



**Examples of Plans and Policies to Conserve Birds and
Biodiversity in Important Bird Areas:
A Resource for Local Governments & Agencies**

Version 1.0

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1. Introduction

This document compiles examples of how Local Governments and other agencies have incorporated wording and recognition of Important Bird Areas (IBA) into their plans and policies. This compilation is intended to provide examples that can be used by other agencies that are exploring ways to promote and improve conservation of birds and IBAs through their own plans and policies. Examples of specific wording from Official Community Plans, Protected Area Management Plans, and other types of plans or policies are provided, along with a link and page reference to the complete plan or policy. We recommend that this document be used to identify example plans and other resources that could be reviewed in further detail should an opportunity exist to revise or develop new plans or policies that better promote and improve the conservation of birds and IBAs.

2. Official Community Plans and Land Use Bylaws

a) Mention birds and Important Bird Areas in introductory paragraphs of Official Community Plans (OCP)

Cowichan Valley Regional District Electoral Area D Cowichan Bay OCP Bylaw No. 3605

<http://cvrld.bc.ca/DocumentCenter/Home/View/9799> (Adopted April 2013)

Page 14 (2.4 Community Goals:
Restore, Protect & Enhance the
Health of the Cowichan Estuary &
Marine Foreshore)

The Cowichan Estuary is recognized as **one of the world's most biologically important areas for fish, waterfowl and wildlife**. Yet land and water-based activities have threatened the estuary and its dependent species such as Chinook salmon, shellfish, waterbirds and eelgrass. The OCP seeks to restore, protect and enhance the Cowichan Estuary so that fish and shellfish can be safely harvested and the coastal environment can be enjoyed for social, cultural and recreational purposes.

Hornby Island OCP Final Draft

<http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/islands/local-trust-areas/hornby/projects-initiatives/ocp-and-lub-review.aspx> (Final Draft Feb 2014 V 7.4)

Page 6 (The Marine Environment)

The waters around Hornby are part of an internationally recognized **Important Bird Area (IBA), designated because the area supports globally significant numbers of waterbirds in winter**. The waters also support a high diversity of marine life including a variety of sponges, anemones, seastars, nudibranchs crabs and fish. A unique feature of the marine ecology is the presence of six-gilled sharks, normally a deep-water dweller, at relatively shallow depths near Flora Islet.

The Hornby-Denman area is the site of the largest and most consistent herring spawn in British Columbia. This spawning is important to a variety of species, including Stellar and California sea lions (that spend the winter in these waters using rocks and islets to the south-east of Hornby as haul-outs), hundreds of bald eagles that congregate here each spring and the **West Coast's largest concentration of Harlequin ducks**.

b) Include policies that protect birds, their habitat and biodiversity within ‘Natural Environment’ or similar sections of OCPs

**Cowichan Valley Regional District
Electoral Area D Cowichan Bay OCP
Bylaw No. 3605**

<http://cvrd.bc.ca/DocumentCenter/Home/View/9799>
(Adopted April 2013)

Page 53 (Objective .2: To protect, restore and enhance the health of intertidal and marine environments of Section 5.2 Ecosystems & Biodiversity)

Policy h) The CVRD recognizes the Cowichan Estuary as a **globally significant Important Bird Area** and will encourage measures to protect coastal bird populations.

Page 60 (Section 5.5 Air, Noise, & Light Pollution)

The Plan seeks to address air, noise and light pollution. Declining air quality is related to an increasing incidence of respiratory illnesses in the region and is detrimental to our water resources. Both noise and light pollution impact humans and wildlife alike. **Light pollution has been linked to impacts on migratory patterns, feeding habits, seasonal dormancy and growth cycles of birds, fish and wildlife, and cancer in humans.** The objectives and policies of this section seek to reduce air, noise and light pollution in the Plan Area.

Page 60 (Objective .2 To recognize and preserve Electoral Area D – Cowichan Bay as a “dark skies” community, by preventing illumination of the night sky and light trespass.)

