



Annual Report

for the year ended 30 April 2011



WILDERNESS
COMMITTEE

Over 30 years of protecting Canadian wilderness and wildlife



Thank you!

Dear Wilderness Committee members and supporters,

From us to you – a great big **thank you** for making possible our work to protect Canada's wild spaces and species. Without the ongoing donations, volunteer time and letter writing from thousands of nature-loving people like you, the Wilderness Committee would not be able to do our wilderness protection work as successfully as we do.

Your support matters. This past year we rejoiced together when industrial hydroelectric schemes to dam and divert several huge BC river systems, the Homathkoi and Southgate River systems in the Bute Inlet and the Klinaklini River system, were all put on hold thanks to the many letters and emails Wilderness Committee members sent to the BC government in Victoria.

The successful defence of these wild rivers is a tremendous achievement that we should all be very proud of.

We add these wild wins to past successes on the Pitt River, and Glacier and Howser Creeks. All these rivers still run wild today even though they have been targeted by private hydro power developers. They are a living, breathing example of what becomes possible

when we work together.

Read this report to learn more about these and other wild stories of court cases to defend endangered species, trail building in remote wilderness, rallies to stop oil tankers from ruining our oceans and coastlines, and boreal forest expeditions – all made possible by your support.

Thanks so much!

Joe Foy

Campaign Director

Gwen Barlee

Policy Director

Beth Clarke

Development and Program Director

Matt Jong

Comptroller, CMA



Joe Foy, Gwen Barlee, Matt Jong and Beth Clarke

Board of Directors

Mike Gildersleeve (Chair)
Diana VanderVeen
John Calvert
Mark Haddock
Stuart Mackinnon
Paul Morgan
Ross Muirhead
Devon Page
Dr. Tom Perry

We couldn't have achieved the results outlined in this report without the endless hours of dedication by our 23 staff members in our Victoria, Vancouver, Manitoba and Toronto offices. Our heartfelt thanks go out to all of you!

Our Wild Vision



Founded in 1980 by a small band of citizens determined to preserve wild Canada, the Wilderness Committee has grown to tens of thousands of members and supporters with offices in Vancouver, Victoria, Winnipeg and Toronto.

Since those early days, we've been successful in gaining protection for over 55 crucial wilderness areas, including critical wildlife habitats for endangered species.

But much remains to be done.

According to conservation biologists, at least half of a nation's land base should be protected in order to conserve nature and provide people with the ability to live comfortably and sustainably. The Wilderness Committee prioritizes protection for Canada's most

threatened wild lands such as remaining old-growth forests in BC, the 'pocket desert' in BC's beautiful Okanagan-Similkameen country, and large sections of Canada's boreal forest.

Our wildlife work targets protection for the



habitat of Canada's most critically at-risk species such as the northern spotted owl, greater sage-grouse and killer whale. At the same time, we are working to strengthen legislation so that protection can be assured for all species at risk across Canada. Additionally, our wild pacific salmon campaign focuses on marine protection from industrial salmon farms.

A necessary part of our work is defending existing parks, including advocating for better funding, more park rangers and stronger regulations. Our campaign to stop BC's rivers from being privatized, then dammed and diverted by corporations, aims to keep BC's rivers, streams and watersheds public so they can be better protected.

The urgency of our work is underlined by ever-increasing scientific evidence of the ecological impacts of human caused climate change and toxic pollution. These concerns have led us to include healthy communities programs aimed at fighting freeway expansion and the burning of garbage, opposing dirty tar sands extraction and coal mine development, protecting local farmland and reducing toxins in our environment.

The Wilderness Committee's wild vision sees generations of Canadians enjoying abundant clean water, fresh air, wild places and wild creatures forever.

