



**WATERFRONT ENHANCEMENT PROJECT  
BOARDWALK AND AWAKWES CONSTRUCTION  
FINAL COMPLETION REPORT FOR  
ISLAND COASTAL ECONOMIC TRUST**



Project Manager: Garry Ullstrom, CA  
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September 4, 2011

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Prompted by waterfront enhancement projects completed by its neighbours, the Village of Alert Bay, in 2006 the 'Namgis First Nation completed a comprehensive Waterfront Enhancement Plan. The overarching goals were to link the 'Namgis waterfront into the Village of Alert Bay's waterfront by means of a boardwalk, and to create culturally appropriate attractions along the waterfront to attract more visitors and to have them stay in the community for a longer period of time.

In the spring of 2008 Garry Ullstrom was appointed as Project Manager. A planning team was then formed, a professional designer, Marla Limousin, was engaged, and technical studies and community consultation commenced. In September 2008 the community reviewed the initial design, and then in January 2009 approved a final design. A Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency environmental assessment was conducted and all necessary permits obtained. Westmar Engineering completed the engineered drawings in December 2009 and in February 2010 Ketz Pacific Construction of Campbell River began building the boardwalk, which was completed in November 2010. 'Namgis crews completed the habitat compensation work required by DFO and milled all of the cedar used in the construction.

Fundraising continued, and in April 2011 construction of the awakwes commenced. David Leslie of Alert Bay and his crew of locals built the awakwes, which were completed in June 2011. A grand opening celebration and traditional blessing ceremony was held on July 21, 2011.

### **Project Objectives:**

- To ensure that the project was shaped by, and received a solid mandate from, the community;
- To construct 670 meters of boardwalk along the seawall from the ferry dock towards the 'Namgis netloft; and
- To construct five traditional awakwes on the waterfront.
- To tie into the Village of Alert Bay's existing waterfront walkway network, thereby creating a stronger physical and cultural linkage between the two communities.
- To attract more tourists to Alert Bay by restoring a traditional look and feel to the waterfront, and by providing them with safe passage enroute to U'Mista Cultural Center.
- To enhance the opportunities for local entrepreneurs to expand their cultural tourism businesses.
- To create as much local employment during construction as possible, while maintaining cost control.

## **Summary of Work Completed:**

### **Consultation**

‘Namgis formed a planning team of staff and community members in the spring of 2008 and Marla Limousin, a professional designer, was hired to help develop a conceptual plan for the project. ‘Namgis community members reviewed and commented on the conceptual plan in September 2008 and then approved the final plan in January 2009.



It was envisaged that the boardwalk would be built along the seawall and two awakwes would be connected to the boardwalk. Awakwes were traditional structures where chiefs used to meet.



It was envisaged that the awakwes would be used by guides to provide a place for cultural interpretive walks and talks. They also provide a viewpoint over the harbor and a place to sit and rest.

The community and Council embraced the conceptual plan and so fundraising and the permitting process began in earnest.

### **Permitting**

Michael Berry, R.P. Bio., of Alby Systems was engaged to coordinate a Comprehensive Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA) screening and assessment. Permits were obtained as follows:

- a) Department of Fisheries and Oceans. DFO laid down strict guidelines to protect the inter-tidal zone during construction. In addition, to protect migrating salmon fry, no inter-tidal work was allowed between April 30 – July 15.
- b) Village of Alert Bay. Permission to encroach upon the Village’s marina foreshore was required.

- c) Ministry of Transportation. Permission to encroach upon the Province’s roadside right of way was needed.
- d) Transport Canada. A permit was granted under the Navigable Waters Act.

Michael Berry was then retained as the onsite, construction Environmental Monitor.

### **Design, Engineering, and Contractor Selection**

Worley Parsons Engineering was engaged to ensure that the project was designed in accordance with the appropriate building codes and to create the construction drawings. They identified that portions of the seawall would have to be buttressed with gabions as the seawall was being undermined in several places. They worked with Ms. Limousin and finished the engineered drawings in December 2009.

