



January 2, 2007

The Coastal Guardian Watchmen Training Program is a response to the interest of First Nations communities on the coast of British Columbia to enhance their capacity for direct and active involvement in monitoring and stewardship of their traditional lands and waters. Guardian programs, also referred to as Watchmen programs, are a mechanism through which First Nations monitor and ensure that activities and practices within their territories are responsible and consistent with community plans and government regulations. The following are Guiding Principles that will shape the development and delivery of the Coastal Guardian Watchmen Training through Northwest Community College.

Program participants will recognize and respect;

1. The diversity of First Nations culture(s), history(s), political interest(s), experience(s) and traditional knowledge in communities on the central and north coasts of British Columbia.
2. That culture, community and environment are interwoven and interdependent
3. That the coastal First Nations will play a meaningful role in the planning, monitoring and implementation of activities affecting local ecosystems
4. That communities are the source of knowledge and authority, and that integrating traditional knowledge and ethics with western science is key to ecological and human wellbeing
5. That cultures and ecosystems in the coastal rainforests have been damaged due to lack of respect

The program will strive to implement the following goals:

1. Provide a comprehensive and relevant training program to support and build the capacity of Guardian/Watchmen programs on the central and north coast
2. Provide shared learning and understanding of the local knowledge and experience held by participants, community knowledge holders, and western scientists
3. Integrate First Nations cultural values, knowledge and experience in all program courses
4. Promote respect, relevance, responsibility and collaboration to empower Coastal Guardian/Watchmen and their communities through multi-directional sharing of knowledge between individuals, communities, educational institutions, and government agencies
5. Maximize field-based learning opportunities and use examples of issues that are relevant to coastal communities
6. Deliver flexible programming within communities on the central and north coast
7. Provide strong student support through interactions with instructors, peers and community members to ensure success at all levels
8. Emphasize the development of writing and oral communication skills throughout the training program
9. Provide a grounded approach to learning how to monitor and manage resource activities in participants' respective traditional territories