

Wild Impact

YOU MAKE THIS POSSIBLE

OCTOBER 2022



Having our say in environmental reviews

Whenever the government wants to hear from us, we do everything we can to encourage people to participate. With your help, hundreds of us write into every environmental review.

However, this summer, they didn't make it easy on us. The BC Environmental Assessment Office was consulting on two disastrous projects — the Sukunka Coal Mine and Tilbury LNG. They claimed to want feedback but the process seemed designed to discourage it. Their online portal was full of dense industry gobbledegook, required multiple steps, and if you missed a tiny button tucked away in the top right of your screen, you were easily lost in a sea of bureaucratic documents.

We couldn't let this discourage you from participating. In the past, we've been able to direct your submissions to an email or even a fax. But this time, after multiple calls, they told us our only other option was to **snail mail** them in. **So we did!** A staggering 902 of you wrote into these two projects, and we printed and delivered these letters to their Victoria office.

While an unnecessary headache, we both know how important it is that decision-makers hear what the public thinks about climate-wrecking, habitat-destroying projects. **Without your support, few would have written in.** Thanks for keeping us going so we can continue this critical public engagement work!



On the ground research in Algonquin

As summer gives way to fall in Ontario and folks flock to feast their eyes on fabulous foliage, we're heading back up to Algonquin Park for a third excursion off the beaten track to document unprotected old-growth forests with renowned ecologist Mike Henry.

Braving black flies in May and humidity in August, **your generous support allowed our intrepid back-country crew to identify the presence of ancient forest landscapes at risk from commercial logging and road-building.** Data sheets in hand, we measured and cored massive hemlock, yellow birch and maple trees up to and over 400 years old. And we examined other old-growth indicators such as large logs, dead-standing trees and an absence of cut stumps. **All signs point to pristine conditions that urgently need protecting** for the significant amount of carbon they store and the biodiversity they support.

Thanks to you, we'll be at it again this October in the northwest corner of the park near Three Mile Lake — a location scheduled for logging this year. Reporting on the evidence we gather brings the media and political attention needed to convince the government to end industry in the province's most renowned park, starting with these critical rare old-growth stands.



Annual Paddle for Protection on the Bird River

On World Rivers Day last month, 26 paddlers (including some of you!) ventured along the lower Bird River in Sagkeeng First Nation territory. While we basked in the Bird River's wild beauty, we talked about the threats of potential mining activity to this incredible ecosystem.

The most important discussion we had was about how we move land back into the decision-making authority of Sagkeeng First Nation and how Indigenous protected and conserved areas are part of our responsibility for reconciliation. As in many other parts of the country, the opportunities offered to Sagkeeng from resource extraction are next to nothing. We need to ensure Sagkeeng has the resources to employ guardians to care for these waters and welcome visitors to their territory.

Your gifts are put straight to work as we use the Wilderness Committee's acquired equipment and skill set to get folks safely and comfortably out into a wild river setting — creating new advocates for this river and the collective need for more nature. Your support made coming out to this one-day excursion a piece of cake, allowing the importance of protecting wilderness to reach a broader audience. Thank you for making the annual Paddle for Protection possible.



Building connections to save old-growth

Our 2022 trail season was a huge success! Thanks to you, we were able to do hands-on trail work with numerous volunteers while raising awareness about the many benefits of keeping old-growth forests standing. **We continued our work building relationships and supporting Indigenous communities and collected information and footage that we'll use to put pressure on the government to change forestry policy in BC.**

This was our first year back leading public trips with volunteers since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. **You made six trips to three incredible old-growth ecosystems around Vancouver Island possible:** Walbran Valley (Kaxi:ks) in unceded Pacheedaht territory, Koksilah Grove in unceded Cowichan territory, and Clayoquot Sound, Meares Island in unceded Tla-o-qui-aht territory and Flores Island in unceded Ahousaht territory. We maintained existing trails, built new boardwalks and worked in partnership and alongside local First Nations and community groups.

In August, we spent a week visiting and documenting at-risk old-growth forests on northwestern Vancouver Island. **We witnessed logging in some of the last remaining intact old-growth, including areas the BC government said should be set aside.** Stay tuned for more photos and videos showing our findings from this trip. Thank you for an incredible on-the-ground field season!



Michelle Johnson,
Donor Relations Manager

Your commitment to protect nature and ensure a wild Canada drives each of our campaigns. Since the Wilderness Committee is funded almost entirely by individual donors like you, your gifts have a huge impact.

Thank you

P.S. Talk to me! Would you share the gift of your story with me?

Share your passion for wilderness and wildlife. Why do you choose the Wilderness Committee? Call or write me:

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Wild Impact is a quarterly update about the Wilderness Committee and our work you make possible. For more information on any of our campaigns please visit [WildernessCommittee.org](https://www.wildernesscommittee.org)