

Coastal Guardian Watchmen Certificate Program
Gwaii Forest Final Report – Haida Gwaii Watchmen
Sustainable Forest Management
October 2008

Project Description

This project was a collaboration of the Haida Gwaii Watchmen, the Haida Heritage and Forest Guardians and Haida Fisheries. This proponent applied for funding enabling eighteen employees¹ to take the Coastal Guardian Watchmen Certificate Program offered by Northwest Community College. Because the Coastal Guardian Certificate Program is not a traditional trade or academic program, potential students were not able to access education funds through either Band Council.

The Program provided college level training and knowledge regarding sustainable resource management practices and Haida worldview regarding issues in forestry, fisheries, tourism and parks, throughout the traditional territory of the Haida Nation. Due to a delay in the approval of funding, the program officially got underway on Monday February 25th at the Haida Heritage Centre at Kaay'lnagaay and concluded on May 9th, 2008.

Program Goals

The certificate program consisted of 18 courses totalling 30 college level credits, including parallel certification in many federally recognized first aid and safety courses. Courses were structured into four modules and delivered in a full-time, intensive format. Module themes included safety and preparedness, communications, monitoring and compliance, and cultural awareness. Students were introduced to key concepts, skills and knowledge required for entry level positions in various fields of environmental monitoring. Students were encouraged to participate in a variety of learning methods, including lectures, readings, discussions, and practical experience. Instruction included both Western/Academic and Haida knowledge and perspectives.

The goals of Northwest Community College and the proponent are listed and summarized below.

1. Successfully deliver the program on Haida Gwaii (within 11 weeks)

The program completed delivery within the time allotted, with some students finishing the last course as a directed study with extended deadlines in order to accommodate the demand and overlap with the Guardian Watchmen work season.

¹ 6 Haida Gwaii Watchmen, 4 Haida Fisheries, 6 Haida Heritage and Forest Guardians, and 2 Haida Mapping Staff attended.

2. Successful completion of the program by Haida students (18 in total)

11 students participated in all courses of the program, with some students withdrawing due to financial strain and emerging job opportunities. Final graduate numbers are to be determined due to delayed directed study courses, deferred Fall 2008 courses and in-process prior learning assessments. Please see the attached appendix to look at individual course completion.

3. Acknowledge and encourage Haida world view, culture, protocols and involvement of Haida Elders in the classroom

Students were able to participate in several discussions and field trips with Haida Elders regarding plants, medicines, language and various other cultural components such as red cedar archaeology. Students were also encouraged to share their own knowledge and experience. For example, Haida Heritage and Forest Guardians led walks and technical exercises that were within their current skill sets and area of expertise.

4. Meet or exceed student expectations

General oral feedback was positive, with student responses such as:

“I have never graduated from anything before, but I am going to graduate from this program. I’m excited about that.”

“I have never received any kind of certificate before, now I have several, including first aid and wilderness survival. I’m really enjoying the program.”
This student went on to be hired full time with the Haida Gwaii Watchmen for summer employment.

Student suggestions for improvement include earlier delivery dates (January – March), equally split courses between Skidegate and Masset, and to have more time to organize funding, transportation and living arrangements. Many of the students were notified only two weeks prior to the program start that they would be attending. Students also had specific suggestions regarding course content and delivery, such as more hands-on and field training, and higher level course content. These comments will be taken into consideration when the curriculum is updated in the near future.

Students had various levels of literacy, experience, financial support, external personal commitments and interest in the program. It was often difficult for instructors to get students to open up in class room discussions and to keep up with reading and assignments. Students were more open to participating in non-classroom settings, such as during hands-on exercises in the field. Many students left the program to pursue work opportunities and many were suffering from fatigue from the demanding schedule and the daily commute between Old Massett and Skidegate.

Students were provided with anonymous instructor and course evaluation forms on the last day of each course in order to provide valuable feedback regarding content and delivery, as well as opportunities to suggest improvements for future deliveries.

It would be wise to have in-depth orientations with students, funders and delivery partners several weeks prior to starting a new delivery, as there are many different questions and expectations at all levels, especially regarding student responsibilities and finances. It was apparent that many of the students had not taken formal post-secondary training before and needed more time to become familiar with the policies and procedures of being a student at the college level. This includes clearly outlined expectations between the student and funder prior to beginning classes.

5. Employ local instructors when possible (including Haida expertise)

On-island instructors were hired when possible. However, due to the short preparation time, off-island instructors were also hired to fill courses. In future deliveries, it would be wise to start recruiting potential on-island instructors several months in advance. Several courses were delayed and rescheduled to later dates due to vacant instructor positions, in some instances leading to scheduling conflicts and misunderstandings between students and instructors.

