



**PACIFIC WILD JOURNAL**

*Dispatches from a Northern Rainforest*

WINTER 2021-2022

# Protecting Wildlife & Habitat Part of the Climate Solution

Climate change is arguably the greatest threat our world has ever known. Except it's no longer just a threat, it's a reality. Even in the Great Bear Rainforest. While extreme heat and fire drew headlines around the world by burning the village of Lytton to the ground, B.C.'s natural world suffered too. Previously unheard-of summer temperatures killed off intertidal life along hundreds of kilometres of the coastline. It's no exaggeration to say it was literally cooked alive. Summer's end brought relief from that heat, but not from devastation — this time in the form of record-breaking storm and rain events.

For Pacific Wild, staying focused on our key mission to safeguard B.C.'s wildlife, and the lands and waters they inhabit, is more important than ever because of the climate crisis. The earth's greatest carbon sinks are the very wilderness areas — the forests, estuaries and bogs — that Pacific Wild has spent years fighting to protect. Intact old-growth temperate forests are thought to sequester as much as 80 per cent of the world's CO<sub>2</sub>, and a new

study of bottom trawlers shows that this destructive method of fishing releases as much carbon dioxide as the world's aviation industry.

In other words, every hectare of old-growth forest that we protect is not just a home for species like endangered mountain caribou, but a critical safety net of carbon storage. Caribou are precious in their own right, but they are also an indicator species. If they're healthy, chances are their forest habitat is healthy too. So protecting our remaining intact forest ecosystems is not just a way to save endangered wildlife, but the best thing we can do to take immediate steps to combat climate change. The two go hand in hand.

Every old tree that is spared from chainsaws; every underwater reef system that is safeguarded against bottom trawlers not only provides a critical life support system for countless species, but ensures that we are taking the most immediate, fundamental and cost-effective action possible to combat the climate crisis. So even in this climate emergency the best and most helpful thing PW can do is stay the course and ensure our threatened wildlife, oceans and forests have a voice.

Your generosity, encouragement, shared love and concern for our planet is what makes our work possible and for this we are deeply grateful.

Sincerely,



**Karen McAllister**  
Co-founder



# The War on Wolves Continues

## Wolves Need Your Voice

British Columbia's wolves — from interior gray wolves to coastal sea wolves — have had a tumultuous 2021. It's been another year of culling by the B.C. government with 237 wolves killed through aerial gunning last winter, despite Pacific Wild's pending hearing of our judicial review. On July 7 and 8, our lawyer Rebeka Breder spent two days articulating why the provincially mandated wolf cull is unlawful. The judge granted an unprecedented additional three days to allow the case to be fully presented, a rarity for environmental/animal rights cases. From Oct. 27 to 29, we returned to court and now await the judge's decision.

More than 1,400 wolves have been killed and millions of taxpayer dollars have been spent over the past seven years. The government is now

calling for a further five years of wolf killing through aerial culls in 13 endangered caribou herd areas. A public survey about the proposed predator reduction plan was made available for input until November 15, with a decision regarding the continuation of the wolf cull expected to be made in December. Strong action to protect and restore habitat for the herds needs to be a priority for our government. Instead, the B.C. government seems intent on increasing efforts to kill more wolves in the years to come while continuing to allow logging and industrial fragmentation of old-growth caribou habitat.

Pacific Wild has also been working with other Vancouver Island wolf activists calling for a moratorium on recreational killing of wolves until scientific and ethical concerns can be addressed. The public needs to be a stakeholder in broad wildlife management decisions in B.C., and non-profits like Pacific Wild play a vital role in ensuring the public has a say. Thanks to the hard work of the Takaya Legacy Project and the Wolf Protectors of Sooke, the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) put forward a resolution at the recent annual Union of B.C. Municipalities conference and the call for a moratorium has now been extended province-wide.