The project was tendered in late December 2009 and two construction companies, Ketz Pacific and Heatherbrae, submitted bids. The bids were higher than the funding on hand, so portions of the awakwes were taken out of the contract and the project was retendered. In February the job was awarded to Ketz Pacific Construction and construction began immediately.

### **Construction**

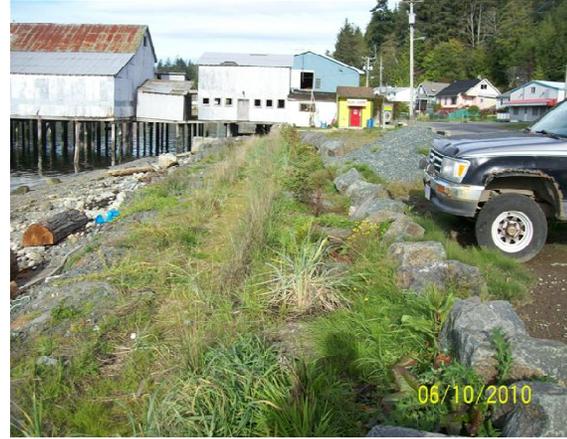
As soon as the job was awarded, the ‘Namgis crew began the shoreline remediation that was to serve as the habitat compensation that was required by DFO. This work proceeded smoothly and was completed within several weeks.



Shoreline to be cleaned up and remediated.



‘Namgis crew using Delta-Lok bags to rebuild shoreline after cleanup.



Completed shoreline remediation in March and October, respectively.

The removal of all of the fallen concrete blocks from the beach and the cleanup of the fill, which included old car engines, chunks of concrete, and tons of other scrap metals, hugely improved the attractiveness of this section of shoreline. The rebuilding and replanting of the shoreline using the Delta-Lok bags greened it up again and has made it into an attractive part of the waterfront once again.



'Namgis crew milling large cedar log into decking for the boardwalk.

Ketza immediately provided 'Namgis with a list of all of the cedar decking and posts that would be needed for the boardwalk. 'Namgis approached Western Forest Products and Lemare Lake Logging, who both donated several bundles of cedar logs for the project. Councilor Stan Hunt towed the bundles over from Beaver Cove with his seine boat and 'Namgis member Stevie Beans and his crew began milling the lumber using his sawmill. Later on, Herman Beans and a crew hand-split the cedar shakes for the roofs of the awakwes.

The first priority for Ketza was to get all of the work that needed to be done in the inter-tidal zone done before the April 30<sup>th</sup> fisheries window deadline. To minimize impact on the beach and to speed construction Ketza precast the footings and pilings and then lowered them into place. They then buried the footings and tied the pilings back into the seawall to meet seismic requirements.



Placing a precast footing.



Buried footings and tiebacks to seawall.

After the pilings for the boardwalk had been placed and tied back to the seawall, Ketzá poured the foundations for the five awakwes. Most of the concrete awakwes footings were then covered up with beach gravel. Fundraising to build the wooden portions of the awakwes continued.

Wire basket gabions were built and filled by 'Namgis crew at the base of portions of the seawall that had been undermined by wave action. Liquid concrete was then sprayed under the seawall in the remaining gaps to support the seawall so it would not crack over time. This had to be done before the concrete footings were put into place. Left over concrete was sprayed in to support an existing boat ramp that had also been undermined.



Awakwes footing.



Gabions protecting bottom of seawall.

Once the gabions were built and the footings and pilings put in place, the supporting beams for the boardwalk were installed. Just as the last beams were being placed there was a rain/snow day and some of the preservative from the wood began leaching out of the wood and dripped onto the beach. DFO conducted an inspection that day and demanded that the wood be removed and washed of all preservative. So the wood was wrapped in plastic to prevent further beach

contamination and then removed and then washed with high pressure hoses. The contaminated water was then filtered and properly disposed of. This was a huge setback to the construction timetable.



Support beams wrapped in plastic.



Beams being power washed in a sealed berm with collection tanks for the contaminated water.

After the beams had been remediated and the remaining beams adequately dried so as to stabilize the preservative so that it would not leach again, construction resumed.



Boardwalk frame and posts for railings.



Stairway down to beach.