6. Encourage a positive relationship between Northwest Community College, the Haida community and partner organizations

Overall, the program delivery was a success. It is important to note that this was a pilot delivery of the program in its first year of operation. All parties, including students, instructors, funders and partners, were new to this process, and many lessons were learned.

In the future, planning and details must be reviewed and finalized between all parties well in advance of delivery. There was tremendous support for this program, ultimately bringing together 13 delivery partners and sponsors, as well as various staff from six Northwest Community College campuses. It was a monumental effort that was achieved in a very short period of time.

Innovative Tools and Strategies

Northwest Community College is committed to employing a student-centred and adaptive teaching philosophy in order to support and encourage student success. Many different strategies and methods were used in order to meet the unique learning needs of the students on Haida Gwaii.

For example, when scheduling of courses conflicted with Haida Memorial Feasts, attendance at the feasts was incorporated into the course curriculum when possible. In another case, a student was unable to operate a chainsaw due to health restrictions. Our solution was to have the student audit the course without having to complete the practical component. The student could then receive alternate course credit without having to put

Coastal Guardian Watchmen Certificate
GFS Final Report

their personal health and safety at risk. In another example, some students had to return to their jobs in the field and were unable to attend classes during the last week of the program, but were committed to completing the course requirements. We were able to develop a directed study equivalent for these students, and arranged for equipment to be sent to them in the field so that they could complete the course without penalty. Finally, when it was possible, field trips and courses were delivered in Masset out of consideration of the students who were travelling considerable distances on a daily basis to attend training.

Student Feedback Summary

This program began with 18 registered students. Although not all of the students attended the entire program, success can be measured not only in terms of course credits received, but also through other values such as insight and knowledge obtained. The following student quotes demonstrate the wide range of feedback received, including discussions, course work submitted, and solicited feedback.

"I have never finished a course in my life. I didn't finish high school or any other school program, but I am going to finish this program. I'm excited about that."
~ Owen Smith

"I have never received any kind of certificate before, now I have several, including first aid and wilderness survival. I'm really enjoying the program."
~ Steven Yeltatzie

[This student went on to be hired full time with the Haida Gwaii Watchmen for summer employment.]

"My favourite part of the program was going out to do the hands on training and getting certified for certain tool uses. I learned more about the cultural plants, what they are used for and how to prepare them too. This had made it easier to identify plants and trees in my job. I would tell the younger people to take this program as it will help them with getting more opportunities to find work."
~ Cullen Marks

"The most valuable part for me was getting certified in different areas. I also learned more Haida stories and language that I didn't know before. I enjoyed the field trips."
~ Owen Jones

"Haida language is beautiful and descriptive and poetic. Traditional knowledge is often enhanced by our language and can open our minds to the possibilities of life and the universe. When I started to learn to speak Haida, it was an opportunity to learn. Haida traditional knowledge surrounds me in both my job

Coastal Guardian Watchmen Certificate
GFS Final Report

and at home, and this course is helping me realize that this is where I need to be.”
~ Sean Brennan

“Traditional knowledge is important because you should know what you are talking about when talking to people about Haida Gwaii and to know what you are looking for when getting food or medicine, and to be respectful of all things.”
~ Ben Penna

“Traditional knowledge and repatriation means a reawakening of who we are. When I was younger I didn't care much about who I was, but now I've come to understand that it is a great honour to be Haida. It feels good to reclaim what we have lost; it's about respect to our ancestors.”
~ Morgan Pollard

“Traditional knowledge is important in the work I do because it will help preserve the land for future generations; whether it's having cedar for poles, canoes, hats, or regalia, or plants for food and medicine.”
~ Cheryl Setso

“Art itself isn't traditional knowledge. It's the knowledge of all that is involved that is relevant, such as how to properly harvest materials, how to make tools, and the importance of understanding the ownership of crests and oral histories that are being recreated, and passing on this knowledge.”
~ Steven Yeltatzie

“The relevance of traditional knowledge to my work is that I have the honour of looking for and locating cedar for future totem poles, canoes, longhouses and cedar hats. I can look at the pieces and say that I had a part in making that piece.”
~ Owen Smith

GFS Feedback

From NWCC's perspective, it would greatly assist in the effective delivery of this program if all funding decisions were made several months in advance. This would allow for adequate time to advertise the program to students, recruit instructors, update curriculum, arrange for Elders and coordinate efforts between campuses, partners, and students. Also, student advisors and orientations with funders and the college would help students understand the various responsibilities of all parties.

It is also essential to have the employers on board as partners in the project. Having employers assist in supporting students and encouraging them to attend as part of work is critical to the students' success. Employers can also then collaborate in integrating what is learned in the program directly into the work environment.

