

# ecobrief

## Making the Case for a Better Earth.



As we experience the heat of the summer season, our resolve deepens to fight for the communities and nature affected by the devastating wildfires sweeping through Canada. These wildfires are not just a reminder of the immediate dangers they pose but also a stark call to action for all of us to address the underlying issue: the climate emergency.

I've often found solace in nature's beauty, and witnessing its destruction due to these fires breaks my heart and angers me. The truth is these wildfires are not isolated events but symptoms of a changing climate. As the Executive Director of Ecojustice, I feel a deep sense of responsibility to shed light on the critical connection between wildfires and the climate crisis, and how our important work plays a role in safeguarding our planet.

Climate change has resulted in drier conditions, prolonged heatwaves, and increased frequency and severity of wildfires. Canada's forests, grasslands, and peatlands are particularly vulnerable to these changes. As temperatures rise and droughts become more frequent, the likelihood of fires spreading and intensifying dramatically increases.

At Ecojustice, our commitment to environmental justice propels us to fight for a future where the impacts of climate change are effectively addressed, and communities and ecosystems are protected. We firmly believe that addressing the root causes of the climate emergency is essential to preventing future wildfire disasters.

Our legal experts tirelessly advocate for stronger policies and regulations that prioritize climate action. We challenge governments and corporations that contribute to climate change, holding them accountable for their actions. Through strategic litigation, we aim to shape legal precedents that promote the transition to a circular economy and protect the ecosystems we all depend on for our survival.

By supporting Ecojustice, you directly contribute to our ongoing efforts to combat the climate emergency and protect our critical ecosystems from the ravages of wildfires. Your generous donations empower us to tackle complex legal battles, advocate for stronger environmental policies, and engage with communities to drive meaningful change.

Together, we can make a difference. Through collective action, we can build a future where wildfires no longer wreak havoc on our communities and landscapes. Your support enables us to continue our crucial work, empowering us to push for a cleaner, greener, and more sustainable Canada.

As we confront the challenges posed by wildfires and the climate crisis, we are reminded that the time to act is now.

Thank you for being an integral part of the Ecojustice community. Together, we can achieve positive change and create a brighter, more resilient world for generations to come.

Tracy London | Executive Director

# Ecojustice Takes a Stand to Protect Coastal Ecosystems

Ecojustice and our partners have made a significant move to safeguard our fragile coastal ecosystems. We filed a judicial review application in Federal Court, challenging the federal government's approval of the Roberts Bank Terminal 2 Project under the Canadian *Environmental Assessment Act*.

Roberts Bank is a crucial habitat for some of the world's largest salmon runs, serving as a vital migratory route. Additionally, the Salish Sea is home to the remaining 73 endangered Southern Resident Killer Whales, relying on this area for their survival. Fisheries and Oceans Canada has confirmed that the Fraser River estuary, including Roberts Bank, is a high-use zone within this critical habitat.

In March 2020 an independent federal review panel found that the new terminal would destroy the legally protected habitat of the Southern Resident Killer Whales. This

construction would decrease the availability of Chinook salmon, a crucial food source for these magnificent creatures, and intensify underwater noise from shipping traffic, further disturbing their delicate environment.

Despite these distressing discoveries and the Minister of Environment and Climate Change's acknowledgment of significant adverse environmental effects, the federal government recently approved the project. We firmly believe that this approval violates the law. According to environmental assessment legislation, a project cannot be deemed "justified" when it contradicts another statute, such as the *Species at Risk Act*.

The Roberts Bank Terminal 2 Project must not proceed if we are to secure the delicate ecosystems of the West Coast.

At Ecojustice, we advocate for robust environmental protections and hold decision-makers accountable. By donating, you actively contribute to our efforts to thoroughly evaluate the Roberts Bank Terminal 2 Project and its ecological impacts. Join us in protecting our precious coastal ecosystems, preserving biodiversity, and ensuring a sustainable future for generations to come.

## Urgent Action Needed to Save the Spotted Owl



We have a dire situation unfolding in British Columbia that demands our immediate attention. The Wilderness Committee and Ecojustice are taking a stand, demanding an emergency order to halt all planned logging in critical Spotted Owl habitat. The fate of this endangered species hangs in the balance, and we cannot afford to wait any longer.

Disturbing news hit the headlines recently, revealing that two of the last three Spotted Owls in the Canadian wild were found dead in



## Major Setback for Bay du Nord Oil Project

Equinor, the Norwegian energy company behind the controversial Bay du Nord oil and gas project off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador, has announced the suspension of the \$12-billion endeavor. This decision comes because of what they deem "challenging market conditions," effectively putting the project on hold for three years.

