



# rising tide

Healthy Oceans. Healthy Communities.

[www.livingoceans.org](http://www.livingoceans.org)



SPRING 2008

## DUO FROM DOWN UNDER SHARE GREAT BARRIER REEF TIPS



Australians Graham Scott (left) and Russell Butler (right) came to B.C.'s coast to share their stories of marine planning on the Great Barrier Reef. Neither had seen snow before. Graham asked if B.C. stood for "bloody cold."

People from Skidegate to Sointula turned out in droves to hear two speakers from Australia share their experiences from rezoning the Great Barrier Reef (GBR), one of the worlds' best examples of community engagement in action. Russell Butler is an Aboriginal Traditional Owner who successfully negotiated the management of his peoples' coastal territory with the Australian government. Graham Scott is chair of the Capricorn Coast Local Marine Advisory Committee that worked with government to have the reef in their area rezoned so that it met differing stakeholders' needs.

Living Oceans Society brought the "Down Under Duo" to northern Vancouver Island and B.C.'s Central Coast from March 25 to April 4 to tell their stories including the successes and challenges that they faced as community residents, First Nations and fishermen working to rezone the Great Barrier Reef.

"There's not much point in fighting about the piece of the pie when you can work to make the pie bigger," was one message that Graham Scott brought from half way around the world. Scott got involved early in the GBR rezoning as an "honest broker," connecting stakeholders to planners and dispelling mistrust and misinformation. "We knew the area we were working with and we knew the ground rules," said Scott. "If you have a field and know the rules of the game then you can play."

When the Australian government rezoned the GBR Marine Park it decided that 20 percent of the ocean would be set aside as "green zones" or "no take" areas where the only commercial activity allowed is tourism. No take areas help restore populations of fish and marine species whose numbers have dropped.

"We were able to get everyone in our area to find common ground that they could agree on," Scott recalled. "Think of it as giving up one of five areas that you currently use, or maybe two of five. No one group had to give up four areas while another group gave up one or none. It was fair."

"It's a good feeling to know we can go back there and know that it's our home—a place where we belong," Butler said. One of the greatest benefits for Butler's people is that their youth have employment as rangers in the park with the GBR Authority and capacity to enforce the rules.

Living Oceans Society has been working to raise awareness about the need for a marine plan in the Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area (PNCIMA) that includes the involvement of local communities and stakeholders. PNCIMA is a planning process that is being led by Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) in partnership with Coastal First Nations and the Province of B.C.●

"There's not much point in fighting about the piece of the pie when you can work to make the pie bigger."

"We invited Graham and Russell to come on tour because a marine planning process is getting underway on B.C.'s North and Central Coast," said Lara Renehan, Living Oceans' Local Marine Planner who hosted the presentations. "Even though we won't be finding Nemo here, there are definitely lessons that can be learned from the GBR rezoning experience. Russell and Graham told us that we can get a good result if everyone works together."



## Letter from the Executive Director

Normally, my kids and I make the trip to Ontario every year for a summer holiday. And every year Ben, my five year old nephew, bombards me with questions about the killer whales that visit Sointula and the surrounding waters every summer. Last summer, Ben's family came to visit us. You just can imagine how excited he was when he arrived on our island and, more importantly, in the home waters of the Northern Resident killer whales.

With great excitement I led my young nephew, brimming with anticipation, down the dock to the boat we had chartered for the day. We headed out on a warm and sunny day, taking in the eagles, seals and rocky shores as our boat skipped over the water.

And then we saw him. Dead ahead and swimming away from us was a lone male killer whale. His dorsal fin sliced gracefully through the water as he suddenly dove, turned around and began swimming towards our boat. Ben was mesmerized. He was living his dream.

As the whale swam beside the boat it felt like we could reach out and touch his magnificent dorsal fin. As he swam past we sadly said goodbye to the magnificent creature who, for a few short seconds, felt like a part of our family. When I looked at Ben I could see he was crying. His tears quickly turned to sobs that swelled to an outburst of pure, raw emotion. In those few seconds that whale had touched a part of Ben that nothing else could. He didn't want the whale to go... or he wanted to go with it.

