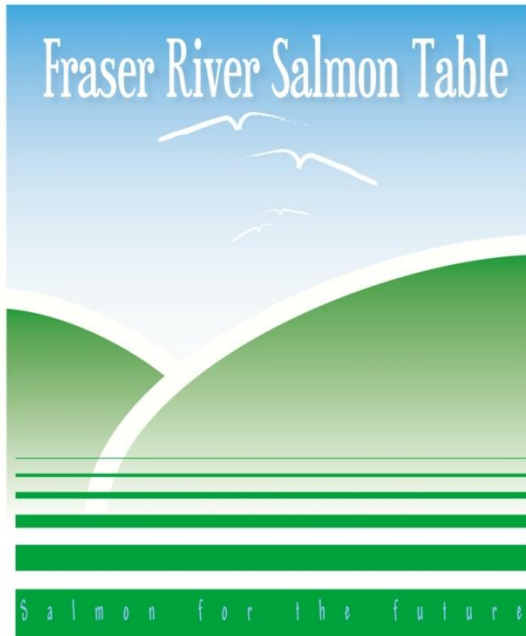


2012

Technical Feasibility for a multi-purpose Fraser River Gateway



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Technical Feasibility – of a Multi-purpose Fraser River Gateway

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1.0 Executive Summary

Managed access to the Fraser River in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia is very limited and between Hope and Fort Langley, the number of formal boat launches and river access points decreases substantially - there are just two sanctioned, motorized access points.

The result has been the creation of informal and often unsafe access points being created on private land and often on First Nation's territory; this has resulted in confrontation between Sport fishers and First Nations.

The Fraser River Salmon Table Society is the facilitator of the First Nations – Sport Fishers Advisory Group that has as its mandate the improvement of relations between First Nations groups and Sport Fishers. This group has defined as a high priority project the creation of new river access points under the brand “Fraser River Gateways” to address this issue.

Fraser River Gateways will be user friendly, environmentally sustainable river access points that can be enjoyed by First Nations, recreational and commercial fishers as well as boaters and eco-tourists. The gateways will be owned and operated primarily by local First Nations. They will generate economic returns in terms of employment and revenues, by providing value added services and amenities to users.

Potential Gateway locations were selected based on a number of criteria, specially:

Locations for potential gateways were determined by a data collection process that involved a number of site visits to locations in the study area. These locations were determined by interviewing local Fraser River authorities.

Based on this analysis two priority Gateways were identified:

- *Chawathil First Nation - Telte-Yet Campsite*
- *Seabird Island Indian Band*

2.0 The Context

Managed access to the Fraser River in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia is very limited. On a broad scale, there are only 15 sanctioned, motorized boat launches in the nearly 150 kilometre reach of the Fraser that extends from Hope to Tsawwassen. Focusing on the intensely utilised stretch of the 'Mighty Fraser' between Hope and Fort Langley, the number of formal boat launches and river access points decreases substantially - there are just two sanctioned, motorized access points.

These numbers become particularly troubling as this reach of the river experiences tremendous pressure for access from commercial, recreational, and First Nations fisheries, eco-tours, and other recreational uses. Quantifying all of the unmanaged access points in this stretch of the Fraser is difficult due to the informal and often spontaneous nature of the access encounters.

Many of the informal access points are so frequently used that they are presumed to be formal, established boat launches and river access areas. As these points lack governance, management, and organization, as well as supporting recreational infrastructure of amenities, these access points can be habitats for conflicting uses, environmentally unsound practices, and as seen in 2009, dangerous actions among users.

3.0 The Fraser River Salmon Table Society (FRST)

The FRST is a dynamic partnership with founding members from Fraser River First Nations, conservation organizations, the sport fishing community, and commercial fishing. It operates in a transparent, inclusive and collaborative manner to foster the rebuilding of salmon stocks and their eco-systems. The Society creates a shared agenda, identifies issues, determines each stakeholder's respective interests and creates mutually beneficial resolutions. In the fall of 2009 the FRST started a new initiative as a result of a shooting incident that injured a local First Nations Chief. A First Nations-Sport Fishers Committee (FN/SFC) was brought together with the mandate of ending confrontation on the river and ensuring a safe and enjoyable environment for all. To accomplish this goal they have identified a number of key projects: their first priority a "River Manners" brochure and video has already been completed. Their current high priority project involves creating greater, as well as more socially and environmentally responsible, access to the Fraser River between Hope and Fort Langley with **Fraser River Gateways**.

4.0 Fraser River Gateways

Fraser River Gateways will be user friendly, environmentally sustainable river access points that can be enjoyed by First Nations, recreational and commercial fishers as well as boaters and eco-tourists. The gateways will be owned and operated primarily by local First Nations, although other operating structures including joint ventures with or facilitated by the Fraser River Salmon Table could also be possible. They will generate economic returns in terms of employment and revenues, by providing value added services and amenities to users.

