



PROTECTING CANADA'S GREAT BEAR RAINFOREST

Pacific Wild 2009

Dear Pacific Wild supporters:

When deciding to start a new non-profit focused on wildlife conservation, we knew that it would take a lot of work, especially during tumultuous economic times. We also knew that it was not enough to rebrand; we had to rethink our **conservation goals** and how we deliver environmental protection.



The threats to the coast have never been greater. But just because campaign strategies worked before did not mean they would work again. We wanted passion and creativity to drive the work of our staff and associates. We saw a need to strengthen our old relationships but also forge new ones as we tackled the challenges facing our coast. And ultimately, we want to make a difference.

Still focused on wildlife protection, our work has broadened in scope. On the education front, we are working with both the Gitga'at and Heiltsuk First Nations on a **cutting-edge education program**. This year, we are delivering wireless video feeds of extremely rare wildlife behavior directly into classrooms. This program not only serves to inspire and educate students by providing new tools to explore their natural world but also serves broader research, science and conservation needs.

A consistent field presence continues to be key in monitoring and bringing global attention to wildlife conservation on the coast. This fall, Pacific Wild's reports on the **declining bear populations** on the coast reached millions of people around the world, elevating awareness of the connection between the health of coastal bears and the plight of wild salmon. More and more, people are recognizing the profound ecological impacts resulting from declining salmon runs on the coast.

On a personal note, I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the many people that have supported Pacific Wild's work this past year. As a grassroots non-profit, this work would simply not be possible without the dedication of so many volunteers, collaborators, partners and other individuals.

Warm regards to you and yours,
— Ian McAllister, Pacific Wild Co-founder and Conservation Director

B.C.'s oil pipeline proposal: Canada stands at the crossroads

Our work in the Great Bear Rainforest is no longer just about the struggle to protect endangered marine and rainforest ecosystems, but has now also become a battle over the export of tar sands oil to the coastal waters of B.C. and points beyond. If Canada permits the Northern Gateway oil pipeline to be built across western Canada to the Great Bear, and then allows super tankers to transport full loads of tar sand oil for export to Asia, this will symbolize our nation's inaction on climate change.

I (Ian) travelled with Andrew Nikiforuk, a leading Canadian energy researcher and writer, on two speaking tours this past spring and fall. We travelled to small communities along the proposed pipeline route in northwestern B.C. and ended up in the big cities of the Lower Mainland. Under the title **"A Story with Two Ends"**, Andrew presented the Alberta start of the proposed pipeline, while I spoke on the destruction that would occur through northern B.C. and at the end, on the coast.

It was astounding to hear Andrew describe the destructive impact of Canada's tar sands industry on our environment, economy and democracy. Canada is about to lose its once-proud international reputation. How could this have happened in such a short time and without public debate? We repeatedly heard these questions from our audiences.

CONTINUED ON PAGE TWO >

at the crossroads

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If built, this pipeline would increase tar sands production by an incredible 40 per cent. It would introduce the largest oil tankers in the world to one of the most storm-ridden, dangerous and difficult-to-navigate coastlines on the planet. Canada has a decision to make. Will it build this pipeline and risk everything—our global reputation, fragile coast and international obligation? Or will we cancel this pipeline/oil tanker proposal and show the world that Canada is ready to lead by example?

The stakes have never been higher, and Pacific Wild is making this issue a priority campaign over the coming years. As an international advocate, Pacific Wild will carry to the rest of Canada and other countries in 2010 the distressing message of tankers and what we stand to lose. Advocacy, research and most of all, working together with First Nations, concerned groups and individuals, will all be part of our work as we push Canada to make the right decision.

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Recent Press



Pacific Wild helps to sponsor a self-propelled expedition of the proposed pipeline in 2010. Stay tuned as this expedition takes shape.



