



# Friends of Clayoquot Sound

*Celebrating the Frontlines of Environmental Conservation Movement Building & Actions for 45 Years!*

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## Indigenous Nations Facilitate \$1.1 Billion Nature Agreement with Governments Aiming to Protect 30% of Land and Sea in BC by 2030



Photo Credit: AJ Roulstone @ajroulstone

The ancient rainforests within Clayoquot Sound contain some of the oldest and largest living organisms that have ever existed in Earth's known history. #WORTHMORESTANDING

In November, a \$1.1 billion BC Nature Agreement was announced by the BC First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) with support from the federal and provincial governments. The historic funding agreement aims to enable BC to reach its minimum target of protecting 30% of land and water by 2030 through Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs). This is the largest provincial protected areas fund in Canada to date, with Ottawa contributing \$500 million and the provincial government contributing more than \$560 million.

"With mutual recognition of First Nations as the original stewards and title holders to our lands and waters, we have reached a jointly developed framework with sustained funding to achieve our collective goals for biodiversity protection, restoration and stewardship," reflected Terry Teegee, BC Assembly of First Nations Regional Chief. "We've experienced this past year, unprecedented drought, unprecedented wildfire season in Canada's

history, and the province's history. And certainly part of that is conserving biodiverse areas in our respective territories, and in British Columbia,"

Clayoquot Sound has been included as part of the 2.6 million hectares identified as top priorities for logging deferrals by the BC government. Logging has been deferred locally since 2020 to enable the local Ahousant, Hesquiaht, and Tla-o-qui-aht Nations to develop the visions for their respective territories. The ancient rainforest ecosystems are vital to Indigenous cultures, while providing climate stability and clean water, and supporting unique and endangered species like wild salmon. Not to forget, the forests are also critical to a multi-billion dollar tourism industry in BC.

Over 80% of the original old-growth forests have already been logged and 5 million hectares of big trees, rare trees, and the very oldest trees remain unprotected in BC. In terms of providing

## WHAT'S UP in this issue

**FOCS Celebrate 45 Years of Environmental Conservation Movement Building & Actions!**

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**Salmon Farms Quietly Expanded in Clayoquot Sound?**

**UN Climate Summit Highlights Need for Fossil Fuel Phaseout**

a climate and biodiversity solution, time is of the essence to protect what's left of the old growth forests globally.

# New Film “Rematriation” Explores Canada’s History with Logging as an Extension of Colonialism

Photo Credit: @rematriation\_the\_film



The new documentary film, “Rematriation”, explores the intersectionality of logging from scientific, cultural, economic and sociopolitical perspectives. To organize a screening, visit [www.rematriationthefilm.com](http://www.rematriationthefilm.com)

undisturbed since the last ice age. The blockade actions to protect the forest that lasted for months and in the process became Canada’s largest act of civil disobedience, surpassing a record that the Clayoquot Blockades held until then.

Old growth forests, like Ada’itsx, represent one of the last lines of defence against climate change, while containing scientific properties we barely understand. Yet mismanagement and greed have left less than 2.6% of them standing. Considering all the political campaign promises to protect old growth, the BC government’s response was initially hypocritical. Despite numerous recent political conservation commitments to protecting at risk old growth forests in BC, the government encouraged the publicly funded Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) to disband the blockades which led to hundreds of peaceful protesters being aggressively arrested. Over 2 years later, and many of those arrested are still making their way through the colonial courts.

**F**riends of Clayoquot Sound screened the new documentary film, “Rematriation”, at the Trees and Seas Festival as well as the Clayoquot Salmon Festival. The film follows concerned residents of BC as they take a stand to protect the last giant trees from being cut down. Along the way, “Rematriation” delves into the layers of complexity surrounding old growth forest protection, as the

filmmakers Alexi Liotti and Colm Keating provide lessons that reach far beyond the forests, permeating the very social fabric of Canadian identity.