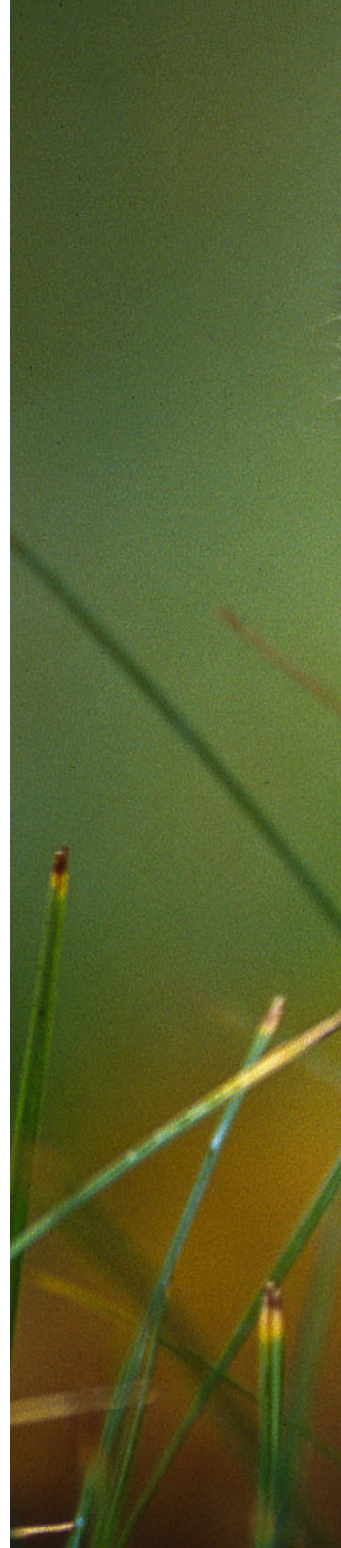


SAVE BC  
WOLVES

For "all things wolves" in B.C., please join our multi-organizational hub (recently rebranded) at [SAVEBCWOLVES.ORG](https://www.savebcwolves.org)

## Wolves at the Ledge

**On October 4th, 2021, Pacific Wild hand delivered half a million signatures to the provincial government** — 250,000 from Canadians, of which 62,000 were from British Columbia — calling for an end to the wolf cull, a powerful rebuke of this kill program. Photos by Geoff Campbell





237

Number of wolves killed by the B.C. government this year

1,400+

Number of wolves killed by the B.C. government since 2015

5 More Years

Proposed extension timeline for aerial wolf culling in 13 endangered caribou herd areas



# In Deep Trouble

## Impacts of Bottom Trawling to Oceans and Climate

Bottom trawling is a highly destructive fishing method where a large weighted net scrapes the bottom of the ocean, capturing everything in its path including sponges and corals, and causing permanent damage to the seafloor. The primary target species of the approximately 44 active vessels in B.C. (with an overall total of 136 licenses), include rockfish, flatfish, lingcod and sablefish. Other non-commercial and many endangered and at-risk species also get swept up in the nets as bycatch and are discarded at sea. This fishery occurs offshore at great depths and is outside of the public eye, making it difficult to regulate and collect accurate data. Over the last 75 years, roughly 30 per cent of trawl catches went unreported on the Canadian Pacific Coast, with nearly 10,000 tonnes unreported in 2018 (*Sea Around Us*, 2018).

