



The New NIPR Newsletter

Volume II | Issue 1 | March 2023 | North Island-Powell River Greens

We Are Here!

Your North Island-Powell River Greens are excited to reconnect with the people who make us so strong and resilient – you!

We need connection. We need cooperation. *We need Community.*

We hope that, in these pages, you find stories that challenge, motivate, and inspire. And we want you to know that we are here, we are working, and we are listening.

We acknowledge that we are based on stolen land on the traditional, ancestral territories of many different First Nations, including the We Wai Kai, Wei Wai Kum, Homalco, K'ómoks, Tla'amin, Kwakuitl, and Gwa'sala'Nakwaxda'xw Namgis.

~ Carol, Jay, Larry, Linda, Mark, & Susan

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MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!

Annual General Meeting for North Island-Powell River EDA in person with Elizabeth May

The Board of Directors of the NIPR EDA are delighted to announce that [Elizabeth May](#), Leader of the Green Party of Canada and MP for Saanich-Gulf Islands, will be our speaker at the North-Island Powell River Electoral District Association's AGM on **May 6th in Campbell River**. We will meet at the beautiful **Maritime Heritage Centre**, 621 Island Hwy at **11:30am**. Light refreshments will be available.

Elizabeth will officially introduce **Jessica Wegg**, the newly selected **Green Party candidate** for North Island-Powell River. Jessica ran for the NIPR Greens in the 2021 election. As the only person applying this year, she was acclaimed to be our candidate again for the next federal election whenever PM Trudeau decides to call it.

Elizabeth will speak on her vision for the future of the Green Party and her thoughts on co-leadership with Jonathan Pedneault. There will be time for questions submitted in advance (details to come).

During our AGM all GPC members will be asked to vote on two items:

1. NIPR EDA Constitutional amendment
2. The Board of Directors for 2023-24

The AGM is open to all, but the voting is for members only. Please make sure your GPC membership is up to date by accessing the Green Party of Canada website: www.greenparty.ca* Call Carol at 250-334-2724 if you have problems logging in.

We look forward to having you join us for this important event!

For more information, contact mark.debruijn@greenparty.ca

HIGHLIGHTING GREEN VALUES – PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY

The photograph at the top of this issue of our newsletter shows how NIPR Greens embrace one of the six core values of Greens worldwide – **participatory democracy**. The photo shows members Carol Thatcher and Mark de Bruijn participating in the Last Stand for Old Growth march (more on that inside this issue).

The Green Party of Canada strives for a democracy in which all citizens have the right to express their views, and are able to directly participate in the environmental, economic, social and political decisions which affect their lives, so that power and responsibility are concentrated in local and regional communities, and devolved only where essential to higher tiers of governance.

Click [HERE](#) to read more about this core value.



Jessica Wegg and Elizabeth May at a campaign rally in September 2021. They'll be together again at our May 6 AGM in Campbell River.

Photo Credit: Sean Wood

Comox Valley Greens Raise Funds and Awareness with Coldest Night of the Year Walk

The Comox Valley Green Party Team was not afraid of a little cold weather and walked in the Comox Valley, Victoria, and around-and-around a ferry to Vancouver to show their support in the Coldest Night of the Year (CNOY) Walk. The residents of the Comox Valley (CV) also stepped up on February 25th to raise almost \$180,000 to support Comox Valley Transition Society and Dawn to Dawn Action on Homelessness Society. These two societies provide support for better housing and food for many unhoused people in the valley. The Comox Valley finished 7th among 182 participating communities and the Green Party Team raised more than \$1300 for the CNOY. Greens supporting our communities!

You can go online to add contributions until March 31/23. <https://secure.e2rm.com/registrator/TeamFundraisingPage.aspx?teamID=989841&langPref=en-CA>

(Submitted by Jay Van Oostdam)



The Wonderful Ron Kelly

We're Recruiting!

Are you looking to make a difference in your community and beyond? Would you like to work toward positive outcomes with other volunteers?

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE NORTH ISLAND-POWELL RIVER (NIPR) FEDERAL GREEN PARTY ELECTORAL DISTRICT ASSOCIATION (EDA)

The Board is comprised of volunteers who provide a governance function, set strategic direction and participate in fundraising and social activities.

About: The NIPR EDA is sanctioned by Elections Canada to facilitate party and community building activities. We build volunteer teams for events, raise funds and support the Green candidate campaigning in the election, and support our local communities.

Green values: The Global Green values are foundational in everything we do: ecological wisdom, non-violence, participatory democracy, respect for diversity, social justice and sustainability.