PHOTO CREDIT: MIKE GRACE

In 2008, the International Whaling Commission endorsed a resolution made by the International Maritime Organization to reduce the contribution of shipping to ocean noise levels by 50% in ten years.

Campaign for a Quiet Ocean

Pacific Wild continues to support the work of Dr. Rob Williams (2009-10 Canada-US Fulbright Chair) with Cornell University on the impacts of chronic ocean noise on cetaceans. This work has broad applications for protecting whales and dolphins worldwide but will be critical in supporting efforts to ban oil tankers from the B.C. north coast and understanding how we can protect the acoustic attributes of critical marine habitat.

Oil tankers are among the loudest vessels in the world. But we don't know to what extent they impact the whales' ability to communicate, feed and survive near tanker shipping routes. Putting numbers to chronic ocean-noise levels will be an important step towards assessing acoustic habitat quality. This scientific work will provide an estimate

of the range at which whales can hear each other under varying noise conditions, and most importantly what impact introducing oil tankers to the coast will have on these acoustically sensitive marine mammals.

Pacific Wild is also supporting Erin Ashe's PhD research at the University of St. Andrews to assess the conservation status of Pacific white-sided dolphins in B.C. The study involves field work to photograph dolphins and will make use of Alexandra Morton's 20 year photo-identification data base of dolphins for additional statistical analysis to estimate abundance and survivorship.

Stay tuned for these reports by Pacific Wild. For more information please visit www.oceansinitiative.org.

Pacific Wild LIVE/Virtual Rainforest Initiative Project

Another successful year of research, education and outreach

This year, our remote camera project, **Pacific Wild LIVE**, took off with successes in many new directions. While researching, developing and field-testing new camera and wireless delivery technology, we continued to collect unique wildlife footage. Field researcher Steve Williamson captured rare footage of **Knight Inlet grizzly bears** rubbing on scent trees deep in the rainforest, while our crew further north filmed a pair of nesting **sand-hill cranes** and the hatching of their two eggs. The capacity for remote delivery from our camera project continues to provide us with a wealth of data and new observations of the unseen lives of wildlife from the farthest reaches of the Great Bear Rainforest. We are also excited about our current experiments with underwater systems; we'll make marine world exploration a new focus for 2010.

In September, we broadened our project to include the the Bella Bella and Hartley Bay schools. We continuously streamed live video into schools from remote cameras in both Heiltsuk and Giga'at territories. Students at each school helped to monitor cameras located in remote parts of the coast. In Bella Bella, students were able to observe a wolf pack

fishing and playing over the course of a month (link), while students in Hartley Bay watched multiple spirit and black bears fishing and foraging along the beach. Not only are students learning about their local environment but they also have an opportunity to learn technical, videographic and field skills.

Through a partnership with both community schools, The Nature Conservancy and the American Museum of Natural History, we are beginning to use our wildlife

"I knew we had achieved something remarkable when I was at the Bella Bella school one morning with students watching live footage of a pack of wolves feeding on salmon, and that same morning, students in Hartley Bay were watching spirit bears fishing for salmon—all live and within the classroom."

— Pacific Wild LIVE coordinator Krista Roessingh

footage as part of a new educational program combining ecology and technology. We will be using interactive whiteboards to enhance classroom learning. This program, called the Virtual Rainforest Initiative, will enable First Nations students in remote communities to connect with marine and terrestrial ecosystems, while providing stewardship, monitoring and research tools. We're also exploring ways to expand this opportunity to students in other parts of the world through live

web-based communication.

Watch our most recent wildlife footage!



Field assistant Richard Taylor sets up a new fuel cell. The addition of fuel-cell technology to the remote camera systems has significantly reduced maintenance, increased field worker safety and greatly improved the non-invasive goal of wildlife research. Instead of changing batteries on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, we can now power the camera systems for over a month without maintenance.

