

## 6.4 Nature observation

### 6.4.1 Resource Assessment

Wildlife and natural history viewing are activities closely associated with ecotourism because they are low impact and non-consumptive. They are also linked to many other activities such as coastal cruising, ocean kayaking and sport fishing. Ecotourism is a growth industry, and a trend that is expected to continue.

The Mid Coast offers tremendous opportunities in this product area. The coastline has been molded by glaciation and sculpted by water and wind activity. There are numerous inlets, coves, bays, islands, islets, shoals, lagoons and beaches. Large lakes, many containing scenic cliffs and beaches, are abundant in the region. There are numerous small creeks and a number of river systems (the largest are the Bella Coola, Dean and Machmel) that empty into the Pacific Ocean. There are various circuit opportunities associated with islands and there is a marine/lake linked product associated with Fish Egg Inlet, Elizabeth Lake, Hardy and River Inlets (portage required and presently undeveloped).

The area has moderate value for Grizzly bear viewing and Princess Royal Island is renowned for the Kermode bear. Other faunas are abundant and can be sighted along rivers and adjacent mountains -- these include mountain goats, black bear, eagles, and migrating birds. The rivers are traditionally well known for salmon and steelhead that are ideal for fishing and for viewing during spawning. Few of the sub-products can exist in isolation; they are interrelated and, when several are combined, can be developed into a viable tourism product for the Mid-Coast.

**Table 6.4-1: Region SWOT Analysis for Nature Observation**

<b>Strength</b>	Quality and quantity of natural and wildlife features, very high marketability for both marine-based (Orcas, whales) and land-based (Kermode bear, grizzlies) species as well as the extensive intact coastal rain forest (old growth and the possibility of unique trees). Proximity to communities. Growing global awareness of Great Bear Rain Forest.
<b>Weakness</b>	Operator attention to resource management issues. Level of support facilities and services available (in terms of washrooms, buildings, parking areas, etc.). Insects. Unreliability of wildlife sightings. Cost to access region. Cost of fuel for boats involved in wildlife observation.
<b>Opportunity</b>	Infrastructure development (e.g. trails and viewing platforms), interpretive touring, touring products linking wildlife, natural features and built facilities (e.g. lighthouses). Linkage to high opportunity activity such as ocean kayaking or boating.
<b>Threats</b>	Unknown tourism impacts on wildlife behaviour & reproductive capacity (e.g., whales and birds). Poor harvesting practices and design can affect scenery and reduce the numbers of large trees. Where bear viewing is frequented, the potential for habituation of bears to tourists is a concern to the safety of both. Direct impacts on wildlife behavior.

### The Mid Coast and Nature Observation

There are a variety of wildlife and natural history features in the region that can be developed and marketed in a variety of ways that could benefit the communities that rely on them. Tourism provides a non-consumptive opportunity that can be advanced with cultural and environmental sensitivity.

The nature observation product can be linked to the culture and heritage of the region through interpretation and awareness building. The Heiltsuk, Kitsoo, Nuxalk and Oweekeno First Nations people have historically derived their sustenance from the bounty of the land and the rich marine resources. The abundances allowed time for arts and ritual. The First Nations continued presence as a people and the subtle historical evidence of their relationship to the natural surroundings heightens the feeling of mystery and wonder for the recreationist along the coastline. Later migrations of people include Alexander Mackenzie<sup>1</sup> who reached the Pacific Ocean in 1793. His arrival to the Pacific shore was followed by explorers in ships trading for furs. Later migrations included those who arrived to exploit and process the natural resources. Evidence can be seen in abandoned canneries, settlements and timber harvesting.

## **Geographic Features**

The coastline has been shaped by glaciation, water and wind activity. There are copious numbers of inlets, coves, bays, islands, islets, shoals, lagoons and beaches. The region boasts several smaller rivers of significance and a number of large rivers that link the coast to the interior. Unique and scenic lakes with towering cliffs can be found along the outer coast and Princess Royal Island. The alpine areas of the remote Coastal Mountains are difficult to reach but offer the enthusiast and air tours untouched expanses of snow and tundra. Many of the opportunities found in the region are internationally significant.

