

# ANNUAL REPORT

## May 2025 — April 2026

WILDERNESS COMMITTEE



# Our Wild Vision

For 45 years, the Wilderness Committee has stayed true to our vision of people powered wilderness preservation for a wild future.

Collaborative grassroots mobilization is central to our efforts to build broad-based support for actions to preserve nature, protect wildlife, and fight for a safe and stable climate, while defending Indigenous Rights and Title.

Our independent, on-the-ground approach reaches 12 million people a year through events, rallies, door-to-door and phone canvassing, online actions, media and social media coverage and regular expeditions to threatened wilderness areas.

Like you, we believe when people learn about threats to biodiversity and the climate, they will join together and defend them.

Front cover: Clayoquot Sound, Vancouver Island, BC (Dave Hutchison).
Inside front: Algonquin Provincial Park, Ontario (All Canada Photos).
Back page: Koksilah Grove, Vancouver Island, BC (Dave Hutchison).



# Thank You

Dear friend,

Doesn't it seem like time is speeding up with each passing year?

Nothing drives that home more than our 45th anniversary. It's hard to imagine we've been doing nature protection work across Canada for 45 years. We've seen some big wins during that time. And we've also taken some hard losses.

You've been there with us to hold on to the things we treasure most.

Nature grounds us during tumultuous times. Watching the slow awakening of the forest as the sun peaks above the trees reminds us the world continues turning. You're on the ground with us documenting the destruction and calling for people to care.

With this latest frantic push for industrial projects, it's easy to turn from one threat to the next without taking a moment to celebrate the real gains we've made together. You're slowly winning ground for nature.

This past year, your support finally forced the federal government to release a recovery plan for the spotted owl and caused a logging company to leave caribou habitat alone. You stood in solidarity with W̱SÁNEĆ Elder ZÁWIZUT Carl Olsen who protected a beloved local stream from highway expansion, and the Nuchatlaht Nation as they won Aboriginal Title to their territory in court. We chose ZÁWIZUT to receive our annual Eugene Rogers Award for his dedication to these lands.

Across the country, you pushed back against bills that would gut environmental protections and run roughshod over Indigenous rights. You packed rooms full of people eager to protect old-growth in Ontario and connect the dots of environmental justice.

You paddled through the remnants of a provincial park in Manitoba after a devastating wildfire and hiked into valleys full of spotted owl habitat to find evidence of logging. You built new trails on Nootka Island and flew drones over clearcuts where southern mountain caribou once roamed.

**Together, we protect the places we love because you never give up on them.**

Your continued support matters now more than ever. You're determined to keep the nature that defines Canada intact — even through these turbulent times.

We can't thank you enough for your generosity and resolve. Your voice holds decision-makers to account and your donation grows the movement we need to meet this moment. We're so grateful you're with us.

For the wild,



B Clarke

**Beth Clarke**
Executive Director



Susan Howatt

**Susan Howatt**
Board of Directors Chair

## Board of Directors

Caitlin Stockwell
Heather Fast
Mariwan Jaaf
Nayeli Jimenez
Ryann Miller
Saya Masso
Susan Howatt (Chair)

Special thanks to our many photographers whose images remind us what we're working to protect.











# Wins for Nature

Standing up for nature is tough, demanding work most days and we couldn't even begin to do the job we do without your support. But we all need something else to keep us moving towards victory. We need some hope — and we find that hope in remembering those times we won the day. Here are some of our recent wins for nature that we accomplished together.

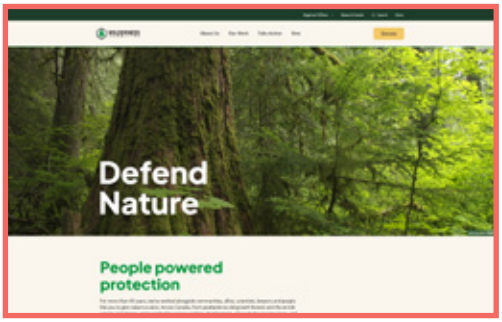
## Hope for spotted owl recovery

In June 2025, we received some welcome news for our campaign to recover spotted owls by protecting their old-growth forest home. After nearly two decades of tireless grassroots advocacy and ongoing litigation, at last the federal government released the finalized recovery strategy for the near-locally-extinct spotted owl, as per the requirements under the federal Species at Risk Act (SARA). This strategy identifies over 4,000 square kilometres of forests in the lower mainland of B.C. as critical habitat — which means we have legal grounds to demand that all of these forests be protected from logging.



