

THE

ACTIVIST

biannual update for  
members + supporters

## SIERRA CLUB CANADA FOUNDATION TURNS 50 THIS YEAR!

As a supporter of the Club, you have a lot to celebrate: from creating some of Canada's first environmental laws protecting endangered species and wildlife, to stopping damaging projects, all while inspiring hundreds of others to explore and enjoy nature.

At our last Annual Meeting, Club members supported a commitment to meeting this moment by growing our impact even more in the years ahead. Things like getting to zero emissions, fighting for environmental justice, creating a fair and circular economy, and ensuring all people have access to nature. Challenging goals but we can do this – together.

As part of our commitment to creating an equitable and impactful movement for change, we are kicking off our birthday celebrations with a special membership drive, and

reducing our minimum membership fee to \$15 for this year. Please join us in building this movement for change by becoming (or renewing) your membership today.

[CLICK HERE TO JOIN.](#)

To celebrate our 50th 'birthday' we invite you to join us in 50 days of action. From Earth Day, April 22 to our Annual General Meeting in June, we will be united in activities for the environment. Activities and tools will be shared via weekly emails, social media as well as a

[calendar on the website.](#)

Please share your actions by using the hashtag #SierraCanada50 on social media when you take action.

We hope that our ongoing birthday celebrations can bring us together to push for the change we want to see for another 50 years!



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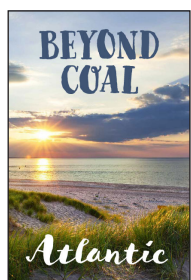
- FEATURE PROGRAM—BEYOND COAL
- CHAPTER ACTIVITIES
- WILD CHILD SUCCESS IN SPECIAL PROGRAMS

# Making Waves in Atlantic Canada

By Tynette Deveaux

Atlantic Chapter Clean Energy Organizer

The Beyond Coal Atlantic project launched in December 2020 with an ambitious goal: to get Atlantic Canada off coal and biomass energy as quickly as possible and transition to clean, renewable energy. Many of the solutions are already here—such as wind, solar, and existing hydro from Quebec—but what’s been lacking is political and corporate will. Tynette Deveaux and Greg Goupko have joined Sierra Club’s Atlantic Canada Chapter to make sure that changes.



Coal is one of the dirtiest fuels used to generate electricity. Not only do coal-fired power plants account for 25 percent of the world’s greenhouse gas emissions, but they also emit harmful pollutants, such as sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, fine particulate matter (PM2.5), mercury, and ground-level ozone. These are all dangerous to human health and the environment.

Biomass power plants, which use wood products, put significant pressure on already stressed forests and add to the problem of clear-cutting. In Nova Scotia alone, nearly half of the forests have been clear-cut over the past 30 years. What’s more, burning biomass for electricity generates more GHGs than even coal!

Our campaign to get Atlantic Canada off coal and biomass is affiliated with Sierra Club’s Beyond Coal campaign in the United States. In order to do our part to combat climate change, it’s imperative we switch to clean and renewable sources of energy.

That’s why we’re keeping a close eye on the energy alternatives being proposed by governments and the provincial utility companies. We don’t need fracked gas as a “transitional fuel” or another megadam like Muskrat Falls in Labrador. These projects devastate surrounding

## 5 MYTHS that DELAY CLIMATE ACTION in NS

### MYTH #2



Biomass (a.k.a. trees) can be burned to generate electricity and help NS meet its renewable energy goals.

### FACT



Burning biomass emits more GHGs than coal. Trees are much better at capturing and storing CO<sub>2</sub> than generating electricity.

All artwork by Andrew Glencross

land and waters, violating guaranteed Indigenous rights. Nor should Atlantic Canada be forced to accept costly and experimental small modular nuclear reactors (SMRs) and the legacy of toxic nuclear waste that comes with them.

It takes a movement to convince our lawmakers to stand up for our planet and our future. That means all of us need to step up and speak out for a clean and healthy environment.



Over the past few months, we’ve worked closely with concerned Nova Scotians who are calling for ecological forestry and a temporary moratorium on clear-cutting on Crown Land. We spearheaded a social media campaign with the Coalition for Responsible Energy for New Brunswick to raise awareness about the federal government’s misguided multi-million dollar investment in SMR technology for the province. We’re collaborating with North American Megadam Resistance Alliance to challenge the proposed Gulf Island project in Labrador — a megadam that would be even bigger and more environmentally devastating than Muskrat Falls.

We’re just getting started. We hope you’ll join us.

