

## 20 Years of Environmental Wins

**Join us in celebrating the EDRF's birthday!**

In 1989, West Coast Environmental Law submitted an application to the Law Foundation of British Columbia requesting \$60,000 for West Coast to provide a new type of legal aid to British Columbians. Bill Andrews, then the Executive Director of West Coast, recalls:

*[West Coast] discussed how we could expand our delivery of legal services, get out of Vancouver and meet regional needs ... [and] expand the public interest environmental bar in BC ... It all came together with the idea of a fund that could pay for environmental help around the province.*

The result has been one of the most flexible and successful environmental law programs in the country. Today, West Coast's Environmental Dispute Resolution Fund (EDRF) is the only source of environmental legal aid in BC, funding the cost of environmental lawyers and scientific experts. With the continued generous support of the Law Foundation of BC, the EDRF has granted over \$4 million to communities across BC, supporting more than 500 legal cases since its inception in 1989.

This year West Coast will be holding events to celebrate the EDRF's 20th anniversary, and its many successes. Keep your ears open for details as they unfold; if you would like us to notify you of upcoming EDRF 20th Anniversary events, please e-mail us at [agage@wcel.org](mailto:agage@wcel.org).

We have a lot to celebrate! Some of the EDRF's wins over its 20 years include:

2008-2009

**Fish farm laws unconstitutional:**

Celebrated fish farm opponent and marine biologist Alexandra Morton, with EDRF funding, teamed up with long-time environmental lawyer and West Coast Honourary Director, Greg McDade, in a successful challenge to the constitutionality of BC's laws allowing fish farms in BC's waters, ruling that fish farms fall under federal jurisdiction.

2005

**Parks for turtles, not developers:** The West Kootenay EcoSociety successfully challenged the plans of the Minister of Parks to relocate Park roads in Grohman Narrows Provincial Park through the habitat of threatened painted turtles to accommodate a local developer.

2003-2008

**Zero waste Vancouver:** EDRF funding to the Nlaka'pamux Nation Tribal Council and the local Cornwall Watershed Coalition was

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### *West Coast Supports* **Climate Change Action and Our Forests**

Sustainable forest use is an essential element of climate change mitigation and adaptation, and one of particular relevance in BC given our wealth of forests and their ecological and economic significance. Protecting our forests helps to curb the impacts of climate change because forests are storehouses of living carbon that might otherwise be released into the atmosphere. They also absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, which helps to fight climate change.

Logging old-growth forests and converting primary forests into industrially-managed forests releases huge amounts of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere every year in BC: 72.7 megatonnes in 2007 alone, according to the BC's Greenhouse Gas Inventory Report released this summer.\* In terms of carbon stewardship, it would

appear that our status quo approach to forest management in BC is a losing proposition.

And logging presents a further blow to forest ecosystems: ecosystems that are fragmented and degraded, simplified or stressed by human activities are much less resilient to climate change than intact, functional, natural ecosystems (e.g., less equipped to survive infestations, support native species and withstand increased disturbances such as severe weather and fires). Enhanced protection of natural ecosystems is thus essential to give native species of plants and animals a fighting chance in the face of climate change.

The conclusion? There is an urgent need for British Columbia to take a hard look at the science and to

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**INSIDE... Flawed Process:**

Tar Sands Pipelines and Tankers Review Will Miss the Big Picture



# Towards A Green Economy

When I first joined West Coast as a student 14 years ago, British Columbians around the Province were sitting at multi-stakeholder land use planning tables where loggers, environmentalists and union representatives faced off against each other. The environment and economy were seen as fundamentally conflicting forces, and trade-offs and compromise were expected as these dedicated citizens tried to reach solutions. Innovative for their time, these planning processes were not, however, permitted to question the underlying legal framework that enabled resource development.

*We have the opportunity now as we move into the 21st century to revamp and strengthen our environmental laws. This is crucial to putting us on the right track to a green economy.*

This was a mistake, because in BC, as in other jurisdictions, our laws about resource and community development were developed under very different economic and environmental circumstances. For example, laws about forestry, mineral and oil and gas development were designed to encourage exploitation of these resources with little thought to environmental impact. Later, as environmental regulation expanded, it was seen largely as “red tape” constraining the economy.