## A refreshed website to grow a movement

In October 2025, we officially launched our refreshed website. This new design is all about making sure the place where you learn about campaigns, take action and follow your impact is clear, welcoming and easier to navigate on any device. And to create an inviting and accessible digital space for potential new supporters to join you in our united mission to protect life-giving biodiversity.






## Saved! SELEĸTEŁ (Goldstream River)

In February 2026, we celebrated a major milestone: the $162 million Malahat highway widening project into the SELEĸTEŁ (Goldstream River) was officially removed from the B.C. budget. Sustained public pressure ensured the provincial government could no longer justify this project — which put salmon and amphibian habitat, and mature coniferous forest, at risk of permanent loss. While the threat is not gone for good, this reprieve allows us to focus on long-term protection. We honoured W̱SÁNEĆ Elder ZÁWIZUT Carl Olsen with the Eugene Rogers Award for his tireless work to protect SELEĸTEŁ.



## Big win for a small caribou herd!

A movement is only as strong as the relationships that bind us — with each other, with nature and in the case of caribou, with a deep love for a fragile species on the brink of extinction. Together in March 2026, we scored a mighty win for caribou in Quesnel Lake when logging giant West Fraser paused planned cutblocks due to public pressure. With your help, this decision marks a significant accomplishment for local residents, because any forest saved for caribou is a triumph for the future of the species.



## Historic win for human rights and nature!

Back in 2024, we celebrated when the Nuchatlaht Nation won a landmark legal case, the first ever declaration of Aboriginal Title in a trial-level court. However, the court only awarded it over a small part of their claimed area — 11 square kilometres. Nuchatlaht appealed, and in April 2026, they won title to their entire claim area! The court recognized over 200 square kilometres of Nuchatlaht Title on Nootka Island. Many allies supported the Nuchatlaht since the outset and are overjoyed at the outcome.




# Independent and Grassroots

Elected leaders switch from friend to foe and back again in a blink of an eye. With momentous issues that could save or sink an entire species with the stroke of a pen, how do we stay focused, effective and above all else not lose hope? We do it by remaining grounded in our grassroots supporters just like you.

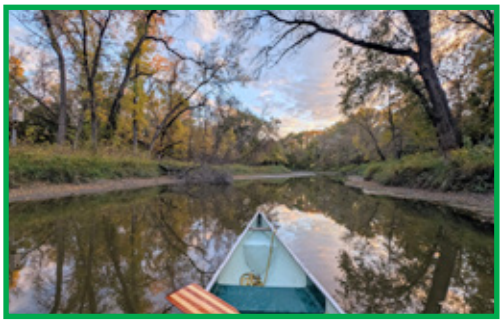
## Working to push back on Ontario's Bill 5

In June 2025, Ontario Premier Ford's Bill 5 was fast-tracked and passed — giving the provincial government unprecedented power to ram through environmentally risky projects. We organized a last-minute rally outside Queen's Park where hundreds of people gathered to listen to speakers from First Nations communities and opposition parties. Nearly three hundred more spoke out through our online letter-writing tool. While Bill 5 trashes the province's protections for endangered species and tramples Indigenous and democratic rights, we'll continue to strategize ways to push back.




## River water testing reveals Winnipeg's dirty secret

In July 2025, ahead of planned community events on Winnipeg waterways, we decided to test urban river sections for water quality and safety. The good news? Tests on the Red and Assiniboine Rivers showed E. coli levels within the province's beach guidelines. But the Seine River reading at Happyland Park in the Boniface neighborhood revealed a surprisingly dirty secret. E. coli levels were more than eight times the 200-count per 100 milliliters the province uses to shut down beaches. It shouldn't be up to folks like you to raise the alarm — Winnipeg needs frequent river water testing now!