The Fairy Creek Blockades at Ada’itsx became publicly renowned in 2021 as an Indigenous led movement to prevent the cutting of this last old growth watershed. These ancient rainforests have been industrially

## Trees + Seas Festival Makes Community Connections on the West Coast

Photo Credit: @friendsforclayoquotsound



At the Tofino screening of “Rematriation”. To organize a screening visit: [www.rematriationthefilm.com](http://www.rematriationthefilm.com)

We kicked off with an outdoor screening of “Rematriation” at the Tofino Night Market, following the Gust of Wind performances and had a presentation from the talented filmmakers themselves. Read more in the article above.

The following day, we met at Wickannish Community School and Jadyn Patton from Redd Fish Restoration guided the group in removing invasive species from the area. And on the final day, Marlayna Demco from Surfrider Pacific Rim led a beach clean at Cox Bay where we collected litter and marine debris to help care for the coastline. A big thanks to everyone who came out to give back, and to our generous community sponsors Long Beach Lodge Resort and Pacific Sands Beach Resort.

**T**his summer, Friends of Clayoquot Sound were part of a fun environmental stewardship collaboration with Surfrider Pacific Rim and Redd Fish Restoration at

different locations within Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks. We engaged over 150 participants to be passionate about protecting, conserving, and preserving our beautiful planet and eager to make a positive impact.

# How the Wanačas Hiłhuuʔis Blockade Protected Tofino's Water & Inspired Innovative Approaches to Environmental Justice Since 1984

Photo Credit: Eli Emms



Joe and Nora Martin, whose family was essential in the 1984 organizing, share stories at Cisa'cis (Heel Boom Bay) with forest defenders from Iisaak Olam, River Voices, Tribal Parks Allies, and Friends of Clayoquot Sound to honour the Tribal Park Declaration anniversary.

Island remains protected for future generations. These actions were pivotal in protecting the region's drinking water that comes from the island. Can you imagine looking out across the harbor and seeing the clear cut logging scars across the mountain? Needless to say, much of the area's attraction for tourism would also have been lost.

In 2014, the ʔaʔuukʷiʔaḥ declared 4 Tribal

In April 1984, on Wanačas Hiłhuuʔis (Meares Island) in Clayoquot Sound near Tofino, the Tla-o-qui-aht and Ahousaht forest protectors, supported by Friends of Clayoquot Sound in solidarity, stopped the clear cut logging of the old growth rainforest. The elected ʔaʔuukʷiʔaḥ (Tla-o-qui-aht) Chief at the time, Moses Martin, declared the island area a "Tribal Park" and changed

the history of the area. The Wanačas Hiłhuuʔis Tribal Park Declaration took place during the blockade which aimed to stop Canadian forestry company MacMillan Bloedel from logging the area's ancient forests.

Through the innovation of the Tribal Park Declaration of 1984 and a legal injunction to stop logging, the old-growth rainforest on Meares

Parks that encompass their entire territory. Businesses and organizations that support the ongoing sovereignty and protection of ʔaʔuukʷiʔaḥ Tribal Parks can become Tribal Parks Allies by making a contribution of 1% of earnings as an ecosystem services fee. The initiative helps to fund the Tribal Parks Guardians that now tend to the largest intact ancient coastal rainforest on Vancouver Island.

## Celebrating 45 Years of Environmental Justice Organizing, Education, Movement Building, & Actions!

In 2024, we celebrate the 45th anniversary of Friends of Clayoquot Sound. The organization was established in Tofino in 1979 in response to the logging activity on nearby Meares Island. At that time, a committed group of activists set their sights on protecting Clayoquot Sound's ancient temperate rainforest as a globally rare ecosystem.

In 1984, FOCS joined the Tla-o-qui-aht and Ahousaht First Nations in one of the first logging blockades in Canada to prevent the logging of Meares Island. MacMillan Bloedel held the rights to clear cut 90% of Meares Island at the time. As a result of the peaceful blockade direct action and the court injunction that followed, Meares Island

was protected and declared a Tribal Park by Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations (described more in the above article).