4.1 Fraser River Gateways - Defined

The predominant feature of each gateway will be a well constructed and maintained boat launch. These structures will be the direct link to the Fraser, providing increased access to the river and opportunity to participate in 'on the water' activities. In many cases, the boat launches will need to be constructed, while in others, existing structures will require improvements to accommodate regular, managed use. While some structures exist at a few of the proposed gateway locations, they are inadequate to meet the needs of even the current, informal uses they receive. Funding sources will need to be secured to complete the construction of boat launch structures that will suitably handle the demands of increased recreational and commercial use.

While boat launches will provide the direct means to the 'end' of river access, complementary amenities will be required for the Fraser River Gateways to remain viable. These facilities and services will help facilitate appropriate use of the gateways, and importantly, will generate the revenues needed for the operation and maintenance of the boat launches. Complementary amenities will be determined on a site-specific basis, to appropriately meet the needs of the specific uses of each gateway. However, as a minimum, each of the Fraser River access points should include the following:

- Public washroom/shower facilities
- Convenience store (bait, lures, ice, snacks, beverages etc.)
- Recreational accommodation (campsite, RV park)
- Interpretive and informative signage (current Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) regulations, fishing advisories, code of conduct, ecosystem information, etc.)
- Secure paid parking
- Eco-Tourism opportunities (interpretive signage, lookout points, river tour destinations)
- First Nations Tourism opportunities (managed access to traditional cultural features)
- Landing location for commercial fisheries
- Monitoring Capacity (First Nation, recreational catch numbers)

4.2 Fraser River Gateways - Revenue Generating Ventures

The **Fraser River Gateways** will go a long way to ensuring proper behaviour on the river and increasing understanding between First Nations and Sport Fishers. They will also promote positive economic benefits to the First Nations involved, as the gateways will be structured as both communication and information hubs. Services would be provided by First Nations, sport fishers and others, providing an example of cooperation that will go a long way to increasing the understanding between all groups.

The Gateways will be multi-service facilities that will benefit all user groups that seek access to the Fraser River. While providing infrastructure to promote safe use of the river for fishing, recreational, tourism, and other purposes, the gateways will also provide revenue generating opportunities. The financial objectives of the gateways are twofold:

1. Generate profits for either the First Nation operator or in the case of a joint venture for all partners, with the FRST reinvesting their profits into the gateway program
2. Create employment for First Nations and others

A scheme of profit targets will be established as the primary gateways are implemented, to measure financial success. It will be important to monitor key trends such as number of boats launched, number of tourist visits, occupancy of accommodation, number of jobs created, and other pertinent indicators of economic success as gateways are implemented.

4.3 Fraser River Gateway - Criteria for Selection

To ensure selection of appropriate access points to include in the Fraser River Gateways program, a set of criteria were established. These criteria were derived from the Fraser River Gateways ENP Grant Application, Feasibility Plan, and background information on the FRST and its goals. Although the need for access to the Fraser River in this area of British Columbia is so pronounced, many potential gateway locations only met a few of the criteria. Those that satisfied the greatest number were selected for consideration as 'Primary' and 'Secondary' gateways in the FRST Gateways Program.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides increased river access opportunities that are managed and maintained
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduces pressure on the current river access and fishing locations along this stretch of the Lower Fraser River
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promotes opportunities for more precise monitoring of river/fisheries activity by relevant authorities, by providing additional designated river access points* <i>(*Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO); Municipal Police/Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP); Search and Rescue; other relevant authorities)(monitoring of catch numbers of recreational and First Nations fishers using the river for food, social or ceremonial purposes) (monitoring of catch numbers for commercial fisheries)</i>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides amenities/potential for amenities that support sport fishing access to the Fraser River
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creates opportunities for partnerships between public and/or private agencies, for the provision of supporting amenities (secure, paid parking; public washrooms and shower facilities; convenience store (for bait, lures, ice, snacks, beverages) ; accommodation (camping, RV parks, motel, 'floatels', etc) infrastructure, maintenance, and management
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promotes employment of local workers, particularly increasing employment opportunities for local First Nations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides access for Eco-tourism opportunities (e.g. Eco-lodges; wildlife viewing tours; viewing platforms, etc)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides access for Aboriginal Tourism opportunities (e.g. viewing archaeological sites, participating in traditional practices, etc)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides a landing location for commercial fisheries
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creates opportunities for a program of signage, codes of conduct and monitoring presence to promote appropriate actions among users.• Increases the capacity of users to resolve issues amicably, through the fostering of mutual respect, recognition of different, but compatible uses, and inter-user reconciliation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promotes appropriate monitoring of sport fisher and First Nation catch figures (joint monitoring of catch figures, to help increase trust, transparency, and accountability between sport and First Nations fishers)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promotes opportunities for multiple services
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides opportunities for monitoring of uses: boats launched, number of eco-tours, number of aboriginal tours, number of jobs created, occupancy percentages of campsites, RV parks, motels, floatels, etc)

4.4 Fraser River Gateways - Opportunities Outlined

Locations for potential gateways were determined in the following fashion.