It has taken the perfect storm arising from the impacts of the current global financial and environmental crises to open up

political space today for a genuine dialogue about the possibility and promise of a “green economy”. Indeed, these twin crises demand a new paradigm.

The world has experienced first-hand the devastating global consequences of a financial sector that was left to regulate itself. We will experience parallel devastation if we continue down the road of unregulated environmental standards.

Strong environmental laws are a critical part of the necessary infrastructure to ensure that we are investing in a sustainable future, especially now, in the face of climate change.

The public understands this, but does our provincial government? A July 2009 Harris-Decima survey shows that Canadians overwhelmingly want government to ensure environmental protection despite the recession. More than two-thirds of Canadians rank protecting the environment on par with addressing economic problems.

Regrettably, the BC government’s recently released 2009 budget update will result in not just a financial deficit but also an increasing ecological deficit that will weigh heavily on future generations. In the face of challenging economic circumstances, we need our government to focus



Jessica is West Coast’s Executive Director and Senior Counsel

economic stimulus on building a new, environmentally sustainable economy instead of propping up the old economy that continues to fail us and jeopardizes BC’s environmental future.

We have the opportunity now as we move into the 21st century to revamp and strengthen our environmental laws. This is crucial to putting us on the right track to a green economy.

*Jessica Clogg*

West Coast Environmental Law has been BC’s legal champion for the environment since 1974. Our mandate is to empower citizens and organizations to use the law to protect our environment and to advocate for the innovative solutions that will build a just and sustainable world. We:

- Have helped establish mechanisms for public participation in decision-making and to champion key legal reforms.
- Act as a watchdog; alerting British Columbians to the weaknesses in existing and new laws, and the potential impacts of change.
- Make environmental law accessible to citizens through community legal education.
- Help thousands of British Columbians resolve critical environmental issues by providing legal advice and access to legal and technical representation.



You can donate securely to West Coast Environmental Law online at [www.wcel.org/give](http://www.wcel.org/give)  
Charitable registration # BN 119292415 RR0001



**West Coast Environmental Law staff and project workers are:**

Jessica Clogg, Executive Director and Senior Counsel; Andrew Gage, Susan Rutherford, Josh Paterson, Staff Lawyers; Todd Monge, EDRF; Lucy Pearson, Director of Development; Anna Beard, Donor Relations Officer; Ceciline Goh, Office Administrator; Allison Grose, Executive Assistant and Project Manager.

News from West Coast Environmental Law (ISSN #1204-4326) copyright © 2009.

Published by the West Coast Environmental Law Research Foundation.

Printed on recycled paper.

We are grateful to the Law Foundation of BC for core funding of West Coast Environmental Law.

# BCUC Insists on Energy Conservation

No issue has polarized BC's environmental community more than the rapid growth of Independent Power Projects (IPPs) on BC's rivers. On July 27th the BC Utilities Commission (BCUC) stunned BC Hydro and others with an interest in IPPs when it rejected BC Hydro's Long Term Acquisition Plan (LTAP). The decision was alternately described by different environmental groups as (on the one hand) jeopardizing clean power and undermining the fight against global warming, and (on the other hand) protecting the environment by preventing privatization of BC's rivers.

But what does the BCUC decision actually say about green power and about the environment? The decision, while certainly a slap on the wrist for BC Hydro, includes wins for the environment and provides an opportunity for public discussion about BC's energy future.

## Demand-side Management

A review of the 186-page BCUC decision reveals that BC Hydro's LTAP was rejected not because the BCUC panel disagreed with the proposal, but because BC Hydro had not outlined a detailed "demand-side management"

(DSM) plan encouraging consumers to use less power, which it was required to do, and to give energy conservation priority over buying new power.

