

# rising tide

Healthy Oceans. Healthy Communities.

www.livingoceans.org

**SPRING 2009** 



#### **EXPEDITION SETS SAIL IN JUNE**

iving Oceans Society is excited to announce the launch of our Finding Coral Expedition, set to begin on World Oceans Day, June 8th. The expedition will set sail in the M.V. Cape Flattery to search for deep water corals in Hecate Strait and the Queen Charlotte Basin. Two Deep Worker submarines will be piloted by our blue ribbon science team, who will travel to depths up to 500 metres to document evidence of corals, associated species, and damage from human impacts.

The Finding Coral Expedition is the first of its kind in B.C.: an expedition specifically designed to study deep water corals and document threats to their well-being.

Many of you have followed our efforts to protect B.C.'s deep water corals since 2004, when we conducted an analysis of bottom trawl observer data and mapped out locations where the most coral was coming up as bycatch in trawl nets. You responded by writing Canada's Fisheries Minister asking for these areas to be closed to bottom

trawling. We took a trawl net to Ottawa and displayed it on Parliament Hill. Decision-makers started to take notice.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) responded with a scientific review that acknowledged for the first time in Canada that deep sea habitat must be protected from fishing practices which contact the seafloor. They have also drafted a policy that is intended to protect habitat such as corals. On paper at least, our government is poised to act, but one thing is still missing.

Very little research exists on B.C.'s deep sea corals, and without evidence of their location, protection is impossible. Because DFO is not in a position to gather the evidence any time soon, we have decided to kick-start the research project ourselves. After over a year of planning, we are now ready to launch the Finding Coral Expedition.

We will document our findings each day, and have created a website for you to watch the expedition unfold. Once we begin diving in June, we'll update the website daily with undersea You Tube videos and photos of our findings, and dispatches from our science team. In the mean time, please visit www.findingcoral.com and meet the science team, see photos of our ship, and refresh your memory about deep sea corals and the threats they face in B.C. Join us on-line in June and together we'll explore the wonders of B.C.'s deep ocean.



info www.findingcoral.com

RIGHT: LOS Executive Director Jennifer Lash will be piloting a mini sub to learn more about B.C.'s mysterious deep sea corals. CENTRE: Tom Shirley of Texas A&M University is one of the scientists who will dive 500 meters below the surface to study B.C.'s coral forests. LEFT: A bamboo coral discovered on the Warwick Seamount just outside of B.C.'s Exclusive Economic Zone.



#### Letter from the Executive Director

arlier this month I learned how to drive a submarine. After a few sessions in the classroom and an orientation of how the subs work, I tentatively climbed into the sub and shut the hatch. A crane lifted me from a pier and placed the sub delicately in the ocean and I submerged into the bright emerald green of the Pacific Ocean. It was fantastic!

I learned how to drive a sub because on June 8, Living Oceans Society is launching our Finding Coral Expedition, a two week journey to the waters off the North Coast of B.C. to learn about the deep sea corals that are such an important part of our ocean.

Deep sea corals come in many shapes and sizes. With names such as red tree coral, bamboo coral and bubblegum coral, these spectacular creatures look like plants, but they are actually animals. Corals provide homes for crabs, shrimp and rockfish, and research from around the world shows that corals play an important role in our marine ecosystem.

Unfortunately, corals are also at risk. Destructive fishing gear, such as the bottom trawling gear used to catch ground fish, destroys corals with weighted nets that are dragged across the ocean floor. Corals can live to be thousands of years old and it can take decades for them to grow back, if they grow back at

Very little research has been done on deep sea corals in British Columbia and, as a result, the corals are virtually unprotected. Living Oceans Society wants to change this. By leading a team of scientists on a research expedition to the bottom of the sea, we believe we can gather the information and samples needed to learn more about corals and ensure they are protected from harmful fishing practices.

Deep sea corals have been out of sight for thousands of years. This summer, Living Oceans Society is going to the ocean depths so we can share these spectacular creatures with you. Everyday we will send reports from the field to the expedition web site www.findingcoral.com. That's where you can see videos from the deep, maps showing where we're diving, and reports from the scientists about these deep sea corals that have never been seen before. We hope you come along for the ride.

