



PACIFICWILD

PACIFIC WILD JOURNAL
Dispatches from a Northern Rainforest

WINTER 2020-2021

Connection & the Forces of Nature

For over a decade, protecting wildlife and wild places has been a priority for Pacific Wild. We are proud of our conservation achievements and growing influence as we continue to inspire greater wildlife, ocean and rainforest protection. We know Pacific Wild has played an integral role in defending the natural world here on the coast where we live, but too often these incremental gains are overshadowed by the daily reports of catastrophic weather events and imperilled oceans. The United Nations has reported nearly a million species are currently at risk of extinction worldwide, and how nearly every government in the world is falling short of achieving climate change mitigation targets. These are continual reminders of the biodiversity crisis we find ourselves in, and now this outlook is overshadowed by a global pandemic.

Our planet — our only home — is in trouble. While it is hard not to feel overwhelmed, it is exactly during times of abject adversity when humanity summons the courage and motivation to change course. By all accounts that time is now.

Earlier this year our team traveled along the edge of the continental shelf, documenting the largely unknown wonders of the offshore world. "It was an uplifting experience to peer into one of the continent's wild corners, to see how vivid, noisy and full of life somewhere can be when left to its own ancient rhythm", said conservation photographer Ryan Tidman. Photo by Ryan Tidman.



The “business-as-usual” model that has caused our current ecological crisis is clearly being questioned like never before as we reflect on what is truly important to us: family, food security, community and at the foundation of it all—the environment.

Here along the rainforest coast, our sense of vulnerability is proving to be a catalyst for small and large communities to search for and embrace more sustainable solutions. This is where the good news stories emerge as a groundswell of voices call for greater protection of ancient forests, local control for sustainable fisheries, marine protected areas and greater protection for wildlife. Indigenous-led conservation areas that embrace traditional knowledge, stewardship and community well-being are no longer conceptual, but are playing out in the most remote parts of B.C.. The need to pause and retool our relationship with the natural world is being discussed as we reflect on what we value most and where our collective hope for the future lies. Now we must act.

Our planet — our only home — is in trouble. While it is hard not to feel overwhelmed, it is exactly during times of abject adversity when humanity summons the courage and motivation to change course.



At Pacific Wild we are continually uplifted and inspired by the many supporters, partners and colleagues we work alongside, advocating for fisheries reform, specifically, the need to build an ecosystem and community-based approach to managing endangered herring and wild salmon populations. These species represent the foundation of our coast

and the successful return to their former abundance will strengthen coastal ecosystems and economies. We continue to advocate for and work towards a system of marine protected areas that will offer time and space to rebuild fisheries and marine habitat.

On the wildlife conservation front it has been a busy year for Pacific Wild, as we continue to work for wildlife management reform. B.C.'s war on wolves remains a priority as

we challenge government on the legality of the wolf cull in the courts while building local and international opposition to the lack of protection for large carnivores in B.C.. These issues, among others, are at the heart of our impactful visual communications that reach hundreds of thousands of individuals around the world and are inspired directly from the very places we work to protect.

Yes it is a hard fight for many species—and late in the day—including for our own, but if ever there was a time to rethink our actions, it must be now.

Your support, measured in countless ways, allows all of us at Pacific Wild to continue the critical work of defending wildlife and wild places. We are deeply grateful. In these uncertain times we also wish each and every one of you safety, compassion and hope for a better future.

Sincerely,

All of us at Pacific Wild



Save B.C. Wolves

#SAVEBCWOLVES

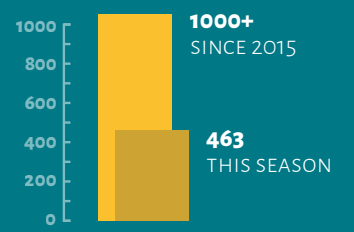
Early in 2020, our online petition to #SaveBCWolves crossed a monumental milestone, exceeding half a million signatures. Since the government-sponsored wolf cull was announced in 2015, we have been garnering support as we work with partners to fight British Columbia's war on wolves. A recent study published in the *Journal of Biology and Conservation* found the government-sponsored kill program has had no detectable effect on reversing the decline of endangered caribou populations. It is clear that wolves and other predators continue to be used as scapegoats for government inaction to protect critical habitat for endangered caribou. So, Pacific Wild is going to court again.

