



SIERRA
CLUB BC

SIERRA REPORT

SPRING 2022

NEW B.C. OLD-GROWTH MAPPING CONFIRMS ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY. THIS COULDN'T HAVE HAPPENED WITHOUT YOU!

First, the good news. Last November, the B.C. government released new information and mapping developed by independent experts on the state of old-growth forests that confirmed what we have been saying all along; we are in an ecological emergency. Thanks to thousands of people like you, the provincial government shared maps showing 2.6 million hectares of the most at-risk old-growth forests that require immediate deferrals with the public and all Indigenous Nations across the province.

The bad news is that the B.C. government offered little details on when those deferrals will take place and didn't commit adequate funding to address short-term impacts, enable Indigenous-led long-term conservation solutions and finance a just transition for workers.

As SCBC's senior forest and climate campaigner Jens Wieting noted, making the paradigm shift on old-growth a reality depends on quickly offering clarity on where and when the next logging deferrals will hit the ground and what level of support communities can count on. With less than \$13 million in capacity funding for Indigenous Nations while

they make decisions on deferrals in their territories, the announcement fell short of giving communities a safe and clear path to safeguarding ancient and intact forests.

One month after this announcement, a rough review by Sierra Club BC showed that thousands of hectares that were proposed for deferrals had already been logged and thousands more were on the chopping block for the coming months. Meanwhile, the escalating climate emergency continues to show the growing urgency to defend the lifesaving, irreplaceable benefits of intact old-growth forests before climate impacts like the recent floods and recurring heat domes and wildfires create even more havoc.

We will continue to push the government to protect these endangered ecosystems and remind them that their intentions for deferrals can only become reality with immediate and adequate funding. You can sign our most recent petition to protect old-growth forests here: sierraclub.bc.ca/oldgrowth.



COME TOGETHER: A WEEK OF ACTION FOR FORESTS

This week of action in September was envisioned to help as many people as possible recognize the unique gift, talent or voice that they have to offer at this crucial time in the old-growth movement. It was designed to invite a deeper sense of connection and obligation to the forest and to expand the web of people who care about them in an inclusive way.

Whether participants were a painter, thinker, donor, student or influencer, we made sure there was something for everyone. This week included the following events:

Day 1: Art for activism – forest printmaking lesson

This short talk on how you can use art as a tool for change was followed by a forest-inspired printmaking lesson. Participants were encouraged to send their artwork to local representatives. You can see some of these beautiful prints below!

Day 2: Journey towards a respectful relationship with the forest

This webinar featuring a discussion between Executive Director Hannah Askew and former SCBC Board members was an invitation to consider pathways into actively restoring a respectful relationship with the forests that sustain us all.

Day 3: Social media day of action for forests

We asked participants to take to social media—Twitter, Facebook, Instagram or any other platforms—to encourage the B.C. government to protect the last remaining old-growth with big, ancient trees.

Day 4: Remembering our relationships with all living beings, a Mother Tree educational resource

Mother Trees are at the centre of Sierra Club BC's newest online educational material. This webinar offered a pathway towards embracing our interconnections, understanding, and joint responsibility with gratitude.

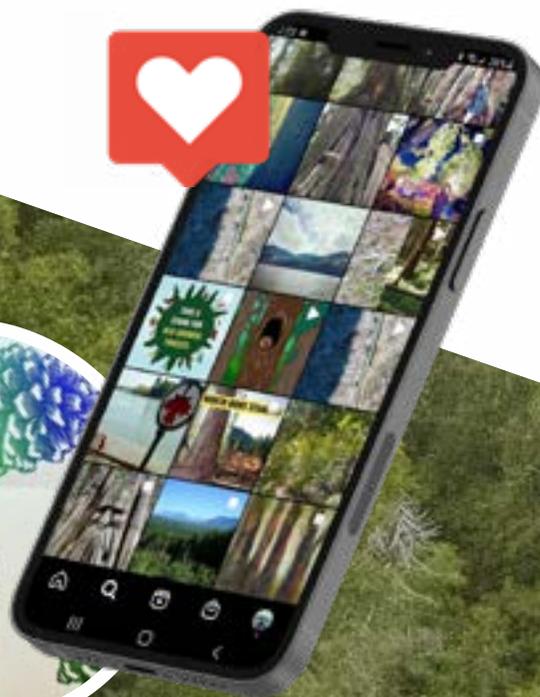
Day 5: Getting out on the land

We invited participants to get out and connect with their local forest—whether that's an oak tree in an urban park or towering old-growth forests. Throughout the week we also hosted a series of walks in the forests guided by kQwa'st'not~Charlene George (see one of these walks in the leftmost photo). These sessions invited attendees into a deeper relationship with forests and were grounded in Indigenous teachings.

