

Areas of marine protection are legally established to protect a portion of the sea surface, water column and/or seabed. They may be designated to protect associated plants, animals, or commercial, recreational, scientific, cultural and/or historical features. Each area is established under a federal or provincial statute.¹

BC Parks, Conservancies and Ecological Reserves (Province of BC: Park Act, Environment and Land Use Act, Ecological Reserves Act and Wildlife Act)

BC Provincial Parks seek to preserve representative BC ecosystems, and special natural, cultural and recreation features; and to provide outdoor recreation for the public in natural environments. Provincial Protected Areas are intended to protect representative examples of: ecosystems; recreational and cultural heritage; and special natural, cultural heritage and recreational features.² There are 152 Provincial Parks and 15 Protected Areas at least partially located within PNCIMA that include land, foreshore and offshore areas.

Conservancies are set aside for protection of biological diversity, natural environments and recreational values, and the preservation and maintenance of First Nations' social, ceremonial and cultural uses.² In PNCIMA there are 144 conservancies that include land, foreshore and offshore areas.

Ecological Reserves are designated for ecological purposes, and include areas suitable for research and education, that are: representative of natural ecosystems in BC, examples of modified environments that can be studied for their recovery, and habitats of rare, endangered or unique species.² In PNCIMA there are 31 Ecological Reserves that include land, foreshore and offshore areas.

Wildlife Management Areas are designated to conserve and protect fish, wildlife and their habitats.² Four of these are within PNCIMA or the watersheds that drain into it, and are intended for managing important bird habitat.

Rockfish Conservation Areas (Fisheries and Oceans Canada: Fisheries Act)

Declines in the abundance of some inshore rockfish populations resulted in the creation of Rockfish Conservation Areas (RCAs) to preserve rockfish biomass. Therefore, fishing activities which may affect rockfish populations are limited within RCAs. There are 192 RCAs in BC, and 79 of those are within PNCIMA.³ Twenty percent of estimated rockfish habitat is intended for inclusion in RCAs in outside BC waters, which include PNCIMA.

Sponge Reef Fishery Closures (Fisheries and Oceans Canada: Fisheries Act)

Large sponge reefs were discovered in the deep troughs of Queen Charlotte Sound in 1987.⁴ There are five known reef complexes, each one globally unique and highly sensitive to disturbance. The reefs were closed to groundfish trawl fishing in 2002. In 2006 the closures were expanded with respect to size and gear restrictions. The reefs are also currently a candidate *Oceans Act* Marine Protected Area.⁵

National Parks and National Marine Conservation Areas (Parks Canada Agency: Canada National Parks Act and Canada National Marine Conservation Areas Act)

The goal of National Parks is to protect a representative example of each of Canada's 39 terrestrial natural regions. They are managed to allow human uses that enhance appreciation, enjoyment and understanding while preserving the ecological integrity of the Park.¹ Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site⁶ is the only national park within PNCIMA.

A National Marine Conservation Area (NMCA) is established to protect and conserve a representative example of each of the 29 diverse marine regions in Canada's oceans, as well as the Great Lakes. NMCAs combine zones of high protection with larger areas where ecologically sound activities such as sustainable fishing are permitted.¹ Exploration and development of non-renewable resources and ocean dumping are prohibited throughout NMCAs. In June 2010, the Gwaii Haanas NMCA Reserve and Haida Heritage Site became Canada's first NMCA formally established under the *Canada NMCA Act*. It adds 3500 km² of protected seascape to the adjacent (terrestrial) Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site.

As part of the PNCIMA process, Parks Canada also plans to select a NMCA candidate to represent the Queen Charlotte Sound marine region.

National Wildlife Areas (Environment Canada: Canada Wildlife Act)

National Wildlife Areas (NWAs) are designated for research, conservation and interpretation concerning wildlife and wildlife habitat, particularly migratory birds and endangered species. In PNCIMA, a NWA is being proposed for the marine area around the Scott Islands, located off the northwest tip of Vancouver Island, which together support the largest seabird breeding colonies on Canada's Pacific coast. NWA designation will permit only those human activities that are consistent with the conservation objectives established for the area. A boundary for the proposed NWA had not been finalized at the time of writing, so it does not appear on the accompanying map.⁷

Material presented is drawn from the following, including literature reviews which contain primary references:
 1 Lucas, B.G., Johannessen, D. and Lindstrom, S. 2007. Appendix E: Marine plants. In Ecosystem overview: Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area (PNCIMA). Edited by Lucas, B.G., Verrin, S. and Brown, R. Can. Tech. Rep. Fish. Aquat. Sci. 2667: iv + 23 p.
 2 Ryder, J.L., Kenyon, J.K., Buffett, D., Moore, K., Ceh, M. and Stipek, K. 2007. An integrated biophysical assessment of estuarine habitats in British Columbia to assist regional conservation planning. Technical Report Series No. 476. Canadian Wildlife Service, Pacific and Yukon Region, British Columbia, 151 pp.
 3 Crawford, W., Johannessen, D., Whitney, F., Birch, R., Borg, K., Fissel, D. and Vagle, S. 2007. Appendix C: Physical and chemical oceanography. In Ecosystem overview: Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area (PNCIMA). Edited by Lucas, B.G., Verrin, S., and Brown, R. Can. Tech. Rep. Fish. Aquat. Sci. 2667: vii + 77 p.
 4 Lucas, B.G., Verrin, S. and Brown, R. (Editors). 2007. Ecosystem overview: Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area (PNCIMA). Can. Tech. Rep. Fish. Aquat. Sci. 2667: xiii + 104p.
 5 MacKenzie, W., Remington, D. and Shaw, J. 2000. Estuaries of the North Coast of British Columbia: a reconnaissance survey of selected sites, May 1, 2000. A Cooperative Project of the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks and the Ministry of Forests, Research Branch. Province of British Columbia, 98p.
 6 British Columbia Marine Conservation Analysis Project Team. 2011. Marine atlas of Pacific Canada: a product of the British Columbia Marine Conservation Analysis. Available from www.bcmca.ca (Accessed March 2011).
 7 Stadel, A., Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada. Personal communication, April 2011.

Areas of marine protection in PNCIMA were established under a federal or provincial statute

