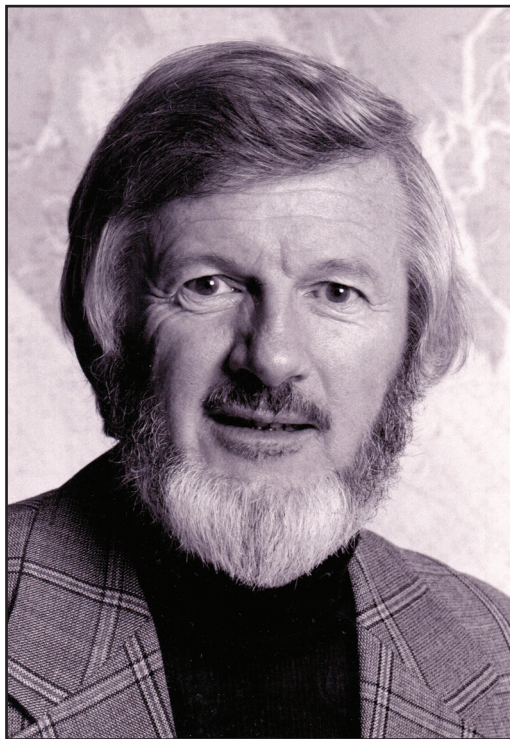


2014 Andrew Thompson Award Finalists



The Andrew Thompson award was established in 2002 by West Coast Environmental Law and the Thompson family as a legacy to Dr. Andrew Thompson, and was made possible through the generosity of the Thompson family. The award is given to an individual who has demonstrated a significant lifetime contribution to environmental protection and sustainability in British Columbia through the law.

Dr. Andrew Thompson was one of the pioneers in environmental and resource law and one of BC's foremost environmental lawyers. In acknowledgement that Dr. Thompson's work bridged the fields of environmental and Aboriginal law and of his contributions to advancing justice for First Nations, the award this year recognizes individuals who have made an exceptional contribution to the fields of environmental and Aboriginal law or to the revitalization, recognition and/or enforcement of Indigenous environmental law.



Ardith Wal'petko We'dalx Walkem

“In many respects, Indigenous laws are very responsive to what the land and waters need to continue to sustain life. So there's a possibility from within these traditions to teach people how to live in a different relationship with the land. I think when we're engaged in a process of seeking justice on a societal basis then it won't merely help Indigenous peoples; that benefits everybody.”

Ardith Wal'petko We'dalx Walkem, is a lawyer and member of the Nlaka'pamux Nation. She has provided legal analysis, advice and direction to the Union of BC Indian Chiefs for 15 years, serving as a bridge of understanding between environmental laws and policies of the Crown and the inherent laws of Indigenous Title and Rights. She strongly believes that Indigenous Peoples and our lands and territories are one. Her work has involved helping to restore and rebuild Indigenous laws for keeping lands and waters safe, and also for keeping children safe for they are our future.



Glen Williams, Malii

“It's a fulfillment and upholding of Gitksan ayookxw (traditional law) to protect our lax'yip (land & resources) for future generations and then one day our laws will co-exist with the white man's supreme law; it may be a small faint light at first, then it will flicker then one it will glow in the white man's law'. This is a beginning of what my grandfather Lelt (Fred Johnson - Wilp Lelt, Gunheda, Kitwangax) would say to me, some three decades ago to protect our 'Hanii tokxw' (dinner table), our food supply.”

Glen Williams, Malii, President and Chief Negotiator of the Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs, has spent decades fighting for the preservation and implementation of Gitanyow laws, successfully litigating and negotiating long-term protection for the Gitanyow lax'yip. The Gitanyow Lax'yip Land Use Plan, including designation of the Hanna-Tintina Conservancy, was based on Gitanyow ayookxw, knowledge and sound science.



Terri-Lynn Williams-Davidson, gid7ahl-gudsllaay

“Indigenous laws are ancient and powerful. They mandate exercising our responsibilities to take care of the land, sea, culture, people and economy. Haida laws teach us to find the wisdom in all laws – environmental, aboriginal and indigenous – and weave them together for the benefit of all. When we do so, we begin the transformation of the legal landscape and dance into being a just and sustainable future.”

Terri-Lynn Williams-Davidson, gid7ahl-gudsllaay, is a lawyer and citizen of the

Haida Nation. The founding Executive Director of EAGLE (Environmental-Aboriginal Guardianship through Law and Education), she has devoted her entire career to protecting ecological and cultural rights, including as lead counsel in the successful 2004 Supreme Court of Canada challenge to protect old-growth forests and the resulting reconciliation over Haida Gwaii.



Grand Chief Bob Pasco

“My understanding of the world and the environment is through an Nlaka’pamux lens. My culture and language are my way of life. The earliest lesson I recall learning translates as: “Take care of the land and the land will take care of you”. I understood this to be my obligation. Learning this law at a very early age inspired me to dedicate my life to protecting the environment through Nlaka’pamux title and rights. Passing this law on to other generations and to non-Nlaka’pamux and personally living by this law, is for me, a critical step in creating sustainability.”

Grand Chief Bob Pasco is the Chair of the Nlaka’pamux Nation Tribal Council. Living on the land, he has devoted his life to Nlaka’pamux title and rights to protect and sustain the environment for all: Grand Chief Pasco has broken the law, he has developed and implemented laws and he has changed the law all in the interest of sustainability.



Chief Roger William

“I been committed to work I do because of my Tsilhqot’in Language Culture, and Aboriginal Rights & Title. I learnt English Language in Residential School, speak and write my Tsilhqot’in Language fluently. Lived and practise my language & culture on the land all my life, was born in Xení Nemiah Valley. Got into leadership in my Community since I was 22, and been involved to date protecting our Lands, Resources, Fish & Wildlife and our Language & Culture. We have fought against Prosperity Mines since 1990’s to

protect our Sacred Lake Teztan Biny Fish Lake. We went through Federal CEAA in 2010 & 2013, in both cases decision in our favour to protect Lake and Area. We filed Aboriginal Trapline Case in 1990, filed Aboriginal Rights & Title Case in 1998, BC Supreme Court of Appeal in 2010 and Supreme Court of Canada in 2013, which resulted in Aboriginal Declarations of Rights in 2012 and Declaration of Title in 2014. Both Land Base win and 1st if its kind...”

In his fight against clearcut logging in Tsilhqot’in territory, Xení Gwet’in Chief Roger William won at the Supreme Court of Canada the first ever declaration of Aboriginal Title in Canada, and demonstrated that he is “a trailblazer at the dawn of an era of reconciliation between the Crown and Aboriginal peoples.”



West Coast Environmental Law



West Coast Environmental Law is dedicated to safeguarding the environment through law. For 40 years West Coast has played a role in shaping BC and Canada’s most significant environmental laws, and worked to ensure citizens’ voices are heard in environmental decision-making. West Coast provides legal and strategic support to First Nations, working together to uphold Indigenous legal traditions as the foundation for powerful strategies to protect the lands and waters of their homelands, and ultimately to transform Canadian law. www.wcel.org