



# ecobrief

## Making the Case for a Better Earth.

### Uncertain Times: A Call for Collective Action

The climate crisis is no longer a distant threat—it is happening now. From the devastating wildfires that have ravaged countless communities in Jasper, and more recently, Los Angeles, to the loss of biodiversity and the continued destruction of critical ecosystems, the urgency of protecting our planet has never been more clear.

Meanwhile, politicians and industry lobbyists have become more emboldened to exploit the economic hardship many Canadians are experiencing to generate more profits for corporations at the expense of environmental and health protections.

All of this is happening as we prepare for an upcoming federal election and a tenuous relationship with our largest trading partner to the south. But there is hope—and that hope is you. Your past support has been crucial in allowing us to take meaningful action.

As we look ahead, 2025 is a year that demands our full commitment. Ecojustice is uniquely positioned for this fight, whether it's in the courtroom or through our advocacy for systems-level change to address the root causes of the

environmental crises. This is true no matter the political leader or party in power.

With the support of our community, we have been able to advocate for systemic change and hold those responsible for harming our planet accountable. But as the challenges grow, so does the need for collective action. The pressures on environmental and health protections are intensifying, and we must be ready to meet these challenges head-on.

We cannot do this work alone. Your continued support makes all the difference. By contributing to Ecojustice, you are directly empowering our efforts to protect ecosystems, wildlife, and communities from the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation. Your generosity enables us to continue advocating for stronger protections, challenging harmful practices, and pushing for policies that ensure a healthier, more sustainable future for us all.

Thank you for standing with us in this critical fight. With your support, we can continue to advocate for the changes our planet so urgently needs. Together, we can protect the future of our environment for generations to come.

# Silent Cry: A Mother's Grief

In the once quiet waters of the Salish Sea, history repeated itself as J35, known by the nickname Talequah, carried her lifeless newborn calf for days, refusing to let go... again. Much like the heart wrenching scenes of 2018, we see an orca mother's visceral expression of grief—a silent cry for help.

This mother's anguish is more than a personal loss. It symbolizes the existential threat faced by her kind. With only 72 Southern Resident orcas left, their survival depends on the dwindling Chinook salmon population, their primary food source. But human activity continues to destroy the delicate balance they rely on.

The recent approval of the Roberts Bank Terminal 2 expansion marks another blow. This project will decimate over 170 hectares of critical Chinook habitat, leaving salmon scarcer than ever.

Ecojustice lawyers argued in Federal Court that the government's approval of this project violated the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA), by failing to ensure feasible measures to mitigate the impact of the project were in place to protect Southern Resident Killer Whales and their recovery.

However, the court dismissed the case, based on its narrower interpretation of the government's responsibilities under SARA.

Despite this setback, Talequah's grief reminds us of the urgent need to act. Her determination to carry her calf is a plea for the future of the Southern Residents and the fragile ecosystem they call home. Ecojustice remains dedicated to protecting these whales and their habitat, but we can't do it alone.

Join us in defending the orcas and the salmon they depend on. Together, we can ensure this mother's story will inspire action, not serve as a eulogy for her species.

# Fighting for Safe Streets

Imagine cycling to work or school on one of Toronto's protected bike lanes, feeling secure from the rush of car traffic. Now imagine that safety being stripped away. That's the grim reality facing cyclists across Toronto due to Ontario's newly passed Bill 212, the *Reducing Gridlock, Saving You Time Act*.

The Government of Ontario claims that removing bike lanes will alleviate traffic concerns, and that they could be replaced by bike lanes on secondary routes. However, studies show the opposite. There are no viable secondary routes on Toronto's packed grid.

Removing bike lanes increases traffic accidents. On one stretch of Bloor Street in Toronto, cycling injuries due to collisions with motor vehicles decreased by 56% after bike lanes were added, not accounting for an increase in cycling volume

along the route. Separated bike lanes make all road users safer. Stripping them away puts lives at risk.

This isn't the first time the Ontario government has enacted policies that put communities and the environment at risk. Ecojustice is determined to fight back. We are taking legal action to challenge the provision of Bill 212 mandating the removal of Toronto bike lanes, standing up for a future where cycling remains a safe, sustainable transportation option for all. With your support, we can push back against policies that harm our communities and the environment.

Together, we can ensure that Ontario's streets remain safe, accessible, and healthy for everyone.