### Hotsprings

There are four primary hotsprings (and other minor or potential) noted in the study area. These include:

- Tallheo- in South Bentinck, consisting of a number of pool clusters. The most popular is the soaking pool just two meters from the high tide mark. This site has First Nations significance, and the Nuxalk people identify three longhouses associated with the site. Linked to Bella Coola and the Nuxalk.
- Nascall - located on private land and consisting of two springs. Linked to Bella Coola and Ocean Falls.
- Eucott Bay (previously developed) offers good anchorage and the springs are among the largest and best known along the coast. There are sets of springs across the bay from the other. The main spring to the west has a high mineral content. The southwest pools include a set with body sized mud soaking pools. Evidence of former development can be found in the ruined bathtubs and pilings. Linked to Bella Coola, Bella Bella and Ocean Falls.
- Sheemahant - (partially developed) cluster of springs. Bathhouse is to the right of the logging road. Hot water issues from cracks in bedrock down cliffs and into a small hot creek, which is held in a boiler tank to cool, and piped to a bathhouse. Developed and maintained by loggers. Potential development by the Oweekeno.
- Thorsen Creek (undeveloped) - reputedly hot enough for soaking. Linked to Bella Coola.

### Large Rivers

The Bella Coola, Kimsquit and Dean rivers are the best known. Each links the coast to the interior and is noted for its historical trails. River fishing is notable with the Dean River having an international reputation for

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<sup>1</sup> He is the first documented traveler to cross the North American continent

steelhead that put up an extraordinary struggle. Other rivers such as the Kimsquit and the Bella Coola/Atnarko provide excellent bear observation and boat drifting.

### Estuaries

There are a number of large estuaries in the region that provide good nature observation. Bear and birds are the most visible wildlife to frequent the estuaries. Major estuaries include the Bella Coola, Kimsquit, Koeye, Oweekeno, Kwatna, and Taleomy. Viewing platforms and blinds may benefit observation of the wildlife and provide excellent opportunities for interpretation.

### Marshes

There are marshes located along the major rivers and on the edge of a number of lakes. The link between Anchor and Canoona Lake has a large marsh, which is a protective area for many animals and offers interpretive qualities.

### Lakes

Numerous scenic lakes in region with good sport fishing. Those with the highest scenic values with lofty peaks and cliffs include Oweekeno Lake, Ellerslie Lake, Anchor and Canoona Lake, Roderick Lake and Deer Lake. Many have notable fishing opportunities and white sand beaches. Anchor/Canoona Lakes have a reputation for excellent Steelhead fishing and Ellerslie, Anchor, Sagar and Four Lakes have fine beaches. The scenery and the presence of white sand beaches make these coastal lakes provincially significant and there are touring opportunities.

### Cliffs, Gorges and Escarpments

The coast has a scattered collection of these features. Some of the most significant are found near the entrance in Fiordland Provincial Park and Anchor Lake. Dean and Burke Channels are well known for the towering, steep mountains that flank the channels. Ideal for the marine tour product.

### Forests and Large Trees

The area is noted for the expanse of old growth forest. The outer coast forest has smaller trees due to the poor growing regime whereas the inner coast and valleys are better growing sites with the expectation that there are opportunities for the presence of large trees. Traditional and current harvesting has reduced the numbers of these large trees substantially.

A large tree can be different for each species however a tree with high recreation and tourism value is generally large in radius and inspires awe. These trees are hundreds of years old and if harvested will not return in the foreseeable future (hence, a lost feature).

This is ideal for the marine tour and canopy walk product. There are tremendous interpretation opportunities. Big trees have been identified in Roscoe Inlet and in some of the remaining drainage.

### Waterfalls

Numerous waterfalls of minor significance are found throughout the region, and provide a scenic backdrop.

### Islands, Archipelagos

The outer coast is a large archipelago with significant island groupings west of Hunter Island and Campbell Island. There are excellent boating and kayaking opportunities that can support interpretation.

### Alpine, sub-alpine

The Coast Range has extensive remote sub-alpine and alpine features including glaciers and icefields. The alpine/subalpine areas are rugged and generally difficult to access. These features provide ski touring and air tour opportunities and are ideal for the interpretation of glacial forces.

### Aquatic Landscape

Aquatic landscapes can be found throughout the coast. Competition with other regions is high as there are numerous areas on the BC coast which provide a similar experience for scuba diving. Charter boats identify the high costs to fuel and running time required in dive shuttling, low fees and the potential for damage to the fiberglass boats. Safety concerns related to the distances away from decompression chambers and medical help.

