



Friends of Clayoquot Sound

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Summer 2015

AT RISK

Chinook salmon in Clayoquot Sound



The Megin watershed is pristine, untouched by development, yet its Chinook run is on the verge of extinction.

Tofino Photography

Salmon are keystone species that are foundational to the marine and terrestrial ecosystems of the Pacific coast. In Clayoquot Sound and in many other places, wild salmon are at historical lows, especially Chinook. The downward trend in Chinook stocks is evident coast wide, even in Alaska. Hence, in this brief look at the status of wild salmon in Clayoquot Sound, we mainly consider Chinook – the reasons for their decline and what’s needed to rebuild their numbers.

Coho and Chum

Coho are relatively abundant in all of Clayoquot Sound’s 21 major salmon bearing watersheds. Coho stocks are in good shape, probably because of a prolonged moratorium on commercial fishing and restricted sports fishing.

Chum are also found in all the major rivers and creeks of Clayoquot Sound. Chum returns are highly variable – currently we are in a low cycle for them.

Sockeye

Sockeye salmon are present mostly in the Kennedy and Megin River systems. Sockeye returns to the Kennedy in earlier years were 50,000-60,000. Cannery Bay at the mouth of Kennedy River supported many First Nations weirs, which were chased out by the cannery that operated until 1932. Overfishing and logging practices have impacted the run, and today the returns are reduced by 90% to a mere 5,000-7,000.

In the Megin, historic numbers were 5,000-7,000; today they are only around 1,200. Illegal river mouth fisheries have impacted these fish.

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Marion Syme

Notes from the forest

No logging in 2014!

The volume of timber logged in Clayoquot Sound in 2014 was zero! Logging company Iisaak Forest Resources is trying to restructure into profitability and to meet its First Nations owners' expectations – likely reasons for the hiatus. The last time the cut dipped to nothing was in 1998, when MacMillan Bloedel was backing out and an economic melt-down hit Interfor's markets in Japan. Iisaak resumed logging in spring 2015 – it currently has cut permits for Kennedy Lake Flats and for Shark Creek at Sulphur Pass.

Interfor still waiting

After a 7-year absence from Clayoquot, Interfor applied in 2014 to build roads on the west side of Boat Basin/Hesquiat Harbour, with the intent to log this summer. However, the road permit is still hung up on consultation with Hesquiaht First Nation whose traditional territory covers the area. Last year, Hesquiaht shut down Interfor's logging further north, just outside Clayoquot Sound. We hope they will also nix the Boat Basin road permit and shut Interfor out of Clayoquot.

Maryjka Mychajlowycz



Old growth cedar logged by Iisaak Forest Resources in Kennedy Flats near Tofino Inlet, spring 2015.

Tsilhqot'in, mining, and Tribal Parks: Implications for the west coast

On February 26th, Friends of Clayoquot Sound organized this forum as part of our campaign to help Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation achieve a moratorium on mining in their traditional territory in Clayoquot. We invited speakers who would expand on Aboriginal rights and title as it relates to industry, the Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks concept, and the catastrophic spill last year at Imperial Metals' Mount Polley mine in interior BC.

The Tofino event raised funds and awareness for Tla-o-qui-aht's Tribal Parks. Tla-o-qui-aht have declared their entire territory to be tribal parks where they will not permit unsustainable resource extraction such as mining. Currently, Tla-o-qui-aht are holding off Imperial Metals from beginning exploratory drilling for gold at the Pandora claim in Tranquil Valley.

Attorney Drew Mildon from the law firm, Woodward and Company, that represented Tsilhqot'in First Nation for 25 years, captivated the audience of 50 or so with his lively account of the lengthy Tsilhqot'in court cases to prove Aboriginal title. In June 2014, the Supreme Court of Canada finally affirmed Tsilhqot'in title over 1,750 square km of their traditional territory in the Chilcotin Plateau, southwest of Williams Lake, BC – the first time the Court has declared Aboriginal title to exist in a specific area. The Court also held that governments must obtain First Nations' consent before making decisions about land and resource use on proven title lands. It was

an important victory with repercussions across BC and Canada.