So it was with great horror, two weeks later, that I told my family in Ontario that a barge towing logging equipment, including a fuel truck with 10,000 litres of diesel, had spilled in Robson Bight, the Ecological Reserve set up to protect the whales they had seen. An oil slick 14 km long spread across the reserve and at least 50 of the whales swam through the spilled diesel.

The staff at Living Oceans Society took charge and called for action. The federal government claimed that, in all likelihood, the equipment's fuel tanks imploded when they sank and all the diesel had been disbursed. Therefore, they said, the wreckage posed no further risk to the whales.

We did not like the odds and insisted that the Canadian and British Columbia governments inspect the wreckage to see if the fuel truck and a large container of hydraulic fuel remained intact. Working with our partners at Greenpeace Canada and OrcaLab, Living Oceans Society spread the word about the spill. People from around the world took action, convincing both governments to stage an underwater investigation. When the submersible went down to the ocean floor they found the fuel truck right away, upright and intact. There was absolutely no evidence to suggest that any fuel had leaked out. We had a ticking time bomb sitting at the bottom of the sea.

Again, we and our partners mobilized people around the world, asking them to insist that the federal and provincial governments remove the fuel truck and hydraulic fluid. Again the governments listened and last month they agreed that to share the costs of removing dangerous equipment from the bottom of Robson Bight. We could finally declare victory.

What Ben felt last summer as he watched the whale swim by the boat was the same pure, raw emotion that moved whale lovers around the world to take action to protect our killer whales. Living Oceans would like to thank everyone who made this happen and, as we move forward with renewed confidence that people can bring about positive change, we will continue to protect the ocean so that there will be whales around for the next five year old child that wants to live their dream.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Lash  
Executive Director



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

Send us your e-mail at [newsletter@livingoceans.org](mailto:newsletter@livingoceans.org)

or sign up online at [www.livingoceans.org/newsletters/](http://www.livingoceans.org/newsletters/)

or mail your postal address to:  
Living Oceans Society  
PO Box 320 Sointula, BC V0N 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 ~ Dorthea Hangaard, Kate Willis Ladell, Catherine Stewart, Shauna MacKinnon, Candace Picco, Jennifer Lash and Geoff Gilliard. | LAYOUT AND DESIGN ~ Beyond Expectations Communication & Design Solutions | COPYRIGHT Living Oceans Society, 2008. | Rising Tides is published twice annually.

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# COUNTDOWN CAMPAIGN

## Oceans Day Countdown Campaign aims to spur government to start Marine Planning in B.C.

No one questions the need for traffic lights, Do-Not-Enter signs or cross walks on city streets. It makes sense that cars aren't allowed to drive across playing fields, that paths near eroded cliff sides are fenced off, and that there are separate trails for cyclists and pedestrians.

We willingly accept the bylaws and zoning rules that make it possible for people to coexist in cities. So it may come as a surprise to learn that there is no comprehensive marine plan that manages the use of British Columbia's coastal waters, home to hundreds of industries and thousands of people and species that rely on the ocean for their well-being.

A significant portion of Canada's Pacific Ocean territory that we call home has been labeled by Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) as the Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area, or PNCIMA (pin-SEE-mah) for short.

DFO has said that they are committed to developing a marine use plan for PNCIMA, the Government of Canada has not provided the funding or leadership required to make it happen.

In response to this lack of action, Living Oceans Society, along with the David Suzuki Foundation and Sierra Club BC, launched a Countdown to Oceans Day Campaign called PNCIMA Watch [[www.PNCIMAwatch.ca](http://www.PNCIMAwatch.ca)]. The campaign calls on the government to start the PNCIMA planning process by June 8, Oceans Day 2008.