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If you would like more information about the work of the Board, or you are wanting to speak to a Board member, please send an email with your contact information to northislandgreens@gmail.com and we will get back to you!



(Literal tree-hugging encouraged, but not required.)

What a March and Rally!!

For many months hundreds of volunteers from a kaleidoscope of environmental and other NGOs, First Nations, seniors groups, and just plain citizens had been working towards a huge rally in Victoria, BC to save what's left of our old growth forests. Figures vary, but as little as 1% of our once almost limitless old trees remain, and we are still logging as though they'll be there forever. On February 25 about 2500 "activists" descended on Victoria to let their passion for these ancient forests be known. Temperatures that were 10 degrees below normal and scattering of snowflakes did not deter this march and rally led by indigenous people and drummers. It was a privilege to be among them, along with many fellow Greens.

Saving the old growth has become an enormously passionate issue for more and more British Columbians, and people around the world are joining the chorus. It's obvious that we are devouring nature to extinction, and destroying these old forests eliminates one of the most productive ways of balancing the atmosphere's CO2 levels to avoid runaway global warming.

But for many people, including myself, there's a personal emotional connection to these trees as special beings. Some call it a spiritual connection, and it's hard to describe in words. But in their presence there's a felt sense of a sentience, of wisdom, of an ancient knowledge. The possibility that we may be losing this forever is an unbearably painful and deeply saddening experience.

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Pictured at right: The Indefatigable Megan Ardyche and Diane Van Oostdam

For more perspective, here is a lovely report on the rally from one of the organizing groups: <https://stand.earth-United For Old Growth>

So this was a different kind of rally. More than a protest, it was an exuberance of a collective love and reverence for these ancient forests. It was a parade, a joyous celebration. Huge banners, flags and signs created a moving sea of colour. Costumes depicting all manner of forest and ocean animals, trees, mountains, and water flowing through the streets and onto the lawns of the BC Legislature. There, the crowds were treated to a parade of speakers, including several First Nations chiefs, David Suzuki, and even Neil Young (who sang Heart of Gold for us!) and his wife, actress Daryl Hannah.

It was a powerful, moving, heart-filled day, full of hope that it left an impression on our elected officials that the people want a deep change in the way we treat our forests. Most of all, it was a full-throated, joyous celebration of our love for forests and the beauty of life.

Mark de Bruijn, March 15, 2023



## ***Ramparts Creek-Brown's River Old Growth Logging in Comox Valley***

**\*\*\*\*CALL TO ACTION\*\*\*\***

Mosaic Forest Management (Mosaic) has continued logging and hauling out old growth trees on the Mount Washington Parkway until snow covered the roads in December 2023. These trees were the remnants of a vast forest of 250- to 500-year-old yellow cedars and mountain hemlocks that surrounded Strathcona Park. The Save Our Forest Team – Comox Valley has been actively involved in lobbying Mosaic to stop this logging of these ancient forests in the middle of a climate and biodiversity crisis!! Mosaic is not interested in changing its old non-sustainable model of forestry.

Mosaic is only the forestry management arm of Timberwest, who actually owns the land. Timberwest in turn is owned by public pensions—the provincial BC Investment Management Corporation (BCI) and the federal Public Sector Pension Investment Board (PSP). If you have ever worked in any capacity for either level of government, you are probably receiving your pension from one of these entities.

This issue was covered in the December NIPR newsletter as well as in the [Comox Valley Record](#). Whether you receive a pension, or are just a concerned Valley resident or Canadian citizen, we would ask our readers to contact the pension plan owners of Timberwest / Mosaic and tell them this old growth logging is unacceptable. As pensioners / concerned citizens we must ensure that our pension plans leave an environment that our children and grandchildren can continue to live, work and play in!!

We have drafted letters to the two pension plans so you can choose the appropriate letter, whether you are a pension plan holder (Comox Valley resident or non-resident), a Comox Valley resident, or a concerned citizen. Please click on the appropriate link and you will get a letter with e-mail addresses for both of the pension plans (federal and provincial). Copy the letter into an e-mail and edit to suit you (based on whether you are a pensioner( [Comox Valley Resident](#) or [non-resident](#) , also chose BCI or PSP), [Comox Valley resident](#) , or [Concerned citizen](#) ). Thanks for your support!