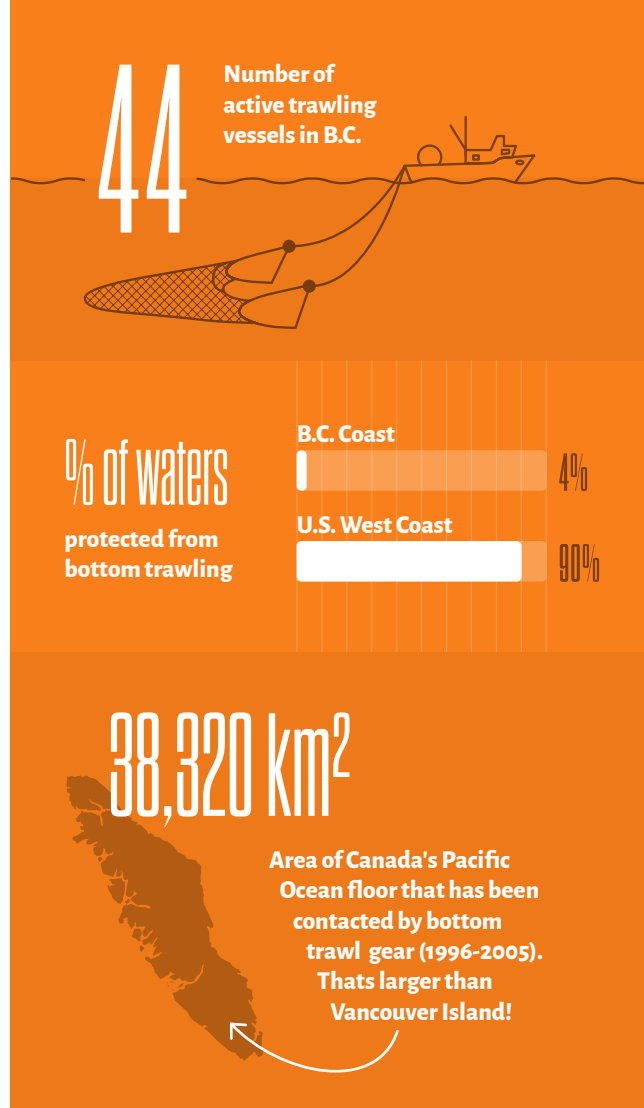
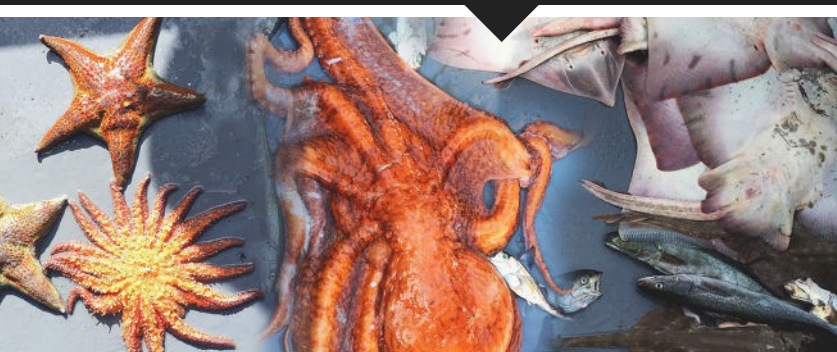
Bottom trawling is still permitted in many sensitive and protected areas, including some of Canada's already established Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). While the work to protect oceans by establishing MPAs is important, Fisheries and Oceans Canada must also consider that fisheries which are prohibited in MPAs can simply shift to other areas from where they are displaced.

A groundbreaking 2021 study published in the journal *Nature* found that bottom trawling is responsible for releasing more carbon emissions than the aviation industry. Carbon disturbed by trawling is released from the sediment and is converted into carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). The CO<sub>2</sub> makes its way into the water column, increasing acidification, and into the atmosphere, contributing to greenhouse gas emissions.

A ban of bottom trawling on the B.C. coast is essential if we want to protect biodiversity, enhance food security and combat climate change. Countries including Belize and Indonesia have already taken steps to ban this harmful fishing method, with others like the United Kingdom soon to follow suit. The United States has banned bottom trawling in 90 per cent of their west coast waters, while Canada has protected only four per cent of the B.C. Coast.

To learn more, visit [PACIFICWILD.ORG/IN-DEEP-TROUBLE](http://PACIFICWILD.ORG/IN-DEEP-TROUBLE)

Trawls catch unintended species and have high rates of bycatch, including halibut, endangered species of rockfish, and marine mammals. Photo by Bridget John



## Targeted & Mismanaged

Using bottom trawl gear does not allow management that considers the complexities of individual species. Here are six (of over 32 targeted species) impacted by bottom trawling.