Woodward and Co. represented Tla-o-qui-aht and Ahousaht when they fought in the 1980s to protect Meares Island in Clayoquot Sound from industrial logging. That court case resulted in a moratorium on logging Meares that is still in effect, and led to the beginning of treaty negotiations in BC.



Welcome sign in Sutton Pass, at entrance to Clayoquot Sound and Tla-o-qui-aht ha'houlthee (territories of hereditary chiefs).

Picking up where Mildon left off, Tofino Mayor Josie Osborne was adamant on the importance of dialogue between municipal government and Tla-o-qui-aht, whose traditional territory includes Tofino. "Local governments must engage with First Nations on matters of mutual interest," Osborne said.

Aboriginal activist and filmmaker Nitanis Desjarlais showed video footage of her visit to witness the disastrous effects of the tailings spill at the Mount Polley mine near Williams Lake. On August 4, 2014, the dam containing the tailings pond failed and 25 million cubic metres of water and toxic tailings sludge poured out, the largest mine spill in Canada. She depicted a bleak and lifeless landscape. The rush of water and tailings obliterated Hazeltine Creek and poured into Quesnel Lake, one of the richest salmon-rearing habitats in BC, and also upstream into Polley Lake, a small lake adjacent to the mine. She hinted a similar failure could happen in Clayoquot if there were tailings ponds at Imperial Metals potential mines at Pandora and Catface Mountain. "We had record rainfall and flooding a few months ago and there was an earthquake in January," she reminded the audience.

To wrap up, Tla-o-qui-aht Councilor Joe Martin described First Nations' teachings on natural law. "If you take care of her, Mother Nature will provide for your needs," he said, "but not for your greed." Terry Dorward, a Tribal Parks Guardian, concluded by speaking about the Tribal Parks vision of healthy ecosystems that underpin a sustainable economy. He invited all of us to support Tla-o-qui-aht's vision.

Wymon Stanlick
local writer

This event was supported by a grant from Mountain Equipment Coop for our mine-free campaign. Thanks, MEC!

Imperial Metals: On the hot seat in BC



On April 29th, Tla-o-qui-aht, FOCS and community allies hosted an #ImperialNoMore action in Tofino to protest the reopening of Mount Polley mine.

Being a mining giant in BC should not be easy. Especially when you're the "proud owner" of the single largest mining disaster in Canadian history.

On August 4, 2014, the dam encircling the tailings pond at the Mount Polley open-pit copper mine burst, dumping 25 million cubic meters of water and toxic sludge into Hazeltine Creek and all the way into Quesnel Lake, a deep fjord lake rich in salmon. Local people, especially the area's First Nations, were left with the aftermath of the spill.

While First Nations and other locals dealt with health and water advisories, what did Imperial Metals have to deal with? Currently, there have been no fines imposed on Imperial, though the company has assumed financial responsibility for "rehabilitation" where possible. The provincial government ordered three independent reports on the dam failure. The first to come out has been the geo-technical report. It indicated among other things that the actual source of failure, an undetected unstable layer of clay and silt under the dam, was just one of several serious issues with the dam, any of



Tahltan elders, who oppose Imperial Metals' Red Chris mine, guard a sacred fire beside the mine's access road (fall 2014).

which could have led to failure.

Most importantly, however, the disaster at Mount Polley has fueled resistance across the province. Many communities where Imperial Metals would like to set up shop are now fully opposed to the company's operations.