## **Wildlife**

Wildlife viewing includes both marine and land-based viewing opportunities. Viewing of Orca, Grizzly bear and the Kermode bear -- three species that can be found in the region -- are internationally renowned. Many rivers are well known for salmon and steelhead and are ideal for fishing and viewing of spawning. Oolichans may be viewed in the region. Bald eagles and waterfowl are abundant. The shorelines contain shellfish, starfish and other forms of aquatic life. In addition to Orcas, several other whale marine species can be viewed. The deeper waters are home to halibut, octopus and wolf eels. The sea otter is reputedly found in the kelp off Goose Island.

### Land Based Wildlife

#### *Bears*

The Mid-Coast has an international reputation for the presence of Grizzly bears and the Kermode or "Spirit" bear. Bear observations are best undertaken from a viewing platform or from a boat along the coast or river. The reliable presence of bears is an important component of the nature observation product.

Bear observation is linked to available optimal locations to view feeding activities. These are associated with the emergence of new grasses and sedges in the estuaries during spring, the arrival of the salmon, the availability of bird eggs in the estuaries and the bounty of berries in known patches.

The low to moderate reliability of observing bears, shortness of season, lack of dependable sites for viewing, and the limited number of viewing areas close to population centers are an impediment to commercial viewing opportunities.

A common occurrence along the coast is the hunting of bears and the frightening of bears by fishermen away from choice fishing ground. This often results in wary, elusive bears -- reducing the observation opportunities. If hunting and harassment pressures are reduced, chances of sightings would likely increase. On the other hand, carelessness among fishermen when disposing fish waste and the constant presence of humans has resulted in the habituation of bears to humans. This is a safety concern for humans and a liability to the bear. Passive measures must be used to assure viewer safety. The identification of safe, discrete viewing areas, the building of safe viewing platforms, the use of boats and other means to ensure that bear watching does not disturb the bear or bring attention to human interaction is a move in the right direction.

- *Grizzly*

Primary viewing areas are as follows.

Area	Unit	Community	Designation	Comments
Khutze	Outside 6C	Klemtu, Bella Bella	Crown	Tidal areas, viewable from marine. Unreliable sightings.
Green Inlet/Lagoon	Outside 6C	Klemtu	Crown	Tidal areas, viewable from marine. Unreliable sightings.
Koeye	1D	Bella Bella	Crown	Tidal area, viewable from marine. Unreliable sightings
Kimsquit	5A	Bella Coola	Crown, IR	Tidal areas, river, viewable from marine and river. High sighting potential in spring and during salmon runs.
Atnarko	5D	Bella Coola, Hagensbory	Provincial Park, Crown	River, viewable from land and river. Moderate sighting potential in spring and during salmon runs.

The primary season is in May, June and July. Bears congregate at the intertidal zone to graze on sedges before the arrival of berries, salmon and other foods that arrive in spring and fall. With some exceptions, the topography of most rivers in the region allows the bears to spread out during the salmon season limiting the congregation of bears and the subsequent viewing capabilities. The clear waters of the Atnarko attract bears during salmon season.

- *Kermode "Spirit" Bears*

This species has been dubbed the Great Spirit bear and is found in an area encompassing Princess Royal Island, Gribble Island and the mainland from Kitimat to Terrace. The bear is uncommon and the level of confidence for an ensured sighting is low except possibly in areas held in strict confidence. The opportunity to view this bear has been heavily marketed. Princess Royal Island is the best known destination, with Klemtu the primary staging area.

- *Black Bears*

This species can be observed throughout the region. Although common, the level of confidence for an ensured sighting is low.

### *Mountain Goats*

Primary Viewing Areas: May be observed along steep coastal areas including Oweekeno, Fiordland. The goats are generally a considerable distance from viewing areas and require the use of binoculars.

### *Elk*

This species can be observed in a number of valleys with the Kilbella and the Chuckwalla reputed to have the highest opportunity.

### Marine Based Wildlife

#### *Whales*

Sightings of Orcas, dall porpoises and white-sided dolphins are generally common. The Humpback and Grey whales migrate through the region in the spring and fall. The limitations for whale watching in the region include higher fuel costs associated with whale watching (generally requires constant running of the tour boat) and unreliability of sightings. Although sightings are seasonally consistent, they can be unreliable on a daily basis.

