



rising tide



Healthy Oceans. Healthy Communities. www.livingoceans.org

FALL 2009

CONTROVERSY GROWS

AROUND ENBRIDGE'S TAR SANDS TO TANKERS PROJECT

Opposition to Enbridge's Northern Gateway pipeline and tanker proposal has been gaining momentum since the First Nations Energy Summit held in Moricetown, B.C. in June, 2009 when over 200 people from communities along the proposed oil pipeline route gathered to discuss the impacts of the mega-project. At least 12 of the First Nations from along the pipeline and

tanker route who were represented at the event spoke out against the Enbridge project.

This past August, Living Oceans Society's Jennifer Lash and Oonagh O'Connor arranged for Enbridge CEO Patrick Daniel to travel the B.C. coast with them to listen to the people whose lives would be directly affected by his company's planned oil and condensate pipelines. Enbridge's massive project

continued on page 3

B.C.'s coastal waters are a global treasure and a cradle of life for the northwest Pacific Ocean. Transporting crude oil and condensate through these fragile marine ecosystems poses significant risks to wildlife and threatens the livelihoods of the many people who rely on marine resources.



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Thanks to our many supporters for helping with our strategic planning survey. We appreciate your valuable input.



Letter from the Executive Director

I was never very good at chemistry. I enjoy biology, but chemistry has always felt like a foreign language with a different alphabet. So when I started reading about ocean acidification, a chemical change that is occurring in our ocean, I hoped someone would find a quick solution, saving me from the perils of the periodic table. I soon realized this was not going to happen, so I put on a brave face and started learning chemistry.

Luckily, I had a good professor. At an Oceans and Climate workshop organized by Living Oceans Society, Dr. Richard Feely walked us through the cause and effect of ocean acidification. My fear of chemistry was quickly dwarfed by my concern over the magnitude of the problem facing the planet. I realized I would have to overcome my fear of chemistry if Living Oceans Society was to play a role in protecting the ocean from climate change.

Ocean acidification works like this: The ocean is a carbon sink, absorbing and storing large amounts of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. As the amount of carbon dioxide has increased (from our pollution), the ocean has absorbed more carbon dioxide—about a 30 percent increase since the Industrial Revolution, upsetting the natural chemical balance. Salt water combines with the excess carbon dioxide to become carbonic acid. In other words, $H_2O + CO_2 = H_2CO_3$.

If you jumped in the ocean right now you would not get a rash or feel your skin burn. That's not the danger—the ocean's not going to turn into battery acid. The danger is that ocean acidification can lead to the dissolving of the shells of many important shellfish, such as mussels and clams, make development difficult for other animals such as crabs and lobsters, and dissolve the shells of plankton, which make up the foundation of the ocean's food web. If these creatures cannot survive, the foundation of the ocean food web will crumble.

Ocean acidification will not appear as an open wound like a clear cut does in a forest. It is invisible to the human eye but it will affect all of us if it is not stopped. The only way to stop the ocean from becoming acidic is to dramatically decrease greenhouse gas emissions. Canada, a country blessed with three oceans and a lot of ice, has good reason to be concerned. Our government should be taking decisive steps to lower emissions at home and in the international arena. They have failed to do so in the past but if we give our government a chemistry lesson perhaps they will move to the head of the class.

Jennifer Lash
Executive Director



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Living Oceans Society is working to ensure the long-term health of the ocean and coastal communities on the Pacific Coast of Canada. We believe that people are part of the environment and that we can build sustainable communities by protecting coastal ecosystems today.

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Controversy continued

linked to the expansion of the tar sands will feed a steady stream of crude oil to super sized oil tankers that will ply the dangerous coastal waters of the Great Bear Rainforest. First Nations and fishermen gave Mr. Daniel clear and repeated messages that the mega-project's risks to the ocean on which they depend outweighed any possible benefits.

At a community meeting in Skidegate on August 28, respected elders told the Enbridge executive that there is no way he could guarantee there would never be a tanker accident, and that just one oil spill could end their traditional food gathering forever. Guujaaw, President of the Council of the Haida Nation, said that the Gateway project would put the entire Haida way of life at risk for nothing more than the chance for investors and company officials to make money.