Sincerely,

Jennyer Lash

Jennifer Lash **Executive Director** 



Sign up to receive Rising Tide and our e-newsletter, Oceans Update, with articles on the issues affecting our oceans and coastal communities.

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sign up online at www.livingoceans.org/newsletters/

mail your postal address to us: **Living Oceans Society** PO Box 320 Sointula, BC Canda VON 3E0

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.

EDITOR: Geoff Gilliard. CONTRIBUTORS: Jennifer Lash, Catherine Stewart, Candace Newman, Dorthea Hangaard, Oonagh O'Connor, Carrie Robb, Jennifer Adams, John Driscoll and Geoff Gilliard. LAYOUT AND DESIGN: Beyond Expectations Communication & Design Solutions. copyright: Living Oceans Society, 2009. Rising Tides is published twice annually. Printed on paper made with 100% PC recycled fiber content using non-polluting wind-generated energy. Certified by SmartWood for FSC standards. Green Seal Certified.

#### INSIDE

Pipeline gets \$100 million ...3

Take Action ...3

Letter from the Marine Protected Areas Campaign Manger ...4

Eat Your Sushi and Save it Too ...5

LOS in Ottawa ...5

Wave Reviews: Sea Sick ...6

PNCIMA Launch ...6

New Staff ...7

Support LOS ...7

### Pipeline from tar sands to Kitimat gets \$100 million for sales pitch

nbridge is stepping up its efforts to sell northern B.C. communities on the benefits of its Northern Gateway oil pipelines. The energy giant has amassed \$100 million to push through the latest version of its \$4 billion scheme to send crude from Alberta's tar sands to the coast, and bring condensate from tankers to the tar sands. The money has been raised by selling guaranteed first rights to use the pipeline to Alberta oil producers and Asian oil refiners.

Missing from the Enbridge sales pitch is what will happen with the crude oil once it reaches the proposed pipeline's end in Kitimat. In case you hadn't heard, 525,000 barrels of oil per day will be loaded onto oil tankers which will then thread their way down Douglas Channel to the Inside Passage. That works out to about 225 loaded, massive oil tankers per year.

Although Enbridge promises it will "strive to adopt the best practices found anywhere in the world," navigating 60 meter wide oil tankers through the storm tossed, rock strewn entrance passages to Douglas Channel is an enormously risky proposition. The reality is, major oil tanker accidents resulting in significant environmental damage happen approximately 3.5 times per year worldwide. B.C. residents know that tanker accidents can occur and the potential for devastating impacts on our coast is cause for great concern.

Enbridge's next step is to file a project proposal with the National Energy Board and Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency in June 2009. If the Harper Conservatives follow through with their plans, the Environmental Assessment process could be significantly weakened (see "LOS in Ottawa" on p5). The two federal government agencies will assess the pipeline project through something called a "Joint Panel Review." The review will be a structured process attended by lawyers and academics. The formal nature of the hearings is not conducive to input from the people who live along the pipelines' and tankers' proposed routes.

Living Oceans Society believes that the government is getting ahead of itself by reviewing the Enbridge

S 100

Pitch

Rick Steiner

Rick Steiner

Party Concerning

To P LEFT: Oil tanker traffic would transport crude oil 140km up Douglas Channel to Kitimat.

RICHT: Proposed tanker routes through Hecate Strait and the Inside Passage.

ships and container vessels.

info www.livingoceans.org/spillfreecoast

heavy" weather route

Gateway project before it has asked Canadians whether they are willing to tolerate oil tankers moving along the B.C. coast. There is, after all, the 37 year old moratorium on oil tankers in coastal waters to consider. The last time the federal government considered allowing oil tankers to enter into coastal waters was in the 1970s when the federal government held an independent public review under the oversight of Dr. Andrew Thompson. That review looked at the environmental, social, and navigational impacts that tankers would have on the coast. When the hearings were adjourned, Dr. Thompson and the federal government agreed that if a tanker port proposal

was reactivated, then the independent public inquiry would be reactivated as well.