- Data collection involved site visits to locations in the study area, where access was permitted

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- These locations were determined by interviewing local Fraser River authorities (Fraser Valley Regional District Parks; Experience the Fraser staff; members of local First Nations; planning consultants; sport fishing operator; as well as other relevant parties)
- Reviewing relevant literature
- Using interactive mapping tools to determine any additional opportunities/analyze preliminary site feasibility.

The sites were evaluated against the above criteria, to test their relevance with the Fraser River Gateways program - particularly their potential to create employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for local First Nations. The sites were then ranked in terms of their criteria satisfaction and geographic dispersion, and then categorized by their ability to provide access and economic opportunities in a timely manner. A grouping of the access points into "Priority Gateways" and "Secondary Gateways" will guide the implementation of the Fraser River Gateways program in the short and long term.

The preliminary focus for implementation should be on the "Priority Gateways", which will satisfy demand for Fraser River access from Fort Langley to Hope, while providing more immediate business opportunities for local First Nations. Over time, and as Priority Gateways are established and operational, Secondary Gateways should be considered for feasibility as resources become available. The Secondary Gateways are equally as viable in terms of providing appropriate access to the Fraser River; however, they do not lend themselves to business opportunities as readily.

The Priority and Secondary Gateways are outlined below, and portrayed in Figure 1. This collection of potential gateways, while extensive, is not exhaustive. There are many additional informal private and industrial ramps on the north and south shores of this reach of the Fraser River, indicating potential at a number of additional locations as the Fraser River Gateway program expands.

Particular details regarding the specific infrastructure, staffing, and operational needs for the Priority Gateways are outlined in the following section. Particular emphasis is placed on the 'top two' Priority Gateways (in *italics* below), to provide an indication of the preliminary requirements for the shorter term opportunities for the Fraser River Gateways program.

Priority Gateways

- *Chawathil First Nation - Telte-Yet Campsite*
- *Seabird Island Indian Band*
- Sts'ailes
- Scowlitz Indian Band
- Shxwha:y Village

Secondary Gateways

- Langley Waterfront (Fort Langley and Glen Valley Regional Park)
- Pitt Meadows at Ferry Slip Landing

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- Former Albion Ferry Terminal
- Mission Harbour Authority
- Dewdney Nature Regional Park
- Nicomen Island (End of Athey Road)
- Old Orchard
- Island 22 Regional Park
- Peg Leg Bar
- Jespersen Bar
- Gill Road, Chilliwack
- Kilby Provincial Park
- Johnson Slough Rest Area
- Ferry Island Provincial Park
- FH Barber Provincial Park
- End of Rupert Street, Hope
- End of Wardle Street and 7th Ave, Hope

5.0 Outlining the Top "Priority Gateways"

The Fraser River Gateways program will be effectively launched by establishing two initial gateway projects. These gateways will serve as the showcase models for the program. Once these top priority gateways are operating, revenue generating river access points, additional gateways can be considered for implementation. While the two preliminary priority gateways will serve as a template for the Fraser River Gateways program, additional research into the relevant opportunities for subsequent priority and secondary gateways will need to be conducted at the time of implementation. This will ensure the best fit of amenities at each location given the environmental, cultural and economic considerations at the time of implementation, and will allow for learning from the preliminary priority gateways.

The top "Priority Gateways" - Chawathil First Nations Telte-Yet campsite, and Seabird Island Indian Band - were chosen based on:

- their satisfaction of the gateway selection criteria
- the availability of current entrepreneurial opportunities; and
- Their location in the particular area of this reach of the Fraser River where demand for access and amenities has been noted to be most intense, but in least supply.

5.1 Chawathil First Nations Telte-Yet Campsite

Located in Hope, the easternmost extent of this heavily used reach of the Fraser River, the Chawathil First Nation has an operational campsite that hugs the Fraser's south shore. The Telte- Yet Campsite is owned and operated by the Chawathil First Nation, and has basic amenities including washrooms, power connections, as well as First Nations crafts. With the provision of appropriate additional amenities, upgraded facilities, and appropriate access

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determined by the First Nation, this site could provide a prime location for a Fraser River Gateway joint venture.

The Chawathil First Nation is currently working on plans to enhance and develop infrastructure, services and facilities at this site, in their "Living Village Experience" (LVE) planning. Partnering with the First Nation to pursue these efforts would be an ideal opportunity for the FRST and Chawathil. The FRST has a good working relationship with the Chawathil Band, and while there were no discussions as part of this feasibility study, preliminary discussions at the time of a 2011 site visit were very positive. It is presumed that mutually beneficial endeavours can be successfully pursued with the parties.

