

Environmental Groups Recommend New Approaches to Clean Electricity in BC

Vancouver, December 17 — Several environmental organizations today released a blueprint for improving the planning and development of renewable electricity projects in British Columbia. The recommendations, authored by the David Suzuki Foundation, the Pembina Institute, Watershed Watch Salmon Society and West Coast Environmental Law, have been endorsed by 25 environmental organizations across the province.

British Columbians are deeply concerned about climate change, and while they support clean electricity to address climate change, many harbour concerns about how clean electricity is currently developed. Government energy and climate policies have stimulated a rapid increase in the rate of development of renewable electricity projects, but public support has not kept pace in many cases. Projects have frequently been opposed due to concerns about social, environmental and economic costs.

The blueprint released today, "**Recommendations for Responsible Clean Electricity Development in British Columbia,**" outlines how planning and development can proceed in a way that is more transparent, strategic and inclusive of and beneficial to all British Columbians — First Nations and the public alike — while limiting environmental impacts.

The groups recommend that British Columbia's progress on clean electricity policy and development can be dramatically improved by:

1. Ensuring that energy conservation and efficiency is the highest priority.
2. Making British Columbia's electricity supply as clean, renewable and low-impact as possible.
3. Adopting a renewable electricity planning framework that limits environmental, social and economic impacts and maximizes public benefit.
4. Reforming water licensing, land leasing decisions and governance.
5. Strengthening the environmental assessment process, addressing and managing cumulative effects, and improving monitoring and compliance performance.
6. Developing an informed consensus about the conditions whereby renewable electricity could be exported from British Columbia, if at all.

Organizations endorsing the Recommendations for Responsible Clean Electricity Development in British Columbia:

BC Spaces for Nature
BC Sustainable Energy Association
Cassiar Watch
David Suzuki Foundation
Forest Ethics
Friends of Clayoquot Sound
Friends of Wild Salmon
Georgia Straight Alliance
Living Oceans Society
Northwest Watch
Outdoor Recreation Council
Pacific Wild
Pembina Institute
Raincoast Conservation Foundation
Sierra Club of Canada, BC Chapter
Skeena Watershed Conservation Coalition
SkeenaWild Conservation Trust
Steelhead Society of British Columbia
Sunshine Coast Conservation Association
T. Buck Suzuki Environmental Foundation
Watershed Watch Salmon Society
West Coast Environmental Law
West Kootenay EcoSociety
Wilderness Tourism Association
Wildsight

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The full recommendations are available at:

<http://pubs.pembina.org/reports/clean-electricity-recommendations.pdf>