BOTTOM LEFT: To illustrate how oil spills from shipping accidents would affect

ecosystems and communities on the North Coast of B.C., Living Oceans Society

has enhanced its online oil spill model to include oil spill scenarios from cruise

With a discouraging lack of democratic process, Ottawa appears to be entertaining Enbridge's proposal that could change the face of our coast permanently, without even asking British Columbians if they would tolerate massive oil tankers in our northern coastal waters. A series of polls in 2006 found that three out of four British Columbians support a ban on tankers in B.C.'s Inside Passage. Perhaps that is why Ottawa is reluctant to seek British Columbians' opinion on the moratorium.

Take action!

Join Living Oceans Society in calling on the Government of Canada to hold a full public independent inquiry to determine public opinion about allowing tankers on the B.C. coast.

www.livingoceans.org/programs/energy/action.aspx



#### **Letter from the Marine Protected Areas Campaign Manager**

Hello. My name is Candace Newman and I am the new Marine Protected Areas Campaign Manager with Living Oceans Society. Last vear. I lived in Zanzibar.

Tanzania and got involved in a number of really interesting projects that focused on protecting marine resources. Similar to British Columbia, the marine resources along the coast of Zanzibar are of great interest to a number of different people: commercial and recreational fishermen, divers, whale-watchers, and recreational boaters.

In Zanzibar, the more experienced fishermen spend days out at sea catching commercially important fish, while the less experienced ones stay closer to shore and use hand lines to collect reef fish. When the tide is low, local women wade out into the tidal flats and collect molluscs and then sell them to family and friends. Throughout the day, dive boats zoom back and forth across the reef bringing divers to popular dive sites where they see brilliantly coloured sea fans, corals and myriad fish.

A tool that is increasingly used to manage these multiple activities in the water is Marine Protected Areas (MPA), an area of water that is identified and then protected by regulating part or all of the enclosed environment for specific purposes. In Menai Bay, Zanzibar, a community-driven MPA resulted in an area being divided into smaller parts, and then community members collectively assigned permissible marine activities in each part. The result was an immediate recovery of some of the most damaged shoreline features.

Like many coastal islands throughout the world, Zanzibar is challenged with balancing marine resource conservation and use. One local NGO, the Jambiani Marine and Beach Conservation, came up with a great idea. Last December, they motivated the island's fishermen to reduce pressure on the coral reef by entering a race. Not just any race, but a sailing race in which fishermen had to use their own boats and crew, and sail for up to four hours from the shore to the coral reef and back. The purpose was to celebrate the value of their local marine resources by racing instead of fishing.

The event was a huge success. Thousands of villagers cheered as each boat returned to shore, and the winning boat received a small cash award. Afterwards, the organizers spoke to the crowd about marine resource sustainability. The race was so successful it will be held again this year.



to reduce pressure on marine ecosystems. Just as the fishermen in Zanzibar learned the value of sustainability after the race, the fishermen of B.C. are becoming increasingly aware of the value of no-take zones (also known as Marine Reserves) in supporting the health and productivity of our oceans. The purpose of a no-take zone is to provide the fish with opportunities to grow and reproduce. When fish are protected for a period of time, their size and number increase and 'spill over' into adjacent areas.

The benefits of no-take areas and MPAs are immense,

for both the fish and those who depend upon them.

The Zanzibar sailing race parallels the efforts in B.C.

Here at the Living Oceans Society, I look forward to working with government, First Nations and others who wish to implement MPAs and Marine Reserves, tools that bring benefits to both the environment and to local communities. Management of our ocean resources is critical now more than ever, so let's work together and ensure that both present and future generations have the opportunity to experience the magic and wonder of British Columbia's marine environment.

Sincerely,

Cardace Newman

**Candace Newman** 

Zanzibari fishermen race to the finish line to support environmental protection.