#### *Humpback and Grey Whales*

Both species are migratory and pass the Mid Coast in the spring and fall. Cape Caution is noted for the presence of Grey whales. Grey whales have been seen in a number of bays including Bella Bella.

#### *Orcas*

There are resident populations that can be viewed year-round but there is not a single location that they are known to frequent (such as Robson Bight, off Vancouver Island<sup>2</sup>). Therefore the whales may be common but the reliability of sightings is low. There is reputed to be a rubbing beach in the outer coast and this may hold a possibility for sighting reliability.

#### *Other marine mammals*

- *Sea Otters*

There is reputed to be a colony in the Goose Island group.

- *Sea Lions and Seals*

Viewing opportunities can be found in many areas along the coast. There are a number of seal haulout including one to the south of Goose Island.

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<sup>2</sup> The whales rub themselves on the round gravel shoreline found in Robson Bight.

### *Fish*

- *Salmon*

The region boasts an excellent sports fishery but has moderate viewing potential. Major rivers are generally muddy and the visibility poor. The smaller rivers have a limited influx of salmon thus limiting the opportunity for developing viewing areas. Significant sites include the bridges along the Bella Coola River.

- *Oolichans*

Oolichan traditional runs include the Kimsquit, Bella Coola and Oweekeno Rivers and take place in the spring. A tremendous number of predators would accompany the fish including thousands of seagulls, eagles, sea lions, seals, Orcas and other species. The past years have seen a tremendous decline in the numbers of oolichans returning to these rivers and it is feared that these runs will never return.

- *Herring*

A large run of herring enters the protected waters to spawn in the kelp during the spring. Two types of fisheries take place -- the harvesting of herring by net and the harvesting of roe attached to the seaweed. This is an active time for the native fisheries and many people are involved. It offers a tremendous opportunity for interpretive tourism targeting not just the Japanese (who are major consumers of roe) but other groups as well.

The *oolichan* and the *herring* fisheries follow the long winters and herald the beginning of a new year for the First Nations people. There are tremendous opportunities for cultural and nature interpretation. The primary drawback is the time of year (it is early), the uncertainty as to when exactly the fish will arrive, and the fact that many of the residents are extremely busy at the fishery.

### Birds

#### *Eagles*

Eagles are very common along the coast with increased concentrations found during salmon and oolichan runs.

#### *Trumpeter Swans*

There is a flyway of swans along the Bella Coola River to the Atnarko where they are known to congregate in Lonesome Lake (within Tweedsmuir Provincial Park). Swans are also evident in the estuaries along the coast. The most visible are the 30+ swans located in the Bella Coola estuary.

### *Other Birds*

Marine rock promontories offer rookeries and safety for aquatic birds. These are extremely sensitive to human visitations and constraints may have to put in place thereby limiting the opportunities. Red, blue and yellow species are found in many areas of the coast.

Waterfowl is abundant throughout the region. However, other regions in BC have greater bird watching significance.

## **6.4.2 Market, Economic and Social Assessment of Nature Observation**

### **Competition**

On the Mid Coast there are currently no tourism operators who identify nature observation as their primary activity. However, several businesses do promote the natural scenery and the area's wildlife as part of the experience of the tourism product they do offer. This is typical throughout the coast where the majority of businesses such as ocean kayaking, marine cruising, and others identify nature observation as a key attraction.

There are several businesses on the west coast that specialize and promote nature observation exclusively. In the North Coast Forest District there are two operators who have park permits to the Khutzeymateen Provincial Park. These operators specialize in Grizzly bear viewing. Throughout Vancouver Island there are approximately 85 commercial whale watching tour boat operators with several of these operators clustered in Victoria and Tofino.

### **Market and demand**

On the Mid Coast, land and ocean based wildlife viewing will likely continue to be linked to other activities such as marine cruising, destination lodges, or ocean kayaking. Non-consumptive use of wildlife resources has been identified as one of the fastest growing components of tourism around the world. There has clearly been a shift in traveler preferences over the past decade with regards to appreciation and participation in land and marine based tourism activities and wildlife viewing. Wildlife viewing has been projected to grow by approximately five percent annually in BC. Wildlife viewing, with 20 percent of participants being 55 years or older, has the highest average mature adult participation rates among ecotourism activities.