Policy a) All development will be required to **avoid illumination of the night sky.** Light fixtures will be fully-shielded in order to direct light downward and avoid light trespass onto neighbouring properties.

Hornby Island OCP Final Draft

<http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/islands/local-trust-areas/hornby/projects-initiatives/ocp-and-lub-review.aspx>
(Final Draft Feb 2014 V 7.4)

Page 29 (Section 3.6 Marine Conservation: The objective of this subsection is to ensure the continued viability of marine ecosystems and species)

Policy 3.6.1) **Areas along the coastline that provide nesting, feeding and resting for birds should be protected.** This may be accomplished by sign-posting, significant building setbacks and required retention of vegetation.

Policy 3.6.2) Programs to reduce land-sourced pollution should be supported.

c) Recognize the social and economic values associated with birds and Important Bird Areas and adopt policies that support these values

PlanSurrey 2013 OCP Draft Bylaw No. 18020

<http://www.surrey.ca/city-services/1318.aspx>
(Draft December 2013)

Page 100 (B5 Memorable Features: Retain and enhance memorable natural and built features and places)

Policy B5.6) Identify and protect significant views, where possible, from public lands and gathering places as an amenity for Surrey residents. Consider the following as significant views to promote:

The Boundary Bay-Sturgeon Banks-Roberts Bank (Fraser River Estuary) Important Bird Area (IBA)

Cowichan Valley Regional District Electoral Area D Cowichan Bay OCP Bylaw No. 3605

<http://cvrld.bc.ca/DocumentCenter/Home/View/9799>
(Adopted April 2013)

Page 81 (7.6 Tourism Economy; Objective .1: To support environmentally friendly, low-impact tourism uses and activities)

Policy d) The CVRD will support low-impact, nature-based tourism such as **bird watching**, whale watching, kayaking and canoeing, cycling and heritage tourism, which are recognized for their potential to provide substantial economic benefits to the local area and broader Cowichan Region.

d) Include policies to reduce impact of buildings on birds

Cowichan Valley Regional District Electoral Area D Cowichan Bay OCP Bylaw No. 3605

<http://cvrld.bc.ca/DocumentCenter/Home/View/9799>
(Adopted April 2013)

Page 138-9 (Rural Character Development Permit Area RC.10 Building Design: The guidelines contained within this section apply to multi-family, mixed use, commercial and industrial development.)

See similar on page 152 in the Marine Village Development Permit Area

BUILDING DESIGN, MATERIALS & COLOURS:

15. Windows should be designed and oriented to prevent bird mortality from window strikes.

e) Include the importance of bird habitat as justification for Development Permit Areas and/or Critical Habitat Protection Permit Areas

**Cowichan Valley Regional District
Electoral Area D Cowichan Bay OCP
Bylaw No. 3605**

<http://cvrd.bc.ca/DocumentCenter/Home/View/9799>
(Adopted April 2013)

Page 111 (Aquatic Resource Protection Development Permit Area; AR.3 Justification)

The Plan Area has an abundance of aquatic resources. These exist in the form of groundwater aquifers, surface and sub-surface permanent and intermittent (seasonal) streams, the Cowichan and Koksilah Rivers, and the Cowichan Estuary and foreshore and its interface with the Salish Sea. These aquatic resources **serve many purposes including providing natural habitat for fish, birds and wildlife**, providing water for residential consumption, businesses and for farm irrigation. The scope of the Aquatic Resource DPA supersedes the scope of the Riparian Areas Regulation, and facilitates comprehensive protection of the estuarine environment and marine foreshore, watercourses, and aquifers and their recharge areas.

The Cowichan Estuary, the body of water located at the mouths of the Cowichan and Koksilah Rivers, **is one of the largest on BC's coast and recognized internationally for providing a biologically rich and diverse habitat for fish, birds and wildlife – particularly for Chinook salmon, Pacific Great Blue Heron, and overwintering waterfowl.**

Page 120 (Critical Habitat Protection Permit Area; CH.3 Justification)

The guidelines of the Critical Habitat DPA aim to protect critical habitat for rare and endangered species of native vegetation and wildlife. **Critical habitat includes lands supporting rare and endangered species, nest sites and Important Bird Areas coincident with the Cowichan Estuary.** The Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory of 1993 to 1997 documented rare and fragile ecosystems to support of sound land management decisions that encourage conservation and good land stewardship.