Could these "challenging market conditions" be the direct result of the unwavering efforts of environmental groups, spearheaded by Ecojustice lawyers, who took the federal government to court over its approval of the Bay du Nord project? It certainly seems that way.

While this suspension provides a temporary respite, our fight is far from over. We are

steadfast in our mission to ensure a proper assessment of Bay du Nord's potential for harm. This delay presents us with the perfect opportunity to strengthen our case.

Throughout our legal challenge, we have steadfastly maintained that federal approval failed to adequately consider the carbon pollution resulting from burning the extracted oil and gas, Indigenous communities were not given the proper consultation and engagement they deserved, and risks to marine wildlife, including endangered species, were shamelessly disregarded.

The Bay du Nord project is projected to yield between 300 million to one billion barrels of oil throughout its lifetime. We must ensure our leaders align with scientific evidence and take bold action to address the ongoing climate catastrophes we face. Every day we delay its progress brings us closer to the cancellation of Bay du Nord.

Together, we have the power to make a difference. Your unwavering support and dedication to our cause have brought us this far. Let us continue our fight for environmental justice and a sustainable future.

early May. This devastating loss highlights the grim reality we face. Once thriving in the old-growth forests of southwestern B.C., today, only one owl remains. It's a shocking decline that demands urgent action.

To save the Spotted Owl in Canada, we need Environment Minister Steven Guilbeault to act now. The survival of this iconic species depends on it. While there is still hope, thanks to the Northern Spotted Owl Breeding Program, success hinges on protecting their remaining habitat.

In February, Minister Guilbeault recognized the imminent threats to the Spotted Owl's

survival and recovery. By law, he is obliged to recommend an emergency order to Cabinet. Yet, we have seen no progress, no timeline for action. Meanwhile, the logging season has commenced, putting 2,500 hectares of vital habitat at risk.

But we refuse to stand idly by. Ecojustice lawyers are taking this matter to court, determined to force Minister Guilbeault's hand and secure the future of the Spotted Owl. Our legal action is a critical step towards preserving the habitat essential for their survival.

We must act now before it's too late.

# Fiona Tinwei Lam

*Ecojustice supporter and Vancouver  
Poet Laureate*

*As the world smoulders,  
let each poem be  
a fallen tree's tongue.*

– excerpt from the poem "Forest" by Fiona  
Tinwei Lam in *Odes and Laments*

Fiona Tinwei Lam has been a quiet and committed advocate for the protection of the environment. Not only is she a generous supporter of Ecojustice, but she also holds the prestigious title of Poet Laureate of Vancouver, and several of her poems and poetry videos draw attention to the environmental crises the world is facing.

Fiona's commitment to social justice began at an early age. After losing her father to cancer at age 11, she witnessed her mother's tireless efforts as a family physician, caring for immigrant women and advocating for gender equality. She grew up in a family with a strong sense of duty and responsibility, leading her to study political science and law before becoming a writer and instructor.

When asked about her support for Ecojustice, Fiona stresses the urgency of the current situation: *"The world is at a crossroads. It is urgent that everyone do whatever they can right now to make a difference. Climate crisis protests alone are not enough. They must be supplemented by concerted, strategic legal action by lawyers with expertise, experience, and passion. Ecojustice has a strong track record and a visionary, committed team."*



Fiona's concern for the environment has influenced her writing. In her third poetry collection, several of her poems address subjects such as deforestation, lost streams, and plastic pollution. Fiona has also collaborated with local animation students and graduates to create captivating and thought-provoking short poetry videos about these topics that have been screened at various festivals worldwide.

*"Environmental issues are inextricably connected to social issues,"* Fiona explains. *"Visual art, film, music, and literature can bring much-needed attention to these connections, laying the groundwork for insight, understanding, action and transformation."*

To Fiona, a brighter environmental future means embracing a circular economy, reducing overconsumption, greed, and entitlement. She envisions corporations taking full responsibility for their energy use, emissions, and packaging. Fiona also calls on individuals, especially the wealthy, to lead by example, becoming role models for sustainable living and stewards of the planet's remaining biodiversity.

As Fiona says, *"The positive measures we take now will benefit future generations."*

## Donor Inquiries

For donor inquiries or feedback, contact Donor Relations at 1.800.926.7744 x295 or email [donor@ecojustice.ca](mailto:donor@ecojustice.ca). Write to us at 390-425 Carrall Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 6E3

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