

Council of BC Yacht Clubs Newsletter - April 2026

Events Since our February Report:

Since our February report CBCYC has been involved in numerous government meetings to further the interests of the recreational boating public including two in-camera advisory sessions: the Gambier Island Advisory Planning Commission (APC) on Mar 23rd; the Southern Gulf Island Private Dock Planning Advisory Process on Mar. 25th and Apr. 1st and the Oceans Protection Plan on Mar 13th. We are continuing to make sure our voice is heard where possible to express our concerns on the continuing emergence of new impractical restrictions on our ability to access our coast and moor our vessels safely while protecting the environment we all enjoy.

The schedule for the next Council meetings for all representatives in 2026 is as follows:

May 16th (NYC)
Sept. 19th (Zoom)
Nov. 21st (WVYC)

Readers can keep track of activities on our website: www.cbcyachtclubs.org

Current Issues

1. Provincial Heritage Conservation Act (HCA):

- Reforms to amendments were proposed for the HCA, and a technical paper was prepared based on feedback from the public, industry, other stakeholders, government agencies and First Nations. It is now available for additional public review and comment. (<https://engage.gov.bc.ca/heritageconservationact/technical-policy-paper/>). The deadline for submissions was April 23rd. A major consideration to ease the burden to foreshore development is the removal of wording requiring seeking consent that implied co-management and possibly F/N vetoes, in favour of wording based on s.35 of the *Constitution Act 1982*. Intangible heritage designations, that is land assignments without physical evidence, have been removed. The Heritage Management Zones the designations were to augment, were to restrict development on all private waterfront properties on the Gulf Islands. There is recognition by the Province for additional field data needed before proceeding.
- As most are now aware, the Province has put part of the DRIPA legislation on hold for up to 3 years, so the impact of that decision on other proposed regulations such as HCA is uncertain.

2. Swiya (Sunshine Coast) Commercial and Group Dock Management Plan:

- CBCYC has joined with a number of other stakeholder organizations to express concern for amendments to the regulation of commercial and group dock construction and zoning on the Sunshine Coast. These regulations include Y/C outstations as group docks and therefore include those by RVYC, SYC, BYC, VRC and WVYC. There are six areas of concern:
 1. Grandfathering security for existing facilities
 2. Waterlot lease tenures that reflect the amortization costs of construction and operation
 3. Dock area restrictions
 4. Deck light transparency
 5. Improved access to safe disposal of old dock material (e.g. Styrofoam)
 6. Less delay in approvals for necessary maintenance activities including dredging.
- A letter has been submitted to Water Land and Resource Sustainability (WLRS) and is available for viewing on the Council website www.cbcyachtclubs.org

3. Navigation Regulations in the presence of Orca sightings:

- Fisheries and Oceans is planning expansion to the distance a vessel can approach a pod of southern resident Orcas. Currently being considered is a 1000M buffer, up from the current 400M, during a 30-day consultation process. The proposal will cover all waters around Vancouver Island and is intended for implementation before the busy summer season. It does not include the other killer whale types (e.g. transients, Biggs etc.), but it is very difficult to determine the “type” of whale from 1000M. Best advice is to avoid any and all encounters with whales because enforcement is increasing and fines totalling \$24K were issued last year. Even whale encounters with non-motorized conveyances are illegal; airplanes and drones are not exempt.

4. Amendments to the Canadian Navigable Waters Act (CNWA):

- A request to review proposed amendments to the treatment of “Minor Works” in the CNWA has been submitted from the Council to Transport Canada. The changes will reduce the regulatory attention to Minor Works including maintenance dredging, dock and moorage considerations and foreshore erosional control. It appears that the Federal Government is intent on streamlining coastal regulations while the Provincial government is creating more complications. We took the opportunity to express concern over the growing number of unregistered mooring buoys and rafts in small boat anchorages and also pointed to the complicated jurisdictional problems that are being created among the three levels of government. Generally we approve of Transport Canada’s attempt to streamline the regulatory process. For more information refer to [Expanding the Minor Works Order under the Canadian Navigable Waters Act – discussion paper](#) for the full amendments.

5. Southern Gulf Island Private Dock Planning Advisory Process:

- Two in-camera advisory meetings have been held in the last month via Teams with the Province (Mar. 25th and Apr. 1st). In the February newsletter we reported on impediments relating to F/N protocol. The Province has now committed to meeting separately with F/N. This has cleared the way for the advisors to discuss separately with Provincial officials the proposed changes to dock and foreshore development in the Gulf Islands. It appears that deck grating, enclosed flotation, a ban on treated timber and restrictions to locations and dock size based on biological concerns are here to stay. There will also be consideration to beach accessibility and a reliance on reports from qualified professionals (biologists, anthropologists, and engineers). In other words, similar changes to those on the Sunshine Coast. There will be one more meeting to advise on zoning regulations, before the Province and First Nations have closed door consultations. We hope the present moratorium on waterlot lease renewals will be lifted soon.