Closing: Being a voice for the forest

For our closing, we announced the launch of our brand-new action takers guide, *Being a Voice for the Forest*, a comprehensive resource on how you can use your gifts to stand up for old-growth.

You can find the recordings and resources from these sessions at sierraclub.bc.ca/forestweek.





A VOICE FOR THE FOREST

Our existence depends on a good relationship with our non-human relatives—from the towering cedar to the mighty bear to the tiniest fungi. Unfortunately, the current model of forestry practiced in this province breaks the relationships between ourselves and nature.

In B.C., forests are being logged at an unsustainable rate, leading to loss of biodiversity, increased carbon emissions and human rights conflicts. Many of us are asking ourselves, “how can I make a difference?” We created a new guide, *Being a voice for the forest*, to help you answer that question.

At SCBC we believe that you are uniquely positioned to make a difference in your community. You may have already identified a problem, whether it’s a planned cutblock, flooding caused by unsustainable logging or something else altogether. We have created this guide to help you with your project.

We invite you to explore this comprehensive guide and join the movement to protect the last remaining ancient forests at sierraclub.bc.ca/action-guide.

CLEARCUT LOGGING IS EXACERBATING FLOODS AND LANDSLIDES IN B.C.

One year ago, we shared a report with the B.C. government that showed the impacts of industrial logging on climate-related disasters like increased wildfires, drought, flooding and landslides. But provincial climate adaptation strategies and amendments to forestry laws still don’t reflect the urgency of the climate crisis. This was painfully clear as unprecedented flooding and mudslides wreaked havoc across B.C., closing highways and prompting widespread evacuations only months after a deadly heatwave.

Our *Intact Forests, Safe Communities* report found that clearcut logging affects slope stability, the rate at which water is absorbed into the ground and the ability to hold soil in root systems. Without trees, heavy rains can wash large amounts of sediment into nearby water systems, choking creeks and streams and causing them to quickly overflow. Areas that were devastated around Princeton and Merritt

are surrounded by heavily logged landscapes. Degraded landscapes combined with seven percent more water vapor for every degree of global warming means time is running out to protect at-risk forests and reform forestry practices.

B.C. has entered a new era of climate emergency that is marked by increasingly severe risks to communities. B.C. needs to speed up and fully fund the promised forestry reforms, including immediate deferrals for all at-risk forests and ending logging practices that put the health and safety of the people in this province at risk. This year we will need your help to make sure the provincial government hears this loud and clear. Call on the B.C. government to mitigate community climate risks by reforming forestry practices here: sierraclub.bc.ca/climaterisk.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM COP26

We are so grateful for the support we received to send our campaigners Tłalitą'las, Mark, Flossie and Anjali to the UN climate talks in Glasgow. Our team journeyed to Scotland along with partners and allies to help bring old-growth protection to a global stage. Over the course of the two weeks, they met countless people, national delegates and spoke at multiple events.

Here are some of the highlights:

- The Sierra Club BC crew along with Nuchatlaht Ha'with (Hereditary Chief) Jordan Michael and Kukpi7 Judy Wilson of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs led a panel talk at the People's Summit which shone an international spotlight on old-growth in B.C. and highlighted the importance of Indigenous-led solutions, including legal challenges that assert Indigenous laws, rights and title to their traditional lands.
- Tłalitą'las-Karissa Glendale, forest relations coordinator at Sierra Club BC and a member of Kwakwaka'wakw helped lead a 100,000 person climate walk through the streets of Glasgow at the People's March.
- The team spoke at many events from community-led marches to an oil subsidy press conference to an economic justice panel.
- We held meetings with members of the Canadian delegation, both federal and provincial.
- We provided on-the-ground coverage to CBC Radio.
- Sierra Club BC hosted two webinars, one live from Glasgow with the Climate Emergency Unit and one before departing with UBC Sustainability and West Coast Environmental Law.
- Our team gave daily social media updates and policy analyses to demystify false promises and breakdown complex policies into clear language for our supporters.
- We deepened our relationships, forged new ones and collaborated with allies from back home as well as with groups from around the world.

