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NATIONAL ENERGY BOARD DISMISSES BRITISH COLUMBIA'S OPPOSITION: YEARS OF LITIGATION, CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE AND CONTROVERSY WILL FOLLOW

BELLA BELLA, B.C. - Today's National Energy Board decision to approve the Northern Gateway oil pipeline is being met with outrage and frustration by people across Canada as the 209 recommendations outlined in the report continue to be analyzed.

"It is inconceivable how the NEB could dismiss the impacts that an oil spill could have on the B.C. coast as being 'significant' but not 'permanent', while Alaskans are still living with the devastation to their coastal environment caused by the Exxon Valdez disaster more than 20 years later," states Ian McAllister of Pacific Wild Alliance.

The NEB has included 209 conditions, including a vague marine mammal protection plan, enhanced marine spill measures and other requirements. There are no mitigation measures that can manage the impact that this project would have on whales and the marine environment. Further, none of the conditions address the adverse social, health or cultural impacts that this project has already had, and will continue to have on coastal communities as long as the threat of this project exists.

The project is also described as being in the public interest, and therefore outweighs environmental impacts and wildlife protection. This flies in the face of the evidence that was submitted to the Panel throughout the duration of the process.

95% of public submissions to the Panel were in opposition to the project and countless polls indicate the majority of British Columbians are strongly opposed to oil tankers in the Great Bear Rainforest. Additionally, over 130 First Nations signatories to the Save the Fraser Declaration have banned tar sands bitumen from crossing their traditional territories.

"The NEB does not regulate projects such as Northern Gateway, it facilitates them," said McAllister. "And considering that 90% of the National Energy Board's budget comes from corporations like Enbridge and

historically they have approved nearly every single project, this decision does not come as a surprise.”

This is a shameful day for Canada, our democracy and our coastal ecosystem.

Pacific Wild Alliance is committed to ensuring that the Great Bear Rainforest remains tanker free, and we will continue to work within the region and with supporters around the world to protect the wild coast we love.

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Pacific Wild is a non-profit organization committed to defending wildlife and their habitat in Canada's Great Bear Rainforest: www.pacificwild.org

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