The Red Chris open-pit copper/gold mine in northwest BC on Tahltan First Nation territory is being fiercely opposed by Tahltan elders. Apparently, the plan for the tailings dam at Red Chris is very similar to the Mount Polley plan, and there may be even more concerns about terrain stability. Imperial Metals also owns an exploratory property at Ruddock Creek in Secwepemc Neskonlith First Nation territory. Here opposition is galvanizing around the impact the lead/zinc mine would have on the Adams River, home to the healthiest sockeye salmon run in British Columbia.

Imperial's troubles and opposition do not end there however! They also own two exploratory properties here in Clayoquot Sound. These projects are strongly opposed locally. Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations are now working on a mining ban that will cover their entire traditional territories. We are working with them to make sure Imperial Metals never explores its Pandora gold claim in Tranquil Valley, known as Onadsilth-Eelseuklis Tribal Park to Tla-o-qui-aht.

Emery Hartley
FOCS campaigner

Check it out

Interactive Google map:

Check out the interactive Google map we've added to our website (a big thanks to volunteer Veronika Degmayr!). You'll find info about recreation (parks, hiking trails, paddling routes), industry (salmon farms, potential mine sites) and the remaining intact (unlogged) temperate rainforest valleys in Clayoquot Sound.

You can access the map from our homepage www.focs.ca

Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks video:

Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks have produced a 6-minute video called "For our Grandchildren," beautifully filmed by Jeremy Williams. It takes you on a journey through Tla-o-qui-aht traditional territory in Clayoquot Sound, focusing on intact temperate rainforest. Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations have declared all their territories to be Tribal Parks, based on a vision of healthy ecosystems that provide sustainable livelihoods for future generations.

You can view the video on YouTube under its title, "For our Grandchildren."

AT RISK

Chinook salmon in Clayoquot Sound



Continued from front cover.

Chinook

Chinook salmon are found mainly in seven rivers in Clayoquot Sound and are considered the most at risk.

The largest Chinook returns are found in the Megin, Moyeha, Bedwell, Cypre, Tranquil and Kennedy, with some of these rivers reaching critically low populations. The Megin and Moyeha are “pristine” – never logged or subject to any industrial activity – yet their Chinook populations are dismally low. The other rivers – Cypre, Kennedy, Bedwell and Tranquil – have all been impacted by logging and other industrial activities, but have ongoing hatchery enhancement to rebuild their Chinook stocks.

Today the Megin and Moyeha, intact rivers but never enhanced, have an average of 40 returning fish each, reflecting populations on the verge of extinction. These rivers could each support upwards of 2,000 spawning adults. What happened?

From 1948 to 1962 the numbers of returning adult Chinook were fairly consistent. The Megin averaged 940 spawners a year, as counted by Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) stream walkers like Eddy Arnet. This number is a low population estimate, as only the lower parts of the river could be accessed. In 1963, however, the stream walkers counted an exceptionally low 50 spawners. The stocks never recovered.

The trend of healthy Chinook salmon populations throughout the 1950s, followed by a huge crash in the early 1960s, is consistent for all six systems

(Megin, Moyeha, Bedwell, Cypre, Tranquil, Kennedy).

A historical lens helps understand why Chinook stocks collapsed. In the 1960s there was a large herring fishery on the west coast of Vancouver Island. As herring stocks declined it resorted to fishing at night with lights. Often there was up to a 50% by-catch of immature salmon; this continued until 1968.

Despite the collapse of Chinook and their feed stocks, fishing pressure mounted. A vigorous Canadian troll fishery continued until the year 2000. Meanwhile, charter boat sports fishing started around 1985 and continues unabated. Even today, between the Alaskan troll fishery and west coast commercial fisheries, 40% of west coast Vancouver Island Chinook are removed from the ecosystem. There have also been sporadic incidents of illegal fishing at river mouths, preventing salmon from reaching their spawning grounds. Currently, a new rights-based First Nations commercial fishery is starting up. Management of all these fishing pressures will be essential to survival of wild salmon stocks.

