieve the Province of any obligation or duty to consult and accommodate affected First Nations.

2. Geographic Area

- (1) Subject to section 3(3) of this Order, the objectives contained herein apply to the Order area as defined by the attached Map 1.
- (2) For certainty, this Order does not apply to private land within the Order area, unless the private land meets the requirements of section 93.4(1)(c) of the *Land Act*.

3. Definitions

- (1) In this Order:

“**forested area**” means the area of land capable of producing trees with a minimum site index of 5;

“**forest influence**” means the total area of the intervention that is within one tree-length from the base of a tree or group of trees, whether the tree or group of trees is inside or outside the cutblock;

“**management unit**” means timber supply areas and tree farm licences within the Order area;

“**retention silvicultural system**” means a silvicultural system that is designed to retain individual trees or groups of trees to maintain structural diversity and forest influence over the majority of the harvested area for at least one rotation. Generally, retention is intended to be long term, with no intention of future removal;

“**source spatial dataset**” means information in the form of a Geographic Information System feature class format, shapefile format, or coverage.

- (2) Words and expressions not defined in this Order have the meanings given to them in the *Forest and Range Practices Act*, the *Forest Act*, the *Heritage Conservation Act*, the *Range Act* and the regulations made thereunder.

- (3) Where an objective refers to an area shown on a map and the area is also defined by a source spatial dataset, the boundaries of the area as defined by the source spatial dataset will apply. All source spatial datasets are available in: <https://catalogue.data.gov.bc.ca/dataset/legal-planning-objectives-current-polygon>

Part 2 – Objectives

4. The following zones, as presented on Map 1, are established as land use objective areas for the purposes of section 93.4 of the *Land Act*:

- (1) ‘maḷik (sockeye) Special Management Zone;
- (2) dza'wan (coho) Special Management Zone.

5. Objectives for the ‘maḷik and dza'wan Special Management Zones:

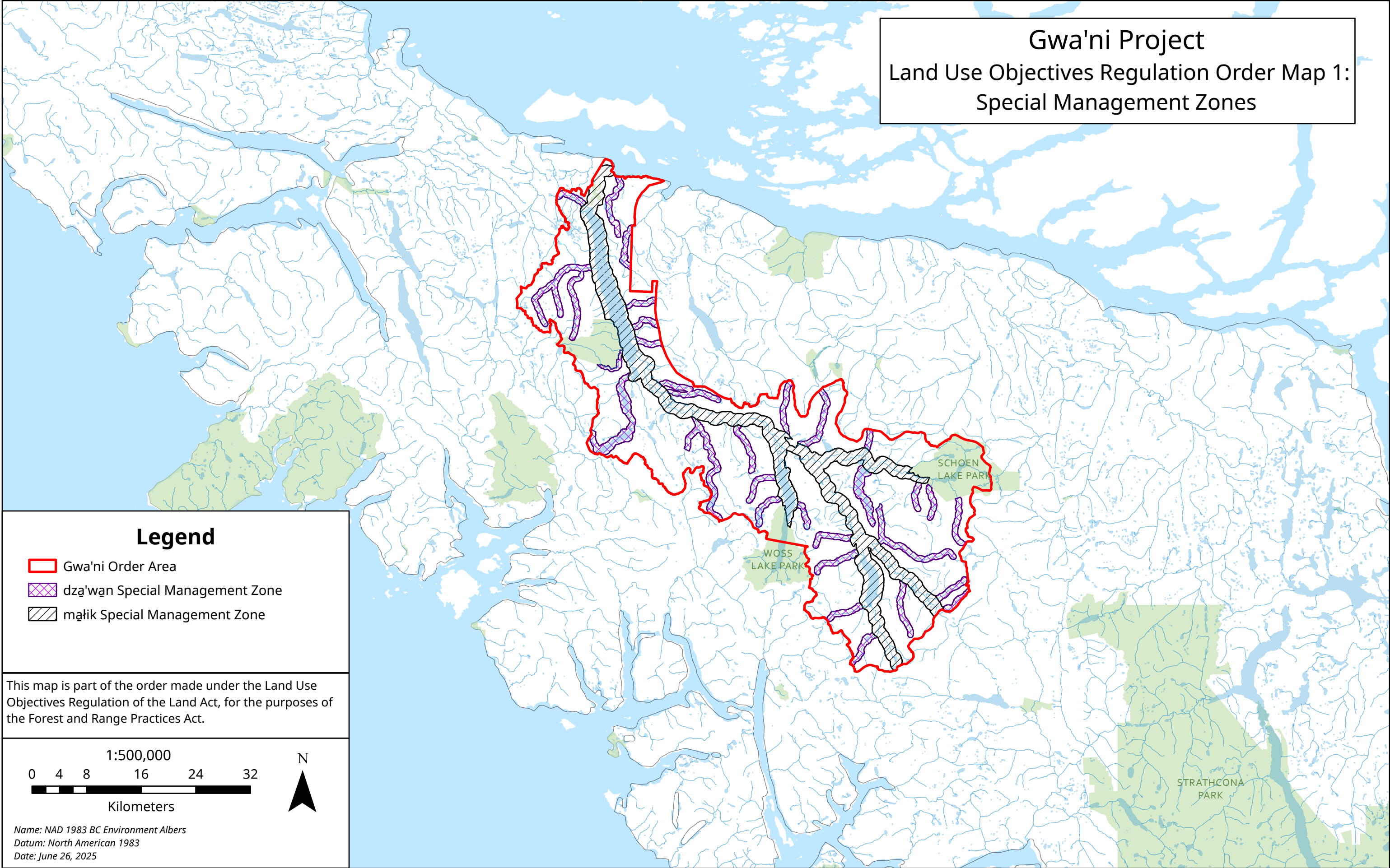
- (1) Increase and maintain the proportion of late seral forest spread throughout the ‘maḷik and dza'wan Special Management Zones by ensuring the following:
 - (a) by the year 2075, a minimum of 33% of the forested area must be greater than 119 years old;
 - (b) by the year 2125, a minimum of 50% of the forested area must be greater than 119 years old; and
 - (c) (a) and (b) must be achieved by each management unit in the Order area.
- (2) Maintain and support forest ecosystem structure, function, integrity, and resilience by:
 - (a) utilizing the retention silvicultural system for all cutblocks.

Part 3 – Transition




6. Application of this Order

- (1) This Order and the land use objectives in this Order take effect on the date that notice of this Order is published in the Gazette.
- (2) The period of time for forest stewardship plan holders to make mandatory amendments required under section 8(4)(a) of the *Forest and Range Practices Act* in relation to this Order is six months, starting on the date this Order comes into effect as specified in subsection (1).

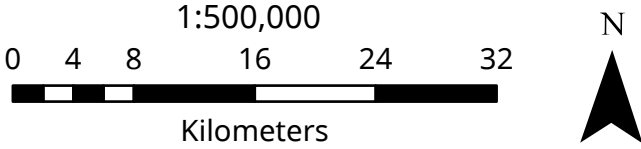
Gwa'ni Project
Land Use Objectives Regulation Order Map 1:
Special Management Zones



Legend

-  Gwa'ni Order Area
-  dza'wan Special Management Zone
-  ma'lik Special Management Zone

This map is part of the order made under the Land Use Objectives Regulation of the Land Act, for the purposes of the Forest and Range Practices Act.



Name: NAD 1983 BC Environment Albers
Datum: North American 1983
Date: June 26, 2025