

ecojustice

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ecobrief

Making the Case for a Better Earth.



Photo: Held v Montana plaintiffs, CCBY2.0/Our Children's Trust

A seismic shift in the landscape of environmental justice has crossed borders, inspiring hope and potential for transformative change. This isn't just a victory in a courtroom; it's a resonating call to action, one that could galvanize monumental progress right here at Ecojustice.

Picture this: a resounding court decision, *Held v Montana*, where young voices rose above the fray to challenge their government's complacency in the face of the climate crisis. They stood for their rights, for a healthier future, and the court echoed their call by upholding their right to a healthy environment. This ruling isn't just about a single case; it's a precedent that could illuminate our path toward justice.

But what sets this victory apart isn't just its legal impact; it's the urgency it conveys. We find ourselves at a crossroads, facing our own battles for environmental accountability, just as the young plaintiffs did in Montana. Our very own *Mathur et. al.* appeal unearthed the chilling truth: the cost of inaction on climate change isn't just negligence; it's a conscious choice that risks lives. This urgency isn't abstract; it's pressing upon our very communities.

Our mission resonates more powerfully than ever in the wake of this monumental ruling. Just as these young activists amplified their voices, we too are unwavering in our

dedication to echoing the need for justice for future generations.

Yet, as we stand at this pivotal juncture, our journey is far from over. The fight for climate action isn't just a battle for courtroom victories; it's a symphony of collective efforts. It demands commitment, innovation, and the unwavering unity of communities.

This is where you come in. We stand on the precipice of change, poised to drive progress that extends beyond borders. But to make this happen, we need more than enthusiasm, we need your support. Your donation isn't just an investment in a sustainable future; it's a lifeline that fuels our ability to fight for justice, to champion the rights of people across Canada.

Every dollar you contribute isn't just currency, it's a clarion call for change. Your support amplifies the voices of young climate activists, echoing their demand for a thriving future, and nurturing the very bedrock of environmental accountability.

As we celebrate the strides toward a greener, more just world, we're acutely aware that change requires our constant attention, effort, and resources. The call is clear, and it echoes within each one of us: Together, we must seize this opportunity for the sake of our planet and generations to come.



Destructive logging threatening migratory birds in Nova Scotia

The federal government has been failing to protect critical nesting habitats in Nova Scotia for years. Local birders and community members in Nova Scotia are raising alarm about the federal government's failure to protect migratory birds in the province. The group is calling on Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) to enforce the Migratory Birds Convention Act (MBCA) to prevent the destruction of migratory bird nests on public lands that are slated to be logged.

Migratory birds are an integral part of healthy ecosystems, which are essential for the planet's resilience to climate change and other environmental challenges. But bird populations are increasingly threatened by climate change and habitat destruction.

Despite concerns raised by local birders in the past, the government has continually turned a blind eye to the impacts of destructive forestry practices on migratory bird habitats during nesting season. ECCC's website does not show a single prosecution of a forestry company for breaches of the MBCA in Nova Scotia (or anywhere in Canada) dating back to 2011. This is despite the devastating reality that, at this time of year, our forests are teeming with nesting migratory birds and every year many hectares of this critical forest nesting habitat are damaged or destroyed by logging operations.

Ecojustice is supporting the work of experienced local birders, who have conducted point count surveys of the number of birds nesting near Tupper Brook, an area set to be logged. The survey results are being sent to the ECCC along with a cover letter, urging them to investigate and enforce the MCBA. By failing to enforce the MCBA, the federal government is jeopardizing the survival of at-risk migratory birds. With the support of donors like you, we can continue to hold the government accountable and prevent the destruction of critical nesting areas.



Photo: Canada Warbler. CCBY2.0/ Andrew Weitzel

Toxics-PFAs

Many of us are aware of “forever chemicals”—these are human-made chemicals called perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyls substances, or PFAS for short. They are notoriously resistant to degradation and can linger in the environment for long periods of time. They are also impossible to avoid and are abundant in products ranging from firefighting foam to cosmetics, and food packaging to clothing. They are in our homes, our offices, our supermarkets and even in our bodies.

Alarmingly, more than 99 per cent of people tested in Canada have PFAs in their blood. These chemicals are easily absorbed and slow to be eliminated and because of this, they are accumulating in our bodies and the environment. Exposure to PFAS has a myriad of negative health impacts including decreased fertility,

developmental delays in children and they can even increase the risk of some cancers. It is even possible for mothers to pass these chemicals to their babies during pregnancy.

Despite these dangers, the regulation of PFAS in Canada is still in its infancy. While a small subset of these chemicals has been listed as toxic, the majority remain completely unregulated. In May 2023, Environment Canada released a report that concluded PFAS carry a significant health risk to humans. Ecojustice has urged Canada to move quickly on the reports’ findings and designate this class of chemicals as toxic under the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act* (CEPA). With the help of our donors, we will continue to push the government to follow the science and protect our health. PFAS causes harm to our bodies and the environment on a massive scale—there is no justification for further delay!