The Wilderness Committee works to protect Canada's remaining natural biodiversity. Our programs focus on the following five priority areas:

Wildlands

BC's Special Places, Old-Growth Logging, Clayoquot Sound, Manning Park, Heart of the Boreal, Coastal Douglas Fir Ecosystem, Okanagan-Similkameen National Park, Bowen Island National Park, Cayoosh and Bendor Range, Juan de Fuca

Wildlife

BC Species at Risk, Federal Species at Risk Act, Killer Whale, Spotted Owl, Woodland Caribou

Pacific Coast

Wild Salmon, Tankers

Public Lands

Parks Defence (BC & Manitoba), Wild Rivers, Access to Information, Site C

Healthy Communities

Climate Change, Waste Incineration, Toxins, Coal, Gateway



Success Stories



Klinaklini River lives

May 2010 – One day after the BC Parks Minister said he would not allow a massive proposed private hydro-power project on the Klinaklini River to interfere with nearby parks, BC Hydro dropped the project from its list of potential purchases, effectively killing the controversial proposal. This was a close call for the mighty fish-filled river located in the Great Bear Rainforest. The project called for a tunnel three stories high to be cut through a mountain in order to divert the river for many kilometres. This was a great win for our Keep BC's Rivers Wild campaign.

Glacier and Howser Creeks run wild

November 2010 – Resistance in BC's Kootenay country was very high to this proposal to dam and divert Glacier and Howser Creeks and several of their tributaries for a private hydro-power project. Record-breaking attendance at public meetings combined with the discovery of endangered fish populations in the creeks kept delaying the project until BC Hydro finally cancelled the power purchase agreement with the private company, killing the project and saving the creeks.



Fish Lake still has fish

November 2010 – Many of you wrote to the federal government asking that Fish Lake on BC's Chilcotin Plateau not be turned into a toxic mine dump to accommodate the proposed Prosperity Mine. We traveled up to the area as guests of the Tsilqot'in National Government and saw the area's beauty and fragility for ourselves. Then tremendous news: the federal government turned down the mining proposal citing its massive impact on the environment. The BC government continues to push for the mine proposal to go ahead, but for now we celebrate a great victory for nature and First Nations' rights!

Killer whales win

December 2010 – The Wilderness Committee and our environmental partners, represented by Ecojustice, won a ground-breaking court case which required the federal government to protect the waters where BC's iconic killer whales socialize, forage and raise their young. This important victory means that the "biological attributes" of critical habitat must be protected; in other words, protection for killer whales now needs to address noise pollution, reduction of

prey species and toxins. This ruling also applies to the critical habitat of other species at risk. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans recently announced they are appealing the court decision so we will be heading back to court in the near future. But for now we (and the killer whales) celebrate wildly!

Meditation Lake to be protected

March 2011 – The Wilderness Committee finally heard the words we'd been seeking since 2009. The Manitoba government announced that Meditation Lake, within Whiteshell Provincial Park, would be granted full protection from future development proposals. Earlier on, the Wilderness Committee had successfully fended off a 2009 proposal to have a



private Tim Horton camp facility built there.

Park parking meters axed

April 2011 – It took an eight-year long campaign, but the Wilderness Committee can finally mark this battle as won. First introduced to BC provincial parks in 2003, the parking meters were brought in without any consultation or studies, and Wilderness Committee research showed that the meters in fact drove away hundreds of thousands of park users and ended up costing more money than they brought in. Now BC needs to honour the 100 year anniversary of BC Parks by adequately funding the system, reinstating park rangers and interpretive programs and protecting the ecological integrity of BC's protected areas.



Partnerships

Making friends

Part of the Wilderness Committee's mission is to **bring people together around environmental issues**. This year was a banner year for partnerships in every area of our campaigns, helping us get the message out further and exposing us to the outstanding work of many amazing environmental activists in diverse communities. Here are some stories of our great partnerships in 2010-2011.



Making Vancouver Oil Tanker Free

The Wilderness Committee joined with partners **Greenpeace** and **Tanker Free BC** to organize a large rally and flotilla in Stanley Park in October 2010, as part of a day of action against oil tankers using Vancouver's harbour. This event was a roaring success and drew substantial media interest and local participation. This is part of our effort to battle one of the largest causes of climate change, the Canadian tar sands, which supply the oil tankers with their deadly loads. Our campaign to make



Vancouver oil tanker free is off to a great start – thanks to our partners!