Conservation Photography

Producing award-winning imagery and video footage remains an essential educational outreach tool for Pacific Wild. In 2010, we will expand our work significantly as we introduce true high-definition resolution to our remote camera technology. We continue to work with many of the world's most talented photographers and filmmakers to illustrate the beauty—and the threats—of the coast.

Two new, fully illustrated youth books by Nick Read and Ian McAllister will be published by **Orca Books** in 2010. The first will be a book on the ever-fascinating world of B.C.'s salmon bears and the other on the unique rainforest wolves of the B.C. north coast.

Pacific Wild's Ian McAllister received the **2010 North American Nature Photography Vision Award**. This honour recognizes early career excellence, vision and inspiration to others in nature photography, conservation, and education.



Wildlife Conservation: more than just habitat protection

The year started with a new coalition of coastal First Nations, environmental and animal welfare advocates announcing a new effort to stop the trophy hunt of bears in the Great Bear. Pacific Wild released a series of videos on the trophy hunt featuring internationally recognized spokespersons like Jane Goodall and Deepak Chopra.

Protecting critical habitat is a foundation of Pacific Wild's work, but without strong policies that manage human activities within and outside protected areas, wildlife will remain threatened. We only have to look at how many of our national parks have failed to adequately protect species, especially wolves and other large carnivores, to confirm that habitat protection is only one part of wildlife conservation. This is one of the reasons that Pacific Wild continues to work closely with The **Humane Society**, coastal **First**

Nations and others to end the trophy hunt of bears in the Great Bear Rainforest.

This year saw significant progress on this campaign. After a long fifteen years, the B.C. central and north coast received three new no-trophy hunting areas, known as Grizzly Bear Management Areas or GBMAs. However, while these GBMAs extended the trophy hunting closure around the Khutzeymateen Grizzly Bear Sanctuary, Princess Royal Island and Knight Inlet, they did not come close to achieving the original goal of establishing a connected system of core protected areas for carnivores across British Columbia. These geographically isolated GBMAs also have a short, ten-year lifespan and do not address non-hunting-related issues such as resource extraction.

[Read More...](#)

Bear numbers decline on north coast

We suspected from the 2008 collapse of salmon on the north coast that a cascade of ecological impacts would result in 2009. When the higher-than-expected returns of pink and coho salmon arrived on the north coast this past fall, the bears should have been close behind. Instead, reports from front-line observers up and down the coast supported our own field observations. Cubs were not observed in normal numbers and individual bears were missing from traditional salmon-feeding areas.

The **provincial government's own surveys** also showed a reduction in bear numbers in the Kimsquit river drainage. Some speculated that the bears had simply changed diet and were not eating salmon. However by the end of October and into November, long after berries and other potential alternative food had finished for the season, the bears were still not found in historic numbers along the salmon rivers.

We continue to call on the government to stop the trophy hunting of bears. Grizzly bears have already been extirpated from most of their historical range in North America. Alberta has had a moratorium on the trophy hunt for two years. We thank the more-than-20,000 people who have sent letters and emails for the last few months to the B.C. government, expressing their outrage. This growing opposition is not going unnoticed. We are optimistic that with sustained effort, we will announce a resolution to this issue in 2010.

Take action to stop trophy hunting



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Marven Robinson and Mary Danes install a remote camera in Gitga'at territory.

Get ready for a RAVE

Pacific Wild is collaborating with the International League of Conservation Photographers (ILCP) to organize a Rapid Assessment Visual Expedition (RAVE) of the waters of the Great Bear Rainforest. This will roughly follow the proposed tanker traffic routes. With a RAVE, we'll aim to achieve a full visual and media assessment by using a multi-disciplinary team that will include several specialized ILCP photographers (landscape, wildlife, macro,

camera trapping, portraiture), writers and cameramen. Their job is to bring back a comprehensive portrait of a conservation issue or threat in a very short period of time. RAVes, conducted by the ILCP throughout the world, have proven an extremely effective tool in conservation. For more info, visit www.ilcp.com