Enhancement will also be important to survival of wild stocks. The Cypre River is the “poster boy” of our enhanced rivers thanks to the efforts of the Tofino Salmon Enhancement Society. Early numbers (1948-1962) indicate an average of about 400 Chinook in the lower river. The entire system probably carried 2,000. By 1963, there was a drop to double digits. With hatchery enhancement, spawning numbers returned to over 600 by 2001 and continue at 500-3,500 a year to the present. But if enhancement stops the numbers dwindle, as illustrated in the history of enhancement in Tranquil Creek.

The number of salmon returning to our streams does not appear to be limited by river gravel or spawning grounds. A good example of salmon resilience is the Cypre River. In 1940, tons of gravel were taken out of the river to build the airport, yet the salmon recovered within a few years.

But we know very little about salmon survival in Clayoquot

Sound’s estuaries and inlets, once juveniles leave their natal streams. There are elevated levels of sea lice on juveniles, presumably due to the many salmon farms. Friends of Clayoquot Sound are concerned that, along with overfishing and poaching, diseases and parasites from salmon farms are preventing many wild fish from even reaching an adult stage.

Our greatest concern, however, may still be the relentless fishing pressure on Chinook stocks.

Steps to rebuild Clayoquot Sound’s Chinook populations:

- 1 Reduce fishing pressure on stocks.** All fisheries need to support this; DFO must put more pressure on Alaska.
- 2 Start enhancement in the Megin and Moyeha** where Chinook stocks are at extinction levels; the Tofino Salmon Enhancement Society has the expertise.
- 3 DFO needs to step up funding for habitat restoration and enhancement.** DFO only spends \$200,000 for all of Vancouver Island, in contrast to a \$5.7 million budget for fish farms! The Tofino Salmon Enhancement Society, which has worked tirelessly for decades on a shoe-string budget, desperately needs increased DFO funding to continue operating.
- 4 Conduct estuary studies** that include juvenile salmon and forage fish such as needle fish. We have to understand fish survival in the estuaries and inlets of the Sound.

Dave Ratcliffe
salmon advisor to FOCS



Black bear fishing for Chinook.

Tofino Photography

Invitation to Wild Salmon Awareness Week: Sept. 26-30

Join west coast communities from September 26th to 30th as we celebrate the return of wild salmon to our rivers. The celebrations will include trips to salmon spawning streams and recognition and support for some of the long-standing salmon heroes who have been working to maintain our salmon stocks. The week will also feature educational events and aims to bridge the gap between government actions and public knowledge and participation. We invite you to join us to examine the present and future of the salmon species that are foundational to this area’s unique ecosystems.

The Golden Fish

An environmental fairy tale for all ages.

Written by Eileen Floody

Illustrated by Marion Syme

Published by Postelsia Press in Tofino;

chapbook format **\$10** includes mailing.



Proceeds to Friends of Clayoquot Sound

Send a cheque or credit card details to: FOCS, Box 489, Tofino, BC, V0R 2Z0



Earth Day beach cleanup on Vargas Island.

Devoted Reality

Events roundup

Music

–On March 15, Friends of Clayoquot Sound (FOCS) hosted Matthew Lien, an award-winning singer-songwriter from the Yukon, as he visited Tofino on his “Headwaters: Music of the Peel River Watershed” tour. His message about protecting the Yukon’s Peel River and valuing and respecting all rivers resonated with the audience, as did his melodies and brilliant piano playing. Hear his music at matthewlien.com

Film

–We screened *The Pristine Coast* on April 20th. It’s a hard-hitting examination of the effects of salmon farming on ocean ecology that goes beyond the impacts on wild salmon, all the way to influencing climate change. FOCS presented the film with Monday Night Movies, and director Scott Renyard was present.

Earth Day clean up

–On April 22nd FOCS teamed up with Surfrider Pacific Rim and Tofino Water Taxi to clean up a remote beach on Vargas Island. In two hours, nine volunteers pulled two boatloads of styrofoam, plastic water bottles, and other debris off the beach and high tide line, even a fridge. Most of this stuff was not from Japan’s 2011 tsunami. So please remember, if not disposed of properly, everything winds up in the ocean!