To learn more and watch the webinars, please visit sierraclub.bc.ca/highlights-from-cop26.



WE ARE CALLING ON B.C. TO PHASE OUT FOSSIL FUELS AND END SUBSIDIES

Numerous reports shared at the UN climate summit in Glasgow showed that current climate pledges and commitments to deliver them are nowhere close to what's needed to avoid catastrophic climate change. The heatwaves, wildfires, flooding and mudslides of 2021 show that time is running out.

B.C. spends more on fossil fuel subsidies than on climate action, particularly through its gas royalty system, a handout so absurd that industry receives more money than what they pay back. The oil and gas industry leans heavily on these public subsidies to stay competitive during a time when it should be in the midst of a managed decline.

Meanwhile, the B.C. government keeps approving and subsidizing new fossil fuel projects, often infringing on the rights of Indigenous Peoples who seek to defend their lands and waters.

Last fall we asked our supporters to speak up and demand an end to oil and gas handouts. Ending subsidies for fossil fuels will give us a chance of meeting our climate commitments while helping fund a just transition for oil and gas workers to safe and long-term work in other sectors. You can sign our petition at sierraclub.bc.ca/fossilfuel.

GOOD NEWS: THE SKAGIT VALLEY 'DONUT HOLE' IS NOW SAFE FROM MINING!

After decades of advocacy, Imperial Metals has surrendered their mining rights to the Skagit River headwaters!

This stunning area—located in the territories of the Nlaka'pamux, Stó:lō, Syilx and Upper Skagit peoples—is home to an important Chinook salmon run, grizzly bears and species-at-risk like the Northern spotted owl. The river also provides clean drinking water to many communities.

With logging being banned in the area since 2019 because of pressure from Indigenous Nations and environmental groups like Sierra Club BC, it's fantastic that this vital valley is now safe from mining as well.

We raise our hands to all who have been working tirelessly for decades to help protect these headwaters, including the Indigenous leaders, our friends at the Wilderness Committee who helped keep the pressure on, and the countless community members who have raised their voices.

Did you know that the Sierra Club of British Columbia was founded in 1969 by advocates like Ken Farquharson who had their eyes set on protecting the Skagit Valley?

NEW EDUCATION PROGRAM OFFERINGS

The SCBC Education team has been hard at work offering place-based education programs across B.C., with a focus on underserved communities. This place-based approach is centered in an authentic voice; meaningfully including invited local Indigenous knowledge into the education programs and materials that we offer.

During the fall term, we engaged over 95 learning communities (both in-person and online) and connected with over 1,900 learners!

For the past school year, we have been focusing on North Island communities, the Gulf Islands and the Greater Vancouver Area. We also launched our Place-Based Learning workshop for high school and the Climate and Place workshop for middle school. These workshops invite learners into relationship with the beings just outside their doors. This is done through interconnected thinking, reimagining our connections, and inviting humans towards stewarding abundant ecosystems by building resilient, equitable communities, that are rooted in place, and are moving out towards the global changing climate.

In addition to school district workshops, the education team has facilitated professional development engagements for teachers and has also been working in collaboration with local and Indigenous groups to deliver community facilitated workshops.

LEARN TO DRAW AND NEW EDUCATIONAL PACKETS

Our popular *Learn to Draw* webinars with scientific illustrator Dr. Julius Csotonyi continue to be a success. These art lessons share both Western and Indigenous perspectives with the help of SCBC educators kQwa'st'not~Charlene George, 'Makwala~Dakota Smith and Ascher Goodman. You can watch them at sierraclub.bc.ca/draw.