"The Government of Canada needs to rise to the occasion and improve the way our oceans are managed," says Kate Willis Ladell, Marine Planning and Protected Areas Campaign Manager. "A marine plan for PNCIMA would look at the entire region as a whole, unlike the current piecemeal approach where management occurs sector by sector. It would balance conservation needs with the needs and values of the people who work and live on the coast."•

Take *action!*

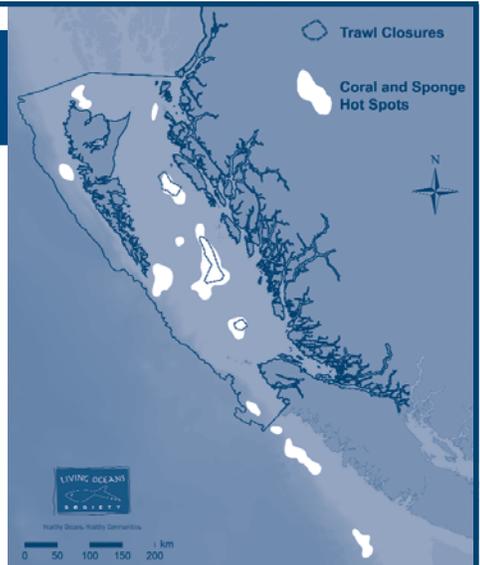
## Urge Canada to ACT ON MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

Start with interim protection of key areas under threat.

Go to

[www.livingoceans.org/programs/mpa/action.aspx](http://www.livingoceans.org/programs/mpa/action.aspx) to download a prewritten action letter to the Minister of Fisheries, or write the Minister in your own words on the issue outlined here.

- Canada made an international commitment under the Convention on Biological Diversity to establish a network of marine protected areas (MPAs) by 2012.
- Canada has committed to a marine planning process in the Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area (PNCIMA) that can make this happen.
- Living Oceans believes the Government of Canada must designate 12 interim protection areas for coral and sponge hot spots on B.C.'s coast.
- These underwater forests of the deep contribute to healthy oceans and fish stocks by providing food, shelter from prey, nurseries, and spawning areas for numerous species.
- By far the greatest threat to deep sea habitat in B.C. is a destructive fishing method known as bottom trawling. Trawlers drag weighted nets along the seabed, scraping it bare as they scoop up everything in their path. Any unintended species of corals, sponges or fish brought to the surface are called "bycatch" and are thrown overboard, dead or dying.
- PNCIMA contains nine of the 12 coral and sponge hot spots that should be off limits to bottom trawling. Protecting these 12 areas from bottom trawling would reduce the bycatch of identified corals and sponges by over 90 percent.



MAP: While four trawl closures have been implemented in B.C.'s globally unique Hexactinellid sponge reefs, the closures have proven to be too small and do not take into consideration our equally important coral forests.

## what are MARINE PROTECTED AREAS?

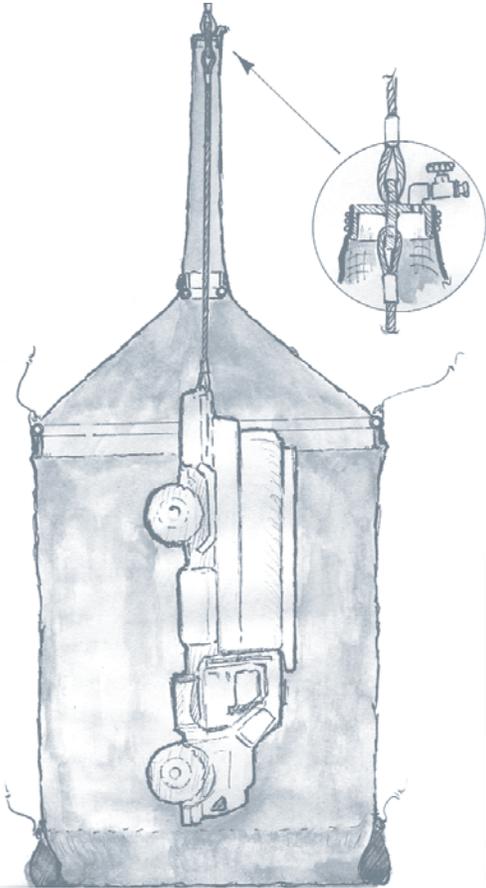
MPAs are areas of the ocean that are set aside to protect ecologically unique and sensitive habitats and/or areas of cultural or historical importance. MPAs allow rare and endangered species to recover, and protect habitat, spawning and rearing grounds. In several cases MPAs have resulted in an