## Burrard Power

As the media widely reported, the BCUC also did not accept BC Hydro's recommendation to plan to scale back its use of the Burrard Thermal power plant. This BCUC decision does not obligate BC Hydro to use the power plant at its full capacity, but it is disappointing that the BCUC decision brushes off public concern about pollution from the plant, and does not adequately address the impacts of the plant on the province's climate change commitments.

## Green Power

The BCUC did not reject IPPs or rule on whether or not they are necessary or "green". Rather, because of BC Hydro's failure to demonstrate that it had prioritized DSM ahead of buying new power, it was not clear to the BCUC panel that the target for green energy identified by BC Hydro in its LTAP is necessary.

BC Hydro had based its "Clean Power Call" – a call made in 2008 to IPP proponents for purchase of their "green energy" power – on the targets outlined in the LTAP; as such, the BCUC rejection has created great uncertainty for the IPP industry (although BC Hydro can still purchase power from IPPs on a case-by-case basis).

BC's *Utilities Commission Act* allows the government to give binding direction to the BCUC, and the government's August 2009 throne speech promised to issue direction to the BCUC concerning IPP energy purchases and utilization of Burrard Power. So BC Hydro's Clean Power Call may go ahead after all – stay tuned.

The BC Utilities Commission decision can be found on-line at [http://www.bcuc.com/Documents/Decisions/2009/DOC\\_22470\\_LTAP\\_Decision\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.bcuc.com/Documents/Decisions/2009/DOC_22470_LTAP_Decision_WEB.pdf).

For more information on IPPs in BC, see West Coast's IPP Q & A Backgrounder publication at: <http://wcel.org/articles/IPP-QandA.pdf>

Andrew Gage

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instrumental in derailing plans to turn the sensitive grasslands at Ashcroft Ranch into a landfill, and convincing MetroVancouver to work towards zero waste.

2001-2002

**Marbled murrelets protected:** The Sunshine Coast Conservation Association used EDRF funds to successfully challenge plans to log in the habitat of the endangered marbled murrelet.

1997-2000

**Protecting the Pitt Polder:** A large scale golf resort would have opened the wetland and agricultural lands known as the Pitt Polder, in Pitt Meadows, to development. However, thanks to grants from the EDRF, the Pitt Polder Preservation Society was able to convince the BC Court of Appeal to throw out bylaws that allowed for the development.

1994

**No logging in Victoria's Watershed:** The Western Canada Wilderness Committee,

with a grant from the EDRF, went to court to challenge commercial logging in the Victoria watershed and won.

1992-1994

**Negotiating parks for BC:** When the BC government created the Commission on Resources and Environment to develop land use plans on Vancouver Island and in the Kootenays and the Cariboo-Chilcotin, the environmental sectors were chronically underfunded. Support from the EDRF helped contribute to a process that saw 100,000 acres of land added to BC's protected areas every month for three years.

1990-1995

**Blocking the Kemano Completion Project:** Alcan's controversial power generation project, which would have destroyed fish habitat on the Nechako River, was defeated in large part due to the efforts of the Rivers Defense Coalition. Thanks to five years of EDRF grants, the Coalition was represented by the late Andrew Thompson, formerly a West Coast Honourary Board member, in a

court action and BC Utilities Commission hearings, leading to the defeat of the project.

Thanks for this remarkable and successful fund go to the staff of West Coast (and especially Bill Andrews, who first came up with the idea), and the Law Foundation of British Columbia, which has funded it through its 20 year history. And, of course, to the lawyers who work at our partially pro bono rates to protect BC's environment.

The EDRF has won major environmental victories, and it has given a voice to people and communities who otherwise would not have been heard. We hope it will continue to do so for another 20 years, and beyond.

Andrew Gage

*"I love my relationship with West Coast and exploit it shamelessly. I think WCEL is one of the best things going in the Canadian environmental scene. Activists in other provinces envy us."*

- Delores Broten, *Reach for Unbleached*

# Flawed Process: Tar Sands Pipelines and Tankers Review Will Miss The Big Picture

## Ottawa's process to review Enbridge's proposed pipelines and tankers is deeply flawed

Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipelines wants to build twin pipelines to transport massive amounts of crude tar sands oil and toxic petrochemicals across northern BC, from the Alberta tar sands to the BC coast and from there onto oil super tankers bound for Asia, the United States and other markets.