With the lack of legislation and enforcement to protect the environment in Canada, especially pertaining to the protection of wildlife, successful legal challenges are rare. However, our legal counsel has found the B.C. wolf cull program to be in direct violation of the province's own laws under the Wildlife Act. In addition, we believe the wolf cull is unconstitutional as outlined under federal aviation security regulations, it's clearly unlawful to have a loaded firearm and discharge said firearm from an aircraft for the purposes of an aerial cull.

The hearing is scheduled early in 2021. Keep locked onto our social media channels for information about the case as it develops.

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Wolves Culled By The B.C. Government



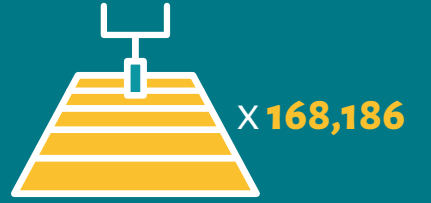
Killing Wolves Doesn't Save Caribou

There is no statistical support for claims that culling wolves will help offset caribou population decline, yet the B.C. government scapegoats wolves for its failure to protect critical caribou habitat.



Critical Caribou Habitat Destroyed

Despite the forests being listed as **critical caribou habitat**, the B.C. government has permitted over **900 km²** of land to be logged over the last 5 years. That's the equivalent to **168,186 football fields!**



Millions of Tax Dollars Spent to Kill Wolves

During the 2019/2020 winter, the B.C. government spent almost **\$2 million** to kill **463 wolves**. That's an average **\$4,300 per wolf**.



TAKE ACTION FOR WOLVES
PACIFICWILD.ORG/SAVE-BC-WOLVES

Protect Wild Salmon

#SALMONCOUNT

The Great Bear Rainforest is the largest remaining intact temperate rainforest in the world and a global beacon of biodiversity. Life on this coast, from the tops of the great cedars to the heftiest bears, owes its very existence to the massive annual migration of salmon in more than 2,000 creeks and rivers found throughout this region. Coastal ecosystems, economies and culture have been built on the abundance of wild salmon for thousands of years, but decades of overfishing, habitat destruction and a changing ocean due to climate change have dramatically reduced wild salmon populations to a fragment of their historic numbers.

The single greatest asset to salmon conservation on the coast is on-the-ground monitoring carried out by *creekwalkers*; First Nations Guardian programs, academics, volunteers, and a few remaining Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) charter patrolmen who are trying to keep the salmon count alive. In the midst of an escalating wild salmon crisis and despite tens of millions of dollars

allocated for salmon, Canada's federal government is simultaneously choosing to undervalue the data collected by on-the-ground monitoring programs in making effective management decisions and divesting from this foundational pillar of salmon management. There is currently one DFO charter patrolman in the Central Great Bear Rainforest (Area 6), which has over 100 spawning creeks and rivers.

"If you have half a billion fish coming back to the Pacific Northwest every year, you have a giant nutrient pulse and an annual fertilizer that effectively feeds the entire coast,"

— ALLISON DENNER, CREEKWALKER & SFU PHD STUDENT

The Great Bear Rainforest has 2,592 populations of wild Chinook, coho, chum, pink and sockeye salmon. Today less than half of these are monitored each year because Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) isn't supporting monitoring efforts adequately. Despite new announcements for \$142.5 million towards wild salmon protection, DFO has decreased their investment in monitoring by over 60% over the last 15 years alone.

#SalmonCount

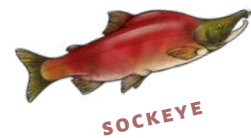
To address this problem, Pacific Wild launched its *Salmon Count* campaign in the fall of 2020. Part educational, part action-oriented, the campaign aims to bring awareness to the importance salmon monitoring has in acquiring critical data on population health and how that information should be better used in decision making. Throughout September and October, our team created and shared information about salmon ecology and the escalating crisis across our digital platforms while contracted fisheries researchers worked behind the scenes to inform Pacific Wild's campaign strategy.