increase in marine life and an improvement in the health of ecosystems both within and outside the protected areas. There is often also an improvement in the abundance of fish available for harvest outside the MPA.●

fact Less than 1% of B.C.'s coastal waters are protected.

ROBSON BIGHT UPDATE

# ON THE HORNS OF A DILEMMA



At the time of printing, the federal and provincial governments have committed to salvaging the sunken logging equipment from Robson Bight, however a request for proposals from potential contractors has yet to be posted. With each passing day the likelihood of a successful recovery operation prior to the return of the Northern Resident orcas becomes more remote.

The initial spill that caused a 14 km slick in Johnstone Strait last August may very well have been caused by four pieces of equipment that were crushed into each other as they came off the barge. That equipment contained over 2,000 litres of diesel. The sunken fuel truck, with its 10,000 litre cargo of diesel and six other pieces of fuel-laden logging equipment, are all resting on the seafloor, apparently intact.



And so the government is faced with a terrible dilemma: Is it better to remove the fuel truck at the beginning of the whale season, or should they postpone the recovery until November, after the whales have left? The first choice means a way must be found to keep the whales out of the area while the recovery operation is under way. The second option means devising a way to protect the whales from any slow leaks that develop—or from a complete spill—for over four months. And putting measures in place to protect the whales over their season in Robson Bight is very complex. Every day that passes increases the difficulties of the operation and therefore the level of risk involved.



Living Oceans Society is encouraging B.C.'s Ministry of the Environment to 'direct award' the recovery operation because of the urgent nature of the situation. A direct award would allow the Province to simply select a company with expertise to expedite their work plan and bypass the extended period of time typically required for awarding a contract.

Ecojustice Canada has found that a direct award is both legal and appropriate in emergency situations. And this is an emergency, if ever there was one. Living Oceans Society remains hopeful the provincial government will move quickly to minimize risk to the whales. If not, we will all be holding our breath this summer.

The Northern Residents orcas are unique in being the most studied and best known orca population in the world (along with the Southern Residents). Even so, they are listed as threatened under Canada's Species At Risk Act. The whales symbolize British Columbia to the rest of the world and deserve our best efforts at protection. ●

TOP LEFT: Nuytco Research, who conducted and filmed the underwater investigation, can cloak the fuel truck while it is being pulled to the surface so that if its tank leaks, the diesel is enclosed and can be safely removed from the ocean.

TOP RIGHT: If the fuel truck and other equipment leak it could be disastrous for Robson Bight and the orcas, already

listed as "threatened" under Canada's Species At Risk Act. © Rolf Hicker.

BOTTOM: Underwater video filmed during the Robson Bight investigation in December clearly shows the condition of the wrecked logging equipment, particularly the fuel truck that was filled with 10,000 litres of diesel when it sank.

# SWIMMING IN IT AT SCIENCE WORLD

**S**ustainable Fisheries researcher Candace Picco was “Swimming In It” at Roots & Shoots Youth for Action Workshop at Science World on April 8th. Candace facilitated a workshop at the event that drew 140 high school students from all over the Lower Mainland. Students got to choose from a number of socially and environmentally important topics including HIV/AIDS, species decline, climate change, marine conservation and many more.

Roots & Shoots is a program of the Jane Goodall Institute’s global youth action network.