The boardwalk was finished in November 2010. Due to the challenges of building in the winter, construction of the awakwes was scheduled to commence in April 2011. David Leslie, a local contractor with a crew of 'Namgis and other residents were awarded the contract. The Village of Alert Bay gave permission for the awakwes framing to be done on the Village dock. The frames were then lifted by crane onto a barge and then placed onto the concrete awakwes pilings. Alert Bay towing, owned by Sam Cook, a 'Namgis member, provided their barge, crane, and tug boat, and only charged for the labour involved. The lifts were done only when the tides were sufficiently high. Once the awakwes frames had been secured to the pilings, the decking, seats, and roofing were installed.



Awakwes being framed on the Village of Alert Bay's dock.



Awakwes being lowered into place at a midnight high tide.

The awakwes were completed in June. Shortly thereafter the Ministry of Transportation paved roughly 400 meters of gravel verge that was between the boardwalk and the existing roadway. They had also provided gravel fill for the rest of the unpaved verge and had compacted and leveled it. To address drainage problems between the ferry dock and Culture Shock, they drilled several holes in the seawall to allow the water to drain through. This has solved a long-standing problem with puddles of water in front of Culture Shock and provides smooth, dry parking for visitors and residents along that stretch of boardwalk now.



Two awakwes along the boardwalk.



Awakwes on the beach by U'Mista.

A grand celebration and blessing ceremony was held July 21<sup>st</sup>, and representatives from most of the funders and contributors attended, along with roughly 200 community members. After the speeches, barbequed salmon and other refreshments were served at the awakwes next to the U'Mista Cultural Center.



Chief Cranmer leading the blessing ceremony.



Community members participating in the blessing ceremony.

In summary, all of the project objectives as listed on page two were met. Other information is as follows:

**Number of People Employed:** (in man months)

People were employed as follows:

- Ketza crew – skilled tradesmen 4 men x 4 months
- NFN part of Ketza crew – unskilled labour 4 men x 4 months
- Milling crew – skilled and unskilled 4 men x 2 months
- Habitat compensation work – unskilled 2 x 1 month
- Splitting shakes – unskilled 2 x .5 months
- Awakwes construction – skilled labour 3 men x 2 months

Total employment = 49 man months

**Economic Impact Post-Construction:**

We continue to hear many positive comments from visitors and residents alike. The boardwalk and awakwes are a source of community pride and a big first step towards enhancing the Alert Bay waterfront.

This project has given us a solid foundation upon which to continue enhancing the waterfront. A completely revamped gateway to the boardwalk is planned; the historic Council Hall will be spruced up and research on its history is being conducted to assist with interpretive tours; Council has approved enhancing the awakwes in terms of their cultural significance (each awakwes represents one of the five founding namimas (families) of the ‘Namgis); and other beautification and enhancement ideas. The completion of the project is not so much seen as an end, but as a beginning.

'NAMGIS FIRST NATION  
WATERFRONT ENHANCEMENT PROJECT  
BOARDWALK AND AWAKWES CONSTRUCTION

Period: May 4, 2009 to June 15, 2011

**Project Expenditures**

Construction, materials and equipment	\$ 1,414,314
Engineering and Design	\$ 222,571
Project Management	<u>\$ 23,215</u>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$1,660,100</b>

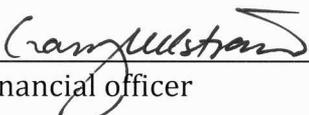
**Project Income (Sources of Funding)**

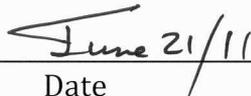
'Namgis First Nation	\$ 611,476
ICET	\$ 499,300
WestCCAP	\$ 250,000
Coast Sustainability Trust	\$ 250,000
North Vancouver Island Aboriginal Training Society	<u>\$ 49,324</u>
<b>Total Income (Sources of Funding)</b>	<b>\$1,660,100</b>

Balance \$0\*

*\*If balance is positive ICET contribution may be reduced proportionately*

I hereby certify that this statement accurately represents all project expenditures and all sources of project funding

  
Financial officer

  
Date