Breathing Easier

Working with our partners **Zero Waste BC**, we were able to have a song recorded by Shane Wiebe, a finalist on the popular TV show *Canadian Idol* and Fraser Valley resident, called 'Landfill in the Sky' based on Norman Greenbaum's classic hit 'Spirit in the Sky'. The song pokes fun at proposals to incinerate garbage in southern BC. Waste incineration opponents in the US and elsewhere have also started to use the song, and have expressed their



appreciation to us for providing this useful campaign tool. We are calling for stepped up recycling and composting along with stricter regulations on product packaging to move towards zero waste. Thanks to our partners we look forward to the day we can all breathe a little easier.

No Dam Way – Saving the Peace River Valley

As the fight against the proposed Site C Dam heats up, the Wilderness Committee has been standing on the front lines with the **Treaty 8 First Nations** and the **Peace Valley**



Environment Association. In September 2010 we helped organize a rally against the proposed dam in Victoria called *Paddle to the Premier*, which culminated in the signing of an historic document with local First Nations opposing the project. Our work continues as we raise awareness about the impacts and costs of this ill-conceived mega-project.

Get Out Migration

In May 2010 the Wilderness Committee organized the Victoria portion of the *Get Out Migration Walk* – a trek the length of Vancouver Island



in aid of wild salmon. Organizing the massive gathering with our partners was a difficult job, but the end result was a rally of several thousand people on the Legislature lawn protesting salmon farming – perhaps the largest environmental protest ever held at the BC Legislature!

Earth Day

We organized a Vancouver Earth Day parade in April 2011, partnering up with a new student group that we have been mentoring called the **Youth for Climate Justice Now**. The Earth Day Parade was attended by thousands



of people, many of them high school students from around the region. The event focused on the climate change issue and what solutions are needed – like stopping the tar sands.

Climate Justice Project

We have partnered with the **Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives** on their innovative Climate Justice Project addressing climate policy from a social justice perspective. The project considers the social and economic effects of climate change, and acknowledges that climate change affects people differently, depending



on their position in society. We have co-published policy papers on transportation and forestry issues in the context of climate justice and have been involved in working with academics, union leaders and other NGO's in helping to shape the project.



Growing our Grassroots!



Finding opportunities for people to meet, talk through issues and take action is critical to the long-term success of the environmental movement. The Wilderness Committee wins our campaigns through community work and grassroots organizing. Some highlights from 2010-2011 include:

Proposed South Okanagan-Similkameen National Park

Our work to see a National Park established in the South Okanagan and Similkameen areas has involved a growing community of park advocates in this region of BC. Working with the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society and local park advocates, we identified and built up grassroots support. We commissioned a poll with Angus McAllister in May 2010 which revealed that the public in the Okanagan-Similkameen is two to one in favour of the park (63% in favour vs 26% opposed). We look forward to the day when overwhelming grassroots support makes the South Okanagan-Similkameen National Park

one of our greatest success stories!

Proposed Cayoosh and Bendor Mountains Tribal Parks

In St'át'imc Nation territory located between Whistler and Lillooet, BC, we continued to work on our long-term farm and Spirit Trail projects with the Seton Lake and N'Quatqua First Nations communities. We also began work in six other St'át'imc communities on farm, traditional pithouse building, and Spirit Trail maintenance projects. We partnered with the Lower St'át'imc Tribal Commission and the St'át'imc Chiefs Council to raise funds and work cooperatively on these projects. We continue to seek legislated Tribal Park status for areas in the Bendor and Cayoosh Mountains, principally in areas for which protection is sought through the St'át'imc Land Use Plan.

Proposed Bowen Island National Park

The Wilderness Committee has hired a local campaigner to work with the community and Parks Canada throughout the current feasibility assessment for the creation of a national park on Bowen Island located near Vancouver, BC. Our current priority is to provide good public engagement on the issue, and to that end the Wilderness Committee is working with a newly created community coalition on Bowen Island, called 'Partners for the Park'. Projects that the Wilderness Committee has supported include setting up workshops with speakers

Working with Communities

and researchers, and developing visual media and literature to inform the public on the natural values of Bowen Island and surrounding marine areas.

Ending old-growth logging in BC

Our dream is for British Columbia to join the ranks of jurisdictions all over the planet that have banned the logging of old-growth forests. To do this we work with communities in a grassroots campaign style calculated to build massive public support. This year we focused our efforts on one of the most old-growth forest depleted landscapes in BC – the east side of Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast. Hundreds of our members wrote in to the BC government resulting in new protection for five small areas of Coastal Douglas-fir forest. We are also concentrating on one eastern Vancouver Island area, the Nanoose Forest, which has not yet gained protection and is under threat of being logged.