For decades, Friends of Clayoquot Sound have been a grassroots leader of environmental justice solutions. Our work has focused on solidarity for Indigenous sovereignty and rights through allyship, and opposition to old growth logging, salmon farms, destructive mining, and fossil fuel infrastructure expansion through education, community organizing, and direct action. We campaign for the protection of cultural and biological diversity.

Our aim is to educate and mobilize support in solidarity with the frontlines of advocacy. No matter where you live, there's a way to take action for environmental justice. It'll take everyone to secure a more sustainable future for the Clayoquot Sound and the world!



Friends of Clayoquot Sound has a strong legacy of peaceful direct action to highlight the need for change, as shown here during the Clayoquot Blockades where hundreds were arrested during the "war in the woods".

Photo Credit: FOCS Archives @friendsofclayoquotsound

# First Nations Coalition Supports Fisheries Minister's Decision Closing 15 Salmon Farms in the Discovery Islands



An interactive map developed by Living Oceans provides information on open net-cage salmon farms and the status of farm closures to meet the government's commitment to transition away from open net pen salmon farms in BC. The map is available at: <https://livingoceans.org/maps/bc-and-washington-salmon-farms-interactive-map>

In February 2023, the Minister of Fisheries decided to apply the precautionary principle and close 15 open net-pen salmon farms in the Discovery Islands. In response, 3 foreign-owned open net-pen fish farm companies - Cermaq, Mowi, and Grieg - are challenging this decision in the Federal Court along with 2 Indigenous Nations.

This summer, a First Nations Coalition launched support for the Minister of Fisheries' decision to protect wild salmon and their habitat in relation to a fully functioning ecosystem as many communities all along wild salmon migratory routes are impacted by their decline in recent decades. This Coalition is composed of 3 First Nations; a tribal council and a Nation Indigenous government, collectively representing 19 First Nations; and a long-standing provincial First Nations advocacy organization that advocates for the inherent Title and Rights of more than

half of the First Nations in BC.