BC has become recognized worldwide for its diversity of wildlife and scenic viewscapes. While visitors to BC may undertake several activities on their visits, many spend some or all of their time participating in some form of land-based and marine-based activities. **Table 6.4-2** outlines the participation rates for land-based and marine-based activities identified from the 1996 tourism survey in BC.

**Table 6.4-2: BC 1996 Visitor Survey: Land Based Participation**

	Number of Total Visitors	Participation	
		Land-Based Activities <sup>3</sup>	Marine-Based Activities <sup>4</sup>
<b>Long Haul US</b> (California/Hawaii, Mountain States, Central & Eastern States, and Mexico)	1,958,000	69%	18%
<b>Regional US</b> (Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Alaska)	3,615,000	58%	13%
<b>Regional Canada</b> (Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, NWT, Yukon)	3,706,000	64%	17%
<b>Long Haul Canada</b> (Rest of Canada)	1,196,000	59%	7%
<b>Europe</b>	535,000	79%	21%
<b>Asia/Pacific</b>	828,000	66% <sup>5</sup>	18%

**Source:** Tourism British Columbia

### Land Use and Planning Impacts

#### *Existing Recreation Uses*

Recreational use is generally low throughout the areas identified for nature observation opportunities. However, since wilderness viewing could involve a variety of different access methods (ie., helicopter to hiking) each approach will have to be assessed prior to determining the impact on current recreation activities. However, in general, moderate growth in commercial wildlife viewing should not create conflict with existing recreation uses.

#### *Other Land Uses*

For nature observation, visual quality and wildlife populations and corridors will be a critical consideration for this type of product. Therefore, forest practices carried out within key wildlife areas will need to be planned accordingly.

Proponents of new nature observation ventures will also need to work with local First Nations to ensure current community uses and culturally sensitive sites are not disrupted. Recently, some First Nations have raised concerns surrounding the contamination of kelp beds with human waste by ocean kayakers. As well, several culturally sensitive sites are in close proximity to significant wildlife viewing areas.

<sup>3</sup> Land based activities include: visiting National/Provincial parks, Wildlife viewing/bird watching, hiking/backpacking, exploring backcountry wilderness.

<sup>4</sup> Marine-based activities include: ocean boating (sail/power) and whalewatching.

<sup>5</sup> For the sub-category “All other Asia/Pacific” (excluding Australia, New Zealand, Japan) participation in land based activities jumps to 85%.

### *Community Use or Planning*

The development of nature observation activities would likely fit with the tourism development objectives of local communities. For those communities on the Mid Coast that have explored tourism development, all have recognized the value of wildlife viewing to the development of their tourism products. The Bella Coola Valley, Hartley Bay, Kitsoo, and Heiltsuk First Nations are either developing or exploring tourism initiatives which would capitalize on the local wildlife and natural features.

### **Employment Impacts**

Seasonal employment would be generated for guides, and in the areas of marketing and operations. Wildlife viewing guides need to be good interpreters to maximize the visitors' experience, so special training will likely be required for guide to achieve the required skills.

### **Regulatory or Crown Tenure Requirements**

If a private trail or campsite development were to be built for wildlife/nature history viewing then a tenure or permit from BC Assets and Land Corporation would be required. If a public trail or campsite was to be used, then agreements for use and maintenance with the Ministry of Forests would be required. Activity targeted within provincial parks would require park use permits. Operators will need to follow the policies developed for commercial recreation on crown lands.

### **Level of Community Support**

Most communities on the Mid Coast are actively exploring the incorporation of wild life and nature viewing into tourism products they are currently developing or exploring.

### **Infrastructure Requirements**

The infrastructure requirements for nature observation activities will depend greatly on the associated mode of transportation and the structure of the events surrounding the wild life viewing as well as whether it is land-based or marine oriented.

### **General Capital Requirements**

The capital requirements will vary, depending on how the nature observation activities are structured and to what degree existing infrastructure (ie., accommodation, air transportation) is involved.

Table 6.4-2 analyses each geographical unit using resource, market, economic and social criteria. The rationale for the boundaries of these geographic units is discussed in Section 5.2 of this report. Areas with the highest potential for the Ocean Kayaking Product have been identified as *polygons* on the map and are described in Table 6.4-3.