The following feedback was provided by students:

“Course deliveries need to be split equally between Masset and Skidegate. Travel between communities on a daily basis is expensive, exhausting and unfair to expect one group of students to do all the travelling.”

“Students need more time to prepare and organize for courses. Many were informed by their employer that they would be attending the program only two weeks prior to the courses starting and did not have time to figure out finances, travel, etc.”

“Students need more financial support to take training, including a living allowance, money for books and supplies, and costs like travel and childcare.”

Have more hands-on training whenever possible. More compass and hip chain work.”

“Need more forest and marine training. Include ethnobotany course.”

“Have more Haida culture, time on the land, elders in the class and Haida instructors.”

“Run program January to March.”

“More clarity on challenging courses and applying for prior learning credits.”

Photography

Please see attached photo disks.

Reporting Financials

Budget as submitted in initial application:

Coastal Guardians Watchmen Certificate Program Budget Budget

<i>Gwaii Forest</i>	<i>In Kind</i>	<i>Gwaii Trust</i>	<i>Total</i>
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Coastal Guardian Watchmen Certificate
GFS Final Report

REVENUES	\$47,600.00	\$44,921.21	\$10,000.00	\$102,521.21
TOTAL REVENUE	\$47,600.00	\$44,921.21	\$10,000.00	\$102,521.21
EXPENSES				
Tuition	\$47,600.00		\$10,000.00	\$57,600.00
Books and Supplies		\$16,830.00		\$16,830.00
Boat Rental		\$4,950.00		\$4,950.00
Truck Rental (FG)		\$750.00		\$750.00
Truck Rental (HGW)		\$6,900.00		\$6,900.00
Truck Rental (HF)		\$2,000.00		\$2,000.00
HF - 37' Vessel & Operator		\$3,000.00		\$3,000.00
19 Foot Skiff & Operator		\$500.00		\$500.00
Field Equipment (Radio/FA)		\$500.00		\$500.00
2 Field Biologists		\$2,400.00		\$2,400.00
Camp Accommodation		\$2,100.00		\$2,100.00
Boat Transportation		\$1,200.00		\$1,200.00
GIS Office		\$1,312.82		\$1,312.82
GIS/GPS Mapping		\$2,178.39		\$2,178.39
Chainsaw Rental		\$300.00		\$300.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$47,600.00	\$44,921.21	\$10,000.00	\$102,521.21

Actual Budget: (variances highlighted)

Coastal Guardians Watchmen Certificate Program Budget
Budget

	<i>Gwaii Forest</i>	<i>In Kind</i>	<i>Gwaii Trust</i>	<i>Total</i>
REVENUES	\$47,926.07	\$41,621.21	\$0.00	\$89,547.28
TOTAL REVENUE	\$47,926.07	\$41,621.21	\$0.00	\$89,547.28
EXPENSES				
Tuition	\$47,926.07		\$0.00	\$47,926.07
Books and Supplies		\$16,830.00		\$16,830.00
Boat Rental		\$4,950.00		\$4,950.00
Truck Rental (FG)		\$750.00		\$750.00
Truck Rental (HGW)		\$6,900.00		\$6,900.00
Truck Rental (HF)		\$2,000.00		\$2,000.00
HF - 37' Vessel & Operator		\$3,000.00		\$3,000.00
19 Foot Skiff & Operator		\$500.00		\$500.00
Field Equipment (Radio/FA)		\$500.00		\$500.00
2 Field Biologists		\$2,400.00		\$2,400.00
Camp Accommodation		\$0.00		\$0.00
Boat Transportation		\$0.00		\$0.00
GIS Office		\$1,312.82		\$1,312.82
GIS/GPS Mapping		\$2,178.39		\$2,178.39
Chainsaw Rental		\$300.00		\$300.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$47,926.07	\$41,621.21	\$0.00	\$89,547.28

Budget Notes

1 Gwaii Trust turned down this project for funding.

Coastal Guardian Watchmen Certificate
GFS Final Report

- 2 Tuition was less than the total estimated due to students not enrolling in all courses.
- 3 Unable to offer field trip as no one was in the Watchmen Co-ordinator position.