There are countless environmental risks associated with the Alberta tar sands (aka oil sands) and the web of pipelines and oil tankers that connect the tar sands to the world.

The proposed Enbridge pipelines will cross over 1,000 rivers and streams, risking oil spills into BC's major life-supporting river systems such as the salmon-rich headwaters of the Mackenzie, Skeena and Fraser Rivers. As an example, the toxic effects of an oil spill into the Fraser river system would be felt for hundreds of kilometres, stretching through at least 77 communities, including 39 First Nations, and ecosystems along the entire length of the Fraser River and into the Pacific Ocean, and exacerbating the Fraser's catastrophic sockeye decline. A pipeline oil spill into these critical watersheds could pollute groundwater and destroy ecosystems and wildlife on a massive scale. BC Ministry of the Environment reports that 80,000 litres of crude oil remain in the Pine River system (near Chetwynd) to this day, almost ten years after a pipeline spill that killed up to 20,000 fish.<sup>1</sup> A tanker oil spill would be impossible to fully clean up, and its effects would linger for many years. An oil tanker spill along BC's north coast and Inside Passage could kill thousands of marine animals, destroy habitats and drastically affect the fishing and tourist industries. (The toxic and deadly nature of the crude

oil spilled by the Exxon Valdez in Alaska's Prince William Sound, and along 1,700 kilometres of shoreline, persists today. Two decades later, there is still no sign of the return of some species.)

## Shortcomings of Ottawa's process to review the Enbridge pipelines

Ottawa has appointed a "joint review panel" (JRP) to conduct its environmental assessment of the proposed Enbridge pipelines. The JRP combines the authorities of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA) and the National Energy Board (NEB) to review this proposal. While a review panel is the strongest form of environmental assessment that the regulatory process currently provides, numerous limitations in the process highlight the critical need for structural reform. For example, the current structure of the JRP does not permit the federal and provincial governments, First Nations governments, and affected communities to be involved in the decision – one that will forever alter the face of northern BC and Alberta, and Canada's Pacific North Coast. As such, West Coast argues that an informed decision on this project can

only be made after a full public inquiry that considers broad, strategic-level policy questions, such as:

- the development of the tar sands and their role in Canada's energy future;
- the impact of this pipeline project and the tar sands on Canada's greenhouse gas emissions, water, and land;
- the significant risks posed by lifting the existing moratorium on oil tanker traffic in Canada's turbulent Pacific North Coast waters; and
- the cumulative impact of pipeline and tanker traffic through the future further development that they will potentially enable.

In the spring and summer of 2009, West Coast and our allies provided outreach to northern BC communities about Ottawa's proposed review and decision-making process for the Enbridge project. Over 2,000 individuals, community groups and First Nations subsequently wrote to the federal government to voice their concerns about the flaws in the process; this is a record number of comments – more than seven times the usual maximum number, according to the CEAA.



Kitimaat Village Harbour (Haisla Harbour Authority), on Kitimat Arm, March 2009

Photo credit: Josh Paterson

<sup>1</sup>BC Ministry of the Environment, Environmental Emergency Management Program Incident Report on the Pine River Oil Spill, online at [http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/eemp/incidents/pembina\\_00.htm](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/eemp/incidents/pembina_00.htm).

In August, West Coast made a submission to the federal government on behalf of a coalition of eleven conservation groups, calling for the appointment of a comprehensive public inquiry to answer the serious policy questions that the current environmental assessment process leaves unanswered. We informed Ottawa that a project that raises environmental, socio-cultural, legal and economic issues of such sweeping magnitude calls for a decision-making process that is similarly broad in scope – one that considers the project in the context of the much larger policy questions that are raised by the prospect of an oil pipeline and oil tankers on the coast, addresses the perspective of all affected communities, and honours the traditional laws and responsibilities of First Nations to steward their territories.