SPINY DOGFISH



YELLOWTAIL ROCKFISH



DOVER SOLE



HAKE



LINGCOD



PACIFIC OCEAN PERCH

# Charting the Course for Marine Protected Areas

## *MPA Networks Support Biodiversity and Create Resiliency*

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are a key and underused tool in preserving biodiversity and limiting human impact in marine environments. They can be used to protect single endangered species, conserve regions of high biodiversity or to help an exploited population recover. In particular, successful MPAs can provide a nursery and refuge for marine species to provide greater resiliency as our oceans are impacted by climate change. These regions can have a variety of protections, ranging from little regulation on fisheries to fully implemented no-take zones. Successful MPAs have strong enforcement, high levels of protection, community support and Indigenous co-management. Even more effective are MPA networks, linking multiple

regions of biodiversity and vulnerability to meet conservation objectives. Canada has committed to protecting 30 per cent of marine and coastal areas by 2030. Currently, only 14 per cent has been protected.

Pacific Wild is involved in marine spatial planning on the Central Coast through planning initiatives for MPA implementation. We participate in two processes: the Marine Plan Partnership for the North Pacific Coast (MaPP) and the MPA Network (MPAN) Process. In both planning processes, the focus is the Northern Shelf Bioregion, which includes the North Coast, Central Coast, Haida Gwaii and North Vancouver Island subregions. These processes are unique as they are co-led by federal, provincial and First Nations governments. This is a historic process in which the Northern Shelf Bioregion will become the first Marine Protected Area Network in Canada. Public consultation for this process is expected to begin at the end of this year.



Canada still allows trawling in 27 per cent of its established MPAs. Pacific MPAs are less enforced than other Canadian MPAs with 57.5 per cent allowing trawling and other resource extraction (oil and gas, mining, etc). These include the Gwaii Haanas and Scott Islands protected areas. The Scott Islands (pictured above) are still not actively managed. Photos by Ryan Tidman



# Protect Wild Salmon

## Salmon Suffer While Many Streams Remain Uncounted



This fall's torrential rainfall and record storm events, along with the summer's extreme heat waves and drought conditions hit the British Columbia coast hard. Pacific salmon are cold water fish and climate change is causing irreparable damage to the salmon life cycle, making it near impossible for fish to complete their upstream migrations. Warmer temperatures cause earlier spring melt, resulting in low water levels and lethally hot rivers for salmon at the end of the summer. Warmer water holds less oxygen, meaning it is harder for fish to breathe. These are just some of the more recent challenges that salmon face, alongside deforestation from wildfires, parasitic diseases introduced from fish farms and industrial development along shorelines.

While we see salmon suffering due to anthropogenic change, we still know very little about the state of many salmon stocks. On the Central Coast, 82 per cent of spawning streams have had no data collection since before 2018.