6. Gambier Island Advisory Planning Commission (APC):

- Public Zoom meeting was held on March 23rd where two resolutions were passed by the Local Trust Committee. The APC is committed to organizing three public engagement sessions with the Gambier residents in July and August. These will seek input on amendments to the Official Community Plan as have been proposed by recent Provincial/Squamish First Nation discussions. At least one session will be held in Vancouver or on the Sunshine Coast; the rest on Gambier. There is also a commitment to the production of a video and a public survey. Considering our commitment to the 5 clubs with outstations on Gambier, it is imperative that members participate in the survey and have their voice's heard at these engagement sessions. Your delegates will keep you informed.

7. Gambier Waterlot License Extension Update:

- In Centre Bay WVYC has now confirmed a 30 year lease renewal for their Elliott Bay outstation on Gambier Island from the Provincial Ministry of WLRS. RVYC earlier received a 30 year renewal, and CBYS expects a similar official response soon based on earlier emailed commitments. On Ekins Point, BYC is proceeding on a month-to-month basis, but is hopeful that a long-term lease will be forthcoming given the precedent now set in Centre Bay. Thunderbird is in the middle of their long term lease. We are gratified to report that the efforts of Council to appeal directly to the Minister have resulted in more flexibility by the Province.

8. Crescent Beach Y/C Update:

- The yacht club has been evicted from the CB marina, but the marina continues to offer discounts and reciprocal privileges.

9. Sports Fishing 30/30 controversy (update from February Report).

- An annual survey has been circulated to selected license holders – completion date May 1st.

10. Parks Host Program Update:

- 2025 year-end report available on the CBCYC website.

11. Pump-out Presentation:

- Presentation from Jacob Banting of the Georgia Strait Alliance at the last Council General Meeting regarding pump-out stations. We are requested to report the locations of non-functional pump-outs to Jacob (jacob@georgiastrait.org). A program to include B.C. pump-out locations on an American app was proposed.

12. Presentation to the Vancouver Chapter of the Canadian Power Squadron at FCYC:

- The Council and the Marine Parks Forever Society provided a seminar to the Vancouver Power Squadron, including an update on the Provincial changes to dock and foreshore management, and changes to Section 7 of BC's Public Land Act. Given the overlapping goals of CPS (now called CanBoat) and CBCYC, we are exploring how our organizations can work more closely to promote safety and seamanship.

13. Marine Parks Forever Society (MPFSoc) AGM at NYC (February 1st):

- More information at: <https://www.bcmpfs.ca/>
- The new slate of directors is similar to the previous year, with Jim Phillips remaining as President.
- We are encouraging collaborations with the BC Parks Foundation that may include interior lake contributions to BC's protected areas.
- MPFSoc donations from Yacht Clubs are often based on voluntary contributions from individuals, usually as part of the bi-annual club invoicing process. Don Thain is available to discuss contribution methods to interested yacht clubs.
- The Council and MPFSoc. are considering updates and amendments to BC Boat Haven designations and are exploring new communication strategies.
- MPFSoc. has offered a contribution to replace stairs in the Federal Southern Gulf Island Park Reserve (ex. Beaumont Provincial Park). This is seen as a strategy to improve collaborative activities with Federal Park managers.

14. Recreational Boaters Association of Washington State (RBAW) and CBCYC

- An annual joint meeting was held on April 4th to explore issues of common concern.
- **Princess Louisa International Society (PLIS)**
 - It was noted that with an annual financial contribution from the Society, BC Parks has agreed to provide a full-time ranger to staff the park starting this season. Parks has also agreed to replace the main dock this year and PLIS has encouraged Parks to raise the construction standard to ensure longer term survival.
- **Mooring Buoy Rentals**
 - There is now an online inventory of private and public mooring buoys throughout Puget Sound that are available for public use on a temporary rental basis. The program is run by OnBuoy and by another provider, Moorbuoy. Both services are available online.
- **Derelict Boats**

- RBAW reports that their program for removal and disposal of derelict or abandoned boats in Washington has been a notable success. The Association lobbied the state successfully to keep \$10M available for the program and now agencies can remove vessels in a timely and cost effective manner before they sink. Council is exploring how we can apply their lessons to our own situation in BC.