**Table 6.4-3: PRODUCT ANALYSIS TABLE: NATURE OBSERVATION**

Unit Name/Number		Outer Coast (1)	Fiords & Lakes(2)	Channels (3)	Oweekeno (4)	Mountains & Trade Routes (5)	Princess Royal Island (6)
<b>Resource Criteria</b>							
Uniqueness of Key Features	Geographic	High (islands, lakes with beaches)	High (cliffs, rock)	High (deep fiords)	High (deep fiords)	High (valleys, alpine, glaciers)	High (lakes with beaches, cliffs)
	Marine Wildlife	Medium (common but unreliable)	Low (common but unreliable)	Low (relatively common but unreliable)	Low (relatively common, unreliable)	N/A	Low (relatively common but unreliable)
	Land Wildlife	Medium (site specific but unreliable)	Medium (site specific but unreliable)	Low	Medium (site specific with some reliability )	High (site specific with high reliability )	High (unique species with high reliability)
Supportive Resources	Estuaries/Marshes	Medium	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Salmon Rivers	Low (Koeye)	Low	Medium (spread apart)	Medium (spread apart)	Medium (spread apart)	Low
	Hotsprings	-	-	Three	One	One	-
	Cliffs/Gorges	Low	High	Medium	Medium	High	High
	Alpine / Subalpine	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Low
	Aquatic	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	-	Medium
	Large Trees	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	High (?)
Existence of Supportive Infrastructure		Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
Associated Products		Marine cruise, road tour, culture and heritage, hiking, scuba diving, cultural heritage interpretation					
Significance of Associated Products		High	High	High	High	High	High
Access to Sub Unit Area		High	Medium	High	Medium	High	Medium
Access from Staging Area to Resource		High	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Prime Season		Spring to Fall	Spring to Fall	Spring to Fall	Spring to Fall	Spring to Fall	Spring to Fall
Resource Discussion (refer to DESCRIPTION for details on this complex subject)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mod. Suitability</li> <li>- Forests, Islands</li> <li>- Lakes with beach</li> <li>- Aquatic, Herring</li> <li>- Grizzly (Koeye)</li> <li>- Orcas and whales (common, unreliable)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cliffs</li> <li>- Forests</li> <li>- Fiords</li> <li>- Lakes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fiords</li> <li>- Steep terrain</li> <li>- Herring</li> <li>- Hotsprings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Herring, Oolichan (possibly)</li> <li>- Cliffs</li> <li>- Mountain goats</li> <li>- Grizzly bears</li> <li>- Hotspring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rivers</li> <li>- Grizzly bears</li> <li>- Mountain goats</li> <li>- Salmon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kermode bear</li> <li>- Lakes with beach</li> <li>- Cliffs</li> </ul>
Communities Most Able to Benefit		Klemtu, Bella Bella, Shearwater, Dawsons Landing	Bella Bella, Shearwater, Ocean Falls	Bella Coola, Bella Bella, Ocean Falls, Namu	Rivers Inlet, Oweekeno	Bella Coola	Klemtu, Hartley Bay

Market, Economic and Social Criteria							
Unit Name/Number		Outer Coast (1)	Fiords & Lakes(2)	Channels (3)	Oweekeno (4)	Mountains & Trade Routes (5)	Princess Royal Island (6)
Level of Competition		Regional: Low Provincial: Low to High – depending on the specific activity or product focus. For example, whale watching is high in BC while other activities would be lower. International: Moderate to High – again depending on the specific natural observation product.					
Market Demand Potential		Provincial: moderate to high. Regional US: High International: High					
Impact/Conflict	Existing Recreation Use	Low to Moderate	Low	Low	Low	Low to Moderate	Low
	Other Land Uses	First Nations’ cultural sites and traditional uses will need to be consider with specific sites and areas being considered for nature observation activities.					
		Forestry use – low	Forestry use – med to high	Forestry use - low	Forestry use – med to high	Forestry use – med to high	Forestry use - low
Community Use or Plans		Would need to balance with alternative local uses to mitigate potential community impacts.					
Local Employment Impacts		Each area would typically only be able to support a small amount of employment however, across the entire Mid Coast this employment could be significant.					
Regulatory or Crown Tenure Requirements		The appropriate portions of the commercial recreation on crown land policy will apply.					
Level of Community Support		Bella Bella actively exploring opportunities.	Bella Bella and Shearwater actively exploring opportunities.	Communities exploring nature observation within their tourism planning.	Community support unknown.	Communities exploring nature observation within their tourism planning.	Communities exploring these activities within their tourism planning.
Infrastructure Requirements		Infrastructure requirements will depend on the associated mode of transportation and the structure of the events surrounding nature observation.					
General Capital Requirements		Capital requirements will vary, depending on how the nature observation activities are structure and to what degree infrastructure exists.					
<b>POLYGONS EXHIBITING HIGHEST POTENTIAL</b>		<b>3,4,5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>