Mr. Daniel heard similar messages in Kitkatla and Lakwa'laams. In Kitkatla, Chief Elmer Moody told him, "industry does not have enough dollars to make up for the loss of the culture, inheritance, and the hereditary system. This project will not be accepted regardless of what is put forward."

The Gitga'at, who are all too familiar with oil spills and the risks of coastal navigation thanks to the Queen of the North sinking in Hartley Bay in 2006, also invited the Enbridge CEO to visit their community where he was told "NO" and "NEVER."

The Haisla First Nation, located in Kitimat where the pipelines would meet the ocean at the proposed tanker port, have also recently weighed in against the proposal, stating they "will not allow any project, including Enbridge's Northern Gateway Project, to proceed, if it will legally infringe [our] constitutionally protected rights."

It is not clear whether or how the government's planned review process will factor in the substantial risks of allowing supertankers on the B.C. coast, the expansion of the tar sands and the contribution to climate change. Because of the Gateway project's potential to cause devastating oil spills from tankers and pipelines, and increase greenhouse gas emissions, these crucial issues must be considered.

Living Oceans Society believes that the best way to protect B.C.'s ocean from potential oil spills from supertankers is by keeping these massive ships out of coastal waters. ■

The Northern Gateway Project

Enbridge's Northern Gateway mega-project would involve two 1,170 kilometre pipelines. One would carry oil from the Alberta tar sands to Kitimat, where 525,000 barrels of oil per day would be loaded onto oil tankers that would thread their way down Douglas Channel to the Inside Passage, bound for Asia. That works out to about 225 loaded, massive oil tankers per year, passing each other in the channel and other narrow, confined areas along the coast. And it would violate the longstanding ban on oil tanker traffic in B.C.'s northern waters.

The other pipeline would carry condensate from Kitimat to Alberta, where it is used to thin tar sands oil so that it can be transported through pipelines. Condensate is classified as a dangerous good by the federal government and is so toxic that it kills marine life on contact. The pipelines would cross approximately a thousand streams and rivers, many of which are in the Skeena and Upper Fraser watersheds. These two river systems are B.C.'s most important wild salmon rivers.

Shipping accidents along our coast are inevitable. On September 25th a potential oil spill disaster was averted when a cargo vessel struck an object in Douglas Channel, a short distance from the Port of Kitimat. Shipping related incidents occur frequently along B.C.'s coast. Between 1999-2009, there were 1,275 commercial shipping incidents reported on the coast — 164 for cargo vessels alone. Allowing super tankers on the coast would only increase the chances of a major oil spill disaster in our coastal waters.



Take *action!*

Please write Prime Minister Stephen Harper and let him know that you want the federal government to keep B.C.'s North and Central Coast free from super tankers.



Send an email to the Prime Minister: <http://www.livingoceans.org/programs/energy/action.aspx>

finding CORAL

Preliminary findings from the Finding Coral Expedition

In June of 2009, the Finding Coral Expedition set off in search of deep water corals off the coast of British Columbia, but discovered a whole lot more. During the two week research journey the Science Team explored spectacular corals that were absolutely blooming with life. We found at least 38 species of fish, and over 50 species of invertebrates. As with forests on land, deep sea coral forests provide important habitat for many creatures, such as crab, shrimp, rockfish, halibut and other flatfish, and sablefish.

The expedition logged 30 dives in seven different locations where the team found at least 16 different kinds of coral. Small *Styaster* corals were the most common, but the species that made the largest colonies were *Primnoa* red tree corals. In Juan Perez Sound, some *Primnoa* colonies were larger than 1.5 meters in height and two meters wide. The science team collected 110 specimens of corals, sponges, and other invertebrate species. Some of these specimens have been sent to experts at the Smithsonian and elsewhere for further analysis. The results will shed more light on deep sea coral ecosystems in Canada's Pacific waters. Other specimens will be permanently housed at the Royal British Columbia Museum, where they will serve to educate and inform visitors, and provide research material for scientists.

