

This Year You Stood Firm for Science and Canada

TENS OF THOUSANDS OF CANADIANS REJECTED THE NORTHERN GATEWAY OIL PIPELINE AND TANKERS

KERMODE BEAR (*URSUS AMERICANUS KERMODEI*)

The Great Bear region of coastal British Columbia is not only one of the richest ecosystems on Earth, but it is the only place in the world where the Kermode bear, or the “Spirit Bear”, can be found. One in ten North American black bears are born white here due to recessive genes, and given the name “Spirit Bear” by Coastal First Nations. These rare white bears prove to be excellent fishers as their colouring appears less visible from the perspectives of fish. The future of the Spirit Bear, as well as of the entire Great Bear region, is at stake as a result of the proposed Northern Gateway pipeline and tankers project that could destroy the bear’s habitat. We are working to ensure that the Great Bear region remains a vibrant and flourishing ecosystem, where unique animals like the Spirit Bear can thrive.



THIS YEAR'S SUCCESSES:

Fighting the Northern Gateway pipeline and tanker project is not the only way WWF is protecting the Great Bear Sea. We're also advancing marine noise research, engaging communities, and influencing policy and planning to preserve one of the richest marine ecosystems on Earth.

- In December 2013, we released a 96-page report on managing underwater noise in Canada's Pacific. The following spring, we were invited to share our expertise on underwater noise at a workshop organized by the International Maritime Organization.
- In April 2014, the B.C. government and 18 First Nations released draft marine spatial plans for the Great Bear Sea—plans that incorporate WWF contributions on climate change, ocean noise pollution, cumulative impacts, and eelgrass habitat.
- In May 2014, we released a new report, *Cumulative Effects in Marine Ecosystems*, with the Center for Ocean Solutions in California, and premiered the report at a successful workshop in Prince Rupert entitled "Grounding Cumulative Effects Workshop in the Skeena Estuary".
- In June 2014, we teamed up with other conservation groups to launch "Protect Our Great Bear Sea," a public campaign calling on government to support the marine spatial plans for this global treasure.

LEADER PROFILE:



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Art Sterritt believes that well-informed people will make good decisions. "The Canadians for the Great Bear campaign helped demonstrate that this is a worthwhile cause," says Art. "We gave Canadians the facts—the science—about the threat the pipeline poses to the region, and they heard us. Natural capital from the Great Bear region has enriched us for millennia and we inherently know that if we protect it, it will continue to do so. My people are used to fighting alone, but seeing that we have partners across the country that appreciate our values has given us confidence to stand strong for this cause."

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THE BIG STORY:

Stretching from B.C.'s coastal mountains to the Pacific shore, the Great Bear Rainforest encompasses 6.4 million hectares of soaring forests and salmon-bearing streams. It's one of the world's largest intact temperate rainforests, nestled up against richly productive marine ecosystems.

That's why Enbridge's plan to drive a pipeline through this global treasure and pilot 220 massive oil tankers a year through the treacherous Hecate Strait creates unacceptable risks.

An oil spill would devastate important habitat for humpback whales. Tankers would increase noise in some of the province's quietest ocean waters. And according to WWF-funded report by University of British Columbia economists, a spill from a tanker the size of the Exxon Valdez could cost \$9.6 billion to clean up, far outweighing the \$600 million in economic benefits the pipeline is purported to bring.

This past year, you spoke up. You signed our petitions, rallied in front of the B.C. legislature, and made submissions to the Joint Review Panel (JRP) established by the federal government. Fifty thousand of you responded to our "Ask a Canadian to Care" campaign to reject the Northern Gateway project, joining scientists, artists, economists, First Nations leaders, and other prominent figures.

When the JRP recommended approving the project, 300 scientists pointed out fundamental flaws in that decision in a letter to Prime Minister Stephen Harper. And when we invited you to stand with those scientists, 20,000 supporters signed our letter in less than two weeks.

This year, on June 17, the federal government approved the pipeline and tankers. But the fight to protect the Great Bear Rainforest and the Great Bear Sea does not end here. There's simply too much at stake: salmon, spirit bears, wolves, whales, sustainable livelihoods, and more.

MARCH 2002

Enbridge announces preliminary plans to build a pipeline from the Alberta oil sands to the West Coast

AUGUST 2012

WWF submits a 100-page statement to the Joint Review Panel outlining the project's unacceptable social, economic, and environmental risks

MAY 2014

Three hundred scientists call the Joint Review Panel's assessment "deeply flawed"

MAY 2010

Enbridge files an application to the National Energy Board for the Northern Gateway pipeline and a Kitimat tanker terminal

NOVEMBER 2013

Fifty thousand supporters respond to our "Ask a Canadian to Care" campaign

JUNE 2014

The federal government approves the pipeline, provided Enbridge meets certain conditions

JANUARY 2012

The Joint Review Panel begins public hearings to determine if this project is in the public interest

DECEMBER 2013

The Joint Review Panel recommends approving the Northern Gateway project, subject to a number of conditions

JUNE 2014

First Nations and environmental groups launch numerous court cases against the federal government's decision