#### arine Protected Areas (MPAs) in B.C.

- Less than 2% of B.C.'s coastal waters are MPAs
- The largest MPA in B.C. is the Bowie Seamount which measures 6,092 km<sup>2</sup>. This is equivalent to 1.8% of of the Great Barrier Reef in Australia.
- The total area of Canada's Pacific coast that is covered by a no-take area (also known as a marine reserve) is 3,574.7 km<sup>2</sup> or 0.8%.
- Commercial fishing occurs in portions of 98% of the MPAs in B.C.
- In B.C., a protected area is defined as inalienable: the land and resources may not be sold, and no industrial extraction of nonrenewable resources or development is permitted. Unfortunately, this definition says nothing about destruction to the site.
- From the time a marine area is designated for protection to full agreement from all marine users on a set of regulations is approximately five years.

#### **ATTENTION SUSHI LOVERS**



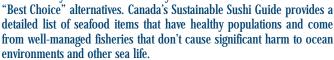
## save them too!

SeaChoice launches Canada's first sustainable sushi guide

Canada's first sustainable sushi guide helps consumers protect threatened marine species while satisfying their cravings for delicious sushi. Developed by SeaChoice (run by Living Oceans Society in partnership with other leading environmental groups) the wallet-sized guide features sustainability information for seafood found on sushi menus by ranking items as green (Best Choice), yellow (Some Concerns) or red (Avoid).

"This guide empowers consumers to make decisions that are better for our oceans, without sacrificing their taste for healthy, delicious seafood," said Shauna MacKinnon, Living Oceans Society Markets Campaigner. "What we're telling Canadians is that by making wiser seafood choices, they can enjoy their sushi and help our oceans too."

Sushi restaurants often offer species—including bluefin tuna and farmed salmon—that are harvested unsustainably. But there are many



The guide offers sushi chefs and diners alike great alternatives for their favourite menu items, including local albacore tuna and Dungeness crab, as well as several new ones like Arctic char or sablefish.



Download or order the wallet card at www.seachoice.org/page/guides



# LOS in Ottawa

#### **Conservatives Slash Environmental Assessment**

By Jennifer Adams LOS Government Relations Coordinator in Ottawa

Without consulting the public, the Harper Conservative government quietly slipped environmentally harmful regulatory changes into the 2009 budget, including changes to the Navigable Waters Protection Act. With even more devastating implications, a government document obtained by environmental groups indicates the government plans to introduce a new and significantly weaker **Environmental Assessment Act as early as** this spring. All of the triggers for the environmental assessment act, including the Fisheries Act, are to be removed. Environmental assessment plays a key role in sustainable development in Canada. It allows public participation in a transparent, informed decision-making process.

**Federal** environmental assessment provides critical information—and sometimes the only assessment review—on project proposals including their potential negative effects and possible alternative means of carrying out the project. While there is a real need to improve the current process by addressing cumulative impacts development, increasing transparency, efficiency and timely implementation, it at least provides some measure of assessment and public input.

The Harper government's slash and burn approach will affect many ocean-based industries and inevitably, our oceans' overall health. Exempting open net-cage salmon fish farms from the environmental assessment process is just one example of the government's failure to consider long

term economic sustainability in their attempts to grasp at a short term political win. Currently, new fish farm applications go through a federal environmental assessment screening. Even this minimal and flawed safety net would be removed if the Conservatives' plans are implemented.

The Harper government used the Budget Implementation Act to force through radical changes to the environmental protection regime for Canada's waterways. These changes allow the Minister of Transport, without consultation or prior notice, to change the level of environmental protection of a waterway. The Minister can now create classes of waterways to which environmental protection laws no longer apply, and to decide arbitrarily if a proposed "work", such as a dam, boom, or causeway, is "minor," consequently exempting such "minor works" from environmental assessment.

Living Oceans Society is among dozens of organizations across Canada telling the feds that economic stimulus and environmental protection should go hand in hand. If the federal government walks away from protecting our environment, the provincial governments do not have the jurisdiction to go it alone.

Our country needs an open and transparent review of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act and improvements to the federal environmental assessment process. In dismantling federal environmental assessment, the Harper government is destroying a cornerstone of sustainable development in Canada with potentially devastating social, economic and environmental consequences.

#### **Wave Reviews**

# Sea Sick

#### The Global Ocean in Crisis by Alanna Mitchell

No matter where you live on this Earth, every second breath you take comes from oxygen produced by plankton in the seas. Every third molecule of carbon dioxide you exhale is taken up by the ocean. Your every action or will profoundly affect the ocean - your life support system.