## Holding governments to account on 30x30

In January 2026, this past winter, we put Canada's marquee conservation goal under the scanner in our hard-hitting report, *The Race to Protect 30%*. Cutting through government spin, it exposes how governments are falling short to protect 30 per cent of lands and waters by 2030 — known more briefly as "30x30." This report will drive our advocacy alongside First Nations, scientists and communities for the next five years.




## Connecting the environment to social justice

In February 2026, we hosted a series of inspiring conversations in Vancouver and Victoria, B.C. in celebration of our 45th anniversary. Campaigners Isabel Siu-Zmuidzinas (Climate), Tobyn Neame (Forests) and Lucero González (Conservation and Policy) shared stories of the passion and strategy driving their work. The themes explored how environmental protection intersects with broader struggles for social justice. These events do more than celebrate a legacy of advocacy: they invigorate our movement for the vital fights ahead to protect our world.

## Prime Minister Carney's budget missteps

In March 2026, we produced and widely distributed an educational report titled *Nature Can't Afford the Banker* — which weighs Prime Minister Carney's recent anti-environment decisions against his past climate values and current economic research. The report stresses Canadian values on protecting nature and the climate. It offers solutions that can build the nation with nature in mind, which is critical for our long-term security and economic benefit.





# Wild Friends

Sometimes when we strategize about nature protection and climate justice, we need a little help from our friends. From environmental groups to social justice activists, Indigenous Nations and union leaders, we're honoured and grateful to work together with our wild partners.



## B.C.'s Kill Bill 15 Fight

In May 2025, when the BC NDP government introduced Bill 15, the Infrastructure Projects Act, we went into action. Alongside First Nations, municipal governments and civil liberties groups, we condemned it as reckless and dangerous legislation that weakens B.C.'s already fragile environmental review process. The BC NDP passed Bill 15 by a single vote margin. While we didn't kill the bill, we'll continue to work with everyone we can to fight for thriving ecosystems, healthy biodiversity and a livable climate.




## Firing up the resistance to fracked gas

In August 2025, a powerful protest during the famous Vancouver Festival of Lights sent a bold message to thousands gathered on the beaches for fireworks — STOPPRGT.CA. We partnered with friends at Stand.earth and Dogwood to display these illuminated letters across the iconic Burrard Bridge, shining a spotlight on the growing opposition to the recently approved Prince Rupert Gas Transmission pipeline (PRGT) project. From a walking tour of the Tilbury LNG facility on the banks of the Fraser River in Delta, to a community meeting in Dawson Creek focused on water scarcity and drought, these actions and gatherings created spaces for connection, learning and organizing.



## Busting the "sustainable" logging myth

In November 2025, we joined with our friends at Ontario Nature, David Suzuki Foundation, Nature Canada, NRDC, Sierra Club BC, Sierra Club Canada and Nature Quebec to produce and distribute a plain-spoken report titled — 2025 *State of the Forests in Canada: DEGRADED*. Our analysis highlights how severe and widespread forest damage is underreported in official accounts by government and industry. Industrial logging with little government oversight is getting worse in the woods and won't get any better until the timber industry's hold on forests ends.



## Never mine Clayoquot

In March 2026, we joined forces with environmental groups Canopy, Friends of Clayoquot Sound, Sierra Club BC and Stand.earth to support the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation by calling on the BC NDP government to immediately rescind permits recently granted to Imperial Metals. These permits would allow for 22 drill pad sites, six trenches, and three helipads in the Tranquil Creek watershed, which is designated as a Tribal Park by the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation.



# On the Ground

Before we can talk about a place we need to go there — to see, listen and feel the pulse of life. That's why we do our on-the-ground photo expeditions, our community events and trail building projects. Only when we feel grounded in a forest or stream or vast wilderness area, can we tell the story and make the case for preservation and protection of nature. We couldn't do any of it without you because through it all, we walk together and win together.

## Spotted Owl expeditions

From May to July 2025, we conducted spotted owl expeditions to document proposed, pending and approved cutblocks that overlap with federally-mapped spotted owl critical habitat. We visited the valleys of Nahatlatch, Kookipi, Scuzzy, Anderson, Wray, Berkey, Nicolum and Fire Lake. in the B.C. Lower Mainland. It was shocking to see how many beautiful forests marked on the federal critical habitat maps had been targeted by logging companies. We then made a video report of our findings titled "What's up with Spotted Owls?".