It is also worthwhile mentioning that the Enbridge pipelines are a key piece of the provincial government's proposed "Northern Energy Corridor", first touted in the February 2008 Throne Speech, and to which the province recommitted itself in the Premier's August 25, 2009 Throne Speech.

### **Proposal for a model approach to assess pipelines and tankers**

As of this writing, the draft JRP agreement and terms of reference for the Enbridge Northern Gateway project have not been finalized.

There are historical precedents for our proposed public inquiry. In 1970, the Thompson Inquiry (led by former West Coast Honourary Board member Dr. Andrew Thompson) reviewed the possibility of oil ports on BC's coast; ultimately, the inquiry was suspended when the proposal for a Kitimat oil port was withdrawn. At the time, the federal government promised the inquiry would be revived if an oil port were ever proposed again in the future. The Berger inquiry in the 1970s into pipelines in the Mackenzie Valley (led by West Coast

Honourary Board member Mr. Justice Thomas Berger) looked at the cumulative impact of the project in a holistic, regional way, and recommended that no pipeline be built. This unprecedented process and historical recommendation changed the way Canadians think about resource development projects.

A public inquiry into Enbridge's proposed pipeline must be equally comprehensive, with updated terms of reference that include today's broader risks, such as those associated with tar sands oil production, pipeline and tanker infrastructure, and their connection to climate change. Such a public inquiry must be independent of the government and Enbridge, possibly composed of highly-respected BC court judges and First Nations representatives. The public inquiry must have ample financial resources in order to conduct thorough research, to hold wide-ranging hearings accessible to affected communities, and to provide funding for intervenors – such as citizens groups, conservation groups, and First Nations – to fully participate. The public inquiry must have no pre-determined outcome, considering all implications and the broader "big picture" policy issues that have to be resolved to ensure that an informed and inclusive decision can be made. If consideration of the "big picture" questions is left out of the environmental assessment process for the Enbridge pipelines, then the federal government will be uninformed when it makes its final decision – and First Nations governments and the public will be in the dark too. This would be an egregious way to shape Canada's energy future.

*Josh Paterson*

## Organizational Announcements

West Coast marks a milestone as we bid farewell to our Executive Director, Patricia Chew. As the first non-lawyer to head up the organization since its founding in 1974, Patricia was recruited for her deep experience in strategic communications and organizational development and management. Among many accomplishments, Patricia brought her skills to bear in communicating West Coast's unique role to a broad range of stakeholders and growing our community of support.

The Board and Staff thank Patricia for her leadership, and for the many significant contributions she has made to West Coast. We wish her every success in her future endeavours.

Jessica Clogg, West Coast's Senior Counsel, has assumed leadership of the organization. Congratulations, Jessica!

West Coast bids a fond farewell to Ingrid Molloy, our Systems Administrator. Ingrid moves on to pursue her career in design and IT. We wish her well!

We would like to say a huge thank you to our three summer student volunteers: Dani Bryant, Emma Hume and Simone Tielech. Their excellent work and unflagging enthusiasm were greatly appreciated by everyone.

## Wildsight On Behalf Of The Columbia Wetlands Needs Your Help!

Wildsight's campaign to end motorized boat traffic in the internationally significant Columbia Wetlands hit a snag when Transport Canada staff refused to use the *Canada Shipping Act* to protect the environment.

Thanks to the EDF, EDF-funded lawyer Mark Haddock, and the hard work of Wildsight, two regulations are now being enacted. However, a third, critical regulation restricting motorized boating between Fairmont Hot Springs and Donald Station, is still being considered by Transport Canada.

Wildsight is asking everyone to write the federal government to press for the enactment of this last regulation. For more information see: <http://www.wildsight.ca/news/607>.

### Climate Change Action and Our Forests continued from page 1

reassess our land use choices in the face of climate change. West Coast has joined with other non-governmental organisations in making submissions to the provincial government calling for the inclusion of nature conservation in the Province's climate action strategy. This includes new legal, policy and other mechanisms to create incentives to reform forestry management and enable enhanced forest conservation in a climate change era.