In Alanna Mitchell's new book, Sea Sick, she poignantly describes how human actions are having a measureable effect on the ocean. We are changing ocean salinity, temperature, volume, and function. From the deepest ocean basins to the surface sea currents, human impact is evident.

Mitchell relates her journey across five continents over two and a half years, investigating the state of the oceans, answering questions about what is really happening in the ocean and the outlook for its future. Speaking with internationally renowned scientists in Australia, the United States, Puerto Rico, Plymouth, Panama, Canada, Spain, China, and Tanzania, she

describes startling evidence that the ocean is changing in a way and at a speed it never has before.

Mitchell's journey begins in the Gulf of Mexico with a group of American scientists

investigating the 'blob', a thick and dense, constantly moving layer of water that contains almost no oxygen. No oxygen means no fish and massive die-offs of crustaceans. What is startling is that this dead zone is no anomaly, the Gulf of Mexico low-oxygen zone is only one of several around the globe that are expanding and staying in areas for months at a time.

On the second leg of Mitchell's journey, she explores ocean acidification with scientists in Puerto Rico. The scientists explain that the ocean is becoming



increasingly acidic, and that the creatures that live in it are extremely sensitive to pH changes. Mitchell makes this point all too clear: if the pH in our bodies changed as much as it has already in the global ocean, we'd be dead.

Mitchell also travels to Halifax, where she investigates changes in fish populations, to China where marine management is challenged by the nation's rapidly expanding population, and to Tanzania where ocean health has direct impacts on the nation as a whole.

Despite these vital signs that point to an emerging ocean crisis, Sea Sick concludes with a message of hope. Engulfed in a submersible with 13-cm thick walls, Mitchell descends to the bottom of the Atlantic and witnesses unidentified fish, giant squids, crabs, black lobsters, marine snow, and brightly coloured corals and sponges. Mitchell writes eloquently that there are still brilliant, thriving, and healthy places in the ocean, and that there is still time maintain our life support system. Hope will propel us to action, she writes, and that is exactly what the ocean needs right now.

# NCIMA Laur

The first formal Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area (PNCIMA) Forum, hosted by DFO and coastal First Nations, was held on March 26-27 in Richmond, B.C. The marine planning and conservation conference attracted a full house crowd of 300 people from coastal communities and First Nations, marine industries, environmental organizations and representatives from all levels of government. The forum was the biggest event of its kind ever held in Canada and is seen by Living Oceans Society as a positive first step in a federally led planning process for B.C.'s Central and North Coast that has been a long time coming.

For several years Living Oceans along with our ENGO partners have prodded the federal government to fulfill their commitment and get the PNCIMA process moving. We have insisted that the most effective way to protect and manage PNCIMA is to work with people who live and work there.

During the forum, however, many participants voiced their concern that the event was held in Richmond rather than

in the Pacific North Coast, meaning that PNCIMA residents had to travel a considerable distance to attend. The PNCIMA Steering Committee, made up of First Nations and federal government representatives, said that in the future they will organize regional meetings. There are also legitimate concerns about funding and capacity to carry out this ambitious project. Living Oceans will continue to put pressure on Ottawa to allocate sufficient resources to protect and plan for healthy oceans.

#### **Next Steps**

The PNCIMA Steering Committee's next steps are to use the forum feedback to come up with options to develop the stakeholder engagement aspects of the marine planning process. The committee's short and medium term activities include:

- Developing a stakeholder engagement strategy
- · Publishing forum notes and discussions on the www.pncima.org website
- Establishing principles and agreement to move forward with a Marine Transportation and Working Group, and how this working group relates to the larger PNCIMA planning model

PNCIMA (pronounced pin-SEE-ma) stands or the Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area, an 88,000 sq. km. area of ocean that supports an abundance of marine life. PNCIMA has been identified by Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) as a priority region for marine planning as part of Canada's Oceans Action Plan.

- Developing community level meetings
- Finalization of the Gwaii Haanas National Marine Conservation Area process.