## Documenting Manitoba wildfires

In August 2025, a climate change-fuelled forest fire swept through the forest along the Bird River. We've been running our popular World Rivers Day Paddle for Protection canoe trips here for more than a decade. In late summer, we visited the forest to bear witness to how it survived the flames. We produced videos narrating stories of the burnt Bird River forest and how fires affected boreal caribou and Nopiming Provincial Park. Viewers connected with the reality of a wildfire year that saw eight per cent of Manitoba forests go up in flames.



## Trail work in Clayoquot Sound and Nootka Island

From May to October 2025, we had yet another amazing trail season working in the legendary ancient forests of Clayoquot Sound, with trail trips on Flores Island in Ahousaht territory and Meares Island in Tla-o-qui-aht territory. A major highlight this season was our first-ever trail building trip to Nootka Island, in Nuchatlaht territory. We've put solidarity into action with the Nuchatlaht Nation for years as they fought to reclaim their land through the courts. Now that they've successfully regained part of their territory, they've invited us to build trails. Our first trip was a huge success!



## Documenting the truth of B.C. caribou

From October to November 2025, we travelled with a team of mapping, lichen and caribou experts into 5,000 hectares of intact core caribou habitat. Driving along logging roads carved into intact ancient forests more than 7,000 feet above sea level, we found cutblocks marked in groves with trees over 800 years old. We heard chainsaws running through a forest draped in caribou-sustaining lichen. All of this only strengthened our resolve to keep fighting for protected habitat forests so that mountain caribou can survive and thrive once again.

## Ontario's first-ever old-growth symposium

In November 2025, we held our inaugural Ontario Old-Growth Symposium. After years on the ground in Algonquin Provincial Park and Catchacoma documenting the state of old-growth in the province, and producing one of our publications, we invited experts from this work to join us for an in-depth look at the latest research and discuss work being done to protect old-growth. They spoke to a sold-out house in Peterborough! This powerful event brought exactly the right people together in a moment where old-growth desperately needs defenders — and they need to join together.






# Join Us

We're all needed in the work of protecting nature in Canada. It's concerned people like you who've strengthened our voice with gifts of time, talent and action! We welcome your participation.

- **Volunteer:** contact your local Wilderness Committee office to volunteer.
- **Sign up:** our action alerts keep you up-to-date on our campaigns.
- **Take action:** write letters, make phone calls and show up to support critical causes in your community.
- **Spread the word:** distribute our educational papers in your community. Join the Grassroots Distribution Team.

Add your voice to the growing number of people working together to defend the natural places we love and promote climate justice in Canada.

**WildernessCommittee.org/TakeAction**

## Thank You!

Special thanks to donors and advisors at charitable foundations investing with us in a wilder future:

- Buchanan Programme & Paul McLoughlin @Orbis Investments
- David Charitable Trust
- DI Foundation
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- Rose Family Private Giving Fund

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- Grayross Foundation

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- Ecofriendly West Fund
- Freya Fund
- Funke-Furber Fund
- Geoffrey, Maurice & Edythe Hodgson Fund
- Our Better World Fund
- Viveka Foundation

- And several generous funders who wish to remain anonymous

## Support Us

Your generosity inspires us to do more. There are many ways to make a difference:

- **Be a *Trailblazer!*** The heart and soul of the Wilderness Committee, monthly donors help us plan more effectively to win critical fights for the wild.

Trailblazers
WILDERNESS COMMITTEE

- **Be a *Wilderness Defender!*** With every donation, you strengthen our campaigns to protect ancient forests, wild waterways and at-risk species and the spaces they call home.
- **Be a *Wilderness Guardian!*** A special group who make future gifts in their estate plans known to us, Wilderness Guardians enjoy exclusive benefits.