This culminated in the launch of our new *Salmon Count* microsite (PACIFICWILD.ORG/SALMON-COUNT) — a place where

JOIN US IN PROTECTING WILD SALMON
PACIFICWILD.ORG/SALMON-COUNT

supporters can get the latest information on salmon monitoring efforts and take action. Interactive tools allow users to put pressure on key governmental fisheries stakeholders and MPs about this issue.

Moving forward, we will continue spreading information about salmon monitoring and calling on the government to fill the gaps in knowledge. How can we make decisions about wild salmon management when we don't even know how many fish are returning?



Our #SalmonCount campaign includes detailed information on each of the five Pacific salmon species which we had illustrated by local artist Claire Watson.

Chum Salmon
A.K.A. "Dog Salmon" / *Oncorhynchus keta*

HEALTHY: MEDIUM/HIGH RISK

AVERAGE WEIGHT: 3.5KG

AVERAGE LENGTH: 85CM

LIFE CYCLE: 4 YEARS

MIGRATION DISTANCE: LONG

REMARKABLE TIGER STRIPE PATTERN

ENLARGED KIDNEY (MOUTH)

LARGE POTENTIAL DOCKSIDE TROTTA

JUVENILE STAGE

SPAWNING AND RIVER PREFERENCE

CONSERVATION STATUS

COMMON PREDATORS

Stan Hutchings is the only DFO charter patrolman counting salmon in the Central Great Bear Rainforest (Area 6), which has over 100 spawning creeks and rivers across 16,900 square kilometres.

Save Pacific Herring

#BIGLITTLEFISH

This year, Pacific Wild joined forces with the WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council, Conservancy Hornby Island (CHI), Ecologist, Sea Legacy, and the Association for Denman Island Marine Stewards to raise awareness and garner support for herring conservation efforts.

In the lead-up to the 2020 fishery, our team took to the road, holding public speaking events in the Cowichan Valley, Salt Spring Island, and Powell River with Eric Pelkey, Hereditary Chief of Tsawout of the WSÁNEĆ Nation. We also worked alongside Courtenay-Alberni Member of Parliament and NDP Fisheries Critic,

Gord Johns on an official House of Commons E-petition which received over 5,000 signatures.

These efforts culminated in hundreds of caring citizens descending on Hornby Island for CHI's fourth annual HerringFest March 5th to 8th, coinciding with the opening of the fishery and the spectacular spring spawn. During this time, we were happy to see a strong turnout for a follow-up meeting from November's historic herring forum in Saanich, with representatives from Indigenous Nations all over the island. Throughout the festival, and the spawn, our team was on the water documenting the fishery from the frontlines while sharing stories about the importance of these #BigLittleFish.

When it comes to commercial fishing, it's easy for critics to focus on the people in the boats, while resource managers and

corporations—the ones ultimately causing the decline in our fisheries—remain out of sight in their government and corporate offices. Our organization's opposition to this fishery comes down to Fisheries and Oceans Canada's (DFO's) widely criticized and evidently flawed management practices, which

We are taking one of the most ecologically valuable fish from the ocean, one that feeds rockfish, salmon and whales and turning it into pellets to feed farmed salmon.

have led to the closures in four out of five herring fishing regions on the B.C. coast. As the governing body responsible for determining fishing quotas and the health of fisheries, DFO's goal is to create a situation that maximizes the catch each year without causing the population to collapse.

It's a flawed strategy considering the Department's mandate has outlined the importance of

rebuilding fish populations to historic levels while incorporating modern safeguards so that fish are protected for future generations.

To determine allowable catch rates, DFO first needs to estimate how many herring are in the ocean. They use a variety of statistical modelling methods that have a huge margin of error, which has led to the collapse of herring populations throughout B.C.. In fact, last year, DFO biologists overestimated the number of herring in the Strait of Georgia (SOG) for the seventh time in the last 13 years, which led to another year of overfishing—catching approximately 25% of the estimated population. The risky 20% harvest rate, initiated in 1983, is still applied year after year. On top of this, DFO compares its estimates to data from 1951, even though herring populations were already depleted by the reduction fishery which began in the 1870s.