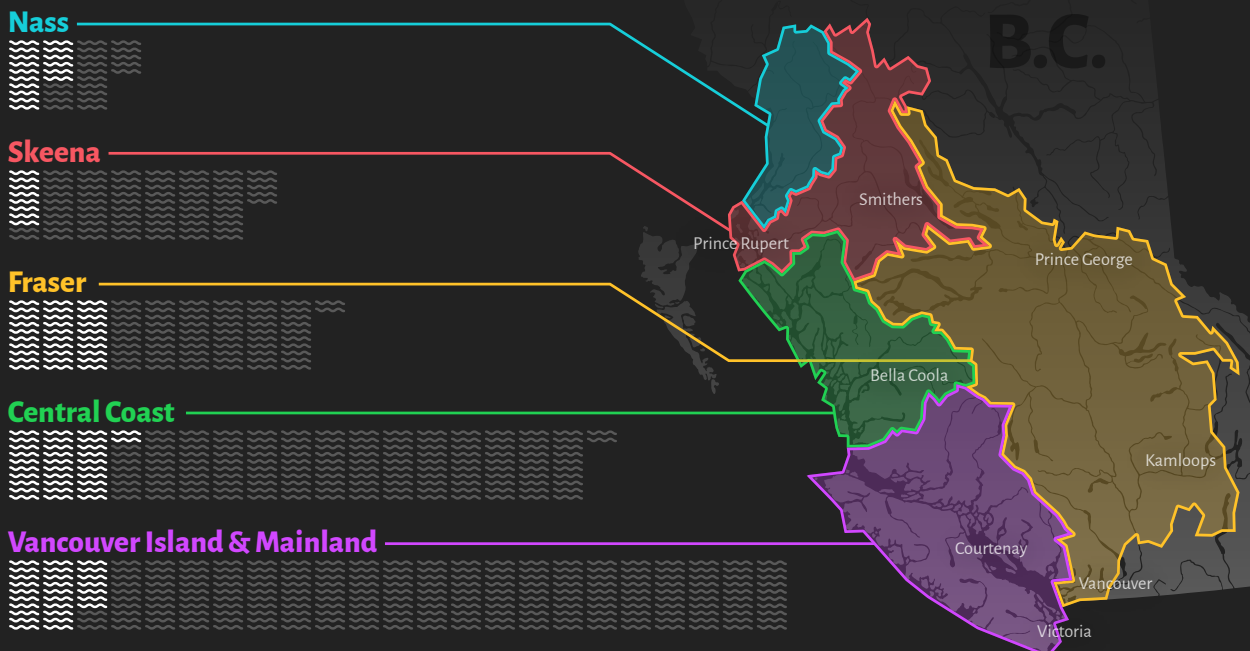
We continue to see the lowest returns on record without active data collection in remote regions. Indigenous Nations Guardian Programs and charter patrolmen are exceptional stewards and monitors on the Central and North Coast, yet are underutilized in the fight to protect wild salmon. Despite tens of millions of dollars being allocated for wild salmon conservation in B.C., Canada's federal government continues to divest from salmon monitoring projects. If fewer than 10 per cent of B.C.'s salmon runs are actually monitored, how is Fisheries and Oceans Canada reliably allocating wild salmon for fisheries and broader ecosystem needs?

How can we save Pacific salmon without a full picture of their population health? Help us protect these vulnerable and critically important fish by urging the new Federal Fisheries Minister, the Honourable Joyce Murray to invest in salmon stream monitoring and enumeration.

## B.C.'s Lack of Salmon Monitoring Data

 Streams with **rich** data  
 Streams with **poor** data\*

### Sufficiency Of Stream Monitoring In The Five Major Management Regions



Data collected from the Pacific Salmon Foundation Salmon Watersheds Program and cross-referenced with Fisheries and Oceans Canada New Salmon Escapement Database System (NuSEDS). The data used is a time series from 1952-2020.

\*Streams that have not been monitored before 2018

# Big Little Fish

## Canadian Herring Face Major Population Decline

Marine-based economies, wildlife and marine ecosystems owe their very existence to healthy herring populations but with over a century of chronic mismanagement, British Columbia herring face a very uncertain future.

Today, four out of the five herring fishing grounds in B.C. remain closed to commercial seine and gillnet fisheries and whether those populations will recover remains unknown.

In the Strait of Georgia, on Vancouver's door step—the only remaining area open to the highly controversial net-fishery—more than 11,277 tonnes (the combined weight of more than 2,000 large elephants) were caught in 2021.

B.C. herring need a long-term break from commercial exploitation to allow current populations to recover while ecosystem-based management approaches are developed that fully incorporate Indigenous knowledge and take into account the important ecological and economic role herring play. As a foundation species that countless others rely on—including our own—the recovery of Pacific herring is in everyone's interest.