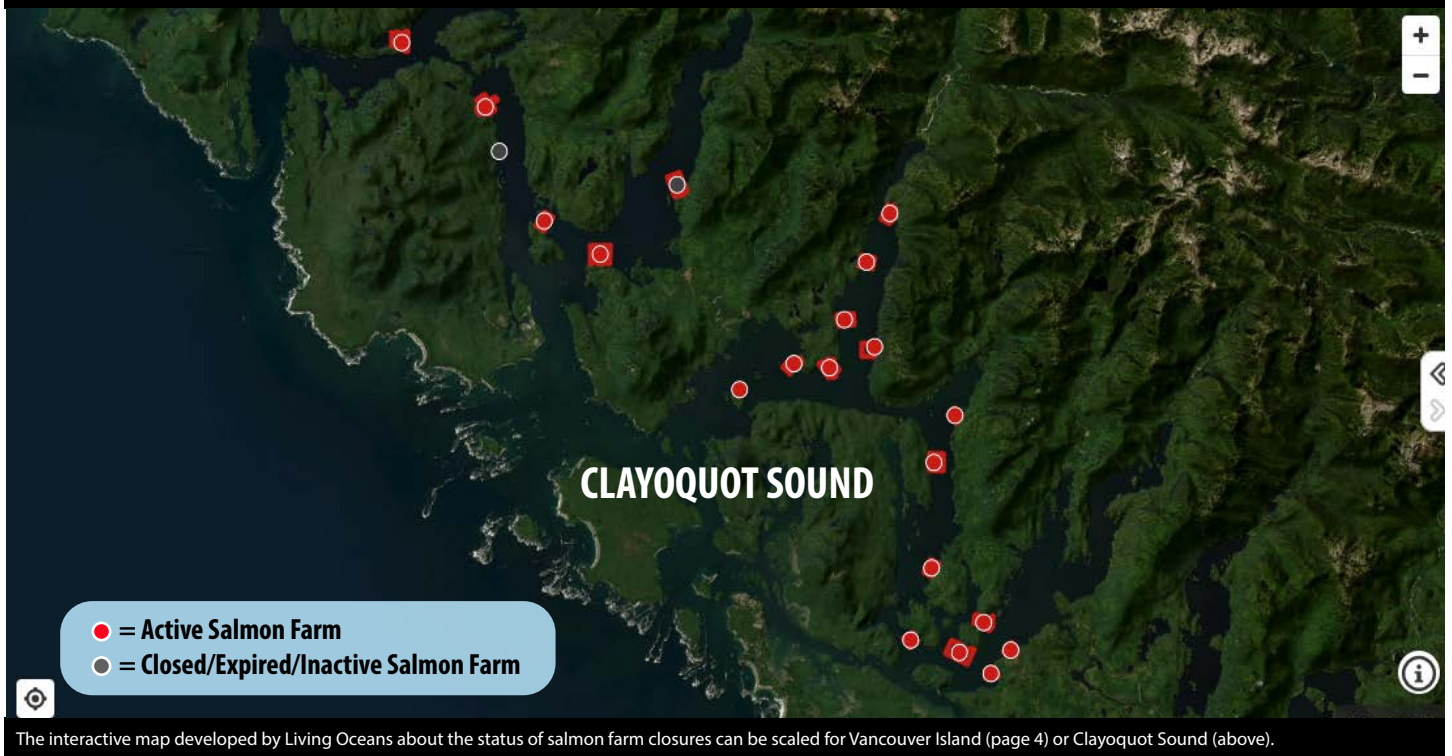
Chief Wayne Sparrow of Musqueam First Nation emphasized: "Musqueam have consistently expressed our clear and unwavering opposition to the operation of open-net pen fish farms in the waters around the Discovery Islands on the undisputed basis that we hold constitutionally-protected and Supreme Court of Canada affirmed rights to Fraser River wild salmon, which are being negatively and severely impacted by the open-net pen fish farms located in the key out-migration corridor for Fraser River salmon."

The First Nations Coalition applied together to the Federal Court to intervene in this critical legal case for the survival of the wild salmon and the closure of open net-pen fish farms in the Discovery Islands area of BC. The Coalition advocates for their inherent title, rights and responsibilities to wild salmon and wild salmon habitat

as integral to the survival, identity and culture of Indigenous Nations, as well as an obligation to protect and preserve wild salmon for current and future generations.

"While different stressors are likely contributing to the decline of wild Pacific salmon - such as deforestation and climate change - 'Namgis has known for decades that the open net-pen fish farms along their migratory routes are causing wild salmon harm by amplifying the spread of harmful pathogens and parasites and creating a harmful environment for them to pass through," stated Hereditary Chief Homiskanis Don Svanvik of 'Namgis First Nation. "The waste from open net-pen fish farms causes damage to the other marine life and indeed the whole ecosystem that we and wild salmon rely on. Unlike the long-term work such as restoring our forests and watersheds, and addressing climate change, open net-pen fish farms are an impact to wild salmon that can and must be addressed now."

# Salmon Farms Quietly Expanded in Clayoquot Sound? DFO's Conflict of Interest Exposed as 2025 Salmon Farm Removal Date Nears



Commercial and recreational fishing organizations, environmental groups, unions and businesses dependent on a healthy ocean have come together with 123 First Nations to demand that Fisheries Minister Diane Lebovitch enact the Canadian government's commitment to transition open-net pen salmon farms out of B.C. waters by 2025. This is ecologically recognized as essential to prevent further declines in populations of wild salmon. Yet, there is a serious contradiction to the government's stated policy as the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) Aquaculture Management Directorate continues to approve applications for salmon farm production increases across the coast. This increases the threat to generations of wild salmon as the salmon farming industry is investing in expansion while the Canadian government continues to consult about the Transition Plan that is supposed to put an end to open-net pen salmon farming by 2025.