Wilderness Guardians

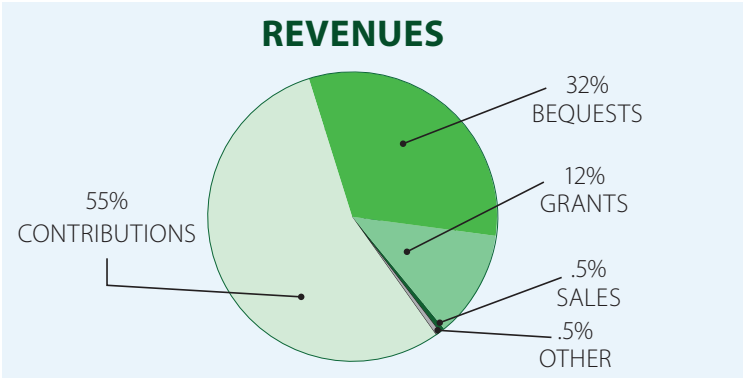
- **Be a wild fundraiser.** Organize a unique event to raise funds and support the Wilderness Committee's work.

**WildernessCommittee.org/Give**



# Financial Summary

| REVENUE | 2026 | 2025 |
|---|---|---|
| Contributions | 2,841,118 | 2,737,088 |
| Bequests | 1,682,093 | 821,425 |
| Grants | 609,364 | 648,120 |
| Sales of educational materials | 30,621 | 30,862 |
| Investment income | 25,759 | 20,323 |
| Freight | 5,503 | 5,050 |
| Gain on sale of capital assets | 2,117 | 782 |
| | **5,196,575** | **4,263,650** |
| **EXPENSES** | | |
| Projects and education costs | 2,438,057 | 2,306,573 |
| Canvass and fundraising costs | 1,049,328 | 976,524 |
| Administration costs | 572,962 | 545,197 |
| Sales costs | 111,413 | 114,351 |
| Amortization of intangible assets | 20,356 | 0 |
| Amortization of capital assets | 10,538 | 13,804 |
| | **4,202,654** | **3,956,449** |
| Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses from operations | 993,921 | 307,201 |
| Other income (expenses)* Gift to qualified donee | (100,000) | |
| Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses | 893,921 | 307,201 |
| **Fund balances, beginning of year** | **1,697,289** | **1,390,088** |
| **Fund balances, end of year** | **2,591,210** | **1,697,289** |




| ASSETS | 2026 | 2025 |
|---|---|---|
| **CURRENT** | | |
| Cash | 793,780 | 909,099 |
| Investments | 10,605 | 16,049 |
| Employee receivable | 4,737 | 11,086 |
| Grant receivable | 200,000 | 100,000 |
| Interest receivable | 21,486 | 13,256 |
| Recoverable from government (GST) | 25,084 | 45,144 |
| Prepaid expenses | 33,440 | 32,021 |
| Inventory | 11,894 | 13,211 |
| | **1,101,026** | **1,139,866** |
| Restricted investment | 1,169,253 | 510,529 |
| Unrestricted investments | 200,674 | 0 |
| Security deposits | 12,804 | 12,804 |
| Grant receivable | 100,000 | 100,000 |
| Intangible assets | 116,366 | 43,542 |
| Capital assets | 26,466 | 25,608 |
| | **2,726,489** | **1,832,349** |
| **LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES** | | |
| **CURRENT** | | |
| Accounts payable + accrued liabilities | 135,279 | 135,060 |
| **FUND BALANCES** | | |
| Unrestricted | 848,789 | 723,021 |
| Internally restricted | 1,331,001 | 592,935 |
| Externally restricted | 411,420 | 381,333 |
| | **2,591,210** | **1,697,289** |
| | **2,726,489** | **1,832,349** |

Audited financial statements are available online at:
WildernessCommittee.org/About-Us/Governance

*The Wild Future Fund was established at the Vancouver Foundation to enable different types of donor contributions. The Wilderness Committee retains rights to this capital and receives income as per the restrictions of this Fund.