VS



**A SUSTAINABLE HERRING FISHERY**, that allows herring to continue to spawn throughout their life cycle instead of being killed in nets, is still practiced by First Nations on the B.C. coast. Visit [Ocean School at oceanschool.nfb.ca/adventures/north-pacific](https://oceanschool.nfb.ca/adventures/north-pacific) to get an in depth look at how the Heiltsuk Nation harvest herring eggs in a traditional and sustainable manner.

**THE HERRING "KILL" FISHERY** extracts the eggs from females for the sushi market in Asia and the bodies are ground up into low value fish meal—a key ingredient in farmed salmon feed, pet food and garden fertilizer. Photo by Kali Wexler.



BY SHIMAN CRIGHTON

Part of the herring stock the herring can't afford to lose. Then they vanish. Why? Where? How? The answers could be found in the water. It should add millions to the nation's economy. Here's how a group of scientists set out to solve the mystery.

### The great herring mystery

## THE FIGHTING FISH

In 2021, Pacific Wild published *The Fighting Fish*, a white paper that documents hundreds of years of herring mismanagement. Author Bryce Casavant highlights that there is evidence of resident and migratory populations of herring—these two populations face different challenges when being exploited, yet they are managed under the same regime. For anyone interested in digging deeper you can access the report at [PACIFICWILD.ORG/THE-FIGHTING-FISH](https://PACIFICWILD.ORG/THE-FIGHTING-FISH)



The 2016 Great Bear Rainforest (GBR) agreement pledged to protect 85 per cent of the region's forests, with logging allowed in the remaining 15 per cent using ecosystem-based management. But since it was signed, more than 10 million cubic metres of ancient forest have been clearcut logged in the GBR. A five-year review is slated for 2021, with public engagement being conducted in the fall, but so far this period for comment has not commenced.

Eighteen months after the provincial government received its Old Growth Strategic Review report, which outlined recommendations to protect at-risk forests, a 26,000 km<sup>2</sup> two-year logging deferral was announced. Historically, logging deferrals have been a “talk and log” approach put forward by industry and government to delay meaningful action and diffuse public opposition while logging continues outside of deferred areas.



## Historic Momentum Builds in B.C.

*Indigenous rights and title, climate change, biodiversity loss and a conservation-based economy — it's time to protect our remaining ancient forests.*

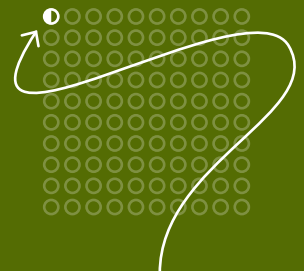
Two of the largest displays of civil disobedience in Canadian history have been in an effort to save B.C.'s old-growth rainforests. Thirty years ago, 900 people were arrested in Clayoquot Sound and today more than one thousand people—and counting—have been arrested on the frontlines of Fairy Creek on Vancouver Island. Biodiversity loss and the destruction of the planet's rarest forest types should be reason enough to end old-growth logging but now as our changing climate brings more record-breaking forest fires, storms, heatwaves, and other destructive events, protecting these forests is a matter of survival.

The forest industry and provincial government continue to insist that logging the last of B.C.'s old-growth is somehow sustainable but with less than three per cent of productive old-growth left in the province it is clear that liquidation is a more accurate description. Standing old-growth forests store 80 per cent of carbon emissions and hold irreplaceable cultural, spiritual, and biodiversity values—this is what's at stake in the battle for what's left.

In the Great Bear Rainforest, most of the productive, valley-bottom old-growth forests have been logged and only a few per cent of Vancouver Island's remains. At Pacific Wild, we understand the urgency for protecting old-growth in B.C. before it's too late. We will continue to work alongside Indigenous communities and a growing local/international citizenry who advocate for an end to unsustainable logging of ancient forests and a rapid transition to adding value and jobs to second-growth forests.