Candace was there running a workshop on—what else?—issues in sustainable fisheries and local solutions. Students in her “Swimming In It” workshop learned about some extreme global examples of the most unsustainable ways to bring seafood from the oceans to our plates. Candace also showed the youth how to make better seafood choices.

Swimming In It workshopers decided that the best way to take action in their community was to look at the seafood that was being served in the cafeterias in their own high schools and perform a “seafood audit.”

To perform the audit, students were equipped with four questions to ask their seafood providers to judge the sustainability of the seafood served at their school:

- what species is it?
- is it farmed or wild caught?
- where was it farmed or caught?
- how was it farmed or caught?

The students will rate their cafeteria’s seafood sustainability by evaluating the answers against Seachoice’s Canada Seafood Guide ([www.seachoice.org](http://www.seachoice.org)).

The rating will allow the students to make recommendations to the school’s food provider about which seafood items they need to remove from their menu, which seafood items are good alternatives and where they can be found. Carrying sustainable seafood exclusively is an easy way for any business to help make a difference in our oceans.

The students’ ‘easy to achieve’ action plan can be implemented by other businesses such as supermarkets and restaurants and even at home.●



LOS’ Candace Picco (left) showed teenagers at the Roots & Shoots action workshop how to take action to help save our oceans.

## new staff



**Dorie Pesicka** joined LOS in January as our Donor Relations Coordinator. She has lived on Vancouver Island most of her life, growing up in a remote area called Jennis Bay. Dorie’s family has been a part of the Sointula fishing community for over 15 years.

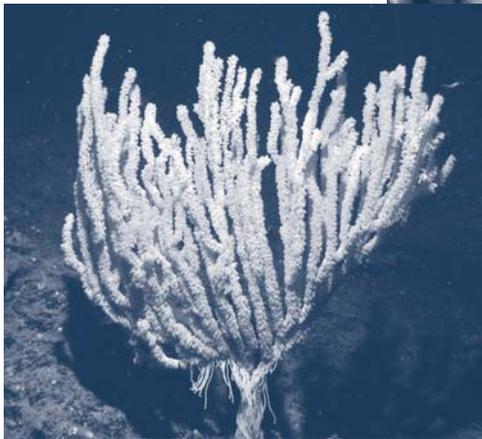
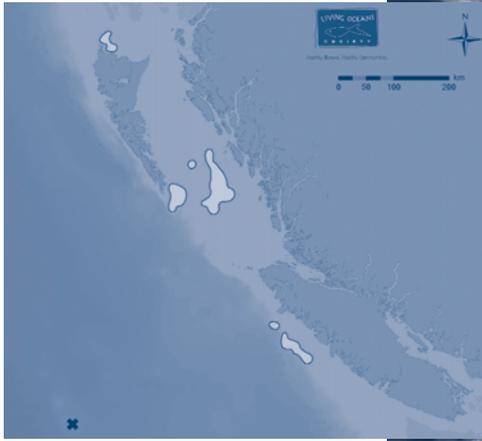
Dorie has a Diploma in Business Administration and is currently working towards a Degree in Commerce through distance education. She became a resident of Sointula in May 2007, when she and her partner purchased some property there. Dorie loves living by the ocean and breathing the fresh air of Sointula.



**Tiffany Hilman**, Markets Campaigner, has moved around a fair amount, but has always considered the west coast home. She most recently lived in Toronto for two years, where she earned a Master of Environmental Studies from York University. In her research she focused on forest policy in B.C., exploring her interests of biological conservation, ecological economics, and natural resource policy. Tiffany is now working to rally the support of chefs and retailers to encourage more sustainable salmon choices. In her spare time, she’s most likely hiking, cooking, camping, learning to sew, or simply enjoying the beach.

## CREATURE FEATURE

# B.C.'s mysterious deep water corals



ABOVE: A juvenile sharpchin rockfish takes refuge in these Gorgonian Red Tree (*Primnoa*) corals in Alaska. © Victoria O'Connell.