Preliminary information released on the LVE reveals emerging plans that will enhance and develop infrastructure, services and facilities, focusing on an interpretive village, boat launch, viewing platforms, traditional food offerings, and recreational accommodation. These plans include Chawathil's Telte Yet site and adjacent lands, Xqelqamex (Greenwood Island). These proposed amenities, the location on First Nations lands along the Fraser River, as well as the LVE's emphasis on promoting employment and other entrepreneurial opportunities for First Nations, position Chawathil as an ideal Primary Gateway in the Fraser River Gateways Program. In this regard, the FRST should embrace Chawathil's Living Village Experience planning, and work with the First Nation in planning, developing, implementing, and marketing the river-related infrastructure and amenities.

Required Infrastructure and Operations

Peak demand for access at the Chawathil Telte-Yet Gateway would likely be between late June (after the Fraser River freshet) and late September, when water levels are suitable for access, and demand for fishing is high. Therefore, the focus for provision of amenities should be during this peak window, with supporting infrastructure, staffing, and other offerings being provided in this timeframe. In this regard, priority should be placed on establishing a formal boat launch, enhancing the existing Telte Yet campsite, and developing a convenience store with basic groceries, fishing needs, and First Nations artisan offerings. These facilities should be designed, developed, and implemented in partnership with the Chawathil First Nation, and with Chawathil staff managing and operating the site.

It will be important to ensure a sustainable revenue generating venture by creating suitable shoulder season attractions. Amenities at the site should focus during the fall and winter months on cultural and eco-tourism offerings. The LVE working concept suggests a covered eating area as a feature to implement at Telte-Yet. This would be an ideal amenity to promote shoulder season use of the Chawathil FRST Gateway, as cultural and food celebrations, performances and other events could be conducted here with rental and catering fees collected by the operation. Additional First Nations tourism initiatives, eco and river boat tours at the gateway could bolster off-season revenues.

First Nations tourism initiatives would be ideally suited at this location for many reasons. The town of Hope is a major transportation hub, connecting the Fraser Valley and Metro Vancouver

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Regional Districts with the rest of British Columbia. With the location on the Hope waterfront, the many visitors that travel to and through this historic community would provide an excellent market for First Nations tourism offerings. Fresh smoked/dried salmon products, woven and carved goods, art and textiles and other specialized cultural projects would offer great appeal. A cultural museum and gift shop would provide an excellent showcase for these pieces, and would help generate additional revenue. Museum tours could be promoted to the many tour buses that cross through Hope, as well as schools from Vancouver to Boston Bar.

Required Facilities

- Boat launch and ramp
- Campground enhancements, including increasing the power provided at each RV spot to 30 Amps, adding additional sites for RVs (10-20) and additional space and power for RV use
- Shaded parking area capable of handling cars, recreational vehicles and buses
- Convenience Store
- A covered dining area capable of holding up to 100 people with cooking facilities. This area would also have equipment and space for cleaning and preparing fish by all users
- Interpretive panels that would provide information about the rules of conduct at the site and on the water, as well as the Chawathil First Nation, the history of the Telte Yet site, the local ecosystems, and other general information-gift shop/museum; maintenance of existing campsite and facilities; fisheries monitoring station

Capacity Minimum/Maximum

With 29 sites currently available for RVs, and a typical use season spanning approximately 180 days (May-October), the capacity of the campground for RVs is approximately 5,400 visitors. With an estimated 3,500 visitors annually (LVE estimates), the campground is currently operating at 65% capacity. The Fraser River Gateway could greatly enhance the usage of the campsite and the suggested supporting amenities, with the increased demands associated with boat launch access to the Fraser River on-site.

Estimated Costs of the Facilities

According to consultants associated with the LVE, the campground currently employs 2 full-time and 1 part-time employees for approximately 6 months each year and generates on average \$70,000 per year in revenues. These revenues could help pay for the initial capital costs (estimates) of the amenities required of the gateway, including:

Boat Launch & Dock \$ 65,000

Covered Dining Area \$ 30,000

Convenience Store \$25,000

Enhancements to Campsite and Washrooms \$ 45,000

Interpretive Panels \$ 5,000

Additional staffing - determined by use of the gateway

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Legal/Regulatory Considerations for Construction/Implementation

The construction of the boat launch will require consultation with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, as well as with the District of Hope. Other relevant authorities may need to be consulted as additional infrastructure and facilities are considered.

Labour and Operational Requirements

Additional staff will be needed as gateway activity grows. As the use of the boat launch commences after implementation, staffing levels can be re-assessed. In the preliminary stages, additional staff will likely include a boat launch staff person to collect fees and monitor conduct, as well as staff for the convenience store. These for profit ventures must generate sufficient revenues to support the employees operating the enterprise, therefore, as demand for access to the site and its amenities grows, so too must staff levels.

Site Ownership and Management

The site is owned by the Chawathil First Nation. The Fraser River Gateway at Chawathil should be operated by the Chawathil First Nation, with profit accruing to Chawathil and being used to maintain and upgrade the operation. The site should be managed by the Chawathil First Nation, with a boat launch manager hired that will report on ongoing operations, including opportunities for improving First Nations – Sport Fishers relations.