### CHECK OUT OUR LATEST SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS IN THE ATLANTIC REGION

<https://www.facebook.com/sierraatlanticcanada>

<https://www.instagram.com/sierraclubatlantic/>

<https://twitter.com/SierraClubCan>





Photo from Mining.com

## ONTARIO

### Indigenous & Environmental Groups Call for Moratorium on Mining Development in Ring of Fire

By Lucy Bain

Ontario Chapter Communications Coordinator

Sierra Club Canada Foundation has joined Indigenous and environmental groups in proposing a moratorium on a mining development in Ontario’s “Ring of Fire”.

As it stands, the region’s wetlands and watersheds are not protected under this development and local communities, both upstream and downstream, are in need of access to clean water, housing and other health services. Until these issues can be met, we are calling on the governments of Canada and Ontario to establish an immediate moratorium in the Ring of Fire for all mineral exploration, assessments for proposed road projects, and other potential developments including the Northern Road link.

The call was made in an [open letter](#) that was sent to the Prime Minister, federal Environment Minister Jonathan Wilkinson, Ontario Premier Doug Ford, and Ontario Environment Minister Jeff Yurek on February 24.

The other groups who cosigned the letter include the Canadian Environmental Law Association, Friends of the Attawapiskat River, Mining Watch Canada, East Coast Environmental Law, Mining Injustice Solidarity Network, Northwatch, Ontarians for a Just Accountable Mineral Strategy, West Coast Environmental Law, Omushkegouk Women’s Water Council, Wildlands League, and World Wildlife Fund Canada.

## QUEBEC

### Biodiversity At Risk: Rethinking Our Borders

By Sofia Ababou

Quebec Chapter Executive Committee Member

While scientific research has widely demonstrated the need for interconnectedness for biodiversity preservation, the majority of government policies are centered on domestic challenges.

However, pollution does not stop at borders. And many border conflicts arise or linger over issues of access to natural resources.

It therefore appears necessary to promote binational cooperation on environmental matters - to ensure that border communities worldwide can access healthy and safe ecosystems. To address the environmental consequences of border facilities (such as border walls), some countries are embracing shared responsibility for biodiversity conservation.

Throughout the world, several transboundary protected areas have been jointly designated for protection under treaties such as the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, or the UNESCO Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

This principle is becoming a conservation paradigm on an international scale, despite the challenges associated with increasing border walls and barriers.

A similar initiative has emerged between the United States and Canada, with the creation of the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Unfortunately, hopes for binational conservation between Arizona, U.S., and Sonora, Mexico, never materialized, and border communities continued to suffer from inequities in environmental policy – as well as from the consequences of the border wall’s construction.

For more info, read [Sofia’s article](#) on our website.

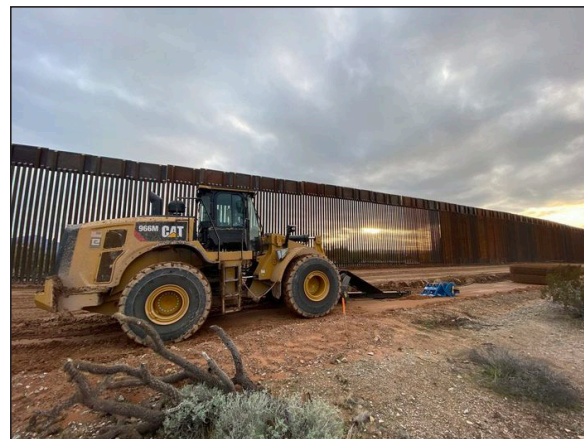


Photo by Laiken Jordahl



# PRAIRIE

## Connecting To Nature Through The Creative Lens

By **Camille Llosa**  
National Communications  
Committee Member

This past winter, participants from across the country used nature as inspiration to create unique pieces of art as a part of the Nature as Muse poetry, visual art and nature immersion workshop series supported by our Prairie Chapter.

This seven-week virtual series was made possible by the International Centre of Art for Social Change and Judith Marcuse Projects, and was led by it's Canadian artists-in-residence Renée Michaud and Laura Barron. Participants were encouraged to connect with their natural environment through the lens of poetry, music, and art. Together, participants learned about poetic forms, elements of Indigenous legends, and visual art-making. Each workshop featured lessons and a walk in nature where reflective prompts were offered to spark the imagination while connecting with the outdoors.

This collaborative project was a part of the FUTURES/forward community-engaged arts mentorship program, funded by the McConnell Foundation, the Government of Canada's Emergency Community Support Fund, and Community Foundations of Canada. FUTURES/forward is an initiative of the International Centre of Art for Social Change (ICASC) and Judith Marcuse Projects (JMP), an arts organization with a 40-year history in Canada and abroad and a pioneer in the field of Art for Social Change.



Clockwise from top: monoprint collage haiku, by Katharine Fletcher; *Nature is Strength*, by Renée Michaud; and haiku and painting by Sabine Modder.