BOTTOM LEFT: A bamboo coral in 800 metres of water on Giacomini Seamount, Gulf of Alaska. Courtesy: NOAA.

TOP LEFT: Living Oceans has identified nine hot spots where the most deep sea corals were uprooted by bottom trawling. Setting these areas aside would reduce the bycatch of corals by over 90 percent. The "x" marks the Warwick Seamount, nicknamed "the Garden of Eden" by scientists who explored it in 2002.

Deep on the sea floor off of British Columbia's coast, groves of corals grow, reaching out their branches like leafless trees into the ink black water. Deep water corals discoveries in B.C. were recorded as early as 1915, when Red Tree corals were discovered in Chatham sound by halibut fishermen. The corals are usually found clinging to the sides of troughs and gullies and the steep slope of the continental shelf where they build colonies over hundreds of years. Some live more than three kilometres below the surface. Corals are carnivores, thousands of tiny creatures cemented together who work as a unit, using tentacles to filter zooplankton and scraps swept to them by ocean currents.

Deep sea corals, like all corals, provide fish with food, shelter them from prey, and serve as nurseries and spawning grounds for many species. Almost no

research has been done on B.C.'s corals. Much of what we know about deep water corals is deduced from U.S. studies and data from B.C.'s bottom trawl fishery. B.C. trawlers must carry onboard observers to record what is caught and what is discarded as "bycatch." Observers are not required to record corals and sponges, nor are they trained to identify them. But nonetheless, observers noted 295,000 kilos of corals and sponges were hauled to the surface, then thrown onboard by B.C.'s bottom trawling fleet between 1996 and 2002 (see map). Since this record is based on voluntary, not required, reporting the actual amount of coral bycatch is probably much higher.

In 2002 the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration visited the Warwick Seamount in the Pacific, just outside Canada's 200-mile exclusive economic zone. The scientists found the undersea

mountain so unique and rich in life that they called it "the Garden of Eden". In Alaska, studies have revealed deep water corals' importance to the ecosystem, providing habitat for rockfish, mackerel, halibut, rock sole, juvenile red king crab and several species of shrimp. Alaska deemed its corals so valuable that the state closed over 960,000 km<sup>2</sup> of the Aleutian Shelf to trawling. Washington, Oregon and California followed suit, permanently banning bottom trawling from nearly 777,000 square km of Pacific waters.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) has no plans to protect B.C.'s corals, which can take centuries to recover from trawling. Living Oceans Society has recommended that the government set aside nine coral protection areas to reduce bycatch.●

# Safeway Board urged to 'THINK PINK' and protect wild salmon



Nutrition Facts	
Wild salmon provide a vital source of food for 137 species.	
SPECIES	NUMBER
Aquatic Mammals including whales, dolphins, porpoises and sea lions	14
Birds including eagles, pelicans, teals and swans	69
Large Land Mammals including bears, wolves and deer	7
Small Land Mammals including mink, shrews, foxes and weasels	20
Turtles	2
Snakes	3
Salamanders	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>137</b>

LOS Markets Campaigner Shauna MacKinnon models the stylish "Dinner for two or dinner for sea lice?" apron, included in gift baskets sent to Safeway's Board of Directors.

In the lead up to Safeway's Board of Directors meeting in May, Living Oceans Society, as a member of the Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform (CAAR), is sending gift baskets to board members to remind them, pleasantly, that when Safeway buys B.C. farmed salmon it is killing our wild pink salmon.

