

Wild Impact

YOU MAKE THIS POSSIBLE

OCTOBER 2023



Bonnie Raitt gives us something to talk about

You may have already heard the news — Bonnie Raitt chose the Wilderness Committee as her Canadian charity to support during her recent tour. *And just like that*, we were at 11 locations across the country talking to the public about old-growth logging, protections for species at risk, the need to get logging and mining out of parks, and our goal to achieve 30 per cent protected lands and waters by 2030.

It was a busy few weeks but we were thrilled to be chosen and lucky to witness some awe-inspiring musicians. **Thanks to the tour we've signed up hundreds of new activists to join our movement!** And Bonnie Raitt herself gave us a few minutes of her time backstage in Saskatoon where she had nothing but praise for the important work we are able to do, thanks to your support.

Her gratitude for the hard work you and I have been doing for decades was heartening. **She acknowledged the sacrifice staff, volunteers and supporters make in order to effect change and defend the environment.** And she gave a public shout out about the critical work of the Wilderness Committee. We remain honoured that of all the amazing charities across this country, she chose to support us.

Thanks to those of you who stepped up to cover some of the costs so that we can continue to build the movement to defend nature across this country.



Overwhelming action to stop mine expansion

We send out calls for action to you and our thousands of supporters on a weekly basis and sometimes you let us know it really resonates! The proposed New Ingerbelle Pit expansion at the Copper Mountain Mine near Princeton, BC is one of those issues. When we heard **this expansion would create the world's second largest tailings dam, with an increase in height by 100 meters, an increase in capacity by 70 per cent and would more than double the mine's permitted discharge into the Similkameen River**, we knew you would want to know.

And when we discovered this whole thing would sneak past us without a provincial environmental assessment, you shouted "NO" from the rooftops. **Over 3,000 people took action telling the BC government to hold an environmental assessment.** And 22 organizations across the province signed on to a joint submission, representing more than a million people together opposed to this horrible expansion scheme.

Your gifts are what make it possible to raise awareness of this mine expansion and the real risks it poses to communities. And they support the Upper and Lower Similkameen Indian Bands and their call for an Indigenous-led environmental assessment.

Public opinion polling done by our friends at the BC Mining Law Reform show that 72 per cent of BC residents believe the provincial government should be required to seek consent from First Nations before issuing mining claims. Together, we won't stop until this becomes a reality.



Win for the Greenbelt in Ontario

September 2023 will go down in history as the time Premier Doug Ford could no longer ignore your voices and actions, and restored all lands removed from Greenbelt protections. **Thanks to the hundreds of calls, emails, and people who attended events, your message was clear: we aren't going to stand by and accept the Ontario government's cuts to environmental protections.** Since its establishment in 2005, you and I knew these lands were critical wetlands, watersheds, wildlife, farmland and natural heritage. It's land designated through a process that involved scientific experts and local residents, and we weren't going to let Ford touch them.

We also learned some important lessons from our work on this campaign. **The role we play as an environmental watchdog is absolutely necessary.** Using information from the auditor general, ethics commissioner and investigative journalists, we need to continue to hold the government accountable. **We need to amplify the experts whose advice should inform policy as we know the government does their best to hide information that threatens their interests.** All levels of government have a role to play in protecting nature and taking strong climate action — we need to continue to make our voices heard at all levels. And through all of this, we need to ensure Indigenous rights are prioritized.

The government's onslaught to environmental protections will continue, but together we're up to the challenge.



Exposing illegal mining claims in Manitoba

This summer, we put your gifts to work on the ground travelling by canoe into the wilderness of Nopiming Provincial Park to confirm illegal mining claims within the park. After discovering these claims listed on the provincial government's mine branch website, we headed to the field to see with our own eyes exactly what we suspected — **mining claim sign posts within the Owl-Flintstone caribou herd occupancy area. The posts were even placed directly on the Seagrims Lake portage trail!** With this evidence in hand we went straight to the media and got a **full two-page spread in the Winnipeg Free press as well as additional online coverage in The Narwhal.**

It wasn't a surprise when our research led us to connect the claims staked to Grid Metals Corp. You may remember them from the former premier Heather Stephanson's media event when she announced the new Critical Minerals Strategy and exclaimed that Manitoba is "open for business" in front of her executive friends from none other than Grid Metals Corp.

While Manitoba still permits logging and mining in provincial parks, **your support allows us to continue to advocate that our new provincial government make serious changes to environmental regulations and give Indigenous communities a full seat at the table.** We still need to significantly increase our protected areas to meet the internationally agreed upon 30 per cent by 2030 for a healthier and more resilient environment in Manitoba.



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:

Phone: 1-800-661-9453

Email: michelle@wildernesscommittee.org

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