

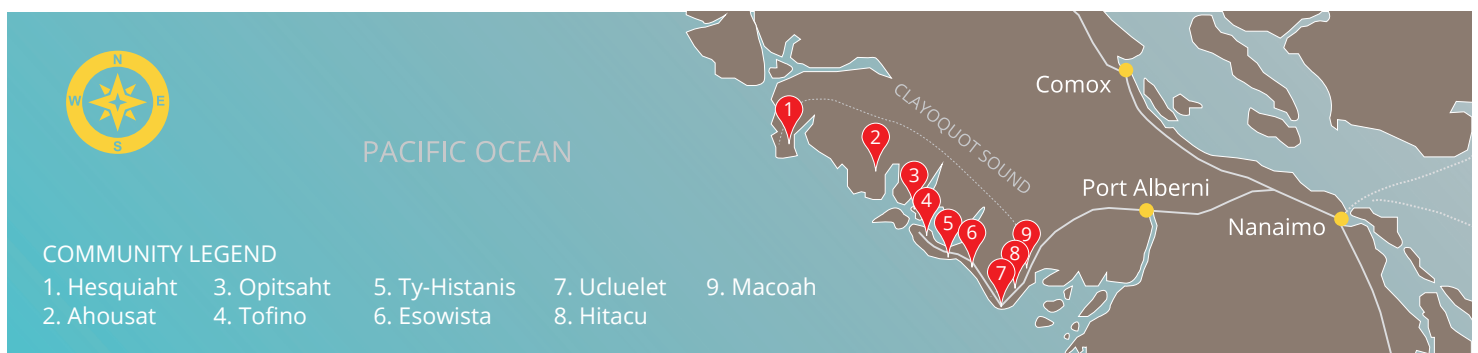
WEST COAST NEST

Nature. Education. Sustainability. Transformation.

2017 Annual Report

In its first year, West Coast NEST successfully delivered on its mandate to share knowledge, build a stronger understanding, and strengthen our foundation for the future by:

- > supporting the creation of local education programs;
- > supporting the growth and expansion of education tourism products and markets within the region through the NEST resource website, social media, and other marketing efforts; and
- > supporting diversification and economic growth in local education organizations, businesses, and communities.



Origin

West Coast NEST was born from a series of grassroots community-driven projects in response to the need to diversify the west coast tourism economy, broaden labour force skills, and increase the number of local youth employed in businesses. Today, the NEST is coordinated and administered by the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust, and continues to build on the core mandate of the UNESCO Biosphere designation by increasing our social, cultural, economic and environmental sustainability. In 2017, the NEST

was supported financially through the provincial Rural Dividend Fund, Tourism Tofino, and Tourism Ucluelet. Our Tourism partners also provided expert marketing contributions. Various cost-recovery social enterprise models are being tested in order to determine what mix of income generation will lead the NEST to support itself and spread benefits to local communities, organizations, and businesses. Our goal is that the NEST will become a self-sustaining regional initiative by 2022.

Regional Partners



Through a collective of over 30 organizations, cultures, businesses, and communities, the NEST supports a wide variety of experiential learning opportunities surrounding science, nature, history, language, and Nuu-chah-nulth culture.

Support for Program Development



RAINCOAST EDUCATION SOCIETY
\$5,000

Development of a new Clayoquot Sound Field School in partnership with the University of Victoria Geography Department and Tofino Botanical Gardens & Ecolodge.



PACIFIC RIM LEADERSHIP CENTRE
\$2,500 & Marketing Support

Development of two new, 3-day leadership and project management retreat programs that will be offered in this fall/winter, along with marketing support.



FIRST NATION TOURISM PROGRAM
\$5,000 & Marketing Support

Development of a training program, hosted by the Aauuknuk Lodge, designed to prepare local youth and adults to become community ambassadors and learn new skills to work in First Nation tourism.

Local training

The NEST coordinated two additional training opportunities for local organizations including: Transitioning Under the Societies Act (lawyer Margaret Mason) and Program Evaluation workshop (Social Planning & Research Council of BC).

Jobs supported

DIRECT – 9 TOTAL

- 1 full-time, year-round Education Coordinator
- 4 part-time marketing positions
- 1 temporary, part-time high school outdoor education program assistant
- 1 full-time, then part-time, temporary Coordinator at Raincoast Education Society
- 1 temporary, part-time position to develop a new, outreaching leadership retreat
- 1 temporary, part-time position to develop/host a First Nation Tourism training program

INDIRECT – 1,292 TOTAL

We estimate the NEST supports 2 indirect jobs per event or course that is listed on the website, one position to coordinate and one to deliver each education program.

Visiting learners also create demand for service jobs including retail, transportation, accommodation, food and beverage, recreation and leisure, cleaning, event planning, and travel agency services.



Marketing

The NEST website, social media platforms, and other marketing efforts have demonstrated measurable growth in expanding education tourism in the region. These marketing services are carried out at no cost to our Regional Partners. Highlights include:

EVENTS AND COURSE LISTINGS – 153 course listings and 493 event listings

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS – 1,100 Instagram followers in our first year along with a steadily climbing presence on Facebook and Twitter

SOCIAL CAMPAIGNS – Trialled 2 successful campaigns between July and September 2017 yielding a total of 812 link clicks coming through the campaign, at a very efficient average Cost per Link Clicks of \$0.83

GOOGLE ADWORDS CAMPAIGN – West Coast NEST qualified for the Google Ad Grant in 2017, and again in 2018. The Ad Grant spend in 2017 was \$2,076, and is projected to be \$5,000-\$6,000 in 2018. Overall, most conversions came through the Outdoor Education campaign during the timeframe of June 1 to December 31, 2017. This campaign also generated the highest CTR.

Top Performing Non-Branded Keywords were 'Learning in the outdoors', 'Outdoor ed activities' and 'BC outdoor education'.



GOOGLE ANALYTICS – Over the year, there has been an increase in the number of users searching organically for West Coast NEST. However, it should be noted that analytics show that paid channels such as our use of the Google Cost Per Click Ad Grant and Facebook attributed to the majority of the overall conversions on the website.

- > Gender: 64.4% Female (1509), 35.57% Male (833)
- > Age: 25-34 (876), 35-44 (906), 45-54 (671)
- > Geography: Majority of the traffic coming from Canada (79%); then US (10%)
- > Cities: Vancouver, Ucluelet, Victoria, Calgary, Kingston, Colwood, Nanaimo, Surrey and Toronto

COMMUNITY PRESENCE – In addition to NEST collateral and over 100 event calendars being posted throughout the region, ongoing networking with DMOs and hospitality services is a priority.

- > Education Fairs – Promoted education organizations and education tourism in our region by connecting with teachers at three exhibits.
- > BC Council for International Education Summer Conference (Kelowna, June 18-20, 300 participants)
- > BC Field Trips Fair (Richmond, September 25, 600 participants)
- > Provincial Specialist Association Superconference (Vancouver, October 20-21, 6000 participants)

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visit westcoastnest.org