# Wilderness Areas You've Helped Save

Akamina-Kishinena Provincial Park, BC
Atikaki Provincial Wilderness Park, MB
Birch Island Park Reserve, MB
Boundary Bay Regional Park, BC
Burns Bog Ecological Conservancy Area, BC
Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park, AB
Carmanah Walbran Provincial Park, BC
Chitek Lake Anishinaabe Provincial Park, MB
Clayoquot Sound Tribal Parks, Provincial Conservancies & Parks, BC
Clendinning Provincial Park, BC
Cummins Lake Provincial Park & Cummins River Protected Area, BC
Duu Guusd Heritage Site/Conservancy &
nine other Haida Gwaii Conservancies, BC
Fisher Bay Provincial Park, MB
Goose Island and Grand Island Provincial Parks, MB
Graystokes Provincial Park, BC
Great Bear Rainforest, BC
Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, Marine Conservation Area &
Haida Heritage Site, BC
Hecla/Grindstone Provincial Park, MB
Hisnit/Power River Watershed Protected Area, BC
Huchsduwachsdu Nuyem Jees/Kitlope Heritage Conservancy, BC
Incomappleux Conservancy, BC
Jedediah Island Marine Provincial Park, BC
Kakwa Provincial Park, BC
Kaskatmagan WMA & Sipi WMA Protected Areas, MB
Khutzeymateen/K'tzim-a-deen Grizzly Sanctuary Provincial Park, BC
Kitasoo Spirit Bear Conservancy, BC
Kilnse-za/Twin Sisters Park (expansion), BC
Koeye Conservancy, BC
Lower Seymour Conservation Reserve, BC
Lower Tsitika River Provincial Park, BC
Manigotagan River Provincial Park, MB
Maplewood Flats Conservation Area, BC
Megin/Talbot Valley (Strathcona Provincial Park), BC
Mkwal'ts Conservancy, BC
Nasparti Valley (Mquqʷin/Brooks Peninsula Provincial Park), BC
Niagara Valley (Cariboo Mountains Provincial Park), BC
Northern Rocky Mountains Provincial Park, BC
Nueltin Lake and Colvin Lake Provincial Parks, MB
Pimachiowin Aki UNESCO World Heritage Site, MB/ON
Pinecone Burke Provincial Park, BC
Qat'muk Indigenous Protected & Conserved Area, BC
Say Nuth Khaw Yum Provincial Park (Indian Arm), BC
Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt, BC
Skagit Valley Provincial Park, BC
Snowy Protected Area, BC
Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park, BC
South Chilcotin Mountains Provincial Park, BC
Spipiyus Provincial Park (Caren Range), BC
Stein Valley Nlaka'pamux Heritage Park, BC
Stikine River Provincial Park, BC
Sturgeon Bay Park Reserve (expansion), MB
Surrey Bend Regional Park, BC
Sx̱ótsaqel/Chilliwack Lake Provincial Park, BC
Tahsish-Kwois Provincial Park, BC
Taku River/T'ak̲ú Tlatsini Conservancy, BC
Tatshenshini-Alsek Park, BC
Tetrahedron Provincial Park, BC
Ts'il?os Provincial Park, BC
Turtle Mountain Provincial Park, MB
Upper Elaho Valley, Callaghan &
Upper Soo Conservancies, BC
Upper Lillooet Provincial Park, BC
Valhalla Provincial Park, BC
West Arm Provincial Park, BC



## PEOPLE POWERED WILDERNESS PRESERVATION

Founded in 1980, the Wilderness Committee has around 60,000 supporters and volunteers from coast to coast to coast. We've helped gain protection for over 66 major wilderness areas in Canada, including millions of hectares of critical wildlife habitats and some of the world's last large tracts of old-growth temperate rainforest and boreal forest.

But much remains to be done.

**Join us.** Your gift defends nature in Canada.

**WildernessCommittee.org/Support**

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WILDERNESS COMMITTEE
WildernessCommittee.org

**WILDERNESS COMMITTEE — NATIONAL OFFICE**
46 E. 6th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5T 1J4
Toll free: 1-800-661-9453
☎ (604) 683-8220 🖷 (604) 683-8229

**VICTORIA OFFICE** WildernessCommittee.org/Victoria
618 Yates Street, Victoria, BC V8W 1K9
☎ (250) 388-9292 🖷 (250) 388-9223

**MANITOBA OFFICE** WildernessCommittee.org/Manitoba
Unit 2A - 553 St.Mary's Road, Winnipeg, MB R2M 3L4
☎ (204) 942-9292 🖷 (204) 942-8214

**ONTARIO OFFICE** WildernessCommittee.org/Ontario
#207 - 425 Queen Street W., Toronto, ON M5V 2A5
☎ (416) 849-6520

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