## SIERRA YOUTH

### Sierra Youth Podcast: News You Can Use in Bite-sized Pieces

By Brynna Kagawa-Visentin

Chair Sierra Youth Executive Committee

10 Minutes to Change is Sierra Youth's new podcast! Starting in January 2021, this podcast features conversations for a healthy planet with the understanding that environmental and climate news can often seem overwhelming.

10 Minutes breaks tough topics down discussing them in a way that is digestible for everyone. At the core of their work is climate, racial, and gender justice. New podcasts are released 2 or 3 times a month.

They recently had a conversation with Corinne Rice-Grey Cloud, an inspiring Indigenous educator who talk-

ed about how we can go above and beyond land acknowledgements to further reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. Sierra Youth also recently had an empowering episode talking amongst themselves about all things regarding International Women's Day, what it means to be a woman, and how to lift up LGBTQ2S+ individuals and communities.

You can find their new podcast on Spotify, Apple Podcast or wherever you listen to your podcasts. Please follow them on [Instagram @10minutestochangepodcasts](#) and [subscribe to their podcast](#).



## GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

- The [Magpie River gets rights!](#) The first river in Canada to be recognized as a legal person last month, the Magpie river in Quebec's Côte-Nord region, has been granted legal rights including the right to flow, to maintain its biodiversity, and to take legal action.
- Right whale baby boom - The North Atlantic right whale numbers only about 360, and it has been hindered in recent years by high mortality and low reproduction. But [this year 18 newborn whales have been spotted](#). The highest number in 8 years!

In March, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled the federal government's carbon pricing regime is constitutional, bringing an end to years of provincial legal challenges to a key cornerstone of federal climate policy.

their device capturing and diverting microplastics. Tire particles are the second most prevalent microplastic pollutant found in the ocean.

- In March, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled the federal government's carbon pricing regime is constitutional bringing an end to years of provincial legal challenges to a key cornerstone of federal climate policy. There are some [great quotes in The Energy Mix](#) on this.

- The Niitsitapi Water Protectors are a grassroots Indigenous group raising their voice to protect the Eastern Slopes and headwaters in Alberta. They have [been pivotal in opening up consultations for the new AB coal policy](#). Much work is still needed but big thanks to the Niitsitapi who are mobilizing and unifying groups for this battle.

- The Tyre Collective, a group of grad students in Britain, are [winning awards](#) with



# So Excited About Our Special Wild Child Programs

By Kristina Jackson

National Operations Director

All three of our Wild Child locations are providing the all-important service of getting kids and their families out into nature safely during the pandemic. Special partnerships and our exceptional instructors allow our Wild Child programs to reach diverse people in our communities.



For example, in PEI we are enjoying the second year of both

Pride ScOUTs and Roots and Shoots - a supportive space for gender diverse/trans kids and their caregivers.

In our closing discussions many youth expressed they would have spent the entire summer in their room on their computers if they didn't have these programs to go to. Many expressed how this program helped them gain friends that affirm and celebrate who they are helping them really relax and feel comfortable. Some of the youth also expressed how the program helped them gain new strategies in dealing with anxiety, and how best to support their friends when they're dealing with mental health struggles. Finally, many said as a result of this program, they have a higher interest and are a lot more comfortable outside in nature, and that they felt proud of the skills they learnt through this program.

In yet another example of how creativity and arts thrive in nature, we celebrated Tales of Islandia (TOI). TOI is a live-action role playing game program where we ran around in the woods in costume and in-character, incorporating story-telling, imagination, and nature play together!

"The impact [of this program] was positive and significant. Everyone was in tears at the end because they didn't want it to be over."

— Testimonial from a parent

In partnership with PEI Black Cultural Society, Wild Child PEI facilitate a BIPOC Girls Group for 6 months.



Activities ranging from writing and dance workshops to cooking and crafts enhanced community amongst the 7 to 15 year old girls. 2020 was a tough year, especially for Black youth, inclusion, belonging, and dealing with anxiety became some of the main goals and achievements of this group.

Wild Child participant [Ray Cullen was featured in a song](#) written by Joce Reyome about their experiences in the Wild Child Program.

Edmonton (AB) Wild Child is celebrating this month by offering Earth Day Kits to the community in partnership with Strathcona County Utilities' Waste Diversion Program. Wild Child Edmonton created an Earth Day Pledge; a fun interactive activity to get families outside that is being distributed along with the kits.

Check out Wild Child on Instagram / Facebook. The fun they are having is contagious - in the best way possible!



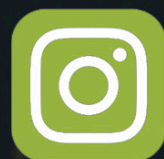
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