In Clayoquot Sound, a UNESCO biosphere reserve, 3 Cermaq farms have already been granted production increases of 25-50%. A further 7 applications from the company are under review, involving increases in tenure size, investments in new net pens and/or production increases. None of the expansion plans of which we are aware involves technology capable of meeting the objective of eliminating the interactions with wild salmon that give rise to our longstanding concerns about viruses, bacteria, and diseases. All of the systems being implemented continue to rely on open-net pens to grow out of the fish to market size; and none of them protects wild salmon from farm effluent which we now know contains viruses and bacteria that cause disease in wild Pacific salmon.

By approving further expansion and investment in open-net pen salmon farming, DFO is supporting the salmon farming industry's argument that it is entitled to the licences that would allow these

expanded tenures to operate. It is entirely unacceptable that the Fisheries Minister has not yet made it clear to the public servants at DFO that the articulated policy is to be followed immediately. DFO's Aquaculture Management Directorate must cease granting approvals for license amendments. The Fisheries Minister needs to issue a statement clearly advising the salmon farming industry of the Canadian government's intention to honour the promise made to Canadians that open-net pen salmon farms will be transitioned out of B.C. waters by 2025.

This is a matter of utmost urgency. While some salmon species are clearly demonstrating the capacity to rebuild, Sockeye and Chinook salmon remain in the critical zone in Clayoquot Sound, the Fraser River system, and elsewhere on the coast. DFO's own stock assessment scientists have said that the recovery of Sockeye and Chinook depends upon "all sources of harm" being reduced to the maximum extent possible. Meanwhile in numerous river systems within Clayoquot Sound, stocks have dwindled to double-digit returns.

# Building Community + Remembering What's Important at the Clayoquot Salmon Festival



Photo Credit: FOCS

west coast. With salmon protection being a central theme, the Festival included the Love Your Beach Clean at Mackenzie Beach with Surfrider Pacific Rim, as well as the Salmon Fun Run Fundraiser with Redd Fish Restoration.

The Village Green hosted a Salmon Solidarity Film Night as well as the Strawberry Island Marine Research Society in constructing the skeleton of a real orca while learning about the biology, ecology, anatomy, evolution, and conservation of killer whales and other marine mammals who are part of the salmon ecosystem. Due to the road closures caused by the Cameron Lake wildfires in the summer that postponed some of the Tofino Jazz Festival, for the 2023 the 2 festivals collaborated for 2 nights for free live music events. The celebrations culminated with a dance party curated by Tofino Tea Party at the Village Green. Thanks to all the contributing organizations, activists, artists, festival goers, sponsors, and supporters including the District of Tofino, Hotel Zed, Long Beach Lodge, Pacific Sands Beach Resort, Tofino Time, and Tuff City Radio. We're already stoked for 2024!

In September, Friends of Clayoquot Sound coordinated the 9th annual Clayoquot Salmon Festival. Across the peninsula, we celebrated this magnificent species because salmon play an integral role for coastal livelihoods,

cultures, and ecosystems. The Clayoquot Salmon Festival continues to offer residents and visitors an opportunity to reflect upon, and build an active appreciation for, the irreplaceable value of salmon on the

## Salmon Story Reflections with Michael Mullin Friends of Clayoquot Sound Founder & Director

“I’ve lived in Tofino since the early 1970s. I’ve been quite involved in developing an alliance with the Nuu-chah-nulth people and I’ve been honored to share in their world. In the early 1980s, around the Meares Island issue, Friends of Clayoquot Sound got involved as allies in their attempt to protect their property. And I’ve been here ever since. A lifetime on the water growing oysters. I raised 4 kids on floathouses, fish boats, sailboats. 10 years under water, digging clams. I’ve

been out there most of my life.

In the earliest days of the Meares Island issue, we could see that salmon were feeding the forest. We could see that if you measured the growth rings of the cedar trees, we could say “this year was a big salmon run” or “these were some tough years.” It’s a miracle that 30% of the isotopes in these ancient trees come from the salmon. Out here, the fish are a miracle, the forests are a miracle, the rivers are a miracle.