Film at our AGM

–At our Annual General Meeting on May 30, we are showing *Life off Grid* by Phillip Vannini and Jonathan Taggart. It features families across Canada who live off the electrical grid, including folks in Clayoquot Sound. Jonathan will attend and discuss the film with the audience. The AGM is Saturday, May 30, at 7 pm, with the film starting at 8 pm, at the Clayoquot Sound Community Theatre in Tofino. Film admission by donation.

Eileen Floody



Ocean Wise™ seafood

With up to 90% of large predatory fish already gone from the world’s oceans, it can be hard to feel good about eating seafood. FOCS has researched and decided to support the Vancouver Aquarium’s Ocean Wise program, an eco-label for sustainable seafood. We believe the Ocean Wise label provides a reasonable guarantee that the seafood in question has been harvested sustainably. Notably, Ocean Wise does not recommend BC salmon farmed in open net-pens. Look for the Ocean Wise label when you’re thinking of buying seafood and check out our local restaurants selling Ocean Wise approved seafood: **Long Beach Lodge, Wickaninnish Inn, Wild Side Grill, Jamie’s Rainforest Inn, Canadian Princess Resort, Norwood’s and Black Rock Oceanfront Resort.**

The wisdom of permaculture

Permaculture, permanent agriculture, is more than just a body of knowledge; it is a great wisdom. A wisdom which humanity has existed within, save for the past industrial century or so. Our great grandparents and most of our grandparents understood permaculture, and didn't need a fancy name to describe it.

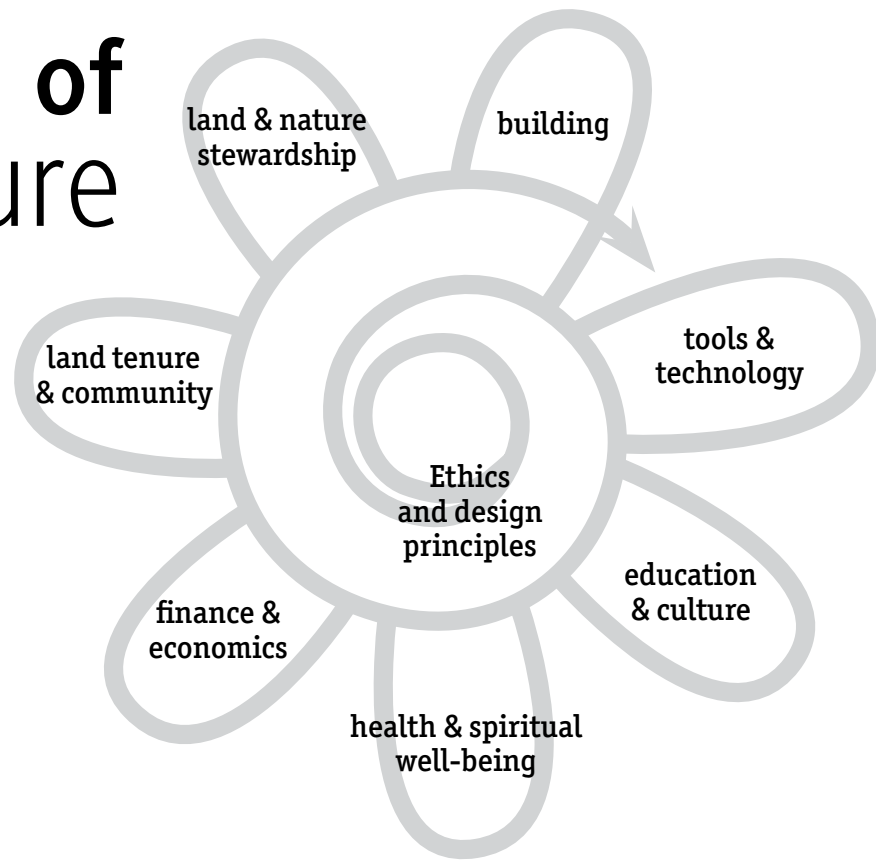
Permaculture is ecological engineering for environmental regeneration and the production of yields for human consumption. It is balance and harmony, circles and cycles, forests and fractals. In other words, permaculture is farming without screwing everything up.