Chawathil Gateway - Opportunities and Challenges

The Fraser River Gateway at the Chawathil Telte-Yet site will present many opportunities and challenges. Those pertinent to the initial gateway development, implementation and management are outlined below. Effective management of the relationship with the Chawathil First Nation will help ensure the opportunities are capitalized, and the challenges are suitably addressed.

Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Showcase the unique culture and history of Chawathil, as determined suitable by the First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chawathil members often feel alienated from their lands, due to unmanaged fishing access
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Showcase the natural capital of the Fraser River, Hope, and Chawathil First Nation, particularly the scenic backdrop provided by Hope Mountain and Landstrom Ridge in Hope	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access will need to be carefully managed (security /maintenance staff, user fees, etc) to ensure the site remains in its present natural and cultural state
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revenue generating opportunities for the First Nation (promotes entrepreneurial	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to fishing locations can be troublesome due to topography and

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goals)	fluctuating water levels
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build a successful First Nations tourism model, based on existing desire by the Chawathil First Nation to develop a viable Aboriginal Tourism product 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring the Chawathil culture, practices, lands, and access to their traditional spaces and places is not adversely affected by opening up managed access
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to the Fraser River in Hope, where there is no managed access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing adequate parking, as current parking for the campsite is very limited
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential synergies with the 'Experience the Fraser' project, which includes Hope its easternmost terminus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demand for access to the gateway will be integrally tied to Fraser River discharge levels, which can be variable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hope would receive positive economic spillover benefits of increased recreational fishing in the community, with visitors spending in local stores, restaurants and accommodation centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The bank along the campground and the Fraser is between 4 and 6ft and is subject to erosion during seasonal flooding

5.2 Seabird Island Indian Band

Seabird Island Indian Band is located along the north shore of the Fraser River in the upper Fraser Valley, three kilometres northeast of the town of Agassiz. Seabird Island's land base of nearly 4000 acres is bound by the ecologically significant Maria Slough and by the 'mighty' Fraser River. The expansive land base is rich in agricultural resources such as corn, raspberries, nursery stock, produce, hazelnuts, as well as ecological resources including Chinook spawning grounds and species at risk such as the Oregon Spotted Frog.

The Seabird Island Indian Band's connection to the Fraser is deeply rooted in their cultural practices and language. The Band offers an annual Tulip of the Valley festival and hosts many cultural events, festivals and educational workshops in their facilities, including the Kwelaxtelotiya Cultural Guest House. Seabird Island's Halq'emeylem (language of the Stó:lō) name, Sq'éwqel - 'turn in the river', and their purpose of walking hand-in-hand with First Nations people, pose them ideally for inclusion in the Fraser River Gateways program. Specifically, their goals of working to create opportunities for First Nations economic growth by encouraging education and entrepreneurship; their active pursuit of investors and potential business as a part of their business opportunity and land lease initiatives; and their working Comprehensive Community Plan framework, which focuses on increasing economic opportunities for First Nations, will promote their success as a Priority Gateway.

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Additionally, Seabird Island has been observed as a high-use recreational fishing spot, particularly along Highway 7. The high demand for access by the recreational fishing, and especially the shore-based angling community, often results in Seabird Island Band members being crowded out of their traditional fishing locations, on their lands. Developing a boat launch access in a location determined suitable by the Seabird Island Indian Band would help the Band retain their traditional fishing and river/slough access spots by promoting managed access for recreationalists in Seabird's desired location. The added incentive in this regard would be that the supporting amenities for the boat launch would generate revenues for the Band, and create employment for Band members.

Pursuing a gateway as a joint venture with Seabird Island would ideally take the form, in the shorter term, of a boat launch, RV park and campground, parking and a small convenience store onsite. In the long term, as revenues from the initial infrastructure accumulate, the joint venture could expand to include a cultural centre, commercial centre and eco-industrial park. These offerings will compliment Seabird Island Indian Band's current ventures, which include the Seabird Island Gas Bar and Convenience Store (offsite), land leases, gravel processing, a hazelnut orchard and select forestry initiatives, and align with their Comprehensive Community Planning efforts.

Required Facilities

- Boat launch and ramp
- RV park and campground for up to 150 tent sites and 50 RVs
- Convenience Store
- Shaded parking area capable of handling cars, recreational vehicles and buses
- Interpretive panels that would provide information about the rules of conduct at the site and on the water, as well as the Seabird Island Indian Band, the local ecosystems, and other relevant information
- Cultural centre with gift shop (long term)
- Commercial Centre (long term)
- Eco-industrial park (long term)

Capacity Minimum/Maximum

It is estimated that usage of a campground and boat launch at Seabird Island would be similar to that of the Chawathil Telte-Yet site, providing greatly needed managed access to the Fraser River in this high demand location. Specific assessments of the precise volumes of informal recreationalist drawing upon Seabird Island for access to the Fraser River and Maria Slough need to be conducted, to more precisely estimate appropriate service levels.