High definition video cameras on the subs recorded the dives, capturing the splendour of the coral forests as well as some areas that had been impacted by humans. Three of the dive sites showed possible evidence of bottom trawling, with the Mid-Moresby Gulley site showing the clearest evidence of both old and recent bottom trawling activity. This is not surprising, because one of the primary problems with bottom trawling is its disturbance and destruction of fragile habitat, including corals and sponges. From 1996 to 2006, fisheries observer data show that bottom trawlers caught at least 295 tonnes of corals and sponges in Canada's Pacific waters. Their real impact is probably much greater than this number indicates, as bottom trawl gear may tip over or break corals and sponges, without necessarily catching them. Impacts on habitat are a major reason why bottom trawling is widely considered to have the most severe ecological impact of any commercial fishing gear used in Canada.

The video and specimens gathered during the expedition will support Living Oceans Society's efforts to get the Canadian Government to protect



TOP: Finding Coral dive sites. MIDDLE: Young ghost shrimp found on a *Swifstia* coral in South Moresby Gully. BOTTOM: The Deepworker sub and *Primnoa* coral 335 meters deep in Juan Perez Sound.

B.C.'s deep sea corals. While the government has taken steps to protect B.C.'s unique glass sponge reefs, there are currently no specific measures in place to protect deep sea corals. Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) has developed a sensitive benthic area policy that may be used to address fisheries impacts on deep sea corals, but the policy has not yet been implemented on the West Coast. Furthermore, DFO has said that they require more information about corals, their location, and the species that depend on them, before they can implement a regional coral and sponge conservation

Finding Coral Speaking Tour:

Our Journey To The Bottom of the Sea



Beginning in late October until April 2010, Jennifer Lash, leader of the Finding Coral Expedition, is visiting cities throughout Canada to share pictures, video and stories from our journey to the bottom of the sea.

Living Oceans Society is looking for groups to help host Jennifer's speaking engagements. The presentation is ideal for:

- community events
- service clubs
- universities
- recreation groups
- conservation groups

Tour dates and locations are posted at www.findingcoral.com

See you soon!

Jennifer's 40 minute presentation contains a message about the importance of our oceans' health to all Canadians, and why we need to protect coral and the deep sea ecosystem. The presentation will be followed by a 20 minute question and answer period.

If you live in a major Canadian city and would like to host an event, please call Dorie Pesicka (250) 973-6580 or dpesicka@livingoceans.org

We will provide posters, media support and web announcements to advertise the event, as well as a projector, computer and information brochures for the presentation. ■

strategy. Living Oceans Society is hoping that the scientific evidence gathered from this expedition will push DFO to finally protect B.C.'s deep sea corals from human impacts.

Commercial, recreational and subsistence fisheries are more than economic drivers on this coast—they are key components of the culture. If we want viable coastal communities, we must also have a healthy ocean. Deep sea coral forests are an essential element for ocean health. Protecting them and other important, fragile ecosystems must be part of the vision for a sustainable future in coastal B.C. ■



Overwaita Food Group stores now label sustainable seafood with the SeaChoice logo.

BOLD SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD PROJECT

SeaChoice partners with Overwaita Food Group

SeaChoice has teamed up with the Overwaita Food Group (OFG) to make it easier for Canadians to buy seafood that promotes healthy oceans. OFG, which operates 117 stores across 80 communities in western Canada, is one of North America's first grocery retailers to commit to a comprehensive sustainable seafood program. Seafood sustainability will be profiled in all banners—Cooper's Markets, Overwaita Foods, Price Smart, and Urban Fare.

OFG has already dropped several red listed products from its store shelves, including Chilean seabass, yellowfin tuna and orange roughy. The company is working to source more seafood options for its customers that meet SeaChoice's green "Best Choice" list, which can be found online at www.seachoice.org.

SeaChoice, Canada's national seafood program, is run by Living Oceans Society in partnership with other leading environmental groups. Living Oceans Society congratulates OFG for providing a great example of how retailers can make a difference and take a leading role in improving the health of our oceans.

In August, OFG stores started displaying giant SeaChoice card posters with a pouch for customers to take their own wallet-sized cards home. This fall, green and yellow SeaChoice labels will be appearing in fresh seafood cases, making it easy for customers to choose "Best Choice" or "Some Concerns" seafood items and keep products with serious environmental concerns out of their shopping carts.