Our efforts will be leveraged by the upcoming Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Copenhagen in December 2009. All indications are that a tipping point has been reached internationally with respect to including 'reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation' in an international agreement to combat climate change. Changes to how forests and forestry are accounted for in the global system are important to British Columbians because they will also have impacts here at home.

West Coast lawyer Jessica Clogg has been selected to participate in an international "Forests and Carbon" working group under the auspices of the Forest Stewardship Council. This working group will attempt to provide timely recommendations and expertise in the lead-up to Copenhagen and beyond, regarding many of the thorny issues facing international, national/provincial and indigenous governments around the world, with respect to integrating measures regarding forests and forestry into action to fight climate change.

*Jessica Clogg*

*\*Not accounting for the carbon stored in long-lived wood products after harvesting. Net emissions from BC forests were 52.1 megatonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e after taking into account carbon dioxide absorbed from the atmosphere and stored as carbon by natural forests and replanted areas. By way of comparison, the total greenhouse gas emissions in British Columbia in 2007 from all sources officially counted towards BC's GHG reductions targets were 67.3 megatonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e. (Because of current GHG rules under protocols to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Canada and BC do not include emissions and removals from "land use, land-use change and forestry" in official GHG emissions totals).*



FSC Forests and Carbon Working Group meeting, Bonn, Germany, September 2009

Photo Credit: © FSC/Arturo Escobar

# Sustaining the People and the Land through Indigenous Environmental Law

“Our histories, laws, territories and institutions have always existed and will continue to exist forever.”

– Gitanyow Constitution

The lands and waters of a vast and diverse 6,200-square-kilometer area in what is now northwestern British Columbia have sustained the Gitanyow Peoples for millennia. However, unsustainable logging and other resource extraction over many decades has dramatically altered this landscape. The quest of the Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs (GHC) for sustainability in their territories has led them to court on many occasions, and most recently, into land use planning negotiations with the provincial government and timber companies. The Gitanyow Forestry Agreement empowers a provincial-Gitanyow Joint Resources Council, which is involved in producing Sustainable Resource Management Plans, for areas referred to by the Province as the Nass South and Cranberry-Kispiox planning areas.

With the assistance of West Coast Environmental Law, the GHC are seeking to build on and consolidate planning work to-date into one land use plan for their territories, grounded in Gitanyow Ayookxw (law), and which will be implemented in both Gitanyow and provincial law.

The Gitanyow Peoples are organized into eight historic Wilp (house, pl.: Huwilp), which are the social, economic and political units of the Gitanyow, each with its own Lax Yip (territory), which incorporates all of the lands, waters, land forms and life forms within its boundaries. Gitanyow rights and ownership over the Lax Yip are set out in Gitanyow Ayookxw. Gitanyow Ayookxw is founded on knowledge, experience and practice that are thousands of years old and affirmed and confirmed through testimony recounted in the Adawaak (which records the history of each Wilp) and Li'ligit (feast; formal public gathering initiated by a Wilp to conduct its business).

Highlights of draft land use plans include designation of a series of critical biodiversity areas and ecosystem networks encompassing the major streams and rivers of the Huwilp territories that run like a lifeblood through them, as well as a major new 'protection area' for the Hanna and Tintina watersheds. Legally establishing a long-term land use plan that covers all of their Huwilp territories, is one important way in which the Simgigyet (Hereditary Chiefs) are meeting their responsibility to uphold Gitanyow Ayookxw, which compels each Wilp Chief to ensure that the lands and resources of the Wilp Lax Yip are managed so as to ensure that they can provide for future generations of the Wilp.

West Coast Senior Counsel Jessica Clogg has worked with the GHC to identify barriers and opportunities in provincial and Canadian constitutional law to support them in achieving their territory stewardship objectives. West Coast's distinctive approach involves working with First Nations partners to articulate their ancestral laws in written land use, plans, policies and codes, and working to implement and enforce these both within their own legal traditions and provincial/Canadian law. In many cases, new or modified legal tools (e.g., legal orders, law reform to statutes like the *Park Act* or *Forest Act*) are required to do so. In this manner, Indigenous environmental law can become a driver for progressive law reform that benefits all British Columbians.