80%

of B.C.'s remaining old growth forests grow relatively small trees and include subalpine and bog forests



Less than one per cent of B.C.'s forests are highly productive ecosystems with large, old trees that most people envision



**FRIENDS**  
OF PACIFIC WILD

# Friends of Pacific Wild

*Our passionate & engaged community of donors, supporters, partners & third-party fundraisers is growing!*

## **SAVE B.C. WOLVES ONLINE COMMUNITY**

More than 3,100 people have joined **SAVEBCWOLVES.ORG**. This online community exists on a closed social network (no Facebook or Instagram required!) and helps us to create a constituency of support for wolves, whether it is for the push to save B.C. wolves from the unlawful wolf cull or to stop unethical & cruel recreational hunting. By signing up, you have an opportunity to take part in discussions and collaborations with multiple organizations and experts, all in the name of advancing the cause of B.C.'s wolves. And it's free!

## **FRIENDS.PACIFICWILD.ORG**

The new *Friends of Pacific Wild* website shares the stories of individuals and businesses who have turned their passions into fundraisers for Pacific Wild campaigns. Friends donate a portion of sales or run special events to help raise awareness of the issues facing the ecosystems and wildlife we have pledged to protect. Do you have an idea for a fundraiser? We'd love to hear from you and help make it happen. Host a challenge fundraiser for your friends. Put together a collaborative art show around a campaign theme. Mount an expedition. The creativity and energy of Pacific Wild's Friends powers change on the ground and amplifies the messages of positive change far and wide. Learn more at **FRIENDS.PACIFICWILD.ORG**.

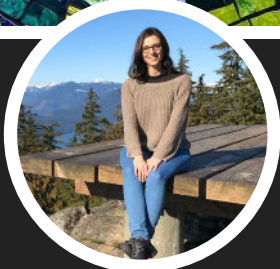
## **#WILDAUCTION 2022**

Our annual Wild Auction will be back in April of 2022. This is one of our main fundraisers and this year we are adding more items. An array of artwork, dining experiences, travel opportunities and other gifts will be put out for auction. This is an excellent way to support Pacific Wild's campaigns - all proceeds go directly to our research, media outreach, education and on-the-ground advocacy. If you would like to be involved in the auction as a donor, buyer, volunteer or to help publicize, please contact our Director of Community at **Laurie@PACIFICWILD.ORG**.



## **Kathryn Beals Artist Spotlight**

Kathryn Beals is a B.C.-based artist with a goal of raising \$100,000 for non-profits in her lifetime. Kathryn received a degree in forestry, and on the day she received a silver ring, she took an oath to be a steward of the land. She has made it a professional practice to donate to conservation and humanitarian causes, and to date has raised almost \$50,000. Kathryn donated \$500 to our wild salmon campaign in the spring and proceeds from her 2021 *Repurpose Series* will be donated to Pacific Wild. Read the full story on **FRIENDS.PACIFICWILD.ORG**



## **ALICE GUASCO DONOR STORY**

Alice Guasco is a regular donor to Pacific Wild. As an international student from Italy where undeveloped wild places are hard to find, she is especially appreciative of British Columbia's biodiversity and range of geographies. She wanted to do more, and early this year contacted us about sponsoring an annual scholarship for Great Bear Rainforest Indigenous students over four years, administered by Pacific Wild. The first scholarship was announced for a Bella Bella student in June. Read the full story on **FRIENDS.PACIFICWILD.ORG**

Be someone  
that wildlife  
can count  
on with your  
monthly gift...



...because  
big changes  
happen with  
small steps!

Give today at [pacificwild.org](https://pacificwild.org)



PACIFICWILD

**PACIFICWILD.ORG**

**PHONE** 250-380-0547

**EMAIL** [info@pacificwild.org](mailto:info@pacificwild.org)

**MAIN OFFICE**

1529 Amelia Street,  
Victoria B.C.  
Canada V8W 2K1

**FIELD OFFICE**

PO Box 26  
Denny Island, B.C.  
Canada VoT 1Bo



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