(Submitted by Jay Van Oostdam)



Old Growth Clearcut at Ramparts Creek Headwaters

## *The Green Party and the War in Ukraine* *by Elizabeth May*

The Green Party of Canada, like Green Party colleagues around the world, condemns the illegal war and brutal aggression by Russian forces against Ukraine. We support unequivocally all actions taken by our government: sending arms, invoking sanctions and other measures to assist Ukraine. I was honoured to make those commitments directly to President Volodymyr Zelensky following his historic speech to our Parliament on March 15, 2022.

The 80 national Green parties around the world are all committed to six core Green values. One of these is to promote non-violence and peace. In the over 40 years that Green parties have existed globally, the illegal and immoral war launched by Russia against Ukraine is the very first time that Greens have supported military aid.

This statement from the European Union Greens is a good summary of where we stand:

“The European Green family condemns President Putin’s war against Ukraine in the strongest way possible. Russia’s full-fledged invasion constitutes an outright attack on Ukraine’s sovereignty and is a flagrant violation of international law.

“This is not only an attack on Ukraine’s territorial integrity, but a brutal attack on the rule of law, democracy and peace in Europe.

“We welcome the sanctions that have been imposed by the EU and its allies. Europe must remain united and extend its sanctions as part of a coordinated effort.

“We also welcome the German government’s decisive action to freeze the Nord Stream 2 gas project, and the instrumental role played by the German Greens (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen) in this decision. The crisis illustrates the strategic necessity to be energetically independent from fossil fuels. Energy policy is a question of security.

“The respect of Ukraine’s sovereignty implies the respect for its right to freely choose its alliances. Ukraine has a right to freedom and democracy, and we must act swiftly to protect these rights.

“We therefore call for:

- Additional sanctions to be stepped up and implemented quickly by the EU and all its member states
- The exclusion of Russian banks from the SWIFT international banking network
- Stopping the import of gas, oil and minerals from Russia as soon as possible
- All former EU and member state governmental representatives to withdraw from functions in Russian companies
- The seizure of all assets of Russian officials responsible for backing this invasion and the freezing of Putin’s assets
- Extended support for Ukrainian refugees, including the provision of shelters, medical aid and information, as well as the creation of humanitarian corridors
- Continued diplomatic efforts in the pursuit of a peaceful outcome

- Speeding up the energy transition to replace Europe’s imported gas and oil dependency to enhance our energy independence and security
- A solidarity instrument including enhanced financial support (not limited to loans and credit guarantees) for Ukraine
- Financial assistance for member states to help deal with the economic consequences of imposed sanctions
- Enhancing the EU’s cyber-security capabilities and a more robust EU strategy on tackling large-scale disinformation campaigns.

“The European Green Party stands firmly with Ukraine and extends its solidarity to its people. We will be joining the gatherings calling for peace and an end to Russian aggression that are happening across Europe, to show our support for Ukraine. We encourage all European citizens to join us.”

As you can see, we do continue to call for peace talks, but never a cessation of support for Ukraine. However, it’s unfortunate that calling for diplomatic efforts to be intensified to seek any path to peace, while also supporting military assistance, as I did in Parliament on Feb. 4, 2023, was seen as a weakening of support for Ukraine.

This is not only unfortunate but reflects a simplification of dialogue and a rapid polarization among people who actually agree with one another.

As a parenthetical point, having left Green leadership in 2019, and been recently elected as Leader of the Green Party of Canada, sharing the work load with deputy leader Jonathan Pedneault, I have found a sharp contrast in media coverage and discourse since when I last did this job.

I find that people (media and public) are on a hair trigger: quick to anger, to make assumptions and denounce. Especially in politics, people are slow to consider and ponder and give the benefit of the doubt.

These tendencies, fuelled by the lightning fast algorithms of “rage-farming” in social media, are really dangerous to our democracy.

That said, on no issue as much as on defence of Ukraine, Canadians are remarkably united. We must continue and intensify efforts. We must end the billions flowing to Russia for oil. Russia must face the reality of Putin’s tragic miscalculation.

Ukrainian democracy will overcome and emerge to a peaceful future. Canada must continue to support Ukraine and — once the war is over — remain committed to the rebuilding of Ukraine and a restoration of its environment.

**ELIZABETH MAY, O.C., IS THE MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR SAANICH-GULF ISLANDS AND LEADER OF THE GREEN PARTY OF CANADA.**

## *Earth Hour ~ Earth Day*

On March 25 at the same local time globally (8:30-9:30 PM.), millions of people around the world marked **Earth Hour** by turning off all lights, TVs, and other electric/electronic devices. With candles ready, it was an invitation to spend an hour in contemplation, meditation, conversation, or enjoying a quiet meal. At our home, we meditated and reflected on the meaning of what we were participating in.

