

Marine Protected Area Network Communications & Engagement Coordinator (Independent Contractor)

Context

First Nations on the North Pacific Coast, the Province of British Columbia, and the Government of Canada have signed collaborative governance agreements to implement a Marine Protected Area (MPA) Network in the Northern Shelf Bioregion. This area, which is also known as the Great Bear Sea, extends from the middle of Vancouver Island (Quadra Island / Bute Inlet) and reaches north to the Canada - Alaska border. A Network Action Plan, the blueprint for the implementation of an MPA Network, was endorsed by the governance partners in February 2023.

The governance partners are now working collaboratively to implement the MPA Network and the governance structures that support the establishment of the MPA sites, which act as the component parts of the larger MPA Network.

Position Summary

The MPA Communications & Engagement Coordinator will play a critical role in developing and facilitating collaborative engagement and outreach programs that support MPA Network implementation. This will include the development of a Network communications and engagement strategy and associated workplan that reflect the interests and needs of the governance partners. In doing so, the coordinator will be required to coordinate and support the specific communications and engagement governance structures that direct and guide the MPA Network communications and engagement.

Broadly, the communications and engagement strategy should include approaches to support the establishment of MPA sites; coordinate site and network level engagement; improve coastal communities' and the public's understanding of the benefits of MPAs and increase support toward the MPA Network; and counter misinformation about MPAs generally and the MPA Network specifically. Communications mediums could include newsletters, brochures, videos, social media, websites, radio pieces, and op-eds, etc.

The coordinator will be a self-starter and a dynamic relationship builder, have refined communication skills with experience in facilitation, project management and collaboration, and be able to adapt to various audiences. The coordinator will collaborate with and support First Nations, and federal and provincial organizations involved in developing similar communications materials internal to their specific partner institution(s).

Scope of Work

1. Coordinate communications and engagement planning
 - Develop and implement a communications & engagement strategy and workplan based off the Network communications & engagement framework that increases awareness and support for MPAs in coastal communities, First Nations communities, and among marine user groups and the public.
 - Lead, facilitate and coordinate the communications and engagement subcommittee(s).
 - Support partner review and approval of communications and engagement products.
 - Develop audience mapping and communication product needs assessments.
 - Create cross-linkages to other MPA Network sub-committees.
 - Support the development of materials that improve partner understanding of the MPA Network and Nation agreements and commitments.
2. Develop communications products
 - Develop communications products across multiple mediums, including newsletters, brochures, videos, social media, websites, radio pieces, and op-eds. Communications products could include:
 - Engaging social media content about MPA benefits and the MPA Network.
 - MPA Network and MPA site specific information.
 - Key messages.
 - Nation-specific communication materials for First Nation communities and organizations, as requested.
 - MPA Network implementation updates and progress reports.
 - Update and maintain MPA Network related communications (e.g. key messages, website).
 - Align communications outcomes with Partner mandates, authorities, and interests.
 - Track engagement and interaction metrics across various communications channels to assess the success of the strategy.
3. Coordinate engagement activities
 - Lead engagement strategies that foster collaboration among Canada, BC, the 17 partner First Nations, and other stakeholders.
 - Manage Network consultations and engagement, including establishing and coordinating a stakeholder advisory table, ensuring alignment with the partnership's objectives.
 - Support the tracking of engagement activities and input received.
 - Plan and lead the organization of MPA Network related events, as required.

4. Coordinate administrative activities associated with communications and engagement
 - Coordinate and support external communications contracts.
 - Develop and manage a communications and engagement budget and expenses.
 - Understand and align communications protocols across the partners.

Qualifications, Experience and Skills

- 5+ years relevant professional experience.
- Preference to holders of a related undergraduate degree(s) (e.g., communications, planning, writing, journalism/media) from a recognized post-secondary institution.
- Experience developing communication products for a broad range of audiences through multiple mediums including newsletters, brochures, videos, social media, websites, radio pieces, op-eds etc.
- Experience developing communication materials for First Nation communities, coastal communities, and local governments.
- Experience facilitating meetings with multiple governments or agencies and stakeholders.
- Exceptional ability to communicate with planners, managers, scientists, stakeholders, and the public, both verbally and in writing.
- Strong interpersonal and collaboration skills and experience working in collaborative and team environments.
- Background/expertise in marine issues such as resource management and/or protection. Knowledgeable about Indigenous-led marine stewardship and co-governance in British Columbia, including a strong familiarity with marine planning initiatives in coastal BC.
- Organized and task driven. Ability to work independently and prioritize and progress several different activities with competing timelines and pressures, in a high work volume environment.
- Computer proficiency with word processing, email. Familiarity with desktop publishing / graphics software, social media, website management and updating (WordPress) is an asset.

Terms of Engagement

Status: The Communications & Engagement Coordinator will be an independent contractor to Great Bear Initiative Society. The successful contractor is expected to work from their own office and to provide the equipment necessary to conduct this work, including a computer and software, wireless access, and cell phone. The position requires flexibility in the contractor's work schedule and the ability to meet tight deadlines and turn around products quickly.

Contract period: May/June 2025 – March 31, 2026

Contract hours: 35 hours/week

Contract Amount: Commensurate with qualifications and experience

Location: Contractor to be located in British Columbia

Travel: Occasional travel to the BC coast. Travel costs are reimbursable.

Application Deadline: May 9, at 5pm PT

Project Authority

The Project Authority is Great Bear Initiative Society.

For more information or to apply for the position, please contact and/or send résumé to:

Steve Diggon, Marine Planning Manager, Coastal First Nations-Great Bear Initiative – Email:
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