Saying No to Raven Coal

The Wilderness Committee has been very active opposing the proposed Raven Coal Mine in the Comox Valley on Vancouver Island. We worked with Coalwatch Comox Valley and Sierra Club BC, and many community members to host over 13 speaking events across BC called "BC's Dirty Secret: Coal Mining in the Comox Valley". We hosted a number of training events to

support local community activists. Our work paid off in a big way, with the Raven Coal Mine gaining province-wide profile. Over 1,800 people wrote in to the first federal comment period, with the vast majority opposing the mine.

Juan de Fuca Trail

The Juan de Fuca Trail is in BC's third most visited provincial park and is located on the southwest coast of Vancouver Island. It was under threat from a proposed 260 vacation home development right next to the park trail. The Wilderness Committee has been engaged in the campaign with a broad range of environmental groups and community members. We helped to organize a rally and concert, participated in public meetings, organized phone calling and letter writing campaigns, and met with local politicians. As a result the grassroots campaign became unstoppable!



The Answer is out There!



Research is the backbone of the Wilderness Committee's work. Over the years we have intensified our research programs to study, map and provide on-the-ground documentation of wilderness areas, wildlife habitats as well as industrial damage. Here are some highlights from 2010-2011.

Laying the groundwork for Clayoquot Sound Tribal Parks

We mounted several expeditions to the Clayoquot River Valley and to Meares Island, located on the west coast of Vancouver Island, to locate and map out trail routes through the spectacular ancient forests. Volunteers have stepped up to join members of the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations to clear hiking trails, laying the



groundwork for these areas being recognized by the BC government as Tribal Parks.

Exploring the Ghost Pass Trail

We continued our work to re-clear the historic Ghost Pass Trail, located to the west of BC's popular Manning Provincial Park. Our explorations of the area located a missing link of the trail in need of repair. This work is in support of our campaign to expand Manning Provincial Park.

Digging up the truth in Nopiming Provincial Park

We mounted several expeditions into Manitoba's Nopiming Provincial Park to document mineral exploration developments. We gathered supporting photos, video, and maps for our upcoming campaign to



Research and Field Work

stop mining in Manitoba's parks.

On the ground and in the ground at Wanipigow

Our first Manitoba community garden and trail project was launched in 2010. Working with the Wanipigow (Hollow Water) community members and the Raven family, we helped establish and grow community gardens, with regular food drops to elders and single parents, and a great deal of fall canning. We also spent some time in the bush, planning trails in this section of the Heart of the Boreal.



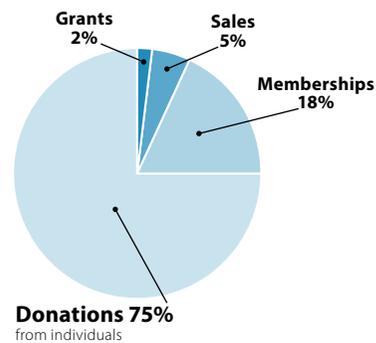
SECRETS REVEALED - FREEDOM OF INFORMATION WORK

Our growing expertise in Freedom of Information (FOI) requests has allowed access to important government information about the state of public land management. This year, we released the juicy details garnered from a FOI request about cuts to BC's Provincial Parks budget and the transportation budget of BC Park Rangers. We told the story of how some parks had run out of money they needed to provide toilet paper for outhouses or gas for Park Rangers' trucks. Originally the BC government tried to charge us \$9,000 for 300 pages of documents that showed these embarrassing facts. After eight months of wrangling with the government over the outrageous fees, we finally got the information at a greatly reduced rate and released it to the media. This resulted in substantial media pick-up, generating over 25 separate media stories and two strong editorials in the Victoria Times-Colonist and the Province newspapers calling for better funding for BC's provincial park system.