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As no current accommodation infrastructure or managed access is present at Seabird Island, it is recommended that the base model for access and service provision should be similar to the Chawathil Gateway. It is estimated that 3,500 - 5,400 users could visit the site over the peak season. Initial campsite provision should allow for approximately 50 RV hookups, and 150-200 campsites for tents. Washroom facilities offer an attractive appeal for potential recreationalists, therefore, 10 washroom stalls, 4 shower stalls, and 2 coin operated washing/drying machines should be provided at the campsite. The convenience store should provide basic groceries, tackle and fishing supplies, with increased levels of supply during the peak season.

Estimated Costs of the Facilities

Cost estimates for the installation of the initial and long-term amenities at Seabird Island's Fraser River Gateway are as listed below. It should be noted that these figures will be subject to change as discussions are carried out between the FRST and Seabird Island regarding the specific levels of access and service provision at this Fraser River Gateway.

Boat Launch & Dock \$ 65,000
Campsite and Washroom facilities \$ 125,000
Convenience Store \$25,000
Interpretive Panels \$ 5,000
Additional staffing - determined by use of the gateway

Long Term Amenities

Cultural centre - \$125,000

Commercial Centre - costs to be determined depending on the determined size of the centre

Eco-Industrial park - land leasing program

Legal/Regulatory Considerations for Construction/Implementation

The construction of the boat launch will require consultation with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, as well as with the District of Kent. Other relevant authorities may need to be consulted as additional infrastructure and facilities are considered.

Labour and Operational Requirements

Preliminary labor and operational requirements will be devoted to the boat launch and campsite. Similar to the Chawathil Telte-Yet site, it is recommended the 2 full-time and 1 part-time employee staff the campsite. These staff members, ideally from Seabird Island, would likely be seasonal.

Additional staff will be needed as gateway activity grows. As the use of the boat launch commences after implementation, staffing levels can be re-assessed. In the preliminary stages, additional staff will likely include a boat launch staff person to collect fees and monitor conduct, as well as staff for the convenience store. These for profit ventures must generate sufficient

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revenues to support the employees operating the enterprise, therefore, as demand for access to the site and its amenities grows, so too must staff levels.

Site Ownership and Management

Further consultation with the FRST and the Seabird Island Indian Band will be needed to determine specific ownership and management structures. It is recommended that the Fraser River Gateway at Seabird Island be operated by the Seabird Island Indian Band, with profit used to maintain and upgrade the operation. A profit re-allocation scheme should be developed to ensure that, once the initial access point and amenities become profitable, the long-term opportunities are implemented. These long-term amenities will help generate a more sustainable economic base for the joint venture, by providing off-season (and year-round) attractions to the site.

To promote First Nations employment opportunities, the site should be operated and managed by the Seabird First Nation. A campsite, a boat launch, and a convenience store manager should be hired. Additional staff for the facilities should be brought on as demands for service increase; however, preliminary staffing levels should be sufficient to provide a safe environment while ensuring the venture remains profitable. The specific staffing levels will need to be determined by Seabird Island as the facilities are implemented.

Seabird Island Gateway - Opportunities and Challenges

Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate the culture, history and unique environmental features of the Seabird Island Indian Band, and their lands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited attempts to manage access to the lands have not proven successful
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilize action towards Seabird Islands Land Lease program, which offers five year leases for investment/speculation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seabird Island members often feel isolated from their lands, due to unmanaged recreational fishing use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategically sited public access developed by the Band could potentially protect sensitive lands and redirect non-member traffic to controlled areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational fishers park informally along and walk across Highway 7 adjacent to the lands, creating safety risks for them
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate gateway implementation with Seabird Islands Comprehensive Community Planning process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational fishers accessing Seabird Island's popular fishing spots must cross an active, uncontrolled railway crossing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase economic and employment opportunities for the First Nation by 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of amenities from pedestrian and boat access, to camping facilities,

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starting on-reserve businesses	washrooms, waste receptacles/ disposal, signage, etc.
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5.3 Potential Revenues

The potential revenues for the gateways can be derived by estimating the earnings from the campsite, boat launch, and parking facilities at each gateway. While additional revenues will be collected from the retail-oriented amenities at each site, the revenues will be derived from discretionary spending, making them difficult to predict.

To determine the potential earnings at each site, the following calculations were made. The average rate for a campsite in BC is \$37.50/night, with full-hookup sights averaging \$48/night, and non-hookup sights averaging \$30/night, provincially. The average rates for parking and boat launching in the Lower Mainland of BC are \$5/day for a vehicle without a trailer (including car-top boats), and \$ 10/day for a vehicle with a boat trailer.

If we assume that average rates are charged at the sites, then we can anticipate the following potential earnings from each site.