The Cowichan Estuary supports more than one per cent of the world population of several species of waterbirds. **The abundance and variety of bird species supported, has led the Cowichan Estuary to be classified as an Important Bird Area (IBA).** IBAs range in size from very tiny patches of habitat to large tracts of land or water that may encompass private or public land. Disturbance, filling in of wetlands and industrial pollution threaten bird health and habitat. The 2012 State of Canada's Birds Report notes that many bird species are in decline in Canada.

f) Include the boundary of the Important Bird Area within Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) mapping

Hornby Island OCP Final Draft

<http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/islands/local-trust-areas/hornby/projects-initiatives/ocp-and-lub-review.aspx> (Final Draft Feb 2014 V 7.4)

Schedule D1 Environmentally Sensitive Areas (April 2014)

This map includes the boundary of the Important Bird Area.

3. Protected Area Management Plans

a) Recognize IBA designations in management plans for protected areas that overlap IBAs

Vaseux-Bighorn National Wildlife Area	http://www.ec.gc.ca/ap-pa/default.asp?lang=En&n=227DE036-1
Page 6 (Regional Context of the 2011 Management Plan)	The Vaseux Lake Important Bird Area includes part of the Vaseux Lake Migratory Bird Sanctuary (MBS).
Excerpt from the online Summary Table for the Vaseux-Bighorn NWA	Additional designations: Part of Vaseux Lake Area Important Bird Area (IBA)
Qualicum National Wildlife Area	http://www.ec.gc.ca/ap-pa/default.asp?lang=En&n=7B956077-1
Excerpt from the online Summary Table for Qualicum NWA	Additional designations: Part of Little Qualicum Estuary to Nanoose Bay Important Bird Area (IBA) .
Alaksen National Wildlife Area	http://www.ec.gc.ca/ap-pa/default.asp?lang=En&n=73907575-1
Excerpt from the online Summary Table for Alaksen NWA	Additional designations: Part of the Boundary Bay – Roberts Bank – Sturgeon Bank Important Bird Area (IBA)
Scott Islands National Wildlife Area	http://www.ec.gc.ca/ap-pa/default.asp?lang=En&n=90605DDB-1
Excerpt from the online description for the Scott Islands NWA	The Scott Islands NWA is recognized as being part of an internationally recognized Important Bird Area and is one of the single most ecologically vital locations in all of the Northwest Pacific Ocean ecosystem.

4. Other Strategies, Plans, Policies, Proclamations and Resources

a) Vancouver Bird Friendly Strategy

The City of Vancouver, in partnership with numerous organizations, is developing a Bird Friendly Strategy. The goal of the Bird Friendly Strategy is to create the conditions for native birds to thrive in the City of Vancouver. The Strategy consists of five priority action areas that address the biological, social and economic challenges to creating a bird friendly city. One of the key justifications for the strategy is the presence of four Important Bird Areas within the Metro Vancouver region. A link to the strategy will be provided once it is finalized and posted online. For more information, please contact The City of Vancouver (<http://vancouver.ca/green-vancouver.aspx>)

b) City of Vancouver “Bird Week” Proclamation

The Mayor of the City of Vancouver has signed a proclamation each year since approximately 2011 declaring Migratory Bird Day or Bird Week in the City of Vancouver to celebrate the City’s importance to birds. The presence of the English Bay-Burrard Inlet Important Bird Area is considered one of the justifications for the proclamation. See Appendix A for a copy of the proclamation for 2014. For more information, contact Vancouver Parks Board (<http://vancouver.ca/parks-recreation-culture.aspx>)

5. Appendix A. City of Vancouver Bird Week Proclamation 2014