Moving forward, we will continue to work with local communities, First Nations, and conservation groups to bring attention to our disappearing herring while advocating for an ecosystem-based approach to herring management, one that values herring as the foundation of our coast and not a commodity to be turned into fish meal for salmon farms and garden fertilizer.

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Marine Protected Areas

Marine protected areas (MPAs) are important conservation tools because they can enable ecosystems and populations to recover from human impacts. Studies show that MPA success is linked to size and age of the area (larger and older is better), high levels of protection, strong enforcement, and support from local communities. Not only do MPAs provide great benefits for biodiversity, they can also offer recreation and economic benefits, such as tourism and recovering commercial fish populations, both inside and outside boundaries. A network is a collection of MPAs that are designed and managed together to meet conservation objectives more effectively and comprehensively than individual MPAs. A well-designed MPA network links individual MPAs together, represents the diversity of habitats in a region, and replicates these habitats across multiple sites. Even if one MPA is negatively impacted, the others still provide protection for that ecosystem and can enhance recovery at the impacted site.

Currently, Pacific Wild is engaged in an MPA network planning process happening in the Northern Shelf Bioregion of British Columbia. While there are many MPAs in Canadian waters, this will be the first true MPA network in Canada. More importantly, it is unique because of its tripartite governance: it is co-led by the federal, provincial, and many First Nations governments. It is a massive



If established, the Northern Shelf Bioregion MPA network will become the first true MPA network in Canada. Photo by Ryan Tidman

scale effort and Pacific Wild is working with other environmental groups to make sure that marine conservation is a top priority. Since 2018, we have performed spatial analyses and conducted interviews with local community members to determine where protection is most critical and to better inform the planning process.

With the uncertainty of climate change, a precautionary approach is even more critical as we work to push for protection of a greater number of sites. When a draft MPA network is complete and released for public comment, we will share further information and call on our supporters to make their voices heard, reminding the governments we need permanently and highly protected areas to help safeguard marine biodiversity now.



The Northern Shelf Bioregion extends north from Campbell River to the Alaska border and west from the mainland out past Haida Gwaii

B.C.

HAIDA GWAII

VANCOUVER ISLAND



FRIENDS OF PACIFIC WILD

The year 2020 has shown an incredible outpouring of spirit and generosity; nowhere is that more evident than through our *Friends of Pacific Wild* initiative. This year, more than 110 artists submitted 160+ artworks in our second annual Wild Auction fundraiser. Pieces ranged from small sculptures to a 60"x60" fine art canvas valued in the tens of thousands of dollars range. Many were international.

Conservation photographer and filmmaker, Cheryl Alexander hosted the first Takaya Arts Festival, with 50 percent of proceeds from art sales and a silent auction donated to Pacific Wild's Save B.C. Wolves campaign. Takaya, the lone wolf of the Discovery Islands, has galvanized the international community and brought a renewed focus on the lives of wild wolves. His death has brought the limitations in our current relationships to wildlife into sharp focus.

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#MakeRyanPay

"This is my way to help ensure the rainforests I grew up with as a kid are still going to be there — wild and unique, and in the world for my kids, and hopefully their kids too."



In July, Pacific Wild rallied its support base to make British Columbia actor Ryan Reynolds match donations made by our supporters. The fundraising initiative doubled support for conservation efforts on the Pacific coast. In a mere matter of days we reached the initial goal of \$50,000 in matchable donations. We received more good news as an anonymous donor came forward pledging another \$25,000 as a potential match. We hit that target shortly after. Our generous community of wildlife lovers donated \$75,000, bringing the grand total to \$150,000 after being doubled by Ryan and the anonymous donor.

It was humbling and inspiring to see more than 1,000 donations come in from around the world to support the work we do during such a troubling time in human history. We can't wait to work with Ryan again in the future.