Refer to Table 6.1-1 for definition of foregoing criteria. See next page for definitions of highest potential polygons.

**Table 6.4-4: Descriptions of Highest Potential Polygons for the Nature Observation Product**

Polygon Number	Description of Polygon
1	<p>Focus: Princess Royal Island                      Staging Area: Hartley Bay and Klemtu                      This polygon contains dramatic cliffs, fish bearing lakes and rivers, inlets, lagoons, old growth forests and other features including the rare Kermodé Bear. Possibility of large trees.                      Nature Observation associated product: Marine Cruising, Ocean Kayaking, Hiking, Cultural Heritage Interpretation, Scuba Diving, Destination Lodge</p>
2	<p>Focus: Roscoe Inlet                      Staging Area: Bella Bella, Ocean Falls                      This polygon contains dramatic scenery, goats, estuaries, fish bearing streams, salmonids and large trees. High First Nations values and concerns.                      Canopy walk and lodge potential.                      Nature Observation associated product: Marine Cruising, Ocean Kayaking, Hiking, Cultural Heritage Interpretation, Scuba Diving, Destination Lodge</p>
3	<p>Focus: Outer Coast – Bella Bella to Goose Island Group                      Staging Area: Bella Bella                      This polygon contains extensive outer coast natural values including intertidal zones, aquatic life, lagoons, estuaries, seal haulouts, bird rookeries and common but unreliable marine mammal viewing. High First Nations values and interest. Potential for viewing the herring roe fishery.                      Nature Observation associated product: Marine Cruising, Ocean Kayaking, Hiking, Cultural Heritage Interpretation, Scuba Diving, Destination Lodge</p>
4	<p>Focus: Fitz Hugh Sound and Codville Lagoon                      Staging Area: Bella Bella                      This polygon contains common but unreliable marine mammal, superb aquatic life, fish bearing river, salmonids, lakes with beaches.                      Nature Observation associated product: Marine Cruising, Ocean Kayaking, Hiking, Cultural Heritage Interpretation, Scuba Diving, Destination Lodge</p>
5	<p>Focus: Fitz Hugh Sound and Koeve River                      Staging Area: Bella Bella and Dawsons Landing                      This polygon contains common but unreliable marine mammal, superb aquatic life, fish bearing river, salmonids, lakes with beaches and grizzly bears.                      Inadequate locations for bear viewing opportunities. Safety concerns and potential for habituation.                      Nature Observation associated product: Marine Cruising, Ocean Kayaking, Hiking, Cultural Heritage Interpretation, Scuba Diving, Destination Lodge</p>
6	<p>Focus: Lower Kimsquit and Dean Rivers                      Staging Area: Bella Coola                      This polygon contains estuaries and high salmonid viewing potential. Very high grizzly viewing potential along the Kimsquit. Inadequate locations for bear viewing opportunities. Safety concerns and potential for habituation. Floats down river must be aware of log jams. High First Nations (Nuxalk and Heiltsuk) values and interest. Potential for viewing the herring roe fishery.                      Nature Observation associated product: Marine Cruising, Hiking, Cultural Heritage Interpretation, Destination Lodge, River Floating</p>
7	<p>Focus: Firvalle to the Atnarko River                      Staging Area: Bella Coola                      This polygon contains high grizzly viewing potential along the Atnarko River. Inadequate locations for bear viewing opportunities. Safety concerns and potential for habituation. Floats down river are a viable option. Mountain goat viewing along road at Firvale (using binoculars). Salmon viewing on bridges along the Bella Coola River. Trumpeter Swan flyway to the Lonesome Lakes.                      Nature Observation associated product: Hiking, Cultural Heritage Interpretation, Destination Lodge, River Floating</p>