OFG's forward-thinking commitment helps reward fishermen, aquaculture operators and suppliers who have environmentally responsible practices. Overwaita is preferentially sourcing from more sustainable producers, and customers now have a way to make choices that support healthy oceans based on clear information. ■

LOS in Ottawa

Living Oceans' Government Relations Coordinator in Ottawa

By Jennifer Adams

It's a long way from Ottawa to the Pacific, and Living Oceans Society wants to make sure that federal decision makers understand how their government's policies can affect coastal communities. To help bridge the gap, Sustainable Fisheries Campaign Manager John Driscoll, and Marine Planning and Protected Areas Program Manager, Kim Wright held a week of meetings in the capital in mid September. The highlight of the trip was a briefing session given by John and Kim to the International Conservation Caucus. This all-party caucus is made up of Members of Parliament and Senators who meet regularly with political advisors, bureaucrats and experts to discuss pressing conservation issues.

John and Kim spoke with the caucus about the impacts of fishing practices on the environment. One of our key "asks" was for the caucus to support greater government funding of ocean management and planning for regions such as PNCIMA (Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area).

We asked The Whalesbone restaurant to cater the event. The Whalesbone is one of several Ottawa restaurants that have joined Wild Salmon Supporters and committed not to sell net-cage farmed salmon. The delicious sustainable seafood had the MPs and Senators in a perfect mood to listen to our presentation that highlighted the urgent need for networks of marine protected areas in PNCIMA. The Whalesbone's fantastic spread may be one reason that Living Oceans drew the largest audience ever for a caucus event.

The LOS presentation prompted Liberal MP Keith Martin to point out in Parliament on October 7, that while Canada committed to putting 25 percent of our coasts in marine protected areas, only a measly 0.5 percent is protected right now. Dr. Martin asked, "[w]hen will the Fisheries Minister implement a plan to expand our marine protected areas in British Columbia to safeguard our crucial marine ecosystem?" DFO Minister Gail Shea responded that the Conservatives were looking after the oceans, having invested \$61.4 million government-wide since 2006 in the health of the oceans.

That \$61 million may sound like good money until you divide it amongst the 12,658,277 square km of Canada's Territorial Waters and ocean Economic Exclusion Zone, which works out to \$1.60 per square km per year. If you searched throughout that vast area, you would probably find more cash than that in lost change. Canada's oceans are seriously under funded and under prioritized. The Oceans branch of DFO lacks the capacity to fulfill their mandate. DFO allocates only one percent of its annual budget of \$1,641,516 toward ocean management.

The Conservatives need not look far to find a commitment to good ocean health. The City of Ottawa is now farmed salmon free, as is the University of Ottawa thanks to food service supplier Compass Group Canada who no longer provide open net-cage farmed salmon. A practical response to this market demand and the wild salmon crisis is for the government to partner with industry and the Province of B.C. to accelerate the demonstration of closed containment. Living Oceans is urging the government to make this important investment. ■



40,000 Atlantics ESCAPE

Living Oceans' Salmon Farm Campaign Local Coordinator Will Soltau knew something was up when he answered a call on October 24 from a gillnetter who'd been fishing for chum salmon on the north shore of Malcolm Island. The fisherman had caught several large Atlantic salmon. The fish, averaging 4.7 kilos, turned out to be escapees from Marine Harvest's farm at Port Elizabeth near Gilford Island in the beleaguered Broughton Archipelago.

The Atlantics were just a handful of the 40,000 that swam away from their open net-cage pen through holes in the net discovered by divers on October 21. Not only will these escaped fish compete with wild B.C. salmon for food, but the hungry Atlantics, deprived of feed pellets dispensed in the pens, will prey on small wild Pacific fish, including wild salmon.

On October 25, Will dissected some of the escaped Atlantics caught by Sointula gillnetters.

"We came across a partially digested wild juvenile salmon," Will said. "After 35 years of experience cleaning salmon, I can say without a doubt that the juvenile wild salmon had been eaten by the Atlantic salmon the same day as it was caught by the gillnetter. We also found bones from another fish in the stomach of that same Atlantic that were more completely digested. While we may have found juvenile wild salmon in only one farmed fish in 20, not only does this demonstrate that escaped farmed salmon have the ability to capture and consume available resources and survive in the wild, but it illustrates another level of risk to our wild Pacific fish stocks from open net-cage farming."