Protect the last wild Spotted Owl in BC

The Spotted Owl is on the brink of extinction in B.C. Before industrial logging in British Columbia, there were an estimated 500 pairs of spotted owls living in the old growth forests in southwest B.C. As of May 2023, there is only one known surviving owl in the wild—two captive-bred owls released last fall were found dead.

Ecojustice has been successful in reaching the federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Steven Guilbeault. In February 2023, Minister Guilbeault formed the opinion that the species faced an imminent risk to its survival and recovery. He determined that 2,500 hectares of spotted owl habitat, necessary for the species’ recovery, was at risk of being logged within the year. Ecojustice, along with our partners, urged the minister to recommend that cabinet issues an emergency order to immediately stop all logging in the critical

habitat of the spotted owl. However, the minister continues to delay this recommendation.

Alarmingly, logging has already started within the 2,500 hectares of spotted owl habitat the minister deemed necessary for the species’ recovery. If this logging is completed, it will make the recovery of the spotted owl in Canada unlikely. This urgency is why we are asking the court to compel the minister to make the emergency order recommendation without further delay. And we will continue to push for the protection of the spotted owl and its critical habitat. But none of this can happen without you. With your generous support, we will continue to use the law to keep this species from extinction.

Dave Barron

Ecojustice supporter

Dave Barron is an avid outdoorsman. As a semi-retired Wilderness Guide, his love for nature is deep-rooted and sincere. Dave grew up in Rexdale, Ontario and enjoyed living near the Humber River. He also fondly remembers camping and canoeing on Lady Evelyn Lake at just five years old. This early exposure to nature instilled a desire to protect it from a very young age.

The outdoors and protecting nature have been a huge part of Dave's life. He has planted 20,000 trees and grows gardens to support bees, butterflies, and other pollinators. He has spent countless days in Algonquin Provincial Park, and canoed Lake Superior. He and his Alaskan Husky, Panik, paddled the Chiniguichi Waterway Park trying to protect Wolf Lake and the surrounding area.

His love of nature has taken him from hiking the Bruce Trail, Silver Peak and Maple Mountain in Ontario, to Mount Washington in New Hampshire, and even to the Juan De Fuca Trail in British Columbia. Throughout all of his adventures be it snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, or dog sledding, protecting nature has been his main priority, which is why he has left a legacy gift to Ecojustice.

"After doing my due diligence, I found that Ecojustice is serious about standing up for the environment. Protection of the environment and protection of habitat are some of their priorities in the legal aspect. These are important to me. I am glad to donate and leave

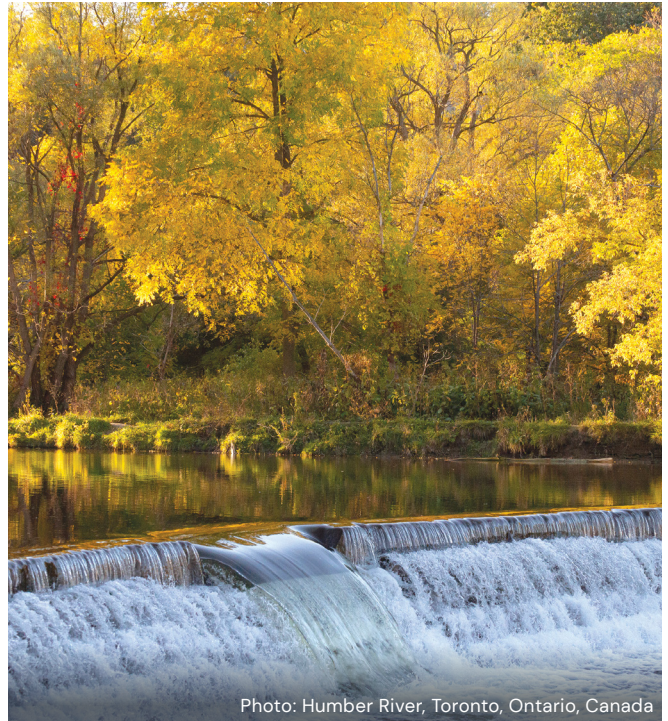


Photo: Humber River, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

a legacy gift to Ecojustice for their caring and passion towards protecting what is right for Mother Nature."

Through action and education, Dave tries to promote environmental and habitat protection. He believes even small acts, like making sure there is fresh water in bird baths, have a large impact. In his opinion, *"it is way past time to protect nature. It has to be now. Ecojustice does that."*

Dave Barron's legacy of passion and dedication to the environment is an inspiring beacon for us all. Together, we stand united in our commitment to safeguarding our planet for current and future generations. Thank you for being part of that with us.

Donor Inquiries

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