Donor Spotlight: Ann Marie Monahan

I first fell in love with wolves in 1993 on a trip to Alaska. My introduction to Pacific Wild came through Ian McAllister's writing of *The Last Wild Wolves: Ghosts of the Rainforest*. The work of Pacific Wild is critical to protecting our wildlife and wild areas but stopping the wolf cull is uppermost in my link to Pacific Wild. And though slow, it seems that progress is being made through the hard work of so many dedicated people and donors. I have learned that stopping the wolf cull is a complicated path but I am hopeful that the additional court challenge approach may eventually strike down the barbaric attacks on our precious wolves. **The work of Pacific Wild is critical to protecting our wildlife and wild areas.**

One other important feature of Pacific Wild is the personable approach of everyone I have connected with in the organization. When I inquired about putting Pacific Wild in my will Karen McAllister called me with the correct language and Ian called to see if I had questions about the organization. Colette and Laurie are always available to answer my questions and help me to learn more about advocating for our wolves. Experiencing this personal connection with Pacific Wild staff assures me that my donations are being directed towards saving the wolves that I so dearly love.

— ANN MARIE MONAHAN, MONTHLY SUPPORTER

Moving forward into 2021, art and community will continue to power *Friends of Pacific Wild*. Our organization welcomes artists, makers, and businesses to join us in building a community of support for conservation work in 2021. Whether you create apparel, run a shop, design jewelry, make art, or wish to donate a portion of your business' profits to further campaign goals, you're at the centre of achieving lasting protection for the Great Bear Rainforest. Your valuable contributions to the *Friends of Pacific Wild* community offer everyday people another window into how conservation can change lives for all species.

To explore how you might contribute to raising awareness through your talents, time and personal commitment towards conservation in British Columbia with Pacific Wild, please connect with Pacific Wild's *Director of Community Outreach & Systems*, Laurie McConnell at LAURIE@PACIFICWILD.ORG.



Gifts & Momentos

VISIT OUR ONLINE STORE AT

SHOP.PACIFICWILD.ORG, where you can buy Pacific Wild branded t-shirts and hoodies. The bamboo hoodie is so cozy and warm—it's like a hug from the Great Bear Rainforest. We'll be having special sale events through November and early December, but order early as delivery in pandemic times is slow. We'll include a downloadable card to give your loved one telling them of their shipped gift, too. You can also purchase Ian McAllister's books, and look for our new limited edition wolf pins! All items are fundraisers for our campaign work.

If you're looking for one of our limited edition campaign shirts, our partnership with charity t-shirt maker Bonfire allows you to choose from a variety of clothing styles and colours (impossible for us to carry as inventory). Bonfire is looking for a Canadian print partner for 2021.

Ways to Give

Your support makes our work possible and we are making it even easier for you to help protect wildlife and wild places.

BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR

If you wish to have the greatest impact, please consider becoming a regular monthly donor. \$10 or more a month provides a strong foundation for our campaigns in unpredictable times and supporters often find it easier as well. You can sign up online or if you'd like to set up a Canadian bank debit, please call our office at 250-380-0547.

ROUND UP FOR THE RAINFOREST

If you're in the US, watch for our new "Spare Change" giving and Round Up for the Rainforest. When you use your debit card your purchases are rounded up to the nearest dollar and your spare change comes to Pacific Wild. It's an easy way to regularly invest into our campaign work on your behalf, and you'll get a tax receipt at the end of the year.

DONATE STOCKS OR ESTABLISH A BEQUEST

Living in the era of Covid-19 has many of us revisiting our wills and ensuring all that postponed paperwork is completed so our families have a clear understanding of our wishes. If you are thinking of including Pacific Wild in your legacy, or wish to do a stock transfer, please contact us and we'll answer all of your questions and help you with what you need to include in your documents. This allows your legacy for B.C.'s wildlife and wild places to last for future generations.

Watch for fun 2021 fundraisers, Covid-19 style. First up is a Trivia Night about wolves, in late January. If you'd like to contribute or be a volunteer for this event, contact

LAURIE@PACIFICWILD.ORG.

All donations received by midnight, December 31, 2020 are tax deductible for Canadian and US donors. Tax receipts will be sent out by late February if you have not already received one.

OUR ALL NEW DONOR PLATFORM

Our new donor platform is accessible from every page on our website, in your own currency. Tax receipts for Canadian and US donors are sent immediately and you can login to your own donor portal to change your credit card information, increase or decrease the amount of your monthly donation, or pause if you need to at any time.



PACIFICWILD

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All photos by Ian McAllister unless otherwise noted.