Escaped farm salmon have already been found in more than 80 B.C. river systems and populations of feral juvenile Atlantic salmon have been discovered at three locations in B.C. If the industry persists in using open net-cages, escapes are inevitable. Grieg Seafoods is one of the three Norwegian corporations that own 90 percent of all farms in B.C. This year they lost over 132,000 fish in a single escape from a Norwegian farm. Earlier in October the Norwegian government reported a 380 percent increase in escapes from open net-cage fish farms over this time last year. Last year, over 111,000 farmed salmon escaped from farms in B.C., the fourth highest number since the province began tracking escapes in 1987; now we can add another 40,000 in the latest event.

"This is a major financial loss to the company, although probably compensated by insurance, and another blow to the health of our marine ecosystems and wild salmon populations. And there is no compensation for the public's loss. Closed containment could have prevented this," said Will.

As the federal government assumes control of salmon farming in B.C., the move away from provincial management provides new opportunity for salmon farms to transition from the harmful net-cages. Living Oceans, and our partners in the Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform, are encouraging Fisheries and Oceans Canada, industry and both the federal and provincial governments to invest in closed containment pilot programs. In the interim, governments must refuse to issue any new net-cage licenses, close five key farms on the Fraser River sockeye migration route in the Wild Salmon Narrows, and develop a transition plan to shift the industry to more sustainable production. ■

TOP: Will Soltau holds up an escaped Atlantic salmon. Its stomach held partially digested wild juvenile salmon.
BOTTOM: 92 percent of B.C.'s salmon farms are owned by three Norwegian multinational corporations.

SAY NORWAY
to uncontained salmon farms

FarmedAndDangerous.org



Closed containment could reduce and/or eliminate:

- solid waste from the farms getting into the ocean
- contamination of the area under the tanks
- escapes
- marine mammals drowning in predator nets
- disease and parasite (like sea lice) transfer between wild and farmed fish
- the need for antibiotics and chemical treatments of the fish

coming

The YMCA is sponsoring two Youth Eco internships with Living Oceans Society.

Tavi Parusel—Joining our Vancouver office is intern Tavi Parusel, a young filmmaker who is passionate about creating films that inspire, motivate and move people. Tavi graduated from the Capilano University Documentary Program in June, and was one of the volunteer videographers on the Finding Coral Expedition. Tavi also enjoys sailing, surfing, rock climbing, soccer and hiking.

Katie Terhune—Our second intern, Katie, will be working in Sointula as our new Oceans and Climate Change Assistant. Katie is a Vancouver Island local and West Coaster through and through. She has spent much of her life in, on, or just nearby the ocean. Katie holds a Bachelor of Science with Honours in Geography and a minor in Environmental Studies from the University of Victoria. She has spent much of her time working in the field on various projects including: wetland conservation, plant and wildlife surveys, fish habitat restoration, geological mapping, and as a Park Ranger. When not working, Katie can be found traveling the world or hiking, camping, or simply playing in B.C.'s great outdoors.

Lara Renehan—Lara Renehan returned in October from a year's maternity leave with her son, Owen. Lara, our Local Marine Planner in Sointula, is looking forward

having conversations with adults and finally going to a meeting about a marine planning process that is actually happening.

going

Heather Aldersey—Heather filled in for Lara until August when she left Sointula to continue her studies with a Master/PhD program in the Department of Special Education at the University of Kansas. Heather's goal is to provide support for families affected by intellectual disability in Africa, where she worked for several NGOs between 2004-2008.

James Gates—James Gates has moved on to other opportunities after a year and a half spreading the word about PNCIMA with the LOS Marine Planning Campaign.

Mathew Evans—GIS Technician Mathew Evans has shifted from LOS to doing mapping work for the B.C. Marine Conservation Analysis project, a collaborative project LOS is involved in. Mathew is helping to create an atlas of ecological values and human use of Canada's Pacific waters.

Candace Newman—After a very short time with the MPA campaign, Candace Newman moved on to Natural Resources Canada.



Tavi Parusel



Heather Aldersey



Katie Terhune



James Gates



Lara Renehan



Mathew Evans

CREATURE FEATURE

Tufted Puffin



Off the northwest end of Vancouver Island lies Triangle Island where in the summer, currents

from the deep bring cold, nutrient rich waters to the surface fuelling a food web rich in life. The waters teem with herring, sandlance and other small forage fish, drawing almost the entire Canadian population of 13 species of seabirds (2.2 million birds), including 90 percent of Canada's tufted puffins.