Final Completion Summary and Invoice:

	2008W	2008S	2008F	TOTALS	Invoice #
Sean Brennan	2,127.23			2,127.23	13861
Jaalen Edenshaw	1,764.86			1,764.86	13862
Mark Grinder	2,508.86			2,508.86	13863
Owen Jones	1,561.10			1,561.10	13864
Ben Levesque	2,127.23			2,127.23	13865
Cullen Marks	2,397.36			2,397.36	13866
Morgan Pollard	2,127.23			2,127.23	13867
Raven Potschka	2,564.62			2,564.62	13868
Cheryl Setso	2,564.62			2,564.62	13869
Owen Smith	1,784.08			1,784.08	13870
Randy Tennant	1,187.47			1,187.47	13871
Irene					
Moraes/Wilson	2,397.34			2,397.34	13872
Shirley Wilson	2,007.08			2,007.08	13873
Jordan Yeltatzie	2,285.84			2,285.84	13874
Steven Yeltatzie	2,508.86			2,508.86	13875
Sean Brennan		68.52		68.52	13882
Jaalen Edenshaw		68.52		68.52	13883
Mark Grinder		780.52		780.52	13884
Owen Jones		557.52		557.52	13885
Ben Levesque		68.52		68.52	13886
Cullen Marks		780.52		780.52	13887
Morgan Pollard		68.52		68.52	13888
Raven Potschka		780.52		780.52	13889
Cheryl Setso		780.52		780.52	13890
Clarence					
Thompson	1,824.71			1,824.71	14142
Owen Jones	278.76			278.76	14254
Bert Wilson	2,453.10			2,453.10	14255
Bert Wilson	55.76			55.76	14473
Shirley Wilson	557.54			557.54	14474
Owen Smith		780.52		780.52	13891
Randy Tennant		68.52		68.52	13892
Irene					
Moraes/Wilson		780.52		780.52	13893
Shirley Wilson		780.52		780.52	13894
Jordan Yeltatzie		780.52		780.52	13895
Steven Yeltatzie		780.52		780.52	13896
Bert Wilson		780.52		780.52	14257
Shirley Wilson		557.54		557.54	14474
Jordan Yeltatzie	278.78			278.78	14475
Irene					
Moraes/Wilson	55.76			55.76	14476
Owen Smith	167.26			167.26	14478
Jaalen Edenshaw	111.50			111.50	14480

Coastal Guardian Watchmen Certificate
GFS Final Report

Owen Smith	557.52		557.52	15180
Clarence				
Thompson	55.76		55.76	15181
Sean Brennan	-544.76		-544.76	15182
Morgan Pollard	-167.26		-167.26	15183
Jaalen Edenshaw	-111.50		-111.50	15184
Sean Brennan		255.00	255.00	14552
Morgan Pollard		255.00	255.00	14553
Jaalen Edenshaw	-111.50		-111.50	15184
Cullen Marks	-501.76		-501.76	15185
Cheryl Setso	-501.76		-501.76	15186
Jaalen Edenshaw		255.00	255.00	15187
Ben Levesque		255.00	255.00	15188
Clarence				
Thompson		323.52	323.52	15190
Owen Jones			948.00	Letter
Cheryl Setso			948.00	Letter
TOTALS	36,371.69	10,606.38	948.00	47,926.07

EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY

EMPLOYMENT: Instructors/ Elders

Name	Local	Off Island	Hrs/ Day	# Days	Total Hrs
1. Amanda Bedard	✓		7.5	5	37.5
2. Chris Ashurst	✓		7.5	5	37.5
3. Janet Gray	✓		7.5	5	37.5
4. Sarah Loewen	✓		7.5	4	30
5. Elizabeth Bulbrook	✓		7.5	5	37.5
6. Captain Gold	✓		4	7	28
7. Roger McColm		✓	8	12	96
8. Capt. James Steele		✓	8	4	32
9. Mia Algarvio		✓	8	1	8
10. Casey Eys		✓	8	1	8
11. Earl Stevenson		✓	7.5	5	37.5
12. Jacinda Mack		✓	7.5	10	75
13. Margaret Edgars	✓		4	1	4
14. Stephen Brown	✓		4	1	4
15. Barbara Wilson	✓		4	1	4
16. Diane Brown	✓		4	1	4

Coastal Guardian Watchmen Certificate
GFS Final Report

17. Andy Wilson	✓		4	1	4
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Local Employment

In total, 11 local people were in the classroom, including both instructors and elders. Elders enriched the courses and knowledge base through hands on expertise and activities, and overlapped instructional time with class instructors. Elders were paid \$200/day for their time. Instructors were paid according to BCGEU pay levels, based on education and experience.

Off Island Employees

In total, seven off-island people were listed instructors, most of whom came from the Terrace and Prince Rupert areas for safety and first aid courses. These instructors were booked through Northwest Community College's Continuing Education department in Terrace and Prince Rupert, on behalf of the Coastal Guardian Watchmen Program. Earl Stevenson and Jacinda Mack were brought in from Victoria and Vancouver. Jacinda is the program coordinator and acted as part time instructor for three courses, totalling two weeks of instruction.