## The gift basket contains:

- a 'think pink' invitation to protect wild pink salmon from extinction
- ice wine glazed, wild pink smoked salmon with an 'enjoy now, before it's gone forever' label
- the November 2007 issue of *Science* with the study on how wild pink salmon in B.C.'s Broughton Archipelago will be driven to extinction within four years if sea lice outbreaks on salmon farms continue
- a photo book portraying the beauty of the Pacific coast and the central role wild pinks play in holding this ecosystem together, the arrival of salmon farms, and the lethal impacts of sea lice to wild salmon
- a stylish 'dinner for two or dinner for sea lice?' apron
- a letter asking the Directors to support solutions that will protect our wild salmon by joining the 'Waitlist for Closed Containment Salmon'

The 'Waitlist for Closed Containment Salmon' is part of CAAR's effort to encourage the salmon farming industry to pursue the development of commercial scale closed containment.

Living Oceans Society, as part of the Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform, is working with Marine Harvest Canada to complete collaborative research on sea lice and on closed containment. Marine Harvest is the largest salmon farming company in the world and the largest operator on the B.C. coast, holding just over 50 percent of B.C.'s salmon farm licenses. We hope that our Think Pink gift baskets will help ensure Marine Harvest International advances the work being done in B.C.■

## Show answers communities' closed containment questions

To explain how communities stand to reap economic and environmental benefits from more sustainable salmon farms, Will Soltau of Living Oceans Society, and the Georgia Strait Alliance's Michelle Young have prepared a traveling presentation called *Closing in on Sustainable Salmon Farming*.

"We give examples of successfully growing salmon and other high market-value fish in closed containment systems, both internationally and in B.C.," says Will Soltau, LOS Local Salmon Farming Campaigner. "The presentation will inspire folks to look at lasting solutions to problems with the way salmon are farmed in B.C. today."

The show is available for interested groups such as fish and game clubs, local governments, First Nations and service clubs across Vancouver Island.

On April 7 Will and Michelle presented *Closing in on Sustainable Salmon Farming* to over 100 members of the Courtenay Fish and Game Protection Association in their new clubhouse on the banks of Comox Lake. More presentations are planned for Campbell River, Quadra Island, Tahsis, Port McNeill, Alert Bay and Sointula.

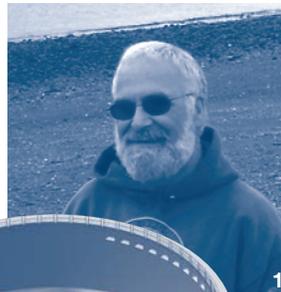
If your organization would like to book *Closing in on Sustainable Salmon Farming* and learn more about how closed containment can benefit your community, please contact:

- Will Soltau wsoltau@livingoceans.org  
250-973-6580
- Michelle Young michelle@georgiastrait.org  
250-753-3459

*Closing in on Sustainable Salmon Farming* is a Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform (CAAR) initiative.

PHOTO 1: LOS Local Campaigner Will Soltau is hitting the road to show communities the net worth of closed containment salmon farms.

PHOTO 2: Ocean-based closed containment would reduce, and in some cases eliminate, the environmental impacts of open net pens: sea lice epidemics, marine mammal deaths, disease transfer, fish farm waste, and escaped fish. The tanks would likely reduce mortality rates among out-migrating wild salmon smolts and boost the chances for higher returns.



# YES!

## Support Living Oceans Society

**1 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 V0N 3E0.

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

**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](http://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](http://www.tidescanada.org).

I would like to donate to **The Oceans Fund** at Tides Canada Foundation.

I am enclosing a cheque for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Payable to Tides Canada Foundation-Oceans Fund.  
 I'd like you to process my donation on my credit card. Please charge:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ each month **OR**  \$ \_\_\_\_\_ once.

Start date DD / MM / YY

Charge my  Visa  Mastercard

Card# \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry date MM / YY

Cardholder name \_\_\_\_\_

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Thank you for supporting the work of Living Oceans Society. A charitable tax receipt will be sent to the above name for donations \$50 and over. Tides Canada is a registered Canadian charity: BN 86894 7797 RR0001.

**Please return this form to:** Tides Canada Foundation, 680-220 Cambie Street, Vancouver BC, V6B 2M9. **Questions?** Please call Living Oceans Society at 250-973-6580.

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