Each year 30,000 pairs of tufted puffins gather to breed on Triangle Island, burrowing into cliff edges, steep grassy slopes or in crevices in rocks to build their nests. Some pairs use their bills to dig a burrow five feet deep to lay their one egg. Puffins co-parent, sitting on the egg for about 45 days until it hatches in June. Then, both parents feed the chick several times a day, each adult delivering between five and 20 fish

at a time. During dives that usually last about 30 seconds, the puffin's raspy tongue holds fish against spines on the palate, while it opens its beak to catch more fish. Also on the chicks' menu is shellfish, squid and octopus.

On the surface, puffins paddle with webbed feet, but underwater, they use their wings almost as if they were flying, using their feet as a rudder. The birds are excellent swimmers and are nicknamed the "penguins of the north," which is a bit misleading because puffins can also fly at over 80 km per hour. The puffin beats its wings up to 400 times a minute, so fast that they become a blur. Strong flying ability is essential to seabirds' survival; many will travel up to 100 km off shore in search of food for their chicks.

The adults themselves feed mainly on sand lance which makes them highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Sand lance are small temperature

continued on next page



LEFT: Puffin in winter plumage. ABOVE: Puffin in summer plumage. Once the breeding season is over, the adults lose their bright facial markings and the gaudy orange sheaths on their bills and return to the open ocean where they ride the waves of the North Pacific, usually on the outer coast of Vancouver Island.

Tufted Puffin *continued*

sensitive fish that live in the cool waters of the sea floor. As ocean temperatures increase, the sand lance move further out to sea, or deeper on the continental shelf. This means that the puffins must travel farther and use more energy to find food.

The sea surface temperature off the coast of British Columbia has been warmer than normal for the past 20 years. Currently, Triangle Island has the densest congregation of breeding seabirds in the eastern North Pacific Ocean, south of Alaska. If the warming trend continues, however, Triangle Island could become unsuitable as a puffin breeding site. This

warming corresponds with drastically decreased growth and survival rates of puffin nestlings and their survival rate after they leave the nest. These decreases have been attributed to shortages of readily available food for adults to feed nestlings and for the youngsters, who cannot fly as far from the nests to forage as adults.

In 1994, the B.C. government established the Cape Scott Provincial Park, which protected the land of the Scott Islands. Now, with seabirds facing the threat of declining fish caused by changes in the ocean temperature, it is more crucial than ever to create a marine protected area around the island group. Although a protected area will not address the effects of climate change, it could help mitigate the damage by reducing other threats to seabird survival, such as the pollution that comes from nesting near a busy shipping route, and being caught in fishing nets.

The Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) is working to establish a type of marine

protected area called a Marine Wildlife Area (MWA) that would protect the ocean environment around the islands, as well as the nesting grounds. Because this MWA is the first marine area designated under the Canada Wildlife Act, progress was slow, then it stalled due to funding shortages and cross jurisdictional complications. Living Oceans Society is working with other environmental organizations and CWS to re-invigorate the planning and implementation of the Scott Islands MWA. ■



Triangle Island is an Ecological Reserve in the Scott Island group, about 45 km off the northwest tip of Vancouver Island.

to LOS

Every dollar you donate to LOS is \$2 for the fish

A generous supporter has challenged us to raise \$150,000 to protect the ocean. If we meet this challenge, our friend will match the donations, providing up to \$300,000 for ocean conservation.

YES!

Support Living Oceans Society

1 Donate directly to Living Oceans Society, (if you do not require a tax receipt).

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2 Donate to Oceans Fund at Tides Canada Foundation if you would like a tax receipt (min \$50).

By cheque or credit card: please fill out this form. Cheques must be payable to TIDES CANADA FOUNDATION-OCEANS FUND. Please note if you would like to make a one time or monthly donation. Monthly donors will receive annual tax receipts.

Online: www.livingoceans.org/donate.

The Oceans Fund is a special fund set up at Tides Canada Foundation to support the charitable work of Living Oceans Society. Tax receipts will be issued by Tides Canada Foundation within six weeks of receipt. For more information about Tides Canada Foundation visit www.tidescanada.org.

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 - \$ _____ each month OR \$ _____ once.

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