Financial Statement

2010-2011 Auditor

Dale Matheson Carr-Hilton
LaBonte Chartered Accountants



2010-2011 Revenues

We are so thankful that our members and donors contribute 93% of our income. This is an illustration of how our national, membership-based wilderness preservation organization is able to protect Canada's wild spaces and species. Our revenue is down 1.4% from last year, however revenue from bequests has doubled again, as the legacy left by our members has a lasting impact. Thank you for your support!

REVENUE	2011	2010
Membership dues	341,600	389,980
Donations	1,383,422	1,520,822
Grant Revenue	34,000	68,305
Sales of educational material	87,496	138,769
Unreceipted donations	38,165	51,741
	1,884,683	2,169,617

EXPENDITURES	2011	2010
Administration costs	187,941	161,732
Amortization	8,156	17,658
Campaign & grant project costs	1,185,225	1,202,753
Canvass costs	247,176	276,688
Membership costs	228,077	225,371
Sales costs	106,016	148,337
	1,962,591	2,032,539

Excess (deficiency) of Revenue over Expenses from Operations	-77,908	137,078
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OTHER INCOME	2011	2010
Rental income	1,850	13,235
Gain on disposal of assets	-	194,228
	1,850	207,463

Excess (deficiency) of Revenue over Expenses for the Year	-76,058	344,541
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Members' equity, beginning of year 822,608 478,067

Members' equity, end of year 746,550 822,608

ASSETS	2011	2010
Current		
Cash and equivalent	27,893	754,696
Restricted funds	80,796	71,046
Short term investments	649,863	0
Accounts receivable	30,478	16,456
Inventory	48,763	56,580
Prepaid expenses	21,927	16,854
	859,720	915,632

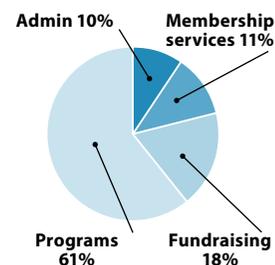
Capital assets	10,438	15,763
	870,158	931,395

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	2011	2010
Current		
Bank Indebtedness	35,430	24,603
Accounts payable	88,178	84,184
	123,608	108,787

NET ASSETS	746,550	822,608
	870,158	931,395

2010-2011 Program costs

We are committed to using your donations wisely and ethically so you know your contribution is having a positive impact on Canada's endangered wilderness and wildlife. We dedicate as much as we can directly to our programs, keeping our administration and operations as efficient as possible.



Auditors' Report for the year ended 30 April 2011

To the Members of the Western Canada Wilderness Committee,

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Western Canada Wilderness Committee, which comprise the statement of financial position as at April 30, 2011 and 2010 and the Statement of operation and changes in fund balance and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditors' judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence that we have obtained in our audits is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Western Canada Wilderness Committee as at April 30, 2011 and 2010, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

"Dale Matheson Carr-Hilton LaBonte"
DALE MATHESON CARR-HILTON LABONTE
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS
Vancouver, BC, July 28, 2011

Photo: [Wilderness Committee staff retreat on Bowen Island](#) (JP).



Help us save Canada's wild places!

There are many ways that you can contribute to protecting wilderness and wildlife:

- You can join the **Wilderness Savings Plan** – becoming a member by giving monthly helps us to plan our work into the future and have sustainable impacts.
- You can **Leave a Legacy** – include the Wilderness Committee in your will as a way to ensure you continue to protect wilderness and wildlife for future generations.
- You can become a Wilderness Committee member – the larger our membership nation-wide, the more impact we have when educating our elected representatives and the larger public.
- You can make a gift of stocks, bonds, or mutual funds, or name the Wilderness Committee as a beneficiary of your life insurance policy or RRSP.

No donation is too small to contribute to helping us make a very big difference!



The Wilderness Committee is Canada's largest membership-based wilderness preservation group with 60,000 members, supporters and volunteers. Founded in 1980, we've helped gain protection for over 55 major wilderness areas in Canada, including millions of hectares of critical wildlife habitats and some of the world's last large tracts of old-growth temperate rainforest and boreal forest. But much remains to be done.

Join us. Your annual membership fee makes a world of difference!
WildernessCommittee.org/join

Printed in Canada on 60 lb Enviro 100 paper using vegetable-based inks.
Special thanks to Steven Lim for help assembling this report.
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