Chawathil First Nation

At Chawathil, with 29 full hook-up RV sites, and over 100 non-hookup sites, there are 129 sites available for current use. There is capacity for up to 200 non hook-up sites, and this report proposes an additional 10-20 RV hookup sites, therefore, as demand grows, so to can the earnings potential. There is also sufficient space to provide for additional parking for day use of the site, and LVE estimates predict up to 200 vehicles, including vehicle boat trailer combinations could be parked in this space. Using current availability, and the peak use season of May-October (180 days), as well as the recommended average provincial campsite rate, we can foresee the following potential profits:

Accommodation

- \$ 202,5000 (just RV sites at full occupancy for the peak season)
- \$ 870, 750 (all current sites at full occupancy for the peak season)
- \$ 1,687,500 (all potential sites at full occupancy for the peak season)

Parking/Boat Launch

- \$117,000 - \$234,000 (Current maximum occupancy for peak season)
- \$180,000 - \$360,000(Potential maximum occupancy for peak season)

Seabird Island Indian Band

As the Seabird Island Gateway's proposed campsite is closely modeled after Chawathil's Telte-Yet campsite, we can assume similar potential profits. There may be a small lag in the initial

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year or two as the use of this new site grows, however, as demand for use of the area is very high, and as amenities in the area to support this use are very lacking, the adoption phase of this new venture may be very, very brief, and profits may be just as high as at Chawathil.

At Seabird Island, there will be a proposed 50 full-hook up RV sites, and 150 non-hookup sites, resulting in 200 sites available for potential use. It will be beneficial to supplement the sites with additional parking for day use of the site, beginning with space for up to 200 vehicles and vehicles/boat trailers to be parked. Using the proposed availability, and the peak use season of May-October (180 days), as well as the recommended average provincial campsite rate, we can foresee the following potential profits:

Accommodation

- \$ 337,500 (just RV sites at full occupancy for the peak season)
- \$ 1,012,500(all potential sites at full occupancy for the peak season)

Parking/Boat Launch

- \$180,000 - \$360,000(Potential maximum occupancy for peak season)

Fraser River Gateway	Costs	Revenue	Net Revenue
Chawathil First Nation	\$240,000 \$170,000 operating costs + \$70,000 current staff*	\$2,047,500**	\$1,807,500
Seabird Island Indian Band	\$290,000 \$220,000 operating costs + \$70,000 initial staff*	\$1,372,500**	\$1,082,500

* Estimated costs will increase with additional staff, at a rate of approximately \$30,000/full-time staff equivalent.

** Calculated using the maximum potential revenue figures

5.4 Outlining the Other Priority Gateways

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As the initial two 'Priority Gateways' become operational and economically self-sustaining, these models can be used to develop the three remaining priority gateways (briefly outlined below), followed by the secondary gateways. In the interim, work can proceed on engaging the stakeholders pertinent to each location, and in the case of the three remaining priority gateways, consulting with the First Nations, regarding interest in creating access to the lands, along with joint venture opportunities.

5.4.1 Sts'ailes

A Fraser River Gateway at Sts'ailes (formerly the Chehalis Indian Band) could provide great potential for both Sts'ailes and the Fraser River Gateways program. The First Nation is located proximate to the confluence of the Fraser River and Harrison Rivers, near Agassiz. This area is characterised by an abundance of important species and ecosystems, including many species of salmon, and white sturgeon. Notably, this unique connection of the two rivers provides such biodiversity that the Province of BC is working to consider it a Wildlife Management Area, and the Pacific Fisheries Resource Council has declared the area Canada's first "Salmon Stronghold." This biodiverse zone provides important habitat for many species of salmon as well as white sturgeon, and has long been highly utilized by First Nation fishers. The appeal offered by the species richness is noted by not only First Nations, but also recreational fishers and eco-tourism/guided fishing operations. Demand for space on the water in this area can be very high, and the most proximate access from the Fraser River is downstream approximately 17 kilometres at Island 22 Regional Park, in Chilliwack.

The Band owns and operates many successful ventures, including: the Sasquatch Crossing Eco Lodge (a bed and breakfast); Sts'ailes Lhawathet Lalem (Chehalis Healing House); a Heritage Trail; and has plans underway for eco-tourism offerings such as the Sp'óq'es (Bald Eagle) Café (a bald eagle orientated educational eco-tourism initiative), as well as a proposed Sasquatch Crossing Eco Resort, to operate in conjunction with the Sasquatch Crossing Eco Lodge. Sts'ailes is also in negotiations with private interests regarding joint venture opportunities for Hemlock Resort Development.

The Band is ideally suited to the economic and ecological goals of the Fraser River Gateway program, with their Sts'ailes Development Corporation serving the *sovereign interests of the Sts'ailes people through the creation, ownership and operation of profitable businesses including socio-economic enterprises*. It will be important to establish a working relationship with Sts'ailes to explore their specific interests in the gateway concept. Preliminary concepts for discussion should focus on exploring interests for establishing a boat launch on the lands, as well adding additional accommodation (RV/camping), parking, washroom and convenience store facilities, to support boat launch access to the Harrison and Fraser Rivers.