The next full forum will be held in the spring of 2010. Between now and then more feedback will be gathered at regional stakeholder meetings.

For more in depth information about PNCIMA and the perspective of Living Oceans and our ENGO partners,



info visit: www.PncimaMatters.ca



# new staff



Kim Wright Marine Planning Campaign Manager

has worked as a facilitator of multi-stakeholder consultations for a number of environmental and land use planning initiatives in B.C. She holds a BSc in Biology from SFU and an MA in Environmental Conflict Analysis and Management from Royal Roads. Since 2003 Kim has worked with Dovetail Consulting and Round River Canada coordinating and managing a number of environmental projects. Prior to that, she

worked with the David Suzuki Foundation on their Marine and Salmon Forests campaigns. Originally from Prince Rupert and a lifelong West Coaster, Kim's passion is marine conservation. She has had extensive experience with B.C. First Nations government, scientists, industry and community organizations.



**Heather Aldersey** Local Marine Planner

grew up in Port McNeill on northern Vancouver Island. Upon graduation from North Island Secondary School, she pursued her Undergraduate Degree in International Relations and French Literature at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Heather has worked, volunteered, or studied in France, Tanzania, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Ethiopia with everything from social enterprise to education and street

youth, to UN peacekeeping and reconciliation after war to sustainable agriculture. Heather couldn't resist the call of home and has returned to her roots to work for LOS. In her spare time, Heather can be found spending time with family, reading all the books she can get her hands on, attempting to cook organically, and learning to speak Swahili and Lingala.



**Jen Adams**Government Relations Coordinator

joined Living Oceans Society in the fall of 2008 during the most tumultuous time in federal politics Ottawa has experienced in decades. Her own experience working for a parliamentarian cultivated a deep appreciation for the value of effective environmental advocacy. The actions of former MPs Clifford Lincoln, Karen Kraft Sloan and the late Charles Caccia have inspired the pursuit of a career in environmental advocacy. Jen shares Clifford's belief that:

perseverance in our convictions and values, wisdom born of knowledge and the modesty of listening to and learning from others, can achieve true sustainable progress.

From her graduate studies in Geography at McGill University to the present, Jen's work has focused on protecting wild spaces, species and a healthy environment for all.

When not engaged in the democratic process, Jen can be found on her skis, bikes, in her canoes or otherwise self propelled in the wilderness or in and around Ottawa with her family.



#### **Candace Newman**

Marine Protected Areas Campaign Manager

Candace holds a Ph.D. in remote sensing and marine protected area development from the University of Waterloo and conducted her Ph.D. research on Bunaken Island in Indonesia. She is originally from Windsor, Ontario, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree with a specialization in Environmental Resource Management from the University of Windsor, and completed her Master of Environmental Studies degree in Geography

from the University of Waterloo. For both of her graduate degrees, Candace has worked in Canada, Belize, Fiji, Indonesia, and Zanzibar to integrate both biophysical information from satellite-based habitat maps and local ecological knowledge to advance Marine Protected Area processes dependent on this information.

If there is magic on this planet, it is in the water. —Loren Eiseley





Kate Willis has traded her role as LOS' Marine Planning Campaign Manager to work with DFO. Good luck, Kate. During her years with LOS, Kate worked tirelessly to get the PNCIMA marine planning process off the ground. Her organizational skills and sense of humour will be sorely missed.



Finn Canadensis has left LOS where he worked as Assistant to the Executive Director to finish writing his Ph.D. thesis in architecture for the University of Melbourne.



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

A generous supporter wants to help Living Oceans Society succeed for another 10 years and has challenged us to raise \$150,000 by June 2009. If we meet this challenge our friend will match the donations dollar-for-dollar providing up to \$300,000 for ocean conservation.

Please make a donation to Living Oceans Society so that we will be able to put \$300,000 towards protecting the ocean.

See the back cover for donation options.

#### **Support Living Oceans Society**

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

**By cheque:** Please make cheque payable to Living Oceans Society and mail to: Living Oceans Society Box 320 Sointula, BC VON 3EO.

By credit card: Please call 250-973-6580 and provide us with your information.

**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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Living Oceans Society

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