But as humanity we have this terrible habit of creating environmental impacts with practices like fish farms and fracking of thinking “this looks like a good idea, let’s do it everywhere, then we’ll find out what the consequences are.” Now we know about reconciliation, we know about carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, we know about old growth logging. For the future, we need real action to protect this salmon ecosystem.”

# Understanding the Social and Environmental Impacts of War Provides Motivation to Advocate for Peace

#FundClimateJusticeNotTheMilitary



\$2,100 billion

GLOBAL MILITARY SPENDING

\$100 billion

CLIMATE FINANCE

The richest countries most responsible for the climate crisis – including Canada – are spending more on the military than on climate finance. A single year's military spending by the top 10 military spenders would pay for promised international climate finance for 15 years (at \$100 billion a year). #FUNDCLIMATEJUSTICENOTTHEMILITARY #WORLDBEYONDWAR

Photo Credit: World Beyond War @worldbeyondwar

**A**round the world - from Ukraine to Palestine - war is devastating. Research in 2023 by the Institute for Economics and Peace indicates that over 238,000 people died in 32 conflicts around the world in the previous year. According to the UN, conflict and violence are currently on the rise globally, as humanity enters the era where conflicts are exacerbated by the changing climate.

Approximately, 2 billion people live in conflict-affected areas like South

Sudan, Syria, Yemen, and Afghanistan. Everyone suffers in times of war, but women and children suffer the most. In the past decade, up to 2 million of those killed in armed conflicts were children. The widespread trauma caused by violence and loss is the hurtful legacy of these conflicts, creating long term emotional and psychological stress.

War destroys communities and families through destruction and displacement. Economies collapse, food and water become scarce, and

homes, schools, places of work, and sacred places that can take decades to build are destroyed in seconds. The environmental impacts of war include habitat degradation, carbon emissions, pollutants, and toxic contamination from weapons like depleted uranium and white phosphorus.

Together we must call on governmental and business leaders to advocate for peace in all conflict zones and invest in humanitarian efforts, including climate finance.

## UN Climate Summit Highlights Need for Fossil Fuel Phaseout

*Excerpts edited from United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres opening remarks at the UN Climate Summit in the United Arab Emirates for COP 28.*

“Earth's vital signs are failing: record emissions, ferocious fires, deadly droughts and the hottest year ever. But it is not too late. We have the technologies to avoid the worst of climate chaos – if we act now. The UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has charted a clear path to a 1.5-degree world. But we need leadership

– cooperation – and political will for action.

It's true. Our world is unequal and divided. Developing countries are being devastated by disasters they did not cause. And climate chaos is fanning the flames of injustice. Global heating is busting budgets, ballooning food prices, upending energy markets, and feeding a cost-of-living crisis. But climate action can flip the switch.

Current policies would lead to an earth-scorching 3-degree

temperature rise. The G20 – which represents 80% of the world's emissions – must lead. We must accelerate a just, equitable transition to renewables. The science is clear: the 1.5-degree limit is only possible if we ultimately stop burning all fossil fuels. The economics are clear: the global shift to renewables is inevitable. The only question is how much heating our planet will endure before it happens. Humanity's fate hangs in the balance.”

# Protecting What We Love, Together!

Friends of Clayoquot Sound is a grassroots organization advocating protection for the ancient temperate rainforest ecosystems 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](http://www.focs.ca)

Send your donation to:

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## FOCS Gratitude



We thank our friend and longtime FOCS supporter and contributor Nancy Powis for the bequest in her will. She left us too early in 2020. And we also mourn the recent passing of Joanne Manley, one of the original land defenders arrested in 1993. We thank her also for thinking of us in her will. It is with gratitude we remember all those have passed and who have taken a stand for the Earth.

### Join the FOCS Coast Action Team by becoming a monthly donor!

Includes annual membership.

Monthly donation:  \$10  \$40  \$100  Other \_\_\_\_\_

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