

Edges and Species at Risk: Some Lessons Learned from the Salish Sea

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One of the most serious deficiencies in how land and water management planning is undertaken in B.C. is the administrative separation of terrestrial ecosystems from marine ecosystems. This separation has often been to the detriment of those species, habitats and plant communities at risk that occupy the ecotone between terrestrial and marine ecosystems or that utilise both terrestrial and marine ecosystems throughout their lifecycles. While some species at risk live their entire lifecycles within a single habitat type such as old growth forest, others such as the non-migrant coastal Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias fannini*), a COSEWIC Species of Special Concern, have more complicated lives that ultimately complicate recovery plans and habitat management plans. This paper will present some lessons learned during the National Energy Board/Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency Hearings on the GSXPL pipeline proposal for the Southern Strait of Georgia, and from several management and planning case studies that have all had a potential or real impact on the coastal Great Blue Heron. There are a number of challenges that lie ahead to ensure recovery of this species, including the need for the Canada Department of Fisheries and Oceans and B.C. Land and Water to take the needs of bird species that utilise the marine ecosystem in coastal British Columbia for all or part of their life cycles into account when making fish management decisions.