Our modern, industrial agricultural method is extractive, petroleum-based, and extremely short sighted. Previous to cheap oil, the human population was much smaller, and food was grown using photosynthesis on vast amounts of arable land. Then came the synthesis of ammonia from atmospheric nitrogen to produce artificial fertilizer, made possible by the Haber-Bosch process using methane, and the population explosion of the baby boom generation following World War II. Agriculture, along with pretty much everything else, became based on petroleum.

Fast forward to today and we've decimated our arable land, sullied the atmosphere with pollutants, and filled up the ocean with non-biodegradable plastic.

This begs an important question: when oil runs out, and we can't make really cheap fertilizer anymore, how are we going to feed a human population ten times that of the 1920s on one quarter the arable land?

A big part of the answer to food security is permaculture. Permaculture produces food yields that rival those of chemical, extractive agriculture, while *regenerating* the soil and ecosystem, as opposed to destroying them. Permaculture encompasses organic agriculture but goes deeper by focusing on relationships between organisms and elements within ecosystems.



There are twelve permaculture principles, applicable to all aspects of sustainable living:

- Observe before taking any action.**
- Energy is everything.**
- Harvest a yield – make sure your work is beneficial.**
- Self-regulate and accept feedback.**
- Limits – everything has them! Especially Earth.**
- No waste, just stuff in the wrong place.**
- Patterns are everywhere.**
- Integrate, don't segregate.**
- Use small and slow solutions.**
- Diversity is valuable and strong.**
- The edge is where the action is.**
- Change – everything changes! Embrace and prepare for it.**

The Permaculture Design System Flower shows key domains that require transformation to create a sustainable culture.

So you might be wondering how permaculture can apply to you to make your life more pleasant and less harmful to the planet. The starting steps are simple. Build a little garden in some spare sunny space if you don't have a lawn. Grow some herbs and easy veggies, like kale, potatoes, salad greens. Refuse to use disposable plastic. That means bringing your own cup, bag and containers, and not buying products with (excessive) packaging. Compost as much as possible, to restore and give back to the Earth from which we take so much. Take time to appreciate natural spaces. Most importantly, rethink and question your values, consumption habits, actions and beliefs. We really need very little to be happy, and in a society that values consumerism, this wisdom is oft forgotten.

Check out: holmgren.com.au/downloads/Essence_of_Pc_EN.pdf for an explanation of the twelve principles of permaculture. Read some articles, get some ideas, start with some slow and small solutions and take it from there. You can email the author at permacultureariel@gmail.com with any questions or comments.

Ariel Weiser Novak
permaculture designer, Tofino

Meeting Godzilla: Earthquake in Tofino

BA-DA-DA-DOOM!!

Minutes after the magnitude 4.8 earthquake struck, diners at Shelter Restaurant in Tofino scrambled for their mobile phones. It was January 7th of this year – an ordinary day, until it wasn't.

Jarred by the loud slamming, people looked around – uneasy question marks on their faces. Once it was clearly over, a buzz of excited chatter broke out. Most people thought a truck had hit the building.

The earthquake was short, but shocking. In fact, it was the first one I've ever felt, despite living in the Cascadia Subduction Zone for nearly 25 years. That's not to say that there haven't been earthquakes, and that people haven't felt them, but this one seemed more violent. As resident Lee-Ann Unger commented, "It felt as if Godzilla was stomping up our outside stairs."