5.4.2 Scowlitz First Nation

The Scowlitz First Nation has lands spanning the north shore of the Fraser River and the southwest flank of Harrison Bay, near Lake Errock. This area shares many of the same appeals

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in terms of biodiversity and ecosystem richness as the Sts'ailes lands, and is situated just downstream of Sts'ailes. Access to the Fraser River between Mission and Harrison Hot Springs on this side of the Fraser River is very limited. The proximate to Scowlitz is very limited, with the well travelled Highway 7 that parallels the river, and the steeply elevated slopes lining much of this reach. These elevated slopes level off towards Scowlitz, however, which could provide a desirable suitable boat launch access to the Fraser on the Scowlitz lands. As convenience store, more campsites and additional amenities would be required on the site to support boat launch access, the Scowlitz First Nation could benefit greatly by participating in the Fraser River Gateways Program. Endeavours to establish communication with members of Scowlitz will need to be carried on by the FRST. It is recommended that conversations are pursued in order to meaningfully explore this First Nations specific interests regarding access to the Fraser River associated with their lands, and the economic opportunities tied to such ventures.

5.4.3 Shxwha:y Village

The Shxwha:y Village First Nation, located on the south shore of the Fraser River in Chilliwack, is just downstream of the high-use Island 22 Regional Park and boat launch. The Shxwha:y First Nation leases sections of their lands for economic opportunities, and will be undergoing a recreational planning exercise in the coming months, which could provide many opportunities for economic ventures. Potential opportunities for discussion could explore the following opportunities.

Their location downstream of Island 22 Regional Park could provide tremendous opportunity for a successful boat launch and supporting infrastructure, including washrooms, parking, camping, and a convenience store, as Island 22 often exceeds capacity during peak season. With many users already travelling to the area for boat launch and overnight access at Island 22, and with such limited additional access to the Fraser River, a boat launch venture (perhaps in partnership with the FVRD's Parks Branch Island 22 site) with Shxwha:y Village could prove very successful at capturing the additional users already seeking access to the Fraser in this area.

Consultation with the Shxwha:y Village will be necessary to determine interest in the Fraser River Gateways initiative, joint venture and partnership opportunities, and to explore specific interest for facilities and amenities on their lands.

6.0 Managing the Fisheries

The Fraser River Gateways program will be an important initiative that will help promote managed access to the Fraser River from Fort Langley to Hope. The gateways will serve as attractive access points, helping to decrease the use of informal, and un-sustainable, river access points. A key component to the success of the program will be monitoring and surveillance of the gateways and their users. By providing managed access, equipped with amenities, codes of user conduct, and staff equipped to promote and enforce the conduct, the

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FRST and its gateway partners will be paving the initial steps towards respectful behaviour on the river.

However, enforcement of the activity on the river will be critical to the success of the gateways. Managing the fisheries as well as the 'on the water' conduct of the commercial, recreational and First Nations fishers will be a cornerstone of the program.

A key issue for ensuring proper use of the fish resources, specifically salmon, will be DFO's capacity to monitor catch results. A sustainable fishery is in the interest of all groups of fishers, and is intrinsically tied to DFO getting the right catch numbers. DFO will need to provide sufficient surveillance of the gateways to help achieve this goal, as an important reason for the lack of trust between two key users of this reach of the Fraser, sport fishers and First Nations, is the lack of trust in each other's catch figures. To help DFO in their efforts, the FRST and the Gateway operators should design and implement joint monitoring strategies for each gateway, that will to help improve the tracking of catch statistics, and strengthen trust between the users.

As one goal of the FRST is to maintain a forum for dialogue to resolve differences, conflict, and issues through a spirit of mutual recognition, respect, and reconciliation, the Fraser River Gateway initiative will be a dynamic tool in achieving this goal as it will act as a focal point for issues and concerns. Success will be measured not necessarily by decreasing numbers of issues but increasing numbers of resolved issues.

7.0 Next Steps

The current feasibility study has identified two high potential, Fraser River Gateway candidates that meet the criteria established for this study. To move this project forward the following steps need to be taken:

1. The core working group for this project needs to contact both candidate First Nations and schedule preliminary discussions. These meetings should establish the basic level of interest, address concerns, list funding possibilities, establish a working committee to complete further work and identify any other preliminary considerations.
2. Assuming there is sufficient interest, a general concept of what services might be provided and the locations of these services needs to be created. This would help inform proposals to develop a detailed business plans.
3. Develop detailed business plans that can be vetted by each First Nation community
4. Assuming community acceptance, the funding required to complete the business plans will need to be identified and pursued

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5. Upon completion of the business plan and further community consultation, financing for executing the business plan would need to be identified and pursued

6. Create the governance structure required to manage the project development and operations

7. Begin construction.