In addition to the *Learn to Draw* webinars, SCBC's education team has been busy building resource packets that blend both Indigenous and Western thinking. These packets are informed by some of the perspectives from SENĆOŦEN & Kwakwaka speaking peoples and include different ways to engage with the material, from watching videos to drawing. Our most recent educational packets feature the little brown bat, the winter solstice, marbled murrelets and Mother Trees.



HEAR FROM TEACHERS WE'VE WORKED WITH!

"I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to share this fun, interactive, outdoor workshop with my students — thank you!"

"The Sierra Club BC presentation was a lot of fun for my students. Getting the chance to go outside and spend some time considering the place we learn and our role in protecting it was valuable and engaging!"

"It was amazing to have an Indigenous person work with the students to learn more about plants, the land and people where we live!"

SUPPORTING THE MA'AMTAGILA

With the help of supporters like you, we raised over \$25,000 for the Ma'amtigila Nation and their title case to reclaim their traditional territories! This was accomplished through a partnership with fashion brand ecologist and Ma'amtigila Hereditary Chief and artist Mak'wala Rande Cook.



LEAVING A LEGACY

Sierra Club BC wishes to pay its respects to the family of our long-time supporter and Salt Spring Island resident Dorothy Cutting, who passed August 16, 2021. A tireless advocate and champion for social and environmental justice, Dorothy selected Sierra Club BC for a legacy gift in her honor. We are beyond grateful.

Legacy giving means leaving Sierra Club BC a gift in your will or estate plan that will help us protect the land and water in your honour.

If you want to leave a positive legacy for future generations, let's talk about leaving a gift in your will or estate. If you'd like to discuss your vision for the future, please contact our office by phone at 250-386-5255, via email at donorservices@sierraclub.bc.ca, or visit sierraclub.bc.ca/legacy-giving.

GOODBYE, ELISABETH!

Sierra Club BC wishes to express its thanks to Elisabeth Noble, Manager of Donor Engagement.

Elisabeth wraps six years as a Sierra Club BC fundraiser, helping connect with supporters and build unique relationships across the province. Her advocacy helped us quash pipeline approvals, protect critically endangered groves of ancient forest, bring nature-based education to thousands of children and youth, and mobilize tens of thousands of you to speak up about the climate crisis.

We wish Elisabeth all the best in her next endeavor—wherever she lands, we know she'll be a passionate and persistent voice for the places we all love!

If you need any assistance as a member in the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact us via email at donorservices@sierraclub.bc.ca or call us at 250-386-5255.



THANK YOU!

**WE'D LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE
AND APPRECIATE ALL THE
HANDS AND MINDS WHO
HELPED BREATHE LIFE
INTO THIS WORK.**

WE COULDN'T DO THIS WITHOUT YOU.

Here's what you helped accomplish this past year:

- Pressured the B.C. government into mapping 2.6 million hectares of old-growth in need of deferrals.
- Produced a brand new old-growth action taker's guide, *Being a Voice for the Forest*.
- Conducted over 15 field assessments to determine the ecological and cultural health of old-growth forests.
- Over 1,600 media hits and news stories mentioning Sierra Club BC.
- 14,240 people registered for informative, nature-based webinars.
- Over 15,000 letters sent calling for bold climate action and old-growth protection.
- 240+ endangered marbled murrelet sightings recorded in Ada'itsx (Fairy Creek) by a team of biologists and birders, with support from Sierra Club BC.
- Our forest team helped get approved cutblocks removed by identifying bear dens, karst limestone features and culturally modified trees, which are all protected.
- Launched *Invite to Action* to inspire artists, mentors, networkers and more to use their talents in support of the movement.
- Published our *Intact Forests, Safe Communities* report which highlighted the importance of protecting old-growth forests in keeping communities safe from climate risks like floods, landslides and wildfires.
- Supported a delegation representing SCBC and the Nuchatlaht Nation to bring old-growth to the world stage at COP26.

GIVE A GIFT FOR NATURE

Donate to help build a healthier future for all. To give a gift, you can scan the QR code which will take you to sierraclub.bc.ca/give. If you'd prefer to mail a donation, you can find our mailing address below. Please contact us at donorservices@sierraclub.bc.ca or call us at 250-386-5255 if you have any questions. We appreciate your support!



Photos (top to bottom) by Sander Jain, Sierra Club BC, Mark Worthing and Troy Moth.



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