As earthquakes go, anything less than magnitude 5 is not even considered moderate. But a quake of magnitude 6 or greater is considered major. So why did westcoasters feel it so strongly, when the earthquake that struck was only 4.8?

Perhaps because, unlike our usual offshore quakes, the epicentre of this one was only 18 km east of Tofino, near the Wollan Islets in Tofino Inlet. The location is mere kilometres from the site of Imperial Metals' potential Pandora gold mine (and possible tailings pond).

Situated along the Cascadia Subduction Zone, where one tectonic plate is pushed beneath another, Vancouver Island is susceptible to mega-thrust earthquakes. The interval varies from 200 to 800 years, the last one having taken place 300 years ago. As we are often reminded, The Big One – a magnitude 9 quake with accompanying tsunami – could come at any moment.

Earthquake preparedness is encouraged in BC. Residents are told to pack grab-and-go bags, keep a multi-day water supply and have an evacuation plan. Tsunami sirens watch over Chesterman Beach and Cox Bay. But beachfront resorts host thousands

of unprepared tourists with no plan for how those tourists will get out of the tsunami zone, or who will feed and house them in the weeks-long aftermath of a quake.

And what about infrastructure? In Tofino, the school and the hospital are expected to fall down in a mega-thrust earthquake. The municipal building is also old. The Coast Guard has a plan for keeping the rescue boat safe in a tsunami, but the station itself will likely be swept away. Clayoquot Sound's many salmon farms may also be swept away.

In one way, small events such as the January quake are reminders to plan our lives with a worst-case scenario in mind. Recent research adds a dire note of urgency: Currently, there is a lack of seismic movement in the subduction zone, forty to eighty miles offshore. Despite deploying extra-sensitive instruments, scientists with the newly-formed Cascadia Initiative report an eerie quiet out there. Why? The most likely answer is that the two colliding tectonic plates are locked. Without the regular release of subduction



zone quakes, pressure can only build.

How much strain can the boundary take before ripping apart in a mega-thrust earthquake? No one can say. One conclusion is clear, however: the clock is now ticking. Godzilla is on his way.

Be prepared.

Joanna Streetly
local author

Sources:

- www.seismescanada.ca
- [Cascadia Deep \(via sfu.ca\)](http://www.cascadia-deep.com)
- [Bulletin of the Seismological Society of America](http://www.bulletinoftheearthquake.com)
- "Eerie Quiet at NW Fault, Where The 'Big One' May Shake," by Tom Banse, Northwest Public Radio



Support the Wild!

Friends of Clayoquot Sound is a grassroots organization advocating protection for the ancient temperate rainforests of Clayoquot Sound. We are part of an international movement calling for a shift of consciousness in the way humans relate to the Earth. We need your support to continue to educate and inspire people. Please send in your donation today to help protect one of the most spectacular places on Earth.

Visit our website to find more ways to help. www.focs.ca

Send your donation to:

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The sound of caring

We at FOCS appreciate all the people who support us, and care about Clayoquot Sound.

We extend special thanks to: Tofino Sea Kayaking (donation-in-kind), Long Beach Lodge (accommodation), Juggernaut Pictures and Scott Renyard (*The Pristine Coast*), Falco Mueller and Dave Ratcliffe (volunteers), and Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation (protectors of their traditional territories).

Donor Barbara Stares wrote us recently: *"I came to Tofino to visit my daughter, not knowing how close I would be to the legendary old growth temperate rainforest. We got out to Hot Springs Cove and I was blown away on the boardwalk by the beauty of it. I was moved to tears by the insanity that allows people to consider its existence as negotiable in any way. And also filled with gratitude for your continued efforts to protect it."*

Thank you, Barbara!

We depend on donations from individuals to continue protecting Clayoquot Sound. Please join us – use the donation form in this newsletter, or click the 'donate' button on our website at:

www.focs.ca Thank you!

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