# Defending Sacred Lands: A Victory Delayed

The Mitchikanibikok Inik, who live in their ancestral unceded lands north of Ottawa, continue to face an existential battle. Ecological, cultural, and spiritual sites crucial to the Mitchikanibikok Inik's survival and identity are subject to "free entry" mining. Hundreds of sprawling mining claims have been registered on the territory, granting companies the right to enter, explore, set up camps, and remove material – all without any consultation or notice. Ecojustice acted for the Mitchikanibikok Inik in a challenge to Québec's free-entry mining system.

In October, we won: the court ruled that the province's mining practices violate its

constitutional duty to consult and accommodate the Mitchikanibikok Inik. The court ordered Québec to consult the First Nation before registering new mining claims, on existing claims, and before allowing exploration on their unceded lands. We celebrated this significant victory for Indigenous rights alongside the Mitchikanibikok Inik and our community of supporters.

Instead of receiving this ruling as an opportunity to advance reconciliation, Québec chose to appeal the Court's decision and prolong the legal battle. Ecojustice and the Mitchikanibikok Inik are not giving up! We are heading back to court, but we need generous donors like you to keep up the fight.

Make your gift now and help us continue to stand up for the Mitchikanibikok Inik's constitutional right to their sacred lands.

# Holding Big Mining Accountable

Who should clean up when a gold mine closes—big mining corporations or the public? This November, Ecojustice and Ecology Action Centre (EAC) are heading to court to ensure the burden doesn't fall on communities. Together, we're standing up for Nova Scotians impacted by the reclamation of the Touquoy Gold Mine in Moose River.

Atlantic Mining Nova Scotia is appealing provincial reclamation standards, claiming they're too strict. They argue in part that making groundwater safe for drinking is unreasonable and want partial reimbursement of their clean-up bond before fully restoring the site. These clean-up requirements are more than rules—they're critical protections for the environment and public health. Without them, communities risk being left with contaminated water and damaged

ecosystems, while mining companies profit without taking responsibility.

Ecojustice is supporting EAC in this case to uphold the Nova Scotia government's authority to impose robust environmental standards. This will ensure that mining companies—not taxpayers—are held accountable for clean-up costs. It could also set a precedent for similar cases across the province, strengthening protections for water resources and communities.

This isn't just a legal challenge—it's a stand against powerful interests that prioritize profit over people and the planet. By amplifying EAC's advocacy and shining a light on the environmental harm of gold mining, Ecojustice is working to defend communities and hold corporations accountable.

Together, we can create a future where industries clean up their mess, and communities thrive. Join us in making it happen—make your gift today.





## Liz Tevaarwerk

Ecojustice supporter with spouse Ann

Liz Tevaarwerk's love for nature began in her childhood, playing in the yard surrounded by towering trees and the gentle companionship of her pet rabbits. Those early moments shaped her connection to the natural world, a bond that would guide her actions throughout her life.

By high school, Liz's awe had transformed into action. Learning about humanity's dysfunctional relationship with the environment, she skipped class to join a protest against the logging of old-growth forests on Temagami First Nation land. "By university, I had been to so many protests I began to wonder, what are we really accomplishing here? It can feel like you aren't getting anywhere. The legal side has a lot of teeth to take on the issues."

It was this realization that led Liz to begin supporting Ecojustice 31 years ago.

***"It was exactly the kind of organization I wanted to give money to. I love the clear focus of the law to hold corporations and governments accountable."***

Liz became a monthly donor, a commitment that has remained unwavering. "Having volunteered with various non-profits, I know that having a steady stream of income is important. It's a commitment to what I value every month."

Her dedication doesn't stop there. Liz has also generously decided to leave a gift to Ecojustice in her will, a decision rooted in her values. "I've never been someone who has been able to give as much as I'd like monthly, but I have a house. Legacy is important because it reflects how we want to leave this earth. If I can do more after I'm gone to address these issues and inspire others, I'd be proud to be remembered for it." She knows that in the future, as climate disasters worsen, Ecojustice will be needed more than ever.

***"Climate change will impact all of our systems – it will affect everything – food systems, plants and animals."***

"For some people, climate change has to touch their lives before they act. When that happens, they will know there is an organization here that can take legal action on their behalf."

***"There is so much experience and talent on board at Ecojustice, which shows through their good reputation."***

Through her monthly giving and legacy gift, Liz ensures she will always stand alongside Ecojustice in the fight for a just and sustainable future.

### 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

Charitable Business Number: 13474 8474 RRO001

### Environmental Responsibility

By choosing 100 per cent post-consumer recycled fibre instead of virgin paper for this printed material, the following natural resources will be saved or reduced this year: 41 trees; 10,698 kg of wood; 131,312 litres of water; 1,668 kg of landfill; 3,236 kg of net greenhouse emissions; 47 million Btu energy. SOURCE: UNISOURCE.CA