Gitanyow values and interests are directly and inextricably connected to and reliant upon the sustained presence and quality of ecological forest resources. Sustaining the integrity of the land is central to sustaining Gitanyow culture and providing for their economics. Gitanyow have a holistic view of the land and its ecosystems. Gitanyow objectives for sustainable resource management are incorporated within the objectives for all forest resources and reflect their desire that these objectives provide direction for all resource management decisions on Gitanyow territories.

*Jessica Clogg*

Legacies are for us to create now! They give us energy and focus. West Coast Environmental Law has been BC's legal champion for the environment for more than 35 years, and we will continue to be well into the future.

West Coast believes that nothing is going to protect the environment better than having it protected by law. And protecting the environment through the law is a long-term commitment: ensuring clean air and water, sustainable communities, pristine wilderness, and clean, thriving oceans for future generations. Legacy gifts too are about caring for the future. A bequest to West Coast Environmental Law will ensure that we are actively fighting to protect our environment - now, and for generations to come.

By leaving a gift to West Coast Environmental Law in your will, you are making a significant contribution to the future protection of what you value most. It will put a smile on your face knowing what you leave behind will benefit others and make the world a better place for future generations. Please call 604-601-2509 for more information.



# A Progressive Spirit: Clare Allan

When Clare Allan's donation arrives, I open the envelope with happy anticipation of the lovely handwritten accompanying note that I know I will find inside. In her notes, Clare always expresses her heartfelt thanks to West Coast for making a difference for "people, animals and nature – we are all interconnected."

Clare arrived in BC to visit family after graduating from university in Ontario – and she never left – settling in Victoria. At the time of the historic anti-logging campaign in Clayoquot Sound, a local business man had arranged for buses to take other business people to Clayoquot in a show of solidarity. Clare, a business consultant at the time, was on one of those buses. Participating in what would become one of the defining environmental protests of our time was a pivotal and visceral moment for Clare, and greatly shaped how she has come to advocate for the environment today.

Clare first learned of West Coast Environmental Law when she happened upon our booth at a community event at Capers many years ago. She read one of our newsletters and immediately identified with our work. She recalls thinking to herself,

*"The law of the land prevails'. It is this adage that keeps me supporting West Coast because I believe that the most definitive way to protect our environment is through the law"*

"These guys (West Coast) advocate legally for the environment, and the law is irrefutable, with power and substance." Clare immediately began supporting West Coast, happy with the knowledge that her donation dollars would have great impact.

As the years have passed Clare feels reassured that we "have her back", environmentally speaking. "I enjoy reading West Coast's newsletters and about your accomplishments, knowing that your achievements have a lasting and protective impact on the environment. 'The law of the land prevails'. It is this adage that keeps me supporting West Coast because I believe that the most definitive way to protect our environment is through the law."

Several years ago Clare began dedicating ten percent of her income to charity. She first heard of tithing\* in her early 20s and took to the concept; today, she believes one of her best decisions has been to "let go of tightness around money." It is her progressive and generous spirit that makes West Coast grateful to have supporters like Clare Allan.

*Anna Beard*

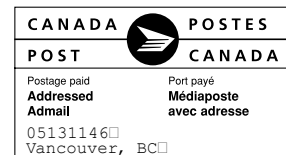


*\*Tithing originated in a religious context but is increasingly becoming a common means of people donating to their favourite charities across the broader charitable sector. 'Tithing' generally refers to donating the first 10 percent of your gross income to the charity or charities of your choice. Here are some tips to make tithing easy!*

- *Have your employer take it off the top – through payroll deduction or in conjunction with United Way.*
- *Create a special account just for your tithing funds.*
- *Write your charitable checks before you sit down to pay your bills.*
- *Sign up for your charity of choice's automatic monthly donation program.*



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