Every year since 2008, global media has tracked reduced electricity use in this tiny act of solidarity. Sixty minutes of peace. An hour of lights out.

It is fairly heart-breaking that in a climate emergency, an act so simple as an hour without lights is hard for so many of us. Earth Hour is clearly a token gesture. Still, every act in climate solidarity matters. We hope many others were joined together in this mostly symbolic act of caring for the earth.

More well-known is **Earth Day**, an annual event that always falls on **April 22**. This year it is a **Saturday**, and local volunteers across the nation including many Greens are organizing a wide variety of events to heighten awareness of the plight of our planet and what we can do about it.

Here in the Comox Valley a major Earth Day event is being planned for **1:00-5:00pm.** by the “green team” at **St. Peter’s Anglican Church, 218 Church Street in Comox.**

About 12 different organizations and groups will be represented, hosting booths and information sessions focusing on environmental issues and activities.

Everyone is invited. NIPR Greens will have a booth with information and volunteers.

Back on April 22, 1970, the first Earth Day was relatively grassroots and self-organizing. We are returning to those roots. We will call for far more radical actions from all orders of government as well as local resilience and adaptation to save lives and property from the events we can no longer avoid. We are eager to hear what the people of the Comox Valley have to say, and look forward to plenty of stimulating conversations.

### *Update on the Transmountain Pipeline – not looking rosy for Canadian taxpayers.*

March 10, 2023

Canada purchased the Transmountain pipeline (then Kinder Morgan) in 2018 for \$4.5B. The first estimate to complete the expansion started at \$5.4B It’s now expected to cost almost \$31B – all taxpayer money. That’s an almost 6-fold increase (600%). And this is likely still not the final price tag. The most expensive project ever in Canada. Canadian taxpayers will be paying for this for generations.

This should not come as a surprise. Even when the pipeline was first purchased by the government on behalf of Canadian taxpayers, there were those who warned of the financial black hole this would likely become.

It is now projected to be completed and in full service by April 2024.

More background on this from the National Observer:

[National Observer-Transmountain update](#)



## Great news on the salmon farms file – Finally!!

As many of you will no doubt already have heard, Joyce Murray, Canada's Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, announced that after long and extensive discussions with people up and down the coast she's decided that the 15 salmon farms in the Discovery Island waters off Campbell River must go. This is such good news for the dwindling wild salmon of so many of the watersheds that feed into the Salish Sea, and whose young migrate through the waters long contaminated by these farms.

The Liberal government has promised to do this for all salmon farms in BC waters by 2025 and transition them to land-based alternatives. Even though Minister Murray's announcement is a victory for the Discovery Islands, we must continue to work to get the government's promise fulfilled completely.\*

For more commentary, from the Watershed Watch Society, click [HERE](#).

Here's Alexandra Morton's take on the implications of this decision: [Alexandra Morton/Tyee](#)

And this link from the David Suzuki Foundation: [David Suzuki.org](#)

It seems there's a ton of support for Minister Murray's decision: [SeaFoodSource/Removing open net pens](#)



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[Check Out the Green Party Platform \(Election 2021\)](#)



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## Update March 23 – The tide is turning against the farms – more good news

March 8 - this just in! After years of pressure from First Nations, several more fish farms will soon be removed, this time in the Broughton Archipelago. And Fisheries and Oceans Canada is expected to release a final plan to transition the entire industry away from open-net pen farms this year. [Details here](#).

### How DFO Misleads Its Minister

If you are puzzled by why it's so difficult to get a federal Minister to make a responsible decision, [this essay by Neil Frazer](#) will interest you. As a scientist, the author examines some of the scientific manipulations that can be used to bamboozle politicians, even when those politicians are people of integrity who genuinely want to do the right things. A longish and somewhat complex read, but well worth it for some great perspective on the vulnerabilities of being a Minister.

Lastly, for a great recap of DFO's dismal history of denying and obscuring the truth about salmon farms, here's a link to an earlier article written just after former Fisheries Minister Bernadette Jordan had closed the Discovery Island farms (a decision later overturned by industry's legal hijinks, and now reinstated by the new Minister): <https://www.safesalmon.ca/captured>

### WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

General Inquiries or Comments and Newsletter Submissions: [northislandgreens@gmail.com](mailto:northislandgreens@gmail.com)

Volunteer Opportunities and Volunteering: [northislandgreens@greenparty.ca](mailto:northislandgreens@greenparty.ca)

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